



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS
of Green Bay**
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

A Quarterly Newsletter

by and for Bereaved Parents

January/February/March 2023

**Our
Mission
Statement:**

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.



Saying Good-bye, what does it really mean to us?

We just said good-bye to another year gone by. We say good-bye, when we leave from visiting with family and friends. But do we want to ever say good-bye to our grief? We all know that we would like to say good-bye to our grief as we hope that it will also mean the pain and sorrow of our loss has left us forever. But if we say good-bye to our grief are we afraid that we will forget our loved ones? The biggest fear that we all have is that as time goes by, that we will eventually forget about our loved ones. We hope that is never the case but eventually our advancing age and health may naturally cause us to do so. We have probably seen it in family and friends that age makes them more forgetful. I would like to think that the pain of our loss will prevent this but you just never know. In my experience with TCF over the years with the different people I have met that some need to try to say good-bye to their grief. Not in the way that would make them forget their child but say good-bye to their grief so that they can heal and start to slowly move forward. Please note, we never move on from our grief but we try to move forward.

I have seen many people struggle to move forward in their grief because they are still struggling with the death or the circumstances of their child's death. The turning point for me in my grief journey was when I started to concentrate on the happy times and memories of events shared with Melissa and Emily. I started to think back on all the fun times we shared and experiences we had with them, whether it was taking them on a vacation or a visit to their grandparents, celebrating a birthday or holiday, a special school event or just sitting home watching television or doing things around the house. I felt that in a way I said good-bye to my pain and suffering that grief brought me. It was part of being able to move forward and cope with their deaths. My grief will never go away but the intense pain and suffering I felt in those early years has left me. I even try to look for signs from them. I got one of those several weeks ago, when I was leaving to go to work. I tuned the truck radio to my favorite channel and Emily's and mine favorite song started playing. I said thank you Emily and smiled and knew that my day was going to be a good one.

On another note, we received a gift from Network for Good. It was made possible by someone who knows about our chapter or has attended meetings in the past or currently. There was nothing on the check to indicate who made this very generous gift. I want to thank them very much for thinking about our chapter. As you know, there is no charge or cost to attend our meetings. We maintain the chapter based on the donations and generosity of you. Please keep us in mind on your child's birthday, as in the past we have received love gifts based on the age the child would have been on their current birthday. Thank you for your continued support of our chapter.

In Peaceful Sadness, Melissa and Emily's Mom and Dad

Mickey and Steve

The Green Bay Chapter of The Compassionate Friends

meets the third Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m.
at First United Methodist Church, 501 Howe Street, Green Bay.
(Enter the parking lot off Monroe at Doty)

For further information contact:

Main Number: 920-370-3858

Sue DeLong, Remembering our Children

Mike Niefert, Steering Committee

Mickey Schmeisser, Chapter Leader/Newsletter Editor

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Monthly Support Group

Tuesday, January 17, 2023 6 p.m.

New Goals For The New Year

Tuesday, February 21, 2023 6 p.m.

Missing Our Valentine

Tuesday, March 21, 2023 6 p.m.

Share Your Child's Favorite Recipe



COPING

Darcie Sims



January is a reflective month. Ice ponds reflect the leaden sky, and the heart reflects the emptiness of a frozen spirit. When will we begin to thaw? When will we feel like we're making some progress in this place of icicles and cold sheets' sunless days and long, empty nights? Will we ever be happy again? Will I ever be ME again? January is also the month for making promises, commitments, and resolutions (resolutions are FANCY promises). We begin our new year with high hopes, strong wills, and long lists of things that will be different this year. To celebrate my commitment to a **new me**, I bought a jogging suit, expensive shoes, timer, pulse meter, and M&M dispenser (you've got to have some motivation). **THIS YEAR WILL BE DIFFERENT!**

We also spend some time looking back over the road we've traveled, and sometimes we wonder if we have made any progress at all. In the beginning, we misplace car keys, checkbooks, toothbrushes, relatives, and important stuff like the TV Guide. We had to begin making lists of everything. We simply couldn't remember anything. I couldn't remember my address, social security number, zip code, or my mother-in-law's birthday. (I never could remember that.) I even started making lists of my lists! I knew I was going to be all right when I first discovered I could remember that I had made a list.

You know you're making progress when you can coordinate an entire outfit again. Shoes, belts, ties, purses, even sweaters and jackets often got left, simply because when we were hurting so terribly, we couldn't think about what to wear. Many of us didn't even know that panty hose were on backwards, or the tie was crooked. If you are wearing matched shoes right now, then you are making progress.

