



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 January 2021

“May 2021 bring everyone Joy - Peace - Hope - Love - Good Health - Renewed Faith - Inclusiveness - Empathy - Understanding - Kindness - Acceptance - in a Safer World. May we spend more time & energy celebrating what we have in common & realize we can agree to disagree & still work & live together in our communities. Happy New Year!!! Happy 2021!!! Shalom!!!” - Unknown

Hi Folks,

A New Year with new beginnings and lots of possibilities for all of us. Wishing everyone, Hope, Healing, Peace and Joy in your lives.

Back in the late fall of 2006 I was one of several keynote presenters for a conference held by the United Nations, The State Department and Georgetown University on the sexual exploitation and trafficking of children and adults. The conference also addressed modern day slavery. I was stunned to learn that there are more slaves today in the world than there were at the height of the slave trade.

I would like to draw attention to January's raising awareness of National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month.

[National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month](#) - United States Department of State

Every year since 2010, the President has dedicated the month to raising awareness about the different forms of human trafficking, also known as modern slavery, and educating people about this crime and how to spot it. In January, the Department of State raises awareness of human trafficking domestically and abroad through U.S. embassies and consulates. We also celebrate the efforts of anti-trafficking organizations, communities of faith, state and local law enforcement, survivor advocates, businesses, and private citizens all around the world to promote this important cause. **Everyone can play a part in ending human trafficking.**

The History Behind the Month - The significance of January originates from the [Emancipation Proclamation](#), which President Abraham Lincoln issued on January 1, 1863, declaring 3.1 million slaves free. In 1865, Congress passed and the states ratified the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, officially outlawing slavery and involuntary servitude in the United States.

More than 20 years ago, the [Trafficking Victims Protection Act \(TVPA\) of 2000](#) enshrined the United States' commitment to combating modern slavery domestically and internationally. With this bipartisan

law, the United States reaffirmed the fundamental promise of “forever free” enshrined within the Emancipation Proclamation.

In 2010, by presidential proclamation, January was declared National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. Since then, eleven presidential proclamations have followed. These proclamations not only raise the profile of the issue, they are also snapshots of global trends and challenges, and significant U.S. anti-trafficking policy achievements.

As Amy Goodman said, “Go to where the silence is and say something.”

Take care, stay safe and stay warm, Michael

Newsletter Contents:

1] Making It Through a Trauma Anniversary by Lilly McGee - Viva Center

2] In Denmark, Empathy Is Taught As A School Subject That Kids Must Learn From A Very Young Age

2a] Thinking Minds – Educate yourself

3] Rise Resilient on Apple Podcasts – Episode 3 - The Role Social Relationships Play In Transforming Stress: Practicing Resilience for Self-Care & Healing - Hosted by Agnes Chen

3a] Rise Resilient on Apple Podcasts Hosted by Agnes Chen

4] Peer respite homes aim to be alternative to psychiatric wards by Sarah Kwon @ Los Angeles Times

5] A Place to Stand - Video Project - A Film by Daniel Glick and Gabriel Baca

5a] A Place to Stand - Official Trailer - YouTube 2:12 minutes

5b] Jimmy Santiago Baca - I Am Offering This Poem - YouTube 1:19 minutes

5c] New Mexico in Focus – Interview with Jimmy Santiago Baca: Words Have the Power to Change The World - YouTube 19:50 minutes

6] My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies by Resmaa Menakem, Paperback - Barnes & Noble®

7] APA's Apology to Black, Indigenous and People of Color for Its Support of Structural Racism in Psychiatry

8] 9 Types of Muscle Tension Caused by Trapped Emotions ★ LonerWolf

9] MOOJAG and the Auticode Secret by N.E. McMorrان / Publisher Spondylux Press

9a] Spondylux Press - is an independent publisher of own-voice stories

10] RUMBLE - The Indians Who Rocked the World - Independent Lens

10a] Link Wray - Rumble - Recorded Live: 11/12/1984 - Capitol Theatre - Passaic, NJ

10b] Rumble: the story of the Native Americans who shaped rock music by Katie Bain @ The Guardian

“Did I offer peace today? Did I bring a smile to someone's face? Did I say words of healing? Did I let go of my anger and resentment? Did I forgive? Did I love? These are the real questions. I must trust that the little bit of love that I sow now will bear many fruits, here in this world and the life to come.” - Henri Nouwen

“The art of healing comes from nature, not from the physician. Therefore the physician must start from nature, with an open mind.” - Paracelsus

*How do folks cope with this? - “**Making It Through a Trauma Anniversary**” I have long found the holidays very hard to navigate. When my kids were younger they helped to soften the blow, their love and energy was so darn infectious. I still find Thanksgiving & Christmas right up through New Years and the several days afterward a slow hard road to hoe...Always a sigh of relief when they are over. It feels like a huge weight has been lifted off of my shoulders. Take care, Michael.*

1] [Making It Through a Trauma Anniversary](#) by Lilly McGee - Viva Center

What is a Trauma Anniversary?

Certain times of the year bring old memories and associations to mind. The holiday season may find you thinking more about family or personal ties, whereas the summer might get you focused on planning your next getaway. Much of the time, these associations are pleasant. Sometimes, however, the memories aren't so enjoyable, especially when they're connected to [trauma](#) (see: [“Am I Living with PTSD?”](#)).

Many trauma survivors experience challenging “anniversary reactions,” which are defined as [“unique set\[s\] of unsettling feelings, thoughts or memories that occur on the anniversary of a significant experience.”](#) When a survivor finds themselves in the midst of a trauma anniversary, they often are forced to re-live [feelings from the traumatic event](#), causing symptoms like increased anxiety, depression, trouble sleeping, loss of appetite, nightmares, and irritable outbursts.

Understandably, trauma anniversaries can be upsetting. In addition to being emotionally challenging, they may also make us feel frustrated. It may feel like we're “reverting” to symptoms we thought we'd overcome. Further, bursts of unexpected anger or worry may threaten to damage our relationships, careers, and wellbeing.

It's important to know that if you experience an anniversary reaction, you are not losing all of the healing progress you have made. Ups and downs are a completely normal part of the process, and it's extremely common for things to be difficult during anniversaries.

There might be a good reason for this - some clinicians believe that trauma anniversaries are actually a way of our minds trying to help us by preparing us to protect ourselves from similar harm. Yet despite our mind's good intentions, it's not helpful for us to live our lives in a constant state of fear.

How to Get Through a Trauma Anniversary

Chances are, you're looking for ways to gain a little more control over your experience during these anniversaries. Doing so is absolutely possible, and we recommend the following tips.

1. Identify Your Timeline

Before you do anything else, you'll want to identify when your trauma anniversaries occur and how they affect you. It's surprisingly easy to go through life experiencing anniversary reactions without even realizing what they are.

Do you always feel depressed during a certain holiday? Do your breakups all tend to happen at a certain time of year? Create a timeline of your difficult periods and see if there's a pattern. In some cases, it may be indicative of [seasonal affective disorder](#), but it may also be due to a trauma anniversary.

Once you've identified the patterns, look at how your anniversary reactions affect you. Some people become incredibly fatigued at a certain time of year, needing more time off of work and struggling to accomplish basic chores. Others withdraw from social contact, or conversely, become hyper-engaged in their social lives. Every person's reaction looks different. When you identify yours, you can take more effective steps towards treating it.

