



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 October 2024

Male Survivor Awareness day Oct 25

[Help for Male Survivors of Sexual Assault & Abuse @ MenHealing](#)

Inspiring Hope, Changing Lives

Men who are survivors of sexual harm are frequently isolated and/or invisible. Through our work, we seek to help men who are survivors become seen while engaging their loved ones in services that support their needs. In addition, we seek to increase awareness and skills for providers and advocates who deliver services for male survivors.

We seek to inspire hope and change lives via an ever-evolving assembly of resources and services, including a dynamic website, a library of multi-media resources (videos and podcasts), live events, and a curriculum that is accessible to the public and under-served populations.

“I found a light I thought burned out of me years ago. I am a survivor still finding my way, but anchored by a lighthouse called MenHealing.”- Jame Canipe

[Healing for Male Survivors Podcast](#) with Mike Chapman

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

Every Tuesday I'll either “Fly solo” where I talk about issues regarding healing. I also will occasionally have guest co-hosts and panels of survivors and providers discussing various topics. I also will have guests, many of them survivors themselves, sharing their stories and other information that may help in our healing journeys.

However 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.

This **is** a faith-based podcast, but do not expect a lot of preaching. Faith has always been a strong part of my journey and will be discussed, but I want to welcome anyone here regardless of faith or lack of faith.

“Healing is a coming to terms with things as they are, rather than struggling to force them to be as they once were, or as we would like them to be, to feel secure or to have what we sometimes think of as our own way.” - Jon Kabat-Zinn

Newsletter Contents:

- 1] Creative Activists: A Bridge of Light by Rae Luskin
- 2] The Hole in the Heart — Taking Back Ourselves by Mikele Rauch, LMFT
- 3] She fled domestic violence fears in Mexico. Now she’s California’s first deaf Latina mayor by Justo Robles @ The Guardian
- 4] The Romantic Lives of People With Psychotic Disorders by Sarah An Myers @ Psychology Today
- 4a] Sarah An Myers - Living as an outlier - Insights into schizophrenia.@ Psychology Today
- 5] How to Date When You’ve Experienced Childhood Trauma by Leah Erickson @ CPTSD Foundation (complex post traumatic stress disorder)
- 6] Usorum – Empowering Social Good @ City Voices
- 7] Artist Natalie Chapman inspired by her council estate childhood by Nicola Bryan@ BBC News
- 7a]] A hidden cause of teenagers’ mental health issues is inequality. My story shows how it works. By Emi Nietfeld @ Slate
- 8] Your Consent is Not Required by journalist Rob Wipond
- 9] 3 Stages to Healing Trauma (You're Stuck in Stage 1) - YouTube 2:02 minutes
- 10] National Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention Month - Office for Victims of Crime- Training & Technical Assistance Center (OVC TTAC)
- 10a] October Is Domestic Violence Awareness Month - The Administration for Children and Families
- 11] Webinar Recordings: Elder Justice Initiative Webinar Series - Resources - OVC TTAC
- 12] Women behind bars are often survivors of abuse. A series of new laws aim to reduce their sentences by Isabella Volmert @ AP News
- 13] 2024 Theme: The Art of Recovery @ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
- 14] Voter Registration Information including Voters Who are in Inpatient Settings @ Choice Heals

14a] Raising Our Voices: Voting and Civic Engagement in the Mental Health Community @ You Tube

15] CDs Are Cool Again. Here's How to Rip Them. by Justin Pot @ Popular Science

"All healing is first a healing of the heart." - Carl Townsend

"Eventually you will come to understand that love heals everything, and love is all there is." - Gary Zukav

1] **Creative Activists: A Bridge of Light** by Rae Luskin

In a world where walls divide,
You craft the bridge where hearts collide.
Through every stroke, in every song,
You weave the place where we belong.
With colors bold and voices clear,
You paint away the weight of fear.
In every line, in every beat,
You turn our pain to something sweet.

