



**The  
Compassionate  
Friends**  
RVA Chapter  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Email: [tcfva@hotmail.com](mailto:tcfva@hotmail.com) Website: [www.compassionatefriendsrva.org](http://www.compassionatefriendsrva.org) Phone: (804) 458-9000

"Grief is part of who I am. It lives in the very bones of me.... So does Love!

— Author Unknown

## The Myth of Closure

Written by Ashley Davis Prend, ACSW – Hospice of North Idaho, July 2018

"When will I begin to feel better? When will I return to normal? When will I achieve some closure?" grievors often ask. Closure, our culture tells us, will bring about a tidy ending, a sense of completion. Some grievors hope that the desired magical closure will occur after the funeral or memorial service. Others are confident it will come once they have cleared out their loved one's room. Or maybe after a special personal ritual. Or perhaps after the first anniversary comes and goes – "surely then, we will have closure," we think. We pray....

The reason we long for closure, of course, is because we would like to neatly seal away all of this pain. We would like to close all of the sad, confused, desperate, angry feelings out of our life. We would like to put all of this behind us. Closure. What an odd concept really, as if we could truly close the door on pain – turn the lock and throw away the key. The truth is far more complex, of course. Closure is for business deals. Closure is for real estate transactions. Closure is not for feelings or for people we love.

Closure simply does not exist emotionally, not in a pure sense. We cannot close the door on the past as if it didn't exist because, after losing someone dear to us, we never forget that person or the love we shared. And in some ways, we never entirely get over the loss. We learn to live with the loss, to integrate it into our new identity.

Imagine if we really could end this chapter in our life, completely. It would mean losing our memories, our connections to those we love. If we really found closure, it would ironically hurt even more because the attachment

### MEETING INFORMATION

Monthly Meetings are held at 7:00 pm on the last Tuesday of each month at

**St. Matthias' Episcopal Church**  
11300 W. Huguenot Road  
Midlothian, VA 21113

### UPCOMING MEETING TOPICS

April 30

*Guest Speaker*

Patti Cox and Angie Morriss from [Crater Community Hospice](#) will speak on how men and women grieve differently.

We will also have sharing sessions.



## Need to Talk? We're here to listen!

We know that meeting once a month is not enough for some people. If you need someone to talk to in-between meetings please call us! We do our best to answer every call as it comes in, however, sometimes we are not able to do so. If that happens, please leave a message and we will return your call within a day. Please call us anytime at (804) 458-9000.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

#### **The Compassionate Friends RVA**

Co-Leaders:

Wanda Moser, Robert Boyle and  
Linda Tebault

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#### **Mailing Address:**

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Midlothian, VA 23114

#### **Meeting Address:**

St. Matthias' Episcopal Church  
11300 W. Huguenot Road  
Midlothian, VA 21113

#### **Regional Coordinator**

Kathy Collins

(703) 425-9504

email: tiffaniesmom@verizon.net

#### **TCF National Office**

The Compassionate Friends

PO Box 3696

Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696

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[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

would be severed. And this attachment is vital to us – the memories are treasures to be held close, not closed out.

Perhaps it is better to think in terms of healing. Yes, we can process our pain and move to deeper and deeper levels of healing. Yes, we can find ways to move on and channel our pain into productive activities. Yes, we can even learn to smile again and laugh again and love again.

But let's not ever think that we'll close the door completely on what this loss means, for if we did that, we would unwittingly close the door on all the love that we shared. And that would truly be a loss to terrible to bear.

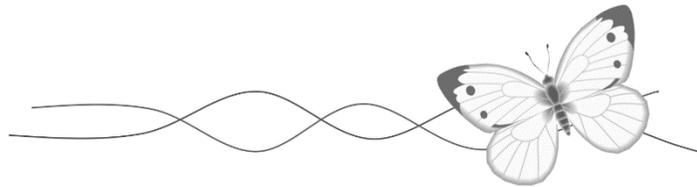
## Driving

Written by Shelly Wanger, The Andrew Poems 1994

You know how it is when you are driving: suddenly you realize you've driven several miles, but you don't remember getting there. With grief the miles are years. Driving is habit. The destination changes; you are to turn left, but you still turn right. When the child in the store calls, "Mom!" I turn the way I always did.

