

The Healing Journey
Excerpts from An Anthology for Bereaved
Siblings
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YESTERDAY, TODAY
AND TOMORROW

Yesterday

You were here and I took it for granted that you would always be here. Telling you I loved you and was proud of you seemed unimportant. There would be time for that when we were older - when we fought less and talked more.

Today

I know that time will never come, and I will never have the chance to say these things face-to-face. So I write them and think them and hope you know I mean them now and have always felt them.

Tomorrow

Each day, the pain and regrets of things left unsaid get easier to deal with. I have begun to realize that you knew how I felt because you felt the same way. And as more tomorrows turn into yesterdays, I will find peace in that knowledge. Someday, somewhere, we will meet again and I will have my chance then.

Shannon Odessa Stiener
TCF, Lowell, IN

SHE'S HERE BUT NOT

She's here, but she's there.
She's with us, but she's not.
She's right around the bend,
But then she's gone again.
She's far away but so near,
It's like she's gone but here again.

Stacy Sharp
TCF, Defiance OH

To My Brother

Wherever we look,
You are there.
You are the light
On the water.
You are the blossom
On the tree.
You are a thought,
And you are a feeling.
Wherever we are,
You are.

Martha Dubinsky
Chappaqua NY

You Did Not Die

You live in the beautiful wind that blows.
You live in the sound of birds that crow.
You live in the sun that shines so bright.
You live in the peaceful dark at night.
You live in a star I see in the sky.
You live in ocean waves that come in with the tide.
You live in the smell of flowers and grass.
You live in the summer that goes so fast.
You live in my heart that hurts so much.
You did not die, we only lost touch.

Shari Swirsky
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

BECAUSE

Because you can't feel me,
Doesn't mean I'm not there.
Because you can't see me,
Doesn't mean I'm not near.
Because you can't hear me,
Doesn't mean I don't speak.
Because you can't see me,
Doesn't mean I'm out of reach.
Because I am dead,
Doesn't mean I'm gone.

Beth Oldani
TCF, Arlington Heights, IL

The Aftermath of Suicide

I had never experienced the death of a close loved one before my brother died. When David died, my world came crashing down around me, shattering me into a million pieces. My brother and I were close, but I had no suspicion that he was contemplating suicide and had been for a long time. The night my sister called to tell me he was dead is etched in my memory forever. If I shut my eyes, I can go back to that time and place almost three years ago and still hear her voice. It is a very painful memory and one that I don't call up, but it is there nonetheless.

The overwhelming feeling of shock, disbelief, numbness, despair, and sadness are very vivid. At the same time, I was outraged at what he had done to us, to me. How dare he do this! I couldn't even begin to guess how many times I said, "I can't believe this is happening."

The first six months was a confusing and emotionally draining period for me. I was obsessed with wanting to have answers, especially from him. I read many books on suicide, and finally, after reading Iris Boltions's *My Son, My Son*, I came to realize what she said was true: "You can ask why a million times but you finally have to let it go, because the person you need the answers from is not here to give them to you. If only for the sake of your own sanity, you have to stop asking why."

Our family drew closer together from this tragedy, and it made me more aware of how much I value and love them. I also had the support of a good friend who was willing to spend hours talking and crying with me. I still get very angry at my brother for changing our lives so irrevocably. That anger inevitably turns into sadness. I cannot see his smiling face, or hear his laughter, or watch him grow into adulthood. Yes, I had dreams for him too. He was an intelligent, warm, sensitive, and caring young man, and I was eager to see what direction his life would take. I can't help but wonder what he would be like today. I miss him very much.

I will never agree with his solution, but it was his choice to make and I have to learn to live with it. I am absolutely certain beyond a shadow of a doubt that I will see him again. Only then will I get answers to my questions. I have no choice but to wait until that time.

Nicki Wright
TCF, MO-KAN, Kansas

