



The Compassionate Friends

Minneapolis Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies



8701 36th Ave N
New Hope, MN 55427

MEETING SCHEDULE

OFFERING HYBRID MONTHLY MEETINGS

ATTEND IN-PERSON OR VIA ZOOM

We meet 7:00–8:30 pm on the third Monday of each month. Join us:

In Person: St. Joseph Parish Community
8701 36th Ave N., New Hope, MN

Via Zoom: Register using the link emailed a few days prior to each meeting.

Bereaved Siblings Hybrid Meeting

A bereaved sibling facilitates the group. Siblings (14+) meet at the same time and place (in-person & Zoom) as our Chapter meeting, but break into their own group for support & conversation.

Monday, November 21 "Sharing Pages of Hope"

HYBRID (In-person & Zoom) MEETING

Do you have a favorite quote, poem, song, article, or book that helped you on your grief journey? It may be something you composed, or by a published author, or from a fellow compassionate friend. Bring it to the meeting and we will share with the group. For inspiration, see the article on Page 3.

OUR GIFT to YOU: At the meeting, you will receive the book, "Healing After Loss," filled with thoughtful daily readings to inspire, strengthen, and comfort.

Monday, December 19 "Candle Lighting Ceremony"

IN-PERSON EVENT

Join us for this special evening, including a program, live music, candle lighting, and memorial slideshow. Our annual CLC takes the place of our monthly meeting. Sign-in at 6:15 pm. Option to Live Stream online via YouTube. See page 3 for info.

Monday, January 16

"New Hope for a Healing Heart"

HYBRID (In-person & Zoom) MEETING

Ushering in a new year can stir a painful reminder of another year without our loved one. With a new year also comes the opportunity for renewed hope.

We Need Not Walk Alone

The Compassionate Friends is a self-help organization offering friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved families. Anyone who has experienced the death of a child at any age, from any cause, is welcome. Our meetings give parents the opportunity to talk about their child and feelings as they go through the grieving process. Our meetings are also open to grandparents, older siblings, and extended family. There are no membership dues. There is no religious affiliation.

When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. **The Mission** of The Compassionate Friends is to provide highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or daughter, a brother or sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

The Secret of TCF's Success is Simple: As seasoned grievers reach out to the newly bereaved, energy that has been directed inward begins to flow outward, and both are helped to heal.

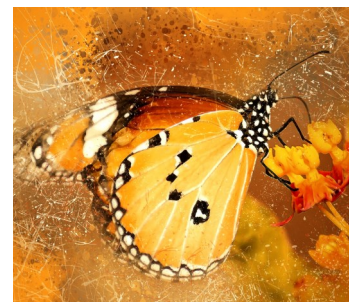
To Our New Members: Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. But, you have nothing to lose, and much to gain. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. The second, third, or fourth meeting might be the time you find the right person...or just the right words spoken that will help you in your grief work.

To Our Members Further Down the 'Grief Road': We need your encouragement and your support. Each meeting, we have new parents, grandparents, and siblings. Think back, what would it have been like for you at your first meeting if there had not been any TCF "veterans" to welcome you and share your grief?

About Our Meetings: Please don't stay away from a meeting because the scheduled topic does not interest you. At each meeting there will be time to discuss and share whatever is on your mind. We welcome your participation, but it is not required.

Inside This Issue:

Chapter and National Contact Info	2
Grateful for Volunteers	2
Candle Lighting Remembrance Program	3
Lending Library New Books	3
Finding the Magic	4
Remembrance Dates Nov-Dec-Jan	5-6
You Can Survive	7
Sibling Support	7



TCF's Vision...

That everyone who
needs us will find us
and everyone who finds
us will be helped.

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Lending Library
David Benson *WELCOME to the Team!*

Special Events Co-coordinators
Vickie Hackel & Monica Colberg

Sibling Loss Facilitator
Maggie Bauer

Steering Committee Meetings
Held quarterly to plan events and Chapter direction. Next meeting: January 13.

TCF NATIONAL OFFICE

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Those who have SUFFERED
UNDERSTAND SUFFERING
and therefore



Articles printed in this newsletter reflect the author's personal views, and not necessarily the opinion of the newsletter editor or The Compassionate Friends.

