



# The Ray of Hope

Newsletter of the Sunrise Wellness Center

Mental Health Association  
of the Southern Tier  
47 Broad Ave. Binghamton

**May 2018**

## A Celebration - Mental Health Awareness Month

### Day of Recovery 2018 Goals and Options

#### Keynote Speaker John Burns

A Real Estate Broker by trade, John has been a regional sales leader for decades. He owns and produces the television program "The John Burns Real Estate Show" which has aired nearly every week since January 2001.

Known for his creative marketing and innovation, John has used these skills to promote and advocate for the hometown of his family. Since the 1840's, his family has called this home.

Ask him what his secret to success is and he will tell you... "The smartest thing I ever did was quit drinking"! Join us, as he shares with us the journey of his experience, strength, and hope.

#### Mike & Jo Whitney-Musicians/Motivational Speakers

##### SUPPORTING THE ROLE OF THE SUPPORT PERSON

When life gets tough, the tough get going! This side of panics presented by Mike & Jo Whitney featuring the GO model. Goals and Options. This mini workshop includes a musicalskit, humor, personal experience and audience participation.

#### Dr. Michael Lavin, M.D.

Director of Psychiatry  
Lourdes Center for Mental Health

#### Katie Hewlett

Kate is a NYCB Certified Peer Specialist, and an NYCA Certified Recovery Peer Advocate. Kate is a recovery and empowerment speaker sharing her message of hope.

#### Katie Cusano and Don Bergin

Masters of Ceremony

**CASAC Credits pending**

#### Sponsored by:

Broome County Dual Recovery Project:  
A project through The Addiction Center of  
Broome County & Broome County Mental Health



*Morning Coffee and afternoon  
Lunch catered by Knees and Toes*

**May 15, 2018 9AM-4PM**  
**18th floor**  
**State Office Building, 60 Hawley St.**  
**Binghamton, NY 13901**

*Please allow time to find parking!*

**MHAST** Mental Health Association  
of the Southern Tier, Inc.

*"This bell rings for hope... a victory for mental health."*

To register email [CKuklis@co.broome.ny.us](mailto:CKuklis@co.broome.ny.us)  
or call Carole Kuklis at 607-778-1162



## No Stigma, No Shame: Breaking the Silence of Mental Illness

by Ruth C. White

Despite the increased awareness of mental illness and the reduction of stigma against people like me who live with a mental illness, it is still difficult to be open about what it is like to live with a mental illness. Brain disorders have a stigma that other illnesses do not have and yet there is no health without mental health.

### Surviving and Recovery

For those who have had cancer, there is the label 'cancer survivor', and people who have made it through the other side can be proud about being cancer free, and people share with them in the relief that brings. For those who have won the battle with addiction, being sober gets counted in days and years and being sober gets 'awarded' with kudos and supported for doing the work necessary to stay drug or alcohol free.

For those of us with mental illness, we have not yet been given 'permission' to own our survival or to claim our days, weeks or years that we have been symptom-free because we too are working our 'recovery'.

### Risk and Resistance

Thus it was when I decided to write about her own obsessive compulsive disorder and profile other women at the magazine in a feature on mental health for their May cover story related to Mental Health Awareness Month, the lawyers and HR people at the magazine resisted. They felt that the reputation of the magazine may be at risk. Then the veteran reporter they hired to write the story backed out because she could not find many women who wanted to be featured in a national magazine.

I ended up being one of those women who were featured and I cannot say it was an easy decision. Although I have written about my challenges with having a severe, chronic mental illness like bipolar disorder, being 'the face' of bipolar disorder in a magazine with such a huge readership was something I struggled with because I also wanted to focus on my health and not my illness.

### Out and About

But I also knew from the response I have gotten from other public 'outings' about my illness, that there needs to be a 'counter-image' to what most people think of when they think of bipolar disorder; the image of the 'crazy person' who goes 'nuts' because they were not taking their medications or because they had a psychotic break. People need to know that people with mental illness can thrive and succeed. It is also good for people to know that we also are 'survivors', that we also have 'days of recovery'; that we are not always 'ill'. That our symptoms can be managed like the symptoms of many other chronic illnesses. My story is like the story of many other people with mental illness: we have families and careers and live lives we love.

### Mental Health Awareness

May is Mental Health Awareness Month and during this month, various organizations such as National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and celebrities such as Princes William and Harry and Princess Kate have launched campaigns to fight the stigma against mental illness. Stigma and shame are also compounded by the lack of access to preventive care and treatment.

