



# The Compassionate Friends

## Fargo/Moorhead Area Chapter

### Supporting Family After a Child Dies

TCF's National Office  
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[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)

F-M Area Chapter  
P.O. Box 10686  
Fargo ND 58106  
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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 12th  
April 9th

#### Dates to Remember

Mom's meeting - 7 pm on March 26th @ Fry'n Pan  
TCF National Conference - Dallas, TX July 10-12, 2015  
TCF FM Chapter's 9th Annual Walk to Remember - August 8, 2015  
TCF Regional Conference - Rochester, MN October 2-4, 2015

#### LOVE GIFTS

John & Kyrene Milligan in memory of their son, Matthew Milligan-Olson  
Jim, Jody & Dana Kutter in memory of their daughter/sister, Michelle Kutter  
George & Patti Pratt in memory of their daughter, Nancy Pratt Coash  
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.

**Holiday Angel not listed in previous newsletters**

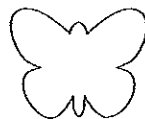
Given by - GARY GILBERTSON  
In Memory of - AUSTIN GILBERTSON

#### OUR CREDO

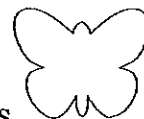
We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope. The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope.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



Our trailer is beginning to look like a butterfly garden! The trailer was purchased in order to transport materials to our chapter activities but it has also helped make our local chapter better known in the Fargo-Moorhead community. Each butterfly decal holds the first and last name of one of our precious children.

Butterflies are still available in all five colors (yellow, pink, red, blue and green). The cost for 1 butterfly is \$25, 3 butterflies are \$65 and 4 butterflies are \$80. If you wish to purchase more than 4, please contact our chapter leader, John Milligan. Butterfly orders should include the child's name and 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](http://www.tcffargomoorhead.org/ourtrailer.html).

"Some say you're too painful to remember. I say you're too precious to forget."

Our Mom's group has been meeting on the 4th Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm at the Fry'n Pan Restaurant, 300 Main Avenue, Fargo. Our gatherings are informal as we come together to talk about our children, books that we've read, recipes we've tried, our jobs and whatever else comes up during the course of the evening. We all have times where the listening heart of another mom or grandma is welcome (and necessary). Please join us this month on Thursday March 26th. For more information please contact Sheryl at 701-540-3287 or sherylev13@msn.com.

## "THE AFTER LOSS CREDO"

I need to talk about my loss  
I may often need to tell you what happened -  
Or to ask WHY it happened.  
Each time I discuss my loss, I am helping myself  
Face the reality of the death of my loved one.  
I need to know that you care about me.  
I need to feel your touch, your hugs  
I need you just to be with me.  
(and I need to be with you.)  
I need to know you believe in me and in my  
ability to get through my grief in my own way  
and in my own time.  
Please don't judge me now  
or think that I am behaving strangely.  
Remember I am grieving.  
I may be in shock.  
I may feel afraid, I may feel deep rage.  
Don't worry if you think I am getting better  
And then suddenly I seem to slip backward.  
Grief makes me behave this way at times.  
And please don't tell me you know how I feel  
or that it's time for me to get on with my life.  
What I need now is time to grieve and to recover.  
Most of all, thank you for being my friend.  
Thank you for your patience.  
Thank you for your caring.  
Thank you for helping, for understanding.  
Thank you for praying for me.  
And remember, in the days or years ahead,  
After your loss, when you need me as  
I have needed you, I will understand!  
And then I will come and be with you.

Author: Barbara Hills LesStrang  
Submitted by Tammy Thompson  
TCF/Northeast Louisiana

## A Name for My Pain

I have given a name to my pain—  
it's called "Longing."  
I long for what was,  
and what might have been  
I long for his touch and smell of sweat;  
I long to hold him one more time.  
I long to look on his beautiful face  
and impress it upon my memories and heart.  
I long to return to the day before  
and protect him from his death.  
I long to take his place,  
so he may live and have sons too.  
I long for time to pass much faster,  
so my longing and pain will lessen.  
Will they?

