



Tissues, Tears & Treasures

A circle of chairs and boxes of tissues,
A roomful of tears and emotional issues.
Frightening at first, I did not want to enter
Into this strange group, and be in the center.

What I soon learned, as we sat side by side,
We were bound by the love of our children who died.
Each shattered heart,
desperately seeking a moment of peace,
from the pain and weeping.

So many things different, and yet all the same,
Hearts lost in a fog of loss and pain.
Those who have journeyed, much further than me,
Reached out in comfort, listened quietly.
Each shattered heart spoke, and the tissues were passed,
We never avoid speaking of the past.

This circle of friends, have found a bond,
And here I'm still known
As "Tony's Mom."
Slowly, I've found
I can reach out to others
Who are newly bereaved, fathers and mothers.
Strength I have found in this
Circle of chairs,
To grieve and to heal
And to show that we care.

*Diane Barta
TCF of Portland, OR*



TCF - Unconditional Caring

My Son Philip died in August 1994, when he was 26 years-old. He died by suicide, influenced by a genetic illness, bipolar mood disorder (manic depression). I well remember how I flinched inwardly when people began referring to Philip's having "committed suicide." It seemed to diminish my wonderful son, to make him into what he never was: a kind of criminal. I wanted people to remember the beauty of his soul, yet what they focused on was the shocking way in which he died.

So it has been personally important to me to learn that TCF has made a change in the language it uses related to suicide. TCF now uses the terms "died of suicide" or "died by suicide" in all publications and presentations. The new, emotionally neutral language helps to lift the burden of stigma from all of us whose children or siblings died by suicide. It gives us strength and helps us heal.

If your child or sibling has died in one of society's less "acceptable" ways-by suicide, murder, alcoholism, from a drug overdose, AIDS or sexually transmitted diseases or in prison do know that TCF does not accept society's stigmas. There is no room for blame or condemnation when all our hearts are aching for the children we no longer have. We honor your child and your grief, no matter the cause of death.

Similarly, if you are a parent or sibling who may feel "other" in our oft-judgmental society, please know that you will not be "other" in TCF. We welcome you with understanding and compassion, whatever your age, your race, your ethnicity, whether you are rich or poor, married or single, gay or straight, whatever your religion or lack of religion. We welcome you.

And if you have endured the most terrible tragedy, if you have had more than one child or sibling die or have lost all your children or siblings, you are welcome. Many people are terrified that we are "contagious" because the worst nightmare has become a reality in our lives. They don't want to believe what we know: that neither we, nor they, can keep our children safe and alive. So they avoid us. And they especially may avoid you who have had more than one child or sibling or all your children die, because the horror of what has happened in your lives terrifies them.

We welcome you, and we honor your courage and want to be helpful to you in your healing. We offer our compassion and understanding to all parents and siblings and other family members who are on this very difficult journey into healing. May the unconditional acceptance one finds in TCF someday be mirrored in a wiser and more tolerant society.

by Kitty Reeve

TCF, Marin & San Francisco, CA

To receive this newsletter via e-mail please contact Steve Haupt at shaupt1@rochester.rr.com

TCF Rochester Donations:

If you would like to contribute to our Compassionate Friends Chapter please forward your Love Gifts and Donations to The Compassionate Friends of Rochester at 130 Portview Circle, Rochester, NY 14617. Please make checks payable to The Compassionate Friends of Rochester, NY. Sincerest Thanks.

On pain and healing...

In pain management used for patients with chronic pain, it is taught not to tighten around the pain but to relax and allow the pain to be present. The idea is that when pain is resisted, it intensifies. When we breath deeply and acknowledge the presence of pain, it has room to move and can dissipate more readily. Pain is there to tell us something, to warn us of possible danger. This is as true for emotional, spiritual and mental pain as it is for physical pain. When pain speaks, we need to listen. All it takes is paying attention to our pain so that when it comes we remember to breathe and get soft. We don't want to fight with our pain. We want to learn from it.

Time does not heal. But healing does take time. Give yourself the gift of time. To become whole means that as we open to the pain, we open to the loss. We break open and, as a consequence, we get bigger and include more of life. We include what would have been "lost" to us if our hearts and minds had closed against the pain, We include what would have been lost if we had not taken the time to heal. As singer/songwriter Carly Simon tells us: "There's more room in a broken heart."

