

Bright Tomorrows

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



New Beginnings

Since childhood, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day have been components for me of a three-month holiday season. In the words of the song made famous by the late popular-music singer, Andy Williams, "It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year!"

In time I certainly came to realize that not all holidays were crisis free events. With maturing perspective I came to comprehend that not everyone celebrated the holidays the same way I did—not everyone even necessarily celebrated the same holidays. I awoke to discover that for others there were often much more basic survival priorities consuming their lives, such as the need for shelter, clothing, food, water and medical attention. Not all children were eating candy after "trick-or-treating." Not all children were enjoying turkey after the Macy's Thanksgiving Parade. Not all children were opening Christmas presents after singing carols. Not all children were celebrating New Year's Day as a symbol of hope and renewal of opportunity. I grew up to be better informed and more sensitive to the plight of others, nonetheless this season remains one of the constancies of my year. It is for me predictably enchanting.

I have often heard people say that they wish they could keep the holiday spirit alive all year long. While I

*"Forget about what's happened;
don't keep going over old history.
Be alert, be present. I'm about to do
something brand-new. It's bursting out!
Don't you see it? There it is!
I'm making a road through the desert,
rivers in the badlands."*

Isaiah 43:18-21 (The Message Bible)

didn't consciously recognize it during my early years, through sights, sounds and smells combined with the gifts of imagination, memory and anticipation, I was set up for a lifetime of positive life-influencing instruction through reflection. With each passing year I find myself desiring to more meaningfully understand why this season fills me with such wonder and anticipation of rekindled love, joy and a sense of all-is-well harmony. Such reflection finally brought me to the realization that each of these holidays represent important ingredients for living 365 "Holy Days" each year—I don't have to wait until Fall!

HALLOWEEN reminds me that there is no fear in love. Where there is love there is life and light. My child-like mantra remains: "The light in the night is the devil's fright!" (1 John 4:18)

THANKSGIVING reminds me that when I seek out opportunities to humble myself and give thanks, I'm acknowledging that I possess nothing that in some way or another I have not received. I am also reminded that it is in the giving that I find myself receiving the best. (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

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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.'"



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Your ministry gave us hope for our daughter when we were without hope. Today she is coping more effectively with her mental health challenge. It was so comforting to us to have you there during our time of need.
— Support Giving Family Member



Tim Reside with
"Next To Normal" theater cast.

Tim, God could have let you be one of the many, instead He has given you a great gift of being one of the few. He has allowed you to see that all the trials that you have had to face were to give you a perspective on life that will allow you to bless all the people He puts in your path. Thanks! — Support Group Participant



Tim and Nancy Reside
with their friend, Joe Padilla,
Executive Director,
Mental Health Grace Alliance.

I strongly believe that God puts people into your life for a reason. You came into my life and helped me to have courage, to hope, to believe in myself, and to love myself. — Support Group Participant

Tim, I wanted to thank you and your wife Nancy for meeting with my wife's siblings to help them understand what she is going through. They have begun checking on her more often and getting together with her every week.

— BT Consultation Recipient

Mission Update Report

BT offers two curriculum-based support groups that use Biblically sound Christian materials that are clinically accurate. The **Bright Tomorrows Support Group (BTSG)**, meeting on the 1st & 3rd Thursdays at 7PM, is designed for adults with a bipolar disorder or a depression diagnosis. The **Bright Tomorrows Family Group (BTFG)**, meeting the 2nd & 4th Thursdays at 7PM, is a support group designed for the family and friend support givers of those with mental health concerns. (See our website for details.)

BT continues to offer to pastors, ministers, lay leaders and chaplains, **FREE Bi-Monthly Breakfast Seminars** led by qualified presenters discussing topics pertinent to church ministry.

BT's June Breakfast Seminar topic was **"Disaster Response: How Ministers and Their Churches Can Effectively Help."** Karin Price, LMSW, and the Outreach Coordinator at the Mental Health Association Oklahoma, shared ways churches and ministry leaders can more broadly and effectively minister in times of crisis. She highlighted Psychological First Aid, a training developed to teach first-responders, community members and other front-line volunteers, how to promote an environment of safety, calm and connectedness, empowerment and hope.

BT's August Breakfast Seminar topic was **"The Benefits of 'Wounded Healer' Ministry."** According to a Barna Group research report, despite the church's effort to communicate the Good News of Jesus Christ and his ministry of hope and compassion, 87% of people outside the church experience Christians as more judgmental than compassionate, and 52% of churchgoers agree. Bright Tomorrows President, Tim Reside, discussed a model for empathic ministry based upon the "friend-of-sinners wounded healer" example of Jesus Christ.

BT's October Breakfast Seminar topic was **"The Solution for Mental Illness in the Church."** Research says that 27% of church participants are dealing with mental illness (family or individual), 66% of pastors rarely or never talk about the subject from the pulpit, and 65% of the families and 59% of the individuals in the pews living with such challenges want their churches to talk about it. Joe Padilla, Executive Director and Co-Founder of the Mental Health Grace Alliance, together with Dr. Matthew Stanford, a renowned Christian author, researcher, and behavioral neuroscientist, was our guest presenter. Joe challenged us regarding our responsibility, while simultaneously inspiring us with the mission field of opportunity that is within our walls and at our doorsteps. He led the seminar participants into a solution-focused conversation.

BT President, Tim Reside, was asked by **Theater Tulsa** to join the cast of **"Next To Normal"** on stage following their June 20th matinee in order to field questions from the audience regarding his experience with bipolar disorder. This unique hybrid musical drama tells the story about a mother who struggles with worsening bipolar disorder and the effect that her illness and the attempts to alleviate it have on her family. The original opening on Broadway took place April 2009 and was nominated for eleven Tony Awards (won three) and won the 2010 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. A portion of Tim's personal story was written up in the Tulsa World and posted as a blog at the website of the Mental Health Association Oklahoma.

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 and click the "donate" button on the left side of the web page.



"New Beginnings"

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CHRISTMAS reminds me that good gifts come from love—from relationships sourced in unconditional love. "God is love." Love's gifts are not acquired through merit or manipulation. Love's gifts are mercy and grace gifts of blessing. I love because I am experiencing accepting and forgiving love. (John 3:16)

NEW YEARS reminds me that the way of "new beginnings" is meant to define the way I live my life daily. Choosing to continually return throughout the day to opportunities for new beginnings is a proactive rejection of failure. In other words, the humiliation of my sins and shortcomings are opportunities to humble myself and acknowledge my need for love's mercy and grace. Grace is the "stuff" I best grow up in. Owning up to failings means that I can own them as opportunities for further instruction, discovery and growth—new beginnings! The only real failure in life is the failure to own up to temporary failings—and all failings are temporary if we own up to them. (James 4:6)

In the first century of Christian history, the Apostle Paul wrote a letter to a church that he had founded in Corinth, Greece. At one point in this letter, Paul incorporated a quote from the ancient scroll of Isaiah: "In an acceptable time I the LORD have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you" (Isaiah 49:8). Paul immediately adds to this some

inspired words of his own: "Behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, NOW is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2, emphasis mine).

The very word "holiday" means to designate or sanctify ("make holy") a day for remembrance and celebration. In ancient Biblical times, the enlightened ones understood the value of taking into their daily routines what they were commemorating and celebrating during holidays. They turned truths revealed and celebrated into daily meditations and practical God-honoring life choices.

Living in the "NOW" is to live life enchanted, filled up with love, strengthened by joy and comparatively harmonious, peaceful and increasingly enlightened. Truths concealed are meant to become truths revealed. Truths revealed long to be appreciated as relevant—applicable to our lives. I am continuing to learn the value of asking questions and listening for answers, seeking solutions while watching and waiting patiently and knocking on doors in anticipation of new revelations of relevancy that will continue to inspire fruitful reflection.

AUTHOR: Tim Reside, MA, MHC, is an ordained minister and the President of Bright Tomorrows. Tim has been successfully coping with and overcoming bipolar illness since 1979.

Contact Information & Resources

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CHURCH MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

NAMI FaithNet: www.nami.org/namifaithnet

Pathways to Promise: www.pathways2promise.org

Mental Health Ministries: www.mentalhealthministries.net

Intl. Bipolar Foundation: www.internationalbipolarfoundation.org

Mental Health Grace Alliance: www.mentalhealthgracealliance.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 7:00 P.M. Thursday Evening Christian Support Group Meetings take place at Asbury United Methodist Church at 6767 South Mingo in Tulsa, OK. For meeting descriptions, a detailed map and complete driving directions, please visit our website.

To receive this free newsletter please e-mail us or visit our website. if you prefer postal delivery, please provide us with your mailing address.

