



MEMORY
PALACE



IN COLLABORATION WITH

MY HEALING LANGUAGE

UPPERCLOUD

COMMUNITY RESPONSIVE EDUCATION

CITY OF SACRAMENTO'S OFFICE OF ARTS AND CULTURE

CALIFORNIA ARTS COUNCIL



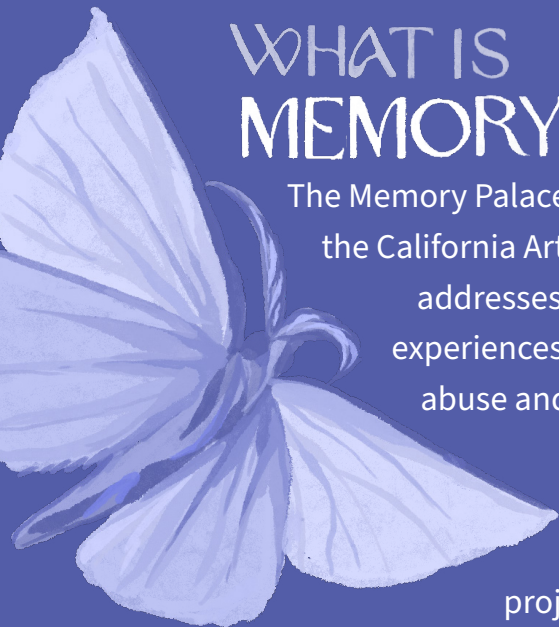
“The MHL Memory Palace is a program for survivors of sexual abuse and assault, ‘for us by us’. It prepares participants to dive deeper into being reflective, gaining access to multiple modalities of healing support and feeling more comfortable in telling their stories in ways that reflect an artistic representation. This artistic rendition is made to help them feel even more comfortable in sharing their stories so they can in some way help end sexual abuse and the stigma against talking about it in this generation.”

— Dr. Keema Cooper Giesselmann, MP Practitioner



To learn more about memory palace
visit [memorypalacemovement.com](https://www.memorypalacemovement.com)

WHAT IS MEMORY PALACE



The Memory Palace Project, funded in part by the California Arts Council, a State agency, addresses trauma resulting from experiences of sexual violence. Sexual abuse and violence, a pervasive issue affecting millions of individuals, is often shrouded in silence. Our project's primary objective is to facilitate healing and empowerment for survivors through storytelling, ancestral healing, and trauma-informed support that is culturally sensitive and understanding of the communities' specific needs while concurrently raising awareness and dismantling the silence and stigma surrounding this issue. By focusing on communities that experience higher rates of sexual abuse and violence and face additional barriers in



seeking help, our project is directly addressing the unique needs of these communities, making it highly relevant to the population it serves.

THE ARTISTS

Each artist worked closely with a participant to create a work of art that resonates with their healing journey.

ESTHER MARIE HALL




“I have experienced both cognitive and dialectical behavioral therapy and found that the Memory Palace experience was much more helpful than the latter, although I was participating as the artist. This program is a life changing learning lesson not only about how to care for others, but for yourself. Reminding us to move through the world without ever dimming our light.”

 @esther__rehtse

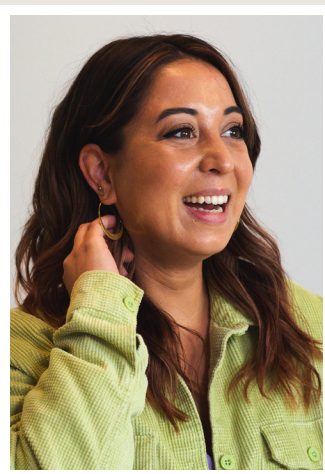
JENNIFER LUGRIS

“This program has changed my life. I felt an overwhelming sense of gratitude for my life during the breathwork and I feel I will carry that with me as years go by. It also gave me a new way of thinking about my artistic practice. This is a transformative experience that nurtures the soul. An opportunity to bring creative expression and fine art into the healing journey.”

 @jenniferlugris



ULI SMITH




"I'd describe this program as a powerful blend of creativity, self-reflection, and community healing. It offers a unique space to explore deep emotions, process personal experiences, and break through creative blocks, all while connecting with others in a supportive environment. It's transformative and can open up new possibilities in both your art and personal growth."

