



The Compassionate Friends

Central Indiana Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

November 2024

The Compassionate Friends (TCF) is a non-profit, self-help organization that provides comfort, hope, and support for bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. We cordially invite you to attend our meetings.

Southside Meeting is the 1st

Wed. of each month @ 6:30 pm
New Hope Church
5307 W. Fairview Road
Greenwood, IN

Facilitator: Angie Groover
angie.groover@tcfcentralindiana.org
(317)777 4258

Upcoming Meetings:

Nov. 6th & Dec. 4th

Northside Meeting is the 3rd

Tues. of each month @ 6:30 pm
Epworth United Methodist
6450 Allisonville Road
Indianapolis, IN

Facilitator: Peggy Johnson
peggy.johnson@tcfcentralindiana.org
(317) 850 2559

Upcoming Meetings:

Nov. 19th & Dec. 17th

CENTRAL INDIANA TCF CHAPTER

Chapter Leader: April Leo
april.leo@tcfcentralindiana.org

Treasurer: April Leo
april.leo@tcfcentralindiana.org

Webmaster: Larry Gardner
larry.gardner@tcfcentralindiana.org

Regional Coordinators:

Position Open

Secretary: April Leo
april.leo@tcfcentralindiana.org

Special Events Coordinators:
Position Open



ANNUAL WORLDWIDE CANDLE LIGHTING

Please join us on Sunday, December 8, 2024 for The Compassionate Friends 28th Annual Candle Light Ceremony.

If you have not submitted your loved one's photo for the slideshow presentation please email it to: tcfindy@sbcglobal.net

Please submit pictures no later than December 2, 2024.

Please include the following information with photo: name, birthdate and angel date. All information needs to be submitted as soon as possible to allow an ample amount of time update the slideshow presentation.

If your loved ones photo was in the 2023 Slideshow Presentation you do not need to resubmit a photo.



New Hope Church
5307 W. Fairview Road
Greenwood, Indiana 46142

Sunday, December 8th
Time: 5:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Program Leaders:

April Leo, Central Indiana Chapter Leader
Angie Groover & Peggy Johnson, Support Group Facilitators
Larry Gardner, Webmaster

Fellowship Hour:

5:00 pm – 6:30 pm

Make an ornament for the holidays in memory of your loved one.
Please bring your favorite finger food for the refreshment pitch-in.
Drinks provided by TCF of Central Indiana.

Candle Lighting Ceremony:

6:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Chapter Leader & Support Group Facilitators
Readings, Slideshow Presentation, Music & Reading of Children's names.

Photos:

Every family is welcome to bring a photo as well to place on the remembrance table.

Grieving The Holidays

All can never be fully well again for parents who have lost a child. Being told “someday” we will be with our child, to “be happy” we have his memories is no consolation. None. What child would YOU like taken in exchange for wonderful memories? The pain and longings of child loss *do not cease* like they do with other deaths, and platitudes make things worse, serving only to make us feel more misunderstood and isolated from those around us. The *only* thing that could take this pain is if our child were back in our arms this holiday where they belong. Nothing else.

Have a Plan

Plan some time to re-charge before the onslaught begins. If at all possible, plan some time away from the grind with your spouse or friends before the holidays arrive. Recharge and prepare yourself for what is coming. Use the time with these loved ones to discuss how you are feeling about the upcoming holidays, and lay out a game plan for getting through them. When emotion and anxiety is high like at the holidays, it’s harder to think things through and anticipate your needs. Sometimes just talking it through helps.

Think about where and with whom you are going to be most comfortable with and plan the big days accordingly. Do you find more comfort being in a different environment than when your family was intact? Are you more at peace at home? Whose home can you spend several hours/days in? What family or friends are going to respect you and your family’s sensitive hearts this season? Those are the places and the people you need to be with. Planning for these times of year takes so much out of you and even the best laid plans may fail, but having one eliminates some of the unknowns and therefore perhaps some of the foreboding surrounding it.

Be Choosy About Who You Spend Time With

It’s hard to be around people at all sometimes and during the holidays you need to be around the *right* people. When your nerves are raw and grief is rumbling under the surface, it’s best to avoid those that may add additional emotional upset. You probably have a pretty good idea already of who those people are, keep them at a distance.

Say "No!"

Social situations are not what they used to be. Try to find out what the event will be like. Who will be there and what will the evening entail? Will there be lots of noise and Christmas music? If so, are you able to be immersed in that? If there will be children and families there, are you going to be OK watching parents and their children enjoying Christmas together? Will you have some of "your people" there, or will you be in a room full of mostly strangers?



