



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 September 2022

Greetings folks,

Well...here we are in September and it's dark at 7:10pm, some leaves are dropping, flowers gone by the wayside and nights are cooler – such is the ever-changing landscape of New England. Personally, I've always enjoyed the changes...I'll complain a little bit, but I do face and embrace the inevitable.

I think of the many changes over the years in my efforts of sharing The Surviving Spirit Newsletter – always a work of passion. I wanted to share resources starting with my first effort - the Survivor Friends and Friends of Survivors e-mail blast - resources for healing relative to trauma, abuse and mental health. I wanted to be inclusive, not exclusive to any one domain – I've always seen the commonality we all share – somehow in life we've been hurt, we've lost, we grieve, we've suffered...and yet, still that spark of hope that propels so many to accept the challenges and do their level best to help themselves and others.

At the heart of the newsletter and its morphing into The Surviving Spirit – too simply share what others are doing - we may not always agree but that's okay.

I know all too well of the dark places and people in this world...But for me, this was about the community of healing out there and to share some of that advocacy, education and caring. All around us are incredible examples of Hope, Healing & Help.

I'm grateful that many of the newsletters are archived at the website – a treasure trove of resources for the inquiring mind. - <http://newsletters.survivingspirit.com/index.php>

Honored to have been a recent guest on the [City Voices, Real People, Real Stories](#) podcast – shared at their You Tube channel – 23 minutes

[City Voices – YouTube channel](#)

Thank you, Michael Skinner

“We cannot live only for ourselves. A thousand fibers connect us with our fellow men.” – Herman Melville

“I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples.” - Mother Teresa

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“There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.” – Margaret J. Wheatley

“In every community, there is work to be done. In every nation, there are wounds to heal. In every heart, there is the power to do it.” - Marianne Williamson

1] [Cultivating Emotion Regulation and Mental Health](#) by Scott Barry Kaufman @ [Scientific American](#)

Susanne Schweizer is a neuroscientist investigating the development of emotional regulatory processes and their role in mental health across the life span.

The ability to regulate our emotions is essential to reaching our goals and feeling mentally healthy. Since this is such an important topic, I was delighted to get a chance to interview Dr. Susanne Schweizer, a Sir Henry Wellcome fellow at the UCL Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience. Dr. Schweizer studies the role of cognitive processes (e.g., emotion regulation) and their neural substrates in the development and maintenance of common mental health problems across the lifespan, with a particular focus on adolescence. Adopting a translational perspective, Dr. Schweizer applies insights from basic developmental cognitive neuroscience to design novel interventions for mental health problems including depression and posttraumatic stress disorder. Before moving to UCL she completed her PhD as a Gates Scholar and later postdoc at the University of Cambridge.

“The real weapons of mass destruction are the hardened hearts of humanity” Leonard Cohen

“The psychotic drowns in the same waters in which the mystic swims with delight.” - Joseph Campbell

2] [Attachment Style and Trauma Are At The Core Of Workaholism](#) by [Annie Tanasugarn, PhD](#) @ [Invisible Illness - Medium](#)

Understanding why some people become workaholics

We’ve probably all heard the saying, *“Work hard, play hard.”* I lived by the adage of “work hard” for years where I burned the midnight oil working thirty-hours a week at my job while juggling post-graduate studies and a 4.0 GPA, school residencies, private internships, and a dissertation. Suffice to say, if a person is a *workaholic*, they aren’t looking at it as “play hard” because their motivation is not based on relaxation or downtime, but on performance and achievement.

Actually, hardcore workaholics typically find themselves working when on vacation, starting their day with coffee but forgetting to eat, and feeling a spike in anxiety and guilt if they try to disconnect from their smartphones or laptop. These same workaholics often choose a 60-hour work week over a night out with friends and may prefer casual sex over touchy-feely relationships that take up valuable time, when they could be...*working*.

Some speculate that workaholism is caused by situational factors outside the person such as with doctors who have highly demanding jobs and work long hours, or that if we love our job, then we must be a workaholic. Actually, the inverse is truer. People who are hardwired as workaholics will be more prone to careers that require longer hours, less outside time for socialization, harder demands and expectations they place on themselves, and jobs that require excessive time commitments.