You are making progress when you no longer choke when you say your loved one's name. When you can walk down the cereal aisle in the supermarket and not dissolve into tears, progress is being made. When you can enjoy baking HIS favorite cookies or pie or cake again, you are on your way. When the photographs come back out once more and you can wander through the scrapbooks again, letting the smiles peek through the tears, then hope is returning. When memories, for the most part, bring comfort and warmth instead of emptiness and pain, *January*

grows shorter. When you begin to understand that putting away your loved one's things does NOT mean putting him out of your life, then your step becomes lighter.

Progress occurs when you completely understand that your loved one DIED, but the love you share between you can never be destroyed. Hope begins to return when you can hear laughter again—and some of that laughter is your own. Recovery is possible once unrealistic hopes for a lost future are given up, grieved for, and moved beyond. Perhaps it is not so much saying good-bye to our loved one as it is saying farewell to the old us and the life we shared. Making progress through grief doesn't mean that you no longer miss your loved one. He is part of your life forever, but his role in your life changes. Our lifestyle and habits change to reflect a different family landscape.

Now as you look back, it is amazing to see the life fabric—no longer ripped apart with a gaping hole, but mended with tiny stitches, left perhaps a bit lumpy (like lots of us), but patched with time, effort and love. Old threads and new threads have blended together and have been re-woven into a pattern not quite the same as we had originally planned. It is a tapestry of love, given and received, remembered and shared. Life can become good and whole and complete once again, not when we try to fill up the empty spaces left by loved ones no longer within hug's reach, but when we realize that love creates new spaces in the heart and expands the spirit and deepens the joy of simply being alive. The renewed energy and love we feel as winter turns into spring becomes the memorial to our loved one...not the grave markers we decorate, not the books we write, not the speeches we give, but the LOVE we share and pass on.

You know you are making progress when all of this begins to make some sense (save this column to read later!). When the shoes match and the car keys are found and the list of lists grows shorter, then you are making progress. Then the laughter can return, and with that magical sound comes the healing of the hurt and the shedding of the Band-Aid, because the heart is learning to sing again.

January...the month to check on our progress, to make new commitments—and to start jogging.

You never know how strong you are until being strong is the only choice you have

Healing and Hope

Robert Gloor
TCF Tuscaloosa, AL



For a long time after the death of a child, bereaved parents are convinced that healing will never occur, and that the loneliness, anger, guilt and despair, which control life so completely, will never change. This feeling is so strong that when others try to reassure the grieving one, the response is usually, "It's different with me! You don't understand!" This is the "normal" response to what is probably the most severe stress a human will ever face.

Fortunately, there are compassionate friends who once felt this same way who have learned that, out of this morass of loneliness, anger, guilt and despair, there finally arises a ray of hope. Though small and fleeting at first, this hope becomes the light which leads the wounded parents through the dark valley and into acceptance of their child's death. And this healing will occur even though there is still no understanding of "Why?"

It is by working through our guilt (both real and imagined), facing our anger including anger at God and even at the dead child, crying our way through our despair (with carefully chosen professional help if necessary), that the loneliness will lessen, and hope will be seen as surviving when it was thought gone forever. Each one must use one's spiritual beliefs in his or her own way to assist in this process.

Full recovery—in the sense that the effects of grief will finally disappear never to return—return not occur, although the term "recovery" is used. I prefer the term "healing," a process whereby our lives come to a new "normal." Healing implies (a) our accepting the unacceptable (the death of our child), and (b) our slowly learning to

resume productive relationships with others. This is done all while we continue to love and miss the dead child.

Since we still love the children who have died, we will still experience grief, but it will no longer control our lives. Just as we cannot stop the flashbacks which occur so suddenly and unexpectedly during grief, neither can we prevent healing from occurring. We may slow the process by failing to do our grief work, but we cannot stop it!! One of the greatest hindrances to our healing is the fear that our dead children will be forgotten. We will not forget them, nor will they be forgotten by others, even though we may not realize it at the time! Perhaps the greatest obstacle to healing is the failure to forgive—ourselves, the dead child, others involved with the child's death, even God if we hold Him responsible. For only through forgiveness and forgiving are we truly able to handle our guilt and the anger that comes from the guilt we presume in others.

