

“VOICES IN THE WILD, FOR THE WILD”

**UNTAMED
VOICES**

Joshua Tree, Ca

DECEMBER 2020



TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT UNTAMED VOICES BY EMILY SILVER.....	3
IT'S THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR, EXCEPT WHEN IT'S NOT BY MELISSA GRISI, LCSW.....	4
MISS G DESIGNS CALEY JOHNSON.....	10
BLACK LIVES MATTER SPEECH EXCERPT BY ARELI GALVEZ.....	11
HE KNOWS IF YOU'VE BEEN BAD OR GOOD BY THYRZA SEGAL.....	14
POSTCARD FROM DESERTON, DESERTIA BY ELLA RICHIE DEMARIA.....	15
FINE BY JAY LONGTIN.....	17
MY SEAT BY SHAWANDA GATSON.....	18
MY WINTER BED BY KRISTEN B STANLEY.....	21
LET IT SNOW NO MORE BY CATHERINE BERRESHEIM.....	22
UNTITLED BY DYLAN SMITH.....	24
I AM CONFIDENT BY DESTYNIÉ CANDELARIA.....	25
SANTA IN A SANDSTORM BY THYRZA SEGAL.....	26
A VERY CRUISE SHIP CHRISTMAS BY DYLAN SMITH.....	27
CONCRETE JUNGLE ANEKA BROWN DESIGNS.....	29
UNTITLED BY KATHLEEN PIZZELLO.....	30
SHARE YOUR VOICE	31
BEHIND UNTAMED VOICES	34

ABOUT UNTAMED VOICES

BY EMILY SILVER



Often people need permission, opportunity, and a platform. *Welcome to Untamed Voices.* A space/publication dedicated to hearing, uncovering, and discovering voices and stories in and around the Mojave Desert and beyond.

Through Untamed Voices, we have an opportunity to build community around

shared narratives, art, dance, music and spoken word.

As an artist, educator, and yoga student/teacher it has been at the root of all I do—that your voices are heard, and that people feel seen. Untamed Voices will be just that, a collaborative publication.

It is with great honor that you all out there take this from here, that you speak up and share with the community what you have to say.

“There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you.” — Maya Angelou



IT'S THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR, EXCEPT WHEN IT'S NOT

BY MELISSA GRISI, LCSW

"Be gentle to your body, and yourself."
- Albert Wong

The holidays can be a time of great joy and celebration, but it can also be a time of immense stress. Old wounds and patterns may emerge as we sometimes set unrealistic expectations for ourselves and loved ones. We may become triggered by family dynamics and regress back into past unhealthy roles. You may also find yourself experiencing grief, as we miss those who are no longer with us.

Now, add COVID-19 into the mix, and you may find this holiday season more challenging in unimaginable ways! Some find themselves separated from loved ones for the first time in decades. Others grapple with establishing boundaries when having to decline invitations and events; which, can create discomfort and potentially disrupt relationships. This unprecedented pandemic has led us into uncharted territory in regards to family obligations.

There are various ways we can take care of ourselves during this complicated time of the year, including noticing and labeling



Grief is a common emotion experienced during the holidays. As a nation, we are also experiencing collective grief due to the events of 2020.

our emotions, learning our triggers, setting boundaries, and implementing a self-care plan.

The Holidays, Grief & COVID

"The story of what could have been and what should have been." -Unknown

Grief is a common emotion experienced during the holidays. We may grieve those who have died and/or relationships that have ended. We may grieve the families we don't have or no longer have. We may grieve the holidays we imagined. This year, we may grieve traditions we cannot partake in because of COVID. We may be experiencing grief around job loss or health issues. And for some, we may be grieving the loss of all the dreams we had for 2020.

As a nation, we are experiencing collective grief due to the events of 2020. So, in addition to our individual grief, we may be carrying others' grief as well. Grief can feel heavy, slow us down, and rob us of our joy. There is probably no other emotion we resist and avoid more than grief. When we are walking through a season of grief, it is difficult to remember that it is all part of being human. It's time for us to begin normalizing grief. Give yourself permission to create space for grief, especially during the holidays. Self-care, self-love, and self-compassion are essential and powerful tools to embrace as you move through the muddy waters of grief.



Family Systems and Holiday Triggers

"If you think you are enlightened, spend a week with your family."

I often share this quote by Ram Dass with my clients (and remind myself of!), especially during the holidays. Families are complex systems. Family members influence one another, and each member of the family directly impacts the overall functioning (or non-functioning) of that system. This is especially important to know when we have dysfunction in our families (which, by the way, most of us do!) because the system can become unbalanced.

However, when addiction, substance misuse, abuse, boundary violations, divorce, separation, and other harmful behaviors enter a family system, our family roles can become trauma responses. We may take on our family system's dysfunction squarely on our shoulders and experience shame. We may become the caretaker and grow into people-pleasers, neglecting our own care and worth. We may unconsciously repeat unhealthy and/or toxic patterns we've witnessed. As adults, we often create our own systems once we

HALT

The acronym HALT can be useful in stressful situations. The letters of HALT stands for Hungry, Angry, Lonely, Tired. We can set ourselves up to be more reactive and less in control of our emotions and behaviors when we allow ourselves to become overly hungry, angry, lonely, or tired. Addressing these four elements can be a beneficial strategy in diffusing holiday frustration.

leave our family of origin; yet, we revert to our old roles when we gather with our family of birth during the holidays.

Therapy can help unpack how we are impacted by our family systems. It can help one learn how to let go of people-pleasing behaviors, set healthy boundaries, heal shame, grow, and evolve. Yet, the simple act of just becoming aware of how family systems work can be helpful as we navigate family dynamics this season. You'll be better equipped to notice behaviors or beliefs that may arise as you spend time with your family unit.

The practice of Svadhyaya or self-study, which is one of the eight limbs of yoga, is also helpful in identifying emotional, cognitive, and behavioral patterns triggered by family and/or the holiday season. Through self-study, you can determine what behaviors set you off, agitate you, stir up anxiety and guilt, and situations that predictably overwhelm you.



Being able to control our emotions and behaviors in stressful situations begins with anticipating and identifying our triggers. As you prepare for holiday gatherings and interactions, consider these examples of common holiday stressors/triggers:

- **Too much togetherness:** Conflict and tension can arise based on who we USED to be rather than who we are today. This can lead to emotional exhaustion and feeling overwhelmed.
- **Not enough togetherness:** Feelings of loneliness can also emerge unexpectedly. It is not uncommon to feel left out even if we logically understand the given situation's dynamics.
- **Overspending:** Spending more money than you are comfortable with and/or going into debt buying gifts can add more stress. This can be especially problematic when attending social and holiday events that require a financial commitment.
- **Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD):** As daylight diminishes and we spend more time indoors, some may experience depressive symptoms. This can intensify over the holidays, accompanied by an all-encompassing sense of gloom.
- **Unhealthy foods:** Eating unhealthy foods your body is not used to, restricting calories, bingeing, and/or purging can cause brain fog, zap your energy, and cause unwanted weight gain.
- **Alcohol Consumption:** Drinking too much or more than you usually do can impair your ability to maintain your boundaries.
- **Expectations:** Pressure to feel happy and joyous all the time during the holiday season can take its toll and become exhausting.
- **Comparison:** Comparing your holiday to others' can stir up feelings of resentment and other negative emotions. Remember, social media is only a "highlight reel." You are only seeing what people want you to see, and it's often not reality or the full picture.
- **Overextending oneself:** Overbooking oneself, having too many activities planned over the season, or overcommitting can lead to burnout. Prioritizing is a healthy habit to develop.
- **Emotional overload:** We may experience difficult/or uncomfortable emotions, including sadness, grief, anxiety, anger, guilt, remorse, jealousy, loneliness, heartbrokenness, inadequacy, vulnerability, bitterness, dread, isolation, defensive, uneasy, tension, exposed, etc. Our emotions are valid and should be evaluated if one can do so. Either on our own, with a trusted friend or family member, or with a professional's help.



