



Conference Care Newsletter

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*“And went to him, and bound up his wounds . . . and took care of him” Luke 10:34
“But that the members should have the same care one for another” 1 Corinthians 12:25*

Editorial

Walls and Barriers

Walls and barriers are built for different purposes. Walls are needed for shelter and used to divide buildings into different rooms. Barriers are set up to keep noise out of residential developments near busy, noisy highways. Barriers keep waves at bay in harbors. Firewalls function in computers. All serve good purposes.

People erect barriers and walls in their minds. Some walls keep out the undesirable. Some walls protect people from going places and doing things that they have vowed not to be part of. People can close themselves to the clamour around them to maintain privacy in the midst of chaos. Sometimes a person draws a line. It's a point that cannot be crossed in everyday relationships. For example: I accept your actions in my relationship with you, but I will not allow you to control me. In a general sense, these walls serve a good purpose.

There are walls that are undesirable. The Berlin wall, a literal wall, was one example. The iron curtain, a barrier not as literal, served similar purposes. Neighbors build walls to maintain privacy in town. Attaining one with the purchase of a property is one thing. Building one or seeing your neighbors build one can be a little sensitive. What are they saying? What am I saying?

And so undesirable walls and barriers are erected in peoples' lives as well. There are things I will not talk about. No one needs to know how I feel about this. I will do almost anything to hide the mental turmoil I feel from time to time or on a regular basis. What I do with my life is my business. I will never share my financial status

with my brethren. I know I crossed a line, but that is my problem.

As people mix and relate to one another it is soon evident where the walls exist. These walls create strained relationships. They bring with them bondage and unhappiness. They can be in families, the community and the church brotherhood. How can they be broken down? Whose responsibility is it to break them down?

You try to push them down, and they usually become stronger. You try kindness, and although this is a good way, it does not necessarily do the job. Patience, of course, is a virtue, and we pray God for the same.

The biggest responsibility lies with the person who has created the wall. If he or she likes it, it will remain strong and erect. If it is causing any element of hardship in relationships, it will take humility and a few positive steps forward to break it down.

Are there barriers in your life? Are you tired of them? Who is your friend? Whom do you trust? Go to such a person and open your heart. You say, "I have no friends." You say, "I trust no one." Either of those thoughts is part of the wall. So go to the Lord. He is a true friend. But it's almost sure that He will send you to some person. It's just the way it works.

And when you happen to be the friend and the one who someone trusts, open your heart and mind in a nonjudgmental way and listen to the story he or she has to tell. Don't pick up hammers and spades to hurry the process of breaking down the wall. Well begun is half done.

No one really likes walls and barriers. Take responsibility and break them down. When they are gone, it will reduce the stress and strain of life and bring on freedom and happiness.

I Have to Confess

Jayn Hanes, Bonners Ferry, Idaho

I have to confess that I am guilty of spying. I overheard a young man as the Conference Care paper was handed out. A brother said to him, “Do you read that?” He said he had to admit he didn’t. Said it didn’t interest him, and he didn’t think it pertained to him. Good thing his parents didn’t feel that way about him.

As soon as we’re born, we begin to die. In between is our “book of life” with many chapters (for most). The last chapters in our books are just as challenging as the ones before. But with a different perspective.

How old is “old”? We are one year old. Then we are eighty years old; obviously not the same “old.” When you are twelve, thirty looks “old.” When you are thirty, fifty looks “old.” And so on. All of a sudden you are old! In years anyway. Why doesn’t anyone want to be old? If you are young, one thing is for sure (if you live a natural life span) you will be old. It’s God’s order. All older people have been young. Yes, you young people, it’s true. Older people have all been your age at one time.

