



The Compassionate Friends

Wake County Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

January
2023



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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 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.

Our Wake County Chapter of TCF meets every 2nd and 4th Tuesday nights of the month at 7:00pm in Room 224 at Hayes Barton Baptist Church, 1800 Glenwood Avenue (at the corner of Glenwood Ave and Whitaker Mill Road at Five Points) in Raleigh.

January Meetings

**Tuesday
January 10
7:00pm**

**Tuesday
January 24
7:00pm**

Remembering

*Remembering is such a special thing.
At first you feel and remember only the grief,
the loss like a throbbing dome of pain
over every thought, every recollection.*

*Remembering is such a special thing.
After a while, you try to remember only the nice feelings, the good times.
You fight yourself if memory tries to bring to mind anything unpleasant.
It feels wrong to think of something not perfect.*

*You remember big events, great successes.
She was the most wonderful child in the world.*

*Remembering is such a special thing.
It takes time before you manage to recall without
discomfort that you were sometimes angry at her,
or disappointed or bored with her. It takes even longer to realize that
glowing recollections make no difference to the way you love her.*

*And then, at last, your memory allows you to have
the whole person with you — all your thoughts about
her are comfortable and comforting.*

*Your dreams about her begin to include scenes from everyday life.
That is when memory lets her be with you again, completely and truly.
It may sometimes hurt a little, bring small reminders of your early grief,
but most of all, it feels warm and tender and real.*

Remembering is such a special thing.

Taken from "Knowing Why Changes Nothing" by Eva Lager with Sascha Wagner



IN MEMORY
JANUARY LOVE GIFTS
 Given In Loving Memory Of Children



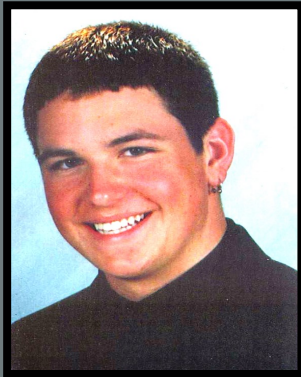
Alvah Ward
 In Loving Memory of Our Son
Larry E. Stafford
 Birthday: 1-19-1952 Anniversary: 11-14-1987
 And His Mother, **Rachel T. Ward**
 Birthday: 7-16-1931 Anniversary: 9-10-2007

Barbara Watkins
 In Loving Memory of My Daughter
Melissa Gray Watkins
 Birthday: 5-17-1963 Anniversary: 4-10-1983

Thomas and Debra Winar
 In Honor of Our Son
Thomas Winar II
 Birthday: 7-27-1985 Anniversary: 5-2-2006
"It feels like he is still with us everyday."

Gary and Susan Yurcak,
 and Meredith & Grayson Ulsh
 In Loving Memory of Our Son, Brother,
 and Uncle
Matthew William Yurcak
 Birthday: 1-27-1984 Anniversary: 5-30-2001

In Loving Memory of
Matthew William Yurcak



In Loving Memory of Our Son,
 Brother, and Uncle

Mom & Dad
 Gary & Susan Yurcak
 Meredith & Grayson Ulsh



At the beginning of this new year we want to thank all the parents who sent Love Gifts last year. Your Love Gifts provide us with the money to send out our newsletter, to cover all our chapter expenses, and to cover the costs involved with providing our Candle Light Service at the end of every year. They are much appreciated because without them we would have to figure out some way to raise money to keep our Wake TCF group going.

These Love Gifts are a special tribute to your child and we would like to make them even more special by also putting pictures, articles or poems in memory of your child in our newsletter whenever you send them. So thank you for the Love Gifts you send and for sending special memories of your children as well.

At this time we want to thank all those who volunteered to help our group throughout the past year. We thank Judy and Vince Schneider for taking on the responsibility of being our group leaders, Charlene Peacock for contacting newly bereaved parents with letters and e-mail communications, Gary Yurcak for being our Treasurer and taking care of our finances, Cindy Jeffries at Griffin Printing for printing our postal newsletters, Pattie Griffin for putting the newsletter together and getting it sent out, Sarah Riggs for keeping our website up to date, and for the many volunteers of our Steering Committee including Charlene Peacock (Committee Secretary), David Tatum, and Dawn Cullom. All of you have been very helpful in keeping our group organized and going forward.