Boundaries and the Holiday

When it comes to boundaries, remember: NO is a complete sentence. Boundaries come in all shapes and sizes and vary depending on the relationship. Boundaries can be emotional or physical. Emotional boundaries include: not being responsible for another person's emotions, not allowing other people's emotions to control you, and/or not sacrificing your emotional needs for others. In contrast, physical boundaries include limits you set regarding your privacy, personal space, and body. This can also include constraints on your time and your willingness to discuss (or not discuss) specific topics. This is especially important when fraught with political misinformation, tension, and mixed signals from elected officials. Everyone has a right to their own opinion; however, you can choose not to entertain those types of conversations.

Maintaining healthy boundaries with family and friends is a form of self-care by creating a secure container for our relationships. They offer us protection, keep others, and ourselves safe and help minimize resentments. Our boundaries can be rigid, open, nonexistent, or somewhere in between. However, the more



The practice of Svadhyaya or self-study, one of the eight limbs of yoga, can help identify emotional, cognitive, and behavioral patterns triggered by family and/or the holiday season.

relaxed and porous our boundaries are, the more resentments and challenges we may experience in our relationships.

If setting boundaries within your family systems is new, reactions to this paradigm shift might be quite intense. Often, those who have benefited from our lack of boundaries in the past may become angry. When we begin to set healthy boundaries within our relationships, we teach others how we want to be treated. With practice and reinforcement, you will start to see improvement and feel more balanced within yourself.

Setting Boundaries During the Holidays

- **First, give yourself permission to set boundaries!**
- **Create a clear and firm message. Write it out and practice, practice, PRACTICE! Practice with your therapist or a friend. Be sure you are grounded before you deliver your message.**
- **You don't have to apologize for setting boundaries with your family and loved ones. Read that again: You don't have to apologize for setting boundaries. They are YOUR boundaries.**
- **Be aware of people-pleasing behaviors. If you feel resentful towards your loved ones and family, you have likely experienced a boundary violation.**
- **Decide beforehand what your "non-negotiables" are, especially during COVID, and inform your friends and / loved ones ahead of time. These may include statements like: "I will not be hugging anyone," "I will be maintaining 6 feet of physical distance," and/or "I will visit with you, but only outdoors." Open and honest communication can help to minimize confusion and hurt feelings.**
- **Just because you experience discomfort when setting boundaries doesn't mean you shouldn't.**
- **Boundaries are another area in our life that require practice. Practice setting boundaries, practice saying no, practice saying yes.**



Holiday Self-Care

Self-care has become yet another buzz word you see all over the Internet, but self-care is not just massages or spa days. Self-care is the act of identifying and utilizing realistic strategies for your daily life and meeting your individual needs. During the holidays, we may need to increase our self-care and find ways to nourish and nurture ourselves. Implementing a unique self-care plan to assist you in being more responsive rather than reactive can be helpful. It's okay to prioritize your emotional and physical needs!

Self-care strategies vary from person-to-person. Below are some options that you may consider adding to your holiday self-care plan:

- Allow yourself to receive from others. Accept people's love.
- Breathe, meditate, do yoga.
- Move your body.
- Spend time in nature.
- Create a budget and stick to it. You don't have to buy expensive gifts or buy any gifts at all, especially if you have experienced financial hardship due to COVID. You can give handmade gifts or give a loved one the

beautiful gift of your time and attention.

- Engage in a gratitude practice. Start or end your day by naming 3-5 things you are grateful for. If it's a hard day, name 1 thing. Don't make it into another chore you "have" to do. You don't even have to write it down.
- If it's bothering you or you find yourself numbing out on it, consider disconnecting from social media and/or limit the use of devices.
- Connect with your community.
- If you work, take a mental health day and sleep late. Then go for a walk, FaceTime with a good friend, make art, and/or any/all of these things.
- Set up online events with loved ones - make it fun! Play a board game together, create a virtual scavenger hunt, or maybe get old school and play a game of show-and-tell!
- Make time for YOU.
- Keep your therapy sessions!
- Consider simplifying the holidays. This is an opportunity to let go of what no longer serves you and create new traditions. What task/activities can you scale down on?
- Practice self-compassion. Know you are not alone in this world; collectively, this is a hard time of year, especially during a pandemic.



Creating a self-care plan can help manage your emotions and stress during the holidays. Spending time with your furry friends might be something to add to your self-care plan. Pets are family too!

Holiday Self-Care Questionnaire

- **What activities/traditions offer you joy?**
- **Which activities may not be your favorite but are manageable?**
- **Do you have the energy? Consider your "endurance" for activities and commitments (your "endurance" and energy level may be very different this year due to COVID-19 and that's alright).**
- **Are you being honest with yourself? Check-in with yourself frequently to assess how much time, money, energy, and emotional bandwidth you have to give to others. It's totally okay if this year looks different.**



ABOUT MELISSA GRISI, LCSW



Melissa Grisi is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW #85168), Certified Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CAADC), EMDR Certified Therapist and trauma-informed yoga teacher. Melissa uses a variety of therapy techniques and tools to help clients meet their goals. She is trained in the following: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), Motivational Interviewing (MI), Gottman Method Relationship Therapy, trauma-sensitive yoga, mindfulness, relapse prevention and expressive arts.

After working as a social worker for nearly two decades, Melissa founded Blue Sky Therapy in 2020. Her clinical practice is a reflection of her professional passions, incorporating psychotherapy, trauma-informed yoga and expressive art into her therapy work. In her spare time, Melissa enjoys hiking in Joshua Tree National Park, practicing yoga, gardening, creating pottery and spending time with family and friends.

Blue Sky Therapy
5735 Adobe Rd
Twentynine Palms, CA 92277
760-972-6458
www.bluesky29.com
melissa@bluesky29.com



MISS G DESIGNS

Miss G Designs is a headdress company based in California where Caley is the sole designer and maker of her one-of-a-kind creations. Miss G Designs came to life in San Francisco in 2010. Caley fell in love with the process of creating headdresses, excited by the idea that anyone could wear her designs no matter their age, sex, body type or style. She draws inspiration from nature, history, art, festival culture, fairytales and the creative humans in her life. Her headdresses reflect the beauty and diversity of humanity, covering a huge range of styles to ensure there is something for everyone! Headdresses by Miss G Designs have been featured in numerous publications, music videos, short films, art galleries and museum exhibits.

WEBSITE: www.missgdesigns.com
 FACEBOOK: facebook.com/missgdesigns
 TWITTER: twitter.com/MissGDesigns
 TUMBLR: missgdesigns.tumblr.com
 PINTEREST: pinterest.com/missgdesigns
 INSTAGRAM: instagram.com/missgdesigns
 DEVIANT ART: missgdesigns.deviantart.com
 ETSY: www.etsy.com/shop/MissGDesignsShop



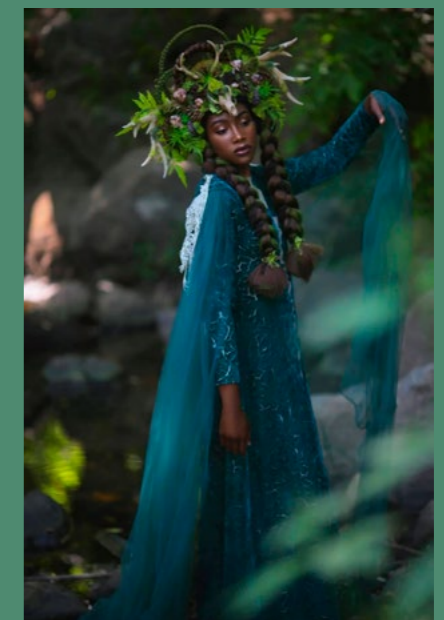
Model: Bernice Ayite Atayi
 @bernice_ayite



Headdress: Caley Johnson
 @missgdesigns



Photo: Savannah Seeger
 @simplysavannahart



Gown: Crystal Wagenman
 @crystalanndesigns

Did You Know?

