



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



NEWSLETTER

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

September - October 2015



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YOU ARE INVITED

The Compassionate Friends - Metrowest Chapter meets twice a month. Evenings on the third Tuesday from 7:30 to 9:30 pm in the library of St. Mary's Parish Center, Route 16, Washington St., Holliston. The parish center is located between the church and the rectory. Our next two meetings will be on:

September 15th October 20th

The **Tuesday** afternoon meetings will be held on the last Tuesday of the month at St. Mary of the Assumption Church in Milford parish center at 17 Winter St. **Please call Ed or Joan Motuzas at (508) 473-4239 by the last Monday or earlier if you plan to attend.**

Directions....On Route 16 (Main St.) going north through downtown Milford (Main St.) at Tedeschi's Market on the left, take a left at the lights onto Winter St. The parish center is the last building before the church. Going south on Route 16 (East Main St.) after Sacred Heart Church on the left, bear right on Main St., continue past Dunkin' Donuts on the right, proceed to the next set of lights and take a right onto Winter St. There is parking on both sides of the street. Look for Compassionate Friends signs to meeting room. Our next two meetings will be on:

September 29th October 27th

WHO ARE WE?

The Compassionate Friends is a nonprofit, nonsectarian, mutual assistance, self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents and siblings.

Our primary purpose is to assist the bereaved in the positive resolution of the grief experienced 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 and siblings for those who wish to understand. Our objective is to help members of the community, including family, friends, employers, co-workers, and professionals to be supportive.

Meetings are open to all bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. No dues or fees are required to belong to the Metrowest Chapter of The Compassionate Friends.

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. ©2015

Weather Cancellation

In the event of inclement weather on meeting days or nights, if in doubt call:

**Ed or Joan Motuzas at
(508) 473-4239**



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



Chapter Information

Co-leaders

* Ed Motuzas 508/473-4239
 * Joan Motuzas 508/473-4239

Secretary

* Joan Motuzas 508/473-4239

Treasurer

* Joseph Grillo 508/473-7913

Webmaster

* Al Kennedy 508/533/9299

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Ed Motuzas 508/473-4239

Senior Advisors

* Rick & Peg Dugan 508/877-1363

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 Janice Parmenter 508/528-5715
 Linda Teres 508/620-0613
 Mitchell Greenblatt 508/881-2111
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The chapter address is:

The Compassionate Friends
 Metrowest Chapter
 26 Simmons Dr.
 Milford, MA 01757-1265

Chapter Web Page
www.tcfmetrowest.com

Regional Coordinator
 Tom Morse
 66 Atwood Avenue
 Middleboro, MA 02346
 Phone (508) 572-3038
tjmorse521@gmail.com

The Compassionate Friends has a national office that supports and coordinates chapter activities. The national office can be reached as follows:

The Compassionate Friends
 P.O. Box 3696
 Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696
 Voice Toll Free (877) 969-0010
 Fax (630) 990-0246

Web Page: www.compassionatefriends.org

TRIBUTES, GIFTS AND DONATIONS

There are no dues or fees to belong to *The Compassionate Friends*. Just as our chapter is run entirely by volunteers, your voluntary, tax-deductible donations enable us to send information to newly bereaved parents, purchase pamphlets and books, contribute to the national chapter and meet other chapter expenses.

THANK YOU to the friends who help keep our chapter going with their contributions.

Love Gifts

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

- Links the members together and fosters a sense of family.
- Provides helpful materials for bereaved families, including those unable or reluctant to attend meetings.
- Gives members a forum to express their feelings through poems and stories.
- Allows members to see their child, sibling, or grandchild's name in print.
- Keeps members informed regarding local and national TCF matters.
- Raises funds for chapter needs. Many donations come from those who receive newsletters but do not attend meetings.
- Reminds professionals of TCF's presence in your community.





Our Children Remembered

As a regular feature, the newsletter acknowledges anniversaries of the deaths of our children/siblings and their birthdays. This issue covers the months of September and October. If information about your loved one is missing, incorrect or our chapter files are in error, please send the correct data, including your name, address, and telephone number, the name of your loved one and the birthday and date and cause of death to the newsletter editor, Ed Motuzas, 26 Simmons Dr., Milford, MA 01757-1265.