RESOURCES

Chapter Locator Tool available on TCF National Website
[Locate Chapter Here](#) www.compassionatefriends.org

Minneapolis Chapter Website:
tcfmpls.org

MPLS Chapter Is On Facebook:



Join our Minneapolis Chapter's private Facebook community online:
TCF Mpls

Or log onto Facebook and search:
TCF Mpls
www.facebook.com/groups/TCFMpls

National Organization Resources
may be found at:

www.compassionatefriends.org

Click "**Find Support**" tab.

- **National Magazine, We Need Not Walk Alone®**
- **Online Grief-Related Webinar Series**
- **Online Support Community**
- **Facebook Closed (Private) Groups**

TCF/USA National Facebook Page
www.facebook.com/TCFUSA

TCF National Magazine

TCF National Organization publishes an online magazine. Inside the Autumn issue is an article on Suicide Loss that reminded me of my thoughts about the stigma of suicide, soon after my son died. Also is an article by Maggie, our sibling loss facilitator who is the recipient of the Sibling of the Year award. Our Chapter Leader, Monica, is seen in a photo from the 2022 National Conference in Houston.

To Subscribe, visit:

<https://www.compassionatefriends.org/resources/we-need-not-walk-alone-magazine/>



Full Circle

The year has gone again
from spring to winter –
and in this year;
your memories may have found
a breath of calm between them,
quiet respite – sometimes.

Then why must there be
twice as many now –
these feelings, now,
these visions, songs and voices,
from Halloween to New Year's:

Twice memories and smiles
Twice memories and tears...

You know the answer,
even while you cry:
your tears are
(like your smiles)

the season's face of love.

sascha



Grateful for Volunteers

Welcome to our new Librarian, David Benson, Abe's dad! He noticed the vacancy on our leadership team and stepped up to volunteer. We appreciate David's willingness to get involved with our Chapter's efforts. Thank you for sharing your time and interests with our group!

Minneapolis Chapter Candle Lighting Program

December 19, 2022

Sign-in at 6:15 p.m. — Program begins 7:00 p.m.

Our chapter's annual Remembrance Candle Lighting program is Monday, December 19 at our meeting location, St. Joseph Parish, 8701 36th Ave. N, New Hope.

We encourage you to join us in person, but there is the option to watch a live stream of the program via YouTube. Several days prior to the event we will email the YouTube link and post it on the Chapter's private Facebook page.

This event takes the place of the monthly chapter meeting. It begins earlier than the regular meetings. Parents, grandparents, siblings, family & friends are encouraged to join us.

Please **RSVP** in advance! Email tcf.mpls@gmail.com with your name and number attending in your group.

The church where we meet practices COVID-19 health and safety protocols. Consider wearing a mask based on your personal preference and if not vaccinated for COVID-19. Please stay home if you feel sick.

At 6:15 p.m. participants may sign in at the front door of the church. The chapter will provide light appetizers and refreshments prior to the program. Bring your family's favorite cookies or bars to share if you wish.

A free-will offering is appreciated to help offset program costs. Ornaments are provided (one per household) which we will personalize with your loved one's name. Please take the ornament home as a memento of the evening.

The remembrance program begins at 7:00 p.m. with beautiful live music performed by parents and friends in our bereaved community. Readings by TCF members will be followed by families lighting flameless candles in memory of our siblings and children and grandchildren. The evening will conclude with a photo slideshow of our loved ones.

To include your child, grandchild or sibling's photograph in the slideshow, please email Gloria Jordan at tcf.mpls@gmail.com. Provide their name as you wish it to appear on the slide, and the year of their birth and year of death. Attach a photo as a .jpg or .png file format. The **DEADLINE is December 6**. Do not send a photo if you sent one last year; we have it.

Want to participate by reading a poem or prose? Email Gloria at tcf.mpls@gmail.com with your name and your loved one's name. Include a copy of the reading with title and author of your selection. The **DEADLINE is December 6** to be included in the program.

If severe weather occurs, we will post a change of date for the event on our TCF chapter Facebook page at www.facebook.com/groups/TCFMpls and announce the December postponement on Channel KARE11 TV.