As I think of our elderly and oldsters who are not in their own homes but are in care facilities, I realize they are living the last chapters in their book of life. They have much wisdom and experience, even if the eyesight and hearing is waning. They have contributed and sacrificed much so that you and I and others can live like we do. They’ve worked, played, suffered and so on. They have passed a torch. Don’t forget them. Don’t think they “don’t pertain to you.” They need our love, prayers, and help. Not scrutiny (perhaps about their driving) or criticism (about the way they live, i.e., thinking they need to go into a care facility). Parents raise their children by helping them. By loving them. By guiding them with patience and understanding. Now it’s time for the children to do the same with their parents.

The Lord willing and if time continues, we are all heading the same direction. My mother used to tell me, “What you do comes back to you.” Give and you will be given. God will bless accordingly. May your chapters all have good endings.

I’m blessed and thankful for our older ones. They have been an important part in my spiritual journey. May God grant them a blessed reward.

Geriatrics Personalized

Alfred Isaac, Birnie, Manitoba

This is a subject that has few guidelines spelled out by anyone, and if you think that this will throw much

light onto an old subject, be prepared for a disappointment. Volumes have been preached and written about child nurture and training, the handling of teen problems, effective parenting and grandparenting, and all the stages in between. But little, very little, about aging and how the aging cope or try to cope with it, and perhaps don’t succeed very well. Being of the age of fourscore years, I should by now have some direction to give to fellow sufferers of this non-phenomenal juncture in the life of those of us who are still in there, trying to maintain a more or less constant flow of rational thinking and acting. Hint no 1: Don’t complain about growing old; many don’t have that opportunity. The only alternative to aging is six feet under, and few of us opt for that. Or want to, unless we’re sick enough.

When my brother, who is ten years my senior, was my present age (he’s still living, if you can call it that) commented on this phenomena some time ago, bemoaning the fact that no one seemed to feel constrained to vouch for positive inputs on this subject, giving some much needed direction. Why is there no one who even ventures to give some concrete teaching on this subject, written or verbal? I’m not talking about growing old gracefully—only the young are foolish enough to attempt that—what I mean is sheer aging! The senses are noticeably receding; sight, hearing, comprehension, taste, chewing, smell, voice control, intimate desires, and others. Zest, sheer piquancy for living, would not be diminished if all the afore-mentioned had remained keen. Now try and maintain a sense of humor in the face of lapsing functions, functions that never failed before but are now flying well below half-mast. Only the entirely uninitiated are foolhardy enough to try and improve your spirits by lauding all the advantages of full retirement. I have an entire book on how to develop and maintain a sense of humor, but it’s written by someone approximately fifty years old. She writes well but sadly lacks experience in aging.

Glasses help, for years, because you start them at age forty-seven or sooner. Hearing aids are only amplifiers that raise noise levels but do nothing, or even less, especially for comprehension. Dentures have a way of improving ascetics (may draw the attention away from wrinkling face when you turn the smile to full volume) but may turn embarrassingly traitorous as in chewing, just when needed most. The others listed have even less means of assistance.

Reading, if eyesight has failed but moderately, tends to stale. People roll their eyes when you tell stories because they’ve heard them too often before. Eating holds some attraction, mostly to drive away boredom. People, out of sheer civility, may tell you that you sing well, considering your age. The only reason you can sometimes hack your own (I’ll say singing, because it sounds better than yowling or mewling) is because you’re so deaf that you can’t

hear how bad it really sounds. Scrabble is a pastime that equates to reading, well, within reasonable parameters. Crokinole is even more boring. So then you nap after lunch for ten or twenty minutes, wake up at 1:30, see no reason to get up, and sleep another half an hour. Then because your spouse is still in the land of nod, you sit up and stare into outer (or inner) space for twenty minutes and then get up and hammer away at this piece of modernity only to find out that inspiration snuck away on you, just supposing you ever had any, which is (or was) at best, ambiguous at the very beginning.

And then the phone rings. Saved by the bell! Recess like we used to say when we were children suffering in a stuffy classroom laboring over some mathematical equation that refused to become clarified in our (mine at least) foggy brains. Information, hot off the press! Great-grandchild number twenty-three has arrived today.

