



The Compassionate Friends

Fargo/Moorhead Area Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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F-M Area Chapter
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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

November 14th
December 12th

Meeting Topics

December - Candlelighting Ceremony, bring your child's or your favorite Christmas treat to share

Weather cancelations will be posted on WDAY, KVLV, KFGO and Fargo Forum!

Dates to Remember

Mom's meeting - 7 pm on November 21, 2019 @ Fry'n Pan
Annual Worldwide Candlelighting - December 8, 2019 7 p.m. local time

LOVE GIFTS

Jerry & Yvonne Nelson in memory of their son, Kyle Nelson
Dennis & Shirley Bjerken in memory of their son, Brian Bjerken
Sheryl Cvijanovich in memory of her son, Matthew Cvijanovich
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

LOVE

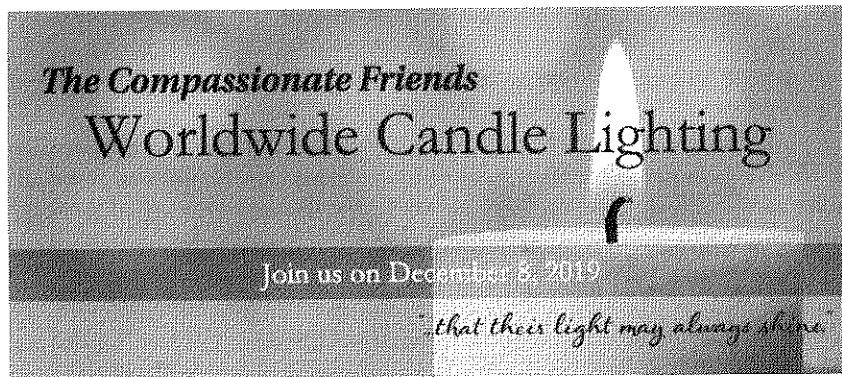
"...Grief is the price we pay for love. We did not lose our children. They died, taking with them our hopes and dreams for the future, but, never, never taking away their love. Though death comes, love will never go away. Hold it tight, the love our children gave us. Hold it tight through the storms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

For the months of November and December, our Mom's group will meet on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 7 pm at the Fry'n Pan restaurant, 300 Main Avenue, 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 November 21st. For more information please contact Sheryl at 701-540-3287 or sherylcv13@msn.com. Location for the Mom's group will be changing in 2020. More information will be provided in the December newsletter.



ANGEL OF HOPE MEMORIAL SERVICE

The Angel of Hope will be holding an annual Candlelight Memorial on Friday, December 6th at 7 p.m. The Angel of Hope in Fargo was dedicated in 2005, and serves as a place for healing and love for all who have lost children. The Angel of Hope is located on the north in Island Park off of 1st Avenue South between 4th and 7th Streets. Attendees are invited to bring a flower (traditionally a white one but you may bring any color you choose) to leave at the site in memory of your loved one(s). Candles will be provided.



Worldwide Candle Lighting

The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting held annually the second Sunday in December, this year December 8th, unites family and friends around the globe as they light candles for one hour to honor and remember children who have died at any age from any cause. As candles are lit at 7 p.m. local time, creating a virtual wave of light, hundreds of thousands of persons commemorate and honor the memories of children in a way that transcends all ethnic, cultural,

religious, and political boundaries.

Now believed to be the largest mass candle lighting on the globe, the Worldwide Candle Lighting, a gift from TCF to the bereavement community, creates a virtual 24-hour wave of light as it moves from time zone to time zone. Hundreds of formal candle lighting events are held and thousands of informal candle lightings are conducted in homes as families gather in quiet remembrance of children who have died, but will never be forgotten.

Why We Grieve Differently

Each of us is unique with our own personality, life experiences and ways we respond to the stress and events that happen throughout our lifetime. Therefore, it's not surprising that our grieving styles are different and no two of us will ever grieve the same way. There is no "right" or "wrong" way to feel or grieve after a loved one dies. As bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings, we are inundated with well-meaning and well-intended advice about how we should grieve and are even given imposed "rules" of grief. We are often blamed if we are too "strong and stoic" and likewise judged if we continue to grieve beyond someone's arbitrary timeframe. People grieve with different intensities over varying durations of time. Some people are more expressive with their grief and find it more helpful to talk and express their emotions while others tend to process their thoughts and emotions internally. One process is not intrinsically "better" than another -- they're simply different.

