



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST

## NEWSLETTER



*The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families in the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child and to provide information to help others be supportive.*

**March-April 2019**



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Vol. 24 Issue 2

### YOU ARE INVITED

The Compassionate Friends - Metrowest Chapter meets twice a month. Evenings on the third Tuesday from 7:30 to 9:30 pm in the library of St. Mary's Parish Center, Route 16, Washington St., Holliston. The parish center is located between the church and the rectory. Our next two meetings will be on:

***March 19th & April 16th***

The **Tuesday** afternoon meetings will be held on the last Tuesday of the month next to St. Mary of the Assumption Church in Milford at the parish center. ***Please call Ed or Joan Motuzas at (508) 473-4239 by the last Monday or earlier if you plan to attend.***

***Directions....***On Route 16 (Main St.) going north through downtown Milford (Main St.) at the Town Hall on the right take a left at the lights onto Winter St. The parish center is the last building before the church.

Going south on Route 16 (East Main St.) after Sacred Heart Church on the left, bear right on Main St., continue past Dunkin' Donuts on the right, proceed to the next set of lights and take a right onto Winter St. There is parking on both sides of the street. Look for Compassionate Friends signs to meeting room.

***March 26 & April 30th***

### WHO ARE WE?

The Compassionate Friends is a nonprofit, nonsectarian, mutual assistance, self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents and siblings.

Our primary purpose is to assist the bereaved in the positive resolution of the grief experienced upon the death of a child and to support their efforts to achieve physical and emotional health.

The secondary purpose is to provide information and education about bereaved parents and siblings for those who wish to understand. Our objective is to help members of the community, including family, friends, employers, co-workers, and professionals to be supportive.

Meetings are open to all bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. No dues or fees are required to belong to the Metrowest Chapter of The Compassionate Friends.

### *The Compassionate Friends Credo*

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. ©2019**

### *Weather Cancellation*

**In the event of inclement weather on meeting days or nights, if in doubt call:**

**Ed or Joan Motuzas at  
(508) 473-4239**



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



## Chapter Information

### Co-leaders

\* Ed Motuzas 508/473-4239  
 \* Joan Motuzas 508/473-4239

### Secretary

\* Joan Motuzas 508/473-4239

### Treasurer

\* Joseph Grillo 508/473-7913

### Webmaster

\* Al Kennedy 508/533/9299

### Librarian

Ed Motuzas 508/473/4239

### Newsletter

Ed Motuzas 508/473-4239

### Senior Advisors

\* Rick & Peg Dugan 508/877-1363

### Steering Committee \*

Judy Daubney 508/529-6942  
 Janice Parmenter 508/528-5715  
 Linda Teres 508/366-2085  
 Mitchell Greenblatt 508/881-2111  
 Carol Cotter 774/219-7774  
 Wendy Bruno 508/429-7998

The chapter address is:

The Compassionate Friends  
 Metrowest Chapter  
 26 Simmons Dr.  
 Milford, MA 01757-1265

**Chapter Web Page**  
[www.tcfmetrowest.com](http://www.tcfmetrowest.com)

**Regional Coordinator**  
 Dennis Gravelle  
 638 Pleasant St.  
 Leominster, MA 01453-6222  
 Phone (978) 537-2736  
[dgctcf@aol.com](mailto:dgctcf@aol.com)

The Compassionate Friends has a national office that supports and coordinates chapter activities. The national office can be reached as follows:

The Compassionate Friends  
 P.O. Box 3696  
 Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696  
 Voice Toll Free (877) 969-0010  
 Fax (630) 990-0246  
 Web Page:  
[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

## TRIBUTES, GIFTS AND DONATIONS

There are no dues or fees to belong to *The Compassionate Friends*. Just as our chapter is run entirely by volunteers, your voluntary, tax-deductible donations enable us to send information to newly bereaved parents, purchase pamphlets and books, support our outreach program, contribute to the national chapter and meet other chapter expenses.

