

The Compassionate Friends

Fargo/Moorhead Area Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

TCF's National Office
P.O. Box 3696
Oak Brook IL 60522
Toll-free (877) 969-0010
www.compassionatefriends.org

F-M Area Chapter
P.O. Box 10686
Fargo ND 58106
www.tcffargomoorhead.org
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Chapter Leader - John Milligan (701)491-0364

Newsletter Editor - Nancy Teeuwen (701)730-0805

The F-M Area Chapter of The Compassionate Friends meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH 127 2ND AVE E WEST FARGO, ND Please enter on the West side. Our meeting is in the Fellowship Hall - lower level, west side.

Upcoming Meetings
August 11th
September 8th

Dates to Remember

Mom's meeting - 7 p.m. on August 25th @ Fargo Fry'n Pan
Worldwide Candle Lighting - December 11, 2016 @ 7 p.m.

"When our special sadness comes to call, when we remember more than we can bear, when courage falters - shadows everywhere: Then let us reach and touch and share, we, who are friends." ~ Sascha Wagner

Our Mom's group generally meets on the 4th Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm at the Fry'n Pan restaurant, 300 Main Avenue, Fargo. Our gatherings are very informal as we meet to talk about our children, books, recipes, jobs and whatever else comes up in conversation. We all have times when we need the listening heart of another mom or grandma.

Please join us this month on Thursday August 25th. For more information please contact Sheryl at 701-540-3287 or sherylc13@msn.com.

OUR CREDO

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope. The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope. We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances. We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships. We are young, and we are old. Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope. Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength, while some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression, while others radiate an inner peace. But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love for the children who have died. We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love to share the pain as well as the joy, share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts, and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE.

WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS. ©2007

Sometimes We Have To Let Go

How many times did I tell you that you could not die before I did? Because I could not live if you died. SO MANY TIMES. Did I hold you here too long to suffer more than you should? I could not bear the thought of life without you. Children should not die before their parents.

How many times has my heart cried "I lied, I lied, I didn't mean it," since that last afternoon when I knew it was time to let you go. You told me that you loved me more than anything but you wanted to go home to Heaven. I told you it was Okay, that I wanted you to go and not have to suffer anymore.

I told you that when a child is born the cord that binds a mother and child together is cut, but there is an invisible cord that binds us that can never be broken. That wherever you go I will always be with you, and no matter where I am you would always be with me. Because I loved you more than life itself I had to let you go. But my heart still cries, "I didn't mean it, it was a lie, I didn't want you to die."

But I will always carry you in my heart, and part of my heart and soul went with you that day. I know that you are waiting for me in Heaven. ONLY THEN WILL I BE WHOLE AGAIN.

~ Hattie Pridgen, TCF/Wilmington, NC (Cape Fear Chapter)
~reprinted from TCF Atlanta Newsletter July/August 2002

Dancing In the Flame

Though I am tired and weary,
My eyes continue to weep,
And my heart denies me the comfort,
That I find only in my sleep.
So I sit alone in the darkness,
Before the firelight,
And stare into the flames,
On this dark and moonless night.
As the flames leap and dance,
I am surrounded by an eerie sight,
That evokes haunting memories,
Brought to life by the fire's light.
My thoughts take me back,
To a time when you were here,
To times when laughter filled my heart,
Times lost forever, I fear.
In the flames, I see your face,
Your sweet and loving smile.
And I know that we will meet again,
But I must wait a while.
These quiet moments of reverie,
Bring comfort to my aching heart,
And tell me that you and I,
Are never far apart.
Now my heart begins to lighten,
As sleep arrives to claim,
The pain I felt just moments ago,
Before I saw you dancing in the flame.

Jacquelyn M. Comeaux

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THE COPING HOURS

Did you ever hear of a nightmare
That occurred in the midst of day?
Webster must have named it wrong
It just doesn't happen that way.

It might be while I'm driving
Or watching some T.V.
Looking at your picture when
This shock grabs hold of me.

