



GRIEVING PARENTS HEALING JOURNEY

the next step

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

MARCH, APRIL, MAY 2016 ISSUE

PUBLISHED BY TCF CHAPTERS OF VANCOUVER ISLAND

In This Issue

- Welcome to The Compassionate Friends
- Meeting Schedule, Victoria Chapter
- Spring Waiting
- Gifts for Spring
- May is Green Ribbon of Hope Month
- Seabeck Retreat
- Brevity Memorial, Kelowna
- To the Newly Bereaved
- At Easter
- Gifts for Mother's Day
- Feelings of Guilt
- From Robin Sharma
- Sisters and Brothers
- It's Never Too Late to Do the Work
- International Gathering 2016 in Germany
- Message from TCF International
- Compassion: The Inner Light
- TCF USA National Conference
- Life Will Never Be the Same Again
- Directors Eileen and Andy Bond, Ottawa
- Children Remembered
- Because of You
- A Vow For Health and Joy
- Confusion
- Telephone Friends

TCF

Spring 2016



- TCF brochures
- Helpful websites
- Bereavement Day B.C., May 19
- Around the Island—meeting schedule



- **Kelowna Brevity Memorial, May 7:** see page 5
- **Seabeck Retreat, June 3-5:** see page 4
- **TCF USA National Conference, July 8-10,** Scottsdale, Arizona: see page 12
- **6th TCF International Gathering, July 28-31,** Frankfurt, Germany: see page 10

Our Logo



*The poignant image of the small child,
either moving away from or towards
the hands,
which look male and female,
along the rays of sunlight,
has never been analyzed and remains
whatever each parent, sibling, grandparent
feels it is for them.*

Welcome to The Compassionate Friends Vancouver Island

Welcome, especially to those newly bereaved who have joined us for the first time. We are sorry we had to meet under such circumstances, but we are glad you found out about us. We would like to do all we can to help you through these times.

We cannot hurry you through it, or take away the pain, but we can help you understand more about what you are going through. Sometimes just knowing you are normal can be helpful. Though it may be difficult, we encourage you to attend a Compassionate Friends meeting at your nearest chapter. **IT WILL HELP.**



*The value of life is not measured by one's longevity, but
by the quality of one's love. Life is transient. Love is not.*
—Paula D'Arcy

*The measure of a life, after all, is not its duration, but its
donation.*
—Peter Marshall

The Compassionate Friends

TCF is an international, non-profit, non-denominational self-help organization offering friendship, understanding, grief education and hope for the future to all families who have experienced the death of a child at any age, from any cause. Our primary purpose is to aid in the positive reconciliation of the grief experienced by parents upon the death of a child and to support their efforts to achieve physical and emotional health. The secondary purpose is to provide information and education about bereaved parents, their surviving children, and the grieving process. The objective is to help those in the community, including family, friends, employers, co-workers and professionals, to be supportive. There are no membership fees; contributions are voluntary.

Meeting Schedule, Victoria Chapter

(AGM) Tuesday, March 22 (five Tuesdays in March)

Tuesday, April 26

Tuesday, May 24

See page 19 for place, time, and contact information.

*It is the gift of hope which reigns supreme in the
attributes of The Compassionate Friends.*

Hope that all is not lost.

Hope that life can still be worth living and meaningful.

*Hope that the pain of loss will become less acute, and,
above all else,*

*The hope that we do not walk alone,
that we are understood.*

*The gift of hope is the greatest gift
That we can give to those who mourn.*

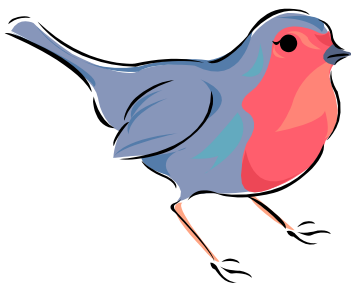
—Rev. Simon Stephens, Founder,
The Compassionate Friends



Spring Waiting

Winter's end is almost here.
 Crocus struggle in the snow.
 Sunlight has a softer glow.
 Is the winter long this year?
 Spring waits, watching for a cue...
 Not to rush your grief away.
 But to be there, when you say.
 Spring is waiting, friend, for you.
 Find a little time for Spring,
 Even if your days are troubled.
 Let a little sunshine in
 Let your memories be doubled.
 Take a little time to see
 All the things your child was seeing –
 And your tears will help your heart
 Find a better time for being.

—*Sascha Wagner*



Gifts for Spring

We cannot stop the winter or the summer from coming. We cannot stop the spring or the fall or make them other than they are. They are gifts from the universe that we cannot refuse. But we can choose what we will contribute to life when each arrives.
 —Gary Zukav

People are fighting over how our heartsongs are different. But they don't need to be the same. That's the beauty. We are a mosaic of gifts. Each of us has our inner beauty no matter how we look.
 —Mattie Stepanek

It's one of the greatest gifts you can give yourself, to forgive. Forgive everybody.

—Maya Angelou

Try not to get lost in comparing yourself to others. Discover your gifts and let them shine! Softball is amazing that way as a sport. Everyone on the field has a slightly different ability that makes them perfect for their position.

—Jennie Finch

Someone who has experienced trauma also has gifts to offer all of us—in their depth, their knowledge of our universal vulnerability, and their experience of the power of compassion.

—Sharon Salzberg

Tucker: "But she gave me the perfect gift."

