



The Compassionate Friends

North Shore-Boston Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Newsletter

November 2023

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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The Compassionate Friends, Inc.
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www.thecompassionatefriends.org

Upcoming Meetings

Wednesday, 11/29/23
7:00 PM

In-Person Meeting

Please contact tcfnoshoreconnect@gmail.com if you would like to attend

Topic: Journaling to Cope With Grief

Monday, 12/4/23
7:00 PM

Online Video Meeting

Please contact tcfnoshoreconnect@gmail.com if you would like to participate

Topic: Open Sharing Session

Sunday, 12/10/23
6:30 PM

CANDLELIGHT REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

Wednesday, 12/20/23

Online Video Meeting - 7:00 PM

Please contact tcfnoshoreconnect@gmail.com if you would like to participate

Topic: Open Sharing Session

-and-

Sibling Group Online Video Meeting 7:30 PM

Please contact Aimeeb15@gmail.com if you would like to participate

Topic: Self Care After a Loss

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JIMMY KIRIAKOS

Someone is Missing

Let this be a loving reminder
That someone is missing today,
Someone our hearts still hold on to,
As we travel along life's way.
Someone who made life so special,
For all those who gather here
Someone who won't be forgotten,
But cherished from year to year.
And now, as we pause to remember,
Let us all fondly recall
How dearly each of us loved him,
And oh how he loved us all!
We miss you Jimmy so very much!
Love, Your Family & Friends



-and-

CARY DEAN THABET

"God Looked Around His garden and found an empty place.
He then looked down upon the earth and saw your tired face.
He put His arms around you and lifted You to rest.
God's garden must be beautiful, he always takes the best.
He saw the road was getting rough and the hills were hard to climb
So He closed your weary eyelids and whispered, "Peace be thine."
It broke our hearts to lose you, but you did not go alone.
For part of us went with you the day God called you home."
My dear Cary, I know the pain you felt
the moment we learned the news of Jamie,
you suffered, you are now at peace,
and I miss you both every day.

You and Jamie are the best thing that ever happened to me.
You made me the happiest I have ever been and the saddest I will ever be.

I love you my sweet boys...until we meet again.
Love you to the heavens and back...

Love Mum



When Grief Upends Your Holidays

By Gloria Horsley



From The Compassionate Friends website

Posted on December 8th, 2020

Everyone has favorite memories of holidays past: Uncle Larry's "toast of gratitude," Grandpa carving the turkey, little Anna's rendition of "Silent Night." These moments sparkle in our memory banks and make us look forward to the next November or December, hopeful that we'll get to bask in the same hilarity or sweetness again.

But what happens when they become memories interrupted? When you've lost a child, it can feel as if you've lost the most beautiful moments of the holidays. If your most cherished memory of Thanksgiving was listening to your child explain the story of the Pilgrims' encounter with the Native Americans or your favorite Christmas moment was watching your child's delight at what Santa brought, the holidays can be fraught with emotion.

Your strongest instinct may be to cancel the holidays altogether and hide out. Eating frosting out of a can and crying over Hallmark movies sounds preferable to holding it together in front of family members you haven't seen since last Thanksgiving. But you deserve to enjoy the holidays and seek happiness where you can find it, and there are a few ways to do that.

Start a new holiday tradition. If your biggest impulse is to throw in the towel, do so — by not doing what you've always done before. Rather than sit at the same table with the same food and stare at the empty seat that fills your every thought, change the dynamic. Push your family to serve Thanksgiving dinner at a soup kitchen. Start a new tradition of "adopting" a family in need for Christmas and buying the gifts on their wish list. Ask everyone to throw new dishes into the Hanukkah mix. If you're used to celebrating Kwanzaa at home, add in ice skating or driving around to looking at lights. Mix up your usual plans so everything feels new, not just your grief.

Scale back your expectations. Are you used to making a huge spread of 14 different dishes, including a turkey *and* a ham? Recognize that that just might not be in your wheelhouse this year — and accept that that can be a good thing. Assign some dishes to other family members to contribute. Call a caterer to prepare what sounds overwhelming. Switch to easier sides that may include a boxed mix or a microwave. There's no shame in simplifying things so you can enjoy yourself, and there's no reason others can't help you carry the load.

Focus on your favorite parts. Is the best part of Christmas planning the playlist for the family? Are you looking forward to stuffing yourself with all the Stove Top you can get your hands on? Do you love unearthing old family videos to watch, especially ones that feature your beloved child? Give yourself permission to notice only the things that bring you joy and ignore the rest. If Aunt Jackie and Uncle Hal are fighting for the 25th year in a row, go to another room. If the noise of the toddlers is too much for you, feel free to read in bed. You're allowed to skip the hard parts in what's already a hard holiday season.

Do some things on your own. If the holidays represent one of your only times to gain support from your extended family, take advantage. But if you just want to leave the house and be by yourself for a while, ask family members to take care of your other children or help make meals while you catch a movie or go on a walk. Family members who care about you won't begrudge you the opportunity to seek solace elsewhere when you can.

Honor your child. Some families choose to light a candle in memory of a child; others tell stories of funny or sweet things the child did. You may want to buy a memorial ornament to hang on the tree, make a special trip to visit him or her in the cemetery, or simply make a meal loaded with his or her favorite dishes. Ignoring the hole in your heart — and your family — won't make the holidays easier, but acknowledging what's missing may give you a moment of warmth that makes the rest less taxing.

