



The Compassionate Friends

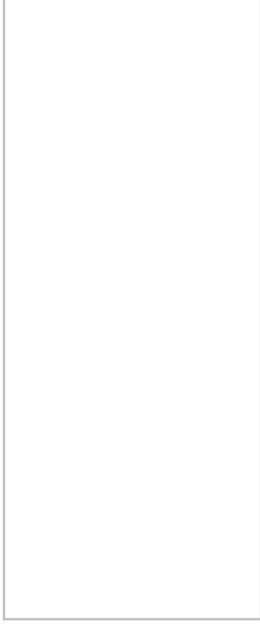
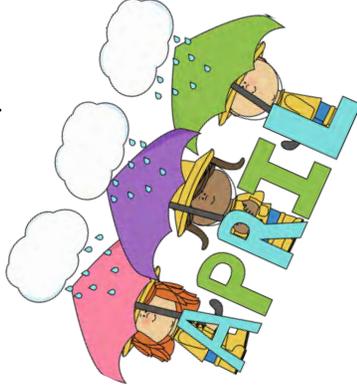
Quad City Area Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



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Moline, Illinois 61265

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To those who are receiving our newsletter for the first time, we wish you were not eligible to belong to this group, but we want you to know that your family and you have many friends. We who have 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.



The Compassionate Friends
Quad City Area Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Volume XXX

April 2017

Number 4

Dear Compassionate Friends,

In January 1987 we received a letter from Leon Gibson, funeral director in Port Byron, Illinois, and Jeff Linman, local pastor, inviting us to attend a grief support group being organized by Kay McDaniel, a twice bereaved parent. Kay hoped that talking together with others who had experienced loss would be helpful for all of their grief journeys. From this first meeting, the Quad City Chapter of Compassionate Friends was born. Over the years we have met at different locations and on different days of the week. We have had a variety of chapter leaders and many grieving parents have joined together to share and process their grief. The following, read in the TCF Seattle chapter newsletter, sums up the vision of Compassionate Friends.

To all our sage grievers and especially to those newly bereaved who have joined us for the first time. We are sorry we had to meet under such circumstances, but we are glad you found us. We would like to do all we can to help you through these times. We cannot hurry you through it, or take away the pain, but we can help you understand more about what you are going through. Sometimes just knowing what you are feeling is normal can be helpful.

We are other parents who have experienced the death of a child and offer understanding and support through our monthly meetings, a lending library, support materials and a listening ear. We have learned the key to survival for bereaved families is communication. We know that if you have been to your first meeting, it was probably very difficult. We ask that you give us more than one meeting to decide if the Compassionate Friends is for you.

It takes courage to attend your first meeting, but those who do come find an atmosphere of understanding from other parents who are having or have experienced the feelings of grief that you are now feeling. There are no registration fees; to share or not to share is your choice, you do not have to speak a word if you do not care to. If you are more comfortable bringing a friend or relative along with you, please be certain they will be most welcome.

The TCF Credo really says it all, "... We Need Not Walk Alone, We are The Compassionate Friends."

Sincerely,
Carol and Jerry Webb

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Chalkboard reflections

My main message is that this journey is survivable. Your life can be good again. I won't say it *will* be good again, that's up to you. To heal is a choice; just as not to heal is a choice. Become a fighter. Make the decision to heal and many terrific resources and people can come into your life. Make the decision to tell death that it didn't, and never can, get all of your loved one's life.

YOU GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION TO GRIEVE BY RECOGNIZING THE NEED FOR GRIEVING. GRIEVING IS THE NATURAL WAY OF WORKING THROUGH THE LOSS OF A LOVE. GRIEVING IS NOT WEAKNESS, NOR ABSENCE OF FAITH. GRIEVING IS AS NATURAL AS CRYING WHEN YOU ARE HURT, SLEEPING WHEN YOU ARE TIRED OR SNEEZING WHEN YOUR NOSE ITCHES. IT IS NATURE'S WAY OF HEALING A BROKEN HEART

DOUG PLANNING

DON'T LET DEATH WIN; LET LIFE WIN. BECOME A FIGHTER AND YOUR LOVED ONE'S LIFE, AND YOUR SMILE, CAN RETURN.

