



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

SOUTH SHORE CHAPTER HINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

SPRING 2009

The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families in the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child and to provide information to help others be supportive

MEETINGS at St. Paul's Parish House, 20 Fearing Road, Hingham (across the street from Citizen's Bank) at 7:30 PM on First and Third Mondays of the month.

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If you are having a bad day, or need someone to talk to, call a friend below

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BOOKS

Our lending library is an ongoing project and we try to keep as many different titles available for the who wish to make use of them. If you have books at home that you have borrowed and finished using please return them to the chapter either in person (we would love to see you) or by mail. If you would like to keep the book just let us know and consider a donation to help defray the cost of replacement The donation of a book is a wonderful way to remember your child on a birthday or anniversary.

WRITINGS

The newsletter is for you and if you have written something you would like to share please send it to the editor and we would be glad to publish it.. The same is true if you read something that you find helpful but we must respect copyright laws and only publish with permission. Also, if you have suggestions as to how the newsletter might be improved we would love to hear them.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

This year's conference will be held in Portland Oregon on August 7-9. Information is available on the TCF website. We will have registration forms at the chapter meetings. Please call me if you have any questions.

Grieving is not about forgetting. It allows us to heal, to remember with love rather than pain. It is a sorting process. One by one you let go of the things that are gone, and you mourn for them. One by one you take hold of the things that have become part of who you are and build again

Rachel Naomi Remen, MD

FROM THE EDITOR

Another holiday season is behind us and we have survived another brutal New England winter. The seasons do come and go as do the birthdays and anniversaries. It is hard to believe that my family will be remembering the twelfth anniversary of Richard's death in less than 2 months. As I look back it is also hard to remember the time before we were bereaved parents. As the newly bereaved enter the room at each meeting, I am brought back to my own first meeting and the terror in my heart as I entered. I also think of all the compassion and support I have received and how far I have traveled on my journey.

Over the last 6 years I have had the privilege of editing this newsletter and it has been a very vital part of my healing. As I read the many poems and articles that have been written on the death of a child I have been in awe of the beautiful words that are born out of grief. I have also been able to share parts of my journey with you and kept the memories of my children alive. As I have said so many times "Helping is Healing"

It is now time for me to allow others to share this experience and is also time for me to move to other responsibilities. As of June the new editors will be Ken & Donna Kaplan. I know they will do a great job and hope that they find it as rewarding as I have. I will continue to be involved in our chapter as well as the national organization. Thank you all for your support with the kind letters and emails over the years and for your continued support of our chapter.

*Peace,
Rick Mirabile*

THE STEPPING STONES OF GRIEF



Come, take my hand, the road is long. We must travel by stepping stones. No, you're not alone. I'll go with you. I know the road well, I've been there. Don't fear the darkness. I'll be with you. We must take one step at a time. But remember, we may have to stop awhile. It is a long way to the other side and there are many obstacles. We have many stones to cross. Some are bigger than others...SHOCK, DENIAL and ANGER to start. Then comes GUILT, DESPAIR and LONELINESS. It's a hard road to travel but it must be done. It's the only way to reach the other side.

Come, slip your hand in mine. WHAT? Oh yes, it's strong. I've held many hands like yours. Yes, mine was, one time, small and weak like yours. Once, you see, I had to take someone's hand in order to take the first step.

Oops! You've stumbled. Go ahead and cry. Don't be ashamed. I understand. Let's wait here a while and get your breath. When you're stronger we'll go on, one step at a time. There's no need to hurry.

Say, it's nice to hear you laugh. Yes, I agree, the memories you shared are good. Look, we're half way there now. I can see the other side. It looks so warm and sunny. Oh, have you noticed? We're nearing the last stone and you're standing alone. And look, your hands, you've let go of mine, and we've reached the other side.

But wait. Look back. Someone is standing there. They are alone and want to cross the stepping stones. I better go: they need my help. What? Are you sure? Why yes, I'll wait. You know the way, you've been there. Yes, I agree- it's your turn, my friend- to help someone else across the stepping stones.

