

# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS INC.

International Organization Offering Friendship and Understanding to Bereaved Parents

## MIAMI COUNTY CHAPTER NO.1870

### August 2024 NEWSLETTER Vol. 32 No.8

Facebook page “The Compassionate Friends of Miami County Ohio Chapter 1870”.  
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### ***Companion Sojourners***

*The dictionary defines the word “sojourn” as temporary place where one may stop, rest, visit, dwell, abide and lodge.*

*The Compassionate Friends is an organization of fellow sojourners. At our monthly meetings we stop for a while to find respite from a world that does not understand what it means to lose a child. We find a safe dwelling where there are others who are just like us. We don’t need to have any special skills to be a sojourner. As bereaved parents, we instinctively reach out to one another. Those of us who have been on our journey for a while are drawn to comfort the others who have more recently embarked on their path of grief. We don’t need to say any special words. A discerning look, a listening ear, or a gentle touch can be balm the other person needs to give them a moment’s solace. We are companion sojourners, wounded healers and compassionate friend.*

*~shared by Janet Reyes  
TCF Alamo Area Chapter, TX*

**Meetings are held at:  
Zion Lutheran Church**

**14 W Walnut St**

**Tipp City, OH 45371**

**(entrance by parking lot on W. Walnut St.,  
handicap accessible)**


**Next Meeting: August 22, 2024**

**7:00 pm**

**Topic**

**A Dad’s Journey of Surviving Grief –**

**presenter: Brian Gillespie**

Thank you to everyone who helped bring the annual picnic and butterfly release together to make it a beautiful night to honor our children. 

# Bereavement by Drugs

By Philippa Skinner- a counselor, Philippa's book, See You Soon: A Mother's Story of Drugs, Grief and Hope is recommended by The Compassionate Friends.

Our son Jim died five years ago of a heroin overdose at the age of 21. It was a total body blow for us. Although he had messed around with cannabis when he was 16 or 17, we believed he had moved on, and we didn't know he was involved with drugs of any kind at the time of his death, let alone a drug like heroin. There is a whole lot I'd like to tell you about Jim; what he was like, what he enjoyed, and there's so much I could write about the pain of losing him and the years of sorrow that followed. Here, though, I want to discipline myself to think about one particular result of losing him in the way we did; the struggle with feelings of shame, stigma, and subsequent isolation. William Feigelman wrote about his research into the specific needs of families bereaved by drugs. He highlighted both the social stigma faced by such families and also the paucity of resources available to them to help them through their grief. As I read his article, I found it rang true to my own experience. Then Jim died, though I was surrounded by much kindness, I was unable to find specific support to help me in my loss. Sadly, at that difficult time, I felt unable to contact groups such as The Compassionate Friends UK or Cruse Bereavement because I had a dread that I would not be met with sympathy, and that Jim would be judged. My gut fear was that no one would care about him because he had died of a drug overdose. I was afraid he and his family would be labeled and stereotyped. In my worst imaginings, I could hear voices saying things like, "The world's better off without people like him," or "Well, it was his own choice to take drugs." In other words, I feared the judgment of myself and our family and of Jim. At that time, it was very hard to walk into social gatherings of any kind, as my bereaved mind and soul struggled with the anxiety that behind the kind and concerned faces were hidden harsh and unloving words and thoughts. I loved Jim so much and knew what a lovely young man he was and how much potential he had, and I couldn't bear the thought that on top of the wrenching pain of losing him, other people might be thinking badly about him. Such tangled and painful emotions caused me to feel very alone in those early months. Who could I speak to about such awful feelings; who could possibly understand? I wanted everyone to know how utterly wrong it was that Jim had died, how special and loved he was, and that he mattered just as much as any other young person who had died of any other cause, natural or accidental. Battling with such pain and not knowing where to turn, I found myself at the end of two years still deep in grief. It's true that I was getting on with other parts of my life, caring for my family and pursuing a counseling course, but everything I was doing was coming from this deep pot of grief and desperation, and it was exhausting me. They were truly wearying months. Eventually, in November, two years after Jim died, I was guided to a charity in the UK called DrugFam, set up not long before by another mum who had also lost her son to heroin. DrugFam was different from many other support groups in that they aimed not only to help families facing the nightmare of looking after loved ones with addiction issues in life but also in death. Now, at last, I was able to meet and talk with other people who were experiencing many of the same emotions I was facing. We were able to support one another and talk about our children or siblings in a safe place where we knew no one would judge either them or us. There were lots of tears, of course, but now I was not alone. What a relief it was to know that all these terrible, confused feelings were not unique to me. It became increasingly clear to me that if the stigma of drug death was going to begin to be lifted, people who had endured it needed to speak out and tell others about their loved ones as a way of challenging commonly held preconceptions about drug users and to help a wider group to understand. For this reason, I wrote a book telling Jim's story and my reflection on living with grief and the stigma of loss by drugs. In the UK at least, there was a gap in the market for such a book. I had longed in the earlier days to read about how others in our situation had survived but had found nothing. So this book became my contribution—a small beginning, but one that has now reached out to many others bereaved in this way, as well as those who have suffered other kinds of loss. It is also, of course, my memorial to Jim; my way of sharing him with others and letting it be known how very proud I am of him. When I get the opportunity, I speak at meetings about Jim, the wider issue of drugs, and the shame and stigma felt by the families of users, both in life and in death. I've been privileged to address the North Staffordshire Compassionate Friends and experienced genuine warmth and acceptance there, and not the lack of understanding I had originally feared. Above all, I share a mother's love and pride in a wonderful son. And that many who hear me speak feel released to come and share their own hurts and pains that they have often held secretly for many years. This is a huge privilege for me and a powerful way of continuing Jim's contribution to the world he was part of for too short a time. With others in DrugFam, I am writing a booklet aimed specifically at helping those who have suffered a drug- or alcohol-related loss to give them some pointers in their pain so that they might know more of what to expect and where to turn for help as the days and weeks turn to months and years. I also volunteer for the Bereaved Parent Support team at Care for the Family, another UK charity. There, I offer support and friendship to the parents who make contact who have lost loved ones through drugs. These are just small things one by one, but they are added to many other small acts being done in other places by other people I'll probably never meet. Together, we can begin to make a difference and share our message that those who die from drugs are just ordinary folk with their own stories, loved by many, and those who are left behind need the same understanding and compassion as any other bereaved person.

