



Healing the Mind, Body & Spirit 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 April 2022

Hi folks,

Some thoughts about the month of April – it is [National Child Abuse Prevention Month](#), [Sexual Assault Awareness Month](#) and [National Poetry Month](#).

I'd like to share a few things that I was part of in addressing a few of the themes for April -

A recent article - NH Business Review - [Q&A with Michael Skinner, Advocate for Survivors of Child Abuse](#) by [John Angelo](#)

"You're wounded, but you do heal. Peer support is crucial. I've learned that I'm not mentally ill. I've had trauma and abuse in my life. I've suffered mental health injuries."

& A little blast from the past, but still relevant today – Honored to be part of the Survivor Stories event hosted by Michael Broussard of [Ask a Survivor](#). Performing two songs of mine and sharing the back story to their creation – “Songs For The Keys To Your Life” and “When Your Heart Follows A Lie”

The songs encapsulate some of the many feelings, thoughts and lessons learned about the impact of trauma, abuse and mental health injuries which I get to talk about in the Q & A.

[Survivor Stories with Michael Skinner – Music & Sharing](#) @ YouTube 21:15 minutes

Take care and share as you wish....Thank you, Michael Skinner

“Go to where the silence is and say something.” – Amy Goodman

“Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness.” – Desmond Tutu

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“Some people need to be told they are worthy, that they are loved, not because nobody ever told them before, but because someone told them they weren't.” - Unknown

“On particularly rough days when I'm sure I can't possibly endure, I like to remind myself that my track record for getting through the bad days so far is 100%...and that's pretty good.” - Unknown

“If we could somehow end child abuse and neglect, the eight hundred pages of DSM (and the

need for the easier explanations such as [DSM-IV Made Easy: The Clinician's Guide to Diagnosis](#)) would be shrunk to a pamphlet in two generations.” - John Briere

1] [“Treating Risky and Compulsive Behavior in Trauma Survivors”](#) by John Briere

[John Briere, Ph.D.](#) Professor Emeritus Psychiatry and the Behavioral Sciences, USC – Adolescent Trauma Training Center, Keck School of Medicine, University of Southern California

From leading authority John Briere, this book provides a comprehensive treatment approach for survivors of childhood trauma who numb or avoid emotional distress by engaging in substance abuse, risky sexual activities, self-injury, suicidality, bingeing and purging, or other self-harming behaviors. Briere shows how to help clients identify and manage the triggers of these “distress reduction behaviors,” learn to regulate intrusive emotional states, and safely process trauma- and attachment-related memories. Emphasizing the therapeutic relationship, Briere's approach draws on elements of psychodynamic, interpersonal, and cognitive-behavioral therapy; mindfulness training; and dialectical behavior therapy. The book combines cutting-edge clinical and experimental research with clearly described interventions, case examples, and [reproducible](#) handouts and forms. Purchasers get access to a Web page where they can download and print the reproducible materials in a convenient 8½“ x 11” size.

[A sample chapter excerpt from Guilford Publications.](#)

“Treating Risky and Compulsive Behavior in Trauma Survivors.”

Purchase this book: www.guilford.com/p/briere

[Books by John Briere](#) & [Author Page](#)

John Briere, PhD, is a past president of the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies, he received the Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Science of Trauma Psychology from the American Psychological Association and the William N. Friedrich Lecturer: Outstanding Contribution to the Field of Child Psychology from the Mayo Clinic. He is author or co-author of over 140 articles and chapters, 15 books (1st or 2nd editions), and 9 trauma-related psychological tests. He presents and consults on trauma, treatment, and mindfulness internationally. His latest book is *Treating Risky and Compulsive Behavior in Trauma Survivors*, published in 2019 by Guilford.

“It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.” - Frederick Douglass

“The butterfly does not look back at the caterpillar in shame, just as you should not look back at your past in shame. Your past was part of your own transformation.” - Anthony Gucciardi

2] [Get Reading: This Is How Books Can Impact Your Mental Health](#) by Christina Quaine @ Pocket

We’ve long known that we can find comfort, solace and help in the pages of a book, and now research has confirmed that reading can be good for our mental health.

It’s that moment when you sink into the sofa after a stressful day at work, relieved to lose yourself in a

[Kate Atkinson bestseller](#) for 20 minutes. It's easing yourself under your duvet at bedtime, prising open Sarah Waters' *Fingersmith*, desperate to discover Sue Trinder's fate. It's those two minutes snatched with [Jane Eyre](#) while you're waiting for the kettle to boil in between Zoom meetings.

Reading a book is one of life's biggest joys, but could it also be a way of coping with the difficult times in life, from [bereavement](#) to relationship problems, and life in lock-down?

New research suggests that reading could be hugely beneficial for our mental health, with classic books written by authors such as William Shakespeare and Charles Dickens being proven to help relieve depression and chronic pain. In a 2020 study published by Oxford University Press, "challenging language" was found to send "rocket boosters" to our mind that can help [boost our mental health](#).

The mental health benefits of reading are something that Dr Paula Byrne certainly believes in. She is an author and founder of [ReLit](#), a charity which promotes bibliotherapy for mental health. She and her colleagues run workshops in schools, prisons and halfway houses and they host a week-long bibliotherapy summer school which is open to all.

"Bibliotherapy, quite simply, is about [books as therapy](#). It's not meant to take the place of medicine, but it can complement it," says Dr Byrne. "It's actually a reinvention of a traditional idea. The ancient Greeks used poetry as therapy and Queen Victoria drew comfort from the works of Alfred Lord Tennyson when her husband, Prince Albert, died.

"Books can take you to a different place. They can relax you and calm you, and they can offer wisdom, or humour, or both."

