



**March- April 2023**

*THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS-CHAPTER 2358*

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*Facebook Page: Compassionate Friends of  
Charlotte, NC*

**MONTHLY MEETING**

**Meeting place:** St. Matthew Catholic Church, 8015 Ballantyne Commons Parkway, Charlotte, NC - Room 234-235

**Meeting Time:** 3rd Tuesday of Each Month at 7:00 pm

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

Our next regular meeting will be at St. Matthew Catholic Church, 8015 Ballantyne Commons Parkway, Charlotte, NC - Room 234-235 on March 21, 2023 at 7:00 pm. And then on April 18, 2023.

It's not too soon to be thinking about the National Conference in Denver, Colorado July 7-9. You can reserve rooms now by going to <https://web.cvent/event/dd24dcf5-a727-460a-b45d-62d9697da091/summary>

**REGIONAL COORDINATORS**

Regional Coordinators for NC and SC: Donna & Ralph Goodrich

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**NATIONAL OFFICE**

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

*online private closed facebook pages:*

<https://www.compassionatefriends.org/find-support/online-communities/>

## TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS!!

**We congratulate you on having the courage to walk through our door for the first time. Please give our meetings at least 3 tries before deciding if they are right for you. We hope, with the resources available through TCF, you will find the right person or the right words to help you. You Need Not Walk Alone, We Are The Compassionate Friends.**

## TO OUR SEASONED MEMBERS:

**We need your encouragement and support. TCF continues because of YOU. You give hope to the newly bereaved - hope that they too can eventually find joy in life again. Please attend when you feel you are able to reach out to another bereaved parent, grandparent or sibling.**

Did you know that TCF Charlotte has its own Facebook page? Just search in facebook groups for - Compassionate Friends of Charlotte, NC

LIKE our Facebook page and please post any article, quote or personal musings that you feel may help another member. All information for meetings and special events will be listed on our facebook page.

**PLEASE VISIT US ON OUR WEBPAGE!!**

**[WWW.CHARLOTTETCF.ORG](http://WWW.CHARLOTTETCF.ORG)**

### WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE PART OF TCF CHARLOTTE STEERING COMMITTEE?

We need your help. Volunteering to be on our Steering Committee is a wonderful way to give back to the organization that helped you when you were starting your grief journey, and what better way to keep your child, grandchild or sibling's memory alive? Contact any of the leaders at our meetings if you would like more information. We need YOUR help to ensure our Chapter is as successful as possible in helping others. This is YOUR Chapter - help us make it a welcoming and caring place for bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings to come to for help.

Our Chapter survives by donations only. There are costs associated with the Chapter, i.e., supplies, books, refreshments, food and supplies for our annual events, and our fee for our website. PLEASE help support our Chapter!!! Please consider donating to your Chapter in memory of your child, grandchild or sibling on their special days or during the holidays. What better thing to do in their memory than to pay it forward for the help you have received from TCF.

You can also help your chapter by being a Steering Committee Member. Just contact one of our chapter leaders. We have lots of different areas that we need help in.

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***We would like to thank all the members who have made generous donations while attending monthly meetings to support our chapter.***

Please Mail All Donations to Our TCF Charlotte Treasurer at The  
Following Address:  
Carolyn Patton  
5902 Rimerton Drive  
Charlotte, NC 28226-8227

## TO OUR MEMBERS

If there are any errors in dates or names in our listing of our children's, grandchildren's or sibling's, please let me know. We are trying to get our database as accurate as possible. Many of our loved ones names do not have a last name listed. In these cases, we assume it is the same as the parent, grandparent or sibling who is listed as a member in our database. If this is incorrect, please let me know. There are many names that do not have a birth date or a death date listed. We know this can be very difficult to list, especially in the early days of grief. If you feel like adding those dates, just email them to me at: [fletcher1mom@gmail.com](mailto:fletcher1mom@gmail.com). We are only human so we do make mistakes, but I have tried to be as accurate as I possibly can. Thank you for understanding.

