



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 January 2025

Hi Folks,

Welcome to 2025!! I hope this year is a time of peace and joy for you.

January is [National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month](#), [National Mentoring Month](#) and [National Stalking Awareness Month](#).

It's also a month of being downright cold. Every morning, regardless of the weather, I go out with my cup of coffee to stare off into the forest and gaze upon the river. It is my time to pause and just be...And when the eagles are flying about or I'm able to catch a glimpse of coyotes, deer, maybe a bear, etc, well, that makes the morning extra special.

I'm also grateful for flannel, fleece, wool and long johns! This morning it was minus nine degrees, yesterday it was minus six. But a heat wave is coming, it will be warming up into the twenties, not quite swimming weather, but a little more tolerable.

I was honored to be a guest on this podcast: [Live Interview with Michael Skinner - Healing for Male Survivors with host Mike Chapman](#) – The Podcast is on Spotify.

We had an open and frank discussion about healing from childhood sexual abuse and Mike also asked me questions about my participation in the Oprah Winfrey Shows that addressed males sexually abused as children.

I've had a little over four decades of healing...and yet, when I listen to any interview I've been a part of, I can hear the nervousness in my voice and the hesitation. I've had many years of putting distance to the past, but the ever-present dissociation always lingers about when I address that which had such an impact upon my mind, body and spirit. There is healing, the simple fact I can participate and draft this newsletter lets me know I'm okay.

Please check out [Mike Chapman's Spotify Podcast](#) series, lots of great interviews and more.

Welcome to the Healing for Male Survivors Podcast, where male survivors of childhood trauma, especially sexual trauma, can find hope and healing.

My main goal is to give a platform to YOU, my listener and fellow survivor. I want to make this a safe space for you to tell YOUR story - and telling your story can often jump-start your healing.

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

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

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“The ideals which have lighted my way, and time after time have given me new courage to face life cheerfully, have been kindness, beauty, and truth.” Albert Einstein

“Constant kindness can accomplish much. As the sun makes ice melt, kindness causes

misunderstanding, mistrust and hostility to evaporate.” Albert Schweitzer

1] [Mitzy Sky - Episode 5: Therapy vs Life Long Mental Patient](#) – Video Podcast and text @ Substack

Podcast excerpt:

Just Doing the Little Things - Episode 5: Therapy vs Life Long Mental Patient, the balance between seeking help and avoiding labels

I added a disclaimer to episode five of *Just Doing the Little Things*:

“This film is not intended to provide medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. The content shared represents the personal story and experiences of the filmmaker.”

In this episode, I address a comment I made in episode four, where I shared that for years I had been in therapy, focusing on what I didn't like. I compared that to what I do now, which involves forgiveness and getting to know myself. I want to emphasize that this change didn't happen overnight. It has taken me a very long time to consciously unlearn old patterns and relearn new ways of being. I also encourage viewers to reach out for the support they need or desire.

I address the title *Therapy vs. Life Long Mental Patient*, which reflects two distinct dynamics I have observed and experienced in society.

The first involves people with knowledge and awareness that when they face challenges and seek therapy they are rewarded with support. These individuals are not typically subjected to discrimination. However, many with access to education, and resources tend to promote mental illness diagnosis labels, often without acknowledging the second reality that exists.

The second thing that exists reflects my own experience: facing adversity, lacking knowledge about how systems operate, and navigating struggles with poverty, limited resources, and a lack of awareness about historical and ongoing societal issues. When I sought help, I encountered the discrimination associated with a mental illness diagnosis that I then turned inward and further oppressed myself.

I shared about the first therapist I saw, Josh, who was very beneficial to my life. However, after experiencing homelessness and staying in a shelter, I was offered a housing voucher. The stipulations for receiving the voucher required me to attend therapy at the community mental health center, see a psychiatrist, take psychotropic drugs, participate in group sessions, and accept help in applying for Social Security Disability. I now see this as coercion but what was I supposed to do, I wasn't working and I needed a home for my children and myself. It would be lovely to receive help in society without a label. Human beings, soul to soul, walking each other home as Ram Dass said.

My example growing up, I had a mother who trafficked drugs and discouraged my brothers from working for five dollars an hour. When one of my brothers turned eighteen, I remember she told him to apply for city welfare. When I had my daughter, I applied for both city and state welfare. I didn't understand working to live as I do now.

