



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

FARGO/MOORHEAD AREA CHAPTER

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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F-M Area Chapter
P.O. Box 10686
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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
May 9th
June 13th

Meeting Subjects:

June - Balloon Release, everyone is welcome
August - Guest speaker Marshall Olson

Dates to Remember in 2013

National Conference July 5-7
Boston, MA
July 20, 2013-Fargo Chapter's 7th Annual WALK TO REMEMBER

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.

"Friends are those rare people who ask how we are and then wait to hear the answer."

~ Ed Cunningham,
TCF/Savannah, GA

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 May 23, 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 sherylc13@msn.com. Please join us!

A Mother's Love

*I need no pictures to
Remember your warm smile;
the lines of your face are
embedded in my memory
of you.*

*I gave you life in one second
of pain, for which you
returned 13 years of
yourself...sometimes quiet,
sometimes noisy, but always
thoughtful.*

*Sometimes I hear a voice
that sounds like you, and I
pause.*

*That pang of hurt stems from
an empty spot you left in my
life.*

*I carried you in my womb,
then later in my arms, but
I will carry you in my heart
forever.*

Joy Morning, TCF-Phoenix, AZ

A Message for Mother's Day

I remember the first Mother's Day I faced after losing our infant daughter, Dylan Rose. It seemed like the most painful day imaginable, with the reminder of the role of motherhood lost to me.

As we learn to redefine ourselves after the death of a child, I think it is important to learn to nurture ourselves. We can only expect to find a certain amount of help from external sources, and in time, need to develop our own private internal strength.

Your "homework" for this Mother's Day for Compassionate Friends is to think of something meaningful to do for yourself on this day (or in the near future). Buy yourself a flower or an outdoor plant, a book, music, or spend some time with a good listener to talk to. You're entitled to have as good of a day as possible!

By my helping I will be helped. If I accept your anger then my anger is accepted. By my caring I am cared for. When I listen I will be listened to. And all these things mean on the lonely road of grief I will not be alone. My recovery will be a little gentler, and my child will not be forgotten because the memory of him can be shared with you who understand how I feel --

My special Compassionate Friends

~ Shirley Egan, TCF/New South Wales, Australia

Let go of the mistaken idea that time heals. It isn't time that heals, it's the grief work you do while the clock ticks away that heals.

~ Margaret Gerner, TCF/Payson, AZ newsletter, Aug 2007

MOST PEOPLE WHO SUFFER A LOSS EXPERIENCE ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- * Feel tightness in the throat or heaviness in the chest.
- * Have an empty feeling in their stomach and lose their appetite.
- * Feel guilty at times and angry at other times.
- * Feel restless and look for activity but find it difficult to concentrate.
- * Sense the loved one's presence, as in finding themselves expecting the person to walk in the door at the usual time, hearing their voice, or seeing their face.
- * Wander aimlessly, forget, and don't finish things they have started.
- * Have difficulty sleeping; dream of their loved one.
- * Experience an intense preoccupation with the life of the deceased.
- * Assume mannerisms or traits of their loved one.
- * Feel guilty or angry over things that happened or didn't happen in the relationship with the deceased.
- * Feel their mood change over the slightest things.
- * Cry at unexpected times.

All of these are natural and normal grief responses. It is important to cry and talk with people when you need to do so. By learning about the process of grief and learning also to express our feelings concerning our experience, we are helped to arrive at a healthy readjustment of our lives and a reinvestment of our emotional energy.

Irma Escue - Hospice Bereavement Team /Boulder, CO

MEMORIES

When you need to . . .

Reach deep inside and take one of your precious memories,

Wipe away the cobwebs, lay it out in front of you and let the sunshine and the sounds engulf you.

Revel in the experience of it . . .

Re-live each precious moment, be overwhelmed by them

And taste the wonderful, sweet tears that are their gift.

When your needs have been almost satisfied,

Pause for one more second,

Then gently fold it back up, give it a big hug and a tender kiss

And return the treasure to where you found it . . .

Then to make the experience complete,

Find someone special and share the feelings with them

For surely something as wonderful as this is meant to be shared!

Don't be afraid of using them - that's what memories are for!

You will never lose them,

for as certain as the sun will rise tomorrow,

Love, once attained, is never lost.

~Steve Channing TCF/Winnipeg, MB Canada

OUR BELOVED CHILDREN REMEMBERED



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

LOVE GIFTS

Neil & Kathleen Prochnow in memory of their son, Reed Joel Prochnow
Galen & Mary Schroeder in memory of their son, Matthew Thibedeau
Joan & Steven Halland in memory of son, Cole Halland
Lyle, Tammy, Justin, Stacy, Jaime, Hunter, & Jersey Helgeson & Jordyn McCloud in memory of son/brother, Jared Helgeson
Sherry Lassel in memory of daughter, Jayme Lassel
Dean & Jo Allmendinger in memory of son, Luke Allmendinger
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.

AFTER THE STORM COMES THE RAINBOW

Happiness does not depend on what happens outside of you, but rather on what happens inside of you. The spirit in which you meet the problems of life measures it. The master secret of happiness is to meet the challenge of each new day in remember to look for the rainbows as assurance God is with us through the storms of life.

SIBLING PAGE

What Siblings Think About

At a Pennsylvania chapter meeting, the brothers and sisters explored their feeling about a number of issues. Those siblings were kind enough to record their feelings on paper with others

I would like my parents to know....

