



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

FARGO/MOORHEAD AREA CHAPTER

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

National Headquarters
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
March 2013

Volume 30 Number 3

Chapter Leader - John Milligan (701) 282-4794

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
March 14th
April 11th

Dates to Remember in 2013
National Conference July 5-7
Boston, MA

If you have any pictures, stories, or poems of your child, grandchild or sibling that you would like to share on our website, please submit them to Sheryl Cvijanovich at SHERYLCV13@MSN.COM or mail them to the PO box listed on the back of the Newsletter. Anything sent to the PO Box will be scanned for the website and returned.

LOVE GIFTS

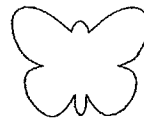
Gerald & Delores Beyers in memory of their daughter, Tammy K. Chaput
John & Kylene Milligan in memory of their son, Matthew Milligan-Olson
George & Patti Pratt in memory of their daughter, Nancy Pratt Coash
Jody & Jim Kutter in memory of their daughter, Michelle Kutter
Keith & Sandra Kiser in memory of their son, Cordell A. Kiser
We are deeply grateful for the LOVE GIFTS given this month.
Our chapter and all chapters, are financed solely through your Love Gifts.
Donations make this newsletter, postage, books, tapes, etc. possible.
Thank you for your tax deductible gifts.

OUR CREDO

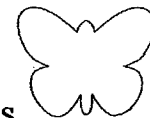
We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope. The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope. 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



Butterfly Decals



The F-M Chapter has recently purchased a trailer, in order to transport materials to our chapter activities. We are selling butterfly decals, which will be placed on the trailer. The butterflies are 4 x 6 and available in five colors: yellow, pink, red, blue and green.

Each butterfly will contain the first and last name of a child.

If you wish to purchase a butterfly in the memory of a child, please send your name, the name of the child, butterfly color, and a check payable to TCF of Fargo-Moorhead, P.O. Box 10686, Fargo, ND 58106.

Butterflies are \$25 each, 3 for \$65 or 4 for \$80. If you wish to purchase more than 4 butterflies, please contact our chapter leader, John Milligan.

On Thursday March 28, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. a group of the ladies of TCF Fargo-Moorhead will meet at the Fryn' Pan at 300 Main Avenue in Fargo for coffee (or whatever), fellowship and conversation. This will be an informal gathering of moms, grandmas, aunts, sisters and friends who would like to chat in a more casual setting. If you have any questions please contact Sheryl at 701-235-8158 or sherylcv13@msn.com. Please join us!

THE ROAD TO HEALING

We gather because our children have died. We assemble because something of ourselves died as well. But also, in those dreadful moments of their passing, something new was born within each of us a pain, an anguish, an agony that not only endures but which consumes the quality and tempo of our living for months and even years.

As compassionate friends we gather to confront that pain to address the absence of our children, to support one another to find the road to healing, to seek ways to live once more.

We seek healing, understanding that healing is not forgetting. We reach for wellness, knowing that wellness does not imply that our deceased child is dismissed from our thoughts for such is not the case. We seek to heal, knowing that we will never forget in either our hearts or our thoughts. And we know further that the touch of our children on our beings, or ours on theirs, will never be wholly entrusted to yesterday.

But each and every one of us seeks release from the bondage of our child's death. We desire repose, stillness and calm, that the beauty of our child's love might enfold us yet again. We thirst for awakenings free of pain, for minutes and hours free from unremitting torment. In our child's name, and for ourselves, we hunger for genuine and lasting emancipation from an overwhelming bereavement that consumes our living and threatens the continued vitality of our spirits.

My belief is that all these things are possible for us as long as we understand that our lives will never return to what we remember as normal before our child died. The experiences of countless bereaved parents assure us that we can learn to bear the unbearable, to overcome that which crushes our spirit, to move from darkness to light, to find our own lives and renew them on a road toward healing. We can learn to live once more.

Many undoubtedly wonder if this can possibly be true, and all of us who have endured well beyond the earlier stages of this long dark journey certainly understand that feeling.

Let me share a portion of my own loss with you. Olin was our only child. When he died at the age of seventeen, the happiness he wove into the pattern of my living seemed to become lost in a vast, consuming darkness. The lamp of life at the core of my soul was extinguished. I felt lost in a lonely, cold netherworld of the spirit.

