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The Compassionate Friends
Supporting Family After a Child Dies
Oscoda Area Chapter

The Compassionate Friends of
Oscoda Area
4087 Forest Rd.
Oscoda, MI 48750
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Issue 85 March and April

Monthly Meetings

2nd Tuesday of the Month
Sacred Heart Church Family Center
5300 N US 23
Oscoda, MI 48750
Meeting time 7:00 pm

**If Oscoda Area Schools is closed due
to weather our meeting is canceled.**

March 10 @ 7 pm
April 14 @ 7 -00 pm

Chapter Leadership

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Oscoda Area

Co-Leaders: Fran Ommani
Charlie Negro
Secretary: Charlie Negro
Treasurer: Jane Negro & PR
Outreach: Tracey Toppa
Director: Vicky Stadler

REGIONAL COORDINATOR

Gail Lafferty 734-306-3930

Kathy Rambo 734-748-2514



*"You Need Not Walk
Alone!"*

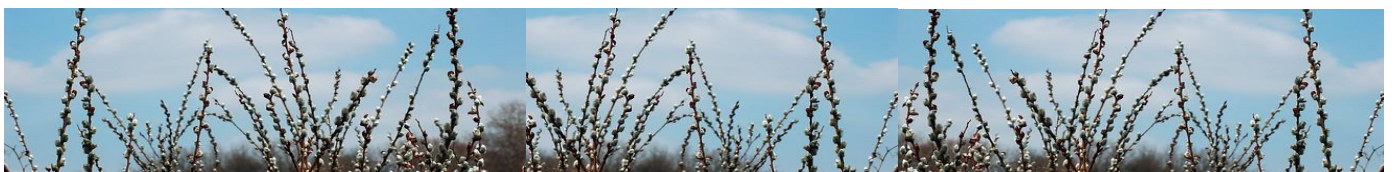
What is Hope When You Are a Grieving Parent?

Hope for a grieving parent is not about "getting over" the loss, but finding a way to live alongside the pain, honoring their child's memory, and finding purpose again. It is a slow journey of navigating the "new normal" relying on community support and finding light in darkness.

Key aspects of hope for a grieving parent include:

- Hope is found in keeping the memory of your child alive through traditions, storytelling, or honoring their favorite things.
- Connect with parents who understand your intense pain. Parents who have experienced your loss can give you support and understand the unique, intense pain of child loss and reduce isolation.
- Recognizing that hope is not about avoiding pain, but a journey *through* it, allowing for healing over time.
- Some parents find hope by helping others, creating, or dedicating themselves to causes that honor their child's life.
- Understanding that healing is not a straight journey. It includes good days and bad days. Most important is giving yourself grace during the process. A grief journey is normal...nothing can prepare us for the loss of child. We all do it in our own way and that is okay!

~JAN



Laura GPS Hope Blog

I used to love it when we had a campsite with the Hope Mobile along water. Each year we seemed to have the blessing of having a few sites here and there on either a lake or a river.

I remember one specific time that I was walking on a path along one of those rivers. Sometimes the path would move away from the water, and I couldn't see it at all.

Eventually I could see some of the river through the trees. I might lose sight of it again for a while, and then suddenly a full view in all of the river's beauty would open up to me. The entire path was like that. I never knew as I walked along if I was going to be able to see only a little of it, none of it, or the full beauty of it.

That is a lot like our hope, especially those first few months and years. We can't see any hope at all, of ever getting past the darkness and being able to live without our child. Then we might get a quick glimmer of hope. We lose it again. Then something happens and we feel full of hope, and then it goes away as quickly as it came.

That river was always there, whether I could see it or not. And hope is always there, whether you can feel it or not, because the Seed of Hope lives inside you.

It takes a while in the natural for a seed to break open, work its way through the soil to be seen and keep growing.

I am confident that the Seed of Hope inside of you is breaking open and is working its way through the dark soil of your heart, on its way to break through and continue growing where you can feel and see it.

