

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

THE MODESTO AREA CHAPTER OF THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Supporting Families After a Child Dies

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

www.modestoriverbanktcf.org

April 2024

tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com

MONTHLY MEETING

7:00 PM

*PLEASE NOTE A
TEMPORARY LOCATION
CHANGE FOR OUR
MEETING FOR THE NEXT
FEW MONTHS.
SEE INFORMATION BELOW*

Please join us at our
next meeting on

Monday, April 8th

*Please arrive by 6:50 p.m.

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

Upcoming Meetings

May 13th

June 10th

July 8th



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.



MESSAGE LINE

(209)622-6786

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

2024 Steering Committee

Kris Leitner
Chapter Co-Leader

Suzanne Casity
Chapter Co-Leader

Nelda Anaya
Secretary

Elsie Freeman
Treasurer

Janet Neal
Outreach Coordinator

Kathleen Irizarry
Library

Michelle Bulman
Public Relations/Social Media

Kris Leitner
Newsletter Editor

Mike & Suzanne Casity
Website

Heyam Khacho
Hospitality

Grief shifts.

It shifts with the seasons.
It shifts with the time.
It shifts with each day and night and new beginning.
It shifts through phases and chapters and transitions.
It shifts, constantly and with great intent.
It's a constant transfer of pain and joy and longing and hope.

xxx, Chelsea Onemiller



MEETING LOCATION CHANGE FOR THE MONTHS OF
APRIL, MAY & JUNE

REDEEMER MODESTO

820 H Street, Modesto 95353

Parking is available at the location

It's on the corner of H St & 9th St



Registration is open!

Saturday, June 1, 2024

Swenson Golf Course in Stockton, CA

Registration for the golf tournament has begun!!

(Reach out to Mike or Suzanne Casity for more information)

[KCP Golf](#)

47th TCF National Conference - Compassionate Friends

Click on the link above for more information about this event.



We are planning a get together in June, the date is still pending, but it will likely be the 8th or the 15th. We will have a sign-up sheet for anyone who would like to attend. The chapter will provide the hamburgers & hotdogs. More information will be forthcoming in the May Newsletter and the May monthly meeting.



Get a photo button made of your child, grandchild or sibling with our button machine!

Close-up photos usually work the best.

Buttons can be made at 6:30 pm on our meeting nights. Bring an extra copy of a photo that can be cut into a circle 3" in diameter.

OR

You can email a copy of your child's photo to Suzanne at scasity@comcast.net and one will be made for you and brought to the next meeting.

This is a wonderful way to share their sweet faces!!



♥ 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

If you wish to make a Love Gift Donation

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.

DOES TRAUMATIC GRIEF GET 'BETTER'?

Words that were meant to console and comfort but missed the mark were a part of my raw grief.

"Give it time. It'll get better," I was told as I struggled to breathe within the nightmare that was my new normal.

Haven't we all been there? When well-meaning friends try to support us as we stand shell-shocked following the death of our child and yet their words end up hurting us even more?

But are they right? Does child loss ever get better?

In my view, the short answer is a quiet 'no'.

Over time we may get better at carrying the loss that much is true, developing as we do a large, invisible grief muscle that helps us bear the crushing weight of our sorrow.

However, my experience has shown me that my broken heart will never mend. It simply can't.

This is one grief that you don't get over.

My loss cannot and will not diminish in size.

Today, it is as vast, catastrophic, and life-changing as it was the first day I had to continue living without my child.

Yet, somehow, I've learned to live with the loss and to grow from it. What's helped is a newly grown, invisible-to-others grief muscle. It's this that has made the difference between lying in bed incapacitated and living again -- it's what helps me carry my grief.

I'm now able to get up in the morning, drive the car, go to work, smile, function, and live life again. It's not the life I had before my child was killed, but then, how could it ever be?

So my answer to the question 'Does it get better?' is no, IT never gets better; IT just gets more manageable because I'm learning to live with IT. Not the same thing at all.

When people offer support or advice they often believe there's a grief timeline -- which simply isn't there. They're not to blame. There's a widely held view that bereavement moves within recognizable parameters no matter the type of loss or who died. This grief intolerance is a societal issue that is, in part, greatly influenced by the medical establishment's attitude toward all types of grief. The psychiatrists' go-to book of diagnostic conditions, the DSM-5, holds to the view that there are 'healthy' timelines -- and if we're still grieving a year after the loss, we're considered to be suffering from 'prolonged grief disorder'.

It's laughable! A year!

One might be tempted to ask who actually wrote the DSM-5 and what they discussed. Unfortunately, we can't because they all signed non-disclosure agreements.

