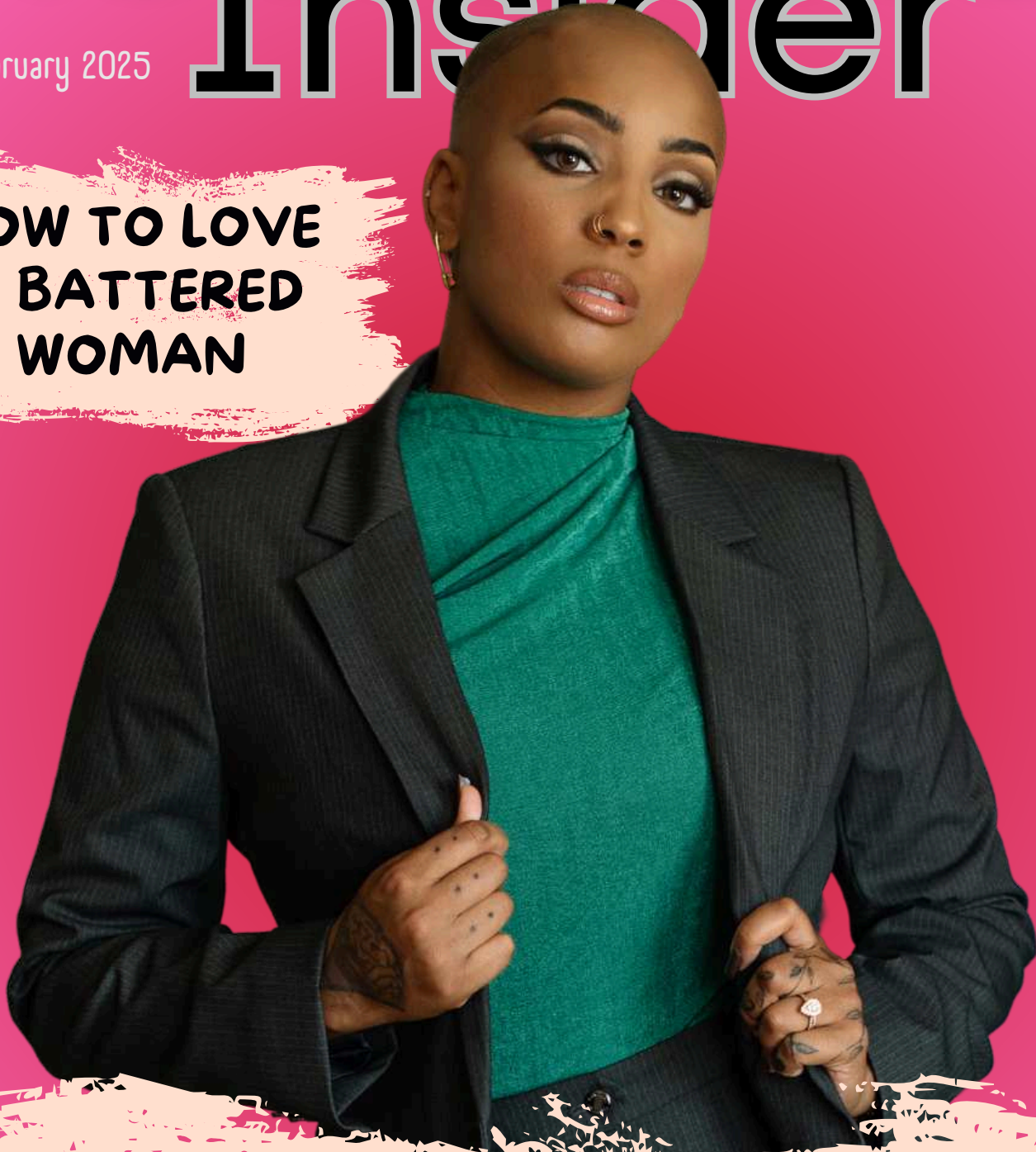


AUTHENTIC Insider

February 2025

HOW TO LOVE A BATTERED WOMAN



TEEN VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

Kathryn Marsh discusses how we can empower young people to recognize their worth and seek respectful, supportive partnerships.

AUTHENTIC PARENTING

Parenting carries immense responsibility, but toxic behaviors can have lasting, generational impacts. STAR Network discusses neuro-parenting.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FRIENDSHIPS

In a fast-paced world where genuine connections often feel elusive, Dr. Kimberly Horn offers guidance through Friends Matter, for Life.

editor's note

Dear Readers,

February is a month of national awareness, balancing heavy topics with the celebration of love. In this issue, I share my experience with 5-MeO-DMT and my journey toward radical self-love, while our cover model, Nia Renee, reflects on "How to Love a Battered Woman."

Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month reminds us of the urgency of addressing unhealthy relationships among young people. In this month's Prosecutor's POV, Kathryn Marsh discusses how we can empower teens to recognize their worth and seek supportive partnerships.

Parenting comes with immense responsibility, and toxic behaviors—manipulation, neglect, or over-control—can have lasting generational effects. STAR Network's Dr. Jamie Huysman and Mila Stankovic explore neuro-parenting, helping parents recognize and break harmful patterns to foster healthier relationships.

In a fast-paced world where true connections feel rare, Dr. Kimberly Horn's Friends Matter, for Life offers research-backed insights on building meaningful friendships in today's complex social landscape.

For National Check-In Month, author and activist Paul Boskind shares his powerful journey of losing his sight and the resilience he found through community and inner strength.

Violence in America leaves lasting wounds, but as trauma educator Karen Gross explains, solutions like stronger mental health support can help mitigate its impact and create a safer, more connected society.

As always, enjoy our monthly playlist—featuring songs to inspire self-love—along with my book picks for children and adults. Plus, don't miss Joy Larkin's Twin Flame Reading to see what February has in store.

Happy reading!

Always
Lorilee Binstock
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Editor in Chief

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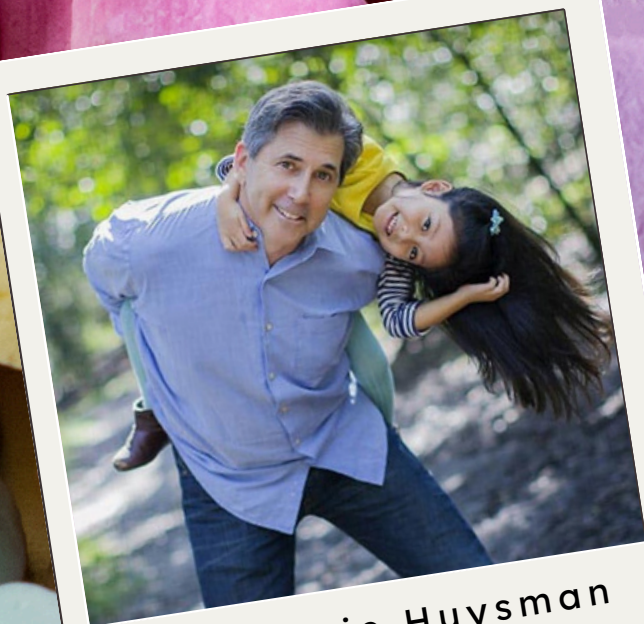
Joy Larkin
Twin Flame Readings

Monthly

Contributors



Kathryn Marsh
Teen Dating Violence
Prosecutor POV



Dr. Jamie Huysman
Neuro-Parenting
Authentic Parenting POV



Mila Stankovic
Neuro-Parenting
Authentic Parenting POV

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Contributors



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Dr. Kimberly Horn
Meaningful Friendships



Paul Boskind
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MY ACCOUNT

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A Trauma Survivor Thriver's Podcast

"Helping Other's Find Purpose After Adversity"

Secrets are toxic to one's well-being. If you don't take control of them, they will own you.

My Story → Podcast →

Lorilee Binstock

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Get the latest from A Trauma Survivor Thriver's Podcast, Authentic Inside Magazine, Lorilee Binstock in the media, and the latest news. Visit traumasurvivorthriver.com

Authenticity Captured!

**YOUR
VOICE
MATTERS!**

This month, we asked
what you love about
yourself . . .



**I love that I am
sensitive to others'
emotions, and I love
that I'm good at
math:)**

Phoebe Taylor

**I love that I am
young at heart and
able to laugh
through good times
and hard times.**

Maddy Bruner

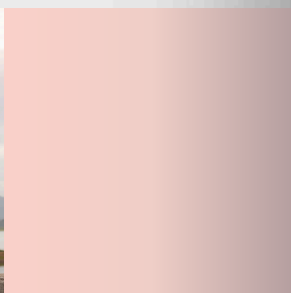


Be the Insider

**YOUR
VOICE
MATTERS!**

We want to hear from YOU!

Share your photos, stories,
memories or ideas for what you
appreciate about yourself. What do
you love about you??



