

The Gift of Support Groups

You are with me everywhere now.

At all meetings, pre-conferences, conferences, IEPs.
At each discussion I have, there you are
Lyn, Marilyn, Judy, Jan, Rick and especially Ronna.

I take you all with me.
I tuck you "as a group" into my pocket
when I have to face all those professionals
who can't make my child normal.

While in my pocket, I hold on to you tightly.
And you, my wonderful friends, hold tightly onto me.
When they, with a capital "T" unintentionally say something
that scorches my soul.

You as a group gather around my hand-in-pocket.
You sing to me.
You tell me to hang on.
You comfort me.
You are my adult elves that I can take anywhere and always.

I can carry on
because you.....the group is with me.

It's like this.
I just don't feel as alone anymore.
Yes, yes, of course I must walk this journey by myself.
But — from now and forever
when I need it most
You are there in a way that makes a difference.

When I say it is hell.
You know what I mean.

When I say I am enraged.
You know what I mean.

When I say it is unrelenting
and hurts more than I every knew pain could hurt,
You believe me.
You nod
and I know that I've been heard.

So, dear elves
Come with me.
And when it's not my turn to fight another battle,
I'll leap into **your** pockets and hold onto **your** hand.

Janice Fialka, April 1992