



GRIEVE HEAL GROW



The Compassionate Friends Victoria AU Magazine

Supporting Grandparents, Parents and Siblings after a Child Dies

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The Compassionate Friends Victoria Inc

The Compassionate Friends Victoria is part of a worldwide organisation, which was founded in England in 1969 and established in Victoria in 1978. It is a mutual assistance, self-help organisation offering friendship and understanding to families following the death of a child, sibling & grandchild of any age and from any cause. The primary purpose is to assist them in the rebuilding of their lives after the death of their child, sibling & grandchild and to support their efforts to achieve, emotional and mental health.

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Being a member of The Compassionate Friends Victoria (TCFV) enables you to access many vital support services and attend social activities whilst demonstrating your support for a society that is aware and understands the impact of grief and bereavement following the death of a child, sibling or grandchild.

TCFV Membership is now open to both the bereaved and non-bereaved. Following an initial complimentary membership period, bereaved members have the option to remain

- Full Member (\$55 pa incl GST) or
- limited Keep In Touch Membership (\$22 pa incl GST).

Associate membership is open to any non-bereaved individual or organisation who knows about our important work and wants to show their support in a meaningful way. The non-bereaved membership levels include

- Associate Individual (\$55 pa incl GST) or
- Associate Organisation (\$110 pa incl GST).

The full details about all our different membership levels and their benefits can be found in the new Membership section of our website www.tcfv.org.au/getinvolved/membership
If you have any questions about TCFV membership, please call our office on 03 9888 4034.

Front cover photo taken by Steven Katsineris
"Sunrise on beach at Phillip Island"

24 HOUR Grief Support - Available on Telephone 03 9888 4944 / 1300 064 068
Bereaved Drop In Centre Hours 9.00am - 5.00pm Monday to Friday

Disclaimer: Unless expressly stated, the views expressed in articles, poetry etc. in this magazine are not necessarily the views of TCFV Board staff or the editorial team. The editor reserves the right to edit any contribution. Permission is given to Editors & Chapter Leaders of The Compassionate Friends to reprint material from the magazine. We request that credit be given to the author & their TCF Chapter.

The Magazine Team

Layout & Design: SM Creative

Team Members: Pat Burns, Judy Dowling, Jenny Galati, Steve Katsineris, Russell Miles,
Sanam Karamally, Andrew McNess, Sandra Green, Harriet Clegg



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Notice Board

contributions to the next magazine...

If you would like to contribute a Love Gift, article or letter for the magazine, please submit the written piece by the 1st of January, March, May, July, September, November for inclusion in the following magazine.

While we do have set themes for each edition, these make up only a small part of the magazine. Poetry, artwork and stories about your grandchild, child or sibling are needed for every edition.

We also look for photos / artwork you have done for our front page.

June / July: Depression, Anxiety, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder & Complicated Grief
August / September: Returning to work Fathers Day

You can send via mail to:
The Editor, TCF, PO Box 171, Canterbury, Vic, 3126.
or email jennyg@tcfv.org.au

The Compassionate Friends Victoria Cocktail Evening 2019

The Dome
333 Collins Street Melbourne

Friday, 14th June 2019

7:30pm - 9:30pm

\$125 per head

Special Guest: John Silvester
Walkley award winning crime
journalist, author, radio and
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a good bloke.

For Bookings: www.tcfv.org.au/cocktail



Helping bereaved families
when a child dies



President's Report



Dear Friends

What's the worst thing ever said to you? In my case it was "Now you've lost your only other child". This was 3 years after Max died and when Erica was almost completely estranged from us due to the influence of a new partner. The comment came from the new partner after we refused to contribute yet more money to them. The old Erica whom I loved and admired has gone. She's alive but she's almost as remote as Max. Why am I telling you this? This issue of our magazine has a focus on those of us who have lost an only child or who have only one child remaining. Recently Mary and I battled our way through the 10th anniversary since Max's death and I noticed that these days I'm clearer about where I get support from. My support people are both inside The Compassionate Friends and from outside The Compassionate Friends, and they make a valuable difference in my life. I'm thankful every day for these people. Hopefully you are finding a similar thing. So far I have spoken personally and about personal support but what about those who support our organisation? We have many bereaved members who help our organisation to run more effectively. There are also many non-bereaved people who help us. Some of our staff and volunteers are non-bereaved. We led the way across Australia by adding a non-bereaved member to our Board. (Other states have now followed our lead.) By doing so, we have been able to gain invaluable access to perspectives and insights on a wide range of issues that we otherwise could not access. What all of our Board members have in common, is a deep sense of commitment to TCF – our members, our purpose and our values. In fact, that is the key we look for when selecting any new member for the Board.

Andrew Weatherhead

TCFV President

Bereaved father of Max (aged 26)

Bereaved brother of Caroline (aged 62)

Estranged father of Erica (since 2013)

From the CEO



Welcome to another edition of Grieve Heal Grow. I would like to acknowledge the work of the team who publishes your magazine (led by Jenny Galati). The team compiles the magazine to ensure that it is interesting and informative for all members. Thank you to everyone involved, including all of our contributors. Our magazine is one of our most important support services.

I am pleased to announce that **Cadia McMahon** has joined our team. Cadia's role is to develop services specifically targeted towards **young people**. We believe that their needs are somewhat different – especially in the way we deliver support. (cadiam@tcfv.org.au)

Cadia is now working to fine tune our **phone app**, which will be initially targeted at 18-30year old's. As this project develops, we hope to be able to run a **youth camp** for secondary-aged children, allowing them to explore their grief with peers and we will also intend to offer **mentoring services** to our younger members. (For more information about the project, see Cadia's article in this edition.)

The phone app will provide grief support via text and, we are now looking for people who are willing to receive training and then provide support to others via text. If you are interested, please contact Cadia on 9888 4034.

Group Leader and Telephone Support training planning is underway. Both programs will be conducted in July. We really encourage you to consider attending one of these programs and here's why:

- ➔ There is a real need for Group Leaders and Telephone Support people, as demand for our services is growing. (In fact, we are hampered in growing our support groups because of a shortage of Group Leaders.)
- ➔ Our training is structured so that you have plenty of opportunities to rehearse your new skills, prior to going into a 'live' situation.
- ➔ You receive ongoing support and development from our team.
- ➔ You have the opportunity to significantly help other people who have or are experiencing similar trauma, loss and feelings that you have.

If you would like to know more about the training, please call Andrew McNess on 9888 4034. (andrewm@tcfv.org.au)

I always welcome feedback about our support services and how we provide them. I can be contacted via 9888 4034 or, johns@tcfv.org.au. I look forward to hearing from you!

Please do not forget that The Compassionate Friends is here 24 hours a day seven days a week. No matter where you are – in Victoria or across Australia, you can ring our national support line on 1300 064 068. We are here for you.

John Sedunary

Chief Executive Officer



Editorial

This time of year is always hard for most mums, with Mother's Day coming up. We all have to struggle without our children. This time of year is always hard for me because Danielle's anniversary is on the 21st April and this year that falls on Easter Sunday. So, for the second year in a row, we will be going away. It's hard not to be able to go to the cemetery on that day, BUT one of our friends, from the Car Club that my husband and I are involved with, said to me last year "What would you rather do, stay at home by yourselves or go away with friends?" So, we choose to go away with friends. We are off to WA for a week with me Car Club for our All State Event that is held every second Easter, somewhere in Oz.

This Mother's Day we, The Compassionate Friends Victoria, are going to be trying to get the word out for others to think about not only those that have lost their Mothers, BUT for those Mother's that have lost a child. And how hard Mother's Day is for them. And we all should think about the mums that have lost their only child.

For those that have lost their only child, so much changes for them, not only at Mother's Day, but all year round. It is hard enough to have lost a child. I can't imagine what it would be like to lose my only child. I know that I have had some ask me, "Am I still a mother?" I answer, "You will always be a mother. Your child is always in your heart. This will never be taken away from you."

I know that over the years my Mother's Day has changed: some years I didn't leave the house, didn't want to know about it at all; other years, I have been able to go out or lunch or dinner with my family. I think you just have to do what is right for you and that may change year by year, and that is okay. I hope you get to do something nice. One other thing: this year is the year for self-care and self-love, something that I am not very good at doing – but I am going to try – so have a think about your own self-care and self-love. Self-care is one of the things that TCFV is giving particular focus to this year. We are running some self-care workshops throughout this year for all our members – so look out for more info in the next couple of magazines.