"I do believe in fairies! I do! I do!"
 -Peter Pan, J.M. Barrie

In West African mythology, legend and folklore exist the fae called the Aziza. They are described as benevolent nature spirits with remarkable beauty, often glowing with magical light. Unlike European fairies, who are often characterized as mischievous, the Aziza are seen as predominantly benevolent beings. Often tied to West Africa's Dahomey tribe or Fon people, the Aziza are thought to have lived in anthills and silk-cotton trees. Also referred to as the forest's tiniest people, they were known for helping hunters and forest travelers by sharing their medicinal herbs and plants' wisdom and teaching them about fire and survival. The Aziza were said to have magical powers to channel magical energy to induce and manipulate events and phenomena. Their supernatural powers are often associated with the gbo, a charm that protects its owner from evil and can hurt its owner's enemies.

Sources:
 Aziza. (2019). Retrieved December 10, 2020, from <https://warriorsofmyth.fandom.com/wiki/Aziza>
 Bane, T. (2013). *Encyclopedia of Fairies in World Folklore and Mythology*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland.



BLACK LIVES MATTER

SPEECH EXCERPT BY ARELI GALVEZ

Before I start my speech, I want everyone to take a deep breath, and if you feel comfortable, close your eyes. I am going to tell you a story today, but when I tell you this story, I want you to remember I do NOT hate the police.

Imagine you're laying on the ground, and a police officer has their knee on your neck, cutting off any airway of any possible breathing. As you lay there, what are you thinking? As your vision begins to blur, you look up, and you see people filming you, but not helping! You feel the pressure of the cop's knee on your neck! What do you hear? You hear the yelling and the mutters of people trying to get the police officer to stop. You

begin to plead, "Please, I can't breathe." and yet you still wonder, "Did he hear me?!" so you try again, "Please, I can't breathe." Nothing is working. So you do what you do when everything is going wrong...call for your mom. You begin to yell, "Mama, Mama! Please!" Yet still, you're stuck in the same position. You begin to tell the officer the body parts that hurt, hoping that they move. "Sir, my neck hurts, my stomach hurts..everything hurts. Please." Still. No sudden movement. You feel your nose begin to bleed. You realize that your life is coming to an end. YET YOU STILL BEG, AND YOU STILL CRY, hoping he will get off of you just to spare your life. Yet still, no sudden movement. As you drift away,

are you thinking to yourself all of this for a 20 dollar bill? Probably not.

So today, I have a question for you guys, I said it once, and I will say it again. What happened to the cornerstone of American justice where every man is innocent until proven guilty. Can you guys answer that question for me yet? Or is it too hard? Can you feel what these people feel yet, or is it too hard? This isn't about race. It's more than that. It's about being united for a cause that has killed many other human beings.

CREDIT: Young Justice Advocates Of The Desert Facebook Page





These moving and poignant words are an excerpt from a speech given by Areli Galvez, 17, at the "Enough Is Enough" Black Lives Matter peaceful rally at Palm Springs' Ruth Hardy Park on Saturday, June 6. Galvez is a senior at La Quinta High School. She is one of the founding members of The Young Justice Advocates of the Desert, which is a social justice advocacy group in the Coachella Valley. She began her journey with social advocacy a little less than a year ago due to the racial profiling she and her family had experienced. After graduation, Galvez plans to attend college and medical school with the goal of becoming a trauma nurse.



My son and I attended the rally along with almost 1000 other face-mask-wearing attendees. With all the racial tension and violence we have faced in 2020, I was moved by the emotionally charged words of Galvez and other members of the community. It gave me hope that despite all the challenges we have faced this year, there are still those who are willing to stand up for what's right. It gives me hope that there is a crop of young people rising up around our nation to take up the mantle of justice and continue to make a difference in our world.

-ShaWanda Gatson



As you gather with your family and friends, by Zoom or in person, take a moment to give "thanks" for your loved one. Remember those who have lost a loved one to unlawful police brutality. As they have an empty seat around their table this year. They are missed. Their lives matter.

Save their names. Remember their names. Don't forget their names.





HE KNOWS IF YOU'VE BEEN BAD OR GOOD

BY THYRZA SEGAL

THYRZA@GMAIL.COM



Altered digital photograph by Thyrza Segal, 2018.

That Christmas carol; worried me as a kid. I wonder if China learned about mass surveillance from Santa? We all have privacy concerns regarding the internet, but I hope the desert can still be a refuge for a little while yet.



POSTCARD FROM DESERTON, DESERTIA

BY ELLA RICHIE DEMARIA

ELLARICHIEDEMARIA@GMAIL.COM

We had to leave Los Angeles.
 We had to abscise from the weed garden
 (ours and everyone's mystery).
 We left behind ghosting on Main and Spring,
 left behind police prisms and hollow eyes;
 we had been extras abandoned on the empty movie set,
 survivors left behind.
 We were explorers of telephone line liana and billboard canopy,
 designers of the project given up long ago,
 party organizers for inestimable masses.
 (God neglects some apocalypses.)
 We had learned to love this headache,
 loved the love we could never get.
 We were faceless in the polyglot.
 Feasters of long dream leftovers,
 prion upon the carrion city,
 ours to make ours.
 We lived the public lives of secrets.
 Until one day, after gradual time, the city caught us on;
 and the unknown we navigated was suddenly customized,
 self-aware, and there,
 and the underground overground
 had no more soul to share,
 just ritz, glitz, and glam,
 skywide and multiplied
 compartmentalized and packaged and presented as a prize.
 So we had to leave.
 We spread out, lichtenberg figured,
 to honest desert climes.
 We dusted ourselves to dust.
 When there, in the Mojave, we found the perfect place to begin
 again.

Amid creosote and holly hocks we incorporated,
 and I present to you: Deserton, Desertia, yet to be articulated.
 Deserton, Desertia as of yet has no verbs to propel it or laws to
 compel it
 — we are satisfied with standing still.
 We have left our communications to the media city
 and here speak the great monosyllabic flatland,
 the murmur of the wordless world.
 But you asked for words
 and I'll cram as I can
 a picture of my newfound home.
 We tumble here (how else to move?),
 fire popular songs under stars,
 drink dry water and eat air;
 we watch shadows stretch,
 count the clouds and scorpion our hair.
 We think sometimes of the cars and remember how
 L.A. seemed untamed,
 but we've laughed and learned
 to write on the wind our memories and names —
 maybe they will find you.
 As this does, and forget me,
 if you can, because it's not;
 you know the me I no longer do.
 One day I may return to find you in L.A.,
 your initials on the sidewalk in a five-point pattern,
 your hand print affirmed beside your name;
 and if you go out towards Deserton, Desertia,
 searching for the same, asking about earlier,
 I'll deny it all and insist you make the change
 to where we know no one nor words nor things to know.
 And as I've done to city life
 then do to me and my words —
 let them go.





These photos of Mojave National Preserve and Bristol Dry Lake were taken on January 1, 2020. I wanted to begin the decade in solitude, and was feeling a bit anxious about the year ahead, knowing nothing of the strange year that was to come. These landscapes comforted me with their vastness, reminding me I was just a blip in the long procession of time.



FINE

BY JAY LONGTIN
TECHSPIN@GMAIL.COM

The snow was falling softly like a white fleece blanket being softly draped over a newborn baby. As he peered out the window, he could see the neighborhood children playing, scrambling up the mound of snow piled high by the plow trucks during the night.

He began to think about his own youth. Which, of course, made him think about his father.

His father was the kind of man who mostly kept to himself. He would tinker around out in the garage for hours each day—working on cars and bikes. Mostly cars. He'd love to strip her down, clean all her parts, and then put her back together. Even a new paint job. This was his passion. She was his pride.

