



The Compassionate Friends

Fargo/Moorhead Area Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, we have decided for the safety of our members to cancel chapter meetings and Mom meetings until further notice.

We are hoping to have Zoom meetings in February and March. Please monitor our website and our Facebook page for updates.

LOVE GIFTS

Fran Leingang in memory of her daughter, Cleo C Jorgensen
Rosella Mickelson in memory of her son, Gregory Mickelson
Glen & Lois Kirk in memory of their son, Douglas Kirk
Larry & Lois Gangnes in memory of their son, Brent M Gangnes
Virgil & Luella Schlueter in memory of their daughter Pamela Jo Erickson
Pontoppidan Lutheran Church Foundation
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.

"It is has been said, time heals all wounds. I do not agree. The wounds remain. In time, the mind, protecting its sanity, covers them with scar tissue and the pain lessens. But it is never gone."

~ Rose Kennedy

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

MAY I GRIEVE?

In the daytime, I walk and work, and all;
But at home, in the evening, I stumble and fall.
The office says, "Function, smile and get control."
But at home I can grieve to cleanse my soul.
Must I be two people for the rest of my life?
If I could be just one person for more than one day,
My freedom to grieve would help light the way.
But society tells me not to be sad,
They say, "She's at peace now
and you should be glad."

When grieving the loss of a child is perceived,
How much easier it is for we the bereaved.

~ Susanne Demars, TCF/Hingham, MA

Our Children Did Exist

I've lost two children, I hear myself say,
And the person I'm talking to just turns away.
Now why did I tell them, I don't understand.
It wasn't for sympathy or to get a helping hand.
just wanted them to know we've lost something dear,
I want them to know that our children were here.
They left something behind which no one can see. They made just two people into a family.

So, if I've upset you, I'm sorry as can be. You'll have to forgive me, I could not resist.
I just wanted you to know that our children did exist.

~ Betty Schreiber, TCF/Ashtabula, OH

My own dearest family,
Please don't continue to grieve
I seldom knew peace or contentment on earth
Though I struggled through life to find these.

My heart was so heavy, my soul so tormented
My mind was too weary to flow
My spirit was burdened with trouble and confusion
I felt it was time for me to go.

To my Heavenly Father, his arms to enfold me
To the comfort that I now know
To the golden serenity that forever engulfs me
To His love that is calm to my soul.

If you can pause in shedding your tears
You would realize my happiness is true
You would know how greatly I love you
And I wait patiently to share it with you.

~ Randie Haake, TCF/Fargo, ND
In memory of her son Wade, 1976 - 2009

HEALING ANGELS

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

Bereavement Magazine - January/February 2003
888-604-4673

STRENGTH

In the early days of my grief, a tear would well up in my eyes, a lump would form in my throat, but you would not know—I would hide it, I am strong.

In the middle days of my grief, I would look ahead and see that wall that I had attempted to go around as an ever-present reminder of a wall yet unscaled. Yet I did not attempt to scale it for the strong will survive—and I am strong.

In the later years of my grief, I learned to climb over that wall—step by step—remembering, crying, grieving, and the tears flowed steadily as I painstakingly went over. The way was long, but I did make it.

Near the resolution of my grief, a tear will well up in my eyes, a lump will form in my throat, but I will let that tear fall—and you will see it. Through it you will see that I still hurt and I care, for I am strong.

~ Terry Jago, TCF/Regina, Canada

FEBRUARY -- A TIME FOR CLEANING

I got very energetic one day in February and decided to do some cleaning. I started with Bryan's room, which was still cluttered with Christmas decorations that never quite made it to the attic, and his Christmas tree from the cemetery. (So, I'm a little behind schedule.) I dug into the mess, hauling box after box into the attic. On one trip down the ladder, I stopped and looked around Bryan's room. I wondered for a moment if it was "time" to put away some of his things, two years have passed since he died. I sat on that ladder for quite a while thinking--no--agonizing over whether I could do it. Could I actually put Bryan's things in the attic? Wouldn't that somehow be like forgetting him, like putting him away? No, I half-heartedly reasoned, even if I put the material things away, he will still be with me.