Hope you get through Easter and Mother's Day, as best you can.

With healing hugs,

Jenny Galati
Bereaved mother of Danielle (16)



Meet Cadia McMahon

TCFV has secured a grant from the Bank of Melbourne Foundation to pilot a 12-month Bereaved Youth Support Program. This initiative recognizes that a relevant and meaningful program is vital for young people dealing with the death of their brother or sister. This project is the first stage of our youth strategy and will focus on the 18-30 age group.

It's a privilege to be part of the team at The Compassionate Friends Victoria.

Nearly seven years ago I suddenly lost my twin brother; Darcy Wills McMahon. Darcy was 23 years old and he was my best friend. The loss of my twin dramatically changed me and how I viewed people, the world and life.

It also triggered my personal and professional focus into grief and bereavement: I am dedicated to expanding the current perspective of grief, while advocating the significance of 'staying connected' while grieving. My ambition is to provide widespread awareness, understanding and education about TCF and how they can support you on your grief journey.

My role is focused on Bereaved Youth Support. I am under way with refining and tailoring the App towards better meeting needs of bereaved youth siblings. My expectation is that the peer grief support delivered via our App will normalize their grief, increase connection and decrease the number of bereaved siblings in isolation struggling to make sense of their grief.

Into this project I bring my personal experience of sibling loss, Bachelor and Graduate Diploma in psychology and extensive volunteer work at Griefline through grief telephone counselling. I have supported disadvantaged families as a mentor at OzChild and have a strong background in leadership and training.

If you think you might want to get involved in spreading awareness about this amazing project or becoming a peer support person, please contact me cadiam@tcfv.org.au





Grief & Self-Care: Tips for Healing, Comfort, and Peace

Posted on May 8, 2017 by Daniel

<https://www.usurnsonline.com/grief-loss/grief-self-care-44-tips-for-healing-comfort-peace/>

1. Write To Your Loved One

This is one of those therapy ideas that sound silly but can be very powerful in addressing grief and healing after the loss of your loved one. Get away from everything and sit down with a journal and write down your thoughts as you would if your loved one was physically present.

2. Exercise

We all know exercise is important, so this is another no-brainer. Exercising is doubly helpful as a form of grief self-care because regular exertion has an immediate positive effect on mood, helps increase serotonin levels, and helps alleviate long-term depression.

3. Try Something New

Maybe now is the time to try roasting your own coffee, learn how to do ceramics, or fix your own car instead of taking it in to the mechanic. Go to the theatre or a community concert; get involved as a mentor in a youth program; read a book outside of your typical genre.

4. Cook A Favorite Meal

This is another one that is perfect for everyone in general, but the details will be suited to tastes. Putting the time and effort into getting the groceries, preparing the ingredients, cooking, and sitting down to enjoy a favorite meal can be very therapeutic. Cook a favorite dish that you and your loved one enjoyed, in their honor. Cook with a friend. Cook for a friend. I think you'll find that kitchen therapy can be very rewarding.

5. Go Outside

We've mentioned the benefits of exercise; simply being outdoors has its benefits as well. You can go the simple route by sitting on the porch for 15 minutes per day, or you can go all-in by taking up landscape photography or kayaking. The point is: get outside, get fresh air, take the time to see the outside world and all it has to offer.

6. Write Down Ten Things You Miss About Them

Naming the things that you miss about a departed loved one helps you identify your sadness and grief. Identifying your thoughts and emotions is always the first step in

working through it in a positive way. Keep in mind that you're not writing down what you miss in order to "get over" it or forget about your loved one, but to remember and honor and miss them in a healthy way.

7. Say No

To people, busyness, laziness, burdensome tasks, junk food. We'll mention fun creature comforts later like a favorite meal or movie, but be careful that you don't make that a way of life. Practice saying no. People will ask you to do things; you don't want to be a shut-in but you also don't want to be overloaded by well-intentioned friends and family members.

Try not to take on tasks out of guilt or an urge to fill up your day and avoid dealing with your grief. Slow down and take time to think, read, relax, be healthy. You know your own tendencies and foibles; if you tend towards laziness, take on a few extra tasks. If you tend towards busyness, clear your schedule so that you have some downtime.

8. Declutter

The time, energy, and sense of freedom that comes with decluttering is positive and healing. Here are eight reasons why decluttering is good for your health:

- Clears your mind
- Encourages physical activity
- Decreases stress
- Increases your overall productivity
- Motivates you to organize other areas of your life
- Can help your allergies
- It's therapeutic
- Decluttering also makes you happier

9. Volunteer In The Community at TCFV

Become a buddy. Help out in a classroom. Go to a local work or cleanup day. Start a community garden. There are lots of ways to get involved in your local community, and in so doing, meet great new people, gain new experiences, and contribute to the welfare of your city.

10. Write Down Ten Things You're Thankful For

Pretty self explanatory; the benefit is in teaching yourself to consciously have a heart of thankfulness.



Letter to Nat

24.01.2019

Dearest Nat,

It's now gone 7 years, coming on to 8 since you tragically passed away on September 2nd 2011 after feeling as though you had no way out but to end your suffering and so you chose to end your life on the evening of August 18th 2011.

I will never forget this day or this evening, as I was at an all-day Professional Learning Development day in Sandringham at Family Life, a service you once had some involvement with, and there I was learning all about social and emotional wellbeing and how to improve the mental health of young people. Little did I know that on that night you were going to end your own life. Had I have known on that day or the evening before when I was actually scheduled to come over and see you but things got cancelled, what dark thoughts you were having I would've done absolutely anything and everything in my power to try and intervene in the hope that you might still be here today. But sadly I didn't know what you were thinking at this time and I never would've thought in a million years that life would've ended for you like this. Even today this is still hard to believe and accept, and even then as you lay in hospital in the ICU unit 15 days post your last living, breathing day, I still couldn't believe, accept or imagine coming to grips with you ending your life and what life would be like after you were gone.

Not a day goes by where I don't feel like something, someone so significant in my life is missing. My only sibling, my youngest sister, you. Maybe I didn't tell you enough how much I loved you, or just how much you meant to me, or how much I needed you here, or how sad or heartbroken I would be if you were gone. Maybe I didn't do enough each time you had an episode, a breakdown, ended up back in hospital, countless medication changes, countless times you'd expressed your deepest depression in various ways. Maybe I didn't show you how much I cared for you, how much you mattered and now sadly it's all too late because you aren't here. I grieve for you every day, every birthday you miss, every year you're not here I am aware that I lost my only sibling to suicide and the pain this causes is endless.

Life. Somehow it goes on and I've had to learn to live around you not being here but each and every time I'm asked if I have any siblings I'm always caused a great deal of pain by this because the answer is always YES, I do, but sadly she's



no longer here with us. Sometimes it ends there and sometimes I share more, depending on whom I'm with and the situation. But this isn't easy and I'm reminded constantly of what I'm missing; a sister I was meant to grow up with, a sister I was meant to share the journey with; the highs of celebrations and milestone, the lows of parents getting older and struggles of life when things don't work out. But you are gone; no

longer here, no longer in pain or suffering but the pain that's left from your passing that pain never goes away. Maybe it eases somewhat over time but it always resurfaces at various points in life; on milestones, birthdays, special occasions or whenever I just stop and think of you and your 23 year life that I believe was sadly cut much too short. But then I also stop and think about how much you went through, how much you suffered, how much you were pained. But then also how much you achieved and succeeded in life and best of all the most amazing legacy you left behind, giving birth to your beautiful daughter Georgia, my gorgeous niece who will be 11 years old this year.

Sadly you aren't here to see your daughter or to watch her grow, in to this most amazing little being she is becoming. She's blossoming in to this beautiful girl and growing up so fast, and I know you'd be so proud of her. I promise that I will try my best to share you and speak of you and remind her and tell her about what an amazing mum she had.

