



# *The Compassionate Friends*

*Central Indiana Chapter*  
**Supporting Family After a Child Dies**

## **Central Indiana Chapter Newsletter** **January 2025**

**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 1<sup>st</sup>

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:**

Feb. 5<sup>th</sup> & Mar. 5<sup>th</sup>

### **Northside Meeting** is the 3<sup>rd</sup>

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:**

Jan. 21<sup>st</sup> & Feb. 18<sup>th</sup>

### CENTRAL INDIANA TCF CHAPTER

**Chapter Leader:** April Leo

[april.leo@tcfcentralindiana.org](mailto:april.leo@tcfcentralindiana.org)

**Treasurer:** April Leo

[april.leo@tcfcentralindiana.org](mailto:april.leo@tcfcentralindiana.org)

**Webmaster:** Larry Gardner

[larry.gardner@tcfcentralindiana.org](mailto:larry.gardner@tcfcentralindiana.org)

**Regional Coordinators:**

Position Open

**Secretary:** April Leo

[april.leo@tcfcentralindiana.org](mailto:april.leo@tcfcentralindiana.org)

**Special Events Coordinators:**

Position Open



We have been so extremely blessed to have Peggy Johnson, as the Facilitator of our Northside Meetings for over three years now. We are incredibly grateful for Peggy, without her time and effort, we simply couldn't provide these services to our Northside group. Peggy has also assisted with facilitating the Southside Meetings when needed as well as helping to host the Annual Candle Light Ceremony during the holidays.

"Volunteers do not necessarily have the time, they have the heart." Elizabeth Andrew

We are currently seeking compassionate volunteers to facilitate our Northside Meetings for bereaved parents and grandparents. It would be ideal to have more than one volunteer, who are able to rotate the monthly meeting schedule. If you are interested in providing support and guidance to those in need within your community, please notify us.

# New Year's Resolutions after Child Loss



## Not-so Happy New Year

The New Year represents hope, new beginnings, and change. I think that's why it hurts a grieving parent's heart so much. When you've lost a child celebrations can feel all wrong. Holidays like the New Year are meant to be celebrated with friends and family, but there is a gaping hole in your family. Who can possibly think of celebrating when your child is missing?

Major holidays like this also mark the passing of time.

You may feel more alone at this time of year as you watch those around you celebrate, have fun, and make exciting resolutions for change in the coming year; people exclaiming they are ready to live happier lives! Yet, here we are: another year without our children.

New Year's Resolutions for a grieving parent:

1. Resolve to just be. Let go of the idea that your grief 'should be' this way or that way. Let go of what society thinks your grief should look like after losing your child. Allow yourself to be however you need to be. If you need to take mental health days from work or life, that's ok. If you need to be in your pajamas all day, that's ok. Remove all expectations of yourself and allow yourself to grieve in a way that feels right to you. What you are feeling is normal. You have been through the worst that life can throw at a person.

2. Resolve to take care of yourself instead of worrying about everyone around you. As parents we are experts on putting ourselves last. After the death of a child, self-care is a non-negotiable. Simply put - you must take care of *you* right now. Drink water, lots of water. Avoid alcohol,

because that is a slippery slope. Eat nourishing foods, even if it's a nibble here and a nibble there. Get outside at least once a day, even if you step outside the back door to look up at the sky. And if at all possible, do your best to go for a walk, even if it's around the block at a time when no one will see you.

3. Resolve to bring aspects of your child forward with you. Know that your child will always be with you and that you can honor their life by doing things that they loved to do and care about the things and the people that they cared about. You can also do projects in their honor, like have a bench placed in a special spot.

5. Resolve to *make* meaning of your new life, instead of focusing on *finding* meaning. Honor your child and their memory by living a meaningful life. Be gentle with yourself and know that you are not alone on this path.

Live in the light of their life, not the darkness of their death.



