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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: tcfoscodagmail.com
www.tcf-oscoda.org

ISSUE 46 JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2020

New Year's Resolutions for the Bereaved

By Tanya Lord

This year I resolve to:

- ♥ Not put a time limit on my grief. Loving someone means loving them for my life time whether they are physically present or not.
- ♥ Tell their stories, the happy and the sad, they will live on through me.
- ♥ Encourage others to share memories.
- ♥ Teach others that they cannot "make" me cry, tears are only an external expression of how I am feeling all the time.
- ♥ Understand that crying or otherwise expressing my pain is healthy and normal. "Doing well" means expressing my feelings.
- ♥ Understand that others will not understand my pain and it isn't fair to expect them to do anything but listen.
- ♥ Recognize that asking for help from those that love us is a really a gift that we give to them.
- ♥ Help others, reaching out to others in pain will help me to heal.
- ♥ Do something nice for myself every day.
- ♥ Know that if today I can not do everything that needs to be done, tomorrow is another chance to get it done.
- ♥ Cry when I need to, laugh when I can and to not feel guilty about either one.
- ♥ Let go, bit by bit, of the guilt, regret and anger because I know holding on to these emotions can be so damaging.
- ♥ Take a risk and let others into my life and heart.
- ♥ Take care of my physical, emotional and spiritual health.
- ♥ Reinvest in life a little bit each day...

©The Grief Toolbox
www.TheGriefToolbox.com



This is from *The Grief Toolbox* for more information go to
<https://thegrieftoolbox.com/artwork/new-year-s-resolutions-bereaved>

"I know for certain that we never lose the people we love, even to death. They continue to participate in every act, thought and decision we make. Their love leaves an indelible imprint in our memories. We find comfort in knowing that our lives have been enriched by having shared their love."

~Leo Buscaglia

<https://www.opentohope.com/we-never-lose-the-people-we-love/>

MONTHLY MEETING

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—per Sacred Heart Policy

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 14th:
Holiday Survival—Reverse Basket

February 11th:
Navigating Grief
"recipes for hope"

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

Mail: TCF-Oscoda Area Chapter
4087 Forest Rd., Oscoda, MI 48750
Phone: 989-254-5888
Email: tcfoscodagmail.com
Web: www.tcf-oscoda.org
The Compassionate Friends Oscoda



Area

CO-LEADERS-
FRAN WHITNEY & CHARLIE NEGRO
SECRETARY-CHARLIE NEGRO
TREASURER-JANE NEGRO
OUTREACH-TRACY TOPPA
DIRECTOR-VICKY WEICHEL

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THE SIBING CORNER

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

What My Brother's Death Taught Me About Grief

By Ashley Cebulka

April 8, 2014

It's an experience we are pretty much guaranteed in life. Yet when it hits us, it can feel like we were just bulldozed by an avalanche, wondering if we'll ever breathe again. The world as we know it seems to stop, and the crumbling inside our hearts can feel paralyzing.

I can only write this to you now, because I've been there. I want to share with you a few things that were incredibly helpful to me in the process.

My oldest brother passed away four years ago. The news hit me in a way that is somewhat indescribable. He was and still is one of my best friends and one of the greatest heroes in my life. I didn't write about it for a long time because in all honesty, I didn't want sympathy. I wanted to be alone in my pain and stay connected to my brother in any and all ways possible. The opinions and, "Oh my gosh I can't imagine" moments were not all that welcome out of what seemed like self-preservation.

I was enraged, overwhelmed with sadness, lost, worried about my parents, lonely, mad that I wouldn't see him again, relieved he returned to love, then angry and sad again. This roller coaster of emotions continued for a long time. I was confused often. I desperately wanted to 'figure it out' and understand the great meaning so that somehow I could experience peace and love in my own heart again.

As time passed I realized there is actually so much beauty in grief. It helps us realize just how enormous our love can be. This is ultimately why it can hurt so intensely to say goodbye to that person in the form that we knew them.

Eventually, I opened up and spoke very, very honestly about it. I began to realize that if I trust everything happens for a reason, death is not excluded from that. While it was painful to lose my brother in his physical form, there are countless miracles that have happened since his passing. I now see that it was simply time for his spirit to move on from the body he was in. His spirit is still very much alive, to this day, and I experience evidence of that regularly. The key is for me to stay open to see it.

This inner-knowing brought a different kind of peace and understanding than I had ever experienced in life. So why am I sharing this? To let you know you're not alone. Grief is a different and unique journey for everyone. We all deal with it the best way we know how in the moment. And it is a moment to moment process of healing.

I am not claiming in any way to be an expert on grief, I simply want to share some things that helped me during that challenging time, with hopes it may be helpful to you.

