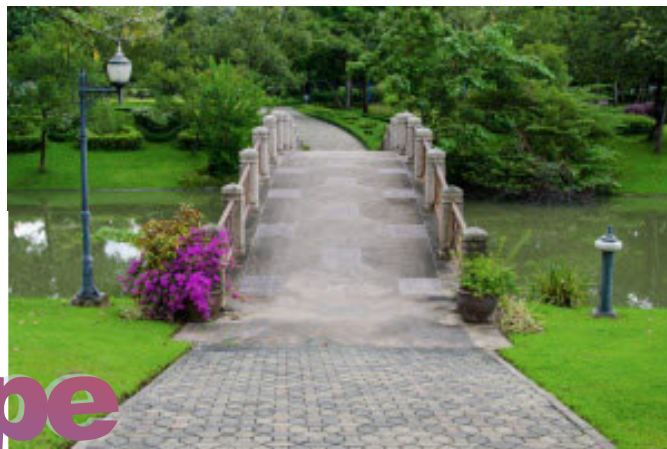


Trauma & Dissociation Bridge of Hope



Note About BoH:

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Winter Breaking?

Is it possible that winter is starting to break? Being into spring now, at least here in Indiana, the weather is a bit like a yo-yo. We have some great days with the sun out and the jacket is thin or can come off, and then the temperature has dropped off and the jackets and heater goes back on. The good news is the sun is out more days than not.

Why am I talking about the weather? Because many of us struggle in the winter season where the sun isn't out much or it's too cold for many of us to go out. For some survivors (and others as well), the winter months can bring on increased symptoms of depression. Some of these symptoms include loss of interest in things once interested in, isolation or increased isolation, feelings of sadness, emptiness or hopelessness, sleep disturbance, anxiety or restlessness, concentration issues, feelings of worthlessness, frequent or recurrent thoughts of death or suicidal ideation. If you haven't already been diagnosed with depression and have signs of these symptoms, it would be good to talk to your family doctor or your therapist about these symptoms.

One of the challenges with recovery from trauma is that recovery of trauma is like a full time job that requires a lot of energy and as much positive thought processes as possible. Struggling with a decreased or depressed mood increases the difficulty of recovery. When there is a difficulty in concentration or a loss of interest when there is a depressed mood, it makes a difficult to continue focusing and moving forward in the healing of recovery.

If you are struggling with a reduced or depressed mood, there are a few things you might try. First, if you are struggling to do anything, push yourself to do something—even little things. I like the 15 minute rule—do something for 15 minutes once an hour. Whether it is basics such as taking a shower, cooking a meal, or doing something more structured such as washing the dishes, putting a load of laundry in the washer the first hour, then the next hour, putting it in the dryer. While it takes a lot of difficulty and effort when you feel down, many times it feels better to have done these basics.

Sometimes recovery takes so much energy, that even without having depressive mood during a winter season, it can be difficult to do the basics including self-care. For some survivors, the struggle of being able to do

the basics can create guilt and shame. There is no shame for this however. It is hard work to recover from trauma and there are times where it can take everything in us to do what need the basics. Survivors didn't ask to be traumatized, and recovery is an individualized process. There is no guilt for struggling.

With the move of weather into having more sunshine, it can help to get out a bit, open the shades and let the sunlight in, and when it's warm enough, to open some fresh air if possible (based on your medical situation and allergies of course). This of course, may also be difficult if the mood is diminished, but it is worth the effort to take any positive steps. Trust yourself in the process of moving forward in your recovery. Stretch yourself but not to the point where you push yourself to your detriment.

Use your support system to help you move forward. Inviting a supportive person to join you in a walk, to sit outside or to even go to the pond and feed some ducks can not only improve mood by socialization but also can be enjoyable activities to improve mood, and not just mood, but even enhances trauma recovery.

If you've found this to be a difficult time for you, there is hope as the weather is improving for many locations. With the weather improving and taking positive steps to improve mood challenges in general, there are likely to lead to increased positive outcomes. Most of all, don't give up. You are worth holding on for and fighting for.

Take gentle care,
Kristen

*Use your support
system to help
you move
forward.*

Coping with Trauma-Related Dissociation

This book is a combination of education and workbook authored by Suzette Boon, Kathy Steele, and Onno Van Der Hart. For survivors with Complex Dissociative Disorders, this is an amazing resource to work through with your therapist.

Beginning with understanding dissociation it moves into coping skills with dissociation and then improving daily skills and dealing with triggers and memories. As the book continues it goes into more advanced skills by dealing with emotions such as anger, fear, shame and guilt.

It is highly encouraged to work through this book with your therapist. It is a very intense book to work through and can be very difficult to work through the worksheets in it and to look at how it impacts yourself.

