

**Fall 2024 Edition**

**Ever feel like smashing something to  
unleash your emotions?**

**Let's do it TOGETHER!**



On November 3rd at 2pm we will be gathering as a group at *Smash It* in Port Charlotte! A rage room full of ways to let go of some of your emotions. Followed by a coffee/dessert get together.

**Cost: \$48 plus tax per person**

This is a **PREPAID** Event. Please pay Beth at our next meeting or get in contact with her if you plan to join us.

**RSVP BY: 10/15**

**3280 Tamiami Trail Unit 23, Port Charlotte, FL 33952**

**Our meetings provide a supportive space to grieve, remember, and honor your child, grandchild, or sibling. We are happy to have you in attendance!**

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

Third Tuesday of the month

### LOCATION:

**North Port Library  
13800 S. Tamiami Trail,  
North Port, FL 34287  
6pm-7:30pm**

### LEADER:

**Beth Wooten  
bethwootenlcs@gmail.com**

### TREASURER:

**Valerie LaBoy  
Valerie@jmlaboy.com**

### NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

**Dawn Stephens  
Morningofthesun@aol.com**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**SMASH IT RAGE ROOM  
AFTERNOON GATHERING**

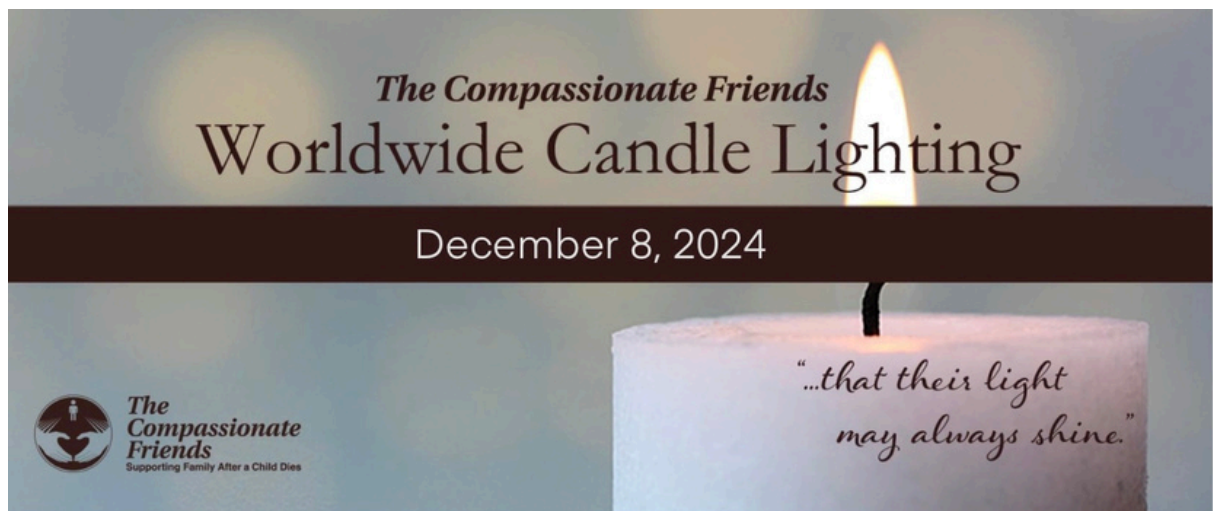
**NOVEMBER 3, 2024  
3280 Tamiami Trail Unit 23  
Port Charlotte**

**WORLDWIDE CANDLE  
LIGHTING**

**DECEMBER 8, 2024  
Unity Church of Peace  
1250 Rutledge Road  
North Port**

**NORTH PORT CHAPTER  
POTLUCK**

**JANUARY 26, 2025  
More info to come**



**Please join us and bring your family to our North Port Chapter Candle Lighting & Dinner event at 5:30pm.**

**Please bring a favorite framed photo of your child to our gathering to display!**

**More info to come on the cost per person.**

**The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting unites family and friends around the globe in lighting candles for one hour to honor the memories of the sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and grandchildren who left too soon. As candles are lit at 7:00pm local time, hundreds of thousands of people commemorate and honor the memory of all children gone too soon.**

**Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the annual Worldwide Candle Lighting, a gift to the bereavement community from The Compassionate Friends, creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone.**

