

# Friendship and Support The Compassionate Friends SOUTH AUSTRALIA



OFFERING FRIENDSHIP & SUPPORT BETWEEN BEREAVED PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS & SIBLINGS



National Grief Support Line Free Call – 1300 064 068 The Compassionate Friends South Australia - 0456 820 133 www.compassionatefriendssa.org.au



The Compassionate Friends (SA) Inc. is part of a world-wide organisation offering friendship and understanding to families following the death of a son or daughter, brother or sister. TCF offers support in the grief and trauma which follows the death of a child at any age and from any cause.

Our purpose is to offer friendship and understanding by reaching out to bereaved parents, to the surviving siblings and other family members to support them in the grief and trauma which follows the death of a child. We promote the positive resolution of parents' grief, and to foster the physical, emotional and spiritual growth, in an open and friendly environment of bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. At The Compassionate Friends you will find the special understanding of those who have "been there". There are no pressures to talk or not talk, to cry or not cry, just a chance to be yourself, to have time-out. The Compassionate Friends offers a safe haven, a listening and understanding ear, a place where you can let down the masks, and if you wish, talk about your son or daughter who has died. The Compassionate Friends offers no miracle cure, just comfort and the consolation and hope that broken threads can be picked up again. The Compassionate Friends Support Groups offer the opportunity for bereaved parents and siblings to meet in a safe environment with others who have 'been there' who understand and care. *Monthly support groups are held at*:



6:30 pm on the 1st Wednesday of each month. Eastwood Community Centre, 95 Glen Osmond Rd, EASTWOOD. SA

Grief does not discern time. We understand there are times when you need to speak with another bereaved parent. Our grief support telephone number 0456 820 133. Please leave a message and we will return your call as soon as possible. If you do not want to wait for a call back, please phone our National Ph: 1300 064 068 Grief Telephone Support. When a son or daughter dies, no matter what their age or the cause of death, grief lasts for longer than society in general recognises. The death of your child is an unacceptable tragedy, and it can take a long time before you regain any sense of normality in your life.

\*Please Note: TCFSA is not a crisis service. If you need immediate crises support, please contact: Suicide Line on 1300 651 251 - Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467 - Lifeline on 13 11 14.

" We Need Not Walk Alone."



#### **Our Values**

These basic principles guide all our interactions and activities:

- Empathy
- Compassion
- Respect
- Integrity
- Inclusivity

*Our Volunteers* – all bereaved parents, siblings or grandparents themselves - provide support, understanding and hope to those who have suffered the death of a son or daughter from any cause.

TCF has no religious affiliations - we offer support to all bereaved parents, adult siblings and grandparents both with faith and those with none.

#### "Grief Needs a Voice"

People say: "I didn't understand grief until my person died" Why is That?

Maybe because we don't talk about it. We don't teach it. We don't encourage it to be part of natural conversation with children – or bigger people. And because we say things like, everything happens for a reason, or it's been a year and you are STILL grieving? Or she or he lived a long life (implying: no need to be sad) or gosh, you are so strong (implying: don't be weak). Or maybe because we CAN imagine the gut-wrenching, heart tugging pain and it is easier not to imagine it until it actually happens to us.

No, that's not how it should be.

Grief needs a Voice.



#### COMMITTEE UPDATES

#### The Compassionate Friends SA (TCFSA)

Dear Members,

We are pleased to share an update on the progress of The Compassionate Friends South Australia as we continue working toward our goals for the year.

Highlights from the past three months include:

#### Bereaved Father's Day - Fusion of Fun and Food

Held at Hey Caddy, Mosaic Hotel at West Lakes. This special gathering brought our community together on the mini golf course in a warm and supportive setting.

#### **Looking Ahead**

We are continuing to build on our plans for regional introductions and are excited to share that the groundwork is progressing well. These visits will help us connect with bereaved parents and families in communities beyond Adelaide, extending our support network across South Australia.

Within the committee, we are now feeling more settled in our roles and are working more closely as a team. This has allowed us to focus on new priorities, such as strengthening communication with members and exploring fresh opportunities to bring people together in meaningful ways.

With Care,
The TCFSA Committee

Warm regards, Vicki Shaw *(Secretary)* 



#### A Message for the Christmas Season



We know that Christmas can be a particularly hard time for those of us who have lost a child, sibling, or loved one. While the world around us celebrates, it's normal for grief to feel even stronger during this season.

Please know you are not alone. Whether it's your first Christmas without your loved one or one of many, it's okay to feel whatever comes up—sadness, memories, or even moments of joy. Be gentle with yourself, and take the time you need.

Our TCFSA community is here for you. Whether you want to reach out, attend a support group, or simply know someone is thinking of you, we walk beside you through this season.

With love and understanding,

The TCFSA Committee

Warm regards, Vicki Shaw *(Secretary)* 

## Bereaved Father's Day





Thank you to all that came and celebrated our TCFSA Bereaved Father's Day event at "Hey Caddy" on Sunday 31st August. It was a fun afternoon indeed, starting with a lovely lunch in the Bistro, followed by a 9 Hole round of Mini Golf. Loads of fun, heaps of laughter, and some epic mini golf skills on show! Helen played some great shots and came out on top, but everyone was a winner on the day!





























## Walks Guided and Self-Guided Walks **Big Heart Adventures**

Big Heart Adventures is proud to introduce events for people of all abilities to join us for mindful nature connection time.

Experience a deeper connection with nature and be guided on a sensory journey with the land we walk upon. You are invited to feel the health benefits of being in nature while deepening our relationships with the earth and ourselves. We include light refreshments and tea at the conclusion of our session. Our leaders carry group first aid kits, emergency communication devices and are qualified bushwalking leaders, certified Nature Therapy Guides and practitioners in outdoor health.

#### WHO IS THIS EVENT SUITABLE FOR?

This event is ideal for everyone, including people recovering from injuries, accidents, illness or using mobility aids to get around or perhaps just not confident with being on trails without a leader or the company of others. Nature Therapy is also a non-clinical, traumainformed practise which has the potential to improve mental health.

Our culturally authentic, guided and selfguided walking adventures are designed for beginners, intermediate and experienced trekkers.

bigheartadventures.com.au









## The Idea of Balancing

The idea of balancing between slowing down to remember and keeping busy is a common experience, especially for those navigating grief or significant life moments.

