

# 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](http://www.modestoriverbanktcf.org)

June 2025

[tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com](mailto: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, June 9<sup>th</sup>*

*Please arrive by 6:50 p.m.*

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

#### Upcoming Meetings

*July 14<sup>th</sup>*

*August 11<sup>th</sup>*

*September 8<sup>th</sup>*

Grief is love  
in its most honest form.  
I honor my love.  
I honor my grief.

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.

I look for you in all  
of the things you loved  
..that is where I find you

#### MESSAGE LINE

(209)622-6786

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

#### 2025 Steering Committee

Suzanne Casity  
Chapter Co-Leader

Kris Leitner  
Chapter Co-Leader

Melinda Lansberry  
Secretary

Elsie Freeman  
Treasurer

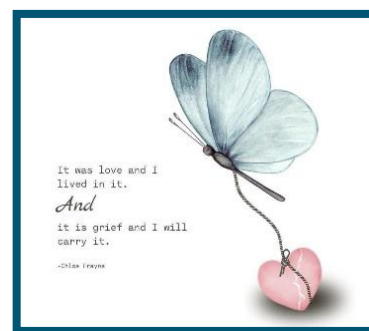
Janet Neal  
Outreach Coordinator

Lorie Boisse  
Hospitality

Michele Mootz  
Public Relations/Social  
Media

Kris Leitner  
Newsletter Editor

Mike & Suzanne Casity  
Website



It was love and I  
lived in it.  
And  
it is grief and I will  
carry it.  
-Diane Ivey



### *Member Submissions for the Newsletter*

If you have found an article, a poem, a saying or a photograph that has given you comfort or offered some healing to your heart, we would love to share it with the chapter. You never know what might help another grieving parent or sibling. What has given you comfort or hope may provide the same for someone else.

Please email your contribution to [tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com](mailto:tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com).

We look forward to hearing from you!

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The event is scheduled for June 14, 2025 and will be held at Swenson Golf Course in Stockton, CA.

*Proceeds for this year's event will be supporting The Kyle J. Taylor Foundation*  
[kylejtaylor.org](http://kylejtaylor.org)

There is a new website! By clicking on the link below all information for the event will be provided. Be sure to visit and bookmark the event at [www.kcpgolf.com](http://www.kcpgolf.com)

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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](mailto: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!!





We are very pleased to announce The Compassionate Friends (TCF) 48th Annual National Conference in Bellevue, WA! TCF's National Conference is an enriching and supportive event for many newer and long-time bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. Attendees come and find renewed hope and support, as well as strategies for coping with grief. Participants create friendships with other bereaved people who truly understand the heartbreaking loss of a child, sibling, or grandchild. Lifelong friendships are often formed and rekindled each year at TCF conferences.

[click photo to register](#)

## ♥ 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.

# Grief and Father's Day ~ A Bereaved Father's Perspective



The conversations around men and grief often go unmentioned in our modern society, especially when it relates to pregnancy and infant loss. This is something Cody Richard experienced first hand when he lost his first, and only, child in a [TFMR pregnancy loss](#) due to maternal health in 2018. "Society has pretty successfully silenced conversations and support for grief in men, especially when it comes to pregnancy loss," shares Cody as he reflects on the loss of his son, Paris. Mothers are often given more permission to grieve and express their

emotions, yet due to gender expectations and lack of understanding, men are not always given a framework or setting to express their grief.

## Men and Grief

In the article [How to Support a Grieving Man](#), they state, "Depending on cultural expectations, men may deal with grief more quietly and tend to keep their emotions to themselves. It doesn't mean they don't experience intense emotional pain like anyone else."

While it's true men may not feel the same permission to express their feelings, it isn't a sign that they aren't grieving. "My grief came second," says Cody, "I had to switch into caretaker mode. I had to take care of my family."

When the world stops turning, when the parent with the most intimate connection of carrying the child is not okay physically, mentally, or emotionally, the role of holding the family together often falls on the father or partner. As a result, their grief can feel secondary. There is little to no emphasis on the unique grief men experience, especially when it relates to the loss of a pregnancy. This upholds the cultural and societal messaging that men are expected to be the strong ones who hold it all together.

"There is evidence that men are more likely than women to remain silent or grieve in isolation, engage in action-oriented forms of grief expression, or lose themselves in distractions such as work or throwing themselves into a new relationship," states J Scott Janssen in an article titled [Understanding the Way Men Grieve](#). "So is the inward experience of grief really different for men and women? Or is the pain simply more likely to find expression along gender lines? Maybe the difference is not so much in the experience of grief itself but in how the pain of grief is absorbed, processed, and expressed, or what we typically call mourning."

## Invisible Grief and Ambiguous Loss

Reflecting back on his own experience when his son died, Cody shares that "there was constantly someone in the room, but nobody even acknowledged me. Dads just get forgotten."

As time goes on, support for both parents begins to lessen, and days like Father's Day can bring up those intense emotions yet provide little to no space for acknowledgement. "Father's Day... two words that evoke so much emotion...a petulant reminder of what I have lost," as shared by AJ Collette in their reflection [A Father's Day Dilemma](#). While more and more dads are sharing their stories, and days like [Bereaved Father's Day](#) being created to help bring awareness to the topic of dads and grief, the deep layers of cultural conditioning around men and emotions make it clear that there is more work that needs to happen in this space.