Just keep going, one day, one hour, one breath at a time if that is where you are. And lean on our hope, until yours is strong enough to lean on.

~Laura GPS Hope Blog

*Those we love we never lose.
For always they will be,
Loved, remembered, treasured.
Always in our memory.
~unknown*

March

March is a season of "renewal". Let your dark soul feel the warmth of new life and each tree, as each bud breaks through the once frozen earth of winter. Let the "renewal" in your life begin. Your frozen heart can start to live and feel again. Open it up to the warmth of your family and your friends and feel the love and yes, life that you thought died with your child.

~Nancey Cassell

SPRING THAWS THE WOUNDED HEART

The first spring came too soon. Why did daffodils show sunny faces around the gravestone?

Why did warm breezes blow clouds away; my world, a gray dismal one had no room for this season.

Now years later the blossoms of love, hope and healing have broken through grounds of utter despair.

Warmed by memories of you, I join the daffodils bringing my own smile.

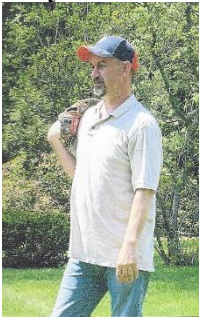
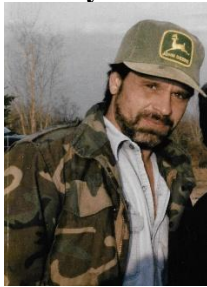


~Alice J. Wisler
~Inspired by the life of
David Paul Wisler



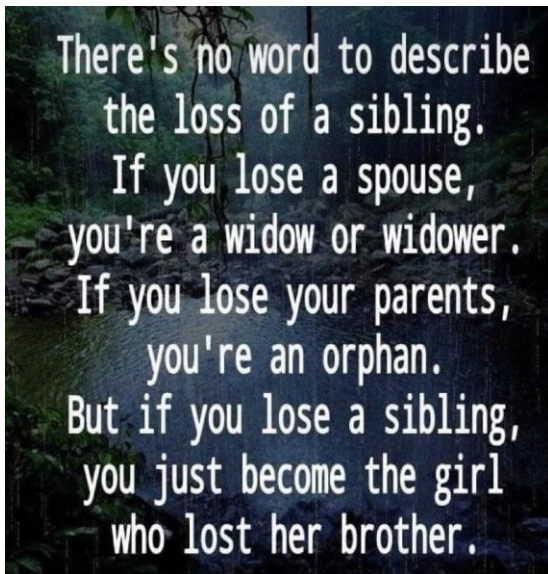
"Forever In Our Hearts"
Our Children/Grandchildren/Siblings
Loved and Missed



 <i>Birthdays</i>		<i>Remembrance</i> 	
March Tony Calabrese 	March Aaron Gonzalez 	March Jerry Bunk 	March Ashely Scott 
March Nathan Kirkpatrick 	March Donald James Sheppard II 	March Angelo Stell 	March Nathan Kirkpatrick 
April Calvin Vallette 	April April White 	April Derek Toppa 	April Samual Martin 
April Aaron Dean 	April Blake VanSnepton 	April Michael Wright 	“ Grief isn't a season. It's the weather now. Izzy Roe ” 

THE SIBING CORNER

This corner is dedicated to siblings together adjusting to grief through encouragement & sharing



Losing a sibling is about loss of past, present and future. So often bereaved siblings are the forgotten mourners. People will likely ask a bereaved sibling how their parents are coping but often forget about the huge loss for the siblings.



And our relationships with our siblings are often complicated too which also makes the grieving process complex.

~Lisa Athan, MA Facebook for Grievors

Laura GPS Hope Blog

Don't you love it when people become our cheerleaders, telling us we can do this because we are such a strong person?

Or when someone tells us they admire us for how strong we are?

Or that they could never go through what we are going through in losing a child.

WHAT? News flash: we had no choice in the matter! We are being forced to go through this. And just because you see us in survival mode doesn't mean we are being strong.