Anniversaries

September

CHAD ARTHUR HOLBROOK
KATHY A. BURNS
DEVIN J. EHRMANNTRAUT
DONNA M. McHUGH
SHAYNE M. DESDOCHES
LINDSEY WHALEN
CHRIS GRIFFITHS
GREG BRUNO

October

ANDREW DELPRETE
MATTHEW T. BRADY
RICHARD J. LaJOIE
ETHAN PATRICK CONNOLLY
DAVID A. SCHNEGG
MARC R. PEARLMAN
CLIFFORD CROWE

Birthdays

September

ELISE LARKIN AYERS
TYLER PARMENTER
RICHARD A. THAMBASH Jr.
WILLIAM BRUCE-TAGOE
RUSSELL J. TERES
AARON STEVEN GRAY
MATTHEW ALLEN BERTULLI
GREGORY P. CALIMERIS
DANIEL R. ADILETTO
MATTHEW PISAPIA
BETSY CHICK-GRANT

October

WILLIAM O. COHEN
KATHY A. BURNS
COLLIN T. MURPHY
EVAN M. RODRIGUES
DENNIS M. HENNIGAN
JEFFREY MALCOLM FLYNN
MAXIMUS ABRAM
LINDSEY WHALEN
JACKLYN KATE THOMAS
CHRISTINA M. ROSSETTI
TIMOTHY JAMES THORSEN

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Go Green



Green goes with everything



THE SIBLING CORNER



This page is dedicated to siblings together adjusting to grief thru encouragement & sharing

"Siblings Walking Together." We are the surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends. We are brought together by the deaths of our brothers and sisters. Open your hearts to us, but have patience with us. Sometimes we will need the support of our friends. At other times we need our families to be there. Sometimes we must walk alone, taking our memories with us, continuing to become the individuals we want to be. We cannot be our dead brother or sister; however, a special part of them lives on with us.

When our brothers and sisters died, our lives changed. We are living a life very different from what we envisioned, and we feel the responsibility to be strong even when we feel weak. Yet we can go on because we understand better than many others the value of family and the precious gift of life. Our goal is not to be the forgotten mourners that we sometimes are, but to walk together to face our tomorrows as surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends.

COPING WITH THE GRIEF OF OLDER SIBLINGS

Everyone grieves differently. A sibling's response is determined by his or her relationship to the child who died and place in the family.

The most difficult thing for them is that the foundation of the family is shaken. Everything has changed over night and that leaves them feeling insecure.

The death of a sibling is a mid-life crisis for kids. Suddenly they are aware of their own mortality. That may cause them to become over-protective. They may also overreact to illnesses.

They will rarely talk about their feelings because they're afraid it will hurt their parents more. The reality here is that parents are at the bottom of the list of people they will talk to, but that doesn't mean they aren't talking to someone.

School becomes a terrible problem and grades drop because they can't function any better than we do as parents.

At some point in the grief process overachieving can also become a way of dealing with pain.

Conflicts intensify between remaining siblings.

Sometimes there is nothing you can do for your kids but allow them to hurt. At the same time, it is hard for parents to let the grief be the child's problem.

They feel they have to make up for the child who's gone.

Kids will think, "It should have been me. You wouldn't hurt quite as much if it were me."

There is likely to be some distancing for awhile.

There is also a fear that if you pull away you'll never be close again, but that usually doesn't happen.

You have to develop memories of things that happened after the child died, and you have to develop new traditions, but that takes years.

The loss surfaces for young people at every milestone in their lives-significant birthdays, graduation, weddings, parenthood, etc.



The child who is suddenly the only child has envy of other kids' siblings. They seem to experience more anger and pain than other bereaved siblings do.

It is difficult for kids when the parents' energy is wrapped up in the dead child. Inside they're screaming, "Look at me, I'm still alive."

The reality of death is that there is always remorse about things done or left undone.

Siblings can benefit from this painful experience. They may gain a different perspective on life, value it more highly, and adopt new priorities. They learn things that strengthen them and they tend to be more compassionate and sensitive than other young people.

***Karol Wendt
Milwaukee, WI***

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PROBLEMS,
IS A SCHOOL
WITHOUT
LESSONS.



