Dear Compassionate Friends,

The English word “comfort” comes from a Latin word meaning “make strong together.” This is what the Compassionate Friends is all about. Reaching out to comfort others who have experienced similar grief to our own because we have all lost a beloved child or children. The credo of the Compassionate Friends contains the following statement.

“We are all seeking and struggling to build a future together as
We reach out to each other in love,
And 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.”

Together we grow strong. We learn to live, laugh, and love again. We find purpose and meaning in life and in time you are able to reach out your hand to ease the burden of others who are new in their grief. We are the Compassionate Friends.

Sincerely,
Jerry & Carol Webb
The Angel of Hope Memorial Garden
5001 34th Avenue, Moline, Illinois, 61265

ANNUAL CANDLE LIGHT MEMORIAL SERVICE

Thursday, December 6, 2017
at 7:00 p.m.
Angel of Hope Memorial Garden
Moline Memorial Park Cemetery
5001 34th Avenue, Moline, Illinois

The Chapter’s Annual Candle Light Memorial Service is for every bereaved parent who would like to have his or her child(ren) remembered. You may light a candle in memory of your child. (You can bring a favorite candle or one will be provided. You can also bring a photo of your child to place with the candle.) All family members are invited.

If you cannot attend and would like a candle lighted in your child’s memory, please complete and return this form to Doug Scott, 6550 Madison Street, Davenport, IA 52806, or email Doug at QuadCityTCF@gmail.com.

Child’s Name: ________________________________

Parents’ Names: ______________________________

The Angel of Hope Memorial Garden
5001 34th Avenue, Moline, Illinois, 61265
If grief has entered your heart this holiday season, know that dreading the holidays is not unusual. It is normal. While you did not choose this loss, you can plan ahead and make choices on how to cope with the first Thanksgiving without your loved one.

Acknowledge that what has happened has really happened, and it hurts. To pretend otherwise is not only untrue, but for many of us it just adds to our pain.

Reflect on how you would like to honor your special person this holiday season. It may be in conjunction with family members and friends, or it may be a private ritual just for you. Take a moment and brainstorm ways you would like to honor your special person this Thanksgiving.

Abby’s Dad,
Doug Scott

Chapter Leadership to Change

After serving as this chapter’s leader for four years, I must regretfully step down. I have had some very serious health issues, as most of you know, that have impacted my life. As a result, my physicians have stressed that I need to scale back my commitments and workload to give my body a chance to heal. Unfortunately, continuing as Chapter Leader is no longer an option for me. I am hoping that someone will hear the call to serve, as Chapter Leader, like I did. I feel that by answering that call, I was able to honor Abby’s memory. I will be available to help the new leader get settled into the role. This will be effective at the close of the candle lighting ceremony on December 6, 2018. I would like to thank everyone related to The Compassionate Friends for all the support you gave me and Barb as we mourned the loss of Abby over the last six years. I feel honored and blessed to have been given the opportunity to lead this group and to be a voice for Abby and all of our children.

Abby’s Dad,
Doug Scott

When grief first enters our life, it tends to invade us... completely and... relentlessly. We are without comfort, we do not feel pleasure, we find no joy. We ache in mind and body. We feel weak and numb. In the deepest core of our being, we are ready to accept that we will never know happiness again. What’s more, we feel that this state is entirely appropriate, natural, and irreversible. Nothing can convince us that, given time, we will learn to live again. But we will.

Sascha

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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
TCF National Web site — www.compassionatefriends.org
http://www.quadcitytcf.org

Mission Statement
The mission of The Compassionate Friends Quad City Area Chapter is 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.
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**Simply Giving Thanks**

The real significance behind the celebration and observance of Thanksgiving Day is simply giving thanks. When the Mayflower landed at Plymouth in 1620, the Pilgrims never realized that their first winter would be so harsh. Half their numbers died and painfully were buried in the frozen soil. The following springtime, with great determination, they sowed their seed and carefully tended the fields all summer long. These colonists knew that their very lives depended upon the fall harvest. Finally, for the abundance that was given them, they shared their bounty with friendly Indians and humbly gave thanks to the Provider and Source of all their blessings.