**THANK YOU** to the friends who help keep our chapter going with their contributions.

### Love Gifts

Lynn Waugh in loving memory of her daughter **Kelsey Mulkerrins** on her anniversary April 18th.  
 Mr. & Mrs. Steven V. Baisley in loving memory of their only child **Stacey Ann Mahoney** on her birthday February 20th and her anniversary March 21st.  
 Kendra Mae Kiraithe in loving memory of her son **David Alexander Schnegg**.  
 Lisa Gelin & Scott Cohen in loving memory of **Brett Cohen** on his anniversary February 14th. "Always loved and never forgotten."  
 Mr. & Mrs. William Rea in loving memory of their son **Evan Rea** on his anniversary March 1st.  
 Mr. & Mrs. Joseph K in loving memory of their son **Kevin K** on his birthday February 13th. and his anniversary February 19th.  
 Mr. & Mrs. Steven Marshall in loving memory of their son **Steven "Chris" Marshall** "Always in our thoughts, never forgotten."  
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Eldredge in loving memory of their son **Kevin R. Eldredge** on his anniversary March 24th.

### CHAPTER TID-BITS

Al Kennedy has graciously donated his picture button kit to make up picture buttons of our loved ones. In loving memory of his daughter Kaitlyn. The buttons are 2 1/4 inch diameter. If you have a photo of your child, you can e-mail it as an attachment to me at [headly@comcast.net](mailto:headly@comcast.net) or bring it to the next meeting. I now have the tool that will cut out the 2 1/4 inch diameter picture to fit it in the button. The circle is an approx. diameter of the button. A special thanks to **Al Kennedy**.



# Our Children Remembered

As a regular feature, the newsletter acknowledges anniversaries of the deaths of our children/siblings and their birthdays. This issue covers the months, March and April. If information about your loved one is missing, incorrect or our chapter files are in error, please send the correct data, including your name, address, and telephone number, the name of your loved one and the birthday and date and cause of death to the newsletter editor, Ed Motuzas, 26 Simmons Dr., Milford, MA 01757-1265.

## *Anniversaries*

### *March*

EVAN GEORGE REA  
NICHOLAS L. BOUDREAU  
JOSHUA O'DETTE  
ALICIA D. JACKMAN  
TIMOTHY JAMES THORSEN  
PAULA BETH WATERS  
SHAWN P. CONTOIS  
STACEY ANN MAHONEY  
KEVIN R. ELDREDGE  
ANDREW JOSEPH DONOVAN  
TYLER PARMENTER

### *April*

JOHN GARVEY  
RICHARD EDWARD JONES  
FRANK W. TOPHAM  
KELSEY MULKERRINS  
TIMOTHY JOHN O'NEIL  
JUSTIN MAYER  
KATHLEEN ANN STETSON

## *Birthdays*

### *March*

ALAN R. STUCHINS  
IAN GREENBLATT  
JONATHAN (JAKE) STEELE MORAN  
DAVID HEMINGWAY  
CHRISTOPHER KENNETH GARABADIAN  
WILLIAM H. BARDOL Jr.  
JONATHAN DAVID COHEN  
MICHAEL CHRISTOPHER BERKS  
RYAN J. McCUSKER

### *April*

RYAN C. TOTH  
JOSHUA O'DETTE  
BENJAMIN ARTHUR MOUL  
LARRY DUGAN  
SEAN PATRICK COTTER  
RACHEL O'DETTE  
DANIEL J. SCOTT Jr.  
PAULA BETH WATERS  
ANDREA RENEE BOSWORTH  
CHRISTOPHER J. BROVELLI





# THE SIBLING CORNER



**This page is dedicated to siblings together adjusting to grief thru encouragement & sharing**

"Siblings Walking Together." We are the surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends. We are brought together by the deaths of our brothers and sisters. Open your hearts to us, but have patience with us. Sometimes we will need the support of our friends. At other times we need our families to be there. Sometimes we must walk alone, taking our memories with us, continuing to become the individuals we want to be. We cannot be our dead brother or sister; however, a special part of them lives on with us.

