

A Constant Companion

By Mary Jane McCormick

I knew you well once upon a time. We climbed trees together, explored the winding creek near the farm and searched each spring for birds that may have fallen from their nests. We played, we danced, we dreamed.

But where did you go when the darkness began? Where were you when our parents' alcoholism and depression came crashing into our lives and sent me cowering in a corner or hiding in the tall, green grass?

Why did I have to go it alone when life demanded I let go of my natural capacity for wonder and awe and become a grown-up?

And why did I have to go through so much counseling and group support to finally realize you never even left me; but that you held onto the hurt, disappointment, anger and sadness growing up can cause?

And why did it take me so long to find a way to update you, to tell you, "Now I can shoulder the trauma life deals."

- To tell you I had abandoned you
- To tell you I had to 'crash and burn' many times to learn I had not failed
- To tell you I had to learn how to accept life, take off the facade and find my way back to being me
- To tell you we can heal together and restore the childlikeness grown-ups desperately need
- To tell you now I am growing old but feeling younger than ever

And because of you, dear inner child:

- Instead of anger, I have forgiveness
- Instead of confusion, I have clarity
- Instead of sadness, I have joy

I look forward to you and I growing old together... surely this will double the wisdom that comes with age.