



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 Surviving Spirit Newsletter June 2015

“We only become what we are by the radical and deep-seated refusal of that which others have made of us.” Jean-Paul Sartre

Hi folks,

A few thoughts to share regarding the month of June - **June is PTSD Awareness Month & June 27th is International PTSD Awareness Day.**

There are some great resources and ideas posted at these sites to help spread awareness on Post Traumatic Stress....

[National PTSD Awareness Day](#) - June 27, 2015 - National Child Traumatic Stress Network

In order to bring greater awareness to the issue of post traumatic stress disorder [PTSD], the United States Senate designated June 27th as National PTSD Awareness Day. In addition, June has been designated as PTSD Awareness Month by the National Center for PTSD [NCPTSD].

[PTSD Awareness Month: Promotional Materials & Tips to Raise Awareness](#) - National Center for PTSD – includes Printable Materials

And please visit the website resources of the [Surviving Spirit](#) for more info on trauma and dissociation. There are also resources posted at my [website](#).

I will share a recent blog post of mine that addresses some thoughts and feeling associated with post traumatic stress and dissociation.

Also posted up front is an interview I did with Dese'Rae L. Stage last year that was recently posted at her incredible website – **Live Through This**. Truth be told, I forgot about this...but grateful for the opportunity to help break the silence and the stigma associated with suicide. We need to talk about it...I know her website information was shared last year in a the newsletter..still amazed at the amount of folks she has interviewed...**a lot of work**, and she and the survivors are to be commended for their part in speaking out and helping to end the shame associated with suicide.

Thank you, Michael Skinner

“I'm convinced of this: Good done anywhere is good done everywhere. For a change, start by speaking to people rather than walking by them like they're stones that don't matter. As long as you're breathing, it's never too late to do some good.” Maya Angelou

1] [Dissociation Tip # 103 – Healing Happens](#) - Michael Skinner

“After a series of traumas, one can lose the capacity to feel fear appropriately.” Jessica Stern

2] [Michael Skinner - Live Through This](#) – by Dese'Rae L. Stage

Michael Skinner is a musician and mental health advocate who lives in New Hampshire. He was 59 when I interviewed him in Boston on April 5, 2014.

[What is Live Through This?](#) - Live Through This is a collection of portraits and stories of suicide attempt survivors, as told by those survivors.

“Suicide” is a dirty word in this country. It’s a sin. It’s taboo. It’s selfish. It's not an easy topic to discuss and because we, as a culture, don't know how to approach it, it's easily swept under a rug. The problem is that suicide is a pervasive public health issue [the 10th leading cause of death in the US]. I get it: we’re afraid of death. But avoiding it and pretending it doesn’t exist is nothing more than willfully perpetuating ignorance.

The intention of Live Through This is to show that everyone is susceptible to depression and suicidal thoughts by sharing portraits and stories of real attempt survivors - people who look just like you. These feelings could affect your mom, your partner, or your brother, and the fear of talking about it can be a killer.

Historically, suicide attempt survivors, in particular, have spoken under conditions of anonymity in order to save them from being discriminated against. The silence and shame created in that act are dangerous. Live Through This encourages survivors to own their experiences publicly - using both their full names and likenesses - and thereby works to strip the issue of anonymity and raise awareness by, simply, talking about it. It's the first known project of its kind, exploring a world that has remained a taboo for far too long.

[The Survivors](#) [Dese'Rae L. Stage](#)

“The greatest gift that you can give to others is the gift of unconditional love and acceptance.” Brian Tracy

3] Charles Willis – a remembrance of a gentle man with a warm smile who touched the hearts and minds of so many...

[Peer Support I – YouTube](#) 3:57 minutes - a short snippet of one who has done so much for so many.

“I gained insight to understand that my problem was unresolved trauma and that existed before I started using drugs.” Charles Willis

As a trainer and mentor, Charles was a sustaining force in the Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network [GMHCN] and the Georgia chapter of the Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association [USPRA].

4] [Standing on the Shoulders of Giants](#) - A place to honor the memory of those who have passed, and to share the wisdom we gained through connection with them.

Learn more about Charles Willis and so many other incredible mental health advocates who helped to pave the way for so many of us. MS

“Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is not to stop questioning.” Albert Einstein

5] [Heal Write Now](#) - How to Live On Earth When You Were Raised in Hell - Christine “Cissy” White

Adversity and trauma take a toll. WRITING HEALS. Studies show writing improves health, sleep and wound healing.

WRITING TRANSFORMS LIVES - I know this as a writer, mother and trauma survivor.