 @paintbyuli

SARAH RENE KRAFT

"This experience and my participant's story that has been shared with me helped me to realize that trauma does not need to be analyzed or remembered in order to be let go. A healing journey does not always begin with perfect understanding of the hurt. It begins with a mighty act of love for the self."

 @sarahrenekraft



EVERYTHING COMES TO LIGHT



My name is Lisa Jones and I'm 31. For the past 5 years I've been doing everything in my power to live my life as freely as possible, and only engaging in activities and with people that feel good to me. I am a teacher, student of life, multi-talented artist, intuitive healer, and lover of food, cinema, knowledge, and travel. I most enjoy creating via music, poetry, drawing, painting, and any other medium that best suits my creative expression needs. A passion of mine is encouraging others to live in their truth as their authentic selves.

One day this pain will be useful to you.

My experiences with SA started from a young age by people within my family and people closest to my family members. Specifically my bio-father, mother's boyfriend, and a neighbor. These occurrences happened on multiple occasions from the age range of 4-16. As a teenager when I spoke up about it to my mother as I was instructed to do if anyone ever touched me inappropriately, I received no help. From an early age I learned that unfortunately the reality of being SA'd, is the situation may not always be tended to with appropriate actions being taken when we need it most. However, I urge everyone who has had this experience to always speak your truth and tell as many people as possible that can get you the help you need.

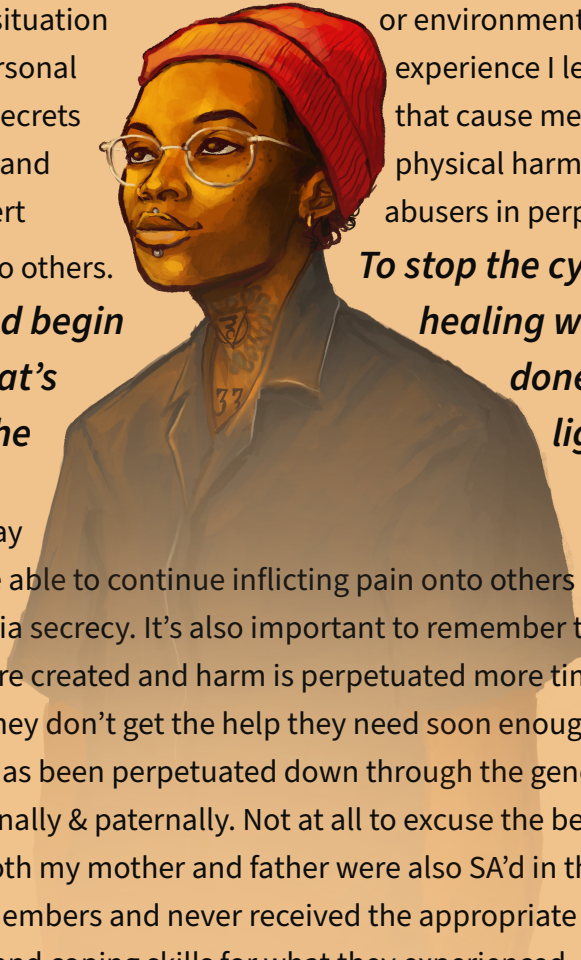
I get that sometimes it's not the safest option due to potentially being threatened, further harmed or circumstances being made worse for yourself or others around us by the offender(s), but do your best. What I experienced in no way, shape, or form was my fault and gratefully I've always known that.

Abuse is never acceptable and should always be brought to the attention of someone who can help remove us from the unhealthy situation or environment. From my own personal experience I learned harboring secrets that cause mental, emotional, and physical harm only assists covert abusers in perpetuating trauma onto others.

***abuse and begin
bring what's
dark to the***

***To stop the cycles of
healing we must
done in the
light.***

The only way abusers are able to continue inflicting pain onto others is being protected via secrecy. It's also important to remember that offenders are created and harm is perpetuated more times than not when they don't get the help they need soon enough. SA in my family has been perpetuated down through the generations both maternally & paternally. Not at all to excuse the behavior, however both my mother and father were also SA'd in their youth by family members and never received the appropriate assistance and coping skills for what they experienced. In turn my mother became a passive bystander and my father became



an abuser. To all survivors of SA/Abuse reading this know that you did nothing wrong and none of what you experienced was warranted or your fault no acceptions or excuses. The purpose of sharing my story is to encourage you to seek assistance to help you heal and forgive those who have hurt you for your personal well being. **You do not deserve to carry the burden of someone else's trauma.** Even if you don't have the capacity to seek help just know you are not alone. Finally if you are a parent, guardian, friend, or anyone made aware of someone being abused/assaulted, I know it's not always easy but please do your best to believe, support, and encourage them to seek help and protection where necessary.

