

# The Primrose



Vol. 32, Issue 3

TCF Broome County Chapter Newsletter

Fall 2012



Our TCF steering committee is in need of more volunteers. It is a great way to do something in honor of your child. Without these caring and compassionate individuals TCF would not exist.

**Our Next steering committee meeting is Wednesday October 24<sup>th</sup> , 6PM  
At Dunkin Donuts, by the Oakdale Mall and all are welcome!**

**\*\*\* We Need Your Involvement \*\*\*  
Please consider joining our steering committee**



**There are open positions that need to be filled**

Hold on to what is good  
Even if it is a handful of earth  
Hold on to what you believe in  
Even if it is a tree which stands by itself  
Hold on to what you must do  
Even if it is a long way from here  
Hold on to life  
Even if it is easier to let go  
Hold on to my hand  
Even when I have gone away

Pueblo Indian Prayer

## **Returning to the Land of the Living –**

### **Sort of...**

Sooner or later we make an attempt to return to the land of the living; In order to do that we must find **Hope**. Find one thing that might give you hope. Small or large – just anything that allows even a glimmer of hope.

Now what do we do? We survive one day at a time. When the universe flip-flops and upside down is right side up and happiness seems impossible and the sight and sounds of a single day much less any season — only annoy and hurt, what do we do to survive?

Everyone is telling us we must move forward, learn to LIVE AGAIN, but how do you do that when everything has changed? Nothing fits, belongs or feels right anymore. At times we can't find our shoes, keys, glasses, things that we just had in our hand so how can we find **Hope**? Has it been stolen from us forever?

NO! **Hope** is still in our midst, we just have to seek it out now. Our lives have changed in every aspect; we now have to find what could possibly bring us **Hope** to re-enter the land of the living. First we have to find a way to survive as we get use to our new normal, then in time we will live life again - it will be a different, but worth living.



## **The Compassionate Friends, Inc.**

### **National Office Information**

Phone Number (toll free) (877) 969-0010

Fax Number (630) 990 -0246

Mailing address: P.O. Box 3696, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696

E-mail: [nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org](mailto:nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org)

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

Regional Coordinator

Al Visconti (518) 756-9569

## **PARENTS RESOURCE CORNER**

Please feel free to call the following people if you wish to speak to someone whose child's death was caused in a manner similar to your child's.

Accidental – Pam Kroft	Ph: 239-4222
Illness - Shirley Mehal	785-5710
Adult child - Claudia Simonis	648-6715
Suicide - Cindy Hutchinson	757-9465

## **The Compassionate Friends of Broome County**

1250 Front Street, # 147 Binghamton, NY 13901

Web Address:

<http://tcfbc.homestead.com/Home.html>

**For information pertaining to the  
The Compassionate Friends of Broome County, call:  
Pam Kroft (607) 239-4222**

### **Monthly Meetings**

First Monday of each month 7:00 - 9:00 PM

Third or fourth Saturday 10 AM – 12 PM

Nimmonsburg United Methodist Church

918 Upper Front Street Binghamton, NY 13901

(across from BCC)

