



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

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

## APRIL 2014

### Inside Valley Forge

**Meetings are on the first Thursday** of every month at 7:45PM (ending at 9:30PM). We meet at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall, Valley Forge and Henderson RDs, King of Prussia, PA. Phone **on meeting evenings only** is 610-265-0733. All other times please call Rhonda at 484-919-0820.

#### Meeting Schedule and other TCF Events of interest

**Apr 3 General Sharing**

**May 1 General Sharing & Death by Suicide**

**July 11-13 37th Compassionate Friends  
National Conference, Chicago.**

**We encourage newsletter writings from our members.** You may also submit articles written by others, please include the author of all articles submitted. **The cut-off date for newsletter entries is the 15th of the preceding month.**  
**ARTICLES SHOULD BE SENT TO THE NEWSLETTER EDITORS.**

There are no dues or fees to belong to The Compassionate Friends, or to receive our newsletter. Your tax deductible donations (which we call love gifts) given in memory of your loved one enables us to defray the cost of chapter expenses, particularly the newsletter, meetings, and our outreach to the newly bereaved. **Please include any special tribute you wish printed in the newsletter along with your gift.**

If you donate to **United Way** at your place of work, and wish your contribution to go to the Valley Forge Chapter of The Compassionate Friends, you may do so by entering: **The Compassionate Friends - Valley Forge Chapter United Way ID# 04-104.** on your pledge form.

**PLEASE MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO:  
TCF VALLEY FORGE CHAPTER  
SEND TO: CHAPTER LEADER  
RHONDA GOMEZ**

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#### 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.

**REFRESHMENTS**

**Nina Bernstein** in memory of my son, **Andrew's** anniversary Feb 9th.  
**Linda DiPasquale** in memory of my son, **Tommy's** anniversary Mar 24th.  
**Lisa & John Russo** in memory of their son, **Casey's** birthday Mar 17th.

Refreshments may be donated in memory of loved ones, please call **Rhonda (484) 919-0820**, or you may sign the refreshment chart located on the refreshment table.

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**NEW MEMBERS**

**Dave Gemmell**, son **Stephen** (22)  
**Kathleen & Craig Gerland**, daughter **Alexis** (19)  
**Laurie & Lee Maxwell**, son **Dan** (18)  
**Susan & Ron Spencer**, son **Rob** (27)

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**LOVE GIFTS**

**Rose Cote** in loving memory of my son, **Mark** on his anniversary March 26th.  
**Catherine Dardozi** in loving memory of my son, **James** on his birthday March 7th.  
**Mary Lou Harrison** in loving memory of my son, **♥Scott♥ Harrison.**  
**James, Elaine & brother Pat Madden** in memory of our beloved son & brother ,  
**Andrew** on his anniversary March 6th. We love & miss him every day.  
**Joy Settles** in loving memory of my son, **R. Gary Korn** on his anniversary April 30th.  
**Marilyn Toole** in loving memory of my son, **Ted** on his anniversary February 27th.

**NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL**

The newsletter is available by email to those who wish to receive it in this form. You will receive the newsletter earlier if you opt to receive the newsletter by email. If you chose to use the email method of receiving your newsletter, and later decide you want to receive it by postal service, you will have the option to switch back to the old method. If you wish to receive the newsletter by email please contact: Frank Gomez [fgomez@hybridpoplars.com](mailto:fgomez@hybridpoplars.com)

**TCF Facebook**

Join 22,000 people who are sharing their grief journey at The Compassionate Friends Facebook page. The page is designed to be informative and supportive. Check out the question or quote of the day. You can find the page by going to TCF's website home page at [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org) and clicking on the Facebook icon. Or you can go to Facebook and do a search for "The Compassionate Friends/USA." Join us and contribute to the conversation.



**Darcie D. Sims, PhD., CHT, CT, GMS**

Died at home on 2/27/14. She is preceded in death by her parents, and her infant son, Austin “Big A.”

Darcie wore many hats in her short time on this earth. She was a mother, wife, grandmother, educator, leader, rose colored glasses wearer, smile on a stick carrier and friend. She was an internationally recognized public speaker on the topic of Grief and Bereavement. Darcie taught thousands of people all over the world how to cope with their grief. She was awarded a lifetime achievement award, “The Voice of The Compassionate Friends” for her tireless efforts supporting families who cope with the death of a child. Her work for the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, TAPS, since 1999 was described as, “She will forever live in the hearts of thousands of grieving military families.”

