

Jan 2024

# BRIDGE OF HOPE

## Trauma & Dissociation

Happy New Year! Can you believe it is January 1st, 2024?

I love the start of each new year because it provides an opportunity to review the past year and to see the growth over the past year, while also looking forward to the growth over the new year.

I'm sure I've said this in past years, but I also see this as an opportunity for a clean slate. I love to use the new year as a time to think about what I want this year, and to start over if it's something I've tried before, or a time to try something new. Journaling about what I want the year to be like has always been something special. It's a time of dreaming and planning. It's a time to think about what I want to do that I've not gotten to do before. It's a time to think about how this year will be better than the last.

What does a new year mean to you?

What do you do when the new year rolls around?

Do you have any special traditions to start out the new year?

The last thing I do each year, is choose a word for the year that I want to embrace in my life. It is a word that gives me strength, encouragement, and helps me grow in some way.

If you were to pick a word for 2023 to focus on or grow with this year, what would you pick and why?

My wish for you this year is that you will find the  
hope and peace that you need.  
Know that you are worth all  
that you invest in yourself.

Kristen

If you're feeling **suicidal**, please contact 800-SUICIDE, Text HOME to 741741 or if outside the US, go to [www.befrienders.org](http://www.befrienders.org)

If you are being **abused**, experiencing incest or rape, please contact RAINN at 800-656-HOPE. RAINN provides links to international agencies.

If you are in an abusive **relationship**, call the Domestic Violence Hotline 800-799-SAFE. For international contacts, go to [www.hotpeachpages.net/a/index.html](http://www.hotpeachpages.net/a/index.html)

## Stigma

Stigma is everywhere

Stigma needs to erase

Stigma kills the heart

Stigma is a dangerous weapon.

Love goes a long way.

Love heals.

Love mend the heart.

Love is the best way to recover.

Laws should be made.

Against stigma. It

Should be outlaw.

It is illegal to the heart.

Stigma is everywhere.

It ought to be erased.

It should be void.

Submitted by:  
Lisa Smith







Submitted by:  
Amy Yuhasz-Richards

## Something New

I take pulse of my senses as my young daughter plays nearby.

Smell: a scent of plastic as I slouch, my chin resting on the doll my daughter hands me.

Touch: my feet in my socks and shoes resting on the solid playroom floor. my face on the coarse, soft curls of the baby doll's abundant dark hair, my hands around the polyester dress clothing the hard plastic body.

Hear: my daughter who drifts into self play with her own doll, a piece of wooden vegetable used as a phone for her doll to hold to tiny ear. her soft contented voice lost in imagination.

See: daughter, little girl, in her unicorn footie pajamas that she proudly dressed herself in without help. Pale blue, rolling on the floor, now lying her back, toys uplifted in continued play.

Breathe.

