



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 March 2020

Hi Folks,

Sending warm thoughts and prayers to all, these are trying times. It can be mind boggling. But I do believe we shall get through this. Hopefully wiser minds and acts of kindness and caring shall be the norm for the days that follow.

I now have this radio show interview posted at You Tube. Please take a listen when time allows.

[Talking Wellness with Mike MacInnis. YouTube](#) - *“I'm particularly proud and happy about yesterday's "Talking Wellness" episode. Michael Skinner was a trailblazer in trauma informed peer support work, getting it done before people even knew it was a thing. A class act and genuine good guy. Definitely give this show a listen!” - Mike MacInnis*

On a personal note, taking part in this interview helped to remind me why I do what I do...the past few years have been a bit hard for me due to lack of focus due to the head injury. I have sensed and felt clarity coming back into my life again. So that is a good thing. I have declined performance gigs and presenting opportunities over the past few years due to the 'confusion' in my head. Strange how a head injury can exacerbate PTSD, depression and give the gift of anxiety, a gift you never felt before. Life and it's strange journeys...as a young man, I used to think of my life as a roller coaster ride through hell. Now I see it as detours, bumps and adventures you may not have asked for, but the learning curve through it all helps.

Take care, Michael

Wise words from my friend James A. - *“The author JB Priestly once said “In WW2 the British were never better before or since “ In the documentary “The World at War “ people spoke of how during the blitz that people looked after each other, complete strangers made sure that if someone lost there things in a raid that the “Jones or Smiths “ down the street would do all they could too make sure people had some clothes and some food in there belly”*

We have been poisoned to fear each other, that we must take, take and take and that those who do look out for others are weak when they are anything but!

If we all come together as one during this virus outbreak and help each other we can show human

*spirit can be the strongest thing of all and build for a better tomorrow,
Its not hard, you plant the seeds now for the next generation and what will grow will last forever in a
beautiful way .*

Those out there who are doing this its you who are the champs of this world !!!!”

Newsletter Contents:

- 1] If coronavirus scares you, read this to take control over your health anxiety - by Rhiannon Lucy Cosslett @rhiannonlucyc - The Guardian News
- 2] What To Do When Worry Keeps You Awake – Mindful – Health mind, healthy life By Nicole Bayes-Fleming
- 3] How the Dallas Street Choir grants homeless residents a voice - PBS NewsHour -Video & transcript
- 4] Breaking Generational Patterns of Suffering – Mindful By Nicole Bayes-Fleming @ Voices, Podcasts & Interviews
- 5] Women Veterans Empowered & Thriving
- 6] A Hot Bath Has Benefits Similar to Exercise by Steve Faulkner @ Pocket Worthy
- 7] People Don't Outgrow the Effects of Childhood Trauma Just Because They Become Adults by W. R. Cummings @ Psych Central
- 8] Daryl Davis: the black musician who converts Ku Klux Klan members by Morena Duwe @ The Guardian News
- 8a] Minds.com “We have lost the act of civil discourse, and Minds is going to restore that.”Daryl D
- 8b] Daryl Davis: Why I, as a black man, attend KKK rallies. TED Talk – You Tube
- 9] Grassroots groups help LGBTQ people survive - and thrive - in Appalachia By James Michael Nichols @ NBC News
- 10] Kimberly A. Cavanagh – author, advocate, educator
- 11] Project Return Peer Support Network – Warm Line Support
- 12] [ALERT] Tell Congress TODAY to Include People with Disabilities in COVID-19 Relief!
The Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law

*“We do not need magic to change the world, we carry all the power we need inside ourselves already:
we have the power to imagine better.” - J.K. Rowling*

“Scars have the strange power to remind us that our past is real.” - Cormac McCarthy

1] [If coronavirus scares you, read this to take control over your health anxiety](#) - by [Rhiannon Lucy Cosslett](#) @rhiannonlucyc - The Guardian News

A pandemic is fertile ground for those who suffer from anxiety - here's a short guide on how to manage it

When news of the coronavirus broke at the end of last year, and as the stories from the outbreak became more alarming over time, I found myself wondering how health anxiety sufferers were coping.

You see, I used to be one. In late 2015, I suffered a post-traumatic stress disorder relapse which led to debilitating anxiety, much of which was health-related. During that period, I was paralyzed by the thought of becoming ill and dying. I was constantly checking for symptoms and signs of disease online and I was fixated on the health of my loved ones.

After treatment, including trauma-focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), I almost completely recovered. But I remember vividly how it felt to be in an all-consuming state of panic. For many months, it ruled my entire existence. Approximately 40 million American adults – roughly 18% of the population – have an anxiety disorder, while in the UK there were 8.2 million cases of anxiety in 2013. There are few statistics about health anxiety, but it can affect those who have an existing anxiety disorder or those who have experienced a life event such as bereavement, birth trauma or an accident. In times like these, where a global pandemic is taking up most of the media conversation, it can be even more difficult to stay calm.

Here is some advice that may give some comfort to those of you who are struggling,

- 1) **Avoid the (health-related) news** - We all want to keep up to date, but when you have health anxiety the need to check and read the latest updates can become compulsive, feeding the anxiety. Try having a news detox, or allocating yourself a time limit for reading or watching news. If you're really worried about missing something crucial, you can always tell friends and family to contact you in the event of an emergency situation in order to keep you informed
- 2) **Try not to seek constant reassurance** - Seeking reassurance can make you feel calmer for a little while, but in my experience, it is always temporary. Your brain creates a feedback cycle where you become increasingly reliant on reassurance, which only serves to reinforce the anxiety. It's natural to want your loved ones to tell you things will be OK, but when you start needing that reassurance several times a day it's time to take a step back.
- 3) **Introduce an absolute ban on Googling symptoms** - Dr Google is not, and never will be, your friend, especially not when you are a sufferer of health anxiety. Nor will message-boards and forums. Try to remember that people visit these places when they have reason to be concerned. Once you start understanding it's a skewed lens, you'll be better able to put things in perspective
- 4) **Try a countering technique** - This is a CBT exercise which involves giving a persistent

thought the courtroom treatment, by confronting it with a rational counter-statement. For example, if your persistent thought is something like “Everyone I love will die from this virus” you can counter it with factual statements such as “Actually, most people who get Covid-19 are likely to make a full recovery, and that’s assuming mum, dad and my little sister will even catch it at all.” As my mother always says: “Just because you think something, doesn’t make it true.”

