

Sharing Her Story: Shelley

I want to introduce my dear, Brave Girl friend, Shelley. We met at Brave Girl Symposium last July and she was such a life-saver to me! My anxiety was in full swing and Shelley was so kind to me!! We enjoyed a few adult drinks on her hotel balcony one BEAUTIFUL summer evening and talked and laughed and cried. I love Shelley!! Here is her Story.

Shelley's Story

Hi everyone! I'd like to first take a minute and thank Leslie for hosting & creating this incredible free class  ☐

I'll tell you when I first met Leslie unofficially – it was through Melody Ross and her Brave girl online art classes. Finally, we met in person at Brave Girl symposium last summer.

I instantly loved her. We were both feeling like we really didn't belong, or like we really weren't good enough to hang out with all my idols – like Melody Ross & Flora & Pixie & Kolleen and Kelli. It didn't take long for us to realize we were soul sisters – we fed off each others confidences and turned things around

I approached Leslie about sharing my story when she first talked about the “say yes ” art course. I thought I'd share with all of you how art journaling helped me ... and continues to help me through my journey.

My name is Shelley Keeble.

I've been married to the love of my life for 30 years this summer.

Together we have raised 3 beautiful daughters – a 28 year old and 25yr old twins. All bring us immense joy; we are so very proud of them. I used to own a little scrapbooking store, but because of my health I had to close the doors. This created a lot of debt and a lot of stress. That's old news and something we continually work at rectifying.

The story you read next is the story of my pain journey. There's more to tell, but I'll save that for another day.

So I've had a really long journey. Some of it was very difficult and it still is hard for me to re-tell. I've healed from so much of it and I know my triggers -which really helps me stay ahead of the game. I'm just going to give you a bullet form of the things that I've been through, because it just sounds like a sordid story if I write it all paragraph style. I have survived:

- being diagnosed with spinal bifida occulta at 13 years old after years of terrible back pain;

- I was in a bad car accident '95 I cracked my sternum, damaged both knees, my wrists, severe whiplash that shifted my head off the base of my neck. I suffered with migraines and chronic pain from 1995 on;

- I have live with depression, anxiety, panic attacks, insomnia, PTSD;-Myofascial pain, chronic pain, chronic fatigue, osteoarthritis in all my joints, and fibromyalgia and all its evil symptoms.

I was taking almost \$1200 a month of pills like OxyContin, liquid morphine, Lyrica, gabapentin, Celebrex, clonidine, lorazepam, and zopiclone, to name some I remember.

None of them giving me relief.

LIFE WAS A DARK PLACE.

Due to some triggers... I started having nightmares, flashbacks, and terrible scary memories. We now know these were long repressed memories. They all came back... as I saw my specialist and counselors. We got to the bottom of the flashbacks and I became aware that I'd been sexually molested by my grandfather as a young adolescent. I think that's when I broke...everything stopped, I crashed. After a lot of counseling: hypnotism therapy, self-help, family and friend support, online art therapy courses and an incredible amount of art journaling and painting ...I feel as though I've come through it all.

Creating! This has been a great help. I've learned I could get so much of my emotions out while being creative. I began working in art journals to help me through whatever the hurdle at that particular time was.

The most groundbreaking Art therapy course for me was when I took the online course THE WALK by Melody Ross through Brave Girls (which is now Brave Living). This was life-changing! Working through my health & mental issues, as well as my pain, was extremely difficult. I quickly learned that I was able to use my creative outlet and my artwork to assist me in my journey. Even now -years later – I go back to a page, if I've had a trigger and remind myself I've already learned this. If I put it in my art journals, I found I was able to get the picture out of my head. My doctor and counselor encouraged my journaling. When things hurt so much that I couldn't stand it, I would put them in my journal. Then I would cover over it, or paint over it, or cut it up. It was so good to be able to get it out.

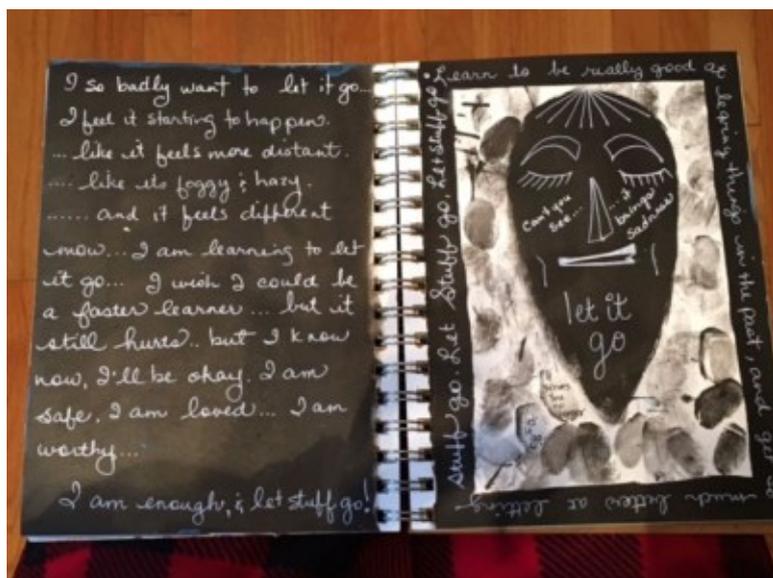
I'm grateful for my chaotic beautiful insane life -even the hard parts!

