



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS



We need not walk alone.

Volume 12, Issue 3

Tyler, Texas

March 2011

Monthly Group Meeting

Tyler Area Meeting

Monday, March 21, 6:30 p.m.
12949 C.R. 42 (McDougle Rd.)

Jacksonville Meeting

Tuesday, March 1, 6:30 p.m.
Sam Smith's office, 1401 E. Rusk

Lufkin Meeting

Thursday, March 17, 6:30 p.m.
Southside Baptist Church, 1615
Tulane Drive

Contact

Phone: (903) 258-2547

www.TylerTCF.org • info@TylerTCF.org
P.O. Box 9714 • Tyler, TX 75711

Chapter LeaderTina Loper
Meeting Facilitators Tyler
Don & Leslie Dixon, Cheri Zucca
Meeting Facilitators Lufkin
Sherri Tutt, Lauri Maner
Newsletter/Web SiteMary Lingle
Steering Committee: Sam Smith,
Carol Johnson, Carol Thompson,
Mary Ann Girard, Cheri Zucca, Mary
Lingle, David & Teresa Terrell, Janet
Majors, Don & Leslie Dixon, Kathy
McKinney, Margie Newman, Pat Settle

Joan & Bill Campbell, Regional
Coordinators: (972) 935-0673
TCF National: (877) 969-0010
www.compassionatefriends.org

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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The Definition of Compassion is: to Suffer With We are The Compassionate Friends — We are survivors

The saving grace of our loss is that hardships are an opportunity for growth. We must be strong to handle grief, and in the end, grief brings out strengths we never knew we had. To experience and embrace the pain of loss is just as much a part of life as to experience the joy of love. This is not the end—merely the ending of things as they were. All changes involve loss, just as all losses require change. Being exposed to this pain brings us to a new level of sophistication, and from that point on we can never return to our original innocence. Peace lies at the center of our pain.

Denial is a safe place where we might find ourselves after the death of our child. This denial gives you moments away from your pain. It is nature's way of letting in only as much as we can handle. This serves as a bandage. Survivors create a healthy and timely defense system which they shed by bits and pieces. As you become stronger you begin to face feelings you were denying.

Anger is another indication of the intensity of your love. Anger can be healthy as it affirms you can feel, that you did love and that you have lost. This anger is proof that you are moving because it will surface once you feel safe enough to know you will probably survive. It can also be used as an anchor, giving temporary structure to the nothingness of loss.

Depression during grief is a way for nature to keep us protected by shutting down the nervous system so that we can adapt to something we feel we cannot handle. As difficult as it is to endure, depression has elements that can be helpful in grief. It slows us down and allows us to take real stock of the loss. It makes us rebuild ourselves from the ground up. It clears our mind for growth. It takes us to a deeper place in our soul that we would not normally explore.

Acceptance is where we find ourselves when instead of denying our feelings, we begin to listen to our needs; we move, we change, we grow, we evolve. We may start to reach out to others and become involved in their lives. We begin to re-invest in friendships and in our relationship with ourselves. We slowly begin to live again, but we cannot do so until we have given grief its time. In a strange way, as we move through grief, healing brings us closer to the child we lost. A new relationship begins.

Healthy grief has a flow, a natural continuing process, although that flow can include stopping to rest, re-energize, or take stock. This emotional rest gives us the opportunity to touch the pain directly for only so long until we have to back away. This is when distractions are needed. If we did not go back and forth emotionally, we could never have the strength to find peace in our loss.

It is our hope that the intense darkness of grief will give way to light as hundreds of thousands of candles spread their flickering flames to light the night as our children are remembered.

Dana Rogers, Mother of Rick Rogers, TCF ~ Galveston Co. Chapter

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.

"Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind." —*Theodor Seuss Geisel (Dr. Seuss)*

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 (held the third Monday 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.”

When You Lose an Only Child

The loss of an only child is neither greater nor less than the loss of one of many children. However, the loss of an only child is experienced differently. It is different because you lose your parenthood, which is such a large part of the life of any parent.

