

# Thao Nguyen Foundation Inc. Newsletter

### 17<sup>th</sup> Issue December 2020

#### TOGETHER, WE BRING LIGHT TO MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

## Greetings from the President

Nhung Hendy

Welcome to the seventeenth issue of TNF newsletter. I hope that this newsletter finds you all safe and healthy. As I write this column, Thanksgiving is upon us. This year, for the first time, my husband, Ted, and I will not travel to Utah to visit his parents for Thanksgiving. Instead, we will have a virtual family get-together via Facetime. As you know, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) as well as Governor Hogan have recommended that we stay home to celebrate Thanksgiving with our immediate family to reduce the likelihood of contracting the corona virus. I hope that you will heed this advice and stay safe at home during this holiday season. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me or call or text to the numbers listed below if you need to talk. Know that help is just a phone call or a text message away.

When our last newsletter went to press, we did not know which student from Drexel University would be the recipient of this year's Thao Nguyen Memorial Scholarship. I am happy to report that Billy Nguyen, a senior English major with a minor in writing at Drexel University, was selected. According to Professor Roger Kurtz, Chair of the English & Philosophy Department, Billy

is an academically gifted student with an overall GPA of 3.79. Please join me in wishing Billy all the best as he completes his senior year.

Please mark your calendar. The wait is over. Our Daybreak juried art show's Opening Reception will be on Saturday, April 24th, 2021 at 501A York Road in Towson, MD. More details will be posted on our web site in late January of 2021 when we finalize the catalog for the show. I hope to see many of you at the Opening Reception where the winners of the competition will be announced. I would like to thank Deirdre Aikin for her generosity in letting us use her gallery for the Art Show. It would be remiss not to mention the unwavering support from artists who submitted their works to the show. In closing, please accept our sincere thanks for your continued support over the years. Have a safe and healthy holiday season as well as a Happy 2021!

Please call or text to the following numbers in case you need help

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:
   Call 1-800-273-TALK(8225)
- Crisis Text Line:
  - Text TALK to 741-741
- The Trevor Project (LGBTQ Crisis Line)
   Call 1-866-488-7386
- Maryland Helpline:
  - Call 211 or text your zip code to 898-211



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#### **TN Foundation Board of Directors**

Michael Biderman, Director Philip Hall, Director Nhung T. Hendy, President James Manley, Secretary & Social Media Manager



#### **SAVE THE DATE!**

Daybreak Juried Art Show Saturday, APRIL 24, 2021 7 P.M. to 10 P.M. 501 York Rd., Towson MD 21204



**7o** One in Sorrow

By Grace Noll Crowell



Let me come in where you are weeping, friend, And let me take your hand. I. who have known a sorrow such as vours, Can understand. Let me come in – I would be very still Beside you in your grief, I would not bid you cease your weeping, friend, Tears can bring relief. Let me come in – I would only breathe a prayer, And hold your hand, For I have known a sorrow such as vours, And understand

#### Reflecting on my Survivors of Suicide Loss Day

By Nhung Hendy



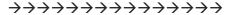
afsp.org/survivorda



On Saturday, 11/21, I was one of a dozen volunteers to co-host the Maryland and Delaware Survivors of Suicide Loss day under the auspices of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. It was held virtually using Zoom for the first time this year due to the pandemic. The event was well attended with about 100 people from all over the country.

I helped facilitate a group of 12 mothers and fathers who all lost their daughters to suicide. My group ranged from those who lost their daughters almost 2 decades ago to those who have just lost their daughters within the past 6 months. There was a mother who lost her 17year-old daughter in March during the stay at home order. I felt connected with her immediately because like me, she lost her only daughter, and because of that, she lost her role as a mother. I told her that I admired her courage in sharing her experience with all of us when her loss was so recent. I let the group know that it took me a few years to be able to open up to others about losing my daughter. I left the event feeling better knowing that I am not alone in my journey toward healing and reconciliation.

I learned that it is a choice we make to either make a difference by raising mental health awareness and destigmatizing suicide or perpetuating its stigma by staying quiet and keeping it to yourself. I hope that you will join me in spreading the words of hope, love, and resilience during these trying times. Thank you for listening.



#### **TIPS for a Virtual Family Gathering**

- 1. Send home made gift items
- 2. Share one aspect of the holiday meal together (e.g., a toast, a dessert).
- 3. Incorporate entertainment (e.g., showing a music video)
- 4. Play some game (e.g., movie trivia app such as Marco Polo, virtual charade such as Heads Up)
- 5. Allow for open time for people to share memorable moments or provide surprising news updates.

#### Source:

https://www.cnn.com/2020/11/18/hea lth/hosting-online-party-tips-zoomwellness/index.html

#### IF YOU WANT TO CONTRIBUTE AN ARTICLE

Contact Nhung Hendy,
President, TN Foundation Inc.
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410-663-0207

#### Research summary in COVID-19 related mental health problem Summarized by Nhung Hendy

A group of researchers from the University of Pennsylvania, Department of Psychiatry, Lifespan Brain Institute of the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and Penn Medicine, and Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Department of Child Adolescent Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences in Philadelphia, PA were among the first to have conducted a large-scale study of more than 3,000 adults, in which they found that **resilience** played an important role in reducing stress, anxiety, and depression during the first two weeks of April when the country was under the "Stay at home" order due to the pandemic.

Study participants were significantly stressed about more family contracting COVID-19 (shared by 49% of the participants) and unknowingly infecting others (36% of participants) than getting COVID-19 themselves (20% of participants). There were no significant differences in patterns of COVID-19 related worries, rates of anxiety, and depression among healthcare providers and healthcare providers. Those reporting a higher level of resilience measured by the authors' developed resilience scale were found to have lower levels of COVID-19 related worries, anxiety, and depression. The pattern of results was consistent between healthcare non-health providers and care

subgroups. One takeaway from this study is that we should and can build our resilience by being aware of our own emotion, staying optimistic, being flexible, believing in ourselves, reaching out to others for social support, and having a sense of humor.

#### Reference:

Barzilay, R., Moore, T.M., Greenberg, D.M., DiDomenico, G.E., Brown, L.A., White, L.K., Gur, R.C., & Gur, R.E. (2020). Resilience, COVID-19 related stress, anxiety, and depression during the pandemic in a large population enriched for healthcare providers. *Translational Psychiatry*, 10, 1: Open Access.



Video games and well-being
By James Manley

Probably you've heard: the vaccines are on the way! The end to lockdown is at least in sight, if not imminent. Unfortunately, the impact of COVID-19 is likely to continue, both physically and increasingly mentally. A recent study (published in November 2020) finds that a COVID diagnosis is associated an increased risk of mental health problems including anxiety, depression, and insomnia. Yet another reason to be careful when you go out. Further, the reverse is also true: although this data just shows correlation and not



causation, folks with a psychiatric diagnosis in the past year are more likely to come down with COVID.

On the other side, there is actually some positive news. A study logging time spent playing video games concluded that for some games, at least (Plants vs. Zombies and Animal Crossing) more time spent playing is associated with a small increase in feelings of well-being. Guess there is some reason people are expected to spend over \$150 billion on video games in 2020. (Did you know that a 2019 study found that 42% of British people between the ages of 55 and 64 play games, and even 25% of 65 year olds?) Of course, caveats still apply -video games can be addictive for some people, and it is always good to get exercise, eat and sleep well. However, I'll take it: as the lockdown continues, it is good to know that one of our vices might not be bad for us.

