



The Surviving Spirit Newsletter – Healing the Heart Through the Creative Arts

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 moving along here for the Surviving Spirit, we've got some new board members to help us in our endeavor, we are holding our first event on April 24th in Chelmsford, MA, a brochure that is just about done, and....soon the website will be up & running 'live', with lots of great things to share. So stay tuned....

The original idea and intent for this newsletter, has always been to promote Hope, Healing, & Help for the concerns of Trauma, Abuse, & Mental Health. There are many great organizations, groups and agencies doing some really good work in these areas. It is equally important to highlight the efforts of what so many other people are doing in their own way to help – whether that is a website, a blog, a book, their art, music, newsletter, speaking, etc, etc... whatever & however they bring their voice to the table to help make the world a better place.

The months of April & May are important months for the above mentioned health concerns - **What's so special about April?**

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month, a time to raise awareness about child abuse and neglect and encourage individuals and communities to support children and families. Learn more about the history of the month, see examples of Presidential and State proclamations, and find strategies for engaging communities and supporting families.

[History of Prevention Month](#) **And** it is also:

Sexual Assault Awareness Month

The month of April has been designated Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM). The goal of SAAM is to raise public awareness about sexual violence (focusing on sexual assault and rape) and to educate communities and individuals on how to prevent sexual violence.

[Sexual Assault Awareness Month](#)

hmnnn....on a personal note, April is also the month of my birthday...the enclosed picture of me as child shows a young boy who wasn't able to look forward to a

birthday...it was one more day to survive. All children should celebrate their birthday... The subject matter of child abuse in of itself is one most people don't want to hear about...and when it is coupled with the sexual abuse of a child...well, the Hear No Evil, See No Evil, & Speak No Evil that takes place [sadly], happens more often than not. We can all help change that equation....



There are many good books and resources to help people in their healing journey from the devastation of child abuse. Personally, I have read dozens of books on healing from trauma, abuse, and mental health concerns. A few that have been most helpful are:

- 1] "Toxic Parents – Overcoming Their Hurtful Legacy and Reclaiming Your Life" – by Dr. Susan Forward & Craig Buck [a New York Times #1 Bestseller]
- 2] "Victims No Longer" – by Mike Lew
- 3] "Trust After Trauma – A Guide to Relationships for Survivors and Those Who Love Them" – by Aphrodite Matsakis, PhD
- 4] "Abused Boys – The Neglected Victims of Sexual Abuse" – by Mic Hunter, PhD

Many friends and folks have shared with me how these two books have been extremely helpful.

- 1] "The Courage to Heal Workbook: A Guide for Women and Men Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse" - by Laura Davis
- 2] "The Courage to Heal – A Guide for Women Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse" – by Ellen Bass & Laura Davis

Please feel free to share what has helped you...so we can pass it on to others.

Some helpful websites, etc:

- 1] Guide for Primary Care Providers: Survivors of Sexual Abuse:

<http://www.csacliniciansguide.net/index.html> - VIP for all!!!

2] Many Voices - Since 1989 Many Voices has offered a forum where thousands of recovering persons share ways they use to heal from tragic physical, sexual, and emotional assaults. That's a long time folks – kudos to Lynn & friends for this achievement.

www.manyvoicespress.com

3] Fix The Law.Org - An organization of individuals and groups who seek to educate, advocate for and address the prevention of child sexual abuse within our communities & to identify, clarify, improve and create new laws which will assist our society in keeping children safe from sexual predators.

www.fixthelaw.org

4] The Child Abuse Survivor Monument – a great idea and mission!!!

http://www.irvingstudios.com/child_abuse_survivor_monument/index.html

5] State of Sadness – Stacey Soares [Therapist, Social Worker, & Foster Mother]

A story about her foster daughter with a shocking conclusion & how to address the issues and concerns of what needs to change in the foster care system.

www.staceysoares.com/id56.html

6] Let Go Let Peace Come In – Has been able to raise the \$\$\$ to help a survivor with 30 trauma therapy sessions – very nice & wishing you continued success in the efforts to help survivors without treatment options and funding.

www.letgoletpeacecomein.org

7] From my good friends up in Canada:

Jeanne Sarson and Linda MacDonald are asking persons who have endured, or are enduring, non-state actor torture such as ritual abuse-torture, or spousal and child torture to participate in their research questionnaire linked below:

<http://pub25.bravenet.com/vote/vote.php?usernum=2120596064&cpv=2>

Non-state actor torture is defined as torture committed, for instance, by parents, spouses, other kin, guardians, neighbors, trusted adults, or strangers in the private sphere, for example, in homes, warehouses, cabins, rented buildings, in fields, or in various public and private places.

Torturing by Non-State Actors Invisibilized, A Patriarchal Divide and Spillover Violence from the Military Sphere into the Domestic Sphere
- Jeanne Sarson and Linda MacDonald, pp. 16-38 <http://peacestudiesjournal.wordpress.com/>

8] Break The Abuse Cycle - The mission of this website and discussion forum is to give survivors of abuse a place where they are able to break their silence, share their stories, and find help, understanding, resources, and compassion. It is also a place to share strength, hope and courage and to promote healing.

www.breaktheabusecycle.com

9] RAINN – Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network - The nation's largest anti-sexual assault organization www.rainn.org

10] Male Survivor - Committed to preventing, healing, and eliminating all forms of sexual victimization of boys and men through support, treatment, research, education, advocacy & activism. www.malesurvivor.org

Thanks for your continued support...not enough space to post all of the resources that are shared...but we will... But, if it has been a while and your website, book, music, etc has not been shared, please let me know....I can blame it on my age...heck, I'm a year older...so I do forget things!!!

The month of May is Mental Health Awareness Month....if anything to share for next month's newsletter, please pass it on.

Take care, Mike

ps. Please share this with your friends & if you have received this in error, please let me know.

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.new.facebook.com/profile.php?id=635415804%20 Facebook - for friends, music, & advocacy!!

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