I Can Hold My Suffering

*I sit by the shoreline
and watch the birds for a long time.*

*A strong breeze pushes in from a new direction.
The birds take one step, suddenly rise,
turn with their backs to the wind,
and lift up as the currents beckon them.*

*My thoughts flow back to an earlier time.
I was comforting my daughter by her bedside,
as I had done for nearly one year.*

*Then, one summer afternoon,
after she had held on for as long as she could,
she shifted,
turned from this world,
and lifted away in the wind.*

I sat alone shaking for a long, long time.

*The seasons changed
and I robotically followed them.*

*I felt the sting of the sand on my skin;
I felt the harsh November winds;
I felt the snow curled under me.*

*And slowly I changed as the seasons did.
I learned to live through each time,
through each cool night, and the bitter cold,
and through the warm, gentle rains.*

*Each season has a different beauty
that does not escape me.
I appreciate the glorious moments,
and now, I can hold my suffering.*

I Can Hold My Suffering

— © Facing Into the Wind by Faith F. Wilcox

JANUARY

New Year, Old Memories

Sun going down in the western sky
A lonely feeling of dread inside.
On this eve of the old year,
the new waiting to be,
I reflect on days past,
and ponder the new ones I wait to see.
What will they bring,
will they be like the old?
I wait and wonder for them to unfold.
Another year gone,
one more mark on time,
Yes, another year gone,
but you remain on my mind.
I gather the memories of all the days past
For I know in this new year they will still last.
Into this new year I timidly step
Along with the love so precious kept.
New days will come,
old ones will pass,
But my love for you will forever last.

(alternate verse)

A New Year is rung in
with glad shouts of cheer.
Parades and parties welcome the new year.
Another holiday season behind us,
a new year to face,
New days for the memories time can't erase.
Gone are the pressures of holiday cheer
As we march on in this journey
of this upcoming year.
The mark of the calendar separates us in time,
But the love still flows in heartstrings
of yours and mine.
May your memories be gentle,
and a comfort to you,
May the love you feel carry you through.
Time is an essence, a mark to make,
Taking us closer to the ones
for whom our hearts ache.

*by Sheila Simmons, TCF Atlanta
In Memory of my son Steven*



Wishes for Bereaved Parents for the New Year



To the newly bereaved, we wish you patience, patience with yourselves in the painful weeks, months, even years ahead.

To the bereaved siblings, we wish you and your parents a new understanding of each other's needs and the beginnings of good communication.

To those of you who are single parents, we wish you the inner resources we know you will need to cope, often alone, with your loss.

To those of you who are plagued with guilt, we wish you the reassurance that you did the very best you could under the circumstances and that your child knew that.

To those of you who have suffered multiple losses, those of you who have experienced the death of more than one child — we wish you the endurance you will need to fight your way back to a meaningful life once again.

To those of you who are deeply depressed, we wish you the first steps out of the "valley of the shadow."

To those experiencing marital difficulties after the death of your child, we wish you a special willingness and ability to communicate with each other.

To all fathers, we wish you the ability to express your grief, to move beyond society's conditioning, to cry.

To those with few or no memories of your child, perhaps because you suffered through a stillbirth, a miscarriage, or infant death, we wish you the sure knowledge that your child is a person and that your grief is real.

To those of you who have experienced the death of an only child or all of your children, we offer you our eternal gratitude for serving as such an inspiration to the rest of us.

To those of you unable to cry, we wish you healing tears.

To those of you who are tired, exhausted from grieving, we wish you the strength to face just one more hour, just one more day.

To all others with special needs that we have not mentioned, we wish you the understanding you need and the reassurance that you are loved.

— Joe Rousseau, Past President TCF National USA



**Death is not extinguishing the light:
It is putting out the lamp because the dawn has come.**

Sir Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941)



ATTENTION: On January 10th and January 24th our group will meet at 7:00pm in Room 224 at Hayes Barton Baptist Church (1800 Glenwood Avenue at the corner of Glenwood Avenue and Whitaker Mill Road at Five Points in Raleigh).

MASKS ARE OPTIONAL

A Word of Warning!

A word of warning ... a New Year is coming. This is one of the holidays most of us don't prepare ourselves for, but we often find difficult. It's like running into an unexpected "brick wall." We prepare, as much as we can, for Thanksgiving, Christmas, Birthdays, etc, ... but we don't think about the first day of the New Year as being a difficult day. It often is, as it represents a "New Beginning," or a "New Start." We don't want a "New Beginning, a New Year" ... we want things (life) to be the way "it was." A New Year can be difficult. Warning: a New Year is coming.

