



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS



*We need not walk alone.*

**Volume 9, Issue 1**

**Tyler, Texas**

**January 2008**

## Monthly Group Meeting

Tuesday, January 15, 6:30 p.m.  
707 W. Houston St., Tyler, Texas

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## The Meeting Agenda

6:30 p.m. ....  
Meeting will begin with refreshments followed by announcement of birthdays and anniversaries and reading of the Credo. We will then have open discussion.  
8:00 p.m. ....  
Meeting will close by recognizing our childrens' names. Feel free to visit after the meeting or check out books from our library.

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## Resolutions

Every time the holiday season comes to a close, I feel as if I can hear a collective sigh of relief. This year was no different except that the sigh seemed louder and longer than in past years. Some years are like that for us. This one was certainly like that for me. No matter how difficult I thought the holidays would be to get through I was wrong. In some ways they were more difficult and in other ways, surprisingly, they were less difficult. The reality is that you and I, no matter how we anticipated the holidays, did get through them. We did survive the holidays and though it may be difficult for you to believe this now, there is no reason that this new year shouldn't be better.

Which brings me to a favorite topic for this time of year, New Year's resolutions. Resolutions that I think are most helpful are those that concern our well-being. Above all else, resolve to take better care of yourself. Try to eat right and exercise. Find ways to nurture yourself—both your body and your mind. Remember all things in moderation. Seek advice from others when you need it and above all, ask for help when you need it. You won't always get the help when you ask for it, but remember, if you don't ask for it, you surely won't get it.

Another thing you can do to have a happier new year is to become more involved in our chapter of The Compassionate Friends. If you've not come to any meetings, or if it's been a while, give it a try. Commit to attending at least three meetings. If you were to attend only one, you would not necessarily get a very good idea of what our meetings are like. Join us and make your needs known to us.

This newsletter is another way you can become more involved in our chapter. Let us know what works for you and what doesn't. Consider becoming a contributor. Tell us how we might be able to better serve your needs.

Have a happier New Year!

*Pat Akery ~ TCF, Medford, OR*

“The world loves closure, loves a thing that can, as they say, be gotten through. This is why it comes as a great surprise to find that loss is forever, that two decades after the event there are those occasions when something in you cries out at the continual presence of an absence.”  
—Anna Quindlen

**The mission of The Compassionate Friends** is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.



*We need not walk alone.*

"Sometimes our light goes out but is blown into a flame by another human being. Each of us owes deepest thanks to those who rekindle this light."

—Albert Schweitzer

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## Welcome

We extend a warm welcome to those who attended their first TCF meeting last month.

We deeply regret the circumstances that brought you to our TCF Chapter. The Compassionate Friends is a mutual assistance, not-for-profit, self-help organization that offers support and understanding to families who have experienced the death of a child. You are cordially invited to attend our monthly meeting (always the third Tuesday of the month). The meeting is open to everyone and free of charge. You are free to talk, cry or to sit in silence; we respect the individuality of mourning. Comments shared in the meetings remain confidential.

Our chapter is operated entirely by volunteers dedicated to furthering the work of TCF. Your voluntary, tax deductible donations honor your loved one(s) in a meaningful way by enabling us to print and mail this newsletter and meet other expenses involved in reaching out to other grieving families (100% of funds are used for this outreach). Donations, along with the name of the person being honored, may be sent to:

The Compassionate Friends of Tyler  
P.O. Box 9714  
Tyler, Texas 75711

## To Our New Members

Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. But, you have nothing to lose and much to gain. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. The second, third or fourth meeting might be the time you will find the right person—or just the right words spoken that will help you in your grief work.

## To Our Old Members

We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together and the glue that makes it stick. Each meeting we have new parents. Think back—what would it have been like for you if there had not been any "oldies" to welcome you, share your grief and encourage you? It was from them you heard, "Your pain will not always be this bad; it really does get softer."

