

The Compassionate Friends



Boca Raton Chapter, January 2009 561-368-0324

The Compassionate Friends, Inc., is a self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to all bereaved parents. TCF is non-denominational and all bereaved parents are welcome. TCF National headquarters is P.O. Box 3686, Oak Brook, Illinois 60522. Telephone 630-990-0010, toll free 877-969-0010, Fax 877-969-0010.

<p>Schedule of Meetings: Held at St. Paul's Church 701 W. Palmetto Park Rd., Boca Raton All meetings begin at 7:30 p.m.</p> <table> <tr> <td>January 5</td> <td>January 19</td> </tr> <tr> <td>February 2</td> <td>February 16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>March 2</td> <td>March 16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>April 6</td> <td>April 20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>May 4</td> <td>May 18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June 1</td> <td>June 15</td> </tr> </table>	January 5	January 19	February 2	February 16	March 2	March 16	April 6	April 20	May 4	May 18	June 1	June 15	<table> <tr> <td><i>Chapter Leader</i></td> <td><i>Gail Schroeder (Engel's Mom)</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Newsletter Editor</i></td> <td><i>Gail Schroeder (Engel's Mom)</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Refreshments</i></td> <td><i>Ina & Cary Winters (Randi's Mom & Dad)</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Librarians</i></td> <td><i>Jerry Flax (Brett's Dad)</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>New Members</i></td> <td><i>Nate Kimbleton (Robin & Melinda's Dad)</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Greeter</i></td> <td><i>Eileen Kesnig (Eric's Mom)</i></td> </tr> </table>	<i>Chapter Leader</i>	<i>Gail Schroeder (Engel's Mom)</i>	<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	<i>Gail Schroeder (Engel's Mom)</i>	<i>Refreshments</i>	<i>Ina & Cary Winters (Randi's Mom & Dad)</i>	<i>Librarians</i>	<i>Jerry Flax (Brett's Dad)</i>	<i>New Members</i>	<i>Nate Kimbleton (Robin & Melinda's Dad)</i>	<i>Greeter</i>	<i>Eileen Kesnig (Eric's Mom)</i>
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This newsletter is dedicated in loving memory of Larry, son, Nancy, daughter, Robin, daughter in law and Nate, grandson by their mother and grandmother, Civia Yellin

Special Days

We call them "Special Days" and there is really nothing special at all about a child dying. The important thing is that we never forget them and by listing their birthday and the anniversary of their death, we always acknowledge their existence...that they were HERE, that their lives had MEANING, and they were LOVED, and that they are MISSED.

Jennifer, daughter of Roni DeBenedetto, date of passing 1-1-00
Kurt, son of Sandy Kimmelman, date of passing 1-2-01
Ryan, son of Barry Gabriel, birthday 1-3-79
Jason, son of Bobby Markowitz, date of passing 1-3-08
Scott, son of Jane Isaacson, birthday 1-4-78
Fred, son of John & Bea Papera, birthday 1-6-64
Stephanie, daughter of Rusty Sarantis, date of passing 1-7-99
Francy, daughter of Stacey Zeitlin, birthday 1-7-86
Michael, son of Harriet & Doug Conn, birthday 1-8-87
Chet, son of Rhoda Halperin, birthday 1-8-55
Debra, daughter of Dolores Rogers, date of passing 1-9-98
Erica, daughter of Davin & Sarah Cline, sister to Tiffany, date of passing 1-10-07
Mark, son of Domenic Grosso, date of passing 1-13-07
Ricky, son of Ann Thiel, date of passing 1-13-05
Craig, son of Robin Child, birthday 1-13-72
Sandy, daughter of Roe & Irv Gale, birthday 1-14-50
Patricia, daughter of Sally & Robin Hardy, date of passing 1-14-90
Priscilla, daughter of Elita Freitas, birthday 1-15-80
Jason, son of Richard Weinstein, birthday 1-15-82
Chuck, son of Joe & Ida Lipson, birthday 1-16-48
Steven, son of Norman Couf, birthday 1-18-45
Bill, son of Rudy & Jayne DeBenedictis, date of passing 1-18-82
Robin, daughter-in-law of Civia Yellin, birthday 1-18
Derek, grandson of Arlene & Marty Jacobs, birthday 1-20-88
Melissa, daughter of Bonnie Levine, granddaughter of Phyllis & Bob Levine, date of passing 1-21-01
Adam, son of Eileen & Perry Glassman, birthday 1-21-84
Anthony, son of Alisa & Steve DeCarolis, birthday 1-22-81
Eddie, son of Leo & Carol Goriss, date of passing 1-22-03
Joseph, son of Donna Lezdey, birthday 1-22-07, date of passing 1-22-07
Corri, granddaughter of Doris Young, birthday 1-22-68
Todd, son of Ellen & Zeke Orlinsky, date of passing 1-23-01
Joel, son of Sonia & Damien Vishno, date of passing 1-23-07
Mark, son of Sara & Morrie Hoff, birthday 1-25-55
Brad, son of Woody & Shirby Knoeber, date of passing 1-26-08
Ellen, daughter of Marilyn & Gilbert Fine, date of passing 1-28-08
Leslie, daughter of Harriette Greene, date of passing 1-28-99
Adam, son of Harriet Gutter, birthday 1-29-78
Shaun, son of Debbie Thomas, birthday 1-29-87
Lauren, daughter of Christine Williams, date of passing 1-31-03

Judd, son of Trish Coyle, birthday 1-31-66

E. Jaime, son of Debbie & Jaime Restrepo, date of passing 1-31-99

New Members:

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 “oldie” to welcome you, share your grief, and encourage you? It was from them you heard, “your pain will not always be this bad; it does get softer.”