The [National Health Service](#) is increasingly tuning into the benefits of literary prescriptions. [Reading Well](#) offers two things: a books-on-prescription scheme which helps people to understand and manage their mental health – all the book lists, which are [non-fiction, self-help-type books](#), are endorsed by health professionals and supported by public libraries in England. [Read the entire article](#)

"Happiness turned to me and said, 'It is time. It is time to forgive yourself for all of the things you did not become. It is time to exonerate yourself for all the people you couldn't save, for all the fragile hearts you fumbled with in the dark of your confusion. It is time, child, to accept that you don't have to be who you were a year ago, that you don't have to want the same things. Above all else, it is time to believe, with reckless abandon, that you are worthy of me, for I have been waiting for years.'" - Bianca Sparacino

"The time to relax is when you don't have time for it." - Sydney J. Harris

3] [Having your pain invalidated is associated with increased shame and, in turn, an increased risk of depression](#) by [Beth Ellwood @ PsyPost](#)

Findings from the journal [Frontiers in Psychology](#) shed light on the link between pain invalidation and risk of depression. The study found that participants who felt invalidated in their pain experienced greater shame, and in turn, greater symptoms of depression.

Pain is a subjective experience that is imperceptible to others. Because of this, people who are experiencing pain often have their pain downplayed by others around them, including nurses and doctors. This invalidation can show up in a few different ways. In some cases, an outsider acknowledges a person's pain experience but does not believe that it requires support, and in other cases, an outsider might not believe that the pain exists at all.

Importantly, having one's pain invalidated can lead to stigmatization and may even exacerbate pain severity. Pain invalidation has also been associated with a range of poor mental health outcomes. In particular, pain invalidation has been repeatedly tied to depression, and study authors Brandon L. Boring and his team say this may have something to do with shame.

Shame is a feeling of inadequacy, self-consciousness, and low self-worth. Pain on its own has been associated with shame, and Boring and colleagues suggest that these feelings may be intensified when pain is being dismissed by others. The researchers conducted a study to explore the relationship between pain invalidation, depression, and shame among a sample of college students.

A total of 478 students were involved in the study. Most (328) participants were female, 139 were male, 10 did not disclose their gender, and 1 identified as "other". None of the students were currently suffering from chronic pain. The participants answered questionnaires that assessed pain invalidation from three domains — friends, family, and medical professionals. The questions prompted students to consider how each of these types of people had reacted to the student's pain experiences in the past year. The respondents also completed assessments of shame and depression.

The prevalence of pain invalidation was remarkably high among the students. Nearly all participants (99.4%) reported at least some pain invalidation from family members. Similarly, 98.9% reported pain invalidation from friends, and 95.5% reported pain invalidation from doctors. As expected, pain invalidation from any of these sources was significantly associated with both shame and depression.

Shame fully mediated the relationships between each source of pain invalidation and depression. In other words, having one's pain invalidated by others — whether by friends, family, or medical professionals — predicted greater feelings of shame, and in turn, elevated symptoms of depression. Notably, these effects were consistent among men and women, except for pain invalidation from doctors which was trending in the same direction but not significant among men.

[Read the entire article](#)

Beth is a freelance mental health writer whose fascination for psychology helps her craft engaging news stories and B2B blog posts. She holds a bachelor's degree in Psychology and Behavioural Science from McGill University and a stack of elementary school report cards that note her early flair for storytelling. You can catch her at bethellwood.com or connect with her on Twitter at [@beth_ellwood](https://twitter.com/beth_ellwood).

[About PsyPost](#) - PsyPost is an independently-owned psychology and neuroscience news website dedicated to reporting the latest research on human behavior, cognition, and society. The publication covers the latest discoveries in psychology, psychiatry, neuroscience, sociology, and similar fields.

We are not interested in re-writing press releases from universities. We are not interested in over-

generalizing or mischaracterizing research to get more clicks. We are not interested in confirming or disproving ideological beliefs. We are only interested in accurately reporting research about how humans think and behave. And we only report on research that has been published in legitimate, peer-reviewed scientific journals. All of the information contained in our articles comes directly from these studies and interviews with scientists.

Our mission is to spread objective and reliable information about psychology and neuroscience research. By reporting on a wide variety of important, interesting, and overlooked studies, PsyPost provides the general public, mental health professionals, and academic scholars with free updates on new research — providing everyone with a glimpse into the latest knowledge being uncovered by scientists.

The website was created by Eric W. Dolan, who currently serves as the sole owner and editor-in-chief. PsyPost is entirely funded by displaying advertisements.

Since PsyPost launched in 2010, our reporting has been mentioned by AskMen.com, ATTN, Big Think, Bustle, Cosmopolitan, Complex, Daily Dot, Elite Daily, Headline & Global News, International Business Times, Inverse, Medical Daily, Mic.com, New York Daily News, New York magazine, Popular Science, RedOrbit, Refinery29, ScienceAlert, Teen Vogue, The Daily Caller, The Daily Express, The Daily Mail, The Guardian, The Miami Herald, The Frisky, The Huffington Post, The Telegraph, The Washington Post, Vice News, Uproxx, and more.

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“The human need to be visible is countered by the need to be invisible to avoid further abuse, and the need for intimacy and the dread of abuse, all pose insoluble dichotomies which promote further withdrawal from human contact, which reinforces the sense of dehumanization.” - Christiane Sanderson Introduction to Counseling Survivors of Interpersonal Trauma

“Never be afraid to raise your voice for honesty and truth and compassion against injustice and lying and greed. If people all over the world...would do this, it would change the earth.” - William Faulkner

4] [The 7 types of rest that every person needs](#) by Sandra Dalton-Smith MD @ Ideas.Ted.com

Have you ever tried to fix an ongoing lack of energy by getting more sleep — only to do so and *still* feel exhausted?

If that’s you, here’s the secret: Sleep and rest are not the same thing, although many of us incorrectly confuse the two.

We go through life thinking we’ve rested because we have gotten enough sleep — but in reality we are missing out on the other types of rest we desperately need. The result is a culture of high-achieving, high-producing, chronically tired and chronically burned-out individuals. We’re suffering from a rest deficit because we don’t understand the true power of rest.

Rest should equal restoration in seven key areas of your life.

