

My Friend Charlie

He is my friend: I am his friend
I help him out: He helps me to learn
I help him to learn: He helps me to grow
I help him to grow: He teaches me to accept

His struggle: Is my struggle
His vulnerability: Leads to my respect
My respect: Leads him to trust
His trust: Leads to my devotion

His availability: Feeds my desire to be needed
I keep his secrets: He keeps mine
 We have an arrangement
His lack of self-consciousness: Leads to my tolerance
His constant need for stimulation: Leads to my patience
His discomfort: Sharpens my sensitivity
His unhappiness: Is my challenge
His presence: Eases my isolation
His loyalty: Leads to my loyalty
 Which leads to mutual appreciation

His brokenness: Makes me accept my own brokenness
 Which leads to healing
His humanity: Leads to personal connection
His steadfastness: Centers me

His smile: Is my reward
His joy: Lifts my spirits
His happiness: Gives me a sense of purpose
His struggles: Expose my anxieties
 Which tests me
 Then strengthens me
 And in turn bolsters my faith

In guiding: I am guided
In helping: I am helped
In teaching: I am taught

In his laughter: There is joy
In that joy: There is energy
In that energy: There is spirit
In that spirit: There is grace

In his eyes: There is a glow
In that glow: Is his soul
In his soul: There is God
And in God: There is peace

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this by Nate Hajdu and the
Jubilee Association, a
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Maryland, as long as his name
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Nate is one of three direct
support professionals who spoke
at the Interfaith Disability
Presummit on September 22 at
St. Margaret's Episcopal Church
in Washington DC on the ways
that their faith is impacted by
supporting and working with
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