



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS NORTHERN NEVADA CHAPTER

Carson City, NV

January 2012

Chapter Leader's Message

2012...

For some the dreaded Christmas is over. And now into a New Year. Time seems to fly. When Tommy died it seemed as if tomorrow would never come. I guess that's the difference between new grief and old grief.

I went shopping after Christmas, another thing I did not do in my first years of grief. I spotted an ornament that I had to have. It was as if Tommy spoke to me. All over the box was written *We Wish You Merry Christmas*. In the middle:

*Santa Since 1985
POSSIBLE DREAMS*

Tommy died in 1985. I had to have it, as I felt like this was a message from Tommy giving me my 1985 gift.

When you think of "his or her last Christmas," search for the happiness and sweetness hidden in the memory and cherish it and hold onto it to help you in the days ahead. We need all the help we can get.

*Love and memories,
Delores*

Newsletter Editor's Message

I've never been big on New Year's Resolutions - I figure it's unkind to start out with a list of ways I can disappoint myself in the next month. That said, I do like to "check in" with myself in the beginning of January, and see where I can focus my energy in the coming year. I did find a few lists I wanted to share for this newsletter, and I hope they help you with your energy and sanity in the year ahead.

*Wishing you a peaceful 2012,
Georgette*

SPECIAL DATES

January 31st
Carson City Meeting

7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
Carson Tahoe Cancer
Resource Center
1535 Medical Parkway

February 28th
Carson City Meeting

7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
Carson Tahoe Cancer
Resource Center
1535 Medical Parkway

March 27th
Carson City Meeting

7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
Carson Tahoe Cancer
Resource Center
1535 Medical Parkway

STEERING COMMITTEE

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January Birthdays

Melinda Brown

Parents: Darryl & Rita Brown

Brandon Bryant

Grandparents: Barbara & Howard Brown

Chris

Mother: Sunny Bryant

Steven David

Sister: Camile Strauch

Joseph Ingenluyff

Mother: Debbie David

John Luna

Parents: Mike & Laura Ingenluyff

Kurt Meunch

Mother: Pauline Luna

Devon Lane Mondragon

Parents: Patrick & Patti Williams

Eric Nageotte

Father: Dan Mondragon

Brandon Painter

Parents: Ron & Carol Nageotte

Catherine Ann Pintar

Mother: Mary Painter

Nicole Michelle Snyder

Mother: Ruth Pintar

Tim Stephens

Parents: John & Patti Snyder

Tubal pregnancy

Parents: John & Connie Currier

Mark Vicich

Grandmother: Amy Hunter

Parents: Rhiannan & Taylor Peart

Mother: Elaine Vicich

Our Children Loved, Missed & Remembered

Our dear children, though gone from our sight, are forever loved and will always be remembered. We remember, with compassion, the parents and families of these precious children on the birthdays and anniversary days listed here.

January Anniversaries

Kelly Barr

Mother: Linda Barr

Erin Hackman

Parents: Rick & Cecilia Hackman

Jacob Allen Kenton

Mother: Amy Cote

Eugene E. Newby

Parents: Ron & Esther Newby

Catherine Ann Pintar

Mother: Ruth Pintar

April Schultz

Parents: Norris & Kathy Schultz

Susanna Celeste LaFleur Siegel

Mother: Sharon Steele Kientz

Tim Stephens

Parents: John & Connie Currier

Justin Royce Talley

Grandmother: Amy Hunter

Tubal pregnancy

Parents: Teresa & Larry Alexander

Albert Troy Winkler

Parents: Rhiannan & Taylor Peart

Heather Youngblood

Mother: Nancy Winkler, Father: Albert Winkler

Parents: Donna & Jim Schumacher



My Journey

I feel like I have been on a journey for the past 23 years
and still on it
And other times it is like no journey at all.

As I look and think back on the past 23 years
and the day you left us
And went on to a new journey of your own.

Christmas Eve is a hard time for me cause
You had your first chemotherapy
And a lot of special memories that will never go away.

So I just try to get past the holiday season
and wished the long and hard days ahead
would just pass me by,
we will make it we always do.

You were such a brave and strong young boy
to try and win his fight with cancer but,
you did not win the fight, the fight won you
And at times it's still so hard
And still wonder where has all the time gone.

You will always have a special place in my heart
And my Love for you will always go on
And I still miss you so each and every day.

I miss hearing the phone to say mom I'll be home
and those big brown eyes of yours and
that little giggle and
So I will carry on
with my journey here for awhile longer.

Happy New Year and Happy Birthday!
God Bless,
Love Mom,

*Connie Currier
TCF Carson City, NV*



Love Gifts

*Betty Kalicki in memory of her daughter
Kara*

*Ruth Pintar in memory of her daughter
Catherine*

*Roberta Begley in memory of her son
Nova*

*Chuck and Jo Saulisberry in memory of their son
Tracy
and their granddaughter
Danielle*

*Suzanne Fox in memory of her son
Jeff*

*Helen Johnson in memory of her son
Justin*

*Michael and Karen Wendling in memory of their son
John*

*Kathy and Norris Schultz in memory of their daughter
April*

**... in memory of the children we love,
miss and remember every day."**

Reflecting on a New Year

The thought that another new year is upon us brings a tear to my eye and an ache to my heart as I realize this is yet another year my daughter and I will not share.

As I think back over the past years, I contemplate the subtle changes my life and personality have taken. I can't help but acknowledge the not so subtle and even drastic changes I have endured not just since the death of my daughter but since her birth.

I sit here taking "inventory" of my emotions. Not just of the pain, heartache, frustration and confusion her death has brought; but also of the love, laughter and warm memories from sharing a short two and a half years with her.

As I assess the years since Kristin's death, I often ask myself if I would relive all that pain for another two and a half years with her. The answer for myself is YES. Then a little voice inside of me says – I would relive it all for just another two and a half minutes with her.

I can say this now because I know I have "survived." I am not "over" her death and I don't feel I ever will be; but I have accepted that fact and have learned to live with my pain. I have come to a place in my life where I am in control of my grief the majority of the time as opposed to when it controlled me...

As you reflect over the past year(s) may you find a sense of peace and tranquility...

Sandra Newton (chapter leader)

TCF Coquitlam, B.C.

*Reprinted from the Newsletter of the Coquitlam, B.C. Chapter of
The Compassionate Friends, January-March 2002*

Thank You

*The Northern Nevada - Carson City chapter of The
Compassionate Friends is funded solely by contributions.
There are no dues or membership fees. The donation of
a LOVE GIFT is a very special way of remembering and
honoring our children.*

January One

New Year
new life
new hope
new expectations
new beginnings

Old Times
old fears
old places
old disappointments
old dead ends

I am aware of my resistance to change
I am aware of how reality is and how
Life Goes On
I am aware
of how I feel vulnerable

Birthdays
Deathdays
Celebrations
Anniversaries
Seeking a new future
as the haunting past returns

I AM ME.
Change is possible and difficult and
inevitable.
I LIVE ON... NOW

*Cindy Bouman
TCF Hinsdale, IL*

*Reprinted from the Newsletter of the South Bay/Los Angeles, CA
Chapter of The Compassionate Friends, January 2002*



Beating the Winter Blahs

DIAGNOSIS: Grieving parents' depression seems aggravated by the cold weather and snow.

PRESCRIPTION: Force yourself to follow one or more of the suggestions listed below when the blahs strike.

WARNING: DON'T EXPECT A MIRACLE BUT APPRECIATE THE LIFT

- Start a summer project... something for your yard from the woodshop, something to wear from your sewing machine, seedlings to transplant when the ground finally thaws ...and challenge yourself to get it done in time to use it on the first warm day.
- Redecorate anything. Creating a new look with paint or wallpaper gives you a heart-lift and your home a face-lift.
- Make it seem like Spring by treating yourself to fresh flowers. Buy a single carnation or mixed blooms... try the supermarkets... they're usually cheaper there.
- January and February are slow months for restaurants so they often run 2 for 1 dinner specials to increase their business. Watch the newspaper for those coupons and treat yourself to a night out as often as you can. Remember... ***you are worth it.***
- Go to the dollar movie often. It's a good way to unwind for a couple of hours and both your mind and body will appreciate that brief relief from tension.
- Try to make the winter easier for the birds and squirrels in your yard and you'll feel better about yourself too. They need water that isn't frozen as well as food.
- If you've got one, light a fire in the fireplace, fix a warm drink of some kind, wrap yourself in a comforter and snuggle with a book. Something funny or totally absorbing that you can get lost in.
- Take a long, hot bubble bath.
- Listen to some happy, snappy music... it'll get you moving whether you feel like it or not.
- Cook your favorite dinner for your favorite friends... you'll enjoy giving and receiving pleasure and friendship.
- There is beauty in the snow and cold... take time to see how snow transforms the landscape... take a walk by the river or in the park. Try skiing or snowmobiling. Build a snowman or an ice sculpture! Remember... ***the sun shines even in the winter, so let it warm your heart and know that better days are coming.***

*Mary Ehmann
TCF Valley Forge, PA*

Special Notices

The Carson City Park Foundation is accepting names for the Memorial Wall in Mills Park. The suggested donation is \$100.

If you move for the winter (or summer) months, please let us know your current address. This allows you to continue to receive the monthly newsletter. Email changes to kathy@tcfcarsongcity.org.



Miscarriage – The Unrecognized Tragedy

Though it's been almost three years since I experienced a miscarriage, it still evokes painful memories. My husband and I had two healthy daughters at the time and were eagerly anticipating the arrival of our third child. The little one was to complete our family.

But at 18 weeks gestation, things went awry, and we lost our wee son. I remember experiencing an overwhelming feeling of emptiness as I left the hospital without our baby. Denial, then shock, sadness and anger caused anguish over the "whys?" and "what ifs?" It wasn't long before I found out how miscarriage may be trivialized as an insignificant occurrence.

My physician, who had not been present when I delivered the baby, confronted me a few hours later. "It was a boy," I sobbed. "Oh," she remarked in an offhanded way, "I didn't see it." I vividly remember my anger toward her nonchalant manner and the way she referred to him as an "it." *Don't you know that was our baby, our little son?* I thought. *Please don't minimize our loss.*

"You have other children at home, don't you?" she continued. *Yes, I was screaming inside, but don't you realize that each child is unique and special in his or her own right? Having two at home doesn't in any way lessen the sorrow I feel for this baby.* "Go home and enjoy your summer," she added later. "You can start trying again in another three months." Enjoy my summer?! This miscarriage had literally knocked me off my feet. There I was, an adult mother of two, reduced to tears whenever I saw a pregnant woman or new baby. (They seemed to be everywhere I went!) There was no denying the intense emotions I felt. My husband and daughters, as well, were trying to deal with the loss in their individual ways. Even though I tried, it was not an enjoyable summer. Life didn't automatically revert back to normal.

Yet my heartache was misunderstood not only by my physician, but by others as well. I was given the impression that it was inappropriate and even abnormal to be mourning. There was a conflict between the way I actually felt and the way society expected me to feel. I began to think I must be losing it.

Fortunately, I had a deep need to find out all could about miscarriage. I read avidly, attended support group meetings and talked to other women who had been through a similar experience. I was relieved to find out that my reactions were healthy and normal. Until then, I didn't know that I was going through the grieving process. The tears, along with the questioning, the heart-to-heart talks with my family and friends, and the memorial service to say goodbye to our baby all helped me to heal.

A loss is a loss. Just because it's named "miscarriage" doesn't mean that it's insignificant. Nothing has ever affected me so deeply... Though the deep sorrow I felt has since subsided, I realize that I'll never completely "get over" him. There are still times that I long to hold our son, to watch him grow, to love him... I know I'll never forget.

*Sara Winslow, Bereavement Magazine,
Colorado Springs, CO*

Breeze

I feel the winds of your grace,
I feel the breeze of your breath.

Whenever a soft breeze touches my face,
I know it's your breath.

Whenever a golden ray focuses in my eye,
I know it's your stare.

Whenever a melody lingers in my ear,
I know it's your voice.

Whenever a butterfly lands on my shoulder,
I know it's your touch.

Whenever a smile spreads on my face,
I know it's your smile reflecting on mine.

Whenever or wherever I come or go,
You'll be there alongside me.

*Reprinted from the Newsletter of the San Diego, CA
Chapter of The Compassionate Friends, January 1995*

The Little Things

Often, even the simple tasks of every day living seem to drain every ounce of one's energy. Remember going to the grocery store even months after your child's death and the feeling you had as you passed up his or her favorite cereal? Or watching another child the same age as yours in a restaurant and trying to swallow your food – you probably didn't even taste it. Or hearing a certain song in public and fighting back the tears? Sometimes even getting through the day in your own house made you feel as if you'd run the marathon and it left you in worse shape. You probably never dreamed that doing the family laundry could make you cry or that getting a piece of mail in your child's name could take your breath away.

Even the best of friends and families can't possibly know the strength you must summon day after day after day. We shouldn't expect them to understand completely, but it does get lonely. Perhaps this quote puts it in a nutshell:

One sad thing about this world is that the acts that take the most out of you are usually the ones that other people will never know about.

*Ann Tyler
TCF Sacramento Valley, CA*

You're Still Here

At the finest level of my being
 You're still with me.
At that level beyond sight
We talk and laugh with each other.
We still touch each other
 On a level beyond touch.
We share time together in a place
Where time stands still.
We are still together
 On a level called love.
But I cry alone for you
 In a place called reality.
How I miss you, Nathan.

*Richard Lepinsky, TCF Winnipeg, Manitoba
Reprinted from the Newsletter of the Kansas City, MO/KS
Chapter of The Compassionate Friends, March 2005*

A Tribute

I think of you in silence,
My feelings seldom show,
But how it hurts to lose you
No one will ever know.

I hope there is eternal life,
So we can meet again.
I not only lost my brother,
I lost my very best friend.

The reason you left so early
I'll never understand why.
I just wish I'd known
You were never coming back
Cause I would have said
good-bye.

*Martha King
TCF Concord, NH
Reprinted from the Newsletter of the South Lake Tahoe, CA
Chapter of The Compassionate Friends, January-February 2002*

Roses and Memories

Roses have thorns, but we learn to be wary of them. As we hold a rose, sometimes unexpectedly a thorn pierces our flesh and tiny drops of blood appear and we are wounded. But we learn to handle this flower gently, carefully, so as to avoid the sting of the thorns. Warily, we clasp the rose stem as we bring the beautiful and fragrant blossom closer in order to scrutinize in detail this lovely creation and to inhale its fragrance deeply.

So, too, it is with our memories. There are sad ones that we skirt gingerly, as we handle anew. But as we learn to deal with these, just as we become used to handling our rose, we can bring memories of good times and days and years of past happiness more fully into our hearts. Thus, the most cherished moments of the past become like the beauty of the rose – something to fill us with a sense of wonder and a feeling of thankfulness that God has given us some very precious days in our lives, just as He graced the stem of thorns with the radiant crown we call the rose.

*Nancy Bellinger
TCF Milwaukee, WI*

The Myth

Many devastating experiences face newly bereaved parents – none of which have they been prepared.

The loss of a child is a catastrophic loss – the cruelest in nature. To that, unfortunately, are added other demands, among them: identifying the body that was your child – or watching helplessly while your child's life slips away from you.

This is followed by the need to select a funeral home, casket, services, plot, etc., all tasks to which we gave no heed previously. If we did think of them, fleetingly, it was for ourselves – not our children. To have to attend to such chores at a time when the sense of loss engulfs our being in grief or numbness is inhuman. Too often a further burden we carry is the quiet but persistent notion that somehow, someday we should have been able to prevent this awful act. After all – isn't that what parents are supposed to do - to protect their children? How could we have failed? What more could we have done to prevent it?

I truly believe that, whether we realize it or not, the feeling that we have failed, often causes us to direct our anger outward towards God, or the doctors, etc., in our unconscious effort to reduce the guilt we feel. If, after all, God (or the doctors, etc.) were responsible, then we may be less so. So we ventilate against others in the search for self-absolution.

This projection of guilt is short-lived. We return again and again to blame ourselves UNLESS we accept the fact that parenthood does not ensure omnipotence; UNLESS we come to the realization that as parents we are not all-knowing and all-powerful; UNLESS we understand that our control over our children's welfare is as limited as our control over the events of our own lives.

When we can achieve this level of knowledge, we are finally free of that debilitation myth of the power of parents. The grieving process can proceed and bereaved parents need no longer be burdened with guilt unfairly self-directed. We are free to mourn, to regret, to heal, to move toward a new "normalcy" of life, to help others meet us there.

Pearl Mann

TCF Louisville KY

Reprinted from the Newsletter of the Valley Forge, PA Chapter of The Compassionate Friends

What Do You See?

