



# *The Compassionate Friends*

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

## **Central Indiana Chapter Newsletter**

**August 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](mailto:angie.groover@tcfcentralindiana.org)  
(317) 777 4258

### **Upcoming Meetings:**

Aug. 6<sup>th</sup> & Sept. 3<sup>rd</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:** Melanie Stewart  
[melanie.stewart@tcfcentralindiana.org](mailto:melanie.stewart@tcfcentralindiana.org)

### **Upcoming Meetings:**

Aug. 19<sup>th</sup> & Sept. 16<sup>th</sup>

### **CENTRAL INDIANA TCF CHAPTER**

**Chapter Leader:** April Leo

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**Treasurer:** April Leo

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**Regional Coordinators:**

Position Open

**Secretary:** April Leo

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**Special Events Coordinators:**

Position Open



**Melanie Stewart and Kelli Clarke are the new Northside Meeting Facilitators. Melanie will take the lead, and Kelli will co-host as needed. We are extremely grateful for these mothers who have come forward, volunteering their time to support our families.**

**For those of you who attend the Northside Meetings at Epworth United Methodist Church, please be advised the group will now meet in room #6. It is in the church basement. There is a sidewalk, to the right of the main entrance and next to the playground, which leads from the parking lot to the basement door. Meetings will continue to be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month and begin at 6:30 pm.**

# Helping Yourself Heal When Your Child Dies

by Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D.

*"The experience of grief is powerful. So, too, is your ability to help yourself heal. In doing the work of grieving, you are moving toward a renewed sense of meaning and purpose in your life."*

## *Allow yourself to mourn*

Your child has died. You are now faced with the difficult, but important, need to mourn. Mourning is the open expression of your thoughts and feelings regarding the death of your child. It is an essential part of healing.

With the death of your child, your hopes, dreams and plans for the future are turned upside down. You are beginning a journey that is often frightening, painful, and overwhelming. The death of a child results in the most profound bereavement. In fact, sometimes your feelings of grief may be so intense that you do not understand what is happening.

## *Realize your grief is unique*

Your grief is unique. The unique child you loved and cared for so deeply had died. No one, including your spouse, will grieve in exactly the same way you do. Your grief journey will be influenced not only by the relationship you had with your child, but also by the circumstances surrounding the death, your emotional support system and your cultural and religious background.

As a result, you will grieve in your own unique way. Don't try to compare your experience with that of others or adopt assumptions about just how long your grief should last. Consider taking a "one-day-at-a-time" approach that allows you to grieve at your own pace.

## *Allow yourself to feel numb*

Feeling dazed or numb when your child dies may well be a part of your early grief experience. You may feel as if the world has suddenly come to a halt. This numbness serves a valuable purpose: it gives your emotions time to catch up with what your mind has told you.

You may feel you are in a dream-like state and that you will wake up and none of this will be true. These feelings of numbness and disbelief help insulate you from the reality of the death until you are more able to tolerate what you don't want to believe.

## *This death is "out of order"*

Because the more natural order is for parents to precede their children in death, you must readapt to a new and seemingly illogical reality. This shocking reality says that even though you are older and have been the protector and provider, you have survived while your child has not. This can be so difficult to comprehend.

Not only has the death of your child violated nature's way, where the young grow up and replace the old, but your personal identity was tied to your child. You may feel impotent and wonder why you couldn't have protected your child from death. Such thoughts are normal and will naturally soften over time as you explore and express them.

### *Expect to feel a multitude of emotions*

The death of your child can result in a variety of emotions. Confusion, disorganization, fear, guilt, anger and relief are just a few of the emotions you may feel. Sometimes these emotions will follow each other within a short period of time. Or they may occur simultaneously.

As strange as some of these emotions may seem, they are normal and healthy. Allow yourself to learn from these feelings. And don't be surprised if out of nowhere you suddenly experience surges of grief, even at the most unexpected times. These grief attacks can be frightening and leave you feeling overwhelmed. They are, however, a natural response to the death of your child. Find someone who understands your feelings and will allow you to talk about them.

### *Be tolerant of your physical and emotional limits*

Your feelings of loss and sadness will probably leave you fatigued. Your ability to think clearly and make decisions may be impaired. And your low energy level may naturally slow you down. Don't expect yourself to be as available to your spouse, surviving children, and friends as you might otherwise be.

Respect what your body and mind are telling you. Nurture yourself. Get daily rest. Eat balanced meals. Lighten your schedule as much as possible. Caring for yourself doesn't mean you are feeling sorry for yourself. It means you are using survival skills.

### *Talk about your grief*

Express your grief openly. When you share your grief outside yourself, healing occurs. Ignoring your grief won't make it go away; talking about it often makes you feel better. Allow yourself to speak from your heart, not just your head. Doing so doesn't mean you are losing control or going "crazy." It is a normal part of your grief journey.

### *Watch out for clichés*

Clichés—trite comments some people make in attempts to diminish your loss—can be extremely painful for you to hear. Comments like, “You are holding up so well,” “Time heals all wounds,” “Think of what you must be thankful for” or “You have to be strong for others” are not constructive. While these comments may be well-intended, you do not have to accept them. You have every right to express your grief. No one has the right to take it away.

### *Develop a support system*

Reaching out to others and accepting support is often difficult, particularly when you hurt so much. But the most compassionate self-action you can do at this difficult time is to find a support system of caring friends and relatives who will provide the understanding you need. Seek out those people who encourage you to be yourself and acknowledge your feelings, whatever they are.

A support group may be one of the best ways to help yourself. In a group, you can connect with other parents who have experienced the death of a child. You will be allowed and gently encouraged to talk about your child as much, and as often, as you like.

Sharing the pain won’t make it disappear, but it can ease any thoughts that what you are experiencing is crazy, or somehow bad. Support comes in different forms for different people — support groups, counseling, friends, faith—find out what combination works best for you and try to make use of them.

### *Embrace your treasure of memories*

Memories are one of the best legacies that exist after the death of a child. You will always remember. Instead of ignoring these memories, share them with your family and friends.

Keep in mind that memories can be tinged with both happiness and sadness. If your memories bring laughter, smile. If your memories bring sadness, then it’s all right to cry. Memories that were made in love — no one can take them away from you.

### *Gather important keepsakes*

You may want to collect some important keepsakes that help you treasure your memories. You may want to create a memory book, which is a collection of photos that represent your child’s life. Some people create memory boxes to keep special keepsakes in. Then, whenever you want, you can open your memory box and embrace those special memories. The reality that your child has died does not diminish your need to have these objects. They are a tangible, lasting part of the special relationship you had with your child.

### *Embrace your spirituality*

If faith is part of your life, express it in ways that seem appropriate to you. Allow yourself to be around people who understand and support your religious beliefs. If you are angry at God because of the death of your child, realize this feeling as a normal part of your grief work. Find someone to talk with who won't be critical of whatever thoughts and feelings you need to explore.

You may hear someone say, "With faith, you don't need to grieve." Don't believe it. Having your personal faith does not insulate you from needing to talk out and explore your thoughts and feelings. To deny your grief is to invite problems to build up inside you. Express your faith, but express your grief as well.

### *Move toward your grief and heal*

To restore your capacity to love you must grieve when your child dies. You can't heal unless you openly express your grief. Denying your grief will only make it become more confusing and overwhelming. Embrace your grief and heal.

Reconciling your grief will not happen quickly. Remember, grief is a process, not an event. Be patient and tolerant with yourself. Never forget that the death of your child changes your life forever. It's not that you won't be happy again, it's simply that you will never be exactly the same as you were before the child died.





## I Lost My Child Today

by Netta Wilson

I lost my child today.  
People came to weep and cry,  
As I just sat and stared, dry eyed.  
They struggled to find words to say,  
To try and make the pain go away,  
I walked the floor in disbelief,  
I lost my child today.

I lost my child last month.  
Most of the people went away,  
Some still call and some still stay.  
I wait to wake up from this dream.  
This can't be real. I want to scream.  
Yet everything is locked inside,  
God, help me, I want to die.  
I lost my child last month.

I lost my child last year.  
Now people who had come, have gone.  
I sit and struggle all day long.  
To bear the pain so deep inside.  
And now my friends just question, Why?  
Why does this mother not move on?  
Just sits and sings the same old song.  
Good heavens, it has been so long.  
I lost my child last year.