You were a great sister and maybe I didn't tell you that enough. Your mental health struggles and various medications often clouded you and hid who you truly were inside and I often struggled greatly to understand you and at times even just get along with you. But Nat I loved you very much with all my heart and all my soul and I love you still today, always and forever. My sister you're forever in my heart, eternally sketched in my memories, the 23 years of life we once shared. I miss you and I love you always and I'm sorry if I didn't say this to you enough. Love always and forever,
Your sister,

Annette Matov
Bereaved sister of Natalie (23)
TCFV



How to Deal With the Pain of Loss

By Steven C. Hayes Ph.D., published June 18, 2018
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/articles/201806/loss-love>

The pain of loss is unavoidable, yet millions harm themselves trying to escape it. But loss has a sweet side, and when you open yourself to the pain, you open yourself to joy.

There is no typical response to loss; every experience is unique. Nor is there a “right” way to grieve, although there are unhelpful ways of coping with loss. Healing takes time; it can’t be hurried or forced. Here are steps you can take to move forward. It will not always be comfortable or easy, but it will help you to get your life back.

1: Acknowledge loss.

Before any healing can happen, there must be acknowledgement that there’s a wound that needs healing. Acknowledge that you have lost someone or something, and it hurts. You are in pain, and it’s uncomfortable, sometimes unbearable. To know about a loss, you have to know what was there before the loss. Start with a remembrance of some of the positive experiences that cannot now be repeated.

2: Embrace feelings of loss.

Pain is uncomfortable by definition. Often, we want to push it away, distract ourselves from it with food, alcohol, television, drugs, work—the list is endless. But numbing ourselves from pain numbs our entire existence. We focus all our attention and energy on controlling the pain. But sooner or later, the pain will surface again, and we have to numb it even more. Instead, try something radically different: Embrace the feelings of loss. You may feel hurt, sad, shocked, angry, guilty, anxious, bitter, hopeless, depressed, or all of the above. Open your arms to these emotions. It may help to make a list of them and see if over time you are better able to touch the range of feelings.

3: Expand your scope of vision.

As you open yourself up, look for what else might be there in the form of emotion, thought, or memory, especially things that are unexpected. Include reactions that superficially “do not belong” because they seem positive or confident—feelings of freedom, relief, laughter, pride. Those are normal, too.

4: Prepare to be overwhelmed.

At times, like a surging wave, your emotions will run high, crash down, knock you over, and seem to carry you away. That’s normal and natural, especially in the early stages of grief. Sometimes you will feel completely numb, other times irritated by everyone. Your emotions might sway back and forth, but they won’t harm you. Measure progress over days and weeks, not a single difficult hour or day.

5: Watch out for unhelpful thoughts.

I should be over it by now. Things will never be the same. Life is unfair. If only I’d done something different. It’s all my fault. I’ll never get over this. Such thoughts are part of the normal grieving process, but it’s important to notice them with a healthy sense of distance. Most often, these thoughts won’t appear as “thoughts” but as factual truths about the world that you have to obey. Instead of treating them as truths, practice looking at them as reactions to be noticed, not dictates to be followed. If you catch that you’ve been hooked, you can unhook: Try singing such thoughts or saying them very slowly. Recognize that they are there without letting them take control over your actions.

6: Connect with what matters.

Despite what your mind may tell you, there’s still meaning in your life. There are still people and activities that are important to you. Your pain, in fact, is proof that you’re still alive. Recognize that your feelings of loss identify what is close to your heart. Determine what that is so you can identify what is important to you. Use that information to become the type of person you want to be. Your loss can be an opportunity to carry what is most meaningful toward a life worth living. Decide on actionable, concrete steps you can take to put the qualities into action.

7: Take committed action.

After having identified what is truly close to your heart, act on it, so your behaviour is guided by your goals and values. It might mean reaching out to other people. It might mean going back to work, or maybe volunteering at a local animal shelter. You get to define what is important to you. And while you are acting on your values, be sure to treat yourself with kindness and compassion.



Losing My Only Child

Q1. WHEN AN ONLY CHILD PASSES AWAY, HOW DO YOU KEEP GOING?

A1. My child Jai passed away on the 18th of December 2007. At first I didn't see any way through the grief and how I was going to pull through life and survive.

It has taken many years to come to a place of a different thinking.

There are times I feel lost without Jai and I miss his physical presence constantly. However, I have decided that in order to keep going, keep living, I need to have fun, I need to do all the things that bring me happiness, I need to look after my physical wellbeing, I need to be kind and smile to all who pass my way.

I do all these things effortlessly, they have become a part of the change in me. They help me feel good about me and about living.

Life is a gift and I have learnt to remain present and live with its turbulence.

Q2. HOW MUCH DID YOUR LIFE CHANGE AFTER LOSING YOUR ONLY CHILD?

A2. Initially after losing Jai I felt quite lost, lonely, angry, and very very sad.

I felt displaced, having moved from interstate to be close to him and then he was gone.

I felt stripped of my title of mother and that it no longer referred to me. I was a mess emotionally and tried to survive the best way I knew how. I needed a lot of emotional support and eventually ended up moving back to my parent's home where I felt safe and supported.

I have come to recognise the importance of living life to the fullest, stop procrastinating and take the stance that this is the chance I have now, to be the best I can be and enjoy all that I want.

I have learnt that I am important and my wellbeing is paramount to me.

I now know that I remain a mother no matter what, physical presence of my child or not, I am still a mother and so grateful to have had this opportunity in life's journey.

I am continuously working on becoming a better listener, more tolerant, more mindful and bring as much peacefulness into my life as I can.

Q3. WHAT HAVE YOU DECIDED TO DO WITH YOUR WILL, NOW THAT YOU DON'T HAVE A CHILD TO LEAVE IT TO.

A3. This is such a good question. All I have done with my will is rip it up. I haven't as yet delved into this part of my journey of loss.

Sarah Nola
Bereaved mother of Jai (20)
TCFV





Wellbeing theory applied to grief

In the website – WYG, what’s your grief, I found an interesting post on a positive psychology theory, PERMA by Michael Seligman. He suggests that there are five areas of psychological wellbeing that can improve a person’s overall sense of happiness, fulfillment and wellbeing. These are – Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishment. The authors on the WYG site propose that a wellbeing theory can be applied to a person coping with grief. If a person feels healthy and happy, then they are more likely to have the physical and psychological strength to cope with loss. I propose that the PERMA theory could also be applied to the loved one’s life to assist in identifying positive memories, meaning and accomplishment in the person’s life.

PERMA theory applied to griever

Below are definitions of the areas of wellbeing and examples of activities you could do to improve your wellbeing.

Areas of wellbeing	Definitions	Examples
Positive Emotion	Feeling good, Positive emotions, Optimism, Pleasure, Enjoyment	Dancing, Eating food you like, Outing
Engagement	Fulfilling work, Interesting hobbies	Sport, Photography
Relationships	Social connections, Love, Intimacy, Emotional and physical interaction	Hug, Call a friend, Write a letter, Text
Meaning	Purpose in life, Meaning in life	Volunteer, Visit church
Accomplishment	Ambition, Realistic goals, Achievements, Pride in yourself	Handyman activity, Cook a new recipe

PERMA theory applied to the loved one

Below is an example of how I have applied PERMA to my son’s life. Identifying these areas of wellbeing to my son’s life helped me realise what a happy life he had and what he accomplished in a short time.

