

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

A self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved families

Inside Valley Forge

Meetings are on the first Thursday of every month, at 7:45 PM (ending at 9:30 PM) We meet at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Founders Hall, Valley Forge Road and Henderson Rds., King of Prussia, PA.

For info call Rhonda (484) 919-0820

Meeting Schedule and other TCF Events of Interest.

Meeting - 4/3/2022

Next Meeting - 05/5/2022

SAVE THE DATE— 45th National Convention, August 5 - 7, 2022 in Houston, TX . Make your reservation now with Marriott Marquis Houston. The phone number is 877-688-4323 and mention TCF National Conference. The price of the room is \$149.00.



We encourage newsletter writings from our members. You may also submit articles written by others. Please include the author of all articles submitted. The cut off date for newsletter entries is the 15th of the preceding month. Articles should be sent to the newsletter editor.

There are no dues or fees to belong to the Compassionate Friends, or to receive our newsletter. Your tax deductible donations (which we call love gifts) given in memory of your loved one enables us to defray the cost of the chapter expenses, particularly the newsletter, meetings and our outreach to the newly bereaved. Please include any special tribute you wish printed in the newsletter along with your gift.

Please make all checks Payable to:
TCF VALLEY FORGE CHAPTER
Send to Rhonda Gomez

April 2022

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Mission Statement

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.

NEW FRIENDS

We welcome our newly bereaved friends, sorry for the cause that brings you. We all have been in the depths of despair, and offer unconditional love and understanding to all of you, it sometimes takes several meetings to feel the full benefit of group sharing. We offer confidentiality, unconditional love and understanding to all of you.

Paul Hagarty
Diana Warner
Rick Loomis

REFRESHMENTS

Refreshments may be donated in memory of loved ones. Please call Rhonda (484) 919-0820 or you may sign the refreshment chart located on the refreshment table.

The Chapter

LOVE GIFTS

Susan Lawlor — In honor her son, Jim Sinah

NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL

We are asking if possible, would you please receive your newsletter by email.

We do not want to remove anyone from our newsletter mailing list who is benefiting from receiving it. We hope it is a help to you while going through your grief, giving you better understanding of your feelings, and letting you know **“We need not walk alone”**.

A newsletter helps to keep our TCF family informed of local and national events. We consider this an important function of our program.

We are asking if you have email, would you consider receiving your newsletter in email format. You will receive your copy earlier if you opt to receive it by email. If you chose to use the email method of receiving your newsletter, you will have the option to switch back to the old method. If you wish to receive the newsletter by email please contact: **Frank Gomez (frank@tcfvalleyforge.org)**

FALLING APART

I seem to be falling apart.
My attention span can be measured in seconds.
My patience in minutes,
I cry at the drop of a hat.
I forget things constantly.
The morning toast burns daily.
I forget to sign the checks.
Half of everything in the house is misplaced.
Anxiety and restlessness are my constant companions.

Rainy days seem extra dreary.
Sunny days seem an outrage.
Other people's pain and frustration seem
Insignificant.
Laughing, happy people seem out of place in
My world.
It has become routine to feel half crazy.
I am normal, I am told.
I am a newly grieving person.

Eloise Cole

OUR CHILDREN & SIBLINGS LOVED, SADLY MISSED AND REMEMBERED

Each month some of us must face those special, but difficult days of birthdays and anniversaries. This month we ask your thoughts and prayers for the parents, siblings, relatives of the following children.

We will no longer list the birth and death years of deceased persons in our newsletter. We have concerns this information could be misused, and result in an adversity for the families.