And so it is, the events of that first Thanksgiving clearly remind us that out of Faith and Hope we can overcome any hardship or struggle against great odds.

TCF Harold E. Mitchell  
Albany, Saratoga & South Glen Falls, New York

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**Grief is Scary**

You don't often hear people use that phrase but when you think about it, grief brings with it change, and change can be very scary. I think grief can be the scariest after the shock has fully worn off and our mind is more fully able to grasp the enormity of our loss. We are often traumatized after the shock fades. Some call it the valley; I call it the vast grief wonderland. It is that place in between knowing that life as we knew it will never be the same...but the life we will know as a lifelong griever isn't yet formed. I call it the wonderland because we wonder if we are crazy, we wonder if we will find joy again, we wonder if we can survive, we wonder how we've made it as far as we have. For those of us far down this road, our wonder eventually turns into a knowing that we will always grieve, but we won't always be imprisoned by a deep paralyzing pain. We know we will experience joy, but we also accept that just below the surface we still feel the longing and missing...we love them still but we are able to live and embrace our new life and integrate that love into this new person we have become. It is important for all of us to recognize and support those whose grief is scary to them right now. TCF does that so well for those families whose child has died. No matter where you are on your journey, regardless of your loss...you are not alone and you are not crazy if your grief feels scary to you.

Alan Pedersen, former TCF Executive Director
**My First Five Years as an Only Child**

I’ve been without my brother for five years. I guess the hard part is over now. Sometimes I think I’ve aged thirty years in the past five. In a strange way these past five years have been the best and the worst of my life.

I’ve accomplished the many things of a typical young adult – learning to drive, graduating from high school, going to college, and starting a career. Every one of my accomplishments has been clouded by the fact that my brother George is not here to share each milestone and is not achieving any more milestones for himself.

He was cheated of so many things. He will never graduate, get married, have children, or travel. He will never grow old and I will never have a brother to grow old with. I’ll never have nieces and nephews.

The sibling relationship, usually the longest relationship in one’s life, has been cut short for us. In these five years, although I’ve learned to accept that he’s not coming back, the difficult part is dealing with it day by day. My relationship with George ended just when we started to become friends. The childish fights and other annoyances of having a big brother were changing to real conversations and to having an occasional ally. I’m angry about all the things that we’ve missed and all of the things that will never be, and I guess I always will be.

Five years heals a lot of wounds, but the hurt will always be there, no matter how many years pass. In these past five years, I’ve been forced to grow up too fast. I’ve been forced into a new outlook on life. I’ve felt lonely and alone. I now realize that I will never be the same person as before. That person is locked away and gone forever. Maybe I’m a better person now because of what I’ve been through.

Five years ago I never thought I’d survive, but I’m still here dealing with it every day. I don’t know what the next five years will bring, but at least I’ve made it this far.

Kristina Steiner
TCF Staten Island, NY

*It’s been just a little over two years* since my lil bro, my best friend ever, died. Almost 32 years since my sister died. Life is so, so weird. I wrote a while ago that in my lifetime I’ve been the youngest, middle, oldest, and only child. And in that order. It’s insane that my parents have to go through this. They’ve lost two children. It’s insane Silvia (my brother’s wife) has to go through this. Their two little boys are amazing. They remind me of both Pat and Silvia, but they are their own unique individuals with super fun personalities. It’s not fair.

Selfishly, it’s insane that I have to go through this. Because he was, is, and always will be my best friend. Life is so not fair but, I’m so, so lucky to have known him. Even if it wasn’t for as long as I’’d have liked. I’m rambling. Always. I miss him.

Kelly Hagerty Wambold, Chicago
Reflecting on the second anniversary of her brother’s death
The Compassionate Friends, Quad City Chapter

November 15, 2018, at 6:30 pm at
Bethany for Children & Families,
1830 6th Avenue, Moline, Illinois 61265
The next regular monthly meeting is
Thursday, December 6, 2018 at the Angel of Hope Memorial
5001 34th Avenue, Moline, Illinois 61265

Please call Doug Scott (563.370.1041) for information and directions.

The Compassionate Friends of Muscatine
Meets the second Sunday of each month at 2:00 at the George M. Wittich-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 linmac67@machlink.com.