2a] [Invisible Illness](https://medium.com/invisible-illness/writer-guidelines-for-invisible-illness-writers-2a08f9bad3bd) - We've created a publication called Invisible Illness to house all of the best stories on Medium about mental health and to help people find great stories and help spark even more conversation. Want to contribute? Start with our writer guidelines and link to our new writer submission form: <https://medium.com/invisible-illness/writer-guidelines-for-invisible-illness-writers-2a08f9bad3bd>

“Instead of avoiding your pain, work through it. Instead of withholding your tears, let them flow. Instead of closing your heart, open it. Instead of expressing hate, show love. Instead of judging another, appreciate them. Instead of being uptight and serious, be playful. Instead of fearing the unknown, move into it.” - Jake Woodward

“I am an old soul. I love genuine kindness. I love compassion. I love poetry. I love soul connection. I love old books. I love deep conversations. I love depth. I love rawness.” - Unknown

3] [Lead Your Teen Podcast](#) - Podcast on Spotify with Christopher S. Mann

This podcast is all about parental leadership, we discuss all things parent-child relationship in the digital age. We also discuss current issues such as motivation, job searching, hard discussions and conflict resolution amongst family and relatives as well as uplifting stories of young people who inspire those around them.

Lead Your Teen podcast is designed with a leadership vs. management style approach to parenting.

“Look at you! Healing those traumas, addressing those bad habits, holding yourself accountable, no longer seeking validation from others, and finally speaking your personal truth. Seriously, I applaud you! Growth gets messy, ugly, and painful, yet here you are growing. We see you!” - Divine Nexus

“The less you open your heart to others, the more your heart suffers.” - Deepak Chopra

4] [Mantra meditation: The ancient practice to heal our minds](#) - BBC Reel 9:21 minutes

The word mantra is derived from two Sanskrit words – 'man' meaning mind, and 'tra' meaning tool. Mantra meditation is used to protect practitioners from a constant onslaught of unhealthy and repetitive thoughts. But is there any science behind their effectiveness?

In this film we explore why our modern mindset may be leaving many of us more depressed and anxious than ever, and how each of us might use mantras to help heal our minds.

Video by Harriet Constable - Animation by Muriel Rebora - Commissioning Editor: Griesham Taan

“Standing up for yourself doesn't make you argumentative. Sharing your feelings doesn't make you oversensitive. And saying no doesn't make you uncaring or selfish. If someone won't respect your feelings, needs, and boundaries, the problem isn't you; it's them.” - Lori Deschene

“Embracing our vulnerabilities is risky but not nearly as dangerous as giving up on love and belonging and joy—the experiences that make us the most vulnerable.” - Brené Brown

5] [11 Biggest Benefits of Walking to Improve Your Health](#), According to Doctors by Meghan Rabbitt @ [Country Living](#)

Lower your blood pressure, lose weight, and feel less stress by following this science-backed advice.

Taking a 30-minute walk a day is kind of like that proverbial apple: There's a good chance it'll keep the doctor away. From helping you lose weight to [lowering your blood pressure](#) and reducing your risk of chronic diseases—going for regular walks is one of the best things you can do for your health, says Melina B. Jampolis, M.D., author of [The Doctor on Demand Diet](#).

“Walking is the number one exercise I recommend to most of my patients because it is very easy to do, requires nothing but a pair of tennis shoes, and has tremendous mental and physical benefits,” she says. Here's what you can expect when you start walking for just 30 minutes every day, most days of the week.

“When we allow ourselves to be vulnerable, we are not pretending, we are not hiding—we are simply present with whatever is going on inside us. Ironically, it is this very feeling of authenticity that draws people to us, not the brittle effort of perfectionism.” - Maureen Cooper

“If you made a mistake, apologize. If you are thankful, say it. If you are confused, ask questions. If you learn something, teach it. If you are stuck, ask for help. If you are wrong, admit it. If you can unselfishly give, give. If you love someone, tell them, now.” - Unknown

6] [Suicide myths debunked and prevention facts](#) by [Kristen Rogers](#) @ CNN

Myths about suicide can exacerbate stigma, preventing those affected from sharing their stories and getting help.

Sometimes people who die by suicide get branded as selfish, depressed or attention-seeking.

Such myths contribute to the stigma that can prevent those who are suicidal from seeking the help they need and falsify understanding of the motivations behind suicide, according to the [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#), or NAMI.

Suicide is a [leading cause of death](#) among children and adults, with [nearly 800,000 people](#) worldwide dying from suicide yearly, according to the Global Burden of Disease Study 2017, cited by the online scientific publication Our World in Data. In 2020, there were [1.2 million attempts](#) globally, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention says.