FROM HEARTBREAKTOHEALING.WEEBLY.COM

The only people who think there's a time limit for grief have never lost a piece of their heart. Take all the time you need.

Unknown

RENEWAL

SPRING! NOT JUST THE WARMTH, THOUGH THAT IS SURELY WELCOME. SPRING! NOT JUST THE FRESH BREEZE THOUGH THAT IS PLEASANT ALSO. IN CONTRAST TO THE WINTER WIND. SPRING! NOT JUST THE FLOWERS THOUGH THEY PERK THE SPIRITS, AFTER DRABNESS OF PAST MONTHS. SPRING! NOT JUST THE NEW GROWTH AFTER THE DORMANCY OF PLANTS, THE DEATH OF LAST YEAR'S GROWTH. SPRING! A REMINDER TO ME THAT EVEN OUT OF DEATH COMES A REBIRTH OF SPIRIT!

FROM THE TCF BLUEGRASS NEWSLETTER

Death ends a life, not a relationship. - Jack Lemmon

Pain demands

to be felt. It won't be rushed. It won't be pushed away or minimized. There is no set timeline for grief. There is no bible verse or life truth that can lessen pain's grip. No matter how much we may try to push it away or pretend it isn't there, it manifests itself. There are no tricks or tips to lessening the agony. Pain is moving through darkness, one tiny step at a time with faith that eventually a ray of light will break through. We honor our pain with tears and time. We honor our pain by acknowledging its heaviness and hurt. We honor it by recognizing loss and the hole it leaves behind.

Lisa Leonard

Moving on

is not moving past, because your loss will always be with you. It's not getting over, because you don't get over losing a child. It's not running away or forgetting about, because you could never forget your child, and you don't run away from those you love. Moving on is surviving even when you're not sure you want to. It's breathing through the lump that's been in your throat since you can't remember when. It's reaching out to someone who's hurting, even if it's just for a moment. It's crying and laughing, and slowly, carefully, letting yourself feel again. It's noticing that your family and friends are still there—for you and with you. Moving on is what you've been doing all along, and you're still doing it. And we're still here—for you and with you.

Kim Crown

Love Gifts

As parents and other family members find healing and hope within the group or from the newsletter, they often wish to make a Love Gift to help with the work of our chapter. This is a meaningful way to remember a beloved child.

Donations and Love Gifts are used to provide postage for the newsletter and mailings to newly bereaved families. Some of the love gifts are used for materials to share with first time attendees at our meetings or to purchase books for our library. Our thanks to the many families who provide love gifts so that the work of reaching out to bereaved parents and families can continue.

If you would like to send a donation or love gift, please send it using the enclosed envelope or to our chapter leader, Doug Scott, c/o Bethany for Children & Families, 1830 6th Avenue, Moline, Illinois 61265. Checks can be made out to *The Compassionate Friends*. **Your gifts are tax deductible.**



GETTING UNSTUCK

Finding Hope Through Grief

Every day I drive by a quaint antique shop. It might be my imagination, but it appears to be the same charming furniture outside every single day. In the morning the antique treasures are carefully placed in the front yard, and every evening they are brought back inside. A few Coca-Cola chairs may have been added since the turn of the century, but otherwise it seems the process is repeated every day.

The death of someone you care about deeply is one of life's most difficult challenges. It's easy to fall into a rut of doing the same things day after day, leaving you lonely and feeling stuck in the sorrow. If you're struggling to move forward, would you consider trying something different to help break through the intense sadness? Hopefully, one of these ideas will help.

Remember. Memories of your loved one's life are treasured gifts to keep close in your heart. Take some time to record memorable stories and save photos in a notebook or journal. Remembering happier times is a beautiful way to honor the person you're missing, and will allow some

light into this painful season of life.

Get Help. People who have been where you are now can be a great source of hope and encouragement. It might take a few visits to know if a support group is a good fit for you, but don't give up. A caring group or maybe professional grief counseling will provide a safe place to process traumatic loss.