The first type of rest we need is physical rest, which can be passive or active. Passive physical rest includes sleeping and napping, while active physical rest means restorative activities such as yoga, stretching and massage therapy that help improve the body's circulation and flexibility.

The second type of rest is mental rest. Do you know that coworker who starts work every day with a huge cup of coffee? He's often irritable and forgetful, and he has a difficult time concentrating on his work. When he lies down at night to sleep, he frequently struggles to turn off his brain as conversations from the day fill his thoughts. And despite sleeping seven to eight hours, he wakes up feeling as if he never went to bed. He has a mental rest deficit.

The good news is you don't have to quit your job or go on vacation to fix this. Schedule short breaks to occur every two hours throughout your workday; these breaks can remind you to slow down. You might also keep a notepad by the bed to jot down any nagging thoughts that would keep you awake.

The third type of rest we need is sensory rest. Bright lights, computer screens, background noise and multiple conversations — whether they're in an office or on Zoom calls — can cause our senses to feel overwhelmed. This can be countered by doing something as simple as closing your eyes for a minute in the middle of the day, as well as by intentionally unplugging from electronics at the end of every day. Intentional moments of sensory deprivation can begin to undo the damage inflicted by the over-stimulating world.

The fourth type of rest is creative rest. This type of rest is especially important for anyone who must solve problems or brainstorm new ideas. Creative rest reawakens the awe and wonder inside each of us. Do you recall the first time you saw the Grand Canyon, the ocean or a waterfall? Allowing yourself to take in the beauty of the outdoors — even if it's at a local park or in your backyard — provides you with creative rest.

But creative rest isn't simply about appreciating nature; it also includes enjoying the arts. Turn your workspace into a place of inspiration by displaying images of places you love and works of art that speak to you. You can't spend 40 hours a week staring at blank or jumbled surroundings and expect to feel passionate about anything, much less come up with innovative ideas. [Read the entire article](#)

4a] [The real reason why we are tired and what to do about it](#) - Sandra Dalton-Smith - TEDxAtlanta - YouTube 9:34 minutes

Board-certified internal medicine physician [Sandra Dalton-Smith](#) reveals the real reason why we are chronically tired despite getting the requisite amount of sleep and the 6 other types of rest available to us in this fast-paced and informative talk.

Physician and award-winning author Sandra Dalton-Smith is passionate about helping others live their best life, especially the stressed-out and burned-out. She has been featured in numerous media outlets including Women's Day, Redbook, First For Women, MSNBC, CBS, and Prevention. Her newest release, "Sacred Rest: Recover Your Life, Renew Your Energy, Restore Your Sanity," offers groundbreaking insight on the seven types of rest.

Sandra received her Bachelor of Science in biochemistry at the University of Georgia and graduated with honors from Meharry Medical College in Nashville. Sandra Dalton-Smith is passionate about

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She is both a board-certified internal medicine physician practicing in Alabama and an award-winning author. Sandra has been featured in outlets including Women's Day, Redbook, First For Women, MSNBC, CBS, and Prevention. Her newest release, "Sacred Rest: Recover Your Life, Renew Your Energy, Restore Your Sanity" offers groundbreaking insight on the seven types of rest.

Sandra received her Bachelor of Science in biochemistry at the University of Georgia and graduated with honors from Meharry Medical College in Nashville. This talk was given at a TEDx event using the TED conference format but independently organized by a local community. Learn more at <https://www.ted.com/tedx>

"When we do not attend to our feelings, they accumulate inside us and create a mounting anxiety that we commonly dismiss as stress." - Pete Walker

"Don't worry when you are not recognized, but strive to be worthy of recognition." Abraham Lincoln

5] [4 Important New Discoveries About Hugging](#) by [Sebastian Ocklenburg, Ph.D.](#) @ Psychology Today

- Research shows that getting hugged by others, but also hugging yourself, may reduce stress hormones.
- Longer hugs are perceived as more pleasant than shorter hugs.
- Older people who at least occasionally get hugs tend to feel better about their health.

During the [COVID-19](#) pandemic and associated lockdowns and restrictions, one of the things many people missed most was getting hugged by their loved ones. This led to an increased interest in the positive effects of hugging in the psychology research community and several studies published over the last year have yielded new insights on what it means to us to be hugged. Here are four of the most interesting new insights into the science of hugging.

1. Getting hugged by others, but also hugging yourself, reduces stress hormones

A recent study by researcher Aljoscha Dreisoerner from the Goethe University in Frankfurt, Germany, and his team focused on the positive effects of hugging on stress ([Dreisoerner et al., 2021](#)). Interestingly, the scientists not only investigated how getting hugged by other people could reduce stress, but also whether hugging yourself (e.g., when other people are not available during a lockdown) does also have a positive effect on stress. The scientists [stressed](#) 159 volunteers using the Trier Social Stress Test (TSST), a standard stress induction method in which people are stressed by asking them to perform a fake job interview. Volunteers also gave saliva samples, so their cortisol (an important stress [hormone](#)) could be measured. Volunteers were assigned to three different conditions. They either were hugged for 20 seconds by an assistant of the scientists, hugged themselves for 20 seconds, or received no hugs and were asked to build a paper plane. The results showed clearly that volunteers in both the hugging and the self-hugging condition showed lower cortisol levels than those in the control condition. Thus, getting hugged by other people, but also hugging oneself, reduces the negative effects of stress.

2. Hugging duration is important for mood

Most people would agree that hugging has a positive effect on mood—we just feel ever so slightly better if a loved one gave us a heartfelt hug. But what influences how hugging affects mood? A recent study by researcher Anna L. Dueren from the Department of Psychology, at the University of London, U.K., and her team focused on the question of what influences the effect of hugging on mood ([Dueren et al., 2021](#)). In the study, the 45 women hugged a confederate of the researcher for either one second, five seconds, or 10 seconds and reported how the hug felt. The results were clear: five-second and 10-second hugs both were rated as more pleasant than one-second hugs. Thus, the optimal hug should be at least five seconds long.

