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

“The evolution of human growth is an evolution from an absolute need to be loved towards a full readiness to give love.” Dr. Karl Stern

Hi Folks,

I hope all is well for everyone…things are okay here. On the weather front we had our first frost here in my little corner of the world. The two bird baths had become mini-skating rinks. And my yard has become a sea of brown leaves…Oh well, raking shall be the pastime this weekend. If you’re up for a ‘raking party’, do drop by – there will be warm apple cider for all!!

I’m very excited with this month’s newsletter that once again shares some news about some incredible people and resources that best exemplify Hope, Healing & Help.

In drafting this newsletter, it struck me how I have been at this now for 20 years – it was the fall of 1993 when I first started my foray into the world of advocacy concerning the issues of trauma, abuse and mental health challenges. There were so many great examples back then for me to turn to with the realization that yes, we can heal and move on with our lives. Joseph Rogers was one of those folks; I did all I could to learn about how he and others had put their life back together, despite the obstacles. The recent award he was honored with is truly well deserved.

It has long been a key focus of the Surviving Spirit newsletter and website to share and show by example that there is Hope, Healing & Help for all of us, regardless of our life’s struggles. We can heal - we survived and we can Thrive.

Proof of this is in my own life and something to share, a message of Hope and of Love. I am engaged to my dear friend and partner Mary. Next year at this time we will be married, October 11th is our big day. I have lived alone the past 17 years…and there have been many times I did not think I would find someone to love and be with. Patience has its own reward and I am truly grateful for all of this. We survived her struggles with cancer and hope now for a future free of that. We will do our best to live in the present and be thankful for the days and the time that we do have together.

And I am truly grateful to all of you who show me by example that life is meant to be lived.
“All the beautiful sentiments in the world weigh less than a single lovely action.” James Russell Lowell

1] 2013 Voice Awards - www.samhsa.gov/voiceawards

The awards program recognizes the achievements of peer leaders who are sharing their stories of recovery and educating the public about behavioral health. Joseph Rogers of Philadelphia, PA, received the Lifetime Achievement Award for his extraordinary leadership and advocacy to advance the recovery movement of individuals with mental health conditions.

Peer Leadership Awards were presented to behavioral health advocates and community leaders Drew Horn, Freehold, NJ; Robert McKinley Gilmore, Sr., Houston, TX; Mia St. John, Calabasas, CA; Jennifer Constantine, Rapid City, SD; and William Kellibrew, Washington, DC. The Young Adult Leadership Award will be presented to Lauren Grimes of Baltimore, MD.

Congratulations to all the winners! William Kellibrew will be a keynote speaker at this year's Alternatives Conference.

William’s story is one of resiliency and strength. He endured numerous hospitalizations and attempts to take his own life after being violently sexually assaulted at age 6 and witnessing the murders of his mother and 12 year old brother at age 10 in their family living room. William's turning point was when his junior high school assistant principal, Charles C. Christian, his first-ever therapist, Christine Pierre, and his grandmother, Delores Short, intervened when he was going to end his life by jumping off a neighborhood bridge at age 13. His pathway to healing and recovery is a reminder of how important it is to focus on prevention and to provide early intervention to children, youth, and families who struggle with behavioral health issues from trauma and substance use. William's message is clear - that healing and recovery is possible.

“It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that no man can sincerely try to help another without also helping himself.” Ralph Waldo Emerson

Peer Leadership Awards presented to the following individuals for sharing their stories of recovery and working to improve public acceptance of people with behavioral health problems.

- Mia St. John, Calabasas, Calif. From her diagnosis of Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD), Panic Disorder, Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) and substance abuse, she is now 24 years sober, a professional boxer, and speaks in schools and juvenile halls on the importance of education and overcoming hardship—sharing her personal experiences with mental illness, addiction and poverty.
- Jennifer Constantine, Rapid City, S.D. She is the executive director of South Dakota United for Hope and Recovery, a statewide peer-run organization focused on mental health advocacy, education and support that applies a lived experience and whole-health wellness-based perspective.