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THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



To the baby in the room across the hall

Dear baby, I don't know your name.

I don't know why you were here in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, I don't know how long you had been here.

I know only that today you became an angel.

Your room is dark now. Your beautiful pictures and the decorations on your door are gone now.

I hope you are running and laughing and playing up in heaven tonight, free of tubes and wires and beeps and pokes and all the things that you were hooked up to in your tiny crib.

Yesterday morning you started having troubles. Your room was a hive of activity all morning and that code light, that damn red code light was lit up above your door as doctors and x-ray machines and surgical teams moved efficiently in and out. My eye caught that of your nurse and tears welled up in my eyes. Because she is our nurse too. And I knew that look on her face. I knew the look on your momma's face too, as she leaned against the nurses' desk watching all the activity and feeling helpless to it all. And all I could do was pray...

They eventually stabilized you. When I left to go home, you seemed stable. I knew our nurse/your nurse was busy in your room doing the amazing work only she can do to keep very chaotic little bodies as stable as possible. Last night when she got off shift she texted me that it had been a rough day, and that she missed coming in to our room for her loves. I texted her back that it was ok, we sent her our love all day, and I knew she was right where she needed to be all day, taking care of YOU. And I know she gave it her all. I know she poured every last ounce of anything she had left into you all day. And when she left, and she needed to, she let all of those emotions about how hard that day was flow as tears.

I hope you are able to look down now and see her and know what an amazing person you had taking care of you. All of them here are amazing. I saw your beautiful pictures, you were a smiling happy baby, surely you knew the love they gave you. I hope you watch over all of them as they continue having hard days, and continue coming in and doing what they do with smiles on their faces, even if those smiles are hiding tears sometimes.

And today I came back and realized your room was clean.

You were gone.

I tried to tell myself maybe you just got transferred somewhere. Maybe you had to go down to the CICU or maybe they flew you to Chicago. Sure they did.

But see, I know that's not the reality of life in the ICU. I know what that code light means.

And I don't know why today was your time, and two years ago when my daughter was in the room right next to yours, and her code light was going off and going off and going off for so many long hours....why it wasn't her time. I don't understand why some babies make it, and some babies don't.

I have had to come to terms with the fact that here in the ICU, as much as it feels like a weird microcosm of "home" sometimes....it also feels like the hardest place in the world to "live". Because while many miracles and successes happen here....just as often there isn't a happy ending.

But what I want to tell you is that you earning your angel wings was not in vain.

You made an impact with your little life.

You made an impact on me. And I don't even know you. I hope I can find out your name at least. I'd like to honor you by at least knowing your name.

Because of that dark room with its absence of a teeny crib and beautiful pictures of your adorable smile, I will hug my babies tighter. I will grab onto life a little harder. I will complain a LOT less. I will smile more often and I will forgive more easily and I will not take one single minute of life, whether it is here on the hard boxes of bliss or home in my own zone of comfort, for granted.

I wanted to be sad today, not quite like this. But I was feeling sorry for myself. Sorry for my own baby girl who was lying in the room across the hall from you. I dropped her sisters off at school and I was sad that I had to say goodbye to them and couldn't tell them when I would see them again. Maybe in two days or maybe a week. I passed my little girl's classroom and I started to cry as I realized she should have been sitting there at the yellow table, brow furrowed in concentration as she worked on her letters and numbers. She should be going on her very first field trip tomorrow to the horse farm. She has been so excited for that trip! It hurts to think of how devastated she will be when she finds out she missed it.

But now I think of all the firsts you will have missed too, and I am glad for the ones my baby HAS experienced. I will try my best to not focus on the things she's missed, and instead be overjoyed for the things she HAS had.

Dear baby....you weren't here long, but you made a difference. Your smile was beautiful and I will likely never forget it. Fly high sweet baby girl.

***Terra Atkinson
(The Mighty - June 24, 2015)***



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



Healing the Grieving Heart Web Radio Show Is A Special Tool For Parents

Gentle, calming voices stream through your computer speakers as you listen to the archived and live web radio shows that comprise the "Healing the Grieving Heart" series. Live shows are at 11:00 am on Thursdays. The archives are available 24 hours per day on the Compassionate Friends web site.

