

# 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 2024

[tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com](mailto:tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com)

## MONTHLY MEETING

7:00 PM

**PLEASE NOTE A  
TEMPORARY LOCATION  
CHANGE FOR OUR  
MEETING FOR THIS MONTH.  
SEE INFORMATION BELOW**

Please join us at our  
next meeting on

**Monday, June 10<sup>th</sup>**

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

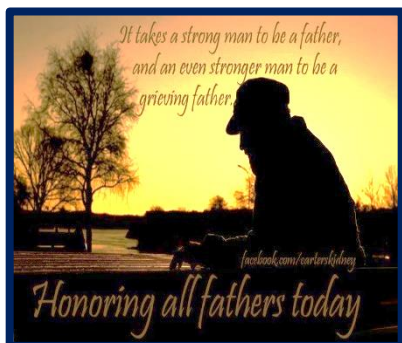
We begin promptly at 7:00  
p.m.\*

## Upcoming Meetings

**July 8<sup>th</sup>**

**August 12<sup>th</sup>**

**September 9<sup>th</sup>**



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

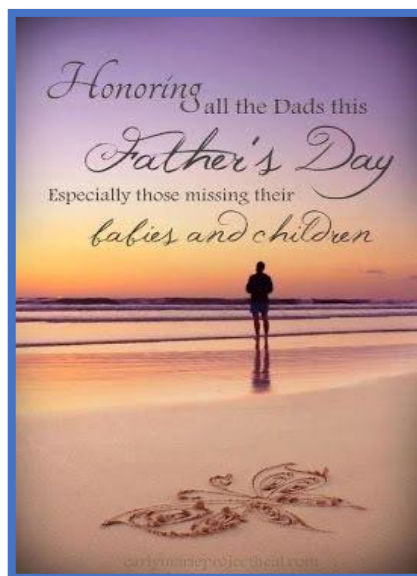
[Chapter Meeting Locator -  
Compassionate Friends](#)



## 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





MEETING LOCATION CHANGE FOR THE  
MONTH OF JUNE  
*REDEEMER MODESTO*

820 H Street, Modesto 95353 (It's on the corner of H St & 9<sup>th</sup> St)  
Parking is available at the location

Please note that we will be meeting at a new location beginning again in July.  
*To Be Announced*

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47th TCF National Conference - Compassionate Friends

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



We are very pleased to announce The Compassionate Friends (TCF) 47th Annual National Conference in New Orleans! 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, all while making 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.

Unique and cherished highlights of our conference include our heartfelt Saturday evening Candle Lighting Program, Sharing Sessions, Keynote Addresses, Healing Haven, Butterfly Boutique, Crafty Corner, and Silent Auction. Our weekend of inspiration, sharing, and learning is followed by the Walk to Remember on Sunday morning.

This year's conference will be held at the New Orleans Marriott. Reservations can now be made online at TCF's dedicated reservation link. Our discounted room rate with the Marriott is \$144 per night plus applicable taxes and fees. Please note that each attendee can reserve a maximum of two rooms. Many attendees arrive on Thursday since the conference begins early on Friday morning. We also have pre-conference activities that are offered on Thursday evening, that attendees find beneficial. We look forward to seeing you in New Orleans!



# CHAPTER POTLUCK

We are planning a get together on June 15<sup>th</sup>. We will have a sign-up sheet for anyone who would like to attend – an email will be sent out the first week of June. The chapter will provide the hamburgers & hotdogs. Address & location will be available in the email.

