

For Siblings



National Conference of TCF

We are the bereaved siblings of The Compassionate Friends. We have lost our brothers and sisters. That loss is like a color, painted on us all, making us different from those around us. For some siblings, the loss is primary – new and sharp and bright. For others, like me, it has aged to a warm patina, both softer and sometimes richer for the time we have worn it. But it is always there. And for three days out of the year, we bring our colors, bright reds and blues, brushed bronze and oxidized copper, and we swirl together in a kaleidoscope of colors – laughing and crying, healing and remembering. We are like a painting. A tribute to those who are no longer at our sides.

Our time together at the National Conference of The Compassionate Friends is a time to let our true colors show. The ones we often have to hide under a cloak of “normal” in order to exist in our daily lives. We come from different cities, we are different ages, yet for that one weekend, we are all the same. We are in a place where it is safe to giggle at a funny story, to shed tears, to even cut loose a little. We all understand, and we have much that we can both teach to and learn from one another. It is a place to make friends, a time to take chances and explore new feelings, and an opportunity to let our bright greens, fiery reds, or soft golds shine through.

By Karen Soltero in memory of her sister, Wendy
Reprinted from *We Need Not Walk Alone*, Autumn 2009

I Carried Him

I went into the school.
I felt cold, a feeling of death in the air
My body shook, my knees gave way,
I stumbled to his locker.
The halls were empty.
I looked at the locker,
Took too many tries to open it.
In front of me were his books, jackets and papers.



As I cleaned out his locker, tears came.
Never felt so alone.
Gathered his stuff in my arms.
Tears covered my face.
Slowly walked down the hall.
A feeling –
I felt him.
He was in my arms.



It felt like I was carrying his body in my arms.
I cried, many tears filled my eyes.
Couldn't stop.
Thoughts entered my mind –
He was no more.

By Donald Freeman, TCF Brunswick, ME
Reprinted from *This Healing Journey*

Questions

I'm weak. I try to cry but the tears don't come. I want to scream! I want to break something! I'm so tired. I'm tired of feeling like this. I'm tired of waking up every morning. I'm tired of pretending to be okay. I'm tired of being strong. I'm scared. I'm scared of what just happened. I'm scared of what will become of us. I'm scared of the future. I'm scared of losing someone else. I'm scared to live. I'm scared to love. I find myself living in constant fear. The fear of what? Of life and all life has to offer. I just want to be happy. I want to laugh again. I want to be normal. I want this horrible feeling deep inside just to go away. I wish I could understand. I want to know why! I want to understand it. I wish I could have him back. Why? Why him? What's the purpose? When will the pain go away? I pray for strength. We all need strength. I want to smile again. I want to know the meaning of happiness. It seems that in one second all my happiness and the life I had always know was totally destroyed. We all have to start over. Where do we begin? How do we begin? My heart is broken. My world has fallen apart.

By Amy Young, TCF NE GA
Reprinted from *This Healing Journey*

Forever Thirteen

He would have been a junior
He should have been on the football team
He could have been a wrestler
He might have been...

He would have been 17 this year,
He should have been laughing and running about
He could have been chasing the girls
He might have been...

He would have been blowing his French horn
He should have been giving his teachers a hard time
He could have been learning how to drive
He might have been...

Except now he is forever 13...

By Lorrie Beyl, TCF Colorado Springs, CO
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