



Boca Raton Chapter, September, 2010
561-368-0324

www.tcf-br.com

The Compassionate Friends, Inc., is a self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to all bereaved parents. TCF is non-denominational and all bereaved parents are welcome. TCF National headquarters mailing address: P.O. Box 3686, Oak Brook, Illinois 60522. Telephone 630-990-0010, toll free 877-969-0010, Fax 877-969-0010. The National TCF website is www.compassionatefriends.org

Meetings:

Held at St. Paul's Church
701 W. Palmetto Park Rd., Boca Raton

1st & 3rd Mondays of each month

All meetings begin at 7:30 p.m. and end at approximately 9:00 p.m.

Chapter Leader: Gail Schroeder
(*Engel's Mom*)

Co-Chapter Leaders: Dottie Kidd
(*Timmy's Mom*)

Tracey Joiner
(*Kayla's Mom*)

Visit the web site's Wall of Memory
A special page for your child can be created

Welcome to our New Members:

Raisa Bernabe, son Nicholas, 3-5-05 / 9-10-09
Dan & Bonnie Brizel, son Dr Allyn Brizel, 10-16-60 / 7-15-09
Linda Brown, son Eric, 1-26-89 / 5-17-08
Mary Ann DiSimone, son Anthony, 1-3-76 / 7-1-10
Petra Hausding, son Adrian, 7-4-68 / 6-22-10
Kitanya Greaves, son Devon, 6-14-10 / 6-14-10
Mary Jane & Tom Juliano, nephew Anthony DiSimone, 1-3-76 / 7-1-10
Charles & Elizabeth Schack, daughter Laura, 5-16-60 / 6-28-10
Kelly Travers, step-daughter Agatha Oatley, 12-30-00 / 8-27-07
Holly A. Word, son Tony J Simonetti, 6-23-69 / 9-9-07
Aimee Zelmab, son Adam, 8-28-87 / 12-23-09

To Our New Members

At nearly every meeting, we welcome new members to our group, always with mixed emotions. We are glad you found us, but we are sorry for the circumstances that bring us together. We understand your pain and we hope our unconditional friendship and understanding will help you through your grief. Attending a meeting for the first, second or third time takes courage, but for many, it is the first step towards healing. The meetings may seem overwhelming, so we encourage you to come to several meetings to give yourself a chance to become more comfortable.

To Our Old Members

We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together and the glue that makes it stick. Each meeting, we have new parents. THINK BACK...what would it have been like for you if there had not been any "oldie" to welcome you, share your grief, and encourage you? It was from them you heard, "your pain will not always be this bad; it does get softer."

Telephone Friends...if you need to talk:

Gail Schroeder	561-901-0483
Jerry Flax	954-224-1973
Ronda Fryburg	954-753-0493
Tracey Joiner	954-593-2766
Dottie Kidd	954-562-5919



Jason MacGowan (561) 818-5847 lost his brother and sister and has offered to speak to siblings. He is a member of The Compassionate Friends in Palm Beach.

September Special Days

We call them "Special days" and there is really nothing special at all about a child dying. The important thing is we never forget them, and by listing their birthday and the anniversary of their death, we always acknowledge their existence—that there were HERE, that their lives had MEANING, they were LOVED, and that they are MISSED.

