

Original Works by Survivors in Maine

The Maine Youth Suicide Prevention Program is in the process of collecting original work from Maine survivors. If you have a poem, an article, a song, etc. that you would be willing to share, please send an electronic copy to ccantybrooks@namimaine.org. We cannot use all submissions due to space limitations, but will try to acknowledge them.

The following is excerpted from a longer piece written by Cheryl Chase six months after the suicide of her son, William Jody “Joe” Day on November 18, 2005.

“As a survivor of suicide, this is what I need from you—I need you to be kind and compassionate while I go through this grieving process, as I don’t know what I am doing. I never lost a child before. Please don’t judge me as a mother, a person, a friend, as I am trying to bear the unbearable. I will never be the same and I can’t tell you who I am going to become because when I lost my son, I lost myself. Don’t tell me I should get over it and go on and please respect that we all grieve in our own way and in our own time. Most importantly please don’t ever forget this wonderful child that is no longer on this earth for Joe gave me great joy, and yes some heartache, but I loved him to the very depths of my soul.

Please be aware that we live in a society that is reluctant to speak of suicide. How can we stop it if we can’t even talk about it? I think it’s time we all learn what we can and try to help stop the second leading cause of death among teens in Maine. So do me a favor if you would. Listen to your friends and loved ones. If someone mentions suicide, get them help. Do whatever you need to do to stop someone else from choosing a permanent solution to a temporary problem.”

“One cold winter night my 27-year-old son put a bullet in his head. Depression brought us both to A Fork in the Road. Rob chose death; I struggle to survive.”

Simmons, Donna., (2005) *A Fork in the Road: My Story of Suicide and Survival*. Victoria, B.C.: Trafford Publishing.

Donna Simmons lives in Alfred, Maine.

*Time goes on and I don't know just where you are
or how I'm going to find you.*

Jefferson Airplane

Searching Still

When I wake in the night and remember that you're gone
As I glance down the hall at the green glow of your cell phone
In hesitation on the stairs by your room
I peek up through the skylight -- Hence the Stars
As I wander in the night without direction
Stirred at dawn by the lonesome call of the mourning dove
When I gaze from the shore and realize you've been here before
Or tremble as I meander under your dark and empty window
Hoping in the Easter dawn on the hillside of Opportunity Farm
Wishing the wispy white jet trail were bringing you back to me
In the comfort of your smile on the couch with your blanket and bear
When I walk your last walk from the Castle to the traffic
Blinded by your candlelight through the mist of my ever-present tears

*And I only kiss your shadow
I cannot feel your hand
You're a stranger now unto me
Lost in the dangling conversation
And the superficial sighs,
The borders of our lives.*

Paul Simon

by Richard Fortier on the loss of his daughter, Michele Nanette Fortier, 1982-2002 (5/11/2003)

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