

# F CUS ONLINE

Bereaved families offering friendship, support and understanding to each other

No 126

Jan-Feb-March 2006

Supported by SESIAHS

FOCUS ONLINE is an edited edition of the printed news letter published for TCF Members. This edition has had surnames and personal phone numbers removed in order to protect members' privacy. Annual subscriptions to the printed news letter are available. FOCUS ONLINE is intended for browsing online and downloading. You are welcome to forward copies of this edition to other people.

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A Publication by the City and Metropolitan Chapter on behalf of The Compassionate Friends NSW Inc.

TCF was founded in England in 1969 by  
Canon Dr. Simon Stephens OBE RN

NSW Patron  
Dame Joan Sutherland OM AC DBE

# TCF BEREAVED PARENT CENTRE

Room 404, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, 32 York Street, Sydney

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**Website:**

[www.thecompassionatefriends.org.au](http://www.thecompassionatefriends.org.au)

**THE CENTRE IS LOCATED AT** 32 York Street, Sydney, just around the corner from King Street and is approximately halfway between Town Hall and Wynyard train stations.

THE BEREAVED PARENT CENTRE OFFICE HOURS ARE 10.30 AM TO 3.00 PM MONDAY TO FRIDAY.

Bereaved parent volunteers are available at the Centre during these hours. We welcome your visit or telephone call.

**AFTER HOURS:** Please note you may leave a message on the answering machine at the Centre. You need not feel alone, please contact the telephone friends on Page 15 of this newsletter.

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If you are planning to visit the Centre it may be wise to telephone first. On occasions at short notice because of illness or family commitments, volunteer staff will not be available to open the Centre.

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## ***PUBLICATION DETAILS***

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**FOCUS EDITORIAL TEAM:** Pam, Evelyn, Judith and Robyn, Council members Mary and Janis.

Mailing List typing: Jean and Sue.

The Focus Editorial Team reserves the right to edit and publish articles submitted to Focus at its discretion. Material submitted may not always be included in the next Focus to be printed. TCF Newsletter Editors in Australia and Worldwide may reprint material from this newsletter providing credit is given to the author and TCF NSW Inc.

## **ANNUAL REGISTRATION AND SUBSCRIPTION NOW DUE FOR 2006**

The annual registration of our members is a vital requirement for the funding we receive from the Government. You may still register as a member of The Compassionate Friends, and thereby assist us in our outreach to other bereaved families, even if you no longer wish to receive Focus. Families are asked to pay an annual subscription fee of \$30.00 including GST to continue to receive FOCUS after their first complimentary six months has expired. Please use the combined MEMBERSHIP and SUBSCRIPTION FORM enclosed with this newsletter, and return it to the Bereaved Parent Centre as soon as possible.

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**SPECIAL THOUGHTS AND WISHES TO ALL PARENTS AND SIBLINGS FOR A PLEASANT AND PEACEFUL 2006 FROM ALL AT THE CENTRE**

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**SPECIAL NOTE:** Children and babies: In consideration for other bereaved parents we ask you not to bring your children to the Centre. Thank you for understanding.

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**WE'RE HERE TO HELP AT THE TCF CENTRE** We offer one hour, one to one sharing sessions, on a Monday during office hours. This service is free to our members but please remember to phone and book your appointment in advance on 9290 2355.

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***CLOSING DATE FOR ARTICLES AND CHAPTER NEWS:***

***WEDNESDAY  
12<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2006***

# GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS

## **‘We need not walk alone’**

Bereaved parents are warmly invited to come along to The Compassionate Friends grief support groups listed below. At TCF sharing groups, you will meet others who understand and care. There is no pressure to talk if you do not wish to.

## **The Bereaved Parent Centre is at 32 York Street, Sydney**

### **Death in Younger Children**

**Please phone the Centre if you wish to attend on the following days:**

Sharing: 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of each month 11am–2pm  
6<sup>th</sup> March, 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 1<sup>st</sup> May

### **Death in Older Children**

Meetings: 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month  
11am – 2pm  
16<sup>th</sup> March, 20<sup>th</sup> April, 18<sup>th</sup> May

Any parent who has lost a child is welcome to this group.

### **Suicide Support at the Centre**

Any parent whose son or daughter has died by suicide is invited to the ‘Survivors of Suicide’ Group

Meetings: 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month  
11am–2pm  
8<sup>th</sup> March, 12<sup>th</sup> April, 10<sup>th</sup> May

### **CRAFT AND SCRAPBOOKING DAYS:**

Everyone is welcome to come – bring your knitting, crocheting, quilting and scrapbooking. Bookings are not necessary. It can help to share craft projects with others who understand.

Meetings: 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month at 10.30 am  
2<sup>nd</sup> March, 6<sup>th</sup> April, 4<sup>th</sup> May

Contact: Sue 9712 1605

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## **CLOSING DATE FOR ARTICLES AND CHAPTER NEWS:**

**WEDNESDAY,  
12<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2006**

# SUBURBAN GROUPS

## **Campbelltown Chapter**

Venue: Narellan Community Health Centre,  
Queen Street, Narellan

Meetings: 1<sup>st</sup> Friday in the month at 7.30 pm  
3<sup>rd</sup> March, 7<sup>th</sup> April, 5<sup>th</sup> May

## **Miranda Chapter**

Venue: Endeavour Room, Miranda Community  
Centre, Karimbla Road, Miranda

Meetings: 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday in the month at 7.30 pm  
14<sup>th</sup> March, 11<sup>th</sup> April, 9<sup>th</sup> May

Miranda Craft Group: Everyone is welcome, please phone Valda for details.

Wishing all Chapter members and friends the very best for 2006, as we continue sharing and caring together.  
Love, Paulette

## **Silverdale/Warragamba Chapter**

Venue: Neighbourhood Centre, Warragamba

Meetings: 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday in the month at 7.30 pm  
14<sup>th</sup> March, 11<sup>th</sup> April, 9<sup>th</sup> May

## **Turrumurra/Ryde Chapter**

Venue: Thornleigh Community Centre  
Cnr. Phyllis & Central Ave, Thornleigh

Meetings: 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday in the month at 7.45 pm  
7<sup>th</sup> March, 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2<sup>nd</sup> May

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Give us through the coming year quietness of mind,  
Teach us to be patient and always to be kind,  
Give us reassurance when everything goes wrong  
So our faith remains unfaltering and our hope and  
courage strong –  
And show us that in quietness we can feel Your  
presence near filling us with joy and peace  
Throughout the coming year.