### **Steering Committee**

Chapter Leader & Delegate - Pam Kroft

Outreach - Luann Ford & Elaine Sahre

Library - Sherry Bailey

Hospitality – Jean Scolaro

Treasurer – Val Ambrose

Newsletter Editor – Val Ambrose

Website Master - Marv Conover

Community Awareness Coordinator - Claudia Simonis

Secretary - Angela Carro

Programs/Events - OPEN

**\*\*\* We Need Help \*\*\***

**Please consider joining our steering  
committee**

**Next steering committee meeting  
Wednesday October 24th  
Call Pam Kroft for information**

## **MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

### **Meetings:**

**First Monday 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM**

**Unless otherwise indicated**

**Third or fourth Saturday 10:00 A.M.**

**(Check calendar!)**

### **NIMMONSBURG UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**918 Front Street, Binghamton**

**(Across from BCC, next to the Credit Union.**

**Parking in the rear, enter through rear door.)**

**September 10th, 2012 (Monday)**

**7:00 “Fast Forward My Grief ?”**

**September 22nd, 2012 (Saturday)**

**10:00 OPEN Discussion**

**October 1st, 2012 (Monday)**

**7:00 “What Have I Become? ”**

**October 20th, 2012 (Saturday)**

**10:00 OPEN Discussion**

**October 24th, 2012 (Wednesday)**

**6:00 Steering Committee Meeting**

**November 5th, 2012 (Monday)**

**7:00 “Get Me Through This Grief ”**

**November 17th, 2012 (Saturday)**

**6:00 PM 10:00 OPEN Discussion**

**December 3rd, 2012 (Monday)**

**7:00 “ Help, Holiday, Help ”**

**December 9th, 2012 (Sunday)**

**600 “ Candle Light Service ”**

The Primrose is published quarterly  
Deadline for newsletter materials:  
February 1st: May 1st: August 1st: November 1st

Send Information to: Val Ambrose 730 River Rd.  
Binghamton, NY 13901  
Or email [JTL7899@yahoo.com](mailto:JTL7899@yahoo.com)

**NOTICE: If you receive this newsletter,  
forwarded through the funeral home, please call  
Val Ambrose at (607 648-8598) with your correct  
address so new issues can be mailed directly to you.**

## A NOTE FROM OUR CHAPTER LEADER:

Hi Everyone,

“When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or daughter, a brother or sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.”

Let's see, intense pain, check; hopelessness, check; isolation, check. That first line was me after Sean died. The pain was indescribable, I was the queen of hopelessness, and the isolation became a way of life...I would get up in the morning after a sleepless night, pull myself together for work, drive Aaron to school, cry all the way to work, try to work, cry all the way home, try to be some kind of a mom to Aaron [I feel I failed at that for a period of time]. Did not want to see anyone because I might have to talk and I could not talk without crying, the cycle continued; day after day, week after week, month after month. Sound familiar? As life continued around me I was forced to join it. Attending monthly TCF meetings I was comforted in knowing I was never alone in my grief even though I preferred isolation from others, I didn't want to lose that intense pain for fear I would forget my loss and feeling the hopelessness kept me coming back month after month. Life continued to go on and I was still being forced to join it. In time the intense pain softened, the hopelessness lost the lessness and the isolation had buried itself somewhere. A huge part of the hope I felt came from the TCF meetings I attended, listening to other parents that had survived what I was experiencing, excepting their hugs and tissues for all the tears I shed. I was skeptical at first not believing that I would want to live without my Sean. I became a believer in TCF's mission and took what I had been given, the comfort, support and hope and gave back to other parents experiencing what I had not so very long ago.

For all that attended the Balloons to Heaven in July I am sure you will attest to a wonderful evening, a night bountiful with friends, family, great food and a colorful sky filled with helium balloons carrying notes to our beloved children. Many thanks to all that were there to set up and for the many that stayed to clean up, your help is so appreciated and much needed. Many of us took a walk to the angel of hope and lingered there talking and reading the in scripted bricks surrounding her base. It's always good to see familiar faces and to greet new ones, we are here for each other, and it's just the way it is.

Since 2002 the angel of hope has been an ongoing project, we are soon to be finished as the last of the bricks have been ordered and soon to be laid at her base. The final dedication of new bricks will be in October, a postcard will be sent to those parents that have placed a brick in memory of their child. As I often need to remind us all that the angel was placed in memory of all of our children that died too soon, whether or not you have a brick at her base. Go, visit the park, sit on a bench and you will definitely feel that hope that I often speak of. The angel is a place to remember not only our loss but our gain of having our children to love for whatever time we had. It was never enough and never will be....

Just a couple of reminders for the next few months, we have a steering committee meeting on Wednesday October 24<sup>th</sup> at the Dunkin Donuts by the mall. We are always looking for new ideas to help us help you. Also our annual candle lighting will be held Sunday, December 9<sup>th</sup> and it takes many to make that evening what it is. If you are at the point to give back please join us in making it happen.

As I close this I take you back to the first paragraph, which is the new mission statement for the Compassionate Friends. At our local chapter we strive on the personal comfort, the hope and the support to every family that walks through our doors or receives our newsletter. We shall continue to be there as death of children seems to never end and many more parents are forced to join life after that death. I sincerely hope that as the summer ends and fall begins you will find just a small glimmer of peace to carry you through your days and weeks ahead.