Dr. Gloria Horsley, a professional advisor to The Compassionate Friends national organization, is the host of this web radio show. Dr. Horsley, who lost her son in a vehicle accident, brings the professional insight and the unique experience of losing a child, to her broadcasts. Guests on her show are usually bereaved parents who have written books, or are professionals or active long time members of The Compassionate Friends. Each guest offers a unique perspective and helps to facilitate a distinctive flow of information and ideas.

The main message of this series is hope. While listening to the gentle voices of Dr. Horsley and the numerous guests and callers, I began to realize that losing a child changes us profoundly and forever, yet we will not stay in this darkest of places for the rest of our lives. We can and do move forward, not away, from the death of our child. We keep the memory and spirit of our child forever as a treasure within ourselves. We realize that life will never be the same, for our child is gone from our side. But we also realize that we will grow, become someone different, because of our loss and are destined to one day find a "new normal" with which we are at peace.

Archived shows can be found on the TCF web site: compassionatefriends.org. Once at the website, cursor down the left side of the page. You will find "Healing the Grieving Heart" link here. The link contains information about the show, the host and a list of shows that are archived so that you can listen to them over and over at your leisure.

Of all the tools that I have found, this one is surely one of the best. While I read a great deal, listen to various web radio broadcasts throughout the day while working, write from time to time about my emotions and the loss of my child and attend monthly TCF meetings, this medium brings a new dimension to my coping options. The "Healing the Grieving Heart" broadcasts present a stream of soft voiced parents who have rediscovered themselves following the death of a child. When I want or need to hear words of hope, I listen.



Before this show debuted, if I was in a particularly bad place or seeking hope, there was little I could do at that very moment....nothing could ease my emptiness or give me solace. This show offers what I need at the time that I need it. The professionals offer gentle suggestions for coping, moving forward, making a bad day a little better and so much more. I have listened to five of the archived shows and plan to listen to each one.

Archived shows from June 2005 through last week are available on The Compassionate Friends Web Site. If you are a parent who has no web access, our chapter has purchased the series and you may check out shows and listen to them on a CD player. This is an outreach of soothing voices, wise suggestions and experienced empathy that each of us should experience as we continue life without our precious children.

We know life will never be the same. But now we do have hope that one day life will become a little bit sweeter, a little bit brighter and little bit happier for ourselves and our compassionate friends.

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

Grandma Wanna-Be

Last fall, my son Derrick and his wife, Jenny, announced that we would be grandparents this summer. At 47, I no longer had a desire to raise another child of my own and was already a self-confessed "grandma wanna-be." Their news made my heart dance. My joy, however, was turned to anger when the pregnancy ended in miscarriage.

As a grandma wanna-be with that first grandchild on the way, I was picturing myself baby-sitting and cooing my way to old age with this child and those to follow cuddled around me. I bought patterns for sewing baby clothes and books filled with baby projects. Would the new parents want the crib my children had slept in? If not, where would I set it up for those visits to Grandma's house? My thoughts were overflowing with being a grandma.

After a one o'clock a.m. call from Derrick, I knew that Jenny was probably miscarrying. My knees hit the floor and I sobbed my prayers. "Please, God, don't let this child die, too!" I implored. When it was confirmed that this child would never be born, all of my happy imaginings were replaced by anger. The raging thoughts of a protective mother quickly replaced those of the grandma-to-be.

In September of 1994 our only daughter, 13-year-old Melissa, died in a car accident.



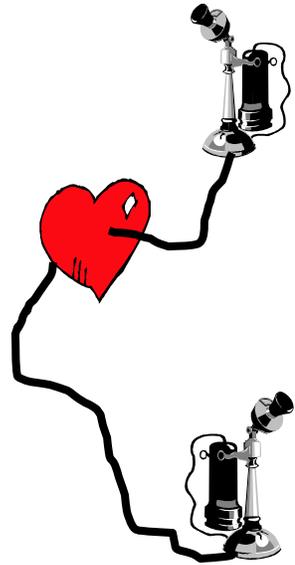
THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



Phone Friends

Sometimes it helps to just be able to talk to someone; maybe at a time when pain or stress seems too much to bear. We maintain a list of Telephone Friends; people who are willing to listen, to commiserate, to give whatever support they can. In a time of need, feel free to call one of our Telephone Friends.

