

A non-profit self-help organization offering friendship and support to families who have experienced the loss of a child

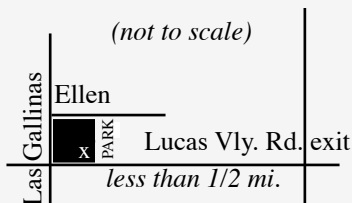
New Meeting Site

**Lucas Valley Community
Church Conference Room
2000 Las Gallinas at Lucas
Valley Rd. in San Rafael
3rd Tuesdays of the month
at 7:30 P.M. (7pm if first time)**

Directions Exit 101 at **Lucas Valley Rd.** and go west. Turn right onto **Las Gallinas** and make an immediate right onto **Ellen**, then a right turn into the parking lot at the signage. The Conference Room is located in the first building next to the parking lot. For more info, call Genesse Gentry at 415/457-3123. Please call prior to your first meeting, so that you might meet with the facilitator before the meeting begins.

MAP

101
North



Alternate site in San Francisco: Parents: Community Meeting Room/Taravel Police Station at 2345-24th Ave. (near Taravel) in S.F. on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7:30 pm. For information, call Audre at 650/359-7928 or alhallum@comcast.net.

Journal for Dan

My son, Dan, died on June 14th, 2004 in a motorcycle accident.

I wrote this on October 13, 2004—4 months have passed...

I hear about going or getting “through” it— — “it” being the loss of a lover, or a job, or maybe a parent and sometimes people say to me “I hope you’re getting through it” — — — and I’ve thought about that a lot and I think that going through something implies that there is an end to the tunnel, a light at the end? of the tunnel?

And there is a light there most times, maybe a different color of light, but nonetheless, a light or change or something different— — a new relationship? — — or a project to challenge my talents?

But this — — this has no end. This is not something to pass through, because there is no end.

And it is the very endlessness of it that I despair of every day. There will be no change—he is not coming back and I cannot hear him laugh that sort of low, rough devilish laugh—no more.

So, I think it becomes essential to add another dimension to myself. That is the dimension of loss and the incredible sadness that accompanies it. And I must learn how to be the fun-loving, play-loving, sometimes angry (of course, always rightfully), passionately creative, music-loving, athletic, all the things — I — am — person, who also is sad— The same person enjoying the same things with another dimension—added. And perhaps tempering the other experiences. At least for now it does. And maybe in time, it will become its own dimension and not so cruelly invade the others.

One thing I do know, for sure, and that is that I will take this sadness with me along with joy and awareness and love and all the other things that I feel as I go through this life, to the end of my life. And “it” will never, ever leave — — — — —.

June 14, 2008 Four years have passed...

Today, on the 4th anniversary of my son Dan’s death, I read what I wrote four years ago and I think about in what ways “it” has changed. Yes, it isn’t so invasive of everything, all the time. No, it doesn’t stay in the “front room” of my emotional house. Yes, I can look at a motorcycle without crumpling. No, I still can’t look at an accident, even on TV. And yes, it has become its own dimension—but let someone express sympathy to me and the sadness is instant and overwhelming. So — — no — — — “it” isn’t through.

Linda Winslow
TCF Chapter Marin County, CA

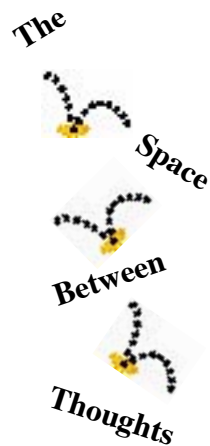
Carol's Corner

**Do you have
a question or topic
you would like to see
addressed by
Carol Kearns?**

Email her at
clkearns@comcast.net.