A healer's hand, a guiding light,
You show the path from wrong to right.
Through broken dreams and shattered skies,
Your art lifts hope where sorrow lies.
For in your craft, the truth will shine,
A peace that heals, one heart, one mind.
So wield your brush, your voice, your pen—
A world of love will rise again.
Creative soul, your power is this:
To turn our pain to peaceful bliss.

[Rae Luskin, artist & author](#)

I am an award winning artist, author, activist and a creative mindfulness mentor dedicated to raising awareness of creativity as a positive catalyst for health and well-being. I specialize in interactive presentations, providing creative tools and strategies to foster self-worth, self-love, healing, and social change. For twenty years I have helped individuals and teams discover their passion, purpose and authentic power to become confident and effective change leaders and creative problem solvers. As a community activist I passionately focus my lens on improving the lives of women and children whether designing art work for Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky's "ask" gun safety campaign or sharing my personal art work and story of healing from childhood sexual abuse. I believe when we share our stories of resilience, people know they are not alone and it creates a positive ripple of hope. In 2016 I received a Woman of Distinction Award and was nominated for a Beauty In Beauty Out Award. I am the author of four books, including *Art From My Heart* a self-discovery journal, *Stuck to Unstoppable Journal*, *The Creative Edge: 30 days of Creativity Prompts* and the Benjamin Franklin award winning

inspirational book, *The Creative Activist: Make the World Better, One Person, One Action at a Time*. I have a Bachelor's of Fine Arts degree from Roosevelt University and a Master's degree in Urban Planning.

"Let the beauty of what you love be what you do." - Rumi

"Learn to face things as they come, and when they come, with calm deliberation. We may not be able to control events, but we can control our attitudes toward them." - Al-Anon

2] [The Hole in the Heart](#) — Taking Back Ourselves by Mikele Rauch, LMFT

Article excerpt:

You may already sense—as an observant human and certainly from your experience as a survivor of sexual trauma—that no matter how your violation occurred it is the perpetrator's narcissism that has left its indelible imprint on your heart.

The perpetrator might have appeared to have all the power. Perhaps they even expressed interest and concern about you, the victim. But in fact, there was a specific self-centeredness that belied their own deep sense of emptiness and profound self-loathing. All of this was contained in an encasement of shame... creating a false self. For the narcissist, this view of the self may not always hit their own conscious awareness and can masquerade as high self-regard. But any threat to the false self will be responded to as if it were an assault to the "real self" inside, because it threatens their own primitive fear of abandonment and annihilation.¹

Perhaps it is only through this lens that you have a way to comprehend how you yourself can inherit a narcissistic injury from the perpetrator. You may have come to believe that even mattering at all was a transactional exercise, one of the tell-tale signs of the narcissist.

There always seemed to be a price to pay for love.

This profound injury leaves a wound which can make you feel that no matter how much you work to be loved and to matter, you doubt that the hole of love you crave will never be filled. It leaves an endless thirst for acknowledgement, validation, even adulation, so that others will somehow recognize that you have done enough, given so much, worked so hard. There may even be a sense of grievance if you are not seen for all you are. But your own story, your own drama, and that constant reference to your self results in a sense of shame. You may feel you can never get out of your own way, as the constant center of your own attention. It can be agonizing to fill that space with only yourself. Or perhaps, at the other end of the narcissistic injury, you might hear the constant drumbeat of self deprecation that would cause you to "smallify"—to hide or shut down, as if your own voice and your very presence should not matter.

But the true core of this wound in the heart is grief.

Sometimes the grief is unnamed and unaccounted for. Nonetheless, it is grief that is at the bottom of this maelstrom of self absorption and self doubt that plagues the mind. Grief for love lost, betrayed, diminished. Grief on this level may have been avoided or passed over for decades, but it no longer

needs to be.

