



The Compassionate Friends Fayetteville Area Chapter



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Hurrying Healing



I don't remember when the words first began to echo in the hollow aftermath of loss. But now it seems that every public or private death, every moment of mourning is followed by a call for "healing," a cry for "closure."

Last month, driving home in my car just 24 hours after three Kentucky students were shot to death in a school prayer meeting, I heard a Paducah minister talk about "healing." The three teenagers had yet to be buried, and he said it was time to begin the healing process, as if there were an antibiotic to be applied at the first sign of pain among the survivors.

Weeks later, at a Christmas party, a man offered

up a worried sigh about a widowed mutual friend. "It's been two years," he said, "and she still hasn't achieved closure." The words pegged her as an underachiever who failed the required course in Mourning 201, who wouldn't graduate with her grief class.

This vocabulary of "healing" and "closure" has spread across the post-mortem landscape like a nail across my blackboard. It comes with an intonation of sympathy but an accent of Impatience. It suggests after all, that death is something to be dealt with, that loss is something to get over – according to a prescribed emotional timetable.

It happened again when the Terry Nichols verdict came down. No sooner had the mixed counts of guilty and innocent been announced, than the usually jargon free Peter Jennings asked how it would help the "healing" for Oklahoma City. Assorted commentators and reporters asked the families whether they felt a sense of "closure."

The implicit expectation, even demand, was that the survivors of 168 deaths would traverse a similar emotional terrain and come to the finish line at the same designated time. Were two-and-a-half years too long to mourn a child blown up in a building?

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Chapter News

I had planned to have all the information about the December Candle Lighting service in this newsletter. I actually had the page typed when I received a message from the church secretary saying we **may not** be allowed the use of Second Baptist Church this year. I will send out a separate mailing by mid November regarding the service. If anyone has a suggestion please contact me.

Now for some good news. Cindy Tart Bowers has agreed to take over as Chapter Leader. Cindy is the big sister of Dennis Tart. He died in 1986 at the age of nine. She has been a member of the Fayetteville Area Chapter for many, many years. She has been a presenter, for the sibling group, at the TCF National Conference for a number of years. This past spring she was chosen to serve on the TCF board of directors as the sibling representative. She does everything she can to honor the memory of Dennis. I urge everyone to give her your full support. I will continue as secretary / treasurer and newsletter editor for the time being.

Thanks, Jennifer German "Amy's mom"

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Hurrying Healing continued from page 1.....

It was the families themselves who set us straight with responses as persona and diverse as one young mother who said, "It's time to move on," and another who described her heart this way: "Sometimes I feel like it's bleeding."

In the Nichols sentencing trial last week, we got another rare sampling of raw grief. Laura Kennedy testified that in the wake of her son's death in 1995, "I have an emptiness inside of me that's there all the time." Diane Leonard said that since her husband's death her life "has a huge hole that can't be mended."

By the second day, however, the cameras had turned away, the microphones had turned a deaf ear, as if they had heard enough keening. Again, observers asked what effect a life-or-death sentence would have on, of course, "healing" and "closure."

I do not mean to suggest that the people who testified were "typical" mourners or the Oklahoma bombing a "typical" way of death. I mean to suggest that grief is always atypical – as individual as the death and the mourner.

The American way of dealing with it however has turned grieving into a set process with rules, stages, and of course deadlines. We have, in essence, tried to make a science of grief, to tuck messy emotions under neat clinical labels – like "survivor guilt" or "detachment."

Sometimes, we confuse sadness with depression, replace comfort with Prozac. We expect, maybe insist upon an end to grief. Trauma, pain, detachment, acceptance in a year – time's up.

But in real lives, grief is a train that doesn't run on anyone else's schedule. Jimmie Holland at New York's Sloan-Kettering Hospital, who has studied the subject, knows that "normal grief may often be an ongoing lifelong process." Indeed, she says, "The expectation of healing becomes an added burden. We create a sense of failure. We hear people say, 'I can't seem to reach closure; I'm not doing it fast enough.'"

Surely it is our own anxiety in the presence of pain, our own fear of loss and death that makes us wish away another's grief or hide our own. But in every life, losses will accumulate like stones in a backpack. We will all be caught at times between remembrance and resilience.

So whatever our national passion for emotional efficiency, for quality-time parents and one-minute managers, there simply are no one-minute mourners. Hearts heal faster from surgery than from loss. And when the center of someone's life has been blown out like the core of a building, is it any wonder if it takes so long even to find a door to close?

Ellen Goodman

This column appeared originally in the January 4, 1998 issue of The Boston Globe. Ellen Goodman is a Globe columnist. © Copyright 1998 Globe Newspaper Company.

*Sibling Walking**Together*

(Formerly The Sibling Credo)

We are the surviving children of The Compassionate Friends.

