

## Sketches on the Body Living & Mental Health

“So in the first place, such things show clearly that the philosopher more than other .. frees the soul from association with the body as much as possible?” — Plato, Phaedo

Is this premise healthy? Freeing the soul from body ?

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First and Always. Never doubt the power of stigma.

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Our distorted relationship to the body mirrors distorted relationship to power.

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Recollecting my father sharing of a colleague who completed suicide and my father referring to him as “selfish”.

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My mother’s mental health. Her attempted overdose soon after I was born and immigration to this country.

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My brother’s description of seeing her at the psychiatric unit and interpreting her presentation as this message, “I do not want to be your mother.”

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Being left to drown at two years old leading to my lifelong seizure condition. How all of this led to twin obsessions with activism and creativity as liberative practice.

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Are we our actions or how the world interprets our actions?

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A society of appearance and celebrity culture in mutation. If a “celebrity” hurts self, the society expresses shock; is it the shock of wondering if “success” means less?

Recent experiences -

Stepfather who seemed to be Mr. Happy Go-Lucky completed suicide in 2020; close friend drowned days later; mother soon after chose not to seek treatment for cancer; caring for her even as she did not want me there or did she?

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Being stabbed by man in deep psychosis at my job 2 months after my mother's passing

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Looking at the man whose eyes were wild as he kicked me and held a knife to my throat and feeling outside my body as I calmly explained to him he did not need to take my life. Thinking to myself "well least I tried" in reference to my life.

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Not wanting to be alive after, not due to trauma, but due to stupidity of people's responses and people fearing my trauma; people sensing the trauma emanating even if they couldn't see it; finally understanding how my clients become "invisible".

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Returning to work and my social work supervisor is in my face and exclaims "least you got a cool scar" while another coworker cried next to her. Understanding clueless professionals.

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The persistent gaslighting and shaming for facing mental health and mortality on the job...

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Some takeaways-

1. All the performative speak around trauma avoids one primary fact-  
Trauma is inconvenient
2. We downloaded efficiency for efficiency's sake which is a kind of murder
3. The mental health industrial complex is often a series of deceptions or managed trickery
4. We empower and affirm those in our community by effort to see them
5. Stigmatizing others for not wanting to live with pain is violence; the mental violence is far more debilitating than the physical in personal experience.

Sometimes “philosophy” feels more productive to me than “psychology” as one practice, at least in its origin, was based on questions and not around obfuscating or pretense at clinical knowledge in areas of complexity. Knowing we do not know. Trying to understand something fundamental instead of re-directing towards coping with broken systems.

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researching neurology in relation epilepsy condition; more formally in social work school-

**Default Mode Network (DMN):** interconnected network of regions becomes highly active when you are daydreaming, recalling the past, or reflecting internally on your personal "story"

Relationship to addiction and to self- harm?

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Dave Berman,

Brilliant poet and musician

Enjoying his hazy indie western music for years, not knowing his story as the son of an infamous corporate lobbyist referred to as Dr. Evil by some. Berman sharing he "hid this terrible shame" from his listeners and stopped playing music for a decade; returned with brilliant album and then two years completed suicide alone in apartment.

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The Default Mode Network- telling stories back to ourselves – do we believe?