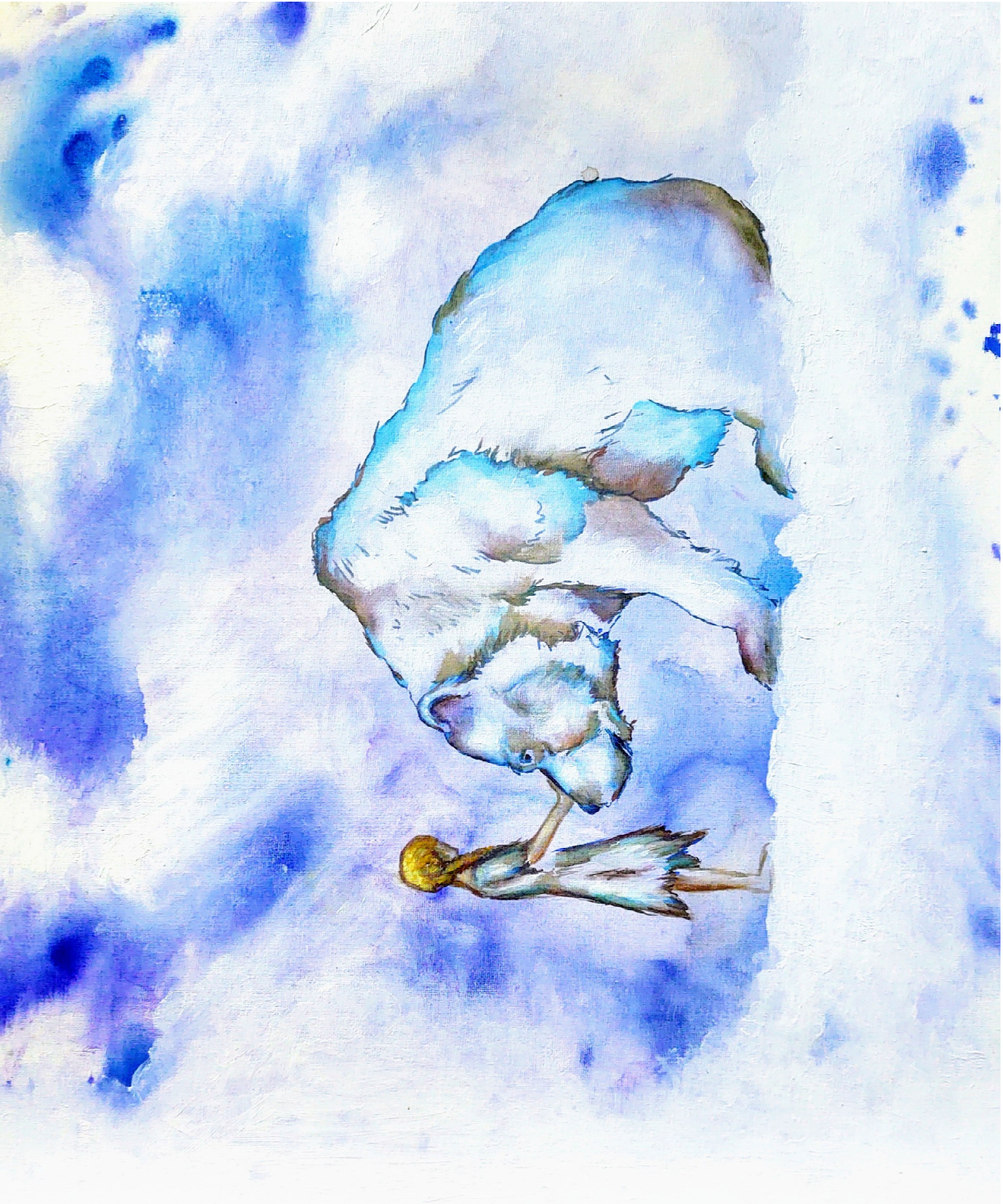
...and how do I feel? What am I feeling as I check in with self? Hmmmm...happiness? Smile, softly laugh at the idea. Really?... Yes, happiness. Suddenly there is almost tears. Happiness (quiet exclamation point)!

Submitted by:

Rose







Submitted by:  
Jackie Davenport Art

## Book Review

### **The Power to Break Free Workbook**

For Victims & Survivors of Domestic Violence

Author: Anisha Durve, A.P.

This workbook is designed for the survivor who is in an abusive relationship in understanding and making decisions of what to do and understanding based on a variety of questions in several areas of what is happening in the relationship. Anyone struggling to stay out of an abusive relationship would find this workbook helpful as well. It looks at several areas of domestic violence from looking at power & control, types of abuse, information about abusers, victims and coping strategies when feeling trapped. The workbook takes you through reasons to stay and leave to help you decide what is your best decision and even helps you to set a safety plan. It explores areas to consider for healing, self-care and a bit on journaling.

This workbook would be unsafe to keep at home if you are currently in an abusive situation where you are living with an abusive partner. If you a safe place to keep a workbook like this, or if you do not live with your abuser, this is a very good workbook to consider starting with to start thinking about things you may not have considered.