Parent(s)	Name	Child's Name	Birthday	Passing
TANDEITNICK	Bryna	Judy, Daughter	9/1/52	
KANTOR	Lynn & Ray	Matthew, Grandson		9/2/05
*MELNICK	Romayne	Paul, Son		9/2/04
RYDER	Anne D.	Brian Hart Schwartz, Grandson	9/2/89	
*KLEPER	Michael & Gwen	Jodi Strada, Daughter	3/16/74	9/3/09
HESTER SR.	Tim	Tim Jr., Son		9/3/00
JAFFE	Edythe	Joshua, son		9/--/09
HARRIE	Estelle	Stephen, Son	9/4/66	9/8/07
FAUST	Shelley & Jay	Eric, Son	9/5/82	
GOYNIAS	Al & Selma	Lynn Greif, Daughter		9/5/08
*MANDELL	Betty & Bernard	Stephen, Son	9/16/49	9/5/91
VALCOURT	Ginette	Vladimir, Son		9/6/09
WASHETZ	Shirley	Joel, Son	9/7/??	
WORD	Holly A.	Tony J Simonetti, Son		9/9/07
GOLDSTEIN	Helene	Keith, Son	9/10/59	9/18/09
BERNABE	Raisa	Nicholas, Son		9/10/09
*ANGSTREICH	Linda & Mark	Erin Tracy, Daughter	9/11/74	
WEINBERG	Marilyn & Len	Steven, Son		9/11/01
SPIVAK	Chana	Benjamin, Son		9/12/09
BASS	Donald & Joan	Sheree Rosenblatt,	9/13/53	
*BELL	Susan & Frank	Ryan, Son	9/14/76	
GIGGEY	Bill & Debbie	Joshua, son		9/15/07
SCHWARTZMAN	Norma	Richard, Son		9/16/06
HERZOG	Peter	Lauren, Daughter		9/16/05
*HILEMAN	Ginny	Steven, Son	9/16/76	
SCHWEIGER	Myrna	Howard, Son		9/17/09
HERLIHY	Monica, Ron, Nina	Ivan, Son & Brother		9/17/05
*NATAUPSKY	Hank & Lesley	Matthew, Son	9/17/74	
PASQUALONE	Ashley	Joseph, Son	9/18/88	
PERAGINE	Anthony	Joseph, Brother	9/18/88	

(If we have missed a special day for your child, please let us know so it can be corrected)

Parent(s)	Name	Child's Name	Birthday	Passing
MERVIS	Anabelle & Morris	Allen, Son		9/22/99
FINE	Marilyn & Gilbert	Ellen, Daughter	9/22/50	
DAVISSON	Terie	Will, Son		9/23/07
*DIAMOND	Suzanne	Joshua, Son		9/24/04
GHERMAN	Maris & Warren	Adam, Son	9/24/79	
SWANSA	Bonnie	Brock, Son	9/25/75	
GORDON	Kenneth & Nancy	Michael, Son		9/25/09
RIZZO	Pat	Daniel, Son		9/25/06
*ABRAMS	Anita	Marc, Son		9/26/08
KASS	Gertrude	Neal Brooks, Son	9/26/56	
RUSKIN	Sue & Bob	Lorie, Daughter	9/27/57	
ZEIMER	Sylvia	Andrea Litaker,	9/27/63	
LAY	Bonnie	Ricky Jones, Son	9/28/60	
RUPPERT	Ed & Elaine	Matthew, Son		9/29/04
JACOBS	Arlene & Marty	Derek, Grandson		9/30/06
MERIZZI	Liz & Ray Juliano	Veronica, Daughter		9/30/07

(If we have missed a special day for your child, please let us know so it can be corrected)

A Message From The Chapter

Forgiveness is one of the hardest steps of the grieving process and one where many people, who are otherwise doing fine in their grief journey, get stuck.

When our anger gets stuck, it doesn't let us forgive. That is why this step comes so much later in the grieving process. We have to release our anger and our pent-up emotions before we can get to the place where forgiveness is possible.

How do we know if need to forgive? We know because we feel a gnawing sadness inside of us, although we may not know the cause.

We do the releasing exercises, but an ache still lingers. Nine times out of ten, if we have completed the other emotional aspects of grief, this ache is caused by our inability to (or choice not to) forgive.

The interesting thing about unforgiveness is that it is a lot like guilt. It is a useless emotion that mostly hurts the person who feels it. Your inability to forgive anything or any person in your world may hurt someone else a bit, but I guarantee it hurts you and your world a hundred times more.

As a visual example, think of two goal posts set 20 feet apart. A more content and peaceful life rests just after the goal posts. All you have to do is run through the 20 foot space, blindfolded and voila, you will be closer to the life you want. It will be a little tough, granted you are blindfolded, but there is a big enough area where you should be able to break through to the other side with a few attempts.

