

# 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)

July 2021

[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)

Please join us at our  
next meeting on

**Monday, July 12<sup>th</sup>**

\*Please arrive by 6:50 p.m.  
so we may begin promptly  
at 7:00 p.m.\*

#### Upcoming Meetings

August 9<sup>th</sup>

September 13<sup>th</sup>

October 11<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

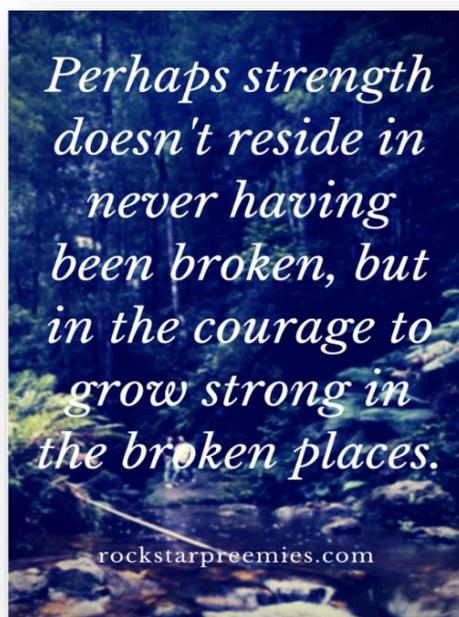
[Chapter Meeting Locator - Compassionate Friends](#)



### Our Mission

*The mission of The Compassionate Friends:*

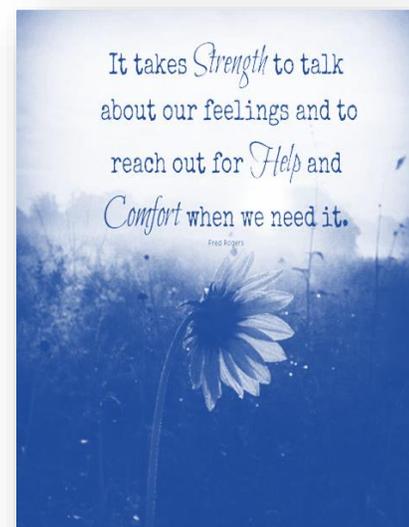
When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.



#### MESSAGE LINE

(209)622-6786

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



#### 2021 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

# July Announcements and Upcoming Events

## The Compassionate Friends 44th National Conference

***Presented Virtually ~ July 16, 2021 ~ July 18, 2021***

***Final day to register is July 15<sup>th</sup>***

**IN THE PAST OUR CHAPTER HAS HELPED A MEMBER ATTEND THE CONFERENCE. THIS YEAR, AS THE CONFERENCE IS VIRUTAL, WE WOULD LIKE TO SPONSOR SEVERAL MEMBERS BY PAYING THE REGISTRATION FEES.**

**IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN A SPONSORSHIP PLEASE CONTACT US AT: [TCFMODESTORIVERBANK@GMAIL.COM](mailto:TCFMODESTORIVERBANK@GMAIL.COM) OR CALL/TEXT US AT (209)629-6786.**

**Workshops**

**Comedy Show**

**Sharing Sessions**



**Keynote Speakers**

**Chapel Service**

**Silent Auction**

**Candle Lighting Program**

**[44th TCF National Conference - Compassionate Friends](#)**



The event is scheduled for July 25, 2021 and will be held at the Swenson Golf Course in Stockton, CA.

**We are still looking for volunteers**

If you would like to help during the event, please [register here](#).

***Registration for the event has already begun, please see site information (link below) to sign up.***

Proceeds for this year's event will be supporting [Agape Villages Foster Family Agency](#) of Manteca, CA.

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)

# ZOOM MEETINGS

Thursday, July 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

Please join us for an online meeting.  
[Modesto Area TCF Zoom Meeting](#)



Sunday, July 25<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m.

A chance for us to just chat!!  
[TCF Sunday Conversations](#)

**If you need assistance with Zoom, please let us know!**

**We have several steering committee members who can help walk you through getting set up & doing a test run or troubleshoot any problems you're having.**

**Contact us at (209)622-6786 – we are here to help!!**



Offering Help After A Suicide Death

[Friends for Survival Inc. - Suicide Bereavement, Bereavement Support](#)

*The group meets, by Zoom, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m.*

Pre-registration is required @ [Meetings \(friendsforsurvival.org\)](#)

## F.Y.I

**The Steering Committee is sending out a special e-mail card to remember your child, grandchild or sibling on the anniversary date of their passing.**

**The subject line reads: *Modesto Area TCF sent you a Digital Card from Punchbowl.***



◦◦ WE'RE PLANNING A SEPTEMBER SOCIAL ◦◦

MORE INFO  
COMING SOON!



