

MENTAL HEALTH IS DONE BEING TABOO

DORID

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WISE WOMEN

AMANDA GOETZ

DORD

MENTAL HEALTH IS DONE BEING TABOO

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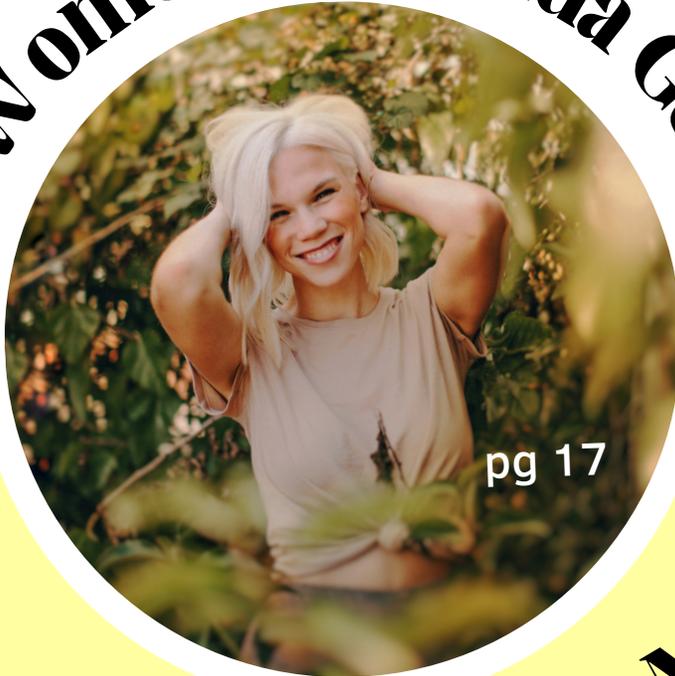
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editor's desk



Truthfully, this issue intimidated the hell out of me. It forced me to think of all the places I stayed small, despite convincing everyone I thought I was a giant. I don't talk about being scared, this past year I ran into every fire I could find, danced off every cliff I came across, and publicly reflected as I did.

I masqueraded around like Wonder Woman when I really felt like Icarus the moment before he fell.

This issue, like all our issues changes me and forces me to reflect on my own life and our team.

I've gotten to meet incredible individuals, like Amanda Goetz who graces our cover and Bunny Barbie, who you've most likely seen all over your social media explore feeds. Both women embody strength, resilience, and most importantly an admirable vulnerability that they carry deep within themselves.

While this started out as a Women Empowerment issue, it quickly became an issue about the strength to be our true selves and not asking for permission to exist.

I hope you each learn just as much from these pages as I did curating them.

Thank you for your endless support, kindness, and for joining us on the journey to destigmatize mental health. All of Team DORD is so excited to continue growing with each of you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Diana Vilic', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Diana Vilic
Editor-In-Chief

Hygge & Home

Spencer Miller

It wasn't until very recently that my partner was talking to me about this concept of Hygge and what it means. She's a lot more travelled than I, and for this concept we need to fly on over to Denmark where the word is derived from. Now, I'm not a phonetic pro or anything, so for our sakes we'll say it's pronounced "who-gah." Another variation of the word is hyggelig (who-gah-lig), which is when you are embodying or achieving hygge. So what does this new word even mean?

I've done some extensive research and I've boiled down hygge to this: Hygge is comfort and coziness. It is connecting to our inner comforts and to our world on a deeper level. It is also creating a sense of comfort that transcends physical possessions. Hygge is creating an aura of comfort that our guests feel in our homes, and that our hosts feel when we are in their homes.

I know I'm supposed to be the interior design guy (Sorry D), but let's think about this outside of the physical for a minute. When we are entertaining someone, we don't want them to feel like a stranger in our home, or in our presence. We want to be the house that people can come to, kick back, and forget about their troubles for a while. We want to live in the moment and focus on the bonds that we are creating with other people. Think of it as the little candy dish that lives on the coffee table at your grandparents house. For me, this started back in college. I used to host get togethers all the time at my apartment. I lived with my buddy at the time and we both identify as male and kept shorter hair. Well, the simple act of having some

pads tucked away in the bathroom and having some hair ties on a dish next to the sink is a huge step to being inclusive of others. It truly is about the little details that you can do to make everyone feel comfortable in your home. This could also be as easy as having a couple pillows and an extra blanket if someone needs to crash on the couch. Try to challenge yourself and think about not just what you need, but what someone else may need if they were to come to your house and maybe came unprepared.

Okay, so back to what we can do in design to make our homes feel extra cozy. I like to think that as humans who inhabit the earth, we have a very strong connection to the earth. Do you ever browse pictures of beautiful rolling mountains? Or maybe listen to rain sounds to help you get to sleep at night? I think that the natural being of the earth is what makes us feel so comfortable on this planet. With that in mind, why wouldn't we bring those natural items into our homes? Shelves and tables are a great example of things that we can change to make a huge impact on how a space feels. Living edge tables and shelves are gorgeous additions that play nicely with any form of architecture. The versatility in the colors of wood and the fact that no grain will ever be the same brings a one of a kind, natural, beautiful addition to any space. Resin Wood tables are also another natural, yet very elegant addition to a space. Now it doesn't just have to be wood. You could add stone or brick to a space to make it feel more natural and homely as well. Who doesn't love the idea of curling up next to a brick or stone fireplace on a rainy day?