LISA'S MEMORY PALACE



ESTHER MARIE HALL

Acrylic fiber, corduroy, cotton, and velvet



Quilts are a sign of care, warmth, and protection.



The sun, symbolizing life, energy, hope, and renewal, represents Lisa.



Butterfields symbolize the power of change and renewal.



Snakes symbolize transformation and regeneration as they shed their skin to present anew.



Spiders, the weavers of fate, symbolize destiny.



1000 years of grief has flown

Rivers through me

Sit with grief so grief won't thief

I sat with grief my grief did speak

I speak to grief so grief won't thief

I'm all ears for grief to grieve

Griefs pain was deep like coral on reefs

When grief was done

Grief left its seat

Headed towards the door til next we meet

That day I learned that grief is sweet

Grief just needed a place to weep

And if you sit with grief then grief won't thief

Grief will teach when you let it speak

— Lisa Jones

THE SAFETY FOUND WITHIN



Nelle is a child of the land, an earth protector. Their work is ancestral, rooted in earth based wisdom uncovered from the center of the Earth as well as from many teachers they've met along their journey. Nelle comes by way of Jalisco, Mexico and the South Western reaches of Turtle Island. Born and raised in Salinas, California, the Salad Bowl of The World. They have a lineage of farmers/land tenders, educators, leaders, birth workers and warriors. Nelle believes their life is a continuation of what their ancestors began before them.



My parents separated before I could form a memory of them together. As single parents they both worked long hours to support me. My Dad often worked at least two jobs, day and night. My Mom and Dad relied on family to care for me while they were away working. Some nights I would hide in my sleeping bag. This cocoon made me feel safe when the world around me