We detour to avoid obstacles. I drive blocks out of my way to bypass his playground. If you are old enough, you will see a car like the one you owned when you were young, and you will travel back through time. Yesterday, I saw my child in the passenger seat of a small car approaching a red light. I changed lanes to get a better look. His head was the same, his blue eyes familiar. He was close, but his mother drove him away.

I should have driven forward, but I couldn't. Wiping my eyes, I could see in my rear-view mirror the driver behind me honking his horn, screaming, "What's the matter with you?". The very question I was asking myself.



## Memories

Written by Collette Covington, TCF, Lake Charles, LA

The certain special memories that follow me each day,  
Case your shadow in my life in a certain way.

Sometimes the blowing wind or the lyrics of a song,  
Make me stop and think of you, sometimes all day long.

Memories are good to have to share and keep in my heart,  
Just in knowing that you're still inside makes sure we'll never part.



**THERE IS STILL TIME TO REGISTER**

## RVA Walk to Remember

April 13, 2019

10:00 am – 1:00 pm

Church of the Epiphany

11000 Smoketree Drive

Richmond, VA 23236

**REGISTER TODAY**

Cost is \$25.00 (ages 13+) Lunch and \*T-Shirt Included

Children 12 and Under are Free, lunch included

Lunch Provided by Carytown Burgers & Fries

*(veggie option available)*

Dove Release and Raffle Items

Join Us for a day of remembrance and support!

\*T-Shirts cannot be guaranteed if registering after 4/1

The Compassionate Friends [National Conference](#) is a weekend spent surrounded by other bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. It is a place where hope grows and friendships are made with others who truly understand.

COPING STRATEGIES FOR GRIEF & LOSS  
with Karla Helbert LPC & Anne Moss Rogers  
Wednesday, April 10th  
6:30-8:30PM  
\*Admission by donation  
Proceeds benefiting Richmond MISS Foundation

### **LOCAL EVENT: Coping Strategies for Grief & Loss**

Wednesday, April 10, 2019

6:30 PM – 8:30 PM EDT

Learn coping strategies in an interactive environment to help you manage the pain of loss and learn how others have moved through grief in a healthy and productive way.

## **Guest Speaker Anne Moss Rogers**

Anne is known as an [emotionally naked](#) Public Speaker sharing messages of hope and healing. After the death of her youngest son, Charles, she sold her company and began focusing on taboo topics of suicide, addiction, mental illness and grief. She is also the President of [The Beacon Tree Foundation](#) and was featured as a [CBS6 Heroes Among Us](#). Join Anne's [mailing list](#) for inspirational updates as well as a copy of her eBook, "[Coping Strategies for Grief & Loss](#)".

*"Grief is love's shadow. The presence of absence. An unbearable weight of emptiness!"*

# We Remember – April 2019



JONATHAN JAMES (JONO) CURTIN	APRIL 4
ELIANA MEEKS	APRIL 4
CODY (CODE) COFFMAN	APRIL 5
JORDAN KUZIK	APRIL 8
HUNTER HATCHER	APRIL 9
MICHAEL B. SCOTT	APRIL 11
DANIELLE MARIE PERRY TEBAULT	APRIL 14
KELLY BOYLE	APRIL 16
CATHERINE AYLOR MILLER	
BARKSDALE	APRIL 20
LEA WILSON	APRIL 22
REBECCA SAADY	APRIL 23
FREDERICK SWOPE	APRIL 24
MARK SCOTT JR.	APRIL 26
DAVID SCOTT PETERSON	APRIL 29

LINDSEY PERRIN CRIDER	APRIL 7
CHRISTOPHER (LIL CHRIS) JOHNSON	APRIL 9
CHRISTOPHER DAY	APRIL 10
ANDREW MCKEE	APRIL 12
BENJAMIN LARUE	APRIL 13
DAJANAE WHITE	APRIL 13
HUNTER HATCHER	APRIL 19
DANIELLE MARIE PERRY TEBAULT	APRIL 20
GRANTLAND SEDILLO	APRIL 27
STEPHANIE COX	APRIL 28

*I will*  
**LOVE YOU**  
*forever*

A decorative graphic of a golden arrow with a feathered tail, pointing to the right.

*"When someone dies, you don't get over your grief by forgetting, you get through it by remembering."*  
- Author Unknown



*"The Compassionate Friends is about transforming the pain of grief into the elixir of hope. It takes people out of the isolation society imposes on the bereaved and lets them express their grief naturally. With the shedding of tears, healing comes. And the newly bereaved get to see people who have survived and are learning to live and love again."*

*- Simon Stephens, founder of The Compassionate Friends*

## **WELCOME**

*though we are sorry you're here*

It is always hard to say "Welcome" to people coming to our meetings for the first time because we are so very sorry for the reason which made you eligible for membership in The Compassionate Friends (TCF).

However, we are glad you found the courage to come. We cannot take away your pain, but we can offer our friendship and support. We ask that you attend 3 – 4 meetings to see how TCF can help you. It might be that you hear just the right words or make just the right connection with another parent which will make a world of difference to you. Discover the special acceptance that occurs with those who truly do understand!

# WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT

## **Do you shop at Kroger?**

We are in Kroger's Community Rewards program! When you link your Kroger card to our chapter, Kroger will donate a percentage of what you spend. Please consider joining this program in support of our organization.

To enroll your card:

- Pick up a Kroger Plus card at any Kroger service desk
- Go to <http://www.kroger.com/>
- Click on Sign In / Register
- Sign up by inputting your zip code or clicking on your favorite Kroger store
- Once verified, click on My Account
- Click on Edit Kroger Community Rewards
- Enter our non-profit number of PQ998 or The Compassionate Friends #1422



## **Do You Shop on Amazon? Use Amazon Smile!**

Click [here](#) to begin using Amazon Smile for your purchases. You may also select The Compassionate Friends Chapter #1422 as your charity. Be sure to bookmark our Amazon Smile page and use it every time you shop on Amazon!

**amazon**smile  
You shop. Amazon gives.



**The Compassionate Friends**

**Supporting Family  
After a Child Dies**

*Please show your support by donating now.*

**LOVE GIFTS**

*Never expected. Always appreciated.*

There are no fees or dues to belong to The Compassionate Friends. As parents, grandparents, and siblings find help within the group, they sometimes make a "Love Gift" to our chapter. It is a way to honor special people in their lives or remember children and others who have passed on. Love gifts allow us to offer resources such as this newsletter, books, and brochures to assist grieving families. They also allow us to provide information to professionals and others who impact the lives and feelings of the bereaved. Love gifts are just that, gifts. They are not required of anyone, but they are very helpful and very much appreciated. We are grateful for all of the generous gifts that have been provided that allow us to continue to support our [mission](#).

The Compassionate Friends is a 501c(3) non-profit organization and your donations are fully tax deductible. If you would like to make a love gift you can either [click here to donate](#) via PayPal or you can complete and print this form and mail it with your donation to:

The Compassionate Friends Richmond Chapter  
1119 Worsham Green Terrace, Midlothian, Virginia 23114

Contributor's Name:

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Address:

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Phone and/or Email Address:

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This gift is made In Memory / Honor of:

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This is a Chapter Gift (without memorial or honorarium)

Donations may also be made from our website by visiting:

[http://www.compassionatefriendsrva.org/support\\_our\\_chapter.aspx](http://www.compassionatefriendsrva.org/support_our_chapter.aspx)

*thank you*



**WE LOVE  
OUR VOLUNTEERS**

Are you interested in volunteering? Want to learn more? Join us for one or more of our Steering Committee Meetings.

- May 5
- July 14
- Sept 15
- Nov 10

All meetings are 2-4 on Sundays. Locations to be announced.

Please let us know if you're interested. We'd love to have you join us as a volunteer!