



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS**
Rim Country Chapter

Rim Country Chapter
P.O. Box 3482
Payson, AZ 85547
(928) 978-1492

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

February 2010

RIM COUNTRY CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

VOL. 4 NO. 2

MISSION

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

Payson, Arizona

Meeting Information

2nd Tuesday of the month -
6:30 PM—8:00 PM
Ponderosa Baptist Church
1800 N. Beeline Hwy
(Just South of Home Depot
& the Roundabout)

Chapter Website

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CHAPTER NEWS

I am always amazed at the instant empathy we each feel as new members come to their first meeting. We have the strangest welcome for these parents: "We are so sorry you have to be here."

Yes, this is a different kind of welcome. But it is the most deeply sincere welcome we will ever receive. We are kindred souls, you and I. Each of us lives in the "after death" world of losing our child. Each of us has learned gradually that the hope we have attained has made life better, lessened the pain, moderated the isolation, tears, emotional devastation and pure mayhem that had overcome us. Each of us has learned this slowly, in our own time and in our own way.

Each month new parents who have suffered the most horrific loss that a human can endure are welcomed into our group. We reach out, we listen with our hearts and we remember.

Our meeting this month will be on **February 9th**. If your child's birthday or "Angelversary" occurs in February, you are welcome to bring your child's favorite treat to share. Feel free to also bring a picture or remembrance of your child to display.

Wishing you peace

**A compassionate friend will take your hand,
They will sit, and listen, and understand.
You don't have to hold back and pretend;
They know your thoughts and can comprehend.
A compassionate friend lets you open your heart;
With them you don't have to play a part.
You can talk, or cry, or even complain,
But, with them, you never have to explain.
A compassionate friend will help you to live;
Whatever you say, or do, they will forgive.
They, too, know your hurt will never go away,
So they will listen and let you have your say.
They have been down this endless path,
So, somehow, they can help your wrath.
If anyone can help your heart to mend,
It has to be a compassionate friend.**

Kathryn A. Pelky TCF, Traverse City, MI

FORGIVE UNTIL FOREVER
Don Hackett– TCF– Hingham, MA

Grieving is a fierce and overwhelming expression of love thrust upon us by a deep and hurtful loss. Yet, grieving is frequently such an entanglement of feelings that we often fail to recognize that ultimately forgiveness must be an integral part of our grief and our healing. For what is love if forgiveness is silent within us? We learn to forgive our children for dying, ourselves for not preventing it. We begin to forgive our God or the fate we see ruling our universe. We start to forgive relatives and friends for abandoning us in their own bewilderment over the onslaught of emotions they sense in our words and behavior. I believe we must be open to the balm of forgiveness. Through its expression on our lives, be it through thought, word, or deed, we find small ways to seek life once more. Deep within us, forgiveness is capable of treading the wasteland of our souls to help us feel again the love that has not died. It is the beginning of release from the dominance of pain, not from the continual hurt of missing those we have lost, but from lacking the fullness of the love we shared with our child. That love lives with strength inside ourselves and yet our beings are so entrapped in a whirling vortex of anger, despair, frustration, abandonment and depression that we often feel it only lightly. Let us all heed the quiet message heard so softly in the maelstrom of the spirit. Forgive, forgive and forgive unto forever. Let love enfold our anguish, helping us to grow and strive this hour to a rich tomorrow.

We Remember You

From a Hebrew Book of Prayer

In the rising of the sun and in its going down,
We remember you.
in the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter,
We remember you.
In the opening of buds and in the rebirth of spring,
We remember you.
In the blueness of the sky and the warmth of summer,
We remember you.
In the rustling of leaves and in the beauty of autumn,
We remember you.
In the beginning of the year and when it ends,
We remember you.
When we are weary and in need of strength,
When we are lost and sick at heart,
When we have joys we yearn to share,
We remember you.
So long as we live, you too shall live,
For you are now a part of us,
as we remember you.