## Getting On With Life—What Does It Mean?

Of all the statements and spiritual platitudes quoted at me since my son Daniel's death, the phrase that I hear most frequently makes me squirm the most. "You have got to get on with your life." Recently I quit squirming long enough to ponder the meaning behind this phrase that is usually said to the bereaved in the form of a command. Exactly what does this phrase mean? What are people implying when they say it?

I was pregnant when Daniel died, and three months later I gave birth to a baby girl. Wasn't that getting on with life? I nurtured my three children, took them to school, the park and birthday parties. Now wasn't that going on with life? I even cooked dinner at least four times a week!

At first after Daniel's death, I would have liked to literally stop my life and be buried next to my son, but I kept existing. Like a plastic bag tossed about by the wind, I was fluttering, being carried by the events of life. Seasons came and went. In the spring, I planted marigolds and tomato vines. In the autumn, I jumped in fallen leaves with my children. I continued; I am still continuing to live.

Now I may be bereaved, but I am by no means a fool. As I ponder the meaning behind "getting on with life," I know exactly what those who say this have in mind. "Forget your dead child. Quit grieving. You make me uncomfortable!" Getting on with life means don't acknowledge August 25, Daniel's birthday, anymore. Forget how he slid down the snowy bank in the recycle bin, sang in the van and ate Gummy Bears. Forget he had cancer, suffered and died at only age four. Don't see the empty chair at the dinner table, don't cry, just live!

Some who are more "religious" would like to believe that a bereaved parent can claim, "My child is safe and happy in heaven. Therefore, why should I yearn for him?" Perhaps I pose a threat to certain types because I have let it be known I question God. I weep. I have been angry. I miss my Daniel. Maybe old friends feel if they hang around me too long I might convince them that a few of their illusions about life are just that, illusions. As my cries of anguish are heard, there are those who can only think how to make me be quiet. To stop my heartfelt yearnings, they say quite sternly, "You must get on with your life."

I am living. I do move on with life with Daniel in my mind and in my heart, although he is not physically here as I continue to live and to love. To sever his memory totally from my life would cause destruction and damage that would ruin me. To push Daniel out of my life and not be able to freely mention his name or write & speak about who he was on earth would only bring more pain to my life. I'd shrivel up. Comfort for me comes in remembering with smiles how he drew with a blue marker on his sister's wall, ran outside naked and picked green tomatoes. For the reality is, getting on with life means continuing to cherish Daniel.

*Alice J. Wisler, Bereavement Magazine, Sept./Oct. 2000, Colorado*





*We need not walk alone.*

“Eventually we can relive our memories with real joy, grateful for them and even more appreciative of the time we had together. If you are in the midst of painful memories at the moment, take heart that it will not always be so.”  
—Shirley Ottman

### Love Gifts



East Texas Center for Independent Living in memory of all children

Kathryn Webb in memory of Randall McDaniel

Bobby & Jean Gimble in memory of Cason Gimble

Sam Smith in memory of Stacey Smith

Doris Paar in memory of Sarah Thompson

Claudette Brown in memory of Terry Brown

Melton Brown in memory of Terry Brown

Cherri Zucca in memory of Leah Zucca

Joseph & Freei King in memory of Terry Brown

David & Teresa Terrell in memory of Andy Terrell - use of a storage building

College-Bound Solutions for allowing TCF of Tyler to use their facilities as our meeting place - in memory of Nathaniel Peter Bolom

Thanks to Michael Mahfood of GroupM7.com for the printing of the December newsletter.

Thanks to everyone who brought refreshments to the Candle Lighting including: Doris Paar, Carol Thompson, Mary Ann Girard, Mary Delaney, Patricia Miller, Margie Newman, Charisse Smith, David & Teresa Terrell, Debbie Shirley, Pat Settle,



### Newsletter Submissions

TCF Tyler welcomes all submissions to our newsletter. Send articles, poetry, love messages and scanned photos to:

TCF Tyler • 5401 Hollytree Drive, 1204 • Tyler, Texas 75703  
Or e-mail text and photos to: [info@TylerTCF.org](mailto:info@TylerTCF.org)

We reserve the right to edit for space and/or content. Deadline for submissions is the 3rd Tuesday of each month. TCF Chapters may copy articles from this publication provided credit is given to the author and the original source. Errors and Omissions: Please notify us if any of your information is incorrect.



