



# The Compassionate Friends

## North Shore-Boston Chapter

### Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Newsletter

February 2021

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 via Zoom Online at 7:30PM. We also hold an in person meeting on the 4th Wednesday of each month at the Aldersgate Methodist Church, 235 Park Street, North Reading at 7:00 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  
48660 Pontiac Trail #930808  
Wixom MI 48393  
Toll-free: 877-969-0010  
PH: 630-990-0010  
FAX: 630-990-0246**

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

#### Upcoming Meetings

<p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday, 2/17/21 7:30 PM</p> <p>Online Video Meeting - Please contact <a href="mailto:tcfnorthshoreconnect@gmail.com">tcfnorthshoreconnect@gmail.com</a> if you would like to participate Topic: Open Sharing Session Facilitators: TBD</p> <p style="text-align: center;">-and-</p> <p>Siblings Group Online Video Meeting - Please contact <a href="mailto:Aimeeb15@gmail.com">Aimeeb15@gmail.com</a> if you would like to participate Topic: Where Are You Currently In Your Grief?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday, 2/24/21 7:00 - 8:30 PM</p> <p>In-Person Meeting (meeting will be limited to 15 participants) Please contact <a href="mailto:tcfnorthshoreconnect@gmail.com">tcfnorthshoreconnect@gmail.com</a> if you would like to attend Topic: How We Have Changed / How Our Relationships Have Changed Facilitators: Tim &amp; Dave</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Monday, 3/1/21 7:30 PM</p> <p>Online Video Meeting - Please contact <a href="mailto:tcfnorthshoreconnect@gmail.com">tcfnorthshoreconnect@gmail.com</a> if you would like to participate Topic: Open Sharing Session Facilitators: TBD</p>

Chapter Leader: David Paul	978-771-6345
<a href="mailto:tcfnorthshoreconnect@gmail.com">tcfnorthshoreconnect@gmail.com</a>	
Newsletter Editors: Eden Paul and Regan Lamphier	603-264-9391
<a href="mailto:tcfnorthshorenews@gmail.com">tcfnorthshorenews@gmail.com</a>	
Regional Coordinator: Dennis Gravelle	978-532-2736
<a href="mailto:dgtcf@aol.com">dgtcf@aol.com</a>	

The North Shore-Boston Chapter website is sponsored this month in loving memory of:

#### ELIOT BENNETT

*"In all this world,  
there is nothing so beautiful  
as a happy child."*

Eliot, on your 3rd birthday  
we celebrate your life  
and remember your  
sweetness and exuberance.

We are so lucky  
to have experienced  
your light and love.

Thank you.  
Mommy and Daddy

-and-

#### JASON DIXEY

Jay,  
You're in our hearts and minds  
every day and are so  
loved and so missed.

Love,  
Mom, Dad, Adam, Peyton and Riley



## ***GRIEVING DURING THIS ISOLATING VIRUS By Carol Thompson***

I can say without reservation that the years spent grieving the loss of my daughter, daily missing her presence, created a loneliness harsher than anything I could ever have imagined. Now, throw in an isolating, disruptive virus floating through our cities and towns, large and small.

With sixteen years of grieving experience on my “life resume,” my attention over the past few weeks has turned to moms and dads who are “new grievers,” those trying to navigate fresh grief when everything in the country – even planning a funeral or memorial service – is out of working order. You have many concerns and worries. My prayers, carried deeply in my soul, are for your comfort.

Maybe you have other people physically in your presence, or like me, you are at home alone. I’m kind of tired of hearing people whine about how tough it is to be “stuck at home” with their kids, coming up with clever ideas and innovative activities to get through this terrible time of being at home with the family.

Now, I’m not minimizing the challenges of setting up school at home and feeding hungry people all day long, believe me. I just wish these people on TV and dancing happily across electronic screens doing chores in their kitchens and cooking in the backyard had any idea of how very fortunate they are. Many parents are living in agony and would give anything and everything to have had more days, months, years with their precious children – even when they were aggravating the heck out of you. It’s impossible to communicate these feelings to anyone who has not lost a child, so I’m trusting you with my thoughts.

Right now you are dealing with the sorrow and isolation of today. Don’t look past today – today is enough. Take yourself outside for a while. If possible, take a short walk – it might turn into a longer walk when you realize walking helps to air out your feelings a little. This is a time to put yourself first when possible, as hard as that may be. Sit down with a book even if you can’t read more than a few pages. Eat something though you don’t feel hungry. (I had some popcorn and a bite of chocolate cake for breakfast, so who am I to be giving advice on nutrition?) Take a quick ride through a drive-through for a cold drink, some small treat to break up the day. Settle down with meditation or prayer though you feel as though you can’t focus. Try something for just a short time to calm your soul. My motto through the years has been “make the bed.” What???? To me that means to accomplish some small task, some little job that puts just a jolt of order and routine to my day. It helped me emotionally and psychologically to pull back the covers on the bed each night rather than toss around in a tangled mess. I would think – I’ve made it through a day – now I can leave it behind and see what happens tomorrow.

You may feel like you are doing better in isolation. I have those times too. But, as you have already likely learned, time can turn on you in an instant, compounding your grief, isolation and loneliness. Reach out through Compassionate Friends to the other moms and dads who are

struggling and who know your walk. Listen to what they are living. And, here’s something you may not have thought about – you are helping someone else when you have honest conversation with another grieving parent. When you become able to soothe someone else’s pain, you will recognize that your own healing has begun. It’s a privilege to share your pain.