So this month, reach out to someone you know who is living with mental illness. Give them your support. Be a friend. Stand up when other people speak about those with mental illness in derogatory terms. Write your media outlets for a more balanced portrayal of people with mental illness. Demand that your primary care physician do mental health assessments as part of their well-care visits.

And if you feel you may be experiencing symptoms or at risk of mental illness, see your medical practitioner as soon as possible to take the steps necessary to get and stay healthy, because there is no health without mental health.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/culture-in-mind/201605/no-stigma-no-shame-breaking-the-silence-mental-illness>



## Memorial Day, or National Grief Acknowledgement Day?

By [Megan Devine](#)

Memorial Day weekend in the States...

For most people, that means cookouts, barbecues, parades and a day off from work. For the widowed community, and for families grieving the loss of a family member, it's just one more day on the calendar they have to *endure*, rather than celebrate. It's one more gigantic "festive" event that they're called to either ignore, or attend while pretending it isn't torturous to be there this way: Without the ones they love.



### **Attending big public celebrations can be extremely difficult when you're in pain.**

Of course, the actual meaning of the holiday is rooted in grief: It's meant as a weekend, a day, to remember those who have died in service to their country, or who died after service to their country.

We have parades and fireworks to celebrate, or we get into heated political debates as to whether war should be happening or not, but both those ends of the spectrum miss the point:

### **People have died, and we miss them. People have died, and we need to remember who they were, where they were, and why they died.**

Whether we agree with the "why," the facts still remain: someone died. Many people died. And they left behind people like us, people like you: people with broken hearts, shattered lives and empty spaces that cannot ever be filled. In a sense, Memorial Day weekend should usher this country into the griever's world: The every day reality of grief. Memorial Day should (or could) be a time when the whole nation bows its collective head to its collective heart, and says: Ow. Ow. OW. *This hurts.*

It could, or it should, be a time when the whole country stops arguing and debating and generally just being jerks, and stands, silently, in awe of the lives that are gone, the lives that have been taken. We could, and we should, stand in respect for the broken hearts still beating, still living here, even after the ones they love have died.

It could be a day of acknowledgement. Of entering into grief, if just for one short day. Beyond all the politics, beyond all the partying. Acknowledgement is powerful.

### **Just one day, where we all bow our heads and say: *you were here, you lived, and you're gone.***

Just one day to feel into the reality of that grief. And just say - thank you.

And then — after the acknowledgment — we can have a barbecue that celebrates life.

That would work for me. How about you?

How does Memorial Day affect you and your family? What do you think about National Grief Acknowledgment day? *Megan Devine is the author of the audio book, [When Everything is Not Okay: Practices to Help You Stay in Your Heart & Not Lose Your Mind](#).*

[https://www.huffingtonpost.com/megan-devine/national-grief-acknowledg\\_b\\_7347676.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/megan-devine/national-grief-acknowledg_b_7347676.html)

**At the Sunrise Wellness Center we encourage peers to be gentle and attentive to self-care during times of grief.** Anniversaries and holidays may intensify a variety of emotions and feelings of loss. Such response is completely normal. If you are in need of additional support we offer weekly peer support groups for adult men and women and also opportunities to meet on-on-one with a peer recovery coach.



## Exciting Activities in May to cultivate a Healthy Mind, Body and Spirit Connection !!!

**NOTE:** Some of our Sunrise Wellness Classes are offered at the Broome County Library, 184 Court Street, Binghamton. Please be sure to double check the location when planning your class schedule. There is Something For Everybody !!!

**Adult Peer Recovery Support Group** Broome County Library , Mondays (4:00—5:00 pm)

**Mindfulness Meditation Mondays with Cindy** Broome County Library ( 5:30—6:30 pm ) begin your week with a mindfulness & meditation practice to support relaxation, stress reduction & self-discovery. \* Beginners most welcome.

**The Mindful Way Workshop with Cindy** Broome County Library (10—11:30 am) interactive class with intro to principles of MBCT mindfulness based cognitive therapy to support health & wellness

Friday May 4th—Topic: Why Do We Get Stuck?

Friday May 18th—Topic: Doing, Being and Mindfulness.

**NUKPORFE** Thursday May 10th (7:00 pm—9:30 pm) exciting performance at Waters Theater SUNY Campus.

**Admission only \$5** African Drumming and Dance Ensemble

\*\*\* **Must pre-register as we have limited seating for van transport 607-771-8888 x301**

**Start Following Your Dreams, with Janiece “Goal Setting Part 1”** May 17th (1:30—3 PM) & **“Goal Setting Part 2”** May 24th , both at the Broome County Library

**Appreciation Celebration** MHASt Friday May 11th (12:30 pm—3 pm) take a day and make the time to appreciate yourself and others who have helped you get to where you are today.