Author unknown

SECOND YEAR



*Why is my grief different in the second year?
Why do I feel so much more empty in the second year?
Why do I cry more, again, in the second year?
Is it because I am more alone and the world has moved on?
Has the world forgotten that you ever lived?
Is it because I realize "with my heart" that you are not coming back?*

*That forever is a long time?
Is it because all of the "firsts" are over and I must move on?
Why is my grief different in the second year?
Because, my child, you are still gone.*

*Eleanor Oberle/TCF
in memory of her son Dan Oberle*



MOTHER'S DAY, "BEFORE" AND "AFTER"



While sorting through boxes and bags, it is not unusual for me to find something unexpected. It happened just the other day. Shifting through a box, I came across a wrinkled, somewhat yellowed piece of lined school paper. I carefully unfolded it only to find a drawing of a stick-Mom and stick-daughter standing along side a mammoth daisy. The mom and little girl were holding hands with huge lop-sided grins on their faces. In her little girl just-learning to- print handwriting were the words, "Happy Mother's Day, Mommy. I love you, Kristina."

Even six years later, little "gifts" such as these can bring fresh tears. It is times like these that I am glad that I was an incredible pack rat, especially when it came to saving things that my children have made. I can picture my then-blond, petite little Nina (her nickname), with the wispy hair, bent over the kitchen table, crayon in hand, creating that handmade card filled with love. Memories of breakfasts in bed, only to return to the kitchen after finishing the "gourmet" meal served with tender care, to find it in such disarray that it took hours to clean up! Even through the tears, these are the sweetest memories.

As I type this, I look at another gift from a Mother's Day past; a little statue of a harried mom, surrounded by mop, broom and bucket, that says, "World's Greatest Mom", chosen for me at a neighborhood garage sale. I came across it accidentally shortly after Nina's death, unearthing it from its hiding place. I wondered to myself, why had I packed it away. Did Nina know that I did and did she think that, by doing so, I hadn't appreciated her gift? Did I ever thank her for it along with the other garage sale items that she proudly brought home to me, or did it show on my face that I really didn't need anymore "junk" around the house? Sometimes resurrecting these treasures can bring unpleasant feelings of guilt as we wonder if our children knew how much their little gestures of love meant to us. When our child dies, it becomes easy to second-guess ourselves, trapped in our fixations and exaggerations of the negative things that may have occurred during our child's life.

The first Mother's Days after Nina died was a grief numbing blur, as it occurred only three days following her death. Unlike previous joyful dinners out with my four children pampering their mom, we spent the day making funeral arrangements and choosing a casket for one of them. In the early evening, I overheard it said to someone else, "Happy Mother's Day." I turned to my own mother and apologized for having forgotten. I could not imagine

ever celebrating another Mother's Day again. I am sure the dads have these same feelings on Father's Day. My heart goes out to them, because I think we forget that they, just like us, grieve and hurt, too.

For those mothers and fathers who have lost their only child, I have been saddened by stories told to me by them of attending church on Mother's Day Sunday and when the pastor asked the mothers in the church to please stand, they were undecided on whether they should stand or not. I hope that they will always remember, and the fathers as well, "Once a mother, always a mother; once a father, always a father." We are forever their parents. If we are fortunate to have surviving children, they are often forgotten as well. In the early days, we become obsessed with the one who is missing. My own children showed quiet patience with this. I often wonder if they thought "What about us? We're still here!" Now with almost seven Mother's Days behind me, I try to accentuate what I do have. This does not happen overnight. I found that in celebrating my surviving children, I could still honor Nina's memory and find ways to include her as well. I have developed a ritual where I get up early on that morning and bring flowers out to the cemetery. I bring a flower and a note to some of the mothers that I know who have buried children there to tell them I am thinking of them and their child. There is something very healing when reaching out to others. I then sit by my daughter's gravesite on the spring-green grass listening to the sweet call of a robin. I bring her a flower and write in her journal telling her how thankful I am to be her mother, how much I love and miss her. That is our private time together; the rest of the day is spent honoring my other children.

Mother's Day and Father's Day are holidays especially created for us. Try to get through them the best that you can, in whatever way feels right for you. Truly, only you know what that is. Whether it is alone those first few years or with people that you love and who understand, do something that you find comforting. It is your day, for you were the giver of a precious life – you held a miracle in your arms. Even as powerfully destructive as death is, even that cannot take those memories away from you -- they are your child's gift to you.

