



## *The Compassionate Friends*

### *Minneapolis Chapter*

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

8701 36th Ave N  
New Hope, MN 55427

### Meeting Schedule

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

**St. Joseph Parish Community**

**8701 36th Ave N**

**New Hope, MN 55427**

**Corner of 36th Ave N & Boone Ave N**

### Bereaved Sibling Group Meeting

A bereaved sibling facilitates the group. Siblings meet separately, but at the same location and time as our Chapter meeting.

### Monday, August 21

#### **"National Conference Highlights"**

Conference attendees will share thoughts from their experience. How a particular speaker or workshop resonated with them. What did they take away to give us hope?

### Monday, September 18

#### **"Post-Traumatic Stress in Family Members after the Death of a Child"**

Chris Lewis is a bereaved parent, past TCF meeting facilitator, and certified grief therapist specializing in traumatic loss.

### Sunday, September 24

#### **"Walk to Remember"**

See Page 3 for details of our popular Sunday noon event for family & friends.

### Monday, October 16

#### **"Who Am I Now?"**

Perspective and possibilities for our future.

## We Need Not Walk Alone

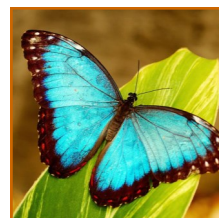
**The Compassionate Friends** is a self-help organization offering friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved families. Anyone who has experienced the death of a child at any age, from any cause, is welcome. Our meetings give parents the opportunity to talk about their child and feelings as they 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. 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
Walk to Remember Fund Raiser	3
Book Review: OPTION B	3
When Hope Comes Home	4
Birthdays and Angel Dates	5-6
The Gate to Tomorrow	7
Grandparents Remembrance	7

## Resources

### Check Out Our Chapter Website:

<http://compassionatefriends.wordpress.com>

You'll find back issues of newsletters, links to other grief support groups, and more.

### Our Local 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](http://www.facebook.com/groups/TCFMpls)

### National Organization Resources

may be found by visiting:

[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

Click "Find Support" tab.

• **National Magazine, We Need Not Walk Alone®**

• **Monthly E-Newsletter**

• **Online Grief-Related Webinar Series**

• **Online Support Community**

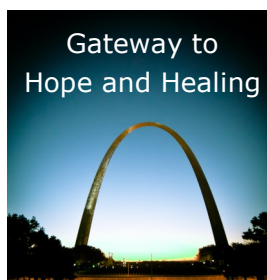
• **Facebook Closed (Private) Groups**

[TCF/USA National Facebook Page](#)

[www.facebook.com/TCFUSA](http://www.facebook.com/TCFUSA)

**MINNEAPOLIS CHAPTER INFO****TELEPHONE:** (612) 444-1301**EMAIL:** [tcf.mpls@gmail.com](mailto:tcf.mpls@gmail.com)**Minneapolis Chapter Leader**  
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Lisa Gross Crees**Hospitality Coordinator**  
Gail Hokemeir**Sibling Facilitator**  
Maggie Bauer**Steering Committee Meetings**  
Held quarterly to plan events and Chapter direction. Next meeting: Friday, October 13.**SURROUNDING AREA ADDITIONAL CHAPTERS****The St. Paul Chapter**Meets at Beaver Lake Lutheran Church at 2280 Stillwater Ave. in Maplewood.  
Second Thursday each month, 7 pm.  
Sandy, (651) 528-6073  
Cathy, (651) 459-9341**The Rockford Chapter**Meets at Our Father's Lutheran Church at 3900 Gilbert Ave SE.  
Fourth Tuesday of each month, 7 pm.  
Sandy, (763) 843-8685**The Monticello Chapter**Meets at St. Henry's Catholic Church at 1001 7th St. E in Monticello.  
Second Monday of the month, 7 pm.  
Beth Hill, (763) 295-3610.**The South of the River Chapter**Meets at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church at 12650 Johnny Cake Ridge Rd., Apple Valley.  
Third Tuesday each month, 7 pm.  
Susan, (651) 683-9236**Regional Conference  
in Music City - Nashville, TN***Memories of Love  
Melodies of Hope***OCTOBER 20 - 21, 2017***Conference begins Friday, 1:00 pm  
and ends Saturday, 5:30 pm.**Hosted by TCF Nashville Chapter*Regional Conferences provide hope and healing similar as found at a National Conference, but on a smaller scale... You'll find guest speakers, Workshops, and the heart-warming Candle Lighting. Registration \$75/person, [click here](#) to download registration form.*Cost includes Friday Dinner with Candle Lighting, Saturday Continental Breakfast, and Lunch.*

Deadline for registration: October 16 or when we reach 300 attendees.