Despite the fact that we grieve differently, people generally experience some fairly normal and predictable reactions and stages to traumatic loss. Initially, shock and denial are typical responses to emotional trauma and serve as a protective response to the reality of what has just occurred. You may feel as though you are walking around in a daze or feeling numb as if disconnected from your life; this usually gives way to overwhelming and intense feelings. Experience physical symptoms such as stomach cramps and feeling as though you can't breathe are common reactions. You may have a sense that your heart has broken into a million pieces. Many people experience a sensation of a knot in the center of their being and have a feeling as though they will never be whole again. You may also experience intense anger and rage.

Thoughts and behaviors may change. You may experience repeated and vivid memories and flashbacks of the event which can lead to reactions such as a rapid heartbeat or anxious feelings. Often people find it difficult to concentrate or make decisions. It is very common for sleeping and eating patterns to be disrupted for awhile. As time goes by, you may experience recurring emotional reactions to triggers such as something you see or hear, something someone says or simply the day of the week or month in which the loss occurred. When the reality of the loss begins to settle, you may sink into a deep sorrow and depression and feel your life is over. Usually with time, this gives way to a coming to terms with the reality and a discovery of ways to move beyond your suffering, integrating the loss into who you are now with a renewed sense of hope and meaning for the future. The grief journey isn't necessarily a linear process.

Sometimes you may find yourself revisiting a stage you thought you had left behind and think you're not making progress. Moving back and forth between stages is a normal part of the grieving process. Over time, symptoms of an emotional trauma generally subside to a manageable level and normal daily functioning gradually returns. If you find yourself resorting to destructive means of coping with the loss or having difficulty moving forward you should seek professional help.

However, people respond to a traumatic loss, it is important to recognize that we are unique individuals with unique styles, intensities of our emotions and timetables. We will all respond differently to the loss of a loved one. When we honor this truth, we can then accept our own manner of grieving and be sensitive and respectful to another's response to loss. We all have our own unique personal journey back to wholeness and healing.

By Pamela Leonhardt, PsyD, a Licensed Psychologist in Boulder and bereaved mother to Angel Child Michael (1976 - 1998).

Blessings and Burdens

As our feelings of loss and pain mingle with celebration, our memories are at once the burden and the blessing of this season, a cause for loving tears and a cause for aching smiles. When memories of winter's past come to mind, many of us can find a light behind the tears. Images and sounds that are stored inside emerge in our mind with familiar clarity and evergreen tenderness. But there are those among us who have no holiday memories because their infants did not live long enough to see their first season of lights. These grievers have few memories to give them solace today, and we can only tell them that we are deeply aware of this special part of their grief.

~ Sascha Wagner, Wintersun

Strange Words Welcome New Members

I am always amazed at the instant empathy we each feel as new members come to their first meeting. We have the strangest welcome for these parents: "We are so sorry you have to be here."

In other organizations the questions are probing: where did you go to school, where do you work, where do you live? All designed to "size up" the newcomer, put him or her in the proper perspective of a neatly ordered world. For us, this information is meaningless. We know the world isn't neat and orderly; we discovered that when we lost our children. We care about you, the newly bereaved parent, whose life was tossed into a cosmic blender when your child died. We care because we are you. We have been here a while, in this purgatory of pain. We have learned to live our lives in a different way, to place value on understanding and hope, the intangibles of the purest meanings of life. We have learned to value each other, to reach out and talk, to wait patiently during the silences needed to form thoughts. We listen intently as you quietly say your child's name, tell your child's story, speak of your heartbreak.

Yes, this is a different kind of welcome. But it is the most deeply sincere welcome we will ever receive. We are kindred souls, you and I. Each of us lives in the "after death" world of losing our child. Each of us has learned gradually that the hope we have attained has made life better, lessened the pain, moderated the isolation, tears, emotional devastation and pure mayhem that once overtook us. Each of us has learned this slowly, in our own time and in our own way.

