



The Compassionate Friends

North Shore-Boston Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Newsletter

October 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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www.thecompassionatefriends.org

Upcoming Meetings

Wednesday, 10/25/23
7:00 PM

In-Person Meeting

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

Topic: Staying Connected to Our Children

Monday, 11/6/23
7:00 PM

Online Video Meeting

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

Topic: Family Vacations and Holiday Gatherings

Wednesday, 11/15/23

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: Remaking Holiday Traditions

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

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KAYLA ANNE BELL

YOU DON'T JUST LOSE SOMEONE ONCE

*You lose them over and over,
sometimes many times a day.
When the loss, momentarily forgotten,
creeps up, and attacks you from behind.
Fresh waves of grief
as the realization hits home, they are gone.
Again.
You don't just lose someone once,
you lose them every time you
open your eyes to a new dawn,
and as you awaken, so does your memory,
so does the jolting bolt of lightning
that rips into your heart, they are gone.
Again.
Losing someone is a journey,
not a one-off.
There is no end to the loss,
there is only a learned skill on
how to stay afloat, when it washes over.
Be kind to those who are sailing this stormy sea,
they have a journey ahead of them,
and a daily shock to the system
each time they realize, they are gone,
Again.
You don't just lose someone once,
you lose them every day,
for a lifetime.*

By Donna Ashworth



We love you and miss you, Kayla
Love, Mom, Dad & Kieran

TIMOTHY GLENDINNING

Gifts From Timothy

October 27th is your 27th Birthday, I have given you models over the years with your birth date on it, but since you left us 6 years ago last month, I want to thank you for several of the gifts you have given all of us. Your gifts have certainly kept our connection of love for you as strong as ever for evermore.

Here are a few of the Gifts From Timothy:

The day after you left us, in our back yard from the woods, the male bucks came out to meet and somehow have their own send off for you. The feeling/energy in the air made the hairs on my arms stand-up. Weeks later while up in your room, there was Besa's painting she did for you years earlier of the 'Buck in the Forest', it looked exactly like that evening in our back yard, A Gift From Timothy.

One year later, Mom and I were up having dinner with Katherine in Portland, and it was the first anniversary of your angle date, a very tough day. As we drove away at the traffic light was a red convertible sports car. As it pulled away from the light, the license plate read: 'For Tim', another Gift From Timothy.

Many of your friends stopped by after losing you, and Collin told us of your last tagging (your spray painting on the overpass by MASCO). To drive by and see your artwork, as though you were just here making your final mark for us to find, A Gift From Timothy.

We feel you in the woods, at the beach, any time nature's beauty takes our breath away, you are here with us. The sunsets, the morning sun rises, the still moments after a snowfall in winter, the autumn colors, it's all a Gift From Timothy. I always smile and say thank you, no need to question how it happened or any concerns why, it's all a Gift From Timothy. We appreciate these gifts, please keep them coming, wherever and whenever. We miss you and love you every single moment evermore.

Love, Mom, Dad, and Katherine

‘I’m Not Done Being Your Mom’

My son is gone, but our relationship — surprisingly — continues to evolve, as my letter to him reveals.

By Caryn Anthony

Dear Robby,

Last year was the first birthday without you - you would have been 21 on June 11th— and the day reminded me about what it’s like to be your mother. Even though you’re gone, in a strange and surprising way, I find that I’m not done being your mother. I thought that losing you would stop our relationship. I would have memories and mementos to hold dear, but that would be all. Instead, I find I’m actually building a new relationship with you now.

I guess I shouldn’t be surprised. Reorganizing our relationship is a challenge I encountered many times as you grew up, and I learned to adjust my parenting to the person you were becoming. It wasn’t always easy — you loved to push boundaries and fiercely protected your new territory. “I can do it myself!” was a frequent refrain as soon as you could talk. I tried to listen and adapt to be the mother you needed.

My job description as your mother evolved significantly when illness forced you to come home from college, and I became your full-time caregiver. A young man should live in a world of infinite possibilities and adventures. Instead, your world was full of debilitating limitations, pain, and life-or-death uncertainty. Being a mother in those circumstances was frightening and counterintuitive. My initial instinct was to try harder, to get closer; but I knew that was the opposite of what you wanted. You valued every scrap of autonomy, so I pushed aside my fear and let you lead and control as much as possible.

After you died, I struggled to get used to the idea that I had a limited number of experiences and memories of you and our life together. We would not add new life milestones like your college graduation or your first job or marriage or children. My early memories of you as a young child are precious but feel very far away. And even though I’m proud of your strength and bravery, my later memories are tinged with sadness for how you suffered. How do I fit these together into a narrative that I can live with?

The passage of time helps. I’m past the fogginess of shock, and the everyday kind of pain of early grief. I’m finding comfort in a strategy that has worked in the past and reframing my expectations. I loved being your mom — watching you grow, discovering your special qualities, being proud of your strength and heart. I’m able to see now that some of the best parts of being your mother are still part of my life every day. The funny or poignant stories about you are still right there, ready to be shared. You still hold your unique place in our family, and my pride and love for you are not diminished by your absence.

I will always wish you were with me to enjoy a beautiful mountain view, or watch a scary zombie show, or laugh at one of your dad’s epically bad jokes. But I’m starting to think that missing you isn’t actually so bad. It makes me feel connected to you. And even with all of the challenges (and maybe because of them), being your mom is one of the best things in my life, and it always will be.

