

Acknowledgement

A year ago, the residents at Villa Redondo and I decided it was time to awaken our collective, spirited and creative voice. This project demanded a year of sustained effort to produce a meaningful, insightful and intimate collection of free verse, narrative and prose poetry. The poems contain imagery, symbolism and narrative accounts of life as experienced by loving souls living with various mental health conditions and physical disabilities. The creative and healing properties of writing poetry serves to reduce self-stigma, and it transforms shame into artistic, vibrant expression. Poetry reflects the voice of the soul and mind. Figurative language adds to the emotional appeal of the work.

The themes include love, life interrupted by mental health conditions, family, aging, self-reflection, friendships and how God inspires hope, optimism and strength to pursue recovery and meaningful living. The poetry here expresses the raw, intimate insight generated by living with disabilities and how the confessional voice can aid the healthy minded to empathize with depth of suffering and internal, psychic struggles all human beings experience. I am eternally grateful

the residents wrote and experienced how therapeutic and liberating the creative writing process could be. The process engendered self-discovery and illuminated once dark passages to bright landscapes containing nurturing, fertile soil.

I have been employed by Trucare Community for 30 years, and it has been my eternal true work. I must express my deep appreciation to the Bolong family for their enduring support of my work at all seven of their facilities. I am empowered to implement our recovery program so the residents can achieve their recovery and rehabilitation goals. I have the resources to support each resident's path to reclaim their lives, imbue their life with meaning and pursue self-determination. We have attained impressive program accomplishments at all of our facilities and will continue to inspire residents to achieve worthwhile goals. All the employees at Trucare Community, from our administrative team, housekeeping and dietary department care deeply for the residents and are invested in their well-being and recovery.

Undoubtedly someone needed to type the manuscript which was handwritten by the residents. Debi Klement dedicated countless hours typing everyone's poetry to create the manuscript. We are so grateful to have Debi

support this project and she understands how the publication of this anthology champions the march toward recovery for our residents. Thank you so much Debi for the ongoing care you express for our residents.

Elijah Levy, Ph.D.

Contents

Brian Matsushita	1
Debra Burke	21
Doug Jacklyn	23
Renee Kemp	47
Barbara Frazier	62
Bonnie Turner	80
Jimmy Williams	124
Tanya Cooper	163
Larry Goodwin	168
Rosemary Lombardo	174
Francisco Lizaragua	176
Cornell Dennis	198
Matthew McNally	199
Jeremy Moeller	203
Gloria Perez, Volunteer	205

Brian Matshushita

I was born on July 20th in Los Angeles and raised in Culver City. I had a “Floating Kidney” which was repaired. I didn’t like school and my parents divorced. I have one living brother and one living sister. My loving wife passed away and I enjoy target shooting, racing and fishing.

I dedicate this writing to all friends and family living and to those no longer with us. Lorie my poetry is eternally dedicated to your, blessed, loving memory. Since you’ve been gone you occupy a very special space in my heart and soul. I miss how you always treated me with kindness and respect.

Mankind is destroying itself. God has been sending a message that mankind must change before the earth, and all living creatures are destroyed. Some people pray and repent and are judged by God.

While thinking about the subject matter my mind began to think about the aroma of the donuts. I started pondering about the scent of the donuts which I was craving.

Life is tough. It's like riding a bicycle most of the time, it's working hard. Plenty of peddling is quite an effort, especially going uphill. Reaching the peak and coasting back down is thrilling. Fixing a flat tire is time consuming.

MY DIVINE LIGHT

I can see my future; it keeps me from ending up in dark places. It keeps me heading in the right direction. The end of my travels is where I am destined.

THAT PERFECT FEELING

That perfect feeling began when I got married to Lorie. It ended when she took her own life.

MEANING OF NEAR DEATH

Working from near death experience got me to think about “Life and Death”. I now believe that existence does not end with death. There is existence after the heart stops beating.

PERFECT MOMENTS

After death, waking up to find I didn't die was quite a surprise. The last thing I remember was not feeling well at the end of a workday.

The train went off the broken track, and everyone had to disembark. Everybody had to find a new way to their destination. The new route was by motor car, and we were able to change the route.

COMES A TIME

There comes a time when change is inevitable. Sometimes it is for the better. Sometimes not. When change does occur, people must try to make the effort to improve.

ADJUSTING TIME

The future has not arrived yet. I wake up 50 years ahead to find that I am no longer physically alive.

I find many people that have died are nearby but most of the people that were alive are not there.

I explain what I remember but there is a period of time that I have no knowledge of.

THE LIGHT IN MY SOUL

The light in my soul is shining to guide me true; I am trying to light my way to the promised land. God is watching and showing the path. I sometimes step to the side but the light forces me back to the way.

I HAVE FIGURED IT ALL OUT EXCEPT

I have figured it all out except how to prevent loss. My reasoning tells me loss is never permanent.

I CAME INTO THE WORLD BLEMISHED

And as I aged when I was young, I received a surgery to attach my “floating kidney” not attached to the main body.

IT'S GOOD ENOUGH

A strong wind in my face.
Bound to moving on.
Home again.

THINKING OF MY PAST

Thinking of my past I look for ways to feel better.

I remember the people and activities that made me happy.

The friends that are no longer with me are memories that I use for inspiration.

IF I WERE A RAINDROP

If I were a rain drop, I would land in a fresh lake.

It makes me so happy that all the fish would enjoy my company.

A CANDLE WITHOUT A WICK

A candle without a wick is like me without my wife.

She was the light of my life, my reason for my existence.

I FEEL MOST AT PEACE WHEN

I feel most at peace when I am at rest and see those passing by gazing down at my face.

Time seems so fast and yet so slow as people gaze down at me

Being tossed out of my childhood home was difficult.

I had to learn how to support myself and survive on my own.

I made a few friends, not many but a few. I met my wife to be, but my family despised her.

Most of my time was spent with her as I was basically disowned by the rest of my family.

I became an EMT and felt very fulfilled helping people who needed medical attention.

STRAWBERRY ON A LEMON TREE

You are on the wrong tree!!! You belong on the tree with all the other lemons you are not sweet like us. I am not a sour lemon. I am sweet because I am descended from a tangerine.

RIDING THE BUS

I don't like riding on a public bus in LA. it is generally dirty and smelly. Too many homeless and vagrants on it.

IT TAKES STRENGTH

It takes strength to accept your weaknesses
Indecisions, losses.

Losses, death of loved ones, friends, people
you admire, pets and items cherished.
Memorabilia.

AGING

What is tough about aging? Forgetfulness,
concentrating, reading, understanding personal
interactions, religions.

Waiting for death.

IF I COULD TALK TO MY YOUNGER SELF

WHAT WOULD I TALK ABOUT?

I would be giving advice about improving myself in my elder years and communication with family and friends more closely.

I would pray to God for personal help.

ON SHAKY GROUND

The earth felt so unsteady, I felt uneasy I was watching the scenery.

Buildings and trees shaking, scaring me severely. Watching the people scrambling made me think that there was no reason to stress out.

I felt that the scary part only lasted a short time. I tried to keep some people relaxed.

I turned on some calming music.

As the time passed, I called on the phone to each person I knew to check on them.

I BELIEVE THAT

I believe that good and evil must exist, without one, the other cannot exist.

It's the philosophy of Yin/Yang.

AT THE SUMMIT OF THE MOUNTAIN

At the summit of the mountain, I climbed I had a spiritual awakening. God let me know he was watching me. I started contemplating my life and my goals.

I saw tears of joy falling from the sky.

God was showing happiness for all new life being born.

MY GREATEST DAYS

My greatest days were the saving of people while working in the medical field as an EMT.

IF ONLY

If only I was there when my wife decided that life was not worth holding dear.

Bipolar disorder is an insidious mental affliction affecting people.

It is deeply disturbing that so many are so depressed that life is not worth the effort.

MY LIFELINE, MY SECURE BASE

My lifeline and my secure base are the people
I can turn to when I am down.

They are the people that keep my spirits up.

I depend on them to keep me anchored.

The people I most depend on are my lifeline
to reality.

They keep me anchored to reality.

I do wish that there could be ways to
communicate with those that are not with me.

LEAN ON ME

I am glad to have helped this morning. Having one of the residents in pain and in tears, I tried to keep the mood light. The paramedics came in a couple of minutes. Fire medics quickly examined, loaded and departed to the closest hospital.

ONCE I SAW THE MOST BEAUTIFUL

Once I saw the most beautiful girl in the world. I married her. Her name was Lori. She had some problems believing in herself. I tried to stay with her until my own medical problems improved.

She ended her life. I pray to her let her know of my happenstance, and to wait for me. I will join her in time.

IN MY DAILY PRAYER

I ask you for eternal peace around the world.
Please watch over and protect everybody that
is in my life.

Also keep those that preceded me with you
always.

THE DAY I MET

The day I met her; I fell in love with her.

I could not get her out of my mind.

ON THE SUBWAY AT MIDNIGHT

I am relaxed and think about the sound of the subway. The subway sounds are very hypnotic.

I am not afraid.

I am very relaxed. There are very few people on board.

THE HIDDEN LIGHT

The hidden light showing the way, I cannot see the source, but I follow my instincts. It disappears to lead to a blissful destination.

MY DOG

When I was a kid, I had a dog named “Queenie” I don’t remember much except that she got out of the backyard and never came back.

HI DAD

I am writing this letter to you because I miss you.

I wish I could have done more while you were near.

I hope I was not much of a disappointment.

MY ABSURD SIDE

I am racing my Camaro that was built by me.

I knew my car inside and out. I was in a Camaro Club known as the "Street Racers"

I never drove it to its limitations.

LION WITH A SOFT VOICE

My Dad was a lion with a soft voice. I never saw him get out of control.

He could be stern and direct; thoughtful and caring.

The memory of him keeps me going. I miss him dearly and will see him in the next life.

LIVING WITH UNCERTANTY

I know I will see my wife again; it will be in my afterlife.

I will be happy to be reunited with her in my afterlife.

No rush, but I will be overjoyed to be with her again.

WHILE SLEEPING I WAS AWAKENED

While I was sleeping, I was awakened by a flower
by the bed.

It awakened me and was saying that it was
thirsty.

The voice sounded like a friendly woman, and
she said she was so thirsty.

I took a glass of fresh water and poured some
in the soil.

Then I slid it closer to the window for sunshine.

I AM IN THE WORLD TO

I am in the world to work on my attitude toward
antisocial attitudes. Watching the news is so
very frustrating. People in the world are getting
more self-centered.

Deborah Burke

I dedicate my poetry to my family, my daughters Breanna, Cassandra and my friends. I also my poem to God that flows within me, in our river of life adventure. I also want to acknowledge my parents Anna Shirlee Hougland and Reverend Kenneth. May it bless and become real in the lives of those that read this book of poetry.

AGAPE

Show me a man and a woman in a love relationship that can see each other for who they truly are in Christ, and I will reveal to you perfect partners for eternity.

For a relationship built upon Christ shall never lose its way but gain as the two become one.

Be patient, seek that fully of Christ and you shall receive in full.

Douglas Jacklyn

I was born in Long Island, New York. I lived there for 22 years and graduated from high school in East Slip. I had my Bar Mitzvah in a synagogue called B’Nai Israel in Oakdale, New York. I went to Glacier National Park with my family when I was 16 years old. I pumped gas for one year in 1987. I also attended Suffolk Community College. I moved to San Diego, California in 1989 and stayed there for about 30 years. I worked as a caregiver for older people. I also house sat and was a companion for elderly people. I never got married and lived in a two-story house for 22 years in Long Island. My brother Glenn lives in Portland, Oregon and I see him once a year.

I want to dedicate my poetry to my loving parents; their blessed, loving memory. I also want to dedicate these poems to my brother Glenn. I am grateful to my parents because they raised me to be a good person.