We enhance the healing process when we do our grief work, when we have gratitude for the time we had with our child, when we recall the happy times we experienced with our child (or during pregnancy, if that's all we had), and when we pick up the shattered pieces of our existence (as our child would want us to do), slowly resuming productive living.

No matter where you are in your journey toward healing, bolster the hope that arises within you. Your healing is probably the best memorial you may erect to your dead child!



Memories

Jacquelyn M Comeaux
In Memory of my angels, Michelle, Jerry and Danny



Time can never erase,
The memory of your face;
Nor the passage of the years,
Stem the volume of my tears.

You are with me for always,
In my heart throughout all days;
Then in my dreams nightly,
Your star shines ever so brightly.

I want your spirit to remain,
Inside of me, despite the pain.
To forget you would be a curse,
Because no memories would be much worse.

You were born a part of me,
Now you live within the heart of me;
Forever precious, forever young,
My beautiful, darling little ones.

Remembering our Children

During the three months that each newsletter covers, we include your child's birthday and the anniversary of your child's death — if we know those dates. Based upon TCF National policy, we will not print the year of your child's birth or death.

BIRTHDAYS

Marisa Nelson (daughter of Amy Nelson)	1/01	Ryan Brunner (son of Bill & Sue Brunner)	2/03
Alex Wolf (son of Keith Wolf)	1/02	Matthew Dulak (son of Frank & Maddy Dulak)	2/03
Aliina Manders (daughter of Spring Manders)	1/03	Adam Federwitz (son of Gary & Mary Federwitz)	2/03
Allison Fields (daughter of Leanne Fields)	1/04	Mike Smith (son of Dave Smith)	2/04
Ben Garot (son of Keith Garot)	1/07	Jesse Hettmann (son of Linda Hettmann)	2/05
Megan Kelley (daughter of Bev Kelley-Miller)	1/09	Caitlin Van Duyse (daughter of Brenda Van Duyse)	2/06
Kandy Kostka (daughter of William & Sally Kostka)	1/09	Lily Boettcher (daughter of Melissa Mielke)	2/09
Mathew Odea (son of Nan Odea & Greg Warcham)	1/09	Julie Sarah Smits (daughter of Jeane Smits)	2/10
Prisha Laabs (daughter of Shamla & David Laabs)	1/12	Brett Buhr (son of Tim & Michele Buhr)	2/11
Alex Neiman (son of Angel Neiman)	1/13	Jason Peck (son of Marianne Peck)	2/11
Corey Calaway (son of Paul & Nancy Calaway)	1/14	Kelby Bagneski (daughter of Bill & Kelly Bagneski)	2/12
April Erickson (daughter of Darla Nooyen)	1/14	Sam Compton (son of Mark Compton and Todd & Sandra Scheffen)	2/13
Travis Christenson (son of Cheryl Oettinger)	1/17	Ricky Lambert (son of Maria Lambert)	2/14
Justin Banaszynski (son of Donna Baranczyk)	1/21	Katie Culhane (daughter of Kevin & Muffy Culhane)	2/15
Jason Banaszynski (son of Donna Baranczyk)	1/21	Ryan Jozwiak (son of Lenee & Eddie Jozwiak)	2/15
Dustin Wilkinson (son of Dave & Donna Wilkinson)	1/21	Aislinn Shimon (daughter of Dave & Patricia Novak)	2/16
Christian Warzniak (son of Tara Hein)	1/22	Samantha LaCount (daughter of Dale & Linda LaCount)	2/22
Brian LaViolette (son of Doug & Renee LaViolette)	1/23	Nick Hietpas (son of Bruce & Diane Hietpas)	2/23
Joseph Wesolowski (son of Jennifer Heller)	1/25	Raina Manders (daughter of Spring Manders)	2/26
Roberta Jean Glebke (daughter of Joyce Glebke)	1/26	Brad Cox (Robert Cox)	2/27
Lawson Aerts (son of Dennis & Teresa Aerts)	1/28	Karen Mary Schley (daughter of Jon & Ann Schley)	2/27
Dylan Krings (son of Jason & Joleen Krings)	1/28	Lucas Shallow (son of Robert Shallow)	2/27
Austin Lindberg (son of Todd & Sandy Lindberg)	1/28	David Staude (son of Irv & Bev Michaud)	3/01
Maliyah Monacelli (granddaughter of Brenda Hendries)	1/29	Matthew Blazek (son of Bill & Betty Blazek)	3/03
Doug Kwiatkowski (son of Dave & Theresa Kwiatkowski)	1/30	Samantha DeLong (daughter of Joe & Sue DeLong)	3/03
Amy Laedke (daughter of Fred & Debra Laedtke)	2/02	Mark Louis Starr (son of Ruth (Patti) Schmidt)	3/04
Jeff Baenen (son of Susan Otradovec)	2/03	Colton John Margotto (grandson of Deb Dobson)	3/05