- Drew Horn, Freehold, N.J. Having experienced homelessness, three failed businesses, two failed marriages, multiple stays in psychiatric wards, and suicide attempts, compassion is what saved his life. Today he is bringing this same compassion to others as a motivational, inspirational, and therapeutic comic and clown.

- Robert McKinley Gilmore, Sr., Houston. After battling heroin addiction, depression, two suicide attempts before age 20 and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), he is now a published author and serves his community as an ordained minister, certified counselor and public speaker.

- William Kellibrew, IV, Washington, D.C. After grappling with childhood trauma and depression, he is now an internationally recognized motivational speaker, focusing on trauma and recovery, trauma-informed care, sexual assault, children exposed to violence and youth-related programming.

Lauren Grimes of Baltimore was presented with the Young Adult Leadership award. She is On Our Own of Maryland’s transitional age youth outreach coordinator, where she works for peer support and youth-led systems change on county, state and national levels. She aids organizations in incorporating the youth voice into their policy and operations and helps young adults create an equitable and reciprocal relationship with their service systems.

“I raise up my voice - not so that I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard.” Malala Yousafzai

Malala Yousafzai is the Pakistani school pupil who, on October 9, 2012, was shot in the head and neck in an assassination attempt by Taliban gunmen while returning home on a school bus. She is known for her education and women's rights activism in the Swat Valley, where the Taliban had at times banned girls from attending school.

“Healers are spiritual warriors who have found the courage to defeat the darkness of their souls. Awakening and rising from the depths of their deepest fears, like a Phoenix rising from the ashes. Reborn with a wisdom and strength that creates a light that shines bright enough to help, encourage, and inspire others out of their own darkness.” Melanie Koulouris

I’ll be a guest on this radio show next week, Friday, Nov. 2nd @ 9pm EST – do check their past archived shows, lots of great interviews and talks on life and healing. MS

2] Can You Hear Me Now - hosts Annie O'Sullivan & Kelly Behr – Blog Talk Radio

CALL IN Line  714-816-4679
Annie O'Sullivan and Kelly Behr have candid conversations concerning the past and much more importantly, inspiration for the future. Our guest have walked your road and come out the other side.

Working to INSPIRE, ENCOURAGE, EDUCATE, AND MENTOR FOR A BETTER TODAY AND TOMORROW!

Your Hosts: Annie O'Sullivan, Author/Writer/Speaker,
“Can You Hear Me Now?” eBook: Annie O'Sullivan: Amazon Kindle Store

Paperback | Barnes & Noble

“If we did the things we are capable of, we would astound ourselves.” Thomas Edison

Kelly Behr, Motivational Speaker and Head Goddess at www.MountainGoddessUnplugged.com

3] Rebecca Kimbel interviews author and Radio Show Host, Annie O'Sullivan - You Tube

Published on September 12, 2013

Rebecca Kimbel interviews author and Radio Show Host, Annie O'Sullivan, whose book “Can You Hear Me Now?” has rocked the pubic with a vivid and painful truth that is denied, ignored and increasing across the nation. Annie's courage and strength in sharing her own experiences in her book, has become a radio show, a blog site and life changing force for victims and survivors of sexual abuse.

“May we know once again that we are not isolated beings but connected…in mystery and miracle…To the universe, this community and to each other.” Anonymous

4] Loving touch may be key to healthy sense of self – Medical News Today

A new study suggests that a gentle caress may be the key to feeling comfortable with one's self. Researchers say a loving touch may increase the brain's ability to construct a sense of body ownership and, in turn, play a part in creating and sustaining a healthy sense of self.

So, what is often an instinctive gesture from a mother to a child or between partners in romantic relationships may have more lasting implications for a person's mental wellbeing.

Laura Crucianelli, lead researcher on the study, says: “As affective touch is typically received from a loved one, these findings further highlight how close relationships involve behaviors that may play a crucial role in the construction of a sense of self.”
“Believe, when you are most unhappy, that there is something for you to do in the world. So long as you can sweeten another's pain, life is not in vain.” Helen Keller

5] **16 Ways To Help A Friend With Post Traumatic Stress**

Helping Someone with Post Traumatic Stress

It can be hard to handle having a close friend or family member with post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). They may struggle with irritability, have problems sleeping at night, be unable to focus, feel depressed or act anxious most of the time. In fact, for some people the symptoms can be so severe that treatment at a certified post traumatic stress disorder treatment center may be necessary. PTSD treatment facilities have been shown to be very beneficial to the health and overall well-being of those with this disorder.

