



**May- June 2021**

*THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS-CHAPTER 2358*

**CO-LEADERS:** Susan Fletcher, Scott Higgins  
& Lesa Hartranft  
Sibling Coordinator - Courtney Langdon

**NEWSLETTER:** Susan Fletcher

**PHONE:** 980-938-4589

**E-MAIL:** [tcf.clt@gmail.com](mailto:tcf.clt@gmail.com)

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

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  
Due to the Covid 19 pandemic, our meetings are now being held virtually by way of Zoom. Meetings will still be the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month at 7:00. Members can look for a Zoom invitation the week prior.

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**TCF Monthly Meeting:** Tuesday, May 18th at 7:00. Please check your email for a Zoom invitation.

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

**WELCOME & Chapter Info**.....2

**Donations & Chapter needs**.....3

**Remembering our children’s birthdays and angel dates**.....4

**The Mind-Body Connection: Taking Care of Your Health During Grief**..... 8

**Graduation-A Time to Remember** ..... 11

**Mother’s Day Revisited**..... 14

**The Gifts You’ve Given Me**..... 17

**Seasons Change and So Do We**..... 18

**A Letter from the Editor**..... 19

**REGIONAL COORDINATOR**

**Regional Coordinators for NC:** Donna & Ralph Goodrich

**Phone Number:** 980-938-4589

**E-mail:** [iluvu2lauren@gmail.com](mailto:iluvu2lauren@gmail.com)

**NATIONAL OFFICE**

*The Compassionate Friends*  
(877-969-0010)

[nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org](mailto:nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org)

*Website:*

[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 you 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.

---

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



# *Uniting Grieving Hearts* Across Our Communities

**44<sup>th</sup> TCF National Conference**

Presented Virtually  
July 16-18, 2021

Save the Date! TCF's 44th National Conference will be presented virtually July 16-18, 2021. Although we would love to be together in person, we can still connect, support, and gather as a community through our virtual event. More details about TCF's three-day conference are coming soon, including number of sessions, registration prices, and earlybird prices and dates.

## 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 - MAY

Kathryn Anderson 5/26  
Robert Ankrah 5/30  
G. Stone Barnett 5/18  
Kevin Bell 5/16  
Chip Day 5/31  
Michael G. Finlay 5/2  
Jack Morgan 5/26  
Steve Hale 5/9  
Michael Howard 5/15  
David P. Jackson 5/25  
Jeremy Jenkins 5/8  
Carl Olson 5/6  
Erica Lubeznik 5/4  
Timmy Manus 5/14  
Amber Johnson 5/5  
Richard McPeek 5/4  
Erica Dawn Mesarus 5/15  
Ayriel E. Moore 5/9  
Michael Ragone 5/31  
Joshua R. Holden 5/4

Breanna Rae 5/4  
Allie Brown 5/17  
Allen Doak 5/31

REMEMBERING THESE CHILDREN ON THEIR ANGEL DAYS -  
MAY

Dylan B. Hahn 5/3  
Andrew M. Chester 5/14  
Drew Wright 5/29  
Jessica Cudd 5/10  
Ben Huff 5/7  
Dennis Darrell 5/18  
Jeffrey Hunt 5/20  
Daniel James 5/21  
Ashton Sweet 5/31  
Rickey Buchanan 5/18  
William Buchanan 5/28  
Sean Patrick Logan 5/26  
Ben Longenecker 5/10  
Michael Mahoney 5/3  
Timmy Manus 5/13  
Austin McRee 5/20  
Jenna Ryan 5/8  
Daniel Schrieber 5/18  
Ryan Scott 5/1  
Keaundra Sheats 5/2  
Corey Smith 5/28  
Nicole Willis 5/3  
Baby Turner 5/8

REMEMBERING THESE CHILDREN ON THEIR BIRTHDAYS -  
JUNE

Felix Barraclough 6/6  
Julian A. Barron 6/23  
Jeremiah Bellard 6/23

Frankie Curra 6/13  
Brian Yaniszweski 6/23  
John J. Gabriel, Jr. 6/6  
Christopher Diehl 6/21  
Kevin Goodnight 6/26  
Tarell Cooper 6/19  
Kaleb Grant 6/28  
Amanda K. Barbee 6/15  
Brittney Lambert 6/22  
Jeannie Liebertz 6/8  
Jacki Grinstead 6/30  
Scott Lee 6/9  
Benjamin E. Owens 6/1  
Kiara Pearse 6/12  
Cherilyn Jane Crawford 6/7  
Christopher Ross 6/25  
"Danny" Gary Scott 6/17  
Joseph Sharp 6/22  
Jason L. Armstrong 6/25  
Jamaal Miller 6/7