Hygge doesn't have to be all about naturality either. Hygge can also be achieved by having variations in texture. Think furry rugs on hardwood. Textured canvas on smooth drywall. Circles and Ovals against squares and rectangles. The variation is what is beautiful. Even a built in bookshelf is a great example. A shelf full of books, coupled with spaces where nick-nacks pepper the wall. Close your eyes for just a moment and try to picture any or all of these and tell me it doesn't make you feel all warm and cozy inside.

What about furniture? Sometimes you don't need the futuristic looking couch or chair. Sometimes you need the oversized leather recliner that you can fall asleep on in the middle of the day just like your father/grandfather/uncle does after Thanksgiving dinner. Sometimes it's the thrifted loveseat that has seen better days, but you lay down on it for a moment and then you wake up 2 hours later wondering what year it is.

It's hard for me to admit this because I love modern architecture, but man... it can feel so impersonal sometimes. The clean lines and muted colors look very chic, but it truly lacks a human element to it. I think that modern architecture is beautiful because of how clean and effortless it looks. There's no clutter, but there's also not a lot of personality to be had either. Try to find those pieces that not everybody will have. Find a local artist and hang their painting on a wall. Go to the thrift store before you go to Ikea and spend more money than you thought you would on something as simple as a barstool.

The last piece of the puzzle is lighting. Warm lighting. I don't know about all of you, but at the time of writing this Michigan has a very large blanket of snow covering the ground. We've had more sunny days than we have in years past, however the only natural light that is reaching me is a cool light. Lighting can be differentiated by "warm" and "cool" tones. These are measured in degrees Kelvin for our sciency people, but for all of you I'll just describe it as the warmer orangey lights vs the cooler whiter lights. When you buy light bulbs you may notice that it shows the different shades it can emit. In the realm of hygge, the warmer lights are usually more homely. It's more closely aligned with the warm hues you'll see crackling from a fireplace (ahem, going back to nature).

Now, I'm not saying go out and replace every lightbulb in your home with 2700K lightbulb. But I am saying that maybe you go and buy a lamp and put a nice warmly hued bulb in there in your reading nook or your bedside. Make sure that you are comfortable in your own home because you're the person that's going to be living in these spaces most. The most important thing to take away from all of this is that hygge needs to feel homely. Make sure that your home feels most comfortable to you!

DEPRESSION
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DEPRESSION
DEPRESSION



MY OLD FRIEND

Don Busch

To the uninitiated, the topic of this opus may seem a bit strange since depression is an evil bug a boo that haunts and torments. It is an insidious mental disease that grabs the brain and torments it until we surrender and fall in a heap of defeat. My take on depression is that it has been my buddy for many years. Unlike many that I have known, I have not fallen to the level of major depression, which is one of the most serious illnesses that has ever plagued mankind.



As everybody knows, there are several levels of depression, which begin with “ah, geez, my boyfriend doesn’t like me anymore”. This form of depression happens when there is a major change in life. It is the type of thing you feel when a relationship ends, the loss of a job, or are involved in a legal battle. It can take on the form of major depression but is more like a depressed mood or unhappiness.

On the next level is SAD, seasonal affective disorder, which is a form of major depression that is related to the change in the seasons. Since I live in Michigan and have the yearly snowstorms, this one is easy to explain as I look out the window for days at gray that permeates every dimension of the world. Having lived in California for many years, I am surprised that SAD does not affect every person that lives where there is severe winter. Actually, to the contrary, there are those who look forward to winter and the fun it brings. I just am not one of them.

Then, there are versions of depression related exclusively to women. These are premenstrual and postpartum. Premenstrual depression happens at several levels. In its severe form, it can take on the appearance of a psychosis and interfere with day to day activities. Postpartum depression can also happen at several levels. In some instances, it happens immediately after childbirth. At other times, it can happen several weeks after the birth of a child.

The list of depressive disorders goes on leading up to major depression. Though I have worked with people who have had major depression, I am still not able to fathom the depth of despair that people with this evil disorder have to endure. My means of teaching it were to describe it as sitting at the bottom of a well looking up at the opening of the well and seeing a light the size of the head of a pin. Darkness and gloom wrap themselves around the sufferer’s mind and drag it down to the worst places the mind can go.

In this day and age, there is a form of depression that should not be ignored and has come to light because of several social movements. By some definitions, it is referred to as complex post traumatic stress disorder or CPTSD. This is not

normally discussed in the same context as depression. After having spoken to several young people who have suffered through this form of trauma, it seems to fit into the depression category.

I realize I started this by discussing my involvement with depression. Each of the forms above are ones that I have experienced through the eyes of people who have suffered from them. In most cases, they have been young women, who, at a very tender age, endured experiences that no one should know, especially when they are so young. It seems our world, with its expansive communication, has broadened the abilities of the disturbed to prey upon the innocent.

In this long pantheon of depressional diseases, it is hard for me to find a place to fit my plague and lifelong companion. There is one place in psychological terminology where it seems to fit, which is persistent depression. Another factor that cannot be ignored is the depressive personality that enjoys their depression and has a hard time letting it go. I am unsure if I fit in there. When I awaken and realize my buddy is going to start my day. I do not relish its presence.

In a study of depression, it is hard to pinpoint its beginnings. There are folks who grow up in a happy home with loving and generous parents who fall into the trap of depression. Those who are spawned from tragic circumstance can easily be seen as growing into depressiveness. Every person from every walk of life has experienced depression at some point of their existence. It seems to be an unavoidable part of existence.

In my case, it came when I was in elementary school, not my favorite memory. As a matter of fact, it was during the third year there when the teacher told my mother that there was little likelihood that my mind would develop beyond that of a highly dull person and not much should be expected of me. That conversation hung with me for most of my time in school and seemed to be the definition that my peers used when they interacted with me. It was then that I knew that this bug a boo would be with me for a while. Little did I realize how long.