Unforgiveness is like an 18 foot wall. Place that between your goal posts and now try running toward that other side. Maybe you will get through. Most likely, you will get some bad bruises, or maybe a broken bone, and probably give up, believing that there really isn't a space – just a brick wall. Like a wall, unforgiveness blocks our pathway.

With forgiveness, we face our emotions, the good and the bad. Instead of glossing over how things actually happened, we face the reality of how our cards were dealt and how we feel the hurt and anger within. When we are unforgiving, we see our own dark sides. Only through facing this darkness, can we release ourselves from its toll. An unforgiving nature is very costly to our lives. We may find ourselves attaching to other people in unhealthy ways, punishing other people or losing hope in the world and with our family or friends. As you can see, we are the ones that suffer most when our hearts and minds won't let us forgive.

Gail

Stories about our children

Jodi Lisa Kleper Strada:

One of her teenage jobs was as an Easter Bunny in a mall. The suite was massive around our little girl.

When she first learned to drive, she would tip the gas station attendant

As a High School junior, Jodi attended a college prep program. She liked living on campus and having the independence. At some point in her program, she decided she didn't want to go back to High School. She wanted to stay in college. She told her High School career counselor that she could earn her remaining course credits at college and told her college advisor that the High School agreed to let her get her course work done in college.

Cindy Brzica:

Fond memories: her love of pictures, family and friends. The sound of her "hello" on the phone. How her face lit up when she saw us.

Her pleasure at receiving my gift, large or small.

Dane Logiudice:

Dane loved his car. He was the happiest when every Monday he would blast the music and wash his car (and sing) It took him about four hours to wash (I miss that!) I am sure the neighbors miss him too.

Brandon Fryburg:

The night he found out that he got into GW University. He was so excited. We went on the GW website and we bought hats, t-shirts, sweat pants and car emblems. That was one of many happy, proud moments of my son

Engel Schroeder:

She would love to ride the rider lawn mower. Daddy would take the blades up and she would run all over the front lawn with her blonde hair blowing in the wind

Eric Kesnig:

I loved to watch you run. We were all so proud when you ran the 5k races and usually placed 1st in your age group. You were so happy to have gone to Australia to run in a marathon. You told me not to worry! Even though you were only 12.

I will never forget when you were 5 years old and we were in the pool having a good time. All of a sudden, you asked if you were Jewish, Christmas or Puerto Rican. We all laughed so hard.

Scott Mamet:

Scott loved to go camping with his father and brother and to go fishing, which was dinner. He loved going to Giant Football games (20 degrees below temperatures) and eating Ballpark hot dogs. My proudest moment was when he graduated from Daytop, which was so hard for him to complete. Scott had a wonderful sense of humor and made us all laugh at our holiday dinners.

September 6th Meeting

Pot Luck Dinner—Bring your favorite covered dish to share in a special night of dinner and sharing.

If dish is hot, please bring ready to eat.

Please bring serving utensils.



Drinks will be provided.



Thanksgiving Dinner

*Provided to bring comfort,
fellowship and support*

November 25, 2010

4:00 pm

*A small memorial service
in memory of our children
will be included*

*Schroeders
350 Paulus Court
Boca Raton 33486*

*RSVP no later than November 10
561-901-0483 Gail*

The Compassionate Friends Annual Candle Lighting Ceremony

Sunday, December 12

*Wyndham Garden Hotel
1950 Glades Road
Boca Raton, Florida*

We are in the process of planning our event. This is the current information that is being given to you for your review.

18 tables – each table being sponsored by a \$100 centerpiece which includes a 8x10 photo of your child with inscription done in memory.

Reserve your table now. Securing a table allows you the 10 seats reserved at the table in advance for the candle lighting.

Please call Gail at 561-901-0483 for a reserved table. A check payable to The Compassionate Friends as well as a 8x10 picture needs to be provided.

A memorial picture presentation of our children is a big part of the event. If you already have submitted a picture from previous years, this picture will be included. If you wish to have a picture of your child included, please call Gail at 561-901-0483. A \$5 charge is incurred for this process. An original, clear picture should be selected.

