



# The Compassionate Friends

Topeka Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

*Published Bimonthly by The Topeka TCF Chapter*

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Topeka TCF Chapter Website:  
[www.tcftopeka.org](http://www.tcftopeka.org)

July ~ August 2016  
Editor: Susan Chan  
3448 S.W. Mission Ave.  
Topeka, KS 66614-3629  
(785) 272-4895

## JULY MEETING

Monday, July 25, 2016  
Most Pure Heart of Mary Church  
3601 S.W. 17th St., Topeka, KS  
**St. Vincent's Center, lower level**  
7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

**Preparing for Milestone Events** - One of the difficult things those who have lost a child have to deal with are what are called "milestone events" - birthdays and death anniversaries are probably the most common, but there certainly can be other days throughout the year that are just more difficult than others. Some examples might include high school or college graduations of your child's friends or a surviving sibling; weddings and baby showers as those same people move along through life events that your child will never experience. We will talk about ideas for handling these tough days and creative ways to remember your loved one on milestone days. Because the MPH Parish Center will be closed for maintenance, the July meeting will be held in the St. Vincent's Center south of the Parish Center/School.

## AUGUST MEETING

Monday, August 22, 2016  
Most Pure Heart of Mary Church  
3601 S.W. 17th St., Topeka, KS  
7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

**Partner Sharing Session** - During this program, members of the group split up in pairs. At a signal from the facilitator, one person in each group spend about 10 minutes telling their "partner" whatever they want to about their child, the circumstances of the child's death, the feelings he or she is experiencing because of the death, or anything else the individual wishes to tell. During this telling, the partner listens, but does not interrupt, express opinions, etc. This is an opportunity for the individual speaking to have their partner's complete and undivided attention as they talk about their child and the death. At the end of 10 minutes, the partners switch off, with the second person having their 10 minutes of uninterrupted talk time. Following the second 10 minutes, both individuals have the opportunity to ask questions of each other, express thoughts and opinions about what each has said, etc.

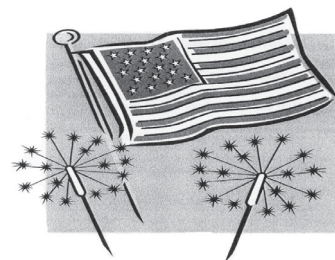
Meetings are always held on the fourth Monday of each month unless otherwise noted. Listen to radio & TV for cancellations due to severe weather conditions.

### *This newsletter is sponsored by:*

*Ralph and Judy Lundin in loving memory of their daughter Amy Lundin who died July 28<sup>th</sup>*

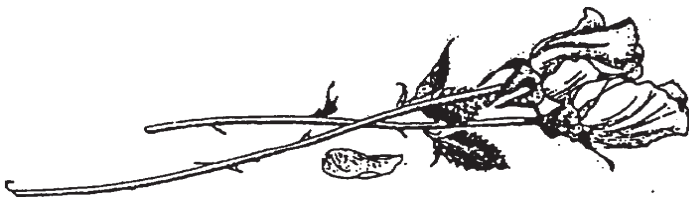
*Mark and Linda Marling in loving memory of their granddaughter Morgan Marie Pollak who was born on August 14<sup>th</sup> and died on August 27<sup>th</sup>*

*Marty and Debbie Tyson in loving memory of their son Brendon Toler who was born August 18<sup>th</sup>*



*The Compassionate Friends is a self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved prents. The purposes are to promote and aid parents in the positive resolution of the grief experience following the death of a child of any age, fram any cause; and to foster the physical and emotional health of all bereaved parents, grandparents and surviving siblings.*

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## We Need Not Walk Alone

### **\*HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE\***

Our TCF Chapter will be holding its 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Memorial Picnic and Dove Release on Saturday, September 17, 2016 at Shelter House #6 at Lake Shawnee

Look for more information and Yellow RSVP/Dove Sponsorship Form in this Newsletter.

# From the Newsletter Editor

Dear Compassionate Friends Family,

**Memorial Picnic/Dove Release** - We are looking forward to hopefully seeing many of you in September when the Topeka TCF Chapter will be holding its 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Memorial Picnic and Dove Release at Lake Shawnee. Be sure to mark **Saturday, September 17<sup>th</sup>** on your calendars now so you won't miss this special event honoring the lives of our precious children, grandchildren and siblings gone too soon. Look for the yellow RSVP/Dove Sponsorship Form in this newsletter. Reservations/Sponsorships will need to be returned **by September 9, 2016**. It not only give information about the event, location, times, what to bring, etc., but also offers you the opportunity to sponsor a dove in memory of your loved one. As you know, we charge no dues or fees to participate in our regular monthly support group meetings or our memorial events, so these Dove Sponsorships help us meet the expenses of renting the shelter house and securing the doves for the Memorial Program.



