

The Compassionate Friends

The Modesto Area Chapter of The Compassionate Friends

Supporting Families After a Child Dies

A self-help organization offering friendship, understanding & hope to bereaved families that have experienced the death of a child.

www.modestoriverbanktcf.org

November 2025

tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com

MONTHLY MEETING

7:00 PM

Community Hospice
4368 Spyres Way
Modesto, CA 95356

*Please join us at our
next meeting on*

Monday, November 10th

Please arrive by 6:50 p.m.

*We begin promptly
@ 7:00 p.m.*

Upcoming Meetings

December 8th

January 12th

February 9th



As I sit
here and whisper,
your name, and say
'I miss you.'
Somehow, I believe
you can still hear me...

Are you taking a vacation?
Visiting family? Moving?
Helping someone new to TCF
to find a chapter?

*Use the link below to find
TCF chapters in other cities
and states*

**Chapter Meeting Locator -
Compassionate Friends**

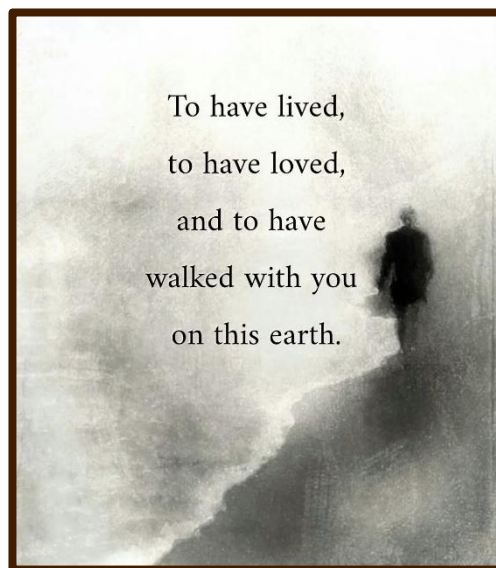


Our Mission

The mission of The Compassionate Friends:

When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated.

The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.



To have lived,
to have loved,
and to have
walked with you
on this earth.

MESSAGE LINE

(209)622-6786

*Please leave a message
and a steering committee
member will return your
call.*

2025 Steering Committee

Kris Leitner
Chapter Co-Leader

Suzanne Casity
Chapter Co-Leader

Melinda Lansberry
Secretary

Elsie Freeman
Treasurer

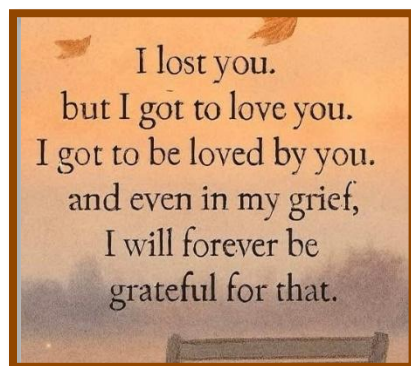
Janet Neal
Outreach Coordinator

Michele Mootz
Hospitality

Lorie Boisse
Public Relations/Media

Kris Leitner
Newsletter Editor

Mike & Suzanne Casity
Website



I lost you.
but I got to love you.
I got to be loved by you.
and even in my grief,
I will forever be
grateful for that.



Autumn Edition

We Need Not Walk Alone shares poems, articles, and expressions that touch the hearts of bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. Items in the magazine offer different perspectives and experiences of grief from those who have been bereaved for varying lengths of time. We hope that you find the magazine relatable, supportive, and filled with hope.

Click on the magazine for the link.

December 14, 2025

29th Annual Worldwide Candle Lighting Event

**Community Hospice
4368 Spyres Way
Modesto, CA**



The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting on the 2nd Sunday in December 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 on December 14th, 2025 at 7:00 pm local time, hundreds of thousands of people commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon.

Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the annual Worldwide Candle Lighting (WCL), 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 WCL started in the United States in 1997 as a small internet observance and 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 and will never be forgotten.

Every year you are invited to post a message on our Memorial Wall which will be available, during the event, at TCF's national website. The Memorial Wall will be open to post a message Sunday, December 1st, through Friday, December 13th. Photos can be posted on our [TCF](#) Facebook page.

If you are new to the group and would like to add your child's photo to our chapter slide show, that is presented during the event, please email your photo to: tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com. If you are a member of the group and have already submitted a photo, please DO NOT submit another one (unless you want to change the one we already have).



♥ LOVE GIFTS ♥

Love gifts can be made in memory of your child, sibling or grandchild in any amount. Donations received are used for our annual Candle Lighting Program each December, for sending our monthly newsletter via US mail and for community outreach. We are here to reach out to other bereaved families who may not be aware we are here to lend our support after the death of a child. Please send your tax-deductible donation to the PO Box below.