*If you would like to make ahead reservations for any available seats left after sponsored tables are taken, please call Dottie at 954-562-5919
Family and friends may be invited.*

A light buffet dinner will be served after the candle lighting

Seating begins at 5:00 Parties with only reservations, not a sponsored table, need to arrive no later than 5:30 pm to keep reserved seats. Sponsored tables families need to arrive no later than 5:45 pm.

The Compassionate Friends of Boca Raton is now on Facebook

The TCF Facebook page is now available. To join the page and become a “friend” of TCF, Facebook users only need to search for “TCF Boca Raton” and request to be a friend.

Utilize this new feature to have further support and communication in between meetings and to make new friends.

Fellowship is one of the key ingredients to traveling on your grief journey without feeling alone.

This wonderful new feature is courtesy of Michael and Gwen Kleper.

Quotes

Death leaves a heartache no one can heal, love leaves a memory no one can steal. ~From a headstone in Ireland

**In the night of death, hope sees a star, and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing.
~Robert Ingersoll**

When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight. ~Kahlil Gibran

A human life is a story told by God. ~Hans Christian Andersen

**To live in hearts we leave behind
Is not to die.
~Thomas Campbell, "Hallowed Ground"**

While we are mourning the loss of our loved one, others are rejoicing to meet him behind the veil. ~John Taylor

He who has gone, so we but cherish his memory, abides with us, more potent, nay, more present than the living man. ~Antoine de Saint-Exupery

**Life is eternal, and love is immortal,
and death is only a horizon;
and a horizon is nothing save the limit of our sight.
~Rossiter Worthington Raymond**

**Tears are God's gift to us. Our holy water. They heal us as they flow. ~Rita Schiano,
Sweet Bitter Love, 1997, published by The Reed Edwards Company**

When someone you love becomes a memory, the memory becomes a treasure. ~Author Unknown

**If tears could build a stairway,
And memories a lane,
I'd walk right up to Heaven
And bring you home again.
~Author Unknown**

The angels are always near to those who are grieving, to whisper to them that their loved ones are safe in the hand of God. ~Quoted in The Angels' Little Instruction Book by Eileen Elias Freeman, 1994

Unable are the loved to die. For love is immortality. ~Emily Dickinson

Perhaps they are not the stars, but rather openings in Heaven where the love of our lost ones pours through and shines down upon us to let us know they are happy. ~Author Unknown

**Although it's difficult today to see beyond the sorrow,
May looking back in memory help comfort you tomorrow.**

A blog from a *friend* of a bereaved parent

2010 has not been what I'd call a very good year...

In fact, in familiar company I'd probably say that 2010 has truly sucked. **BIG TIME!** Aside from the death of my stepmother, and the end of my marriage, there has been another horrific event. On December 18, 2009 someone I love—someone who has been a mother, a sister, a friend, a mentor, a tissue flunky...so many beautiful things to me—suffered what I believe is the worst possible assault on a human being. A “jet” filled with passengers and fuel crashed into her heart. Her son's home caught fire in the early morning hours, and it set ablaze while he and eight or nine others (including a few children) were asleep.

Initially, everyone made it safely out of the house, but my friend's son did not know that. He thought one of the children was still inside, so he raced back in and tried to search for the child he had presumed missing. When he came back out he was burned over 40% of his body and collapsed on the pavement as the house burned to the ground. He lived through a few surgeries and survived in a medically induced coma, but the burns, the damage to his lungs, the damage to his kidneys, and who knows what other residual problems were too much for his body. He died December 30, 2009.

My friend's heart exploded on impact.

The other passengers on board my friend's life (her friends and family) and the remaining fuel that has long kept her going (her Christian faith and energetic personality) were left tangled up in the bomb site. I never knew her son, but that has not mattered one bit. I believe that I have wept over his death every day for the nearly 7 months since this tragedy occurred.

In the past few months, the strangest thing has happened. While my friend seems to be processing her grief in some other way(s) I've found myself searching out, meeting, and occasionally ministering to other bereaved parents. It seems that while my friend is trying to figure out how (or if) she can get her life back, I am the one who needs to be around grieving parents. What's up with that???