That I am OK and would like to talk to them about my brother or sister whenever they feel like it
That I hurt too and loved my brother/sister.
That my love for my sibling will never go away.
How special my parents are and how proud I am of their love.
It's all right if they want to talk to me. I will listen and be sad with them
That they are not at fault.
That it's OK to cry together and that I'm there for them.
That I'll never forget my sibling, the good times and the hard ones.

I would like my father to know....

It helps to talk.
That if anything happened to him, I would feel the same way.
He is not alone and I want to laugh and cry with him again.
That his child knew that he loved him/her.
That it's OK to talk about my brother/sister when I am around.
I do cry, not a lot, but I do cry.

I would like my mother to know....

I love her.
It's OK to cry and I am there for her to talk to
That I will always love her.
She has been my example of giving love.
That my sibling is at peace with God
It's OK to talk about the past.
I cry. I knew my sibling in a different way. I think about those times and smile through the tears.

I would like my dead brother/sister to know....

We miss you.
That I love you and miss you and need you in my life.
That we are well, sharing all we have, and waiting to be with you again.
It's sad around here, but we remember you.
That we all love and miss you very, very much
That your life won't be forgotten.
That I try to be like you. I am in many ways.
One thing I'd like to say is that I go into your room for the memories.

The hardest part of losing my brother/sister is....

Having such a hole in our family.
Believing it actually happened and that I'll never see or talk to him/her again.
I will never have a sibling to talk to.
Not being able to look into your eyes, hug you and laugh with you
That I never told you personally that I loved you - it was always assumed.
Losing my best friend.
Not having you there to complain at me for the things I

do.

I like to remember my sister/brother by....

Looking at pictures.
Thinking of you when you would goof off with my children.
Going to the grave.
Playing my music loud, singing like you and laughing I listen to your favorite albums.
Talking about him and looking at his truck in the driveway.

I regret.....

Nothing
All the arguments we had and not having the chance to say good-bye.
Fighting with my brother/sister.
Not hearing your music play and the telephone busy.
Not sharing enough time with you.
Not telling you how much I loved you.
Not yelling at or hugging you one more time.
Not knowing when you were going to die.
Hugging you because you were the "big brother/sister."
Not spending time with you.
Being a massive pest.

The Sibling Group TCF, Lehigh Valley, PA

KITE MEMORIES

Brushed golden by the sun, a kite flies
free above a greening meadow.
Drifting lazily until it turns to catch the
motion of a flock of trumpeting geese
homeward bound.

Fragrance of early spring flowers
makes me giddy with the thought that
you too fly unfettered, to drift or chase
dreams beyond imagination,
unrestrained by life or expectations.
Now I cherish each kite that rises to
the wind, because it fills me with
memories of your gifts for love but -
only sometimes - I wonder whether
you remember, too.

~ Marchia Alig, TCF/Mercer Area Chapter, NJ

INCONGRUITIES

Thoughts of you can bring a smile to my face . . .
and tears to my eyes.
Memories of you tug at my heart
filling it with love . . . and longing.
I feel so thankful for having had you in my life . . .
and yet so sad that you are gone.
I'm comforted by the sense of your presence
surrounding me at all times . . .
while loneliness overwhelms me.
My life is filled with incongruities;
they assure me I am healing . . .
and that I never will.

~ Gayle Block, TCF/Baytown, Texas

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)

Mother's Day...Father's Day... Graduations...Proms

Spring comes – and with it comes the uneasy awareness of difficult days ahead. For those who are still going through all the “firsts” without your child, we share with you some special ways other parents have coped and managed.

Mother's Day...Father's Day...graduations...vacations... these are special family times which often catch us unaware and bring unexpected tears and painful memories of young lives cut short. It does get better! And you can make these special days better with some planning and with encouragement from those who have already been there.

Whatever the “special day” that lies ahead for your family, try to focus on doing something meaningful and tangible in remembrance of your child. Share as a family thoughts and suggestions about planting a tree or starting a rose garden, donating a book to the library or school, putting flowers on the altar, lighting a special candle or taking that long talked-of vacation. Tears and moments of sadness are okay, for they are expressions of love.

Remember:

- Take one day at a time.
- Keep things simple by playing down the holidays and special days, while they are so painful.
- Change your routine from past years.
- Make plans to be “busy” during at least part of the day (go out to lunch or to a movie, or visit friends)
- Give your older children some “space.” They not only feel your extreme sadness at these times; they also have their own feelings to deal with.
- The anticipation is often worse than the day itself!

From Fox Valley TCF Chapter, Aurora, Illinois

THE TRUE MEANING OF MOTHER'S DAY

Mother's Day comes once a year.
That surely is a shame.
For we should recognize her all year
and honor her with fame.
She's the one who stands so proud.
Sharing the love she gives.
Taking no credit for all that she does.
It's for her children she lives.
Now, we see persons all around us.
Moms who have lost their own.
But their Mom's love shines through;
Keeping them from being alone.
We also see Moms who have lost a child;
Oh what a pain it must be for those.
They are going to need a hug from you ...
Oh share one as your love flows.
Yes, this day is a special recognition for Moms.
Make sure to leave no one out.
For the love, honor and support she gives ...
Oh, that is what Mother's Day is all about.

~ Kaye Des'Ormeaux, Copyright 2003

Dedicated to all Moms and Mums On Mother's Day

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	Secretary-Treasurer	Sheryl Cvijanovich 701-235-8158
Librarian		Initial Contact	Kylene Milligan 701-491-0364
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)	701-491-0364
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.