As I climbed off that ladder, task in mind, I felt like the LITTLE TRAIN THAT COULD, saying, "I think I can. I think I can." I picked up a bag and started packing up some of these toys. Just as I was about to say, "I DON'T think I can" something happened. Bryan's Christmas tree from the cemetery lit up! The amazing thing is the batteries in those little lights were the same ones that had burned out on Christmas Day, nearly 2 months before.

Of course, the logical types (I'm sure some of which are reading this article) call it coincidence, or they come up with some scientific mumbo jumbo as to why the batteries suddenly started working. I, on the other hand, see this as a sign. A sign telling me that my son is safe and it's OK if I put away his "stuff". A sign telling me he has all he needs where he is.

After this happened, I found the courage to finish what I started. I put the toys away in the attic, I gave all his stuffed animals or "babies" as he called them, to his sister. I stored the most precious of his things in my hope chest. This was such a hard job to do, yet I felt a certain sense of peace about it. I really believe that God, and our children, watch over us. They somehow manage to calm our fears, guide us when we are unsure, and give us strength when we need it most. I am so very thankful for that.

Watch closely for your quiet signs!

~ Cindy Fisher, TCF/Fairfield, OH

There's a Valentine Waiting for You

There's a valentine waiting for you,
that's different from all the others.
It's there every month at our meetings,
of heartbroken fathers and mothers.
Its envelope is made of caring,
the glue of understanding seals it tight.
This non-judgmental group who've "been there,"
help to take away your fear and fright.
So, come join with us together,
read your loving message printed clear.
In not only this month's valentine,
but all those throughout the year.

By Mary Cleckley, Lawrenceville, GA
Bereaved Parents USA

Tears do not flow only from the pitiful and the weak.
They spring also from the love and tenderness of the strong.
We should never be ashamed of our tears,
whether in private sorrow or public grieving.
Tears alleviate our grief and encourage the healing of our wounds.
Macagdoches, TCF

SEND BACK THE NOISE

It's way too quiet here
Since our son is not around.
I'd pay any to again hear the sound
Of a basketball rhythmically hitting the ground;
Or to answer the question,
"Dad, can you make this shot?"
"Pass the ball...probably not!"
His bedroom looks more like a sporting goods store,
But those balls, gloves, and cleats aren't used any more.
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 send back the noise?
~ Peter Graves, TCF/San Diego, CA



A Love Story

The mention of my child's name,
may bring tears to my eyes.
But it never fails to bring
music to my ears.
If you really *are* my friend,
please don't keep me from
hearing the beautiful music.
It soothes my broken heart,
and fills my soul with love.
~ Nancy Williams, TCF/Central New Jersey

The Winds Of Change

The wind of change blows through our lives, bringing
many changes
The North wind blows icy winds, and our lives it
rearranges.
The East winds blows turmoil, bringing unsettled emotions
to bear
The West wind blows moisture, with many tears to share.
But the South wind blows warm, a healing to our life
Easing up the pain of a broken heart of strife.
Wind from all direction brings a mixture into our lives,
blowing on the wind of change
Some are gaunt and icy, some warm and healing, they
come in every range.
If the North wind blows upon your life today
Hold on, a wind of change is coming, waiting to blow
healing gentle winds your way.
Hoping gentle breezes for your day
~ Sheila Simmons

With what a deep devotedness of woe
I wept thy absence - o'er and o'er again
Thinking of thee, still thee, till thought grew pain,
And memory, like a drop that, night and day,
Falls cold and ceaseless, wore my heart away!
~Thomas Moore

GETTING ON WITH IT

It's taken me over three years to figure it out! When people would say to me, "Get on with your life," what they really meant was: Live life just as you did before - as though nothing traumatic has happened to you, and you haven't changed. Obviously, they couldn't tell that I was doing exactly what they were telling me to do. I was getting on with my life.

