



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Rim Country Chapter
P.O. Box 3482
Payson, AZ 85547

A national non-profit, self-help support organization offering friendship, understanding, and hope to families grieving the death of a child of any age, from any cause.

JUNE 2008

RIM COUNTRY CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

VOL. 2 NO. 6

MISSION

The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward 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 Info

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

www.RimCountryTCF.org
E-mail Address
info@rimcountrytcf.org

Chapter Leaders:

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TCF NATIONAL OFFICE

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OAKBROOK, IL 60522-3696
(877) 969-0010, FAX (630) 990-0246

CompassionateFriends.org

Regional Coordinator:
Gene Caligari 480-361-1877

CHAPTER NEWS

Our next meeting is June 10.

This month we celebrate Father's Day. Come share any special memories you may have of past Father's Days with us.



All Payson and Rim Country residents are invited to gather on Main Street and show their patriotism and welcome "THE WALL" on June 5th @ 8:45 am. The Payson Fire Dept. and over 1,000 motorcycles will escort "The Wall" to its staging destination at Green Valley Park.

FATHER'S DAY

As this day approaches I wonder how I will react.
Am I still a father?

I will sit quietly never allowing family and friends to see how I feel.

I will miss my son, but I can't allow myself to "break".

I must remain strong and always be the 'rock'".

I wish I could just let someone know how much I miss my little angel.

How much I cry and how much I miss hearing "Dad I love you."

I am a father, but I wonder, will I just pretend, as usual, that it doesn't bother me?

Remember me, for I hurt, too, on this special day.

TCF- Tampa, FL.

THERE'S A NEW MAN IN TOWN

By Dave Simone

Bereaved Father, Tampa, Florida

My son is dead. The moment I was told my son died in an auto accident, there was a new man in town. The old man would find a way to fix "it" or at least make "it" better. The new man couldn't fix a thing. Oh, he could make arrangements, settle accounts, acknowledge condolences as though he were really there but the new man was far off, living in a protective shell hardened by disbelief and shock. Yes, he did things, but he didn't feel in the old ways, he was far off being reborn.

My wife's grief would bring the new man back, at least for a while. There was no fixing her, just acknowledgement of the hurt and pain and helplessness we both felt. I was there for her as she was there for me and we bonded in our grief at depths we did not know existed. My son did not die to make our marriage better or worse and his death did not change what it fundamentally was and is. There is however a new level where we meet to hurt and heal together.

When a baby is born there are pain and tears followed by profound joy. If that baby dies before his parents, there is pain and tears and a longing for peace. No man can anticipate the number of tears that will flow during his rebirth. The half hour drive to work each morning was a time of nothing but tears and pain and guardian angels to provide safety for myself and those around me. The new man was every bit the good driver the old man was, but he wasn't there, he was far off being reborn in those unstoppable tears. Peace was nowhere to be found.

I am not going into detail into the many ways I think I have changed. Believe me, I have changed and so have you fellow bereaved father. I cannot believe my son died to make me a better man. I do believe that my son's death shocked me into holding dear all that was always precious to me with the new knowledge that "it" can all end in an instant, and neither the old man nor the new man can ever fix "it". The protective shell is fading away and real peace is finding its way into my heart and soul. But the shell will never be completely gone and the peace will never blend into complacency. We are new men with new priorities and new things to do. This does not mean we abandon all that was of the old man, the newness is in our attitudes and understanding and acceptance of vulnerability.

OUR LOVED ONES DIED, BUT THE LOVE WE

SHARE BETWEEN US CAN NEVER BE DESTROYED.

IT IS SECURE. PEACEFUL AND THERE TO

SUSTAIN US WHENEVER WE NEED IT.

DARCIE SIMS



A GRIEVING HUSBANDS THOUGHTS

BY; PAT GRIMM
BEREAVED FATHER

There is a wife who is missing at our house.
I'm not sure where she has gone,
I never seem able to reach her,
And time seems ever so long.
Often I try to talk to her,
And she is just not there.
And I have grown accustomed to
That blank and aimless stare,

I lost a son, too and I loved him as much,
But it seems like she just does not hear.
Does she know men do not grieve the same?
That inside we are shedding our tears,
And I would give anything to have Andy back.
And start our lives anew.

