

Mental Health Sunday

Macy Warner

Mental illnesses live in the dark
They grow in the silent spaces
And they shut the blinds tightly, so that no one can see in, and you cannot see out
They feel so alone, that they fill the empty space by growing larger and larger
Mental illness feeds on judgement and stereotypes
And feeling too scared to speak up and have their voice be heard
They isolate, they repeat cycles, they keep us small, and scared
And Mental illness doesn't discriminate, based on gender, age, race, religion or background

It's true that healing happens in community
And each and everyone of you sitting here today has been apart of creating this community

Through listening without judgment
Through acceptance
Through unconditional love and understanding
Through being open-hearted and open-minded
Through being an ally and an advocate
Being there when your friend comes to you in a time of need
Being there for a stranger who walked in from the street
Through thick and thin
Through the dark times
Through cherishing the light
With a hot meal
With a smile
With a warm embrace
Through tears
Through laughter
And through holding space

A large part of community care involves compassionately looking inward

Don't suffer in silence

This community wants to hear your story
They want to sit with you in your grief
They want to celebrate your success
They want to see you grow
They want to hold you, when you can't hold that space for yourself
They want to love you, even when you don't have the strength to love yourself

All of us have a part to play in ending the stigma

All of us have the power to help our community heal