

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC.

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

SEPTEMBER 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

Sept 2 General Sharing & Death by Suicide
Sept 12 Alan Pedersen - Angels Across the USA
Concert Tour - Quakertown PA - (see page 10)
Oct 7 General Sharing
June 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

Joe & Katie Glinski, son *Joey* (27)
Lauretta Wager, daughter *Traci* (42)
Judy Kahl, son *Mark* (23)

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.

AUGUST REFRESHMENTS

Mary Lou Harrison, in honor of her son, *Scott's* birthday
Rhonda Gomez, in honor of her brother, *Donnie's* birthday
Nina Bernstein, in honor of all the children

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.

LOVE GIFTS

Donald and MaryRose, in loving memory of our daughter, *Marjorie Rose-Cotteta* (44)

NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL

Our income from love gifts and United Way has decreased considerably. The cost of printing has increased. The newsletter costs of printing and mailing is approximately \$370 per month. We are exhausting the Chapter's savings. 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

Diana Clark is a member of the Valley Forge chapter. We asked her to write an article about her experience.

I recently had the opportunity to go to Haiti as part of a surgical team. It was an incredible, emotional and quite humbling experience. We landed in Port-au-Prince where the missionaries picked us up to take us to the clinic where we would stay for 7 days. The airport experience was something I can't even describe. Haitians surround you trying to make a dollar offering to carry your bag anything. The poverty we saw was beyond anything any of us has ever seen in our lives. The destruction from the earthquake was still evident every where we went with no signs of anything being done. Everything we took had to be smuggled in or else customs would take and sell.

We were very fortunate to stay in a place with beds and had food prepared for us daily. Everyday I felt guilty for being able to eat, when below us were hungry people surrounding us. The clinic houses the missionary couple (Bert and Roberta) on the second floor and offers rooms for those who come to help. We were split into two groups with the men staying above the clinic and us females staying above the orphanage (approx 200 ft away). Sitting on the balcony looking at the countryside you could envision Haiti being a beautiful place to visit if circumstances were different. But then you look below and see the tents and the people; the children with no shoes, no clothes. We were next to one of the many, many tent cities that have been erected and it leaves you speechless. The sad part is that they are still putting up tents for hundreds more who still need them. Prior to the earthquake Haiti had 400,000 orphans. Since then the numbers have increased. Hope Orphanage has struggled since the earthquake and they are fortunate that a company from Ohio has come to build a new facility for them. Their workers are all volunteers from the states and they pay the Haitians who also do labor for them. We were told that Haiti is now classified as a 4th World Country. Unbelievable. We did approx 30 surgeries the week we were there and were greeted graciously by the people. It was the first time since the earthquake that a surgical team has been to the clinic because of the damage and the danger. By the end of the week we were all emotionally drained and quiet on our ride back to the airport. The experience was something that left an impact on us and for which we will always share. Words can never truly express what we saw.

I have signed up to return again in November. I wish we could do more.

To read about Bert/Roberta Anderson and Hope Orphanage the link is: www.haitihope.org/HOPE/

To view the last newsletter printed for the clinic and the Anderson's the link is:

[www.panamaum.org/Spring%202009%](http://www.panamaum.org/Spring%202009%20)



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.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