REMEMBERING THESE CHILDREN ON THEIR ANGEL DAYS -  
JUNE

Gabriel Jordon 6/6  
Julian A. Barron 6/23  
Michelle H. Beebe 6/3  
Christopher Brown 6/2  
Lauren Campbell 6/21  
Chip Day 6/14  
Emily L. Upton 6/1  
Christopher Flower 6/16  
Stacey Glickman 6/15  
Kaleb Grant 6/22  
Caitlin Taylor Patton 6/22  
Kristopher Hartung 6/15  
David P. Jackson 6/21



Jacquetta Johnson 6/10  
Richard Maxwell 6/21  
Adyson Faith Mendicino 6/24  
Elizabeth Messer 6/24  
Christina Michailidis 6/8  
Eric Lemarier 6/27  
Blake Carlton 6/16  
Anthony J. Pijerov 6/8  
Heath Graves 6/5  
Andrew J. Wesley 6/2  
Jimmy Zacharias 6/8  
Amanda Jean Ziegler 6/25

I found hope after meeting others going through the same nightmare,  
dealing with the loss of their sibling.

They gave me the strength and courage to **ALLOW MYSELF TO BE VULNERABLE,**  
to accept that I *did not need to go through this journey alone.*

I found hope when I realized I could help someone else  
*simply by sharing* what has worked for me.

As well, I found hope by hearing what has worked for others.

- Keith Singer, Lori's brother



**The  
Compassionate  
Friends**  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



# THE MIND-BODY CONNECTION: TAKING CARE OF YOUR HEALTH DURING GRIEF

*Posted on January 2nd, 2019*

The mind and body are intricately connected, which results in a physical response to our emotions, thoughts, and actions. Poor emotional health weakens the body's immune system, making us more susceptible to minor illnesses, infections, such as colds and flu, and long-term illnesses. Consequently, the manner in which we take care of our health while grieving not only helps relieve some of the common side effects of grief, but also helps lessen complications of existing diseases and developing future health problems.

## How Grief Induces the Body's Stress Response

Grief is not an illness that requires medication, but a normal natural healing response to a loss of any kind. The resulting stress causes the body to display strange and unfamiliar symptoms. All parts of the human body; i.e., the brain and nervous system; the endocrine and immune system; body organs such as the heart, lungs, and kidneys, and emotional responses like fear, love, anger, and grief, share a common chemical language. When we experience a stressor (grief), the alarm/threat message goes to the brain, which secretes stress hormones (adrenaline) that alert all body organs to secrete more hormones to prepare the person for fight or flight.

Because grief is long term, these chemical reactions continue to occur, resulting in some of the following common signs and symptoms of grief:

- Digestive problems such as loss of appetite or overeating
- Sleepiness and sleeplessness
- Heartache and chest pain
- Forgetfulness and memory loss

- Cognitive changes including general confusion and difficulty concentrating
- Emotional changes including sadness, crying, and prolonged weeping
- Respiratory problems including shortness of breath and asthma
- Panic attacks; i.e., sweating, rapid heartbeat, numbness, and tingling
- Confusion with an associated feeling of loss of control or a feeling of “losing one’s mind”

Some bereaved parents have been diagnosed with illnesses not previously experienced such as diabetes, hypertension, or cancer. Another bereaved mother thought she was having a heart attack and learned after her third trip to the emergency room that it was a grief response. After an explanation for her symptoms, she was able to calm herself down.

#### Nutrition and Fluid Intake

Proper nutrition is markedly difficult when you have no appetite for food. Establishing regular meal times is desirable, as well as eating frequent smaller meals. A diet of the superfoods, i.e., leafy green vegetables, citrus fruits, berries, beans, fish high in omega 3s, nuts and seeds, whole grain, low-fat milk, and yogurt is most nourishing. Small amounts of comfort foods and one’s favorite dish can encourage eating. Mindful and slow eating aid in digestion and prevent food being caught in the throat. Healthy snacks of nuts, veggies, and fruits should be kept on hand to avoid snacking on sugary and salty snacks. Avoid highly seasoned, high fat, and fried foods. Avoid simple carbohydrates such as donuts and pastries, because they can lead to a drop in blood sugar causing a jittery feeling.