Hugs,  
Pam Kroft  
(Sean's Mom)



## **GRIEF: OUR ACT OF LOVE**

"I had a child who died." How simple these words are, yet how painful they are to say. The death of a child is the harshest blow life has to offer; it destroys our trust in the world at the most basic level. Grief is our total response to the death of a child; our body, mind, emotions and spirit all react to the loss. While many of us wish to stop the intense grief work we are doing, we find it impossible for many reasons.

First, grief is an act of love, not a lack of strength or faith. The more we loved our child, the greater will be our grief. The more integrated our lives were with the life of our child, the more we will miss his or her very presence. The intensity of our grief is often representative of our love.

Second, grief is a necessary process that we must go through in order to maintain our wholeness and sanity. If we do not grieve, we will not heal. One of the earliest and hardest lessons we bereaved parents learn is that men and women grieve differently; women, in general, grieve more openly than do men, and women, on the whole, are more comfortable verbally expressing their feelings of loss. While segments of our culture indicate it is more "manly" not to cry, we know this is not true.

Grief work also helps us to complete unfinished business with our child and close the past relationship that we had. We will never "get over" the loss of our child, nor would we ever really want to. We are who we are partly because of our relationship to that child. Our lives will always be influenced by our son or daughter, but most of us will eventually learn to live a meaningful life, despite our tragedy. Our child will always be with us in spirit and in love, and we often feel a need to hold on to tangible items, such as toys or clothes, to maintain that feeling of closeness. But, intense grief work allows us to let go of the relationship we had and create a new relationship with our child. Our remembrances, love and feelings of oneness with our child can never be destroyed. I cannot see nor touch my Philip, but I vividly remember him. I have completed earthly mothering, but I still have an intense mother-child relationship with my son.

Grief over the death of a child is the hardest work that most of us will ever do. While we all wish for the pain to stop, we need to remember that we grieve intensely because we loved intensely. It is unrealistic to expect that grief to ever totally go away, because the love we have for our child will never go away. Our grief is an act of love and is nothing for which we should be ashamed.

Elaine Grier, Philip's Mom — TCF, Atlanta, Georgia

## **Grandparents' Remembrance**

We are the grieving grandparents, the shepherds of our children and grandchildren's lives. Our grief is two-fold and at times we feel powerless to help. We seek to comfort our children in the depths of their grief and yet we need the time and space to face our own broken hearts. We have been robbed of the special tender touch a grandparent shares with a grandchild, and we have lost a symbol of our immortality. As we walk by our child's side, we both give and draw strength. We reach into their hearts to comfort them, and when they reach out to us in their distress, we begin the journey to heal together. We continue to be their guardians. We allow traditions to change to accommodate their loss. We support the new ones, which symbolize the small steps on their journey. It is in their healing that our hearts find comfort.

*Susan Mackey, TCF Rutland, VT*

## Storytellers in the Circle of Weavers

They come to tell their story  
in the circle of weavers.  
Because it is a story of love,  
it is also a story of pain.  
They tell how they wove their fabric,  
with care, with many threads.  
They tell how the fabric was ripped  
beyond repair.  
The sound of that long, final tear  
is in their voices, and in the air.  
It follows them relentlessly, everywhere.  
The silence at the end of the story  
could be the end.  
But in the circle of weavers,  
it is not the end.  
Torn threads begin to stir.  
Back and forth,  
across and around the circle,  
the weaving begins.  
The threads are torn and broken,  
but there is life and power  
in the weaving of them.  
Pain and loss can be respected.  
They cannot be changed.  
But new cloth can be woven,  
of caring, and understanding.  
Even with broken threads,  
In the circle of weavers.

Elizabeth Morris (TCF Concord, MA)



## Night Agonies

*In the deepest part of the night, when I am alone  
with my blackest grief, I reach deep inside my-  
self and measure the depth of my love for my  
child.*

*I focus on these feelings, now made unequivocal  
by death, and realize that an emotion so strong,  
so pure cannot be obliterated by the physical act  
of dying.*

*My love lives on.*

*This link to my child remains, unbroken,  
unaltered. This bond, the strongest two people  
can share, But how can it remain, if my child  
does not?*

*A solid bridge must have a secure footing  
on either side. The strength of the love that flows  
to my child from the deepest part of my being  
remains as it was in her life. I must conclude it is  
still anchored in the very fiber of my child's soul  
— on the other side of death*