Areas of wellbeing	Definitions	Examples
Positive Emotion	Feeling good, Positive emotions, Optimism, Pleasure, Enjoyment	Watching comedies on TV, Playing with pets, Eating pasta
Engagement	Fulfilling work, Interesting hobbies	Running, cycling, photography
Relationships	Social connections, Love, Intimacy, Emotional and physical interaction	Talk about travels, Visit grandparents dining with friend
Meaning	Purpose in life, Meaning in life	Volunteer at Park run Teach others about running
Accomplishment	Ambition, Realistic goals, Achievements, Pride in yourself	Complete marathon, Complete course Build a new computer

Summary

The wellbeing theory PERMA is briefly described and applied to the grieving persons lifestyle regarding how to feel happy and regain a sense of wellbeing, so that the person has the strength to cope with grief. The same theory is applied to the loved one’s life to identify how the person led a happy and fulfilled life. This then assists in the generation of happy memories to coping with grieving

<https://whats your grief.com/summer of perma/a wyg coping challenge>

<https://whats your grief.com/expanding our understanding of coping with life after loss>



Mothers Day - From the other side

A few weeks back, while I was volunteering at The Compassionate Friends Victoria, I overheard a conversation between one of their members, Jenny and someone that I am assuming was a bereaved mother at the other end of the telephone. She said something that struck a chord with me. Something that was ringing in my ears the entire night and something I hadn't thought about up until then. Jenny said, "Most people think about children who have lost their mothers on a Mother's Day, but no one thinks about the mother who has lost her child. Even if that was her only child who she lost, as long as she lives, she will continue being a mother"

Honestly, I am guilty of that line of thought myself. Every Mother's Day, I think about children who have lost their mothers, but seldom have I thought about mothers who have lost their children. Losing a child at whatever age is immaterial. Whether that child was old enough to have his/her own family or lived for just 10 minutes or maybe that pregnancy resulted in a miscarriage and that child was unable to even take the first breath. The fact that a mother was able to feel that heart beat inside of her, makes that woman "a mother". And just like every other mother, she too had dreams for her child and hoped her child to have outlived her. We are told children are the future, but to talk about your child in the past tense is probably the most painful experience for any mother. Her life changes and she is a different woman now. It is important to accept her "new normal" state. Getting back to her life before she lost her child is almost impossible and moving on will only keep reminding her of what she has lost. Attending birthday parties, family celebrations, seeing other children who might be your child's age and thinking this is probably how my young one would have been, are all heartbreaking thoughts.

Just like most people, the idea of death frightens me. Losing a loved one is probably our worst nightmare and yet that is a reality of life. A reality that we refuse to talk about in our grief-avoidant culture. Whatever your reason is for avoiding to talk about grief, whether it is not knowing what to say, lacking the empathy to realize that "moving on" is not an option or sheer ignorance – this Mother's Day walk up to a mother who has lost her child, knowing fully well that while she has lost her child, her love for that child lives on. Don't expect a high spirited welcome, but don't ignore her either. Approach her with compassion, hear her, see her for what she is, not what you expect her to be.

Something I have learnt during my time volunteering is that grief doesn't seek cure, neither does it seek your approval. Refrain from offering unsolicited advice as a solution, grief is a process not a problem. This journey is individual and often times, very private. You just have to listen to the bereaved, non-judgmentally and with patience. The loss is too heavy to bear and while you and I will never be able to ease that pain, neither will we ever be able to understand it, we can support them in this journey of theirs. The bereaved want companionship not correction. You can't just "get over" losing someone, life as they know it is gone with the ones they lost, but they march on, knowing something very close to their heart is missing. A mother knows that someone she brought into the world is smiling at her from the sky ... her urge to hug her child has been replaced by a heartfelt prayer for that child.

Remembering all the brave bereaved mothers this Mother's Day and their little stars who they have lost. You continue to be mothers regardless of where your child is, and I am sorry we haven't made it any easier on you!

Sanam Karamally, a non-bereaved volunteer of TCFV





The Compassionate Friends Victoria

End of Financial Year Appeal

We are launching our 2019 End of Financial Year Appeal.

With the help of our supporters 160 newly bereaved families received vital grief support over the past 12 months following the death of a child. On their behalf, **THANK YOU** for helping to provide a welcoming, non-judgemental and safe place for them to grieve in their own way, and at their own pace.

Even though through tragic circumstances, we have had to support this number of new members, we know that there are still thousands of bereaved Victorians who do not know that peer support services are available to them. They may therefore not be receiving valuable peer-based grief support in a timely manner.

Our goal is to help more grieving families (parents, siblings, grandparents) throughout regional Victoria – giving them access to support networks we take for granted are available to all Victorians.

Our goal for this campaign is to raise \$10,000 by June 30th.

If we raise \$10,000, we'll be able to better support those grieving throughout rural and regional Victoria, who for geographic, family or emotional reasons are unable to access information and supports. We want to develop a range of online video information resources for them as well as provide local face to face group or individualised support. We want them to be able to access social and emotional support from others who have similar experiences of grief and bereavement following the death of their child.

We could support more regional Victorian families this coming year. But we need your help to make this happen.....

Are you able to make a special year end donation of \$100, \$250 or whatever you can afford to help us meet our goal? We won't be able to do it without you. Your support will make a genuine and lifelong impact for those who are trying to process and understand their grief.

To donate, please visit: www.tcfv.org.au/tax-appeal

Please note that all donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible.

With gratitude

Danny Bendel
TCFV Treasurer





Circle

My Doctor drew a wide circle on a piece of paper. He then drew two tiny stick figures almost at random.

"This is your son, Nick," said my doctor pointing at one figure. "The other is you."

I had been telling my Doctor that I thought of my son in the present tense. That is, rather than "Nick would have liked that movie, book, whatever," but "Nick likes such and such." I was wondering what it meant. I had not told anyone else other than my Doctor.

"The circle is Everything," continued my Doctor. "Nick is going to be always with you."

My Doctor then drew another circle inside the first and around the stick figure representing me. "This is Here and Now."

I rubbed my head, looking at the circles. My Doctor often made drawings to simplify what he might be explaining. "You are trying to keep Nick in this inner circle."

I clenched my fist. I realised what I was being told. Nick would always be with me, in everything that the broad circle represented; I cling to him in the inner cycle. "I don't like these circles!"

"Would you like to draw the circle as you would have it?" My doctor tore the paper of the note pad leaving a fresh sheet.

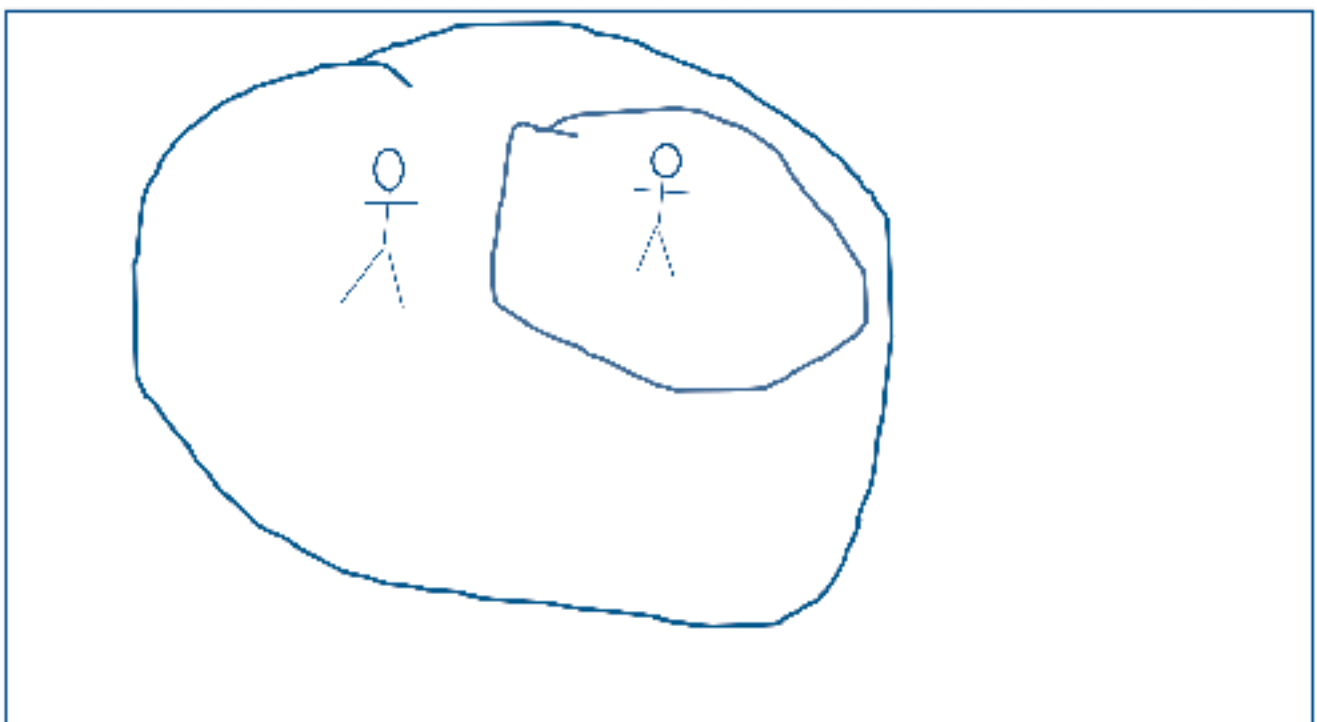
I took the pencil. "I wouldn't draw an outer circle." I scribbled to make a cloud-like image. I knew my Doctor was a very devoted man. The ridged circle represented his clear religious view of the World. I had more fuzzy views. "I also would not have a clear inner circle." I drew a wiggly line that connected in a rough shape.

