

# reunion



ISSUE 03

**FOCUS ON  
DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE**

**TELLING  
AMY'S STORY**

**CREATIVE  
EXPRESSION**

**CRISTINA  
CARLINO**



The mission of the Joyful Heart Foundation is to heal, educate and empower survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence and child abuse, and to shed light into the darkness that surrounds these issues.



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*\*The beautiful 'ilima featured above is from a photograph made available by Forest and Kim Star. The 'ilima is the official flower of O'ahu and its healing properties are associated with both women and children.*

COVER ART: LISA DENNING

LETTER

"We believe that a community and will change the climate so that



PHOTOGRAPHY: CATHRINE WHITE

**From the Editor:** Welcome to the third edition of Reunion. For this issue's letter, Linda Fairstein joins our Executive Director, Maile Zambuto. Linda served as a special victims prosecutor in the Manhattan District Attorney's office beginning in the 1970s and tried hundreds of domestic violence cases. She is a national expert, a leading advocate for domestic violence and sexual assault response reform as well as a best-selling author. Maile, who credits Linda as one of the trailblazing leaders in whose footsteps she is honored to follow, her teacher and her hero, has worked on sexual and family violence issues for more than a decade.

-Nathan Richards

As two people who have been working on the issue of domestic violence (DV) for for many years, we have witnessed firsthand the many challenges facing our collective movement. There was a time when those working on DV (at various times referred to as intimate partner violence, relationship or family violence, battering or domestic abuse) didn't have the language to properly describe it and the public-at-large wouldn't have spoken about it even if we did.

We can remember a time only a few decades ago when newspapers wouldn't cover cases and law enforcement considered battering a private matter. It was not that long ago when it took considerable effort to get measures in place to protect women while they were at work. And we can recall how impossible it seemed that domestic violence would ever be elevated to the level of national consciousness necessary to change the attitude that it was only an issue for the underclass.

Some of those old challenges remain. There are still countless headlines in the media that refer to DV cases as "domestic disputes" or "lovers' quarrels"—headlines that conceal the true nature of these incidents, which are acts of criminal violence. The statistics—that 1 in 4 women and 1 in 9 men in the United States will be victims of domestic violence at some point in their lives—are almost too vast in scale to contemplate.

**NEED HELP? YOU ARE NOT ALONE.**

If you or someone you know needs help, please contact:

The National Domestic Violence Hotline — 1 (800) 799-7233 [www.ndvh.org](http://www.ndvh.org)  
or The National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline — 1 (866) 331-9474 [www.loveisrespect.org](http://www.loveisrespect.org)  
or Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network — 1 (800) 656-4673 [www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org)  
or National Suicide Prevention Lifeline — 1 (800) 273-8255 [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

**If you are in immediate danger, please call 911.**



empowered with knowledge about these issues can violence is no longer tolerated or excused.”

But we do now acknowledge that domestic violence happens in the darkest corners of every community across the country. We understand that violence can and does extend outside of the home and that victims should be able to seek protection while at work. We know that the language we use to describe violence is important and influences the way people think about the issue.

And while there is still a tremendous amount of work that remains to be done to prevent domestic violence where we can and to support the healing of survivors when it does occur, we have seen progress on many

of these fronts and continue to be hopeful that our society can collectively end the cycle of violence and abuse.

And that is what this edition of *Reunion* is all about—our collective response.

In the pages that follow we work to shine a light on domestic violence through the telling of one courageous survivor's personal story. We seek to share ways that victims can get help and begin their healing journeys. We highlight the work of the Verizon Foundation-funded documentary, *Telling Amy's Story*, which has helped teach communities of all shapes and sizes what role they can play in

preventing violence. We introduce creative expression as a healing modality that can be used to cope with individual or collective trauma. We explore the history of Hawai'i to gain understanding of how cultural trauma can result in increased violence. We honor a few of the many professional healers and supporters who have advanced this work for decades. And more much.

At Joyful Heart, we believe that a community empowered with knowledge about these issues can and will change the climate so that violence—whether we are referring to domestic abuse, sexual assault, child abuse and neglect or other forms—is no longer tolerated or excused. *Reunion* is one of the ways we seek to build that community. Thank you so much for joining us.

With deep gratitude,

~ Maile Zambuto & Linda Fairstein



PHOTOGRAPHY: CATHRINE WHITE

**LINDA FAIRSTEIN** is a bestselling crime novelist and the former chief prosecutor of the New York County District Attorney's Sex Crimes Unit. Fairstein also serves as Vice Chair of the Joyful Heart Foundation's Board of Directors. She is pictured with fellow JHF Board Member, Dr. Valli Kalei Kanuha (right), whose article on colonization and violence in Hawai'i can be found on page 16.

## reunion

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PHOTOGRAPHY: RICCARDO SAVI, ASSOCIATED PRESS, LISA DENNING

FROM TOP TO BOTTOM: **Mariska Harigitay, Sheryl Cates, Rose Kirk and Detective Deirdri Fishel at the Washington, DC premiere of *Telling Amy's Story* in May 2010. Joe Torre, founder of the Safe at Home Foundation, and Mariska Harigitay walk to meet the press after their visit to the White House for the commemoration of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October 2010. Aileen Deese, Mariska Hargitay and Carrie Shoda-Sutherland at the Joyful Heart Foundation Hawai'i Advocates Tea in August 2010.**

# W

e are so excited to bring you the third installment of *Reunion*.

While National Domestic Violence Awareness Month is observed in October, we know that domestic violence doesn't take the other eleven months off. In fact, domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women between the ages of 15 and 44 in the United States. That's why we at Joyful Heart are on a mission to raise awareness about the signs of abuse, ways to prevent violence by promoting healthy relationships and how those affected by the issue can heal and reclaim their lives.

As we approach this work, I am reminded of the words shared by my ultra-eloquent, actor-writer-poet husband, fellow advocate and Joyful Heart Board Member, Peter Hermann:

"When you buy a plant, it comes with instructions: **Requires watering daily. Thrives in sunlight.** If domestic violence came with a label on how to make it grow, it would say: **Requires darkness. Thrives in the darkness of fear, shame and isolation.**"

At Joyful Heart, we are committed to shining a light into that darkness. That's what this issue is all about. And it's why Joyful Heart has been engaged in our busiest year to date promoting domestic violence awareness and prevention. Among some of my personal highlights:

- Last spring, inspired by the life and tragic death of Amy Homan McGee, who was murdered by her husband as her parents and two young sons waited outside in a car while she prepared to leave an abusive marriage, we signed up to partner with Verizon Foundation, Penn State Public Broadcasting and a number of other national organizations to produce and promote *Telling Amy's Story*.
- In September, guided by our Hawai'i Advisory Committee, we met with leading advocates from across the state to discuss their unique needs and the ways in which Joyful Heart could serve a community that means so much to us.
- I sat proudly in the East Room of the White House as President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden commemorated National Domestic Violence Awareness Month and announced a new National Institute of Justice pilot project to help eliminate the backlog of untested rape kits in the United States.
- In December, we saw two of the movement's leading corporate champions, Verizon and Liz Claiborne, come together for the New York City premiere of *Telling Amy's Story* and the kick off of Liz Claiborne's annual It's Time to Talk Day, a national day of conversation about domestic violence.

At each of these events, and throughout the year, we endeavor to remember that no single film or speech or magazine can shed all the light that's needed to break the cycle of violence.

But what is in evidence in all that we do, and what we can demonstrate in our daily lives, is that all of us, collectively, can take steps toward illuminating this issue.

I hope that you will join with me in this effort.

God bless,

# FOUNDER'S CORNER



President Barack Obama and Mariska Hargitay exchange a warm greeting in the East Room of the White House. Also pictured, New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu and Maryland Congresswoman Donna Edwards.

PHOTOGRAPHY: REUTERS

“All of us, collectively, can take steps toward illuminating this issue.”



PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY OF A WINDOW BETWEEN WORLDS

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modolenit laore vendion henim  
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# EFFECTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON MOTHERS AND CHILDREN

BY SHERISA DAHLGREN

# W

e have heard it said many times, "Why didn't she just leave?" While it may be more comfortable thinking of domestic violence as a danger that we can see easily and avoid, in all reality domestic violence often has a slow, chronic onset where it is difficult to pinpoint where the honeymoon ended and the violence began. Small changes, such as constantly criticizing her choice of friends or questioning her ability to spend money wisely, turn into chronic patterns that create isolation and dependence. Add in the element of physical violence, which places the mother in constant fear for her life and the lives of her children and robs her of her self-confidence and her social support, and now you have a picture of a typical family struggling to escape this cycle of violence. Strong women, women with access to resources, educated women, and most likely women you know and respect have all fallen victim to the cycle. The question of "Why didn't she just leave?" then more aptly turns into "It's a miracle they escaped."

I would try and be nice and not get into trouble. I tried to be very good so that the he would not scream at her and do bad things to her. I tried to avoid him by not talking back and coming home early to stay out of his way. It worked most of the time, but when I made a mistake, then he would scream at my mommy and say everything was her fault. He would call her useless and that she is not worth anything. He would yell at mom, then he would blame me and my younger sister saying, "It's all your fault that we are fighting."

**8-YEAR-OLD GIRL**

## COPING STRATEGIES

Believing there are ways you can predict the violence is a common coping strategy used to survive living in violence. The equivalent of walking on eggshells, children and mothers alike may cope with the constant feeling of danger by tiptoeing around the violence in an attempt to avoid a dangerous episode. By trying to be perfect you may hold on to the hope that you can control the situation as a way to protect yourself. Other ways children may cope include siding with the violent parent in order to avoid being a target, spacing or numbing out and creating rituals for safety. And while these coping strategies may help one survive at the moment, they often create patterns that wreak havoc on the rest of their lives. Dissociating or "spacing out" helps children separate themselves from the violence and serves as an emotional protection, but also makes it difficult to focus in school, remember important information and be present in conversations. These patterns can become engrained as a way of living and impact not only current functioning but future relationships as well.

When your dad is mad, you feel weak and can't do anything. You're just stuck to the ground. Confused. Helpless and you can't act right. You think it's your fault he is mad, even though it's not your fault.

