



The Compassionate Friends

Quad City Area Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

July-August 2025

Volume XXXVIII, Number 4

Dear Compassionate Friends,

On March 14th of this year, our second grandchild and first granddaughter was born. We were invited to meet her at the hospital room the day after she was born. Like her brother, we were excited to see Liesl for the first time.

What we were not ready for was the triggering of long buried memories dating back to January 8, 1999, when our daughter, Maggie was born. Liesl bore a striking (almost uncanny) resemblance to Maggie, who died suddenly shortly after her sixth birthday in 2005.

Our joy in welcoming a new family member was strangely mixed in with an overwhelming grief evoked by a resurgence of memories of our long lost daughter.

The Cope Foundation's article on page 14 of this month's newsletter addresses the issue of "Grief Triggers." A grief trigger can be anything that brings up memories related to your loss. They may be obvious and easy to anticipate, or like ours be unexpected and mixed in with a joyous event. We hid our triggered emotions from our son and daughter-in-law, until we were alone in the car on the road home, when tears of sadness and joy flowed freely.

In the weeks and months that have followed, we are able to see Liesl as the beautiful and determined little girl who she is, again, so much like her aunt, but clearly her own and unique person. The grief we will carry for the rest of our lives has been assuaged a bit by the abundance of life that is our granddaughter Leisl Margaret. We will need to remember to tell her in the years to come all about the six year old firecracker of a little girl that was her dad's sister and whose name she bears.

Sincerely,
Laurie and Bill Steinhauser

yesterday was a hard day. and i missed you.
today was a good day.
and i missed you.
i don't know what
tomorrow will bring. but
i. will. miss. you.

sara rian

The best thing any father can do for himself and for others around him is to reach out for help and to know it is not a sign of "weakness"; it's a sign of courage — courage to face these feelings head on. There is no time frame for healing after such a loss. Some days your emotions will win, but gradually over time it will dawn on you that you are winning this battle and a new you is starting to emerge. Maybe the new you will be someone you don't recognize, but in time you will realize this is the new you and you will learn to live with this person.

Kelly Farley

You ask what you can do for me.
Say their name, share a story.
Don't rush me, hurt with me.
Allow me to feel what I feel
For as long as I need to feel it.

Alan Pedersen

Vacation time, like holidays, can be especially painful for bereaved parents. Vacations, especially the "take it easy kind," which release the mind to think are sometimes very hard.

For the first few years you may find fast-paced vacations to be best. Places you have never been before, new experiences, new places, new people may refresh you and prepare you to pick up your grief work when you return. (Our memories do travel with us, but somehow, they seem less painful than at home.) Remember to allow enough time for rest – an exhausted body will often lead to depression.

Some couples have even found an occasional separate vacation (or weekend) to be helpful. Allow space since you are not grieving at the same rate. When one goes alone, they do not take the other's memories, only their own. It can be a time of sorting out and straightening priorities. The bottom line is you must find your own way. Don't be afraid of change.

Leona Dooley, Editor
TCF Amarillo, Texas



LOST POTENTIAL

Last year I attended a workshop presented by a specialist in grief named Dr. Cable. Dr. Cable said many important things about the grief process, but as a bereaved parent, one thing stuck in my mind.

He said that if you ask a bereaved person to describe his deceased mother, he will say, "Oh, she was so sweet. She always wore flowered dresses and loved to bake cookies." But, if you ask a bereaved parent to describe her deceased child, she will say, "Oh, he would be five this year and just starting kindergarten," or, "She would be twenty-two this year and graduating from college."

You see, we bereaved parents grieve the lost potential



of our children. Our children don't stop growing in our minds. We grieve again and anew each year since our child would have been a different age.

TCF, Walla Walla, Washington

Summertime

With summer comes more time for relaxation and more time for get togethers with family and friends. After our son died, it left a void in all those family activities and lots of time for thoughts of summers gone by – vacations, 4th of Julys, Bible schools, camps, baseball games, swimming lessons, skiing at the lake, and many other memories.

