



# The Compassionate Friends NEWSLETTER

Manhattan Newsletter

HOLIDAY 2016 Vol. XXVIII No. 4

## OLYMPICS OF THE SOUL II

by Marie Levine

These are the last few days of Fall. As the leaves turn and fall, the days will grow mercifully shorter, the temperature will drop and we will retreat to the safe comfort of home. For just a brief period, we can watch the world from the safety of the nest, not enticed out into the games of summer by well meaning friends and family, intent on our participation. We need this time to prepare...to prepare for the next Olympics of the soul...the Holidays.

So much has been written about getting through the holidays when you are grieving. The intensity of the pain of the recently bereaved, the suggestions of how to manage by the experienced griever, the wistful thoughts of the poets...so much to be said about this particular period of survival. Truth is, the holidays are only a tad more difficult than every other day. Like salt in a wound, the over-the-top joyousness adds an extra dose of emotional pain. But I've come to realize, that many who "celebrate" the holidays are also fellow travelers along this grieving path. They're just further ahead than many of us are. I'm still not up to the festivities. For me, it remains a time of introspection. With absolutely no opportunity to mourn our losses at this time of year, I choose to remain as low key as possible and venture back into the ebb and flow of days only after New Year's Eve.

It's not possible for the uninitiated to comprehend the emotional roller coaster we are on now. But I recently came

*(Continued on page 10)*

## THE EVOLUTION OF GRIEVING

by Nora Yood

July 30<sup>th</sup> marked the ninth anniversary of my son David's death. Since that day, I have been mourning his loss. I am not being morbid or hyperbolic; just descriptive, stating a fact. I suffer Perpetual Sorrow Syndrome, the unquenchable yearning for a lost loved one which has become a chronic condition hardwired into the mental infrastructure. Yet as time passes, our relationship—the bond between David and me— has changed. I have learned to practice managed mourning. I see my progress as the evolution of grieving.

In many ways the loss of my child is more concrete today that it was earlier in the cycle of mourning where returning to some approximation of normalcy was overwhelming. For a long while, the finality of him being gone forever could not be comprehended. I imagined him entering into the house, saw him on the street, and heard his voice. These apprehensions seemed so tangible. Often, I had dreams in which I was able to intervene and reverse the outcome of his fate. Real life was the nightmare I woke up to. During this period, I was negotiating a foreign territory where the physical environment was recognizable, but not familiar. I felt constantly disoriented and frightened, a sense of dread looming everywhere. There was the avatar of myself going about the business of eating, sleeping, working, while an identical human representation followed behind; a lost soul, stranger to herself and her surroundings, clueless and confused about where she was and what she was doing. I wasn't psychotic, just in the acute phase of grieving. Simmering below the predictable sadness and loneliness, was guilt,

*(Continued on page 2)*



**TELEPHONE FRIENDS** - When you're having the kind of day that you feel only another bereaved parent or sibling can understand, we are willing to listen and share with you. Don't hesitate to call our Manhattan Chapter phone for meeting information (212) 217-9647. However, if you need to speak with someone please call one of the following volunteers: Jacquie Mitchell (eves) (347) 414-1780jacquienytcf@verizon.net .

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**THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS MEETINGS** are always the second and fourth Tuesday of each month.

**Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church,**  
55th and 5th Avenue. Enter at 7 West 55th street.  
**We start PROMPTLY at 7:00PM.**

*The Compassionate Friends is a mutual assistance self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents. We are a group of bereaved parents who are seeking support in our grief or are able to give it. Among us, your religion, your race, your politics, your job or social standing are not important. We care about your grief—the tragedy that each of us has shared—and how we can grow through it, not back to the person we were but to the person we can become.*

rage, self-pity, resentment, depression, and many other negative, self-defeating turns the human psyche takes after deep trauma and tragedy.

There are many factors including time, serious introspection, religious rituals, searching and discovering ways to honor the memory of the child, and reaching out to other bereaved parents, to help a parent function after a child's death. Many occasions remain painful and fraught with anxiety and melancholy—the empty chair at family celebrations, noting the milestones your child's contemporaries, responding to queries from new acquaintances about your children, growing old without the company and support of a son or daughter. Still, the months and then years move forward, and it sinks in that you are still in the land of the living (yes, it is possible!), but your beloved child, ever present in your consciousness, exists in some other sphere of being. Miraculously, it seems, but not until you are emotionally ready, comes acceptance. The next phase in the evolution of grieving has arrived.

