



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS**

September and October 2009



Seattle King County Chapter P.O. Box 66896 Seattle, WA 98166 206-241-1139

SEPTEMBER MUSINGS



You are going about your everyday tasks, thinking that just maybe this might turn out to be an "okay" day, one that you think you might actually get through. But then a certain song plays on the radio, or you see someone tilt his/her head and smile in that certain way your child did, or the smell of the air after a rainstorm brought you back to a poignant memory of your child. And without warning, you find yourself suddenly spiraling into despair, collapsing in a torrent of tears. Even something that may seem harmless can trigger a grief storm, sneaking up on you when you least expect it. I remember one of the parents in our group telling how the sight of a box of Kraft Macaroni & Cheese could make her leave her cart behind and flee the grocery store because it was one of her son's favorites.

For example, the month of September may seem innocent enough. There aren't any major holidays like Christmas to deal with. But this is a month that isn't easy for me and I am sure that many bereaved parents would agree. Starting the school year is a momentous occasion for many children. Those whose child that died wasn't old enough for school will never get to see the excitement on their child's face as they go off to their first day of school with their new lunch boxes and backpacks, knowing that their child should be among them and is not.



Those whose children were older when they died have memories of the preparation of getting ready for the school year. For example, my daughter Nina LOVED to go shopping with me for school clothes. The first fall after she died I could barely endure walking into the department stores, seeing those mannequins dressed in all the latest back-to-school fashions. I could picture how she would scurry through the racks of clothing picking out her favorites. She would run into the fitting rooms where she would poke her head out to ask me what I thought about her choices. Seeing the moms and daughter shopping together was agonizing. Listening to those mothers with irritated, hassled voices, chiding their children to "Hurry up, I don't have all day!" made my head swim. If they only knew that there could come a day when they would be sorry they did not savor the time spent doing those kinds of mother/child things.



The dilemma for me was that Nina would be of college age and, knowing her love of school, I am quite sure she would be headed off to college. She would have been so excited! The September after she would have graduated, a parent whose child had left for a college out West called me and said, "Now that Kim is at college, I know exactly how you feel about losing Nina." That was one of those moments that I was rendered speechless. I might now have the wherewithal to respond, but not at that particular juncture in

October's Memories

TCF, Northfield, NJ

October's here, the air is bright,
The leaves decked out in fancy dress,
The clouds in shapes of animals
Hang in the sky so blue.
This was our favorite time of year,
Your favorite.
You'd come in, cheeks glowing, eyes sparkling,
Smelling of the leaves you'd jumped through,
As a child and even after you grew up.
Our time, but now only my time.
Time to dream dreams that won't be.
Time to wish wishes that won't come true.
Time to remember and treasure each day
We had together.
Time to recall and lovingly remember,
Time for those precious October memories.



my grief journey. I remember my mind racing and wanting to say, "You can hop on a plane whenever the urge strikes you to see her is overpowering; you can pick up the phone and hear her voice 24-hours a day; she will be coming home over the holidays and summer vacation when the school year has ended. But my daughter will NEVER come home again! How can you compare the two???" I guess we can only forgive them for their lack of empathy and comprehension, and be glad for them that they don't really know how it feels.

We can't block out what is happening around us or change the sometimes inappropriate things that come out of people's mouths. But we can keep those close to us who understand – a spouse or significant other, our surviving children if there are any, close family and friends. And, of course, we know our Compassionate Friends will always be there: those TCF friends who appreciate the difficulty of the path we are walking; those who understand that we need others to be gentle with our fragile hearts, and accept that there are no timetables in grief and recognize our present frailties. Those same priceless fellow grievers who know the sun will shine again, but, for now, realize they may need to hold the umbrella for us.

Bless all of you who have been there, and who continue to be there, for other bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents in need of understanding. May all of us be that fortunate to have people like that in our currently shattered lives, so that someday, when the cloud has lifted, we can be that "Compassionate Friend" for someone else.

With gentle thoughts,

Cathy Seehuetter, Nina's mom - TCF, St. Paul, MN



The Compassionate Friends

Seattle-King County Chapter



The Compassionate Friends (TCF) is a non-profit mutual assistance, self-help organization offering friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved parents and families. Anyone who has experienced the death of a child of any age, from any cause is welcome. Our meetings provide an opportunity to talk about their child and about their feelings as they go through the grieving process. There is no religious affiliation. There are no membership dues. The purpose of this support group is not to focus on the cause of death or the age of the child, but to support bereaved parents, grandparents and adult siblings in the positive resolution of the grief feelings and issues that revolve around the death of their loved one and support their efforts to achieve physical and emotional health.

TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Coming to the first meeting is the hardest, but you have nothing to lose and everything to gain! Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. At the next meeting you may find just the right person or just the right words said that will help you in your grief work. Try to attend three times before deciding if TCF is right for you.

TO OUR MEMBERS WHO ARE FURTHER DOWN THE "GRIEF ROAD"

We need your encouragement and your support. Each meeting we have new parents. THINK BACK – what would it have been like for you at your first meeting if there had not been any TCF 'veterans' to welcome you, share your grief, encourage you and tell you, "your pain will not always be this bad, it really does get better!"

INFORMATION REGARDING OUR MEETINGS

PLEASE come to a meeting. We are here to discuss whatever is on your mind. This is YOUR group and we are here for each other. You do not have to talk at meetings. We welcome your participation in our group, but it is not a requirement. Coming to listen to the other members is okay, too. Our meetings are open to parents, grandparents, adult siblings, or adult family members such as aunts and uncles.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

This group belongs to you and cannot survive without assistance. You can help with refreshments, setting up before a meeting, sending out reminders for the next meeting, providing input, help with the newsletter, send thank-you notes, becoming a facilitator, volunteering to help with Chapter activities or serve on the board.

Part of getting better, sometimes is being there to assist others, too, through this journey.

If you'd like to help, please contact us.

Chapter Co-Leaders: Mike McLeod: 206-369-7366 and Marge Tomlinson: tcfmarge@aol.com



KEEPING IN TOUCH



Seattle-King County Chapter **Phone: 206-241-1139** (TCF Line)

Seattle-King County Chapter **Mailing Address: P. O. Box 66896 Seattle, WA 98166-0896**

Seattle-King County Chapter **Website: www.tcfseattle.org**

♥ **Phone Support:** Having a rough moment? Need someone to talk to? Call Robyn at 360-259-8006 ♥

Western Washington Regional Coordinator: Jacqueline Russell 360-457-7395

TCF National Office Phone: 877-969-0010

TCF National Mailing Address: P. O. Box 3696 Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696

TCF National Website: www.compassionatefriends.org

♥ **TCF Online Support** - Please visit the National website to get the session schedule for the following groups:

♥ Parents / Grandparents

♥ Pregnancy / Infant Loss

♥ Survivors of Suicide

♥ Siblings

♥ No Surviving Children

♥ Men Only

We are your organization. We are you. No better, no smarter, no more experienced - just fellow parents struggling along. Among our group are homemakers, bankers, teachers, office workers, physicians, cops, waitresses, accountants, justices of the peace...in short, the whole human spectrum. Just people, just grieving parents who are trying to help themselves and others. No pat answers, no glib replies, no religion, no color, no age, no judgments, truly. We ARE you. You may not know us, but you know us *all* so well. Say nothing, say a lot. No barriers, no requirements, only the promise that whether you listen or lead, you will find genuine understanding and shared experiences. No need to spill your guts or bare your soul; just come to a meeting and realize that you are truly not alone in your grief and loneliness, in your anger and 'craziness' and pain. We ARE you.

- Lindsey Maddox, Bryan, TX TCF



Our Chapter's Sharing Group Location:

FEDERAL WAY

~2nd Wednesday evening of each month~

**September 9, October 14, November 11,
December 9, January 13, February 10**

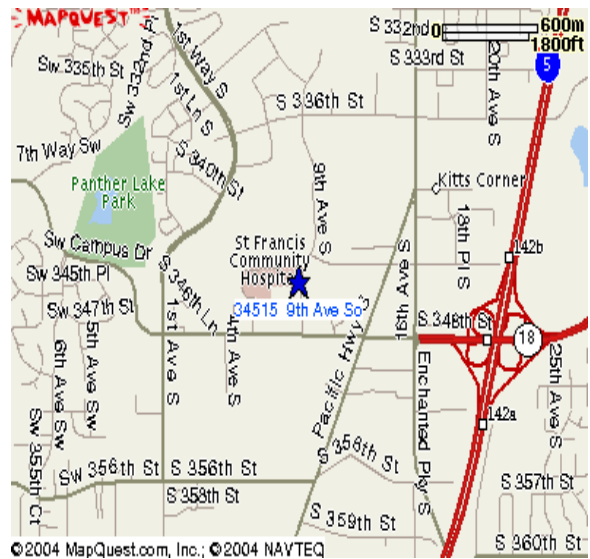
6:30pm – 8:00pm

St. Francis Hospital

34515 9th Ave. So.

