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towers fall on tv. In July 2003, I went to Ground Zero, well- as close as I could get, which was about half a block. But I could see there was a hole- mostly from the construction at that point, but I cried. I wasn't there when it happened, and everybody's got their own personal history for 9/11, some much closer to the tragedy of that day.

I did know a few people in the city, former colleagues, distant acquaintances. I reached out in the weeks following, and all were safe. But I was weary to even intrude and ask, because their proximity meant that they likely did know somebody, or had a friend of a friend, who was directly involved. There are invisible lines that are hard to cross, even when you want to embrace.

But holding back- because they perhaps did know one of the 2,977 innocent people (the total known number from the WTC, the Pentagon, PA, the passengers and the flight crews, minus the terrorists) who died just because they were in a place that a hate-filled group wanted to destroy, thinking it would empower them and weaken us. It did not do either. Americans are more than a building or a symbol or a flag or something that can be easily brought down. We are an idea, a dream... then, and even now while we debate and debase. And the world was outraged at the attack and stood by us. The attack hurt us, without a doubt. But it made us stronger.

Read this: A Father Recalls His Fallen FDNY Son: <http://www.firehouse.com/...>

On the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, I woke up, showered, got ready for work. I was a tech nerd even then, so I checked my email, browsed the Yahoo! News page and saw an article headline that said that a "small aircraft" had reportedly struck one of the World Trade Center towers. So, in curiosity, I turned on the morning news to a reporter speaking over video footage that clearly showed the results of a larger impact, and more accurate reports started to come in. I continued watching in horror as the second tower was struck. As they collapsed.

I went to work for about an hour. Was out of it on the way home. I was in a short-

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in Oklahoma City, where we'd experienced the Bombing only a few years earlier, I still could not even begin to understand how New Yorkers felt, especially those who lost loved ones. Or those in the Pentagon on that Tuesday morning. I will never be able to express enough, my respect for the firefighters, police, EMTs, volunteers and other responders who gave more than was ever asked. Nor will I forget the "Let's Roll" bravery of the passengers on Flight 93, whose sacrifice prevented even greater loss.

Monuments will be built; new towers will pierce the sky. But I think the most honorable memorial is within our hearts and minds. To remember, and keep dear to your hearts, the phrase that emerged shortly after the tragedy: Never Forget.

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I wasn't in New York 10 years ago, but Harvey Eisner was. He's the editor-in-chief of Firehouse Magazine, a print and online news and information resource for firefighters and first responders. He's written a book called WTC: In Their Own Words, an historical and emotional reflection on the events of 9/11 from the perspective of members of FDNY. Eisner has been a member of the Tenafly, NJ, Fire Department since November 1975, where he has served as Fire Chief for 12 years, Assistant Fire Chief for two years, Lieutenant for three years, Captain for eight years and currently Assistant Fire Chief. He was a firefighter in the Stillwater, OK, Fire Department for three years while attending Oklahoma State University in the 1970's.

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