Clara: "What?"

Tucker: "You."

—Cynthia Hand, *Unearthly*

I cursed the fact I had no shoes until I saw a man who had no feet.
 — Persian proverb

It is one of the beautiful compensations of this life that no one can sincerely try to help another without helping himself.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

May is Green Ribbon of Hope Month

May 25 is National Missing Children's Day in Canada. In May of each year, Child Find hosts the Green Ribbon of Hope campaign, focusing on recognition and support for families whose children are missing. "Green is the colour of hope. It symbolizes light in the darkness and is an expression of our thoughts for missing children, their families and friends." **Child Find 1-800-387-7962**



Seabeck Retreat, June 3—5, 2016

For over thirty years bereaved parents have been crossing the wooden bridge into the quiet serenity of Seabeck Conference Center for the annual TCF retreat sponsored by Seattle-King County Chapter of TCF. The historic town of Seabeck is located on Hood Canal and is just an hour-and-a-half drive from Seattle. The majestic Olympic Mountains rise to the west, scenic Hood Canal lies between you and the Olympics, and wooded hills slope eastward from the beach. This setting sets the tone for healing. One feels secluded and protected from the outside world. One also feels very welcomed and included. This is a safe, supportive place to do one's grief work.

Our retreat is just that...a *retreat*. We leave behind the busyness of our everyday lives and enter a relaxed and safe haven to work on our grief and bond with other bereaved parents. The retreat is a place where we share our thoughts, feelings, and precious memories of our children. The weekend includes workshops, sharing groups, a reflection room, burden basket, crafts, Children's Memorial Garden and a candle-lighting ceremony on Saturday night.

The retreat is low-key and there is no pressure to attend every scheduled session. The weekend is yours to use, however you need to take care of yourself. If it's time for an activity, but you want to take a nap or take a walk, do it. Do what YOU need to do. Some people choose to not participate in sessions and yet do a lot of grief work because they have the opportunity to be in a safe and supportive setting that allows them the time and space to work on their grief away from the distractions of a busy daily life. It's a nurturing environment and you are with people who understand what you are going through.

The Seattle TCF chapter works with WICS — Widowed Information and Consultation Services — to plan the retreat. We share the main speaker and workshops, but TCF and WICS have separate sharing groups, memorial ceremonies and housing. Together, TCF and WICS provide a children's program for those who want to bring their children (ages 5-17). The children's group has their own program with their own activities and ceremonies. All three groups share the dining room at meal times, but each group has designated tables, so each is with their own group. (*For information about the Children's Program, contact WICS at 206-241-5650.*)

About 60-70 bereaved parents from Washington, Oregon and British Columbia attend our retreat. At Seabeck you will find bereaved parents with caring hearts who can relate to you and your grief. We truly feel that other bereaved parents are the greatest resource and support for us on this most difficult journey we have to travel.

Please join us at our Seabeck Retreat this year!

For more info call Seattle-King County TCF chapter office: 206-241-1139 or email: tcfmarge@aol.com

For more information about the Seabeck Conference Center, visit www.Seabeck.org.

\$220 US per person, all-inclusive, for the Friday night to Sunday noon retreat (two nights and six meals).

Single-occupant rooms are available for an extra \$40. A limited number of scholarships are available.

TCF Retreat, PO Box 66896, Seattle, WA 98166-0896. Deadline for registration: May 1.

The theme this year is "*Precious Lives - Treasured Memories*".



Brevity Memorial Ceremony, Kelowna, May 7, 2016

The Brevity Memorial at Kelowna City Cemetery was dedicated on September 24, 2004. The memorial plaza is centered around a bronze statue of two children playing on a tree stump. The annual ceremony is held on the Saturday of the Mother's Day weekend (May 7 this year), at Kelowna City Cemetery.

No matter where your child is interred, you may have your child's name, along with their birth and death dates, inscribed on the memorial walls. Engraving will be done once per year and all names must be submitted no later than March 31st each year. Because The Compassionate Friends is a non-profit society there is a minimum donation of \$125 to offset the cost of the engraving. Money should never be a barrier; therefore do not hesitate to request payment arrangements or other considerations.

To request an inscription, list your child's name, age, sex, cause of death (optional), birth date and death date. Include your name, address, phone and e-mail. Make cheques payable to The Compassionate Friends and mail to 650 Gibson Road, Kelowna, BC V1P 1C2.

For additional information about the Memorial, e-mail **Kelowna@TCFCanada.net** or call **Linda or Glen Woods at 250-807-2487**.

Registered Charity BN#889062899RR0001



Since Victorian times, a gravestone image of a broken branch or tree has symbolized a young life cut short.

Defenses erected against suffering will stifle our lives and leave us with another kind of suffering, more painful than that which we sought to evade.

—Elizabeth O'Connor

To the Newly Bereaved:

The newly bereaved do not know, and can't believe, that there can be a positive future that includes the love we carry for the children we have lost. This is why we meet, cry, scream, and hug each other. With time, good things will creep into our lives when we least expect them.

Being with other parents, grandparents, and siblings who understand our grief helps us to find our future lives. There is a future for all of us that includes carrying the love for our children forever as we gradually open to our positive future.

We will never stop loving or missing our children. However, with many small steps over time we can "Integrate a Positive Future With Our Loss". This is our hope. It happens.

—Allen Roth, TCF Olympia, WA

At Easter

...in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.
—Psalms 30:5



To give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. —Luke 1:79

Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you.
— Isaiah 49:15

What if I should discover that the poorest of the beggars and the most impudent of offenders are all within me, and that I stand in need of the alms of own kindness; that I myself am the enemy who must be loved—what then?
—Carl Jung

Life will bring you pain all by itself;
your responsibility is to create joy.
— Milton Erickson

Life is the fire that burns
and the sun that gives light.
Life is matter and is earth,
what is and what is not,
and beyond is eternity.
— Seneca

Just imagine that the purpose of life is your happiness only—then life becomes a cruel and senseless thing. You have to embrace the wisdom of humanity. Your intellect and your heart tell you that the meaning of life is to serve the force that sent you into the world. Then life becomes a joy.
—Leo Tolstoy

The inspiration you seek is already inside you. Be silent and listen. —Rumi

Don't underestimate the value of Doing Nothing, of just going along, listening to all the things you can't hear, and not bothering.
—A.A. Milne, as Pooh

First say to yourself what you would be; and then do what you have to do. —Epictetus

The souls of wise people look to the future state of their existence; all of their thoughts are concentrated toward eternity.
— Cicero

There are no mistakes, no coincidences. All events are blessings given to us to learn from.
— Elisabeth Kubler-Ross

A dreamer is one who can only find his way by moonlight, and his punishment is that he sees the dawn before the rest of the world.
—Oscar Wilde

Gifts for Mothers Day

Spring Challenges Bereaved Mom to Find Hope



Springtime is upon us, along with all the excitement of new growth, new life, and new beginnings. But spring doesn't hold such new hope and life for everyone. Those who have endured the death of a loved one don't always welcome the new seasons.

My son died in mid-winter, so when spring came around, I scoffed at all of the new beginnings around me. It's easy to get caught up in feelings of anger, resentment, and isolation. But it's much harder to embrace change, learn from it, grow from it, and make a new normal.

For me, it took time, understanding, time, patience, time, and more time to enjoy spring again (do you see a pattern here?). Time doesn't necessarily "heal" all wounds, but it does lessen their sting. It leaves behind scars that remind us of the battles we have fought and won. It lets us know that we can be stronger than we ever thought possible. I wear my scars proudly, knowing that I have come out of my experiences a changed—but better—person than I was before.

This spring, I challenge you to try and see the new life transpiring around you in a new light. Find one thing—a budding flower, a new baby animal, a leaf growing on a bare tree—and focus on the beauty. Focus on it and see that new life as a sign that your loved one is thriving on the other side.

In every new life, I see my precious angel, Connor. Yet, it wasn't always that way. I used to turn away from nature and new beginnings, but now I focus on the positive influence my son's life had on all those around him. I try to focus on the constructive instead of the harmful.

We all have good days and bad days, but I find that as I embrace the changes around me, my good days outnumber the bad. You, too, can get to this point. Know that you are stronger than you realize, and that you can rise above the calamities that befall you—rising up a better person than you ever thought possible.

—Amy C. Maddocks 2011

Found on many websites, always unattributed:



Feelings of Guilt



It is a common phenomenon that when we lose someone we love dearly, some of us suffer feelings of guilt. We start reproaching ourselves for words left unsaid and acts of kindness left undone. We imagine that it is our fault that these “might-have-beens” were never realized. We blame ourselves for not giving enough time, or sufficient thought or care. “If only” we had not waited and postponed things. “If only” we hadn’t spoken so harshly or acted meanly.

If you are accusing yourself in this way, you need to realize that this is part of everyone’s grief. It belongs to the normal pattern of mourning. There is no reason for you to feel guilty. On the contrary, it is only because of your deep love for the one you have lost that you harbour sad feelings, thereby unnecessarily adding to your burden. To suffer from such an unsound guilt complex can play havoc with your life, and worse still, can deprive those who need you most now, of your love and help.

The absurdity of self-reproach is demonstrated by a woman who blamed herself totally for her husband’s death. Because he had felt unwell, she made him visit the doctor who diagnosed a serious illness and advised an operation. There were complications and the man died. The woman was convinced that it was all her fault. She firmly believed that if she had not sent her husband to the doctor, there would have been no operation and no death. She totally misinterpreted her concern and her wise counsel because of her depressed state of mind.

— Dr. R. Brasch, in *A Book of Comfort* (TCF Johannesburg, SA, newsletter, July 2012)

From Robin Sharma:

1. You must make the time to confront your resistances and examine yourself when frustrations or fears surface, rather than making it about others and avoiding self-responsibility. When you blame others for the things that anger or irritate you, you lose a precious chance to get to know more of the shadows that are running you.

2. Keep on putting a voice to your fears and they will move through you. Remember, feelings are like rainstorms, with a beginning, a middle, and an end. If we stifle them, they will fester like wounds. If we pay attention to them and bring them into the light of our awareness, we will move through them and they will complete.

When we love, we always strive to become better than we are. When we strive to become better than we are, everything around us becomes better too.

—Paulo Coelho

I believe that imagination is stronger than knowledge. That myth is more potent than history. That dreams are more powerful than facts. That hope always triumphs over experience. That laughter is the only cure for grief. And I believe that love is stronger than death.

