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## SURVIVING LOSS BRINGS NATIVE TWIN CITIAN BACK TO HER CIRCLE OF STRENGTH

ST. MICHAEL, MN. Minnesota native JoAnne Funch found her way back to the Twin Cities to receive support and strength from her circle of family and friends following the deaths of her mother and husband. “It was unexpected when my mom passed in 2005. She had been ill, but I didn’t think about her dying – not yet. Less than one month later, my husband fell from a ladder, sustained a head trauma, and died. Not long after that, my sister-in-law was diagnosed with breast cancer and one of my oldest friends from junior high school had a heart attack. Later that year, I found out my father had prostate cancer.” It was a year of disbelief. Life had really thrown her a curve ball.

In April of 2007, after selling her house and leaving memories from the past 22 years, she got in her car and headed back to Minnesota to start a new chapter in her life.

Today, JoAnne is working to build a business she had started part-time in 2003 called *Circle of Strength*. Her mission is to provide inspirational gift products for women and produce fun events where women can make connections and share knowledge with like-minded women. “Circle of Strength has taken on a whole new meaning for me,” says JoAnne. “I share my story of surviving loss and the circle of family and friends who have helped me along the way.” JoAnne continues to be a staunch advocate for women and charities that benefit women such as Minneapolis-based *Ready for Success* where she volunteers her time and resources. She has also become a voice to comfort those grieving by sharing her own story and the lessons she learned along the way.

“Today, my family members are cancer free and my friend is doing well, but what I went through profoundly changed how I look at my own life. Life is a gift, and I am filled with gratitude for all that I have and all that I am.”

To find out more information contact JoAnne Funch at: (763) 497-1779, or visit the website at: [www.circleofstrength.com](http://www.circleofstrength.com)

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