Live

Live a little
Live a lot
Seems a bit
Seems so much

Oh so tired
Don't know why
Hard to hold on
Hard to breathe

Looking around
What do I see
What is the hope
Where is it found

Staying close
Being available
Hoping for more
Seeking peace

Loving me
At least trying
So not easy
But I'll carry on



Snuggles can make all the difference in a day.

Journaling Tips

Know that there is not one specific way to journal. Whether you journal by writing long hand, bullet journal, journal through poetry, make lists or use artistic journaling of some sort, it's totally okay.

Don't censor yourself. Allow yourself to journal whatever comes to mind.

Start small if you're just starting out.

If you struggle with journaling, try a new location, a different time of day, or a new style.

Don't worry about how long to journal. It can be 2 sentences if you want. It can be a paragraph.

If you aren't sure what to journal about, sometimes having a topic a day, or journaling daily gratitude can be a great place to start.

Keep asking questions. If you're surprised about the responses, it's okay to ask more questions.

Journaling Tips for Survivors with DID

Everyone in your system is welcome here. Invite all parts to journal. Invite them by writing it in the journal.

Set guidelines—this is a safe place to write. There is no punishment for what is shared here.

Get to know each other. Don't be afraid to ask questions.

Keep asking questions. If you're surprised about the responses, it's okay to ask more questions.

It's okay to ask for internal help to understand responses.

Ask your therapist for help in understanding responses if needed.

If you don't understand a response, it's okay to ask for clarification. If you're having issues getting responses, try asking questions a different way or taking a different direction.

Share gratitude for responses and vulnerability.

For littles, it's okay for them to share their art when they are unable to write, or to encourage them to have someone older to write for them.

Questions to Start Your Communication Journal

What is your name or what can I call you?

What do you usually do?

What is your favorite color?

What is your favorite food?

Is there something you need help with?

Is there anything you would like to share with me or anyone else?

Is there anyone else you know inside?

Do you have a safe place inside?

What is your favorite place to be?

What makes you feel happy?

What makes you feel sad?

What makes you feel better when you are sad?

Do you feel safe? If you don't feel safe, what makes you feel safe?

What do you find most difficult to deal with?

What do you like to do?

Do you have a seat in the conference room or living room?



Making Tracks

Moving fast
 Heading forward
 Moving ahead
 Not looking back

Want to hurry
 Get through it
 Just not fast enough
 Let's hurry now

Trying to force it
 Trying to move
 Trying to focus
 Trying to heal

Seems so slow
 Patience they say
 Want to move faster
 Hope against hope

Trying to slow
 Trying to wait
 I'll get there
 Just seems forever

Looking forward
 Could it be tomorrow
 When all feels better
 When it's all through

Healing is taking too long
 I want it to move faster
 How to make that happen
 That I do not know

Submitted by:
Karen

Dissociative Identity Disorder Educational Group

We will be starting a new educational group for survivors diagnosed with Dissociative Identity Disorder in late April. This is a 7 week group that covers the basics of understand dissociation and various parts of the system.

Participation in the group requires confirmation from your therapist of your diagnosis and clarification from your therapist that they feel you are in a stable enough place to participate in this group. We require a release of information to be able to contact your therapist if necessary, only as needed for safety issues or clarification of information about group should we or your therapist have concerns while you are in this group. Registration is required and space is limited.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

Some things that we can do to show awareness in the community about sexual assault during April include but are not limited are:

Wear teal, taking a stand against sexual assault. If you are comfortable, take a selfie and promote Sexual Assault Awareness Month on social media.

Write a message of support for a survivor (include yourself in this) of sexual assault. It can be a message of hope, a statement that says “I believe you,” or “I support survivors.”

Tell us about a book, show, song, YouTube video, etc. that gives a good representation of survivors that we can share.

Identify at least three activities that help you ground when you struggle with memories of your sexual assault and share them with us.

Identify a way community members can support survivors virtually and share them with us.

We would love to find a way to reach out to communities and share your thoughts and information to benefit survivors and communities at large. You can email your information to recovery@hope4-recovery.org with the Subject line SAAM.

*Set boundaries to
protect your self-
care.*

Self-Care Tips

Self-care means taking time to do things you enjoy.

Self-care also means taking care of yourself.

Make self-care a priority.

Set specific self-care goals.

Make self-care a habit.