NEED TO TALK TO SOMEONE?  
A listening ear is sometimes the best medicine.

- Kim Bundy (suicide) 573-9877
- Pam Fortener (cancer) 238-4075
- Donnie Fortener (cancer) 760-2238
- Pam Fortener (siblings) 238-4075
- Cathy Duff (auto accident) 473-5533
- Jackie Glawe (auto accident) 478-3318

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Chapter website by Mica Glaser Jones:  
[www.thecompassionatefriendsmiamicounty.com](http://www.thecompassionatefriendsmiamicounty.com)

## CHAPTER NEWS

### Upcoming meetings:

- Aug - *A Dad's Journey of surviving Grief*
- Sep - *TBA*

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*Thank You*   
*for your love gifts!*

- ★ *Sara & Jerry Cron in memory of son, Keith Cron.*
- ★ *Rob & Bev Gardner in memory of son, Jeff Gardner.*
- ★ *Dee Rawlins in memory of daughter, Jennifer Schoeb.*
- ★ *Candy Farst in memory of daughter, Matt Farst.*
- ★ *Linda Joyce in memory of daughter, Ashley Joyce Perez.*

Love Gifts should be made out to: The Compassionate Friends and mailed to **Cindy Glaser, 5255 Rudy Road Tipp City, Ohio 45371**. Please send your donation by the 15th of the month prior to the month you want your child remembered in the newsletter.



### **FORKED!**

*Why the fork?  
it took me where I did not want to go  
a state of shock  
a different reality  
a pit of darkness  
give me the spoon, I want the spoon!  
The spoon would circle back around to where I was  
before  
before it ever happened  
instead I'm thrust to the tines  
stabbed  
it hurts! I can't breathe!  
I SCREAM!  
..... SOB!  
..... WAIL!!!!  
dropped over the edge, into the sorrow  
the never ending grief  
the loss  
lost  
no choice  
the abyss  
separated from the world  
alone  
forever  
Changed*

*~by Jackie Glawe, TCF Miami County, Ohio chapter  
(daughter Jordan was lost to a car accident Aug 6, 2009)*

*Thank you to Power 107.1 in  
Troy, Ohio*



## *Our Children Lovingly Remembered*

### *August Birthdays*

Child—Parent, Grandparent, Sibling

*Adam Douglas Cheadle - Gary & Elaine Meyers  
Brian Keith Willis - Keith & Linda Willis  
Brian Patrick "Stew" Stewart - Joel & Connie  
Kempton  
David Allsbrooks - Brenda Slifer  
Jill Myers - Sandra Saurber  
Leslie M. Turner - Randy & Debra Turner  
Lydia Herrick - Patty Herrick  
Matthew Shane Conover - Sandra Conover  
Nicole Barker - Rod & Kathy Barker  
Ryan S. Thuma - Scott & Renee Thuma  
Shaun Bradley Duff - Michael & Catherine Duff  
Tony Robert Lavy - Robert E. & Sharon Lavy  
Judy Rajah – Rasha Alkazbari  
Billy Ladd - Ronald Ladd  
Emily Watson - Mary Watson*