Visit us online at [www.TylerTCF.org](http://www.TylerTCF.org)

### Announcements



**Tyler TCF won first place for the Lack's Christmas Tree Food Drive!** Thanks to everyone who helped decorate our tree and to everyone who donated canned food.

**Our Annual Butterfly Release is held in May.** Information will be included in our newsletter as it becomes available. Please call (903) 258-2547 if you would like to help this year in honor and loving memory of your child.

**Request for Help with the Newsletter:** We are in need of donations to help pay for the cost of printing the monthly newsletter. It will cost approximately \$140 per month. We also need volunteers who will fold, staple and mail out. We know how important the newsletter is to many members and we hope to continue sending it. If not, we might send it out quarterly via mail, and post it monthly on the Web site for viewing and printing. Thanks in advance to anyone who would like to help! Call (903) 258-2547.

### TCF of Tyler Memorial Quilt

If you would like to have your child's photo included on the fourth memorial quilt, please mail a \$25 donation to P.O. Box 9714, Tyler, TX 75711. For more information contact us at (903) 258-2547, or email us at [info@TylerTCF.org](mailto:info@TylerTCF.org).

Thanks to Teresa and David Terrell for donating their talent and time on these beautiful quilts which will be displayed in our meeting room and at future special events.





*We need not walk alone.*

“When I come to the end of my journey and I travel my last weary mile, just forget, if you can, that I ever frowned, and remember only the smile.”  
—Author unknown

### January Birthdays



**Joshua Paul Renaud**  
1-18-86 ~ 6-9-06  
Son of Christi Renaud McMillan



**Jocelyn McCormick**  
1-11-04 ~ 12-7-04  
Granddaughter of June McCormick



**Michael Rucker**  
1-18-93 ~ 6-1-02  
Son of Brandy Rucker Pearson  
Grandson of Shelba Putman



**Amber Glasco**  
1-30-91 ~ 6-16-05  
Daughter of Chris & Julie Glasco



**Jonathan Sanders**  
1-4-87 ~ 9-8-06  
Son of  
Lisa Dunford & Donald Sanders



**Brooke Wallace**  
1-16-81 ~ 11-24-98  
Daughter of  
Charles & Tammy Wallace



**John Wallace**  
1-1-80 ~ 2-2-99  
Son of Barbara Wallace



**Kimberly Pryor**  
1-2-73 ~ 5-30-07  
Daughter of  
Jerry & Judy Olson



**Sarah Thompson**  
1-3-81 ~ 9-8-05  
Daughter of  
Ted & Carol Thompson

### Pain

I am not a young man, and I thought I knew the meaning of pain. I have experienced pain from a toothache, arthritis, and even the loss of relatives and friends. But nothing in my fifty-four years had prepared me for the pain I experienced when we lost our son. I had no clue to real pain.

I think only a bereaved parent knows the true meaning. Not to belittle the loss of a parent or spouse, but those who have lost both tell me that it is not the same. My mother said to me at my brother’s funeral, “Now I know how you feel.” Even though she had lost a grandson, it was not the same.

It has been almost five years now, and there hasn’t been a day go by that I don’t see his picture or think of him and feel that pain. Pain for what we lost—and for what he lost. That pain is not as intense now. I have learned to tolerate it and still lead a normal life. The Compassionate Friends helped me to realize that I was not alone and that there were many others who felt that same pain. They helped me learn how to deal with it. Now it is my turn to try to help someone else.

*Harold F. Underwood ~ TCF, Southern Maryland*

### Adjusted

“It’s been several years since your son died,” They say, “Surely, you must have adjusted by now.”

