



A Letter to My Daughter One Year Later

By Dawn Paoletta, TCF Providence Chapter

Dear Katherine,

It's been a year now since you took your life. A year and 7 days to be precise. The truth is nothing is precise in our lives here anymore. Since that time, life goes on, but is a blur of meaningless activity overshadowed by your absence. Time is irrelevant. Day, night, hours- what are they? I struggle to make sense of it all. I struggle to find meaning in anything. It's not that I am not doing things. It's that everything is less since you've been gone.

I've had to forgive everyone. I mean everyone... past and present. For all the hurts along your path...all the failures of humanity I held in my heart, recognizing even while you were still living, their toxicity, but unable to let them go, for in holding them I felt a fuel, a fire to fight for you. But that battle is done now. Have I forgiven myself for my lack, for my choices, for my failures? God knows.

I confess it would be easy to hate for so many reasons, for all you suffered. How many times I can recall specific people or incidents, which were the worst examples of humanity, yet, we had such a measure of grace along the way as well. Often from unlikely places. For that I am grateful. The rest I leave in God's faithful hands. Hate is too big a burden for anyone to carry. It's taken many down who are stronger than I. Hate and un-forgiveness are unacceptable options no matter how justified they appear by the world's standards. You know this already.

I've had to choose forgiveness or die. And though dying certainly holds appeal, if I knew without any doubt I would hold you again, see your beautiful smile, I would wholeheartedly embrace it...and I will in due time, as

God determines. In the meantime, I am here. Without you. And everything is wearisome. I mean, this living out days that used to hold hope, meaning and a measure of possibility. The whole world is lacking without you in it. You hold a piece irreplaceable.

Now, we are left asking the question, what next? But more so, the bigger question, why even bother? We also endure the casual remarks of well-meaning people with their inability to grasp the reality we are living. Can they fathom the depth of this loss? No, and may those who cannot fathom it thank God that they cannot.



I wish we could go back in time, but how far? How many things could we change to secure a different outcome? Was it one thing, or many? If only love was ever enough. You knew you were loved, but this world, it's not easy, it's not kind, and it favors those willing to play by unseen rules that don't always make sense. I've seen what this world has to offer, and I am not impressed. It takes. That's all it can do.

Too many think it's all that matters...all they can see or hope in. But I know that's not true. As you also do.

But you, my dear child...how I miss you, how I miss every moment with you. How I miss you by my side. How I miss you telling me your struggles. I miss hearing your dreams. And all the hopes you held close but dared not speak. I miss our heated arguments, our debates over big things and small. I miss your brilliance! How I miss the person you were and would have become this side of eternity. For better or worse. I miss how you challenged me ...Lord, how you challenged me! How often you challenged and befuddled many. I can see now how right you were, and sometimes how wrong you were, and how you knew that too. How I miss your hugs.



Birthday Remembrances

We celebrate the day they were born and hold them in our hearts forever.

May

Derrick Blair
Eric Boyd
Brandon Burns
Robert Carmone
Gregory S. Earley

David W. Greenwood
Kory Jeschke
Tucker Keene
Jennifer Mailloux
Justin T. Marron

Michael V. Medeiros
Jason Sherratt
Lori Taglione
Stephen Treistman
Thomas D. Walker

June

Jeffrey J. Berg
Connor Brandon
Cheryl Buccì
Leonidas Ashton Caruso
Christine McKay Chabot
Henry Charbonneau
Sebastian Cocco-Babcock

Michael Gastall
Nicholas Charles Hendee
Roger Hobbs
Ryan N. Jennings
Stephanie M. Karbowski
Jason Killian
Nicholas Messier

Lorie Okerholm
Gina Marie Pontarelli
Melissa Rourke
Daniel Erik Schuster
Justin J. Vacher
Jackson Weintraub

July

Natalie Joy Adamo
Melissa Elizabeth Allin
Patrick Christian Barbosa
Connie Lee Bradley
Daniel Reid Cornell

Shane Currier
Alex Flanagan
Amando Gomes
Almanny I. Nuñez
Matthew K. Serio

Matthew Sheehan
Paula Jane Torrico
Alex Valicenti
Christopher Paul Valliere
Conor Alexis Young

