



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

Greeting folks,

Hard to believe that this year will soon be coming to a close - it helps to give me time to pause and reflect upon life and all that it entails. A time to think upon all that I am grateful for and to honor and give thanks to those who day in and day out try their level best to make the world a better place. It is one of the many reasons that this newsletter is shared – to help give thanks and honor those who have taken their pains, their hurts and their losses and transformed their suffering into **Hope, Healing & Help**.

A few weeks ago, I was presenting and performing at the, To Tell The Truth – Surviving & Healing Sexual Abuse Conference in Dorchester, MA. I've been doing this for many years and there is always an incredible line-up of folks presenting – a time of sharing, healing and raising awareness.

There are several of us who are present for this event every year – one of these folks is Bob Curley... a quiet soft-spoken man who shares a story that always leaves me in a state of flux and deep sadness for him, his family and his little boy who is no longer here. His son Jeff was only ten years old when he was horribly abused and murdered by two pedophiles.

"I look at other kids and see what's out there and I can't just do nothing. Jeff Curley isn't going to go down for nothing. I have to make it mean something," Bob Curley

Bob and his family have lost so much and yet he is tireless in his efforts to raise awareness to help others so that they may not know this anguish. It is an honor to know him....

[A Grieving Father's Journey From Death Penalty Advocate To Opponent](#)

Deeply held beliefs are sometimes subject to change. That's the focus of a new book about one of the most high-profile crimes in New England. Even now, 12 years later, many people remember the horrific details of the kidnapping and murder of 10-year-old Jeffrey Curley. And they remember his father, Bob Curley, who led the fight to bring back the death penalty in Massachusetts after his son's murder.

As the details about the murder emerged, including one suspect's association with the North American Man-Boy Love Association, public outrage intensified and a devastated Bob Curley led the campaign to reinstate the death penalty. Despite Curley's tireless efforts, Massachusetts lawmakers rejected the death penalty, but by just one vote.

His journey to the opposite viewpoint is outlined in a new book, *"The Ride"*, in which Boston Globe reporter Brian MacQuarrie documents the intense personal struggles of Curley, a firehouse mechanic from Cambridge, who goes from grieving father and death penalty advocate to still grieving father, but death penalty opponent.

[The Ride: A Shocking Murder and a Bereaved Father's Journey from Rage to Redemption](#) by Brian MacQuarrie

"The Ride" tells the true story of one of the most gruesome crimes in recent memory - the 1997 abduction and murder of ten-year-old Massachusetts resident Jeffrey Curley - and how his father, Bob Curley, managed to heal the deep wounds of rage and emerge to become an outspoken critic of the death penalty.

Once again, thankful to share with you a fair amount of resources, information and some stories of courage. Samuel and Colleen were also at the event in Dorchester. MS

1] ["Eyes Without a Face"](#) – Samuel P Holloway III - *My only goal is to provide understanding and healing to all who have been abused. Enough is Enough!*

"Eyes Without a Face" is a candid story about the life and experiences of Samuel P. Holloway, III. Mr. Holloway tells a riveting story of abuse, exploitation and promiscuity. More importantly, he raises our awareness about the fact that domestic violence is very prevalent in gay relationships.

Samuel P. Holloway, III (born Robert Theotis Edmond) was born in Gary, Indiana where he attended Gary Community Schools. He completed high school at Theodore Roosevelt High School and attended Ivy Technical College, Indiana State University and St. Paul Technical College. He has had a dark life filled with the perils of abuse, promiscuity, exploitation and domestic violence. As a result of his tumultuous life, he eventually began working on a book of his own to delineate his experiences in hopes that he could help someone else.

[Eyes Without a Face](#) – You Tube 2:22 minutes

"There are times when I have to hurt through a situation and when this happens, the choice is not whether to hurt or not to hurt, but what to do while I am hurting." In All Our Affairs, Al-Anon

2] ["Who Feels It Knows It"](#) - Colleen Williams

Colleen "Warrior Empress" Williams and was born in the beautiful twin island of Trinidad and Tobago in 1972 and always had a passion for writing poetry and short stories. This book was written out of the painful experiences that she had to endure in life. Coming from a rough past, it was hard to trust and forgive again after years of abuse. It is her heartfelt wish to educate individuals of all ages using this book, which is filled with poetry, short stories and dedications.

