

The Compassionate Friends Victoria, Australia

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Inside Out

There are children smiling, crying, talking to each other, over one another, moving fast, moving slow, being pushed in wheelchairs, looking happy, looking blankly, hi-fives to each other and to the adults who attend and teach them.

My workplace is an extraordinary place. It is a school for students with disabilities. I see it as more than just a job but as an opportunity to bring out the best of the human spirit.

There are students from 18 months to 18 years of age. Some are very sick and some have died. Some achieve big things and some achieve small things - but everyone of them achieves great things.

Each classroom has 5 - 8 students, a teacher and 2 support staff.

Every day there are more tasks to do than there is time to do them! There are days that go like clockwork and days that that fall away from the best laid plans.

There are days when my attention is diverted to a colleague, carer or parent. They, too, have lives of joy and sorrow and I find myself just being with them, like the little girl in the 'Broken Doll' story who can't fix her friend's broken doll, but she can sit with her and listen to her cry.

Since my son died 11 years ago, I have been more able to do that - to sit with someone and to listen to their problems and pain. I recognise this as compassion and I recall the words of the Dalai Lama:

***If you want others to be happy, practise compassion.
If you want to be happy, practise compassion.***

The grief I still feel for my son is tremendous. It will never go away. I miss him. I really miss him every single day. But I am changing and learning to like who I am. I do want the best of what's inside of me to be reflected in my relationships.

With the memory of my son, Dylan, I am still trying to make sense of my life, but I believe we all have opportunities to take a step towards our own healing when we consciously sit with someone with a compassionate heart.

Mariette Buckle
TCF Vic AU

Forever Remembered

And if I go while you're still here,
know that I live on,
vibrating to a different measure
behind a thin veil that you cannot see through.

You will not see me,
so you must have faith.
I wait for the time when
we can soar again,
both aware of each other.
Until then, live your life to the fullest,
and when you need me,
just whisper my name in your heart -

I will be there.

Emily Dickinson

For All Our Lost Children



I will see you again in the fullness of time.
You will reach out your hand; I will take it in mine.
As together we walk all the sorrow-filled years
dissolve as a cloud in the midst of our tears.
I will see you again; we will laugh as before.
I will kiss your dear face as I pass through the door
to a place where you are and a bright, shining sun
will assure my glad heart that my life has begun.
I will see you again though the journey be long.
I will try for your sake to sing some kind of song.
For you I'll endeavour to live through my pain
Till the moment, dear child, when I see you again.

Betty Kenna
TCF, UK