

# Forever Angels



Hello Everyone,

A dear friend of mine has been taking a writing class since April and after the 10-week course was finished the group of eight decided to continue, rotating through each other's homes on a weekly basis to continue writing. I'm not much of a writer myself and find a blank page intimidating in spite of the fact that I love to read historical diaries. Queen Victoria, for example wrote from when she was about 10 years old until her death. She filled volumes, and while she was of a privileged part of society, she recorded much about her day to day life and feelings regarding some of the political situations of the day, as well as what she received for her birthdays. Two other fascinating diarists are Vita Sackville West and Virginia Woolf. These two ladies were also of the privileged class, and their thoughts, impressions, ideas, poems and comments make great reading. Two of my favorite diary/letter writers were sisters Susanna Moodie and Catherine Parr Traill. They immigrated from a wealthy British status to the back woods of early Canada and their writings record intimate details of carving out an existence in the Canadian wilderness. A far cry from their well-to-do British upbringing.

I had lunch with my friend this week and she shared with me the parameters of her writing group and some of her writings. A designated person "in charge" would start with a few words: *The cat jumped on the counter and.....* and the group has 3 minutes to complete the thought. Some other exercises began: *I was worried when I saw the gun.....* and, *I had just came out of the hair dressers when it began to rain.....* and, *He couldn't decide to go right or left.....* One exercise had to be only nonsensical words: *felix thru jobber fornith taxin philly* - try writing non-sensical for 3 minutes!! LOL Another exercise had to be completed with one's non-dominant hand. The value of that exercise would, I think, be of stepping outside one's comfort zone and concentrating on writing legibly. One of my favorite's was that they had to write as nastily as they could - imagine being given license to be nasty with no judgments, no limits (other than 3 minutes), and having the liberty to choose any insult you might think of - Oh, the power and best yet, no one was hurt in the process!

I listened transfixed as Dorothy shared her writings. There is something very appealing, even to someone whom shrinks from a blank page, about being able to complete spur of the moment sentences and see where they might lead you. To explore, in the name of personal growth, spontaneous feelings and thoughts and then to share them, or not, as you felt at the time. Dorothy admitted the class was challenging at the beginning but as the weeks passed, the group melded and felt freer to say what they meant and mean what they wrote. Such freedom, such individuality, such value, such growth.

All this to say that while I am unable to write myself, I really appreciate and understand why people (men too) keep diaries. The smooth pages (and today with an array of gorgeous covers) bear witness to the writer's most private thoughts, feelings, customs, wishes, hopes, dreams as well as what s/he had for breakfast and the weather for the day. For some, writing or journaling, can be a meaningful way to express who we are, what we hope to achieve, bear witness to our pain and grief and ultimately help with the healing.

If you feel so inclined and would like to give it a try, here is the beginning of a sentence. Give yourself 3 minutes to write down how you feel/felt. If you also feel so inclined, send it in and we can share in an upcoming issue of *Forever Angels*. You can write anonymously with no judgments. Or not. Whatever works for you.

Here's the sentence: *I felt the rain would never stop.....*

*Thinking of you,  
Lynda*

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They lived and laughed and loved and left.  
~James Joyce

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## **The miracle of your life**

*A Grandfather's Reflections*

Your softness in my arms, the fragile rise and fall of breathing,  
Thoughts of past and future bring pure joy, love, unrestrained.  
I sing softly to you, unashamed of my emotions,  
Such a tiny, perfect person, as my heart watches over you.

You'll run ahead, I'll follow, watching my yesterdays through you.  
You'll marvel at every new bud in springtime.  
Warm summer days, bare feet on sand, scent of ocean.  
Every leaf that falls in autumn will amaze you.  
The clean, frostiness of your first snow will thrill you.  
This and more will you wonder at, as my heart watches over you.

You'll walk by my side, your small hand in mine. I'll teach you things  
You'll need to grow, while I learn from you, how to stay young.  
Can this joy really be for me? I am irrevocably changed,  
While my heart still watches over you with wonder.

***By Edward J. Smith, loving grandfather to Nick, 20 years, twin to Anthony (who was killed aged 15 years while riding his bicycle), Giana, 3 years and Victoria, 22 months.***

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*Book provides insight about speaking to young children about death.....*

*The e-mail below passed over my desk recently and it may be of interest to some of you whom are facing having to speak to young children about death and what it means. This book may provide you with some tools to begin the talk, and for the child to better understand what death means. [If you do purchase a copy, please consider making your charity choice Multiple Births Canada www.multiplebirthscanada.org](http://www.multiplebirthscanada.org) We greatly appreciate all donations to keep our support work going.*

Good morning. My name is Nikki Sian-Leigh Aksamit, and I am a new author from Chandler, Arizona. I have written a book to help families deal with the loss of loved ones, and I am hoping to get this resource into the hands of those who need it.

How do you explain to your young child that mommy lost the baby she was carrying in her tummy? Or tell them that a family friend lost his battle with AIDS? Or answer "Why did puppy have to die?" In an eighteen month period, I was faced with explaining all of these things to my four-year old son. I couldn't find any books that were specific enough, or age appropriate to give him the answers I wanted him to have. So, I wrote my own. I have just made it available on eBay in eBook form, and wanted to make those families with grieving children aware of it.

**"Mommy, What is Dead?"** (copyright 2007) is an illustrated book explaining death and dying, aimed at preschoolers and young children. It explains the difference between body and soul, and the various ways people and animals die. Taking no religious stance, it offers the two most common beliefs as to what happens to the soul after death ("heaven" and reincarnation). **"Mommy, What is Dead?"** offers comfort by telling children that our memories are the way love continues on. With gentle text, and simple pictures, young children easily understand its message.

This eBook sells on eBay for \$5, with free shipping, and \$2 from every sale goes directly to the charity of the buyers choice, which could mean funds directly to your wonderful organizations and websites.

I wrote this book in hopes that my efforts can help other families during a difficult time, like it did mine, and that it may be used as a resource in healing. I am looking to you to help me get in touch with those who have young children who have experienced loss, and may have need of a book like mine.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this with you.

***Nikki Aksamit, Author***

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## **Pearls of Wisdom and Healing.....**

Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D. is an author, educator and grief counselor. He has written several stellar books on grief and is well-known for his compassionate messages about healing while grieving. One of my favorite books (recommended by LSN member Cathy Deschenes, Mom of Daniel, Josh, twins Katie and Jordan who died from their extreme prematurity, and Emily) is ***Healing Your Grieving Heart: 100 Practical Ideas***. Initially and for some time after a loss, it can be impossible to read anything involved and lengthy. Dr. Wolfelt's book is a compilation of "100 Practical Ideas" (what a surprise!) and you can pick up the book, open it to any page at all and read something meaningful, helpful, supportive, right-on-the-mark, put the book down again and go on your way until the next time you feel the urge to pick it up and thumb through it further. He speaks to Helping Others, Reaching Out, Listening to Music, Pet a Pet, Buying a Book, Paying Someone to Clean Your House and so much more. Each page has pearls of wisdom to touch the heart and gently guide the reader towards healing. Each pearl encourages the reader to move forward, aware, in touch, gently, with confidence and love. In truth, these pearls meet the needs of just about anybody in any state of mind and leaves the reader with a smile, a dream, a vision, and maybe best of all, hope. Give it a try - bet you feel a positive difference too.