David Bonga, daughter *Amanda* 9/15
John & Joyce Bryant, son *John Russell Bryant* 9/24
Robyn Buseman, daughter *Maya Buseman-Williams* 9/30
Scott & Gail Campbell, daughter *Chelsea* 9/1
Pattie Cook, sister *Jacqueline Raimondi* 9/11
Judy & William Cosgrove, son *Michael Cosgrove* 9/4
Reno & Bonnie Crescimone, son *Jonathan* 9/5
Agnes & Alex Crisanti, Jr., son *John Crisanti* 9/6
Dorothy & G. Robert Daily, Sr., son *G. Robert Daily, Jr.* 9/19
Catherine Dardozzi, grandson *Evan Schmidt* 9/29
Robert Dilbeck, wife *Dolores Dilbeck* 9/4
Michelle G Doll, son *Justin* 9/1
Julie & Joe Fabrizio, brother *John Russel Bryant* 9/24
Sharon & Francis Gailey, son *Francis E. Gailey, III* 9/28
Molly Gehring, son *Daniel* 9/12
Rhonda and Frank Gomez, son *Frank Jr.* 9/30
Jeanne R Helmers, sister *Mary Ann Helmers Kemme* 9/16
Gail & Calvert G. Hess, Jr., son *Calvert G. Hess, III* 9/4
Walt & Adele Higgins, son/stepson *Brian* 9/22
Michelle Hillstrom, daughter *Jen* 9/26
Jacob & Rachel Himmelstein, son *Benjamin Himmelstein* 9/25
Lesley Jones, son *Christopher* 9/14
Gwen & Dennis Kearns, son *Dennis J. Kearns, Jr.* 9/18
Tobie & Herman Kessler, daughter *Beth Kessler Waasdorp* 9/16
Suellen & Stephen King, daughter *Danelle Rossi* 9/18
Marcia Kling, son *CJ* 9/20
Becky & Alan Logsdon, son *Nathaniel Logsdon* 9/25
Elaine & James Madden, son *Andrew Madden* 9/26
Frank & Bernadette McAllister, son *Christopher J. McAllister* 9/4
Linda & Jim McGrath, son *Paul Drew McGrath* 9/26
Alfred J. & Joan Michini, son *Adam Jonah Michini* 9/28
Jeffrey & Christine Miller, daughter *Teresa Leanne Miller* 9/12
Betty & Dick Miller, son *Raymond "Jim"* 9/1
Barbara & Jeff Norris, son *Greg* 9/21
Mary O'Halloran, brother *Thomas M. O'Halloran* 9/1

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS continued

Winnie & James O'Halloran, son *Thomas M. O'Halloran* 9/1
Elizabeth Orbann, daughter *Linda Elizabeth Johnson* 9/15
Linda & Andrew Peoples, Jr., son *Brian A. Peoples* 9/7
Mary & Salvatore Perna, grandson *Nathan A. Bieber* 9/11
Robert & Nancy Ricciardi, daughter *Jessica Lee Ricciardi* 9/23
Ruth Richardson, grandson *Nicholas Richardson* 9/1
Gina & Brian Richardson, son *Nicholas Richardson* 9/1
Jacqueline Rider, daughter *Michelle Connelly* 9/24
Margaret Rodalewicz, son *Shane Wooley* 9/23
Donald & Mary Rose, daughter *Marjorie Rose-Cotteta* 9/30
Joan Santillo, daughter *Cathy Gambone* 9/9
son *Brian Gambone* 9/8
Margaret & Tom Saunders, daughter *Katie* 9/27
Michelle & Bill Schmidt, son *Evan Peter Schmidt* 9/29
Cathy Seehuetter, daughter *Nina Seehuetter* 9/24
Cathy Siciliano, son *Anthony* 9/15
Helen Smith, son *Patrick Kenneth "Kenny" Smith* 9/5
Walter & Irene Stolarczyk, daughter *Barbara Stolarczyk* 9/11
Emil & Joy Tkachick, son *David L. Tkachick* 9/11
Sharon Venezia, son *Justin Negron* 9/9
Shelly Wagner, son *Andrew Wagner* 9/29
Shirley Weir, daughter *Lee Ann Weir Beckmann* 9/12

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Laura Bedrossian, son *Teddy* - 9/24
Jeff & Donna Brown, son *Kenneth Bernstiel* - 9/12
Ann Bruner, sister *Katy Wade* - 9/27
Suzanne Carcarey, son *Eddie* - 9/21
Phyllis & James Casey, son *Jim "Jimmer" Casey* - 9/17
Tom & Irene Cornely, son *Tom* - 9/1
Marie D'Angelo, son *Mark Anthony* - 9/12
Catherine Dardozzi, son *James Dardozzi* - 9/7
Michelle G Doll, son *Justin* - 9/4
Sarah Fishel, daughter *Allyson* - 9/15
Mary B. Frederick, friend *Michael Puglisi* - 9/10
Sherry Goldberg, son *Neal* - 9/3
Susan Goldberg, brother *Neal* - 9/3
Judi Griffith, son *Steve* - 9/4
Virginia Hagen, son *Matthew D. Hagen* - 9/28
Jeanne R Helmers, daughter *Betsy Helmers* - 9/7
Nancy Lee & Jerry Hess, son *Jerry R.L. Hess* - 9/28
Barbara Jacobs, daughter *Pamela Faye* - 9/17