Leader's Corner

The Compassionate Friends meeting spaces are sacred safe places. To enter a space such as this, all of us have begun grief journeys. We are among friends. It is the name of the organization we have joined. Conversations will be meaningful.

Lean into those around you. Talk with someone. You will find those who soothe you, inspire you and light your way toward healing from your greatest loss.

Friends communicate with each other. A handwritten card is a real prize. Words on paper, graphics, perhaps with a photo tucked in the envelope, store memories that are automatically retrieved every time it is reread. I received one last month that kept me smiling all week.

Let's write cards to one another. My hope is that you find friendships at TCF meetings.

Monica Colberg
Art's Mom

TCF Minneapolis Chapter Leader

Sharing Pages of Hope at November 21 Meeting

At our November meeting, you will have an opportunity to share poetry or prose passages that are meaningful to you in your grief process. They can be anything you have found or anything you have written yourself. We will facilitate the sharing of your passages during the November meeting. Below are two examples:

From the Enya song;

If I Could Be Where You Are

"Where are you this moment?
Only in my dreams.
You're missing, but you're always
A heartbeat from me.
I'm lost now without you,
I don't know where you are.
I keep watching, I keep hoping,
But time keeps us apart..."

And a poem by one of our members;

Winter Mallards

Watching the winter mallards
Circling at sunset.
Looking for the single
The one flying alone.
Abe flies alone now
On his way to the ancestors.
And he will make it there
Before me.

Free Lending Library

Monica brought back two self-published books from the National Conference for our library. They are "So I Am" and "Dance Again, Grief is Healing." The first is a memoir-like recounting of the 14 months of life and death of the parents' medically fragile daughter, Olivia. The family never knew if each day would be Olivia's last. The second recounts 14 months of healing after Olivia's passing.

David Benson, our new Librarian, recently donated the book "How Men Heal" to our library. It normalizes the typical men's grief process for men, while giving women some information about it.

The two paragraphs above reflect distinctly different themes that may or may not relate to your situation. In our library we have many more different themes. Our library cart labels areas of interest. Just looking at the labels on the cart can stimulate your thoughts. ~David Benson

Finding the Magic

Once again, it's that time of year. Will this year be different from the last seven? Will I find the magic again? Wait. Let me revise that question: Did I ever feel the magic?

As a bereaved parent, I have experienced only two holiday seasons. While I have physically lived through 49 hell-idays, emotionally, there have been only two types: the ones before and the ones after Jason's death. The two categories are distinctly different.

If memory serves me correctly, which it doesn't always do, I spent the first 42 years focused on material issues. First as a child... What would I get? What did I want? What would make me the happiest child in the whole wide world? As I grew older and had my own little family, I spent the next 22 years asking myself, what I would get them? What did they want? What would make them love me more? How would I manage to pay for all of it? I always felt there was something missing...but I didn't really have the time or interest to find that missing something. Besides, why borrow trouble? Each year, by the time I realized that something was missing, the decorations were packed in their boxes and the kids had gone back to school. I could always find the magic next year.

In 1996, Jason died. Suddenly, my life ended its forward march, and everything I had ever regarded as important became nonsense. My heart was not simply broken—it was ripped into shreds, emptied of what had fueled it over the span of my life. I had no hope of waiting for it to heal and had to face the reality that only a total reconstruction would suffice. I would have to create a new heart...from scratch.

The first fall was difficult. I was still numb, still cushioned from reality, but the pain of Jason's death was beginning to seep in. Then it was Halloween, and the horror of what had happened was upon me. Thanksgiving came with Christmas on its tail, bringing an empty chair, an unbroken wishbone, and silence where laughter had once prevailed.

I was sure it could not get any worse, but life always surprises us. The holidays of 1997 and 1998 were devastating. The numbness that had protected me that first season was gone. Reality had arrived, and I could not escape it. I would never again see Jason walk through our front door with that grin that always made me nervous, tracking snow across my "freshly waxed for the holidays" floor. I was sure I would never again buy two of everything for Jason and his twin brother. I would never again enjoy the holidays...or life.

Years four through seven, we bought gifts for needy families, hung Jason's stocking right beside the rest of ours, illuminated special candles to include him in our celebrations, and smiled cheerfully at everyone who offered us their joy-filled "Merry Christmas." And as I spread my Christmas cheer and goodwill toward men, I had only one thought in my mind. It became my mantra: If I can just make it through December, I will be okay. I was no longer focused on the material side of the season. I was no longer focused on the season at all. I wanted it over.