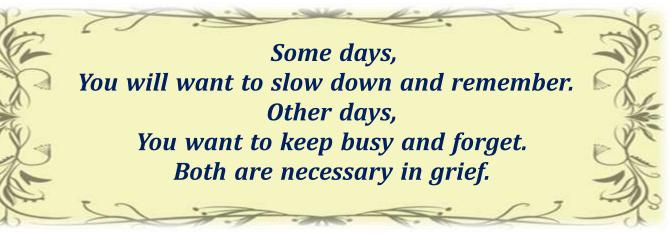
#### Slowing Down to Remember

There are days when memories, emotions, or anniversaries surface strongly, and it feels right to pause. Slowing down allows space for reflection, honoring a loved one, or simply sitting with emotions rather than pushing them aside. These moments can be healing, offering a chance to connect with what truly matters, process feelings, and find meaning in the past.

#### **Keeping Busy to Move Forward**

On other days, staying active can be a helpful way to manage emotions, prevent overwhelming sadness, or regain a sense of routine and purpose. Keeping busy doesn't mean avoiding grief or forgetting but rather integrating memories into daily life while also engaging with the present.

Both approaches serve a purpose—some days, you need to give yourself time to feel, and on others, movement and action provide the energy to carry on. The key is listening to yourself and allowing both to coexist in a way that supports your well-being.





#### International Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month

A Time to Reflect, Remember, and Raise Awareness Together, we can honour the memory of babies who have died too soon.

October is recognised globally as Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month. It is a time for families, communities, and healthcare professionals to come together to break the silence surrounding miscarriage, stillbirth, and infant death. This month holds particular significance for those who have experienced the devastating loss of a baby and serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of support, awareness, and education in addressing pregnancy and infant loss.

#### Why Awareness Matters

In Australia each year, around 3000 families experience a stillbirth or the loss of a newborn baby. This number dramatically increases when miscarriage and early pregnancy loss are included. The loss of a baby at any time during pregnancy or soon after birth represents a family forever changed. By raising awareness, we can help to normalise conversations around pregnancy and baby loss, and create a safe space for families to share their stories. It also provides an opportunity to highlight the resources available to support those navigating the loss of a baby. Honouring the Memory of Babies.

**On 15**<sup>th</sup> **October, 2025** the International Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day will culminate in the **#WaveOfLight**, a powerful event where people around the world light candles at **7pm** in their local time zone to honour the memory of babies who have died. This wave of light symbolises solidarity and remembrance, helping to create a sense of global connection for grieving families.

We encourage everyone—whether you have experienced pregnancy loss personally or know someone who has—to join the #WaveOfLight on 15th October, 2025 - by lighting a candle, you send a message of love and support to those who have lost a baby. It's a small but meaningful way to show that no one is alone in their grief.

There are many ways to get involved in Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month and show your support. Whether it's participating in the **#WaveOfLight** event, sharing information on social media, or having a conversation with a friend, your actions can help raise awareness and break the silence.

By coming together, we can foster a more compassionate world for grieving families.







#### 7 THINGS I HAVE LEARNED SINCE THE LOSS OF MY CHILD

Child loss is a loss like no other. Often misunderstood by many. If you love a bereaved parent or know someone who does, remember that even his or her "good" days are harder than you could ever imagine. Compassion and love, not advice, are needed. If you'd like an inside look into why the loss of a child is a grief that lasts a lifetime, here is what I've learned in my seven years of trekking through the unimaginable.

- 1. Love never dies. There will never come a day, hour, minute or second, I stop loving or thinking about my son. Just as parents of living children unconditionally love their children always and forever, so do bereaved parents. I want to say and hear his name just the same as non-bereaved parents do. I want to speak about my deceased child as normally and naturally as you speak of your living ones. I love my child just as much as you love yours— the only difference is mine lives in heaven and talking about him is unfortunately quite taboo in our culture. I hope to change that. Our culture isn't so great about hearing about children gone too soon, but that doesn't stop me from saying my son's name and sharing his love and light everywhere I go. Just because it might make you uncomfortable, doesn't make him matter any less. My son's life was cut irreversibly short, but his love lives on forever. And ever.
- 2. Bereaved parents share an unspeakable bond. In my seven years navigating the world as a bereaved parent, I am continually struck by the power of the bond between bereaved parents. Strangers become kindreds in mere seconds—a look, a glance, a knowing of the heart connects us, even if we've never met before. No matter our circumstances, who we are, how different we are, there is no greater bond than the connection between parents who understand the agony of enduring the death of a child. It's a pain we suffer for a lifetime, and unfortunately only those who have walked the path of child loss understand the depth and breadth of both the pain and the love we carry.
- 3. I will grieve for a lifetime. Period. The end. There is no "moving on," or "getting over it." There is no bow, no fix, no solution to my heartache. There is no end to the ways I will grieve and for how long I will grieve. There is no glue for my broken heart, no elixir for my pain, no going back in time. For as long as I breathe, I will grieve and ache and love my son with all my heart and soul. There will never come a time where I won't think about who my son would be, what he would look like, and how he would be woven perfectly into the tapestry of my family. I wish people could understand that grief lasts forever because love lasts forever; that the loss of a child is not one finite event, it is a continuous loss that unfolds minute by minute over the course of a lifetime. Every missed birthday, holiday, milestones, back-to-school, school years and graduations; weddings that will never be; grandchildren that should have been but will never be born— an entire generation of people are irrevocably altered forever. This is why grief lasts forever. The ripple effect lasts forever. The bleeding never stops.
- 4. It's a club I can never leave, but is filled with the most shining souls I've ever known. This crappy club called child loss is a club I never wanted to join, and one I can never leave, yet is filled with some of the best people I've ever known. And yet we all wish we could jump ship— that we could have met another way— any other way but this. Alas, these shining souls are the most beautiful, compassionate, grounded, loving, movers, shakers and healers I have ever had the honour of knowing. They are life-changers, game-changers, relentless survivors and thrivers. Warrior moms and dads who redefine the word brave. Every day grieving parents move mountains in Honor of their children gone too soon. They start movements, change laws, spearhead crusades of tireless activism. Why? In the hope that even just one parent could be spared from joining the club. If you've ever wondered who some of the greatest world changers are, hang out with a few bereaved parents and watch how they live, see what they do in a day, a week, a lifetime. Watch how they alchemize their grief into a force to be reckoned with, watch how they turn tragedy into transformation, loss into legacy. Love is the most powerful force on earth, and the love between a bereaved parent and his/her child is a lifeforce to behold. Get to know a bereaved parent. You'll be thankful you did.

