

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

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The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.

*Welcome: The Nashville chapter meets at 3:00 P.M. on the second Sunday of each month at the ABC (Associated Builders and Contractors of Greater Tennessee) Building, 560 Royal Parkway, Nashville, TN 37214 (**SEE MAILING ADDRESS ABOVE**). We truly regret that we have no accommodations for young children, but teenagers and older siblings are welcome to attend.*

March 8th Meeting Program:

What's In a Name?

Shortly into our meetings the microphone is passed around the room. We introduce ourselves, and tell the name of our child, grandchild or sibling. Later in the program, let's learn a little more about our loved ones. How did they get their name? Who chose it and why? Were the names chosen to honor a family member or friend or because of the characteristics attributed to that name?

We hope you will join us in March to talk more about our precious children, grandchildren or siblings and their unique names. We will break up into our usual sharing groups after the program discussion ends.

Phone Friends

We have all experienced the pain of losing a child. We understand and would like to listen. If you can't reach one of us, feel free to call another person on this list.

Accidental Death	Mike and Paula Childers 615-294-4959
Illness	David and Peggy Gibson 615-308-2520 or 615-504-4307
Infant	Jayne Head 615-264-8184
SIDS	Kris Thompson 931-486-9088
Suicide	Ron Henson 615-789-3613
Alcohol/Drug Overdose	Ed Pyle 615-712-3245

*The name of your dead child
is a magic word.*

Did you know?

*Something will happen
And whatever that something is,
Let it happen—
Even if it be tears.*



*At any given moment—
Whether busy or still—
Stop.
And think or say that name*

*The name of your child
is a magic word
To heal your heart.*

Sascha

There may be crocus blooming by now, but the chance of inclement weather is still a consideration. In case the weather threatens safe travel, please check our website, Facebook page or call the chapter leaders at the numbers above for possible meeting cancellation.

ALWAYS WITH LOVE, WE REMEMBER THEM--**In the month of their births**

Bonnita Brown
(Nee Nee)
March 18
Daughter of
Elaine Frey

LaTorra Fayne
March 18
Daughter of
Helen Fayne

Parker Gabriel Coats
March 23
Son of
Glenn and Jessica Coats

Marvin Lee Edwards
March 23
Son of
Charles and Ruth Edwards

Nicholas Ghassan DaaBoul
March 17
Son of
Laurie and Georges DaaBoul

Tina Haven
March 5
Sister of
Teresa Umphrey

Ebony David Merriweather
March 28
Son of
Tonya Johnson

Samuel James Moore
March 28
Son of
Darrell and Dianne Moore
Grandson of
Mac and Polly Moore

Kevin Moncrief
March 17
Son of
Sandra Merkel

Mack Lewis Page
March 3
Son of
Michael Page

Alexander Nicholas Parkes
March 3
Son of
Gary Parkes

Sheila Rochelle
March 17
Daughter of
Jennie Reeves
Sister of Charity Collins
Aunt of Kristanna

Danny Wayne Phillips, Jr.
(Red)
March 18
Son of
Janie Totty

Michael Reeves
March 16
Son of Jennie Reeves
Brother of
Sheila, Michael, and
Mark

Trinity Rhodes Steagall
March 18
Son of
Rose Steagall

Asher James Lee Wilson
March 19
Son of
John and Ali Lee Wilson



Mary Catherine Elizabeth Ricketts
March 22
Daughter of
John and Connie Ricketts

***Newly Bereaved . . . Time will ease the hurt***

The sadness of the present days is locked and set in time, and moving to the future is a slow and painful climb.

But all the feelings that are now so vivid and so real can't hold their fresh intensity as time begins to heal.

No wound so deep will ever go away, yet every hurt becomes a little less from day to day.

Nothing can erase the painful imprints on your mind; but there are softer memories that time, will let you find.

Though your heart won't let the sadness simply slide away, the echoes will diminish even though the memories stay.



And in the month of their deaths

Matthew Johnson Brooks
March 5
Son of
Mike and Sherry Brooks

Cameron James Cantrell
March 5
Son of
Nikkie Robinson

Danielle Dedja Carter
March 6
Daughter of
Jeff Carter

Morgan Priscilla Graves
March 6
Daughter of
Ginger Graves

Kenneth Elberson
March 15
Son of
Harry and Winnie Elberson

Justin Bruce Hensley
March 1
Son of Denise Jones

Mary Grace Hodsdon
March 14
Daughter of John and
Mary Hodsdon

Caleb William LeQuire
March 5
Son of
Craig and Jennifer LeQuire
Grandson of
Norma LeQuire

