

Bright Tomorrows

Reflecting the Compassion of Jesus Christ to Those with Mental Health Concerns

CHRONIC PAIN

HEALING TEARS

JOY COMING

I'm tired of all this—so tired. My bed has been floating forty days and nights on the flood of my tears. My mattress is soaked, soggy with tears. The sockets of my eyes are black holes; nearly blind, I squint and grope. (*Psalm 6:6-7 Message Bible*)

I, Tim Reside, believe in miracles because I believe in God. Dictionaries define miracles as “surprising and welcome events that are not explainable by natural or scientific laws.” Persons of faith happily attribute these to the goodness and mercy of God. Nevertheless, some of us who believe, do live with chronic medical and psychiatric health issues—often including chronic pain. Such co-occurrence can become overwhelming. I have often been reinvigorated by observing the courage of others who endure trials and testing. I want to emulate those who choose a pathway through that matures character. I am inspired by those who hope on in faith even when the going is tough.

We do groan, we do weep—sometimes profusely. Why? Because in the darkness of our painful midnights it just hurts! I believe that God desires to meet us in our groanings and tears: “Likewise the Spirit of God also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.” (Romans 8:26) It does no good to fake it. We need not fear nor be ashamed of times when we find ourselves lamenting in anguish. “[God] you’ve kept track of my every toss and turn through the

sleepless nights, each tear entered in your ledger, each ache written in your book.” (Psalm 56:8 Message Bible)

It is my desire to be an encouragement to persevering fellow travelers. I have discovered that it is important to daily find meaning, purpose and significance—even during times of pain—and especially during times of pain. It is equally important to cultivate and maintain an attitude of gratitude in order to find and to keep joy.

Joy is not a party emotion, rather, joy is hope singing its “hold on my child” faith song in the middle of the dark night. Joy is also hope singing its faith song during the daylight moments of reprieve, release and healing-recovery. This is the hope-embracing lifestyle choice of those who live “... as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing” (2 Corinthians 6:10)

While healing found in tears may be but a temporary relief, these healings nevertheless are reoccurring assurances that one day God will wipe away all tears. In that day “there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” (Revelation 21:4)

MISSION STATEMENT

Bright Tomorrows is committed to mobilizing churches to better serve those with mental health concerns. Our daily mission is to reflect the compassion of Jesus Christ by assisting those struggling with mental illness and promoting mental health.

Jeremiah 29:11

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans for wholeness and not for evil, plans to give you hope and a future."

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THE TIM RESIDE STORY: Continuing To Survive And Overcome Mental Illness — By Grace, Through Faith, Plus Hard Work! Before a live audience on the evening of November 16th, 2017, Tim Reside was videotaped sharing his personal mental health story in more explicit detail than he had ever done before. This message of faith, hope, love, healing-recovery and purpose is now available for FREE viewing on the internet.

Go to WWW.BRIGHTTOMORROWS.ORG and click on Articles/Videos.

I watched one of your videos today. I realized that my situation could be so much worse. I am thankful that in that moment I became more aware because I "realized" how much God loves me—I already knew but wasn't believing.

I have watched the video four times and each time I come away with something else. You have not lost your God-given ability to articulate truth. God uses the faithful. Tim, you are one of them. Thank you for all you do for marginalized people!

Tim, I will play your video over and over. There are things here about mental illness and healing that I had no idea about. It was great. God Bless you all and strengthen you so that you can keep up the work.

In the video I really like the part where you said, "pain is pain." Sometimes I feel like my pain isn't worthy of God's assistance, but now I know that my pain is valid—that it exists—and I need the comfort and peace of God just like anyone else. Tim, thank you for your encouragement.

MISSION UPDATE REPORT



**MAY IS "MENTAL HEALTH
AWARENESS MONTH"—
WHAT IS YOUR CHURCH'S
RESPONSE TO MENTAL
ILLNESS?**

Bright Tomorrows is aware that ministry leaders tend to be the "first-responders" to individuals and families in crisis. Often mental health concerns, inclusive of illness, caregiving challenges and stresses are brought to their doorsteps. 65% of family members who have a loved one dealing with a mental health challenge and 59% of those with mental illness want their church to talk openly about mental illness. **Bright Tomorrows** is available to help. For more information, check out our website and feel free to e-mail us by way of our online CONTACT US page.

BT offers FREE Bi-Monthly **Breakfast Seminars** to ministry leaders. See our website for details.

BT's January Breakfast Seminar was conducted by **Tim Reside**, MA, MHC and **BT** President. The presentation

was entitled **Christian Mindfulness Meditation — Paradox?** Recognizing that there are justifiable reasons for why Christians need to examine this matter discerningly, he affirmed the principle that a responsible church should "test all things; hold fast what is good [and] abstain from every form of evil." He shared that his personal and academic studies had led him to conclude for himself that there exists both dirty bath water to be tossed and a baby to be saved. Biblical meditation, inclusive of meditative consideration of nature's revelations, should be taught as a discipleship practice. Contemplation should be appreciated as a natural outcome of such meditation. Tim's four-fold outline demonstrated that Christian Mindfulness Meditation can: (1) be a valid way to "ceaselessly" practice Christ's Presence; (2) nurture Spiritual Formation; (3) foster daily "Sabbath" relaxation, serenity and mood stability; and (4) advance personal Missional Faithfulness.

BT's April Breakfast Seminar was conducted by **Tim Peterson**, LPC, LMFT who is with the Laureate Outpatient Clinic and also a **Bright Tomorrows** board member. He provided a **Depression Overview and Update: Essential Information for Church Leaders**. Tim shared data that supports the fact that depression is the number one mental health problem facing the church

today. It is the top cause of disability in the world and it is estimated that 1 in 5 Americans will experience an episode of clinical depression in their lifetimes. Tim provided information on how to recognize signs of depression allowing ministry to play a powerful part in the healing process. In addition, Tim offered an update on some of the latest ways to treat depression, including non-pharmacological interventions.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUPPORT



Tim & Nancy Reside

**BT is supported only by
good-will donations.**

*Would you prayerfully consider
supporting our ministry
as we assist those with
mental health challenges?*

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NOT GETTING WHAT WE DESERVE

"Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* [the miserable ones] tells the story of Jean Valjean, who spends nineteen years in jail for stealing a loaf of bread and then for trying to escape his imprisonment. ... His experience turns him into a brooding, bitter man.

"In desperation [Valjean] seeks lodging one night at the home of a Catholic bishop, who treats him with genuine kindness In the middle of the night he steals most of the bishop's silver, but he is caught by the police When the police bring him back to the bishop's house for identification, they are surprised when the bishop hands two silver candlesticks to Valjean, implying that he had given the stolen silver to him, and says, 'You forgot these.' After dismissing the police, the bishop turns to Valjean and claims him for God. 'I have bought your soul for God,' he tells him.

"In that moment, by the bishop's act of mercy, Valjean's bitterness is broken. The rest of the novel demonstrates the utter

power of a redeemed life. Valjean has every reason to hate and exploit, since fate so often turns against him; yet he chooses the way of mercy, as the bishop had done. ... He fulfills his destiny with joy, returns good for evil wherever he goes, and then longingly enters heaven.

"Valjean never got what he deserved, either way. His life was both miserable and good. His suffering was undeserved, but so was his redemption. Like Valjean, I would prefer to take my chances living in a universe in which I get what I do not deserve—again, either way. That means that I will suffer loss, as I already have, but it also means I will receive mercy. ... I will have to endure the bad I do not deserve; I will also get the good I do not deserve. I dread experiencing undeserved pain, but it is worth it to me if I can also experience undeserved grace."

SOURCE:

"A Grace Disguised: How the Soul Grows through Loss"
by Jerry Sittser, Loc 1422-1442/2594 Kindle Version.

CONNECT WITH US

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www.brighttomorrows.org

Bright Tomorrows Support Group (BTSG)

(Adult Bipolar & Depression Support Group)

1st & 3rd Thursdays at 7 P.M.

Bright Tomorrows Family Group (BTFG)

(Family & Friend Support Givers Group)

2nd & 4th Thursdays at 7 P.M.

These Christian Support Group Meetings take place September thru May at Asbury United Methodist Church, 6767 South Mingo in Tulsa, OK. For meeting descriptions, a detailed map and complete driving directions, please visit our website.

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