Anniversaries

Bill Padove & Jen Scaless - Zachary - son - 4/26

Denis Nicholson Asselin & Judy Nathaniel - son - 4/15

George & Anne Beerley - Jennifer Beerley - daughter - 4/19

Leslie Brown - Scott - son - 4/4

Terry & Sam Capizzi - Sammy - son - 4/6

Diana Clark - Alexander - grandson - 4/5

Judy & William Cosgrove - Michael Cosgrove - son - 4/17

Ed & Sue Duffy - Peter - son - 4/11

Nancy & David Dykty - Jim Sutton - brother - 4/16

Diane Goldberg - Sammy - nephew - 4/6

Frank & Rhonda Gomez - Paul - brother - 4/26

Joanne Haley Douglas - Haley - son - 4/3

Nancy Hartzell - Adam - son - 4/8

Lorie & Mike Henry - Blair Henry - grandson - 4/7

Mike & Dorie Henry - Blair - Granddaughter - 4/7

Walt & Adele Higgins - Brian - son/stepson - 4/17

Sigrid Hirschhorn - Samantha - daughter - 4/6

Sharon Hirst - Tom - son - 4/16

Janet & Dave Keller - Elily Lou Miller - granddaughter - 4/4

Joan Kellett - Daniel Thomas Kellett - son - 4/29

Lynn Kivlen - Brien Kivlen - son - 4/26

Terry Kozlewski - Frankie - son - 4/1

Elaine Marino - Mark Joseph Marino - son - 4/21 - Lisa Marino - 'daughter in law' - 4/12

Jennifer McGowan - Clark Joseph McGowan - brother - 4/15

Susan McKelvey - John - son - 4/23

Sharmell & Chris McMurray - Ryan - son - 4/26

Fred & Marilyn Mountjoy - Marian Mountjoy - daughter 4/16

Crystal Moyer - 4/13

Anniversaries - Cont'd

John Mscisz - Liam John Willamson - grandson - 4/6
Mary Mulholland - Joseph McGowan - son - 4/15
Marian Mullahy - Matt - brother - 4/2
Sheila & Mike Mullin - Matthew - son - 4/25
Barbara & Jeff Norris - Greg - son - 4/1
Dale Pearlstein - Jeffrey - son - 4/17
Terri Pfeiffer - Matthew - son - 4/20
Marcella Rice Raymond - Anthony - son - 4/15
Maureen & David Rich - Mallory Kirby Rich - daughter - 4/26
Harry & Carol Schultz - Brian Andrew Schultz - son - 4/18
Joy Conard Settles - R. Gary Korn - son - 4/30
Jeffrey Smith - Jacob Smith - son - 4/5
Robert & Sigrid Snow - Barry Snow - son - 4/28
Edward & Mary Stimson - Keith Stimson - son - 4/7
Fred & Irene Sutton - Jim Sutton - son - 4/16
Tracey Sutton-Vitabile - Jim Sutton - brother - 4/16
Allan Thomas - Zinta Thomas - wife - 4/23
Harry & Lynne Urian - Mike - son - 4/22
Joan & Ed Young - Jed Young - son - 4/2

HUGS

It's wondrous what a hug can do.
A hug can cheer you when you're blue
A hug can say, "I love you so."
Or, "Gee, I hate to see you go."

A hug is, "Welcome back again!"
And, "Great to see you," or
"Where have you been?"
A hug can soothe a small child's pain
And bring a rainbow after the rain.

The hug! There's just no doubt about it.
We scarcely could survive without it.
A hug delights and warms and charms,
It must be why God gave us arms.

Hugs are great for father and mother,
Sweet for sisters, swell for brothers,
And chances are some favorite aunts
Love them more than potted plants.

Kittens crave them, Puppies love them,
Heads of state are not above them.
A hug can break the language barrier,
And make the dullest day seem merrier.

No need to fret about the store of them,
The more you give,
The more there are of them.
So stretch those arms with out delay
And give someone a hug today.

Dean Walley

SHARED THOUGHTS ON GROWING THROUGH SHARING

As I observe the intensity of Parental Grief in the newly bereaved, I see my past self with all the vivid memories of fresh pain. Hopefully, you can see healing and hope as you look at us, the more seasoned bereaved. Much of our healing comes from the caring and understanding of other Compassionate Friends, who helped to restore meaning to our lives again.