How can you deal with this situation? The following steps can serve as helpful tips for dealing with and loving someone with PTSD.

“We can never gain any peace of mind until we secure our own soul.” Margaret Chase Smith

6] **Dangerous Minds | List of reasons for admission to an insane asylum from the late 1800s**

A list of what could have gotten you admitted to West Virginia’s Hospital for the Insane (Weston) aka Trans-Allegheny Lunatic Asylum back in the late -1800s.

Trans-Allegheny Lunatic Asylum is still open, but only for tours.

Historically, the insane were considered incurable and were often chained to walls, unclothed, in a dungeon like environment.

Wow!! – Quite scary and oh-so-sad to even contemplate what people were subjugated too. MS

“Children must be taught how to think, not what to think.” Margaret Mead

7] **Suicide Prevention Resource Center** [SPRC]

SPRC is the nation’s only federally supported resource center devoted to advancing the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention. We provide technical assistance, training, and materials to increase the knowledge and expertise of suicide prevention practitioners and other professionals serving people at risk for suicide. We also promote collaboration among a variety of organizations that play a role in developing the field of suicide prevention.
Although it is well established that substance abuse is a major risk factor for suicide, making connections with substance abuse prevention and treatment programs isn’t always easy. To help facilitate these important linkages, SPRC is pleased to announce the launch of our new Substance Abuse and Suicide Prevention Collaboration Continuum pages. These pages offer tools, resources, and success stories to help suicide prevention program leaders start or strengthen their collaborative efforts with substance abuse prevention and treatment programs in their community.

This year, SPRC surveyed and interviewed alumni Garrett Lee Smith (GLS) grantees to find out how they sustained community suicide prevention efforts after their GLS funding ended. These conversations contributed to the new report Leaving a Legacy—Recommendations for Sustaining Suicide Prevention Programs, which summarizes alumni grantee experiences and makes recommendations for sustaining suicide prevention programs that are applicable regardless of funding source. We encourage you to take a look and share it with your partners!

**Petrice Post, M.A.** Senior Tribal Prevention Specialist Suicide Prevention Resource Center Education Development Center, Inc. 43 Foundry Avenue Waltham, MA 02453 1-877-438-7772 (928) 522-3337 (Direct) ppost@edc.org

*Visit our new Suicide Prevention Online Training (SPOT page) to access our free online courses!*

“I am larger, better than I thought, I did not know I held so much goodness.” Walt Whitman

8] Project Unbreakable – the art of healing

The mission of Project Unbreakable is to increase awareness of the issues surrounding sexual assault and encourage the act of healing through art. Since the project’s conception in October 2011 by then nineteen year old Grace Brown, it has featured over two thousand images of sexual assault survivors holding posters with quotes from their attackers. Project Unbreakable has been featured media outlets such as Glamour, TIME, The Huffington Post, and The Guardian.

If you are interested in participating by submitting in your own image, you may send an email to projectunbreakablesubmissions@gmail.com. All other questions/concerns can be sent to projectunbreakable@gmail.com. Please know that we unfortunately are unable to read messages sent via Tumblr.

“Besides the noble art of getting things done, there is the noble art of leaving things undone. The wisdom of life consists in the elimination of non-essentials.” Lin Yutang

9] The BULLY Project

The BULLY Project is the social action campaign inspired by the award-winning film BULLY. We’ve sparked a national movement to stop bullying that is transforming kids’
lives and changing a culture of bullying into one of empathy and action. The power of our work lies in the participation of individuals like you and the remarkable list of partners we’ve gathered who collectively work to create safe, caring, and respectful schools and communities. Our goal is to reach 10 million kids or more, causing a tipping point that ends bullying in America.