*- Helen Steiner Rice*

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**Seek the friend whose hand has  
helped you, and tell them what  
they mean to you.**

## **COUNTRY SUPPORT GROUPS**

### **Bowral Chapter**

Venue: Lecture Room, Old Bowral Hospital  
Meetings: 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday in the month at 7.30 pm  
20<sup>th</sup> March, 17<sup>th</sup> April, 15<sup>th</sup> May

### **Central Coast Chapter**

Venue: Our Lady of the Rosary Parish Centre  
(non denominational), Cnr. Glennie St  
and Henry Parry Drive, Wyoming  
(parking available)  
Meetings: Last Wednesday in the month at 7.00 pm  
29<sup>th</sup> March, 26<sup>th</sup> April, 31<sup>st</sup> May

### **Cessnock Area**

Meetings: By arrangement

### **Cowra Chapter**

### **Dubbo Chapter**

Venue: The Crest Building, Welchman Street, Dubbo  
Meetings: 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday in the month at 2 pm  
11<sup>th</sup> March, 8<sup>th</sup> April, 13<sup>th</sup> May  
We welcome members to our share and care group.

### **Forbes Chapter**

Venue: Van on the Park, Court Street, Forbes  
Meetings: 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday in the month at 12.30 pm  
(luncheon) 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 6<sup>th</sup> April, 4<sup>th</sup> May

### **Grafton Chapter**

Venue: Pullins Centre (next to Crown Hotel),  
3-7 Prince Street, Grafton  
Meetings: Last Tuesday in the month 10 – 12 noon  
28<sup>th</sup> March, 30<sup>th</sup> May  
Everyone who has lost a child is welcome for a casual chat  
and “cuppa” at our care and share group, where you will find  
love and compassion in your grief.

### **Griffith Chapter**

Venue: Neighbourhood House, 80 Beneremdah  
Street, Griffith  
Meetings: 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in the month  
19<sup>th</sup> March, 21<sup>st</sup> May

### **Inverell Chapter**

Meetings: Meetings are now by arrangement

### **Kiama Chapter**

Venue: Meeting Room No. 1, Kiama District  
Hospital, Bonaira Street, Kiama  
Meetings: 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday in the month 9.30 – 12.15  
15<sup>th</sup> March, 19<sup>th</sup> April, 17<sup>th</sup> May

### **Kyogle Chapter**

Venue: Community Health Centre  
Meetings: By arrangement

### **Lismore Chapter**

Venue: Activities Centre, Lismore Baptist Church  
Cnr. Rotary Drive and Uralba St, Lismore  
Meetings: 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday in the month at 7.30 pm  
16<sup>th</sup> March, 20<sup>th</sup> April, 18<sup>th</sup> May  
Lismore Chapter's Candlelight Memorial Service on Sunday  
11<sup>th</sup> December 2005 was well attended and as always, it was  
wonderful to have members from other Chapters and  
bereaved parents from the region share the evening with us.  
The Lismore service actually concludes as Compassionate  
Friends around the globe are invited to light a candle "...  
that their light may always shine". While we share supper  
together we pause to mark this worldwide event, local  
sibling Hamish lighting the candle on this occasion. A huge  
thank you to Hamish and to all who contributed in so many  
ways to make the service meaningful for those in attendance.

### **Macksville Chapter**

Venue: Neighbourhood Centre,  
27 Wallace Street, Macksville  
Meetings: Meetings at Neighbourhood Centre by  
arrangement  
3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday in the month 10.00 am at  
Short Order Coffee Shop, Princess Street,  
Macksville  
21<sup>st</sup> March, 18<sup>th</sup> April, 16<sup>th</sup> May  
One on one meetings scheduled upon request.  
Love to all, Joy and Sandra

### **Maclean Chapter**

Meetings: By arrangement. Please contact Narelle  
for details.

### **Murwillumbah Chapter**

Meetings: 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday in the month  
9<sup>th</sup> March, 13<sup>th</sup> April, 18<sup>th</sup> May

### **Muswellbrook Chapter**

Meetings: Meetings are now by arrangement

### **Nelson Bay Chapter**

Venue: Women's Information & Counselling  
Services, Stockton Street, Nelson Bay

Meetings: Contact Bev for dates

### **Parkes Chapter**

Venue: The Neighbourhood Centre  
Currajong Street, Parkes

Meetings: 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday every 2 months 2-4 pm  
8<sup>th</sup> April, 10<sup>th</sup> June

Contacts: Judy and Tony  
Come and join us to share our thoughts and feelings – a friendly chat and a cuppa.

### **Singleton Chapter**

Venue: The Neighbourhood Centre  
6 Castlereagh Street, Singleton

Meetings: 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday in the month at 9.30 am  
20<sup>th</sup> March, 17<sup>th</sup> April, 15<sup>th</sup> May  
Night meetings by arrangement

Contacts: Pauline  
Carol

### **Tamworth Chapter**

Venue: "Vestry" (behind the Uniting  
Church), Marius Street, Tamworth

Meetings: 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday in the month at 10am–12noon  
14<sup>th</sup> March, 11<sup>th</sup> April, 9<sup>th</sup> May

Contact: Peg  
Helen

### **Tweed Heads/Southern Gold Coast Chapter**

Meetings have been put on hold as Helen and Rodney are currently travelling.

### **Wee Waa and District Chapter**

Meetings: By arrangement

Contact: Rhonda

### **West Wyalong**

Contact: Noela

**Dear Mums and Dads,**

**Please encourage your sons and daughters to contribute to the Sibling Page, articles or sharing thoughts etc. This would be very much appreciated.**

**Thank you.**

**Focus Team**

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## **WHO IS THIS CHILD?**

Who is this Child

For whom so many tears are shed?

Who is this Child

For whom empty hearts and arms yearn?

Who is this Child

Who was destined to live and love in the future?