- If it helps one person, just one, it was worth it, is what writers know and say. Maybe you are the one your words need to reach. Turning to the unconditional open page is an affordable way to reduce stress. You don't have to worry about grammar, punctuation and sharing your writing to benefit.
- The power of the pen need not be limited to those getting published or paid to write.
- Writing expressively is done to help you unburden your body, let go of shame and help you feel better.
- Writing expressively is free and takes little time. You can write, starting now, for ten to twenty minutes a day without censoring yourself or thinking too much. If you do this four days in a row and write honestly and with emotion you can expect positive results. It does not have to be a daily habit if you think, “I'm not the journal writing type.”
- Studies show writing about trauma for four consecutive days in a row improves sleep, wound healing, reduces doctor visits, missed work or school days. You can make an appointment to write, with yourself and you don't have to waste gas or fork over a co-pay. Or, you can share what you write in therapy and get more bang for your buck.
- Sharing your deepest feelings is up to you. You may get added benefit by reading or showing someone what you wrote. But even if you stick in in a shredder you still get benefits. In fact, sharing is only helpful if you are not judged, shamed or criticized. If you might be it's better to keep your words to yourself. Again, sharing is up to you. You are empowered and decide if, what and when to share. Or not. [Learn more](#)

[Survivor Inspiring Survivor](#) - The cause of our post-traumatic stress may be different but many aspects of healing from trauma are universal.

- Let's share writing, resources & information so we can motivate & validate ourselves & each other.
- Let's create a place where experts ask for our opinions & insights about what trauma survivors crave or despise.
- Let's speak for ourselves about post-traumatic stress, recovery & healing.

What Do You Need? - Let's make a trauma-survivor wish list.

- What do you crave? What do you misunderstand about childhood trauma & adult recovery?
- What skills or practices keep you joyful & present?
- How do you manage trauma symptoms & breaking the cycle?

What Helps Most? What Are Your Go-To's? - Please share information & inspiration most helpful to you.

- Do you have quotes, songs, research or writing that gets you through tough times?
- Do you have websites you return to again and again?
- What apps or music or mindfulness practices actually help ground you?

Ways to Share Your Experience & Resources

- Send me a guest blog piece in response to a writing prompt.
- Make comments on blog or [Facebook page](#).
- Send me an email to cwhite@healwritenow.com

"The wound is the place where the Light enters you." Rumi

*"We are all faced with a series of great opportunities - brilliantly disguised as insoluble problems."
John Gardner*

6] [OP-ED: Justice Foiled by Ignorance of Trauma](#) - Juvenile Justice Information Exchange - By: Judge George Timberlake, Ret.

At the supermarket last week, I saw a young woman who looked familiar, but I could not recall her name. I said "Hello" and continued looking for kale, quinoa and 15-grain bread - staples at my house since we are eating healthy.

Two aisles over, I saw her again. She was thin, almost gaunt, dressed in worn clothes that didn't fit, but I now recognized her from an appearance years ago in my juvenile courtroom. Let's call her Kera.

Kera recognized me, too. I tried to start a conversation. She mumbled a short response and hurried out of the store without making a purchase.

In the parking lot, I sat in my pickup for several minutes thinking about this woman who had the outward appearance of a meth addict. I wondered how she came to be the person I just saw and what I might have done differently to improve her outcome.

My thoughts turned to remarks delivered by Abigail Baird, a developmental neuroscientist studying brain development and decision-making by teenagers. She was addressing a symposium sponsored by the National Center for State Courts and the MacArthur Foundation's [Models for Change](#) initiative.

A few days later, I was in the audience for a presentation by Anne Studzinski, managing director of the Illinois Childhood Trauma Coalition. Both experts referred to the effects of trauma on the intersecting development of the individual. These two discussions had a link that stirred up my own memories of

Kera's visits to my courtroom.

Baird described the dual development of different brain regions for emotions and thoughts and how they influence each other.

Studzinski asked the audience to think back to their earliest memories. Most reported that the memory was from ages 4 to 6 and involved a "first" time - the first day of school, a first funeral, a first trip to the emergency room or first wedding. She said those are "recallable" memories but pointed out that brain activity begins in the womb and precognition does not mean that the world around a child goes unnoticed.

Emotional responses to external events create emotional memory and when those events are positive - like hearing your grandmother's voice singing a lullaby - the sensations cause you to feel the warmth of those moments without being able to verbalize when or where she was.