Together  
IS A  
Wonderful  
PLACE TO BE.

# JULY BEREAVED PARENTS AWARENESS MONTH

July is annually recognized as  
**Bereaved Parents Awareness Month**

*This month is dedicated to raising awareness of the support necessary when one endures the loss of a child.*

Within the National TCF community there is a wealth of information to guide, assist, encourage and support you.

Under the Resources Tab [Resources - Compassionate Friends](#) on the website, [The Compassionate Friends Non-Profit Organization for Grief](#) you will find:

Crisis Hotline Information - [Crisis Hotline Information - Compassionate Friends](#)

Other Organizations - [Related Organizations - Compassionate Friends](#)

National Magazine - [We Need Not Walk Alone Online Magazine - Compassionate Friends](#)

Social Media - [Private Facebook Groups - Compassionate Friends](#)

The TCF Store - [Storefront \(visoexpress.com\)](#)

Reading Suggestions - [Books - Compassionate Friends](#)

Online Support/Live Chat - [Online Support - Compassionate Friends](#)

Weekly Web-Radio Series - [Open To Hope TV - Open to Hope](#)

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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](tel:2096226786) and one of the Steering Committee members 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*.

# Grieving the Death of a Sibling



*One of the great losses in life is the death of a brother or sister, and many of us will face the loss of a sibling more than once. Yet this is one of the most neglected types of grief, especially in adulthood. Following a death, the focus of support is usually on the surviving spouse and children, or on the parents who have lost their child, rather than on the siblings. A sibling often has less input into the funeral, memorial service or other arrangements. Sentiments and condolences offered to them often lead with questions about how the deceased's "immediate" family or parents are faring. It should be remembered that this is a significant loss for a sibling, and they are dealing with their own deep grief or mourning. (For more information on how grief of all kinds (especially sibling loss) affects children, please read: [Helping Children Cope and Deal with Grief after a loved one has died](#). ([healgrief.org](#)).*

## **Why sibling loss is unique**

*The loss of a sibling in adulthood can have many meanings. It is the loss of a brother or sister who shared a unique co-history with you. This person was an integral part of your formative past, for better or worse. Your brother or sister shared common memories, along with critical childhood experiences and family history. When death takes your brother or sister, it also takes away one of your connections to the past. That brother or sister knew you in a very special way, unlike those who know you now as an adult. Consequently, a constant is gone. This can make you feel insecure, for although you may or may not have had frequent contact with your sibling, at least you knew another member of your family was there. Your sibling holds a symbolic place in your life even if your brother or sister did not have an impact on your current day-to-day activities. This brother or sister's death can make you feel older and indicate that your family is dwindling. Because you likely have the same genetic background, the death of a sibling may increase concerns about your own mortality. And in some cases, the death of a sibling may suddenly make you an only or the eldest child — creating a profound shift in the role you may have held for all or most of your life. This new role, when combined with your natural grief, can make it difficult to wade through the many complicated emotions that arise when a sibling dies. Some adults who have lost an adult sibling experience a change in their relationship with their parents. Since siblings often feel their grief isn't fully acknowledged and their parents are focused on overcoming their loss, they can feel abandoned by their parents. At a time when they need them the most, their parents are disabled by their own grief. It's critical that surviving siblings get the support they need from others in their family or community. This will help meet not only the surviving sibling's needs, but also temper any feelings of resentment or abandonment.*

*There are some valuable ideas in: [Ideas for Coping with Grief](#) ([healgrief.org](#)) and other ideas found within the [www.healgrief.org](#) site, as well as [Recommended Reading](#) ([healgrief.org](#)) attached to this link. There are also online and local groups for those who have lost a sibling — being part of a community of people who have suffered a similar loss may be helpful.*