When our brothers and sisters died, our lives changed. We are living a life very different from what we envisioned, and we feel the responsibility to be strong even when we feel weak. Yet we can go on because we understand better than many others the value of family and the precious gift of life. Our goal is not to be the forgotten mourners that we sometimes are, but to walk together to face our tomorrows as surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends.

## ***How My Family's Life Was Changed Forever***

I want to tell you about my family and how my brother changed our lives. In my family there is my mom and dad and my two sisters Savannah and Sterling. Savannah is 6 Sterling is 1 and I am 8 and then there is my brother Sadler. He had half of a heart. A lot of dockers suggested that he should not be born. But we let him be born. He changed our lives by teaching us to love people better. He was feed through a tube that went through his nose and down to his stomach. If he didn't have it his half of heart would youse up all his energy eating. And he wouldnt grow. One day Sadler came to pre-school with me. And we put a cape around him and my mom flew him in the air. And we tride to make him as normle as possible. He got to go to Gatlenberg and he got to ride on a helecoptr. He got to feel a horse and feel snow. Also he was very well loved. He got to watch us open presints on Christmas. He had two mager heart serger-eyes. That lasted ten or eleven hours. He went threw a lot. He was born June 6, 1994. He died on Mar. 13, 1995. He was nine months and one week when he died. Every year we selebrate his birthday at the grave. And we send notes up to him on a balloon and eat cupcakes. When people saw that life was so hard for Sadler, they started to love there children more and be thankful for there children more just in case they die to and every year we buy a bookey of flowers, and bring them to the church in memory of Sadler. If Sadler woughdint have died we woughdint have Sterling. Sterling is my baby sister and she is one. Sterling is the best baby and she is walking now. And she makes funny noises. We love Sterling but we still miss Sadler. He's still a big part of our family even now.

I have learned that bad things happen to good people. I think about Sadler sometimes and so does my family. Sometimes I talk about him at school and a lot of people know about him. And even though we miss him there are more smiles than tears. The End. (This beautiful story was written in loving memory of Sadler Holliday Moore by his brother Sawyer, son of Gary and Audrey Moore, TCF Nashville. Sawyer's story won first place in the Williamson County Library Association Family Willing Contest for the K-2nd grade category. He wrote it all by himself.

Sawyer is a 2nd grader at Christ Presbyterian Academy from TCF, Rockland County (NY) Chapter Newsletter.

## ***A YEAR OF GRIEF***

It has been a year since you went away. Time goes by so slowly -I never knew so much pain, along with fear and emptiness, could be felt by anyone.

Your death had sent me into a darkness and void that words can't describe. I never knew I could cry 'til there were no more tears, but these came unannounced.

The price of loving a brother as special as you will take me a lifetime to pay.

My pain hasn't been for me only, for friends don't want to see the cost of loving and losing.

They say get on with your life - but they don't understand how big a part of my life you were.

So I will take my pain, along with my special memories, and live day by day.

These memories from happier days are all I have of you now. So I will place them first in my heart.

If I was given a choice, knowing the pain and devastation that I feel today, I would still want you to be my big brother to love... for memories can't be taken away.



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



## *The Process*

Recently we faced the second anniversary of my son's death. Quietly, at home, no friends, no phone calls, no plans, just personal thoughts and reflections. That is how we chose to honor Todd Mennen on this saddest of days.

My husband said he woke up during the night; he had been dreaming about the accident and Todd's death. I slept throughout the night, but when I awoke in the morning I was still in that place between awake and asleep; I was "in a dream". Todd and I were having a conversation; it felt nice. I didn't feel the usual jolt of reality when I awoke—the jolt each of us feels when we awaken to remember our child is gone. The conversation was comforting.