And now, here I am, at year eight. My eighth season of joy, my eighth year of decking the halls, my eighth year of Jason's physical absence. You probably think I am going to tell you that this year will be no different from the last seven. You might even anticipate that I am going to tell you that it never gets better, that there is no such thing as healing, and that grieving parents will always be bitter and angry, especially during the times when families everywhere celebrate the season of giving. Wrong. But don't feel bad; this revelation has totally shocked me also.

A few days ago, I woke up and was amazed to see that it was snowing. Overnight, the world had gone from brown to pure glistening white. It was beautiful. Later that day, I heard someone in

my home actually humming Christmas carols. How dare they! But...I was alone. It was me. That evening, I spent an hour printing up a beautiful green and red Christmas "wish list" with graphics! That was the straw that broke the camel's back. Suddenly, it hit me. And no matter how guilty I feel in acknowledging it, I have to tell you: I am looking forward to the holidays. How can this be? Why is this happening?

Well, after much pondering, I think I know why. I think I spent 42 holidays looking through a lens that focused only on black and white, on the physical, on that which can be seen and physically felt. The lavishly wrapped gifts, excessive food, amount of money spent, and glittering (sometimes gaudy) lights on the tree. The next seven were spent looking through a lens that was distorted and scarred by grief. I focused on what was missing rather than on what was still here. I think I wanted it that way.

But now, I feel I've learned how not only to endure—but to enjoy—a memory that can be defined only as bittersweet. I've come to appreciate that feeling emotional is really about feeling impassioned. And I think this year, as the songs start to play on the radio and the cards begin filling our mailbox, I will choose a different lens, a lens that captures what we cannot see or physically touch. A lens that goes beyond.

Not everything will change. I will still hang Jason's stocking beside ours, buy gifts for the needy, light candles in his memory, and all of the other things that have made the last seven years bearable. But this year, I hope to do these things with joy rather than with bitterness and sorrow. This year, I want to grasp the hand of a homeless mother, kiss the cheek of a newborn baby, and hold a sleeping kitten while it plays in its dreams. I want to watch Santa as he holds wiggly toddlers on his lap. I want to sing "Silent Night" on a snowy night in mid-December when it feels as if all the world is sleeping. I want to feel the Christmas that we cannot see.

This year, I want to remember who I really am. I want to enjoy the months ahead. Not because I need to or because someone says it's time to—but because—well, because I can. This year, I want to find the magic before it is time to put away the boxes. And I won't stop searching until I find it.

Merry Christmas to you and yours.

Believe in magic. And always...expect miracles.

Sandy Goodman, In Memory of Jason

Sandy Goodman is the author of Love Never Dies: A Mother's Journey from Loss to Love (Jodere, 2002) Reprinted with permission from "We Need Not Walk Alone," The Compassionate Friends national magazine. ©2003



Our Children Remembered...on Their Birthdays

Loved...Missed...Forever in Our Hearts



November

CHILD		MEMBER
Andrew	sibling	Tiana Schwandt
Luke	sibling	Carolyn Crotteau
Luke		Amy & Jason Crotteau
JoAnna		Aron & Ruth Wilterding
Lauren		Dawn & Peter Duwenhoegger
Yaya		Ron Garber
Nathan Scott Weidner		Amanda Weidner
Barry Allan Beal		Carol Beal
Hallie		Todd & Kathy Brown
Sarah Tilman		Cathie Tilman
Sullivan		Holly Holmes
Campbell		Jenner Johnson
Keith Rosenwinkel		Wanda VonHoltum
Brandon	sibling	Kathryn Demars
Brandon		Pamela & Patrick Demars
Michael DeBruin		Mary & Bob DeBruin
Everett Rachko	cousin	Mollie Freese
Everett	nephew	Mary Jane Kronberg
Everett	sibling	Allie Rachko
Everett		Charla Rachko
Leon Harwood		Antonia (Flipper) Filipiak
Tucker		Dana & Kevin O'Brien