- 5) **Do some exercise** - Even if it’s just star jumps in your bedroom, or shaking your body parts like you’re in the warm-up section of a hippie acting class, exercise will help get the adrenaline out of your system and channel the panic elsewhere.
- 6) **Breathing and grounding exercises** - From guided yogic breathing to using a strong smell (I favored lavender oil), grounding exercises can help bring you back to reality. I also found bending over to touch my toes and then very slowly standing up starting at the base of my spine to be beneficial, as it centers me. You can look for examples online, but sometimes, something as simple as sitting on the floor can help.
- 7) **Allocate yourself a daily ‘worry period’** - Give yourself half an hour to worry about this to your heart’s content, and then you have to go and do something else.
- 8) **Treat yourself** - Anything that will give you a little boost can help. It doesn’t need to involve spending money: you can also cook yourself something nice, have a hot bath, or listen to a song you love.
- 9) **Remember that your anxious state isn’t permanent** - When you are in it, anxiety always feels as though it will never end, but it will. It’s hard to remember this, but do try. I genuinely thought that I would never recover, and now even though we are in a public health crisis, I feel calm and have things in perspective. It’s a worrying time, and many of us, myself included, will have loved ones who might be showing symptoms, but the tendency to jump to the worst-case scenario very rarely reflects reality. Be kind to yourself. It may be a bit cheesy, but this too shall pass.

“Before sunlight can shine through a window, the blinds must be raised.” American Proverb

“True unity is based not on the elimination of conflict, but on the conviction that responding creatively to conflict can be a doorway to deeper connection and growth.” Unknown

2] [What To Do When Worry Keeps You Awake](#) – Mindful – Health mind, healthy life By [Nicole Bayes-Fleming](#)

Behavioral sleep expert Jared Minkel explains four ways to quiet a racing mind and sleep more soundly.

We may have outgrown our fear of monsters hiding under the bed, but nighttime anxiety continues to keep many of us awake long past lights out. According to the American Psychological Association, [43 percent of Americans](#) say stress has caused them to lie awake at night at least once a month. So is there a way we calm our anxious minds, and get to sleep more quickly?

That's a question Jared Minkel, assistant professor and director of the adult behavioral sleep medicine program at Brown University, answers in this video from Happify.

[How to Calm Your Worries and Sleep Better](#): A Scientist's Tips for Falling Asleep More Quickly –
YouTube 2:49 minutes

“One of the most common difficulties with getting to sleep is people just can't turn their minds off,” Minkel says. “You might be tired and sluggish all day, but you lay down in bed and all of a sudden your mind just starts going and won't stop.”

If that sounds familiar, here are four ways you can quiet the mind and sleep soundly:

1. **Encourage positive distractions** - Focusing all your attention on how you can't get to sleep will only [make sleep more difficult](#). Instead, Minkel recommends distracting yourself with “interesting and engaging imagery,” involving as many of your senses as possible.

For example, close your eyes and picture a nice beach - can you hear the crashing of waves? Feel the sun on your skin? Taste the salt from the sea?

“These kinds of images can then transfer into dream content, so keep it pleasant and positive,” Minkel says.

2. **Allow worrisome thoughts** - If you're unable to sleep because you're fixated on something stressful that's happening the next day - like a big presentation at work, or a confrontation with a family member - it's common to want to push those thoughts from your mind. However, doing so may hurt more than it helps.

“Not only will you start to think about these things again, now your arousal will be higher, too,” Minkel says.

Rather than trying not to think about what's worrying you, he recommends considering what comes after the big event. Remembering the mundane tasks that follow something stressful - like cleaning up your meeting space after the presentation, or going grocery shopping after you've seen family - can help you recognize that the [panic will pass](#).

“Keep going until the stressful part is over and you're back into your normal life,” Minkel says. “Don't just replay the worst parts over and over.”

3. **Practice nightly mindfulness** - Often when we're wide awake worrying, we're focused on something that's happening in the future. In those cases, [mindfulness](#) can be a powerful antidote as it directs your attention towards what's happening in the present.

“You can always focus on your breathing, but it may also be helpful to focus on a physical sensation like how warm and soft your blankets feel,” Minkel says.

You can also try a [body-scan meditation](#) to relax both your body and mind.

“Anything that helps you focus your attention on something that’s happening right now, rather than something that might happen in the future,” he says.

4. **Focus on gratitude** - Finally, focusing on the good can evoke pleasant emotions and help soothe you to sleep.

“For example, rather than thinking what might go wrong, try to focus your attention on something you’re looking forward to,” Minkel says. “You can also think of something that happened during the last day or two that you are grateful for.”

It can also be comforting to think of a positive person in your life, or nice deeds other people have done for you.

“Feeling [fortunate or grateful](#) for that person can reduce worry and help you sleep,” Minkel says.

“The thing about a crisis is that you have a choice. You can react and panic, or you can take the opportunity to change your perspective on all the problems you have been worrying about and focus on the important things in life. It is your choice, choose with kindness and compassion.”

#RespondinKindNess

*“Associate yourself with people of good quality, for it is better to be alone than in bad company.”
Booker T. Washington*

3] [How the Dallas Street Choir grants homeless residents a voice](#) - PBS NewsHour [Video & transcript posted at website]

The mantra of the Dallas Street Choir is “homeless, not voiceless.” Some 2,000 singers have passed through the group in the last five years, seeking support, artistic expression and community as they contend with life on the streets. The organization also aims to raise awareness of Dallas’ growing homelessness problem, even as the city’s economy booms. Jeffrey Brown reports.

[You Tube](#) 8:11 minutes

“Our culture has bred consumers and addicts. We eat too much, buy too much, and want too much. We set ourselves on the fruitless mission of filling that gaping hole within us with material things. Blindly we consume more and more, believing we are hungry for more food, status, or money; yet really we are hungry for connection.” Vironika Tugaleva

“You can't hold a man down without staying down with him.” Booker T. Washington

4] [Breaking Generational Patterns of Suffering](#) – Mindful By [Nicole Bayes-Fleming @ Voices](#), Podcasts & Interviews

Justin Michael Williams is on a mission to bring mindfulness and meditation to teens in the U.S. cities most impacted by violence.

