The Compassionate Friends Modesto~Riverbank Chapter

Supporting Family 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

May 2020

tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com

MONTHLY MEETING

7:00 PM
Bridge Covenant Church
2201 Morrill Road
Riverbank, CA 95367
(Corner of Oakdale Rd and Morrill Rd)

The meeting scheduled for Monday, May 11th will be conducted as a Zoom meeting online (instructions to follow)

Upcoming Meetings

June 8th
July 13th
August 10th





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.

The day you become a mother is the day you start watching your heart walk around outside your body.

MESSAGE LINE

(209)622-6786

If you leave a message a steering committee member will return your call.

2020 Steering Committee

Tracey Parker - Chapter Leader

Devon Homme - Secretary

Elsie Freeman - Treasurer

Kris Leitner - Newsletter Editor

Janet Neal - Outreach Coordinator

Lori Leitner – Hospitality & Library

Chad Homme – Public Relations

Mike & Suzanne Casity - Website

Visit us on Facebook The Modesto-Riverbank Area Chapter of TCF



Find us on Instagram at modestoriverbank_tcf



Letter from the Leader

Dear Friends,

It's been thirty-nine days, (as of this writing) since our governor first issued an executive order to stay at home during the pandemic. In those thirty-nine days we have heard about the importance of self-care. For us, members of the bereaved community, self-care isn't always the same as it is for the rest of the world. Some of the self-care suggestions, like organizing your closet, can be an impossible task when it took everything you've got just to get out of bed that day. Other suggestions, like looking at old photos, can be a major triggering situation. We don't always function the way other people in society do. And for the newly bereaved, this seems especially true.

Self-care can be an important factor in helping to cope in these extraordinary times. However, it is also necessary to realistically choose activities that are attainable and meaningful. So, we have come up with a list with some self-care suggestions that I consider to be suited for those who not only are dealing with this time of self-isolation, but who are also grieving through it. The ideas on this list vary widely and I believe are appropriate for both the newly bereaved and the seasoned griever. As always though, you should choose whatever self-care and coping techniques are best for you!

I hope our list provides you with some ideas that you can use in your efforts to deal with self-isolation while grieving. In addition to the included list, I invite you to join us online Monday, May 11th, at 7:00pm for our Zoom Chapter meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/173207216. There is more information in the newsletter, and you will also receive a second with a link to the meeting. I hope you can join us. Until then, take care and stay safe!

~Tracey Parker Chapter Leader & James' Mom

Grief & Self Care During Quarantine

- Read a book/Listen to an audiobook
- o Take a bubble bath
- o Stretch for 10 minutes
- Meet with friends online-Facetime, Google Hang-out, Houseparty
- Watch a classic movie
- o Sing at the top of your lungs
- o Write-a letter to your loved one or yourself, journal or a story
- o Light a candle
- o Eat a healthy meal
- o Go outside-take a walk, ride a bike or even go on a hike
- Garden-plant some vegetables, herbs or flowers
- Listen to a Podcast
- Start a new hobby
- o Phone a supportive friend
- o Do something that requires focus-a puzzle, Sudoku or crossword
- o Bake something
- o Meditate/commune with nature
- Drink a smoothie
- o Pay it forward-pay for someone's coffee, fast food or groceries
- o Take a drive
- o Be kind to a stranger
- Create a vision board
- o Take a day off-give yourself permission to do nothing at all
- Buy yourself flowers
- o Take a break from Social Media
- o Practice deep breathing
- Dance with reckless abandon
- Practice self compassion-treat yourself and your grief as you would treat others...without judgment and with love!



All events and activities

are cancelled or postponed

until further notice.



If you are struggling and need to talk, we are here for you. We have set up a phone tree and someone is available day or night. You can call or text us at (209)622-6786 and one of the Steering Committee will get back to you as soon as possible. You may also reach someone through the email address, tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com, or on our private Facebook page, which you can find by searching for *The Modesto-Riverbank Area Chapter of TCF*.

If you would like to be a part of our phone tree and be available for other members, please contact us through one of the above mentioned methods and we will add your name and number to our list.

A Bereaved Mother's Love



There is a love so pure, so tender, and so strong. A love that spans over a lifetime and pours in and out of other realms. It is higher than the stars that fill the moonlit skies. Wider than the earth itself. It is deeper than the most forbidding places of the ocean. A love that radiates brighter than the sun and pulls just as mercilessly as a black hole. A love that is insurmountable in all regards.

It is a love that transcends time and is completely unrestrained. It is free. There is a love so sacred, so cherished, and true.

A love that is incomprehensible to the world around. A love that can exist where others think it wouldn't. A love so perfectly intertwined deep within your heart, your soul. A love that makes the rest of the world look cold and gray because its beauty and depth is unmatched. Yet at the same time, it sheds beauty upon the earth that was never before seen.

Nothing compares to this love. This love — it does exist. It exists and we live to tell the tale of how it can exist even though unseen. With little tangible evidence remaining, it still survives. But what's more — it thrives. It grows. More and more each day this love flourishes and spreads like spring wildflowers in an untouched meadow. The rivers of this love never run dry and the gusts of its winds never cease.