## REMEMBERING THESE CHILDREN ON THEIR BIRTHDAYS - MARCH

Cory Abernathy 3/24  
Zachary Anderson 3/5  
Jack Hicks 3/26  
Mary-Mattison Barnett 3/1  
Vincent Chandler Edmund 3/19  
Michael Crites 3/31  
Alexander M. Williams 3/12  
Jennifer Eanes 3/18  
Lauren Ehele 3/8  
Cliff Golla 3/21  
Lauren Marshall 3/22  
Homer Denver Graham III 3/25  
Donald McDermott 3/17  
Missy Minor 3/8  
Jason Lubeznik 3/14

Anthony McLain 3/29  
Samantha Mertz 3/15  
Aiden Miller 3/24  
Isaac Rowell 3/21  
Christina Rupp 3/19  
Keandra Sheats 3/8  
Danielle Jean Callahan 3/29  
Robert Hunter Moyer 3/4  
Jimmy Zacharias 3/31  
Breondra Newman 3/13

REMEMBERING THESE CHILDREN ON THEIR ANGEL DAYS -  
MARCH

Brandon Baldwin 3/26  
Phillip Jason Bell 3/13  
Kevin Bell 3/1  
Dan Biffi 3/11  
Nick Brendle 3/23  
Andrea Skillman 3/25  
Eric Carlson 3/9  
Nicholas Cherry 3/26  
Alexander M. Williams 3/12  
Nathan Eply 3/1  
Michael Gregory Finlay 3/15  
Steve Hale 3/18  
Jason P. Huff, Jr. 3/22  
Chase Austin McCowie 3/23  
Scott Aaron Katowitz 3/13  
Joshua Brian Bronson 3/15  
Joey McKee 3/3  
Lance Ferguson 3/2  
Chaylan Tucker 3/27  
Veronica Nicholson 3/4  
Jaqueline Nicholson 3/4

Cherilyn Jane Crawford 3/24  
Hannah Quinton 3/26  
Jason Kendall Ray 3/26  
Jason Christopher Roberts 3/5  
Christopher Eastman Tilsch 3/21  
Allen Doak 3/9  
Cory Vincent 3/3  
Robert Hunter Moyer 3/4  
Kelsey Anne Ward 3/5  
Jonathan Holt Whitlow 3/31  
Javon Brown 3/23  
Derik Brown 3/23  
Christopher Diehl 3/8

REMEMBERING THESE CHILDREN ON THEIR BIRTHDAYS -  
APRIL

Brad Aylward 4/6  
Nick Brendle 4/25  
Christian Buell 4/12  
Lauren Campbell 4/27  
Kevin Carosa 4/1  
Fausto DE Los Santoa 4/2  
Garth Marshall 4/23  
Ryan Jamal Hayes 4/1  
Jaxson Hill 4/26  
Luke Hoover 4/20  
Brady Hopkins 4/27  
Jordan Horeth 4/4  
Sean McCormick 4/8  
Michael Kern 4/30  
Russell Kershaw 4/30  
Joshua Brian Bronson 4/10  
Gevaughti Lawson 4/25  
Jeremy Lewis 4/26  
William Buchanan 4/19  
Brien Smart 4/15  
Jason Smart 4/24

Andrew John Wesley 4/12  
Laura Whittaker 4/21  
Joey McKee 4/7  
Gina Rosette Samuels 4/20  
Michael Schexnayder 4/22  
Cory Vincent 4/17  
Emily Parker 4/28  
Matthew Jordan Randolph 4/17  
Kerrigan Rohsler 4/5

