



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,

Greetings to all and wishing you a Happy Holiday Season – whatever your beliefs or non-belief may be. As mentioned in the last newsletter, I realize that it can be a very difficult time of the year for so many and for a variety of reasons. I received a fair amount of correspondence from a lot of folks who were grateful for the resources that were provided last month to help cope with the holiday season. With that in mind, I will gladly share some more to help facilitate your healing journey through this time period – whether it is for yourself or a loved one.

Do visit the Surviving Spirit website for *hope, healing and help* and click on the Resources tab for all kinds of useful information [and more to come!] – www.survivingspirit.com

And please visit us at our Facebook page by clicking on the tab posted at the site or via – <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Surviving-Spirit/138180506227288>

I too struggle through at this time of the year and I have for as long as I can remember. That said; I have worked hard at not allowing the sad feelings to rob me of the joy that can be experienced. Recently I attended a workshop with my friend Maureen that gave us some great ideas and insight on how to cope through this difficult time of year. We both went with no expectations, but with the hope that we might learn some new ways to cope with our respective hurts, trauma and grief. Well I am pleased to say that we both can give this workshop the proverbial “two thumbs up”! I know I will go back – & here’s the scoop:

1] “The Opening the Heart Workshop™(OTH) is a weekend-long workshop that provides a safe and supportive environment for accessing feelings, working through blocked emotions, disentangling from the past, reconnecting with core truths, and learning to live more fully from the heart.”

<http://sites.google.com/site/theopeningtheheartworkshop/> or <http://www.openingtheheartworkshop.com/>

2] My friend and fellow advocate Joyce Boaz of “Gift From Within” [what a great name!] also shared some wonderful resources that I am pleased to pass on. Her website is full of helpful information – here’s a few to help get you started:

PTSD Resources for Survivors, Caregivers, Military & Family

a] <http://www.giftfromwithin.org/index.html> - For Survivors of Trauma and Victimization

“Anything that has real and lasting value is always a gift from within.” Franz Kafka

b] [How to Cope with PTSD and the Holiday Season](http://www.giftfromwithin.org/html/holiday.html)
<http://www.giftfromwithin.org/html/holiday.html>

c] [Healing from Shame Associated with Traumatic Events](http://www.giftfromwithin.org/html/healing.html) - by Dr. Angie Panos
<http://www.giftfromwithin.org/html/healing.html>

3] I have shared Jim Hopper’s website link in the past because of all the great resources and body of knowledge that he posts there – all of which are so helpful. Please visit this part of his site on Mindfulness and Kindness – Inner Sources of Freedom and Happiness to help guide you through this Holiday Season - <http://www.jimhopper.com/mindfulness/> It has helped so many of my friends who I have shared this with, along with myself, so it’s well worth the effort to visit and read, you have nothing to lose and so much to gain. He’s one more example of a good guy doing good things for others, as are all the other folks and organizations highlighted in these newsletters.

4] & Here’s a good article to follow up with that pertains to the Mindfulness information.

Can Mindfulness Help Manage Pain And Mental Illness? By Elizabeth Landau, CNN
<http://www.cnn.com/2010/HEALTH/11/16/mindfulness.therapy.meditation>

STORY HIGHLIGHTS

- The idea of mindfulness comes from Buddhism and is key to meditation in that tradition
- Mindfulness helps people with cycles of pain and anxiety, expert says
- Therapists use mindfulness to help eating disorder patients manage emotional pain

I’d like to share a few quotes that seem to fit well with the thoughts and ideas of Mindfulness - "As long as you live, keep learning how to live." Seneca
"Change your thoughts and you change your world." Norman Vincent Peale

5] Something Fishy is “dedicated to raising awareness about eating disorders - emphasizing always that eating disorders are NOT about food and weight. They are just the symptoms of something deeper going on inside. Something Fishy is determined to remind each and every sufferer of anorexia, bulimia, compulsive overeating and binge eating disorder that they are not alone, and that complete recovery is possible. If you are the loved-one of someone that suffers with an eating disorder, use this website to educate yourself. The more you know, the more you are equipped to provide the support your loved-one needs. If you have an eating disorder, you can find help. You can recover. And you deserve to do both.” - <http://www.something-fishy.org/>

6] The International Disability Alliance is an organization representing more than 650 million people with disabilities worldwide. They too share all kinds of resources and information.

[International Disability Alliance](http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/) or <http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/>

7] Andrew Willis and his colleagues at The Stop Abuse Campaign are doing some great work; please think about it, if we help to end abuse in all its forms and manifestations, more people and children would be able to enjoy the holidays.

“The Stop Abuse Campaign is a grassroots movement representing the rights of anyone sexually, physically or emotionally abused. Our mission is to stop abuse and alleviate the suffering of all those affected, including families, friends, businesses and communities.

We will do this by igniting conversations and inspiring people to believe that as individuals, organizations, churches, communities and as businesses, we can work together to stop the abuse that affects a staggering half of the population - men, women and children.” - <http://stopabusecampaign.com/>

Hmnnn.....I'd like to share a few thoughts of mine about the Surviving Spirit newsletter. This is a labor of love, especially for one who is still quite 'computer challenged'. Someday when funds permit, this will be a bit more 'snazzy' in its format and be printed up much like a professional journal and have an editor who can help me with my grammar and all the other things that I may miss. But it has always come from the heart and always will – I enjoy sharing the resources and news of what others are doing out there in their respective efforts and mission to help others.

I'm also mindful that it takes a lot of effort to create this document – I do visit the websites and read the content and all that it pertains too – sadly, it reminds me of why I do what I do. To help prepare myself for today's effort, I listened to one of my favorite recordings – “Rubber Soul” by the Beatles. This was the very first record I bought at the ripe old age of eleven years old in 1965. Hearing the song “In My Life” brought up so much to think about – I thought of all of you who I have come to know through my music, my advocacy and my public speaking, I feel honored and privileged with that and so grateful that you graciously accept this newsletter and share it with others. Listening to the Beatles brought back a lot of memories and how they literally helped to transform the life of a sad little nine year old boy. When time permits, please do read this article that I wrote for Male Survivor back in 2005 that shares how the power of music helped save a life. - <http://www.mskinnermusic.com/pdfs/MenSpeak.pdf>

You can also access the article by visiting <http://www.mskinnermusic.com/mskinner.html> and clicking on the Advocacy Section and scrolling down a bit.

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://speakersbureau.survivingspirit.com/>

Finally, you can help the Surviving Spirit in its Mission to help others affected by trauma, abuse and mental health concerns with your *Time, Treasure or Talent*. We are a 501[c]3 organization, so any and all contributions are tax deductible. We could also use some

help with grant writing. 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 – Healing the Heart Through the Creative Arts

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

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