We miss him so much. His laugh, his sincere, sparkling eyes will never grace us again. His deep concern about others, his love of life, his gifts of analyzing, listening, gently suggesting....those have gone with him. In their place is a deep void.

The process of grieving is a strange one. Each day is different. Throughout each day my child is in my mind....in the forefront or in the background....but in my mind. I shed tears unexpectedly, my voice breaks when I remember truly special events in Todd's life. Sometimes I get angry over little things. Sometimes I don't react to anything. Sometimes I seem normal to everyone, but it doesn't matter.

Normal, of course, is what others want to see in me. What is normal for a mother whose only child is dead? Who has that answer? Everyone has an opinion, but in truth, there is no normal, there is no answer.

And so, as we continue to travel this highway of life, our grief is in us and around us.

Sometimes our grief is all we have. Still we travel this empty road.

We understand. We're all different, yet, we are all the same. Our child is dead. We are Compassionate Friends.

**Annette Mennen Baldwin**  
*In memory of my son, Todd Mennen*  
TCF, Katy, TX

## *Shared Thoughts on the Love That Makes Us Parents*

For many, the month of May can be a very traumatic time. We expect the warm days and the beauty of spring to renew us, but often our depression lingers, or deepens, for we are not ready to move on with the season. Many of us feel we are not finished mothering our child when they die. Mother's Day magnifies the fact that we can never complete that unfinished job, and we cannot find a place for our unfinished love.

On the days we feel so sad, and don't have the energy to help ourselves, it is normal to want to stay where we are in our grief. It takes more strength than we have to move on. Our grief can become so overwhelming that we have to fight to get through the day. We feel we are not making progress, but it can be a tremendous accomplishment just to survive. Each day of survival helps us to recovery. Even reversals show progress, when we can get back to where we were before the slip. We often expect too much of ourselves. We are very fragile, confused, and vulnerable to slipping while climbing out of the pit of grief.

It takes a lot of grief before our days can have more good hours than bad. But it does come. Most of us can not even imagine that progress in our early grief. Eventually, we can make peace with our loss and our painful memories become warm treasures. Even though we always think of our child daily, it is with thankfulness that they were a part of our lives.

The only real joy comes from having known our child or sibling. Our grief becomes so overwhelming it crowds out the joy and deteriorates us to the level of feeling we can never know joy again. It is necessary for all of us to go through stages of grief. Once we have finished our grief work (which is much more than a few months) the memories of those we love become superior to the death, or cause of death. And we accept that the real joy was having them in our lives, knowing them, and the mark they left on us.

When our child was born or adopted, we became a parent; that relationship cannot be revoked. We are still their mother and father. Often those who lose only, or all, children struggle with their parental title. We are their parents, and they will always be our children. Love is what makes this bond, and that did not diminish because they died. We still have the pride and joy of being their parent as long as the love remains, and we know that is forever.

**Marie Hofmockel**  
TCF, Valley Forge, PA

## *My Dog Died*

"I know how you feel, my dog died." These words can bring murderous rage to the hearts of bereaved parents when spoken by well-meaning, but errant friends. I never actually had this experience, but several of my friends did and the result was always the same, a compelling desire to strangle the person with one's bare hands.

On the morning of December 21, my husband and I said a tearful final goodbye to Gretchen, our beautiful Doberman, who had been a constant companion, loving friend, protector, and source of great joy for nearly eight years. She was, in a word, magnificent.

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# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



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The pain and feelings of sadness are tremendous. As I look around at the empty bed, the dish in the kitchen, the favorite toy, I am overwhelmed with an intense sense of loss and sorrow. Memories of happy times, daily rituals and the unconditional love that only a pet can give assail from all directions. Tears flow uncontrollably. I really hurt.



No, it can't compare with the loss of my son. This pain will pass before long; we will get another dog (although there can never be another Gretchen); in years to come we will remember her with love and wonderful memories; she will never be forgotten.