~ June Williams-Muecke, TCF/Houston West Chapter

## DEPRESSION

Depression is a natural result of grief. It comes to all of us. You may experience all or just some of the following. We hope that recognizing the symptoms and then working on the suggestions for coping will enable you to work through it. It can be done.

### *Symptoms And Solutions*

A key symptom of depression is a feeling of deep pervasive sadness and hopelessness that lasts for longer than two weeks.

Other typical symptoms may be:

- Loss of appetite or overeating
- Insomnia or sleeping much more than usual
- Inability to enjoy anything
- Apathy/restless or anxious behavior
- Preoccupation with thoughts of suicide, or wishing to be dead
- Loss of interest in sex
- Difficulty in concentrating and making decisions
- Poor memory
- Can't cry/ won't cry/ can't stop crying
- Feelings of guilt
- Withdrawal from friends and relatives
- Headaches/ backaches (more frequent illness or colds)
- Self-criticism, pessimism, discouragement
- Neglect of appearance
- Irrational anger
- Alcohol and drug use to "medicate"

### *Some Suggestions For Coping With Depression*

- Acknowledge your depression
- Accept responsibility for alleviating it
- Depression serves a purpose, face it and work through it
- Talk, it could help avoid serious depression
- Redirect energy into constructive channels to help create more pleasure in your life (trips, night out, etc)
- Exercise. It helps you to relax, work off tension and sleep better
- Lean into your pain. Allow yourself to experience the many feelings you get such as anger and guilt. Express them! Scream, hit a pillow, cry!
- Get involved with others, volunteer
- Try deep breathing, it stimulates physical energy
- Good nutrition is very important
- Think pleasant thoughts as hard as that may be, just one moment at a time
- Avoid alcohol as it is a depressant
- Work on self-esteem; do something that you do well; be kind to yourself
- Remember, you do have a choice. Depression is manageable and does not have to ruin your life

If the depression becomes so severe that suggestions such as these do not help you, PLEASE don't hesitate to seek professional help.

From *Support Newsletter POMC, Inc.*  
TCF/Greater Cincinnati Chapter

## FOR THE BOTH OF US

As long as I can  
I will look at this world for both of us.  
As long as I can  
I will laugh with the birds,  
I will sing with the flowers,  
I will pray to the stars,  
for the both of us.  
As long as I can  
I will remember how many things  
on this earth were your joy.  
And I will live as well  
as you would want me to live  
As long as I can.  
Sascha - from Wintersun

### But It Hurts Differently...

There is no way to predict how you will feel. The reactions to grief are not like recipes with different ingredients and certain results. Each person mourns in a different way. You may cry hysterically or you may remain outwardly controlled, showing little emotion. You may lash out in anger against your family and friends, or you may express your gratitude for their concern and dedication. You may be calm one moment --in turmoil the next. Reactions are varied and contradictory. Grief is universal. At the same time it is extremely personal.

HEAL IN YOUR OWN WAY. -- Rabbi Earl Groliman

## THE FIX-IT MAN

Being a "jack of all trades and master of none" all my life, our children thought I could fix anything that they broke. I myself thought that anything that was made could be fixed, and maybe even fixed better than when it was new. Many times one of our children would bring me something that had broken, though they didn't know how it got broken, and asked me if I would attempt to fix whatever it was, and one way or another, I would succeed.

Then one day something broke that I never will be able to fix. One of our children died. This time, the something that broke, I could not fix. There are no tools to bring a dead child back to life.

All I can think and wonder is, how and why did I end up with something I cannot fix? Since that time, it is hard for me to fix something that breaks. It brings to mind the one big thing I will never be able to fix, the death of our child.

Bill Krieglstein, TCF/Fox Valley

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS is the hospital where my broken bones were reset and my wounds cared for and dressed with healing ointment. My fears were eased. Now I have been thrust into the hurting and wounded, and I find the grace is there to touch, to hug, to dress a wound. I want to say "thank you" my compassionate friends.