It still seems important for us to participate in those same activities because on each occasion some memory is stirred of a time when our son was a part of these activities that made summer such a special time for us. At first those memories made us so sad, but now when we remember what he did or said in certain situations, our hearts are a little lighter and even sometimes a little smile appears on our faces.

These memories are what we have left and they are so very precious. Summers are a good time to relax and remember our happy times together.

Carol Linch
TCF LaGrange, GA

TCF's Facebook Page is a proven support area for bereaved family members to come and talk about their grief. Stop by and visit with some of our more than 120,000 Facebook members. **Please join our TCF/USA Facebook family.** Tell us about your child, sibling, grandchild, or other loved one and find support in the words and concern of others. **Check out the Discussion Boards!** Every day we also provide thought provoking questions, grief quotes, and links to grief stories, as well as TCF news such as updates on the National Conference, Worldwide Candle Lighting, and other TCF programs.

Closed Facebook Groups: The Compassionate Friends offers several closed Facebook groups to connect with other bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. The groups supply support, encouragement, and friendship. Recently added groups include Men in Grief; Loss to Long Term Illness; Loss of a Step Child; Loss of a Child with Special Needs.

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., P.O. Box 46, Wheaton, IL 60187 (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

P.O. Box 46

Wheaton, IL 60187

Toll Free (877)969-0010

TCF National Website:

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.



Not Wrong; Different

Everyone grieves differently. Not wrong; just different. Sometimes husbands and wives forget that. We have been unified in so many other ways in our marriage, we forget we will grieve as individuals, not as couples. Following the death of our daughter, we lost two babies to miscarriage. I was devastated by the first prenatal loss, shocked and hurt by what seemed like a betrayal of my expectations of happiness I thought we deserved. Hadn't we already suffered enough? But Jerry did not seem to me to be impacted at all. I felt very alone in my grief. When the second baby died, I was at a different place emotionally and spiritually than I had been a few months before and so coped differently. But Jerry was filled with a deep dark anger at God and the perceived unfairness of our situation. His anger created a wedge in our relationship and it took time and a lot of deep conversation over many months for us to work through the resulting pain. One mother shared that she did not think her husband was grieving at all for their daughter who had died. As it turned out he was pulling his tractor off to the side of the field and crying out his grief and anguish alone in the cab. While being a couple joins us, our grief may pull us apart. We need to be patient with each other and keep in mind that in most instances our individual ways of grieving are not wrong; just different.

Carol Webb TCF, Quad Cities

Finding Hope Again

Finding hope is crucial. With some losses, it can seem to disappear. Our hearts are so wounded that we can't even imagine it. Healing in any shape, form, or fashion seems impossible.

As we move through our grief, things begin to change over time. Our hearts begin to beat again. Our souls slowly wake, as if from a coma. Color gradually returns to the dull, grey world we've been living in. And one day we sense something we haven't felt for a long time. Hope.

The truth is that hope didn't take a hiatus. It's always been there, but our shattered hearts couldn't see it, much less take it in. As we process our grief in responsible and healthy ways, more space opens up in our pain-riddled hearts. We sense hope's presence again. Our loved one has become more a part of us. They have settled into their "always place" in our hearts, though they are no longer physically present in our daily lives. Hope, like a gentle breeze on a stagnant day, begins to blow through our souls again.

And suddenly we realize an important fact: we're going to make it. We're going to survive this. We will live on, honoring our loved one along the way.

Granted, at any given moment

we may not feel hopeful at all. Many of us are still in the heat of the emotional battle, bouncing from sadness to anger to fear to anxiety to depression and back again. We may feel forlorn and empty. Exhaustion might be the current state of our existence. But it will not always be so.

