

The Compassionate Friends



Boca Raton Chapter, May 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.

Schedule of Meetings: Held at St. Paul's Church 701 W. Palmetto Park Rd., Boca Raton All meetings begin at 7:30 p.m.	<i>Chapter Leader</i>	<i>Gail Schroeder (Engel's Mom)</i>
May 4	<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	<i>Gail Schroeder (Engel's Mom)</i>
May 18	<i>Refreshments</i>	<i>Ina & Cary Winters (Randi's Mom & Dad)</i>
June 1	<i>Librarian</i>	<i>Jerry Flax (Brett's Dad)</i>
June 15	<i>New Members</i>	<i>Nate Kimbleton (Robin & Melinda's Dad)</i>
	<i>Greeter</i>	<i>Eileen Kesnig (Eric's Mom)</i>

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.

Joshua, son of Bill & Debbie Giggey, birthday 5-1-84
Jonathan, son of Veronica Cooper, birthday 5-2-90
Jim, son of Joanne Goldberg, birthday 5-2-55
Alan, son of Emily Simon, birthday 5-2-55
Karen, daughter of Faye Landau, birthday 5-4-63
Robert, son of Maria Sak Everhard, date of passing 5-5-90
David, son of David & Raiza Iverson, birthday 5-6-88
Jason, son of Leda Kirk, birthday 5-7-80
Anthony, son of Alisa & Steve DeCarolis, date of passing 5-8-06
Engel, daughter of Gail & Walt Schroeder, date of passing 5-9-00
Matthew, son of Hank & Lesley Nataupsky, date of passing 5-9-01
Aaron, son of Natasha Murdock-Lorenzo, birthday 5-9-04
Ben, grandson of Alice Kroulas, birthday 5-9-82
Michael, son of Catherine Riesgo, date of passing 5-10-06
Jarret, son of Michael & Barbara Hoehman, birthday 5-12-87
Nate, grandson of Civia Yellin, birthday 5-13
Michael, son of Harriet & Douglas Conn, date of passing 5-13-05
Sondra, daughter of Harvey Schiller, birthday 5-14
Craig, son of Laura & Henry Friedlander, birthday 5-14-82
Gregg, son of Larry Grossman, birthday 5-15-62
Justin, son of Lee Peterson, birthday 5-15-80
Marc, son of Florence & Rube Freedman, date of passing 5-15-90
Matthew, grandson of Lynn & Ray Kantor, birthday 5-16-88
Daniel, son of Lawrence & Patricia Toole, date of passing 5-18-06
Samantha, daughter of Marissa & Scott Wynkoop, date of passing 5-18-05
Antonio, son of Evangelina Magdaleno, date of passing 5-19-06
Lilyana, daughter of Romas & Ruth Moshe, date of passing 5-20-08
Christopher, son of Janet & Daniel Roy, date of passing 5-21-00
Lori, daughter of Eleanor & Irving Rappaport, date of passing 5-22-06
Richard, son of Carol & Sidney Berman, birthday 5-22-59
Scott, son of Jane Isaacson, date of passing 5-22-07
Gary, son of Chet & Fran Polanin, birthday 5-23-65
Devon, son of Neil & Kathy Isler, birthday 5-23-05 ; date of passing 5-23-05
Brandon, son of Adonna & Robert Jacobs, date of passing 5-24-06
Gary, son of Roz & Marty Falkoff, birthday 5-19-71
Erin, daughter of Mark & Linda Angstreich, date of passing 5-26-00
Tim, son of Tim Hester, birthday 5-27-83
Sanford, son of Sonny Kohn, date of passing 5-28-06
Mark, son of Sheryl & Eddie Stern, birthday 5-28-74
Kayla, daughter of Tracey Joiner, birthday 5-29-91
Susan, daughter of Bernice Rothstein, date of passing 5-30-02
Zachary, son of Daniel & Dianne Solomon, date of passing 5-30-98
Robert, son of Maria Sak Everhard, birthday 5-31-73

New Members:

Cynthia Mayo, son Jason 3-11-85 2-16-09

Valerie Lanham, son, Michael 1-12-83 10-5-03

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	561-901-0483
Jerry Flax	954-341-8657
Ronda Fryburg	954-753-0493
Nate Kimbleton	561-414-0811

If you would like the entire current month newsletter dedicated to your child, please call the chapter line of 561-368-0324. A donation of \$100 is requested.

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."

Many happy memories will linger in my heart on Mother's Day, Engel. My tears will trace the memories of other, happier Mother's Days when you were with us. The day before Mother's Day is your Heaven Day and represents 9 years without you. I will pray for the strength to cope and continue to remind myself of the smile that was always on your beautiful face and the twinkle in your eyes.

Love Mommy

Dear Timmy: I miss the roses and the special cards that you picked out. But more than that, I miss your hugs and smiles. It would have been your second month wedding anniversary this month and I might have been a grandmother. I love you and I am so proud to be your mother.

Love Mom

Rick – another Mother's Day is here and one more year without you; there is heartache no one or time can heal. I miss you so much.

Love Always, Mom

Dear Kayla: When Mother's Day starts without you and I can't see you; if the sun should rise and find my eyes all filled with tears for you, I will know that you wish so much that I wouldn't cry, the way I am today. I know how much you love me, as I love you and each time I think of you, I know you miss me too. I love you so much Kayla. I'm sending you hugs and kisses to Heaven. Tell Grandma that I love her too!!