Sleep is such a short time
While the coping hours are long
Day in, day out, I sort it out
Somehow this all seems wrong.

So, nightmares aren't for night time
It's the light of day I fear
The ever-constant reality
Is the fact that you're not her.

- Ellen Schick, "Bereavement" 1988

HEALING ANGELS

The angels in heaven have shed their tears -
Tears of sorrow and anguish
Tears of remembrance and longing
Tears for the lost.
Now the task of healing has begun.
It is enshrouded in a veil of fabric woven by God.
He alone has ordained His helpers
To bestow comfort upon those who are still grieving.
He has commanded that
The stars in the sky,
The rays of sun,
The blades of grass and
The flowers that bloom
Become embodiments of the souls
Who were snatched from us so abruptly and sadly.
Nevermore shall darkness becloud them.
Their loved ones will no longer be numbed with heartache,
Instead, they will be overcome with a balm of
Tranquility and hope.

Bereavement Magazine - January/February 2003

This Too Shall Pass

If I can endure for this minute
Whatever is happening to me,
No matter how heavy my heart is
Or how dark the moment may be-
If I can remain calm and quiet
With all the world crashing about me,
Secure in the knowledge God loves me
When everyone else seems to doubt me-
If I can but keep on believing
What I know in my heart to be true,
That darkness will fade with the morning
And that this will pass away, too-
Then nothing in life can defeat me
For as long as this knowledge remains
I can suffer whatever is happening
For I know God will break all of the chains
That are binding me tight in the darkness
And trying to fill me with fear-
For there is no night without dawning
And I know that my morning is near.

...Helen Steiner Rice

1900 - 1981

A Solitary Journey

Grief is a solitary journey. No one but you knows the gaping hole left in your life when someone you know has died. And no one but you can mourn the silence that was once filled with laughter and song. It is the nature of love and of death to touch every person in a totally unique way. Comfort comes from knowing that people have made the same journey. And solace comes from understanding how others have learned to sing again.

~ Helen Steiner Rice, TCF/Pasco County, FL

The Stress Test

On my desk is a little card that measures stress. It is similar to the "mood rings" of the 1970s in nature. If I am having a good day, the color is green. If I am particularly serene, the color is blue. Sometimes the color is black or red.....these are the bad days. Black equals stress; red equals tense.

If only our real emotions were that easy to measure and quantify. If only we could touch a card or a stone and find out if we are angry, sad, depressed, withdrawn, happy, balanced or "normal". But, this does not exist.

Instead we must rely on our subjective minds to analyze what should be a very objective situation: where are we now? Only parents who have lost a child can relate to this statement. Where am I now? Yesterday seemed good, but today is terrible. I don't even want to get out of bed.

Then the guilt sets in: it is the American way to "get on with it". The work ethic is part of the fabric of most of our lives. Be productive. Have accomplishments. Do things, tackle projects, keep on moving, moving, moving.

Sometimes that moving is really running: running from our demons. Can we analyze this for what it is? Can we ask ourselves what those demons might be? Can we go into the dark recesses of our minds and pull out the offensive demon and throw it into the stratosphere? Actually, we can.

I have done this many times. Some people do this with prayer, some with yoga, some with exercise, some with meditation, some with medication, some with reading, some with professional therapy, some with sheer willpower.

We each search for ways to deal with our grief, to analyze each phase of our grieving process, to help ourselves to help ourselves. What I have found to be most helpful in analyzing each phase of "demon purging" is the exponential value of talking with others who are also in grief. Asking questions of them will often answer questions of my own. I move forward one step after each Compassionate Friends meeting. It is a difficult step, a tearful, emotional step, a step that slides sideways and backwards and forwards and then finally settles. But it is the next step on the road of grief. I take that step and its lesson and I apply it for the next month.

The meter of measurement is what I tell myself before I go to sleep each night. Today was good because..... Tomorrow will be good because.....

Where did I learn this technique? I invented it 38 years ago. I invented it for my child. Each night before he fell asleep, we would read a book. Then, we would talk about his day. What was bad? How can you change it? What was good? How did it make you feel? What are you looking forward to tomorrow? Think about that while you fall asleep, I would tell him. Tomorrow will be a good day filled with whatever positive event he had mentioned. He would recite all the good things from his day and everything positive about tomorrow.

Even as teenager and later as an adult, my child and I would have these late night conversations. Our final night conversation was just 6 hours before he died. He was thinking positive, anticipating the good.

So now I continue the tradition. What was good today? What was bad? What am I looking forward to for tomorrow? There is always something positive. I analyze the things that went wrong and "sleep on" a solution.

So this is my stress test -not very complicated-something like a prayer for enlightenment and positive feelings. I discover my yo-yo emotions, my grief, my sadness and yet I remember the happiness and the hope. It helps me to sleep each night. Tomorrow will be better.

Annette Mennen Baldwin, TCF/Katy, TX

In memory of my son, Todd Mennen

HUGGING

Friends, I'm not a doctor, but I've got some very good news.
I've got a new prescription for getting rid of the blues.

What you need is a great big hug from a relative, lover or friend.

It may seem strange at first, but you'll feel better in the end.

Everybody needs hugging - child, woman or man.

It give you something your body needs and does it like nothing else can.

It warms your heart and touches something in you that's very rare.

It makes you feel secure and give you a feeling that someone cares.

Hugging is a two-way street, as you give you shall receive,
So fill your hugs with genuine love, don't fake it, don't deceive.

Every human being has a basic need to touch.

So pass you hugs around generously, you just can't hug too much.

So make today a hugging day and hug the next person you see,
and just in case I miss you, hug someone for me,

And I will do the very same and hug someone for you,
till hugging spreads throughout the land, and no one's ever blue.

~ Ernie Scott, Prairie View, IL

PARENTS.....

.....OF A SAINT

A little bit of Heaven

Came to both of you one day,

Then soon this little breath of God

Was suddenly snatched away;

The joy you built within your hearts

Has now turned into grief,

You feel that nothing found in life

Could ever bring relief.

Nay, parents, if you'll meditate

You'll find it otherwise,

The grief you have is really

But a blessing in disguise;

The waters of eternal life,

Have freed your babe of taint,

'Twas meant by God that you

Should be the parents of a saint.

~ Sr. Kathleen Gibbons, O.S.F. Breckenridge, MN

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OUR BELOVED CHILDREN REMEMBERED BIRTHDAYS

CHILD		PARENTS
HALLIE CLARE BJELLAND.....	12	ANDY & RHONDA BJELLAND
JOSEPH T BOLGER.....	50	LOWELL & PRISCILLA BOLGER
ZACHARY COLE.....	28	JERRY & DEB COLE
ASHLEY RAE HAINES.....	28	WILLIAM HAINES III
HEIDI HELLAND.....	29	JOHN & TERRI HELLAND
TARI L HELLER.....	61	RICHARD & CLARE ELLESS
CORDELL ALAN KISER.....	44	KEITH & SANDRA KISER
ERIC C LARSON.....	36	CRAIG & BARB LARSON
JOSHUAH G NELSON.....	25	JOHN & DARCY NELSON
KYLE NELSON.....	22	JERRY & YVONNE NELSON
JAMES KEVIN SKJEFTE.....	44	VERNE & DIANE SKJEFTE
BRANDI ROSE IRENE TEEUWEN.....	14	JOHN & NANCY TEEUWEN
DANE TVEDT.....	28	TOMMY & LEAH TVEDT
MICHELLE WARNECKE.....	49	DOUG & JOAN WARNECKE

ANNIVERSARIES

CHILD		PARENTS
TAMERA KAY CHAPUT.....	10	GERALD & DELORES BEYERS
CORDELL ALAN KISER.....	4	KEITH & SANDRA KISER
MICHAEL LEALLEN KRAIG.....	3	JILL KRAIG & BRYAN MOFFET
KENT R NELSON.....	6	DEANNA NELSON
MATTHEW ROBERT SAUNDERS.....	11	ROBERTS & MARY SAUNDERS
GREGORY SEARS.....	7	PERSYS PIERSALL (Grandmother)
GREGORY SEARS.....	7	LORI & JERRY BRADY
BRANDI ROSE IRENE TEEUWEN.....	14	JOHN & NANCY TEEUWEN
SCOTT ANTHONY TOBOLT.....	13	JOHN & MARY TOBOLT
AUSTIN WAYNE WAGAR.....	4	JAMIE & SCOTT OLSON
JASMINE ROSE WILSON.....	5	KAREN WILSON

Anniversary missed in the May Newsletter
My apologies to the Sadek family for this error

ANDREW SADEK 2 JOHN & TAMMY SADEK

Please check out our Chapter website's page for 'Our Beloved Children'
(www.tcffargomoorhead.org/ourchildren.html). If you would like your child's picture and a poem or story posted on this page, please submit them to us at tcfl1313@hotmail.com or mail them to our PO Box (listed on the back of the newsletter). Photos and poems/stories sent to the PO Box will be electronically scanned and then returned to you so please remember to include a return address

"Grief is neither a sign of weakness nor a lack of faith. It's the price we pay for love."
~ Darcie Sims

"In grief, nothing 'stays put'. One keeps emerging from a phase, but it always recurs. Round and round. Everything repeats. Am I going in circles, or dare I hope I'm on a spiral? But if a spiral, am I going up or down?"

C.S. Lewis: A Grief Observed

SIBLING PAGE

MY BEST FRIEND

By Ryan Auch for his brother Ronny
BP/USA Augusta, GA
The fishing season's coming,
but no more fishing for me,
Because my best friend's not here,
to share his hooks with me.
We went fishing nearly every day.
Never hooked a thing.
But, oh, what fun we had,
Talking about the one that got away.
The garage holds all the fishing gear,
but I've no desire to fish.
It's not the same without him here.
Oh! If I could have one wish.
My wish would be
to bring my brother back to me,
so we could fish along the shore.
We'd have fun together,
And laugh once more.
All that's left are memories,
for me to think about.
I won't say goodbye;
I'll see you again.
But I will miss you forever,
MY BEST FRIEND.

A THOUSAND FACES

I walked in wearing your jacket, my arms linked between Mom and Dad.
My hand trembled around the folded pages of my speech.
I could barely breathe as we sat down in front of your coffin.
I had asked to speak first. One thousand sets of eyes watched every step of my careful pace to the podium.
My heart pounded, my hands shook the unfolded pages, and tears began to stream down my cheeks.
I stood beside your silence. And listened to the echo of my grief into the sobbing crowd.
I wanted to fall to my knees, pound the wooden floor and scream for answers. I wanted to lay down into the madness that your death brought me to. But you had always taught me to be strong.
I took a deep breath and continued as if you were standing beside me—
I spoke of your sarcasm, your love for chicks, our childhood fights, and our developed friendship. And my memories were joined by a laughter that reminded me to remember your smile and not this day.
I wiped my eyes and folded the pages that said goodbye to the sixteen years that I spent looking up to you.
Your favorite song began and echoed from the walls of the same gymnasium that used to chant your name on game day.
I watched your best friends file around you and looked into eyes that I had never seen shed tears until today.
A thousand hearts broke for the shaken spirits of the boys that led your procession.
My hand trembled around the folded pages of my speech.
And I followed your lead for the last time.

~ Alexandra, TCF/Portland, OR

MY BROTHER

My brother is an angel and he can fly---
I'll get to see him when I die.
I love Him I love Him---
Matthew McGowin, age 5, TCF/Montgomery, AL

Siblings - Tribute to My Sister

You always held within your heart a strength and purpose that few others would have known. My success in life and joy I owe to you for helping me along the way. In the eighteen years that I was blessed to have you in my life, you taught me so many things. You gave me new challenges, and a new place was created in my heart the day you were born. You were there when I stumbled and fell, and you gently helped me up again. Your little hand I held while rocking you to sleep at times. At darker times it was you who held my hand, always a beacon of light for me to focus on. And, always, when I needed a friend, you were there.

Throughout the years you were always my family. You honored me with your love and trust, and though different than you, always accepted me just as I was. More than my own flesh and blood, you were my sister, and I will always cherish the time we had together. We have laughed, complained, and sometimes wept, but we always persevered. The good times, the bad times, the joy and sorrow, will always bind our hearts as long as I am able to draw my breath.

We traveled together for awhile and our journey was fulfilling, but now our paths have diverged and we had to say goodbye. To my years with you, I bid farewell. Ahead of me lies a life without you, a new definition of myself. For all that I may someday become, you will always be a part of me.

On some distant day, when something reminds me of you, I will lovingly think of you and remember the smile you had. From time to time, I will remember the years spent with you and what we have shared. I will always miss your sweet voice and your unconditional support and endless companionship. May we carry that beyond the grave.

For all the smiles and tears, for all of the love and laughter, and, above all, for being the person that you were, I will carry you in my heart. I will always, always love you.

~from Lisa Sockwell Meredith, Snellville, GA

Two years, has it
been that long?
Seems like only
yesterday.
I think the pain,
is here to stay.
I loved you then.
I love you now.
Tears for you then.
Tears for me now.
Flowers for you then.
Flowers for me now.
Thoughts of you.
Fill each new day
I wish it wasn't you.
they took away.

~Beebe Adam-Hammack, TCF/ Louisville, KY

The Storms of Grief

I've often thought about how differently grief affects those left behind when someone has died. To me there are three groups of bereaved. There are those that lose someone they loved very much and are most affected. In the middle group are those that cared about the person and will miss them, but their death doesn't change their lives. The third group are sorry that the person has died, but are largely unaffected by their death.

Now envision those groups on a mountain. When my son died, I felt like I was on a mountaintop, alone with a storm raging around me. Thunder and lightning filled the sky, thick clouds enveloped me, and a cold hard rain fell upon me. Winds buffeted my body from every side. There was no shelter; no place to sit, or lie down. Others who were suffering as much as I (my husband and daughters) were on their own Mountaintop, and we could derive no comfort from each other. I stood there, sometimes railing against God, sometimes feeling as if my heart had been ripped out, sometimes just feeling emptiness so deep; I feared I would drown in it. Days, weeks, months passed.

The middle group of people stood on the side of the mountain (close friends and relatives). They also were caught in the storm, but they had some shelter and each other. They wanted to comfort me but the path upward was winding and rocky and I could find no path down to them.

The last group of people were at the bottom of the mountain in the valley. There, the sun was shining and the breeze was gentle. They could see the storm I was caught in, but could do nothing to help me. Sometimes the storm would subside and I could see something besides dismal gray and I had respite from the wind and rain.

But this would be followed by another raging storm. Back and forth, I never knew what to expect. Eventually the sky would clear and I was able to find a path to those that cared and could offer me hugs and a shoulder to cry on. The storm was still there, but there was also shelter and I wasn't alone. It has been 12 years since Todd died and I have been able to come completely down off that desolate mountaintop and live in the valley of sunshine. Sometimes I stay there quite a while. Sometimes I climb that mountain and experience that same emptiness and sadness. We all know that this kind of storm may brew on those special days - birthdays, holidays, and family events. We are also blind-sided by those times that just take our breath away . . . being in a place they loved, hearing their music, smells, movies, ballgames, seeing their friends. We really have no control over these unexpected, sudden storms.

I have learned to give into them and let the tears fall. I can live with these storms and accept them as part of my life because my child lived and I loved him with all my heart. I cannot change the fact that my child has died and I will not change my love.

~ Barb Seth, TCF/Madison WI

INFANT DEATH

A family was gathered in the hospital where a couple's twelve-hour-old infant daughter had died. The sister of this couple said, "It's so hard to hold her, it makes it all so real." She had spent only hours with her niece and already was feeling the impact of this child's death. If it takes only hours for an aunt to feel the loss, how can we begin to explain the impact on the parents?