In my pain and suffering, I often remembered all the negative things. But as I write this now, I practice forgiveness and have learned to observe my thoughts and not let emotions turn into pain. This allows

me to also recognize the positive aspects of my experiences.

“The beginning of love is to let those we love be perfectly themselves and not twist them to fit our own image.” - One Day at a Time in Al-Anon

“We cannot climb up a rope that is attached only to our own belt.” William Ernest Hocking

2] [How the Vagus Nerve Could Influence Physical and Mental Health](#) by Jena Pincott @ [Scientific American](#)

Article excerpt:

The healing potential of the brain’s most interconnected nerve intrigues researchers.

The vagus nerve is a vine of nerve fibers with roots in nearly every organ and shoots in the brain. It helps us detect a racing heart, rising blood pressure, stomachache, discomfort, an overzealous [immune system](#) and even alarm calls from microbes in our gut. When it senses trouble, the vagus helps to steady our heart, soothe our stomach, rein in our immune system and calm us down.

Wellness influencers claim we can ice, tone or zap the vagus nerve to fix almost anything—long COVID, headaches, poor memory, extra pounds, the blues. Much of that hype is unfounded. Still, some research on the vagus nerve is intriguing enough—and promising enough—to draw serious scientific attention.

Investigators have long known that activating the vagus with mild electrical pulses can treat some conditions. In 1997 the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved a [vagus nerve stimulation](#) (VNS) device that can be surgically implanted under the collarbone and linked to a wire wrapped around the nerve. It is widely used to treat cases of epilepsy that do not respond to drugs. In 2005 the FDA certified a similar device for treatment-resistant depression, and the agency approved yet another one in 2021 to speed up recovery from stroke. Gadgets that stimulate the vagus nerve from outside the body, such as at the outer ear or neck, have been cleared in many countries, including the U.S., to treat obesity, pain and migraines.

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Signaling confidence in the potential of VNS, the National Institutes of Health Common Fund launched a \$250-million initiative in 2015 with a second phase in 2022. The program, called SPARC (for Stimulating Peripheral Activity to Relieve Conditions), seeks to map the nerve's individual fibers and circuits and to illuminate their functions. Scientists hope it will enable them to refine existing treatments and find new therapies for other conditions, ranging from inflammatory bowel disease to [long COVID](#). Clinical trials are underway on so-called transcutaneous VNS (tVNS) devices, which are easier to use because they access the vagus from outside the skin, or cutaneous barrier. These tools potentially could be used to treat rheumatoid arthritis, migraine, lupus and chronic fatigue syndrome—and that's just a partial list.

When the vagus nerve brings news of dangerous inflammation in the body, the brain sends down signals to soothe it.

“Life truly lived is risky business, and if one puts up too many fences against risk one ends by shutting out life itself.” - Kenneth S. Davis

“It is good to have an end to journey towards; but it is the journey that matters in the end.” - Ursula LeGuin

3] [CPTSD and Long-Term Personality Changes: Navigating Trust and Transformation](#) by Tracy Guy

@ [CPTSD Foundation](#) - *Empowering the healing journey from complex trauma*

Article excerpt: Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (CPTSD) arises from prolonged exposure to trauma, often in situations where escape feels impossible. Unlike PTSD, which is generally linked to a single traumatic event, CPTSD develops over time in contexts like childhood abuse, domestic violence, or captivity. The prolonged nature of the trauma leaves deep emotional, psychological, and even physical scars. Over time, this can result in significant personality changes and deeply rooted challenges with trust.

Understanding the Impact of CPTSD on Personality - Trauma fundamentally changes how individuals view themselves, others, and the world around them. In CPTSD, the effects are often pervasive, shaping emotions, beliefs, and behaviours. Common personality changes may include hypervigilance, where individuals are constantly alert to potential danger, and persistent low self-worth, driven by feelings of guilt or shame. Many people with CPTSD also experience emotional dysregulation, where they struggle to manage intense emotions, often cycling through anger, sadness, or anxiety. These changes are survival mechanisms developed during periods of trauma but tend to persist, disrupting relationships and everyday life even when danger has passed.