**12-YEAR-OLD BOY**

## PLACEMENT OF BLAME

While it is easy for us to see that a child is not at fault for a violent dynamic in a family, it is a much more complex issue for a child to understand. After months or years of having the belief reinforced that they are the cause of the violence, it is both an academic and emotional process to internalize an entirely new belief system in which you, the child, are innocent.

My mom and my dad were fighting. I was sad and scared that my Dad was going to hurt my mom. I had to leave my little baby doll, and I was sad. I told my mom if we could get it, but we didn't have time because we had to get away really fast.

**9-YEAR-OLD GIRL**

## UNACKNOWLEDGED LOSSES

Sometimes what stays with a child and resonates as painful is different than what we might imagine. Children often describe in vivid detail the loss of favorite toys, worries that pets will be hurt in retribution, and the loss of their normal daily structure. These losses may receive less time and attention than needed to process as the family struggles with the basics of survival—access to a food and a safe bed for the night.

Dad's face was all grumpy, so I knew he was about to scream or throw things at my mom. After that, my dad went with me to the beach and helped me swim. I felt happy then, but I also remembered the scary times, too. Sometimes Dad is safe, and when he is not safe it's hard to describe.

#### 10-YEAR-OLD BOY

### MIXED FEELINGS

Like any of us trying to understand how someone can do this to their own family, children also struggle with a host of mixed feelings related to having a violent caregiver. One day they feel safe and loved, and the next day they are fearful for the lives of themselves, their siblings and their parents. This constant duality makes achieving normal developmental milestones, such as differentiation from their parents, more painful and challenging. Carefree daydreams about becoming ballerinas and firemen in the future are replaced with loaded worries about becoming violent themselves or becoming a victim to others. There is also the desire to love and be loved by both parents, and memories of good times and bad. Children may feel guilt for having happy memories and loving the violent parent, anger at both parents for the losses they are feeling and a great deal of confusion at their own feelings and behaviors.

At the shelter I feel nervous. I want to do fun things but am stuck. I feel sad and worried and won't eat. If I could feel better, I would read a book or talk to my mom, but I can't. I try to eat so I won't worry mom.

#### 7-YEAR-OLD GIRL

### TIME TO HEAL

Dealing with the aftermath of domestic violence is an ongoing process that continues well past the time in which immediate safety is secured. Many family members have symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, such as an exaggerated startle response, inability to concentrate, symptoms of depression and active flashbacks. They are coping with these symptoms while adjusting to a new living environment, such as a shelter, that often has limited access to resources and increased restrictions on personal freedom. Recovery from exposure to domestic violence is possible, but it requires addressing painful realities and discovering new inner strengths, a process that requires time, space and safety to begin.

**F**amilies who have experienced domestic violence are in the process of healing both physically and emotionally from multiple traumas. The mPower Program, developed by Joyful Heart Foundation, provides much needed space and resources for families at domestic violence shelters to begin their healing process. Co-led by trauma specialists and wellness practitioners, the mPower program provides an experiential group process of trauma-informed wellness practices that promote emotional and spiritual healing and enable participants to learn to embody true joy and wellness. This process engages mind, body and spirit

and allows participants to nurture their fully realized selves. In 2010 the Los Angeles mPower program led healing drum circles, practiced animal yoga poses, danced around the courtyard, smelled lavender, made collages and created flower arrangements. The sessions are filled with mutual support and feelings of confidence as moms and kids uncover strengths and talents they did not know they had and a sense of possibility as a new life opens up. As mothers and children practice self-care, relaxation, artistic expression and joyful interaction, they are able to rediscover the world and their own bodies as caring and loving places. ♥

## Quick Facts About DV

Children are exposed to or experience domestic violence in many ways. While “exposure” is often considered being within sight or sound of the violence, it should be considered in broader terms. A child may:

- Be threatened while in their mothers’ arms
- Be held hostage to force the mother to return home
- Observe a parent who is out of control or reckless with anger
- See one parent assault the other
- Live with the aftermath of a violent assault
- Be used as a spy, interrogated about his or her mother’s activities, or
- Be forced to participate in the abuse.

Long term effects, especially from chronic exposure to domestic violence, may include:

- Impaired academic performance
- Reduced levels of motor and social skills
- Behavior problems in adolescence
- Juvenile delinquency
- Alcohol or substance abuse
- Seeing and hearing things that aren’t really there
- Changes in brain physiology and function
- Emotional difficulties in adulthood, including depression, anxiety disorders and PTSD

A 2006 survey of American households revealed that nearly 30% of children (many of whom are very young) in this country live in homes where there is some form of intimate partner violence (McDonald, R., Jouriles, E.N., Ramisetty-Mikler, S., Caetano, R. & Green, C.E.)

Taken from Domestic Violence Curriculum, The Whole Person Approach, by Dr. Leslie Ross, Sherisa Dahlgren and Elizabeth Powers

# Cultural Trauma and Family Violence in Contemporary Hawaiian Life

By Valli Kalei Kanuha, Ph.D.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Praesent tempor volutpat magna ac scelerisque. Aenean quis felis viverra neque pretium semper. Aliquam vestibulum justo sit amet tellus accumsan posuere. In non nisl nec nibh viverra faucibus. Praesent hendrerit, nulla sit amet ullamcorper malesuada, nisl sem pharetra nulla, sed molestie risus ligula non eros. Phasellus vitae urna sit amet sem adipiscing mollis. Duis congue egestas enim, quis luctus lorem venenatis sed. Proin ornare ultricies turpis, non feugiat erat viverra et. Nullam vehicula sodales tempor. Proin venenatis mauris nec lacus molestie sit amet placerat sem cursus.

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**1. Hawaiian woman making a plaited hat in Onomea, Hawai'i; circa 1910.** PHOTOGRAPHY: RAY J. BAKER, BISHOP MUSEUM. **2. Auntie Elizabeth Maluihi Lee, designated a Living Hawaiian Treasure, demonstrates the art of lauhala weaving as part of a Joyful Heart program.** PHOTOGRAPHY: LISA DENNING.

**3. Lauhala weavers sponsored by University of Hawai'i extension service; Ho'olehua, Moloka'i, Hawai'i in 1949.** PHOTOGRAPY: UNKNOWN, BISHOP MUSEUM. **4. Joyful Heart participants practice lauhala weaving under Auntie Maluihi's guidance.** PHOTOGRAPHY: LISA DENNING.



It is estimated that the first humans to arrive in what is now known as the Hawaiian Islands did not arrive by “accident,” but were skilled navigators from Eastern Oceania who sailed double-hulled canoes almost 2,000 miles, guided only by their highly advanced knowledge of “wayfaring” passed on orally through their ancestors.<sup>1</sup> Most maritime historians agree that Native Hawaiians, or Kanaka Māoli (first people), were using advanced systems of navigation and were sailing farther distances with more accuracy than the most skilled European explorers of their time.

Similar to that of their Polynesian forbearers, early Hawaiian social life was structured around a complex mythology

linking human beings, animal and plant life, the skies, sea and land, as well as ancestral spirits, into a holistic cosmology structured by gods (akua) and spiritual power/forces (mana). When the English explorer Captain James Cook arrived in Hawai'i in 1778, his crew described Hawaiians as “radiantly healthy and of near physical perfection. They were genial, affectionate and generous. A highly developed agricultural system and skillful and intensive fishing methods provided the food needed for a relatively large population.”<sup>2</sup>

Noted Hawaiian historian Mary Kawena Pukui states that, before contact with outsiders, physical aggression against one's partner or children did occur but was clearly considered a violation of Hawaiian social

norms that valued balance and harmony in all relations. She added that hostile speech such as name-calling was also unacceptable because “the violent word was the violent deed.”<sup>3</sup> Ulunui Kanaka'ole Garmon explains that Hawaiians were specifically forbidden from hitting the head, shoulders and back because the upper body was deemed closer to the heavens, and therefore to spiritual sources.<sup>4</sup> Rape was called *pule wale*, or “slimy attack,” reflecting disapproval for the “beast” or “animal” who committed such acts. Social sanctions against physical, verbal or sexual abuse were clearly demarcated, and those who violated social customs and limits were thought to have “a real problem”<sup>5</sup> and could be banished from the family or community

unit, particularly in the case of those who mistreated children.

In just one hundred years after the arrival of Captain Cook and other foreigners, exposure to contagious diseases to which they had no natural immunities reduced the indigenous population of Hawai'i from an estimated 800,000 to just 40,000.<sup>6</sup> In addition to the decimation of the Hawaiian race, the presence of foreign ways signaled the gradual deterioration of Kanaka Māoli cultural practices such as fishing, gathering, planting and engaging in spiritual or other sacred traditions that had been integral to the social stability of Hawai'i for centuries.

Today Hawaiians are among the ethnic groups in Hawai'i with high rates of social problems such as substance abuse, teen pregnancy, homelessness and family and acquaintance violence, including domestic violence and sexual assault. What has happened to the native people of Hawai'i, whose indigenous culture was based on reverence and balance in all relationships and particularly, the sacred honoring of family life? Hawaiian psychologist Kamana'opono Crabbe suggests that this deterioration of indigenous values and practices is a result of cultural trauma,<sup>7</sup> and what Professor Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart (Hunkpapa, Oglala Lakota) refers to as historical trauma response (HTR).<sup>8</sup> These concepts refer to the multi-generational loss of cultural values, beliefs, traditions and practices due to the social-historical-political

effects of colonialism. This loss results in "cumulative psychological and emotional wounding," and a sense of violation and injury to a person's self as well as to a conquered group of people who suffer from what Brave Heart calls "massive group trauma."

The major manifestation of cultural trauma is historical unresolved grief that results in depression, social/educational underachievement, alcohol and other drug abuse and, too commonly, domestic and sexual violence. Brave Heart argues that "Native Americans have, for over 500 years, endured physical, emotional, social, and spiritual genocide from European and American colonialist policy" (see <http://www.historicaltrauma.com/>), which underlies many of the social challenges found in First Nations peoples not only in the Americas, but also among Hawaiians and peoples across the Pacific. Unresolved grief from societal-level traumatic events is also at the root of depression and other mental health problems in Holocaust survivors and among women and girls who are victims of war-based torture in Rwanda and Bosnia.

