



# MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

September 2024

Volume 1, Issue 4

Through our monthly newsletters, Let's Talk About aims to educate and connect with our clients by raising awareness on issues that pertain to mental health - our specialty.

Your story matters and so do YOU!

## NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH RESOURCES AND EDUCATION

National Suicide Prevention Month is observed from September 1st - 30th. Spreading awareness and providing our readers with important information, such as risk factors, warning signs, and local resources was our goal for this newsletter. Suicide is preventable when implementing proactive strategies. Our newest clinician, Mary Marrero L.C.S.W., provides a detailed report on how we can make a difference by educating ourselves to help those in need of assistance effectively.



## HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

### HONORING HERITAGE

Hispanic Heritage Month, is observed on September 15 - October 15th. As a Latina - owned business, we find it important to pay tribute to the generations of Hispanic Americans who have positively influenced and enriched our nation and society. Our Director Of Operations, Lillian McCord, discusses how her Puerto Rican roots follow her as she travels the globe.



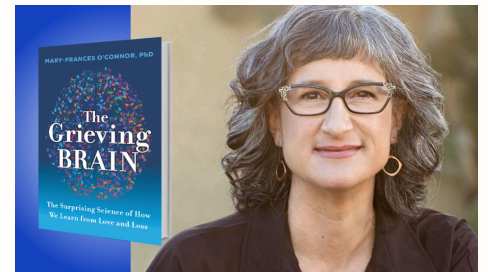
## 9/11 & ITS IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH

The mental health impact of 9/11 underscores the importance of comprehensive support systems and the need for ongoing attention to mental health in the wake of large-scale traumatic events.



In this month's newsletter, we discuss the perpetual influence of 9/11, the important role of counseling in the healing process, and the national unity that came from such a horrific event.

## LET'S TALK ABOUT LITERATURE THE GRIEVING BRAIN



This month's book recommendation is one that highlights the science behind grief while offering research-backed coping strategies. Mary Frances O'Connor, PHD, offers a thorough yet straightforward analysis on how the brain processes grief. Having an understanding on how the grieving process works can be monumental throughout any healing journey.



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# National Suicide Prevention Month

## SPREADING AWARENESS

Why is it critical to speak about suicide prevention? It is well known that suicide is one of the leading causes of death around the globe. Yet, death by suicide is preventable. Most suicidal individuals give warning signs or signals of their intentions. As a responsible citizen, you can play a crucial role in suicide prevention by recognizing these warning signs and knowing how to respond if you spot them.

If you believe that a friend or family member is suicidal, your assertive role in suicide prevention can make a significant difference. By pointing out the alternatives, showing them that you care, teaching coping and problem-solving skills to help people manage challenges, and connecting people at risk to effective mental and physical health care, you can save a life.

Therefore, let us explore together some common suicide risk factors, preventative measures, and treatment.

### Diagnostic Risk Factors:

- Depressive and mood disorders
- Anxiety disorders (such as PTSD)
- Alcohol and other substance abuse
- Schizophrenia and other psychoses
- Personality disorders (such as BPD)
- Aggression, impulsivity, and hostility
- Trauma
- Often talking or writing about death, dying or suicide.
- Making expressions of having no reason for living, or no sense of purpose in life.
- Isolation, and withdrawal from friends, family and community.
- Talking about feeling trapped or being a burden to others.
- Past attempts and ideation

### Preventive Measures and Treatment:

- Follow-up and after care plan after suicide attempt; including family support, ongoing mental health treatment, support groups, and education/prevention.
- Effective and accessible mental health care.
- Feelings of strong connections to individuals, family, community and social institutions.
- Teaching problem-solving and conflict resolution skills.

You have the power to make a difference. Call 911 if someone is at risk of committing suicide, has a plan to harm himself/herself or is actively suicidal. Remember, every life matters.

Lastly, while suicide is a form of escape from emotional and/or physical pain, prevention and education are invaluable ways of empowering individuals to get the help they need. By understanding the warning signs, seeking support, and finding the courage to confront their biggest life fears and challenges, individuals can overcome suicidal thoughts and live a fulfilling life.