**Day of Recovery** Tuesday May 15th (9 am—4 pm) State Office Building, Binghamton

\*\*\* **must pre-register to attend**, and lunch will be served

**Healthy Balance: Release Stress & Laughing Yoga with Carol:** MHASt May 3rd (1:30— 3 pm)

**Healthy Balance: Story Card Fun, Express Yourself with Carol:** MHASt May 31st (10 to 11:30 am)

**Healthy Balance: Finish Lotus Flower Painting with Carol** MHASt May 23rd (10—11:30 am)

**Nutrition Class with Jennifer Vallone RD, CDN “Vegetarian Practices”** MHASt May 9th (1 to 2 pm)

**And Wow, There’s Sugar in That?**—MHASt May 16th ( 1—2 pm)

**Individual Nutrition Appointments with Jennifer Vallone:** MHASt \*\*\***must call front desk to make appointment.** May 9th & May 16th available (11:30 to 12:30 pm) & (2 to 3 pm)

**Anger Workshop with Donna** MHASt May 30th (1:30—3:30) overview of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy to identify unhealthy thought patterns and decrease self-defeating behaviors

\*\*\* **Expressive Art classes below will be in the MHASt Building** \*\*\*

**Mosaic Window Art** with Carol Tuesday May 1st and Thursday May 10th (1:30 to 3 pm)

**Create Your Personal Vision Tree** with Cindy & Joe Thursday May 3rd (10 am—noon) painting & self-discovery

**What Improves Mental Health** with Janiece Tuesday May 8th (1:30-3 pm) mix media interactive class

**Gemstones & Crystals with Donna** Tuesday May 22nd (1:30 to 3 pm) Explore alternative therapy where the use of these items are used to enhance the health and general well-being of individuals.

**Creating an Affirmation Box** with Donna Wednesday May 23rd (1:30—3pm) Increase your well-being by understanding, creating and using affirmations. We will decorate a small box to hold your affirmations

**OPEN Art Studio** Tuesday May 29th (1:30—3 pm) we provide materials & you the creative spark. A good time to finish projects or start something new.



## Peer Support Groups to look forward to this month....



# Sunrise Wellness Center

### Sunrise Wellness Center Peer Support

MHAST 47 Broad Ave. Binghamton NY

Men's Group Mondays 11 am to 12 pm

Women's Group Tuesdays 10 to 11:30 am

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### MHAST Endicott Peer Support Group

First United Methodist Church  
53 McKinley Ave Endicott NY

Peer Support Group on Wednesdays  
4:00 pm to 5:00 pm

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### MHAST Peer Support Group " *New Downtown Location* "

Broome County Library  
Peer Support Group on Mondays  
4:00 pm to 5:00 pm

184 Court Street  
Binghamton NY

### Sunrise Wellness Center Staff

#### Kim Taro

Director of Sunrise Wellness Center  
(607) 771-8888 ( ext 335 )

#### Donna Parmer

Recovery Coach  
& Community Connections  
(607) 771-8888 ( ext 309 )

#### Cindy Casterlin

Recovery Coach & Expressive Arts  
(607) 771-8888 ( ext 303 )

#### Janiece Miller Recovery Coach & Poet

(607) 771-8888 ( ext 311 )



### PEER SUPPORT VALUES:

CHOICE  
NON-JUDGMENTAL  
HOPEFUL  
EMPATHY  
MUTUALITY  
RESPECT

WE CAN HELP  
YOU SET UP  
AN INDIVIDUAL WRAP PLAN

AND ASSIST YOU IN  
ESTABLISHING A LIST OF LONG TERM  
AND SHORT TERM GOALS  
AND OFFER  
SUPPORT  
IN ALL  
ENDEAVORS

### YOU CAN ALSO MEET

ONE-ON-ONE WITH

A SUNRISE WELLNESS

PEER SUPPORT

RECOVERY COACH

\* Need Help ?

\* Need someone to talk to?