Love always, Mommy

Message From The Chapter

I like to think that the return from grief is like finding our own way out of the forest. The way is marked by great changes or signposts if we will only follow the bread crumbs. I think of them as gifts left behind by our children. They change us and lead us out of the forest, but a very different place than we first went in. Here are three that I have found. Maybe you will find others.

Crumb One: We pick up a new sense of what is important and what is not. We seem to develop an immediate impatience for the meaningless and the trivial. On the other hand, we pick up an incredible sensitivity to the world around us that we did not have before. We watch the news differently. We value people more than things. We live more in the moment and less in the future because we know that sometimes “tomorrow doesn’t come.”

Crumb Two: We find our real self on the road back. After the loss of a child and a period of emptiness, we do eventually come back. But we come back differently and I believe better, than the person that entered that awful forest. With our new understanding of priorities, we listen again to “that still small voice” that we silenced in the race to climb the career ladder or have the “perfect life” or do what our parents or teachers thought we “should” do. We find new courage to be the person we really are. We begin living from the inside out instead of the other way around; from a sense of what is important not what is expected. We go from a thousand name Rolodex of contacts to a handful of people we love.

Crumb Three: We pick up one more gift that I noticed. We seem to get anointed with an ability to help someone else. We didn’t want it. We didn’t ask for it. But we got it, anyway. It is almost like a giant invisible radar screen gets mounted on our head and we now pick up vibrations from other people in need. And we find that we really can help. People seek us out. People who don’t know what to say when a child dies, call us and ask, “Could you please go over?” We know we can and will, if only to listen. Sometimes we can just help someone else cry and that is enough. Unlike most people, we can walk directly up to a bereaved parent, look them in the eye, and say, “I know how you feel.” And in helping another person, we help ourselves heal too.

So what do we do with these new gifts or breadcrumbs left along the way for us? New priorities. A new sense of self. And the ability to help someone else.

These are definitely good things. They did not come from the death of our child. Nothing good comes from the death of your child. But there is a change. These changes come after the death, when we recognize that we can’t change what happened, but we can change what we do about it. And because we can change what we do about our lives after our child dies, the world in some small way is changed forever. And when the world in some small way is changed forever, then our child’s life continues to make a difference.

And when our child’s life continues to make a difference, our children are never entirely gone.

Gail



5/29/91 – 10/22/07



Happy 18th Birthday Angel.

My Dear Kayla,

This is such a hard birthday; you would be graduating on your birthday. We all miss you so much. Your beautiful smile and very kind spirit lives on. I know you are in heaven with Grandma and I feel your presence with me all the time; that's the only comfort I can find in this whole nightmare. You have taken a piece of my heart with you. I love you Kayla, and I promise to always keep your memory alive. You will always be with me. Until we meet again.... Rest in Peace.

We will continue to grow your foundation and make sure people Buckleup4kayla.org

Love always

Mommy and your family



Engel Grace Schroeder

*Became our daughter,
February 19, 1991
Became our angel,
May 9, 2000*

In Loving Memory of

Scott Isaacson

January 4, 1978 May 22, 2007

**In my dreams, you are alive and well
Precious child, precious child
In my mind, I see you clear as a bell
Precious child, precious child
In my soul, there is a hole
That can never be filled
But in my heart, there is hope
Because you are with me still.
In my heart you live on
Always there, never gone
Precious child, you left too soon
Although it may be true that we are apart
You will live forever, in my heart!**

Love Momma

Dandelions From Heaven

**Mothers Day is coming...and I wanted to send you a sign...
Something you can tell others..."Is from an angel of mine".
So I searched the Heavens high and low for that perfect thing..
And low and behold I found it....and a smile I hope it will bring.**

**So when you look to the Heavens...and see the yellow stars in the sky...
Just think of me...your angel... in the Heavens way up high...
And just imagine those stars...are dandelions up above...
Yes! Dandelions are also in Heaven...,which you know how much I love.**

**So on this Mothers Day... when you awake and feel blue...
You will notice those yellow stars...are no longer in view...
So just look to the meadows and the dandelions you see...
Are the ones I've tossed down this Mothers Day from me!**

**And when you find a dandelion that has turned from yellow to white...
You're supposed to make a wish...and then blow with all your might.
For you will be blowing kisses... to me in Heaven above...
And I will be catching them and blowing them back...sent with all my love.**

**Please know that I am with you...on this Mothers Day...
And also in the days ahead...because I will never stray...
I will be with you in the morning...when you wake and see the sun..
I will be with you when you say your prayers...when the day is done.**

**For I will never be...very far from your side...
For I can now be everywhere...and I will be your guide...
So...remember when you see dandelions...it's your guarantee...
That I am always close to you...
For dandelions are free to roam.....now just like me.**

Mother's Day

A day of joy and celebration
For all mothers on this earth
Who love their children unconditionally from adoption or birth
This love lasts a lifetime
But if your child should die
The day is marked with sadness
Stained with tears that you will cry
God bless the special mothers
Whose children have donned wings
This day represent sadness
And melancholy that it brings
No matter how many years will pass
Your heart will hurt this day
Like a glowing ember flaring up
The pain returns your way
There is nothing that can be said
Nothing anyone can do
No one can heal the pain
So deep inside of you
It is your pain
The greatest burden a mother can bear
Imbedded within all the joys of motherhood
There will always be some despair
Find solace the best you can in knowing a
Mother's love transcends all time and space
And no matter where your child is
They will feel your heart's embrace

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

***Beyond Tears* Book Presentation**

Special Guests – Authors and Panel Discussion

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.