—Robert Fulghum

Sisters and Brothers: Thoughts from Michelle in Australia

There is a lake inside me, made of tears and sadness and grief. When my brother died, that lake rose out of nowhere and drowned me completely, for a very long time. The water covered me. I saw, heard and felt the world through its distortions. I moved slowly, held down by the weight of it. Huge waves would suddenly seize me and dash me against the shore leaving me dazed and exhausted. Sometimes the lake overflowed completely, obliterating everything around it, covering all its surroundings in my tears, in my sadness. I couldn't breathe. I couldn't see or find a way out, and I was too weighed down to try. I drowned. For a long time.

As time passed, the water became stiller and clearer. I was dashed against the shore less often. The overflows became rivers, then streams. I began to make out the odd shape in the distance. I was still drowning but I felt like I was learning to swim a little bit, having some control over how I drowned.



One day, to my surprise, I realized my eyes were above the water and I could see some way into the distance. My surprise turned to grief that what I used to be able to see, was no longer there. A huge wave crashed down and I drowned once more.

Gradually, I became more used to the view, even though I still missed what I used to see. My head stayed above water for longer. Sometimes an arm stretched out to feel the air. Often currents pulled me under. Sometimes waves knocked me down. And I drowned for a little while again. But I remembered how to swim and how to pull myself upright.

These days, seven years later, most of the time I am standing, with only my feet in the lake. The lake is still there, but somehow the weight of it round my ankles makes me stand stronger. And all those years learning to swim and stand upright again taught me that I might not stand in the same place, or in the same way, but that I am still able to stand. There are still storms, and rain, and the odd hurricane.

And every now and then, a tidal wave that still has the power to knock me down, knock the wind out of me and make me fight for breath. Make me lost in the currents and the waves for a while, make me retreat to the bottom of the lake. But I am no longer drowning. I am standing.

I wish my brother were standing with me, but then I would most likely be standing in a different place, have learnt to swim a different stroke. And I know that my brother is pleased to see me standing; he helped me learn to swim again, and he held me upright when I found standing hard, when it exhausted me, when I would have gladly sunk back into the lake. I know he's happy that he can see me above the water, so his view of me is clear. So I'm standing.

I know some of you are drowning right now, and some of you are just trying to learn to swim. I know it feels like the lake is endless and the water will never let you go. And some days you wish you could just give up and be swallowed completely. **But if I can swim, if I can stand, you will too.**

They say if you fight the current too hard, you will drown from exhaustion, and the best thing to do is float until the water brings you back to somewhere calmer, or to shore. If you get exhausted trying to swim, trying to stand - float for a while till you get your breath back, and you'll find your swimming legs again later.



And one day, you'll find yourself standing. You will, I promise. And when you're above the lake, give your loved one a smile, because they will have been waiting patiently for a clear view.

—SIBBS Winter Issue 2001 and TCF QLD 2015

It's Never Too Late to Do the Work

It is never too late to do the work of mourning. When the unfinished business of loss is getting in the way of your living your life, it is always wise to pay it the attention that it deserves, and if necessary, to seek outside, professional help in doing so. If you had a broken arm or leg, you wouldn't think twice about seeking medical attention, yet here you are with a broken heart and you're expecting to be able to "fix it" all by yourself.

Effective grief work is not done alone. Private, solitary activities such as reading and writing are wonderful, but it's also helpful to work with others through talking, participating in bereavement counselling, or finding support in a group. Reaching out to others is often very difficult when you're struggling with grief, but experience has taught us that in grief, the more support and understanding we have around us, the better we cope.

Rather than worrying whether or not it will help, you might consider counselling as a precious gift you can give to yourself. Effective counselling truly can change your life—and for the better.

I am reminded of an interesting article I read recently in the Winter 2007 issue of the Wings Newsletter, entitled "Feeling the Agony of Sibling Death: My Story" by Diana Papilli. Describing how she came to terms with the violent murder of her brother twenty years before, Diana writes:

...I followed some early advice. I allowed myself to feel all of my feelings: anger, hatred, revenge, sorrow, pity, disgust, grief, regret, resentment and others. However, I did not wallow in them; not for long, anyway. I let them be and then let them pass...

I also used the services of a professional counsellor. I did not seek him initially for my grief, yet all of my experiences came into those sessions with me. My grief helped shape both the things inside me that I wanted to keep and wanted to release. A detached but compassionate counsellor can go a long way in helping overcome the most difficult of obstacles. Grief support groups offer similar benefit.

Many years have passed and I sometimes have to revisit those feelings. I do not treat them as evil robbers at my threshold. Instead, I treat them as necessary assistants, showing me where I need to work next. Living a decent, joyous life despite John's murder is the best tribute I can give to my brother. He wouldn't want anything less.

—Mary Tousley, Grief Counsellor; article from TCF North Shore newsletter, Winter 2015-16



The **International Gatherings** take place every five years. Here's the next one:

6th International TCF Gathering and the 20th National Conference VEID (Bereaved Parents and Siblings in Germany e.V.)

Welcome to the International Gathering of Bereaved Parents and Siblings in Frankfurt/Main from 28th to 31st July 2016.

<http://mourninginmotion.org/en/>

This message came in at the end of January:

My Dear and Compassionate Friends,

It is now 47 years since TCF was founded on 28 January, 1969.