- Ed & Joan Motuzas, ...**Scott**, age 31, Kidney and Liver Failure,(508)473-4239
- Janice Parmenter,**Tyler**, age 29, Chronic Addiction,(508)528-5715
- Judy Daubney,**Clifford**, age 27, Suicide,(508)529-6942.
- Linda Teres,.....**Russell**, age 19, Automobile Accident,(508)620-0613
- Mitchell Greenblatt,...**Ian**, age 18, Automobile Accident,..... (508)881-2111
- Judith Cherrington,....**Jeffrey**, age 48, Cancer,(508)473-4087
- Sandra Richiazzi.....**Bryan C. Plunkett**, Automobile Accident,.....(508)877-8106



It is always useful to have more Telephone Friends; individuals who are willing to provide support and comfort via the telephone. The chapter provides guidance for those who want to help. When you listen and talk to the bereaved, you make a difference. A longer list of Telephone Friends increases the likelihood that someone will be available when needed. Call Ed Motuzas at (508) 473-4239 if you would like to be a Telephone Friend.

(continued from last page)

Our sons, Derrick and Wade, were also in the car. At 15 and 11, respectively, they were devastated emotionally though they had only minor physical injuries. We have all worked hard at living without Melissa, but some days it seems that there is a dark cloud hanging over us determined to block the sunshine from our lives.

Derrick blamed himself for the accident. He put himself in a world of self-induced guilt, a place from which we sometimes wondered if he would ever return. Retrieving his soul has been a long and arduous journey, Jenny beside him every step of the way. I knew immediately upon hearing the baby was lost that he would somehow go back there, which he did. In his mind, Melissa's and his baby's deaths were connected by his feelings of helplessness in the face of tragedy. The fact that this could happen, placing him back in that hell, made my blood boil. Those beautiful children had been through enough! Why couldn't Derrick and Jenny have just this one blessing free of heartache?

Many people reminded me of all the medical reasons for miscarriage, making it sound like some grand act of mercy. They said that the baby was very likely genetically damaged and, if brought to term and live birth, it may have been afflicted with any number of maladies. I know they were trying to make me feel better, and it is likely they were right, but their words only made me angrier. There didn't have to be anything wrong with this baby! My mind screamed. Babies are carried to term and born every day.

Why did this one have to be damaged? Derrick and Jenny needed this joy. And we were already grieving the loss of the grandchildren Melissa would never deliver. Wasn't that enough?

I did not feel guilty or sorry for my anger. I have learned through grieving for Melissa that anger is a natural part of grief. Until now, I simply felt that it was unfinished business. I needed time to come to a place of peace in the face of another child lost to us.

When Melissa died, as deep as my grief was, I rejoiced in the lives of my sons. The fact that they survived that accident was declared a miracle, and it spun a web of protection around my broken heart. Then, in the summer of 2001, Wade was in another accident. The fact that he walked away from it only sore and bruised was declared another miracle. I remember the gratitude and grace I felt when I wrapped my arms around him and sobbed for the words I could not speak.

That memory began to emerge as my initial anger over being denied our first grandchild lost some of its steam. My gratitude for lives saved began to spin around in my head, seeking domination over the anger for lives lost. As much as I wanted to let go of the anger and embrace gratitude, I just couldn't find the resolution I sought.

Until now. It is summer again, 2002. Wade was in a third accident, this time escaping the rolled vehicle only seconds before it burst into flames within sight of where Melissa had died. When I arrived at the scene I walked past the incinerated mass of metal. Again, I could not speak, but only held Wade until I could peel my arms from his healthy, whole self.



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



(continued from last page)

I was calm and in control until later that night when I was alone.

The mash of emotions in my head and heart were too great to hold inside. I was in my car so I opened the roof, cranked up the music, and sobbed for twenty miles. The mother of Melissa grieved yet again. The grandmother of an unborn child also grieved as the mother of Derrick fought for rights to her anger. The mother of Wade wailed prayers of thanks.