How CPTSD Impacts Trust - Trust is one of the most significant casualties of prolonged trauma. The very essence of CPTSD involves a betrayal of safety, which creates deep-seated mistrust in people, systems, and even oneself.

For individuals with CPTSD, trusting others often feels unsafe or even dangerous. Relationships may be approached with suspicion, skepticism, or outright avoidance, as they constantly anticipate betrayal. Conversely, some survivors may overextend trust to gain approval or prevent rejection, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation or re-traumatization.

Trust issues also extend inward. Many survivors struggle with self-doubt, questioning their own perceptions, decisions, or worth. This internalized mistrust can feel paralyzing, preventing individuals from confidently navigating relationships or decisions. Furthermore, fear of intimacy often develops, as the vulnerability required for deep connections triggers reminders of past betrayals, leading to emotional walls and isolation.

Personality Changes Over Time - The cumulative impact of trust issues and trauma responses often leads to significant long-term personality changes. While not universal, many people with CPTSD experience heightened sensitivity to rejection. This can cause intense emotional reactions to perceived slights, even if unintentional.

“Think for yourself and let others enjoy the privilege of doing so too.” - Voltaire

“Healing isn't about fixing yourself: It's about reconnecting with who you truly are - beyond the person you had to become in order to survive...there is a big difference!” - Caroline Middelndorf

4] [Unshrunk: A Story of Psychiatric Treatment Resistance](#) by Laura Delano

“A courageous, insightful, beautifully written book challenging major tenets of Big Pharma and mainstream psychiatry.” - Kirkus Reviews

The powerful memoir of one woman’s experience with psychiatric diagnoses and medications, and her journey to discover herself outside the mental health industry

At age fourteen, Laura Delano saw her first psychiatrist who immediately diagnosed her with bipolar disorder and started her on a mood stabilizer and antidepressant. At school, Delano was elected the class president and earned straight-As and a national squash ranking; at home, she unleashed all the rage and despair she felt, lashing out at her family and locking herself in her bedroom, obsessing over death.

Delano’s initial diagnosis marked the beginning of a life-altering saga. For the next thirteen years, she sought help from the best psychiatrists and hospitals in the country, accumulating a long list of diagnoses and a prescription cascade of nineteen drugs. After some resistance, Delano accepted her diagnosis and embraced the pharmaceutical regimen that she’d been told was necessary to manage her incurable, lifelong disease. But her symptoms only worsened. Eventually doctors declared her condition so severe as to be “treatment resistant.” A disturbing series of events left her demoralized, but sparked a last glimmer of possibility . . . what if her life was falling apart not in spite of her treatment, but because of it? After years of faithful psychiatric patienthood, Delano realized there was one thing she hadn’t tried—leaving behind the drugs and diagnoses. This decision would mean unlearning everything the experts had told her about herself and forging into the terrifying unknown of an unmedicated life.

Weaving Delano's medical records and doctors' notes from her time in treatment with illuminating research on the drugs she was prescribed, Unshrunk questions the dominant, rarely critiqued role that the American mental health industry, and the pharmaceutical industry in particular, plays in shaping what it means to be human.

"Delano renders difficult episodes from her past with gravity and grace, makes a convincing case that big pharma holds disproportionate lobbying power in contemporary psychiatry, and paints a resonant portrait of a culture devoted to papering over difficult emotions. . . . A potent reconsideration of a pressing social issue." - Publishers Weekly

4a] [Laura Delano on Overcoming Labels and Facing Painful Emotions](#) – YouTube 5:46 minutes -

Laura Delano shared what it was like to be diagnosed "mentally ill" as a teenager and how she found life beyond labels by learning to be with her emotional pain. The video was produced by Live Different, a Canadian-based charity, for their Own Your Story series.

"Take rest, a field that has rested gives a beautiful crop." - Ovid

"I will not try to make important decisions until I have freed my mind from resentment, self-pity and hopelessness. Then I will be ready." - Al-Anon

5] [It's Not Always Depression, Sometimes It's Shame: The Story of Brian](#) – YouTube 7:53 minutes

Hilary Jacobs Hendel reads her "famous" article on "Brian" and how he recovered from a "treatment-resistant" depression. What was really ailing Brian had more to do with the emotional neglect he suffered as a child and less that there was something wrong with his brain and mind.

