



*Healing the Heart Through the Creative Arts, Education & Advocacy*

Hope, Healing & Help for Trauma, Abuse & Mental Health

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

Hi Folks,

I hope all is well in your corner of the world, things are okay here...doing my level best to practice gratitude and being thankful for what I do have in my life, it can be so easy to forget or lose sight of what we do have that is good, despite the obstacles and challenges we face in the day to day.

Hopefully we will soon be sending the newsletter from our website, this will make the task of putting this together and all that entails a little bit easier to do – we are also in the process of tweaking the website and adding things, fixing ‘stuff’ and adding more resources and making them easier to access. Do take a look at a few of the things we have done so far when time permits – [www.survivingspirit.com](http://www.survivingspirit.com) Please note that when the newsletter is sent from the website, it will come from one of these addresses –

[Mike.Skinner@SurvivingSpirit.com](mailto:Mike.Skinner@SurvivingSpirit.com) or [contact-us@SurvivingSpirit.com](mailto:contact-us@SurvivingSpirit.com)

*“Let someone love you just the way you are – as flawed as you might be, as unattractive as you sometimes feel, and as unaccomplished as you think you are. To believe that you must hide all the parts of you that are broken, out of fear that someone else is incapable of loving what is less than perfect, is to believe that sunlight is incapable of entering a broken window and illuminating a dark room.” Marc Hack*

1] This could help those who struggle with love, especially if impacted by trauma and abuse and you didn’t receive love as a child and all you know is shame of self because of what was done to you. We all deserve love, compassion, kindness and caring....

**Lovingkindness meditation** – <http://www.wildmind.org/metta>

The Metta Bhavana, or Development of Lovingkindness, practice is one of the most ancient forms of Buddhist practice, one that has been passed down in an unbroken line for over 2,500 years.

We’re often taught as children that we should love others. Religious teachings say, for example, that we should “love others as ourselves.” But how do we learn to love others? And what happens if we don’t particularly like, never mind love, ourselves? The

development of lovingkindness meditation practice is the practical means by which we learn to cultivate love for ourselves and others. The practice helps us to actively cultivate positive emotional states towards ourselves and others, so that we become more patient, kind, accepting, and compassionate.

*“Until and unless you know that you are enough just the way you are, you will continue to look for more. Until you wholeheartedly believe in your own value, worth, and worthiness, in spite of your accomplishments and possessions, or lack thereof, there will always be a void in your spirit.” Author unknown*

2] **National Counsel on Disability [NCD]** Issues Groundbreaking Report *“Rocking the Cradle: Ensuring the Rights of Parents with Disabilities and Their Children”*  
<http://www.ncd.gov/newsroom/09272012>

**Key findings:**

- Estimates indicate 6.1 million children in the U.S. have parents with disabilities – Nearly 1 in 10, almost 10% of the population.
- Parents with disabilities are the only community of Americans who must struggle to retain custody of their children.
  - Removal rates of parents with psychiatric disabilities is as high as 70 – 80 %
  - Removal rates of parents with intellectual disabilities is as high as 80%
  - Extremely high removal rates and loss of parental rights for parents with sensory or physical disabilities.
  - Parents with disabilities are more likely to lose custody of their children after divorce.
- Prospective parents with disabilities have more difficulty when it comes to accessing reproductive health care such as assisted reproductive technologies.
- Prospective parents with disabilities face significant barriers to adopting children.

NCD thanks Through the Looking Glass, the NIDRR-funded National Center for Parents with Disabilities and Their Families, for their valuable assistance in writing sections of this report. Their insight and guidance during the research and drafting of “Rocking the Cradle” was instrumental in its development and completion.

Full report is available on NCD's website at:  
<http://www.ncd.gov/publications/2012/Sep272012/>

*“There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest.” - Elie Wiesel*

3] **Disabled Parents Face Bias, Loss of Kids:** Report: National Public Radio [NPR]  
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=165890611>

*“Stand up for what is right even if you are standing alone” author unknown*

*"The way we talk to our children becomes their inner voice." Maria Montessori*

4] **“Rocking the Cradle”** from a personal perspective –  
<http://badcripple.blogspot.com/2012/10/rocking-cradle-on-parenting-and.html>

**Bad Cripple** – William Peace <http://badcripple.blogspot.com/>

“Paralyzed since I was 18 years old, I have spent much of the last 30 years thinking about the reasons why the social life of crippled people is so different from those who ambulate on two feet. After reading about the so called Ashley Treatment I decided it was time to write a book about my life as a crippled man. My book, *Bad Cripple: A Protest from an Invisible Man*, will be published by Counter Punch. I hope my book will be completed soon. I am a cultural anthropologist and writer interested in disability studies, body art and modification, and the history of anthropology. I am divorced and have a son, Tom, who is an undergraduate at Hofstra University.”

