



*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,

Before we dive into all of the wonderful resources to share from some truly amazing people, I thought I would take this time to 'gently' let you know of the Surviving Spirit's presence on Facebook. We have two sections, first is our [Surviving Spirit Facebook Page](#) - where we hope you "Like Us", but more importantly, a place to visit and learn from some of the great postings shared there – recent examples include:

Jeanne McElvaney - Recognizing the difference between ordinary memories, trauma memories, and dissociated memories can empower us ~

Rachel Grant - Today's Blog: Embracing Yourself in Love

Misa Leonessa Garavaglia - Spiritual abuse is the misuse of a position of power and the misrepresentation of information.

And then there is our [Surviving Spirit Facebook Group](#) which is a place to visit and share what's going on in your life, find peer support and share your creative expressions. It is a closed group, so log in and ask to join. Thanks!

Once again we are honored to share with you some helpful insight and information...and as the saying goes, "take what you like and leave the rest."

1] [Joining Forces: Empowering Male Survivors to Thrive](#) Dr. Howard Fradkin  
*Foreword by Tyler Perry*

***Joining Forces: Empowering Male Survivors to Thrive*** is an inspirational new book written to empower male survivors of sexual abuse and assault at any age to develop skills they can use to overcome the effects of their trauma and learn to thrive in their lives. Visit the pages on this website to learn more about my book.

The book is organized to reflect the critical steps I believe are necessary to heal and fully recover from sexual victimization of any form. The first part focuses on essential skills needed to begin the healing process; while the second part focuses on additional skills needed to move toward thriving. Throughout the book, I have incorporated the stories and the wisdom of a group of alumni of our weekends program, who I call the "Silence Breakers".

[Dr. Howard Fradkin - Words and Wisdom](#) - Welcome to my website! I hope you will find inspiration, hope and healing here! I have devoted my career and my life to helping others, and I hope in the words, articles, interviews and links provided here, you will find help for yourself too. What I know to be true is that healing from sexual victimization, no matter what age it started or ended, is absolutely possible and achievable!

*I have the pleasure and honor of knowing Howard for many years, dating back to when [Male Survivor](#) was first formed, back then they had a really long name, not so now, Male Survivor says it all!*

*Howard is the real deal....he gets it and his caring and love of helping others shines throughout this powerful book that is a testimony to hope, healing and help. His insight, knowledge and compassion speaks right to you – and that is what I felt while reading this book. I truly felt as if he was in the room talking to me directly, in a gentle and thoughtful manner – that is a wonderful gift of love that he shares, and that is not a word I throw out frivolously. His allies and friends in healing, the “Silence Breakers” also give wonderful insight and testimony on healing throughout the book.*

*My only ‘disagreement’ with the book pertains to the chapter on Forgiveness. I share his belief that we must learn to forgive ourselves for what was done to us...but I take exception to forgiving those who hurt us – some of us have been able to heal and thrive without having to forgive...and that is okay. That should be a personal choice and belief...*

What is **Male Survivor**? We are committed to preventing, healing, and eliminating all forms of sexual victimization of boys and men through support, treatment, research, education, advocacy, and activism.

*“Owning our story can be hard but not nearly as difficult as spending our lives running from it. Embracing our vulnerabilities is risky but not nearly as dangerous as giving up on love & belonging & joy— the experiences that make us the most vulnerable. Only when we are brave enough to explore the darkness will we discover the infinite power of our light.” Brené Brown*

2] Thursdays @ 10am pst Svava Books answers questions in the *OneHealth* chat room about childhood sexual abuse.

Register free - <http://sexualabusesupport.onehealth.com/> & 2:12 minute audio clip

A safe place to heal - *OneHealth* is a private and confidential community where you can feel safe and secure when sharing with others and managing your health goals.

A 24/7 source of community and support - Feel instant fellowship with our online community of people who share your health goals.

A set of clinical tools that work - Set and keep track of your goals, and share your experience and progress. Find online community meetings when and where you need them. Share your story and life journey with others.

*"If I am overwhelmed, I may be trying to do too much. Today I will try to "Keep it simple." Courage To Change*

3] [Kids At Risk Action \(KARA\)](#) - Advocating for the Rights of Invisible Children

*KARA* is a non-profit advocacy network focusing on issues related to neglected and abused children. Founded by Mike Tikkanen, a businessman turned socially-concerned citizen, *KARA* works to educate individuals and communities about the need to protect the rights of children.

OUR MISSION is to advocate for the welfare of at-risk children and youth through the identification and promotion of people, programs, and policies that work.

OUR INITIATIVES include raising awareness of at-risk children by:

- sponsoring *KARA* Community Forums
- organizing children's rights Community Action Networks
- offering free audiobook downloads of Invisible Children
- Contact *KARA* for information about public speaking engagements & workshops

*"The ability to simplify means to eliminate the unnecessary so that the necessary may speak." Hans Hofmann*

4] [In mental illness, is 'stigma' the wrong word? How about 'discrimination?'](#) Arielle Levin Becker The Connecticut Mirror

"When I had cancer, I got cards and flowers," Karen Kangas' sign reads. "When I was diagnosed with bipolar disorder, I got *no cards* and a *pink slip*."

A picture of Kangas holding the sign hangs in the state Capitol complex, part of an exhibit called "Discrimination: A Roadblock to Recovery."

The title is no accident.

People often talk about the stigma of mental illness. But some, including Patricia Rehmer, prefer the term "discrimination." It's stronger. It makes people uncomfortable. And it more accurately describes what people with mental illness face when looking for jobs and housing, in social situations, and even in some legislation that's been proposed in recent years, said Rehmer, the state's commissioner of mental health and addiction services.

"I always say it's the last bastion of discrimination," she said. "I can't really think of another group that's still so discriminated against."

*"Although no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending." Carl Bard*

5] [\*Ark of Hope for Children\*](#) brings awareness of and provides emotional care for victims of child abuse, child sex trafficking and bullying (peer abuse). Ark of Hope focuses on care, habilitation and life transformation to help victims become empowered survivors.

When loving people stand in the gap with sacrificial and unconditional love, the trajectory of shattered lives can change forever. Through *Ark of Hope* programs we encourage local, church, state and international mobilization on behalf of abused, trafficked and bullied children.

*Ark of Hope* programs:

- [\*"Removing Chains"\*](#) - Providing safe online chat areas for coaching and mentoring
- [\*"Don't Stand Alone"\*](#) - Anti-bullying collaborative effort with three other peer abuse victim support organizations
- [\*"Chain Breakers"\*](#) - Equipping for maximized, life changing results
- [\*"Harbourage"\*](#) - Rescuing child trafficking victims and placing them in our child trafficking safe homes

*"Love is a great beautifier." Louisa May Alcott*

*Ruth Jacobs is another great example of a **Surviving Spirit** who has taken her own pain and suffering and turned that into a force of greater good for helping others – please do visit her website. And her Facebook pages [ <https://www.facebook.com/rujacobs> & <https://www.facebook.com/SoulDestructionSeries> ] where there are all kinds of great sharing, resources, hope and healing.*

6] Ruth Jacobs – author <http://ruthjacobs.co.uk/>

I write a series of novels entitled Soul Destruction, which dispel the ‘happy hooker’ myth and expose the dark world and the harsh reality of life as a call girl. My debut novel, [\*Soul Destruction: Unforgivable\*](#), will be published in 2013 by Caffeine Nights. I studied prostitution in the late 1990s, which sparked my interest in the subject. I draw on my research and the women I interviewed for inspiration. I also have firsthand experience of many of the topics I write about such as posttraumatic stress disorder, and drug and alcohol addiction. My short charity publication, [\*In Her Own Words... Interview with a London Call Girl\*](#), is available on Amazon.

To view the series of interviews for [\*Human Trafficking Awareness Month\*](#), January 2013, click [here](#).

*In Her Own Words... Interview with a London Call Girl* is available to download from Amazon. All royalties will be donated to **Beyond the Streets**, a charity helping women

exit prostitution. The publication is 77p from Amazon UK [here](#) & 99c from Amazon US [here](#). It is also available worldwide.

*“Today I will make use of the precious gift of imagination. Thus I will turn away from negativity, self-doubt, and fear, and celebrate life instead.” Courage To Change*

*Some great news to share from my friend and fellow advocate and member of **Males 4 Trauma Recovery**, William Kellibrew of the [William Kellibrew Foundation](#) [WKF]*

## 7] [WKF Stories of Surviving and Thriving](#)

As the national conversation about violence prevention continues it is important that the voices of those who have been affected are heard.

Each month we will share at least one story in order to build awareness, educate policy makers and help shape the public policy conversation.

1. Send an email to - [info@TheWKFoundation.org](mailto:info@TheWKFoundation.org)

Include: Name, Age, Location, Your Story

2. Be prepared to record a 3-minute video sharing your story.

- What happened?
- How did you feel then and now?
- How are you coping?
- What do you hope will be done to prevent this type of violence in the future?
- What do you think is an important message for others to take away from your story?

*We start with a courageous woman from Kansas, Linda Oktach, whose husband was murdered in 1968 on Thanksgiving Day. In response to Newtown, Linda tells her story of survival; raising her 22 month old son who survived the day she lost her husband. It is stories like Linda's that give us hope. Thank you for your courage Linda. Linda now lives in Kenya.*

[WKF Stories Restoring Lives: Linda Oktach – YouTube](#) 4:54 minutes

*“The greatest healing therapy is friendship and love.” Hubert Humphrey*

## 8] [The Road To Resilience](#)

How do people deal with difficult events that change their lives? The death of a loved one, loss of a job, serious illness, terrorist attacks and other traumatic events: these are all examples of very challenging life experiences. Many people react to such circumstances with a flood of strong emotions and a sense of uncertainty.

