



*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,

Nov 2010

Greetings and my best to all - it is hard to believe that November is almost over and soon we will be entering into a New Year. I hope this latest newsletter finds you to be in a good place, I know that the holidays can be a difficult time to go through for so many. Hopefully, with this month's sharing of resources and information, it may help those of you who struggle through this season of the year – personally, it has always been a difficult time for me.

We can also experience great joy at this time of year, and yet, sometimes the slightest trigger of painful thoughts, feelings or memories from the past can send many into a downward slide. The good news, there are all kinds of ways and resources to help us cope and move past these debilitating feelings and memories. If you are struggling, please reach out; please do not be alone in your pain. Take the time to treat yourself to something nice - because you deserve it. You can also visit our website Resources Section for a variety of resources to help you; these website links can lead you to all kinds of *hope, healing and help* - <http://survivingspirit.com/resources.html>

Our thanks to Alison Rogers for sharing these insightful resources that help create awareness and education regarding concerns around the holidays for those who struggle with PTSD and depression – this information can also help their family and friends.

PTSD and the Holidays - <http://www.sidran.org/pdf/PTSDandholidays.pdf>

State of Grace - An Adult Child Abuse Survivor's Guide to the Holidays –

[http://gracedavis.typepad.com/i\\_am\\_dr\\_lauras\\_worst\\_nigh/2009/11/a-child-abuse-survivors-guide-to-the-holidays.html](http://gracedavis.typepad.com/i_am_dr_lauras_worst_nigh/2009/11/a-child-abuse-survivors-guide-to-the-holidays.html)

Sometimes just the simple act of sharing your story with someone can be one of the most powerful tools for healing – it is exciting to be able to share some great resources that can help you in that process. Maybe these sources of inspiration can lead you to some of your own ideas to help not only yourself, but to also help others – just as these kind and caring folks and organizations are doing with their respective works and advocacy.

1] Meghan Caughey has founded a new arts organization called VISIONS: A.R.T.- Art for Resilience and Transformation - VISIONS will inspire persons who have lived

experience of mental health challenges to create art that expresses their unique stories, creating opportunities to educate, inform, and transform public perception of what it means to have mental health challenges.

You can learn more at - <http://www.visions-art.org/>

Meghan recently received “The Howie the Harp Award” at the Alternatives 2010 Annual Conference - “Promoting Wellness Through Social Justice”. This distinguished award is given each year to someone who best exemplifies social change in using the creative arts. Meghan is someone who I not only think of as a ‘Surviving Spirit’, but also a gentle spirit and she gives so much to so many in her creative advocacy efforts - so a well deserved award. You can learn more about the Alternatives Conference at:

<http://www.power2u.org/alternatives2010/index.html> and “The Howie the Harp Award”

at: <http://www.alteredstatesofhearts.com/index.htm> - then click on News and Info.

2] Gayle Bluebird who has been ‘in the trenches’ for so long in helping and inspiring so many was also honored recently with a VOICE Award. The VOICE awards are given annually by SAMHSA [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration] to honor movies, TV shows, and stars that portray mental illness in a positive light. They also present six consumer advocate awards. This year Gayle was one of them [and justly so], along with a few others you may know; Laverne Miller, Janet Paleo, Moe Armstrong - who received the Lifetime Achievement Award [way to go Moe!!], Fred Freese, Clarence Jordan and Lorrin Gehring [for the youth award].

