

1. I panicked. I had three days to write a speech that would honor Don and let the world know the anger I felt that the terrorists had stolen my choice and had made a decision for my life that I never would have made. I heard in my mind's ears a doubtful voice that sounded a lot like mine but was a composite of many voices that over the years had told me that I can't do things. *"You can't talk in front of cameras. There are millions of people on the other side of them, and they'll hear you stutter, and you don't want that to happen."*

Prone to procrastination, I left writing the speech until late the night before the press conference. Starting at around 10 p.m., I wrote until 1 a.m. nothing sounded coherent. I ripped it all up.

I had an internal rant at Don in my head. *How could you do this to me!? Why did you have to go off and die? If you'd listened to me and stayed home you would still be here. This is so unfair! You the one who loved to give speeches, not me. I wish you were here then I wouldn't have to write this. Damn, I miss you! Please help me. This is the one thing I feel I can do to fight terrorism, and it's important to me. I'm wait- ing...* And I waited for about an hour.

Still waiting at my computer at 2 a.m., I started to nod off when I felt something touch my shoulder. I jumped and looked around but saw no one.

"Don, is that you?" I asked, and then I felt something brush my cheek. I burst into tears allowing all my sadness, anger, and frustration pour out until a wave of calm flowed over me, like warm water being poured all over my body. I felt at peace for the first time since the terrorist attack. Savoring the feeling, I took in a deep breath, and the words began to flow. The speech was written in twenty minutes. It looked great, and I knew I could share it with confidence, without stuttering or crying.

I put my hand out, hoping I would feel Don's hand in mine, but I didn't. I let him know how much I loved him and how grateful I was for his help. I blew him a kiss and went to bed.

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