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March is

SOCIAL WORK MONTH

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I have officially been a Social Worker since I got my BSW in 1998 and during these past 24 years I have had ups and downs in my career like many of us that have worked in the field. Social Work is HARD work, and it is also a calling. I didn't even know social work was a career until I took a career placement test which told me Social Work would be a good fit. Prior to that point my major was psychology, and just before transferring to CSULB, I made the switch to social work. I am so happy I made that choice because it truly was made for me. I believe in the power of people's ability to be resilient with support, and social work values are completely aligned with mine. We are there to empower, guide, provide resources, advocate, cheer on, be supportive, validate, link with resources and supportive systems, help heal, create change, collaborate, develop or manage programs, and much more. We wear a ton of hats which is what separates us from MFTs or Psychologists (love ya'll too) we are an all-inclusive package! Unfortunately, that's what also causes us to feel underappreciated and burned out when management doesn't recognize our strengths and limits. At the end of the day, we are still human though we do a superhero's job. Social Workers are expected to be great at handling high caseloads, crises, never-ending paperwork while being underpaid and underappreciated. But we do it because it is a calling, we believe in the power of people and want our society to be better and thrive and believe that the time we are putting in with our client/s is totally worth it.



On this social work month, I ask that if you know a social worker, send some love and appreciation their way. If you are in management, recognize when workers are tired and need more than a potluck to cope. Remember to celebrate their successes and guide and support them to be successful when struggling whether it is by listening, making administrative changes, paying what they are worth (no excuses), giving them the tools they need

to do their work, giving them manageable caseloads, telling them you're thankful and see their hard work not just once a month but throughout the year and remember that working with people, though rewarding it's exhausting.

For my fellow social workers, YOU ROCK! I am grateful that you chose this field and thank you for your amazing work. Please know that you are making a difference in whatever field you are working in, whether it's child welfare, working with the elderly, hospital, school, mental health, administration, community activism, policy, etc.... I want you to remember that you also have a voice and should advocate for yourself by asking for help when needed, you should also be taking your lunches, vacation, sick time as mental health days, going home on time, spending time with friends, and family, and should take care of you because we need you to be well and not burned out. I love Social Work and I'm putting to work all that I have learned in the past 24 years as I ventured into launching Resilience Social Work, and I'm looking forward to this new phase in my career as a Social Worker Entrepreneur. Thus, I want you to know that all the work you do now is a learning experience that will serve as a tool in the future.

HAPPY SOCIAL WORK MONTH!



Marilyn Mejia-Peña, LCSW, CIMHP

GETTING UNSTUCK : LUCK OR CONSCIOUS CHOICE?

Last month I did an IG Live on unresolved grief induced by the pandemic, hoping to bring awareness to how we are all grieving and therefore feeling kind of numb and stuck. The responses I received were interestingly similar in that people felt like I was talking just to them when I shared different examples of how it manifests in our lives. I think that aside from being fascinating and extremely flattering (as a presenter), it confirms that most of us are feeling stuck, and have been in a long-term funk that seems to be lingering forever (Ugh). The talk also validated that it is normal to feel that way after having been through collective trauma and grieving our past pre-covid life. So, if that's how you feel, you are not alone.

But the question for you is, are you doing something about it? Do you know how to move forward, how to shake it off and finally wake up from this long-term nightmare? If you are already on your way to healing from the trauma and grief, congratulations! Keep going! But if you aren't, I hate to tell you that luck is not going to do it for you. Instead, it's up to us to make the deliberate choices that are going to push us into taking the first step, the first reach, the first action to move us forward. I know it's not what we want to hear, COVID has left us with little motivation and energy, so making decisions, setting plans, and then actually following through takes a greater amount of work than before (just reading that sounds exhausting right?) However, that is exactly what is going to take for us to get unstuck and get out of the numbness hole we are in.

I can tell you that though it may seem impossible or super hard right now, it's definitely doable. I have witnessed the complete transformation of trauma victims into trauma survivors. Do you know what they had in common? They all had to make the conscious choice and effort to take the first step into vulnerability and the unknown to be able to discover their potential and transform into their thriving selves. Resilience doesn't just happen, lucks got nothing or very little to do with it. Resilience happens when conscious decisions are made to overcome, to envision a different future, when we have a support system (people, environment, resources/tools) and when we do the hard work and push through the growing pains of becoming the person we want to be. Our world needs us to be fully present and come back to the game of life. There are just too many things at play (our mental health, raising the next generation, healthy relationships, the environment, civil rights, ...) and we have to be in our A-game. I look forward to seeing you thriving, creating, sharing, collaborating, and experiencing all the goodness that you bring to this world when you are functioning at 100%. I challenge you to choose a category from the list below and commit to an action you can complete, it can be as simple as "I will go to sleep at a decent time tonight," you choose, but choose and then follow through. I know you can do it!

- ◆ Engage in Self-Care: eat nutritious food, exercise, get good sleep
- ◆ Reconnect with family and friends
- ◆ Join a support group
- ◆ Engage in Spiritual/religious activities
- ◆ Talk and process about how you're feeling with a therapist, friend, journal
- ◆ Plan ahead and schedule fun activities into your calendar



Upcoming Events

INSTAGRAM LIVE
@resiliencesocialwork

Let's make Kambucha

Friday 3/4 at 11 a.m.

Let's make Granola

Friday 3/11 at 11 a.m.

WORKSHOPS

**Understanding the Fight Flight Freeze
Response when working with Trauma**

Thursday 3/10 10-11:00 a.m.

Wednesday 3/30 11 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Cost: \$15 Sign up at:

<https://resiliencesocialwork.com/events>

COACHING

Healthy Lifestyle Coaching Group

**2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month
time TBA Cost: \$20 p/group**

This group will be starting next week and there's still room to sign up. Let me help you stay committed and accountable in meeting your wellness goals by assessing your current systems and adjusting them as needed to develop healthy habits. Tips for success will be shared for sleep, meal planning, food for happiness, time management, and self-care. Also, you will be able to connect with others in the same journey. Sign up at:

<https://resiliencesocialwork.com/events>

By the way I am available to provide in-service staff development trainings in-person or virtually as well as consultation services and professional coaching. For questions or referrals contact me via social media, website, email or phone provided in the first page