March

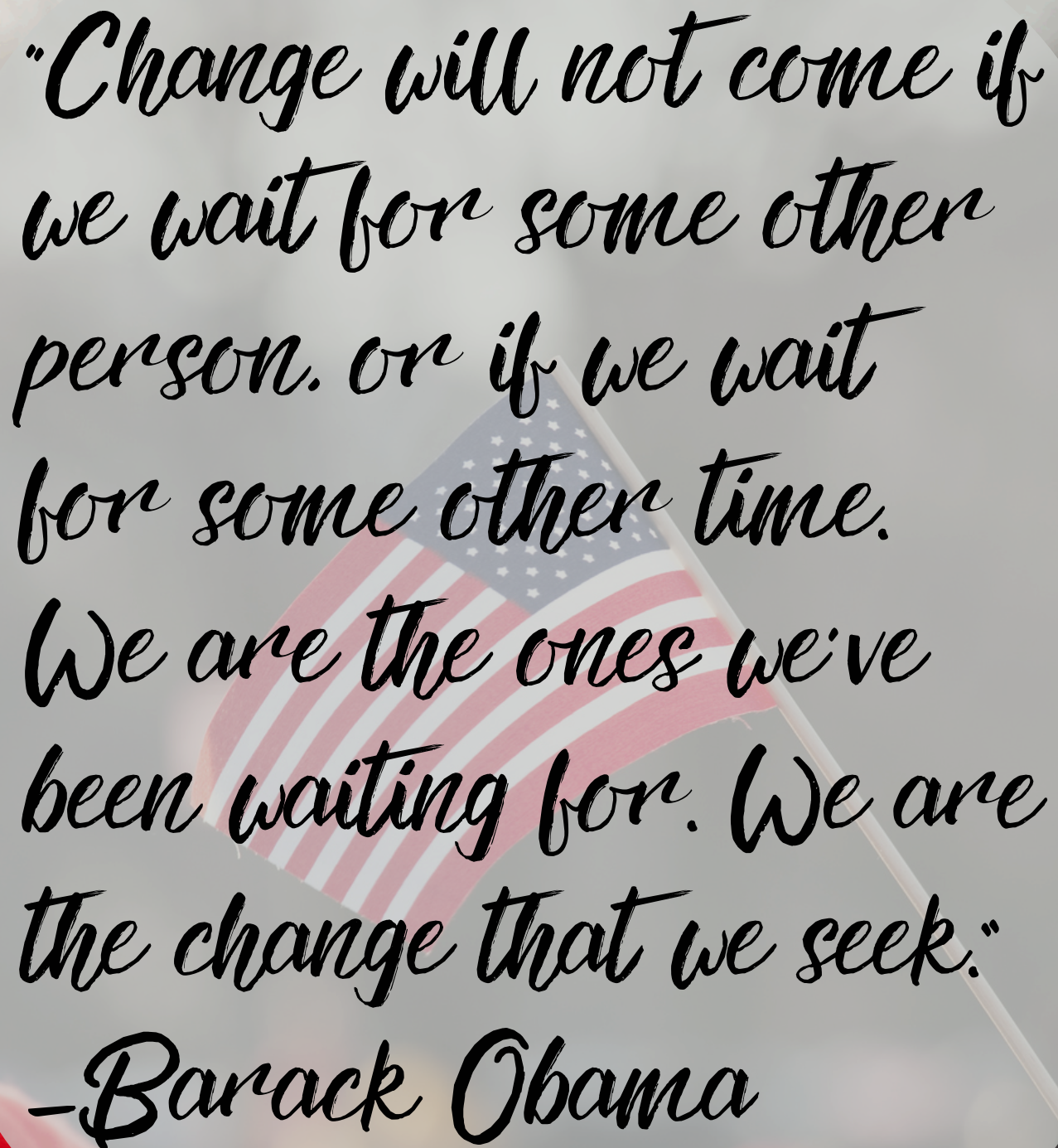
**HOW DO YOU
RELIEVE STRESS?**

**SEE YOURSELF
IN NEXT
MONTH'S
ISSUE!**



Cali Binstock

**Art by our own Cali Binstock
as a reminder to give your
beautiful self some love!**

The background of the image shows a crowd of people at what appears to be a political rally or protest. An American flag is visible on a tall pole, partially obscured by the text overlay. The scene is slightly out of focus, emphasizing the text in the foreground.

*"Change will not come if we wait for some other person. or if we wait for some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek."
-Barack Obama*



5MEO
DMT

and Radical Self Love

By Lorilee Binstock

HEALING GENERATIONS

My Journey With 5MeO-DMT and Radical self-Love



Trauma leaves a lasting impact. For years, I carried the weight of complex post-traumatic stress disorder (CPTSD), feeling unworthy of love, joy, or healing. Trauma has a way of making you question your value and disconnecting you from your inner goodness. That's how I felt for most of my life. But everything changed once I started working with psychedelics. Each time I worked with these medicines, I felt more grounded and worthy, however, old stories would creep back in. But recently, I experienced 5-MeO-DMT—a powerful psychedelic that didn't just open my mind but helped me reclaim my sense of self.

What is 5-MeO-DMT?

You might have heard of 5-MeO-DMT, sometimes called “The God Molecule.” It's a naturally occurring psychedelic compound found in the venom of the Bufo Alvarius toad, though it can also be synthesized in labs for therapeutic purposes. Unlike other psychedelics, 5-MeO-DMT is known for its intense, ego-dissolving effects and its ability to make you feel profoundly connected to the universe. The experience is often described as a total mental and emotional reset. For trauma survivors like me, it offers a chance to confront and release pain while discovering a sense of wholeness.

How 5-MeO-DMT Helps People Heal

Trauma creates a divide between the mind and body, trapping us in cycles of fear and self-doubt. What 5-MeO-DMT does is dissolve the ego—the part of us that clings to trauma—and opens up a state of pure awareness. In this space, many people experience deep emotional release and moments of self-compassion. For me, it wasn't just about letting go of the past but realizing that I'm so much more than the stories of unworthiness that would wash over me when I experienced life's challenges.

My Journey: From Pain to Generational Healing

When I decided to try 5-MeO-DMT, I had one goal in mind: to find radical self-love. After years of feeling unworthy, I was ready to reconnect with myself. The experience was unlike anything I'd imagined. I was confronted with the depth of my pain but also the incredible resilience that had carried me through it. It was as if I was seeing my life in its entirety—not just the struggles but the strength and beauty woven through it all.

In that moment, I realized my healing wasn't just for me. It was for my family, for the generations before me who couldn't heal, and for those who come after me. I left that session with a profound sense of purpose and a commitment to love myself fully.

“It was as if I was seeing my life in its entirety—not just the struggles but the strength and beauty woven through it all.”

Why Radical Self-Love Matters for Trauma Survivors

Radical self-love isn't just a buzzword—it's essential for anyone healing from trauma. Trauma tells us we're broken or unworthy, but self-love pushes back against that narrative. It invites us to honor our scars as symbols of survival and to nurture the parts of ourselves we've ignored for too long.

For me, self-love is more than affirmations or self-care routines. It's a deep acknowledgment of my value, despite everything I've been through. 5-MeO-DMT helped me see that. It gave me the clarity to embrace my flaws, my strengths, and the beauty of simply being me.



A Call to Love: It Starts from Within

February is often seen as the month of love, but real love—the kind that's authentic and transformative—has to start within. Almost everyone has experienced some form of trauma, and without self-love, it's hard to create meaningful connections with others. By turning inward and cultivating love for ourselves, we lay the foundation for deeper, more fulfilling relationships.

5-MeO-DMT taught me that healing and love go hand in hand. The love I sought from others had to begin with me. Through self-love, I've not only healed myself but also transformed how I show up for the people around me. Love truly is the most powerful force we have—one that can heal individuals and entire generations.

So, if you're on your own healing journey, I encourage you to take that first step toward radical self-love. Whether it's through breathwork, therapy, meditation, or exploring psychedelics like 5-MeO-DMT, know that the path to self-love is also the path to freedom. And always remember: You are worthy of love, just as you are.



"HE WHO IS NOT
COURAGEOUS ENOUGH
TO TAKE RISKS WILL
ACCOMPLISH NOTHING IN
LIFE." -MUHAMMAD ALI



How to Love a Battered Woman

Written by Nia Renee, Coach & Founder of How to Love a Battered Woman LLC



Loving a battered woman is a deeply compassionate and transformative act. It requires patience, understanding, and above all, respect for her journey. But true love for her starts with a foundation that can only be built within: self-love. Often, this connection is overlooked in conversations about healing and relationships, yet it is the most crucial step toward a fulfilled and empowered life.

A battered woman carries more than physical scars; she carries the weight of emotional and psychological wounds that may make her question her worth, her decisions, and her ability to love and be loved. To love her is to hold space for these wounds, allowing her to heal in her own time and way. But for her to truly embrace love from others, she must first begin to rebuild the relationship with herself.

The Foundation of Self-Love

Self-love is not simply about affirmations or indulgence—it is about creating a life where she feels safe, valued, and free to express her authentic self. For a battered woman, this means redefining her sense of identity beyond the pain of her past. Abuse often strips away a person's autonomy and confidence, leaving a fragile sense of self in its wake.

To reclaim self-love, she must first acknowledge the pain and the circumstances that led her there. This is not about blaming herself but about understanding the patterns and beliefs that might have kept her in unhealthy spaces. It takes courage to face these truths, but in doing so, she begins to recognize her resilience and strength.



Steps Toward Self-Love

1. **Forgiving Herself:** Many battered women carry guilt or shame, wondering if they somehow caused or deserved the abuse. The first step toward self-love is releasing these thoughts and forgiving herself for the choices she made while trying to survive.

