

# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC.

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

## OCTOBER 2010

### 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 at Valley Forge and Henderson RDs, King of Prussia, PA. Phone on meeting evenings only is 610-265-0733. All other times please call Ann or Rhonda at 484-919-0820.

#### Meeting Schedule and other TCF Events of interest Please Mark Your Calendar

Oct 7 General Sharing  
Nov 4 General Sharing & Death by Suicide

**PLEASE NOTE DATE CORRECTION BELOW:**

**July 15-17, 2011** 34th National Conference  
St. Paul - Minneapolis, MN

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 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.**

**PLEASE MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO:  
TCF VALLEY FORGE CHAPTER  
SEND TO: RECORD KEEPER, DIANA CLARK  
PLEASE SEND ALL OTHER CHAPTER MAIL  
TO CHAPTER CO-LEADERS  
RHONDA GOMEZ or ANN MURRAY**



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**NEW FRIENDS**

**Pat Zimmerman**, daughter *Gabrielle* (35) & son *Bernard* (13)

**Bill & Karen Flavin**, son *Chad* (24)

**Kristen Hallman**, brother *Joey Cash* (27)

**Steven Cash**, brother *Joey Cash* (27)

**We welcome our newly bereaved friends, and are sorry for the cause that brings you. Having been in the depths of despair, we know that it is difficult to share our pain and personal feelings. It is important that you attend three or four meetings before evaluating the benefit of our group to you. Our meetings offer confidentiality, unconditional love, compassion and understanding to all of you.**

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**SEPTEMBER REFRESHMENTS**

**Rusty Puglisi** son *Michael* anniversary September , 10

**Rhonda & Frank Gomez** son *Frankie* birthday September 30

Anyone wishing to donate refreshments (cheese & crackers, fruit, cakes, cookies, etc. ) in memory of loved ones, please call **Rhonda Gomez or Ann Rapoport (484)919-0820**, or you may sign the refreshment chart located on the refreshment table. Beverages are provided by the chapter.

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**LOVE GIFTS**

**Shirley & Philip C. Kennedy & Sean** in loving memory of our son/brother

*Philip V. Kennedy* on his 23rd anniversary. Mom & Dad and brother Sean.

**Rose Yanni** in memory of my wonderful nephew *David Yanni* on his 47th birthday. He is always loved and remembered for the joy he brought to us.

**Marcia Epstein** in loving memory of my grandson *Andrew Voluck* (20).

**Catherine Dardozzi** in loving memory of my son *James Dardozzi* (38)

**Patricia McLain** in loving memory of my son *Gary McLain* on his 18th anniversary.

**Agnes Crisanti** in loving memory of my son *John* on his 42nd birthday.

**Pamela Schneibolk & Marie & Ken Hofmockel** in loving memory of our son/grandson *Steven Schneibolk* on his 3rd anniversary.

**NEW FEATURE ON VALLEY FORGE WEBSITE**

Frank spends much time and creativity upgrading the Valley Forge website. He has added a feature for you to leave comments and suggestions that you would like to see in the Chapter Program. Please voice your opinions on how the Chapter is being conducted, and ways we might improve the program. The chapter belongs to all of us, please support it.

**NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL**

**We are asking if possible , would you please receive your newsletter by email.**

We do not want to remove anyone from our newsletter mailing list who is benefiting from receiving it. We hope it is a help to you while going through your grief, giving you better understanding of your feelings, and letting you know **“We need not walk alone”**. A newsletter helps to keep our TCF family informed of local and national events. We consider this an important function of our program.

We are asking if you have email, would you consider receiving your newsletter in email format. You will receive your copy earlier if you opt to receive it by email. If you chose to use the email method of receiving your newsletter, 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**

**YOU’LL EXCUSE ME**

You’ll excuse me if the bounce is gone from my step. Or the depth of my laughter has changed. Issues that were once monumental, now seems so insignificant. Please, excuse me if I don’t commiserate that your car needs repair, or the faucet leaks; my focus on life has forever changed.

You’ll excuse me if my spirit seems lost during holidays of any kind. They are now days to bear, rather than days to share and enjoy. You’ll pardon me if I bring you down or make you feel discomfort, and I’ll pardon you for not understanding; that my life will never be the same, that although I’ll survive, there will always be sorrow

*Joan Fischer*

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To be bereaved means to have experienced a loss. BEREAVE comes from the root word ROB. To be bereaved is to be injured. The Latin words are GRAVARE which means "to burden" and Gravis which means "heavy". To be bereaved is to be heavily burdened, to bear something, to carry a weight.

