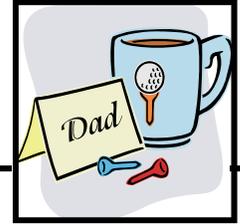




The Compassionate Friends

Wake County Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

June
2016



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If this is your first Newsletter

If you are receiving this newsletter for the first time, it is because someone has told us it might be helpful for you. We hope it is. We also invite you to our monthly meetings at Hayes Barton Baptist Church. At these meetings you may talk or choose not to say a word. There are no fees or dues. We are sorry you have had to experience the death of a child (or children) but we are here for you. We, too, are on this journey of grief and extend our hearts and arms to you.

Attention: The Compassionate Friends meet in Room 224 on the 2nd Floor of the Church Building. Go left past Information Desk and at the end of the long hallway turn right. Then half way down this hallway take elevator on the right to 2nd floor. Meeting room is across from the elevator.

The Wake County Chapter meets every second and fourth Tuesday of the month at Hayes Barton Baptist Church, 1800 Glenwood Avenue, at the corner of Glenwood Avenue and Whitaker Mill Road at Five Points in Raleigh. Enter from Whitaker Mill Road into Main Entrance of the Family Life Center which is attached to

and behind the church. Ask directions to TCF meeting room at desk just inside the entrance door.

Tuesday, June 14th — The meeting will start at 7:30 pm.

Tuesday, June 28th — The meeting will start at 7:30 pm.

F L O W I N G T E A R S

The tears may come,
I know not when.
My face shows pain
And a puckered chin.

Large tears glisten,
Falling down my face;
On a large grey man
They seem out of place.

My thoughts may not be
Of the girl I knew.
Happiness, or sad tales,
Turn the mood blue.

My memories turn back
To my beautiful girl—
Dimples on a pretty face
And a dainty curl.

Odd; but true,
A happy scene can make me cry.
Hold back the tears,
I don't even try.

At times I have tears
expressing joy,
As a child might
With a repaired favorite toy.



My child left through
The portals of eternal life.
Now I grieve and feel wounded,
As with a knife.

The tears I feel
Make matters seem so clear;
Though I miss the one
I loved so dear.

The tears flow,
And the hurt will seem to heal;
Later I know
That life is not such a rotten deal.

The Lord above must have
Created all the tears,
So everyone
Could better handle their fears.

I know nothing can ever
Return my loving child,
Who had a lively step
And manner so mild.

Tears will not wash away
Reality this day,
But as long as I have them,
I have courage to stay.

The tears will flow
And ease my grief;
That, I say,
"Is a great deal of relief."

So if you see me crying
And tears on my nose,
Leave the room quietly
And gently the door close.

For God gave me tears
So I might cope,
Whenever I seem
To have lost all hope.



IN MEMORY

JUNE LOVE GIFTS

Gifts Given In Loving Memory Of Children



In loving Memory of Our Son and Brother

Timothy Justin Castaneda

Karen, Tito, Brian and Steven Castaneda

In Loving Memory of

Helen Joostema

Sent in by Joyce Byrd



In Loving Memory of
Timothy Justin Castaneda



Mom, Dad, Brian and Steven



Please send Love Gifts to:

Love Gifts – Wake County Chapter, The Compassionate Friends,
P.O. Box 6602, Raleigh, NC 27628-6602

Please e-mail pictures, articles & poems for newsletter to pattie.grif@gmail.com or
Pattie Griffin, 30 Shepherd St, Raleigh NC 27607. Need by 26th for next month newsletter.

Melanoma Awareness...the Amanda-Corey Foundation Story

The Melanoma Research Foundation (MRF) invites you to join their run/walk:

Miles for Melanoma Raleigh
Saturday, June 4 — **changed to Sunday, August 28th**
WakeMed Soccer Park
201 Soccer Park Drive, Cary NC 27511.



Check-in and Registration begins at 7:30 a.m.
Run/Walk begins at 8:30 a.m.

