



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



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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.



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
QUAD CITY AREA CHAPTER
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

June 2013 — Volume XXVI, Number 6

Dear Compassionate Friends,

I am an avid reader. Curling up in a quiet place with a good book is a relaxing treat for me. After our daughter died, I appreciated the many books and articles I was able to read, learning how others processed their grief. One of the most meaningful for me was *Roses in December*, written by Marilyn Heavilin. One of the most useful was *Gone But Not Lost* by David Wiersbe.

We Need Not Walk Alone, the national publication for The Compassionate Friends often has book reviews. In the most recent issue is a review of *Happy Again! Your New and Meaningful Life After Loss* by Harriet Hodgson. The reviewer, Heidi Horsley, summarizes by saying, "Harriet's account of a journey from despair to hope is filled with practical suggestions on how to once again have a meaningful life.... Harriet realized life had given her a choice. She could choose to be happy or choose to exist.... This book tells how she chose happiness, and gives you tools, tips and sage advice for doing the same."

Bethany for Children & Families has graciously provided a bookshelf for the Quad City TCF lending library in the room where monthly meetings are held. If you have not looked to see what books are available you may want to check it out and check one out. If you have books related to the grief of parents and siblings that you have already read, please consider donating them to the TCF library so others can benefit from what they have to share. If you have read a book that was particularly useful to you, let us know and we will include some information about it in the newsletter.

There are many tools that help us along our grief journey and the thoughtful, vulnerable, honest, writings of ours can be a very valuable tool.

Sincerely,
Jerry and Carol Webb

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The Sounds of Silence

The sounds of silence are everywhere-it is the silent pain of the loss of our son, Andy, it is the silence of our home because one of our children is gone, and it is the silence of the sudden quiet that comes over people when we mention Andy.

We have become both better and worse in the six years since Andy died of cancer at the age of 22. We are better because we are able to get on with our lives and even enjoy ourselves occasionally. We have gotten worse because, as the years go by, we feel his loss more deeply.

We feel his loss every time we participate in a celebration marking some milestone of our friends and relatives or their children. We feel the loss because any celebrations of our own will always be incomplete-one person will always be absent and not there to celebrate with us or to enjoy his own milestones. The pain of his absence is always present at these events.

When Andy died, the pain of his loss was a sharp acute screaming pain that tore a hole inside of us. Now the pain is a silent, quiet, steady pain. The hole is still inside us, covered by a scar, but it is still there. It doesn't scream out loud any more, but instead just remains as a quiet steady and never-ending ache and sadness-a silent pain.

The silence of our home is a different kind of quiet. By now, if Andy had lived, he probably would have been out on his own. We would have been "empty nesters" anyway. But, when a home becomes empty because of the death of a

child, it is a different kind of empty nest. Our daughter, Lesley, is married and out on her own, the way it should be. But Andy is gone for a different reason.

So, the silence of our empty nest is not the silence of knowing we raised two children and now they are both out leading their own lives. Instead it is the silence of a home that is empty because one child is gone forever-of having to deal with the reality that phone calls only come from one child, not two; that only one child stops by for a visit, not two; that one child is forever gone from the nest. There is a silence in our home that often seems to pervade every space. It is a sad silence, not the temporary quiet of a happy home.

And then, there is the silence of relatives and friends when we talk about Andy-not about his death but about the things he did while alive. It is as if Andy has become a forbidden topic because he died, as if his death wiped out the 22 years he did live. It occurs when a relative whispers that our son died when someone asked how old he was-like his life and what happened to him was a big secret. It occurs when people suddenly get a funny look on their faces and don't know what to say next when you mention something about Andy. It occurs when you get the feeling that people want to avoid you because you remind them of a horror that could happen to anyone. It is a silence that reminds you that our emotions and feelings are different from that of others and that you will always have to live with the sounds of silence resulting from your son's death.

**Mel Winer – In memory of his son, Andy.
*We Need Not Walk Alone, 1997***

Compassionate Friends Offers Grief Related Webinar Series

The Compassionate Friends is expanding its outreach to bereaved families by offering a series of free online grief related seminars. The webinars, to be held once per month, are on various grief topics and guests are well-known experts in the field. Webinars have included such topics as "Handling Grief Through the Holidays," "Getting 'Stuck' and 'Unstuck,'" "Caring for Your Health While Grieving," and "Coping with Guilt During Bereavement." These webinars were recorded and are available to view on demand on TCF's national website. To reserve a seat for the next webinar (or to view the previous month's webinar), go to http://www.compassionatefriends.org/News_Events/Special-Events/Webinars.aspx Webinars are being archived in TCF's Webinar Library, accessible from the webinar page.

