



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Newsletter

A self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents



Volume 3 Issue 7

July, 2008

Brevard Chapter Web Site

www.tcfofbrevardnc.org/tcf/home.htm

TCF Brevard Newsletter

PO Box 304

Brevard, NC 28712

Editor: Marisol Gollnick 828-890-8227

mgollnic@gte.net

Chapter Leaders

Caroline and Steve Smith

Caroline.smith@mtnwaves.net

770-924-3389 (Home in Atlanta)

828-862-3389 (Home in Brevard)

770-335-4343 (Cell)

Co-Chapter Leaders

Marisol and Bill Gollnick

mgollnic@gte.net

828-890-8227 (Home)

828-329-9783 (Cell)

Steering Committee

Vickie VanAntwerp

828-877-5172 (Home)

empnop2001@yahoo.com

Sharon Palan

828-877-4008 (Home)

riversek@aol.com

Martha Clark

336-774-0075 (Home)

mccmbc@juno.com

Joyce Dempsey

828-883-4469 (Home)

hdempsey@citcom.net

National TCF Office (Oakbrook, IL)

Toll Free (877) 969-0010

www.compassionatefriends.org

Monthly Meeting

*Always the **second Monday** of the month.*

July 14, 2008

Program:

Open Forum

Meeting Time & Location:

7:00 PM

The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

22 Fisher Road, Brevard, NC

**Compassionate Friends
A Safe Place to Talk**



There is a need to talk, without trying to give reasons. No reason is going to be acceptable when you hurt so much. A hug, the touch of a hand, expressions of concern, a willing listener was and still is the things that helped the most. The people who were the greatest help were not judgmental. It's most helpful when people understand that what is needed is to talk about it and that this is part of the grief process.

TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Coming to the first meeting is the hardest, but you have nothing to lose and everything to gain! Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not The Compassionate Friends will work for you. At the next meeting you may find just the right person or just the right words said that will help you in your grief work.

TO OUR MEMBERS WHO ARE 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, share your grief, encourage you and tell you, "your pain will not always be this bad, it really does get better!"

TCF OF BREVARD CHAPTER NEWS

Hello Everyone!

By the time you receive this newsletter, the 4th of July will have past, and I pray you all had a peaceful and safe holiday with your families.

Summer is here, and we are into the "Vacation Mode" or lack thereof. It can be a very difficult or a very healing time of the year. But either way, it is a good time to come to a meeting and share what is happening with you. You could make a difference in how the next bereaved parent deals with their vacation. Come and share your experiences – good and bad and help the next parent either way.

I will be attending the Compassionate Friends conference in Nashville, TN, July 17th through the 20th, along with others parents from our chapter, and we will remember all the children from our chapter at the conference. If you would like for us to bring your child's picture, so we can pin it to our tee shirts the day we do the memory walk, please bring a picture for us to bring to the conference at the next meeting.

We are looking forward to sharing with you all our conference experience at the next month's TCF meeting. For many of us it will be our first time attending a TCF national conference.

I have also enclosed with this newsletter an invite from Sharon Palan to Kevin's Memorial.

It is hot out there, so please stay cool. Till next month.



If you would like to have an article, poem, etc printed in our newsletter, please mail to TCF-Brevard, PO Box 304, Brevard, NC 28712 OR e-mail to:

mgollnic@gte.net by the 25th of the month prior to the next newsletter's release.

(Please be sure to put "newsletter" or "TCF" in the subject line.)

LIVING THROUGH DEATH

It's Summer! The butterflies are coming. Many of us at Compassionate friends hold the butterfly with utmost regard, for it is a symbol of our child's life after death. We think of our children being born into a free and more beautiful existence after the drudgery of a caterpillar's life here on earth.

But what about us? Does the butterfly hold an even deeper meaning for bereaved parents? It seems that in fact we have died also. We are never the same after the death of our child. But can we be transformed into a beautiful creature, or are we doomed to be trapped in the webs of a cocoon forever?

