



The National Sexual Assault Coalition Resource Sharing Project

# ReShape Newsletter

*Working together to end sexual violence.*



In one of Mary Oliver's poems, she writes:

"You do not have to be good.  
You do not have to walk on your knees  
For a hundred miles through the desert, repenting.  
You only have to let the soft animal of your body  
love what it loves."

This is painfully difficult to do for many survivors of sexual violence. Survivors may have internalized deep shame about themselves. And their experiences of trauma may have led to fear and distrust, of themselves and others. This fear and distrust can make it seem nearly impossible to feel safe and soft in their bodies. In this ReShape, we share coalition, RSP, and community perspectives on ways survivors of sexual violence relate to their bodies.

Oliver, Mary. "Wild Geese". Accessed at <https://www.brainpickings.org/2014/09/24/mary-oliver-reads-wild-geese/> on August 22, 2018.

## ***Supporting Survivors Who Self-Harm***



Even though we witness the messiness of healing journeys all of the time, the words healing and wellness often evoke images of white, middle-class relaxation: day spas, Buddha statues, droplets of water, and breathing slowly. With this mental model in mind, it can be hard to imagine self-injury, self-medication, and other self-harming behaviors as anything other than bad or counter-productive to healing. This guide from the Washington Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCSAP) offers practical tips for providing non-judgmental support to survivors of sexual assault engaged in a spectrum of self-harming behaviors. Included in the discussion is space to explore the differences between self-harm and suicidality.

WCSAP GUIDE TO SUPPORTING SURVIVORS WHO SELF-HARM:

[http://www.wcsap.org/sites/default/files/uploads/resources\\_publications/advocacy\\_station/Advocacy\\_Station\\_SelfHarm\\_REV.4.30.pdf](http://www.wcsap.org/sites/default/files/uploads/resources_publications/advocacy_station/Advocacy_Station_SelfHarm_REV.4.30.pdf)

## ***Benefits of Trauma-Informed Yoga***



For survivors who are considering joining a trauma-informed yoga group, this blog post from the Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CCASA) provides a simple list of potential benefits for survivors of sexual violence. This list of benefits is based on the experiences of participants in a 6-week trauma-informed yoga group specifically for survivors of sexual assault.

[CCASA BLOG: THE BENEFITS OF TRAUMA SENSITIVE YOGA FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT:  
http://www.ccasa.org/being-in-your-body-the-benefits-of-trauma-sensitive-yoga-for-survivors-of-sexual-assault/](http://www.ccasa.org/being-in-your-body-the-benefits-of-trauma-sensitive-yoga-for-survivors-of-sexual-assault/)

## ***Healing Through Combat Sports***



What are other ways for survivors to build a sense of safety in their bodies? In this article from Stephanie Phillips, a PhD student at the University of South Florida, she explores how some survivors of sexual and domestic violence are healing through the practice of Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) and Muay Thai.

STEPHANIE PHILLIPS' HOW SURVIVORS ARE FINDING STRENGTH THROUGH MARTIAL ARTS:  
<https://www.hastac.org/blogs/snphillips/2017/10/15/fighting-heal-how-survivors-are-finding-strength-martial-arts>

## ***Body Affirmations for Survivors***



This National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) blog post is written by a person who facilitates trainings on the intersections of eating disorders and sexual violence. It begins with affirmations and gratitude for our bodies.

NSVRC BLOG: MY BODY BEAUTIFUL: <https://www.nsvrc.org/blogs/my-body-beautiful>