



**THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS**  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



1830 6th Avenue  
Moline, Illinois 61265

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Permit No.190  
Rock Island, Illinois

Return Service Requested



**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**  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

February 2012—Volume XXV, Number 2

*Inside*

TCF 2012 National/ International Conference	2
Love Gifts Our Newsletter	3
Fly Little Wing Alive Alone Grief Materials	4
Have You Ever... Winter Grief What's It All About?	5
Common and Unique Characteristics of Parental Grief	6
Ways Parents Can Help Themselves Heal	7
Resources for Grieving Parents and Siblings	8
Workshop Recordings Available Sign-up for National Monthly e- newsletter	9
Chalkboard Reflections I Share with you... Grief Materials	10
Memories Something to Think About	11

Dear Compassionate Friends,

"They say that time in heaven is compared to 'the blink of an eye' for us on this earth. Sometimes it helps me to think of my child running ahead of me through a beautiful field of wildflowers and butterflies; so happy and completely caught up in what she is doing that when she looks behind her, I'll already be there."

Author Unknown

When I saw this quote recently, I smiled. The June after Anna died in March we were expecting a dinner guest. The young man was a missionary who worked on a college campus in Arizona, and we had limited contact with him outside of business related to our support of his mission work. As we were working together doing last minute preparations, Jerry said to me, "Does Tom know about Anna?" Horrified I realized that although we had sent him an announcement of her birth, we had not sent him notice of her death. At that moment the doorbell rang. With trepidation we went to greet him and our pulses raced when we saw he came bearing gifts for the new baby he expected to meet. While we all had a few uncomfortable moments explaining our loss, I have always been grateful he did not know, because I needed the gift he brought. It was a small poster of a little girl in a charming pinafore dress, with a bow in her hair, walking in a field of wildflowers with the legend – "Walk in the Sonshine." This was exactly how I pictured my daughter, wearing a ruffled dress and running free through a flower strewn meadow. I framed the poster and it hangs in our bedroom still today along with childhood photos of each family member. And though it has been a long time – almost 28 years since I held my daughter, I know that compared to eternity this time is but a blink of an eye and someday we will enjoy "Sonshine" together.

Sincerely,  
Jerry and Carol Webb

**TCF 2012 National/  
International  
Conference  
Costa Mesa, California  
July 20-22, 2012**

Registration for TCF's 35th National Conference/5th International Gathering is expected to open during February. You will be able to mail in a registration form or register online on TCF's national website at [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org).

We do recommend that if you wish to stay at the host hotel, the Hilton Orange County/Costa Mesa hotel that you go ahead and make your reservations. Although The Compassionate Friends has arranged a room block for the conference that includes every room within the hotel, there has been an unprecedented demand for rooms both for main conference nights, as well as pre- and post-conference nights. This demand is probably being fueled by the International nature of the event.

Room charge is \$129 per night plus tax of approximately 11%. The room block is available July 17-24. You can also receive the special room rate July 14-16 and July 25-27, but subject to more limited

availability. Rooms are King Size (holds 2, roll-away bed available for \$10 per night) or double queen (maximum 4 per room). To reserve your room online, please go to [Online Reservations](#). Please note that the first night's deposit is required at the time you reserve your room.

Because this incorporates TCF's International Gathering and many of those attending will be traveling long distances from countries around the world, special excursions are being planned for before and after the conference so everyone can take in some of California's great attractions. A special Spanish language workshop and sharing session will be held Thursday, July 19.

Conference keynoters include popular writers Lois Duncan, Kathy Eldon, and Darcie Sims, as well as TCF Founder Simon Stephens. For all the latest information and updates as they become available, and more information about the event keynote speakers, please visit the official TCF National Conference/International Gathering site at [TCF 2012 National/International Conference](#).



**M**emories - tender, loving, bittersweet. They can never be taken from you. Nothing can detract from the joy and beauty you and your loved one shared. Your love for the person and his or her love for you cannot be altered by time or circumstance. The memories are yours to keep. Yesterday has ended, though you store it in the treasure house of the past.