REMEMBERING THESE CHILDREN ON THEIR ANGEL DAYS -  
APRIL

Kyle Bennett Allen 4/18  
Peter Fowler 4/5  
Will Blottman 4/26  
Tarell Cooper 4/6  
Nicholas Daniel 4/24  
Fausto De Los Santoa 4/12  
Creed Campbell 4/15  
Garth Marshall 4/23  
Donald McDermott 4/25  
Jordan Horeth 4/7  
Jordi Bone 4/26  
Sergio Huerta Jr. 4/25  
Carl S. Olsen 4/24  
Michael Kern 4/13  
Brian Michael Kirchner 4/29  
Bradley Lovell 4/6  
Andy Yeager 4/20  
Brittany Williams 4/14  
Jamie McKinley 4/9  
Jonah L. Gray 4/21  
Kyle Bodord 4/23  
Adam Powalski 4/12

Gina Rosetta Samuels 4/29  
Loren Silva 4/12  
Darron Stitt 4/1  
Brian Colbert 4/7

## **The Compassionate Friends (TCF) 46<sup>th</sup> Annual National Conference**

We are very pleased to announce The Compassionate Friends (TCF) 46<sup>th</sup> Annual National Conference in Denver! TCF's National Conference is an enriching and supportive event for many newer and long-time bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. Attendees come and find renewed hope and support, as well as strategies for coping with grief, all while making friendships with other bereaved people who truly understand the heartbreaking loss of a child, sibling, or grandchild. Lifelong friendships are often formed and rekindled each year at TCF conferences.

Unique and cherished highlights of our conference include our heartfelt Saturday evening Candle Lighting Program, Sharing Sessions, Keynote Addresses, Healing Haven, Butterfly Boutique, Crafty Corner, and Silent Auction. Our weekend of inspiration, sharing, and learning is followed by the Walk to Remember on Sunday morning.

This year's conference will be held at the Sheraton Denver Downtown. Reservations can now be made online at TCF's dedicated [reservation link](#). Our discounted room rate with the Sheraton is \$159 per night plus tax. Please note that each attendee can reserve a maximum of two rooms. Many attendees arrive on Thursday since the conference begins early on Friday morning. We also have pre-conference activities that are offered on Thursday evening, that attendees find beneficial. We look forward to seeing you in Denver!

## **When Sadness Becomes Depression: Some Thoughts for Bereaved Parents**

About a month after my son died, I went to visit my doctor for my annual checkup. He was aware that my son had died and was very concerned about my state of mind. He asked me how I felt, and I told him this was the worst trauma of my life and I was "in the hole" mentally. When he offered to write a prescription for an anti-depressant, I declined. Why did I do that?

I explained to my doctor that I was supposed to be depressed, disconnected, tearful, sad, angry, withdrawn and deeply hurt. That is expected in the initial stages of this grief process. I told him that if I had said, "Oh, I'm doing great. No problems. Just another little hiccup in life," that he probably would have had me in a straight jacket on the way to a mental hospital.

"Wouldn't you think I was completely insane if I said I was 'ok'?" He agreed and said that a loss



of this magnitude was incomprehensible to him, and he was available day or night if I needed his help.

A year later when I went back for my annual physical, we had the same conversation. This time, though, I was in a different frame of mind. I wasn't depressed, I was simply very, very sad. Medications were not necessary.

However, I have met many, many bereaved parents who are unable to start seeing hope after six months, eight months and then a year. These parents are in a paralyzing fog of deep depression. Once we pass the one year mark, we are still devastated, but we are usually functioning on most levels, albeit without the joy that once was in our lives. Those parents who are still depressed, unable to motivate themselves, unable to function, continually tearful and withdrawn, are probably clinically depressed. These deep, continuing depressions call for a medication to work on the physiological causes and a good grief counselor to work on the damage to your psyche. There is no shame in this; it is a matter of simple survival.

