



The Compassionate Friends
Quad City Area Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

November 2021

Volume XXXIV, Number 9

Dear Compassionate Friends,

The holidays are coming and for many that means the expectation to participate in traditional large family or friend gatherings. This can be particularly difficult for parents grieving the loss of a child. The family is together, but your child is not there. In the midst of the holiday commotion, you judge the everyone else has moved on. Your child is neither missed nor acknowledged. About five years after Anna died, I experienced sad, uncomfortable and angry feelings while vacationing in Colorado with my parents, siblings, and their children. I realized I was feeling the emptiness of our loss and judged no one else remembered or cared. Even though it may be hard to start the conversation, it is important to talk to people, especially your closest family and friends about your loss and pain. You do not need to hide or deny your feelings. Let people know you need them and ask for help. Consider writing a letter to family and friends outlining your thoughts and feelings. Be patient when family or friends don't know what to say. You can talk about your loved one and share precious memories. Ask them to share memories as well. What is something your child taught you or them? What some of their special qualities you/they miss the most? Be grateful for those with the courage to hear your pain and walk beside you. And be gracious to those who are not able to do that and realize you may have to adjust your expectations for them. Remember others at your family gathering may be carrying a heavy burden and might also need a listening ear as well. If you are early in your grief, your best decision may be to limit the amount of time you spend with the larger family groups. For each of us deciding to join into a family celebration is going to be different depending on our temperament, needs, and the people in the group. Have a conversation with your spouse and surviving children and decide together what will be best for all of you. We wish you unexpected joys in your journey as you continue to navigate your grief.

Sincerely,
Jerry and Carol Webb



Season of lights,
Season of love and peace,
Season of shadow,
Season of memories,
Season of warmth and joy,
Season of secret tears:
Give us the courage to laugh again,
Give us the vision to hope again,
Give us the power to love again,
For all our new seasons
And all our new years.

Sascha, Wintersun

So many things are
overwhelming right now. Just
remember to take one step at
a time, one day at a time.

Through a Season of Grief by Bill Dunn and
Kathy Leonard

Think about what will bring you the most peace this holiday season.

- 1. Keeping all traditions intact?*
- 2. Tweaking some traditions, a bit and adding new ones?*
- 3. Throwing out all the old traditions and starting new ones?*
- 4. Flying to the Caribbean and completely skipping the holidays this year? It's okay to do that.*

Tom Zuba

You are three blessed young men. You have someone who is able to give high praise for you and express high hopes for you. You have a great blessing in your life. Through the years, you'll often think of your sister, and it'll be easy for you to say, "I wonder what she'd say about me?" Let that be your guide. There will be a brighter path.

*Rev. Edward Dufficy,
to three brothers on the death of their sister.*

We have such strong traditions and strong memories around the holidays that use all of our senses – the taste and smell of food, sounds of music, prayers, touch and feeling. The hugs and love from people... such visceral and strong memories of our loved ones and grief just comes up from that.

Dr. Amber Cohen

Grief is so tricky that way. It doesn't really go away. We always carry it. It's kind of like having on a backpack that can't be taken off. Sometimes it is so light I almost forget I have it on – I can even pull out a little memory with a smile. But other times, like holidays or even when a certain song comes on, it feels like someone has filled it with rocks. It's so heavy, I don't understand how I can move forward. But somehow, I do.

Hannah Dearth

Love Gifts



As parents and other family members find healing and hope within the group or from this newsletter, they often wish to make a **Love Gift** to help with the work of our chapter. This is a way to remember a beloved child, and to help other parents who mourn the loss of their child.

Thank you to:

Bill and Laurie Steinhauser in memory of their niece, Beth Hagerty

Donations are used to provide postage for the newsletter and mailings to newly bereaved families. Some of the love gifts are used for materials to share with first time attendees at our meetings or to purchase books for our library. Our thanks to the many families who provide love gifts so that the work of reaching out to bereaved parents and families can continue. **If you would like to send a donation or love gift, please send it or to our Chapter Treasurer, Doug Scott, 6550 Madison Street, Davenport, Iowa 52806. Checks should be made out to *The Compassionate Friends*. Your gifts are tax deductible. (This chapter of The Compassionate Friends would be a suitable charity for receiving your Required Minimum Distribution from your IRA account.)**

Contact the Editors

If you read or write an article or poem which might be helpful to other bereaved parents and would like to share it...

If you move and would like to continue receiving the newsletter, please send us your new address. Because we send the newsletter bulk rate, the post office will not forward it...

If you know someone you think would benefit from receiving the newsletter,

send his/her/their name and address...

If you prefer to no longer receive the newsletter or if you prefer to receive this newsletter via email...