3. Hugs and health are related in older adults

A recent study by researcher Tia Rogers-Jarrell from the School of Kinesiology and Health Science at York University in Toronto, Canada, and her team focused on the positive effects of hugging on older adults ([Rogers-Jarrell et al., 2021](#)). [Read the entire article](#)

“Great minds discuss ideas; average minds discuss events; small minds discuss people.” – Eleanor Roosevelt

“I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear.” – Nelson Mandela

6] [The Healing Power of ART & ARTISTS](#) – We are a global community of Artists and Advocates raising awareness about how art serves as a catalyst for healing individuals, society and our environment.

The Healing Power of ART & ARTISTS (HPAA) is an initiative of [Manhattan Arts International](#), an organization launched in 1983 to promote emerging artists. HPAA is a growing global community of artists, advocates, and writers dedicated to raising awareness about how ART serves as a positive catalyst for enhancing the well-being of individuals, society and the environment. We believe that art has the power to heal, inspire, provoke, challenge and offer hope and bring positive change to the world.

HPAA was launched by Renée Phillips in 2015, the Founder and Director of Manhattan Arts International, [ManhattanArts.com](#), and curator of around 100 exhibitions in NYC venues and online, on a variety of themes including “The Healing Power of ART”.

As a staunch artist’s advocate Renée Phillips has served on the advisory boards of several non-profit arts organizations including the UNCF “The Art of Giving Back” and New York Artists Equity Association.

She has been a member of the prestigious Art Critics Association of America (AICA-USA) for more than 15 years and her articles have appeared in leading art magazines, websites, and gallery catalogues. Currently, she focuses on writing articles on this website, on [Manhattan Arts International](#), and [Renee-Phillips.com](#).

She was the founder and editor-in-chief of *Manhattan Arts International*, a major art magazine in NYC, NY, from 1983-2020. During this time she organized the only art political debate in the history of NYC among art leaders. She also served on one of the NYC mayor's "Excellence in the Arts" advisory boards.

Renée has presented many lectures and keynote speeches in such venues as the Art Institute of Chicago, Heckscher Museum, Columbia University, National Arts Club, New York University, Artists Talk on Art, and New York Foundation For The Arts. She designed a series of art and business courses for Marymount Manhattan College and for 7 years she presented "How to Get Into New York Art Galleries", a course at The Learning Annex.

She is the author of several art and business of art books including a series of ebooks that are available on her website renee-phillips.com.

She received her art education at The Art Student's League, SVA, FIT, and the New York School of Interior Design — all in NYC, NY. While she was a full-time artist she launched "Artopia" and organized group exhibitions to help fellow artists get exposure throughout NYC, in such venues as Lincoln Center, Chase Manhattan Bank, Studio 54, and many art galleries.

About The healing Power of ART & ARTISTS – HPAA has become one of the most popular positive art related websites on the Internet. As internationally recognized arts writer Edward Rubin states about The Healing Power of ART website, "It's filled with awe-inspiring essays. Hope, optimism and beautiful thoughts is just what is needed to remind us that there is still good in the world and that all is not lost." Read [comments about HPAA](#).

How We Achieve Our Purpose - We maintain [The Healing Power of ART Gallery](#) that features Artists who create art with a healing purpose.

6a] [Mehreen Hashmi](#) - Artist and Curator Mehreen Hashmi Gives A Voice to Survivors of Abuse

Mehreen Hashmi is an independent curator, art educator and internationally exhibited visual artist from Karachi, Pakistan. Since 2010, she has been engaged with her community, initiating public art projects and exhibiting her own art work. She is the founder of a non-profit project 'Paywasta Reh Shajar Se' in order to promote art education for children with such challenges as addiction, lack of resources and childhood abuse. She also curated Pakistan's first Karachi Art Summit in 2017 and recently participated in an international group show in London titled 'Modern Panic VIII'.

Her heartfelt story is about how her art and curatorial projects have helped her as a survivor of sexual abuse and how she uses art to give a voice to other survivors. She states, "Being a visual artist has served to share my sufferings and narrate my story through visuals whereas being a curator has given me the liberty of curatorial activism..." To view her art and learn more about her please visit her website at www.mehreenhashmi.com

Abuse can be fatal emotionally for a child as well as adults. In most cases, it scars deeply and one suffers throughout their life. There are possibilities including counseling or converting their post traumatic disorder into nonverbal communication.

I have always believed in producing art work of a strong nonverbal communication which can scream loudly without a voice. This is the reason for the choice to deal with it through my practice as a visual artist and curator.

With sexual abuse, I have suffered physical and emotional abuse as well. I wanted to share the aftermath and its horrid effects on a person's life. My work has been a statement for all the survivors of sexual abuse, women of domestic violence, and children from abusive families. It has served as a companion during my darkest days of my break downs.

Being a visual artist has served to share my sufferings and narrate my story through visuals whereas being a curator has given me the liberty of curatorial activism and bring together other artists' work in one show.

My self-portraits are a depiction of these heinous acts of others on one's body, mind and soul. It is a narration of oppression, turmoil and an ordeal which I have faced on daily basis during a certain period of my life.

It has been also difficult to display my work based on most critical context of my society; sexual abuse and protesting against the pedophiles. It is not an easy practice to display your most vulnerable emotions for a public display and prepare yourself for the reaction as well.

There are taboos against mental illness, emotional break downs and addressing sexual assault in our society. Mostly those who have been suffering from it do not share it which can cause more emotional damage. [Learn more & see her art](#)

"If you want to improve the world, start by making people feel safer." - Stephen W. Porges, Ph.D.

"It takes one a long time to become young." - Pablo Picasso

7] [Jim Hopper, Ph.D. -Interactive. Self-paced. Free Online Courses](#) - how stress and trauma can alter brain functioning during sexual assaults and other traumatic experiences.

Interactive online courses are another way to learn what I teach to live audiences and in my writings and videos. People have different learning styles, and you may find this a good match for you.