*“Don't walk in front of me, I may not follow; don't walk behind me, I may not lead; walk beside me, and just be my friend.” Albert Camus*

5] **Trauma Survivors Share Tips for Therapists Dealing with Trauma** [from our good friends at *Gift From Within - PTSD Resources for Survivors and Caregivers*]  
<http://giftfromwithin.org/html/Survivor-Tips-for-Therapists-Dealing-with-Trauma.html>

Here are some tips and suggestions for helping trauma survivors from the survivors themselves. They've been reviewed by a seasoned therapist and she believes they would be very useful for other therapists and especially for student interns.

*"Learn from the past, set vivid, detailed goals for the future, and live in the only moment of time over which you have any control: now." Denis Waitley*

6] **Support for Partners** is here to help provide some support for partners of those who have been sexually abused as children, provide resources to develop skills that help partners in their relationships, and provide information about abuse and its effects. The complexities and challenges of relationships are magnified with survivors of sexual abuse. Those who are in a partner-relationship with survivors often need some support and understanding to help them through the recovery process. Our online forum is a place where partners can both get and provide support. Here is one partner's feedback on their participation in the forum:

*“I was shocked to hear of my partner's past and am sympathetic to his feelings and beliefs, but the discovery left me lost and confused about my own ideas of our relationship. Being a part of the Support For Partners forum - sharing my experiences and reading other peoples' concerns - helped me realize that I am not alone and that through time, care, and love - my partner and I can prevail.”*

<http://www.supportforpartners.org/>

*"The greatest healing therapy is friendship and love." Hubert H. Humphrey*

7] **For Parents & Friends of Rape & Sexual Abuse Survivors** Pandora's Project  
<http://www.pandys.org/secondarysurvivors.html>

Knowing that someone you care about has been hurt may leave you feeling overwhelmed. Oftentimes both survivors and their supporters struggle with feeling helpless in the aftermath, and it can take some time to learn how to respond.

For many survivors, support is a crucial part of the healing process, and receiving compassionate and validating responses from friends and family can make a real difference.

You may have difficulty in knowing what to say or do to help your loved one. It's okay to not have all the answers; non-judgmental listening and simply being there can be a wonderful support for the survivor. Let your loved one know that you care, that you don't blame them, and that you believe in them. Unfortunately, there are no quick or easy fixes for healing from sexual violence, so it's important to be patient when the process seems to be taking what some consider to be a long time.

8] **Study on Recovering from Mental Health Issues Without Medication Seeks Participants**

Resilience: Factors and processes related to natural recovery of people who were given a diagnosis of schizophrenia, bipolar disorders, or major depression

Ohio State University researchers are inviting individuals in recovery who have a psychiatric diagnosis and who have not used psychotropic medication in the past year to complete a 30-minute online survey. "It is hoped that the findings from this research will assist helping professionals to further understand the natural recovery process....Such knowledge will be of immense value to the design of complementary, [empowering and cost-effective] behavioral [health] treatments and programs for people who were given a mental health diagnosis." For more information or to participate -

<https://survey.csw.ohio-state.edu/limesurvey/index.php?sid=36192&lang=en>

*"Until you make the unconscious conscious, it will direct your life and you will call it fate." Carl G. Jung*

9] *Trauma-informed care is as much about social justice as it is about healing.*

The newest brochure from the **National Center for Trauma Informed Care** [NCTIC] is now available [lots of good info and insight]

<http://www.nasmhpd.org/docs/NCTIC/NCTIC%20Marketing%20Brochure%20FINAL.pdf>

To learn more about NCTIC, please visit: <http://www.samhsa.gov/nctic/default.asp>

10] Meditation appears to produce enduring changes in emotional processing in the brain  
Imaging study finds different forms of meditation may have varying effects on key brain  
structure - <http://www.massgeneral.org/about/pressrelease.aspx?id=1520>

A new study has found that participating in an 8-week meditation training program can have measurable effects on how the brain functions even when someone is not actively meditating. In their report in the November issue of *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, investigators at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), [Boston University](#) (BU), and several other research centers also found differences in those effects based on the specific type of meditation practiced.

"The two different types of meditation training our study participants completed yielded some differences in the response of the amygdala – a part of the brain known for decades to be important for emotion – to images with emotional content," says Gaëlle Desbordes, PhD, a research fellow at the [Athinoula A. Martinos Center for Biomedical Imaging](#) at MGH and at the BU [Center for Computational Neuroscience and Neural Technology](#), corresponding author of the report. "This is the first time that meditation training has been shown to affect emotional processing in the brain outside of a meditative state."

*"Every good thought you think is contributing its share to the ultimate result of your life." Grenville Kleiser*

11] **"Mindful Healing"** The effectiveness in meditation to treat an array of illnesses has led to studies of how meditation can change the brain - Health & wellness – Jan Brogan The Boston Globe *"More and more studies show meditations effectiveness."*

<http://www.bostonglobe.com/lifestyle/health-wellness/2012/11/26/the-effectiveness-meditation-treat-array-illnesses-has-led-studies-how-meditation-can-change-brain/E8bvB57PLkIuIQmsLumDXL/story.html>

12] **Wildmind** – Buddhist Meditation -There are several articles posted at this site on meditation and mindfulness in helping insomnia, pain, heart attacks and lots more, some good stuff folks.