2. **Setting Boundaries:** Rebuilding self-love means learning to say no and recognizing that her worth does not depend on pleasing others. Healthy boundaries protect her peace and ensure she does not repeat cycles of harm.

3. **Celebrating Small Wins:** Every step toward healing is an achievement. From seeking therapy to journaling or simply getting through a tough day, celebrating progress reminds her of her strength.

4. **Embracing a Support System:** Self-love does not mean isolating herself; it means surrounding herself with people who uplift, support, and respect her. These relationships can mirror the love she is cultivating within.

*“Self-Love
is not simply about
affirmations or
indulgence—it is about
creating a life where
she feels safe, valued,
and free to express
her authentic self.”*



“Loving a battered woman means recognizing her autonomy and letting her lead the pace of her healing”.

How Others Can Love a Battered Woman


Loving a battered woman means recognizing her autonomy and letting her lead the pace of her healing. It means not attempting to “fix” her but walking alongside her as she rebuilds her life. Patience is key, as trust may take time to develop, especially after experiencing manipulation or betrayal.

Empathy is another essential component. Listen to her without judgment, validate her experiences, and affirm her worth. Avoid phrases like, “Why didn’t you leave sooner?” or “You’re so strong for staying.” Instead, focus on empowering her to see her potential and the future she can create.

The Interconnection of Love and Self-Love

When a battered woman begins to love herself, she creates a solid foundation for receiving and giving love. She becomes less likely to tolerate relationships that diminish her, instead seeking connections that affirm her value. Self-love allows her to set the standard for how she deserves to be treated and ensures that her relationships enhance her life rather than take from it.

To love a battered woman is to honor her journey, celebrate her progress, and support her in rediscovering herself. But above all, it is to remind her that the most important love story she will ever have is the one she writes with herself.



“What’s the world for if
you can’t make it up the
way you want it?”

—Toni Morrison



Breakups hurt, but losing someone who doesn't respect and appreciate you is actually a gain, not a loss." – Anonymous

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month, a time to shine a light on an issue that often hides in the shadows. It may seem shocking that we need a national awareness month to address teen dating violence, but the statistics are sobering. One in three teens in the United States will experience physical, emotional, or sexual abuse from a dating partner before they turn 18. These numbers highlight the urgency of creating awareness and providing support for young people navigating relationships.

Nostalgia often paints teenage romances as innocent and fleeting—a mix of sweet memories, fleeting heartbreaks, and a few angst-filled moments that serve as a rite of passage into adulthood. However, the reality for many teenagers is far more complex. Unhealthy relationships can develop in any context, and teens are especially vulnerable due to their inexperience, emotional development, and peer pressure.

The Reality of Teen Dating Violence

Teen dating violence doesn't always look the way people might imagine. It can manifest in various forms, including physical abuse, emotional manipulation, verbal threats, or even digital harassment. A partner might use social media to monitor or control their significant other, demand passwords, or send constant messages to track their whereabouts. Emotional abuse, such as belittling or isolating someone from their friends and family, is equally harmful and often harder to recognize.

For victims, the effects of such relationships can be long-lasting. They may experience anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem. In some cases, these experiences can shape how they approach future relationships, making it harder to build healthy connections.

Why Awareness Matters

Addressing teen dating violence requires more than just identifying the problem. It starts with fostering open and honest conversations about what healthy relationships look like. Young people need to understand the importance of respect, trust, and communication as the foundation for any partnership. They also need tools to recognize the warning signs of abuse, such as excessive jealousy, controlling behaviors, or verbal put-downs.



Parents, educators, and community leaders play a crucial role in these discussions. By modeling healthy relationships and creating safe spaces for dialogue, adults can empower teens to advocate for themselves and seek help when needed.

Schools can also integrate lessons on consent, boundaries, and communication into their curricula to provide teens with the knowledge they need to navigate relationships safely.

A Message to Teens

If you're a teenager reading this, know that you deserve to be in a relationship built on mutual respect and trust. Love should never hurt, make you feel small, or take away your sense of independence. If you're unsure about the health of your relationship or you're experiencing abuse, don't hesitate to reach out for help. Talk to a trusted adult, counselor, or friend. Resources like loveisrespect.org can provide guidance and support.

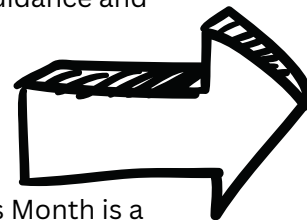
Moving Forward

Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month is a reminder that while breakups and heartbreaks are a natural part of growing up, enduring abuse should never be. By fostering awareness, encouraging open conversations, and equipping teens with the tools to build healthy relationships, we can create a future where no young person has to suffer in silence. Remember, walking away from someone who doesn't respect and appreciate you isn't a loss; it's a step toward reclaiming your worth and finding the love you deserve.

Breaking the Cycle

Breaking the cycle of teen dating violence involves both prevention and intervention. Organizations across the country are working tirelessly to provide resources for teens and their families. Hotlines, counseling services, and educational programs are all critical components of these efforts. For example, the National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline (loveisrespect.org) offers 24/7 support via phone, text, or chat, ensuring that teens have someone to turn to at any time.

It's also essential to address the cultural factors that perpetuate unhealthy relationships. Media, for instance, often glamorizes toxic behaviors, such as possessiveness or control, framing them as signs of love. Challenging these narratives and promoting positive representations of love and partnership can help shift societal norms.



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gestures
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you allow
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"EVEN THE DARKEST
NIGHT WILL END AND
THE SUN WILL RISE
AGAIN."
— VICTOR HUGO



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Psychedelic Access Fund

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WHO WE ARE

The Psychedelic Access Fund (PAF) is a 501c3 nonprofit that
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A close-up, profile shot of a woman with dark skin, smiling and looking towards a vintage-style microphone. She is wearing a patterned headwrap and a beaded necklace. The background is dark and out of focus, suggesting a recording studio environment.

**“Just don’t
give up what
you’re
trying to do.
Where there
is love and
inspiration,
I don’t think
you can go
wrong.”**

**-Ella
Fitzgerald**



Authentic Parenting

Written by Dr. Jamie Huysman & Mila Stankovic,
Co-Founders of STAR Network

Parenting is one of life's most profound responsibilities. While many parents strive to do their best, certain harmful behaviors – whether learned, inherited, or unintended – can cause emotional and psychological damage to their children.

Toxic parenting, characterized by actions such as manipulation, neglect, or over-control, can leave long-lasting effects that ripple through generations.

This article explores how parents can recognize and overcome toxic patterns, create a nurturing environment, and foster genuine connections that promote emotional security and personal growth in their children.



Understanding Toxic Parenting

Toxic parenting goes beyond occasional mistakes or bad days. It reflects a consistent pattern of behaviors that undermine a child's sense of self-worth, safety, or individuality.

While some toxic behaviors may stem from parents' own unresolved trauma, others might result from societal conditioning or cultural expectations.

Children raised in such environments may struggle with mental health issues, emotional regulation, and the ability to form healthy relationships.

The impact of these behaviors can persist well into adulthood, often shaping how children eventually parent their own families.

Dr. Jamie Huysman (STAR Network founder) likes to say: "Parents shape the future, not expectations."

"Parents shape the future, not expectations."

The Emotional Landscape of Toxic Parenting

At its core, toxic parenting disrupts the emotional bond between parent and child. Overprotectiveness, for example, can smother a child's ability to develop independence.

Children raised in overly controlled environments often find it difficult to make decisions or trust their own instincts, leaving them vulnerable to self-doubt.

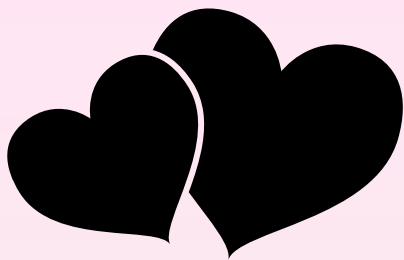
On the other hand, constant criticism chips away at a child's self-esteem. Words meant as discipline or "tough love" can create a lasting inner dialogue of inadequacy and fear of failure.

This emotional weight can follow children into adulthood, affecting their relationships, careers, and sense of self-worth.

Gaslighting and manipulation are perhaps the most insidious forms of toxic parenting. By distorting a child's reality or undermining their perceptions, parents create a state of confusion and emotional dependency.

Over time, these children may struggle to trust their own feelings, perpetuating cycles of anxiety and insecurity.

Even neglect, whether emotional or physical, leaves its mark. Children who feel unseen or unsupported often grow up with a deep sense of inadequacy, believing they are unworthy of love or attention.



Breaking the cycle

The journey to healthier parenting begins with self-awareness. Recognizing toxic patterns, whether inherited or unintentional, is the first step.

Many parents repeat behaviors they experienced in their own upbringing, believing they are “normal.” However, acknowledging these behaviors as harmful is crucial to initiating change.

Authentic parenting prioritizes respect, emotional safety, and mutual understanding. It’s not about perfection but about creating a space where children feel valued, heard, and supported.

1. Embrace Self-Reflection

Take time to evaluate your actions and their impact on your child. This process can be uncomfortable, as it often requires confronting your own emotional wounds and triggers.

Journaling, mindfulness, or speaking with a trusted therapist can provide clarity and insight.