"WHO FEELS IT KNOWS IT" is many things. It's a saying I have, meaning, "If you've not experienced it, you don't really understand it." It is also the title of my first book. This book is a journey through the seasons of my life: from descent into pain in the Fall through to Winter, where I endured constant abuse and neglect, and where I emerged stronger, entering into the glories of Spring.

This book is a celebration of strength - of coming out stronger after years of sexual, emotional and physical abuse and neglect. It is a compilation of poems and paragraphs that I wrote over the years to help me process some of the negative things that happened to me. But it is not all doom and gloom! It has been described as a modern day "Cinderella" story; in the middle of my pain, I met my Prince Charming - my "Mr Undefeated" - who was instrumental in bringing me out of Winter and into Spring.

"WHO FEELS IT KNOWS IT" resonates with every reader. Most people either have been abused themselves or know someone who has been abused. This book lets the abused know that there are survivors out there who have come out and broken the cycle of abuse. It will make you cry, laugh and celebrate with me as I journal through my pain and come out to the beginning of my happiness.

<https://www.facebook.com/WhoFeelsItKnowsIt>

"Our greatest strength is our ability to acknowledge our differences, our greatest weakness is our failure to embrace them." Judith Henderson

3] [Healing Bobby](#) - Red Border Films – YouTube 9:35 minutes

Directed by Peter van Agtmael, the latest Red Border Film tells the story of Bobby Henline an Iraq War veteran turned comic who has made his injuries a part of his comedy.

"What lies behind us and what lies before us are small compared to what lies within us."
Ralph Waldo Emerson

Also - [One War Veteran's Inspiring Source for Comedy](#) - TIME magazine article

For the past decade, a generation of troops has returned from Iraq and Afghanistan with wounds that few of their predecessors were able to survive. When they came home, they faced the challenge of not just healing but reshaping their lives. Since the wars began,

nearly 50,000 American troops have been wounded. Almost a thousand lost limbs, and thousands more suffered severe burns. With Veterans Day here, TIME presents the story of Bobby Henline, a remarkable soldier who became a standup comedian, using humor as a powerful form of therapy.

“Each of us has fire in our hearts for something. It is our goal in life to find it and keep it lit.” Mary Lou Retton

4] [Recovering From Abuse Through Music](#) - Safe Space Radio

An interview with songwriter Michael Skinner, who has used music as a way to heal from the abuse he suffered as a child. Michael talks about how his past has affected him throughout his adult life in the form of painful and frightening flashbacks, and about the strategies he has developed to live a productive life in spite of the challenges presented by PTSD. The conversation touches on his often-frustrating encounters with the mental health system and his efforts to resist the stigmatizing label of “mental illness”. Finally he talks about how songwriting has been an important healing tool in his life, and how he has been able to incorporate advocacy and support for other abuse survivors into his life as a professional musician.

*“We can never obtain peace in the outer world until we make peace with ourselves.”
Dalai Lama*

5] [Dr. Anne Hallward - Safe Space Radio](#) - A Live Forum for Courageous Conversations

The mission of Safe Space Radio is to invite the courageous, respectful and compelling discussion of stigmatized stories and subjects.

Safe Space is a show about subjects that are hard to talk about - a respectful forum for courageous conversations about difficult subjects in order to reduce stigma, provide education, offer hope and access to resources. It is a space for the in depth discussion of matters that touch hearts and yet feel risky to share; subjects that deserve, but rarely get, thoughtful consideration.

“There is a sacredness in tears. They are not a mark of weakness, but of power. They speak more eloquently than ten thousand tongues. They are the messengers of overwhelming grief, of deep contrition and of unspeakable love.” Washington Irving

Dr. Anne is a Board certified psychiatrist in Portland, Maine. She trained at Harvard Medical School, and served on the faculty at Harvard, teaching at Cambridge Hospital, before moving to Maine. Her interest in creating space for open conversation about difficult subjects began in her teens when she noticed that very few adults seemed to be talking about intimate or difficult subjects. While at Harvard, she taught classes on Death and Dying, Human Sexuality, Psychiatric Interviewing, Psychotherapy and Cultural Competence. **The one thing these classes all have in common is that they address subjects that people avoid talking about.** She approaches these tender subjects

respectfully, in a way that gives acknowledgment and recognition to feelings and fears that have been carried in silence.

