

Bright Tomorrows

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

Bright Tomorrows Support Groups: Support, Encourage and Educate

by Tim Reside

My wife Nancy and I, through Bright Tomorrows, have offered **Christian faith-based peer support** since June of 2001. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), peer support is getting help from someone who has been there. People with similar experiences may be able to listen, give hope and guidance toward recovery in a way that is different, and may be just as valuable (although not a replacement for) professional services.

We are not clinicians or professional counselors. We are **mental health “consumers”** who since 1979 have been dealing with mental health concerns resulting from my bipolar disorder. Even though I continue to know the challenges of living with this brain disease, with Nancy’s help I am successfully coping.

Our family knows what it is to experience the shock and distress of mental illness invading the home and painfully upending dreams. We have not forgotten our disorientation, grief, deep sadness and anger. Since 2001, we have offered ourselves as **mental health “consultants.”** Drawing upon decades of life experience, we make ourselves available to those who find themselves in

the midst of the tsunami-like shock and awe of mental illness. In solidarity and compassion, we are able to sit with the diagnosed, their family and/or their support-care friends and help them map out navigation paths for survival that give hope and a reason to believe in brighter tomorrows.

Nancy and I began facilitating our first BT **peer support group** in June of 2001. Unlike formal group therapy, peer support groups are led by a qualified group member and are better understood to be self-help support groups. Peers with the same issues who come together in community to learn and discover what helps them to better cope, gain a sense of empowerment and belonging. Such groups have proven to be very helpful coping tool supplements to formal treatment. Within this context, I’ve been offering **mental health “coaching”** through education and self-help training. Over the years, I have developed unique self-monitoring, self-managing and self-stabilizing tools and materials that I have used together with reputable curriculum formulated by others.

~ continued on back page ~

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:

TIM RESIDE
President

JIM GRINNELL
Vice President

NANCY RESIDE
Secretary-Treasurer

TIM PETERSON
Board Trustee

JAY HOFFMAN
Board Trustee

Last night's session for family members was outstanding, and it was very good for our daughter. If you're able to meet with her in a consultation session next week, that would be great!
—parent of university student

Thanks for always being there on Thursday nights, offering us hope and help with our coping challenges.
—support group participant

We are so thankful to be able to share in the privilege of supporting Bright Tomorrows so that you can minister to others in need as you did to our family. Thank you for your continued prayers for our son.
—parent of university student

Finding this support group has given me a hope that I never had before! It means the world to me at this time in my life, and I look forward to EVERY Thursday!
—support group participant

I attended Tim's QPR suicide training workshop. The very next day, I found myself using that training to assist a friend and colleague who was considering suicide. I was able to get her the emergency life-saving help she needed. Thank you for helping me save a life.
—employer

I am a strong believer that God puts people into our lives for a reason. You came into my life and helped me to have courage, to hope, to believe in myself and to love myself. I want you to know that I appreciate you and I am thankful for all that you have done for me.
—support group participant

My Mom helped me find BT. It has been a saving grace to find others who struggle with bipolar disorder.
—support group participant

As a pastor, I lost my wife to divorce resulting from her bipolar disorder and unwillingness to accept help. In recovery, I chose to accept my singleness. However, a few years later God chose to give me the priceless gift of love, companionship and partnership in ministry. Tim and Nancy, thank you for being a key piece in helping me to find my way in the midst of mental illness chaos!
—minister

MISSION UPDATE REPORT

BT introduces **NEW SUPPORT GROUPS**, **NEW CURRICULUM** and a **NEW MEETING LOCATION** in September of 2015.

BT has offered support groups and educational programs for people with mental health and mental illness concerns for fourteen years. Now we are excited to announce that this coming September we will be adding a separate support group for caregivers and support-givers with relevant educational features.

NEW BT DEPRESSION AND BIPOLAR SUPPORT GROUP: 1st and 3rd Thursdays at 7PM

NEW BT FAMILY-FRIEND SUPPORT GROUP: 2nd and 4th Thursdays at 7PM

NEW BT CURRICULUM: We will be offering curriculum-based support groups which will utilize both BT and Mental Health Grace Alliance materials.

NEW BT MEETING LOCATION: We will be moving from the **Venue 68** building to **Room 2821** in the main building of **Asbury United Methodist Church**, 6767 S Mingo Rd.

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

BT Vice-President, Jim Grinnell, a Certified Christian Sex Therapist, as well as a pastor and clinician, presented on February 26 the topic *The Dangers of Pornography: What Every Minister Needs to Know*. He updated those in attendance on the research and also pastorally shared from his extensive experience working with individuals and couples effected by pornography.

BT co-sponsored the 14th annual **Caring for Your Congregations Mental Health** symposium at University Village in Tulsa with the Mental Health Association Oklahoma and other fine organizations. This one-day event for clergy, church staffs, chaplains, and lay leaders took place on April 24. This year's theme was *Navigating Stressful Times: Integrating Faith, Resilience and Recovery*.

BT President, Tim Reside, a certified **QPR Suicide Prevention Training Instructor**, presented a session to 60 adults at Highland Park Christian Church in Tulsa on January 21. Attending were church ministry staff, school teachers (church and public), counselors and 12 Tulsa County Sheriff Department Chaplains.

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.



~ continued from front page ~

Bright Tomorrows Support Groups: Support, Encourage and Educate

Probably the biggest advantage of peer support is helping a person realize that they are not alone—that there are other people who have the same problems. This is often a revelation and a huge relief. In addition, the members of peer support groups, in discovering others with the same or similar problems, find themselves in a position to receive sympathetic and understanding support and in turn find opportunities to offer support to others. Within this non-clinical therapeutic environment new ways of relating to others and to challenges tend to be picked up.

What does science say about the benefit of peer support? The group, **Peers for Progress: Peer Support Around the World**, observes that research-based evidence supports the assertion that peer support is a critical and effective strategy for ongoing health care and sustained behavior change for people with chronic health challenges. There is evidence that the incidence of co-occurring disease decreases while life expectancy increases. Participants become

better informed and educated and thus they become more empowered. There is an increased confidence in one's own ability to affect outcomes by completing tasks and reaching healthy goals. It is reported that these persons are also more prone to self-report to caregivers and health providers as they begin to more proactively monitor and manage their symptoms, thus their disease. Self-care improves as well as medication adherence. Notably, the research reveals a reduction in need for emergency services among this population. Anecdotally, providers of peer support report a lessening of depression and a heightening of self-esteem as well as self-efficacy—an overall improved quality of life.*

*Sources: Google: Peer Services and Supports - NAMI; Google: Science Behind Peer Support | Peers For Progress; Research Analysis: Google: Sustained Outcomes of a Peer-Taught Family Education Program on Mental Illness and Google: Peer Support for Persons with Co-Occurring Disorders and Community Tenure: A Survival Analysis

CHURCH MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Bright Tomorrows: www.brighttomorrows.org

International Bipolar Foundation: www.internationalbipolarfoundation.org

Mental Health Grace Alliance: www.mentalhealthgracealliance.org

Mental Health Ministries: www.mentalhealthministries.net

NAMI FaithNet: www.nami.org/namifaithnet

Pathways to Promise: www.pathways2promise.org



*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

Depression & Bipolar Support Group

1st & 3rd Thursdays at 7:00 P.M.

Family-Friend Support Group

2nd & 4th Thursdays at 7:00 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.