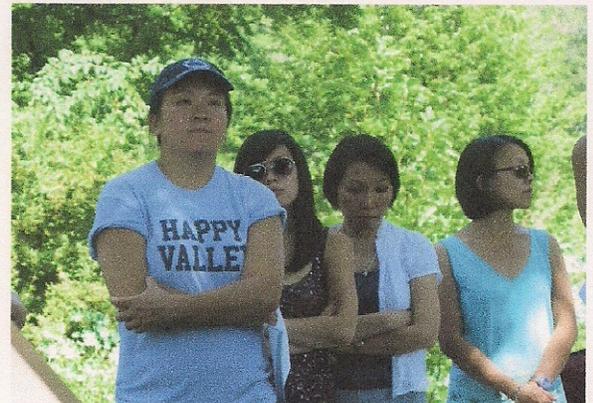
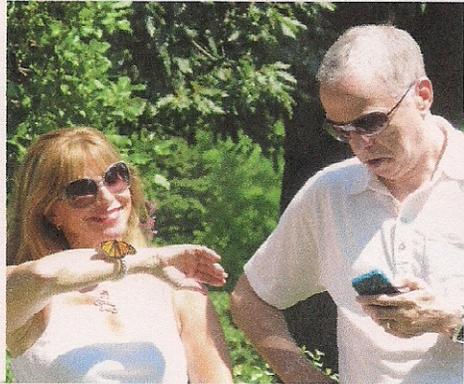
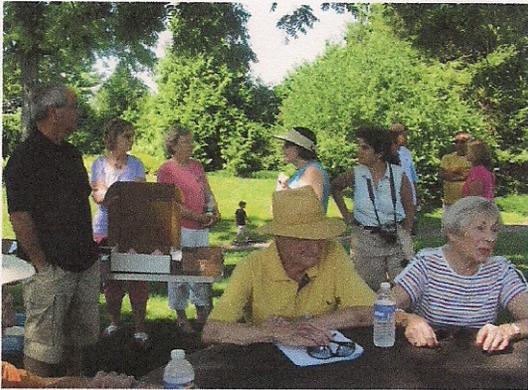
SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES continued

Margaret C Jones, son *Christopher* - 9/15
Gwen & Dennis Kearns, son *Dennis J. Kearns, Jr.* - 9/28
Shirley & Philip C. Kennedy, son *Philip V. Kennedy* - 9/23
Gloria and Jerry Koval, son *Steven* - 9/3
Karen & Francis Legieko, son *John Francis Legieko* - 9/25
Joanne & Thomas Lennen, son *Scott C. Lennen* - 9/2
Maureen Lok, daughter *Jessica* - 9/25
Willard & Patricia McLain, son *Gary J. McLain* - 9/23
Alfred J. & Joan Michini, son *Adam Jonah Michini* - 9/7
Betsy Oakes, son *Bruce Schaeffer* - 9/2
Marie O'Connon, son *Curran J* - 9/8
Elsie Oreski, son *Gregory T. Oreski* - 9/3
Teresa and Ron Perkins, daughter *Allison* - 9/22
Kathy & Jim Petrokubi, son *Andrew* - 9/26
Mary Jane Pollart, son *Mark Andrew Steffler* - 9/7
Rusty & Anthony Puglisi, son *Michael Puglisi* - 9/10
Steve & Joann Reynolds, son *Chris* - 9/15
Donald & Freda Rhinier, son *Glenn D. Rhinier* - 9/16
Bonnie Rosen, son *Troy* - 9/29
Marie & Sam Schmeltzer, son *Sam "Sonny" Schmeltzer* - 9/11
Michelle & Bill Schmidt, brother *James Dardozzi* - 9/7
Janet & Jonathan Schultz, brother *Marc Ernest Stein* - 9/9
Abigail Schwartz, brother *Jake* - 9/13
Charles & Tish Shaw, son *Charles "Corky" Shaw* - 9/29
Ann Sherwood, daughter *Martha Sherwood Fransway* - 9/6
Helen Smith, son *Patrick Kenneth "Kenny" Smith* - 9/17
Anne & Charles Swann, daughter *Katherine Anne Swann* - 9/7
Jean Sykora, son *Mark* - 9/27
Renee Teufel, son *Gregory* - 9/24
Barbara Tuller, son *Charles* - 9/24
Weldon & Marie Tyson, son *Ronald C. Stewart* - 9/21
Sharon Venezia, son *Justin Negron* - 9/17
Lauretta Wager, daughter *Traci* - 9/10
Muriel Wilson, son *John F. Shaffer* - 9/25
Gisela Witte, son *Bruce G. Edlund* - 9/22

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

Please visit the Valley Forge website,, www.tcfvalleyforge.org and leave your comments about the Butterfly Release, or any suggestions you may have to help improve the Chapter Program. This is your chapter, please voice your opinion so that we know how to better serve your needs.