Competitive (Timed) runners—\$30
Untimed Runners and Walkers—Free

**This Miles for Melanoma Raleigh 5k run/walk has been postponed to:
Sunday, August 28th, 2016.**

If you are able to attend on August 28th, no action is needed as your registration is active for the new date. If you are unable to attend on August 28th, please respond. I will remove your registration and change your registration fee (if applicable) to a donation or refund your payments.

Contact Jena Kitchen, jkitchen@melanoma.org



In Memory of
Jetton "Jason" King

May 20, 2016
To my only child, my son Jason,



Jason, you are my pride and joy.
What a blessing to have been given a little boy.
You were such an easy, happy baby and child.
What a miracle it was
to watch you grow through the years.

Just shy of your 26th year
the impossible happened, my greatest of fears.
Almost a year later the pain is worse; it is
the new normal, the end of my life
without your touch or companionship.

I was never afraid of my future because
I knew sickness, or even old age, would
be tempered with your presence and compassion.
I looked forward to our time and adventures together.
Even today I cannot resign myself to the how;
I know you never expected to go so soon.

You gave me the most precious gift of all:
unconditional love.
For all the love I gave you; you gave it back 10 times.
I used to look at the stars and wondered is it real?
How could I be so lucky to have such an
amazing relationship with this boy?

How did I get such an openly loving child?
Your affection only grew as you grew into adulthood.
You and I had so many fun adventures together.
We also went through some very rough times
and only had each other.
Just hanging out never bored us.
I was lucky that way too.

I feel honored to have known you
for the time we had together.
You touched so many people's lives and brought
happiness, love and comfort to those around you.

My son Jason was a lover of all things outdoors.
He was raised to appreciate nature
and we spent a great deal of time outside.
The first 3 years of his life were spent
on 8 acres of land bordering a river.

He loved snowboarding, camping, four-wheeling,
disk-golf, swimming, hiking, going to music festivals,
and playing golf. The boy could dance
and loved all types of music.

Jason was a scout
and very patient with small children.
He got to explore caves, white water rafting, and
enjoyed scout camp for many years.
He loved to kayak and fish from a canoe.
Jason lived out in Colorado for a while
and became quite skilled as a snowboarder.

He loved all animals and spent many hours hiking
and playing with his beloved husky.
He was gentle with small children
and toyed around with the idea
of becoming a kindergarten teacher.

In his teens he sailed around the islands
off the coast of Maine with an Outward Bound
group using only maps, the stars, and a sextant
to circumnavigate in the fog.
This was on an open boat where they slept
on canvas and life preservers at night.
They don't even use those boats anymore.

Jason was everybody's best friend.
He was a passionate person with a zest for life.
He openly showed affection to me through
the years even when it wasn't cool with
his other friends to give your mom hugs and kisses
in public. He was a great hugger.

He was an encourager and always lent
a helping hand to those down on their luck.
Jason, my love for you will never die
because we love through the dimension of eternity.

I feel you comfort me when I cry myself to sleep.
I know you have a great journey ahead of you and
I want you to know that I'm trying to live as best I can.
I know that angels are with us.

— Forever your "Momma", Susan Vincent



Random Observations

From Walking This Valley—
Tucson TCF Chapter

Father's Day is fast approaching ... bringing with it promises of happiness and tears. Memories drift in and out, in no particular order ... of ringlet games, slumber parties, rock music and boyfriends. I embrace one for a moment, then carefully tuck it away once again. How "male" our house has become since Kim died ...

Sometimes I don't feel like much of a father anymore. I lose my temper more quickly these days, doubt my ability to make correct decisions and I tend to get lost in my thoughts more often ... much to the chagrin of my son.

Being a parent has never been an easy job ... being a single parent trying to raise a teenage son while desperately trying to recover from my daughter's suicide is something else again! Sometimes I think, "who would blame me if I gave up?" We all know how easy it would be to grab a bottle and sink into the gutter or to end our own life! Who would blame me ... no one! No one ... except Kim.

For, as easy as it is to lie down and feel sorry for myself, I can't do that anymore because I know that's not what I should be doing ... and if Kim were here, she'd be the first one to tell me so. She'd also get after me to take better care of myself, stick to my diet and start getting out more.

So why is it so difficult? Why do we, as bereaved parents, find it so hard to get "back into the swing of things"? Is it really so difficult to laugh and have fun again?