2. Foster Open Communication

Children thrive in environments where their voices are heard. Active listening—without judgment or immediate solutions – allows them to feel understood.

Share your own thoughts and feelings honestly, modeling healthy communication and emotional transparency.

3. Respect Boundaries and Autonomy

Acknowledge that your child is an individual with their own identity. Allow them the freedom to make age-appropriate decisions and learn from their experiences.

4. Heal Your Own Wounds

Breaking the cycle of toxic parenting often involves healing your past. Unresolved trauma, anxiety, or emotional struggles can unconsciously shape your interactions with your child. Therapy, support groups, or personal development practices can be transformative in addressing these challenges.

5. Seek Support When Needed

Parenting can be overwhelming, and there’s no shame in seeking help. Mental health professionals, parenting workshops, and community support groups can provide guidance and strategies to navigate difficult situations and create a healthier home environment.

“Authentic parenting prioritizes respect, emotional safety, and mutual understanding. It’s not about perfection but about creating a space where children feel valued, heard, and supported.”

Moving Toward Authentic Parenting and Finding Support

Authentic parenting is about nurturing a relationship rooted in love, trust, and understanding. It’s about recognizing that children are not extensions of their parents but unique individuals with their own dreams, feelings, and perspectives.

Breaking toxic patterns requires patience and commitment. Mistakes will happen – it’s part of the process.

The key is to acknowledge them, take accountability, and strive to do better. Over time, these small, consistent efforts create a ripple effect, fostering a healthier and happier dynamic for generations to come.

Breaking the cycle of toxic parenting and healing from its effects is not a journey you have to face by yourself.

While self-reflection and intentional change are powerful steps, external support can provide the guidance and encouragement needed to move forward.

The TAR Anon Support Group is a digital peer-to-peer community designed for individuals dealing with or recovering from the effects of toxic family relationships.

Whether you’ve experienced the challenges of toxic parenting, unhealthy sibling dynamics, or a strained marriage, this group offers a safe and judgment-free space to share your experiences and find support.

Healing from the wounds inflicted by toxic parenting takes time, patience, and strength.

Connecting with others who understand your journey can help you rebuild your confidence, create healthier relationships, and learn tools to ensure you don’t repeat these cycles in your own family.

By joining a support group like this, you can find encouragement and resources to not only recover but also thrive as you work toward a healthier and more authentic future – for yourself and your children.

For more information, or to join the TAR Anon Support Group for toxic families, consider exploring this resource as part of your journey toward healing. Together, we can break the cycle and create a legacy of love and emotional security.





About STAR Network

Transforming Trauma, Inspiring Resilience

STAR Network is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to alleviating the pain and suffering caused by trauma. As the world's preeminent trauma support network, we empower individuals and families through awareness, transformation, and self-love, providing trusted resources for all things trauma-related.

We are a revolutionary platform offering free, accessible, and scalable support for those impacted by trauma. Rooted in a community-driven approach, we foster resilience development, authenticity, and healing through awareness and expert guidance. The STAR symbolizes the broken heart caused by Toxic Abusive Relationships (TAR) and the commencement of healing from PTSD & CPTSD, enabling individuals to transition from victim to STAR.

What We Do?

We connect people to a global, inclusive STAR Family dedicated to:

- Transforming lives through trauma recovery.
- Accelerating resilience in the face of adversity.
- Making healing accessible to all, without barriers

Our programs provide a safe, neuroregulated space for individuals to reconnect with themselves and the world around them, tackling real and perceived barriers to healing.

Our Mission

We are dedicated to preventing, supporting, and treating the effects of Toxic Abusive Relationships (TAR), PTSD and Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (CPTSD). Through global awareness and free support resources, we empower individuals, families, and communities to heal and thrive. Our mission is to transform trauma into strength, fostering resilience and creating a brighter future for survivors worldwide.

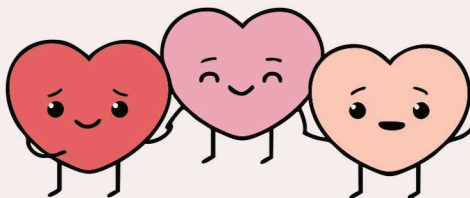
Testimonials from STAR Family

- "STAR Network gave me the tools to reconnect with my authentic self. I'm thriving again."
- "Being part of the STAR Family changed my life. I finally feel seen, heard, and supported."

We transform lives by creating a world where healing is accessible, resilience is celebrated, and trauma survivors shine as beacons of strength and authenticity. Together, we make an enduring impact—on ourselves, our communities, and the world.

Join the STAR Family today. Together, we heal and thrive.

Contact us at contact@starnetwork.org





About TAR Anon

First Virtual Peer To Peer Fellowship for Recovery and Resilience

TAR Anon, a program of STAR Network, a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to alleviating the pain and suffering caused by trauma. (Toxic Abusive Relationships Anonymous) is the first scalable "Family Systems" Recovery & Resiliency Peer-to-Peer Fellowship for PTSD and CPTSD. Designed to address the unique challenges of toxic abusive relationships, TAR Anon empowers individuals to transition from victim to STAR through community, awareness, and self-healing.

What We Do TAR Anon provides:

- **Free Weekly Support Groups:** Safe, neuroregulated spaces for trauma survivors to share and heal.
- **Peer-to-Peer Support:** A fellowship rooted in shared experiences and mutual growth.
- **12-Step Fellowship for Trauma:** A simple, plug-and-play program to foster resilience and recovery.

Our Impact

- Transforming trauma into resilience and strength.
- Creating a world where no one faces trauma alone.
- Bridging the gap between pain and healing through accessible and inclusive support.

Why TAR Anon Matters Trauma touches everyone, but real and perceived barriers often prevent individuals from seeking help. TAR Anon breaks these barriers, offering an inclusive and sustainable solution for those impacted by Toxic Abusive Relationships (TAR), PTSD and Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (CPTSD).

Key Takeaways

- **Accessibility:** Always free and available to anyone in need
- **Scalability:** Designed to grow and adapt to support individuals worldwide.
- **Simplicity in Healing:** A clear path to recovery and transformation.

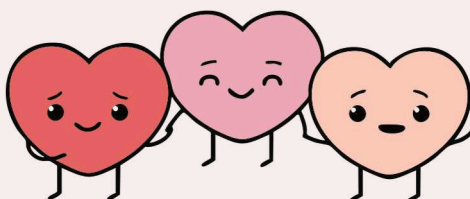
Testimonials from TAR Anon Members

- "TAR Anon changed my life. I finally feel seen, heard, and supported."
- "The fellowship gave me the tools to rebuild my life after trauma. I'm stronger than ever."

Imagine a world where survivors of toxic abusive relationships find community, resilience, and hope. TAR Anon fosters a future where trauma recovery is not just possible, but empowering and life-changing.

Join STAR Network's TAR Anon and begin your journey to resilience today.

Contact us at contact@starnetwork.org



Why Is TAR Anon™ for you?

Our **STAR LIGHTS** Will Tell You Why

ITAI S.

“

Through TAR Anon, I gained valuable insights into my alcohol addiction. Thank you so much for offering these amazing meetings!

”

ANNA L.

“

TAR Anon provided a safe and anonymous space that was essential in my recovery. It helped me realize my addiction issues stemmed from childhood.

”

ROB W.

“

Through TAR Anon, I was able to dig deep into my untreated CPTSD and understand more about my addictions to opioids and other drugs.

”

GABRIELE Y.

“

TAR Anon was key in freeing me from narcissistic abuse. Toxic Abusive Relationships can destroy you! But TAR Anon helped me break free!

”

Free TAR Anon Meetings

Relationships

Toxic Families

Parental Alienation

Toxic Worksites



*"No matter how
hard the past,
you can always
begin again"*
—Buddha





Meaningful Friendships

Written by Dr. Kimberly Horn,
Author of Friends Matter, for Life

In a world where the pace of life often feels relentless, and genuine connections seem harder to come by, I felt compelled to offer a guiding light. *Friends Matter, for Life: Harnessing the 8 Tenets of Dynamic Friendship* was born out of both professional research and personal experience, a heartfelt exploration of what it truly means to connect with others in today's complex social landscape.

Friendship has always fascinated me—not just as a psychologist studying human behavior but as someone who has navigated the joys and challenges of maintaining meaningful relationships. I've seen firsthand how transformative true friendships can be, how they uplift us during our darkest moments and enrich our lives with joy, purpose, and meaning. Yet, I've also seen how elusive and fragile they can feel amidst the demands of careers, family, and the ever-present distractions of the digital age.

The idea for this book began with a simple observation: despite the universal need for connection, many of us struggle to cultivate and sustain friendships as adults. I wanted to address this gap by providing a framework that anyone could use—whether to rekindle old friendships, nurture existing ones, or build new ones from the ground up.

The *Framework of Dynamic Friendship* came to life through years of research, conversations, and introspection. It focuses on eight essential tenets, including vulnerability, communication, and reciprocity. Each tenet represents a crucial aspect of friendship, supported by practical exercises designed to help readers take actionable steps.

One of the most powerful lessons I've learned is the importance of vulnerability. Authentic connections often start with the courage to be open—about our struggles, our aspirations, and our imperfections. This openness builds the foundation for trust, something I delve deeply into in the book. Similarly, effective communication is key to fostering understanding, while conflict resolution can turn challenges into opportunities for growth.