That's where I learned to be strong and kind and loving – I'm a brave girl! I'm a survivor! I'm a warrior! I always try to find my sunshine... even on the darkest day.

To wrap it up: I work very very hard to stay positive; I live simply; I enjoy every single day to the fullest and I never take life for granted. Thank you for reading my story. I hope it helps you in some way.

Shelley Keeble

Here are some heart-felt and inspiring pages from Shelley's journals...



Challenges in life can rock your world... decline in my health, fatigue, neuropathic pain, fibromyalgia, depression, anxiety, chronic pain, flashbacks, night terrors, pituitary tumor, TMS, PTSD, Tics, permanent nerve damage

I am a
strong
Brave
Survivor
crutches

NIGHTMARE

BEER
DRINK

... I am a fighter, I come back, I learn, I forgive, I love I am a Survivor. 😊



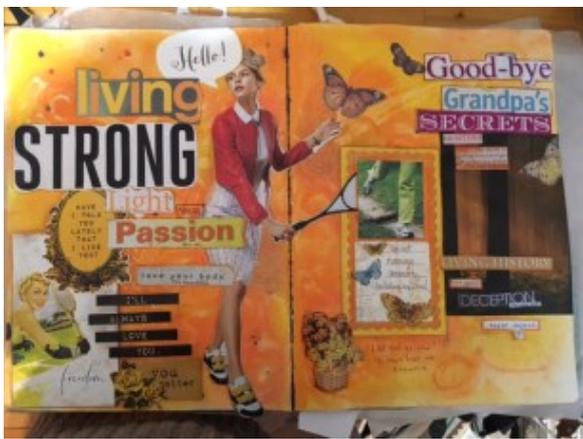
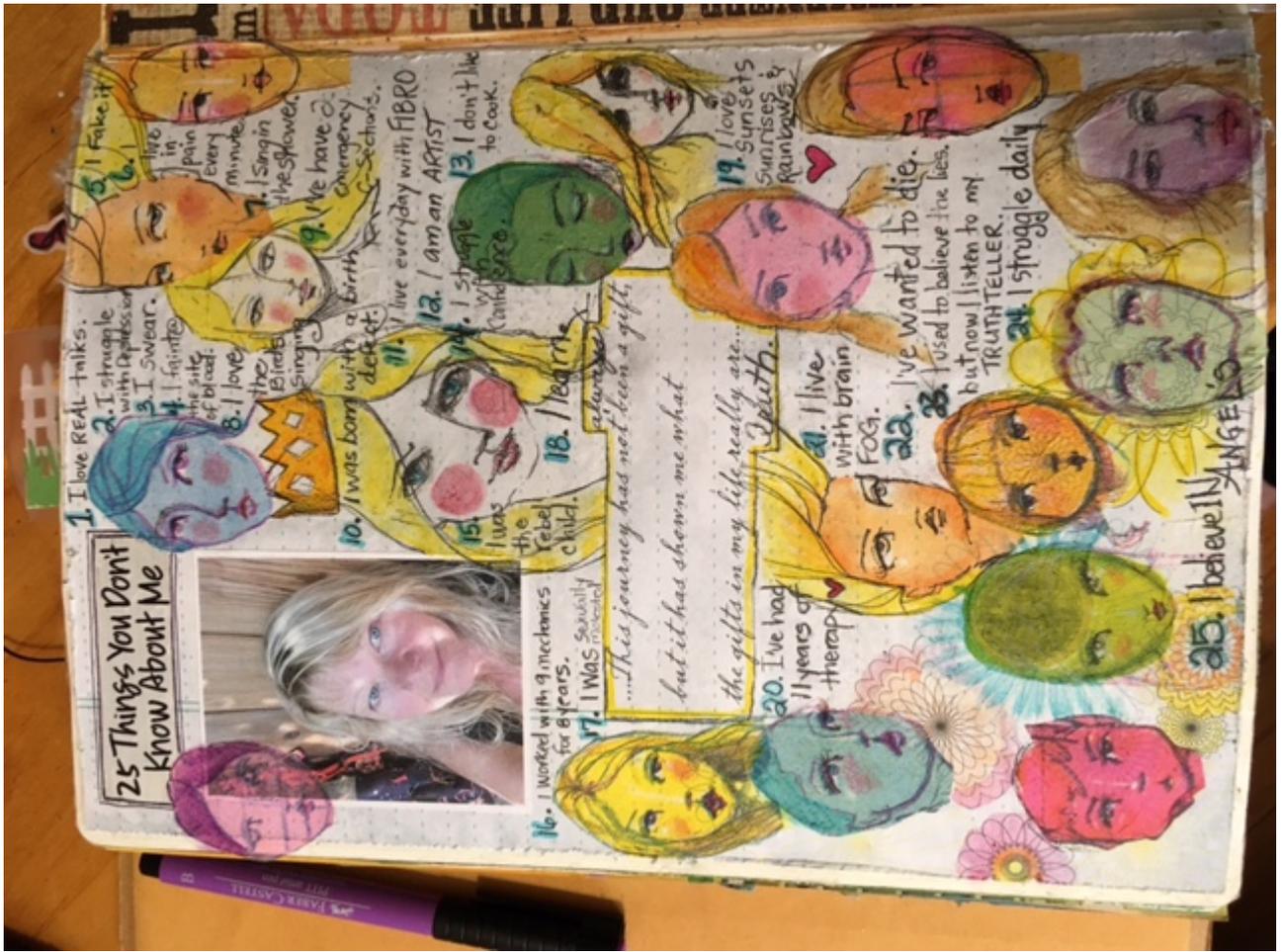
Ken, the girls & my Circle of good friends helped get my life back



