

Author Biography:

Tamara Faris

Tamara Faris, RN, MS specializing in grief and loss, has spent the past 10 years traveling and initiating the use of Memory Books, a simple scrapbook for children, in Africa, India, Haiti, Mexico, and the United States. Inspired by her own childhood losses, she abandoned a traditional nursing career and discovered stories similar to hers lived by millions of children throughout the world.

She is a published co-author of “Evaluation of Implementation of Use of Memory Books by Children Orphaned in South Africa” in *The Journal of Pediatric Nursing* (July/August 2014, Volume 29/4, pages 337-343). She is currently writing about research conducted in India orphanages.

She received her Masters of Science from Oregon Health Science University, graduating with honors. When she received a BSN from University of Portland School of Nursing, Portland, Oregon, she was awarded the 2011 Rev. Thomas C. Oddo Outstanding Service Award Alumni Award. Presented for her work with disadvantaged children, the award describes Tamara’s efforts “to awaken them to their own divine gifts and joys, to instill confidence and self-esteem, to help them savor the amazing power of prayer of story to elevate lives.”

In 2005, Tamara founded Memory Books for Children International, a non-profit organization that provides children with a personal Memory Book. Approximately 25,000 Memory Books have been distributed to children worldwide, including countries in Africa, Asia, and Central America. Orphanages, schools, and churches also are gifted with craft and art supplies to enhance children’s story telling—all at no cost.

Tamara conducts training in grief and loss for caregivers, teachers, and pastors anywhere in the world where Memory Books are placed. She also makes herself available to share her knowledge about grief and loss at University of Portland Nursing School, for local church international team mission teams, and as a volunteer at foster children summer camps. She has been interviewed on the radio, and invited to be a guest speaker at churches, women’s groups, and philanthropic organizations.

- Women of Purpose International Women’s Conference in Kenya, August 2014.
- Interviewed by show host Reverend Leslie D. Nelson of Heart of the Savior Ministries, KPDQ True Talk Radio, 10:30 to 11:00 a.m. Saturday, May 10 & 17, 2014, Portland, Oregon.
- Critical Perspectives in Nursing and Health Care Conference, Vancouver, B.C., Canada, June 19-20, 2013. “Evaluation of Memory Book Interventions with Orphaned Children in South Africa.” Presentation of a report co-authored by Barb Braband, Kaye Wilson-Anderson, and Tamara Faris. (Article published in *The Journal of Pediatric Nursing*, July/August 2014, Volume 29/4, pages 337-343.)
- International Education Week, University of Portland, Portland, Oregon, (November, 18-23, 2013). “Evaluation of Memory Book Interventions with Orphaned Children in South Africa.” Presentation of a report co-authored by Barb Braband, Kaye Wilson-Anderson, and Tamara Faris.

Tamara is married to Ron Faris, and is a mother and grandmother.