

2011 Program

7:00 P.M. Lighting of the Chapter Candle

Welcome: Anne Arbelaez, **David's Mom**

We Remember: (Pg. 3) A responsorial poem

The Compassionate Friends Creed: (Pg. 6)

Marcia Santos:

Phil, Dean, & Marcy's Mom

The Grandparents Creed: (Pg. 7)

Marcia Martin: **Corey's Grandmother**

The Sibling Creed: (Pg. 7)

Drew Andersen, with his Mom Janet:

Brother and Mother of Rylee

Whispering Hope (Pg. 4) John Francis Dill

CANDLE LIGHTING

Reading of the names: Terese Walker,
Collin's Mom

Candle lighters: Carey Walker,
Collin's Sister
Anthony Herrera,
Ethan & Lily's Cousin



Musical Medley Laura Lou Roth,
Harpist

Shadows: (Pg. 5) David & Luisa Kennison
Ellie's Mom & Dad

You'll Never Walk Alone: (Pg. 4) John Francis Dill

Closing Remarks: Anne Arbelaez, **David's Mom**

Special thanks for all the expressions of love shared so selflessly on behalf of all our children and their families.

Permission to Grieve Slip

This certificate entitles:

Permission to grieve for an indeterminate period of time. Please excuse forgetfulness, unexpected and sudden tearful outbursts, moodiness, disinterest in normal, happy activities such as baby showers and holiday celebrations. Please excuse bearer's seemingly misplaced anger or blame or inability to engage in shallow conversations about sports, work, or draperies. Excuse tardies and no-shows. Please remember that Bearer's child died. Please grant permission for immeasurable sadness for extended periods of times and please be patient with bearer of this certificate.

2011 Candle Lighting Dinner Music CD created with love
by: **Cady, Collin's Sister**

The Story / Brandi Carlile
There You'll Be/Faith Hill
If I Die Young /The Band Perry
Love Profound /Little Big Town
Talking to the Moon / Bruno Mars
Angels Among Us/Alabama Cheap Seats
You'll Be In My Heart/ Phil Collins & Glenn Close
Keep Your Mind Wide Open/AnnaSophia Robb
Somewhere Over the Rainbow Judy Garland
Before the Storm/Nick Jonas ft. Miley Cyrus
Swing Low Sweet Chariot/Zooey Deschanel
Love Remains the Same Gavin Rossdale
Because You Love Me/ Jo Dee Messina
My Heart Will Go On/Celine Dion
Sigh No More/Mumford & Sons
You Raise Me Up/Josh Groban

Only Time /Enya	Count On Me/ Bruno Mars
Bleed/Katie Armiger	Angel/Sarah McLaughlin
Keep On Tryin'/Poco	The Climb/Miley Cyrus
Brave/Idina Menzel	Ava Maria/Charlotte Church
Anyway/ Martina McBride	I Believe / Diamond Rio

New or Update Member Form

Please complete the data sheet and return it so that we may add you to our future mailings. This is to insure that all the information we have is correct and complete. This is for internal use only. Please print *clearly*

Your Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone _____ Email: _____

Child's Full Name: _____ M

ale _____ Female _____ Child's Birthdate: _____

Child's Death Date: _____

Cause of Child's Death : (optional)

Circle Child's relationship to you: son, daughter, brother, sister, grandchild. Names & ages of all siblings:

How did you find out about The Compassionate Friends?
Please circle one: (1) Friends (2) Family (3) Hospital (4) Church (5) School (6) Funeral Homes (7) Internet (8) Newspaper (9) Employers (Human Resources) (10) Other _____

Note: The information you have given above will be confidential (used for internal purposes only unless you answer "yes" to one or more of the following questions:

1. Do you want your child's name to appear in the newsletter? Yes _____ No _____

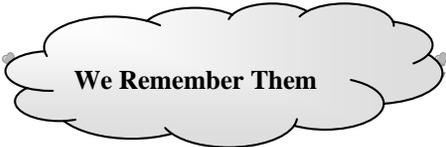
Voluntary donations are TCF Southwest Florida's only source of income. The Compassionate Friends are all volunteers and we are a non-profit. Please consider making a donation to our outreach in Memory of:

Requested by: _____

I would like to apply my donation toward the following outreach: (1) _____ newsletter (2) _____ birthday/angel date cards (3) _____ newly-bereaved packets (4) _____ annual candlelight remembrance service (5) _____ general expenses

Make Checks Payable to:

The Compassionate Friends Southwest Florida Chapter
Please return to: The Compassionate Friends, c/o Anne Arbelaez, 680 Woodshire Lane H-9, Naples, FL 34105