So now I've spent an hour or two on what I thought was a worthwhile topic only to find out that the reason no one has ever written on this subject before is because there is nothing worth recording. And probably never will be. But surely, you say, something of worth should come out when so much time and energy has been expended. Dream on!

Then the flu strikes. Before too long, you begin to wish the old boredom back. After all, anything beats this aggravating, itchy, sneezing, crawly, Kleenex-consuming exercise forced upon you because the powers that be (pharmaceutical) missed including (verified by one local doctor) the one ingredient in the flu serum, a shot of which you received a month ago that might have averted this catastrophe. The pharmaceuticals and their henchmen, the retailers, have made their money, so all was not in vain, at least not for everybody.

Now four years after beginning this composition, I experience facets of aging which become more disconcerting and, at the same time, possibly less aggravating because of the fact that perception in general is slipping. "And desire shall fail because man goeth to his long home" (Eccles. 12:5). When interests fade, be that in activities as participant or as spectator, what have you got left? When events and happenings take place that would have been of major interest and concern at one time leave you feeling indifferent, what then? That's God weaning a person from this world. You know the end is nearing.

In this as in all other aspects of life, we take comfort from the Bible verses that begin, "It came to pass," nothing has come to stay. On that cheerful and encouraging note, I can conclude this narration. "After all this life is over and our burdens have been lifted," as the one songwriter says, this song will be exchanged for a far nobler and more melodious one. In that great by and by (which is

"frighteningly," no I don't like that word, I should say "gloatingly" closer than it was), we will never more think of time dragging. If time has ceased, there is no more dragging, staring at the four walls and wondering, in our more lucid moment, "What's for supper?"

When I opened this document, I realized that it was almost four years ago that I first began to put these vagrant thoughts on paper or, rather, onto this monitor. What might I add to this script that could prove of even mild interest to someone who might perchance have an opportunity to peruse this bit of written verbosity?

The world, per se, holds little attraction. That is a plus. Youthful temptations are ancient history. The brother mentioned at the beginning of this treatise has reached the "land of endless delight," as have numerous other acquaintances. Face death. Discuss it. Ignoring it will neither hasten nor delay it. Eternity, when faced by those who have experienced the first resurrection, holds no dread but, contrariwise, is anticipated with pleasure. One older sister, years ago, said it was not fear of death, it was dying she dreaded. That is natural, very much a part of our fleshly humanness.

So back to the original question, what is a person supposed to do and think when joints and muscles become ever less cooperative? What can one do to keep up a positive and optimistic outlook on life in general and one's own in particular when the physical and possibly the mental are on a rather steep decline? Fortunately, the mental process remains more or less active and operable. The latter might well be a moot point. But for assumption's sake, let's leave it functioning. Fabricating prose is a hobby that has seemed to serve me well, at times, for my own entertainment, first of all, and then possibly for a few others willing to wade through it, though I have said on occasion that my wellspring of inspiration threatens to dry up. Then it ceases to be a wellspring. Other more gifted writer's labors serve well, taking up the slack when my own afflation (that's just another word for inspiration; the word *inspiration* borders on becoming slightly shopworn) languishes. I love reading, which pales after too many hours of unbroken indulgence.

This morning for my personal devotions I read Psalms 90, 91, and 92. That clearly spoke to my heart as to the reason for it all. So regardless of my age, I know that God's promises have never failed, and so ought my praises, too, never cease. Thanks anyway, reader, for letting me cry on your shoulder. The acuteness of any need dissipates when shared with others and viewed in God's eternal light.

Things We May Do

Name withheld

“Oh, the things we may do, you and I, you and I; Oh, the love we can give if we try; Just a word or a song as we’re passing along, They will count in the great by and by” (Lizzie DeArmond, “Oh, the Things We May Do”).