As I approach completing a decade since that sweltering summer day -- was I in hell?—when we buried my son, I want to explore the possibility of moving beyond acceptance to a higher spiritual goal: to cultivate an attitude of gratitude. Just writing this fills me with astonishment, since I still believe there can never be anything positive about the untimely passing of a young person. But I am willing to open my heart to truths I previously denigrated

and dismissed as wishful and naive. I want to embrace the blessing of the time spent with my son rather than bemoan the curse of his death. I want to take comfort in the knowing that each of us has a purpose on the earth, a mission to fulfill in the eternal unfolding of existence. The worth of life cannot be measured in the amount of years an individual lives. Of course, we bereaved parents would have wished our children a long, happy, healthy stay on this planet, lasting much beyond our own departure. Of course, we will grieve for them until we too, have shed our physical container, and are no longer matter but pure energy, ready to join our children as part of the creative force that fuels the eternal cosmos.

The years of David's life were diminished, but not its worth. I want to be able to let go of the *what ifs* and *if onlys* that surround his dying; to give up the fantasies of what he could have been, done, achieved had he been granted a normal life span. I want to focus on the special joy, insight and pleasure he brought to those who knew and loved him. The thoughts of him and what he means to me have allowed me to manage my mourning and go on with my life. I have learned from his destiny, the immeasurable value of life that must be revered, respected unconditionally, and the indestructible power of love that transcends even death. It was his gift to me, which I accept with gratitude, even as I continue to mourn his loss. This, I believe, is the next stage in the evolution of grieving.

## A SILENT LANGUAGE

A few weeks ago my husband Frank and I had dinner with people we had not seen for a long time. Eventually the conversation moved toward issues around our families. I knew it was coming, the question that has become so difficult to answer. I was asked whether I had any siblings. I said: "I have a sister. We were very close. She died almost two years ago". Seconds passed when nobody said anything, until the one who had asked me managed to reply "Oh, I forgot. I remember I heard about it when it happened....":

I tried to ease the situation, and asked myself again what else I should have said, that would not make the situation for everyone so uncomfortable. People mostly don't know what to say, especially young people, who often have not lost someone yet, and don't know what it feels like. A simple "Oh", or "I didn't know", and the topic will be changed to

something that suits them better. I often wonder how the loss of my sister and her baby girl can be the center of my whole life and at the same time an issue that people go over so quickly, without even trying to imagine the tragedy behind the words "she died".

When I said these words, I felt the burning in my throat again, the iron fist around my heart. These are the words to use, the verbal symbols that are used to express what happened. And yet, these words seem to be so inappropriate. Standing for something so important and far-reaching, do not at all express the vastness of sorrow I feel. My mind still struggles to take in the whole meaning and consequence of losing my sister – how can this be that you do not live anymore? That your beautiful bodies are in a grave, side by side? And I haven't found words yet to express how much it hurt to have lost you.

Sadness became a constant and familiar part of my life, following me everywhere like a shadow. I wonder if there will ever be a way to make other people understand what it feels like to miss someone so desperately, how big the void is without my sister, how heavy the burden is to carry knowing that we will never see each other again. What are the appropriate words for it? It is a silent language, and only those who suffered through loss understand it. I almost wish I had not said these terrible words "she is dead" I wish I had just pretended that everything is fine: my sister is still here, everything is the way it should be. I could have enjoyed a break from the truth. Maybe I will just do it, the next time when someone asks whether I have any siblings. "oh yes. I have a sister, and we love each other very much." How good that feels.

**Britta Nielson, TCF Manhattan**

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**Siblings** - *We are the surviving siblings of The 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©*

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## SIBLING GRIEF

I was a sophomore in High School when my little brother Arthur was killed. As a sad coincidence, the woman who killed him was the secretary at y school. I can't remember seeing Arthur lying in the street, though i know I did. All I can recall is being horrified and needing to get away from there. I took my younger sister home and never saw Arthur again. It was the dreadful beginning of a very long and painful journey.