Federal Way, WA 98003

Ask at the information desk in the main lobby for
directions to the meeting room.



WAITING FOR ANSWERS

Years ago I left my first meeting of The Compassionate Friends and drove home in tears. My son, Max, had died a few short weeks before and I had been anxiously awaiting this evening. These people must have some answers, I thought. With paper and pen in purse, I was ready to take notes and do as they prescribed. I would do anything to ease the ache in my soul. But when I walked out into the spring air later that night, I felt betrayed. I hadn't heard any answers. Instead of learning how to leave my grief behind, it had been confirmed, made more real with expression. I know I would miss Max forever. Now I wondered if I would grieve forever. Would it always be this way, a flash of pain aligned with every memory?

During the next months and years, I attended TCF meetings and conferences, read books, raged, kept busy, sometimes spent the day in bed. I wrote, cried and talked about Max. Slowly, I discovered the answers I had feared *were* true: yes, I will grieve forever, and yes, my memories will often provoke tears. But something had changed. My grief was now more forgiving, my tears almost sweet with memory. Max's life took shape again as the anguish of his death began to recede. If I would always miss him, I would also always have him with me in so many ways. I wanted to carry his memory into the future: the joy, the lessons, and the inevitable pain. How could I do otherwise?

As I walked to my car after that first meeting, the TCF chapter leader caught up with me. "How can I stop this pain?" I asked. She put her arm on my shoulder. "Just do what feels right to you," she said. "Listen to your heart. And we'll be here to listen, too." Sometimes the best advice is none at all.

- Mary Clark, TCF, Sugarland/SW Houston Chapter, TX

THERE WERE NO STRANGERS

Alice Monroe, TCF, Mesa County, CO
(August 2001)

There is a *tenderness* among bereaved parents. A gentleness far beyond "normal" interactions with people in everyday life. We speak softly to each other and silently acknowledge our mutual vulnerability and fragility. That doesn't mean we might not hurt each other from time to time through a misunderstanding, but it seems to me, the hurt is never meant to be. We have hurt enough already.

Somehow, there is *forgiveness* among bereaved parents. Forgiveness that comes from knowing we are just struggling human beings trying to make the best of our lives that will have, forever, an empty hole.

There is a quiet *beauty* among bereaved parents. A beauty that comes out of the experience of being hit with such pain and love all mixed together that words completely fail us.

There is *courage* among bereaved parents. The courage to get up, get dressed, and face another day.

We look to each other for the tenderness, the forgiveness, the beauty, and the courage. How often we say, "I'm so glad to know you... but I wish we had not met like this." And then we often add, "But, would I... could I... have ever felt so close if it wasn't for the pain?" Strange, isn't it, how there are hidden gifts in the middle of unspeakable agony?

The closeness of bereaved parents and siblings is universal. I just returned from the National TCF Conference in Washington, DC, where 1,500 people, from all over the world and every walk of life, attended. It didn't take a name tag to identify each other. Formal introductions weren't necessary. The question, "What do you do for a living?" never came up. The words most often spoken were, "Tell me about your child (or brother or sister)." There were no strangers. Even if you were not there... you were there. *The invisible link ... is love.*



CHALLENGE AND CHANGE

Sherry Mutcher, TCF, Appleton, WI



As I look back over the past six years since our son died, I realize how much I have changed. When we talk about grieving, we often forget to mention that we grieve, too, for the person we were before our child died. We might have been energetic and fun-loving, but now are serious and absorbed. Our friends and family miss the old us too, and their comments show it. "Don't you think it's time to return to normal?" "You don't laugh as much as you used to." They are grieving for the person who will never be the same again. Like the caterpillar that shrouds itself in a cocoon, we shroud ourselves in grief when a child dies. We wonder, our families wonder - when will we come out of it? Will we make it through the long sleep? What hues will we show when we emerge? If you've ever watched a butterfly struggle from the safety of the cocoon, you'll know that the change is not quick or easy - but worth the effort! We begin to mark our struggle from the cocoon of grief when we begin to like the new us. When our priorities become different and people become more important than things; when we grasp a hand that reaches and reach in turn to pull another from the cocoon, when we embrace the change and turn the change into a challenge, then we can say proudly: "I have survived against overwhelming odds." *Even though my child's death is not worth the change in and of itself, the changes and the challenges give me hope that I can be happy. I can feel fulfilled again. I can love again.*



We can shed tears because they are gone
or we can smile because they lived.