He wasn't an easy man to spend time with. He didn't like to talk about his feelings. When he did express them, they generally came out in anger.

The movement outside his window brought him back into his living room. Did any of these children feel the same way he did? Did they have a father like his? Were they hoping someone would help them? Maybe, he could help them?

But how could he help them if he couldn't help himself?

He turned, withdrew the curtains, and walked over to his favorite spot on the couch. It was too cold outside. But, inside, it was warm. Safe. He turned on the tv, took a sip of his merlot, and settled in.

The children will be fine.



MY SEAT

BY SHAWANDA GATSON

Outgoing text from me to a friend, September 2019:

"[My ex] wants to take his girlfriend home to meet his family for Thanksgiving and Christmas."

The dismemberment of marriage is brutal. Regardless of why it ended, it's no romp through the poppy fields. Even if you are the one who initiated it, as I did, it's still a death. And you will still grieve. And no matter how evolved you are, a declaration like this affects you.

When I sent this text to my friend, I had known about my ex-husband's girlfriend for quite some time. He and had been divorced for about a year and separated even longer. And in ALL honesty, I was happy for him. But yes, since I'm human, I still felt some sort of way. It wasn't the sting of the green-eyed monster. No. It was something else. It was a new and unknown territory.

That's when the logical side of me joined the party. She's like the older sister or best friend who always has your back. She's the side of you that reminds you that everything has a cause and effect. And that's OK. And being uncomfortable, but not looking too backward,



What's your why? My son, Mateo, is mine. I filter my choices through the lens of how it will ultimately affect him.

is OK too. Human emotions are complex. Sometimes I want to tell my logical side to get the f@!k out of my face, so I can be petty. Lol. But, she usually has the healthiest advice to share. So I keep her around.

She reminded me of a few things:

If not now, it would eventually happen.

If not her, it would eventually be someone.

If not this holiday, it would be some holiday.

My ex had made plans to take our son to see his family that lives in Las Vegas. My exes girlfriend was also going to be going. This would be her first Christmas with his family.

This was BIG!

So he and I discussed it. And he discussed it with his girlfriend. And we discussed it with our son. There were some uncomfortable conversations, but they were honest. Ultimately, they were all necessary conversations. And they all turned out pretty well. Our individual take on things was nuanced and even different at times, but we still listened with civility. We got upset and frustrated at times and had to give each other space to cool down.

But what was our other option?



We could ignore the situation and hope it just worked itself out. Or we could choose to do and say things we couldn't take back. But those weren't the choices that would ultimately bring us all peace.

I guess this is how boundaries are made. They don't come ready-made. 6, 8, or 10 feet barriers that just...BOOM...drops out of the sky to protect us. Boundaries are made one choice at a time. Boundaries are made based on the information we have at the time.

In the first *Incredibles* movie, Violet Parr didn't know she could shield her family from Syndrome's attacks, until she had to. And when the time came...she did. She doubted herself many times and wasn't sure if she had the strength to protect her family.

I wasn't sure if I had the strength to make the right choice. The most harmonious choice. Part of me wanted to rehash the past. Add fuel to the fire of my petty side. But what good would that do? My ex and I had already said our sorries and made amends for our marriage. In the end, I had to remember my why.

My, why is my kid.

And although, at the time, my son was 6 months from being 18...a new adult...he was still my kid. His opinion mattered. And my

opinion mattered to him.

He was watching and listening.

For a brief moment, I considered that all this could turn into an episode of the *Real Housewives of the Morongo Basin*. Or we could create one of those ultra-progressive celebrity collaborative parent fusion type scenarios. My exes GF and I could go for a hike or do some yoga. Or we could discuss all our feelings using a talking stick.

Much to YOUR chagrin, it was neither. (I know some of you were hoping for some Jerry Stringer type tale...NOPE). Yet, the feelings I felt leading up to meeting her were complicated.

I mostly felt motherly ownership of my son. Would I be OK with him having another motherly figure in his life?



But, I also had the thoughts of...

What is she like? What does she look like? Is she prettier than me? Would my ex-mother-in-law like her better than me?

A quick note before we continue. All of you turning your noses up, don't judge me. I see you. C'mon. You ALL think stuff like that too. I don't care how MATURE you are. Everyone wants to see the new GF or BF and size them up. And yes, I know comparison is not a healthy emotion. But it pops in my head and your head as a normal, knee-jerk, human reaction. And you know what, it's OK? We just can't stay in the mindset of comparison; that's when problems arise—no Bueno.

Let us continue...

So all this jumble of thoughts were running through my head. I sat with them for a bit.

When a marriage ends and a new partner comes on the scene, they will now sit where you used to. The seating arrangement has changed. Your seat is not your seat anymore. Right? And depending on the circumstances of your relationship, marriage, and/or your divorce will determine how that knowledge sits with you.



When I ultimately decided to file for divorce, I did it with full knowledge that these types of moments would arise. Whether it be for the holidays, my son's graduation, or any other future family functions that involve my son. (Like when he gets married.) I also knew that when these moments did come up, they would probably suck. But the severity of their "suckitude" would be dependent on my choices. My choices would be the only thing I would have control over. The past already happened. All of it. Can't change it. But I get to chose how I respond.

When I left my marriage, I didn't lose the memories of what was. Memories that are both good and bad. When I left, I knew I would be faced with many uncomfortable choices. But the funny thing about choices is that they're paradoxically simple and complex.

A choice is simply a decision between two or more options. Yes or no? Right or left? Up or down? But each choice will take you in a specific direction. Even the act of "not" making a choice is actually still a choice. So here is what I chose:

As long as my exes girlfriend is good to my kid, then that's all that really matters to me. He's my why? And that plays a HUGE part in my decision making.

She will be one more person that will love my kid. And that's not a bad thing. I'm always

going to be his mother, no matter what. I liken it to how teachers and students bond. I adored my students when I was a teacher. They would share their sweet little hearts with me. We laughed and cried over the stories we read together. And I loved them, and they loved me back, but that in no way diminished the BIG love they had for their parents.

But hear me...

Knowing my why and choosing to act accordingly is not always easy. I have to work at it—every day. But it's worth it to me.

You're probably wondering what happened at the Ex-Wife vs. New Girlfriend showdown. Grab your popcorn! Are you ready?!

NOTHING HAPPENED.

Before the text, I hadn't expressed one way or another about how I felt about my exes girlfriend. I hadn't said anything negative or positive about her. My focus was on other things, and we had not gotten to that bridge before that point. But now we were at the bridge. I needed to have an opinion. I needed to vocalize that opinion because my son was watching.

We were at the bridge, and we had to cross it.

So I thought, and I thought and thought, and I thought some more. And then I talked to my kid. And we crossed the bridge. She didn't end up spending Thanksgiving or Christmas with my exes family because our son just wasn't quite ready. But I didn't go either. I spent both Thanksgiving morning and Christmas morning with my kid, and then he and his dad went to Las Vegas...just the two of them.

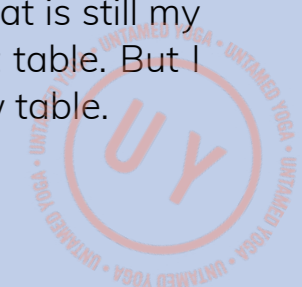
Later in 2020, I finally met my exes GF, and she's been to three family gatherings. All of which I didn't attend. My choice. But, I still maintain my own separate relationship with my exes family.

I am two years and two months out of my divorce, and it has been a wild, bumpy, messy, and beautiful ride. I've learned a lot about myself. I've had some spectacular failures and some mind-blowing triumphs. I have wept uncontrollably over the smallest things and have been utterly humbled by perspective.

And again, that's OK.