There will always be some clouds, even though the storm of grief is over. But, that gutwrenching pain that used to come without warning or mercy has left, and the residue is tolerable. There is life after grief. You can restore love, hope, find a purpose for living, and a measure of peace. Unfortunately, these things lie on the other side of grief. We must first walk in the valley to find them, but we don't have to walk alone.

Sharing can lessen our loneliness, and help remove the feeling of isolation during our grief. A hug, a touch, or a knowing look can give reassurance that we are normal, in our very abnormal situation. Just speaking our loved ones names and sharing memories gives us a measure of healing. Life can be more bearable if we feel their nearness. One of our concerns is the world may forget our child or sibling. Fresh grief tends to remember the death, but as we heal we concentrate more on the life of our loved ones. The intense pain is caused by the great love we have for them, and the love they had for us. At some point, we have to be thankful for the time we had, even though we all agree it was not long enough.

We can find creative ways to memorialize and have our child or sibling live through us. They can not physically be a part of our life, but they can make us even more of who and what we are in this world. Their memories can give us courage and hope to lead a productive life again. It can even cause us to reach out to others in pain and offer comforting words by saying "I know".

The school season can bring a flood of tears as we watch children going to and from school. It reiterates that our children will not enter the next year of development. We hope you will come to meetings to share with us, it is the one place we can feel comfortable and a sense of normality. Regardless of what you are feeling, you can be certain someone else in the room has dealt with the same problem. We welcome discussion on both negative and positive subjects. Many times we have to deal with the negative side of grief before it can become positive. Come share with us. We care.

Marie Hofmockel , TCF Valley Forge, PA

LIFE IS WHAT WE MAKE IT

Life is what we make it, I said with the confidence of youth. My own well-ordered life would be the shining proof.
That ills that befall others, would never come to me.
But, then from nowhere came a blow that made me with pain.
The illusion of control was gone never to come again.
Life isn't what we make it, I railed against this bitter fate.
But only how we take it, and this I refuse to take.
But gradually acceptance came and with it some release.
Of the vice-like grip upon my heart of rage & anguished grief.
Life is what we make it, I slowly came to know.
If only in the way we take its unexpected blows.

Roberta Robertson

I FEEL THE JOY

Never let there be a time when
I cannot feel the pain,
When hurt and sadness
are blocked out,
And only numbness reigns.

At least with pain I am alive,
But numbness will destroy,
For if I cannot feel the pain,
Then I cannot feel the joy.

**Joanetta Hendel
TCF, Indianapolis, IN**

BIRTHDAYS

Barbie Blake - son - Chad Blake - 4/15
 Leslie Brown - son - Scott - 4/3
 Ellen & James Burbano - son - Eric - 4/19
 Gina Cappelli - son - Dan Foley - 4/20
 Phyllis & James Casey - son - Jim "Jimmer" Casey - 4/18
 Linda DiPasquale - son - Thomas - 4/26
 Janie Ebersole - daughter - Ashley Sankus - 4/19
 Ginny Ebert - son - Jason - 4/17
 Scott & Charlene Fazekas - Son - Eric Scott Fazekas - 4/25
 Maureen & Jim Fleagle - son - Brian - 4/20
 Stephanie Grier - son - John "JD" Grier - 4/15
 Nancy & Gerald Hall - son - Douglas Byron Hall - 4/15
 Kristen Hallman - brother - Joey - 4/10
 Othell & William Heaney - son - Roger Heaney - 4/17
 Jeanne R Helmers - daughter - Betsy Helmers - 4/7
 Cynthia Hornyak - daughter - Meredith - 4/1
 John Horulko - son - Daniel - 4/6
 Monica Horulko - son - Daniel - 4/6
 Margaret Huss - son - Daniel - 4/18
 Dennis & Lois Ianovalle - son - Dennis - 4/18
 Carl and Dorothy Johnson-Speight - daughter - Carlana Speight - 4/6
 Roxanne Kamilatos - daughter - Dina - 4/29
 Janet & Dave Keller - granddaughter - Elily Lou Miller - 4/4
 Karen Lopera - son - Michael - 4/3
 Bob & Laura Latshaw - son - Scott - 4/22
 Susan & Richard Leoni/Cutler - son - Kevin - 4/3
 Betty Manzi - grandson - Ronnie T. Seal, Jr. - 4/17
 Elaine Marino - son - Mark Joseph Marino - 4/20
 Michelle Mazzio - son - Brendan Mazzio - 4/18
 Marjorie Meckley - son - Douglas Meckley - 4/25
 Bob & Janet Milnazik - daughter - Kim - 4/24
 Sheila & Mike Mullin - son - Matthew - 4/10
 Ashlie Nawrocki - sister - Chereen - 4/3