Our 1 Million Kids initiative has brought the film BULLY to young people and educators around the country along with a curriculum and training from our partner, Facing History and Ourselves. These resources were created to help prepare educators to lead a discussion with their students that focuses on developing empathy and taking action. To date, the campaign has facilitated screenings for over 250,000 students and 7,500 educators across 120+ cities. Now that the film is available on DVD, we’ve created an Educators DVD Activation Toolkit. The kit includes many materials designed to ignite honest, meaningful dialogue. Partners who contributed to the kit include Facing History and Ourselves, The Harvard Graduate School of Education, Not In Our School, Love is Louder, the National Center for Learning Disabilities and Common Sense Media. Roll up your sleeves and join the movement! Everything starts with one and builds up.

“Making amends isn’t just saying, ‘I’m sorry’. It means responding differently from our new understanding.” As We Understood, Al-Anon, Courage to Change

10] The BULLY Project - Amy C Killingsworth

We are greater than the names we are called. We are Strong, BEAUTIFUL, and Deserving.

I have a passion to end bullying. I know that no person deserves to be bullied. I, myself, was bullied for many years. I was also a bully. I know the pain that both sides feel. Together, we can end the pain and suffering by educating and comforting our entire community.

“Your present circumstances don't determine where you can go; they merely determine where you start.” Nido Qubein

11] “Betrayal and the Beast: One man's journey through childhood sexual abuse, sexual addiction and recovery!” by Peter S. Pelullo [Author]

CEO and International Entrepreneur Reveals Sexual Abuse

When seven-year-old Peter Pelullo suffered multiple sexual-abuse attacks at the hands of two older neighborhood kids, no one in his 1950s middle-class world knew what to do. Everyone hoped he would just forget about it.

But Pete couldn’t forget. Scarred and tormented, he started down a path of unremitting sexual promiscuity, headed toward a life devoid of intimacy. Eventually, he found success as the owner of a major recording studio and even worked with the Rolling
Stones but he was still emotionally lost. He lived half a life, masking his pain with prescription drugs, alcohol, work, and sex, and watched his family slip away from him.

It would be almost five decades before he would address his childhood sexual abuse and come to grips with the betrayal he d suffered and the beast it had created within him. The book has received excellent reviews and was featured on several television networks including CNN, CBS, ABC and HLN with Dr Drew.

Peter continues to work to have the issue of Childhood Sexual Abuse accepted in the social consciousness in our society and to also carry the message that the recovery process should be treated and accepted for an Adult Survivor like any other health problem that is already understood by our society. *Let Go…Let Peace Come In* is part of Peter’s advocacy and passion to help others

12] **Let Go... Let Peace Come In Foundation**

Our Mission: We need nothing short of a sweeping shift in “social consciousness” making it okay to talk about sexual abuse…it’s essential! This is how we will help the children to speak up and this is the way we’ll have adult survivors enter the recovery process to learn how to live again!

“Nobody can do everything but everyone can do something.” Unknown

13] **Boxer Sugar Ray Leonard finds new arena as sexual abuse victim helping other survivors** - NY Daily News

An Olympic gold medal may bring fame and fortune, but immunity from the darkest corners of human nature is not included. Beneath Leonard's sweet face and dazzling athletic skills was a deeply troubled man.

**Sugar Ray Leonard lends perhaps biggest celebrity to growing list of those who say it’s imperative for survivors to talk about sexual abuse.**

“Nobody wants to talk about it,” Leonard says. “It’s so ugly, so toxic, that people can’t even envision it happening. But it is happening, and it won’t stop until we speak up, and until we speak out. It’s an obligation. It’s a personal obligation. (Because) if you keep silent it will kill you. It will just take you apart piece by piece until there is nothing left.”

Five-and-a-half years after launching the foundation, Pelullo, 62, a survivor of serial sexual abuse that started when he was 7 and that he kept secret for almost 50 years, exudes a missionary’s zeal when he speaks about the issue. His vision includes a $25 million capital campaign that will help fund research at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and begin establishing a network of meetings where survivors can go and get group treatment under the direction of a trained trauma therapist. Just as such people as Queen Latifah, Todd Bridges and R.A. Dickey have had a significant
impact after going public with their own stories of childhood sexual abuse, Pelullo believes Ray Leonard is precisely the fistic front man the foundation needs.