*Special Lodging rate of \$119 provided by: Four Points by Sheraton Nashville-Brentwood (615) 964-5500***Save the Date:**  
*July 27-29, 2018***TCF  
National  
Conference***St. Louis,  
Missouri***Do You Know**

Do you know what I've learned, that the deepest, truest healing offered by The Compassionate Friends comes not in the first few years, but later.

Do you know that just when you think there is no more to gain by coming to meetings, something you will say or do will help another and another ... and exponentially, through your opened heart, there can flow riches, gifts beyond imagining?

Do you know that TCF's truest alchemy lies not in what we can get but what we can give? That by turning grief's dark energy and inner absorption out-wards towards the Hope of helping other we can regain a sense of purpose, honor our beloved children, and take them with us as we do?

All this...if only you stay on – or come back – to help those more newly bereaved, sharing your own unique path through grief and learning, along with others, what you did not know you know.

Genesee Bourdeau Gentry  
TCF/Marin Cty, CA*"Because I cannot hold you in my arms, I will envelope you in my heart. Because I cannot hear your song, I will whisper your love into the world.**Because I cannot gaze into your eyes, I will tender your vision of compassion where it's most needed.**In every moment without you, I will do all I can to grace others with the beauty in your wake."**Dr. Joanne Cacciatore***NATIONAL OFFICE**

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Email: [peachy3536@comcast.net](mailto:peachy3536@comcast.net)*Articles printed in this newsletter reflect the author's personal views, and not necessarily the opinion of the newsletter editor or The Compassionate Friends.*

## Minneapolis Chapter



Mark your calendar for **Sunday, September 24** for our annual Chapter Walk to Remember. We walk to remember our children, siblings, and grandchildren who have died. Invite extended family and friends to join us.

This is our Chapter's annual fund raiser. There is no fee to walk, but donations are appreciated. We are a recognized 501(c)3 organization; all donations are tax deductible. Funds received are used to support our chapter's many activities that assist families after the death of a child.

Join us at beautiful **Bassett Creek Park in Crystal**, (same park as last year) off 32nd Ave. N, between Douglas Dr. N and Hwy 100. Go south off of 32nd Ave N onto Welcome Ave, then enter parking area off Welcome Ave. Meet at the picnic shelter near the playground. **Check-in begins at Noon**; we'll start the walk at 12:30. It's just a quick 1-mile jaunt around the pond, but we can go around as many (or few :) times as you want.

This scenic venue offers free parking, a picnic shelter, disc golf, volleyball, memorial garden with benches, a new playground area, and more. Invite family and friends to join us for friendship and healing. Pack a picnic treat to enjoy after the walk.

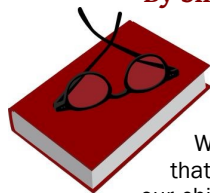
We will carry the names of our children on bibs provided by the chapter. If you are unable to join us, please submit your child's name and someone will be honored to carry your child with us on our walk.



### OPTION B:

### *Facing Adversity, Building Resilience, and Finding Joy*

By Sheryl Sandberg and Adam Grant



Although Sheryl's grief story is about the loss of her husband, and each loss is personal and unique, we all face the challenge of finding purpose, meaning, and joy again. When grieving a major loss, it is painfully clear that "option A" is no longer available. We can't get our child or sibling back. We have to face that reality and try our hardest to make the best of "option B." Our loved ones changed us by their presence, and now we are realizing how profoundly they continue to change us by their absence.