The pain of grief is unavoidable, so is the family disruption. What can be changed however, is the length of the grieving process. Unfortunately, for our family, we were given no help and we stayed a mess for a very long time. I would like to share my experiences in the hope it will help you to cope with your brother or sister's death.

The first thing I can remember is not knowing how to act or what to do. I felt terribly alone and awkward.

I didn't know how I was supposed to act at school. Part of me wanted to tell everybody what happened and part of me didn't want to talk to anyone at all, but I felt people would think I didn't care when I said nothing. It hurt either way. One way I dealt with my grief was by being sarcastic and laughing whenever something painful came up. I laughed outside but I think my friends knew I was crying inside. Most people don't know how to help us, but hopefully you will have someone to talk to.

Home becomes a pain-filled place. Our parents, who have been hurt very badly, aren't the parents we knew before. The biggest mistake I made in my grief was trying to "fix" my parents' pain. I wished for and acted in ways that I hoped would change them back to happy, whole people again. I know now that it was not my responsibility to do this. In fact, I couldn't do it. The bad thing was, in trying to make them better, I stuffed a lot of my own sadness, tears and worries inside. This added even more problems to my grief. I learned we have to take care of ourselves and trust our parents to take care of themselves.

TCF, San Diego 2001

## THE BRINK

Holidays are frequently difficult times for survivors. Family gatherings just don't seem the same without our loved one.

I recall after my brother had taken his life, my family was planning the memorial service. We got into a rather heated argument over what should be done and how it should be done. The frustration and anger following a suicide often leaves survivors in a frenzy. Finally, in exasperation, I said "I don't want to go to the memorial service. It isn't what Ken would have wanted anyway". The room quieted and my mother looked at me and said, "The memorial isn't for Ken. It's for us. To help us deal with it". It was stark and it was clear. So right.

Months later, Christmas was approaching. My mother spoke about 'canceling' Christmas. She lamented that the holidays would not be the same without Ken there. I thought about the fact that my brother had always been the life of the party at holiday gatherings. He trotted out old stories deliberately designed to embarrass everyone but himself. He presented us with a 'gag gift' every year. It could be a rock, a can of pork brains, or the smokeless ashtray he and my brother Tony gave back and forth every year. He had all the best quips. He made us all laugh and enjoy the season. But in the end I recalled my mother's earlier words and paraphrased them back to her. "Mom, holidays are for the living. This Christmas is for us". It seemed almost callous but it was the truth. And we had a nice Christmas that year. No, it wasn't the same. How could it have been? But life, including holidays, must go on.

One of the most bitter pills for me to swallow during my brother's memorial service was the preacher saying "Life must go on". For me an my family, life had seemingly stopped. But it does go on.

Our loved ones could not have known the extent of emotional and social paralysis their irrational act would leave us with. We might ask ourselves if our loved one would want us to languish in our pain and avoid carrying on tradition with our friends and families. Better still, we might give ourselves the ultimate Christmas gift of allowing ourselves to experience some joy.

Wading through the holidays soon after the loss of a loved one is difficult. Oftentimes you won't believe you can ever find the holiday spirit again. Sometimes the old traditions have to be changed. The arms and shoulders of friends and family help to pull us through. Sometime you won't feel at all like having fun. Allow yourself your grief. Listen to the clues our hearts, minds and bodies give.

Whatever you choose to do, remember that the holidays are for family. They're for your children, your parents and your siblings. And you. Peace.

Kevin Wade, Survivors of Suicide

## SPECIAL HANDLING PLEASE

**I was handed a package the other day.  
It was wrapped securely to be mailed away.  
Attached to the outside as plain as could be  
was a simple note for all to see:**

*Please rush through the holiday season;  
too painful to open for any reason!  
Contained within, find one bereaved heart  
fragile, broken, falling apart.*

*Tried to go shopping the other day;  
the hype of the season blew me away.  
Sat down to write cards,  
that was insane. Couldn't find the list  
or think of my name.*

*People say "come over,"  
"be of good cheer."  
"Celebrate the holidays,"  
"prepare a New Year."*

*But my grief overwhelms me  
like waves in the sea.  
Can they cope with my crying;  
an unsettled me?*

*I don't have any holiday cheer,  
decorations, traditions, big family meal,  
I can't do it this year.  
Do you know how I feel?*

*Guilty and frustrated!  
I've let everyone down!  
Our holiday celebrations  
used to be the best in town!*

*So just ship me away  
address unknown.  
When my grief is over  
I might fly home.*

*signed: Bereaved Heart*

**I just couldn't send Bereaved Heart away,  
so I jotted a note, and left it that day:**

Dear Bereaved Heart:

The death of your loved one  
has forced you to start  
a new type of living  
that's hard on the heart.