Hearing that old lullaby again can create a warm feeling. On the other hand, witnessing or experiencing a violent event also has an effect. Baird described how the fight or flight response becomes associated with painful events in a child's past. Later, the negative behaviors that society labels disruptive, disrespectful or criminal in a social setting may be traced to a response to a forgotten trauma.

Kera was first in a courtroom at age 9 when a petition alleging sexual abuse was filed against her mother and paramour-perpetrator that alleged sexual penetration at age 4. Mom refused to leave her boyfriend, and Kera became a ward of the state child welfare agency. She didn't like that, and she bit, screamed, cried and threw tantrums. At the age 13, she ran away from her foster home. She was found, returned and placed in another foster home - only to run away again and again.

As she approached age 15, Kera was placed in a group facility where she discovered drugs from other residents, ran away and learned that sex is a saleable commodity almost anywhere. When that wasn't enough, she and a friend burglarized a house. Sadly, the elderly resident was inside the home and was brutally beaten by Kera's friend before they fled with about \$500 and a .44. They were caught before they used the gun or spent the money.

After a long period in detention awaiting trial, Kera was convicted. At sentencing, her caseworker described her as a girl who was always "out of control" and "needing consequences for her behavior." Even with therapy, the caseworker often found her running or scheming to run away to her "worthless" mother. In prison, she was placed in segregation at least once per month. In court review hearings, she was shackled, in leg chains and a belly belt to prevent her outbursts and attempts to run.

I can attempt to salve my conscience because I did not know about brain development or trauma-informed practice. But it doesn't work - acknowledging my ignorance and failures of the justice system cannot repair the harm done.

Our court systems, both child welfare and juvenile delinquency, must learn what science can teach us and use that knowledge every day in every case, no matter what the circumstances. That will be justice.

Judge George W. Timberlake, Ret., is chair of the Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission and an alternate member of the Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice. He was a trial court judge for 23

years before his retirement as chief judge of Illinois' 2nd Circuit. He is also a member of the Illinois Models for Change Coordinating Council, the Illinois Juvenile Justice Leadership Council, the Redeploy Illinois Oversight Board and the board of the statewide Juvenile Justice Initiative.

“There are wounds that never show on the body that are deeper and more hurtful than anything that bleeds.” Laurell K. Hamilton, [Mistral’s Kiss](#)

7] [I Want TO HUG PEOPLE WITH My Words.](#) - Cecil [Cec] Murphey

When I write, I want to reach out and hug my readers.

I write because it’s a gift.

Although it’s difficult for me to say those words aloud, I believe I have an aptitude to communicate messages of encouragement on the page or screen. It’s difficult to say because I don’t want to come across as implying I have a special endowment that no one else does. Yet it’s part of my “divine equipping,” and I want to use it well.

About Cecil Murphey – The Man Behind the Words

Veteran author Cecil (Cec) Murphey has written or co-written more than 135 books, including the New York Times bestseller *90 Minutes in Heaven* (with Don Piper) and *Gifted Hands: The Ben Carson Story* [with Dr. Ben Carson. His books have sold in the millions and have brought hope and encouragement to countless people around the world.

Cec stays busy as a professional writer and travels extensively to speak on topics such as writing, spiritual growth, care-giving, significant living, sexual abuse, and recovery.

Prior to launching his career as a full-time writer and speaker, Cec served as pastor in Metro Atlanta, as a volunteer hospital chaplain for ten years, and was a missionary in Kenya for six. [Learn more](#)

[Survivor](#) - After I began to deal with my childhood sexual abuse, I felt I needed to share my story, especially with other survivors. One of the things I often say is, “I know of myself only what I say of myself.” *As long as I kept the abuse a secret, I still wasn’t free.* But as I shared my experiences and what I had learned as a survivor, people resonated with those words, and I experienced healing.

I didn’t plan to make abuse a phase of my ministry, but the responses and the incredible needs have pushed me to become more public. As I become open with my story, it encourages others to speak out and free themselves from pain.

Blog Post – [Men Shattering the Silence](#) - I hurt for a long time because of childhood sexual abuse. Now I want to provide a safe place for hurting men to connect with other survivors of sexual abuse. Talk to us. You don't have to use your real name to share your experiences or ask questions

“Vulnerability is not weakness. And that myth is profoundly dangerous.” Brené Brown

“If you know someone who’s depressed, please resolve never to ask them why. Depression isn’t a

straightforward response to a bad situation; depression just is, like the weather.” Stephen Fry

8] [Photographer explores her struggle with anxiety in surreal portraits](#) – Mashable by Andrea Romano

Anxiety and depression can often be an alienating experience. Between social stigma and personal struggle, it can be difficult for those who suffer from mental health disorders to express themselves and reach out.