I believe that each of us holds the key to answering those questions deep in our hearts. I believe that before real healing can take place in our lives that we must learn to give ourselves permission to get better. Allow yourself to be human, to make mistakes and to not always be the "best that you can". Surely we did not expect perfection from our children who died ... so why do we expect it from ourselves?

Remember when your child did something that made you mad ... even furious? Did you hold it against them forever? Certainly not! You did what any other normal parent would do. You struggled through your feelings and found a way in your heart to forgive them ... So, just for a moment, become your own parent ... and forgive yourself!

I am convinced that by doing this, not only have I made my life (somewhat) more worth living and can see now that the light at the end of the tunnel is not the oncoming train that I thought it was ... but also believe that I have made Kim proud of me, too ... and that's a good feeling to have once again! Give it a try, you've got nothing to lose!

Steve Charming, TCF/Winnipeg



Today is Graduation Day — a day when children don the cloak of adulthood. They leave the structure of their home to find the structure of their lives.

They scatter in many directions — each to the beat of his own drum, each to follow his own heart.

Today is Graduation Day — and I am sad.

My child will not be among his classmates as they are handed their diplomas.

My child will not participate in the proms, and excitement of this time. My child will not be there. Is he forgotten?

Does not one mind remember him or one heart feel his presence? Please, Lord, let him be a part of this day even if I don't know it.

Let one person for one second think of him and say, "I wish Jim were here today."

For today is Graduation Day — for everyone else's children, but not for mine — not for mine.

I could wax philosophical and say that he has already graduated — that he has made the most important step of all.

But this doesn't help the ache in my heart or fill the hole left there. On other days, I can sometimes feel okay that he is in heaven, but, today, I want him here.

I want him to go to the prom and wear the cap and gown and receive his diploma. I want to see his smile and take his picture and rent his tux.

I want him going to college and choosing his courses and deciding what his future will be. I want — it does no good to want or to wish. These things can never be. I must face this day as I've faced a thousand others — with longing, with pain, and with strength — God's strength.

This is what keeps me from crumpling into a ball of despair — this is what keeps me from giving up and giving in — this is what keeps me from looking down in abject helplessness and lets me look up with new hope. The strength from God gives me the strength to live — and the strength to love — and the strength to continue.

Today is Graduation Day — I think I can live through it — I think I can overcome what it brings with it — I know I can find my way once again through the longing, through the darkness, through the pain, 'til once again I see the light of tomorrow.

Yesterday was Graduation Day —
and I'm still here....

*In memory of Jim Abbott,
Susan Abbott, Quincy, IL*

The Ship

I am standing upon the seashore. A ship at my side spreads her white sails to the ocean. She is an object of beauty and strength. I stand and watch her until at length she hangs like a speck of white cloud just where the sea and sky come to mingle with each other.



Then someone at my side says:

"There, she is gone!"

"Gone where?"

Gone from my sight. That is all.

Her diminished size is in me, not in her. And just at the moment when someone at my side says: "There, she is gone!" there are other eyes watching her coming, and other voices ready to take up the glad shout:

"Here she comes!"

And that is dying.

—Henry Scott Holland

Father's Tears

I'd never seen my father cry
Until the day Glen chose to die.

His eyes were red,

His cheeks were flushed,

His son was dead,

To his beard, tears rushed.

He tried to stem that salty flow,

13 days to Christmas, ho, ho, ho.

But he couldn't stop it, no one could,
That doesn't matter because no one should.

We should not be afraid to cry.

Especially now that Glen chose to die.

Written by Eddy Gilchrist
Age 15, Farmington, Maine

Men Do Cry

by Ken Falk

I heard quite often "Men don't cry"
Though no one ever told me why
So when I fell and skinned a knee
No one came to comfort me.

And when some bully boy at school
Would pull a prank so mean or cruel
I'd quickly learn to turn and quip
"It doesn't hurt" and bite my lip.

So as I grew to reasoned years
I learned to stifle any tears.
Though "Be a big boy" it began
Quite soon I learned to "Be a man."

And I could play that stoic role
While storm and tempest wracked my soul.
No pain nor setback could there be
Could wrest one single tear from me.

