

August 2006



The Compassionate Friends

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Grief and Loss - Your Options - Dealing Effectively With Grief

Introduction

Grief is a process that takes time and in which movement is progressive *and* regressive. In order to clarify its progressive nature, grief is separated into different phases.

Phase I: Shock, Alarm, and Denial

There is a sense of shock and disbelief. You feel numb. This can last from a few hours to a week.

Phase II: Acute Grief

This phase includes physical, emotional, psychological, mental, intellectual, and behavioral expressions.

- **Physical:** There can be a relentless aching and a feeling that your heart has been pulled out of your chest without an anesthetic. Symptoms may include: headaches, fatigue, backaches, tightness in the chest, changes in sleep patterns, changes in appetite with accompanying changes in weight, and experiencing symptoms that mirror those of the deceased.
- **Emotional:** There are feelings of depression, anxiety, guilt, and anger. With depression comes a feeling of despair and doubt about the ability to go. Suicidal thoughts may arise. Overwhelming feelings of anxiety may be experienced while contemplating life without the deceased. Guilt arises as responsibility (realistic or not) for the loss is assessed.
- **Psychological:** The deceased may be idealized as a way to compensate for the guilt and anger.
- **Mental:** Forgetfulness, confusion, and difficulty concentrating frequently develop.
- **Intellectual and Philosophical:** There is an attempt to understand and find meaning in the loss. Statements like, "He's with God now," and "At least she's not suffering anymore," abound
- **Behavioral:** Crying, pacing, physical and/or verbal outbursts may occur. Searching is also evident, in which there is restlessness and wandering. There may be constant thoughts of the deceased and the events surrounding the loss. The bereaved may smell and or sleep with their loved one's clothing, listen to their old voice messages, and hold onto their belongings in an attempt to remember and be close to them. Searching may also involve the expectation that the deceased will return home at their usual time.

Phase III: Integration of the Loss and Grief

The reality of the loss is accepted. Crying diminishes. Physical and psychological well being are restored. The focus is on the present and the future. A new identity is established. Life can be enjoyed again. The period of time necessary to achieve acceptance is dependent on the individual's ability to succeed in doing their "grief work." It is influenced by past experiences, the extent the loss affects everyday life, the individual's personality, and the support available. This process can take up to two years to complete.

What You Can Do to Take an Active Part in Working Through your Grief:

- Familiarize yourself with the normal reactions of grief.
- Identify your thoughts, feelings and behaviors as you experience them.
- Embrace the pain. Alternate experiencing the pain with respite, work, and exercising. A healthy balance will energize you and give you the strength to go on.
- Surround yourself with people sensitive to you and your loss.
- Share your story through journaling or talking with others.
- Join a bereavement support group.
- Know that a current loss sets off reminders of past losses and ushers in fears of future losses.
- Sensitize yourself to the many types of loss that may initiate a grief response.
- Avoid alcohol and drugs that will anesthetize you and impede your ability to progress in your grief work.
- Be aware that you may temporarily regress in your grief work on birthdays, anniversaries, and holidays.
- Wait a year, if possible, before making any major decisions.
- Monitor yourself. Are you having more "good days" or "bad days"? Consider seeing a professional if you are "stuck."

Use your journey to become the best possible you. Working through your grief will strengthen your character, promote positive self-esteem, and provide a general feeling of emotional well being.



Our Children, Loved and Remembered



<i>Birthdates</i>		<i>Anniversary Dates</i>	
Jeffrey Basso Son of Kate & Joe Madigan	8/1/1965	Barry Belyea Son of Sue Bernier	8/3/2000
Michael McSorley Son of Marcie Spencer	8/5/1955	James Michael Perkowski Son of Anita Opp	8/4/2003
Veronica Babineau Daughter of Rita Babineau	8/7/1936	Jean Marie Sullivan Daughter of Margaret Sullivan	8/4/1974
Sarah Anne Kithcart Daughter of Anne & Herb Kithcart	8/17/1987	Michele Daidone Daughter of Harriet & Bruce Cole	8/10/2002
David Paul Plamondon Son of Janet & Tim Plamondon	8/25/1982	Chad Collier Son of Cindy Jones	8/17/2002
Edward John Barone Son of Viv Barone	8/30/1969	Zackary Robert Finch Son of Keith Finch	8/30/2002
Graham Edward Woody Son of Sid & Barbara Finkelstein	8/30/1969		
Jack Leben Son of Jeff & Pam Leben	8/30/1999		
Chad Collier Son of Cindy Jones	8/31/1982		

Why Butterflies?

Since early times, the butterfly has symbolized renewed life. The caterpillar signifies life here on earth; the cocoon, death; and the butterfly, the emergence of the dead into a new, beautiful and 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 and 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 and freedom—a comforting thought to many.