As you are reading this, you may be wondering how my life led from being the village idiot to writing this oeuvre. Sorry, there isn't anyway to explain it. Very early, at the behest of my step-grandfather, I became interested in the written word and its magical power. My work as a writer began around ten or eleven with tales that only a pre-teen could enjoy or understand. Writing has been and is a place to go with myself. As with depression, it has never left me and drives my life.

If there is one part of me that wants to reach out to people, it is that piece that wishes to help those who are suffering, especially with sadness and depression. I would never take the role as someone who understands it. Sitting and listening to the young woman who was sexually abused by her father every day and night is probably the most excruciating experience I have had to endure. There is no way to heal that pain or make it go away. When she closes her eyes, in a moment of unhappiness, she can see and feel those memories.

This leads to the greatest accolade of all, which goes to the men and women who are on the front lines of mental illness every day. Recently, I made contact with one of my students from many, many, many years ago. As an eleven year old spritely little girl, she was very bright and seemed to have a promising future with college and advanced degrees. Things didn't turn out that way. She tried college for a while but didn't make it. To fill her need for education, she went to a trade school and learned to work with the mentally ill and devoted the rest of her life working with those who were suffering. Now, as a grandmother and mom, she feels fulfilled knowing that she helped alleviate the suffering of others.

On those days when things are not going your way and there doesn't seem to be a way out. Stop and think of the folks who spend days, months, and years looking at the world from the bottom of that well. To them, there isn't a future, and the past is tainted.

CRISIS HOTLINES

Childhelp (1.800.4ACHILD)

Provides 24/7 assistance in 170 languages to adults, children and youth with information and questions regarding child abuse. All calls are anonymous and confidential.

National Parent Helpline (1.855.4A.PARENT)

Helpline for parent and caregiver support.

National Domestic Violence Hotline (1.800.799.SAFE)

National call center refers to local resources; Spanish plus 160 other languages available; no caller ID used.

National Human Trafficking Hotline (1.888.373.7888)

National and confidential toll-free hotline to report trafficking or connect with anti-trafficking services, 24/7, available in 200 languages. Text also available for survivors: text HELP to BEFREE (233733) from 3pm-11pm.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1.800.273.TALK)

Support and assistance 24/7 for anyone feeling depressed, overwhelmed or suicidal.

National Sexual Assault Hotline (1.800.656.HOPE)

(Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network - RAINN)
Nationwide referrals for specialized counseling and support groups. Hotline (1.800.656.4673) routes calls to local sex assault crisis centers for resources and referrals. Spanish available.

A woman with long, wavy brown hair is sitting on a bed, looking down with a thoughtful or somber expression. She is wearing a white, short-sleeved dress with intricate lace detailing on the sleeves and hem. The background is softly lit, suggesting a window with sheer curtains. The overall mood is contemplative and intimate.

Is Your Marriage Successful?

Kim Childress



My husband and I are about to celebrate our 29th anniversary, and I dare say we remain happily married! However, we have not yet technically reached the status of “Marriage Masters,” couples who have been married 40 or more years. In seeking to help those contemplating the institution of marriage, I have been asked to share some hindsights and insights into my marriage journey, and so I have gathered and gleaned advice from Marriage Masters willing to share their advice and experience, with a few asides of my own.

COMMITMENT

“Divorce is not an option” is vital for the long-term success of a marriage, agreed all the Marriage Masters. This mindset allows couples to seek solutions to marriage’s boiling points and periods of a relational strife. Marriage Masters simplify this bit of wisdom into one word: commitment. Commitment was viewed as the virtue sorely missing from today’s marriages. My husband and I sought premarital counseling beforehand, which I highly recommend. Such mini-conferences are provided--frequently free--through churches and community resource centers. And you do not need to attend a church or be a member to participate in these courses. The key component to premarital counseling is to open communications into areas you may not have discussed as a couple before.

EXPECTATIONS

Creating a great marriage takes work. There’s no such thing as a perfect marriage. There’s the fairy-tale ideal where we always figured we’ll find our soulmates and things will naturally fall into place after live happily ever after. One marriage master wife said, “Whoever said that being soulmates was going to be easy?” Her husband of 52 years then added, “Marriage is a bed of roses, thorns and all.” The best marriages expect non-perfection, and come to understand, accept, and even embrace one another’s differences. Any time two individuals live together, especially over 40 years, there are bound to be irritations. “That’s the beauty of marriage,” said Maurice, another Marriage Master. “All of our individuality’s, all of our wonderful differences.” Practice patience and give the acceptance we want in return.

COMMUNICATION

Unexpressed frustration, and can quickly turn into resentments, and in a marriage can pile up and weigh us down like an overloaded gunny sack. “Holding resentment is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die,” said Sally, married 50 years. Resentment will eat away at your marriage.

The Marriage Masters encourage unpacking the gunnysacks by opening the communication lines as frequently as possible. Which means “fighting with honor,” and creating a nurtured environment where open, honest communication is welcomed and treated with diligent respect. Speak the truth in love. And one tip I strongly advise and one reason I believe my husband and I remain married today: keep a sense of humor.

LOVE IS A FOUR LETTER WORD SPELLED G-I-V-E

Marriage Masters have a higher degree of selflessness. “I’ll never forget what my mentor told my wife and me before we got married 42 years ago,” said one Marriage Master named Walter. He said, “Most people think marriage is 50/50. It’s not. It’s 60/40. You give 60 you take 40. And that goes for both of you.” This philosophy seems to be apparent in the best of the marriages, where both spouses believe in this concept – putting one another first.