### *August Angel-versaries*

Child—Parent, Grandparent, Sibling

*Brad M. Massie - Barbara Massie  
Christine Taylor - Ann Anderson  
Denise R. Brown - Darlene N. Brown  
James Hatfield - Betty White  
Jeffery L. Miller - Marilyn Miller  
Jill Myers - Sandra Saurber  
John A. Brower - Robert & Barbara Brower  
Jordan Elizabeth Glawe - Jeff & Jackie Glawe  
Samuel James Barga - Linda Barga  
Sara Krum - Faith Krum  
Stephanie Rain - Ed & Kathy Sams  
Matthew L. Farst – Candice Farst  
Grady Lyons – Jason & Kristi Lyons  
Madison Bayless – Jeremy & Chandler  
Andy Suerdieck – Mike & Cynthia Suerdieck*



*We all know how difficult those "Special Days" can be - birthdays and death anniversary days. Please remember these parents on their special days and let them know that they are not alone; someone cares about their pain and their grief. It means so much to be remembered!*

*Please let me know if I have omitted a child, misspelled a name or have published an incorrect date. I know how important it is to bereaved families to have their children remembered. If you receive this newsletter and you have not given us the name and dates for your child, but want them listed here, please contact me – Jackie Glawe/Editor, Kim Bundy/Chapter leader or Cindy Glaser/Treasurer*

### *Child Loss*

*is not an event, it is an  
indescribable journey  
of*

### *Survival*

**“DON’T CRY BECAUSE IT’S  
OVER...SMILE BECAUSE IT  
HAPPENED”**

I cry when I think about how much I  
miss my brother!

I cry when I long to hear his voice or  
see him come around a corner.

I cry when I think about all the  
times we won’t be sharing together  
anymore--holidays, birthdays, family  
times.

I cry when I think about the wonderful  
person he was, and how many more  
incredible things he could have  
accomplished, if he was still here.

I cry when I think of why he had to go  
so soon, and what I could have done to  
help him stay with us a little longer.

I cry when I think of his pain, and I  
think of why it had to happen to  
someone so undeserving of it.

I cry when I think about my own two  
children, and the uncle they will never  
get to truly know, and the fun times  
they will never get to have together.

I cry when I think of all the people  
who will never get to meet my brother,  
and who will never get to experience  
his warmth and caring.

I cry when I think of the family of his  
own, that my brother will never get to  
have.

I cry when I think of the pain and hurt  
I see in my parents, as they endure the  
suffering caused from losing a child.

I cry when I think of the pain my sister  
and I share, as we work through the  
loss of our little brother.

I smile when I think of the thirty years  
of great times we had together.

I smile when I think of how happy we  
were to get a little brother.

I smile when I think of how much he  
was spoiled by us, as the baby of the  
family.

I smile when I think of how much I respected  
him, as he grew up to become  
an outstanding young man, Marine  
and Police Officer.

I smile when I think of his humor, outgoing  
personality, and awesome smile.

I smile when I think of our last few  
times together and the talks we had,  
and the support he was there to lend.

I smile when I think of all the all-too  
few good years my children got to  
spend with their uncle Denny.

I smile when I think of all the people  
he touched, and the lives he made such  
a difference in.

I smile when I think of how proud my  
family has always been of my brother.

I smile when I think of how loved my  
brother is, and always will be, no matter where  
he is.

I smile when I think about how lucky  
I am to have gotten to have someone

like my brother in my life, no matter how far-  
too-short our time was  
together.

I smile when I think of him watching  
over me, and being with me, wherever  
I go, in my heart, where he will never  
be forgotten.

“Don’t cry because it’s over... Smile  
because it happened.”

~Kelly Mallory Herrmann  
From This Healing Journey  
An Anthology for Bereaved Siblings



**The  
Compassionate  
Friends**

Miami County Chapter  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies  
2445 N Montgomery County Line Rd  
Tipp City OH 45371

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

*The Compassionate Friends is a self-help organization which offers support to families who have experienced the death of a child. Only a person who has experienced the trauma of losing a child can fully understand the pain and suffering involved.*

*We gather to listen) to share) and to support each other in the resolution of our grief. We need not walk alone. we are The Compassionate Friends.*

**MISSION STATEMENT** ... The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.

***If you are receiving our newsletter for the 1st time,***

it is because someone told us that you might find it helpful. To find out more about The Compassionate Friends, please call our Chapter Leader, Kim Bundy (937) 573-9877. We cordially invite you to our monthly meetings held on the fourth Thursday of each month. Nothing is ever expected of you. You don't have to speak a single word. Parents who do attend, find comfort, support, friendship and understanding from others who have also lost a child. You do not have to come alone - bring a family member or friend with you.

**You need not walk alone!**



IF YOU ARE RECEIVING THIS NEWSLETTER, AND WISH TO HAVE YOUR NAME REMOVED FROM OUR MAILING LIST, PLEASE CALL OR TEXT (937) 478-3318 AND LEAVE A MESSAGE.

Thank you.