SHARED THOUGHTS ON THE COMFORTED BECOMING THE COMFORTER

Guarding the safety of our children is probably one of the highest priorities on every parent's list. Our children's dying diminishes us as human beings. We feel we have failed to protect the most important thing in our life. The death robs us of our zest for living. It can take the power, motivation, and joy from our jobs, whether it be a menial or the ultimate position in life. For this period of time it is essential that we become the comforted. Recognizing the depth of our loss and despair is not self-pity. It can help us justify our reactions and behavior, and know our feelings are normal for what we are experiencing. We must accept our feelings, even though they are not happy, and cause much dampness from our tears. We need to keep grief alive long enough to resolve it. This does not mean a lifetime of grief, but it is much longer than we want it to be, and certainly much longer than non-bereaved people will allow us.

Our pain can not be explained or finished. Our children are our very essence of life, and our joy of living. They have made us part of who and what we are. Life gave us the blessing of our children, how empty our lives would have been had we never known them. We savor the dreams of what they might have become. After much grieving and healing, we become stronger in the broken places. As Don Hackett writes about our dead children, he says, "they become gentle and soft music in our souls".

We all need to be comforted in early grief. Often, people try too soon to become a comforter to family members. Laying our grief aside to reach out can be a mistake. For we can help others most by letting our fragmented and fragile bodies and minds heal first. That is why airline attendants always say, in an emergency, to place your oxygen mask on before your child's, so you will be better equipped to offer help. After your grief has softened, we hope you will become a comforter to your family, and your Compassionate Friends. A large part of comforting should be to build comforters for those who will need us, and in turn, the comforter's reward is great and completes the grief cycle for them.

Healing can take place just by knowing others have survived what we feel is impossible to endure. Sometimes we have to struggle to do what we think we can not do. You can be happy again. We wish happiness could come sooner, but it doesn't. The loss is too great for a quick fix to be lasting. We must go through the sorrow and pain before we can hear the gentle and soft music in our souls. Often we have the volume control in our hand and blame our hearing, rather than turning up the music. Listen for and expect the gentle and soft music in your soul.

God Bless, *Marie Hofmockel*, TCF Valley Forge

<p>Never bear more than one kind of trouble at a time. Some people bear three - All they have had, all they have now, and all they expect to have. Edward Everett Hale</p>

COMPASSIONATE SIBLINGS

I had a prayer today, one I'd like to share.
I found I'm not alone in my grief,
I found someone to care!
I've been in pain for quite awhile,
but kept it deep inside.
But now I know there are people in
whom I can confide!

They'll let me cry or scream or yell,
and they know just how I feel;
You see they also know that pain,
and know it's very real.
Each one has suffered a loss,
one like I have known;
Yet now we stand together.
This unique group of siblings is bonded,
you might say,
And strength to carry on is for what each
one must pray.

One by one we keep going,
although painful it might be,
And the emptiness we feel,
many will never see;
Because we choose what face to show
the world and courage keeps us going.
We have a constant ache inside,
No matter what the outside is showing.

And whether it takes me a year or two,
time is all that can heal;
So I've been sent some "Compassionate
Siblings"
Who know just how I feel.

Bless those who need to be understood
When tears come and go without warning.
May we help heal the wounds so deep
that are hurting all the hearts left empty
by the death of a sibling.

Stacie Gilliam TCF/N. Oklahoma City,OK



A PART OF ME

You were not just my brother,
but you were my friend as well.
You were supposed to be here
always
Or till the world came to an end.
I know that we argued and
Seemed to disagree,
But I could always count on you
To be there for me.
You may be gone from this world I
see,
But you will always be a part of me.

Donna Montville
Gardner, MA - TCF

SILENT GRIEF

I smile but remain silent.
Do you not feel the ache
That never leaves my heart?
Can you not see
The faraway look in my eyes,
The tear that falls beneath the
lowered lash?
I look but do not see
The going-on around me;
and time goes on,
But I am standing still -
suspended in a moment of time.
One year has passed.

Cathryn Haywood
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada

Other Events and Happenings

Angels Across the USA Tour

Date: September 12, 2010

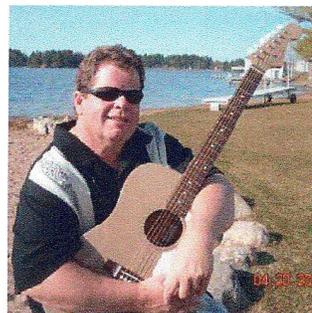
www.angelsacrosstheusa.com

Time: 3 PM

Place: St Isidore's RC Church

2545 West Pumping Station Rd

Quakertown PA 18951



Alan Pedersen is an award winning songwriter, successful recording artist and nationally recognized speaker on grief and loss. Currently living in Roseville, California, he along with his wife Denise, have founded Grief and Beyond: a multi media ministry offering support to organizations, families and individuals going through the grieving process.