MY life! And my life included (and still includes) living with the horrible fact that my daughter is dead forever, adjusting to my grief-transformed husband; trying to be a supportive, not too protective, nor distant, mother to my son; maintaining relationships with my non-bereaved family and friends; and figuring out this "new me". This is a lot to get on with! So, if anyone ever again tells me, "Get on with your life," I'll know what to say: "I am!"
~ Melinda Siegel, TCF/Contra Costa, CA

You Were On My Mind

When I woke up this morning...
You were on my mind. You were on my mind.
You with that genuine enthusiasm,
like a kid with his first bicycle.
You with the curiosity and excitement
that dads love to be there for.
There's so much of you still with me.
Still with us!
It's not fair that we feel cheated or
that we won't share your ways anymore.
But in reality, after all the tears and
inner feelings of pain and sadness pass
We will have joy and great happiness because
we shared your days. Your laughter. You.
And when I wake up each morning
It will be OK that you were on my mind...
You are on my mind.
That's a special place for you to be,
because it will be forever.
~ Michael Tyler, TCF/Lewes, DE

Masques

In idle conversation you ask me about my children
You are an acquaintance.
I do not know you well and so I don a masque.
I speak happily of mischief, but I do not speak of death.
I do not want to see the shadow of uncertainty pass your face.
And feel the awkward silence that falls like a curtain between us.
I do not want to say,
"it's okay, that was a long time ago"
It will never be quite "okay"
and sometimes it seems like yesterday.
And so I take my masque along with me through life like a
perpetual Halloween Night,
to hide just a bit from people and to preserve my strength.
For mourning is tiring and each time I recount that day of death, I
am a little wearied.
I would much rather speak of the joys of his life than the sorrows of
his death,
to strangers who absently ask of children.
Yet tragedy is more universal than ever I had known before it
touched my life.
And so at time I wonder who else looks out from behind a masque
~ Karen Nelson, TCF/Box Elder County Chapter

OUR BELOVED CHILDREN REMEMBERED *BIRTHDAYS*

CHILD	.....	.....	.....	PARENTS
DAVIN BAUCK	31	.....	.....	DEAN & DIANE BAUCK
PAMELA KAYE BJERKE	65	.....	.....	DARLENE SKAR
BRIAN BJERKEN	49	.....	.....	DENNIS & SHIRLEY BJERKEN
SHERI PETERSON BJORGAN	58	.....	.....	DEWAYNE PETERSON
KEVIN DILLENBURG	66	.....	.....	LOYSE PORTER
ISSAC JEREMY ENGELSTAD	25	.....	.....	SETH & DEVI ENGELSTAD
BRENT GANGNES	44	.....	.....	LARRY & LOIS GANGNES
DERRICK DENNIS JACOBS	33	.....	.....	TROY & DENISE JACOBS
BRANDON WILLIAM THOMAS KLUTH	38	.....	.....	BRENDA KLUTH
BENJAMIN KOTTA.....	38	.....	.....	ARLEN & JULIE KOTTA
MATTHEW MILLIGAN-OLSON.....	46	.....	.....	JOHN & KYLENE MILLIGAN
AMANDA LEA PERKINS	33	.....	.....	DWIGHT & MARLENE PERKINS
JONATHAN LEVI POITRA.....	39	.....	.....	SUZIE & JAMES HILL
TRAVIS JON MICHAEL ROBINSON	34	.....	.....	LARRY & MARY LEE ROBINSON
JOSEPH PETER ROEL	53	.....	.....	BOB & SANDI ROEL
ALEXANDER TUFTE	15	.....	.....	DAWN & BRANDON TUFTE

ANNIVERSARIES

CHILD	.....	.....	.....	PARENTS
RYAN TODD AASEN.....	5	.....	.....	TODD & ADELE AASEN
NATHAN BEACH.....	7	.....	.....	LISA BEACH
BRENT GANGNES	20	.....	.....	LARRY & LOIS GANGNES
JAMES "JESSY" HABERMAN	3	.....	.....	JIM & HEATHER HABERMAN
ROBERT DEAN HANSON	2	.....	.....	STEVE & DIANE HANSON
KARL HELFTER.....	5	.....	.....	MARK & HELLA HELFTER
ROY DANA RICHMOND.....	12	.....	.....	THOMAS & AUDREY RICHMOND
CARSON DENNIS RONEY.....	4	.....	.....	PAUL & RENAE RONEY
ALEXANDER TUFTE	4	.....	.....	DAWN & BRANDON TUFTE
MELODY TUFTE.....	4	.....	.....	DAWN & BRANDON TUFTE
SPENCER TUFTE	4	.....	.....	DAWN & BRANDON TUFTE
CHAD VARRIANO	4	.....	.....	ANTHONY & KAREL VARRIANO

Please check out our Chapter website's page for 'Our Beloved Children'
(www.tcffargomoorhead.org/ourchildren.html). If you would like your child's picture and a poem or story posted on this page, please submit them to us at 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.