**Please contact:
Jerry and Carol
Webb**

390 Arbor Ridge,
Benton Harbor, MI
49022 or email
CarolynPWebb@gmail.com.



The Compassionate Friends Worldwide

Candle Lighting on the 2nd Sunday in December unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor the memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren who left too soon. As candles are lit on **December 12th, 2021 at 7:00 pm** local time, hundreds of thousands of people commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon.

Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the annual Worldwide Candle Lighting (WCL), a gift to the bereavement community from The Compassionate Friends, creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone.



The Compassionate Friends National Newsletter

A complimentary issue of the National Newsletter is sent to bereaved families who contact the office at The Compassionate Friends, Inc., 48660 Pontiac Trail, #930808, Wixom, MI 48393, (877)969-0010.

email:

NationalOffice@compassionatefriends.org

Website: www.compassionatefriends.org

Visit the **sibling resource** page at www.compassionatefriends.org. It is also available to read online without charge.



e-Newsletter Now

Available! An e-Newsletter is now available from the National Office! The monthly e-Newsletter contains notes and happenings of interest to all TCFers. To subscribe to the e-Newsletter, visit the TCF National Website home page and click on the Register for TCF e-Newsletter Link. This newsletter is available to everyone.

About The Compassionate Friends

The Compassionate Friends is a nonprofit, self-help organization offering friendship and support to families who have experienced the death of a child. Founded in England in 1969, the first U.S. chapter was organized in 1972. Since then, 635 chapters have been established. The current Quad City Chapter was formed in 1987 (<http://www.quadcitytcf.org>).

TCF National Office

48660 Pontiac Trail, #930808

Wixom, MI 48393

Toll Free (877)969-0010

TCF National Web site:

www.compassionatefriends.org

Mission Statement

The mission of The Compassionate Friends Quad City Area Chapter is that when a child dies at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

Vision Statement

The vision statement of The Compassionate Friends is that everyone who needs us will find us, and everyone who finds us will be helped.

Printed Resources for Grieving Parents & Siblings

TCF Online Support Community	<p>TCF's national website offers "virtual chapters" through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The sessions last an hour and have trained moderators present. For more information, visit www.compassionatefriends.org and click "Online Support" in the "Resources" column.</p>
TCF's Grief Related Resources	<p>There are resources on elements of grief with well-known experts in the field. To view the resources, go to https://www.opentohope.com/tv/.</p>
TCF National Magazine	<p><i>We Need Not Walk Alone</i> is available to read online without charge. Go to www.compassionatefriends.org and review the options at the top of the page. TCF e-Newsletter is also available from the National Office to subscribe to the e-Newsletter, visit the TCF National Website home page and click on the Register for TCF e-Newsletter link.</p>
Grief Materials	<p>Looking for a particular grief book? Look no further than the Centering Corporation, the official recommended grief resource center of The Compassionate Friends. With the largest selection of grief-related resources in the United States, Centering Corporation will probably have just about anything you're looking for — or they'll be able to tell you where to find it. Call Centering Corporation for a catalog at 402.553.1200 or visit their website at www.centering.org. When ordering, be sure to mention you are with The Compassionate Friends and all shipping charges will be waived.</p>
Amazon.com	<p>When making a purchase from Amazon.com, enter through the link on the home page of TCF national website and a portion of the purchase price is donated to further the mission of TCF. This donation applies to all purchases made at Amazon.com.</p>
Previous Newsletter Editions	<p>Looking for more articles or previous copies of this newsletter? Go to www.bethany-qc.org for copies of the last several years of The Quad City Chapter of TCF-QC Chapter Newsletter in Adobe Acrobat format.</p>
Alive Alone	<p>A newsletter for bereaved parents whose only or all children are deceased. A self-help network and publication to promote healing and communication can be reached at www.alivealone.org or alivealone@bright.net.</p>
Bereaved Parents' Magazine	<p>Online articles and poems. Reminder emails are sent notifying readers when new issues are available. https://bereavedparentsusa.org.</p>
Our Newsletter	<p>Published one to three times per year, when there is content to make a balanced issue. It usually contains 30 pages of personal stories and updates, poetry, subsequent birth announcements, and any new topical articles and information. Currently it is being distributed electronically (PDF), but a printout is available to anyone without email access. To request a sample copy, please email Jean Kollantai at climb@climb-support.org. Include your full name, your location, and your reason for interest.</p>