"Now place yourself."

I drew myself inside the rough shape. Before my Doctor could prompt me, I added Nick who straddled the wiggly line.

We talked some more. My Doctor wrote out a new prescription. Then we made our next appointment. I don't like counselling. But it is what I'd tell someone else to do. So I'd come back.

By Russell Miles
Bereaved father of Nick (22)
TCFV





Jog For Joey, Celebrating 50 Marathons In 50 Days, 22 February 2019

A brief history of Jog for Joey

Jog for Joey is in honour of Joseph Thomas Moschetti who passed away unexpectedly in his sleep at 18 years old.

Upon hearing of the insensitive ways that our family and other bereaved families can very often be treated by those close to them, Sean Bell wanted to do something to help. So along with Sean, my husband Rob and I, we decided to form Jog for Joey, a run by Sean around Australia from November 30 2020 – July 30 2021. The purpose of the run is to raise awareness and funds for TCF. All funds raised will be used to help educating the community on how to better treat the bereaved.

On 4 January this year Sean set out to run 50 marathons in 50 days. The aim was to build credibility in the eyes of both the community and potential sponsors. The success of the 50 Marathons in 50 Days was better than we could have ever imagined. Sean on behalf of Jog for Joey was on several radio stations as well as making the Channel 7 and Channel 10 news and had an article in the Sunday Herald Sun. Jog for Joey gained sponsorship, raised funds for the run around Australia as well as for TCF.

Oh What A Night

After months of planning the day was finally here, Sean was running his 50th and final marathon and the celebration of this was to be held at the Manhattan Hotel in Ringwood. Sean ran most of his last marathon at Vermont Football club along with many other runners, but the final 100 metres was running into the Manhattan along with Joseph's brother Harry and some of Joseph's closest friends from primary school, high school and SEDA where Joseph was attending Year 12 when he passed away.



I went into the Manhattan knowing that the event was well planned and that almost 400 tickets had been sold. However I was still worried, would people turn up, would the food be OK, would people be sensitive and compassionate towards me and my family, would people be able to have a good time despite the fact the speeches were going to be sad and emotional, I did want people to celebrate but I also wanted them to remember and think of Joseph, was I expecting too much?

The evening began at 7.00 pm and as the night went on I knew I had no reason to worry. Rob kicked off the speeches and anyone not realising what the night was about soon got the message there was hardly a dry eye in the room. Also speaking that night was Sean talking about his 50 marathons and Samantha Gash, our guest speaker talking about motivation and having a reason to run. Please look Samantha up on social media she is an inspiring and amazing young woman. Later on Harry, Joseph's brother spoke, you could hear a pin drop and once again there was not a dry eye in the house with people openly sobbing when Harry spoke about the day, only a week before, when he woke up and opened his eyes on a normal Saturday morning meaning he had lived a day longer than his brother ever got to. He spoke of how Joseph's passing had affected him and would affect him for the rest of his life.

The last speech of the night was by Andrew Weatherhead, the TCF President. Andrew spoke about TCF and I think everyone was openly shocked when he mentioned that 25,000 people under the age of 50 die every year in Victoria but only about 250 of them ever contact TCF. Andrew is a mesmerising public speaker and if you ever get the chance to see him speak, please take up the opportunity.

The night was an overwhelming success, the room was packed well beyond what we ever imagined, the bar was five deep at times as people tried to get drinks, people were dancing and despite being in tears during the night people looked like they were enjoying themselves. We raised almost \$14,000 from this one night and the Manhattan reported back that they had their best night behind the bar for months!





The biggest success for me however, was the numerous people who came up to me on the night and spoke to me of Joseph and said how much they still thought about him. Others shared their stories of loss and some came up and admitted they had not always done the right thing but would try harder in the future to be a Compassionate Friend. After the night we also received messages from people saying how they wanted to change their ways for the better in the future. We had friends contact us who we had not heard from for a while and we know that hundreds of people have now heard of TCF as a result of Jog for Joey, this means that someone out there who may have lost a child, a sibling or a grandchild now know they have somewhere to turn for support.

One friend best summed up the night for me, she told me that you could feel the love in the room. Joseph I think we did you proud.

Jane Moschetti
Bereaved Mother of Joseph (18)
TCFV



“Grieving Mother”

*The day my child died
I became somebody new
A totally different person
Someone I never knew*

*I am not who I used to be
I am definitely not the same
The only thing that hasn't changed
Is the spelling of my name*

*I cry more than I ever did
I break down quite a lot
My heart hurts everyday
The pain will never stop*

*A mother gives her child life
And a love unlike no other
When that is taken all away
She then becomes a grieving mother*



Rob's Speech - From Jog for Joey

Whilst I am standing here celebrating the last 50 days I do so with a broken heart, as does Jane, Harry and Milly. I'd give everything I have not to be here speaking to you tonight, we will never be the same people as we once were, we miss Joseph every day and our lives without him have changed forever.

Joseph was unique. We miss him terribly, his smile, his infectious giggle, his warmth, his handshake, and his stories that always revolved around sport, his legendary appetite, his love of family and mates and of life is a gulf that can never be replaced. He had an amazing photographic memory, you could be driving down Burwood Highway and pass a car and he will say that was so and so who played for Boronia against us in round 6, 3 years ago. Do you remember him Dad? He wore number 15, he kicked 2 goals in the 2nd half. We led at half time, but they over-ran us in the last quarter and won by 9 points. Golden moments like this are gone forever.

After losing Joseph, Jane and I received a letter from a footy team-mate at Vermont by the name of Sean Bell. The letter was raw and from the heart. He told us that one day he was driving to training and saw Joe walking with his footy bag. He pulled over and asked Joe to jump in, he would take him the rest of the way to training, he said it was the best decision he had ever made in his life. Despite playing in different teams they shared a special bond, both rabid Richmond supporters and discussing the ups and downs of the mighty tigers. It was a beautiful letter.

In September 2016 Jane and I attended the Vermont Football Club best and fairest awards night, it was so difficult to go but there was to be a yearly award presented in Joseph's honor, so we went. The award was called The Mo and would be awarded to the player who lived by Joseph's values, someone who cared and encouraged others, celebrated others success and put the good of the team before individual values. That year Sean won the award and Jane and I got to meet him in person.

Soon after the VFC awards night, Sean started to drop around to visit, very often with Dan on board, we always enjoyed these nights as we all shared stories of Joe and could have a laugh as well as cry at his antics. As time went on Sean heard stories of how friends had abandoned us and even worse some of the stories of the totally inappropriate ways we had been spoken to and treated. He came to learn that unfortunately these stories are all too common amongst bereaved parents, so Sean told us of his idea to run around Australia to raise money for a charity of our choice and the charity we wanted to support was The Compassionate Friends.

Why are we doing this? This is going to be confrontational! Firstly, close your eyes, imagine you have lost your beloved child, you have to write their eulogy and go and choose a plot of earth to put them in. It is incomprehensible!! I bet none of you can imagine doing this.

Jane and I attended a monthly support group at TCF for 2 years and unfortunately most of the discussions are around how appallingly bereaved parents have been treated by family, friends and employers. Jane and I have had a next-door neighbour hiding on the ground behind her car when she saw us coming, Jane has had people ask her how her ... long pause ... TWO children are, with an emphasis on the two. This is cruel, we have 3 children and always will have. We have had someone say 6 weeks after losing Joseph that surely we are (fingers inch sign) this much better today than we were yesterday, this is just ridiculous. Many people said they knew other people who have lost children and they got over it. This is not true, Jane and I have met 100s of bereaved people none of whom have ever got over their child's death. Again, telling someone that they will get over their child's death is cruel, they are trying to offer hope, but the bereaved parents feel that what they are really saying is that their child didn't matter. However the most common theme is ignoring, people turning round when they see you coming, people putting their head down or just pretending they haven't seen you, but probably the worst thing you can do is pretend everything is back to normal and just forget that Joseph ever existed and no longer speak about him. Remember you can never upset or remind a bereaved parent about their child. They are upset because their child died, not because you mentioned them and believe me, they could never be reminded their child died.