2. Practice self-compassion

This is already a challenging time for you, so the last thing you need is more negativity. Once you've accepted that this is going to be a difficult time, find ways to increase your self-care.

For example, you may anticipate needing more support. Knowing this, you might schedule a lot of time with your loved ones, or even make a pact with a friend to check-in via phone call.

You may decide this won't be an ideal time to take on any big tasks. Beforehand, you can work to finish tasks in advance or ask for support from your peers. If you're asking for help in the workplace, you don't need to disclose the reason. We all go through periods when we need some assistance.

Even everyday tasks like cleaning and cooking can be challenging during these anniversaries. Are there things, like freezing meals in advance, that you can do to prepare? Maybe you can set aside a little money to have someone help you with cleaning, gardening, or other tasks. All the while, remember that you're not lazy for needing some extra support. You wouldn't blame your friends with physiological

illnesses, like diabetes or fibromyalgia, for getting outside aid. You have the right to get support too!

3. Honor your experience

It may sound counterintuitive, but both the APA and the US Department of Veterans' Affairs tout the benefits of "commemorating" trauma anniversaries. The idea is not to celebrate the date but rather to find a healthy way to honor your experience..

Here are a few ways to commemorate your anniversary:

- Donate time or money to charity, especially if that charity aims to prevent or to help others who've experienced trauma
- Organize a dinner with loved ones. You may choose to make this a reflective occasion or a loving, joyful one. Do what best fits your needs;
- Visit a meaningful spot, like a place that you associate with happiness or healing;
- Plant a tree and bring new life into the world;
- Express your feelings through art, writing, dancing, or another activity where you can release your thoughts;
- Make yourself laugh by seeing a funny movie or hanging out with your most hilarious friends.

Speaking of spending time with friends...

4. Utilize your support system

[Social support is a strong protective factor](#) when it comes to both mental and physical health. In addition to providing us with an outlet, friends, partners, and family can provide much-needed support during low periods and encouragement when we engage in healthy behaviors.

It can be understandably difficult to open up, even to our closest loved ones, about experiences of trauma. If you don't feel comfortable doing so, that's perfectly okay. Just spending time with loved ones can have therapeutic benefits.

That being said, you won't want to deal with your traumatic memories and symptoms alone, which is where a [trauma-informed](#) therapist can provide invaluable support.

Working with a therapist with extensive training and experience working with trauma is among the most highly recommended treatments for trauma symptoms. There are a variety of therapeutic modalities that you can choose on, based on your unique needs and preferences - talk therapies like [cognitive-behavioral](#) and [mindfulness](#) approaches are very popular, and here at Viva we greatly appreciate the efficiency and cutting-edge nature of brain-based therapies like Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing ([EMDR](#)) and [Neurofeedback](#). No matter which modality you go with, we always recommend asking your clinician about their experience in trauma-informed care. Any good clinician will be happy to answer that question.

Trauma anniversaries are challenging, but you can get through them - and we're here to support you however we can. We hope the tips above work for you, and also recommend the trauma resource page at the [Resilient Brain Project](#), which features apps, blogs, podcasts, research, and more tools to help

you learn more about and cope with trauma and/or PTSD.

What has helped you get through a trauma anniversary? We'd love to [hear from you](#).

[Lilly McGee](#) is Viva's Director of Operations and Communication and supervisor of the [Resilient Brain Project](#). A published poet, she enjoys writing about mental health, literature, and identity. Other blogs include [Mental Health on TV](#) and [What is Trauma-Informed Care?](#)

"The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new." - Socrates

"If you have hope in the future you will have power in the present." - Chris Voss

2] [In Denmark, Empathy Is Taught As A School Subject That Kids Must Learn From A Very Young Age](#)

While math and science are important in life, Denmark knows that empathy is much more important a life lesson that will take people further than numbers and formulas ever will.

When a baby is born, their mind is a clean slate. How they are exposed to the world decides what gets written on it, which subsequently decides what type of person they will become. This does mean that at an impressionable age, the child should be taught things that will shape them into a person who will grow up to contribute to society. They will learn to pick up kindness, empathy, generosity, honesty instead of other detrimental qualities. When a whole generation of children grows up with good attributes, the world will definitely be a better place to live in.

In Denmark, they place a lot of importance on cultivating empathy in their children. Believe it or not, people do not actually care about others' well-being. It is something we are socialized into and something that is necessary for us to survive. While math and science are important in life, Denmark knows that empathy is much more important a life lesson that will take people further than numbers and formulas ever will. This is why Danish schools decided to introduce mandatory empathy classes in 1993. In these classes, children aged 6-16 are taught how to be kind, according to [My Modern Met](#).

The children during the empathy classes or "Klassens tid" are asked to share any problems or issues they are going through. The entire class pitches in to help find a solution. Kids grow up to become confident, emotionally intelligent adults, who will know not to judge people for their struggles. This also means that they are more likely to raise happier kids themselves. Denmark has consistently been at the top of the [UN's World Happiness Report](#). In the [latest report](#), Denmark stood in second place followed by Finland. Denmark has been at the top in 2012, 2013, and 2016. Perhaps the empathy classes have a lot to contribute in this aspect.

[The Danish Way](#) stated, "Empathy helps build relationships, prevent bullying and succeed at work. It promotes the growth of leaders, entrepreneurs, and managers. 'Empathic teenagers' tend to be more successful because they are more oriented towards the goals compared to their more narcissistic peers." Empathy is also taught through teamwork where those excelling and those lacking are made to work together. This not only helps with understanding the positive qualities of each other but also lift each other up to complete a task without being pulled down by competition with each other.

Another popular program is called the CAT-kit. In this program, the aim is to improve emotional awareness and empathy by focusing on how to articulate experiences, thoughts, feelings, and senses, reported [The Atlantic](#). There are picture cards of faces, measuring sticks to gauge the intensity of emotions, and pictures of the body, included in the CAT-kit so kids can understand the emotions being exhibited while also learning to conceptualize their own and others' feelings. In the classroom setting, along with the facilitator, the children are taught not to be judgmental but acknowledge and respect these sentiments.

“A child who is naturally talented in mathematics, without learning to collaborate with their peers, will not go much further. They will need help in other subjects. It is a great lesson to teach children from an early age since no one can go through life alone,” [says](#) Jessica Alexander, author of the book *The Danish Way of Parenting: What the Happiest People in the World Know About Raising Confident, Capable Kids*. She adds, “Many studies show that when you explain something to someone – like a math problem for example – you not only learn the subject much better than you would do by memorizing it yourself, but you also build our empathy skills which are further strengthened by having to be careful about the way the other person receives the information and having to put oneself in their shoes to understand how learning works.”

2a] [Thinking Minds](#) – Educate yourself

Thinking Minds is an educational network that seeks to inspire out of the box thinking, open mindedness and act as a catalyst for people to discover the limitless potential that exists inside us all.

Our focus is on people that inspire and motivate others to express their own truth, create their own happiness, and seek their own enlightenment.

Education is our passion, and we believe that is it part of our everyday life where people can learn and educate themselves from reading variety content.