On World Suicide Prevention Day and beyond, awareness of the realities of suicide can help people view these deaths with more understanding and compassion, realize the importance of helping others get help, and address their own mental health problems if they are struggling, NAMI says.

6a] *Related article* - [National Suicide Prevention Week: How to help those at risk](#) by [Kristen Rogers](#) @ CNN

“Don’t let this silly world trick you into starving your soul for material things. Cause someday you’re gonna be sitting out under the sun and realize how little you actually need to be truly happy.” - Brooke Hampton

“So many messages telling those who are struggling to reach out. Fair enough, but part of what depression does is mutes your ability to reach. If you are NOT depressed and you see someone struggling, YOU reach out. If you don’t see someone who used to be around, YOU reach out.” - Caissie St. Onge

7] [We should drop the disorder because...](#) - YouTube 2:38 minutes

A short film of allies sharing their reasons as to why we should drop the disorder!

AD4E challenges the culture of psychiatric disorder and the pathologising of emotional distress.

Because labels don’t tell truthful stories.

Check out the AD4E festival 2022 - <https://bit.ly/3CF98lv> - A Disorder 4 Everyone

Thanks to Mark Bailey the wonderful film maker who created this piece and to all those involved

“Agreeing to things just to keep the peace is actually a trauma response. When you do this you’re disrespecting your boundaries. No more making yourself uncomfortable for others to feel comfortable. You have control now. You run your life. Take up space and use your voice.” - Dj Love Light

“Silence isn’t empty. It’s full of answers.” - Unknown

8] [Stress, anxiety or depression may increase long Covid risk](#), study finds By [Aria Bendix](#) @ NBC News

People who felt stressed, anxious, lonely, depressed or worried about Covid before getting infected were at higher risk of developing long-term symptoms from their illness, a new study found.

For the [research](#), published Wednesday in the journal JAMA Psychiatry, a team at Harvard looked at survey responses from nearly 55,000 people in the United States and Canada from April 2020 to November 2021.

Of that group, more than 3,000 participants said they'd had Covid, and around 1,400 said they had long Covid, defined as Covid-related symptoms lasting four weeks or longer.

The results showed that people who reported psychological distress before they got infected had a 32% to 46% increased risk of long Covid, compared to people who did not report such distress. And those who reported high levels of two or more types of psychological distress, such as both depression and anxiety, had a 50% increased risk.

What's more, the study found a stronger association between long Covid and psychological distress than long Covid and some of its known physical risk factors, such as [obesity](#), [asthma](#) and [hypertension](#).

“Practice the pause. Pause before judging. Pause before assuming. Pause before accusing. Pause whenever you’re about to react harshly, and you’ll avoid doing and saying things you’ll later regret.” - Lori Deschene

“Sometimes we tolerate the destructive patterns of others because we are afraid to lose them, not understanding that tolerating them will only cause us to lose ourselves.” - Royale L'radin

9] [‘The medical model has presided over four decades of flat-lining outcomes’](#) by Fauzia Khan @ The British Psychological Society

Author, anthropologist and psychotherapist Dr James Davies tells Fauzia Khan about his journey into the field of mental health and his work as co-founder of the Council for Evidence-based Psychiatry.

What brought you into the field of mental health? - My journey into the field, psychologically speaking, I could probably trace to my ninth year, when there was a lot of upheaval in my family. I would often spend long stretches of time away from them. Outside the safety of their care for the first time, I felt very exposed, afraid and unprotected. Who were these new people now taking care of me? Who could I trust, who could I not? As a result, I awoke rapidly from that warm haze of childhood to become hypervigilant about my new surroundings, mostly due to instinctual self-preservation.

Later on, I learnt that such experiences are very common in children whose primary environment has been disrupted or precipitously removed. Childhood ends early for them. On the upside they may become resourceful, ‘streetwise’ and very perceptive for their age; on the down, they are more exposed to various dangers and harms, psychological, situational, relational etc. There are many literary representations of this childhood predicament – they are the Gavroches, the Dodgers and the Saroo Brierleys.

And that early vigilance developed into a fascination with Psychology? - Only much later. In my early 20s I was experiencing a lot of emotional turmoil, some of it related to those earlier years. I began reading vociferously to work things out. One influential book I encountered was Peter Kramer’s *Listening to Prozac*. As everything felt so painfully complicated at the time, I was seduced by its simple message that a pill could remedy my suffering.