One way to heal the broken heart and mend the bottomless hole is to be tender to this grief. Indeed, it is a challenge to touch these wounds again. The deaths with no closure, the loves that were not given, the pain covered by defenses, and even some of the rituals for self improvement can hold some of the greatest impediments to doing this deeper work. It may be an ongoing challenge to repair yourself with kindness and respect. It requires honest, raw and compassionate truth.

[Taking Back Ourselves](#) - About

“Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forwards.” - Soren Kierkegaard

“When you tell someone who was traumatized to stop living in the past, focus on the positive, or just let go, you're teaching them to stay traumatized. These statements have no impact on a person's nervous system. Healing comes with invitation to be honest as and where we are.” - Nate Postlethwait

3] [She fled domestic violence fears in Mexico](#). Now she's California's first deaf Latina mayor by Justo Robles @ The Guardian

Article excerpt:

Josefina Dueñas faced doubts from her own colleagues on the city council. Now ‘I represent the women, the immigrants, the disabled, the homeless’

It wasn't until she turned five years old that Josefina Dueñas was diagnosed with a disorder her family had long suspected: hipocousia bilateral, or severe hearing loss that affected both of her ears.

Almost 60 years later, as Dueñas walked into Ukiah's city hall, located in northern California's Mendocino county, she recounted her childhood memories and the years that trained her to overcome the many challenges that still arise due to her hearing disability.

“Here, I represent the women, the immigrants, the disabled, the homeless,” said Dueñas, who at the age of 64 became the first deaf Latina mayor in California.

Alongside the six council members in Ukiah, the mayor represents the interests of [more than 16,000 people](#), most of whom identify as Latino or white, according to US census data.

Council members are elected for a four-year term by the voters while the mayor is appointed every year on a rotational basis by the council.

Long before Dueñas could serve as the mayor of Ukiah, she studied psychology at the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla in Mexico and worked for the state secretary of finance reviewing tax documents. She had started wearing earbuds and communicating in sign language.

While Dueñas seemed to grow professionally, the situation at home was increasingly alarming.

Fearing the threat of domestic violence against her and her children, Dueñas migrated to California.

She arrived in Ukiah in 1989 and soon worked in the fields along the busy Highway 101 corridor, picking grapes and contributing to the success of local vineyards, one of Ukiah's main attractions today. Today.

"I remained undocumented until 1999, when I suffered domestic violence at the hands of my second husband," Dueñas said on a recent afternoon, inside Ukiah's city hall.

With the passage of the [Violence Against Women Act](#), also known as Vawa, in Congress in 1994, immigrants who have been abused by a US citizen can seek legal protection in the country.

"You are not accidental. The world needs you. Without you, something will be missing in existence."
Osho

"Talk to yourself like you would someone you love." Brene Brown

4] [The Romantic Lives of People With Psychotic Disorders](#) by Sarah An Myers @ Psychology Today

Article excerpt:

What we know about romantic relationships among people who have psychosis.

Key points

- There is little academic information regarding the romantic lives of patients with psychotic disorders.
- Studies that do focus on romance in people with psychosis often have mixed and unstandardized reporting.
- While some studies indicate having romantic relationships is associated with fewer symptoms, others don't.
- The dating lives of people with psychosis is as heterogeneous as the disorder itself.

When you think of a person with schizophrenia, do you imagine their love lives? Schizophrenia is a disability, but it doesn't stop people from feeling the natural desire to love and be loved by romantic partners.

In fact, there are few studies that examine the romantic lives of people living with schizophrenia, and those that do report mixed findings and limited insight into the diverse range of individuals living with the heterogeneous presence of symptoms.

This disorder is among some of the most stigmatized conditions there are, so it seems almost instinctual that people with a schizophrenia spectrum disorder would have different experiences. Are they for the better? Sometimes they are, but many times they are not.

Some studies report 27 percent of survey participants with schizophrenia experienced [discrimination](#) even within their own personal romantic and sexual relationships, and 55 percent even anticipated it. Individuals living with the diagnosis often self-discriminate, possibly leading to worse outcomes.