## Our HOUSE

Crisis Respite Program  
provides a 24/7  
Peer Support Line

(607) 240-7291  
ext. # 350





# In the Community

## **OUR HOUSE— A Peer-run Short Term Crisis Respite**

offering an alternative to emergency hospitalization for individuals 18 and older experiencing mental crisis or emotional distress. Please contact us by telephone to discuss arrangements. Pre-registration is necessary, as we are unable to accept walk-ins. MHASt Binghamton, NY Telephone Contact: (607) 771-8888 EXT. 350

## **Dual Recovery Anonymous**

Dual Recovery Anonymous™ is an independent, nonprofessional, Twelve Step, self-help membership organization for people with a dual diagnosis. Our goal is to help men and women who experience a dual illness. We are chemically dependent and we are also affected by an emotional or psychiatric illness. Both illnesses affect us in all areas of our lives; physically, psychologically, socially, and spiritually.

*Meetings are Saturday and Sunday @2:00pm in the Beacon Drop In Center*

## **Broome County Urban League**

### **SMART Recovery Meetings**

**Every Wednesday @ 6:00pm**

The SMART Recovery® 4-Point Program employs a variety of tools and techniques to help individuals gain independence from addiction and addictive behaviors. SMART Recovery® teaches individuals how to change self-defeating thinking, emotions, and behavior and to work towards long-term satisfactions and quality of life.

*The group will meet at Urban League on Carroll St Binghamton NY.*

For more information, please call (607) 218-5945 or e-mail [info@hope607.org](mailto:info@hope607.org).

## **SUNY ATTAIN Labs at Binghamton**

ATTAIN provides communities access to new technologies, education, and technology training. These services are designed to ensure that adult learners succeed not only in college and the workplace, but also meet the emerging needs of employers in New York State. Call and register for an Orientation class!

SUNY ATTAIN Lab @ Broome County Urban League, Binghamton NY (607) 772-4765 or (607) 772-4765

## **\*OTHER SUPPORT GROUPS IN THE COMMUNITY\***

### Bereavement Support Group

Location: Lourdes Hospice Office, 4102 Old Vestal Rd, Vestal, NY. Call Marie Halecki at (607) 584-9160

### Depressive and Bipolar Support Group

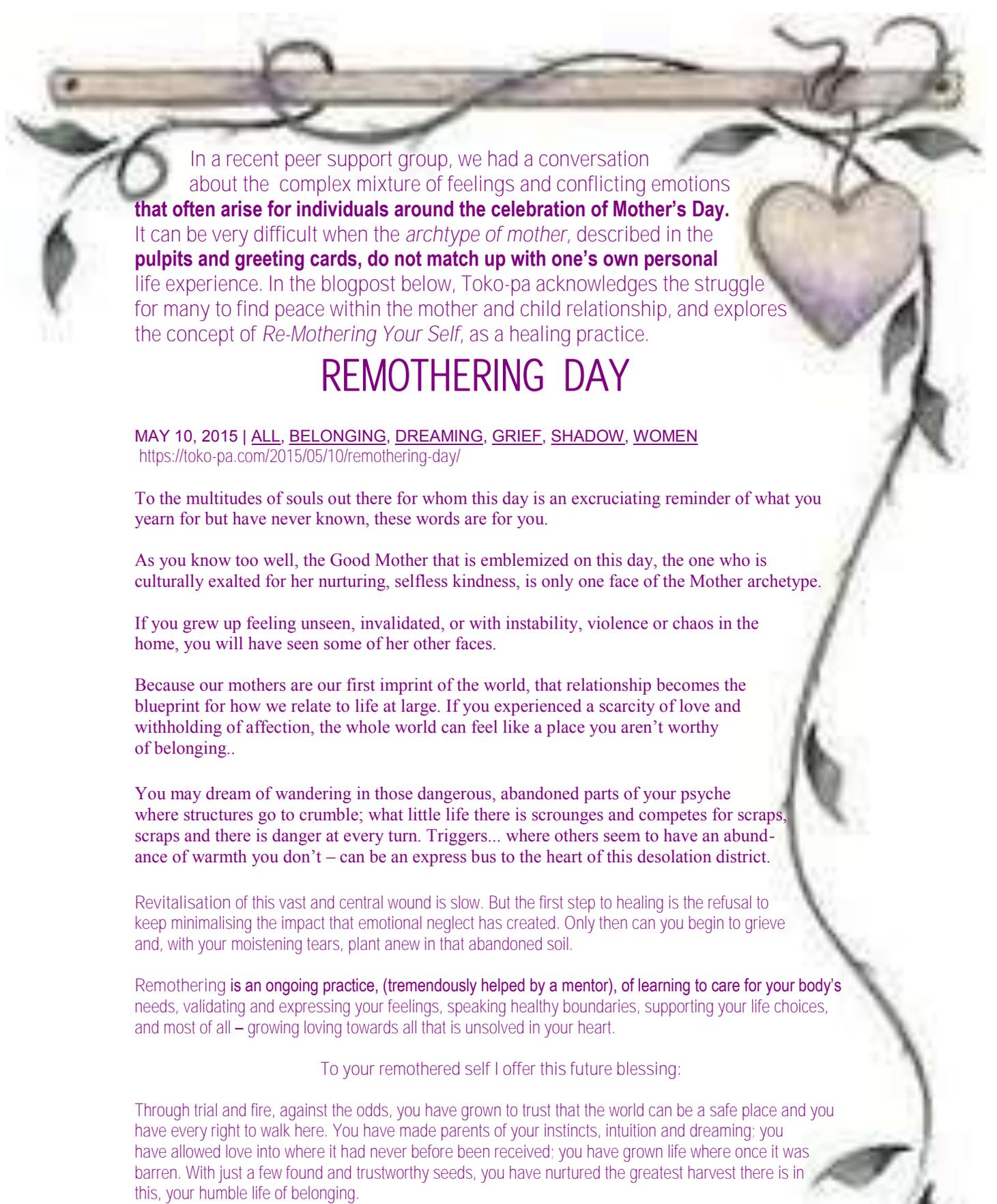
Location: Unitarian Universalist Church, 183 Riverside Drive, Binghamton, NY.