My exes girlfriend isn't sitting in my seat. She has her own seat. That is neither negative nor positive; it just is. There's no comparison of our chairs that need to be had. Her seat is her seat. And mine is mine. My seat is still my seat; I'm just sitting at a different table. But I like my new table. I chose my new table.

And once more, that's OK.



MY WINTER BED

BY KRISTEN B STANLEY

KRISTINADELESTANLEY@GMAIL.COM

My socks are balled up at the foot of my bed
Tucked in so tight...
So like, I can't really smooth out the blankets
Unless I unmake the bed

Oh...did i tell you?
I make the bed every morning now.
Now that winter is here
and , well, there is no one sleeping late
In my bed

MY bed...
A queen
Brand new
The smartest financially irresponsible purchase
I've ever made...

I make my bed every morning.

My mattress was not free-
But i feel free
When i put my meditation sounds on
And close my eyes at night
Socks on

I've been sleeping in my own bed for a while.
Since last winter
We thought it was fine.
We thought we were "that couple"
We didn't like to snuggle in bed anyway.

My Christmas lights are up
They're white this year
Can you imagine?
Remember the colorful lights you would put up
Just to make me smile?
Even though you don't really like Christmas lights

Damn.

Last night, i missed you
Lisa warned me-I'd miss the inside jokes
I thought-meh that's easy
I was wrong.

I made my bed

It's crispy out
Cold
Your voice on the other end of the phone
From my new home to our old home
It's colder

And

I know we will warm up
By Easter it will be gone
We will rise up

Make our bed(s)

My socks are balled up at the foot of my bed
Tucked in so tight
And, I'm ok with the lumps...



LET IT SNOW NO MORE

BY CATHERINE BERRESHEIM

CATHERINEBERRESHEIM@COMCAST.NET

The last time it snowed Big here in Nashville, I was forty-five days into healing a fractured humerus. Therefore, I was restricted from playing in the fresh powder. For a Chicago kid who loves snow, this was, well, clearly karmically unfair.

After all, my fondest childhood memories center around snow. The snow was what made the winter cold bearable. We spent hours in our frosty forts, slinging snowballs, or depending on the texture and consistency, tunneling igloos in the mountains of snow deposited in the lucky kid's yard by the plow. I had quiet moments, too, alone, lying on my back, watching the flakes fall and float, transforming the world into a holy place. I hadn't seen the ocean yet, but the snow was just as miraculous to me. How could you not believe in a god while witnessing such wonder?

My brothers and I would tromp home, pull off our layers of wet things, throw them onto the heat vents and drying rack, eat lunch, thaw out toes, and go back out again.

So, when it snows, even though I am a



On Friday morning, January 29, 2010, I woke with the knowledge that the weatherman wasn't teasing. I could feel it coming. I could smell it in the air.

menopausal woman, that kid comes out, delighted, mesmerized, enchanted, and ready to play.

Each winter since the last Big One here in 2003, I've anxiously awaited snow's return. But thanks to global warming, sadly, only dustings came.

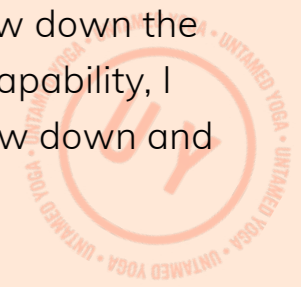
So, when the forecast said a Big Snow was coming, I rejoiced. I went to Publix late on Thursday night to gather cocoa, fruit, and

extra eggs. I made a pot of white bean chili. I was ready. On Friday morning, January 29, 2010, I woke with the knowledge that the weatherman wasn't teasing. I could feel it coming. I could smell it in the air. I could see the heaviness in the clouds.

This was the real thing.

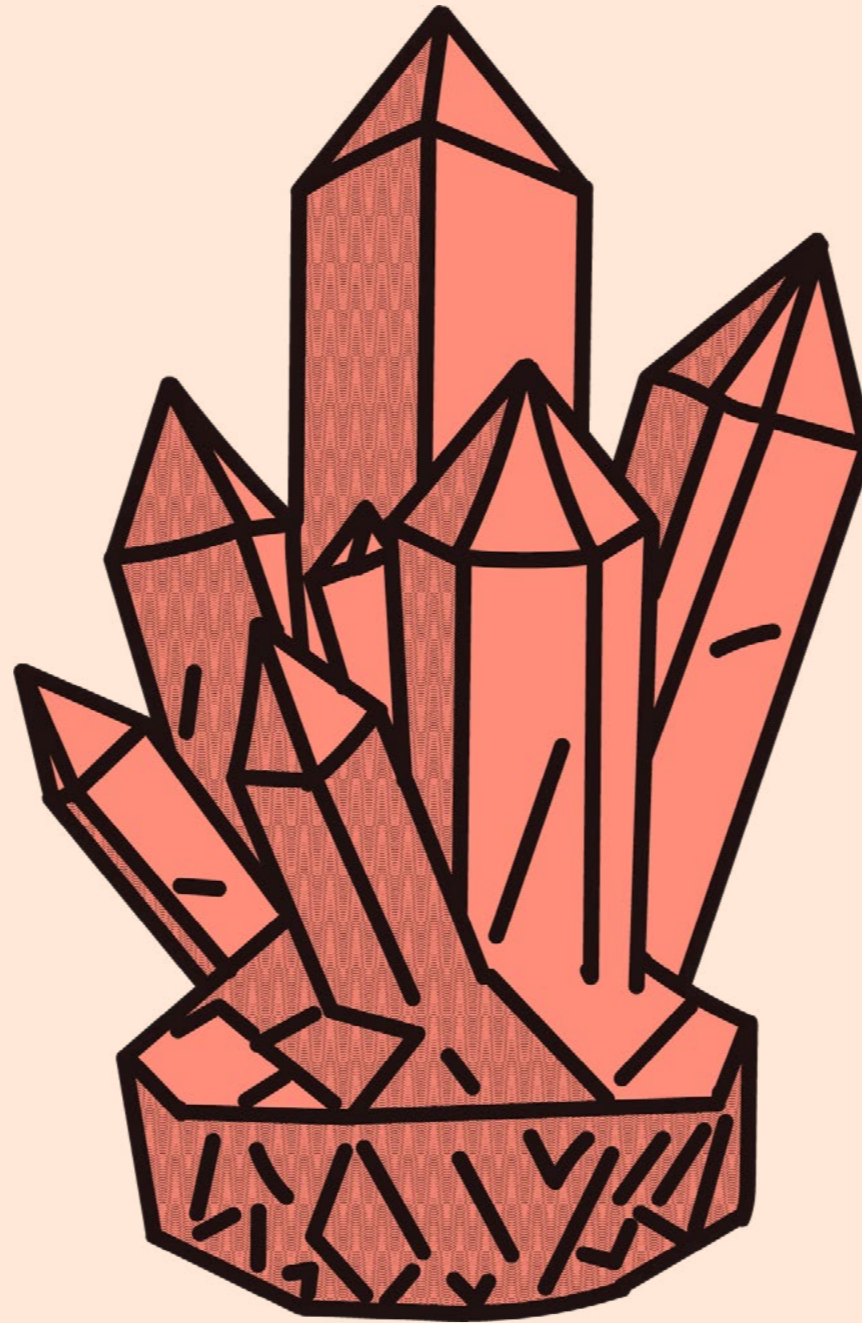
And it came. The snow came, and sleet, and more snow, and freezing rain—a 'mixed bag' the weather people like to say. I stood outside with arms outstretched, twirling around, head tilted up, mouth open, catching flakes in salutation. By Saturday morning, the city was deep in white.

I woke early, ate a hearty breakfast to hold me for an extended day of sledding. My husband chose the hillside behind Dupont Hadley Middle School as the first site. All bundled up and ready with the snow tube, which looks like a giant water-wing with handles, I took the first turn. I flew down the hill, and as there is no steering capability, I used Fred Flintstone's feet to slow down and stop.



