

# The Compassionate Friends

## *The Modesto Area Chapter of The Compassionate Friends*

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

October 2020

[tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com](mailto: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, October, 12th**  
will be conducted as a  
Zoom meeting online

#### Upcoming Meetings

November 9<sup>th</sup>

December 14<sup>th</sup>

January 11<sup>th</sup>

Visit us on Facebook  
The Modesto Area Chapter  
of TCF



Find us on Instagram at  
Modestoriverbank\_tcf



#### 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

*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  
**Janet Neal**  
Outreach Coordinator  
**Lori Leitner**  
Hospitality & Library  
**Chad Homme**  
Public Relations  
**Kris Leitner**  
Newsletter Editor  
**Mike & Suzanne Casity**  
Website





*All events and activities remain cancelled or postponed until further notice*

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#### OUR CHAPTER PHONE TREE

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](mailto: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.

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We will be having a second Zoom Meeting in October. If you are unable to attend the October 12<sup>th</sup> meeting, please note that there will be a second *Zoom Meeting on Thursday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> starting at 7PM.*

## Zoom Meeting Instructions

***\*NOTE: Meeting Link information will be sent in a reminder email 2 or 3 days prior to the scheduled meeting.***

### **Zoom Instructions for Participants Before a Videoconference:**

1. You will need a computer, tablet, or smartphone with a speaker or headphones. We suggest that you download the app a few days before the meeting.

### **How to Join a Zoom Meeting:**

The same steps apply to both your desktop & your device.

#### **Join the videoconference using a Meeting Link:**

1. If you have a meeting link (sent via email 2 or 3 days prior to the meeting), just click on it or paste it into your web browser to join the meeting.
2. You have an opportunity to test your audio at this point by clicking on "Test Computer Audio." Once you are satisfied that your audio works, click on "Join audio by computer."

#### **Join the videoconference using a Meeting ID:**

1. Open the Zoom app & click on the "Join" icon.
2. Copy & Paste or type in the meeting ID # & click "Join"
3. You have an opportunity to test your audio at this point by clicking on "Test

Computer Audio." Once you are satisfied that your audio works, click on "Join audio by computer."

#### **Join using the Call-in Option:**

1. On your phone, dial the teleconferencing number  
Teleconferencing Number to call into the meeting (669) 900-6833.
2. Enter the Meeting ID number (included in the reminder email that will be sent 2 to 3 days prior to the meeting) when prompted followed by the pound sign

#### **Using the icons in the lower part of the Zoom screen, you can:**

- Mute/Unmute your microphone (far left)
- Turn on/off camera ("Start/Stop Video")
- View Participant list – opens a pop-out screen that includes a "Raise Hand" icon that you may use to raise a virtual hand
- Open the chat window to chat with others in the meeting
- You will also see a choice to toggle between "speaker" and "gallery" view. "Speaker view" shows the active speaker. "Gallery view" tiles all of the meeting participants.

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If you are still having trouble signing into Zoom or you need a short tutorial to help you navigate signing in to a meeting, click on the link below:

<https://www.naturalvita.net/how-to-use-zoom-step-by-step-for-beginners-complete-guide>

# Lessons I've Learned From My Grief

BY: MARYBETH CICHOCKI

Grief changes  
shape, but it never  
ends.

*Keanu Reeves*

Matt,

I never wanted to have this personal relationship with grief that I do. I never really thought I would know this heartbreaking, life changing type of grief. I never thought it would become my life partner. I never thought it would become a part of my soul and stay forever in my heart. This grief is like the blood that pumps through my body. It has become part of who I am.

I've learned that grief doesn't keep track of time. Although four years have passed since your death, this grief is as powerful as it was in the very beginning. I've learned that the first year is not the hardest. Surviving all those firsts really means nothing. That first year fog protects you like a warm cocoon. It shields you from the reality that life will never be the same. It enables you to continue to breathe, to survive. But it in no way prepares you for what is to come.

I've learned that this grief does not soften with the passing of time. I've learned there is no escape from those unexpected gut punches. Those powerful, crushing waves continue to knock me off balance just as they did in the beginning. Time brings with it the harsh reality that this is it. This grief is here to stay. This grief remains as overpowering and relentless showing no signs of letting up. Time continues to march on as years follow dragging me through the next birthday and holiday without you. Dragging me kicking and screaming begging for a short break from the pain of your loss.

I've learned there are no stages of grief. I bounce from one emotion to the next without warning. There are no straight set of rules. There is no passing one stage to get to another. No passing go to find peace. Grief is not linear. Grief is a tangled mess. The more you fight the emotions, the tighter its grip becomes on your heart. Grief is anxious and dirty. Grief is losing control in the blink of an eye. Grief is a trigger that hits like an explosion in your head and heart. Grief is the mess your life becomes after losing a child.

I've learned grief never sleeps. She's there lurking in every corner waiting to pounce as soon as she feels your vulnerability surface. Grief grabs you as soon as you awaken and follows you through your day. Like a lost pup she nips at your heels. Tiny bites with a sharpness that can't be ignored. Grief follows as you close your eyes to rest. She comes in those haunting memories, the what if's, the I should have's, the why's. Grief is a 24/7 animal.

I've learned that grief can partner with guilt. Adding regret for things done, said, not done and not spoken. She teams up with so many powerful emotions that leaves the heart and soul spinning out of control. Grief is a constant reminder of reality. Grief continues to beat you down until you are battered and bruised. Grief however long she's been in your life will continue to take your breath away.