Birthdays — continued

Thomas & Mary Jane Poore - son - Bradley Poore - 4/25

Joe & Kim Pratt - son - Paul - 4/7

Marcella Rice - mother - Elise B. Rice - 4/30 - son - Raymond Anthony - 4/15

Art & Carol Silverman - daughter - Cheryl Beth Silverman - 4/23

Robert & Sigrid Snow - son - Barry Snow - 4/28 - son - Kevin Snow - 4/19

Marissa Wadsworth - son - TJ Wadsworth - 4/8

Deb Walter - son - Evan - 4/18

Ellen & Dale Weaver - son - Jeffrey M. Weaver - 4/12

Terry & Bob Wolfe - son and stepson - Steven Moyer - 4/22

THERE IS NO BETTER FRIEND

For over 40 years, I have had the best friend you could ever have. When I told my best friend that I was fat, she never said, "I just lost three pounds without even trying."

When we went to a sock hop together in college and she was offered a ride home, she never ditched me.

When I gave myself a home permanent and left it on too long, she was the only one to sit with me in the bathroom until it grew out.

When I told my best friend my husband gave me two snow tires for our anniversary, she never said, "You should be happy he remembered."

When I was pregnant and my stomach looked like a tray on a car door in a drive-in, she never said, "There's a glow about a pregnant woman."

When I had a miscarriage and everyone else in the world said, "There will be other babies." She cried with me over the one I lost.

When she told me she was staying home for the summer, I wouldn't have dreamed of sending her a card from Spain telling her what a great time I was having.

When her mixer broke down, I never asked her if she had sent in the warranty card so she'd be covered.

When I moved 3,000 miles away, she never once told me what I was doing to her.

When her mother died, I never said, "She had a rich, full life and she was in her 70's."

When I argued with my husband and begged her advice, she kept her mouth shut. She just listened.

When we couldn't get a sitter and had to bring the kids along to her house for dinner, she never fell apart.

When I left my first autographing party and no one showed up, she never once suggested, "They probably didn't see the ad."

When her political candidate lost and mine won, I never said, "Ha, ha, I told you so."

Every time we got together, neither of us had to say, "I'm glad to see you."

Recently, my best friend lost her child. He was her youngest and was in his 20's. I listened to her. I cried with her. I felt pain that I had never known I could feel before. But not once did I say to her, "I know how you feel."

Erma Bombeck

We need not walk alone. We are the Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope. The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope. We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances. We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds and relationships. We are young and we are old, some of us are far along in our grief but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength. While some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression; while others radiate an inner peace. But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of the Compassionate Friends, it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love for the children who have died.

We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love to share the pain as well as the joy, share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts and help each other to grieve as well as to grow. We need not walk alone, we are the Compassionate Friends.

The Compassionate Friends Credo



*A bereavement organization
For parents, siblings and families
We offer friendship, love and understanding
We talk, we listen, we share, we care.*

Valley Forge Chapter
of the Compassionate Friends
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