



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

NORTHEAST LOUISIANA CHAPTER

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March/April 2005

MONTHLY MEETINGS

The 1st Thursday of each month

March 3rd / April 7th

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Place: St. Francis Enaut Conference Center
408 Hall Street (Directly behind SFMC)

The most beautiful people we have known are those who have known defeat, known suffering, known struggle, known loss, and have found their way out of the depths. These persons have an appreciation, a sensitivity and an understanding of life that fills them with compassion, gentleness, and a deep loving concern. Beautiful people do not just happen.

Easter Thoughts

One more winter overcome,
one more darkness
turned to light and promise.

Winter is the price for spring.
Struggle is the price for life.

Even in sorrow, remember
to prepare your heart
for celebration...
next spring perhaps.
Or the spring after that...

Sascha Wagner
TCF Des Moines, IA

In March

The year moves on.
Between the weeks and days
are spaces filled
with more than only time...

Those minutes, moments,
when your life stands still
and aches in memory...

And part of you
needs to endure the dark,
because it means
to have love again.

And part of you
prays for forgiveness,
because your mind
may break, remembering.

Between the weeks and days
are spaces filled
with more than only time...

Sascha Wagner,
TCF Des Moines, IA

CHAPTER CO-LEADERS

Marilyn & French Smith

STEERING COMMITTEE

Henry Cole, Facilitator
Beverly & Charles Wall, Treasurer
Dianne & Frank Bruscato, Library
Ann Cole & Marilyn Smith, Hospitality
Frances & Jim Gregory, Outreach
Julie & Danny Petty, Newsletter
Betty Jean & Johnny James, Newsletter
Editors
Sandy Chester, TCF Regional Coordinator



For Siblings

An outlet for siblings is the TCF Sibling Forum. It is available online and is a place where siblings from all over can share and help each other cope with the unique grief of losing a brother or sister. Siblings are able to ask questions, make a comment or leave a thought for others to respond.

Visit the Sibling Resources Page at www.compassionatefriends.org
Email tcsiblingrep@compassionatefriends.org for the password

" AFTER"

As the world around me gets brighter,
And the darkness fades away,
The weight I carry gets lighter
Because I know she'll be near one day.

My life is no longer as lonely,
As when it was when she left.
I know she wasn't trying to hurt me,
But for a while I couldn't catch my breath.

Each day the pain gets easier
And the memories aren't so sad.
I'm finally able to smile for her,
As I think of the time we had.

Now when I'm feeling alone,
And ask for her embrace,
I close my eyes and she warms me,
And her spirit kisses my face.

Sarah Yoder
in memory of her sister Morgan

SHE'S HERE ...BUT NOT

She's here
but she's there.

She's with us,
but she's not.

She's right
around the bend,

But then
she's gone again.

She's far away
but so near.

It's like she's gone
but here again.

Stacy Sharp,
TCF Defiance, OH

"THE AFTER LOSS CREDO"

I need to talk about my loss
 I may often need to tell you what happened-
 or to ask WHY it happened.
 Each time I discuss my loss, I am helping myself
 Face the reality of the death of my loved one.

I need to know that you care about me.
 I need to feel your touch, your hugs
 I need you just to be with me.
 (and I need to be with you.)
 I need to know you believe in me and in my
 ability to get through my grief in my own way
 and in my own time.

Please don't judge me now
 or think that I am behaving strangely.
 Remember I am grieving.
 I may be in shock.
 I may feel afraid, I may feel deep rage.

Don't worry if you think I am getting better
 And then suddenly I seem to slip backward.
 Grief makes me behave this way at times.
 And please don't tell me you know how I feel
 or that it's time for me to get on with my life.
 What I need now is time to grieve and to recover.

Most of all, thank you for being my friend.
 Thank you for your patience.
 Thank you for your caring.
 Thank you for helping, for understanding.
 Thank you for praying for me.
 And remember, in the days or years ahead,
 After your loss, when you need me as
 I have needed you, I will understand!
 And then I will come and be with you.

Author: Barbara Hills LesStrang

*Submitted by Tammy Thompson
 TCF Northeast Louisiana*



RENEWED HOPE AND FAITH

"I have cried my tears.
 I have asked my whys.
 I have mourned the future that may not be.
 I have planted my hope in the God who made me.
 He is my refuge in this storm."

Betty Stallings,
 in loving memory of her sweet child, David.

The time does come when we feel that most of
 our tears have been shed and our whys asked.
 Our longing for all that will not be is now seeded
 by fresh dreams. Out of our despair, we have
 found a sense of hope. For some, this hope lies in
 God. Others find it in a renewed appreciation of
 nature, or a thankfulness for life. Moving on is a
 challenge. Hope can come from letting go of
 much of our intense pain, from accepting reality,
 and from new dreams. While our tears may still
 come and the "whys" still find their way to our
 lips, our faith and hope for the future can be the
 firm footing we need to go forward.