“Here’s a five-time world champion coming forward, (basically) telling countless men and women who are afraid that it’s okay for them to come forward, too,” Pelullo says. “I believe Ray will help open the doors of corporate America, where literally millions of survivors are working every day.”

“It takes courage to live the life you want, to look deep down inside yourself and ask the unknown, and see the soul you truly are.” Ivy Woods

A few words about Tong Ren. Several of us have been going to the workshops to help with our respective health concerns. For me, the arthritic left hand that is affecting my guitar playing and the ‘cloud of confusion’ that still holds court in my head relative to my PTSD issues. The hand is feeling a little better and the ‘cloud’ seems to be clearing... My friends are also experiencing some significant positive changes.

What is most profound is the amount of people who we are meeting at these workshops for major health issues such as cancer, diabetes, heart, etc...they have all been impacted by childhood abuse...perhaps an ACE Study on those reaching out to holistic modalities might show even more child abuse and its negative affects upon our health.??? MS

14] Tong Ren Healing   www.tongrenstation.com

Tong Ren is a form of energy therapy for restoring health and vitality. Tong Ren is based on the belief that disease is related to interruptions, or blockages, in the body's natural flow of chi, neural bioelectricity, blood, or hormones. Blockages are very commonly found physically, rather than energetically, commonly along the spine inhibiting the natural circulation of the body's central nervous system. Tong Ren Therapy utilizes the concept of the collective unconsciousness to remove these blockages, restoring the body's natural ability to heal itself, even when illnesses are chronic, debilitating, or otherwise untreatable.

Tong Ren combines western knowledge of anatomy and physiology with the ancient principle of "chi," or life force energy, to create what many consider to be a powerful new healing modality. Drawing on the Jungian theory of the "collective unconscious," Tong Ren is believed to access energy from this universal source and direct it to the patient. Because no physical contact is involved or necessary, Tong Ren is often practiced as distance healing.

15] Founder of Tong Ren – Tom Tam   www.tomtam.com

Tom Tam is a writer, poet, and healer. Born in Tai Shan, China, he came to the United States in 1975 as a political refugee. Since 1982, he has been practicing acupuncture, Tai Chi, and Chi Gong healing with great success.
Tom Tam is a licensed acupuncturist in Massachusetts and has practiced acupuncture in Chinatown, Boston for 25 years. In 1984 Tom trained his students in acupuncture and Tui Na in the Boston area. In the ninety’s, Tom formed his own healing system, and wrote the Tom Tam Healing System (1995). Also he wrote a Chinese healing book, An Zhen – The Palpation diagnoses (2005). This book combined the west and east medical knowledge and formed a new theory for the understanding and healing of difficult diseases.

“In order to succeed, we must first believe that we can.” Nikos Kazantzakis


In 2005 Rick Kuethe traded a career in music for life as an energy healer. A student of Tom Tam-founder of Tong Ren and the Tom Tam Healing System - Kuethe has conducted over 5,000 one-on-one distance-therapy sessions, mostly on cancer and other serious illnesses. In addition to his practice, Rick Kuethe is a teacher, author, lecturer, and concert pianist. He lives in Boston with his wife, Florri

“TONG REN THERAPY: WHAT IT IS, WHY IT WORKS, AND HOW TO DO IT”

In this clear, easy-to-understand book, Rick Kuethe reveals the inner workings of Tong Ren healing, the scientific reasons why it works, and a step-by-step blueprint of how to do it. From a personal confrontation with his wife's cancer to his evolution as a Tong Ren practitioner, Rick Kuethe sets the reader on a scientific adventure that challenges modern medical thinking today.

“Bravo on your book! It is wonderfully written. I love it! You explain everything so clearly and the summaries, charts, and illustrations are fantastic. The love you have for Tong Ren is evident on each page.” Angie Lawless, Roslindale, MA.