A GRANDMOTHER'S GRIEF

My mother, recently diagnosed with lymphoma, died just before Mother's Day. Only two months prior, she was a high spirited fun-loving woman, the heart of our family, who was looking forward to her 90th birthday celebration this fall. As I cared for my dear mother, knowing I would soon lose her, I reflected back on my daughter Kristen's death at age seven and my mother's concerns about me at that time. I had been so consumed by my own grief then, and the grief of my young son, only nine when his sister died, that I was hardly aware of others' grief. Not until a few years ago did my mother confide her pain of not only grieving for her precious granddaughter, but her daughter as well. Her fear was that the tragic sudden loss of Kristen could also mean the loss of her daughter. "Kristen drowned in the ocean but you were drowning in grief. I know you felt helpless to save her, but I felt the same about you. I had no idea how to rescue you." Surprised to hear this, even though I had also feared losing myself, I became aware for the first time of the unique role a grandparent plays when their grandchild dies. I recently became a grandmother myself and have been overjoyed with this new role of welcoming Joseph into the world. My favorite picture is of my mother, shortly before she died, with a huge smile and her arms outstretched reaching for baby Joseph when meeting him for the first time. While my mother's death, unlike Kristen's, is part of the natural cycle of life, I will miss her deeply. She taught me so much and I think of her now in my new role as a grandparent. When Joseph was born, I had the luxury of spending the first several weeks with him, watching him change daily and his parents move nervously into their new role. I loved being witness to the bond developing as they changed from being a couple to being a little family. My son, a resident in anesthesiology, studies nightly with Joseph often nestled against his chest in a baby sling. He once shared how much he misses his baby with his long hours at the hospital. Watching the creation of this strong parental bond, I became aware of the unique dual bond of the grandparent. A bond that takes her heart to places she never thought possible...a bond that should never be broken. I now appreciate what my mother experienced. The lesson for me is that while the focus is often on the bereaved parent, we must also be sensitive to the grief of the grandparent. And, too, there is this: Staying mindful of the flow of life and death in one's family can be a source of renewal and joy, even (and especially) in the midst of our darkest grief.



You are no longer in my thoughts constantly.
You are now dwelling in the space between thoughts,
a part of my every moment whether joyful or sad
or in between, or both simultaneously.
I walk, talk, work, play and you surround me.

You are in the sparkle of my smile
the wisdom in my thinking
the rainbow circles in my life.

As I breathe and live, you breathe and live.
As I learn, you are teaching, not only me
but all those who are in my life today.
You are a blessing, dear child, for all you were
and all you are and all you'll forever be.

Genesse Bourdeau Gentry June 2001
TCF Marin Chapter Leader, No CA Regional Coordinator
This poem is included in a new collection of Genesse's poetry,
which will hopefully be available by the first of the year.

Our Children's Legacy

The Hubal family established the Matthew D. Hubal Scholarship in 1994 at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo after the death of their son. Each May awards are presented to recipients chosen from the City and Regional Planning Department of the School of Architecture and Environmental Design. The awards recognize talented undergraduate students in the CRP program who demonstrate exceptional academic excellence, community and campus humanitarian involvement as well as financial need.

The award is a legacy to a remarkable young man. Matt was constant motion. He was a senior carrying a staggering load of responsibilities, a state of California Intercollegiate Press Association award winning editorial illustrator for the Mustang Daily, ran a t-shirt business, played on an intramural softball team, was a photographer's model, and a "big brother" for more than four years through the Newman Catholic Center, and a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon, fraternity. Considered a star with a bright future, a professor stated that, "He was taken right when he was ready to do so much."

Tributes include a tree with plaque planted outside the CRP building. A memorial book of his editorial cartoons, art work, CRP renderings and notes written by friends and assembled by the newspaper staff. The book provides a glimpse into who he was both artistically and personally.

As one friend said, "Everyone loved him. He had a sense of comedy far beyond his age and time. He was incredibly smart, creative and funny. He was thoughtful, genuine and loyal. I think anyone who ever laughed with Matt was touched by Matt." His huge heart and love of family and friends was the foundation from which he lived.

Matt, you loved deeply. You made us all laugh until we cried.....and yes, you had the BEST hair ever! We are blessed to have shared 22 years with you. Your generous spirit continues to touch others through scholarships which reflect your accomplishments and assist outstanding students complete their courses of study.

Matthew D. Hubal Scholarship,
Advancement Programs Cal Poly State University, San Luis Obispo, CA 93407

Sonoma County TCF Chapter

If anyone is interested in restarting the Sonoma County TCF chapter, contact the former chapter leader, *Anne McHugh*, at 707-762-8517.

BOOK REVIEW

My name is Mike Miller and I am a member of The Compassionate Friends of West Phoenix. I recently wrote and published a book explaining the grief process for fathers after losing a child. The book is also intended for women who are trying to understand their spouses' feelings after losing a child. The following is a short description of the book. You can purchase it through just about any online book store. Just do a search for the title, "**Maci's Place – The Loss of a Child through a Father's Eyes.**" I welcome any feedback and comments you have pertaining to the book. All proceeds of the book go to The Maci Danielle Miller Scholarship fund. Thank you and God Bless.