I've gained weight over the last few years, and apparently, the physics were just right: a plastic tube, icy snow, and a weighted female make for a stupid fast ride. My husband and daughter took their turns.

On my second slide, I pushed myself off and whizzed straight down the center of the hill, picking up speed. I felt afraid. I was going farther and faster, approaching the road. To slow me down, I drug my right foot into the Earth. But this only twirled me round and round. Pulling my foot in, I was now flying back toward the road. Before I got there, I felt a bump. My legs flew into the air. Then I hit hard, crashing into the drainage ditch. While flailing about like a bloated tick in a whiplash motion, I slammed my head into an iron sewer grate. Was that yellow "caution" tape marking the ditch I just landed in? Possibly. Unsteadily, I climbed back up the hill that I had just careened down. I was able to catch my breath enough to answer my husband's "Are you ok?." Not wanting to spoil their fun, I lied and said, "yes."



On Monday, still having blurry vision, with a slight but constant headache and mild nausea, I went to the doctor to learn that I had a concussion.

Me, the one who loves snow, the one who at the mere mention of the possibility of snow, the one who wears a snowflake headband and fairy crown with white boa feathers, and an iridescent white cape to work to usher in and welcome every flake. Me, the one who can smell when it's coming and can hear by the quietness that it has arrived. Me, the one who waited seven years to sled because I had a broken arm when at the last Big Snow came. As Lorelei Gilmore declared, "Snow and I were through."



UNTITLED

BY DYLAN SMITH

DYLANPARRYSMITH@GMAIL.COM

Fall passes the chilly baton to winter,
Paving way to less sun; the cold does splinter.

I attempt to stay present, but my mind often wanders.
To my first winter in the desert, heart-pounding ponders.

Will I get to see that momentary dusting of snow?
Or is it just a high desert legend, perhaps I'll never know.

The hum of the 62 sets my mind adrift.
To New York City blizzards, the desert now my gift.

Darker and darker night shrouds to shorter days.
Perhaps a time to hibernate, to reflect, find gratitude in infinite ways.

As I write this, we prepare to hunker down once again.
This magical yoyo called life, my heart on the mend.

It was never quite broken but perhaps just cracked.
But I am getting stronger and stronger, and that my dear, is a fact.

Do not be afraid of all that you are.
Keep believing, soldier on, the light is not quite so far.

Winter in the wild, savage and sublime.
Keep your eyes and heart open, here in our desert paradise,
You never know what you may find.



Song: "The Promise of A New Day" by Paula Abdul
Choreography by Dylan Smith



I AM CONFIDENT

BY DESTYNIË CANDELARIA
DESTYNIËCANDELARIA@GMAIL.COM

I have been on a journey of self-healing and self-love for about four years now. I am still on this journey, and I have fallen in love with the fact that I will be forever.

Throughout this journey, I have gathered an ever-expanding repertoire of tools to help me live a more conscious life. I'm sure all of us have had that "where did the time go?" feeling at least once. Realistically and obviously, the time was always there, but, likely, you weren't. Often, while juggling work, kids, family, bills, social life, health, and much more, we aren't showing up in our lives. Sure, physically, we are there, but we aren't present. Have you ever been so excited when you hear your favorite song come on, so you start singing, and then the thoughts take over and, although you are singing every word, you realize the song has come to an end, and you think, "I didn't even hear it!"? Yeah, me too. Replay! However, with our lives (and the radio), we don't get a replay button.

A highly effective practice I've found to help me be more "in the moment" is meditation. There are so many different meditation techniques, practices, benefits, and ways of doing it.

I had no clue what I was doing when I first began meditating a little over three years ago. Often, I felt like I was wasting my time, but still, I persevered and kept doing it. Now meditation is a part of my daily life. Through this practice, I discovered mantras, another essential tool that I utilize every day.

"Mantra is a Sanskrit word, comprised of the root words 'manas' meaning mind/to-think, and 'tra' meaning vehicle. So a man-tra is literally a "mind-vehicle" or a way to transport us beyond our thoughts" (Baudier, 2019). You may have heard the mantra "Om" used in a yoga class to begin and/or end the session. "A mantra can be a powerful, affirming statement or simply a collection of resonant symbols with no literal meaning" (Baudier, 2019).

When I first started using the technique of mantra repetition, it felt forced, unreal, pointless even. Like anything else, it takes consistency to see progress. I realized I had to put more feelings and power behind my mantras. I chose my mantras with intention and allowed them to change based on my



Often, while juggling work, kids, family, bills, social life, health, and much more, we aren't showing up in our lives. Sure, physically, we are there, but we aren't present.

life's current waves.

My favorite mantra, which I still use to this day, is "I am confident." That was always something I struggled with while growing up. It was something I wanted, needed, to be true. I know that I still have room to grow in this area, but I also know that I would not feel confident now if I didn't spend all that time repeating it to myself. "Mantra and quantum languaging are predicated upon the influence the vibrational frequencies embedded in our language have on our subconscious minds, our emotions, and our realities" (Katz, 2018). Every cell of your body hears what you say to yourself and even what you think about yourself. Mantras can be helpful and conducive to your growth or entirely detrimental to your mental health. Why not rewire our brains to think positive thoughts about ourselves? After all, you're all you've got. And here's a secret: you're all you need.

Now I repeat my mantras every chance I get; in the shower, while I meditate while walking my dogs, in savasana, and any other time the thought occurs to me. It helps me to dissipate the mind chatter. I have cried while repeating my mantras. I have laughed, smiled, and even felt unsure. But guess what...I am doing it. And you can do it, too.

Sources:

Baudier, Amanda. "THE MEANING OF MANTRAS." Sakara, Sakara Life, 10 Sept. 2019, <https://www.sakara.com/blogs/mag/mantra-the-power-of-quantum-languaging>
Katz, Dani. Word Up: Little Languaging Hacks for Big Change. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2018.



SANTA IN A SANDSTORM

BY THYRZA SEGAL

THYRZA@GMAIL.COM



Altered digital photography by Thyrza Segal, 2020. Original photo taken by Kathy French, 2017.

My friend, Kathy, got stuck in a sandstorm one time when she was coming over and sent me a snapshot. I worked in these menacing Joshua trees to add to the surreal situation. I think that Santa can drive in the snow just fine, but can he handle sand? I grew up in Alberta, and it was always a point of pride for guys to know how to drive on icy roads. Does the same machismo test exist in the desert?



A VERY CRUISE SHIP CHRISTMAS

BY DYLAN SMITH

DYLANPARRYSMITH@GMAIL.COM

In the world of theatre, your cast, no matter how long the contract, inevitably becomes your family. And as we all know, with family comes a myriad of experiences and emotions, especially during the holidays.

It is Christmas 2003, and I have been on the MS Ryndam as a dancer in the production shows for nearly four months. Our cast was all hired separately and then brought together in Los Angeles to rehearse. We spent four months preparing to “knock em’ dead” aboard Holland America Cruise Line, the “Elegant Explorer,” with our high kicks and festive harmonies. So, there we are, somewhere at sea in the Mexican Baja waters, probably on our way to port in Puerto Vallarta.

By now, the ten of us in our cast had gotten to know one another VERY WELL. You see, when you are an employee on a cruise line, your living quarters, socializing areas, and a pool of friends are reduced to a small fraction. Life onboard a cruise line is extraordinarily confined and consequently very heightened. Who’s hooking up with who? Who isn’t talking? Who did this? Who did that? In short,



My cruise family and I dressed to the nines for our modern-day Titanic holiday celebration.



there is no shortage of drama. Picture the Bravo television show “Below Deck,” but on a much larger vessel than a yacht, with lots of entertainers, additional staff, and ten times the amount of guests. Now that I have set the stage (no pun intended) let us get back to Christmas morning.