Yes, I am adjusted—

Adjusted to feeling pain  
And sadness and grief and guilt and loss.  
Adjusted to hurting and unexpected tears.  
Adjusted to seeing people made uncomfortable upon  
Hearing me say “My son died.”  
Adjusted to losing my best friend because I’m not always “up.”  
Adjusted to people acting as if grief is contagious.  
And TCF meetings are “morbid.”  
Adjusted? Oh, yes, to many things.  
Knowing I won’t hear his voice, but listening for it still.  
Knowing I won’t see him drive his Toronado,  
But staring at every one I see.  
Adjusted to feeling empty on his birthday  
And wishing for just one more time with him.  
Adjusted: As life goes on—  
To realizing I cannot expect everyone I meet  
To wear a bandage—just because I am still bleeding.

*Shirley Blakely Curle ~ TCF, Central AR*



*We need not walk alone.*

“Lean on us, for we have been where you are today. We will walk with you on your journey toward hope, peace and resolution. It is in this place that the healing will begin. This is a new year.” —Annette Mennen Baldwin

### January Anniversaries



**Brittany Butler**  
10-4-84 ~ 1-21-01  
Daughter of Shelly Butler



**Ashley McCaa**  
12-22-82 ~ 1-2-00  
Daughter of Pat McCaa



**Taylor Davis**  
12-31-85 ~ 1-21-06  
Son of Diane Ecker



**Susie Gorman**  
10-9-51 ~ 1-14-07  
Spouse of Onie Gorman



**James H. Fincke**  
7-15-80 ~ 12-25-99  
Son of Sara Fincke



**Rusty Welch**  
11-29-57 ~ 1-1-67  
Son of Travis & Martha Welch



**Christopher Baggett**  
4-23-69 ~ 1-8-89  
Son of Anita Demby

Editor's Note: We apologize for overlooking James Fincke's anniversary in December.

### What is New About the New Year?

There is a lot of silliness about ringing in the New Year, and I have never been able to enter into the spirit with noisemakers, funny hats and loud hurrahs. Since the death of my son, I especially find myself wondering what this is all about. I think some of the partying and celebrating are motivated by a deep desire for a new start in our lives; a desire to leave behind some of the problems, sorrows, worries and pain of the year just ending. The short, sunless days and long, dark nights make us want something to cheer us. So we give the New Year's Eve party a try.



**Charles "Bryan" Meadows**  
3-18-80 ~ 1-19-03  
Son of Charles & Lynda Meadows



**Jeremy Newman**  
4-15-80 ~ 1-10-02  
Son of Victor & Margie Newman

But it really doesn't work for most of us; we see now that we are just the same and the heaviness in our hearts, as we continue with the struggle to cope with the loss of our child, remains with us. Can we find new ways to live our lives in the New Year?



**Dylan Corey**  
2-21-97 ~ 1-24-01  
Son of Christy Corey



**Michelle "Missy" Green**  
2-09-69 ~ 1-30-93  
Daughter of Elena Glasscock

I'd like to suggest a few things we can try. Let's make an effort to find new friends. A good place to start this is at Compassionate Friends meetings. Here you are with a group of people who care about each other in special ways. We understand the pain and anger, the confusion and the inertia suffered by bereaved parents.

In the New Year, let's also find new ways to be close to the family that we have left. We feel regrets about hugs not given, letters not written, "I love you" not said often enough. We can do all these things now. We can establish new memories with the family we have right now.



**Michael R. Peymon**  
9-18-79 ~ 1-2-06  
Son of Tom & Sharon Peymon



**Brennen Applegate**  
8-10-69 ~ 1-22-01  
Son of C.R. & Kathryn Applegate

Another way to move into this New Year with a better feeling is to think about what we can do for others, because that is truly a way to help ourselves, too. If we can reach out to other sorrowing families, give a gift of our time, a note of love, a listening ear, or a shoulder to lean on, we'll grow stronger ourselves.

For those parents who are suffering the deep pain of the newly bereaved, none of the things I've mentioned may be possible yet. For you, I hold out the hope that soon your days will be just a bit better, your sorrow a little lighter, your tears healing, your friends strengthening and your memories filled more with the good times and less with the unhappiness of your grief.