We can close our eyes and pray that they'll come back,
Or we can open our eyes and see all they left.

Our hearts can be empty because we don't see them,
Or full of the love we shared.

We can turn our backs on tomorrow and live yesterday,
Or we can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday.

We can remember them and only that they're gone,
Or we can cherish their memory and let it live on.



We can cry and close our minds,
Be empty and turn our backs,
Or we can do what they'd want-
Smile, open our eyes, love and go on.



Read at the Queen Mum's funeral, author unknown
(Adapted for TCF by Margaret Pringle/UK)

FALL

Fall is a season of many feelings.
Autumn is here once again,
As it comes every year.
And with the leaves
My falling tears.
This time of year's
the hardest time of all.
My heart is still breaking.
Once again it is fall.



Memories once so vivid
Are seeming to fade.
My time spent with you
Seems some other age.

This season reminds me
Of grief and of pain
But yet teaches hope
And joy once again.
For the trees are still living
Beneath their grey bark,
And you, my sweet child,
Are alive in my heart.

-Cinda Schake, TCF, Butler, PA

THE COLOR OF THIS SEASON

Today, I took the
time to look
At all the colors in
the trees.



I watched as their colors changed,
With each breath of November breeze.

It hurt me to see this season...
The reds, greens, yellows & gold...
For in the empty space within my heart
There's a memory too painful to unfold.

Last year, you were here with me.
We shared laughter, tears and fun.
I will treasure those memories forever.
I will hold them dear to my heart.

And as this season rolls around again,
I can't let those memories depart.
The colors of the season can be seen.
And what a beauty they are to behold.

But the wings you wear on this very day...
Are the wings of an angel in gold.
Though the colors of this season are many,
The main one I see is blue.
It remains a stain within my heart,
As long as I am here ... without you.

Kaye Des'Ormeaux

Grandparent's Day
Sunday, September 13, 2009



How can a grandparent celebrate a day set aside for them? If you have surviving grandchildren, make a point of contacting them. Shouldn't they be contacting you? That depends on when their sibling/cousin died. Maybe their mom and dad are not aware of what day it is and even if they were they are just not able to focus on any kind of celebration. Your child (the parent of the grandchild that died) may need your support and maybe so do your surviving grandchildren.

If you have no surviving grandchildren does that mean you are no longer a grandparent? No, you will always be a grandparent. If your only child/children died before they had children you might consider the option of becoming an "adoptive grandparent" to a child who has no living grandparents. That way you each win, for there is nothing more fulfilling than a hug and "I love you" from a child. I wish you happy memories, many healing hugs – I love you.

Betty Farrel, Sarah Louise's Nana, Arlington, VA Chapter of TCF



DEATH FROM A GRANDPARENT'S POINT OF VIEW

The death of a child is the most tragic thing that can happen to anyone. It affects so many lives: family and friends and even strangers. I lost my grandchild through death, and only a grandparent can understand the love a grandparent has for a grandchild and the loss that is felt when the child dies. For a grandparent, it is a double loss. Not only is your grandchild gone, but you also watch your child die each day. The smile that was always on her face is no longer there. The hurt is so deep and the questions so many. You feel helpless as a parent. You can't kiss away the hurt as you did when he was a child for you don't understand the many feelings you are experiencing yourself. Each day you hope and pray for a little something to say or do that will be of comfort to them. It seems that there is no end to the suffering. As time goes slowly by, the healing process begins. In time, a ray of hope will show on her face and a smile will make his eyes light up again. Your child will turn to you for what comfort that you can give. There will always be a part of you that is gone, but in time you can learn to live with the part that is still there.

Ruth Eaton, TCF, Savannah, GA



**WHAT GRIEVING GRANDPARENTS
CAN DO FOR THEIR CHILDREN**

From "For Bereaved Grandparents" by Margaret H. Gerner

1. Encourage talking. Like you, bereaved parents have a strong need to talk about what they think and feel.
2. Allow your child to cry. Crying, even sobbing, is healthy and necessary.
3. Talk about your grandchild. Don't worry that it will make your child cry.
4. Listen to your bereaved child. The greatest gift you can give your child is to listen.
5. Physical support is important. You can certainly help your child in this respect if you live close by. The fatigue that is part of grief is debilitating.
6. Take the surviving grandchildren for a day or afternoon. This will give your bereaved child some time.
7. Physically hold your child.