Grief is a long and winding road. It meanders over many hills and through multiple valleys. As we travel, the landscape is forever changing, as do the people around us and our circumstances. We trudge on, one small step at a time, leaning forward as best we can. It is a journey through uncharted territory. Eventually, calmer terrain greets us. The sun shines a bit more. The air grows lighter, fresher. Even some flowers begin to appear along the side of the road.

We carry our loved one with us, inside us, to greet the next portion of the journey. Which way the road will turn, we don't know. But we do know we love them, and that we will live to honor them any way we can. We will walk on, telling their story, for it is our story too.

Love endures. It always has. It always will.

TCF NSW Focus Newsletter

What Helps When It Hurts: How to Reinvest Yourself in Living When a Loved One Dies

Feel the pain. Allow yourself to really feel what you are feeling – the whole range of emotions – whether it’s sadness, anger, guilt, etc.

Denying the feelings may only intensify and prolong the pain.

Cry. Tears may be the most therapeutic tool you have – let them cleanse you and relieve your pain inside.

Talk, talk, talk. Share the pain. Sharing grief diminishes it. You must talk about your feelings, even when you feel you “can’t go on,” or that “life will never have meaning again.” It helps you when someone responds by their presence to your pain.

Talk to the loved one who died. Even though you may feel uncomfortable, it will give you the opportunity to finish your thoughts and feelings you’ve wished to express. Use statements like: “When you died, I wanted to...” “I miss...” “How could you leave me?” “It was a relief when you died: the ordeal and pain were over...”

Let the words flow. You have already been through the worst.

Keep a journal. Your journal is a private place where you can write anything: unfulfilled wishes, guilts, angers and other thoughts and

feelings. Again fill in unfinished sentences: “If only... I wish we had... I’m furious with... I’ll never forgive... I’ll never see you... I remember...”

Let go. Don’t let bitterness engulf you. Resentment is a heavy load and it only hurts you. Find the source of your anger and do everything you can to resolve it—whether you actually clear the matter up with the hurtful person or you resolve the problem in a symbolic way with a friend.

Find your own comfort. Create rituals that feel right to you and give you comfort. Whether it’s prayer, meditation or other activities, rituals can be a source of strength.

Hold off. Tread lightly when making decisions. Mull over and thoroughly explore your options before taking a major step. You may still be too vulnerable to make a life changing decision.

Be kind to yourself. Be patient with the conflict inside you. Find a balance between the happy and sad persons, the angry and peaceful selves, the guilty and glad you – all feelings which may be raging in your mind. Have patience with yourself. Life is too short for you to be the villain in your life.

Learn to laugh again. Rediscover your sense of humor. Remember: disloyalty to your loved one is not in finding joy again but in giving up

Continued on page 10



The Angel of Hope Monument, located at the Moline Memorial Cemetery, 5001 34th Avenue in Moline, Illinois, offers grieving parents a way to honor the child who has died. The brick apron in front the Angel of Hope statue is paved with bricks honoring those offspring who have passed. If you would like to purchase a brick, the order form is on the next page with instructions.

Angel of Hope Memorial Brick Order Form

Name			
Address			
City, State, Zip			
Email Address			
Telephone			
4" x 8" Brick	\$100	Inscription Limits: 13 characters per line (including spaces and punctuation)' 1 to 3 lines.	
8" x 8" Brick	\$200	Inscription Limits: 13 Characters per line (including spaces and punctuation, 1 to 6 lines.	

Inscription on a 4" x 8" brick (print):

Inscription on 4" x 8" brick (print):

Call (309) 781-9074 with questions or for more information.
 Make checks payable to: Angel of Hope Memorial Garden
 Mail your completed order form to:
 Angel of Hope Memorial Garden c/o Christie Hoffman 11618 6th Street, Milan, Illinois 61264

on living when you still have life.

Nurture your body. Be good to yourself! Exercise. Your body can't revitalize without good nutrition and physical activity.