His death isolated my being. I drifted, removed from life, and thus the value of existence itself became diminished within me. Olin had been the catalyst of laughter, the touchstone of joy. Now, both laughter and joy had become but ill-defined memories.

As I struggled ever downward, I started to realize that I was paying scant honor to Olin's life and its influence on mine. I had loved him still, with fierceness and tenacity. But my emotional state was such that I was labeling, unintentionally, his life's touch on mine as destruction, allowing no chance or opportunity for life or love to shine through.

I reached out for help, acknowledging my obligation to keep faith with Olin. I sought recovery and life as a part of my debt, my duty to him. It was months before I saw it also as an obligation to my wife, my family, or to myself. We often recognize our bond with the deceased before that which we share with the living.

In the months and years to follow, I was fortunate to find a pathway toward healing. In looking back with the keen sight of retrospection, three areas seem worthwhile to examine as essential elements of a successful healing journey.

1. To seek healing for more than just our deceased child, to extend that obligation to our families and to ourselves.
2. Forgiveness, of both ourselves and others.
3. To consciously make future decisions and commitments, to set realistic goals and actively pursue them.

Looking back. I see a moment with my father, two months after Olin died, as the first inkling that I might have an obligation to more than just Olin. He said to me. "Don, you've got to get over this. You've lost your zest, your energy, your interest in life. You've got to overcome this."

Most of us view moments such as this with anger. How could another person possibly understand? But he did. He also is a bereaved parent, having lost my sister only a year and a half before the death of Olin.

I cannot tell you that I paid heed to his concern right away. I did not. I could not. But I have never forgotten.

When I recall the love and concern in his voice and eyes, I always reflect on these words of Gibran from the *Prophet*: "You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth."

My only living arrow had fallen, and for a long while I was awash in darkness. But through that darkness, my father, who had himself cast four arrows to the future, who had already felt the fall of one, reached out to steady the flight of one who had faltered.

I have come at least to understand what he already knew - that I too, am a living arrow sent with love from my parent's bow into the future. And so are all the rest of us.

All of us have an obligation to complete the trajectory of our own flight, our own lives. We owe it to those who sent us forth and to those who share our journey now. And we owe it to ourselves, for if our flight, or life is to be true, we must find and give flower to love and caring in our souls.

The second area to address in healing is perhaps the most difficult: forgiveness.

We must forgive our children for abandoning us, for dying. We must forgive ourselves for letting them die, even if there was nothing we could have done to prevent it.

We believe parents preserve and protect and many of us initially regard ourselves as having failed in that regard. And even if we did fail them in many ways, we still must forgive ourselves their deaths, for we did not kill our children. Indeed, each of us would have saved our child, or even taken their place, had only such a chance presented itself. We deserve to forgive ourselves.

We must forgive ourselves our errors, even our wrongs, in child rearing. For all our failures, real and imagined, intentional or unintentional, we are still only human beings and we must find the strength to forgive ourselves.

Forgiveness is acceptance of our own and other's faults, wrongs and "humanness." It is also our victory over hate, bitterness and despair. It is as strong an act of love as we can make. Just as grief is the crying forth of love at parting, forgiveness is the balancing of love's power to both hurt and heal.

I am certain that forgiveness, in its many expressions and with its many demands, is a necessary forerunner to embracing the future.

And that brings us to our final area, to consciously make future decisions and commitments, to set realistic goals and actively pursue them. No matter how much it may hurt, the future awaits us all. Indeed, the future is the healing zone, that place where all efforts merge to produce a recovery that enables us to live once more. In our early bereavement this is nearly impossible to contemplate, for it is about all we can manage to confront the moment, the hour, the day. For a very long time, the future is just not a part of our consciousness.

Yet there comes a time on the healing road where decisions and commitments to the future are possible, frequently even necessary.

Perhaps you paint, coach soccer, are active in a bridge club, work with girl scouts, help newly bereaved families or work hard at raising your own family. There is more than ample room in these or in numberless other areas where future commitments can be made. Anything of value to ourselves will suffice.

It is setting and achieving goals that count, goals sensible and possible within the context of our own lives.

The road to healing is not easy, but few worthwhile things in our lives are easy. Yet healing really is not nearly as difficult as the task we have already met, the hour of our child's death and the weeks immediately following.

Our children danced joy in our lives and the memory of that joy is a song that continues in our hearts ~ it will ever be, but more that is good remains to be said.

The horror in our lives will pass away and the pain will ultimately perish. But our love for our children and their love for us shall not perish, nor pass away, or ever die. For love is immortal. It knows no season, nor comings or goings. It is and shall remain.

~ Don Hackett TCF

Bereaved Presidents

Did you know that 20 of our presidents and their wives were and are bereaved parents?

John Adams lost his son Charles, 20, while he was president.

Thomas Jefferson had six children and only two lived to adult-hood. A daughter, May, 26, died while he was president.

James Moore lost a son two years of age.

John Quincy Adams lost a daughter in infancy; a son died while Adams was president; and another son died 5 years later.

William Harrison had ten children; six died before he became president.

Zachary Taylor had six children; two died as infants and a daughter died three months after her wedding.

Millard Fillmore's daughter, Abigail died at 22.

Franklin Pierce lost two sons in infancy. History records his wife's grief so great that he resigned from the Senate. Two months before his inauguration to the presidency, their son, Benjamin, 11 years old, was killed in a railroad accident. Mrs. Pierce collapsed from grief and was unable to attend the inauguration. She secluded herself in an upstairs bedroom for nearly half of her husband's term in office.

Abraham Lincoln lost two sons during his lifetime. Edward, four years old, while Lincoln was in office, and William, 11 years old. He wrote, "In this sad world of ours, sorrow comes to all... it comes with bitterest agony..." The president's wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, unable to cope with the assassination of her husband and the death of yet another son, Thomas, 18 years old, was confined to a sanitarium. Although she was released after a few months, she was never to be well again.

Rutherford B. Hayes had eight children, three of whom died in infancy.

James Garfield had seven children; two died in infancy.

Chester Alan Arthur's eldest son died in infancy.

Grover Cleveland's oldest daughter, Ruth, died at age 13.

William McKinley lost both children: Ida, four months old, and Katherine, four years old. His wife became so overwhelmed with shock and grief that she became an invalid for the remainder of her life.

Theodore Roosevelt's son died at 21 years of age.

Calvin Coolidge had a son, Calvin Jr., who died at 16 while his father was in office. Recorded in his autobiography, the president said, "When he went, the power and glory of the presidency went with him."

Franklin Roosevelt's son, Franklin Jr., died in infancy.

Dwight Eisenhower's son, Doug Dwight "Icky," 3 years old, died at Camp Mead, MD. In President Eisenhower's autobiography written in 1969 (49 years after Icky died), he stated, "With his death a pall fell over the camp. When we started the long trip back to Denver for his burial, the entire command turned out in respect to Icky. We were completely crushed - it was a tragedy from which we never recovered. I do not know how others have felt when facing the same situation, but I have never known such a blow. Today when I think of it, even as I now as I write of it, the keenness of my loss comes back to me as fresh and terrible as it was in that long, dark day soon after Christmas, 1920."

John F. Kennedy and his wife Jackie lost their two-week old son Patrick in 1963 while he was president. The Kennedy's' first daughter was stillborn.

George H. W. Bush and his wife Barbara lost their daughter Robin, at 3 years old to leukemia.

--Author Unknown

OUR BELOVED CHILDREN REMEMBERED



Birthdays and Anniversaries have been removed from the Internet version of our newsletter for security purposes



Grief

Grief feels like a cave, an aimless groping into a black deepening void. Into your hand I press the only candle I have, a message to flicker in the darkness of your soul: Grief feels like a cave, but it is not a cave. Grief is a tunnel, a journey. The blackness is the same, the only difference is Hope.

Author unknown,
LLF Loving Arms, Pregnancy & Infant Loss Centre
Spring issue 1995

When God sends forth a tiny soul
To learn the ways of earth,
A mother's love is waiting here --
We call this wonder -- birth.
When God calls home a tired soul
And stills a fleeting breath,
A Father's love is waiting there,
This too is birth -- not death.

~ Author Unknown

SIBLING PAGE

WHEN SIBLINGS ARE GRIEVING

The sibling group of the Acadiana Chapter, Lafayette, LA, has prepared a list of concerns that siblings who are grieving must cope with. These issues and suggestions are relevant not only for parents but for family members, friends, and teachers as well.

1. Don't overprotect us. We are trying to fit back into our lives, and overprotecting us makes it harder.
2. Many feel that being stoical is being strong. Don't hide your grief from us. Show us that you grieve, too, so we will come to you when we are hurting.
3. Information is important. We want to know what has happened or is happening, but we are often afraid to ask for fear of hurting you more than you already hurt. Please give us opportunities to ask questions, and please answer our questions truthfully.
4. We often feel we are being ignored when we are left with other people, especially when these people won't talk to us about what is going on. Parents and family members can help us when they help others to be open.
5. Grief is an individual experience. Sometimes when we are hurting badly, we need to be left alone. Please honor this need.
6. Grief is not a placid experience: it is full of ups and downs. Sometimes we're happy when you are sad, and sometimes we're sad when you are happy. Help us to accept that this is all right.
7. Advice and easy answers to difficult philosophical questions don't help. Don't tell us something just to be saying something. It's all right to tell us that you don't have all the answers.
8. Don't tell us that we won't understand when we ask questions. We understand more than you think we do.

~ The Sibling Group, TCF, Acadiana Chapter, LA

DO I HAVE TO?

Mom, do I have to stop loving my brother, because he is not here?

Will I forget all about him because he's not near?

I remember all the things we did together, even though we were very young.

I laugh and feel warm each time I think of a particularly funny one.

Sometimes I get so angry that he's no longer here to share, But I know he knows it's because of how much I still care.

I miss him so even though at times we didn't agree.

Just knowing he was there made things feel safe for me.

He always felt he had to be my strong protective big brother, And that's a bond we'll always share with each other.

He tried to protect me even when he too was just as scared.

Those were the very special kinds of moments we shared.

No, I won't stop loving that big brother of mine,

Not now, not ever, not till the end of time.

He will always be a part of what makes me be me,

And that's the part of our love that will live eternally.

~ Jackie Rosen, TCF/North Dade, FL

"The soul always knows what to do to heal itself. The challenge is to silence the mind."

~Anonymous

My Silent Companion

I see you in my dreams--

Laughing happily, free from sorrow

And safe from life's misfortune.

The joy that lights your eyes fills me with comfort,

And I know that every step I make,

You also take.

Guiding me down life's path,

through obstacles in my way--

You are my silent companion.

When God took you back - it changed our lives,

And our perspective.

We now see the vibrant glow

That lives in every one of His creations,

And it reminds us of you.

I hear you laugh in the crashing surf

and feel warmed by your hugs in the soaking sun.

You are everywhere--

You are my silent companion.

Though I want to reach out to you

And hold you tightly in my sorrow,

I know you can feel my tears on your shoulder

As you surround me in your soul.

You sprinkle my life with tokens and treasures,

Reminders and reassurances of how much you love me.

I know you'll live inside my heart

And walk with me until I can join you--

Forever as my silent companion.

~ Jennifer Forrest, TCF/Orange Coast, CA

I'M HERE

I cannot ease your aching heart,

Nor take the pain away,

But let me stay and take your hand

And walk with you today.

I'll listen if you need to talk;

I'll wipe away your tears.

I'll share your worries when they come;

I'll help you face your fears.

I'm here and I will stand by you,

Each hill you have to climb,

So take my hand, let's face the world;

Live one day at a time.

You're not alone, for I'm still here.

I'll go that extra mile,

And when your grief is easier,

I'll help you learn to smile.

~ Jeanne Losey

I'll cry with you, she whispered,

until we run out of tears.

Even if it's forever.

We'll do it together.

There it was a simple promise of connection.

The loving alliance of grief and hope that blesses both our breaking apart and our coming together again.

---Molly Fumia

HOPE...

I saw a husband and wife last night, standing close to one another to better see and to show the pictures of their son. The pictures were in a little flip folder which had a hard paper cover and was a little bent around the edges. They must have shown these pictures many, many times. Their son, such a nice looking boy, was about 18. I watch how the husband put the picture folder away in this pocket. It must have been in and out of there many, many times. Still he handled it so gently, so tenderly, almost with reverence. Their son was dead.

They were attending their first meeting of HOPE, acronym for Helping Other Parents Endure, a chapter of The Compassionate Friends. It's a place where they could mention their son. Other fathers with boys 18 can laugh about their sons latest hijinks and grin knowingly. But what does a man say about his son who is dead? or a daughter.

And what does a mother talk about? What does a mother do with the mementos of her child that remind her of the funny tender stuff of childhood? The time he or she was not yet two and dressed for church and found the only muddy place out front. The trophy won by mistake. The homely TV lamp they bought thinking how much I would love it. And there it sits in the closet. And it will never go to Goodwill. And there will never be another. And we will never sit and laugh together over stories of "when you were little."

The one thing about The Compassionate Friends is that the mention of your child's name won't cause an awkward gap. You know, the kind that makes you feel somehow you shouldn't have said anything. How can anyone else know that your child is still real? That they were real and are real? I want to scream sometimes that my boys are real? See, he's here in my heart. Oh, and when I stopped at a traffic light today, there was boy in a car next to me who put his hand to chin, just like my son did. It was amazing - that gesture, that hand - just like my son's.

The little one is not so clear in my mind anymore, but he's real. How many children do I have? Three. My daughter is married and living in New York. And the boys? Well, one will always be four and a half. I heard him laugh the other day in the giggles of some preschoolers. And my oldest son? I told you he got his black belt, didn't I? And that he made sergeant? And that I saw him this morning in the gesture of a boy waiting at a traffic light?

~ LaVergne Dunn, TCF/Ottuma, IA

GRIEVING IN PAIRS

How many times have people said, "Well, thank God you have each other." How many times have you felt "each other" to be entirely inadequate at meeting your needs?

Alarming statistics are available telling us of the rocky road parents encounter in their marriage after the death of a child. We sometimes see in ourselves a touchiness or quickness to become irritated that wasn't there before. It always seem that my "bad" day is my wife's "good" day or the day she wakes up crying was the day I had planned on playing tennis.

Or sometimes, even more difficult, we both have a bad day and find no help from the other in pulling things back together. How can one person hold up another when he is himself facedown in the mud?

Every person grieves differently. This is a rule that even applies within a family. And the needs of every individual are different. While you may need to talk and talk and talk, your spouse may need some time alone to reflect inwardly.

You have both been through the worst experience of your life. And while at times you can face recovery as a team, sometimes you must develop the patience to be able to wait out certain needs alone or with someone else. Realize that no matter how it is shown, your partner hurts too.

~ Gerry Hunt, TCF/White River Junction, VT

EACH SPRING GOD RENEWS HIS PROMISE

Long, long ago in a land far away,
There came the dawn of the first Easter Day,
And each year we see that promise reborn
That God gave the world on that first Easter Morn. . .

For in each waking flower and each singing bird,
The Promise of Easter is witnessed and heard,
And Spring is God's way of speaking to men
And renewing the promise of Easter again,
For death is a season that man must pass through
And, just like the flowers, God wakens him, too. . .
So why should we grieve when our loved ones die,
For we'll meet them again in a "cloudless sky"--
for Easter is more than a beautiful story,
It's the promise of life and Eternal Glory

~ Helen Steiner Rice

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

Grandparents' Grief -- A Two Tined Fork

Grandparents' grief is like a fork with two tines -- one tine represents the loss of a grandchild and the other represents the pain of seeing your child suffer. Therefore, you have two tasks. The first is to work through your own grief and the other is to feel helpful to your bereaved child. There may be two parts, but you actually deal with them at the same time.

Many things determine how you grieve. We are all individuals in our personalities, experiences, ways of coping, and grief timetables. Your feelings will be the same as many other grandparents. At the same time, your grief and feelings will be uniquely and singularly yours. You may also experience some of these as well:

Sleep Problems - Most bereaved grandparents find sleep difficult for a time. Warm milk or a bath before bed, reading or using relaxation techniques or relaxation tapes, keeping a notebook by the bed to write out feelings and thoughts when you can't sleep may help. *Don't fight sleeplessness.* Accept the fact that this is normal and temporary, and that the rest you get by lying quietly can be almost as helpful as sleep. Be careful of drugs or alcohol. Neither produces normal sleep, and they may even delay your healing.

