



# *The Compassionate Friends*

## *North Shore-Boston Chapter*

### **Supporting Family After a Child Dies**

**Newsletter**

**February 2020**

To all those newly bereaved, who are receiving this newsletter for the first time and to all our Compassionate Friends, we wish you were not eligible to belong to this group, but we want you to know that you and your family have many friends. We, who 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.

**Meetings are held the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month** at the Aldersgate Methodist Church, 235 Park Street, North Reading at 7:30 P.M. We are a self-sustaining organization with no funds except what we receive through donations from members and newsletter recipients. Please join with us at a meeting.

#### **Grief support after the death of a child**

The Compassionate Friends is a national nonprofit, self-help support organization that offers friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. There is no religious affiliation and there are no membership dues or fees.

The secret of TCF's success is simple: As seasoned grievers reach out to the newly bereaved, energy that has been directed inward begins to flow outward and both are helped to heal.

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

**National Office:  
The Compassionate Friends, Inc.  
P. O. Box 3696  
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696  
Toll-free: 877-969-0010  
PH: 630-990-0010  
FAX: 630-990-0246**

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

#### **Upcoming Meetings**

Our next chapter meetings will at be held at 7:30 PM on:

#### **Wednesday - 2/19/20**

#### **Open Sharing Session**

Facilitated by:

Tim & Sandy

-and-

**Sibling Group**

Where Are You Currently In Your Grief?

Chapter Leader: David Paul 978-771-6345  
[tcfnoshoreconnect@gmail.com](mailto:tcfnoshoreconnect@gmail.com)

Newsletter Editor: Eden Paul and Regan Lamphier 603-264-9391  
[tcfnoshorenews@gmail.com](mailto:tcfnoshorenews@gmail.com)

#### **The February Newsletter is dedicated to**

#### **ELIOT BENNETT**

To our happy boy Eliot, who had a smile for everyone and made everyone smile. We celebrate your life and honor your memory on your 2nd birthday, and throughout the year.

Love you forever.  
Mommy and Daddy

## **OLIVIA MARY MARCHAND**

Olivia, it's been 10 years since losing you but feels like yesterday. The guilt and pain will be with me forever, since I survived, but you did not. When your husband knows he's losing control after years of emotional abuse, he may try to murder his wife, but an evil monster takes his daughter with him. My mission in life is to tell my story and to more importantly keep your memory alive. You are with me every day, and I can't wait until I am with you again.

"A mother's treasure is her daughter"

## **5 THINGS GRIEF TAUGHT ME** **By Monique Minahan**

Six years inside complicated grief taught me many things. Five of them I can put into words and on paper. I have a feeling I will be learning from her the rest of my life.

**Grief taught me that sometimes I don't have to let it go. I just have to let it out.**

Through writing, through words, through movement, through tears, through screaming at the top of my lungs or whispering to the wind. The way into grief was very narrow, but the way through was up to me.

**Grief taught me that releasing is not the same as relinquishing.**

My grief is mine forever. When I release her into the world through words or conversation or tears, she is free to leave for a while or return right away, the same or changed but always welcome in my heart.

**Grief taught me what it means to be vulnerable.**

Not in the ways we choose to be vulnerable. The way life tears down every wall we've built, every label we've claimed, every role we've identified with and reveals a broken, beating heart that is not sure if it wants to live or die.

With practice I realized that beyond the flood of tears there is the dock of another human heart waiting to hear what I have to say. And if I can brave the flood that makes me feel so exposed and vulnerable, I will receive the gift of being seen and being heard.

**Grief taught me I am not alone.**

I didn't realize it then but looking back I understand that even when no human could comfort me, mother nature was soothing me with her bright moons, wild oceans and dancing flowers. She was teaching me something about human nature, about darkness and light, about the cycle of life.

She was taking my words and echoing them back to me, blurring their edges on the journey so they sat a little softer in my soul upon returning.