From this tangle of emotions, one truth emerged: As long as I choose to embrace the miracles around me, my heart will dance. Whether in the slow dance of grief or skipping to the beat as I cuddle and coo with grandbabies yet to come, hope and joy will emerge in the rhythms of the dance.

**JoAnne Rademacher
TCF Minot, ND**

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THE BEDROOM DILEMMA

There are many dilemmas affecting the life of a bereaved parent, but one that seems to cause one of the greatest amounts of stress and hand wringing is what we do with our children's (or siblings or grandchild's) bedroom. My daughter Nina's room was her sanctuary—a very messy one at that. Much to my chagrin, the more clutter surrounding her the better! However, as a teenager, that is where she could be found most often; lying on her daybed chatting on the phone with her friends, homework and soda cans scattered around her, clothes and shoes thrown every which way. Laughter emanated from her bedroom, my daughter's intermingled with her friends' shrieks of delight. Many evenings I sat on her bed as she told me of her adventures as a freshman at Park High, her latest crush, and regaled me with her tales of a day in the life of a typical 15-year-old girl. Much of my memories are to be found in that room, and the realization I would never have those experiences again with Nina were almost unbearable. Therefore, what I would do with her bedroom now that she was no longer here was of utmost importance to me.

Over the 12 plus years since Nina left this plane, and I have been a part of TCF sharing groups, I have heard various ways others have dealt with this issue. Interestingly, what seems to come into play again and again is what friends and family thought should be done with the child's room. More often than not, their school of thought is that we should empty it completely, give away their possessions, and change it into an office or guest bedroom just as quickly as possible. They believe keeping things as is are only constant reminders of our children's absence. In reality, we are thinking of them 24/7 anyway. Truly, they mean well and are only trying to find ways to help us. However, in the early stages of our grief most of us are not capable of making such an important decision, which is one that should be made only by us. With our loved ones gone, once we change something, there is no going back. To clear away her things and depersonalize her room felt to me as if I was somehow removing her from my life. What I learned from seasoned bereaved parents was that what are perceived as painful memories of their absence, while in early grief, will, in time, become cherished memories we will want to hold onto. When the numbing brain fog lifts we will more clearly begin to realize that, and only then make more rational decisions that are right for our situation.

(continued on page 11)

Other Area TCF Chapters

- MA/CT Border Towns Chapter (Dudley, Webster areas)
- Chapter Leaders: Paul & Anne Mathieu
- (508) 248-7144.....ampm1259@charter.net
- South Shore Chapter (Hingham, Weymouth areas)
- Martha Berman
- (781) 337-8649.....mmartha1@comcast.net
- Worcester Chapter
- Chapter Co-Leaders: Lisa Holbrook
- (774) 482-6066.....sixholes@charter.net
- Mary Vautier....
- (508) 393-7348.....mjvautier@msn.com
- Central Middlesex Chapter (Needham, Concord)
- Chapter Leader: Carol Gray-Cole
- (781) 444-1091.....cgc603@aol.com



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



NEWSLETTER MAILING LIST UPDATE (THIS PAGE WILL BE PRINTED EVERY OTHER EDITION)

We continue to update our mailing list. We want everyone who reads our newsletter to receive it; however, mailing costs make this update necessary. We want to send it where it is being read. Your donations allow us to print and mail this newsletter and to reach out to hundreds of parents and siblings.

Please fill out this form now if you wish to be added to or removed from our mailing list. This form should be filled out annually. If we don't hear from you in a year's time you will be notified through the newsletter that your name will be removed from our mailing list unless we hear from you.

If you are able to make a donation at this time, it will be gratefully received. Please mail to address below.

PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM AND RETURN IT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

I (do___) (do not___) wish to continue receiving the TCF newsletter.

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

(Parent / Sibling / Grandparent___) (professional___)

(Donation included___) Make checks payable to "The Compassionate Friends" or TCF

If there are any errors in spelling or other information in this newsletter, please call it to my attention so that I may correct it. Please use this page to send back information, reverse side is addressed for your convenience.

Mail to: TCF Metrowest, 26 Simmons Dr., Milford, MA 01757-1265

CHANGE OF ADDRESS?

PLEASE ADVISE US OF ADDRESS CHANGES TO INSURE YOUR RECEIVING THE NEWSLETTER, THEY ARE NOT FORWARDED BY THE POST OFFICE.

