



....In The Meantime

With



24 hour confidential hotline: 1-800-537-6066 or 874-1973

Mini-Mag #42: February 15, 2021

This project was supported by Grant No. 2015-WEAX-0016 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Hello,

In 2015, Dr. Hyder Zahed submitted an essay to the Huffington Post titled: 'The Power of Spoken Words', which begins with the following assertion:

"Words are singularly the most powerful force available to humanity. We can choose to use this force constructively with words of encouragement, or destructively using words of despair. Words have energy and power with the ability to help, to heal, to hinder, to hurt, to harm, to humiliate and to humble."

While 2 years earlier, Susannah Meyer, who at the time was a high school student, contributed her own essay, this, on the history of the *written* word. In the opening paragraph, she writes: *"The written word has saved lives, circulated powerful ideas, preserved traditions and memories, and so much more."*

Whether we are speaking or writing, we can probably all agree that the words we choose matter. Our 'friend', Frederick Buechner, states that the words we use have a little bit of us in them...*"have in them our breath and spirit and tell of who we are"* (189). And he goes one step further to underscore the power of the written word when he asserts that *"Writing on the other hand strikes me as intravenous."*(189). And better still: *"the words you read become, in the very act of reading them, part of who you are."* (189).

How many of us have not only favorite books, but books that are riddled with notes, torn pieces of paper masquerading as bookmarks, and underlined passages; books that we dust-off in times of strife for inspiration and encouragement? And perhaps for many of us, those books might be of the fiction variety. Which, on the one hand, sounds ludicrous. How can reading about a pretend person going thru a pretend struggle inspire us? And yet, those well-worn books line many a bookshelf. Because on the other hand, we may often call upon the author's words and insight when we, ourselves, are struggling, and perhaps feel less alone for doing so.

In the 2nd chapter of his 1997 book: *"How Proust Can Change Your Life"*, Swiss-born, British Philosopher and writer, Alain De Botton underscores Proust's belief that *"In reality, every reader is, while he is reading, the reader of his own self"* (24). Masculine pronouns aside, perhaps this phenomenon—of reading ourselves in novels; crying at the death of our favorite character; having our own unresolved feelings brought to the surface; or feeling newly inspired to make changes in our own lives...all speak to the power of words and the power of story. And if it's true that we can find comfort and inspiration in fiction then it is equally true that we can find the same in lyrical prose...poems and music/songs/song lyrics, as well.

Is it possible to read the opening line: (*"Why is the measure of love loss?"*) in Jeannette Winterson's *"Written on the Body"* (1992) ...which is heralded as *"At once a love story and a philosophical meditation"*...and not have the sense that the author is speaking directly to us, but then too, feeling cut-to-the-quick in wondering if we, ourselves, have loved the people in our lives well enough? And a handful of pages in, Winterson, via her protagonist, again underscores the power of words when they disclose, *"I had used them as bullets and barter"* (11). Interestingly, the gender/sex of Winterson's protagonist is never made known...which leaves the door wide-open for the every reader to easily insert themselves into that role.

The final stanza to (13th century Persian Poet) Rumi's "The Tent" is this:

Listen to presences inside poems,
Let them take you where they will.

Follow those private hints,
And never leave the premises.

Rumi appears to be telling us here that we, as reader, are actually present and 'inside' a poem. And he implores us to hold fast and welcome the journey.

If we go back to "How Proust Can Change Your Life" and in the chapter: "A Cure For Loneliness", De Botton beautifully outlines why a fictional character's experiences may resonate with the reader:

"What is considered normal for a person to feel in any place at any point is liable to an abbreviated version of what is in fact normal, so that experiences of fictional characters afford us the hugely expanded picture of human behavior, and thereby a confirmation of the essential normality of thoughts or feelings unmentioned in our immediate environments" (27).