To learn more about healing and recovery from trauma, depression, anxiety, and more, pick up a copy of [It's Not Always Depression](#) book:

Sara suffered a debilitating fear of asserting herself. Spencer experienced crippling social anxiety. Bonnie was shut down, disconnected from her feelings. These patients all came to psychotherapist Hilary Jacobs Hendel seeking treatment for depression, but in fact none of them were chemically depressed. Rather, Jacobs Hendel found that they'd all experienced traumas in their youth that caused them to put up emotional defenses that masqueraded as symptoms of depression. Jacobs Hendel led these patients and others toward lives newly capable of joy and fulfillment through an empathic and effective therapeutic approach that draws on the latest science about the healing power of our emotions.

"Your vision will become clear only when you can look into your own heart." - Carl Jung

"We need more light about each other: Light creates understanding, understanding creates love, love creates patience, and patience creates unity." - Malcolm X.

6] [Can You Recover From a Mental Illness?](#) By Emily Grossman @ [Psychology Today](#)

A Personal Perspective: Mental illness recovery happens, and I'm living proof.

Article excerpt:

I'll never forget the first day that I trained a group of mental health professionals and shared how after 12 [psychiatric](#) hospitalizations and nearly being institutionalized, I had gone on to live in recovery from [bipolar 2](#) disorder with psychotic features.

The psychiatrists in the room weren't having it. One particularly gruff male psychiatrist raised his hand and said, "Recovery means cure, and there is no such thing as a cure for mental illness." And this gave me pause. There I was, after struggling since I was 18 with bipolar, living symptom- and hospital-free for 10 years and absolutely thriving in all areas of my life. If that wasn't the absence of a mental illness, then what was?

So, what do I mean when I say I'm living in recovery, now for 15 years?

- I have no symptoms of [mania](#), deep [depression](#), or [psychosis](#). Yes, I've experienced some difficult times, but I have coping strategies to navigate them without being plunged into symptoms.
- My treatment team no longer diagnoses me with bipolar 2 disorder, because I no longer meet the criteria for this diagnosis.
- I have meaningful, healthy relationships in my life, including romance. This was something that eluded me for years, but my work in [therapy](#) and spiritual practices has really helped me to build rich, happy relationships.
- I live independently, including supporting myself financially. This is an important thing. I now know how to manage my finances and not spend impulsively.
- I have a [career](#) that I'm completely passionate about. I train mental health professionals for a large university and, in addition, have a few clients that I coach as a mental health peer provider (this is a person with lived experience of recovery who helps others to recover, and, yes, that is a real job).

"We are each other's harvest; we are each other's business; we are each other's magnitude and bond."
- Gwendolyn Brooks

"All for one and one for all, united we stand divided we fall." - Alexandre Dumas

7] [National Empowerment Center Has Released a Book on Emotional CPR](#)

Emotional CPR: Assisting People through Emotional Distress recounts how a team, mainly comprising individuals with personal experiences of severe mental health conditions, developed a novel method to aid those in mental health crises. Unlike conventional approaches, this method prioritizes establishing a heart-to-heart connection over diagnosis. By treating individuals as resourceful, the approach empowers them to navigate their path forward, fostering revitalization. This approach reflects how the Emotional CPR developers desired to be treated during their own distress, and how such treatment facilitated their journey through distress.

NEC Director of Training and Engagement, Kimberly Ewing, hosted a virtual coffee house where

contributors read from the book and discussed their experiences with Emotional CPR in their lives and work.

[Emotional CPR Book Launch](#) - YouTube

Emotional CPR: Assisting People Through Emotional Distress, written and edited by individuals with lived experience of a mental health condition, tells the story of the development and worldwide impact of Emotional CPR, an evidence-based practice.

[The National Empowerment Center](#) (NEC) is proud to announce the publication of a groundbreaking book on Emotional CPR (eCPR), an evidence-based practice used around the world to support people in emotional distress.

“The book tells the story of Emotional CPR, a practice developed entirely by those with lived experience,” said Oryx Cohen, CEO of the National Empowerment Center. “It shares engaging, sometimes lifesaving stories of the impact of eCPR across the globe.”

