

Arlington Chapter

New Members

We are sorry you need us, but glad you found us.

Mark and Barbara Bertolini, parents of Briana
Ricardo Caletz, parent of Rhys and Rhae

Closure

I recently attended a community bereavement networking luncheon where representatives from support and grief groups met and exchanged information with each other regarding their various organizations and their goals and purposes. I listened as a person from each group introduced themselves and gave an overview of the mission of their organization. As each one took their turn to speak, I was struck by how many times I heard that they help people to find "closure."

To a parent whose child has died, the word "closure" no longer has any relevance. I no longer understand the meaning of the word. The word "closure" sounds like it comes from a strange and exotic foreign land that offers no translation for the English language. I turned to my ever trusty American Heritage Dictionary for the clarification. "Closure" it stated; was "The act of closing or the state of being closed. Something that closes or shuts. A bringing to an end; a conclusion."

I sat still and was taken a little aback. No wonder I could not grasp the meaning of this word as it related to the death of my child. Bereaved parents do not want "closure." We don't want the bright light that was our child to be forever snuffed out and brought to an end. We need another word. Acceptance; perhaps. Resolution; maybe. But please, not "closure." It sounds so cold and final.

Do grieving parents have a bit of a "grief superiority complex" compared to those suffering from other types of grief? That may well be true. I keep hearing that "loss is loss." It seems that the only people who really believe that are those who have not experienced the death of a child. Yes, the loss of a job, pet, parent, or spouse, are all horrible experiences, but the loss of a child is a unique grief. It is visceral, forever life altering, and out of step with the balance of nature. Then I remembered and took comfort in the words of Dr. Heidi Horsley who always says that "Closure is for bank accounts, not love accounts," and I believe that's true.

Janet G. Reyes, TCF Alamorea Chapter, TX

Just Ten Weeks

For just 10 weeks
I had you to myself.
And 10 weeks seems too short a time
For you to have changed me so profoundly.
In just 10 weeks I came to know you . . .
And to love you.
You came to trust me with your life.
Oh, what a life I had planned for you!
Just 10 weeks.
Then I lost you.
I lost a lifetime of hopes,
Plans, dreams, and aspirations.
A slice of my future simply vanished overnight.
Just 10 weeks.
It wasn't enough time to convince others how
Special and important you were.
How odd, a truly unique person has died recently
And no one is mourning the passing.
Just 10 weeks.
And no "normal" person would cry all night over
A tiny 10 week fetus, or get depressed and withdrawn
Day after endless day.
No one would, so why am I?
You were just 10 weeks, my little one.
But it seems you only needed 10 weeks
To make my life so much richer and give
Me a small glimpse of eternity.

Susan Erling
TCF St. Paul, MN

Love Gifts

Katy & Kent Womack - in loving memory of Andy
Womack, son of Katy and Kent Womack

Lois & Jay Copeland - in loving memory of their son David
Michael Copeland, In honor of Edith Rosenzweig's
100th birthday, In loving memory of Connor Moriarty, son of
Tom & Meegan Moriarty and grandson of Mary Frances
Moriarty, In honor of the birthdays of Ron and Sandy
Edlavitch, In loving memory of Bill Eagleson, husband of
Ann Eagleson

A Parent's Lament

*I know not if there'll come a day
When I'll wake to not feel this way
The empty ache...the sudden fear
Reminds me you're no longer here.*

*But in my dreams you still abide
As in days before these tears I've cried
Laughing, smiling...nary a care
I live in hope, but without a prayer*

*My friends tell me to 'just believe'
Then I won't feel the need to grieve
But that sounds much like 'letting go'
And so my response is always "no"*

*At times I think they may be right
That grief is a foe that I must fight
Is winning truly mine to choose
Or what's left, when nothing's left to lose.*

*I see myself in some abyss
A void to fill with the YOU I miss
I can't be sure what happens now
All I know is this solemn vow*

*I'll take you with me where e'er I go
To heights of dreams or in grief so low
For now I can only hope to heal
The pain I feel is all too real*

*Maybe somehow you'll be my guide
To live my life on the softer side
Beyond the torment of you loss
And lift the burden of this cross*

*For in you lies the chance to smile
If only for a little while
Your mem'ries are my Joy to keep
And not just dreams for when I sleep.*

