



The Compassionate Friends

North Shore-Boston Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Newsletter

December 2024

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 In Person at 7:00PM at the Aldersgate Methodist Church, 235 Park Street, North Reading at 7:00 P.M. We also hold an Online meeting via Zoom on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 7:00PM. 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.

National Office:
The Compassionate Friends, Inc.
48660 Pontiac Trail #930808
Wixom MI 48393
Toll-free: 877-969-0010
PH: 630-990-0010
FAX: 630-990-0246
www.thecompassionatefriends.org

Upcoming Meetings

Monday, 12/2/24
7:00 PM

In-Person Meeting

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

Topic: Open Sharing Session

Sunday, 12/8/24
6:30 PM

CANDLELIGHT REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

Wednesday, 12/18/24

In-Person Meeting - 7:00 PM

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

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

Chapter Leader: David Paul

978-771-6345

tfnoshoreconnect@gmail.com

Newsletter Editors: Eden Paul

eden.r.paul@gmail.com and

Regional Coordinator: Dennis Gravelle

tfnoshorenews@gmail.com

978-532-2736





JILLIAN ANNE SULLIVAN

Love, light, and everything good.
That's what you are to me.
I love and miss you sweet Jill.
I'll see you someday ❤️ 🥰
Love Mom!



-and-

NICHOLAS RYAN AMIRAULT

In memory of our dearest Nicholas

Wishing we could all be
together again on your 40th birthday,
however, we know that
you are watching over us
as we celebrate your life
and all you mean
to your family and friends.

Love you, miss you...forever,
Dad, Mom,
Holly, Marc, Lily and Ryan Nicholas



Facebook post (March 18,2024), from Dr. Joanne Cacciatore, author of *Bearing the Unbearable: Love, Loss, and the Heartbreaking Path of Grief*

Someone asked me today if the sorrow I still feel (because my child died many years ago) gets in the way of “gratitude.”

First, let’s talk about why you’d ask this question of me. Second, let’s talk about what gratitude means to you because for me gratitude doesn’t equate to an eradication of grief. In fact, one of our research studies showed that grieving parents reported a deeper appreciation for life - when they felt ready and that they had the space to open to those feelings.

So, yeah, seemingly antithetical experiences can coexist. I am not an ungrateful person. I recognize that having running water, a safe home, and living children are things for which I feel gratitude.

And also, one of my children isn’t here with me so there isn’t a day that passes when I’m not missing her and feeling sorrow for all the time we missed together.

This is my simply complicated truth.



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.

© Lorna Gibson



ABedForMyHeart.com



Thanksgiving, Christmas, Chanukah, New Years

These are the biggest and usually most challenging of all. You can and will get through the Holidays. Rather than avoiding the feelings of grief, lean into them. It is not the grief you want to avoid, it is the pain. Grief is the way out of the pain. Grief is our internal feelings and mourning is our external expression.

Ways to externalize the loss – give it a time and a place

- A prayer before the Holiday dinner, about your loved one.
- Light a candle for your loved one.
- Create an online tribute for them.
- Share a favorite story about your loved one.
- Have everyone tell a funny story about your loved one.
- At your place of worship remember them in a prayer.
- Chat online about them.



Ways to Cope

Have a Plan A/Plan B – Plan A is you go to that holiday dinner with family and friends and if it doesn't feel right, have your plan B ready. Plan B may be watching a movie you both liked, or looking through a photo album, or going to a special place you went to together. Many people find that when they have Plan B in place, just knowing it is there is enough.

Cancel the holiday altogether. Yes, you can cancel the holiday. If you are going through the motions and feel nothing, cancel them. Take a year off. The holidays will come around again and will always be there. For other people, staying involved with the holidays is a symbol of life continuing. Let the holiday routine give you a framework during these tough times, and lean on a holiday support system.