Throughout the writing process, I reflected on my own friendships and the lessons they've taught me. I've celebrated bonds that have stood the test of time and mourned the loss of relationships that were once central to my life. These experiences reinforced the idea that friendship is both a gift and a responsibility—one that requires effort, empathy, and intention.

Friends Matter, for Life is not just a guide; it's an invitation to embark on a journey of self-discovery and connection. I've woven personal anecdotes and real-world examples into the framework to make it relatable and actionable. My hope is that readers will see themselves in these stories and feel inspired to take steps toward more fulfilling relationships.

The world is facing an epidemic of loneliness and isolation, and I believe that fostering meaningful friendships is part of the solution. Whether it's learning to set healthy boundaries, appreciating the diverse roles that different friendships play, or finding the courage to walk away from toxic relationships, this book is a roadmap to a more connected life.

As a psychologist, author, and lifelong learner, my mission is to empower people to navigate their social terrain with confidence and intention. And as someone who has witnessed the power of friendship in my own life, I'm honored to share this work with you.

I invite you to reflect on your own friendships, to consider the ways they shape your happiness and well-being, and to take the steps needed to nurture them. Together, we can rediscover the joy and fulfillment that comes from meaningful connections—because friendships truly matter, for life.

"One of the most powerful lessons I've learned is the importance of vulnerability."

Authentic connections often start with the courage to be open—about our struggles, our aspirations, and our imperfections."



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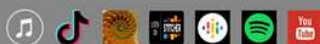
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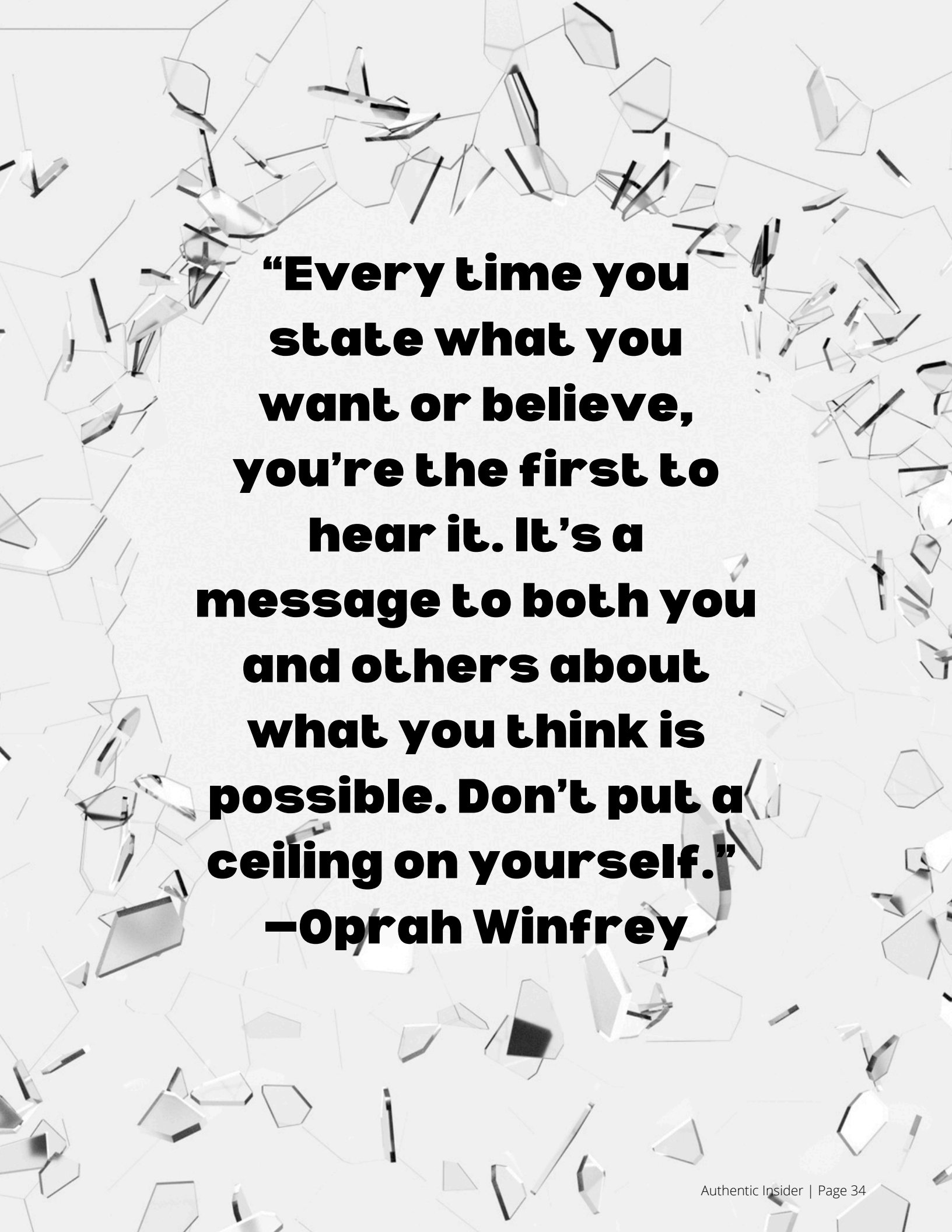
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**“Every time you
state what you
want or believe,
you’re the first to
hear it. It’s a
message to both you
and others about
what you think is
possible. Don’t put a
ceiling on yourself.”
—Oprah Winfrey**

EXPLAIN VIOLENCE IN THE US: THE CONSEQUENCES ARE GRAVE

Written by Karen Gross, Trauma Educator

What a violent way to start the New Year in the US. True, nations across the globe live with daily violence. Seems we do as well in America, although we are fighting a different kind of war. Actually, we are fighting many wars within the US.

Consider the incidents within the last 36 hours in New Orleans, Las Vegas and New York. Shootings as well as cars used as weapons. Home made explosives abound. Innocent people are shot and injured and killed. The consequences were not accidental; these were/are intentional acts by all media accounts.

Anger

I get that folks are angry. Think January 6th. I get that angry folks seek to make their voices heard. Ponder the killing of the United Healthcare CEO in plain view.

Here are my questions. Why is violence seen as the only or optimal or available way to be seen and heard when one is angry? Is it strategically and morally how best we voice our deepest concerns and angry feelings/thoughts? Ponder school shootings. Ponder other acts of violence like in Lewiston, Maine. And that's a recent starter list.

Seems to me that violence rarely makes a lasting point with respect to resolving the underling issues that precipitated the horrors. Think Boston Marathon. We know this: Violence hasn't curbed further violence. It hasn't changed views, say denying weapon access. Violence makes its points in red (damaging individuals and families and communities forever) but once the blood is cleared and cleaned, what have we learned that sticks?

In sum: Violence doesn't seem to curb the anger that generated it.



Consequences and Solutions

Those injured from violent attacks suffer. Families of those killed and injured (some with lasting medical consequences) struggle mightily. There is a ripple effect on past survivors, a rekindling of earlier trauma. There are others who treat survivors: medical staff, first responders, counselors, social workers; they all struggle; they feel hurt too. Add in that parents and caregivers and teachers who try to explain violence to young people. That's just a short list of the harms suffered.

Explain to me please what can be done (if anything) to curb violence. What solutions exist?

As we enter 2025, our world seems unsafe. Not "seems;" it is unsafe in many ways, of which violence is but one.

We are unsafe in many ways in our culture. Yes. In addition to grotesque violence as described and shared above, we are exposed to non-violent assaults repeatedly by mean, nasty, envious, troubled, narcissistic prejudiced and/or angry people who chip away at our individual and collective wellness. Yup. Meanness abounds (and yes, to be sure, there is kindness too). Think about travel incidents. Think about community incidents including meetings that devolve into shouting matches. I am sure readers have their own internal lists.

Resolutions

I have looked at many New Year's resolutions (mine included) about folks affirmatively taking steps in 2025 to avoid "bad" people. A shocking number of folks are taking steps to surround themselves with good people as an affirmative step! That's because we are choosing something to better good in our lives.

Yes, we can and should create boundaries to keep out "bad" people, many of whom have behaviors or characters traits that cannot change. OK. I get that. Self protect. I'm trying that in my own life: bad actors in our private lives are out.

Make our small world better as we try to improve the larger world.

But that boundary creating approach doesn't answer the larger question about high levels of violence that are outside our control, violence that targets innocent people to make a point (at least it appears in most cases that there is some point being made through these destructive acts).

We can block bad folks on social media. We can avoid bad people in our personal lives for the most part. We can improve workplaces. We can elect officials who display grace and equanimity (think Carter). We can reward those who regularly give back to others by volunteering in many needed contexts. We can use legal remedies if needed.

But, what resolutions will address the large scale increasingly omnipresent violence damaging individuals, communities and our nation?

Wishing violence away isn't enough. Laws aren't enough. Physical boundaries are not working well enough. Intelligence efforts by authorities to stop attacks aren't working well enough.

But enough is enough.