In our work in Hawai'i, the Joyful Heart Foundation acknowledges that Hawaiians, as the first people and host culture of these islands, have disproportionately suffered from the centuries-long trauma of displacement from their lands and subsequent bans on practice of their cultural protocols. We are coming to better understand the profound effects of these losses on the social fabric of a

once-thriving society in which family, couple and acquaintance abuse, once rare, is now sadly commonplace. The most significant outcome of what Bud Pomaika'i Cook calls cultural wounding<sup>9</sup> is not only that Hawaiian individuals, families and communities are grieving, but that the entire ecology of Hawai'i also suffers. Oceans and reefs once teeming with sea life and rare corals lie dormant, forests with birds found nowhere else on the globe stand silent, and streams bubbling from fresh mountain springs are now dry or polluted. The entire island nation of Hawai'i is a living example of historical trauma response.

As the Joyful Heart Foundation continues its commitment to healing, education and empowerment, we acknowledge that all persons make choices to live in peace and non-violence. We know that Hawaiians, like human beings everywhere, are strong, resilient, healthy and self-sufficient, and we also understand that many Hawaiians suffer deep pain over histories lost to time and that exist now only as distant ancestral memories. We honor the people and the 'āina (land; place) of Hawai'i because we believe that we cannot help to heal our host community if we do not acknowledge the roots of longstanding historical trauma they have experienced. We know that our healing and wellness programs will be profoundly transformed not only by the history and legacy of Hawai'i but also by the sacred mana (spirit; power) of the Hawaiian people. ♥

*\*Portions of this article have been published previously by Dr. Kanuha.* **1** Finney, B. R. (1994). *Voyage of discovery: A cultural odyssey through Polynesia*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Kyselka, W. (1987). *An ocean in mind*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. **2** Mitchell, D. D. K. (1992). *Resource units in Hawaiian culture* (Rev. ed.) (p. 250). Honolulu: The Kamehameha Schools Press. **3** Pukui, M. K., Haertig, E. W., & Lee, C. A. (1972). *Nana i ke kumu (Look to the source)* (Vol. 2) (p. 224). Honolulu: The Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center. **4** Garmon, U. K. (2000, February 16, 2000). Introduction to diversified cultural lifestyles and domestic violence. Paper presented at the Integrating cultural diversity in domestic violence, Hilo, HI. **5** Pukui, et al. (p. 221). **6** Bushnell, O. A. (1993). *The gifts of civilization: Germs and genocide in Hawai'i*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press Stannard, D. E. (1988). *Before the horror: The population of Hawaii on the eve of Western contact*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. **7** Crabbe, K. M. (1998). Etiology of depression in Native Hawaiians. *Pacific Health Dialog*, 5(2), 341-345. **8** Brave Heart, M. Y. H. (2000). *Wakiksuyapi: Carrying the historical trauma of the Lakota*. *Tulane Studies in Social Welfare*, 21-22, 245-266. **9** Cook, B. P., Wityh, K., & Tarallo-Jensen, L. (2003). Cultural trauma, Hawaiian spirituality, and contemporary health status. *Californian Journal of Health Promotion*, 1 (Special Issue: Hawaii), 10-24.

# Caring for Self while Caring for Others



I

n the second issue of *Reunion*, we introduced Joyful Heart's Heal the Healers program. Our program was designed to address the vicarious traumatization that can result when professionals are exposed to the suffering of others.

We also profiled more than a dozen healers who shared their stories of trauma exposure and their insights on the best ways they can keep themselves well while caring for others. Among them: the head of the Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women, trauma experts from across the country, a writer who penned plots about child abuse, three men who worked in different ways to prevent violence against women and children and a member of the NYPD Scuba Team.

In this and future issues of *Reunion*, we will continue to honor the work of the many healers who we are so privileged to know and meet. And we will continue to highlight the challenges and triumphs in achieving sustainability in our collective movement that asks us to healers strike a balance of caring for self while caring for others.

*dyanne*  
**Purcell**

Dyanne Purcell is the new Chief Executive Officer for the National Domestic Violence Hotline and the Texas Council on Family Violence.

**HER PATH WAS SET DURING HER 1960s'**

Austin, Texas childhood, when her family turned to the non-profit sector to help care for her younger sister, who was born with multiple disabilities. Later, Purcell trained in accountancy, but soon became disillusioned with the corporate world and drawn to the same type of caring institutions that had helped her family. "They brought us hope," she recalls. One day, a colleague in the bank where Purcell was working came in with a black eye. At first, her shocked co-workers didn't know what to say; but they banded together to offer help. "The floodgates opened," remembers Purcell, and her colleague recounted the first of thousands of cases of domestic abuse that Purcell would hear over the years. Instinctively, the co-workers devised what Purcell would later learn to call a "safety plan." She had found her life's direction.



PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY OF NDVH

**REUNION:** How did you get involved with the National Domestic Violence Hotline and the Texas Council on Family Violence?

**DYANNE PURCELL:** In the early 1990s, I began my own company, Purcell Financial Services, to serve the non-profit sector, and saw how it holds the community together. I heard about what's now called the Texas Council on Family Violence needed administrative help and realized I could contribute. At first I wasn't on staff; I just wanted to be part of it. Now I've been here for over thirteen years. This is where I'm supposed to be, helping women, children and families.

**REUNION:** It must be satisfying to have a direct impact on the lives of your callers.

**DP:** Making that first call is scary. There is hope, shame and fear. It's a brave step. When callers tell their stories, it's an amazing relief to realize that someone believes what's happening to them.

They're not crazy. We give options, we don't judge; we are here to be a listening ear 24 hours a day. Every day we receive about 726 calls. We coach our callers in building a network they can trust. If the caller never leaves her abusive situation, we help them make safety plans so they have some control. One advocate told a caller that she was a hero. The caller was silent, and then phoned back a week later to say that no one had ever said anything supportive to her before. It makes me tear up, just thinking about it.

**REUNION:** Does your work ever extend beyond telephone counseling?

**DP:** One National Hotline caller was in a remote rural location and couldn't call the local police because they knew her husband and wouldn't believe her.

She and her children were in a dangerous situation and needed to relocate, but they had no transport and there were no bus routes. Our advocate called a shelter hundreds of miles away for help. They agreed to go to the country line, though they weren't allowed to cross it. The advocate found a sheriff in another county, who didn't know the caller's husband. The woman and her kids walked down dirt roads, the sheriff picked them up and they made it to the shelter.

**REUNION:** Have you noticed any change in your callers' issues in the fourteen years the Hotline has existed?

**DP:** We don't collect identifying information, but we've begun a database and in the past two years we've observed an escalation in the intensity of violence and the degree of physical abuse. More objects and weapons are being used. Our average call used to last five minutes. Now it's ten.

**REUNION:** How do you stay level?

**DP:** One in four women and one in nine men experience domestic abuse. When you're surrounded by violence, it does affect you even if you're not the one experiencing it. I used to be a workaholic but that really depletes you. My wellness practices include exercise and nutrition. I love to journal and let my thoughts flow. Plus, I've had a wonderful husband for over twenty-five years. As a leader, I've learned how important it is for an organization to support its employees' wellness. As the head of the National Domestic Violence Hotline, it's a major priority to encourage staff self-care and to avoid creating a culture that uses everyone up. ♥

# CREATIVE EXPRESSION

BY ABIGAIL SIMS

Many of us remember making art as small children. Carving out that piece of floor or kitchen table or classroom and losing ourselves as we became engrossed in the task at hand. Immersed in a sea of paints, crayons, construction paper, brown paper bags and Popsicle sticks, all our senses were engaged. The smell of the crayons, the feel of wet paint or glitter glue on fingers, the sound of furious coloring or of our own rhythmic breathing as we focused on a task all grounded us to our mission. Some will remember the sense of pride and accomplishment at having completed this act of telling a story. Telling our story in a way that makes sense of ourselves, our families and our world.

Later, as teenagers, we may have had a similar experience. Our newly heavy limbs sprawled out as we wrote poetry or song lyrics, drew cartoons or just expressed our thoughts in notebooks or journals. We were still connected to that drive to communicate our inner selves to the world. That communication has intrinsic value. It connects us to others, to a community. It allows us to have agency in that community by sharing a story and making ourselves visible.

## WHAT IS CREATIVE EXPRESSION?

“Joy’s soul lies in the doing.” – Shakespeare

### THERE IS AN ONGOING THEME IN OUR WORK AT

Joyful Heart. That theme is that all of us have the knowledge inside ourselves about what we need to heal and find our joy. Creative expression can help connect people, at all stages of life or their recovery from trauma, to that inner healing voice.