The depth and intensity of such love is the kind you only hear about in fairy tales and happily ever after's — yet it exists in something far from that. This love dwells in uncertainty and shaky grounds. It lingers in silent tears and aching arms. It is the light in the most isolated place. It lives to tell the tale of what was and is no longer.

This love rests in the irrecoverable pieces of our souls and the gaping wounds of our shattered hearts. It sways elegantly with joy in the darkest places of desolation and despair. For even in darkness it continues to grow and rejoice. It is beauty and chaos released in the same breath.

This love — this unchanging, unwavering, unbreakable love — is that of a broken heart. This love belongs to the bereaved mother. For even in death, she loves endlessly. For even in darkness, her love is scintillating. Not even death could extinguish this love, for it is a love like no other. Unmatched and unparalleled — it is truly one of a kind.

The beautiful love of mother and child — put to the ultimate test and stretched far past the breaking point. Yet it remains untouched — only to grow stronger with each pull. The world stands idly by waiting for the bond to break. For the bereaved mother to let it go — to give up. Little do they know, they will wait for an eternity.

The love of a bereaved mother is a force to be reckoned with. A force so powerful that nothing can stand in its way. (Neither) time nor death can change it. (Neither) sorrow nor pain can break it.

This love — it is our love. It survives where they are not. It is the love that occupies the space in our hearts and in our lives where they once were. This love saves a sacred space for them. It exists only because they lived. It remains even though they left. It is neither theory nor fiction — it is an incredible, powerful truth.

The love of a bereaved mother is an implausible, fierce, interminable love that defies all odds. This love is what has taken root in every single cell of my body and pulses through my veins with purpose and meaning. This love has wiped my soul clean. It has changed my very being. This love lightens the burden of loss. For it is this love that makes the pain more bearable. Perhaps, even worthwhile.

Death does not define me — it is life and this love that defines me. It is this love that has changed the course of my life and has separated me from the rest of the world. This love — it is my love. And for the life of me — I will never let it go. It is the one thing that binds my broken soul. This love — it is what keeps me going.

It is the echo that ripples from all that I do. And all that I am.

No matter the distance, no matter the time — this love is prevailing.

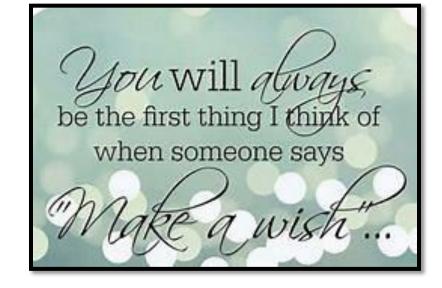
And it is mine.

By Contributor Jessi Snapp: stillstandingmag.com



Those we love
don't go away.
They walk beside
us everyday.
Unseen unheard.
but always near.
so loved, so missed.
so very dear.





Beyond the Rainbow's End, there lies

The land of love and light

Where shadows never dim the skies

For there, there is no night...

And though the loss is hard to bear

Of loved ones, or of friend

We know that we shall find them there

Beyond the Rainbow's End...

all-greatquotes.com

your life was a BLESSING
your memory a TREASURE
loved beyond WORDS
missed beyond MEASURE



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AmazonSmile is a simple way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added benefit that Amazon will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. You can choose from over one million organizations to support. (click on the link above for further information).

9 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 Compaccionate Friends

	Modesto/Riverbank Area Chapter PO Box 578713 Modesto, CA 95357	r
$\ \square$ Child, $\ \square$ Sibling or $\ \square$ Grandchild		
Date of Birth/ Date	e of Passing/	
Donation amount		
Your Name		
Telephone	Your email address	
Your address	City	Zip
Would you like your gift listed in our mo	-	r child, grandchild or sibling?
The Compassionate Friends is	a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization	n. Donations are tax deductible



Thank you 7- Eleven stores at 2500 Geer Rd., Turlock, CA and 3225 McHenry Ave., Modesto, CA for sponsoring our monthly newsletter!!

Check out our closed Facebook page, Modesto-Riverbank Area Chapter of TCF. Make a request to join the page & 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 vou 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 bv email reach 118 tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com or by phone at 209-622-6786 or on Facebook.



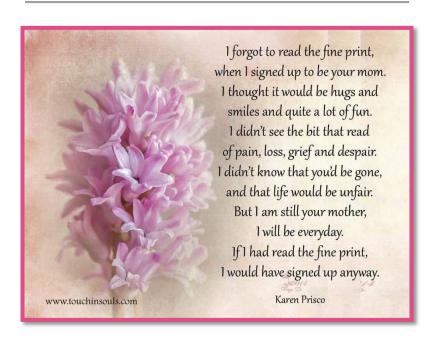
Visit our website for information and to stay up to date on chapter events.

www.modestoriverbanktcf.org





You can still get photo button made of your child, grandchild or sibling with our new button machine! Buttons can be made at 6:30 pm on our meeting nights. Bring an extra copy of a photo or a photocopy of it that can be cut into a circle 3" in diameter. Close-up photos usually work the best. You may bring a graphic design instead of a photo, if you wish. This will be a wonderful way to get acquainted with each other's children! Magnets are also available!!



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