Undecorating your life  
of its angers and fears  
is not easy to do  
without shedding tears.

And untying your guilt  
can release a bundle of strife  
questions are stirred up  
about living and life.

Don't be concerned now  
with invitations, big meals.  
See how the little stuff  
handles and feels.

Let the love of your family,  
neighbors or friends  
uphold and sustain you  
when you're at loose ends.

Most are eager to be there,  
willing to share.  
Tell them your needs,  
and they'll show you they care.

They'll take you shopping,  
write cards, even cook.  
Let that stuff go now  
get yourself off the hook.

You need time for healing,  
you've much work to do.  
Your heart needs mending -  
give that gift to YOU.

Take a walk, read a book,  
try something your style.  
Make sure it's relaxing,  
makes you pause, rest a while.

When holiday invitations  
knock at your door.  
Don't say "yes" to five  
when you want only four.

If you wish to remember  
your loved one who died,  
plant a tree, give a gift  
let your heart be your guide.

This season of wonder  
can bring you relief  
if you're willing to unwrap  
your tears and your grief.

Please listen Bereaved Heart,  
stay close and please dare  
to open your package  
and let others care.

signed: C.U. Soon

*Reprinted from Bereavement Magazine  
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## THOUGHTS FOR THE BEREAVED DURING THE HOLIDAYS

### PLAN AHEAD.

Bereaved individuals who experience the most difficulty with the holiday season are those who have given little thought to the challenges they will encounter. Consider ahead of time what may be expected of you, both socially and emotionally, as well as your own preferences.

### ACCEPT YOUR LIMITATIONS.

Grief consumes most of your available energy no matter what the season. The holidays place additional demands on your time and emotions. Plan to lower your expectations to accommodate current needs.

### MAKE CHANGES.

Your circumstances have changed. Expect to make necessary alterations in holiday plans to accommodate these changes. Consider changing your surroundings, rituals, and/or traditions to diminish the stress. Serve notice on family and friends that this year things may be somewhat different.

**TRIM DOWN TO ESSENTIALS.** Limit social and family commitments to suit your available energy. Shop early or use catalog sales. Reevaluate priorities and forego unnecessary activities and obligations.

### ASK FOR AND ACCEPT HELP.

Accept offers of assistance with holiday shopping, decorating, cleaning, cooking, etc. Chances are, loved ones are looking for ways to lessen your burden at this time of year. Allow those who care about you to offer their support in concrete ways.

### INFORM OTHERS OF YOUR NEEDS.

Give family and friends the tools they need to help you through the holidays. Be specific about your preferences and desires, and keep them up to date when those needs change.

### BUILD IN FLEXIBILITY.

Learn to “play it by ear”. There is no concrete formula for learning to deal with loss. You are the foremost authority on what is best for you, and your needs may legitimately change from day to day. Accept the fluctuations that must occur when walking in unknown territory, and learn to take each moment as it comes.

### GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION “TO BE”.

Allow breathing space and expect fluctuations in mood and perspective. The bereaved work overtime. Not only is life more complicated, but all energy is siphoned into mental and emotional resolution. Grieving is nature’s way of healing the mind and heart from the greatest injury of all. Allow yourself the privilege of limping until your wounds have healed and you can learn to run again.

Reprinted with permission from  
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## BEING THANKFUL

It’s not easy being thankful  
when you’re no longer here.  
It’s not that I’m ungrateful, just  
that death makes life unclear.

I’m thankful for a mind that still  
remembers you so well, and  
the life we shared together  
left stories I can tell.

I’m thankful for the things I have,  
reminders of your life;  
childhood drawings, baseball cards,  
your writings and scout knife.