With gentle thoughts and peace on your special day,
Cathy L. Seehuetter, TCF/St. Paul, MN

BREAD CRUMBS-FINDING OUR WAY BACK

by Rich Edler

Bread crumbs are all we have.

They are what is left behind after the death of our child. They are our memories and our mementos.

A bread crumb is the little answering machine cassette tape that says "*Hi, it's me. Leave a message at the beep.*" We may be the only people with a cassette tape in our safe deposit box. It's not much, a few quick words, but it's his voice—a small crumb from the original.

A bread crumb is his favorite shirt that I still can't part with, so I wear it for good luck on special days. A bread crumb is the last Father's Day card he wrote in his own hand before he went off to college.

Thanks for everything Dad, especially the \$. My years at home were better than words can say and I never took anything for granted. I've had the best childhood anyone could have. Thank you for the ideas and opportunities I grew up with. I love you.
Mark

I call these things crumbs because they are a disappointing piece of the real thing, but treasured because they are all we have. I also think there is a second way of looking at this. Bread crumbs are a part of children's stories symbolizing signposts along the way to help lead us out of the forest—to find our way back to the land of the living, at least if the birds don't eat them

I like to think that the return from grief is like finding our own way out of the forest. The way is marked by great changes or signposts if we will only follow the bread crumbs. I think of them as gifts left behind by our children. They change us and they lead us out of the forest—but at a very different place than we first went in. Here are three I have found. Maybe you will find others.

Crumb One

We pick up a new sense of what is important and what is not. We suffer fools, superficial cocktail parties, and convenience friends poorly. We seem to develop an immediate impatience for the meaningless and the trivial. On the other hand, we pick up an incredible sensitivity to the world around us that we did not have before. We watch the news differently. We value people more than things. We live more in the moment and less in the future because we know that sometimes "tomorrow doesn't come."

Crumb Two

We find our real self on the road back. After the loss of a child and a period of emptiness, we do eventually come back. But we come back differently—and I believe better—than the person that entered that awful forest. With our new understanding of priorities, we listen again to "that still small voice" that we silenced in the race to climb the career ladder or have the "perfect life" or do what our parents or teachers thought we "should" do. We find new courage to be the person we really are.

We begin living from the inside out instead of the other way around—from a sense of what is important, not what is expected. From a life of "what's in it for me?" to "how can I help you?" We discover new and compassionate friends, and sometimes drift away from old ones. We go from a thousand name Rolodex of contacts to a handful of people we love.

We often also find our spiritual center and an inner peace. We become unafraid to die, at the same time we are beginning to live again.

Crumb Three

We pick up one more gift that I have noticed. We seem to get anointed with an ability to help someone else. You know what I mean. We didn't want it. We didn't ask for it. But we got it, anyway. It's almost like a giant invisible radar screen gets mounted on our head and we now pick up vibrations from other people in need. And we find that we really can help. People seek us out. People who don't know what to say when a child dies call us and ask: "Could you please go over?" We know we can and will, if only to listen

I am reminded of the story of a little boy who arrived home late from school. "Where have you been?" his mother asked. "I was helping Timmy who broke his bike," the child answered. "But, Honey," the mother said. "You don't even know how to fix a bike." "I know Mom," came the reply, "But I was just helping him cry." Sometimes we can just help someone else cry, and that is enough. Unlike most other people, we can walk directly up to a bereaved parent or sibling, look them in the eye, and say, "I know how you feel." That is what TCF is all about. And in helping another person, we help ourselves heal too.

So, what do we do with these new gifts or bread crumbs left along the way for us? New priorities. A new sense of self. And the ability to help someone else.

THE VISIT HOME

There once was an old man who journeyed back to his hometown with the intent of reminiscing about the good times, as well as the sorrows he had experienced as a young father.

High on the list of places he intended to visit was the elementary school his daughter had attended.

First he would walk around the huge playground where he so often had brought his daughter to play. He would stop at the slide, then the swings, and finally the monkey bars, remembering the joy on his daughter's face as she had moved happy and carefree from one adventure to another.

Then he would enter the school building. His first stop there would be the kindergarten room. He could still see in his mind that memorable day almost 75 years before, his daughter's outstretched hand enclosed in his firm, yet tender, grip. As they searched for her classroom, their loving touch finally ended as she walked through the open door to a new stage in her life.

