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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
989-254-5888
Email: tcfoscoda@gmail.com

Issue 58 March/April 2021

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 9th

7 pm Masks Required



April 13th

7 pm Masks Required

We follow

Health Department Guidelines



CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

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The Compassionate Friends Oscoda Area

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

REGIONAL COORDINATORS

Gail Lafferty 734-748-2514
Kathy Rambo 734-306-3930

Grief Seuss Style by *Debbie Rambis, TCF*

Grief of a child is a whoa,
No one should ever have bestowed.
It's no laughing matter
As there is nothing sadder!

Your life's upside down.
Seems you are crazy bound.
You begin to have rushes,
Oh those heart beat gushes!

You try but can't sleep
Even counting sheep.
You toss and you turn
Beginning to sleep yearn.

Or sleeping all the time?
This does put you in a bind.
But you ask, "Who is this I've become!"

To the fridge you do run
Always eating quite a sum
You have eaten so well
That you begin to "swell!"

Now the Doctor says, "Diet!
And pretend to row a kayak!"
And take these two pills,
As they'll make you not ill.

You take this new script
It makes you feel adrift.
You walk with a hop,
But this world must stop!

Your friends express glee!
You flail, "It's not really me!"
But they want the old you
You put on "the mask" and play too.

But then you'll find "The Compassionate Friends"
Who show you they care
For you without airs.

Spring





A New Season A New Way of Coping

Spring is the season of shifting, sorting and cleaning house. Spring brings it a sense of renewal, a sense of wanting to lighten the load, clear the air and simplify living. It's a time to clear away the baggage of winter's grief and to shed the overcoat that seemed to shelter us from the pain. Spring is the time when we get a new sense about the cycles of life. When tulips bloom, trees bud and the garden begins to awaken, there comes a change in perspective. We may be able to see things in a new light, with new vision, with a clarity that can only be borne in the fires of loss. We will never go back to being who we were, but we can establish a new sense of self as we work through our grief. We can create a "new normal" as we learn to adapt to the changing demands of grief. We can get through this time of sorrow, but we will not get over it. We simply learn to look at things differently in the early light of spring. The death of a loved one teaches us to embrace the moments of our life rather than waste them in search of tomorrow. Grief is a thief, stealing away energy and time, and I no longer want to be a victim of anything.

There is so little time in life, when you really think about it. I no longer want to waste any of it. Sometimes I forget and I get caught up in all the "little stuff," like schedules, and chore lists and meetings and appointments. Then I need to step back, take a breath and slow myself down. Then, and only then, can I begin to hear the new rhythms of whoever I am becoming. I am forever changed because someone touched my life. I want to remember that - always!

The lessons of our losses cannot be ignored nor negated. They simply are too expensive. I no longer want to count what I have lost. I want to acknowledge the blessings of the springs that I did spend with my loved one. I do not want to cloud the joy of our life together with a long list of things that I didn't say, things I didn't do, things I didn't mean.

The line between the living and the dead is so thin that it is not visible, but it separates those who are moving forward and those who are standing still in grief and regret. I will no longer live my life so that I am building up a bank of regrets that will have to be paid at the end of a loved one's life.

The time to say I love you is now. The time to settle the argument is now. The time to give a hug, a kiss, a handshake, an encouragement is now. The time is now, and now I want to take the time. Funny how that works. When you have too little time, it seems an impossible task to grab more. When you have too much, it seems an impossible task to spend it. The time to live is now. Live your life in celebration and gratitude of those who have so lovingly shared their life with you. Cherish those moments you spent together and live your new life now with a renewed commitment to living as fully as possible. It is acknowledging and living the pain that brings forth the energy and strength to allow hope and healing to return. No matter where you are, no matter what memories you carry with you, may love be what you remember the most.

~Darcie Sims

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Lovingly Lifted from TCF Atlanta Newsletter

Spring 2004



The Compassionate Friends National Conference

July 16-18, 2021

Typically, a National Conference is held during the summer. This popular annual event is filled with healing workshops, keynote speakers, and more. This year the plan was to hold the conference in Detroit. However, due to COVID the conference will again be held virtually. Last year, the National Conference was also held virtually. While not ideal, it gave thousands the opportunity to be surrounded online with support to find renewed hope. Options are being explored for 2021. Watch for updates on our website, Facebook, and newsletter.



Who Am I Now?

By Traci Morlock BP/USA St. Louis

Who am I now that my sibling has died. I have asked myself that question many times over the last four years. When I think of my brother, Sean, I think of how things used to be. I also think of all the things he will miss. For example, my husband or my children will never know Sean. Sean will never have children. There are just so many things that he will miss. I began to question who I was about a month after Sean died. He and I shared a great love of music. When I think of music, I think of Sean. At first, every song I heard made me cry. After a while, though, I began to try to find a deeper meaning in the songs. I know that a lot of teenagers and young adults identify important times in their lives by music. I am one of those people. Now, I am trying to figure out what place the music has in my life. After Sean died, music took on a new meaning for me. The music I sing and listen to is my special connection to my brother. The song "Because You Love Me" by Celine Dion was especially powerful for me. I came to realize that, through simply loving and supporting me, my brother had helped to shape the person who I was becoming and who I wanted to become. I have realized now that my life's direction has taken a slight detour. I have had to reroute my image of myself.

When I hear music, I see my brother, and I hope that will never change. When I saw myself, in the past, I saw Sean by my side. That picture has now been altered. The biggest part of the question, "Who am I now?" is also am I still a sister?" The answer to that is a simple yes! Sean will always be my brother and I will be his sister. Forever. Peace until next time.