Dr. Anne is also initiating a study on pediatric medical trauma, looking at the long term impact of urological procedures that are done on young girls. This is another not-discussed subject that can have long-lasting impact particularly if the fear and pain of the procedures are not named and acknowledged. If you are interested in participating in this study, please contact her at dr.anne@safespaceradio.com

"A happy marriage is the union of two forgivers." Robert Quillen

6] ["Survivors Pay it Forward"](#) - The Survive to Thrive Mission – Beyond Trauma Foundation

Believe in Your Dream - No Survivor is left behind. We are The “Survivor’s Pay it Forward” and “The Voices of Victory” advocates. Our mission is to build the first survival community support center and rehabilitation facility providing grants for wellness programs, legal support and coaching guidance for survivors of trauma, brain injury, stroke, illness, injury, disease, abuse and war.

Founder Deborah Berry - Deborah Berry is an Australian Author, Life Challenge Coach and Inspirational Speaker. She is a TBI advocate and the founder of The Beyond Trauma Foundation. Her mission is inspired by the tragic death of her son and her survival of life tragedies that span over her entire lifetime. Her message is a simple one... We represent Courage, Wisdom and Kindness.

Submission wanted - **The Voices of Victory Project** - is looking for unique stories from 100 survivors of extraordinary challenges who pay it forward in the community.

There are many facets to this movie/documentary. The synopsis will be released when we get closer to its development to protect its copyright and content.

Submissions: send an outline of your interest to Deborah@survivorspayitforward.com - title the page Submissions-Movie.

"Awareness is so much better for me than closing out all feelings, shutting out people, withdrawing from living. No matter how hard the truth is or what the facts are, I prefer to know, look at, and accept this day." As we Understood, Al-Anon

7] [VeryLoudYouth](#) - *Where peer pressure is positive.*

About Us - Talented, bright young people are falling through the cracks everyday due to disadvantaged family structures, impatient teachers, and under-resourced school systems. **VeryLoudYouth** aims to stem this tide by empowering and sustaining creative young talent using the power of positive peer-to-peer...

“Self-discipline is self-caring.” M. Scott Peck

“Change your thoughts and you change your world.” Norman Vincent Peale

8] [Addressing the stigma of mental illness](#) - The University of British Columbia - Live Well, Learn Well: Health, Wellness, and Counseling

What is stigma?

Stigma often occurs when someone is viewed as being different in a negative way on the basis of societal, cultural, racial, religious, gender, or other stereotypes. Stigma is unfortunately a common occurrence for individuals struggling with mental illness, who are often judged based on inaccuracies or misunderstandings around mental health issues.

What are the Effects of Stigma?

Stigmatized people often experience shame and discrimination. Research shows that stigma can have a strong and long-term impact on the well-being of individuals struggling with mental health issues^[1]. Not only do these people have to cope with their own emotional struggles, but they also have to deal with their worries about what others think of them. Due to the stigma of mental illness, these individuals keep information about their mental health concerns from bosses, teachers, friends and family.

Know Yourself:

- Be aware of your personal biases & stereotypes of others
- Strive to be non-judgmental and have compassion for those who are struggling with their mental health
- Seek accurate information to educate yourself on mental health issues
-

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

9] [Mental health peer support champions - Uganda](#) – YouTube 16:23 minutes

An insightful short film talking about mental health peer support in Uganda - from those that provide it and receive it. Mike Ilamyo was commissioned to create this film for the Butabika-East London Link and Heartsounds Uganda.

“I find the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand as in what direction we are moving.” Oliver Wendell Holmes

10] [Surviving - then thriving - post-traumatic growth](#) - Science Daily

Modern medicine usually considers trauma -- both the physical and the psychological kinds - as unequivocally damaging. Now researchers at Tel Aviv University are lending

support to a more philosophical view of suffering, finding that trauma, however terrible, may have distinct psychological benefits.

Last year, junior investigator Dr. Sharon Dekel and Prof. Zahava Solomon of TAU's Bob Shapell School of Social Work found that individuals with Holocaust-survivor parents may be less likely to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder in the wake of their own traumas. In a study published in the Journal of Traumatic Stress, the researchers set out to see if so-called second-generation Holocaust survivors also undergo more post-traumatic "growth."