**An Update on the Chapter Newsletter** - As I mentioned in the last newsletter, we have established an electronic list of those who prefer to receive the newsletter via e-mail. If you have not requested to be on the e-newsletter list, you will continue to be mailed a hard copy of the newsletter. Remember, you can also always access the current and past issues of our newsletter on our Chapter website at [www.tcftopeka.org](http://www.tcftopeka.org) under "Newsletters". Those families whose loved one died in 2015 or thus far in 2016 are automatically kept on the mailing list for one full year unless they request in writing to have their name removed. You are all asked to send any address changes (hard copy or e-mail) to [tcftopeka@gmail.com](mailto:tcftopeka@gmail.com)

**Update on Memory Pages** - We are once again accepting Memory Pages for the newsletter. However, while they will not be published in the printed edition of the newsletter, they will appear in the online PDF version of the newsletter which is posted and viewable on our TCF Chapter website at [www.tcftopeka.org](http://www.tcftopeka.org) < This option helps to not only save printing costs, but will also allow us to include Memory Page photos in full color rather than in black and white. If you have questions, contact Susan at [chanx2@cox.net](mailto:chanx2@cox.net)

**An Update on Dillions Community Rewards Program** - Have you signed up to support our Topeka TCF Chapter yet by using your Dillions Shopper's Card? While we currently have less than a dozen families signed up, we could bring in a lot more passive income to help meet Chapter expenses (like the printing/mailing of this newsletter) if more of you would sign up. If you have not signed up to support the Topeka TCF Chapter through this program, I encourage you to go to [www.dillions.com/community](http://www.dillions.com/community) rewards and click on "Register" at the top of the page. When you enroll you will be asked to designate which charity your wish to support. The Topeka Compassionate Friends Chapter NPO number is 65403. Once you have done so and have a Dillions Shopper's Card, every time you make a purchase at Dillions a portion of your total will be donated to the Topeka TCF Chapter. Participating in this program **costs you nothing** and **does not affect your fuel points** for gasoline purchases. If you need assistance in setting up your account, call toll-free at 1-800-576-4377 and select Option 3.

Until next time, be gentle with yourself and let the healing happen. Remember, You Need Not Walk Alone

## CALL FOR PHOTOS

If you would like your loved one's photo included in our TCF Chapter's memorial slide presentation, please do one of the following:

1. If you have computer access and can send a jpg file of your child's photo electronically, please send to: [dtucker35@cox.net](mailto:dtucker35@cox.net) Be sure to include your loved one's full name, birth and death dates.
2. If you are not able to send a photo file electronically, you may send a photo print (do not send the only copy you have!) so that we may scan it into digital format. Send the photo plus the full name, birth and death dates for your loved one to: Susan Chan, 3448 SW Mission Ave., Topeka, KS 66614-3629. Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope for return of your photo. We will continue to collect photos throughout the year to add to the slide presentation. If you already sent in a photo, you need not resend one.
3. The Memorial Slide Presentation will be a part of our Candle Lighting Memorial in December.



# Love Gifts

**Your Love Gifts Help Spread  
the Message of Hope & Healing ~ Won't You Help Today?**

What is a Love Gift? A Love Gift is a gift of money (or books, etc.) to The Compassionate Friends. It is usually in memory of a child, grandchild or sibling who has died, but it may be from individuals who wish to honor a relative or friend who has died, a gift of thanks that their children are alive, or simply a gift from someone who wants to help. The Compassionate Friends charges *no individual dues* or fees and depends on such Love Gifts to meet the Chapter's expenses, including the printing and mailing of this newsletter. **When you make a donation, make sure to check to see if your employer may have a "matching gifts" program** as this could double the amount of your donation. If you are not sure whether your company has such a program, check with your Personnel Department. This month we thank:

♥ *Mary Harrington in loving memory of her daughters Juliet Faith Harrington who died on August 25<sup>th</sup> and Clara Harrington-Jones who died on August 26<sup>th</sup>*

