



The Compassionate Friends

Offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents

SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

I. TCF OFFERS FRIENDSHIP AND UNDERSTANDING TO BEREAVED PARENTS

We have learned that the death of our child has caused a pain that can best be understood fully by another bereaved parent. Knowing they all need love and support, we reach out as our own grief subsides to those who still feel alone and abandoned.

II. TCF BELIEVES THAT BEREAVED PARENTS CAN HELP EACH OTHER TOWARD A POSITIVE RESOLUTION OF THEIR GRIEF

We understand that each parent must find his or her own way through grief. We know that expressing thoughts and feelings is part of the healing process. We offer an opportunity for sharing and learning from other bereaved parents.

We do not offer professional psychotherapy or counselling.

We seek the cooperation and the support of the professional community but do not depend on it for supervision or formal guidance.

We welcome the opportunity to share with the professional community what we have learned about the needs of bereaved parents.

III. TCF REACHES OUT TO ALL BEREAVED PARENTS ACROSS ARTIFICIAL BARRIERS OF RELIGION, RACE, ECONOMIC CLASS, OR ETHNIC GROUP

We espouse no specific religions or philosophical ideology.

We support our activities through voluntary contributions and assess no dues or fees.

We do not participate in legislative or political controversy.

We express our individual views on controversial subjects with respect for those who may disagree with us.

IV. TCF UNDERSTAND THAT EVERY BEREAVED PARENT HAS INDIVIDUAL NEEDS AND RIGHTS

We never suggest that there is a correct way to grieve or that there is a preferred solution to the emotional and spiritual dilemmas raised by the deaths of our children.

Everyone deserves an opportunity to be heard.

No-one is compelled to speak.

All have the responsibility to listen.

V. TCF HELPS BEREAVED PARENTS PRIMARILY THROUGH LOCAL CHAPTERS

We treat what is said at meetings as confidential and what we learn about each other as privileged information.

We recommend that attendance at meetings by the media, by students, or by other observers be permitted only with prior announcements and with the consent of the chapter members.

We realize that some time must be spent on organizational problems and financial matters but we prefer to keep this to a minimum and out of the regularly scheduled TCF meetings.

VI. TCF CHAPTERS BELONG TO THEIR MEMBERS

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VII. TCF CHAPTERS ARE CO-ORDINATED NATIONALLY TO EXTEND HELP TO EACH OTHER AND TO INDIVIDUAL BEREAVED PARENTS EVERYWHERE

We maintain national co-operative links to serve us by assisting in the development of new chapters, by offering support and consultation to existing chapters, and by responding to bereaved parents where there is no local chapter.

We have learned that it is often easier and more effective to provide programme material and educational services by working together at the national or regional level than to work alone.

We seek opportunities to share with society the insights our grief has brought us so that future bereaved parents may receive needed understanding and support.

We acknowledge the grief of other family members, especially siblings and grandparents and extend support and comfort to them.

We acknowledge our responsibility to support our local and national goals by contributing what we can of our time, our talent, and our resources.

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