Find Hope. Regardless of your religious beliefs, deep sorrow often draws one to seek spiritual help. In my darkest season of loss, I realized I was drowning in the sadness. When I finally called for help, a friend offered to pray when I couldn't find the words.

Admitting your inability to cope and allowing someone to be strong for you can be a powerful turning point toward healing. Dr. Gloria Horsley, executive director of the Open to Hope Foundation, puts it beautifully: "If you have lost hope, we invite you to lean on ours until you find your own." You don't have to go through grief alone.

Beth Marshall

Contact the Editors

If you read or write an article or poem which might be helpful to other bereaved parents and would like to share it.

If you move and would like to continue receiving the newsletter, send us your new address.

If you know someone you think would benefit from receiving the newsletter, send his/her/their name and address.

If you prefer to no longer receive the newsletter or if you prefer to receive this newsletter via email.



Jerry and Carol Webb
Box 71, Cordova, Illinois 61242,
309.654.2727.

BOX OF COINS

My husband Bruce and my stepdaughter Jess drove to our son's apartment to retrieve his things shortly after his death. They returned with clothing, bed linens, lots of CDs, his backpack, and a computer desk that he and I assembled together at his new apartment. They brought back the computer, kitchen items, and a New Balance shoebox.



I recognized the box. We gave him shoes as a parting gift as he left for college that fall. His college expenses stressed our budget. I second guessed most purchases but not the shoes. He needed them. I wondered why he kept the box.

It was filled with coins and a red cup. Jess said the cup had been on his desk. Apparently at day's end our son Art emptied his pockets of loose change into the cup. Eventually Art poured the contents of the cup into the shoebox. The boy had a savings plan.

I saved the box of coins. I could not toss them into a change counter. He had touched each one. I stored the box under a bed that he had used as a youngster.

After four years, I pulled out the box and spent a quiet evening counting coins. \$74.14. I wrote a note from Art to an anticipated nephew or niece that he would never meet and slipped it in the box. "Use these coins for college." From Art.

The box slid under the bed again. I would find the right place for those coins—maybe a charity, maybe the scholarship initiated in memory of Arthur. Not now.

Last month Jess called me with a funny story about her toddler son, my first grandchild. Jess and Brandon had taught their young son to drop coins into a big red piggybank. They were scrounging for coins because their son liked the game so much.

Perfect! Those shoebox coins just found a new home! That weekend I delivered the box of coins to them. The next time I babysat, I pulled a few coins from the shoebox and handed them to my grandson, one by one. Mason giggled as he touched each one and dropped it squarely into the piggybank. We both smiled at each other.

The boy has a savings plan. Must be genetic!

I am grateful for the gift of time with my son's possessions. TCF monthly meetings taught me to be patient with myself until I found my new balance. It took almost seven years. I gave away my son's coins with no regrets.

Monica Colberg,
TCF/Minneapolis, Minnesota-
In memory of my son, Art

TCF's Facebook Page is a proven support area for bereaved family members to come and talk about their grief. Stop by and visit with some of our more than 120,000 Facebook members.



Please join our TCF/USA Facebook family. Tell us about your child, sibling, grandchild, or other loved one and find support in the words and concern of others. Check out the Discussion Boards! Every day we also provide thought provoking questions, grief quotes, and links to grief stories, as well as TCF news such as updates on the National Conference, Worldwide Candle Lighting, and other TCF programs.

Closed Facebook Groups: The Compassionate Friends offers several closed Facebook groups to connect with other bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. The groups supply support, encouragement, and friendship. Recently added groups include Men in Grief; Loss of Long Term Illness; Loss of a Step Child; Loss of a Child with Special Needs.

About TCF...

The Compassionate Friends is a nonprofit, self-help organization offering friendship and support to families who have experienced the death of a child. Founded in England in 1969, the first U.S. chapter was organized in 1972. Since then, 635 chapters have been established. The current Quad City Chapter was formed in 1987.