When you look down on us
What do you see?
Do you see how we are missing you?
Are you missing me?

Maybe you see Riley with his toys all on the floor
Or maybe baby Zoey crawling from the bedroom door

You probably saw Lindsay
Wrapping all day long
Everyone's loving support
Is continuous and strong

Did you feel the visitors,
Who sat upon your grave?
Bringing flowers and ornaments
That was very brave

I know you see us from above
We can feel you everywhere
First holiday without you was very hard
There is nothing that can compare

I hope you don't feel sadness
When you look down and see
PJ, you never leave our hearts and thoughts
That is the place you'll always be

Natalie Sanchez

In memory of Patrick "PJ" Johnson,

March 21, 1979 – September 11, 2010

Written by PJ's niece, Natalie, and lovingly shared.

Reprinted from "We Need Not Walk Alone," the Newsletter of the National Chapter of The Compassionate Friends, Autumn 2011

Welcome New Members

We welcome new members to our chapter of The Compassionate Friends. We're sorry you have a need to be with us, but we hope you feel you have found a safe place to share your grief and will return. It often takes a few meetings to feel at ease in a group setting. Please try attending three meetings before deciding if TCF is for you. *Each meeting is different and the next one might be the one that really helps.*

Meetings are generally held the last Tuesday of every month, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m., at the Carson Tahoe Cancer Resource Center, 1535 Medical Parkway, Carson City, NV.

Some Ideas for Creating Your Own Memorials

1. Prepare a photograph album and have copies made for each member of the Family. Take time to share memories with each other.
2. Create a wreath or shadow box decorated with mementoes of your child's life. Let each person select something special to put in it.
3. If your loved one wrote stories or poems, have these printed and bound for family and friends. Make tapes of them singing or playing an instrument.
4. Jewelry can be created using the child's birthstone. Locketts can be worn with pictures enclosed. Charms can be engraved with names and dates.
5. Order personalized license plates with the name of the child.
6. Send family and friends packets of flower seeds (Forget-Me-Nots?) to be planted on the anniversary of your child's birth or death.
7. Decorate the church with flowers on your child's birthday, anniversary of death or holidays.
8. Transfer photos, footprints, ultrasound pictures, etc. to a shirt with fabric transfer medium & a copy of the object. Or paint your own shirt with stick figure drawings & your child's name and dates.
9. Keep a journal of your experience. Someday you might want to collect some of your writings and bound them into a booklet to give to family and friends.
10. Donate time or money to support groups. Clothes and child care items may be donated to outreach programs or crisis centers. Adopt a family; provide a meal or child's gift. Is there a local Ronald McDonald House you can help make happy?
11. Create a quilt using pieces of your child's clothing, with panels signifying events that were meaningful & special interests of the child.
12. Release a balloon tied with "love notes." Scatter rose petals into the sea.
13. Decorate a room at your church or a children's hospital. Buy hymn books, medical equipment or toys.
14. Volunteer with senior citizens, very sick children, or special-needs children. Make a wish come true.
15. Start a bank account for the extended family to donate money into for flowers and upkeep of family graves for years in the future.
16. Keep precious items in a decorated memory box, trunk or book created for this purpose. Include toys, bulletins, letters, blankets, clothes, photos, cards, poems, and/or journals. Photos of the mother while pregnant or an ultrasound picture can be very special.
17. Write about your child for a newsletter on special days.
18. Continue to sign the child's name on family cards. If not comfortable with that, use a special "symbol," a sticker or drawing, for your child (angel, dove, rainbow, heart, flower).

Reprinted from Pen-Parents Fall 1994. Compiled from ideas submitted by Maribeth Doerr, Jule Ann Martin, Sara Tamurrino, Kim Johnson, Jodi Haley, Ruth Zschoche, Laurie Zak and Dana Gensler.

We are glad you came - Do come again!

If you are receiving our newsletter for the first time it is because someone has told us that it might be of some help to you. We cordially invite you to attend our monthly meeting. There are no dues or fees. You need not speak one word. Attending your first meeting does take courage, but our parents who do attend find a comforting network of support, friendship and understanding that only friends who have "been there" can give. We are not the only answer to your grief, but we can help. So please come and join us.

Grandparents

In our involvement in the grief over the death of our child, we fail to realize that grandparents also grieve. Although not in the same way or to the same extent we do, they do grieve. Their grief is two-sided, one for the child who is dear to them and the other for their own child who is suffering. Just as the parent does, the grandparent loses his future. One of the joys of grandparenthood is the knowledge that through grandchildren they achieve immortality. It is expected that their name will be carried on through them. At the death of their grandchild, that branch of their family tree is cut off. What should have been will not be. In cases of an only child, there will be no future generation. Just as for the parent, the family of the grandparent will never be complete again. They, too, feel the empty place at family gatherings. We bereaved parents must consider the needs of the grandparents and at the same time be open and honest with them about our needs. We must let them know how they can help us, but at the same time we must be aware that they, too, need help. Mutual sharing of feelings between bereaved parents and grandparents will be helpful to both in the recovery process. The sharing not only of painful feelings but also happy memories of the child with grandparent can be helpful for both and it can also create a deeper relationship in the family.

*Margaret Gerner
TCF St Louis, MO*

Old Grief

Older grief is gentler.
It's about sudden tears swept in by a strand of music.
It's about haunting echoes of first pain, at anniversaries.
It's about feeling his presence for an instant one day
while I'm dusting his room.
It's about early pictures that invite me to fold him in my
arms again.
It's about memories blown in on wisps of wood smoke
and sea scents.
Older grief is about aching in gentler ways, rarer longing,
less engulfing fire.
Older grief is about searing pain wrought into
tenderness.

*Linda Zelenka TCF Orange Park-Jacksonville, FL
Reprinted from the Newsletter of the Lehigh Valley, PA
Chapter of The Compassionate Friends, December 1995*

Listening

Please listen to me.
Hear what I'm saying.
Not just the words that come from my
mouth, for I can talk
and not really say what I mean
Words can cover up, a mask,
so listen carefully.
I'm crying for help.
My heart speaks; pay attention.
It takes courage to share with you
and let you see me as I am.
It takes time to drop the facade,
so stay quiet and listen.
Listen with more than your ears.
Listen until I've said what I ache to say.
If you rush me with good advice
and tell me not to worry, I'll clam up.
I'll think you don't really understand.
I'll sink deep into myself and hide.
So please...
Accept my grief and take a share.
Don't push me aside as if it doesn't matter.
Be here with me.
And cry with me.
And then I'll know you've truly listened
and heard and understood.
Then... I'll be comforted.

*Carolyn Hooper
TCF Pawtucket, MA
Reprinted from the Newsletter of the Kansas City, MO/KS
Chapter of The Compassionate Friends, February 2005*



Expectations

Expectations play a large role in our grief. Certainly, expecting to feel better, and to not always hurt is helpful, 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.

*Margaret Gerner
TCF St. Louis, MO*

Suggestions For New Year’s Resolutions:

- I will try not to expect so much understanding from others who have not walked the same path.
- I will be kind to myself – health, appearance, and time to be alone.
- I will remember that I owe it to myself to try to enjoy life.
- I will try to be more considerate of my remaining loved ones. They too are coping and deserve my help.
- I resolve, in memory of my loved one, to do something to help someone else, for I know that in doing this my loved one will live on – through me.

*Adapted from The Compassionate Friends Newsletter of
Mobile, AL – The HOPE Line, Jan. 1990
Reprinted from the Newsletter of the South Lake Tahoe, CA
Chapter of The Compassionate Friends, January-February 2000*



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS**
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Sign up for Compassionate Friends E-Newsletter

The Compassionate Friends National Office publishes a monthly e-newsletter designed to keep you up-to-date on what's going on with the organization and its more than 625 chapters.

Published once a month (as well as occasional special editions), the e-newsletter includes information on such things as TCF National Conferences, the Walk to Remember, the Worldwide Candle Lighting, regional conferences, and other events of importance.

Each e-newsletter also includes a story specially selected from a past edition of We Need Not Walk Alone, the national magazine of The Compassionate Friends. For the siblings, the e-newsletter features a past question and answer column by Dr. Mary Paulson.

All you have to do to receive The Compassionate Friends e-newsletter is sign up for it online by visiting The Compassionate Friends national website at www.compassionatefriends.org, and clicking on e-newsletter at the top of the Home page.

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