

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

August 2021

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, August 9th

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

Upcoming Meetings

September 13th

October 11th

November 8th



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.

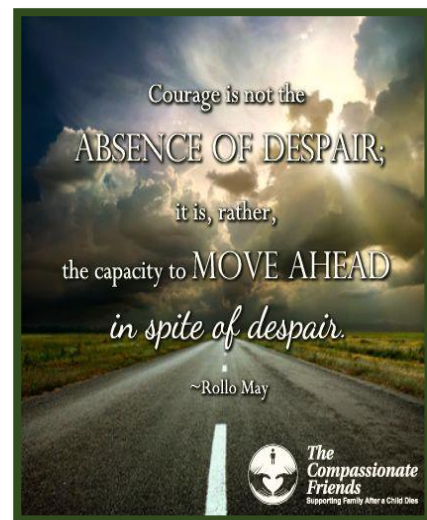
"Perhaps they are not
stars in the sky but rather
openings where our
loved ones shine down
to let us know
they are happy."

TRADITIONAL INUIT SAYING

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

Welcome August

2nd Monthly Meeting

Thursday, August 26th at 7:00 p.m.

Please join us for an online meeting.

Modesto Area TCF Zoom Meeting



Sunday Conversations

Sunday, August 29th at 3:00 p.m.

A chance for us to just chat!!

TCF Sunday Conversations

◡◡ MODESTO AREA CHAPTER SOCIAL ◡◡

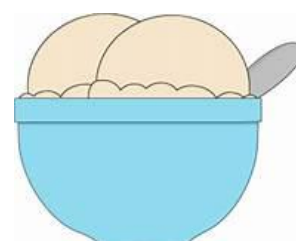
Join our monthly
chapter meeting
on Monday,
September 13th



...while we enjoy
some delicious
pie & ice cream

...we will
end a little
early

...to spend
some time
together



Together
IS A
Wonderful
PLACE TO BE.



Offering Help After A Suicide Death

Friends for Survival Inc. - Suicide Bereavement, Bereavement Support

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

Pre-registration is required @ [Meetings \(friendsforsurvival.org\)](https://www.friendsforsurvival.org)

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, 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.

♥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.

Roní Edgmon, in loving memory of her beloved son, Ryan Edgmon.

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.

“Music heals the
heart”

I THINK MUSIC IN ITSELF IS HEALING.
IT'S AN EXPLOSIVE EXPRESSION OF HUMANITY.
IT'S SOMETHING WE ARE ALL TOUCHED BY.
NO MATTER WHAT CULTURE WE'RE FROM,
EVERYONE LOVES MUSIC.

~BILLY JOEL

Music has healing power. It has
the ability to take people out
of themselves for a few hours.

Elton John

@quotefancy

Music is therapy. Music moves
people. It connects people in
ways that no other medium can.
It pulls heart strings. It acts as
medicine. ~Macklemore

Music expresses that which
cannot be put into words
and that which cannot
remain silent.

Victor Hugo

♪ GRIEVING THROUGH MUSIC ♪

Loss and grief are inevitable parts of life and all over the world throughout time people have used music at times of loss to come to terms with their losses, to grieve, remember and heal.

Grief through music appears in some of humanity's earliest stories, such as Orpheus in Greek myth or David's laments in the Bible, and continues to this day.

In popular culture, examples include Sufjan Steven's *Carrie and Lowell* or Nick Cave's *Skeleton Tree*, which explore a very personal grief, not to mention Elton John's *Candle in the Wind* which provided solace for millions on the death of Princess Diana.

In classical music, we find the requiem while folk music gives us innumerable tales of death and grief. Meanwhile, there are countless traditional practices from around the world including, to name but a few, the weeping songs of Yolngu Australian Aboriginals, Shi'a laments and Shona-mbira spirit ceremonies.



♪ HOW CAN MUSIC HELP YOU GRIEVE? ♪

Grief can often unleash scary, unknown and uncontrollable emotions. It can leave you feeling out of control or lost at sea.

Music can access our deepest emotions. It can help us discover these emotions, experience fully and accept them. Music creates a legitimate space to grieve especially when words may be impossible and it can also allow you to connect and feel with others in grief. Giving such space to our emotions allows us to process them and eventually tame what's initially overwhelming.

But more than that, you can use music to navigate grief, and to consciously influence, channel and give direction to your raw emotions. Music can help you to create your story, define your relationship to grief and even turn your grief into something beautiful.

Music speaks simultaneously to both body and mind. It somehow sits on the border between what we can articulate and what we can only feel. We can speak of how we feel and tell our stories, but putting those stories into the right music makes the meaning and emotions resonate right through us.

Music also lets us remember. Through listening to or playing meaningful music, it can allow you to connect to the indelible part in you that a loved one leaves in you and allows that part to live on through music.

Music speaks to the soul, or to our subconscious and to our bodily experience. Music can give us a window to that other side of ourselves. It can even help us discover ourselves, grow as people and become stronger through grief, little consolation as that may be.

Music is one of the most powerful tools we have in times of loss and many traditional practices and modern forms of art implicitly know this. Music is, however, a tool that we can all "rediscover" and use to help us navigate grief and grieve well.

🎵 IN WHAT WAYS CAN MUSIC HELP?

Music is not some miracle quick fix. You might have heard people talking about grief “work” and music is no different: it requires time, effort and active engagement. You will, however, find many ideas on this website www.songsoflossandhealing.com, to help you explore how communities, individuals and artists have used music to help them in times of grief. Hopefully, this can help you discover your own way to use music. In the meantime, here are some of the basic ways music can help:

🎵 ***Feel fully*** - Music can help you feel an emotion fully and feeling fully is often said to be a key factor in grieving well.

🎵 ***Discovering hidden feelings*** - Writing or listening to music that we’re drawn to can help us discover suppressed emotions.

🎵 ***Directing emotions*** - Music can influence our emotional state. We can use it to direct raw emotion in a certain direction.

🎵 ***Giving yourself a break*** - Music can also give you a break from grief and help take you to another place for some time.

🎵 ***Saying goodbye*** - Music has been forever used to mark rites of passage, including the final one helping us accept and say goodbye.

🎵 ***Remembering*** - We can remember people through music we shared with them or music that helps us to connect with them in their absence.

🎵 ***Creating space for grief*** - Music can be the space where we put our grief, express it and even share it if we so wish. Music can overcome taboos on grief.

🎵 ***Transforming your grief*** - This might be the root of all art, the transformation of pain into beauty. For some, this is what makes suffering bearable.

🎵 ***Connecting body and mind*** - We don’t just live in our heads and grief can be a full body experience. Music speaks to the whole body.

🎵 ***Connecting with others*** - Making music with others can help bring people together in their grief.

Music is a fantastic tool, but it does not hold all the answers. If you are struggling with grief, please contact a bereavement charity or therapeutic professional who can help you through ♥

[How Music Helps With Grief | Songsofloss \(songsoflossandhealing.com\)](http://www.songsoflossandhealing.com)



Finding the Courage to Grieve



Loss and death visits all of us. Grief comes, and then goes, only to arrive again. If we continue to treat grief as something to avoid we are not only fooling ourselves, but also hurting ourselves. If there is no acceptance, there is no healing. You cannot control how loss shows up. In our experience of death, we can wish for only peaceful endings of long lives within the circle of people we care about, but there is no immunity from sudden and traumatic events. Accepting this truth at times of happiness is even more valuable than realizing it when there is a loss.

Death is the most difficult loss to accept. Different cultures have practices and rituals. Seeing the body after death is a common tool to help the mind – that can often go into denial to self-protect from pain – and acknowledge the reality of the loss. Ceremonies, sacraments, and rites serve an important purpose for both individuals and communities, but even with available outlets, accepting loss and death within your own conscious mind is an internal process. Teachings and wisdom provide the framework upon which you build your own house of healing.

When we grieve, an important process of acceptance and renewal begins. If we do not have an outlet for sorrow, emotions internalize and develop into anger, depression, and a disconnection from feeling. There are many manifestations of grieving, some healthy, healing, and unselfish; others focused on self-pity, fear, or narcissistic motivations. Being mindful of how we grieve is the goal, rather than feeling as if there is only one way to move through loss and death.

Grief and gratitude are not usually thought of together, but they walk together.

The insight that grief ultimately delivers is the gratitude for the time we have with the people we care about, and the gratitude we can develop about the nature of life. That nature is good and bad, joyous and sad, birth and death.

Without the darkness, there is no light. We would not know we were in illumination if it did not leave us at times.

There's no replacing someone who has left us through death, but the idea that someone has become your "reason to live," is going to destroy you. It is especially hard in the case of losing a child or a spouse. The key is to shift your perspective while these people are here with you. Love can be deeper than the ocean but it is not about needing someone to be alive. We each have our story in this existence. We cannot grasp on to a different reality from the one that is meant to be, or cling to someone who is transitioning from this life. Feeling like you can't go on is not unusual but like everything else, it will change.

We hear stories about people, throughout history, who have lost everyone and everything, yet they find a way to emerge from unfathomable grief. Though most of us will never know this exact experience, we need to be in communion with everyone's losses. There are no "lucky people" vs. "unlucky people." Life and its varied, transient, non-selective nature is the source of events that happen to people – good, bad, peaceful, and traumatic.

You are fighting the natural order of life if you deny loss and try to avoid pain. Out of fear, there are individuals who run away from loss and death, sometimes abandoning people in need of emotional support, occasionally even a person who is dying. We have to be mindful not just of our own journey, but of those around us, and the actual people facing the end or a major shift. Our inability to process grief can come out in a negative way that hurts other people. It is hard for many people to even think about major loss or death, but until you integrate it into your life, you will lack the tools to take care of yourself and others who need your support during the stages of grief.

Loss and death can very easily throw us out of balance, and open up the floodgates of questions about the meaning of life and impermanence. Going through the stages of grief, with the tools of awareness and mindful observation, will help you fully feel, accept, and move forward when there is loss. When we are mindful we allow every sensation and emotion to move through us, in whatever way they need to manifest. Insight and enlightenment may take longer than you would wish. It is important to be in the moment. Grief can be excruciating but you must go down its path, one day at a time.

Our relationships with people are about connection, compassion, and love. Grief is the natural price we pay for these emotions that both enrich our lives and trigger pain when we lose a relationship or someone dies. Mindfulness brings us to the present, where we can evoke that love and connection in a new form after a person moves out of our life or passes to another existence.

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 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

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

Support our chapter by using
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smile.amazon.com

(click on the link above for further information).

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.