TCF "Online Support Community" Offers Opportunity for Grief Sharing

The Compassionate Friends 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 rooms supply support, encouragement, and friendship. The friendly atmosphere encourages conversation among friends, friends who understand the emotions you're experiencing. There are general bereavement sessions as well as more specific sessions. These include "Pregnancy and Infant Loss," "Bereaved 2 Years and Under," "Bereaved 2 Years and Over," "No Surviving Children," "Survivors of Suicide." There are also sessions for surviving siblings.

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 National Office Seeks Your Stories and Articles!

For many years, The Compassionate Friends National Office has provided on its Leadership Site stories and poems by TCF members that can be cut and pasted into chapter newsletters around the country. The National Office, in order to better serve its newsletter editors and members who receive support from chapter newsletters, has committed to doubling, over the next two years, the number of articles and poems available to the chapter newsletter editors. Currently, the Newsletter Editor Database has 500 stories and 150 poems. The National Office would like to include your personal grief related stories and poems. Please submit your articles and poems to TCF's Public Awareness Coordinator, Wayne Loder, at wayne@compassionatefriends.org. Please include your name and chapter affiliation.



Loving Listeners

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

Michelle Curtis
309-644-0486

Judy Delvechio
563-349-8895 or
delvecchiojudy@hotmail.com

Kay Miller
309-738-4915

Kirby White
563-271-5908 or

Michelle, Judy, Kirby, and Kay 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.

Love Gifts

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:

Dennis and Mary Jordan in memory of their son, Joshua.

Bill Steinhauser and Laurie Boyce-Steinhauser, in memory of their great-niece, Delaney Raine.

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.

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 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.



Looking for more articles or previous copies of this newsletter? Go to www.bethany-qc.org for copies of the last five years of The Quad City Chapter of The Compassionate Friends Newsletter. They are downloadable in Adobe Acrobat format.

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.

CHALKBOARD REFLECTIONS

In time, we learn there is no loss without gain and no sorrow without joy. As death closes doors behind us, new doors open before us.

Joanetta Hendel

"WHY ME?" IS A SINGULAR AND LONELY QUESTION, BUT IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE. TOGETHER WE CAN GIVE HOPE TO THE HOPELESS AND COMFORT TO THE SUFFERING. ALL WE NEED TO DO IS REACH OUT, THEN MAYBE THE "WHY ME?" WILL ANSWER ITSELF.

POLLY MOORE

Remember the life! Remember the whole life, not the final page of it.

Rabbi Maurice Davis
TCF/Baltimore, MD

No matter where you are in your journey toward healing, bolster the hope that arises within you. Your healing is probably the best memorial you may erect to your dead child!

Robert Gloor

Grieving on Father's Day

by Carol Ranney

Fathers are often referred to as the hidden grievers. When a child dies, thoughts generally go to the mothers—the agony they most certainly are suffering, their loneliness, emptiness, now that someone who was once a part of them is gone.

Women tend to grieve outwardly, talking to their friends, crying, seeking out supportive groups and friends to be with and with whom to share their burden of sorrow.

Men, on the other hand, have a much more inward grieving style. Men are usually more factual than emotional. They accept more readily that nothing they say or do will reverse the situation; their child is irrecoverably gone from this earth. They may weep at times, but that is not their primary mode of mourning. A man may throw himself into his job with fervor, perhaps to help alleviate the feeling that as the “family protector,” he has failed to keep each member safe. He may begin or continue a project, or start a new activity, in memory of his loved one, to whom he dedicates his efforts.

Men are more concrete in their thinking, but that does not mean they grieve less. What it often does mean is that they get less emotional support; people see them return to work, keep busy at home, and as-

sume “they’re over it.” Little do others realize that men agonize through their grief and mourning fully as much as women, and appreciate just as much the caring word, the hug, a recalled memory, a shared moment of silence.

Perhaps the best gift you could ever give a grieving father on Father’s Day is the recognition of his loss, and affirming him as a father in mourning. A book especially for men in grief; a card recognizing that he is missing one of those who made him a father; a gift in memory of his child; or simply a hug, an arm around the shoulder, or a compassionate word will assure him that although he does not grieve outwardly much, those who truly care about him have not forgotten.