Putting my hopes in Prozac, I went to my GP and asked for a prescription. He sent me away, stating that I ‘didn’t look depressed’ to him! So, my reading and searching continued, which ultimately led me into therapy. And so my entrée in our field was through my own lived experience, just as for so many others.

“The people you will always remember are the ones who made you feel loved when you were at your lowest.” - Brigitte Nicole

“Some of you are unaware of just how amazing you really are. The way you make people laugh, lift others up, or spread some extra love. You do this even though you are struggling too, and I think it makes you such a beautiful human being.” - Unknown

10] [I Am a Person, Not An Illness](#) - Story 1 – YouTube 15:03 minutes

In this 5 part series, Pat Deegan shares important lessons she learned on her journey of recovery after being diagnosed with schizophrenia as a teenager. She illustrates how to use these lessons in everyday work with young people diagnosed with early psychosis and their families. In this first of five stories, Pat focuses on the fact that illnesses don't recover, people do

“There is no timestamp on trauma. There isn't a formula that you can insert yourself into to get from horror to healed. Be patient. Take up space. Let your journey be the balm.” – Dawn Serra

“One of the things that pains me is we have so tragically underestimated the trauma, the hardship we create in this country when we treat people unfairly, when we incarcerate them unfairly, when we condemn them unfairly.” – Brian Stevenson

11] [Inside the Adolescent Mental Health Crisis](#) - The New York Times - podcast 30 minutes and [transcript](#) - Hosted by [Michael Barbaro](#)

Young people in the United States are facing a new set of risks. Why has the situation caught so many people off guard?

This episode contains discussions about suicide, self-harm and mental health issues.

In decades past, the public health risks teenagers in the United States faced were different. They were externalized risks that were happening in the physical world.

Now, a new set of risks has emerged.

In 2019, 13 percent of adolescents reported having a major depressive episode, a 60 percent increase from 2007. And suicide rates, which had been stable from 2000 to 2007 among this group, leaped nearly 60 percent by 2018.

We explore why this mental health crisis has become so widespread, and why many people have been unprepared to handle it.

“What we change inwardly will change outer reality.” – Plutarch

“Even in times of trauma, we try to maintain a sense of normality until we no longer can. That, my friends, is called surviving. Not healing. We never become whole again ... we are survivors. If you are here today... you are a survivor. But those of us who have made it thru hell and are still standing? We bare a different name: warriors.” – Lori Goodwin

12] [Male Survivor Book Store](#) - MaleSurvivor has launched this helpful “bookstore” featuring survivor focused books that are available online. To purchase any of the listed books simply click on the book's Cover image and you will be directed to the website to purchase the book. Many male survivors and those around them have utilized key written materials to help them in their healing journeys. To recommend an appropriate book or related item for our list, please contact our [Webmaster](#)

[MaleSurvivor - YouTube](#) – view informative videos and the complete library of MaleSurvivor

Webinars of Recovery

[MaleSurvivor](#) - Male Sexual Assault & Abuse Support for Men

Every man who has experienced sexual assault or sexual abuse deserves access to a judgment-free space where he can heal on his own terms and without shame. For 26 years, MaleSurvivor has fostered a healing community where tens of thousands of men from more than 200 countries come together to find support, information and — most importantly — hope.

MaleSurvivor is a 501(c)(3), non-profit, public benefit organization committed to preventing, healing, and eliminating all forms of sexual victimization of boys and men through support, treatment, research, education, advocacy, and activism.

Formed in 1995, MaleSurvivor has an international membership of over 15,000 registered members from over 200 countries in the world. MaleSurvivor is primarily funded by member donations. Visit [guidestar.org](#) to confirm [MaleSurvivor's nonprofit status](#). MaleSurvivor's EIN is 41-1831829. All contributions are tax-deductible as allowed by law. Read our detailed [history, accomplishments and international conferences](#).

“Shout-out to all the men going through a lot, with no one to turn to, because this world wrongly taught our males to mask their emotions and that strong means silent.” - Alex Myles

“Sitting silently beside a friend who is hurting may be the best gift we can give.” - Unknown

13] [Confessions of a People-Pleasing Addict From Trauma Therapist Rythea Lee @ betterafter50.com](#)

People-pleasing is an art. It requires the psychic ability to read other people's needs from the smallest of clues- an eye shift, a hand gesture, a change of tone of voice, a withdrawal of attention, a needy or disgruntled expression, an exhale, an inhale, a glare, a deflation, a lost look, a blaming word, or a shame-filled story. Children raised with punishment, abuse, neglect, or trauma often build their personalities around keeping people from hurting them. They literally form their nervous systems around caregivers' patterns and moods, working 24/7 to secure security.