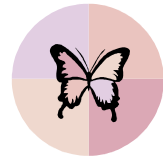
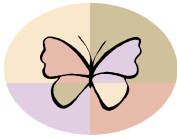
I believe it is a matter of choice. We can stay in the silken threads of self-pity which we have spun for ourselves. It's quite safe there. Perhaps if we isolate ourselves with a really tough cocoon, no one can ever reach in far enough to hurt us gain.

But if we take a chance on emerging into a new person, the light of our children's love will have a chance to shine through. Others will know the beauty of our child by the pattern of our newly formed wings.

It won't be easy. The grief cocoon holds anger, fear, guilt, and despair. But we can work through it. In fact, there's no going around it. All butterflies must work their way through an ugly cocoon.

***IT'S SUMMER-THE BUTTERFLIES
ARE COMING. WON'T YOU
JOIN THEM?***

By Katie Sliel, TCF, Tulsa, OK



Please, Say their Names

The time of concern is over. No longer are we asked how we're doing. Never are the names of our children mentioned to us. A curtain descends. The moment has passed. Life's slip from frequent recall. There are exceptions: close and compassionate friends, sensitive and loving family. Still look. Still ask. Still listen. Thank God for them. For most, the drama is over. The spotlight is off. Applause is silent.

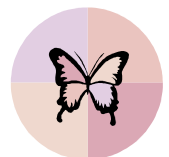
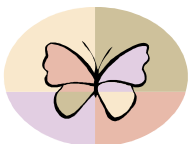
But for us the play will never end. The effects on us are timeless. What can be said, you ask? Please say "their names" to us. Love does not die. Their names are written on our lives. You may feel that they are dead. We feel that they are of the dead and still they live. They ghost-walk our souls, beckoning in future welcome. You say, "They were our children"; we say "They are". Please say "their names" to us and say "their names" again. It hurts to bury their memory in silence. What they were in flesh is no longer with us. What they are in spirit stays within us always. They were of our past but they are part of our now. They are our hope for the future. Please understand we cannot forget. We would not if we could.

We know that you cannot know, yesterday we were like you. Understand that we dwell in both flesh and spirit. We do not ask you to walk this road. The ascent is steep and the burden heavy. We walk it not by choice. We would rather walk it with them in the flesh, looking not to spirit worlds beyond. We are what we have to be. What we have lost, you cannot feel. What we have gained you may not see. Please say "their names" for they are alive. We will meet them again, although in many ways we've never parted. Their spirits play light songs, appear in sunrises and sunsets. They are real and shadow, they were and they are.

Please say "their names" to us and say "their names" again. They are our children and we love them as we always did. More each day.

"PLEASE, SAY THEIR NAMES"

~ Written by an unknown author ~



GRIEVING IN PAIRS

How many times have people said, "Well, thank God you have each other." How many times have you felt "each other" to be entirely inadequate at meeting your needs?

Alarming statistics are available telling us of the rocky road parent's encounter in their marriage after the death of a child. We sometimes see in ourselves a touchiness or quickness to become irritated that wasn't there before. It always seems that my "bad" day is my wife's "good" day, or the day she wakes up crying was the day I had planned on playing tennis.

Or sometimes, even more difficult, we both have a bad day and find no help from the other in pulling things back together. How can one person hold up another when he is himself facedown in the mud?

Every person grieves differently. This is a rule that even applies within a family. And the needs of every individual are different. While you may need to talk and talk and talk, your spouse may need some time alone to reflect inwardly.

You have both been through the worst experience of your life. And while at times you can face recovery as a team, sometimes you must develop the patience to be able to wait out certain needs alone or with someone else. Realize that no matter how it is shown, your partner hurts, too.

Gerry Hunt TCF White River Junction, VT

Remembrance

In the light of day

I awake with thoughts of you

In the dark of night

I sleep with thoughts of you

Is it grief or disbelief?