The people that matter to me are my parents. My friends are people that also matter to me. My parents are deceased, but I still remember them in my heart. I had a few friends in New York who mattered to me. We used to hang out together, and I miss these fun times. We would tell jokes and have fun together. My parents used to take care of me. They were very good people. My father passed away 20 years ago and my mother 10 years ago. My brother is someone that matters to me. He visits me once a year from Portland, Oregon. We usually go out to dinner and we both like Italian restaurants.

My carefree life would include having a career. I would be very happy and would have a lot of time to do things. I would be rich because I would have a lot of money. I would spend it on food and a place to live.

Living with uncertainty would not be good. Not knowing where your next meal would be coming from and not knowing whether your money will take care of your bills. You wouldn't know if the sun would shine and a bunch of clouds around; not knowing if it would rain or not.

My day starts when I get up and maybe eat breakfast. I do some puzzles. Sometimes I stay in my bed and rest. I eat lunch and dinner sometimes. I also go to my appointments and take a shower. At times I feel good, so I exercise

THAT PERFECT FEELING

When I have good things to eat, I feel really good. After I wake up rested, I feel good.
After a long day, I feel good.
Eating pasta makes me feel good.

My mom was a good cook. She would have a variety of meals that I thought were very good. I know that feeling free of worries makes me feel good.

Listening to music also makes me feel good. My dad bought a stereo, and I used it for about 10 years.

When I was young, I had a red 10 speed bike. I once entered a race, and it was fun. I wasn't too smart because I put the bike in 10th gear. I thought I would ride faster but I was the last person to finish the race. That was a big mistake, and I should have kept it in low gears.

I used to ride my bike on local streets. I stayed close to my home. I kept the bike in our garage, and I liked looking at my new bike. I liked the colorful red. I also had a blue bike, but it was stolen. I remember my insurance was able to replace it with a new bike.

BOUND TO MOVING ON

Graduating from high school and college is bound to moving on. Making new friends and moving away from old ones.

I see myself in five years as still staying in this place. Still wanting people to take me out. Going out to dinner with my brother.

IT'S GOOD ENOUGH

Having what I want in my life is good enough.

Eating good meals.

A FISH ON LAND

A fish on land is a very fragile animal. It might not live too long. It shines in the sun light, and its beautiful colors are seen. It can be cooked up and eaten. If it is a rare fish it wouldn't be allowed to be eaten. How far from the water has the fish swam? What kind of fish is it?

THE LIGHT IN MY SOUL

The light in my soul is bright, and it guides me along my path in life. With God's help it steers me toward truth and peace.

It enables me to stay calm through times that are tough. I can see things better with a bright light. The light helps me to stay happy. Sometimes the light is dim, and I get anxious.

RAINDROP ON A ROSE

To catch the beautiful fragrance of the rose.
To cleanse the rose to make it pretty, to see it grow and show its beautiful grace.

To display the colors of the flower. To watch the raindrop, fall of the rose's petal, on to the stem. To watch it dry up under the sun.

Don't touch it because it has thorns.

WITH MY PEN

With my pen I can write a short story about anything I want.

I can do puzzles.

I can take tests.

I can create art.

I can write about myself.

ON THE LAST SUBWAY HOME AT MIDNIGHT

I can enjoy the ride.

I can talk to people sitting near me. I can eat a snack.

UNBLEMISHED

I came into the world unblemished when I was born. God made me unblemished. He said as I get older, I will begin to acquire blemishes because of things I shouldn't have done. I can accept these blemishes since they are small and make me who I am today. In my life I can turn them into an advantage by doing the right things.

MY DIVINE LIGHT

My divine light enables me to be with God.
It shines the way to heaven.
It enables me to do good things on earth.
It helps me to be a good person.
It tells God that I am good.
It tells others that I am good.
God was the one that gave me my divine light.
It gives me a good perspective of life.

I am in the world to enjoy life and make others enjoy their life too.

My friends are people I enjoy being with all the time and we make the world a better place.

I enjoy myself in the world and it helps make the world become a better place.

IN MY LUGGAGE OF LIFE

In my luggage of life, I keep several things such as good memories. I had my Bar Mitzvah and that was a good memory for me. I was 13 years old and had my birthday. I had the reception at a fine restaurant. I wanted about 20 friends to be there. I first started to drive at age 17. I enjoyed driving for about three years. The car was a Chevy Citation, 1980.

WITH MY VOICE

With my voice, I can get my words in order.

I can tell people what I think.

I can exercise my vocal cords.

I can read aloud.

I can tell people how I feel.

I can communicate my feelings.

I can tell people the things that come to my mind.

STUCK IN REVERSE

If I was stuck in reverse, I would need a new transmission.

I could only walk backwards.

I could only talk backwards.

The record would only play in reverse.

I would only remember when I was a child and would forget all about my adulthood.

I could only read backwards, like in Hebrew.

I could only leave a place and couldn't come into it.

I would eat my food from dessert to the first course.

I could only siphon the gas from my car.

I wouldn't be able to put gas in it.

It would only snow from the ground up and not in the normal way it snows.

The trees would turn into seeds.

AS I AGE

I wish I was younger.

But unfortunately, we always get older.

If there was a way to slow down aging, wouldn't it be great to have a time machine?

I could go into the past and relive my life.

Or I can travel into the future and get older.

Finding out what would be going on and going back to change history.

The train doesn't work anymore. It used to be a beautiful ride to and from my workplace. The track ended and the state stopped the train. The train was something great. The engineer used to operate the train. It used to be a long ride on the train. A few hours long was the ride. My life changed when the train stopped running.

At the summit I enjoyed a lunch I packed and it felt good. Being in nature it was a full day and the leaves were changing color the temperature was in the 50's There were a few people I saw at the top of the mountain and I talked to them and they said it would take a few hours to get to the top of the mountain God made a very special day, the air was fresh the scenery was full of light and I was tired from all the walking The trail was marked.

A strong wind in my face pushes me back a little bit gives me reason to wear heavy clothes to protect myself. Its high pressure moving to low pressure. I am still when there is a strong wind, I watch the trees move in the wind. I watch the leaves move on the ground. I see people staying inside because of the wind. I can fly a kite in a strong wind and go to the ocean I watch my ice cream cone fly out of the cone. I see animals running for shelter, squirrels running away from the wind. I see hats flying from people's heads.

One day I met a friend, and we went out to dinner. His name was Scott. I played table tennis with him I met another friend named Darryl and we had fun.

I have just enough time to get things done; eat a meal and work on things, then go to the park, get dressed and see my friends.

THE HIDDEN LIGHT

I can look. I can read. I can see the trees.

It smells good. I can pick the plant I want to grow. I can plant the flower in my garden

On the last subway home, I can look out the window and see the sights. I can talk to the people, I can pay the toll, and I can relax. I can sleep. I can get to the restaurant. I can eat things I enjoy. I can enjoy going through the tunnel. I can visit my brother. I can read the paper.

CRISIS IN MEANING

When I have panic attacks I am in crisis. I get them every few days and they last a few hours then my medication kicks in. I feel better after the medication starts to work.

This road I am on has too many places. This sometimes is a struggle, but I am happy when I reach the top. Sometimes I see things, trees among the side of the road. It makes me happy.

I feel most at peace when I am listening to music or lying down in bed or doing my word searches. When I take walks, enjoy a good meal, a favorite meal then I go to sleep for the night. I use water to clean my face

On the bus people there are people I meet, and they are looking out the window. I look for my destination, people who are sit next to me are pulling the cord for their destination to get the driver to know when to stop I like the conversations with people who I meet on the bus, and I tell the driver things. I will say goodbye to people.

The door was a symbol. It could have been on the price is right. It could have had many prizes to offer the winners on the show. The door opened to a trip to Spain. A luxurious trip and a hotel in Spain, it went to whoever guessed the prize. The trip closest to the actual retail price of the trip.

What should I buy to give to someone? If I had more friends, I would give some flowers to someone like a girl. A gift from a friend is better than a gift from a mortal. A place to live can also be a gift.

AN INTERESTING ENCOUNTER

If my parents were alive today that would be an interesting encounter. They would tell me about what happened after they died, maybe they went to heaven. They would tell me about an interesting experience. Did they speak to God? Did they get everlasting life? Maybe, they went into the past, probably not. What is in the afterlife? They would tell me if it was a good experience or not. They would tell me about my grandparents and how they saved them. Maybe they saw other friends of mine that died or took a detour.

I was driving down a highway, and I saw a detour coming in a half mile. I had to exit the highway sooner than my destination. I wanted to get off at an exit farther than I could be. I wanted to have breakfast at a restaurant beyond the detour. So, this messed up my plans.

BOUND TO MOVING ON

Graduating high school and college is bound to moving on. Making new friends and moving away from old ones. Running is bound to moving on. I see myself in five years as still stuck in this place. Still waiting for people to take me to dinner, like with my brother again.

IT'S GOOD ENOUGH

Having what I want in life is good enough, eating good pears.

ABSURDITY IN THE WORLD

Not everyone is created equal. Under the eyes of the law. People should be equal. I think some people are crazy and others are sane. People are all different and some get lucky with their situation in life. Some don't have good luck. I worry that I will run out of good luck. A lot of funny and crazy things occur like running out of food in a restaurant that needs food. It must close and reopen often. Food is replaced. There are storms that put people in danger and others that laugh at them because they aren't in the storms. Then there are some people who react differently, and it takes a lot of patience. I wish it wasn't true.

I saw a teary cloud, and this suggested that there was unhappiness in the sky. I saw a few birds flying in the clouds. The air was blustering; God created the clouds so there was beauty in that sight. To some it represented sickness, but to me it was beautiful.

Without sunshine a flower will wilt and it will not develop. It won't be with other flowers, will lose all color, will become asleep in the world. In the real world, it will become bright It will be picked up by a person.

I see a lot of animals in my room. Why are birds flying all over the place? The sun is out in place or my roof. I can see the sky. I roll over on my back, and I see monkeys eating bananas. I can hear birds chirping loudly. I can see thunder and lightning coming and I know the rain is coming soon. I can see the rain; I see horses flying too. They have wings on them; I would like to ride on these horses. They are saying get up and join us for the ride of your life. I spoke to the horses, and they answered me. I said how are you? Let me ride you and the horse said I will. Come to your bed and so I said go ahead and one horse came over. I enjoyed the ride. We went flying together. I said giddy up and it took me to a far place, a castle in the forest.

I am taking up my rightful space in the world. I have mass. I have atoms and molecules. The space can be moving to and from the confines of my space when I am moving, I always stay the same mass no matter what shape I have. If I take more mass than I am more than one person. So that be true. If I double my weight, then the space increases. If God wants to pop my space, I will die. I will live until God wants to enter my space.

IF I COULD TALK TO MY YOUNGER SELF

I would talk about all the new things I've learned, like in school. The knowledge that I picked up over time. I've learned that things cost more over time. I've learned that love is more valuable than money. I've learned that friends are few in a lifetime. I would say take your time growing up because youth is important. I have learned that respect for other people is more important than just none at all. Being on the right side of the law is important. You must have strength for the long run.

THE ORDINARY BECOMES THE EXTRAORDINARY

If I had a talking encyclopedia, what would I ask it? It can tell me anything I need to know plus things that would augment my life and things that are out of this world such as about other planets. The encyclopedia would tell me about future events such as who would become president and what the weather would be in years from now. I would know if the planets would still be around even millions of years from now.

Renee Kemp

I was born in Covina, CA but was raised in El Monte until the age of 19. I attended Mountain View High School and graduated in 1982. In 1982 I had my daughter Jenifer, followed by my son Robert in 1986. I got married in 1988 and it lasted 20 years. I attended school to be a medical technologist and worked for an orthopedic surgeon. I then had my third child, a son named Johnathan. In 1996 I had a daughter named Sarah. I also worked for a pediatric family practitioner. My first job was at Whittier Hospital, and I resigned from there in 2010. At the hospital I scheduled surgeries for five years. I also was a caregiver for a period of five years. I arrived at Villa Redondo about one and a half years ago.

I dedicate my poetry to my loving parents William and Rosa Lee. Also, my beloved daughters Sarah and Jenifer and sons Robert and Johnathan.

