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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 51 JUNE 2020

A Note from our Chapter Steering Committee.....

Our June meeting was an outside meeting on the lawn at Sacred Heart. Sacred Heart continues to plan for the safety of everyone as we transition out of the Stay Home, Stay Safe directive. We are hoping that maybe July's meeting will be back inside. At this times, we have not set a date for the Butterfly Release as we don't know just what to expect as things continue to reopen. We hope to set a date as soon as restrictions are lifted!

During these trying times please know that TCF is here for you! If you need some support, please contact



The Compassionate Friends of Oscoda Area

Our phone number--989-254-5888

Our email—tcfoscodagmail.com

Our Chapter Website www.tcf-oscoda.org

TCF National Website www.compassionatefriends.org

Please take good care of yourselves.....we want you all to be safe. We are all in this together. Remember: We need not walk alone, we are the Compassionate Friends.

A FATHER WRITES

Bob Steiner, 1998

A father does not find his job an easy one. The responsibilities he faces are enormous. Everything from finance to being a good role model tests a man's ability to be the best father he can. It is a job charged with emotional, physical and mental challenge. And, at the time it is only one of the many roles he fills. His roles include husband and lover, son, friend, boss, co-worker to name a few. The relationships he has are numerous, complex and always changing. One event in particular can really put all these relationships and roles to the test – the death of his child.

The bereaved father is a unique individual. Unfortunately, his uniqueness and attendant problems are not often understood by others or even by himself. His child's death puts extraordinary demands on him. All the roles he fills change and his life is truly not ever the same again. That is not to say it cannot ever be as good, but just the circumstances are going to be different.

When a child dies, it seems that the majority of sympathy is directed towards the mother. This is usually because she is much more open in her grieving, thus it is easy to focus on her emotional needs. But what of the grieving father??? His other roles may prevent him from working out his grief. As husband and provider, he is the one who sees to the practical matters around the death: funeral arrangements, notification of people, arrangement for sibling care, etc. It may be days, weeks or months before things are settled to the point that he thinks deeply about what happened. In most cases, he is back to work and into his usual routine so quickly that he can find himself comforted by this. The impact of the child's death is lessened to a degree. Away from the house, it is easier to "forget" the child and what has happened.

MONTHLY MEETING

*June 9
On the lawn of Sacred Heart*

*July 14
TBD*

**If Oscoda Area Schools is closed
due to weather our meeting is
canceled—per Sacred Heart
Policy**

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

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The Compassionate Friends Oscoda



Area

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In our society, we are taught in subtle and not so subtle ways that men don't cry and that, in general, they are not at all open about their emotions. Thus, many men are denied a perfectly good emotional release mechanism – crying! Even in the privacy of their own home, they feel they have to “be the strong one.” Our experience has taught us that men who use crying as a tool in their grief work have fewer long-term adjustment problems. Since men often suppress their feelings, good and bad, how they are coping with their child's death never comes to the surface.



GRIEF YOU MAY BE EXPERIENCING DUE TO THE SURPRISING, UNEXPECTED CHANGES IN OUR WORLD.

Chelsea Hanson, author of *The Sudden Loss Survival Guide: Seven Essential Practices for Healing Grief, Sudden Loss Bereaved Parents USA.org 2020 Spring*

Typically, we think of grief due to the death of a loved one or someone we care about deeply. But each day we have other types of grief, both small and large. Perhaps you notice a child getting older, your aging body, lack of fulfillment, or unwelcome changes in family relationships.

Now, with the uncertain times concerning our health and stability, you may be feeling oddly uneasy. This is grief too.

Below is a condensed, four-part process to help you work through what you may be experiencing. Although I made the exercise easy to follow, it may feel unfamiliar if you have been pushing down your feelings. That's ok... go slow and be gentle with yourself.

The steps are to be aware of your feelings, notice emotions with attention, express them, and practice this process regularly.

1. Awareness: Take an inventory of the griefs you may be experiencing right now. Loss of normalcy Loss of routine Loss of financial resources Loss of safety Loss of companionship Loss of control Loss of planned events (weddings, baptisms, graduations) Loss of freedom
2. Attention: Name your grief and the feelings it is bringing up. Disbelief Anger Sadness Shock Regret Uncertainty Anguish Fear Loneliness
3. Expression: Allow feelings to naturally move through you. You may be afraid if you feel all your painful emotions, the pain may not cease. By resisting emotions, your pain will persist longer than necessary. Instead, when you release sorrow little by little, the uncomfortable feelings begin to gradually recede and disappear.
Feeling equates to healing.

Remember, all feelings want to be felt. They come up to be felt, so feel them. That is their sole purpose. Emotions want to be in motion. Once you express your emotions, they will transform and dissipate.

4. Practice: Make it a habit of allowing daily time to be with your emotions. You're likely not used to noticing what's occurring for you in an expressive, non-judgmental way. Whatever you're feeling right now is okay. All emotions and feelings are acceptable, even the ones you think aren't.

Practice being with your emotions using love, compassion, and gentleness.

Spend 10 to 15 minutes a day alone in a quiet, safe space to be with your thoughts.
How can you honor your feelings?



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

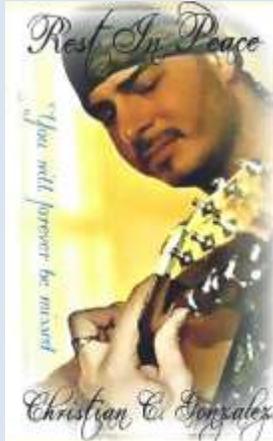


Birthdays



June

Christian Gonzalez



June

Tommy Draper



Remembrances



June

Aaron Gonzalez



June

Elise Schenk



June

Bradley Hilberg



What Might Have Been

There is a place I go to stand and think every Sunday for the past seven years. I feel sadness as I walk from the car to my spot it still has the power to bring me to tears.

I stand in the place where one day I will be same prayers, same questions, over and over again. I have one lingering thought every time I'm here. I've never stopped wondering what might have been.

I think about things I would have done differently other things could remain the same. It saddens me to think that all we have left are memories, pictures and a stone that bears his name.

I close my eyes and think about the future memories of the past echo through my mind. I hope he can somehow feel the love From all of us who were left behind.

There's not a day that goes by that I don't wonder what a wonderful life this would be. No more why's, no what if's, no more self-pity. once again a family of four instead of three.

Somehow we've been able to live with what is. To know the time will come when we'll meet again. The dreams buried beneath that stone make me wonder we'll never know what might have been.

When I'm ready to leave this spot and go back home I always touch his name carved in that stone. I know that I will never forget how we cried, when we stop to remember...the day the music died.

June

Mark Negro



Poem by
Tom Murphy
Greater Cincinnati TCF
East Chapter, OH
In Memory of Son Brennan
Murphy

The flier is information for when we will be able to meet inside at Sacred Heart. They want to make sure that we all know they are planning for everyone's safety and are working on a plan that includes parishioners as well as the community groups that meet at the church.



Father's Day

Warm and sunny days in June
 Father's Day
 Children, small and grown
 Give gifts to father
 Say thanks to father
 Say I Love You.

But there are fathers
 Whose children are not here
 To give gifts and say thanks
 And say I Love You.

Remember the fathers
 Whose children are gone,
 Because they will always be
 Fathers at heart.
 ~Sascha Wagner
 Winterson

Hope is not pretending that troubles don't exist. It is the hope that they won't last forever. That hurts will be healed and difficulties overcome. That we will be led out of the darkness and into the sunshine.

~Author unknown



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
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LAKESHORE CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES



Keeping each other safe
 Our shared response to Covid-19

FACE COVERINGS

It is expected for people to wear face coverings/masks inside the church. Parents should consider health guidelines and then use their judgment regarding whether small children can or should wear them.



THINGS TO REMEMBER

Bring your own hand sanitizer. No Food or Drink. Please sanitize all surfaces used after meetings using supplied cleaners

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Individuals or families from the same household must be seated in the church 6 feet from all others to maintain recommended social distancing



HAND WASHING

Before coming to church please be sure to wash your hands. If possible bring your own hand sanitizer to use before and after receiving Holy Communion

SYMPTON SELF-CHECK

Before arriving at church, be sure that no one in your household is experiencing symptoms of a fever above 100.4° F and/or an atypical running nose or cough. If so, please stay at home.



Remember that video recordings of Mass are available on our website: www.hf-sh.org

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 Friends 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 have a memory brick area.

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 tcfoscada@gmail.com

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