We are here to change the world for a better place to inspire daily and spread truth, love and light all around the world.

“Kindness is like snow. It beautifies everything it covers.” - Kahlil Gibran

“Children live what they learn” - Dorothy Nolte

3] [Rise Resilient on Apple Podcasts – Episode 3](#) - The Role Social Relationships Play In Transforming Stress: Practicing Resilience for Self-Care & Healing - Hosted by Agnes Chen

“Nothing about these experiences of adversity and trauma is inevitable in terms of the development of the child.” - Dr. Gerry Giesbrecht

The adverse childhood experiences study has taught us that 1/3 individuals has experienced some form of childhood adversity between the age of 0-17 years, and that this adversity can have long term negative effects on the individual. But how might this adversity impact a mom and her baby? According to my latest conversation with Dr. Giesbrecht, approximately one quarter to one-third of all

pregnant women experience some form of psychological stress during pregnancy. Although some forms of mild stress may actually be beneficial, exposure to high levels or persistent stress during gestation significantly increases the risk for the emergence of emotional, behavioural, and cognitive disorders in children.

On this episode of the Rise Resilient Podcast, I chat with Dr. Gerry Giesbrecht about his research into the science of stress and resilience with a focus on how social supportive relationships (and simple kindness) have the ability to not only transform stressful experiences into positive development outcomes but also has the potential to disrupt the inter-generation transmission of stress from mom to baby.

Gerry also talks about his current research on how nutrition and gut microbiota might be able to interrupt the effects of stress and be used as a psychological resiliency resource.

Dr. Gerry Giesbrecht is a registered Clinical Psychologist in the province of Alberta and Associate Professor in the Departments of Paediatrics and Community Health Sciences at the University of Calgary. His research program focuses on the psycho-biology of stress, and especially on the effects of stress during pregnancy on child development. I am currently studying the effects of risk and resilience factors, such as adverse childhood experiences, nutrition, temperament, and the gut microbiota on children's neurodevelopment and mental health outcomes. The overall objectives of his research program are: to identify the mechanisms by which early life exposure to stress becomes biologically embedded in children's development, to identify risk and resilience factors that modify the effects of early life stress exposure on children's development, and to develop effective intervention and prevention strategies to prevent or reduce the effects of early life stress exposure on children's development.

3a] [Rise Resilient on Apple Podcasts](#) Hosted by Agnes Chen

They say resilience is the ability to bounce back DESPITE adversity, but what does “bouncing back” look and FEEL like, and how do we ensure our children (including the inner child in us) is ABLE to RISE resilient? Join me, Agnes, a passionate Mama, Registered nurse and community care advocate as I marry the science of trauma with our STORIES of resilience with friends who have not only inspired me through the hills and valleys of my own resilience journey, but also whose wisdom and empathy are inspiring a more beautiful tomorrow.

“Pain is a pesky part of being human, I’ve learned it feels like a stab wound to the heart, something I wish we could all do without, in our lives here. Pain is a sudden hurt that can’t be escaped. But then I have also learned that because of pain, I can feel the beauty, tenderness, and freedom of healing. Pain feels like a fast stab wound to the heart. But then healing feels like the wind against your face when you are spreading your wings and flying through the air! We may not have wings growing out of our backs, but healing is the closest thing that will give us that wind against our faces.” - C. JoyBell C.

“The core of authenticity is the courage to be imperfect, vulnerable, and to set boundaries.” - Brene Brown

4] [Peer respite homes aim to be alternative to psychiatric wards](#) by Sarah Kwon @ Los Angeles Times

These neighborly havens help people facing mental health crises. Some neighbors object

Mia McDermott is no stranger to isolation. Abandoned as an infant in China, she lived in an orphanage until a family in California adopted her as a toddler. She spent her adolescence in boarding schools and early adult years in and out of psychiatric hospitals, where she underwent treatment for bipolar disorder, anxiety and anorexia.

The pandemic left McDermott feeling especially lonely. She restricted social interactions because her fatty liver disease put her at greater risk of complications should she contract COVID-19. The 26-year-old Santa Cruz resident stopped regularly eating and taking her psychiatric medications, and contemplated suicide.

When McDermott's thoughts grew increasingly dark in June, she checked into Second Story, a mental health program based in a home not far from her own, where she finds nonclinical support in a peaceful environment from people who have faced similar challenges.

Second Story is what is known as a "peer respite," a welcoming place where people can stay when they're experiencing or nearing a mental health crisis. Betting that a low-key wellness approach, coupled with empathy from people who have "been there," can help people in distress recover, this unorthodox strategy has gained popularity in recent years as the nation grapples with a [severe shortage of psychiatric beds](#) that [has been exacerbated by the pandemic](#).

Peer respites allow guests to avoid psychiatric hospitalization and emergency department visits. They now operate in [at least 14 states](#). California has five, in the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles County.

"When things are really tough and you need extra support but you don't need hospitalization, where's that middle ground?" asked [Keris Myrick](#), founder of [Hacienda of Hope](#), a peer respite in Long Beach.

People with serious mental illness are more likely to experience emotional distress in the pandemic than the general population, said Dr. Benjamin Druss, a psychiatrist and professor at Emory University's public health school, elaborating that they tend to have smaller social networks and more medical problems.

That was the case with McDermott. "I don't have a full-on relationship with my family. My friends are my family," she said. She yearned to "give them a hug, see their smile or stand close and take a selfie."

The next best thing was [Second Story](#), in a pewter-gray split-level, five-bedroom house in Aptos, a beach community near McDermott's Santa Cruz home.

Peer respites offer people in distress short-term (usually up to two weeks), round-the-clock emotional support from peers - people who have experienced mental health conditions and are trained and often certified by states to support others with similar issues - and activities like arts, meditation and support groups.

"You can't tell who's the guest and who's the staff. We don't wear uniforms or badges," said Angelica Garcia-Guerrero, associate director of Hacienda of Hope's [parent organization](#).

Peer respites are [free](#) for guests but rarely covered by insurance. [States and counties](#) typically pick up the tab. Hacienda of Hope's \$900,000 annual operating costs are covered by Los Angeles County through the [Mental Health Services Act](#), a policy that directs proceeds from a statewide tax on people who earn more than \$1 million annually to behavioral health programs.

In September, California Gov. Gavin Newsom [signed a bill that](#) would establish a statewide certification process for mental health peer providers by July 2022.

For now, however, peer respite staff in California are not licensed or certified. Peer respites typically don't offer clinical care or dispense psychiatric drugs, though guests can bring theirs. Peers share personal stories with guests but avoid labeling them with diagnoses. Guests must come - and can leave - voluntarily. Some respites have few restrictions on who can stay; others [don't allow](#) guests who express suicidal thoughts or are homeless.

Peer respite is one of several types of [programs](#) that divert people facing behavioral health crises from the hospital, but the only one without clinical involvement, said Travis Atkinson, a consultant at [TBD Solutions](#), a behavioral healthcare company. The first peer respites arose around 2000, said Laysha Ostrow, CEO of [Live & Learn](#), which conducts behavioral health research.