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# National Suicide Prevention Month

## HOTLINES & LOCAL RESOURCES

If you or someone you know is at risk for suicide, there are various resources and support systems available. Here are some key community resources that can provide help:

### Crisis Hotlines and Immediate Support:

#### ☛ National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (988)

- For immediate support, **call or text 988** to connect with trained crisis counselors.
- **Website:** <https://988lifeline.org/>

#### ☛ Crisis Text Line

- **Text HOME to 741741** to reach a trained crisis counselor via text message.
- **Website:** <https://www.crisistextline.org/>

#### ☛ United Way Central Florida

- For immediate support, **dial 211 or text your zip code to 898-211** to chat with an operator.
- **Website:** <https://uwcf.org/>

### Local Mental Health Organizations

#### ☛ Be Free Lake

- A nonprofit organization focused on substance abuse, violence reduction, and advocating for mental health awareness.
- **Phone:** 352-383-2099
- **Website:** <https://www.befreelake.org/index.php>

#### ☛ NAMI Greater Orlando

- The local chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness provides support groups, education, and advocacy.
- **Phone:** (407) 253-1900
- **Website:** <https://namigo.org/>



### Educational Programs:

#### ☛ Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) for Suicide Prevention

- This class offers key information to help save lives and reduce suicidal behaviors by providing innovative, practical and proven suicide prevention training.
- **Phone:** 888-726-7926
- **Website:** <https://qprinstitute.com/>

#### ☛ Mental Health First Aid

- Offered through Be Free Lake, you can learn risk factors and warning signs for mental health and addiction concerns, strategies for how to help someone in both crisis and non-crisis situations, and where to turn for help.
- **Phone:** 352-383-2099
- **Website:** <https://www.befreelake.org/index.php/mental-health-first-aid>



### Clinician Corner

“As a mental health therapist, I firmly believe that knowledge is power. Suicide is preventable and you have the power to make a difference.

Providing this information to our readers is crucial to spreading awareness. I am happy to have contributed to efforts to educate our clients.”

*Mary Marrero, M.S.W., L.C.S.W.*

# Hispanic Heritage Month

## CELEBRATION AND RECOGNITION

Hispanic Heritage Month, celebrated from September 15th to October 15th, honors the history, culture, and contributions of Hispanic and Latino Americans.

The start date coincides with the independence anniversaries of several Latin American countries, including Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Mexico's Independence Day is on September 16, and Chile's is on September 18.

Communities often host parades, festivals, and cultural exhibitions featuring music, dance, food, and art from various Hispanic and Latino cultures. Local organizations and businesses might engage in activities that support Hispanic communities and celebrate their achievements. Many media outlets highlight Hispanic heritage through special programs, films, and literature featuring Hispanic authors and creators.

Hispanic Heritage Month is a time to celebrate and recognize the rich cultural heritage and significant contributions of Hispanic and Latino Americans to society. Our Director of Operations, Lillian McCord, speaks on how her latin heritage influences her life today.



### Local Celebratory Events:

- 🍷 **Sips and Salsa Festival - Sept. 21st**
  - At Waterfront Park in Clermont, a display of cultural cuisine will be available in a variety of exquisite dishes, accompanied by live salsa music and dancing. Lots of activities for the whole family.
  - **Website:**<https://www.southlakechamber-fl.com/events/sips-salsa>
- 🌅 **Sunset at the Zoo: Celebrating Hispanic Heritage - Sept. 27th**
  - Join the Central Florida Zoo & Botanical Gardens in Sanford for after-hours fun, with themed crafts and activities, live music, food trucks and more in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month.
  - **Website:**<https://www.centralfloridazoo.org/event/sunsetseptember/>
- 🎨 **Art of the Ancient Americas at Orlando Museum of Art - Ongoing**
  - Go back in time at the Orlando Museum of Art, where you can discover ancient artwork from the indigenous nations of North, Central and South America.
  - **Website:**[https://omart.org/collections/art\\_of\\_the\\_ancient\\_americas/](https://omart.org/collections/art_of_the_ancient_americas/)



# Hispanic Heritage Month

## Clinician Corner



“Hola, amigos! As we dive into Hispanic Heritage Month this September, I’m excited to share a little bit of my story and how my Puerto Rican roots have shaped my journey across the globe.

Born in the vibrant town of Caguas, Puerto Rico, my heritage has been the heartbeat of my life, no matter where I’ve called home. From the cobblestone streets of Italy to the charming towns of Belgium, and from the historic ambiance of Charleston, S.C., to the bustling energy of Chicago, my Puerto Rican roots have traveled with me every step of the way. Even though my suitcase may have been packed with a variety of international experiences, my heart always carried a touch of Caguas with it. And let’s not forget, those family recipes—because who doesn’t need a taste of mofongo and pasteles to keep things lively?