Forever Changed

A dear, close friend asked me the other day, “Where are you with your grief?” It is rare that anyone asks me so pointedly about my grief since our adopted son, Grant, died unexpectedly, since our daughter, Catherine, was born premature and did not survive, since our previous attempts at starting a family ended in miscarriages. It is rare that anyone will raise all that ugliness. Most are relieved to think that we’re getting on fine and that things are better now, maybe even back to before. The typical avoidance is symptomatic of their discomfort, not really in the interest of protecting our hearts. There is no shelter from the pain of losing a child.

I read recently on this site about “re-mapping” our lives, altering the journey so that somehow we can continue to move forward. We build a different life than we imagined and – at least – we haven’t wholly shriveled up and died.

Five months ago, my wife and I showed great resolve and courage and adopted another son. Bradley is happy, healthy, and has brought so much joy to our world.

My friend continued in his inquiry with, “How has the relationship with your son impacted your grief?” And I thought about that a lot. Has it healed me? (No.) Has it distracted me? (Yes.) Has it made me more guarded? (Perhaps.) Has it given me hope? (I think so.)

The truth is that our infant son requires constant care, love, and attention. That cannot be denied – denied to him or, perhaps more importantly, denied from us. To realize our dream of a family we had to face our greatest fears and commit to love. That’s not to say we’re not paralyzed with anxiety sometimes. How could we not be? But we have re-mapped and there is a path before us. And so, we’ll make our way in that direction – forever changed, but not hopelessly broken.

The other piece of that relationship is that sometimes there is terrific guilt. It’s easy to be critical of yourself that you could even possibly re-map a life with so much devastation in the past. You ask yourself, does living today in the present deny the significance of those precious lost lives?

To many it may look like we’re all better, that our grief is over. (If only!) I’m sure they’re relieved and happy for us. I appreciate the sentiment, even if it is misguided. We’re who we are as parents today because of Grant, Catherine, and our unborn children. Our love for Bradley encompasses the wholeness of our experience.

I’m so grateful to have an understanding friend who recognizes the complex layers of grief and life, of pain and love, of both honoring and taking steps forward – baby steps. I’m touched that he actually asked and more that he listened. I hope you have that kind of support in your life. What’s that question for you – one that’s been asked or one that hopefully will be – the one that gets to the heart of your journey?

By Thom Gonyeau - from the Grieving Fathers blog <http://www.grievingdads.com>

Resources for Grieving Parents & Siblings

The Compassionate Friends of the Quad Cities

Monthly Meeting: Thursday, June 27, 2013 at 6:30 pm

Bethany for Children & Families, 1830 6th Avenue, Moline, Illinois, 61265

Call Rosemary Shoemaker (309.945.6738) or Bill Steinhauer (309.736.6601) for information and directions. Directions to Bethany are: from the I-74: exit at 7th Avenue and go west to 18th Street. Turn right at 18th Street and enter the parking lot on the right, immediately north of the alleyway.

Next meeting: July 25, 2013, at 6:30 pm at Bethany for Children & Families.

Quad City Chapter Website: <http://www.orgsites.com/il/tcfquadcityareachapter/index.html>

The Compassionate Friends of Muscatine	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 linmac67@machlink.com .
Helping Heavy Hearts—Grief Support Group	We are a support group for people who have suffered a tragic loss of life whether a child, sibling, or other. We are great at listening and offer tender shoulders when you contact us. We are flexible to meet any time of day or night. Death needs no appointment and neither do you. We are not professional counselors, but we do have a degree in life experiences. Please contact Kirby White, 563-271-5908 or kombo100@msn.com
Rick's House of Hope	This is a community resource for children and adolescents dealing with grief. 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. Groups meet on Monday and Tuesday nights. The group for 14 year olds and older meets Sunday from 3:00 pm until 5:00 pm. All meetings are held at 5022 Northwest Boulevard, Davenport, 52806. For more information, call Emily Gordon, Program Director, by phone (563-324-9580) or email (egordon@rhoh.org) or go to www.rhoh.org .
MJL Foundation Suicide Grief Support	A peer group for suicide grief support 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, there.is.hope@hotmail.com — http://www.mjlfoundation.org .
MJL Foundation Suicide Grief Support	Survivors of Suicide Support Group Meets on second Monday of each month in Fulton, Illinois, at the Second Reformed Church, 703 - 14th Avenue, Fulton, Illinois 61252 from 7:00pm - 9:00pm. Contact: Laura Wessels, 815-589-3425 or laura@secondreformedchurch.net
SHARE	A support group for parents who have lost a child through miscarriage, still-birth, or early infant death. SHARE meets 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 chalyn@shareqc.com or www.shareqc.com .
Alive Alone	Alive Alone is for 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 -- Website: www.alivealone.org .