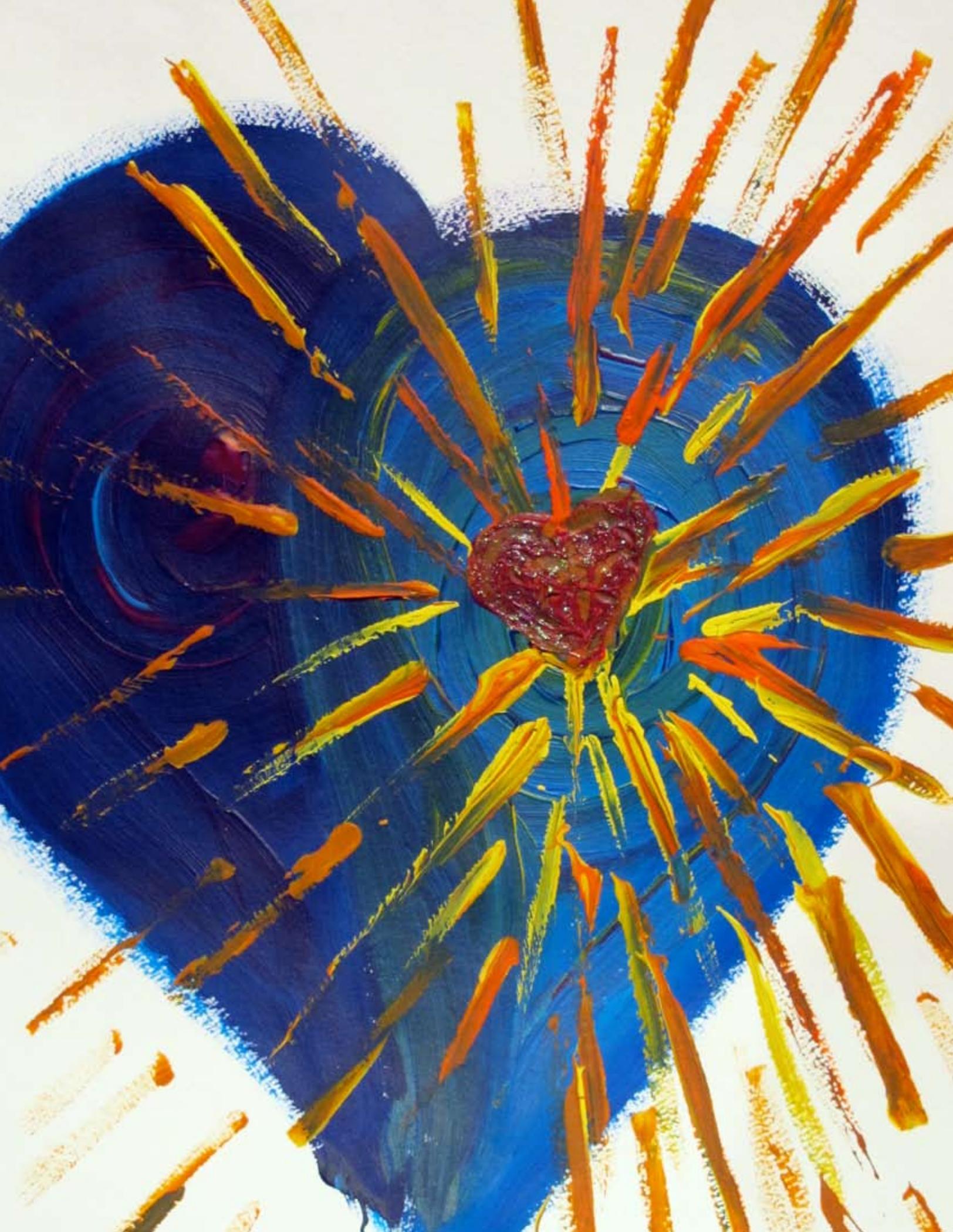
There are many routes to self-expression. Creativity can be explored through a variety of artistic disciplines. Commonly identified methods include drama, dance, music, creative writing and the visual arts, including photography. All these activities engage the participant/artist in a process that uses a holistic health framework to access physical, mental, spiritual and social wellbeing. The benefits of creative expression do not end at any particular age, but many people are not given the opportunity to be artistic as they

move into adulthood. Children, youth, adults and the elderly can all participate in creative or artistic expression. It can be utilized to express thoughts and feelings that are too big or too difficult to put into words. This can be especially helpful with people who have linguistic or cognitive issues that make creating a written or spoken narrative daunting.

One of the most engaging features of the creative process is that it facilitates moments of vitality and connection for those who choose to participate in it. Sir Ken Robinson, an internationally recognized leader in the development of creativity, innovation and human resources, describes the experience: “The arts address the idea of an aesthetic experience. An aesthetic experience is one in which the senses are operating at

their peak, when you are present in the current moment, when you are resonating with the excitement of this thing that you are experiencing, when you are fully alive.” This experience is part of the enchantment that creative expression holds, the process connects us to our authentic self. Art can be the expression of our most inner selves, even of our souls.

Creative expression can lead us to a deeper level of understanding and self-discovery. Cathy Salser, the Founder and Executive Director of A Window Between Worlds, an agency that was born from her vision to “share art in a way that makes a difference,” describes creative expression as “the language that lives in the heart and the spirit. It’s the language that emerges when you find the safety to really listen to your heart.”





## HEALING BENEFITS OF CREATIVE EXPRESSION

“There is no agony like having an untold story inside of you.” –Maya Angelou

**WHEN ONE EXPERIENCES SEXUAL ASSAULT,** domestic violence, child abuse or other types of interpersonal violence, a complex set of reactions can come into play. Some of these reactions are physical reactions to trauma and increased nervous system response, some are emotional reactions to a highly distressing event, some are cognitive responses as we try to make sense of the event(s) that occurred, and some are social responses as survivors grapple with community attitudes and social norms around abuse. Because of the many layers of disruption involved, the healing benefits of art are diverse and apply to different aspects of wellness.

Cathy Salser says that engaging in creative expression creates a “window of time to honor whatever comes out, whatever needs to emerge. Whatever it looks like, whether it makes sense or doesn’t make sense. Even

if it is just a scribble. It is a way to reclaim what’s been lost or what’s been trapped, whether that is relaxation or safety or possibility or a sense of freedom.”

Art can be an oasis, a place to find relaxation and calm. It can also be used to release pain and unexpressed feelings. As we express and integrate unacknowledged feelings, we honor and integrate our whole selves. Creative expression can be both a way to find calm and a way to release pain, as the state of arousal that occurs as one achieves an emotional catharsis resolves in a state of relaxation once deeply held thoughts and feelings are released.

Using creative expression for healing and wellness can be a large-scale public health intervention strategy, like nutrition. This strategy can be implemented by health professionals and paraprofessionals across the spectrum of care and has benefits for

multiple populations. Dr. Jeremy Nobel, MD, MPH and Founder and President of The Foundation for Art and Healing says, “The idea of art having healing capabilities for individuals and society is at least four thousand years old as far as we can tell. This is not new. That said, there are ways of making it available to people as well as to evaluate on a more rigorous scientific basis, to see how it works and how to make it work better.”

To that end Dr. Nobel coauthored with Heather L. Stuckey, DEd “The Connection Between Art, Healing and Public Health: A Review of the Current Literature,” published by the American Journal of Public Health, February 2010, Vol 100, No. 2. This article examines the efficacy of using creative expression in healing in multiple types of health settings using multiple artistic modalities, and found the following benefits:

**CREATIVE EXPRESSION:** “The language that lives in the heart and the spirit. It’s the language that emerges when you find the safety to really listen to your heart.”



- 1 **MUSIC ENGAGEMENT**, which can include the passive experience of listening to music or the active experience of creating music, was seen to have effectiveness in decreasing anxiety and tension, calming neural activity in the brain, and reducing heart and respiratory rates.
- 2 **VISUAL ARTS** are any endeavor that results in a physical work that can be viewed, and includes painting, sculpture, collage, photography or anything else that is expressed visually. Engaging in visual expression has been linked to enhanced self worth and identity through achievement, reduced stress, increased positive emotions, and decreased markers of emotional distress. It also results in a desire to continue in the healing process.
- 3 **MOVEMENT**, including formal, informal and free form dance, has been observed to contribute to a positive body image as well as increased self-awareness, problem solving abilities, self-esteem, and cognitive and psychological well-being.
- 4 **EXPRESSIVE WRITING**, which can involve journaling, storytelling, free writing, poetry, or personal memoir, can improve control over pain, depressed mood, and pain severity. It can also positively effect anger expression, feelings of social support and other general quality of life measures.

Because this article included a survey of available research, the outcomes for different modalities are based on different measures, but it is likely that many creative activities contribute to a common set of physical, emotional, cognitive, social and spiritual gains. Dr. Nobel summarizes the major benefits of creative expression as follows: "Art allows you to do three things, and this is where the healing comes from. Art puts you in the moment, puts you in touch with yourself and allows you to bring forth something that did not exist before. And those three things taken together are incredibly powerful in terms of adjusting your understanding of yourself, your relationship to yourself, your relationship to the world and your sense about possibilities for the future. "

Creative expression has elements that are specifically

relevant to integrating the experiences of sexual assault, domestic violence or child abuse. Survivors have had the experience of their voices being taken away. That feeling of invisibility is a response to the exposure to a set of events where it was not safe to voice one's boundaries or needs. In some situations it was not safe to have feelings at all. That lack of access to one's inner voice can make a person feel disconnected and unmoored. The results of those feelings can be that a vision of a life where one's feelings and thoughts and desires are honored and deserving of respect can seem out of reach. According to Cathy Salser, creating art can be the "first step in making something that seems impossible, tangible, visible. It can create the new future of respecting what you feel and think and want."

## USING CREATIVE EXPRESSION TO INCREASE ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

“I think artists can go to a level of vision that can often save us from a situation that seems to have no solution whatsoever.” – Susan Griffin, from the New Dimensions program “The Power of Story in Social Change”



PHOTOGRAPHY: LISA DENNING, ABIGAIL SIMS, MAILE ZAMBUTO

### JUST AS ENGAGING IN CREATIVE PROJECTS BENEFITS

individuals, practicing creativity can be beneficial to organizations. Organizations, like people, can get stuck in ineffective patterns. Deborah Obaili, Executive Director of Foundation for Art & Healing, describes this organizational challenge, “If something stays the same too long, it gets stratified in a way that is not useful, because the world is changing around us. What we thought we were doing that worked, or that we thought worked, may no longer be the best organizational practice.” This lack of flexibility can inhibit program effectiveness and organizational growth.

One way to combat this organizational torpor is by introducing creativity as an organizational value. This can be done experientially by implementing creative projects as part of organizational thinking. If your organization is in the middle of a strategic planning process, you may want to have staff and board paint, collage or write

a poem about what they see as next steps. This process may yield richer results than a strictly intellectual discussion group. Ms. Obaili explains the rationale behind this approach “Creative expression can be used as a tool to help people and organizations think differently. When you use creative exercises to think through problems in a certain way, all of a sudden you get different answers.” The results of creative exercises may transform an organizational culture by increasing creativity, flexibility and forward thinking.