If Roses Grow in Heaven

If roses grow in Heaven,
Lord please pick a bunch for me,
Place them in my daughter's arms
And tell her they are from me.
Tell her I love and I miss her,
And when she turns to smile,
Place a kiss upon her cheek.
And hold her for awhile.
Because remembering her is easy,
I do it every day.
But there's an ache in my heart
That will never go away

Unknown

*I know for certain that we never lose the people we
love, even to death.
They continue to participate in every act, thought and
decision we make.
Their love leaves an indelible imprint in our memories.
We find comfort in knowing that our lives have been
enriched by having shared their love.*

Leo Buscaglia

You don't get over it,
You just get
through it.
You don't get by it,
Because you can't get
around it.
It doesn't "get better" it
just gets different.
Everyday....
Grief puts on a new face.
Wendy Feireisen

MY OLD FRIEND GRIEF

My old friend Grief is back. He comes to visit me once in awhile to remind me that I am still a broken man. Surely there has been much healing since my son died six years ago, and surely I have adjusted to a world without him. But the truth is, we never completely heal, we never totally adjust. Such is the nature of the loss that no matter how much life has been experienced, the heart of the bereaved will never be the same. It's as though a part of us dies with the person we lose through death.

And so my old friend Grief drops in to say "Hello". Sometimes he enters through the door of my memory. I'll hear a song or smell a fragrance. I'll look at a picture and I'll remember how it used to be. Sometimes it brings a smile to my face.... sometimes a tear.

One may say that remembrance is unhealthy... that we shouldn't dwell on thoughts that make us sad. Yet the opposite is true. Grief re-visited is Grief acknowledged and Grief confronted is Grief resolved. But if Grief is resolved, why do we feel a sense of loss when we least expect it? Because healing doesn't mean forgetting and moving on with life doesn't mean that we don't take a part of our lost love with us. Of course the intensity of the pain decreases over time if we allow Grief to visit from time to time.

Sometimes my old friend Grief sneaks up on me. It's as though the one's we have lost are determined not to be forgotten. My old friend Grief doesn't get in the way of living. He just wants to come along and chat sometimes.

Grief has taught me a few things about living I wouldn't have learned on my own. He has taught me that if I try to deny the reality of loss, I end up having to deny life altogether. Old Grief has taught me that I can survive great loss and although my world is different, it's still my world and I must live in it.

My old friend Grief has taught me that the loss of a loved one doesn't mean the permanence of death. My friend will be back again and again to remind me to confront my new reality and to gain through loss and pain.

Adolfo Quesada
TCF— Colorado

Thoughts About Progress

One thing that is frequently discussed at our meetings is the despair of thinking you are on the road to “recovery”, when all of a sudden you seem to be back at square one. But are you really?

Let’s keep in mind most of us have had no previous experience “recovering” from the loss of a child. Therefore, we have no point of reference—It’s all new to us. Actually, the “roller coaster” of emotions is perfectly normal. In the very beginning most of us seem to vacillate between dead numbness and excruciating pain. Constant crying, to not a tear left—just dried up and limp. We actually are living minute-to-minute.

After a couple of months we might actually have a few hours that we have not cried or felt that deep overwhelming despair. Then, WHAM—back to where we started. We tend to panic and think something is wrong with us. Let’s be realistic!! There is something wrong—terribly wrong: we have each lost a child.

Let’s be fair to ourselves. We started to play a role to the outside world. Like the old song says, “laughing on the outside—crying on the inside.” We want to be acceptable to society. “You are doing so well,” we hear. If only they knew! We may feel we have to fool others, but let us really be honest about our feelings. To deny our feelings, particularly to ourselves, is to block the road to recovery. Remember that recovery in this case does not mean “getting over it,” it means to gain control of our lives again.

So, let’s not worry about what other people think, say, or expect. Our friends (well meaning as they are), sometimes members of our family, even someone who has lost a child, should not sit in judgment. Each person grieves differently, due to a person’s general make-up and the relationship with the dead child. Unless someone has totally withdrawn from everything and everybody over a lengthy period of time, the chances are all is in the realm of normalcy. Only after we have walked down the long road of grief and can look back, remembering those early days and weeks, can we see we really are not on square one again. We have just slipped backwards for a time. That is all. Allow yourself that, and then strive forward again. It takes time, a lot of time! We tend to expect too much from others, others expect too much from us and therefore, we tend to expect too much from ourselves.