I am one of those who Gayle has helped to inspire in my own creative advocacy endeavors; she has been a friend, a peer, mentor and so much more. Please visit the NASMHPD [National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors] website to read her bio and her acceptance speech along with pictures of the event – just scroll down to - Recent updates and Information:

<http://www.nasmhpd.org/consumernetworking.cfm>

3] Ed Pazicky, Coordinator and Webmaster for Altered States of the Arts – “Promoting Recovery Through Art’ is looking for artists to display their creative efforts at the website - [www.alteredstatesofhearts.com](http://www.alteredstatesofhearts.com) Ed is another one of those caring people who helps so many others, just visit the website to see this in action. He’s also posted Gayle Bluebird’s above mentioned award and information – scroll down to Bluebird’s Words. Please contact Ed at - [edpazicky@comcast.net](mailto:edpazicky@comcast.net)

4] Corinna West is gathering recovery stories and recovery poems to post on her website for Poetry for Personal Power. Corinna’s words sum it up best – “I would love to feature works from people across the country.” Please contact her at:

Corinna West, MS, CPS Creative Director, Human Hand Wordworks  
PO Box 172351, Kansas City, KS 66117 816-392-6074

<http://corinnawest.com/>      [corinnawest816@gmail.com](mailto:corinnawest816@gmail.com)

5] Draw That Beast is an online art project. People are welcome to submit original artwork (drawings, paintings, montages, photos) of how depression visually looks to them. Anyone is welcome to join in; it is not an art competition. If you can't draw, then take a photo or compile some pictures together that have some meaning to you. If words fit best, then that is ok too. <http://drawthatbeast.blogspot.com/>

Submit by email: [drawthatbeast@gmail.com](mailto:drawthatbeast@gmail.com)

Submit by post:

Draw that Beast, PO Box 7043, Watson ACT, AUSTRALIA 2602

6] Christopher De Serres has created a powerful medium for the millions of sexual abuse survivors out there who want to tell their stories - many of whom feel isolated and unable to express the deepest pain in our lives. The "My Name Is Project" is there to provide a survivor a way to express it via video sharing. All of the information and resources to help you in this worthwhile endeavor are posted at –

<http://womenspeakout.wordpress.com/2010/11/01/my-name-is-project/>

Chris and his wife Ophelia are also the founders of (Wo)Men Speak Out™ - a non-profit organization dedicated to eradicating violence against both genders. They seek to educate both men and women, cultivating healthy relationships and gender equity. Learn more at - <http://www.womenspeakoutnow.com> Chris also took part in the recent Oprah Winfrey shows about males who were sexually abused as children.

7] Lauren Leigh, mental health activist and founder of "On the Borderline" [and fellow NH resident!!] is looking for your videos about your experiences while living with Borderline Personality Disorder. Please include all of your relevant links in the email – e.g. your You Tube channel, Facebook or Myspace profile, your blog, etc and send to – [contact@ontheborderline.org](mailto:contact@ontheborderline.org)

To learn more, please visit Lauren's sites at - <http://ontheborderline.org/> and

<http://www.youtube.com/ontheborderline30>

8] Sharon Wise is now holding first readings for people interested in her hit play, "Meet me on the Moon". She's looking for two females and one male actor to be a part of this creative effort – so if you are in the Washington, DC area, please contact her at Skype - 202-460-2753 or by e-mail at - [thehouseofsharon@msn.com](mailto:thehouseofsharon@msn.com)  
I have been fortunate to experience Sharon's powerful dance renditions and her equally impressive art creations, so I can't wait to see this play.

9] Kate Swift's book - "This Tangled Web" is one woman's journey from victim to survivor. It is the untangling of a web created by the pain of childhood sexual abuse. The

author brings you to the center of the web through her poetry and art, allowing you to see the journey through her eyes.

<http://www.thistangledweb.co.uk/kate-swift-book.htm>

10] Chipmunka Publishing's catalog of mental health books gives a voice to writers with mental illness around the world. They help to raise awareness of mental health and the stigma surrounding mental health problems by encouraging society to listen. They are offering 45 Free E books to download from their website, learn more at - <http://www.chipmunkapublishing.co.uk> Click on specials and then e books.

I would like to close by sharing this quote from Albert Einstein - "Try not to become a man of success but rather to become a man of value." I truly believe that all of you who are mentioned in these newsletters and those who graciously receive them exemplify this quote – Thank you for what you do in helping others.

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)

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)

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