**If we have inadvertently missed your child's Birthday or Anniversary Date or made any other errors, please accept our deepest apologies. Do call us at 287-5968 or email anne.rinaldi@comcast.net to make an immediate correction.

Thank you for your Gifts of Love

. All donations are gratefully accepted and assist the chapter in its mission to help bereaved families following the loss of a child.

Loving Listeners:

For those times when you need to speak to someone who will listen with understanding and who can offer hope and support from their own process of healing in grief please call us:

Annette Carruli 250-4071

Teresa Walker 353-3215

Anne Kithcart 775-5640

Members Area: Southwest Florida Compassionate Friends

By Aisling Swift ***Tree planting honors Naples High graduate who died in accident*** April 28, 2006

A live oak tree will be planted today in memory of a 2004 Naples High School graduate who was killed walking across U.S. 1 in Coral Gables last year by a driver who ran a red light. The public is invited to attend the tree planting ceremony, in honor of Ashley Erin Kelly, which will be held at 3 p.m. near the lake in Lowdermilk Park. One of Kelly's teachers, Janet Glancy, and two friends, Veronica Smith and Shelli Galati, will be speaking during the ceremony, which is part of National Arbor Day. Vice Mayor Johnny Nocera and Joe Boscaglia, the city's arborist, also will speak.

Kelly, a 19-year-old University of Miami student, was the 2004 Naples High salutatorian and was captain of the mock trial team. She was the daughter of Tom and Sherri Kelly of Naples.

"We're really appreciative of the city for this opportunity," Sherri Kelly said, adding that her daughter loved Naples and its beaches. "It just means a whole lot to us to have this tree planted. It's special to us because the last time we were together was when we had a picnic in Lowdermilk Park in February." She said her parents, Ben and Sidney Smithson, were at the picnic and are donating a plaque to be put at the foot of the tree.

Kelly died as a result of the 8:30 p.m. crash on April 11, 2005, at South Dixie Highway and Mariposa Court when she and her roommate, Andrea Cinque of New Jersey, were walking in a crosswalk when they were struck by an SUV driven by Kristin Arbuckle, 24, of Miami. Cinque was treated in a hospital for an arm injury and released the next day.

Arbuckle, who was related to a University of Miami board chairman, later pleaded guilty to running a red light, lost her license for six months, served 50 hours of community service, attended traffic school and was ordered to pay \$323.50, which includes fines and a donation to a memorial scholarship fund in Kelly's name. Last year, the first Naples High graduate awarded the scholarship, Alex Barton, was given \$1,000, said Sherri Kelly. She now goes to the University of Florida. Another senior will be given a scholarship next month. A Web site in Kelly's honor has been set up at: <http://ashley-kelly.memory-of.com>

The city of Naples, which maintains more than 22,000 trees and palms, recently was recertified as a "Tree City USA" by the National Arbor Day Foundation, an honor it has received for nine years. To be honored, communities must have a city tree ordinance, a governing tree board, a comprehensive urban forestry program, and observe of Arbor Day.

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For those of you who would like to share your ideas, growth, insight, stories or poems, please email your material for the newsletter. Or if you prefer, mail it to my address: 168 Lake Point Lane, Naples, FL 34112.

Our Mission: The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age, and to provide information to help others to be supportive.

The Compassionate Friends is a national nonprofit, self-help support organization that offers friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. There is no religious affiliation and there are no membership dues or fees.

The secret of TCF's success is simple: As seasoned grievers reach out to the newly bereaved, energy that has been directed inward begins to flow outward and both are helped to heal. Please come, bring your hope and energy, and be a Compassionate Friend to another.

The Compassionate Friends

The Compassionate Friends Newsletter
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Naples, Florida 34112

**Compassionate Friends Web Address: www.compassionatefriends.org
Regional coordinator: Sally Migliaccio (561)747-2691**



**TCF meets every first Monday of the month. Please note:
September's meeting will be the second Monday due to Labor Day being on the first Monday**
Our own member, Chris Doyle, is attending the national conference & she will share her experiences

Next Meeting: August 7, 2006

MEETING BEGINS AT 7:00 P.M.

Committee meets at 6:30 P.M.

MOORINGS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (in the library)
791 HARBOUR DR., NAPLES

GOING NORTH ON U.S.41, HARBOUR DR. IS A LEFT TURN
ABOUT A MILE NORTH OF COASTLAND MALL AND GOLDEN GATE PARKWAY.

Dear Friends: To receive this newsletter by email, which will help us save on the cost of printing and postage, please send an email to me at: anne.rinaldi@comcast.net. On the subject line insert "TCF Email Newsletter" and your name and you're done.