Jeff Johnson, TCF ~ Wilmington, NC

Entering a New Year

As we begin a new year and think about the one ending, we often assess what went well and what we want to change in the coming year. Depending on the length of time we've been bereaved, it may be hard to identify much that was positive about our year, and painful feelings may be the most prominent ones as we start another year without our loved one.

Grief and profound loss, like that of a child, grandchild, or sibling, change us in many small and large ways. It can be easy to identify the ways in which we are forever different that we never would have chosen. For example, it might feel hard to be open and let new people into our lives. We may have difficulty trusting ourselves or the greater world around us. Our physical health may be worse with struggles of poor sleep, higher stress, and unhealthy coping techniques.

There are positive ways that we are changed as well even though those might not be as easily recognizable. Perhaps we stress a lot less over small things than we used to. We may focus on ensuring that our time spent with others is more meaningful and less concentrated on superficial things. Appreciation and gratitude may be new practices as we acknowledge the people and things around us that mean even more.

Deeply grieving and journeying through loss require more of us than we could have imagined. Honoring whom we've become through this process and how far we have come is important. This self-awareness and acknowledgment may not be what's most apparent amid the pain and longing for our son, daughter, sister, brother, or grandchild. If it's too early in grief for much to be evident, recognizing all that you've survived and how you've managed through the seemingly impossible is beneficial.

How will you honor the person you've become through your experience of loss as this year closes and a new one begins? May the words and sentiments shared throughout this edition by others navigating their path through grief help you gently enter the new year.

Warmly,

Shari O'Loughlin, MBA, CPC

CEO The Compassionate Friends



Perhaps they are not
stars in the sky,
but rather openings
where our loved ones
shine down to let us know
they are happy.

Eskimo Indian Legend



A New Year's Resolution

People all around us are making their resolutions — lose weight, give up smoking, save money — the list is endless. Three years ago my only resolution was to survive, although there were times when I wondered why. There has been a gradual change in my New Year's resolution, one that I did not continuously think about, and which probably explains my involvement with TCF. That is to tell people what grief is like and how damaging it can be if there are no loving people near to help you through it. The destructive power of grief is pervasive and long-lasting.

To those who have worked through their grief, make a resolution to let others know what helped you. Give "I" messages like, "I really appreciated my neighbor's short visits right before dinner," or "My boss was so understanding about my inability to concentrate that first year." This way they will know these are suggestions that may help someone else, not rules set in concrete. At least it may start them thinking of ways they might offer assistance to those burdened with fresh grief.

This year, let's come out of the closet and let people know where to find good information about healthy grieving.

— Rita Glancey, TCF, Boise, ID



Struggling to Reclaim Christmas

by Dennis Apple
(A Story About Faith)

The first Christmas after the death of our son, I was living in the fog of grief. Even though his death happened ten months earlier, I was still reeling from the shock of having lost him suddenly.

When Denny died, I was serving as one of the staff pastors in a large church, just south of Kansas City. While others in our congregation were excited about the special Advent services, I was sinking lower into the dark hole of unbelief and doubt. Let me explain.

It will soon be thirty-two years since it happened, but I can easily recall the exact moment when I found the body of our eighteen-year-old son. We were planning to go on a ski trip with several other friends. Suitcases were half packed and we were anticipating three days of fun-filled excitement in the Colorado mountains. However, it all changed in a split second when our lives were shattered by his death. He had been diagnosed with “mono” just two days prior and given meds to help with his pain. We learned later that he had an allergic reaction to the narcotic in one of the meds. His death certificate simply describes the cause of death as, “Complications from Mono.”

In those first moments after I discovered his body, I desperately tried to resuscitate him, but I knew he was gone.

I recall the very first words that came screaming out of my throat, “Oh God, this isn’t supposed to happen to me.” Those words revealed the faith and attitude that I held about God, up until that fateful moment when I found him... dead!

I have been a pastor all my life and, prior to our son’s death, felt that if I prayed and asked God for protection over my family, my prayers would be honored. In other words, I felt that I had a free pass, given to me, straight from God. I was on

God’s side, a pastor. I felt as though I was living a charmed life, free from the disasters that struck other families.

