



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



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.



The Compassionate Friends
Quad City Area Chapter
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September-October

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Dear Compassionate Friends,

Our daughter received much of her medical care from a health system away from our home.

We had some communication with the doctors while she was inpatient and some was filtered through our Primary Care Physician. After her death, we received a sheaf of final reports. In one of her earliest evaluations, a doctor made the statement, "This mother understands she cannot breastfeed this child." I read those words in shock and dismay. I understood no such thing. I did not remember any medical person telling me this. The nurses who worked with us had facilitated and encouraged my desire to breastfeed. Filled with anxiety, I wondered, "Had I been responsible for my child's death because I did not hear or understand a direction which was clearly stated in writing?" I called our home doctor who gently reassured me Anna received far more than nutrition from me as I nursed her. I wanted to believe him, but my mind continued to cycle the coulda, shoulda, wouldas of guilt and regret.

At one point during our grandson's long recovery from a massive seizure which almost stole his life, my daughter-in-law said to me, "I just don't want to have any regrets."

It is the unusual parent who does not have regrets and research tells us, guilt will be part of almost all bereaved parents grieving process. As I was researching guilt and grief, I read the following: "Grief is an ocean, and guilt the undertow that pulls me beneath the waves." We have included two articles on guilt and grief in this month's newsletter. We hope they are helpful to process feelings of guilt as you continue to move through your grief journey.

Sincerely,
Carol and Jerry Webb

Guilt and Grief: Coping with the shoulda, woulda, couldas

When my dad died, I remember well the intense guilt I had in the months that followed. Though his death didn't fit into one of the categories known for guilt, that didn't stop me from feeling guilty. I felt guilt that I wasn't a match for a bone marrow transplant, though rationally I knew I had no control over that. I had guilt that I hadn't called him more during my first year of college, guilt that in the hospital we had told him it was okay to let go and that we would be okay without him.

When my sister's boyfriend died of an overdose years later, my guilt went to a new level. I rehashed all the things I felt I should have done, all the negative thoughts I had over the years, and approximately a million other guilt-thoughts that often plague survivors of substance losses.

Now, we could just assume I have guilt issues (quite possible), but luckily I have worked with enough grieverers over the years to know that my guilt when grieving is the rule, not the exception. In our experience most grieverers have some level of guilt associated with their loss – sometimes big, sometimes small.

If you have ever felt guilt associated with your loss and articulated it to someone else, there is a good chance you heard some variation of, "Oh, don't feel guilty!" or "You shouldn't feel that way, it wasn't your fault." If you're like me, your inner-angsty-14-year-old probably screamed "Don't tell me how to feel, you don't know me!!" In case you were worried, that is a totally normal reaction.

Here's the deal – guilt is a feeling. Feelings need to be validated and we need to find ways to accept, integrate, and move

forward with these feelings. We can't stop feeling guilty because someone tells us to – sorry, that's sadly just not how feelings work. So, when it comes to why we feel guilt, it is important to reflect on the reasons for our guilt and then consider ways we can cope with guilt. But first and foremost, we need to accept that guilt is a common and normal feeling in grief. *Why Do We Experience Guilt and Grief?*

Because we really did something wrong.

As much as people are quick to say something wasn't our fault or we shouldn't feel guilty, a reality of life is that we all screw up sometimes. We make mistakes and sometimes those mistakes have significant consequences. Sometimes we fail to do things we wish we had done or should have done. That may be as large as a grievous error in judgment or mistake that led to a death. It could be as small as something hurtful we said, or something meaningful we failed to say.

Because we feel like we did something wrong.

As our dear cyber-friend Marty over at griefhealingblog.com has been known to say, just because you *feel* guilty doesn't mean you *are* guilty. There are many, many times that we grieverers are completely irrational. As we have been known to say, *grief makes you crazy!* We dissect every moment of time with our loved one, we consider every "shoulda, woulda, coulda" you can imagine. Our irrational brain will find just about anything to feel guilty about. Despite being irrational, this guilt can be consuming.

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Grief and Guilt, Continued from page 2

It takes inordinate strength to wake up every morning and consciously step back into a world in which someone you love is missing. Give yourself credit.

Whatsyourgrief.com

Your absence brings a deep and lingering ache, but your love persists here too, a bond that will never break, that will comfort and continue. So, it seems no matter what I do, my heart will always look for you. In everything I do. In every memory, old and new. My heart will always look for you.