Then one long night I stood nearby
And helplessly watched my son die
And quickly found to my surprise
That all that tearless talk was lies.

And still I cry and have no shame
I cannot play that "big boy" game.
And openly without remorse
I let my sorrow take its course.

So those of you who can't abide
A man you've seen who's often cried
Reach out to him with all your heart
As one whose life's been torn apart.

For men do cry when they can see
Their loss of immortality.
And tears will come in endless streams
When mindless fate destroys their dreams.

A FATHER'S FEELINGS

The wind never blew so cold
(though it was summertime)
as it did that day;

And I swayed,
And stumbled,
And nearly fell.

But unseen hands caught me,
And supported me,
And gave me comfort.

But as God is my witness,
I never knew
I had so many tears.

Don Center, TCF Abilene KA





Hidden Emotion



Hidden deep inside my breast is a longing that has been suppressed. The feeling is always there—longing—longing—to see you, to hug you, to know who you are at this time in your existence. It stays hidden for a period of time and then—when I least expect it—rises to the surface and must be tended to.

At times I feel as if I cannot breathe, as if I will suffocate trying to suppress the pain. At other times a tear comes from nowhere and trickles down my cheek. Occasionally, something inside of me explodes causing me to weep uncontrollably.

I can only guess what causes these unbidden emotions. Is it the song that's playing on the radio? Can it be the changing of the seasons? Do the budding trees beginning new life cause me to let down my guard? The longing never goes away.

I feel like a tight rope walker never knowing if I will make a misstep, causing me to fall into the stream of emotional pain that forces me to cry out, as I long to see you again.

With the passing of years, I have learned that if I can hang on for just a little longer, these emotions—strong as they are—will pass and I can live again with the longing hidden deep inside my breast.

—Shirley Muller TCF Lafayette, IN



CHILD LOSS: *UNDERSTANDING A FATHER'S GRIEF*



Men go through all kinds of identity changes when they experience the loss of a child, especially a child who is older and has lived long enough to create established memories with his father. A man identifies himself by mainly two things: The job he has, and the children he has. When a child is taken away by death, a man suddenly loses the largest, most important part of his identity and a real crisis situation has been created, not just for the father, but also for the role the father plays with the family. Fathers love to feel needed; they love to feel like they are the one responsible for the happiness of the entire family.

Men are far less verbal than women by nature, and it makes it much more difficult for family members and friends to understand the changes that are taking place with a father when he loses a child. He often feels like a total failure because he was unable to prevent the death or to fix the death once it took place. This is especially true if the child's life was lost due to an illness or a preventable accident. Fathers are notorious for fixing things that are broken or in need of repair, and when they cannot fix their child's illness and the end result is death, a father goes through a deep grieving period of feeling

tremendous guilt and failure.

A father who loses a child also loses such a large part of his dreams. Fathers don't always openly talk about their dreams of hunting and fishing with their children, or of tossing a ball in the backyard, but they think about these events all of the time. Fathers of girls daydream about walking their daughter down the aisle and dancing that first dance at the wedding. They dream about taking care of all of their child's hurts, wiping their tears away, and being called "hero" for all of the ways they show their strength to their son or daughter. Child loss, in a father's eyes, often represents weakness. Men believe fathers are to be strong and in charge, not at a loss for knowing what to do when death turns life upside down. Child loss is such a helpless feeling, and often this is a foreign emotion for fathers who have been immersed in a society that looks to fathers as the tower of strength for their child.

What is a father to do? How can a father go on and feel whole once again? It takes time to work through the pain of loss. It takes a long time to build back a feeling of belonging as a father. It will often take years for a father to be able to reclaim his identity of a father. It will take lots of working through feelings of fail-

ure and loss to feel like a man who can always proudly wear the name father.

Take it a day at a time, a step at a time. Begin by telling yourself over and over that you will always be a father. Nothing can change that — not even death. Remind yourself often that some things cannot be fixed by you, and child loss is one of those things. Remember often that lost dreams are part of the pain every parent feels when a child dies. It takes a lot of tears and years to work past the milestone markers of such things as dreams of your child playing ball, driving a car, dating, getting married, and having children. These are not easy dreams to release, but with time you will be able to more vividly remember the times you had with your child than to sorrow over the time you never had.