Unfortunately, there are also way too many people who mean well, who think we should get to a point in our lives (often within a few months) where we don't fall apart, and we shouldn't continue to miss our child verbally or emotionally. Some believe there is something wrong with us if our continued pain causes us to be unable to function fully like we did before our child died. They don't stop to think that since our love for our child never goes away, neither will the pain of missing them.

Sometimes when we say, "I still miss my child so much!" people respond with, "I know how you feel. I miss her, too." While we are glad to know our child is missed by others, we also know how absurd it is for someone to think it is possible to miss our child as much as we do.

And then there is the comparison, "I know how you feel. I lost my..."

These things can make our blood boil to the point of ending relationships. And at times, that may be necessary, if it is constant and becoming toxic to your healing journey.

But a better way is usually grace... we need LOTS of grace and strength.

How can they possibly know or understand what it is like to lose a child? (And honestly, I don't want them to know.) I know I sure did not understand until it happened to me. And I probably said hurtful and stupid things to others in their deep painful loss, trying to fix them or make them feel better.

Our grief is draining enough, without letting things people say and do drain us even more by getting angry about it and stewing over it. We need to ask God to help us to let it go, forgive and use the little energy we have in better ways.

And when those things happen, don't be afraid to get encouragement from people around you who know better. We get it, we understand, and we are here for each other.

People don't mean to be cruel. Yes, sometimes they are trying to ease their own discomfort at being around us, but most of the time they want to help us feel better.

You and I know that there are no words that will make things better. But let's do our best to look beyond the words and see the heart of love and concern. If you need to vent, do it with other people who get it.

There isn't anything you can do to keep people from saying hurtful, insensitive comments. But you can control how you respond, and you can choose not to take offense, adding bitterness to your already wounded heart.

~Laura GPS Hope Blog

Grief Does Not Make You Stronger

Some of the most common phrases people say to someone who's grieving are meant to be encouraging:

"You're stronger than you think."

"You'll get through this."

"This will make you stronger."

It sounds supportive. It sounds hopeful.

Here's the thing...but grief doesn't actually work that way.

Losing someone you love doesn't magically transform you into a stronger version of yourself.

Grief isn't some hidden personal development program that builds character through suffering. It's loss. It's absence. And it's learning to live with something that never should have happened.

Many of us who're grieving were already strong long before our loss. We were independent, capable, resilient, and we handled life and our responsibilities. Strength was never the missing ingredient.

And yet...we still miss them, and no amount of 'strength' erases that.

Grief doesn't make you stronger. If anything, grief often makes you feel more fragile because it strips away the illusion of control. It reminds you how deeply you can hurt and how powerless love can sometimes feel in the face of death.

When someone says, "You're stronger than you think," it can unintentionally feel like they're measuring your pain against your ability to endure it. As if surviving the unimaginable is some kind of achievement.

But most grieving people aren't trying to be strong. They're just trying to survive something that's irreversible, and there's no strength training for that.

There's only adaptation...and learning how to carry something that can't be fixed.

~Gary Sturgis ~SURVIVING GRIEF – 365 Days A Year

Spring Waiting

Winter's end is almost here,
Crocus struggle in the snow.
Sunlight has a softer glow.

-Is the winter long this year?

Spring waits, watching for a cue
not to rush your grief away.
But to be there, when you say.

-Spring is waiting, friend, for you.

~Sascha Wagner



Passover

*Counting the years,
Blessings and tears,
Counting the children
Who are gone
From this earth.*

*Counting the memories
Of times past and done.
Blessings the children
On earth in this day of live.*

~Sasha Wagner
~From "For You from Sasha"

*It may take years before green
shoots of hope begin
to appear in your life.
Be patient and keep
looking for them.
They will reappear after
your long winter of
grief.*

~Dennis L. Apple

Easter Thoughts

One more winter overcome,
one more darkness
turned to light and promise.

Winter is the price for spring.
Struggle is the price for life.

Even in sorrow, remember
to prepare your heart
for celebration next spring perhaps
or the spring after that.

~Sasha Wagner
~From Wintersun