“Open thy mouth for the dumb” (Prov. 31:8). I want to speak out for those among us who are silently suffering or struggling. It is likely that some of them have no idea what to even do about it or where to turn.

To the struggling ones, I want to take you to the story of the children of Israel crossing the Jordan. It takes faith to step into the river and trust others. But try, and if your feet splash into the water and no miracle happens, simply step back and say, “I guess this isn’t the river God wants me to cross.” But, please, don’t give up hope. He will take care of you and lead you to another river, until you find the waters parted, and you are able to cross safely over on the dry ground.

And, yes, it is frustrating when those around you simply don’t “get it.” But, remember, traffic almost always moves in two directions. If we want understanding from others, we need to extend it to them. I’m not saying that everyone is doing all they can, but at the same time, they are likely not as uncaring as we judge them to be at times. Some time ago, I was playing a game with several friends. One of the players made a move, and two others at the table were like, “Hey! You can’t do that! It’s against the rules!” Well, it was fully in accordance with her rules. So we consulted the rules, talked about it, and came to a friendly agreement. Each of us develops our own set of rules from the home we grew up in. Then we move out into the wide world and expect the rest of the population to operate by our set of rules. Likely it’s not going to happen. Our ability to adjust our “rules” in order to accommodate those of others will smooth the road for everyone.

And to those looking on, if you see someone who appears to be struggling, why not reach out to them and be a friend? Sometimes these individuals lack the courage to reach out and get the help for which they long. They feel different; they don’t know what people will think of them if they reveal their inner thoughts and feelings. They’ve tried before, and it fell flat. Chances are that they are confused and don’t understand a lot of things themselves. Reach out to them and show that you care. Love will find a way. Apathy will find an excuse. You don’t have to give them answers. If you have two ears and a compassionate heart, you have all you need. Just listen, and if you have nothing else to say, tell them you will be praying for them. And then, don’t forget about them. Check back in with them later and see how it’s

going. Or if you think they need professional help, encourage them to seek it. If they take you into their confidence, please keep what they share confidential unless they give you permission to do otherwise. And if they ask for help via indirect communication (messaging), please do not wait several days before responding. This sends them the message that their needs are not important. If you are busy or don’t have an answer at the time, simply tell them, “I got your message, but I will need some time to be able to answer your request.” Prompt, consistent communication means a lot.

There are many parents today who are on the front lines. They are facing challenges daily which most of us know nothing about. Can we stand beside them, offer encouragement, and show that we care about what they are going through?

What I see as the key in these situations is open-hearted sharing, listening, and empathy—everyone laying down prejudices and opening their hearts and minds to what the other person is saying and what God reveals to be His truth. And for clarity, *prejudice* is a preconceived opinion; an adverse opinion or leaning formed without just grounds or before having sufficient knowledge (Merriam-Webster).

Now the question: How do we help someone who “doesn’t have a need”? I believe that the first step is going to be much the same—developing a friendly, nonthreatening relationship with them. You say, “Nonthreatening? What’s up with that?” Have you ever watched someone approach a wounded animal? You may see its flight-or-fight instinct engage, depending on how it views the advances of the individual. Well, there are some wounded creatures in our midst. 1 Corinthians 9:22 reads, “To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak.” I do not believe that we are to condone sin, but we may need to divest ourselves of some of our strength in order to reach an individual. Perhaps these could be strong points in our personality or principles we have always held to—I don’t know.

I would like to share some thoughts written by Margaret P. Toews: “It is not your job to convict your loved ones of their need of salvation. That is the work of the Holy Spirit. It is not your work to condemn them; that is the work of the Word. Neither is it your work to save your loved one; that is the work of the Savior. Your work is to love.” Our love and prayers can combine to create a powerful force in the hearts of these individuals. And God is very clever. He has ingenious ways of getting people’s attention.

Another hindrance may be our hesitancy to move outside our comfort zone. Jesus left us a shining example to follow.