But it is not the same. I know this because I have lost a child. Only one who has walked this road can know that no other loss, no matter how profound, can compare with the death of a child. If I had not had this experience, I, too, might be tempted to say "I know how you feel, my dog died."

We must endeavor to understand that these words are spoken from the heart, from someone whose pain is intense and who knows no better point of reference. And we must pray that those who speak those words will never know.

My pain is assuaged somewhat by my firm belief that Gretchen is now in the loving care of my beloved Robert, who will enjoy and love her as we did. She is in good hands. I know they are having a wonderful time.

**Carole Ragland**  
**TCF, West Houston Chapter, TX**  
**In Memory of my son, Robert**

A very special thank you goes out to those people that facilitate our meetings every month. It is through their unselfishness in stepping up, that makes our chapter a safe place for the newly bereaved to get through the grieving process.

Thank you for your involvement and continued support.

- Mitchell Greenblatt (Ian's Dad)**
- Linda Teres (Russell's Mom)**
- Rick Dugan (Larry's Dad)**
- Janice Parmenter (Tyler's Mom)**
- Judy Daubney (Clifford Crowe's Mom)**

## Loss of an Adult Child

I think every parent can remember the best time and the worst time in their life. It is no different now for me. The cold month of January is one of the happiest times in my husband Jay's and my life. Our first baby girl was born, and we thought our life was complete. Five years later we had another baby girl, and both girls were beautiful and healthy. What more could a parent ask for? Then, 31 years later, another cold day in January was the worst day of our lives. We got that terrible phone call (every parent's worst nightmare) telling us our daughter Debbie had been killed in a car accident. I was hysterical. I felt my life was over. I had no desire to live. My life was no longer complete. Our world now had been turned upside down. All I could think about was that my child had been killed.

This was my baby girl, and I was her mother, even though she was a 31-year-old. Not only did I lose my child, I felt I had lost my best friend.

I realized when we lost Debbie I had never looked at her as an adult. She was our youngest and I still saw her as still our little girl. I was not prepared for, nor expecting her to live only 31 years. As parents, we expect our children to bury us; we do not expect to bury them. But the death of a child, regardless of age, is overwhelming, and the worst thing you will ever experience in your life. And, yes, we are grateful to have had our child to live to be an adult.

When people tell you, "I know how you feel," no, they do not. They don't have a clue... I had talked to Debbie earlier that day, telling her we had put our house up for sale. We were going to start building our new home on our lake property. She was so excited for us and told me how happy we were going to be living on the lake. She knew that had been our retirement plans for some time.

Debbie loved the water. She was great at waterskiing. She learned to ski when she was 12 years old. She got up on her first try, and she was so proud of herself. We now live on the same lake where she learned to ski.

I miss her so much; not being here, not being able to watch her ski. All we have left are memories and dreams of what could have been. Everything else is gone.

She called me the night before she was killed and made plans to come over the next evening to see us. That never happened. I never got to see her again or make any more plans with her. Our lives and dreams had been shattered. We will never be the same. I thought about the song "Gone Too Soon." My little girl was gone too soon. All we could do now was make plans for her funeral.

Her birthday was in October. As Jay and I were having coffee one morning and reminiscing about Debbie – we were talking about how old she would be now – I turned to him and said, "What do you think she would be like now?"

(Continued on page 8)



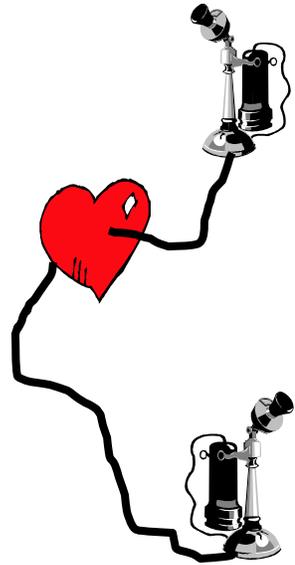
# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



## Phone Friends

Sometimes it helps to just be able to talk to someone; maybe at a time when pain or stress seems too much to bear. We maintain a list of Telephone Friends; people who are willing to listen, to commiserate, to give whatever support they can. In a time of need, feel free to call one of our Telephone Friends.