Who is this child

Who has no future – only a short glorious past?

This Child is our Child

Child of this world –  
Humanity's hope for the future

The death of this Child –

Diminished our world

This world is poorer

Future hope is lessened.

But I can say with pride and love

This Child is still my Child

My life the richer for that Child's being ...

*Sonia Eastwood,*

*Mother of Damien Thomas Bindloss,*

*9.8.67 – 12.4.91*

*- Taken from Words of Sorrow Words of Love,*

*Edited by Eva Lager*

---

## **CLOSING DATE FOR ARTICLES AND CHAPTER NEWS:**

**WEDNESDAY,  
12<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2006**

## **TCF NEWS MURWILLIMBAH CHAPTER**

A special thank you to all the members of Murwillumbah Chapter for the very generous donation as a result of their raffle.

For many years the members of this Chapter have worked hard to make a success of their fundraising and it is always appreciated by all in TCF New South Wales.

Thank you again to everyone who supported the fundraising.

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### **RESULTS of the RAFFLE**

drawn at December meeting – Miranda Chapter

Lovely Knitted Rug:  
Winner – **AUDREY**  
Ticket – Orange D39

A special thank you to Miranda Chapter for their continued support in fundraising for TCF NSW.

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### **2006 DIARY DATE**

We hope to hold a Residential Weekend at Tamworth during 2006. Full details will be included in May *Focus*.

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### **CHAPTER LEADERS AND TELEPHONE CONTACTS**

**If you have an email address, would you kindly notify the Centre by email of same**

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### **2005 – 2006 COUNCIL COMMITTEE NSW Inc**

President:	Mary Carroll
Council	Pam
Management	Janis
Committee	Evelyn
Members:	Marlay
	Stephen
Honorary Solicitor:	Tony Carroll
Honorary Auditor:	David and Adam

## **COST INCREASE FOCUS NEWSLETTER**

The Committee has taken the decision to increase the cost of *Focus* to \$30.00 per year. This is the first increase for many years.

Please subscribe to *Focus* and register as soon as possible (Registration Form enclosed in this issue).

TCF New South Wales relies heavily on the income from *Focus* subscriptions and registrations, any donations members can afford to give helps to keep TCF operating. (Provision is always made for bereaved families experiencing financial hardship to receive the newsletter free of charge.)

Mary Carroll, President

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### **OUR NEWSLETTER**

Dear Members,

Please be encouraged to write small articles or share your thoughts. One or two paragraphs from several members can make a page. Contribute in any way that may help other bereaved families.

We cannot use Australian material if we do not receive same for *Focus*.

When submitting articles or poems to be included in *Focus*, from other sources, please state the origin and author as we cannot publish without this detail.

Thank you

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**The dates for *Focus* 2006 are as follows:**

**PREPARED JANUARY  
POSTED FEBRUARY  
PREPARED APRIL  
POSTED MAY  
PREPARED JULY  
POSTED AUGUST  
PREPARED OCTOBER  
POSTED NOVEMBER**

# SHARING THOUGHTS

Dear Friends,

Please continue submitting articles and shared thoughts for Focus. We need your input - it is much appreciated by other members.

Dear Friends at the Bereaved Parent Centre,

It is with great pleasure that I present a cheque as a donation from Murwillumbah Chapter. The money was raised from the Christmas Hamper raffle drawn at our Christmas Luncheon. We held it a bit earlier this year which proved to be very successful, and we had 35 people attend. The 2<sup>nd</sup> prize in the raffle was a lovely hand knitted rug which was made and donated by our beloved late member, Elaine Chilcott. It was won by our member, Marilyn Tagget, who was surprised and thrilled, as she is a distant relative of the late Elaine. We thought Elaine would have been so pleased, who said there aren't Angels? We lit candles for children who had died, and whose parents were unable to be with us on the day. Their thoughts were with us in sorrow and understanding.

Our Chapter has had a busy year, with new members coming along the way. Such a sad and painful time for most of them as this is their first Christmas. That is why our day on the banks of the Tweed, the releasing of helium balloons and lighting of candles, gives new and old members the opportunity to acknowledge the difficulty we all experience facing Christmas.

We send our warm thoughts of love and peace to all the ladies at The Bereaved Parent Centre.

We will be in recess for January and February and our next meeting will be 9<sup>th</sup> March 2006.

Love and blessings. Sincerely, Lorraine, TCF Murwillumbah Chapter

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## *FROM THE "SUROODOORS OF SUCCODE" GROUP, BLACKTOWN*

### A Tribute to Someone Special

In the last Focus I wrote about the fact that I was not going to continue with the Blacktown/Toongabbie S.O.S. Group in 2006. I thanked many people in the Group and the Centre for their help over 7 years. There is one very special person whom I want to thank separately.

Her name is Brenda Robilliard, and Brenda is the Baptist Chaplain at Westmead Public Hospital. She has been a great supporter of TCF in general and has been a wonderful help both to myself and my Group. We have had many meetings over the last few years. Brenda has explained grief, has spoken about suicide and has organised some beautiful and meaningful services for us. Everyone has the utmost respect for Brenda and her one-on-one sessions have meant a lot to each one of us. Her comfort and support cannot be measured. Brenda is a truly special person who is still willing to help us (if need be) in the future. We thank her so much for everything she has done for our Group. Have a healthy 2006 Brenda.

Heather, Anne and the Blacktown S.O.S. Group

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The closing of the Blacktown Chapter of The Compassionate Friends was a very sad time but there comes a time when our paths go in other directions and we know when that time comes. To me personally, I will always be grateful to the Group for the love, support, friendship and understanding which will always be in my heart. I would not have managed without that help. Everyone in that Group became one big loving family and we all know we will always keep in touch and be there for everybody.

To Heather and Anne, a job well done because it was always done with love. I will always go to the City Group because I know there is always help and support for anybody who needs it. I recommended the Group to a friend who suffered a loss and they were grateful for the support. To all the support groups, thank you. To the Blacktown Group, I love you all.

Nellie, Blacktown S.O.S. Chapter

We are all here for our Christmas break-up for the last time and to pay tribute to our sons, brother and daughter.

What wonderful young human beings they were.