Judy Tatelbaum writes in her beautiful book, THE COURAGE TO GRIEVE, "to work through and complete grief means to face our feelings fully, and to tolerate and accept our feelings for however long it takes for mourning to be completed. Mourning is painful, enormously painful, but it is healthy and surmountable and will enable us to not only recover but to grow".

You can be bereaved and not mourn. It is the inability or avoidance of mourning that prevents us from healing. We must go through mourning in order to get beyond it.

*by Lillian L. Meyers, Ph.D.*

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**The depth of your sorrow diminishes slowly and, at times, imperceptibly. Your recovery is not an act of disloyalty to the one who has died. Nor is it achieved by forgetting the past. Try to strike a delicate balance between a yesterday that should be remembered and a tomorrow that must be created.**

*Author Unknown*

**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: **Additions or corrections to this list should be given to the editors, Marie & Ken Hofmockel.**

**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.**

**OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS**

**Maryellen & Dick Abell, son *Brian Abell* 10/14**  
**Lillian Aquilante, son *Nicholas* 10/30**  
**Carole Bailey, son *Matthew J. Bailey* 10/6**  
**Victoria Bayle, son *Bobby D Bayle III* 10/5**  
**Nina Bernstein, son *Andrew Voluck* 10/12**  
**Martha & Albert Caesar, son *Daniel Mark Caesar* 10/18**  
**Diana Clark, grandson *Alexander* 10/16**  
**Amber-Todd Clark-Warrick, son *Alexander* 10**  
**Carole and Kevin Creighton, son *Ryan Kent Creighton* 10/7**  
**Virginia Di Fronzo, daughter *Sis* 10/7**  
**Harold & Marcia Epstein, grandson *Andrew Voluck* 10/12**  
**Barbara Frederick, son *Michael J. Frederick* 10/26**  
**Gwen & Walt Gearhart, grandson *Jamie Rogers* 10/29**  
**Rita & Thomas Gibbons, daughter *Patricia Gibbons* 10/26**  
**Virginia Hagen, son *Matthew D. Hagen* 10/20**  
**Joanne Haley, son *Douglas Haley* 10/4**  
**Carl & Catherine Helwig, son *Michael Helwig* 10/9**  
**Lynn Kivlen, son *Brien Kivlen* 10/12**  
**Barb & Larry Lauchle, son *Gray* 10/23**  
**Maryann Lockyer, son *Keith* 10/23**  
**Maureen Lok, daughter *Jessica* 10/24**  
**Jennifer & Michael Magee, sister *Jacqueline Ann Rogers* 10/3**  
**Dan Markle, brother *Matt Markle* 10/30**  
**James & Mary Beth Mattiford, son *Scott Mattiford* 10/15**  
**Mark & Kathryn McNally, daughter 10/1**  
**Alexandra Milas, mom's sister *Demitra Vallianos* 10/16**  
**Fred & Marilyn Mountjoy, daughter *Barilyn Mountjoy* 10/3**  
**daughter *Maralin Mountjoy* 10/3**  
**Kathy Nicholson, son *Frank* 10/26**  
**Peggy O'Brien, son *Rick O'Brien* 10/4**  
**John & Therese O'Rourke, son *Brian J. O'Rourke* 10/27**  
**Deborah Osting, son *Christopher Daniel Osting* 10/24**  
**Roy Redman, daughter *Linda Inez Redman* 10/22**  
**Thomas & Jeri Reinert, son *Thomas Reinert, Jr.* 10/21**  
**Ginger & Merle Renner, daughter *Deanna Dawn Renner* 10/11**

**OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS continued**

Carol Robinson, son *Jim Kearney* 10/4  
Skipp & Kathy Robinson, daughter *Carrie Robinson* 10/28  
Mike & Diane Rogers, daughter *Jacqueline Ann Rogers* 10/3  
Donna Rogers, son *Jamie Rogers* 10/29  
Sandra & John Salemmo, son *John C. Salemmo, Jr.* 10/21  
Joy Conard Settles, son *R. Gary Korn* 10/5  
Robert & Nell Shoemaker, daughter *Brynn Shoemaker* 10/5  
Betsy Townsend, daughter *Wendy Townsend Besche* 10/25  
Janice Vanderslice, son *Gregory Vanderslice* 10/4  
Sandra & Harry Wolfheimer, daughter *Ann Marie Wolfheimer* 10/10  
Rose Yanni, nephew *David Yanni* 10/26  
Frank & Dolores Yanni, son *David Yanni* 10/26

