

The Surviving Spirit Newsletter – Healing the Heart Through the Creative Arts - 11/5/09

Out of suffering have emerged the strongest souls; the most massive characters are seared with scars. - Kahlil Gibran

Hello Folks,

I hope all is well for everyone, things are good here...no complaints.

No complaints...but some great news to share. I had the good fortune to perform last week at The Alternatives Conference in Omaha, NE. [<http://alternatives2009.org>] That went well, met a lot of wonderful people, sold lots of my cd's, and...I received the Howie the Harp Arts Award!!! For those unfamiliar with Howie, here's a little background info:

"Since his passing, Howie has been memorialized in many ways. In his memory, a "Howie the Harp Arts Award" is given each year at Alternatives to an artist who exemplifies his spirit as an artist with a social change message. Many have written stories and poetry about him." <http://alteredstatesofthearts.com/>

Howie the Harp Peer Advocacy and Training Center -

Created in 1995, HTH was inspired by the vision of its founder, Howard "Howie T. Harp" Geld, a man who had known homelessness and mental illness. Howie championed the idea that people with psychiatric disabilities do not have to be relegated to menial, low-paying jobs, but can find meaningful work that pays a living wage.

http://www.communityaccess.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=18&Itemid=20

When my health issues of complex post traumatic stress & depression laid me low back in 1993, I soon became quite angry at how I was being treated by so many. So I started learning about people doing advocacy work on the issues and concerns of those labeled "mentally ill". I became quite aware of what Howie did in that arena.

Closer to home here in New Hampshire, two people had a significant impact upon me back then, Sherry Young & Shery Mead. Both were speaking out and doing incredible advocacy work via their respective organizations. Sherry Young with the NH Incest Center and Shery Mead with Stepping Stones Peer Support Center. To eventually become friends with both of them made it even better. I learned a lot from their examples of speaking out and doing the right thing. So to receive this award many years later is truly an honor for me. As I mentioned in accepting the award - "This is like getting a Grammy Award in the mental health arena. Thank you!!!"

I will attach the introduction speech [and picture-thanks Charles!!] prepared by my dear fiend Ed Pazicky and read by another dear friend, Gayle Bluebird. You can learn more about their advocacy endeavors in

the creative arena at the above-mentioned Altered States of the Arts website link.

Also, please check this out!!! - "The Fall 09 Rap Sheet is online, with your story in it!" <http://www.drcnh.org/RAPFall09.pdf>.

Not only is there a short article I wrote on my music and healing...but there are lots of great articles on some truly impressive creative people overcoming great odds despite their respective disability issues. Well worth taking the time to read...please.

And finally, I will be performing this Saturday for this great endeavor. Debbie Chambers and I met many years ago when we both presented at a college in Boston [BU I believe??] and she is another great example [and friend] of one overcoming great difficulties in life and turning that around to help others. What a great gift to the world!!!

Learn About Surviving Sexual Abuse & Child Sexual Abuse Prevention

Attending Conference#22 Is One Step Towards Healing From Sexual Abuse

Join Other Victims/Survivors Of Adult or Child Sexual Abuse

Find The Support You Need To Become A Thriving Survivor of Sexual Abuse

Date: 11/07/09 Time: 11am to 3pm Always FREE

Debbie Chambers - Empowering Children

Codman Square Health Center's - The Great Hall - **Entrance Across From McDonald's**

637 Washington Street Dorchester, MA 02124

Phone: 617-298-1102

Email: dcempoweringchildren@gmail.com

Website: dcempowering.org

Take care, Mike

*Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.
~Martin Luther King, Jr.*

A diagnosis is not a destiny.

www.mskinnermusic.com - Hope, Healing, & Help for Trauma, Abuse, & Mental Health through music, resources, & advocacy

www.myspace.com/michaelskinnermusic - musical endeavors only

www.youtube.com/mcstrain - live performance of "Brush Away Your Tears" from TV show interview

mikeskinner@comcast.net 603-625-2136 38 River Ledge Drive, Goffstown, NH 03045

www.michaelskinner.net - new site for public speaking & music presentation on healing for trauma, abuse, & mental health.

"BE the change you want to see in the world." Mohandas Gandhi

ps. Please share this with your friends and colleagues...and if you have receive this in error, please let me know. Thanks!!!