

IGNITE



THE FIRST RESPONDER'S LIFE GUIDE
JUNE 2022 / ISSUE NO.6

MORE THAN
ENOUGH

THE MOMENTS

ENCOURAGE YOUR
SPOUSE TO SEEK
ADVENTURE

THE TRUTH ABOUT
EMOTIONAL TRAUMA

PREVENTING PERMANENT
SOLUTIONS TO TEMPORARY
PROBLEMS

UNITING FIRST RESPONDER FAMILIES

YOU MATTER!

IGNITE MAGAZINE

JUNE 2022 / ISSUE NO. 06

Lorie Gurnett – Creator & Editor

Sandra Grace – Assistant Editor

CONTENTS

- 04 EDITOR'S INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGE
- 05 MORE THAN ENOUGH
- 10 PREVENTING PERMANENT SOLUTIONS TO TEMPOTARY PROBLEMS
- 15 THE MOMENTS
- 20 THE TRUTH ABOUT EMOTIONAL TRAUMA
- 25 ENCOURAGE YOUR SPOUSE TO SEEK ADVENTURE
- 30 HONORING THE FALLEN



“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”

— Matthew 5:43-45



Lesley Ann Whittle

Lesley Ann Whittle, author of *Battlefield of the Heart*, is a transformation coach, helping people discover their true identity and purpose, defeat their giants, and develop a victorious mindset, so they can experience fullness of life.

Lesley is married to pastor and missionary Michael K Whittle, founder of Good News Gospel Church in the UK. She has two sons and two grandsons.

www.lesleyannwhittle.com



Dr. Sunil Raheja

Dr. Sunil Raheja has been a psychiatrist and coach for over 25 years. He equips overwhelmed, frustrated, and distracted high-achievers to evaluate their next steps, so they can create the life they hunger for while still having time for family, friends, and fun.

Along with his private practice, Dr. Raheja has a YouTube podcast based on the theme of his book, *Dancing with Wisdom: A Sacred Quest to Restore Meaning, Purpose, and Fun to Your Life and Work* (available on Amazon, Kindle, and Audible).

Dr. Raheja lives in London, England with his wife, Sally. They have four grown children.



Danielle Bernock

Danielle Bernock is a trauma-informed self-love coach, author, speaker, podcast host, and founder of 4F Media. She helps men, women, and organizations EMERGE with clear vision of their value, TAKE ownership of their choices, and CHART a path to their promise to become Victorious Souls who embrace the change from survive to thrive, through the power of the love of God. Her first book *Emerging with Wings* started it all. <https://daniellebernock.com/>



Tami Imlay

Tami Imlay is a USAF Veteran and USAF Widow. She lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma with her two amazing kids. Tami has learned to embrace life as it comes and turns ashes into beauty no matter the circumstances. Using her military background, MBA, and MFT, Tami is a Restoration and Confidence Coach and host of her Restored Spirit podcast. She uses the love of Christ, the Enneagram, and the power of neuroscience to change lives and inspire hope.



Cory Holstein

Cory Holstein was born in Dayton, Ohio. He was five years old when his family relocated to Arizona, and he lives there still, with his wife and two dogs. After graduating from Arizona State University, Cory joined the U.S. Army in 2014. He spent most of his military career at Fort Bragg, NC, serving as Gunner and Section Chief in the 18th Field Artillery Brigade and later as a Section Chief in the 2nd Infantry Division in South Korea. After he left active duty in 2018, he spent two years serving in the Army Reserve. He was an Observer Controller Trainer in the 653rd OCT Battalion in Arizona until May 2020. In his free time, Cory enjoys archery, paddleboarding, and Jiu Jitsu with fellow veterans, family, and friends.

PAINFUL GROWTH

BY EDITOR: LORIE GURNETT

For some people, growth can be the dawn of a new chapter in their lives, an exciting new adventure, or perhaps a step forward out of the muck of their past. Others focus more on the consequences of growth. In my experience, we cannot have growth without pain. Growth for children could bring joint pain or the emotional pain of not fitting in. For teenagers, growth is more emotional than physical as they try to discover who they really are.

We all want change to some degree, but what will that journey actually look like? Will it be a saunter or calming stroll through life or a strenuous upward climb to reach the top of that looming mountain? Sure, be it a saunter or a strenuous climb, we can usually map and plan out our next footing and continue forward. Now, what happens when trauma weighs heavily down upon us? How do we find the strength to focus on that next step with fear hitting on every side;

anger tearing us apart from the inside; anxiety drowning us, filling our lungs with toxic lies? Where is the hope? Are we all alone? Does anyone see us? Does anyone care? Will we survive each suffocating memory? Will our storms continue to collide and build one upon another, or is there a way through?

When we lose sight of who we are, surrender control to our terror, and believe the lies to be true, we lose the battle. We must fix our eyes, like Peter did, on Jesus. Christ will teach us to walk on the water, where the crushing trauma, waves, and shattering lies will no longer be a threat. I admit it is not an easy journey, but through faith, forgiveness, and shifting focus on the positives, our perspectives with change. We will experience those growth pains, but we will be strong enough to get back up, for He is always holding us.

MORE THAN ENOUGH

**BY: Lesley Ann
Whittle**

In my head, I knew that God loved me for who I was; but deep down, I wasn't so sure. I would constantly want to do more and to achieve more because I felt I was never good enough. I felt ineffective, unimportant, and insignificant. I always fell short no matter what I did. My expectations were too high, and I let myself down constantly and caused myself pain. I was drowning in a sea of negative emotions. I could never reach the expectations of people in the past, and I never measured up; so I was constantly seeking the approval I could never get. Until one day I realized I would never gain it! I had to stop living like that. I had to





learn to like myself and *be*, rather than *do*. I discovered my worth was not based on accomplishments. I can never be worthy enough to receive God's grace by anything that I do. I am worthy by the death of Jesus on the cross; He makes me worthy.

We do not need to accomplish anything or get everything right for God to love us. He loved us before we were born and before we did anything good.

We ask ourselves, "Am I enough?" In one way, no, we are never enough, and that is a good place to be: dependent on

Him who is more than enough.

On the other hand, we say, "Yes, I am enough," because of what Jesus has done and made possible on the cross. We can be confident that whatever God asks us to do, He will equip us with everything we need.

"The thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy," and your identity is top of his agenda because he does not want you to realize who you are. Satan wants to steal your peace and joy and spoil your relationships. He wants to distract you by focusing on your own thoughts and feelings rather than

looking to God and who He is for you. Satan wants you to feel alone and that God has left you.

Life can be extremely difficult, the heart truly a battlefield; we can travel so far in our minds without leaving the sofa. One day in the middle of depression and hopelessness, struggling to overcome, totally governed by emotions, I asked, "Lord, is there anything that you did not make provision for when you died on the cross? Did you leave out depression and anxiety, and expect us to overcome our emotional struggles by ourselves?" Of course not!