When nutritional intake is compromised during grief, it is useful to add a multivitamin, as well as the anti-stress vitamin-B complex. One should avoid the use of artificial sweeteners, but rather substitute natural sweeteners such as honey or foods that are naturally sweet, such as apples and bananas. Mealtime can be more fun when eating in a different location with a friend.

Water and fluid intake often suffer during grief. It is helpful to drink a cool glass of juice, water or other liquid at least every two hours to avoid dehydration. Caffeinated drinks, like coffee and colas, should be limited or avoided because they may increase jitteriness and sleeplessness.

It may be tempting to numb the pain of grief with food and drink, especially alcohol. This can, in turn, lead to additional problems like dependence and overweight. Numbing the pain also prolongs the grieving process.

### Sleep Enhancement

Insomnia, the inability to fall asleep and/or to stay asleep, is a distressing grief manifestation that can be difficult to overcome. The natural tendency to seek sleep medications is not always effective and may have negative side effects, including habit formation. Behavioral adaptations that can help resolve sleep problems should be considered.

Environmental preparation of the sleep area includes removing the TV, laptop, smartphone, and other work-related items. The temperature of the room should be comfortably cool for sleeping. Some grieving individuals feel chilly, so socks will help warm the feet and add a warm cup of herbal tea or a warm bath for additional comfort. The addition of soft lighting and an essential oil, such as lavender, will help induce relaxation.

A sleep routine should consistently include a get-up time, a standard bedtime no later than 10 pm, and a wind-down (chill-out) period. Winding down includes physical and mental winding down. The first part of winding down is to separate your busy day from bedtime. Clear your mind of thoughts, worries, pent-up feelings, and the proverbial "To-Do List" by writing them in a log/journal. Don your favorite sleepwear, play relaxing music or light a candle for added ambiance. The second part of winding down is to physically relax the muscles by alternating between tensing and relaxing each part of the body from head to toe. Slow deep breathing calms the heart and further enhances relaxation for sleep.

Some of us get to sleep, but find it impossible to stay asleep. The addition of white noise (sounds introduced via a recording or other instru-

ment specifically to keep silence or other environmental noises from becoming disruptive) may be especially helpful. If you awaken and do not get back to sleep in 10-15 minutes, don't try to force it. Just rest in bed and enjoy the feel of your soft pillow and bed covers around you. Give yourself the gift of time-out, awake or asleep. Some of the tried and true anecdotes for insomnia include warm milk, herbal teas, and counting sheep from 100 backwards. Another technique is the use of specialized sleep DVDs, which use headphones to enhance the sound.

A word of caution: avoid alcohol and caffeine, especially after about 5 p.m. The stimulation can interfere with sleep. Finally, avoid strenuous exercise too close to bedtime, as this also interferes with sleep. When all else fails and sleep does not come, consider seeking medical advice for sleep aids for short-term use only.

Some of you may have the opposite problem—you find it nearly impossible to get out of bed. You do not have any energy and you feel there is no reason to get up. Nothing seems to matter anymore. This is also a normal grief reaction. Give yourself permission to do nothing, at least for the first few days. Then plan for a favorite activity, such as a movie, shopping, a massage, or visiting with a good friend. In the early months and years, it can be difficult to find anything of interest.

### Rest and Relaxation

Rest is extremely important because grief is hard work and the body needs rest to repair itself. In the days and weeks following the loss of a loved one, there is often a flurry of activity. There is also a desire to move faster than the brain and body are able to. Later on, there is the desire to keep busy so as not to think of your child. These factors contribute to fatigue, which is so common in early grief. One way to get some rest and relaxation is to schedule a specific relaxation time in your day. Be sure to include time alone. Plan an enjoyable activity exclusively for pleasure and relaxing such as listening to happy music, reading or writing poetry, dancing, yoga, or any of your favorites. Time spent observing birds, trees, flowers, and nature in general, is relaxing, as is gentle exercise.