**Grief taught me loss expands before it shrinks.**

The list of what I've lost is not just one line but pages long sometimes. Because I didn't just lose a human being I loved. I lost the sound of their feet in the hallway, the water running as they brush their teeth, the sight of their face down the hall, the sound of their voice on the phone, the ability to reach out and touch them.

Everyone's list is unique and endless. I try to honor the living by not turning away from their list of loss, by not telling them what it should contain, by not comparing my list to theirs.

This grief, she's like a mother to me. She birthed me into an experience I never asked for and many times was not sure I would survive. But together we make it through this life, stumbling and learning, mourning and celebrating, each step teaching us all we need to know about what it means to live, to love and to lose.

**A REMNANT**  
**By Peggi Johnson**

I am a wretched seamstress, although there have been numerous attempts on my part over the years to remedy that. At this point, I am fairly content with my ability to sew on a button. I can also, with help, produce a pretty snazzy pillowcase.

During those previous attempts to acquire some skill, I did have to occasionally venture into a fabric store. In most fabric stores, there is a "remnant table." Leftover pieces from bolts of fabric. Often not in sufficient quantity to make much of anything. Always sold at a discount. Sometimes a very steep discount.

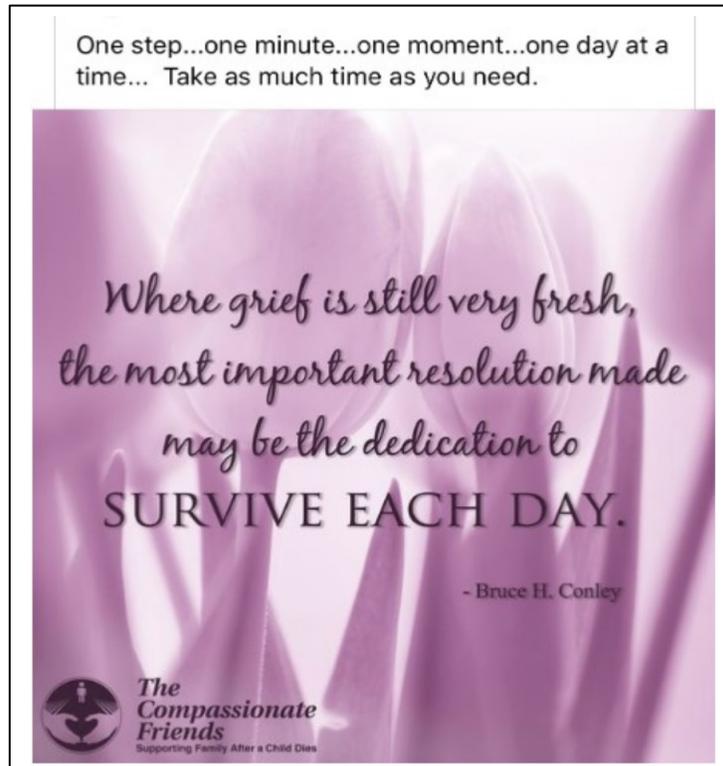
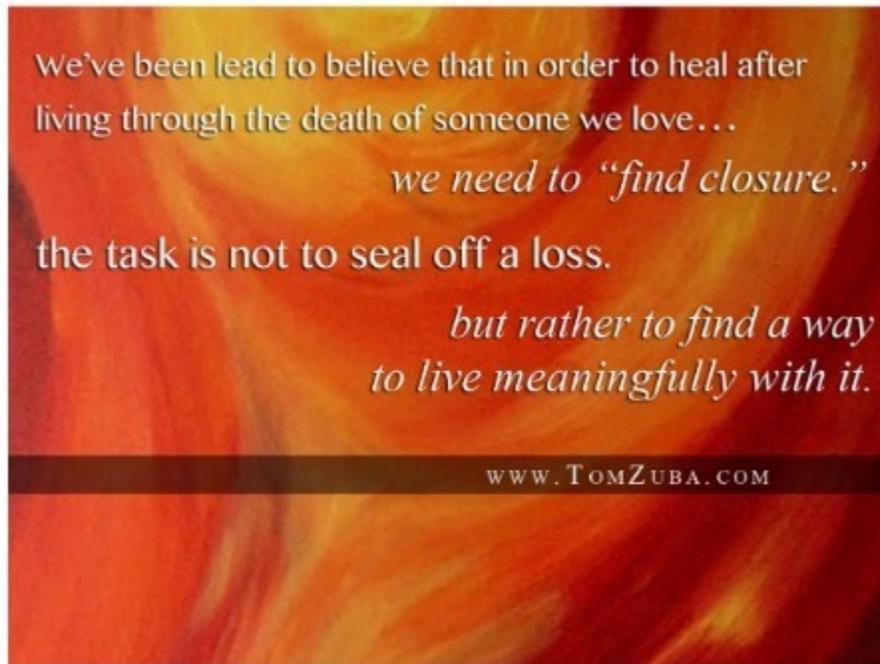
These scraps may be from fabric that never was anything more than cheap. It may be a design or color that has gone out of fashion. In some cases, it may be a small fragment of something that was once a fine, valuable fabric. But what does one do with such a leftover?

