

July Newsletter

How to Care Deeply Without Burning Out

(Written by Susa Talan for Mindful Magazine, June 9, 2017)

Mindfulness teaches us to be aware of and responsive to the emotions of others. But when we face the suffering of others without equanimity, our empathetic response can overwhelm us. “I think it’s almost inevitable that we get burnt out, at least from time to time,” says meditation teacher Sharon Salzberg. Part of the reason that happens is that we respond to the suffering of others without recognizing the difference between empathy and compassion.

You can acknowledge the pain, you can want to help, but you have to recognize that you can’t change other people’s experience of the world. When we sense the suffering of others, that’s empathy. Having compassion is a choice we make consciously and it can only happen with the balance of equanimity. In this conversation between Sharon and Dan Harris, of 10% Happier, they talk about the difference between empathy and compassion, and explore a few ways to avoid burning out.

- **Know the difference between empathy and compassion.** Empathy is our natural resonance with the emotions of others, where we sense the difficulty someone might be feeling. Compassion is one of the many responses to empathy.
- **Realize when you’re feeling overwhelmed.** It’s inevitable that we will all experience burnout. What’s important is recognizing what’s happening and moving towards balance. Compassion implies a stability of attention and caring in a wise and balanced way—caring about yourself and others.
- **Recognize that you can’t change others.** Compassion also implies a wisdom and intelligence to know that it’s not up to you to fix the world for others. You can’t function if you’re just taking in other’s pain all the time. There’s a balance that’s crucial: You can acknowledge the pain, you can want to help, but you have to recognize that you can’t change other people’s experience of the world. That’s the letting go. Dan Harris puts it this way: “My father says the hardest thing about having kids is letting them make their own mistakes. That’s compassion with equanimity.”

Special Dates

- July 4: Office Closed
- July 5: Volunteer Hours Due
- July 11, 18, & 25: Trauma Informed Yoga @ Response, 1:00pm
- July 29: Rubbermaid Fundraiser @ Apple Blossom Mall, Winchester, 6:30am-12:30pm

Urgent Needs!

- Twin Sheet Sets
- Large Bath Towels
- Batteries (AAA & AA)
- New Pillows
- Gift Cards (Walmart, Food Lion, Dollar General, Sheetz)

Survivor Story

Lady Gaga

When Lady Gaga was 19 years old, a music producer, 20 years her senior, raped her. It is only recently that the national icon, singer and songwriter disclosed her assault.

"I didn't tell anyone for, I think, seven years," she said. "I didn't know how to think about it. I didn't know how to accept it. I didn't know how not to blame myself, or think it was my fault. It was something that really changed my life. It changed who I was completely."

Gaga blamed herself at first, she explained, because of her provocative pop-music persona. "Because of the way that I dress, and the way that I'm provocative as a person, I thought that I had brought it on myself in some way," she said. "That it was my fault." She added that the physical consequences of the rape were just as painful as the emotional: "When you go through a trauma like that, it doesn't just have the immediate physical ramifications on you. For many people it has almost like trauma, where you re-experience it through the years after it, it can trigger patterns in your body of physical distress."

As a result of the attack she now suffers from PTSD and has discovered that mediation and yoga help her cope with the trauma. In 2015 she wrote the popular song "Til It Happens to You" for the documentary The Hunting Ground, an expose on the rape crisis facing college campuses nationwide. She chose that time to open up publicly about her assault in hopes that it helps heal her fans who've gone through something similar.



Shelter Happenings

New Staff Member!



We are thrilled to announce that long time volunteer and Response supporter, Lynn McKee, has been hired as our new Volunteer & Outreach Coordinator! Lynn will be taking on the role of organizing volunteer trainings, meetings and events as well as collaborating with Beth Ogle to continue our community outreach efforts. Lynn's awesome talent for organizing is already improving our day-to-day functioning. After months of construction, repairs and upheaval, Lynn's sense of order has been a breath of fresh air!

Now that Lynn has joined the staff, there will be a change in email contacts. Lynn will now be using the volcoor@shentel.net email address and Beth can be contacted at respourt@responseva.org. Please let us know if you have any questions!

Upcoming Events

Volunteer Training

We are looking to start another volunteer training course in late July/early August. If you know of anyone who may be interested, please have them contact Lynn McKee by email at volcoor@shentel.net or by calling our office at 540-459-5599.

Trauma Informed Yoga



Our introduction to trauma informed yoga has been well received by staff and we will be continuing the practice into July. Yoga days will continue to be held on Tuesday's at 1:00 (with the exception of the 4th of July). The theme for July will be empowerment. Empowering ourselves to be the best we can be, in our yoga practice and in our day to day lives. These sessions are open to our shelter and out-of-shelter clients as well as staff and volunteers. Please let me know in advance if you plan to attend so that we can ensure there is enough space. Also, if you have any extra yoga mats that you would like to donate for client use, please drop them off at the shelter at your earliest convenience.

Rubbermaid Sale

Thanks to a special partnership with [Rubbermaid Commercial Products](#), United Way of Northern Shenandoah Valley offers a monthly sale of returned goods, discontinued products and slightly damaged items. The sale is held the last Saturday of the month, in the Belk Parking lot at Apple Blossom Mall in Winchester, VA from 8:00a.m. to 12 noon. Items are different every week and the proceeds of each week's sale benefits a different local organization.

On July 29, 2017, the Rubbermaid sale proceeds will benefit Response. Staff and volunteers will be needed to help with the event. We need 10 to 15 volunteers to be there at 6:30am to set-up and unload the trucks. This should take about 2 hours. We will need about 8 people from 8:30am until 12:30pm. Please let me know if you can work on this day, what time you can be there and how long you can stay by emailing volcoor@shentel.net.

Wit N Waiter Wahoo

SAVE THE DATE!!!! September 23, 2017 will be the date of the 25th annual Wit N Waiter Wahoo – referred to this year as the Wit N Waiter Silver Jubilee! Corporate sponsorships are available now and tickets will go on sale soon!