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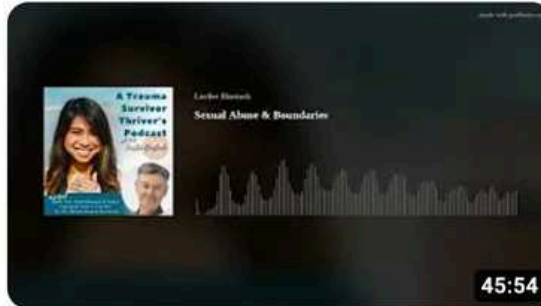
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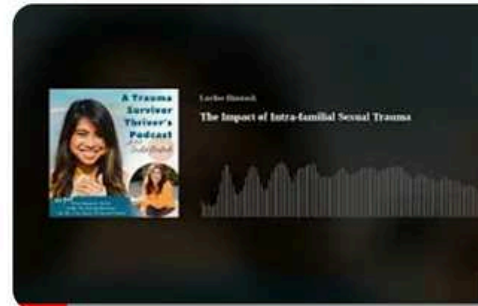
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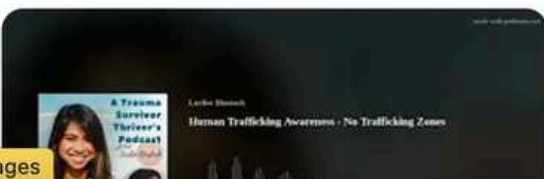
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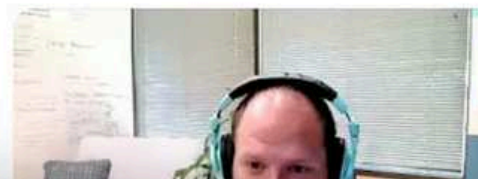
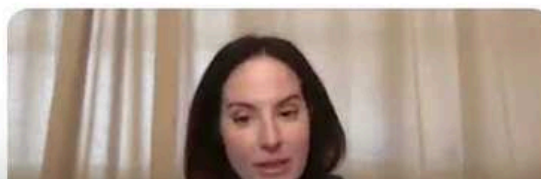
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The Impact of Intra-familial Sexual Trauma

3 views · 3 weeks ago



Images



**"It was when
I realized I needed to
stop trying to be
somebody else and be
myself, I actually
started to own, accept,
and love what I had."**

—Tracee Ellis Ross



National CHECK-IN Month

By Paul Bcskind, Author of *The Blind Man Game*

Philadelphia, Summer 2016 - The Blind Boy Cane

Leaving the air-conditioned, orchid-scented lobby, I am thrust into a cacophony of honking cars and zigzagging pedestrians. The awning of the Philadelphia Ritz Carlton, like a thick canopy, casts a sheltering shadow over the sidewalk. Sunlight bounces off the car bumpers thronging the street. Traffic fumes taint the air. I can make out the contours of the banners suspended between skyscrapers, advertising tomorrow's Democratic National Convention.

Like a mantra, I repeat, under my breath, the hotel receptionist's directions from moments ago: 'Macy's is just half a block right of the hotel. They'll definitely have plenty of neckties for you.'

I pace myself, counting my steps as I angle the cane in front of me. My slow and deliberate movements contrast starkly with the scurrying dress shoes and pointed elbows rushing past.

Macy's is exactly where the receptionist said it would be. I pause in the lobby, deliberating my next move. The familiar game of throwing darts in the dark is about to begin. I experience a sudden flicker of irritation: How could I have forgotten to bring a tie to the DNC?

I spot what I think is a counter, with a woman standing behind it. I approach carefully.

'Ma'am. Would you point me to the men's neckties, please?'

It's the wrong question of course. What good is pointing to me?

'Sure, over there,' she replies. 'Just up the escalators and immediately on your left.' I try to be subtle about raising the cane just high enough for her to see. '...Sorry, ma'am. Could I bother you to walk me there?' 'Absolutely!' I sense the surprise in her voice, quickly covered by a forced politeness. 'Please follow me,' I pick a tie quickly, pay for it and leave.

Outside, the pavements continue to bustle with pedestrians. I bring up my memory of the walk from the hotel and recall the step count. There's a layer of sweat between my palm and the cool aluminum of my cane. It's the same way back, I tell myself, only half a block. But the swarm of pedestrians disorients me. Screeching car horns drive all other sounds from my mind.

I set off, with the cane at its usual angle, counting the steps, marking my progress against the buildings I passed on the way here. At the corner of the sidewalk, a little girl sings out, 'Mommy, look! That man has a big stick!'

'Hush, Sweetie,' her mother says, 'he's blind.'

My chest begins to burn. I don't move, but I can feel something inside me coiling up. My surroundings turn foggy. The woman and her daughter pivot and are gone, but it's as if the mother's words have woven a web around me and I can't move.

He's blind.

Here's another of those moments when I have to turn and face what's happened to me. When working through trauma, it is essential to face it head on rather than to try to avoid the emotional pain.

I had been trying to conceal my disability for years, but hadn't quite realized how futile that concealment had become. Despite the ache ballooning inside me, I place one foot in front of the other and make it back to the hotel.

I had been confronted with the truth of my deteriorating vision in the past, but in Philadelphia, I was outed. Hearing a stranger casually declare that I was blind was like being strip searched. I felt naked beneath a glaring spotlight. I could no longer hide. Years of being a closeted gay man in Texas had accustomed me to the cruel ordeal of hiding, of faking every move. But I can no longer closet my vision loss. I'm outed again, this time as a blind man. My disability is a chess match rigged against me.

Accepting my fate feels impossible. Not accepting it seems futile. It is the unstoppable force meeting the immovable object. Something has to give.

'The big stick' that the little girl saw was, for a long time, inextricably linked with the despair of my accelerated vision loss. I signed up for training on how best to use it with the San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind. They called it 'orientation and mobility training', and it was meant to expand the scope of the cane, from merely identifying that I have a visual impairment to becoming a navigational tool. They taught me how to use it to sweep back-and-forth in order to figure out what was in my path.

It didn't really click with me, not at the beginning. I kept thinking, I can't do this! Why am I doing this? It is so freaking sad that I have to learn this new skill...

Afterwards, I kept the cane folded and hidden on the way in and out of my building, and likewise, I'd always make sure it was out of sight when I returned to the lobby. I didn't want the concierge to see me with it, I didn't want him to know that I had a disability. But one day I said, 'Oh, the heck with it!' I didn't fold it or try to hide it. I kept on going in through the doors and across the lobby. As well as the concierge, several of my neighbors were there too, but guess what?

Nobody remarked on it, nobody asked me anything about it. I just continued on to the elevator and up to my apartment. I thought at least that someone would say, 'Hey Paul, what's that? Why have you got a cane?' but there was nothing. Why? Were they trying to be polite?



It was a strange and unsettling experience.

A couple of weeks later, I was at a fundraiser in a New York City apartment.

Because I was unfamiliar with the layout of the place, I had my cane out. Next thing the elevator doors swept open and out stepped a friend I had not seen in a while.

‘Hi Paul!’ she said, then ‘wait a minute, what are you doing with that cane?’

‘Oh,’ I said, ‘I guess you’ve never seen me with this before.’ I explained that I’d only ever met her in my apartment, and because I knew the layout, I didn’t need the cane. ‘But now I need it all the time because my vision has declined so much.’

Her approach was exactly right of course. She didn’t pretend not to see it, she expressed surprise, we talked about it like normal human beings, then moved on to other things.

That’s the way it should be, right?

These days, I make full use of the cane, I’m no longer embarrassed by or inhibited about it. Every day, I fight the disability, and my cane is my guide. It connects me with the world around me, bringing me forward from powerlessness and isolation. It’s particularly useful in airports. If I ask someone where gate C 74 is, they don’t point absently. The sight of the cane makes everyone helpful and super courteous.

My relationship with the cane has shifted so fundamentally that when I was asked to give a keynote speech to the San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind, that’s what I talked about. It’s a mark of how far I’ve come that I was able to turn the experience at the crosswalk in Philadelphia into a joke. When I reported what the mother had said to her daughter: ‘Hush honey, he’s blind’, I didn’t talk about that sense of despair. Instead, I said that I’d thought, ‘Yeah, but he’s not hard of hearing.’