These self-paced modules explain, in very accessible ways, how stress and trauma can alter brain functioning during sexual assaults and other traumatic experiences. They explain the key brain circuitries impacted by stress and trauma, including the prefrontal cortex and the defense and habit circuitries. They provide increased understanding of brain-based experiences and behaviors, which have important implications for understanding, supporting and working with victims of sexual assault and other violence. In short, they are a critical foundation for bringing trauma-informed practices to people who have been assaulted.

Learning outcomes: (1) The ability to define key brain circuitries impacted by severe stress in the midst of traumatic experiences, from sexual assault to military combat. (2) The ability to name and explain common brain-based subjective, cognitive and behavioral responses to sexual and other assaults, which can bring understanding and support to victims/survivors in law enforcement, clinical and other

settings.

These modules were created with Articulate Rise software, which provides lots of engaging ways to receive and interact with content, including various layouts and combinations of text, images, audio and video.

A few notes: The first course offered here has three parts and doesn't yet include a lesson on memory. It's geared to investigators but accessible to everyone, and I'm working on versions tailored for other professionals and people who have been assaulted. I hope to offer continuing education credits in the future.

Some tips: These courses look best on a tablet or larger screen, but work on phones too. On larger screens, you can change font sizes in your browser (here's how in [Chrome](#) and [MS Edge](#)). To leave and retain your progress upon returning, keep the browser window open.

Finally, a caution: Some course content will be triggering for some people; please take care of yourself.

[Part 1: Introduction](#) - A little history, some neurobiological basics, why this matters, and cautions about not making assumptions. 3 Lessons, About 20 minutes

[Part 2: When Attack Is Detected](#) - Impaired prefrontal cortex, bottom-up attention, and freezing responses. 3 Lessons, About 25 minutes

[Part 3: Reflexes and Habits](#) - Self-protection habits, extreme survival reflexes, and the big picture over time. 4 Lessons, About 60 minutes

[About Jim Hopper](#) - Nationally recognized consultant, trainer and speaker

[YouTube Channel Playlists](#) – Independent Consultant, Therapist & Researcher – Teaching Associate in Psychology, Harvard Medical School.

“This is why people who have experienced severe abuse and trauma often have difficulty explaining their experiences. They have a problem because clinicians, friends, and family often don't have the concept of an immobilization defensive system in their vocabulary.” - Stephen W. Porges, Ph.D.

“All that is valuable in human society depends upon the opportunity for development accorded the individual.” – Albert Einstein

8] [ADHD Linked to Hoarding Behavior](#) - Neuroscience News

Summary: People with ADHD are significantly more likely to develop hoarding behaviors, a new study finds.

Source: Anglia Ruskin University

New research has found that people with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) are significantly more likely to also exhibit hoarding behaviors, which can have a serious impact on

their quality of life.

The study, published in the Journal of Psychiatric Research and funded by the British Academy and the Leverhulme Trust, found that almost one in five people with ADHD exhibited clinically significant levels of hoarding, indicating there could be a hidden population of adults struggling with hoarding and its consequences.

Hoarding disorder is a recognized condition that involves excessive accumulation, difficulties discarding and excessive clutter. The disorder can lead to distress or difficulties in everyday life and can contribute to depression and anxiety.

Previous research into hoarding disorder has mainly focused on older females who self-identify as hoarders and have sought help later in life. This new study, led by Dr. Sharon Morein of Anglia Ruskin University (ARU), recruited 88 participants from an adult ADHD clinic run by the Cambridge and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust.

The study found that 19% of this ADHD group displayed clinically significant hoarding symptoms, were on average in their 30s, and there was an equal gender split. Amongst the remaining 81%, the researchers found greater hoarding severity, but not to a degree that significantly impaired their lives, compared to the study's control group.

The researchers asked the same questions, about ADHD symptoms and impulsivity, levels of hoarding and clutter, obsessive compulsive severity, perfectionism, depression and anxiety, and everyday function, on a closely-matched group of 90 adults from the general population, without an ADHD diagnosis, and found only 2% of this control group exhibited clinically significant hoarding symptoms.

They then replicated this with a larger online sample of 220 UK adults to see if similar patterns were found, and similarly only 3% of this group exhibited symptoms.

Dr. Morein, Associate Professor in Psychology at Anglia Ruskin University (ARU), said: "Hoarding disorder is much more than simply collecting too many possessions. People with diagnosed hoarding disorder have filled their living areas with so many items and clutter that it impacts their day-to-day functioning leading to a poorer quality of life, anxiety, and depression.

"Overall, we found that people who had been diagnosed with ADHD had a higher likelihood of also having hoarding symptoms. This is important because it demonstrates that hoarding doesn't just affect people later in life, who are typically the focus of much of the research so far into hoarding disorder.

"Greater awareness amongst clinicians and people with ADHD about the link between ADHD and hoarding could also lead to more effective long-term management, as hoarding often gradually worsens with time." [Read the entire article](#)

[Neuroscience News](#) - What is neuroscience? Neuroscience is the scientific study of nervous systems. Neuroscience can involve research from many branches of science including those involving neurology, brain science, neurobiology, psychology, computer science, artificial intelligence, statistics, prosthetics, neuroimaging, engineering, medicine, physics, mathematics, pharmacology, electrophysiology, biology, robotics and technology.

*“When faced with choosing between attributing their pain to “being crazy” and having had abusive parents, clients will choose “crazy” most of the time. Dora, a 38-year-old, was profoundly abused by multiple family perpetrators and has grappled with cutting and eating disordered behaviors for most of her life. She poignantly echoed this dilemma in her therapy: “I hate it when we talk about my family as “dysfunctional” or “abusive.” Think about what you are asking me to accept—that my parents didn't love me, care about me, or protect me. If I have to choose between “being abused” or “being sick and crazy,” it's less painful to see myself as nuts than to imagine my parents as evil.” - Lisa Ferentz, *Treating Self-Destructive Behaviors in Trauma Survivors: A Clinician's Guide**

“Each time I perform an act of kindness, a part of me heals.” Lupi Ngcayisa

9] [When Family Members Don't Side With Those Abused](#) by [Hilary I. Lebow](#) @ Psych Central

Why Family Members Take Sides in Sexual Abuse - When sexual abuse occurs, family members may side with those who abuse instead of the survivor. There may be a reason for this.