There is a part of me that wonders if the deep spiritual connection we shared before this 9/11-like life attack has found an unexpected form of expression amid the aftermath of this horror story that has nearly excised me from my friend's life, save the occasional email. Has my spirit taken up the healing project that hers cannot or will not endure? I honestly do not know the answer, though I like the idea. It makes me feel less disconnected from this one whom I love as my own soul, less kicked out of her life. But then, maybe it's just a style thing. Maybe she's one of those people who would recommend something like a grief share to others, while being totally unable to conceive of participating in such a thing herself. Again, I just don't know.

What I find most peculiar is how comfortable I feel communicating with bereaved parents. Some are walking horrifically wounded. Some are filled with anger. Some have a kind of psychedelic spirituality that seems to get them through well enough, and some, like my friend and I, have deep Christian faith that has become not only a foundation for coping, but also for ministry.

Regardless of their place on the grief continuum, if indeed there is such a thing, and no matter their spiritual or emotional condition, I find myself not the least bit put off by the things bereaved family members post to the Facebook threads created by The Compassionate Friends, an international outreach to bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. (<http://www.compassionatefriends.org>)

The range of intellectual, social, spiritual, and emotional perspectives represented by these posts is entirely okay with me. My heart seems immediately to go out to each and every one of them...perhaps because my friend has not yet made a space for me to grieve alongside her.

Maybe the deep sorrow I've felt for her loss, along with the sadness of missing her companionship and the incredible desire to help her through this nightmare, has needed an outlet. Having been closed out of attending the memorial service, and having no idea where the cemetery is so that I can have my own sort of closure, perhaps my heart has come up with a strategy for grieving by listening in on the sufferings of the people who are able to share them aloud and in public.

A few precious, grief-stricken parents have taken me under their wings, praising me as some sort of "earth angel" for trying so hard to reach out to my friend. I am told that very often friends disappear, grow uncomfortable with the grief and the emotional roller coaster, and finally evacuate the bomb site. That doesn't seem to be applicable in my friend's life. She has one of those rock star auras about her and has an exceedingly devoted following, I think. Yet this unique collection of compassionate friends has turned up in my life, and they often "like" my posts, respond "@Anne" with generous encouragement for whatever I've written, or send me private messages to say how touched they were by something I wrote. These dear souls urge me to hang onto my friend despite the current void in our relationship. There have been many days when these encouragements have been like manna from Heaven. Here is a group of people in various levels of truly awful pain, and yet they reach out to me. Go figure.

One such outreach came through a mother who read one of my posts and then promptly called one of her bereaved mom friends to read it too. This other bereaved mom then contacted me to ask if she could quote me on her blog provided she gave me the credit!!! Again, go figure! Normally, I'd have just shrugged and said, "Sure, and don't worry about quoting me or using my name; just take what you need etc," but I decided to accept the offer on her terms in the shallow hope that one day my friend and I will be able to write together about this experience. I wonder if that is a sign of pride when I should be thinking strictly about my friend's pain and her need to heal. Should I even be talking about any of this stuff in public...on the web????!!!!???

Sigh...

Here is the portion of my post that seemed to impact the blogging, grieving mother along with a number of other people:

I've had a recurring "vision" (if you want to call it that—it's just an image in my mind's eye) of the heart of a bereaved parent looking something like a bomb site—a place that was once thriving and responsible for the health and lives of many people, now suddenly and violently interrupted by a

gaping, smoldering hole. The debris of life before the bomb is mixed in with a strong, deep root system—the parent/child bond.

I think of myself, then, as a responder—someone who first comes to help supply immediate care and assistance—applying comfort and kindness and even material needs wherever I can, then to help sort through the debris (as needed and where possible), then to begin planting life and love and hope around the bomb site, then to cultivate what I plant and encourage its growth, so that over time it will interact with and enhance that deep root system of parental love that will always remain. Yet even in that “green” space, there needs to be some good, prime space set aside for a memorial—a place that is always quiet, sacred, and separated from the life that goes on and grows up around it. I think that’s what we’re supposed to do for our friends and family who grieve not only over the child that has passed, but also for the place in their hearts that was once part of a thriving system and is now a site of reflection and mourning. - Anne Bosworth

The thing is, I honestly believe all that! I am deeply desperate to help my friend and her family. Am I grateful to have found my way onto the fringes of a few other grieving, aching parents’ lives? You betchya! And maybe part of God’s plan of redemption in their lives has some odd thing to do with my burden for their grief. Can it be that if my friend had not locked me out of her life I would not have been in a position to encourage one grief-stricken mom to re-engage with her Christian faith? Is there some larger supernatural plan taking place? I wish I knew what was happening in God’s economy.