Mondays @ 7. Contact Bunny at (607) 239-4624

### Family Support Group

For family members who have a loved one with mental illness. Location: Krembs 5 conference room, Binghamton General Hospital on Wednesdays, from 6:30-8 pm. For more information call (607)762-2887.

NO pre-registration required.



In a recent peer support group, we had a conversation about the complex mixture of feelings and conflicting emotions **that often arise for individuals around the celebration of Mother's Day.** It can be very difficult when the *archtype of mother*, described in the **pulpits and greeting cards, do not match up with one's own personal** life experience. In the blogpost below, Toko-pa acknowledges the struggle for many to find peace within the mother and child relationship, and explores the concept of *Re-Mothering Your Self*, as a healing practice.

## REMOTHERING DAY

MAY 10, 2015 | [ALL](#), [BELONGING](#), [DREAMING](#), [GRIEF](#), [SHADOW](#), [WOMEN](#)  
<https://toko-pa.com/2015/05/10/remothering-day/>

To the multitudes of souls out there for whom this day is an excruciating reminder of what you yearn for but have never known, these words are for you.

As you know too well, the Good Mother that is emblemized on this day, the one who is culturally exalted for her nurturing, selfless kindness, is only one face of the Mother archetype.

If you grew up feeling unseen, invalidated, or with instability, violence or chaos in the home, you will have seen some of her other faces.

Because our mothers are our first imprint of the world, that relationship becomes the blueprint for how we relate to life at large. If you experienced a scarcity of love and withholding of affection, the whole world can feel like a place you aren't worthy of belonging..

You may dream of wandering in those dangerous, abandoned parts of your psyche where structures go to crumble; what little life there is scrounges and competes for scraps, scraps and there is danger at every turn. Triggers... where others seem to have an abundance of warmth you don't – can be an express bus to the heart of this desolation district.

Revitalisation of this vast and central wound is slow. But the first step to healing is the refusal to keep minimalising the impact that emotional neglect has created. Only then can you begin to grieve and, with your moistening tears, plant anew in that abandoned soil.

Remothering is an ongoing practice, (tremendously helped by a mentor), of learning to care for your body's needs, validating and expressing your feelings, speaking healthy boundaries, supporting your life choices, and most of all – growing loving towards all that is unsolved in your heart.

To your remothered self I offer this future blessing:

Through trial and fire, against the odds, you have grown to trust that the world can be a safe place and you have every right to walk here. You have made parents of your instincts, intuition and dreaming; you have allowed love into where it had never before been received; you have grown life where once it was barren. With just a few found and trustworthy seeds, you have nurtured the greatest harvest there is in this, your humble life of belonging.

Bless your heart, Toko-pa



Mental Health Association of  
the Southern Tier

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Visit us on Facebook at

<https://www.facebook.com/WellnessSunrise>

**[www.yourmha.com](http://www.yourmha.com)**

The Sunrise Wellness Center is a free program offering support, education and social opportunities to promote mental, physical and spiritual wellness. This program is peer-operated and recovery oriented. If you or someone you know is in need of support or is looking for an alternative to traditional mental health care, please do not hesitate to contact us. The Sunrise Wellness Center is open to all adults, age 18 and over, and no diagnosis or referral is needed. The services can be used on their own or as a complement to traditional treatments.