In loving memory of all our beloved children

Please fill out the information below and send with a check to:

The Compassionate Friends
Modesto Area Chapter
PO Box 578713
Modesto, CA 95357

☐ Child, ☐ Sibling or ☐ Grandchild _____

Date of Birth_____/_____/_____ Date of Passing_____/_____/_____

Donation amount_____

Your Name_____

Telephone_____ Your email address_____

Your address_____ City_____ Zip_____

Would you like your gift listed in our monthly newsletter in memory of your child, grandchild or sibling? The amount will remain anonymous Yes ___ No ___

The Compassionate Friends is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. Donations are tax deductible.

How to Deal With Grief During the Holidays

The holidays can be the toughest time of the year.

The swell of grief around the holidays is a common reason clients enter my therapy office this time of year. People often seek help for the immense sorrow that starts surfacing right around Thanksgiving.



I experienced that wave of grief in my own life when my husband passed away. Christmas music, holiday parties, and festive decorations that were meant to bring joy served as painful reminders of my loss. As it is for most people experiencing loss, the holiday season was the most painful time of all.

If you're wondering how to get through the holidays this year without your loved one, these strategies can help:

1. Trust That Grief Is Part of Healing

Time doesn't heal the pain associated with a loss; it's what you do with that time that matters. Grief is the process by which you heal. Experiencing the pain—rather than constantly trying to escape it—can actually help you feel better in the long-term.

So while it may be tempting to pretend the holidays don't exist—or to numb the pain with alcohol—temporarily avoiding the pain only prolongs the anguish. Eventually, the holidays will get easier, but only if you allow yourself to experience the grief of going through them without your loved one.

2. Set Healthy Boundaries

You certainly don't have to force yourself to face every holiday event or celebratory tradition, however. If attending a tree lighting ceremony or participating in the office gift swap is likely to bring about too many painful memories this year, be willing to say no. Other people may try to convince you to participate, but you certainly don't have to try to please everyone.

3. Focus on What You Can Control

There are a lot of things you can't control about the holidays. You may be subjected to Christmas music in the waiting room of your doctor's office or you may overhear your co-workers constantly talking about their holiday plans. While you can't prevent those things from happening, there are some things you can control.



Think about what you can do to lessen the heartache when you can. It's OK to limit your decorations or shop for presents online only. Pick a few things you can do to assert some control over the holiday cheer, and keep in mind that life goes on for other people and it's OK that they're happy to celebrate this year.

4. Plan Ahead

Often, the anticipation over how hard something is going to be is worse than the actual event. So while Thanksgiving dinner may only last two hours, you could easily spend three weeks dreading it. Create a simple plan for how you'll get through the holidays to avoid extending your anguish.

Often, it's helpful to create an escape plan. Drive yourself to holiday functions or ride with a trusted friend who will take you home whenever you want. Just knowing you can easily leave at any time can help you enjoy the activity much more than you would if you felt stuck.

5. Allow Yourself to Feel a Range of Emotions

The holidays can bring about a wide range of emotions. You might feel joy, guilt, and sadness all within a few minutes. Allow yourself to feel those emotions without judging yourself or thinking you should be happy or you shouldn't be laughing.

6. Find a Way to Honor Your Memories

Create a special way to memorialize the person you've lost. Whether you decide to light a candle every night or eat your loved one's favorite food, honoring your loved one can serve as a tangible reminder that although your loved one is gone, the love never dies.

7. Create New Traditions

Don't be afraid to create new traditions this year too. It's OK to get creative and do something a little out of the ordinary. You can also alter old traditions and make them fit better with the new phase in your life.

8. Do Something Kind for Others

Even when you're in the midst of grief, you still have something to offer the world. Performing a few acts of kindness can be really good for a grieving person's spirit. Donate gifts to families in need, serve meals at a soup kitchen, or volunteer to help people at a nursing home make holiday crafts if you're up for it.

9. Ask for Help

Don't be afraid to ask for help when you're struggling with the holidays. Reminding loved ones that you're having a rough time may be enough, but you also may want to reach out for more support. Look for support groups or contact a professional counselor to help you deal with your grief in a healthy manner.

Author: Amy Morin, LCSW www.psychologytoday.com





Grief is exhausting. Missing someone can be incredibly draining. Everything seems like a solo climb of Mount Everest.

From the Grieving Heart:

I'm exhausted. I wake up each day and sigh. My body feels heavy. Everything takes so much effort. Brushing my teeth is a workout. Not sleeping well doesn't help. Not eating well doesn't help either. My head feels like it's stuffed with cotton. My eyes hurt.

I live in a daze. It's like I'm sleep-walking through life. Missing you is exhausting. My heart is deflated. Part of me seems to have left with you.

What's wrong with me? I don't feel like myself at all. I want my old life back. I want you back.

I'm so tired I can barely think. I manage to gear up for what I must do, and somehow function enough to get through it. Then I crash on the other side. I zone out for minutes at a time. I hope this gets better.

Grief is exhausting

Grief demands incredible energy. Life in fight-or-flight mode is exhausting. Fatigue is natural and common during times of loss.

