



The Compassionate Friends of Tallahassee

<http://www.tcftallahassee.com>
V. 2 No. 2 April-June 2008

Steering Committee

Chapter Leader Becky Barch
Co-Leader Sheila Ryan
Treasurer Gary Matthews
Newsletter Janice Mazza
Outreach Marie Primas-Bradshaw
Juliacarol Love

We need someone that is interested in taking over the job as treasurer. If you are interested, please contact let Becky Barch.

Monthly Meetings

2nd Monday; 7:00 P.M.
St. Stephen Lutheran Church
2198 N. Meridian Rd.
Tallahassee, FL 32303
850-422-8404

It takes courage to come to the first meeting. Bring a friend or relative if you wish. You will find it is all right to laugh or cry, to share exactly how you feel or say nothing at all. You are not alone and we understand.

Donations

◆ Bill and Sheila \$100
Ryan in memory of Will Ryan

Lillian Poole \$100 in
memory of Will Ryan

Janice, Nick and
Nicole Mazza \$100 in
memory of Christopher
Mazza

TCF is a self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents and siblings.

“The vision of The Compassionate Friends is that everyone who needs us will find us and everyone who finds us will be helped.” This quote is TCF’s mission statement. The selection below from Henri Nouwen’s book of daily meditations, “Bread for the Journey” reflects our purpose.

Joy is hidden compassion. The word compassion literary means “to suffer.” It seems quite unlikely that suffering with another person would bring joy. Yet being with a person in pain, offering simple presence to someone in despair, sharing with a friend times of confusion and uncertainty...such experiences can bring us deep joy. Not happiness, not excitement, not great satisfaction, but the quiet joy of being there for someone else and living in deep solidarity with our brothers and sisters in this human family. Often this is solidarity in weakness, in brokenness, in wounded-ness, but it leads us to the center of joy, which is sharing our humanity with others.

To Our New Members

Coming to the first meeting is the hardest, but you have nothing to lose and everything to gain! Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not The Compassionate Friends will work for you. It is often difficult the day after a meeting, even for those of us that have been here so long. At the next meeting you may find just the right person or just the right words said that will help you in your grief work. Give TCF a chance to help you.

To Our Members Who are Further Down the “Grief Road”

We need your encouragement and your support. Each meeting we have new parents. We need you to help welcome them, share their grief, encourage them and them “your pain will not always be this bad, it really does get different.

***“We Need Not Walk Alone.
We Are The Compassionate
Friends”***



TCF Library -- Checkout books and materials from our library. If you have suggestions or would like to donate a book to the collection let us know.

Why Butterflies?



Since the early centuries, the butterfly has symbolized renewed life. The caterpillar signifies life here on earth: the cocoon, death; and the butterfly, the emergence of the dead into a new, beautiful and freer existence. Frequently, the butterfly is seen with the word "Nika," which means victory. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross movingly tells of seeing butterflies drawn all over the walls of the children's dormitories in the World War II concentration camps. Since Elisabeth believes in the innate intuitiveness of children, she concludes that these children knew their fate and were leaving us a message.



Many members of the Compassionate Friends embrace the butterfly as a symbol—a sign of hope to them that their children are living in another dimension with greater beauty and freedom—a comforting thought to many.

We are finally through the holidays and then comes Spring with more "special" days....Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Memorial Day...



Spring

I'm afraid of the Spring.
I'm afraid, you might say,
Of other children's voices
As they come out to play
I'm afraid of the feelings
Deep down in my heart;
With all the pain and the hurt
I may fall apart.
Shall I shut all the windows?
So I don't hear a thing?
Shall I shut my eyes?
so I can't see the Spring?
Shall I winter live
The whole year through
And feel safer inside
And a lot colder too?

Penny Lenehan
TCF Brookside, N.J.

Prayer for Spring

Like Springtime, let me unfold
and grow fresh and new
From this cocoon of grief
that has been spun around me.
Help me face the harsh reality
of sunshine and renewed life
As my bones still creak from
the winter of my grief.
life has dared to go on around me.
As I recover from the insult
Of life's continuance,
I readjust my focus to
include recovery and growth
As a possibility in my future.
Give me strength to break out of
The cocoon of my grief,
But may I never forget it as
the place where I grew my wings:
Becoming a new person because of my loss.
Janice Heil,
Coquitlam, BC Canada

I Will Remember

I will remember each day,
To enjoy and be grateful.
The creator has chosen for me to be here
And has not told me why.
Therefore, I will remember each day,
To do what the universe requires of me.
I will remember to be grateful
That I still breathe
I will remember to enjoy
All the remarkable people in my life.
I will remember to see the sky,
The silhouette of a tree,
The flight of geese or a tiny bird.
I will remember to be here, now.

Agnes Furey
March 15, 2006

The Cord

We are connected,
My child and I, by
An invisible cord
Not seen by the eye.

It's not like the cord
That connects us 'til birth
This cord can't be seen
By any on Earth.

This cord does it's work
Right from the start.
It binds us together
Attached to my heart.

I know that it's there
Though no one can see
The invisible cord
From my child to me.

The strength of this cord
Is hard to describe.
It can't be destroyed
It can't be denied.

It's stronger than any cord
Man could create
It withstands the test
Can hold any weight.

And though you are gone,
Though you're not here with me,
The cord is still there
But no one can see.

It pulls at my heart
I am bruised...I am sore,
But this cord is my lifeline
As never before.

I am thankful that God
Connects us this way
A mother and child
Death can't take it away!

Unknown Author

Mother's Day Now

As we move into May, the day dreaded by bereaved mothers everywhere approaches – Mother's Day. There seems to be no safe place to hide. No matter where you turn you are bombarded. Television shows are interspersed with maudlin commercials about what to buy mom for Mother's Day. The card aisles are filled with Mother's Day cards. Newspapers feature full-page ads and the radio is filled with Mother's Day commercials.

For sixteen and one half short years I was engaged in my most sought after and favorite role in life: parenting a child, my son, my only child -- Jonathan. For those of us who have experienced the loss of a child, Mother's Day becomes less about mothers and more about children but what about those like me who are now childless?

Some might think Mothers Day is worse for those of us who have no surviving children and in many ways I think it is – but in some ways I think it may be easier -- at least for me. I think of those of you who have living children and while I am envious of the pleasures you share with your children on this and all the other days of the year, on this day I am keenly aware of the pressures and expectations that both you and your children must feel on this day.

Since Jonathan died, I dread its arrival but I thank my extraordinary and magnificent mother who gives me the gift, without guilt or shame, to ignore the day and pretend it does not exist if I so choose. I told you she was wonderful – didn't I?

I will on this Mother's Day, just as every other day, try to get through it the best way I can, in whatever way feels right for me. It is our day, for we were the giver of the precious life we held in our arms. And even death, as destructive as it is, cannot take away our memories -- they are our child's gift to us on this and every other day but especially on Mother's Day.

I can only hope that as each year passes the heart ache of being separated from the ones who gave us the title of "mother" is replaced with the memories and joy we had in being their mother. May you all have a peaceful Mother's Day.

To my Mother and In Loving Memory of Jonathan Barch
Becky Barch - 2008

Grief Issues

The deepest, most painful thing that unites us and allows us to understand each other is the fact that at least one of our children has died. This shared pain brings us close together, and as we listen to each other, we do understand the shock, the raw pain, the memories that both hurt and comfort, the inability to sleep, or eat, or get enough energy together to do the yard work, or the housework. We understand the anger, the guilt, the loss of hope, and the memory lapses. So many symptoms of the deep grief that assaults our being when a precious child of any age dies are common to all of us. Our hearts are broken; at times, they seize with an actual pain. Our future with our child is gone. We will never know what they would have become. We have become foreigners, or aliens in a strange land. We know we will never be the same as we were before our loss. And it takes each of us a different amount of time to decide to live again, to know we will survive. We share so much that we wish we didn't have in common.

And we have what I'm calling "issues" attached to our grief, and our lives, that are different. Some of us have other children and have needed to comfort them and worry about them surviving the loss of their sibling. Some have spouses that either shared our grief or grieved in a completely different manner that left us angry, comfortless, and worried about their recovery as well as our own. Some of us have no spouse to share our grief, and deal with loneliness. For some the child we "lost" was our only child, and we have lost what we envisioned as our future: no graduations, or weddings, or grandchildren, or a child to care for us in our old age, or grieve our own deaths. There have been sudden deaths, accidents, murders, heart failures, suicides, drug miscalculations that have ripped children from us. Stolen them senselessly. And there have been babies, born and unborn, who have died before they had a chance to live, and grow, and know our love, and young children who have died much too soon. Some have watched their child die slowly, and some have lost more than one child, and yet, somehow, survive.

