

4-24-20 How do we say goodbye to dear friends?

Many months ago, I began to prepare myself for the loss of my dear friend, Winston. Never did I imagine that his life partner, Faye, with her brilliant mind of a university professor and the energy of a teenager, would precede him in passing from this world to the other.

Two of my best friends died within days of each other. Faye went first and quickly from a brain tumor, after tirelessly advocating for and lovingly caring for Winston for more than a year. Winston faded as he slept more and more and five days later, he joined her. Anyone who knew them, knew that Faye could be very bossy; I meant assertive. We imagine her saying to him, "Winston, get up here, now!"

How do we say goodbye to a dear friend? How do we say goodbye to poetry, history, music, model airplanes and the most sentimental people I have ever met?

How do we say goodbye to a handsome face and beautiful hair, a man and a woman who could spontaneously recite poetry on a lovely afternoon, elicited by the breeze and sunshine of the moment?

I choose to not say goodbye. I choose to celebrate Winston and Faye and keep them close. That is my choice. You may choose differently.

Every time I see a rabbit, I will think of him.

Every time I see an airplane take off, I will think of him.

Every time I see a poem, well, a good poem, I will think of both.

I will not just think of them during these and other moments. It is more than thinking of. It is more like being with. I will be with them and they will be with me, and I will be with them.

Knowing of his interest in quantum physics, I once told Winston that quantum physicists are beginning to believe they have proof of consciousness continuing after death. I promised him that we would speak in some manner or other after he left this earth. He seemed skeptical. I, again, promised him, and gave him a palm to palm, high-five and smiled.

I planned on keeping that promise to my dear friend, Winston. Now, I will keep that promise for my two friends who called themselves realists and believed there was nothing after death. We shall see about that.

They did not suffer pain and I am so grateful for that.

They did not contract or suffer from COVID 19 and I am grateful for that. However, the Covid 19 pandemic has changed our lives so completely, that while trying to save lives, we cannot gather to honor the ones we have lost. That gathering is postponed, adding to the weight of our loss.

How do we say goodbye? Maybe we do not. Maybe we say, “I am so thankful to have known you. I will miss you so much, so terribly, and I will see you later, my friend.”

My friends, Winston Bolton and Faye George Hennebury were treasures.

I asked my son, Keith, to welcome them.

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