### Exercise

Getting physical, along with keeping the heart healthy, helps strengthen muscles and bones, reduces stress, and lowers overall health risks. It also helps to expend some of the angry feelings and pent-up emotions. It is especially helpful during acute grief because it increases energy and helps the body produce endorphins that elevate the mood. Additionally, exercise helps facilitate rest and sleep which can be elusive in early grief. If you have a fitness program in place, you are already familiar with its benefits. If not, do yourself a favor; find a physical activity of interest, and begin today. Exercise a minimum of 30 minutes five days a week. Keep in mind that some exercise is better than no exercise. A simple brisk walk is an exercise that requires no equipment, is cost effective and easy to achieve. Other exercises may include any of your favorites, such as bicycling, jogging, dancing, aerobics, swimming, and weight training. Be sure to get a physical exam before embarking on a new exercise program.

In summary, this long difficult journey called grief is manifested in symptoms that result from the connection between the mind and body. Careful attention to health issues during bereavement can help relieve some of the normal grief manifestations and, more importantly, prevent a worsening of existing disease conditions and prevent future health problems.



### **CORALEASE RUFF**

Dr. Coralease Ruff is a Bereavement Facilitator, Registered Nurse, University Professor, and an International Nursing Consultant. She and her husband became bereaved parents in 1997 following the death of their 21-year old daughter in an automobile accident in the Dominican Republic. Since then, she has been involved in The Compassionate Friends in many roles.

## **GRADUATION—A TIME TO REMEMBER**

I was driving down the road the other day, thinking of how the retail market makes any event an opportunity for revenue. Graduation seems to fall into that category, with cards and gifts for every Graduate. This time of year reminds me that my graduation from high school was a bittersweet time.

Really, it was the first time I had “surpassed” my older brother, David, in anything significant. I turned the age that he was when he died, 18, in the beginning of my senior year of high school. That year was difficult for me, as I felt that I was getting to move past where he had been cut short. Graduation day was no exception. I was happy to be getting out of high school, and looking forward to that coming August when I would go to college. But why was I getting to do these things, and not David? What made me so special that I got to stay here and experience these things? I still am not quite sure of the answer to those questions.

Graduation from high school was really just the first of many events which I have gotten to experience that David never will. College graduation, my wedding, and the birth of my two children are examples. And for me, each event has been a bit bittersweet.

The good news is this: that while time does make it easier to bear day-to-day activities without your sibling, each major event in your life presents itself as a new opportunity to remember your brother or sister, as well. For me, figuring that out was a huge relief, as it meant that my fear of forgetting David was not something I needed to worry about any more. His memory is just as alive for me today, 15-1/2 years later, as it was when I took that walk across the stage to accept my high school diploma.

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

**Mother's Day Revisited**

Many of us in TCF do not look forward to Mother's Day. On this holiday, when the whole nation is celebrating the joys of parenthood, grieving parents often feel a special anguish.

Mother's Day this year looms as a particularly difficult milestone for me, Sunday, May 10, 1998, is not only Mother's Day but also the second anniversary of the death of my ten-year-old son, Jacob. Because this day of private sadness also happens to be a day of public celebration, I decided that I should start thinking early about the occasion. I engaged in a little research about the holiday and learned a story that I think is worth sharing.

Mother's Day was the creation of a woman named Anna Jarvis in the early years of this century. Anna, who never married and never had children of her own, devoted herself to establishing a national Mother's Day as a way of honoring her beloved mother, who died on May 9, 1905. In Anna's view, her mother deserved a memorial because she had lived selflessly and endured considerable suffering - seven of her eleven children had died in early childhood. According to historians, Anna's mother mourned the deaths of her children throughout her life.

Anna insisted that the holiday always fall on a Sunday so that it would retain its spiritual moorings. Because of her efforts, President Woodrow Wilson finally proclaimed the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day. Although Anna couldn't prevent the new holiday from quickly becoming a marketing phenomenon, she did try. Speaking out against "the mire of commercialization" that threatened to engulf Mother's Day, Anna attempted to preserve her creation as a true "holy day," a time for solemn reflection and prayer.

Mother's Day, then, was borne of a daughter's grief and love. More importantly, it was intended as a tribute to a bereaved mother-a brave woman who lost multiple children but who managed to live with an abiding kindness and generosity toward others. I like knowing this background, and my attitude towards Mother's Day has been colored by the knowledge. The holiday now makes me think of the common sorrow that links all bereaved parents. I feel a bond with Anna's mother that stretches over time and space. In a broader sense, the woman for whom the holiday was founded reminds me of people I've met at TCF who have continued to live productive, meaningful lives in the face of unthinkable loss.