## ***Why sibling grief can be complicated***

*Mourning after the loss of a sibling can be complicated for several reasons. The ambivalence that is normally present in a sibling relationship may give rise to guilt, and guilt is known to complicate mourning. You may have had a close relationship with your sibling or a distant one — either extreme or everything in between can affect your guilt or feelings of abandonment after your brother or sister's death. You may experience guilt, sadness and regret if the relationship was never what you ideally would have wanted it to be. Perhaps you had not spent as much time together since you became adults with your own careers and families. Your survival itself can be another source of guilt, especially if you recall the times when you wished your sibling would disappear. These are all normal reactions to sibling loss, and you shouldn't judge yourself if these feelings arise in you. Another factor that complicates sibling grief is the need to support your parents in their grief. This can draw on your energy and emotional reserves, making it harder to care for yourself. You may question if you have the "right" to mourn as deeply as they do, or as a surviving spouse or children do. Know that you do have the right and the need to mourn, and deserve the same support and care as others affected by your sibling's death.*

## ***How children are affected by sibling loss***

*The death of a brother or sister at any age profoundly changes the lives of surviving siblings. But children who lose a sibling often face long-term challenges that differ from those for adults who lose a sibling. Research shows that the death of a sibling adversely affects surviving children's health, behavior, schoolwork, self-esteem and development. Surviving siblings may be troubled throughout life by a vulnerability to loss and painful upsurges of grief around the date that the sibling died. They may develop distorted beliefs about hospitals, doctors and illness. Many bereaved siblings describe feeling sad, lonely and different from their peers. The impact of loss may be felt most by the brother or sister who shared the greatest amount of "life space" with the one who died. Siblings who shared a room or who played or spent their spare time together are likely to be those most profoundly affected. Just like adults, many children who lose a sibling can experience strong feelings of guilt. When a brother or sister dies, they remember all the fights and name-calling, seeing themselves in their memory as the bad child and the dead sibling as the good one. This can result in feeling that they are not good enough.*

*A child's experience of losing a sibling depends partly on their understanding of death, which is associated with age and developmental level.*

*As mentioned in the main [Understanding Grief and Loss, it's as unique as individuals themselves: \(healgrief.org\)](#), your grief will be your own. Other topics that may be useful to you include the [The Mourner's Bill of Rights \(healgrief.org\)](#), as well as the additional links listed below. Grief is often a life-long journey. How you grieve and for how long will be different than for anyone else, and you need to allow yourself to grieve in your own way.*

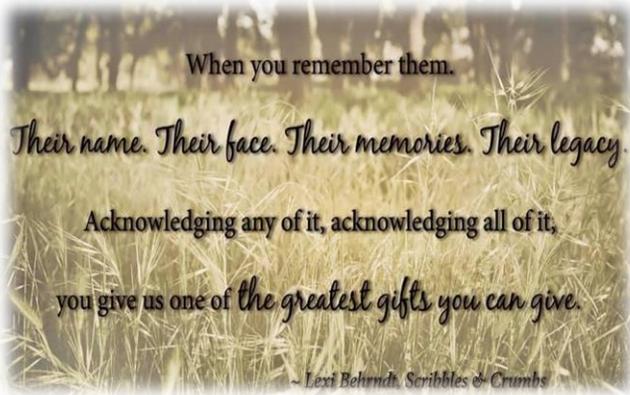
*Article by: [www.healgrief.org](http://www.healgrief.org)*

*Additional links:*

*[Grief is and grief is not is a way to validate your own grief experience. \(healgrief.org\)](#)*

*[Complicated grief is when grief doesn't seem to go away. \(healgrief.org\)](#)*

*[Self-Care, When Grief Bubbles Up: What you need to know. \(healgrief.org\)](#)*



When we honestly ask ourselves which persons in our lives mean the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving advice, solutions, or cure, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a warm and tender hand.

The friend who can be silent with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not knowing, not curing, not healing and face with us the reality of our powerlessness, that is a friend who cares.

~ Henri Nouwen



## ♥ 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 memory of our beloved children, grandchildren and siblings.*

### 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.



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.

How do we go on,  
after the unthinkable happens?  
How can we carry the burden of knowing  
the world can be cruel and dangerous,  
the future so unpredictable?  
How do we grieve with empty arms  
and a head filled with echoing memories?

We are stronger than we know,  
and this is how we show it:  
Holding each other,  
giving comfort in the midst of pain.  
Loving more fiercely,  
through our actions and the things we say.  
Making the world just a little bit better,  
every single day.  
Never taking life for granted,  
knowing that it can be snatched away.

This world may bring deep darkness,  
but we are the bearers of light.  
We'll join our flames together,  
and shine in the blackest of nights.

*John Mark Green*

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)

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, 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.