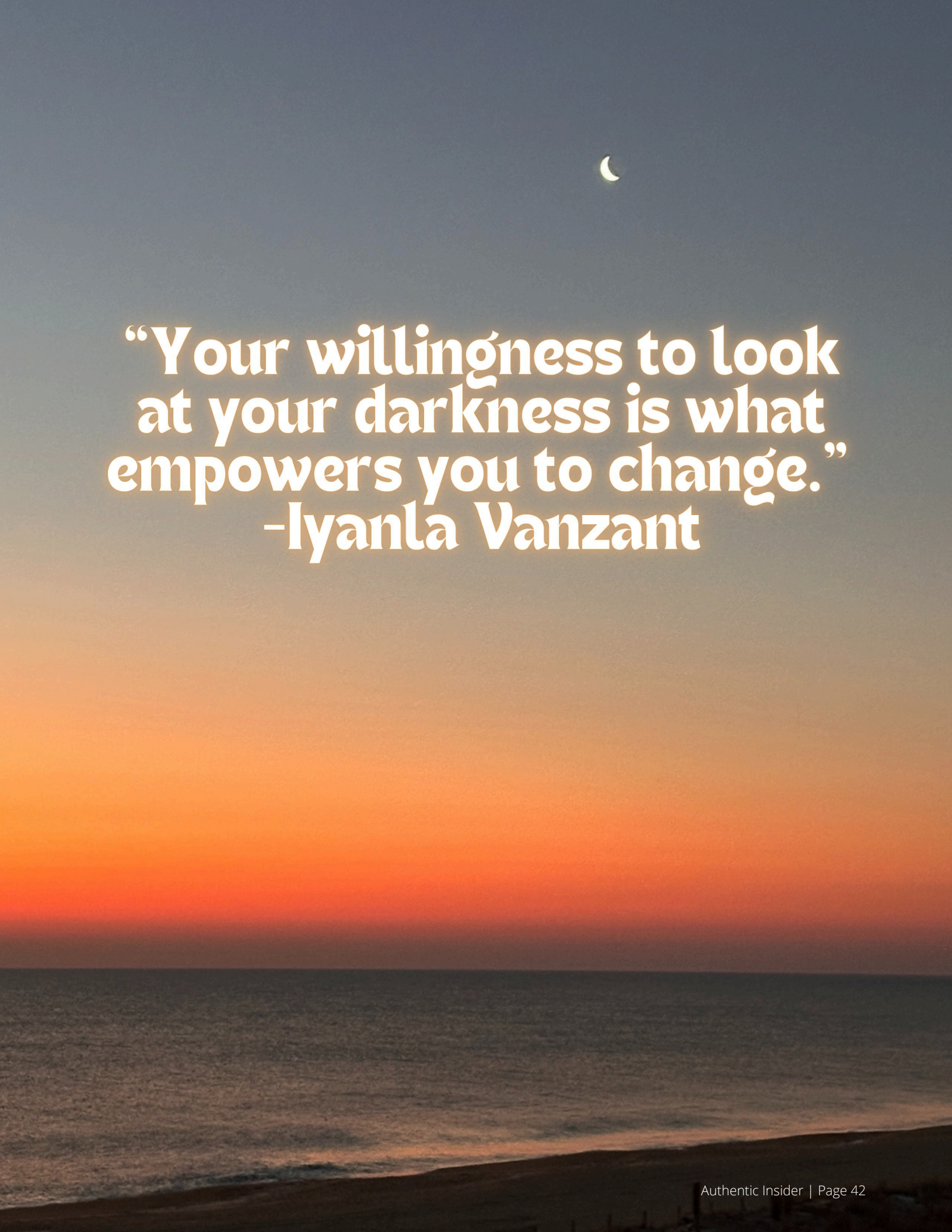
CHECK-IN

Check in with the people you care about. Don’t overlook what’s happening in their lives. Instead, offer support, be present, and share your genuine self with those you love.



PAUL BOSKIND

PHOTO CREDIT: [HTTPS://AMPLIFYPUBLISHINGGROUP.COM/AUTHOR/PAUL-BOSKIND-PHD/](https://amplifypublishinggroup.com/author/paul-boskind-phd/)

A serene landscape featuring a calm ocean under a vast sky. The sky transitions from a deep blue at the top to a vibrant orange and red near the horizon, indicating a sunset or sunrise. A thin, white crescent moon is visible in the upper portion of the sky. The ocean's surface is dark with subtle textures, and a dark, silhouetted shoreline is visible at the bottom.

**“Your willingness to look
at your darkness is what
empowers you to change.”
-Iyanla Vanzant**

OUR OWN PERSONAL REALITIES

An Upcoming Documentary about the Fight to Bring Psychedelic Healing Back into the Light

As the mental health crisis reaches devastating levels post pandemic, more and more people are looking for ways to manage their mental health.

How does a childhood sexual abuse survivor, a veteran struggling with PTSD and an athlete suffering from Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI), trauma, and addiction find effective healing and relief? Psychedelics.

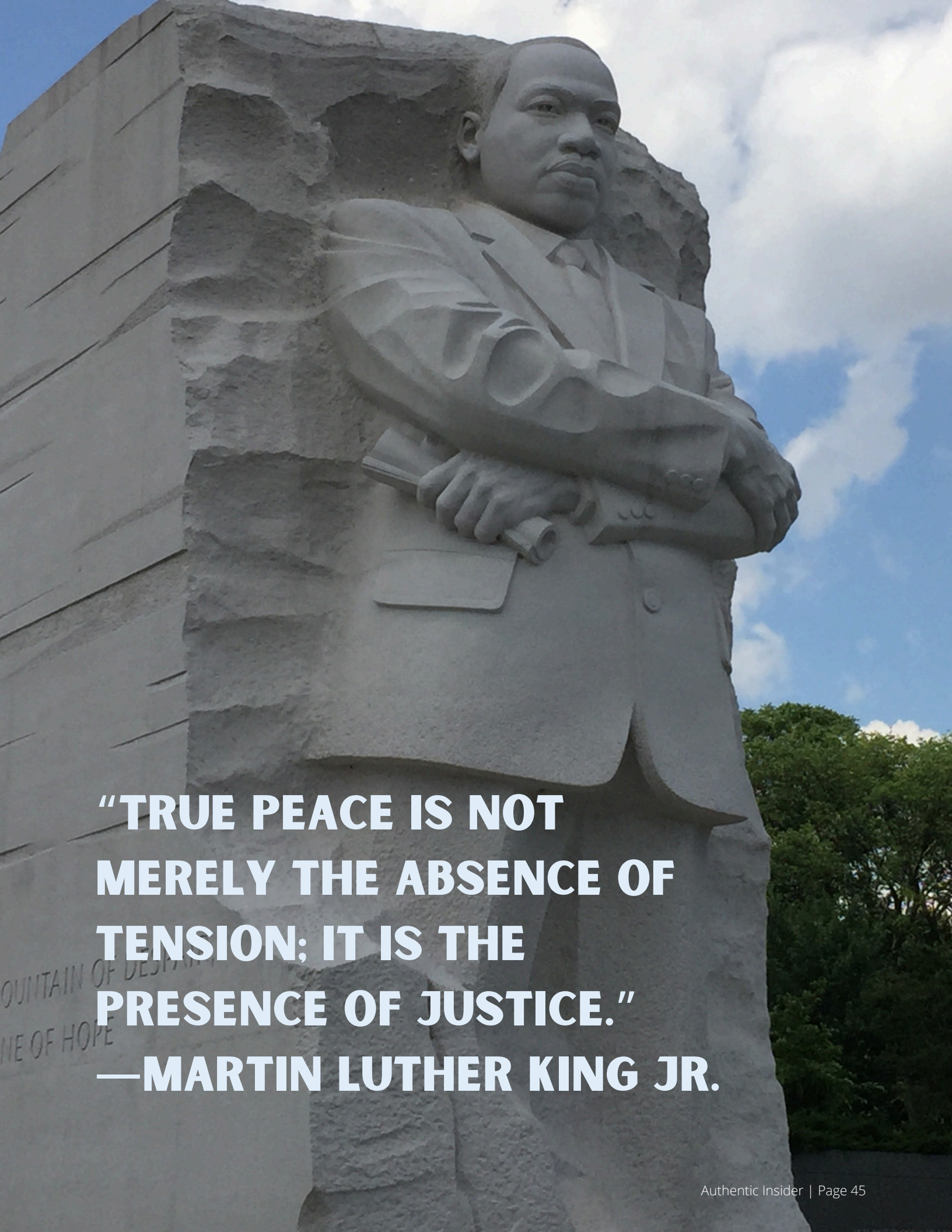
A treatment that was studied and used as effective treatment for mental health disorders until it was banned and categorized as a schedule I drug in the 1970s, psychedelics have provided much needed relief for thousands of people suffering from trauma and mental health issues.

Regardless of the laws banning these treatments, the people who understood the power of these medicines feel more empowered to find ways to help others find healing through them. On the following page click on the graphic to view the Proof of Concept for "Our Own Personal Realities."





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investing in this film, please email
lorilee@binstockmediagroup.com**



**"TRUE PEACE IS NOT
MERELY THE ABSENCE OF
TENSION; IT IS THE
PRESENCE OF JUSTICE."
—MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.**

Love Songs to Yourself

MUSIC

"GIRL ON FIRE" - ALICIA KEYS

"TRUTH HURTS" - LIZZO

"LOVE MYSELF" BY HAILEE STEINFELD

"BORN THIS WAY" - LADY GAGA

"CONFIDENT" - DEMI LOVATO

"SCARS TO YOUR BEAUTIFUL" - ALESSIA CARA

"I AM ENOUGH" - DAPHNE WILLIS

"ME, MYSELF AND I" - BEYONCÉ

"UNPRETTY" - TLC

"GOOD AS HELL" - LIZZO

"BEAUTIFUL" - CHRISTINA AGUILERA

"STRONGER (WHAT DOESN'T KILL YOU)" - KELLY CLARKSON

"GOLDEN" - JILL SCOTT

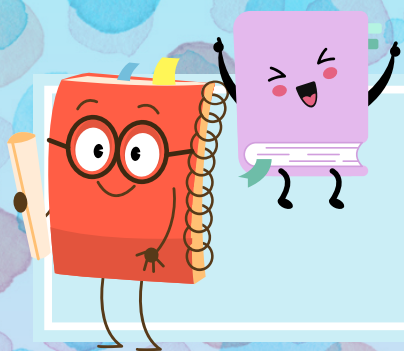
"JUST FINE" - MARY J. BLIGE

"WHO SAYS" - SELENA GOMEZ & THE SCENE

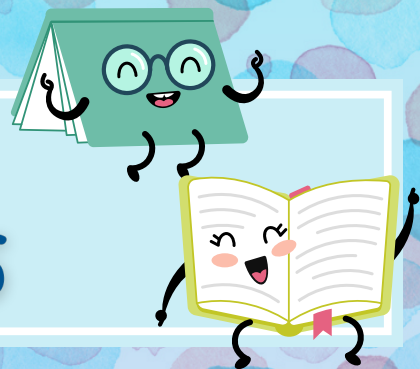
Music has the unique ability to uplift and inspire, making it a powerful tool for self-love. Listening to songs that celebrate individuality and resilience can remind us of our inherent worth and help us reconnect with ourselves. These self-love anthems provide comfort during tough times, boost confidence, and encourage self-acceptance. Whether you're looking to reflect, heal, or simply feel empowered, this playlist serves as a reminder that you are enough just as you are.