THE GRANDFATHER CLOCK

The grandfather clock has a hard time keeping accurate time.

But he has the power to take you back to your youth.

It is so nice seeing my loved ones again.

I don't have any more pain in my body.

Mom and Dad look so young.

Hugging them again is priceless.

Seeing my children as babies.

I really enjoyed them when they were younger.

The little silly things they did.

THIS IS HOW I FIT INTO THE WORLD

I once saw the most beautiful sunset at the beach. My son Robert came for a visit.

He lives in Canada.

I asked him what he wanted to do.

We went to San Diego for the day and saw the sunset on Coronado Bay.

It is a treasured memory for me.

IN MY DAILY PRAYER SHOW ME A FAVOR

Every day I pray to God for my family, to keep them safe. I pray for guidance of the day.

I pray that my pain level is low.

HEY IT'S ME

One good thing about social media like Facebook and Instagram is that you could reconnect with your family and longtime friends. I found an old friend from high school and wrote hey it's me, Renee remember me? At first, she had a hard time remembering because time had passed. As we got to talking about the good old days, she said to me Hey Renee it's you. We had a family reunion a few years ago. I was so excited to see people I hadn't seen in 40 years. I went up to my cousin Louise, hugged her and said hi it's me Renee. She said to me sorry I don't know you. I felt a little sad and walked away. My cousin David told me she had dementia.

BEING OF SPIRIT

I am so fortunate to grow up with parents. My dad was Catholic and my mom was Christian. They taught us about God.

They taught us to be spirited and always be kind to someone or walk away with grace. You know the type of people that give the shirt off their back. I taught my four children the same.

MY LIFELINE IS GOD

My lifeline is God. It used to be my family, but I haven't seen them in a few years. God gives me peace of mind that they are all ok.

MY SECURE BASE IS GOD

My secure base is God.
I have been through many trials
in life and I am still here.

IF I WAS A BUTTERFLY

If I was a butterfly, I would be bright colors so that when people saw me, they would take pictures, and I would fly around the mountains and the forest. Being in nature I would live my life out.

IF ONLY

If only I could bring back my daughter Jenifer. She would never have diabetes. She could get married like she did to Jonathan and could have children like she wanted to have. I only wish diabetes didn't exist.

If only I had my Mom and Dad here. My life would be different. I would make sure they were taken care of.

They could live with me. It would also be a carefree life. We would all be healthy.

AS I AGE

As I age, I am getting older. I can feel pain in my body.

My bones have arthritis. Sometimes it's hard to move.

I pray to God for the strength to get up.

I long for the time I was younger and able to move around freely with no pain.

WITH MY VOICE

With my voice I could tell my family that I love them.

Even though we don't see each other as often as when we were younger.

With my voice I pray for my children every day for their wisdom in their lives for them to know God.

THE PEOPLE THAT MATTER TO ME

The people that matter to me are my mom and dad for raising me, my three brothers and five sisters, my six children and friends. I think of them often and pray for them every day. I miss them very much.

I AM IN THIS WORLD

I am in this world to live my life the way God wants me to.
Giving him all the glory.
Sharing his word with others.
I am looking forward to eternity with him in heaven.

SPREADING MY WINGS

Spreading my wings full and wide soaring
through the sky.

Seeing all the beautiful sites around the world.

Being an eagle is being the king or queen of
the sky.

I MAKE THE WORLD HOLY BY

I make the world by being nice to people.

Helping them if they need it.

I used to feed the homeless people when I
was younger.

In later years I needed to be fed.

God will always provide for our needs.

AT THE SUMMIT OF THE MOUNTAIN

At the summit of the mountain I climbed, I felt
the cool wind on my face as I looked across
Gods creation.

The view was simply amazing.
It was definitely worth the climb.

I SAW A TEARY CLOUD

I saw a teary cloud. It was full of rain.
It covered the road and made a river.
You needed a boat to travel around instead
of a car.

MY GREATEST DAYS ARE

My greatest days are when I had my four children. When they were born, watching them grow up to be good people.

My greatest days were also working in the medical field with doctors and hospitals and helping people. It meant a lot to me helping patients.

MY GUARDIAN ANGEL

My guardian angel has helped me out a lot in life. I was the accident-prone kid. My angel has always protected me. I remember a time when I was sitting at Sav-on's in my car, a lady was screaming that her child was running in the parking lot. I got out of my car, and the little boy ran into my arms. A van went behind us. I know God put me in his way to save his life. The mom was so happy I handed her little son back to her.

HOW WELL DO I KNOW MYSELF

I think I know myself very well.
I was raised by good parents.
I raised my four kids to be good.
I worked in the medical field
most of my life.
I cared for elders in my last job.
I am here at Villa Redondo to live my life.

THERE COMES A TIME

There comes a time when we have to say we
have grown up and are getting older.
Losing our loved ones along the way.
We are able to remember the good days so
we can have good days ahead of us.

I HAVE HAD MANY DETOURS

I have had many detours in my life from divorce to ending up in the streets. I found a place called Safe Landing and they sent me here to Villa Redondo. I am happy to have a place to live.

THE PERFECT FEELING

That perfect feeling was when I was holding each of my children for the first time. The joy of being their mother. Their tiny little bodies. Jenifer was the smallest at 6 lbs. and Jonathan the biggest at 9 lbs. 14oz. My son Robert 8 lbs. was my first c-section at 9 lbs. 2 oz. Sarah was by c-section. All of them have given me joy in life.

THE RED DOOR IN THE FIELD

We found a red door in a field. We found out a developer was going to build a beautiful home for a family and that's where he started.

A DAY WITH A GLAZED DONUT

Throughout the years I have had many favorite donuts. When Krispy Creme opened the glazed were my favorite. We were allowed to watch them being made. The aroma of them filled the room. The sound of them being cooked made everyone ready to get them. The place gave everyone a warm feeling as we knew were going to taste the fresh donuts soon. Picking up the donut and eating it was heavenly.

MY DANCE STARTED ALONG TIME AGO

My dance started a long time ago on
September 28th 1964.

Born to loving parents who both worked to
take care of their family.

Raised with our brothers and sisters.

Going through school in South El Monte Ca.

Mom worked nights and dad worked days.

We were taught to be good to our neighbors.

We went to church.

I met my daughter's father in high school and
had her when I was a senior.

She was a bright surprise that inspired me
to be a better person.

Things fell apart with her dad due to
drugs and the pressure of him being a good
role model.

I left and met my husband and had three
more kids.

I saw a beautiful colored rainbow after a few days of rain.

It was huge from east to west; the colors were bold and radiant.

It was calling me to let me know it is Gods promise that He won't flood the earth again.

Barbara Frazier

I was born in San Diego and lived there until the age of six. In 1962 we moved to Corona, CA and I graduated from Corona Senior High School. I enrolled at University of California, Riverside in 1985 and earned my teaching credential. I began teaching first and second grade special education. My first marriage was in 1977, and I had two daughters, Kim and Christina Sheldon. I have two granddaughters, Aida and Raina Simonton. I moved to Villa Redondo in 2023. I enjoy painting with watercolors and Batik painting which is decorating cloth using wax and dye.

I dedicate my poetry to my loving parents Bettie and Bob Rew, and to my wonderful brother Jeffrey, a famous musician who instilled goodness, courage and kindness in me. I also dedicate my writing to my exceptional daughter Christina Beth and my beautiful granddaughters Aida and my cheerleader Raina.

THE PEOPLE THAT MATTER TO ME

1. My daughter Christina Beth Simonton
2. My Granddaughter Aida Jonette Simonton
3. Raina Anne Simonton
4. My 1st true love Kim William Bray
5. My mother Bettie Lou Rew
6. My father James Robert Rew
7. My grandmother Jonette Alice Cox
8. My brother Jeffrey Roberf Rew
9. My niece Kimberly Jan Rew
10. My boyfriend Arturo Espiranza

I love them all and they have influenced me and shaped my life to make me the lovely woman I am today.

MY GREATEST DAYS

When I met my boyfriend Kin Sheldon we got engaged when I was 15 and he was 18. In 1973 we were married by my brother's psychiatrist in San Diego. We had a beautiful girl in 1977 Christina Beth Sheldon. I went to UCR in 1983 and got a master's degree in childhood education. I met my wonderful husband Dwayne Allen Frazier in an Assembly of God Church. We were married for 30 years. I taught 1st and 2nd grade and special Ed.

IN MY LIFE

My guardian angel was helping me get sober after being an alcoholic for 40 years.

My guardian angel has protected me with God's help, from three suicide attempts.

Thank you, God!

I had Rapid Cycling Bipolar Disorder 1

The longest time I was awake was for four days.

MY DIVINE LIFE

My divine life has enlightened my spirit and brought me closer to God.

It has helped me fit into Villa Redondo after a shaky start.

The eagle, I had an encounter with a golden eagle on my way to my doctor's office.

They suspected I had Huntington's Disease.

I was given the name of Stand Eagle.

Soaring the skies I stopped to visit Funny and Gizmo.

Soaring above the tree line I stopped by to visit condors.

I built a sturdy nest of twigs with my mate Kimbo.

I was in the Willamette Valley in Oregon.

Lots of yummy salmon.

We stayed together for life and had two chicks Chrissy and Aida.

WHAT CAN YOU DO

This I how to make the world a more holy place, by praying for everyone here at Villa Redondo, the residents, staff and administration.

Encouraging, being friendly, accepting people wholeheartedly. Being positive. I support SE+I

Praying for our president to support the troops.

Being sensitive to the Holy Spirit.

At the summit of the mountain I climbed I
found out that I wasn't afraid of heights
anymore.

I was braver than I thought I could be.

God spoke to me and said I shouldn't be
afraid of failure, and I could be more creative.

Most of all He showed me his everlasting love.

THE BEST PART OF MY DAY

The best part of my day is after lunch.
I get my watering can and my LA times and a
soda.
I put on my sunglasses and go out on the
patio on the second floor.
I walk out and water my plants and say hi
babies and they say hi mama!!
How's everyone doing?
We are doing great!
It's the best part of my day.
And the wildflowers say it's the
best part of our day.
Then I sit in my favorite chair and lay
out in the sun!

HOW WELL DO I KNOW MYSELF

Pretty well, but I am excited to learn new things.

I have completed most of the things I wanted to do.

Had a baby, taught 1st and 2nd grade, special education for 17 years in Lake Elsinore at Machado Elementary School.

There comes a time, when it's time to forgive myself.

To quit dwelling on the past failures, addictions and bad decisions.

The past is the past and the present is a gift to move to Villa Redondo and enjoy Elie's class.

To enjoy fulfilling my artistic endeavors and Paint, Paint, Paint and enjoy all my friends here.

The famous "Bismark"!

My luscious donut is calling my name Barbara
Barbara Barbara!

Come to me my Darling, delicious cherry
filling, pastry cream! Delectable tender dough
with an incredible chocolate glaze!

The famous "Bismark"!

Yum Yum Yum

I'm in Love

A DANCE WITH AN UNEXPECTED

My dance began in 1955.

I had mom and dad Bettie and Bob Rew.

We lived in a tiny suburb of San Diego called Spring Valley.

My brother Jeff was an inspiration to me.

When I was 15 when I met my first husband, Kim Sheldon.

We had a beautiful daughter Christine Beth Sheldon.

After a misstep, Kim and I got divorced. In 1987.

I met a wonderful man Dwayne Allen Frazier, and we were married 30 years.

He encouraged me to get my teaching degree. Yeah.

We were very happy.

BICYCLE AS A METAPHORE FOR LIFE

My first bicycle was a Schwinn 3 speed bike.
My dad bought it from a neighbor Collete
Pfistel.

The name was "Roxie".

I was 14. My second bike was in Salem,
Oregon a 10 speed.

Life was good.

Cruising along in a happy marriage to Kim
Sheldon and had a beautiful daughter
Christine.

Had an uphill challenge with divorce.