The tools Sheryl and Adam provide, are not all that different from other grief books, but I found it helpful to contemplate her idea of "post-traumatic growth." We have heard of PTSD, but Sheryl says that she has actually grown and become more grateful, more present, more alive, and more aware of how precious and short life is.

In my early days of grief, ideas like that didn't make a lot of sense to me, but over time, I have come to see signs of growth in myself also. I appreciate things that I used to take for granted. I can have fun and laugh again. I can find little moments of joy each day, and this focus helps me move in a positive direction. I believe that we all gain perspective on what is really important, and when we search for ways to do good things, our actions can become part of our child's impact on the world. This book might inspire you on your journey to an "option B" that is potentially better than you envisioned before.

Pat Brown

TCF Minneapolis Chapter, Co-Librarian

## Leader's Corner

Grief journeys often begin in deep sorrow. Hope along the path is not recognizable with all the tears and shock of loss.

The newest member of our Minneapolis TCF chapter steering committee calls a TCF meeting a sacred space. This is where seasoned griever offer a supportive arm and mirror hope to newcomers who are in their worst grief.

A new friendship can begin with these words, "You are my friend." My hope is you will find friendships at TCF meetings.

Monica Colberg, Art's Mom  
TCF Minneapolis Chapter Leader

## TCF National Conference Experience

Almost 3 years after losing my almost 18 year old son Brayden, I am still searching. I was skeptical about attending TCF National Conference but went anyway. I don't like crowds or big hotels but I was in one. I didn't want to see Bray's picture with the 1200+ pictures that loving parents wore in memory of their cherished children. Not wanting him to be left out, I wore it anyway. It was surreal walking down the long hallway of the hotel in the morning to catch the elevator to attend classes to learn how to live again because Brayden had died. My legs felt similar to the first steps I took after Bray passed away; weightless, weak, like I was floating. But I kept walking and breathing and it got better.

I attended helping sessions put on mostly by parents who had lost children themselves and wanted to help me and others in dealing with this monster called grief. One session gave me researched and proven suggestions on how to heal. Another gave me hope that my child is alive in spirit. Another taught it is OK to be angry but it's what I do with the anger that matters. One session of a panel of siblings that had lost a brother or sister confirmed that I was doing the right things with my surviving son Daniel. Yeah! One reminded us of how guilt can "zap our energy/strength" and "empty our tank" if we let it, and by sitting with and listening to others we can help them and ourselves.

I totally related to a father giving a session called "Love, Laughter, and Power Grieving" because both of our sons had loved to play football. He caught my attention immediately and everything he said resonated with me...feeling guilty because we are still here. "Every damn thing" his younger child does, his deceased son will miss. We will never "get over it." He suggested taking some power back, that tears=love and are good. His tears were sorrowful but now flow from acts of love for his son/people remembering him. He said to find something that "will allow you to build and be creative." He works as a comedian and said his humor has saved him. I believe it!

My heart broke many times over as I cried for strangers as I looked into their eyes and listened to their stories. I met loving, supportive, and inspirational people. A mother and her daughter walked me to a classroom, another asked me to join her table at lunch, another told me I was doing well. We are all searching for what we lost/loved, but can't have. We will ALWAYS love our children and we have to find purpose again or we will literally die. Not truly living is dying too. The Compassionate Friends lets us know we are worthy and deserving of life/love and having a future; even if we never fully feel that way or believe it ourselves.

