



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

Greetings Folks,

I hope all is well for you and yours...no complaints here...well, I have a few, but I will save them till the end of the newsletter...because today's thought and word is

Appreciation:

1. Recognition of the quality, value, significance, or magnitude of people and things.
2. A judgment or opinion, especially a favorable one.
3. An expression of gratitude.
4. Awareness or delicate perception, especially of aesthetic qualities or values.
5. A rise in value or price, especially over time.

"Appreciation can make a day - even change a life. Your willingness to put it into words is all that is necessary." Margaret Cousins

Margaret Cousin's quote sums up quite elegantly what I feel and value for all of you who are helping to make the world a better place – especially for those impacted by trauma, abuse and mental health challenges.

It is a hard road to hoe at times, but we are fortunate to have so many speaking out and standing up; whether they write a book, create art, dance, poetry, music, lend a helping hand, or provide compassionate caring and counseling...the list goes on.

We can have appreciation for these endeavors, because it is not so easy to do, for if it was, more people would be 'doing the right thing' and the world would be a better place.....

Please take some time to let those you know, who you value and appreciate, what you feel about them...

"Hope is that beautiful place between the way things were...and the way things are yet to be." Unknown

And now on to our fellow *Surviving Spirits* and resources....

1] [*"This is How it Feels A memoir of attempting suicide and finding life"*](#) by Craig Miller

At twenty-years-old, Craig Miller attempted to end his own life. He sat on the edge of a rented bed and swallowed two hundred and fifty pills. He lay back and closed his eyes, never imagining that a note he wrote to himself fourteen years earlier would be what would save his life. That note, written across the creases of a tear stained paper, read, "Don't ever forget how this feels."

From the time he was six-years-old, Craig lived his life by those words. He believed that if he needed to remember the feelings behind his life's most significant events, then there must be a reason why they happened. And for three extraordinary days following his suicide attempt, as he lay in the Intensive Care Unit floating in and out of consciousness, he found those reasons.

He relived days from his childhood when his only friend became his assailant. He relived years of building a troubled and misguided relationship with God when he prayed to be saved from a violent and broken home. He remembered when the pain of his life's tragedies finally caught up to him. He lost the only person he had ever loved and became the victim of severe obsessive compulsive disorder, relentless anxiety, and devastating irrational fear.

[I had the good fortune to hear Craig speak a few months ago – a humble, gentle man who has so much to share, and the world is a better place for it. MS]

"Unexpressed emotions will never die. They are buried alive and will come forth later in uglier ways." Sigmund Freud

2] [What happens now?](#) *Exploring life after a suicide attempt or suicidal thinking*

Few voices of suicide attempt survivors have emerged in the public conversation about suicide, and few resources exist for us and for those who've wrestled with suicidal thoughts. We wanted to create a space that people and those who love them can stumble across while Googling answers to those lonely questions, "Has this ever happened to anyone else?" and "What do we do now?"

This blog was launched by the [American Association of Suicidology](#), in the first such effort by a national organization. The group's members include researchers, clinicians, crisis responders, social workers, attempt survivors and people who have lost loved ones to suicide.

New contributors are welcome, and so are your comments.

3] ["Not once was I asked if I wanted to live"](#) by Craig Miller @ [What happens now?](#)

“As my sufferings mounted I soon realized that there were two ways in which I could respond to my situation - either to react with bitterness or seek to transform the suffering into a creative force. I decided to follow the latter course.” Martin Luther King Jr.

4] [*“Imbalance of Power Exploitation of Women by Catholic Priests”*](#) A Memoir by Patricia Bond with Bobbi Linkemer

My life got off to a rough start. Sent to an orphanage at the age of four, I became a shy, quiet child.

Years later, divorced from my high school sweetheart and the mother of three young children, I found myself romantically involved with the priest in whom I had placed my trust.

Together, we had a son named Nathan, who was rejected by his father and the Franciscan order of the Catholic Church.

Book forward by A.W. Richard Sipe – certified clinical mental health counselor, former Benedictine monk and priest, and author of several books, including *“Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church”*

“The moving story of a mother Pat Bond and her son Nathan” - Laurie Goodstein, National Religion Correspondent for The New York Times, first broke the touching story – “A Mother, a Sick Son, and His Father a Priest. A rare look at the lengths the Catholic Church goes to keep clergy members’ clandestine relationships hidden.”