I had heard of this organization from my friend who joined up here in East London, South Africa, soon after her 21-year-old son shot himself. But I was never going to need such an organization because I was never going to lose a child. Or so I thought. Two years later this friend was one of the first on my doorstep when my own 21-year-old son died while driving an Army ambulance. Two weeks later, I attended my first meeting with her and was so smitten with the whole wonderful concept that I am still here almost 26 years later.

You know the rest of the story through the deaths of your own beloved children – the sorrow, disbelief, desperation, heart-wrenching pain, tears that we would never recover.... And our own gradual reinvestment in life, spurred on by those who had trodden the road before us – the road paved for us by our Founders.

Having visited the very hospital and indeed the very room where Simon Stephens, Joe and Iris Lawley, Bill and Joan Henderson and Betty Rattigan met to discuss how they could reach out to bereaved parents and their families through the loss of their young sons, Kenneth, Billy and Jimmy, keeps me ever mindful of the candle of hope that still burns around the world today. So this is just a reminder to light your own candle in memory of your child or children, not only in gratitude for their lives but in deep gratitude for the hands of hope that were held out to each one of us and to thank you for holding on and reaching out to those who follow us in the name of The Compassionate Friends.

Hoping to see you all again at The International Gathering in Frankfurt and thanks to Wolfgang Book, Karin Grabenhorst and their tireless team for their attention to detail as they prepare for our arrival at the end of July 2016.

In warmest compassion - Myrtle Fleming, Chair, TCF International

It is never, ever, too late to light the candle of gratitude in our hearts!

Compassion: The Inner Light

The root of the word *compassion* is the Latin *cum patior* meaning *to suffer with* or to be passionate for someone else's well-being. But compassion is more than the simple act of caring. It leads us to go where it hurts, to enter places of pain and to share in brokenness, fear and confusion. Compassion means full immersion in the human condition including sorrow and loss.

Compassion is sometimes regarded as a type of sentimental pity towards those less fortunate: the sick, the poor, or the mentally ill. This kind of thinking taints compassion with the sour odor of superiority. Such pity is condescension and is applied to emphasize the differences between us. To discover for yourself if you engage in pity or in compassion, ask this question: When I help another, do I feel superior or humble?

Compassion is not a mere quiet sympathy with others, because compassion always requires action. We no longer offer help because we are supposed to, or give aid with the expectation of getting something in return. We do not reach out to another soul in pain because it shows how "evolved" we are, but because it is the compassionate thing to do.

Compassion is located in the heart, the place of our healing. The more hurts we have encountered, the more potential we have to be compassionate. As we seek to embrace the meaning of our own pain, we discover a healing light and open up to the suffering around us. We begin to understand people and events in a new way. Difficult situations no longer baffle us. This new understanding of how to help others allows us to reveal our compassion—the outward expression of our inner light.

—Christine Jette in *The Grieving Heart*



TCF USA 39th Annual National Conference
July 8 - 10, 2016
Scottsdale, Arizona

Registration is now open; the hotel is taking reservations.

The conference schedule and the list of topics (118 of them!) and presenters is posted on the website. It would be great to see some more Canadians there!

www.compassionatefriends.org

Life will never be the same again...

Remember that life will never again be exactly the way it was before your loved one died. If you are expecting things to "get back to normal" after a while, you may be disappointed to find that the new "normal" is not like the old "normal".

Your life will go on, but precisely because the person was important to you, it will not be the same without him or her. In the beginning it will seem as if your grief is running you, but in the end, you can learn to run your grief. When you understand what is happening to you and have some idea of what to expect, you will feel more in control of your grief and will be in a better position to take care of yourself, to find your own way through this loss and to begin rebuilding your life.

It is perfectly natural to need time and space to honour your feelings, and the memory of your loved one. It is also normal for significant dates, holidays, or other reminders to trigger feelings related to the loss.

It is not unusual for the painful emotions of your bereavement to make others feel extremely uncomfortable...to the point of feeling profoundly helpless. Unfortunately, this may leave you feeling isolated and lonely.

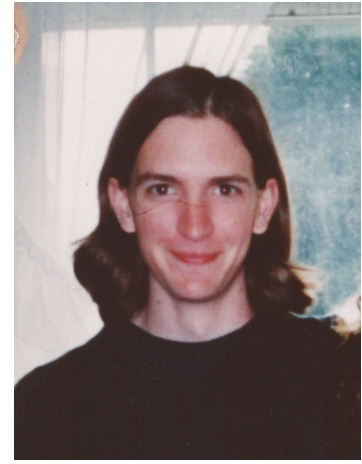
Your family and friends care about you, and are likely to offer advice about what they think is best for the grieving process. Listen to all the well meaning advice given to you, but this is your grief, it is your pain.

No one other than you can work through your grief. It is incredibly important that you do what you want to do. Do what feels right and most comfortable for you!

—Mark R Simpson, www.livingwithgrief; found in TCF Okanagan newsletter, Spring 2016

How can you hesitate? Risk! Risk anything!
 Care no more for the opinion of others, for those voices. Do the hardest thing on earth for you.
 Act for yourself. Face the truth.
 — Katherine Mansfield

Everyday courage has few witnesses. But yours is no less noble because no drum beats before you and no crowds shout your name.
 — Robert Louis Stevenson



Kevin Geeves Bond

September 6, 1974—October 7, 1994

Meet two more members of your TCF Canada Board of Directors:

Chapter Development: Eileen and Andy Bond, Ottawa

Eileen and Andy Bond are co-founders and current leaders of the Ottawa Chapter of The Compassionate Friends of Canada. Their 20-year-old son Kevin died suddenly in 1994 from “cardiac arrhythmia” leaving their two surviving children – Jennifer (b. 1972) and Michael (b. 1982).