*Dory Rooker ~ TCF, Upper Valley, VT*



*We need not walk alone.*

“A wounded heart, not allowed to mend from the depth of its agony, will be as an abscess to swell and undermine, erupting at a distant time. Or, suppressed, will slowly choke the spirit of its host. Only the bearer will know when his heart has healed.” —Nancy Green

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## Another Year Without My Child

It's a new year and I am marking it, for the fifth time, without my child. Last month was the fourth anniversary of his death. This is one more milestone in the journey of a bereaved parent. The new year brings the promise of new adventures, happiness and prosperity to others. To bereaved parents it adds another dimension to our loss. It also brings the opportunity to look at where we are and how far we have come.

I remember the first new year's day without my son. What an empty, hollow feeling I had on January 1, 2003. My world had ended, the shock was still systemic in my mind and body, and I counted the days since he last walked, talked and laughed on this earthly plane, dwelling on the passing of days, hours and minutes since the moment of his death. I was frozen.

Looking back at that time, I recall just how the pain felt; unlike other pain, the pain of losing a child is never forgotten. I feel the familiar jolt that rocked my mind and body each time I awoke to remember that my son had died. I remember the misery of slogging through endless, meaningless days. I remember the tears, the second guessing, the anger, the guilt...I remember it all. I still bounce in and out of those emotions; this will never end. It has moderated greatly, but it never ends.

Now I am more focused on my son's life. Details about his life spring into my mind...happy times, maturing times, good times and funny times. I remember it all with the clarity that only a mother can possess. And so, that is how I will begin this new year...remembering the life of my child but never forgetting the loss.

I am a different person than I was before my son died. I feel as though a lightning bolt struck me on the day of his death, and now I perceive the world from a different vantage point. I have simplified my life from what it once was. I have many new friends who share the experience of losing a child; I have permanently removed old friends from my life who simply couldn't accept my grief and were fearful of talking about my child. I have a new understanding of the problems that other parents face...problems that a mother of one never has to address. I have become more solidly spiritual. I have gone through Dante's seven circles, walls and gates of hell and emerged as the unique person I should have been all along. People change. Bereaved parents change a great deal.

I no longer dread each new day. I no longer weep silently every night. I no longer ache from head to foot with the pain of losing my child. I read, I write, I stay active in the community. I work in my small business, doing what I want to do and what I must do. I go to museums, to movies, to stage plays. I listen to music, watch television and work in my home and yard.

Amazingly, my word recall and memory are returning. Forgetting names, events, people, destinations and other critical factors of daily life was something I dealt with for over three and half years. I thought I had lost my mind until I started talking to other parents. I have begun doing memorization exercises...something I probably should have done three years ago. I am learning that the journey through grief lasts for a lifetime. Each stage is different, each sudden, poignant memory is paralyzing and each new day brings an opportunity to evaluate progress.

Much has changed during the past four years. Much will change throughout my life. Each of us experiences the loss of our child at the deepest level of our psyches. Yet each of us comes to this place with a different set of experiences and a unique genetic composition. I cannot compare myself to others. I can only mark my tiny steps forward with a sense of wonder at the resiliency of the human mind and spirit while simultaneously accepting that I am not in control...at any moment a flash of the past might bring me to my knees. I have learned to go with it.

I have found hope for the future. It certainly isn't the future I had envisioned. There will be no late night talks with my son, no holidays or birthdays shared, no participation in my son's children's lives, no cards, no handmade gifts. That door was closed by lawsuit happy former in-laws who have no standing in my life today. I have crawled through the minefields and dodged the bullets of some pretty mentally unbalanced people and survived. I have faced the abyss of losing my only child while enduring the cruelest of sniping, the worst of intentionally inflicted pain. I did none of this with grace and finesse...I merely got through it. I survived. I became stronger by letting go of my anger. I found hope by remembering the goodness that is my son and by leaning on friends who had lost their children. These friends were there for me when I so desperately needed the comfort of kindred souls: Compassionate Friends who reached out to me gave me the glimmer of hope when all seemed forever lost and living was almost intolerable.

