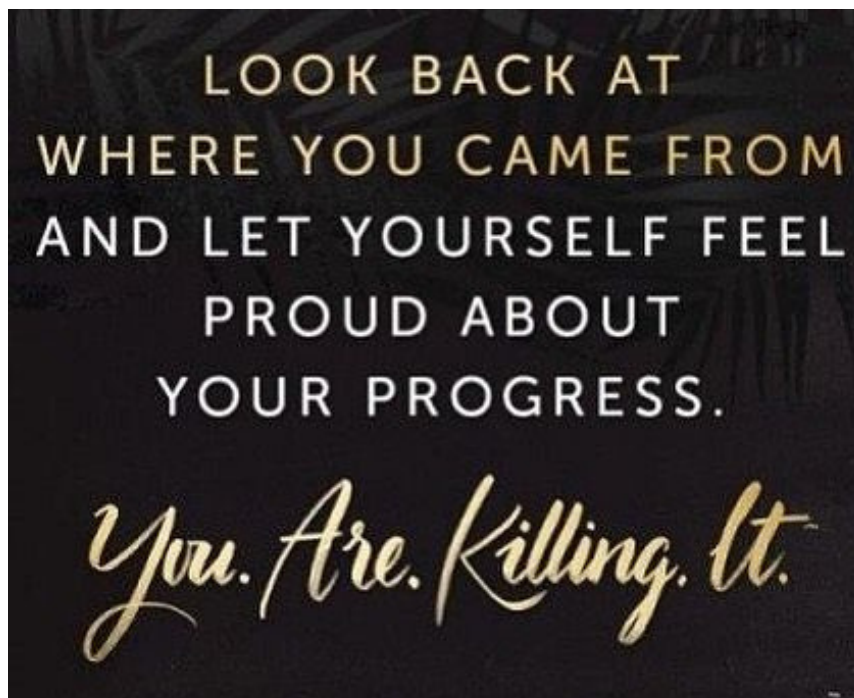




Spring 2026 Edition

As spring unfolds with chirping birds, soft breezes, and blooming flowers, remember how far you've come. Every step, even the smallest one, has mattered. Through it all, your child walks with you every step of the way and is celebrating you!

Be proud!



MONTHLY MEETINGS

Third Tuesday of the month

Next Meeting:

April 21, 2026

6pm

LOCATION:

Shannon Staub Library

4675 Career Lane

North Port, FL 34289

LEADER:

Beth Wooten

bethwootenlcsw@gmail.com

(469)-475-1650

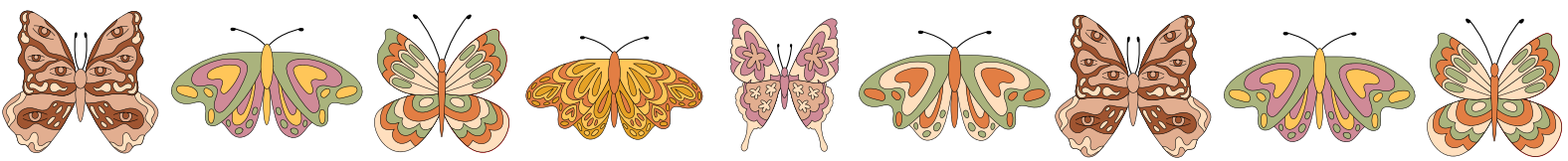
NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

Dawn Stephens

Morningofthesun@aol.com

Have something to share? A poem, a story, what you did in honor of your child? Email Dawn!

Our meetings offer a supportive environment where you can grieve, remember, and honor your child, grandchild, or sibling. We're delighted to have you join us!



BUTTERFLY RELEASE

Our butterfly release event was truly inspiring, with 34 attendees coming together to celebrate our children and grandchildren. Thank you to everyone who joined us on a such beautiful day!

The tradition of releasing butterflies originates from a blend of Native American legends who believed that if you whisper a wish or prayer to a butterfly, it will carry a message to the Great Spirit, who will grant the wish. Butterflies are released to represent the soul of the departed. They symbolize transformation, new life, hope, and the release of a soul. It is a way to memorialize loved ones, in a peaceful way to honor significant moments.

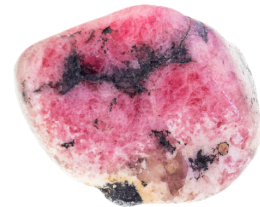






Crystals are therapeutic gemstones that can help you heal spiritually, emotionally, physically, and mentally. Each crystal has different properties that can help you in different areas of your life. Many stones provide you with a sense of peace and comfort as you work through bottled emotions and difficult experiences. Crystals can help you through grief and loss by providing you with positive energies while balancing your emotions. Some healing crystals will help you experience your suppressed feelings and offer an opportunity for you to work through them.

Denial – Rhodonite



Rhodonite is known as the emotional healing stone. During difficult times, Rhodonite is great for projecting a calming effect to help keep us centered. This stone helps to heal our emotional wounds while activating the heart for love again. Through grief and loss, Rhodonite helps to bring grief to the surface.

Guilt – Rose Quartz



Rose quartz is known as the love stone. Using rose quartz will allow us to love ourselves. Through balancing emotions, rose quartz helps to bring peace and clear any negative emotions. Rose quartz encourages us to keep our hearts and minds open while helping us move forward when the time is right. Being open will allow loving ourselves and others around you, healing us from the negative attributes in our life.

Anger – Amethyst



Amethyst is known for stress relief while promoting a sense of peace. This healing crystal helps us through grief with its calming properties to overcome painful experiences. This stone also deeply cleanses our body and mind, while enabling us to think more rationally, reducing our anger and negative emotions. Amethyst is a protection stone that will help guard us against future negativity.

Depression – Smoky Quartz



Smoky Quartz is one of the best stones for grounding during overwhelming stress and depressive times. This quartz absorbs negativity providing us with the chance to live with more clarity and the positive energy we need. Smoky Quartz is a calming stone that removes fear and lifts our mood, bringing positivity back into your life.

Acceptance and hope – Chrysocolla



Chrysocolla is known for its calming effects, compassionate and forgiving properties. A peaceful stone that stimulates balance and wholeness through the release of our bottled emotions. Chrysocolla enables us think more clearly and is known for relieving emotional strain. Its positive energy is important for self-expression and encourages acceptance.

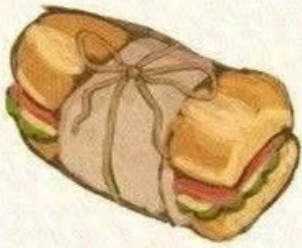
How to Use Healing Stones for Grief

Carrying/Worry Stones: Keep polished stones in a pocket to touch throughout the day for calm.

Meditation: Hold stones like during meditation to process emotions.

Under the Pillow: Place stones under a pillow to process grief while sleeping.

Memorializing: Create a safe space for grief by creating a crystal grid or setting up a, "comfort bowl".



Eat lunch outside
in the sun



Try a new herbal tea



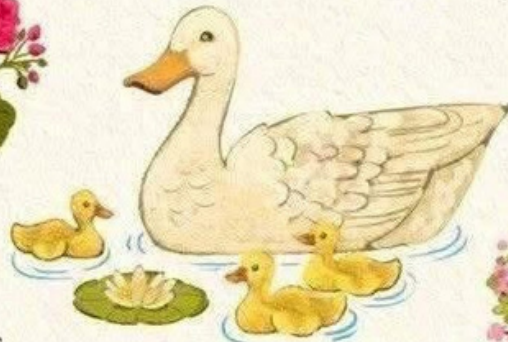
Go for a walk in
the rain



Add native
plants into your
garden



Pot flowers for
your porch



Go feed the ducks



Visit an orchard with
blossoming trees



Get a bouquet of
tulips or daffodils



Learn a new
recipe for spring



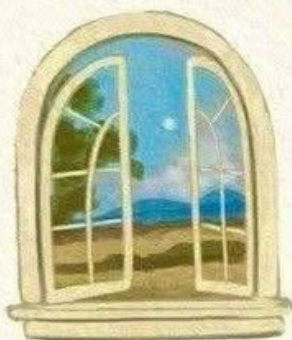
Put on your favorite
pair of sandals



Light a spring candle



Spot the first
butterfly of spring



Open the windows



Thrift a
new vase



Make a rainbow craft



Make a fairy garden

April

BUCKET LIST

by brooklyn swenson

ALWAYS WITH LOVE, WE REMEMBER THEM

Michelle Roy honors her daughter, **Mikayla**.

Mike and Ellen Stevens honor their son, **Ryan**.

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

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

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

Tyneisha Eaddy honors her son, **Tyler**.

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

Harry Moore honors **Buster**.

Beverly Mott honors **Benjamin**.

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

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

Jan Armstrong honors her daughter, **Carrie**.

Tammy Sheen honors her son, **Michael**.

Monika Kozaka honors **Isabella**.

Susan honors her grandchild, **Hayley**.

Melinda honors her daughter, **Charlotte**.

Pamela Scholund honors **Steven**.

Tanya Hall honors her daughter, **Leanna**.

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

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

Mae Serrano honors **John**.

Judy Dawley honors **Chris**.

Tammy Brooks honors **Tuano**.