Telephone Friends...if you need to talk

Gail Schroeder	561-368-6916
Jerry Flax	954-341-8657
Ronda Fryburg	954-753-0493
Nate Kimbleton	561-414-0811

If you would like the current month newsletter dedicated to your child, please call the chapter line of 561-368-0324.



A love gift is in honor of a child who has died. All gifts are of no charge to our members and you may either submit one by calling the chapter phone number or by leaving one at any meeting. Remember you may use this tool in our newsletter for your child or in memory of other's children. This is a wonderful way for others to say, "I am remembering your child."

Happy New Year Engel. One more year without you but your short life with us gave us enough love to last our life time in that you share it in abundance. I hope this year gives us more opportunities to make you proud of us and share your legacy.

Love Mommy and Daddy

A Message From The Chapter

Why does it hurt so much? Why is this grief so incapacitating? If only the hurt weren't so crushing. Sound familiar? All of us have known hurts before, but none of our previous "ouches" can compare with the hurt we now feel. Nothing can touch the pain of burying a child.

Yet most of us have discovered that the sun still comes up. We still have to function. We did not die when our child die, even though we wished we could have. So we are stuck with this pain, this grief, and what do we do with it? Surely, we can't live like this forever!!

There are no magic formulas for surviving grief. There are a few commonly recognized patterns of grief, but even those are only guidelines. What we do know is that the emptiness will never go away. It will be come tolerable and livable. Some day.

Time. The longest word in our grief. We used to measure time by the steps of our child, the first word, first tooth, first date, and first car. Now we don't have that measure anymore. All we have is time.

So what do we do? Give ourselves time to hurt, to grieve, and to cry. Time to choke; to scream. Time to be "crazy" and time to remember. Be nice to yourself. Don't measure your progress against anyone else's. Be your own timekeeper. Don't push. Eventually you will find the hours and days of grief have turned to minutes and their moments. Yes, we will always hurt, but one day it become tolerable and livable.

Change your focus a bit. Instead of dwelling on how much you lost, try letting the good memories come over you easily as the awful ones do. We didn't lose our child. They died. We loved the love that flowed between us. It still flows, but differently now.

Does it help to know that if we didn't love so very much, it wouldn't hurt so badly? Grief is the price we pay for love. And as much as it hurts, I know I am very glad I loved and knew my daughter.

Don't let death cast ugly shadows, but rather warm memories of loving times you shared with your child. Even though death comes, love never goes away.

Let this New Year be a time to reflect on your child. Think of the special time you were given together, even if it was too short. Would you have changed having your child in your life so you would not have had to experience such a pain when they died? My daughter was here for a mere nine years, but I am grateful for those short years in that while she was here she taught me so much about love and giving and I now want to share her life with others, model my life after hers and I am glad she was and still is my daughter.

Wishing you gentle peace and strong courage,

Gail

Please See Me Through My Tears

**You ask, "How are you doing?"
As I told you, tears came to my eyes
And you looked away and quickly began to talk again
All the attention you had given me drained away.
"How am I doing?"...
I can do better when people listen
Though I may shed a tear or two
This pain is indescribably.
If you have never known it you can not fully understand
Yet I need you
When you look away; when I am ignored
I am again alone with it.
Your attention means more than you can ever know.
Really, tears are not a bad sign, you know!
They are nature's way of helping me heal.
They relieve some of the stress of sadness
I know you fear that asking how I am doing brings me sadness
But you are wrong.
The memory of my child's death will always be with me
Only a thought away
My tears make my pain more visible to you
But you did not give me the pain
It was already there
When I cry, could it be that you feel helpless,
Not knowing what do you?
You are not helpless
And you don't need to do a thing but be there
When I feel your permission to allow my tears to flow
You have helped me
You need not speak
Your silence as I cry is all I need
Be patient...do not fear
Listening with your heart to "how I am doing"
Relieves the pain
For when the tears can freely come and go, I feel lighter
Talking to you releases what I have been wanting to say loud
Clearing Space for a touch of joy in my life
I will cry for a minute or two
And then I will wipe my eyes
And sometime you will even find I am laughing later
But when I hold back the tears, my throat grows tight
My chest aches, and my stomach knots
Because I am trying to protect you from my tears.
Then we both hurt
Me, because my pain is held inside, a shield against our closeness
And you, because suddenly we are distant.
So please take my hand and see me through my tears
Then we can be close again.**