wasn't. I struggled in my waking life,

my parents thought it was my

fault. School became a

challenge as my mind was too

occupied reliving what I had

been hiding in my cocoon

from. My parents simply

thought I wasn't trying hard

enough in school. They

didn't know what had been

happening to me while they

were gone. I was shamed

for making mistakes

when what I needed

was understanding

and patience. As I

grew older I buried

these memories and

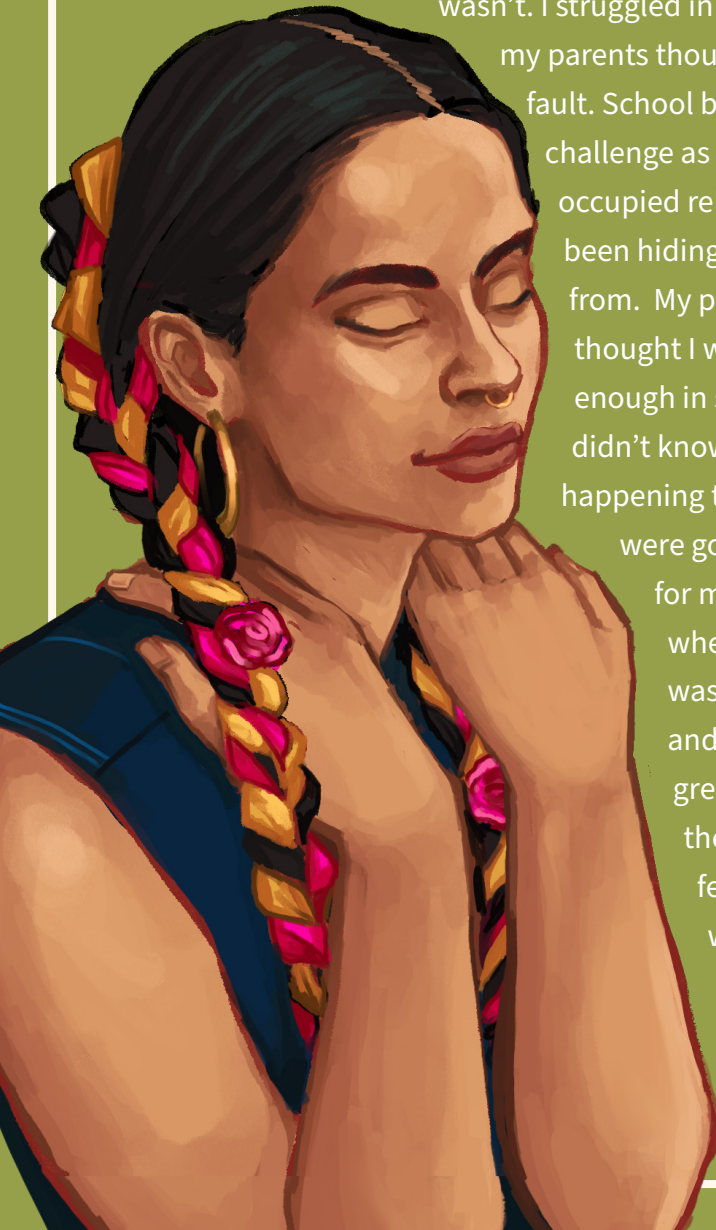
feelings because I

was feeling the

pressure to grow

through the

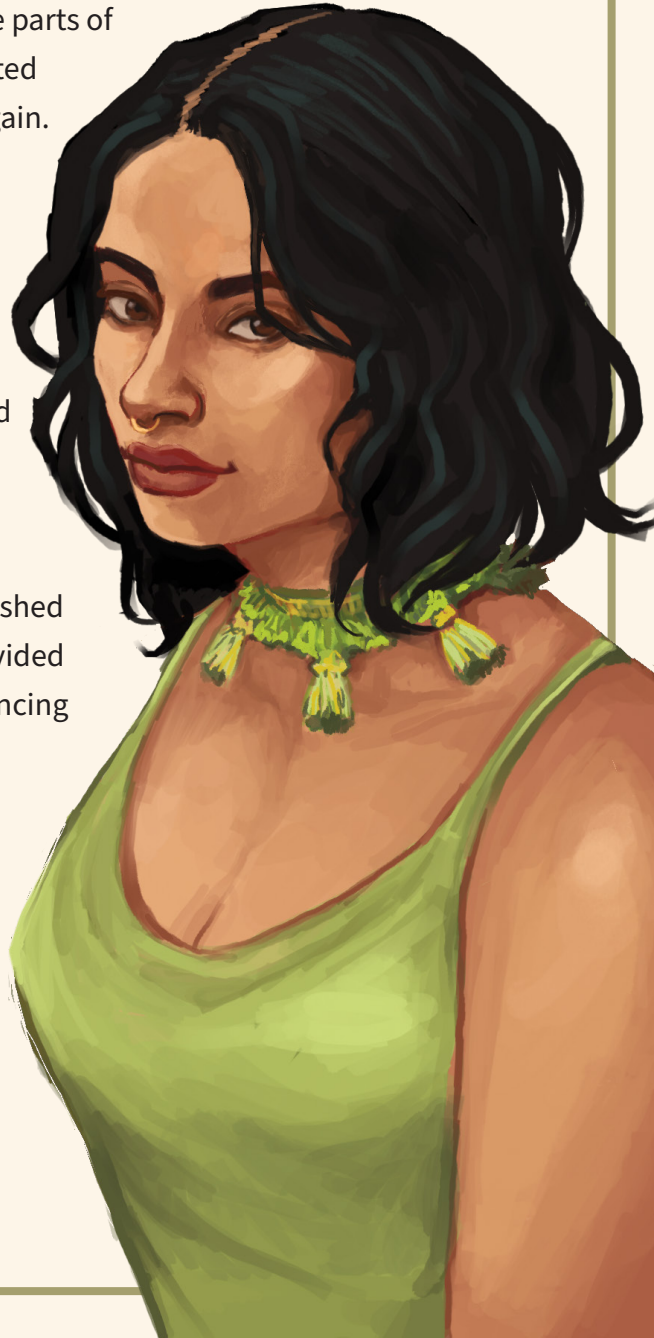
challenges.



Not facing or addressing what happened to me as a child continued to affect me throughout my life until I was brave enough to face the hurt. Before, I didn't have the tools to heal, but it wasn't too late for me. Having people to lean on gave me the strength to heal the parts of myself that I lost. I started dancing and singing again.

I learned how to communicate my needs and set healthy boundaries. I came home to the safety of my body. I remembered to love the innocent child within myself, to give them the patience and understanding I wished my caretakers had provided me when I was experiencing those hurts. Tell your people what you are going through. You aren't alone. People want to help. We all deserve to be understood and listened to with patience.

I love you.