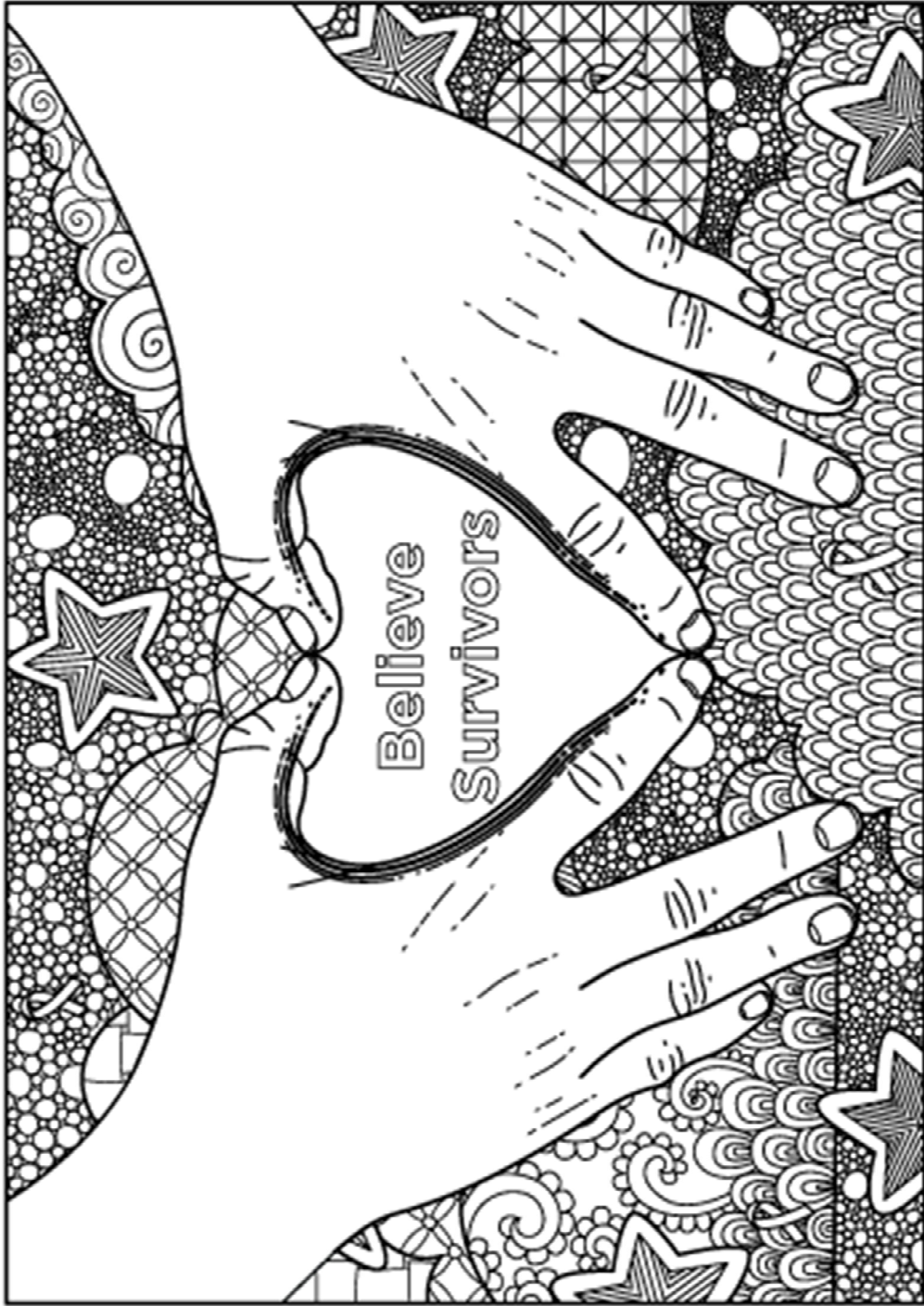
Set boundaries to protect your self-care.

A few minutes of self-care is better than no self-care.

Unhealthy activities don't count as self-care.

Keep up with self-care, even when you're feeling good.





www.nsvrc.org/saam #SAAM #IAAM
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NSVRC National Sexual Violence Resource Center
Sexual Assault Awareness Month

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.

Hope Recovery Inc.

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Office Hours:
Tuesday - Friday—3p—7p Eastern

Other hours by appointment.

If you're feeling **suicidal**, please contact 800-SUICIDE or if outside the US, go to 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 a **violent relationship**, call 800-799-SAFE. For international contacts, go to www.hotpeachpages.net/a/index.html

We're on the Web

www.hope4-recovery.org

Find our newsletters at <http://www.hope4-recovery.org/publications.html>

Fees:

Free to Survivors.

\$4 donations recommended from supporters and professionals to cover the costs of the website and printed copies.

Donations may be sent to our PO Box, or online via our website.

**You Are
Not Alone!**



When all seems like a struggle, there is hope.