Try the holidays in a new way. Grief has a unique way of giving us permission to evaluate what parts of the holidays we enjoy and what parts we don't. Remember, there is no right or wrong way to handle the holidays in grief. You have to decide what is right for you and do it. You have every right to change your mind, even a few times. Friends and family members may not have a clue how to help you through this time of year, and you may not either.

It is very natural to feel you may never enjoy this time of year again. They will certainly never be the same as before your loved one's death. However, in time, most people are able to find meaning again in the traditions as a new form of the holiday spirit grows inside of them. Even without grief, our friends and relatives often think they know how our holidays should look, what "the family" should and shouldn't do.

Do's and Don'ts

- Do be gentle with yourself and protect yourself.
- Don't do more than you want, and don't do anything that does not serve your soul and your loss.
- Do allow time for the feelings.
- Don't keep feelings bottled up. If you have 500 tears to cry don't stop at 250.
- Do allow others to help. We all need help at certain times in our lives.
- Don't ask if you can help or should help a friend in grief. Just help. Find ways; invite them to group events or just out for coffee.




 **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
Elizabeth "Liz" Chandler daughter of Kimberly Surrette
Delaney Marchant daughter of Kathy and Bob Marchant

 **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 Foreman Powell and step daughter of Robert Powell
Daria Elise Pearlman daughter of Jill Pearlman
Kaleigh Rainone daughter of Colleen and Dean Jaynes



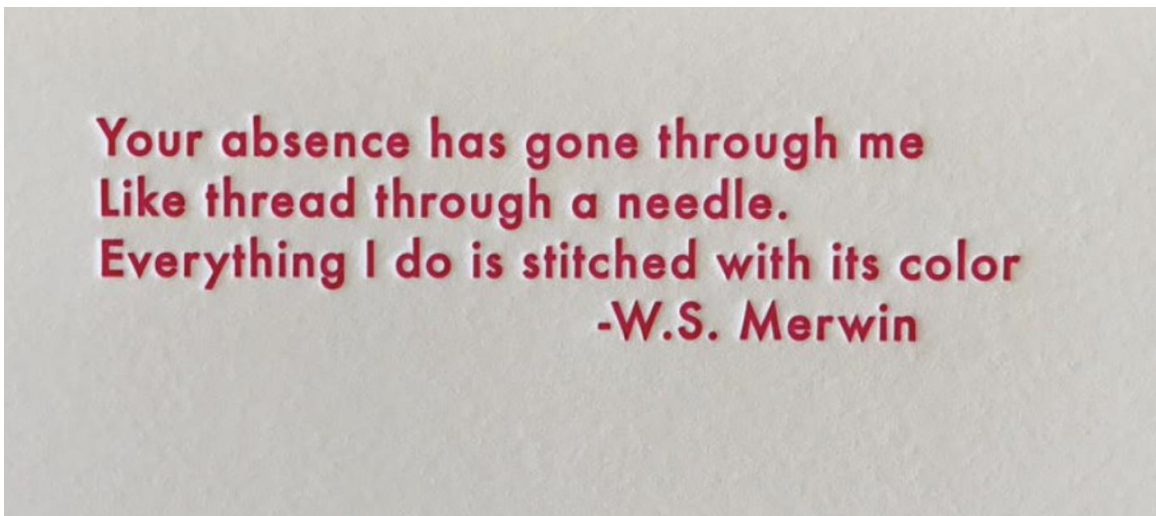
	<p>Our telephone friends are here to help you if you feel the need to connect with someone outside of our usual meeting night. We are not professionals – we are all bereaved parents seeking to find a way through our grief.</p> <p>Please be considerate in the timing of your calls to these volunteers.</p>	
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.





Love Notes



stjude.org/donate today

Love Note:

Christopher, we miss you in a hundred little ways every single day.

Love,
Mom + Dad

"God gave us memory so that we might have roses in December." - J.M. Barrie



IN MEMORY OF MY SON
DONALD TOTINGHAM AT
CHRISTMAS

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 – December 2024



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