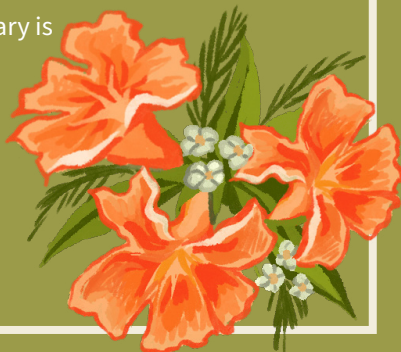


THE HEALING JOURNEY

Jennifer Lugris
Acrylic on Canvas

Welcome to my Healing Sanctuary where my ancestors are surrounding a pool carved out of the highest peak in the world. The DNA that is dancing

around came to me in a vision that I painted years ago. Here the ancestral DNA is portrayed in many forms and textures to show the range of places my people come from. When I enter the sacred waters I soak in the gifts instilled in me by everyone in my lineage who came before me. I'm honored to hold all their love and knowledge within my body. The ancient magnolia trees bordering the canvas depict how rooted in my groundedness I am even when I am kissing the highest point of Nepal. The sticky monkey flower grows from the rocks, a resilient plant that symbolizes connection with the body, pleasure, and sexual identity. My Healing Sanctuary is a place where I visit often to experience love past all measures of time and space. Here I connect with my loving ancestors to whom I owe this life to. I feel at home here at the highest possible point. Imagine how much higher I can reach.



STORY BY C

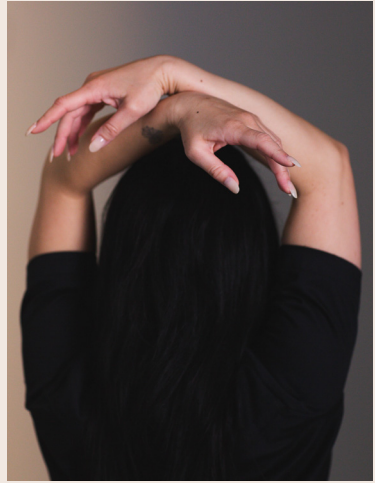


A
FRIEND

PAIRED WITH ARTIST **ULI SMITH**

I AM C.

Dancer of the waves and concrete jungles, she loves the sun, needs the rain, and a cool atmosphere. C. enjoys the smell of eucalyptus, cedar, rain in trees, salt air, burnt wood, and sage. C. aims to guide others to their authentic self through movement and music. She loves to listen to music, loves museums, horses, her dogs, her lost turtle (Speedy if you're reading this I love you) films, dancing, swimming and traveling.



A FRIEND.

A “friend” can ask you out, think you're cute, actually like you, help you, date you, give you kind advice, and sexually assault you.

Friend. We often use that word so carelessly. But what is a friend? I am very careful with the word ‘friend’ now. For friendships should symbolize a truth of heart and mind towards another. Yet, we still call strangers and acquaintances “friends” when we do not truly know them. As a young girl, I was one of them. I loved the word “love” and I used the word “friend” so carelessly. I used it like a common phrase, even into my early twenties when I rekindled my friendship with him from high school. Unfortunately, the environment I was raised in taught me to believe that the monsters of our world are in scary strange van, ready to grab you from the streets... and in some cases that may be true... *but the monster is usually a family member, a priest, a counselor, a boss, a boyfriend, or a friend.*

The text messages always started out the same. “How are you?” “What are you up to?” “How’s the day?” “Can I help?” “Need someone to talk to?” “I’m cheaper than a therapist.” What seemed to be how a friend should act when one is in need of guidance, especially to a young woman who was confused and depressed. I sought guidance and care from him, since I did not have genuine friendships at the time. At first, he seemed like someone I could truly open up to and discuss deeper topics with. So it was a relief to have a deeper connection with someone who understood the pains of our world. At the time I had recently ended a relationship with someone who I first had sex with. Heartbroken and sad, I wanted to talk and confide and seek comfort from a friend. And so I did. As I drove over to his house I remember my head hurting so bad from all the sinus congestion of crying for hours. When I arrived at his house, I remember walking in and the entire house was dark, not even a lamp or light was on. The curtains curtains were all shut, the house was