Mary Ehrmann
TCF- Valley Forge, PA

The Season of the Heart

This is the Season of the Heart! Yet many of us will be asking how to live during this season with a heart that is broken. Just what is it that our hearts are knowing during these days? What are the feelings that pulsate and ebb and flow? Is it-

- the Heart that catches its breath on a memory and is overwhelmed?
- the Heart that feels it absolutely cannot hold one more ounce of pain?
- the Heart that knows the fleeting smile of a loved one?
- the Heart that catches a fragment of joy and is warmed?
- the Heart that knows pain, and keeps on loving?
- the Heart that is tempted to lie still and lonely?
- the Heart that searches for the acceptance of a friend?
- the Heart that is one day, suddenly surprisingly single?

Questions arise! Why is a heart red, and why does it have two lobes?

A response might be-

- A Heart is so vulnerable; so easily bloodied.
- A Heart consists of opposites; changed by sorrow and by joy.
- A Heart, when whole, includes all emotions.
- A Heart can lie cold and sad and broken...
- A Heart can grow and heal and love...

We each have our choices to make!

Marie Andrews
TCF- Southern Maryland Chapter, MD

Some Quiet Valentines

While watching an evening sunset
Fade in the western skies,
We know that when tomorrow dawns,
From the east the sun will rise.
Although it may be hidden
By veils hanging low,
We're sure it will appear again
And we'll feel its warming glow.

And so it is with life,
When seen through misty eyes,
When our world is suddenly dimmed
And we plead and ask those whys.
It is then we learn, 'no man is an island,'
As someone wisely said,
As we travel life's uncharted course
And by an unknown hand seem led.

To walk that path of sorrow,
Enduring life's great loss,
But by chance or fate that someone's
Path we are guided to cross.
That someone through kindness
In his or her way does impart,
A warmth and a tenderness
That so lifts a sad heart.

For it's the depth of their smile
That lifts this sorrow of mine,
And by far they are best suited
To be our Valentine.

We may be someone's Valentine
And never be aware,
In these caring, still-grieving hearts,
Our children's love is there.
We've no choice but to continue
On life's uncharted way,
And be thankful for those quiet friends
Who brighten up each day.

From TCF Newsletter Cleveland, OH
Printed in Atlanta TCF Newsletter Feb
98

TO HONOR YOU

To honor you, I get up everyday and take a breath.
And start another day without you in it.

To honor you, I laugh and love with those who knew your smile.
And the way your eyes twinkled with mischief and secret knowledge.

To honor you, I take the time to appreciate everyone I love.
I know now there is no guarantee of days or hours spent in their presence.

To honor you, I listen to music you would have liked.
And sing at the top of my lungs, with the windows rolled down.

To honor you, I take chances, say what I feel, hold nothing back.
Risk making a fool of myself, dance every dance.

You were my light, my heart, my gift of love, from the very highest source.
So everyday, I vow to make a difference, share a smile, live, laugh and love.

Now I live for us both, so all I do, I do to honor you.

Connie F. Kiefer Byrd
In Loving Memory of Jordan Alexander Kiefer
8/24/88 - 12/13/05

Waiting for You
By Mary Cleckley
Lawrenceville, GA

There's a valentine waiting for you,
that's different from all the others.
It's there every month at our meetings
of heartbroken fathers and mothers.

Its envelope is made of caring,
the glue of understanding seals it tight.
This non-judgmental group who've
"been there" help to take away your
fear and fright.

So, come join with us together,
read your loving message printed clear.
In not only this month's valentine,
but all those throughout the year.