Each month new parents who have suffered the most horrific loss that a human can endure are welcomed into our group. We reach out, we listen with our hearts and we remember.

~ Annette Mennen Baldwin, TCF/Katy, TX
In memory of my son, Todd Mennen

Thanksgiving Prayer

I'm thankful this Thanksgiving
That my grief is not so new.
Last year it was so painful to
Think of losing you.
Death can't claim my love for you
Tho we are far apart,
Sweet memories will always be
Engraved upon my heart.
Time can never bring you back
But it can help me be
Thankful for the years of joy
You brought our family.
To all the parents with grief so new
I share your loss and sorrow
I pray you find with faith and time
The blessings of each tomorrow.
~ Charlotte Irick, TCF/Idaho Falls, ID

The Survivors

We who are left behind in the shadow of the valley of death, we know about sorrow from the bones out. We who choose to stay behind and not follow our loved ones through the portal of death, we are the brave ones. We who survive abandonment by children who left unwillingly, struggle through the lonely night, into the empty day. We who drink this cup of sorrow need to remember the joy that carved the cup so deep.

~ Anna Olson, TCF/Winnipeg, MB
In memory of Jennifer

Silent Visit

I'm going to your grave today with flowers, orange, yellow and red. I'll throw the faded ones away and leave fresh ones instead. I'll kneel beside the place you lay placed there a year ago, and once again my heart will break and unchecked tears will flow. With gentle fingers I'll caress your name carved in the stone and brush away the fallen leaves November winds have blown. Then I'll dry my eyes; I'll say a prayer and as I raise my head another grieving mother; just tucked her child in bed.

~Alice Osborn, Missouri,
In Memory of Michael Patrick Gordon

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

OUR LOVE

We created you, With our love...
We cared for you, With our love...
We nurtured you, With our love....
We honored you, With our love...
We buried you, With our love...
We remember you, With our love.
~ Alice & Otto Weening, TCF/Cincinnati, OH



OUR BELOVED CHILDREN REMEMBERED BIRTHDAYS

CHILD		PARENTS
OLIVIA MAE BUTH.....	21	TIM & MELANIE BUTH
MATTHEW ISAAC CVIJANOVICH	38	SHERYL CVIJANOVICH
STEVEN "HERMAN" FESKE.....	61	ROSEMARY FESKE
RYAN P GOERTZ	41	JAMES & CHERI GOERTZ
COLE HALLAND	34	STEVEN & JOAN HALLAND
KYLE KASSMAN	34	TOM & NANCY KASSMAN
DENNIS JAMES MULDOON, JR.....	52	PATRICIA MULDOON
RYAN DEAN NELSON	39	BECKY NELSON
RAND LOREN PIERSALL	64	PERSYS PIERSALL
REED JOEL PROCHNOW	44	NEIL & KATHLEEN PROCHNOW
CHLOE GRACE RONGEN	8	CONNIE & BARRY RONGEN (Grandparents)
ANDREW SADEK.....	26	JOHN & TAMMY SADEK
TYLER JAMES THOEMKE.....	28	JAMIE & SHERI THOEMKE

ANNIVERSARIES

CHILD		PARENTS
BRIAN BJERKEN.....	13	DENNIS & SHIRLEY BJERKEN
RILEY MARK DAHLBERG	13	BLAKE & CHRISTINA DAHLBERG
GREGORY S GROOTERS	3	LARRY & HAZEL GROOTERS
MICHAEL L HANSON	11	LARRY & MARY HANSON
HEIDI HELLAND	8	JOHN & TERRI HELLAND
TARI L HELLER.....	12	RICHARD & CLARE ELLESS
JESSE ANDREW KOLNES.....	2	LEOBA KOLNES
LANNIE LEE KORNELIUS.....	12	LEROY & DONNA KORNELIUS
ERIC C LARSON	17	CRAIG & BARB LARSON
KEVIN DEANE MAESSE.....	3	HELEN MAESSE
KYLE NELSON	5	JERRY & YVONNE NELSON
CHLOE GRACE RONGEN	8	CONNIE & BARRY RONGEN (Grandparents)
JUSTIN DONALD RUEDIGER	1	STEVE & CARISSA HAUGEN

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

EACH LIFE IS LIKE A SONG

A life is like a song we write in our own tone and key,
Each Life we touch reflects a note that forms the melody.
We choose the theme and chorus of the song to bear our name,
And each will have a special sound, no two can be the same.

So when someone we love departs,
In memory we find
Their song plays on within the hearts
Of those they leave behind.

By Elma Burns Semko,
Mother to Bobby Burns

Lovingly lifted from the Northshore/Boston Chapter

SIBLING PAGE

A Holiday To Do List:

As a reflection back on the past 13 (Wow! has it really been that long?!) Christmases, I would like to share some ways that I have handled the holidays, as well as some additional thoughts. This time of the year is bittersweet for me now, as opposed to the first Christmas without my older brother, David. That was the worst.

At any rate, I can handle November and December much better now. I suppose I've learned a little along the way, and gained strength each year. Nonetheless, the anniversary of his death always gets to me. Unfortunately, it falls between Thanksgiving and Christmas on December 9th. Here's my list of suggestions for honoring a sibling whom you have lost, and on simply making it through yourself:

1. Hang that stocking. Go ahead. Put up your sibling's stocking. It isn't as though your brother or sister never existed, and isn't still a part of your life.
2. Write a poem or letter to your sibling and put it in the stocking.
3. Put up a tree, or continue with your holiday traditions. Yes, this is VERY difficult. But for most of our siblings, this was their favorite time of year. Celebrate how blessed you have been to have had your sister or brother for holidays past. Decorate the way THEY would have wanted to, instead of the way you would do it.
4. Create a "memory" box. This is simply a box of belongings from your sibling, or pictures of your sibling, etc. Wrap it in festive holiday paper, and put it under your tree if you have one.
5. Buy a gift for your sibling. Maybe it is something they truly would have wanted for the holidays, maybe it's something the two of you would have enjoyed together or gotten a good laugh out of. This can be VERY therapeutic.
6. Go somewhere that your sibling would have wanted to go--the beach, a movie they would have liked, a favorite restaurant, wherever. "Share" this time with your sibling. This is also good on their birthday. Celebrate that they had a life and that they are a part of yours!
7. Bake a favorite holiday goody of your sibling's.
8. Get together with your family and cry (and LAUGH -- it's OK to do this) at some great family memories from years past that involved your sibling. Share thoughts on great places you may have visited for the holidays, or anecdotes of you and your sibling trying to peek at what your gifts were ahead of time.
9. Put together a photo album of your sibling. This could be of your sibling's life in general, or of a specific subject, like the sport your sibling played, or holidays past.
10. Give your album to your parents. Cry (and LAUGH!) at the pictures and the memories they generate.

I hope that you are blessed this holiday season, and that my suggestions are helpful. Please know that the holidays get easier with time, and that you WILL make it through, even though it may seem impossible.

~ Amy Baker Ferry, TCF/Heart of Florida Chapter

This Thanksgiving

This Thanksgiving and always,
Through the grief,
Through the tears,
Through the loneliness,
Through the fears,
WE ARE THANKFUL

WE HAD OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS

~ Khaki Chambers, TCF/Pensacola, FL

THEY DON'T WEAR PURPLE HEARTS IN HEAVEN

I lost my brother to a foreign land;
I was too young to even understand
There was a knock at the front door,
Then Momma wasn't smiling anymore.
The man at the door was a Marine;
The first I've ever seen.
Momma told me to go out and play,
Then the preacher came and they started to pray.
Tears ran down Momma's eyes, and
I heard her say, "Why, Lord, Why?"
Father stood there seemingly mindless, all he said was,
"We've lost another of America's finest."
The Marine handed Momma a small velvet case,
Inside was a Purple Ribbon, attached to
a gold heart with Washington's face.
I asked Momma if it were mine,
But she said "It's your brother's, Sunshine."
"Momma can we send it to Kevin?"
She answered, "They don't wear Purple Hearts in
Heaven."