Jeanne Thornbury, TCF Cincinnati North Chapter



## The Color of My Joy

It was not planned, yellow meaning so much to us. First, a yellow scarf, given to me by one of Tom's high school teachers, a thoughtful gift to wrap me up through my grief. Then the question asked, "What was Tom's favorite color?" When he was young, it was yellow (or "lellow," as he said before speech therapy). Finally, the realization during that first week of loss, yellow is the color for suicide prevention. So yellow became forever tied to the memory of my beautiful son who left this world too soon. Now everywhere I see yellow, whether natural or human-made, magnificent or mundane, I am reminded of him. Flowers in the yard, cemetery, or The fire hydrant in our yard. The bracelet I wear in his memory. The Pikachu alarm clock and giant stuffed Pikachu, both in our Toffee (Tom's room + now our office). The owl kitchen timer. The ribbon pinned to his favorite stuffed animal, Bubby. The teardrop gem necklace I am wearing right now. The stuffed duck dropped off a few days ago along with a heartfelt card. The cookies a student gave me last week. The crocheted afghan, a gift from a student, placed lovingly on a chair in our family room where Tom spent most of his time. The Dollar Tree crown resting on the head of his Mariners stuffed teddy bear. The heart painted on a sign made for us. The yellow ribbon bow, quietly placed on the bannister leading up into my high school classroom. The blown glass heart, a gift after his passing, showcased in our shadow box of Tom's special items. A sunset.

Just yesterday I realized anew I will never see him or hold him, hear his laugh, or roll my eyes at his bad puns again, at least in this life. But he lives on in me and around me in so many ways. So although blue is the color of my grief, yellow is the color of my joy, because when I see it, I am reminded of him and that others remember and miss him, too. Despite the fact he is no longer here with me, he is everywhere, every day.

Kimberly Starr  
TCF Facebook Loss to Suicide Group  
In Memory of my son Tom



## Torch

A small glimmer of solace washed through her, a sweet tendril of optimism not unlike the feeling that she had in the hours immediately after her mother's funeral. For those hours she'd felt oddly pacified, remotely less sad, briefly convinced of what everyone had told her: that it would be okay. That her mother was in a better place. That her sorrow was a road that she would travel down, or a river or a sea. And that to her grief, like each of these things, there was another side, an end, a place to which she'd be delivered and there she could be happy again, content without her mother. This did not prove to be true. Instead, as the weeks passed and then turned to months, Claire's sorrow thickened, deepened. She came to see that her grief did not have an end, or if it did, she would not be delivered there. Grief was not a road or a river or a sea but a world, and she would have to live there now. The world was different for each person and she couldn't say what Joshua's or Bruce's was, but hers was a place vast and wide. It was everywhere, went on forever. The sky at night in a place famous for its night sky: Montana or the Sahara Desert. And her face eternally tipped up to that sky. Stars and stars and stars.

Excerpt from Torch, by Cheryl Strayed

## When Hope Comes Home

July 6, 2017 – It has been four years or has it been four seasons since our son, Christopher Steven Ripp, left this world? He was suddenly taken from our earthly lives but never from our emotional and spiritual lives. For four years, each morning, I touch his name printed upon the CU mug we bought for him when he was three. I drink from it to start each day, a sign of his lasting nourishment in my life. His mother, for four years blesses his name with her gentle fingers tracing a cross over "Son" on his grave marker each time she leaves the place of his final earthly resting. She feels what it means to give life in its fullest form. Our son, gives us life each day as he reaches beyond that thin veil to walk with us until we can be together again and realize that this whole time he never left us.

**Year 1 : Fall** – We tried with all our might to hold on to him. Never wanting to admit that he was gone. As the Fall tries to hold onto the blossoms of Summer, as trees strive to convince their painted foliage not to flutter away, as grasses begrudgingly yield their seeds. We too realized that we had to say goodbye. All we could whisper to each other was, "It will be ok." The whole time wondering if we were lying to each other. An emotional stillness enveloped us. Ps. 46:11 – Be still and know that I am God. **Year 2 : Winter** – Cold stillness. Hope frozen in a barren emotional reality. There is no purpose. Where is the reason? The horizon revealing only the stark outline of emptied dreams, black branches a silhouette of all that had been and nothing else. Ps. 130:1-2 – Out of the depths I cry out to you oh Lord. Lord be attentive to the voice of my pleading. **Year 3 : Spring** – Twigs of evidence, ever so slight, gentle nudges that life is stirring. Sprouts of hope daring to try again, risking exposure to the unknown journey, cautiously advancing, recalling the deep sting of such daring. To grow just to die? But love shines warm rays of grace revealing a purpose which is elusive yet enticing. A vision of hope. 1 John 3:2 – Beloved, we are now children of God, what we shall become has not yet been revealed, however we shall be closer to God and see God as God is. **Year 4 : Summer** – Hope brought home. Each day presenting a gift. Dare now to open it, only then can it bloom with the magnificence of the iris or the hydrangea. Loneliness and grief now shadows which can be embraced by the arms of certainty, by hearts broken but now healed by sacred stitches woven by the Creator with a fabric of graced encounters, of life tinged with joy, of tears from intimate places. Wisdom 4: 7-8 – But the just one, our Chris, though he died young is at peace, for the age that is honorable comes not with the passing of time nor is it measured in years. Nor is it measured in seasons.