If I could just see my wife smile again,
But I do not know what to do,
So...I will stick in there and keep doing my best
To comfort, love her and pray,
That my wife will come back to our house again,
In each and every way.



BEATITUDES

Blessed are those who do not use tears to measure the true feelings of the bereaved.

Blessed are those who stifle the urge to say, "I understand" when they don't.

Blessed are those who hear with their hearts and not their minds.

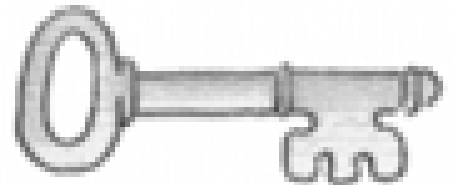
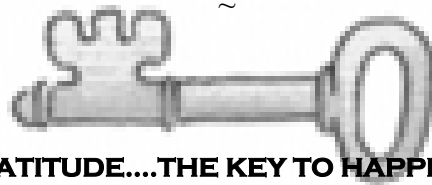
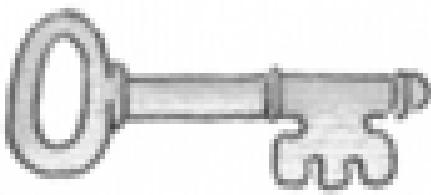
Blessed are those who allow the bereaved enough time to heal.

Blessed are those who admit their uncomfortableness and put it aside to help the bereaved.

Blessed are those who do not give unwanted advice.

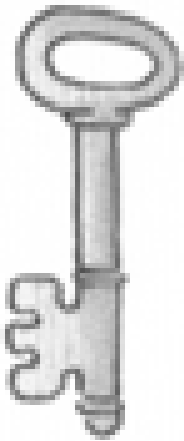
Blessed are those who continue to call, visit, and reach out when the crowd has dwindled and the wounded are left standing alone.

Blessed are those who realize the fragility of bereavement and handle it with an understanding shoulder and a loving heart.



GRATITUDE....THE KEY TO HAPPINESS

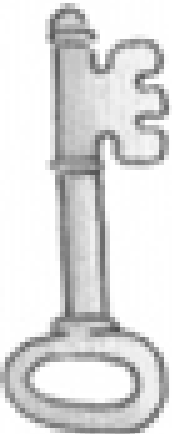
I am convinced that the key to happiness is gratitude. I did not come upon this insight, I learned it from Dennis Prager, a wonderful and gifted man who is both author and talk show host for KABC radio in Los Angeles. I give him all the credit. But I have thought a lot about this idea after my son, Mark, died five years ago tomorrow.



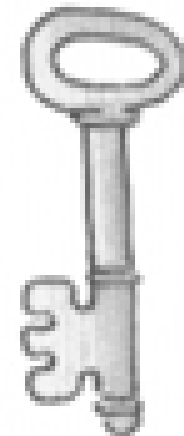
At first, I was offended by people who smiled or even laughed during a COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS meeting. These were people who seemed to have somehow re-entered the land of the living. How dare they greet each other with hugs. How dare they laugh? How dare they appear normal when their children have died?

But over the last five years I have learned three valuable lessons:

...Life goes on and we must too. Gradually the pain eases and the warm memories replace the sadness. Gradually we return to life. One day we find that it is 11:00 in the morning and we have not thought about our child yet. At first we feel guilt. But then we realize we are going forward. We will never forget. But we decided that the loss of our child will not be the all-consuming factor in our life. We choose to enjoy friends again. We choose to go out to dinner again. We choose to laugh again. I am convinced that this is what our children would want for us. It does not bring our child back. It only makes us miserable without end.