♥ *Mark & Linda Marling in loving memory of their granddaughter Morgan Pollock who was born August 14<sup>th</sup> and died August 27<sup>th</sup>*

♥ *Marty & Debbie Tyson in loving memory of their son Brandon Toler who was born August 18<sup>th</sup>*

Thank you for your gifts which enable us to print this newsletter and reach out to newly bereaved families. Donations are our only source of income and are **tax deductible**. If you would like to sponsor a newsletter, the cost is \$30.00. If we have more than one sponsor, we recognize all of them. If you wish to send a Love Gift, any amount is appreciated. It is whatever you feel you can give. Donations of books that you have found helpful to the Topeka Chapter Library are also greatly appreciated, and it is a nice way to remember your child or other loved one. If you would like to send a Love Gift or a Newsletter Sponsorship, you may do so by sending it to: The Compassionate Friends, c/o Susan Chan, 3448 SW Mission Ave., Topeka, KS 66614-3629. For Newsletter Sponsorships, please indicate which issue you wish to sponsor (Jan/Feb, March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October, or November/December). Makes checks payable to "TCF".

**TCF National Office e-mail:**  
nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

**Compassionate Friends web address:**  
www.compassionatefriends.org

**Topeka TCF Chapter web and e-mail addresses:**  
www.tcftopeka.org    tcftopeka@gmail.com

**Kansas Regional Coordinator:**  
Marty & Renda Weaver - (785) 823-7191  
mweaver@cox.net

**A Word on our Photo Wall** - I also wanted to remind you that we maintain a photo gallery of our beloved children, grandchild and siblings that is displayed at every meeting. If you would like your loved one represented, send in a 3 x 5 inch photo (vertical or horizontal presentation) along with their full name, their birth and death dates and your name. You can send these to me at my address on the front page of the newsletter. You may also request that your child's photo become a part of our annual Photo Tribute video that is shared at the December Memorial Candle Lighting Program.

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

## Upcoming Events/Dates to Remember

**July 8-10, 2016** - The Compassionate Friends is pleased to announce that Scottsdale, Arizona, will be the site of the 39<sup>th</sup> TCF National Conference. "Hope Rises on the Wings of Love" is the theme of next year's event. The 2016 Conference will be held at the The Fairmont Scottsdale Princess Resort. Hotel reservations and Conference The Conference will offer over 100 workshops, sharing sessions, a Memorial Candle Lighting and a Walk to Remember among many other things. Plan to share this supportive and healing event.

**September 17, 2016** - Topeka Chapter 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Memorial Picnic and Dove Release at Lake Shawnee. 11:30am-3:00pm

**Our Thanks to:** Midland Care Connection for giving us a mailbox and Most Pure Heart of Mary Church for allowing us to meet at their facility. A special Thank You to ProPrint for helping to underwrite the printing cost of this newsletter.

**Pro Print**  
**DIGITAL PRINT AND COPY SERVICES**  
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LAWRENCE, KS 66044    TOPEKA, KS 66604  
785.842.3610    785.272.0070



# And We Remember.....

*Because of the potential for the hurtful crime of identity theft, TCF Chapter Newsletters will now only publish the date of a child's birth or death without listing the year of each event. This is a directive from the National TCF Office to protect all TCF members. **Due to space constraints, only those families who remain current on our newsletter mailing list will be included in the We Remember section***

Jon Bieher, brother of Andrea Smith, born on August 5<sup>th</sup>



Terry Edward Burns, son of Kenneth and Eleanor Burns, and brother of Kathy Kaesewurm, born on September 17<sup>th</sup>

Rebecca Lynne Smith Crismas, daughter of BobbyJean Smith, who was born on August 13<sup>th</sup>

Wendi Sue Cushing, daughter of Scott and Denise Cushing; sister of Deana and Dylan Cushing, died on August 9<sup>th</sup>

Jeffrey Darrell Darting, son of Gerry and Judy Darting and brother of Sarah Escobar and Jenny Darting, died on August 29<sup>th</sup>

Gerald (Jerry) Eberhardt, son of Duane and Mary Eberhardt, who was born September 1<sup>st</sup>

Amber Fleer, daughter of Darla Hughes and Terry Fleer, who was born on September 21<sup>st</sup>

Jeremy Scott Goehl, son of Danny and Kim Goehl; brother of Jason Goehl, who was born on August 29<sup>th</sup>

Juliet Faith Harrington, daughter of Mary Harrington, who was born on September 2<sup>nd</sup>; died on August 25<sup>th</sup>