A systematic review published in 2021 reports that the data that have been collected about relationships in people with schizophrenia merely focus on biological issues such as sexually transmitted diseases or sexual dysfunction. Studying the romantic lives of people with schizophrenia could provide insight into how patients can live a normal life with a full network of social support, including romantic love.

4a] [Sarah An Myers - Living as an outlier](#) - Insights into schizophrenia.@ Psychology Today

“Speak from your soul and every heart will understand,” M. Painter

“The glow of one warm thought is to me worth more than money.” Thomas Jefferson

5] [How to Date When You’ve Experienced Childhood Trauma](#) by Leah Erickson @ [CPTSD Foundation](#) (complex post traumatic stress disorder)

Article excerpt: How does a real adult date?

I used to act a part on dates. The part of “Real Adult Who Dates, Is Fabulous, and Definitely Has No Trauma.” I still felt like a wounded child inside, but I was sure that I could hide my childhood trauma if I had the sexiest nail polish color or applied my makeup perfectly. If my outfit showed off an appealing figure or my earrings were stunning, Guy Who Asked Me Out for a Cup of Coffee wouldn’t notice that I was messy inside.

I was terrified of what would happen once I told Coffee Guy about my past. Connecting on any serious emotional level was unsafe. I would not let a guy in only for him to conclude that of course I was too much once he saw how big my wounds were.

Signs Your Childhood Trauma Shows Up in Your Dating Life

You may jump right to physical intimacy to please the other person, freak out in shame, and ghost. You may hide parts of yourself or dump all your baggage on the date at once, looking for assurance he’ll accept you. You may avoid physical intimacy or feel unsure if you want that. Is it safe to hold his hand or let him kiss you?

You may need constant reassurance he likes you, even if he has communicated he does. You may feel an urge to cling or to run away at the first sign of trouble.

Maybe you have to drink or get high to be relaxed enough to hook up. It’s okay if you’re a person who won’t refuse anyone who shows interest in you, even if you don’t really like him.

Boundaries, Boundaries, Boundaries!

Here’s how I started to be a real adult in romantic relationships: I started making small decisions that felt safe but stretched my window of tolerance.

I figured out what my boundaries were regarding:

-physical intimacy

-paying for meals, other activities on dates

- sharing my story
- opening up about my dreams for the future and my current life

*A note about physical intimacy: you can change your mind AT ANY TIME. It does not matter how long the relationship has been going on or if you've agreed to and enjoyed something before.

Talking About Your Trauma with Your Romantic Interest

"We're so concerned with the idea of what we ought to be that we fail to take into account the things that make us who we really are." Nenia Campbell

"Dwell on the beauty of life. Watch the stars and see yourself running with them." Marcus Aurelius

6] [Usorum – Empowering Social Good](#) @ City Voices

Let's Make People with Mental Health Challenges Smile Again! – Media and Community-building Projects

Usorum is a peer-run business dedicated to helping nonprofits connect with their audiences in impactful way. Sharing resources, videos, articles, etc.

[Share Your Personal Recovery Story](#) - We invite you to share your inspiring recovery story from mental health or addiction challenges. Your story can offer hope and encouragement to others, and you can choose to remain anonymous if you prefer.

[Share Your Peer Support Professional Story](#) -We'd love to hear your story as a peer support professional! Share your experiences, including any notable challenges and successes, to inspire others in the field. Your insights can make a real difference.

[Maintaining Our New Friendships Program](#) -We call it The Friendship Squad and it builds one-on-one friendships for people with life challenges worldwide. How can we boost engagement and sustain participation in the program

Help us rebuild The Friendship Squad, a program that pairs individuals facing mental health and addiction challenges in supportive one-on-one friendships. Loneliness affects everyone, but it hits hardest for those dealing with life's toughest battles. Together, we can make a difference. *Thank you for your support!*

Our mission, to empower individuals facing serious mental health and/or substance use challenges to live their best lives by cultivating a vibrant community that provides support, fosters engagement through enjoyable activities, offers valuable information, promotes mindfulness practices, and embraces holistic techniques.