-Liz Newman

Reflections

With each piece, the bereaved, through trial and error, find where each piece belongs or even if it belongs at all. This process is different for every person and does not adhere to any kind of timeline. This (what feels like endless) thinking is the work that grief demands—it is the creation of a new picture of your life—created one piece at a time.

-Stephanie Elson

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 electronic version of the newsletter, please send us your email address. If you know someone you think would benefit from receiving the newsletter, send his/her/their name and email address...

If you prefer to no longer receive the newsletter or if your email address has changed...

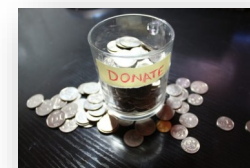
Please contact Jerry and Carol Webb at 390 Arbor Ridge, Benton Harbor, MI 49022, or email CarolynPWebb@gmail.com or webbjerryd@gmail.com.

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 for mailings to recently 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 to the Chapter Treasurer, Laurie Boyce-Steinhausner, 397 W. Wachter Rd., Galena, IL 61036. Checks should be made out to *The Compassionate Friends*. Your gifts are tax deductible.



Peer to Peer continued from page 10

Within a peer-led group, there is permission to speak openly: to say your child's name as often as you need, to share the raw, unfiltered moments, to talk about anger, guilt, confusion, or even unexpected moments of peace. These are not spaces that try to fix grief. Instead, they honor it. That distinction matters. Because grief is not something that needs to be solved, it is something that needs to be witnessed. Peer-to-peer support does something else that is equally important: it shows people what it can look like to move forward while still carrying love and loss side by side.

For someone newly bereaved, seeing another parent, grandparent, or sibling who is further along in their grief can provide a sense of possibility. Not that the pain disappears, but that life, connection, and even moments of joy can still exist. This kind of hope is different. It is not forced or offered too soon. It is quiet, steady, and believable because it comes from someone who has lived it.

Grief can be incredibly isolating, but community has the power to gently pull people back toward connection. Whether it is a monthly chapter meeting, a meaningful Facebook post at midnight, or a message from someone who remembers an anniversary, these moments matter. They remind individuals that their grief is seen. That their loved one is remembered. That they belong.

For many, peer support becomes more than something they receive, it becomes something they give. At some point, many bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings feel a pull to support others. Not because their grief is "over," but because they understand how meaningful it is to have someone walk beside you. This act of giving back can be deeply meaningful. It allows individuals to honor their loved one's life in a tangible way, to create purpose from pain, and to continue a cycle of compassion that defines peer-to-peer support.

Peer-to-peer support matters because grief is not meant to be carried alone. It matters because being understood without explanation is a powerful form of comfort. It matters because in a world that often struggles to respond to grief, these communities know how to simply be present. And it matters because every connection, every shared story, every quiet nod, every moment of recognition, helps someone take one more step forward.

-Brenda Busby www.compassionatefriends.org/blog



Because we want order.

This is a big reason for why we experience guilt and blame, though as griever we often fail to see this connection. The bottom line is this: without someone or something to blame, we have to accept that the universe may be unpredictable and chaotic. If we think we could have done something differently that would have changed the outcome of a loss, that can provide comfort that there is a rational order to things and that we have some control. If we accept that we never could have known or changed the outcome we must accept that some things that happen are completely outside our control. As long as we hold on to guilt, we have hope that we could have controlled the outcome. A perception of control (however inaccurate) is often more comforting than considering that we have no control. Talk about the lesser of two evils . . .

As usual, the question becomes what do you DO about guilt? Here are some quick tips for coping with guilt:

1) Acknowledge that guilt is a normal grief emotion and don't let others minimize the validity of your grief experience.

2) Consider what your guilt is all about. Is it rational? Is it irrational? Is it about control?

3) Talk it over with others. Though you don't want people minimizing your feelings, talking about guilt can help you reflect on your grief. A good counselor or support group is a great environment to talk about feelings of guilt.

4) Examine your thoughts. Often our guilt thoughts, whether rational or irrational, start to consume us. They can drag us down into one of those bottomless black holes – the kind that are full of isolation, despair, and far too much wine and Ben & Jerry's ice cream. In order to adjust your thinking, you have to know what your guilt thoughts are and notice them when they arise.

5) If your guilt feelings are irrational, admit it. This doesn't mean dismissing your feelings of guilt. It means acknowledging that, though you feel guilty, you may not actually be guilty. Some common examples are acknowledging you did the best you could with the information you had at the time; you couldn't predict the future; there were many other factors at play other than your behaviors, etc. Being honest with yourself about your guilt is important, and accepting that grief is sometimes irrational can be helpful.