And tomorrow! How can you face its awesome problems and challenges? It is as far beyond your mastery as your ability to control yesterday. Journey one day at a time. Don't try to solve all the problems of your life at once. Each day's survival is a triumph.

Rabbi Earl Grollman  
from *Living When Loved One Has Died*



**Something to Think About  
From *Alive Alone*,  
by Kay Bevington**

In our country we do not hesitate to remember our dead heroes. We are taught the dates of birth and death of past presidents and many other people that have special places in our heritage. We often have public services to remember these special people. Why then are parents told that it is not right to openly remember the dates so important to us (the birth and death of our children)? Maybe our children didn't have time in their short lives to make a great impact on the whole nation. But they did make a great impact on us.

We need to educate people that, just as they will always remember JFK or some other famous person that died. We have every right to remember our loved ones and not feel that we have to hide our feelings. These are the same feelings that set us apart from the rest of creation, the ability to love and remember. Our children are special to us and undoubtedly, to many other people. So, to all our children, you are gone but will never be forgotten.

## CHALKBOARD REFLECTIONS

And tomorrow! How can you face its awesome problems and challenges? It is as far beyond your mastery as your ability to control yesterday. Journey one day at a time. Don't try to solve all the problems of your life at once. Each day's survival is a triumph.  
Rabbi Earl Grollman - From *Living When Loved One Has Died*

Don't try to destroy a beautiful part of your life because remembering it hurts. As children of today and tomorrow, we are also children of yesterday. The past still travels with us and what it has been makes us what we are.  
Rabbi Earl Grollman  
From *Living When a Loved One Has Died*.

"Whatever we do - going or not going to our children's graves, sleeping with a toy or closing the door to their rooms - has only to be what we each need, what we require to make it through each day without them. There is no other yardstick." Elizabeth Edwards

## 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 Web site at [www.centering.org](http://www.centering.org). When ordering, be sure to mention you are with The Compassionate Friends and all shipping charges will be waived.

I share with you the agony of your grief.  
The anguish of your heart finds echo in my own,  
I know I cannot enter all you feel  
nor bear with you the burden of your pain.

I can but offer that my love does give  
the strength of caring,  
and the warmth of one who seeks to understand  
the silent storm-swept barrenness of so great a loss.

This I do in quiet ways,  
That on your lonely path you may not walk alone.

From Howard Thurman's  
"Meditations of the Heart"

## Love Gifts

There are no dues or fees to belong to TCF. As parents and other family members find healing and hope within the group or from the newsletter, they often wish to make a Love Gift to help with the work of our chapter. This is a meaningful way to remember a beloved child.

Thank you to:

- ♥ Bill Steinhauer and Laurie Boyce-Steinhauer, in memory of Abby Scott, 4/05/1996 — 1/26/2012
- ♥ Bill Steinhauer and Laurie Boyce-Steinhauer, in memory of their daughter, Maggie, 1/08/1999 — 2/17/2005

Love gifts 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 love gift, please send it to our treasurers, Larry and Joyce Molitor, P.O. Box 191, Cordova, Illinois 61242. Checks can be made out to *The Compassionate Friends*. Your gifts are tax deductible.



### Our Newsletter

For parents who have experienced the death or deaths of multiple birth children during pregnancy, at birth, in infancy, or in childhood, contact Jean Kollantai at P.O. Box 91377, Anchorage, AK 99509.

Looking for more articles or previous copies of this newsletter? Go to [www.bethany-qc.org](http://www.bethany-qc.org) for copies of the last four years of The Quad City Chapter of The Compassionate Friends Newsletter. They are download-able in Adobe Acrobat format.

### Amazon.com

When making a purchase from Amazon.com, enter through the link on the home page of The Compassionate Friends national website, and a portion of the purchase price is donated to further the mission of TCF. This donation applies to all purchases, not just books, made from the Amazon.com site.

If you read or write an article or poem which might be helpful to other bereaved parents, please share them with us, Jerry and Carol Webb, Box 71, Cordova, Illinois 61242.

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, we would be happy to add them to our mailing list.

