

UPLIFT: A monthly ASCA newsletter of thriving and inspiration. Exclusively from The Morris Center for Healing from Child Abuse.

JUNE 20



Featuring positive, uplifting information exclusively from The Morris Center for Healing from Child Abuse.

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In this issue, we feature original artwork by Adult Survivors of Child Abuse, including information on self soothing and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in honor of PTSD awareness month. Finally, we share inspiring insight of how one survivor thrives.

"Winged hearts of love fly high and join all lost, wounded and targeted human beings in the powerful embrace of love"

Amaroq



Original artwork by Amaroq



In loving, celebratory memory of all the Latino & Non-Latino lives recently who passed away at the gay night club in Orlando, Florida. I also dedicate this to Muslim people who are right now being unjustly targeted and harassed in neighborhoods across the United States. The Flying Hearts also symbolize this year's San Francisco Gay Pride Weekend's wonderful theme: "*Racial & Economic Justice*." I dedicate this to all the before mentioned and also in honor of PTSD awareness day in the United States, which coincidentally and perfectly lands on Monday, the 27th of June.



Original artwork by Violet Newborn

The butterfly was inspired by my awareness of realizing the strength and endurance I have now to fly. It took months while incarcerated but I filled the wings with God's fruits of the spirit, as I learned to live by them. Although there were no mirrors, I became aware of my inner beauty. I am honored to touch anyone's soul/spirit who didn't get to sleep through the night.

JUNE IS PTSD AWARENESS MONTH

June is PTSD awareness month, with June 27th as PTSD awareness day in the United States. Let's learn more about the effects of PTSD on our body from [psychcentral.com](https://www.psychcentral.com) and some ways to self soothe from our very own [survivor to thriver manual](#).

During an experience that is traumatic, the part of our brain (brain stem) known as the Reptilian (responsible for autonomic body processes, instinct and survival) will shift the body into a reactive mode. Shutting down all non-essential body and mind processes, our brain stem takes full control and orchestrates survival mode. While this is happening, our sympathetic nervous system increases stress hormones to prepare us to flee, fight or freeze. In many cases when immediate threat ceases, our parasympathetic nervous system now shifts into a restorative mode. This natural process allows the brain to shift back to its usual control structure. Around 20% of trauma survivors go on to develop post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This happens when the Reptilian part of our brain, holds trauma survivors in a constant, reactive state.

Now that we've learned what happens to our bodies, lets look at some ways we can self soothe.

Evaluate the ways you soothe yourself, choosing to retain the healthy practices and controlling or even letting go of the less healthy ones. Soothing can be through physical activities like reading a favorite book, taking a walk or sharing a special meal. You may enjoy soothing yourself with daily inspiring or uplifting activities like meditation. Soothing can also be through empathetic and hopeful reassuring words. Perhaps write an encouraging letter to yourself and then read it again later, after some time. You are absolutely in the right to provide yourself these words that are reassuring, empathetic and hopeful! Frankly, you absolutely deserve to know you are awesome.

INTRODUCING LEAH: A LEADER OF LEADERS

Finally dealing with the trauma issues at the root of my eating disorder, I am currently in therapy for the first time after being diagnosed with PTSD just this year. I know/believe that I will be successful because I have the courage to work hard on myself. I love singing and like to pretend I'm a rock star through karaoke nights with my friends and family. I live in California and am just embarking on my 40's, currently a supervisor at a major healthcare organization overseeing a leadership development program.



Leah is: A role model, mother, leader



Pictured is the labyrinth that a small group of employees and I built at my workplace. One of my coworkers led the entire effort, she'd recently been certified as a labyrinth facilitator and wanted to bring the benefits of walking a labyrinth to our workplace. The work to map and draw it out in the dirt stretched my physical capabilities at the time but I persevered and the end result was worth every drop of sweat. I love walking the labyrinth with my daughter and proudly telling her the story of how I helped build it. They say there is no wrong way to walk a labyrinth, well she likes to run it! I feel happy imagining her bringing her children here one day.



Three stages of a labyrinth walk (as mentioned in the photo)

Releasing (walking from entrance to center)

The act of shedding thoughts and distractions enables you to let go of the details of your life. This is the time to open your heart and quiet your mind.

Receiving (while in the center)

At the center, stay there as long as you like, sit or stand, meditate or pray. Allow yourself to receive guidance.

Returning (walking from the center back to the entrance)

To leave the center, follow the same path out. There may be a sense of strengthening and clarity—becoming more empowered to find and do the work you feel your soul calling you to do.

[finding a labyrinth near you](#)

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UPLIFT joins our still ongoing, quarterly newsletter. We would love to feature you. If you would like to volunteer, have comments or would like to provide supportive feedback for anyone featured in this newsletter, send an email to ascanewseditor@gmail.com by including their name in the subject line of your email.

A special thank you, to all those who have made a [donation to the Norma J Morris Center](#). We would not be here without you.

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