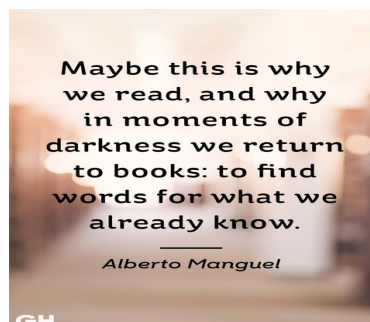
How often do we wonder if our thoughts or feelings are 'normal'? How many of us have done things that we now regret and perhaps are now being held accountable for; how many of us are living with the heavy weight of disappointment from a missed opportunity that could have changed our lives for the better? And yet how difficult is it to put these feelings into words? But if the experiences or challenges of a fictional character in a novel mirrors or are similar to our own experiences and challenges, we may feel comforted and less alone or alien as we read about their falls and triumphs.

De Botton also writes:

"We cannot be taught wisdom, we have to discover it for ourselves by a journey which no one can undertake for us, an effort which no one can spare us" (67).

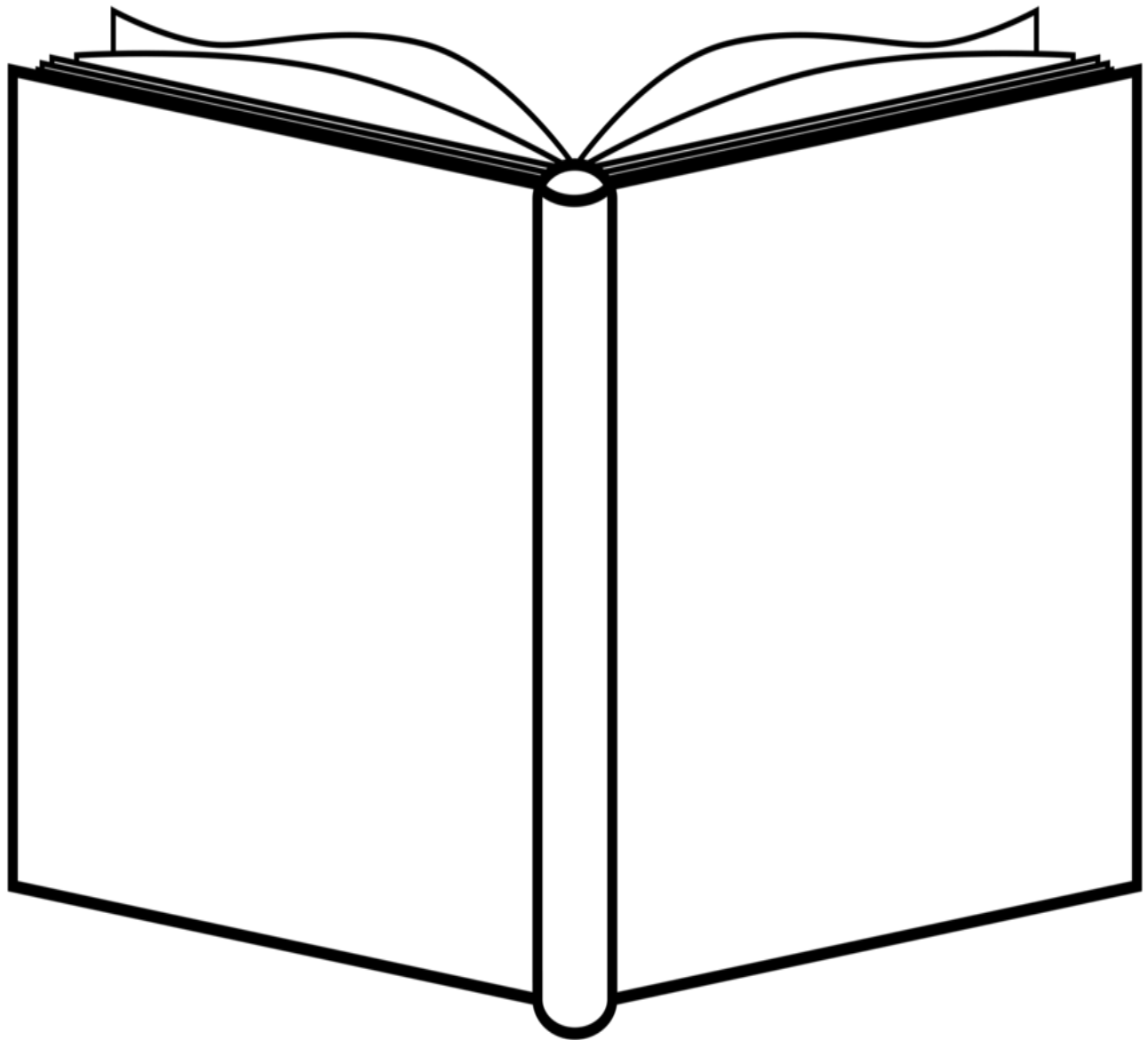
It is with intention that we include poems, song lyrics, and the ever-popular quote page in our mini-mags because it is our belief, too, that words and stories can transform us. Have you ever lost track of time reading a book because you were so caught-up in the characters and the storyline? We offer this for your consideration: If we can *lose ourselves* in a good book, maybe we can find ourselves there as well.

