

The Compassionate Friends Victoria, Australia

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It doesn't interest me what you do for a living.

I want to know what you ache for, and if you dare to dream of meeting your heart's longing.

It doesn't interest me how old you are. I want to know if you will risk looking like a fool for love, for your dreams, for the adventure of being alive.

It doesn't interest me what planets are squaring your moon.

I want to know if you have touched the centre of your own sorrow, if you have been opened by life's betrayals or have become shrivelled and closed from fear of further pain!

I want to know if you can sit with pain, mine or your own, without moving to hide it or fade it or fix it.

I want to know if you can be with joy, mine or your own, if you can dance with wildness and let the ecstasy fill you to the tips of your fingers and toes without cautioning us to be careful, be realistic, or to remember the limitations of being human.

It doesn't interest me if the story you're telling me is true. I want to know if you can disappoint another to be true to yourself, if you can bear the accusation of betrayal and not betray your own soul. I want to know if you can be faithful and therefore be trustworthy. I want to know if you can see beauty even when it is not pretty every day, and if you can source your life from God's presence.

I want to know if you can live with failure, yours and mine, and still stand on the edge of a lake and shout to the silver of the moon, "Yes!"

It doesn't interest me to know where you live or how much money you have. I want to know if you can get up after the night of grief and despair weary and bruised to the bone, and do what needs to be done for the children.

It doesn't interest me who you are, how you came to be here. I want to know if you will stand in the centre of the fire with me and not shrink back.

It doesn't interest me where or what or with whom you have studied. I want to know what sustains you from the inside when all else falls away. I want to know if you can be alone with yourself and truly like the company you keep in the empty moment.

Written by
Oriah Mountain Dreamer
(Native American Elder)

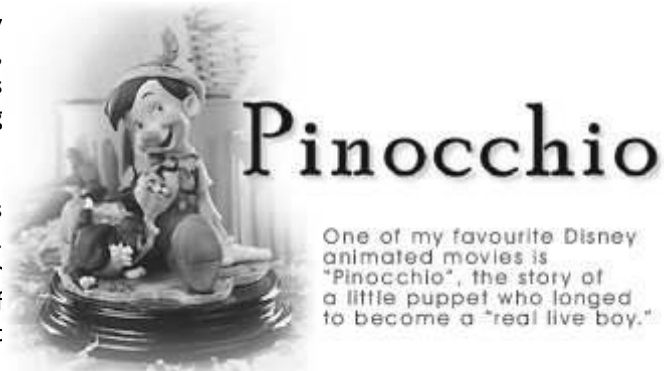
Everyone remembers that whenever he lied, Pinocchio's wooden nose grew longer. When we're not truthful eg. "I'm fine thanks", our noses don't grow, our distress does. Fooling others is one thing, not being open with ourselves is worse. Hiding our concerns eventually makes the burden heavier. Getting through grief isn't possible without honesty.

Pinocchio didn't have much brain in his poor little wooden head. His silliness resulted in him growing donkey ears – literally making an ass of himself. Tormented by grief we may act unreasonably. It's not prudent to ignore our own physical and emotional health nor to neglect to nurture the well being of others. Enveloped by misery it's tempting to withdraw but one of the most sensible things we can do is to communicate with those we love.

Jiminy Cricket was Pinocchio's best friend and conscience. His counsel was well-thought out but alas too often flouted. More troubles befell our puppet until he learnt to heed good advice. For the bereaved there are numerous sources to choose from. Perhaps your examples come from reading, learning from the experiences of others, benefiting from the guidance of experts. It could be receiving professional help or maybe attending meetings, joining support groups such as TCF and keeping in touch with other grieving families.

Eventually Pinocchio did reach his goal and become human. He achieved this by behaving with extraordinary courage and ingenuity. Each of us displays bravery as we move through every day, the next month, another year. We are heroic as we learn to re-invest in our lives and to be with others as they remake theirs. The Oscar-winning hit song of "Pinocchio" was "When you wish upon a star your dreams come true." Go on and wish, for that star is you.

With much love,
Rosemary, TCF Johannesburg, South Africa.





Do Angels Exist?

If there are truly angels, where are they?

Do they live amongst us?

Do we see them every day and not know it?

What questions would we ask an angel if we saw one?

I would ask the angel: "Where do our children go when they leave the earth?"

And I am told they go home to the one you call God.

He takes care of them for us. He loves and protects them as we would.

"Can our children see us? I ask.

And I am told they certainly can see us.

And they know where we are every day.

They know our feelings and they know how much

We love and miss them.

When we have a good day they rejoice to see us.

I would hug and kiss my son if I could, but I have to wait.

I know in my heart and soul that I will see him again

And then I will be truly happy again.

Why am I still here? There was a time when I didn't want to be here.

That feeling has changed now, I do have happy days,

And I treasure each good day I have.

I hate to think what my life would be like without my friends.

My Compassionate Friends.

I marvel at all of us for the way we have survived.

And we can once again lift our faces to the sun

And find purpose in our lives.

Written by Ruth Baldock,

TCF, Vic. Aus.

