



## Newsletter

September 2021



## Suicide Prevention Awareness Month *with Teens Finding Hope*

It is time to raise awareness on this stigmatized topic and taboo subject. Let's use this month to spread crucial information to teens and families impacted by suicide. Our goal is to help individuals, friends and families find suicide prevention resources and help.

Within this newsletter you will find articles on radical hospitality, a story, information on how to create a Wellness Action Recovery Plan (WRAP) and how to support those we care about and how to take care of ourselves with compassion.

## A Sibling's Point of View

I am the fourth of five children. My older brother just celebrated his 30<sup>th</sup> birthday. A milestone for anyone and one we were not sure we'd make...

I remember bits and pieces of a flurry of activity when I was in the sixth grade. I remember a week where my younger brother and I were carted away and looked after by friends of my parents, and various family members that suddenly appeared in town. I remember sympathetic eyes looking at us, but not being able to understand why. I remember my mom and dad sharing with us that our older brother was really, really sad. That he tried to hurt himself, but the doctors were helping him get better. I don't think I understood the full gravity of what that meant, just that he was not living with us for a while. I remember missing him, so my mom pulled me out of school one day so we could bring him lunch at the hospital. I remember being excited, but nervous—not sure what to expect. Then I remember seeing him and having more understanding.

My brother was diagnosed with depression when he was in the third grade and later would be diagnosed with bipolar disorder his sophomore year of high school. His battle with depression and bipolar disorder is lifelong. He is with us today, and for that I am immeasurably grateful.

I share my story of being a sibling of someone who is impacted by depression and suicidal thoughts as September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. The more we talk about suicide, the more we can reduce the stigma. If you yourself are struggling, remember you are not alone. There is hope!

-Sibling of a Loved One

## Crisis Hotlines

## National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicide crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

1-800-273-TALK (8255) or CHAT

1-888-628-9454 (En Español)

1-800-799-4889 (TTY, for the deaf or hard of hearing)

### CRISIS TEXT LINE:

Text "HOME" to 741741

### VETERANS CRISIS LINE:

1-800-273-8255 & Press 1

CHAT: Text 838255

## Radical Hospitality

by Kristi Barth

What is it? **Radical hospitality is hospitality that goes beyond being friendly; it is welcoming guests with a warmth, openness, and authenticity that significantly exceeds expectations. It is intentional hospitality that**

**surprises and delights people by making them feel noticed, giving them personal attention, and providing excellent follow-through.**

We have seen hate crimes, protests, and destruction rock our world. We can get bogged down and feel that this isn't a good time or place to live or even raise our children.



How do we exhibit this kind of hospitality in our very broken world? What if we used the gifts we were blessed with to bless others? Many of you strive to do this each and every day. Some of us were gifted with the love of cooking, others love to taking care of others, still others love to teach or are great encouragers. Health is important to work towards. We each have unique talents. What if we focused on loving others through our gifts? Can we share love, spend time listening with our hearts and work to lift each other up? I think if we could, we would find that we have more in common with one another than different. Look for and seize opportunities to do good deeds. Take a risk. Invite new people into your circle, make space for others, not just the ones that are just like us. This includes broadening our circle to include other races, religions, and people struggling with mental health issues. It will take some work but be intentional.

## REMEMBER:

**You are a blessing. You are uniquely talented, and you have great value just as you are.**

**You are EPIC:**

**Essential**

**Phenomenal**

**Inspiring**

**Courageous**

"If you are a gifted person, it doesn't mean that you gained something. It means you have something to give back."

- Carl Jung -

THE WORLD IS  
SHORT STAFFED.  
PLEASE  
BE KIND TO THOSE  
WHO SHOWED UP



National Alliance on Mental Illness

[This NAMI link helps identify some indicators of a mental health crisis.](#) This can help you assess a situation and know what you can do.

[NAMI also offers crisis planning suggestions. Click here to learn more.](#)

*From NAMI*

A crisis is a natural aspect of life. When it happens you don't have to feel powerless. Be prepared with a plan and share it with friends and family.