Whatever their reasons, until you've lost a child, you cannot conceive of how cataclysmically life-changing child loss really is.

The moment your child dies, you're catapulted across an invisible divide into a parallel world, never, ever, to return. Those on this side of the child-loss barrier recognize you for what you are now — a bereaved parent whose beating heart hides the fact it's broken — and extend their love and understanding. Those on the other 'living' side see a bereaved parent struggle with the fact that their child is dead yet believe that in time, with therapy, and maybe medication, things will return to normal.

But there is no normal. There's no going back or getting through this grief. The timeline for child loss does not exist. Child loss is not fluid, does not progress, and does not diminish. It is. There's no moving past this loss.

That's why we learn to live with it, with grace, humility, and great sadness. And in doing so we are gifted a deep wisdom that helps us find a way to build a new life around the physical absence of our child.

My loss has become a part of me, an essential and enriching element of the new me that cradles my broken heart. I see child loss as a lifelong grief and accept it as my new reality, my new normal. I'm not stuck, I'm not suffering from prolonged grief, and I'm certainly not moving on: I simply am.

By: Katja Faber



A PARENTS WORST NIGHTMARE

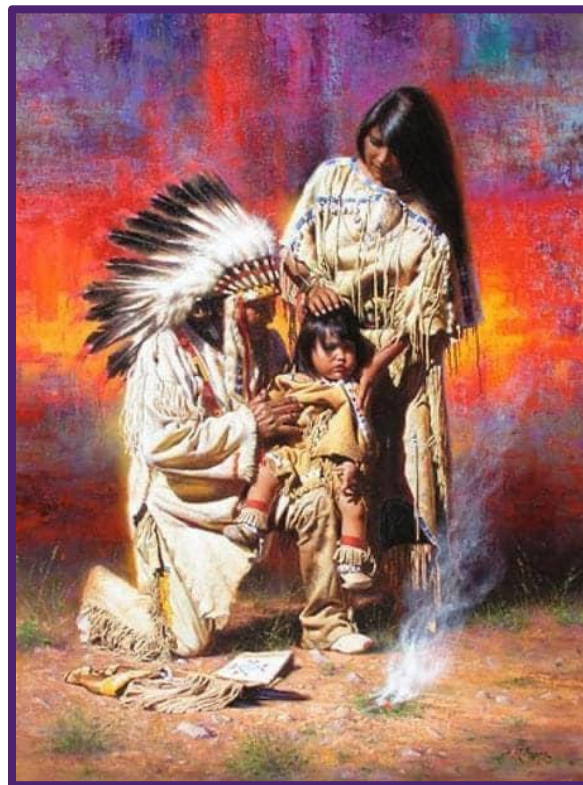
Losing a child and having to bury them. A man lost his son and couldn't bear the thought of living without him. He was suffering and couldn't believe his son was gone. He cried and cried every day and night, missing his son, wishing things were different.

He couldn't sleep and hadn't slept in a long time. One night an old medicine man came to him in a dream and told him "Enough!! That's enough crying!!" The dad told him "I cannot stop, I am never going to see him again!" The old Medicine man said, "Do you want to see him again?" The dad says "yes of course" the old medicine man takes him to the entrance of happy hunting ground where he sees many little beautiful children, so happy and innocent, carrying eagle feathers into the happy hunting grounds, smiling and laughing and just so beautiful. The dad asks "where is my son? Who are these kids?" The old medicine man said "these are the children that are called home early, they are innocent and loved and they go right through to the happy hunting grounds, so happy" the dad says "and my son? Where is he? Why isn't he with these children?" The old medicine man said, "Come this way" and guided him to the side of entrance. A small boy with a beautiful smile was standing there watching all the children enter the happy hunting grounds. He was standing there within reach of an eagle's feather. His dad grabbed him and hugged him, and the boy kissed his dad's cheeks and told him he missed him. The dad said "Why don't you have an eagle's feather like the other kids? Why are you waiting here at the entrance?"

The boy said "I keep trying to get the eagle feather Daddy, but your tears pull it out of reach. I see you are so sad, and I am tied to that feeling so I wait here until you're ok. The dad burst out crying for the last time and told his son, "Get that eagle feather and go. I will be ok and now I know you will be too."

Don't cry too long for that loved one you lost, whether son, daughter, husband, mother or father!! Let them rest in peace, don't torment your life because they won't come back. Have faith that you will be together again, and that Creator makes us a beautiful Home with all our loved ones when we leave this world.

[A PARENTS WORST NIGHTMARE - Native American History | Facebook](#)



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.**

PRIVATE FACEBOOK GROUPS

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.

[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](#)