Sponsor a Newsletter

We are pleased to offer our members the opportunity to sponsor a newsletter. We will feature your child's story and photo on the front page of our newsletter when you make a donation. This offers members another way to share their child with our group, as well as to help offset the cost of producing and mailing our newsletter. We are offering up to two sponsorships per newsletter. Your story can be any length up to 500 words and can include 1-3 photos. **If you would like to see your child featured in a future issue, please contact Lucille at (401) 231-9229 or lcvalliere49@gmail.com.**

In Memory of Our Children

As long as we live, our children too shall live, for they are part of us in our memories. We lovingly remember the following children on Their Anniversary.



May

Abby Aukerman
Michael P. Batalon
Cheryl Bucci
Brandon Burns
Dante Cappelli
Shane Carrier
Allison DeAngelus

Christine Grinavic
Bradley Lawrence
Thomas P. Lewis
Jeffrey S. Monica
Gregory "Josh" Montigny
Arthur Pelliccia
Kyle Saunders

Dan Schnebly
Jason Alan Smith
Joshua Spinelli
Christopher Paul Valliere
Tomas Watson
Rebeckha Lynn Whitefield

June

Mary Elaine Ackaway
Caitlyn Marie Adler
Rebecca Eisen
Michael Gastall
Tucker Keene

Kameron Montanino
Erin Noble
Jamie Rappaneau
Eddie Reed III
Emma Elizabeth Soares

Tyler Anthony Williams
Marrina A. Yeomans

July

James Avitabile
Patrick Christian Barbosa
Stephanie Lynn Blum
Connor Brandon
Daniel John Coleman
Alexandria Marie Curtis
Anthony Michael D'Arezzo
Robert Desmet

Brian Gault
Nicholas Charles Hendee
Stephanie M. Karbowski
Daniel M. Malo
Jennifer Mailloux
Justin T. Marron
David Roger Monica
Joan Elizabeth Plante

Gina Marie Pontarelli
Matthew Sheehan
Jason Sherratt
Paula Jane Torrico
Lori Taglione
Thomas D. Walker

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I am trying to remember the blessings we shared, for they were many. I am trying to hang onto you in a million little ways. In spontaneous drives to your favorite places, in the sunsets, in the clouds, in the quietness of the days. Do you know how often I think of you? It's like you are with me all the time...like a whisper I can't quite hear, like a song I want to remember, like the full moon in winter, like an ache in my heart that never relents. Every minute I live without you feels like a desert. Like I am gasping for air. How I wish I could breathe in your hair, gaze into your earnest brown eyes...just one more time. How I wish I could reassure you, just one more time, cause you to laugh, share the same space with you one more time...and forever.

First Day of the Second Summer Without You

Today, a short poem to commemorate another moment that brings the stark recognition of my daughter's absence. There is no timetable for grief. That is what I am learning in the time following Katherine's departure January 9, 2021.

Others march on into their brave new world's blessings, but grieving the loss of a child is like having a deep wound, scabbed over that is torn open every day. The same blood, from the same body, but different... because this wound cannot heal. Not this side of ever after. C.S. Lewis put it this way, "How often—will it be for always?—how often will the vast emptiness astonish me like a complete novelty and make me say, "I never realized my loss till this moment"? The same leg is cut off time after time."

For Katherine:

Today is the first day of Summer
and you're not here

The heaviness crushing my heart
is too much to bear

If I could take back every yesterday
and trade them all for you near—

Would that replace the empty space in my heart
where grief resides with fear?

—Dawn Paoletta

My love, you were my courage, my strength, my purpose. You gave me a reason to be and to believe, and without you, I struggle to see. But who can argue with God?

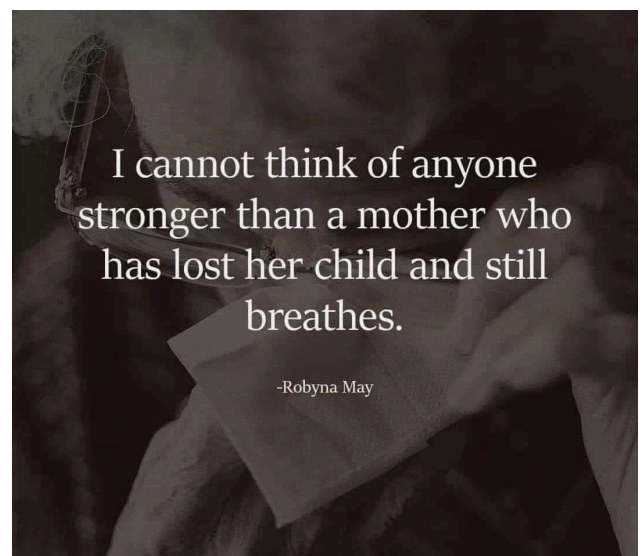
So, I go on.

I'll continue to hold my place by grace and by faith and by the One who is both faithful and incomprehensible. I miss you beyond words...in a million different ways.

Until I see you again,

I remain,

Your loving mother.



LOVE Love Gifts

A Love Gift is a living memorial to your child. Usually given on birthdays, anniversaries of their deaths, holidays, or just to remember. Our thanks to the following for their generous donations.

Kory Jeschke – We think of you every day. You are in our hearts forever, Love Mom and Dad

Christopher Boone – Forever in our Hearts

Jay Lawrence – Thinking of you Always, Mom and Dad

Jeffrey Stephen Shank – Forever in our hearts

Keeley Lynch – Thank you for being my daughter, Love, Mom

Servulo Gonsalves – Forever in my heart, Love, Mom

Nicole Meredith Reinert – We talk about your every day. We Miss you always, Forever in our Hearts, Mom and Dad

Gina Pontarelli – Love you Forever, Mom and Dad

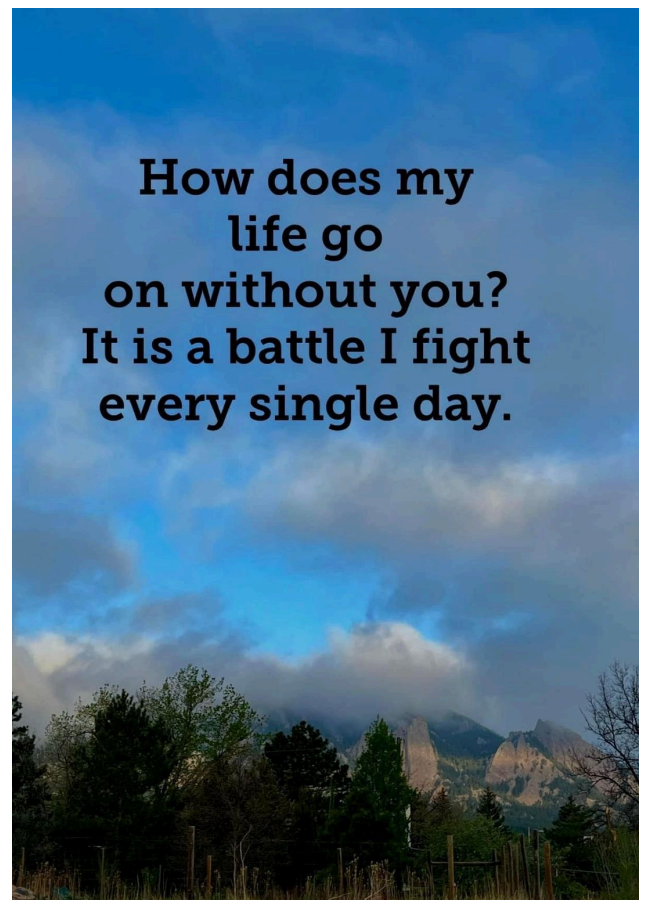
Thank You for your donations in memory of Our Children.

Still Here The Compassionate Friends

Several months ago, our Chapter embarked on a new adventure by creating a podcast titled *Still Here*, which supports parents and family members who have lost a child. This meaningful endeavor is hosted by TCF member Bob Houghtaling with administrative support from Elaine Arts, and each month features a guest who shares their grief experience.