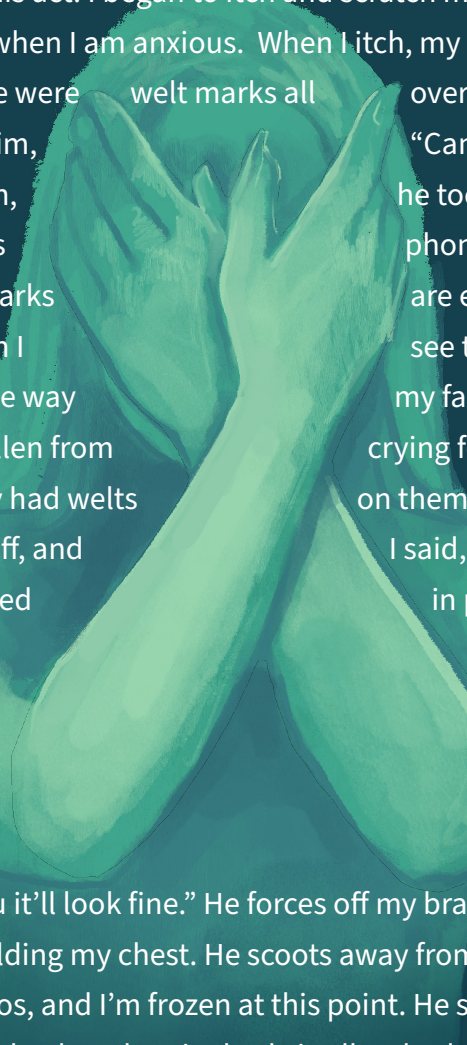


not directly in the sun and it was about a few hours before sunset. Initially, he asked me to hang out that evening to talk about how upset I had been since my break-up. Then, he said “We can take pictures and forget about your day.” Upon entering, I remember him barely asking what had been bothering me all day and week. We didn’t spend any time talking about anything deeper than surface topics, but he was eager to take photos of me. I remember his energy as trying to just brush away my tears and acting like my grief was not of importance. Even though he had offered to be a friend to talk to when things were very dark, the energy felt rushed and I began to feel uncomfortable.



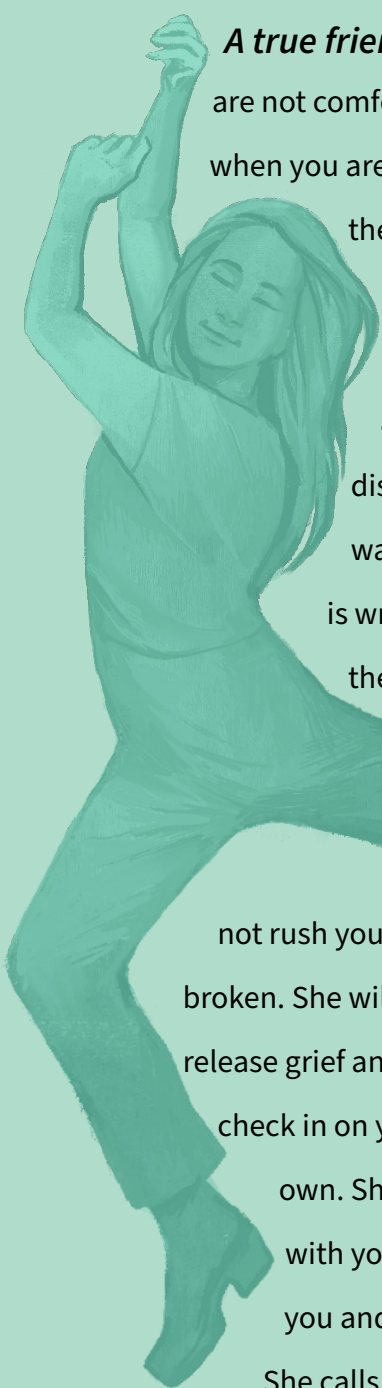
Deep in my pain, I wanted to leave and just cry elsewhere, but he suggested that expressing ourselves through art might help. He showed me his photograph set-up in his room/work studio. He said “Let me take a few bare shots of you just in your T-shirt,” (it was a beige color that covered my body) but he took a few “test” shots with his phone. I was a very inexperienced 21 year old, I had just ended my first serious relationship... So at this point in time I just went along with the direction of the photographer because I actually did not have a clue on how artists should take photos. He then said “Take off your shirt.” I said I did not want to, I’m not comfortable with my body.