- 5. The empty chair/room/space never becomes less empty. Empty chair, empty room, empty space in every family picture. Empty, vacant, forever gone for this lifetime. Empty spaces that should be full, everywhere we go. There is and will always be a missing space in our lives, our families, a forever-hole-in-our-hearts. Time does not make the space less empty. Neither do platitudes, clichés or well-wishes for us to "move on," or "stop dwelling" from well-intentioned friends or family. Nothing does. No matter how you look at it, empty is still empty. Missing is still missing. Gone is still gone. The problem is nothing can fill it. Minute after minute, hour after hour, day after day, month after month, year after heartbreaking year the empty space remains. The empty space of our missing child(ren) lasts a lifetime. And so, we rightfully miss them forever. Help us by holding the space of that truth for us.
- 6. No matter how long it's been, holidays never become easier without my son. Never, ever. Have you ever wondered why every holiday season is like torture for a bereaved parent? Even if it's been 5, 10, or 25 years later? It's because they really, truly are. Imagine if you had to live every holiday without one or more of your precious children. Imagine how that might feel for you. It would be easier to lose an arm, a leg or two anything than to live without your flesh and blood, without the beat of your heart. Almost anything would be easier than living without one of more of your precious children. That is why holidays are always and forever hard for bereaved parents. Don't wonder why or even try to understand. Know you don't have to understand in order to be a supportive presence. Consider supporting and loving some bereaved parents this holiday season. It will be the best gift you could ever give them.
- 7. Because I know deep sorrow, I also know unspeakable joy. Though I will grieve the death of my son forever and then some, it does not mean my life is lacking happiness and joy. Quite the contrary, in fact, though it took a while to get there. My life is richer now. I live from a deeper place. I love deeper still. Because I grieve, I also know a joy like no other. The joy I experience now is far deeper and more intense than the joy I experienced before my loss. Such is the alchemy of grief. Because I've clawed my way from the depth of unimaginable pain, suffering and sorrow, again and again—when the joy comes, however and whenever it does—it is a joy that reverberates through every pore of my skin and every bone in my body. I feel all of it, deeply: the love, the grief, the joy, the pain. I embrace and thank every morsel of it. My life now is richer and more vibrant and fuller, not despite my loss, but because of it. In grief there are gifts, sometimes many. These gifts don't in any way make it all "worth" it, but I am grateful beyond words for each and every gift that comes my way. I bow my head to each one and say thank you, thank you, thank you. Because there is nothing—and I mean absolutely nothing—I take for granted. Living life in this way gives me greater joy than I've ever known possible.

I have my son to thank for that. Being his mom is the best gift I've ever been given. Even death can't take that away.

Written by Angela Miller

(Shared with thanks from TCF-QUEENSLAND Newsletter)

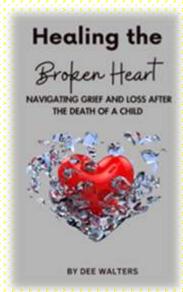




#### **BOOKS and PODCASTS of INTEREST**



When her 20-year-old son passed away suddenly and unexpectedly, she faced an indescribable loss that changed her life forever. "Healing the Broken Heart" is not just a recounting of her journey through sorrow; it is a guide for others who are dealing with the heartbreaking loss of a child. It tackles the intense emotional turmoil with courage and honesty, presenting strategies for surviving and eventually healing from such an overwhelming tragedy. This riveting book's raw authenticity draws you into the author's world, showing you the real face of grief and the power of resilience. Her narrative transcends beyond just a retelling of personal tragedy; it is a testament to human strength in the face of unbearable loss. The author's intimate account coupled with practical strategies is intended to serve as a comforting companion to those who find themselves on this heartbreaking journey.



In this book, you'll find:

- Insightful, practical strategies to navigate grief and reframe the future.
- Honest reflections on the process of grieving and healing after the loss of a child.
- Empathetic guidance to manage and acknowledge your pain, and to honour your unique grieving process.
- Valuable resources and advice for seeking professional help, joining support groups, and building a network of understanding.
- Encouragement to express your feelings through creative outlets as a therapeutic form of release.
- Suggestions to honour your child's memory and keep their spirit alive in your heart.

Through her words, the author paints a portrait of her son so vivid, it's as though you knew him. She takes you on the emotional rollercoaster that followed his passing - the agonizing hospital stays, the numbness that enveloped her afterward, and the painful process of telling her other children about their brother's departure. As you journey with her through the fog of grief and into the light of acceptance and transformation, you may find solace, understanding, and perhaps, a renewed sense of hope. "Healing the Broken Heart" is not just a book about loss; it is about love, resilience, and the incredible strength of the human spirit. In the throes of despair, the author discovered the transformative power of grief. She learned to honour her son's memory in a way that helped her heal, grow, and find purpose again. She hopes to share the insights she gained along the way, hoping they may serve as a guiding light to others experiencing a similar loss. Join her in this deeply moving journey of the heart and discover a roadmap to healing after the unthinkable happens.

#### PODCASTS by ANGELA SNOWDEN – Life after Child Loss: "A Parents Grief"

Life After Child Loss is a personal and deep podcast with focus on, not only my journey, but the journey of other parents all over the world who have lost children of various causes and reasons. It's the grief many don't understand and others aren't willing to talk about. An in depth, uncensored talk about parent's trying to live a life after they lose their child. Walk with me as I take you on my journey of twists, turns, highs and lows of fighting from merely existing to living, but also finding meaning as I take on my "new normal" after I buried my son.

(https://podcasts.apple.com/au/podcast/life-after-child-loss-a-parents-grief/id1492746664)



## 7 THINGS TO REMEMBER TO HELP YOU COPE WITH GRIEF & LOSS

When it comes to grief, there is no magic answer. No solution. No cure. Grief is an individual experience that can only be processed by the person working to cope with it. Although there's no quick fix to grief, there's time-honored wisdom that can support coping and promote acceptance.

#### Here are 7 things that can help in processing grief and dealing with loss:

- Grief comes in waves and can be heightened during moments like anniversaries or holidays. Ensuring you have the extra support from professionals, family and friends can help you process, cope and move forward.
- 2. As people, we want to avoid pain at all cost, but we're stronger than we think we are. We not only learn our capacity to deal with hurt and pain by experiencing it, we grow from it too. Resiliency is one of the best practices to help cope with grief.
- 3. Grief is exhausting and taking care of yourself is important. Giving yourself time for naps, nourishing meals, laughter, personal time and time with loved ones is vital to coping with your grief and loss. Remember, you deserve it.
- 4. Grief is not something you experience and simply get over. Grief moves in cycles. If you're feeling "okay" and then feel bad again, it doesn't mean you relapsed or worsened. It means you're human and are actually moving forward in your process. Your grief is yours, no questions asked.