Ed & Joan Motuzas, .....**Scott**, age 31, Kidney and Liver Failure, .....(508)473-4239  
Janice Parmenter, .....**Tyler**, age 29, Chronic Addiction, .....(508)528-5715  
Judy Daubney, .....**Clifford**, age 27, Suicide, .....(508)529-6942  
Linda Teres,.....**Russell**, age 19, Automobile Accident, .....(508)366-2085  
Mitchell Greenblatt,.....**Ian**, age 18, Automobile Accident,..... (508)881-2111  
Sandra Richiazzi-Natoli,...**Bryan**, age 17, Automobile Accident,.....(508)877-8106  
Sarah Commerford,.....**Timothy**, age 21, Homicide.....(508)429-9230



It is always useful to have more Telephone Friends; individuals who are willing to provide support and comfort via the telephone. The chapter provides guidance for those who want to help. When you listen and talk to the bereaved, you make a difference. A longer list of Telephone Friends increases the likelihood that someone will be available when needed. Call Ed Motuzas at (508) 473-4239 if you would like to be a Telephone Friend.

## Support Resources

### TCF Online Chat Groups:

[WWW.compassionatefriends.org/resources/online\\_Support.aspx](http://WWW.compassionatefriends.org/resources/online_Support.aspx)

- For questions, please contact Diana Jorden, 925-432-3854, who moderates the general grief and suicide loss rooms on Friday nights and Sunday. TCF online offers several specialized chat rooms, all moderated by moms who have been in chat for at least 2 years or more. We offer a sibling-only chat, loss under 1 year, loss over 2 years, loss of only child, suicide survivor, infant/pregnancy loss, and every night (and Monday mornings) there is a general loss room open to parents, step and grand, and siblings.
- You can sign up for the online TCF National newsletter at [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)
- You can reach our TCF National Facebook page through the link on the same home page of our national website. You will be asked to join Facebook if you are not already a member, and we hope you'll find our Facebook page as interesting as do the more than 11,000 fans who have already found us!

### Other Grief Support Websites

- [agast.org](http://agast.org) - for grandparents
- [alivealone.org](http://alivealone.org)
- [aliveinmemory.org](http://aliveinmemory.org)
- [angelmoms.com](http://angelmoms.com)
- [babysteps.com](http://babysteps.com)
- [bereavedparentsusa.org](http://bereavedparentsusa.org)
- [beyondindigo.com](http://beyondindigo.com)
- [childloss.com](http://childloss.com)
- [goodgriefresources.com](http://goodgriefresources.com)
- [parmenter.org](http://parmenter.org) - children's bereavement
- [griefhealingblog.com](http://griefhealingblog.com)
- [griefwatch.com](http://griefwatch.com)
- [GriefNet.org](http://GriefNet.org)
- [healingafterloss.org](http://healingafterloss.org)
- [Jeff's Place-www.jeffsplacemetrowest.org](http://Jeff's Place-www.jeffsplacemetrowest.org)
- [opentohope.com](http://opentohope.com)
- [pomc.com](http://pomc.com) - families of murder victims
- [save.org](http://save.org)
- [survivorsofsuicide.com](http://survivorsofsuicide.com)
- [Taps.org](http://Taps.org) - military death
- [webhealing.com](http://webhealing.com)
- [Griefshare.org](http://Griefshare.org)



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We smiled at each other and he said, "The same ole Debbie," (happy-go-lucky). I often wonder how long it is before you stop missing your child. I have not reached that point in my life yet.