DEALBREAKERS: THE THREE A’S

That said, there are deal breakers that few interviewed couples advocated working through, which have come to be known as the three A’s: Addiction, Adultery, and Abuse. A marriage master suggested if you find yourself overwhelmed with any of the three A’s, take care of yourself and your safety first, and the marriage second.

In the end, the old saying holds true: where your attention goes, energy flows. So next time you’re facing a mountain in your marriage, focus on the next foothold and soon enough you’ll find yourself over the top.



Ukiyo

EMILY DURKIN







AMANDA GOETZ

WISE

WVO

Photographed By Robyn Dawn Photos

Interview by Diana Vilic



MEN

When researching Amanda Goetz for our interview, I noticed a trend. There's a lot of the same words that are thrown around to describe Amanda – words like “Ambitious”, “The-Women-Who-Has-It-All”, “Trailblazer”, “Founder”, “Recently Divorced Mother of 3”, and “The Next Marketing SuperStar”. While all those words are true, the Amanda I had the pleasure of sitting down with was so much more than a collection of keywords.

I'm not going to lie, I've rewritten this article 7 times, each time falling short of being able to cover the full essence of Amanda. You see, while Amanda is a notorious badass business woman who stands for empowerment – she's also somebody who can make you feel like the most important person in a room, almost effortlessly.

Amanda is both somebody I see myself in, and someone I aspire to be like. It was surprising to me how our stories were similar and drove us to missions that aligned along each other.

I started the interview apologizing for the mess of professionalism I made; I pushed the interview due to my anxiety, forgot to answer emails, and overall I was my own nightmare. God how would anyone want to work with me when I couldn't even remember to reply to an email! The first thing Amanda did was interrupt my completely scripted "I'm-that-I'm-a-fuckup" apology with "Don't apologize, it's okay, it's totally acceptable." Echoing something every founder I've sat down with has told me, no one teaches any of us how to do this. There are days when we just aren't our best, the only thing we can do is be transparent and carry forward.

When you sit down with Amanda, it's obvious she's been doing this a while. She worked at a variety of startups and founded two businesses, her current project being House of Wise, a CBD startup designed around women empowerment and the destigmatization of CBD.

You have to wonder if somebody like Amanda is made or born and to my surprise Amanda and I share this intersection of life. Both growing up watching how people treated our parents, we became absorbers of energy, something we both still carry to this day and in so many ways something that drives our personal mission statements.

"Growing up in a small town, I was a first generation college grad, my dad was the town Plumber and Electrician." She pauses, "Even today I worry about thinking how I started so far behind and carrying this chip on my shoulder feeling like I need to prove myself and my right of being here. Being in these environments where I feel like an outsider – I wasn't raised with money, I didn't have access or grow up in a big city, my parents didn't have college friends with connections who I could be introduced to. Even being a Founder and suddenly having access to all these things I never had, I still have crazy imposter syndrome, and the feeling of needing to overtly prove that I'm supposed to be there instead of just accepting that people assume I can do the job."

Everytime I write this article I pause there, needing to reflect on how true that is. You see when you read about Amanda, we see every ounce of success, making her seem like Superwoman and while in many ways she is,



it's so refreshing to hear somebody share the same soundtrack that plays in your head, especially when they don't let it hold them back.

"After my divorce I realized I have this whole chapter of my life where I get to set new terms" she said as she moved closer to the screen. "Every year for the past four years, I've been forcing myself into situations where I'm uncomfortable, so they don't phase me anymore. One year I decided I would do media appearances because they scare me. So I did that for a year. Then I decided I want to start a company and fully lean into that – my first one failed and I think there was a lot of fear around repeating that." She paused, "I had to realize that was the old me, I had two distinct identities, my 20's, which was a very different identity and narrative that I was clinging to and now I don't want to have fear around that. Even if I was to fail again, there's so much you can learn from doing things on your own."

"There's so much to leaning into your fears that I didn't do in my 20s, I was too wrapped up in the fear of who I wanted to be and I set this life plan that didn't allow for it."

I couldn't help but comment me too. My entire past year was built around letting my dream job go, just because I realized I hated my dream job. I wasn't the 8 year old who dreamt it out anymore, instead of dreams I was following passion projects. After sharing my story, Amanda commented, "People in their 30s feel like they can't run into the fire because there's so much more risk." Taking a sigh, she continues, "What scares me is so many women, hit having kids and think their time to run into the fire is gone. But in your 20s, you're figuring out who you are." She laughs, "The best time to run into the fire is when you feel confident in who you are because you can handle what is being thrown at you since your identity won't feel shaken." We both laugh, "Life is a big game, if you're drawn to something, why wouldn't you do it?"

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"There's so much to leaning into your fears that I didn't do in my 20s, I was too wrapped up in the fear of who I wanted to be and I set this life plan that didn't allow for it." I couldn't help but comment me too. My entire past year was built around letting my dream job go, just because I realized I hated my dream job. I wasn't the 8 year old who dreamt it out anymore, instead of dreams I was following passion projects. After sharing my story, Amanda commented, "People in their 30s feel like they can't run into the fire because there's so much more risk." Taking a sigh, she continues, "What scares me is so many women, hit having kids and think their time to run into the fire is gone. But in your 20s, you're figuring out who you are." She laughs, "The best time to run into the fire is when you feel confident in who you are because you can handle what is being thrown at you since your identity won't feel shaken." We both laugh, "Life is a big game, if you're drawn to something, why wouldn't you do it?"