Now I'm cruising very happily at Villa Redondo!!
With all my friends.

THAT PERFECT FEELING

I met Kim Bray (Kimbo) in 1973. We met at Corona High School. Kimbo lettered in track and field. This was in 1972 when I was a sophomore. I went to a football game and wore a fake fur hat. I was a natural hippie, still am. He worked at Denny's in Corona. When I walked by him and smiled at him "BOOM"!! our eyes met, and it was Love at first sight! I was 15 and he was 18. We were inseparable. We went to lots of concerts. We moved to Carlsbad, California by my parents. In 1973 we got married. We were married by my brother's psychiatrist, and he read our wedding vows out of the Prophet by Kahlil Gibran. We went on our honeymoon in Canada and had a beautiful daughter Christine Beth Simonlo.

I SAW A TEARY CLOUD...

I saw a cloud with tears coming. Crying for the state of the world with all its positives and negatives.

I AM IN THIS WORLD TO

God has prepared me to encourage and love and comfort, support and love one another.

?????? has given to share my spirituality in different ways.

Buddhism, ???? Yoga, being a teacher and a chef.

AS I AGE

As I age, I can experience healing from suicide
?????

Celebrating my relationship with my husband
whom I met in church.

I remember Guru Eric Sing Khalsa who was my
yoga teacher in Kundalina Yoga.

I could use meditation as medicine to calm
my frazzled ego.

I celebrate my success and failures that make
up the complete Barbara Jan Frazier.

Inch by inch Life is a cinch
Yard by yard life is hard

--- Mel Brooks

With my voice I can sing everything!
I can express my opinions and emotions!
With my voice I can tell my family I love them
Christina, Aida and Roina!
As I age, I can experience healing from
Fibromyalgia, mental illness, suicide and death
of a spouse Dwayne Frazier.
Being better, stronger, happier than ever
before.
Now that I have a boyfriend, Arturo Art
Espinoza.
Respect Respect Respect

Eight years ago, old swallowed a bottle of
aspirin

2016 suicide attempt
2018 suicide attempt
2023 suicide attempt

IF I WERE A RAINDROP

I would land on a dog, a husky named Luna.
It would be a soft landing on her thick fur.
Luna would feel good having the raindrops
land on her.

Luna would feel special because this one
raindrop landed on her and only her.

Luna kept walking with the one raindrop until
it totally soaked into her fur.

The owner and Luna eventually got home and
no more raindrops.

TALKING ANIMAL

My dog Luna talks to me and says take me outside. And then she is hungry, she eats, then we play then another long walk, then go home and she takes a long nap. One day Luna woke up and began talking to me and acted strange. I thought I was dreaming, then I realized it wasn't a dream. Luna likes to talk, and she wants me to feed her gourmet, expensive dog food. I told her we can't afford it. So, they don't take food stamps for dog food, I told Luna. She likes to walk around downtown Long Beach. Luna asked if I could get another dog for her to play with. I told her we couldn't there wasn't enough room in the house. I told Luna I loved her and that I will always take good care of her.

ITS GOOD ENOUGH RIGHT NOW

Where I'm at right now is good enough.

It could be better, but I have a lot of help here.

I could have more, but what I have now makes me feel good.

Bonnie Turner

I was born in Woerden, Holland and lived there until the age of five. My family emigrated to Long Beach and I graduated from Lakewood High School. After high school, I went to work for the Long Beach post office for 23 years. I retired from the post office and worked as a dispatcher for the Long Beach Police Department for 10 years. I had my son in 1981 and daughter in 1996. For leisure, I enjoy swimming at the beach.

I dedicate my poetry to my son John Paul and my daughter Jazmine. I also want to dedicate my writing to the blessed, loving memory of my father Francois and mother Eleanor who taught me to be a loving and strong person.

LIVING WITH UNCERTAINTY

You never know what tomorrow will bring.
Living with uncertainty is like walking around
partially blindfolded.
You don't know how you feel or who you'll be.
Take one day at a time just make sure you
live each one to its fullest.
One day I'll be moving to Texas, and I don't
know what will happen there.
That makes me afraid, but also very
excited.

AWAKENED

I first started working as a dispatcher, I wasn't sure I could do it because there was a lot to learn. As I was learning I realized it wasn't that hard, and it became easier and easier. I liked to help people when I worked as a dispatcher at the security company. At Anaheim Police Department I worked as a 911 dispatcher. I enjoy helping people in emergencies, to help them calm down. I worked at Anaheim PD for eight years.

MY WALLS ARE TALKING TO ME

Hello Bonnie, my name is Gerald and I'm your friendly wall.

Hey Bonnie, it would be nice if you hung more pictures on me and gave me a good paint job. So, when I see you, I'll be nice and clean and freshly painted.

I have a friend, the wall in your second bedroom and his name is Harold and he wants you to hang more pictures on him. You guys talk too loud at night, and it keeps me up.

Ok Bonnie, we will be quieter when we talk at night.

I AM MAKING THE WORLD A HOLY PLACE

I am making the world a holy place by helping
our church,

playing with the kids and singing songs.

I also served the kid's snacks.

I volunteered.

While I worked, I helped my co-workers, so I
trained them

how to answer the phones as a dispatcher.

I went to a homeless shelter, and I donated
clothes.

I would like to go into the community and
feed the homeless.

I also want to continue being kind to people.

MY SECURE BASE

My good friend Jimmy is my secure base.

He is always there for me when I am sad
happy, and he never judges me.

He is always there to help me when I need
something.

One day I was sad, he knew it by looking at
me and he asked me what he could do to
make me feel better.

I can't imagine not having him in my life.

IF ONLY

If only I could bring back my dad, he was always there, he was a very sweet man. Hardly got mad but when he did you would know it.

He worked hard as a T.V. repairman who went to people's houses to repair T.V.'s.

I remember one time I was crying because my boyfriend left me, and my dad told me its ok baby there are a lot of other guys out there for you.

It was my first boyfriend.

OH, A CAREFREE LIFE

I would like not having any responsibilities like paying bills.

I could buy whatever I want and not worry about anything.

I wouldn't have to be at work or answer to anyone.

I could sleep in get up when I want and not worry about the time.

I would not get bored in this carefree life.

AS I AGE

As I age, I discover I have more aches and pains.

I am calmer and take things more in stride.

I can be more patient with people, and it improves my relationships with them.

I have seen my two kids mature into good loving people.

My son and daughter are there for me if I ever need anything and they show me how much they love me.

PEOPLE THAT MATTER TO ME

The people who matter to me are my parents when they were alive, my siblings and my five close friends.

These people are my loyal friends, and they have been there since I got here.

We talk to each other and hang out together.

I also know I matter to them, they always speak to me, and we treat each other with respect.

We have lots of things in common, we color and like to eat snacks, and we joke around and make each other laugh especially when one of us is feeling down.

SPREADING MY WINGS FAR AND WIDE

I want to go on an adventure to Africa and go on a Safari. I also like the clothes they wear, and I would like to buy some because they are very colorful. Their clothes have bright patterns that reflect each tribe's customs and practices. I know they do great Safaris in Tanzania. I want to see giraffes up close, and lions and monkeys. I would fly over Indonesia to visit relatives I never met. I was born in the Netherlands. I would visit my older sister there. I would eventually come home to Long Beach.

MY DAY STARTS WHEN

My day starts after I eat breakfast. I then go for a smoke; talk to my friends to see what they are doing. I go to group that day. I participate in other activities. I'll go outside if I can and eat at the restaurant. I come back to rest and hang out with friends and watch a movie then have dinner. Rest watch T.V. and to sleep around 7:00.

GOD CAN WE GO FOR COFFEE AND TALK

God, can we go for coffee and talk about the journey I am going through now?

It makes me sad and cry, but I also know there's a reason for this and I know you will help me.

So, I take it one day at a time, pray to you and know you will not leave me alone on this journey.

At the end of this journey, it will make me a stronger and patient person.

So, I thank you God for watching over me while I am on this journey.

MY CLOUD OF DOUBT

My cloud of doubt, what do you want from me?

Don't try to hold me back because it won't work.

I'm positive you will disappear so I can go on to live a healthy, positive life with you following me.

Almighty Father, will you help the cloud disappear?

I can't have you following me around because you only hold me back.

So, goodbye forever and no coming back to me.

I FEEL MOST AT PEACE WHEN

I feel most at peace when I'm alone in my room thinking of a younger me with siblings. Worry free at the park listening to birds sing, rolling in wet grass, enjoying the breeze, feeling refreshed. I remember feeling young.

ON THE BUS

On the bus there can be many frustrations, getting on the wrong bus, constant stops, loud and interesting passengers. But that creates the experience of meeting different people. Making friends makes riding on the bus fun.

THE CALM IN MY ROOM

The calm in my room relieves my stress,
clears my mind.

Relieving the emptiness is simply just reminding
myself to relax and enjoy life.

ON SHAKY GROUND

If I was on shaky ground my life wouldn't be stable, but upside down, with no balance. Getting sick caused me to be unable to walk. I felt scared because I didn't know what to expect. Now I'm more stable and able to find my steady ground.

THE LIGHT IN MY SOUL

The light in my soul is sometimes dim but mostly bright. I know what direction to go in when it's bright. At times when it's dim, I go to my room and rest my soul until it gets bright again. Certain people make my life good and bright.

A STRONG WIND IN MY FACE

Aging is like a strong wind in my face.

A strong wind can slow me down.

As we age, we learn to adjust movements,
our eating habits change, and health even
though it slows us down.

I am a fighter and will find my way through.

Things like this remind me of challenges I
faced and was able to pull through.

The strong wind helps me take a second to
admire things around me, trees flowing, birds
singing.

It's like a breath of fresh air.

BOUND TO MOVING ON

Living outside of Villa Redondo, to start working again and working on my health. This will keep me moving in the right direction.

Getting married and walking again.

Thinking of this gives me a sense of relief.

Motivation to keep moving forward.

I want to walk and get my body moving more.

AT THE SUMMIT

At the summit of the mountain I climbed, I had a spiritual moment.

I saw God's image, a beautiful one and I cannot explain it.

It left me calm and I wanted to know more about God, such as why there is evil in this world when God is all about love.

I SAW A CLOUD

I saw a cloud and tears coming out of it. I looked and wondered if it had human qualities. It's kind of strange that a cloud would cry with tears coming out of it. But I suppose it can happen, and I wanted to do something to make the cloud happy so it would stop crying. I thought about talking to the cloud and telling it how beautiful it looked.

MY GREATEST DAYS

I am proud having my two kids, a son and daughter. At my job I was promoted to a supervisor after being a dispatcher for 12 years. I also did track, the 100-yard dash in high school and I hold a school record. I also attended LBCC for one year and did track again running the 100-yard dash and I competed in tournaments.

MY GUARDIAN ANGEL

One time when I was driving, I almost got hit, my legs froze, and I didn't get into an accident. If I got into the accident with the 18-wheeler I would have been severely injured or died. I know for sure it was my guardian angel that intervened, and I avoided getting into the accident.

A DETOUR TO

I got married 50 years ago but it didn't work out. So, I went back to work and raised my two kids, and they turned out pretty damn good. Even though we went through our ups and downs because we had detours in life, it all turned out good.

THAT PERFECT FEELING

When my family gets together
and I get to hold my
grandson for the first time.
I saw myself in my grandson, in his eyes,
smile and the
color of his eyes was like mine.
Eric's beautiful round
face was just like mine, his grandmother. Oma.
As Eric grew up and matured, he enlisted in
the Navy.
I saw many of my traits in him. He is very
responsible, kind, nice and friendly and
handsome. Eric has made my son John Paul
and me very proud of all that he has
achieved.

After a couple of days of rain,
I walked outside and looked up
to the sky and saw a beautiful rainbow with all
its colors saying wake up smile and come visit
me. So, I got on my bird
and flew up there so I could sit on the
rainbow and look down
at everybody. I saw people walking and looking
up at me sitting on the rainbow.
A friend of mine saw me on the rainbow and
asked me how I got up there.
I told my friend my bird flew me up here.