In my family there were six girls. Three of us have lost an adult child. First, one of my nephews was killed on his job and it happened to be on his 22nd birthday. He had been married only eight months. When we got the call about this accident, it broke my heart for my sister, and I thought, I know how you feel. Well, a year and a half later when we got that call about Debbie, I realized I didn't have any idea how my sister had felt! Three years after Debbie was killed, another one of my nephews had a heart attack at 42. I think the support we shared as sisters helped all of us with our grieving. We each had someone we could call and talk to who completely understood what we were feeling.

Through my experience and listening to other parents who have lost an adult child, I have learned that one of the hardest things for a parent to face after their child's death is seeing their child's previous spouse start dating again, or someone else driving their child's vehicle. I remember it just broke my sister's heart when her daughter-in-law remarried and let her new husband drive the pickup truck my sister had given her deceased son for his 16th birthday. At the time of Debbie's death she was divorced and didn't have any children, so we did not encounter a lot of other problems that most parents have when their adult child is married and has children.

Then there is the issue when children are involved. The possibility that the deceased child's spouse might keep the grandchild from seeing their grandparents is a painful potential. It's like taking the rest of their life away. These children are their memories and all they have left of their child.

Since serving as chapter leader for the last five years for The Compassionate Friends, (the greatest self-help organization in the world), I have learned a lot about parents' losing an adult child. Death of an adult child is often overlooked. Some people think losing an adult child might not be as painful as losing a younger child. I cannot see that there could be any difference, regardless of a child's age. You have lost a part of you.

Another difference in the loss of an adult child is that some people tend to forget that the parents are older and often do not receive the support they need.

In losing an adult child, you have also lost someone you thought would be there to take care of you later in life. And if this was your only child, you now face the additional identity challenges in that your parental responsibilities have ended.

Finally, in some cases the adult child could still be living with the parents due to physical, financial, or emotional reasons. Their son or daughter may have become the focus of their lives and there is now a huge void.

Everyone grieves differently. There is no wrong way, and no time limit, whether that child is stillborn, young, or an adult.

As you mourn the loss of your child, you treasure the meaning of that child's life.

*Alice Watts  
TCF, Keystone Heights, FL  
In Memory of my daughter, Debbie*



### *Other Area TCF Chapters*

- ♥ MA/CT Border Towns Chapter ( Dudley, Webster areas)
- ♥ Chapter Leaders: Paul & Anne Mathieu
- ♥ (508) 248-7144.....ampm1259@charter.net
- ♥ South Shore Chapter (Hingham, Weymouth areas)
- ♥ Chapter Leader: Mercedes Kearney
- ♥ (781) 749-3401..... mdkearney@comcast.net
- ♥ Worcester Chapter
- ♥ Chapter Co-Leaders: Lisa Holbrook
- ♥ (774) 482-6066.....sixholes@charter.net
- ♥ Mary Vautier....
- ♥ (508) 393-7348....mjvautier@msn.com
- ♥ Central Middlesex Chapter (Needham, Concord)
- ♥ Chapter Leader: Carol Gray-Cole
- ♥ (781) 444-1091.....cgc603@aol.com



### *The Storms of Grief*

I've often thought about how differently grief affects those left behind when someone has died. To me there are three groups of bereaved. There are those that lose someone they loved very much and are most affected. The middle group are those that cared about the person and will miss them, but their death doesn't change their lives. The third group are sorry that the person has died, but are largely unaffected by their death.

Now envision those groups on a mountain. When my son died, I felt like I was on a mountaintop, alone with a storm raging around me. Thunder and lightning filled the sky, thick clouds enveloped me, and a cold hard rain fell upon me. Winds buffeted my body from every side. There was no shelter, no place to sit or lie down.

(continued on page 11)



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



## NEWSLETTER MAILING LIST UPDATE (THIS PAGE WILL BE PRINTED EVERY OTHER EDITION)

We continue to update our mailing list. We want everyone who reads our newsletter to receive it; however, mailing costs make this update necessary. We want to send it where it is being read. Your donations allow us to print and mail this newsletter and to reach out to hundreds of parents and siblings.