They all came from loving families and happy childhoods.

Some had families of their own and some were just starting out in life.

They were our brave children, never letting us know just how bad life was for them.

We all love them so much that our hearts are broken.

They are with us from when we wake until we sleep at night.

We can't bring them back but we'll always have the wonderful memories they left behind for us.

I often hear my son's voice whispering in my ear saying "don't be afraid, Mum."

Our children are with Jesus now; we must try to live our lives with happiness.

They wouldn't want us to be sad all the time.

We have all been given a task that at times seems unbearable but life is for living and learning.

They have not gone in vain; I believe that we will learn something from them passing that will be invaluable for us in the future.

It has been such a blessing belonging to this Group. We have come a long way in our grief.

We can all relate to the situation we find ourselves in.

We know exactly how it feels to lose a child to suicide.

We miss their jokes and loud music, dirty clothes and untidy rooms, all the sports gear and backyard games and the things that they grumbled about.

We were always there for them by just being parents.

It doesn't matter how long they have been gone, it's still like yesterday.

You think at any minute they might walk through the door.

You know that can't happen but for a few seconds your heart gives a flutter.

Our lives are going on, except the roles have changed.

We used to watch over them, now they are watching over us.

I have comfort in knowing that my child, like yours, had strength, courage and lots of love.

They are all in a safe place now, never letting us out of their sight for one moment.

This Christmas we will place our special gift on the tree for our son Terry.

We will remember him with all our love and cherish those special things he loved about Christmas.

We, like you, will cry for our loved ones and tell them that we will always love them.

Treasure every memory that you have.

Treasure them more because you shared them with someone very special ...

I would like to thank Heather for doing a tremendous job of leading this Group called "The Compassionate Friends", for that's what we are now. Thank you to Nellie for feeding us, what generosity! And to Anne for her supportive and caring way. We would also like to thank the whole Group for being there for us in our time of need.

Frances (mother of Terry 23/2/60 – 25/3/04), Blacktown S.O.S. Chapter

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The Blacktown S.O.S. Group commenced as a result of our Founder, Simon Stephens, speaking at an evening meeting at Guilford when he visited Sydney in 1995. In the beginning the Group was nurtured by the care and support of Margaret and John. Over the past years Heather has continued as leader with love and dedication. There can be no more fitting tribute to Heather, Anne and the Group than from Frances, "*For that's what we are now, a group of Compassionate Friends.*" Thank you to everyone who participated.

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## WORLDWIDE CANDLE LIGHTING NIGHT, HELD BY PARKES CHAPTER

Judy and Tony reported that a very meaningful Candle Lighting evening was held in their local park on 11<sup>th</sup> December with more than 70 bereaved families and friends attending.

An excerpt from the evening programme:

### To My Brother I Love

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*Read by Carly*

I still remember the last words you spoke  
Right before so many hearts broke  
Leaving behind so many you love,  
Watching from above.  
We all wish in every way,  
You could come back for just one day.  
Because brother I love and brother I miss,  
Why can't I give my little brother a kiss?  
Your face will always be in my heart,  
I understand we were split apart.  
Your voice is still heard everywhere,  
Your scent still lingers in the air.  
You were a hero until the day you died.  
Now you are hero that lies inside!

There is a plaque and seat in the park dedicated to our late member Mary Mcphee. A very peaceful place for reflection and time out.

## **FIRST YEAR, WORST YEAR??**

### **Maybe, maybe not**

Our library at the Bereaved Parent Centre frequently receives new books as gifts from members and other benefactors so it is a good idea to check it out whenever you are in the Centre. Reading a book by a fellow bereaved parent or sibling can help us get through the time between support group meetings or help to lighten the load of grief on an otherwise interminable day. Books can be understanding companions, if not providing answers, at least providing a measure of comfort and a feeling that someone understands.

The most recent addition to our library is a memoir by Barbara and Michael Wilson, *FIRST YEAR WORST YEAR* (John Wiley and Sons, Ltd, 2004), which chronicles the year immediately following the death of their adult daughter Sarah in a white-water rafting accident in Peru. The book relies heavily on journals kept by Barbara throughout the period.

Although many of us who have been bereaved for a number of years might question the premise suggested by the title, this is a very moving story of a family in the turmoil we have all come to know so well. In addition to the excerpts from her own diary, Barbara includes poetry written by her husband as well as writings by Sarah's brother, sister and niece. Because the story includes perspectives from so many different family members, it has a relevance and a balance unusual to a first work by a bereaved parent.

Barbara and Michael first heard about The Compassionate Friends only five weeks after Sarah's death and they attended a residential weekend the following month, where they were the most recently bereaved persons in attendance. Barbara describes the weekend as "an emotionally draining experience", but one which gave them "things to cling to and remember regularly." She described TCF as a "club none of us wanted to join and yet we needed to meet people who knew how we felt." She found it most helpful to meet people who had been bereaved for a number of years and could report that their lives were once again full and meaningful. One of these TCF members explained that "instead of an open wound, grief becomes a scar".

Newly bereaved parents will especially find this book helpful because of the minute detail it provides concerning the first year of grieving, with roller coaster rides of intense pain, weeping, shock and anger. Reading that description and then seeing the progress the parents made in achieving emotional equilibrium and a return to functioning in normal life situations—this will give the newly bereaved hope to carry on from one day to the next. Those of us further along in grief will most appreciate the story itself –of a vibrantly adventurous young woman, her untimely death, and the beautiful ways she was memorialized by family and friends.

Other members of TCF who have read books they found helpful or comforting may wish to consider making a donation to the library. If it is a book you obtained from the library and would like to recommend to other members, we at the FOCUS will be happy to pass along your thoughts.

*- Focus Team*

## WHY I FEEL 'BONDED' TO SUNFLOWERS

After Paul died, sleepless nights were usual for me and during one especially difficult night I decided that when morning came I would act on the advice of an elderly friend of mine who suggested I plant some sunflower seeds. She told me that "they carry a good message, in that when they flower they always know that the sun is there even on the cloudiest days, they turn their faces to the sun and their shadows fall behind them." (I knew she was trying to help me in my sadness.)

I am not much of a gardener, but I did plant some seeds and watched as the plants grew.