*With the reawakened awareness of the connec-  
tion of our love I find proof of her continuance, a  
soothing reassurance that though she is no  
longer with me, she still **IS**.*

Sally Migliaccio TCF, Babylon, NY

## Halloween And Other Masks

The month of October brings with it a smorgasbord for the senses. We can hear the crunching and crackling of leaves under our feet. We can see the brilliant reds, oranges, and yellows splash the earth. We can feel the magical approach of winter in the air. October is also for Halloween, a date synonymous with masks. As bereaved parents we have, at various times, worn many and varied masks. We have masked our feelings of despair, sorrow, and anguish for the sake of our loved one, friends, and acquaintances. We have masked our feelings of anger and bitterness for the traditional belief that a kind God would not do this to innocents. Most importantly, we have masked the person we have become, the person that has evolved after living through the death of a child. Let us celebrate the month of October by beginning to take off some of our masks! A very positive and helpful way to begin this process is to attend the next TCF meeting. Share your sorrow, your fears, your bitterness, and disappointment. Above all, share your progress and triumphs through the arduous journey of grief. When you enter a room of caring and supportive people who have shared your grief, there is no more reason to wear a mask.

Cathy C., Erie, PA

From *Healing After Loss; Daily Meditations for Working Through Grief* by Martha Whitmore Hickman



## OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED

*In each issue, we reach out with our arms and hearts to the parents who will be facing difficult days during the next three months. Please remember them on the anniversary of the death of their child. The children's names listed are those of parents who have made a love gift and are subscribing to the Primrose.*

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## OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED *continued*

***...That their light may always shine...***

We know how important it is for your child's name to be included on this page. We apologize if we missed anyone. We encourage you to notify us if you notice an error or if you would like us to update information. Please email me at [JTL7899@yahoo.com](mailto:JTL7899@yahoo.com) or Call 607 648 8598.

*Thank you for understanding.*



### **Reflections of an Anniversary**

Frozen in a hundred photographs, my son,  
No more do you crash through the door  
And throw your adventures at my feet  
Or solve the non-workings of a music box.  
Your rolling giggle echoes in your sister's voice;  
Your dimple somehow lodges on your brother's face  
And younger brother lives with your scientific thirst.  
We said good-bye years ago  
But you never left.  
Memories, a thousand moonbeams of joy,  
Not frozen, but active  
A spirit filling in the corners and hollows of my life  
A love expanding my capacity for living  
Until in eternity—we meld again.  
*Marcia A. ~ TCF, Mercer Area Chapter, NJ*

### **But It Hurts-Differently**

There is no way to predict how you will feel. The reactions of grief are not like recipes, with given ingredients and certain results. Each person mourns in a different way. You may cry hysterically. Or you may remain outwardly controlled, showing little emotion. You may lash out in anger against your family and friends, or you may express your gratitude for their concern and dedication. You may be calm one moment—in turmoil the next. Reactions are varied and contradictory. Grief is universal. At the same time it is extremely personal.

By Earl A. Grollman

## FEELINGS

Her clothing is folded in tidy array  
How it was left is how it will stay.  
Her desolate dresser silently weeps  
in the still of the night, when everyone sleeps.  
The closet continues to guard and protect  
items hanging on hangers, forlorn with neglect.  
The bed she adored,  
where she bounced high with glee  
cries invisible tears when no one can see.  
The bathtub she splashed in will not again see  
someone who will love it as fiercely as she.  
It sits idle now, no longer a "star"  
And asks (in its way) if I know where you are.  
The house that she lived in,  
the yard where she played  
are missing the landscape of love that she laid.  
Her numerous playthings, her once favorite toy  
languish mournfully now without any joy.  
This dwelling called "home"  
Has relinquished its heart,  
That gift from the one who was forced to depart.  
Now it withers from grief—it's spirit extinct  
and we watch through our tears  
as the walls seem to shrink.  
Our angel was gone in the blink of an eye  
she took the light with her that day in July.  
Yet now there are times  
when my heart feels her near  
Then I know she's not left me ...  
her love is still here.  
(For Tracey, Always)

*By: Sally Migliaccio ~ TCF, West Islip, NY*

### The Thing Is

To love life, to love it even when you have no  
stomach for it and everything you've held dear  
crumbles like burnt paper in your hands, your  
throat filled with the silt of it. When grief sits with  
you, its tropical heat thickening the air, heavy  
as water more fit for gills than lungs; when grief  
weights you like your own flesh only more of it,  
an obesity of grief, you think, How can a body  
withstand this? Then you hold life like a face  
between your palms, a plain face, no charming  
smile, no violet eyes, and you say, yes, I will  
take you... I will love you, again.

by Ellen Bass

## Promises of Rainbows

I promise not to offer  
Rainbows after storms  
Or silver linings beyond the clouds,  
But if you have tears of sorrow,  
I will share them.