Emotional CPR’s history begins in 2009, when its seeds were planted in the hearts and minds of its creators, Lauren Spiro and Dr. Daniel Fisher. The illustrated book includes an Introduction, with details on what led them to begin to develop eCPR, followed by Part 1: How eCPR Changes Lives, and Part 2: Learning Emotional eCPR. Part 2 is a manual on how to practice eCPR. Appendix E offers “Resources for Further Exploration.”

We hope you enjoy the book and the recording!

“A choir is made up of many voices, including yours and mine. If one by one all go silent then all that will be left are the soloists. Don’t let a loud few determine the nature of the sound. It makes for poor harmony and diminishes the song.” - Vera Nazarian,

“In a room where people unanimously maintain a conspiracy of silence, one word of truth sounds like a pistol shot.” - Czesław Miłosz

8] [Lead in gasoline tied to millions of excess mental health disorders](#) By Elizabeth Chucl @ NBC News

Lead in gasoline tied to over 150 million excess cases of mental health disorders, study suggests.

Exposure to car exhaust from leaded gas, which was phased out in 1996, resulted in anxiety, depression and ADHD symptoms in generations of people, researchers found.

Article excerpt:

Exposure to lead in gasoline during childhood resulted in many millions of excess cases of psychiatric disorders over the last 75 years, a new study estimates.

Lead was banned from automobile fuel in 1996. The study, published Wednesday in [the Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry](#), looked at its lasting impact in the U.S. by analyzing childhood blood

lead levels from 1940 to 2015. According to the findings, the national population experienced an estimated 151 million excess mental health disorders attributable to exposure to lead from car exhaust during children's early development.

The exposure made generations of Americans more depressed, anxious, inattentive or hyperactive, the study says.

The researchers — a group from Duke University, Florida State University and the Medical University of South Carolina — found that the exposure also lowered people's capacity for impulse control and made them more inclined to be neurotic.

Lead-associated mental health and personality differences were most pronounced for people born between 1966 and 1986, according to the study. Of that group, the greatest lead-linked mental illness burden was for Generation Xers born between 1966 and 1970, coinciding with peak use of leaded gasoline in the mid-1960s and mid-1970s.

Researchers found that lead-associated mental health and personality differences were most pronounced for those born between 1966 and 1986.

People born during those years "can't go back in time and change that," said Aaron Reuben, a co-author of the study and a postdoctoral scholar in neuropsychology at Duke and the Medical University of South Carolina.

"Studies like ours today add more evidence that removing lead from our environment and not putting it there in the first place has more benefits than we previously understood," Reuben said.

The groups born around 1940 and 2015 had the lowest lead exposure and lead-associated mental illness, the study reported.

Though no longer in gasoline, lead is still present in other sources, such as [some toys imported from other countries](#), [water service lines](#) that have not yet been updated, some soil and paint in old houses. (Lead paint was banned in 1978.)

"Truth never damages a cause that is just." - Mahatma Gandhi

"The most authentic thing about us is our capacity to create, to overcome, to endure, to transform, to love and to be greater than our suffering." - Ben Okri

9] [That Healing Sound](#) By Kevin Berger @ [Nautilus](#)

Article excerpt:

As a music lover my entire life, who could have been doing productive things to be a good citizen rather than playing albums and going to concerts, I can safely say I have never been inclined to think of music as having any practical value.

But reading the new book by Daniel Levitin, [I Heard There Was a Secret Chord: Music as Medicine](#),

made me think otherwise. Levitin, a neuroscientist who first got the public thinking about the biological machinery behind music in his 2006 book, *This Is Your Brain on Music*, puts the spotlight on burgeoning methods of music therapy restoring pleasure to so many people who have lost it.

Recently, over video, I told Levitin at his home in Hollywood that his book opened my eyes to the seemingly magical effects of music therapy. That led us into an engaging conversation on the secret chords that music strikes in our brains and bodies. Levitin began writing the book around the time he got some news from friend Bobby McFerrin, the many-splendored vocalist best known for his a cappella hit, “Don’t Worry, Be Happy.”

You write that Bobby McFerrin “changed forever the way you think about music and medicine.” How so?

To begin with, I consider Bobby to be among a small number of people who are oracles. They’re human 2.0 Whatever force he’s in touch with, he just seems more evolved than the rest of us. That’s not to sound mystical or anything, but when Bobby says or does something, I pay close attention.