“Thank you for your book. It is so helpful and my husband finds it particularly supportive. He is really studying it. A great service to have written that!” Isabel Anderson, Marriottsville, MD.

17] “Dating After Trauma: How to find the love of your life after experiencing an abusive relationship, rape, or sexual abuse”  by Emily Avagliano Paperback & Kindle

Amazon

“Dating After Trauma” teaches readers how to date again after being raped or experiencing an abusive relationship. Dating after rape, date rape, or an abusive relationship presents unique challenges as most survivors experience Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) which alters their perception of the world and makes it more difficult to develop relationships, build trust and experience intimacy. It takes tremendous courage to date after suffering an abusive relationship or sexual trauma. It can be even more difficult to be open to love from a good person without experiencing fear. However, once you know what to look for in terms of roadblocks, the path to love becomes much
easier. In "Dating after Trauma" Emily Avagliano discusses the common obstacles abuse victims have when trying to find love. Her story is based on her own personal struggle to overcome past trauma and find her soul mate. Through this insight, she provides a methodology for dating that builds trust and intimacy in a safe and healthy way.

“Nothing can dim the light which shines from within.” Maya Angelou

18] To Tell The Truth – Surviving & Healing Sexual Abuse Conference November 2, 2013  [Honored to be presenting & performing at this powerful event – do join us. MS]

DC Empowering Children - OPEN 2 Males & Females of ALL AGES

https://www.facebook.com/dcempowering Surviving Sexual Abuse Conference #27

10am – 2pm @ Codman Square Health Center’s Great Hall, 637 Washington Street, Dorchester, MA 02124

Contact: Debbie Chambers 617-298-1102  dcempoweringchildren@gmail.com

“Everyday single day do something that makes your heart sing.” Marcia Weider

19] This video clip came from my presentation at the recent NYAPRS Conference, from my workshop, “The Silence of Suicide”.

The Silence of Suicide

Michael Skinner, Surviving Spirit, Goffstown, NH

Part of the book “Our Encounters with Suicide” brings together a range of voices on the theme of suicide - those who have been suicidal, alongside the friends, family and staff who have lived and worked with them. Too often the rhetoric of ‘suicidology’ is occupied only by those who have never had personal experience of suicidality. The first-person voice is strangely absent. These frank accounts go some way to correcting the balance.

I closed my presentation with this song, “JOY” – taken from a cell phone, Wow is a word that comes to mind with the power of technology. [Thanks Hyacinth!]

It is posted to my revamped website to be ‘unveiled’ in the next few weeks ['old site’ still accessible]…and it has made it to this website -

Please check this out - my participation with the 1BlueString Campaign to raise awareness on males who have been sexually abused/assaulted. Just scroll down a bit and there's my live performance and my blue E string performing my song, "JOY".

https://www.1bluestring.org/2013/10/01/1bluestring-in-the-community/
“JOY”© Michael Skinner Music

There’s joy in knowing what I have found
There’s joy in knowing that I’m still around
There’s joy in knowing that I still care
Joy in knowing you’re still there
Joy in knowing you’re still there

I’m so glad you’re still around
Thanks for sharing not kicking me down
Something so simple yet it’s so profound
A life to live a life to give your hand held out

Joys of wonder laugh out loud
No more secrets I’ve let them out
It’s tears from laughter and it’s time to shout
There’s joy in knowing I’m still around
There’s joy in knowing you’re still around

I’m so glad you’re still around
Thanks for sharing not kicking me down
Something so simple yet it’s so profound
A life to live a life to give your hand held out
There’s a life to live and a life to give your hand held out

There’s joy in knowing what I have found
There’s joy in knowing that I’m still around
There’s joy in knowing that I still care
Joy in knowing you’re still there
Joy in knowing you’re still there
Yes it’s joy in knowing you’re still there
Yes it’s joy in knowing you’re still there

“The miracle of gratitude is that it shifts your perception to such an extent that it changes the world you see.” Robert Holden

Take care, Mike, Mary, Zsuzsi, Becky, 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
The Surviving Spirit Speakers’ Bureau

The Surviving Spirit Facebook Page

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@SurvivinSpirit Twitter

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