



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

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

APRIL 2018

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 Founders 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

April 5 General Sharing

May 3 General Sharing

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.

INSIDE VALLEY FORGE CHAPTER

REFRESHMENTS

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.

The Valley Forge Chapter - given in loving memory of all the children, grandchildren & siblings.

LOVE GIFTS

Rose Cote, in loving memory of my son, *Mark Cote* on his anniversary 3/26.

Catherine Dardozzi, in loving memory of my dear son, *James* on his birthday 3/7.

Nancy & Arthur Singer, in loving memory of our son, *Jeffrey Vincent Singer* on his anniversary 3/9.

Michael Gormish, in loving memory of his brother-in-law, *Douglas Moyer*.

This publication of the **TCF Valley Forge Chapter Newsletter** is funded by the **Steven Schneibolk Memorial Fund**.

MEETING CANCELLATION NOTIFICATION

It is impossible to notify all members who are planning to attend a meeting. If there is a need to cancel a TCF meeting due to inclement weather, power shortage or any situations that may occur preventing safe travel, **Please view the Valley Forge web site: www.tcfvalleyforge.org**, for the latest update or call the TCF phone 484-919-0820.

We have approximately 600 in our database mailing list. Not knowing who plans to attend, this would be an impossible task to contact everyone by telephone.

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 frank@tcfvalleyforge.org**



The Compassionate Friends is pleased to announce that St. Louis, Missouri, will be the site of the 41st TCF National Conference on July 27-29, 2018. “Gateway to Hope and Healing” is the theme of this year’s event, which promises more of this last’s great National Conference experience. The 2018 Conference will be held at the Marriott St. Louis Grand Hotel. We’ll keep you updated with details here, on the national website as well as on our TCF/USA Facebook Page and elsewhere as they become available. Plan to come and be a part of this heartwarming experience.

Adult Registration: \$115
Child Registration (9-17) \$55
Full-time College Student Registration \$55
Active Military Registration \$55

To help plan your time in St. Louis, view the general conference schedule. We also have a list of the Workshops available.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

TCF’s discounted rate with the Marriott St. Louis Grand Hotel is \$140 per night plus tax. Reservations can now be made online or by calling the Marriott Reservation line at 800-397-1282. Please note that each attendee will only be able to reserve two rooms. If your group needs to reserve a larger block of rooms, please contact the National Office to make arrangements for your reservations.

Transportation to/from the Marriott St. Louis Grand Hotel to/from the St. Louis Lambert International Airport (approximately 15 miles)

GO BEST Express 877-785-4682: \$21.00 one way

Estimated taxi fare: \$40.00 one way

Bus service: \$7.00 one way

Subway service: \$3.50 one way

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.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Blake Barbie, son *Chad Blake* 4/15
Leslie Brown, son *Scott* 4/3
Ellen & James Burbano, son *Eric* 4/19
Gina Cappelli, son *Dan Foley* 4/20
Phyllis & James Casey, son *Jim "Jimmer" Casey* 4/18
David Castle, best friend *Eric* 4/19
Linda DiPasquale, son *Thomas* 4/26
Janie Ebersole, daughter *Ashley Sankus* 4/19
Ginny Ebert, son *Jason* 4/17
Scott & Charlene Fazekas, son *Eric Scott Fazekas* 4/25
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 Ianovala, son *Dennis* 4/18
Carl and Dorothy Johnson-Speight, daughter *Carlena 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
Bob & Laura Latshaw, son *Scott* 4/22
Karen & Francis Legieko, son *John Francis Legieko* 4/8
Susan & Richard Leoni/Cutler, son *Kevin* 4/3
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 Mazzio, son *Brendan Mazzio* 4/18