After Denny’s death, the church surrounded us with overwhelming expressions of support and love. Our son’s funeral was held in the same church where I had served for so many years. Even to this day, I feel in debt to them for the way they helped us as we experienced the worst. Two weeks after the funeral, I tried returning to my pastoral responsibilities. Looking back, I realize it was too soon.

It was about six weeks after Denny’s death, and I was alone in my office. Overcome with grief, I screamed out, “Oh God, why didn’t you step in and save my son? Why didn’t you alert me or wake me up so that I could take him to the emergency room? Why, Why, Why? I had the strongest urge to pick up my desk and hurl it through the window. I was dripping with adrenaline, raging against God. The rage didn’t stop.

I often heard parishioners tell stories of how their guardian angels spared them from an awful accident. Hearing their stories only intensified my anger but I felt I could tell no one. As the days continued, my anger turned to indifference toward God. I reasoned that God had ignored my prayers so now I was going to ignore him. This may seem strange to many, but I kept on doing what pastors do: weddings, funerals, teaching classes, counseling, but inside, I was questioning the very existence of God. The rhythm of my week was to also visit the sick in hospitals. I can easily recall those moments when I prayed for a patient and then, following the prayer, walked out of their room thinking, “I might as well be praying to the Easter bunny or tooth fairy. God doesn’t care about that sick person, and he certainly doesn’t care about me and

my family.”

Soon after the initial shock wore off, my personal spiritual practices went away. I didn’t read my Bible or other spiritual books. I didn’t pray as I had done formerly. I was still trying to help others while I could be best described as a closet atheist. All the things I had previously thought about prayer, God, and God’s guidance and protection over my life were being brought into question. These thoughts were swirling around in my mind as I continued in my pastoral role. No doubt the members of the congregation thought I was doing well and gaining closure over my son’s death. I wasn’t. Instead, I was walking around with a gnawing question about the very existence of God. While I continued in the role of pastor, in my mind, I was hanging out near the backdoor of my faith, thinking seriously about the existence of God, the meaning of life and how I should live into the future. I pondered these questions for years.

While I was still trudging along through those early years with my questions, I discovered The Compassionate Friends. I read the Credo carefully and was pleased when, included in their statement, were these words, “Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength, while some of us are struggling to find answers.” I settled into a support group and began to realize that a TCF circle was a place where an atheist could sit next to a religious fundamentalist, and both would be safe. Both could share the deep sorrow over the loss of their child, grandchild, or sibling. We could even talk about our spiritual struggles. At first, I was reluctant to let others know about my doubts. Everyone in my group knew I was a pastor, and I certainly didn’t want to be the cause of anyone losing faith. However, I soon learned that others had similar



Guilt

It's What Our Brain Does

by Dr. Bob Baugher



After your loved one died, did you find yourself saying things such as: I should've, I shouldn't have, If only, I wish I would've, or Why didn't I? If so, you are part of a very large group of humans who have felt guilty following a death. It doesn't matter whether the death took place thousands of miles away or in your home. It matters less whether your loved one died in an accident, in a war setting, or due to an internal war. What matters is that this precious person is no longer in your life.

You awaken each day with the harsh realization that the worst has happened. Your future looks uncertain. Those around try to help, but your grief is a dizzying array of emotions and thoughts. And one of the most common emotions of grief is guilt. As we examine this grief reaction, the most important fact to keep in mind is that guilt is a feeling. You cannot talk someone out of a feeling. That's why, when people say, "Don't feel guilty," we don't respond with, "OK, thanks. I feel much better now."

Next, let's look at types of guilt and suggestions for coping with it. See if any of these apply to you.

TYPES OF GUILT

Survivor guilt: You feel guilty because you are alive and your loved one is not. Or you think it should have been you who died instead of your loved one.

Benefit guilt: Did money come to you following the death? If you received any sort of benefit, guilt will raise its financial head.

Role-failure guilt: You look back on your life and feel bad because you weren't a good enough (pick one): spouse, parent, sibling, grandparent, friend, relative. When a death occurs, your brain goes back into the past and reviews all the events and interactions with the person who died. It's easy to dwell on all the past wrongs.

Death-causation guilt: Although you didn't directly cause the death, you may have felt that you should have or could have done something—anything—to prevent the death. If so, you are experiencing death-causation guilt.