TCF National Office

P.O. Box 3696
Oak Brook, Illinois 60522-3696
Toll Free (877)969-0010
TCF National Web site —
www.compassionatefriends.org
<http://www.quadcitytcf.org>

The Compassionate Friends National Newsletter

One complimentary copy is sent to bereaved families who contact the national office: The Compassionate Friends, Inc., P.O. Box 3696, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696 (877)969-0010.

email:

NationalOffice@compassionatefriends.org

Website:

www.compassionatefriends.org

Visit the [sibling resource](http://www.compassionatefriends.org) page at www.compassionatefriends.org. It is also available to read online without charge.

e-Newsletter Now Available! An e-Newsletter is now available from the National Office! The monthly e-Newsletter contains notes and happenings of interest to all TCFers. To subscribe to the e-Newsletter, visit the TCF National Website home page and click on the Register for TCF e-Newsletter Link. This newsletter is available to everyone.

Mission Statement

The mission of The Compassionate Friends Quad City Area Chapter is when a child dies at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

Vision Statement

The vision statement of The Compassionate Friends is that everyone who needs us will find us, and everyone who finds us will be helped.

DAFFODILS

In the Spring, I will bring daffodils to you with a prayer.

After the cold, snowy winter is over and gone, I will sit on the grass and sing the songs that we have shared, knowing that your boundless spirit lives on. I've walked the path of sorrow. It's helped me to grow.

Through the tears have come my strength and my healing.

My heart, once wounded and broken, is mended and filled with deep love for everyone in all that I do.

And every warm, sunny Spring, I will bring yellow daffodils, and cherish the memories of you.



Sharon Corder, TCF/Inland Empire, California

Easter and Passover

The Easter and Passover seasons are upon us. They are special family times that make it more obvious that one is missing. Some parents are struggling with what they believe anymore. The pretty new dresses and hats don't seem to matter as much as they did. There are more important things on our minds now. We are facing the renewal of life all around us — and yet the missing child's life is not renewable. We hurt because life is going on and his or hers is not.

These are normal reactions for some when grief is fresh, for the changing of seasons is a poignant time for many. It won't always be this painful. When your grief softens (and it will), so will many of the hurtful

responses. Get out in the sunshine, go for a walk, smell the fragrance of the flowers and allow the warmth of the season to permeate your being. It just may make your day a little lighter, and a lighter day is worth trying for.

From the TCF/Bluegrass Newsletter



Support Groups for Grieving Parents & Siblings

The Compassionate Friends, Quad City Chapter

Monthly Meeting, Thursday, April 27, 2017, at 6:30 pm at
Bethany for Children & Families, 1830 6th Avenue, Moline

Please call Doug Scott (563.370.1041) for information and directions.

Next month's meeting: May 25, 2017, at 6:30 pm

TCF website: <http://www.quadcitytcf.org>.

The Compassionate Friends of Muscatine	Meets the second Sunday of each month at 2:00 at the George M. Wittich-Lewis Funeral Home, 2907 Mulberry, Muscatine, Iowa. Chapter Leaders are Linda and Bill McCracken. You can call them at 563.260.3626 for directions or information, or contact them at linmac67@machlink.com .
Rick's House of Hope	This is a community resource for children and adolescents dealing with grief. There is no fee for services. Groups meet on Monday and Tuesday nights. The group for 14 year olds and older meets Sunday from 3:00 pm until 5:00 pm. All meetings are held at 5022 Northwest Boulevard, Davenport, Iowa 52806. For more information, call Emily Gordon, Program Director, at 563.324.9580, or egordon@rhoh.org or go to www.rhoh.org .
MJL Foundation Suicide Grief Support (DeWitt)	A peer group for suicide grief support meets on the third Friday of every month, 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm at the Frances Banta Wagnor Library, 505 10th Street, DeWitt, Iowa 54742. Contact Betsy Loehr, 563.843.3655 or at there.is.hope@hotmail.com — http://www.mjlfoundation.org .
MJL Foundation Suicide Grief Support (Fulton)	Survivors of Suicide Support Group meets on the second Monday of each month in Fulton, Illinois, at the Second Reformed Church, 703 - 14th Avenue, Fulton, Illinois 61252, from 7:00 pm-8:30 pm. Contact Laura Wessels, 815.589.3425, or laura@secondreformedchurch.net .
SHARE	A support group for parents who have lost a child through miscarriage, still-birth, or early infant death. SHARE meets the third Thursday at 6:30 pm in the Adler Room #1 in the lower level of Genesis Heart Institute, 1236 East Rusholme Street, Davenport, Iowa. Questions? Contact Chalyn Fornero-Green at 309.373.2568, or chalyn@shareqc.com or www.shareqc.com .
Loving Listeners	If you need someone who understands and will listen, feel free to call or email (if address is given): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♥ Kay Miller 309.738.4915 ♥ Doug Scott 563.370.1041 doug.scott@mchsi.com ♥ Rosemary Shoemaker 309.945.6738 shoearthb3@mchsi.com ♥ Judy Delvecchio 563.349.8895 delvecchiojudy@hotmail.com <p>Kay, Doug, Rosemary, and Judy are willing to take calls from bereaved parents, grandparents, or siblings who want to talk to someone who cares that they don't feel alone.</p>