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**OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES**

Marilynn Anton, nephew *Steven Schneibolk* - 10/02  
Victoria Bayle, son *Bobby D Bayle III* - 10/2  
William & Charlotte Bodulich, son *William W. Bodulich* - 10/15  
Pattie Cook, sister *Jacqueline Raimondi* - 10/27  
Virginia Di Fronzo, daughter *Sis* - 10/4  
Joseph & Patsy Dooley, son *Peter J. Dooley* - 10/1  
Shirley & Herb Druker, daughter *Heidi* - 10/25  
Jim and Patty Duffy, son *Michael Duffy* - 10/28  
Thomas & Anne Glenn, daughter *Lauren Glenn* - 10/15  
Charlotte and Michael Gormish, brother *Douglas Moyer* - 10/19  
Carol Graber, son *Bobby* - 10/28  
Cathy Grosshanten, son *Gary* - 10/18  
Thomas & Virginia Hoesch, son *William E. "Buddy" Hoesch* - 10/7  
Marie & Ken Hofmockel, grandson *Steven Schneibolk* - 10/2  
Jean Jones, grandson *Bobby* - 10/28  
Margaret & Edward Kiefski, Sr., son *Edward Kiefski, Jr.* - 10/25  
Jo Makowski, sister *Pamela Makowski Goresch* - 10/14  
Christine Miraglia, son *Ralph Miraglia* - 10/3  
Fred & Marilyn Mountjoy, daughter *Barilyn Mountjoy* - 10/3  
daughter *Maralin Mountjoy* - 10/3  
John B. & Lillian Neff, son *Patrick Neff* - 10/17  
Kathy Nicholson, son *Frank* - 2/3  
Gary & Patricia Otto, son *Benjamin Otto* - 10/17  
Joan Palumbo, son *Michael* - 10/13  
Barbara Pearl, son *Jason Seth Pearl* - 10/16  
Betty Jane Peters - son *Martin A Peters* - 10/22

**OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES continued**

**Robert & Barbara Pontician**, son *Rob Pontician* - 10/28  
**Ann Gill Price**, son *Douglas Gill* - 10/5  
**Barbara Purtell-Frank**, son *Michael John Keller Purtell* - 10/29  
**Marge Randolph**, son *Doug Fixter* - 10/12  
**Ginger & Merle Renner**, daughter *Deanna Dawn Renner* - 10/22  
**Robert & Nancy Ricciardi**, daughter *Jessica Lee Ricciardi* - 10/7  
**Ilene & Sy Rockower**, daughter *Amy Rockower* - 10/17  
**Thelma Rosen**, brother *David Beeler* - 10/31  
**Barbara Rossman**, daughter *Kickole Lyn* - 10/12  
**Ron & Sandy Ruth**, son *Brian David Ruth* - 10/21  
**Carol Sannella**, husband *Robert J. Sannella* - 10/21  
**Joan Santillo**, daughter *Cathy Gambone* - 10/8  
**Pamela Schneibolk**, son *Steven* - 10/2  
**Phyllis Sisenwine**, daughter *Jill* - 10/9  
**Ruth Thomas**, son *David George Thomas* - 10/28  
**Barbara Torrens**, brother *Robert Birmele* - 10/21  
**Weldon & Marie Tyson**, daughter *Lisa M. Tyson* - 10/26  
**Henry & Elizabeth Weaver**, grandson *Donald Smith, Jr.* - 10/16  
**Jackie Wesley**, daughter *Teresa Ellen Wesley Hough* - 10/2  
**Theresa Wigand**, daughter *Dawn* - 10/18  
**Paul & Marcia Woodruff**, son *Danny Woodruff* - 10/29  
**Pat Zimmerman**, son *Bernard* - 11/13

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**BEATITUDES FOR THOSE WHO COMFORT**

Blessed are those who do not use tears to measure the true feelings of the bereaved.