I love my purple bicycle it has a purple seat.
My dad taught me to ride my bike after he
put training wheels on it.

I rode it all around the block and as I got
older, I got to go further away.

I rode it to school and then it was stolen at
junior high school.

After that I rode the bus for a while.

My brother said they couldn't afford to buy
another bike.

I did not put a lock on my bike when it was
stolen.

I never bought another bike after it was stolen.

I ended up getting a Mazda when I was
in high school.

As a kid we had two German shepherds I don't remember their names. I always walked them, let them run around the park and let them chase my brother. They were lovable, cute dogs. We took them to the beach, and my brothers mostly gave them baths.

They liked running around in our big back yard. They also chased the birds. One day they got loose in the backyard, they ran away and we found both of them dead, they were poisoned.

After that we did not get any more pets. They were 10 years old when they died.

MY THURSDAY MORNING FIX

My favorite donut always calls me on Thursday morning around 10:00am to come get it out of the container. I can smell it for miles away the closer Levy gets to Villa Redondo. The stronger the scent of the chocolate donut filled with custard. My mouth starts to water anticipating the delicious custard donut. I can experience a euphoric state unlike eating anything else because my taste receptors long for a lovely gratifying experience.

A DANCE INTERRUPTED

My dance began on 3/6 in Amsterdam Holland and my early years dancing included learning how to speak English so that I could communicate after moving to dance in the United States. I first began dancing in Inglewood Ca. before dancing my way to Long Beach. My dance in Long Beach began at age 7 and I experienced some missteps because of my language barriers. My dance became more fluid as I grew older, as I danced through high school and college. At age 23 I met a dancing partner and we danced in synchrony until he began dancing with a new partner. A couple of years later I met a new dancing partner, and we had a daughter. We danced nicely for 8 years until we had some missteps. Now I'm dancing alone and it feels good. About 4 years ago I met another dancing partner, and we are dancing in synchrony now.

THERE COMES A TIME

There comes a time when you learn to make adjustments in life. We give up things we don't want to, it's hard initially and then you adjust to it. Like when I had to give up my apartment and my car, it was very difficult. It was like losing a part of myself that I could never regain. But I have adjusted and come to accept my situation and still have gratitude for the good in my life. I am happy where I am now with my circle of friends.

HOW WELL DO I KNOW MYSELF

I think I know myself pretty well because I have done almost everything I wanted to in my life. I have raised a son and daughter and worked as a dispatcher which I loved for 18 years. I retired and experienced health problems which explains why I came to Villa Redondo, and my health has improved. I would like to one day start to walk.

I MAKE THIS WORLD MORE HOLY

I make this world more holy by
being kind to others
helping one another
and praying for world peace.
I am a servant
of the Lord on earth,
and as his servant
I offer money to the homeless and sometimes
give them food.
I also send money to charities
that provide treatment
to kids with cancer.
I occasionally go to church
when my
friends pick me up to go.
I babysit the children at the church
and I enjoy doing it.

I'm in this world to
make a difference,
to be kind to people.
My duty in this world
is to help people
when they are down,
it fulfills me.

WITH MY VOICE

With my voice I can speak my mind, make choices, and let other people know how I feel. When I was younger, I executed a stronger voice and got what I wanted. As I got older my voice got a little weaker and I don't speak as much and as stronger. Even though my voice has weakened, I still get my needs met.

IF I WERE A BUTTERFLY

I would like to be purple and yellow, and I would fly as far away as I could fly, like Holland, Indonesia. I would visit my relatives and tell them how beautiful America is.

I would come back to Lakewood, Ca. to see my butterfly families.

I would tell everyone I love them before I die at around nine months.

I also want to say I didn't like being trapped in the chrysalis for 4-5 weeks because I am claustrophobic.

I once saw the most beautiful dolphin. I was on a boat with friends in the pacific. I remember catching a glimpse of it and thinking “wow I’ve never seen something so beautiful”. I couldn’t keep my eyes off of it. The way it used it’s tail to swim and jump so fast. I wasn’t aware they had tails like that. I blinked and the next second it had disappeared and replaced by a school of fish exactly where it had just been. Beauty replaced by beauty. God makes everything amazing.

IN MY DAILY PRAYER

I ask God to grant clarity to my friends and family, to leave confusion far away from their hearts. To give them peace every day. I used to pray on my knees but now I pray anywhere I can whether I'm sitting or lying down. I just lower my head and close my eyes and talk to Him. Sometimes I say, "God are you there"? Sometimes He's quiet, but He always gives me an answer. By the end of my daily prayer, I feel at peace I feel heard, like God always got me.

The day I met Lia...My right hand
She's always here now,
writing the right words for me.
She's always smiling like me!
Dr. Levy brought her here.
And I'm very thankful for that.

WHEN I LOOK AT MYSELF

I need improvement, I need to get healthy, I
need to get wiser.

Kinda like Dr. Levy, but I also see a child,
because that's who I am at heart.

I see a wild heart.

These days I don't need to look in the mirror
to remember who I am.

I don't need to look in the past. When I look
at myself, I feel as though I'm glancing back
at my past.

When I look inside myself, I can embrace who
I truly am.

I HAVE JUST ENOUGH TIME

I have just enough time to get better. To see
and play with my grandkids.

I feel old now, but I have time
to feel young again.

If I wanted to, I could ride a bike again.

I can watch movies from my childhood.

I have enough time now to talk to my dad as
much as I should have when he was alive.

I had the time needed to right all my wrongs
and now I have more than enough time to
continue to love myself.

WITH MY PEN

With my pen I can do a lot.
I can have a friend, turn all my
thoughts into a poem.
I can draw flowers; I can draw the moon.
Whatever comes to my mind I can place on a
paper and make it real.
I can put these drawings on my door to
express myself!
I can draw food that makes me hungry, but
my pen can't bring me food.

ON THE SUBWAY AT MIDNIGHT

On the subway at midnight, I may see a ton
of different people.

I see drunks.

They're drinking out of brown bags,
like they're trying to cover up.

But we all know.

Why am I here?

I AM THE FIRST IN MY FAMILY TO

I am the first in my family to hang glide!
The first of my family to fly in the sky like an
eagle.

I was able to do things like this because my
parents brought me to America to live a better
life.

A LION WITH A SOFT VOICE

My dad was a lion with a soft voice.
He was the head of our house.
He was always teaching
us lessons in a way we understood.
We came from Holland
and we spoke Dutch,
and it was hard for him to learn English.
He had to get a job where the boss was
Korean and did
not speak English.
I think this taught him how to communicate
with people without the use of words.
He used his hands to
talk a lot, always gentle movements.
He was a lion with a soft voice.

MY ABSURD SIDE

I remember going hang gliding around age 20
in Temecula.

Once I got off the mountain,
I was scared and once
I started gliding it was exhilarating.
I felt so liberated like a
bird soaring the open sky.
Although it was exhilarating,
I was still anxious.
I was soaring for ten minutes.
The landing was frightening,
but I managed to land softly.

I AM TAKING UP MY RIGHTFUL SPACE IN THE WORLD BY

I am taking up my rightful space in the world
by showing people how to laugh.

The way the laughter makes them feel will
make me smile more.

When everyone around me is happy I know
the day will go better.

If everyone focused more on laughter and not
so much the negatives it would make a better
world.

I know I'm taking up my rightful space when
the people around me are happy and smiling.

A STRAWBERRY IN AN APPLE TREE

Apple is angry because the strawberry is smaller but has lots of seeds, which means its smarter.

The apple only has three seeds; it wants to steal the seeds from the strawberry so it can fill itself up with more seeds and be smaller.

So, the apple says to the strawberry “you may be smarter but so what, I’m bigger than you.”

So, the apple breaks free of the branch, tumbling to knock off the strawberry.

They both look around and feel freer than ever.

The strawberry says why are we fighting? Let’s be friends.

And then they hold hands and roll away in the grass together.

MY LUGGAGE OF LIFE

I'm doing a lot, but always fought through it, managed kids, had heart ache but there was light in the future.

I learned from poor choices, learned to let go to make better choices.

Christmas reunion with my family filled with love and harmony. It's these moments that I feel joy. There is no age limit to learn to change for the better.

A CANDLE WITHOUT A WICK

A candle without a wick got me stuck thinking
which way to go.

Without a wick, who am I?

So, to find out, I need
my fire to shine bright laughing,
joking and remembering
happy moments.

BEHIND THESE DOORS OF LIFE

Behind these doors of life,
we have choices to make,
the overwhelming decisions haunt me.

Uncertainty to what?

I will see, will it be exciting or challenging?
I'll never know till I open the door.

I HAVE FIGURED IT ALL OUT

I have figured it all out except where will I go after I leave Villa Redondo?

I want to go live with my daughter in Texas because she is a positive person in my life.

I might also want to live with my boyfriend, and we could move to Texas together.

Whatever I decide to do,

I just want to have lasting happiness.

Jimmy Williams

I was born in Scott Greenville, Mississippi. I moved to California with my mother when I was one year old. We stayed with my mother's sister and my cousins. We lived in Long Beach. I enjoyed going to the beach and the pike back then. In school I liked to run track. I was pretty fast. I like baseball, that was one of my favorite sports when I was growing up. I had my first job in a liquor store I was 18. I graduated from High School in 1977 Long Beach Jordan. I would say the 1970's were the best years. Everything was at a reliable price compared to now how have things really changed.

I dedicate my poetry to the blessed, loving memory of my mother Sarah and father Jimmy Sr. My mother and father taught me to respect people, and they instilled confidence in me so I could realize my dreams. I am eternally grateful to my parents for all I was blessed to learn from them in my life.

IF I WAS A RAINDROP

I would fall on a tree to fill the leaves
and branches with moisture
and I would like to smell
the tree fragrance, it's
wonderful and I'm comforted
where I am and the tree would
keep me from falling to the ground.

AT THE BUS STOP

At the bus stop as I sit here waiting for the
bus to come,

I'm watching all the cars go by
and the people. I see so many
wonderful looking cars and
sometimes it's cold at the bus
stop so I wait patiently for
the bus to come and get my
journey started.

I enjoy the bus stop, enjoying the peace
that it gives me when I'm outside.

IN MY LUGGAGE OF LIFE

I changed the way I had been by accepting the way I have become a better person giving up alcohol and that was a very good choice when I made that change.

My body and health got better, and I could make good choices instead of bad ones behind when I was drinking. It heals my soul.

LIFE IS A CIRCUS

Life is a circus having good times, a roller coaster ride filled with something every day. There is time to resist a natural attraction and a time to yield to put space between me and the object of your desire to gauge just how strong the circus really is. It became a way to sort of hide my emotions and kind of have solitude.

CACTUS

Happy and sad especially when you have to be a hypermasculine dog to survive.

MY DAY STARTS WHEN I GET UP

My day starts when I get up first thing in the morning at about 5:00 am.

I make my bed up first and then I go to the restroom to brush my teeth, wash my face and then I make a cup of coffee. Before breakfast I watch the news for a little while and then I clean my room, by that time, it's breakfast time.

Now I'm waiting to go down to have smoke, and I say good morning to some people downstairs and then I go for my walk.

BEHIND THE DOORS OF LIFE

I've been having to make the right choice of what door I want to choose.

I tried to open the wrong door bad choice, so I had to give myself time to think and I got the door I wanted.

I went through it, good choice.

IF MY LIFE WERE A PAINTING

I would like to have myself look colorful, some of the paintings would have dark colors and bright colors. I guess when you look at it, it would make me see if I was depressed or happy my emotions would be something of a mix up expression. I would have dreams of comfort and security and the luxury of time to savor life's pleasures and invest in my own growth.

BLEMISHED

I came into the world unblemished as a child. As I got older, I had a lot of blemishes in my life. But how I have learned to accept my blemishes. I just keep making better choices now in my life.

