



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 February 2023

“You either get bitter, or you get better. You either take what's been dealt to you and allow it to make you better, or you allow it to tear you down.” - Iona Mink

“Sometimes it takes an overwhelming breakdown to have an undeniable breakthrough.” - Don Keigh

[Survivor Stories with guest Michael Skinner](#) – YouTube - 1 hour

A thought provoking discussion and insight on healing from trauma and sexual abuse.

[Presented by Ask A Sex Abuse Survivor](#) - Amplifying survivor voices worldwide

“I attended this event, and Michael has a gentle approach to making sexual and physical trauma stories become meaningful and a source of hope.” - Jacek_Jack Haciak

Hi folks,

Please consider Subscribing to my You Tube Channel and if you click the Bell Icon it will notify you when I post new videos. My plans are to start sharing more live performances of my songs and some of my favorite cover tunes. - <https://www.youtube.com/c/MichaelSkinnerMusic/featured>

Thank you, Michael

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

“Love is our true destiny. We do not find the meaning of life by ourselves alone - we find it with one another.” - Thomas Merton

1] [Growing Up Mad in the South: Stories, Poems, and Other Aberrations](#) by Bonnie Henderson Schell

Growing Up Mad in the South is set in Atlanta, GA, during the 1950s and '60s, when racism, sexism, and personal salvation were lurking behind “Well bless your heart.” Diagnosed with schizophrenia at age 17, the “Mad” narrator struggles with both her aberrant senses and righteous anger at a society that fails to value everyone. From a toddler learning language to an adolescent trying on love, she flowers into a creative adult who finds grace writing for a literary magazine in an all-girls college. With a

widowed Methodist mother and a protective Hard-Shell Baptist Granny, the narrator's upbringing is shaped by the lyrics of gospel music. Bonnie Schell manages to confront "Should," "Keep Quiet," and "White Only" with lyricism and laughter.

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

"The two most important days in your life are the day you're born and the day you find out why." - Mark Twain

2] [Moral injury: the effect on mental health and implications for treatment](#) - The Lancet Psychiatry

2a] [Moral Injury Is an Invisible Epidemic That Affects Millions - Scientific American](#) - A specific kind of trauma results when a person's core principles are violated during wartime or a pandemic

2b] [Moral Injury](#) @ Psychology Today

"Anything that's human is mentionable, and anything that is mentionable can be more manageable. When we can talk about our feelings, they become less overwhelming, less upsetting, and less scary. The people we trust with that important talk can help us know that we are not alone." Fred Rogers

"The conflict between the will to deny horrible events and the will to proclaim them aloud is the central dialectic of psychological trauma." Judith Lewis Herman

3] [A Simple, 5-Minute Breathing Technique Is a Powerful Tool to Reduce Anxiety](#) @ ScienceAlert

3a] [4-7-8 breathing: How to use this method for sleep or anxiety](#) @ CNN

"...you cannot heal what you do not acknowledge, and what you do not consciously acknowledge will remain in control of you from within, festering and destroying you and those around you." -Richard Rohr

"There are wounds that never show on the body that are deeper and more hurtful than anything that bleeds." Laurell K. Hamilton

4] [A Brief But Spectacular take on cross-cultural suicide prevention research](#) – YouTube 3:24 minutes

Amelia Noor-Oshiro is a Muslim woman, educator, activist and suicide survivor. Through her advocacy work, she is using science and research to help others who are experiencing suicidal thoughts. Noor-Oshiro shares her Brief But Spectacular take on cross-cultural suicide prevention research.

"I have learned that some of the nicest people you'll ever meet are those who have suffered a traumatic event or loss. I admire them for their strength, but most especially for their life gratitude - a gift often taken for granted by the average person in society." Sasha Azevedo

"Sometimes a breakdown can be the beginning of a kind of breakthrough, a way of living in advance through a trauma that prepares you for a future of radical transformation. - Cherrie Moraga

5] [Who I Am – LGBTQ+ Discuss Experiences with Crisis Services](#) – YouTube 18:43 minutes

Rainbow Heights is a Brooklyn-based support and advocacy program for LGBTQ+ individuals served by the mental health system. It features the voices of Rainbow Heights members discussing their thoughts and experiences with crisis services.

“Only Thing We Have to Fear Is Fear Itself” - Franklin D. Roosevelt

“Care of the soul...appreciates the mystery of human suffering and does not offer the illusion of a problem-free life. It sees every fall into ignorance and confusion as an opportunity to discover that the beast residing at the center of the labyrinth is also an angel.” Thomas Moore

6] [Writing Workshops – Madwomen in the Attic](#) - This workshop, a partnership between Herstory Writers Workshop, the Humanities Institute at Stonybrook University, and Madwomen in the Attic, invites people who have been affected by the mental healthcare system, who may identify as mad, psychiatric survivors, psychiatric consumers, or neurodivergent, to write their memoir in a mad-affirming, human rights-driven, supportive environment. In this workshop, we will combat stigma and discrimination through the power of storytelling to change hearts, minds, and policies.