1. With the death of an only child, you lose the one person who could use all of the love you had to give every hour of every day. One of the secrets of parenthood is that from birth, children teach us that we have a greater capacity for unselfish love than we thought possible. When your only child dies, you may feel that you are drowning in the parental love your heart continues to generate for the child you have lost.
2. With the death of an only child, you lose so much of your own future that was tied to your child's future. The first day of school, sports, learning to drive, a first crush, a first date, a first heartbreak, high school, college, career, marriage, children, grandchildren, great grandchildren. Your only child lost all of this from his or her future. And so did you.
3. With the death of an only child, you suffer many tiny losses that cause pain only another grieving parent can comprehend. You have lost the joy of checking the cereal aisle to see if Cocoa Puffs are on sale. You have lost the reason to keep up with the top ten hits on the pop music charts. You have lost the joy of caring what prize is in a box of Cracker Jack. You have lost the joy of getting up early on a Saturday morning for kids soccer, basketball, or bowling. You have lost the reason to hope for a December snow. You have lost the person who thought you made the best cocoa on a cool December evening. For me, I lost a gentle, kind, generous child who loved, watched for, and shared beautiful sunsets.

The loss of an only child is a devastating loss. Your child has lost his or her life. And you have lost an important piece of your own life, your parenthood. The Compassionate Friends chapter near you is there to help you acknowledge and grieve these losses by sharing your pain with others who have known their own pain.

*Bill Snapp ~ TCF, Atlanta (Tucker)
in memory of son Bill Snapp*

March

A little bit of warm spring
Breaking its way out of the earth?
Today I see snowy flakes which remind me
That still again one season is passing into the next.
Another layer of chilling rain, ice and snow
Another layer of flowers fresh from bloom fallen to the ground
Another layer of long, dry days with too much sun
Another layer of autumn leaves fallen damp to the ground.
Seasons continue to run ahead while my heart and spirit are slow to follow.
March is on the calendar to remind me that it's time for still more change.

*Carol Thompson ~ TCF, Tyler, TX
Always Remembering Sarah
Cold Wintry January 2, 2011*





We need not walk alone.

“Bereavement is a darkness impenetrable to the imagination of the unbereaved.” —*Iris Mudoch*

Love Gifts



Mary Delaney in memory of Ryan

Mr. & Mrs. Charles Bridges in memory of Cory Blackmon

Lisa Schoonover in memory of Jake

Lisa Schoonover in memory of Leah Zucca

Lisa Schoonover in memory of Stephanie Settle



Thanks to the following members who have made a rent donation for our meeting place this month:

Jim & Cheri Zucca in memory of Leah

Dale Cavazos in memory of Chad

Merri Walsh in memory of Chris O’Leary

Tina, Johnathan & Heather Loper
in memory of Christopher

Danny, Pat & Stephen Settle in memory of Steph

Don & Leslie Dixon in memory of Austin

Thank you to the following members who have made a contribution for an entire month’s rent for our meeting place. We appreciate this generous donation.

Merri Walsh in memory of Chris O’Leary
Carol Thompson in memory of Sarah Thompson

Special Thanks!

Thanks to the following people who make a monthly love gift to TCF of Tyler:

Claudette Brown in memory of Terry Wayne
Dale & Phyllis Cavazos in memory of Chad
Sam Smith in memory of Stacey -
use of his office for the Jacksonville meeting
David & Teresa Terrell in memory of Andy -
use of a storage building

Thanks to all who helped with the assembly of last month’s newsletter. We appreciate all our volunteers!

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

Announcements

We will be holding our 8th Annual Butterfly Release on May 21 at 1 p.m. at the First Baptist Church south campus, 2813 and Hwy. 69 W. We are personalizing wood butterflies for an additional charge again this year. If you want a butterfly designed specifically for your child, please let us know. Football, baseball, softball, cheerleading, dance, military, etc., are a few of the designs available. Personalized butterflies are \$20 and need to be paid for in advance. Live Monarch butterflies are available for \$10 each. If you are interested in donating refreshments this year, or would like to help with the set up in loving memory of your child, please contact us at (903) 258-2547.