I sometimes think of myself now as a remnant, a trace of the person I used to be before my son died. Whether the fabric that was my former self was cheap cotton, gaudy polyester, sturdy woven wool, or a finely made silk is up for debate. But here I am a remnant, wondering what to make of what is left. Or, indeed, sometimes wondering if it is even worth the effort.

I guess one option is to sort of throw myself in the proverbial trash heap. But I try...most of the time? some of the time?...to find ways to be useful and productive and engaged. I try to stay off the trash heap. I try to make something out of what is left.

*"We who have suffered understand suffering and so extend our hand."* - Patti Smith

When someone dies  
we often hear of "closure."  
Here are my thoughts regarding "closure."  
I'd love to hear yours.



## Our Children Remembered



### February Birthdays

Andrew Adams Wilder son of Mark and Betty Wilder  
Alfonso Daniel Sisneros son of Bob & Laura Reich  
Shane Patrick Murphy son of Karen and Kevin Murphy  
Scott Ronald Nagel son of Fiona Nagel  
Catherine Cann daughter of Anna Bourque  
Lorin Beth Bennett daughter of Judith Bennett  
Ryan Covino son of Linda and Bill Covino  
Christopher Taatjes son of Patricia Taatjes  
Talia Rose Ronga daughter of Debra Ronga  
Brendan Burgess son of Catherine and Bill Burgess  
Christopher Genna son of Joseph & Leslie Genna  
Paul A. Nestor son of Geri & Bob Gatchell  
Eliot Lee Bennett son of Eric and Elizabeth Bennett  
Lisa Marie Norco daughter of Roberta Deputat  
Gale McLaughlin daughter of Joan & Frank McLaughlin  
Daniel Noah (Danny) Fine son of Gail and Stephen Fine  
Julia Ciampa daughter of Julie Brachanow

### February Angel Dates



Christopher Burke son of Dotty and David Burke  
Christopher Michael Rollins son of Nancy & Rick Rollins  
Olivia Mary Marchand daughter of Jody Marchand  
Ryan James Gilligan son of Paula Gilligan  
Cadyn Nathaniel Douglas son of Cheryl Coss and Andre Douglas  
Lorin Beth Bennett daughter of Judith Bennett  
John Queenan son of Margie Queenan Christopher  
Warner Fennelly son of Laurie Malonson Christopher  
Taatjes son of Patricia Taatjes  
Patrick Barry son of Joanne Barry  
Julia Ciampa daughter of Julie Brachanow  
Zachary Doyle Hilton son of Patricia Doyle  
Robert Hale Tavares son of Lorraine Snow  
Robert Kagacha son of Sarah Kagacha  
Jaxton Donais nephew of Kayla Welch  
Anthony Travalini son of Anne Travalini  
Mario Miller son of Maria Salles  
Christopher Fennelly son of George Fennelly  
Eric Kronk son of Kathy and Walter Kronk

As a regular feature, the newsletter is used to acknowledge the Birthdays and Anniversaries of the death of our children/siblings at the request of parents/siblings. Permission must be given for us to print your child's name. For privacy reasons we do not print dates. You only need to give permission once and we will keep it on record.