Charise & George Augustine honor **Tiffany**.

Mialy Garcia honors her brother, **Aiden**.

Melissa Jayne honors her son, **Aiden**.

Betsy & Terry Jones honor their daughter, **Kerri**.



ALWAYS WITH LOVE, WE REMEMBER THEM

Linda Wildes honors her son, **Max**.

Stephanie Tallen honors her son, **Jake**.

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

Angie Davenport honors her daughter, **Ryan**.

Sharon Anderson honors her two sons, **Scott & Steven**.

Deirde Berregie honors her sibling **John**, and son **Zack**.

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

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

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

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

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**.

Kim Raabe honors her son, **Matt**.

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**.

Bonnie Car honors her son, **Troy**.

Heather Ulmer honors her son, **Nathaniel**.

Amy Pelaggi honors her grandson, **Malcom**.

Denise Rado Amendola honors her daughter, **Dana**.



IT'S OKAY
to ASK
For HELP

What Is Grief Brain?

Many people refer to grief brain as grief brain fog. It can occur as a result of traumatic loss or complicated grief. As people try to make sense out of a significant loss like the loss of a child, loss of a parent, or loss of a grandparent, their brains struggle to process or move through the stages of grief.



Grief Brain Symptoms

- Intense sorrow and sadness
- Feelings of shock and loss
- Anhedonia (inability to feel pleasure)
- Inability to focus or concentrate
- Headaches or body aches, muscle tension
- Lack of energy
- Disorientation or confusion also known as grief brain fog

How to Cope with Grief Brain

1. Journal
2. Get support
3. Engage in self-care
4. Meditate
5. Be patient with yourself
6. Get counseling
7. Identify, reduce, or eliminate stressors in your life
8. Make something meaningful out of your grief and loss
9. Connect with your spirituality or faith



YOU
ARE NOT
ALONE

HEALING
TAKES
TIME

KIND
TO
YOURSELF

Layers of Softer Pain

Posted by Beckie Miller on TCF website

Often in our support group meetings, I have shared that one day our pain grows softer, and as I look around the circle of new or fairly new attendees, I see the looks of absolute disbelief on their faces. I believe most of us who are grieving the death of a loved one, whether a child, sibling, spouse, parent, friend, or other family member, have a very hard time with accepting, and often allowing, that the pain will grow softer one day. It seems to us that if it does grow softer our love is weaker. I can tell you that never happens and our loved ones would want a softening of our pain for us. They would want us to one day rebuild our lives in our “new normal” state and to not suffer as agonizingly as in the beginning...

If anyone had told me in the first years, though, after my son, Brian's death to a homicide, when he was at the receiving end of two bullets from a robber hell-bent on getting his wallet, that one day I would feel joy again I would have laughed in their face, claiming NEVER!

Actually, now, many years later, I am grateful for the softer pain and returning joy. If it still all consumed as horrifically as it did in the first few years, I could not have stood it. It would have literally killed me. Mercifully, though, as time passed it did soften. No, it did not ever leave, nor did I ever stop missing my son and I will never get over his loss. Instead, I have gotten on with it. It is incorporated into my new life, always a part of me just not fully engulfing me as in the beginning. As we have a measure of healing (we never fully recover) the joy comes in again; that first laugh that catches us off guard, the birth of a new family member/grandchild, a wedding, or graduation.

Yes, each event is bittersweet, always over-shadowed by who no longer is able to share the events with us, but we can control the focus on the bitter or be grateful for the sweet.

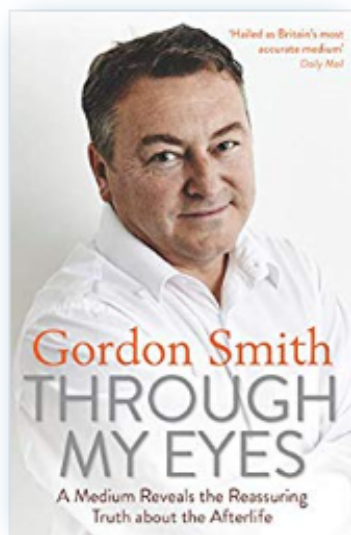
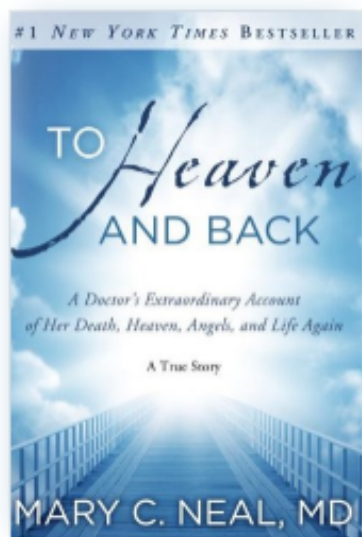
As much time passed instead of the fresh, raw, bleeding pain in my heart, healing began to form protective layers over my open wound. With more time, more grief work, more acceptance, and many journey gentlers in my life the layers increased, allowing even more protection and the wound finally began to stop seeping. As it stopped seeping, a softening of my pain replaced the rawness of that fresh and open wound. It will happen but not real soon. It takes a lot of time, work, and many steps both forward and back.