### ***Winters of Our Lives***

— Mary Wildinan, - TCF Madison County IL

Someone has said that is in the winter, when the trees have dropped their leaves, “revealing the diversity and uniqueness of each ridge and valley” — when the hills bare their innermost selves — that we get to know them — what is really out there.

And so it is with people. Most of the time we wear our masks. But it is during the difficult times, during the winters of our lives, that there is the strong need to shed our masks and be able to reveal the hurting and turmoil that is really there.

It is in these moments that friendships are formed and we experience one another as few ever will.  
So it is among the Compassionate Friends. WE CARE.  
We know. We grieve. We love.

## *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 & Michael Bennett, sibling of Allison and Pamelyn  
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 Sallese  
Christopher Fennelly son of George Fennelly  
Eric Kronk son of Kathy and Walter Kronk  
Andrea Martocchia son of Diana and Paul Martocchia  
Ella Rose Biggio daughter of William and Allison Biggio  
Jason Dixey son of Sandy & Barry Dixey  
Kyra Grace Koman daughter of Kathy and Stu Koman  
Renee Mithen daughter of Kathleen Ravagno



Evan Cohen



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

## Love Notes

### In Memory of Robert Hale Tavares

My mind still talks to you and my heart still looks for you. But my soul knows you're at peace. I love you Rob ~ Mom



In memory of Erik Sean Rakos

It's been many years now since you left us, but I remember you and love you every day.

Love, MaMa

In memory of JOEL WESLEY LINDQUIST

Joel, you were a child of the community. So many people got to know you during the brief eight years you were with us. You are still a constant presence in our hearts, even after 19 years.

Love, Mom, Dad, and your brother, Andrew

In memory of Andrew Wilder

His seemingly miraculous birth to us older mom and dad was joy without measure. Andrew fought so hard over his addiction. We loved him and always will.

Love Mom Dad and his brother  
Doug

In memory of TODD MacDONALD  
Todd,

You are in our minds and hearts every day. Your family and your friends honor your memory every day in so many ways.

Love, Mom, Dad & Tracy

*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

**Bob Boulanger, 42 Chatham Rd. Billerica, MA 01821**, 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 \_\_\_\_\_

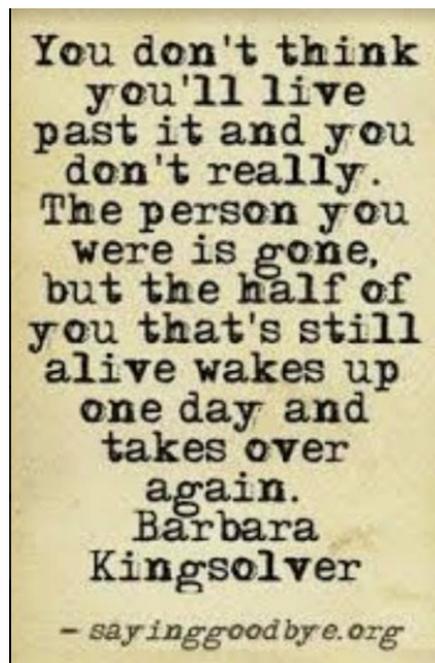
Message: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## How My Grief Has Changed

Newly bereaved parents will often ask “How long will it take before I start to feel different?” I remember after my daughter died searching for an answer to this same question. Looking back at my own experience I think what I was really asking was “How long will it take to wake from this nightmare and have my daughter with me again?” For a very long period, deep in my soul, I still held out hope that this tragedy was not really my life, that there was a faint possibility that either I could fix this or that it truly was a bad dream. I could say the words “my daughter died” and could acknowledge the reality of it but that was at an intellectual level. My heart however could not accept this. My early grief was all encompassing. I was feeling the deepest sadness a human being could experience while at the same time feeling untethered to the rest of the world.

Over the next few years, as I integrated back into the world, my grief remained. But in addition to my grief, I realized I could also carry with me things like happiness and even joy. At this point I still wondered how long grief could remain such a large part of my life. While I knew I would never stop missing my daughter I still expected that at some point there would be an end to my grief. The thought that grief would be my companion for the remainder of my life was not something that I thought possible. I was wrong. Many people who have not walked this path talk about parents eventually accepting their child’s death. What I came to understand is that it is not about accepting the loss but about accepting the grief. It is two totally different things. My grief, as I began to realize, was as an important part of my existence as my personality, my love, my faith, my joy. This perspective allowed me to stop fearing my grief or searching for a way out. It changed everything.

At the beginning of this journey our grief is all encompassing. Over time, while it never leaves us, our relationship with it changes. Rather than fear grief we can accept it as an important part of who we are and who we will become.



## 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

c/o Bob Boulanger  
42 Chatham Road  
Billerica, MA 01821

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

DATED MATERIALS  
PLEASE FORWARD



*The Compassionate Friends*

*North Shore-Boston Chapter*  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

NEWSLETTER – February 2021



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.....**

To receive these newsletters via email please send an email to the editor  
[tcfnoshorenews@gmail.com](mailto:tcfnoshorenews@gmail.com)