Assess your tolerance for the occasion and say no if necessary. Be OK with leaving early as well. People who have taken the time to try and understand what you are going through will also understand your need to say no or go home. It's that simple. Worry a little less about what others may think and a little more about your own well-being. The people who matter will understand. Saying 'no' also opens up precious time for you to do things that will help you manage and bring meaning to this time for you and your family.

<http://www.untilholdyouagain.com>

7 Things I've Learned Since the Loss of My Child

Love Never Dies

There will never come a day, hour, minute or second I stop loving or thinking about my son. Just as parents of living children unconditionally love their children always and forever, so do bereaved parents. I want to say and hear his name just the same as non-bereaved parents do. I want to speak about my deceased child as normally and naturally as you speak of your living ones.

I love my child just as much as you love yours – the only difference is mine lives in heaven and talking about him is unfortunately quite taboo in our culture. I hope to change that. Our culture isn't so great about hearing about children gone too soon, but that doesn't stop me from saying my son's name and sharing his love and light everywhere I go. Just because it might make you uncomfortable, doesn't make him matter any less. My son's life was cut irreversibly short, but his love lives on forever. And ever.

Bereaved Parents Share an Unspeakable Bond

In my seven years of navigating the world as a bereaved parent, I am continually struck by the power of the bond between bereaved parents. Strangers become kindred's in mere seconds – a look, a glance, a knowing of the heart connects us, even if we've never met before. No matter our circumstances, who we are, or how different we are, there is no greater bond than the connection between parents who understand the agony of enduring the death of a child. It's a pain we suffer for a lifetime, and unfortunately only those who have walked the path of child loss understand the depth and breadth of both the pain and the love we carry.

I Will Grieve for a Lifetime

Period. The end. There is no "moving on," getting over it. There is no bow, no fix, no solution to my heartache. There is no end to the ways I will grieve and for how long I will grieve. There is no glue for my broken heart, no exilir for my pain, no going back in time. For as long as I breathe, I will grieve and ache any love my son with all my heart and soul. There will never come a time where I won't think about who my son would be, what he would look like, and how he would be woven perfectly into the tapestry of my family. I wish people could understand that grief lasts forever because love lasts forever; that the loss of a child is not one infinite event, it is a continuous loss that unfolds minute by minute over the course of a lifetime. Every missed birthday, holiday, milestone – should-be back-to-school school years and graduations; weddings that will never be; grandchildren that should have been but will never be born – an entire generation of people irrevocably altered forever.

This is why grief lasts forever. The ripple effect lasts forever. The bleeding never stops.

It's a Club I Can Never Leave, But is Filled With the Most Shining Souls I've Ever Known

This crappy club called child loss is a club I never wanted to join, and one I can never leave, yet is filled with some of the best people I've ever known. And yet we all wish we could jump ship – that we could have met another way – any other way, but this. Alas, these shining souls are the most beautiful, compassionate, grounded, loving, movers, shakers and healers I have ever had the honor of knowing. They are life-changers, game-changers, relentless survivors and thrivers. Warrior moms and dads who redefine the word brave.

Every day loss parents move mountains in honor of their children gone too soon. They start movements, change laws, and spearhead crusades of tireless activism. Why? In the hope that even just one parent could be spared from joining the club. If you've ever wondered who some of the greatest world changers are, hang out with a few bereaved parents and watch how they live, see what they do in a day, a week, a lifetime. Watch how they alchemize their grief into a force to be reckoned with, watch how they turn tragedy into transformation, loss into legacy.

Love is the most powerful force on earth, and the love between a bereaved parent and his/her child is a life force to behold. Get to know a bereaved parent. You'll be thankful you did.

The Empty Chair, Room, Space Never Becomes Less Empty

Empty chair, empty room, and empty space in every family picture. Empty, vacant, forever one for this lifetime. Empty spaces that should be full, everywhere we go. There is and will always be a missing space in our lives, our families, and a forever-hole-in-our-hearts. Time does not make the space less empty. Neither do platitudes, cliché or well-wishes for us to “move on,” or “stop dwelling,” from well-intentioned friends or family. Nothing does. No matter how you look at it, empty is still empty. Missing is still missing. Gone is still gone. The problem is nothing can fill it. Minute after minute, hour after hour, day after day, month after month, year after heartbreaking year the empty space remains.

The empty space of our missing child(ren) lasts a lifetime. And so we rightfully miss them forever. Help us by holding the space of that truth for us.

No Matter How Long it's Been, Holidays Never Become Easier Without My Son

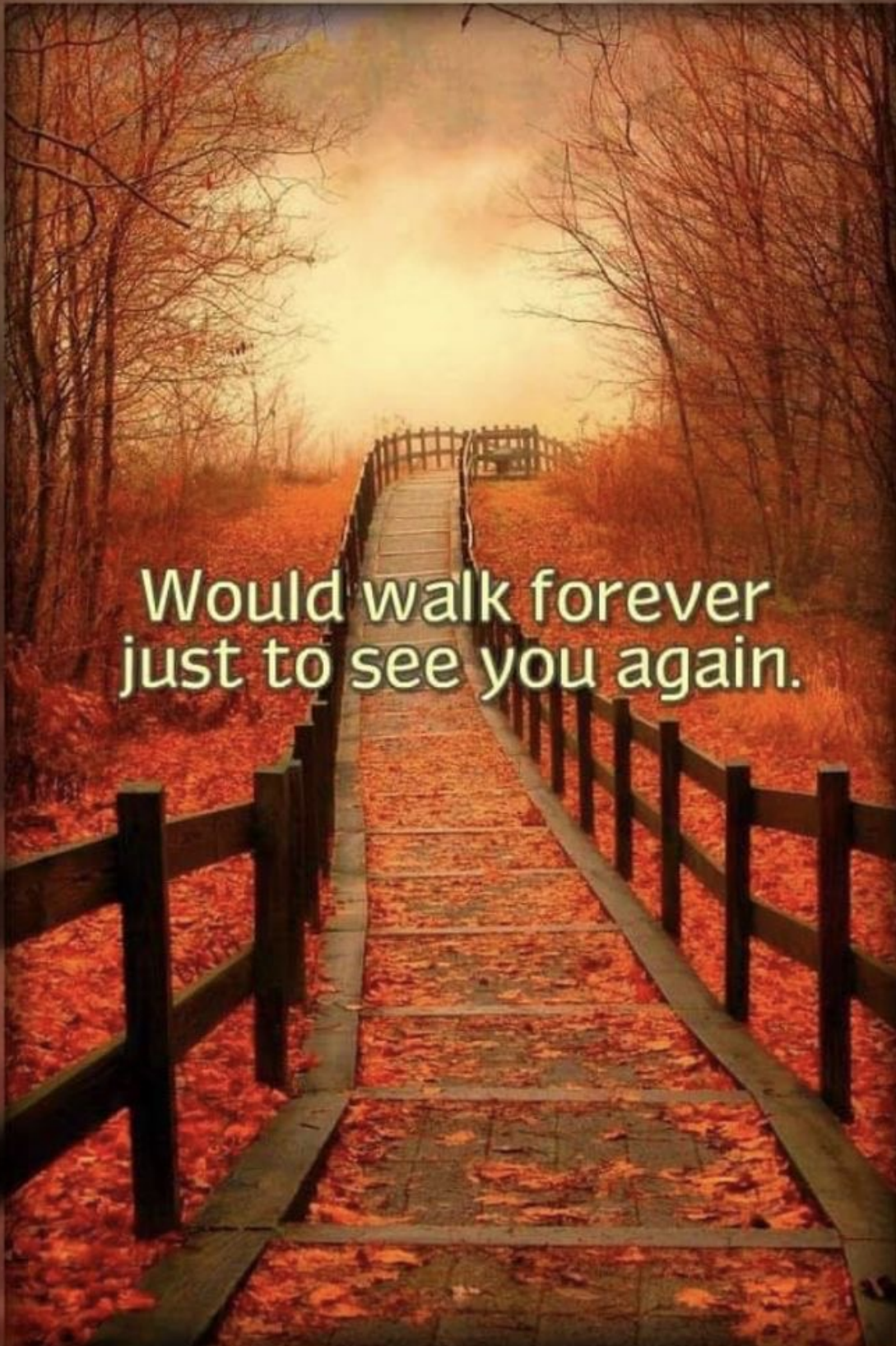
Never, ever. Have you ever wondered why every holiday season is like torture for a bereaved parent? Even if it's been 5, 10, or 25 years later? It's because they really, truly are. Imagine if you had to live every holiday without one or more of your previous children. Imagine how that might feel for you. It would be easier to lose an arm, a leg or two – anything – than to live without your flesh and blood, without the beat of your heart. Almost anything would be easier than living without one of more your precious children. That is why holidays are always and forever hard for bereaved parents. Don't wonder why or even try to understand. Know you don't have to understand in order to be a supportive presence. Consider supporting and loving some bereaved parents this holiday season. It will be the best gift you could ever give them.