The old man's next stop would be the tiny gymnasium where his daughter had performed in the holiday pageant. How beautiful she had appeared, dressed in soft white as she sang *Silent Night, Holy Night*.

Finally he would stop at his daughter's third grade classroom. The old man clearly remembered the day he and his wife had stood outside the closed classroom door, tears streaming down their cheeks. Finally, gathering their courage they entered the room to comfort and talk with their daughter's classmates who, as yet, failed to comprehend why they would never again see alive the little girl they all considered their best friend.

The anticipation grew strong as he neared the street where the school stood. Arriving at the spot, the old man wept at what he saw. The plain white concrete structure he expected was no longer there—a sleek modern building in its place. An asphalt parking lot now covered the old grassy playground.

Now understanding that he would never be able to fulfill his mission, the old man started thinking about the transient nature of life—how nothing ever remains the same.

Communities change. Buildings are here today and gone tomorrow. Loved ones live—and die. Even nations rise and fall.

But then the old man had another thought: The love his daughter had passed onto him still remained within his heart—67 years after she had died.

He realized that it truly didn't matter if a day, a year, a decade, or a century were to pass. The candle of love would continue to burn bright in his heart.

And he thought how even an eternity from now the love he still carried for his daughter would have transcended his own death and been returned to her a thousand fold.

The old man turned his car around to head back toward the highway. There was no need to stop elsewhere. Taking one last glance in the rear view mirror at the new school, he understood that memories live on not because of a building, or a classroom, or a playground. They remain alive inside each of us because love outlasts even the sands of time.

A smile crossed his lips.

His mission had been completed!

Wayne Loder
Public Awareness Coordinator
The Compassionate Friends/USA
Reprinted from *We Need Not Walk Alone*

*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. ~*

From The Prophet
by Kahlil Gibran

*Death leaves a heartache
no one can heal,
Love leaves a memory
no one can steal. ~*
Found on a headstone in Ireland

MY DAD IS A SURVIVOR

My dad is a survivor too
which is no surprise to me.
He's always been like a lighthouse
that helps you cross a stormy sea.
But, I walk with my dad each day
to lift him when he's down.
I wipe the tears he hides from others;
He cries when no one's around.
I watch him sit up late at night
with my picture in his hand.
He cries as he tries to grieve alone,
and wishes he could understand.
My dad is like a tower of strength.
He's the greatest of them all!
But, there are times when he needs to cry...
Please be there when he falls.
Hold his hand or pat his shoulder...
And tell him it's okay.
Be his strength when he's sad,
Help him mourn in his own way.
Now, as I watch over my precious dad
from the Heavens up above...
I'm so proud that he's a survivor...
And, I can still feel his love.
The end.

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(copied from TCF Atlanta online)*



MY MOM IS A SURVIVOR

My mom is a survivor,
or so I've heard it said.
But I can hear her crying at night
when all others are in bed.
I watch her lay awake at night
and go to hold her hand.
She doesn't know I'm with her
to help her understand.
But like the sands on the beach
that never wash away....
I watch over my surviving Mom
who thinks of me each day.
She wears a smile for others...
a smile of disguise!
But through Heaven's door
I see tears flowing from her eyes.
My Mom tries to cope with death;
To keep my memory alive.
But anyone who knows her knows
it is her way to survive.
As I watch over my surviving Mom
through Heaven's open door...
I try to tell her that angels
protect me forevermore!
I know that doesn't help her,
or ease the burden she bears.
So, if you get a chance, go visit her.
Show her that you care.
For no matter what she says...
no matter what she feels.
My surviving Mom has a broken heart
that time won't ever heal.

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(copied from TCF Atlanta online)*

MOTHER'S DAY: A FATHER'S VIEW

In our house as in other bereaved parents' households, Mother's Day comes with mixed emotions. Setting aside a day to honor motherhood is only right: mothers do tend to be taken for granted. I remember the childhood joy of getting my mother a special gift, even if the gift was nothing more than a crayon drawing. As an adult, buying gifts for your mother and the mother of your children still brings back those happy memories. But this all changed after Erin died.

Looking through all the cards at the gift shop only reminds me of the irony. Cute, humorous, and sweetly sentimental cards await the bereaved father shopping for his bereaved wife. I can't find the card that will comfort my wife on this day, and even worse, I'm afraid that I'll buy a card that will bring back only painful memories of the child she lost.