Trauma's silver lining

Researchers have traditionally focused on the negative implications of trauma, and survivors have been shown to pass this burden onto their children. But a growing body of evidence suggests that trauma can have positive outcomes as well. Some survivors of traumatic events develop new priorities, closer relationships, an increased appreciation of life, a greater sense of personal strength, and experience heightened spirituality.

"The mystery of human existence lies not in just staying alive, but in finding something to live for." Fyodor Dostoyevsky

11] [Personalized Support for Survivors of Childhood Sexual Trauma](#) – One Health Microsite

Find people like yourself who are learning how to heal past wounds and live a healthier life.

One Health is excited to offer you:

- A complimentary membership
- A healing community of people who are supporting each other
- Access to resources
- Life management and other practical solutions

Once you join you will be able to attend free weekly online meetings about childhood sexual abuse with Svava Brooks! Meetings are held in our online chat room.

You are not alone. The One Health community is ready to support your health goals in a safe and secure place today. We hope to meet you here!

"Self-respect cannot be hunted. It cannot be purchased. It is never for sale. It cannot be fabricated out of public relations. It comes to us when we are alone, in quiet moments, in quiet places, when we suddenly realize that, knowing the good, we have done it; knowing the beautiful, we have served it; knowing the truth we have spoken it." Whitney Griswold

You can learn more about Svava at her own site – another shining example of someone who took their painful experiences and suffering & turned it around to help others....MS

12] [Speak4Change](#) - Child Sexual Abuse Prevention

Welcome to Speak4Change. That is what I do. I speak about my childhood, being a survivor of child sexual abuse from the age of 4 years old. My name is Svava Brooks and I am born and raised in Iceland. I now live in California with my husband and 3 kids. It is a long story how I got to this place and I will tie the story into my posts over the next few weeks and months.

Change is what happens when people realize that they can talk about the issue of child sexual abuse and still feel like they can do something about it. My goal here is to be an example of how and when to talk about the issue of child sexual abuse and how we can prevent it. My main message is always prevention.

“When the power of love overcomes the love of power the world will know peace.” Jimi Hendrix

13] **Child Trends** - [Homelessness among LGBT Youth: A National Concern](#)

For many of us, in November our minds turn toward plans for Thanksgiving, a holiday likely spent at home, surrounded by family. This scenario is far from the reality for many homeless youth in the United States. November is National Homeless Youth Awareness Month, reminding us that even as we think about what we are grateful for in our lives, we should consider all the work that needs to be done to improve the welfare of this vulnerable group.

*“Sometimes we try so hard that we fail to see that the light we are seeking is within us.”
As we Understood, Al-Anon*

14] **Child Trends** - [Teen Suicide: A Look Behind the Numbers](#)

While National Suicide Prevention Week and Mental Illness Awareness Week have recently passed, it is important that we continue the conversation with a focus on teen suicide.

Suicide is the third leading cause of death among young people between the ages of 10-19. Although the percentage of U.S. high school students who considered suicide fell by nearly half between 1991 to 2009 (from 29 percent to 14 percent), this percentage has increased slightly in recent years. In 2011, roughly one in every six high school students considered suicide. The data also point to important differences by gender, race, and ethnicity. Among high school students, for example, girls are more likely to have planned or attempted suicide than boys, while Hispanic and black students are more likely to have attempted suicide than white students. However, the suicide rate is over three times higher for boys than girls, and is higher for white than for black or Hispanic youth. Further, suicide rates are actually highest among Native American/Alaska Native youth compared with other racial/ethnic groups

“Life is like a library owned by an author. In it are a few books, which he wrote himself, but most of them were written for him.” Harry Emerson Fosdick

15] [PEERS](#) [Peers Envisioning and Engaging in Recovery Services] - Promoting Mental Health, Empowerment, and Social Inclusion - a nonprofit based in Oakland, CA

Our Mission and Vision - PEERS is a consumer-run organization that inspires hope and contributes to the resiliency and well being of mental health consumers through a not-for-profit commitment to compassion and excellence in eliminating mental health disparities.