Appetite - A grieving person is seldom concerned with nutrition or a well-balanced diet, but proper nutrition is more important now than ever before. The quantity of food is not vital, but the quality is. Include something from the four food groups in each meal. Water, too, is important. You may want to pour eight glasses into a pitcher and be sure you drink it all during the day. Avoid caffeine and alcohol. It's a good idea to take a good, general vitamin daily.

Adequate sleep and good nutrition are especially important for us because we're older. We don't have the physical resilience that our bereaved children have.

Constant Thoughts - In the early weeks, you may think about your grandchild and the death almost constantly. This is not unusual. It's your mind's way of sorting out what happened. Let yourself think. Contrary to what people might tell you, you are not "dwelling" on painful thoughts, you are processing. This will lessen as you begin to heal.

Constant Talk - You need to hear yourself say, out loud, what you are thinking and feeling. This helps you see the reality of the death. Talking about your grandchild, your feelings and the death is the most healing thing you can do. The problem is finding someone to listen to you. Your friends are likely to tell you it's not good to talk about these things. Others may simply be uncomfortable listening to your pain. No matter! Find someone who will let you talk. Talking with your bereaved child helps both of you. Some find that talking into a tape recorder helps. One grandfather, when told he was talking to himself replied, "Right! It's good to have a conversation with an intelligent person." Others find it helpful to write to their grandchild who died, saying goodbye and sharing their feelings. However you do it, remember, *talking is essential.*

Inability to Concentrate - This part of grief can be very disconcerting and uncomfortable. You may feel confused or as if your thinking processes have slowed down. You may find yourself in the grocery store staring for 5 minutes at the peas and carrots, forgetting which you were going to get. Some people feel this confusion for many months, while others experience little of it. Again, we are all different. You can handle the inability to concentrate in different ways. Muddle through it, write yourself detailed instructions or reminder notes, and eliminate as many jobs as you can. If you can accept this reaction as normal and temporary, you will be less bothered by it.

Your Body Grieves Too - Physical problems such as weakness, fatigue, infections, colds, stomach problems, increased blood pressure, headaches, are common to bereaved grandparents. Any chronic physical ailments you already have can be aggravated now. It's important to have a check-up but be sure your physician knows you are grieving and understands that grief is normal. It's a part of life, not a pathological or emotional illness. Unfortunately, many doctors still see grief as "sick" and will prescribe medication for "nerves". Hopefully, your doctor can prescribe medication that will lessen your physical problems. Just be extremely careful of allowing any doctor to try to alleviate the stress of your grief with mind or mood-altering chemicals.

Your reaction to your grandchild's death is likely to be different from that of your spouse or the other set of grandparents. Don't compare yourself with them or think something is wrong with you if you grieve differently. Many things in our personalities, cultures, religions, and our lives contribute to how we grieve.

We hope you take the suggestions here and allow yourself to openly express your emotions. It isn't easy to change old patterns, but try. You can't avoid or bury grief. You must *go through it*. Sadness must be expressed through tears. Anger and guilt must be talked out and looked at honestly. Lean into the pain and *allow yourself to experience it*. In other words, *allow yourself to be miserable when you need to be*. This is what working through grief means.

From www.healingheart.net

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
OF THE F-M AREA
PO BOX 10686
FARGO ND 58106

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT #1625
FARGO, ND

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
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 701-282-4794	Secretary-Treasurer	Sheryl Cvijanovich 701-235-8158
Librarian		Initial Contact	Kylene Milligan 701-282-4794
Newsletter Editor	Nancy Teeuwen 701-730-0805	Newsletter Database	Mike Cvijanovich 701-235-8158
Newsletter Printing	Joyce at Olivet Lutheran Church	Mailing Committee	Contact Us to Join

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)	701-282-4794
Duane Skramstad (daughter, 20 - car accident; son, 2 - drowning).....	701-437-2507
Lois Gangnes (son, 24 - accident)	701-282-4083
Nancy Teeuwen (daughter, 15 hours - illness)	701-730-0805
Mark & Hella Helfter (miscarriage & son, 35 - accident)	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.