- 5. Anger, sadness, hurt—your feelings of grief are yours and, more importantly, they're normal. Having someone (including yourself) challenging how you should feel compounds the experience and prohibits coping, resiliency or growth. Everyone comes to their loss experience with their own story, their own unique context and their own meaning.
- 6. Believe it or not, grief can create meaning in your life. There's no getting over the loss of a loved one, but, in that loss, you can glean new purpose for your life as you cope with your grief. Connect to what gives you meaning like a passion project, your family history or even helping others who've experienced grief themselves. Doing so will promote co-existence with your grief and help you build strength.
- 7. Although grief is individual, you're not alone. There are support systems in every corner of the state. Whether it's a behavioral health or medical professional like a counselor or doctor, a long-time family friend, a grief support group or there are avenues where you can build your resilience and coping with your loss in the best way for you.



## ART THERAPY FOR GRIEF

Art therapy can be incredibly helpful in helping you process through a myriad of experiences and grief is no exception to this. Art therapy and grief are deeply interconnected, as the creative process offers a meaningful outlet for expressing the pain, confusion, and complex emotions that accompany loss. While grief can feel overwhelming and difficult to articulate, art therapy provides a safe space to externalize these feelings through visual expression. If you'd like to explore this method of managing grief, this article provides some background and some suggestions on art therapy activities for grief.

#### What is art therapy?

Art therapy is a therapeutic practice that uses creative processes like drawing, painting, sculpting, or collage-making to help individuals express and explore their emotions, thoughts, and experiences. It combines psychological principles with artistic expression to promote mental and emotional well-being. Through the creation of art, people can communicate feelings that might be difficult to articulate verbally, allowing them to process trauma, grief, or stress in a nonverbal, intuitive way. Often guided by a trained art therapist, the practice provides a safe space for self-exploration, healing, and personal growth. Art therapy is used in treating anxiety, depression, trauma, and grief, making it a versatile tool for emotional and psychological healing.

#### How is art therapy helpful for grief?

Art therapy is helpful for grief because it allows individuals to express complex and often overwhelming emotions in a creative, nonverbal way. Grief can be difficult to articulate through words alone, but engaging in artistic activities offers a safe and accessible outlet for these deep feelings. By creating images, symbols, or using materials that represent the loss or their emotions, individuals can process their grief at their own pace, exploring both the pain of loss and the memories of their loved one. Art therapy also promotes self-reflection, emotional release, and healing, helping people navigate through the various stages of grief while fostering resilience and a sense of continuity with the deceased.

#### Do I need a therapist in order to engage in art therapy?

While working with a trained art therapist can enhance the healing process and provide professional guidance, you don't necessarily need a therapist to engage in art therapy activities. Many people use art as a personal tool for self-expression and emotional processing on their own. However, a therapist can help you navigate deeper emotions, offer support, and guide you through techniques tailored to your specific needs, especially if you're dealing with intense grief or trauma. If you're looking for structured help or struggling to manage your emotions, seeking the support of a therapist can be highly beneficial. Otherwise, engaging in creative activities independently can still offer therapeutic benefits and emotional release.

#### What kind of art therapy activities are helpful for grief?

Art therapy can be a powerful tool for processing grief, as it allows people to express complex emotions that may be difficult to put into words.

Some helpful art therapy activities for grief include:

#### 1. Memory collage

Materials: Old magazines, photographs, fabric, coloured paper, glue, scissors, and markers.

Instructions:

Gather images and objects that remind you of your loved one—these could be photographs, words from magazines, fabrics, or any small objects.

Arrange and glue the images onto a poster board or piece of paper. There's no wrong way to do this; it's about expressing your relationship and memories.

You can also add personal notes, drawings, or symbolic items like flowers or colours that remind you of them. Once completed, reflect on the memories you've collected and how they make you feel. The collage can serve as a visual representation of your bond with the person who has passed away.

#### 2. Emotion wheel

Materials: A large piece of paper, markers or coloured pencils.

Instructions:

Draw a large circle on the paper and divide it into sections like a pie (5-8 sections).

Label each section with an emotion you are experiencing in your grief (anger, sadness, guilt, confusion, love, etc.).

In each section, use colours, shapes, or images that represent how that particular emotion feels to you. For example, use red to symbolize anger, jagged shapes for confusion, or soothing colours for love.

Once complete, step back and reflect on which emotions dominate your grief and which are more subtle.

This can give you insights into your emotional state and help you process those feelings more deeply.

#### 3. Letter to the deceased

Materials: Paper, pens, coloured pencils, markers.

Instructions:

Start by writing a letter to the person who has passed away. This can be anything you feel you want to say to them—goodbyes, apologies, things left unsaid, or happy memories.

Once the letter is written, use coloured pencils or markers to decorate the letter. Add drawings, symbols, or images that reflect your relationship or feelings. You might draw hearts, flowers, or favourite objects associated with your loved one.

Take time to reflect on the emotions that arise as you write and decorate. This can serve as a way of maintaining emotional contact and releasing unresolved feelings.

#### 4. Grief mandala

Materials: Paper, compass (for drawing a circle), coloured pencils, markers, paints.

Instructions:

Draw a large circle on your paper, and within that circle, divide it into sections or use freeform patterns like spirals or radiating lines.

Begin filling the sections of the mandala with symbols, colours, patterns, or images that represent your grief and emotions. You might use dark colours for sadness or softer colours for peace.

You can incorporate meaningful symbols like tears, hearts, or other objects that hold significance to your experience of grief.

As you work, allow yourself to feel the emotions associated with each part of the mandala. When complete, reflect on how the mandala represents your journey through grief and any emotions that were revealed during the process.

#### 5. Memory box

*Materials*: A small box (wood, cardboard, or metal), photos, fabric, small mementos, glue, paint, markers. Instructions:

Select a box that will become a "memory box" for your loved one.

Decorate the outside of the box with paint, markers, or glued-on photos or symbols that remind you of the person. Inside the box, place mementos, such as photographs, letters, small objects that belonged to your loved one, or notes you've written. Continue to add to the box over time if you like. It can become a personal shrine or keepsake holder, offering a space for connection and reflection as you process your grief.

#### 6. Tree of life

Materials: Large piece of paper, coloured pencils, markers, or paint.