One day Bobby was feeling fatigued before a show in Vermont. He didn’t feel like he had the flu. He didn’t know what it was. But he was going to cancel the show. And then, because he’s Bobby and thinks more about other people than he does himself, he started imagining all these people who bought tickets. They’d probably been planning for this evening for some time. Some of them had to hire babysitters. And he didn’t want to upset that.

It was like the angel and devil on each shoulder telling him, “Stay in the hotel room, you’re sick.” “No, do the show.” Anyway, he went and did it, and once he started singing, everything changed. He no longer felt fatigued, he no longer felt unfocused, and he went through the whole show. Shortly after that, he was diagnosed with [Parkinson’s disease](#).

What did his decision to perform tell you?

I knew from my own work in the laboratory that dopamine does different things in different parts of the brain, but one thing it does is signal pleasure. It’s also part of the motivation network. It motivates you to do things that are pleasurable or healthful, and it helps you to coordinate movement when you’re in the throes of Parkinson’s and can’t otherwise control your movements. In Bobby’s case, it kicked his motor system into doing the amazing thing he does, and the ultimate pleasure he derives from it.

Let’s talk about a few other afflictions. How does listening to music relieve depression?

The “how” is a difficult question. We know it does. But we’re still trying to sort out the distinct mechanisms behind it. The social part, though, is a big factor. Usually, when you’re depressed, you don’t feel like being with other people. Something has happened in your life that has caused you to feel cut off from others. There’s an organic component of depression and there’s genetic predispositions toward it, but there’s usually some sort of environmental trigger that leaves you feeling misunderstood.

So, if you listen to happy music, that’s just another bunch of people who misunderstand how you feel. You’ve got no use for them. But, put on the right sad music, and you feel understood and validated. Your emotions are validated. It’s not somebody coming in and saying, “Hey, get up off the couch,

straighten up and fly right. You have a lot to live for.” That’s not somebody who gets you.

But when you hear a musician or band that’s feeling what you’re feeling, you find that uplifting and validating, and you realize, “This person’s been through what I’ve been through and they came out the other side, and they turned it into a beautiful work of art.” On the chemical side, when you’re feeling in tune with the music, the hormone prolactin is released. It’s released in lactate when mothers are nursing their infants, in both the mother and the infant. It soothes and tranquilizes us.

“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

“... [To] take something from yourself, to give to another, that is humane and gentle and never takes away as much comfort as it brings again.” - Thomas More

10] [A star urologist preyed on men and boys. Why didn't his hospitals stop the abuse?](#) By [Maite Amorebieta](#) and Tom Llamas @ NBC News

Article excerpt:

BR was 27 years old and suffering from groin pain when he began seeing a renowned New York urologist, [Dr. Darius Paduch](#), in 2006. What took place in the examination room haunts him to this day.

Paduch told him to masturbate in front of him and proceeded to examine and photograph his erect penis, BR said. Paduch also showed BR photographs he had taken of other men’s penises as well as hardcore porn on a computer in his examining room, according to BR.

“Some things were clearly over the line,” said BR, who asked to be identified by his initials.

Still, he did not initially report Paduch to anyone at the hospital. “He had reasons to touch me,” BR said, “so it was hard to say with certainty that this is wrong.”

But about 12 years later, spurred in part by the [rise of the #MeToo movement](#), BR filed a complaint with the New York Health Department. He also emailed it to the associate general counsel at the hospital where Paduch worked, NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell in Manhattan.

Yet Paduch continued seeing patients at the hospital for one more year and remained employed until March 2020. And he continued seeing patients at the hospital he joined that same year, Northwell Health on Long Island, even after at least one person reported to management that Paduch had abused him years prior under the guise of medical care.

Paduch was only terminated in April 2023 when he was arrested and ultimately charged with sexually abusing seven former patients, including five boys under age 18. The urologist was convicted in federal court in May after a 10-day trial that left a crucial question unanswered: How was he allowed to practice for so long?

“There’s a litany of evidence that this was going on,” BR said, speaking out for the first time. “Why would an institution tolerate this kind of behavior?”