The approach seems to be expanding. Live & Learn counts 33 peer respites today in the U.S., up from 19 six years ago. [All](#) are overseen and staffed by people with histories of psychiatric disorders. About a dozen other programs employ a mix of peers and laypeople who don't have psychiatric diagnoses, or aren't peer-led, Atkinson said.

Though she had stayed at Second Story several times over the last five years, McDermott hesitated to return during the pandemic. However, she felt reassured after learning that guests were required to wear a mask in common areas and get a coronavirus test before their stay. To ensure physical distancing, the respite reduced capacity from six to five guests at a time.

During her two-week stay, McDermott played with the respite's two cats and piano - activities she found therapeutic. But most helpful was talking to peers in a way she couldn't with her mental health providers, she said. In the past, McDermott said, she had been involuntarily admitted to a psychiatric hospital after she expressed suicidal thoughts. When she shared similar sentiments with Second Story peers, they offered to talk, or call the hospital if she wanted.

"They were willing to listen," she said. "But they're not forceful about helping."

By the end of the visit, McDermott said that she felt understood and her loneliness and suicidal feelings had waned. She started eating and taking her medications more consistently, she said.

The small number of studies on respites have found that guests had [fewer hospitalizations and accounted for lower Medicaid spending](#) for nearly a year after a respite stay than people with similar conditions who did not stay in a respite. Respite visitors [spent less time in the hospital and emergency room](#) the longer they stayed in the respite.

[Financial struggles](#) and [opposition from neighbors](#) have hindered the growth of respite, however. Live & Learn said that although five peer respite have been created since 2018, at least two others closed because of budget cuts.

Neighbors have challenged nearby respite placements in a few instances. Santa Cruz-area media outlets [reported](#) in 2019 that Second Story neighbors had voiced safety concerns with the respite. Neighbor Tony Crane told California Healthline that guests have used drugs and consumed alcohol in the neighborhood, and he worried that peers are not licensed or certified to support people in crisis. He felt it was too risky to let his children ride their bikes near the respite when they were younger.

In a written response, [Monica Martinez](#), whose [organization](#) runs Second Story, said neighbors often target community mental health programs because of concerns that “come from misconceptions and stigma surrounding those seeking mental health support.”

Many respite are struggling with increased demand and decreased availability during the pandemic. Sherry Jenkins Tucker, executive director of Georgia Mental Health Consumer Network, said its four respite have had to reduce capacity to enable physical distancing, despite increased demand for services. [Other respite](#) have temporarily suspended stays because of the pandemic.

McDermott said her mental health had improved since staying at Second Story in June, but she still struggles with isolation amid the pandemic. “Holidays are hard for me,” said McDermott, who returned to Second Story in November. “I really wanted to be able to have Thanksgiving with people.”

This story was produced by [KHN](#) (Kaiser Health News), which publishes [California Healthline](#), an editorially independent service of the [California Health Care Foundation](#). KHN is not affiliated with Kaiser Permanente.

“Dare to reach out your hand into the darkness, to pull another hand into the light.” - Norman B. Rice.

“Greatness is best measured by how well an individual responds to the happenings in life that appear to be totally unfair, unreasonable, and undeserved.” - Marvin J. Ashton

5] [A Place to Stand](#) - Video Project - A Film by Daniel Glick and Gabriel Baca

“Baca's harrowing story will stand among the world's most moving testimonies to the profound value of literature.” -Booklist

A Place to Stand tells the story of acclaimed author Jimmy Santiago Baca’s transformation from a functionally illiterate convict to an award-winning poet, novelist and screenwriter. Based on the memoir of the same name, the film takes viewers into Baca's past and present to uncover how the power of the written word lifted him from the violence and pain that defined his early life.

With powerful revelations from family, friends, and fellow inmates, as well as insight into the early writings that first captured Baca's imagination, the film shows how he turned his life around. *A Place to Stand* follows Baca's path from childhood abandonment in Estancia, New Mexico, through adolescent drug dealing and a subsequent 5-year narcotics sentence at Arizona State Prison, one of the most

violent prisons in the country.

Baca began his incarceration an angry and illiterate young man. Against the odds, he taught himself how to read and write, discovering a passion for poetry that gave him a means of understanding and expressing himself, and that ultimately saved his life. Writing poetry helped him to survive the brutal inhumanity of his incarceration, and eventually to heal the wounds of his childhood and open himself to a whole new future.

In the film, Baca reads some of his poetry while shots of the prison and the surrounding Arizona landscape pan across the screen. Baca's poems provide a unique window to his mindset at the time as he channeled his frustrations and hopes to paper. Baca's extraordinary life is both inspiring and haunting, simultaneously an indictment of our current criminal justice system and a model of the potential for human transformation.

5a] [A Place to Stand](#) - Official Trailer - YouTube 2:12 minutes

5b] [Jimmy Santiago Baca - I Am Offering This Poem](#) - YouTube 1:19 minutes

5c] [New Mexico in Focus – Interview with Jimmy Santiago Baca](#): Words Have the Power to Change The World - YouTube 19:50 minutes

Correspondent Megan Kamerick sits down with wordsmith Jimmy Santiago Baca. He was born in New Mexico of Apache and Chicano descent in 1952. Abandoned as child, he was in an orphanage and was in and out of trouble as a teenager before eventually being incarcerated in the brutal and violent Arizona State Prison for five years. That was where he taught himself to read and began writing. His poems brought him attention from the literary world even before he got out of prison. Since then he has published numerous volumes of poetry, as well as novels and essays. His novel "Blood In Blood Out" was adapted into the film "Bound By Honor." He has also worked extensively with people who are still incarcerated as well as young people and those living on the margins of society. Baca has won numerous awards including the American Book Award, Pushcart Prize, and the International Hispanic Heritage Award. He has held a Regents Chair at UC-Berkeley, the Wallace Stevens Endowed Chair at Yale University, and the Endowed Hulbert Chair at Colorado College. He also has an honorary doctorate from the University of New Mexico. His memoir "A Place To Stand" was made into a documentary of the same name in 2016.

"Your vision will become clear only when you can look into your own heart. Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes." - Carl Jung

"I sat with my anger long enough, until she told me her real name was grief." - Isaac Rowe

6] [My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies](#) by Resmaa Menakem, Paperback - Barnes & Noble®

In this groundbreaking book, therapist Resmaa Menakem examines the damage caused by racism in America from the perspective of trauma and body-centered psychology.

The body is where our instincts reside and where we fight, flee, or freeze, and it endures the trauma inflicted by the ills that plague society. Menakem argues this destruction will continue until Americans learn to heal the generational anguish of white supremacy, which is deeply embedded in all our bodies.

Our collective agony doesn't just affect African Americans. White Americans suffer their own secondary trauma as well. So do blue Americans - our police.

My Grandmother's Hands is a call to action for all of us to recognize that racism is not about the head, but about the body, and introduces an alternative view of what we can do to grow beyond our entrenched racialized divide.

- Paves the way for a new, body-centered understanding of white supremacy - how it is literally in our blood and our nervous system.
- Offers a step-by-step healing process, in addition to incisive social commentary.