Best,
Monique
&
Nicolle



This project was supported by Grant No. 2015-WEAX-0016 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Below is your autobiography. What would it be titled? What would you want written on the back cover as a synopsis of the book's contents? Decorate the cover and add recommendations and words of praise from your own favorite author if you like.



This project was supported by Grant No. 2015-WEAX-0016 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Justice.



This project was supported by Grant No. 2015-WEAX-0016 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Not.

by Erin Hanson

You are not your age,
Nor the size of clothes you wear,
You are not a weight,
Or the colour of your hair.
You are not your name,
Or the dimples in your cheeks,
You are all the books you read,
And all the words you speak,
You are your croaky morning voice,
And the smiles you try to hide,
You're the sweetness in your laughter,
And every tear you've cried,
You're the songs you sing so loudly,
When you know you're all alone,
You're the places that you've been to,
And the one that you call home,
You're the things that you believe in,
And the people that you love,
You're the photos in your bedroom,
And the future you dream of,
You're made of so much beauty,
But it seems that you forgot,
When you decided that you were defined,
By all the things you're not.

WRITING PROMPT

What is your favorite book? What resonated with you? Was there a particular character you identified with? Why?



This project was supported by Grant No. 2015-WEAX-0016 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Famous Authors

DIRECTIONS: Find and circle the famous authors' last names in the grid.
Look for them in all directions including backwards and diagonally.



ANGELOU, Maya
AUSTEN, Jane
CHRISTIE, Agatha
DICKENS, Charles
DICKENSON, Emily
FAULKNER, William
FITZGERALD, F. Scott
HEMINGWAY, Ernest
JOYCE, James
KAFKA, Franz

KEROUAC, Jack
KING, Stephen
MAILER, Norman
MELVILLE, Herman
ORWELL, George
ROWLING, J. K.
SHAKESPEARE, William
SHAW, George Bernard
STEINBECK, John
TOLSTOY, Leo