I will close with a quote from Leo Buscaglia: “Too

often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.”

Joy in the Midst of the Storms

Marlene Oberholtzer

Christians should always be happy, right? You try, but you fall so short of the mark that you give up in despair. Happiness and sadness are emotions. Emotions are affected by things that happen to us. Sometimes emotions are hard to control, so it isn't realistic to think we should be happy all the time.

Joy isn't just an emotion. It is a fruit of the Spirit. I think as long as a Christian is surrendered to God's will, he can have a constant joy deep down that is not affected by events. We don't always feel joy. It is like the sun. Some days it is brightly shining. Sometimes it is hidden behind the clouds. But even on the darkest days, joy can shine through the clouds enough so that life isn't totally dark and hopeless.

It is the middle of the night. You haven't slept much for several days. You feel like you are going over the edge, and you wonder if you ever will be sane again. But you can feel God holding you. You used to have doubts and fears about your salvation, but when you can feel God holding you, there is no question. And so there is, maybe not complete happiness but, joy in the middle of the night.

You are sitting in the psychiatrist's office. She drops the bombshell, "Classic bipolar." And it rocks your whole world! Bipolar? She might as well have told you that you will be a nutcase for life. Bipolar! Aren't those the crazy men who bomb buildings and shoot people? Later you realize that you don't need to fear that you might do things like that if God is holding your hand. Your friends convince you that the B word isn't a life sentence, that people do very well once they get stabilized on the right medication. In fact, they do so well that they think they can quit taking those little pills, and that is the recipe for disaster.

So you set out to conquer this giant that is in your way. You pray a lot and have the strong faith that things will get better. You are determined that you will be like the little canary at the bottom of the coal mine and will never lose your song. But the road keeps getting longer, and you realize that maybe you aren't going to conquer this giant. Maybe it is something you will have to live with for the rest of your life. You tell someone how discouraged you are, how you tried so hard and spent so much money, and

things aren't getting better, and maybe they never will. He tells you that you aren't going to get better until you lay down your will and come to accept your problem. You try to accept it, but you can't handle the thought of living with bipolar for the rest of your life. Finally, you tell the Lord, "I want to lay it down, but I can't. You will just have to take it."

Later these thoughts come to you: Everybody has a cross, and yours could be a lot worse. You think of the people who don't know God as their Father and Friend. You wouldn't trade with them for the world. It doesn't matter if we are blind or crippled, have cancer or "computer problems." The important thing is that God is holding our hands, and if He is, we will go to Heaven when we die, and in Heaven there will be no cancer or bipolar. You learn that the only way to have joy is to build altars—not just once or twice but again and again. When you come to accept your problem, things do get better. On the good days you are even thankful for your cross, because it does have some good side effects. The bipolar "highs" generate creativity. By the way, if you have Asperger's, dyslexia, OCD, schizophrenia, depression, or bipolar, you are in good company. Many of the famous scientists, inventors, writers, artists, musicians, etc. had "computer problems," too. Go figure.

Just when you think you have learned how to deal with your giant (well, sort of anyway) his friend OCD drops in to say hi. Horrible thoughts pound on your brain till you can hardly think rationally anymore. Then your thoughts start churning, "Maybe you aren't a real Christian because real Christians wouldn't think such thoughts." You pray, sing, and read the Bible. Nothing helps, so you start losing faith in God. You feel like your boat is sinking. Then as you sing "Master, the Tempest Is Raging," this phrase jumps out at you, "No waters can swallow the ship where lies the Master of ocean, and earth, and skies." You realize that it is impossible for your boat to go down if Jesus is in it, even if He seems to be sleeping. Even while your mind is in turmoil, down in your heart there is no question—not since those days when you could feel God holding you. There is, maybe not complete happiness but joy in the midst of the storm, because even if you can't feel God, you know He is in your boat.