We wish there was a magic formula for chasing away those post-holiday, pre-spring gloomies that so many of us suffer from in January and February. Problem is there's no such thing as a generic cure-all for the blahs. The task of "grief work" after the death of a child is hard work. There is no way to predict how you will feel. The reactions of grief are not like recipes with given ingredients and certain results. Each person mourns in a different way. You may cry hysterically, or you may remain outwardly controlled, showing little emotion. You may lash out in anger against your family and friends, or you may express your gratitude for their concern and dedication. You may be calm one moment – in turmoil the next. Reactions are varied and contradictory. Grief is universal. At the same time, it is extremely personal. Heal in your own way.

Rabbi Earl Grollman
"Living When a Loved One Has Died"

Remembering our Loved Ones on Valentine's Day

We've barely made it through the holidays of December and January, and now the stores are filled with hearts and flowers and candy, all of it in celebration of the gift of love. But February 14 can be a difficult day for those of us who are grieving, and for some it will be the first Valentine's Day since our precious Valentine died. For us there is no celebration; there is only grief

Sometimes, for fear of "letting go," we may find ourselves "holding on" to our pain as a way of remembering those we love. Letting go of what used to be is not an act of disloyalty, and it does not mean forgetting our loved ones who have died. Letting go means leaving behind the sorrow and pain of grief and choosing to go on, taking with us only those memories and experiences that enhance our ability to grow and expand our capacity for happiness.


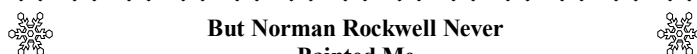

If our memories are painful and unpleasant, they can be hurtful and destructive. If they create longing and hold us to the past, they can interfere with our willingness to move forward in our grief journey. But it doesn't have to be that way. We can choose which parts of life we shared that we wish to keep and which parts we wish to leave behind. We can soothe our pain by thinking of happy as well as sad memories. The happiness we experienced with our loved ones belongs to us forever.

If we decide to do so, we can choose to embrace Valentine's Day as a special day on which to commemorate our loved ones and to celebrate our love for them. Death ends a life, but it does not end the relationship we have with our loved ones who have died. The bonds of love are never severed by death, and the love we shared will never die either. For Valentine's Day this year, we can find a way to honor our loved ones, to remember them and to show them that our love is eternal.

We can build a piece of "memory time" into that particular day, or we can pack the entire day with meaning. Think of it this way: It's much easier to cope with memories we've chosen than to have them take us by surprise. Whether we are facing Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Memorial Day, an anniversary or birthday, or any other special day of our own choosing, we can immerse ourselves in the healing power of remembrance. We can go to a special place, read aloud, or listen to a favorite song. We can celebrate what once was and is no more.

Personal grief rituals are those loving activities that help us remember our loved ones, and give us a sense of connectedness, healing and peace. Creating and practicing personal grief rituals can also help us release painful situations and unpleasant memories, freeing us to make our memories a positive influence in our lives.

Bereavement Counselor Marty Tousley is the creator and instructor of the online courses [The First Year of Grief: Help for the Journey](#) and [A Different Grief: Coping with Pet Loss](#) exclusively available through www.SelfHealingExpressions.com. Her award-winning Web site, www.GriefHealing.com, offers information, comfort and support to anyone who is anticipating or mourning the loss of a loved one, whether human or animal. Copyright © by Marty Tousley. All rights reserved.


**But Norman Rockwell Never
Painted Me**

At this time of year it always seems
That I see the families of others' dreams
Everywhere I look, every ad I see
Shows the joyful reunions of family
With the table laden, good times abound
While families, reunited, gather around
But Rockwell never painted an empty chair
And a family mourning the one who's not there
A season that once was celebrated
Now makes us feel more isolated
I need TCF so that I can see
That there are others just like me
Whose feelings about holidays are mixed, at best
Whose strength of will are put to the test
We're loving those that we still hold near
But thoughts of one out of reach brings a tear
Even now, amidst the love and gladness
This time of year brings a certain sadness
I no longer have the average family
So That's why Rockwell never painted me
Kathy Hahn
TCF - Lower Bucks, PA


Feelings From Facts

After our son Bret was killed in an auto accident, I discovered there can be a big difference between feelings and facts. We need to recognize and deal with feelings. But, while we must not deny them, we don't want our feelings controlling us. Below are some feelings/facts I had to sort out--you may have some of your own.