I've learned that grief will shake your beliefs about God. I questioned why he allowed you to die. I questioned why my prayers of keeping you safe were ignored. I questioned where God was when you were taking your last breaths. I questioned where he is now. I've learned that without God I would never have survived your death. I've learned that God is quiet and I need to let him be in control. I've learned that what happened in your life and at the time of your death was between you and God. I've learned to talk to God like he is a friend not always in a prayer but like he is standing beside me. I've learned that if I open myself up to signs they will be there.

I've learned that I will never be the same woman. The eyes looking back at me show a profound sadness. I've learned that I have an inner strength I never knew existed. I fear nothing. I've learned never to take life for granted. I appreciate the sunrise, the birds singing, and the warmth of a winter sun. I look at life through a different lens. I judge less. I've learned everyone is living through something hidden behind the masks we wear.

I've learned that living with grief is not for the faint of heart. I've learned my grief has a life of its own. I know there is no escape. I've learned my grief must be accepted and acknowledged. My grief is as powerful as my love was and remains for you. I've learned not to fight when the waves hit. I must allow the grief to wash over me knowing that my life will always be vulnerable to those little things that bring you back to me.

All my love ♥

<http://mothersheartbreak.com/grief>



## National Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day

The loss of an infant is devastating. National Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day honors those lives lost to miscarriage, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, stillbirth, the death of a newborn, and more. On October 15, take the opportunity to reflect, honor, and come together over pregnancy and infant loss. If you have a loved one who has experienced this loss, take the time to give them the love and support needed to process and recover. Below are resources and information to provide guidance and support for mothers and fathers.

<https://nationaltoday.com/national-pregnancy-and-infant-loss-remembrance-day/>

<https://myforeverchild.com/pages/miscarriage-baby-loss-resources>

<https://stillbirthday.com/>

<https://www.nowilaymedowntosleep.org/>

<http://facesofloss.com/>

<https://mendinginvisiblewingsblog.wordpress.com/>

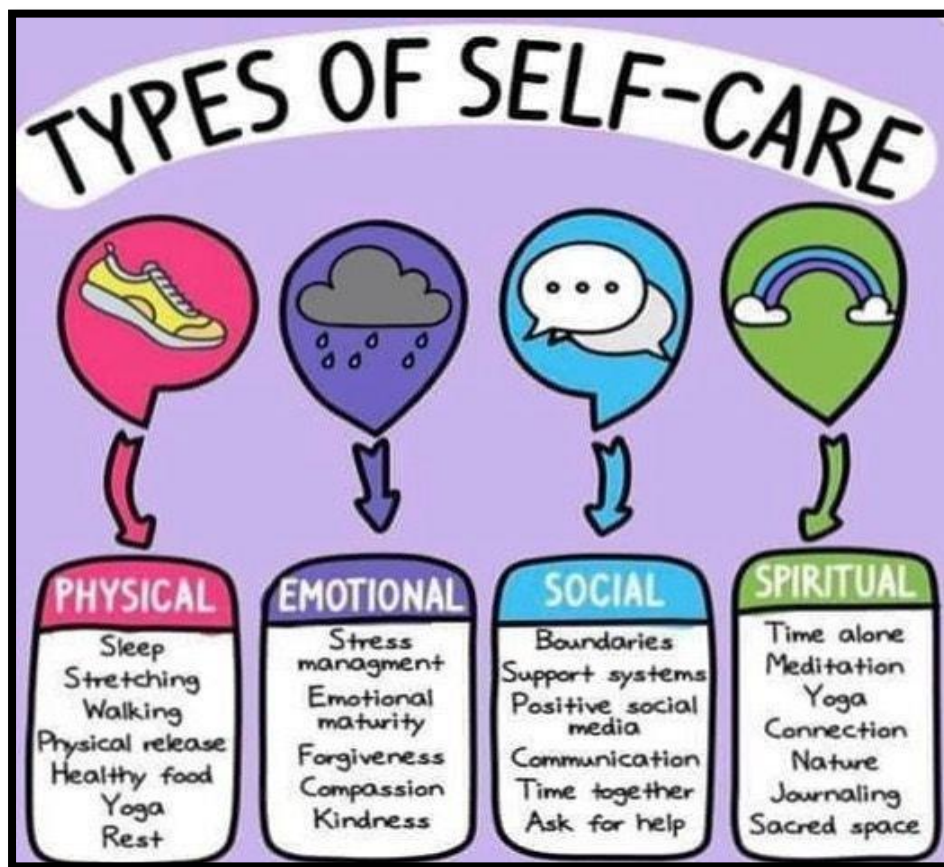
<http://nationalshare.org/>

<https://www.sacredbeginning.com/pregnancy-infant-loss-resources>

<https://rtzhope.org/fathers>

<https://hannahsheartandlove.org/resourcessupport/keepsakes/>





## ♥ 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.

*Stella Villegas in memory of her beloved son, Luciano Juan Garnica*

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

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)**



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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Support our chapter by using *Amazon Smile*

**[smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)**

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](http://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).

How to turn on AmazonSmile in the mobile app

- 1**

**Join AmazonSmile**

If you are not already an AmazonSmile member, sign up on your web browser. Simply select your favorite charity to start generating donations, at no cost to you.
- 2**

**Get the app**

Download or update to the latest version of the Amazon Shopping app on your phone. You can find it in the App Store for iOS or Google Play for Android.
- 3**

**Turn on AmazonSmile**

Open the app and find 'Settings' in the main menu (≡). Tap on 'AmazonSmile' and follow the on-screen instructions to turn on AmazonSmile on your phone.