APRIL BIRTHDAYS continued

Robert & Marjorie Meckley, son *Douglas Meckley* 4/25
Fran Miller, son *Christian* 4/7
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
Thomas & Mary Jane Poore, son *Bradley Poore* 4/25
Joe & Kim Pratt, son *Paul* 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
Robert & Sigrid Snow, son *Barry Snow* 4/28
son *Kevin Snow* 4/19
Ann VanLandingham, son *Eric VanLandingham* 4/21
Marissa Wadsworth, son *T.J. Wadsworth* 4/8
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
Judy & William Cosgrove, son *Michael Cosgrove* - 4/17
Anton & Maureen DeMaioribus, daughter *Ann DeMaioribus* - 4/23
Ed & Sue Duffy, son *Peter* - 4/11
Nancy & David Dykty, brother *Jim Sutton* - 4/16
Rhonda and Frank Gomez, brother *Paul* - 4/26
Joanne Haley, son *Douglas Haley* - 4/3
Nancy Hartzell, son *Adam* - 4/8
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

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES CONTINUED

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
Fred & Marilyn Mountjoy, daughter *Marian Mountjoy* - 4/16
John Mscisz, grandson *Liam John Williamson* - 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
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
Robert & Sigrid Snow, son *Barry 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

FLOWING

Fowing more gently my River of Tears
Its banks holding grief of nineteen year.

Ripples of memories so many kind
In my heart they are always I find.

Memories of kissing away childhood hurts
Praying life's pitfalls you would avert.

You choose to leave your sadness on earth
For Heavens peace and eternal rebirth.

For *Mark Cote*
From mother, *Rose Cote*

"He held me in his arms and made
me share it and accept that his sorrow was
as great as my own. He simply wouldn't
allow my grief to divide us...push us apart,
which is what happens so often where
there is a loss like that.

And for as long as I live, I will
respect and appreciate my husband for the
strength of his understanding.

Barbara Bush
Bereaved Parent
1988 Republican National Convention

SHARED THOUGHTS ON A PAIN THAT SPRING CAN'T FIX

Sometimes spring can make us feel even more depressed, we often begin with our shoulds, oughts, and time frames. In past winters, when we were suffering from cabin fever we looked to spring to motivate us. Many non-bereaved will even tell us, we should feel better for spring is here. Or, we ought to get out more, now that the weather is nice. We sometimes put more guilt on ourselves, when we are depressed on a glorious day. A gloomy day can be more comfortable, for we feel our spirits don't have to rise to meet our surroundings. The grief we are enduring is probably the greatest pain we will ever know.

Seasonal changes frequently have an opposite effect than they used to have on us, the changes can close a time frame that we had set to reach a certain goal in our grief. When our expectations have not been met it lowers our self-esteem. We are frequently our own worst enemy, when it comes to putting impossible expectations on ourselves. I believe our creator put earth's beauty here for us. But when our pain is so great it is difficult to enjoy its beauty, we should not feel guilt for lack of appreciation. When in the depth of despair, it is hard to feel good about anything. Grief is not curable, but the pain will soften, and we will one day feel better (I could not believe this in my early grief). The road to healing is very long, but it is not endless as it may now seem.

The evolution of progress will have many setbacks even though we are having a long-term positive trend of healing, it is often hard to see progress. We never understand why our child died and it is never over, but we can become functional human beings again. We must first do our grieving, for that is when the healing takes place. Our grief causes us to face reality and imagine our future without our loved one. As painful as this is we must go through it, we can not go around it. We need to let go of our shoulds, oughts, and time frames, and take one step at a time. But we need to get a good foothold before moving on. Putting something behind us too early can cause us to deny and not acknowledge the loss. Grief can't be rushed. Most of all we must have hope, that is the light at the end of the tunnel.

My pain has healed so I can work, play, and enjoy family and friends again. When I think of Douglas, my pain is no longer intense and gut wrenching. It most often is fond memories that I love to share with others. I do have a need to speak of my child, but not so extensively. We at The Compassionate Friends have come to know each other's child through our sharing.

As I look forward to spring with great anticipation it makes me realize how much we can overcome, and that grief doesn't have to dominate the rest of our life. We can lead productive and wholesome lives again. It takes a lot of patience, hard work, and prayers to find happiness again. I hope you will not try this hard road alone. The Compassionate Friends can lighten your path.