Jesus made every provision,

"Jesus is more than enough; and whatever your need may be, the provision can be found in him."
— Lesley Ann Whittle



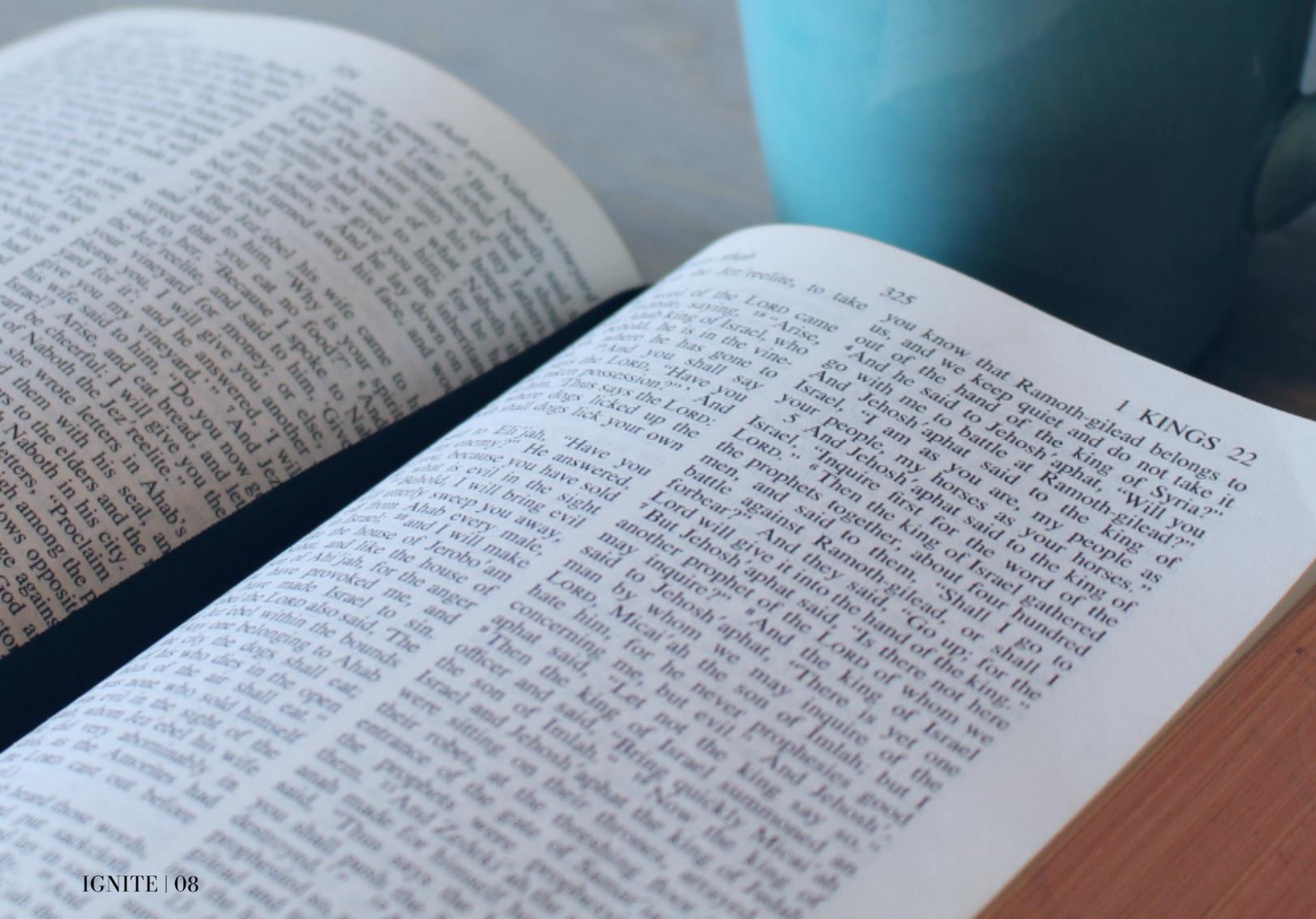
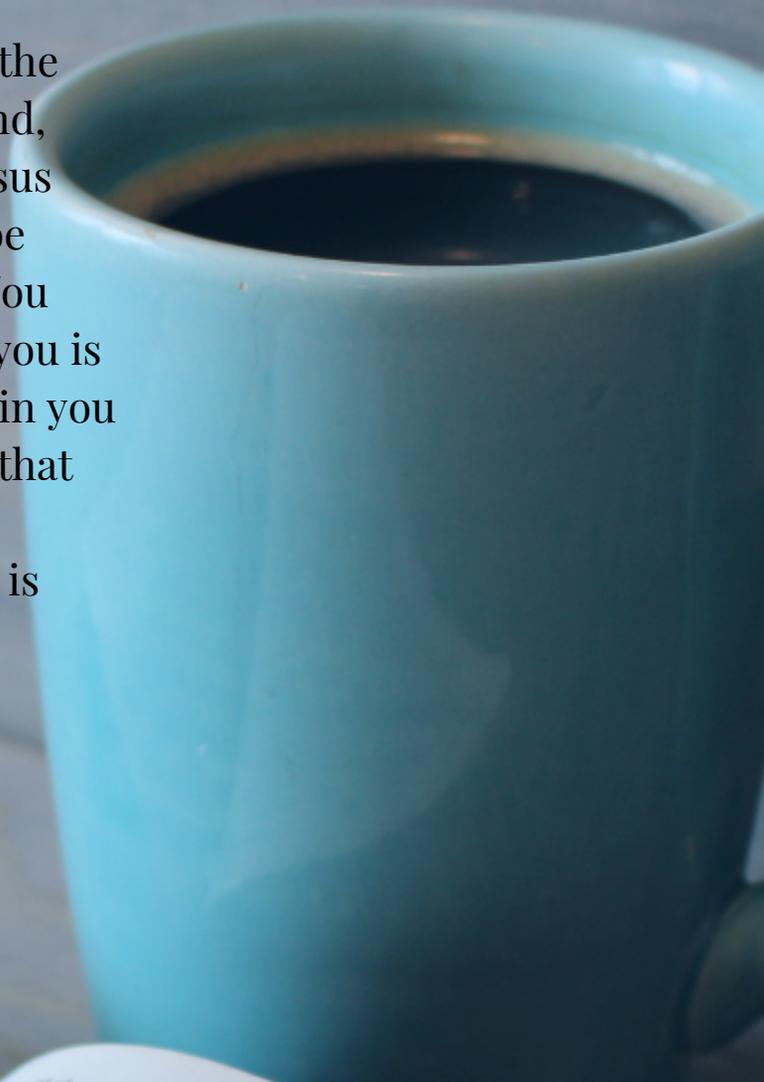
and we can speak to our emotions; we can command them to be steady. And that is what I began to do. I prayed out loud Psalm 34 and 42 and commanded my soul: "Oh, my soul, why so disturbed within me? Why so downcast? I will praise the Lord. Come on, soul, rejoice before I see the outcome." This shows great faith. God's Word is true and does not return to Him void but accomplishes what He sets out to do.

We cannot think two thoughts simultaneously. Whatever we dwell on, our emotions will follow. So to feel happier and stronger, we need to change our thinking. In Matthew 14, Peter walks on the water toward Jesus. As soon as Peter took his eyes off Jesus and focused on the storm around him, he began to sink! Keep your eyes fixed on Jesus. Settle, fasten, lock, and focus your thoughts on how much He loves you. Trust Him to see you through.