Yet people generally adapt well over time to life-changing situations and stressful conditions. What enables them to do so? It involves resilience, an ongoing process that requires time and effort and engages people in taking a number of steps.

This article is intended to help readers with taking their own road to resilience. The information within describes resilience and some factors that affect how people deal with hardship. Much of the article focuses on developing and using a personal strategy for enhancing resilience.

*“The more light you allow within you, the brighter the world you live in will be.” Shakti Gawain*

9] [10 Journaling Tips to Help You Heal, Grow and Thrive](#) – Loran Hills @ Tiny Buddha

Keeping a journal has many positive benefits. Journaling can help with personal growth and development. By regularly recording your thoughts you will gain insight into your behaviors and moods.

Journaling can be used for problem-solving and [stress reduction](#). It’s been proven to improve mental and physical health. It can lead to [increased self-esteem](#).

10] [You Can Be Your Own Hero – You Tube](#)

Here’s a forum where you can share your own video of speaking out regarding sexual abuse as these courageous folks have done.

*“To improve the golden moment of opportunity, and catch the good that is within our reach, is the great art of life.” Samuel Johnson*

11] [Rethinking mental health: Local practitioners, groups reject mainstream treatment](#) – Tracy Rose, Mountain Xpress Asheville, NC

Asheville psychiatrist **Daniel Johnson** didn’t set out to transform his profession. But he’s now part of a growing movement, both locally and nationally, that’s challenging the most fundamental assumptions about mental illness.

Dr. Johnson launched a private practice here in 2010 and, like most psychiatrists, he prescribed medications for his patients. But a controversial article he read nearly a year and a half ago got him thinking and eventually led to a profound shift in the nature of his work (see sidebar, “By the Book(s)”).

“Unfortunately, and sadly, more often than not, medications do more harm than good,” Johnson now maintains. “And of course I had contributed to all that in my own practice. I had a lot of soul searching and reckoning to do on a personal level.”

*“To love oneself is the beginning of a lifelong romance.” Oscar Wilde*

12] [The Voice from the Spectrum: My First News Appearance on Autism Awareness](#)

Ryan Comins is a graduate of Oakland University. In December 2012 Ryan received his Bachelor of Science and Business Administration with a major in marketing and a minor in English. While attending school, he was a member of the marketing honor society Alpha Mu Alpha. Ryan was diagnosed with pervasive developmental disorder (otherwise not specified autism) at age 12. Through use social media and internet radio, Ryan uses his eloquent way with words to help raise autism awareness.

*"If I can see pain in your eyes then share with me your tears. If I can see joy in your eyes then share with me your smile." Santosh Kalwar*

13] [How Child Abuse Primes the Brain for Future Mental Illness](#) - By [Maia Szalavitz](#)  
TIME Magazine – Health & Family

Child maltreatment has been called the tobacco industry of mental health. Much the way smoking directly causes or triggers predispositions for physical disease, early abuse may contribute to virtually all types of mental illness.

Now, in the largest study yet to use brain scans to show the effects of child abuse, researchers have found specific changes in key regions in and around the hippocampus in the brains of young adults who were maltreated or neglected in childhood. These changes may leave victims more vulnerable to depression, addiction and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), the study suggests.

& [Study: How Chronic Stress Can Lead to Depression](#) Maia Szalavitz

*"They do not want to hear what their children suffer. They've made the telling of the suffering itself taboo." From Possessing the Secret of Joy, by Alice Walker*

14] [America Has an Incest Problem](#) - Mia Fontaine The Atlantic

Mia Fontaine is the author of [Come Back](#) and [Have Mother, Will Travel](#), and a speaker on the subject of incest and child sexual abuse. She has written for the *New York Times* and *Ms.* magazine.

*People are rightly horrified by abuse scandals at Penn State and in the Catholic church. But what about children who are molested by their own family members?*

Last year offered plenty of moments to have a sustained national conversation about child sexual abuse: the Jerry Sandusky verdict, the BBC's Jimmy Savile, Horace Mann's faculty members, and a slew of slightly less publicized incidents. President Obama missed the opportunity to put this issue on his second-term agenda in his inaugural speech.

**Child sexual abuse impacts more Americans annually than cancer, AIDS, gun violence, LGBT inequality, and the mortgage crisis combined—subjects that Obama did cover.**

Had he mentioned this issue, he would have been the first president to acknowledge the abuse that occurs in the institution that predates all others: the family. Incest was the first form of institutional abuse, and it remains by far the most widespread.

*“Child abuse casts a shadow the length of a lifetime.” Herbert Ward*

*Kudos to Mia Fontaine for writing this...I would take this a step further and add in child abuse in all of its forms - the silent epidemic that is causing so much suffering throughout our world...someday this silence will end, till then, we all continue to do what we do in our respective advocacy endeavors...and **thank you** for that.*

Take care, Mike, Mary, Zsuzsi, Rachel, Cynthia & Mary Ann

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*

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[The Surviving Spirit Speakers' Bureau](#)

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