Miscarriage, stillbirth and infant death are not thought to be significant because the parents didn't really know the baby. Even with a loss early in pregnancy, the parents know the baby. Once a pregnancy is confirmed, the parents think about the baby all the time. This child is a part of their daily lives. They form a mental picture of the baby and plan what college he or she will attend. Names are chosen and rooms are decorated. In the book, *Swimmer in the Secret Sea*, a couple walks through the woods and pretends the baby has already been born and is swinging along between them holding onto their hands. After their son is stillborn the doctor says, "The baby looks perfectly normal. There's no reason why you can't have another child." Laski (the father) listened numbly. "He thinks that's what has been at stake, our wish for a child, any child, not this particular child who swung down the road between us. They can't know how special he is. The point to the future. But we're here, forever, now."

Parents are sometimes encouraged to have another baby as soon as possible in the belief that they will then forget about the baby that died. Most parents do go on to have another child, if able, simply because they are in the family-building part of their lives. They know it will not take away the pain or replace the child that died.

Some parents need to get pregnant again right away, & others want to wait for a while. As long as the mother is healed physically, whenever the parents feel ready for another pregnancy is the right time.

Occasionally parents experience some difficulty getting pregnant again, and it takes longer than it did before. Others have no difficulty achieving a pregnancy, but find even a few months a stressful wait.

Getting through the next pregnancy can be an emotional roller coaster. On one hand is joy and hope for the new baby; on the other hand is vulnerability and fear that what happened before may happen again. However, because they feel so exposed, parents now worry about everything that could happen, not only what caused the previous loss.

There is little support for parents who experience an infant death. Because many people see infant loss as insignificant and easily forgotten, they offer either no support or support only in the first few days or weeks. After that time parents are assumed to have healed and forgotten. If there are other children in the family, it is seen as being easier. "At least you have other children," is what these parents are told, as if that makes the loss easier. Since grief is overwhelming and takes so much energy, parents with other children may need extra help with caretaking. If no one offers, frequently parents find it difficult to ask for the help they need.

Parents need to know that it is okay to ask for help or to take life easy and be good to themselves. Remember, grief can heal only if you let it.

~ JoAnne Matzke, TCF/ Hinsdale, IL

We must have your written permission on file to use your child's name in the newsletter. Permission may be withdrawn at any time by written request. This information is used to maintain our Chapter Database. It is confidential and is only utilized for Chapter activities such as the newsletter.

Your Name: _____

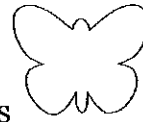
Child's Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Birth Date: _____ Death Date: _____

Date: _____

(Signature)

Please return to: The Compassionate Friends of F-M Area, P.O. Box 10686, Fargo ND 58106
(Please note that if you have already submitted a permission slip, you do not need to submit another one)



Butterfly Decals

“Butterflies are the heaven sent kisses of an angel.” ~ Author Unknown

Butterfly decals are available to help personalize our trailer. The trailer is used to carry items to and from our Walk to Remember and other chapter events. It has also given us some visibility in the Fargo/Moorhead community. Each butterfly decal holds the first and last name of one of our beloved children.

Butterflies are available in five colors (yellow, pink, red, blue and green). The cost is as follows: \$25 for 1 butterfly, \$50 for 2 butterflies, \$65 for 3 butterflies and \$80 for 4 butterflies. If you wish to purchase more than 4 butterflies please contact John Milligan at 701-491-0364.

Butterfly orders should include the child's first and last name (middle name is optional) and the color of the butterfly. Checks should be made payable to TCF of Fargo-Moorhead and the order mailed to PO Box 10686, Fargo, ND 58106.

You can see pictures of the trailer with butterflies on our website at www.tcffargomoorhead.org/ourtrailer.html.

Thoughts About Progress

One thing that is frequently discussed at our meetings is the despair of thinking you are on the road to “recovery,” when all of a sudden you seem to be back at square one. But are you really?