“Everything I’ve done that I’ve failed whether it be my marriage, my first company, and infertility, I learned so much about myself and grew as a human, coming out better and stronger.”

Transitional moments are hard, but being able to go through adversary equips you to handle more and more.”

“For better or worse I’ve lived a lot of life in the past 10 years – infertility, fertility treatments, having babies, going through a divorce, going through dating as a single mother, you name it and I feel like I’ve done it. Most of those things are what women go through commonly but its still considered weird to talk about.” She paused, “We were raised by people who kept to themselves, they didn’t air their dirty laundry, we’re happy on the outside and you don’t talk about your stuff. Throughout my 20s I tried to do that and have the instagram perfect life.” Amanda took a deep breath, adding purpose to her next line, “There was a moment when I went through my miscarriage and I shared it with a friend and I remember because I shared my experience, the people around me suddenly felt safe enough to share their experiences whether it be a miscarriage or general life hardships.” When I share all these things, it allows other women to open up in their own way, that’s the premise of House of Wise. It’s all about not asking for permission anymore to figure out how to have better sleep, sex, and a conversation around wealth and finance.” Now glowing she continues, “House of Wise is a CBD company but wrapped in empowering women to feel in control of the outcome of their life and set them up with a community to guide them along their way.”

Talking about things we admire, the conversation took a slight turn, “As a woman feeling powerful is being confident in your flexibility. I’m a maternal human, being able to accept I can be that and negotiate in a boardroom. To me that makes me feel powerful, the fact that I don’t need to pick a lane and can be both is empowering.”

I ask about how she navigates self worth, almost selfishly. I know how easy it is as a woman to let other people define your worth. “Women always try to prove what they’re worth and earn it, men demand it and meet it.”

“The way I view it, at the end of the day it’s all about outcomes. Are we aligned on goals and how to measure success. If we’re aligned on that, you don’t get to micromanage my time.”

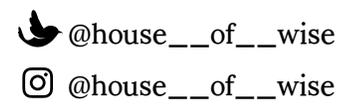
“Leaning into the fact that I know what I’m capable of getting done, and just because I don’t work the same clocked hours, I know my ability to be efficient trumps someone’s ability to be inefficient but work longer hours. That’s hard to ask for as a junior person, but there’s a power that came from becoming a mom and knowing you can hit the same numbers in a shorter slot of time.”

Looking at me, ensuring I understand her next point, she continues, “Time is a construct, you’ll do whatever you need to do in order to get the job done.”

“When going into negotiation, always ask for more than you feel comfortable with, then add 20% or even 50%. The funny thing is if women doubled what they’d ask for, many times it’s still lower than what a man would ask for.” We both laugh, knowing we’ve been around enough men to learn that lesson. Personally, growing up around just males and watching them become powerful men in various fields, they all share one advice with me, go in there and show them you know what the fuck you’re talking about.

I mention how hard it is for me to be friends with females because I grew up around those type of guys. Amanda chuckles, “I grew up with guys, I was around men my entire life. Something I’ve learned in my life, especially recently, “Women need to learn to let go of relationships that are focused on competition. There should be a red flag if your friends only want to talk about other people or focus on the bad parts of life. It’s hard for us, we’re naturally worried about not being able to find new friends or acting better than somebody else. But I found that who you surround yourself with impacts your mental health.” I nod, being able to list books worth of people I let go because I wouldn’t have been able to function otherwise. “I surround myself with female founders who get what I’m trying to do. There’s a way to talk about experiences with a growth mindset over a victim mindset. Many of the friendships I’ve had to let go were looping around trauma bonding versus moving forward.” Taking a second, to process her thoughts, she carries her point, “Women struggle with when to set those boundaries because they feel bad about letting relationships end. That’s why House of Wise is so important to me. It’s a growth mindset community where we encourage each other and focus on growth and each others development.”

As our talk grew closer to the end, I couldn't help but marvel at the person in front of me, somehow being left at ease while still inspired to take over the world. It was apparent Amanda lived a lot of life, but never let that hold her back. Instead she used it as the fuel to move forward and encourage others to do the same. I asked Amanda what a strong women looked like to her, to me it's very apparent. Amanda Goetz is my image of a strong women.



houseofwise.co

LETTER TO PATIENTS

Why Patient Advocacy Matters

In the healthcare field, there are people who advocate for the rights of a patient. They may be associated with a single disorder or represent the patient regarding treatment. In most cases, they work for the institution providing the care, which makes their role a little shady since they may be concerned about who pays them and not the patient.

The concept of patient advocacy comes from the idea of holistic care, which embodies the idea of treating the whole person and not just the disease. Holistic care comes from the treatment of children with cancer to confront the needs of parents who were watching their child suffer. In those circumstances, it was evident that treating the illness was not sufficient since there were so many other factors involved.

When we go to a health provider, our first inclination is to place all our trust in them since they are professionals and have been trained to deal with all of the issues regarding physical ailments. Our faith in them is built on the idea of receiving answers to why we are hurting. Initially, there is little thought given to offering our opinion in the matter.

The thing that we have to realize is that medical folks are people and not descendants of the former residents of Olympus. That is where things get a little sticky. Though we may realize that they are not gods, they may not and may treat any of our thoughts, ideas, or advice as pure ignorant speculation, which is kinda ridiculous since we have lived with us longer than they have known us.

It has been my displeasure to be part of a group discussing my health, a silent member. As the professionals popped ideas back and forth, while I sat and listened, there wasn't any reference to me as a person, object, thing, or table lamp. They bantered their medical terms back and forth in jargon I understood without acknowledging my existence.