The holidays are overwhelming for many people: Travel, family dynamics, and packed schedules can all take their toll. But add in the weight of grief, and the holidays can feel unbearable. Rather than throw in the towel and avoid the celebrations altogether, let yourself do what you need to so you can both participate and cope. The holidays may be different, but they can still be beautiful.

Buried Heart
By Karen Howe
From The Compassionate Friends website
Posted on March 13th, 2023

My heart stopped the day you died
I put it away in a heavy, metal box
Away from laughter and sunlight

I buried the box
Beneath guilt, regrets and the pain of not saying
goodbye
Deeply buried under the pain of missing you

I went searching for you

In forests, mountains and jungles
In deserts, meadows and beaches
Searching for a look, a trace, a glimpse of you

But you came looking for me
In strange, unexpected places
You'd show up for a brief moment when least
expected
Bringing me a bird, a song, a sign
Unmistakably you


To show your love for me
To comfort me
To sustain me until we embrace again

 **November Birthdays** 

AJ Ryan son of Shirley Loranger
Cadyn Nathaniel Douglas son of Cheryl Coss and Andre Douglas
Gregory Stames son of Donna Bouley
Amy Elizabeth Palmetier daughter of Judy & Joe Palmetier
James Kimball Carlsen son of Kathy Carlsen
Maxwell O'Hanlon son of Brady and Kim O'Hanlon
Amanda L Dick daughter of Kathy Nelson
Christopher Muraca son of Maria Muraca
Brittany Lynn McCauley Daughter of Nancy and Patrick McCauley
Jon James McGlinchey son of Jim and Laureen McGlinchey
Ethan Henry Lamphier son of Regan Burke and Bill Lamphier
Jared Linzey son of Sharyn & Tom Linzey
Michael Gannon sibling of Alice and Gil Costa
Philip Everett Reddy son of Phil Reddy
Michael Gannon Sibling of Alice and Gil Costa
Bella-Francisca Kamga daughter of Pearl Kamga
James Lee Aiguier Jr son of Lori Walker

 **November Angel Dates** 

Christina Laura-Ann Saviano Daughter of Laurie Saviano
Daniel M. Scafidi son of Martin and Barbara Scafidi / stepson of Sandra Scafidi
Talia Rose Ronga daughter of Debra Ronga
Jimmy Kiriakos son of Sandy Tsakirgis
Thomas "Scott" Gray son of Laura Gray
Madigan Drummond daughter of David Drummond
George Silva son of Ester and Bob Boulanger and sibling of Aimee Gordon
Steven Kaminski son of Joanne Kaminski
Ryan Liam Teague son of Susan Teague
Joey Brancato son of Andy Brancato
Marc Ouellette son of Donna Marcotte and Bob Ouellette
Robert Troiano son of Karen Troiano
Stanley Parsons son of Laura Desisto
Cary Thabet son of Sheila Khaire Thabet
Marc Donovan son of Carol and Neil MacDonald
Michael Sawyer son of Diane Sawyer
Peter Merrill son of Martha Merrill
Ryan Sherman Loughlin son of Cynthia Sherman
Joey Domenici son of Carla Domenici
Penney Richards daughter of Dave & Penny Richards
Emily Anne Driscoll daughter of David F. Driscoll and Rosanne Benedetto Driscoll
Nicholas Ryan Amirault son of Rick & JoAnne Amirault
Nicholas Amiralt sibling of Holly Polito
Diane Buckley daughter of Anna Bourque
Elliot Weaver son of Kerri Ann & Alex Weaver
Miguel Alonzo son of Yasmin Alonzo
Alyssa M. Joy daughter of David Joy

	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

TCF North Shore-Boston Chapter Website Sponsorship

In order to help cover our chapter website fees, we invite our members to sponsor our chapter website for 1 month in memory of their children, grandchildren or siblings. The monthly website sponsor donation is \$25 per member and the maximum number of sponsors per month is 2. Sponsors may post a message to their children, grandchildren or siblings; this message will be displayed in the Website Sponsor column on the Home page of our website and will also appear in our chapter newsletter. If you would like to sponsor our chapter website, please contact our Website Manager via email: tcfnoshoreweb@gmail.com. Website sponsor signup sheets are also available at our monthly in-person meetings.



Our Candle Lighting Ceremony is being held Sunday, December 10th at 6:30PM.

DATE AND TIME: Sunday December 10th. Starts at 6:30PM (See note below on early arrival for Picture buttons)

LOCATION: Aldersgate United Methodist Church, 235 Park Street North Reading, MA

PHOTO BUTTONS: If you would like a photo button of your child made at the event, please arrive at 5:30PM. You will need to bring a photo which we will then cut to fit a 2.5" badge so please make sure the photo, when cut, will display on the 2.5" area of the badge.

SLIDESHOW PHOTOS: If you would like your child or sibling's photo in our slideshow that we run at the end of the event please email it by November 30th. Details below:

- You may submit up to 3 photos which will be posted as space permits on a slide. Pictures should be 5x7 or smaller and should be as close as possible to the age of your child or sibling's angel date. Pictures should be single poses, when possible, not group shots. However, if there is at least one single pose, a family picture is acceptable.
- Submissions should include your child or sibling's name as you wish it to be posted, birth date and death date and age at time of death.
- You can email photos to tcfnoshoreconnect@gmail.com.



Love Notes



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

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Supporting Family After a Child Dies



NEWSLETTER – November 2023



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