“What is the source of our first suffering? It lies in the fact that we hesitated to speak. It was born in the moment when we accumulated silent things within us.” - Gaton Bachelard

*“Tell your stories, if people wanted you to write warmly about them, they should have behaved better.”
- Anne Lamott*

11] [New mothers face barriers getting the mental health care so many need](#) - @ YouTube – PBS Newshour

Maternal mortality rates have soared in the U.S. to nearly three times those of other high-income countries. Over 20 percent of deaths among new mothers are from suicide and overdose. Researchers and service providers have made progress in addressing postpartum depression and anxiety, but barriers to care remain. Ali Rogin reports as part of our Race Matters coverage.

“Today I pray for the wisdom to build a better tomorrow on the mistakes and experiences of yesterday.” - Al-Anon

“Most of the shadows of life are caused by standing in one's own sunshine.” - Ralph Waldo Emerson

12] [SAFE 4 Recovery](#) – Survivors And Families Empowered for Recovery

We are a coalition of psychiatry survivors, families, and mental health professionals who believe in the power of hope and the resilience of the human spirit.

“Nothing about us without us”

Our experiences have taught us that deconstructing the fears and myths about mental illness will reduce the over reliance on restrictive interventions which interfere with recovery.

HOPE - “My ascent from madness to my present state of clarity and self-acceptance was and is a journey whose responsibility always resided within me. However, as I try to describe and share with others what wisdom I acquired, to aid others in their work, I acknowledge one element that I do not understand or take credit for, something that is named or interpreted according to one’s unique beliefs and values as luck, fate, karma, or God’s blessing.

I believe that as long as a person is alive, some seed of **Hope**, some possibility is there waiting to be fertilized. **Hope** fights the fear, nurtures the courage, and inspires the vision and the work required to resist giving up and accepting that your goals are unattainable. Deep in the recesses of our being there are safe sanctuaries, secure hiding places for never fully lost dreams. But sometimes they are hidden so well that we can no longer reach those parts of ourselves. The help we need may come from expected and unexpected sources.” ~ Ronald Bassman

How are we different? - We offer support services and resources that foster hope in recovery from extreme mental states or challenging emotional experiences without forced or toxic treatments.

“I really do think that any deep crisis is an opportunity to make your life extraordinary in some way.” -

Martha Beck

“The best thing about the future is that it comes only one day at a time.” - Abraham Lincoln

13] [PsychForce.Report](#) with Rob Wipond & Jesse Mangan – YouTube

Investigative journalist Rob Wipond, in conversation with Jesse Mangan of the [Committable](#) podcast, discusses the launch of [PsychForce.Report](#), a Substack column tracking the expanding uses of involuntary commitment and coercive mental health law powers across society.

“Find the good. It’s all around you. Find it, showcase it, and you’ll start believing in it.” - Jesse Owens

“Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless.” - Mother Teresa

14] [How to Stop Being So Mean to Yourself](#) @ Pocket Worthy

A gentle guide to dialing down the negative self-talk and showing yourself a little more grace.

Tips to let go of your regrets and feel more deserving of your own love. Plus, why you should talk to yourself like you talk to a friend.

Links to these articles posted online:

1] How to Make Friends With Your Inner Critic – Try to quiet the harsh, judging voice by naming it, offering counterexamples and staying mindful. By Lakesha Sullivan

2] How to Forgive Yourself.- Finding it hard to move past a hurtful mistake? With these steps toward repair and renewal, you can do and feel better. By Nathaniel Wade & Marilyn Cornish

3] Why are we so critical of ourselves after meeting someone new? Self-protection. By Robby Berman

4] Regret Can Be All-Consuming—a Neurobehavioral Scientist Explains How to Overcome It. By J. Kim Penbethey

5] Stop Being So Hard on Yourself at Work. By Melody Wilding

6] Feeling Embarrassed? Here’s The Right Way To Handle It By Lizzy Francis

7] How to Stop Being So Damn Angry at Yourself By Katie Arnold-Ratliff

“Our Age of Anxiety is, in great part, the result of trying to do today’s job with yesterday’s tools and yesterday’s concepts.” - Marshall McLuhan

“We gain strength, and courage, and confidence by each experience in which we really stop to look fear in the face...we must do that which we think we cannot.” - 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

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Live performances & advocacy @ [Michael Skinner – You Tube](#)

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