This type of scenario is typical especially in cases where mental health is being treated, which brings us to another understanding. Mental health issues are the most difficult of medical concerns because we know so very little about the brain. In those situations, the input of the patient would seem to be more preeminent and of central concern. Even professionals, who have studied for many years, do not know exactly what is happening in a damaged and confused mind. They can guess and hypothesize, but they really don't know for sure.

In short, it is essential that we speak up and voice our feelings when being treated for any illness, especially ones that concern our mind. The patient is the only one that knows what is going on in their head. The job of the professional is to assist them in putting their concerns into words and not doing a diagnosis and pronouncing judgment.

Yours Truly,





Bunny

Barb

Interview by Diana Vilic



If you've been on social media in the past few months, you've probably seen Bunny sitting in her closet. Her videos range from short fashion reviews of celebrities and influencers, taking on haters, and spending time with her family. Viewers may gravitate to her videos in part because of her lavish lifestyle, but stay for her sincere authenticity. If one thing can be said about Bunny, it's how truly humble and grounded she is.

Right off the bat, it was obvious why her fans adore her - she's genuine, luminous, funny, and cares deeply for both her audience and her family. Unlike most influencers who focus on growing enormous followings, Bunny cultivates a supportive community, especially for the young girls who follow her. "I want my comments section to be a really positive environment," she remarked, "I like to put people in their place and show them that these are the things that it's not okay to say."

I want my comments section to be a really positive environment

Bunny's personality is refreshing in this age of social media - she doesn't sell her fans an image to live up to, instead she encourages them to be fully themselves, admitting "I wish every girl felt confident in themselves." It's no wonder so many of her fans view her as a cross between a big sister and a mommy figure, something Bunny takes very seriously. She loves being able to empower young girls, and adores spending time with her family. "I promise, I'm normal" she reflects, "I think people look at my videos and think I need things to be perfect or it's all about money, and it's not. I really don't care how much money I have, it's all about being able to spend time with my family and be a voice for these young girls." Illuminating the room as she speaks, "I just want my son to be a kind human being that will change the world. I really want him to find happiness."



Reflecting back on her childhood, Bunny mentions “I hate when people look at these girls and comment on how they dress or act, when they don’t know what they’re going through or what their mental state is.” Taking a sigh she continues, “I think we have a really hard time putting ourselves in other people’s shoes, overall people need to be better at empathy.” Bunny is one of the rare people who have transmogrified what they’ve gone through, becoming a transitional character, leaving the world and everyone she meets better than she found them - it’s impossible to not find yourself uplifted or inspired almost immediately after encountering Bunny.

In so many ways I could see parallels between the words Bunny spoke and the women in my life who I admire. Relating to Bunny is effortless, despite the glam and jetsetter lifestyle, at her core she’s a mirror of someone we all know. “If I told my 10 year old self that I would be successful, thriving, and happy, I would have told everyone to fuck off so much sooner than I did” she joked.

When asked about her ideal friend, she laughed, “I really want a homeschooling, mommy, vegan, best friend. Let me know if you’re out there.”

While many parents have been forced to homeschool due to COVID, Bunny not only willingly opted for it, but owns ActivityBunny, a brand of curriculum designed to foster a love for learning in young children. “I want every mom to know that they’re able to homeschool their kids.”

“You don’t need to be a perfect person to be a homeschool teacher,” smiling as she talks about the decision to homeschool her son. “For me having my son around for all those special moments, and being with him all the time is so important to me. I don’t want to wake up and he’s 18 and I’ve only spent weekends with him.” The decision came when he was still a newborn and her peers were already encouraging her to wait list him in the best pre-schools. Knowing there had to be other

Life is all about growing and changing, we can all change into better people. It's so important we pass growth on instead of trauma to our children.

options, Bunny started researching alternatives, and stumbled upon a former teachers curriculum for pre-school. She loved it so much, she purchased the curriculum, and launched her own company focusing on empowering moms.

As we come to a close, Bunny reflects, "I think the meaning of life is finding your true self, being really authentic to who you are and not caring about what other people think." Pausing for a brief moment, "That's the number one thing you can do for your mental health, be who you are and like the things you like. We shouldn't be ashamed of who we are." I can't help but laugh, it's advice I've heard too often, but like many people I disregard it. "Life is all about growing and changing, we can all change into better people. It's so important we pass growth on instead of trauma to our children."





Amour Propre

Noun

A sense of one's own worth; self-respect.

A wise woman once told me, we must love ourselves in such a way that others learn to love us.

I think of all the bite marks concealed by my lips—scars left from swallowing words I should have spoken.

I reminisce on folding myself inward, hoping to be just big enough to be seen, but not prominent enough to exist.

I recall the child I once was who radiated self-belief, embedded magic within her fingertips, whose booming laughter overtook rooms—never afraid she would suffocate others with her existence.

I place my hand on my heart, praying to return to innocence before I inherited the responsibility of destroying myself on behalf of others.

Only to discover, my inner child never stopped anticipating my return.





CONFLICT NEGOTIATION

Psychological Dynamics

Dr. Alice Hamachek

Negotiation conflict can often stem from psychological reasons that can make a negotiator become defensive. Discover the reasons for this conflict and how you can learn to de-fuse negative behavior during your negotiations.

Freud is alleged to have said, "A cigar is just a cigar". Yet at the negotiation table, differences in perception are too often distorted and magnified by the emotions and biased outcomes of one or more parties. Negotiation often needs to go through a conflict resolution or problem solving stage before it can be creative and grow opportunities. This article shares some of the background and lessons negotiators need to unravel the knots that too often tie up our negotiations.