Still Here creates connections with those looking to learn more about TCF, while also offering support to individuals who cannot make it to meetings. You can listen to the podcasts any time from the *Still Here* digital library on our website at www.tcfprovidence.com/still-here.

Moving forward, if you have any ideas regarding future topics and guests please feel free to contact Elaine Arts at elainearts@icloud.com. We are truly excited to be offering this valuable program. Thank you for all of your kind support. See you soon!

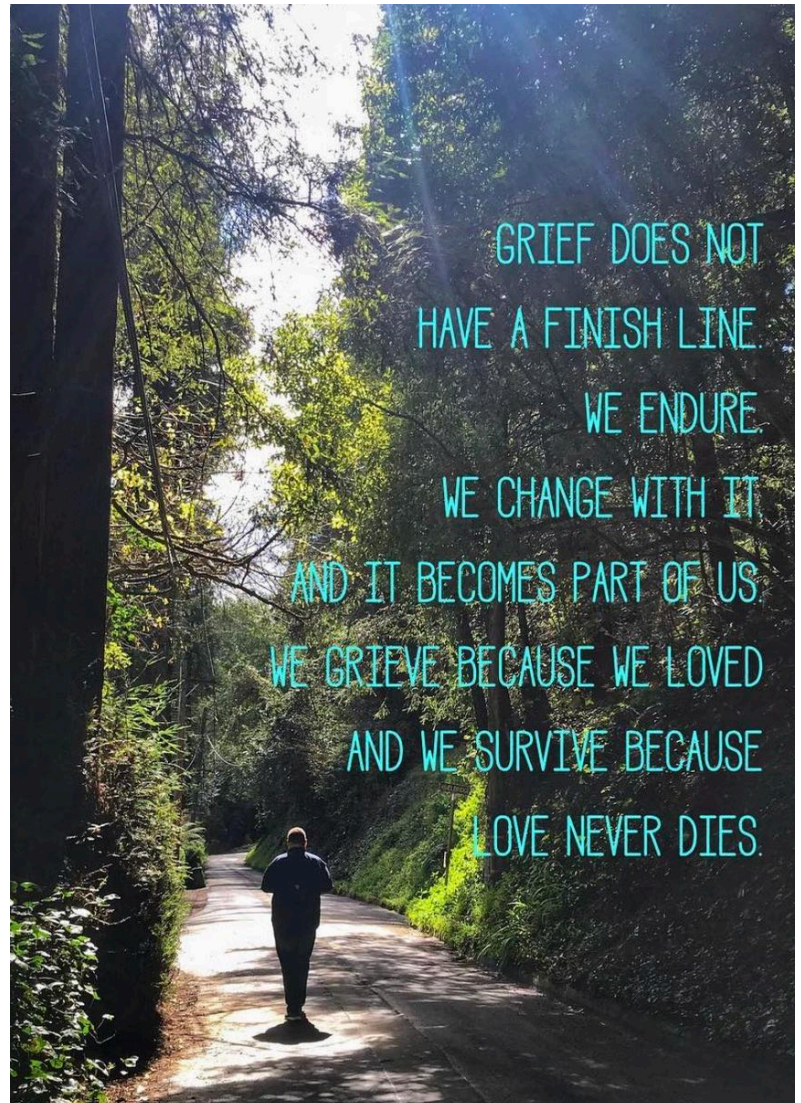
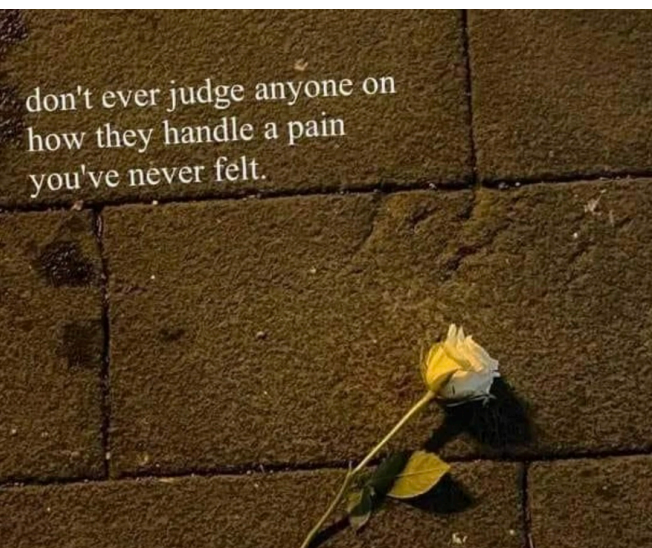
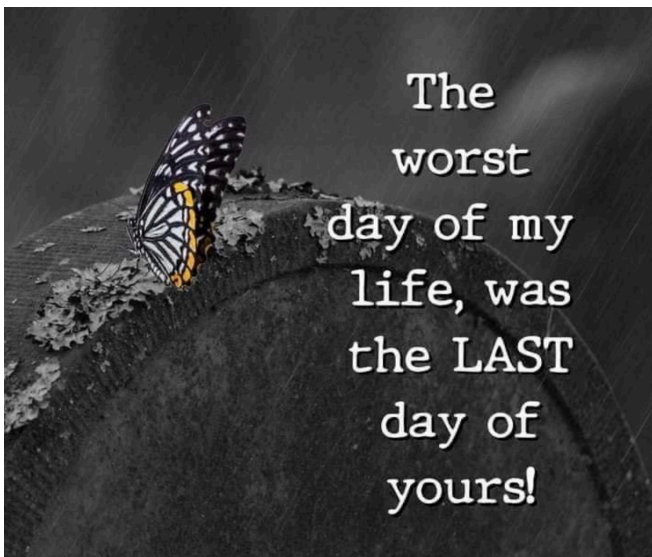