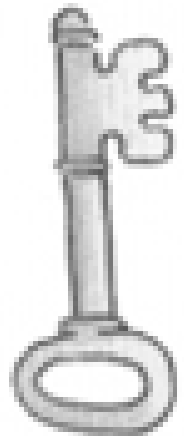
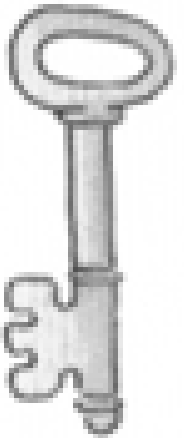
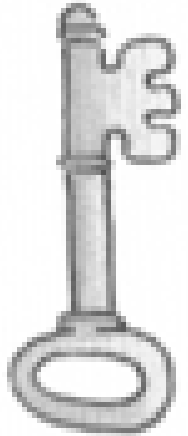
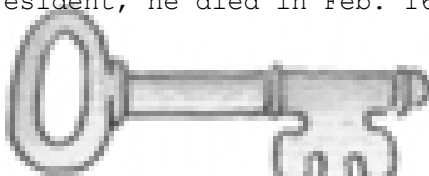
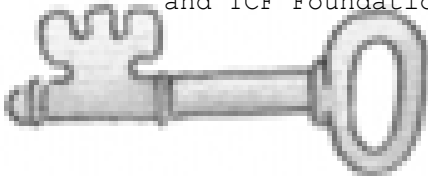
...We become grateful for what we have, not focused on what we have lost. I see people in our chapter meetings every month who have gone through "every parent's nightmare" and want no part of life again. But I ask that these compassionate friends also think about the ways they have been blessed, as well as hurt. In my experience, most people have more to be thankful for than they realize: health, other children, a loving family, a career they enjoy, financial security, life in a free country, a faith that works for them, a true best friend, a spouse who they love. Nobody has it all. But compared to most of the world we have a lot.



...The life we now lead will be better than it would have been. That does not make our child's death a good thing. It just means that our child's life mattered, and it has changed us forever. It means that in some small way the world will be better because our child lived, and we are the ones who can make it so. We have a new sense of priorities. We don't "sweat the small stuff". We know what matters because we know what is irreplaceable. And we know how deeply other people hurt, because we, too, have been there. We "know how they feel."

And when our life is different and better because our child lived, then that child is never forgotten. Each of us would do anything in the world to go back in time, but we can't. It is up to us now to go forward and we can.

Written by Richard Edler, National TCF Board Member, TCF President, and TCF Foundation President, he died in Feb. 16, 2002



THE GRIEF OF FATHERS

In the early days of my grief,
A tear would well up in my eyes.
A lump would form in my throat.
But you would not know—
I would hide it,
And I am strong.

In the middle days of my grief
I would look ahead and see that wall,
That I had attempted to go around
As an ever-present reminder
Of a wall yet un-scaled.
Yet I did not attempt to scale it
For the strong will survive—
And I am strong.

In the later days of my grief
I learned to climb over that wall—
Step by step—
Remembering—
Crying—
Grieving.
And the tears flowed steadily
As I painstakingly went over.
The way was long, but I did make it ,
For I am strong.

Near the resolution of my grief,
A tear will well up in my eyes,
A lump will form in my throat
But I will let the tear fall—
And you will see it.
Through it you will see
That I still hurt
And I care,
For I am strong.

GENTLY. SOFTLY. SLOWLY. WITH LOVE.

Tears stream down my face. I repeat my mantra.
Gently. Softly. Slowly. With Love.

I give myself permission to grieve.
Gently. Softly. Slowly. With Love.

I yearn. I search. I cling. My heart breaks.
Gently. Softly. Slowly. With Love.

I wail. I scream. I worry. I despair.
Gently. Softly. Slowly. With Love.

I listen. I read. I write. I pray. Not often, I talk.
Gently. Softly. Slowly. With Love.

I remember. Your face. Your eyes. Your smile. Your
love.
Gently. Softly. Slowly. With Love.

I feel your presence next to me. I reach out my
hand.
Gently. Softly. Slowly. With Love.

I learn to care for myself, as I once care for you.
Gently. Softly. Slowly. With Love.