REMEMBERING OUR BABIES – OCTOBER 15th

**PREGNANCY & INFANT LOSS
REMEMBRANCE DAY**



How does one measure how long it has been? By the number of sunsets or by the tears that have fallen? The sweet solitude of slumber gives way to morning-teared memories of all that used to be when I had you safe inside of me. Our time together is no more. Only God knows why you went away. Sometimes I forget you are no longer here as I lovingly whisper your name. and then I remember ... and life is not the same.



- Debbie Dickinson

PREGNANCY AND INFANT LOSS

In our society we avoid talking about death. The death of a baby is even more hidden because it so violates our expectations. A difficult challenge for many of us is society's refusal to acknowledge that the loss of an unborn or newly born child is the loss of a unique individual. The fact that our babies were in the womb or in our arms for such a little while adds to the pain and isolation of losing a child.



However or whenever it occurs, a baby's death is a profound loss, and one of the most painful and traumatic experiences a parent will confront in a lifetime. Our attachment can begin before conception. When we lose a child, our hopes and dreams for the child have already become a part of our life. The loss of a child, regardless of gestational age, is a loss of part of our future.

Memories, so important for the bereaved, allow us to experience a more gradual good-bye. When a child dies before or shortly after birth, we have precious few memories. Our child is gone and we have very little evidence that he or she ever really existed. This abrupt hello-good-bye relationship makes grieving very complex and painful.

Unfortunately, many friends and relatives do not recognize the depth of the loss of an unborn or newly born child. Acquaintances may never have seen the baby and find it difficult to imagine our grief over a child we have never seen or perhaps held only briefly. Because so few people actually knew our child, our grief may be even more isolating.

Although nothing can take away the pain, it may be helpful to know what others have experienced or found comforting as they struggled to deal with the intense grief that followed the death of their child. As we travel this path, it may be helpful to seek out those who are supportive in helping us cope with the loss of our babies. May we reach out and comfort one another on this journey.

- TCF, Vedugo Hills

Death leaves a heartache no one can heal,
Love leaves a memory no one can steal.

- found on a headstone in Ireland

PLEASE LET ME MOURN

I've never lost a child before, and I don't understand all these emotions I am feeling. Will you try to understand and help me?

PLEASE LET ME MOURN - I may act and appear together, but I am not. Often it hurts so much I can hardly bear it.

PLEASE LET ME MOURN - Don't expect too much from me. I will try to help you know what I can and cannot handle. Sometimes I am not always sure.

PLEASE LET ME MOURN - Let me talk about my child. I need to talk; it's part of the healing. Don't pretend nothing has happened; it hurts terribly when you do. I love my child very much, and my memories are all I have now. They are very precious to me.

PLEASE LET ME MOURN - Sometimes I cry and act differently, but it's all part of grieving. My tears are necessary and needed and should not be held back. It even helps when you cry with me. Please don't fear my tears.

PLEASE LET ME MOURN - What I need most is your friendship, your sympathy, your prayers, your support, and your understanding love. I am not the same person I was before my child died and I never will be again. Hopefully we can all grow from this tragedy.

PLEASE LET ME MOURN - God gives me the strength to face each day and the hope that I will survive with His help and yours. Time will heal some of the pain, but there will always be an empty place in my heart.

PLEASE LET ME MOURN - And thank you for helping me through the most difficult time of my life.

- Lonnie Forland, TCF, Northwood, IA

What Grieving People Want You to Know

- **I am not strong.** I'm just numb. When you tell me I am strong, I feel that you don't see me.
- **I will not recover.** This is not a cold or the flu. I'm not sick. I'm grieving and that's different. I will not always be grieving as intensely, but I will never forget my loved one and rather than recover, I want to incorporate his life and love into the rest of my life. That person is part of me and always will be, and sometimes I will remember him with joy and other times with a tear. Both are okay.
- **I don't have to accept the death.** Yes, I have to understand that it has happened and it is real, but there are just some things in life that are not acceptable.
- **Please don't avoid me.** You can't catch my grief. My world is painful, and when you are too afraid to call me or visit or say anything, you isolate me at a time when I most need to be cared about. If you don't know what to say, just come over, give me a hug or touch my arm, and gently say, "I'm sorry." You can even say, "I just don't know what to say, but I care, and want you to know that."
- **Please don't say, "Call me if you need anything."** I'll never call you because I have no idea what I need. Trying to figure out what you could do for me takes more energy than I have. So, in advance, let me give you some ideas:
 - ♥Bring food.
 - ♥Offer to take my children to a movie or game so that I have some moments to myself.
 - ♥Send me a card on special holidays, birthdays (mine, his or hers), or the anniversary of the death, and be sure to mention her name. You can't make me cry. The tears are here and I will love you for giving me the opportunity to shed them because someone cared enough about me to reach out on this difficult day.
 - ♥Ask me more than once to join you at a movie or lunch or dinner. I may say no at first or even for a while, but please don't give up on me because somewhere down the line, I may be ready, and if you've given up, then I really will be alone.