For those who will not be attending [The Alternatives Conference](#) this year, PEERS will be bringing the conference to you online. In addition to our regular coverage (articles, blogs, podcasts) we will live stream video of some of the keynote speeches. Once we receive the conference agenda, I'll be able to provide more details. Visit www.peersnet.org to see our coverage from last year. Jenee Darden- Journalist

- Live stream videos can be viewed on our channel <http://www.youtube.com/peerstv>
- Listen to podcasts at www.peersnet.org/radio
- Look for us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/peersorg or @peersorg

“Forgive yourself for your faults and your mistakes and move on.” Les Brown

16] [Better Days - A Mental Health Recovery Workbook](#) - Craig Lewis

This book helps those aspiring toward recovery and also those in recovery because it addresses and challenges the individual - in very real, basic and honest ways - to make significant cognitive adjustments in how they live their lives. The beauty of this curriculum is that people want to do it and don't consider it a chore, a demand, or a requirement, because every page subtly encourages the individual to think in realistic and forward-moving ways. This allows them to feel good about doing the work.

I based this book on my personal life and recovery, and every page has been used successfully in peer group settings.

Craig Lewis is a Certified Peer Specialist living and working in Massachusetts. He has struggled immensely with mental health issues throughout his life, but he has successfully transformed this into a life of wellness. He has embraced his recovery process, producing remarkably beneficial results. He has discovered that he has innate skills and capabilities for helping others in their recovery, and he has been able to help many people improve the quality of their lives, which is life-affirming for him. He does this by tapping into his lived experience to help others transcend their own struggles. He

is sincerely committed to his recovery and helping nurture the recovery and wellness of all with whom he comes into contact. Craig is successfully working as part of an outreach team at a human services agency in Boston, Massachusetts. He also tours the country, speaking about his lived experience, sharing his struggles and triumphs to help others.

“That the birds of worry and care fly above your head, this you cannot change. But that they build nests in your hair, this you can prevent.” Chinese Proverb

17] [Getting through the Holidays -The Surviving Spirit Resources](#) [21 total]

The holidays can be a time of great stress and reminders of painful hurts, losses and memories – do visit the site for some helpful resources to help with coping.

“You have to count on living every single day in a way you believe will make you feel good about your life.” Jane Seymour

18] **[Donate ... Your Time ... Your Talent ... Your Treasure](#)**

The Surviving Spirit exists because of the donations of time, talent and treasure from those who organize it and those it serves. The Surviving Spirit is a 501(3)(c) tax-exempt, nonprofit organization and donations of money, bequests, devises, transfers or gifts in any amount are both tax deductible and gratefully accepted.

We are now able to accept donations securely from checks, credit and debit cards through the services of Paypal at our website. Donations of non-cash items will be greatly considered. Please contact us at contact-us@survivingspirit.com or 1-603-625-2136.

Thank you!

“To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also dream: not only plan, but also believe.” Anatole France

] [Protecting Children From Toxic Stress](#) - NYTimes.com – David Bornstein

Imagine if scientists discovered a toxic substance that increased the risks of cancer, diabetes and heart, lung and liver disease for millions of people. Something that also increased one’s risks for smoking, drug abuse, suicide, teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted disease, domestic violence and depression — and simultaneously reduced the chances of succeeding in school, performing well on a job and maintaining stable relationships? It would be comparable to hazards like lead paint, tobacco smoke and mercury. We would do everything in our power to contain it and keep it far away from children. Right?

Well, there is such a thing, but it’s not a substance. It’s been called “[toxic stress](#).” For more than a decade, researchers have understood that frequent or continual stress on young children who lack adequate protection and support from adults, is strongly

associated with increases in the risks of lifelong health and social problems, including all those listed above.

Children can be shielded from the most damaging effects of stress if their parents are taught how to respond appropriately.

“Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear – not absence of fear.” Mark Twain

] [Schools That Separate the Child From the Trauma](#) - NYTimes.com - David Bornstein

Recently, I [reported](#) on the damaging effects that prolonged stress can have on young children who lack adequate protection from adults. Over the past 15 years, researchers have [learned](#) that highly stressful — and potentially traumatic — childhood experiences are more prevalent than previously understood. Now scientists are shedding light on the mechanisms by which they change the [brain and body](#). These insights have far-reaching implications for schools, where it’s still standard practice to punish children for misbehavior that they often [do not know how to control](#). This is comparable to punishing a child for having a seizure; it adds to the suffering and makes matters worse.

“Cooperation is the thorough conviction that nobody can get there unless everybody gets there,” Virginia Burden

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

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