1. Forgiveness: for the situation, the person, the things not said, the moments you wish you had, the ones you wish you could get back. Forgive.
2. When I was ready, choosing to focus on the love shared rather than the current pain.
3. Realizing and trusting that this too shall pass, while also trusting it's happening for a reason.
4. Being open and honest about where I was emotionally rather than trying to hide it. Expressing my needs to my loved ones, letting them know the times that I simply needed alone time.
5. Asking for help from the people I trust and love, while allowing myself to receive it.
6. Giving myself the time and space to feel and heal the way I uniquely need to.
7. Expressing gratitude for the gifts I received, for having my brother as a part of my life for as long as I did, celebrating our endless memories. While realizing that his spirit is forever with me, as long as I stay open to experiencing it. I also wrote down all of the incredible memories we had together, which was so healing.
8. Then eventually focusing on what I love and doing more of that every day.

I write this open letter with so much love in my heart to you reading this right now.

<http://www.mindbodygreen.com/0-13271/what-my-brothers-death-taught-me-about-grief.html>



*"Forever In Our Hearts"
Our Children/Siblings Remembered*



Birthdays



Remembrances



January
Derek Toppa



February
Ashley Scott



January
Tony Calabrese



January
Katie Kirkpatrick



February
Jerry Brunk



January
Tommy Draper



February
Casey May Whitney



The truth is,
that hole in your heart
shaped exactly the size and shape of
our child

**WILL NEVER,
EVER GO AWAY.**

But the **LOVE** that oozes from it has
more power to change the world
than anything
I've ever known.

By Angela Miller

<https://abedformyheart.com/>



January
Audree Ball





Reflection of a New Year Reflections of a New Year

We begin a new year, one that many of us enter with reluctance. After all, it means another year away from our child and another year to be lived without the physical presence of the one we have lost. Apprehensive about any new challenges that we may be called upon to face in our broken condition, we call out, "Wait, I'm not ready yet!"

The death of our child changed the course of our life; nothing will be the same again. But it also has shaped us into who we are today. And it will continue to do so as we learn to incorporate this loss into who we are to become.

Have you found that you have already begun to live differently? Compassion toward others is more profound. Trivial things are no longer important. Appreciation for life, and those in our lives is paramount. We're living the same life-differently.

Tragedies, disappointments, and heartaches combine with beauty, love and joy to fashion our life. These are all part of life, and our challenge is to incorporate them into our world. The difference that our child's life has had upon the world continues through us.

So rather than being fearful of the challenges that lie ahead, perhaps a better question to consider at this time might be: what opportunities will present themselves in the coming year to honor this loss that is already a part of our life? Our child has become more integrally entwined into our being than ever before. We bring him or her to every situation that we encounter. How can we make that situation better because of this bond?

The start of a new calendar year is a good time to remember that we are in the midst of life. It is not perfect. Nor is it one that we might have chosen. But, our struggles do not put life "on hold." Rather, they are a part of life itself! Our life is ours to make the most of, with many gifts that we can share with others. There is no better time than the present to gather up the pieces and recognize the uniqueness made more wonderful because of our child's presence in the life we choose to live.

~Paula Staisiumas Schultz
TCF, South Suburban Chapter
Evergreen Park, IL

Paula and her husband, Bob live in Chicago.

Their daughter Melissa and her husband Jeff Cleaves had been married seven weeks
when they died in a car accident in 1999.

Reprinted from TCF We Need Not Walk Alone, Winter 2002



Thoughts on Valentines Day

"How sad this day must be for you."
I read it in their eyes.
As if there's no more love between us anymore, you
and I.

How wrong they are.
They do not understand
the bond between a parent/grandparent and a child.

I do not have to see your face
to remember your sweet smile.
I do not have to hug you,
although if I could, I would.
I do not have to hear your voice,
our love is understood.

Everyday I think of you,
my thoughts are full of memories.
I realize that love does not end
With death's painful goodbye.
I await with hope until we can say hello again,
you and I.

~Karen Nelson
TCF Elder Chapter, Utah



2020 TCF Oscoda Area Calendar of Events

2nd Tuesday of each month 7:00 pm @ Sacred Heart Church Family Center, Oscoda, MI

**If OAS is closed due to the weather TCF meetings are also canceled—per Sacred Heart Policy*

	January 14	Holiday Survival—Reverse Basket
	February 11	Navigating Grief— <i>Recipe for Hope</i>
	March 10	Get Real About Grief
	April 14	Bucket of Flowers

Check out our website www.tcf-oscoda.org facebook <https://www.facebook.com/thecompassionatefriends.oscoda/>

Other On-line Resources:

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 Stepchild](#)

Moderators: Barbara Davies and Babe Muro

[TCF – Loss of a Grandchild](#)

Moderators: Grace Cassidy, Mary Ebert Fisk, and Debbie Fluhr

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

Moderators: Luci Abrahamson, Dylan Stoskus, Katelyn Stoskus, Stephen Stott, and Cindy Tart

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

Moderators: Arlene Istar Lev and Paula Pressley

[TCF – Multiple Losses](#)

Moderator: Lisa Jones

[TCF – Men in Grief](#)

Moderators: Gary Odle and Bradley Vinson

[TCF – Daughterless Mothers](#)

Moderator: Mary Ebert Fisk

[TCF – Sudden Death](#)

Moderators: Chris Lourenco and Dana Young

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

Moderators: Barbara Allen, Mary Lemley and Carol Wiles

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

Moderators: Barbara Allen, Kristy Flower, and Andrea Keller

[TCF – Loss to Suicide](#)

Moderators: Carla Askew, Marilyn DeVan, Leanna Leyes, Marcie Knase, Barbara Reboratti, Laura Beth Stone Brimer, Deidre Taylor, and Mary Ann Ward

[TCF – Loss to Homicide](#)

Moderators: Rebecca Perkins and Todd Underiner

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

Moderator: Robin Landry

[TCF – Loss to Cancer](#)

Moderator: Rita Studzinski

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

Moderators: Beverly Carter Busch, Donna Reagan, and Krissy Tempesta Brigante

[TCF – Loss to Long-term Illness](#)

Moderator: Debbie Gossen

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

Moderator: Lisa Jones

[TCF – Loss to Mental Illness](#)

Moderators: Sherry Cameron and Annette Swestyn

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

Moderators: Kelly Kittel and Ann Walsh

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

Moderators: Debbie Fluhr, Carole Mayer, and Michele Myers White

[TCF – Infant and Toddler Loss](#)

Moderators: Julia West and Deanna Wheeler

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

Moderators: Heike and Brian Mayle

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

Moderator: Vanessa Stanley

[TCF – Loss of an Adult Child](#)

Moderators: Debbie Heath Miller, Rebecca Perkins, and Deanna Sotherland

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

Moderators: Marsha Paul Anders, Tonja Knobel, and Crystal Webster

[TCF – Grandparents Raising their Grandchildren](#)

Moderator: Janine Cortese

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

Moderators: Laura Beth Stone Brimer, Lois Copeland and Mary Brooks Prine

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

Moderators: Ron Gallacher, Michael McLeod, and Clayton Samels

[TCF – Crafty Corner](#)

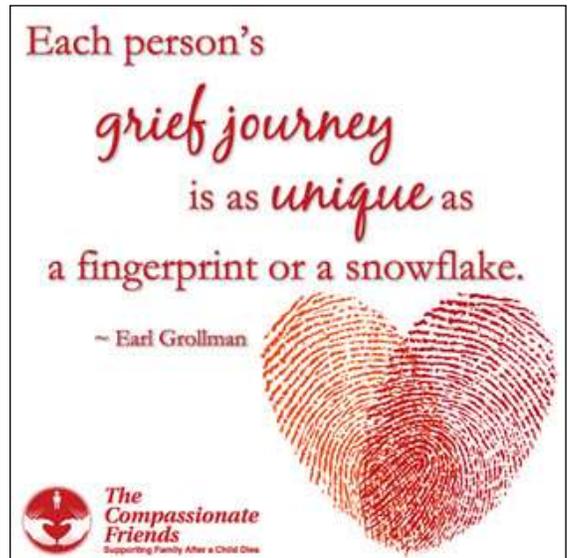
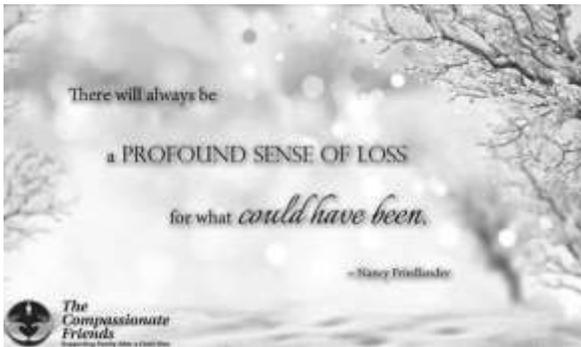
Moderators: Gail Lafferty and Kathy Rambo

[TCF – Loss of a Child](#)

Moderators: Kelly Coccia-Stanczak, Jennifer Dixon, Donna Goodrich, Cheryl Hackenmueller, Kathy Wingo Holder, Carol Martin, and Eileen Nittler

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

Moderator: Rita Studzinski



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When you shop at smile.amazon.com
Amazon donates
Go to: <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/35-2493920>

iGive is an amazingly simple, no cost to you, donation platform. Check it out at
<https://igive.com/TheCompassionateFriendsofOscodaArea>

Check out the over 1,000 on-line stores that when you shop donate money to TCF

Memories
Unique as snowflakes,
impossible to hold but for a moment,
yet when one is gone
there is another gliding
down upon the first
until they become blankets
of protection against the
storms of loneliness.
Memories, gentle memories.
~Marcia F. Alig
TCF Mercer, NJ