<http://www.wildmind.org/tag/science>

13] ***Tuning in to the love that fills and surrounds you*** - Rick Hanson PhD  
<http://www.wildmind.org/blogs/on-practice/tuning-in-to-the-love-that-fills-and-surrounds-you>

Take a breath right now, and notice how abundant the air is, full of life-giving oxygen offered freely by trees and other green growing things. You can't see air, but it's always available for you.

Love is a lot like the air. It may be hard to see – but it's in you and all around you. Love is woven into your day because it's woven into your DNA: as our ancestors evolved over the last several million years, many scientists believe that love, broadly defined, has been the primary driving force behind the evolution of the brain. Bands of early humans that were particularly good at understanding and caring for each other out-competed less cooperative and loving bands, and thereby passed on the genes of empathy, bonding, friendship, altruism, romance, compassion, and kindness – the genes, in a word, of love.

*“Love is not consolation, it is light.” Simon Weil*

14] **“How Gender Stereotypes Warp Our View of Depression”** By [Amanda Gardner | Health.com](#)

Stereotypes about male and female roles may influence the way we perceive depressed people.

It's a well-known fact that men and women who behave the same way in the exact same situation - whether it's a job interview, a cocktail party, or a traffic stop - are sometimes perceived and treated differently based on their gender.

Something similar, it seems, may happen when men and women start to show signs of [depression](#). A new study, published this week in the journal *PLoS ONE*, suggests that people of both sexes are less likely to view men as being depressed and in need of professional help—even if a man's symptoms are identical to a woman's.

<http://healthland.time.com/2012/11/15/how-gender-stereotypes-warp-our-view-of-depression/>

15] **The National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare** has released its new trauma infographic *How to Manage Trauma* in printable format:

<http://www.thenationalcouncil.org/galleries/default-file/Trauma%20Infographic%20Print.pdf>

Mission - The mission of the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare is to champion opportunities that advance our members' ability to deliver proactive and holistic healthcare services. [http://www.thenationalcouncil.org/cs/about\\_us](http://www.thenationalcouncil.org/cs/about_us)

16] **“Stigma scares off employers”** Clay Lucas Workplace Editor for The Age

Having a mental illness is a bigger barrier to employment in Australia than a physical disability, according to a new study.

<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/national/health/stigma-scares-off-employers-study-20121007-277o1.html>

Research commissioned as part of Mental Health Week, revealed a stigma around hiring people with a mental illness - half the respondents said they could be unreliable and disruptive at work.

At the last census, one in five people said they had been affected by a mental illness in the previous year.

The research highlighted a widespread negative view of mental illness that did not match reality, said Matthew Lambelle from the not-for-profit employment services provider WISE, which commissioned the report. He said a lack of understanding caused some people to avoid hiring people with a mental illness.

The study found an assumption that mental illness inhibited job performance. *"In fact the two are not linked,"* Mr Lambelle said.

*"All that is valuable in human society depends upon the opportunity for development accorded the individual."* Albert Einstein

17] **WISE** – Empowerment Through Employment

<http://www.wiseemployment.com.au/en/about-us/wise-story/>

Mission: Guiding and inspiring people to realize their potential and achieve fulfilling vocational goals.

WISE Employment is a not-for-profit organization. We empower jobseekers to find meaningful work and become self-sufficient and we help employers to find the right staff by understanding their needs and providing them with workers from diverse backgrounds.

Each year, our passionate and skilled staff assist over 10,000 people into jobs. Our services are cost-free to eligible jobseekers and employers.

Since 2001, we have invested \$3.5 million of our funds into innovative projects to support the most disadvantaged in our community including people with disability, mental illness, youth, ex-offenders, refugees and Indigenous communities. WISE Employment also operates four socially-inclusive social enterprises, employing 200 people. Since 1992, we have been empowering jobseekers and employers. We believe the entire community is enriched when everyone is supported to achieve their potential.

*"The circumstances of your life have uniquely qualified you to make a contribution. And if you don't make that contribution, nobody else can make it."* - Rabbi Harold S. Kushner

18] Here's a great book that helps to break down the barriers of stigma, discrimination and stereotypes – ***"Firewalkers – Madness, Beauty & Mystery"***

<http://store.survivingspirit.com/webstore/books/firewalkers-madness-beauty-mystery-featuring-seven-authors.html>

Winner of a Brimstone Award from the National Storytellers Network.

“Radically Rethinking Mental Illness” - The authors of Firewalkers, Myra Anderson, Carla Beck, Debra Knighton, Joni Michelle, Lauren Spiro, Michelle Sese-Khalid and Tracy D. Stuart chronicle the profound, turbulent, spiritual experience of living through a mental health crisis. What our society labels as "mental illness" can be a sacred quest that has the power to enrich us, reveal unknown strengths, and transform our lives.

*Thanks & take care, Mike, Zsuzsi, Mary, Rachel, Lynn & Cynthia*

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*

[The Surviving Spirit](#) - Healing the Heart Through the Creative Arts, Education & Advocacy - Hope, Healing & Help for Trauma, Abuse & Mental Health

[The Surviving Spirit Speakers' Bureau](#)

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