Waking up Christmas morning on a ship without the tradition of being with family immediately felt a bit strange and sad. However, at 22 years old, my resilience was high. I tried to remind myself that I was gainfully employed, had a significant other on board, and was with my fellow performers, all of whom I cared deeply for. One of the female dancers in my cast had almost her entire family on board for the holidays, so at least we had a “Mom and Dad” figure for this particular Christmas Day we were all experiencing together.

Our morning began with mimosas and Secret Santa. We dressed in tuxedos and gowns, making it feel like a modern-day Titanic holiday celebration.



There were no shows scheduled for that day. Our only duty would be Christmas caroling at midday for the guests. Can you see where this is all going? Mimosas, an unfamiliar way of spending a significant holiday, intense emotions, lack of family?

The mimosa enjoyment continued for a few hours, and before we knew it, the time had come for us to spread vocal cheer for all those young and old. We managed to make it to the atrium of the ship, get our sheet music in order, and prepare to carol for the guests. Decorations of silver and gold, green and red, glistened throughout our playing space. I can still recall the scent that filled the atrium that afternoon. It was definitely a step up from a Yankee Candle; with all the piney, cinnamon notes.

All the familiar holiday tunes were in our repertoire that afternoon; “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer,” “Rockin’ Around the Christmas Tree,” “Silent Night,” and so on. Then came “Jingle Bells.” It seems like a simple tune that you’d know all the words too, right? Wrong! You see, no one ever teaches you the very unfamiliar and, in our case, the very perilous, second verse of “Jingle Bells.”

So there we all are, dressed to the nines, nailing all of our songs and feeling pretty proud of ourselves. That was until the second verse of “Jingle Bells” crept up. Lines such as “The horse was lean and lank” and “And then we got upsot” were not only bizarre and foreign, but threw us off completely. We were suddenly chasing a runaway Christmas cruise ship. The tempo, the words, the mimosas all started to envelop us.

Our once clear, vibrant, cheerful singing morphed into a mix of Charlie Brown’s mother’s speaking voice and literal, uncontrollable laughter. We were all bright red, shoulders rising and falling rapidly with laughter, completely hysterical. Our faces were glued to our sheet music the entire time in hopes that we could save the sinking ship that was our performance. I cannot begin to tell you what the audience looked like or how they were reacting to this spectacle. All I can say is that our Cruise Director (my boyfriend at the time) closed the curtain on us. End scene.

The course of events that Christmas day were perhaps some of the funniest and most unifying of my life. Right then and there, we were together. There was no drama, no thoughts of missing our families or what emotions came with that. We were present, living in that hilarious moment.

It was a good thing it was Christmas after all because we received quite the scolding from the Cruise Director. Sure it was slightly unprofessional to have overly imbibed, but we were doing the best we could. At the time of writing this, I was on a group text with most of the cast recounting Christmas on the cruise ship. The retelling of this event may very well be the catalyst for us to stay in touch more and possibly reunite someday. Perhaps on a cruise ship on Christmas? We will see. All I know is that I will never forget the laughter from that day and how amazingly connected we were despite the circumstances. That is a holiday memory that will last a lifetime.



CONCRETE JUNGLE

ANEKA BROWN DESIGNS 2020 COLLECTION

WWW.ANEKABROWNDISIGNS.COM



"Live everyday of life like you're on a runway." - Aneka Brown



Aneka Brown is a nationally-published jewelry designer, interior designer, and event planner based in Palm Springs, California. Known for her unique brand of luxurious "California AfroChic," blending modern African themes, rich jewel tones, and calming California earth tones, she is quickly building a unique brand of her own and a name for herself in the industry. Aneka Brown Designs are full of Life, Love, and Color.

www.AnekaBrownDesigns.com
www.mkt.com/Aneka-Brown-Designs



UNTITLED

BY KATHLEEN PIZZELLO

THEMOONANDTHEMAT@GMAIL.COM

This mountain we've been climbing
feels insurmountable
immeasurable
and never ending

great mountain
please teach me
to be brave
to stay humble
to not give up

I want to see the view
to breathe that air
I can feel it

each step feels like
we are on a million mile march
an uphill battle
with the world
and each other

if I needed water
would you help me
quench my thirst?

will you help me tend my wounds
from this expedition?
there are so many

it's not just me
we are all begging
to be held
by each other

there is so much space
at the top
for all of us
it's clear up there
vast sky
freedom
the heart bursts
upon arrival
limitless

I'll meet you there



Joshua Tree National Park, Joshua Tree, California, 2020



SHARE YOUR VOICE

Each issue of Untamed Voices will include a curated collection of written and visual stories centered upon a theme that reflect the multi-faceted voices represented in our community and beyond. It is our hope that by sharing ALL our stories, past and present, that we will be reminded of our common humanity.

Let your “untamed voice” be heard and share from the heart.

General Guidelines

Written Work

- Looking for original fiction, non-fiction and/or poetry.
- All written pieces should be 1500 words or less.
- Publication ready, with only light copy editing needed.
- This is an open call, and may be reposted.
- This is an unpaid experience, but you will get your own byline.
- No fee to submit.
- You may submit up to TWO pieces of written work for consideration.
- Please submit as a word document or an accessible Google Drive/Docs link.
- Include a short bio, photo and full contact information

Visual Work

- Artists are welcome to submit works in any medium: painting, drawing, sculpture, ceramics, printmaking, photography, textile, installation, mixed media, digital, performance and film (only jpg + link to video) etc.
- All visual art mediums are welcome.
- This is an unpaid publication.
- No fee to submit.
- You may submit up to TWO pieces of visual work.
- Please submit a high resolution photo of your work or link.
- A brief narrative (500 words or less) about the piece including: name, medium, year and inspiration behind the work
- Include a short bio, photo and full contact information.
- Resume
- A selection of photos that show your range and versatility (please provide a link to website)



Facing Yourself: Starting the New Year with Intention and Accountability

2020 was quite the year! We faced unprecedented challenges individually and collectively. As you transition into the new year, what of 2020 are you leaving behind and what are you bringing forward? Your answer will depend gratefully on your willingness to face it all...the good, the bad and the ugly. Going into 2021 with intention and a willingness to be accountable to yourself (and others) may seem daunting; but, it's a great place to start. January 1 may not feel any different to you than December 31, but you can still commit to taking the reigns of your situation and begin to walk toward the life that you would like to have.

How will you face yourself in 2021? What intentions for your life are you planning to undertake? What do you need to take responsibility for?

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: January 6, 2021

Email to untamedvoices@untamedyogastudio.com with the subject line: January 2021

Conditional Love: Loving with Boundaries

The idea that love comes with conditions may seem foreign to some. Conditional love isn't about a person having to prove themselves or jump through hoops for your affection. Nor, is it about keeping scores or quid pro quo. Conditional love is about setting healthy boundaries. Boundaries on how you want to be treated and the behavior in which you will accept or not accept in a relationship. And this includes self-love, romantic and platonic relationships, familial relations, love for our community and even a love for nature.

What boundaries have you set in your life? What situations have you found yourself in that are boundaryless? How has conditional love manifested in your life? What relationships need your attention? How do you define and walk in love

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: January 16, 2021

Email to untamedvoices@untamedyogastudio.com with the subject line: February 2021



A Curious Life: Finding Your Inspiration and Having the Courage to Explore

Curiosity is the spark that keeps life interesting. Curiosity is the undercurrent that drives our desire to try new things. Curiosity is the force that gives us the appetite to create. Curiosity is the root of inspiration. When curiosity arrives in our lives, we are given a choice. We can ignore it, run from it or fear it. Or we can have the courage to explore and embrace it wholeheartedly.

What inspires you? Where has your curiosity and your courage taken you? In what ways have you ignored, run from or feared curiosity? In what ways have you opened yourself up to exploration?

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: February 6, 2021

Email to untamedvoices@untamedyogastudio.com with the subject line: March 2021

Legal Disclaimer

Untamed Voices ask for first publication rights. You may publish your work featured on the site elsewhere following initial publication, but please credit Untamed Voices with first publication.