Rick’s House of Hope
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 millerl@verafrenchmhc.org or go to www.rhoh.org.

SHARE
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 chalyn@shareqc.com or www.shareqc.com.

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 shoartb3@mchsi.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.
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:

Donald and Anastasia Schold, in memory of their son, Gregory L. Hillard
Jerry and Cathy Thomas, in memory of our good and faithful son, J.T.
Bill Steinhauser and Laurie Boyce-Steinhauser, in memory of their niece, Beth Hagerty

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 leader, Doug Scott, 6550 Madison Street, Davenport, Iowa, 52806. Checks should be made out to The Compassionate Friends. Your gifts are tax deductible.

The Website What's your Grief has a lot of helpful tips for dealing with grief during the holidays. Here are a couple of links for posts directly related to Thanksgiving. Both contain useful information but are too long to publish in this newsletter.

https://whatsyourgrief.com/surviving-thanksgiving-6-tips-for-grievers/;
Mixed Up Emotions
We humans often think we have to feel one way or another. Either we are happy or we are sad. We are brave or we are afraid. We are weak or we are strong. We are lonely or we are loved. You get the picture.

Consider the example of the person who finds themselves having fun for the first time after a loved one’s death and suddenly feels ashamed thinking, “Wait a minute, I’m supposed to be miserable. How can I laugh when my loved one is dead?” Though the person may know that one emotion doesn’t cancel the other out, they still may find themselves feeling guilty or confused when they experience things like happiness, joy, growth, or hope for the future in the midst of their grief.

But the reality is, we often feel many different things at one time. This was true in your pre-grief life and it is especially true now. Grief encompasses so many different emotions and these emotions are constantly changing, intertwining, and evolving. It’s a lot!

Something people have an especially hard time with is when they experience seemingly conflicting emotions. People tend to assume these emotions must cancel each other out, but that’s not how things work. Two (or three or four) contrasting emotions can indeed exist at the same time.

For example, on important days and milestones, you may experience feelings of celebration and happiness and also sadness because your loved one isn’t present. Another example, you may feel extremely loved by your support system and also lonely when thinking about your loved one’s physical absence.

Finally, you may feel extremely scared at the thought of living life without your loved one, but also brave when facing challenges and painful emotions.

Sometimes it seems like living with grief is like living one lifelong paradox, so getting comfortable with the dissonance created by certain emotional experiences can be beneficial. When a person can accommodate and cope with a wide spectrum of human emotions, they may feel less inclined to run from them or to label them as wrong.

Whatyourgrief.com

The Empty Chair
I remember the first Thanksgiving after Tony was killed. I didn’t know how we could possibly get through that dinner, with his empty chair.

The solution that occurred to me was to fill his chair with someone else – several someones. Grandpa came to spend the week; a newly widowed friend came for dinner, and so did her delightful young nephew and his bride, who had just moved to town. They brought the salad.

And we were thankful – for each other, for the love among us, and for memories.

If this will be your first Thanksgiving, do something different. The pattern for your life has been broken. Break it some more! Have dinner at a different place, or with different people. Go away for the weekend. Be kind to yourself. You do not have it all, but you have something.

Ronnie Peterson, TCF, Northern New York Chapter
It is crucial that we not resist the tides but instead give in to them and trust that after each wave we will be brought safely back to shore.


Grief is not an enemy or a sign of weakness. It is a sign of being human. Grief is the cost of loving someone.

From Through a Season of Grief

The key to offering true support is empathy, and to cultivate empathy we must first listen and sit with the pain. It is only then that we can come to understand that caring isn’t about fixing but rather, comforting. There is no way to take the hurt away, we can only be there through the hurt.

Author unknown

Believe that life is worth living and your belief will help create the fact.

William James

The human heart has the extraordinary capacity to hold and transform the sorrows of life.

Jack Kornfield

It is crucial that we not resist the tides but instead give in to them and trust that after each wave we will be brought safely back to shore.


By acting on our grief, we can eventually find within ourselves a place of peace and purposefulness. It is my belief that all griever, no matter how intense their pain, no matter how rough the terrain across which they must travel, can eventually find that place within their hearts.

Author Unknown
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.

You are not alone in your grief.