6) Find positive thoughts to balance your guilt thoughts. "Thought stopping" is a technique with mixed reviews among the mental health crowd. The idea is this – when you notice a negative thought taking over (i.e., guilt) make a conscious effort to stop and replace the thought. Though it may not be quite this simple, there is value in having a positive thought to balance negative guilt thoughts you experience.

Continued on page 5

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.

If you are a group facilitator or wish to be one, you are invited to TCF Facilitator Training being presented virtually on September 19th and December 5th. The Compassionate Friends chapter meetings provide bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings caring, understanding, and supportive space. Group Facilitators play a key role in creating a safe space where people can share, be heard, and offer mutual support. This training provides helpful tools, techniques, and tips for facilitators. Go to the TCF National website for more information!

www.compassionatefriends.org is within the

Printed Resources for Grieving Parents & Siblings

TCF Online Support Community	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.
TCF's Grief Related Resources	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/ .
TCF National Magazine	<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.
Grief Materials	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.
Amazon.com	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.
Previous Newsletter Editions	Looking for more articles or previous copies of this newsletter? Go to the Quad City Chapter of The Compassionate Friends (www.quadcitytcf.org) for previous versions of the newsletter in PDF format.
Alive Alone	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 .
Bereaved Parents' Magazine	Online articles and poems. Reminder emails are sent notifying readers when new issues are available. https://bereavedparentsusa.org .
CLIMB-support.org Our Newsletter	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 CLIMB-support.org . Include your full name, your location, and your reason for interest.

Support Groups for Grieving Parents & Siblings

The Quad City Compassionate Friends Chapter Meetings are usually held on the fourth Thursday of each month, at the
East Moline Library
745 16th Avenue, East Moline, Illinois
from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

The upcoming meeting will be held on
Thursday, September 24, 2026.

The following meeting will be **Thursday, October 29, 2026.**

The Compassionate Friends of Muscatine	Meets the second Sunday of each month at 2:00 at the Snyder and Hollenbaugh Funeral Home, 2907 Mulberry Ave., Muscatine, Iowa (in the Community Room). Tom Summitt can be contacted at (563)506-0103 or tcsummitt@machlink.com
Rick's RAY of Hope	Rick's RAY of Hope has been the regional center for grieving and traumatized youth for the past 16 years, offering hope and guidance to children experiencing grief, loss, or trauma issues. The center became a program of the Vera French Community Health Center in July of 2015 as Rick's House of Hope. The program was renamed in September 2023. Rick's RAY of Hope offers fall, winter, and spring support groups for children of all ages and developmental levels, special holiday events for coping with that time of year, and crisis debriefing for traumatic situations involving children. For more information, please contact them at (563)383-1900.
SHARE-Quad Cities	A support group for parents who have lost a child through miscarriage, stillbirth, or early infant death. For more information, please contact Holly at sharequadcities@gmail.com or (309)779-8283 or visit the Facebook page at Quad Cities Share Group.
Phone Support	If you need someone who understands and will listen, feel free to call or email: ♥ Rosemary Shoemaker, (309)945-6738, shoeartb4@gmail.com ♥ Judy Delvechio, (563)349-8895, delvechiojudy@hotmail.com Rosemary and Judy are willing to take calls from bereaved parents, grandparents, or siblings who want to talk to someone who cares.

Guilt and Grief, Continued from page 3

For example, if you are feeling guilt that you were not there at the moment of your loved one's death, when that thought comes up, be prepared with a thought about the many times you were there.

7) Forgive yourself. Easier said than done, right? Remember, forgiveness does not mean condoning or excusing. Forgiveness can mean accepting we may have done something we regret, but finding new attitude and perspective toward ourselves in relation to that action. It doesn't mean we forget, but means we find a way to move forward.

8) Figure out what you have learned. Guilt often teaches us something. It can be something about ourselves or about the world. We can learn and grow from almost any emotion (cheesy, but true) so take some time to consider what your guilt has taught you.

9) Do something with your guilt. Whether rational or irrational, you can use your guilt to help others. What you do may come out of things you have learned. Whether it is educating others so they can avoid the mistakes you feel guilty about, raising awareness about causes of death (anything from heart disease to substance abuse to suicide), or simply encouraging others to talk with their family about end of life wishes, you can use many guilt experiences to help others.

10) Consider what your loved one would tell you. Get yourself in a space to truly focus on thinking about your loved one. Imagine telling them how you are feeling – your regrets, your guilt, all of it. If there are things you wish you had said, say them. Then imagine what your loved one would tell you.