Grief guilt: Have you somehow felt that you weren't grieving right: crying enough, angry enough, sad enough, tough enough? Or perhaps you felt that you were crying too much or overly angry or too depressed or weak. Remember, you grieve however you grieve. There is absolutely no right or wrong way.

Moving-on guilt: Have you laughed again? Done things for pleasure? Gotten involved in new activities? Have you felt guilty about it? This is one of the most significant challenges in coping with a death. After someone we love dies, we still get out of bed (even though we may not feel like it). Time keeps moving and suddenly it's a month. You know when it's been exactly a month because that date has been forever etched in your brain. Months turn into years and you realize that you have no choice but to live your life, even though it's not the one you wanted. Time has forced you to move on. You realize that moving on does not mean forgetting. You will never forget the life this wonderful person lived. But time has moved you forward and guilt arises.

COPING WITH GUILT

Let's look next at some suggestions for coping with guilt. These suggestions came from bereaved people themselves. For my book *Understanding Guilt During Bereavement*, I asked many people what helped them in coping with guilt following the death of their loved one. Here is what they said:

Educate yourself: By reading this article you have taken a step toward making a little more sense of your guilt.

Watch your self-talk: For a time, go ahead and beat yourself up with the should have and if only thoughts. But pick a date in the future, such as the birthday of your loved one, and make a decision to cease using these negative terms. When you start to say, "I should've" catch yourself by saying, "Okay, stop this kind of talk." Consider it a gift from your loved one.

Compile memories: Write stories or record them on a voice recorder or video. It can be called "I remember the time when..." Contact friends and relatives to ask them for stories, pictures, and videos of your loved one.

Forgive yourself: At various times during the week, ask yourself, "What would it take for me to begin to forgive myself?"

Write a list of all you did wrong and all you did right: It is important to get all the things you feel guilty about out of your head and onto paper. It's easy to beat yourself up for the negatives, but you also need to look at the positives.

Perform a guilt ritual: In a workshop I presented at

(Continued on page 8)

Struggling to Reclaim Christmas *(Continued from page 6)*



doubts and that it was okay to share our thoughts with one another. Those moments of honest sharing were the beginnings of a new thing that was stirring in my own soul.

I cannot fully explain here how my attitude toward God has changed through the years. However, I know that, at some point in my journey, I came to a fork in the road where I decided to embrace the deep mystery of God and to try once again to follow the teachings of Jesus. Even though I still have doubts and questions, I now live with the hope that one day, I will understand more.

Shortly before our son died, he was active with the mission efforts of our church and was on a team that went to the poorest parts of Kansas

City to feed the homeless. Later, he wrote about that experience and said, “this world is not a good place for a person to be alone.” He understood that the true meaning of Christmas is found in the gift of caring for one another, especially in times of great need.

Getting back to the TCF support groups, when we pull up a chair into the circle of our TCF friends and give careful attention to their stories, we are giving a special gift, a safe space where each person can share, without judgment. It is a “Christmas” moment when members of a support group share their grief, knowing that others in the group are bearing witness to their story. Then, after the story is told and the tears are dried, to watch the relief wash over their face as they begin to breathe again.

It took many years for me to experience the joy of Christmas again. However, I have come to see that one of the best gifts I can give to a grieving parent, grandparent, or sibling, is to listen to their story, cry with them, and offer hugs. It may cost me something but when I do it, I experience the true meaning of Christmas.

Dennis Apple is co-leader of the Johnson County TCF group, and also serves as a staff pastor at The Church of The Resurrection in Leewood, KS. He facilitates a weekly online support group for bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. He is a bereaved father who lost his son, Denny, in 1991. He is also the author of two books: Life After the Death of My Son and Runaway Griever. He is a frequent workshop presenter at the national TCF gatherings. Dennis and his wife, Buelah live in Olathe, KS. They have one son, Andrew, who lives with his wife, Amber, in Seattle, WA.

TCF We Need Not Walk Alone, Winter 2022

Guilt *(Continued from page 7)*

the TAPS (Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors) conference for families whose loved one died in the military, I passed out small, polished rocks to each participant, telling them it was their guilt rock. They were to take it home and, as time went by and they began to feel less guilt, they moved the rock further away until they could finally throw it away. Another example of a guilt ritual was shared by a TAPS mother whose support group used a guilt candle. She thought about the guilt she felt for letting her son join the military, and when she blew out the candle, it felt like a weight had been lifted from her shoulders.