A stormy night came along. I couldn't sleep and longed for daylight to come. When morning came, I looked out the window and could see that overnight the plants had been damaged by wind and rain and one in particular looked so bent and broken that I thought, "it looks how I feel."

I asked Lindsay (my husband and Paul's Dad) to help me help the sunflower plant by putting a support stick in the ground and attaching a ribbon on to the stick and plant and we hoped it would survive. I watched its progress daily and as it slowly straightened and became stronger, so did I. It grew into a beautiful flower, admired by many people. Its seeds continue on.

I was amazed at the effect it had on me as it became important to me that the sunflower survived. I also thought about 'support' and how it had helped the plant keep growing. This thought made me think about 'support to people' who feel 'broken and bent'. How blessed we are when support comes along for us and helps us keep on from day to day.

My elderly friend also followed the progress of the struggling sunflower through my long distance friendship with her during so many personal 'cloudy, overcast days'. I will always be so grateful to her for her good advice and both she and I know that the sunflower has, indeed, been a great blessing. I still grow sunflowers. They have become an important part of my life.

*- Margaret Burnie, Tasmania  
Loved mother of Paul who died 5.6.1992  
and loved mother of Luke who died 27.11.1992  
- Taken from TCF Victoria Inc, Oct/Nov 2005*

H H H H H

## TO COMFORT, ALWAYS

Dr. Peter Barnes is a General Practitioner from Enfield, Middlesex.

This article is reprinted by kind permission of the British Medical Journal where it first appeared.

The Reithe Spitze is a mountain over 2,300m overlooking Seefeld in the Austrian Tyrol. From its summit there *are* spectacular views in all directions. Yet for me the most memorable sight is a simple cross on top of the mountain on which is set a verse by Paula Grogger.

*Was wir bergen, in den Sargen, ist das Erdenkleit.*

*Was wir lieben, ist geblieben bleibt in Ewigkeit.*

Translation tends to detract from its lyricism but it literally means:

*What we bury in coffins are only the earthly remains.*

*What we love, is always loved, and remains with us for an eternity.*

When my wife and I read that inscription as we stood on top of the Reithe Spitze last summer it seemed to sum up what had been a long and tragic story. It is not unique, but it may be that in the telling of it, someone, even if it is only us, may find comfort.

In February 1987 our nine year old son died from lymphoblastic leukemia. He had fought the disease for two and a half years and for much of the first year had been in a steady remission. We were looking forward to the distinct possibility of a cure. But a testicular relapse while still on chemotherapy was a prelude of what was to come. Despite further horrendous doses of chemotherapy and a bone marrow transplant from his older brother, there was to be no further relief for him. He died peacefully at home surrounded by his family. Lear's words come to mind when I look back on the whole saga: '*Poor naked wretches where so 'er you are, that bide the pelting of this pitiless storm*'.

What might seem to be the end of the story was far from it. When a child dies in your practice it is, of course, a tragedy and you are saddened by it. When the child is your own it raises fundamental questions in your mind that bring into doubt all your previously held beliefs. Coming as I do from a long line of doctors there had never been much doubt in my mind about the infallibility of the great medical ethos. Nor were there discomfiting thoughts about the existence of an 'afterlife' and 'heaven'. Surely 14 years of general practice in a working class area of north London had convinced me that there was no orchestration of this chaotic symphony of life by someone on high?

At first my son's death only tended to confirm those beliefs. Yet after a while I began to think that my son must have gone to a better place; there must be someone looking after him somewhere. Otherwise, what is the point of it all? To reconcile these feelings with my established, mainly existentialist personal creed, produced great mental anguish.

It made me wonder why I should carry on practising medicine when all it had promised over the years had been blown away like ashes on the wind. What had I done to bring this on him and us? There are as yet no answers to these questions. It may be that eventually there will be purely scientific answers. I doubt if that will be enough, whereas three years ago I am fairly certain it would have been.

With all this uncertainty in my mind it was hardly surprising that my work began to suffer. 'Why on earth do I have to sit here and listen to this? Don't they know that their problems are non-existent beside those of mine and my family?' It reached the stage where every morning I was physically shaking at the thought of going to work. Not to go would be an admission of defeat. How could I become immune to all these mundane trivia? Should I throw my hand in and do something else? 'Why is it that I, in need of consolation, always seem to end up consoling others? Surely there are others in this practice who can deal with this. Leave me alone.'

It was when I was at my lowest point mentally that two things happened that at the time I did not understand. Two of my patients died, from cancer. The first was an older man, but the second was a

little girl. She was three years old and had disseminated bone cancer, despite an initial amputation of her arm.

Although my partners wanted to shield me from the stresses of looking after these patients, I had insisted. I had known both families for many years and the little girl had been in the same oncology unit as my son. We had something in common; perhaps I could be of use. I was with her and her parents when she died. Afterwards they were kind enough to tell me how much they felt it had helped them to have someone with them who had been through the same experiences.

It was not easy, but I found that these two incidents helped me to come to terms with medical practice again. I was able to ignore the trivialities and I found myself listening to people more. It became obvious to me how alike we all were. The simple act of listening seemed to help me almost as much as my patients. It was only later that a young Baptist minister made the simple but obvious explanation that these two dying people and their families had allowed me to give something again. After many months of battling against my son's illness it seems I had lost the capacity to give. And yet giving is such an essential part of human life in general and medicine in particular. As medicine becomes increasingly scientific the individual doctor may well find that his ability to give to his patients becomes progressively more difficult. It may well be that he and his patients will suffer as a consequence. Whether he is aware of it is, of course, a different matter.

Where do I go from here? Some would argue that there is a message in my experiences that comes from someone greater than all of us. I think it is too soon to say that it was my 'road to Damascus'.

What it has reminded me to do is to concentrate on people rather than on illnesses. It may be that by doing so we may actually have more effect on the illness itself. Despite our natural desire for material things and our ego trips down the roads of organisation and scientific discovery in medicine, we must remember our patients' feelings and fears. It put me in mind of the philosophy of the ancient Greek school of medicine.

*To cure, occasionally.*

*To relieve, often.*

*To comfort, always.*

It may be that as a profession we should remember this.