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. Founded in England in 1969, the first U.S. chapter was organized in 1972. Since then, 650 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

Mission Statement

The mission of The Compassionate Friends Quad City Area Chapter is 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.

The Quad City Area Chapter of The

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

Quad City Chapter Newsletter Editors

Jerry and Carol Webb
Box 71, Cordova, IL 61242
<http://www.orgsites.com/il/tcfquadcityareachapter/index.html>

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 Website home page and click on the Register for TCF e-Newsletter Link. This newsletter is available to everyone.

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 this is your first vacation since your child died, you may find you really don't want to go at all, but feel pressured by previous commitments or other children's needs. Try to leave yourself an escape route. Go – but with the understanding that if it's too much, you can come home. Just having that agreed to ahead of time and knowing that choice is available to you may make it an easier time for you.

Mary Cleckley TCF/Atlanta, GA



Quad City Angel of Hope

About the Angel of Hope



The Angel of Hope, an exact replica of the Christmas Box Angel statue located in Salt Lake City, Utah, stands as a symbol of hope for all parents who have experienced the death of a child. Right now the nearest statues are in Rockford, Illinois; Iowa City, Iowa; and Coal City, Illinois. Peoria is in the early stages of obtaining a statue.

Lisa Ornelis, the mother of two deceased children, has been the local leader and spearhead for the creation of an Angel of Hope monument. She worked with Meyers Landscaping and the TCF committee to create the design that is on the opposite page.

In the coming months, the committee will be announcing plans for the purchase and placement of memorial bricks by Quad City parents, grandparents, siblings, and other family members who wish to honor a deceased son, daughter, grandchild, or brother or sister. Look to future editions of this newsletter for more information.

Progress on creating the memorial garden

The creation of the Angel of Hope Memorial Garden is underway! A committee of bereaved parents from the local chapter of The Compassionate Friends has been meeting over the past several months to design a garden and monument that would fit appropriately within the site the city of Moline has graciously donated in Moline Memorial Park, 5001 34th Avenue, Moline, Illinois.

Meyers Landscaping created a 3-D rendering of the proposal for the garden and monument. These renderings appear on the opposite page.

Over the next several months, the committee will be communicating with local and national funding sources seeking funds that will allow the Angel of Hope monument to become a reality for bereaved parents and families of the Quad Cities. If you would like to be part of the Angel of Hope Planning Committee or aid in the fundraising, please contact Lisa Ornelis at (309)737-3448 or Rosemary Shoemaker at (309) 945-6738.

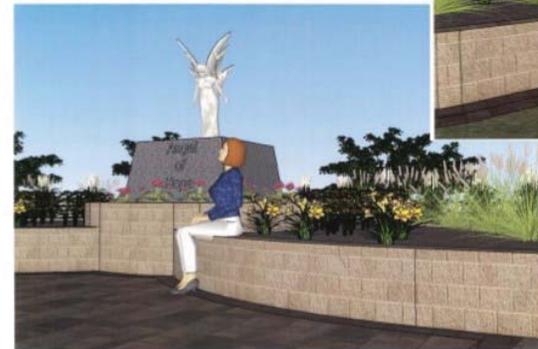
Bethany for Children & Families is acting as the fiscal agent for the project and has set-up a restricted account for any donation made for the creation of the Angel of Hope monument. It is anticipated that the completed memorial will cost \$57,229. Donations can be mailed to:

Angel of Hope Monument
c/o Bethany for Children & Families
1830 6th Avenue
Moline, Illinois 61265

Three dimensional renderings of the proposed Quad City Angel of Hope Memorial Garden to be erected in the Moline Memorial Cemetery.



Color versions of these drawings are available on-line at Bethany-qc.org.



The memorial will have areas with designated paving stones that are suitable for inscription. These stones will be available to parents, siblings, and families who would like to remember a deceased child, adult-child, sibling, or grandchild. Further information will be printed in future newsletters.