Instructions:

Draw a large tree with roots, a trunk, and many branches. On the branches, write or draw memories, traits, or moments shared with your loved one. You can also add leaves, fruits, or flowers to symbolize these memories or traits. In the roots, write what your loved one's legacy means to you, or how they influenced your life. This can help symbolize how they continue to "nourish" you, even in their absence. Reflect on the tree when finished, considering how your loved one's life intertwined with yours and the ways they continue to live on in your memories.

#### 7. Journey map

Materials: A large piece of paper, markers, pens, coloured pencils.

Instructions:

Draw a path or road on your paper, symbolizing your grief journey. Along the road, add different "milestones" or significant moments—these could include the moment of loss, times of intense grief, or moments of relief or reflection. As you move along the road, use symbols, colours, or images to depict the emotions or events that you've experienced at each point. The road can twist, turn, or divide as needed—grief is not linear, so allow your map to reflect the real ups and downs of your journey.

When complete, look at the whole journey and reflect on how far you've come and where you are right now in your process. This can help you see your growth and recognize the different emotional stages you've passed through. Each of these activities allows for creative exploration of grief, offering a tangible, visual representation of emotions and memories while fostering healing through expression.

#### How can I tell if art therapy is working?

Art therapy works by using the creative process of making art to help individuals express emotions, thoughts, and experiences that may be difficult to articulate verbally. Through drawing, painting, sculpting, or other artistic activities, people can explore their feelings in a nonverbal way, often uncovering and processing complex emotions. While it's not the same to do this on your own, without the help of a professional, it is possible to engage in some of the activities on your end. If you're working with a therapist or are trying some of these activities on your own, here are some signs that it may be helping you through your grief process:

**Better emotional release**: You may feel lighter or more relieved after expressing difficult emotions through your artwork. Art therapy can help release pent-up feelings, and this emotional catharsis can signal progress. Increased self-awareness: You may start gaining insight into your feelings or behaviours. The creative process often reveals underlying thoughts and emotions that weren't previously clear, helping you understand your grief or emotional state better.

*Improved mood*: Over time, you might notice an overall improvement in your mood, feeling less anxious, sad, or overwhelmed. Creating art can foster a sense of peace or joy, even in small ways, which can indicate healing.

**Enhanced coping**: Art therapy can help you develop healthier ways to cope with grief or stress. If you're finding it easier to handle your emotions or navigate difficult days, that's a sign it's working. Personal growth: You might recognize growth in your ability to process your grief or other emotions. This can come from seeing how your artwork evolves, noticing recurring themes, or gaining comfort from the creative process.

**Connection to memories**: In the context of grief, if you find that creating art helps you connect with positive memories of your loved one, it can provide a sense of healing and continuity.

While progress might be slow or subtle, any improvement in your emotional state, clarity, or ability to cope indicates that art therapy is working for you. Finding a grief therapist who specializes in art therapy can help you track your own progress and identify places where you might be getting stuck.

There's something quietly disorienting about the days that go well after loss. When, for a few hours, you laugh at something silly. When the sun feels warm again on your skin. When your thoughts drift to things other than pain. And for a little while, you breathe differently, lighter, maybe even hopeful.

But then evening comes. The light fades. And with the quiet, the grief creeps back in.

That's often when it hits the hardest—when the day has been good enough to remind you of what a truly good day used to feel like before everything changed.

You might find yourself sitting with a strange ache in your chest, trying to make sense of the shift. Realising that no matter how bright the day was, the person you're missing wasn't in it. That even on the best of these new days, there's a shadow. A gap. A quiet that used to be a voice, a hug, a presence.

It's a kind of melancholy that's hard to describe—part sorrow, part gratitude, part longing.

Perfect days, the ones you used to know, are gone.

But this isn't the end of beauty, or joy, or meaning. It just means that the best days now look different. Softer. Quieter. More tender. They come with tears and smiles, and a little more grace for yourself.

It's not about chasing perfection anymore. It's about making each day the best it can be within the circumstances. Living gently. Loving deeply. And honouring the grief that walks beside you, even when—especially when—the sun shines.



#### **POEMS and QUOTES**

#### **Heaven's Rocking Chair**

Are there rocking chairs in Heaven

Where little babies go?
Do the angels hold vou closely
And rock you to and fro?
Do they talk silly baby talk
To get a smile or two,
And sing the sleepy lullabies
I used to sing to you?
My heart is aching for you,
My angel child so dear.
You brought such joy into my life,

The short time you were here. I know you're in a happy place, And in god's loving care. I dream each night I'm rocking you

In Heaven's rocking chair.

By Ron Tranmer

You never know how STRONG you are until being STRONG sthe only choice you have!

Unknown

#### **Memories**

"Memories are the one place we can visit those we have lost.
Since memories are portable, we can take our lost loved ones with us anywhere at any time."

Unknown

In grief, do what you want.
Say what you want.
Remember, "No" is a
complete sentence.

David Kessler, Grief.com

#### Move On

To "move on"

Is to put something behind you
Forget about it
And never look back.
To "go on"
Is to forever
Carry it forward with you
And never forget.
A bereaved parent
Will never move on........
By Tammy Brown

"Sometimes I touch the things
you used to touch, looking for
you used to your fingers."
echoes of your fingers."
By lain Thomas

#### Take Them with You

If someone you love did not make it on that trip,
You can take it
for them
with them.

If someone you love did not witness that milestone, You can show them anytime you like.

If someone you love did not get to do *their* living, You can finish those dreams on their *behalf*.

The beautiful thing about love you see is that death need not stop life.

If you carry someone in your heart

You can take them with you anywhere you like.

By Donna Ashworth

## THE GRIEF GAP

There's a version of me that existed when they were still alive.

I can still picture her—laughing more freely, moving through life with a kind of ease she didn't even realize she had.

She didn't know how fragile everything really was.

She didn't know that one phone call, one diagnosis, one final breath could change her forever.

I'm not her anymore.

But I haven't quite figured out who I am now, either.

And that's the gap.

That strange, quiet space between who I used to be and who I'm becoming. It's filled with memories I can't let go of and questions I don't know how to answer.

I'm living in the in-between—still tethered to the past, but slowly learning how to breathe in the present.

Grief has carved out pieces of me I didn't even know existed.

Some days I feel lost in it.

Other days I catch small glimpses of the new version of me, wiser, softer, stronger in ways I never asked to be.

But mostly, I just miss them.

And I miss the me I was when they were still here.

So, if you're here too, trying to make sense of this version of yourself that doesn't quite fit yet—

#### I see you.

This gap isn't a failure.

It's the sacred space where healing begins.

Where identity shifts. Where love and loss coexist.

You're not broken.

You're becoming.

And even in the gap, you are never alone.



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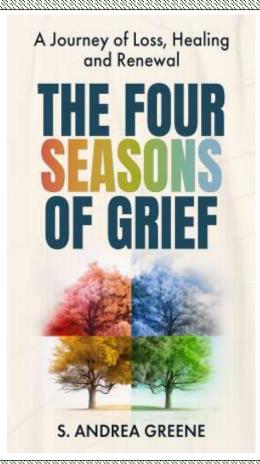


#### Weather & Grief - The Changing Sky, The Changing Heart

Grief has a way of intertwining with the world around us. Some days, the rain feels like it's mirroring our sorrow—grey skies, heavy air, and the quiet drizzle of tears we carry inside. Other days, the warmth of the sun brings a sense of lightness, a small reminder that beauty still exists, even in our pain. The changing seasons can bring an ache all their own. As time moves forward, so does the distance from the last time we held them, heard their voice, felt their presence. The crispness of autumn, the first bloom of spring, the long summer days—each one marking another shift in time without them.

For some, a bright, sunny day brings comfort. For others, it deepens the ache—because how can the world be so beautiful when they are not here to see it? A perfect sky, a gentle breeze, a world moving on when our hearts feel frozen in time. Grief is as unpredictable as the weather. Some days it soaks you to the bone, other days it lets in a small glimmer of warmth. However, it feels for you today, know that you are not alone.

Shared with Thanks from TCFVICE.





#### **EDITOR'S CHOICE**

In this deeply moving and insightful exploration, The Four Seasons of Grief takes readers on a transformative journey through the profound experience of grief and healing. Drawing inspiration from the natural world, the book beautifully captures the essence of the four seasons. Through heartfelt personal stories, profound insights, and therapeutic exercises, The Four Seasons of Grief provides a guiding light for those who seek to navigate the inevitable seasons of sorrow. This compassionate and empowering book offers practical tools to cope with sadness, uncertainty, and transformation. By acknowledging the natural cycles of life, readers are encouraged to tap into their inner strength and cultivate a sense of renewal, even in the face of loss.



#### **GRANDPARENTS' GRIEF**



The loss of a grandchild may affect you differently than your child. You have spent many years as a parent, protecting your child from physical and emotional pain. Now your child may be experiencing both physical and emotional pain greater than he or she has ever felt before. This is a pain that you cannot make go away. Watching your child suffer may leave you feeling powerless and frustrated by your inability to help. At the same time, you are grieving the loss of your grandchild and the dream of your special relationship with him or her. Grieving will help you to adjust to the devastating loss that you have experienced. In your mind, you may have already imagined special family times together such as birthdays and holidays. When a child dies, often attention is focused on the child's parents. Grandparents may feel forgotten. However, when grandparents grieve it can be doubly painful. Grieving the loss of your grandchild and watching your own child's agony at the same time, may find you feeling completely unable to alleviate the anguish for either of you. It is very important to be able to relate the feelings that you are having. Share your thoughts and feelings with friends and family. Because of his or her own grief, your child may have a very difficult time having an awareness of being able to acknowledge your feelings of loss.

BELOW ARE FOUR EXPERIENCES OF GRIEF YOU MAY RECOGNISE IN YOURSELF, YOUR CHILD OR OTHER FAMILY

MEMBERS: These experiences are common aspects of grief. It's important to know that the phases do not necessarily occur in order. Some people may go back and forth between these feelings, experience more than one at a time or even skip one entirely. There is no right or wrong way to grieve. Your grief, and how you work through each phase, is unique to you. You may want to put your own grief aside to support and comfort your own son or daughter who is grieving. However, it is important that you allow yourself to grieve and work through the phases of grief at you own pace.

NUMBNESS OR PROTEST - You may have been overcome by a sense of numbness upon hearing of the loss of your grandchild or you may have protested the death, which may have been characterized by mental and physical signs of stress.

DIS-ORGANISATION AND DESPAIR - During this time, you may begin to recognise the loss of your grandchild. You may feel helpless and begin to withdraw from others.

SEARCHING AND YEARNING - You may find yourself completely preoccupied with your grandchild and seeking any and all reminders.

RE-ORGANISATION - At this time, your grief may begin to recede; you may find that your life has changed and you have adopted new patterns of living. You may be asking what you can do for your child. As a parent, your instincts may lead you to want to take charge, handle the situation, make decisions and protect your child from any more pain. However, it may be very important for your child to make decisions as a part of the grieving process. You play an extremely important role during this time in your child's life. Be present and let your child know you are available to support him or her in the way that is most helpful. You cannot do your child's grief work for him or her, but you can act as a guide for your child through the grieving process. Try not to tell your child what he or she should or should not do or feel. Avoid statements such as "he/she is in a better place "or" needed her more, "or" you still have your other children." Although you may be trying to comfort your son or daughter, these types of statements won't alleviate their pain. In fact, they may actually be hurtful or alienate your grieving child. You may find that the most important thing that you can do is just to be there and listen. Allow your son or daughter to grieve in his or her own way. Encourage dialog and open expressions of grief and remembrance. As a parent, you have guided your child throughout life. At this time, your role is just as important to be there for your child, providing your love, guidance, and support through this difficult time.





### FOR ROAD TRAFFIC VICTIMS

## 16th NOVEMBER 2025

The National Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims, observed on the third Sunday of November each year, is a global day to remember those who have died in road crashes and to advocate for better support for victims and their families.

Over the last 30 years, more than 44,000 lives have been lost on Australian roads and hundreds of thousands have been hospitalised.

We're asking Australians to Reflect and Remember all the lives impacted by road trauma this World Day of Remembrance by lighting a candle at home.

By reflecting on and remembering our road trauma victims, we can inspire others to make the change to prevent more loss of life.

On World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims, we also pay tribute to the dedicated first responders and medical professionals who deal with the after effect of the trauma of road crashes on a daily basis.