--Virginia A. Simpson, news@beyondindigo.com

Permission to Mourn

The holder of this certificate,

is hereby entitled to publicly acknowledge his or her loss, mourn openly, to share narratives of the loss, and to recruit social support in his or her own way and time,

without apology or embarrassment during this holiday season. Tears, memories, silence, uncertainty, and strong emotions are hereby enfranchised.

Please treat this griever with kindness, compassion, and love.

Signed this _____ day of _____, in the year _____.

This certification has no expiration date.

With Love, We Remember Them...



In Memory of ...
BRETT PHILLIP Q.

February 1986 – January 2009

“His life though too short was lived to the fullest;
his legacy hugs and kisses.

I love him and miss him terribly.”

From Michelle D.

In Memory of ...

JACKIE N.

July 1983 – January 2009

From Al and Peggy N.

In Memory of ...

AMBER W.

From the Kevin W. family

In Memory of ...

MIKE S.

May 1951 – July 1997

MARIAM S.

June 1956 – July 1997

“Not a day goes by that you are not in our thoughts – 12
long years now. We love you.”

From Jack and Joan S.

THANK YOU Microsoft for your matching gift program.

TCF is an IRS 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

♥ All gifts are tax deductible.

♥ Ask your employer if they participate in a “Gift Matching”
program. You may be able to double the value of *your* gift
through this program.

♥ For our chapter to be a recipient of **United Way** funds you
MUST specify The Compassionate Friends (TCF) of Seattle
/ King County when you fill out the United Way form at your
workplace.

Altho' one of a bereaved parent's, sibling's or grandparent's greatest desires is to hear our beloved child's name spoken and to see it in print, we are not using full names or entire dates in our newsletter nor on our website. Due to concerns about Identity Theft and on advice from the Nat'l TCF office we have had to modify our “With Love, We Remember Them” page.

♥ **TCF asks for donations in memory of our children who have died.** ♥

Our chapter is funded solely through donations; therefore we sincerely appreciate your support.

♥ **Please help us help others by making a LOVE GIFT today.** ♥

LOVE GIFT FORM

Love gifts are **tax-deductible donations** made to the Seattle-King County Chapter of TCF in memory of
your beloved child, sibling, grandchild or loved one.

If you wish to give a Love Gift, send your check made out to:

Seattle-King County TCF.

Your name: _____

Address: _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number (if we have any questions): _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

In memory of (name of child): _____

Date of Birth: _____

Date of Death: _____

Special Message: _____

Send checks and forms to:



Seattle – King County TCF
Love Gifts
P.O. Box 66896
Seattle, WA 98166-0896



The Compassionate Friends
Seattle-King County Chapter
P.O. Box 66896
Seattle, WA 98166-0896



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*SEPTEMBER &
OCTOBER 2009*

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Changing Seasons

Rosemary Maier



Fall is the time when nature changes dramatically. Days are shorter, the air is crisper; the leaves begin to change color, and children return to school. I used to love the fall. This was the season of order after a carefree summer. Time for new beginnings at school, a time of choosing new interests among the array of possibilities....

For all us bereaved parents, changing seasons are a poignant reminder that another block of time has passed, another season will begin without our beloved children. Each season has its own memories, and like turning pages in the family album, we experience the joy and the sorrow over again. We remember buying school clothes and new felt pens, the soccer tournaments, and the excitement of a new teacher...only for us, the memories stop growing. Once again we ask ourselves what would our child be doing right now?

Jessica Easton has mentioned that changing seasons can cause depression or restlessness. Fall may usher in feelings we thought we had overcome. How can we fight those feelings?

Autumn is a time of splendor. The leaves are crisping into orange and red. The geese are gathering overhead, and the air is filled with the perfume of sun-ripened apples and early morning fog. We can draw strength from the orderly progression of nature. Of all things, the seasons keep on changing in a predictable pattern. Even though our lives have been shattered, we can draw strength from the beauty and solidness of the natural world around us.

Breathe deeply, re-live your favorite memories and then go for a walk. Enjoy the beauty around you, combine memories from the past with a special moment of remembrance today. Make this a new tradition.