December

CHILD		MEMBER
Joshua		Brenda Kise
Scott	sibling	Suzie Berzins
Scott		Stephen Berzins
Scott		Cathy Drexel
Daniel Nelson	sibling	Michele Dooley
Daniel		Audrey Nelson
Michelle Franta	sibling	Jeff & Melia Liedman
Michelle Marie Franta		Lynn & Stan Liedman
Jeremy Klein		Chris Klein
Cole Haakana		Carrie Haakana
Conner Box-Lindholm		Stacey Lindholm
Monica Marie Collins	sibling	Gladys Williamson
Mark Andersen		Ruth Shaddrick
Natalie Perry Smead		Karen Prieto & Pete Smead
Daniel Christian Demsky		Barbara & Robert Demsky
Matthew	sibling	Carmen & Camille Koch
Matthew		Tim & Betsy Koch
Wilder		Tea Lee
Cherpre		Dawn Boesch
Vanessa Marie		Maureen Voltin
Joseph		Kim Corkins
Leo	grandchild	Rod Monroe
John Alden		Mary & John Alden
Juliette		Nancy Kilhan

January

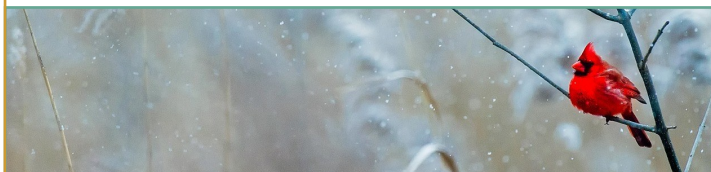
CHILD		MEMBER
James		Samantha & Michael Wallad
Tara		Seth & Angela Engman
Allyson		Roger Graphenteen
Evelyn Charlotte		Jeff & Jenny Sevaldson
Henry		Helen & Chris Taylor
Brian		Bonnie & Mike Maloney
Anne		Carol Just
Dan	sibling	Michael Larson
Dan		Ruth & Jon Larson
Grayson Jett		Brian & Jennifer Jett
Machael Greeman		Marijo Greeman
Alex		Frank Commers
Joseph Engles		Deb & Paul Barland
Amia		Adrienne Pelleg
Kevin Kocur		Jan Kocur
Grace		Katie & Charlie Heitzig
Kyle		Lynda Kubousek
Madeline May		Lisa & Mark Orfield
Daniel		Dan & Chevis Peso
Brenden		Tammy Sperr
Nicole Jean Gallery		Janna Gallery
Cody		Dave & Jennifer Perna
Adrian		John & Stephanie Merfeld
Ann Longton-McNamara		Barbara & Richard McNamara
Krystie Anna		Rick Karl & Bruce Steiger
Krystie Anna		Bruce Steiger
Kali		Peg & Roger Mann
Jack Kocur	grandchild	Jan Kocur
Jack Kocur		Shelly & Kent Kocur
Kelly Hyatt		Maureen Hyatt
Lisa Marie Hall		Ron & Ursula Hall
Missy	sibling	Tasha Feigh
Missy		Mary Feigh

Birthday Month

Birthdays are given special recognition at our monthly meetings. During your child/sibling/grandchild's birthday month, you are invited to bring a photo or memorabilia to share and display on our Birthday Table. Some like to sign up to bring a favorite snack or treat (even birthday cake) to celebrate the birthday of their child. If you're attending via Zoom, we invite you to share your photo during introductions.

One kind word can warm
three winter months.

JAPANESE PROVERB



Our Beloved Children...in Our Hearts Always

especially during the Remembrance Month of their death.



November

CHILD		MEMBER
Gregory		Mary & Tom Sincheff
Tracer Rustad		Nancy Buffington
Nedra Michael		John & Linda Michael
Jen		Karen & Gary Gross
Alicia Marie Queen-Wilson		Queen Wilson
Joshua		Brenda Kise
Zachary		Darcie Rummel (Turner)
Thor Eide		Susan Nokleby
Madeline May		Lisa & Mark Orfield
Kinsley		Farynn Kimmes
Payton Tripp	grandchild	Janet & Richard Tripp
Nick Harter		Brian & Sandy Harter
Joseph		Kim Corkins
Matthew Robert Demsky		Barbara & Robert Demsky
Machael Greeman		Marijo Greeman
Charlotte Jean	grandchild	Jean Umezu
Harry Richards		Winnie Visco
Hailey		Michelle Chamlin
David	sibling	Gabrielle Robbins
David		Christiane Robbins

December

CHILD		MEMBER
Yaya		Ron Garber
Lisa Marie Hall		Ron & Ursula Hall
Andrew	sibling	Tiana Schwandt
Rob Anderson		Sandy Cikotte-Anderson
Cole Haakana		Carrie Haakana
Nathan Scott Weidner		Amanda Weidner
Rachel Anne		Pam Dugdale
Matthew	sibling	Carmen & Camille Koch
Matthew		Tim & Betsy Koch
Carson Thomas Jordan		Gloria & John Jordan
Michael John Blesi		Carolyn Blesi
Kristin Reller	sibling	Anthony Reller
Kristin Reller		Pat & Don Reller
Sullivan	grandchild	Bev Lind
Sullivan		Jamie & Tyler Peek
Mackenzie Ndujwe Nnantah		Korina Hackert
Cody		Dave & Jennifer Perna
Tara		Seth & Angela Engman
Kali		Peg & Roger Mann
Jennifer Blethen	sibling	Melissa Blethen
Brandon	sibling	Kathryn Demars
Brandon		Pamela & Patrick Demars
Cora		Danielle Grinsel
Allison	sibling	Andrew Bailey
Allison		Miriam Porter

January

CHILD		MEMBER
Caitlin Louise Higgins		Jeffrey Weihe
Christopher Bormann		Susan Bormann
Alyssa		Rich & Dori Beattie
Grace		Katie & Charlie Heitzig
Tom Williams		Keri Williams
Monica Marie Collins	sibling	Gladys Williamson
Eric Brodin		Judy & Buck Brodin
Katie		Fern & Dave Sanders
Evelyn Charlotte		Jeff & Jenny Sevaldson
Mark Frain	sibling	Michael & Terri Frain
Mark Frain		Donna Frain
Brian		Deb Bergland
Stefanie		Jayne Darling
Dan		Deb Sholl
Cristian		Sara & John Schmidt
Keith Demry		Char Fonville
J. D.		Cathy Bailly
Lawrence		Karen & Dave Philbin
Eric Lindquist		Bruce Lindquist
Tina		Cynthia Wong
Jamison		Brian Brooks
Ethan		Tom Lang



Autumn

With the dark evenings come memories,
 memories that make us weep.
 A long hot summer, passed, without you.
 Last autumn, your life began to fall apart,
 your strength to ebb away,
 Now the trees are turning again
 shedding leaves, like tears.
 It seems as if my life has been frozen just
 waiting for you...to come home.
 Perhaps, when the evenings lighten and
 spring comes...
 but I know that you will not return.

I will not see you again,
 until my winter is here...

© Gill Hartley Autumn 2006 From "My True Son"
 Borrowed from TCF New Zealand, April 2016

"Grief's darkness fades in the
 sunlight of thanksgiving."

— Billy Graham

You Can Survive

Recently, a dear friend of mine lost her son to suicide. Unfortunately, this brought back memories of the loss of my two sons. The questions were there as my friend cried, "Why?" I couldn't tell her why; all I could say was that she may never know.

Why did my son take his life? Why was his older brother killed at work? These are questions to which I have never found the answers. I don't believe that God is a cruel God so I can't blame Him. Accidents happen, and sometimes surviving siblings take their lives. I was lucky to have my boys as long as I did. I value every memory, every picture.

I don't have the answers, but I do know how to survive. I've found that talking with someone with whom you feel "safe" is a good thing. Writing about my loss has been a tremendous help and I am so grateful for The Compassionate Friends newsletter. In that venue, I felt "safe" in baring my soul. I walked and talked with a dear friend who later told me that he couldn't understand a word I said because I was crying so hard. But you know what? It didn't matter because he listened!

Surviving the loss of a child requires a lot of grief work. I wrote and talked and read until I was exhausted every night. Since there is emotional and physical pain and aching, sleep is so important at this time.

Get in the shower and let the rush of water wash away your tears, your aches, the feeling that no one in the world knows how deeply you are hurting. The shower is a "safe" place, where no one hears your sobs, and no one asks questions or tries to express sympathy with words that mean nothing to you right now.