Though we need seasons, these four years, to believe, to sense to somehow know that our Chris rests in the palm of God's hand where it is always summer. Where our hearts can finally rest contently. We will have seasons here until that time when we are welcomed to the eternal summer – when Hope Comes Home.

Ken Ripp, TCF Chippewa Valley Chapter

## Our Children Remembered...on Their Birthdays

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



### August

CHILD	MEMBER
Rhiley	Mike Henneman
Chris (Sibling)	Tawnya Schrank
Ron Reinert	Sharon Reinert
Ryan	Lynn Swanson
Dennis Michael Person	Don & Georgia Govednik
Brody Kutney	Kandi & Nick Kutney
Frank	Mary Weber
David	Derwood Twigg
David Andrew Twigg	Selma Twigg
Kristin Reller	Pat & Don Reller
Michael James Lewis	Joanne Lewis
Aaron	Deb & Darryl Christensen
Selene Anderson (Sibling)	Elizabeth Anderson
Selene	Deborah Anderson
Tommy	Sheryl Hutton
Dan Lewis	Chris & Bob Lewis
Zachary James Govednik (Grandson)	Don & Georgia Govednik
Antonio	Jeffrey Demeules
Juli Elisabeth	Lisa & Steve Crees
Melissa Roeser	Marilyn & Steve Dahlmeier
Lauren	Nancy Riesgraf
Sarah	Jane Ramerth & Marc Friedman
Leah Strom Riele	Shirley & Ken Strom
Katie	Diana Moore Hoops
Joseph Daniel Muonio	Michael & Anita Muonio
Lana Celinda Johnson	Eldon & Penny Johnson
Melissa Marie Vomhof	John & Ruth Vomhof

### September

CHILD	MEMBER
LaChance Skipper	Angela Johann
Barrett Ugland	Renee Forst
Peter	Peggy Saari
Nick Harter	Brian & Sandy Harter
Kelsey Eberle (Granddaughter)	Mary Alice Carlson
Kelsey Eberle	Roxanne & Terry Eberle
Brooklyn	Carrie Roderick
David Lindgren	Jeff & Jan Bowers
David Lindgren (Siblings)	Adam, and Tony Lindgren
Luke	Wendy Lemke
Graham McCoy	Karen & Richard McCoy
Rachel Anne	Pam Dugdale
Chad	Gayle Brus
Ethan	Tom Lang
Rosie DelMain	Cathy Smith
Jaden Dallas Dalton	karren Gray
Calob	Jessica Bartram
Mark	Tim & AnnBremer
Scott (Brother)	Katie Murray
Abigail Grace	Tom & Christina Monroe
Jeanne Platt	Steve & Anne Platt
Michael McCabe	William & Betty McCabe

### October

CHILD	MEMBER
Michelle	Katie Krause
Liv	Sang, Zoe & Jude Tran
Lily	Leah Cameron
Michael John Blesi	Carolyn Blesi
Carissa Hayen	Linda Hayen
Brian Joseph Henry	Janine Jordan
Jen	Karen & Gary Gross
Alicia Marie Queen-Wilson	Queen Wilson
Matthew Robert Demsky	Barbara & Robert Demsky
Alyssa	Rich & Dori Beattie
Mary	Ryan & Joan Ganley
Caitlin Louise Higgins	Jeffrey Weihe
Molly	Pat, Charlie & Tyler Brown
Dominic	Aaron Cepeda
Benjamin Segal	Lucinda Cummings
Ethan	Jon & Sarah Hockstetler
Corey	Mary Feigh
Ella	Heather Ward
Gregory Sather	Nancy Sather
Gregory Sather (Sibling)	Eric Sather
Gregory Sather Sibling)	Joelle & Paul Valentini
Jordan	Leslie Holt

### Birthday Table

Birthdays are given special recognition at our monthly meetings. During your child's birthday month, you are invited to bring photos and 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.