Chapter Updates

New Clerical Assistant – We would like to welcome Judy Eisen for volunteering to help with clerical work for our Chapter. Thanks a million, Judy!

Change of Address – If you change your address or email address, please be sure to send a notice to Lucille at lcvalliere49@gmail.com. Also, please let us know if you want to be removed from our mailing list.

Important Reminder – There will be NO MEETINGS in July and August 2023. See you in September!



Love Gift Donation

For TCF Chapter Expenses



Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

In Loving Memory Of _____

Love Gift \$ _____ Message _____

Your donation is tax-deductible and will be posted in our Newsletter.

Please make your check payable to: **TCF Providence Chapter**.

Please send donations to our Chapter Treasurer: Kevin Sbardella
133 Fieldstone Lane
Fall River, MA 02720

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Join Us! 2023 Remembrance Garden Dedication Ceremony

Sunday, June 11, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. – You're invited to join us as we dedicate 22 new names to the stone walkway of our Remembrance Garden in downtown Providence. Light refreshments will be served. Bring lawn chairs for your comfort.



Remembrance Garden
of Greater Providence

Love Gifts

Matthew Marandola – Forever in our hearts, Love, Mom and Dad

Beau Wennermark – You are always on our Mind and in Our Hearts, Love, Mom and Dad

Justin Marron – Birthday Remembrance. So many years have passed but you are always present in my heart, Love, Mom

Gina Pontarelli – Love you Forever, Mom and Dad

Lori and John Taglione, Jr. – Love and miss you both every day, Mom and Family

Christopher Valliere – On your 20th Anniversary and 46th Birthday. A Day does not go by that we don't miss you. Love, Mom, Dad, and Craig



**The
Compassionate
Friends**
Greater Providence Area Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

10 Dail Drive
North Providence, RI 02911
tcfprovidence.com



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Remembrance Garden Love Gift Donation Form

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

In Loving Memory Of _____

Love Gift \$ _____ Message _____

_____ I would like my Love Gift to go toward upkeep of the Remembrance Garden.

Your tax-deductible donation helps defray the costs for garden upkeep. Your donation is greatly appreciated and will be acknowledged in this newsletter. Please make your check payable to: **Remembrance Garden of Greater Providence.** Call 401-231-9229 with any questions.

Please send donations to: Lucille Valliere
10 Dail Drive
North Providence, RI 02911