He walked over to me and just took it off, implying that “he’ll help give me the courage to love my body more” by being forceful with this act. I began to itch and scratch my body all over; I do this when I am anxious. When I itch, my body begins to welt so there were welt marks all over my back. And then, I asked him, “Can I put my shirt back on” (again, he took those photos with his phone). He said, “Your scratch marks are everywhere and I said, “Can I see the photos...”. I did not like the way my face looked. My eyes were swollen from crying for so long and my entire body had welts on them. He then said, “I want to be naked in photos...” He said “It’s okay, I’ll help you through your body dysmorphia”, and I said “no” continuously and “stop”. He said “Just let me help you it’ll look fine.” He forces off my bra and I just stood there holding my chest. He scoots away from me to take a few more photos, and I’m frozen at this point. He sees my discomfort, my back and entire body is all welted and red now. The sun has set and there is no light. He takes my hand and pulls me to his bed. At the end, I remember not understanding what had just happened. My body just went into auto pilot. I asked how the rest of the evening will be spent and he said that



he wasn't interested in taking more art photos of me. He then begins to hint at rushing me out of his house because he had friends coming over to meet him at his house. My body was still in auto pilot. I got ready, washing my hands in the bathroom. His friends actually arrived early. I barely remember meeting all of them, because I could feel my body just completely disconnecting from everything. But I remember meeting a girl with them, I remember wanting to run to her and cry to her about what just happened but still I was so frozen. I wanted to forewarn her and get her out of that house, but something about her energy appeared so confident, and sadly, for me, society at the time made me feel embarrassed to vocalize what I had just been through. So I played an "I'm cool" card. Raced home in tears wanting to call a friend but could not really process what 'a friend' had just done to me... and I could not call my ex... I just wanted to scrub my body. I ran to the shower blasted it cold, and just began scrubbing so hard until I made myself bleed.





A true friend will never force you into a situation you are not comfortable with. A true friend will listen to you when you are sad, and invite you over to comfort you in the way that you need. A true friend will not manipulate you to try an art activity with them and actually have selfishly hidden agendas in mind. A true friend will not dismiss you after they've received what they wanted. A true friend will know if something is wrong with you, just by the way you say

'hi' to them. She will open her home with light and laughter and not rush you to leave, especially when you're heart broken. She will dance with you when you need to release grief and pain from your body. She will constantly check in on you, even if she is battling demons of her own. She empathizes with your pain and cries with you as she holds your hand. She sings with you and smiles with you. She is love. She is peace. She calls and fights for justice.

HIGHER SELF



ACRYLIC ON CANVAS

ULI SMITH

As C. and Uli walked together they were visited by angels in the form of butterflies, who became symbolic of the higher self that she connected with during a transformative workshop. This portrait is an ode to C.'s communion with her higher self in the form of a butterfly delicately poised on her finger representing guidance and resilience. The role of the ocean in C.'s life as a healer is referenced in her azure persona and turquoise aura. The portrait captures her in a graceful dance pose, embodying the intimate connection she has forged with her body through movement.

THE

SPHINX

REMEMBERS



SYD SCANLON



Syd Scanlon (she/they) is a local social worker, professional therapist for neurodivergent and mentally ill youth, and a highly sensitive and intuitive individual. Syd identifies as a witch, carrying at least one crystal in her purse at all times. She enjoys reading fantasy novels, writing poetry, going on long walks with her nephew dog, acting as Auntie to all of her friends' young children, and playing the drums. Syd is empowered to help other survivors of sexual and domestic violence, having lived through several traumatic events in her late teens and early twenties.

At age 19 I was working retail at a used bookstore in the suburbs of Sacramento. I was hired at the same time as a male co-worker who was 10 years older than me, but we became friends quite quickly, learning that we had many similar interests in art, music, movies, and aesthetic style. This male co-worker also had experience in film and video editing work, and became helpful to me during my community college career, as I had to make a short documentary-style project. During the filming of this project, our relationship progressed from platonic to sexual, as there was





mutual attraction. From this point forward, this man and I became essentially inseparable, doing everything and anything together. We also entered into an “on again, off again” romantic relationship, while continuing to work together in the same bookstore. In the summer of 2017 I was still living with my parents at age 21, saving up money, and feeling lots of growing pains. I had a boyfriend that was not this co-worker, and was looking for a place to live. I moved into my co-worker’s home in August of 2017, as just a roommate, nothing more. In September of 2017 I impulsively quit my job at the bookstore with no backup plan, and did not become employed again until late November of 2017. During this time, my boyfriend and I broke up, and my roommate/best friend became increasingly controlling, manipulative, violent, and malicious. While there certainly had been red flags and toxic behaviors from the beginning of our relationship (many of which I

couldn't see until reflecting back years later, this period of time is truly when the violence escalated). He used coercion to force me into several degrading and violent and sexual acts, as "payment" since I was often short on rent during my un-employment. He became physically aggressive, often hitting, punching, kicking me, knocking me around, dragging me around the house. He videotaped my sexual acts, and would often use these as "blackmail" if I didn't listen to him or comply. He was a severe gaslighter, he at some points in time had me so confused that I was unclear about details as simple and obvious as my own name.