Be patient with yourself! Be kind to yourself! Forgive yourself! And, when you fall into the emotional pain of feeling like a failure, remind yourself that you will always be a father and nothing can take away that badge of honor, not even death! Lastly, remind yourself over and over again that you will make it! There will be a day when you can say with confidence, "I am a father — always and forever — and I am so thankful for that!"

Clara Hinton



The Dragonfly

(Is Your Child Like The Dragonfly?)

Once, in a little pond, in the muddy water under the lily pads, there lived a little water beetle in a community of water beetles. They lived a simple and comfortable life in the pond with few disturbances and interruptions. Once in a while, sadness would come to the community when one of their fellow beetles would climb the stem of a lily pad and would never be seen again. They knew when this happened, their friend was dead, gone forever.

Then, one day, one little water beetle felt an irresistible urge to climb up that stem. However, he was determined that he would not leave forever. He would come back and tell his friends what he had found at the top. When he reached the top and climbed out of the water onto the surface of the lily pad, he was so tired, and the sun felt so warm, that he decided he must take a nap. As he slept, his body changed and when he woke up he had turned into a beautiful blue-tailed dragonfly with broad wings and a slender body designed for flying.

So, fly he did! And, as he soared he saw the beauty of a whole new world and a far superior way of life to what he had ever known existed.

Then he remembered his beetle friends and how they were thinking he was dead. He wanted to go back to tell them, and explain to them that he was now more alive than he had ever been before. His life had been fulfilled rather than ended.

But, his new body would not go down into the water. He could not get back to tell his friends the good news.

Then he understood that their time would come, when they too would know what he now knew. So he raised his wings and flew off into his joyous new life!

~ Author Unknown ~



Transitions[™] GriefCare

FORMERLY HORIZONS GRIEF CENTER

Summer 2016 Updates

www.transitionslifecare.org/griefcare

ADULT SERVICES

Exploring Grief Through Expressive Arts

Many people grieving a loss feel that there are simply no words to describe their experience. For some, art making may help "unlock" unspoken feelings, memories, and insights. This series will use various art modalities to explore grief reactions in a safe, nurturing setting. Each session will include time for making art, journaling, and optional sharing of creations with the group. This is an opportunity for adults to use the arts to encourage expression, insight, and healing. No artistic experience needed. **REGISTRATION REQUIRED**

Every other Tuesday 6:30-8:30 pm.

June 14: Exploring My World of Grief

June 28: My Grief Journey: From Hurt to Hope

July 12: Tending My Garden of Grief

July 26: Heart to Heart: Honoring Enduring Connections

Summer Series on Grief

These are educational and supportive sessions, each focusing on a different topic of grief. You may attend all sessions or only those that are of interest to you.

REGISTRATION ENCOURAGED

Every other Monday (except for July 5) 6:30-7:45pm

June 6: Understanding Grief

June 20: Grief and Anger

*July 5: Guilt and Regret

July 18: You Just Don't Understand: Communicating My Needs

August 1: Who am I Now and Where do I go From Here?

*Note July 5 meeting is on a Tuesday

Self Care for the Soul

Experiential session for participants to learn and practice self-care through yoga, aromatherapy, and guided imagery. All levels/abilities welcome. Please wear comfortable clothing and dress in layers.

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

June 10 (Friday) 10:00am-12:00 noon

August 8 (Monday) 6:30-8:30pm

Writing Through Grief

An opportunity to explore writing as a tool for self-discovery and healing. No writing experience needed. **REGISTRATION REQUIRED**

Fridays, 10:00am-12:00noon

July 22 — July 29 — August 5

CHILDREN/TEEN SERVICES

Chrysalis (Teen Group)

This is a group exclusively for teens (grades 6-12).

These sessions allow teens to connect to, learn from, and support each other.

Sessions may include social outings, use of writing, and creative arts activities (no artistic skill needed), and discussion about the impact of grief on their lives.