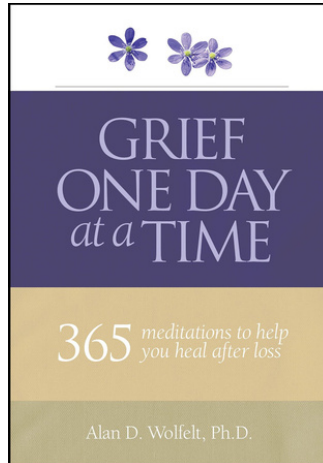
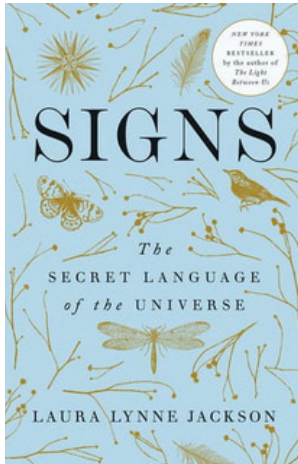
**Unity Church of Peace  
1250 Rutledge Road  
North Port**

**Please RSVP to Valerie by December 1st  
Valerie@jmlaboy.com**



Our North Port chapter is growing! We will be moving our monthly meeting to a more spacious and comfortable space starting in November. We are excited to be able to provide some snacks during our meetings as well. More info to come!

## Book Recommendations:



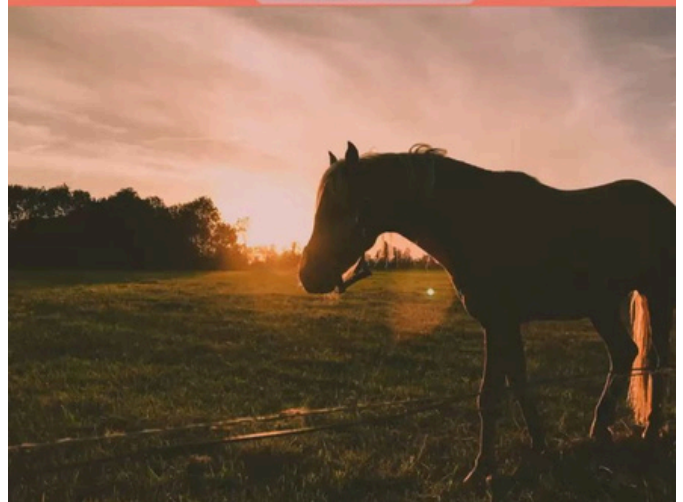
## Have you tried grounding?

It is the process of connecting to the Earth's electrical energy. Sometimes it can be helpful to step outside with barefeet and let your feet connect with the ground/the earth. It can settle your anxious thoughts a bit and get you back in your body if your mind has been swirling with grief. This practice can even reduce pain, stress, and inflammation in the body, as well as increase energy level and ability to sleep!



## FEATHERS

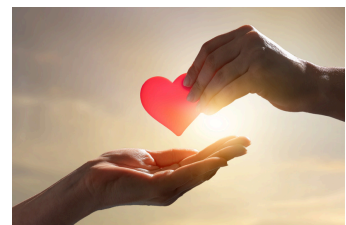
I left you a little white feather  
I placed it right there in your way  
I wrapped it in love with a message  
to let you know you'll be okay  
I drew you a colourful rainbow  
It followed your car for a while  
I made it a beautiful rainbow  
I hoped it would show me your smile  
I flew down a beautiful robin  
It landed right there on your ledge  
I prayed he would give you the strength  
to push yourself back from the edge  
I try every day to remind you  
that I never did go away  
the feathers, the rainbows, the robins  
are my way of trying to stay.  
-Donna Ashworth



## Have something to share?

Do you have a poem, a story you wrote, a quote, a podcast or book recommendation?  
Email: [Morningofthesun@aol.com](mailto:Morningofthesun@aol.com)

The North Port Chapter is now established with a bank account and Treasurer. When love gift donations are made to your local chapter in loving memory of your child, at the same time it is helping to fund the work of your local TCF chapter. Each chapter is run by Volunteers. If you wish to donate, checks can be made out to: North Port Compassionate Friends.



# ALWAYS WITH LOVE, WE REMEMBER THEM



Francisco Villafane honors his son, **Jomar**.

Arlene Spadone honors her granddaughter,  
**Olvia**.

Briana Murphy honors her daughter, **Lexi**.

Karla Relyea honors her daughter, **Megan**.

Beth & Steve Wooten honor their daughter,  
**Kenna** and unborn **grandchild**.

Jenn and Eric Winship honor their son,  
**Jakeb**.

Gail and Ken honor their sons and  
grandson, **Tony**, **Jason**, and **Jay**.

Heather Pope honors her son, **Eric**.

Pat Haupt honors her granddaughter,  
**Lauren**.

Kim and Pat honor **John** and **Jesse**.

Christine honors **Jakeb**.

Irene Ploskina honors her son, **Mikey**.

Dawn Stephens honors her son, **Spencer**.

Valerie LaBoy honors her son, **Daniel**.

Linda Goodwin honors her son, **Trey**.

Cynthia Mascola honors her son, **Michael**.

Dorothy Gray honors her son, **Chuck**.

Pamela McMinn honors her daughter,  
**Danielle**.

Robin and Richard Server honor their  
daughter, **Brooke**.

Sherri Pinna honors her son, **Ryan**.

Tatyana Walters honors her son, **Vitaliy**.

Angela Daubaras honors her daughter,  
**Melanie**.

Irene Ploskina honors her son, **Michael**.

Harry Moore honors **Buster**.

Beverly Mott honors **Benjamin**.

Chuck Henneke honors his daughter,  
**Kelly**.

Jo Marie Cook honors her sons, **Gregory**  
and **James**.

Monika Kozaka honors **Isabella**.

Pamela Scholund honors **Steven**.

Stacy Becker honors her son, **Ryan**.

Johni and Tom honor their daughter,  
**Kellie**.

Mae Serrano honors **John**.

Judy Dawley honors **Chris**.

Tammy Brooks honors **Tuano**.

Charise & George Augustine honor  
**Tiffany**.



# Helpful Insights to Self-Care in Grief

Written by: Linda Triplett

Author of : Healing Reflections for a Grieving Mom's Heart

I have just passed the 26th year of missing my son, Adam. He was a pilot and died while giving a lesson to a student. He had an engine problem and could not survive when they landed. Adam was only 23 and married just three short months. He was the kind of kid that everyone loved the moment they met him.

I would like to share some insights that I have learned over the past years and hope there is something that helps you on your grief journey. First, I learned that I wasn't crazy when I couldn't remember the smallest things that first year, and beyond. I called it "cotton brain." What helped me was to start writing in a journal. When sleep wouldn't come, I would write to Adam. I poured out my heart about how much I missed him, how angry I was that the plane failed to perform to keep him safe. I told him about my day, all the insignificant things that I would have told him if he were sitting next to me. And most of all, I told him over and over that I loved him and missed him.

Another thing was to acknowledge my grief, give myself grace to grieve my huge loss. I could not worry about what others thought if I showed my sorrow. I had to let go of the "advice" I received from others. I also found that some of my friends were not able to handle being around someone so sad, so they left. I needed to find new friends that "got it." The Compassionate Friends was a particularly valuable resource.

A friend that had a couple of years into grieving the death of her daughter gave us invaluable advice. She told me, "You can't lean on a broken fence when you and Mark (my husband) are broken." That is when we began looking for a grief counselor to help us navigate through our grief rather than expect help from each other. I highly recommend doing the same. It is a huge relief to be able to share anything in your heart with someone and not be judged, but instead just be listened to. Not everyone finds the one that will work for them right away. I think that if the first one does not work out, keep looking until you find one that does, like trying on a pair of shoes! You rarely find the right ones that fit with the first pair you try on.

Soon I realized how important it was to take care of myself, not only mentally but physically too. In those first months I could have cared less about my well-being. But I knew from resources that I read that if I did not, I could become a statistic that affects so many because of the impaired immune system. Illness can be one, also accidents increase causing some nasty physical consequences, sometimes for a lifetime. Did you know that when we experience a death of a loved one, it is a brain injury? Because of this, we do not think rationally when it comes to taking care of ourselves; however, our traumatized brain needs us to. Going for a walk is a great stress reliever or take some “me” time to just sit outside and listen to the birds. It can give a much-needed break for your mind and body. And sometimes we just need to have a good cry. It releases the tension that builds up.

Another significant help is to laugh. It is natural to feel like we should not because we are somehow not missing our kids if we do, but it is not at all the truth. Nothing could make us miss them any less. Try tuning in to a classic Carol Burnett show. It’s so good for the soul to laugh even for a moment. I learned I needed laughter as much as feeling the grief of missing Adam to have healthy healing.

And my final insight and the most important one for me was to not only look at my loss, but also count the blessings that our beautiful children left us. The most wonderful way to honor them is to go on living. To say their names and to share our stories. If we do that, we could be helping another hurting heart because we “get it.” I look back at those first entries in my journal and see how far I have come and know that although I did not believe I would survive, I did! I miss my son and always will, but I have found joy in life again. I can talk about Adam now and smile at the precious memories that we shared.

