

October 26, 2009

Dear Daughters of Dick Endres:

Twenty-five years ago I stabbed Dick Endres during a fight which resulted in his death. I did not intend to kill him but that doesn't excuse what I did. I chose to carry a knife and I chose to use it on Dick. Even though I have come to regret those choices, I am still responsible for them.

I am sorry for your loss. I am sorry that I took your dad out of your life and deprived you of all the years you could have had with him. I do not know if you have children but if you do, please tell them I am sorry they were never able to know their grandfather. I cannot bring him back nor can I erase the hurt that I caused you.

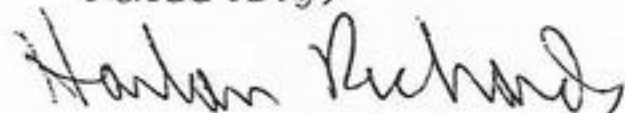
I have been learning about restorative justice and it has prompted me to look at what I did through your eyes. It has enabled me to see the damage I did to you and to everyone who loved him.

I have a daughter. She was 5 years old when I came to prison and she is now 30 years old with children of her own. I look at the years I lost without her in my life and imagine how much worse it is for you. I may one day be united with them but because of me you will never have that opportunity. I am sorry.

I have spent many years figuring out what made me into the person I was. I was callous and uncaring with no empathy or compassion. I engaged in extensive self-therapy to change that. I suffered through a lot of abuse as a child and grew into an emotionally crippled adult. That doesn't excuse what I did but it may help explain why it happened. I have experienced the emotional healing I needed to become a loving, caring person. I look back on the type of person I was in 1984 and cannot believe I was ever that way. But I must own what I did, take responsibility for my actions and accept the consequences.

I can't imagine ever hurting anyone again and I deeply regret not having made the effort to change before it cost Dick his life. I have made a vow to never harm another human being again and to make the world a better place for every person with whom I come in contact. If there is anything else I can say or do to ease your pain and loss, please let me know.

Sincerely,



Harlan Richards