-Litsa Williams, whatsyourgrief.org

Dragonflies: Tiny Messengers of Hope

For many bereaved parents, signs of love and connection often appear in unexpected places. One of the most meaningful symbols is the dragonfly.

Dragonflies begin their lives underwater before emerging transformed into graceful creatures able to soar

For many grieving parents, this journey reflects the experience of grief itself – a passage through deep sorrow toward a new way of carrying love and memories forward.

Across many cultures, dragonflies symbolize change, resilience, hope, and the enduring presence of those we have lost. Whether they appear in a garden, along a walking path, or during a difficult moment, their presence can bring comfort and a sense of connection.

Not everyone interprets dragonflies in the same way, but for many bereaved parents they serve as a gentle reminder that love continues beyond loss. The next time a dragonfly crosses your path, perhaps it can be an invitation to pause, remember, and hold close the bond that death cannot take away.

Like dragonflies, the love we carry transcends what we can see. Though our children are no longer beside us, their presence continues to touch our hearts in quiet and meaningful ways.

-TCF Livonia, MI Newsletter

Guilt in Grief

Guilt is perhaps the most painful companion of death. It can be a common yet complex emotion in grief. Guilt does not always have to be rational to be real. Even when we realize our guilt is not based on reality, we may still experience it.

Two researchers, Margaret Miles and Alice Demi, identified six different types of guilt:

- **Causation guilt:** Here, one feels guilty they are responsible. Because of something they did or failed to do that they believe led to the death of their loved one. Maybe our loved one never went to the doctor. When they passed from a health related issue, we feel guilty that we didn't push them enough to get checked out.
- **Moral guilt:** Here the person grieving believes that the loss is some sort of a punishment for a prior act.
- **Role guilt:** Is the feeling you were not a good enough brother, father, mother, sister, or spouse in the person's life. Such guilt often can arise as one struggles with the demands of caregiving. In other cases, guilt may result from earlier aspects of the relationship. We may feel guilty and regret we had not spoken to our family member prior to their death.
- **Survivor guilt:** can be experienced as a wish the person grieving had died instead of the person who actually did.
- **Grief guilt:** Is where one feels guilty he or she is not grieving well, or correctly.
- **Recovery guilt:** Is often referenced when griever's sense they are coping

too well and feel a sense of guilt when experiencing happiness without their loved one.

Grief is a roller coaster experience of ups and downs. It is not unusual to experience all types of guilt in the normal cycle of good and bad days.



While grief is a normal reaction to loss, it is one we have to explore, as research has indicated unresolved guilt can complicate our grief.

First, we should try to recognize and understand guilt as a common and inevitable part of the experience of grief.

Second, try to fully examine it. How real is it? We may have unrealistic expectations of what we can control or accomplish. Try asking yourself if others would find you guilty.

Other times, we may need to do something tangible such as write a letter, speak to an empty chair, or say something at the grave side. We may need to explore our beliefs. Every faith or philosophy understands the need for forgiveness, including forgiving ourselves.

Guilt is a heavy burden in grief and we do not need to carry guilt forever on the journey with loss.

-St. Peters Health System

Our children

Grief that lasts forever
Empty spaces everywhere
Holes in our hearts
They are missing gone
Painfully hard holidays
Empty seat at our tables
Life has to change and will become richer
In this deep place of love, joy will emerge
We'll love deeper still
Music is heard
Risks are taken
Courage is prayed for
Change we must
Life should be loved
We will become richer fuller vibrant
Light will return
Taking nothing for granted
Live with both joy and despair
Finally saying
Thank you to
Our sweet children
Our most precious gifts

-Patricia Vigorita,
TCF, Manhattan

Most people don't fully appreciate the degree to which grief drains your baseline energy. Simple tasks take exponentially more motivation; movement itself is a reminder that we're dragging our feet through a world that's been shattered. Routines are comforting and excruciating. They can force motion again but at the same time they accentuate this new, uncanny reality where everything around you somehow looks familiar, but is radically changed forever.

-From the Central Iowa TCF Newsletter

Do You Know Who I Am

I am flesh and blood, torn mind, and broken heart.
I feel at times like a wise old woman – but then, in the next moment like a small child.
I admit total confusion. I look in the mirror and see someone I'm not sure I know.
I want an answer; I want a solution – to a problem that has neither on this earth. It seems that nothing matters anymore and yet at the same time I have learned that everything does.
That there are billions of people on this earth. When one of them dies, it matters.
I ache to a degree that only another who has crossed this bridge could gauge. And only they can for a moment understand my torment.
Do you know who I am?
I am a bereaved mother – the last thing I ever thought I would be.
My child has died before me, the most unnatural thing in the world.
And my continued being seems the next most unnatural thing in the world.
A portion of my heart, spirit, and dreams – and all thoughts of total peace, are with Ryan, never to be recovered to make a whole until I see him again.
The tears I cry are not for me, but for the beautiful life that ended far too soon.
And the utterly helpless frustration of not being able to do anything to change that.

