

The Compassionate Friends Victoria, Australia

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Magazine Excerpts - Feb ~ Mar 2005

Just when we think things couldn't get worse - they do.

We are all so vitally aware that thousands of lovely children have died in the sumamis' aftermath. Our poor battered hearts!

All most of us can do is send our love, hopes, our prayers and a skerrick of money. We can breathe deeply and hold on to the quietude of now, perhaps with a good book like the one's we Compassionate Friends are used to, that help rest our addled minds.

In all the tragic turmoil, the enormity of the despair is beyond comprehension. You don't need to be reminded of that. My young son died so peacefully in Melbourne and when he did he was surrounded by love and warmth and light. Everything that could be done was done - beautifully. We, his family, were cushioned and coddled - and together. I tried to be grateful for that and now I find I am. I seem unable to cope with the disaster statistics. It is way beyond considering each grieving person; they have to become part of the endless list. To me there is only one face, a lovely dark haired anguished girl holding her poor child. She represents so many. What is ahead for her? Can we do anything for her?

In early January five bereaved parents sat around a table at Canterbury TCF and asked this question. What can we, as a group do? The question is presently rattling around in a few heads.

It would be satisfying to hone-in on a particular tiny challenge. Too early just yet, but if you have any ideas please let the office know.

Judy
TCF Vic, Au



Some Ways To Help A Grieving Spouse

Assign top priority to your marriage relationship.

Cultivate transparency, openness, and honesty.

Accept the pain that you feel. Be willing to share it and to listen to your spouse's expression of the pain he or she is feeling. Be patient with your spouse and with yourself. Recognize that your spouse is probably not at the same place in the grief process as you, and that is okay.

Don't expect your spouse to be your only source of healing. Keep working at communicating. Give special attention to your affection for each other. Learn and practice the gestures of love. Remember to stay in touch physically; the importance of human touching and hugging is hard to over estimate.

Allow or create space in your relationship. Everyone is entitled to a degree of privacy with their feelings, including their grief. Allow yourselves to enjoy life and each other. Be willing to laugh together, as well as cry together.

Work at finding some fun things to do together.

Help each other to remember that life is more than this child who has died. As important as this child is to you, and as much as you feel pain over his or her death, your marriage relationship is important too.

Howard
TCF Norman,

Photograph

There's an everlasting smile that lights your lovely face,
My eyes keep drifting back and forth to catch your
endless gaze,

Eyelids never blink, they are always open wide,
Untold stories hidden there, where I can't see inside, No sound
ever leaves your lips, your hairstyle never changes,
The clothes you wear remain the same, nothing re-arranges,
Forever young you won't grow old, time stands still for you,
You are now a treasured memory, of one I loved and knew,

I pray that you can never see the tears fall from my eyes,
And hope that you are now at peace, somewhere in paradise,
I know that deep inside my heart you can't feel any pain,
Never knowing I miss you like a desert misses rain,

Your picture hangs upon my wall, taking pride of place,
Your eyes, your smile, the child I knew, a never ending gaze,
I long to hold you, hear you speak, I know what you would say,
"I'm sorry mum, I love you too, but I had to go away."

Written by Christine
TCF Vic, Au

With love xxxx
Mother of Cameron
7/11/69 - 18/10/2002 (suicide)