Photographer and Louisiana State University graduate Katie Joy Crawford has battled both anxiety and depression for more than a decade, which is why she chose her personal fight as the subject matter for her senior thesis work, titled "My Anxious Heart."

See also: [Haunting photography series explores many versions of the self](#)

"I was taking a closer look at what was causing my pain and hardships. I was able to identify my triggers and find new ways to handle and cope with the daily struggle of this illness," Crawford told Mashable.

Beyond her own personal experiences with mental health, she also wanted to shed some light on common misconceptions about the disorders, which affect more than 40 million people in the U.S. over the age of 18, according to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America.

"There's a common saying being thrown around that 'it's all in your head,' which somehow makes it seem less important ... In fact, it is all in your head ... What is more terrifying than your own brain making you fearful of your own thoughts? There are treatments and therapies, but people are often too scared to admit to their illness due to the stigma of them seeming 'crazy'," Crawford says.

Crawford's self portraits explore different moments, sensations and thoughts a person with anxiety or depression may experience with striking, surreal imagery. While every portrait had its own significance, Crawford's birdcage portrait, she says, is especially relevant to her.

"I have frequently compared my struggle to that of being trapped in my own mind. Some days I fly a bit further from my cage, but I always return to it," she says.

She hopes that her work helps people, and that others with the same disorders will "celebrate your little victories often and don't dwell on your bad days. The simplest tasks can be so overwhelming ... It's such a slow process to becoming less and less anxious. It's smaller than baby steps."

Crawford is currently working on a book of her images that will also provide her story on how she has coped with her disorder. Fans of her work can view more images on her [website](#), on [Facebook](#) and on [Instagram](#).

'Sometimes our enthusiasm for change depends on our willingness to take a chance on tomorrow by risking what we have today.' Living With Sobriety

"The only people mad at you for speaking the truth are those living a lie. Keep speaking it." Unknown

From Surviving to Thriving on the Journey to Wholeness

“Child abuse damages a person for life and that damage is in no way diminished by the ignorance of the perpetrator. It is only with the uncovering of the complete truth as it affects all those involved that a genuinely viable solution can be found to the dangers of child abuse.” Alice Miller ~ [Banished Knowledge ~ facing childhood injuries](#). [Learn more on Alice Miller](#) - child abuse & mistreatment

Lately I have been writing a lot on the subject of dysfunctional family systems. I feel like I am just getting started when it comes to sharing about some of the things that were so dysfunctional in my own family. The dysfunctional mother daughter relationship I had with my abusive mother was only one part of it. I had an emotionally unavailable father as well. There was sexual abuse and physical abuse. I was not heard or even seen as a child - as though I was not really a person yet. And that “non person” fact seems to be at the root of everything; the discounted voice and disregarded feelings of the child. We live in a whole world of adults who have not been valued as children but who are expected to function properly in spite of that.

When I was “in the fog” which means not understanding exactly why some of the details about these situations were wrong, but having this “feeling” or suspicion that they were wrong, I could never put all these “facts” together and therefore I was never able to see the real truth. When I first started this blog “Emerging from Broken” I was afraid to share too much, I thought it would turn people off. I was afraid that I would be seen as a whiner, that I would be seen as someone who was “stuck in the past” and unable to “get over it” and that I was somehow deficient in putting the past behind me, EVEN though I already knew that the way that I recovered was by facing the past, realizing the lies versus the truth and changing my false belief system, I was still scared of rejection and of being unheard and misunderstood. (because that was ALL I knew!) I was afraid that I was “wrong” even though this truth was what set me free. I was especially afraid to talk about the dysfunctional mother daughter relationship stuff and dysfunctional family stuff.

In hopes of contributing to the “greater good” of mankind, I pressed on and took the “risk” of being pooh poohed and even rejected, because deep down I believed that others could relate and that I could make a difference with those people. I figured I would deal with the rest when it came up.

I was also afraid that people would write comments sticking up for the abusers and controllers. I lived in a world for such a long time where the abusers were protected and the victims were to blame, that it took a long time to sort it all out. Kids like me were raised with an “unquestioning respect” for authority. Half the problem with my recovery was that one issue! I could not go against that deeply ingrained teaching especially when it came to my parents. I still feared the same consequences that I feared when I was a child. I feared that I would die if they rejected me.