**Those we love don't go  
away, they walk beside us  
everyday. Unseen, unheard,  
but always near, still loved,  
still missed and very dear.**

# THE STORY OF THE DRAGONFLY



From the book "Tales to grow and heal" by Michel Dufour

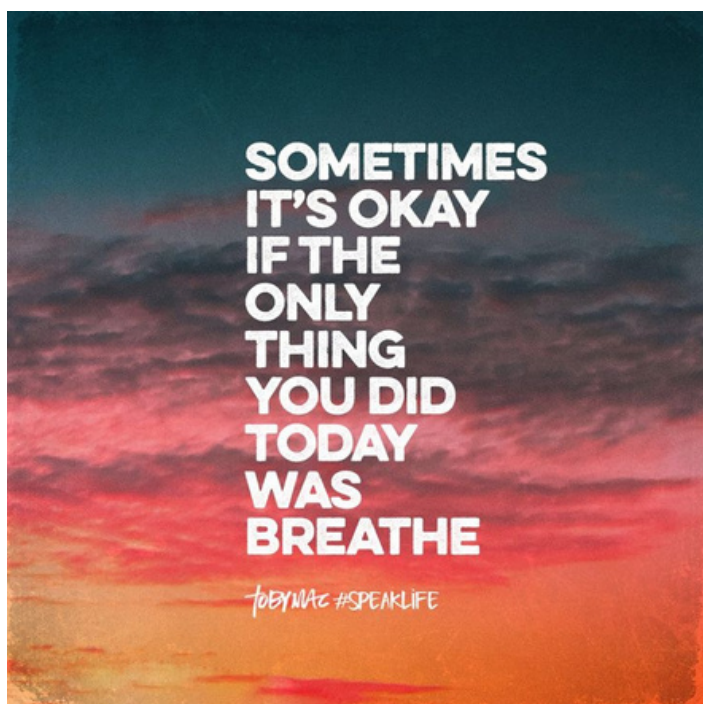
"At the bottom of an old pond lived a group of larvae that did not understand why when any of them ascended through the long lily stalks to the surface of the water, they never descended again where they were.

They promised each other that the next of them who would rise to the surface, would return to tell the others what had happened to him. Shortly after, one of these larvae felt an irresistible desire to ascend to the surface. He began to walk upwards through one of the thin vertical stems and when he was finally outside he began to rest on a lily leaf. Then she experienced a magnificent transformation that turned her into a beautiful dragonfly with beautiful wings.

He tried to keep his promise, but it was in vain. Flying from one end of the pond to the other, she could see her friends in the background. Then he understood that even if they in turn had been able to see her, they would never have recognized one of their companions in this radiant creature. The fact that after that transformation that we call death, we cannot see our friends or family, or communicate with them, does not mean that they have ceased to exist...

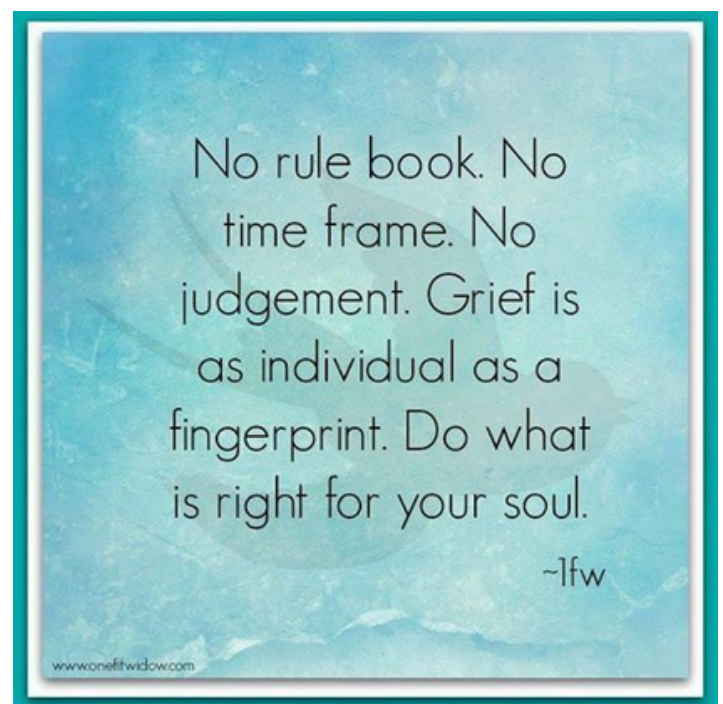
They are not here, they went to another place to take care of us from there with a different view.

**"Death is nothing more than a change of mission."**



**SOMETIMES  
IT'S OKAY  
IF THE  
ONLY  
THING  
YOU DID  
TODAY  
WAS  
BREATHE**

*JOEY NAC #SPEAKLIFE*



No rule book. No  
time frame. No  
judgement. Grief is  
as individual as a  
fingerprint. Do what  
is right for your soul.

*~Ifw*

[www.woneitwidow.com](http://www.woneitwidow.com)