Author unknown

Lifted from TCF Atlanta Linked Together Newsletter

A GENTLE BREEZE

A gentle breeze descended onto the world, changing the atmosphere. He would flow through the house, around the block, throughout the neighborhood--through my heart. A gentle breeze, he changed many lives. On a hot day, he was a cool breeze, making the worst heat less intense.

He was a gentle breeze; a constant breeze; a breeze that made the lives of those he knew a little bit better. This breeze was a kind one, not one of destruction. A breeze such as this, as good as this, should remain endless.

But one cold night, a different wind came along and overpowered our gentle breeze. This wind was one of destruction, thriving on pain, torment and grief.

The gentle breeze that had captured my heart and soul was fading away, until ... stillness. Nothing moved. Time stood still. Heaviness was now taking the place of my gentle breeze. The new wind raged in me, forcing upon me everything it thrived on. That cold night, my gentle breeze died, leaving me with a tormenting storm of emotions and feelings. A storm that welled up grief and a devastating sense of loss in my heart.

My environment is so hostile, yet so very still. A gentle breeze, such as the one I had grown to love and rely on, comes only once. How I long to feel the gentle breeze again, teasing me with his spontaneity. How I long for the gentle breeze to be there for me on those hot, summer days that seem so heavy and endless. This breeze will always occupy a special place in my memory. The breeze I long for so much is a part of me.

This gentle breeze is my brother, Shannon.
Bereavement Magazine - (888)604-4673 (HOPE)
www.bereavementmag.org - November/December 1989

TAKE ME TO WHERE THE WATERMELON GROWS

Take me to where the watermelon grows
stretched out over years ago
Take me to where memories live, and sorrow
never casts its shadow
Show me the grass where laughter thrives
where little boys and girls dance
Take me to those rich fields of yesterday
ripe with the memories
...basking in sunlight,
waiting for me to smile
as I remember my child.

~ Alice J. Wisler

HOLIDAYS IN HEAVEN

The Holiday Season is just not the same,
A smile is missing when saying one name.
For parents who've lost a daughter or son,
Nothing can bring back the delightful fun,
Of watching them talk, laugh, or just run.
The memories are all that we do have now,
We do go on.....only God knows how.
A New Year comes as midnight arrives,
Our Angels still a big part of our lives.
If only we could trade the presents we receive,
For one more day with those whom we grieve!
But nothing can bring back our beloved child,
The one that laughed, cried, and often smiled.
They are together in a much better place,
Watching us cry.....touching our face!
Although we miss them on Holidays to share,
Be assured their loving presence fills the air,
At home, in church, at New York's Times Square!
So celebrating the Holidays are now hard to do,
But always remember they are thinking of you too,
Wishing you happiness and showing their love,
Not on this Earth, but from Heaven above!

~ Dan Bryl, TCF/Lawrenceville, GA
In Memory of his daughter, Jessica

INNER TEMPEST STILLED

Sometimes I sense a little flutter.
Like a shadow swiftly slipping by.
Or I hear a silent, gentle murmur.
Like a soft whisper from out the sky.
Sometimes... I hear you call my name,
Or clearly see your face before me.
And I feel that you are with me still.
Then peacefully... I come to know
As I am thinking happy thoughts of you
You, my son, are thinking of me too.
Loving memories fill my aching heart.
As dreaming dreams of what could be.
Or might have been, if you were here.
Until the piercing pain of losing you
Comes tumbling down on trembling fear.
And clearly once again I hear you say,
"But Mom... What if I had never been.
You could not then in LOVE remember me."