Our vision, a dynamic community of individuals who have faced mental health and/or substance use challenges, where mindfulness and artistic expression come together to cultivate a sense of inner peace, happiness, and self-love.

“Set out each day believing in your dreams. Know without a doubt that you were made for amazing things.” Josh Hinds

“If you can't face it, you can't heal it. If you don't say it, you will never come to grips with it.” Iyanla Vanzant

7] [Artist Natalie Chapman inspired by her council estate childhood](#) by Nicola Bryan@ BBC News

Article excerpt: Artist inspired by council estate childhood wants to make art more inclusive.

Artist Natalie Chapman grew up feeling stigmatised for living in a council house, receiving free school meals and having a parent who was in and out of rehab.

"You face prejudice from people, people have ideas about people who live in in council houses," she said.

In her most personal project to date, she has turned her childhood memories into a collection of bold, autobiographical portrait paintings called All The Stories I Could Never Tell.

"I don't want my exhibition to be like poverty porn, because it's not," she said. "There's a lot of love within those paintings and there's a lot of support."

Natalie, 43, grew up mostly on the mid Wales coast in Ceredigion, with "very, very loving" parents but money was scarce, her attendance at school was sporadic, and her late father's drug addiction meant time in rehab.

Before getting social housing in the early 1980s the family lived in a home with no electricity, using paraffin lamps for light.

Later the large family bought a one-bedroom cottage where they all lived in one room before it was repossessed.

"When I was really little I remember friends being like, 'my mum says that we're not allowed to play with you because you're a hippie and you can't come round to our house'," she said.

As a young teenager Natalie took part in a France exchange programme, but on her return home the French student wrote to her suggesting she was not going to be staying with her family when she came to Wales.

Natalie decided to ask a teacher about it.

"She sort of just blurted it out in front of everybody, 'we've decided your family's not suitable, so she won't be coming stay with you'," recalled Natalie.

Instead the student stayed with a child from a "well-to-do family", she said.

"It relayed back to me 'I'm not deserving of this chance' and I think there's so many situations and scenarios that actually still exist, a lot of those things haven't changed."

"The arts have become expensive hobbies for the rich when it should be accessible to all," she said.

She also wants to see more galleries taking a risk on the art they show.

"There's a lot of deprivation in Wales, there's lots of stories that aren't being told on gallery walls," she said.

"Who better to have interesting stories about their lives than people who've gone through things - to me the most interesting thing is people who face challenges and come through them, that's where the richness of life is."

[All The Stories I Can Never Tell by Natalie Chapman Natalie](#) @ New Blood Art – more of her paintings

"There is a call within every one of us, a call to do something, however unpopular or unnoticed, to make the world a better place." Robert Cooper

"Compassion is not a relationship between the healer and the wounded. It's a relationship between equals. Only when we know our own darkness well can we be present with the darkness of others. Compassion becomes real when we recognize our shared humanity." Pema Chödrön

7a]] [A hidden cause of teenagers' mental health issues is inequality.](#) My story shows how it works. By Emi Nietfeld @ Slate

This story was supported by the journalism nonprofit the [Economic Hardship Reporting Project](#).

Article excerpt: How inequality messes with teenagers' minds.

The first time I met a rich person, I was 15. I'd just arrived at boarding school on scholarship after time in foster care. My new roommate—let's call her Jane—had transferred from a top-ranked public high school that educated Silicon Valley's heirs. I grew up with an anguish that came from low expectations, while Jane suffered from the stress of never being good enough. In our tiny, cell-like dorm room, I learned that despite our opposite upbringings, we had a lot in common. We both loved calculus and hated our nosy RA, and we were both miserable. And we both coped in ways that have now become ubiquitous among America's youth. I cut myself, abused Adderall, and made myself throw up in our dorm's bathroom. Jane grappled with overwhelming anxiety, distorted body image, and social media addiction. Even our emotional torment seemed to have a common origin: economic inequality.