Creative expression can also contribute to staff morale, a sense of job satisfaction and individual sustainability. Creative expression can be used as a tool for individual self-care and as a way to manage trauma exposure response. Many people are reinvigorated by seeing the results that creative work can have. They may have been drawn to helping professions out of a desire to connect with clients or community members in a deeper way than they are able during the normal

course of their duties. When they are able to have that deeper connection using art, their sense job satisfaction increases and they are more able to manage the inevitable setbacks and disappointments of doing the work.

At its most powerful, creative expression can be a tool for individual and organizational transformation. It can help people externalize and name painful feelings and thoughts. It can enable people to connect to their inner voice and allow them to make themselves heard. It can flow through the barriers that separate our conscious from our unconscious, our public personas from our private selves. It can be a mechanism for healing and growth and community. At its more mundane, creative expression can enrich our lives in everyday ways, by brightening our mood with a glimpse of color or inspiring our imagination with a beautiful phrase or by providing a path to joy with soul-stirring music. In any and all of its incarnations, creative expression can benefit everyone who interacts with it. ♥



## GETTING STARTED

“To draw, you must close your eyes and sing.” — Pablo Picasso

Contrary to what some of us learned in school, creative expression is not some complex, rule-laden process. It is something we all have inside of us. Creative expression is a natural human trait and has been practiced for centuries by individuals and communities all over the world. You don't need special training or extraordinary talent to be creative. You just need to be willing to give yourself permission to release your inner creative and artistic self.

Here are some steps to get started on your creative journey:

**Identify what you are drawn to.** This doesn't have to be what you think you are good at, or what you feel you should do, just what feels attractive to you. Are you

interested in painting? Writing poetry? Knitting? Japanese flower arranging? Think about what feeds your spirit and try that first.

**Set a time to do it!** Make a commitment to yourself and set aside a time and space to feed your creative self. It doesn't have to be a big commitment of time or money. If you want to paint, you can start by collecting images that inspire you, or browsing the paint section at an art supply store. You can build your creative muscles as you make creativity a part of your schedule.

**Keep at it. You can't mow the lawn just once.** Creative expression is an ongoing process. Continue the process by committing to find opportunities to be creative and exploring new avenues that interest you.

# INNER LANDSCAPE COLLAGE

BY ELENA HULL

*This is a creative experiential exercise designed to allow space for our inner wisdom to guide our awareness. It is a creative meditation for accessing a deeper space within ourselves in times of not knowing, transition, conflict, decision, disconnection, hope or new beginning. It is a pathway to our true self.*



ART BY ELENA HULL

## PREPARATION

First, collect some magazines that interest you. Flip through the pages and tear or cut out any images that naturally grab your attention. Let the images or the colors choose you, try not to think about it. I keep a folder of images I have collected over the years from magazines, books, programs from dance/musical performances, newspapers, cards I've received, found images I've come across, drawings I've done and photos. There is inspiration all around us.

Buy some mod podge, a multi-use glue that allows you to be messy as it dries clear and can be put under and over images. Have scissors, a brush for the glue, and durable drawing paper. I love using large sheets of black paper for my background. You can also gather any paints, markers, ribbons, glitter, stickers, string or materials you may already have and want to use.

Create an environment: clear some space, select some inspirational music for your creative adventure and light a candle.

## THE EXPERIENCE

Spread your images out across a table or the floor, whatever space you have prepared for yourself, close your eyes and take several deep breaths, clearing your mind of anything you have to do, any expectations you might have, any anxiety around being creative. Wait until you feel clear and relaxed.

A gentle four count in breath with a pause and then a four count exhale is a breathing technique that gives the nervous system what it needs to relax. You can do this for the length of one song if you'd like, making sure you pick a slow and spacious song. I recommend using a song without words for this.

When you are ready, open your eyes and just trust whatever images catch your attention. These are the images that want to reveal to you your inner landscape in this moment in time. Just let yourself begin and get lost in the choosing, cutting, placing, shifting, creating and composing. Trust the process! Feel free to add paint, words and any materials you feel called to. There is no right or wrong.

Enter the music and the experience of making something with your hands. Connect to your senses. There is almost always a point of frustration or not quite feeling like it's what you want. Stay with it. This is natural, and if you keep playing with the materials you may notice something emerge that works in a way you never imagined. I have spilled paint on a collage and worked it into the composition, and it ended up becoming my favorite part; give the mistakes a chance!

When you feel complete, take a moment, grab a journal and ask your collage if it has any message for you, any wisdom or knowing it wants to share. ♥

*Elena Hull is the Clinical Director of Midtown Marriage and Family Therapy and provides in-depth psychotherapy to individuals and couples both at Midtown MFT. As a licensed psychotherapist specializing in trauma and creative expression, Elena is an integral part of Joyful Heart's program development, training, and facilitation.*



# TELLING AMY'S STORY

Verizon Foundation Uses  
Vast Network to Shed Light  
On Domestic Violence

On November 8, 2001, Amy Homan McGee, a mother of two, was shot to death by her husband in their home in Pennsylvania. The murder was the final act of violence in a history of cruelty and abuse. She was thirty-three years old.

In 2010, with the help of the Verizon Foundation, Penn State Public Broadcasting created *Telling Amy's Story*, a documentary chronicling the events leading up to Amy's death. With an introduction by Joyful Heart Founder & President Mariska Hargitay, the film uses interviews with Amy's friends and family, law enforcement officers, court personnel and co-workers at the Verizon store where she worked to examine the warning signs that may have changed the outcome of Amy's story. As Detective Dierdri Fishel—the lead investigator on Amy's case and the film's narrator—says, we must look at “what we can do as a community to change the ending for another victim.”

The film concludes with a discussion between Mariska and Sheryl Cates, then-CEO Emeritus of the National Domestic Violence Hotline, in which they begin to address of the many questions Amy's story raises: Why don't people talk about this issue more? Why does the shame lie with the victim and not the pepe-

trator? What can be done to bring change?

*Telling Amy's Story* premiered in Washington, DC, at the Newseum on May 18, 2010. The Verizon Foundation, along with Liz Claiborne and the Joyful Heart Foundation, hosted a New York City premiere on December 7, 2010. The latter event was also the kick-off for Liz Claiborne's annual It's Time to Talk Day, a national day of dialogue to raise awareness for ending domestic violence and teen dating abuse. Throughout the day, leading talk radio hosts from around the country interview more than 80 guests about what can be done to end the cycle of abuse, how to get involved in prevention and how and where victims can get help.

During the premiere, Mariska welcomed those in attendance and offered some sobering words:

“In the time it will take us to participate in this event, over 700 women will be battered somewhere in the United States. Into that tragic reality comes *Telling Amy's Story*, a brave and important tool in acknowledging the truth about domestic violence, embracing survivors and insisting on change. As part of a public service media project, the film brings

1. Kim Wells and Mariska Hargitay. 2. Melanie Doebler, Lupita Reyes and Melody Brown. 3. Kathryn C. Brown. 4. Mariska welcomes guests to the DC premiere. 5. Associate Attorney General Thomas J. Perrelli. 6. Sue Else. 7. White House Advisor on Violence Against Women, Lynn Rosenthal. 8. Verizon's Rose Kirk moderates the panel discussion that followed the film. PHOTOGRAPHY: LEIGH VOGEL AND RICCARDO SAVI



together the power and reach of public broadcasting with the engine of local engagement. *Telling Amy's Story* has the power to heal, to educate and—most importantly—to save lives.”

Acknowledging Verizon’s leadership on this issue, Mariska said, “I especially want to honor the courage and commitment of the Verizon Foundation for being one of the first companies to take a stand on this issue, and for making this film and this evening possible.” In the past four years, the foundation has given over \$21 million to non-profits assisting survivors of domestic violence.

Joyful Heart Board Member Peter Hermann hosted the event in DC, while Meredith Vieira, co-host of the *Today* show, emceed the New York City premiere. The events drew a number

of distinguished guests from both the public and private sectors, including Associate Attorney General Thomas J. Perrelli; Lynn Rosenthal, the first-ever White House Advisor on Violence Against Women; Jim Gerace, Verizon Communications president – New York region; Bill McComb, CEO of Liz Claiborne; and Sue Else, President of the National Network to End Domestic Violence.

Following the film presentation in Washington, Rose Kirk of the Verizon Foundation moderated a panel discussion with Sheryl Cates; Melanie Doebler, Director of Public Engagement, Penn State Public Broadcasting; Detective Deirdri Fishel, Police Department of State College, PA; and Joe Myers, Creative Director, Penn State Public Broadcasting and the film’s producer/director.

In New York, the question and answer session featured experts on domestic violence, including Detective Deirdri Fishel; Kim Wells, Executive Director of the Corporate Alliance to End Partner Violence; Commissioner Yolanda Jimenez of the Mayor’s Office to Combat Domestic Violence in New York City; Melanie Doebler; Martha Delehanty, a Senior Vice President at Verizon; and Linda Fairstein, author and former prosecutor, who is also the Vice-Chair of the Joyful Heart Foundation Board of Directors.

Since its premiere, *Telling Amy's Story* has aired on more than 300 local public television stations, in 47 of the top 50 markets in the United States, covering 85% of the population. It is estimated that over 14.5 million people have viewed this important documentary. ♥

## TELLING AMY'S STORY

1. Linda Fairstein, Jane Randel, Meredith Vieira, Maile Zambuto and Lupita Reyes. 2. Rose Kirk, Meredith Vieira and Robert Kirk. 3. Detective Dierdri Fishel, Meredith Vieira, Patrick Gaston and Sheryle Gaston. 4. Peter Hermann introduces the program. 5. Meredith Vieira hosted the NYC event. 6. Jim Gerace discusses Verizon’s commitment to domestic violence prevention. 7. Liz Claiborne’s Bill McComb describes the inspiration for *It’s Time to Talk Day*. 8. The panel responds to questions from the audience. PHOTOGRAPHY: RICCARDO SAVI

“We know that no single TV show or script or film can shed all the light that’s needed to break the cycle of violence. But what is in evidence in this room tonight, and what we can demonstrate as we leave here, is that all of us, together, can take steps toward illuminating this issue.” ~Peter Hermann

## rose Kirk

Rose Kirk is the President of the Verizon Foundation and Chair of the Board of Directors for the National Domestic Violence Hotline.



PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY OF VERIZON FOUNDATION

**“I BEGAN TO ENGAGE IN THE ISSUE OF** domestic violence prevention almost 30 years ago,” Rose Kirk begins. Kirk has worked in the telecommunications sector for approximately 25 years. As the President of the Verizon Foundation, she oversees a generous philanthropic budget that awards grants to non-profit organizations focusing on education and domestic violence prevention. Kirk also oversees its employee volunteerism program, which has placed almost 10,000 participants who have provided nearly 750,000 hours in volunteer work to about 8,100 organizations nationwide.

But that’s only during regular business hours. Kirk has also sat on the Board of Directors for the National Domestic Violence Hotline for about five years. She currently serves as its chair, a position she has held for about two years.

**REUNION:** What made you go into this field?

**ROSE KIRK:** The issue of domestic violence prevention became very real to me when I was 15 years old and witnessed my sister, a young bride of 22, being abused. I wasn’t sure what was happening, but I knew it was wrong, demeaning and something I would never accept as a natural part of any relationship. My crusade for change began then. Since, I have worked in the domestic violence prevention field in Arkansas, Alabama, Texas and New Jersey. I’ve trained members of speakers bureaus, sat on panels, served on boards, donated money, clothing and whatever other resources I could. Currently, I’m privileged to lead the Verizon Foundation, which includes domestic violence prevention as one of its signature causes.

**REUNION:** What services and programs does the Verizon Foundation provide? Who are your clients and partners?

**RK:** We provide grants, programmatic development, technology and employee resources for our domestic violence prevention efforts. The Verizon Foundation awards approximately \$67 million a year to non-profit organizations across the country and abroad. We focus the majority of our giving in the areas of education and domestic violence prevention. In addition, the Foundation strongly supports the volunteer activities of Verizon’s employees, providing a grant of \$750 to a non-profit when an employee volunteers 50 hours to the group in a calendar year.

We also work closely with Verizon Wireless on the HopeLine from Verizon program, in which Verizon collects no-longer-used cell phones and accesso-

ries from any provider and uses those phones to support victims of domestic violence, either with grants funded through reselling the phones or by directly providing phones and free airtime to shelters. Since 2001, HopeLine from Verizon has awarded more than \$10 million in grants and collected more than 8 million phones.

We work closely with the National Network to End Domestic Violence, National Family Justice Center Alliance and the Family Violence Prevention Fund in our domestic violence prevention efforts.

**REUNION:** What do you find most challenging about this work?

**RK:** There is so much that needs to be done, so many problems that need solutions.

When we meet with our partners to discuss grants or partnership ideas, we're often talking with people who have personally experienced domestic violence, and listening to first-person stories of the horrors of domestic abuse is so difficult. I'm always astounded to think that this abuse occurs so often in every community in our nation, across socioeconomic conditions.

But to have the best opportunity to bring about lasting change, we are very precise in focusing our funding support. Unfortunately, that means we sometimes have to say no to very worthy programs, to these people who have experienced so many awful things. But our hope is that by strongly focusing on this issue, we can bring about substantial positive

change, allowing us to move on to tackle the next item on the world's to do list.

**REUNION:** What are you most proud of and what have you found the most rewarding in this work?

**RK:** I'm most proud of the collaborative efforts of the Verizon Foundation team and our many tremendous partners. This is tough work. There's always more to be done. Ending domestic violence is not something that will happen immediately. It's a long-term process that includes successes, and failures along the way. I'm proud of the effort we have shown and the progress we have made so far. The success of the documentary *Telling Amy's Story* was immensely rewarding as well. The documentary was produced by Penn State Public Broadcasting and funded by the Verizon Foundation. It tells the story of one of our employees, Amy Homan McGee, a mother of two small children who was shot and killed by her husband.

So far the documentary has aired on more than 300 public broadcasting stations across the country and has been used as a training tool on college campuses and by the U.S. Department of Justice. Knowing that we were able to help bring this story to light and spread its message to millions of people across the country has been incredibly rewarding.

**REUNION:** How do you think this work has affected you personally?

**RK:** It has in so many ways. Both my husband, Robert, and my 10-year-old son, Connor, are finding ways to get involved

in domestic violence prevention. And everyday, my work is a tribute to the life of my sister, Benita.

**REUNION:** Do you have regular self-care or wellness practice?

**RK:** It's multi-layered: eating well, working out, relaxing with a good book, sneaking in cat naps when I'm traveling from one engagement to another and staying connected to my family at all times. Robert and Connor shore me up.

**REUNION:** At what point, if ever, did you realize the importance of self-care?

**RK:** I subscribe to the airline mantra: put your oxygen mask on first. The minute I became a mom, I realized it wasn't going to work in the household if I didn't take care of me first.

**REUNION:** As you mentioned, this work can be hard on people who do it. Has the Verizon Foundation established any mechanisms to deal with burnout and vicarious trauma or to nurture an environment that promotes self-care?

**RK:** We're a step removed from the advocates on the front lines working with victims of domestic violence every day to rebuild their lives. Because of that, we can't really compare what we experience to what the advocates in the shelters or the courtrooms experience. However, we do believe it is very important to provide employees opportunities to take care of themselves, through on-site gyms and personal trainers, generous healthcare benefits, numerous wellness programs and by offering generous vacation time. ♥

# Program Spotlight:

## A Window Between Worlds



PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY OF A WINDOW BETWEEN WORLDS

### A WINDOW BETWEEN WORLDS IS A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

dedicated to using art to help end domestic violence. Since 1991, AWBW has provided creative expression as a healing tool for over 50,000 battered women and their children in crisis shelters, transitional homes and outreach centers throughout the United States.

By providing an environment that promotes healing, art workshops help women and children develop a renewed sense of hope and possibility that profoundly impacts future decisions regarding the direction of their lives, their relationships and their safety. Art empowers survivors to transform how they view themselves, allowing them to see past the abusive messages they learned from their batterers and rebuild their self-confidence.

In this 20th anniversary year, the AWBW Windows Programs continue to be available, free of charge, to any agency or organization seeking to implement art as a healing tool for survivors of domestic violence. Scholarships are available for training, art supplies and ongoing support. By training staff members of collaborating domestic violence agencies, AWBW assists partner shelters to individually incorporate the art workshops into the fabric of shelter life and adapt the program as needed to meet the specific cultural and emotional needs of their clients. No artistic experience or expertise is necessary. AWBW invites you to learn more about programs and to join them in using art to empower survivors and to break the silence surrounding domestic violence in our communities.

“I can’t imagine not having A Window Between Worlds here... It’s the one aspect of our shelter that I get more positive feedback about than anything else.” **SHELTER DIRECTOR** / “I have my sad heart and I have my happy heart; when I do art my heart is happy.” **PARTICIPANT, AGE 4, CHILDREN’S WINDOWS ART PROGRAM** / “You can read books and pamphlets, but I think with my hands making things. It works to wake up a part of me that was dead.” **PARTICIPANT, WOMEN’S WINDOWS ART PROGRAM** / “Every workshop is a cleansing of my soul, leaving space for the new, the beautiful and the discovery of the self!” **PARTICIPANT, WOMEN’S WINDOWS ART PROGRAM**

For more information and to find out about trainings and events, including those celebrating AWBW’s 20th anniversary, go to [www.awbw.org](http://www.awbw.org).



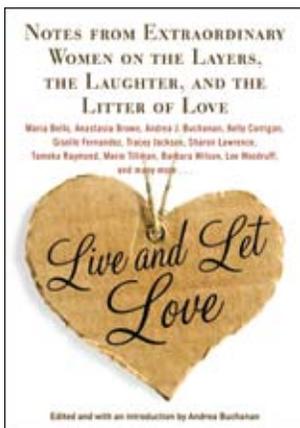
In the hustle and bustle of daily life, sometimes it takes a friendly reminder to slow down and be well. The Well Daily is a website and free daily email for all things related to yoga, meditation, nutrition and wellness that is just that. They have the simple mission to be well, do well, live well—for yourself and others.

The site's creators, Sukey Novogratz and Jackie MacLeod, know they are not alone in their quest to breathe more deeply, operate more energetically, live more mindfully and age more gracefully. So they have culled the very best from the worlds of yoga, meditation, nutrition and wellness to send to subscribers in a wonderful daily update and share on their beautiful website. They pass along the ideas that they love, whether it's the latest or the most ancient. Ideas that open the heart, nurture the body and expand the mind.

You can join their circle of friends, yogis, gurus, beginners, experts, sages, vegans, vegetarians, conscious carnivores; everyday people seeking more health and more joy, and subscribe to The Well Daily, at [www.thewelldaily.com](http://www.thewelldaily.com).



Compiled by  
JOANNA COLANGELO



**LIVE AND LET LOVE**  
Notes from Extraordinary Women on the Layers, the Laughter, and the Litter of Love

Edited and with an introduction by Andrea Buchanan

One of Joyful Heart Foundation's founding Board Members, Andrea Buchanan, follows her first collection, *Note To Self*, with a new compilation of thought-provoking, illuminating, often poignant essays on love written by some of America's most fascinating and vibrant women, including an award-winning actress, a soldier's wife, a cancer survivor, a college student and many extraordinary others.

What the women in *Live and Let Love* have in common—what all of us have in common—is a need for love: to give it, to receive it, to express its many aspects. We encourage you to take a journey with these courageous and joyful women who have portrayed their innermost emotions and shared their own experiences for readers to learn from, laugh at and lean on.

**Shine** / David Gray

*You gotta rise from these ashes  
Like a bird of flame  
Step out of the shadow  
We've gotta go where we can shine*

**You Are Not Alone** / Mavis Staples

**One Big Love** / Patty Griffin

**Bring on the Wonder** / Sarah McLachlan

**Cherokee Morning Song** / Robbie Robertson and the Red Road Ensemble

**Send Me on My Way** / Rusted Root

**Thirty Years of Tears** / John Hiatt

**Long As I Can See the Light** / Creedence Clearwater Revival

**Life Is Long** / David Byrne and Brian Eno

**Hard Times** / Eastmountainsouth

**Cosmic Love** / Florence + The Machine

JOYFUL PLAYLIST

# HERO OF THE HEART

## Cristina CARLINO

Since the earliest days of the organization, Cristina Carlino has been one of Joyful Heart's most vocal and most generous supporters. *Reunion* editor-at-large Peter Hermann spoke with Cristina about her commitment to the issues and new plans for her philanthropic pursuits.