~ Beenie Legato

Thanks for a little while

Thank you for life, for its good times and bad.
Thank you for love, even when I can't feel it.
Thank you for the love (we used to share)
For the arms that held me tight.
Thank you for my family
In faraway places,
In different times.
Thank you for the songs we sang,
For the dreams we saved,
For the smiles we shared.
Thank you for the strength that eludes me just now.
Thank you for the weakness that sends me to
my knees.
Thank you for the searching, the reaching, the hoping.
Thank you for the bonds of memory that hold me
in place,
Even when I don't believe in it anymore,
Or...forget what it is all about.
Thank you most of all,
For having been blessed with the love I have known,
Even now when I fear I will forget it.
Thank you for memory and
For filling it full measure for me.
It wasn't nearly long enough, but it will have to do.
Thanks for the moments we danced.
Thanks for the little while.

~ Darcie D. Sims, Ph.D

Meditation

A woman whose life had had many hard times said, "The hardest grief I have had to bear is this temporary separation from my daughter." That she was able, in faith, to view her adolescent daughter's death as a temporary separation surely helped her immeasurably. But of course she longed for her daughter's presence now.

It is foolish to expect to "get over" a serious grief. The pain is always there, the fantasy of what might have been. Over time, I'm sure that for this woman the pain was mixed in with happy memories of the daughter's childhood and adolescence, and also with her anticipation of their ultimate reunion.

So the mosaics of adjustment are laid down. On some days the grief is most noticeable; on others, the happy memories; on others, the hope of reunion burns bright.

*As I think about my loss, the strands of grief and memory
and hope are mysteriously braided together.*

- Martha Whitmore Hickman, *Healing After Loss*

Cancer is not God's will.
The death of a child is not God's will.
Deaths from automobile accidents
are not God's will.
The only God worth believing in
does not cause the tragedies,
but lovingly comes into the anguish
with us. -

~Madeleine L'Engle

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: _____

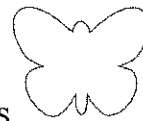
Date: _____

(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.

Coping with Grief: Winter Blues

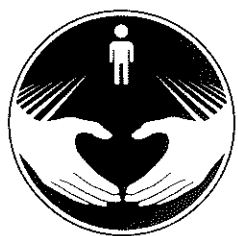
When the weather gets colder and the days get shorter, we often find ourselves feeling low. Some people call this the Winter Blues. When you are grieving, those blues can feel overwhelming. Grief itself is hard to cope with and cold winds and longer nights can make those feelings seem more intense. Here are a few ideas that may help you cope with the Winter Blues:

- Winter only lasts a few months. Use this time to reflect on your relationship with the person who died. Sometimes in our efforts to deny our loss, we rob ourselves of precious memories.
- Reach out to friends or family when you can. Often our isolation is worse because we do not allow ourselves time with others. You are not alone. There are many other people going through a similar experience. Although your relationship with your loved one is special, other people can understand. Take the risk to ask someone over for coffee or tea. Share with them.
- Take time to look through picture albums. Gather family to share stories. Make a new tradition during the dreary months of winter for family to gather for an evening of remembering. The holidays are over and the pressure is off. Maybe other people are feeling the same way and are afraid to talk about it.
- Try a grief support group. Sometimes all we need is to know other people hear us and understand. A group can help you to know you are normal.
- Read ... favorite stories, comedies, novels, or information about grief to understand your own reactions better. Somehow reading about such topics helps us know we are not alone. You can look for grief materials in your local library, church, or local TCF chapter.
- Take good care of yourself. Eat right, rest and pamper your body. This goes for any season. Your body is under a tremendous amount of stress in adjusting to your loss.
- Since grief affects us physically, paying attention to our bodies is important. Whether you prefer to do things alone or with others, physical activity helps. Taking a walk, doing simple aerobics, indoor swimming, playing racquetball or other activities can help you keep your body ready for the continued adjustment to loss. Feeling better physically can make a difference.
- If you feel sad and need to cry, know that is a normal reaction. You are not weak if you need to show your emotions.
- Write a letter to your loved one. Sometimes we need to communicate with them. Going to the cemetery is okay and normal. If the weather prevents that, a letter can be very helpful.
- Remember that you will survive this loss. The pain and ache can seem like it will last forever. The intensity will lessen in time, although you will always remember your loved one. Time does not necessarily "heal" all wounds, but it can help us adjust to the change. Take it minute by minute ... then day by day. From TCF Newsletter, Pittsburgh, PA

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	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.