Maybe you've waited a long time to open up to someone you feel close to. You prepare what you're going to say, then the big day comes, and they don't support you.

You may be shocked or feel disappointed.

Not only have you gone through a traumatic experience, but now you're navigating another layer of trauma: When your loved ones side with the one who hurt you.

No one should have to go through this, but it happens far more often than many would believe. If this is the case in your family, here's how to find the support you need.

Why does this happen? - Perhaps the most common reason boils down to this: People don't want it to be true.

“We all may know someone who's been sexually assaulted or abused, but very few of us will admit that we know a person who sexually abuses,” says [Amber Robinson](#), a licensed psychotherapist in Los Angeles.

“People who sexually abuse are not just shadowy figures in dark alleys,” she says. “They are hidden in our family, neighbors, colleagues, and friends. It's unfathomable to many of us that our loved one could commit such an egregious act. However, many do.”

In fact, of all child sexual abuse cases, [34%](#) are committed by family members.

Sometimes, the person who abuses may come across as a model citizen, successful executive, or doting parent, which adds to the confusion.

Other reasons for disbelief may include:

- the reputation of the family is at stake
- talking about abuse is considered taboo

- the person who hurt you is the head of the household
- the truth could threaten resources or finances
- fear of stirring the pot or breaking up the family unit
- other survivors in the family are not ready to speak up
- religious expectations around abstinence

Narcissism in a family system - If the sexual abuse was caused by someone with [narcissistic traits or behaviors](#), the entire family could play a role:

- the person with narcissistic traits: needs the family's validation
- the supporter: insists that you fill the person's needs
- the defender: defends or allows the person's behavior
- the golden child: can do no wrong in the family's eyes
- the scapegoat: takes the blame for the entire family

If a survivor has the potential to disrupt the flow, the family may do whatever it takes to preserve the family dynamic, like dismissing your story or making you the "scapegoat."

What happens when a family sides with a person who abuses instead of the survivor

Your family members may not be able to give you the support you deserve. The family may:

- Deny the abuse happened. They may say that the abuse never happened or you're remembering details incorrectly.
- Minimize the abuse. They may downplay the abuse as a mistake, drunken moment, or misunderstanding.
- Place the blame on you. They may say that you're trying to get attention or lying. They may imply that you somehow consented or deserved what happened to you.
- Get defensive. They may get angry or threaten to ostracize you if you dare to tell anyone else.

Ways family members can be supportive -The best gift a family member can provide is [active listening](#) with a nonjudgmental attitude, says [Shagoon Maurya](#), a psychotherapist in Adelaide, Australia.

"They must believe the survivor and reassure them it's not their fault," she says. "Respect their narrative and let them share details in their own comfort and pace."

[Read the entire article](#)

9a] [Coping with Family while Healing from Sexual Abuse](#) - The Second Wound

Welcome to The Second Wound, a site for survivors of trauma, including sexual abuse and assault. The Second Wound was created to address re-victimization, a surprisingly common phenomenon in which survivors experience victim-blaming, denial, and other damaging responses to their painful life experiences. In a high percentage of cases, family members, friends, and even some professionals:

- Fail to believe the truth
- Minimize survivors' experiences

- Blame, shame, and scapegoat survivors
- Lie about survivors and launch smear campaigns
- Ostracize survivors
- Exclude survivors from group and family activities (even as they include perpetrators of abuse)
- and attempt to silence survivors

These devastating responses are far more common than most people realize. Already wounded, survivors end up feeling blindsided, confused, and alone. All while they work to heal from their original trauma. These behaviors create a “second wound” that has no endpoint. What’s worse, it often mirrors the elements of abuse and assault, leaving survivors feeling ashamed and powerless.

The Second Wound is a site where you can come to feel understood, supported, and empowered by those who truly understand, your fellow survivors.

“If you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.” Max Planck

“In order to heal, most people with C-PTSD must confront hopeless thoughts, painful emotions, and intolerable sensations. Navigating this territory requires careful guidance. It is all too common to get stuck in avoidance patterns, fall in a pit of despair, or become imprisoned by the negative thoughts. You can find freedom from shame and helplessness. This process requires gentleness, acceptance, and persistence.” Dr. Arielle Schwartz

10] [How to support a struggling friend](#) by Elise Kalokerinos @ Psyche

Sometimes it’s hard to know what to say or do. Use these five strategies for providing effective emotional support.

Need to know - Your friend is devastated. She’s just lost her job and looks like she’s about to burst into tears in the middle of the busy coffee shop. You don’t know what to do. You want to help her, but what do you say in this horrible situation? How do you make her feel better right now, and how can you help her get through the tough time to come?

We’ve all been in situations like this, both big and small and everything in between: from a friend burning the food at their dinner party, to struggling with the loss of a loved one; from missing the bus to work, to enduring a marriage breakdown. Common wisdom suggests that a problem shared is a problem halved. We really want to help, yet we don’t quite have the words or the tactics. You might have felt yourself freeze in these moments, paralysed by the thought that anything you say or do could be a little awkward, or even make things worse.

Being supportive isn’t easy - Research shows that many people don’t really know what works best to help their friends effectively. Moreover, the support we do provide, such as giving advice, is often ineffective. Part of the challenge is that there are just so many possible ways to intervene. A survey of the methods that people used to manage their friends’ emotions [identified](#) 378 distinct strategies, including allowing the other person to vent their emotions, acting silly to make the other person laugh, and helping to rationalise the other person’s decisions. Given this large variety of strategies, it’s no wonder that deciding what to do when you have a friend in tears can be a little overwhelming.