David Benton Lowe
March 5
Son of
Charles and Teresa Lowe

Samuel James Moore
March 28
Son of
Darrell and Dianne Moore
Grandson of
Mac and Polly Moore

Alex Morgan
March 7
Son of Karen Bloch

Wade Hampton Morgan
March 3
Son of
David and Barbara Morgan

Adam Nicholas Pappas
March 2
Son of
Gust and Jane Pappas
Brother of
Andrew, Alex, and Erin

Mariah Rhodes
March 9
Daughter of
Sara Robinson
Granddaughter of
Anita Brown

Darius Lamont Patterson
March 22
Son of
Sylvia Patterson

David George Shriver
March 2
Son of
Warren and Donna Jones
and George Shriver
Brother of
Bekki, Bonnie, and Laurie

Tristan Walker
March 11
Son of
Tamara Brown



Michael Todd Webb
March 25
Son of
Mike and Debbie Webb

Hope as a Goal

Hope for a healed future and a new normal life is difficult to see in the shadow of the loss of a child. Hope is always present in our lives but must be sought, perhaps as a goal. Don't ever give up hope that your pain will subside and that someday a peaceful feeling will take its place.

This attainment of peace does not happen overnight, unfortunately. But keep sight of your goal and someday it will be a reality.

Janet Sonnen
TCF, Salem, OR

GIFTS OF LOVE AND REMEMBRANCE



We are deeply grateful for the voluntary gifts of love that make it possible for The Compassionate Friends to offer comfort to those families who do not know today that they will need us tomorrow.

*Mike and Kay Duncan
in Loving Memory of their sons,
Jon Ashley Duncan and
Jamie Michael Duncan*

*Thanks to you, Kroger Shoppers,
we received a gift of \$100.61
from the
Kroger Plus Community Rewards
Program*

*Linda Black
in Loving Memory of her son,
Christopher William Black*

*Sandra Merkel
in Loving Memory of her son,
Kevin Moncrief*

*Each month, Price Printing, 615.360.3339, donates the printing of this newsletter as a gift to the families of TCF.
Deanna Brown and her family assemble, label, sort, and mail the newsletter in loving memory of
her son, Marcus Dean Brown. We appreciate so much these people and their generosity to all of us.*

It's My Choice,



To Be a Survivor Or Be a Victim

T o seek out people and resources who will listen and care when I need support	OR	retreat from life and isolate myself from sources of support.
To search for meaningful things to give my life a sense of purpose	OR	decide I have no hope or purpose in life and that I have nothing to live for.
To realize that loss is only one of the many factors in my life	OR	see myself only as a bereaved parent and allow this to blacken and disrupt all aspects of my life.
To communicate with family and friends when I need information and help	OR	wait for others to discover what I need, getting angry and pitying myself when they don't.
To accept what is gone and out of my control and act on what I can do	OR	constantly pity myself over what has changed and what I can't do.
To try to understand how my family feels—they hurt too	OR	feel that absolutely no one can understand me and what I am going through.
To look for ways to fight back against negative feelings	OR	feel that I am helpless and at the mercy of fate.
To talk about fears with someone I trust	OR	bottle up fears and horrors that are unexpressed and let them have power over me.
To accept my grief as a recovery process in my recovery from loss	OR	be ashamed of my grief and pretend all is well to protect others' discomfort.
To be angry at the circumstances of the death and seek comfort and strength from God or others	OR	blame God for my circumstances and become angry, bitter and alienated from Him.

*Adapted from Positive Patterns of Survival
A segment of the I Can Cope course
TCF, Australia*



Our TCF National Conference is a place for bereaved families to find community and hope, while learning and sharing with others. Lifelong friendships are often made at the conference through meeting others who truly understand the painful loss of a child, sibling, or grandchild. This eagerly anticipated event will take place in Baltimore, Maryland, during the weekend of July 3-5, 2026. Plan now to attend. Go to www.compassionatefriends.org for registration and lodging information.

A Time to Grieve...A Time to Heal

*Have you ever noticed the many mixed-up,
confusing emotions involved in grieving?
On the one hand, you feel restless.
On the other hand, you feel like
you don't want to move at all.
You feel desperately alone, and yet,
you don't want anyone around.
You feel scatterbrained, forgetful,
and yet, frantically meticulous.
You feel like crying at nothing
and sometimes laughing at anything.
Or do I have that backwards?*

*Being in a crowd of people is fine
as long as they don't talk to you.
And yet if they don't talk to you,
you feel as if nobody cares.
You want so desperately for someone
to mention your child,
to remember the life that once was.
And yet it can make you furious if
ALL they want to talk about is the dead one,
and never even mention the living ones.*