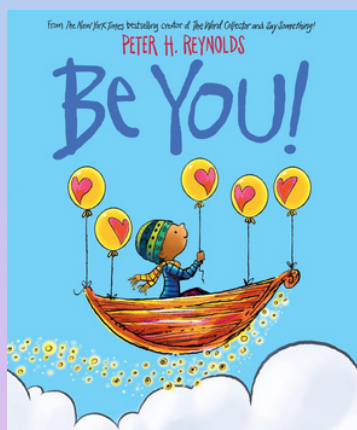
SELF-LOVE PLAYLIST 2025



MENTAL HEALTH CHILDREN'S BOOKS

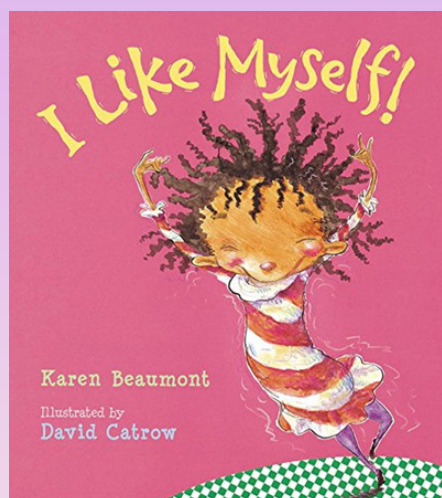


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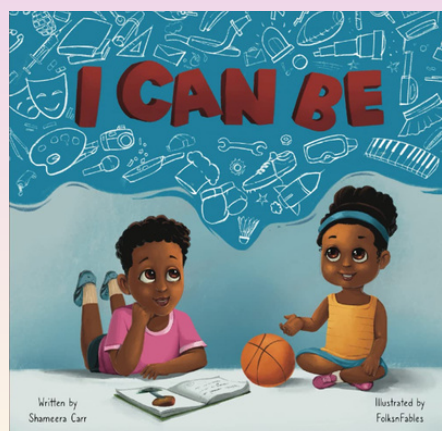
Discover a joyful reminder of the ways that every child is unique and special, from the beloved creator of *The Dot*, *Happy Dreamer*, and New York Times bestseller, *The Word Collector*. Here, Reynolds reminds readers to "be your own work of art." To be patient, persistent, and true. Because there is one, and only one, YOU.

In the tradition of books like *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* and *I Wish You More* comes a wholly original, inspirational celebration of individuality as only Peter H. Reynolds can create!



High on energy and imagination, this ode to self-esteem encourages kids to appreciate everything about themselves—inside and out. Messy hair? Beaver breath? So what!

Here's a little girl who knows what really matters. At once silly and serious, Karen Beaumont's joyous rhyming text and David Catrow's vibrant illustrations unite in a book that is sassy, soulful . . . and straight from the heart.



An empowering book that celebrates a child's ability to be anything they aspire to be. Each page references a well-known Black figure and is paired with the positive affirmation of "I can be". An amazing tool for parents to foster confidence and self-esteem and for educators in teaching Black history to early learners. This book motivates children to be their very best selves!

Mental Health Books

(FOR ADULTS)



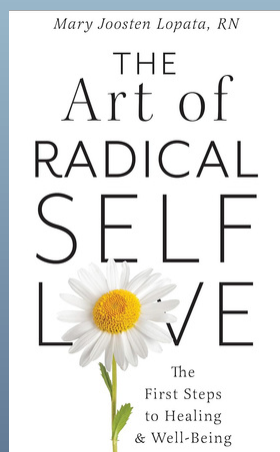
Envision yourself in the midst of life's hustle and bustle—juggling work commitments, family obligations, and never-ending to-do lists. While you long for meaningful friendships that go beyond the surface, the path to forging and sustaining such connections often feels like a maze with unforeseen challenges and constant diversions. But you're not alone.

In a world where connections often feel fleeting and relationships constantly evolve, the significance of friendships cannot be overstated. Yet, the journey of establishing and maintaining adult friendships can be challenging. Navigating this intimate and sometimes uncharted territory, Dr. Kimberly Horn offers a rich tapestry of insights, research-backed strategies, and real-life anecdotes which will resonate with anyone seeking meaningful bonds.



Dr. Paul Boskind, a successful psychologist and LGBTQ+ advocate, thought he had everything under control. Diagnosed with a blinding retinal disorder at twenty-one, he defied the odds, building a fulfilling life. But years earlier than expected, his vision began to fade.

The Blind Man Game is Paul's poignant journey of self-discovery as he navigates the emotional turmoil of losing his sight and sense of self. With his future uncertain, Paul must draw on his expertise and inner strength to confront grief, fear, and a world no longer designed for him.



A nurse is someone who delivers direct patient care and acts as an advocate and health educator for patients and families. To most, this sounds like more than just tender loving care. To others it may create fear causing them to struggle and ignore their inherent healing power of self-love. You see, not everyone realizes that a deep love for themselves is essential to the healing process from within . . . a most radical concept.

Monthly Collective Readings for All Signs

with Joy Larkin
(February 1, 2025 – February 28, 2025)

FEBRUARY BRINGS A WIDE VARIETY OF EMOTIONS. SOME MAY FEEL BITTERSWEET ABOUT LETTING GO OF A SITUATION, WHILE OTHERS MIGHT EXPERIENCE A SURGE OF CREATIVITY, WORKING ON A PROJECT OR EMBRACING A NEW IDEA. THIS MONTH IS ALSO A TIME FOR SELF-DISCOVERY, WITH MANY SETTING INTENTIONS FOR THE NEW YEAR AND HOLDING ONTO FAITH FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE. REMAINING HOPEFUL AND FOCUSING ON POSITIVITY IS KEY ADVICE FOR NAVIGATING THESE EMOTIONS.

ON THE OTHER HAND, SOME PEOPLE MIGHT FEEL GUILT BUT WILL WORK THROUGH IT BY FOCUSING ON THEIR LIFE PURPOSE AND ENGAGING IN INNER WORK. A SEPARATE MESSAGE SUGGESTS GOOD LUCK FOR SOME THIS YEAR, WHILE OTHERS MIGHT FEEL LIKE THEY HAVE UNFINISHED BUSINESS WITH A SITUATION. CREATIVE ENDEAVORS, ESPECIALLY IN MUSIC, COULD ALSO TAKE CENTER STAGE FOR CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS.

FOR THOSE WHO ARE SINGLE OR FEELING LONELY, FEBRUARY, THE MONTH OF VALENTINE'S DAY, CAN STIR FEELINGS OF SADNESS OR ISOLATION. HOWEVER, IT'S A REMINDER TO PRIORITIZE SELF-LOVE AND RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF LOVE IN ALL ITS FORMS. SOME MAY EXPERIENCE SIGNIFICANT CHANGES, SUCH AS MOVING, OR RECEIVE UNEXPECTED COMMUNICATION SYMBOLIZED BY A "MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE." ULTIMATELY, MANY WILL SEEK PEACE OR STRIVE TO BRING MORE TRANQUILITY INTO THEIR LIVES.

ANOTHER MESSAGE INDICATES THAT SOME MAY FEEL REGRETFUL OR FOOLISH ABOUT A PAST DECISION. HOWEVER, LETTING GO OF THE PAST OR A FAILED INVESTMENT CAN LEAD TO GROWTH. SOMEONE MAY CHOOSE TO HOLD ON TO A RELATIONSHIP, WITH JUSTICE BEING SERVED AND COMMITMENTS BEING STRENGTHENED—WHETHER TO THEMSELVES OR OTHERS. THE ADVICE HERE IS TO TREAT OTHERS AS YOU WISH TO BE TREATED. MANY ARE TIRED OF STRESS AND SEEKING BALANCE, MAKING IT CRUCIAL TO FIND JOY THROUGH FUN ACTIVITIES AND MAINTAINING A HEALTHY WORK-LIFE BALANCE.



About Joy

Joy is a Narcissistic Abuse Survivor who has made it her life's work to help others through life coaching. She is also a healer, earth angel and psychic medium.

If you would like coaching services from Joy and/or get your own personal reading, please scan the barcode below with your smartphone camera.

Personal
READINGS



Coaching
INFO