 We Remember Them

In the rising of the sun and its going down,
We Remember Them. Shelli's family

In the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter,
We Remember Them. Michael's family

In the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of spring.
We Remember Them. Christopher's family

In the blueness of the skies and in the warmth of summer,
We Remember Them. Ethan & Lily's family

In the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of autumn.
We Remember Them. Corey's family

In the beginning of the year and when it ends,
We Remember Them. Christopher's family

When we are weary and in need of strength,
We Remember Them. Patrick's family

When we are lost and sick of heart,
We Remember Them. Maximillian's family

When we've joys & special celebrations we yearn to share,
We Remember Them. Tanner's family

So long as we live they too shall live, for they are part of us.
We Remember Them. Ivy & Willi's family

We are the Compassionate Friends
We Remember Them. Phillip's family

 Dimmed be the region afar
 Soft as the voice of an angel Willn't deepening darkness
 Breathing a lesson unheard Brighten the glimmering star
 Hope with a gentle persuasion Then when the night is upon us
 Whispers a comforting word Why should the heart sink
 away?
 Wait till the darkness is over When the dark midnight is over
 Wait till the tempest is done Watch for the breaking of day
 Hope for the sunshine tomorrow
 After the shower is gone Whispering hope,
 Oh, how welcome, thy voice
 Whispering hope Making my heart
 Oh, how welcome, thy voice In its sorrow rejoice
 Making my heart
 In its sorrow rejoice
 If in the dusk of the twilight Whispering hope,
 Oh, how welcome, thy voice
 Making my heart
 In its sorrow rejoice



When you walk through a storm
 Keep your chin up high
 And don't be afraid of the dark.
 At the end of the storm
 Is a golden sky
 And the sweet silver song of a lark.
 Walk on through the wind,
 Walk on through the rain,
 Tho' your dreams be tossed and blown.
 Walk on, walk on
 With hope in your heart
 And you'll never walk alone, You'll never walk alone.

Perhaps at a deeper level my brain was saying, "*And since your kids don't drink and drive* (something, of course, that I could never prove; but I wanted to believe), *this tragedy won't happen to them*. However, I was in for a surprise, and I believe that this is why I was able to catch myself in these short-lived thoughts. What this father said next took away my brief feeling of relief. His words were, "Alcohol was not involved in this accident. They found none in his bloodstream." I remember the immediate shift I felt. Suddenly I was back into the pain, back into the depths of the senseless tragedy of the death of this young man and back into the grief of this devastated father sitting no more than three feet from me. Yet there was a part of me that still wanted, in some small way, to link the alcohol problems with the accident. That's how insistent my brain was. I remember saying to myself, "*Don't forget what just happened to you.*" And this is why I am sharing with you today what I hope is some insight for you into the workings of the human mind.

It may be that your own life tragedies have modified the tendency toward Brain Pain Relief. If so, then you have moved beyond the reaction of most people. But for the rest of humanity, whose brains continue to attempt to protect them, it is important to be aware of how subtle and automatic this reaction can be.

Another facet of this mode of thinking is for people to say to themselves, "Yes, this story is tragic; but it's not as bad as..." To judge by comparison is, I believe, another way for our brain to minimize the pain of a loss. A final example of this tendency is shown when people who listen to your story of loss fall into the trap of beginning a sentence with the deadly words, "At least..." Again, the brain is begging to reduce the pain.

What can we do about this natural tendency? I have three suggestions. First, realize that it is more likely to occur when we are listening to information regarding a tragedy. When you know that you are about to listen to the story of a death (in many cases you won't see it coming, except perhaps at TCF meetings), you might say to yourself, "I need to watch my tendency to try to make sense of this tragedy and try not to compare it with other tragedies." Second, as the person tells you their story, try to counter the minimization process by saying to yourself phrases such as:

"Let the pain be. Accept it." "Don't try to look for reasons." "Just be there for this person." Third, forgive yourself if you catch yourself judging. Remember, it is a natural human quality to try to reduce the pain in our lives. The important fact is that you are now more aware of what you have been doing and you can focus more on providing what we all need: a caring listener who is going to be there and not judge. This is the greatest gift you can give.

One of the many lessons we can learn from a death is to reserve our opinions until we have walked in another person's shoes. Despite this, many people react almost instinctively to reduce their own pain caused by the empathy they feel as they listen to the story of the tragic death of a child, sibling, partner, or other beloved person. Reading this, you might be saying, "I don't judge anymore. The death of my child or sibling has taught me to accept." This article is written with caring and concern to shed some light on an area that few people talk about. Let me begin by telling a story.