*Please fill out this form now if you wish to be added to or removed from our mailing list. This form should be filled out annually. If we don't hear from you in a year's time you will be notified through the newsletter that your name will be removed from our mailing list unless we hear from you.*

If you are able to make a donation at this time, it will be gratefully received. Please mail to address below.

### PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM AND RETURN IT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

I (do\_\_\_) (do not\_\_\_) wish to continue receiving the TCF newsletter.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

(Parent / Sibling / Grandparent\_\_\_) (professional\_\_\_)

(Donation included\_\_\_) Make checks payable to "The Compassionate Friends" or TCF

If there are any errors in spelling or other information in this newsletter, please call it to my attention so that I may correct it. Please use this page to send back information, reverse side is addressed for your convenience.

**Mail to: TCF Metrowest, 26 Simmons Dr., Milford, MA 01757-1265**

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# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



(continued from page 8)

Others who were suffering as much as I (my husband and daughters) were on their own Mountaintop, and we could derive no comfort from each other. I stood there, sometimes railing against God, sometimes feeling as if my heart had been ripped out, sometimes just feeling an emptiness so deep, I feared I would drown in it. Days, weeks, months passed.



The middle group of people stood on the side of the mountain (close friends and relatives). They also were caught in the storm, but they had some shelter and each other. They wanted to comfort me but the path upward was winding and rocky and I could find no path down to them.

The last group of people were at the bottom of the mountain in the valley. There, the sun was shining and the breeze was gentle. They could see the storm I was caught in, but could do nothing to help me.

Sometimes the storm would subside and I could see something besides dismal gray and I had respite from the wind and rain. But this would be followed by another raging storm. Back and forth, I never knew what to expect.

Eventually the sky would clear and I was able to find a path to those that cared and could offer me hugs and a shoulder to cry on. The storm was still there, but there was also shelter and I wasn't alone.

It has been 12 years since Todd died and I have been able to come completely down off that desolate mountaintop and live in the valley of sunshine. Sometimes I stay there quite a while. Sometimes I climb that mountain and experience that same emptiness and sadness.

We all know that this kind of storm may brew on those special days - birthdays, holidays, family events. We are also blind-sided by those times that just take our breath away. . .being in a place they loved, hearing their music, smells, movies, ballgames, seeing their friends. We really have no control over these unexpected, sudden storms.

I have learned to give into them and let the tears fall. I can live with these storms and accept them as part of my life because my child lived and I loved him with all my heart. I cannot change the fact that my child has died and I will not change my love.

**Barb Seth  
TCF, Madison, WI  
In Memory of my son, Todd**

## A 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 had 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 Arthur 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.

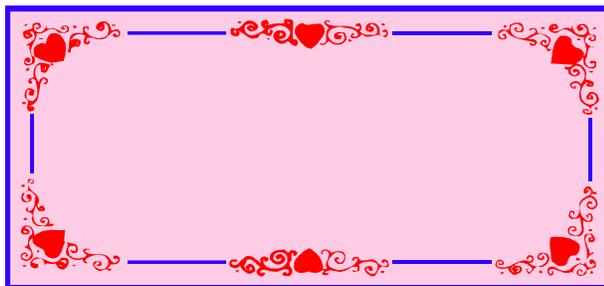
Last month Jess called me with a funny story about her toddler son, my first grandchild. Jess and Brandon had taught their young son to drop coins into a big red piggybank. They were scrounging for coins because their son liked the game so much.

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, MN  
In Memory of my son Art**

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### ***TO OUR NEW MEMBERS***

*Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. But you have nothing to lose and everything to gain. 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 said that will help you in your grief work.*



### ***TO OUR OLD MEMBERS***

*We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together and the glue that makes it stick. Each meeting we have new parents. **THINK BACK...** what would it have been like for you if there had not been any “oldies” to welcome you, share your grief, and encourage you? It was from them you heard, “your pain will not always be this bad; it really does get softer.”*