Darcie and her husband have lived in the Seattle area since 2005.

She is survived by her husband of 44 years, Robert “Tony” Sims, daughter, Alicia “Allie” Franklin, granddaughter, Darci Franklin, son-in-law, Greg Franklin and sister, Deborah Switzer of Enid, OK.

The family has asked that in lieu of flowers, a donation be made to The Compassionate Friends National Office in support of the Darcie Sims

Memorial Training Fund, [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org).

The National Office is generously sponsored by the Open to Hope Foundation in loving memory of Darcie Sims.

She is the author of *Why are the Casseroles Always Tuna?, Footsteps Through the Valley, Touchstones* and *If I Could Just see Hope*. She co-authored *A Place for Me: A Healing Journey for Grieving Kids, Footsteps Through Grief, The Other Side of Grief* and *Finding Your Way Through Grief* with her daughter, Alicia Sims Franklin. She co-authored *The Crying Handbook, In the Midst of Caregiving,* and *Exploring the Heart, Soul, and Challenges of Caregiving for Professionals* with Dr. Robert Baugher. She also wrote and produced the videos *Handling the Holidays* and *What Color is Dead: Death From A Child’s View* as well as authored numerous chapters in professional books and textbooks. Darcie is featured in the award-winning video series “*Good Grief*” produced by Iowa Public Television and has been featured in several other videos as well. She has written 6 Care Notes for Abbey Press.

She was an internationally recognized speaker and was Coping Editor for *Bereavement* magazine for 15 years. She wrote for *Grief Digest*. She served on the national board of directors for **The Compassionate Friends**, the national board of directors for the **Association of Death Education and Counseling** and the board of trustees for the **National Catholic Ministry to the Bereaved**. Darcie received **The Compassionate Friends Professional Award** in 1999. She co-chaired the 1991, 1996 and 2005 **World Gathering on Bereavement**, and keynoted at all 4 **World Gatherings**.

Darcie was president and co-founder of **GRIEF, Inc.** a grief consulting business and the Director of the **American Grief Academy**® in Seattle, Washington. She was the Director of Training and Certification for the **Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors**®. She was a Board Certified Professional Counselor (APA), a Fellow in the **American Psychotherapy Association**, a Certified Diplomate in Clinical Hypnotherapy and is listed in *Who’s Who in America, The World Who’s Who of Women* and *The International Who’s Who of Professional and Business Women*.

Darcie has given much of her time and talent to The Compassionate Friends. She has been a key-note speaker at many Regional and National Conferences, offering hope to those who have no hope. Her words of healing have touched bereaved families world wide, and given us the strength to endure the pain of losing a child or sibling. She, and her words of comfort “**May Love Be What You Remember Most**”, will be greatly missed by many of us.

# The Compassionate Friends National Conference



Chicago, Illinois will be the site of the 37th TCF National Conference on July 11-13, 2014. "Miles of Compassion through The Winds of Hope" is the theme of this year's event, which promises more of last year's great national conference experience. The 2014 conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare in Rosemont, just minutes from the airport. The national website, as well as on the TCF/USA Facebook Page will keep you updated. Plan to come and be a part of this heartwarming experience.

## **CONFERENCE AND HOTEL REGISTRATION**

To obtain a conference registration form, go to The TCF National website [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org). If you do not have internet access, contact the TCF National Office by phone at 877-969-0010 (toll free) to help you obtain a registration form.

The hotel reservation is separate from the conference registration, and must be made directly to the hotel. The Hyatt Regency O'Hare, 9300 Bryn Mawr Ave., Rosemont, IL 60018, is now accepting reservations for TCF's National Conference. Conference attendees are receiving a discounted room rate. You must identify yourself as a TCF member. Conference attendees will also receive a discounted parking rate of \$10 per day. We anticipate a large attendance for the conference, so we encourage you to make your reservation as soon as it is convenient for you. Reservations can also be made by calling the hotel directly at 888-421-1442 and please mention The Compassionate Friends when reserving your room.

Please visit Rosemont's website, [www.rosemont.com](http://www.rosemont.com), for information on local area dining and activities.

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## ***Volunteers***

Volunteers are always needed for this very special conference. If you would like to volunteer, please call the National Office at 877-969-0010 (toll free).