Eileen and Andy initially made contact with TCF in Winnipeg and found the phone calls and newsletters to be a lifeline during those terrible initial weeks and months. They founded the Ottawa Chapter after attending a TCF Conference in Kelowna, BC, in 1998.

While raising their family, Eileen held several part-time jobs and volunteer positions in the community and also ran a successful home-based bookkeeping business. She is now retired, after 12 years as Office Manager in a long-term care facility. She spends time with her grandsons and still volunteers with The Council on Ageing and TCF.

Andy retired in December 2015 following a career in program management and business development in the aerospace and defense sector and 14 years as a career and retirement lifestyle coach. He is still active with local business groups and on various TCF projects.

In 2012, Eileen and Andy were honored to receive Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Medals in recognition of their work with TCF Ottawa. They joined the current TCF Canada National Board in 2015 and look forward to helping TCF Canada thrive as a national organization and making peer support as widely available as possible.

The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of confidence but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.
—Martin Luther King, Jr.

Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.
—Martin Luther King Jr.

Our Children Loved...Missed...Remembered

MARCH ... APRIL ... MAY MEMORIES

Our children remembered and missed on their birthdays...

Brett Armstrong was born on April 9, 1968; son of Judy Armstrong
Timothy Alexander Kingsford Arthur was born on May 24, 1971; son of Mitzi and Tim Arthur
Christina Marie Amos was born on April 14, 1966; daughter of Anita Barnes
Ryan Briton was born on March 31, 1992; son of Diane Bigham and Rob Eldred
Sarah Brooks was born on March 29, 1975; daughter of Kathy and Martin Brooks
Noah Cownden was born on April 12, 2006; son of Meadow Dykes, Christopher Cownden and Kelly Revel
Shayna Altair Darville was born on May 6, 1990; daughter of Kim and Jed Darville, sister of James Darville
Phoenix Demski-Jones was born on May 28, 1981; daughter of Viola Demski and Glenn Jones
Risa Dhillon was born on March 19, 1971; daughter of Harb and Bob Dhillon
Zachary Wayne Downey was born on May 1, 1996; son of Tania and Wayne Downey
Barbara Egan was born on April 6, 1963; daughter of Winnie Egan
Mark Robert Hall was born on March 7, 2008; son of Leslie and Bob Hall
Erika Holland was born on March 22, 1985; daughter of Cathy and Michael Holland
Tammy Miller was born on May 18, 1966; daughter of Ruby and Carl Johnson
Michael Kelly Kurash was born on March 5, 1984; son of Eileen Jespersen and Terry Kurash
Gregory Laslo was born on March 14, 1983; son of Josie Laslo
Irene Susan Lawrence was born on May 5, 1967; daughter of Susan and Mike Lawrence
Iris Lucinda "Cricket" Lloyd-Lenz was born on April 12, 2002; daughter of Mary Lloyd and Garth Lenz
Joelle Dawne McCaig was born on March 19, 1986; daughter of Karen and Dave McCaig
Hannah Miller was born on April 4, 1996; daughter of Kathryn and Stephen Miller
Cordelia Mister-Mercer was born on April 4, 2012; daughter of Emma Mister and Samuel Mercer
Grant David William Neufeld was born on May 20, 1993; son of Kimberley Albrighton and Randy Bryant
Kenneth Lee Pears was born on May 27, 1986; son of Dave Pears
Steven James Saxelby was born on April 22, 1965; son of Beryl and Eric Saxelby
Gregory Shoemsmith-McMorland was born on May 28, 1971;
son of Gil and Cheryl Shoemsmith and Brenda and Wally McMorland
Liam James Stebbins was born on April 22, 1994; son of Colleen Hobson and Shawn Stebbins
Courtenay Taaffe was born on April 7, 1976; daughter of Dianne and Mike Taaffe
Jim Tait was born on March 9, 1962; son of Moira Tait
Christopher Andrew Tuele was born on May 21, 1984; son of Trudy and Darren Tuele
Cliff Stephen Villeneuve was born on May 29, 1978; son of Brenda and Steve Villeneuve
Nicole Ann Waldron was born on April 16, 1979; daughter of Debbie and Ken Waldron

*Softly ... may peace replace heartache and cherished memories remain with you always
on your child's birthday.*

—TCF Johannesburg newsletter

Our Children Loved...Missed...Remembered

MARCH ... APRIL ... MAY MEMORIES

Our children remembered and missed on their last days...