If someone was hit by a bus, we wouldn't expect them to jump up and carry on as usual. If they survived the collision, they would be transported to a hospital, preferably to one with a trauma center, for emergency life-saving treatment. Once their life is out of danger, the stabilizing process takes time. Then the healing and recovery process can begin. During this time, all their physical energy is being channeled toward simply staying alive. Fatigue and exhaustion are routine fare for those recovering from life-threatening injuries.

We've been hit by the Grief Bus. It can stun and flatten us. We don't simply shake the collision off and walk away unscathed. Our wounds are invisible but real. The emotional pain can be intense and draining. Pain, in any form, taxes our system and exhausts us.

Rest becomes a priority. Fatigue takes a toll over time. We simply can't do as much. Our performance at work might be off. We need more space and margin in life than ever. Taking ourselves and our grief seriously is critical. Being patient with ourselves is important.

Like other grief challenges, the fatigue will change over time. Our hearts, souls, and bodies will adjust and recover. Time doesn't heal all wounds, but healing does take time.

Author: Gary Roe



Give Me Away

Now that I am gone, remember me with smiles and laughter.

*And if you need to cry, cry with your brother or sister
who walks in grief beside you.*

*And when you need me, put your arms around anyone
and give to them what you need to give to me.*

There are so many who need so much.

*I want to leave you something, something much better
than words or sounds. Look for me in the people I've known
or helped in some special way.*

*Let me live in your heart as well as in your mind.
You can love me most by letting your love reach out to
our loved ones, by embracing them and living in their love.*

*Love does not die, people do.
So, when all that's left of me is love,
give me away as best you can.*

~ Author Unknown.



Check out our closed Facebook page, *The Modesto Area of TCF*. Make a request to join the page and an Administrator will approve your request.

Join us on our Instagram account page. You can find us at – *modestoriverbankarea_tcf*.

Our Steering Committee wants to provide the best possible support to each of our TCF Chapter members and friends. Please contact a member of the Steering Committee with any concerns you have or any ideas about how our Chapter can be of support to you and others. We're also available if you'd like to talk about your child or some aspect of the challenges of your bereavement journey. You can reach us by email at: tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com or by phone at 209-622-6786 or on Facebook.



Please remember to send in your child's photo so that it can be added to the new TCF Modesto-Riverbank website. Send photos to: scasity@comcast.net

Visit our website for information and to stay up to date on chapter events.
www.modestoriverbanktcf.org



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

The Compassionate Friends offers a variety of private Facebook Groups. These pages are moderated by bereaved parents, siblings, or grandparents, and may not be accessed unless a request to join is approved by a moderator. Please click on the link next to the group you wish to join and answer the screening questions so we can confirm your request. Please note, all three questions need to be answered in order to be approved. If you are on a phone or tablet, you will need to scroll down before hitting "submit." If you are still waiting approval after three days, please message one of the administrators. Join requests to our Facebook groups must be requested personally, therefore when you wish to share the group with someone please pass along the link to the group.

PRIVATE FACEBOOK GROUPS

[TCF – Loss of a Child](#)
[TCF – Loss to Miscarriage or Stillbirth](#)
[TCF – Miscarriage, Stillbirth, Loss of an Infant Grandchild](#)
[TCF – Infant and Toddler Loss](#)
[TCF – Loss of a Child 4 -12 Years Old](#)
[TCF – Loss of a Child 13-19 Years Old](#)
[TCF – Loss of an Adult Child](#)
[TCF – Loss of an Only Child/All Your Children](#)
[TCF – Grieving the Loss of a Child as a Single Parent](#)
[TCF – Loss of a Stepchild](#)
[TCF – Loss of a Grandchild](#)
[TCF – Sibs \(for bereaved siblings\)](#)
[TCF – Loss of a LGBTQ+ Child](#)
[TCF – Bereaved LGBTQ Parents with Loss of a Child](#)
[TCF – Multiple Losses](#)
[TCF – Men in Grief](#)
[TCF – Daughterless Mothers](#)
[TCF – Sudden Death](#)
[TCF – Loss to COVID-19 and Other Infectious Diseases](#)
[TCF – Loss to Substance Related Causes](#)
[TCF – Sibling Loss to Substance Related Causes](#)
[TCF – Loss to Suicide](#)
[TCF – Loss to Homicide](#)
[TCF – Loss to a Drunk/Impaired Driver](#)
[TCF – Loss to Cancer](#)
[TCF – Loss of a Child with Special Needs](#)
[TCF – Loss to Long-term Illness](#)
[TCF – Loss after Withdrawing Life Support](#)
[TCF – Loss to Mental Illness](#)
[TCF – Finding Hope for Parents through TCF SIBS](#)
[TCF – Grandparents Raising their Grandchildren](#)
[TCF – Bereaved Parents with Grandchild Visitation Issues](#)
[TCF – Inclusion and Diversity](#)
[TCF – Grieving with Faith and Hope](#)
[TCF – Secular Support](#)
[TCF – Reading Your Way through Grief](#)
[TCF – Crafty Corner](#)