**OUR CHILDREN & SIBLINGS LOVED, SADLY MISSED AND REMEMBERED**

Each month some of us must face those special, but difficult days of birthdays and anniversaries. This month we ask your thoughts and prayers for the parents/siblings/relatives of the following children:

**We will no longer list the birth and death years of deceased persons in our newsletter.  
We have concerns this information could be misused, and result in an adversity for the families.**

**APRIL BIRTHDAYS**

Leslie Brown, son *Scott* 4/3  
Gina Cappelli, son *Dan Foley* 4/20  
Phyllis & James Casey, son *Jim "Jimmer" Casey* 4/18  
Martin & Mary Conway, son *Neal* 4/8  
Linda DiPasquale, son *Thomas* 4/26  
Janie Ebersole, daughter *Ashley Sankus* 4/19  
Ginny Ebert, son *Jason* 4/17  
Maureen & Jim Fleagle, son *Brian* 4/20  
Carol Fritz, daughter *Kate Pawlowski* 4/3  
Joe & Katie Glinski, son *Joey* 4/10  
Stephanie Grier, son *John "JD" Grier* 4/15  
Nancy & Gerald Hall, son *Douglas Byron Hall* 4/15  
Kristen Hallman, brother *Joey* 4/10  
Othell & William Heaney, son *Roger Heaney* 4/17  
Jeanne R Helmers, daughter *Betsy Helmers* 4/7  
Cynthia Hornyak, daughter *Meredith* 4/1  
John Horulko, son *Daniel* 4/6  
Monica Horulko, son *Daniel* 4/6  
Robert Huss, son *Daniel* 4/18  
Dennis & Lois Ianovale, son *Dennis* 4/18  
Carl and Dorothy Johnson-Speight, daughter *Carlana Speight* 4/6  
Millie Jones, grandson *Shawn Dian* 4/18  
Roxanne Kamilatos, daughter *Dina* 4/29  
Susan Kelleher, son *Jake* 4/24  
Janet & Dave Keller, granddaughter *Elily Lou Miller* 4/4  
Karen Lapera, son *Michael* 4/3  
Karen & Francis Legieko, son *John Francis Legieko* 4/8  
Lynne & John Malloy, son *David Gross* 4/13  
Betty Manzi, grandson *Ronnie T. Seal, Jr.* 4/17  
Elaine Marino, son *Mark Joseph Marino* 4/20  
Michelle & Chris Mazzio, son *Brendan Mazzio* 4/18  
Robert & Marjorie Meckley, son *Douglas Meckley* 4/25  
Bob & Janet Milnazik, daughter *Kim* 4/24  
Sheila & Mike Mullin, son *Matthew* 4/10  
Ashlie Nawrocki, sister *Chereen* 4/3  
Rosemary Peterson, son *Donald R. Peterson* 4/18

**APRIL BIRTHDAYS continued**

Thomas & Mary Jane Poore, son *Bradley Poore* 4/25  
Jacqueline Rider, son *Josua Rider* 4/7  
Thelma Rosen, son *Thomas Grisafi* 4/24  
Marie Shippen, son *Michael Morgan* 4/19  
Art & Carol Silverman, daughter *Cheryl Beth Silverman* 4/23  
Barry & Sigrid Snow, son *Robert Snow* 4/28  
son *Kevin Snow* 4/19  
Ann VanLandingham, son *Eric VanLandingham* 4/21  
Deb Walter, son *Evan* 4/18  
Ellen & Dale Weaver, son *Jeffrey M. Weaver* 4/12  
Linda Weaver, daughter *Krista "Binky" Weaver* 4/29  
Jackie Wesley, daughter *Teresa Ellen Wesley Hough* 4/25  
Terry & Bob Wolfe, son and stepson *Steven Moyer* 4/22  
Joan Zdun, son *Erick George* 4/14

**APRIL ANNIVERSARIES**

Denis Nicholson Asselin & Judy, son *Nathaniel* - 4/15  
George & Anne Beerley, daughter *Jennifer Beerley* - 4/19  
Leslie Brown, son *Scott* - 4/4  
Diana Clark, grandson *Alexander* - 4/5  
Tom & Irene Cornely, daughter *Colleen* - 4/26  
Judy & William Cosgrove, son *Michael Cosgrove* - 4/17  
Anton & Maureen DeMaioribus, daughter *Ann DeMaioribus* - 4/23  
Nancy & David Dykty, brother *Jim Sutton* - 4/16  
Joanne Haley, son *Douglas Haley* - 4/3  
Walt & Adele Higgins, son/stepson *Brian* - 4/17  
Sharon Hirst, son *Tom* - 4/16/  
Susan Kelleher, son *Jake* - 4/14  
Janet & Dave Keller, granddaughter *Elily Lou Miller* - 4/4  
Joan Kellett, son *Daniel Thomas Kellett* - 4/29  
Lynn Kivlen, son *Brien Kivlen* - 4/26  
Terry Kozlewski, son *Frankie* - 4/1  
Susan & Richard Leimbach, son *Sean Duffy* - 4/2  
Becky & Alan Logsdon, son *Nathaniel Logsdon* - 4/29  
Elaine Marino, son *Mark Joseph Marino* - 4/21  
daughter in law *Lisa Marino* - 4/12  
Jennifer McGowan Clark, brother *Joseph McGowan* - 4/15  
Susan McKelvey, son *John* - 4/23  
Joan Morefield, son *Robert* - 4/29