Now the healing process has completed its circle. I am here for those parents who need me. Strangely this helps me to heal as well. I reach out to others who are new to the process of grief, and I tell them that there is hope. One day the sunrise will again be beautiful and you will find peace within yourself. You will remember your child's life, you will honor your child's life and you will forever be changed by your child's death. But always, always, your child will remain in your heart. This is my truth to all who wish to know. Lean on us, for we have been where you are today. We will walk with you on your journey toward hope, peace and resolution. It is in this place that the healing will begin. This is a new year.

*Annette Mennen Baldwin ~ In memory of my son, Todd Mennen ~ TCF, Katy, TX, January, 2007*





### **I Don't Know Why**

I don't know why.  
 I'll never know why.  
 I don't have to know why.  
 I don't like it.  
 I don't have to like it.  
 What I have to do is make a choice about my living.  
 What I do want to do is accept it and go on living.  
 The choice is mine.  
 I can go on living, valuing every moment  
 in a way I never did before,  
 or I can be destroyed by it and,  
 in turn, destroy others.  
 I thought I was immortal.  
 That my family and my children were also.  
 That tragedy happened only to others.  
 But I know now that life is tenuous  
 and valuable.  
 So I am choosing to go on living,  
 making the most of the time I have,  
 valuing my family and friends  
 in a way never possible before.

From the book, *My Son, My Son*, by Iris Bolton,  
 whose son Mitch died by suicide.

### **A Name for My Pain**

I have given a name to my pain—  
 it's called "Longing."

I long for what was,  
 and what might have been

I long for his touch and smell of sweat;  
 I long to hold him one more time.

I long to look on his beautiful face  
 and impress it upon my memories and heart.

I long to return to the day before  
 and protect him from his death.

I long to take his place,  
 so he may live and have sons too.

I long for time to pass much faster,  
 so my longing and pain will lessen.

Will they?

*June Williams-Muecke ~  
 TCF, Houston West Chapter*

### **To My Friends**

This is my pain.  
 Let me feel it.  
 Don't tell me not to cry.  
 I know you mean well, dear friend.  
 But telling me not to cry,  
 Tells me you don't understand.  
 But, how could you, really?  
 Have you lost a child?  
 Have you given birth, loved and laughed,  
 And then watched him die?  
 This is my pain.  
 Let me feel it.  
 Be patient with me when I want to scream  
 to cry  
 or be crabby  
 or talk about him  
 or be alone.  
 This is my pain.  
 Let me feel it.  
 I know you'd take it all away,  
 if you could.  
 But you can't.  
 I can't avoid it,  
 Or stuff it down somewhere,  
 Or run away from it  
 Because it always finds me again.  
 The cold, hard fact is,  
 That I had a child that died,  
 and it hurts.  
 So I know, that this is my pain,  
 And I have to feel it.  
 To get through it.

*Carolyn Johnson ~ TCF, Yuba City, CA  
 From We Need Not Walk Alone, Summer 1994*

### **Endowment**

Hope gives us vision for regaining  
 the tenderness of memories.  
 Hope carries us through to survival and healing.

Hope offers us courage  
 for acceptance and overcoming.  
 Hope gives us new spirit and new laughter.

Hope is among the greatest gifts  
 to be found in time of sorrow.  
 But hope cannot restore on earth  
 what is lost to death.  
 Hope can only go forward and make us new.

Give space to hope in your life.

By Sascha, From *LARGO*, Fall 2001





*We need not walk alone.*

"No one ever told me that grief felt so like fear." —C.S. Lewis

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## One

It was only 1 second, one thought, one decision, one action in a lifetime of seconds, and thoughts, and decisions, and actions. It was so fast, so permanent, so irreversible, so hopeless. This moment, this thought, this decision, this action do not define him, do not honor him, do not immortalize him. It is the preceding 946,080,000 seconds, and thoughts, and decisions, and actions that define him, that honor him, that immortalize him.

I remember my brother in all of the other seconds, and thoughts, and decisions, and actions that preceded this one. I remember him coming home from the hospital, lip syncing in the basement, falling out of the tree, biking across campus, coming home from school, from boot camp, from war... I remember him hiking, and skiing, and running, and laughing, and crying. I remember how safe I always felt when he was around. I knew he would take care, protect, defend.

I don't remember exactly when my brother became an amazing human being – I just looked at him one day and knew he was. I knew that nothing would make him change his mind about me. He was without judgment, without prejudice, without preconception. I knew my brother because we talked and he listened. I respected my brother most for his humanity—for being so sensitive, so vulnerable, so honest. I loved my brother for sharing the load when it was too hard for someone he loved to carry alone. I knew my brother because he left so much of him in me.

I trusted and respected my brother's decisions in the preceding 946,080,000 seconds, I have to trust and respect this one decision the same. I honor my brother by honoring myself. I do not dwell in that one moment, instead I celebrate and cherish all of the others. In that 1 second, one thought, one decision, one action, I found the strength he had given me and I will not let him down. I will not let that one moment be the only one.

*Michele Mallory*

## Some People Say . . .

"I wouldn't go to one of those grief meetings. It's morbid—people sitting around talking about the dead." How wrong those people are!

In so many ways, those who attend are saying, "I am hurting now, but I want to go on with my life." They are saying, "I am crying now, but I want to laugh again." They are saying, "I am sick in body and soul; help me get well." I see these things as healthy, not morbid.

It is not easy to walk into a meeting of any kind alone, especially one where the subject is very emotional; but once there, it takes only a few minutes to find out we are not alone; that there are those who care about us and want to help us. We see others hurting and suddenly we want to help them. I don't see that as morbid.

A grieving parent wants to talk about his beloved child who is no longer physically part of his life. That child has died with a tragic suddenness or as a result of an illness that usually takes older people. We want to know why or find a reason or some meaning in our child's death. I don't see any morbidity in trying to understand.

Memories of our child are all we have left. We have a driving need to hang on to those memories lest we lose that small bit of our child. It is not morbid to want to keep that small part alive forever, at least in our hearts and minds.

To walk into a bereaved parents' meeting is a loud shout - "I want to live and be happy again." It is a cry that "My child is dead, but I know he would want me to go on and be a better person for the suffering." It is a confirmation that "Even though part of my life is gone, there is a reason to go on." There is nothing morbid about doing what is necessary in order to re-enter the mainstream of life.

*Margaret Gerner ~ TCF, St. Louis, MO*





# The Compassionate Friends of Tyler

P.O. Box 9714  
Tyler, TX 75711

We are happy to send our newsletter to you. We hope that it is helpful to you to be kept informed of chapter resources and activities and that you still wish to receive our newsletters that contain excellent material relating to grief issues.

To keep our mailing list current, we do ask to hear from you each year making sure that our information is correct and that you still wish to receive our mailings. If we did not hear from you in the last year please indicate any appropriate choices below and return the form to the address at the bottom of this page.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Death Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Cause of Death: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check any of following that apply.

Please continue sending the newsletter.

No thank you, I'd prefer to stop receiving the newsletter.

Please include my child's name and picture in the slide presentation at the Candle Lighting Ceremony.

Please include my child's picture and information on the TCF-Tyler Web site. ([www.TylerTCF.org](http://www.TylerTCF.org))

I am enclosing a memorial to support The Compassionate Friends in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_  
Please make check payable to TCF

In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

The continuation of this chapter's work depends on donations. If you have not taken the opportunity to give a donation in memory of your child please consider taking this time to give a gift that will help reach out to other newly bereaved parents.

We must have your written permission on file to use your child's name and/or picture in the newsletter, Web site, Candle Lighting Ceremony or any other TCF event. Permission may be withdrawn at any time by written request. This information is used to maintain our Chapter Database. It is confidential and is only utilized for Chapter activities such as the newsletter.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return completed form to: The Compassionate Friends of Tyler, P.O. Box 9714, Tyler, TX 75711



**"I don't think you ever stop giving. I really don't. I think it's an on-going process. And it's not just about being able to write a check. It's being able to touch somebody's life." —Oprah Winfrey**



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

P.O. Box 9714  
Tyler, Texas 75711



*We need not walk alone.*



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