Registration required one week prior to event: 919-719-7199

Wednesdays, 6:00pm-8:00pm

June 1 — July 6 — August 3

Caring Connections

For grieving children ages 5-12

Friday, June 17, 6:00-8:00pm

Join us for a night of play, connections, and fun with other grieving children and families at:

Monkey Joe's

Pleasant Valley Shopping Center

6220 Glenwood Ave #104, Raleigh, NC 27612

(Located between Savvi formal wear and Marshall's)

The Caring Connections program aims to connect grieving children and teens with other grieving peers through a night of fun and play. Caring Connections is held quarterly throughout the year, and each program is held at a different location. Pizza dinner will be provided, as well as an opportunity for families to exchange contact information (if desired) at the end of the evening.

All grieving children and teens are welcome to attend this event, though only children ages 12 and under will be able to play on the equipment at Monkey Joe's. Socks are required to participate (or are available at Monkey Joe's for purchase).

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Forgiveness Can Be Complicated

Forgiveness is a word not commonly found in bereaved parent's literature. The word forgiveness doesn't quickly jump into our minds when our child is killed in an accident except for twisted people like me.

The day after Arthur was run over by an elderly woman and killed, I sent her a note telling her I knew she didn't mean to do it and that I didn't blame her. But for years I didn't speak to my sister from another city who had a son the same age as Arthur and whose birthday was the same day Arthur was killed.

Some forgiveness! Huh!

Six years later this same sister's 16 year-old daughter was run over and killed by a drunk driver. Thank God, I had worked through my irrational anger towards her before her daughter was killed so I was able to be with her in her grief.

Most of us have someone we hold responsible for our child's death.

The drunk driver, the person who was careless and let the accident happen, the medics who didn't get there in time, the physician whom we feel didn't do everything s/he could, our husband, ourselves. God! Whoever!

Somebody must be blamed. It's almost impossible to believe that what happened to our child was honestly and truthfully an accident.

And, you know, sometimes, someone or something **IS** responsible:

The driver who ran your son off the road was drunk.

The man running the crane that crushed your child wasn't paying attention.

The 911 dispatcher gave the wrong address and the medics got there too late. The doctor was incompetent.

*I gave my child medicine out of the wrong bottle. Our spouse braked too fast on the icy road. Our child did **NOT** have to die.*

And I write about Forgiveness?

Yes, I write about forgiveness because blame leads to anger and hate, and anger and hate lead to destruction. We are the ones who are destroyed. I'm not so Pollyannaish as to suggest you rush out in early grief and forgive everyone and everything for your child's death. That's ridiculous!

But I am suggesting that somewhere along your road to recovery that you give serious consideration to the blame, either by recognizing that it's irrational and simple letting go of it, or by doing the hard thing, forgiving.

Forgiving can be very complicated. Usually there are practical and psychological elements to it. Hopefully, you can do this yourself by examining what has taken place, thinking about it, praying about it, and then letting go of the blame. But sometimes the blame necessitates professional help to sort through the various aspects of it.

I hope that if you're having trouble getting through your grief and finding happiness and joy in your life again, that you will look at the possibility that forgiveness might be what you need.

Margaret Gerner



It's Okay!

It's Okay to Grieve:

The death of a child is a reluctant and drastic amputation, without anesthesia. The pain cannot be described, and no scale can measure the loss. We despise the truth that the death cannot be reversed and, somehow, our dear one returned. Such hurt!

—It's okay to grieve.

It's Okay to Cry:

Tears release the flood of sorrow, of missing, and of love. Tears relieve the brute force of hurting, enabling us to "level off" and continue our cruise along the stream of life.

—It's okay to cry.

It's Okay to Heal:

We do not need to "prove" we love our child. As the months pass, we are slowly able to move around with less outward grieving each day. We need not feel "guilty," for this is not an indication that we love less. It does mean that, although we don't like it, we are learning to accept death. It's a healthy sign of healing.

—It's okay to heal.

It's Okay to Laugh:

Laughter is not a sign of "less" grief. Laughter is not a sign of "less" love. It's a sign that many of our thoughts and memories are happy ones. It's a sign that we know our dear one would have us laugh.

—It's okay to laugh.

