

Welcome to Progressive Action Alliance

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# A Military Family Member and Truth-Teller - Sherry Glover at March 19, 2005 Sing Peace Event

Submitted by [Sarah Gonzales](#) on November 15, 2005 - 4:27pm.

## **MY ROLES- A Military Family Member and Truth-Teller**

speech by Sherry Glover, MFSO member at "Sing Peace" event in Houston, Mar. 19, 2005

The organizers of this event felt it important to share with you my struggle in agreeing to be here. When I first began to search for re-entry, I was met with the inevitable reminder that, even in the peace community, someone would betray my heart and spit the words that echo in my heart today, "Your daughter is a trained killer, and murderer" he said, and his friend explained that he teaches his little daughter how those guys in the GI uniforms on TV are the "bad guys". Do these words disturb or comfort you? This verbally inflicted wound was my initiation into "peace" activism.

Just when I thought it was finally safe to share my heart, I received hateful, violent warnings to "keep my mouth shut" from others who simply fail to fully examine their own consciences. The venom was potent, the hostility amazing. The "disconnect" began to reveal itself to me, and continues to unravel the fabric of a functional, compassionate peoples who clearly aren't united, and definitely are not at peace within themselves much less one another.

And so, I continue to search for renewed hope, and for the winner in this invisible tug of war, between all who try to redefine freedom and patriotism, insisting that their truth is ultimate and finite. The tugging is very tense, the extreme stretch divides us as a nation that really yearns for something to be acceptable for all-but I think in the end, the winner will be "love". In the words of Kenneth S. Wills, "The real messages of hope in our generation are not those to be bounced back from the moon, but those to

be reflected from one human heart to another." Without love there is no real "freedom". Without love, we are birds with broken wings! (M. Albom)

I am not here to express rhetoric or political views, but to honor the people in my own life and to share the direct experience of my heart. There's no where else to look or to be to find spiritual food, if we recognize what we're seeing. We need calmness to bring forth a deeper intelligence; we must experience stillness and peace. We want to be true to ourselves. How would that feel, to be completely true to your self? Do we not share a yearning for freedom, peace, contentment, oneness with our source?

I consider myself uninformed about some things, so I make it my policy not to take positions about those issues. But I *am* informed about my roles, and *also* my heart and like most, sometimes define myself by them. Outside of my own definitions, I really don't count much in the grand scheme of world events. Yet the opportunity to use my voice is one I don't take lightly, and I consider that opportunity humbling as a human being. This is perhaps the most sacred role I play in the matter of my life. What is the role of your heart in your own life?

Carly, the younger sister to Army Specialist Casey Sheehan, who was killed in Baghdad on April 4, 2004 writes poetry expressing her new reality. I remember feeling similarly upon learning of the death of our own young son who died at age 16.

**Have you ever heard the sound of a mother screaming for her son?**

**The torrential rains of a mother's weeping will never be done**

**They call him a hero, you should be glad that he's one, but Have you ever heard the sound of a mother screaming for her son?**

**Have you ever heard the sound of a father holding back his cries?**

**He must be brave because his boy died for another man's lies**

**The only grief he allows himself are long, deep sighs Have you ever heard the sound of a father holding back his cries?**

Today, my twin boys are draft aged, in high school and Community College. I can not yet say with certainty whether they will, or will not be drafted into the Armed Forces in their lifetimes, but truthfully, I am concerned.

Today, my father, an Airman recovers from recent surgery at a Veteran's hospital. He says, "God gave me another bite at the apple, and I intend to express appreciation from here on out." And I believe him.

Today, my husband, a US Marine from the Vietnam era is a disabled American Veteran. He has physical pain each and every day of his life. He remains imprisoned and can never escape. Today, my daughter, a reservist in the US Army is just 20 years old and I expect my first grandchild, a girl named Dakota, Native American for "Friend" in just a few weeks.

And today, the child's father is active Army, currently stationed in Kuwait. He'll soon transfer to Iraq for the next year. I directly experience such awkwardness and enormous inner conflict and difficulty when I politely ask, "How are you, really?" and he always answers to protect my heart, "I'm pretty good".

But I hear something else, something elusive in the unspoken. He then shares intimately, with his wife, that his greatest concern and fear is not the "enemy" but the possibility that he will be forgotten.

In stunning silence, I have the direct experience of a broken heart. Because my heart always tells me the truth, I can share with certainty the intense, constant dread of all mothers who have a child in harm's way. The simple truth be told, I worry about them all, as if they are all mine, and my heart isn't still.

And my heart informs me that those who have forever gone before us in the current conflicts of our time play a pivotal role in the hearts and minds of their family and friends.

They have made a sacrifice that is so final and noble, we are aware of them now, and we should always be aware, and honor their lives in their deaths. Although they are gone, and many more tears will no doubt be shed, the truth is that the word "war" will sadly and forever be connected with their memory.

Remember the sacrifice of the many lost innocents who impact their families, and the word "war" will sadly and forever be connected with their memory.

The truth is that I am a mere mortal human that plays a role in the lives of others I love, and I only wish for a Noble life for everyone, and an eventual end to this unsettling method of truth-altering events. Those who listen to my voice will only

truly "hear" its message with their own hearts.

I fail to understand why people are so splintered, and divided. This division closes off compassion and reason, and only through the heart can we begin to both tell and hear the truth. With deep respect and gratitude, may we share now, right this second, the greatest sacrifices that have been made by those we remember tonight. May they never, ever be forgotten! May they rest in eternal peace, and slumber and may we see the day that there will never again be such bloodshed and unhappiness due to the heartbreak and grief their loss brings with it. And may we never forget the wounded and disabled who now need us more than ever to care for them. We are the community, these are our losses, and if our hearts can and will open, perhaps we will all hear and tell the truth.

With an opened heart, I wish to share the teaching on loving kindness from my faith tradition. I always go back to this noble teaching because it always helps me remember the wonderful invitation to live a mindful, wise, and loving life that values simplicity, sincerity, kindness, and unity. And I remember love.

*This is what should be done  
By one who is skilled in goodness,  
And who knows the paths of peace;  
Let them be able and upright,*

*Straightforward and gentle in speech,  
Humble and not conceited,  
May they be contented and easily satisfied,  
Unburdened with duties and frugal in their ways,  
Peaceful and calm, and wise and skillful,  
Not proud and demanding in nature.  
May they do nothing that the wise would later reprove.  
May all beings be happy.  
May they be joyous, and live in safety.*

*All beings, whether weak or strong,  
the great or the mighty, medium, short or small, seen or unseen,  
near or far away, already born or yet to be born,  
may all beings be at ease! Let none deceive another,  
Or despise any being in any state.*

*Let no one out of anger or ill will Wish harm upon another.*

*Even as a mother at the risk of her own life watches over and protects her only child,*

*with a boundless heart should one cherish all living things, radiating kindness, suffusing love over the entire world, above, below and all around without limit, should one cultivate an infinite good will toward the whole world.*

*Whether standing or walking, sitting or lying down, during all one's waking hours may they remain mindful of this heart and this way of living that is said to be the sublime abiding.*

*By not holding on to fixed views, being freed from all sense desires, the pure-hearted one, with clear vision, will never be reborn in the cycles of suffering.*

Thank you, Sherry Glover

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