



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
FARGO/MOORHEAD AREA CHAPTER
 Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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 September 2012

Volume 29 Number 9

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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 September 13th October 11th

Dates to Remember in 2012
 December 9th - Worldwide
 Candle Lighting 7 pm

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
 Paul, Kara, Ashley & Kyle Bailey in memory of their son/brother, Nick Bailey
 Deborah Fraser in memory of her son, Cody Conner
 Karen Boyes in memory of her daughter, Kelly Boyes
 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.

“There is a light in the world, a healing spirit, more powerful than any darkness we may encounter. We sometimes lose sight of this force, when there is so much suffering and too much pain. Then suddenly, the spirit will emerge through the lives of ordinary people who care and answer in extraordinary ways.

~ Mother Theresa

Where to Buy Grief Books

Looking for a particular grief book? Look no further than Centering Corporation, the official recommended grief resource center of The Compassionate Friends. With the largest selection of grief related resources in the United States, Centering Corporation will probably have just about anything you're looking for-or they'll be able to tell you where to find it.

Call Centering Corporation for a catalog at 402-553-1200 or visit their website at www.centering.org. When ordering, be sure to mention you are with The Compassionate Friends and all shipping charges will be waived.

Endowment

Hope gives us vision for regaining
the tenderness of memories.
Hope carries us through
to survival and healing.

Hope offers us courage
for acceptance and overcoming.
Hope gives us
new spirit and new laughter.

Hope is among the greatest gifts
to be found in time of sorrow.
But hope cannot restore on earth
what is lost to death.
Hope can only go forward
and make us new.
Give space to hope in your life.

~ Sascha Wagner

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From LARGO, Fall 2001

THE TOP TEN GIFTS

HUGS....to someone who is lonely

LOVE....to someone who has nothing to give in
return

PATIENCE....to someone who is struggling with
life.

FREEDOM....to someone drifting in a sea of
anxiety

UNDERSTANDING....to someone who is confused

TOLERANCE....to someone who doesn't see things
as you do

KINDNESS...to someone in pain

FORGIVENESS....to someone you feel has harmed
you

SOFTNESS....to someone who has not yet removed
his hard shell.

Lifted with Love from the TCF Fox Valley
Newsletter

The Seven "T"'s of Grief

1. **Truth:** Tell it, regardless of how terrible the facts may be and how hard it is to talk about. Don't hide the truth about how you lost the person you loved. This generally applies to all kinds of tragedy.
2. **Trust:** Allow it. Don't let the painful circumstances surrounding the death of your child prevent you from talking with friends about your loss. It's very important to find people to trust to whom we can talk about what's going on in our lives.
3. **Therapy:** Which some completely believe in—not only traditional therapy of the talking kind, but also body therapy, massage, art therapy, music therapy, physical therapy, which can be therapy without even having the tag on it. Because loss can be a physical shock as well as a mental and emotional shock.
4. **Treasure:** Hold on. Don't stop treasuring your child.
5. **Thrive:** Keep looking at life with your eyes wide open. Don't give in to the temptation to use alcohol or other addictive substances to blunt or blur your sadness. Tremendous loss is also the opportunity for a fill in your life. It could be learning compassion for other people. It could be learning compassion for yourself.
6. **Treat:** nurture yourself. Give yourself the gift of kind understanding, and taking care of ourselves when we're in a fragile circumstance and when we have miles to go, because these things don't end in a week. They stay with us.
7. **Transcend:** The work always reminds me of spring because the earth transcends from the apparently dead circumstances. The spring comes and the sun comes and the flowers start to bloom, and the world really transcends death.

AUTUMN

What a strange time is autumn.

More than a season,

Autumn can be like a mood
Softness and warmth and abundance
Drift from the sky like a smile.

And you remember the seasons
Before the children died.

They do seem faraway sometimes,

Those seasons, now.

But not the children -
they are always here

In this strange time, this autumn,

When the softness

And the warmth

And the abundance

Of unseen children

Drift from the sky like a smile.

~ Sascha Wagner, TCF/Des Moines, Iowa

OUR BELOVED CHILDREN REMEMBERED



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



SIBLING PAGE

Beloved Brother: Losing You is Losing Me

Dearest Justin,
To lose a sibling is to lose oneself,
For a part of me is gone...
And now I'm left to reminisce
As now I try to carry on.
The thought of you not being here
Has torn my world apart...
Yet every day I feel you near;
Is a blessing to my heart.
Your memory comforts me today
In ways I wish you knew...
But tears are falling from the pain
That comes from losing you.
I see your face in the morning sun
And in the moon at night...
I wonder how you're feeling now,
I pray that you're alright.
And one day when my time has
come
To soar with eagles' wings...
We will be joined forevermore.
I Love You Forever & Always.

~ Charlie Clakley, TCF/Tyler, TX

The Room Across The Hall

The room across the hall is dark and empty now. All of the things that once filled it have been removed somehow. The clothes that were once in the closet have all been given away. The occupant won't be needing them, for he died in the month of May.

The room across the hall was filled with a young man's things; gun, and knives, and video games and rocks from any springs. All of these have been locked away inside a small square chest. Just like the room's occupant, they have been laid to rest.

The room across the hall aroused feeling such as pain. The fact that it is Empty can make tears fall like rain. I cry because the occupant was very much like me. The occupant was my brother, whom now I cannot see.

The room across the hall belonged to a normal boy. He could bring you heartache and lots of sorrow, but he could also bring you joy. He was not another Socrates, for he wasn't quite that clever. But the memories he left me will be with me forever.