Jesus is more than enough; and whatever your need may be, the provision can be found in Him. He is above all things. There is no other name higher than the name of Jesus. His name is higher than depression and sickness. We can go to His Word as our utmost and final authority in our lives and for every situation we find ourselves in. His Word is higher

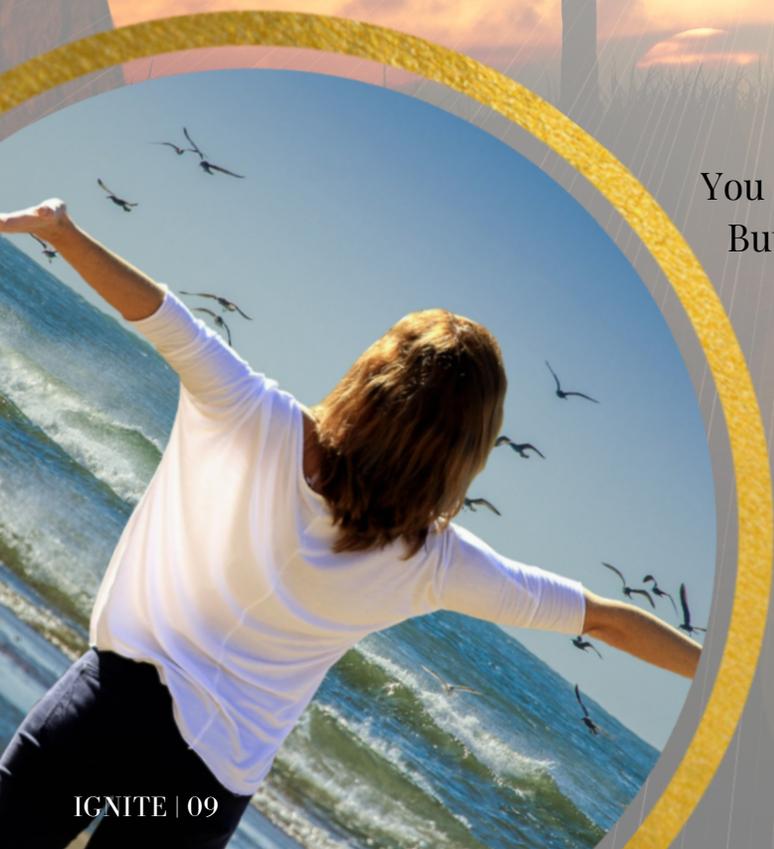
In your struggle, practice starting from the place of victory with the outcome in mind, not from the place of defeat. Because Jesus has made us to be overcomers, we can be assured of victory. You may feel weak. You may feel you're not enough. But God in you is more than enough: greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world. Jesus came that you may have life in all its fullness, overflowing with all His blessings. Jesus is more than enough for you.

— Lesley Ann Whittle





and more powerful than the physical evidence we see with our natural eyes. His powerful spoken Word created the universe. God said, "Let there be light," and it was so. We are His children, made in His likeness, with the same creative power by the words we confess. In your struggle, practice starting from the place of victory with the outcome in mind, not from the place of defeat. Because Jesus has made us to be overcomers, we can be assured of victory.



You may feel weak. You may feel you're not enough. But God in you is more than enough: greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world. Jesus came that you may have life in all its fullness, overflowing with all His blessings. Jesus is more than enough for you.

Article by Lesley Ann Whittle



PREVENTING PERMANENT SOLUTIONS TO TEMPORARY PROBLEMS

Dr. Sunil Raheja

I have a friend who, over ten years ago, made a serious suicide attempt. His wife had called me at around 8:30 a.m. saying he had left home very early without speaking to her. She knew he had a lot on his mind, and she was worried about him. He had not responded to her repeated calls or texts. He was not at his office. We agreed the police needed to be called. We also started to search frantically for him. Thankfully, his attempt was unsuccessful; and all these years later, he is in a much more positive place.

One of the great tragedies of modern life is the increasing number of people who feel life is not worth living. It is a difficult subject that gets relatively little coverage; and yet when you look at the statistics, it is quite staggering how widespread an issue it is in our increasingly complex and challenging world.

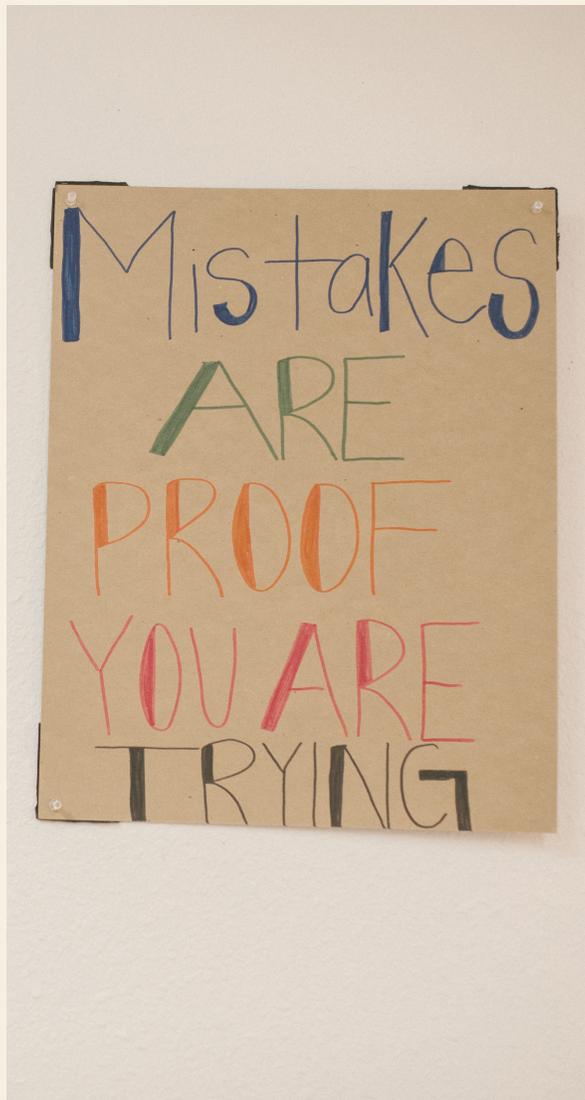
In most countries, the incidence of suicides is higher than the incidence of homicides. More people die of suicide than die of

One of the great tragedies
of modern life is the
increasing number of
people who feel life is not
worth living.

— Dr. Sunil Raheja



war and murder. An estimated one million people worldwide die by suicide every year. Globally, suicide ranks among the three leading causes of death in those aged 15–44 years. Attempted suicides are up to 20 times more frequent than completed ones.