Valentine Message

I send this message to my child
Who no longer walks this plane,
A message filled with love
Yet also filled with pain.

My heart continues to skip a beat
When I ponder your early death
As I think of times we'll never share
I must stop to catch my breath.

Valentine's Day is for those who love
And for those who receive love, too
For a parent the perfect love in life
Is the love I've given you.

I'm thinking of you this day, my child,
With a sadness that is unspoken
As I mark another Valentine's Day
With a heart that is forever broken.
~Annette Mennen Baldwin, TCF/Katy, TX
In Memory of my son, Todd Mennen

SIBLING PAGE

Angel From Above

Inspired by Kyle Janssen

written by Kyle's brother, Trevor Janssen

In one single night, I lost my best friend, my brother, and my companion.

I thought the world had ended; this wasn't how I planned it.

Everything was blurry, and I was scared to death, how could one evening, take his last breath.

I wanted to wake up, as though it was just a dream, but God had called him up to join his Holy team.

At such a young age, I didn't understand, why the God that watches over us, could take my brothers hand.

So much life to live, and so much to share, what was God thinking, does he even care?

Kyle was our family, and now God has torn us apart. How do we mend all our broken hearts?

Kyle is so dearly missed, to this very day. He is always in our thoughts and every time we pray.

We know that we will be with him soon, but it is still not soon enough. We go through everyday trying to be touch.

One prayer that God has answered is the angel from above. She is filled with joy and laughter and overwhelmed with love.

This angels name is Anna and she has blessed us with her grace. No one in the world could take this angels place.

She has given us the strength to carry on each day. No matter how hard times get, we know well find the way.

I know our Lord Jesus, is filled with nothing but love, I especially know it now, because he sent us our "Angel From Above".

That's What Little Brothers Are For

To tease,

To please.

To ignore,

To be there for.

To talk to,

Be there for you.

To share,

To care.

To play,

To pray

No one else knows

The pain when he goes.

~Author Unknown

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

For Pete's Sake

You left behind a great many
Who loved you very much.

You didn't stay very long,
Yet so many live you touched.
Your beaming smile I remember,
Your laugh was one of a kind.

My biggest regret,
Is that we spent so little time.

Although you had your troubles
Like many of us do,

I never met another

Who was a friend so true.

In our hearts you'll always be there,
You speak from beyond the grave.

I know that God needed you,
Although I wish you could have stayed.

When life gives me troubles,

And I'm feelin' kind of bad,

I feel your wings surround me,

And no longer am I sad.

I know you didn't want to leave us,
You knew God needed your help.

You always thought of others
Before you thought of yourself.

Although I never got a chance

To say how much I care,

I find comfort in knowing

That you'll always be there.

You're in a better place now,

With more important work to do.

I just wanted to take a chance

To tell you how much we love you.

~ Nic Bosworth, for his cousin Peter, TCF/Salt Lake City, NV

Don't Ask If I'm Okay

Don't ask me how I'm doing

Don't ask if I'm okay

Don't say they're in a better place

As you won't like what I say

No...Time is not a healer

And this was NOT God's will

If He knew how much I've really lost

They would be right here still

I WON'T try to be positive

And this wasn't for the best

My hearts in broken pieces

And it hurts deep in my chest.

Don't say, at least they're out of pain

Well I'm not, and MAY NEVER be.

Their pain is gone, but mines still here

It's been passed on to me

Don't tell me, you know how I feel

Even though, it may be true.

This Grief is MINE,

For what length of time...