Printed Resources for Grieving Parents & Siblings

TCF Online Support Community	TCF's national website offers "virtual chapters" through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The sessions last an hour and have trained moderators present. For more information, visit www.compassionatefriends.org and click "Online Support" in the "Resources" column.
TCF's Grief Related Webinars	Held monthly, the webinars are on various grief topics with well-known experts in the field. To reserve a seat for the next webinar (or to view the previous month's webinar), go to http://www.compassionatefriends.org/News_Events/Special-Events/Webinars.aspx . Webinars are being archived in TCF's Webinar Library, accessible from the webinar page.
TCF National Magazine	<i>We Need Not Walk Alone</i> is available to read online without charge. Go to www.compassionatefriends.org and review the options at the top of the page. TCF e-Newsletter is also available from the National Office — to subscribe to the e-Newsletter, visit the TCF National Website home page and click on the Register for TCF e-Newsletter link.
Grief Materials	Looking for a particular grief book? Look no further than the Centering Corporation, the official recommended grief resource center of The Compassionate Friends. With the largest selection of grief-related resources in the United States, Centering Corporation will probably have just about anything you're looking for — or they'll be able to tell you where to find it. Call Centering Corporation for a catalog at 402.553.1200 or visit their website at www.centering.org . When ordering, be sure to mention you are with The Compassionate Friends and all shipping charges will be waived.
Our Newsletter	For parents who have experienced the death or deaths of multiple birth children during pregnancy, at birth, in infancy, or in childhood, contact Jean Kollantai at P.O. Box 91377, Anchorage, Alaska 99509.
Amazon.com	When making a purchase from Amazon.com, enter through the link on the home page of TCF national website and a portion of the purchase price is donated to further the mission of TCF. This donation applies to all purchases made at Amazon.com.
Previous Newsletter Editions	Looking for more articles or previous copies of this newsletter? Go to www.bethany-qc.org for copies of the last several years of The Quad City Chapter of TCF-QC Chapter Newsletter in Adobe Acrobat format.
Alive Alone	A newsletter for bereaved parents whose only or all children are deceased. A self-help network and publication to promote healing and communication can be reached at www.alivealone.org or alivealone@bright.net .
Bereaved Parents' Magazine	Online articles and poems. Reminder emails are sent notifying readers when new issues are available. http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org/BP_NatlNews.htm .
Our Newsletter	Published one to three times per year, when there is content to make a balanced issue. It usually contains 30 pages of personal stories and updates, poetry, subsequent birth announcements, and any new topical articles and information. Currently it is being distributed electronically (PDF), but a printout is available to anyone without email access. To request a sample copy, please email Jean Kollantai, climb@climb-support.org . Include

EVER WONDER HOW *THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS* STARTED?