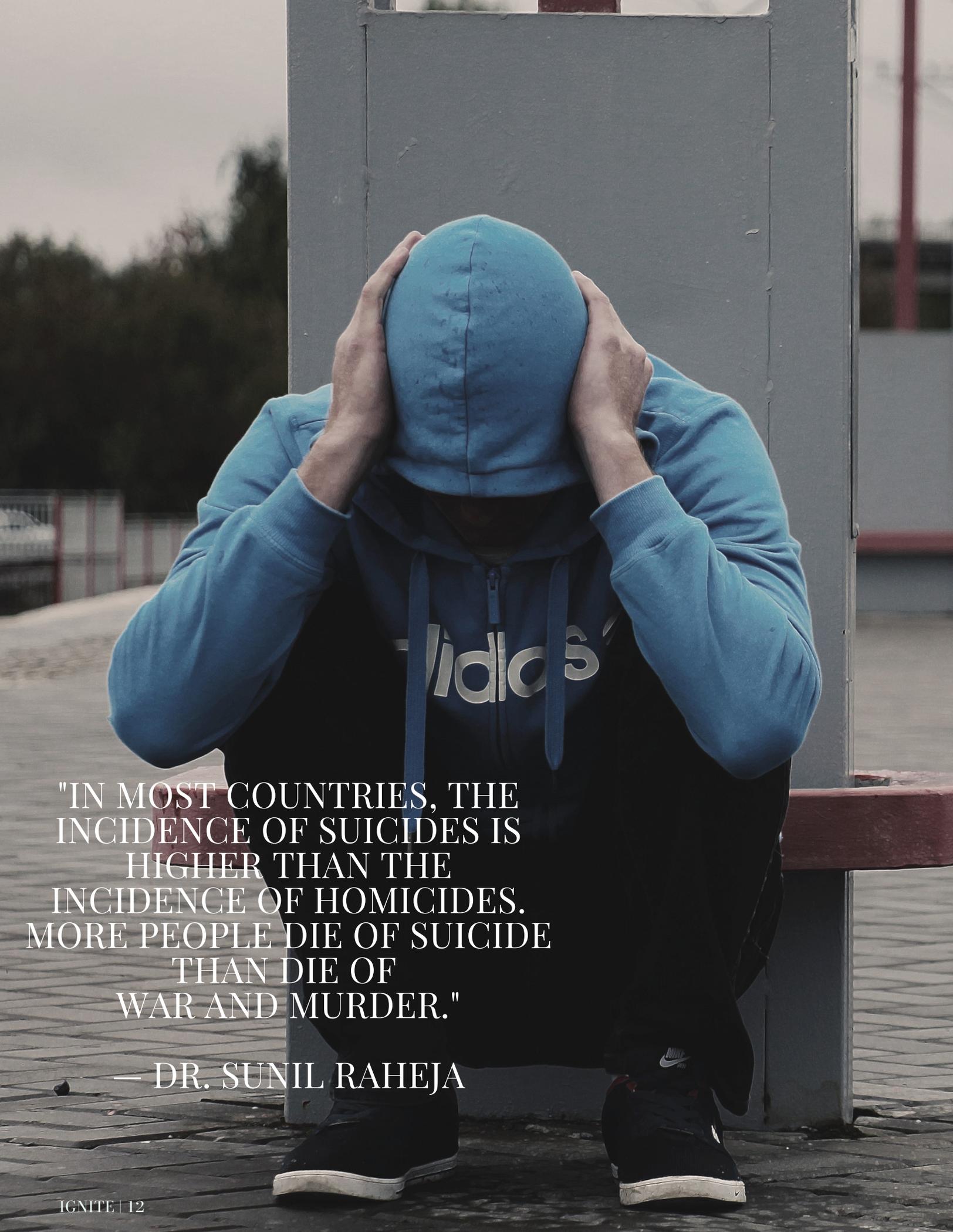
Here are four myths about how to respond to someone whom you suspect may be considering suicide.

Myth: You should not talk about suicide as it might put the idea into someone's head.
Fact: Talking about suicide openly will not make it more likely to happen. Just being there for the person and listening in an accepting way can help the person feel less isolated and frightened.

Myth: If someone has tried suicide before they don't really mean it. It is just a cry for help.

Fact: Those who have attempted suicide before have a higher chance of eventually dying by suicide, although many people have suicidal feelings without acting on them.

Myth: Most people who talk about killing themselves rarely complete suicide.



"IN MOST COUNTRIES, THE
INCIDENCE OF SUICIDES IS
HIGHER THAN THE
INCIDENCE OF HOMICIDES.
MORE PEOPLE DIE OF SUICIDE
THAN DIE OF
WAR AND MURDER."

— DR. SUNIL RAHEJA

Fact: Most people who kill themselves have talked about it and/or given some verbal clues.

Myth: Once someone has decided to die by suicide there is nothing you can do to stop them.

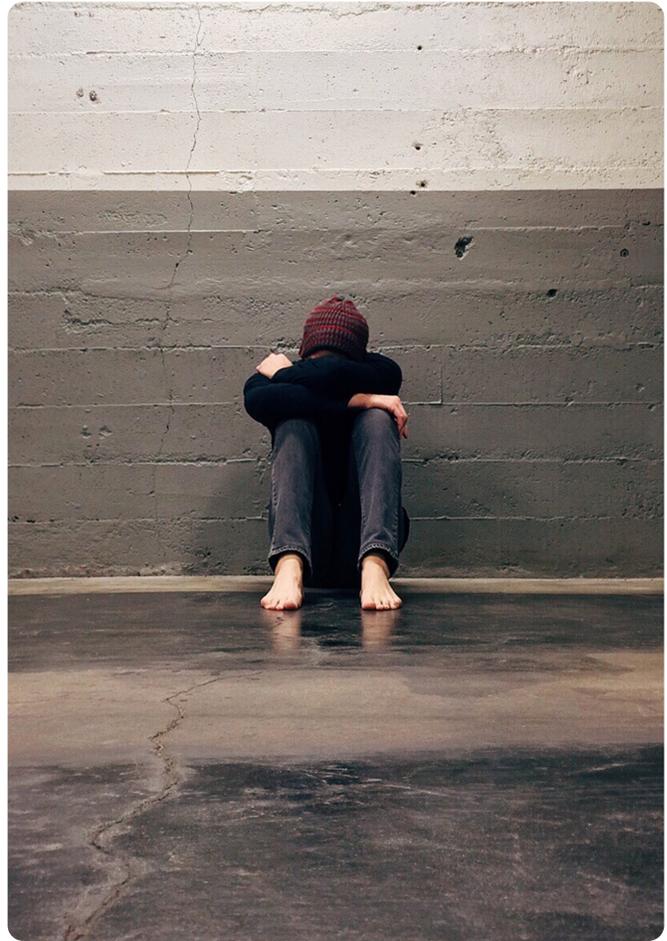
Fact: Suicide can be prevented. Many people who are suicidal do not want to die. They just want to stop their pain.

Here are some practical ways you can help:

- Talk to the person about how they are feeling. Ask them if they have felt like this before and how long they have been feeling like this.
- Listen to the person and take them seriously.
- Don't dismiss expressions of hopelessness as a 'cry for help' or try to 'jolly' them out of it.
- It is important to encourage the person to get some help.
- What support do they have? If the person has anyone else involved in their care, ask them if they have let them know how they are feeling.
- Does the person have someone to talk to or a helpline number to call if they feel desperate?
- If the person says they do not want anyone else to know how they are feeling, explain that if you are concerned about their immediate safety and you feel they may harm themselves (or others) you will have to contact someone to inform them (such as the mental health team, the general practitioner, or the police).