It takes me, to get through

~ Toni Kane, all-greatquotes.com

TALKING WITH CHILDREN ABOUT DEATH

Death should not be a "hush-hush" topic with children. Relying upon euphemistic phrases such as "She passed away," "He's gone to sleep," "Grandma went away on a long trip," are often more harmful than helpful. Death is a **NATURAL AND NORMAL CONSEQUENCE OF LIVING**. It should not be a taboo subject for thought or discussion.

Virtually every child will experience the death of a friend, a pet, or a family member (or knows someone who has had such an experience and shared it with them). Children do develop thoughts and ideas about death at an early age. They also learn quickly who they can and cannot talk with about those thoughts and ideas!

Ages 3-5: These children do not yet accept death as a permanent process. Death has an ending and they often ask questions such as "When will Grandma come back?" They fear separation more than death.

Ages 5-9: These children are beginning to understand that death is permanent, but it is not yet universal. Death is often personified and given powers to select those who are to die.

Ages 9-12: Death, for these children, is permanent, personal, and universal. They understand they, too, will die--SOMEDAY. They are fascinated with the macabre and find details of death events appealing.

Ages 12+: Most adolescents have reached adult levels of understanding about death. Many adolescents have very intense emotions about death and do spend time thinking about death.

Children should be offered opportunities to talk about death as they experience it in their everyday world. The death of flowers, leaves, pets, and relatives should be addressed as a natural occurrence in the scheme of life.

Children should be included in their rituals of death whenever possible and appropriate. They should be offered the opportunity to participate if they so desire.

Expressions of sadness and grief should be shared. They can participate in the support of family and friends should be included in family visits and conversations.

Children's questions about death should be answered as honestly as possible. It is important to try to discover what is behind the questions being asked and to respond appropriately. Do not feel obligated to have all the answers! Sometimes wondering and exploring are some important than answering. Do not ignore questions, however. Some type of response is always needed as children will create answers for questions not heard and explored.

~ Darcie Sims, TCF/Abilene, TX

Newly Bereaved ... Burden of Grief

As I struggle with words to find answers
Reading and writing my pain
The pages grow blurred
before eyes that are tired
From this crushing emotional drain.
The relief that comes from the writing
Parallels what I feel when I read—
To open myself to the torture of loss
Seems to soothe this unbearable need.
There's no pleasure in life at this moment
It's an effort to get through the day
And I labor to stay above water...
But the shoreline is so far away.
So I pick up a pen or a book about grief
And it serves as a raft for a while.
And I hope, as my tears fall
On pages of pain
That I'll learn once again how to smile.
As I swim toward the
Shore of acceptance
I pray for the peace of belief
That heaven's your home and
You're waiting for me
Then I'll finally be free of this grief.
~ Sally Migliaccio, TCF/ Babylon, NY

CAPSIZED

Put a family onboard a boat and, when a loved one dies, the boat capsizes. Each family member is stunned, but they begin to swim for shore the best way they know how. Some swim with long strokes, others float or dog paddle while hoping the others are coming along okay. It seems to take all of one's energy, leaving no reserve.

They want to stay together but need to have room apart to navigate through the waves. Some comfort is found in that they are not alone, and yet, are on their own to find the method to shore that works for them.

Successfully reaching shore has more rewards than realized. In looking back subtle signs of encouragement were almost overlooked, and that love and support still lingers on in the heart-healing-along with a newly found confidence in inner strength.

A new relationship is born enabling each family member to carry forth a treasure of personal memories, honoring the loved one who has gone ahead to a shoreline we have yet to see.

The journey through grief is designed to build strength, to honor our differences, and to encourage others for a lifetime.

~ Jayne Belancio
(Reprinted with permission from Bereavement Publishing, Inc.)

Never bend your head. Hold it high. Look the world straight in the eye. ~ Helen Keller

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: _____

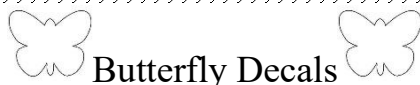
Child's Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Birth Date: _____ Death Date: _____

Date: _____

(Signature)

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



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

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

Butterflies are available in five colors (yellow, pink, red, blue and green). The cost is as follows: \$25 for 1 butterfly, \$50 for 2 butterflies, \$65 for 3 butterflies and \$80 for 4 butterflies. If you wish to purchase more than 4 butterflies, please contact Paul and Kara Bailey at 701-491-0364. Butterfly orders should include the child's first and last name (middle name is optional) and the color of the butterfly. Checks should be made payable to TCF of Fargo-Moorhead and the order mailed to PO Box 10686, Fargo, ND 58106.

MY OLD FRIEND GRIEF

My old friend Grief is back. He comes to visit me once in awhile to remind me that I am still a broken man. Surely there has been much healing since my son died six years ago, and surely I have adjusted to a world without him. But the truth is, we never completely heal, we never totally adjust. Such is the nature of the loss that no matter how much life has been experienced; the heart of the bereaved will never be the same. It's as though a part of us dies with the person we lose through death.

And so my old friend Grief drops in to say "Hello". Sometimes he enter through the door of my memory. I'll hear a song or smell a fragrance. I'll look at a picture and I'll remember how it used to be. Sometimes it brings a smile to my face.... sometimes a tear.

One may say that remembrance is unhealthy... that we shouldn't dwell on thoughts that make us sad. Yet the opposite is true. Grief re-visited is Grief acknowledged and Grief confronted is Grief resolved. But if Grief is resolved, why do we feel a sense of loss when we least expect it? Because healing doesn't mean forgetting and moving on with life doesn't mean that we don't take a part of our lost love with us. Of course the intensity of the pain decreases over time if we allow Grief to visit from time to time.

Sometimes my old friend Grief sneaks up on me. It's as though the one's we have lost are determined not to be forgotten. My old friend Grief doesn't get in the way of living. He just wants to come along and chat sometimes.

Grief has taught me a few things about living I wouldn't have learned on my own. He has taught me that if I try to deny the reality of loss, I end up having to deny life altogether. Old Grief has taught me that I can survive great loss and although my world is different, it's still my world and I must live in it.

My old friend Grief has taught me that the loss of a loved one doesn't mean the permanence of death. My friend will be back again and again to remind me to confront my new reality and to gain through loss and pain.

~ Adolfo Quesda, TCF/Colorado

AFTER SOME TIME - IT IS STILL OKAY TO CRY

It seems to be acceptable to go for counseling or therapy during the early months of grief. But what happens after a certain amount of time has passed and you feel yourself being "ambushed" by the first raw feelings of grief? Most people think you should just "buck up" and look around you and count the blessings you have left. These are worthy and meritorious attitudes, but sometimes they are simply unattainable, at least for a little while. We have lost MUCH when we lost our child. Sometimes we have to remind ourselves that it is okay to relapse, that there is nothing wrong with us when we feel alone and sad, that there is no shame in backtracking to the dark recesses of grief, for it is in those times when we give way to the hurt and pain that we acknowledge how MUCH our child continues to matter to us. We sometimes have to allow ourselves "space" to be sad and permission to cry over the simple sadness of no longer having our child with us.

They MATTERED to us. They still do. WE CONTINUE to remember them, to love them, and to miss them. "IT IS STILL OKAY TO CRY." May each of you weep tears of release for the child that you so deeply continue to love and miss. With the deepest respect and compassion for my fellow grievers,

~ Faye McCord, TCF/Jackson, MS
In memory of Lane McCord (1965-1998)

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
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	Paul & Kara Bailey .....701-491-0364	Newsletter Editor	Nancy Teeuwen..... 701-730-0805
Co-Chapter Leader	Lori Wiger.....701-781-3931	Newsletter Database	Sheryl Cvijanovich 701-540-3287
Secretary	Sheryl Cvijanovich.....701-540-3287	Website Administrator	Sheryl Cvijanovich 701-540-3287
Treasurer	Chuck Klinkhammer .....701-298-2929	Initial Contact	Sheryl Cvijanovich
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:

- Sheryl Cvijanovich (son, 23 - illness) 701-540-3287
- Lois Gangnes (son, 24 - accident) 701-282-4083
- Nancy Teeuwen (daughter, 15 hours - illness)..... 701-730-0805
- Mark & Hella Helfter (miscarriage, son, 35-accident & son, 45-cancer)... 701-235-9622

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

Love gift given in Memory/Honor of _____

Name _____

Address _____

Relationship _____ Born _____ Died _____

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