Molly Klika Zarnoth (daughter of Bob & Barb Klika)	3/06	Shawn Wendricks (son of Darrick & Amy Wendricks)	3/21
Kelley Calkins (daughter of Kate Calkins)	3/11	Allison Hunt Bush (daughter of Terry & Nan Bush)	3/23
Kevin Keane (son of Mike Keane)	3/12	Cam Wendt (son of Lon Wendt)	3/24
Heather Fuller (daughter of Leslie Tagge)	3/14	Tami (Sam) Cornelius (daughter of Brenda Cornelius)	3/25
Anne Johanski (daughter of Judy Johanski)	3/16	Mike Quinette (son of Carol Quinette)	3/26
Beau Baxter (son of Laura Martens)	3/17	Steven L Vosters (son of Marvin & Patti Vosters)	3/26
Taylor Nieft (daughter of Michael & Dawn Nieft)	3/18	Lane Harris (son of Susan Harris)	3/27
Kali Pfaller (daughter of Sally Winger)	3/20	Heidi Lessmiller (daughter of David Lessmiller)	3/29
Patrice True (daughter of Wendy Hunter)	3/20	Andrew (Andy) Short (son of Barbara Short)	3/29
Ella Cumicek (daughter of Chris & Rhonda Cumicek)	3/21	Mark Malueg (son of Sue Malueg)	3/31
Parker Wendricks (son of Darrick & Amy Wendricks)	3/21		

ANNIVERSARIES

Matthew Daley (son of Mary Daley)	1/03	John Charniak (son of Maynard & Jeanette Charniak)	1/24
Aliina Manders (daughter of Spring Manders)	1/03	Carson Murfield (son of Matthew & Christy Murfield)	1/24
Skylar Beattie (daughter of Krystle Cooley)	1/05	Troy Jacques (son of Sally Martin)	1/26
Matthew Dulak (son of Frank & Maddy Dulak)	1/08	Heidi Lessmiller (daughter of David Lessmiller)	1/26
Mark Shafer (son of Bruce & Pat Shafer)	1/10	Chad Olson (son of Brenda Olson)	1/26
Christy Stackhouse (daughter of Frank Stackhouse)	1/10	Madeline Wotachek (daughter of Brandon & Michelle Wotachek)	1/26
Ben Garot (son of Keith Garot)	1/11	James Capelle (son of Tammy Capelle)	1/29
Jesse Hettmann (son of Linda Hettmann)	1/11	Matthew Arnold (son of Bob & Carrie Arnold)	1/31
Chad Schaefer (son of David & Miriam Schaefer)	1/11	Mark Louis Starr (son of Ruth (Patti) Schmidt)	2/01
Ian Seymour (son of Paul & Diane Seymour)	1/12	Zander Varga Schenzel (grandson of Nancy Varga)	2/02
Craig Kozloski (son of David & Bobbie Kozloski)	1/14	Andrew Steiner (son of Nicole Steiner)	2/02
Robby Rohr (son of Carol Wautlet)	1/16	Steve Price (son of Steve & Jennifer Price)	2/03
Shawnie Silas-Grode (daughter of Pauline Silas)	1/18	Amanda Dulak (daughter of Frank & Maddy Dulak)	2/04
Matthew Murphy (son of Kathleen Murphy)	1/21	Chris Krueger (son of Cheryl Krueger)	2/05
Joshua Webster (son of Julie Denny)	1/21	Dylan Krings (son of Jason & Joleen Krings)	2/08
Elias Gonzales (son of Maria Gonzales)	1/22	Corey Calaway (son of Paul & Nancy Calaway)	2/09
Alex Neiman (son of Angel Neiman)	1/22	Karson Fenlon (son of Jennifer Neshek)	2/09
Alex Olmsted (son of Lisa Olmsted)	1/22	Allen O'Harrow (son of Cal & Lois O'Harrow)	2/09
Nick Argall (Joyce Argall)	1/23	Jeff Baenen (son of Susan Otradovec)	2/12

Nathan Crowe (son of Tom Crowe & Lisa Hanneman)	2/13	Brandon Groh (son of Cathy Groh)	3/11
Chad Seitzer (son of Fred & Sandi Seitzer)	2/13	Jason Ziemann (son of Diane Strick)	3/12
Lawson Aerts (son of Dennis & Teressa Aerts)	2/16	Elizabeth Turek Bigley (daughter of Albert & Mary Turek)	3/13
Maliyah Monacelli (granddaughter of Brenda Hendries)	2/16	Beau Baxter (son of Laura Martens)	3/17
Derek Waterman (son of Patricia Waterman)	2/16	Josh Gilson (son of Ron & Cindy Gilson)	3/17
Ella Cumicek (daughter of Chris & Rhonda Cumicek)	2/18	Amaris Soletski (daughter of Amy Soletski)	3/18
Nathan Axelrod (son of Johanna Axelrod)	2/19	Rebekah Puzen (daughter of Larry Puzen & Carol Schroeder-Puzen)	3/19
Patrick Meyer (son of Dan & Anne Meyer)	2/19	Julie Sarah Smits (daughter of Jeane Smits)	3/20
Federico Abarca (son of Concepcion Melgar)	2/22	Bryan VanderKelen (son of Bob & Debi Lepak)	3/20
Brett Buhr (son of Tim & Michele Buhr)	2/22	Ricky Lambert (son of Maria Lambert)	3/21
Matthew Odea (son of Nan Odea & Greg Warcham)	2/25	Parker Wendricks (son of Darrick & Amy Wendricks)	3/21
Shane Hopfensperger (son of Mike & Joann Hopfensperger)	2/28	Shawn Wendricks (son of Darrick & Amy Wendricks)	3/21
Jason Peck (son of Marianne Peck)	2/28	Taylor Nieft (daughter of Michael & Dawn Nieft)	3/24
Christian Warzniak (son of Tara Hein)	2/29	Hunter Vincent (son of Steven & Dawn Vincent)	3/24
Tom Manning (son of Peggy Manning)	3/01	Luke Watzka (son of Marty & Rita Watzka)	3/24
Matthew Blazek (son of Bill & Betty Blazek)	3/03	Randy Blezek (son of Bill & Betty Blazek)	3/25
Matt Hanson (son of Dean & Mary Hanson)	3/03	John Aulik (son of Germaine Aulik)	3/26
Colton John Margotto (grandson of Deb Dobson)	3/05	Dustin Wilkinson (son of Dave & Donna Wilkinson)	3/29
Chayse Michael Wilcox (grandson of Todd & Melanie Wilcox)	3/06		
Todd Reigner (son of Arthur & Barbara Reigner)	3/08		



ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENTS, & MISC.

Calendar of Events 2023:

January 17: New Goals For The New Year

February 21: Missing Our Valentine

March 21: Share Your Child's Favorite Recipe

Please Visit Our Website:

www.compassionatefriendsgreenbay.org

All sorts of goodies are included:

- *Past Newsletters
- *Calendar of Events
- *Articles
- *Online Donations

46TH TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The Compassionate Friends is accepting applications for workshops for the 2023 TCF National Conference in Denver, Colorado on July 7-9, 2023. TCF is proud that it offers a wide variety of workshops at each Conference to allow attendees many choices about grief as well as workshops presented from the perspective of the type of loss and the family relationships.



Please note:
If area schools are closed,
due to inclement weather, we will cancel
our scheduled meeting

Love gifts were recently given by:

Ken and Mary Gehm, in memory of Jared Gehm
Joyce E. Glebke, in memory of Gary and Roberta Glebke
Dan and Myra Krhin Freshly Squeezed, in memory of all our children
William and Sally Kostka, in memory of Kandy Kostka
Network For Good, in memory of all our children
Todd and Sandy Scheffen, in memory of Sam Compton
Sue Van Straten, in memory of Jessica Van Straten
Pam Vogels, in memory of Jason Vogels
Carol Wautlet, in memory of Robby Rohr
Lon Wendt, in memory of Cam Wendt



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS
of Green Bay**
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



PO Box 211
Green Bay, WI 54305

We need not walk alone!

Our monthly
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Tuesday,
January 17, 2023
at 6:00 p.m.

at First United
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off Monroe at Doty.
Call 920-370-3858
for information.

The Compassionate Friends Credo

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope. The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope. We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances. We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships. We are young, and we are old. Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope. Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength, while some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression, while others radiate an inner peace. But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love for the children who have died. We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love to 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. We Are The Compassionate Friends.