

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

August 2026

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, August 10th
*Please arrive by 6:50 p.m.
We begin promptly
@ 7:00 p.m.*

Upcoming Meetings

September 14th
October 12th
November 9th



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.

MESSAGE LINE

(209)622-6786

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

2026 Steering Committee

Suzanne Casity
Chapter Co-Leader

Kris Leitner
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

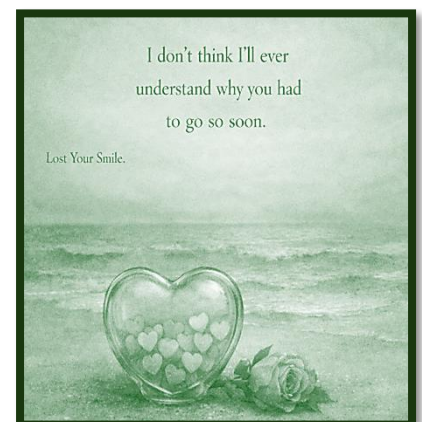
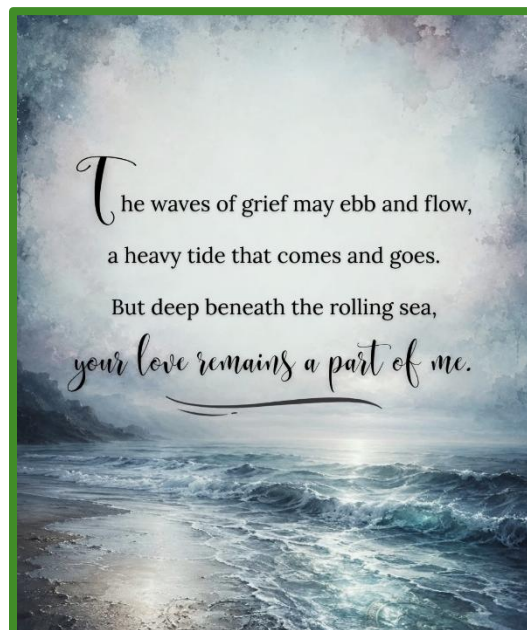
Mike & Suzanne Casity
Website



**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](#)





Upcoming Group Events

Chapter Dinner Get-Together

August 18, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

We'll be meeting at

La Parilla Mexican Restaurant

1700 McHenry Ave, Ste 6

Modesto, CA 95350



We hope you'll join us for some social time together

Save the Date for our Chapter Potluck

September 19th 2026

Time and Location to follow



Event Details

Date: 10/31/2025

Location: Modesto Jr College

West Campus

Modesto, CA

Registration: 9:00 am

Event Time: 10:00 am

For more information contact:

Contact Name: Jori Martinez

Contact Phone: 209-200-6979

Contact Email: msjori89@gmail.com



American
Foundation
for Suicide
Prevention

Click on the "Out of the Darkness" picture and it will take you directly to the Modesto Walk page.

♪ GRIEVING THROUGH MUSIC ♪

Loss and grief are inevitable parts of life and throughout the world people have used music at times of sorrow to come to terms with their losses, to grieve, remember and heal. Grief through music appears in some of humanity's earliest stories, such as Orpheus in Greek myth or David's laments in the Bible and continues to this day.

In popular culture, examples include Sufjan Steven's *Carrie and Lowell* or Nick Cave's *Skeleton Tree*, which explore a very personal grief, not to mention Elton John's *Candle in the Wind* which provided solace for millions on the death of Princess Diana. In classical music, we find the requiem while folk music gives us innumerable tales of death and grief. Meanwhile, there are countless traditional practices from around the world including, to name but a few, the weeping songs of Yolngu Australian Aboriginals, Shi'a laments and Shona-mbira spirit ceremonies.

HOW CAN MUSIC HELP YOU GRIEVE?

Grief can often unleash scary, unknown and uncontrollable emotions. It can leave you feeling out of control or lost at sea.

