

The Our Voice Project: Survivor Self-care & Leadership



Through The Our Voice Project, HopeWorks' provides opportunities for survivors of sexual and intimate partner violence to connect and support each other, develop leadership, and work together to end these forms of violence.

The Our Voice Project is comprised of eight peer-lead educational and wellness programs that are based in trauma-informed peer support and self-advocacy.

The **Our Voice Advisory Board** is HopeWorks' organizing mechanism for survivors to build community, plan projects, and share insights.

Survivors are invited to attend **Preservation Circle**. Through engaging and creative activities we cultivate continued courage, self-compassion, connection, learning, and self-directed advocacy. Events, topics, and themes vary. Preservation Circle is supported by a grant from the Horizon Foundation.

During one-on-one sessions called **Poetry N2 Wellness**, survivors who are out of crisis, can learn and practice wellness and healing techniques. Sessions include development of self-care practices and mindfulness tools, as well as creative activities such as expressive journaling, visual journaling, and mixed-media arts. No prior art or writing experience is needed.

In our eight-week **Self-care & the Healing Journey** workshop series, we use expressive arts activities to explore issues, share insights and learn from guest speakers. Topics include stress relief, healing, self-awareness, identity, understanding boundaries, self-compassion, mental and physical health awareness, and the dynamics of experiencing multiple oppressions (e.g., poverty and sexual violence).

After participating in Poetry N2 Wellness one-on-one sessions or a workshop series you are eligible to receive **Journaling Our Voice**, a monthly eNewsletter devoted to helping you maintain self-care practices.

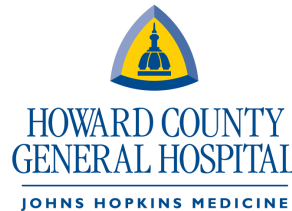
The Our Voice Project con.

During the **Unlearning Not to Speak Day Retreat** we attend interactive workshops where we share, play, reflect, and collectively celebrate surviving and thriving.

In **LOVED: A Survivor Self-care Circle for Black Women**, we address "triple jeopardy"; the exploitation and oppression experienced by survivors who are black women. Through engaging and creative activities, we cultivate self-love, beloved community, and strategies to address the root causes of violence. Sessions feature the use of expressive-arts techniques, guided discussions, seminars, and guest speakers. LOVED is supported by a grant from the Horizon Foundation.

Coming May 2023: *A Support Group for Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse.*

Many Thanks to Our Program Sponsors!



The Survivors' Health Project



addressing the long-term health effects of sexual and intimate partner violence

ARTiculation: Chronic Pain Conditions Peer-Support

Yoga for Survivors

The Wellness Locker

The Health Advisory Board

Articulating Health Newsletter

HopeWorks of Howard County

• (410) 997- 0304 •

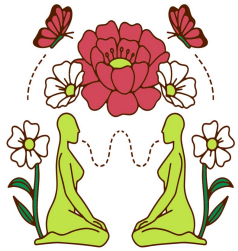
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“Just because no one else can heal or do your inner work for you doesn’t mean you can, should, or need to do it alone.”

-Lisa Olivera



HopeWorks’ mission is to support and advocate for people in Howard County affected by sexual and intimate partner violence and to engage the

community in creating the change required for violence prevention.

HopeWorks’ services include crisis shelter, counseling, advocacy, legal resources, survivor leadership & wellness programs, prevention education, professional trainings, community self-care & social justice programs and volunteer opportunities.

Long-term Effects of Violence

When we think of a survivor our minds most often think of the person in imminent danger. Unfortunately, the consequences of experiencing trauma can last well beyond the moment of crisis.

Research confirms that physical, sexual, and psychological violence is linked to many long-term health problems, including arthritis, anxiety, chronic pain, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, depression, fibromyalgia, frequent headaches, traumatic brain injury, irritable bowel syndrome, gastrointestinal disorders, migraines, myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS), problems with the immune system, and post-traumatic stress disorder.



THE SURVIVORS’ HEALTH PROJECT

HopeWorks addresses the long-term effects of violence through The Survivors’ Health Project. The project provides opportunities for survivors to attend to and advocate for their health, learn and practice wellness skills and create a network of supportive care.

Education & Support Group

ARTiculation is a peer education and support group for survivors living with chronic pain conditions. The group explores ways to live well, be informed self-advocates, address stigma and the health disparities that challenge well-being. Sessions include the use of Transformative Language Arts (TLA) expressive arts activities, self-care practices, relaxation techniques and presentations from guest speakers. The two hour sessions meet via Zoom in January, March, May, July, September and November. ARTiculation is supported by a grant from the Horizon Foundation.

Trauma Informed Yoga

Three and a Half Acres Yoga (THAY) partners with HopeWorks to provide a weekly virtual one hour trauma-informed yoga session. THAY works within Harlem and Upper Manhattan, that serve residents facing emotional, physical or social trauma. Their mission is to provide yoga, breathing and mindfulness programs to nonprofits to support their existing missions and build bridges of understanding among neighbors.

The Wellness Locker

For many survivors an “ordinary day” is extraordinarily difficult to manage. Survivors experience a wide range of symptoms including difficulty walking, depression, unrelenting exhaustion, constant pain and gastrointestinal problems. Many of the treatment modalities for these conditions are not covered by insurance. Additionally, it can be costly to maintain a regular schedule of treatments.

HopeWorks alleviates some of the financial challenge by maintaining the Wellness Locker. The Wellness Locker contains essential wellness items to replenish body and mind. The locker is available to survivors who are members of the Survivors’ Health Project. The Wellness Locker is supported by a grant from the Horizon Foundation.

Health Advisory Board

Members of our Health Advisory Board serve as resources of support and information as we continue to develop the Survivors’ Health Project. Together we work to raise awareness, to educate, to improve care, and to increase access to a broad range of treatment modalities. Membership to the Board is open to survivors, care givers, community partners, and health practitioners including acupuncturist, rheumatologists, nurses, internists, nutritionists, trauma nurses, physical therapists, and mental health practitioners.

Newsletter

HopeWorks’ publishes a quarterly electronic newsletter called *Articulating Health*. The newsletter is published in November, February, May and August. Each issue features notices of health/wellness workshops and events, agency news, and articles highlighting the work of community partners.

For more information about The Survivors’ Health Project contact Vanita Leatherwood, Director of Community Engagement at (410) 997-0304, ext. 7720 or email: vleatherwood@hopeworksofnc.org