Fold & Tape

The Compassionate Friends
Metrowest Chapter
26 Simmons Dr.
Milford MA 01757-1265

Fold & Tape



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF METROWEST



(continued from page 8)

I decided to leave Nina's room as it was, mostly from advice I received at a TCF meeting. I told myself that I would know when I was ready to tackle that decision. This is not always possible for everyone—maybe they had previously crowded conditions and needed that room for someone else or a variety of other reasons. What we need to remember again is that handling something like this is so personal; what feels right for one person may be entirely wrong for another. I think the key thing to remember is that if we are able to take our time that we try not to make a snap decision. We had no control over the fact that our child died; this might be something that we can make a choice about when we are ready and able to do so.

In my case, I waited for seven years before redoing Nina's room. I tried to do it at one and a half years and then again at five years, and found that I just could not. When I finally did at seven years, I took my time and spent many weeks sifting through her life. I cried a ton of tears, but at that stage I spent the majority of time smiling and laughing. I found things she wrote, what I call 'buried treasures', that in the early stages would have set me back weeks because of its emotional impact, but years later brought me peace, and a deep personal understanding of Nina's thoughts that rekindled our close relationship.



I acknowledge that most people do not wait seven years to undertake the bedroom project; however, that is what worked for me. I made her room into a guest room that still included her daybed and many of her personal belongings. At that later stage, it became my private place where I would wrap myself in her handmade afghan, lie on her bed, look at the glow-in-the-dark stars on her ceiling (that are still there today), and I felt close to my daughter. The point here is that seven months or seven years, we must try not to let someone else force the issue, as well meaning as they may be, with something as important as what to do with our child's room. Everyone has different timetables. Only we will know what and when it is right for us.

With gentle thoughts,

Cathy L. Seehuetter
TCF St. Paul, MN
In Memory of my daughter, Nina



A very special thank you goes out to those people that facilitate our meetings every month. It is through their unselfishness in stepping up, that makes our chapter a safe place for the newly bereaved to get through the grieving process.

Thank you for your involvement and continued support.

Mitchell Greenblatt (Ian's Dad)
Linda Teres (Russell's Mom)
Rick Dugan (Larry's Dad)
Janice Parmenter (Tyler's Mom)
Judy Daubney (Clifford Crowe's Mom)

September 13, 2001

Horror, unthinkable, happened in the US on Tuesday. The exact numbers are unknown to us now, but thousands are dead.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with them," we read and hear from today's media. But you and I who have lost a loved child or children, know that it is more we feel today than thoughts and prayers. We are in shock like the rest of the nation, but we are also in pain for we know too well the horror mothers and fathers are now facing at the death of their children. These parents have entered what we live with each day, a life without our loved one.

Our "get on with your life" society isn't always kind to the griever. Already it seems like there is the focus on showing the terrorists that we are not to be destroyed and that the American spirit cannot be crushed.

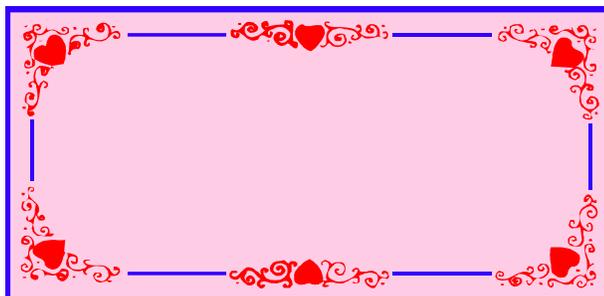
While this is a necessary action to project to the world, we know that what these new griever's need to have is support, empathy and the freedom to be devastated and immobilized. What better people than we, to offer them this support, tenderness and understanding.

I hope we can demonstrate to our broken country the loving arms and listening ears the newly bereaved of all ages need. Today the focus is on the tragedy as a nationwide event. But in time, the horror will diminish. However, the intense grief from the loss of thousands of loved ones will have only just begun.

For those of you who have had a loved one die due to any of Tuesday's events, my heart is heavy with sorrow. You have already suffered much.

Weep boldly. There is healing in tears.

The Compassionate Friends
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TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. But you have nothing to lose and everything 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 said 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.”*