Find individual or group support: If you have found that your guilt and your grief are interfering with your ability to work on your activities of daily living, finding a counselor who understands grief and loss may help. Some people have discovered that a support group, such as TAPS where people share feelings of grief and suggestions for coping with it, has been the best thing they've done for themselves since the death occurred. Many people have said to me, “Bob, without TAPS, I don't know where I'd be today. It saved my life.”

Create a chat with your loved one: This is an exercise some people find difficult to do. Put down this magazine for a minute and do the following: imagine that your loved one is going to visit you for 20 sec-

onds and say something to you about all the guilt you've been feeling since the death. Imagine that this person is standing in front of you. Listen. Go ahead, do this now. What words do you hear? Next, take out a pen and paper and write down those words. Understand that these words are a gift that this person has given to you. Accept the gift.

Channel your guilt: One way people cope with the guilt and anger over the death of a loved one is to channel it into a worthwhile project. Ask yourself, “What can I do now to help others in the name of my loved one?”

Guilt is a natural reaction to a significant loss. As the years go on, you may find that guilt may still pay you a visit. Guilt feelings are our brain's way of attempting to make sense of something that defies logic. I hope you will find something in this article to give you insight into the types of guilt and tools for coping with it. I wish you a life filled with little guilt and many positive memories of the life this person lived.

Dr. Bob Baugher is a psychologist and certified death educator who teaches at Highline College in Des Moines, WA. He is the professional adviser for the South King County Chapter of TCF. Bob is the author of grief-related books and several articles on coping with bereavement. For the past 25 years, he has been invited to present workshops at most TCF national conferences.



An Open Letter to Grandparents

by David Dieterle



Dear Grandparents,

We grandparents are put into the unenviable double role with the death of a grandchild. Not only do we lose a grandchild, but we find ourselves in the helpless position of watching our children grieve the loss of their child. Several of the challenges with which we are faced as bereaved grandparents include communicating with our children, being a good listener (often very hard for us grandpas), and trying to understand our roles with our children, other family members, and friends as we face being strong for our children yet giving ourselves room for our grieving process.

As grandparents, one of our greatest challenges is asking 'why' did such a tragedy happen to our family. As the family matriarchs and patriarchs, in our minds we are the ones who are supposed to die first. Not our children, and most definitely not our grandchildren. The death of a grandchild goes directly against everything we consider the natural order of our family's life. The natural order is for us as the matriarchs and patriarchs to go first. Yet here we are faced with the reality of a grandchild's death before ours. If you are asking 'why' or more specifically 'why not me' (as I did), you are a normal and loving grandparent.

As grandparents, we also must deal with what I call the double whammy of grief. All our grandchildren are very special to us. Each one is uniquely blessed to touch us in a way no other child does, not even the other grandchildren. My first whammy was the loss of that grandchild's uniqueness in our heart and our life. My dear BB (our loving nickname for Briellynn Bullard) died within 72 hours of the diagnosis of her cancer. The hole in my life and heart was sudden. BB's uniqueness is gone. That is an emptiness we will never refill. No matter the time it takes, grandma and grandpa, the hole in your heart and life is sudden. Give yourself time to process and grieve in your own way and time.

The second whammy is the grief and helplessness in comforting our children, the parents of our lost grandchild. We as parents have de-

voted our lives to the comfort and best for our children. Suddenly we are thrust into a position in which we are very unfamiliar. We are helpless in our ability to comfort our children. Stay involved with your children but give them space to grieve in their ways. Process their grief as you process your own.

In our position as leaders of the family, it is important to remember that all family members will grieve differently.

We grieve differently than our children (parents) who grieve differently than any siblings (other grandchildren). Remember there are different ways to grieve. Some will grieve by being quiet while others will keep busy occupying themselves with work or hobbies. There is no right or wrong way to grieve. Give your family members space and allow various ways of grief.

Always remember there is also no timetable for grief. Some family members will take time, some a very long time. Grief has no timetable. Grandparents, don't try and push your other family members to adhere to your, or any other's, timetable. Grief does not tell time. Grief does not own a clock or calendar. Grief has no timetable for anyone.