# A Child's Death Changes Everything

A child's death not only changes a parent forever, it also permanently alters a couple's marriage. As individuals you must each deal with the confusion and pain that you are experiencing. As a couple you must face these changes and not allow it to separate you.

In a sense, you each have become something of a stranger to yourself and each other. And in the process, your marriage cannot be what it was before. It is the marriage of two people who have shared a very heavy loss. You are two people who have seen each other grieving, of two people who have gone through the relationship struggles couples experience when a child dies.

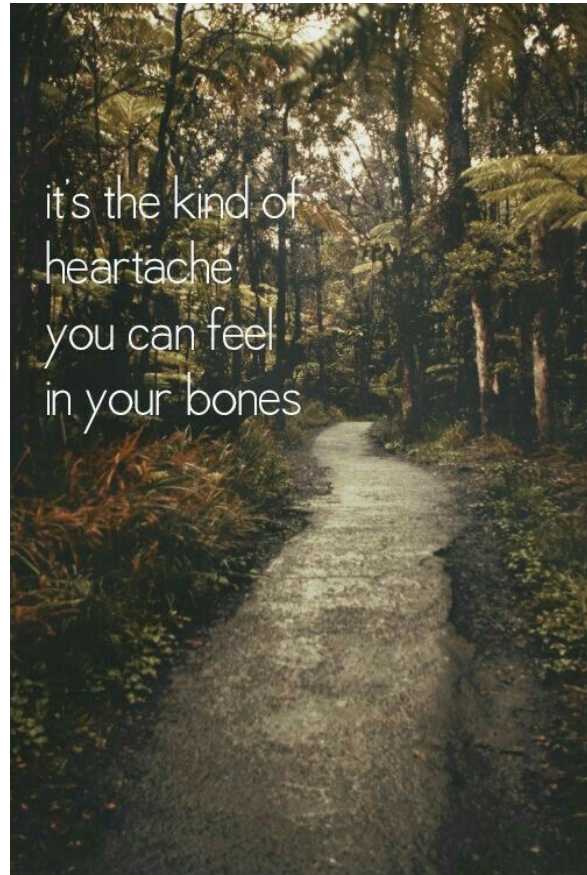
## Beginners after a Child's Death

You become new people, with no sense of whether you can or should return to being your old selves. You are likely to be beginners at dealing with the kind of grief parents feel, and beginners at coming to terms, as a couple, with whatever is going on in your life as individuals and as a couple. For quite a while, grief is likely to sap you and your partner of energy to solve problems. You will find it difficult to talk about things, to think things through well, and to come to terms with what has happened. For weeks, months, or even years, you may feel that you are in some kind of holding pattern, just trying to do the bare minimum to get along.

## You Become Different People

Also, your child's death makes you different from most people you know. Although several million American couples have lost a child, you may not know anyone whose experiences can be a resource to you. In fact, your friends, relatives, neighbors, coworkers, and the people in your religious congregation, may not be able or willing to help beyond the first outpouring of sympathy. Most will never have had a similar experience and most, even if they care for you deeply, will not be very comfortable with you.

Added to all this, grieving can make your couple relationship difficult. Being down so much, being needy and looking at everything in new ways after a child dies, it is easy for you and your spouse to see many negatives in each other. You may see many negatives in each other and in your marriage that may have been ignored or were not present in the past. So in addition to dealing with the loss of a child, you may have to deal with how to change your marital relationship, or even with the possible loss of your marriage.



it's the kind of  
heartache  
you can feel  
in your bones

## Work Together in Grief

Dealing wisely with your relationship will help head off or minimize difficulties. If you can work together on your relationship, you may have success at backing away from bickering, blaming, and hurt feelings. You may have success dealing with communication difficulties, disappointments, and other issues that can undermine your relationship. And you may be able to offer support, help, and understanding for each other.

Parenting together is a shared journey, and dealing with a child's death is as well. In bereavement, the couple journey will be hard. But it does not have to end in disaster.