SOBRIETY

It takes strength for me to keep my sobriety. I make good choices now and I don't want to go backward so I tell myself every day that I'm going to be alright by going for my morning walks. I have the instinct for taking the right action and use it to achieve the outcome I want in the physical and the emotional world.

AGING

The hardest thing about aging for me is that I must adjust to how much weight I can lift now. If it's too heavy, I will regret it so I make sure that I get a lighter weight. I don't want to hurt myself and I want to keep my health intact by continuing to do my exercise.

WITH MY PEN

With my pen I would write to someone that is special to me. I think she would be surprised that I'm writing to her. I could also do crossword with my pen.

ENOUGH

It's good right now for me that I don't drink anymore. I have a place to live, I'm not homeless or in prison.

It feels good that I'm taking care of myself now, that's what makes it good.

My health is good, I'm taking my medicine and I'm thankful for the people at Villa Redondo.

MY ABSURD SIDE

My absurd side is to go bungee jumping. I always wanted to feel the rush of going to the edge and free falling off the cliff and feeling the adrenaline. I never have done this, but I really would like to. It's an adventure I think it would be fun, wish me good luck.

THE WALLS IN MY HOUSE ARE TALKING TO ME

As I was getting ready to have a cup of
coffee I heard voices, they were my walls.
I thought to myself wait a minute,
this is not real. I was in a state of shock for
a minute, it's got to be my imagination.
No says the walls this is real we have been
wanting to talk to you about painting us we
don't like it anymore; it's time for a change.
I said this is my house and I will paint you all
when I am ready.

THE HIDDEN LIGHT IS LIKE

The hidden light is like when I see the clouds
covering the sun. I like it when the sun is out,
it makes me feel good and I can take my
walk because I never know when the sun is
Hidden. Maybe it will rain on me, so I say to
the clouds you guys are raining on my
parade, let the sunshine on me I really
appreciate it.

MY GRANDFATHER CLOCK

My grandfather clock is old and doesn't give the right time but it can take me back in time to when I was younger to my teenage years.

IN MY DAILY PRAYER

In my daily prayer I have to thank the Lord for blessing me, for waking me up this day. In my daily prayer Lord thank you for waking me up this day.

I'm grateful that I'm free to go outside and do my walk and Lord, I appreciate the things that I'm doing in a positive way.

Thank you for the peace that I have, faith and hope I believe in you Lord for making me a better person now.

BEING OF SPIRIT

I wake up every morning and have a positive attitude. My being of spirit is to say good morning to everyone I see in the morning. I stay humble and I just stay the same.

YOU CAN LEAN ON ME, HEY ITS ME BEING OF SPIRIT

Hey! it's me Jimmy I know it's been a long time since we spoke to one another. So, I was calling you to see how you were doing and making sure your health is alright. From the last time we talked about your health, are you sure that you are taking your meds. I'm just concerned as a friend till the next time take care of yourself.

I would say that being here at Villa Redondo has let me stay focused. I'm grateful for the staff here. I'm very pleased to know that I have a roof over my head and that I'm still here and not in prison. Thank you, God, for all you have done for me. I'm not homeless.

WITH MY VOICE

With my voice I talk to people respectfully. I go out and ask someone what time the bus will come, and I tell them thank you and have a nice day. By the time I go inside a store I would ask them where the sugar free candy is with my voice calm. I don't raise my voice; I don't try to raise my voice at people. Respect goes along way. Don't raise your voice.

I make the world holy by helping other people when they need help. I try to stay humble. I enjoy going for walks and talking to people I like to volunteer when I can and to see people with a positive attitude and I make sure that I treat people the same with respect it goes along way.

CLOUDS

I saw tears in the clouds, coming out I said to myself it's going to rain

AT THE SUMMIT OF THE MOUNTAINS

At the summit of the mountains I climbed, I saw birds and the clouds, and I thought it was God that I was seeing. I think it was a sign that he was saying to me you made it up here and keep doing your best to stay a positive person, Jimmy. I said thank you, God, you're always with me.

MY GREATEST DAYS

My greatest days were when I saw all my kids being born.

My greatest day is when I got my freedom.

My greatest day is when I stopped drinking.

My greatest day is enjoying life.

My greatest day is now I know how to save money.

Now that's my greatest days.

MY LIFE WAS LIKE A TRAIN TRACK

My life was derailed on the track, until I took the time to get back on track. I went to a program and started to get my life together. I started to look forward to good things that came my way. It was like my life got a new way, no more broken track. I'm grateful right now that I fixed something in my life. I'm not on parole anymore after doing so much time.

MY FAVORITE DONUT

I see my chocolate donuts, they look good and feel good when I touch them. When I take a bite, the smell makes me want more than one. I love the sweet taste in my mouth. The chocolate donut is my favorite one. I sometimes hear my donut calling me. Have just one more Jimmy, but I can't now because it has to be sugar free.

My plants wake me up every morning and I see my plants have been growing for over three years. They tell me they like how much I take care of them. They appreciate that I gave them enough water and sun and give them fertilizer to keep growing strong and healthy. I love my plants, I'm watching over them.

MY GUARDIAN ANGEL

My guardian angel has made me make better choices. It has guided me in the right direction and has made sure that I won't go backward. I thank my God for the life that I'm now living being sober.

THE PARTING

I would say when I was about 16, I got in trouble, and they sent me away for some time. As I was reflecting, I realized that I didn't enjoy my youth for a while, but I told myself that when I got home, I would turn my life around.

THE AWAKENING

The awakening for me is that I let go of
people that I called my friends.
I told myself no more negativity.
I have my positive thinking now,
and I feel good about myself

THE GIFT

The gift I would say that I cherish the most is
when I saw my wife give birth to my first
daughter. That was a real blessing.

I have figured it all out, I'm trying to quit
smoking now. I have a patch to help me with
my craving. It's hard and I'm trying to not smoke
that many cigarettes now. I want my health to
be better because I've been smoking since I was
12 and now, I'm 65.

GOD CAN WE GO FOR COFFEE AND TALK ABOUT

God, can we go for coffee and talk about me. I know that I have not been a good person in my life, but now I've made changes in my life; I'm making good choices. I just want to thank you for listening to me. You have made me a better man. Thank You again for your time, God. But who is paying for the coffee from Star Bucks?

THE TRUTH CAME TO ME WHEN

The truth came to me when I had my accident. God was there with me. I thought I was not going to walk again. They said that I had a brain injury.

WITHOUT SUNSHINE

Without sunshine a flower would not grow.
The leaves would fall to the ground.
No flowers without sun or water.
It has to have these things to grow or it
would not blossom.

A PERFECT MOMENT

A perfect moment is when I get a chance to get out and walk and look at the flowers and do some shopping. I'm free to do things I like while I'm here. I'm really enjoying getting on the bus, it's a perfect moment for me and being in my groups with Dr. Levy.

HELPLESS AGAINST TIME

As for me time doesn't stop.
I do the things like my daily exercise.
I read and I just keep on doing my best to
stay healthy by eating right.
I make sure that I take all of
my medications daily,
that is really important to me and
I enjoy doing my coloring every day.

I'M TAKING UP MY RIGHTFUL SPACE IN THE WORLD

I'm taking up my rightful space in the world by
doing the things that I enjoy now. I'm not
crowding people; I stay in my lane and try to
do my best just to stay a positive person. I
don't want to be the old Jimmy. I like what I
have accomplished so far, and I like keeping on.

THAT PERFECT FELLING

That perfect feeling is when I get up in the morning and get ready to start my day. I'm here, and there aren't a bunch of people around me. I don't have to worry about what is going to happen to me. When I feel good, I'm in my room doing my coloring. That's a perfect feeling to me.

HOW WELL DO I KNOW MYSELF

I learn to have more respect for other people. I don't get angry like I used to do. I enjoy coloring now. At first, I didn't and now I'm staying as positive as I can.

COMES A TIME

There comes a time in life when I have made better decisions.

Comes a time when I take care of myself.

I make sure that I go out and take my walk.

Comes a time now that I have new friends in my life.

There comes a time that I'm at peace with myself.

There comes a time that I'm grateful that I'm not on the street anymore and I have the opportunity to do things in a respectful manner.

Comes a time that I have made it this far.

MY ROOM WAS A FOREST

I woke up and my room was now a forest. I say to myself what am I going to do, I can't get off my bed because there is a bear right in front of me. As I try to move the bear jumps up, I say to myself just talk to him so that he won't eat me. So, I ask him if he is hungry and he replied sure, so I gave him something to eat, and he let me out of the room, and I ran so fast. Luckily, I had some leftover pizza in my room. As I got out of my room to my surprise there are monkeys all around swinging on trees. I call my friend to come over to see what's happening but when he gets there everything is gone and he says to me what have you been drinking.

IF I COULD TALK TO MY YOUNGER SELF

If I could talk to my younger self, I would say that you made a lot of mistakes. Bad decisions that got you in trouble, hanging around the wrong people. As I look back, I would make myself think before acting and the main thing was that I should never have started drinking when I was young. You got yourself in a lot of trouble.

LOOKING INTO THE CLOUDS

Looking at the sky full of clouds I see that it's so full, but you can never tell because there are a mixture of clouds. Some darker in some places. So, you don't know what is really going to happen. The clouds are still.

IF I WERE A BUTTERFLY

If I were a butterfly I guess I would spread my wings and fly and start my journey across the world. Oh, if I were a butterfly.

AS I AGE

As I age, I discover that I try to do my daily exercise in the morning. I get up early to make sure that I get my medicine because that's important. I still have my aches and pains but do the best I can to stay active in my life.

THIS IS HOW I FIT IN THE WORLD

I became a law-abiding person. I make sure that I don't do anything to get in trouble. I know there are consequences, I've been there before. I respect the law, before I didn't. I love having relationships with people. I told myself to let things go that I don't have any control over.

ONE WORD

LOVE

CARING

PEACE

GRATEFUL

JOY

HOPE

FAITH

FORGIVENESS

UNITY

MYSTERY

SERVITUDE

SOLIDATRITY

ORIGINAL

HOLY

FEARFUL

AGING

YOUTH

IVY

SOME

TWO WORDS

WRITING PROMPTS

WHAT IF

MY THOUGHT

REMEMBER THIS

BEAUTY IS

REAR VIEW

OPEN ARMS

LONG HUNG

I'M THINKING

TO LIVE

STILL THINKING

BLENDED WORLD

MAGICAL GARDEN

THREE WORDS

CAN'T GIVE UP
ONLY LIVE ONCE
ABOUT DARN TIME
WHY NOT ME
WHAT TOMORROW BRINGS
I DIDN'T MEAN
I HAVE PAIN
IN MY LIFE
LONG FLAT ROAD
EVERY DAY IS
I LOVE YOU
ALWAYS LOOKING FORWARD
IT'S TOO MANY
IT'S TOO MUCH
DREAM LIKE REALITY
A TALKING ANIMAL

FOUR WORDS

GOOD THINGS ARE THERE
I CAN'T STAND IT
I NEED IT NOW
LONG ROAD BETWEEN US
LET GOD BE GOD
HEY GOD, IT'S ME
I'LL BE HAPPY WHEN
THINGS WILL BE OKAY
WHAT TO DO NOW
THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT
A WALL THAT WHISPERS

New connections gravitate towards me, drawn in by my reliability and integrity. Emotions can be habits that can be broken. The more I invest in my real life the less space emotional habits loops will take up. Wanting well is an art I zoom out to look at my history with anger, passion, longing and more. I let my mind work on puzzles of the past. My heart will catch up.

MY DOG

My dog Fido is a great dog. He asks me to take him for a walk. He talks to me; I was surprised so I told myself that this can't be happening and then Fido told me that I was a good person. I really enjoy the way you treat me and said we should communicate more often. I said, sure anytime.

MY CLOUD OF DOUBT

I'm trying to escape my cloud of doubt. You are up there over my head. I don't need any negative thoughts, I'm hoping you are going to go away and let me be comfortable at this present moment. I'm not going to let you stay over head. I'm going to battle with you, I'm going to defeat you, my cloud of doubt.