*- Taken from Reflections TCF West Australia, Sept 05*

## THE MYTH OF CLOSURE

“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 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 too terrible to bear.

*Ashley David Prend*

Lovingly lifted from TCF/Mid-Hudson Valley, NY

- Taken from TCF Winnipeg Chapter Newsletter, Sept/Oct 2005

# MEMORY CORNER

We ask that your Memory Corner contributions are no more than 10 lines as we are receiving many more each issue with our growing membership.

## Paul

29.3.84 – 9.1.05 20 years young  
Motor bike accident

For Bro Pauli

I cannot believe it, I still don't believe it's true,  
Since we were young, I never pictured life with just me,  
It Always Included You

Now that you're gone, it's too far for me to reach,  
I can't grab hold to tell you, no-one will fill the breach,  
The pain leaves me aching and I'm empty deep inside,  
We've travelled this road together, forever by my side.  
I know you're in heaven, I need you to give me a sign,  
That you're there all knowing, and that you're doing fine,  
So when I hear the tone of a booming ringing bell,  
I'll smile and say thank you bro,  
I'll know then you're doing fine.  
Love Bro Andrew

H H H H

## In loving memory of my precious son

**Scott** 21.3.72 – 18.3.96

Scottie, my darling son – beyond words that can ever begin to tell how much I love and hold your precious memories within my heart each and every day. The greatest gift of all was to have a precious son like you mate. I miss your handsome face and your cheeky smile and I will love you forever and ever, until we meet again my Scottie boy.

Love from your Mum

H H H H

## Samuel

3.10.94 – 5.10.94 Birth Asphyxia

You would have been a lovely 11 year old. I see all your contemporaries growing up, so sad, but comforting too. I can imagine what you would have been like.

All the love still there, darling Sam, from your Dad, Mum, big brother Tom and little sister Frances. We all miss you.

H H H H

## AN ANGEL'S KISS

- Peggy Bouse – Source unknown

We go through life so often  
Not stopping to enjoy the day,  
And we take each other for granted  
As we travel on our way.

We never stop to measure  
Anything we just might miss,  
But if the wind should blow by softly  
You'll feel an **angel's kiss**.

A **kiss** that is sent from Heaven  
A **kiss** from up above,  
A **kiss** that is very special  
From someone that you love.

For in your pain and sorrow  
An **angel's kiss** will help you through,  
This **kiss** is very private  
For it is meant only for you.

So when your heart is heavy  
and filled with tears and pain.  
and no-one can console you  
Remember once again ....

About the ones you grieve for  
Because you sadly miss  
And the gentle breeze you took for  
granted  
Was just an **angel's kiss**.

- Taken from Johannesburg Chapter Newsletter, Sth Africa, October 2005

# MOVING FORWARD EACH DAY

I have never spoken publicly about the deaths of all of my three children, Sharon age 21, Stuart age 26 and Phillip age 20, but it is with the hope that in its telling that I can offer some small measure of that hope to those who are behind me on the road of grief, loss and despair with its ability to stop us in our tracks, and its potential to crush and destroy us. But this is not a story of grief and loss, it is more a story of trying to 'let go' and striving to keep moving forward when there didn't seem to be any point, in a journey that had its beginnings in 1988 and is still a work in progress. This is my personal journey and for each of you who are grieving, your own personal journey will have its own unique experiences and forks in the road, your own way of coming to terms with the loss of a loved family member. This is above all a story of trying to accept without bitterness, the unacceptable.

Of all my family members, Sharon was the bright star, a high achiever, a Rotary exchange student, speaking fluent Indonesian, a graduate with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Liberal studies. Her death as a passenger on a country road in NSW on 20<sup>th</sup> January 1988, came shortly after we had moved to Western Australia to give our youngest son Phillip a chance of extending his life after being diagnosed with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy in 1983. This fatal condition affects mainly boys and there is no treatment, but Western Australia seemed to be the State where the boys lived longer, so we uprooted our family and left Sharon behind to finish her studies. She came to Perth at Christmas in 1987 and then returned to NSW on 15<sup>th</sup> January 1988. I had been excited about attending her Graduation in the April of that year and it seemed such an ironic twist of fate that the outfit which we had both chosen for me to wear, and which was on lay-by, was a black suit. I had to let go of the fact I'd never see her graduate and I wore it instead to her funeral and the money in a fixed deposit for her overseas trip was spent instead on her funeral. The remembrance of the news of her death by two policemen is like a negative snapshot of that moment in time, and comes back into consciousness at any time. Her sudden death didn't just take us to our knees, it flattened us and left us living in a deep dark pit with no visible means of escape.

The only way I could move out of that pit after the first few months, was to get up every day and attempt to do three tasks I had allocated for myself the day before. It didn't matter if it included washing the dishes piled up in the sink, or try to pick up the phone and connect with another human being, but as soon as they were finished, I could return to my grief until the next day when I would get up and try and start again with another three tasks. My moving forward every day was forced on me by Phillip who had started to fall over and now needed a wheelchair. Not only was I trying to let go of my future hopes and dreams for Sharon, but I was forced at the same time to let go of hoping that Phillip's condition had been misdiagnosed and accept that our lives were now completely in chaos.

By 1996 Phillip had gone from a manual to an electric wheelchair and was now almost completely dependent on us for all of his daily needs. I had written to Make a Wish to grant him a safari in South Africa. His older brother Stuart was coming along to help. A few months before we left on this trip, we were visited again by two policemen who notified us that Stuart had died from an overdose of a painkiller. We continued on our trip to South Africa and returned to a coronial inquest which decided Stuart's death was the result of an accident. The inquest did not find any closure for me, it left more unanswered questions and again I was forced to acknowledge that letting go of the need to find answers was the only way I could keep moving forward to give Phillip the care he now needed. I had to let go of the fact that none of my children were going to survive and that the future ahead seemed grim. The one thing I clung to was Phillip's tenacity and zeal for life and he filled it completely before he died at home on the 9<sup>th</sup> April 1999.