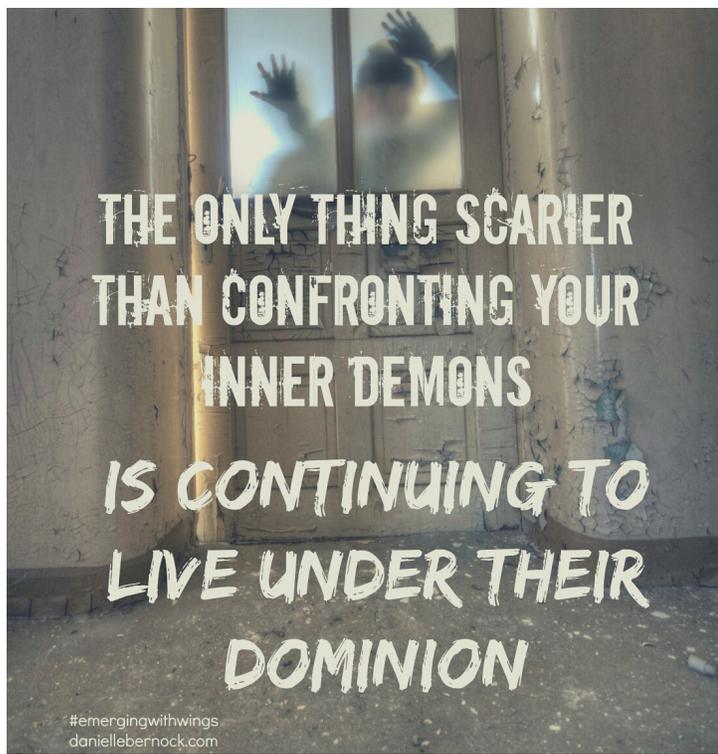


I had a remarkably sobering insight when I spoke to my friend a few days after his suicide attempt. He told me about his thought processes in the early hours of the morning of the day he went missing. He had been full of anxiety and worry about the financial issues he was facing. Suddenly, a thought came that he could get away from it all by ending his life. At that point he described how he had an overwhelming sense of calm and peace. It was at that point he decided he would make the attempt to end his life. His account was a vivid reminder to me how dangerously our minds can mislead us about what is right for us. He had not shared his thought processes openly with anyone to get other perspectives.



Today, when I look at his transformed life, and how content and positive he now is, I am reminded how unnecessary such permanent solutions to temporary problems can be.

Dr. Sunil Raheja
Psychiatrist and Executive Coach,
bringing wisdom to successful
people who feel stuck.
drsunil.com



THE TRUTH ABOUT EMOTIONAL TRAUMA

Danielle Bernock

Trauma. The very word invokes emotion. It's no wonder the masses avoid any connection to it. However, the aversion to the word 'trauma' drives the truth into the darkness. In this dark place, emotional trauma festers like flesh-eating bacteria—eats away at the soul like metastasizing cancer—until it suffocates and silences its victim. But there is hope. Light and love can deliver us from such destruction. For this to happen we need to know and embrace three things.

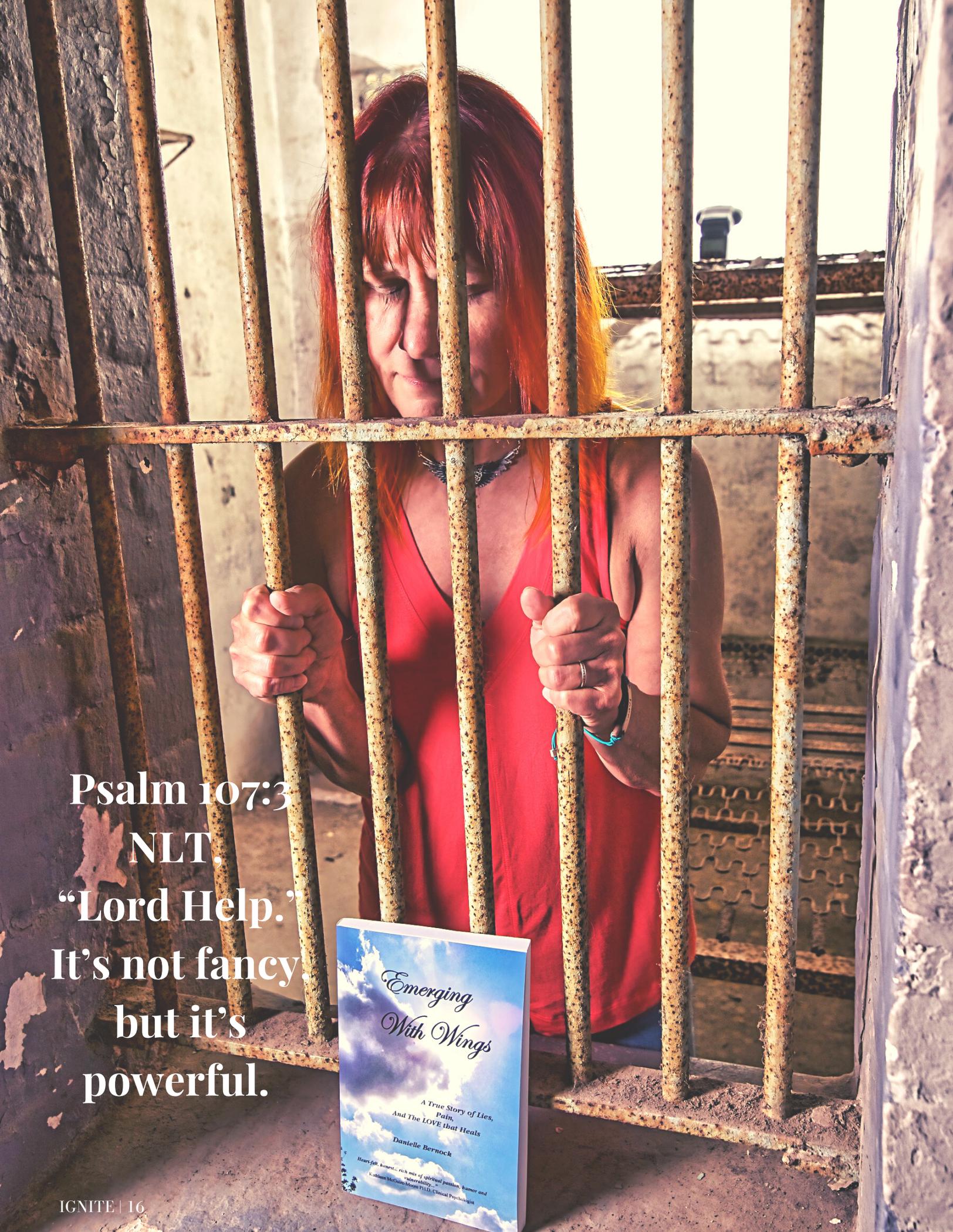
1. Trauma is personal
2. Trauma is an involuntary wound
3. Trauma can't heal itself

These three things are the pathway to inner healing and freedom.