The holidays

The mere thought brings on the tears. How do we get through them? How do we even survive them? How can we make them pleasant for our loved ones? How do we celebrate them and with who? How do we look forward to Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukah, New Year's? How do we decorate for the holidays when each ornament reminds us of days past? When putting up the nativity scene, we are reminded of how much we have in common with Mary and Joseph. Do we go to holiday parties? Our son's birthday is on December 18th. So, we also have a birthday to survive. Ever left a grocery cart full of groceries on



the spot when a memory surfaced? You are not alone. Do you find it difficult to plan a holiday menu or tradition because it is painful and concentration is difficult? We do also. The first year we lost David we traveled. We visited family and friends on the east coast for Thanksgiving and the west coast for Christmas. We are not wealthy and certainly do not travel every year, but found it necessary that first year. We are also fortunate to have family/friends who allowed us the space to grieve and attempt to heal at the same time. We have embraced the

traditions of our son and his wife's family. They have adopted us and we are blessed with a whole new family which includes little ones who make the holidays special once again. Don't try to endure the holidays alone, allow those who love you to help. What you will discover is that there are different traditions and experiences which can enrich your life. Let's face it, the holidays as we knew them will never be the same no matter how hard we try. We often hear the phrase that there is an empty chair at the dinner table. We who have lost a child know that it is far more than that. I do my Christmas shopping early. The stores are not as crowded, the decorations and music are at a minimal and it doesn't overwhelm me as much. Whenever possible I send my husband to the grocery store; it is easier for him than me. Friends often offer help, but don't know what kind of help we need. Let them help you. Give them your grocery list. David loved cookies. So, now I try to bake cookies on his birthday. Last year I gave away dozens of cookies. It was great therapy for me on that special day. In the morning I shed a few tears, got busy baking and was exhausted at the end of the day. I didn't send out holiday cards that first year, but I do now. Consider a visit to a counselor or therapist if you have not done so. They can be a great resource of ideas and comfort. I have yet to enjoy holiday parties, but possibly will in the

Support Groups for Grieving Parents & Siblings

The Compassionate Friends, Quad City Chapter Meeting Upcoming meeting on

Thursday, November 18, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

**Our meeting is held in-person at 1830 6th Avenue, Moline, Illinois,
on the second floor. Masks and social distancing are required.**

Annual Candle Light Ceremony is on December 6, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

(See insert on page 11.)

<p>The Compassionate Friends of Muscatine</p>	<p>Meets the second Sunday of each month at 2:00 at the George M. Wittch-Lewis Funeral Home, 2907 Mulberry, Muscatine, Iowa. Chapter Leaders are Linda and Bill McCracken. You can call them at 563.260.3626 for directions or information, or contact them at linmac67@machlink.com.</p>
<p>Rick's House of Hope</p>	<p>Rick's House of Hope serves children, ages 3-18, and family members from the Quad Cities and nearby counties. We serve those with grief, loss, or trauma issues. Death of a loved one and divorce are common; however, any sort of traumatic event or family change would fit our criteria, such as: bullying, teen dating victimization/harassment, crime victims, and other needs. At this time, Rick's has a Holiday Healing group for children experiencing loss on Tuesday nights 5:30-7:00 until the Christmas holiday. The continuous groups are Family Together for all members of the family on Wednesday nights 5:00-7:00 pm and a Teen Night on Thursdays 5:00-7:30 pm. All meetings are held at 5022 Northwest Boulevard, Davenport, Iowa 52806 and are free. Rick's House of Hope also does individual counseling/therapy. For more information, contact Lynne Miller, Program Manager, at millerl@verafrenchmhc.org or go to www.rhoh.org.</p>
<p>SHARE</p>	<p>A support group for parents who have lost a child through miscarriage, stillbirth, or early infant death. SHARE meets the third Tuesday at 6:30 pm via ZOOM MEETING during the pandemic and in "normal time" in the Adler Room #1 in the lower level of Genesis Heart Institute, 1236 East Rusholme Street, Davenport, Iowa. Questions? Contact Chalyn Fornero-Green at 309.373.2568, or chalyn@shareqc.com or www.shareqc.com.</p>
<p>Loving Listeners</p>	<p>If you need someone who understands and will listen, feel free to call or email (if address is given):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♥ Doug Scott 563.370.1041, dns0826@gmail.com ♥ Kay Miller, 309.738.4915 ♥ Rosemary Shoemaker 309.945.6738, shoeartb4@gmail.com ♥ Judy Delvecchio 563.349.8895, delvecchiojudy@hotmail.com <p>Doug, Kay, Rosemary, and Judy are willing to take calls from bereaved parents, grandparents, or siblings who want to talk to someone who cares that they don't feel alone.</p>

Surviving the Holidays

- ♥ Tradition is meant to serve people, not the other way around. Do not be afraid to change what is no longer comfortable or convenient.
- ♥ Recognize that your emotional and physical strength will be limited, and do not overextend. Enlist the help of other family members.
- ♥ Parties are exhausting, and you may not feel in a “merry-making” mood. Do not allow well-meaning friends and relatives to pressure you to attend.
- ♥ If a large meal is part of the usual pattern, consider eating out or having someone else prepare it.
- ♥ Religious services may or may not bring comfort. You may want to sit near an exit in order to leave quickly, if necessary, without disturbing other worshippers.
- ♥ You cannot buy your way out of grief. Watch your spending habits. You may want to limit your cash on-hand and put your credit cards away for a while.
- ♥ A visit to the cemetery is appropriate, if you are up to going. It is not an obligation; you may stay away if you feel you do not have the strength for it.
- ♥ Some people take great comfort in spending holiday time helping others. You may wish to donate several hours of service in the name of your child.
- ♥ As you look at things to do over a particular holiday, ask yourself this question: “Will the holiday be meaningful to me if I do things different this year?”
- ♥ Be kind to yourself. This is a time to do what is best for you, and if other people do not understand, do not let that worry you. Grief is as individual as you are, and just because someone else was able to “carry on in the grand tradition,” do not feel you have to copy them. Be true to yourself and your grief.



-Author Unknown

Thanksgiving

You may ask, "What do I have to be thankful for now that my child is dead?" After the death of a child, where is the joy in a day off from work? What pleasure can we derive from sitting around a table when someone is missing, and an uttered prayer of thanksgiving echoes hollow in our hearts?

Maybe we have been concentrating on the loss which has brought the overwhelming sorrow of death, and have forgotten the complete joy of life. When I remember laughing brown eyes, a mischievous grin, a scraped knee that Mommy could fix, a new word learned, even the memory of the realization that I had a baby boy, I have a great deal to be thankful for. I had 1 1/2 years of a dream come true, and I'm truly thankful I had my child.



Sure, the agony of grief, the anguish of losing my precious child to death, the torture of wanting to see that child grow and mature and the pain of never knowing, rips me up.

There is no Thanksgiving in entertaining these thoughts, so this month I am going to concentrate on the living of my child, the Life that brought me so much joy. In this I am thankful that Evan was born, thankful that he lived, thankful that even for those short 30 months—I lived them too. Even so, as he lived once, I live now and want a productive life.

I am thankful I have come that far in my grief work to know I want to live and remember the good times without sorrow. And, I am thankful for my husband who stood by me during the rough times. The husband who is the father of the child of our love. In him I have found my child, in our marriage I have found love, and that love taught us how to love that child.

I am also thankful for you, my real friends—Compassionate Friends.

**Edie Kaplan, TCF/Ft. Lauderdale, FL
In memory of my son, Evan**

ANNUAL CANDLE LIGHT MEMORIAL SERVICE

Our annual Candle Light Memorial Service is for bereaved parents who would like to have their child(ren) remembered. The service will be held at the Angel of Hope Memorial in the Moline Memorial Park Cemetery on Monday, December 6. There will be music and reflection, and a procession of light to the angel.

We will gather in the chapel (just south of the memorial garden) for a short service. All participants are asked to wear masks. Following the service, we will proceed to the Angel of Hope placing a candle and a white flower to lay at the foot of the monument.

If you cannot attend and would like a candle lit in your child's memory, please complete and return the form below to Lisa Rains at 2341 7 ½ Street, East Moline, Illinois 61244.

Child's Name: _____

Parents' Names: _____

**Monday, December 6, 2021
at 6:30 p.m.
Angel of Hope
Memorial Garden**

**The service will be held at
the Memorial Garden, in the
Moline Memorial Park
Cemetery**

5001 34th Avenue,
Moline, Illinois





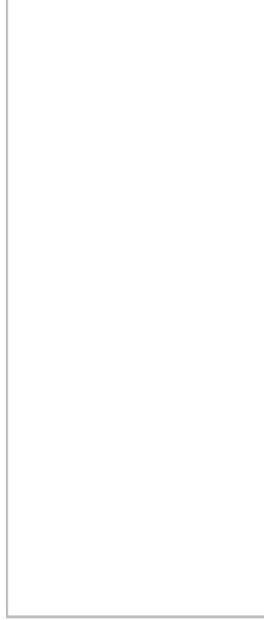
The Compassionate Friends
Quad City Area Chapter
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Moline, Illinois 61265

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To those who are receiving our newsletter for the first time, we wish you were not eligible to belong to this group, but we want you to know that your family and you have many friends. We who have received love and compassion from others in our time of deep sorrow now wish to offer the same support and understanding to you. Please know we understand, we care, and we want to help.

You are not alone in your grief.