Evan Filmore, Huntington, UT

The **July** Newsletter is dedicated to the memory of all our children...

Gone too soon...But never forgotten.

We Remember their **Birthday** and their **Angel** Dates.



On the advice of the TCF national office, we are only including the month and date – not year – of birthdays and angel dates.

<u>Child's Name</u>	<u>Birthday</u>	<u>Angel Date</u>	<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Family</u>
Martha Sheryl Clark		07/04	Daughter	Martha Clark
Robert Lynn Morgan	07/04		Son	Georgia & Troy Morgan
Terry Lee Dempsey		07/15	Son	Joyce Dempsey
Joseph Adam Dempsey		07/15	Grandson	Joyce Dempsey
Matthew Hawkins	07/27		Son	Rise Hoyle

**“A greater love comes from your deepest pain
And there’s power in that love to help you rise again”**
From “A Little Farther Down the Road” by Alan Pedersen

Every month at our chapter meeting, we provide a Birthday Table. In the month of your child’s birthday, if you are ready to do so, please bring pictures and small mementos of your child to place on the table. You may also bring a favorite cake, cookies, or other snacks, flowers, candles or balloons for the table in memory of your child. We do this to celebrate our children’s lives and to share their special day with others who understand.

I’ll Be with You

When the summer sun caresses you with its warmth,
Think of me and I’ll be with you.
When the gentle breeze softly blows through your hair,
Think of me and I’ll be with you.
When you stand alone and try to count the stars,
Think of me and I’ll be with you.
And when you’re lonely and need someone near,
Think of me and I’ll be with you.
For every moment of every day in your thoughts and
In your heart, I’ll be with you.

Linda LaBelle Rowley

Love Gifts – A Way to Remember

There are no dues to belong to the Compassionate Friends, because we have already paid the ultimate price; the loss of our loved one(s). A **Love Gift** is a gift of money given in Honor of a child who has died from their family members or as a Memorial from friends. Your gifts are tax deductible and are used to reach out to other bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. Your gifts support this newsletter, our TCF Library, Brochures and other Chapter Expenses.

In Memory of:

From:

**TCF of Brevard
PO Box 304
Brevard, NC 28712**



THE BUTTERFLY STORY

Author unknown

One day, a small opening appeared in a cocoon, a man sat and watched for the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to force its way through the little hole. Then, it seemed to stop making any progress. It appeared as if it had got as far as it could and it could go no further. So the man decided to help the butterfly. He took a pair of scissors and opened the cocoon.

The butterfly then emerged easily, but it has a withered body. It was tiny with shriveled wings. The man continued to watch because he expected that, at any moment the wings would open, enlarge and expand, thus be able to support the butterfly's body, and become firm.

Neither happened! In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with a withered body and shriveled wings. It never was able to fly. What the man, in his kindness and goodwill did not understand was that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required the butterfly to get through the tiny opening were nature's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into the wings, so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon.

Sometimes, struggles are exactly what we need in our life. If we were allowed to go through life without obstacles, it would cripple us. We would not be as strong as we could have been...Never able to fly.

I asked for Strength... and I was given difficulties to make me strong.

I asked for Wisdom... and I was given problems to solve.

I asked for Prosperity... and I was give a brain and brawn to work.

I asked for Courage... and I was given obstacles to overcome.

I asked for Love... and I was given troubled people to help.

I asked for Favors... and I was give opportunity.

I received nothing I wanted... but I received everything I needed!

Live life without fear, confront all obstacles and know you can overcome them.



The Compassionate Friends of Brevard

PO Box 304
Brevard, NC 28712

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

July 2008 Newsletter



Our Credo...

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope.

The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope.

We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances. We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships. We are young, and we are old. Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength, while some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression, while others radiate an inner peace. But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love for the children who have died.

We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love to share the pain as well as the joy, share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts, and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

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