Spencer Mark Hastings, son of Steve and Sue Hastings, who died on September 28<sup>th</sup>

Vernon A. Jamison, Sr., son of Eugene A. and Mayverdis Jamison born on August 30<sup>th</sup>



Clara Harrington Jones, daughter of Mary Harrington and John Jones, born and died on August 26<sup>th</sup>

Jonathan Kaspar, son of Jeffrey and Susan Kaspar; sister of Jen Kaspar, who was born on September 17<sup>th</sup>



Michael "Mike" Dean Kidney, son of Forrest and Susan Kidney, who was born on September 14<sup>th</sup>

Joel Andrew Knight, son of Jim and Gloria Knight, died on August 23<sup>rd</sup>

William Henry "Hank" Lumpkin, son of Joe and Penny Lumpkin, who died on August 19<sup>th</sup>

Nicholas Artck McCarthy, son of Sabrina Cruz, who died on August 19<sup>th</sup>

Belinda Meier, daughter of Maggie Walshire, who was born on September 14<sup>th</sup>

Sharis Thompson Meyer, daughter of Gary and Margaret Thompson, who was born on September 15<sup>th</sup>; died on August 25<sup>th</sup>

Morgan Myers, daughter of Alta and Rocky Myers, who was born on August 20<sup>th</sup>



Robin Lynn Paulson, daughter of Frank and Brenda Bissey and sister of Brad Bissey, and Greg Lee Paulson, son-in-law of Frank and Brenda Bissey and brother-in-law of Brad Bissey, both died on August 27<sup>th</sup>

Kasey Pike, grandson of Grace Reichle, who died on August 7<sup>th</sup>

(Use the form below to submit your listing if you have not already done so. Once you have submitted your listing you **do not** have to do so every year as long as you remain active on our mailing list. Your child's name and dates will remain on the We Remember database unless you request their removal or choose to discontinue receiving this newsletter.. This month's listing includes birth and death anniversary dates for August and September)

**And We Remember** - If you wish your child, grandchild or sibling included in the We Remember section of this newsletter, please fill out the form below and return to: Susan Chan, 3448 S.W. Mission Ave., Topeka, KS 66614-3629. You may also email the information to chanx2@cox.net< We do not automatically list your information just because you are receiving this newsletter. We only list information for those parents requesting it. If you have previously submitted your child's information and it has appeared in the newsletter during the past year, you **do not** need to resubmit it. If you have just begun receiving this newsletter, or have never submitted this information, you will need to do so in order for it to be included. **Please type or print clearly.**

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Son\_\_ Daughter\_\_ Grandchild\_\_ Brother\_\_ Sister\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Death \_\_\_\_\_

Father \_\_\_\_\_ Mother \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** Please list your address and phone number. You will only be contacted if there is a question about your listing.

**Is this a change of address for you? (please circle) YES NO**

## A Special and Important Message to Our New Compassionate Friends

If you are newly bereaved and have recently attended your first Compassionate Friends meeting, you may have left the meeting feeling overwhelmed and emotionally drained. With the heavy load of grief you are carrying, you cannot bear to hear about all the pain shared at meetings. Consequently, you may have decided not to return. We would like to let you know that these feelings are common to all our members, many of whom resolved not to expose themselves to such anguish again, but were drawn back by the knowledge that they were among those who "know how you feel".

Please give us at least **three** tries before you decide whether or not the meetings are for you. You will find a network of caring and support which will help you as you travel your grief journey, and most assuredly, you will find hope along the way. We truly care about you and want to make certain that no bereaved parent ever needs to walk this path alone.

---Topeka TCF Chapter Steering Committee

### ***Additional Support Group Resources***

**HEALs** - Healing after loss of suicide offers support to all survivors affected by the loss of a loved one to suicide. Meetings are at 7 p.m. on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month. Pozez Center (north side of Stormont Vail). Contact Information: Sandy Reams 785-249-3792 or email sreams67@gmail.com

**Pregnancy and Infant Loss Group** - Meets 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays of the month from 6-8 p.m. at the Pozez Education Center. The group, which has regular meetings to share information and experiences, also has a blog for members that offers communication, resources and support. If you are interested in learning more about the blog, please email lrosen@stormontvail.org. For information call (785) 354-5225.