During that roller coaster ride of bipolar highs and lows—the highs when you felt absolutely crazy like you had too many energy drinks, when your mind was spinning 100 mph till it drove you nuts, and the lows when life looked dark and hopeless, when your mind only went 5 mph—those were the days when you prayed the hardest and sang the loudest. Those were the days when songs and Bible verses became very meaningful. Some days the only thing that mattered anymore is that you have a home in Heaven, and in Heaven we will be happy all the time.

Early Support and Counseling for Parents

Tim Penner (editor)

The challenges faced by parents of children with disabilities and birth defects are not always easy. When our fourth child was born, we had a major surprise. The child had both a cleft lip and cleft pallet. There was basically no evidence of the condition being genetic. We hardly knew what it was. The support we had from the medical staff was tremendous. The subsequent help received from the complete medical team involved is still prized.

Our daughter went through numerous surgeries and procedures, and today it is nearly a non-issue. Her condition was completely taken care of within the provincial medical system. When she was about sixteen, there was one more surgery or adjustment the surgeon offered to do on her face. Our daughter said she was content with the way she looked and said she didn't want it, which was honored by everyone involved. The support from family, friends, and the medical team was always great. We are still grateful for it all.

Obviously this was not a major disability, but it was real, and a lot of time and effort were put into correcting it.

There are disabilities that cannot be changed. Some can be corrected to a measure. But the stress and life-changing conditions are never ending in many cases.

Below is a story about a family. As you read, you will sense some of the difficulties they experienced. At the end of the story are some ideas that could be developed to aid and assist people in similar circumstances.

Are we ready to launch into a project like this? The Care Committee would be interested in hearing your comments. Our names and contact information are in the Conference Committee Booklet.

A Picture

Name withheld

A picture comes to mind. The scene is the ocean, very beautiful in its majesty, very terrible in its power. Someone is out there, too far out to be seen clearly. It appears that he is in distress, but he is too far away from the shore for the people to see clearly. However, the longer they watch, the more they realize someone is drowning.

The peoples' responses are different. The larger group of people stand on the shore shouting directions on what to do and what not to do. They call out, "No don't do that! Don't go there! Come to the shore where we are! It's safe

here! God is over here. Why did you go out there?" They shout, "We're praying for you!"

But that's as much as they know to do. Because they have never experienced being out there themselves, they have no idea of the horrible fears and emotions of the drowning person. They don't know he's mostly deaf with panic. With outstretched arms and pointing fingers, they try to point the way to the shore, but they don't realize that the drowning person is much too exhausted to see what they see.

Then there's a small, very small, group of people who wade out into the water. They reach out their hands and say, "I'm here. God is here. You'll get through this. I know because I've been out there myself. Can you reach my hand? How can I help? I love you. God loves you, and He won't let you go. You're doing the best you can. I know that God is stronger than the ocean waves." And they wade out as far as they can so they can make eye contact, and they say with soft eyes, "You will be okay!"

And the person who's being washed over with wave after wave? He doesn't know if God is real. It all seems so hopeless. All he knows is that his life is over. All he knows is despair. If God is love, why would He ever allow this to happen? If God is good, why does He leave me here?

Then he looks into the eyes of the person closest to his distress, and he sees something that calms him a tiny bit. He sees a little bit of God's love. That friend says to him, "Try a different swimming technique. It helped me. I learned about it when I was in deep water, over my head."

One tiny bit at a time, the drowning person gains hope that his life isn't over. Suddenly he looks up and gets a little glimpse of God's kind and loving eyes, and he gains enough faith to cry out for help. Slowly, slowly, waves still washing over him, he sees a Hand reaching down. Strong. Gentle.

With time and healing, he will eventually realize that the Hand was actually underneath him the whole time.