We are brought together by the death of our brothers and sisters.

Open your hearts to us. But have patience with us.

Sometimes we need the support of our friends.

At other times we need our families to be there.

Sometimes we feel we must walk alone, taking our memories with us, continuing to become the individuals we want to be.

We cannot be our dead brother or sister; however, a special part of them lives on with us.

When our brothers and sisters died, our lives changed.

We are living a life very different from what we envisioned, and we feel the responsibility to be strong even when we feel weak.

Yet, we can go on because we understand better than many others the value of family and the precious gift of life.

Our goal is not to be the forgotten mourners that we sometimes are, but to walk together to face our tomorrows as surviving children of

The Compassionate Friends.

A Holiday To Do List:

As a reflection back on the past 13 (Wow! has it really been that long?!) Christmases, I would like to share some ways that I have handled the holidays, as well as some additional thoughts. This time of the year is bittersweet for me now, as opposed to the first Christmas without my older brother, David. That was the worst.

At any rate, I can handle November and December much better now. I suppose I've learned a little along the way, and gained strength each year. Nonetheless, the anniversary of his death always gets to me. Unfortunately, it falls between Thanksgiving and Christmas on December 9th. Here's my list of suggestions for honoring a sibling whom you have lost, and on simply making it through yourself:

1. Hang that stocking. Go ahead. Put up your sibling's stocking. It isn't as though your brother or sister never existed, and isn't still a part of your life.
2. Write a poem or letter to your sibling and put it in the stocking.
3. Put up a tree, or continue with your holiday traditions. Yes, this is VERY difficult. But for most of our siblings, this was their favorite time of year. Celebrate how blessed you have been to have had your sister or brother for holidays past. Decorate the way THEY would have wanted to, instead of the way you would do it.
4. Create a "memory" box. This is simply a box of belongings from your sibling, or pictures of your sibling, etc. Wrap it in festive holiday paper, and put it under your tree if you have one.
5. Buy a gift for your sibling. Maybe it is something they truly would have wanted for the holidays, maybe it's something the two of you would have enjoyed together or gotten a good laugh out of. This can be VERY therapeutic.
6. Go somewhere that your sibling would have wanted to go--the beach, a movie they would have liked, a favorite restaurant, wherever. "Share" this time with your sibling. This is also good on their birthday. Celebrate that they had a life and that they are a part of yours!
7. Bake a favorite holiday goody of your sibling's.

8. Get together with your family and cry (and LAUGH – it's OK to do this) at some great family memories from years past that involved your sibling. Share thoughts on great places you may have visited for the holidays, or anecdotes of you and your sibling trying to peek at what your gifts were ahead of time.
9. Put together a photo album of your sibling. This could be of your sibling's life in general, or of a specific subject, like the sport your sibling played, or holidays past. Give your album to your parents. Cry (and LAUGH!) at the pictures and the memories they generate.

I hope that you are blessed this holiday season, and that my suggestions are helpful. Please know that the holidays get easier with time, and that you WILL make it through, even though it may seem impossible.

Amy Baker Ferry
TCF Heart of Florida Chapter
In loving memory of my brother, David

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Love Gifts



A Love Gift is a donation to honor a child who has died, or as a memorial for a relative or friend.

The Compassionate Friends depends entirely on voluntary contributions from individuals and organizations to meet chapter expenses. TCF is a 504(c)(3) non-profit organization: all donations are tax deductible. 100% of every dollar donated goes toward chapter expenses.

We thank the following for their kind generosity, love and sharing. There are no dues. We have already paid the ultimate price to be a member.

Ben and Christine Traylor in memory of their son Benny Michael Traylor

Greg and Mabel Walden in memory of their son Spencer Walden

If you wish to make a donation or a love gift, please make checks payable to The Compassionate Friends, and mail to TCF Fayetteville Area Chapter, 703 Rosebud Court, Vass, NC 28394. Please include the name of the child, love one, or friend that you wish the donation to be made in memory or honor of.



The Compassionate Friends
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

The National Office of The Compassionate Friends

P.O. box 3696

Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696

Web Site: www.compassionatefriends.org Toll free: 877-969-0010

Regional Coordinator for the Fayetteville Area Chapter of TCF

Donna & Ralph Goodrich

704-822-4503 or iluvu2lauren@gmail.com

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THANKSGIVING PRAYER

I'm thankful this Thanksgiving
 That my grief is not so new.
 Last year it was so painful
 To think of losing you.
 Death can't claim my love for you
 Tho we are far apart,
 Sweet memories will always be
 Engraved upon my heart.
 Time can never bring you back.
 But it can help me be
 Thankful for the years of joy
 You brought our family.
 To all the parents with grief so new
 I share your loss and sorrow.
 I pray you find with faith and time
 The blessings of each tomorrow.