## ***The Need for Ritual***

In the podcast [A Man's Need for Ritual](#), William Ayot explores how rituals, which once routinely marked life events, have been lost, and with it a way for men to process their grief surrounding complex losses.

Those complex losses often surround experiences like pregnancy loss. And while the impact may seem less immediate, it's a moment that changes the foundation of fatherhood. Making room for rituals, and providing a framework for the grief of fathers, begins with the intentional, and the purposeful decision to allow room for grief in whatever form it presents itself.

In the days and months following the loss of his son, Cody spent a lot of time building things and working with his hands. This work, while meeting a practical need, also provided an outlet for his grief that was more embodied.

“Even if you're a private person,” he says, “you have to find a way to process your grief, a way that works for you. I wish someone would have asked me how I was doing. We need to talk about it. We need more people sharing their stories and offering tools for grieving. That's how we start a movement.”

There is the misconception that rituals have to be big and elaborate to be meaningful. The attention is often put on big events and public displays of emotion, rather than the everyday ways fathers can draw on rituals to acknowledge their grief and loss. In the conversation [Guys and Grief – Advice for Men Going Through Loss](#), it becomes apparent that the presence of ritual, especially the everyday ways of honoring and showing up, is how to create space for true healing and the ability to keep going.

There is no one size fits all when it comes to men, grief or the framework around ritualizing loss. Yet, there is, and continues to be, fathers who are showing up, supporting one another, and creating spaces for their unique grief to be told. And like Cody says, “It's that little bit of empathy and that connection that goes a long way.”

## ***Where to start?***

- Create or gift a [Father Loss ceremony](#) to someone you know who is grieving or has a complicated relationship with fatherhood this Father's Day.
- Check out [The Pregnancy and Infant Loss Support Centre](#) as they offer 1:1 and group support for partners and dads as it relates to pregnancy loss.
- Listen to the podcast [Guys and Grief](#) as they seek to break the silence on how men grieve.
- [Glow in the Woods](#) offers a collection of articles written by dads on grief and pregnancy loss

May Father's Day be a gentle day of remembrance and love.

[Grief and Father's Day ~ A Bereaved Father's Perspective - Be Ceremonial](#)



# Child Loss: Finding Courage to Face the Future



*I think it was somewhere around two months from Dominic's departure when my heart realized life was moving forward whether I granted permission or not. Not only folks on the fringes and the "bigger world out there" but close by-in my own family, my own circle of intimate friends-people were making plans, having birthdays, going places and doing things. **I wanted to scream.***

*Could the world not take more notice that it was absolutely **NOT** business as usual? Was I the only one whose heart was so shattered that the thought of another sunrise was painful? How could I walk into a future that didn't include Dominic? By the grace of God, I did it.*

*No one can keep the world from turning, the sun from rising, time from ticking by. **But it took a great deal of strength and courage.** First it was a "grin and bear it" kind of courage. I strapped on my armor and tucked a hankie in my pocket. I could show up and smile (a bit), talk (awhile) and muddle through.*

***Sometimes it didn't go so well. I had to apologize and leave early. And I was always exhausted.** Then it was an "I'm going to be present for my family" kind of courage. The last thing I wanted to do was shortchange my earthbound children. I worked to get a better handle on my thoughts and emotions. I learned how to pre-grieve major events and milestones. I found I could bring Dom with me by wearing a meaningful piece of jewelry or tucking a keepsake away where I could touch it if I needed to.*

***I was able to laugh (most of the time), make small talk and write dates on the calendar again.***

*Now the courage that helps me hold on as I'm pulled forward into the future is informed by the fact that every passing day is one day closer to the reunion my heart longs for. What first seemed impossible is now habitual. Sorrow and joy can coexist. I don't have to be empty of one to feel the other. The future is not my enemy-it's where I can and will love **ALL** my children, husband, family and friends well until the day we are in eternity together forever.*

*My love for Dominic is Background Music to everything I do. But it doesn't always demand my full attention. Sorrow is no longer all I feel and Dominic's absence no longer all I see.*

***Sunrise is still hard to face some days.** My heart will always long for the time things were as they should be instead of how they are. **But I'm thankful for the courage to step into the future even when I'm afraid.***



they say grief fades with time..

but it doesn't..it really doesn't.

it burrows itself down into  
the core of who you are.

it shifts the way you see everything.

and grief is the teacher you never asked for

but it shows you that you can still live with  
a heart that's heavier yet somehow still beats.



## *A Father's Grief*



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

It must be very difficult  
To be a man in grief.  
Since "men don't cry" and "men are strong"  
No tears can bring relief.  
It must be very difficult  
To stand up to the test.  
And field calls and visitors  
So that she can get some rest.  
They always ask if she's alright  
And what she's going through.  
But seldom take his hand and ask,  
"My friend, how are you?"  
He hears her cry in the night  
And thinks his heart will break.  
And dries her tears and comforts her  
But "stays strong" for her sake.  
It must be very difficult  
To start each day anew.  
And try to be so very brave-

*He lost his child too.*

~ Eileen Knight Hagemeister

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.

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Join us on our Instagram account page. You can find us at – *modestoriverbankarea\_tcf*.

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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](mailto:tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com) or by phone at 209-622-6786 or on Facebook.

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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](mailto:scasity@comcast.net)

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

[www.modestoriverbanktcf.org](http://www.modestoriverbanktcf.org)

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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 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.

[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](#)