The issues surround, and eventually layer on top of the deep grief of our children's deaths. We all have one or more of them. Do they divide us? I don't think so. Do we understand another's issues completely? No. My child was murdered. I am a widow. I mostly understand others with those issues. I understand the stress and drain of representing a child at the trial of his/her murderers, and the struggle to forgive, among other things that go along with this type of death. And I know what it's like to live alone. I only partly understand the issues that are not part of my child's death, or my life. But I do understand the loss of a child. And I can listen to what I only partially understand, and care, and not measure my issues with another's. And I can know that these things matter. Regardless of how our children died, or what issues are attached to us, we are present to each other when much of the world is not. The wondrous thing we all do is give each other unconditional support. We are named appropriately. **We are the compassionate friends.**

Taken from TCF of Pasco County/ by Jean L.

Our Children Loved, Missed, Remembered

April

Child	Birth	Death
Michael Joseph Watson	April 3	
Kelly Lane Gaddy		April 4
John David Pollock		April 5
Joshua Martin Wolfe		April 5
William "Will" Ryan		April 5
Dodie Kever	April 6	
Marie Suzanne Smith		April 6
Jeff Godwin		April 7
Sean O'Brien		April 7
Gia Michelle Francheschi	April 9	
Tammy Sansome	April 11	
Hunter Mozolic		April 12
Colin Angel Miller	April 13	April 13
David Andrew Kuell	April 13	May 28
Keith Roberts	April 13	May 10
Gregory Corder Hranicky	April 14	
Diana McShae Harris	April 15	
John Langdale Johnson	April 20	June 16
Nancy Elizabeth Dahl	April 22	
Sylvia Marie Richardson	April 22	
John Adam Christie	April 26	
Brittany Leigh McKinnell	April 29	
Zelma Smith- Jordan		April 28

May

Child	Birth	Death
Jenny Amy Correia	May 1	May 1
Hayley Michele Meyer	May 3	May 3
Albin (Bin) T. Chalk, III		May 5
Michael David Owens	May 6	
Will Wright	May 6	
Anthony Michael Pizzuto		May 6
Paul David Bussey		May 6
Stevie Dobson		May 6
Michael Sayah		May 7
Abraham Smith, Jr.		May 9
Danielle N Smith		May 9
Gregory Paul Burris	May 9	May 10
Christopher John Mazza	May 13	

Rusty Laminack		May 14
Vernon Tyrone Foster		May 17
Ivan Larue Richardson		May 19
Amanda Page Smith	May 20	May 20
Andrew "Drew" Thompson		May 22
Diondra Peters	May 22	May 22
Sherry Lynn Fulcher		May 23
Malayshia Nicara Chaires	May 24	May 24
Robert "Wilson" Thornal	May 24	
Laura Marie Haight	May 25	May 25
Joseph (Jessie) Correia		May 26
Suzie Mueller	May 27	
John Brown	May 28	
Scott David Salerno	May 30	May 25
Amanda Brooke Miller	May 31	May 31
Christopher Sean Kelly	May 31	
June		
Child	Birth	Death
Mark Anthony Pope		June 1
Dena Suzanne Herndon	June 3	May 8
Ricky Powers	June 5	
Robert Sean Gunn		June 5
Leslie Anne Knowles	June 8	
Megan Elizabeth Barksdale	June 9	June 10
Danny Kinsey		June 9
Gregory Eugene Montford	June 12	
Nicholas Irving		June 12
Sara Combs	June 12	June 23
John William Switalski	June 15	June 15
Jerrold Walker Bullock	June 16	
Sammy Mobley		June 16
Robin and Hanna Rogers	June 17	June 17
Donald Mathis	June 18	
Noah Colvin		June 20
Michael Sternchak	June 22	
Colby Strickland		June 24
Kathryn Carr Alday	June 24	June 24
John A Wolfe		June 25
Danny John Densmore		June 26
Troy Tedder	June 26	
Trace Boyd	June 27	
Richard (Rick) Thompson	June 29	
Michael Kenneth Eubanks	June 30	