I face one more day.
Gently. Softly. Slowly. With Love.

By Debbie Ortega for her daughter, Angela Marsh



HIS ROOM

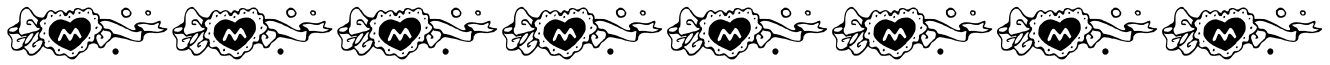
I walk past it a hundred times a day,
Sometimes pausing at the door;
It hurts to look inside,
It's not his room anymore.

We folded his clothes and put them away,
The closets are all bare;
Our little boy is dead you see,
Only memories are there...

The wallpaper's stripped, the furniture's gone,
The room is empty now;
I know that life does go on,
So please tell me how.

The room is just an empty space,
Four walls and a door;
I cry as I step inside,
It's not his room anymore.

By; Tom Wyatt Bereaved Father St. Louis, Mo.



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 three chapters' expenses: printing and mailing of our newsletter, books for our lending libraries, our 24-hour 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 10th 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 _____

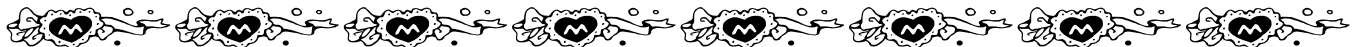
CHILD'S NAME _____ M or F (circle)

DATE OF BIRTH _____ DATE OF DEATH _____

Enclosed is a love gift in memory of my child to help deray 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 August. 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.



JUNE MEMORY PAGE

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

KEVIN JOHN CARNOW... son of Michael & Ellen Carnow, born 6/5/1961.

COREY SCOTT GIBBONS...son of Charles Gibbons, born 6/13/1992.

BARBARA GRAHAM...daughter of Robert Graham, died 6/1/1978.

MICHELE LYNN HEATH...daughter of Gale & June Heath, died 6/6/2003.

KYLE LEROY HOCHSTETLER...son of Mel Hochstetler, born 6/5/1977.

SIBLING CORNER

SEAN

~by Dana Lyn Brophy~

This is a poem I wrote for my brother...

I love you, Sean!

I stood on the bathroom, what should I do?
Mom had just told me someone had found you.
She had no idea what she should say now,
But I cried from my heart "Please tell me how?"
We raced down the freeway to where you lie,
As my mind asked "How can someone just die?"
I collapsed to the ground dizzy from pain,
Breathing from habit like a fall's first rain.
Back to the church we unwillingly went,
Gathered together we started to vent.
Reminiscing on times we've laughed and cried,
Trying to be closer to you inside.
The time had stopped ticking in life for me.
A day without you would be misery.
The funeral came and is like a dream.
I spoke onstage but wanted to scream.
Now it's been months and gets worse with each day.
Missing you desperately here's what I'll say,
I promise you I'll never say good-bye.
Just please let me know you hear when I cry!
I have a hope that I'll see you again
When I finally set foot on the streets of heaven.

In memory of Sean Patrick Sullivan



I REMEMBER YOU

In memory of my brother, DALTON WILLIAM KNAUSS

By: Sara Knauss

I remember the way you laughed,
You meant so much to me
I remember the way you smiled,
You were the way a Christian should be
You were so smart.
Your presence could light up any room
We all miss you so much,
We wonder why you left so soon
Memories of you make me smile,
While others make me cry
I wish you could have stayed for one more day,
Now all I have is the question "Why?"

The day that you were called
Was sad for everyone,
We tried and tried to save you
But nothing could be done
I know that you are in Heaven,
And I know that you are free
But when I am sad I stop and wonder,
Do you remember me?
Now all that I have left,
Are memories of what you would do
Some are happy, some are sad,
But I remember you.



**THE
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***RIM COUNTRY
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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 receive this newsletter and do not wish to receive it or to change an address or add an address.

The Compassionate Friends Credo

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

We reach out to each other with love, with understanding and with hope. 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 circumstances.



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.