## Cloud of Dreams

Is it time  
 To Fly  
 Away to the unknown?  
 A place where endless noise from a ticking clock ceases to exist,  
 Embraced by golden sands,  
 The warmth of the sun smiling forever,  
 Opulent in its beauty of vivacious colour  
 Awash with shades of cornflower and crisp linen white  
 Tiptoe in a cloud of dreams,  
 Which one will be chosen?  
 Fall into a slumber of unbroken promise  
 Where time is yours to do as you wish  
 Without shadows of doubt  
 Or whispers of uncertainty softly calling,  
 Just a gentle puff of kindness dotted around.

A reminder  
 For when the impossible becomes unthinkable,  
 Of memories past of a captured mind.  
 Surrender?  
 Indeed! A monumental task of one who may question validity.  
 Is there ever an escape from silence to sound?  
 With breath there is life, the essence of growth in an ever-changing landscape.  
 Your moment  
 Is here  
 Right now.  
 Relinquish your fears,  
 When raindrops no longer fall  
 We will hold on together,  
 Ready to fly home.

Submitted by:

Elizabeth Shane (Rainbow of Promise)







## Setting Boundaries

A common struggle after being abused, is learning to set boundaries with others. When you've tried to set boundaries and no one has listened, it's difficult to try again. Here are some thoughts.

Saying no is a good example of a boundary that is difficult to set. Many times people say yes when they really want to say no. Depending upon the situation, saying no, may be no, absolutely not. In this case, you can say no, and if they continue to ask, it's okay to say, I'm sorry, I'm not available, or I'm not available.

You do not need to give a reason for a no. No means no. You don't owe anyone an explanation for why you say no.

Sometimes your schedule doesn't allow you to say yes at the moment, but you would like to say yes. This is one of those times where you could say, I'm sorry, I can't do that (when), but I could do that (name when) if you could do that then.

When you haven't set boundaries with people, it's good to start with small boundaries. For example, if you have someone who calls you really late at night, it would be easier to ask someone to not call you after a certain time or before a certain.

Then you could turn off your phone during those hours. There are consequences when people do or don't respect your boundaries.

For example, if someone doesn't respect your boundaries, you might block them during those hours you set. If they do respect your boundaries, you might tell them that they can call you in an emergency if needed. So they receive extra privileges for the respect they have given you.

It's not easy to set boundaries when they haven't been respected before, but as you begin to practice them, you can become more confident in your ability to set them.

Struggling with relationships and boundaries? We offer an 8-week Relationships & Boundaries group to help begin to look at this topic. Non-offending survivors can register on our website.

## **What is post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD?**

It is natural to feel afraid during and after a traumatic situation. Fear is a part of the body's "fight-or-flight" response, which helps us avoid or respond to potential danger. People may experience a range of reactions after trauma, and most will recover from their symptoms over time. Those who continue to experience symptoms may be diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

## **Who develops PTSD?**

Anyone can develop PTSD at any age. This includes combat veterans and people who have experienced or witnessed a physical or sexual assault, abuse, an accident, a disaster, a terror attack, or other serious events. People who have PTSD may feel stressed or frightened, even when they are no longer in danger.

Not everyone with PTSD has been through a dangerous event. Sometimes, learning that a relative or close friend experienced trauma can cause PTSD.

About 6 of every 100 people will experience PTSD at some point in their lifetime, according to the National Center for PTSD, a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs program. Women are more likely than men to develop PTSD. Certain aspects of the traumatic event and biological factors (such as genes) may make some people more likely to develop PTSD.

## **What are the symptoms of PTSD?**

Symptoms of PTSD usually begin within 3 months of the traumatic event, but they sometimes emerge later. To meet the criteria for PTSD, a person must have symptoms for longer than 1 month, and the symptoms must be severe enough to interfere with aspects of daily life, such as relationships or work. The symptoms also must be unrelated to medication, substance use, or other illness.

The course of the disorder varies. Although some people recover within 6 months, others have symptoms that last for 1 year or longer. People with PTSD often have co-occurring conditions, such as depression, substance use, or one or more anxiety disorders.