So, this is how and why Jog for Joey came into being, now to the future. We have an incredible passion to help bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents and our goal is to raise as much money as possible for TCF so that they have the much needed funds required to get out and educate the community so in the future everyone can continue to go back to work and have the support they need from family and friends.

Jog for Joey has been a life line for us, it means that we get to talk about Joseph every day, his legacy lives on and in the midst of our heartache Jog for Joey has given us something positive to focus on and we will be forever grateful to Sean for coming to us with the idea.

Rob Moschetti
Bereaved Father of Joseph (18)
TCFV

When You Lose An Only Child

The loss of an only child is neither greater nor less than the loss of one of many children. However, the loss of an only child is experienced differently. It is different because you lose your parenthood, which is such a large part of the life of any parent.

1. With the death of an only child, you lose the one person who could use all of the love you had to give every hour of every day.

a. One of the secrets of parenthood is that from birth, children teach us that we have a greater capacity for unselfish love than we thought possible.

b. When your only child dies, you may feel that you are drowning in the parental love your heart continues to generate for the child you have lost.

2. With the death of an only child, you lose so much of your own future that was tied to your child's future.

- The first day of school
- Sports
- Learning to drive
- A first crush, a first date, a first heartbreak
- High school
- College
- Career
- Marriage
- Children, grandchildren, great grandchildren

Your only child lost all of this from his or her future. And so did you.

3. With the death of an only child, you suffer many tiny losses that cause pain only another grieving parent can comprehend.

a. You have lost the joy of checking the cereal aisle to see if Cocoa Puffs are on sale, b. You have lost the reason to keep up with the top ten hits on the pop music charts.

c. You have lost the joy of caring what prize is in a box of Cracker Jacks.

d. You have lost the joy of getting up early on a Saturday morning for kids soccer, basketball, or bowling.

e. You have lost the reason to hope for a December snow.

f. You have lost the person who thought you made the best cocoa on a cool December evening.

g. For me, I lost a gentle, kind, generous child who loved, watched for, and shared beautiful sunsets.

The loss of an only child is a devastating loss. Your child has lost his or her life. And you have lost an important piece of your own life, your parenthood. The Compassionate Friends chapter near you is there to help you acknowledge and grieve these losses by sharing your pain with others who have known their own pain.

Bill Snapp,
Father of Billy (14)
TCF Atlanta USA





Sibling Grief: Memories, Dreams and Ongoing Connections

Sibling Grief – Healing After the Death of a Sister or Brother (Gill White)
Chapter 9, Page 75.

Connecting through Memories

Some people are afraid that they will forget their siblings, and rightly so. Although they will never forget what their sibling meant to them, specific memories do fade. Creating some kind of memory store is important.

When siblings die without warning, we have to work harder to preserve our memories. The activity of creating a memory store, such as a photo is healing in itself.

Linking Objects

Linking objects are any tangible objects that remind you of the person who died. They can be articles of clothing, or any belonging that you associate with the deceased, such as a toy, favourite book, or piece of jewelry. Photos and letters can be linking objects. It is normal to want to be close to our sibling's belongings when we can't have the actual person with us.

Creating a Memory

Gather together items you treasure because they belonged to or remind you of your sibling, even something you wrote about them. Then, using whatever technology with which you are familiar with, record yourself talking about each of the objects. No matter what your age at the time of your sibling's death, recording your own voice adds another dimension to your memories.

Other Rituals

As time passes, bereaved siblings may wish to engage in other activities to keep them connected with their deceased sibling. Some write letters to their sibling, visit their grave, have their sibling's favourite meal on their birthdays, listen to their music, and hold special candlelight memorials.



A Support Group for BEREAVED SIBLINGS

Based in BENDIGO.

Our TCFV support group provides bereaved brothers and sisters the opportunity to meet in a safe environment with other bereaved siblings who have "been there". A chance to talk about our grief, how we've been going, and the legacy of our siblings in our lives.

When: we meet the third Monday of the month at 6pm.
(Upcoming meetings: 16 April, 20 May, 17 June, 15 July)

Where: Murray PHN Building, 3-5 View Point, Bendigo (across from the Fountain).

For meeting information, or to speak with the local group leader, please contact our partnering organisation *The Gianna Centre* on 0419 498 440.



Our partnering
organisation in
Bendigo:
The Gianna Centre
www.gianna.org.au



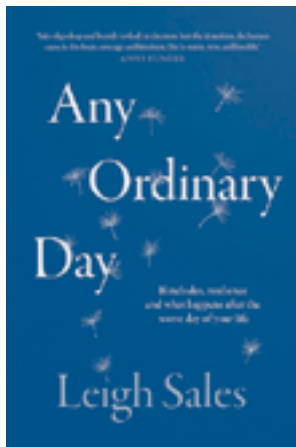
VICTORIA
State
Government



BOOK REVIEW:

Book reviews – Any Ordinary Day and Option B

Following the sudden and tragic death of my son Nathan in August 2018 I started to research grief and found two books which were useful. Both books were written following adversity experienced by the authors. Leigh Sales nearly lost her life and the life of her second child in childbirth, her marriage ended, and her father died. Sheryl Sandberg's husband, Dave Goldberg, died suddenly and tragically at the age of 47 years leaving his wife to raise their two young children. She writes this book with her friend and psychologist Adam Grant.



Any Ordinary Day – Leigh Sales.

This book is about how ordinary people wake up one ordinary day for it to become one of the worst days of their lives and then how they then cope with strength, hope and grow as people.

She provides some statistical information on the probability of being in the wrong place at the wrong

time which leads to death such as in a car accident, a plane crash or a terrorist attack. Research is described into brain function and psychology in relation to how we process fear and grief. Interviews are conducted with a variety of people – Walter Mikac, Stuart Diver, Louise Hope, John Howard and some personnel who have assisted people in adversity – a police officer, social worker, priest and judge. These insights are invaluable.

Option B: Facing Adversity, Building Resilience and Finding Joy – Sheryl Sandberg and Adam Grant.

This book also provides information on psychology research into grief and loss, personal insights from the author on coping with grief and practical ways on how others can assist – family, friends, work colleagues and employers. Sandberg, the Chief Operating Officer of Facebook, does acknowledge the privileged position she is in from a financial perspective and the level of support from her family.

Summary

My learnings from the books are as follows:

- Life is uncertain, not always controllable and can be unfair and unjust. If life throws us a curve ball, then we have to move to Option B rather than our previous Option A in life. We cannot control life only how we respond to, cope with and conceptualise our grief.
- We can choose to remember the positive memories of our loved one, we can choose to find moments of joy in our life. We can choose to surround ourselves with people who will support, comfort and help us with our grief. Sandberg wrote a nightly list of three things she was grateful for, what she did well during the day and that gave her confidence and joyful moments during the day.
- We all have a set of beliefs we hold about the world, others and ourselves. Adversity may require us to revisit these and reframe them. A good person who is kind honest and generous, who is loving and hardworking can lead a good life where they are loved and rewarded but a good life does not mean a long life. We need to cherish and enjoy the life we have now.
- You may need to teach people how to assist us in our grief. Your loss becomes the elephant in the room, people do not want to add to your unhappiness, so they do not acknowledge your loss. You may need to cross the road to talk to people, mention your loss, initiate conversation about your loved one, understand and forgive people for their ignorance. To say, "How are you, today?", acknowledges your grief and shows you care rather than "How are you?". Tell people how they can help you – go for a walk with me on Friday at 10.00, come for dinner on Tuesday and bring a casserole please, send me a text message.
- Post traumatic growth is a documented psychological phenomenon where trauma survivors experience growth and thrive. Growth and thriving are defined as – a greater appreciation for life, form deeper relationships, discover more meaning in life, openness to new possibilities in life and sense of greater personal strength. Sandberg writes of co destiny, doing good on behalf of your loved one can become part of their legacy.

