



*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 okay here. It has been busy, really busy, but there have been LOTS of great things happening and that is part of the reason why the delay in sending out the October issue in November.

Some personal information to share that is very exciting, I became a grandfather again to a precious little girl named Ava three weeks ago. I was able to spend eight days last week with my oldest daughter and her family out in sunny California....and then back to reality here in New England with the not so sunny temperatures.

Please mark your calendars for two very important dates – November 5th and November 12<sup>th</sup> and tune in [or record] the Oprah Winfrey Show for two powerful shows on males who have been sexually abused as children. I was fortunate to have been a part of these historic shows that had two hundred male survivors in the audience.

Oprah Winfrey Show Press Release - [http://www.oprah.com/pressroom/Historic-Discussion-with-200-Men-on-Molestation\\_1](http://www.oprah.com/pressroom/Historic-Discussion-with-200-Men-on-Molestation_1)

Part of the reason why for the delay in sending this out was that we were blocked from sharing this information till several days ago, at which time I was in CA. Due to the short time frame here, I will focus most of the news on these shows. Next week I will send the November issue with some great news about Gayle Bluebird, Megan Caughey [awards they received, etc] and more...

The two days spent in Chicago were incredible. Before our shows were taped we got to watch the Tyler Perry show that was broadcast on October 21<sup>st</sup>. Oprah felt this was so powerful and important, that she decided to do two shows. I didn't get on for a speaking part, but just being there was huge and honored to be a part of this. As of two weeks ago I was to be taped for a piece...then during the first show taping she indicated to me that I was next to be asked a question and they actually had the microphone [on a boom arm] planted at my feet for about seven minutes. But then the dynamics of the questions and dialog changed and my opportunity was gone....but that is okay. I was right up front, probably about 15 -20 feet away from her and Tyler Perry. All of those who spoke did an incredible job and they helped convey lots of important points, hope and healing.

These shows will help end some myths and fears...at the very least, to start getting some dialog going...because males for too long have been ignored. I will always continue to speak out and share...but I learned many years ago, now it is about helping others. As children we longed to be able to tell our story...I've been fortunate and blessed to have reached thousands upon thousands via my music, speaking, websites, writing and speaking...I will over time, reach even more. BUT...it is to help those out there now who are suffering...I want to help be part of the change for others and their children...we need to break this out into the open and stop hiding from the fears of talking about it. The statistics are too high to ignore this any more...one in four women are sexually assaulted before the age of eighteen and for men it is one in six....stop to think about that the next time you are with a group of family, friends, work, church, the store, etc...that is too much pain, suffering and shame out there. And 90% of that abuse comes from the people we know...the "stranger danger" is a myth that needs to be out in the open also...we have more to fear for our children from some of those we know and trust.

Tyler Perry's life was so sad, hard and brutal....and yet today he is listed as the second richest man in Hollywood after director James Cameron [Avatar, Titanic, etc] and his list of accomplishments are huge...his show focused on his own sexual abuse as a young child at the hand of 3 men and a women [neighbors and church]. A very compelling story; it is posted at Oprah's website and it is well worth watching.

<http://www.tylerperry.com/>

People magazine on his Oprah Winfrey show -

<http://www.people.com/people/article/0,,20435854,00.html?xid=rss-topheadlines>

[http://www.oprah.com/showinfo/First-TV-Interview-Tyler-Perry-Speaks-Out-About-Being-Molested\\_1](http://www.oprah.com/showinfo/First-TV-Interview-Tyler-Perry-Speaks-Out-About-Being-Molested_1)

It was a great two days, but a very emotional experience....just being with 200 other males survivors from all over the country and Canada was huge....very excited to have many come up to me and introduce themselves because of my own advocacy work and they are on the newsletter list...so that was really cool. We got to spend a lot of time with one another and we shared lots of stories, some pain and LOTS of laughter....so as I said, a good two days and well worth the trip.

If I had spoken, this is what I would have liked to have shared on Shame & Stigma:

“Sadly, shame and stigma help to perpetuate the feelings you already have of being ‘dirty’ and ‘no good’ from being sexually abused...unfortunately, a large part of society turns away from you in so many ways, that helps reinforce the shame that really isn't yours. What we experienced was done to us, yet somehow we can be blamed for what happened – the mentality of “blame the victim” is so pervasive. And when we finally reach for help, many family members, spouses, partners, lovers, friends, and people we know, turn away from us, we are cut off and pushed away – that hurts, it really hurts. Too many of us have experienced mental health counselors and other treatment providers who tell us “it's in the past”, “move on with your life”, or “get over it” – they don't want us to

share our story of pain and hurt in our efforts of trying to heal. They end up reinforcing the beliefs you have inside of you that you are dirty and no good.

Fortunately, we do meet people who don't push away...but we need more of society to not treat us like lepers for having been sexually abused and having to deal with mental health concerns because of that abuse.

People fear what they don't know...but it doesn't take much to take the time to learn about trauma and abuse and its long term effects....”

To learn more about the effects of childhood sexual abuse upon males, their partners and society, please visit:

1 In 6 @ <http://www.1in6.org/>

Male Survivor @ <http://www.malesurvivor.org/>

Jim Hopper PhD @ <http://www.jimhopper.com/>

The Surviving Spirit @ [http://www.survivingspirit.com/boys\\_men\\_healing.html](http://www.survivingspirit.com/boys_men_healing.html) We have a ten minute clip posted of the powerful film documentary – “Boys and Men Healing From Childhood Sexual Abuse” at our website Two of the men [Mark & Tony] in this film were also part of the Oprah Winfrey Shows and Tony had a chance to share on the show. You can also order the film from us or book a presentation of the film – details at our website.

Please keep the Surviving Spirit in mind for your next event when you need a talented and inspirational keynote or workshop presenter. Please visit our Speakers' Bureau for all of your needs - [http://survivingspirit.com/Speakers\\_Bureau.html](http://survivingspirit.com/Speakers_Bureau.html)

Finally, you can help the Surviving Spirit in its Mission to help others with your Time, Treasure or Talent. To learn more please visit - <http://survivingspirit.com/donate.html>

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.survivingspirit.com](http://www.survivingspirit.com) – Healing the Heart Through the Creative Arts

Speakers' Bureau - [http://survivingspirit.com/Speakers\\_Bureau.html](http://survivingspirit.com/Speakers_Bureau.html)

[www.mskinnermusic.com](http://www.mskinnermusic.com) - Hope, Healing, & Help for Trauma, Abuse, & Mental Health through music, resources, & advocacy

[www.new.facebook.com/profile.php?id=635415804%20](http://www.new.facebook.com/profile.php?id=635415804%20) Facebook - for friends, music, & advocacy!!

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