**A Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP)** can be very helpful for overall care, and can help avoid a crisis. Here's some information to include in your WRAP:

- Phone numbers for you or someone you care for. Include therapists, psychiatrists and other healthcare providers
- Contact information of family and friends. A local crisis line number.
- If you need to find one search for "mental health crisis services" and list your county)
- Names and addresses of crisis centers and emergency rooms
- The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- The current diagnosis and list of medications.
- History of psychosis or suicide attempts if any.
- History of drug abuse if there is any
- Triggers
- Things that have helped in the past
- Mobile Crisis Unit phone number
- Determine if police officers in the community are involved in Crisis Intervention Training (CIT)

Review the plan with loved ones and your physician. Keep copies in several places. Store a copy in a drawer in your kitchen, your glove compartment, on your smartphone, your bedside table, or in your wallet.

You can also ask about a Psychiatric Advance Directive (PAD), which is a legal document that allows a second party to act on behalf of your loved one. If they become unable to make decisions about treatment. The PAD details the individual's preferences for treatment should they become unable to make sound decisions due to their mental health condition. Planning ahead can make a huge difference in your loved one's treatment experience.

## Healthy Relationships

Mental health issues have struck our family a number of times. These links have proven helpful;

**[Maintaining A Healthy Relationship](#)**

## Taking Care of Yourself

- Connecting with someone you love who mental illness can be difficult and frustrating. We can only change ourselves. Sometimes you are the one that needs to change to improve your relationships. Knowing and understanding mental illness is vital for getting along.
- You are not your illness. Someone is not bipolar. They happen to have bipolar disease, but that is not who they are. The disease is not their fault, nor are they broken. It is a disease....period.
- People may exhibit challenging behaviors that can frustrate and embarrass us. These behaviors may not be deliberate, but part of their illness.
- Make sure you and your friend have a support network to be able to cope with the reality of the illness.
- It's OK to expect safe and acceptable behavior and talk about this when the time is right, not during an episode. Make a plan for when interactions get out of control.
- Sometimes we have our own perspective or preconceived ideas about mental illness. These ideas may or may not be true. Sometimes a low self-esteem, negative self-talk or other issues are making the person you care about perceive conversations and interactions differently than you. Respect each other and remembering to put ourselves in another's shoes is helpful.
- Using simple and clear wording can help a conversation. Try stating facts and help them see a positive outcome as a result.



## Self Care Starts With Compassion

by Kristi Barth

I would like to challenge all of us to think about using compassion. Compassion for ourselves—grace for when we get tired and are not on the top of our game. Don't even get me started on COVID-19—I think of it as the 19 pounds that have been acquired during this time. 😊 Having compassion for our neighbors, clients, co-workers, family, friends and strangers. We all are enduring COVID exhaustion. If we work to fill our hearts with grace and compassion there will be little room for judgement to creep in. If we viewed the world with compassion, perhaps judgement or discrimination would cease to exist. Let's add compassion!

**How do we become more compassionate?** It starts with you. Be kind to yourself. Do some self-care. Take a walk or a bath, read a book, pet your dog, call a friend. Take time for yourself, even if you think you don't have the time. Carve out 5-15 minutes a day for YOU time. Do something that makes you feel good. Share your compassion with others. You won't have to look far to find someone that could use some. Do one simple thing to start. Open the door for someone, smile as someone walks by—yes even in a mask (your eyes smile), call a



neighbor or relative just to check in. I know you will have some great ideas of how to pass along compassion. I'd love to hear from you! Reach out and let me know what you have done compassionately for yourselves or others. Here is my email is if you choose to share; [teensfindinghope@yahoo.com](mailto:teensfindinghope@yahoo.com)

**Being challenged in life is inevitable, being defeated is optional.**

## Be A Super Hero

by Roger Crawford



Family getting ready to enter store tonight. Mom & dad put on their masks, then dad crouches down to little girl, maybe 3.

Dad: What do superheroes do?

Girl: They protect people.

He helps her put on her mask.

Dad: What are you?

Girl: I'm a superhero!

Yeah, kid, you are. #yyc



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**Thank you!**

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