In America, the gap between haves and have-nots is enormous, and has been widening for years. What's less well-known is the growing body of evidence, summarized this month in a [Lancet report](#), suggesting that inequality harms us psychologically and physically, no matter our tax bracket or the size of our house. It makes status hypersalient, weakens social ties, and encourages us to choose prestige over purpose. As inequality rises in lockstep with measures of psychic distress among teens, we need to consider its role if we want to keep kids from suffering needlessly, falling short of their

potential, and, increasingly, dying before they reach adulthood.

This problem, which defined my teenage experience, has become particularly urgent to me as a new parent. I don't want to raise my daughter in a culture where well-meaning parents push their progeny to the brink, where it increasingly feels like the only two options are amassing enormous wealth at all costs or suffering through a life of penury.

Sociologists and demographers have long recognized a relationship between [poverty and illness](#), but inequality itself seems to contribute to negative outcomes—for rich and poor alike. In her book *The Spirit Level*, epidemiologist Kate Pickett found that less egalitarian nations had three times the rate of mental illness of more egalitarian countries, and that even wealthier citizens in those unequal places were vulnerable. Inequality, Pickett told me, “affects everyone in a society. We're all exposed to it.” By making social status increasingly important, inequality spurs people to incessantly compare themselves to others, a source of constant stress that wears us down and, in turn, makes it hard to trust, eroding the social bonds that protect against despair.

[Acceptance: A Memoir](#) by Emi Nietfeld

“Nietfeld's gifts for capturing the fury of living at the mercy of bad circumstances, for critiquing the hero's journey even while she tells it, make *Acceptance* a remarkable memoir.” —The New York Times Book Review

“True peace is not merely the absence of tension, it is the presence of justice...” Martin Luther King Jr.

“We can pave the way for calm, reasonable communication only if we first find healthy outlets for our own negative feelings.” The Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage

8] [Your Consent is Not Required](#) by journalist Rob Wipond

Your Consent Is Not Required: The Rise in Psychiatric Detentions, Forced Treatment, and Abusive Guardianships ([BenBella](#), 2023) is now available in hardcover, ePub, Kindle and audiobook by order through your local bookstore, or at [Amazon](#), [Amazon Canada](#), [Barnes & Noble](#), [Chapters/Indigo](#), [Audiobooks.com](#) and elsewhere.

Asylums are supposed to be in the past. However, though the buildings were closed, many of the practices lived on. In fact, more law-abiding Americans today are being involuntarily committed and forcibly treated “for their own good” than at any time in history.

In the first work of investigative journalism in decades to give a comprehensive view into contemporary civil psychiatric incarceration and forced interventions, *Your Consent Is Not Required* exposes how rising numbers of people from many walks of life are being subjected against their will to surveillance, indefinite detention, and powerful tranquilizing drugs, restraints, seclusion, and electroshock.

There's a common misconception that, due to asylum closures, only “dangerous” people get committed now. But forced psychiatric interventions today occur in thousands of public and private hospitals, and also in group and long-term care facilities, troubled-teen and residential treatment centers, and even in

people's own homes under outpatient commitment orders. Intended to "help," for many people the experiences are terrifying, traumatizing, and permanently damaging.

Driven partly by individuals' genuine concerns for the "mental health" of others, and partly by institutions entangled with goals of power, profit, and social control, psychiatric coercion is increasingly used to:

- manage school children and the elderly
- quell family conflicts
- police the streets
- control people in shelters, community living, and prisons
- fraudulently increase hospital profits
- "resolve" workplace disagreements
- detain protesters and discredit whistleblowers

Thoroughly researched, with alarming true stories and hard data from the US and Canada, Rob Wipond's *Your Consent Is Not Required* builds an unassailable case for greater transparency, vigilance, and change.