Music can access our deepest emotions. It can help us discover these emotions, experience fully and accept them. Music creates a legitimate space to grieve, especially when words may be impossible and it can also allow you to connect and feel with others in grief. Giving such space to our emotions allows us to process them and eventually tame what's initially overwhelming. But more than that, you can use music to navigate grief and to consciously influence, channel and give direction to your raw emotions. Music can help you to create your story, define your relationship with grief and even turn your grief into something beautiful.

Music speaks simultaneously to both body and mind. It somehow sits on the border between what we can articulate and what we can only feel. We can speak of how we feel and tell our stories, but putting those stories into the right music makes the meaning and emotions resonate right through us. It also lets us remember through listening to or playing meaningful music, it can allow you to connect to the indelible part in you that a loved one leaves in you and allows that part to live on through music. Music speaks to the soul or to our subconscious and to our bodily experience. Music can give us a window to that other side of ourselves. It can even help us discover ourselves, grow as people and become stronger through grief, little consolation as that may be. Music is one of the most powerful tools we have in times of loss and many traditional practices and modern forms of art implicitly know this. Music is, however, a tool that we can all "rediscover" and use to help us navigate grief and grieve well.

IN WHAT WAYS CAN MUSIC HELP?

Music is not some miracle quick fix. You might have heard people talking about grief "work" and music is no different: it requires time, effort and active engagement. You will, however, find many ideas on this website www.songsoflossandhealing.com, to help you explore how communities, individuals and artists have used music to help them in times of grief. Hopefully, this can help you discover your own way to use music. In the meantime, here are some of the basic ways music can help:

Feel fully - Music can help you feel an emotion fully and feeling fully is often said to be a key factor in grieving well.

Discovering hidden feelings - Writing or listening to music that we are drawn to can help us discover suppressed emotions.

Directing emotions - Music can influence our emotional state. We can use it to direct raw emotion in a certain direction.

Giving yourself a break - Music can also give you a break from grief and help take you to another place for some time.

Saying goodbye - Music has been forever used to mark rites of passage, including the final one helping us accept and say goodbye.

Remembering - We can remember people through music we shared with them or music that helps us to connect with them in their absence.

Creating space for grief - Music can be the space where we put our grief, express it and even share it if we wish. Music can overcome taboos on grief.

Transforming your grief - This might be the root of all art, the transformation of pain into beauty. For some, this is what makes suffering bearable.

Connecting body and mind - We do not just live in our heads and grief can be a full body experience. Music speaks to the whole body.

Connecting with others - Making music with others can help bring people together in their grief.

“Music heals the
heart”

I THINK MUSIC IN ITSELF IS HEALING.
IT'S AN EXPLOSIVE EXPRESSION OF HUMANITY.
IT'S SOMETHING WE ARE ALL TOUCHED BY.
NO MATTER WHAT CULTURE WE'RE FROM,
EVERYONE LOVES MUSIC.

-BILLY JOEL

All it takes is **ONE SONG**
to bring back a thousand memories.
author unknown



**The
Compassionate
Friends**
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Music expresses that which
cannot be put into words
and that which cannot
remain silent.

Victor Hugo

Music is therapy. Music moves
people. It connects people in
ways that no other medium can.
It pulls heart strings. It acts as
medicine. ~Macklemore

~ Sway ~

After Grant died, everything inside me became still — not the kind of stillness that brings peace. The terrible kind that is left behind after impact and destruction.

My body forgot its own music.

Something tender within me stopped singing. Even the beating of my own heart felt cruel. There was no harmony anymore — not even a silent echo.

And that is how it was for a time. No melody. No chorus. No tune. I was a hollow chamber — emptiness pressed against my ribs, aching to be filled with something, but what?

With time I came to discover — grief is not dormant. It moves. Quietly at first. Like curtains shifting from a window left cracked open or a leaf gliding along the current of a forest stream.

There were intervals when I could feel a resonance beneath the sorrow — as if ethereal octaves, tones and distant pitches were humming softly underneath my grief.