“Watching my son for three years dying of brain cancer, I felt so helpless and distraught. Nathan, as he was dying, gave me a mission, which gave me the strength to live. He wanted me to tell our story.” Pat Bond

“We must alter our lives in order to alter our hearts, for it is impossible to live one way and pray another.” William Law

5] The New York Times – [Lawyers of Sound Mind?](#) By Melody Moezzi - Op-Ed Contributor

RALEIGH, N.C. — LAST week, swarms of sun-starved, soon-to-be lawyers emerged from hiding to celebrate completing the bar exam. Passing the exam, however, won’t guarantee them admission to the bar. They also have to demonstrate that they possess the requisite fitness and moral character for the practice of law.

I worry for some of them. Specifically, I worry for those who have passed the exam and lived upright lives but may still be denied admission to the bar — not because of a criminal record or a history of academic misconduct, but because of a mental illness.

[*Haldol and Hyacinths: A Bipolar Life*](#) By Melody Moezzi - With candor and humor, a manic-depressive Iranian-American Muslim woman chronicles her experiences with both clinical and cultural bipolarity.

"If we all did the things we are capable of, we would astound ourselves." Thomas Edison

6] [Meaning Is Healthier Than Happiness](#) - The Atlantic by Emily Esfahani Smith

People who are happy but have little-to-no sense of meaning in their lives have the same gene expression patterns as people who are enduring chronic adversity.

Being happy is about feeling good. Meaning is derived from contributing to others or to society in a bigger way.

For at least the last decade, the happiness craze has been building. In the last three months alone, over 1,000 books on happiness were released on Amazon, including *Happy Money*, *Happy-People-Pills For All*, and, for those just starting out, *Happiness for Beginners*.

It seems strange that there would be a difference at all. But the researchers, who looked at a large sample of people over a month-long period, found that happiness is associated with selfish "taking" behavior and that having a sense of meaning in life is associated with selfless "giving" behavior.

But a [new study](#), just published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* (PNAS) challenges the rosy picture. Happiness may not be as good for the body as researchers thought. It might even be bad.

"Courage does not always soar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day that says, 'I will try again tomorrow.'" Mary Anne Radmacher

7] [Fibromyalgia network](#) - Suggestions & Advice for daily living

Caring for your body and mind, and nurturing relationships with others are vitally important to your health and well-being. Effective communication skills can prevent your illness from coming between you and the people you care about. Family and friends can sometimes be insensitive and cause you frustration, but it is crucial to build a strong social network so that, when necessary, you have someone to lean on.

Living with fibromyalgia or chronic fatigue syndrome is challenging, necessitating a variety of skills to help you make it through each day with a sense of satisfaction. Along with our articles on [coping](#), the sections below offer advice on aspects of daily living with chronic illness.

[Coping with fibromyalgia](#) is particularly difficult because the symptoms are invisible and chronic. A person can't simply "get over" fibromyalgia with the passage of time or wishful thinking. The article links below are provided to assist patients with solution-oriented approaches to handling awkward, sensitive, or stressful situations brought on by your illness.

"Children are like wet cement. Whatever falls on them makes an impression." Dr. Haim Ginott

8] [BANNED AUSSIE TV AD](#) – YouTube 1:32 minutes long

Children learn what we teach them. They imitate us. We're all responsible for this fact.

Children see. Children do. Make your influence positive.

"Courage faces fear and thereby masters it." Martin Luther King Jr.

From our friends in Nova Scotia –

9] [Survivors of Abuse Recovering \(S.O.A.R.\)](#) is a non-profit charitable organization committed to providing peer counseling and support groups to survivors of childhood sexual abuse and to educate the public around survivor issues.

[S.O.A.R Peer Counseling Training Manual](#) is designed as a "textbook" for an 18-session training course, and is not intended to stand alone without the in-class training.

However, there is a lot of useful information, particularly in the Resources section, that can help survivors in their healing journey.

Watch this web site for notices of upcoming training courses offered by S.O.A.R.

Click on the [picture below](#) to download the manual. This version cannot be printed. If you would like to purchase a printed version in a binder, the cost is \$35 plus postage. [Contact us](#) for more info.

"SOAR's Peer Counseling Training Manual is excellent. It offers a valuable resource for those who wish to provide effective and humane help to people recovering from the effects of sexual victimization. Congratulations and thanks to those who created this important document." - Mike Lew, [The Next Step Counseling & Training](#), Brookline, MA. Author of *Victims No Longer: The Classic Guide for Men Recovering from Sexual Child Abuse* and *Leaping upon the Mountains: Men Declaring Victory over Sexual Child Abuse*

"No man can think clearly when his fists are clenched." George Jean Nathan

10] [The Guiding Rage into Power \(GRIP\) Program](#) at San Quentin is a year-long transformative program that provides the tools that enable prisoners to *"turn the stigma of being a violent offender into a badge of being a non-violent Peacekeeper."* Not only have the men transformed their own behavior, they have become agents of change, people with skills to defuse conflicts around them. This 5 minute video offers a rare opportunity to go inside San Quentin and witness the men actively engaged in the GRIP Program.

11] [Insight-Out's GRIP Program featured on PBS TV](#) - PBS correspondent Kate Olson, and her team, took an in depth look at Insight-Out's GRIP Program at San Quentin.

"We can't just change what men think... we have to change what we think about men."
Dan Griffin

12] [Men and Trauma: Eight Agreements](#) - The following Eight Agreements were developed in May 2013 at the Males, Trauma, and Addiction Summit held in La Quinta, California as part of the West Coast Symposium on Addictive Disorders. This historic summit marked the first time that professionals in the addiction and recovery field had come together to discuss males' experience of trauma. The group emphasized the importance of more effectively and comprehensively addressing the issue of trauma as a keystone of males' recovery.

[The Eight Agreements .pdf](#) [Dan Griffin - A Man's Way Through The 12 Steps](#)

*"When you know who you are
When your mission is clear
And you burn with the inner fire of unbreakable will
No cold can touch your heart,
No deluge can dampen your purpose
You Know Who You Are."* Chief Seattle

13] [The Paradox of Mental Health: Over-Treatment and Under-Recognition](#)

Among all the conditions in the world of health, mental health occupies a unique and paradoxical place.

On the one hand is over-treatment and over-medicalization of mental health issues, often fueled by a pharmaceutical industry interested in the broadening of the boundaries of *"illness"* and in the creation of more and wider diagnostic categories and thus markets for *"selling sickness."* On the other hand exists profound under-recognition of the suffering and breadth of mental health issues affecting millions of people across geographies, which is a global problem.

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“Remembering that we can live only one day at a time removes the burdens of the past from our backs and keeps us from dreading the future, which none of us can know anyway.” This Is al-Anon

14] [ProjectSTIGMA](#) - Our mission is to confront, challenge and mitigate the stigma, prejudice and discrimination linked with Serious Mental Illness.

The Film - This 60-minute documentary film portrays the current and historical reality of mental health stigma. Objectively defining social stigma in its many forms, the film offers alternative approaches, evidence-based practices and remarkably effective models and techniques to fully integrate mentally challenged individuals into the community and workplace as productive contributors to society.

Dissolving the shame, guilt and social alienation associated with psychiatric illness, this insightful, inspirational and informative film will enlighten, educate and entertain audiences of all cultures, lifestyles and ages.

The Performing Arts Contest - Win hundreds of dollars in Cash Prizes awarded in two Art Contests in 2013! Inspired by a government grant, Robert J. Richter, Jr. of Delaware County, Pennsylvania, USA is creating an educational documentary film entitled (STIGMA).

We are holding a performing arts contest designed to sponsor awareness and discover the artist(s) responsible for creating the performing arts entry of poetry, music, song, dance, jingle, theme, skit, puppet show etc. to be featured in the film.

Project STIGMA art contest entry deadlines are Monday, 16th September, 2013, 5pm EST.

“The things you do for yourself are gone when you are gone, but the things you do for others remain as your legacy.” Kalu Kalu

15] [Healing Forward: Online Information and Support Program for Parents of Youth who Self-Injure](#)

Are you or someone you know a parent of a teenager between the ages of 12-20 years old who self-injures without the intention of committing suicide (e.g., cut, burn, scratch, etc.)? Would you like an opportunity to receive a FREE parent support program to learn more about how to help your teen? If so, you may be eligible to be paid \$100 for providing feedback on the first two modules of a new program for parents of youth who self-injure.

We are looking for a diverse group of parents (grandparents, adoptive parents, or other legal guardians are also welcome perspectives!) to help us evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of an online support program for parents of youth who injure themselves without suicidal intent (e.g. self cutting, burning, carving, scratching etc...). The program

is called *Healing Forward*. The final training will be 10 modules long but we have developed only the first two (plus introduction) for review so that we might make adjustments and revisions based on your feedback.