BEHIND UNTAMED VOICES



ShaWanda Gatson - Managing Editor

ShaWanda is an educator, writer, storyteller, and yogi. She was born in Mississippi, but raised in 29 Palms and has lived in the Morongo Basin for over 20 years. ShaWanda has a bachelor's degree from Pepperdine University and an MFA in Creative Writing from Spalding University. She writes fiction for children, narrative non-fiction, and dabbles in poetry and short stories.

ShaWanda is currently working on her yoga certification and will begin teaching in 2021. Her areas of interest are yin and restorative yoga. It is her desire to help share this transformative and healing practice with children and women of color and other marginalized communities.

ShaWanda lives in Yucca Valley with her son, Mateo, and their miniature schnauzer, Duchess. When not writing or doing yoga, ShaWanda enjoys reading, traveling, dancing, cooking for family and friends, and binge-watching tv shows.

Follow her on Facebook
@shawandagatsonwrites



Emily Silver - Editor In Chief

Emily Silver is an artist, yogi, educator, and art gallery owner located in Yucca Valley CA. Emily is originally from New York where she received her BFA from SVA in NYC, her MFA from Penn State University. She is on the faculty at Santa Monica College and Copper Mountain College, where she has been teaching in the art departments for over 10 years.

She has been practicing on her mat for over 17 years and teaching yoga in the hi-desert, Los Angeles, Seattle and Portland over the last few years.

Yoga Trainings:

- 500RYT Hatha training from Modo Yoga. Kelowna, BC
- 50hrs Yin Training, Joe Barnett, Encinitas CA
- 100hrs Vinyasa Flow, North Vancouver BC
- 40hrs Flow State Advanced Sequencing .
- 50hrs Yin Training, Bernie Clark
- Currently enrolled in IAYT 805 Yoga Therapy program

Follow her @emilysilverstudio,
@untamedyoga

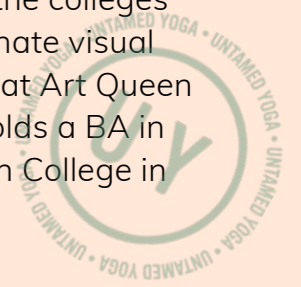


Dylan Smith - Associate Editor

Dylan Smith is a Southern California based dancer, choreographer, teaching and visual artist. He was the recipient of Broadway World San Francisco Best Choreography in 2015. Dylan is an accomplished teaching artist and choreographer that instructs all over the world at various colleges, universities and studios teaching master classes and setting original works including:

Broadway Dance Center, Alvin Ailey School of Dance, Rutgers University, Sonoma State University and Santa Rosa Junior College.

Behind the table, Mr. Smith has worked with the Emmy Award winning RWS Entertainment Group as an audition choreographer/coordinator and assistant to the casting director. Dylan trains college bound performers on their dance technique, audition material and has successfully gotten many of said hopefuls into the colleges of their choice. He is also a passionate visual artist with an upcoming solo exhibit at Art Queen in Joshua Tree, California. Dylan holds a BA in Dance from Marymount Manhattan College in New York City.



JUSTICE FOR BLACK GIRLS

Central to our mission at Untamed Yoga and Untamed Voices is social justice.

We are dedicated to creating safe spaces, supporting those around us, and having critical dialogues around injustice. Our commitment extends into Karma classes, community classes, quarterly donations and in the near future a Yoga Therapy Clinic.

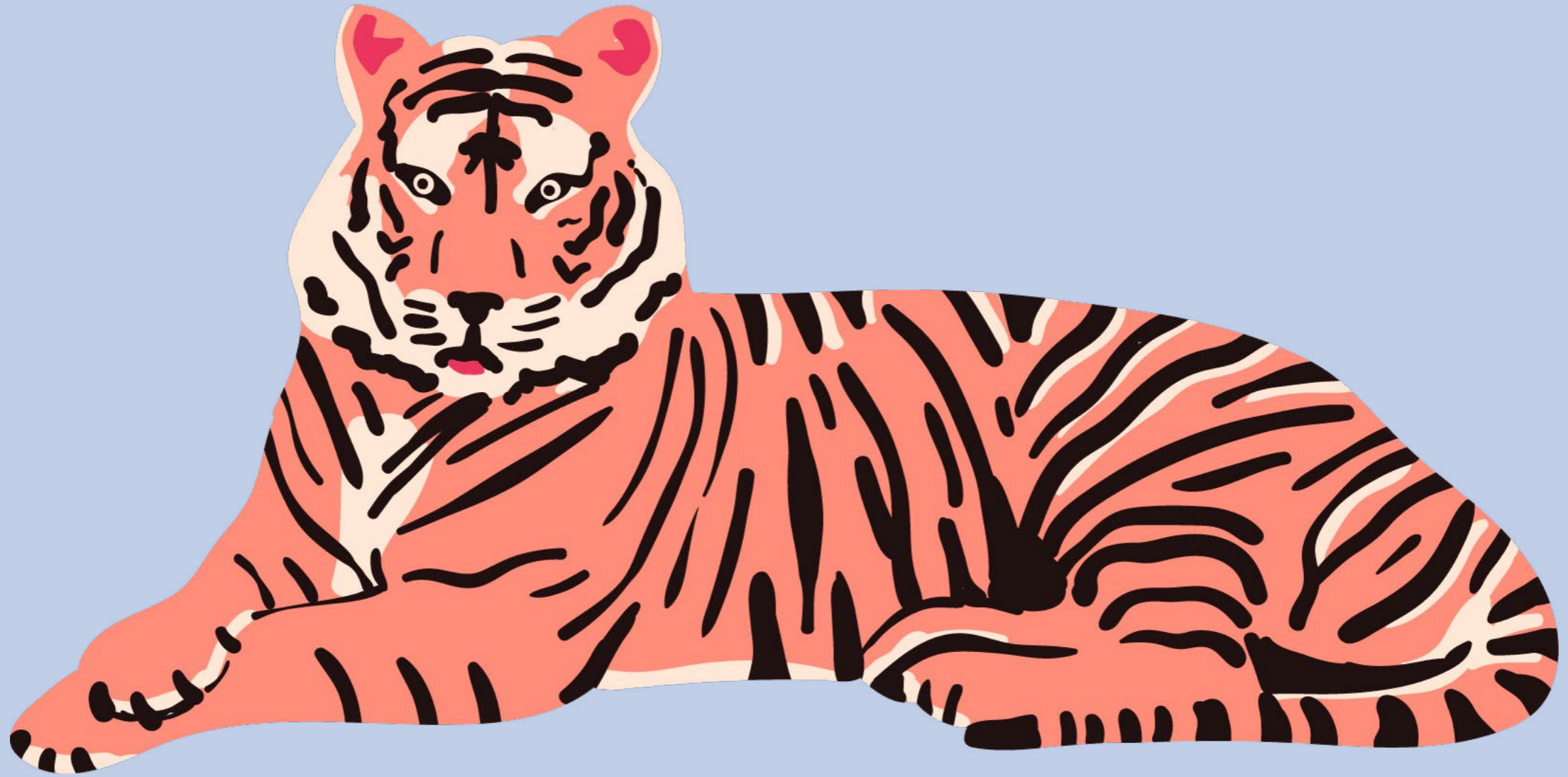
This quarter we are supporting Justice for Black Girls. All of our members have a dedicated amount of their membership donated to charity amongst our special karmic offerings at Untamed Yoga.



Justice For Black Girls Mission: The mission of Justice for Black Girls is to expand global knowledge of how US-based systems of power respond to and perpetuate the abuse of Black girls in schools, in prisons and in protest.

If you would like to donate to JBG please donate directly to them here:

www.justiceforblackgirls.com



UNTAMED YOGA

Joshua Tree, California