Childs Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Angel Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents: \_\_\_\_\_

**Send to:** David Paul 48 Castle View Dr, Gloucester, MA 01930

**Note:** If your child's information is missing or not correct please send the correct data to be posted in the next edition to: [tcfnoshorenews@gmail.com](mailto:tcfnoshorenews@gmail.com)

	<p>Our telephone friends are here to help you if you feel the need to connect with someone outside of our usual meeting night. We are not professionals – we are all bereaved parents seeking to find a way through our grief.</p> <p><b>Please be considerate in the timing of your calls to these volunteers.</b></p>	
Beverly	Carmen Pope, son, 3 days, anencephaly; son, 11, boating accident	978-998-4087
Malden	Marnie Smithers, son, 13, ATV Accident	781-322-1722
Gloucester	Melinda & David Paul, daughter, 20, sudden cardiac arrest	978-771-6345
Haverhill	Crystal Chambers, sibling, 28, cause unknown	508-523-2810
North Andover	Catherine Olson, daughter, 27, pedestrian accident	978-681-8341
Salem, NH	Regan Burke, son, 8, pneumonia/cardiac arrest	603-264-9391
Winchester	Reenie McCormack, son, 20, drowning	781-729-1878
Woburn	Nancy Whipple, son, 22 months, cancer	781-938-5840

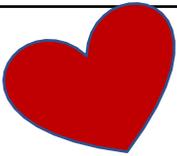
*A grateful **Thank You** to all who donate to the North Shore-Boston Chapter of The Compassionate Friends. Our chapter is run by volunteers and all our twice-a-month meetings, our sibling meetings, our annual Spring event, Walk to Remember event and Candle Lighting ceremony are funded solely through these donations.*

## Love Notes



In Memory of Andrew Wilder. It's been over 15 Years since we lost you. We can now share memories without overwhelming pain & sorrow. Our love is still so real - Mom and Dad

In Memory of Kelly Dawkins Lavigne There is not a day we don't think of you. Your little Shawna, looks like, dresses like and is so much like you, it's scary. We love you to pieces and take care of Lyndon we all miss him so much too – Mom, Dad, Erin and Shawna



*This section is reserved for personal messages in memory of our children, grandchildren, and siblings. Donations received help to cover the operating costs of the chapter; monthly meetings, refreshments, newsletter mailing, etc. While not expected, any donations are always appreciated.*

*Thank you to all who continue to leave donations in the box at every meeting*

Love Notes are a way to share a message in memory of your child/grandchild/sibling. Donations received with Love notes help with the cost of publication of this newsletter.

Please send your Love Notes with donation by mail to

**Millie Becker - 14 Harris St unit 1, Salem, MA 01970**, or give them to the leader at the monthly meetings.

Please use the form below to assure notes are posted exactly as you want them. Love Notes for the next newsletter must be received by the **15th of the previous month**.

**Love Gifts for future dates may be sent at any time; month to be published:**

Love Gift from \_\_\_\_\_ In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Message: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**TO OUR NEW MEMBERS**

Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. The second, third, or fourth meeting might be the time you will find the right person or just the right words that will help you in your grief or comfort you. Remember we have all been there and even though circumstances may be different, we really do understand. You are not alone.

**TO OUR SEASONED MEMBERS**

We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together. Each meeting we have new parents. Think back.... remember hearing from others farther along than you...“your pain will not always be this bad it really does get better” Come to the meetings and share your wisdom. Show others that there is hope, from someone who has found it.

**THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS**

Millie Becker  
14 Harris St unit 1,  
Salem, MA 01970

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

**DATED MATERIALS  
PLEASE FORWARD**



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

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

\*\*\*\*\* CHAPTER WEBSITE: [www.TCFNoShore-Boston.org](http://www.TCFNoShore-Boston.org) \*\*\*\*\*

**Help us save money and paper.....**

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[tcfnoshorenews@gmail.com](mailto:tcfnoshorenews@gmail.com)