Sue Rowan
Bereaved mother of Nathan (25)
TCFV





What's on at the Centre:

Reiki: 2nd Tuesday by appointments
12.30, 2.00 & 3.30
9th April, 14th May, 11th June

Art Therapy: 3rd Monday 7.00 to 9.00pm,
15th April, 20th May, 17th June

Menspace: 3rd Wednesday 7.00 to 9.00pm
17th April, 15th May, 19th June

Coffee Morning: 3rd Thursday, 10.30 to 12.00pm
18th April, 16th May, 20th June

Topics around Grief:

"Spiritual Experiences Around Loss"

2.15pm for 2.30pm start on 27th April, please register on website

Events: See more info in this magazine

Walk to Remember – Sunday 7th - April 11.00am

High Tea – Wednesday 8th May - 11.00am

Trivia Night – Wednesday 29th May - 6.00pm

Cocktail Event – Friday 14th June - 7.30pm

Winter Solstice – Friday 21st June - 5.00pm



Love Gifts

Boeden Seduikis
14.06.1990 - 09.08.2017
Our precious and inspirational son and brother.
We love and miss you so much. Forever in
our hearts and always on our minds.
Love you Mum, Dad,
Ryan & Taylah

Danielle Marie Galati
4.07.1988 – 21.04.2005
It been 14 long years since you left us, Not
a day goes by that we don't think of you.
Love you to the stars and back
Love always mum, Dad,
Ben & Tony

Love Gift Messages and Donations

Love Gift messages can be made on the back of the cover leaf that comes with the magazine. Please limit your Love Gift message to no more than 30 words, counting the date as one word.



DONATIONS OF STAMPS, STICKERS AND CARDS

Thank You to Nicki Schultz for the donation of stamps in memory of Kara.

Thank You to Steven Katsineris for the donation of butterfly stickers in memory of Chione.

Thank You to Leanne Campbell for the donation of handmade cards in memory of Brett.

Thank You to Danny Bendel for the donation of stamps in memory of Joshua.

Thank You to Jan Smith for the donation of stamps in memory of Ben & Zach.

CORRECTION

In our Feb/March edition of Grieve Heal Grow we featured an article about last year's Christmas Appeal. In the article we listed the names of loved ones for whom a memorial gift was made by a TCFV member.

We overlooked the incorrect spelling of Simon Taplin's surname. For this and any distress it may have caused the Taplin family we are sincerely sorry.



TCFV Events

We would like to invite All Grandmothers and Mothers



To the Centre for **High Tea**



On: Wednesday 8th May

Time: 11am - 3 pm

At: 229 Canterbury Rd Canterbury

Cost: \$15.00 per person

This is a hard time of year for all mums,

so come along enjoy lunch with other

bereaved mums who would love to have a chat

RSVP by 1/5/19

www.tcfv.org.au/hightea

TRIVIA NIGHT

WEDNESDAY, MAY 29

RICHMOND UNION BOWLS CLUB
2 Gleadell St, Richmond

Dinner available from 6pm | Trivia starts at 7pm

SILENT AUCTION, GAMES and PRIZES!

Food and drinks at bar prices

PURCHASE TICKETS AT WWW.TCFV.ORG.AU/TRIVIA

TICKETS
ONLY
\$25

Make a table of
10 or come on
your own and we
will join up with
other friendly
members.

Run in collaboration with
St. Columba's College Essendon
Year 12
CERT III in Events

Generously sponsored by
Richmond Union
Bowls Club





TCFV Events



WINTER SOLSTICE GATHERING

In olden times, the Winter Solstice was a time of reflection and welcoming the return of the light.

Join us at the Centre on **Friday, June 21** and find light and hope out of the darkness.

Food/Mulled Wine/'Toasted Marshmallows/Hot Chocolate

Fire Release Ceremony

Music & Readings

5.30pm to 9.00 pm

Register at www.tcfv.org.au/winter

TCFV Training

TCFV Volunteer Training – in July

Being a TCF telephone volunteer gives me the opportunity to use my loss experience in a positive way.

Understanding that grief is so overwhelming and isolating and sometimes all the caller needs is a kind voice at the other end of the phone to listen.

We all know how painful, heartbreaking and lonely it is to sit with grief. To have someone say *"I understand"* and mean it, can make a difference to someone's life.

Tanya Goldin
Bereaved mother of Gabriel (3mths)

We are running both Group Leader and Phone Answerer training in July, we would love anyone thinking of doing either or both to please call the centre and talk to Andrew or Jenny on 9888 4944 for more information.



Bereavement Support & Social Support Groups

“What TCFV Group Meetings offer is...

- The opportunity to get together with other bereaved people,
- The chance to talk about the person missing in their lives,
- The opportunity to drop the mask that society so subtly demands of each of us,
- The chance to cry without embarrassment,
- The opportunity to laugh without others thinking you must be “over it”, and
- The opportunity to bask in a non-judgemental atmosphere and make new friends.”

Support Group Meetings provide bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents the opportunity to meet in a safe environment with others who have “been there”, who understand and care. Group attendees report that meetings are an essential part of their “learning to live again” journey.

Social Support Group Meetings (held at a café) are not “formal” grief sharing like a support group – but we still welcome any discussion of grief, bereavement and our precious children, siblings and grandchildren. Like formal support groups, these meetings are also facilitated by group leaders.

Do I need to speak with someone before I come to a meeting?

If you’re planning to attend your first meeting with a group, we ask that you contact the Centre on 9888 4944 / 1300 064 068. This way, we can let the leaders know you’re planning to attend, and they can keep an eye out for you, and welcome you into the group. Group members report this has helped them in the process of settling into a group.

Is there a charge to attend?

The cost of attending a group is included in our TCF membership. You can attend as many groups as you like, in any location as part of joining our organisation. New members receive a 12-month complementary membership, after this it is \$55 per year (less than \$5 a month), which also gives you access to all of our other services.

I have baby sitting problems. Would it be alright to bring my child with me?

While we understand the difficulties of finding child care, we must ask that out of respect for the needs of others, you do not bring children (under 18 years of age) to meetings. At this time, we do not provide any services for bereaved parents or siblings below 18 years of age, but we can refer you to other agencies where these services are available.

April - June 2019 Meetings Support Groups (Metro)

MEETING GROUP	TIME	DATE	VENUE
Greensborough	1.30pm	First Wednesday: 3 Apr, 1 May, 5 Jun	‘THE MEETING ROOM.’ (next to Greenhills Preschool), located up the path from Greenhills Community Centre, Community Drive, Greensborough
Rowville	1.00pm	First Friday: 5 Apr, 3 May, 7 Jun	Bridgewater Centre, cnr Fulham Road & Bridgewater Road, Rowville
Canterbury (Night)	7.45pm	Second Tuesday: 9 Apr, 14 May, 11 Jun	TCFV Centre, 229 Canterbury Road, Canterbury
Sunshine	7.30pm	Third Tuesday: 16 Apr, 21 May, 18 Jun	Salvation Army Drop-In Centre, 42 Devonshire Road, Sunshine
Canterbury (Day)	11.00am	Fourth Wednesday: 24 Apr, 22 May, 26 Jun	TCFV Centre, 229 Canterbury Road, Canterbury
Bayside	7.00pm	Fourth Wednesday: 24 Apr, 22 May, 26 Jun	Highbury Community Centre, 2 Livingston St, Highbury



Specific Focus (Metro)

MEETING GROUP	TIME	DATE	VENUE
Suicide-bereaved (Eastern Suburbs)	7.30pm	First Monday: 1 Apr, 6 May	TCFV Centre, 229 Canterbury Road, Canterbury
Suicide-bereaved (Western Suburbs)	7.00pm	First Wednesday: 3 Apr, 1 May, 5 Jun	Salvation Army Drop-In Centre, 42 Devonshire Road, Sunshine
Sibling Grief (18+) (Canterbury)	7.45pm	Second Tuesday: 9 Apr, 14 May, 11 Jun	TCFV Centre, 229 Canterbury Road, Canterbury
Menspace	7.00pm	Third Wednesday: 17 Apr, 15 May, 19 Jun	TCFV Centre, 229 Canterbury Road, Canterbury
Bereaved of a young child	10.30am	Forth Tuesday: (Feb/May/Aug/Nov) 28 May	TCFV Centre, 229 Canterbury Road, Canterbury