Charlotte Irick
 TCF, Idaho Falls, ID

Remember

Light a quiet candle
 Send a quiet kiss
 Say a quiet fare-thee-well
 To the one you miss.
 Light a quiet candle
 Shed a quiet tear
 Sing a quiet lullaby . . .
 And the quiet
 Christmas Star will hear.

Sascha Wagner
 TCF Des Moines

You Did Not Die

You live in the beautiful wind that blows.
 You live in the sound of birds that crow.
 You live in the sun that shines so bright.
 You live in the peaceful dark at night.
 You live in a star I see in the sky.
 You live in ocean waves that come in with the
 tide.
 You live in the smell of flowers and grass.
 You live in the summer that goes so fast.
 You live in my heart that hurts so much.
 You did not die, we only lost touch.

Shari Swirsky
 TCF Toronto, Ontario, Canada

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

MEETINGS

First Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm
 meetings will be held in **room 224** of the General
 Class Building at Fayetteville Technical Community
 College. 2817 Ft. Bragg Road, Fayetteville, NC
 28303 (across the street from the Barbeque Hut)
 Unless otherwise posted on our website. **If there are
 changes for any reason, meeting
 location and information will always be posted on
 our website www.tcffayetteville.org**

Contact Jennifer German at (910) 245-3177 or
jojegerman@outlook.com
 if you have any questions.

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Our Credo

We need not walk alone.
 We are The Compassionate Friends.
 We reach out to each other with
 love,
 With understanding, and with hope.
 The children we mourn have died at
 All ages and from many different
 Causes, but our love for them
 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, creeds and
 relationships.
 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 of strength;
 While some of us are struggling to
 find answers.
 Some of us are angry,
 Filled with guilt or in deep
 depression;
 While 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 the children who have
 died.
 We are all seeking and struggling
 To build a future for ourselves,
 But we are committed to
 Building that future together
 We reach out to each other in love
 to 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 to grieve
 As well as to grow.

We need not walk alone....

We are The Compassionate
 Friends.

10 Tips for Living with the Holidays this Year

1. Remind yourself that you will survive. You will.
2. Think about what will bring you the most peace this holiday season.
 - a. Keeping all traditions intact?
 - b. Tweaking some traditions a bit and adding new ones?
 - c. Throwing out all the old traditions and starting new ones?
 - d. Flying to the Caribbean and completely skipping the holidays this year? It's okay to do that.
3. Don't expect anyone to mention your child by name. *Believe it or not*, that's your job. People will look to you to determine whether or not it's safe to talk about the person that died. A few subtle ways to do that:
 - a. Serve/bring your child's favorite dish to the holiday get-together – talk about it!
 - b. Bring a favorite picture – pass it around. Work it into the dining table centerpiece.
 - c. Bring a favorite memento – a book, a poem, a toy, a video, an article of clothing - share it after dinner.
 - d. Have your child's favorite music playing in the back ground – tell the story!
4. Plan a special evening for close family and friends when you REMEMBER. Ask everyone to bring a favorite photo and write down a special memory. Set time aside to sit in a circle and share the photos and memories.
5. Remember that it's okay – it's even healthy – to cry.
6. It's okay to stay in bed...you will get out, when you are ready and able.
7. It's also okay to smile or even laugh, a bit. You're not being disloyal.
8. Buy yourself a gift. Wrap it. Write a note – to you – from your beloved child.
9. Buy someone less fortunate than you a gift.
10. Light a candle.

Use in TCF newsletters granted by the author, Tom Zuba, twice bereaved parent, author, speaker, and workshop presenter.
www.tomzuba.com.

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Our Children & Siblings Remembered on Their Birthday's

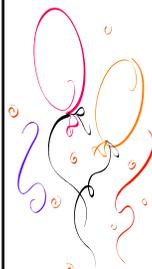
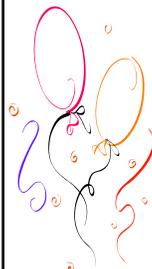
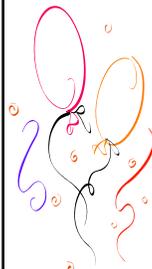
Each month some of our members face special but very painful days. We ask that you keep in your thoughts the parents, grandparents, and siblings of the following children's:

October

Bryan Bowles October 1
 Jimmy Wallace October 2
 James Page October 4
 Sharnale DeMar Thompson October 8
 Mark Draughon October 15
 Kevin Harlan October 15
 Carissa Gillis October 18
 Ryan Malcom October 20

November

Preston Riley November 1
 Ryan Stevens November 5
 Elijah Caddick November 8
 Carolyn Kapperman November 7
 Baby Davis November 9
 Renee Anderson November 11
 Omar Sharaf November 11
 Cameron "Cameo" Booher November 11
 Keith Parker November 12
 Jeffrey George November 13
 Charles Cook November 14