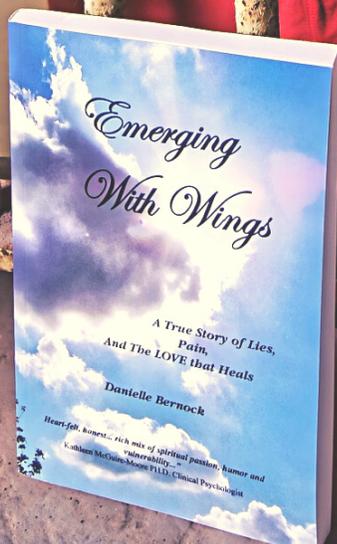
TRAUMA IS PERSONAL

Those three words were the beginning of my freedom. I lived bound in a trauma-induced prison for years, dismissing the cause of my misery. Growing up, I endured multiple traumas. But to me, it was just my life. Trauma wasn't a word I knew much less something to validate or embrace as truth. We live in a world filled with comparisons. That isn't always bad. When shopping for a melon we compare them to choose the best one. However, when we compare things that affect our sense of value, the comparison is poisonous. It's toxic to our souls ... our sense of self. I compared my experiences in life—my trauma—to things I deemed "more significant." Some measure trauma using a big T and a little t. This is damaging because it causes shame to the one measured smaller, driving them into that dark place of hiding. The measuring and dismissing of the trauma exacerbates it. Only by validating the truth can the involuntary wound begin to heal. Your trauma matters because it's yours.

"Trauma is personal. It does not disappear if it is not validated. When it is ignored or invalidated the silent screams continue, internally heard only by the one held captive. When someone enters the pain and hears the screams, healing can begin." — Danielle Bernock, *Emerging with Wings: A True Story of Lies, Pain, and the LOVE that Heals*.



Psalm 107:3
NLT,
“Lord Help.”
It’s not fancy,
but it’s
powerful.



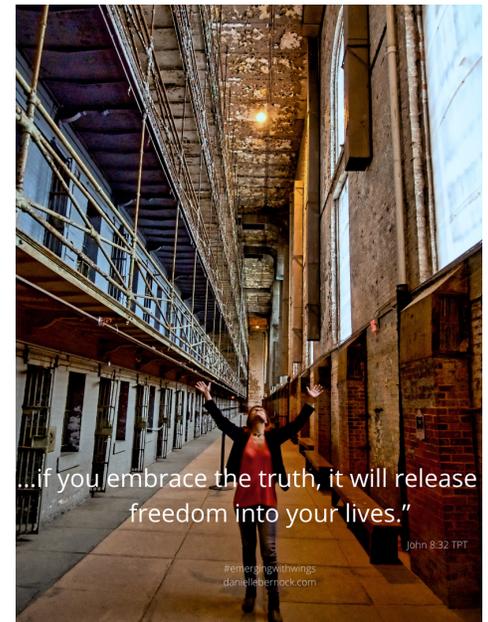


TRAUMA IS AN INVOLUNTARY WOUND
Contrary to what many believe, trauma is not an event. Trauma is a wound. It is the wound left behind in the brain and soul after a person has been subjected to something they were unable to process. Shame is one of the primary side effects of trauma. This shame is what drives the wounded into silence and hiding. The voice of shame lies, blaming the victim, stealing their value, erasing their sense of identity, and shattering their perceptual capacity. The lies are pervasive



"Trauma is not the bad things that happen to you but what happens inside you as a result of what happens to you."

— Dr. Gabor Mate, *The Wisdom of Trauma*

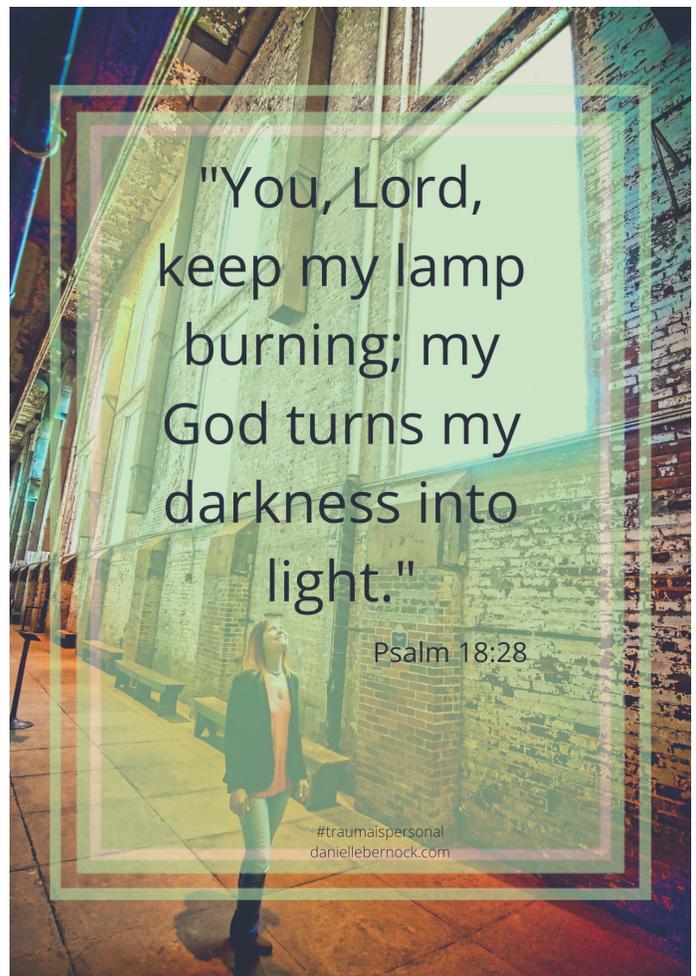


and laced with fear. The internal pain cripples with accusations like, *It's all your fault ... If only you would have _____ ... You should have known better ... You should be stronger than this ... You're making a big deal out of nothing ... You should be over it by now ...* But the truth is that trauma is not just a wound, it is involuntary. No one chooses to be traumatized. Trauma happens when a person is faced with something in such a way that it causes a wound in their brain and soul without their consent. **They couldn't have *not* been traumatized.** It's not their fault.

TRAUMA CAN'T HEAL ITSELF

Time, alone, doesn't heal trauma. This is where light and love come in to deliver us from destruction and set us free. There are only two things the Bible says that God is. God is light,

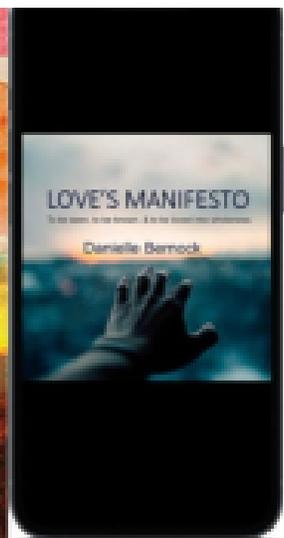
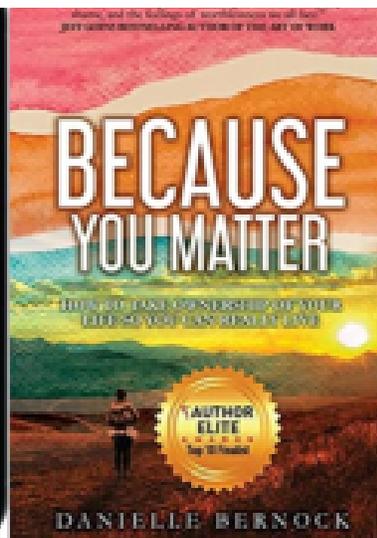
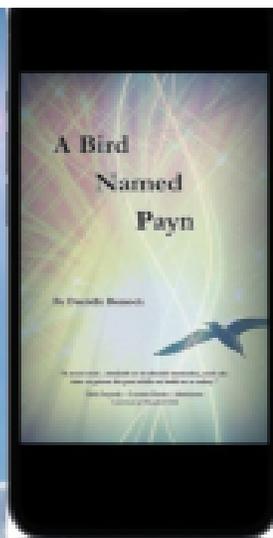
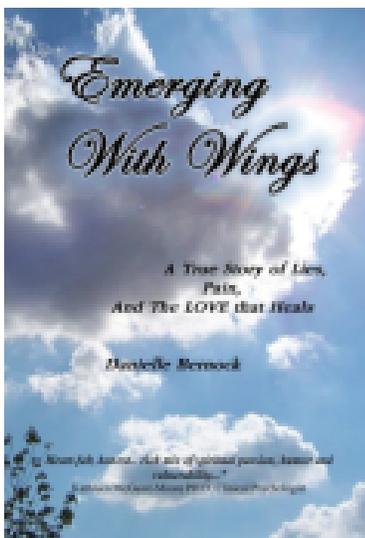
and God is love. It also says God heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds (Psalm 147:3), but it's not magical or automatic. The wound of trauma can be healed but requires a willing participant. Partnering with God, we can find healing because love drives out the fear that keeps us in the darkness. Love produces courage to run into the light and expose the truth of emotional trauma. God lovingly brings healing to the depths of our souls through His Word and the spirit of grace. We can begin the process of God helping us heal with just two words, found in Psalm 107:3 (NLT): "Lord Help." It's not fancy, but it's powerful. God doesn't need fancy from us, He wants real. When we bring our real pain to Him, He can minister real healing to our souls. This process of healing takes time, so patience is needed. Just like our bodies need time to process to heal, so do our souls. You can be healed.