From the chapter, "Time Does Not Heal All Wounds,"

of the book, "Good Grief," by Deborah Morris Coryell

Annual Garage Sale

The annual garage is going to happen! Kathy Parkison is making arrangements to host the sale in August. Dates for the sale are August 13th & 14th. Items can be dropped off on Thursday, August 5th and Friday August 6th. Other times to drop off items can be arranged by calling Kathy. The sale will be held at 73 Pleasant Way in Penfield.

Volunteers are needed to help: on Thursday to set-up and mark items; on Friday and Saturday to work during the sale; and on Saturday afternoon to pack up leftover items after the sale. Sign-up sheets will be available at the TCF meetings.

Kathy also plans on having a bake sale along with the garage sale—so items for this sale will also be needed. You can also sign-up or find out more information by calling Kathy at (315) 594-2783.

Please gather items to bring to the sale and consider working a shift to help out—Thanks!

Welcome New Friends

At nearly every meeting we welcome new members to our group, always with mixed emotions. We are glad you found us, but we are so sorry for the circumstances that bring us together. We understand your pain; we hope our unconditional friendship and understanding will help you through your grief.

Attending a meeting for the first two or three times takes courage, but for many it is the first real step toward healing. It may seem overwhelming, so we encourage you to come to several meetings to give yourself a chance to become



Upcoming Planned Events— Mark Your Calendars:

Annual Balloon Release—June 8th meeting will be at Fellows Rd. Park for this event.

Annual Yard Sale—August —please see article for details –we need your help!

Lily Dale trip—August 7th—see article for more information

Coupon book sale—will start in mid-September

Lily Dale Trip

Lily Dale is a center for spiritual development located about one hour south of Buffalo, NY, near the village of Cassadaga. The Lily Dale summer season runs from late June to early September

Information from the website includes the following: "It offers a summer program of lectures, workshops and other activities featuring best-selling authors, leaders in academic and scientific research into psychic phenomena, as well as the world's most powerful mediums, teachers and healers. Lily Dale is widely known as a place where knowledge and enlightenment converge in ways that deepen faith and heighten awareness.

More information about Lily Dale is available on their website at <http://www.lilydaleassembly.com>. Contact Becky Price (rprice01@rochester.rr.com) for trip information and planning.

Local B & B in Fredonia that you might want to consider for the Lily Dale trip:



The White Inn
52 East Main St.
Fredonia, NY 14063
(716) 672-2103
Toll Free Hotel Reservations
(888) 373-3664
inn@whiteinn.com

Chapter Information:

Meeting Location:

Lifetime Care Care
3111 Winton Road South
(across from Valley Cadillac)

Meeting Days for June 2010:

Tuesday the 8th and Tuesday the 22nd
7:00 P.M. to 7:15 P.M. - social
7:15 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. - meeting

Contacts:

Linda Haines— 315-879-7739
Cathy Spoto - 585-254-6983
TCF Regional Coordinator:
Jacquie Edwards-Mitchell 718-451-0814
TCF National 877-969-0010
or www.compassionatefriends.org

Send news letter inputs to:

Colleen Kohl at: coleenkohl@hotmail.com

Miscellaneous:

National Conference

The Conference is being held over the July 4th weekend. Six members of our local Compassionate Friends group are attending. We wish them safe travel and hope that they will find this experience helpful and beneficial. Hopefully, they will be able to share their experience with those that were not able to attend.



See Linda for TCF Bracelets (\$2.00) and Memorial votive candle holders (\$5.00)

Rochester Chapter TCF Mission:

The MISSION of the Rochester Chapter of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.



Our Children Remembered

June, 2010

Birthdays and Remembrance Days



Birthdays

Brian Furness
Lindsay Ann Kyle
Matthew C. Norton
Kurt E. Marks
Sara Michelle Oberhofer
Adam V. Marano
Patrick D. Cooley
Jeff Milano Johnson
Robyn Best
Owen Avery Krieger
Michael VanValkenburgh
Kevin F. Schantz
Sarah Marie Protulipac

Remembrance Days

John Paul Crescuillo
Larry J. Lyons
Brendan T. Barry
Sara Ann Carrales
Teddy S. Piendel
Darla Lynn Schwark
David Goad
Christian Carlisi
Terry M. Fedigan
Rolf Gerard Hallinan
Amy Marie Dennis Iwasko
Chiya Elise Rubin
Alyssa Ann Buckley
Jaden Michael Fournier
Ellen Barbara Aquino
Zachary Lawrence Yates
John Eric Yelle
Laura Ann Collins
Sean Howard Dell
Andrea Marie Lovette
Brad E. Lynn
Ann Marie Ericson
Hannah Louise Congdon
Katherine C. Shirley
Kevin Schantz
Daniel F. Andrews