Michael S. Miller
mike.miller@primosolutionsllc.com

Synopsis

Losing a child is the most devastating thing that can ever happen to anyone. Learning to live with that loss is equally devastating. Outlined in this book is the true story of one man's loss in the hope that it provides comfort and understanding to you. This journey outlines the psychology behind the way you feel day in and day out, and displays a first hand understanding to why things are happening the way they are. The book is intended for men, suffering from the loss of their child, in any number of situations. Yet, if you are a loved one trying to understand what is happening to the man in your life, it can provide guidance as well. Through the detailed explanations, we hope that those that want to understand the way a man truly feels with such great loss will understand just how incredibly painful it can be.

• • • • • **CHAPTER ANNOUNCEMENTS** • • • • •

Chapter Leader/No. CA

Regional Coordinator:

Genesse Gentry
21 Shemran Ct.
Fairfax, CA 94930
415/457-3123

Marin TCF website:

www.tcfmarin.org

Talk with a Friend

When you want someone to talk with, the following people will welcome your call:

- Judith Billings 707/452-1116 (afternoons)
- Ed Garvey 650/756/8010 (suicide loss)
- Sallee Kiilerich.... 415/897-6849
- Natalie Meyring .. 415/383-4084 (sibling loss)
- Diana deRegnier.. 415/383-1703 (suicide loss/call 9am-8pm)

TCF National Website

www.compassionatefriends.org

TCF National Office

P.O. Box 3696
Oak Brook, IL 60533-3696
Phone: 630/990/0010
Toll Free: 877/969/0010
Fax: 630/990/0246
Email: nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

Additional Support Sites

Inlovingmemoryonline.org
Healingafterloss.org
Bereavedparents.com
childloss.com
survivorsofsuicide.com

Men's Chat Room

TCF website on Mondays from 9-10 central time.

Other Bereaved Parent Resources

The Center for Attitudinal Healing in Sausalito
(415) 331-6161, ext. 106.

Hospice by the Bay offers individual and group grief counseling.

Marin (415) 927-2273
SF (415) 626-5900
Sonoma (707) 935-7504

Marin TCF Meeting Calendar

Tues., July 15th

Many of us are thankful that the significance of our children's lives, before and after their deaths, continues to take on new dimensions and special meaning as our healing progresses, yet one experience can isolate itself. For our July meeting please bring your thoughts concerning the difficulties often associated with the actual deaths of our children. The inevitable 're-living' or contemplation of the death itself can be very difficult. Let's share with one another any lessons learned and tools gained in this area of our grief process.

Tues., August 19th

For our August meeting we'd like to reflect on special vacations with our children. First we'd like any members present, who's child died in infancy, to take a moment to share experiences of dreams lost. Following, let us celebrate these great family times with pictures and stories! Our 'ground rule' that both tears and laughter are welcome may be well practiced at this meeting! If you wish, please bring photos to share!

As with all meetings, we will share what has personally worked for us.

Coming to a TCF meeting for the first time???

We recognize all too well that it takes courage to come to the first meeting, whether you are a bereaved parent of one month or 5 years. You are welcome to bring a friend or relative for moral support if you wish. You will find that it is all right to cry or to laugh, to share how you feel or just listen. You are welcome to come late and leave early. We recommend that you attend 2-3 meetings before deciding if TCF is not for you. Each meeting is as varied as the attendees and the topic.

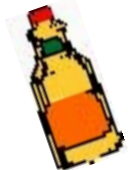
You will meet parents in both early and late stages of the grief process. Longtime members are present at meetings to help new members process their tremendous losses in their lives, and to show that some time down the road of grief, they too will be able to function and grow and learn how to live with these losses. It is best if you contact TCF prior to your first meeting at 415-457-3123 so we can meet with you before the meeting begins.

Walking Group

All walks begin at 10 am on the 1st Saturday of the month (rain or shine). Bring water, appropriate clothing, and snacks/lunch if so desired; sometimes we "dine-out". Unless noted otherwise, please RSVP to Marcie so she will be on the lookout for you: marcieeach@aol.com. Note some walks will indicate different leaders.

