



The Compassionate Friends

North Shore-Boston Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Newsletter

December 2022

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 1st Monday and 3rd Wednesday of each month via Zoom Online at 7:00PM. 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 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.

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www.thecompassionatefriends.org

Upcoming Meetings

Wednesday, 1/18/23	Online Video Meeting - 7:00 PM Please contact tcfnorthshoreconnect@gmail.com if you would like to participate Topic: Open Sharing Session Facilitators: TBD -and- Sibling Group Online Video Meeting - 7:30 PM Please contact Aimeeb15@gmail.com if you would like to participate Topic: Learning to Socialize After a Death
Wednesday, 1/25/23 7:00 PM	In-Person Meeting (meeting will be limited to 15 participants) Please contact tcfnorthshoreconnect@gmail.com if you would like to attend Topic: Open Sharing Session Facilitators: TBD
Monday, 2/6/23 7:00 PM	Online Video Meeting Please contact tcfnorthshoreconnect@gmail.com if you would like to participate Topic: Open Sharing Session Facilitators: TBD
Wednesday, 2/15/23	Online Video Meeting - 7:00 PM Please contact tcfnorthshoreconnect@gmail.com if you would like to participate Topic: Open Sharing Session Facilitators: TBD -and- Sibling Group Online Video Meeting - 7:30 PM Please contact Aimeeb15@gmail.com if you would like to participate Topic: Finding Out Your Sibling Died
Wednesday, 2/22/23 7:00 PM	In-Person Meeting (meeting will be limited to 15 participants) Please contact tcfnorthshoreconnect@gmail.com if you would like to attend Topic: Coping With Everyday Life Facilitators: TBD

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dgtcf@aol.com

JILLIAN SULLIVAN

Dear Jill, I love you.
We still walk together
in this life and
I have faith you will
welcome me into the next.
I'll see you someday!

Love you Always,
Your Mom

-and-

ROGER COSTA

Roger,
Thanks for welcoming your nana
with open arms in March.
We miss you and her every day!
You are also now officially an uncle....
Nico was born June 1st!
Although he brings a smile to our face,
our thoughts and love for you
will always be a part of us!

Love, Mom, Dad and Matt



*If Christmas is hard,
If you've lost someone dear. Just look in your heart,
And you'll know they're still here.*

*The star in the sky,
The light falling snow.
The robin outside,
It seems like they know.*

*If this is a time,
When you're struggling through. Just do what you can,
For what matters, is you.*

*There's no need to be merry, There's no need to bright. Just do what you can,
It will all be alright.*

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HEART CONNECTIONS – NO NEW PHOTOS

By Shari O'Loughlin

This past summer was the ten-year anniversary of the death of my son, Connor. I was struck by the inadequacy I felt about how to describe this very unwanted milestone that came faster than I would have imagined. I didn't like the evident recognition of so many years passing since I last saw, hugged, spoke, and laughed with my only son. I struggled further when I looked for photos that I wanted to post on Facebook as I tried to express what was in my heart at that moment.

Photos tend to mark time and progress. Family photos are guideposts to our updated lives over the decades. How is that true when our child, sibling, or grandchild's photos are frozen in time, and we will never have new photos of them again? Where is that meaning when we have a finite number of photos to recirculate that must tide us over for a lifetime?

Most of us long for new photos that would display the physical growth of our loved one who died. What would our child, sibling, or grandchild look like when they were learning to drive, graduating high school or college, or walking down the aisle in marriage as we witness their friends do over the years? How would they look when cradling their firstborn child in wonder?

We somehow still grow during these years that they are physically absent from us and from our photos. Some of us have other children who pass through all the beautiful milestones and marking points of their lives that we are privileged and honored to share. New things come into our lives that spring from the person we've become through our loss. We make meaning in our lives in unique ways that we would not have previously imagined. How we live in the world represents growth in honor of the lives we shared with them.

Perhaps when there are photos far in the future that they cannot be present in, their light shines through us in those photos even as their older photos age and date with time. Maybe we carry their light and their lives in significant enough ways that this helps us just a little with the pain of not having new photos. When someone tells me that I have a warm smile in a photo or an air of light in a photo, I know that exists, in part, because of the

ways that I live from my love for Connor. May you find the shining light of your child, grandchild, or sibling, in your new photos, no matter how many years have passed, and may this bring you some comfort.