*Grief settles over you like a hot blanket.
You're as cold as winter snow.
Grief presses on you like a steamroller.
You're floating in a bubble above yourself.
Grief boxes you in on four sides and introduces you
to pain no one should have to know.*

*But then, once again, you begin to feel compassion.
You relate to other parents who have had
an experience similar to your own.
And eventually, with a light as sharp as a sunburst,
you hear yourself saying your child's name
with an unfamiliar smile on your face.
You remember some of the funny times,
And feel laughter building in your throat.*

*One morning you notice the sun is shining,
the flowers are bursting with the colors of spring.
Three seasons have passed unnoticed...
and somehow, you are still here.
Even though your child is still There,
you feel your heart swell with a love
you never even knew could exist.
And you find a place in your life
for something called,
Dare I say, Peace...?*

*And then, ever so gently, the memories
enfold you in a warmth as soothing as
a cool shower on a hot summer day,
so you find you want to remember.
And tender memories of love lift you
to unreachable heights,
to the brightest of stars,
to the loveliest touch of
Your child.*

Dana Gensler
TCF, South Central KY

What to Do with Anger

Anger is one of the most difficult emotions for me to express. Reared as a "proper" young lady, I was taught that anger was not becoming. Many of the women I have spoken to were similarly taught. I found, however, I did not have the tools to deal with the deep anger that came shortly after the death of my daughter. My anger was spilling over to people who did not deserve it, or I vented excess anger by overreacting to some situations. With the loving care and patience of several people, I developed some tools that helped me to express my anger. Rather than trying to suppress my angry feelings, I learned to release them in constructive ways. Hopefully, some of these coping techniques will be helpful to others.

EXERCISE - This is a great way to release anger, plus get into shape! I joined the YMCA, swam twice a week, did "Y's Ways to Fitness" three times a week, and walked three to five miles each day. At first, I was concerned about doing so much exercise because I have a very bad back, so I took it easy and worked my way up to my present routine. I always feel much better after a good workout, and I had the extra benefit of getting out of our home and back into society. After my daughter's death, my life felt so out of control; but as I became more fit, I regained some control. This renewed strength aided in my recovery.

Exercise decreases stress levels and aids in controlling depression. Since grief can also make us more vulnerable to physical illness, exercising and taking care of our health is important. Even daily walking is good therapy.

WRITING - When the anger bubbled up in me, I would write. Many times I didn't know where to begin, so I just started by writing, "I am angry because. . . ." Soon, my thoughts were coming faster than I could write them down. After I had expressed my anger in writing, I often discovered that the sources of my anger were different than I had imagined. It usually sifted down to just being angry about my daughter's death. The technique of writing about your feelings is especially nice because you can just throw away or burn your words and the anger with them.

PAINTING - There is nothing like taking bright oils or acrylics and stroking them over an open canvass. I had not painted in over fifteen years, but I went up into the attic and got down the easel, brushes, and paints. I always felt better after a good painting session. Those times were very private for me and no one ever saw my creations, but they were helpful in expressing my anger.

TALKING - Sometimes I would call a good friend and just rant and rave. My friend was a very good and non-judgmental listener. She realized that most of what I said in anger I did not mean. She never gave advice or held me to my "anger" statements. She just lovingly listened. This technique calls for a careful choice of friends who can maintain confidentiality and are not afraid of anger. It is even more helpful if the friend has had a similar loss.

ENERGY - Convert anger into energy and use that energy to change the world. Angry with the limited support that mothers of children with Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA) had in their communities, I converted that anger into action. I joined several nationwide support groups and helped to bring their support into our community. My anger was further converted into energy which I used to raise money for SMA research. I baked over 700 loaves of bread (a lot of anger there!) for a fundraiser. My friends saw my energies and joined in to help. Together, our efforts raised over \$6,000 in under six weeks! This kind of energy can be contagious. Reaching out to others can help in healing. If something good can come from our tragedies, it can add meaning to their deaths.

EGGS - Yes, eggs! When I just could not resolve my anger with any of the above techniques, I would take a dozen eggs and a black felt-tipped pen and go into the back yard. Writing the reason I was angry on the egg, I threw it at the back fence. At first, I thought this was a little crazy, but after throwing the first egg and watching it shatter, I felt so much better! I always used just one word to describe my anger. It might be: Death, SMA (the disease my daughter died of), Husband, A friend's name, God. No one need know what you write on that egg! Afterward, the birds would have a treat eating the eggs; and listening to their happy noises while having their treat, eased my anger.

These are some of the techniques I used to express my anger. It is OK to be angry, and it is important to express, not suppress, anger. Suppressed anger can result in deep depression.