Still, I am SO ready, so deeply desirous of having a place in my friend’s mourning. How do I know if all the love I’ve tried to plant around her wounded heart will ever take root and grow up strong enough to help her...to help us reconnect? If only grief weren’t so entirely messy and all-over-the-place. Maybe then I could see that this heart redevelopment site that I am trying so hard to clean, support, and restore will someday have a nice bench for me to sit on alongside my beautiful friend.

Meeting Schedule and Topics

Meeting Dates for 2010: 1st & 3rd Mondays 7:30-9 PM

September 6th "Potluck and Sharing"

Bring a covered dish for fellowship and sharing

September 20th "The Use and Abuse of Religion"
Presented by Walt Schroeder

October 4th- "Honoring your child on special days"
Presented by Eileen Kesnig

October 18th "Anger – I'm Mad!"
Presented by Gail Schroeder

November 1st- "Everything you need to know about tears"
Presented by Christine Williams

November 15th -"Permission to Grieve"
Presented by Ronda Fryburg

December 6th- Holiday meeting
"The Gifts We Give Ourselves to Heal"
Presented by Gail Schroeder

December 20th- "Coping with the Holidays"
Presented by Christine Williams

Information Page

If you would like an entire month's newsletter dedicated to your child, please call the Chapter line of TCF at 561-368-0324. A photo of your child can be included if you wish.

A donation of \$ 100 is requested, mailed by the 15th of the current month.

A single page dedication can also be made with the donation of \$50.

Volunteers Needed – *By Meetings Coordinator, Christine Williams:*

Refreshments: We all enjoy the goodies, but it's a burden for the same person to do it every meeting. If everyone takes one meeting, it will run smoothly. What you need to do: Come at 7 PM, bring snacks and soda/make coffee (We will open the room at 7pm, when the coffee ingredients, cups, napkins, plates will be supplied).

Clean up: Stay after meeting and straighten up kitchen and room.

Sign up for refreshments or clean-up, or both! Do it in memory of your child! You may want to choose a meeting during a special month.

Email me, Christine Williams, at clw023@bellsouth.net with the meeting date, your name, telephone and email (so I can remind you). Available dates for both refreshments and clean-up: July 5, 19, August 2, 16, September 6, 20, October 4, 18, November 1, 15, December 6th and 20th. Thank you! --Christine

Many excellent books are available for you to borrow from our chapter's library, free of charge. Please see Jerry Flax at our meetings, and return them when you are through—

Thank you.

Dottie Kidd has volunteered to collect our empty printer ink cartridges, in order to receive \$2 each for the Chapter's benefit from Staples. Please bring them to the meeting & see Dottie. "Thanks to your donations of used cartridges we were able to purchase paper, new cartridges and copies. Keep them coming!"—Dottie

Our Chapter's website is www.tcf-br.com

You will find many helpful resources, such as our monthly Newsletter, The Wall of Memory, Light a Candle, Chapter News & Events, Meeting Schedule, Frequently Asked Questions, etc.

TCF brochures you may want to read (a link to the National TCF website):

www.compassionatefriends.org/Resources/Available_Brochures.aspx

TCF currently has 31 brochures on many different topics related to the death of a child.

The Compassionate Friends Credo

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with understanding and with hope. Our children have died at all ages and from many different causes but our love for our children unites us. Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope.

We come together from all walks of life and many different circumstances. We are a unique family because we represent many races and creeds. 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 we feel hopeless and see no hope. Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength; some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt, or in deep depression; others radiate an inner peace. But whatever the pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is a pain we will share just as we share with each other our love for our children.

We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building that future together, as we reach out to each other in love and 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.