If you prefer to no longer receive the newsletter, we would appreciate you letting us know. Thanks. Jerry and Carol Webb (Editors), Box 71, Cordova, Illinois 61242, (309)654-2727.

Thank you to **Bethany for Children & Families and Maggie's Fund** for printing this month's newsletter. If you would be willing to prepare the newsletter for the post office, please contact Jerry and Carol Webb (309) 654-2727.

**Alive Alone** provides bereaved parents whose only or all children are deceased. This is a self-help network and publications including a bi-monthly newsletter to promote communication and healing.

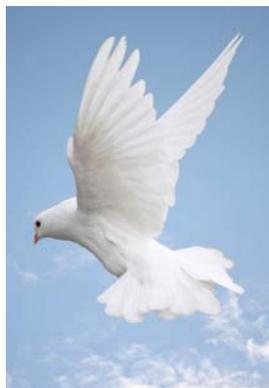
Email: [alivealone@bright.net](mailto:alivealone@bright.net)  
Website: [www.alivealone.org](http://www.alivealone.org)  
Alive Alone, Inc.  
11115 Dull Robinson Road  
Van Wert, Ohio 45891

Fly, fly little wing  
Fly beyond imagining  
The softest cloud, the whitest dove  
Upon the wind of heaven's love  
Past the planets and the stars  
Leave this lonely world of ours  
Escape the sorrow and the pain  
And fly again

Fly, fly precious one  
Your endless Journey has begun  
Take your gentle happiness  
Far too beautiful for this  
Cross over to the other shore  
There is peace all one word  
But hold this mem'ry bittersweet  
Until we meet.

Fly, fly do not fear  
Don't waste a breath, don't shed a tear  
Your heart is pure, your soul is free  
Be on your way, don't wait for me  
Above the universe you'll climb  
On beyond the hands of time  
The moon will rise,  
the sun will set  
But I won't forget

Fly, fly little wing  
Fly, where only  
angels sing  
Fly away, the time  
is right  
Go now, find the  
light.



Sung by Celine Dione – dedicated to her niece, Karine, who died in 1993 at the age of 16 from Cystic Fibrosis.

### TCF 34th National Conference Program and Workshop Recordings Available

Recordings of many of the workshops, as well as the Opening, Closing, and Friday and Saturday banquet programs from the 2011 34th Compassionate Friends National Conference in Minneapolis are now available for purchase by our chapter members.

These recordings are perfect 1) if you weren't able to attend the conference, but want to hear keynote speakers or specific workshops you find of interest or 2) if you attended the conference but want to relive some of the high points or listen to workshops you were not able to attend.

The Opening Program, Friday Afternoon Banquet Program, Saturday Evening Banquet Program including the candle lighting, and the Sunday Closing Program are each available on DVD video for \$20 (\$6 for shipping for entire order of 3 or fewer DVDs). Or you can purchase the entire four program set for \$69 (plus \$10 shipping). Audio version only is available for less.

Each workshop is \$7 on audio CD (or MP3 for download). You can purchase as many single workshops as you wish on CD and pay just \$6 total for shipping or you can purchase the 59 workshops complete on CD at \$299 (plus \$10 shipping), a savings of \$114 off the \$413 regular price. The complete set is also available in MP3 format on three 1GB flash drives. Workshops recorded include a wide variety of grief topics related to the death of a child. Sibling workshops are not available due to privacy concerns.

To learn more and to order, visit [www.freshpublishing.com](http://www.freshpublishing.com). Click on "conferences" and "2011" and TCF's National Conference logo. Workshops may become available via MP-3 download. Please check the TCF's national website conference page.

### Sign up for National Monthly e-newsletter

The Compassionate Friends National Office publishes a monthly e-newsletter designed to keep you up-to-date on what's going on with the organization and its more than 625 chapters.

Published once a month (as well as occasional special editions), the e-newsletter includes information on such things as TCF National Conferences, the Walk to Remember, the Worldwide Candle Lighting, regional conferences, and other events of importance.