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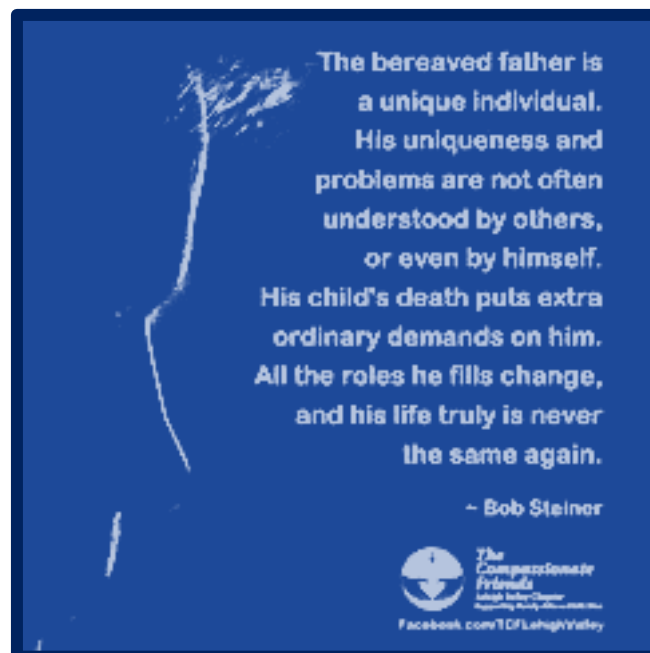
Get a photo button made of your child, grandchild or sibling with our button machine!  
*Close-up photos usually work the best.*

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.

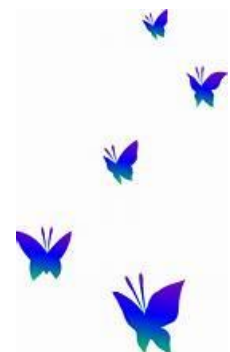
This is a wonderful way to share their sweet faces!!



The bereaved father is  
a unique individual.  
His uniqueness and  
problems are not often  
understood by others,  
or even by himself.  
His child's death puts extra  
ordinary demands on him.  
All the roles he fills change,  
and his life truly is never  
the same again.

~ Bob Steiner

 The  
Computerized  
Friends  
Lehigh Valley Chapter  
Facebook.com/TDF/LehighValley



## *For Fathers, Loss of a Child Carries Special Burdens*



Men go through all kinds of identity changes when they experience the loss of a child, especially a child who is older and has lived long enough to create established memories with his or her father.

A man identifies himself by mainly two things: the job he has and the family he has. When a child is taken away by death, a man suddenly loses the largest, most important part of his identity. A real crisis situation has been created, not just for the father, but also for the role the father plays with the family. Fathers love to feel needed, and they love to feel like they are the one responsible for the happiness of the entire family.

Men are far less verbal than women by nature, and it makes it much more difficult for family members and friends to understand the changes that are taking place with a father who loses a child. He often feels like a failure because he was unable to prevent the death or to fix the death once it took place. This is especially true if the child's life was lost due to an illness.

Fathers often believe their role is to fix things that are broken or in need of repair, and when they cannot fix their child's illness and the end result is death, a father goes through a deep grieving period of feeling tremendous guilt and failure.

A father who loses a child also loses such a large part of his dreams. Fathers don't always openly talk about their dreams of hunting and fishing with their children, or of taking bike rides together, going to ball games together or of tossing a ball in the backyard, but they think about these events all of the time.

Fathers of girls daydream about walking their daughter down the aisle and dancing that first dance at the wedding. They dream about taking care of all of their child's hurts, wiping their tears away, and being called "hero" for all of the ways they show their strength to their son or daughter.

Child loss, in a father's eyes, often represents weakness. Men believe fathers are to be strong and in charge, not at a loss for knowing what to do when death turns life upside down. Child loss is such a helpless feeling, and often this is a foreign emotion for fathers who have been a tower of strength for their children.

What is a father to do? How can a father go on and feel whole once again?

It takes time to work through the pain of loss. It takes a long time to build back a feeling of belonging as a father. It will often take years for a father to be able to reclaim his identity of a father. It will take lots of working through feelings of failure and loss to feel like a man who can always proudly wear the name father.

Take it a day at a time, a step at a time. Begin by telling yourself over and over that you will always be a father. Nothing can change that—not even death. Remind yourself often that some things cannot be fixed by you. Remember often that lost dreams are part of the pain every parent feels when a child dies. It takes a lot of tears and years to work past the milestone markers of such things as dreams of your child playing ball, driving a car, dating, getting married, and having children.

These are not easy dreams to release, but with time you will be able to more vividly remember the times you had with your child than to sorrow over the time you never had. Be patient with yourself. Be kind to yourself. And, when you fall into the emotional pain of feeling like a failure, remind yourself that you will always be a father and nothing can take away that badge of honor, not even death.