Article by: Danielle Bernock

REMEMBER:

Trauma is personal, and yours matters.
 Trauma is an involuntary wound, and it's not your fault.
 Trauma can't heal itself, but it can be healed





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THE MOMENTS

BY: TAMI IMLAY

Have you ever watched an airplane take off? This giant piece of machinery lifting off with the grace of a feather ... It has always fascinated me to watch this phenomenon. When you experience fighter jets taking off in the midnight sky with full afterburners, the pride you feel is immeasurable. When it is your husband, the feeling intensifies. My eyes were filled with joy, sadness, and excitement. They were also filled with fear, not knowing what to expect. Not understanding the road I was about to walk. But laughing with 15 other women at the end of the runway as we cracked jokes about how we would survive this deployment.





We never know what is around the corner. We never know what wilderness we are walking into. We walk boldly day by day, understanding we have a job to do, understanding that our spouses and friends have a mission that is so far above ourselves we can't question why. In these moments, we have a way of lying to ourselves that everything will always be okay. We are not blind to what the mission entails or requires. We are not blind to what is being asked of our person or ourselves. But we have to reassure ourselves that, no matter what happens, we can handle it. Even when we feel that it is too much.

Trauma has a way of consuming you. Taking your breath and making you fight for it. It shows up when you least expect it and lasts longer than you wish. It looks different every day, and when it becomes part of your life, it never goes away. The trauma of losing my husband was too much. Listening to strange men in formal uniforms tell me that there was an accident and he didn't make it was a gut-punch. At that moment, I fell to the ground, feeling like my world was crumbling. Everything I knew to be true was stripped away with one swoop. I lost my bearings, my thoughts, and my dreams.



Many people do not initially think of grief as a trauma response. I didn't consider my grief a trauma. Living daily with a raw pain nagging at every fiber of your being is a trauma. I was told that any suffering is trauma; that was the moment healing could begin. I could understand what I was dealing with and empower myself not to feel that way forever. The flip side of experiencing trauma is grief. When you experience trauma, you also experience suffering and grieve what you knew to be true. The moment you accept that grief is a part of your life, your healing can begin.

Our lives are full of moments. Moments of happiness and joy; moments of sadness and tears. Trauma has a way of connecting these emotions into one entangled experience.



"The things you go through do not get to define your life."

— TAMI IMLAY

Living with trauma does not mean you have to experience raw pain constantly. It doesn't mean you have to live in sadness forever. You get to choose how the trauma affects you. You get to decide how you encounter life. You get to choose, every moment, whether you allow life to happen around you; or you get to be intentional about your thoughts, emotions, and actions.

Each day, you have a life to live. You get to determine how YOUR day will go. The moment you decide that trauma no longer controls the day and allow it simply to influence your decisions is the day you take your life back.

I had to stop and listen to what my body, mind, and soul needed. I needed to stop putting on a brave face and address what I was going through. Embrace the pain because, for years, I had embraced the love. By embracing the pain, I could connect my experience to it and free myself from its rawness. I was able to take each moment and choose, not only to live, but to thrive. I didn't have to avoid the emotions and thoughts but could allow them to change how I see the world: allow them to give me a new lens of compassion and grace. Allow me to

**"YOU GET TO MAKE A
CHOICE EACH DAY ABOUT
HOW YOU WILL LIVE YOUR
LIFE. CHOOSE JOY."
— TAMI IMLAY**



understand that with every joyful moment, there is a sadness that others may not understand; but it deepens my connection with life.

You don't get to decide what you go through or pick and choose your experiences. You do get to resolve how you will live through them. Living with trauma is not a temporary reality, but you don't have to exist in constant pain and suffering. Every decision you make does not have to reflect a trauma response. You get to take the moments of your life and craft a beautiful story from ashes.

God knows what you went through, what you are going through, and what is on the horizon. Nothing is a shock or coincidence to Him. The amazing thing is, He is the one who will, Himself, restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. He knows there will be suffering; but He has a plan for you, and HE is the one who is going to make it possible.

Tami Imlay
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“Trauma and grief go hand-in-hand, and everyone experiences them.”

“After you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.”

— 1 Peter 5:10



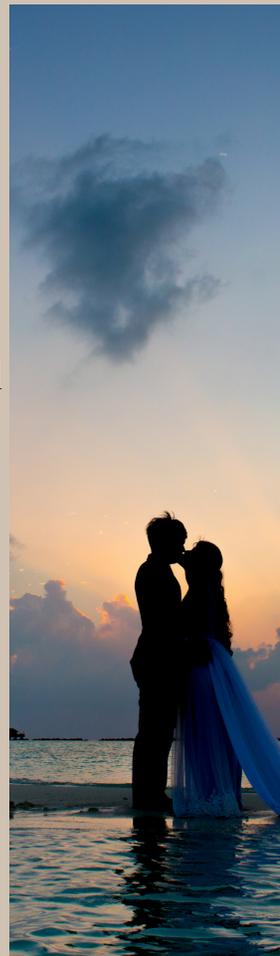
ENCOURAGE YOUR SPOUSE TO SEEK ADVENTURE

CORY HOLSTEIN

In my opinion, marriage is a sacred bond of two individuals who care for one another. It is a give-and-take relationship: when one person in the relationship is in need, the other does what any loving companion would do—handle the situation and rise to the occasion. Loved ones do not enjoy seeing their partners in pain or suffering. If a loved one is ailing in some way, it is a natural response for the other partner to support and encourage unconditionally.

I am a veteran. I believed I could change the world through my service. Earlier in my life, I volunteered to defend my country, my people. After I served my time, I chose to leave the military. During my military career, I was a single soldier. After the military and transitioning back to civilian life, I moved back to my home state and met the love of my life. Our meeting was like a fairy tale, so to speak. In a sense, like it was meant to be. We dated for over a year, then we decided to make it official, which was one of the best days of my life.