Let's keep in mind most of us have had no previous experienced “recovering” from the loss of a child. Therefore, we have no point of reference—it's all new to us. Actually the “roller coaster” of emotions is perfectly normal. In the very beginning most of us seem to vacillate between dead numbness and excruciating pain. Constant crying, to not a tear left—just dried up and limp. We actually are living minute-to-minute.

After a couple of months we might actually have a few hours that we have not cried or felt that deep overwhelming despair. Then, WHAM—back to where we started. We tend to panic and think something is wrong with us. Let's be realistic! There is something wrong—terribly wrong: we have each lost a child.

Let's be fair to ourselves. We started to play a role to the outside world. Like the old song says, “laughing on the outside—crying on the inside.” We want to be acceptable to society. “You are doing so well,” we hear. If only they knew! We may feel we have to fool others, but let us really be honest about our feelings. To deny our feelings, particularly to ourselves, is to block the road to recovery. Remember that recovery in this case does not mean, “getting over it,” it means to gain control of our lives again.

So, let's not worry about what other people think, say, or expect. Our friends (well meaning as they are), sometimes members of our family, even someone who has lost a child, should not sit in judgment. Each person grieves differently, due to a person's general make-up and the relationship with the dead child. Unless someone has totally withdrawn from everything and everybody over a lengthy period of time, the chances are all is in the realm of normalcy. Only after we have walked down the long road of grief and can look back, remembering those early days and weeks, can we see we really are not on square one again. We have just slipped backwards for a time. That is all. Allow yourself that, and then strive forward again. It takes time, a lot of time! We tend to expect too much from others, others expect too much from us, and therefore, we tend to expect too much from ourselves.

~ Mary Ehmann, TCF/Valley Forge, PA

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**The
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 Friends**
Fargo/Moorhead Area Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

MISSION STATEMENT: When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

A SINCERE WELCOME TO ALL COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS... We are a nonprofit self-help organization offering friendship and support to families who have experienced the death of a child. We offer group support, understanding and friendship. Our purpose is to promote and aid parents and siblings in the positive resolution of the grief they are experiencing and to foster physical and emotional health. If you have questions or wish to talk directly to a member of the Fargo-Moorhead Compassionate Friends, please call any of the numbers listed.

FARGO-MOORHEAD COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS BOARD
 YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN THE BOARD AT ANY TIME!

Chapter Leader	John Milligan..... 701-491-0364	Newsletter Editor	Nancy Teeuwen 701-730-0805
Meeting Facilitator	Paul & Kara Bailey..... 701-261-0668	Newsletter Database	Mike Cvijanovich 701-235-8158
Secretary	Sheryl Cvijanovich 701-540-3287	Website Administrator	Sheryl Cvijanovich 701-540-3287
Treasurer	Chuck Klinkhammer 701-298-2929	Newsletter Printing	Joyce at Olivet Lutheran Church
Initial Contact	Jamie Olson 701-219-3865	Mailing Committee	Contact Us to Join
Librarian	Contact Us to Volunteer		

LIBRARY INFORMATION: We have an extensive library available. Please feel free to check materials at our next meeting.

TELEPHONE FRIENDS

HAVING A BAD DAY OR NIGHT? Feel free to call and talk to any of the following:
 John Milligan (son, 25 - car accident) 701-491-0364
 Lois Gangnes (son, 24 - accident) 701-282-4083
 Nancy Teeuwen (daughter, 15 hours - illness) 701-730-0805
 Mark & Hella Helfter (miscarriage, son, 35-accident & son, 45-cancer)... 701-235-9622

Love gifts must be received by the 15th to be included in the next month's newsletter. If you wish to give a love gift please complete:

Love gift given in Memory/Honor of _____
 Name _____
 Address _____
 Relationship _____ Born _____ Died _____

NOTE: By giving a love gift, you are giving us permission to include your child(ren) in our monthly birthdays and anniversaries.