God Bless, *Marie Hofmockel*, TCF Valley Forge

By my helping I will be helped
 If I accept your anger then my anger is accepted.
 By my caring I am cared for.
 When I listen I will be listened to.
 And all these things mean
 On the lonely road of grief I will not be alone.
 My recovery will be a little gentler,

And my child will not be forgotten
 Because the memory of him can be shared
 With you who understand how I feel --
 My special Compassionate Friends

Shirley Egan

TCF, New South Wales, Australia

THE PATHWAY OF TEARS ... TO THE HAPPINESS OF MY MEMORIES

I walk in turmoil, I walk in peace.
I walk in loneliness, I walk with love.
I walk in sadness, I walk in happiness.
I dwell in the depths of despair, yet soar to the ecstasy of beyond.
I dwell in the shadows of darkness, yet strive for the light afar.
I feel the emptiness, the pain, the grief, the heavy grief
Yet search for the splendor of butterflies and the glory of rainbows.
I feel trampled and wasted and without cause.
I feel nothing.
I feel the love of memories overflowing within me.
I feel the warmth of his smile, his touch, his kiss, his arms around me, his innocence.
I remember the hurt, the misunderstanding, the alienation, the darkness, the
bleakness, the hopelessness, the devastation.
I remember his love, his caring, the scent of his hair, the touch of his hand, the little
boy playing in the sun.

And I remember the family I found who understood when no other wanted to understand.
I remember the guilt, the tears, the anger and hostility, the inability to carry on, to forgive,
to laugh again.
And I remember the family of Compassionate Friends who allowed that multitude of
feelings to flow, to surface and to happen, thus finally allowing me to forgive, to live again,
to smile again, to let happiness override unhappiness.

I thank my Nathan for his lessons of love, for his ability to see the beauty and life, in all
creatures, great and small.
I thank that little boy for his warmth, his sunshine, his gentleness, his wisdom, his innocence.
And I thank The Compassionate Friends for their patience, their understanding, and love,
their acceptance.

I know that as long as I live I will remember, sometimes I will hurt, I will ache and I
will weep in remembering.
Do we ever really let go? I doubt that it is possible to ever let go of that precious part of
ourselves that has ceased to be. That is how it is - in spite of ourselves, and despite
anyone else's beliefs.

Remember, remember the happiness of memories.
Remember the sadness, the tears of memories.
Remember always our children of the past; they dwell in the present of our hearts forever.
AND TRUE LOVE NEVER REALLY ENDS...

CONCERNING SIBLINGS

It's been said that when a child's brother or sister dies, actually three people are lost: the sibling and both parents. The sibling also loses a friend, playmate, confidant, role model, and lifelong companion. For the parents, the loss of a child is often so traumatic that they have little left to give to the surviving children. Yet the surviving sibling has fears, needs, and anxieties that must be explored and addressed if the child is to avoid negative long term consequences. Listed here are normal feelings siblings might have concerning the loss along with some suggestions on what to do to encourage their expression.

Normal Thoughts

- * "Did I cause the death?"
- * "Will the rest of my family die?"
- * "Who will take care of me now?"
- * "I'm all alone now."
- * "Half of me died."
- * "I'm different from all the other kids."
- * "I'm not a child anymore."
- * "I feel left out."
- * "Things will never be the same again."
- * "No one cares about my grief, only about my parents grief."
- * "I can't cry because it will make my parents more upset."
- * "I feel guilty to be happy or to laugh."
- * "Why wasn't it me?"
- * "Will I die young too?"
- * "I made it happen by wishing him dead!"
- * "If I act like my sibling, maybe my parents will feel better."
- * "Maybe my parents would love me more if I died!"

Normal Feelings

- * Impatient and angry at the world.
- * Resentful over the attention the parents are getting.
- * Resentful over the attention they are not getting.
- * Fearful of having to replace the sibling.
- * Guilt for feeling relieved over the death after a long illness.
- * Guilt over all the "bad" thoughts, words, and fights with the deceased.