**From Victims to Survivors** - Support group for families who have had a loved one murdered. The group meets the fourth or last Wednesday of each month at Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 4775 S.W. 21st. For more information, call Bill Lucero at 232-5958 or see <http://fromvictimstosurvivors.com>.

### **FREE online subscription of TCF's national magazine, *We Need Not Walk Alone*, now available**

The Compassionate Friends national magazine *We Need Not Walk Alone* is now available free through an online subscription. TCF is also archiving past editions at TCF National Magazine and Archive. Those who do not wish to subscribe can view the magazine in the archive once the next issue has been published. Past issues of *We Need Not Walk Alone*, starting with Winter/Spring 2011-2012, are available in the archive. On the home page ([www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)), click on Find Support, then Online Community, then Sign Up for National Publications. You can also sign up for the TCF E-Newsletter at this site to keep up with all that is happening in the organization.

#### **Are You Moving?**

If you move, please let us know your new address so you can continue to receive this newsletter. It costs the Chapter 71 cents every time a newsletter is returned by the Post Office with an outdated address. Please send address changes to: Susan Chan, 3448 SW Mission Ave., Topeka, KS 66614-3629. You may email address changes to [chanx2@cox.net](mailto:chanx2@cox.net). We appreciate your cooperation as this will save the Chapter money which can be better spent on bereavement outreach. If, for any reason, you wish to have your name removed from our mailing list, please drop me a note or email and I will take your name off the list.

## Musings

Isn't it strange that things we once took for granted, have changed so much?

Things like the soft wings of a brilliant colored butterfly, or the radiant colors in the sky at dawn and sunset or perhaps a song we heard in passing or a movie, we once took for granted. But now, these very same things can bring on tears and leave us feeling a deep sense of longing.

Why? Are these not the same as before? What changed? We did. The things we once took for granted are now viewed with much more than human eyes. We now experience these things through the eyes of a broken heart.

I believe grief gives us a very different view on things. A heart bruised and broken by loss has a new tenderness and compassion. Just look inside yourself at how your views have changed. I also believe this is our children speaking to us saying ... look at the beauty and know that I am still near.

~ Sheila Simmons, TCF Atlanta,  
In Memory of my son Steven Simmons

## Night Agonies

In the deepest part of the night, when I am alone with my blackest grief, I reach deep inside myself and measure the depth of love for my child.

I focus on these feelings, now made unequivocal by death, and realize that an emotion so strong, so pure, cannot be obliterated by the physical act of dying. My love lives on. This link to my child remains, unbroken, unaltered. This bond, the strongest two people can share, continues.

But how can it remain, if my child does not? A solid bridge must have a secure footing on either side. The strength of the love that flows to my child from the deepest part of my being remains as it was in her life. I must conclude it is still anchored in the very fiber of my child's soul--on the other side of death.

With the reawakened awareness of the connection of our love, I find proof of her continuance, a soothing reassurance that though she is no longer with me, she still IS.

~ Sally Migliaccio, TeF, Babylon, NY

# Transition in Grief

It is good to speak of our children, to recall the wonderful memories of their lives. It is good to honor our children with ritual, ceremony, prayer, and thanksgiving for the gift that will always be our child. It is good to celebrate the life of our child, to cherish our time with them.

It is also wise to acknowledge that by honoring our child in these ways, we are doing our grief work. This work also involves pushing, pulling, and dragging ourselves through the purgatorial fog that transcends our every thought after our child dies. The grief is overwhelming; the process of grief work is demanding, punishing, and often harsh.

Either we stay in one place, “stuck” in our grief, or we reach out and help ourselves. There are no other choices. The loss of our child to death is the most traumatic event of our adult lives. We have lost the future, and we have lost an immense piece of ourselves when our child died. We must work to rebuild ourselves. Rebuild ourselves for a new life: a life without our child sharing this physical plane with us.

But as we share our child with others, speak of the life that no longer is, celebrate that life in ritual, ceremony, and memories shared, we are doing our grief work. At first it is difficult. The throat swells, the breathing is shallow, and the words are so difficult to find. But we pursue, for we do not want the memory of our child to be erased.

We carry our child forward into the future; we see the world for two now. We cherish this new journey that we take for our child and ourselves. This effort is our child’s legacy. Our child will live as long as we live ... through our words, actions, thoughts, memories, and memorial efforts.

And as we do these things that are good, we find the burden lifts ever so slightly. Days, weeks, months, and then years pass. At some point we realize that we, too, have transitioned. Our subconscious mind has accepted the worst that life can give, and we have emerged as different people cherishing the goodness that is always our precious child.



