

# The Seven Principles of The Compassionate Friends

## 1. 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 that all need love and support, we reach out as our own grief subsides to those who still feel alone and abandoned.

## 2. 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.

## 3. TCF reaches out to all bereaved parents across artificial barriers of religion, race, economic class, or ethnic group.

We espouse no specific religious or philosophical ideology.

We support our activities through voluntary contributions, fund raising and annual subscription fees.

We do not participate in legislative or political controversy.

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

## 4. TCF does not tell you how to grieve.

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 death of our children.

Everyone deserves and opportunity to be heard.

No one is compelled to speak.

All have the responsibility to listen.

## 5. TCF helps bereaved parents primarily through local chapters.

We have established local chapters to provide sharing groups that create an atmosphere of openness and honesty.

We believe that chapters succeed most frequently if there are two or more founders who are at least two or more years from their loss.

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## 6. TCF groups belong to their members.

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 of the 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.

## 7. TCF groups are coordinated by each individual State or Territory.

The Queensland office in Brisbane assists in the development of new groups throughout our state by offering support and consultation to existing chapters and by responding to bereaved parents where there is no local group.

We have learned that it is often easier and more effective to provide program material and educational services by working together at State level than to work alone.

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

We encourage other family members, especially siblings to share in our task of mutual support.

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

*With acknowledgement to Art Peterson, TCF USA who wrote the original version Seven Principles of The Compassionate Friends. This brochure has been adapted to reflect the differences of TCF in Australia.*