As a former Nashville songwriter, stand-up comedian and network radio news reporter, Alan has 30 years of experience writing, performing and producing all genres of entertainment.

On August 15, 2001 Alan's life was changed forever. Ashley Marie Pedersen, his oldest child and only daughter, was killed in an automobile accident in rural Colorado.

Alan has turned his journey through the valley of grief and the pain of loss into a collection of powerful and moving songs recorded on to 3 highly acclaimed CD's. Alan speaks and plays his original music at more than 100 events every year throughout the United States. His gentle mix of humor and straight-from-the-heart talk wrapped around powerful songs about love, loss and healing make for a unique experience.

His music is popular with bereaved people around the world and has been used at thousands of candle lighting services, balloon and butterfly releases, and by hundreds of professionals and organizations as a healing tool for the bereaved. His music has been played at Ground Zero in New York City, the memorial at Virginia Tech University, the memorial at Columbine High School and is featured on many memorial and tribute websites.

Alan has been a keynote speaker and workshop presenter at many prestigious conferences including: The World Gathering on Bereavement, The Compassionate Friends National Conference, and The National Gathering of Bereaved Parents of the USA.

Alan has written many articles on grief that have been featured in national magazines, newsletters and other publications. He has been a recurring guest on Healing the Grieving Heart on the Health and Wellness Radio Network. Stories about Alan's music, message and travels have been featured on television and radio stations around the country, and have been the subject of countless newspaper articles.

Currently Alan and Denise are on the road as part of the Angels Across the USA tour which is sponsored in part by bereaved families in honor of their children, grandchildren, and siblings. They will travel to 120+ cities and feature at least one concert event in each of the 48 states. The goal of this 2010 tour is to raise community awareness and draw media attention toward local grief organizations that provide resources for the bereaved



Photos of the Angels Across the USA trailer taken in February 2010. If you would like to have your angel go on tour across the USA with Alan visit their website for a sponsorship decal.



Come join our chapter for an afternoon of music and inspirations by Alan Pederen, songwriter, recording artist and grief-loss speaker.

HELPING OTHERS HELP YOU - 10 RULES FOR SELF HEALING

1. Tell friends to call you often. Explain that after the first couple of months you'll need their calls.
2. Tell your friends to make a specific date with you; none of this "we must get together for lunch". Remind them that you're bound to have "down" times and their patience would be appreciated.
3. Tell them to please feel free to talk about the person that has died -- and don't avoid that person's name.
4. It's important for friends to understand that you may appear to be "doing so well" but on the inside you still hurt. Grief is painful, it's tricky and it's exhausting.
5. Ask your friends to care but not to pity you.
6. Make plain that friends and relatives can still treat you as a person who is still in command and can think for yourself.
7. Tell your friends that it's all right to express their caring. It's OK for them to cry; crying together is better than avoiding the pain.
8. Let your friends know too, that it's all right to say nothing. A squeeze or a hug are often more important than words.
9. Let people know that they can invite you to socialize, but that you might decline.
10. Ask your friends to go for walks with you. You and your friends can "walk off" feelings. Walks promote conversation and help fight depression.

Ruth Jean Loewinsohn

IF I SHOULD TELL YOU

If I should tell you
That it will get better
In time (just when I don't know)
Will you look at me
With lifeless, leaden eyes, with sagging shoulders,
And turn away in forlorn disbelief?

If I should tell you
I, too, like you have been there,
Have struggled, rebounded, and
fought my way back.
The nights will become softer,
The days less relentless.

If I should tell you
That this damnation will fade
Slowly, slowly, ever so slowly,
As you battle the pain, such riveting pain,
That enervates and drains your very being,
will you believe me?

If I should tell you
You will live again, you will live again.
And somehow, somewhere,
You will love again, you will love again.
And embrace, and caress, and encompass
The memory of that beautiful child of yours.
YOU WILL.

If I should tell you
That that Gordian knot
So relentlessly snarled
Will gradually fray and unravel
And you will start to rise up again.

Will you believe me? Please do.

Dave Ziv - Bucksmont Chapter, PA