**APRIL ANNIVERSARIES CONTINUED**

**Fred & Marilyn Mountjoy**, daughter *Marian Mountjoy* - 4/16  
**John Mscisz**, grandson *Liam John Willamson* - 4/6  
**Mary Mulholland**, son *Joseph McGowan* - 4/15  
**Sheila & Mike Mullin**, son *Matthew* - 4/25  
**Barbara & Jeff Norris**, son *Greg* - 4/1  
**Terri Pfeiffer**, son *Matthew* - 4/20  
**Maureen & David Rich**, daughter *Mallory Kirby Rich* - 4/26  
**Jacqueline Rider**, daughter *Michelle Connelly* - 4/14  
**Harry & Carol Schultz**, son *Brian Andrew Schultz* - 4/18  
**Joy Conard Settles**, son *R. Gary Korn* - 4/30  
**Jeffrey Smith**, son *Jacob Smith* - 4/5  
**Barry & Sigrid Snow**, son *Robert Snow* - 4/28  
**Edward & Mary Stimson**, son *Keith Stimson* - 4/7  
**Dave & Lynn Strange**, son *Bradley* - 4/21  
**Fred & Irene Sutton**, son *Jim Sutton* - 4/16  
**Tracey Sutton-Vitabile**, brother *Jim Sutton* - 4/16  
**Allan Thomas**, wife *Zinta Thomas* - 4/23  
**Harry & Lynne Urian**, son *Mike* - 4/22  
**Joan & Ed Young**, son *Jed Young* - 4/2  
**Joan Zdun**, son *Erick George* - 4/4

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**NOT GUILT, REGRET**

One of our basic responsibilities as parents is to keep our children from harm. So, when anything happens to them, we feel guilty whether we could realistically have done anything or not. When the ultimate tragedy occurs, we are devastated. How could we let it happen? Why didn't we stop it? If we have compounded our guilt with any degree of human error of commission or omission, we are beyond devastation. Even words, either of anger or left unspoken, haunt us.

Guilt implies intent. If we intended to harm our child, we can feel guilty of that. If we never intended harm to ever, ever come to our child, the correct name for our emotion is regret. The crushing pain is still there, but regret is softer, gentler, less judgmental, and easier to forgive and to heal. It is also more accurate. If that name doesn't feel strong enough for our feelings, it will in time. Let it float there and try it now and then. Not guilt - we feel regret.

*Kitty Sanders*, Nashville, TN  
Survivors of Suicide Group

**SHARED THOUGHTS ON CARING FOR FRIENDS & FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS**

Frequently the change of seasons adds to our depression. In the spring we look forward to the new plant life popping up all around us, bearing the fact its dormant life was only temporary. Often, when the evidence of spring does not lift our spirits as it has in the past, it iterates to the low level our depression has descended. We begin to question why our beloved children and siblings can not return to us. It can even make us feel we are less important than the nature we view.

When we are in the pit of depression, we can not see beyond our loss. It is important to have someone who will not immediately encourage us to see a doctor to prescribe anti-depressant drugs, so they can shift the responsibility of helping us to someone else. We need someone who is willing to listen to our rambling and repetitive talking about our loss, and will not pass judgment, even though they do not understand us. But hopefully, they will gently encourage positive thinking. We need to be accepted for what little we can give in return. When we lean on those who help us, it is essential to let them know we are doing the best we can in our very abnormal situation, and appreciate their allowing us to talk about that which is very healing in our grief.

Relationships with our family members are also important. Our remaining children need to know they are as equally important, and loved as much as our deceased. By putting our dead child on a high pedestal the remaining siblings can feel they are not as precious to us. It is best to be verbal, and not assume they understand our feelings. It is very normal for siblings to find more comfort in sharing with friends, or other siblings, rather than parents. It is too much for them to take on their parent's grief, and it hurts too much to see parents cry. They have had both the terrible loss of a sibling and a stable parent (as they knew them), and they too, are fragile.

The marriage is under tremendous strain. Both are so overwhelmed with grief, and don't have the strength to support the other. It is like leaning on a bent twig. If we harbor little grievances, all sorts of held in resentment may surface, exploding into serious problems. Often sexual relations habits will change, and frequently in opposite directions. This takes communicating with one another. A spouse can not fully understand or solve their mate's grief, but we must accept each other's style of grieving. The accusation of blaming a mate for the death is probably the most damaging of all. If this continues to smolder, it may be helpful to include a third party, such as a psychiatrist, pastor, or some form of grief counselor. No bereaved parent can handle being accused of their child's death. We must attempt a resolution, we can't afford to lose our marriage along with our child. Sometimes an experienced grief specialist can help clear our vision. It is very normal to blame someone for the death. But, most often in a family situation, the death could not have been prevented, or the party being accused was acting to the best of their ability. We must forgive, for they also loved the deceased, and are hurting badly

God Bless, *Marie Hofmockel*, TCF Valley Forge

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"Commitment to life and living for yourself, spouse and family; and commitment to your child's memory are four choices you must make. Each one requires perserverance and patience. Failure to make these commitments will extend the tragedy by increasing the loss."

*Nancy Hogan*

**THE SOUND OF PAIN**

There's a sound that can only be heard by those with broken hearts;  
 I believe it's the sound of God working, to mend that hurting part.  
 We have all come to know what this pain can do;  
 We've lost one we love, and learned agony we never knew.  
 And it doesn't go away, not in a day, a month, or even two years,  
 No matter where we are and no matter what we do, the pain is always near.  
 So how do we continue to live when our lives have been turned upside down?  
 How do we continue to smile and laugh – to see what lies beyond that sound?  
 I don't have all the answers, and sometimes it seems I never will;  
 All I know for sure is that the sound means God is with us still.  
 Years will keep going by, but I know we shall never, never forget him;  
 Our precious, beautiful Peter, whose life light will never ever dim.

*Stacey Mastrocola Sullens*

For her brother, **Peter A. Mastrocola, III**  
June 7, 1975 – August 10, 1995

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**PLEASE ASK**

Someone asked me about you today,  
 It's been so long since anyone has done that.  
 It felt so good to talk about you  
 ...to share my memories of you  
 ...to simply say your name out loud.  
 She asked me if I minded talking about what  
 happened to you or would it be too painful to  
 speak of it.  
 I told her I think of it everyday and speaking about  
 it helps me to release the tormented thoughts  
 whirling around in my head.  
 She said she never realized the pain would last this  
 long  
 She apologized for not asking sooner.  
 I told her, "Thanks for asking."  
 I don't know if it was curiosity or concern that  
 made her ask, but I told her,  
 Please do it again sometime soon."

*Barbara Taylor Hudson, Cincinnati, OH*

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**WHEN**

When we finally realize that you are always going  
 to be smiling and dancing in our hearts, then, our  
 pain shall turn to joy. *Bob Walters*

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**SILENT GRIEF**

Grief is sometimes silent – like  
 snowflakes falling on a dark winter's  
 night – but never peaceful or serene or  
 pretty like the pure white snow. When  
 grief is silent, the tears seem to turn to ice,  
 like the snowflakes, before they reach our  
 eyes.

Grief is sometimes raging – like a  
 monstrous thunderstorm – with all its fury  
 and bolts of lightning striking our hearts  
 at every angle. When grief is raging, the  
 tears come in torrents, like the rain, and  
 flood our soul.

Grief, whether it be silent or raging -  
 hurts.

*Verna Smith* TCF, Ft. Worth, TX

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**Those we hold dear never truly leave  
 us. They live on in the kindness they  
 showed, and the love they brought  
 into our lives.**

*Isabel Norton, Central Iowa Newsletter*

**YOUR SMILE**

Though your smile is gone forever,  
and your hand I cannot touch,  
I still have many memories  
of the one I loved so much.

Your memory is my keepsake,  
with which I'll never part.  
God has you in his keeping,  
I have you in my heart.