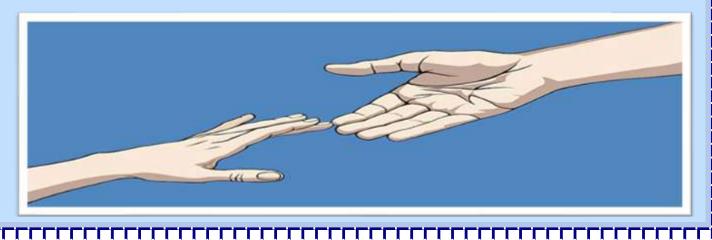
Since 16 March 1963 Lifeline has provided Australians in crisis with a listening ear to be heard and a community-based network of support. Like so many important Australian charities, Lifeline Australia is supported by trusted volunteers right around the country. Lifeline was founded in Sydney on 16th March 1963, conceived after Rev Dr Sir Alan Walker OBE had taken a call from a distressed man who later took his own life. Determined not to let isolation and lack of support be the cause of more deaths, Sir Alan launched what was later to become the organisation's 24/7 telephone crisis line, 13 11 14.

In that time, Lifeline has built a network of 41 centres across the country, answered approximately 23 million calls and now receives a call from a help seeker every 30 seconds. Lifeline Australia has provided crisis support for people who are feeling overwhelmed or who are having difficulty coping or staying safe. It provides confidential one-to-one support with trained crisis supporters.

More than 100,000 volunteers have been trained as crisis supporters.

Lifeline Australia has become synonymous with suicide prevention, as the leading crisis support service for those in need. Its trusted service is now a critical component of Australia's suicide prevention framework. Volunteers from across Australia have kept the lines of Lifeline open every hour of every day, allowing Lifeline to deliver on its mission to support Australians in times of crisis.

\*Last year, with support from the Australian Government, Lifeline launched 13YARN, a national crisis support line for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



#### HEAVENLY BIRTHDAYS



**FOREVER YOUNG** 

**FOREVER LOVED** 

**FOREVER MISSED** 

#### **OCTOBER**

13th October 1971 – Lisa, daughter of Annette, sibling to Ian

25<sup>th</sup> October 1977 – Lee, son of Maureen

26<sup>th</sup> October 1977 – **Andrew,** son of Pauline & Graham, sibling to Rebecca & Sarah

#### NOVEMBER

10<sup>th</sup> November 2010 – Caitlin, daughter of Megan, sibling to Tyson

20<sup>th</sup> November 1996 – **Aurora**, daughter of Julie & Jonathon, sibling to Cordelia

28th November 1980 – Natasha, daughter of Diane & Daryl

7 years ago, on 24<sup>th</sup> August our lives changed forever. Natasha was 37, to us she was still our "little girl". Fighting hard to live on and beat this dreaded disease, never complained and smiling when saying "I'm the lucky one, I'm not in pain" often sharing jokes with her quick-witted humour. She came into this world full of beans, soon nicknamed "little cyclone" into everything and grew into a smart, beautiful woman, wife and mother to her precious babies, Zara & Goldie with husband Adam. With our aching hearts we miss our precious Natasha so very much and love her so dearly.

Diana, Daryl, Alana, Lisa & Bentley 💙 🧡 💛 🛡

#### **DECEMBER**

31 December 1980 – Gemma, daughter of Kay

31st December 1995 – Nathaniel, son of Karen & Danny, sibling to Tracey & Michelle

The name of your Child/ren has been published here from the list of current members. If you would prefer this not to appear, please let us know and we well respect your wishes. Families are welcome to submit up to 30 words about their child on this anniversary





#### **ANNIVERSARIES**





Wherever a beautiful soul has been, there is a trail of beautiful memories RR

#### **OCTOBER**

7<sup>th</sup> October 2022 – **Jasmine**, daughter of Denise & Brenton

16th October 2023 – Guy, son of Elizabeth & Nigel

17<sup>th</sup> October 2002 – **Andrew**, son of Pauline & Graham, Sibling to Rebecca & Sarah

20th October 2011 – Lisa, daughter of Annette, sibling to Ian

21st October 2017 - Matthew, son of Deborah, sibling to Levi & Natacha

#### **NOVEMBER**

3<sup>rd</sup> November 2024 – Elisa, daughter of Pat, sibling to Jackie & Hannah

8<sup>th</sup> November 2015 – **Nathaniel**, son of Karen & Danny, sibling to Tracey & Michelle

9th November 2021 - Brandon, son of Kyla & Justin, sibling to William

24<sup>th</sup> November 2023 – **Child** of Chantel, sibling to James & Lucas & Levi & Alethea

27th November 2022 – Megan, daughter of Maureen

#### **DECEMBER**

12th December 2023 - Benjy, son of Anna, sibling to Jasper & Henry & Edie

25<sup>th</sup> December 2020 – Caitlin, daughter of Megan, sibling to Tyson

26th December 2022 – Laura, daughter of Connie & Graeme, sibling to Emma

27<sup>th</sup> December 2022 – Jackson, son of Cindy

31st December 2023 – Tyler, son of Alison, sibling to Dillon

### A Light in the Darkness

There's something timeless and comforting about lighting a candle for someone we've lost. A candle's flame is fragile yet steady — just like our love and memories.

When we light a candle, we make space for our grief and our love to be seen. Its glow reminds us that while our loved one's physical presence is gone, their light lives on in our hearts.

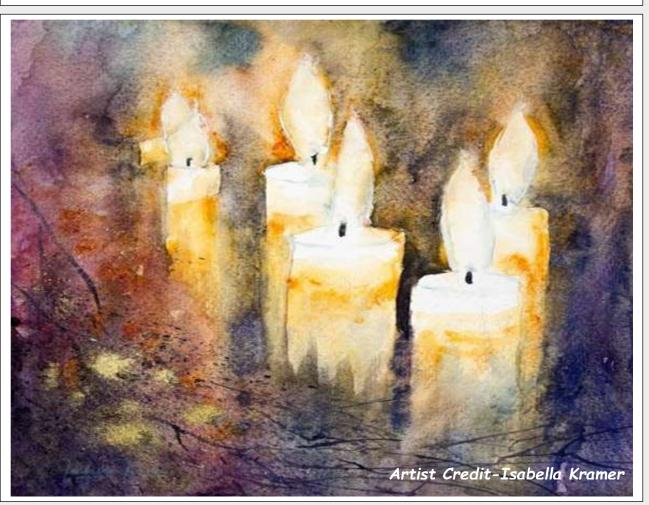
A single flickering flame can feel like a quiet connection — a way to say, "I remember you. I miss you. I carry you with me."

That's why so many of us light candles on anniversaries, birthdays, or any day when the longing feels too heavy. It's a small ritual that brings warmth, hope, and a moment of peace in the darkness.