Here is a good description of depression and anxiety (both so very common to bereaved parents) from the DSM-Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, published by the American Psychiatric Association:

“A person is suffering from a major depressive episode if he or she experiences items number 1 or 2 from the list of symptoms below, along with any 4 others, continuously for more than 2 weeks:

1. Depressed mood with overwhelming feelings of sadness and grief
2. Apathy--loss of interest and pleasure in activities formerly enjoyed
3. Sleep problems--insomnia, early-morning waking, or oversleeping nearly every day
4. Decreased energy or fatigue
5. Noticeable changes in appetite and weight (significant weight loss or gain)
6. Inability to concentrate or think, or indecisiveness
7. Physical symptoms or restlessness or being physically slowed down
8. Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, and helplessness
9. Recurrent thoughts of death and suicide, or a suicide attempt.”

While the above are also symptoms of the initial grief for the bereaved parent in the early months, these symptoms should modify toward the end of the first year. If they do not, the “episode of depression” referenced above will become a never-ending way of life. Should this happen to you, address it now. Talk to your doctor and a counselor about your days and nights and feelings. Let them know what you feel...not what others want you to feel. You won't be pulling yourself up by the bootstraps on this one, gentle parent. You are unique in your grief. I have never seen any two parents grieve in the same way. I've often said that my odds of winning the lottery 20 times are better than my odds of seeing a bereaved couple who travel the grief road in exactly the same way.

It may surprise you to know that a substantial number of our members are seeing counselors and many are taking medications for depression and anxiety. This is the harsh reality of life after the death of our children. The shock and the overwhelming sense of loss do damage us both physically and psychologically. That's our truth and our reality. Not all parents experience this. But to deny that many of our members do experience depression and deep anxiety is to deny the very essence of our souls. Be honest with yourself. Be open to possibilities.

There is hope. You see it in the eyes of those who have passed the third, fourth, fifth, tenth and even twentieth anniversary of their child's death. But many of these people were clinically depressed and wisely sought professional help. Do this for yourself. Depression is a roadblock to your grief work.

Annette Mennen Baldwin

In memory of my son, Todd Mennen  
TCF, Katy, Tx

## HEART CONNECTIONS – THE BONDS OF SHARED GRIEF

*By Shari O’Loughlin*

Divisiveness and intolerance for others’ views seem prevalent all around us today. We see it in our political beliefs, social justice concerns, and health environment. It is apparent within families, workplaces, and organizations. When we are grieving the painful death of a child, grandchild, or sibling, this divisiveness creates walls that can make our sorrow even deeper. It’s difficult enough when we’re grieving to feel connected to the people around us, and these dividing walls can further isolate us.

The Compassionate Friends credo begins with these words:

*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.*

Uniting people who share this deep grief was the premise that started The Compassionate Friends. The death of our brother, sister, child, or grandchild permeates all aspects of our being. It’s something that can’t easily be explained to those who have not experienced it, while those who have, possess a deep and compassionate understanding that requires little explanation. The bonds within our TCF community can bridge these chasms we see around us. Rather than being further isolated in our grief, we can feel surrounded by understanding, community, and shared hope that can be lifesaving during this time.

While none of us would choose to be a part of this community given the reason that brought us, we are connected at a deeply meaningful level. It's hard to see someone across the table with a similar loss and stay in a place of intolerance and anger. When we remember what binds us as a group and honor our shared losses, we focus on supportive and comforting connectedness. When we reach for the love in our hearts that's bolstered by our shared sorrow, we can model a greater energy that's needed in our world. Our child, grandchild, or sibling who died and brought us to TCF is honored each time we choose this path of connection through our differences rather than more division because of them.

## LOVE NEVER GOES AWAY

"Why does it hurt so much? Why is this grief so incapacitating? If only the hurt weren't so crushing." Sound familiar? All of us have known hurts before, but none of our previous "ouches" can compare with the hurt we now feel. Nothing can touch the pain of burying a child.

Yet, most of us have discovered that the sun still comes up. We still have to function. We did not die when our child did, even though we wished we could have. So...we are stuck with this pain, this grief, and what do we do with it? Surely we can't live like THIS forever!