However, as good as things were, life happens. I felt anxiety and depression start to emerge. I told myself that nothing was wrong; all was good. I lived life like a normal guy; my two priorities were work and taking care of my family. After feeling this way for a while, my wife began to bring up concerns regarding my behavior. I was in denial when she approached the topic. Internally, I began to notice that my moods had changed, and I was acting different. I experienced multiple anxiety attacks during COVID lockdowns. These attacks woke me up to realize that I needed to seek help to deal with anxiety and depression.



My wife and I discussed therapy as an option. I agreed and began meeting with a therapist weekly. The therapist helped me develop tools and techniques to cope with anxiety and depression. These techniques helped me for a short time, but the real challenge is managing these symptoms long-term. The feelings are not as bad as they were before I sought out therapy, but they are still present. Every day presents new opportunities and challenges, I still experience anxiety and depression, but now I am equipped with methods to help ease the pain and make me a better partner.



**"Do one thing every day that scares you."
— Eleanor Roosevelt**



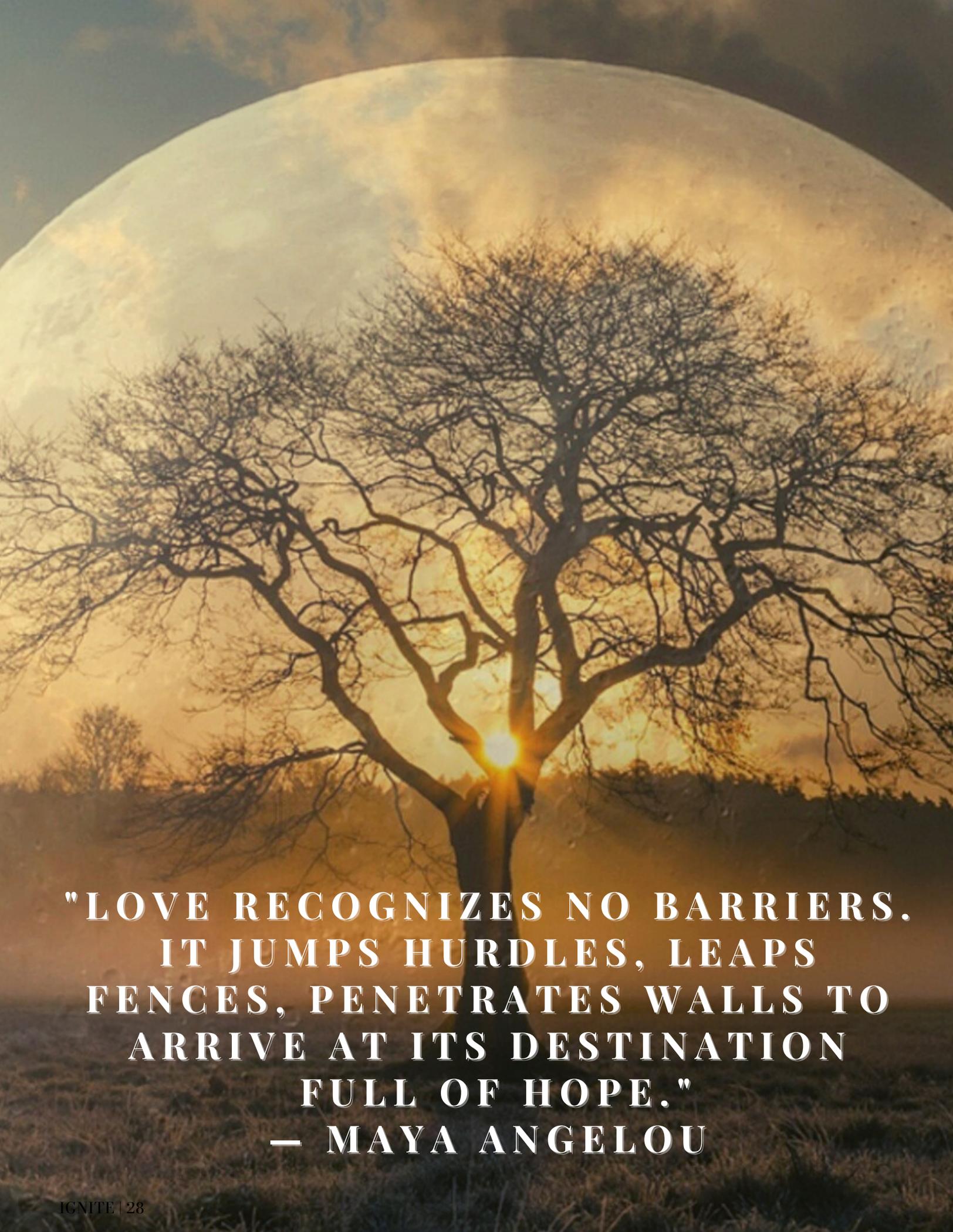
During this whole experience, my wife never gave up on trying to help me. She constantly encouraged me to seek out activities that I enjoy and that make me happy. She suggested I seek out new challenges that get me out of my comfort zone. With her support, I decided to connect with my local Jiu Jitsu Academy. I drove to class the first day experiencing extreme anxiety. I sat in my truck with the intent that I was going to pass out. I began taking deep breaths, a technique I learned from therapy. Through the simple act of deep breathing, I calmed myself down enough to walk in the front door. I never regret going to the class. I stepped out of my routine and faced a fear of the unknown. That allowed me to



find an outlet, and I haven't had any major bouts with anxiety or depression. If she hadn't encouraged me to seek out something new and challenging, I may still be experiencing high levels of anxiety and depression.

Encouragement within the marriage is important because, as partners, we should be trying to better each other every single day. We should be encouraging each other to seek out adventure and get out of our comfort zones. With the encouragement from my wife, I have become a better partner. I am more patient. I handle my emotions in a more appropriate manner. I am more resilient with daily challenges. All three of these things make for a better marriage.

In return, I also encouraged my wife to seek out adventure. As a result, she joined a yoga studio. Our marriage is stronger and happier by us committing to encourage one another daily to be better than the previous day.



**"LOVE RECOGNIZES NO BARRIERS.
IT JUMPS HURDLES, LEAPS
FENCES, PENETRATES WALLS TO
ARRIVE AT ITS DESTINATION
FULL OF HOPE."
— MAYA ANGELOU**



"Marriage is a sacred bond, and it is okay not to feel okay."
— Cory Holstein

Although we don't know what the future holds, we do know that we will be stronger together if we support and encourage one another. A solid foundation will help a marriage succeed through the good and bad times. A marriage is a give-and-take relationship. Encouragement is being supportive of each other, giving each other confidence to get through anything together. From the love of my wife, I found strength and hope in our bond through life.

Article by: Cory Holstein



IN HONOR OF OUR FALLEN HEROES

Deputy Sheriff Walter Jenkins
Deputy Sheriff Robert Adam Howard
Patrol Officer Brian Lee Sember
Sargent Nicholas W. Tullier
Officer Darryl Wayne Fortner
Officer David Glen Evens

HEROES

"Hard times don't create heroes. It is during the hard times when the 'hero' within us is revealed."

— Bob Riley