"I felt like my heart had been so thoroughly and irreparably broken that there could be no real joy again, that at best there might eventually be a little contentment. Everyone wanted me to get help and rejoin life, pick up the pieces and move on, and I tried to, I wanted to, but I just had to lie in the mud with my arms wrapped around myself, eyes closed, grieving, until I didn't have to anymore."

~Anne Lamott



5 TIPS FOR DEALING WITH GRIEF

- #### 1 EDUCATE YOURSELF ON THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF GRIEF

Knowing the symptoms of grief is especially helpful in determining if or when you might need to seek guidance from a doctor.
- #### 2 ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR PAIN BY TALKING ABOUT IT WITH A TRUSTED FRIEND

Confiding in someone helps you hear yourself talk out loud about what you're going through, which can aid in acceptance.
- #### 3 DO THE THINGS THAT MAKE YOU FEEL LIKE YOURSELF

It's okay to take a break, but don't lose sight of who you are. Get back to your routine so you can get a sense of normalcy back in your life.
- #### 4 DO WHAT YOU CAN TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF EMOTIONALLY AND PHYSICALLY

Caring for your body and mind can help heal your heart. Eat healthy, exercise, get some sun and fill your mind with positive thoughts.
- #### 5 ALLOW YOURSELF TIME TO HEAL

Don't rush your feelings. Process what you need to and give yourself grace during times of unexpected emotion.

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12 SIMPLE HABITS TO RELIEVE STRESS

(backed by science)

DO STUFF THAT FEELS GOOD

- 

GO ON DIGITAL + SMARTPHONE DETOX

Heavy internet users are 5x more likely to suffer from depression
- 

READ A BOOK INSTEAD

Stress declines by 68% after reading for just 5 minutes
- 

OR ENGAGE IN A CREATIVE ACTIVITY

45 min of creative activity lessens stress in the body

BUILD UP HEALTHY HABITS

- 

EAT FOODS THAT REDUCE STRESS

Avocado, lemon, dark chocolate, oatmeal, almonds
- 

BUT EXERCISE EVERY DAY

It takes 5 min of moderate exercise to get mood enhancement
- 

AND GET YOUR SLEEP BACK IN CONTROL

REM sleep (when you dream) decreases levels of stress hormones

RESTORE MINDFULLY

- 

FOCUS ON YOUR SENSES A FEW MINS/DAY

There's a strong correlation between positive mood and breath counting
- 

OR SPEND TIME OUTSIDE

Studies on "Forest bathing" show it decreases levels of anxiety
- 

AND TAKE MORE BATHS

Being horizontal in water mimics the womb conditions & improves mood and optimism

LET HORMONES GO CRAZY

- 

DANCE LIKE NO ONE'S WATCHING

Partner dance & musical accompaniment release endorphines & promote stress relief
- 

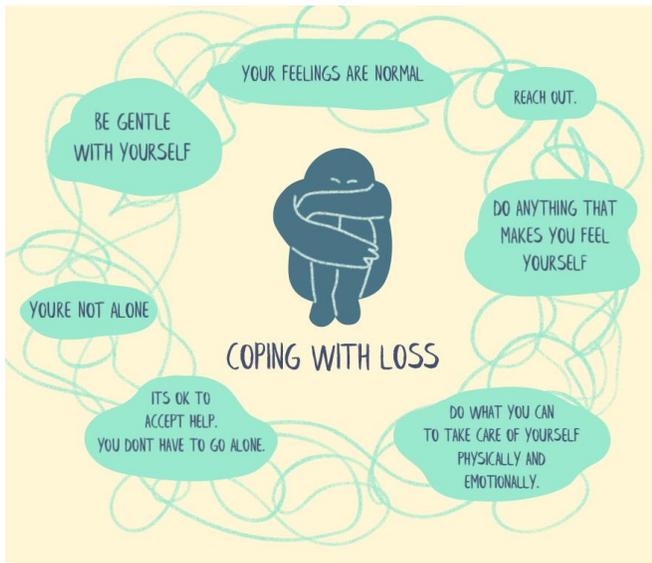
LAUGH YOUR HEAD OFF

Laughter releases hormones known to reduce stress, boost immunity & strengthen social relations
- 