I have worked with hundreds of bereaved parents for more than two decades. For five years I was a clinician with the University School of Nursing Parent Bereavement project in which we worked with more than 100 parents in small groups for a 10-week period in the early months following the death of their child by accident, suicide, or homicide. By the end of the project, I had heard what seemed to be every imaginable story of horrendous death.

I wasn't prepared for my reaction to the following story which I have modified to protect the confidentiality of those involved. Sitting with a group of seven parents I listened to a father describe the death of his son in a freeway auto accident. I sat, as did the parents, empathetically listening to a story of monumental tragic proportions watching this man struggling to express the details of his son's final moments. It was a scene not unlike many I had experienced over the past 20 years, but the pain was no less excruciating. Then I heard this father say, "...and he had alcohol problems." At that instant I remember feeling a shift in my response to his story almost a relief. And I caught myself saying in my head something like, "Oh, I see." And then catching myself and saying, "I see? What am I doing? This father is describing the death of his son and I'm feeling somewhat relieved?" It was as if a part of my brain was trying to ease my pain by saying, "He had alcohol problems that's it. That explains how this senseless tragedy could have taken place." For a moment, the senseless seemed to make at least some sense.

If our brain could speak to us during the exact moment that a fellow human being is crying, telling the story of the loss of their child, and describing the intense pain of grief, it might say something like, "My God, this is terrible. I can't take all this pain. Do something to make it not hurt so much." I believe our response to this plea of our wounded brain is to make a desperate attempt to reduce the pain and try to make some sense of this. I like to call this: "Brain Pain Relief."

Let me continue with my example. Here was my brain saving, "Oh, I see, it was alcohol that contributed to the death." ."



"I wrote a poem recently about this Photo. It was taken only a couple weeks after our daughter passed away. At first I thought it was just a bad photo because the shadows blocked out my wife and son, but as I looked back at it more and more it became to represent how I have been feeling since the day she died."

David Kennison,
Ellie's dad.

Shadows Shadows

My shadow is always with me.
On the sunniest of days it always seems to grow bigger.
On the darkest of days it always seems to grow darker.
When I walk, it sometimes walks in front of me and
sometimes it walks behind me.
But it is always with me.
Some days I am scared of my shadow.
Other days I try to embrace it.
What makes me most sad, is the reminder this shadow
provides.
A silhouette of a person I knew, that will never be again.
So as I try to move, outpace my shadow, it will always be
there,
Growing bigger on some days and smaller on others.
I guess I will never let you go, as you will never let me
go.
I hope I can love you, as the way you seem to love me.

by Ellie's dad, David

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope. The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope. We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances. We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships. We are young, and we are old. Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope. Some of us have found our



faith to be a source of strength, while some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression, while others radiate an inner peace. But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love for the children who have died. We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love to share the pain as well as the joy, share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts, and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

The sharp knife of a short life, well,
I've had just enough time
So put on your best boys and I'll wear my pearls
What I never did is done
A penny for my thoughts, oh no, I'll sell them for a dollar
They're worth so much more after I'm a goner
And maybe then you'll hear the words I been singin'
Funny when you're dead how people start listenin'
If I die young, bury me in satin
Lay me down on a bed of roses
Sink me in the river at dawn
Send me away with the words of a love song
Uh oh (uh, oh)
The ballad of a dove (uh, oh)
Go with peace and love
Gather up your tears, keep 'em in your pocket
Save them for a time when you're really gonna need them, oh
The sharp knife of a short life, well
I've had just enough time
So put on your best boys and I'll wear my pearls

The Band Perry

If I Die Young

If I die young, bury me in satin	Lay me down on a bed of roses
Lay me down on a, bed of roses	Sink me in the river at dawn
Sink me in the river, at dawn	Send me away with the words of a love song
Send me away with the words of a love song	The sharp knife of a short life, well
Uh oh, uh oh	I've had just enough time
Lord make me a rain- bow, I'll shine down on my mother	And I'll be wearing white, when I come into your kingdom
She'll know I'm safe with you when she stands under my col- ors, oh and	I'm as green as the ring on my little cold finger,
Life ain't always what you think it ought to be, no	I've never known the lovin' of a man
Ain't even grey, but she buries her baby	But it sure felt nice when he was holding my hand,
The sharp knife of a short life, well	There's a boy here in town who says he'll love me forever,
I've had just enough time	Who would have thought forever could be severed by
If I die young, bury me in satin	



We are the surviving **siblings** of Compassionate Friends. We are brought together by the deaths of our brothers and sisters. Open your hearts to us, but have patience with us. Sometimes we will need the support of our friends. At other times we need our families to be there. Sometimes we must walk alone, taking our memories with us, continuing to become the individuals we want to be. We cannot be our dead brother or sister; however, a special part of them lives on with us. When our brothers and sisters died, our lives changed. We are living a life very different from what we envisioned, and we feel the responsibility to be strong even when we feel weak. Yet we can go on because we understand better than many others the value of family and the precious gift of life. Our goal is not to be the forgotten mourners that we sometimes are, but to walk together to face our tomorrows as surviving siblings of The Compassionate Friends.

Grandparents Creed

We are the grieving grandparents, the shepherds of our children and grandchildren's lives. Our grief is two-fold and at times we feel powerless to help. We seek to comfort our children in the depths of their grief and yet we need the time and space to face our own broken hearts. WE have been robbed of the special tender touch a grandparent shares with a grandchild and we have lost a symbol of our immortality. As we walk by our child's side, we both give and draw strength. We reach into their hearts to comfort them, and when they reach out to us in their distress, we begin the journey to heal together. We continue to be their guardians. We allow traditions to change to accommodate their loss. WE support the new ones which symbolize the small steps on their journey. It is in their healing that our hearts find comfort.

Siblings Creed

8 What to expect at a meeting

If I go to a meeting, will I have to talk? No one is required to talk at any meeting. We understand how difficult that can be when our grief is so fresh. We do ask that you listen, however.

My child was an adult and didn't live at home. Can I still go to a meeting? Chapter meetings are open to all families who have experienced the death of a child, at any age, from any cause. Regardless of age, we in TCF believe our children will always be thought of as just that..... our children.

Is there a charge to attend? There is never a charge to attend a TCF meeting. Our chapters rely on voluntary donations from members, friends and the community at large.

What happens at a meeting? Some meetings are simply introducing ourselves and sharing our thoughts and feelings. At other times, chapters have short programs before the sharing time. The programs may include a brief guest speaker, viewing a video tape, or listening to an audio tape.

Can I bring a friend with me? Of course, you can bring a friend, but we ask that they, as well as all members, respect each other's privacy. It is important for us to be able to share freely within our group and be sure confidences will be respected.

My partner says they won't come with me. Can I come alone? Yes. We all grieve differently & they may not be ready to take part just yet...or ever. Likewise, many parents attend without their partners.

My child died from AIDS. Will I still be welcome? Yes. All families who have experienced the death of a child at any age, from any cause, are welcome.

Religion doesn't matter to me anymore. Can people at a meeting accept that? I think you will find TCF members are very tolerant of any views. After the death of a child, many priorities, as well as values, change. TCF has no religious affiliation. Chapters meetings are held in a wide variety of locations depending upon what is available in our communities.

I have baby-sitting problems. Would it be all right to bring my child with me? While we understand the difficulties of finding child care, we must ask that any children attending with you be old enough to understand the meeting discussions and not be upset by them. Some chapters have sibling groups for children sixteen or older; check with your local chapter about this.

9 What to expect at a meeting Cont.

Do I need a reservation before I come to a meeting? No Just come whenever you feel up to it.

My child died several years ago, and I postponed my grief work. Now it's catching up with me. Is it too late to come now? We all grieve differently. Many parents don't feel the need of a support group until years after the death of a child. It's all right to come whenever you are ready, whether it's soon after your child's death, months later or years later.

Can Grandparents or Siblings attend with me? We have separate support groups for grandparents, siblings, and all other family and friends that are grieving over the death of your child. The Compassionate Friends meetings are reserved for the bereaved parents.

Local suggestions: *Consider bringing a picture of your child(ren) for our picture board. You are welcome to leave it knowing we will be remembering at every meeting.*



Why Butterflies?

Since early times, the butterfly has symbolized renewed life. The caterpillar signifies life here on earth; the cocoon, death; & the butterfly, the emergence of the dead into a new, beautiful & freer existence. Frequently, the butterfly is seen with the word "Nika" which means victory. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross movingly tells of seeing butterflies drawn all over the walls of the children's dormitories in the World War 11 concentration camps. Since Elisabeth believes in the innate intuitiveness of children, she concludes that these children knew their fate & were leaving us a message. Many members of The Compassionate Friends embrace the butterfly, a symbol—a sign of hope to them, that their children are living in another dimension with greater beauty & freedom—a comforting thought to many.

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