Rob Wipond is a freelance investigative journalist who writes frequently about the interfaces between psychiatry, civil rights, policing, surveillance and privacy, and social change. His articles have been nominated for seventeen magazine and journalism awards for reporting on science, medicine, law, business, and community issues.

"You own everything that happened to you. Tell your stories. If people wanted you to write warmly about them, they should have behaved better." Anne Lamott

"Nothing can dim the light that shines from within." Maya Angelou

9] [3 Stages to Healing Trauma](#) (You're Stuck in Stage 1) - YouTube 2:02 minutes

"There is a call within every one of us, a call to do something, however unpopular or unnoticed, to make the world a better place." Robert Cooper

10] [National Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention Month](#) - Office for Victims of Crime-Training & Technical Assistance Center (OVC TTAC)

There are no communities of people who are immune from domestic violence. As victim service professionals, we are called to bring awareness and support victims to lessen the impact on families and communities affected by domestic violence. When we know more, we can do more, and OVC TTAC has many types of resources so you and your team can become better able to support victims of domestic violence and bring more awareness to your communities.

10a] [October Is Domestic Violence Awareness Month](#) - The Administration for Children and Families

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM). During DVAM, victim advocates, allied professionals, survivors of abuse, their loved ones, and the surrounding community come together to

mourn the lives lost to domestic violence, celebrate the progress that has been made to end this epidemic, and connect with others working to create change. This tip sheet provides suggestions on what individuals and organizations can do to help raise awareness of domestic violence using the hashtag #1Thing to demonstrate that everyone can play a role in bringing about change.

Events to raise awareness of domestic violence and its impact on individuals, families, and communities take place throughout the year. During Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM), victim advocates, allied professionals, survivors of abuse, their loved ones, and the surrounding community come together to mourn the lives lost to domestic violence, celebrate the progress that has been made to end this epidemic, and connect with others working to create change. This year's #1Thing DVAM Campaign is being funded by the Administration for Children and Families. 1 Think of #1Thing you can do to get involved, take action and make a difference for those affected by domestic violence. Access free tools and materials at <https://nrcdv.org/dvam>

"Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow." Albert Einstein

"Hatred destroys everything and LOVE changes everything." Melissa Brown

11] [Webinar Recordings: Elder Justice Initiative Webinar Series](#) - Resources - OVC TTAC

DOJ's Elder Justice Initiative is hosting a series of webinars on topics critical to people working in the arena of elder justice. To get more information and register for these sessions, visit the website.

"Our sorrows and wounds are healed only when we touch them with compassion." - Jack Kornfield

"Each of us has a unique part to play in the healing of the world." - Marianne Williamson

12] [Women behind bars are often survivors of abuse](#). A series of new laws aim to reduce their sentences by Isabella Volmert @ AP News

Article excerpt: Advocates for domestic violence survivors in Illinois celebrated earlier this month when Gov. JB Pritzker signed a bill into law making it easier for those who are incarcerated to get reduced sentences.

House bill sponsor Rep. Kelly Cassidy was among those cheering. First elected in 2011, she has since written legislation designed to help survivors of gender-based and domestic violence, including the resentencing bill that was signed into law in August. The idea is that women who received harsh sentences without a court hearing about their histories of abuse should get an opportunity to tell their stories in court and potentially be resentenced.

"We can write all the laws in the world but until we start taking women's lives seriously and valuing them and believing them, we're going to keep having more tragedy," Cassidy said.

[Illinois](#) is taking this view into account with a series of new laws. Only New York and California — and now Oklahoma — have comparable resentencing statutes, although efforts to change laws are underway in several other states. Since the laws involved reducing sentences, tough-on-crime lawmakers remain hard to convince.

ut Illinois women’s advocates have had success getting laws passed and the state’s become sort of a laboratory, Cassidy said. “We’ve now figured out how to do it and could easily share it across other jurisdictions.”