### September (continued)

CHILD	MEMBER
Dustin Harrington	Gretchen Harrington
Rob Anderson	Sandy & Bob Anderson
Tim	Rozanne & John Puhek
Keith Demry	Char Fonville
Tyler (Sibling)	Lindsay Kloetzke
Ty	Steve & Pam Kloetzke
Jason McCarthy (Grandson)	Ken & MaryLou Theisen
Katie	Connie Weiss

## Our Beloved Children...in Our Hearts Always

especially during the Remembrance Month of their death.



### August

CHILD	MEMBER
Andrew Frankel Hurwitz	Doreen Frankel & Jake Hurwitz
Noah David Muonio	Michael & Anita Muonio
Natalie Perry Smead	Karen Prieto & Pete Smead
Brody Kutney	Kandi & Nick Kutney
Jeanne Platt	Steve & Anne Platt
Jonathan Townsend	Kelly Townsend
Kameron	Dawn Gurule
Melanie Laura Nelson	Dean & Allison Nelson
Lily	Leah Cameron
Ryan	Lynn Swanson
Shane Guedes	Denise & Tina Guedes
Ethan	Jon & Sarah Hockstetler
Christopher	Mary & Bruce Bauer
Chris (Sibling)	Maggie Bauer
Mark Blaska	Karen Blaska-Morrow
Abigail	Eric & Sam Zander

### September

CHILD	MEMBER
Dylan Colbath	Lisa Colbath
Matthew (Matt)	Stephen & Carol Hawk
Bridgette	Tom Twining
Zachary Latterner	Sandy DuBois
Dennis Michael Person	Don & Georgia Govednik
Brooklyn	Carrie Roderick
Aiden	Mary Sullivan
Antonio	Jeffrey Demeules
Chris (Sibling)	Tawnya Schrank
Michael McCabe	William & Betty McCabe
Alex	Frank Commers
Graham McCoy	Karen & Richard McCoy
Adam	Kathryn & Waters
Daniel	Audrey Nelson
Daniel Nelson (Sibling)	Michele Dooley
Dustin Harrington	Gretchen Harrington
Scott	Stephen Berzins
Scott (Sibling)	Suzie Berzins
Scott	Cathy Drexel
Ann Longton-McNamara	Barbara & Richard McNamara
Danny	Georgie Waulk
Renee	Pat & Roy Schulz
Lisa	Carol Sorensen
Dawn Ankney	Sharon & Gregory Maidment

### October

CHILD	MEMBER
Jeff	Beckie O'Connor
Noah	Jenna & Scott Rogers
Derek	Darwyn & Mary Tri
Kirin	Scott Chavez
Carolyn Ann Bedford	Barbara & Robert Demsky
Katie	Diana Moore Hoops
Andrew	Jim & Sue Senger
Paul	Char & Rich Myklebust
Nick (Sibling)	Alyssa Kroll
Joe Sicherman	Al Sicherman
Wilder	Tea Lee
Mary	Ryan & Joan Ganley
Michelle	Katie Krause
Troy Perron	Gin Perron
Cassie Nicole Turner	Gail Turner
Sawyer James Tate	Robert & Joy Tate
Kelly Hyatt	Maureen Hyatt
Mark	Tim & Ann Bremer

*We look at the night sky  
in the quiet of darkness  
and they are never far.*

*Those we have  
loved and cherished,  
those who have changed  
our lives in some  
small or profound way  
are closer than we know,  
because it is their light that  
shines on our world.*

*It is the brilliance of  
their souls that makes  
our night sky glow.*

## The Gate to Tomorrow

There is a gate that each of us has unknowingly passed through. This gate opens only one way...once we have passed through this gate we cannot return to the other side. Each of us stepped through the gate at a different time and in a different way. This gate opens to the world of parents whose children have died; it is their gate to every tomorrow.