Because I Know Deep Sorrow, I Also Know Unspeakable Joy

Though I will grieve the death of my son forever and then some, it does not mean my life is lacking happiness and joy. Quite the contrary, in fact, though it took a while to get there. It is not either/or, it's both/and. My life is more rich now. I live from a deeper place. I love deeper still. Because I grieve I also know a joy like no other. The joy I experience now is far deeper and more intense than the joy I experienced before my loss. Such is the alchemy of grief.

Because I clawed my way from the depth of the unimaginable pain, suffering and sorrow, again and again – when the joy comes, however and whenever it does – it is a joy that reverberates through every pore of my skin and every bone in my body. I feel all of it, deeply: the love, the grief, the joy, the pain. I embrace and thank every morsel of it. My life now is more rich and vibrant and full, not despite my loss, but because of it. In grief there are gifts, sometimes many. These gifts don't in any way make it "worth" it, but I am grateful beyond words for each and every gift that comes my way. I bow my head to each one and say thank you, thank you, thank you. Because there is nothing – and I mean absolutely nothing – I take for granted. Living life in this way gives me greater joy than I've ever known possible.

I have my son to thank for that. Being his mom is the best gift I've ever been given. Even death can't take that away.



Would walk forever
just to see you again.

FB/Blowing Kisses to Heaven



Loved One

Birthdate

Angel Date

Shauna Synesael	Nov 04	Mar 19
Matt Price	Nov 06	Apr 15
Walter Griffin	Nov 08	Nov 25
Harrison Conner Strader Wood	Nov 08	Apr 05
Tyler Rugg	Nov 09	Jul 24
Brady	Nov 10	Dec 20
Donovan Isaiah Burdine	Nov 13	Jan 25
Christopher Lamberg	Nov 13	Feb 22
Stephanie Michelle Toof	Nov 13	Jul 09
Austin Robinson	Nov 14	Sep 26
Lindsay Marie Johnson	Nov 17	Jun 09
Haven Mills	Nov 17	Nov 17
Bwembya Longwe	Nov 21	Jul 17
Kadentz Mills	Nov 23	Nov 23
Maurice Martinez	Nov 24	Apr 29
Jacob Westman	Nov 26	Oct 28
Zachery Groover	Nov 26	Sep 28
Sarah Kish	Nov 28	Feb 16
Xavier McDonald	Nov 30	Nov 13



<u>Loved One</u>	<u>Birthdate</u>	<u>Angel Date</u>
Jackie Quandt	Jun 09	Nov 05
Jessica Humpf	Sep 23	Nov 08
Kelsey Devine	Mar 19	Nov 09
Willie Kalin	Oct 31	Nov 11
Mandy (Russell) Rode	Feb 21	Nov 11
Tyler	Aug 07	Nov 12
Roxanne Young	Jul 07	Nov 12
Xavier McDonald	Nov 30	Nov 13
Kaitlyn Isbell	Apr 05	Nov 14
Ryan W Fry	Aug 14	Nov 15
Joshua Wright	Apr 08	Nov 15
Alex Dunn	Aug 11	Nov 16
Kendall Scout Wood	Sep 25	Nov 16
Haven Mills	Nov 17	Nov 17
Tanner Peckenpaugh	Mar 22	Nov 17
McKayla Myers	Dec 30	Nov 18
Lora Pfiffner	Oct 10	Nov 21
Kevin Yanavich	Dec 04	Nov 21
David Stewart	Dec 22	Nov 21
Kadentz Mills	Nov 23	Nov 23
Walter Griffin	Nov 08	Nov 25
Ashley Marie May	Jul 18	Nov 26
Linsey Parley	Mar 08	Nov 26
Linsey Parsley	Jun 27	Nov 26
Robert Parsley	Mar 19	Nov 26
Alex Dagley	Jan 15	Nov 27
Robert Oswalt	May 28	Nov 27
Karlee Mason	Mar 14	Nov 28
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Paul Gray (P.G.)	Jan 23	Nov 29
Aaron Miller	Mar 15	Nov 29
Corey Roberts	Feb 12	Nov 30



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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 we 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 the gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love for our children who have died.

We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building that 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.

We welcome submissions for the newsletter from any of our members. If you have a poem or some other writing that has helped you, or just some helpful insights of your own, submit them to april.leo@tcfcentralindiana.org. Please be sure to include the author's name, whether it's someone else or yourself.

Love gifts are much appreciated.
You can mail them to our
Treasurer, April Leo
7133 Nostalgia Lane
Indianapolis, IN 46214
(317) 681 4292
april.leo@tcfcentralindiana.org

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