Zackery Hollister November 14
 Johnny Cole November 15
 Brianne Stewary-Goodrich November 18
 Lamont Saffore November 21
 Lawrence Boivin November 24
 Brittney Stokes November 24
 Kristen Wactor November 30
 Matthew Guin November 30

December

Joe Konen December 1
 Pam Tatum December 5
 Crystal Dawn Jackson December 5
 Zach Grullon December 6
 Tammy Owens December 7
 Kendra "Candy" Seay December 8
 Christine Geier December 9
 Shawn Leigh Watkins December 15
 Ricky Diaz December 15
 Derrell Lee Dean December 16
 Hope Parker December 19
 Nickolas Ross Hayden December 25
 RaMael McArthur December 28
 Lexi Minyon December 31

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Our Children & Siblings Remembered on Their Angel Date's



Each month some of our members face special but very painful days. We ask that you keep in your thoughts the parents, grandparents, and siblings of the following children's:

October

Melba Ross October 1

James Page October 5

Carla Parker October 9

Valencia Fredrick October 10

Kirsten Wactor October 10

Pam Tatum October 11

Brittney Stokes October 19

Ralph Lanier October 20

Archie Kagy October 21

Johnathan "JD" McKenzie October 21

Christopher Ortega October 26

November

Kyle Harris November 6

Christopher Hrvoj November 7

Talisha Morris November 8

Kendra "Candy" Seay November 8

Baby Davis November 9

Joe Konen November 9

Patrick "Pat" Shea November 14



Joshua Gurierrez November 12

Zackery Hollister November 14

Lawrence Boivin November 15

Amy Elizabeth German November 16

Joshua Jona November 16

Christine Geier November 20

Brianne Stewart-Goodrich November 22

December

Andrew Beutelspacher December 2

Kayla Francis December 10

Stephen Dew December 12

Cameron Booher December 16

Ryan Malcom December 19

Grant Miles December 22

Preston Riley December 23

Ryan Stevens December 30

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Inga Hondros mother of Chris Hondros has been an active member of our chapter for over six years. Our members get to know each other's children through their stories. That is what Compassionate Friends do, we listen, we share, we honor and we remember each others children. Chris was an acclaimed war photojournalist who was killed April 20, 2011 while on assignment in Libya. Now we have the chance to get to know Chris even better. Greg Campbell a friend of Chris's since childhood along with Jenny Golden have written a documentary titled "Hondros". Jake Gyllenhaal and Jamie

Lee Curtis are among the executive producers. "Hondros" had its world premiere on April 21, 2017 at the Tribeca Film Festival. The film will be the opening night feature of the Indigo Moon Film Festival in Fayetteville October 13, 2017. The first showing of "Hondros" will be at 7pm in the Cameo Art House Theater on October 13th. There will be a second showing on October 14, 2017 at 7:15pm also in the Cameo Art House Theater on Hay Street. For ticket information www.indigomoonfilmfestival.com .

TCF NATIONAL OFFICE SEEKS YOUR STORIES AND ARTICLES

For many years, The Compassionate Friends National Office has provided on its Leadership site stories and poems by TCF members that can be published in Chapter newsletters around the country.

Currently, the Newsletter Editor Database has over 500 stories and 200 poems. The National Office would like to include your personal grief related stories and poems. Please submit your articles and poems to sara@compassionatefriends.org. Please include your name and chapter affiliation.

TCF "ONLINE SUPPORT COMMUNITY" OFFERS OPPORTUNITY FOR GRIEF SHARING



The Compassionate Friends national website offers "virtual chapters" through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The rooms supply support, encouragement, and friendship. The friendly atmosphere encourages conversation among friends; friends who understand the emotions you're experiencing. There are general bereavement sessions as well as more specific sessions.

The sessions last an hour and have trained moderators present. For more information, visit www.compassionatefriends.org and click "Online Support" listed under the Find Support menu.

The Compassionate Friends
Fayetteville Area Chapter
703 Rosebud Court,
Vass NC 28394



The Compassionate Friends
Fayetteville Area Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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We're on the Web
www.tcffayetteville.org

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Love Gifts

There is no charge for our newsletter, meetings, or lending library, and we depend solely on your contributions. Love gifts can be made in memory of your child, grandchild, or sibling. Your love gift will insure that all who need our newsletter, will receive it.

I wish to make a donation in memory of _____

Date of Birth _____ Date of Death _____

Donated by _____ Relationship _____

Address _____

If you would like to make a donation please make checks payable to The Compassionate Friends,
and mail to TCF Fayetteville Area Chapter, 703 Rosebud Court, Vass, NC 28394

Please send form with check. **A donation is not required to submit items for the newsletter.**