



***The Compassionate Friends***  
***Rochester Chapter***  
**Supporting Family After a Child Dies**

May / June 2017 [www.tcfrochester.org](http://www.tcfrochester.org)



**Borrowed Hope**

Lend me your hope for a while  
I seem to have mislaid mine.  
Loss and the hopeless feelings accompany me daily.  
Pain and confusion are my companions.  
I know not where to turn.  
Looking ahead to the future times  
Does not bring forth images of renewed hope.  
I see mirthless times, pain filled days, and more tragedy.  
Lend me your hope for a while.  
I seem to have mislaid mine.  
Hold my hand and hug me.  
Listen to all my ramblings.  
I need to unleash the pain and let it tumble out.  
Recovery seems so far distant.  
The road to healing, a long and lonely one.  
Stand by me. Offer me your presence.  
Your ears and your love.  
Acknowledge my pain, it is so real and ever present.  
I am overwhelmed  
With sad and conflicting thoughts.  
Lend me your hope for a while.  
A time will come when I will heal.  
And I will lend my renewed hope to others.

**Eloise Cole**  
**TCF, Phoenix AZ**



### Wisdom

As bereaved mothers, we know the joys and the pain of Mother's Day. Through the life and death of our child, we have loved much and lost much. We are far better people because of our children. Our wisdom surpasses anything we could have considered possible before our child died, for now we know loss, the darkest places of the human psyche, the deepest valley of the soul and the depths of insurmountable pain. This wisdom was not chosen by us. It is, nevertheless, our wisdom and experience to share with others as we choose. It is ours to keep in our minds as we live a life without our child. It is the purest wisdom one finds on this side of the moon.

We will continue to learn much about life as we live on after our child has gone. We were active participants in the lives of our children; we must be active participants in the mourning and grief following the deaths of our children. From this experience we grow ... it is painful growth, but it is absolute growth of mind and spirit. As our growth increases exponentially, we find that wondrously, we have come full circle.

One day we choose to focus on the life of our child. When that day comes, as it does for each of us, we are released from the darkness and despair and gently enter into the ambient glow of the light hope. Tentatively we take our first steps into the light. Then gradually we move with more confidence. The light glows brighter as we accept the healing it provides to us. As we heal, we reach out, we return to life, we work a little harder, love more deeply, and give freely to others. Our perspective turns outward. We will still reflect, but we will not be enveloped by our grief. We will laugh again, we will smile. We will even act spontaneously on occasion. We will live ... live in the shining light of hope.

And so, gentle mother, as you mark Mothers Day, think of your child's life. Think of love. Think of times passed and those to come. Think of your journey. Think about your vast wisdom. Think about hope. You are a remarkable work in progress. Think about that.

**Peace to you on Mother's Day,  
Annette Mennen Baldwin  
In memory of my son, Todd Mennen  
TCF, Katy TX**

### SOMETIMES ...

"Sometimes, I still don't believe it,"  
My husband said to me  
We had gone to bed, said our goodnights  
And were resting comfortably.  
My reply was short and to the point,  
I simply said, "I know,"  
Though it's been eight years since you have died  
Chip, we miss you so.  
The memories of our life with you  
Are treasures that we share.  
For nineteen years we loved you well  
While you were in our care  
So once again we said goodnight.  
But before this we did pray.  
This was a very poignant night.  
This night was Father's Day.

**Nancy McKeaneey  
In Memory of my son, Chip  
TCF, North Penn PA**



**Bereaved Parents**

Different ages  
 Different stages  
 Different issues

Same pain  
 Daily strain  
 Occasional tissues

Our children have died  
 Often is all we know  
 A fact we fear to hide

Despite our ever-present woe  
 We live with pride  
 Though broken-hearted  
 To love, remember, and grow

**Victor Montemurro  
 TCF, Medford NY**

**Griefscape**

Shadows play with the light here  
 And no matter the age gone  
 Our arms ache  
 Wishing to cradle our child.

This land we now inhabit is  
 Vast empty plain  
 Barrenness of the poles  
 Harshness of deserts.

Grief rules  
 Taking all color with it  
 Leaving us bruised and battered  
 Lost hopes and dreams  
 Dark skies.

**Melissa Anne Schroeter  
 TCF, Rockland County NY**

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“Grief is complex stuff. It can impose a cruel trick on us all. It begins when death barges into our lives and takes our loved one from our physical grasp. It then leaves us in pain, which in turn causes a multiple array of grief reactions. Finally, because our memories are all we have, the recollections easily become blended with our pain and grief.

You can overcome this cruel trick by doing all you can to compile and retain lasting memories of this wonderful, amazing person whose love will never die. By now, you’ve likely heard of the many ways that you can keep your loved one with you still: creating a picture album, writing the person’s live story, planting a tree, giving to others in your loved one’s name, building something, producing a video, making a quilt. As you gradually experience the many levels of diminishing pain while simultaneously strengthening the memories, you will find that, despite this sad loss, you are getting a little better.”

The Cruel Trick of Grief, Bob Baugher, PhD

“My wish for all our TCF members is that each of you will wrap yourselves in the love that was, is, and will always be your child, hold that love close. Don’t let the first thing you think about each day be how your child died. Let it be how your child lived.

“How Your Child Lived”, Pat Loder



### **Living With A Broken Heart**

I spend some time each day wondering  
How different my life might be.  
Why so many people that I love  
Are no longer here with me.

Mothers, Fathers, a sister, then our son  
Wonderful friends, beloved pets, always another one.  
I know where there is love, there will also be pain.  
The sadness will continue until we're together again.

When the phone rang that particular morning,  
I was sure it was a call from Heaven.  
The ashes of my best friend, Gabby, were ready.  
It was Valentine's Day. (The time was 11:11.)

The loss of each one has left its mark.  
Their legacy is what they gave to those they left below.  
"It's not what you take when you leave this world,  
It's what you leave behind when you go."

How many more breaths will I be allowed to take  
Before it's my time to leave this world?  
How many breaks can one heart take  
Before it doesn't beat any more?



**Tom Murphy**  
**Greater Cincinnati TCF, East Chapter OH**  
**In Memory of my son, Brennan Murphy**

**Support Compassionate Friends Rochester, Inc. when you shop at: [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/16-1129742)**  
<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/16-1129742>

Pat Wheeler has some butterfly themed sweatshirts, t-shirts, and totes from the PA regional TCF Conference. \$15, \$10, \$10 respectively.  
If you are interested, please see Pat.

*We want to share this support group information:*

**Face 2 Face Friendship Group, Rochester NY.** [face2facerochester.com](http://face2facerochester.com) Providing support &

hope to families coping with miscarriage, stillbirth, & infant loss.

**Healing after Loss to Addiction** A bereavement support group focused on living and healing after loss related to drug use or overdose. Please call Lifetime Care for more information ... 585-475-8800.

**Bereaved Parents.** Bereavedparentsusa.org A national non-profit self-help group that offers support, understanding, compassion, and hope to bereaved parents, grandparents, & siblings. Shared by Pat Loomis.

**Alive Alone.** Alivealone.org. Support for now childless parents. Shared by National TCF.

**“Healing the Grieving Heart” Web Radio Show.** Compassionatefriends.org (left side of the home page, link to “Healing the Grieving Heart”). Live shows are at 11:00 am on Thursdays. The archived shows are available 24 hours per day.

### Love Gifts

*Support for the meeting on March 14th was donated by  
Ed & Colleen Dobrowski, in loving memory of son Jason Dobrowski  
Paul & Linda Valint, in loving memory of son Paul Valint III*

*Support for the meeting on April 11<sup>th</sup> was donated by  
Arif & Tina Motiwala, in loving memory of son Matthew Motiwala*

*Support for the meeting on April 25, was donated by  
Bonnie Corbett, in loving memory of daughter Kelly Lynne Forrest*



**Upcoming Event:*****The Compassionate Friends Rochester Chapter Balloon Release***

***Tuesday, June 6, 2017 7:00 pm First Unitarian Church of Rochester (our TCF Chapter location) 220 Winton Road South Rochester, New York Flyer Attached***

**Please note change: This is the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday in June**

**Meeting Location:**

First Unitarian Church, 220 Winton Road South  
Rochester, New York

**Meeting Days :**

Tuesday the 9th & Tuesday the 23rd (May)

Tues the 6<sup>th</sup> Balloon Release & Tues the 27th (June)

7:00 P.M. to 7:15 P.M. - social

7:15 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. – meeting

**Contacts:**

Mary Ann Dobbins 585-872-0566

**TCF Regional Coordinator:**

Jacque Edwards-Mitchell 718-451-0814

**TCF National :**

877-969-0010 or

[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

Send newsletter inputs or web comments to:

Joan Carafos, [jcarafos@photikon.com](mailto:jcarafos@photikon.com)

If you would like to contribute to our Compassionate Friends Chapter, please forward your Love Gifts and Donations to:  
The Compassionate Friends of Rochester  
C/O 3446 Rush Mendon Road Honeoye Falls, NY 14472  
Please make checks payable to: The Compassionate Friends of Rochester, New York

Sincere Thanks!

To receive this newsletter via e-mail, please contact  
Alice Torres at [alice3970@gmail.com](mailto:alice3970@gmail.com)

***Welcome New Friends***

*At nearly every meeting we welcome new members to our group, always with mixed emotions. We are glad you found us, but we are so sorry for the circumstances that bring us together. We understand your pain; we hope our unconditional friendship and understanding will help you through your grief.*

*Attending a meeting for the first two or three times takes courage, but for many it is the first real step toward healing. It may seem overwhelming, so we encourage you to come to several meetings to give yourself a chance to become comfortable.*

***Rochester Chapter TCF Mission:***

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. Adopted 2-25-12