I mentioned this earlier to you but feel it is worth mentioning once again before closing my letter. Be careful you get so concerned and involved in your children's grieving you forget your own grief. This can be especially difficult for grandpas. It definitely was for me. We grandpas want to fix things, especially those of you of my generation. Please don't forget you, grandma and grandpa, need to also grieve. Pay attention to your grief. Have someone, or somewhere, to go with your pain and grief. You must take care of yourself, or you won't be able to take care of others.

As I close, remember you most definitely are not alone. The Compassionate Friends (TCF) is indeed your friend. At TCF you are amongst friends who understand your grief and your pain. If your surviving grandchildren view you as their 'hip'

grandma or grandpa, you are probably a techie. You can access the TCF Facebook Group/TCF-Loss of a Grandchild to be with other grandparents experiencing the same grief, pain, and issues that come with being a grieving grandparent.

I am concluding my letter with our Grandparent's Credo. Read it often and remember, you are not walking alone.

Grandparent's Credo

We are the grieving grandparents, shepherds of our children and grandchildren's lives. Our grief is two-fold. We seek to comfort our children in the depths of their grief and yet we need the time and space to face our own broken hearts. We have been robbed of the special tender touch a grandparent shares with a grandchild. We have lost a symbol of our immortality. As we walk by our child's side, we both give and draw strength. We reach into their hearts to comfort them. When they reach out to us in their distress, we begin the journey to heal together. Even though at times we feel powerless to help, we continue to be their guardians. We allow traditions to change to accommodate their loss. We support the new ones, which symbolize the small steps on their journey. It is in their healing that our hearts find comfort.

Thank you for reading my letter.

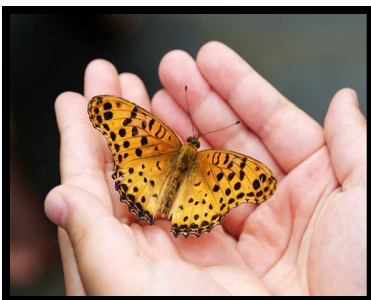
Your grieving grandparent friend

David

David was a professor of Economics at Walsh (Troy, MI). In 2015, he retired as President and Chief Academic Officer of the Michigan Council on Economic Education. Being a widower, David was aware of the grieving process of losing a spouse. As a widower, watching his daughter and son-in-law go through the grieving of losing a child was much worse as a grieving grandparent. Thankfully, David found The Compassionate Friends. Through TCF's support, his family found a safe place to be themselves, to grieve and move forward on their terms. The Compassionate Friends has helped him through the double grief of grieving for his daughter, son-in-law, and other granddaughter, as well as his own grief of losing his granddaughter.

LOVED & ALWAYS REMEMBERED
OUR JANUARY CHILDREN
Birthdays

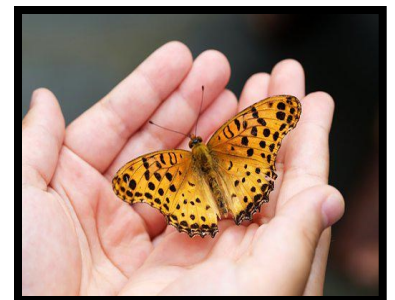
Ian Kirk	Son	Kevin & Stormie Kirk
Timothy Reedy	Son	Kelly Boutwell
Jill Perlette	Daughter	Maureen & Charles Perlette
Kyle Evan Shaw	Son	Judy & Doug Brunk
Eric Metcalf	Son	Kim Berthiaume
Zachary Michael Arata	Son	Mike & Karen Arata
Sarah Tatum	Daughter	David Tatum
Danielle Surabian	Daughter	Judy Surabian
Lynn Williams	Daughter	Wilson & Ann Williams
Pam Demaree	Daughter	Mary Demaree
Jason Yasser	Son	Donna Tyson
Meredith Ann Forlenza	Daughter	Elizabeth "Ann" Riddick
Gregory William Smith	Son	Ann Conlon-Smith & Shepherd Smith
Larry E Stafford	Son	Alvah & Rachel Ward
Kaitlyn Hassard	Daughter	Richard & Korey Hassard
Karl "KJ" Davis II	Son	Selina & Karl Davis
Malcolm McCaskill	Son	Terrell & Candice McCaskill
Joseph Tanner	Son	Jackie & Michael Tanner
James (Jay) Edmund Spence IV	Son	Ed & Becky Spence
Isabella Hedge	Daughter	Amber Silvers & James Hedge
Avery Smithies	Son	Shannon & Silas Smithies
Orion Joseph Saah	Son	J. Royden Saah
Kevan Hill	Son	Beth & Mike Hill
Christopher (Chris) Pecoraro	Son	Anthony & Betty Dodd Pecoraro
Gabriella Alba	Daughter	Dantavia Alba
Charles "Chuck" Turlington II	Son	David & Nancy Turlington
Matthew Yurcak	Son	Gary & Susan Yurcak
Casey Edens	Daughter	Kimberly Edens
Jason Walder	Son	Jack & Eunie Walder
Blake Lemaster	Son	Sandra & J.B. Lemaster
Michael Mendy	Son	Kathleen & Mike Mendy
Jacob Lee	Son	Terri & Bill Holt
Abigail "Abby" Cox	Daughter	Betsy Whaley
Jonathan Latham	Son	Catherine (Cate) Forrester