I know about these skills because I was a professional.

My Father was so violent, my Mother so absent, that I was born a workaholic. Watch, listen, and learn; that took every bit of my brain power. I did not let down. Did not rest. Did not “get to know myself.” I got to know them endlessly, and that was my very best strategy. It wasn't just about observation; it was also about fixing the problem. I read their moods, eyes, hands, tone, and then, I responded with high forms of ingenuity under deep, deep duress. As mentioned, this took all my spoons. There was not much left over for school learning or the natural unfoldment of time, space, or emotion.

I was a care-taking genius. I learned to be preemptively helpful, kind, caring, compassionate, pro-active, performative, and most importantly, sweet. I was raised female by a misogynist pedophile, so maybe you can imagine the depths of my daily work.

Of course, I failed. I hope this is obvious. All my hard labor did not prevent my parents from abusing me, leaving me to the hands (and bodies) of other abusers, blaming me, and physically torturing me. All the people-pleasing in the world was never enough. Imagine that. I could not give enough, try enough, sacrifice enough, perform enough, to make it not happen. I was a constant failure.

13a] [The Lonely Edges: Rythea Lee: The Lonely Edges of Non-Coercive Parenting](#) on Apple Podcasts

Rythea shares about the following:

The challenges and realities of non-coercive parenting
What Rythea and her daughter negotiate
What daily life is like
How her daughter operates differently from her friends
How self-hatred operates
What is Advice from the Loving Bitch
Why it's so powerful to move towards self-love

Bio - Rythea Lee is a dancer, writer, and multi-disciplinary artist giving voice to personal and shared stories of healing. She created and stars in a 20-Episode YouTube advice show called “Advice from a Loving Bitch” that uses humor and emotional education to help people transform life-long patterns of self-hatred. Watch episodes here. That show has become the basis for online trainings and groups co-facilitated with colleague Divinah Erving.

13b] [About Better After 50 | BA50 Online](#) – Attitude. Acceptance. Edge.

I have developed my own mantra, one which is so vital to who I am and what I do that I had it tattooed on my wrist: Write what scares you.” Jennifer McMahon

“Our lives are transformed as we actively take part in fully living our lives with all the fear and heartbreak which become the keys to our healing and transformation when we live our lives compassionately.” Thomas Moore

14] [Fighting for Recovery: An Activists' History of Mental Health Reform](#) by Phyllis Vine @ Amazon Books

An essential history of the recovery movement for people with mental illness, and an inspiring account of how former patients and advocates challenged a flawed system and encouraged mental health activism.

This definitive people’s history of the recovery movement spans the 1970s to the present day and proves to readers just how essential mental health activism is to every person in this country, whether you have a current psychiatric diagnosis or not.

In *Fighting for Recovery*, professor and mental health advocate Phyllis Vine tells the history of the former psychiatric patients, families, and courageous activists who formed a patients’ liberation movement that challenged medical authority and proved to the world that recovery from mental illness is possible.

Mental health discussions have become more common in everyday life, but there are still enormous numbers of people with psychiatric illness in jails and prisons or who are experiencing homelessness – proving there is still progress to be made.

14a] Fighting for Recovery, An Activists' History of Mental Health Reform Book Launch.

What:Book Launch and Panel Discussion

Where:Strand Book Store, 828 Broadway, New York, NY 10003

When:Thursday, September 22, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Howard Geld, known as Howie the Harp, was Community Access' first Director of Advocacy and is among the peer rights pioneers that helped open the world's eyes to the possibility of change. Vine chronicles Howie's activism in Fighting for Recovery, including his vision for a peer workforce training program that became Community Access' award-winning Howie the Harp Peer Workforce Academy.

Caroline Lewis, Health and Science Reporter at [WNYC Radio](#), will moderate the panel discussion. The author and Howie the Harp graduates and staff will share their experiences and perspectives on mental health reform and social justice. We'll look ahead at the changes we still need to create a system that centers dignity, self-determination, equity, and well-being for people with mental health concerns.

To RSVP, please email Lorraine David, at ldavid@communityaccess.org

<https://www.communityaccess.org/our-story>

"It's when we start working together that the real healing takes place." - David Hume

"Healing takes courage, and we all have courage, even if we have to dig a little to find it." - Tori Amos

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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[@SurvivinSpirit](#) Twitter

[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