-Deborah Wiseman, TCF of Nashville, TN

The Power of Sitting Together: Why Peer-to-Peer Supports Matter in Grief

Grief changes everything. It shifts the rhythm of a family, the meaning of ordinary moments, and the way the world feels when you wake up each morning. For parents, grandparents, and siblings who have experienced the death of a child, grandchild, or sibling, that shift can feel isolating, like living in a space that others simply cannot fully understand. And that is where peer-to-peer support becomes not just helpful, but essential.

There is something profoundly different about sitting across from someone who knows. Not someone who has studied grief, read about it, or wants to help, but someone who has walked a similar path. A parent who has buried a child understands the silence that follows the funeral. A sibling understands the complicated mix of grief, identity, and memory. A grandparent understands the layered sorrow of watching their own child grieve. Peer support creates a space where explanations are not required. In these spaces, you don't have to justify why certain dates are hard, why a song can stop you in your tracks, or why your grief looks different from someone else's. There is a quiet understanding that allows people to show up exactly as they

are.

This is the heart of The Compassionate Friends: a mission rooted in the belief that living with grief happens best in the presence of others who understand. Our mission, to support families after the death of a child and to help others better assist the grieving, comes to life every day through peer-to-peer connection. Across more than 450 chapters, dozens of private online groups, and a growing virtual presence, this mission is carried forward not by professionals alone, but by volunteers, bereaved parents,



grandparents, and siblings, who choose to reach back and walk alongside someone else.

It is a model built on compassion, lived experience, and the simple but powerful act of saying, "You are not alone."

Grief often brings thoughts and emotions that feel difficult to share in everyday spaces. There can be fear of saying too much, of making others uncomfortable, or of being misunderstood. Peer support groups remove that barrier.

Continued on page 14

Being a parent and then a grandparent are two of life's greatest joys. We love our children and desire only the best of everything for them. We protect them as best we can, hurt with them from the first time they fall and desire to take all their pains away. We have hopes and dreams for their futures being filled with peace, joy, success, and a family of their own to love as deeply as we love them. But what happens when unimaginable loss and pain suddenly enters their lives? I found out the answer to that question three years ago when my youngest daughter and her husband lost their thirteen-month-old daughter very suddenly to an undiagnosed genetic heart condition

I realized that grandparents actually experience a two-fold grief. Grandchildren are like jewels that adorn our lives. They are precious and priceless treasures. When one of them is suddenly taken from us, the pain of that loss is indescribable. Our hearts are broken and filled with grief at the loss of that beautiful grandchild, while at the same time we grieve that our own child is suffering the tragedy of losing their child. The weight of that two-fold loss can be overwhelming for many grandparents.

When a child dies, the parents are usually surrounded by friends and family asking if there is anything they

might need. This is as it should be. We want our children to have as much support as possible to help them stay afloat in that sea of grief into which they have been thrown. Because grandparents are focused on being strong and helping their children, they are often not recognized as someone who might also need some support. This is not an intentional slight, nor is it



anyone's responsibility to know what we might need. It is just not something that occurs to people.

Sometimes talking to someone close to you (a spouse, a family member, a friend) about what you are feeling can be all the help and comfort you need. I found that reaching out to others who have gone through the loss of a grandchild was a great way to get helpful insight and support. Remember that we all desire to help our children through what is most likely the worst experience of their lives, and to do that we have to be on strong footing.

-Pamela Krause, North Central MA TCF
Chapter Newsletter



Angel of Hope Monument at the Moline Memorial Cemetery

Samples of memorial bricks are available for purchase and placement at the memorial garden.



The Angel of Hope Memorial Garden, located at the Moline Memorial Cemetery, 5001 34th Avenue in Moline, Illinois, offers grieving parents a way to honor their child who has died. The brick apron in front of the Angel of Hope statue is paved with bricks honoring those offspring who have passed. If you would like to purchase a brick, please use the order form on page 9. Please call (309)781-9074 with questions or for more information. Make checks payable to Angel of Hope Memorial Garden c/o Christie Hoffman, 11618 6th Street, Milan, Illinois 61264.

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 8" x 8" brick (print):		