After a dangerous event, it is natural to have some symptoms. For example, some people may feel detached from the experience, as though they are observing things as an outsider rather than experiencing them. A mental health professional—such as a psychiatrist, psychologist, or clinical social worker—can determine whether symptoms meet the criteria for PTSD.

## **To be diagnosed with PTSD, an adult must have all of the following for at least 1 month:**

- At least one re-experiencing symptom
- At least one avoidance symptom
- At least two arousal and reactivity symptoms
- At least two cognition and mood symptoms
- Re-experiencing symptoms
  - Flashbacks—reliving the traumatic event, including physical symptoms, such as a racing heart or sweating
  - Recurring memories or dreams related to the event

- Distressing thoughts

- Physical signs of stress

Thoughts and feelings can trigger these symptoms, as can words, objects, or situations that are reminders of the event.

Avoidance symptoms

- Staying away from places, events, or objects that are reminders of the experience

- Avoiding thoughts or feelings related to the traumatic event

Avoidance symptoms may cause people to change their routines. For example, some people may avoid driving or riding in a car after a serious car accident.

Arousal and reactivity symptoms

- Being easily startled

- Feeling tense, on guard, or on edge

- Having difficulty concentrating

- Having difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep

- Feeling irritable and having angry or aggressive outbursts

- Engaging in risky, reckless, or destructive behavior

Arousal symptoms are often constant. They can lead to feelings of stress and anger and may interfere with parts of daily life, such as sleeping, eating, or concentrating.

Cognition and mood symptoms

- Trouble remembering key features of the traumatic event

- Negative thoughts about oneself or the world

- Exaggerated feelings of blame directed toward oneself or others

- Ongoing negative emotions, such as fear, anger, guilt, or shame

- Loss of interest in previous activities

- Feelings of social isolation

- Difficulty feeling positive emotions, such as happiness or satisfaction

Cognition and mood symptoms can begin or worsen after the traumatic event. They can lead people to feel detached from friends or family members.

The information in this publication is in the public domain and was taken from the National Institute of Mental Health.



## Types of Cats

D A R T E N G U I N A I L A Y Z M A R M  
 R A I N L O C X U E R T R A H C H A A T  
 A R T C I T I N F E N T E E T N B R G A  
 P U M A O N I S S B O B C A T Y G M D B  
 O U T J N U N E S T N U H H B A C K O U  
 E A T B A G G A G G E E E S Y H O H L R  
 L H A S L G A A W A R D E D G O L E L M  
 Y B R E A A U R R E G I T B R A O S C E  
 M T O R R Q S A S S A T A B Y P C O Y S  
 A S K V E U C U R E S O H R O E O M U E  
 N O J A G U A R I U X O X U T R L A C E  
 X N Y L O H R E S T N O I S E S O L A C  
 P O N Y A C A P R J U D L R R I S I L I  
 O C E V F O C O F E M I I A W A W R L E  
 R M A M I B A B Y S S I N I A N T A M T  
 E N O L E N L L A T M A T A N I G Q A O  
 A N O M I O D E X U T O U T R N I F I L  
 N O O N I C O P C A O D E T E T R A M E  
 B O N I L R O O P N N U R B I N O O C C  
 Z S A M S N O W L E O P A R D N A R T O

Abyssinian

Colocolo

Lion

Serval

Bengal

Cougar

Lynx

Snow Leopard

Bobcat

Guina

Manx

Tiger

Burmese

Havana

Margay

Tuxedo

Calico

Jaguar

Ocelot

Caracal

Jaguarundi

Persian

Chartreux

Korat

Puma

Cheetah

Leopard

Ragdoll



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### **STATEMENT OF FAITH**

Psalm 147:3 He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

### **MISSION**

The mission of Hope Recovery is to provide support and compassion in the lives of adult survivors of abuse and sexual trauma.

### **VISION**

To offer support and compassion as survivors make their way on the journey of recovery and healing.

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This publication is designed as an information exchange for survivors of trauma and dissociative disorders and their supportive others and professionals. Neither its editor nor its layperson contributors are engaged in the practice of medicine.

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