Resmaa Menakem, MSW, LICSW, is a therapist with decades of experience currently in private practice in Minneapolis, MN, specializing in trauma, body-centered psychotherapy, and violence prevention. He has appeared on the *Oprah Winfrey Show* and *Dr. Phil* as an expert on conflict and violence. Menakem has studied with bestselling authors Dr. David Schnarch (*Passionate Marriage*) and Dr. Bessel van der Kolk (*The Body Keeps the Score*). He also trained at Peter Levine's Somatic Experiencing Trauma Institute.

“Sensitive and probing, this book from therapist Menakem delves into the complex effects of racism and white privilege. Departing from standard academic approaches, he speaks from the wisdom of his grandmother and his own expertise in somatic therapy, a field that emphasizes the mind-body connection. Trauma, both present-day and historical, forms the cornerstone of Menakem’s analysis. He writes that race is a “myth—something made up in the 17th century,” with the concepts of whiteness and racial superiority nonetheless now “essential facts of life, like birth, death and gravity.” The result is that both black and white people are traumatized with fear of the racial other and with the “dirty pain of avoidance, blame, and denial.” At the outset, Menakem implores readers to “experience” his book in their bodies. To this end, bodycentric activities, such as breath exercises, are described throughout. Menakem emphasizes body mindfulness, helping readers move from unhealthy reflexive responses to traumatic emotions to the conscious experience of “clean pain,” which involves directly facing such emotions and thereby getting past them. Menakem is specific when directing his messages. “To all my white readers,” he says, “welcome... let’s get to work.” To law-enforcement officers he gives the same welcome. And to African-Americans, he offers counsel and highlights the value of their experiences.” - Publishers Weekly

“Not all wounds are so obvious. Walk gently in the lives of others.” - Unknown

“Care less about what you own. Care more about how you live.” - Unknown

[7\] APA's Apology to Black, Indigenous and People of Color for Its Support of Structural Racism in Psychiatry](#)

Today, the American Psychiatric Association (APA), the oldest national physician association in the country, is taking an important step in addressing racism in psychiatry. The APA is beginning the process of making amends for both the direct and indirect acts of racism in psychiatry. The APA Board of Trustees (BOT) apologizes to its members, patients, their families, and the public for enabling discriminatory and prejudicial actions within the APA and racist practices in psychiatric treatment for Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC). The APA is committed to identifying, understanding,

and rectifying our past injustices, as well as developing anti-racist policies that promote equity in mental health for all.

Early psychiatric practices laid the groundwork for the inequities in clinical treatment that have historically limited quality access to psychiatric care for BIPOC. These actions sadly connect with larger social issues, such as race-based discrimination and racial injustice, that have furthered poverty along with other adverse outcomes. Since the APA's inception, practitioners have at times subjected persons of African descent and Indigenous people who suffered from mental illness to abusive treatment, experimentation, victimization in the name of "scientific evidence," along with racialized theories that attempted to confirm their deficit status. Similar race-based discrepancies in care also exist in medical practice today as evidenced by the variations in schizophrenia diagnosis between white and BIPOC patients, for instance. These appalling past actions, as well as their harmful effects, are ingrained in the structure of psychiatric practice and continue to harm BIPOC psychological well-being even today. Unfortunately, the APA has historically remained silent on these issues. As the leading American organization in psychiatric care, the APA recognizes that this inaction has contributed to perpetuation of structural racism that has adversely impacted not just its own BIPOC members, but also psychiatric patients across America.

Events in 2020 have clearly highlighted the need for action by the APA to reverse the persistent tone of privilege built upon the inhumanity of past events. Inequities in access to quality psychiatric care, research opportunities, education/training, and representation in leadership can no longer be tolerated. The APA apologizes for our contributions to the structural racism in our nation and pledges to enact corresponding anti-racist practices. We commit to working together with members and patients in order to achieve the social equality, health equity, and fairness that all human beings deserve. We hope this apology will be a turning point as we strive to make the future of psychiatry more equitable for all.

“it’s important to make sure that we’re talking with each other in a way that heals, not in a way that wounds.” - Barack Obama

“What drains your spirit drains your body. What fuels your spirit fuels your body.” - Carolyn Myss

8] [9 Types of Muscle Tension Caused by Trapped Emotions](#) ★ LonerWolf

Your body is a map and storage house of every experience you have ever had.

So many of us carry repressed and trapped emotions within multiple areas of our bodies, without even knowing it. In fact, we can go for years, even decades, completely oblivious to the blocked energy our muscles are holding on to. This repressed energy is responsible for countless ailments and chronic health conditions that cause us great suffering.

The fact is that your body doesn't forget.

Your body is the most honest and obvious way to access trapped feelings and even traumatic memories. No matter how much you try to ignore, intellectualize or suppress how you feel, **your body knows the truth.**

If you are struggling with chronic tension in your neck, shoulders, back, thighs, legs, or any other area

of your body, this article may help you get to the root of your pain, once and for all.

What Causes Chronic Muscle Tension?

According to various [studies and papers](#), we develop chronic muscle tension as a result of four different causes.

The first cause is **social conditioning**. Social conditioning starts in early childhood and is reinforced throughout the rest of our lives by our parents, friends, teachers, family members, and society at large. A lot of the muscle tension that we develop is the result of unspoken social beliefs that we were taught to adopt as a way of being “acceptable” or likable. For example, many of us were taught that “only babies cry,” so as children, we learned to suppress our tears and sadness in order to “not be a baby.” Many of us were also taught that expressing anger is a “bad” thing as we were punished as children for expressing it. This form of conditioning is strengthened throughout adulthood, particularly in our workplaces where expressing anger is seen as “unprofessional” and potentially dangerous to our job security.

The second cause of muscle tension is **trauma**. Traumatic experiences can range from being spanked as a child all the way to extreme violence. [Trauma](#) may have been deliberately inflicted on us (e.g. rape or physical assault) or accidental (e.g. a car crash). When these traumatic experiences aren’t consciously dealt with, they can result in chronic fear, stress, and even occurrences of PTSD. This chronic anxiety, anger, and grief tend to get stored within the body resulting in muscle tension which contributes to numerous other illnesses such as fibromyalgia, digestive disorders, mental illnesses, and even cancer.

The third cause of muscle tension is **psychological tension**. Psychological tension is any form of anxiety, frustration, sadness or anger that we develop as a result of our perceptions. For example, we may develop psychological tension as a result of our thoughts regarding our coworker (e.g. they’re lazy) or of us being stuck in traffic (“this shouldn’t happen). Our automatic tendency to attach to these thoughts and take them seriously is what causes us psychological tension. The more negative, fearful or fault-finding our perspective is, the more tension we tend to store in our muscles.

The final cause of muscle tension is **environmental stressors and habits**. For example, our sedentary lifestyles (working at a desk all day) tend to exacerbate our physical pain because we aren’t giving our muscles a chance to expel the tension. Other habits such as poor posture, lack of sleep, drug use, unhealthy eating, and environmental pollution tend to increase the likelihood of us developing chronic muscle tension.

Consequences of Chronic Muscle Tension

The field of [psychosomatic medicine](#) has conducted [numerous studies](#) through the years exploring the mind’s effect on the body, and vice versa.

In terms of muscle tension caused by mental and emotional factors, we tend to experience many health issues:

- Mood disorders (anxiety, depression, SAD)
- Joint pain and increase chance of injury

- Dysmenorrhea (menstruation problems)
- Insomnia
- Skin problems (acne, psoriasis)
- Asthma and hayfever
- Headaches and migraine
- Palpitations and chest pain
- Nausea
- Fibromyalgia
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome
- GI issues (diarrhea, bloating, constipation, cysts)
- Hypertension/High blood pressure
- Sexual dysfunction (premature ejaculation, painful sex)
- Increased tendency towards addictive behavior

This list is by no means complete, and there are many other consequences out there of muscle tension. So if you believe I've missed something out, please comment below.

Download The Body Work PDF! <https://lonerwolf.com/muscle-tension/> scroll down @ website

Learn how to release painful memories and emotions stored in the body, we've compiled this article into a *Body Work* (as a PDF) step-by-step how-to guide.

9 Types of Muscle Tension Caused By Trapped Emotions

According to a [study](#) conducted in 2012, **25.3 million Americans** (11.2%) suffer from chronic pain every day and 17.6% suffer from severe levels of pain. This single study reveals a grim reality: so many of us are suffering from muscle tension on a daily basis. Surely there must be a better way to live.

As a person who has struggled with chronic neck and shoulder pain for many years, I was lucky to discover the source of my pain thanks to a healing method known as "floating." Thanks to my experience in a float tank (also known as a sensory deprivation tank or [isolation tank](#)) I was able to discover that my muscle tension was intimately linked to old memories and repressed emotions. Lying in the dark, with no sound or sensory input on top of 800 pounds of dissolved Epsom salts, I gradually started feeling my muscles unwind. As each muscle group relaxed and spasmed, thoughts and emotions fired through my head. For example, as my spine let go into the water, I could feel grief pour through me and memories from childhood run through my mind. I could feel my upper thighs release their contraction as anxiety and [loneliness](#) bubbled up through me. I could feel the fear and burden be released from my shoulders and neck area.

Although everyone is different and there are no (known) absolute places in the body where outright emotions are stored, there are certain places which tend to accumulate specific types of emotions.

Below, I want to share with you nine of the most common types of muscle pain and what underlying emotions are connected to them.

1. Shoulder Tension = Burdens and Responsibilities

When we feel weighed down by the stress of life, we tend to accumulate these feelings within our shoulders. Ever heard the expression “carrying the weight of the world on your shoulders”? Shoulder tension seems to be intimately linked to social and emotional responsibilities, including unconsciously carrying the burden of *other* people’s pain. As such, many [empaths](#), [healers](#), and caretakers struggle with chronic shoulder muscle tension.

2. Neck Tension = Fear and Repressed Self-Expression

Neck tension is often connected to [throat chakra](#) issues such as the inability to communicate clearly or be your authentic self around others. Fear and anxiety are also frequently stored in this area, particularly as a physical response to danger (as the neck is a vulnerable area) or strange environments. Neck muscle tension is also related to trust issues.

3. Upper Back = Grief, Sorrow, and Sadness

Unexpressed and unreleased sadness tends to build up within the upper back region. As this area is close to the heart, it is also where emotions connected to heartbreak and loss are stored. For instance, if you carry around grief regarding a loved one or your family at large, you will likely feel tense in this area.

4. Middle Back = Insecurity and Powerlessness

Healing traditions such as reflexology link middle back pain to feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, and insecurity. If you’re feeling unsupported by other people or life, you probably carry tension here.

5. Lower Back = Guilt, Shame, and Unworthiness

Lower back issues often correlate with feelings of low [self-worth](#) and lack of self-acceptance. Feelings such as guilt, shame, and even sexual inadequacy or trauma can be stored here as well.

6. Stomach = Inability to Process Emotions

The expression “I can’t stomach it” appropriately describes stomach muscle tension. If your stomach feels stiff or sore, you might struggle to process both negative (and even positive) emotions.

7. Inner Thighs = Fear of Vulnerability

Are you nervous and untrusting around other people? If you [struggle with social anxiety](#), you might also have inner thigh pain. Because our legs are biologically programmed to run when we first spot danger, fear towards others is often stored here.

8. Outer Thighs = Frustration and Impatience

How fast do you live life? The more quickly and mindlessly you live, the more likely you have frustrated and impatient energy stored in your outer thigh muscles. Our jobs and personal lives can also

contribute greatly to muscle tension in this area.

9. Buttocks = Anger and Rage

How often do you have to deal with people who are a “pain in the bum”? Anger and suppressed rage are often stored in the buttocks. Pay attention next time you feel your head boil: is your but tensing up as well?

How to Release Trapped Emotions

Now you may be wondering how to release the muscle tension you have. Here are some tips:

- Allow yourself to **“feel it to heal it.”** One of the easiest ways to let go of muscle tension is to actively feel and [let go of emotions](#) when they come. Of course, this is not always possible, so at the end of every day, make sure you allow yourself the space to feel the emotions you’ve had through the day. Feeling these emotions might involve crying, punching or screaming into a pillow, or any other form of catharsis.
- Adopt an attitude of non-judgment. When we judge our emotions as something “bad” or “wrong,” we actually deepen our suffering and solidify the tension within our muscles. Instead, simply realize that an emotion is an emotion. It doesn’t need to mean anything about you unless you let it.
- Journal about how **you feel**. Let all of your emotions out in a journal, completely unfiltered. This is a very healing practice if done regularly and is a powerful form of [shadow work](#).
- Be gentle with yourself. Muscle tension tends to add to our negative inner voices which cause us even more tension. To break this cycle of the body feeding the mind and the mind feeding the body, be kind towards yourself. Treat yourself as you would a child or best friend. This practice is a simple but profound way [to relax](#).
- Stretch your muscles. Do simple stretches or try yoga to relax your muscles. Even just five minutes a day is beneficial.
- Breathe deeply. Shallow breathing causes a restriction in air, blood flow, toxin removal, and increased anxiety. Deep breathing stimulates the vagus nerve which calms the mind.
- Try floating. Unless you can afford to go into outer space or an anti-gravity chamber, floating is the only opportunity there is on this planet to experience total weightlessness. [“Sensory Deprivation Tanks”](#) may sound daunting, but actually they’re immensely healing and calming. People with claustrophobia frequently have no issues with floating. Some of the main benefits include reaching deep states of [inner peace](#) and bliss, muscle relaxation, enhanced magnesium, better sleep, improved skin, mental clarity, and improved focus. To get the most out of floating, try a minimum of three sessions.
- Get a massage. Seek out a licensed massage therapist to reduce your muscle tension.

Alternatively, use something like the [Acuball](#) to give yourself a deep tissue massage (the Acuball is what I use).

- Meditate. Meditation is a great way to become more present and conscious of muscle tension as it arises.
- Art therapy. Express how you feel through painting, drawing, sculpting or any other method of self-expression as a [form of therapy](#).

I hope this article has better helped you to understand your own muscle tension. Please remember that muscle tension has many causes, and emotions aren't just the only cause. Also, the list presented in this article isn't definitive or set in stone. Every person varies meaning that **it's important that you actively explore what emotions are linked to your muscle tension yourself**. For example, tension in your shoulders might mean sadness *for you personally*, whereas this article says it's generally linked to feeling burdened. So it's important that you explore your muscle tension for yourself.

Have any advice on how to reduce muscle tension? [Please share with us](#).