The softening of my pain did not however, at any time soften my love. Nothing can ever take away from the love my son and I shared -and still share- as nothing can take that away from you, those who share the same painful loss. Embrace that softening of the pain that will one day come to you. It must. Or we would simply wither up and die from that open wound in our hearts. As you embrace the softening, the love actually becomes stronger. Nothing, not even death, can ever take away the love... As our wonderful Darcie Sims always says, “May love be what you remember most.” “Sorrow comes in great waves ... but it rolls over us and though it may almost smother us it leaves us. And we know that if it is strong, we are stronger, inasmuch as it passes, and we remain.” Attributed to Henry James.

I've got a Badass Badge that I never thought I'd wear
It says my child's in Heaven and to handle me with care
I've worn some different badges in this lifetime that I've known
But since I've worn a Badass Badge my soul surely has grown
I've learned to speak about my child when others are too shy
I've found that with this Badass Badge it isn't hard to cry
Some days as I Rock this Badge my child's memories make me glow
And other days my Badass Badge makes my days a Shit Show
And unlike any other Badge this Badge can't be put down
And no one else can wear my Badge when my heart wears a frown
This Badass Badge has taught me that my child is always near
I can hear my child in thoughts and then my worries disappear
And then some days the Badass Badge is Heavy on my heart
And though I feel my child's love, I feel so far apart
There is no rhyme or reason to how this Badass Badge is worn
Some days you're happy then the Badass Badge makes you feel torn
Please speak your favorite memories of my child I love to hear
This Badass Badge does not mean that my child just disappeared
The strength it takes to wear this Badge is full of Grace and Sass
For no other souls are stronger than those that we call Badass
Written With Love,
Fara Gibson Psychic Medium

You are a warrior,
keep fighting

Book Recommendations:



Podcast Recommendation:

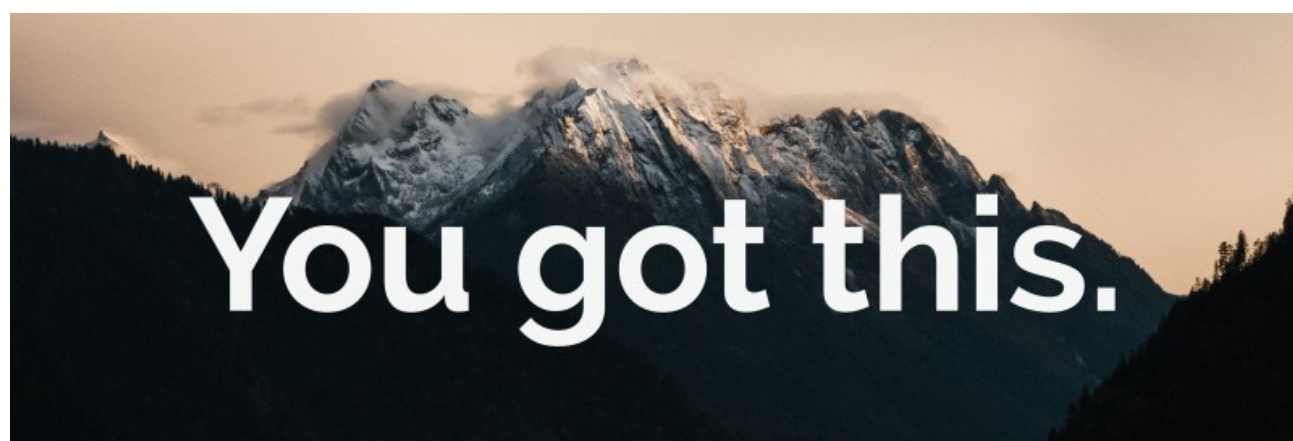


On your darkest days do not try to see the end of the tunnel by looking far ahead. Focus only on where you are right now. Then carefully take one step at a time, by placing just one foot in front of the other. Before you know it, you will turn that corner.

Take a shower, wash off the day.
Drink a glass of water. Make the room dark. Lie down and close your eyes. Notice the silence. Notice your heart. Still beating. Still fighting. You made it, after all. You made it, another day. And you can make it one more.

You're doing just fine.

Charlotte Eriksson



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.