Finally, Mother's Day in its origins symbolizes both the joy and the vulnerability inherent in parenthood. Anna's mother knew all too well that from the moment a child is born, hope and the possibility of tragedy go hand in hand. She understood the fragility of life.

Enriched by its own history, Mother's Day is easier for me to tolerate. The coincidence of dates this year-Mother's Day and the anniversary of my son's death-is not as jarring as it once seemed. Although the commercial images of the modern Mother's Day still make me wince, I can turn off the television and envision the kind of day that Anna Jarvis had in mind: a time for quiet reflection and the sharing of cherished memories.

Barbara Atwood  
In memory of Jacob  
TCF, Tucson, Arizona

## The Gifts You've Given Me

I left the need to know Why behind years ago.

Instead,

I practice finding peace with the inner turmoil,

accepting the unacceptable,

living my truth.

You have given me the gift of uncertainty

and thus, taught me to live in the Now.

The fingers of your loss have quietly shaped me,

molding away the sharp edges,

my judgment of others,

my innocence.

You have given me the gift of Humility.

You were a child,  
my child.

Now you parent.

Invisibly, quietly, from behind the veil,  
you show me the meaning  
of Life.

You have given me the gift of Awareness.

I am not the same.

In losing you,  
I found my strength, my sorrow,  
my compassion, my  
Self.

You have given me the gift of Suffering.

These tears carry knowledge  
that through suffering came  
Understanding,  
and through understanding came  
Forgiveness,  
and through forgiveness came  
Love.

You fluttered in my womb like a butterfly,  
and now you flutter in my soul,  
eternally a part of me.  
Eternally giving.

Sara Therese  
TCF Tucson, AZ  
In Memory of Shawn

## Seasons Change and So Do We

These warm days remind us spring is here and summer is coming. Some of us, as bereaved parents, stare at the yard and think: "Where will the energy come from to prune and plant one more time now that our child is dead?"

Spring is a time of renewal, nature's loving promise of eternal life. So many things about our child will never die—the light in young eyes that came with a smile, the warmth of a hug, the joy we experienced as we watched the child discover and grow. These things came from love—our love and our child's love. Is there a way to take back love or the memories of it? Once experienced, love is eternal. Just as the awakening of each season occurs over and over and will always do so.

We can do some things even in our state of depleted energy. Touching growing things can rejuvenate a battered heart. Try planting a small flower bed or a pot of special flowers in memory of your child. Tend it with love and watch it respond. It will give you pleasure and a closeness with your child you can experience in no other way. The strength to face your bereavement will grow with the plants.

One of our members planted a rose garden in memory of her son. She speaks of how much she enjoys looking at the roses outside and bringing them in. Tending the rose garden is a special act of love, an act of cherishing. Planting, tending and enjoying is a salute to our child and to the way the world is planned for eternal renewal and change. Perhaps it says we don't have the energy to recover all at once, so we will care for these tender plants as we heal. Healing is not instantaneous, even for a limb pruned by the clippers. When grass is mowed down, it's not back to its origi-

nal height in the morning. If nature heals slowly, maybe this is the way set up for us, too. Each season invited us to experience its cycle, its pattern which, while it involved change and, yes, even death, is a promise that as one stage of our lives turns into another, there can be beauty and joy mixed in with pain and loss. We do not believe when the trees bare themselves in the fall, there will never be green leaves again. So with the arrival of yet another cycle, touch, see, smell, taste, and perhaps enjoy nature's renewal. The eternal cycles are a promise that nothing ever goes away permanently. They speak to us of strength for change and immortality—our own and our child's.

—Elizabeth B. Estes TCF, Augusta, OA

Hello Friends,

There are things to enjoy and appreciate about all four seasons, but Spring is always extraordinary! It is a season of hope! The Earth renews itself with a bounty of color, sights and sounds, fragrances, wildlife and growth. My son Michael loved Spring. He was gifted with a green thumb and took great pride in his landscaping and gardening. He enjoyed planting things and watching them grow. I am particularly hopeful this spring. I have been fully vaccinated as have most of my like-age friends and the vaccine is now available to all adult ages. The Covid numbers are going down! Hospitalizations and deaths have decreased significantly, and social restrictions are beginning to be lifted. We are not “out of the woods” yet and we need to maintain caution but, we are moving in a positive direction and I am hopeful that, in the near future we will be able to meet again. Thank goodness for HOPE!

Susan

(Michael's mom)