I now had to let go that I was no longer a mother in a real physical way. If I was no longer a mother then who was I? I had to let go not only of the guilt that I couldn't keep Phillip alive, but the overwhelming guilt of failing to protect my children. I had to let go of the security I had felt that since I was a decent human being, God would shine His light upon me and protect me from suffering. When Phillip died I went back into that pit again, but this time it was harder to find the effort it took to assign three tasks every day. I had to let go that all those years I had felt I was in the driving seat, I was only a passenger instead, in the lives of my three children.

My three children not only left me with memories, they left me with gifts which I use every day. Sharon taught me tenacity and to believe in myself, she accepted me for who I was. Stuart had dreadlocks and wore the strangest clothes. He taught me to accept and understand that people can look and act in different ways and to accept and respect that difference. Phillip taught me about prejudice and discrimination in his life as a disabled person and gave me an understanding of how it feels to be on the receiving end of that kind of ignorance. He taught me that life was still worth living. If he could cope, then surely I could too.

Phillip left me with a huge hole in my life and I have had to let go of seeing my identity wholly as a mother and a carer and reinvent myself in a new and different way. Part of this reinvention saw me enter Murdoch University in 2002. I graduate this year with a Bachelor of Arts in History, with a minor in Community Development and Corporate Communication. I have been asked many times where this latest journey will take me. I have to tell you that I don't really know. All I can say, is that every day when I get up I tackle three tasks that I have set the night before and keep moving forward throughout the day.

*- Barbara  
Mum of Sharon 21 yrs, Stuart 26 yrs, Phillip 20 yrs  
TCF Western Australia January 2005*

## A FEW LITTLE WORDS

It only takes a few little words to cause so much pain,  
And it only takes a few words to cause much happiness.  
It only takes a few words to crush a heart and it only takes a few words to give a heart joy.  
It only takes a few words to alienate a friendship,  
And it only takes a few words to make a friendship blossom.  
It only takes a few words to cause someone to go astray,  
and it only takes a few words to help them find their way back again.

It only takes a few words to destroy someone's hopes and dreams,  
And it only takes a few words to give a person reason to hope and dream again.  
It only takes a few words to make someone cry  
And it only takes a few words to take their tears away.  
It only takes a few words to make someone's day sad and dreary,  
And it only takes a few words to make someone's day happy and cheery.  
It only takes a few words to cause dark clouds to appear,  
And it only takes a few words to chase all those dark clouds away.

Just a few little words can comfort one in grief;  
Can soothe a broken heart and bring one back from the brink of despair.  
Just a few little words can help someone cope, and help someone lonely, feel not so alone.  
Just a few little words can calm someone's fears and ease someone's troubled thoughts.  
Just a few little words can brighten someone's day, and make their road in life easier to travel.  
Just a few little words can lift someone's burdens, and help them make it through the day.

*Walter Westfall - Taken from TCF East Rand  
- Taken from TCF Johannesburg Chapter Newsletter South Africa, Nov 2005*

**GRIEF IS A WAY TO GROW, FOR WITHIN THE SEEDS OF SADNESS ARE THE FLOWERS OF HOPE  
WE CAN GIVE TO OTHERS**

# TELEPHONE CONTACTS

Please telephone any of the following if you would like to talk to another bereaved parent. Remember, we are not here to advise or counsel, but we are there to offer comfort and strength, to share your sorrow and lighten your load.

**Phone numbers are available only to TCF Members. Please contact the Bereaved Parent Centre 02 9290 2355 to be put in touch with these people.**

## SYDNEY AREA CONTACTS

### Fathers

Guy

### Asthma

Sue

### Murder

Betty

Michael

### Neo-Natal

Louise

### Older Children

Valda

### Only Child

Diana

### Road Accident

Roberta

### Siblings

Lynne

### Stillbirth

Louise

### Suicide

Margaret

### Terminal Illness

Judy

### Hawkesbury

Audrey

## NSW COUNTRY CONTACTS

### Bowral

Liz

Robyn

### Casino

Margaret

### Cessnock

Gail

### Cooma

Norma

Cootamundra

John

### Cowra

Marina

Del

### Dorrigo

Mavis

### Dubbo

Judy

### Forbes

Gwen

Robert

### Goulburn

Lois

### Grafton

Shirley

### Griffith

Lorna

### Inverell

Graham & Heather

Wilma

### Kiama

Joan

### Kyogle

Jean

### Lismore

Glennys

### Macksville

Joy

Ruth & John

### Macleay

Narelle

### Murwillumbah

Lorraine

### Muswellbrook

Jennifer

### Namoi

Kay

### Nowra

Colleen

### Orange

Viv

### Parkes

Judy and Tony

### Queanbeyan

Janine

### Singleton

Pauline

### Springwood

Janice

### Tamworth

Peg

### Temora

Aileen

### Walcha

Marlay

### Wee Waa

Rhonda

### Wollongong

Margaret

### Young

Robyn

## OTHER AUSTRALIAN CONTACTS

### Adelaide

P.O. Box 26

Kent Town SA 5071

Catherine 0883510344

### Brisbane

Drop-in Centre

505 Bowen Terrace

New Farm Qld 4005

P.O. Box 218,

Springwood Qld 4127

Marion 07 3254 2657

### Canberra/

### Queanbeyan

Maxine

Christopher

### Melbourne

Bereaved Parent

Centre

267 Canterbury Road

Canterbury Vic 3126

03 9888 4944

### Perth

City West Lotteries House

2 Delhi Street

West Perth WA 6005

08 9486 8711

### Tasmania

### (Hobart)

Dennis and Maureen

### (Launceston)

Peter and Lee

## **WORLDWIDE FAMILY OF COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS**

Belgium (email [tcf.belgium@skynet.be](mailto:tcf.belgium@skynet.be)),  
Bolivia, Brazil,  
Canada ([www.geocities.com/paris/parc/5171/](http://www.geocities.com/paris/parc/5171/)),  
East Africa, France,  
Germany, Kenya,  
Hong Kong, Israel,  
Jerusalem, Mexico,  
Netherlands ([www.vook.nl](http://www.vook.nl)),  
New Zealand (email [tcfotago@deepsouth.co.nz](mailto:tcfotago@deepsouth.co.nz))  
Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka,  
South Africa,  
Johannesburg,  
Switzerland,  
United Kingdom ([www.tcf.org.uk](http://www.tcf.org.uk)),  
United States of America ([www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)).  
Contact names with Full postal addresses are available for all these countries at the Bereaved Parent Centre

**Dear nicky your funny and fast.  
your muscles are extremly vast.  
I hope your in the bestest place.  
In the hole entre universe and space.  
love from your brother James (26.10.04)**

- James, older brother to Nicholas 26.12.99

- 14.05.02

K K K K K

## **A SISTER REMEMBERS** - by Candice

**The memories are still as vivid as they were four years ago. That fateful night still haunts my thoughts. It lives in my dreams and crawls between the cracks of my heart and into my broken soul. The pain envelops my whole being. It hurts to feel.**

Just like any other day of the year, the 6<sup>th</sup> of February was a day that simply (like clockwork) passed. No significance, no importance, just another moment in time that stopped for no one.