Sadly missed, but never forgotten.  
Author Unknown

In memory of my son, **♥Scott Harrison**  
submitted by **Mary Lou Harrison**

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No matter how long we are on this  
earth, the more we have to realize  
that life finds us living every day  
with the unanswered. Faith helps  
us to live with the unresolved. Trust  
helps us to accept...and go on with  
the work of living. **Mark Connolly**

**MY LUCK ANGEL SON,  
ANDREW MICHAEL MADDEN**

You are with me often, my Luck Angel son.  
I meet you in my deams, so quickly you pass by  
Sometimes like a camera moved, your image blurs  
But I know it is you.

Are we playing hide and seek?  
When I awake, my Luck Angel son, my eyes are misty.  
We must be on vacation, a summer at the shore.  
Have you been near the sea?  
Did the spray from a wave touch us?  
And then I realize it is a tear, because the dream is fading.  
There are still days, my Luck Angel son  
When I pull the walls of our home around me.  
Curling up as in a memory quilt.  
As if waiting for you to come, to smile and say,  
*I'm sorry, Mom, that I've been gone so long.*  
But most days, you give me strength, my Luck Angel son.  
Making me grateful over these years,  
for what I have and those I love.  
And for the hope that we will meet again  
In love's eternity, my Luck Angel son.

**Elaine Madden**, Miami Valley Ohio Chapter TCF

**SPRING**

Yellow-green willow branches  
Stretch and breach the cerulean blue of sky.  
Brilliant colors break the earth  
And blow in the newfound warmth of spring.  
And I sit with sweated shoulders  
And drink in the day.  
I need its reminders of the cycles of life.  
Birth, then death, then life again.

This is my hope for you,  
My precious,  
And for me.  
My heart was as cold and bitter  
As winter  
When they broke the earth for you.  
I died that day a little, too.

And each awakening spring  
I hope  
That I can live again --  
That I can hold  
Your place in my heart  
And still reach out  
To life,  
Embrace it  
Without being able to embrace you.

Each spring my faith is renewed,  
My faith in resurrection's spring.

**Karen Nelson**  
TCF - Mantua, UT



**OUR LOGO: ITS MYSTERY AND ITS HISTORY**

Are the hands reaching out or letting go? Are they the hands of one person or two? These are questions often heard from new members, . . . so we asked the people who know.

Much of the beauty of our logo lies in the fact that there are no definitive answers to its symbolism. At first glance its meaning seems obvious; yet as you look more closely, these questions may arise.

The hands represent different things to us at different periods in our grief journeys. To the newly bereaved, the hands reach out toward him or her, offering comfort and support. Later in our grief journeys, they may symbolize the process of letting go, of coming to terms with the child's death, or acknowledgment that the child is no longer a part of our earthly existence.

Still later in our grief journeys, we begin to reinvest in life and reach out toward others. Then, *our* hands become the hands which are extended to the newly bereaved. ***The circle is complete:*** a circle of love and understanding, with the child at the center.

Joe Lawley, Founder-Chairman of the Society of the Compassionate Friends (Coventry, England, 1969) supplied the details on how the logo came about. Help came from John Fisher Design, Marketing, LTD, Maggie and John Fisher (Coventry) – whose 8 ½ year-old daughter, Clare, was killed on November 17, 1974 – wrote: "We are mobile, immediately available, and ready, both physically and spiritually, to begin work for the Friends. Please use us".

The logo first appeared on the June 1975 newsletter. Originally, the logo was a bright emerald green; subsequently, in 1977, the general universal color of royal blue with white was used and continues to this day.

*Joyce Andrews*

From "Friends Caring & Sharing"

**MY SWING**

Out in the backyard  
Was the most wonderful thing,  
From a huge maple tree  
There hung my swing.

When I had a problem  
A bad day at school,  
Straight to my swing  
That's what I'd do!

I'd swing away worries  
Swing high in the air,  
When I was there swinging  
I hadn't a care.

Now I am much older  
The pains run so deep,  
I have much depression  
And I cannot sleep.

Now I am childless  
I don't have my boy,  
My reason for living  
The source of my joy.

My life is so different  
Not a minute goes by,  
When I can become tearful  
I just start to cry.

My husband's so patient  
With me all these years,  
He never stops trying  
To stop all my tears.

He gave me a gift  
Only a true friend can bring,  
He gave me back comfort  
He gave me my swing!

*Diane Hornis*

Alive Alone Newsletter, Feb. 1999



**THE  
COMPASSIONATE  
FRIENDS, INC.**

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**...A bereavement organization  
For parents, siblings & families  
We offer friendship, love and understanding  
We talk, we listen, we share, we care**

**The Compassionate Friends 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.