~ Annette Mennen Baldwin  
TCF Katy, TX

# Dwelling on Our Loss

To an outsider, the idea of meeting with a group of people for the purpose of discussing death, our personal experiences with the death of our children, the “grief process,” etc., may seem grim if not altogether morbid. All of us who are involved in The Compassionate Friends have run into someone who has asked, “Why do you do this?” or “Why don’t you just try to let it go?”

The idea of “dwelling on the loss” is always stated with negative connotations, yet dwelling on the death of a child is not something we can avoid. Indeed, “dwelling” is part of the healing process. It’s how we come to grips with the questions “Why, what if...?” that uncontrollably pop up in our minds, and it is how we learn to accept the unacceptable.

Certainly, there is a wealth of information in books dealing with death and dying. Our faith, our pastors, priests, and rabbis have much to contribute to our healing. Psychologists, psychiatrists and therapy may be necessary.

The Compassionate Friends encourages grieving parents to utilize any or all of the above tools, but we also realize the value of learning to verbalize, openly, publicly, the grief and the loss we feel....not in the privacy of our doctor or minister’s office, where we are very sheltered, but openly among people who know full well how hard it is to say, “My child is dead.” We do not put any pressure on people attending our meeting to say anything, but the beautiful part of this group is that it enables you to see people who are “down the long road” a way further and to realize that you will be there in time.

Are we dwelling on our loss? Absolutely. But we are learning to dwell on it constructively, to dwell on it without guilt and without the isolation we have all felt. We learn how to reach out (in time) to others with a compassion that brings healing to others as well as to ourselves.

~ Philip Barker - TCF, California





## What Might Have Been ... What Is

I want what might have been...

And I want what is.

I want the child I do not have,

And I want the child that has come after.

I cannot choose

One or the other,

My heart wants both.

What might have been,

A sturdy lad,

Baseball bats,

Football helmets,

Squiggly worms on hooks

Dirt and mud and

Burps and booms.

What is now,

A charming girl,

Raggedy Anne,

Stuffed bears,

Curls and ribbons on hair

Tea and cookies and

Squeals and giggles.

How can I choose

From two blessings,

One gone too soon,

One here by a miracle?

I cannot ...

But if I could...

I would want both ...

What might have been ...

And what is.

~ Lisa Sculley

In memory of Joey Sculley 7/16/92 to 10/7/92 SIDS

And with love to Leslie Sculley, Born 3/19/19

*Sympathy sees and says "I'm sorry"*

*Compassion feels and says  
"I will help"*



## PLEASE BE GENTLE.....

### An Afterloss Creed

By Jill Englar, Westminster, MD

Please be gentle with me, for I am grieving. The sea I swim in is a lonely one, and the shore seems miles away. Waves of despair numb my soul as I struggle through each day. My heart is heavy with sorrow. I want to shout and scream and repeatedly ask, "Why?" At times, my grief overwhelms me, and I weep bitterly, so great is my loss.

Please don't turn away or tell me to move on with my life. I must embrace my pain before I can begin to heal. Companion me through my tears and sit with me in loving silence. Honor where I am in my journey, not where you think I should be.

Listen patiently to my story. I may need to tell it over and over again. It's how I begin to grasp the enormity of my loss. Nurture me through the weeks and months ahead. Forgive me when I seem distant and inconsolable.

A small flame still burns within my heart, and shared memories may trigger both laughter and tears. I need your support and understanding. There is no right or wrong way to grieve. I must find my own path.

Please, will you walk beside me?

*(Reprinted with permission from Bereavement Magazine, 5125 N. Union Blvd., Suite #4, Colorado Springs, CO 80918 Phone (719) 266-0006)*

Grief is the darkness of a broken life.  
Grief crushes like a deadly avalanche.  
Grief is a story sea that throws the heart  
into the depth of pain, the center of despair.

But we are given tender remedies;  
Remembrances of a golden joy embraced,  
Rich feelings left from moments in the sun.

If we but reach for these:  
they wait beyond the dark to give us hope,  
to let us live again, to let us celebrate  
the children gone from earth, yet always here  
eternal light of memory and love.

~ Sascha Wagner

# **The Compassionate Friends**

Topeka Chapter, c/o Midland Hospice Care., Inc.  
200 S.W. Frazier Circle, Topeka, KS 66606-2800

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

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

## **TCF 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.

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends.