Dear Compassionate Friends,

Recently we have learned of newly bereaved parents from a number of different sources. Our son told us about work colleagues whose child had died. Our pastor shared about a funeral he had performed for the family of a young child and the deep sorrow he felt as he ministered to her family. In a recent online meeting one of the participants requested prayer for friends whose adult son had died that week from COVID-19. Each time we learn of bereaved parents, our hearts ache with the remembrance of our own deep grief after the death of our daughter. We feel compelled to do what we can to reach out with encouragement and words of caring to others who are hurting as we did.

Shortly before the beginning of the pandemic, our grandchildren spent the night. Driving home from dropping everyone off at school, I was reflecting on some of the unique needs of girls compared to those of boys. Without warning I was overcome with grief, sad that I never really had the chance to fully experience nurturing a girl since our only daughter had died when she was very young. I was surprised at the strength of my feelings. We are many years beyond the intensity of early grief or even that constant underlying ache of grief that may last for years. Then I saw this quote written by another bereaved parent, “Those of us who are farther into the steps of grief know that the pain we feel is not the sharp pain we once felt and newly bereaved parents are feeling now, but the pain will always be with us. It can resurface, triggered by a song, a memory of your child, a car, a hairstyle, letting us know it will never go completely away.” Anna is part of who we are. Our grief at her loss is also part of who we are. And that is OK.

Sincerely,
Carol and Jerry Webb
Mother’s Day Dread

Mother’s Day for me is just as hard as Father’s Day, but for different reasons. It is always difficult for me to see my wife struggle with not being a mother to a living child.

Her only experience with being a mother is the loss of two babies. I know it’s something she thinks about every day. We both try to move through our days wishing for something different, something more meaningful than regular “life” stuff.

We both know something is missing but we know we can’t change it, so we do it again tomorrow.

We go through the motions and most days, that’s enough. But Mother’s Day isn’t one of those days.

Mother’s Day is generally a somber day. We try to stay away from all of the mothers in the neighborhood that are excited about the break they “deserve” when their husband takes the kids for the day. I know they come from a different perspective, but that doesn’t mean we want any part of it. In fact, we find it annoying. We would love to spend the day with our children.

As a dad and husband, I have no idea how to handle this day. Acknowledgment of the obvious with a hug or a day of celebration with a simple gift? Seems weird to me to tell someone “Happy Mother’s Day when we both know it isn’t.

As we approach the dreaded “day.” I want to wish all grieving moms (and dads) a Peaceful Mother’s Day.

From the South Bay, Louisiana Chapter Newsletter

Love Gifts

As parents and other family members find healing and hope within the group or from this newsletter, they often wish to make a Love Gift to help with the work of our chapter. This is a way to remember a beloved child, and to help other parents who mourn the loss of their child.

Thanks to:

William & Diane Stock in memory of their granddaughter, Claire Glassford

Donations are used to provide postage for the newsletter and mailings to newly bereaved families. Some of the love gifts are used for materials to share with first time attendees at our meetings or to purchase books for our library. Our thanks to the many families who provide love gifts so that the work of reaching out to bereaved parents and families can continue. If you would like to send a donation or love gift, please send it or to our Chapter Treasurer, Doug Scott, 6550 Madison Street, Davenport, Iowa 52806. Checks should be made out to The Compassionate Friends. Your gifts are tax deductible.
My Name is Mom!

Hello, my name is Mom, Mother, Mommy or Mama, which ever you prefer (just pick one, I love them all). My name did not change when my child died. I will always remain the mom to this wonderful child even though you cannot see her. I cannot change this nor would I ever want to. I am so proud of my title, it is something I have and will continue to cherish. Sure, I am known by other names, my name given to me by my parents and my married name, but I adore the name of Mom. Yes, my child died. A parent’s worst nightmare, a fear that hovers over a caregiver every day from the first thought of bringing forth new life. Whether your child is lost before it’s first breath or after years of living in this world, the pain of this loss is more than anyone can imagine. I am lucky enough to have had each of these titles spoken to me in love throughout seventeen and a half years by my daughter.

When Kim was little, I was Mommy. In her early years, I became Mama. The teenage years changed the name to Mom. Whenever cards or notes came home from school, or when compositions were written, the name was a more formal, Mother. When introduced to another parent, it is “Kim’s Mom” or “Paul’s Mom” or even “Jason and Jamie’s Step-mom.” Whatever the form my appellation, I never tired of hearing it or seeing it in print. My daughter’s voice may be silent now but I can still hear her in my memory.

During my grief process, I have tried to remember the first time my baby girl said, “Mama.” I will never forget the warm glowing feeling of hearing her say, “I love you, Mommy,” as she would go off to school. I hold in my heart a special memory of my beautiful daughter, going off to her special dance at school, calling back to me, “See you later, Love ya, Mom.”

As far back as I can remember, I wanted more than anything else in the world, to be a Mom. The most difficult and demanding job that exists, but I wanted the job. I planned to be a parent even before I had dolls to pretend with. As time consuming and involved as this job is, I loved it and worked hard at the task of raising my children without the benefit of an instruction book. I may never know which of us learned, cared, cried, laughed or prayed more than the other, the vote is still out on that. Yes, my name is Mom. I will not stop being Kim’s Mom, there is just no way that can ever change.

My remaining child, my son, still calls me Mom, which is always music to my ears—I am his Mom too. I hold my title as proudly as any member of a royal family may hold onto theirs. Along with all of my memories, I hold my position as Mother in top priority and very close to my heart. If I close my eyes, from the quiet portion of my soul and out of the stillness can come an echo of a voice calling, “I love you, Mom.” “I love you too!,” is my response, the same as it always has been, but now I don’t have to say it out loud every time. I feel Kim can hear me even if it is just my heart sending her the message.

Bonnie Harris-Tibbs
TCF/Richmond, Virginia
TCF's Facebook Page is a proven support area for bereaved family members to come and talk about their grief. Stop by and visit with some of our more than 120,000 Facebook members. Please join our TCF/USA Facebook family. Tell us about your child, sibling, grandchild, or other loved one and find support in the words and concern of others. Check out the Discussion Boards! Every day we also provide thought provoking questions, grief quotes, and links to grief stories, as well as TCF news such as updates on the National Conference, Worldwide Candle Lighting, and other TCF programs.

Closed Facebook Groups: The Compassionate Friends offers several closed Facebook groups to connect with other bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. The groups supply support, encouragement, and friendship. Recently added groups include Men in Grief; Loss to Long Term Illness; Loss of a Step Child; Loss of a Child with Special Needs.

The Compassionate Friends
National Newsletter
One complimentary copy is sent to bereaved families who contact the national office: The Compassionate Friends, Inc., P.O. Box 3696, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696 (877)969-0010.
Email: NationalOffice@compassionatefriends.org
Website: www.compassionatefriends.org
Visit the sibling resource page at www.compassionatefriends.org.
It is also available to read online without charge.

e-Newsletter Now Available! An e-Newsletter is now available from the National Office! The monthly e-Newsletter contains notes and happenings of interest to all TCFers. To subscribe to the e-Newsletter, visit the TCF National Website home page and click on the Register for TCF e-Newsletter Link. This newsletter is available to everyone.

About The Compassionate Friends

The Compassionate Friends is a nonprofit, self-help organization offering friendship and support to families who have experienced the death of a child. Founded in England in 1969, the first U.S. chapter was organized in 1972. Since then, 635 chapters have been established. The current Quad City Chapter was formed in 1987.

TCF National Office
P.O. Box 3696
Oak Brook, Illinois 60522-3696
Toll Free (877)969-0010
http://www.quadcitytcf.org

Mission Statement
The mission of The Compassionate Friends Quad City Area Chapter is that 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.

Vision Statement
The vision statement of The Compassionate Friends is that everyone who needs us will find us, and everyone who finds us will be helped.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Printed Resources for Grieving Parents &amp; Siblings</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TCF Online Support Community</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>TCF’s national website offers “virtual chapters” through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The sessions last an hour and have trained moderators present. For more information, visit <a href="http://www.compassionatefriends.org">www.compassionatefriends.org</a> and click &quot;Online Support&quot; in the &quot;Resources&quot; column.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TCF’s Grief Related Webinars</strong></td>
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<td>Held monthly, the webinars are on various grief topics with well-known experts in the field. To reserve a seat for the next webinar (or to view the previous month's webinar), go to <a href="http://www.compassionatefriends.org/News_Events/Special-Events/Webinars.aspx">http://www.compassionatefriends.org/News_Events/Special-Events/Webinars.aspx</a>. Webinars are being archived in TCF’s Webinar Library, accessible from the webinar page.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TCF National Magazine</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>We Need Not Walk Alone</em> is available to read online without charge. Go to <a href="http://www.compassionatefriends.org">www.compassionatefriends.org</a> and review the options at the top of the page. TCF e-Newsletter is also available from the National Office — to subscribe to the e-Newsletter, visit the TCF National Website home page and click on the Register for TCF e-Newsletter link.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grief Materials</strong></td>
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<td>Looking for a particular grief book? Look no further than the Centering Corporation, the official recommended grief resource center of The Compassionate Friends. With the largest selection of grief-related resources in the United States, Centering Corporation will probably have just about anything you’re looking for — or they’ll be able to tell you where to find it. Call Centering Corporation for a catalog at 402.553.1200 or visit their website at <a href="http://www.centering.org">www.centering.org</a>. When ordering, be sure to mention you are with The Compassionate Friends and all shipping charges will be waived.</td>
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<td><strong>Amazon.com</strong></td>
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<td>When making a purchase from Amazon.com, enter through the link on the home page of TCF national website and a portion of the purchase price is donated to further the mission of TCF. This donation applies to all purchases made at Amazon.com.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Previous Newsletter Editions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Looking for more articles or previous copies of this newsletter? Go to <a href="http://www.bethany-">www.bethany-</a> qc.org for copies of the last several years of The Quad City Chapter of TCF-QC Chapter Newsletter in Adobe Acrobat format.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Alive Alone</strong></td>
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<td>A newsletter for bereaved parents whose only or all children are deceased. A self-help network and publication to promote healing and communication can be reached at <a href="http://www.alivealone.org">www.alivealone.org</a> or <a href="mailto:alivealone@bright.net">alivealone@bright.net</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bereaved Parents’ Magazine</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Online articles and poems. Reminder emails are sent notifying readers when new issues are available. <a href="https://bereavedparentsusa.org">https://bereavedparentsusa.org</a>.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Our Newsletter</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Published one to three times per year, when there is content to make a balanced issue. It usually contains 30 pages of personal stories and updates, poetry, subsequent birth announcements, and any new topical articles and information. Currently it is being distributed electronically (PDF), but a printout is available to anyone without email access. To request a sample copy, please email Jean Kollantai at <a href="mailto:climb@climb-support.org">climb@climb-support.org</a>. Include your full name, your location, and your reason for interest.</td>
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My Child Died

According to the American Cancer Society, about 600 adolescents, aged 15 to 19, die from cancer each year. In 2017, my daughter, Ana, was one of them.

Ana was sick for four and a half years. During most of that time, even as her cancer progressed, I didn’t think that she was going to die from her disease. I thought that she would beat it. I thought that her tenacious will to live would help her overcome the odds, and that scientists or doctors would invent something miraculous to shrink her tumors and restore her health. When it eventually became obvious that a miracle wasn’t going to happen for Ana, I turned my focus to helping her die.

Her death pulled the rug out from under my life. It shattered my understanding of the presumed natural order of things. It left me with the dilemma of trying to make my way in a world that made absolutely no sense to me. It robbed me of my ability to feel joy, at least for a while. Living without Ana wasn’t something I’d ever considered. When I did let myself think about it — her empty room, my empty days — my mind recoiled from the thought.

But it happened, the worst possible outcome — I woke up one morning in a world without Ana. I had to get out of bed, had to do laundry, had to try and function for my husband and my remaining daughter. I had to walk Ana’s dog and feed her ancient gerbil (a creature, to my unending chagrin, that had outlived his own life expectancy by nearly triple the length). There were a million everyday scenarios that required me to move through life as if a piece of my heart wasn’t permanently gone. Those early days of living in a post-Ana world felt like an affront.

Back then, I had an almost obsessive need to tell whoever crossed my path that my daughter died. “Don’t you understand?” I wanted yell, “None of this matters because my daughter died!” (by “this” I meant everything — work, life, the upcoming season of Game of Thrones and everything in between). Sometimes I did (and still do) tell total strangers — I blurt it out or I slip it into an email, because I want them to know. I need them to know. My child died. That happened. I am here and she is not.

I barely worked for months after I lost her. I spent my time walking outside and watching birds. I searched for her, for any sign she was trying to communicate. I stared up at the sky constantly. I outsourced most of my work to subcontractors who kept my consulting business going while I drifted through the days in a fog of numbness and grief.

Back then, most people who knew me knew that Ana had died. I’d been blogging about her for years. I also told everyone — and I mean everyone — her story. Bank tellers, a rabbi I’d just met, prospective new clients, my dental hygienist, a life insurance broker, unsuspecting cashiers and the mechanic who fixes my car. I told them all. It made for some very awkward moments.

I eventually learned to suppress the urge to tell every single person I met about Ana. But I’ll never stop saying her name and when someone asks how many children I have, I will never hesitate in my response. “I have two daughters,” I will tell the unsuspecting questioner, “One living and one who died from cancer.” It’s probably
harder to hear that than to say it.

The fact that I’m no longer telling everyone about Ana could be construed as some measure of progress. But, from where I’m standing, it doesn’t feel like much. It’s taken me two years to get to a place where, sometimes, I feel almost okay, but this wound hasn’t healed, not by a long shot.

I think part of my compulsion to tell people about Ana, and about the long, painful trajectory of her illness, is that sometimes I still don’t quite believe it all happened. Ana was a healthy, vibrant child before she got sick. She’d never been hospitalized. She hated needles and doctors. She loved cats and swimming. She was supposed to grow up. I had no idea how lucky I was before cancer came into my home and took up residence. It’s appalling, really, the assumptions I’d made about cancer and terminal illness and grief, before I was dragged into this darkness.

I haven’t fully emerged from a place of despair. I probably never will. There are people I knew before Ana got sick that I don’t see or talk to anymore. I’ve withdrawn from them, for the most part, and in some cases, they’ve withdrawn from me. I can’t really blame them. I’m a completely different person now. The version of myself that existed before I lost Ana, died with her. I am a more fearful mother, afraid of losing Emily, my remaining daughter. I am always bracing for catastrophe. When I drop Emily off at school each morning, I push away visions of a gun-wielding kids bursting into her homeroom, erasing her from my life.

When something hurts — her head, her hip, her arm — my head fills with visions of tumors growing on her bones or in her brain. In a little less than two years, she’ll be driving, and I will have to squash the images of fiery car crashes that will inevitably haunt my troubled imagination.

I want the universe to spare me from any more loss. I want people to understand the weight I’m carrying and help me carry it. I want them to accept that I’ll never be my old self again — the shape of my soul is different. A piece of it is gone. It’s this way for all of us, the griefing parents of the world. I wish we could get a free pass from further pain forever. I know it doesn’t work like that. I was lucky once, incapable of believing that either of my children could die even though the evidence was all around me.

These days, I’m more selective about who I tell about Ana. I tell the people that have the potential to stay in my life for more than a brief moment. I tell them because I can’t bring myself to care about small talk or politics or the cost of gasoline. I’m compelled to acknowledge my new self, my changed self, and hope that they accept this broken version of me. Some of them do. As it turns out, grief lurks below the surface for many of us. It’s a true source of solace to meet someone who can walk this lonely path with me. Sharing grief makes it more bearable. That’s the biggest reason I tell people that my child died.

Jacqueline Dooley
### The Compassionate Friends, Quad City Chapter Meeting

**Thursday, May 28, 2020, at 6:30 p.m.**

It will be held in person if the shelter-in-place order has been lifted.

Social distancing seating and face masks will be required.

TCF website: [http://www.quadcitytcf.org](http://www.quadcitytcf.org)

Next month’s meeting will be held on **Thursday, June 25, 2020, at 6:30 p.m.**

It will be held in person if the shelter-in-place order has been lifted.

Social distancing seating will still be required.