There are no magic formulas for surviving grief. There are a few commonly recognized patterns for grief, but even those are only guide-lines. What we do know is that the emptiness will never go away. It will become tolerable and livable... some day.

TIME...the longest word in our grief. We used to measure TIME by the steps of our child...the first word, first tooth, first date, first car...now we don't have that measure anymore. All we have is TIME, and it only seems to make the hurt worse.

So what do we do? Give ourselves TIME...to hurt, to grieve, and to cry. TIME to choke, to scream. TIME to be "crazy" and TIME to remember.

Be nice to yourself! Don't measure your progress against anyone else's. Be your own timekeeper.

Don't push. Eventually you will find the hours and days of grief have turned to minutes and their moments... but don't expect them to go away. We will always hurt. You don't get over grief...it only becomes tolerable and livable.

Change your focus a bit. Instead of dwelling on how much you lost – try thinking the good memories come over you as easily as the awful ones do. We didn't lose our child...HE/SHE DIED. We didn't lose the love that flowed between us...it still flows, but differently now.

Does it help to know that if we didn't love so very much it would not hurt so badly? Grief is the price we pay for love. And as much as it hurts, I'm very, very glad I loved. Don't let death cast ugly shadows, but rather warm memories of loving times you shared. Even though death comes, LOVE NEVER GOES AWAY!

**Darcie D. Sims, Ph.D., CHT, CT, GMS**

## **Time to "Spring Clean" Your Grief**

Winter is finally almost over! Trees are budding, animals are coming out of hibernation- even people are "thawing out" after the long, cold days of winter. It's time to get ready for spring! **AFTER A LOSS** The death of a loved one can feel like the bitter days of winter. You go into hibernation, and turn inside yourself to cope with your pain and sorrow. It may be months before you pick your head up and look around and realize you've been immersed in your grief for so long that you've tuned out everything else- your family, your friends, even the change of seasons. You can only just now start to look around and move a little more outside yourself. This is what I call the heart and soul's "spring awakening." It is the time in your grief journey when your heart and soul begin to "bud" with little shoots of hope- where you can recall your loved one's death and still feel sorrow, but you also begin to remember the joy of your relationship. **"SPRING CLEANING" YOUR HEART AND SOUL** You will feel a momentum inside you when it is time to start "spring cleaning" your grief. Many people in your life may think they know when it's best for you to start this process. Friends and family may tell you to "get over it and move on," often before you are ready. But only you will know when the time is right. Respect your own timeline for grief; it will be different from everyone else's. One suggestion for everyone, however: **DO NOT DO ANYTHING DRASTIC FOR ONE YEAR.** The first year after a loved one dies is full of "firsts:" first holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, etc. Your loved one's death is often too new and the grief too overwhelming for you to make any major decisions such as moving, changing careers or beginning new relationships. Let yourself ease back into life. How you feel right after a death and how you will feel in a year will be different. Commit to the one year rule, and when that is over, take a deep breath and take stock of your life. Where are you now? **THE "STUFF" DOES NOT**

**EQUAL THE PERSON** When you are ready to begin to "spring clean" your grief, you will begin to go through your loved one's "stuff," clothes, belongings, etc. It will be a sort of "life in review" for you. As you look through those papers and clothes and files and personal items, the things they loved and used and cherished, don't be surprised if it opens up the sadness all over again. The intensity of this grief may take you by surprise, like an unexpected snow in April. This is normal! Remember: as you go through their belongings, you are NOT giving away the person; you are only giving away and throwing out the stuff. You can never give them away; your love for them will always be with you and comfort you. It is actually very healthy for you to reminisce and cry and daydream of your loved one. While you are literally cleaning out your house, you are also cleaning out your heart and soul... and that is healing.

**"SPRING CLEANING" TIPS** One really great way to do this "spring cleaning" is with someone who loves you and understands this bittersweet time. Reminisce about your loved one. As you go through their belongings, tell stories of the life you shared with that person. There is comfort in the shared joy and sadness this task will bring. Sometimes, knowing you are helping others can relieve some of the grief you are feeling. Many people give away some of the stuff they clean out to charities so that the gift of your loved one's life can go on. Keep your most treasured, favorite items to celebrate the life of the person who has died, and if you want, display them proudly! Time by yourself can often be good for "spring cleaning" your heart and soul, too. Alone time gives you the chance to reflect on your life with your loved one, and to start thinking about where you are headed. Lots of people will tell you it will take time, but you'll get "back to normal." A very important thing to understand about losing a loved one is that you will never be "back to normal." Things can never be exactly the same as when your loved one was alive. Instead, you will have to go on without that person physically in your life and create a "new" normal. Your loved one will always be with you, but now, it will be in a different way as you learn to live in the world without them there. How will it all turn out? No one knows... you cannot control the future or plan too far in advance. Make small changes, lean on your friends and family for support, and take it one step at a time. You CAN do it.

**SEASONS CHANGE, BUT LOVE NEVER DIES** The death of a

loved one is devastating. But death and loss are NOT the final word. Seasons change, and with death, relationships change, too. But in the circle of life, spring always follows winter, and new life grows from the greatest despair and loss. Embrace your pain, and when you are ready, do some "spring cleaning" and start letting it go. Your emptiness will be filled with new gifts and ways of loving your loved one, and you will be able to move on to the next season of your life.

By Megan Meade-Higgins LMSW

Megan Meade-Higgins is a Licensed Master of Social Work (LMSW) specializing in bereavement.

# 10 Spring-Inspired Ideas for Grieving a Loss

Did you lose a loved one in the [springtime](#)? Or was spring your loved one's favorite time of year or when they were born? Whatever the reason the season reminds you of your loved one, these spring-inspired ideas for grieving a loss can help you cope.

Whether you want something adventurous and outdoorsy or a more low-key activity, we've brainstormed ten ideas to help you get started.

## 1. Help Children Grieve by Doing Outdoor Activities

There are many outdoor activities that your family can do with your children to help them grieve. One idea is to use chalk to draw something that reminds them of their loved one. Whether it's a picture of their loved one or one of their favorite things, there are no wrong answers. It's a creative way for them to express their thoughts and emotions that they may not know how to put into words. Then, you can take pictures of their drawings, so they last forever.

## 2. Plant Flowers

What better springtime activity is there than planting some flowers? Whether they were your loved one's favorite kind or are types that grow well in your climate, it's a beautiful way to let their memory live on forever. You can plant them in your own yard or somewhere in your community with permission.

For example, reach out to your local funeral homes to see if they'd like some flowers to brighten up their landscape. It could even be a community event for everyone to honor their loved ones who have passed away.

You also could pick some of the flowers to make memorial crafts with, such as a frame-pressed flower or dried flower potpourri.

## 3. Visit Their Gravesite or Ash Scattering Location

If you planted some flowers, you could bring some to place on your [loved one's gravesite](#) or ash scattering location. While you're there, you could also clean up the area, have a family picnic, or just sit and think about your loved one. If you want to add any decorations or plants to their gravesite, just be sure to double-check the cemetery's rules.

## 4. Plant a Garden

Along with flowers, you could also plant a fruit and vegetable garden. You could include your loved one's favorite produce or ones that grow well in your area. If you don't have space in your own backyard to grow your garden, you could see about starting a community garden! Or there may even already be a community garden in your area. If your loved one was an avid gardener, this is the perfect way to honor their memory.