Defense Mechanisms Used in The Negotiation Process

There are two ways to view how conflict can arise during a negotiation.

A negotiator's internal state will directly affect the interaction between the parties at the negotiation table. The interaction that occurs at the table, will have a direct effect on the negotiating parties.

A conflict or dispute causes us to become defensive or offensive. This is not dissimilar from the "fight or flight" response we have in our more primitive brain. Our reaction as people is complex. Nonetheless, we all respond with a "cause and effect" reaction when confronted with a conflict during our business negotiations. Here are some of the most prevalent of the defense mechanisms, used by negotiators in a conflict setting:



Why People Engage In Irrational Behavior

Denial – Like the proverbial ostrich with their head stuck in the sand, we do not acknowledge the existence of any conflict. If we don't think about it, it doesn't exist or will go away.

Avoidance – Just like it sounds, we know the conflict is there, but we don't want to deal with it, and make or find excuses to not deal with it.

Projection – Permits us to deny our own faults by projecting these faults onto others. An example would be, "You're at fault, not me". Signs that indicate that projections are often based on vulnerability, helplessness, being over vigilant, hostility or suspicion. A person responds by either withdrawing or attacking.

Reaction Formation – In this situation, a person might respond by adopting the traits or mannerisms of the person with whom they are engaged in conflict.

Displacement – Rather than take our emotional reaction, such as anger out on the person we are in dissent with, we take it out on another person. Another form of displacement is to attack the person by changing the original topic of conflict, with some other unrelated complaint.

Counter phobic – This defense entails our denying the anxiety we feel about the conflict, by becoming aggressive, confrontational, or carrying the proverbial "chip on the shoulder".

Escalation of the importance of the conflict – A person will respond to the conflict by blowing it out of proportion, or expressing their own needs, by acting overly melodramatic, and appearing too needy for attention. We want other people to believe our immediate needs are more important.

Rationalizing and minimizing the scope of the conflict – A person distances themselves emotionally from the conflict, by concentrating on details or unrelated details.

If we find that either we or our counterparty is reacting in a defensive manner, the above may help in characterizing the reason behind the defensive response. When we realize what is occurring, we can take proactive steps to change the conflict into a problem-solving venue instead.

Reflecting Blame – This allows an individual to place their own problems or inadequacies on the other person so they avoid altering their own behavior.

Habitual Reaction – Many of the reasons an individual may respond in a defensive manner, is a habitual response he has developed from early on in his formative development. In a way, this response acts as a suitable retreat, so the individual can return to familiar patterns of behavior. This behavior becomes comfortable for them when faced with unknown situations.

Provides a Measure of Excitement – By reacting defensively, the individual allows themselves to change the rules of the game should they be feeling bored, dissatisfied or engaged in internal conflict. Individuals suffering from depression, may also resort to a defensive response and use it as a stimulant to engage in conflict.

To Gain Approval from Others – Acting defensively may also be used to receive moral support from others. To change their attitude might end up in a withdrawal of this support, or a possible loss of self esteem.

A person's sense of identity, self esteem, and personal security, are intangibles that are often inherently non negotiable items. To unlock the defensive mold, we will need to alleviate their internal concerns by making them see, that we are interested in addressing their emotional interests. They are then likely to become more amenable to working cooperatively.

Conflict in negotiation may have a psychological basis that doesn't fully show itself at the negotiation table. There are many reasons why people respond defensively, or with some measure of hostility. We have to engage in communication to better understand the underlying reason behind this behavior. A cooperative atmosphere can only be engendered when both parties think cooperatively and believe that the other party will abide by any agreement they reach. It always takes one party to act first by being collaborative. Negotiators must always strive to fully understand the real interests that lay behind the position.

Wake Up: Real Talk About Competition

Kevin Donovan

Wake up. Get dressed. Go to work. Work. Go home. Eat. Sleep. Repeat. In a year like 2020 and in a world like ours, it's easy to lose track of meaning – It's easy to feel like our lives have no meaning when we're caught in a seemingly endless loop of waking up, working, eating, sleeping and repeating. Like a modern day Sisyphus rolling a stone up an endless hill, we face a constant cycle of repetition, often with neither tangible progress nor a feasible end in sight. We need to change how we as a culture think about value and meaning in life.



Competition is a major part in today's work and education culture. From our earliest education until our retirement, we are taught two things: that we have to win against our competitors and that our winning must get something in return. It's a quid pro quo, a this-for-that work culture that will drive us into a deep rut of feeling like we have no real meaning. This kind of meaning, the idea that our value and worth can only be derived from our winnings, is not the kind of meaning we ought to focus on primarily. If it is, then the rising and setting of the Sun is as senseless as Sisyphus. Furthermore, according to German sociologist Max Weber, inequalities within social structures cause conflict. In a society of competition, that means inequality of meaning will bring not just personal conflict, but societal conflict. By maintaining that our achievements are our primary meaning in society, our culture will only deepen the meaninglessness.