Tyler TCF Meeting: The meeting in Tyler is held on the third Monday of the month, 6:30 p.m., at 12949 County Road 42 (McDougle Rd.). For more information, please email pdsettle@wmconnect.com or butterfly6@nctv.com, or call 903-258-2547.

Jacksonville TCF Meeting: The meeting in Jacksonville is held on the first Tuesday of the month, 6:30 p.m., at Sam Smith’s office, 1401 E. Rusk, Jacksonville. For more information, please email pdsettle@wmconnect.com or butterfly6@nctv.com, or call 903-258-2547.

Lufkin TCF Meeting: Join us at the Lufkin meeting held at 6:30 p.m. every 3rd Thursday of the month at Southside Baptist Church, 1615 Tulane Drive, Lufkin, TX 75901. For more information, contact Lauri Maner at 936-854-2002 or Sherri Tutt at 936-404-9517.

The Touched by Suicide meeting is held the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. The meeting is held at Avail Solutions, 1116 E Travis in Tyler (small white frame duplex converted into offices). Anyone who has lost someone they love to suicide is welcome to attend this peer support group. For more information please call 903-330-0678 or visit www.touchedbysuicideeasttexas.org.

Save the Date! If you are interested in participating in our chapter by serving on the steering committee, please plan to attend a steering committee meeting. Our next meeting will be held Wednesday, March 2, 6 p.m. at El Charro on East 5th Street.

General Assembly: Join us each month to assemble the newsletter and mail out cards. We hope to get some new volunteers to help with this monthly project. Call 903-258-2547 for details.

MADD Heart meets 2nd Tuesday of the month at the MADD office, 215 Winchester Dr. Ste., 100, Tyler, TX 75701. For more info call 888-665-6233 or email Melissa at melissa.granberry@madd.org.





We need not walk alone.

"The finest days of our lives may well be a part of our past. Somehow, we must recognize that this is not unique to surviving our child's death, but is often a portion of the human condition." —Don Hackett

March Birthdays



Roozbeh Arianpour
3-25 ~ 6-6
Son of Farideh
Arianpour



Michael Schmidt
3-11 ~ 2-10
Son of Patricia
Jeffery



Tiffany Sue Hightower
3-31 ~ 5-12
Daughter of
Donna Hightower



Joshua "Josh" Wilcox
3-17 ~ 9-7
Son of Melanie
Wilcox



Colton Allen France
3-8 ~ 3-08
Son of
Carla Howard



Lisa Tutt
3-20 ~ 7-30
Daughter of
Steve & Sherri Tutt



Randy Joe Cannon, Jr.
3-26 ~ 11-6
Son of
Randy Cannon



Wadiya Adnan Bdah
3-7 ~ 3-13
Son of
Catherine Bdah



Amanda Kay Stone
3-25 ~ 9-7
Daughter of Mary Kay
& Glenn Stone



Ben Smith
3-01 ~ 7-21
Son of Charisse Smith
Son of Doug Smith



Toni Wood
3-10 ~ 9-29
Daughter of
Tami Wooldridge



Jodi Lynn Attaway
3-8 ~ 6-5
Daughter of
Cindi Attaway-Gill



Sally Snodgrass
3-1 ~ 4-15
Daughter of
Leland Snodgrass



Danielle Celeste Yura
3-22 ~ 1-15
Daughter of Susie
Hughes Fincher



Cathy Key
3-26 ~ 8-19
Daughter of
Cindy Murray



Adam Grabill
3-6 ~ 7-23
Son of
Beth Jones



Charles Bryan Meadows
3-18 ~ 1-19
Son of Charles &
Lynda Meadows



Kenny Ivy
3-10 ~ 5-12
Son of
Jo Anne Ivy



Noah Boone Bridges
3-5 ~ 3-15
Son of Shannon
Johnson



Jackson Huse
3-31 ~ 3-25
Son of Doug &
Johna Huse



Jill Rozell
3-14 ~ 8-2
Daughter of
Peggy Rozell



Jana Lauren Shearer
3-26 ~ 1-5
Daughter of
Stephanie Shearer



Kathy Jo Tumminello
3-19 ~ 7-20
Sister of
Susie Gorman



Brandon Krpec
3-27 ~ 2-11
Son of Larry &
Debby Krpec



Jamye Marie Crawford
3-10 ~ 4-12
Daughter of Judy &
Robbie Crawford



Scott Bradshaw
3-26 ~ 7-19
Son of Bud
Bradshaw



Deanna Holcomb
3-31 ~ 4-19
Daughter of
Pat Smith



Andrea Young
3-15 ~ 2-1
Daughter of Roland &
Jackie Young





We need not walk alone.

"There are things that we don't want to happen but have to accept, things we don't want to know but have to learn and people we can't live without but have to let go." —*Author unknown*

March Anniversaries



Adam Knott
12-29 ~ 3-20
Son of Virginia &
Bobby Knott



Neil Defenbaugh
10-20 ~ 3-27
Son of James &
Dina Defenbaugh



Colton Allen France
3-08 ~ 3-08
Son of Carla
Howard



Blythe Madison Harper
5-02 ~ 3-08
Daughter of Stephanie
Joshua Harper



Allen Price
4-11 ~ 3-29
Son of Deborah &
Floyd Holcomb



Kayla Smith
11-7 ~ 3-5
Daughter of
Debbie Smith



Jeremy Kersh
4-30 ~ 3-25
Son of Brad &
Debbie Kersh



Cory Blackmon
12-31 ~ 3-13
Grandson of
Charles & Billie Bridges



Robert McMahon
7-18 ~ 3-6
Son of Dana Wright



Gary Dean Arnold
9-17 ~ 3-7
Son of Betty &
Harold Arnold



Noah Boone Bridges
3-5 ~ 3-15
Son of Shannon
Johnson



Randall Scott McDaniel
5-7 ~ 3-17
Son of Kathryn
Webb



Jackson Huse
3-31 ~ 3-25
Son of Doug &
Johna Huse



Phillip Kuhn
12-28 ~ 3-27
Son of
Carolyn R. Kuhn



Joshua Andrews
6-21 ~ 3-14
Son of Tawna
Andrews



Joshua Washburn
9-23 ~ 3-26
Son of Kimberly
Boswell



Trey LePelley
6-10 ~ 3-13
Son of Jack &
Julie LePelley



Laura Wilkinson
7-16 ~ 3-7
Daughter of
Peggy Cunningham



James Wilkinson
7-6 ~ 3-9
Son of Bill &
Betty Wilkinson



Douglas Johnson
9-24 ~ 3-18
Son of Doug &
Shelly Johnson



Wadiya Adnan Bdah
3-7 ~ 3-13
Son of
Catherine Bdah



Rowdy Cunningham
8-10 ~ 3-7
Son of
Peggy Cunningham



Tyler Roberts
1-6 ~ 3-7
Son of
Peggy Cunningham





We need not walk alone.

“And then, ever so gently, the memories enfold you in a warmth as soothing as a cool shower on a hot summer day, so you find you WANT to remember. And tender memories of love lift you to unreachable heights, to the brightest of stars, to the loveliest touch of your child.” —*Dana Gensler*

The Gift of Giving

*In the Hope of Helping Others —
The Compassionate Friends*

After the death of our daughter Lori, I was completely devastated. Everything I believed about life was tossed out the window and I was filled with despair. It felt as if grief would destroy me.

Much of that time is now a blur, too painful to remember. But I do recall clearly my feeling of disconnection from most of the world of the living. My life had been ruined and I had no idea what to do. The friends with whom I'd surrounded myself before Lori's death had no way of knowing how to befriend me in this and I had no idea how to ask for the help I needed. So into my overwhelming grief was added hurt and loneliness because friends who didn't know what to do or say often opted to do and say nothing.

Then my husband and I found the monthly meetings of The Compassionate Friends (TCF) a support organization for families that have experienced the death of a child. I won't say the meetings were immediately a perfect fit for me, because they weren't, or that I felt comfortable as I attended, because I didn't. I was a very private person; I had had no experience crying on anyone's shoulder. My tears had always been in solitude. I'd never learned to express my feelings in words. So when someone asked me how I was feeling, I'd almost panic. How DID I feel? And after listening to the others in the circle, by the time my turn came, I was often overwhelmed with feelings. Like many others, I can't cry and talk at the same time, which caused people to have to wait as I tried to get the words out . . . I hated all the eyes on me while I tried to gain enough control to speak.

So why did I keep going? At the beginning it was because my husband, Bill, wanted to go and it was there that I learned more about how he was feeling. I was also learning from the more seasoned grievers ways of coping with my loss. All too soon I learned that TCF was actually a sanctuary, the rare place where I could try to explain my feelings or talk about Lori and her death without people trying to change the subject because they were being made uncomfortable by my words. And it was such a relief to find out that not only was it ok to voice my darkest thoughts and feelings, but others often felt the same way too. They understood! Some months I had to overcome my lethargy to get into the car and drive the half hour to get to the meetings, but every time I went I was thankful that I had. Looking back now, I realize that the meetings, and the friends I made at the meetings, probably saved my life.

But by the spring before the second anniversary of Lori's death, we were no longer attending every meeting. I regularly spoke with TCF friends, but didn't feel I needed to go every month. I had come to the point, as so many do, where I felt I'd received most of the help I would get from TCF. I might soon have stopped going to the meetings altogether. Now I can't even imagine who I would have become if that had happened. Instead I was given a gift, a reason to keep attending the meetings. Our facilitator was moving out of the area and I was asked to facilitate the local meetings. I said yes and found there was a whole new world of healing when I stopped going only for myself and began to attend meetings to help others. I can't overemphasize the importance of this turning point in my life.

From then on, every month I had to look outside myself into the hearts and minds of others and try to give them hope. I found the intensity of my own raw pain began to take a backseat to that of others more newly bereaved than I. Because I needed to find words for THEM, to try to help ease THEIR pain, a floodgate was gradually opened in me and words, amazing words, began to fill my life. Feelings, with the words to describe them, began to well up from my innermost being, feelings from the past, from those first months after Lori's death, and feelings in the present, words in the form of poetry, poems to help me understand myself and poems to help others. Truly, I believe this would not have happened if I hadn't opened my heart to my newly bereaved compassionate friends.

I believe there is the potential for something like this to happen to all who become actively involved in the "helping" aspect of The Compassionate Friends. I don't mean that everyone begins writing poetry. But I do believe that the greatest healing derived from TCF is this outward movement, this growth away from the self-centeredness, self-absorption of grief, towards the open hearted hope of helping others.

Cont. on page 7





We need not walk alone.

"I will let go for a time, release what I feel, and will be able to function better as a result of having vented the feelings that are an ever-present burden."
—Carol Staudacher

Cont. from page 6

It comes to me that parenthood, itself, does something like this. From our self-centered, self-directed lives before our children are born, we learn the awesome responsibility of another person's life when we first gaze upon them. Our lives change focus and their survival and growth become our highest purpose; our hearts become larger because our children are in them. When our children die, we not only hurt because the most important, most loved people of our lives are gone, but that intense focus is gone and our sense of great purpose. We wander in a wasteland, searching for what has been lost.

When Lori died, we still had our 15-year-old daughter Megan at home, but I felt so crippled as a mother. How thankful I am that Megan was somehow able to get through those early years with a mother so distracted by grief—and emotionally distanced by fear. I was half a mother in more ways than one.

Now, because of TCF, I began to find a new focus for my maternal instincts and a new way to grow back into the loving mother I'd been before Lori died. As I tried to grow to the task of helping those more newly bereaved than I, just as I'd had to grow to the task of being Lori and Megan's mother, I was benefiting three-fold. First, my "mother" energy, which is a huge part of me, was again flowing outward. Second, as I was learning ways to help others heal, I was learning them for myself. And third, once again, I began to feel that I was doing something important with my life, that my life mattered, that my life had purpose.

When I look at other bereaved parents who seem to have survived this great loss the most successfully, I find that they too have again found purpose. And often that purpose has something to do with the child who has died. Sometimes they work towards eradicating the reason their child died: drunk driving and cancer are two examples. Some start foundations in their child's name. Some take up and even finish the work that their child started.

Many bereaved parents, like me, have regained a sense of purpose through The Compassionate Friends. My work in TCF has given me a great sense of purpose, satisfaction in helping the newly bereaved at our monthly meetings, being part of the Steering Committee, a vital part of my chapter, and Chapter Leader. As Regional Coordinator I also try to give support to my region's chapters, and the ripples go out from there.

And just as important to me, besides this sense of purpose, TCF has allowed me to keep Lori more visibly in my life. Wherever I go, whatever I do for TCF, Lori's name is mentioned; Lori is not forgotten. Because what I do for TCF matters, and because all I do for TCF, I do in her name, Lori's life continues to matter, all these years after she left this earth. Through TCF Lori remains in the forefront of all I do, the guiding star in the direction of my life. I could not have found a more loving or fitting way to honor her than I have through The Compassionate Friends. My grief and TCF have forced me to grow in ways of which I had never dreamed. And Lori has been with me every step of the way.

From *Catching the Light — Coming Back to Life after the Death of a Child* by Genesse Gentry and previously published in *We Need Not Walk Alone*, the national magazine of The Compassionate Friends.

Mourning

Imagine, your heart being taken from your chest and opened up as if it were a pouch with a zipper on it. Take the insides out and set them on a concrete slab and blow it up with a stick of dynamite. Scrape up all the fragments you can find, put them back into the now empty heart, zip it up, put it back and go on with your life.

This is now the heart I must learn to live with. Starting all over because it is nothing like what it was since the moment I heard my sweet boy Douglas passed away. Days and months pass and I can't say how I live from one day to the next—they just keep happening.

Janella Otell ~ TCF, Marin Co., CA





We need not walk alone.

“When a child dies, grandparents bear the grief of the death of a loved boy or girl compounded by the pain of watching their own adult child, the dead child’s parent, writhe in an agony they are powerless to ease. It is a double grief.”
—*Harriet Sarnoff Schiff*

I Saw You

A Tribute to my Sister
Lori Lee Smith

I saw you today in the morning dew
As brilliant as a sea of shimmering diamonds
I shared the most amazing sunrise with you today
A million shades of red so random in their perfection
I heard you today in the laugh of my children
An enchanting melody a thousand angels strong
I walked with you today and we talked about everything
. . . and nothing all at once
I saw you today in the changing of the leaves
The colors of your life, the close of one season
And the ushering in of another
I sat beside a stream with you today
The peaceful flow, steady and constant
I saw you today . . . and you were perfect
And rest assured . . . I shall see you again

Avery Smith ~ TCF, Ada Area Chapter

I Am Spring

I am the beginning.
I am budding promise.
I spill cleansing tears of life
from cloudy vessels
creating muddy puddles
where single cell creatures abide
and splashing children play.
I am new green growth.
I softly flow from winter’s barren hand.
On gentle breeze I fly – embracing sorrow.
With compassion, we feather nests
where winged voices sing winter-spring duets.
As frozen ice transforms to playful stream
I whisper truth – life is change.
I am spring.
I bless long, dark wintry days.
I crown mankind’s pain
with starry skies
in deepest night
lighting solitary paths from sorrow to joy
as the wheel of life turns ‘round and ‘round.

Carol Clum

*(written after attending a workshop presented
by John Fox, author of
‘Finding What You Didn’t Lose’ and ‘Poetic Medicine’.)*

Beautiful Dream

Eyes open wide
I awake from a beautiful dream
Within seconds the painful reality of my life sets in
I find myself wanting to scream

Grief so strong
Impossible to explain
Living with a broken heart
Struggling with the pain

Eyes closed tight
I pray for that beautiful dream
A short escape from the painful reality
That makes me want to scream

Robert Willis ~ TCF, Frederick, MD

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 a while.

I just can’t believe it...

Gretta Viney ~ TCF, Yakima, WA

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. (Newsletters are posted monthly on our Web site.)

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)

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

In memory of _____

Please use this gift for:

TCF Newsletter Butterfly Release Candle Lighting TCF Events Other _____

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