Sat., July 5th NOTE: CHANGE IN MEETING SPOT FOR NOVATO WALK

Due to low & smelly water content at Rush Creek, we will walk further east from 101. Take 101 north to the Atherton/San Marin exit. Turn right and stay on **Atherton** for about a mile; left on **Bugeia** (well marked). Bugeia becomes **Bahia**. Go mile or so to the **end of Bahia**. Look for Marin Open Space signs on the left. Path is both flat and rolling, not steep. Bring a lunch for picnic in Sandy's yard afterwards across the freeway. RSVP Sandy: tcfed@comcast.net.



Sat., August 2nd Phoenix Lake

Take SFD to Ross; left on Lagunitas. Park at Ross PO or drive to end of Lagunitas (ltd. parking). It's a pleasant walk from the PO to Open Space; about 3 mi. around the lake. Email Nancy:nke1@juno.com.

Sat., Sept. 6th Baker Beach, San Francisco

A walk in San Francisco! We will meet at Baker Beach. There is a neat labyrinth; can end up at the Cliff House. More details in the next newsletter. Check with Nancy: nke1@juno.com.



Children's Memorial Karen Klingel is chairing the committee for the new plaque at the Greenbrae Memorial Site. Children who have gone too soon can be included on the plaque if their parents, grandparents, or siblings live/or lived in this county or if they attend TCF Marin meetings here or in San Francisco. For an application form and information to have your child's name memorialized, contact Karen at: kklingel@sbcglobal.net . Directions for the memorial are on this page.

In Memoriam

TCF Marin's main source of funding the newsletters, the meetings, the Candle Lighting and other TCF expenses has always been the Love Gifts sent in by TCF members, their friends and families in memory of our children. We think it's possible that people might like to donate money in memory of friends and family members (other than our children). These will be mentioned in the newsletter under the title *In Memoriam*. (This is separate from a Love Gift donation.)

Send *In Memoriam* donation information (with check payable to TCF/Marin) to: TCF/Marin Newsletter Editor, 254 Butterfield Dr., Novato, CA 94945.

Grief Support After the Death of a Child

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 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. The vision of The Compassionate Friends is that everyone who needs us will find us and everyone who finds us will be helped.

Newsletter Editor Needed!: Here's a special niche for someone interested in keeping chapter members not only informed, but supported and encouraged. It is also a great way to process your own personal grief. The current newsletter editor will work with you to get started. Please contact the editor (Sandy Williams) at tcfed@comcast.net or Genesse at 457-3123 or gbgentry@aol.com.
Other Volunteer Opportunities available! Contact Genesse at above information.

Candle Lighting DVDs Info

The **2007 DVD of Our Children**, is available by mailing a check for \$20 (which includes a \$5 donation to the Marin TCF) made payable to **Digital Video Dimensions** to the address below. Include your mailing address along with your payment. DVDs will be shipped via USPS First Class Mail within 5 days of receipt of payment.

Digital Video Dimensions
 attn: 2007 TCF DVD
 273 Crest Rd., Novato, CA 94945

Questions: Alan Kolsky
 (415) 893-9070

Directions to the Children's Memorial

Take Sir Francis Drake Boulevard to Bon Air Road in Greenbrae. Park on Bon Air Road across from Marin General Hospital. Take the path across the marsh and footbridge towards Corte Madera Creek. Turn right at the multi-use path and walk 1/8 mile or less to a bench. Just before the bench is a dirt path going off to the right. Take the path into the site. Be sure to take a moment to sit on the bench or look up at Mt. Tam and enjoy the solitude, beauty and solace of this site.

Adult Siblings Loss Group

Although this group is not presently active, Elise Noland and Caitlin Fager, past co-facilitators, are still available by phone or email for questions or concerns. Elise: eliseln@yahoo.com or Caitlin: cfager@gmail.com.



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS**

Marin County, California Chapter
Newsletter Editor: Sandy Williams
254 Butterfield Dr.
Novato, CA 94945

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July/August 2008

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Dated Material - Please Deliver Promptly

Message

When the child you have cherished is taken,
when the light of that promise is gone,
when the faith which sustained you is shaken
and your days stumble painfully on,
When the sorrows of loss are unending
and your God seems forever away,
find the message your lost-one keeps sending:
words of loving and thanking and mending...
let your child shape the peace of the day.

Sascha Wagner
"For You From Sascha"
In memory of Sascha Wagner
August 4, 1927~December 9, 2003

Check out our website at tcfmarin.org for more information.