I’m thankful for all family,  
now gone, and those still here,  
the many friends now in my life,  
‘twas death that brought us near.

Why does this season cause me pain  
when thankful for so much,  
and knowing you’re still with me, simply  
out of sight and touch?

Please know I’m not ungrateful  
if not up to holiday mirth.  
For I’m thankful that I shared the life  
you lived when on this earth.

~Georgia A. Cockerham  
from “Why? Why? Why?”

## A REASON TO LIVE

My sorrow seems endless, my grief only grows  
the life I knew ended, I'm caught in the throes  
of bereavement so painful that life's put on hold  
as I struggle for meaning in a world now grown cold.

The delight of the past, the joy of the day,  
captured in her sweet smile have been swept away.  
Now I search for a reason to live out my life  
though my soul waits in anguish  
and each hour brings strife.

Through ME lives her memory! I'll keep it alive  
through my words and my pen, so her name will survive.  
And each day of my life I will send her my love...  
I'll live now to remember my daughter above.

~**Sally Migliaccio**, TCF Babylon  
from *Tracy, an Extraordinary Child* 1995

## THANKSGIVING PRAYER

I'm thankful this Thanksgiving  
that my grief is not so new.  
Last year it was so painful  
to think of losing you.

Death can't claim my love for you  
though we are far apart.  
Sweet memories will always be  
engraved upon my heart.

Time can never bring you back  
but it can help me be  
thankful for the years of joy  
you brought our family.

To all the parents with grief so new;  
I share your loss and sorrow.  
I pray you find, with faith and time,  
the blessings of each tomorrow.

~ **Charlotte Irick**,  
TCF, Idaho Falls, ID



## THE HOLIDAYS



With the changing of the seasons  
the holidays come once more.  
Busy shoppers, joyous laughter,  
pretty wreaths hung on the door.

Though I pause in the twilight hour,  
and hear the children play,  
my joy is forever silenced,  
by the dreadful day in May.

My love of the holiday season,  
now lives in another time,  
memories of past Christmases,  
when all of my life was fine.

The tree lights no longer sparkle,  
my heart is cold inside.  
My holiday joy ended  
the day my only child died.

I stand outside now, looking in,  
to a world I no longer know.  
My tears flow like a river,  
and melt the falling snow.

I turn now to the meaning  
of what Christmas really is -  
My pain softened by believing,  
in spirit, he will always live.

~**Vicki Tushingam**  
TCF, Los Angeles, CA



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**  
1924-1998

The lyrics of the familiar I Heard The Bells On Christmas Day, were written - on Christmas Day by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, when he received word that his son had been mortally wounded in combat in the Civil War.

When I was a child, the words symbolized the spirit of the season for me. Peace and good will were the order of the day. Gifts were made or bought - then hidden then given; and we were reminded of how much we loved and needed each other. This was the time of reflection and celebration - of families coming together, setting aside discord and rancor, singing, sharing and rejoicing in the pleasure of being together and the promise of peace and new beginnings.

After the death of our daughter Rhonda, I thought I would never again recapture that feeling. The pain of losing her was made even more intense by the beauty of the season. The sound of bells brought tears to my eyes, and I braced myself against the moment I would hear this lovely song again. The words were just an empty promise now. "This is reality" I thought. "All of my peace and joy are in the past. How can I ever again hear the music and message of peace on earth, when I am tormented by this longing for my child?"

When our child died, the difference between major pain and minor grievance was instantly defined. Our

lives were irrevocably divided into two parts; before and after. We could not control our child's death; and in our weakest moments, we believed we could not control anything in our lives - that we had no further responsibility for anything that happens to us or anyone else. Yet we know this isn't true. We still have control over our own words and our own behavior, and we work at controlling our thoughts.

## **OF PEACE ON EARTH, GOOD WILL TO MEN**

**I heard the bells on Christmas Day  
Their Old Familiar Carols play,  
And wild and sweet the words repeat  
Of peace on earth good will to men.**

**And in despair i bowed my head;  
"There is no peace on earth," I said,  
"for hate is strong and mocks the song  
of peace on earth, good will to men".**

**Then pealed the bells more loud and deep;  
"God is not dead, nor doth he sleep;  
the wrong shall fail, the right prevail  
with peace on earth, good will to men."**

**'till ringing, singing on its way,  
the world revolved from night to day,  
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime,  
of peace on earth, good will to men.**

Longfellow's words are both a plea and a promise. I put myself in his place; the pursuit of peace became a personal quest when our child died. Yet how can we find personal peace when each day brings fresh rumors and reports of conspiracy, bigotry, violence, hunger and strife? Our lives are filled with dismal reminders of how tragic the consequences can be when we lose sight of our real mission on this earth; to love and live in harmony with one another.