TWAIN, Mark
VERNE, Jules
VONNEGUT, Kurt
WILDE, Oscar
WOOLF, Virginia



© 2016 puzzles-to-print.com



30 Days of Gratitude

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____

13. _____

14. _____

15. _____

16. _____

17. _____

18. _____

19. _____

20. _____

21. _____

22. _____

23. _____

24. _____

25. _____

26. _____

27. _____

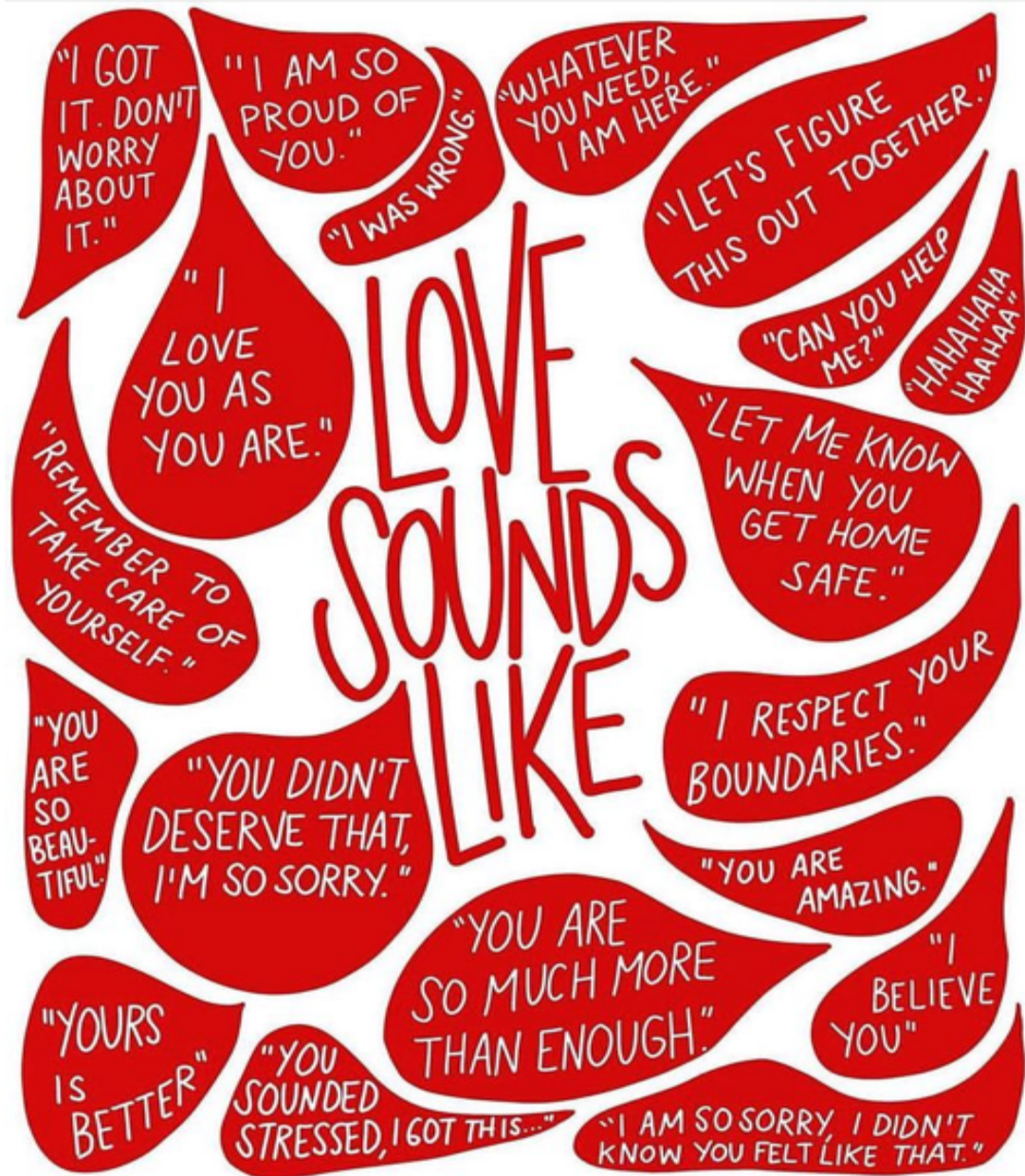
28. _____

29. _____

30. _____

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Healthy relationship reminders from: Instagram-dbsacityofangelsla



This project was supported by Grant No. 2015-WEAX-0016 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Justice.

MOMS HELPING MOMS

Words Matter

Choosing positive words over negative words when communicating with our child/children, especially when we want them to either 'do something' or 'stop doing something' is important not only for over-all effective communication, but for their self-esteem as well. Therefore, we must be mindful re: what we say (the words we choose), how we say it (tone), and our body language, in that all play an equally important part in whether we effectively and respectfully communicate our messaging without making our child/children feel 'less than, bad about themselves, or othered'.

While our impulse may to shout-out a quick 'stop doing that!' in a loud or serious tone, which will probably get our child's/children's immediate attention, but this method of communication does very little in actually teaching right from wrong. Moreover, negative language and intimidating body language can have a harmful impact on our child's/children's self-confidence. Taking the time to speak to our children to explain and remind them of a specific family rule on how to respectfully communicate with a sibling or the importance of telling the truth, etc., will not only get the behavior you desire, but also instill in them the know-how to effectively communicate with others.