~By Paul Thibault

**Having suffered such tragic loss,
Hope whispers softly.
Listen carefully to hear it.**



Announcements

1. Our next meeting is **Thursday, March 8** at 7:30 pm at the Trinity Presbyterian Church. Doors open at 7:15. Please join us. We will have two sharing sessions. One will be, **“Effects of our child’s loss on surviving children.”** Other sharing session will be, **“Our issues this month.”**
2. **Alan Pederson Concert April 12 at 7 pm** at the Trinity Presbyterian Church. Our regular meeting night. Concert is free, **but donations greatly appreciated.** Alan Pederson is an award winning speaker, songwriter and recording artist. His inspirational message of hope and his music have resonated deeply with those facing loss or adversity in their lives. Since the death of his 18 year-old daughter Ashley in 2001, Alan has traveled to more than 1,300 cities speaking and playing his original music. Alan served four years as the Executive Director of the Compassionate Friends. He is currently on the road with **The Angels Across the USA Tour**, where he will join us April 12. We always play his original song, **Precious Child** at our Candle Lighting Service. I have seen Alan perform any number of times and can't say enough about how beautiful and inspiring and uplifting his concert is.
3. **Annual Family Picnic and BBQ**, Saturday, June 10 at Lake Barcroft, Lake 5, from 1 – 4 pm.

To Our New Members

Coming to the first meeting is the hardest, you have nothing to lose, everything to gain. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not The Compassionate Friends will work for you. Give us at least three tries. At the next meeting the right words may be said or you may connect with just the right person.

To Our Members Who Are Further Along

We need your support and encouragement. Think back—what would it have been like for you at your first meeting if there had not been TCF veterans to welcome you, hear your story and share your grief, encourage you and tell you, “you will survive, your pain will not always be this bad, it really does get better.”



We Remember the Anniversary

Susan Elizabeth Bell Parents (Daughter) John and Mary Bell	3/10/1967	2/25/1987
Ashley Burlison Parents (Daughter) Rudy and Terrye Richter		2/3/2002
Alexander Britton "Sandy" Hume Parent (Son) Clare Stoner Hume	9/2/1969	2/23/1998
Mary Margaret "Molly" Moriarty Sibling (Sister) Tim Moriarty Parent (Daughter) Mary Frances Moriarty	11/6/1964	2/24/1985
Christopher Deane "Chris" Morton Parents (Son) Samuel and Patricia Morton Sibling (Brother) Katherine Morton Orf	6/2/1978	2/15/1999
Taft J. Sellers Parent (Son) Vickie Sellers	7/7/1982	2/18/2013
Jessica Stein Parents (Daughter) Gary and Doris Stein	6/2/1997	2/2/2002



Birthdays Remembered

BB Nyce		2/18/1954	4/17/2007
<i>Sibling (Brother)</i>	<i>Lynn Nyce</i>		
Danny Hibbits		2/18/1982	8/28/2010
<i>Parent (Son)</i>	<i>Mary and John Hibbits</i>		
Diane Bradish		2/6/1983	8/31/2014
<i>Parent (Daughter)</i>	<i>George Bradish</i>		
Jackson Lee Gallagher		2/21/2003	8/6/2010
<i>GP (Grandson)</i>	<i>Kay and Frank Gallagher</i>		
Justin Kropff		2/20/1976	8/7/2015
<i>Parent (Son)</i>	<i>Mary Audrey</i>		
Luke Golden		2/27/2011	6/13/2012
<i>Parent (Son)</i>	<i>Jennifer and Josh Golden</i>		
Michael Zmidzinski		2/17/1990	5/26/2008
<i>Parent (Son)</i>	<i>Renee Youngs</i>		
Owen Vennett		2/10/2008	2/10/2008
<i>Parent (son)</i>	<i>Amy and James Vennett</i>		
Raphael (Rafi) Martin		2/7/2014	6/25/2014
<i>Parents(Grandson)</i>	<i>Sandee and Jay Mervis</i>		
Rianna Prusley		2/13/1992	5/13/2015
<i>Parent (Daughter)</i>	<i>Susan and Greg Tate</i>		
Sara Galoró		2/19/1976	2/18/1991
<i>Sibling (Sister)</i>	<i>Rachel Galoró</i>		
<i>Sister</i>	<i>Rachel Galoró</i>		
Stephanie Jean Fiorino		2/22/1989	8/9/2008
<i>Parent (Daughter)</i>	<i>Sue Ellen Wells</i>		
Steven A. McGrath		2/28/1963	4/17/1995
<i>Parent (Son)</i>	<i>Frederick and Nancy Schultz</i>		
Tiffany Schuck		2/16/1991	2/17/2014
<i>Parent (Daughter)</i>	<i>Michele and Richard Schuck</i>		
<i>Parent (Daughter)</i>	<i>Michelle & Richard Schuck</i>		
William Alexander Heffernam		2/17/2016	6/16/2016
<i>Parent (Son)</i>	<i>Alysa and Ryan Heffernam</i>		