The ticking did stop that day. My life, my Dad's, my Mom's and Gillon's life had not just changed, but had also abruptly ended. Without warning or wanting, a gust of wind unwillingly intruded into our lives. It had no right. It invaded something so deep within, that only true tragedy realises that it's there. It is not a physical wound that heals with times infinity, but rather a hole. A hole so deep that not even the entire mass of the earth's sand, could fill it up. My world had ended and a new one began. A suffocating, thick, dark, musty cloud suddenly hung over our lives.

Life became as cold as a gunshot and as sharp as a serrated knife.

What happens to a family that is left behind? After all the hoards of people stop sending their condolences, after the social workers stop offering their help, after all the malicious, untrue rumours have been spread, after the house becomes quiet, after the floors are swept and the food is eaten ... what happens? A group of now four broken people have to face this new world together. Our hearts have been ripped up into tiny, bloody, microscopic pieces, which have been splattered across our very existence. Through our entire lives we'll constantly try to fit these pieces back together. Impossible. When a glass breaks, there are too many pieces, too many splinters to ever make it whole again.

After a couple of weeks, normality consumes your very being and the routine of everyday life begins. This I find most startling. Nothing had changed, except now the world was missing my brother. The brother whose radiant smile and naughty grin embellished what being alive was really all about. That beaming lamp that shone upon every passer by had now been switched off. That one street light had been shut down.

"How many siblings do you have?" is a question which is commonly asked as "what do you do for a living?" This seemingly simple question has become as hard to answer as any complicated geometrical math sum. How can you not acknowledge a person's existence who had been with you for most of yours? But at the same time, the pity and awkwardness that arises out of telling them otherwise is often just too difficult to handle.

Birthdays, simchas, *happy times*, sadly sting the most. It is a silent, choking mask behind fake smiles of congratulations. There is always, *always* someone missing, forever an empty seat that

will never be filled. The realisation that he won't be there when I graduate or when I get married sinks in even deeper.

The lonely tears that spilled into my soft pillow understood the sharp, endless, excruciating pain. The longing for him, for normality, for things to be as they were before, became unbearable. The longing for someone to ask or just to care, felt like a wishful dream. But there is a moment, a realisation that painting a smile or shaking off a tear is no longer the better option. Grieving silently became too hard, even to share this grief with my grieving family, I just had to ask for it.

*I miss him. It has taken me four years to say that aloud.*

*I miss him throwing a used, rolled up serviette at me after every Shabbat dinner.*

*I miss him putting on all the lights in the house and opening and closing the doors while I was trying to sleep.*

*I miss him calling me cooks because no one said it better than he did.*

*I miss his smelly shoes and his favourite holey, out of shape, grey Nike t-shirt.*

*I miss the fights we had when he irritated me.*

*I miss not knowing who his wife would have been and how many nieces and nephews he would have given me.*

*I miss there being five people at the table instead of four.*

*I miss his loud music, latest cd's and thinking he was exceptionally cool.*

*I miss being referred to as simply Wayne's little sister ...*

In many ways I am lucky, I see him everyday. I see him in Daddy's smile and sense of humour, in Mommy's courage and supreme bravery and in Gillon's heart and special soul. He is thankfully with me wherever I go and there is not a day that goes by that he is not in my thoughts. I can only hope that he is as proud of me as I was and still am of him. The notion of life and what it all means is really, well simple. It is moments in time ...

***In loving memory of my big brother, Wayne Marc 15.07.77 – 06.02.01***

*- Taken from Johannesburg Chapter TCF Sth Africa, July 2005*

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## **SIBLING MEETINGS & SOCIAL FUNCTIONS**

If you would like to meet with others who understand and care, please join us for our meetings which are held every second month. In addition we also regularly have social functions. These provide wonderful opportunities to meet and socialise with others in a 'safe environment'. To join us for either our social functions or meetings, please call Lynne.

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**TIME:** *by Jacqueline TCF, Qld - in loving memory of my brother, Colin*

It's only been ten years since your death yet, time somehow feels surreal. It only felt like yesterday that the world changed and became emptier from your absence. Has it been so long since I last heard you laugh or spent time with you?

Seeing you everyday was something I took for granted. And I now have endless time to live with that regret. So many years that I have cried for you and wished it all were different. That time could be turned back to happier days. Where the dark clouds could have lifted and allowed you to see the blue skies that lay ahead. Time would have seen you grow into a man. Instead of being far too young to die. We could have shared a lifetime of beautiful memories. If only we'd had more time.

*- Taken from TCF Queensland Inc, December 2005*

## MY WISH TO ALL

My arms reach out to all those who are hurt, to those who cry late at night, longing for someone to hear, ease and understand their pain. To those who cannot face their grief and desperately try to forget it. To those who see no hope, no future and no point to it all. To those whose lives were torn and trodden on.

I cry with you and frantically search for any answer. We can't control our own destiny; there is no guarantee on our lives.

Rebecca Brady, Sister of Alina Brady, 25.12.76 – 7.8.94

- *Taken from Words of Sorrow Words of Love, Edited by Eva Lager*

## CLOSING DATE FOR NEXT SIBLING PAGE WEDNESDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2006



*We welcome letters, poetry and drawings from siblings of any age.*

*Send to: TCF SIBLING PAGE GPO BOX 1303 SYDNEY 2001*