Think of how we would feel if our bosses or partners always shouted at us when he/she/they wanted us to do something differently or wanted us to stop doing something altogether? We would not feel valued, loved, or appreciated, which would then trouble our self-image and place in the world.

The way we
talk to our
children
becomes their
inner voice.

PEGGY O'MARA

www.TheSilverPen.com

This project was supported by Grant No. 2015-WEAX-0016 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Justice.

QUOTES

"I do believe something very magical can happen when you read a good book."

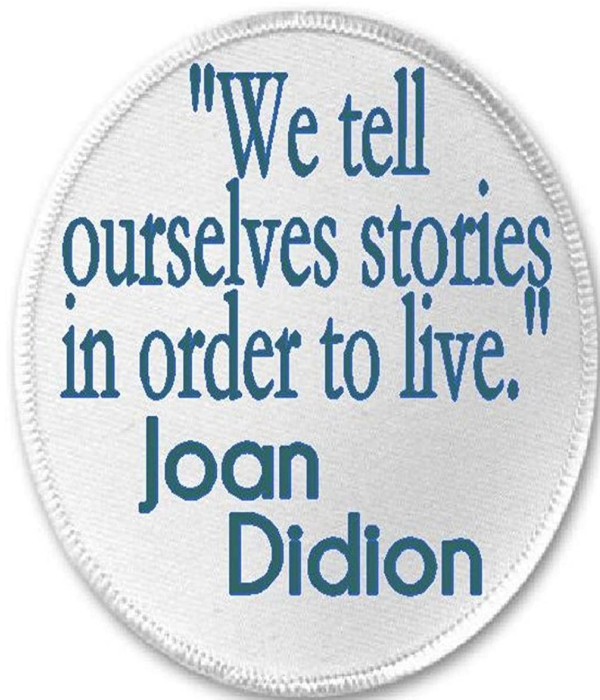
-J.K. Rowling



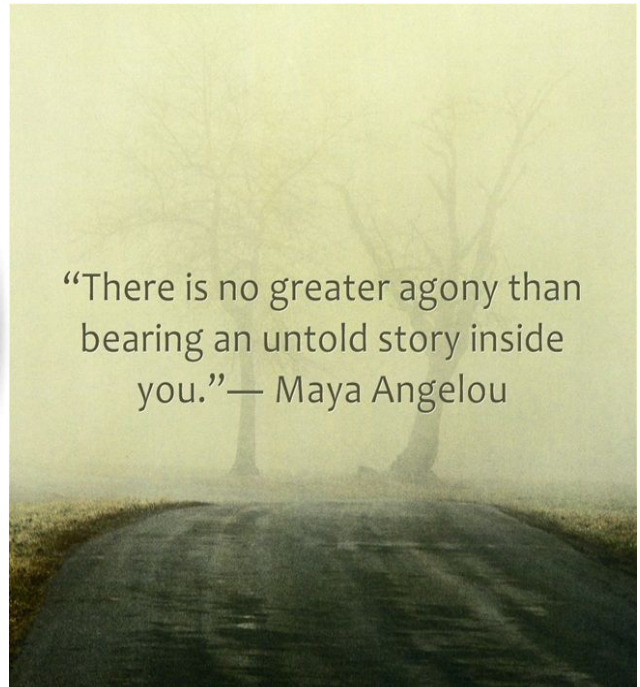
Good
Reading

"A novel is not an allegory. . . . It is the sensual experience of another world. If you don't enter that world, hold your breath with the characters and become involved in their destiny, you won't be able to empathize, and empathy is at the heart of the novel. This is how you read a novel: you inhale the experience. So start breathing."

Azar Nafisi, *Reading Lolita in Tehran*



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



Bookmarks

WWW.BOTANICALPAPERWORKS.COM



WWW.BOTANICALPAPERWORKS.COM



WWW.BOTANICALPAPERWORKS.COM



This project was supported by Grant No. 2015-WEAX-0016 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Justice.