Hug. Take pleasure from physically sharing with others. We all suffer from skin hunger. So reach out and hug someone – and yourself.

Don't be hesitant to seek help. If you need outside help, admit it. You want to be willing to be helped and healed. An outside resource may be just the salve you're searching for.

Become a wounded healer. Reach out and help others. It just may help you too.

Let life grow. Develop new interests, skills and friends. Focus your energy away from the past and toward the future. Take small steps and enjoy the small victories. You are a changed person seeking a new life.

You can be stronger after grief; the choice is yours. You may have been powerless to help your loved one, but you are not powerless to help yourself.

Seize the power right now that abides within you and begin again the journey that is your own life. Grief is the price we pay for love-but we do not have to go on paying forever.

**Alexis Stein and Howard Winokuer,
from *To Life*, Vol. 4, Summer 1986**

Starting Over Again

As parents, how many times have we told our children to **"Try, try again. You can do it. Just start over."** We would say this, be it coloring a book not kept within the lines, with learning to tie shoes, working with school assignments, or later with the other difficulties that life brings.

Little did we think that this well-meaning advice, which we gave out of love and concern for our children's well-being, would be the words that we now must follow.

"Hang on. Don't give up. Try again, and start over." All this now applies to us.

Had the situation been reversed, we would not have wanted our children to live out the rest of their lives in pain and unable to go on. We would have wanted them to continue not in constant sorrow but with hope for renewal and better days ahead.

As we have said to them, they would be throwing right back to us... **"It is a very hard road that you must travel, but you can do it. What you wanted for me, I want for you. Do what you have to. Find your way out of the dark tunnel, and when you fall, pick yourself up and start over again. You can do it."**

If we could hear them right now, they would be saying: **"LIVE**, for life is but a moment. **LOVE**, for that is what really matters, and **GO ON**, for we shall be together again someday."

Mary Ann Lambden
TCF, Gloucester County, NJ

Journaling

In October 1996, my world fell apart. All things felt and believed were shattered. My emotions and feelings were swirling inside my head and heart at such a rate I could not deal with it. All the words I needed to say to my daughter on a daily basis, all the words I had to share with her, all the words I needed to tell her of the future were stuck. They were lodged in my mouth with nowhere to go.

There were words of sorrow over my loss of something so precious and dear to me, words of fear, longing, love, joy, anger, hate and any number of other words that you can imagine.

What to do with these words? I talked to as many as would listen, but still the words were there, still are in lots of ways. A friend, yes—another bereaved parent who knew, sent me a journal with words of encouragement to use it.

I was frightened at first. What do I put in this book? If I wrote the words, would I feel better or worse? How to start? I thought about it for a few days, and then I just sat down and wrote. Oh how I wrote! Pages and pages of words, sprinkled with tears, yet containing my sanity. I wrote poems, letters and holiday greetings. I wrote of my love, my loss, my longing. I wrote for days, I wrote at odd times, unusual places. I carried my little book, still do, and felt

like it was a link to her in some way.

I do not use it as much now. I guess time has robbed me of that need to say those words. I think they are still there; I just have become used to it. Maybe in a way, holding on to those words now keep her closer somehow. You know time has a way of dimming things for us no matter how hard we try to hold on. I think I have started holding on more to the words to keep her more alive and near me, if that makes any sense. Does to me anyway. I guess I am still afraid, more than I like to admit, more than others would like for me to be I should say.

Journaling is good, if you can do it. Some can, some can't. It was a help to me. I try to go back sometimes and read some of it. Some of the pages are



so blurred because of the tears they are hard to read. Some of it is too painful for me even though I wrote them. I weep for myself when I read them. Some of them I could share most of them I couldn't. It would be like opening up my heart and soul and letting people see inside. I think someday I will toss them away, but not yet. Not just yet....

Barbara Sockwell, Snellville, GA
In memory of Ashley, 1/31/1978-
10/22/1996

Support Groups for Grieving Parents & Siblings

The Compassionate Friends, Quad City Chapter Meeting

July 24, 2025 6:30 p.m.

Bethany for Children & Families

1701 River Drive, Moline, Illinois

(Please park in the east lot and go to the second floor.)

The next chapter meetings are on

Thursday, August 28, 2025, and September 25, 2025.

**The
Compassionate
Friends of
Muscatine**

Meets the second Sunday of each month at 2:00 at the Snyder and Hallenbaugh Funeral Home, 2907 Mulberry, Muscatine, Iowa, Chapter. The contact person is Tom Summit, 563.506.0103.

**Rick's House of
Hope**

Rick's House of Hope serves children, ages three to 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. The continuous groups are Family Together for all members of the family on Wednesday nights 5:00-7:00 p.m. and a Teen Night on Thursdays 5:00-7:30 p.m. All meetings are held at 852 Middle Road (Vera French), in Bettendorf, Iowa, 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.

SHARE

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 p.m. 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.

Phone Support

If you need someone who understands and will listen, feel free to call or email (if address is given):

- ♥ Doug Scott, 563.370.1041, dns0826@gmail.com
- ♥ Rosemary Shoemaker, 309.945.6738, shoearthb4@gmail.com
- ♥ Judy Delvecchio, 563.349.8895, delvecchiojudy@hotmail.com

Doug, 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.

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>

Grief Triggers

Grief triggers are those reminders, often unexpected, that in an instant can cause a wave of grief to wash over you or even knock you down. You become distracted from what you were doing and find yourself in pain.

A grief trigger can be anything that brings up memories related to your loss. They may be obvious and easy to anticipate – like a birthday or a holiday – or they may surprise you – like spotting someone who looks like your loved one in a crowd. A grief trigger might be tied to an obvious memory or emotion or it may be something that flashes into consciousness and merely leaves you with a sense of sadness and yearning.

Knowing these triggers are out there can cause anxiety. You might fear being blindsided by reminders of your loved one, their death and their absence. Some grievors will respond by trying to eliminate and avoid reminders such as objects, people and places. While others will try and battle their way through, growing less and less embarrassed by each public outburst of emotion.

Avoidance as a tactic to limit encountering grief triggers can

seem helpful. However, when it interferes with your regular day-to-day functioning, you may need to work on tolerating the possibility of encountering a trigger.

Developing coping strategies can help you to adapt. Coping strategies can include things like having an escape plan or a “safe” person to call when it happens. Planning ahead when you know you will be somewhere that triggers happen for you can be very helpful in managing them and reducing their impact.

In spite of the anxiety that grief triggers can cause, over time, as you progress along your grief journey, they can mellow into a positive experience, a reminder of your loved one.

Cope Foundation



New Normal

I don't think we talk enough about how quiet the road gets. How long the waiting feels. How lonely healing can be.

I don't think we talk enough about how undone we become in the valley of grief. Or how enormously we must stretch just to fit ourselves into some kind of new normal and dare to call it life again.

And I don't think we talk enough about how we have no other thing left but to gather up our heavy limbs and carry on.

Because the earth keeps on spinning. The sun keeps on rising.

And the days keep on bleeding, one into the next, regardless of the moment that made all the minutes inside of our heart stand still.

Ullie Kay TCF, UK

Grief is like a long valley, a winding valley where any bend may reveal a totally new landscape.

From *A Grief Observed*, by C.S. Lewis

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.

Donations are used to provide postage for the newsletter and mailings to our bereaved families, for the materials shared at our meetings, and/or to purchase books for our library. Thank you to the many families who provide love gifts so 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 the Chapter Treasurer, Laurie Boyce-Steinhauser, 2946 Summertree Avenue, Bettendorf, Iowa 52722. Checks should be made out to *The Compassionate Friends*. Your gifts are tax deductible.**

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
Quad City Area Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



1701 River Drive, Suite 200
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.