We invite you to join us to use the power of your voice to (re)shape our mental healthcare system and (re)imagine care. To register for this free virtual workshop, please send a message of inquiry to Jessica Lowell Mason (jlmason1@buffalo.edu) and Janelle Gagnon (jgagnon@herstorywriters.org), including some basic information about yourself and your interest in the workshop.

“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

“Your pain is the breaking of the shell that encloses your understanding.” Kahlil Gibran

7] [Triumph Over Trauma](#) - Trauma comes in many forms and can have severe, long-lasting effects on individuals, families, and communities.

Triumph Over Trauma begins with a 7-week psychoeducational program that aids people on their journey to recovery.

Volunteer facilitators are trained and equipped to lead a group in a creative, faith-affirming way.

If you would like to join an online group, please sign up [here](#).

7a] [Survivors of childhood trauma often grow up believing they are unworthy](#) by Andrea Szasz & The Guardian

Being conditioned as a child to see toxic relationships as almost normal can prevent an adult make loving connections

“Childhood trauma does not come in one single package.” – Dr. Asa Don Brown

“The shock of any trauma, I think changes your life. It's more acute in the beginning and after a little time you settle back to what you were. However it leaves an indelible mark on your psyche.” Alex Lifeson

8] [3 Simple Habits That Can Protect Your Brain From Cognitive Decline](#) by Tara Swart

These three habits help your body, and also have a positive impact on your brain.

“The ax forgets, the tree remembers.” African proverb

“Believe in yourself and all that you are. Know that there is something inside you that is greater than any obstacle.” - Christian D. Larson

9] [What we keep getting wrong about homelessness and mental illness in the US](#) - Mental Health

If an older man living on the streets becomes distressed when put in handcuffs, does he have a mental disorder?

9a] [The frontline scouts fighting to end homelessness in New York's subways](#) - The Guardian

Members of an outreach program that provides housing and behavioral health services aim to tackle the issue at its root

9b] [Two researchers aim to better understand L.A.'s homelessness crisis with smartphone surveys](#) – NBC News

A 2017 survey found that more than half of unhoused people have smartphones. That resource is now being used to get a better idea of their experiences.

“I feel the capacity to care is the thing which gives life its deepest significance.” Pablo Casals

“As my sufferings mounted I soon realized that there were two ways in which I could respond to my situation - either to react with bitterness or seek to transform the suffering into a creative force. I decided to follow the latter course.” - Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr

10] [Massive review study suggests psychological trauma nearly triples a person's risk of mental disorder](#)

A systematic review of 14 meta-analyses found strong evidence that psychological trauma increases one's risk of mental disorder by nearly three-fold. The findings were published in the [European Archives of Psychiatry and Clinical Neuroscience](#).

“Want of care does us more damage than want of knowledge” - Benjamin Franklin

“Never look down on anybody unless you're helping him up.” - Jesse Jackson

11] [Defining What It Means to Care](#) by Leah Harris @ The Progressive

Alberta Lessard never stopped fighting for compassionate mental health care.

Sometimes in tragedy we find our life's purpose - the eye sheds a tear to find its focus." – Robert Brault

"A good character is the best tombstone. Those who loved you and were helped by you will remember you when forget-me-nots have withered. Carve your name on hearts, not on marble." - Charles H. Spurgeon

12] [American Visionary Art Museum](#) - AVAM specializes in original thematic exhibitions that seamlessly combine art, science, philosophy, humor and especially social justice and betterment.

"One of the most fantastic museums anywhere in America." - CNN

"So when you are listening to somebody, completely, attentively, then you are listening not only to the words, but also to the feeling of what is being conveyed, to the whole of it, not part of it." - Jiddu Krishnamurti

"Giving connects two people, the giver and the receiver, and this connection gives birth to a new sense of belonging."- Deepak Chopra

13] [Songs of Life, Love, Loss & Hope - Set 1](#) by Michael Skinner - Healing Trauma, Abuse & Mental Health Injuries - YouTube - 20:10 minutes

[2] Four song sets addressing the impact of trauma, abuse & mental health injuries.

[Songs of Life, Love, Loss & Hope - Set 2](#) by Michael Skinner - Healing Trauma, Abuse & Mental Health Injuries - YouTube – 26:52 minutes

"Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see." - Mark Twain

"Wherever there is a human being, there is an opportunity for a kindness." - Seneca

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