Take a Moment to Breathe

Be kind to yourself
Respect your body
Engage with others|
Allow emotions to ebb and flow
Take life one minute at a time
Honor your loved one
Examine your expectations

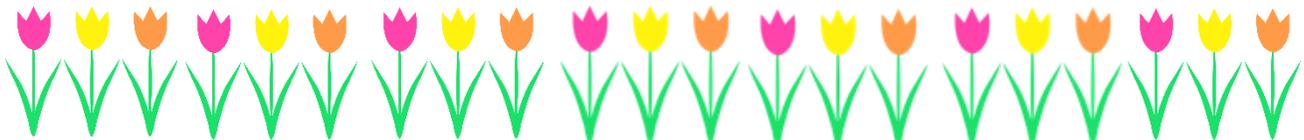


SPRING THAWS THE WOUNDED HEART

The first spring came too soon. Why did daffodils show sunny faces around the grave stone? 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/Siblings Remembered



Birthdays



Remembrances



March

Tony Calabrese



March

Aaron Gonzalez



March

Ashley Scott



March

Nathan Kirkpatrick



March

Nathan Kirkpatrick



April

Aaron Dean



March

Angelo Edward Stell



April

Derek Toppa



April

April White



April

Calvin Vallette



April

Michael White



A TIME FOR RENEWAL

Spring has wrapped us in the glory of floral bounty with flowers, blooming bushes and trees and wild bluebonnets hinting at a renewal. In the gentle rains we have received a sweet cleansing of the spirit. It is spring that gives us hope for the future. As the season changes, we sense the cloak of our grief lifting in tiny increments. Yes, it is uplifting. For those of us who are newly bereaved parents or siblings, discovering a bit of lightness in our grief mantle is so very welcome.

And that is how our grief will be for the rest of our lives. No epiphanies, no giant steps, just a slight lifting each day, a microscopic rebirth of ourselves and a step further into our lives after the death of our child. There are setbacks, of course. The pain is agony in the first year.....brain pain, soul searing pain, physical pain, anxiety and much more seem to rule our days. But each day is a tiny step forward into hope.

To enhance our grief journey, we must do grief work. Just as the gardener tends to the soil, fertilizes, gently stimulates tender roots and removes weeds from the flower bed, we must tend to our grief daily. Throwing out the negative...the guilt, the anger, the anxiety and adding the positive by seeking our solace in our journals, reading, movie choices, spirituality, friendships kept and friendships left behind. In the garden of our psyche, our grief must be tended as if every day is the first day of spring.

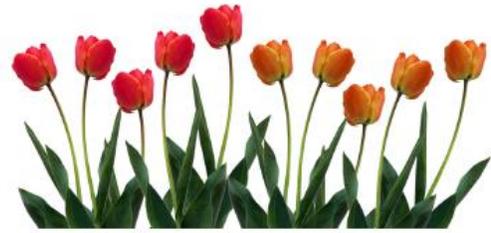
And so it is that with springtime comes a reminder of renewal and the grief work we must do to obtain that renewal of spring. Day by day we change; month by month we make note of that change. One day we will be able to see the blossoming of our renewal as we move forward in life with our precious children in our hearts.

~Annette Mennen Baldwin TCF Katy

Find a little time for **Spring**, even if your days are troubled. Let a little **Sunshine** in—let your memories be doubled.

Take a little time to see all the things your **Child** was seeing... And your tears will help your **Heart** find a better time for being.

~Sascha Wagner



Grief in Spring?

Open to Hope

Posted March 2015 by John Pete

If Spring makes you feel better and to feel new hope, that is a good, positive and nurturing thing. But it may not be true for everyone, and no one should feel they have to hide their true feelings. It is perfectly normal to experience new heightened grief and/or grief-related anxiety in Spring, just as it is in other seasons of the year. Although warmer, sunnier months can be nurturing and inspire new hopefulness, grief does not suddenly go away just because seasons change.

Spring generally brings a sudden flurry of change and things begin to move faster all around us. There is rebirth and renewal in nature as flowers and trees bloom and everything turns green again, and people quickly begin to flock to their favorite warm-weather activities. Try to take time to sit down make some plans that can nurture you and help you cope with your losses and grief.

A helpful way to respond to one's anxiousness about spring and summer is to remind yourself that YOU are in control and that the warmer months offer unique opportunities for nurturing activities such as travel, planting gardens, nature walks, photography, family gatherings, star-gazing, and many other things.

And if it helps, take comfort in the belief that your precious loved ones are with you wherever you are and whatever you are doing.

*'Behind each dark flower of sorrow
waits a memory of
the blessings you shared.'*

~Sascha Wagner

Memory Garden @ Mark's Park

The Memory Garden @ Mark's Park is a perennial flower garden nurtured, maintained and supported by community volunteers and the Compassionate Friend of Oscoda Area. The Memory Garden is intended to be a place to enjoy nature and revisit positive memories of our children, grandchildren and siblings who died too soon.



In addition to the garden, we are planning a memory brick area similar to what is shown in the picture.

Individual bricks may be purchased, engraved with the name of your child, grandchild, or sibling and placed in the designated area of the park. Proceeds from this project will be used to support TCF activities as well as to maintain and expand the Memory Garden @ Mark's Park.

We can only allow one brick per child, grandchild or sibling that has died in order to keep the area open for future bricks.

To order a Memory Brick, please mark which size brick, complete the form and return it to.....

_____ 4 x 8 bricks \$35.00 with up to 3 lines of text with 13 characters per line.

_____ 8 x 8 bricks \$55.00 with up to 5 lines of text with 13 characters per line.

Name _____ Date: _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Make checks payable to: TCF of Oscoda Area

Return completed form to: TCF Oscoda Area
4087 Forest Rd.
Oscoda, MI 48750

For more information please contact us at tcfoscodagmail.com

Please use grid below, allowing one space per character—a character is each letter, number, and/or space used.