Providing support is a skill that can be learned - The good news is that there are evidence-based support strategies you can learn that will help you provide more effective support to your friends. What's more, providing support to your friends is good both for them and for you. *Receiving* social support from friends has benefits: in general, people who are supported tend to be more [mentally](#) and [physically](#) healthy. This might be because support from our friends and family is a strong [buffer](#) against the stress caused by tough times. *Giving* social support to friends also has benefits: when we support another person, it helps to [strengthen](#) our relationship with that person, and it makes us feel [better](#) (with the benefits being even greater when we feel like we've done a good job helping).

In this Guide, I will take you through five strategies to help you provide more effective emotional support to those who are struggling. For each strategy, I'll give an example to help you see what this might look like in practice. These five strategies are broadly applicable but, later in the Guide, I'll also cover some caveats to keep in mind.

What to do - Resist the urge to downplay your friend's problems

Your friend Alex messages you, upset that he received a B in a college class. Your first impulse is to ignore the message – you think Alex is overreacting. He can handle this non-event on his own, and you don't get why he is so upset. After a while, you figure you should respond. You write: 'You'll be fine, I don't know why you're worrying! Getting a B is pretty good and not the end of the world.'

When we think that someone is catastrophising something that (to us) is not a big deal, it can be tempting to ignore them, downplay them or be dismissive, but that would be a mistake and will likely end [badly](#). Whatever your own take on your friend's dilemma, it's important to be responsive to their requests, and to prioritise trying to understand how they feel. Some [studies](#) suggest that being supportive is helpful *only when* we are responsive in this way. Moreover, being *responsive to other people* – trying to understand them, valuing their opinions and abilities, and making them feel cared for – is a [cornerstone](#) of good relationships.

In the longer term, a way to work on being more responsive and less dismissive is through setting compassionate goals. These involve focusing on supporting others, being constructive in interactions, and being understanding of others' weaknesses. In a [study](#) with college students, people who reported setting goals that were more compassionate and less selfish had roommates who felt more supported by them. Cultivating a compassionate mindset is a useful background for all the remaining steps in this Guide.

Ask questions and really listen. [Read the entire article](#)

[Elise Kalokerinos](#) is a senior lecturer in psychology and co-director of the Functions of Emotions in Everyday Life Lab at the University of Melbourne. She studies how people manage their emotions, and the emotions of others, as they navigate their daily lives.

[Psyche](#) is a digital magazine from Aeon that illuminates the human condition through psychology, philosophy and the arts.

“When we long for life without difficulties, remind us that oaks grow strong in contrary winds and

diamonds are made under pressure.” - Peter Marshall

“To my children, I’m sorry for the unhealed parts of me that in turn hurt you. It was never my lack of love for you. Only a lack of love for myself.” - Teresa Shanti

11] [116 Songs About Domestic Violence and Child Abuse](#) by FlourishAnyway @ [Spinditty](#)

FlourishAnyway believes there is a playlist for just about any situation and is on a mission to unite and entertain the world through song.

Spread awareness about domestic violence and child abuse with a playlist of pop, rock, and country songs. Be part of the solution.

The Dangerous, Ugly Cycle of Domestic Violence - Chances are that you know someone who abuses his or her partner or children. They could be a relative, coworker, neighbor, someone you go to church with, even your child's teacher or coach.

Perhaps you want to dismiss that as an unlikely possibility or as someone else's problem. However, domestic abuse crosses all socioeconomic, demographic, and religious boundaries. Here's the ugly truth:

- Every nine seconds in the United States, a woman is beaten.
- Ten million American children are exposed to domestic violence each year.
- Long-term impacts of child abuse include higher risks of smoking, drinking, and sexual activity at an early age; illicit substance abuse; criminal activity; teen pregnancy; adult psychopathology and suicide; and even heart and liver disease decades later.
- Children who grew up in abusive homes are at a three-fold risk of perpetuating the cycle.

Outside of the secrecy of home, the vast majority of abusers are law-abiding citizens without criminal records. However, the trauma that they inflict can last a lifetime.

One way you can help spread awareness about the epidemic of domestic violence and child abuse is through music. Make a playlist of pop, rock, and country songs about this painful, moving topic that impacts so many lives.

You can also be attentive. Lives may depend on you noticing and reporting what you see. (Click [here](#) to learn about traits and warning signs of abusers or [here](#) regarding what to do if you think someone is abusing a child.)

One-quarter of all adults report having been physically abused as children.

1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men have been victims of physical violence by an intimate partner within their lifetime. - National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV)

Children who experience abuse and neglect are 9 times more likely to become involved in criminal activity.

[Hear the songs here](#)

[FlourishAnyway](#) is an Industrial/Organizational psychologist whose personal passions include popular music, cats, crafts, cooking, family life, nature, and travel. For more than 15 years, has flourished in spite of multiple sclerosis. Additionally, having served in corporate Human Resources for two Fortune 500 companies, her interests also include HR workplace investigations, fairness perceptions, and employee selection.

She generally writes about the above personal topics. Life can pack a mean punch, but ...

FlourishAnyway! She can be contacted at sneillbaker@gmail.com

[Spinditty](#) - **Who We Are** - Welcome to *Spinditty*! We are a site created by music buffs—sharing our unique expertise and knowledge. We offer articles ranging from how to write jazz music to the craziest things Ozzy Osbourne ever did. If you're looking for information that is music related, we are here to answer your questions!

Our Purpose and Goal - Our goal at *Spinditty* is to be the best place online to find high-quality, informative-style content. We are also a platform for enthusiasts and aficionados to create original, useful, in-depth content. In most cases, we pair our authors with professional editors to create a well-written, informative piece.

Join Us! - If you have unique music knowledge, we'd love to have you on our team of writers. Feel free to check out our [editorial policy](#) and write your own article! *Spinditty* is a place to discover and create original, in-depth, useful, media-rich pages on topics you are passionate about.