Blessed are those who do not always have a quick “comforting” answer.

Blessed are those who do not make judgments on the bereaved’s closeness to God by their reaction to the loss of their loved one.

Blessed are those who hear with their hearts and not with their minds.

Blessed are those who allow the bereaved enough time to heal.

Blessed are those who admit their uncomfortableness and put it aside to help the bereaved.

Blessed are those who do not give unwanted advice.

Blessed are those who continue to call, visit, and reach out when the crowd has dwindled and the wounded are left standing alone.

Blessed are those who know the worth of each person as a unique individual and do not pretend that they can be replaced or forgotten.

Blessed are those who realize the fragility of bereavement and handle it with an understanding shoulder and a loving heart.

*Jacki Deems*

**SHARED THOUGHTS ON GUILT**

Frequently we invent our own guilt, by blaming ourselves because we did not have hind sight, and dwell on the "ifs -- and onlys". Parents assume responsibility for children's behavior, welfare, and fate, often forgetting that we are human and not all-knowing.

Sometimes we become our own worst enemy, especially when assuming the responsibility for our child's or sibling's death. It is important to understand the cause of the death, and not assume guilt that is not ours.

Often, we feel guilty for being alive, when our child or sibling has died. The event is so out of the natural order, that it is difficult to re-program our mind, to accept the fact that we have to live the rest of our lives without their being with us. It is hard to let go of the hopes and dreams for the future of that child or sibling.

In our early grief, it is easy to feel guilty for crying, laughing, socializing, or not socializing. Our behavior does not feel comfortable, or appropriate. We do not fully enjoy anything, because we can not attain our greatest desire (to be with our child or sibling).

Often guilt comes when we can no longer meet our responsibilities as homemaker, provider, mother, father, wife, husband, or sibling. All this adds to our low self-esteem, and makes us feel a failure. Our self worth is lowered when we feel dysfunctional.

Our grief will sometimes cause us to place guilt where it is not justified. It is important to not lay guilt on other family members, and guard against being accusatory, particularly for the child's death.

It is very normal to go through these stages of grief, which can rip us apart, and cause us deep pain. Through our grief work, particularly by sharing our feelings with a compassionate person who is not judgmental, the wound will heal, and help us to know and understand we did not cause, or could not have prevented the loss of our loved one.

Being so critical of ourselves, frequently inflicts much of our own pain. It is easier to forgive all others, than to forgive ourselves for not being super-human with impossible insight. It helps to be kind to yourself. We need all the love we can get to carry us through. Having done the best we can, is all that can be expected of us.

God Bless, *Marie Hofmockel* - TCF Valley Forge Chapter

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**AUTUMN TEARS**

We look back on September and we realize that somehow we made it through those dreaded first days of school. Whether it was the anticipation or the actual days that were the worst, we survived. We used our faith, our support systems or just plain hard work and made it over yet another hurdle. We watched small children heading for their first day of kindergarten, listened to excited teenagers talk of high school, and heard stories of children leaving home to attend post-secondary school. Somehow we rode the waves of grief and found ourselves ashore again.

As these waves subside new ones will build as we head into the holidays that speak of, and to children. Halloween will soon approach and for some painful memories. Thanksgiving arrives to loom ahead. These special days are forever reminders of our loss...the costumes we'll never sew, the empty chair at turkey dinner, the fun and magic we'll never share with someone we love. Forever reminders that our child has died.

To survive when these events and anniversary days come around let's find time to think of the good memories we have...the announcement of our long awaited pregnancy at Thanksgiving dinner, the look of excitement on our son's first Halloween night, the vision of our daughter helping prepare the turkey dinner. These holidays will always be reminders that our child died...Let us also make them reminders that our child lived! They left us memories more precious than any others to hold and celebrate.

*Penny Young* TCF Powel River, B.C

Expectations play a large role in our grief. Certainly, expecting to feel better and to not always hurt is helpful, (although we tend to expect it to happen too soon) but other expectations can be hurtful. Some of these are the expectations we have of those around us - our friends and relatives.

We “expect” them to listen to us talk about our child and our pain. We “expect” them to be sensitive and aware that we are hurting more on a particular day or date. We “expect” that they will understand that it is normal to grieve for so long. We “expect” them to understand our mood swings. We “expect” and we “expect”, and when they don’t understand or provide what we need we are angry and hurt.