Owen Anthony Aparcar died by suicide on April 28, 2002; son of Mary Jane and Tony Aparcar

Michael Renay Battle died on April 16, 2000, in a motorcycle accident; son of Martin and Stella Battle

Thalea Caravitis died on April 13, 1998, from complications from a brain tumour;

daughter of Debra Caravitis

Darren Thomas Kirk Cedar died on May 25, 2012, from an accidental overdose of prescription

pain medication; son of Cindy and Kirk Cedar

Noah Cownden died on April 9, 2008, from head trauma; son of Meadow Dykes,

Christopher Cownden and Kelly Revel

Aiden Tofino Day died on April 9, 2006, from mitochondrial disorder; son of Soleia Zotzman and Bille Day

Zachary Wayne Downey died on May 25, 2014, from cancer; son of Tania and Wayne Downey

Naomi Ruth Frantzen died on March 15, 2005, from drug complications; daughter of Bobbi and Mark Frantzen

Steven Fry died on March 8, 2003, from drug complications; son of Helga and Al Fry

Stephen Harvey died on March 1, 1999, drowned while trying to rescue his dog; son of Catherine Harvey

Jon Evan Klein died on May 13, 2013, from an unknown cause; son of Janet and John Klein

Winnifred Krimmer died on March 24, 2009, from amyloidosis; daughter of Dorothy Krimmer

Michael Frank Lawrence went missing May 28, 1968, later found drowned; son of Susan and Mike Lawrence

Patrick Lee died on April 7, 2013, from brain cancer; son of Meg and Ron Lee

Nathan Lepinsky died on May 25, 1991, from viral pneumonia; son of Aline and Richard Lepinsky

Iris Lucinda "Cricket" Lloyd-Lenz died on May 9, 2002, due to twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome;

daughter of Mary Lloyd and Garth Lenz

Gail Ooms died on April 10, 2001, from a rare heart problem; daughter of Laurel Lucas

Joelle Dawne McCaig died on March 11, 2001, from a brain tumour; daughter of Karen and Dave McCaig

James McGuire died on May 15, 2003, from suicide; son of Camilla and Ray McGuire

David Allen Lloyd McKenzie died on March 30, 2004, from impulsive suicide;

son of Louise and Philip McKenzie

Trever William McKenzie died on March 23, 2014, from an overdose of fentinol; son of Georgene Perrin

Cordelia Mister-Mercer died on April 16, 2012, from birth complications and genetic syndrome;

daughter of Emma Mister and Samuel Mercer

Laurie Nanson died on March 24, 2004, from multiple myeloma; daughter of Joan and Jim Nanson

Alicia Anne Rockel-Strain died on May 17, 2015, from cancer and its treatment; daughter of Linda Vayra

Bradley Sihvon died April 7, 2010, from a GI bleed; son of Lynn Darrow

John McKim Millar died in April, 2003, in a mountaineering accident; son of Eileen Sowerby

Robert Scott (Scotty) Stone died on May 1, 2013, cause unknown; son of Judie and Jim Stone

Because of You

Because of you I appreciate the sunset more than before.

Because of you I stop to look up at the moon and wish upon a star.

Because of you I look forward to hearing the birds sing in the morning,
and thank God for their beautiful songs.

Because of you I am more understanding of others
and accept people for who they are.

Because of you material things do not matter.

Because of you the touch of someone I love
is more precious than any gift I can receive.

*So much
to be
Thankful
for!*

Because of you I have a broken heart but I thank God for sending you to me.

For there is no stronger love than I hold for you.

Until we meet again....

—J. Melia, in TCF North Shore newsletter, Winter 2011/12

Families are encouraged to submit memorials for inclusion in the newsletter. This may be as simple as the child's name listed on the Children Remembered pages, or it might be an appropriate poem, a favourite recipe, or a photograph or two for publication on these pages.

A Vow for Health & Joy

I vow to offer joy to one person in the morning and to help relieve the grief of one person in the afternoon.

I vow to live simply and sanely, content with a few possessions, and to keep my body healthy.

I vow to let go of all worries and anxiety in order to be light and free.

—Thich Nhat Hanh

What is there to do when people die

—people so dear and rare —

but to bring them back by remembering.

—May Sarton

Do not wait for life. Do not long for it.

Be aware, always and at every moment,

that the miracle is in the here and now.

—Marcel Proust

Confusion

Two steps forward, one step back ...
Or is it two steps backward, one step forward ...?
Now I can't remember.
Which way am I going?

And what will I do when I "get there"?
Confusion, lack of direction, memory "loss", and a sense of just
going in circles are all a part of the grieving process.

Over and over we find ourselves standing in the
middle of a room wondering why we are there. We came
with a purpose but darned if we can remember what it is
now that we are here.

I know that it can be blamed on age but I also know that
grief can play havoc with our ability to function on a day-to-day
basis. Tasks that once seemed simple now take

forever to complete – and we only get it done if we write
it down first! I can report that for me ... it's
getting better. Now, it is age more than grief which
steals my memory and hides it on the counter.

Yesterday I thought I was pretty effective ...
I got dressed, I ate, I accomplished things.

But today ... I can't find the list,
I'm not sure I showered,
And why am I looking in the freezer?

Two steps backwards, today.
Oh well, tomorrow I will start again.

—Jane Ono, TCF Coquitlam, BC

But grief still has to be worked through.
It is like walking through water.
Sometimes there is an enormous breaker that knocks me down.
Sometimes there is a sudden and fierce squall.
But I know that many waters cannot quench love,
neither can the floods drown it.

—Madeleine L-Engle, *Two-Part Invention*

For fast-acting relief,
try slowing down.

—Lily Tomlin



Enjoy

the little things in life...

for one day

you'll look back

and realize

they were the big things.

Hold on to what is good
even if it is
a handful of earth.
Hold on to what you believe
even if it is
a tree which stands by itself.
Hold on to what you must do
even if it is
a long way from here.
Hold on to life even when
it is easier letting go.
Hold on to my hand even when
I have gone away from you.