SEPARATE FEELINGS FROM FACTS:

You feel like you are going to die-FACT is, you will live.

You feel like you will never be happy again-FACT is, you can find happiness if you allow yourself, if you search.

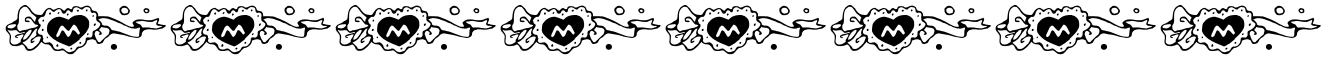
You feel cheated-FACT is, no law was ever passed, no one ever guaranteed you would have one or two or more perfect children and they would live twenty years after you die.

You feel like you are the only one going through this, or feeling like this-FACT is, every bereaved parent has gone through or is going through this and feeling like you.

You feel like no one understands-FACT is, no one can feel what you are feeling but they can be understanding caring.

You feel like there is no one you can talk to-FACT is, there is someone who will listen, you do have to search them out.

Lois Eske
TCF-Phoenix, AZ



LOVE GIFTS AND DONATIONS

A love gift is to **"REMEMBER THE LIVES OF OUR CHILDREN."** Since TCF has no membership dues, we rely upon tax-deductible donations for funds to pay the chapters expenses: printing and mailing of our newsletter, books for our lending libraries, our phone message line and information packets sent to newly bereaved families and professionals in the community. Books donated for our libraries and volunteer work for your chapter also qualify as "love gifts." Make your checks payable to The Compassionate Friends and mail to: PO Box 3482 Payson Arizona 85547. **Love gifts received prior to the 23rd of each month will appear in the following month's newsletter.**

MEMORY PAGE

If you wish to have your child remembered on our Memory Page, please complete the form below and Mail to PO Box 3482, Payson Arizona 85547

PARENT(S) NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

PHONE _____

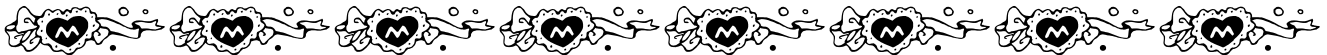
CHILD'S NAME _____ M or F (circle)

DATE OF BIRTH _____ DATE OF DEATH _____

Enclosed is a love gift in memory of my child to help defray costs of the Rim Country Chapter:

_____ \$5 _____ \$10 _____ \$25 _____ Other **THANKS!!!!**

The anniversary of your child's birth and death are often extremely painful days. We ask that you keep in your thoughts the parents who are observing such days. In this newsletter is the memory page update. If you haven't sent one in yet, please take a moment to fill it out and send it in. We would like to share your memory days with you.



Our children ... always loved, missed, remembered ...

FEBRUARY 2010 LOVE GIFTS

**Patricia Irvin in Memory of her son WILLIAM (BILLY) FRANK MANNING
Jack & Barbara Gooch in Memory of Granddaughter KAITLYN (KATIE) GOOCH**

FEBRUARY 2010 MEMORY PAGE

**RYAN DAVID GOLEMBEWSKI... Son of David Golembewski
GRACIE LEE HAUGHT... Daughter of Hooter & Bobbie Jo Haught
KIM MARIE BAILEY... Daughter of Bits Siller**



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***We Need not Walk Alone.....
We are The Compassionate Friends.***

E-mail us at info@rimcountrytcf.org or call us at 928-978-1492 if you would like to submit articles, be added to or removed from this newsletter mail list or to correct information.

Newsletter printing & mailing donated by Able Steel Fabricators in memory of Cory James Clark

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

**We need not walk alone...
We are The Compassionate
Friends.**

We reach out to each other with love, with understanding and with hope. Our children have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for our children 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 circum-



stances.

We are a unique family because we represent many races and creeds. 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 we feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source for strength; some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in a deep depression;

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 our children. We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building that future together as we reach out to each other in love and 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 grieve as well as to grow.