If you have any questions please contact Carrie Ernhout at cge27@cornell.edu or the study PI, Dr. Janis Whitlock at jlw43@cornell.edu.

Your help with this program will aid us in developing an educational tool for parents of youth who injure themselves. Your assistance is invaluable.

"Be not afraid of growing slowly, be afraid only of standing still." Chinese proverb

16] [Junior Positively Autistic: Ryan's Spectrum Talk](#) - Life Podcasts

During this broadcast, Ryan will interview recent high school graduate and autism advocate Dani Bowman about her graduation and plans for the future.

Dani is such an aspiring figure within the autism community through her animation company, Powerlight Studios and through her energetic, optimistic outlook on life.

17] [Poetic Travels On The Autism Highway](#) - Art Podcasts

For our second show, Kelly and I are thrilled to have poet Nicole Nicolson read some poetry and talk about her upcoming release entitled "*Novena*". Nicole has a lot to share with us as she is full of ideas and brilliant at penning lush imagery.

We will also be talking about the mechanics of her poetry and where you can catch her live readings. Nicole is a published author living with Asperger's syndrome - she lends her expertise to autism awareness.

[The following comments made by Brian Williams and Phil McGraw cause so much harm and only help to perpetuate stigma and discrimination....thankfully there are many voices speaking out against this...MS]

18] [Mental Health America Urges Dr. Phil to Issue Retraction for Mental Illness Comments](#)

Mental Health America calls on syndicated talk show host Dr. Phil to issue a retraction for reckless and offensive remarks he made about individuals who live with mental illness (During his show, Dr. Phil said people *who are insane 'suck on rocks and bark at the moon.'*)

Comments like these, particularly from a professional psychologist, perpetuate inaccurate and harmful stereotypes that marginalize millions of Americans. These statements only produce shame and embarrassment when we should be promoting understanding. They diminish the contributions of millions of Americans and discourage individuals from

seeking treatment for mental health conditions that allow them to achieve recovery and live full and productive lives.

19] [Brian Williams' mental illness remark draws fire](#) Orlando Sentinel - Kate Santich

As president of the [Mental Health Association of Central Florida](#), Candy Crawford spends a lot of time trying to dispel the common myths about [mental illness](#).

It's an uphill battle.

So when she tuned in her favorite national news anchor Thursday – NBC's Brian Williams -- she was horrified. Opening his newscast with the sentencing hearing of Ariel Castro, who held three Cleveland women captive for a decade, Williams called the kidnapper and rapist *"arguably the face of mental illness, a man described as a monster."*

In addition to the fact that there are no published reports of Castro even having a diagnosed mental illness, less than 5 percent of violent crimes are committed by people who do have such a diagnosis, Crawford says.

20] [Dr. Phil and Brian Williams: You Can Do Better; Listen to President Obama about Ending Stigma](#) - National Alliance on Mental Illness

"It has been a bad two weeks for Americans with concerns about the stigma that surrounds mental illness. For all the progress that has been made in recent years, Dr. Phil of the CBS Distribution Network and Brian Williams of the NBC Nightly News, through televised comments, perpetuated cruel and inaccurate stereotypes about people living with mental illness.

Dr. Phil said that people who are insane 'suck on rocks and bark at the moon.' Mr. Williams called Ariel Castro, the Cleveland kidnapper and rapist, 'arguably the face of mental illness,' violating journalism guidelines against speculative diagnoses and ignoring the fact that the vast majority of people living with mental illness are not violent.

21] [First Dr. Phil, Now NBC's Brian Williams: Stigmatizing Mental Illness](#) – Pete Earley

I've been warned that fighting stigma is a bit like tilting at windmills, but I find it difficult to keep silent when I see blatant examples. Dr. Phil's comments about how *"insane" individuals "suck on rocks and bark at the moon"* were especially offensive since he is a psychologist. Last night, I flipped on the news and heard NBC Anchor Brian Williams make remarks that were just as stigmatizing.

Williams announced that Ariel Castro, the Cleveland kidnapper/rapist who held three women captive for a decade, was *"arguably the face of mental illness."*

"...Human beings, by changing the inner attitudes of their minds, can change the outer aspects of their lives." William James

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

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

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