I realize this day, perhaps because it is so widely celebrated, can even, years later, take my wife back to grieving she thought she was "through with." I can never do enough on Mother's Day; maybe I try to do too much. I know, of

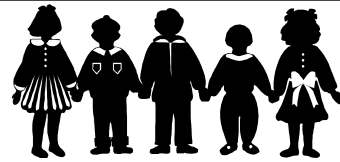
course, that all the cards, gifts, flowers, and messy breakfasts in the world, can't make up for the loss of our child. But I still do all these things; she deserves them.

The unfairness of our daughter's death will always be there. I know I can't change that with a card. But I can remind her she is a great mother, a loving mother, and most importantly, she is still the mother of the child we lost.

If she's happy on Mother's Day, I will try my best to keep her there. If she's depressed, I try to cheer her up as best I can, even though I feel I'm not very good at it. This, then, is the wish I have for all other bereaved mothers today: Please be as happy (and proud) as every other mother today; no one can dispute the fact you brought your child into the world. Although that child is no longer with you, the love you had for her or him remains and can never be taken away from you. If you should be depressed, may there be family and friends there to remind you of this and comfort you.

To Chris and to you
HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY. -- Al Bots
TCF, Cleveland, OH, SW Suburbs

Siblings



ONLY SURVIVING SIBLINGS *Am I an Only Child Now?*

In families with only two children, the siblings often look out for and protect each other, which makes the loss of one even more difficult for the surviving child. The brothers and/or sisters look forward to a long and enjoyable future, never thinking that they would be separated. There was the assumption that the sibling would grow old together, reminiscing about the past. Not only are there the intense sadness and feeling of total devastation, but the surviving sibling may feel a huge sense of responsibility for the future care of parents. While both siblings are alive, there might not be much thought about the loss of a parent, as they believe they will always be there to help each other make decisions when the time comes— they would always go through everything together.

Another concern is that the surviving sibling won't have any family to rely on to remember the past. With the loss of a sibling, we are left a “new reality” that we never wanted, never asked for. The anguish and loneliness are overwhelming. Those who have no surviving siblings to share their thoughts, feelings, memories, and pain are left to deal with a wider range of issues. An Only Surviving Sibling sharing session is one of the most requested topics at The Compassionate Friends national conferences.

Bereaved parents often have a hard time with the question “How many children do you have?” Many only surviving siblings also have a hard time dealing with similar issues. They may not be up to explaining what happened. It often depends on the relationship to the person asking. The best choice is to answer whatever way is easier emotionally. Another question surviving children often ask themselves is “Am I an only child now?” The sibling who has died will always be their brother or sister, but they may want to spare themselves the pain of people’s reactions to hearing of the death (or just the pain of having to say it which is hard enough). It is so difficult to process the fact that this one person, who shared the past will not be part of their future. It’s good to remember that no matter how the question is answered, we will always be an older or younger brother or sister.

Many only surviving siblings have said that it really made an incredible difference when they talked to others who had lost a sibling. It doesn’t make it better, but being in contact with people who understand certainly makes it less confusing and more tolerable than being alone. Many only surviving siblings have found lasting friendships through The Compassionate Friends sibling chat, sibling forum and sibling pen pal program. For more information on these programs visit the sibling resources page on the national web site, [www. Compassionatefriends.org](http://www.Compassionatefriends.org).

*By Daniel Joffe,
former TCF Board of Directors Sibling Representative*

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
Heart of Florida TCF, Longwood, FL June 2004*

OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED



Each season we remember the children who are sadly missed. Please take a few moments, place them in your thoughts, and remember them on their day together with their parents. None of us ever forget our special days and messages that say "I care" help us to get through them. Our children's lives will go on, as long as we remember them and celebrate their lives



APRIL BIRTHDAYS

*Frank Lo Conte
Tonya Marie Barnes
Robert Joseph Caputo
Peter Frederick Kerle
Melissa Lee Leminen
Beth McVeigh
David Anthony Morrison
Glen Sherrif
Glenn Colin Standifer
Jonathan Taylor
Jean Whitaker
Brian Joseph Honan
Taylor Bates
Paul Frances Burns
Catherine Elise Crocker
David Robert Ware Jr.
Christopher Joseph Sweeney*

MAY BIRTHDAYS

*Bethany Lawton
James Anthony Conry
Ryan Carmichael
Andrew Duhaime
George Joseph Rull
Michael Piccarini
Donna Marie Carey
Jonathan Boudreau
Grant Dean Lynch
Brain MacIver
Michael Joseph Marmo
Tracy Harriette Davidson
Steven Dennis Burke Jr.*

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

*Tommy Camejo
Gregory Curtis
Sean Michael Ewas
Joseph Ferreira
Brian Hayes
Benjamin Lowell Kimball
Justin Scott Langham
Brendan Teague MacDonald
Jacob J. Orchard
Vincent R. Peruzzi
David F. Terrio
Lindsay K. Pellegrino
Robert J. Corbin Jr.
Harry Goldman
Gregory Kelly Porter
Jorge Lisandro Paiz Sault
Vincent J. D'Andrea Jr.
Natalie Rose Burns Foster
Kevin Patrick O'Connor*

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

*Leann Corkery
Laura Marie Fusco-Fazio
Brian Hayes
Justin Scott Langham
George Joseph Rull
Brendan Teague MacDonald
John J. Ho Sang
Kris Michael Hans Schlegel
Phoenix MacLeod
Jonathan Paul Lally
Donna Marie Carey
Patricia Elizabeth Shea
Guy V. Schipellite
Liam O'Donnely
Tracy Harriette Davidson*

MAY ANNIVERSARIES

*Robert David Ware Jr.
Ryan M. Davis
Jordan Dale Cibley
Alan Howard Freedman
John W. Terrio
Christopher Sullivan
Jeffrey Charles Stevenson
Noah Curtin
Richard J. Mirabile Jr.
Melissa Lee Leminen
Daniel Maloney
Alfred Gomez
Joseph Ferreira
James Ferreira
Gregory Curtis
Amy Courtney*

JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

*Debbie Sevier
Andrew Duhaime
Jane Lee Flett
Marc Jude Orlandino
Michael Piccarini
Mark Shinney
Brian Sullivan
Jean Whitaker
Alexander Robert Passerati
Taylor Bates
Paul Frances Burns
Lloyd Young*

FORGIVE UNTIL FOREVER

Grieving is a fierce and overwhelming expression of love thrust upon us by a deep and hurtful loss. Yet, grieving is frequently such an entanglement of feelings that we often fail to recognize that ultimately forgiveness must be an integral part of our grief and our healing. For what is LOVE, if forgiveness is silent within us?

We learn to forgive our children for dying, ourselves for not preventing it. We begin to forgive God or the fate we see ruling the universe. We start to forgive friends and relatives for abandoning us in their own bewilderment over the onslaught of emotions they sense in our words and behavior.

I believe we must be open to the balm of forgiveness. Through its expression in our lives, be it through thought, word, or deed, we find small ways to seek life once more. Deep within us, forgiveness is capable of treading the wasteland of our souls to help us feel again the love that has not died.

It is the beginning of release from the dominance of pain, not from the continual hurt of missing those we have lost, but from lacking the fullness of the love we shared with our child. That love lives with strength inside ourselves, and yet our beings are so entrapped in a whirling vortex of anger, despair, frustration, abandonment and depression that we often feel it only lightly.

Let us all heed the quiet message heard so softly in that maelstrom of the spirit. Forgive..... Forgive.... Forgive until forever. Let love enfold our anguish, helping us to learn to grow and strive beyond this hour to a rich tomorrow.

*Don Hackett
TCF, Hingham, MA*

FROM THE EDITOR

We want all who find this newsletter helpful to receive it. Printing and mailing it represents one of the major expenses of our chapter.

An email version saves paper and chapter dollars and we encourage all to take advantage

If we have not heard from you in the past year and you find your newsletter with a colored sticker this will be your last mailing. If you wish to continue to be on the mailing list, please take a moment to fill this out and mail it or email me a message. If you find it useful please consider a donation to defray the cost. It is not required but would be greatly appreciated.

Since this is your newsletter I would appreciate any suggestions you might have to improve it. Also, if you have any poems, suggestions or reflections you would like to share with other bereaved parents please send them to me.

Name _____

Address _____

Would you like to continue to receive the newsletter?