Words can hurt; words can ignite anger; words can destroy lives. But words can heal; and words can inspire and light fires of friendship and hope.

This year, when we hear the plea for peace and good will, perhaps each of us can, in some small way, help someone realize the promise the words embody. Let's do it in memory of our children.

~ **Joyce Andrews**, Regional Coordinator  
Southeast Texas, 1996

across a column written, appropriately, by an Australian mom. Though not written with the holidays in mind, it expresses for me the way I spend much of my time during this particular season. With the Olympics recently completed there, I wanted to share it with you. I thank our TCF friends on Cape Cod for discovering this.

**IF ONLY THEY KNEW...**

By **Jan McNess**, TCF, Victoria, Australia

If only they knew when I speak of him, I am not being morbid, I am not denying his death. I am proclaiming his life. I am learning to live with his absence. For twenty-six years he was a part of my life, born, nurtured, molded and loved; this cannot be put aside to please those who are uncomfortable with my grief.

If only they knew that when I sit quietly, apparently content with my own company, I am not self indulgently unhappy, dwelling on things which cannot be changed; I am with him, I am seeing his face, hearing his voice, remembering his laughter, recalling his excitement and joy in life. Please allow me this time with him as I do not begrudge you your time with your children.

If only they knew when I sometimes weep quietly, I do not cry in self-pity for what I have lost. I weep for what he has lost; for the life he loved, for the music which filled his very being and for all he still longed to hear, for the poetry which moved him to tears, for the beauty about him that daily fed his soul, for the exhilaration and excitement of flying the skies, of searching for his God in the vast space of the universe. For all that he loved and lost, I cry.

If only they knew the feeling of deep grief, the emptiness and dull pain, the endlessness of death. If only they understood the insanity of the platitudes so freely spoken; that "time heals", that "you'll get over it", that "it was for the best", that "God takes only the best", and realize that these are more an insult than a comfort, that the warm and compassionate touch of another means so much more.

If only they knew that we will not find true peace and tranquility until we are prepared to try to stand in the shoes of others. We will not be understood until we learn to understand compassionately and we will not be heard until we learn to listen with our hearts as well as our minds.

As this Holiday season begins, I pray that we all find it in our hearts and minds to be thankful for what we have and grateful for having had what we've lost.

October 2000

**THE CONFERENCE**

I went to an extraordinary place;  
every stranger looked familiar  
the pain in the eyes of others  
was identical to the pain reflected in my mirror.  
It was acceptable to cry but,  
more importantly, it was safe to laugh.

I went to an incredible place;  
My wounded heart was torn from my body.  
It was pounded upon and trampled, yet  
simultaneously, caressed and soothed.  
And, when it was returned to me,  
somehow, I had begun to heal.

I went to a mystical place ;  
I wanted to run  
I wanted to die  
At times, I believed I would die.  
I couldn't wait to leave but  
left wishing I could have stayed forever.

I went to the Compassionate Friends Conference;  
Every parent, sibling, grandparent, relative and friend  
Suffered the loss of one or more who died too soon.  
Ached and cried and laughed and learned  
that love is stronger than death and  
"WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE"

**Madeline Perri Kasden**, TCF Rockville Center

**REMEMBER ME**

Remember me in quiet days  
When raindrops whisper on your pane,  
But in your memories have not grief  
let just the joy we knew remain.

Remember me when evening stars  
Look down on you with steadfast eyes;  
and when your thoughts do turn to me,  
know that I would not have you cry;  
but live for me and laugh for me -  
when you are happy, so am I -

Remember an old joke we shared;  
remember me when Spring walks by;  
think of me when you are glad,  
and while you live, I shall not die.

by sibling, **Lyn Bryant**



**The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting®** unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor the *memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren who left too soon*. As candles are lit at **7:00 p.m.** local time, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon.

Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the 19th annual Worldwide Candle Lighting, a gift to the bereavement community from The Compassionate Friends, creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. TCF's WWCL started in the United States in 1997 as a small internet observance, but has since swelled in numbers as word has spread throughout the world of the

remembrance. Hundreds of formal candle lighting events are held and thousands of informal candle lightings are conducted in homes as families gather in quiet remembrance of children who have died, but will never be forgotten.

On **Sunday, December 11th** our Manhattan Chapter will join the Worldwide Candle Lighting by having our ceremony at:

**THE AFFINIA HOTEL**  
**31st Street at Seventh Avenue.**

Doors will **open at 5:45**  
and our program will begin promptly at **6:45**  
so that candles will be lit at **7PM.**

**REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED**

*Be sure to bring a framed photo that can be displayed in the ballroom during the evening.*

**There will be an ongoing slide presentation of all of our children. You are invited to submit two photos - a "sunrise" (young) photo and a "sunset" one taken shortly before his or her anniversary date. Photos should be emailed in .jpg format to: [photosmtcf@gmail.com](mailto:photosmtcf@gmail.com)**

**PHOTOS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN NOVEMBER 15TH**

**IN ADDITION:**

Our chapter will be sponsoring the National Office the week of **December 21st**. If you want to submit a short message and photo of your child, that will appear for the week on the TCF National website, send that to: [jacquienytcf@verizon.net](mailto:jacquienytcf@verizon.net) by **November 30th**

## THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS CHAT SCHEDULE

**Go to:** [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org), and click on CHAT. Times are Eastern Standard Time.

EDT	9:00-10:00AM	8:00-9:00PM	9:00-10:00PM	10:00-11:00PM
MON			General Bereavement Issues & Grandparents/Stepparents	General Bereavement Issues & Men's Chat
TUE			General Bereavement Issues, Bereavement over 2 years & Pregnancy Loss/Infant Death	General Bereavement Issues & Pregnancy Loss/Infant Death
WED	Newly Bereaved		September 11 Families & Siblings	General Bereavement Issues
THU		No Surviving Children	General Bereavement Issues & Siblings	General Bereavement Issues
FRI		Suicide	Special Needs Children	General Bereavement Issues
SAT				General Bereavement & Siblings
SUN	Siblings		General Bereavement Issues & Siblings	General Bereavement Issues & Siblings

**The Compassionate Friends National Office**  
P.O. Box 3696, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696  
(630) 990-0100 / Toll Free (877) 969-0010  
[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)  
email: [nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org](mailto:nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org)

***We Need Not Walk Alone***  
TCF National Magazine  
1 yr. subscription \$20

**Deadline for Newsletter article submissions:**  
Fall: August 1st Spring/Summer: April 1st  
Winter: February 2nd Holiday: October 1st

**Mark Your Calendars!**  
Our next Chapter meetings are Tuesdays:  
OCT 11 NOV 8 DEC 13 JAN 10 FEB 14  
OCT 25 NOV 22 DEC 20\* JAN 24 FEB 28  
\*Note change. Church closed on 27th.

### OUR COMPASSIONATE FRIENDLY NEIGHBORS

Babylon	1st Friday	(516) 795-8644	Medford	2nd Friday	(631) 738-0809
Bronx	2nd Tuesday	(914) 714-4885	Rockville Centre	2nd Friday	(516) 766-4682
Brookhaven	2nd Friday	(631) 738-0809	Rockland County	3rd Tuesday	(845) 398-9762
Brooklyn	3rd Wednesday	(917) 952-9751	Staten Island	2nd and 4th Thursday	(718) 983-0377
Flushing	3rd Friday	(718) 746-5010	Syosset (Plainview)	3rd Friday	(718) 767-0904
Manhasset	3rd Tuesday	(516) 466-2480	Twin Forks/Hamptons	3rd Friday	(631) 653-9444
Marine Park, Bklyn	3rd Friday	(718) 605-1545	White Plains	1st Thursday	(914) 381-3389
			HOT LINE		(516) 781-4173



**The Compassionate Friends**

P.O. Box 86,  
New York, NY 10159-0086