I was pretty confused. It isn't that we don't live in that same world now but the difference is that I no longer believe that abusers SHOULD be protected and I no longer discount myself. I do not acknowledge that false system anymore. It is backwards and I am not afraid to speak out against it.

There is no excuse for devaluing a child; there is no excuse for mistreatment, there is no excuse for abuse. And respecting authority that is causing harm against children and causing them lifelong

damage, is insane. I don't want to live in that insanity anymore.

The world has to realize that children are born totally innocent and are born equally HUMAN with equal value and equal human rights. Children are not property; they are not objects. The damage done to them is NOT imagined by the child and it is not forgotten by the child. Even if the child blocks it out, the damage is there, lurking and festering and causing all sorts of problems and struggle for the person that it happened to. It is not okay because it happened "in the past". It is not excusable. The abusers ARE the ones who are accountable for that damage; the guilt and shame belong to them and the only way for an adult child who grew up with abuse to overcome the belief system that manifested because of that mistreatment is to realize that first of all, it really happened no matter how many times we have been told that we dreamed it up or exaggerated it and then secondly to understand that as a child, we were powerless and have NO responsibility for what happened. Those two things set me on the right road to emotional healing.

And I needed to talk about it. I needed to be heard, but not by the abusers.

I had no idea that the more I shared about this kind of family system dysfunction and confusion the more popular my blog would become. My mother daughter dysfunctional relationship articles have been read thousands of times. They rank very high in search engines and are among the most read blog posts here in EFB. There is a reason for that. I found out that millions of people struggling with depression, addictions, post traumatic stress, self harm issues, dissociative identity disorder and many many other issues also struggle with this same confusion around the dysfunctional family system and the accepted protection and "respect" for the "authority" who is so often the perpetrator of abuse and emotional mistreatment instead of regard for the child victim.

But WE were those child victims...and we still need to be heard.

[Please Share your thoughts.](#) Exposing Truth, One snapshot at a time;

[About Darlene Ouimet](#)

"May there be peace in your letting go and courage in your moving on." Unknown

"One truth stands firm. All that happens in world history rests on something spiritual. If the spiritual is strong, it creates world history. If it is weak, it suffers world history." Albert Schweitzer

10] [Say No to HATE](#) – YouTube 1:56 minutes Herb Cohen

We have the power to say NO to hate. We can break the barriers of negative experiences through our acts of courage, determination, and passion for positive change. Herb Cohen

[Our Power of Choice](#) - Encouraging positive change through the beauty and inspiration of nature.

[About Herb](#) – Self empowerment is to realize that even though we may not be able to control every situation in our life, we can choose to control our attitude and actions towards those situations.

Herb is an award winning photographer whose unique collection of artwork combines his passions for

photographing nature and his creation of thought-provoking prose. His passion is to create artwork that encourages positive change through the beauty and inspiration of nature. Currently, Herb volunteers at schools and various organizations presenting his 'Our Power of Choice' and Self empowerment' programs.

"Don't let someone get comfortable with disrespecting you." Unknown

"Everyone smiles in the same language." George Carlin

11] [Gifts of Improvement After a Brain Injury](#) – William C. Jarvis Ed.D. - Disabled Magazine

Power - The gift of power is a result of improvement after a brain injury in terms of psychological power to accomplish great things. For many a brain injury results in psychological depression because a person is unable to do so many things; he/she is “powerless.”

Improvement is always very slow and can be depressing. However, if a person perseveres, he will improve in some areas. Keeping track of improvement and recognizing small gains will give a person an ongoing sense of power to continue on. There is power in this type of internal motivation!

"Patience and perseverance have a magical effect before which difficulties disappear and obstacles vanish." John Quincy Adams

"Success is not final. Failure is not fatal. It is the courage to continue that counts." Winston Churchill

This psychological power is what keeps a person optimistic throughout the rehabilitation process and life. There will be good days and bad days, but seeing and feeling improvement will provide the power to “not give up.”

Love -When a person has experienced a traumatic event in life, there is an understanding and compassion for others who have had similar unfortunate circumstances. An unexplainable “love” develops for others that did not exist before. As personal improvement is achieved, this empathy for the less fortunate is often heightened and the injured person wants to be of encouragement and help and love others.

This is one of the curious conditions of man. It is almost like the desire to be of help to others can greatly increase as a person improves more. In this sense, increased love and compassion are positive results of improvement.

There is something sustaining in experiencing love both as a recipient and a giver. Love is a trait of experience that will give you the desire to continue the path to improvement.

"We may give without loving, but we cannot love without giving." Bernard Meltzer

It is through giving that improvement is maximized when there are so many obstacles. Engage in life and participate all you can through giving to others and you will receive maximized improvement in return,

Self-control - A basic result of a brain injury is lack of self-control over behavior and psychological wellness. The benefit of improvement is that when a person is thinking with a clear mind, there tends to be more examples of self-control than lack of it. There still will be times of failure in this area, but the consistent application of self-control strategies will result in the ability to understand why you fail and therefore promote healing towards making necessary decisions to avoid failures! The very fact that a person is not giving up magnifies all the benefits of self-control and therefore the person can multiply this positive experience.

“What you do today can improve all your tomorrows.” Ralph Marston

If you have self-control over what and how you improve, a person will lay the ground work for tomorrow. It will be positive!! If you lack self-control, the direction for tomorrow is lacking. Improving in a consistent manner through the self-control of choices will only promote future success!

These are three benefits of improvement after a brain injury. The process is slow, but if you continue to seek improvement, you will experience power, love, and self-control and reinforce future improvement. A person will feel personal power in the fact he/she has overcome insurmountable odds. He/she will feel a sense of love as an outcome of being helped by others and helping others through encouragement inspiration, and example. Lastly, he/she will feel a strong sense of self-control through personal decisions that led to maximizing improvement.

About - William C. Jarvis Ed.D has developed the Jarvis Rehabilitation Method [JRM] in 2008 to create internal motivation to improve after a brain injury. Dr. Jarvis was in hospitals for eighteen months and has used these strategies for many years after his own severe TBI in 2000. Today, Dr. Jarvis walks with a cane, but has made remarkable improvement. Dr. Jarvis teaches improvement strategies that reinforce a person’s motivation. This method is based on his experience as a TBI Survivor, a teacher, a principal, college professor in Education, and co- leader of a TBI Support Group. His academic study in Education and personal understanding of the effects of a brain injury has provided an opportunity to apply motivational strategies to foster improvement during home rehabilitation.

“The spiritual path is simply the awakened awareness of living our lives. Everyone is on a spiritual path; most people just don't know it.” Unknown

12] [About Disabled Magazine](#) - Disabled Magazine is a social, interactive, online magazine that caters to individuals with unique life challenges. The network was designed to better accommodate people with their social and leisure skills while they are in the safety of their own home. Our goal is to provide a platform for all individuals to interact with others. The magazine will feature a social component as well as health and wellness, lifestyle, entertainment and much more.

We know first-hand what it is like to live with a disability, or know someone who is suffering from one. We teamed up with one another to start Disabled Magazine for four very important reasons:

- Provide tips on living with disabilities
- Provide a safe, fun way to socialize
- Bring stories of real life heroes to light
- Make new friends with our readers!

On behalf of the Disabled Magazine team we welcome you with open arms! We can not wait to interact with each one of our readers and hope we can provide a beacon of hope, fun, and warmth.

[Personal Stories](#) - Disabled Magazine

“Give yourself time to be sad, frustrated, and angry. Give yourself time to heal, accept, and to grow. Time doesn’t erase anything, but it can provide you with enough space to be able to breathe again. And then one day you wake up and your heart has a little bit of sunshine in it. And day by day, people offer you pieces of their hearts to help remake your own.” *Spiritual Awakenings*

“When you are born into a world you don't fit in; it's because you were born to help create a new one.” *Unknown*

13] [18 Behaviors of Emotionally Intelligent People](#) – Time.com **Inc.**

Emotional intelligence is a huge driver of success - When emotional intelligence [EQ] first appeared to the masses, it served as the missing link in a peculiar finding: people with average IQs outperform those with the highest IQs 70 percent of the time. This anomaly threw a massive wrench into the broadly held assumption that IQ was the sole source of success.

Decades of research now point to emotional intelligence as being the critical factor that sets star performers apart from the rest of the pack. The connection is so strong that 90 percent of top performers have high emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence is the “something” in each of us that is a bit intangible. It affects how we manage behavior, navigate social complexities, and make personal decisions to achieve positive results.

Despite the significance of EQ, its intangible nature makes it difficult to measure and to know what to do to improve it if you’re lacking. You can always take a scientifically validated test, such as the one that comes with the [Emotional Intelligence 2.0](#) book, but unfortunately, most such tests aren’t free. So, I’ve analyzed the data from the million-plus people TalentSmart has tested in order to identify the behaviors that are the hallmarks of a high EQ. What follows are sure signs that you have a high EQ.

You have a robust emotional vocabulary - All people experience emotions, but it is a select few who can accurately identify them as they occur. Our research shows that only 36 percent of people can do this, which is problematic because unlabeled emotions often go misunderstood, which leads to irrational choices and counterproductive actions.

People with high EQs master their emotions because they understand them, and they use an extensive vocabulary of feelings to do so. While many people might describe themselves as simply feeling “bad,” emotionally intelligent people can pinpoint whether they feel “irritable,” “frustrated,” “downtrodden,” or “anxious.” The more specific your word choice, the better insight you have into exactly how you are feeling, what caused it, and what you should do about it.

You’re curious about people - It doesn’t matter if they’re introverted or extroverted, emotionally intelligent people are curious about everyone around them. This curiosity is the product of empathy, one of the most significant gateways to a high EQ. The more you care about other people and what

they're going through, the more curiosity you're going to have about them.

You embrace change - Emotionally intelligent people are flexible and are constantly adapting. They know that fear of change is paralyzing and a major threat to their success and happiness. They look for change that is lurking just around the corner, and they form a plan of action should these changes occur.

You know your strengths and weaknesses - Emotionally intelligent people don't just understand emotions; they know what they're good at and what they're terrible at. They also know who pushes their buttons and the environments [both situations and people] that enable them to succeed. Having a high EQ means you know your strengths and how to lean into and use them to your full advantage while keeping your weaknesses from holding you back. [Learn more](#)

"Depression is the inability to construct a future." Rollo May

"Depression is not a sign of weakness, it means you have been strong for far too long. Unknown

14] [Study Information](#) - Protocol Title: An Exploratory Study to Evaluate the Experiences within Acute Psychiatric Wards from the Staff and Patient Perspective: A Mixed-Methods Approach

Principal Investigator: Christina Borba, PhD

Contact Information: Monday - Friday from 9:00AM - 5:00PM: Call 617-512-9089

Email: cborba@mgh.harvard.edu

Co-Investigator: Morgan Shields, BA

Contact Information: Monday - Friday from 9:00AM - 5:00PM: Call 954-907-0099

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Description of Subject Population: Adults [18+ years] who are former service-users of acute psychiatric facilities.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH - The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of important factors that influence staff and patient satisfaction within acute psychiatric wards. The experience of being a patient within acute psychiatric wards can vary greatly from ward-to-ward and even between patients within the same ward. Given the lack of knowledge regarding the experiences within acute psychiatric facilities from the service-user perspective, we hope to better understand factors that contribute to satisfaction and dissatisfaction with care.

Findings from this study will provide important data for developing future research on this topic and will hopefully inform the development of programs and policies that might improve both the staff and patient experience within acute psychiatric wards.

STUDY INFORMATION [Learn more](#)

"Try to understand the blackness, lethargy, hopelessness, and loneliness they're going through. Be there for them when they come through the other side. It's hard to be a friend to someone who's depressed, but it is one of the kindest, noblest, and best things you will ever do." Stephen Fry

15] [The Women Who Face More Traumatic Brain Injury Than NFL Players](#) – Huffington Post by Melissa Jeltsen

Thirty years ago, Kerri Walker, now a coordinator for a domestic violence shelter in Phoenix, found herself inexplicably driving down the left side of the road into oncoming traffic. “It felt totally normal,” she said, recalling how she was oblivious to the danger. Walker escaped an accident that day, but looking back now, it was the first clue she had an undiagnosed brain injury.

At the time, Walker, 51, was in the throes of an abusive relationship, she said. She estimated that over a 2 1/2-year period, she was hit in the head around 15 times - once with a gun - and violently shaken.

“I had major headaches, and every now and then I would have these moments when I would get dizzy and disoriented,” Walker said. But she didn't connect her symptoms to the assaults until a year later, when a doctor at Geauga Medical Center in Ohio diagnosed her with traumatic brain injury, or TBI. “When you are in a relationship with that much trauma and violence, you don't know what's physical or what's emotional or mental,” she said.

Soldiers returning from war and athletes are regularly diagnosed with TBI - a complex brain injury caused by a blow or a jolt to the head - and many subsequently receive support and services for the condition.

But domestic violence survivors have been largely left out of the picture.

On Tuesday, the Sojourner Center, one of the largest U.S. domestic violence shelters and where Walker works in Phoenix, is taking a big step to change that. The center, along with TBI experts at local hospitals and medical institutions, is launching an ambitious program dedicated to the study of TBI in women and children living with domestic violence.

The Sojourner BRAIN [Brain Recovery And Inter-professional Neuroscience Program will study how common domestic violence-related TBI is, investigate short-term and long-term effects, develop domestic violence-specific tools to screen for head trauma, and provide individualized treatment plans.

“These women are falling through the cracks,” said Maria E. Garay, the CEO of Sojourner Center who is spearheading the initiative. “This is a public health epidemic. The fact that no one is tracking this is, to me, a crime.”

Robert Knechtel, the interim director of the BRAIN program, said there is a lack of comprehensive research on TBI in domestic violence survivors. “Most of the work has been done with athletes or the military,” he said. “This is a group that, by extrapolating some numbers, would dwarf the military and the athletes combined.” [Read the entire article](#)

Please note, great article...but nothing on males, domestic violence, child abuse and TBI – I wrote to her and she let me know that her next article would also include some males. MS

“Let us always meet each other with smile, for the smile is the beginning of love.” Mother Teresa

“Mental pain is less dramatic than physical pain, but it is more common and also more hard to bear. The frequent attempt to conceal mental pain increases the burden: it is easier to say “My tooth is aching” than to say “My heart is broken.” C.S Lewis, The Problem of Pain

16] [The Pesticide Factor](#) - Psychiatric Times; Dee Rapposelli.

Pyrethroid pesticide use may be encouraging expression of an ADHD phenotype, according to researchers from the Cincinnati Children’s Hospital in collaboration with researchers from Rutgers, University of Rochester, Brown University, and Simon Fraser University.¹ [[pdf](#)] To follow-up on murine and rodent studies that showed a correlation between pyrethroid exposure and ADHD symptoms that were especially pronounced in males, the researchers assessed exposure and ADHD symptomatology in a random sample of 687 US children, age 8 to 15 years.

These children were participants in the 2001-2002 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), which was the only NHANES cycle that included a structured diagnostic interview regarding ADHD, pyrethroid pesticide biomarkers, and covariates [eg, sex, household income, age, race/ethnicity, health insurance status, prenatal tobacco exposure, blood lead level, and urinary organophosphate pesticide metabolite level].

Exposure was assessed by measuring concurrent urinary levels of the pyrethroid metabolite 3-phenoxybenzoic acid (3PBA). An ADHD diagnosis was defined as either meeting DSM-IV criteria via the Diagnostic Interview Schedule for Children or a caregiver report of a past diagnosis. Multivariable logistic regression examined the link between pyrethroid exposure and ADHD, and poisson regression investigated the link between exposure and ADHD symptom counts.

In all, 15% of the study population met criteria for an ADHD diagnosis. Urinary 3-PBA levels were detected in 79% of the study participants [mean, 1.14 µg/L], with the means for the 10th, 50th, and 90th percentiles being 0.07, 0.29, and 1.94 µg/L, respectively.

After adjusting for covariates, the researchers discovered that children with detectable urinary 3PBA were twice as likely to have ADHD as those in whom 3PBA was undetected. Higher 3-PBA levels also were associated with an increasing number of hyperactive/impulsive symptoms. In fact, hyperactive/impulsive symptom counts were 77 % higher in children with detectable 3-PBA levels than in children with nondetectable levels. Whereas effect on inattentiveness was insignificant, hyperactive/impulsive symptoms increased by 50 % for every 10-fold increase in 3PBA level measured. This effect was also sex-specific.

Boys most at risk - In correlation with animal studies, boys were far more affected than girls. Boys with detectable urinary 3-PBA were nearly 3 times more likely to have ADHD than boys in whom urinary 3-PBA was undetectable. Further, a 10-fold increase in urinary 3-PBA level was associated with a 43% increased prevalence of ADHD whereas this pattern was not seen in girls.

Pyrethroid pesticides, such the insecticide permethrin, have been thought to be safer than organophosphates, which were banned for residential use by the US Environmental Protection Agency in 2000-2001. Pyrethroid pesticides are now the most commonly used pesticides for residential use and are increasingly being used in agriculture as well. Although additional investigation is warranted, given the findings of this study, residential and personal use of pyrethroid pesticides should be reconsidered.

Clinicians serving the pediatric as well as obstetric care populations may want to inform patients and their caretakers of the health risks of pyrethroid-based pesticide/insecticide use in relation to ADHD symptomatology.

*"Instead of spending your energy on hating your enemies, use it to love your friends a little harder."
Unknown*

Take care, Michael, Mary, Becky, Cynthia, Lynn & Mary Ann

PS. Please share this with your friends & if you have received this in error, please let me know – mikeskinner@comcast.net

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