**TO EXPECT IS TO PRESUME.** When we expect a friend or relative to behave a certain way or say a particular thing, we presume they know what we want or need. **This is rarely possible.** Even if the other person is a bereaved parent, he cannot read our minds. What they needed in their grief may not be what you need in yours. If our friend or relative is not a bereaved parent, it is even less likely they will have any idea how to help us.

The problem with expecting understanding and help from another, is that we set ourselves up to be hurt. On page 452 of one of my favorite books, ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, it says, “my serenity is inversely proportional to my expectations.” Of course, serenity doesn’t exist for the bereaved parent, but the hurt we feel from others IS “inversely proportional to our expectations.”

If we expect a friend or relative to do or say the right thing and they don’t, we are hurt. But, on the other hand, if we do not expect their reaction and they react as we would like them to, we will be pleased. I think it would be better to be pleased now and then, rather than be hurt almost every time.

We need to remind ourselves over and over, that **others do not know how to help us.** They are not being cruel, uncaring or indifferent. **They simply do not know what to say or do.** Therefore, the responsibility to let them know of our needs lies with us. Not only must we tell them of our needs, after we have done that we must take it a step farther. In the future, if the individual does not react in the way we prefer, we must try to accept this and consider that, for reasons only they can know, they are either unable or unwilling to do as we ask. We can’t know their innermost motivation anymore than they can know our innermost needs.

To eliminate the hurt we feel from others **we must let go of our expectations of them.** We can only be hurt if we **ALLOW** ourselves to be hurt by something that was done or said (or not done or said) in ignorance. **Remember, we ourselves did not know of bereaved parents needs** before our child died. There will be times we must simply say, “He or she doesn’t know,” or we might ask ourselves, “How important is it that that person is not supportive?”

It is up to us to protect ourselves from any more hurt than we already have. **If we stop expecting what others may not or cannot give, we can stop some of the unnecessary hurt.**

Hi. My name is **Marlene Boylan**.

My sister, **Tiffany** died June 10, 1994. She was 13 years old. She died of a train accident. Her friend **Tammy** died too. Tammy was 14 years old. Both families miss them but it has to be like this. People still put flowers and crosses up at the tracks. I know everyone must suffer, but soon we will be back home.

*Marlene Boylan, age 11  
Valley Forge, PA*

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**Scott** was good to me. He is the best brother anyone could have. Here are some memories of him: We always wrestled. When I was 6, I went to an Orioles game with him. I used to help him with his home work. He was a caring person. He taught me all I know. He died of hypertrophic cardiomyopathy when he was 11, and I was 6. I miss him so much. It's been 4 years now since he died and I never forgot him. Oh, I really miss you Scottie.

*Greg Rosenthal, age 10  
Valley Forge, PA*

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**TO MY SISTER**

You touched us all  
You loved us all  
Forever giving  
Forever caring  
Forever forgiving  
Never wanting to return.  
Blessed are those who shared your life  
Rich are those who carry your memories  
Please rest now  
Your chores we will finish.  
Till we meet again ...

*Cindy Kelz  
Arlington Heights, IL*

**WHY CAN'T I LET GO**

You were always my hero.  
I always wanted to be like you.  
You were my younger brother,  
Still, I always looked up to you.

You were always there for me,  
Even when things were at their worst.  
You helped me through my hardest trials,  
And we always made it through.

Now as I set here, writing these words,  
Remembering you and times gone by,  
I'm trying to find a way to tell you,  
I'm trying to say good-bye.

Nineteen years are just too many,  
To just let you go,  
I can't believe you're gone, you died,  
And left me here alone.

Some days I'm fine,  
Some days I'm low,  
But most days,  
I just miss you so.  
It was you and me,  
But now, what do I do?

Each night I ask why?  
Why I'm so angry?  
Why I can't cry?  
Why I can't let you go?

I know we'll see each other again,  
But the years seems so long.  
I long for the day I'll see you again,  
Waiting for me with open arms.  
Brother, I love you and miss you so.  
But now I need you most.  
This time in my life is oh so hard,  
I just can't let you go.

