



The Waterbury, CT Chapter of

# The Compassionate Friends

July/Aug 2010

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*The Compassionate Friends is an international self-help group for parents and their families who have experienced the death of a child of any age, including adult children, and from any cause. We offer hope in a network of support, friendship and understanding that only friends who have "been there" can give.*

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## Summer Thoughts

Summer is a time when things naturally slow down, a time when many are waiting for the orderly routine of their lives to begin again. For those of us in grief whose lives are already in limbo, it can seem endless if we let it. Seeing children, babies and teenagers is not easy for us, and we see them everywhere from shopping centers to beaches. Everyone is out living, loving, enjoying carefree activities with their children, and we want to scream, "It's not fair!" I was sitting on my patio one evening at dusk recently listening to the shouts of children playing and I was crying as I remembered the sounds that my child used to make. I became very depressed as I thought what a long summer this was going to be.

In my reverie, I was reminded of a recent comment that I had heard at a TCF meeting: "My child was such a loving giving person. He would not want me to waste my life being bitter." I also remembered a good friend telling me to "count my blessings" and naming all the things I had to be grateful for. I was furious at the time. Nothing could compensate for the fact that my child was dead.

Now, sitting in the twilight of this early summer evening, I began to see things differently. I determined that this summer would not be an eternity; I would not let it be. I decided first of all to stay busy. I know I can find plenty to do if I only take the time to look. I am also going to try to enjoy the simple things that used to give me so much pleasure, like working in my garden and flowers. I then decided to try to be truly grateful for the blessings that I have, like my husband, my surviving children, my job, friends, etc.

It has been almost 5 years for me and I know that last year this would not have worked. Of course, I still have times of sadness. I know I always will, but I have decided that in the process of grieving, we close so many doors that the only way to recovery is to reopen them gradually at our own pace.

I know I will never be the same person I was before the death of my child, but I hope eventually in some ways I will be a better person because suffering can be beneficial if we learn and grow through it. A year ago, I didn't feel this way and know I still have a long way to go, but in the meantime, I know the greatest tribute to my child will be to enjoy this summer as he would have.

By Libby Gonzalez, TCF Huntsville, AL, Reprinted from TCF NorthShore/Boston, Summer 1997



*"For years I never knew whether the twilight was the ending of the day  
or the beginning of the night  
and then, suddenly one day,  
I understood that this did not matter at all,  
for time is a circle  
and so there can be no beginning and no ending,  
and this is how I came to know that birth and death are one,  
and it is neither the coming or the going that is of consequence.  
What is of consequence is the beauty that one gathers in this interlude called life."*

From "Come Walk Among the Stars," by Winston Abbott  
Reprinted from Bereaved Parents of the USA Newsletter, Spring May 2008