Raising my kids with these cherished values has been a balancing act. I’ve instilled in them the warmth of our culture and the importance of family, while also encouraging them to carve out their own unique paths. It’s a bit like giving them a taste of the traditional arroz con gandules, but letting them decide whether they want to mix in some new ingredients. The goal? To ensure they grow up with a strong sense of their heritage while embracing their own individuality.



Now, let’s talk mental health—a topic that’s often a bit too serious but oh-so-important. In many Spanish-speaking communities, mental health conversations can be, let’s say, a bit reserved. Picture this: we’re all about fiesta and fun, but when it comes to talking about feelings, it’s more like, “¿Qué feelings?” We might joke that our mental health strategy is a bit like our cooking—just throw in some good vibes and hope for the best.

But in all seriousness, it’s crucial to recognize that mental health matters, and it’s okay to seek support. Embracing our heritage means recognizing that self-care is part of a healthy lifestyle. Whether it’s through open conversations, seeking professional help, or simply finding moments of peace amidst the chaos, taking care of our mental well-being is essential.

So, as we celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, let’s honor our rich traditions while also acknowledging the importance of mental health. Let’s keep the music playing, the laughter flowing, and remember that taking care of our minds is just as important as cherishing our cultural roots. Aquí’s to celebrating our heritage, embracing our journeys, and prioritizing our well-being every step of the way!”

*Lillian McCord, D.O.D.*

# Remembering September 11th

## THE IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH

The impact of September 11th, 2001, on mental health has been profound and wide-reaching. The attacks not only caused immediate trauma for those directly involved but also had longer-term psychological effects on individuals and communities.

Many people experienced post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as a result of the attacks. First responders, survivors, and those who witnessed the events directly were particularly affected. PTSD symptoms can include flashbacks, nightmares, severe anxiety, and emotional numbness.



The attacks heightened fears about personal safety and security. This led to increased levels of anxiety and a general sense of insecurity. The subsequent events, including wars and ongoing threats of terrorism, kept these fears prominent.

The scale of the tragedy led to immense grief and mourning for those who lost loved ones. The collective sense of loss affected not just individuals but communities and the nation as a whole.



Programs and initiatives were created to provide counseling, support groups, and other resources to help individuals cope with the psychological aftermath. Research has shown that the mental health effects of 9/11 can persist for years, with some people experiencing long-term psychological challenges.

It is important to note that the unity experienced after 9/11 was a testament to the strength and resilience of communities and individuals. There was a significant surge in national and community unity, as well as a sense of solidarity both within the United States and globally.



### Clinician Corner

“Grief counseling is crucial when catastrophic or major events occur, as it helps individuals process overwhelming emotions, navigate the

complexities of loss, and begin the healing process. Mental health counseling is an essential resource for anyone facing significant loss or trauma, as it provides coping skills to heal and eventually find a path forward. Contact our office for more information on how we can help you take the next steps in your grieving journey.”

*Kaiza Canales, L.M.H.C.*



# Let's Talk About Literature



## The Grieving Brain

By: Mary Frances O'Connor, PHD

"The Grieving Brain: The Surprising Science of How We Learn from Love and Loss" by Mary-Frances O'Connor is a comprehensive exploration of how grief affects the brain and the ways in which we process and learn from loss.

The book delves into the neurological and psychological aspects of grief, exploring how the brain responds to loss. O'Connor explains that grief involves complex changes in brain function and structure. Grief affects cognitive functions and emotional regulation, influencing how individuals remember and think about their loved ones.

O'Connor discusses how people can find meaning in their loss and how the grieving process can lead to personal development and changes in perspective. Connections with others can help individuals navigate their grief and provide comfort.

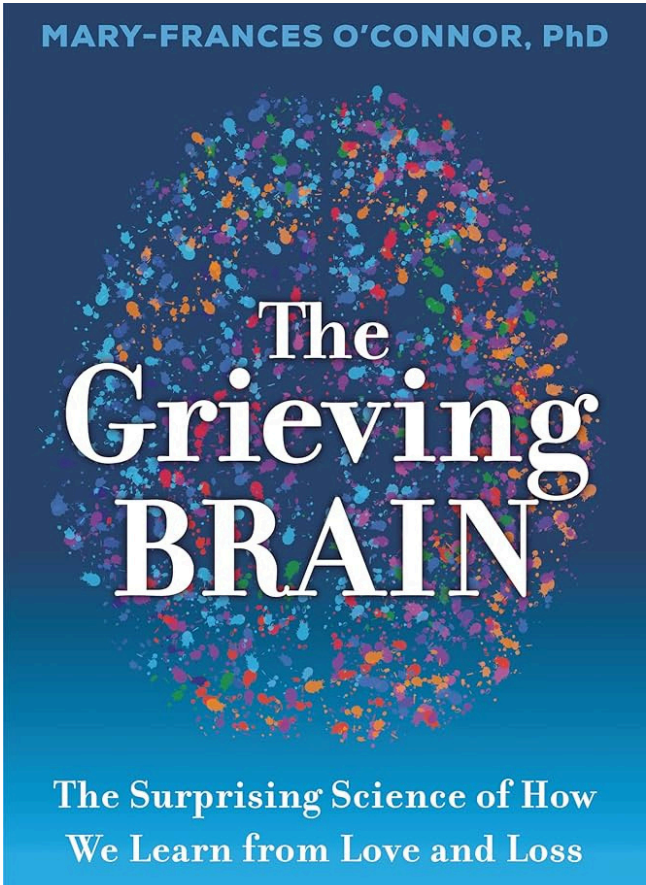
The book explores how understanding the science of grief can inform better, more compassionate mental health practices and therapies.

## How can this book help you?

O'Connor offers practical advice for managing grief, including strategies for self-care, seeking support, and understanding the normalcy of the grieving process. She also addresses common misconceptions about grief and provides guidance on how to support others who are grieving.

With having a more informed understanding of grief from not only an emotional standpoint, but a clinical one, individuals are able to be more cognizant of what they or their loved ones are going through. With this, grieverers are able to come up with strategies that will help them get through this difficult time, many seeking help from mental health professionals.

The book suggests that a deeper understanding of the science of grief can enhance therapeutic practices and improve mental health support for those dealing with loss.



# OUR CLINICIANS

## Michelle Asencio

**Specialties:** Anxiety, Depression, Mood disorders, Sexuality issues, Sex Therapy, Couples, Marriages, Adjustment Disorders, Pre- Marital. **Spanish Speaking. 13 years old +**

**Modality:** Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Sex Therapy, Solution Focused Therapy, Client Center Therapy, Brief Solution Therapy, Couples Therapy

## Kaiza Canales

**Specialties:** Anxiety, Depression, Anger Management, Mood Disorders, Adjustment Disorders, Pre-Marital, Couples Therapy, Trauma Focus, Parenting, Social Skills - **Spanish Speaking. 6 years old +**

## David Gomez

**Specialties:** Anxiety, depression, Anger Management, Mood Disorders, Adjustment Disorders, Behavioral Issues, Parenting Issues, Parenting, Autism, Social Skills. **Spanish Speaking. 3 years old +**

## Brecking Crowley

**Specialties:** Anxiety, Depression, Mood disorders, Anger Management, Mood Disorders, Adjustment Disorders, LGBTQIA+, Transgender, Substance Abuse, Trauma, Alternative Lifestyle, Sexuality, Couples Therapy, Social Skills . **Adults 18 +**

## Mary Marrero

**Specialties:** Mood Disorders, Adjustment Disorders, Life Transitions, LGBTQIA+, Spirituality Issues, Parenting Skills, Grief, Loss, Personality Disorders, Eating Disorders, Human Developmental Challenges, and Substance Abuse Problems. **Spanish Speaking. 6 years old +**

## Paola Balseca - Registered Mental Health Counselor Intern

**Specialties:** Anxiety, Depression, Pre & Postpartum Depression, Anger Management, Mood Disorders, Adjustment Disorders, Behavioral Issues, Parenting Issues, Social Skills, Couples, Domestic Violence. **Spanish Speaking. 6 years old +**

## Tisifenee Taylor - Registered Mental Health Counselor Intern

**Specialties:** Anxiety, Depression, Pre & Postpartum Depression, Anger Management, Mood Disorders, Adjustment Disorders, Behavioral Issues, Parenting Issues, Social Skills, Couples, Domestic Violence. **6 years old +**



# OUR MISSION STATEMENT

At Let's Talk About, our mission is to provide compassionate, evidence-based mental health therapy that empowers individuals to overcome challenges, cultivate resilience, and live fulfilling lives. We are committed to creating a safe and supportive space where clients can explore their thoughts, feelings, and experiences without judgment. Through collaborative and personalized treatment approaches, we strive to promote healing, growth, and positive change. Our goal is to empower clients to harness their strengths, develop effective coping skills, and cultivate meaningful connections with themselves and others. Together, we work towards fostering a community where mental health is prioritized, stigma is challenged, and individuals thrive.



WE APPRECIATE YOUR REFERRALS!



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