Cassidy, who had herself grown up in an abusive home, found her passion for criminal justice reform while working in the 1990s as a policy assistant at Cook County State’s Attorney Office — the equivalent of a district attorney’s office — where she managed a pilot program that provided resources to people facing domestic violence with an increased risk of escalation.

Women who were abused are much more likely to be incarcerated than women who are not, according to research published by the [National Online Resource Center on Violence Against Women](#). Melissa Dichter, author of the research and a professor at Temple University, said the pipeline also disproportionately impacts women and girls of color because of racial biases in the justice system as well as economic disadvantages.

“Leaving an abusive partner takes resources and takes money,” she said.

“We need the compassion and the courage to change the conditions that support our suffering. Those conditions are things like ignorance, bitterness, negligence, clinging, and holding on.” - Sharon Salzberg

"Scars show us where we have been, they don't dictate where we are going." - David Rossi

13] [2024 Theme: The Art of Recovery](#) @ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

The 2024 Gallery of Hope: Artistic Expressions of Recovery Across the Nation

Recognizing the transformative power of creative arts in advancing recovery, in May 2024, the [Office of Recovery](#) launched the Gallery of Hope, inviting visual art submissions from individuals with lived experience and their families.

This initiative raises public awareness and understanding of the many contributions that people in recovery bring to our lives by offering a platform for creative expression as a means of connection, healing, and empowerment. By showcasing art as a tool for growth and self-discovery, the project seeks to break down societal stigmas and foster greater understanding and support.

Photography and Painting, Drawing or Mixed Media Submissions

"You are the sky. Everything else is just the weather." - Pema Chödrön

“Silence is a place of great power and great healing.” - Rachel Naomi Remen

14] [Voter Registration Information including Voters Who are in Inpatient Settings](#) @ Choice Heals

Voting is For All, Yes! (A Project of Kasper Connects)

The following sites can be used to download registration forms from each state, learn how register and vote while in a hospital. There are videos that can be used in groups to discuss how to vote including rank voting, and messages from leaders including Pat Deegan. The last link from MHANYS is a comprehensive site of how to vote for peers in New York State.(several website links posted at the site)

14a] [Raising Our Voices](#): Voting and Civic Engagement in the Mental Health Community @ You Tube

“Empathy has no script. There is no right way or wrong way to do it. It’s simply listening, holding space, withholding judgment, emotionally connecting, and communicating that incredibly healing message of ‘You’re not alone.’” - Brené Brown

“Medicine heals the body, music heals the soul.” - Becca Cahan

15] [CDs Are Cool Again. Here’s How to Rip Them](#). by Justin Pot @ Popular Science

Article Excerpt: CDs are back. Here’s how to turn them into digital content again

The number of sold CDs is [rising for the first time in a generation](#), in part because buying them is a great way to [support the bands you love](#). But there’s a problem: you can’t listen to CDs on your digital devices [unless you rip them first](#).

In ancient times—back in 2001—people knew how to do this, but much that should have been remembered has been forgotten.

No worries: we’re here to remind you (or maybe even teach you for the very first time in your life) how to rip CDs on your computer.

As a musician I had to share this resource! Please take a listen to my songs, two minute clips posted for each CD. Thanks!! MS

<https://www.mskinnermusic.com/music/waitin-train/>

<https://www.mskinnermusic.com/music/album-train-tears/>

<https://www.mskinnermusic.com/music/album-pirates/>

“I think music in itself is healing. It’s an explosive expression of humanity. It’s something we are all touched by. No matter what culture we’re from, everyone loves music.” Billy Joel

“Music has healing power. It has the ability to take people out of themselves for a few hours.” Elton John

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 Mind, Body & Spirit Through the Creative Arts, Education & Advocacy

[The Surviving Spirit Facebook Page](#)

mike.skinner@survivingspirit.com 603-625-2136 38 River Ledge Drive, Goffstown, NH 03045

[@SurvivinSpirit](#) Twitter

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

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

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