~ Kathi Barnhill

## THOUGHTS FROM A PARENT WHO LOST AN OLDER CHILD

Perhaps, I had my child longer than you had yours, but thirty-eight years does not seem long. Perhaps, there are more memories to hold in my heart, but I know yours are just as dear to you as mine are to me even if your memories are memories of only one or two days.

Your dreams for your child are gone. So are mine. Never did I imagine that I would have to deal with my child's death instead of him having to deal with mine.

In thirty-eight years there was time to give me a legacy of three grandchildren. This is a very special blessing and one that I do not take for granted.

My child died from a terminal illness that is not one of the "acceptable" diseases. My child died of alcohol and drug addiction. The tools for remission of this disease are placed in the hands of the person who has the disease. Even with help of four treatment centers the recovery was not to be.

One day at a time my recovery is taking place. The pain, after two and one half years has gone to a place where it can be tolerated. My mission is to sustain the relationship with my three granddaughters who now live three thousand miles away from me.

My story and my age may be different from yours, but the bottom line is the same! My child has gone to a place where I cannot go and I miss him so much. The pain of grief is still there, but I am living life one day at a time enriched because my son came through my body into my life.

~Helen Godwin, TCF/Orange Park - Jacksonville Chapter

## PLEASE ASK

Someone asked me about you today.  
It's been so long since anyone has done that.

It felt so good to talk about you,  
To share my memories of you,  
To simply say your name out loud.  
She asked me if I minded talking about  
What happened to you...

Or would it be too painful to speak of it.  
I told her I think of it every day  
And speaking about it

Helps me to release  
The tormented thoughts  
Whirling around in my head.  
She said she never realized the pain  
Would last this long...

She apologized for not asking sooner.  
I told her, "Thanks for asking."

I don't know if it was curiosity  
Or concern that made her ask,

But I told her,  
"Please do it again sometime...  
Soon."

~ Barbara Taylor Hudson, Kansas City Chapter,  
Parents of Murdered Children ~ [www.pomc.com](http://www.pomc.com)

OUR BELOVED CHILDREN REMEMBERED  
 BIRTHDAYS

CHILD		PARENTS
KEVIN MICHAEL FERRIS .....	50 .....	MICHAEL & SHARON FERRIS
MICHAEL L HANSON .....	32 .....	LARRY & MARY HANSON
ALLEN HARRIS.....	56 .....	DELORES HARRIS
DARRYL ROBERT INFELD .....	54 .....	ROBERT & ELEANOR INFELD
JOHN CLAYTON JACKSON JR.....	67 .....	NORMA JACKSON
MICHELLE KUTTER .....	26 .....	JIM & JODY KUTTER
JAMES ALLEN LAMBRECHT .....	50 .....	VICTOR & LORETTA LAMBRECHT
CHRISTOPHER LOE .....	43 .....	MARGARET "MUGS" LOE
ZAYNE WILLIAM MALHEIM OLAFSON.....	6 .....	BILLY OLAFSON & SHANDRA MALHEIM
JAMIE C OLSON.....	37 .....	GLENNIS OLSON
ROY DANA RICHMOND.....	50 .....	THOMAS & AUDREY RICHMOND
TOMMY ROESCH.....	20 .....	DAVID & LINDA ROESCH
DAVID J VOLK.....	53 .....	JACK & JUNE VOLK
ANGELA MARIE WENTZ.....	44 .....	DAVID WENTZ
PATRICK DAVID WILKIE .....	28 .....	DAVID & SHAVONNE WILKIE

ANNIVERSARIES

CHILD		PARENTS
NANCY PRATT COASH.....	11 .....	GEORGE & PATTI PRATT
KEEGAN M DERHEIM .....	8 .....	RICK & TAMMY DERHEIM
KEVIN MICHAEL FERRIS .....	2 .....	MICHAEL & SHARON FERRIS
LEE A HALVORSON.....	6 .....	DOREEN HALVORSON
DAVID MICHAEL HELFTER.....	11 .....	MARK & HELLA HELFTER
DARRYL ROBERT INFELD .....	6 .....	ROBERT & ELEANOR INFELD
KAREN LAUMAN .....	3 .....	FRANK LAUMAN
SARAH DEWITZ MARTINSEN .....	5 .....	DEB DEWITZ
MATTHEW MILLIGAN-OLSON.....	15 .....	JOHN & KYLENE MILLIGAN
JARAD NILLES.....	3 .....	RALPH & CAROLYN NILLES
ZAYNE WILLIAM MALHEIM OLAFSON.....	6 .....	BILLY OLAFSON & SHANDRA MALHEIM
GABRIEL "GABE" THOMPSON .....	12 .....	FRANK & JANE THOMPSON