To Those I Love

*When I am gone, release me, and let me go
I have so many things to see and do
You must not tie yourself to me with tears
Be happy that we had so many years
I gave you my love
You can only guess
How much you gave me in happiness
I thank you for the love that you have shown
But not it is time I traveled on alone
So grieve awhile for me, if grieve you must
Then let your grief be comforted by trust
It is only for a while that we must part
So keep the memories within your heart
I won't be far away, for life goes on
So if you need me, call and I will come
Though you can't see me, I will be near
And if you listen with your heart, you will hear
All of my love around you, soft and clear
And then, when you must come this way alone
I will greet you with a smile and say
"Welcome home!"*

In Loving Memory of Joel Gonzalez
June 20, 1987 January 23, 2007

To a wonderful son, Joel

Mommy misses you so much. I miss your smile, your hugs and your kisses. Our home is not the same without you. It will never be the same. I think of you every morning, night and day. I cry so much that I cannot even believe that I still have tears left. My heart is so broken. I am happy that the day before you became an Angel, it was my birthday and we danced together, we were laughing and like always, I kissed and hugged you goodnight. I am glad that I have this happy memory. Thank you for the 19 beautiful years.

I love you sweetie

With Lots of Love, hugs and kisses,
Mommy

Joel, I miss you very much and I wish you were here with me.
I Love you brother,
Love, Marlene

If I knew it would be the last time that I'd see you fall asleep,
I would tuck you in more tightly, and pray the Lord your soul to keep.
If I knew it would be the last time that I'd see you walk out the door,
I would give you a hug and kiss, and call you back for just one more.
If I knew it would be the last time I'd hear your voice lifted up in praise,
I would tape each word and action, and play them back throughout my days.
If I knew it would be the last time, I would spare an extra minute or two,
To stop and say "I LOVE YOU", instead of assuming you know I do.
So just in case tomorrow never comes, and today is all I get,
I'd like to say how much I love you, and I hope we never will forget.
Tomorrow is not promised to anyone, young or old alike,
And today may be the last chance you get to hold your loved one tight.
So if you're waiting for tomorrow, why not do it today?
For if tomorrow never comes, you'll surely regret the day,
That you didn't take that extra time for a smile, a hug, or a kiss,
And you were too busy to grant someone, what turned out
to be their one last wish.
So hold your loved ones close today, and whisper in their ear,
That you love them very much, and you'll always hold them dear.
Take time to say "I'm sorry," Please forgive me," "thank you" or "its okay".
And if tomorrow never comes, you'll have no regrets about today. Poem by Norma Cornett Marek

Why Do You Need The Compassionate Friends?

Where can a bereaved parent turn to for understanding and hope? The Boca Raton Chapter of The Compassionate Friends is a support group for parents to provide friendship, understanding and hope for all parents who have lost a child, no matter what age or circumstances. Here is a place where parents meet other parents who truly know the grief journey. A place where it is okay to talk about your child who has died. A place where other parents understand the need to tell your story of what happened and it is okay to cry and to laugh. Everyone at The Compassionate Friends “gets it.” We have all been there. We are all going through the same pain and overwhelming grief. We all have questions, doubts, guilts, sadness and we call all share with each other whatever we are feeling. Each parent can truly relate as we listen, talk and share. It is all “the worst” – we are living a life that has been turned inside out and upside down. We are struggling and trying to piece a life back together without our child. We are struggling to even find the desire to want to live our life again spiritually and in memory, not physically, not the way he or she is supposed to be. It is just not natural for a parent to outlive their child and when this happens and our world is not normal, the questions, tears and aching for our child just doesn’t go away magically one day. A bereaved parent will never “get over” losing a child. We learn to cope, to come up with survival techniques, to rediscover contentment in our lives, but it can be a very long and lonely road without someone to walk beside us, to hold our hand, give lots of hugs and hope and understanding. The Compassionate Friends support group provides a warm, comforting place where bereaved parents can bridge the gap between their emotional world and their real, working world. None of us are professionals. We are just bereaved parents with experience. The Compassionate Friends does not have all the answers to the multitude of questions that bereaved parents daily struggle with, but we believe that through our sharing, by telling each other how we cope and how we manage to find the strength and energy to survive another day, another month, another year and how we reinvested our lives for ourselves and our child helps each other to find some semblance of answers to pick up the pieces and put our lives somewhat back together again.

Meeting Schedule and Topics

January 5

Coping-Moping-Hoping (post holiday meeting)

Presented by Gail Schroeder

January 19

Men on one Side, Women on the Other

Presented by Jerry Flax

February 2

Religion and Spirituality

Presented by Walt Schroeder

February 16

“Am I Making Progress”

Presented by Nate Kimbleton

March 2

Coping With Grief

Guest Speaker Abby Mosher

March 16

Death by Illness versus Sudden Death

Presented by Gail Schroeder

April 6

Surviving Passover and Easter

Presented by Nate Kimbleton

April 20

Marriage Survival after the lost of a child

Presented by Ronda Fryburg

May 4

Grief of Mothers and Grief of Fathers

Presented by Gail Schroeder

May 18

Myths about Grief

Presented by Gail Schroeder

June 1

Share a Story about your Child

Presented by Gail Schroeder

June 15

What’s Bothering Me?

Presented by Jerry Flax

The Compassionate Friends Credo

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