



## **Writing Our Journey: Poems and Essays by Family Caregivers**

Each meeting has a suggested prompt, or idea, for people to write about. Everyone is free to interpret that prompt however they'd like. Below is one of the prompts, followed by a sampling of what was written in response.

Please remember that each piece of writing belongs to the writer and, if quoted, must be credited to that writer.

### **A time when you were stronger than you ever thought you could be**

Write about a time or a situation that required more strength, or a different kind of strength, than you ever knew you had. This may be related to your child with disabilities, but it doesn't have to be.

- "Working on a Good Thing" by Ann Martinelli
- "How Can the Sun Be Shining?" by Gail Frizzell
- "Speaking for You" by Kathy Roberson

## Working On A Good Thing

*Where did it come from?*

I don't remember ever being afraid.

*Was it always there?*

Must have been.

*How did I do it?*

Bit by bit.

*How did I let go?*

Trusting he could do it, believing people are good.

*Am I finished?*

No.

*Is there more to do?*

You bet.

*Will it ever be a "fait accompli"?*

Probably not.

*Will I ever know?*

No.

*Am I happy?*

Yes!!

*Am I proud of him?*

More than anyone will ever know.

*Me?*

Not proud, at peace.

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## How Can the Sun be Shining?

Late afternoon sun streaming  
through blinds creates  
linear patterns on the carpet.  
In warm, golden light  
I lay on my bed  
too numb to cry.

How can the sun be shining?

My baby naps in her room,  
soft brown hair framing  
an angel's face.  
I should be thankful,  
peaceful, content.  
I am anxious, scared.

How can the sun be shining?

Will the world make a place  
for this precious baby girl?  
What will her future be?  
Will there be stares, exclusion?  
Will she be shoved to the side  
forgotten and unloved?

How can the sun be shining?

I am unprepared.  
God, don't let this be real.  
What do those words mean?  
Developmental disability  
Static encephalopathy  
Leber's Amaurosis

How can the sun be shining?

So many questions  
So few answers  
My baby cries.  
I breathe.  
I get up.  
I go to her, but

How can the sun be shining?

© Gail Frizzell

## Speaking for You

You will say, I know  
you will, *I can't*,  
*I am not strong*  
*not anymore*, but  
you will be wrong.  
Uncompromising  
honesty continues  
to slice with precision  
through stubborn  
pretense, tangled  
reasoning; you help  
us both see clearly,  
then laugh somehow  
through the wrenching  
sadness of truths  
revealed. You listen  
carefully to words,  
comprehending needs  
unspoken, have never  
stopped loving others,  
even through the  
unrelenting hurt and  
upending of your  
dreams. You give me  
friendship, and with it  
the strength to draw  
upon that comes  
from knowing you.

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