“You did the best you could with the knowledge you had in that moment. It’s easier to look back at an event and see a better choice or pathway because we already learned from our experience. Hindsight happens after the lesson, so we can’t condemn ourselves for not knowing the lesson before we learned it.” - Emily Maroutian

“There are three ways to fulfill your emotional intelligence needs – find them in yourself, draw them from others or extract them from nature. What's your way of fulfilling your emotional intelligence needs?” - Sukant Ratnaka

12] [Sexual Assault at Any Age is a Risk Factor for Psychosis](#) By Jenny Logan @ Mad in America

Research finds no "critical period" for sexual abuse and mental health—sexual assault at any age can lead to psychosis symptoms.

There is a statistically significant link between psychosis and adverse experiences, including sexual abuse. New work from a team of researchers at the University College Dublin School of Medicine sought to determine whether there was a specific developmental window of sensitivity (sometimes referred to as a “critical period”) to sexual abuse that would be more strongly associated with psychotic symptoms later in life.

The researchers, led by Professor Kathryn Yates, hypothesized that earlier exposure to sexual trauma in childhood would lead to an increased risk of hallucinations, delusional beliefs, and psychotic disorder

relative to survivors of sexual traumas that occurred later in life. On the contrary, they discovered that sexual assault at any age was associated with increased odds of hallucinations, delusional beliefs, and psychotic disorder. [Read the entire article](#)

[Jenny Logan](#) is an Associate Faculty member at the Brooklyn Institute for Social Research and a PhD student in law at Birkbeck College, University of London. Jenny has worked as a special education teacher in the Bronx, New York, and more recently in fair housing and environmental justice movements in Portland, Oregon. A psychiatric survivor, she is interested in the political economy of child sexual abuse and psychiatry's role in the erasure of various forms of oppression.

[Mad in America](#) – Science, Psychiatry and Social Justice

“It shouldn't hurt to be child.” - Unknown

“Silence is the abuser's friend.” - Unknown

13] [Scientists Finally Understand the Link Between Depression and Bad Sleep](#) by Sarah Sloat

Some brains can't help but decide that three o'clock in the morning is the right time to ruminate on everything that's going wrong.

Approximately 75 percent of people diagnosed with [depression](#) say that they suffer from terrible sleep. On the other side of the same coin, people who consistently suffer [restless nights](#) have a high risk of developing depression. But because of a study released in *JAMA Psychiatry* a treatment for the one-two punch of depression and sleeplessness might be on the horizon.

“Sleep and depression go hand in hand,” University of Warwick professor [Jianfeng Feng, Ph.D.](#) tells *Inverse*. “We have worked on this area for many years and bad sleep is a core symptom for depression.” [Read the entire article](#)

Sarah Sloat is a writer based in Brooklyn. She has previously written for The New Republic, Pacific Standard, and McSweeney's Internet Tendency.

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

“Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness.” - Desmond Tutu

14] [4 Hidden Sources of Grief Nobody Told You About by Sarah Epstein](#) @ Psychology Today

Key points

- The societal definition of grief can often feel very narrow. But we can grieve many things other than deaths.
- You may grieve things you choose to change, losses other than that of a person, or small losses.
- Even if others don't acknowledge or recognize your grief, it does not mean it's less valid.

1. Grieving the things you chose to change

2. Losing something other than a person
3. “Small” loses that mean something bigger to you
4. Loses that are good choices

[Read the entire article](#)

[Sarah Epstein LMFT](#), is a marriage and family therapist working in Philadelphia, PA. Sarah has contributed and been featured in a variety of publications, including *Family Therapy Magazine*, *Business Insider*, *Physician Family Magazine*, Brit + Co, KevinMD, BestLife, and Thriveworks, among others. Sarah is the Amazon bestselling author of the book [Love in the Time of Medical School: Build a Happy, Healthy Relationship with a Medical Student](#), a book about overcoming the challenges of dating somebody in medicine.

“I have learned silence from the talkative: tolerance from the intolerant and kindness from the unkind. I should not be ungrateful to those teachers.” - Kahlil Gibran

“The greatest gift you can give yourself is a persistent loyalty to your process and unending determination to heal what has been hurt.” - Lucy King

15] [In Ukraine, people with disabilities cannot escape the terrors of war](#) by Eva Clifford @ Huck

As the Russian invasion continues, people with disabilities and their families are facing significant hurdles to reaching safety. Many are now fearing they will be abandoned and left behind.....

Natalia Komarenko was asleep when the first explosions began. It was just after 6am on 24 February 2022, and she'd woken to find her city under attack from Russian forces. For Komarenko, a mother of three children – one with a severe disability – with two elderly parents, she knew that the risks of evacuating were too high.

As thousands fled, Natalia had no other choice but to remain in her native Kyiv, where she is currently sheltering with her family. Beneath their house is a bomb shelter, but they have never been down there – not yet. “We are hiding in the corridor of the apartment, in the bathroom or the toilet,” she says. “For now, we think it’s safer for our younger child, who is scared.” [Read the entire article](#)

15a] [Huck - Submissions Guidelines](#) - Work with us!

How do I pitch a story?

Get acquainted with Huck. - We’re constantly on the lookout for inspiring stories – from grassroots activism to emerging subculture. Huck is very much a broad church, but make sure you get a feel for what we do before pitching. Spend some time on the website; go through an issue of the magazine.

Keep it short and sweet. - Zero in on your angle, be concise – your pitch should be around 2-4 paragraphs. Keep in mind: who or what you would like to cover; why readers will care about your piece now; how you will go about gaining access to the individuals in your story; when you can deliver the piece; what makes you right to take it on.

“It takes courage to love, but pain through love is the purifying fire which those who love generously know. We all know people who are so much afraid of pain that they shut themselves up like clams in a shell and, giving out nothing, receive nothing and therefore shrink until life is a mere living death.”
Eleanor Roosevelt

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](#)

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

Live performance of “By My Side”, “Joy”, “Brush Away Your Tears” & more @ [Michael Skinner – You Tube](#)

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