BY PETER HERMANN

**PETER HERMANN:** You know you're being honored in this issue of *Reunion* as the Hero of the Heart—"our hero" being one of our favorite names for you—so to start out, who were your heroes as you were growing up?

**CRISTINA CARLINO:** I was always attracted, quite frankly, to doctors. We're going to go back now, but Ben Casey, Marcus Welby, Julia, all those medical dramas in the sixties and seventies. My heroes have always been people who helped people. That remains the same to this day.

**PH:** Why do you think you turned out to be the person you are?

**CC:** I would have to say that it's a combination of things. My parents gave me the gift of faith in God and the reverence that goes with believing that life has a greater meaning. They also taught me compassion, so I think that also found its way into my DNA.

**PH:** Can you tell me about your journey with philosophy, about the birth of that company, where it has gone and where you are now?

**CC:** Prior to philosophy, I had a company called BioMedic that sold primarily to physicians, who then dispensed to their patients. But I wanted something more

soulful. Philosophy was almost an anti-beauty company. It was about a woman we don't pay much attention to in the beauty industry, so it attracted people who were committed to the environment, or global issues, or the types of issues that Joyful Heart addresses—real "feelers." It's been a tremendous journey. I sold the company in 2007, and I've chosen to pursue things that I think are going to be more compatible with who I am today, less of a leader and more of a cheerleader for people who are doing tremendous good in this world.

**PH:** Not everyone sells companies and then decides to dedicate their lives to helping other people succeed. Can you tell me about how you ended up taking that path?

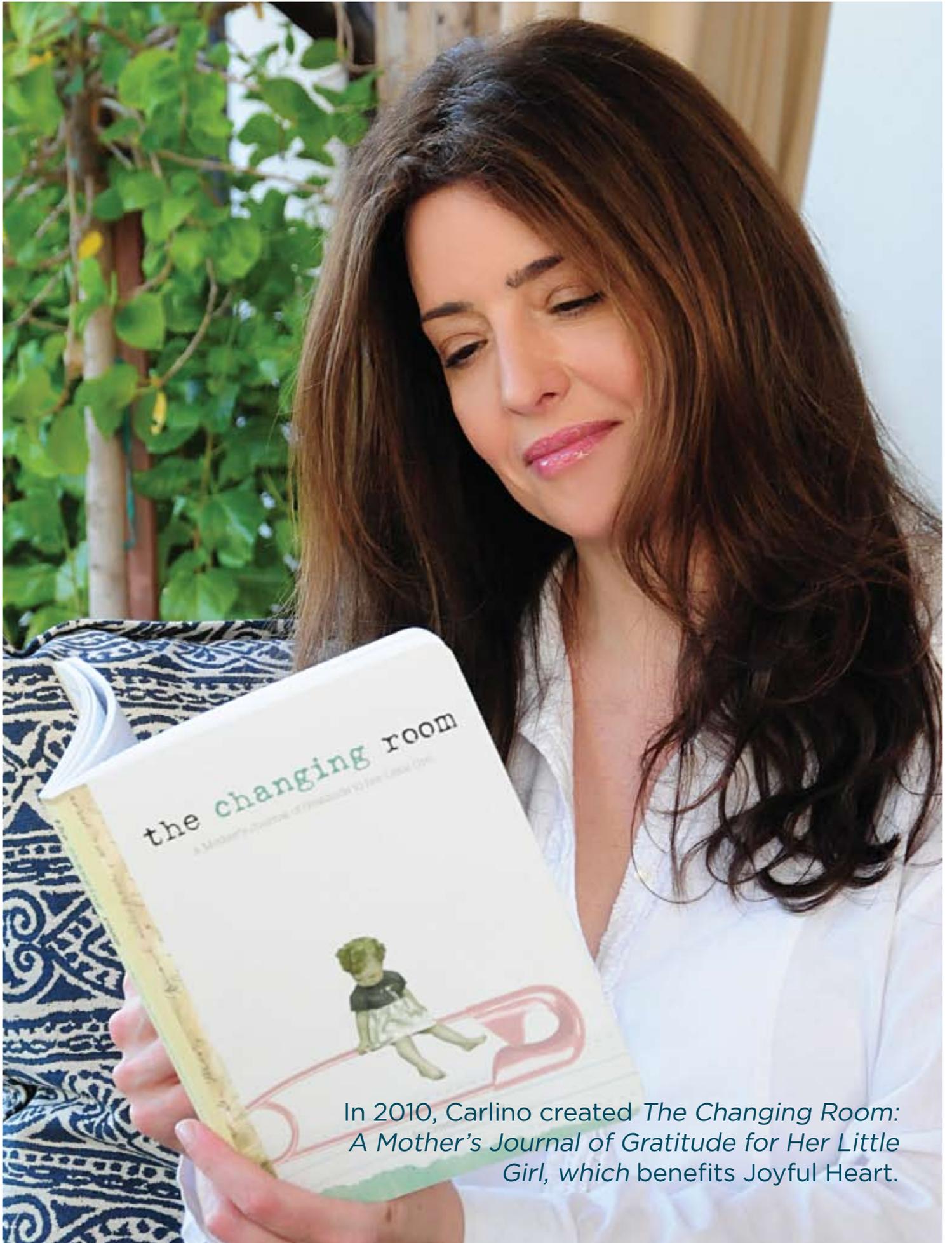
**CC:** I guess I feel called, very much the way Mariska was called to do what she's doing. I feel like it's something I know I can do. I am extremely clear on my limitations, which is why I choose not to sit on boards or get myself completely immersed. I try to take more of a visionary, strategic, outside role with the nonprofits I've worked with and ask, "What can I do with my particular set of skills to help this cause?" I just want to help people who are really putting themselves out on that limb. And I don't put myself out on a limb, by the way. That's why I so admire people who do.

**PH:** That's where [your charity network] Project Miracle comes in, right?

**CC:** Exactly. It's really just about supporting others. Whenever I see a person, I'll think, "Okay, what product would be compatible with this person? What marketing platform makes sense for this person?" When I think of Mariska, I think of her as a mother, and that's what the Changing Room project for Joyful Heart is about. She's already been captured as an actress and as an activist. I wanted to capture her as a mother.

**PH:** You've talked about how you're motivated by a desire to help people. Have there been moments on your journey that have frustrated you?

**CC:** I just can't believe this is the best we can do as people in this world. Whether we're talking about the issues that JHF covers [or] the environment, no matter where you look, we've got to do better. So I just say, rather than asking someone else to do better, why don't I just do better? I'm very motivated by looking at my daughter and at all these kids coming out of her school, and I think, "This is not right. We cannot hand this world over to these kids the way it is. We can't continue to tolerate things that are just intolerable." We all have to do our part, and my part [is]



In 2010, Carlino created *The Changing Room: A Mother's Journal of Gratitude for Her Little Girl*, which benefits Joyful Heart.

a supporting cast member, if you will.

**PH: How did your association with Joyful Heart begin?**

**CC:** I met Mariska through a friend who said, “You’ve got to meet her, she wants to meet you. I think she would be a great match for philosophy.” I’ve never had time to watch a lot of TV, so I asked, “Mariska Hargitay? Who is that?” And then I saw her picture, and said, “Wait, that’s that woman I love!” Because I’d seen the show once a long time ago and just really connected with her character the moment I saw her on screen. So I said, “That’s who you’re talking about? Love the character, love the woman. I’m in all the way!” Then I just had to practice saying her name.

**PH: What does Joyful Heart’s cause mean to you?**

**CC:** I learned late in my life that one of my dearest friends and her sister were victims of sexual assault and abuse by a parent—a very successful parent—and both of them just had enormous struggles in their adult lives. That is a horrifying story to look back on, knowing that this was happening to one of

your friends and her sister, and you had no awareness of it. The other thing that really got me is just the statistic alone. Breast cancer [affects] one out of seven women by the age of 70–75. Then you looked at this statistic, one out of three or four [women will experience sexual or domestic violence]. That means that one out of three times you’re hugging a woman, she’s been through some very, very awful things. But so often, you’re not going to hear about it from them because they’re not going to talk about it. So I wanted to help Joyful Heart open up the dialogue in a safe way.

**PH: What do you envision when you picture progress?**

**CC:** Getting the statistics out there, for starters, to let people know this is happening, and to let them know they have so many more friends who have gone through this than they realize. I would also hope it would get women to be much more compassionate with each other, because women sometimes have trouble with that. I’ve also had to speak to my daughter about all of this. I’ve had to teach my daughter things I never imagined I would

teach her by seven and eight years old. I didn’t know these things growing up. I couldn’t even fathom having the conversations I’ve already had with my daughter. But we went through it. It was hard, but you have to do it. Whether you have a daughter or a son, you’re going to have to have a conversation with your children earlier than may be comfortable. I think the education piece for parents is an area where Joyful Heart can be really, really helpful.

**PH: I know that you had a very powerful, life-changing, mountaintop experience.**

**Can you talk about that?**

**CC:** (She laughs.) Actually, I’ve had a couple. But the greatest epiphany was becoming a parent, realizing that all the things that I thought mattered don’t matter one bit. That’s what *The Changing Room* is about. My daughter made everything count. Whether it was the environment, or how I wanted to perceive beauty, or how I wanted to perceive assault or rape, everything changed with this child, because she gave me a view into what fragility really looks like when a child is defenseless against the things we’re talking about. ♥

“I guess I feel called, very much the way Mariska was called to do what she’s doing. I feel like it’s something I know I can do.”

Cristina Carlino was honored by Mariska Hargitay as the first recipient of Joyful Heart’s annual Heart of Gold Award at the Foundation’s inaugural gala in May 2008.