## 5. Bake or Cook a Springtime Treat

Use the fresh fruit and vegetables from your garden to make a delicious springtime treat! You could even bring it to your family picnic. If your loved one enjoyed cooking, you could make one of their favorite recipes, or these are a few spring-inspired treat ideas:

- [Sweet fruit salad](#)
- [Refreshing watermelon salsa](#)
- [Tasty rhubarb pie](#)

## 6. Try Bird Watching

Did you know that [cardinals](#) are a sign that a loved one is watching over you? This may bring you some comfort while grieving your loss. So, if you want a more relaxing activity, bird watching may be right for you. Try going for a walk on a local trail and seeing what birds you can find.

## 7. Do Some Spring Cleaning

Spring cleaning can be both productive for staying organized and a way to look back on cherished memories. By going through your loved one's possessions, you can find items for a [memorial craft project](#). Or you can find something special to pass down to younger generations in your family, so they have something to remember your loved one by.

## 8. Get Outside and Enjoy the Fresh Air

If the previous activity suggestions aren't your thing, there are many other ways to grieve a loss while spending time outdoors. Below are a few ideas!

- Did your loved one enjoy playing basketball? Or could you always find them watching the latest baseball game? Honor their love for the sport by gathering your family members for a game.
- You don't have to do something active to enjoy the fresh air. For example, you can lay in a hammock while reading a book. Or you can listen to your loved one's favorite songs.
- If you're looking for a more relaxing group activity, set up an outdoor movie! Check out [this list](#) of movies with meaningful messages about grief.



## 9. Take a Trip to the Zoo

Another way to enjoy the fresh air is to take a trip to the zoo. When grieving a loss, this may be just the trip you need, since [according to health.com](https://www.accordingtohealth.com), animals can help you reduce stress and lower your blood pressure. If you can, spend time in an area where you can pet and interact with the animals.

## 10. Donate to a Cause That Was Important to Your Loved One

An honorable way to pay tribute to your loved one while improving the lives of others is to donate to an important cause. It can be a cause that was special to your loved one, or if they died of a disease such as [cancer](#), it can be to raise funds for cancer research. You also can see if there are any upcoming events in your community, such as a walk/run you can put together a team for.

Posted by: Erin Ward in Grief and Guidance, Memorialization | JULY 7, 2021

*Normal day, let me be aware of the treasure you are.  
Let me learn from you, love you, savor you, bless you before you depart.  
Let me not pass you by in quest of some rare and perfect tomorrow.  
Let me hold you while I may, for it will not always be so.  
One day I shall dig my nails into the earth, or bury my face in the pillow,  
or stretch myself taut, or raise my hands to the sky,  
and want more than all the world for your return.*

~ Mary Jean Irion

A Letter from The Editor

Hello Friends,

It's not too soon to think about the TCF National Convention this July. This year's destination is Denver, Colorado. Haven't you always wanted to visit the Rockies? There is a dedicated registration link on the national website and more information about events. Our very own Donna Goodrich is a keynote speaker. We are so proud! More information about workshops and schedules will be available soon.

Spring is quickly approaching although it doesn't really feel like we've had a winter season. Those days that were 70 and 80 degrees felt great, but they felt very "out of place" for February. Spring has always been a season of renewal and rebirth. Mother Nature orchestrates an amazing transformation; trees bud, plants grow, eggs hatch, flowers bloom, calves, foals and bunnies are born, and we have more hours of sunlight. For a long time, my grief dulled my appreciation of what was occurring all around me. Well, I am happy to report that I am now far enough along in my grief journey that I am able to enjoy and appreciate the renewal and rebirth this season brings. It took years and it didn't happen overnight but each spring is more welcome than the year before.

As I was reading a TCF newsletter from another chapter and it occurred to me that I had no articles that address the needs and concerns of siblings. I'm not sure I have ever included an article intended for siblings. I apologize for this! I'm so focused on losing a child that sibling grief passed me by. Siblings are an important part of our group, and I am so sorry I have neglected you. I promise that going forward I will devote space in each newsletter for sibling interests and concerns.

Love and Peace,

Susan

Michael's mom