**I found a picture of you
One that I had not seen in a while
I held it gently in my hands
Lost for a moment in your smile**

**I found a card from you
Written in your own special way
I held it gently in my hands
Lost for a moment in that day**

**Memories, sweet gifts from you
To allow my heart a breath
To let me be lost for a moment
To remember life not just death**

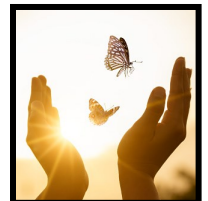
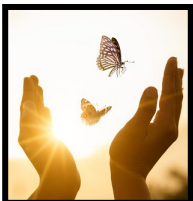


LOVED & ALWAYS REMEMBERED
OUR JANUARY CHILDREN
Anniversaries

Mike Helfant	Son	Susan & Larry Helfant
Reece Michael Melton	Son	Debbie & Chris Strickland
Dillon Jeffreys	Son	June Jeffreys
Bill Richardson	Son	Rick & Dolly Richardson
Michael Joy	Son	Nicholas & Amber Joy
Pam Demaree	Daughter	Mary Demaree
Priya Balagopal	Daughter	Geetha & Nair Balagopal
Ayden Champion	Son	Mechelle & Eric Champion
Ann Myers	Daughter	Gretchen Wrigley
Michael Mihalik III	Son	Jody & Michael Mihalik, Jr
Christopher Cyr	Son	Teresa Cyr
Carol Stamper	Daughter	Mark & Lynn Stamper
Jake David Breland Jr.	Son	Kathleen & Jake Breland
Sean Patrick	Son	Christine & Vincent Torricelli
William Crabtree	Son	Angela Crabtree
Jill Perlette	Daughter	Maureen & Charles Perlette
Benjamin A. Thorp IV	Son	Barbara Thorp
Kyle Kozlowski	Son	Kimberly Lavenets
Jeannie Crusen	Daughter	Jean Pritchard & George Boley
Jason Yasser	Son	Donna Tyson
Terrance Norwood	Son	Joyce Reed
Keenan Cozzolino	Son	Natalie & Chris Dunigan
Jason Walder	Son	Jack & Eunie Walder
William "Will" Hayes	Son	Wanda Hayes
Adriana Toro Zaid	Daughter	Sandra Zaid
Heidi Lynn Bauer	Daughter	Mimi & Merle Bauer
Malcolm McCaskill	Son	Terrell & Candice McCaskill
Kevin Harlan	Son	Sosan Harlan
Isabella Hedge	Daughter	Amber Silvers & James Hedge
Sean Ryan	Son	Frank & Suzanne Ryan
Tony Thompson	Son	Susan Thompson
Kaitlyn Hassard	Daughter	Richard & Korey Hassard
Christopher Alan Brothers	Son	Ronda & Rank Marshall
Jamie Lynn McLeod	Daughter	Brenda Yates
Gabriella Alba	Daughter	Dantavia Alba
Jeff Miller	Son	Carol Shelton
Hannah Victoria Pearce	Daughter	Lisa Pearce
Lisa Diane Gatlin	Daughter	Jo Ann & Miller Gatlin

**Grief is a sacred time where we can rearrange our
fragments into a new definition of wholeness.**

**Stephanie Ericcson,
Living Enrichment Center, Wilsonville, OR**





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**



**THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC.
Wake County Chapter
PO Box 6602
Raleigh, NC 27628-6602**

Chapter Leaders
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