If you have words of anger,  
I will hear them.  
If you have moments of confusion,  
I will help you through them.

Perhaps  
Your tears of sorrow today  
Will water the seeds  
Of tomorrow's garden  
Of spiritual growth, of worthy priorities,  
Of loving relationships and genuine  
Understanding and compassion.

My sad friend,  
your weeping is not fruitless.

*Nancy Williams — TCF Marlbor, NJ*



### An Angel Kiss

An Angel kissed my tears away  
today when I was sad.  
I wasn't feeling quite myself;  
my day had been so bad.  
I felt a warmth brush by me  
that quickly dried my tears,  
a gentle, kind, and loving touch  
that seemed to hold me near.  
Immediately, I felt so much better  
and the day seemed brighter too.  
I guess that's just the way you feel  
when an Angel comforts you.

TCF of Louisville, KY Newsletter



## Chasing After Closure

I have kept reading in the newspapers about survivors of tragedy or death seeking — closure. Yet no one really defines what closure means, whether it is possible or how to get there. For many in our society, closure means leaving grief behind, a milestone usually expected within a matter of weeks or months. Closure means being — normal, getting back to your old self, no longer crying or being affected by the death. It means — moving on with life and leaving the past behind, even to the extent of forgetting it or ignoring it.

For we who have experienced death, this kind of closure is not only impossible but, indeed, undesirable. Closure, if one even chooses to use the term, is actually more a process than a defined moment. The initial part of closure is accepting the reality. At first, we keep hoping or wishing that it weren't true. We expect our loved ones to walk through the door. We wait for someone to tell us it was all a huge mistake. We just can't accept that this person has died, that we will never physically see them again on earth, that we will not hear their voices, feel their hugs, or get their input on a tough decision. Usually it takes weeks or even months for the reality to finally sink in. We come to know, in both our heads and our hearts, that our loved one has died and is not coming back. We still don't like it, but we accept it as true.

As the reality sinks in, we can more actively heal. We begin making decisions and start to envision a life different from what we had planned before, a life in which we no longer expect our loved one to be there. We grow, struggle, cry and change. We form fresh goals. We face our loneliness. We feel the pain and loss, but except for short periods of time, we are not crippled by it. We also make a shift in memory. Memories of our loved ones, rather than being painful as they were at first, sometimes make us smile or even laugh. This healing phase takes a very long time and involves a lot of back-and-forth. We alternate between tears and joy, fears and confidence, despair and hope. We take two steps forward and one step back. We wonder whether we'll ever be truly happy again and often doubt that we will. Eventually we realize we are taking the past, with all its pain and pleasure, into a new tomorrow.

We never forget and, in fact, we carry our beloved with us; he or she is forever a cherished part of who we are. We are changed by the experience of having loved this person, by the knowledge of life's transience and by grief itself. We become different and hopefully better, more compassionate, more appreciative, more tolerant people. We fully embrace life again, connecting, laughing and loving with a full heart. Still, there is no point of — final closure, no point at which we can say, — Ah, now I have finally completed my grief. Or, — Yes, now I have healed.

There is no point at which we will never cry again, although, as time goes on, the tears are bitter-sweet and less common. Healing is a lifelong process, one in which we often don't even realize we are healing until we look back and see how far we have come. — Closure? I don't think so. Acceptance — yes. Peace — yes. Hope — definitely. But putting a period behind the final sentence and closing the book on it? No! Life and love are much too complex for that. The story does not end; instead, it awaits the next chapter.