Aletheia Luna is an influential spiritual writer whose work has touched the lives of millions worldwide. After escaping the religious cult she was raised in, Luna experienced a profound existential crisis that led to her spiritual awakening. As a spiritual counselor and author, Luna's mission is to help others find love, strength, and inner light in even the darkest of places.

"True love is born from understanding." - Buddha

"Every day we should hear at least one little song, read one good poem, see one exquisite picture, and, if possible, speak a few sensible words." - Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

9] [MOOJAG and the Auticode Secret](#) by N.E. McMorran / Publisher [Spondylux Press](#)

When Nema and her friends discover a hidden sugar-hooked society holding lost kids, they find their perfect world in danger. The strange, sticky place hides the truth about Nema's missing brother, and a plot to destroy the free life she knows. But only they can reverse a code to prevent a rock candy robot invasion and rescue the captives. Fail and they might never make it back home...

MOOJAG and the Auticode Secret is a quirky, cli-fi adventure featuring neurodiverse characters, for readers 10 years and up. Set in the utopian 'Real World' of post-catastrophe 'Surrey Isles', Britain 2054, where neurodivergents live in harmony with nature and technology.

Anyone who has ever felt different or had trouble fitting in will identify with this story about finding the strength to be your true self. A fun, Alice-esque adventure revealing what it means to be neurodivergent, in a way that's relatable to all.

"Moojag is a fun science fiction tale that has a serious message about people who are different. The surprise ending will really make you think." TEMPLE GRANDIN - 'Animals in Translation', 'The Autistic Brain'

N.E. McMorran is a British-Cypriot autistic writer, designer and teacher, who lives with her teen and their rescued dog, Ben. She's a foodie and loves fixing stuff and helping people. Her special interests are autism, art, natural living, and finding a solution to end homelessness. She previously worked for the BBC as researcher and photographer, taught in London schools, and founded/managed a magazine publishing company.

She currently volunteers with the NAS and facilitates the London based Spondylux Press, run by autistic professionals to publish inclusive neurodiverse works.

McMorran attributes her achievements to her creative and autistic traits - persistence, imagination, mimicry, problem solving, empathy and intuition, hyper focus and attention to detail.

The inspiration behind Moojag

Moojag reflects the author's experiences growing up undiagnosed in a neurodiverse family, and the journey to her late autism diagnosis.

As a child she listened in awe to her parents' made-up stories about giant animated rock candy, and greedy fairies who magic-up sweet treats. (No surprise she has a sweet tooth!) In her 30s, after moving to Cyprus, she decided to write a book based on their stories: 'The Gajoomstiks' and 'Poof Poof'. She wrote a page, but put it away. She became a mum and started telling her own made-up stories. A few years later she experienced autistic 'burnout'. When she returned to London with her son to home educate and get support, she started writing again. Their experiences began to feed the story and it was through 'Moojag' that she realised she fit the criteria for autism. Two years later, at age 43, she received her formal diagnosis from the Lorna Wing Centre (NAS).

9a] [Spondylux Press](#) - is an independent publisher of own-voice stories, run by actually autistic professionals to promote originality, neurodiversity, inclusion, growth, creativity, sustainability, social change and justice.

Based in London, with over twenty years publishing and media industry experience, **we actively seek, support and publish the work of underrepresented artists and writers.** We also welcome self diagnosed autistics.

Contact us if you have a book idea or would like to submit a manuscript for consideration. If your work isn't ready for publication, we will provide free honest, critical and creative feedback to get you on track.

We are offering opportunities, in editing/illustration/design/marketing and admin. To apply, please contact us with details of experience and skills. We accommodate individual needs and welcome all ability levels.

“One of the most destructive ways you kill your self-confidence is when you compare yourself to others and make the faulty assumption that you should already be somewhere other than wherever you are. Comparing yourself to someone else doesn't take into account the fact that you have completely different life experiences, biology, genetics, etc. People don't come out of the starting gate all in the same place. Comparing yourself to others prevents you from taking credit for your own journey and all that you have become based on your own set of circumstances. Always remember that your life

experience is your own.” - Jennice Vilhauer

“If you’re hysterical, it’s historical.” - Anonymous

Hey folks,

A powerful music documentary. Well worth watching to learn the back story on some great musicians and music. I saw this a few years ago, glad I watched it again.

Talk about overcoming trauma, racism and stigma....these folks exemplify the courage and the perseverance of the human spirit. Michael

10] [RUMBLE - The Indians Who Rocked the World](#) - Independent Lens - PBS - By Catherine Bainbridge & Alfonso Maiorana

RUMBLE is the electric story of how Native American influence shaped rock and roll, a missing chapter in music history.

About the Film - They tried to ban, censor and erase Indian culture from rock and roll history but Native American influence is wrapped into modern music's DNA. *RUMBLE: The Indians Who Rocked the World* is an electric look at Native American influence in popular music, going deep into the Indigenous foundations of rock.

RUMBLE traces the melodies, rhythms, and beats of traditional Native music as they took different forms across the spectrum of 20th-century American rock. Native Americans such as Robbie Robertson and Buffy Sainte-Marie helped to define its evolution, while Native guitarists and drummers such as Link Wray - the electric guitar pioneer whose titular instrumental hit was banned from the radio, Hall of Famer Jimi Hendrix, who was part-Cherokee, Jesse Ed Davis, and many more forever changed the trajectory of rock and roll. Their stories are told by some of America's greatest rock legends who knew them, played music with them, and were inspired by them, including George Clinton, Taj Mahal, Slash, Jackson Browne, Taboo, Buddy Guy, Quincy Jones, Derek Trucks, Tony Bennett, Iggy Pop, Steven Tyler and Stevie Nicks.

[RUMBLE: The Indians Who Rocked the World](#) – Official Trailer - YouTube 2:32 minutes

Telling a missing chapter in rock history, RUMBLE is essential viewing for music fans.

[Additional viewing options - RUMBLE: The Indians Who Rocked The World](#)

Catherine Bainbridge has brought her signature enthusiasm and passion for storytelling to countless documentary, drama, comedy and interactive media projects, notably the Peabody Award-winning documentary *Reel Injun (Independent Lens)* about Native stereotypes in Hollywood films. Her role as director on *RUMBLE* encapsulates her love and devotion to music, history, politics and bringing important Indigenous stories to the mainstream.

Based in Montreal, **Alfonso Maiorana's** DP experience on Hollywood films, independent features, MOWs, and television series brings a distinctive look and feel to the films he shoots. His directing

credits include *The Big World* which premiered at the Montreal International Film festival.

10a] [Link Wray - Rumble - Recorded Live](#): 11/12/1984 - Capitol Theatre - Passaic, NJ You Tube 4:27 minutes

“He who sings scares away his woes.” - Cervantes

“Music acts like a magic key, to which the most tightly closed heart opens.” - Maria von Trapp

10b] [Rumble: the story of the Native Americans who shaped rock music](#) by Katie Bain @ The Guardian

In an eye-opening new documentary, hidden Native American figures are finally given credit for influencing a vast amount of popular music.