1830 6th Avenue, Moline, Illinois. 6:30 pm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Compassionate Friends of Muscatine</th>
<th>Meets the second Sunday of each month at 2:00 at the George M. Wittch-Lewis Funeral Home, 2907 Mulberry, Muscatine, Iowa. Chapter Leaders are Linda and Bill McCracken. You can call them at 563.260.3626 for directions or information, or contact them at <a href="mailto:linmac67@machlink.com">linmac67@machlink.com</a>.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rick’s House of Hope</td>
<td>Rick’s House of Hope serves children, ages 3-18, and family members from the Quad Cities and nearby counties. We serve those with grief, loss, or trauma issues. Death of a loved one and divorce are common; however, any sort of traumatic event or family change would fit our criteria, such as: bullying, teen dating victimization/harassment, crime victims, and other needs. At this time, Rick’s has a Holiday Healing group for children experiencing loss on Tuesday nights 5:30-7:00 until the Christmas holiday. The continuous groups are Family Together for all members of the family on Wednesday nights 5:00-7:00 pm and a Teen Night on Thursdays 5:00-7:30 pm. All meetings are held at 5022 Northwest Boulevard, Davenport, Iowa 52806 and are free. Rick’s House of Hope also does individual counseling/therapy. For more information, contact Lynne Miller, Program Manager, at <a href="mailto:millerl@verafrenchmhc.org">millerl@verafrenchmhc.org</a> or go to <a href="http://www.rhoh.org">www.rhoh.org</a>.</td>
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<td>SHARE</td>
<td>A support group for parents who have lost a child through miscarriage, stillbirth, or early infant death. SHARE meets the third Thursday at 6:30 pm in the Adler Room #1 in the lower level of Genesis Heart Institute, 1236 East Rusholme Street, Davenport, Iowa. Questions? Contact Chalyn Fornero-Green at 309.373.2568, or <a href="mailto:chalyn@shareqc.com">chalyn@shareqc.com</a> or <a href="http://www.shareqc.com">www.shareqc.com</a>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Loving Listeners | If you need someone who understands and will listen, feel free to call or email (if address is given):

- **Doug Scott** 563.370.1041 doug.scott@mchsi.com
- **Rosemary Shoemaker** 309.945.6738 shoearhb4@gmail.com
- **Judy Delvecchio** 563.349.8895 delvecchiojudy@hotamil.com

Doug, Rosemary, and Judy are willing to take calls from bereaved parents, grandparents, or siblings who want to talk to someone who cares that they don’t feel alone. |
Missing You
I just can't believe it...
The sun still rises and sets, the moon and stars still shine,
The flowers still bloom, the birds still sing.
I expected a change in everything. I just can't believe it...
It still gets dark and light, the ocean still has waves,
The rain still rains, the wind still blows,
Is it because they do not know? I just can't believe it...
I thought the world would stop
When in my house I found an empty chair, a missing smile
I thought it would stop for just awhile.
I just can't believe it...

Greta Viney
TCF, Yakima WA

We are our children’s storytellers, we are the ones left behind to live for the lost, we are the brave souls who live through the impossible act of saying goodbye.

Morgan McLaverty

The experience of grief is powerful. So, too, is your ability to help yourself heal.
In doing the work of grief, you are moving toward a renewed sense of meaning and purpose in life.

Alan Wolfelt

Sharing Sweet Memories of Love
43rd TCF National Conference July 24-26, 2020 Atlanta GA
Sadly, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 National Conference has been cancelled.

Contact the Editors
If you read or write an article or poem which might be helpful to other bereaved parents and would like to share it.
If you move and would like to continue receiving the newsletter, please send us your new address. Because we send the newsletter bulk rate, the post office will not forward it.
If you know someone you think would benefit from receiving the newsletter, send his/her/their name and address.
If you prefer to no longer receive the newsletter or if you prefer to receive this newsletter via email.

Please contact:
Jerry and Carol Webb
390 Arbor Ridge, Benton Harbor, Michigan, 49022
or email CarolynPWebb@gmail.com.
Letting Go of Guilt

Quite often, the first feelings that overtake a mother or father following the death of a child are feelings of extreme guilt. Thoughts of "if only" seem to relentlessly keep returning. "If only" I had taken her to the doctor sooner. "If only" I had not given him the car keys when I knew the roads were icy. "If only" I had not turned my back to answer the phone. "If only" I had not left him playing alone in the bathtub. Guilt is such a heavy burden of grief to carry around!