—Nancy Wood, 1974



Telephone Friends

“Who better to soften the wound of one, than he who has suffered the wound himself.” — Thomas Jefferson

When you have a bad day, and you want to speak to someone who understands, call a phone friend. Members below will speak with you and may know other members to call who have losses or circumstances similar to yours.

North Island

Eileen Sowerby 250-285-2434 - son, 24 years,
mountaineering accident

Mid-Island

Carolyn Farrington 250-954-8495 - son, 28 years,
commercial fishing accident

Victoria

Sue Ross 250-478-9270 - son, 20 years,
cardiac arrhythmia

List of TCF brochures

- My Child Was Murdered
- When a Grandchild Dies
- Grief in the Classroom
- Sudden Accidental Death
- Grief: Understanding the Side Effects
- Seven Principles for Bereaved Siblings
- My Child Died by Suicide
- Seven Principles for Bereaved Parents
- How to Help
- Ways and Words To Comfort
- Miscarriage, Stillborn and Newborn Death
- Coping With Grief After a Long-term Illness
- Grieving the Death of a Step-Child
- Caring For Surviving Children
- The Death of an Adult Child
- Sibling Grief
- Childless Parents
- Back To Work

Brochures are available from the TCF National Office.

Helpful websites:

<http://www.griefnet.org/>
<http://www.goodgriefresources.com/>
<http://www.thebereavementjourney.com/>
<http://www.nationalshareoffice.com/>
<http://www.survivorsofsuicide.com/>
<http://www.compassionatefriends.org>
<http://www.griefwatch.com/>
<http://journeyofhearts.org/>



A Black Ribbon for

May 19th
Bereavement Day in B.C.



A lapel pin in the shape of a draped black ribbon is available from the BC Bereavement Helpline. It's meant to be worn "to help others acknowledge your loss or to acknowledge the loss of others".

www.bcbh.ca bcbh@telus.net
toll free 1-877-779-2223

Pins are also available from the TCF National Office (contact information at the bottom of page 19)

Griefworks BC interactive website for kids called "The Journey World":

www.griefworksbc.com

Sibling websites:

www.tcfatlanta.org/sibling.html

www.angelfire.com/co/compassion/Sibs.html

Around The Island



TCF MONTHLY MEETINGS

Chapter/Place	Date Each Month	Time	Place	Leader/Contact
Comox Valley	2 nd Wednesday	7:00 p.m.	North Island Public Health Unit Tyee Plaza #200-1100 Island Hwy Campbell River	Judy Dowd: 250-923-2485; 250-220-2593
Cowichan Valley	2 nd Wednesday	7:00 p.m.	Cowichan Green Community 360 Duncan St., Duncan	Judi Aitchison: 250-510-1626
Oceanside	2 nd Thursday	7:00 p.m.	Valhalla House (Oceanside Hospice) 210 Crescent Rd. West Qualicum Beach	Carolyn: 250-954-8495 (Qualicum Beach) Joan Mantie: 250-954-0364
Port Alberni	contact Margaret Vatamaniuk		250-735-0810	mvatman@gmail.com
Victoria	4 th Tuesday (except in December)	7:00 p.m.	First Memorial Funeral Services 4725 Falaise Drive (Broadmead area)	Victoria@TCFCanada.net Contact: Sue Ross 250-478-9270
<u>AGM Tuesday, March 24, 2015</u>				

The Compassionate Friends of Canada

e-mail: NationalOffice@TCFCanada.net
 phone toll-free: **1-866-823-0141**
 web site: www.TCFCanada.net

Our first Compassionate Friends Headquarters was established in 1977 in Winnipeg, MB. Ken Pinch, Pat Pinch and Gwen Brown were instrumental in developing the National Organization in 1986, fulfilling the vision with the development of national by-laws, incorporation, and establishing a central location, linking bereaved parents across Canada. Gwen Brown travelled across Canada visiting and developing chapters from her *"Hopemobile Office."*

— TCF Canada, 2015

TCF NATIONAL BOARD 2015-2016

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 Vice-President: Susan Doyle Lawrence, Victoria, BC
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National Advisory Board: Pat Pinch (Squamish, BC)

Published with the assistance of the Community Outreach Programs of

FIRST MEMORIAL FUNERAL SERVICES CREMATORIUM

"GARDEN OF MEMORIES"



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*SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF VANCOUVER ISLAND AND
OUTER ISLANDS FOR OVER FOUR DECADES*

The Compassionate Friends Funding

The Compassionate Friends of Vancouver Island receives no government funding, and relies solely on donations from members, professional caregivers, and the public. There are no dues or fees to join The Compassionate Friends—bereaved parents have already paid the ultimate price, the death of a child. Donations are often given to remember birthdays or anniversaries.

TCF Victoria relies on donations to continue its services to the community. If you benefit from receiving the newsletter, a donation would be appreciated.

Suggested minimum annual donations for newsletter subscriptions are:

- Members and public—\$15.00
- Professionals—\$25.00



Tax-deductible receipts are available.

Donations may be mailed to:

The Compassionate Friends — Victoria Chapter
c/o 959 Glen Willow Place
Victoria, BC V9B 4W3



Newsletter Deadlines

May 1, August 1, November 1, February 1
e-mail: Victoria@TCFCanada.net

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If you would like to receive a copy of the newsletter by e-mail, please let us know at Victoria@TCFCanada.net.

Thanks to everyone contributing to this issue!

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