And then one day, there I stood — looking out the window, my hand resting on my chest, swaying gently in the space of his absence. Eyes closed. Tears rolling down my cheeks in slow, metered streams.

And as I swayed, precious moments began flowing through my mind and soul. His laugh breaking open a room . . . His small hand reaching for mine . . . The sound of his voice saying “Mom,” as if love itself had learned to speak. The memories unfolded within me, each one like a verse from a song I had never heard before and yet somehow already knew every word.

I continued to sway. Back and forth between then and now. Between the child I once carried in my arms and the child I now carry in spirit. I sensed his radiance close by — present, witnessing, aware, smiling.

And slowly, somewhere through that motion, that familiar sway — my essence began to remember what moving felt like again. Not the old heartbeat — that mother is gone now.

This was a quieter cadence. Softer. Deeper. A heart made gentler by sorrow and more intentional with love.

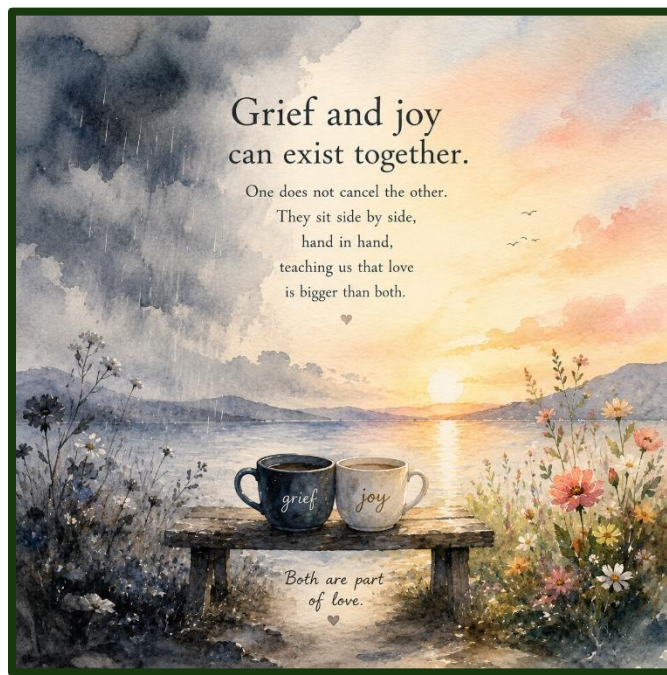
And in my swaying, I began to discern things differently. I could hear the sacred ache of love continuing without a place to land. It was there. It always had been and always would be.

Swaying between remembrance and renewal. Between devastation and devotion. Between the breath that left with him and the breath that still carries me forward.

Maybe that is what survival truly is. Not standing still after loss. Not “letting go.” Rather, allowing the soul to sway gently between memory and becoming -- until life begins singing through us again.

~ Kris Leitner





♥ 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.

Helpful Tips for Well-Being



5-4-3-2-1 GROUNDING

for anxiety

5

THINGS YOU
CAN SEE

a tree



4

THINGS YOU
CAN TOUCH

blanket



3

THINGS YOU
CAN HEAR

birds
chirping



2

THINGS YOU
CAN SMELL

coffee



1

THING YOU
CAN TASTE

gum







5 Anxiety Relief Techniques That Work in Under **EMERGENCY**

(Keep This Emergency Kit!) ⚡



BOX BREATHING
Breathe in 4, hold 4, out 4
hold 4
Activates parasympathetic nervous system

60
SECONDS



5-4-3-2-1 GROUNDING
See 5, touch 4, hear 3, smell 2, taste 1
Redirects focus from internal to external

45
SECONDS



BUTTERFLY TAP
Cross arms, tap shoulders
alternately
Bilateral stimulation calms amygdala

30
SECONDS

INSTANT
CALM!



COLD WATER RESET
Cold water on wrists and temples
Triggers mammalian dive response

15
SECONDS



NAME IT TO TAME IT
Say aloud: I notice I feel anxious
Prefrontal cortex regulates emotion

30
SECONDS





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 for 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](#)