There is no other place that compares with life in this world beyond the gate; there is no sorrow like the sorrow inside the gate. The numbing pain and perpetual agony we experience when first stepping through this gate are so overwhelming that we often don't immediately realize that there will be no return. But we will never return to life before the gate.

The new world inside the gate is populated with friends who are strangers and strangers who are friends.

Our perspective on life has changed forever. Few of our friends from life before the gate will linger with us now; these people are now the strangers. Our pain is all encompassing; they have lives to live, things to do, plans to make, happiness to capture. We are no longer part of their picture. Rare is the friend who stands by us inside the gate...stands by us until one of us dies and leaves the world inside the gate.

The strangers who are now friends live inside the gate with us. Some have just come through the gate; others have been here a long, long time. But these strangers who are now friends share our experience; they understand our need to talk about our children, each life and each death. They applaud our tiny advances toward acceptance and serenity and peace. Although we can never go back to life before the gate, we now have our compassionate friends... once strangers but now kindred souls who share our lives and our world.

Life will not be the same again, yet life can be good again. Inside the gate we will each find ourselves with the help of our compassionate friends. They listen carefully to stories about our child. They know our child's name better than they know our name. And that's how we want it to be...remember our children. Remember with us.

Annette Mennen Baldwin, TCF, Katy, TX  
In memory of my son, Todd Mennen

## Grandparents Remembrance



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

Susan Mackey  
TCF Rutland, VT

### Sibling Support Meeting

16 and older

Same date/time as our Chapter meeting

Facilitated by a  
bereaved sibling

## How Can They Move On?

How can they move on? Every day I realize that while my brother's death may have touched many people's lives, they seem to be able to just pick up where they left off and continue with their lives. For me, it has been so much harder.

I learned this week, that last year, my brother's girlfriend had gotten married. While I am very happy for her to have finally been able to love again, my happiness is also filled with a little jealousy. I think of my brother at some point every day. Does this mean that she has forgotten him? I have asked myself this question all week. I hope that she hasn't and at least remembers the good times that they had sometimes. I find it hard to think of her with someone else, but she was so miserable for so long, she deserves a little happiness. I was also told that she is pregnant and is having her baby soon. When I heard this I almost cried. I think that was harder than finding out that she was married. Then a real jealousy kicked in. I thought, Hey, what about Sean's baby? He'll never know the joy of being a parent.

After mulling this around for a while, I realized that everyone must move on. Sometimes I feel as if I can't go on another day because I feel so much pain. That pain is not so strong as it was two or three years ago, but it does come back to visit now and then. When Sean first died, a few of his friends came over a lot. Over the past few years, that began to happen less and less until his friends stopped coming at all. One of his friends still comes by or at least calls my mom at Christmas. Another puts presents on his grave occasionally.

I know that a lot of people cared about my brother, but I think that knowing him for 19 years and being as close as we were has made it all the harder for me. I know that he watches over our family and is always with us. I know in my heart that moving on is not the same as forgetting. I hope with my heart that all who knew Sean still spare at least one thought for him once in awhile. While I wish every one of his friends much happiness in their lives, I hope that they will never forget.

~Traci Morlock  
BP/USA Bereaved Sibling St. Louis, MO  
The Gate to Tomorrow

### SUMMER'S END

*Always at summer's end, there comes that moment  
when memory brings to me, gifts from the past.*

*I see your faces then, glistening in the sun.*

*I hear your laughter then, shared by the wind.*

*And in that glint of time  
I feel you near again,  
as you were, long ago,  
at summer's end.*

~ Sasha Wagner





# The Compassionate Friends

Minneapolis Chapter  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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

The Minneapolis Chapter of The Compassionate Friends operates solely with voluntary donations. The printing and mailing of this newsletter is the largest item in our chapter's budget. While there are no dues or subscription fees, donations to help offset this expense are much appreciated. A \$10 annual donation covers the expense of providing the newsletter to you for a year. Gifts in any amount are appreciated.

Thank you for your consideration!

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