Marianne Waite, TCF El Paso, TX



**Why We Still Go to TCF?
Are you still involved with that group?
Aren't you over it yet? Why do you go?**



These are questions I often hear now that it has been more than seven years since Mark died. I suspect you hear them too. There are easy answers. But not everyone understands, unless you have been there. Here are nine I can think of:

1. Because we never want the world to forget our child, so what we do we do in his or her name.
2. Because when we reach out to help someone else, we also help ourselves.
3. Because someone was there for us when we needed it most; now the best way to say "thank you" is to pass it on by being there for others.
4. Because it is the one thing we do that can bring something positive out of tragedy.
5. Because we have found in TCF better friends and closer bonds than we ever thought possible. Here we can cry and hug people even if we don't know their last name or what they do for a living. And it doesn't matter.
6. Because few people are qualified to walk up to a newly bereaved family and say, "I know how you feel." And because we can, we must.
7. Because sometimes we need to talk, too, and to remember and share. We are further along than many around us, but we never forget.
8. Because many of us believe that one day we will meet our child or brother or sister again, and he or she will ask, "So what did you do with your life after I left?" And we will have an answer.
9. Because our presence might help newly bereaved families understand that they will survive and even laugh again.

Richard Edler TCF South Bay/LA, CA

Thoughts on Caring for Friends and Family Relationships

Frequently the change of seasons adds to our depression. In the spring we look forward to the new plant life popping up all around us, bearing the fact its dormant life was only temporary. Often when the evidence of spring does not lift our spirits as it has in the past, it iterates to the low level our depression has descended. We begin to question why our beloved children can not return to us. It can even make us feel we are less important than the nature we view.

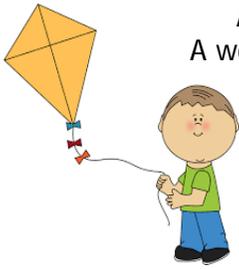
When we are in the pit of depression, we can not see beyond our loss. It is important to have someone who will not immediately encourage us to see a doctor to prescribe antidepressant drugs, so they can shift the responsibility of helping us to someone else. We need someone who is willing to listen to our rambling and repetitive talking about our loss and will not pass judgment, even though they do not understand us. But hopefully they will gently encourage positive thinking. We need to be accepted for what little we can give in return. When we lean on those who help us it is essential to let

them know we are doing the best we can in our very abnormal situation, and appreciate their allowing us to talk about that which is very healing in our grief. Relationships with our family members are also important. Our remaining children need to know they are as equally important, and loved as much as our deceased. By putting our dead child on a high pedestal, the remaining siblings can feel they are not as precious to us. It is best to be verbal and not assume they understand our feelings.

It is very normal for siblings to find more comfort in sharing with friends or other siblings rather than parents. It is too much for them to take on their parent's grief, and it hurts too much to see parents cry. They have had both the terrible loss of a sibling and a stable parent (as they knew them), and they too, are fragile.

The marriage is under tremendous strain. Both are so overwhelmed with grief, and neither have the strength to support the other. It is like leaning on a bent twig. If we harbor little grievances, all sorts of held-in resent-

ment may surface exploding into serious problems. Most sexual relation habits will change and frequently in opposite directions. It is important to try and resolve continued absence of sexual relationships. This takes communicating with one another. A spouse can not fully understand or solve their mate's grief, but we must accept each other's style of grieving. The accusation of blaming a mate for the death is probably the most damaging of all. If this continues to solder it may be helpful to include a third party, such as a psychiatrist, pastor, or some form of grief counselor. No bereaved parent can handle being accused of their child's death. We must attempt a resolution. We can't afford to lose our marriage along with our child. Sometimes an experienced grief specialist can help clear our vision. It is very normal to blame someone for the death. But, most often in a family situation, the death could not have been prevented or the party being accused was acting to the best of their ability. We must forgive for they also loved the deceased and are hurting badly.



A boy was flying a kite. He kept adding spools of string to make it go higher. A woman walked by and said, "you have that kite flying high." And the boy agreed. The woman left and went about her business. On her way back, she looked up toward the kite and said, "I do not see your kite." The boy agreed. She added, "Then why don't you let go of it?" The boy answered, "I can't, I can still feel it tugging."

This is the plight of bereaved parents.

~ Author Unknown ~

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OUR JUNE CHILDREN

LOVED and Always Remembered



Birthday

Steven Vick
Kim Moreno Thomas
Danny Noonan
Wendi Rene Hutchins
Faith Elizabeth Wilson
Matthew Speight
Gary Griffin
Shaun Gallagher
Jarrold Marc Vecchione
Christopher Cyr
Louis Canino
Kellie Hahn
Mark Hardison Lanway
Adam T. Morgan
Cameron Firebaugh
Kristy West
Baby Simpson
Tony Thompson
Addison O'Malley
Charles W "Charlie" Kochersberger
Joseph (Indy) Vecchione III
Jake David Breland Jr.
Kolin Robbins
Tucker "Rives" Mann
Michael Mihalik III
Timothy Justin Castaneda
Keith W. Jones
Lori Frances Pinette
Sean Ryan
Michelle Danko
Lee Callis
Gustin Gareth Hinnant
Javan Stewart
Whitney Mebane
Addison Bryan

Son Sue & Melvin Vick
 Daughter Judy Moreno
 Son Timothy Noonan
 Daughter Margaret & Chip Hutchins
 Daughter Kati & Kevin Bourque
 Son David Speight
 Son Mary Chris Griffin
 Son Daniel Gallagher
 Son Elizabeth Curry
 Son Teresa Cyr
 Son Chris & Pat Canino
 Daughter Claudia & Doug Campbell
 Son Selma H Lanway
 Son Cindy Morgan
 Daughter Jamie & Aaron Firebaugh
 Daughter Kathy & W.A. West
 Son Julie & Robert Simpson
 Daughter Susan Thompson
 Son Kara & Daniel O'Malley
 Son Janet Watrous & Robert Kochersberger
 Son Elizabeth Curry
 Son Kathleen & Jake Breland
 Grandson Cynthia Kay Moore
 Son Karen & Tucker Mann
 Son Jody & Michael Mihalik, Jr
 Son Karen & Tito Castaneda
 Son Keith & D. Marie Jones
 Daughter Allen & Carmen Pinette
 Son Frank & Suzanne Ryan
 Sister Stephanie Riggan
 Son Pam & Tom Watson
 Son Malissa Obonyo
 Son Ursula Seda & Omarr Stewart
 Daughter Betsy Mebane
 Son Hillary & Ben Bryan

Anniversary

Slade Tripp
Stephen Greenslade
Brenda Sue White
Mehdy Hazheer
Matthew Speight
Nicole "Colie" Hoffman
Charles "Chuck" Turlington II
Jetton "Jason" King
Faith Elizabeth Wilson
Ashley Gilley
Austin Wiggs
Natalie Chidlaw
Natalie Jo Chidlaw
Ian Kirk
Lindsey Michelle Blythe
Baby Simpson
Harris Pharr
Stacy Carroll
Damian Curran
Jennifer Holder
Drew Winstead
Rebecca Tucker

Son Sharry Tripp
 Son Marie & George Greenslade
 Daughter Sue & Ray Brandolin
 Son Mir & Hafsa Hazheer
 Son David Speight
 Daughter Sandra Hoffman
 Son David & Nancy Turlington
 Son Susan Vincent
 Daughter Kati & Kevin Bourque
 Daughter Kristi & Mike Gilley
 Son Beth Davis
 Sister Morgan Walters
 Daughter Jamie Brauer
 Son Kevin & Stormie Kirk
 Daughter Jonnie Diane Poole
 Son Julie & Robert Simpson
 Daughter Jodi & John Pharr
 Daughter Ivy Carroll
 Son Sharon Wilks
 Sister Sarah & Mitch Hassell
 Son Gwynn Winstead
 Daughter James & Lisa Tucker



Remember the fathers whose children are gone, because they will always be fathers.

Sascha Wagner





The Compassionate Friends

Wake County Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

The Compassionate Friends, Inc.
Wake County Chapter
PO Box 6602
Raleigh, NC 27628-6602



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