The one thing that is most important in recovery is that you need to feel "safe" whether talking, reading, crying, screaming or sleeping. Talk to that trusted friend. Let the shower wash away your pain. Take care of yourself. Let your caring friends hug you. Let the reading of other parents' losses make you aware that you are not alone. They've already gone through it and survived. So can you.

I love Life now; I enjoy Life; I appreciate Life so much more. Life is good!

"Thank you for filling a place in my life
that no one else could."

- Pam Brown

Written with love, in memory of my two sons Jim and Jeff
Joan Conley
TCF Kamloops, BC, CA

Hanukkah Thoughts

At this season of lights, we remember
the light you brought into our lives:

The light of your laughter,

The light of your wit and intelligence,

The light of your love.

May the time not be distant when the
memory of these lights will illuminate
our hearts and minds and eradicate
the darkness therein.



Stephanie Hesse
Rockland Co., NY

Why??

I have asked myself that very question over the last few weeks. A friend at work lost her child the week of my brother's anniversary. Even though Sean has been gone for five years, all of those memories came rushing back to me. The pain was once again fresh and new.

I have only attended one young person's funeral since Sean died. My experience at that funeral was awful. I was close to being hysterical through the whole funeral and when it came time to go up to the coffin, I fled the building. I just couldn't look into the eyes of the child's mother and sister and feel that pain all over again. I later apologized to the mother and she understood so well. Now with my friend's child dying, I was beside myself. I didn't know if I could even go to the wake much less the funeral. I had no idea what was about to unfold for me.

My office is a small office, so when we heard about my friend's child dying the impact was felt intensely. My co-workers and I couldn't think or work. We just kept thinking about my friend and her family. One by one people began asking me what they could do for her. I immediately called my mother and the next day everyone had a pamphlet on knowing how to help a grieving co-worker. Then we began talking about how we were feeling. I let them know some things that they might expect, and that if they thought what they were going to say was stupid then to just say they were sorry. We then made plans to attend the wake.

I was taking things one step at a time. I went to the wake and when my mother and I arrived, car loads of kids were arriving also. I took a deep breath and in we went. I made it to the coffin. My friend had been taken out just before I arrived, so I talked with her sister. When I looked at her beautiful child all I could think of was why. Why did another young life have to end? Why did another mother have to feel this pain? Why did one more sibling have to feel the way I do? Why did another family have to change forever?

I will probably never know the answers to those questions. I know that when I looked into that brother's eyes, I knew that pain. When I hugged my friend, I remembered that numbness. I realized that I will just have to take my experiences and help anyone I can – the kids that go to my group, a co-worker, a perfect stranger. I just know that I feel a need to show people that life does go on, but in our own time.

Traci Morlock, Sean's Sister BP/USA, St Louis, MO

taken from the national newsletter of Bereaved Parents/USA,
A JOURNEY TOGETHER
www.bereavedparentsusa.org

NEW MEETING

Sibling Suicide Loss Support

meets via Zoom

8 pm CST

4th Monday of the Month

Hosted by Maggie Bauer and Luciana Rossi

Zoom Meet-up:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82709946616?pwd=eERFaTdaLlFDZOxanEFrSHUOK1A1dz09>

Meeting ID: 82709946616

Password: sibs

Maggie: MBGriefRecovery@outlook.com



The Compassionate Friends

Minneapolis Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

c/o St. Joseph Parish
8701 36th Ave N
New Hope MN 55427

The Minneapolis Chapter of The Compassionate Friends operates solely with voluntary donations. While there are no dues or subscription fees, donations to help support our Chapter's efforts are much appreciated. Funds are used for meeting supplies, rent, newsletter printing/postage, and more. Gifts in any amount are appreciated. Please consider a \$10 annual donation if you are receiving a printed, mailed newsletter.

Thank you for your consideration!

Complete and return this form along with your donation to a chapter monthly meeting or mail to our treasurer:

John Jordan, 11905 53rd Ave N, Plymouth, MN 55442

Please make check payable to *The Compassionate Friends Minneapolis*.

Please Print

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone

Email

Child's Name

Birth Date

Death Date

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