ON THE BUS

Riding on the bus is like feeling good. I get a chance to look at the flowers, and I enjoy the scenery. Riding on the bus gives me time to be alone for a while. I enjoy looking out the window looking at all the beautiful colors of the flowers and being able to just enjoy my journey.

ON SHAKY GROUND

I've been on shaky ground for a long time. I've learned to just let it go and have a positive attitude and I know that my life is better now because I let my old friends and drinking ways go. That was my shaky ground.

THE TRUTH CAME TO ME WHEN

The truth came to me when I told myself that I wanted to quit drinking. I've tried so many times. Nothing seemed to work for me until I had the accident, that was my wakeup call.

A FIRST

When I started smoking my first cigarette I was 12 years old. One of my friends said try this. I asked what it was he told me it was a cigarette, and I said ok, it got me dizzy. But that didn't stop me from smoking. I would go to the cigarette machine and buy them, they were cheap, I could get them for 75 cents. I guess I can say I enjoyed it back then and now to this day I still smoke but I don't smoke as much. I have a tobacco patch on now, it helps me to not smoke as much. Maybe 5 cigarettes a day.

MAKING THE WORLD MORE HOLY

I'm making the world holy by helping people that need a helping hand. If I see somebody homeless, if I could buy them something to eat I would. I never had a chance to volunteer but I would like to go to the Long Beach Mission and help them, for me to be caring and a respectful person.

MY DOG CHESTER

When I was growing up I had a dog, his name was Chester. He was a loving dog who was brown. Chester and I would take long walks, he really enjoyed the walk. Sometimes I would let him off his leash and he would wait for me. I still remember Chester barking and running around the yard.

When I look at myself now, I have overcome a lot of changes in my life. I have become more respectful to people. I try to treat everyone the same. I turn to God now and I have made good choices now. I really enjoy the way I'm living now I have a roof over my head and I can save a little money. I became a more responsible person. I have made a choice to do the right things in my life now. I have new people in my life that are positive. I let go of the unhealthy friends and I'm making sure that I take my medicine that's why I look at myself and I just wake up with a good attitude.

I HAVE JUST ENOUGH TIME TO

I have just enough time to search for my family. That could be a blessing. I would really like to keep doing my walk in the morning. I have enough time to catch my bus. When I'm going out and I make sure that I have enough time to get my meds, that's important to my health.

MY DIVINE LIGHT

My divine light would shine like a star when I got my life together. From darkness to the light, I see that my life is a new beginning. The divine light lets me see things more clearly now. I thank God for making me see my divine light.

NOT DANCING ALONE ANYMORE

My dance through life was like doing the twist, a lot of struggles from the beginning but I found a way to do my dance by making good choices, like going to groups that I enjoy. They keep me on the right track. Having support from my adopted family that accepts me how I am. I believe that if there is a will you can dance to a good beat.

Tanya Cooper

I saw a beautiful rose on a bush as I passed by. I wanted to pluck it and make it mine. Then I realized that it would die within hours detached from its vine and its roots. Just as we were plucked from our original home, denied our history and our roots, so that beautiful rose would've not been there for anyone else to admire its beauty, so I continued on without it sadly looking back at the beauty I could not possess. I thought on our ancestors done the same way, plucked from their roots, not knowing our history because we were more valuable on another part of the earth.

I make the world more Holy
by being an example of
a Christ like life.

I try to live a life
of purpose, of being helpful
when I see someone
in need.

Being available to assist
another person when I can.

I donate my money to causes
that help others like St. Jude.

IN THE LUGGAGE OF MY LIFE

The luggage of my life is filled with strife.
Becoming a mother at age 18 was not part of
my dream.

But it's turned into the most amazing part of
this life, and not being a wife made it more
difficult to navigate.

It's been, however, one of the greatest
blessings in my life.

The woman my daughter has become fills me
with pride after such a difficult ride.

Being around her gives me such joy and
watching her navigate her life lets me know I
did raise her right.

Watching her get married on a beautiful beach
in Santa Monica, having two children that are
now amazing young men. And getting her
beautiful home in Cypress in a fulfillment of
her dream.

THE PARTING

I at 18 my daughter, 1 yr old came home to my mother's home from one of our several weeklong visits with a college friend. On approaching our driveway, I was faced with several boxes of my belongings as my mom had decided since I was acting grown, I should be on my own. My precious grandmother found and rented us a 2-bedroom apartment where I continued college while raising her. It was somewhat of a shock, but I was prepared for the challenge of the 2 of us against the world. And when I look back, I don't have a single regret as she is now an outstanding young woman with a beautiful 4-bedroom house in Cypress with 1 bedroom as her home office. I must have done something right and with God's guidance we not only survived but thrived.

The cloud I saw with tears
coming out of it must
have been my grandmother's tears.
Seeing what has happened to my
strong athletic body,
now unable to walk,
run or do the things
she once saw me
doing without effort.

Larry Goodwin

MY DIVINE LIGHT

My divine light shows the path of my soul. It enables me to walk with faith toward my goal of peace and connect to a calm and peaceful place. To seek out purpose of being, to be a responsible person in all my endeavors.

AT THE SUMMIT, I SAW MYSELF

At the summit I saw myself in a different frame of peace. It was like a calm I had never felt before. I was at peace in my own skin. I had been in a place of mistrust and hopelessness. But by your grace Father I am now whole and present in my own skin.

I SAW TEARS COMING FROM A CLOUD

I saw the tears coming from my cloud and thought of my mom and the last time I was with her before she left me to join the Father in heaven. She said to me no flowers at my funeral. I don't want people spending the money on things like flowers. But I want you to get a single red rose and a bud vase and place it by my urn and know that I love you.

THERE COMES A TIME

There comes a time in my day when I just stop and listen to my thoughts of the day, on what I have to deal with. Being in the now, not looking back but focused. Every day is a new beginning to explore the growth of self, of taking that step of faith to continue a positive thought of peace and contentment.

HOW WELL DO I KNOW MYSELF

It's up to me. I see myself today, I have learned that I tend to stay in the past rather than looking forward. I need to learn to get a better attitude on life. Life is a gift, and I need to be grateful for each day and rejoice in the glow of contentment of being at peace within.

MY GUARDIAN ANGEL

My guardian Angel has always kept me aware of things. I must face forward to keep myself on track. To always keep looking back to see what I must do to stay in line with my goal of reaching the rainbow of life.

AS I AGE

As I age I've learned that I have chosen to continue to set a new path to walk in faith that takes me to a better place in my life. I want to establish a new platform of connections with others around me. I want to establish a new platform which I continue to grow in faith.

WITH MY VOICE

With my voice I have learned to express my feelings in a positive way rather than through negative and distrusting expressions. I have also learned to speak my faith without fear of exclusion from my walk in life.

My mom always had the heart of a lion but always had a gentle touch to her approach to life. She was always there to love me. Never judge always supported my endeavors. She was always saying just trust your heart to lead your way. Always there to listen no matter what she had going on. She was a true lioness.

It takes being present to be in the moment of the day. You must be present in every moment of yourself to be involved in life. Life is what you make it.

IF I COULD TALK TO MY YOUNGER SELF

If I could talk to my younger self, I would tell myself to listen more to those around me that have the knowledge of life and how to manage the daily things, and how to deal with people who are negative on life.

Looking at the sky, I see beauty and wonderful joy. I see hope for another day of adventure. I see the wonderful face of my mother's smile and feel the love that she shared all around me.

THE LIGHT IN MY SOUL

The light in my soul guides my way through the day and keeps my path illuminated. Also, it keeps my thoughts clear. It keeps me from falling into unhealthy thoughts of life. Life is what we make it, good or bad, it's up to me. Also keep positive thoughts. We must always think of going forward not back.

Rosemary Lombardo

I was born in Brooklyn, New York in Crown Heights Hospital. At age seven, my family moved to Baldwin Park, California. I graduated from Redondo High School and went to beauty college. I was married in 1966 and this marriage lasted six months. I worked as a hairstylist for 10 years and raised two daughters Angela and Trista. I decided to move to The Chateau, an assisted living program two years ago before relocating to this facility Villa Redondo in Long Beach. For my hobby, I enjoy painting in watercolors.

I dedicate my poetry to my mother and two daughters Angela and Trista. I love you Angela and Trista with all my heart. My mother Helen and my daughters are always in my life and with every breath I take.

I got off the plane in New York. It was raining and snowing very hard all day. The beautiful scent of the pine tree permeating all around me. I looked up to the giant trees overhead filled with rain drops and fluffy snow. The drops kept falling on my head. My hands were frozen, and my face was numb. I closed my eyes and let the memories fill my head and mind. I am so grateful to our dear Lord and Savior to be able to have these beautiful memories.

I am sitting on a bench,
looking out to the sea,
and wondering what
my future will bring.
The sun is starting to set
on the ocean, so bright like
sparks of gold that hold the light.
Life is beautiful, just look around
and don't miss what
the Lord gave us.
It's so profound.
God bless you, Lord Jesus.

Francisco Lizaragua

I was born in a little border town between Arizona and New Mexico. I was about 14 years old when I moved to California and went to junior high school. When I enrolled in school, I learned English as a second language and made a lot of new friends. I played football and soccer in high school. It was a totally new experience and language. My favorite teacher was Mrs. Almas. Right after high school I attended college. I also worked as a night manager for Taco Bell. I sailed on the Mercy ship and went to South America and Europe. Got to meet a lot of interesting people. I also traveled to Arizona; Chicago and I became a school bus driver and armed security officer working at the Long Beach Court House. Later in life I got married and joined the Army had my beautiful daughter Olivia which I love very much and hope I can visit in Michigan someday soon. I am the seventh of eight kids and my mom worked hard to support all eight of us. I also have a sister that lives in San Pedro, CA and I visit her every other weekend.

I want to dedicate my poetry to the blessed and loving memory of my mother Felipa and my daughter Olivia. Olivia taught me to be a loving father so I could be a better person. I learned to be respectful of other people because of you mom.

MY CLOUD OF DOUBT

I am trying to escape my cloud of doubt.
But it seemed that the more I tried to escape
it, the closer it gets to me.
Every now and then I turn back and look
and it's still there. Sometimes I wish it would
completely disappear and get away but all
seemed in vain the harder I tried, the closer it
got.
But then I think I will go to battle, and I am
going to defeat you.

STANDING ON SHAKY GROUND

All my life (mostly) I felt like I was standing on
shaky ground without a foundation. Most of
my life I have been walking insecure, not sure
what the outcome will be.

So, my life has been like I was walking on
shaky ground, and now that I found the light I
feel more secure now.
I found God.

THE GRANDFATHER CLOCK

The grandfather clock is old and inaccurate. It can't give me the correct time because it's always dancing. It doesn't care if it gives me the right time because he wants to dance with me. I wish it can take me back in time.

IN MY DAILY PRAYER

In my daily prayer I ask for daily supernatural spiritual strength for daily living so I'm able to go through daily struggles in my life.

I ONCE SAW THE MOST BEAUTIFUL

I once saw the most beautiful piece of art in the Museum of Modern Art. It was the most interesting set of colors I ever saw in my life. It was full of flowers and different kinds of colors and shades.

My life is my personal relationship with the Lord. Based on my beliefs my trust that I deposit in Him.

IF I WERE A BUTTERFLY

If I were a butterfly I would transform into many different colors and shades, and I will fly to many flower fields around the world. I know they only live two to six weeks so I would fly as far as I can.

I seek truth when I am meditating upon the word of God. I seek the truth of God being manifested in his word, always knowing that I will find a true revelation that will help me find His truth, divine revelation and peace.

If only I had a chance to go back in time I would go back to school and have a college education and earn a degree or probably start a military career. I would earn a degree in human relations or counseling.

IF I WAS A RAINDROP

If I was a raindrop, I will land on a beach close to a calm lake filled with a lot of different colored fish that make the lake look like a rainbow with multiple arrays of colors. Some people stop and admire the lake filled with all the different types of color of fish being displayed before their eyes.