PET YOUR PET

It increases levels of stress-reducing hormone oxytocin and decreases stress hormone cortisol

FOR REFERENCES: WWW.CORALIESAWRUK.COM



Our Children Remembered



December Birthdays

Joel Wesley Lindquist son of Roy and Mariann Lindquist
 Jonathan Corey son of Reenie McCormack and Ron Corey
 Michael John Smithers son of Marnie Smithers & sibling of Chanel Powers
 Nicholas Ryan Amirault son of Rick & JoAnne Amirault
 Penney Richards daughter of Dave & Penny Richards
 Emily Anne Driscoll daughter of David F. Driscoll and Rosanne Benedetto Driscoll
 Deirdre Helene Olson daughter of Catherine E.B. Olson
 Charlee Charette Daughter of Christopher and Samantha Charette
 Joey Domenici son of Carla Domenici
 Jillian Anne Sullivan daughter of Jacqueline Sullivan
 Thomas Hart (Tom) Pope son of Carmen and Jeff Pope
 David John Santucci son of John & Marie Santucci
 Andi Maree Payne daughter of John Payne
 Ethan Costello son of Kelly Costello
 Nicholas Sean Carey son of Linda Calandrella
 Tom Alfieri son of Diane Alfieri
 Dakota Thomas son of Jeanne Mace and brother of Lauren Steeves
 Raymond Moyette and Dennis Costa siblings of Alice and Gil Costa
 Jason Dube son of Eileen Rosato
 Ian Byrnes son of Julie and Geoff Moore



December Angel Dates

Andrew W. Taylor son of Constance Taylor
 Joey Bolivar son of Reggie and Cindi Bolivar
 Eric Howard Krasker son of Barry and Cheryl Krasker
 Catherine Cann daughter of Anna Bourque
 Ethan Henry Lamphier son of Regan and Bill Lamphier
 Nathaniel (Nate) Doiron son of Stacey & Linus Doiron, grandson of Dorothy Molley
 Andi Maree Payne daughter of John Payne
 Amanda L Dick daughter of Kathy Nelson
 Ashley St Onge daughter of Rick and Chris St. Onge
 Darcie Forrestall daughter of Sally and Tim Morse
 Max Durham son of Andre and Mary Durham
 Peter Thomas son of Jeanne Mace and brother of Lauren Steeves
 Julia Ann Forman daughter of Patricia & Robert Powell
 Daria Elise Pearlman daughter of Jill Pearlman
 Kaleigh Rainone daughter of Colleen and Dean Jaynes

	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. Please be considerate in the timing of your calls to these volunteers.	
Beverly	Carmen Pope, son, 3 days, anencephaly; son, 11, boating accident	978-998-4087
Reading	Sheila Thabet, son, 19, Pedestrian accident, Son 20, accidental overdose	781-670-0335
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 Kelly Dawkins Levigne (9-13-64 to 9-12-00)

Kel you are always on our mind and in our hearts. You must be very happy now that you have your Daddy with you.

Lucky Girl
Mom, Steve, Cyndi and Jodi, Ron and of course Erin and Shawne

In Memory of Frank Dawkins (7-9-42 to 1-17-22)

The Candlelight Vigil was a favorite of mine. I miss you all! Keep up the good work...

In memory of Donald Tottingham

In loving memory of our son Don at Christmas.

Love Mom and Dad

In memory of Daniel,

Love you and miss you. I think of you every day.

Love Dad, Sandra, and Mom



What we once enjoyed
and deeply loved
we can never lose,
for all that we love deeply
becomes part of us.

Helen Keller

Eterneva™



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

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:

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

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

DATED MATERIALS
PLEASE FORWARD



The Compassionate Friends

North Shore-Boston Chapter

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NEWSLETTER – December 2022



National Website: 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 *****

Help us save money and paper.....

To receive these newsletters via email please send an email to the editor
tcfnoshorenews@gmail.com