A Story

Helmut Herrmann

My story is as follows. My daughter Ona was born in Edmonton. In that city when a child with Down Syndrome is born, the hospital contacts the local support group, and within one day, someone from the group shows up at the hospital to offer support, advice, and counseling to the parents. In our case, the woman who showed up brought her daughter along and guided us through a very turbulent time in our life. Questions like: What supports are there available? What doctors, what programs, what medical

needs? When a child with disabilities comes into your life, it is easy to feel that you are alone in the struggle and that no one understands. A doctor can open a medical book and read what is there, but that does not answer your deeper questions.

Life can disappoint. People can disappoint. Family can disappoint. One learns that people who were once your friends may not be there for you when you need them most. People you trusted and respected suddenly turn their backs on you. This may be unintended or done unconsciously. People don't know how to handle something like this and may take the easy way out, by evasion. At the end of the day, new parents are left dealing with the new child all by themselves. Families who have a child with disabilities come into their lives, have their lives changed forever. It is a path that others do not travel. There may be an overwhelming sense of disbelief, shock, and confusion. They may have to deal with depression because everything seems too much to bear. These families have different needs than others. They need information, support, guidance, counseling, and understanding from a broad spectrum of people. They need attention medically, spiritually and emotionally from the community, family, friends, and neighbors. Family dynamics are deeply affected. How will this new addition alter the lives of the other siblings in the family? What is their role in this? How will this alter their lives and relationships? Everyone is in uncharted waters and must find a way to cope. Every day is a learning experience.

My thoughts are along these lines. I would suggest that an effort be made to organize on a state and provincial level. Families in each area who are dealing with disabilities would make themselves available to help others. They would be willing to contact and visit anyone who has a newborn child with disabilities. I am thinking primarily within the brotherhood, but I am also thinking of the humanitarian and Christian outreach if it were to include anyone. From my own experience, I feel that it is essential that the response be immediate. The longer it takes, the less effective it is. The emotional support is needed as soon as possible. Because of the urgency of the need, I feel that it is something that is best done on a local or regional level. Knowledge of the situation and communication between staff members of the various congregations

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Send change of address or quantity to Lowell Koehn, P.O. Box 66, Burns, KS 66840; Ph. 620-726-5536; e-mail: leeprinting@eaglecom.net.

would sometimes bring awareness to those who could help. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of making contact as soon as possible after the child is born.

Are there others willing to share their experience? Are we willing to offer ourselves to such a work? How can we organize such an effort? Does it need to be organized, or are we able to take this inspiration and spontaneously make ourselves available when the need arises?

Notice and Invitation

Care Meeting (Formerly called Special Needs Meeting)

Conference Care Committee is planning a Care Meeting in Crooked Creek, Alberta.

The meeting will begin Thursday, August 9, with sign-in at 9:00 A.M. and close Friday, August 10, at 5:00 P.M.

Courtesy Committee members in Crooked Creek are:

Cal Thiessen teesoncal@yahoo.ca ;	Ph. 1-587-202-9772
Gary Wohlgemuth glwohlg@gmail.com ;	Ph. 1-780-402-5867
Pete Toews, pete@starfab.net ;	Ph. 1-780-814-3106

Please contact the above people for travel information and accommodations.

The agenda is in the planning stages. We hope to have presentations on:

- a) The Connected Child
- b) Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS).
- c) We are working at getting someone to speak on what parents face who deal with children with disabilities on a daily basis. We trust this will provide encouragement and inspiration.
- d) There will be opportunity for you to share your experiences

Other points in consideration are:

- a) Vicarious trauma: (VT) is a transformation in the self of a trauma worker or helper that results from empathic engagement with traumatized clients and their reports of traumatic experiences.
- b) Organization of support groups.
- c) Encouragement to cultivate positive relationships.

The care committee and resource team are very open for more agenda item suggestions. Please contact Patrick Hanes, patrickhanes@outlook.com; or Mark Loewen, mkloewen7585@gmail.com, or any other members of the care team you are familiar with.

More information will be sent out via Conference Services.