~ Melissa B., TCF/Atlanta, GA

SILENT GRIEF

I smile but remain silent.
Do you not feel the ache
That never leaves my heart?
Can you not see the faraway look in my eyes,
The tear that falls beneath the lowered lash?
I look but do not see
The goings-on around me;
And time goes on,
But I am standing still --
Suspended in a moment of time.
One year has passed.
~ Cathryn Haywood Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada

I Am Your Sister and Always

"I am your sister and always will be." That's how Susie signed her cards to me. After a while, she shortened it to, "I am..." And of course I knew the rest of it. Susie was two and one-half years younger than I. She was alive one evening talking on the phone to Mom about the Oscars and to Dad about moving. The next day she was found. Whatever it was--it ended her life and changed mine forever.

There was a wonderful side of my sister that I didn't pay enough attention to. She was a kind and loving person, always ready to shelter lost animals and lost souls. When she was in a good mood, her smiles warmed my heart. Yet I spent most of my life wishing that things were different: wishing that she thought more of herself, wishing that she would take my advice, wishing that she were happier, wishing that we could accept each other.

Now, for two years. I've done nothing but wish she were here so we could have another chance to work at our relationship. Now, I wish that I had been able to give her my unconditional love & support. (She needed it and deserved it.) Now, I wish that I could have been with her that night so she would not have been alone. Now, I wish that I would have held her in my arms and told her how very much I loved her. Because, Susie, I am your sister and always will be.

~ Michele Walters, TCF/Baltimore, MD

Memories Of Your Face

I woke this morning
Finding everything in a haze
Wiping tears from my eyes
I saw your smiling face.
I reached out and touched you
Yet all I could feel was pain
You felt nothing
From your life within a frame.
I spoke, receiving no reply
I told you that I loved you
I asked you
Why?
I'll never have another
No one to take your place
All I have, little brother, are memories
And the picture of your face.

~ Lisa Wahnsey, TCF/Sarasota, FL

"When we honestly ask ourselves which person in our lives meant the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving advice, solutions, or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a warm and tender hand. The friend who can be silent with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not knowing, not curing, not healing and face with us the reality of our powerlessness, that is a friend who cares."

~ Henri Nouwen

THE LITTLE THINGS

Often even the simple tasks of daily living seem to drain every ounce of one's energy. Remember going to the grocery store even months after your child's death and the feelings you had as you passed up his or her favorite cereal? Or watching another child (the same age as yours was) in a restaurant and trying to swallow your food...you probably didn't even taste it. Or hearing a certain song in public and fighting back the tears?

Sometimes even getting through the day in your own home makes you feel like you've run a marathon and leaves you in worse shape. You probably never dreamed that doing the family laundry could make you cry or that getting a piece of mail in your child's name could suck your breath away.

Even the best of friends and families can't know the strength you must summon day after day. We shouldn't expect them to understand completely, but it does get lonely. Perhaps this quote puts it into a nutshell:

One sad thing about this world is that the acts that take the most out of you are usually the ones that other people will never know about.

~ Anne Tyler, TCF/Sacramento Valley, CA

Empty Places

I drove the old way yesterday.
It'd been a while, you see.
And there, without a warning,
the pain washed over me.

I drove the old way yesterday
and sadness came on strong,
taken back by so much feeling,
since you've been gone so long.

Places seem to lie in wait
to summon up the tears,
to say remember yesterday,
those days when you were here.

Places where you laughed and played
are places where I cry.
These places hold the memories
that will live as long as I.

~ Genesse Gentry, TCF/Marin Cnty CA

Grief Is Not...

Grief is not a mountain to be climbed,
with the strong reaching the summit
long before the week.

Grief is not an athletic event,
with stop watches timing our progress.

Grief is a walk through loss and pain
with no competition and no time trials.

Author unknown



LOGIC VERSUS EMOTION

I was thinking recently about how our emotions play such a strong part in how we feel. After my daughter's death (08-13-2002), a few people pointed out to me that I shouldn't feel guilty about something I couldn't change. Their advice was logical. But humans aren't like Mr. Spock on Star Trek. You remember that Mr. Spock would frequently chide Captain Kirk for doing something illogical, something based on his feelings.

No, we humans are filled with emotional feelings. It's one of the things that separates us from animals. Even though someone might tell me not to linger in sadness or to feel guilty about my daughter's death because it wouldn't change what happened, I still had both feelings. Even though my logic might tell me to shrug off these unpleasant feelings, I couldn't, at least not for some time. And that's the point. Clear thinking, logical human beings are still subject to powerful emotions, even though those emotions will seem illogical to some people.

Do understand that strong feelings of sadness, loss, and guilt are normal after the death of a child, and at some point logic will allow those feelings to lessen. As our logical minds begin to prevail, we may seek positive ways to remember our child (scholarship funds, charitable donations, etc.) and we may seek positive ways of changing ourselves into better people. At this point our logical minds will push us in a constructive direction and we will feel better. So don't worry excessively about those strong, emotional feelings after the death of your child they're perfectly "logical".

~ David Haddock

SEND BACK THE NOISE

It's way too quiet here
Since our Son is not around.
I'd pay any price again to hear the sound
Of a basketball rhythmically
hitting the ground;
Or to answer the question,
"Dad, can you make this shot?"
"Pass the ballprobably not!"
His bedroom looks more like a
sporting goods store,
But those balls, gloves, and cleats
aren't used anymore.
Soccer, basketball, football,. lacrosse,
Just one more game, win, tie or a loss.
I'd buy one more ticket, regardless of cost.
It's too quiet around here
Things just aren't the same.
I'd settle for the sound of a video game.
I know it's not possible to get back our boys...
So, please God,
Could you just send back the noise?

~ Peter Graves, TCF/San Diego, CA



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OF THE F-M AREA
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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 701-282-4794	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.