Support Groups (Regional)

MEETING GROUP	TIME	DATE	VENUE
Bendigo	1.00pm	First Tuesday: 2 Apr, 7 May, 4 Jun	Bendigo Neighbourhood Hub, 155 Crook Street, Strathdale
Ballarat	7.00pm	First Tuesday: 2 Apr, 7 May, 4 Jun	Mt Clear Church of Christ (Church Hall), 1185 Geelong Road, Mt Clear
Wodonga	7.00pm	First Thursday: 4 Apr, 2 May, 6 Jun	St Patricks Hall, 515 Smollett Street, Albury
Mildura (Note: new time & day)	11.00am	Second Saturday: 13 Apr, 11 May, 8 Jun	MADEC Community Centre, 133-137 Madden Avenue, Mildura
Siblings Grief (18+) (Bendigo)		Third Monday: 15 Apr, 20 May, 17 Jun	Murray PHN Building, 3-5 View Point, Bendigo
Portland	7.00pm	Third Tuesday: 16 Apr, 21 May, 18 Jun	Star Theatre, 40 Julia Street, Portland
Camperdown	7.30pm	Fourth Monday: (fifth Monday in April) 29 Apr, 27 May, 24 Jun	Camperdown Uniting Church, cnr Leura & Barkly Streets, Camperdown
Geelong	7.30pm	Last Tuesday: 30 Apr, 28 May, 25 Jun	Noble Street Uniting Church, 26-42 Saffron Street, Newtown
Castlemaine	7.30pm	Last Thursday: 25 Apr, 30 May, 27 Jun	Maternal Child & Health Centre, Lyttleton Street, Castlemaine
Hamilton	Contact TCFV Centre for details: 1300 064 068		
Horsham	Contact TCFV Centre for details: 1300 064 068		

Social Support Groups (Metro & Regional)

MEETING GROUP	TIME	DATE	VENUE
Southern Peninsula	11.00pm	First Tuesday: 2 Apr, 7 May, 4 Jun	Contact TCFV Centre for venue: 1300 064 068
Men's Grief (Social Breakfast)	7.30am	First Thursday: 4 Apr, 2 May, 6 Jun	Wilson & Walsh, 129 Maling Road, Canterbury
Bayside	10.30am	Second Tuesday: 9 Apr, 14 May, 11 Jun	Blue Dish, 326 Highett Road, Highett
Geelong	10.00am	Second Tuesday: 9 Apr, 14 May, 11 Jun	Brioche Cafe, 175 West Fyans Street, Newtown
Coffee Mornings Canterbury	10.30am	Third Thursday: 16 May, 20 Jun, 18 Aug	TCFV Centre, 229 Canterbury Road, Canterbury
Suicide Bereaved (Social Dinner)	7.30am	Fourth Thursday: 25 Apr, 23 May	Box Hill RSL 26-28 Nelson Road, Box Hill
Healesville	Contact TCFV Centre for details: 1300 064 068		

Support & Social Support Groups (Interstate)

MEETING GROUP	TIME	DATE	VENUE
Hobart Support	7.30pm	Second Tuesday Bimonthly 9 Apr, 11 Jun	McDougall Building, 9 Ellersie Road, Battery Point
Hobart Social	Contact TCFV Centre for details: 1300 064 068		



TCFV Services



Express Yourself Through ART

Release your inner artist
Express your feelings via art
No skills required! No judgement needed!
Fun and learning to be had by all!



"Express yourself through Art"

for all TCFV members.

What does it involve?

Using the creative process of artwork, the "Express Yourself through Art" classes help release and enhance the physical, mental and emotional well-being of individuals. The classes enables participants to express feelings and thoughts that they may not be able to articulate, want to speak about or share. This is in a calm, safe and non-judging environment. It is also a great way to get to know others, and be part of a community environment – and have a bit of fun!

Classes are held the 3rd Monday evening of each month at 7pm

To book, please go to our website to register:
www.compassionatesfriendsvictoria.org.au/events

Please remember we are at our new home at
229 Canterbury Road, Canterbury.

We are excited to provide this new service free of charge
(including all materials) to our members.

The Facilitators

Lauren Foster is an experienced volunteer, former board member and bereaved mother of Rex. In addition, Lauren is an experienced art therapist who works professionally in this area.

Kerry McInally is a professional counsellor, counsellor, art therapist and a published author. Kerry found herself self-expressing herself after the loss of her daughter Leah and husband Peter.



MENSPACE

*A meeting place for
bereaved fathers,
grandfathers and
brothers.*



While grief may affect us all in individual ways,
it has been found that often-times men express their grief
differently to women.

MenSpace is a group forum where bereaved fathers,
brothers and grandfathers can discuss issues including loss,
bereavement, and other life issues, in the company of men.
It is also an opportunity to speak openly of the children,
siblings and grandchildren no longer with us.

MenSpace meets once a month on an ongoing basis.

Date: 3rd Wednesday of the month

Where: The Centre, 229 Canterbury Road, Canterbury

Time: 7.00 pm—9.00 pm

For further information, please call




Groups Coordinator Andrew McNeess on 5986 4944





NEW..... Our Community Noticeboard



 admin@heavensentelectrical.com.au
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A FREE CONSULTATION

We provide free home safety check-ups
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ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS HERE

In the past TCFV members have contacted us wanting to support businesses where the owners/operators have also experienced bereavement through the loss of a child, sibling or grandchild.

We would like to offer businesses the opportunity to grow their profile amongst our members - building a sense of community support complementing our support groups and services.

1/6th SIZE COLOUR ADVERTISEMENT
19 CMS X 7.5 CMS
\$100 FOR 2 EDITIONS
\$250 FOR 6 EDITIONS
(Subject to GST)

1/9th SIZE COLOUR ADVERTISEMENT
6 CMS X 7.5 CMS
\$50 FOR 2 EDITIONS
\$120 FOR 6 EDITIONS
(Subject to GST)

MEMBER SERVICE

REIKI (NEW SERVICE)

2nd Tuesday of the month at TCFV Centre

Appointment times:

12.30pm, 2pm, 3.30pm - Dates: 9 April, 14 May, 11 June

For bookings

please email jennyg@tcfv.org.au

REIKI is a form of
hands-on healing that, it is believed,
channels a form of "universal energy".

With a sense of well-being,
life can be seen through different eyes.

MEMBER SERVICE

Art MEETING GROUP

Art Therapy:

"Express Yourself Through Art"
Please register at www.tcfv.org.au
(via EVENTS Page)

TIME 7.00pm

DATE Third Monday: 15 Apr, 20 May, 17 June

VENUE TCFV Centre
229 Canterbury Road, Canterbury

Thankyou *Supporters*

5 Point Foundation
All Souls OP Shop
Bank of Melbourne
Bunnings Box Hill
Bendel Family
Caroline Durre Foundation
Crown Resorts Foundation
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Flowers of Canterbury
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TCF Australia

ACT & Queanbeyan

0419 137 818

New South Wales

02 9290 2355

Queensland

07 3254 2585

South Australia

0456 820 133

Western Australia

08 6107 6257

TCF Mandurah

08 9535 7761

4th Floor, Room 404, 32 York Street, Sydney 2000
505 Bowen Terrace, New Farm 4005

54 Simpson Street Ardross WA 6153

Mandurah Lottery House - 7 Anzac Place, Mandurah 6210

TCF on the internet - USA www.compassionatefriends.org - New Zealand (email) tcf.otago@xtra.co.nz

United Kingdom www.tcf.org.uk - Canada www.tcfcanada.net/ - Netherlands www.vook.nl/

Belgium (email) tcf.belgium@skynet.be

The Compassionate Friends Victoria

229 Canterbury Road, Canterbury VIC 3126

Po Box 171 Canterbury, Vic. 3126

Phone: (03) 9888 4944 National Number 1300 064 068

Email: support@tcfv.org.au **Web:** www.tcfv.org.au