**In March**

The year moves on.  
 Between the weeks and days are spaces filled  
 with more than only time...  
 Those minutes, moments,  
 when your life stands still and aches in memory...  
 And part of you needs to endure the dark,  
 because it means to have love again.  
 And part of you prays for forgiveness,  
 because your mind may break, remembering.  
 Between the weeks and days  
 are spaces filled with more than only time...

~ Sascha Wagner, TCF/Des Moines, IA

## SIBLING PAGE

### Memories of my brother

Why is it so very hard  
Accepting you are gone;  
I guess the thought is unbearable  
And I am not that strong.  
I am too afraid to face the truth  
And scared to feel the pain,  
Of never seeing your sweet face  
Or hearing your voice again.  
Sometimes I see you in my dreams  
And picture you still here, till I awaken dreadfully  
To watch you disappear.  
You were always happy and carefree,  
And I don't understand  
How you can seem so real to me,  
As your grasp slips from my hand.  
The sixteen years of life you had  
Somehow do not compare,  
To the tragic, senseless death you faced  
And the cross you had to bear.  
I try to think of pleasant times  
And childhood memories,  
But guilt and sorrow haunt my soul  
And I cannot break free.  
I am sorry for the times we fought  
And for treating you so badly.  
I am sorry for ignoring you  
And wasting the time we had.  
You were and are my brother still.  
When you took your last breath,  
A part of me went on with you  
And I shall mourn your death.  
~ Jennifer, TCF/Ellicott City, MD

### DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know:

You need to rip up sheets to make a kite that flies.  
That you cannot build a fort without a tree with Y's.  
That matchbox cars run better when they are full of paint.  
Or, if you hold your breath too long, you probably will faint.

Did you know:

A baseball bat makes a terrific gun.  
And, yes, an egg can really fry when left out in the sun.  
And cardboard boxes seem to make the most terrific trains.  
And you can swim in puddles after gentle summer rains.

Did you know:

That baseball cards clipped upon your bike will make the awful clicking noise that parents never like.  
A crab trap can be used to catch the most exquisite birds.  
And pig Latin serves to provide a private world of words.  
And did you know my brothers?  
They died a few years back.  
They taught me all these marvelous things  
That sometimes sisters lack.

Kathi Guthrie, TCF/Cape May County, NJ

### THE DAY THE MUSIC DIED

On February 3, 1959, parents would lose children, siblings would lose brothers and grandchildren would die. This was the day a plane crash took the lives of singers J.P. Richardson (The Big Bopper), 28, Buddy Holly, 22 and Ritchie Valens, 17. Since all three were so prominent at the time, February 3, 1959, became known as "The Day The Music Died."

At the time of his death Ritchie Valens was a young man with superstar potential who, even though was still in his first year as a recording artist, had already made a name for himself in the music industry.

Growing up music would become a large part of my twin brother Alan's life. His interest in "The Wizard of Oz" would lead to an admiration of Judy Garland and in time Liza Minelli. He had seen many of Liza's concerts often sending her mail-grams of well wishes much to my mother's disapproval. It was her fear that he would get arrested for harassment. We would travel often to other concerts as well including Billy Joel, Bruce Springsteen, Diana Ross, Whitney Houston, Kenny G and even Yanni.

Alan's interest in music and the arts began in high school with the artistic productions. After graduation from Temple University he would become entrenched in the Philadelphia cultural scene. Much of his free time was spent volunteering for arts, dance and theatre organizations. His name would be listed in the credits of many artistic productions. He, like Ritchie Valens, was just starting to realize his dreams. Then came June 25, 1992. Alan had died of an AIDS-related brain tumor that had started not more than two months earlier. This was-for me-the day the music died.

Don McLean immortalized the February 1959 tragedy with his 1972 hit "American Pie", a song that took Alan and I years to understand and memorize. I would mark my personal tragedy by constantly changing the radio station. So much that I thought I would break the buttons. A break-up song would remind me too much of my loss. While in a friend's car I had him turn off the radio rather than risk crying.

Then one day a few years later, upon leaving the cemetery, on the radio I heard Whitney Houston's "The Greatest Love of All". Alan and I had recorded an awful rendition at a Hershey, PA amusement park recording studio. We agreed that no one else would hear the dreadful outcome. I switched stations twice only to hear the song two more times. It was my reflection that Alan was telling me to enjoy the music once again. To take pleasure in life and to do what we enjoyed doing together. I hear Alan's voice saying the words inscribed on Ritchie Valens grave "Come On, Let's Go."

Daniel Yoffee, TCF Board of Directors Sibling Representative. Reprinted from We Need Not Walk Alone (Summer 2003)

The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt within the heart.

~ Helen Keller

## Choosing Life

"It will never be the same. Never." As a bereaved parent, you have often heard or said these words to express grief's profound feelings of sorrow and disorientation. Your life has suddenly taken an unexpected course that appears both uncharted and endless. Bewildered, you vainly search for pathways back to your former life, until you confront the reality that there is no way back. Your child is dead forever. It is then that you may say, "...never the same."

This is the aspect of grief that Simon Stephens calls "The Valley of the Shadow." It is that very long time between the death of your child and your reinvestment in life. *Between*. It is not supposed to be a permanent resting place. Although some people do take up residence in the valley, it is a transition from the death of your child to life with renewed purpose.

The key to this transition is yourself. You must choose between life and the valley. You and only you can decide. And you must make that decision again and again, each day.

Giving in to the hopelessness of the valley is tempting. Choosing to move on toward life requires a great deal of work. You must struggle with the pain of grief in order to resolve it. It is a daily struggle full of tears, anger, guilt and self-doubt, but it is the only alternative to surrendering yourself to the valley.

Little by little you choose to move on. Little by little you progress toward the other side of the valley. It takes a very long time, far longer than your friends or relatives suspected. Far longer than you had believed – even prayed – that it would be. When one day you find yourself able to do more than choose merely to live but also how to live, you will know you are leaving the valley of the shadow. There will still be more work to do, more struggle and choosing. The valley, however, stretches behind rather than in front of you.

When you have resolved your grief by reinvesting in life, you will be able to realize that nothing is ever "the same." Life is change. We would not have it be otherwise, for that is the valley of the shadow. Change has the promise of beginning and the excitement of discovery.

Life is never the same. Life is change. Choose life!

~ Marcia F. Alig, TCF/Mercer Area Chapter, New Jersey

## Beyond Surviving: "Twenty Five Commandments"

Hundreds of books have been written about loss and grief. Few have addressed the aftermath of suicide for survivors. Here again, there are no answers; only suggestions from those who have lived through and beyond the event. I've compiled their thoughts.

1. Know you can survive. You may not think so, but you can.
2. Struggle with "why" it happened until you no longer need to know "why," or until you are satisfied with partial answers.
3. Know you may feel overwhelmed by the intensity of your feelings, but all your feelings are normal.
4. Anger, guilt, confusion, forgetfulness are common responses. You are not crazy – you are in mourning.
5. Be aware you may feel appropriate anger at the person, at the world, at God, at yourself.
6. You may feel guilty for what you think you did or did not do.
7. Having suicidal thoughts is common. It does not mean that you will have to act on these thoughts.
8. Remember to take one day at a time.
9. Find a good listener with whom to share. Call someone if you need to talk.
10. Don't be afraid to cry. Tears are healing.
11. Give yourself time to heal.
12. Remember, the choice was not yours. No one is the sole influence in another's life.
13. Expect setbacks. Don't panic if emotions return like a tidal wave. You may only be experiencing a remnant of grief; an unfinished piece.
14. Try to put off major decisions.
15. Give yourself permission to get professional help.
16. Be aware of the pain of your family and friends.
17. Be patient with yourself and with others who may not understand.
18. Set your own limits and learn to say no.
19. Steer clear of people who want to tell you what or how to feel.
20. Know that there are support groups that can be helpful, such as The Compassionate Friends, or Survivors of Suicide groups. If not, ask a professional to help start one.
21. Call on your personal faith to help you through.
22. It is common to experience physical reactions to your grief, i.e., headaches, loss of appetite, inability to sleep, etc.
23. The willingness to laugh with others and at yourself is healing.
24. Wear out your questions, anger, guilt, or other feelings until you can let them go.
25. Know that you will never be the same again, but you can survive and go beyond just surviving.

Iris Bolton, author of *My Son, My Son*

**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)

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Please check out our Chapter website's page for 'Our Beloved Children' ([www.teffargomoorhead.org/ourchildren.html](http://www.teffargomoorhead.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 [tcf1313@hotmail.com](mailto:tcf1313@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.

### ***SAYING GOODBYE***

Car accidents claim the lives of many teenagers each year. Getting the call late at night saying, "There has been an accident", is probably one of the greatest fears of having a teenager of driving age.

For parents who do live through the nightmare of getting a late night call saying there has been an accident, the next greatest heartache is not having the chance to say goodbye. It is so difficult to move forward when there is that one painful obstacle. There was no farewell. There was no opportunity to say goodbye.

What is a parent to do? How do you move forward in grief when there was no goodbye? At some point in the grieving process, it is a good idea to find a way to say the goodbye you never had the opportunity to express to your teenager. A goodbye ritual is not only appropriate, but also very healing. There are several ways of doing this, and you should choose the one that gives you, the parent, the most comfort.

Many parents find it quite healing to write their deceased child a goodbye letter. In this letter, state all of the things you would have said had you known this was your last time to talk with your child. Say how much you love your son or daughter. Talk about a few of those extra special moments you experienced together as a family. State the things in your letter that you feel so deeply in your heart.

This letter writing can be a difficult thing to do; it might take several weeks of trying to accomplish this one very important task. But, the benefits far outweigh the effort put into this one exercise of finding a way to say goodbye.

After the letter is written, many parents find great comfort in visiting the graveside and reading the letter aloud. "Parents may even talk to the child as they visit the cemetery, speaking words that were left unsaid. There is great healing in this." (Silent Grief, Chapter 5)

If you feel comfortable enough, bring other close family members of the child with you, each reading personal words of love. Then, create a ritual that will be remembered in a healing way. Place the letters in plastic and cover them with beautiful flowers. Perhaps release a balloon in honor of a celebration of the life your child had with you. Be creative, and do what feels right for you to do, as your special way of saying a final goodbye.

Having the opportunity to say goodbye to your child is important. It gives you that special last time that you needed to say all of the things that you feel. It is a way of accepting the reality of your child's death. This time of saying goodbye is also a way of making amends for any harsh words you might have spoken to your child.

As you say this final goodbye, you will begin to feel the release of many emotions. You can expect tears, and an overwhelming sense of comfort as you begin to let go. This act of saying goodbye can be one of the most healing steps forward in your long, painful journey of grief.

~ by Clara Hinton, Nov 05, 2001 [www.silentgrief.com](http://www.silentgrief.com)

"Strange is our situation here upon earth. Each of us comes for a short visit, not knowing why, yet sometimes seeming to a divine purpose. From the standpoint of daily life, however, there is one thing we do know: That we are here for the sake of others...for the countless unknown souls with whose fate we are connected by a bond of sympathy. Many times a day, I realize how much my outer and inner life is built upon the labors of people, both living and dead, and how earnestly I must exert myself in order to give in return as much as I have received." ~ Albert Einstein

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

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**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..... 701-491-0364	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) ..... 701-235-9622

Love gifts must be received by the 15<sup>th</sup> 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.