How To Help

- * The bereaved parents should constantly remind themselves to be sensitive to the feelings of the surviving children.
- * The parents should strive to maintain as much of a normal routine as possible for the survivors.
- * The parents should encourage grieving, openness and the expression of feelings in the children by grieving openly and expressively in front of them.
- * Reassure them that they are not going to die, too.
- * Reassure them that they are loved, wanted and okay.
- * Reassure them that they did not cause the death in any way.
- * Give lots of physical reassurance in the way of touching and hugs.
- * Contact the teacher/teachers or school counselors.
- * Ask them what and how they would like the school to be told.
- * Prepare them for questions and remarks they can expect at school.
- * Encourage them to resume their normal activities at their own pace.
- * Remember the sibling's birthday and anniversary of the death.
- * Remember the sibling at special family gatherings and functions.
- * Don't be afraid to talk about the child that died.
- * Talk about all the qualities of the child that died - positive and negative.
- * Talk about the differences between the siblings - good and bad.
- * Don't promise them a replacement sibling with talks of having another child.
- * Remember surviving siblings cannot become, or replace, the deceased - brother or sister.

TLC Group grants anyone the right to use this information without compensation so long as the copy is not used for profit or as training materials in a profit making activity such as workshops, lectures, and seminars, and so long as this paragraph is retained in its entirety.

Adapted From: *Helping Children Cope With Loss*
Buz Overbeck - Joanie Overbeck

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**

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 dreams, 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

RESPECT THE LONELY SAILOR ON THAT VAST, DARK OCEAN

Recently, two acquaintances were discussing a man whose wife died a few months ago. It was time he gave away her things, they said. It was time he got over it.

I listened, silent, but started writing this column in my mind.

Dear friends, we have such a small understanding of grief and so little patience with the bereaved. It's time to find more of both.

Grief has no schedule. It would be so much easier on all of us if the pain of bereavement ended after three months, but it just doesn't work that way.

Sometimes after three months the reality of the loss is just beginning to sink in.

Grief is neither a sickness that can be cured nor a stage one can outgrow. Like any other milestone, it's a permanent addition to our self-definition. After the loss of someone we love, please don't expect us to snap out of it and be who we were before. Our old self and our old life died with our loved ones. However prepared we might have been, when they died we stepped through a door that has forever closed behind us. We can't go back.

Sometimes we feel like we're just going through the motions for the first year after a loss. Each holiday, anniversary and birthday looms like a tidal wave and hits us about that hard. The weeks or months in between are simply recovery from or preparation for the next unbearable event.

We have to get through all these significant dates at least once before we can understand how we'll get through the rest of our lives. It takes a full year to go through all of them, and then we still face the worst one of all, the first anniversary of the death.

Everyone grieves differently. Sleep, often elusive, is at least oblivion. Waking is dreaded. We may be clingy, we may have nightmares, we may be remote, we may cry often, we may never cry again.

We're often told time will heal us, but time is the enemy. We want to turn back the clock but it goes forward. It slows down in the worst parts and speeds up through the easy parts. Some days are excruciating. Some seasons are endless.

Eventually, things do change. But each person's grief takes its own good time. While a 1-month-old grief is unbearable and a 1-year-old grief is still raw, a 10-year-old grief is different.

Even after much time has passed, gently and caringly asking about a loss can be a kindness, especially when well-meaning friends have decided it's a taboo subject. One of the hardest parts of losing someone you love is the fear that he will be forgotten. So many times, the people who recognize our need to talk are those who've been where we are.

There's a strange kinship among the bereaved. We have lifetime memberships in a club no one wants to belong to. More than once, I've initiated conversations with near-strangers about subjects so private and painful others might have been shocked. But we understood each other. We recognized each other because we spoke the language of tragedy.

Everyone reacts differently to a loss. Some of us do things we'd never do otherwise. Please, be gentle in your opinions and understanding in your expectations. If you haven't gone through what someone else is experiencing, then trust me, no matter how compassionate you are, you don't know what it's like.

People speak of grief as if it were a tide that's come in and will soon recede. But grief is not the tide. Grief is what's left when the unimaginable occurs. It's the residue of horror, the aftermath of heartache, the uninvited guest who will not leave. It lingers, it hovers, it smothers. It's unrelenting.

Bereavement puts us on a small boat in a great ocean. Time, faith, love, friends and our own inner strength are the tides that can carry us to shore. But grief is the ocean, vast and overwhelming.

Once you've seen the ocean, you never see the world the same.

Jennifer Hansen



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC.

Valley Forge, PA Chapter
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Chapter Leaders
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Glenmoore, PA 19343

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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.

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. ©2007