It is also all right to be angry with God. He is forgiving and understands our emotions. He would rather have us be angry with Him than shut Him out.

Penny A. Blaze
TCF, New Canaan, Connecticut

*If your compassion does not include yourself,
it is incomplete.*

Jack Kornfiel

CHAPTER INFORMATION

Are you Moving?

Each time a newsletter is returned to us with an incorrect address, we pay to retrieve it in order to find out where you've moved; then we pay again to mail it back to you. This is in addition to the original bulk mail cost. It would help a great deal in both time and money if you would notify us immediately of any address change so your newsletter can reach you right away. You may call, write or email the chapter leaders or the newsletter editor. Thanks for your help.

The “Children Remembered” Listings

If you are unable to attend TCF meetings and would like for your child to be listed on pages 2 and 3 in The Children Remembered list, please let us know, printing the exact way you'd like the child's name to appear, the child's birth and death dates, and the parents' names as they should be listed. Drop us a note at TCF, P.O. Box 8283, Hermitage, TN 37076. We'll be glad to include them. You need to contact us only once, unless any of your information changes.

Corporate Donations to TCF

To benefit TCF, go to the Kroger website and click on “Community Rewards”; then follow the instructions on that page and designate The Compassionate Friends Nashville Chapter. After that, when you shop at Kroger, swipe your Plus Card or key in your phone number when you check out, and Kroger will donate dollars to our chapter.

How You Can Help

Most people who attend TCF meetings never heard of TCF before they lost a child, and many bereaved parents still have not heard that there is an organization that exists to help them navigate their grief journey. If you know a family in the middle Tennessee area who has experienced the death of a child, regardless of age or cause of death, and you think they would benefit from finding out about TCF and possibly attending a TCF meeting, we will be happy to send you some information that you may share with them about what TCF is and what we do to support bereaved parents. If you have attended a TCF meeting, it might be helpful if you would invite them to attend their first TCF meeting with you. We also have a monthly newsletter that they can receive free of charge simply by asking for it.



BEREAVEMENT RESOURCES

Alive Alone

Alive Alone is an organization to benefit parents whose only child or all children have died. Visit their website at www.alivealone.org.

Alive Hospice Support Group for Bereaved Parents

For general information about grief support services and groups at Alive, please call the Grief Line at: 615-963-4732 or email griefsupport@alivehospice.org. They offer eight-week groups, ongoing monthly groups, family group and Little Hearts Club for children who have experienced the death of a sibling. Services are in Franklin, Nashville, Hendersonville, Lebanon, and Murfreesboro.

Sharing

SHARING is a community organization for parents who have experienced a miscarriage, stillbirth or the death of an infant. The website is sharingmiddletn.org.

Survivors of Suicide

There is a caring SOS group in Nashville. For information about meetings, you may call (615) 244-7444, or go to the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network at TSPN.org, and you will find a list of all Tennessee SOS locations.

TCF Website —A Treasure for You

When you log onto the TCF Website at www.compassionatefriends.org you will find a wealth of information about TCF and grief—poetry and articles, chat rooms, grief in the news, other chapter Web sites and numerous other resources.

The Compassionate Friends

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March 2026

March – A Month of Transition

The first day of any new month seems reason enough to pause, perhaps, and reflect on the significance or meaning that each of us might associate with a new month. For me, March has always signified a time of transition, a slow but steady emergence from the dark depths of winter into the first, but sure, signs of spring. Something like the “light at the end of the tunnel.” This spring will have a different meaning for each of us. For some, especially the newly bereaved, there will be a reluctance to accept it—a feeling of longing for the child with whom we would have liked to share it. You may wish to ignore the signs of this year’s spring, but it will happen anyway—you don’t have to enjoy it. Your sorrow is too new to let you enjoy anything. We understand this feeling. It’s part of the guilt we feel for surviving the loss of a child. It just won’t seem fair to you that the world goes on much the same as before.

Others of us, with the aid of time, sometimes much time, can face spring with a little more resolve. The resolve to accept things the way they are. Somehow, we learn to recognize our limitations, and we stop hurting ourselves with guilt or with the responsibility to change things. There is no way to change the fact that our children have died. The only thing we can change is ourselves. Those children will always be with us in our minds and our hearts. When we become secure in that belief, we will have changed. The changed person can accept life again and still be faithful to the memory of his child.

Bob McCollough
TCF Burlington, NC

Attending your first TCF meeting can be difficult. Feelings can be overwhelming. We have all experienced them and know how important it is to take that first step. Please attend two or three meetings before deciding if TCF is right for you. There are no dues or fees. If you choose, you need not speak a word at a meeting. We are an international, non-denominational group, offering support and information to bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents. We need not walk alone.