On Monday, June 13, 2016, Joe Lawley died. Joe was one of the founding members of The Compassionate Friends in Coventry, England. Where would we be in our grief journey if this wonderful group did not exist? For many of us who have walked through these doors, we are grateful to the bereaved parents who came before us and showed us there was hope. Numerous parents would say, "The Compassionate Friends saved our lives." Here is Joe's story in his own words:

The family was engaged in the usual early morning hassle as we washed, dressed, ate and finally shared a moment as the children left for school. We were four—Iris and Joe, parents, Angela (the elder of our children, aged nearly fifteen) and Kenneth—the younger, nearly twelve. The youngsters departed and then, minutes later, as we prepared to leave too, the telephone rang. I picked it up, a voice said, "There's been an accident. Kenneth has been taken to hospital by ambulance." We rushed to the hospital convincing each other that it could be nothing worse than a broken limb, but within a short time we knew that it was serious, he was unconscious; later we were told that he had suffered major head injuries, with resultant brain damage. We were face-to-face with death.

Elsewhere in the hospital was another

boy, Billy Henderson, suffering from cancer. His parents had nursed him through a long illness, at his bedside day and night. We discovered later that the Henderson family (Bill and Joan, the parents, Andrew and Billy, their sons, and daughters, Shone and Susan) and ourselves were all known to the Rev. David Dale, a minister in the United Reformed Church.

Standing back from the constant group of relatives and friends round Kenneth's bed in the Intensive Care Unit was another young man in clerical garb, the Reverend Simon Stephens. He simply said, "If I can help....I am here, all of the time." Eventually we asked, "Will you pray for Kenneth and when he did so, he mentioned Billy Henderson. Thus, we came to know somewhere in this vast hospital another boy lay dying, another family hoped and prayed.

It was not to be. Kenneth died on 23rd May 1968 — a day now indelibly stamped in our memory. Billy Henderson died a few days later.

Iris suggested that we send flowers to Joan and Bill; we did not then know the significance of that act, but looking back, it might be said that The Compassionate Friends started there. Joan and Bill telephoned their thanks and we met for a cup of tea.

Together, midst freely flowing tears,
Continued next page

Continued from previous page
the four of us were able for the first time to speak openly of our children, without feelings of guilt that we were endlessly repeating the virtues of our children, and of our vanished hopes for the future. Together, we were all able to accept, for the first time, the words used by many well-meaning friends – rejected almost universally by parents who have lost a beloved child —"I understand." We did understand, all four of us, and, in the immensity of our grief (and in reality, is there any other tragedy of quite this enormity?), we all suffered together.

We were helping each other – a telephone call in the blackest hour brought love and help immediately to the door; the regular family visits, where the younger members reminded us constantly of their needs and dragged us back to the role of parent, and where the occasionally humorous incidents induced the first smiles, and even laughs – all these played their part in our journey through the experience of overwhelming grief. We were learning to live a little again. It did not happen overnight, nor even with years but it had started.

Simon Stephens, who had kept close contact with us, spotted it first. He said, "You are helping each other in a way which I, and virtually everyone else, am unable to do, because of your shared experience; do you think it could work with other bereaved parents?" We put it to the test. We wrote to, and subsequently visited, a West Indian family who had lost a

young child in a road accident. It worked. We became friends.

Simon then suggested a meeting of a number of recently bereaved parents, and the initial coming together took place January 28, 1969, in a room at the Coventry and Warwickshire Hospital, a place with poignant memories for most of us; returning to the hospital itself was, you might say, a hurdle we needed to surmount.

In the event, six people were present — Bill and Joan Henderson, Betty Rattigan, Simon Stephens, Iris and myself. We talked about an organization that would try to help other bereaved parents. But the number of child deaths in the UK was dauntingly large — would we be able to cope with what might become an overwhelming demand for our time? We decided to try.

What about a name? The word "compassion" had featured frequently in our conversation, and eventually "The Society of the Compassionate Friends" emerged. It sounded right then, and now in a slightly shorter form, it still sounds right – perhaps even inspired.

To round off this part of the history of The Compassionate Friends, I would like to record the names of that first committee. They were: - Honorary President – Simon Stephens; Chairman – Joe Lawley; Secretary – Betty Rattigan; Coordinator – Joan Henderson; Treasurer – Bill Henderson; Member and Visitor – Iris Lawley.