.....when working with marginalized groups, he says, **“The questions change. It’s like: how do I**

empower myself to overcome these things, how do I deal with the trauma that I'm facing, how do I break these generational patterns of stuff that's holding me back?"

By his own admission, Justin Michael Williams is used to being the “token black guy” in the meditation community.

“My mission was never ever to be a meditation teacher,” he explains. “It just ended up being, ‘Ok, this practice has changed my life, let me share it.’”

As a musician, public speaker and soon-to-be author, Williams says he considers his practice to be “the glue that holds my whole life together.”

But before meditation would bring his life together, everything had to fall apart.

Bringing Meditation Home - William grew up in Pittsburg, California, in a neighbourhood plagued by gun violence. At home, he witnessed his mother survive domestic abuse.

“My adaptation to all of it was to just be as smart as I could, so I could get out,” he says.

He pushed himself to keep it together and focus on school, eventually winning a scholarship to UCLA. Yet when he finally left home, he found all of the painful emotions he had been pushing down for so long resurfaced, resulting in a damaging eating disorder.

In seeking out help, he was directed to try yoga and meditation.

“Back then I didn't know any black people doing meditation or yoga,” he says. “Long story short, I started going to these meditation workshops and I hated them.”

A chance encounter with Lorin Roche, the author of [Meditation Made Easy](#), changed everything

“He basically said, ‘If you want to learn to meditate, come meet me at the beach tomorrow at nine,’” Williams says. “I did - and my life changed forever that day.”

Williams went on to apprentice with Roche for three years. As he became more and more involved with the meditation community, he recognized the need to include - and involve - [more people of color](#). But it wasn't until the results of the 2016 presidential election that he felt a renewed sense of urgency.

“That's when I really said hold on, how do I bring this practice that has helped me to a community that is not getting it?” he recalls.

Hoping to reach a more diverse group than those who usually attended the retreats and tours he'd taught at, Williams began to host free meditation sessions in LA, which drew LGBTQ+ people and people of color.

For Williams, the experience was eye-opening.

“When I'm teaching in the rooms that are primarily privileged the questions are: how do I relax, I'm so

stressed, how do I be more zen? Which I think are all super important questions, and the practice has helped me in those ways,” he acknowledges.

But when working with marginalized groups, he says, “The questions change. It’s like: how do I empower myself to overcome these things, how do I deal with the trauma that I’m facing, how do I break these generational patterns of stuff that’s holding me back?”

Helping People Heal From Systemic Trauma - Once he began working with underserved communities, Williams quickly realized there were only so many people he could help at once. He decided to work on a book, both to offer as a resource and to inspire others like him to teach.

His book, [*Stay Woke: A Meditation Guide for the Rest of Us*](#), was released in February 2020. It tackles the struggles not typically found in meditation books, including overcoming homophobia, reckoning with personal trauma, and dealing with stress induced by poverty.

“It’s still meditation, [mindfulness](#), and I didn’t make that up,” he says. “But what’s new about it is the context that I put it in.”

Looking back on his childhood, Williams recognizes that he was dealing with a trauma that was bigger than himself - and it’s one he says he sees many students still grappling with today.

“Studies are showing that kids are facing a level of PTSD today that’s similar to returning war veterans,” he says. “But there’s no ‘P’ in PTSD when they haven’t left [those environments].”

Rather than plan a traditional book tour, Williams and his team have researched the U.S. cities most impacted by violence in order to reach students in high schools and on college campuses most in need of support. The list includes Flint, Chicago, Atlanta, and Detroit.

“We’re doing an event that’s like a TED talk meets a music concert together,” he says. “What gives me chills is when you go and there’s 3,500 kids at one high school... When you teach 3,500 people in a community like that to meditate at once, and then they take these books and go to 3,500 homes, that’s a huge ripple out into the world.”

Through a partnership with the [Sounds True Foundation](#), Williams is currently crowdfunding in order to provide copies of his book for free to all of the students who attend his tour.

“What I really believe is that mindfulness is about awareness,” he says. “And awareness right now in this world is calling us to take action.”

“Our brains are wired for connection, but trauma rewires them for protection. That’s why healthy relationships are difficult for wounded people.” Ryan North

“The only ones among you who will be really happy are those who will have sought and found how to serve.” Albert Schweitzer

5] [Women Veterans Empowered & Thriving](#)

OUR MISSION - To guide women Veterans to reconnect with their mind, body, soul and passion for

life. Through creativity, compassion and camaraderie in a nonjudgmental space, we empower each other to ascend to the best version of ourselves.

RITUALS - Warrior Cultures of the past Greeks, Romans, Native Americans welcomed their military home in rituals of storytelling. This bridged the gap of communication between Veterans and civilians. We at Women Veterans Empowered & Thriving curate Empowerment Performances to facilitate these rituals, to call on civilians to uphold their civic duty by being a witness and validate the service of all Veterans.

PROGRAMMING - To stay true to who we are as Women Veterans Empowered & Thriving we advocate for, create and provide Veterans with programming. Fully funded by donations these programs bring our Mission to life.

BI-MONTHLY MEET UP & WORKSHOPS - Greet, meet and eat with fellow women Veterans. Share resources, cultivate friendships, embrace camaraderie, creativity and community. Empower your truth and experiences.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS & PUBLIC SPEAKING - Women Veterans avail themselves to organizations, universities and communities by leading and participating in discussions and speaking about issues that relate to all Veterans.

[Gallery](#) – photos & more

[Contact Us](#) troupe@wvet.org Bethlehem, PA

“If I could give you one gift today, I'd give you the ability to see beyond your fears, worries and doubt. Then you could embrace the extraordinary person that you truly are.” Katrina Mayer

“I can shake off everything as I write; my sorrows disappear, my courage is reborn.” Anne Frank

6] [A Hot Bath Has Benefits Similar to Exercise](#) by Steve Faulkner @ [Pocket Worthy](#)
· Stories to fuel your mind.

A hot bath burns calories, helps control blood sugar and keeps your blood vessels healthy. What's not to like?

Many cultures swear by the benefits of a hot bath. But only recently has science began to understand how passive heating (as opposed to getting hot and sweaty from exercise) improves health.

At Loughborough University we [investigated](#) the effect of a hot bath on blood sugar control (an important measure of metabolic fitness) and on energy expended (number of calories burned). We recruited 14 men to take part in the study. They were assigned to an hour-long soak in a hot bath (40°C) or an hour of cycling. The activities were designed to cause a 1°C rise in core body temperature over the course of one hour.

We measured how many calories the men burned in each session. We also measured their blood sugar for 24 hours after each trial.

Cycling resulted in more calories being burned compared with a hot bath, but bathing resulted in about as many calories being burned as a half-hour walk (around 140 calories). The overall blood sugar response to both conditions was similar, but peak blood sugar after eating was about 10 percent lower when participants took a hot bath compared with when they exercised.

We also showed changes to the inflammatory response similar to that [following exercise](#). The anti-inflammatory response to exercise is important as it helps to protect us against infection and illness, but chronic inflammation is associated with a reduced ability to fight off diseases. This suggests that repeated passive heating may contribute to reducing chronic inflammation, which is often present with long-term diseases, such as type 2 diabetes.

Exciting New Field of Research - Passive heating for human health is a relatively new field of research, but some exciting results have emerged over the past few years.

Research from Finland, [published](#) in 2015, suggested that frequent saunas can reduce the risk of having a heart attack or stroke – at least in men. The idea that passive heating can improve cardiovascular function received further support when the University of Oregon published a [study](#) the following year showing that regular hot baths can lower blood pressure.

In a [second study](#), the same group looked at the mechanism responsible for these improvements. They found that passive heating raised levels of nitric oxide, a molecule that dilates blood vessels and reduces blood pressure. This has implications for treating high blood pressure and improving peripheral circulation in people with type 2 diabetes. As type 2 diabetes is associated with reductions in [nitric oxide availability](#), passive heating may help re-establish a healthier nitric oxide level and reduce blood pressure.

In order to establish the effect of increasing body temperature passively, as opposed to through exertion, [another study](#) matched the intensity of heating from water immersion to that of running on a treadmill. Water immersion resulted in a greater increase in body temperature compared with exercise, as well as a greater reduction in average arterial blood pressure. This is important as a reduction in blood pressure is closely associated with a reduced risk of developing heart disease. This study points to the promising effect that may result from passive heating. It also suggests some of the cardiovascular effects of passive heating may be comparable with those of exercise.

As well as the cardiovascular effects of passive heating, there is evidence to suggest that there may be beneficial metabolic effects as well – such as better control of blood sugar. The [first study](#), conducted by Philip Hooper of McKee Medical Center, Colorado, in 1999, investigated the effect of three weeks of hot-tub therapy in patients diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. The results showed improvements in body weight, blood sugar control and a reduced dependence on insulin.

Hooper thought these effects may result from changes to blood flow as a result of passive heating, but he was unable to identify a specific mechanism by which their intervention led to these benefits.

Since this early investigation, few studies have investigated the potential for passive heating to improve blood sugar control in humans. With our study, we have tried to reignite interest in the health benefits that may be linked to passive heating.

Heat Shock Proteins - Studies using [animals](#) may have identified how heating affects health. These studies suggest one of the key regulators of blood sugar control may be [heat shock proteins](#).

Heat shock proteins are molecules that are made by all cells of the human body in response to stresses. Their levels rise following exercise and [passive heating](#). In the long term, raised levels of these proteins may help the [function of insulin](#) and improve blood sugar control. (Conversely, heat shock proteins have been shown to be [lower in people with diabetes](#).)

It seems that activities that increase heat shock proteins may help to improve blood sugar control and offer an alternative to exercise. These activities – such as soaking in a hot tub or taking a sauna – may have health benefits for people who are unable to exercise regularly. Hopefully our future investigations, coupled with those of other groups worldwide, will help to establish the true potential of passive heating as a therapeutic tool.

Steve Faulkner is a research associate at Loughborough University.

“In times of stress, the best thing you can do for each other is to listen with our ears and our hearts and to be assured that our questions are just as important as our answers.” Fred Rogers

“We can boost our immune systems by strengthening our social networks and decreasing stress.” Jane McGonigal

7] [People Don't Outgrow the Effects of Childhood Trauma Just Because They Become Adults](#) by W. R. Cummings @ [Psych Central](#)

Scrolling through Facebook this morning, I passed a picture someone had posted, which said, “Stop blaming your parents for how you turned out. You’re grown now. Your mistakes are your own. Grow up. Forgiveness is important.”

I think I understand where the creator of the post was coming from, but I also think they must’ve been very under-informed about what childhood trauma actually does to the brain. I’m sure the sentiment behind the statement was to encourage people to take responsibility for their own choices, to work hard to overcome obstacles, and to avoid leaning on emotional crutches.

However, I can’t help but wonder about the life of the person who wrote it.

Maybe they feel free to write those words because they never experienced trauma that rewired the way their brain processes emotion. Or maybe they felt justified because their own children have made negative claims against them as a parent. Or, perhaps, they genuinely know people who take advantage of their sad stories so they think it applies to everyone who talks about childhood pain.

I don’t know, but I can tell you the post didn’t consider all the people who have legitimate, residual hurt from when they were kids.

More often than not, the way people act in the first decade of adulthood can be pretty well attributed to

how they were raised. These behaviors include the positive habits our parents taught us in childhood (whether intentionally or inadvertently) and the negative habits. This isn't even limited to negativity that resulted in trauma - just negative habits, in general.

For example...

- I don't make household chores a part of my daily routine because I wasn't really made to do chores when I was a kid. Am I angry with my parents about that? Nope. But it affected how I prioritize my life as an adult. Could I teach myself how to be more disciplined in that area? Yep. But it goes against the grain of what feels right to me.

- My dad isn't very emotionally expressive because he grew up in a family that didn't hug, say "I love you," or really talk about their feelings.

- My mom struggles with self-worth because of messages that were sent to her in childhood.

- My best friend values financial security over relational security because she spent time in and out of foster care as a child.

- Another friend struggles with making healthy food choices because it wasn't engrained in them as a child.

- A different friend feels a deep sense of shame and embarrassment whenever they don't do what is "morally" right because of the church they were raised in.

I could go on and on, but the point is that we're all affected by how we're raised, and those effects don't just go away when we turn eighteen. Sometimes they stick with us our entire lives, even after years of therapy and hard emotional work.

When a person's childhood involves something so negatively impactful that it causes actual emotional *trauma*, there's an even greater likelihood that the effects of it will be permanent or long-lasting.

But what qualifies as "trauma?" Is that just a word people use to overdramatize the parts of their lives they don't like? In the world of psychology, trauma is generally defined as the emotional response the body goes through after someone is exposed to something that is deeply distressing. Not just inconvenient, bothersome, or scary.

Deeply. Distressing.

Oftentimes, when we think of childhood trauma, we think of the more "typical" traumas, such as being physically abused. However, trauma comes in many different forms and can vary in impact from one person to another. It might even come from something that's only "moderately" distressing but happens consistently for a long period of time... because living in emergency-response mode for an extended period of time also causes the brain trauma.

For one person I know, the smell of marijuana triggers the emergency-trauma-response system in her brain. The smell reminds her of her mother, who severely neglected her as a child. Even after A LOT of

therapy, and a lot of years in adulthood, the smell of weed tells her brain that it's time to go into survival mode.

For others, it's the slamming of a door. For some, it's being given the silent treatment. For others, it's being afraid of running out of food.

When true trauma happens to a person, the brain is physically altered and the biological processes in the body are affected. This isn't just a psychological theory. It's been proven in study after study of brain imaging done on those who've experienced traumatic events.

The fear center of the brain (the "amygdala") becomes overstimulated by the trauma, which causes the brain to think it should be afraid all of the time, even when not in danger. In turn, the prefrontal cortex of the brain becomes less able to function properly, which steals the ability to make logical decisions, control impulses, and organize thoughts. Over the course of time, the part of the brain that controls emotions becomes dysregulated, which means the person might feel emotions too strongly, not strongly enough, too often, not often enough, or at inappropriate times.

The brain can even develop scars after experiencing trauma. These scars exist along the neural pathways of the brain, which prevents messages from getting from one place to another. Neural pathways are sort of like the "roads" of the brain, while neurons are like the "cars" that transport messages. When the "road" becomes damaged—maybe sexual abuse in childhood caused the collapse of a massive bridge—then the road is no longer drivable by a neuron/car. Alternative routes, or detours, can be created over time with certain types of therapy, but the road itself can never actually be repaired.

This means that even after a person has reached adulthood and starts learning how to cope with their trauma, they'll still have damaged pathways in their brain for the rest of their life. There will always be road blocks.

When you think of it that way, it doesn't really make sense to say, "Stop blaming your parents for how you turned out. You're grown now."

Be understanding of how much deeper someone's story is than what you see on the surface. You have no idea how well they're doing, in spite of the hand they were dealt.

"Grief is in two parts. The first is loss. The second is the remaking of life." Anne Roiphe

"I shall allow no man to belittle my soul by making me hate him." Booker T. Washington

8] [Daryl Davis: the black musician who converts Ku Klux Klan members](#) by Morena Duwe @ The Guardian News

After an encounter with a KKK member in the 1980s, the accomplished pianist turned his focus to curing racism through education

Daryl Davis is a musician – a pianist to be exact. He has jammed with the likes of Chuck Berry, Jerry Lee Lewis, BB King and even Bill Clinton. Loyal to music but not to genre, he plays jazz, blues, rock'n'roll, country, boogie-woogie, swing, big band and beyond. No matter the musical style, Davis

will play it, because he believes that music in all its variations is a great equalizer. So when he entered the Silver Dollar Lounge in Frederick, Maryland, for a country gig one fateful night in 1983, being the only black man present did not perturb him at all.

While this was not his first country gig at the Silver Dollar Lounge, it was his most significant. After he and his band finished their set, Davis was approached by a patron who was around 15 years his senior. Not an unusual occurrence for a working musician. However, while praising Davis on his performance, the patron candidly noted that he had never seen a black man who could play like Jerry Lee Lewis.

More curious than offended, Davis used this encounter as an opportunity for friendly discourse rather than outrage. “I explained to this older white guy that Jerry Lee Lewis was influenced by the same black boogie-woogie and blues piano players as I was,” Davis says with a chuckle. “He didn’t believe me. Then I told him that Jerry Lewis is a good friend of mine and well, he didn’t believe that either, but he was fascinated.”

“So he asks me to join him for a drink,” he continues. “I don’t drink so I had a glass of cranberry juice and then he took his glass and cheered me. Then he said, ‘You know, this is the first time I ever sat down and had a drink with a black person.’ I was instantly curious and thought, ‘What’s going on here?’ So I asked him why. He didn’t answer at first but eventually admitted that he was a member of the Ku Klux Klan.”

This is a story Davis shares on lecture stages and in classrooms – both nationally and globally. It is an important anecdote as it marks a catalytic moment in which Davis’s trajectory pivoted from working musician to race relations crusader.

What began as a hobby gradually transformed into a calling. As his music career continued to flourish, Davis also became enmeshed in quite arguably the world’s strangest side hustle – meeting with KKK members of various ranks and attending so-called cross lighting rallies. Some of these Klansmen became close friends of Davis’s – the aforementioned Silver Dollar patron included – their long conversations untangling a knot of hate that had coiled for decades. In many cases, these civil dialogues led them to quitting the organization because they no longer believed in its tenets.

While some say Davis converted these men, he prefers to say that they converted themselves, and that he merely provided the impetus for them to do so. Over the past 30 years, Davis has become well-versed in the organization’s ethos and hierarchy which led to him to becoming the first black man to write a book about the KKK entitled *Klan-destine Relationships: A Black Man’s Odyssey in the Ku Klux Klan*, which was published in 1998.

The Ku Klux Klan was formed in 1865 by a group of Confederate soldiers at the end of the American civil war in an attempt to keep newly emancipated slaves suppressed. Having seen several iterations, what remains consistent across all chapters of the group is its hate toward people of color, sometimes resulting in assault and murder. In 2018, 153 years later, a record high of more than 1,000 hate groups – including the KKK – were documented as active in the United States by the [Southern Poverty Law Center](#) civil rights group. “Our ideology needs to catch up to our technology,” Davis said recently as a guest on the [Joe Rogan Experience podcast](#).

So why would a successful musician like Davis willingly meet with high-ranking KKK members in his spare time? The journey to that answer begins long before his Silver Dollar Klan encounter in 1983.

“In 1968, when I was the age of 10, I had a racist incident,” Davis recalls with conviction, his voice sonorous and unwavering. “I was in the Cub Scouts and we were in a parade when people started throwing rocks and things at me. I didn’t understand why people would do that and I formed a question: ‘How can you hate me when you don’t even know me?’”

“The answer was always, ‘there’s some people who are just like that,’” Davis adds. “Well, that wasn’t good enough for me. What does ‘just like that’ mean? Where does that come from? You’re not born ‘just like that. I was curious about racism ever since, but even still, nobody can seem to answer the question.”

One of Davis’s first and most fabled encounters was with Grand Dragon Robert Kelly, who eventually became the Imperial Wizard of Maryland. After having his secretary set up a meeting with Kelly under the pretense of including him in a book about the KKK, Davis knew he was entering new territory. Kelly was unaware that Davis was black, so the grand reveal was a shock. After a few tense hours of conversation, the two parted ways, but their relationship did not end there.

Eventually, Kelly began inviting Davis to his home and then to Klan rallies in which ritualistic chants were intoned, giant crosses were burned, and beer and hot dogs were served. Kelly shared everything with him, including the deeply racial stereotypes that help form the foundation of the Klan’s hatred. All the while, Davis listened, asked questions, took notes, and through his actions, slowly dispelled each stereotype one by one. With each conversation, the gap between them narrowed and they were able to become friends.

Finally, Kelly quit the Klan, shut down his entire chapter and, as a trophy of sorts, gave his robe to Davis. That was not the last Ku Klux Klan robe that Davis would be gifted nor was it the last Klansman he would befriend.

“I still perform sometimes and though I would much rather be on stage playing happy music all the time and seeing people dance than be talking about the KKK and neo-Nazis,” Davis says with a laugh, “I have found that lecturing and talking and educating people is far more important and necessary today.”

Davis has lived through several eras of hate – from the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr in 1968 to [the “Unite the Right” rally](#) in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 2017. Though he has convinced hundreds of white supremacists to deradicalize and join the land of the loving, he does not deny that some are beyond saving. However, that acknowledgment does not deter his mission as he continues to focus on those who are open to conversation, open to civil discourse, open to friendship, and ultimately, open to change.

Most recently, Davis partnered with Minds.com, an open source social networking platform that uses blockchain to reward the community with ERC20 tokens. Davis hopes to utilize this platform, founded by Bill Ottman and John Ottman, to educate people on how to conduct civil discourse. Beyond the world of white supremacy, the idea is to help individuals navigate through opposing perspectives – be it at a political protest, in a classroom, on social media, or at the dinner table.

“People must stop focusing on the symptoms of hate, that’s like putting a Band-Aid on cancer,” Davis says. “We’ve got to treat it down to the bone, which is ignorance. The cure for ignorance is education. You fix the ignorance, there’s nothing to fear. If there’s nothing to fear, there’s nothing to hate. If there’s nothing to hate, there’s nothing or no one to destroy.”

8a] [Minds.com](#) - “We have lost the act of civil discourse, and Minds is going to restore that.” - Daryl Davis Check out [@daryldavis](#) speak with [@joerogan](#) about why he joined Minds as an advisor and some of the exciting projects we are working on together in 2020

8b] [Daryl Davis: Why I, as a black man, attend KKK rallies.](#) TED Talk – You Tube 16:52 minutes

“Tension is who you think you should be. Relaxation is who you are.” Chinese Proverb

*“You are braver than you believe, and stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think.”
Christopher Robin*

9] [Grassroots groups help LGBTQ people survive - and thrive - in Appalachia](#) By James Michael Nichols @ NBC News

In the mountainous and relatively conservative Eastern region of the United States, the work of local queer organizations can be lifesaving.

A year ago, Venus Octavian, then 17, was homeless and spending nights next to a dumpster behind a Taco Bell in eastern Kentucky.

Octavian, who prefers they/them pronouns, has spent the better part of life between Kentucky and Tennessee, navigating the Appalachian region of the United States, an area often understood to be a difficult place for LGBTQ people to live. After coming out as nonbinary to their mother, Octavian had to leave home and spend most days until high school graduation seeking shelter in a Walmart. Octavian also relied heavily on community support from a small network of LGBTQ friends and allies.

“I felt like somehow I'd done something wrong,” Octavian told NBC News. “Especially after being kicked out, me and my mom were best friends up until this point. I really felt like I must have somehow done something so horrible that not even my own mother could love me.

Now 18, Octavian lives in a two-bedroom apartment, though still grappling with the immense barriers to employment that LGBTQ people living in Appalachia - a long mountainous swath of the eastern U.S. stretching from northern Mississippi to southwestern New York - can face on a daily basis.

Octavian’s story is not uncommon for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people growing up in regions of America marked by conservative social views and underscored by a lack of access to LGBTQ-affirming resources commonly found in metropolitan areas.

“One of the first things we think about when it comes to Appalachia is the compounding effects for LGBTQ folks who are living with lower incomes and living in poverty, which is certainly not an uncommon experience for folks in the region,” Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, executive director of the

[Campaign for Southern Equality](#), an advocacy group, told NBC News. “Especially for people living in more rural areas, it’s hard to access basic services to begin with, but the additional burden of finding LGBTQ-friendly services creates real challenges.”

In November, the Campaign for Southern Equality released its [2019 Southern LGBTQ Health Survey](#), and Beach-Ferrara said in Appalachia — where [17 percent of residents live below the poverty line](#) — the survey found particular challenges for LGBTQ respondents around “finding stable employment where you’ll be treated fairly, where you’ll have some basic protections and where you can show up to be who you truly are.”

“It’s a part of America where we see intense levels of need, particularly around that intersection of some of our most basic needs around access to health care, stable employment and housing, and access to services catering to mental health,” she added.

Despite the unique challenges they face, a number of LGBTQ young people living in Appalachia are trying to paint a different picture of how life can be possible and fulfilling in the mountainous region. And for those who do remain, the work of local grassroots organizations can be lifesaving, despite a lack of visibility surrounding their work on the national stage.

[The STAY Project](#) - Before Octavian found an apartment, they became involved with [the STAY Together Appalachian Youth Project](#), run by people age 14-30 across Appalachia. As Octavian took the steps to become financially independent and stable, the STAY Project provided a small amount of funds for those first set of bills and became a crucial network of support.

The STAY Project is a 10-year-old organization based in New Market, Tennessee, that is dedicated to helping young people “develop the skills and knowledge that would allow them to contribute to social change efforts” in the region, according to its mission statement. While it’s not specifically an LGBTQ organization, a substantial amount of its leadership and membership identify as queer, largely due to the networks of support LGBTQ people within Appalachia often rely on for both community and survival.

“There’s a specific narrative out there about what Appalachia is, and it often doesn’t include young people and queer people and black people and indigenous people,” Lou Murrey, the organization’s coordinator, told NBC News. “We have done some work to kind of fight that narrative, but while also celebrating the complexities of what our actual realities are.”

The STAY Project’s programming is focused on helping young people in the region create better life opportunities for themselves and turn the region into a place where they would want to stay. It also pushes back on the notion that those in marginalized communities can’t have happy and successful lives in Appalachia. But Murrey said the most important component of the group’s work is providing a supportive network for its young members, particularly those who are LGBTQ.

“Having a network across the region is lifesaving,” Murrey said. “The magic of STAY is, really, that we put people in a room together, and they build relationships, and so you have relationships of queer folks from across Appalachia who know each other and can send each other resources.”

The organization’s biggest endeavor is the annual STAY Summer Institute — a four-day summer camp,

of sorts, where attendees can learn everything from transgender-inclusive sex education to Astrology 101 and strategies for low-income homebuying. The institute, which has been held in various towns throughout the region since it debuted in 2011, was Octavian's first point of entry into the organization.

"STAY has definitely given me a place to feel like I can talk," Octavian said. "I don't have to apologize for taking up space as a queer person, I don't have to apologize for making space as a person. I'm only 18 now, so I have 12 years before I age out of STAY. I definitely feel like by that time, I will be in a position that I will feel like, as far as activism goes and as far as the fight for liberation goes, I'm going to feel empowered."

Tranzmission - Another network-based organization working along the Appalachian region with a heavy focus on Western North Carolina is [Tranzmission](#). Based in Asheville, the group is dedicated to supporting and advocating for transgender and gender-nonconforming people. Its services and programs range from clinics to help trans people legally change their names to cultural competency workshops for health care and business professionals working with trans and nonbinary individuals.

One of Tranzmission's main focus areas is helping trans and gender-nonconforming people experiencing homelessness. One in five transgender people have faced discrimination while seeking housing in the United States, and over one in 10 have faced eviction due to their gender identity, according to the [National Center for Transgender Equality](#). And a number of studies have found LGBTQ youth represent up to [40 percent of all homeless youth in the U.S.](#)

Tranzmission Executive Director Zeke Christopoulos told NBC News that many shelters and organizations providing housing for people in crisis operate through a religious framework in Appalachia, creating barriers for LGBTQ individuals to safely and authentically use those resources. Christopoulos also said that homeless shelters that will house trans people according to their affirmed genders instead of their sex assigned at birth functionally do not exist in Western North Carolina.

"When people are forced to be housed according to what it says on their license or perhaps how people interpret them to be, we know that there is extreme risk for sexual violence and physical violence," Christopoulos said. "In fact, our community would rather stay in the woods or band together and stay together in one person's vehicle if somebody has one, than attempt to access resources that other people can access without a second thought."

Tranzmission operates its own network of housing within Western North Carolina for transgender people experiencing homelessness. Some members of the Tranzmission community may open up their own homes, while others vet Airbnb accommodations and then volunteer to rent them out when a community member is in need.

Another popular service offered by Tranzmission is its [Name Change Project](#), which helps participants navigate the often complex process of legally changing their name in North Carolina. The organization has boiled down the process into eight relatively straightforward steps, including obtaining certified birth certificate copies and getting a background check, and someone from the group will even accompany participants to the courthouse to help with paperwork.

"It's an interesting thing, to change your name and have to navigate laws that were written many times decades ago, or sometimes even centuries ago, that were often put into place around issues that have

nothing to do with why we're changing our names now," said Allison Scott, who formerly worked at Tranzmission and is now the director of policy and programs at the Campaign for Southern Equality.

Scott, who independently changed her name in Western North Carolina in 2014, said trans and gender-nonconforming people are often forced to "dive into systems that weren't made for us and make them work."

"It's unfortunate that the people in our community have to go through this very disjointed, overly complex system that was not built to handle trans and nonbinary issues like name change," Scott said.

Queer Appalachia - One of the more visible groups working out of the Appalachian region dedicated to the LGBTQ experience is [Queer Appalachia](#), a project that started in 2016 as an Instagram account intended to create a pipeline for zine submissions and today has accrued just shy of a quarter million followers. Based out of the coalfields of West Virginia, Queer Appalachia is the brainchild of activist and artist Mamone.

Mamone uses the organization's Instagram to celebrate Appalachian LGBTQ life through a far-left lens and elevate injustices faced by marginalized communities throughout the region. Over the past several months, for example, the group has drawn attention to the [Yellow Finch tree sitters](#), a protest encampment made up of many LGBTQ people in Elliston, Virginia, intended to stop the production of the Virginia Mountain Valley Pipeline.

Queer Appalachia also amplifies important initiatives from other organizations, such as elevating the Campaign for Southern Equality's Southern LGBTQ Health Survey, and draws attention to the plights of resource-poor LGBTQ Appalachians by sharing their stories and their PayPal or Venmo information.

"Queer Appalachia has been in a constant state of evolution - from its beginning as an artist and zine collective to the digital rural queer community it is today," Mamone said. "We celebrate queer identities and voices in Appalachia, the South and other rural places, and are committed to exploring mutual aid, decolonization and intersectionality."

In recent years, Queer Appalachia has turned the bulk of the organization's focus toward harm reduction efforts and the escalating opioid epidemic plaguing the area. West Virginia [has the highest number](#) of opioid-involved overdose deaths in the country, and the opioid crisis has become [an epidemic](#) throughout the region.

"At the heart of what we do, we believe that no one is disposable and that people who use drugs and those that struggle with mental health are deserving of love, support and community," added Mamone, who is open about their own journey with addiction.

For the past couple of years, Queer Appalachia has helped train a network of volunteers in harm reduction strategies and has deployed them into regions of Appalachia where access to adequate health care can be hard to find and complicated by cultural attitudes about visible queerness. The group started by providing people with Narcan, a lifesaving medication that can treat narcotic overdoses in emergency situations. They now also offer fentanyl test strips, Naloxone, condoms, internal condoms, lube, Plan B, drug disposal bags, clean needles and HIV home test kits — the majority of which are funded through community support and donations.

Most recently, the organization announced a new mobile unit in partnership with Virginia Harm Reduction. The vehicle travels throughout the Appalachian region and helps underresourced LGBTQ individuals receive support and care, no matter where they are.

“For some people having access to talk therapy is harm reduction, or being able to sleep eight hours at night is harm reduction. Only you know what causes you stress and pain and sorrow,” Mamone said. “Harm reduction is meeting people where they are with absolutely no judgments, and understanding that if drugs are involved, you're probably not making really great decisions, right? And you might need some help with that.”

‘**Nobody should have to leave home**’ - Whether it’s helping LGBTQ people thrive or just survive, grassroots groups like The Stay Project, Tranzmission and Queer Appalachia have been crucial to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people looking to attain a sustainable - and enjoyable - quality of life in the region.

“I think that lots of people have different reasons for staying in Appalachia,” Murrey, of The Stay Project, said. “Sometimes it's because they want to be here. Sometimes it's because they don't have a choice to be here. But nobody should have to leave home.”

“When we long for life without difficulties, remind us that oaks grow strong in contrary winds and diamonds are made under pressure.” - Peter Marshall

“Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less.” - Marie Curie

10] [Kimberly A. Cavanagh](#) – author, advocate, educator

Kimberly is a full-time mother, writer, and performing poetess. She was honored in November 2018 with the Community Health Hero Award for Lewis County for her dedication and perseverance in working with trauma survivors.

Her plan is to continue to write more books and she hopes to continue reaching and empowering others to put their best foot forward every day. Life is a gift and God is good all of the time.

[Shadow Dancing](#) - Kimberly A. Cavanagh shares her joys of living in Lewis County, New York and the rich time she spent at Martha's Vineyard in the summer with her children, Joel and Mandy. These moments are more precious than any hour I've counted...Kim writes in her 2nd book, Shadow Dancing

[Haunting Lucidity](#) - A poetic memoir that will raise the hair's of one's conscience. One Woman's fight to save the only life she could save...

[Emotional Essence](#) - Kim takes the reader on a journey through romantic love, the love shared between soul mates, and the love that allows us to just be ourselves.

[Emotional Essence Kindle Edition](#)

“Open your eyes, look within. Are you satisfied with the life you're living?” - Bob Marley

“Every woman who heals herself helps heal all the women who came before her and all those who will come after her.” - Christiane Northrup

11] [Project Return Peer Support Network](#) – Warm Line Support

“Hello,

My name is Leonard Lang and I am a Peer Support Specialist for Project Return, contacting you on behalf of the Project Return Peer Support Network (PRPSN) Warm Line. The reason I am getting in touch with you today, is not only to provide you information on my line in the hopes that the people you serve will find my line useful but to also get some information on your organization to add to our list of resources, available to callers.

The PRPSN Warm Line is a non-crisis toll free line that is specifically but, of course, not limited to, people who are coping with a mental health concern. What we try to do is provide a safe place to talk to those who may not have one. All calls are confidential and allow our peers to vent and talk about their presenting issues. Along with being great listeners, we also provide resources and referrals, previously gathered and stored in our resource database, which may be of interest to our callers such as shelters, self-help and support groups, family planning agencies and much more!

The PRPSN Warm Line hours and numbers are:

Monday-Friday: 5:00pm-10:00pm; Saturday: 11:00am-4:00pm; Sunday: Closed

Phone – English: 1-888-448-9777 Phone – Spanish: 1-888-448-4055

Accepts Nationwide Calls!

Please let me know if you would like more information about our line or if you would be able to provide me further details on your services by emailing me at: llang@prpsn.org or calling me at: (323) 346-0960 ext 229. I look forward to hearing from you and working together in the near future!

Thank you and have a great day!”

Leonard Lang, Warm Line Supporter

2677 ½ Zoe Ave

Huntington Park, CA 90255

Office: (323) 346-0960 ext. 229 Warmline: (888) 448-9777

E-mail: llang@prpsn.org

Web: [History – Project Return Peer Support Network](#)

“A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives.” - Jackie Robinson

“Many receive advice, only the wise profit from it.” - Harper Lee

12] [ALERT] [Tell Congress TODAY to Include People with Disabilities in COVID-19 Relief!](#)

[The Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law](#)

Congress has passed two packages related to the Coronavirus pandemic, and is working on a third package RIGHT NOW. It is important that you contact your Senators and Representative OVER THIS WEEKEND to tell them to address the needs of people with disabilities in this third package.

Email your members of Congress using [this tool](#) from the Arc to tell them that the Coronavirus legislation MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- Raise the federal match rate for Medicaid home and community based services, including mental health services under Medicaid's "rehabilitation option." This is important to help community providers continue to serve people during the current crisis and to prevent people from being admitted to hospitals and nursing homes, where there are heightened risks of transmission of the coronavirus.
- Significantly increase funding for housing subsidies, including Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers, Section 811 supportive housing, the McKinney-Vento Emergency Solutions Grants program, the HOME Investment Partnerships program, and the Community Development Block Grant program.
- Incentivize states to stop admissions to state hospitals during the emergency period. Two states have already done so due to the heightened risks of transmission of the coronavirus.
- Prohibit disability-based discrimination in the allocation of treatment for COVID-19. Conversations are already beginning concerning how needed treatment may be rationed. The lives of people with disabilities must not be devalued in these decisions.
- Ensure that existing rights of people with disabilities, including those under the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, are not weakened. Efforts to use the pandemic as an excuse to reduce these critical rights must be strongly rejected.

“do not look for healing at the feet of those who broke you” - Rupi Kaur

“The best relationships in our lives are the best not because they have been the happiest ones, they are that way because they have stayed strong through the most tormentful of storms.” - Pandora Poikilo

Thank you & Take care, Michael

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

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

[The Surviving Spirit Facebook Page](#)

mike.skinner@survivingspirit.com 603-625-2136 38 River Ledge Drive, Goffstown, NH 03045

[@SurvivinSpirit](#) Twitter

[Michael Skinner Music](#) - Hope, Healing, & Help for Trauma, Abuse & Mental Health - Music, Resources, & Advocacy

Live performance of "Joy", "Brush Away Your Tears" & more @ [Michael Skinner – You Tube](#)

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