

# Bright Tomorrows

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

## ***“Am I my brother’s keeper?”***

**by Tim Reside**

There are masses among us contemplating death by suicide. As recent as 2010 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that every 13.7 minutes in the United States an American died by suicide. It is estimated there is 1 attempt each minute. That means that 105 people died each day and 38,364 over the course of the year—more than died in automobile or airplane accidents! What can we do about it? Do we personally have any responsibility here?

In the biblical story of the first taking of a life, the LORD asks Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” He said, ‘I do not know. Am I my brother’s keeper?’” (Genesis 4:9)

A closer look at the word “keeper” in Hebrew (shaw-mar) suggests that Cain’s question was meant to be rhetorical and sarcastic. He’s accusing the LORD of expecting him to be his brother’s parent, custodian or caretaker. In fact, the LORD is actually probing Cain’s capacity for empathy. Cain’s answer proves that he is woefully self-consumed. The tradition of Judaism and Christianity, and others, has determined that people do have responsibilities within their spheres of influence, and sometimes even beyond.

***“I am my brother and sister’s keeper!”***

While some might argue that there are justifiable suicides, the fact is that the preponderance of

suicide deaths are impulsive and/or ill-informed decisions. Mental health experts believe that over 90% of suicides are not the result of a rational decision but of mental disorder—the person is painfully suffering spiritual and psychological distress. At least 60% of all who die by suicide, in that moment of time, are suffering despair inducing depression.

We all have spheres of influence and responsibility. If we are paying attention, opportunities will appear to be our brother and sister’s keeper. It is well-documented that if an intervening person effectively offers a listening ear and hope-inspiring help, the majority contemplating such a death will choose to reconsider life and ultimately never commit suicide.

In the 1990’s, I awoke to the realization that I had another sphere of opportunity where I could potentially make a difference. I live with a bipolar disorder (BiPD). A significant percentage of we who live with chronic mental health challenges experience recurring suicidal ideation—thoughts about how to kill ourselves. While the majority of people who experience suicidal ideation do not carry it through, all too many do. The rate of attempted suicide among people with BiPD is 20-25%—the highest of any psychiatric disorder and more than twenty times higher than the rate of suicides among the general population.

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Bright Tomorrows is dedicated to reflecting the compassion of Jesus Christ by promoting mental health, helping those struggling with mental illness toward a healing-recovery lifestyle, and by assisting churches in their mission to better serve those with mental health concerns.

### **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.”

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

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In her book, *An Unquiet Mind*, Kay Redfield Jamison, Ph.D. (who lives with the disorder and is considered a leading authority on BiPD internationally), eloquently and authentically gives expression to how I have experienced my mental illness.

“Manic-depression (BiPD) distorts moods and thoughts, incites dreadful behaviors, destroys the basis of rational thought, and too often erodes the desire and will to live. It is an illness that is biological in its origins, yet one that feels psychological [and/or spiritual] in the experience of it; an illness that is unique in conferring advantage and pleasure, yet one that brings in its wake almost unendurable suffering and, not infrequently, suicide. I am fortunate that I have not died from my illness, fortunate in having received the best medical care available, and fortunate in having the friends, colleagues, and family that I do.”

In 2001, I resigned my full-time church ministry position and together with my wife embraced Bright Tomorrows as an opportunity for finding ways to come alongside persons struggling with depression and bipolar disorder where we had struggled—and where I continue to know episodes of struggle. We began by facilitating a support group for adults and other support and educational programs. As a result, Bright Tomorrows has increasingly become an expression of our life-story, life-work, life-ministry and life-mission (see [www.brighttomorrows.org](http://www.brighttomorrows.org)).

In 2012, I experienced another awakening. Recognizing that people are literally dying in a multitude of spheres beyond ours, it became clear that we needed to find a way to alert and equip others to be prepared for potential life-saving opportunities. I became a QPR Gatekeeper Instructor (Question, Persuade, and Refer).

***“Ask a Question, Save a Life”***



Those at risk for suicide by death among us are hiding in plain sight. They are in the midst of our families, among our friends and colleagues, within our communities of faith, and in our neighborhoods—but all too often we do not recognize their cries for help.

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# MISSION UPDATE REPORT

**BT** offers three different types of Christian Depression and Bipolar Support Services. For more info on the descriptions given below, contact us by email or our website.

**THE FIRST THURSDAY NIGHT** of each month is an Educational Support Group Meeting for Care Givers & Those in Recovery that takes place on the campus of Asbury United Methodist Church, Tulsa. Care recipients must be medically stable. **ADULTS ONLY.**

**THE SECOND, THIRD & FOURTH THURSDAY NIGHTS** of each month are Share & Care Support Group Meetings for those in recovery who are clinically diagnosed with either depression or bipolar disorder. Attendees must be stable, under medical care and current with medications. **ADULTS ONLY.**

**CONSULTATIONS BY-APPOINTMENT-ONLY** (non-clinical) are offered by Tim and Nancy Reside. See website for more information: [www.brighttomorrows.org](http://www.brighttomorrows.org).

**BT** co-sponsored the annual Caring for Your Congregations Mental Health symposium for clergy, church staff, chaplains, and lay leaders on April 11. Now into its second decade of involvement, **BT** has been privileged to co-sponsor this FREE all-day event with such fine organizations as University Village, Mental Health Association Oklahoma, Laureate Psychiatric Hospital, Cleveland Area Hospital Senior Life Program, LIFE Senior Services and Brookhaven Hospital. This year's theme was Reclaiming Hope, Accepting Forgiveness.

**BT** continues to offer **BI-MONTHLY BREAKFAST SEMINARS** (7:30-9:00 a.m.) for professional pastors and ministers, lay leaders and chaplains at no charge. Mental health related topics pertinent to church ministry and pastoral care concerns are presented and discussed with qualified presenters. Participants are also treated to a delicious breakfast and a time of good fellowship.

**BT's** March 27th breakfast seminar; Ask a Question, Save a Life? (Suicide Prevention Training for Ministry Leaders), was presented by Bright Tomorrows President, Tim Reside, M.A. Tim is a certified QPR Gatekeeper Instructor (Question, Persuade, and Refer). The literature on suicide states that a fairly large number of those who are thinking of harming themselves turn to clergy rather than to mental health professionals. This best practices suicide prevention workshop provided the participants 3 simple steps for helping to save a life from suicide.

**BT's** August 28th breakfast seminar, Nightmares—How to Help, was presented by Dr. Joanne Davis, a professor and researcher at the University of Tulsa, who specializes in the area of nightmares and sleep problems. Statistics demonstrate that in a congregation of 100 members it can be expected that between 3 and 7 people experience troubling nightmares. Traumatized persons experience greater incidences, and 71% to 96% with PTSD may have nightmares. Dr. Davis discussed different kinds of problematic sleep behaviors, including night terrors, anxiety dreams, REM nightmares, and trauma

related nightmares. She shared that she has developed a successful approach for treating traumatic nightmares and that free treatment is available through research grants. The presentation was highly informative and well received.

**BT's** October 23rd breakfast seminar, The "Surprising" Good News About Marriage, was presented by pastor, clinician and Vice-President of Bright Tomorrows, Jim Grinnell. This event was both informative and inspiring. Pastors and ministers left with good news for their congregations. Jim pointed out that for many years it has been suggested that half of all marriages end in divorce, and that the divorce rate in the church is just as high, if not higher, than in society at large. These beliefs have left many Christians and Christian leaders with a sense of futility about marriage. Jim presented some of the exciting research findings documented in a new book, The Good News About Marriage, by Harvard trained researcher, Shaunti Feldhahn. Among other significant information shared, Jim revealed that the research data shows that the divorce rate has never been close to 50%, and that the divorce rate in the church is significantly lower than society at large.

## **BT TOP TWO NEEDS:**

- 1. BT PRAYER PARTNERS!**
- 2. BT SUPPORT PARTNERS!**

*Thank You...  
For Caring  
& Sharing!*

## OPPORTUNITIES OF SUPPORT



**Tim & Nancy Reside**  
**Work and Ministry Support**

Please indicate on check whether you are making  
**a monthly pledge OR a one-time donation.**

Make checks payable to Bright Tomorrows.

**Donations are tax-deductible.**

To make one-time credit card donations or recurring monthly donations by way of a PayPal account, please visit [www.brighttomorrows.org](http://www.brighttomorrows.org) and click the "donate" button on the left side of the web page.





# "Am I my brother's keeper?"

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Dr. David Satcher, former Surgeon General of the United States, says that "suicide is our most preventable form of death." What could you do to become better informed and prepared to respond to an opportunity to potentially save a life? You could attend a QPR Gatekeeper Training Workshop and become a trained "gatekeeper." According to the Surgeon General's National Strategy for Suicide Prevention (2001), a "gatekeeper" is someone in a position to recognize a crisis and the warning signs that someone may be contemplating suicide. Gatekeepers include parents, friends, teachers, supervisors, ministers and many others who are strategically positioned to recognize and refer someone at risk of suicide.

Just as people trained in CPR help save thousands of lives each year, you could learn three simple steps that could help save a life from suicide. You would learn in as little as 90 minutes how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade, and refer someone to help.

If you would like to be invited to an upcoming scheduled QPR Gatekeeper Training Workshop or if you would like to know how to schedule such an event for a group within your church or organization, contact me using the information at the bottom of this page.



For more information, check out our BT website ([www.brighttomorrows.org](http://www.brighttomorrows.org)) and click on "Training Workshops."

About Author: Tim Reside, M.A., is the President of Bright Tomorrows and an ordained minister who has spent over forty years in church-related pastoral work and ministry.

## CHURCH MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

**Bright Tomorrows:** [www.brighttomorrows.org](http://www.brighttomorrows.org)

**International Bipolar Foundation:** [www.internationalbipolarfoundation.org](http://www.internationalbipolarfoundation.org)

**Mental Health Grace Alliance:** [www.mentalhealthgracealliance.org](http://www.mentalhealthgracealliance.org)

**Mental Health Ministries:** [www.mentalhealthministries.net](http://www.mentalhealthministries.net)

**NAMI FaithNet:** [www.nami.org/namifaithnet](http://www.nami.org/namifaithnet)

**Pathways to Promise:** [www.pathways2promise.org](http://www.pathways2promise.org)



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

### **Contact us at:**

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Website: [www.brighttomorrows.org](http://www.brighttomorrows.org)

### **Christian Depression and Bipolar Support Group Meetings For Care Givers & Those in Recovery** **Thursday Evenings at 7:00 P.M.**

These events take place on the second floor of the Venue 68 building on the south campus of Asbury United Methodist Church at 6767 South Mingo in Tulsa, OK. For meeting descriptions, a detailed map and complete driving directions please visit our web site.

To receive this free newsletter please e-mail us or visit our website. We can also send this to you via e-mail when you provide us with your e-mail address.