IN MY LUGGAGE OF LIFE

In my luggage of life, I gave up bad choices in like drugging and drinking. I joined the US Army which completely turned my life around. Unfortunately, I did not make this choice sooner.

THE HARD THING ABOUT AGING

The hard thing about aging is the old painful memories of the past. Some can be easily erased but some are not. I tried to deal with some of them as best as I can. Some are really hard to erase from your memories especially the loss of a close friend and relatives. Especially those very dear and close to your heart. Also keeping healthy along with my medications.

DEPARTING

I remember the time I left home for the first time; I was only 14 years old. The last words my mom told me were to behave and be good in life. I thought I was going on vacation but in reality, I came to stay with some of my relatives and stay for good. My mom and relatives had already planned for me to stay here in California with some of my relatives.

ARCHITECT OF MY LIFE

Ever since I left my little town, I felt I began to be the architect of my own life. My life began when I registered for summer school. I felt I was writing a passage to my life, everything was foreign to me, the culture, the language the whole society. At first, I didn't know what was going on until I began to understand the language. Everything began to make sense to me. I began to adjust to this new society and began to build a new chapter in my life.

I HAVE FIGURED IT ALL OUT

I have figured it all out except different trials and problems that come my way, especially those difficult situations that I cannot change.

A PERFECT MOMENT

A perfect moment is a holy moment. My perfect moment was when I graduated from Christian rehab after being on alcohol and drugs for over 20 years and became clean and sober. Also, when I got married, had my daughter Olivia and I dedicated my life to Christianity. I had a real transformation and became free!

HELPLESS AGAINST TIME

I feel helpless against time for not being able to get a higher education when I was younger and able to take advantage of all the free time I had when I was younger. Even though I missed out, I had other accomplishments.

MY ABSURD SIDE

My absurd side is to be able to go on a helicopter ride. Also, to get in an airplane and jump out of it. It's probably very scary but exciting especially for the first time in my whole life. I always dreamed of sky diving, a very scary but exciting adventure and a good rush.

We are the light of the world, to shine upon the darkness.

We are called on to illuminate other people. I have a responsibility before God and man.

I AM TAKING UP MY RIGHTFUL SPACE IN THE WORLD

I am taking up my rightful space in the world by taking on my responsibilities that God laid upon me. By participating and not being the center of attention all the time and allowing other people to have more space.

GREEN BANANA ON AN APPLE TREE

If I was a green banana on an apple tree, I would wait until I ripen and be at the right season before I venture out to go be on a banana tree with my own kind, instead of being on an apple tree.

THE WALL IN MY HOUSE IS TALKING TO ME

The walls in my house are talking to me, constantly talking to me asking me where I am going. I answer back saying it's none of your business and told them if they don't quit talking to me, I'm going to tear them down and build new ones in their place. So please be friendly to me!

BLEMISHED

I came into the world unblemished but I became blemished because of my bad behavior. But one day Christ came into my life and cleaned me up and now I became unblemished. Thank you for your love and grace.

MY LIFE IS GOOD ENOUGH

My life good enough right now but I think I can do better with my financial situation. Right now, I could go back to school and get a better education and enhance my financial situation, have better living conditions and a better future. And take a class in finance.

God speaks to me when I am alone. Praying, reflecting upon the many blessings He has poured upon me, the very areas in my life. Thank you for directing me in all my decisions I make in my life.

The people that matter to me are my daughter. My family and friends, my mother when she was alive. All of them were a big influence in my life throughout the years to help me form the character that I am now. They taught me a lot of principles about life.

I AM IN THIS WORLD

I am in this world. I am created in the image of God to make a difference and help to repair this world and have a big influence on others, especially those who might be in desperate need.

MY DIVINE LIGHT

My divine light can shine upon the universe. It also helps light my path and not be scared going on a dark path. I will start traveling as safe as I can.

If I was an eagle, I will spread my wings as long as I can and start traveling towards the Grand Canyon in Arizona and travel around the world and end at home in Long Beach.

BACK TO THE PAST

I'm going to set my watch for the 1950's, an era when my parents were teenagers. Set my watch when rock and roll was popular and a nice time to be around. When people were dancing and having fun. So, I would have loved to be around that fun era when songs were pretty and full of romance. I insert myself with several of the singers and groups and I would sing and dance to the music. It was a very fun exerting experience.

A LION WITH A SOFT VOICE

My mom was a lion with a soft voice. She was a single mom who raised eight children by herself. A woman with a very strong will. She had to be a father and a mother at the same time. She was my hero. She gave me a lot of confidence and a strong will.

I am the first of my family to go to college and to enlist in the armed forces. To travel to south America and Europe. I got to see very interesting places around the world. Different cultures and languages.

I HAVE JUST ENOUGH TIME TO

I have just enough time to plan for my funeral arrangements and my home going. Make more preparation for my last wishes for my relatives to fulfill my last wishes.

WITH MY PEN

With my pen I can write letters to my daughter and share my whole life story. The travels around the world the very many interesting people I have met and the interesting places I visited.

THE HIDDEN LIGHT

The hidden light will illuminate my walk and keep searching for the light to illuminate my path so I can walk free on my way to my final destiny.

THE FRAGRANCE OF LAVENDAR MAKES ME

The fragrance of lavender makes me think of the garden that my mom used to tend to when I was a little boy. They are good memories of my childhood.

The day I met the Lord in the Christian rehab center, and my life became completely transformed.

When I look at myself, I think about the experiences I went through in my Christian Walk and all the changes I went through.

GOD CAN WE GO FOR COFFEE AND TALK ABOUT

God, can we go for coffee and talk about certain things that bother me?

First of all, whenever I feel discouraged and it seems that no one is there to listen to my cry deep inside of me I know you are merciful and mighty.

Help anyone in distress. I think of King David when he restored a new spirit within me.

Hey, God, one last thing, can you pay for the coffee?

THE TRUTH CAME TO ME WHEN

The truth came to me when I was living a meaningless life, going around life with no sense of direction. As I have gotten older, I notice that it is harder to get around. More aches and pains, it's harder to remember things from the past. I notice changes in me, physical and emotional.

The truth came to me when I discovered how my lies only got me in more trouble.

MY GREATEST DAYS ARE WHEN

My daughter calls me and tells me she loves me. My graduation from college, the army and when I got to travel all over the world on a mercy ship. I got to see all kinds of interesting countries around the world. Finally, when I met my wife Dana and got married and when my daughter Olivia was born.

MY GUARDIAN ANGEL

My guardian angel kept me safe from a lot of anger and trouble, especially when I was lost using drugs and alcohol. I got into a lot of trouble, and I could have died many times. God had assigned my guardian angel to watch over me.

MY BROKEN TRACKS

My old, broken railroad tracks is like my life, old and broken down. As we age, we look broken down. My life seems all old and broken down and in need of repairs. Just like my life before my alcohol and drug addiction. It reminds me of the old broken life I was living. My life was going well until I derailed and sank deep into addiction. Now everything changed and I'm starting to live a new life and no more broken tracks.

MY OPEN DOOR

My life's like an open door. My life is so transparent it can open both ways. My life can be like a revolving door sometimes.

MY FAVORITE DONUT AND PASTRY FLAVORS

My favorite donut is calling me to taste that delicious fragrance and taste one of my favorite flavors. It is a coconut and chocolate glaze. I really enjoy that delicious flavor especially early in the morning. I can't help but to think and enjoy it all the time. I am always looking forward to that combination of those two flavors. How gratifying it is. This reminds me of when I was young on my way to school, I was always looking forward to that first bite.

DANCING THROUGH LIFE

My dance through life was fluent with my wife but then it took a leap when I started messing with alcohol and drug addiction and I got divorced. Then I had to find a new partner and begin to dance fluently and did fine until I messed up again. I began dancing again and did fine and staying up and began to experience a good life again.

MY BICYCLE TRIP AROUND THE COUNTRY

I took a bicycle from Nogales, Arizona towards the Grand Canyon and I took some camping gear and a comfortable seat. I got to see different and exciting places and people around the country. It got difficult a couple of times. I got a couple of flat tires along the way. I named my bike Johnny, and we got to travel together a long way. I also got my bike stolen once so I had to buy another bike so I could continue my trip and never bought another bike in my life. At times I got to travel back in time and visit my childhood neighborhood where I grew up. I got to see some of my best friends. It was kind of fun to travel back in time again.

Cornell Dennis

I was born in Houston, Texas. We moved to Los Angeles and lived in the San Fernando Valley. I played little league baseball. I am a loving person.

I dedicate my poetry to my mama Margie who taught me self-confidence and also to my Auntie Cynthia.

My day starts when I wake up in the morning.
I have a shower, eat breakfast then go to the
beach to exercise. I like to do pushups at the
beach. I sometimes talk to people, and I usually
stay at the beach for an hour.

The light in my soul is dim
because I'm trying
to get on my feet.
Once I'm on my feet,
the light will shine
so I can go and
see my family.
My family lives in Lancaster.
I have three daughters
and I text them to stay in touch.

HOW WELL DO I KNOW MYSELF?

I believe I know myself pretty well. I enjoy going to the beach to exercise and talk to people. I also enjoy watching television in my room and listening to music. I like oldies such as The Supremes, Temptations and Otis Redding. I also like Al Green, Teddy Pendergrass, Betty Wright, Anita Baker and Chaka Khan. I don't like doing nothing and being bored.

I know what I want and need. I know what I like and dislike.

My favorite donut is a chocolate one because it calls me. I will not share it with anyone because it is chocolate.

Matthew McNally

I was born in Stratford, Connecticut and attended Quinnipiac College in Hamden, CT. I also attended and graduated from Bethel Christian College in the mid 1990's. Later, I completed courses at Life Institute Bible College. My employment history includes working as a salesperson for a time share company in Palm Springs in 2010. I was married for seven years and have one son named Matthew born in 1979. I came to Villa Redondo in 2023, and my hobbies include playing golf and tennis.

Seeing light come out from darkness where
the morning star shines his face.

Hear the stars sing their song.

New life conquering death.

Begotten from the grave.

A new spirit birth.

The new man only He can make.

Shining among stars.

Grace through faith.

God directing our harmony.

With no beginning.

With no end.

Born from above.

The heavens our return.

Jeremy Moeller

If I was a raindrop falling from the sky landing on a tree, I would make sure that I was safe and not splashing to the ground. I would at least be able to make moisture on a leaf and smell it to see the birds land on it. I would enjoy the breeze and cool air that I'm getting when I'm outside on the tree.

In my luggage of life, I changed my negative thoughts to positive ones by accepting that alcohol was in my luggage of life. I made up my mind to let go of it because it was a very good choice. When I made that decision my body and health got better, and I didn't have any more shakes or cravings. I healed my soul.

Life is a circus having good times on a roller coaster ride filled with something new every day. There is a time to resist a natural attraction and a time to yield to put space between me and object of my desire to gauge. Just how strong the circus really is becomes a way to sort out my emotions and kind of put up a mask that looks at these two sides of life of being happy and sad especially when you are hyper masculine to survive.

For me solitude is when I'm in my room thinking about what I'm going to do at that moment. So, I think to myself and say I will do some coloring to relax me, and I like to look at what I color. I'm going to use the room as quiet time. I have my headphone on to drown out the noise. I adjust the range of vision extending it enough to give a feel for the world.

Gloria Perez, Volunteer

I have always had deep feelings, not just for my family, friends, and animals, but for people in general. I especially care about people who may be dealing with a loss, change in life, or any situation that makes their life more difficult.

I truly believe that reaching out to others is what we are meant to do, and sharing our ideas, stories, experiences, triumphs and failures. It not only shows us how much we are alike but also enables us to learn.

I can see the joy and hope Dr. Elie brings to people through his humble service. He not only inspires me but teaches me too. I do want to live a “better than ok” life and I believe people are capable of amazing things. If you think about it, we truly are all we have. I have always felt so blessed just to be alive because where there is life, there is hope. At the end of the day, I love being a part of hope.