How does a parent move beyond the guilt of losing a child? How can a parent shed the painful feelings of inadequacy? How does a parent ever find a way to let go of the guilt?

The most difficult step in releasing the tight clutch that guilt holds on a parent's heart is dealing with the reality of the loss. "My child died" are often the most difficult three words that will ever come from the mouth of a parent. Those words are hard words, yet they are words that are necessary to say and to understand, before being able to rid oneself of guilt.

When we live in an "if only" emotional environment, we have not yet come to the full realization that child loss has actually occurred. We are still working through the mental "if only" reasoning which continues to wreak havoc on a parent's heart. When a parent lives in an "if only" state, the reality of the child's death can never be completely accepted. As painful as it is, a parent must, at some point, make the hard choice to accept the reality that the child has died.

Because a parent's primary role is to nurture and care for the child, a parent often has a feeling of deserving punishment when a child dies. That is simply another way of expressing the heaviness of guilt. A parent often wrestles with the thought that "because my child died, I do not deserve to ever smile again". Guilt continues to prevent many parents from moving forward in this difficult journey we call grief.

It takes a lot of concentrated effort, hard work, and support from others to be able to forgive oneself and finally let go of the gnawing feeling of guilt following the death of a child. Until a parent makes the decision to leave the heavy weight of guilt behind, joy can never return to a heart that has been so deeply wounded by the loss of a child.

Letting go of guilt is a decision that must be made. There is no timetable for making that decision, and others cannot force that decision on any parent. Eventually, a parent will come to the realization that the child's death is real, and there is a hard choice to be made to continue to live in the guilt of the loss, or to let go of that heaviness of guilt and begin to experience a bit of peace and joy once again.

Letting go of guilt requires a real effort to put an end to the "if only" questions. Letting go of guilt means that a parent no longer blames himself for the death of the child.

Letting go of guilt means forgiving oneself and accepting oneself. Letting go of guilt means being gentle with oneself and allowing time for healing to take place. Letting go of guilt is one of the most difficult parts of grief work. It takes a lot of energy, understanding, and patience. But, when guilt is finally set free, a parent's heart can begin to walk the journey of healing through child loss.

Clara Hinton
TCF/Orange Coast Chapter, California
If there’s one thing I learned about grief, it’s that it always surprises me. Disappearing one minute, returning with a vengeance another. Sometimes it surfaces in tears, other times in anger and apologies. I don’t understand...the smallest trigger, a similar laugh, a song, a place you drive by...and in an instant it feels like you are flung into a time machine, transported back to that moment when the time stood still and they were standing next to you.

Author Unknown

Grief is a passion to endure. People can be stricken with it, victims of it, stuck in it. Or they can meet it, get through it, and become the quiet victors through the active, honest, and courageous process of grieving.”
Bereaved Parents of the USA, Baltimore, MD August 2008

Joy is hidden in sorrow and sorrow in joy. If we try to avoid sorrow at all costs, we may never taste joy.
Henri Nouwen

Mother’s Day is a day of appreciation and respect. I can think of no mothers who deserve it more than those who have had to give a child back.
Erma Bombeck

Postings

Mother’s Day and Father’s Day are holidays especially created for us. Try to get through them the best that you can, in whatever way feels right for you. Truly, only you know what that is. Whether it is alone those first few years or with people that you love and who understand, do something that you find comforting. It is your day, for you were the giver of a precious life—you held a miracle in your arms. Even as powerfully destructive as death is, even that cannot take those memories away from you—they are your child’s gift to you.
Cathy C. Seeheuter – TCF St. Paul MN

Don’t put unrealistic demands upon yourself. Let yourself heal according to your own time frame. Each path is unique and will have many ups and downs. Be patient with other grievers and with friends, family, and strangers that do not understand. Keep an eternal perspective. Ellesway.org

Sometimes all a person needs is a hand to hold and a heart to understand.
Andy Rooney, bereaved sibling
To those who are receiving our newsletter for the first time, we wish you were not eligible to belong to this group, but we want you to know that your family and you have many friends. We who have received love and compassion from others in our time of deep sorrow now wish to offer the same support and understanding to you. Please know we understand, we care, and we want to help.