By Amy Florian, Hoffman Estates, IL

*Love Gifts*

*Our chapter is a self-help group with no required dues. We rely solely on contributions. Your donations help us pay for the cost of this newsletter, the postage, all the books in our library, meeting and event supplies which are a great help to bereaved parents.*

**Your contributions are tax deductible and very sincerely appreciated. The following donations were received since the last Primrose deadline:**

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## Compassionate Friend

What is a Compassionate Friend?  
One who softens the journey of grief  
One who stands beside me  
One who gives a gentle and safe hug  
A look of understanding  
One who shows me how to live, laugh, and love again  
Validates the loss of my child  
Accepts me for who I am  
Honors the life my child lived  
Remembers my child  
Allows me to share memories of my child  
Acknowledges and confirms my feelings are real  
Most importantly the friendship, love, support, and care  
given through the darkest times a parent experiences  
through the loss of a child  
I am grateful for my family, friends, and especially my  
compassionate friends who endure the same journey and  
truly understand the loss of a child  
My hope is that each and every one of you find some  
comfort and peace on your journey and know we are  
here to walk with you and support you

In Memory of Stacy  
and Appreciation of my Compassionate Friends  
Sadly missed, forever loved, and never forgotten...  
Susan S. ~ TCF, Manchester/Nashua, NH

## Benchmarks

Good bye would be too difficult,  
Although I know you are gone.  
Instead, I keep you in my heart  
And your memory lives on.  
I have redefined my purpose, son,  
Since you are no longer here.  
With your death I faced a choice  
To die, exist or to live free.  
My life has changed forever, child,  
I'm redefined each week,  
You would call these benchmarks  
Of goals set and then achieved.  
And so I set my benchmarks,  
Achieving many, reshaping some..  
But everything is different now  
Except your mother's love.

*In memory of my son, Todd Mennen  
Annette Mennen Baldwin  
~ TCF, Katy, TX*



Please check your mailing labels for an expiration date. Let me know if you want to continue to receive the Primrose before you expire. Also, let me know any corrections to names or addresses.

### \*\*\*\* NOTICE \*\*\*\*

*The Primrose Newsletter, published quarterly, is available for a year with a suggested subscription of \$8.00 - \$10.00. You may pay as little or as much as you like towards our newsletter printing and mailing fund. Your expiration date is shown in the lower right hand corner of your mailing label. Please let me know by this date if you wish to continue receiving the Primrose. This is my way of knowing if you want the newsletter.*

Send your Tax deductible donations to: Mrs. Valerie Ambrose 730 River Rd. Binghamton, NY 13901

Make checks payable to: *The Compassionate Friends Broome*



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Please check if new  
Address

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_ DoD \_\_\_\_\\_\_\_\_\\_\_\_\_

Newsletter \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Library \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify) \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Generic \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please specify if there is a specific fund you want the money used for (newsletter, books, supplies, ect...)  
ALL donations will be mentioned in the Love gift section of the newsletter.

## WAYS TO FIND HOPE AND SURVIVE

- ♥ Make a list of things you need to do each day. Start with the necessary things at first. Start with a simple task, such as showering, getting dressed or brushing your teeth, just something that you always did before your "normal" life was turned upside down. Then begin to add things you want to do. This list may be more difficult than the necessary list, but you **will** be able to make this list eventually. **Remember - grieving is hard work and you need to be kind to yourself.**
- ♥ Get it out of the house. Take out the trash, walk around the outside of your home; just get out of the house if only for a minute! While you are doing this task, look around you for a sign **Hope**.
- ♥ Eat. Whatever you want, just make sure you eat whatever you are supposed to. Skip the —ought's and —should's right now and concentrate on the comfort foods. You can't eat this way forever, but you might as well take advantage of your grief and treat yourself.
- ♥ Buy a gift for yourself. While you are buying a gift for yourself, buy one for a loved one as well. Look around while buying your gifts for a sign of **Hope.... and smile.**
- ♥ Take deep breaths every so often, In and out; In and out. This takes some of the weight off you and your grief, for a moment or two. We need all those —moments we can get! It's that simple and that hard. Some days just breathing is all you can manage and that is okay because other days it's a bit easier.

## *Bereaved Parents Group*

Broome County Chapter  
1250 Front St., PMB 147  
Binghamton, NY 13901-1043  
(Address Service requested)

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**THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS**  
**BROOME COUNTY CHAPTER**  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies