



BRIGHT *tomorrows*®

Reflecting the compassion of Jesus Christ
to those with mental health concerns

"When Someone At 'BTSG' Said That I Was A Blessing; God's Love Revealed My Value!"

My body was already cold and numb and feelings of unreality had set in when I started willing myself to die. I was sure God was going to take me. I sat in my recliner, closed my eyes, and waited to stop breathing. When I didn't stop breathing, I moved to my couch and tried the same thing. When I didn't die, I got angry at God and told him He had "better have a good reason for not taking me!" I hit rock bottom.

This desperation of "rock bottom" is what pushed me that fall of 2006 to attend my first Bright Tomorrows Support Group meeting. That I got to the meeting in one piece on October 5th is a miracle. I could hardly feel my steering wheel and everything outside my car seemed to whizz by in a blur. I believed God wanted me there so I believed He would keep me and the other drivers in my path safe, and He did. When I attended again the following week, although I wasn't feeling much better, one of the other group members told me that I was a blessing to the group. This came as a total surprise because all I'd been doing was crying. Later at home I finally started to realize that God loved me—because God is love! A veil in my mind rolled away like two scrolls.

What brought me to that moment in time had its beginnings in my early childhood. I was diagnosed with epilepsy at four and in those early years, in

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder terms, was anxiously plagued with the fear that I was not going to heaven. I can remember at a church youth retreat in later years my obsessive fear of going to hell flaring up. When I was fifteen I saw my first counselor but I didn't make any progress because she seemed weird to me and I was too afraid to discuss my embarrassing obsessions with her. For me the OCD became much worse at age sixteen and it seemed to explode when I was seventeen!

By the second semester of my Junior year in high school, I could no longer go to school, do homework, hold down a job, eat that much or even breathe normally. I couldn't shower. It took me two hours to get ready to go anywhere and all I was doing was taking off my pajamas and putting on my clothes. My Mom had to drive me everywhere because I was too terrified to do so. I was doing so poorly I considered dropping out of school. On an average night I would only get two hours of sleep because the obsessions were so severe that my head felt like it was getting pounded by an unceasing mental hammer. Eventually, I was started on a medication for my OCD that was still in the trial stage. It proved to be a miracle medication for me.

~ continued on back page ~

Bright Tomorrows is committed to equipping 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 to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

TIM RESIDE
President

JIM GRINNELL
Vice President

NANCY RESIDE
Secretary-Treasurer

TIM PETERSON
Board Trustee

JAY HOFFMAN
Board Trustee

Headline **NEWS**

May 13, 2010, ARLINGTON, VA—Americans with serious mental illnesses such as bipolar disorder are three times more likely to end up in jail or prison than in a psychiatric hospital, according to a new state-by-state survey from the Treatment Advocacy Centre and the National Sheriff's Association. The report suggests that more mentally ill people are incarcerated in states where less money is spent on mental health services.

July 10, 2010, WASHINGTON, DC—U.S. President Obama announced that the Department of Veterans Affairs will make it easier for veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) to receive disability benefits. In light of the fact that for the first time in recorded history military suicide rates have surpassed that of the general American population, this relief assistance is welcomed news. In the past, veterans with PTSD were stymied by requirements that they produce evidence proving a specific attack or event had caused their disorder.

The practical cognitive behavioral techniques we learn at BTSG help me "return" to a sense of God's presence.

At BTSG I feel safe and accepted —I can share openly and freely.

Tim and Nancy, what you relate regarding your own ongoing challenges is in itself an important part of meeting your BTSG educational goals with us.

This week's BTSG lesson was wonderful —very practical.



B.T.S.G.
(Bright Tomorrows Support Group)

The survival stories I found at your Bright Tomorrows website gave me hope.

Thanks, Tim, for visiting our college class today. Your lecture gave me hope for the future of my mentally ill son.

MISSION UPDATE REPORT

BT continues to offer bi-monthly **Breakfast Seminars** (7:30-9:00 a.m.) for professional and/or lay ministers and ministry leaders at no charge. Mental health related topics pertinent to church ministry and pastoral care concerns are presented and discussed with qualified presenters.

BT's August 26th Breakfast Seminar welcomed back **Dr. Dale R. Doty, PhD**, founder and director of the Christian Family Institute in Tulsa, Oklahoma, to speak to our seminar attendees about **Premarital and Enrichment Counseling**. In addition to sharing from his more than 30 years experience working with couples and training physicians, pastors, and counselors in the use relationship assessment tools (valuable handouts offered) Dr. Doty gave an overview of the PREPARE and ENRICH inventory instruments. To date more than 100,000 trained clergy members, professional counselors, mentors, and marriage educators have been trained to use these instruments with over 3 million couples.

BT's October 28th Breakfast Seminar title was an attention

grabber: **Problem Gambling? Not in my church--don't bet on it!** Regardless of varying stances among Christians with regard to gambling and the appearance that for some it is experienced safely as recreational and fun, it has been clearly established that for a certain percentage it becomes a compulsively destructive trap. Recognizing that there are over 90 casinos in Oklahoma, Bright Tomorrows geared this seminar to assist pastors in (1) knowing the difference in a social/recreational gambler and a problem/pathological gambler; (2) recognizing the signs of problem gambling; (3) clarifying the pastor's role in supporting the problem gambler and their family members through recovery; and (4) developing awareness of area resources for problem gambling recovery. To accomplish these goals we were blessed to have as our special guest speaker, **Teresa L. "Teri" Burnett, LCSW, MT-BC, NCGC II (National Certified Gambling Counselor)**. Terri has been in private practice as a psychotherapist in the Tulsa area since 1992 and has been working with problem gamblers and their

families since 2003 she was certified as a problem gambling counselor in 2009.

BT's weekly **Christian Depression and Bipolar Support Group Program** takes place Thursdays at 7 p.m. at Evangelistic Temple in Tulsa. 1st and 3rd Thursdays are **Educational Nights**, whereas 2nd and 4th Thursdays are regular **Support Group Meeting Nights**.

The **1st Thursday** is an open-to-the-public **Educational Seminar Night** (7-9 p.m.) for support group participants and supportive caregiving family and friends alike. The series is entitled: *How To Survive & Overcome Depression & Bipolar Disorders*. The monthly topics for presentation and discussion can be found at the Bright Tomorrows website.

The **3rd Thursday** is an **Educational Workshop Night** (7-8:30 p.m.) for support group participants ONLY. Cognitive-behavioral "tool-sets" are taught, modeled and practiced for self-monitoring and self-managing. These are also serviceable to one's daily faith and spiritual practices. Such

equipping can effectively supplement but not substitute for the physician's diagnostically determined therapeutic protocols.

The **2nd and 4th Thursdays** are **Support Group Meeting Nights** (7-8:30 p.m.). While not to be confused with clinical group therapy sessions, these meetings are nonetheless often beneficially therapeutic. Participants refer to them as "Share & Care" nights.

For further information about the BTSG PROGRAM and other BT current offerings, we invite you to view our website or e-mail Tim Reside your questions.

Website:

www.brighttomorrows.org

E-mail:

treside@brighttomorrows.org

BT TOP TWO NEEDS:

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

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

"WITH THANKSGIVING LET YOUR REQUESTS BE KNOWN..."

PHILIPPIANS 4:6

BRIGHT TOMORROWS NEEDS A REPLACEMENT VEHICLE!

In 2002, a Bright Tomorrows Board Trustee donated a 1994 Nissan Quest Van to provide Tim Reside transportation for the work and ministry of Bright Tomorrows.

While many things improve with age, vehicles tend to deteriorate and that's the case with the Nissan. It is no longer operable and the ministry is in need of a replacement vehicle.

If you or someone you know are interested in donating a vehicle in good condition to Bright Tomorrows—or investing toward the securing of a good replacement vehicle—please contact Tim Reside at email address treside@brighttomorrows.org, home address 5630 So. Boston Ave, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 74105, or home phone 918.743.5613.

Bright Tomorrows is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation and all gifts are tax-deductable.
A letter of receipt for end-of-the-year tax purposes will be made for donations given.

~ continued from font page ~

God's Love Revealed My Value!"

When I was nine, I was sexually abused by one brother and then one year later by both of my brothers. Although not sexually so, my father also was abusive. My extremely co-dependent mother enabled him to be so. When I was ten or eleven, because drinking and drugs were not an option, food became my drug of choice. Later in life I would be diagnosed with an eating disorder. We moved to a town where I knew no one and I began middle school where I was mercilessly picked on. I was experiencing extreme mood changes by the time I was eleven or twelve. Varyingly diagnosed throughout the years, in the late nineties I was diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder. By way of homebound education services, I finished my last year and a half of high school and miraculously graduated with my class. After a period of working, I became a part-time student and later quit my job to be a full-time student. In 1995 I graduated with an Associates Degree.

I was twenty-six when I was hospitalized for the first time suffering from the effects of Bipolar Disorder and a nervous breakdown. I was twenty-eight when I attempted suicide and was hospitalized for the second time. After my suicide attempt I was finally persuaded to apply for disability. That was a difficult decision because I was determined to be self-sufficient. Severe suffering with Premenstrual Dysphonic Disorder led to my third hospitalization.

From 1998 to 2001 I went from one job to another. The following two years are a blur. I do know that I came to be awarded disability and that almost immediately following this I was hospitalized for a fourth time. Later

that same year my Mom was diagnosed with cancer and died on my 32nd birthday. It was in August of 2006 that I lapsed into the annual grief period I have over my Mom's death. By October my grief and feelings of failure had become so severe that I had no desire to live at all and I didn't think I was supposed to. It was then that I drove to my first B.T.S.G. meeting.

Since coming to the Bright Tomorrows Support Group I have improved dramatically! I'm tracking my symptoms better which is helping me to manage my illnesses better. God is restoring my purity. My self esteem and confidence have improved which is helping my eating disorder to improve. I'm nicer to others, my relationships are improving and part of my family is back in my life. I've learned more about God and how the principles of His Word apply directly to the more effective monitoring and managing of my illnesses than I ever did the entire time I was being raised in church. I have a greater value for life; because I've realized that God loves me and everyone else in this world. This is a real change of heart and mind for me as I used to wish that people who angered me or whom I strongly disliked or hated would die. I've found a group of Christians among whom I feel safe, with whom I can share my struggles, and who inspire me. I also have two group leaders to look up to and see the possibility of what can be.

Attribution: This story was anonymously submitted by a participant in the Bright Tomorrows Christian Depression and Bipolar Support Group.



BRIGHT

tomorrows®

*Reflecting the compassion of Jesus Christ
to those with mental health concerns*

Contact us at:

Bright Tomorrows
5630 South Boston Avenue
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74105-7725

Phone: (918) 744-5761 (**Information Only**)
E-mail: treside@brighttomorrows.org
Website: www.brighttomorrows.org

Christian Depression and Bipolar Support Group Program

Thursday Evenings from 7:00-8:30 P.M.

This weekly event is held at Evangelistic Temple Church in the Fireside Room on the 2nd floor of the Family Life Center. E.T. is located at 5345 South Peoria Avenue • Tulsa, Oklahoma.

For a detailed map and complete driving directions please visit our web site.

*To receive this free newsletter please call or 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.*