I love you.

Mom

*Caryn Anthony is a nonprofit consultant and executive coach from Silver Spring, Maryland. She previously wrote [“Bring Soup, Not Salad,”](#) a guide for bringing food to mourners, for *Modern Loss*, and has a blog called [“Any Way the Wind Blows.”](#)*

I just wanted the world to go
away. I just wanted to go away.
I wanted to be left alone.

I couldn't take the pain of being
with others, and yet, it was so
painful to be so utterly alone.

There was no place to hide.
There was no place to run.
I was left with two choices
– self-destruct or heal.

Benjamin Allen

TheAfterloss.com



After you died
all things changed.

Dust collected
around the house
payments went unpaid
and calls unreturned.

Casseroles went uneaten
teeth unbrushed
plants unwatered
'thank you' cards, unmailed.

After you died
the smell of rain disappeared birds lost
their melody
stones turned to ash
and clouds to concrete
the sky surrendered its blue
grasses withered and trees fell.

After you died
a part of me did, too
and what remained
collapsed under the weight

of your constant absence

All things changed.

And, I realized that
all things had to change
because my world
could not remain
the same without you.

Sameness would not sufficiently honor the holiness
of your mark
upon my heart
the longing
for every part of you
even parts I would never know.

After you died
all things changed.
All things changed except my love
for you.

- Dr. Joanne Cacciatore

 **October Birthdays** 


John Queenan son of Margie Queenan
Katy Warde daughter of Peg Warde
Susan Eaton daughter of Patti Eaton
Lindsey Dias daughter of Bruce Dias
James Vincent Barreira son of Susan Barreira
Robert Anthony Viera son of Arlene Viera
Alyssa Lynne Nanopoulos daughter of Andrew & Nancy Nanopoulos
Christian E. Frechette grandson of Janet Frechette
Jimmy Reppucci sibling of Crystal Reppucci
Samantha Ruth Fargo daughter of William and Justine Fargo
Timothy Glendinning son of Tim and Barbara Glendinning
Max Durham son of Andrew & Mary Durham
Benjamin Huxtable grandson of Alaina & Peter Huxtable
Charlie Carmillo son of Paul & Amie Carmillo
Christopher Howland Webber son of Joanie Howland and Bill Webber
Elliot Weaver son of Kerri Ann & Alex Weaver
Kayla Bell daughter of Stephen and Paulette Bell
Miguel Alonzo son of Yasmin Alonzo
Lenardo Clement son of Muriel Clement
Maren Cao Daughter of Xuandong Cao
Noah Caiden Santiago son of Katelyn Muise and Dane Santiago
Kory Ouellette Daughter of Steve and Maureen Ouellette



October Angel Dates



Patricia Gail Kingston daughter of Elaine and John Kingston
Erik Sean Rakos son of Frances Rakos
Christopher Genna son of Joseph & Leslie Genna
Daniel Noah (Danny) Fine son of Gail and Stephen Fine
Paul A. Nestor son of Geri & Bob Gatchell
Christopher Dennis Lane son of Marilyn Lane
Nicholas Erbafina son of Susan and Charlie Erbafina Sibling of Jackie Erbafina
Neal Richard O'Brien Jr. son of Neal and Nancy O'Brien
Jonathan (Jed) Lazar son of Jon and Noreen Lazar
Andrew Brooks Son of David and Waldina Cameron
Alyssa Rose Conte daughter of Janice and David Conte
Nicholas Sean Carey son of Linda Calandrella
Alex Vitale son of Rob & Robin Vitale
Victor Hugo Batista DeMacedo son of Patricia Dos Santos
Ethan Costello son of Kelly Costello
Neil Wetzler son of Philomena Wetzler
Kristina Latham daughter of Kerry and Kevin Latham, Sibling of Josh Latham
Corey Noel son of Gary Noel
David Conant Siljeholm son of Anita Siljeholm
Anderson James Elam son of Lynette Elam
Scott Nagel son of Fiona Nagel
Patricia Gail Kingston daughter of Elaine and John Kingston
Daniel Esposito son of Julie and Joseph Esposito
Jackson Mace son of Jeanne Mace & Sibling of Lauren Steeves
Brandon Ste.Croix son of Andrea Green
Erin McLaughlin daughter of Jan McLaughlin

	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

Announcing the North Shore – Boston TCF Monthly Dinner Series



Each month our chapter will hold an informal social dinner event prior to our monthly in-person meeting. Our monthly in-person meeting is typically held on the 4th Wednesday of each month. While each person will be responsible for their own bill, we will try to always get tables together. The dinners will start at 5:00PM and we will select a restaurant close to our meeting location in North Reading, MA. We will send a reminder each month a few days before the meeting and ask for a response from those who are attending in order to reserve enough tables. Our first two “trial runs” of this have been very well received.

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 tcfnorthshoreconnect@gmail.com.



Love Notes



In memory of Daniel Fine on his 25th anniversary,

“The real voyage, no matter the boat, is into the soul”

Always in our hearts and minds,
Mom, Dad, Aron, and Rebecca



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
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

NEWSLETTER – October 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
tfnoshorenews@gmail.com