## You'll Grieve Differently

You will find that you and your spouse will not grieve the same way. You differ in biology, personality, upbringing, current responsibilities, the relationship you had with the child, and life experiences. Even if those things didn't guarantee that you and your partner will mourn in your own way, women and men differ in numerous ways that will show up in how you deal with your child's death.

In some couples, one partner believes how and when the other grieves is wrong, or one partner's grief make the other feel uncomfortable. If over a long period, you let such differences upset you or if your differences lead to conflict, they can be a wedge that pushes the two of you far apart.

Spouses have different paces into and through various parts of grieving. One partner might have stronger feelings or a certain feeling soon after the loss, while the other might feel those things later. To some parents, there seems to be a route to travel, and they talk about being farther or less far along than their partner.

## Different Wants

In some couples there seems to be turn-taking in emotional control. When one partner is deep in grief, the other controls his or her emotions enough to do the basics. Perhaps that spouse says things that are meant to be soothing and supportive.

The one who wants more conversation might decide to wait it out, but might still feel angry that the partner will not talk. Also, just as the spouse who wants to talk finds the other's silence frustrating and infuriating, the spouse who wants to talk less can be irritated by the other's pressure to talk.

The main point is that you should expect and tolerate differences between you and your partner. Doing so is not likely to make the grieving process any easier. However, it should help you and your spouse to maintain a stronger couple relationship as you deal with the death of your child.

# Private Facebook Groups

The Compassionate Friends offers a variety of private Facebook Groups. These pages are moderated by bereaved parents, siblings, or grandparents, and may not be accessed unless a request to join is approved by a moderator. Please click on the link next to the group you wish to join and answer the screening questions so we can confirm your request. Please note, all three questions need to be answered in order to be approved. If you are on a phone or tablet, you will need to scroll down before hitting "submit." If you are still waiting approval after three days, please message one of the administrators. Join requests to our Facebook groups must be requested personally, therefore when you wish to share the group with someone please pass along the link to the group.

[TCF – Loss of a Child](#)

[TCF – Loss to Miscarriage or Stillbirth](#)

[TCF – Miscarriage, Stillbirth, Loss of an Infant Grandchild](#)

[TCF – Infant and Toddler Loss](#)

[TCF – Loss of a Child 4 -12 Years Old](#)

[TCF – Loss of a Child 13-19 Years Old](#)

[TCF – Loss of an Adult Child](#)

[TCF – Loss of an Only Child/All Your Children](#)

[TCF – Loss of a Stepchild](#)

[TCF – Loss of a Grandchild](#)

[TCF – Sibs \(for bereaved siblings\)](#)

[TCF – Loss of a LGBTQ+ Child](#)

[TCF – Bereaved LGBTQ Parents with Loss of a Child](#)

[TCF – Multiple Losses](#)

[TCF – Men in Grief](#)

[TCF – Daughterless Mothers](#)

[TCF – Sudden Death](#)

[TCF – Loss to Substance Related Causes](#)

[TCF – Sibling Loss to Substance Related Causes](#)

[TCF – Loss to Suicide](#)

[TCF – Loss to Homicide](#)

[TCF – Loss to a Drunk/Impaired Driver](#)

[TCF – Loss to Cancer](#)

[TCF – Loss of a Child with Special Needs](#)

[TCF – Loss to Long-term Illness](#)

[TCF – Loss After Withdrawing Life Support](#)

[TCF – Loss to Mental Illness](#)

[TCF – Finding Hope for Parents Through TCF SIBS](#)

[TCF – Grandparents Raising their Grandchildren](#)

[TCF – Bereaved Parents with Grandchild Visitation Issues](#)

[TCF – Inclusion and Diversity](#)

[TCF – Grieving with Faith and Hope](#)

[TCF – Secular Support](#)

[TCF – Reading Your Way Through Grief](#)

[TCF – Crafty Corner](#)

There are losses that rearrange  
the world. Deaths that change  
the way you see everything,  
grief that tears everything down.  
Pain that transports you to an  
entirely different universe, even  
while everyone else thinks nothing  
has really changed.