Yes _____

No _____

Donation enclosed \$ _____

Please mail to:

**Richard Mirabile
11 Ridgewood Crossing
Hingham, Mass. 02043
Email Rmirabile@comcast.net**

TO KNOW OR NOT

*I wept I never had the chance
In which to say goodbye
But would it have sat more lightly
Had I known you were to die?*

*I've often pondered late at night
About which would have hurt the most
Anticipation of your leaving
Or acceptance of your loss*

*Richard A. Dew
From Rachel's Child*

AS LONG AS I CAN

*As long as I can, I will look at the world for both of us
As long as I can, I will laugh with the bird, I will sing
with flowers, I will play to the stars for both of us.
As long as I can, I will remember how many things on
earth were your joy.
And I will live as well as you would want me to live,
as long as I can*

by Sascha

LOVE GIFTS

A love gift is a living memorial to our child. Usually given on anniversaries, holidays etc. but any contributions would be welcome at any time. Since there is no charge for newsletters and meetings, we solely depend on donations to purchase books, brochures and keep the chapter running. They are tax deductible. **A wonderful way to remember your child is to sponsor either the printing or mailing costs of a newsletter. If you are interested please contact either Rick Mirabile or Martha Berman.**

In Memory Of _____

Dates _____

Message _____

From _____

Address _____

Mail to
Compassionate Friends
147 North Street
Hingham, MA 02043

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Carly Anne Hayes, sister of Alison Marie Hayes
Robert Dermady, father of John-Paul Joseph Dermady
Deborah & Fred Wells, parents of Andrew Pierce Wells
Cindy Ware, mother of David Robert Ware Jr.
Sue & Anthony Falco, parents of Bo Craig
Anne Kubik, sister of Frank L. Kubic
Joann Arone & Tom Kilroy, parents of Nina Kilroy
Carol Catrambone, mother of Ronald A. Catrambone Jr.

We thank the following individuals for their support. It is deeply appreciated.

Gilda Peruzzi, in loving memory of **Vincent Perruzzi**

Amy Moore & Andrew Davidson, in loving memory of **Tracy Harriette Davidson**- "We miss and love you so much: Love Ma & Andrew

Mary & Edward Farrar and family, in loving memory of **Nancy Ann Farrar-Hood**-40th birthday remembrance.

The Mulligan family, in loving memory of **Christopher Michael Mulligan**- "Love you, always have, always will" Mom, Dad, Kerry & Kate

Judy & Eddie Freedman, in loving memory of **Alan Howard Freedman**- "We love you"- Mom & Dad

Harriet Burak, in loving memory of **Michael Jonathan Burak** "Much love, my son, on what would have been your 36th birthday ..Your life with God is everlasting and you will be forever young" Your mother.

Barbara Curtin, in loving memory of **James Blankenship & John Terrio Jr.**

Kathleen Palmeri, in loving memory of my beautiful son, **Joseph Francis Palmeri**

Anonymous donor, in loving memory of **John A. Leary**

Geno Duhaime, in loving memory of **Andrew Duhaime** "Miss you and love you everyday"

Jean Stevenson, in loving memory of **Jeffrey Stevenson** "Some people come into our lives and quickly go. Some stay for a while and touch our hearts and we are never the same" Mom, Tracy, Donnie, Tara and grandchildren.

MEMORIAL DAY

For each grave where a soldier lies at his rest
For each prayer that is said today out of love
For each sign of remembering someone who has died

Let us also give thought to the mothers and fathers
The brothers and sister the friends and lovers
Whom death left behind



Sascha

**SOUTH SHORE CHAPTER
THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
147 NORTH STREET
HINGHAM, MA. 02043**

NEWSLETTER RENEWAL

We want all who make use of the newsletter to continue to receive it. If we have not heard from you in the past year please let us know your wishes and consider an email-copy which saves the environment and chapter \$\$\$. Please see renewal form inside

If your copy has a colored sticker this month it will be the last mailing unless we hear from you

TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. But you have nothing to lose and everything to gain. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether it will work for you. The second, third, or fourth meeting might be the time you will find just the right person— or just the right words said that will help you in your grief.



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 it would have been like for you if there had been no “oldies” to welcome you, share your grief, and encourage you? It was from them that you heard “your pain will not always be this bad; it really does get softer”