Each e-newsletter also includes a story specially selected from a past edition of *We Need Not Walk Alone*, the national magazine of The Compassionate Friends. For the siblings, the e-newsletter features a past question and answer column by Dr. Mary Paulson.

All you have to do to receive The Compassionate Friends e-newsletter is sign up for it online by visiting The Compassionate Friends national website at [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org) and clicking on e-newsletter at the top of the Home page.

## Resources for Grieving Parents & Siblings

### The Compassionate Friends of the Quad Cities

**Monthly Meeting: Thursday, February 26, 2012, 6:30 pm**

Bethel Assembly of God Church, 3535 38<sup>th</sup> Ave., Rock Island, IL

Call Rosemary Shoemaker (309.441.5586) or Michelle Curtis (309.644.0486) for information and directions.

From John Deere Road – follow the signs to Rock Island, turn right at 38<sup>th</sup> St. (by Kmart) and go up the hill. Turn left on 38<sup>th</sup> Ave. The church is on your right. We meet in the downstairs fellowship hall. (Or you can turn into the church driveway off of 38<sup>th</sup> St.; the church is on the west side of the road.) Next meeting: March 22, 2012, at 6:30 pm.

<b>The Compassionate Friends of Muscatine</b>	Meets the second Sunday of each month at 2:00 at the George M. Wittich-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 <a href="mailto:linmac67@machlink.com">linmac67@machlink.com</a>
<b>Helping Heavy Hearts — Grief Support Group</b>	Meets the second Tuesday of each month at 6:00 pm in HomeRidge Inn Suites in Bettendorf east of the Bennigan's Restaurant. Please check at the front desk for room location. Please contact Kirby White ahead of time to verify the meeting location; <a href="mailto:kombo100@msn.com">kombo100@msn.com</a> or (563)271-5908.
<b>Mom's Group meets in Aledo</b>	A group of moms who have had children die meet once a month in Aledo to support and encourage one another as they go through the grief process. You are invited to join them at 12:30 on the third Saturday of the month at 403 SW 10th Avenue, Aledo. For directions or more information, call Kay Forret at (309)582-7789.
<b>Rick's House of Hope</b>	This is a community resource for children and adolescents dealing with grief. "Children and adolescents experiencing grief and trauma often need a safe place to express their feelings. They need companions for the journey of grief who are outside their family and not themselves grieving." The volunteer mentors at Rick's House of Hope provide this for young people and their families during painful and confusing times of grief. There is no fee for services. For more information, call (563)324-9580 or (563)421-7970. Find Rick's House of Hope on the web: <a href="http://www.genesishealth.com">www.genesishealth.com</a> — keywords "children and grief."
<b>Quad City SHARE</b>	A support group for parents who have lost a child through miscarriage, still-birth, or early infant death. SHARE meets the first Thursday of each month, 6:30 pm, in the Wallen Room at the Larson Center next to Illini Hospital, 855 Illini Drive, Silvis, IL, and the third Thursday at 6:30 pm 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 <a href="mailto:chalyn@shareqc.com">chalyn@shareqc.com</a> or <a href="http://www.shareqc.com">www.shareqc.com</a>
<b>MJL Foundation Suicide Grief Support</b>	A peer group for suicide grief support that meets on the third Friday of every month, 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm at the Frances Banta Waggner Library, 505 10th Street, DeWitt, Iowa 54742. Contact Betsy Loehr, (563)843-3655, <a href="mailto:there.is.hope@hotmail.com">there.is.hope@hotmail.com</a> — <a href="http://www.mjlfoundation.org">http://www.mjlfoundation.org</a>

**H**ave you ever wanted to scream out in frustration in not being able to control your life? Did you ever wonder if you would care about anything again?

Were your feelings ever hurt by people who turned away from you?

Did you ever cry until your eyes and throat hurt?

Have you ever buried your face in a certain piece of clothing and breathed in the memories?

Do certain days ever get you down?

Was it ever difficult to leave your home?

Did you ever start crying for no reason at all?

Did you ever get so angry that you couldn't think straight?

Have you ever felt guilty about something you didn't do?

Has your faith ever been tested to the limit?

Were you ever tempted to tell others how you really feel?

Do you ever think you would wake up from a terrible dream?

Do you ever think about special moments?

Have you ever wondered "Why?"

Did you ever find Compassionate Friends who understood your grief?

Do you ever feel it's getting a little easier?

Yeah, me too.

Cathy Heider, TCF/Algona, IA



### Winter Grief

Grieve as if to find eternal winter

Ache as if to banish every spring

In your broken footsteps follows mourning

For the children who were with you once.

Grieve as if to keep the day from dawn-

ing. Weep as if to kill each song you

shared. But be ready: when the sun

grows stronger.

Spring will yet reclaim your loving heart.

Sascha Wagner



### What's it all about?

The Compassionate Friends is a nonprofit, self-help organization offering friendship and support to families who have experienced the death of a child. The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families in the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child and to provide information and education to help others be supportive.

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.

#### TCF National Office

P.O. Box 3696

Oak Brook, Illinois 60522-3696

Toll Free (877)969-0010

TCF National Web site —

[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

#### Mission Statement

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

#### The Quad City Area Chapter of The

**Compassionate Friends** meets on the fourth Thursday of the month in Rock Island, Illinois. See the newsletter for schedule.

#### Quad City Chapter Newsletter Editors

Jerry and Carol Webb

Box 71, Cordova, IL 61242

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

## Common and Unique Characteristics of Parental Grief

Bereavement specialists point to the shared characteristics of parental grief, which may include an overwhelming feeling that the pain will last forever. Two normal responses commonly experienced by bereaved parents are a baffling sense of disorientation and a deep conviction that they must never let go of their grief.

Grief may be experienced physically, emotionally, and socially. Many parents have difficulties with eating, sleeping, and exhaustion; many feel overwhelmed, off-balance, and depressed; and many feel lonely, abandoned, or isolated. These feelings, too, are normal.

As our understanding of grief has evolved, we have learned that bereaved parents express their grief in ways that are individual and unique—there are no set phases or stages, no rules, no timetable.

Grieving, like healing, is a journey. Parents need to know that there are many paths they can follow. Grieving parents respond differently, learn to live with their grief separately, and express their sadness uniquely. Individual responses are influenced by many factors, including life experiences, coping skills, personality, age, gender, family and cultural background, support and/or belief systems, and even the type of death.

[www.sidscenter.org](http://www.sidscenter.org)

Grieving parents should learn to be compassionate, gentle, and patient with themselves and each other. Grief is an emotionally devastating experience; grief is work and demands much patience, understanding, effort, and energy.

[www.athealth.com/consumer/disorders/parentalgrief.html](http://www.athealth.com/consumer/disorders/parentalgrief.html)

## Ways Parents Can Help Themselves Heal

- Admit to yourself and others that your grief is overwhelming and exhausting and should not be diminished or ignored.
- Allow yourself to be angry, and recognize that you are vulnerable and disoriented.
- Begin to understand that to grieve is to heal and that integrating grief into your life is necessary.
- Acknowledge the need and desire to talk about your child who died, as well as about moments and events that will never be experienced.
- Honor the significance of your child's life, no matter how brief.
- Create memorial services and other rituals to commemorate your child's life.
- Draw strength and support from your spiritual beliefs or faith community.
- Express your feelings in journals, poetry, prayers, or reflective writings or through other creative activities such as art or music.
- Try to be patient and forgiving with yourself and others; avoid making hasty decisions.
- Trust and confide in those who care.
- Get more physical activity and eat healthy foods.
- Volunteer your services to organizations that support bereaved parents.
- Obtain help from traditional support systems such as family, friends, professionals or faith-based groups; join a parent support group; seek professional counseling if needed; or learn more about death and the grieving process.
- Recognize that you were, and still are, a loving parent.
- Let go of fear and guilt when the time seems right and the grief seems less.
- Give yourself permission to feel pleasure and continue with your life, knowing that your love for your child transcends death.

[www.sidscenter.org](http://www.sidscenter.org)