MEGAN DEVINE





<u>Loved One's Name</u>	<u>Birthdate</u>	<u>Angel Date</u>
Edward (Cody) Frye-Keller	Jan 06	Feb 27
Rachel Gambino	Jan 06	Mar 02
Sarah Christina-Grace Hamer	Jan 07	Feb 19
Olivia Feilen	Jan 07	Dec 06
Greg Fisherkeller	Jan 08	Feb 07
MacKenzie Barnes	Jan 09	Apr 28
Justin Amandus Stegemann	Jan 11	Mar 29
Jamison MacKenzie Bell	Jan 11	Sep 28
Hugo Debolt	Jan 12	May 26
Tyler Cundiff	Jan 14	Nov 04
Alex Dagley	Jan 15	Nov 27
Taylor Lueken	Jan 16	Jan 25
Alyse Krauss	Jan 17	Aug 05
Luke Bent	Jan 18	Aug 18
Jaiden King	Jan 18	Jan 17
Coleen Paravicini	Jan 19	Sep 05
Andrew "Drew" Sims	Jan 19	Jun 27
Andrew "Drew" Sims	Jan 19	Jun 27
Julie McNamara	Jan 20	Jan 10
Jordan Amonette	Jan 22	Feb 04
Harper Fowler	Jan 22	Oct 05
Paul (P.G.) Gray	Jan 23	Nov 29
Cameron Alexander Sherrill	Jan 23	Apr 30
Luke Butler	Jan 24	Aug 29
Megan Martin	Jan 24	Jan 18
Danielle Krapinski	Jan 24	May 15
Zoe Nicole Martin	Jan 24	Oct 20
Nathaniel Wayne Sweat	Jan 27	Aug 05
Lincoln Henley	Jan 31	Mar 07



<u>Love One's Name</u>	<u>Birthdate</u>	<u>Angel Date</u>
Summer Barndt	Sep 05	Jan 02
Rachel Litherlaud	Sep 11	Jan 02
Adam Miller	Dec 02	Jan 03
Rod Everetts	Feb 04	Jan 04
Nicholas Herran	Jun 14	Jan 04
Michael Rusomaroff	Apr 17	Jan 06
Travis Karn	Oct 30	Jan 08
Danielle Crum	Mar 20	Jan 08
Ava Parker	Mar 15	Jan 09
Jason Sipher	Mar 11	Jan 09
Julie McNamara	Jan 20	Jan 10
Zachariah Nash	Sep 25	Jan 10
Ann 'KATE' Kathleen Mowery	Jul 20	Jan 12
Crosley Jayne Buchner	Aug 15	Jan 13
Melissa McBride	Jun 16	Jan 14
Cory Barker	Oct 22	Jan 15
James Andrew Day	May 17	Jan 16
Jeff Gardner	Oct 27	Jan 16
Jason Matthew Kreutzer	Dec 14	Jan 16
Jaiden King	Jan 18	Jan 17
Lauren Sacha Johnson	Oct 10	Jan 18
Megan Martin	Jan 24	Jan 18
Charles "Chuck" Kirlin	Aug 07	Jan 24
Donovan Isaiah Burdine	Nov 13	Jan 25
Taylor Lueken	Jan 16	Jan 25
Matthew (Matt) Fritz	Jul 07	Jan 26
Jamie Smiley	Sep 08	Jan 26
Lori Diane Sherrill	Sep 19	Jan 26
Kimberly Tinker	Aug 03	Jan 27
Katie Garrity	Apr 13	Jan 28
Ethan Brown	Aug 27	Jan 29
Sonrisa Moring	Sep 08	Jan 31
Rachael Valentine	Mar 09	Jan 31



# *The Compassionate Friends*

*Central Indiana Chapter*

**Supporting Family After a Child Dies**

*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](mailto: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  
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Web Address: [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

Local Website: <http://www.tcfcentralindiana.org/>