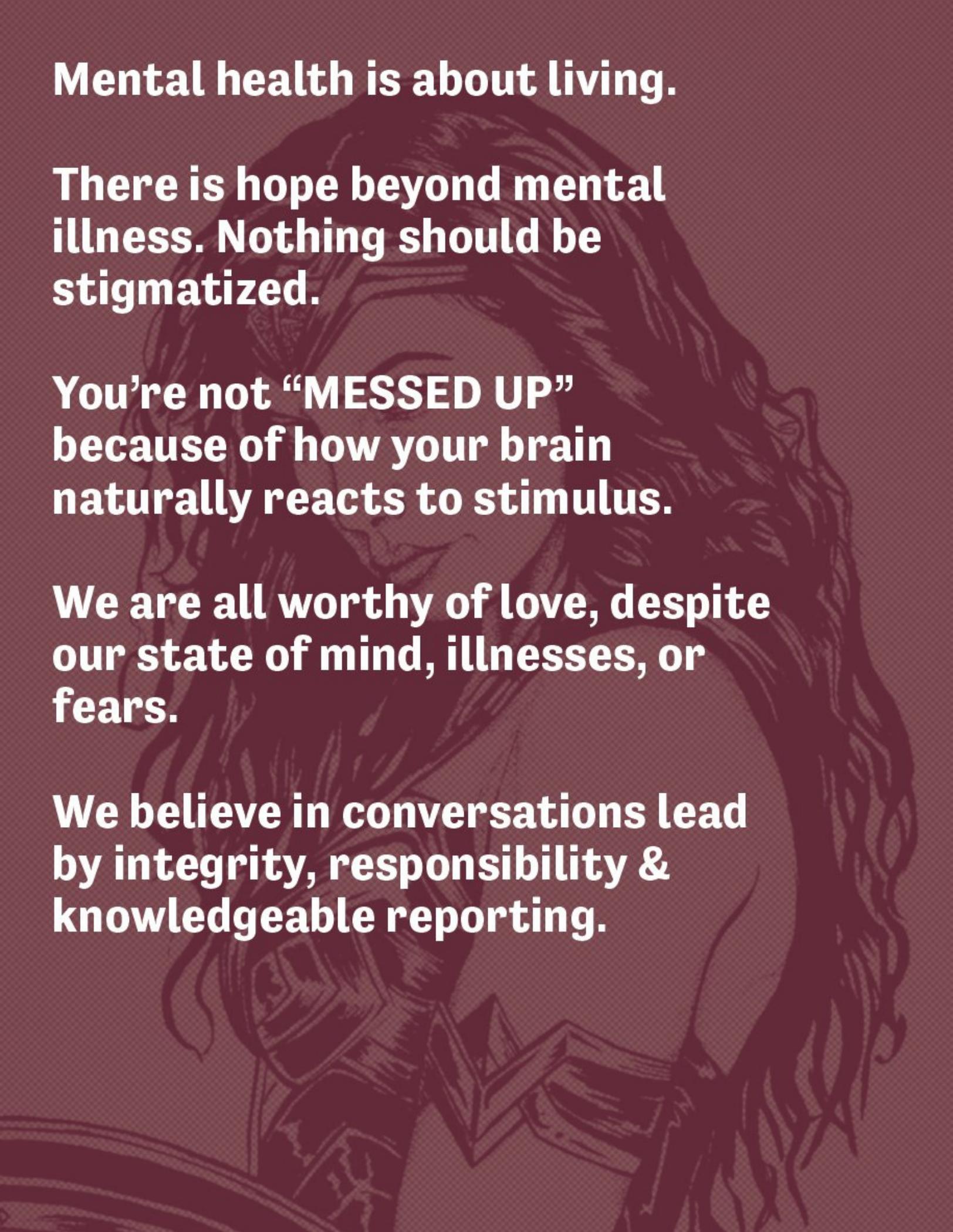
In Richard Taylor's essay, *The Meaning of Life*, Taylor examines the Myth of Sisyphus and compares it to human life. The things we do in life that we have deemed meaningful, whether it be derived from winnings, creating things to leave behind or some kind of legacy, are not too far off from Sisyphus' endless toil. Time will wear down that which we leave behind, physical or not. According to Taylor, "We do achieve things—we scale our towers and raise our stones to the hilltops—but every such accomplishment fades, providing only an occasion for renewed labors of the same kind." The cycle continues. We construct our achievements only for them to fade away and be repeated by the generations beyond our own. In this way, human life can be compared to Sisyphus'. To what end

do we build up our achievements if they are to only crumble in the end? There can still be meaning and value to that which we achieve, but relying solely on our achievements to find meaning will only lead us to meaninglessness. So meaning must not come from our achievements alone.

If meaning cannot come from our achievements, then we must look elsewhere. Taylor argues that despite our achievements failing to time in the end, we can still draw meaning from them, just not in the form of a legacy. Although time will cause any achievement to fade, they still have meaning to us in the moment. According to Taylor, "The things to which they bent their backs day after day...were precisely the things in which their wills were deeply involved, precisely the things in which their interests lay, and there was no need then to ask questions." It doesn't matter how long your legacies last. These are the things that matter to us now and for that alone, they have meaning. A builder does not build a house to make something that stands forever, but because it's a home. We don't need to despair in our perpetual monotonous cycle because our meaning comes not from what we leave behind or what we achieve but simply that we are alive.

This is why we desperately need to reassess how we value ourselves. If we continue to think of achievements and legacies as a reflection of our meaning then we will only face the endless cyclical nature of life. But in finding meaning in instants, the present and not the past or future, we can see that we in ourselves are enough to have significance, regardless of what we have achieved. For being alive – that is enough to be meaningful.





Mental health is about living.

There is hope beyond mental illness. Nothing should be stigmatized.

You're not "MESSED UP" because of how your brain naturally reacts to stimulus.

We are all worthy of love, despite our state of mind, illnesses, or fears.

We believe in conversations lead by integrity, responsibility & knowledgeable reporting.