*Stephen Welch  
TCF Sibling Group - St Louis, MO*

## CARRY YOUR OWN SIGN POST

Carry your own signpost. Really I am serious. Think about it. They liken the grief process to a journey, and I agree with that symbolism. But who makes the road signs on the way? It feels like everywhere and everyone has an idea, a "method", or opinion of where we should be in our grief. They stick those sign posts everywhere ...in the well meant phrases ("It's time to move on"); in the avoidance of talking about the one who died; in their speech to others around us; in the barrage of Techniques, Methods, and Guidelines people are willing to sell us to help us cope.

But what if we carry our own signpost? We would always be in the right place - after all you put what you want on the sign. We would always be going in the right direction doesn't matter if it's backwards, forwards, sideways ... the point at this pain filled stage in our life is we are moving - period. We are going to go every which way when grieving. There is no straight line, no technique to learn, just a gradual moving through. That is the next thing to put on your sign ... you post the speed. You set the timeline. Now be honest... don't you feel like there should be a sign above your head anyway? Ever changing, and of course with the standard toilet paper roll affixed to it ... those of you who are going "huh?" need to stop in your tour at Grief Inc. and visit Darcie.

By the way did I mention you can change your sign minute to minute? Use a white board and marker ... much easier. We can turn it into a warning sign - "WARNING BEREAVED PEOPLE TEND TO TAKE UNEXPECTED TURNS" - then no one trying to walk with us will be surprised when we suddenly veer over to Weepy City for coffee, or to brake hard for Memory Crossings. One place I end up at a lot is Tear Drop Falls. I tend to look like hell when I leave, but I always feel better later. We all have standing reservations at Heartbreak Hotel, and the "tourists" just don't understand the immense meaning of the landmarks in our land - Guilt Mountain, the Bitter Cliffs, and of course we all troop through the Angry Desert once in a while. Some people spend a lot of time there. ... but of course they are carrying their own sign, so that is ok... they will come and meet us at the one sane place we all gravitate to ... the Compassionate Friends Sharing Meeting.

These landmarks are important to those of us who have already toured them, they serve as reminders of how far they have come in their journey - thank goodness some of them stick around so we can read their signs ... and find the gem of our journey ... the Hope Diamond! Carry your own sign, set your own pace, be where you feel you need to be. It is your heart that is broken, it is the love that you have for your child that will guide you - if you let it help you carry your sign. .

CindyVogt  
TCF/SouthWestManitoba

TAKE THE TIME . . . TO HURT, TO CRY. . .

Wordless and worldless -- Endless and forever, grief goes on --  
It takes the best -- And leaves the rest an empty shell -- Life is Hell.

David was dead four months when I wrote that in my journal. Time is my enemy. As I envisioned the future of my life, I saw only a vast expanse of desert - dry, parched, and empty.

It is now a year and a half since David's death, and I recognize that time has become my friend. Now, when I look to the future, I see hills and valleys - struggles, to be sure, but, also, moments spent at the summit. What has happened? Time is healing.

Take the time . . .

**To hurt . . .** The pain is great and the temptation to run away is great. But, there is no avoiding, no escaping the hard feelings. If you cover them over, they only re-surface later in a potentially more destructive way.

**To cry . . .** It may feel like once started, you can never stop. But you have every reason to cry, and when you have cried enough, you will stop.

**To "fall apart." . . .** If you have a broken leg, you would not expect yourself to function at full capacity right away. Your wound is much greater - you have a broken heart. Confusion, inability to concentrate, lethargy, imagined glimpses of your dead child are a normal part of the grieving process and do not mean that you are going crazy.

**To be "selfish." . . .** Mourning is an egocentric time, a time for turning inward and introspection.

**To "identify" . . .** and seek out resources in your environment that can help: friends, clergy, Compassionate Friends, a counselor. Talk to them.

Having done all that - having lingered in the valley of the shadow - it is time to begin the climb out.

Take the time . . .

**To engage again** in activities that were once pleasurable. They may hold no joy the first few times; someday they will and that will be all right.

**To laugh without guilt.** Savor the good moments in the day, brief though they may be. Through your child, you can re-discover the beauty of a sunset.

**To care for your health.** Grieving is a physio-, as well, as psycho-logical stress. Your body needs protection.

**To be patient.** Wanting to live again and learning to live again takes time. The path out of the other side of the valley is steep, and we all often stumble. But with time - time spent doing the work of grief - you can find the path to a world made richer by your love.

*Bronna Romaoff, PHD* - Albany, NY, TCF