PHOTOGRAPHY: JEFF SOKOLOWSKI

## *sister anne* Kelley

*Reunion* has chronicled many significant caring organizations but none as long-established as The Good Shepherd Sisterhood, which dates back three hundred and seventy years. Anne Kelley has been a Sister for forty of those years.



PHOTOGRAPHY: MAILE ZAMBUTO

**“WE OPERATE IN SEVENTY-THREE countries,”** Sister Anne explains. “And domestic violence is alive and well in all seventy-three.”

Established in 1977, the Good Shepherd Shelter of Los Angeles is a privately funded transitional shelter for battered women with children. A dozen families in need receive apartments, education, therapy, legal and emotional advice and career training. Recently, Sister Anne transitioned from being the Shelter’s Executive Director and Director of Development, to focus exclusively on development—at one of the most challenging times in recent history for fund-raising. But Sister Anne has faced challenges before, and seen many miracles happen.

**REUNION:** What made you decide to focus on development full-time?

**SISTER ANNE KELLEY:** It gets frustrating trying to do two full-time jobs, and

knowing that neither is getting done as well as it should be. Since I know all the donors, it was more logical for me to concentrate on development, especially as we have such a fabulous staff. Also, because of the economy, donations are down while domestic violence is up. Good Shepherd Shelter remains totally privately funded so that we can individualize our services within a flexible time frame. It’s tough to put a tight timeline on personal healing; if one member of the family improves, there might be three others who need more time.

**REUNION:** What made you decide to treat whole family units?

**AK:** For ten years I worked with teens who were runaways from abusive homes. When I returned to Los Angeles, the domestic violence movement had started. I’d seen how much damage is done by the time abused young people are sixteen; they don’t know what a

normal home looks like. We started the Shelter as a way to do early intervention within a family context, so that we could get the mothers involved and healed as well. If you heal the whole family together with the mother, you get a much higher success rate; it’s cheaper, faster, easier and more effective. I’m mostly a cheerleader for the moms. They’re the key.

**REUNION:** Are there differences in how men and women get trapped in a cycle of violence?

**AK:** Commonly, it’s men who witnessed their mothers being battered, or who were battered themselves. Women who were emotionally neglected in childhood are often more susceptible. Abusers are charming and manipulative and when these girls are told they’re wonderful, they fall for these lines very quickly. Possessiveness and jealousy seem flattering at first, and it takes a while to

figure out it's a huge red flag. We have some wonderful guys at the Shelter so the children can experience what a healthy male looks like.

**REUNION:** Your clients must have gone through some very extreme situations.

**AK:** Mothers will do anything to protect their children. Often my mouth just drops while I listen to their stories. They have no idea how brave they are, because no one has ever affirmed them.

**REUNION:** The Shelter offers advice on nutrition, yoga and you even have a swimming pool. Are there any other therapies you find helpful?

**AK:** I have my own version of pet therapy. I had every pet imaginable when I was growing up and I especially loved my horse. When I lived in Las Vegas as director of a program for teens from the juvenile court system, someone donated a small ranch with horses,

goats and chickens. It did the girls soooo much good, not to mention me! Now, whenever things get tough, I walk my Rotweillers. They're our guard dogs, but they're also my babies.

**REUNION:** What else do you do for self-care?

**AK:** I meditate, walk every night, swim. I'm working on yoga, I play with my dogs and I go to the beach whenever I can.

**REUNION:** If you had to sum up the population you serve in one sentence, how would you describe them?

**AK:** Incredibly brave women who are determined to keep their children safe and create a healthy future for them after all of them have survived violence and abuse.

**REUNION:** In a few words, what makes you most joyful?

**AK:** Watching others blossom. ♥

# HEARTSHOP



PHOTOGRAPHY: CATHRINE WHITE

# HEARTSHOP



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## Me&Ro's Lotus Mandala Pendant

Me&Ro proudly continues its support of the Joyful Heart Foundation. With its third joyful product, Me&Ro offers this limited edition Lotus Mandala Pendant as a reminder that from darkness comes light and that we all have the ability to rise above life's difficulties.

Available in sterling silver on a natural cord, sterling silver on a silver chain or in 18K gold, the mandala is engraved with a lotus flower motif, inspired by an old hand-dyed lotus flower print. 100% of the net proceeds of the sale of Me&Ro's Heartshop products go directly to the Joyful Heart Foundation. [www.meandrojewelry.com](http://www.meandrojewelry.com)

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## The Changing Room: A Mother's Journal of Gratitude to Her Little Girl

Create, express and forever capture in your own words, drawings, photos and letters, this moment in time when you are the mother of your little girl in her first precious years. Cristina Carlino shares pure and personal insights, questions and images from her story and *The Changing Room* can be used to capture yours.

A proud Hero of the Heart, Cristina Carlino is donating 100% of the net profits to the Joyful Heart Foundation. **Search for "The Changing Room" on [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)**

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## AZIAM: Unleash Your Inner Joy!

AZIAM's "I Am Pure Joy" Wife Lover features a "Pro-Woman" twist on the classic "Wife Beater." Custom made specifically for the Joyful Heart Foundation, this baby rib tank reads, "I Am Pure Joy" - a bold message of courage, hope and empowerment.

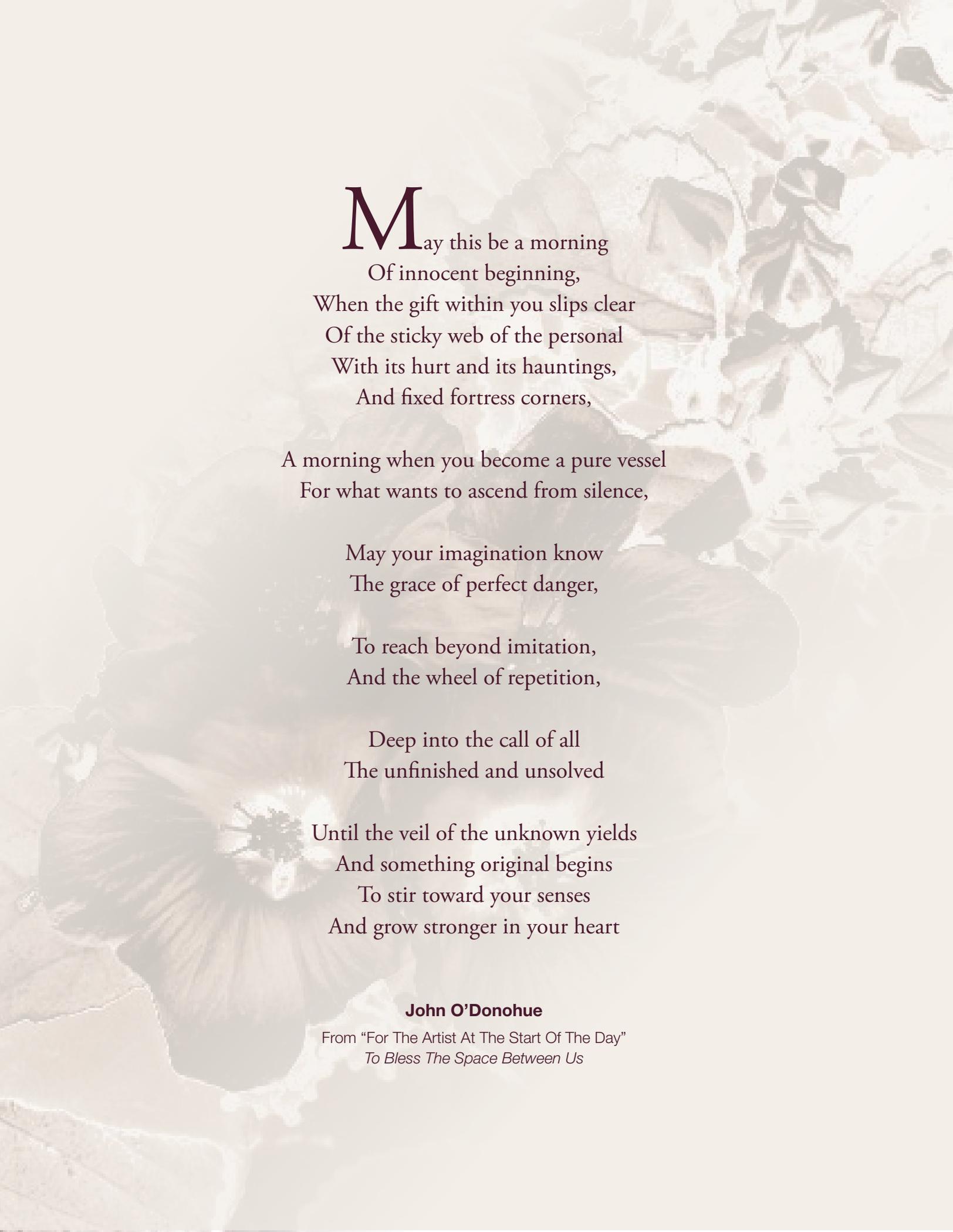
Each tank is custom cut, hand made and features gold thread stitching and a specialized graphic sure to inspire living, loving and BEING! The tanks are made of an organic supima cotton slub and lycra blend to assure a fashionable, sexy and comfortable fit. Ten percent of every sale is donated directly to Joyful Heart. [www.store.aziam.com](http://www.store.aziam.com)



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All of the products sold to benefit Joyful Heart are designed to inspire and educate. To learn more about each of them, please visit our online Heartshop at: [bit.ly/heartshop](http://bit.ly/heartshop)



**M**ay this be a morning  
Of innocent beginning,  
When the gift within you slips clear  
Of the sticky web of the personal  
With its hurt and its hauntings,  
And fixed fortress corners,

A morning when you become a pure vessel  
For what wants to ascend from silence,

May your imagination know  
The grace of perfect danger,

To reach beyond imitation,  
And the wheel of repetition,

Deep into the call of all  
The unfinished and unsolved

Until the veil of the unknown yields  
And something original begins  
To stir toward your senses  
And grow stronger in your heart

**John O'Donohue**

From "For The Artist At The Start Of The Day"  
*To Bless The Space Between Us*