[By: Clara Hinton Open to Hope](#)



*A Father's Grief*



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 Hagemester



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

♥ 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.

# *Dads Grieve Too - And They Need Other Grieving Dads*



**Dads grieve too.** The women in our loss community say it often and we say it with such passion. ***Dads grieve too.***

However, right after we finish that statement the discomfort settles in. A question inevitably arises: Yes, dads grieve but *how do we support them in their grief?*

There's a lot we, as women, can do. We can listen to their stories and to their silence. We can recognize and honor their fatherhood in its many iterations. But, there is something we can't do for them. *We can't be fathers.*

***Grieving dads need other grieving dads.***

They need the words and the support and the companionship of other fathers like them. Fathers who have known loss and who are living lives touched by grief. Fathers who know what it's like to hold the hands of their child's mother as the helplessness takes hold. They need to share experiences with someone who has also paced hospital floors in despair and sat in uncomfortable chairs while receiving devastating news. Dads need each other.

Take a moment to consider what it has meant for you, as a mother who knows loss or infertility (or both), to read about another mother with an experience like yours. It means everything to you to know that there is someone out there who can empathize with your story. ***Now, take a moment to consider what that could do for the fathers we know.***

I considered this very idea and I reached out to this incredible community with a request: Please share resources for fathers created by *other fathers*. For me, it was crucial to gather content that was from other dads because that is what dads need. It was necessary to find dads with varied experiences who offered a variety of option.

Because that's what our fathers need. They need the options that the mothers in this community have. Instead of offering up one dad, I wanted to offer a community.

I can now say with confidence that ***grieving dads are out there.*** There is a community of fathers out there and they are eager to connect with other fathers who have experienced the heartbreak of building a family and the overwhelming love that fathers have for ALL of their children.

Besides our own love and support, the greatest gift we can give our dads is the love and support of one another.

***Because dads grieve too and they need other grieving dads.***

# RESOURCES FOR GRIEVING DADS

## ***Blogs and Websites:***

- [A Father's Grief](#)
- [Pine Cones and Study Days](#)
- [Daddy To A Rainbow & A Star](#)
- [Dads Grieve Too Series on Hannah Pontillo: Trying To Navigate Life After Child Loss](#)
- [Mia's Legacy](#)
- [Diary Of An Almost Father](#)
- [Shoebox Full Of Memories](#)
- [Pillars of Strength](#)
- [Grieving Dads](#)
- [36 Things To Do For Those In Grief \(Essay\)](#)
- [I Am Still A Father \(Essay\)](#)

## ***Facebook Community Pages and Groups:***

- [Dad Minus One \(Facebook Page\)](#)
- [Grieving Dads - To The Brink and Back \(Facebook Page\)](#)
- [Grieving Fathers \(Facebook Page\)](#)
- [Diary Of An Almost Father - Men's Group \(Closed Facebook Group\)](#)
- [Sad Dad's Club: MISS Foundation Support & Social Group \(Closed Facebook Group\)](#)
- [Grieving Fathers \(Closed Facebook Group\)](#)
- [Pregnancy After Loss Support - Group for Dads \(Closed Facebook Group\)](#)
- [The Grieving Dad's Project \(Closed Facebook Group\)](#)

## ***Instagram Accounts:***

- [@pine\\_cones\\_and\\_study\\_days](#)
- [@stilledads](#)
- [@pops\\_and\\_roos\\_dad](#)
- [@robcruss](#)
- [@dadsgrievetoo](#)

## ***Books (Links will bring you to Amazon page for book):***

- [A Guide For Fathers: When A Baby Dies by Tim Nelson](#)
- [Grieving Dads: To The Brink and Back by Kelly Farley](#)
- [From Father to Father: Letters From Loss Dad To Loss Dad by Emily Long](#)

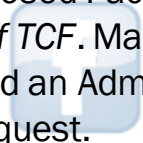
## ***Retreats:***

- [A Memory Grows](#)
- [The Uncharted Trail](#)

Article and Resources written by: Rachel Whalen

<https://stillstandingmag.com>

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](mailto: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](mailto:scasity@comcast.net)

Visit our website for information and to stay up to date on chapter events.  
[www.modestoriverbanktcf.org](http://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](#)