May the light of our memories keep shining.



Shared with thanks from TCFVIC Facebook





As we approach the end of another year, the TCFSA Committee would like to express our sincere gratitude for your support and presence within our support group and community this past year. Your willingness to share your journey with us, whether through attending our meetings or simply reaching out for support, has been deeply meaningful.

We are proud of the connections we've fostered and the ways we've been able to offer comfort and understanding to bereaved parents navigating the challenges of grief. This year, we have seen increased attendance at our support group meetings. We believe by working together, we can continue to provide a safe and supportive environment for bereaved parents to heal and find hope.

We understand that the Christmas/New Year can be a particularly difficult time for those who have experienced loss. We are always here to listen, support, and offer a space for connection and healing. We hope you'll continue to find solace and strength in our group meetings and within the community.

We wish you and your loved ones a blessed Christmas with moments of peace and healing.

With warmest regards,

Helen Baczynski (Editor)

## PLEASE NOTE: THERE WILL BE A "CHRISTMAS EDITION NEWSLETTER" COMING OUT IN THE FIRST WEEK OF DECEMBER – 2025



May you find peace and comfort during the Christmas Season

#### **Some Internet Grief Resources**

www.dougy.org —National center for grieving children and families, a non-profit online resource.

www.grieflossrecovery.com -Professional, well designed site. Offers reflections on grief and loss through poems, articles, a newsletter, memoirs, memorials, links, and on-line grief support.

www.silentgrief.com -A message of hope for the grieving heart of those who have suffered miscarriage and later child loss. Professional articles, user submissions (stories and poems) and chat boards are available.

www.griefloss.org -The Center for Grief is a non-profit organization dedicated to offering help and hope for the difficult times in our lives through therapy, counselling and education in the areas of complicated grief, trauma, general bereavement and loss.

www.aarp.org/griefandloss/ -A collection of resources and a community of care sponsored by the AARP offering education, on-line sharing and a toll-free Grief Support line.

www.adultsiblinggrief.com -This site is dedicated to the formation of a support community for those who have suffered the devastating loss of an adult sibling.

www.saadvocacy.com.au—SA Advocacy & Mediation is committed to providing complete and affordable advocacy, mediation and counselling services to all South Australians, regardless of their geographical location or socio-economic status.

www.hospicenet.org -An invaluable resource offering information that covers all aspects of hospice care; from selecting a hospice to being a patient and what you need to know. Hospice Net is an independent, nonprofit 501 (c) (3) organization working exclusively through the Internet

www.griefwatch.com -As part of its mission to the bereaved, Grief Watch and its companion program, Perinatal Loss, publish books, videotapes, audiotapes and other helpful resources in an effort to offer spiritual, emotional and other support to persons who have suffered loss.

www.sharegrief.com -On-line grief counseling by skilled professionals.

#### Resources

#### Grief link (well recommended)

National Association for Loss and Grief www.grieflink.asn.au

#### TCF New South Wales

www.thecompassionatefriendsnsw.org.au

#### TCF Queensland

www.compassionatefriendsqld.org.au

#### TCF Western Australia

www.compassionatefriendswa.org.au

#### **TCF Mandurah**

www.tcfmandurah.bravehost.com

tcfmandurah@bigpond.com

#### TCF Victoria

www.compassionatefriendsvictoria.org.au

#### TCF UK

www.tcf.org.uk

#### TCF USA

www.compassionatefriends.org

#### **Bereaved Parents USA**

www.bereavedparentsusa.org

#### Alive Alone

Parents with no surviving children www.alivealone.org

#### **Rural Resources**

Adelaide Hills Bereavement Service

Ph 08-8393 1888

Southern Fleurieu Bereavement Support

Ph 08-8552 0600

Please contact us with details

of any other resources you have found helpful.

#### Grief Support and Resources must involve at least 3 levels of support

- 1. **Informational support** refer to providing information to help someone understand what is happening and the strategies that will enable them to work through their situation.
- 2. **Emotional support** is about helping to lift someone to higher ground so he or she can see their way through the difficulty and begin to move forward.
- 3. **Social support** enhances their quality of life in the situation they find themselves to provide a buffer against adverse life events. There is good evidence that social support plays an important role in mental health in as much as that lack of social support and feeling of loneliness can make us more vulnerable to the onset of mental health issues like depression or substance abuse problems.

For these reasons, reconnecting with others in healthy supportive ways is often an important component of managing mental health issues or grief. We all need people we can depend on during both the good times and the bad. When some-one dies, the grieving person often feels like their world through their emotions and confront the reality of how life is different, the journey does not end. They still have to come to terms with how life can be meaningful even in the light of loss, known as situational reorganization. Knowing that life still has meaning gives us a purpose, and gets us out of bed each morning.

by Centre for the Grief Journey



#### SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

If you will be attending a support group for the first time, please try to call our message bank

in advance so that the facilitator knows to expect you.

Phone: 0456 820 133 (Telephone or Text)

6.30pm start first Wednesday of each month.

#### **EASTWOOD COMMUNITY CENTRE**

95 Glen Osmond Road

EASTWOOD SA 5063

(Parking is available in Front and at the rear of the Centre, with additional parking nearby)

Committee Meetings dates to be advised held at:

Location to be Advised

#### **OPPORTUNITY**

Have you lost a child, grandchild or sibling?

Do you think you could support others who have also?

We are inviting you to join our Volunteer Committee and assist in this Organisation.

Many in need and many ways you could help.

EMAIL ENQUIRIES: tcfsainc@outlook.com

We are on the Internet: www.compassionatefriendssa.org.au

and Facebook: 'The Compassionate Friends SA Inc'

MAIL: PO Box 26, Kent Town SA 5071

#### Α

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

On behalf of the committee, we wish to acknowledge the following people and businesses who have offered us services or awarded financial contributions such as grants. Also, our sincere appreciation to all the businesses displaying TCFSA pamphlets.

We thank them for their generosity and support.

WEBSITE - Alex Kebbell

**Eastwood Community Centre** 









#### A Friendly Reminder – Membership Renewal Due 30th June 2025.

Your membership subscriptions are used to produce the newsletter, to subsidise social, support & memorial functions throughout the year, and to cover essential administrative costs to keep the organisation running. These subscriptions are also used to subsidise a phone service for the newly bereaved, so that they need not feel alone.



0456 820 133 P.O. Box 26 Kent Town S.A. 5071 tcfsainc@outlook.com www.compassionatefriendssa.org,au

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