Remembering With Love
 By Elizabeth Levang, P.D. & Sherokee Ilse

Wild flowers
 recoup from
 winter's
 desolation to
 decorate spring.

By Diantha Ain

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS is the hospital where my broken bones were reset and my wounds cared for and dressed with healing ointment. My fears were eased. Now I have been thrust into the hurting and wounded, and I find the grace is there to touch, to hug, to dress a wound. I want to say "thank you" my compassionate friends.

Kathi Barnhill



Make plans to stay at the Marriott Copley Place Hotel, site of the 2005 National Conference, located in Boston's Back Bay.

Hotel Reservations:

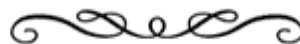
Marriott Copley Place Hotel
110 Huntington Ave.
Boston, Massachusetts 02116
Phone: 617-236-5800



(Reservations must be made directly with the hotel.)

If you would like to receive an individual 2005 TCF Conference Registration form, please send a #10 business size, self addressed stamped envelope to:

TCF Conference 2005
PO Box 3696
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696



Everyone is encouraged to contribute to the newsletter to keep our chapter going strong. Please contact Johnny James with your ideas.

Also, remember you can bring your child's favorite snack for refreshments to our monthly meeting or do a flower arrangement for the table. Please contact Marilyn Smith one month prior to the meeting.

Our Children Always Loved and Remembered

A special table is set up at our meetings to honor children whose special days are in that month. We invite you to bring a picture or memento of your child to share during that significant month.

OUR CHILDREN'S MARCH BIRTHDAYS

David Pruitt	03/27/59	Joyce Pruitt
Kaye Shields	03/04/62	Lila & R.L. Hargrove
Jerrell Rowland	03/13/64	Melba & Charles Tomlinson
Amanda Miller	03/12/70	Chuck Miller
Rusty Thomas	03/04/79	Donna Thomas
Tyrone Edwards	03/10/81	Sheila Edwards
Ben Caldwell	03/26/83	Emily & Douglas Caldwell

OUR CHILDREN'S MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

Larry Gilley	03/31/97	Louis & Leroy Gilley
Brian Gregory	03/10/98	Frances & Jim Gregory
Duston Albritton	03/14/98	Linda & Ronnie Albritton
Brandi Spradlin	03/22/98	Rita & Terry Colegate
Elois Jackson	03/15/99	Elizabeth Jackson
Joseph Monfette	03/15/00	Melba & Craig Monfette
Beau Wicker	03/18/00	Ralph Wicker
Kimball James	03/31/01	Betty Jean & Johnny James
Jeremy Barnhill	03/08/02	Kathi & Terry Barnhill
Tyrone Edwards	03/30/02	Sheila Edwards

OUR CHILDREN'S APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Kenneth Eggleston	04/24/48	Helen Eggleston
Kammy Fuller	04/18/63	Judy Fuller
Jason Garrett	04/02/67	Sandra Garrett
Chris Culpepper	04/04/69	Noel Culpepper
Christopher Johnson	04/23/89	Melissa & Barry Johnson

OUR CHILDREN'S APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

Martha Mickel	04/13/84	Ruth Mickel
David Clements	04/10/96	Juanita Clements
Kenneth Eggleston	04/20/99	Helen Eggleston
Michael Carter	04/28/99	Brenda & David Carter
Jason Williamson	04/16/01	Sharon & Harold Williamson
Juanita York	04/24/01	Della York
Trey Linzay	04/07/02	Cindy & Wayne Linzay
David Pruitt	04/20/02	Joyce Pruitt
Pamela Ford	04/10/04	Leona Lipton

To our long time Members:

We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together and the glue that makes it stick. Each meeting when new parents arrive with a fresh hurt and frightened eyes, I remember how we felt at our first meeting. Think back ... what would it have been like for you if there had not been any "oldies" to welcome you, share your grief, and encourage you? It was from them you heard, " your pain will not always be this bad; it really does get softer." They were the ones who wanted to really listen when you talked about your child. Can you be an "oldie" for someone else? By helping someone else, you help yourself and share your child with someone who never got to know them. Come out and share with newly bereaved parents to help them heal. Our own healing happens when we are reaching out to others.

"We need not walk alone, we are The Compassionate Friends."

OUR CREDO

We need not walk alone.
We are The Compassionate Friends.
We reach out to each other with love, with understanding and with hope.
Our children have died at all ages and from many different causes,
but our love for our children 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 and creeds.
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 we feel helpless and see no hope.
Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength;
some of us are struggling to find answers.
Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression;
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 our children.
We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves,
but we are committed to building a future together
as we reach out to each other in love
and 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.

WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED