



The Compassionate Friends

Fargo/Moorhead Area Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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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

Weather cancellations will be posted on WDAY, KVLV, KFGO and the Fargo Forum online at www.inforum.com!

Dates to Remember

Mom's meeting - 7 pm on March 26th @ Denny's
TCF National Conference July 24-26, 2020 in Atlanta, GA
TCF FM Chapter's 14th Annual Walk to Remember - July 25, 2020

LOVE GIFTS

Larry & Lois Gangnes in memory of their son, Brent Gangnes
Brenda Kluth in memory of her son, Brandon W.T. Kluth
Glennis Olson in memory of her son, Jamie Clifford Olson
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.

"The best thing about the future is that it only comes one day at a time."
~ Abraham Lincoln

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

LOVE

"... Grief is the price we pay for love. We did not lose our children. They died, taking with them our hopes and dreams for the future, but, never, never taking away their love. Though death comes, love will never go away. Hold it tight, the love our children gave us. Hold it tight through the storms of grief and bring it with you into today. Love never goes away..." ~ Darcie Sims

Our Mom's group generally meets on the 4th Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm at the Denny's restaurant, 4437 13th Ave SW, Fargo. Our gatherings are very informal as we meet to talk about our children, books, recipes, jobs and whatever else comes up in conversation. We all have times when we need the listening heart of another mom or grandma. Please join us this month on Thursday March 26th. For more information please contact Sheryl at 701-540-3287 or sherylc13@msn.com.

This Day

Sunshine after a week of hiding The grey skies suited my general mood
I reach out and catch Solitude and loneliness
Years reach place of sorrow Stunning it its solidness
A monument of tears Add a brick to build it up
I feel so utterly alone sometimes My eyes flicker strange retreats
How is it that I search past the moon In such a way
I'm falling

But The hole in my heart is forever.

~ Melissa Anne Schroeter, TCF/Rockland County, NY

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Suicide Note

The following letter was written by David John Bernreuter before he died by suicide on May 12, 1987. David, an astute 22-year-old, was unusually well-informed about his illness. By his own description of his feelings, myths and assumptions about suicide are shattered, and we are allowed an insight into his motivation to end his life. In granting permission for its use, it is the hope of David's family that the loved ones of other victims may find comfort in David's words.

Dear Mom, Dad, and Stephany:

First, some facts:

1. I LOVE YOU VERY MUCH.

2. I KNOW YOU LOVE ME VERY MUCH. If love alone would have made me better, I would be the most well adjusted man on earth. Please don't feel that you neglected to tell or show me how much you loved me.

3. YOU WERE NOT TO BLAME FOR MY CONDITION. I believe my mental illness was the result of a chemical imbalance in the brain. A certain percentage of people, from all types of family situations have a major mental illness. It was just the luck of the biological draw that I happened to be one of them. Whether it was Major Depressive Disorder, Schizoid Personality Disorder, Manic Depressive Disorder, or Schizophrenia, my mental illness made my "life" unlivable. But you are not to blame for that. So please don't let yourselves feel guilty.

4. I KNOW THAT YOU WILL MAKE IT THROUGH THIS. It won't be easy, but you will have a lot of support from a lot of friends and relatives. Don't be like me, the ultimate schizoid loner. Count on the support of your friends and relatives. If you only knew what goes on inside my head. I know you will say that I "didn't try long enough or hard enough." I have been emotionally disturbed since late childhood. I now have a major mental illness. I tried as long and as hard as I could. I've had all sorts of suggestions, like: "Repeat positive phrases over and over again. Don't eat foods with yeast. Take Haldol. Don't take Haldol. Accept Jesus as my 'personal Savior.' Quit smoking. Get a girlfriend." And the list goes on and on...

I know that the above suggestions were made with the best intentions, but they lack an understanding of what mental illness is all about. That's why I found something in common with other people who are mentally ill. When they told me how being mentally ill affects their life, I understood, because my illness affected me in the same way. If I were to tell Uncle Ray that I had bought a gun, that I felt suicidal, he would have no alternative but to call the hospital and the police. And before you know it, I'd be back in the hospital. I'd rather be dead. It's not like I killed myself because I didn't get an A on an exam or because I broke up with my girlfriend. Those are the kinds of depression that have a reason to happen. My depression comes without any help from the outside. Nothing bad has happened to make me depressed except my depression. It's not like I did this "on a lark." I've had over a year to think it over. But I can hardly expect you to understand about something I myself don't understand. I don't know why I am the way I am. 'The man who didn't see it through.' That is what this is. If given a chance to choose between an eternity in heaven or another go-round as a human of earth, I'm certain I would choose the latter.

And now for the business part of this suicide note: Cremate and scatter me (I don't care where). All my money goes to you. Everything else, too. Do with it what you will, but may I suggest sending a portion of my worldly goods to a mental health research foundation of your choice."

As David requested, the family sent a donation to a mental health organization in hopes that someday a cure will be found.

Permission to reprint from the February 1989 issue granted by Bereavement Magazine February 1989 (888)604-4673.

WE ARE SURVIVORS

In the beginning we are survivors groping and clawing merely to rise and face each day without our children
WITHOUT OUR CHILDREN

Intellectually we know the reality we have gone through funerals wakes/shivas memorials
WE KNOW THE REALITY

but emotionally we cannot (nor should we) come to terms with this reality one cannot make this emotional commitment called parenting then abruptly shut it off after a funeral whether our child was six months or sixty our love our sacrifice our future cannot be measured by a chronological clock thus we cling to the hope that this is a bad dream a mistake that soon there will be a knock at the door the phone will ring we'll hear their footsteps upstairs and they will be back where they belong

BACK WHERE THEY BELONG

In the beginning we face each day with disbelief we plod on but we want our children back not their pictures not their clothes not their memories

WE WANT OUR CHILDREN BACK

As months turn into years, years into years our lives start to "normalize" (although we will never be the same again) emotions begin to catch up with intellect we gradually grudgingly come to realize that they are never coming back to the way they were (we seek out psychics to connect with them where they are now) As parents we have the need to nurture (I will ALWAYS be your parent you will ALWAYS be my child) we are compelled to make an emotional compromise and keep them alive in different ways like the caterpillar transforming into a butterfly our children take on new lives to be sure it is not the way we want it to be but now in our hearts and in our heads we say "this is the way it is this is the way it is going to be" now we are parents again and they are our children we have paid the ultimate price for wisdom strength and courage and though we will never be the same again

we will BE

~ Phyllis and Moe Beres, TCF/Babylon, NY

My Angel

Deep in the woods a meadow lies
this is the place where sorrow hides
In this clearing there is a pool
filled with tears I've cried for you
And from this pool springs forth a stream
that leads me to the land of dreams
This is the place I long to be
The place where you can be with me
Thou I know this cannot be
I also know you'll wait for me
And one day when my time has come
I'll find you smiling in the sun
And together joyfully we'll run
through meadows made of memories,
of love, of hope, and happy things
Until then I shall carry on
With you as my angel to lean upon

~ Tracy Smith

In Memory of my niece, Madison Lynne Smith

TO MY MISCARRIED BABY

Out of our love you came,
Planned, wanted, welcomed.
Your announcement created excitement, joy.

Friends and family inquired,
Do you want a girl or boy?
Will you take Lamaze?
What colors for the nursery?
Then suddenly you're gone — and silence.
No one talks about a baby that won't be.

Were you real or a dream?
I feel alone and empty.
Where can I put my love that was for you?
Now what does it mean?

~ Betty Ruder, TCF/North Shore Chapter, IL

Heaven's Rocking Chair

Are there rocking chairs in Heaven
where little babies go?
Do the angels hold you closely
and rock you to and fro?

Do they talk silly baby talk
to get a smile or two,
and sing the sleepy lullabies
I used to sing to you?

My heart is aching for you,
my angel child so dear.
You brought such joy into my life
the short time you were here.

I know you're in a happy place
and in God's loving care.
I dream each night I'm rocking you
in Heaven's rocking chair.

~ Ron Trammer

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

To My Beautiful Angel (Jayme)

If I could pick a Star
It would be the one that sparkled brightest.
If I could paint a Rainbow
I would paint your favorite colors of pink.
If I could watch the Sunshine
I would wear some Big Styl'n' Shades
as I know you would...
The Stars
Sparkle as your smile glistens through.
The guiding light when the darkness sets in.
Rainbows

Are the colorful beauty of your caring, kindness
and giving which you always painted
with your smile.

They are the calm after a Storm
of you having to go.
But creating the beauty, the color
of how you fill my life.

The Sunshine
How bright the room
became as you entered
The warmth of your caring heart
that lightens the emptiness within.
Time

Stands still without your presence
But must go on as you guide
My Journey
of keeping your MEMORY alive.

I LOVE YOU MY BEAUTIFUL ANGEL!

You will never be forgotten.

~ Sherry Lassle, TCF/Fargo, ND

OUR BELOVED CHILDREN REMEMBERED BIRTHDAYS

| CHILD | | PARENTS |
|---------------------------------------|----|-----------------------------------|
| BRENT M BARTSCH | 38 | LINDA BARTSCH |
| KARI RAE BORGEN | 48 | JOHN & KELLY BORGEN |
| MICHAEL L HANSON | 37 | LARRY & MARY HANSON |
| TAMARA JO "TAMMY" HINES | 55 | SHARON D COOK |
| JOHN CLAYTON JACKSON JR..... | 72 | NORMA JACKSON |
| KRISSY KEELAN | 40 | DONNA QUAM |
| MICHELLE KUTTER | 31 | JIM & JODY KUTTER |
| ZAYNE WILLIAM MALHEIM OLAFSON | 11 | BILLY OLAFSON & SHANDRA MALHEIM |
| JAMIE CLIFFORD OLSON | 42 | GLENNIS OLSON |
| ANNIKA LORRAINE QUALLEY | 9 | MARLYS KESSEL (Great-Grandmother) |
| ANNIKA LORRAINE QUALLEY | 9 | RHONDA & MICHAEL QUALLEY |
| ROY DANA RICHMOND | 55 | THOMAS & AUDREY RICHMOND |
| CARLA RAE TRUITT | 56 | LORETTA KEISACKER |
| CHAD VARRIANO..... | 48 | ANTHONY & KAREL VARRIANO |
| ROBIN VIGDAL-HOSLER..... | 49 | WALTER & KARIE COWDEN |
| KATHRYN "KATIE" ELIZABETH WHELTL..... | 38 | SHARON & MARK WHELTL |
| ASHLEY WIGER | 33 | LARRY & LORI WIGER |
| PAIGE WIGHTMAN..... | 30 | DAVID & MICHELLE WIGHTMAN |

ANNIVERSARIES

| CHILD | | PARENTS |
|-------------------------------------|----|---------------------------------|
| NANCY PRATT COASH..... | 16 | PATRICIA PRATT |
| KEVIN SCOTT COWDEN..... | 2 | WALTER & KARIE COWDEN |
| JUSTIN L DIETRICH..... | 2 | TRACY & CAROL DIETRICH |
| STEVEN "HERMAN" FESKE..... | 2 | ROSEMARY FESKE |
| JAYSON P HAUGEN..... | 3 | PAULETTE HAUGEN |
| DAVID MICHAEL HELFTER..... | 16 | MARK & HELLA HELFTER |
| TODD ALLAN JOHNSON | 5 | RUSSELL & ANNE JOHNSON |
| KRISSY KEELAN | 6 | DONNA QUAM |
| MATTHEW MILLIGAN-OLSON | 20 | JOHN & KYLENE MILLIGAN |
| STEVEN J NEWARK JR..... | 2 | JANET & JOHN OURADNIK |
| JARAD NILLES..... | 8 | RALPH & CAROLYN NILLES |
| ZAYNE WILLIAM MALHEIM OLAFSON | 11 | BILLY OLAFSON & SHANDRA MALHEIM |
| CONNER SANDER..... | 1 | KELLY SANDER |
| LAURIE SATHER..... | 1 | PEGGY BULLIS |
| JEFFREY M WEBBER..... | 3 | JUANITA WEBBER |

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

When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one which has been opened for us.

~ Helen Keller

SIBLING PAGE

A Grief All My Own

I was a freshman at Point Loma Nazarene College when my brother, Carl, died. The news reached me hours after he had been found at the base of the radio tower. Jim, a faculty member and family friend, stuck his head inside the door of my chemistry class as I waited for class to begin and motioned me outside. I was pleasantly surprised to see him, but my smile faded as I noticed the somber expression on his face. He took my hands in his as he told me of my brother's death. I searched his face desperately waiting for his expression to break in to a grin as people will often do before they let you in on the joke, but there would be no punch line. I drew back instinctively and as I pulled away, Jim tightened his grip. I began shouting "No!" over and over until I became aware of myself once again and sunk into his hug. When I started to breathe more regularly Jim walked back into the classroom to get my backpack. I began to grow physically and emotionally numb as he led me down the stairs to his van. He asked me if I had a friend who could wait with me until I could get to the airport. I nodded indicating I did. He drove over to her classroom and I carefully looked in to see if I could find her. Fortunately she saw me and dismissed herself.

When I got to the dorm, the RA (resident assistant) for my unit was already waiting for me. She and my friend, Heather, followed me to my room after an exchange of somber glances between them. Without much thought as to what I needed I packed a suitcase hoping I had everything I needed since I would be going home for the week. I was nearly finished packing when one of my roommates came into the room. She heard the announcement in chapel and came to see how I was handling the news. I was suddenly aware of how closely I was being watched. It was as though I had taken up residence in a fishbowl. The girls sat silently watching me, not quite knowing what else to do. I could feel their unease at not knowing what to say; afraid of saying something that would cause me to have some sort of nervous breakdown right in front of them. I desperately wanted to be alone. It was as though I was a hostess at a boring party needing to entertain my guests, but I was afraid to act anything but somber. Would they think Carl meant nothing to me if I tried to strike up meaningless conversation? I felt an emptiness growing in the pit of my stomach. I wanted to crawl in bed and curl up against the wall. Yet, all I could do was sit uncomfortably while they watched. I was the elephant in the room. My brother had just died, yet no one could state the obvious: something horrible had just happened. I didn't know it at the time, but I had experienced for the first time a reaction that was to become all too familiar to me.

After a draining week at home, I was unprepared to face my friends, roommates, and acquaintances at school. I could feel the tension as I walked into my unit. The girls watched cautiously as if waiting to see if it would be OK to approach me. I wanted to tell them about the week and about all of the painful memories my hometown triggered of my brother. Actually, I needed to talk about it, yet I knew it was better to keep it to myself. I don't know how to explain it, but people react very strangely when they hear about someone's death. I couldn't count the frequency with which I was purposefully avoided or had someone quickly change the subject if I happened to mention my brother. I soon discovered a positive reply when asked how I was doing avoided many uncomfortable situations. Most of the time people merely asked out of a sense of obligation, not concern. Few wanted to hear how my stomach turned when I walked up to his casket and saw the bruises, which ran down alongside his head and neck beneath the make up the mortician applied in an attempt to conceal them. Nor did they want to hear how my heart skipped a beat when I thought I caught a glimpse of Carl riding his skateboard down the street, only to have it break one more time when I realized it couldn't have been him. They didn't even want to hear how I found comfort in memories of him such as the time we were just little kids and had been sent to our rooms because somehow we had managed to irritate Dad. Unwilling to accept our punishment and allow our fun to come to an end we recorded ourselves giggling and set it behind our dad's chair knowing we were sure to get a reaction. We laughed hysterically when our dad heard the recording and sprang from his chair to catch us out of our rooms. I found I was truly alone in my grief aside from what I could share with my parents. I try not to get angry when I think of how others reacted to me in my grief. I, myself, reacted toward others the same way before I lost my brother. Yet, it was difficult to be forced to create a mask for the comfort of others when comfort was what I sought. Each day I "put on a happy face" and tried my best to appear together.

A few weeks after I returned to school the other girls in the unit no longer tolerated my grief. I could sense their irritation when I failed to get out of bed as they prepared for class. No longer was it necessary to try to comfort me. They had accepted my brother's death and were done feeling bad. It would not have been a great shock to learn they had forgotten I had a brother. I was forced to stuff my grief for the remainder of the semester. I cried only when I was sure I was alone and knew no one would be back for a while. I carefully watched what I said as not to let anything about my brother slip into conversation. I found even sharing a good memory of Carl could set off a series of uncomfortable events. The mere mention of his name would cause my listeners to freeze. Would I break down immediately and fall to pieces at his memory? I didn't know at the time it would have been OK. No one had to understand my emotions, nor did anyone have to deal with them. I was the only one able and willing to carry myself through my grief. I had to realize I could only do what I could as I struggled with my grief and had to remind myself I would be able to do more as time passed and the impact of his death gradually became less painful. It was necessary for me to understand if I never got over his death I would also be all right as the death of a sibling is not something anyone ever truly gets over. Everyone deals with grief differently. If I were to only allow myself to grieve as much as other's around me felt comfortable I would be quite miserable today.

It has been four years since his death and I continue to miss him. I still watch what I say to others, but I don't worry so much about their reaction. I know what to expect from someone when they hear about Carl for the first time and have found ways to keep the evil of discomfort for all parties at a minimum. When Carl died I struggled with what my answer would be when someone asked if I had a sibling. I didn't know how to answer. Would I say I did have a brother or would I say I had a brother? Neither answer seemed quite correct. Today I can answer the question. Carl was and always will be my brother. My memories of him are mine to share if I wish. My grief is also mine to deal with, as I need to.

It is not open to the criticism of others.

~ Carrie Pueschel
In Memory of my brother, Carl

Being Public Takes Its Toll

When one is pretending, the entire body revolts. ~ Anais Nin

As we attempt to return to our jobs or our social life, or just to leave the house to do errands, we may feel that we must hold our heads up and keep acting brave. So we talk about things that don't interest us instead of talking about what plagues our heart and mind. We reluctantly agree to do things in which we do not have the slightest bit of interest.

All of this takes a tremendous amount of energy. But it does something else, too. Our bodies are under a great deal of stress as we work through our child's death. Trying to create and maintain an artificial front contributes to that stress. And stress, of course, manifests itself in many ways throughout the body - in headaches, rashes, insomnia, digestive disturbances, the inability to concentrate, and the impulse to fidget or be on the move. We may also have more colds and flues as well as unexplained pains in various parts of our bodies.

One of the kindest things we can do for ourselves is to behave, as much as is possible and reasonable, in accordance with our deepest needs and desires. We can greatly reduce the amount of time and effort we put into doing what only seems socially required.

I will not push myself into false situations or require myself to perform in a way that differs significantly from my truest self. I will take care of myself by not forcing certain actions or responses, regardless of the pressure put on me to do so. My self, my body comes first, and I need to remember that my body will revolt against pretending.

~ Carol Staudacher, From A Time to Grieve

Somewhere, Just Over There

Sometimes I dream
Sometimes I try to see
Sometimes I cannot believe
How this loss came to be

Some things make me smile
Some things are not spoken
Some things give me hope
Yet my way still seems broken

Somehow I must walk forward
Somehow I must thrive
Somehow I must hold my head up
Somehow I will survive

Someone said that I am still strong
Someone said just try to do your best
Someone said I'll find perspective
Someone said I'll pass grief's big test

Somewhere I dream to be
Somewhere just over there
Somewhere a place for me
I've already paid my fare

Someday, I'll take my flight
Someday up to the light
Someday I'll arrive and be
Someday there, in Eternity

~ Donald Moyers, TCF/Galveston County, TX

A Survivor's Alphabet: Empathy

"Where were you when I needed you?" Ever find yourself saying words like that? Ever look for comfort at a point of greatest need and wonder why it doesn't come or help? Family and friends try their best to let us know they care. It never seems enough for just what we need at the critical moment.

What's going on? Family and friends, in expressing their sincere words of comfort and love, are relieving their own anxiety. In their attempts they often bypass our more critical need. It's like two trains passing each other in the night. They meet but quickly go their separate ways.

What we have received is sympathy which, by itself, gives temporary comfort and relief but has little long lasting effect. It may or may not touch the point of hurting with enough impact to relieve. What is better is a sensitivity to hurt where it is and a response to that hurt that mirrors the crisis itself. What is needed is not sympathy but **empathy**.

Empathy is made up of the following:

Listening. What do you hear when you hear? Isn't it amazing how often we hear but we do not listen. You and I hear the concert while the violinist listens for pitch and tone. We tell a mechanic the engine runs "rough" while he listens and notes that something is wrong with the valves. Developing the skill of listening enables us to be more sensitive to actual need where it occurs. A cry for help may be more, or less, than what we think we hear. Someone is hurting and needs relief, now. Being with that person we listen and are given clues of what to say and do that will bring the greatest relief. It's not for us to set the agenda; the other person in their hurt and pain does.

Understanding. By careful listening it's amazing what we can learn that we only surmised before. We learn that our agenda can be put "on hold" while the hurting person is considered as top priority. We learn that words do not always have the weight we give to them; a touch will do far more. Maybe just being there without thinking that we have to do something helps. Whatever it is, we are there for the other person and they know it; they are given just what they need at that given moment.

Value. This tacit understanding gives strength for building trust. A bond is created whose value will be noted long after the crisis is over. Friendships are developed that are long lasting. New understanding between family members creates a climate of love. Personal self esteem is given a boost which has a value of its own. We understand others and they understand us and a network is established of support and caring.

Empathy is "LUV" actively supporting and sustaining to develop strength for times of crisis. It goes beyond in creating long lasting relationships that give personal vitality to each of us.

© 1999 Jesse Baker

Jesse Baker is a retired minister of The United Methodist Church. He and his wife Fay live in Port Orange, FL. They became bereaved parents when their daughter Vera was murdered in November, 1984.

Reprinted from the Heart of Florida Chapter newsletter, May 1999.

Friendship doubles our joy and divides our grief.

~ Swedish Proverb

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)



Butterfly Decals

"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.

Our Logo — Its Mystery and Its History

Are the hands reaching out or letting go? Are they the hands of one person or two? These are questions often heard from new members...so we asked the people who know.

Much of the beauty of our logo lies in the fact that there are no definitive answers to its symbolism. At first glance its meaning seems obvious; yet as you look more closely, these questions may arise.

The hands represent different things to us at different periods in our grief journeys. To the newly bereaved, the hands reach out toward him or her, offering comfort and support. Later in our grief journeys, they may symbolize the process of letting go, of coming to terms with the child's death, of acknowledging that the child is no longer a part of our earthly existence.

Still later in our grief journeys, we begin to reinvest in life and reach out toward others. Then our hands become the hands which are extended to the newly bereaved.

The circle is complete: a circle of friends, a circle of love and understanding, with the child at the center.

Thanks to the efforts of TCF historian Helen Robinson of the Tuscaloosa AL Chapter, the origin of our logo has now been documented. Helen has been in touch with Joe Lawley, Founder-Chairman of The Society of The Compassionate Friends. Joe supplied details on how the logo came about, as well as a copy of a letter which John and Maggie Fisher of Coventry, England, wrote on February 12, 1975.

In his letter, John says that their daughter Clare "was killed on November 17th last, aged 8 1/2. By chance we met someone, who knew someone who had heard of the Friends, who lived in Watford, some twenty or thirty miles from our home, and as a consequence Mrs. Joan Wills wrote to us and subsequently came to our home.... Although we still feel our loss greatly we both know that we are now ready to assist the Friends ourselves.

"Our help would also include the services of my own company (John Fisher Design & Marketing, Ltd.), which include Advertising, Design, Marketing and Public Relations activities.... We are mobile, immediately available, and ready, both physically and spiritually, to begin work for the Friends. Please use us."

Joe tells us that "Its first appearance was on the June 1975 Newsletter and is recorded on that occasion as being 'in a bright emerald green' subsequently however settling into the generally universal color of royal blue and white from 1977 on."

(This article first appeared in the Spring, 1998 issue of Friends, Caring and Sharing, which at the time was The Compassionate Friends' in-house newsletter for chapter leaders and steering committee members.)

~ Joyce Andrews/TCF, Sugar Land - SW Houston Chapter

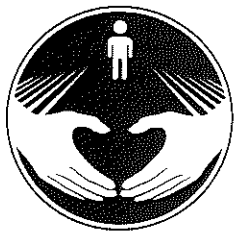
"You have to love your children unselfishly. That's hard. But it's the only way."

~ Barbara Bush

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.