There are entire weeks of my memory that have been blacked out, I am not able to recall certain events at all.

In February of 2018 I received a message on social media from this person's ex-girlfriend. She knew me through mutual friends, and knew that I was living with this person, while ironically working in a shelter as a counselor for other survivors of sexual and domestic violence. After a phone call with this ex-girlfriend, in which she disclosed that this person had also horrifically abused her, I was face to face with my own trauma and abuse. Within the next calendar week I was secretly packing up all my items, and running quite literally for my life from my abuser. I moved back in with my parents, and finally began coming clean about the abuse I had endured.



I turned my entire life around, and went into hiding from this man. I have luckily never seen him since the day I moved out, the day before my 22nd birthday. I have spent years in therapy unpacking my trauma and re-wiring my brain. I am so thankful to be alive and as strong as I am today.

My message to other survivors: ***I did the best I could with the information I had at the time.*** There is no point in beating yourself up in retrospect, do your best to be gentle with yourself, focus on your future and your healing.



Although often associated with Egyptian mythology, the Sphinx actually originates from Greek lore. Even the Egyptian Sphinx originally had a different head, later replaced by that of a Pharaoh. The lost aspects of its lore reflect Syd's experience of trauma and memory loss. The Sphinx's blue bird wings reference Syd's found family, who are represented as a flock of blue birds huddling together for warmth on the Sphinx's shoulders.

THE SPHINX REMEMBERS



SARAH RENE CRAFT

PENCIL, CHARCOAL, INK, & GOLD FOIL ON PAPER

Syd always had the power to heal and just needed a little help to remember her power. To symbolize this, a key is loosely tied around the collar with a red ribbon. The single blue bird holding the key represents a pivotal person in Syd's life, inspired by the adage "a little bird told me."



“Experiencing SV is more than just a physical assault; It’s a lifelong trauma that shapes how we navigate our relationships and daily lives. Memory Palace offers support on this healing journey, no matter where we are in the process.”

— Sarah Marie Hawkins, MP Co-Creator

RESOURCES

Washington Neighborhood Center

400 16th Street, Downtown Sacramento, CA 95814

WNC provides programming and healing for violence against women.

IG: @thecenter916

WEAVE

1900 K Street, Sacramento, CA 95811 • 916.920.2952

WEAVE is the primary provider of crisis intervention services for survivors of domestic violence and the Rape Crisis Center for Sacramento County. WEAVE provides an array of multi-lingual services designed to be survivor-centered and trauma-informed.

IG: @weaveinc

My Sister's House

Sacramento, CA • 916.428.3271

The organization provides educational support groups, a work program for survivors, shelters and transitional housing, community outreach and education, and culturally tailored intervention services, along with a 24-hour multilingual crisis line.

IG: @my_sisters_house

OUR PRACTITIONERS

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otherwaysofseeing.com

Beau Belisle

beau-knows.com

Deanna Damasen

gotcmherbs.net

Chanel Durley

mourningflow.com

Keema Giesselmann

keematherapy.com

Martin Giesselmann

keematherapy.com

Glenda Macatangay

myhealinglanguage.com

Vanessa Maggio

vanessaholistica.com

“As Practitioners we aren’t exempt from doing deep healing work alongside the folk we hold space for. There were many moments in preparation of and during Memory Palace where I had to explore my past experiences, my Ancestral relationships, my healing practices and rituals, and how they contribute to how I move through the world today. Doing this work allowed me to deepen and expand my relationship with my family allowing us all to heal.”

— Chanel Durley, MP Practitioner



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Brynne Barnard-Bahn

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Chanel Durley

Keema Giesselmann

Martin Giesselmann

Vanessa Maggio



“It’s not easy to remember. We can spend our whole lives using all our energy to forget. As survivors, if we can be held in exploring our memories, confronting our truths, being with our pain, the possibility of true and whole healing can exist. We deserve the opportunity to live life in the fullness of who we are, within and beyond our trauma.”

— Glenda Lee Goce Macatangay, MSW