Time has not moved on for me.  
The numbness it has disappeared.  
My eyes have now cried many tears.  
I see the look upon your face,  
"She must move on and leave this place."  
Yet I am trapped right here in time,  
The songs the same, as is the rhyme,  
I lost my child.....Today.

FB / LITTLE ANGELS UP ABOVE



<u>Loved One's Name</u>	<u>Birthdate</u>	<u>Angel Date</u>
Tyler Rowland	<b>Aug 01</b>	Jun 13
Kimberly Tinker	<b>Aug 03</b>	Jan 27
Dylan McGinnis	<b>Aug 03</b>	Oct 01
Carl Puckett III	<b>Aug 06</b>	Mar 07
Charles "Chuck" Kirlin	<b>Aug 07</b>	Jan 24
Tyler	<b>Aug 07</b>	Nov 12
Natalie Donlan	<b>Aug 09</b>	Jul 12
Timothy Beard	<b>Aug 10</b>	May 25
Shelby Fink	<b>Aug 10</b>	May 03
Alex Dunn	<b>Aug 11</b>	Nov 16
Ryan W Fry	<b>Aug 14</b>	Nov 15
Crosley Jayne Buchner	<b>Aug 15</b>	Jan 13
Sean Bidwell	<b>Aug 19</b>	Aug 08
Sage Hayashi	<b>Aug 20</b>	Aug 18
Lauren E. Crowner	<b>Aug 22</b>	Aug 22
Jeremy	<b>Aug 22</b>	Jul 13
Ethan Paulin	<b>Aug 23</b>	Feb 11
Gary Ward	<b>Aug 25</b>	Jul 03
Andrew Moreland	<b>Aug 25</b>	Jun 16
Kairi Maxson	<b>Aug 26</b>	Jun 17
Shane Alexander Elmore	<b>Aug 26</b>	Jun 03
Ethan Brown	<b>Aug 27</b>	Jan 29
Jeremiah McGee	<b>Aug 28</b>	
Jim Hiner	<b>Aug 28</b>	Aug 25
Emily Brooke Lewellyn	<b>Aug 28</b>	May 11
William E Hodges, Jr	<b>Aug 28</b>	Oct 17





<u>Loved One's Name</u>	<u>Birthdate</u>	<u>Angel Date</u>
Marvella Jean Love Barton	Jul 31	<b>Aug 02</b>
Matthew Steven Spivey	Dec 31	<b>Aug 04</b>
Alyse Krauss	Jan 17	<b>Aug 05</b>
Nathaniel Wayne Sweat	Jan 27	<b>Aug 05</b>
Heather Ann Adams	Feb 11	<b>Aug 07</b>
Sean Bidwell	Aug 19	<b>Aug 08</b>
Nathaniel Carl Mroz	Oct 10	<b>Aug 08</b>
Carson Query	Jul 09	<b>Aug 08</b>
Daniel Hill	Apr 08	<b>Aug 10</b>
Corinne Shields	Oct 01	<b>Aug 10</b>
Adam Wisley	Apr 17	<b>Aug 12</b>
Ellie Kaschner	Apr 28	<b>Aug 17</b>
Luke Bent	Jan 18	<b>Aug 18</b>
Sage Hayashi	Aug 20	<b>Aug 18</b>
Lori Huter Hardcastle	Mar 10	<b>Aug 19</b>
James Rowland	May 12	<b>Aug 19</b>
Mike McGarvey	Dec 15	<b>Aug 20</b>
Lauren E. Crowner	Aug 22	<b>Aug 22</b>
Chad Charleston	Jun 15	<b>Aug 24</b>
Ty'Shawn Boyd	May 25	<b>Aug 22</b>
Aidan Kerry	Feb 14	<b>Aug 24</b>
Charlie Noska	Dec 17	<b>Aug 24</b>
Jim Hiner	Aug 28	<b>Aug 25</b>
Trey Elzy	May 30	<b>Aug 27</b>
Luke Butler	Jan 24	<b>Aug 29</b>



We need not walk alone. We are 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  
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