For a song with no lyrics, Rumble managed to say a lot about sex, swagger and the allure of teenage rebellion. Released in 1958 by Native American guitarist Link Wray, the track – all dirty chord progressions and blistering guitar – was an omen of the impending 60s rock revolution, and is widely credited with inventing the power chord that would become essential to rock, metal, thrash and other tangential genres. Sixty-one years after its release, Rumble remains the only instrumental track to be banned from American radio, for fear it would incite youth violence.

But this wordless call to arms did get through to the masses, and certain members of the audience to which it spoke would internalize Rumble’s sound and spirit and with them create a new and fantastically unholy genre of larger than life guitar music.

“Jeff Beck told me that he and Jimmy Page used to jump around the bedroom at his mom’s house playing air guitar to Link Wray,” says guitarist Stevie Salas. “To visualize these guys that are like, the Mount Rushmore of rock stars playing air guitar to a Shawnee Indian, it just blew my mind.”

Indeed, Link Wray, the leather-clad rocker prowling the stage with mega-bravado, grew up poor in rural South Carolina in the days when the Ku Klux Klan would ride by his house in the middle of the night, and when the Klan was just as likely to come after you for being Indian as for being black. He’s one of many Native artists – Jimi Hendrix, The Band’s Robbie Robertson, jazz vocal icon Mildred Bailey – whose heritage was largely hidden, even as they shaped musical history.

Wray’s most famous song thus serves as the title of *Rumble: The Indians Who Rocked the World*, a documentary exploring the Native American presence in, and influence on, popular music. Released last year, *Rumble* makes its US television premiere on 21 January and in it, Steve Van Zandt calls Rumble “the soundtrack to juvenile delinquency” while Iggy Pop preaches that the track “did help me say ‘fuck it, I’m gonna be a musician.’”

But Rumble’s narrative goes far deeper than teenage impulses, tracing a path from rock ‘n’ roll to jazz to the blues to the music of pre-colonial America, before European immigrants and Federal government began their systematic decimation of Native people and the vibrant musical traditions they carried. Through exhaustive research backed by the Smithsonian, *Rumble* makes a case that the blues, the oldest form of American popular music, was influenced by even more ancient Native styles of playing

and singing.

In particular the film points to Charley Patton – “the father of the Delta blues” who’s believed to have Choctaw ancestry – as a key artist who melded traditional tribal rhythms with the then burgeoning blues. The scene in which Tuscarora/Taíno musician Pura Fé demonstrates the Native influence in Patton’s *Down the Red Dirt Road* will likely give you chills.

“That’s Indian music with a guitar,” Fé says, her eyes lighting up, “that’s where it went.”

Patton’s style influenced other blues artists and, eventually, the British rock and rollers like The Rolling Stones, The Who and Zeppelin who would bow at their feet in the ‘60s. *Rumble* features a 1965 clip from the American musical variety show *Shindig!* in which the Stones host a performance by Howlin’ Wolf, who was deeply influenced by Patton. With such footage, *Rumble* fleshes out the DNA of popular music, which has for centuries been incomplete due to the suppression of Native people.

“As we started to find out the depth of it, we were so excited and also felt a tremendous amount of responsibility to do it properly,” says *Rumble*’s director Catherine Bainbridge. “It’s a nuanced thing, and it’s not about over-claiming anything. It’s just about saying there’s a part of that history that got buried, and that you should know because it was important.”

Rumble took four years to make and was filmed in 28 cities throughout North America – from the deep south to the mountainous west – with the film-makers often spending days with families of the musicians they were investigating, gathering stories and digging through old photo albums.

Ultimately, they gathered over 10,000 pieces of archival materials and did 178 hours worth of interviews with musicologists, historians, journalists, poets and rockstars. *Rumble*’s cast features Pop, Van Zandt, George Clinton, Martin Scorsese, Steven Tyler, Dan Auerbach, Taj Mahal, Jackson Browne, Slash, Buffy Sainte-Marie, Robbie Robertson, Metallica’s Robert Trujillo, Wayne Kramer of the MC5, Taboo of the Black Eyed Peas and other musical luminaries talking about each artist in question with unmistakable deference.

“I was completely influenced by Mildred Bailey,” Tony Bennett gushes. “She sang perfect, for me.”

The A-list cast was largely a function of the film’s executive producer Stevie Salas, a venerable rock guitarist who’s toured with Rod Stewart and The Rolling Stones. Salas and Bainbridge felt it was key to have famous musicians proclaiming the importance of Native artists in order to make the case for their importance and add weight to interviews with subjects including Fé and the late Santee Dakota author, musician and activist John Trudell.

“To me it was important that it wasn’t just Native people praising these musicians, but the biggest rockstars in the world,” Salas says. “If I got on screen and said, ‘Jesse Ed Davis was the greatest guitar player,’ you’d say, ‘Okay, whatever.’ If Eric Clapton tells you, you’re a lot more inclined to believe him.” Salas’ rock Rolodex also helped open doors when requesting interviews.

“Everyone,” says Bainbridge, “said yes without hesitation”.

The idea for *Rumble* came to Salas after he worked he worked with co-Executive Producer Tim Johnson at the Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian on *Up Where We Belong: Native*

Musicians In Popular Culture. Based on Brian Wright-McLeod's 2000 book *The Encyclopedia of Native Music*, this 2010 exhibition displayed artifacts from Native musicians including Jimi Hendrix, Robertson and Sainte-Marie, and hosted record crowds in Washington D.C. and New York. In this era, Salas was spending time on reservations and had witnessed he says, "what seemed to be a lack of role models. People to look up to Native Americans from 100 or 200 years ago, the Sitting Bulls and Geronimos. I wanted to do something to show Native American people that Native American musicians were really influential and fantastic." He decided to make the exhibit into a movie.

Collaborating with Bainbridge was an easy fit, as the Canadian director had made the 2009 film *Reel Injun*, which documented Hollywood's portrayals, and misportrayals, of Native people. What the filmmakers and their team found as they researched was, to them, nothing less than a revision of history, so much so that a curriculum has been developed around *Rumble* so it can be taught in schools. Meanwhile, last year *Rumble* found wide release in hundreds of theaters throughout North America and Europe. (Of using the controversial label "Indian" in the title, Salas says: "The goal was to get as many people to understand what the film is, so they'd see it and learn the information. If that meant using a word people are more familiar with, the end justified the means.")

In 2017, *Rumble* was named one of the year's best Canadian films at the Toronto film festival and won the world cinema documentary special jury award for masterful storytelling at the Sundance film festival. Salas couldn't attend Sundance, as he was on tour in Japan recouping some of the money he lost while taking time off the road to make the movie. Meanwhile Bainbridge and her husband, who is First Nation, had mortgaged their house to help finance the film.

For the duo, the steep investment of time and money has paying off not only in praise, but more so in the opportunity to shine a light on Native American heroes who, until now, have been largely left out of the mainstream.

"What makes me so proud about the film," Bainbridge says, "is that now all of us can know this history, and once we know that, we know there are other things we don't know. That's where we are right now in our history of decolonization—all the stories are being retold."

"Decision is a risk rooted in the courage of being free." - Paul Tillich

"Music has real health benefits. It boosts dopamine, lowers cortisol and it makes us feel great. Your brain is better on music." - Alex Doman

Finally, in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Day, some poignant thoughts to share from him.

"Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'"

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

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