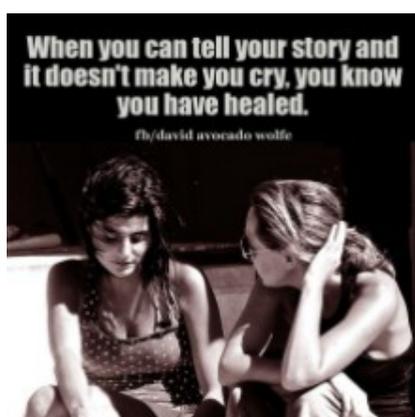
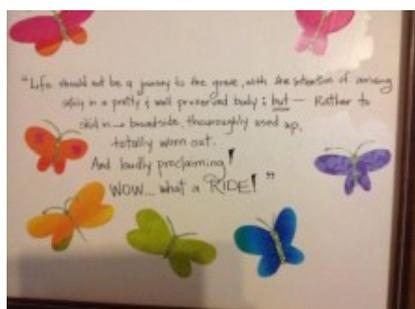
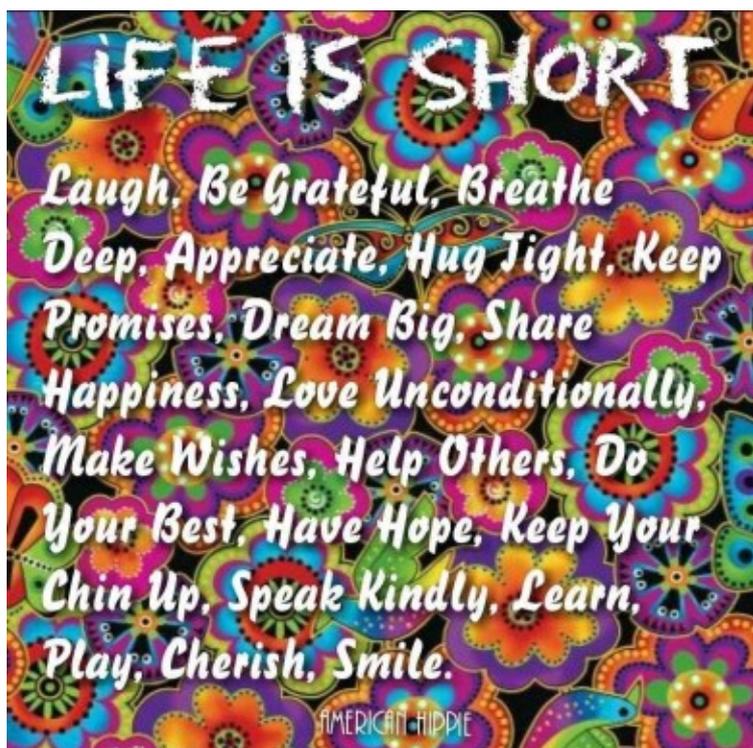
Let go of the PAST.

I am safe now.

it's gonna be o.k.



Some of her favorite Quotes...



THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR SHARING YOUR STORY WITH US!!!

XOXO

Leslie