For Immediate Release

Paths to Healing: Retreat and Conference for Sexual Assault Survivors

Friday-Sunday, June 27-29, 2025

University of Wisconsin-Parkside, Kenosha, Wisconsin

Several Wisconsin organizations and sponsors have joined forces to present a powerful weekend conference for sexual assault survivors and their allies. The event will take place from Friday evening, June 27 through Sunday morning, June 29 at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside in Kenosha.

Presented by BeLEAF Survivors, Inc., Wings of Fire Healing – The Phoenix, Unspoken: Conversations with Candace, and author Callen Harty, this transformative retreat and conference will focus on survival, hope and healing. Additional sponsorship and support is from The National Foundation to End Child Abuse and Neglect (EndCAN), Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin, The Blue Flower Curtain Dawn Helmrich, DigiMentors, Kelly D. Speaks and Broken to Beautifully Whole Cathy Studer.

This weekend includes healing-centered activities such as sound bath, yoga, expressive arts, breathwork, and reflective plans – offering survivors a chance to reconnect themselves and others in a safe, supportive environment.

Conference organizers are honored to present Callen Harty as the opening keynote speaker. Harty is a male survivor of child sex abuse, an author, playwright, and a long-time survivor activist and speaker. He founded and launched the Paths to Healing conference in 2013 in Madison, where it ran for seven years before pausing due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2016, he received the Wisconsin Coalition of Sexual Assault’s Courage Award for his work in the field.

The closing address will be delivered by Candace Sanchez, an author and host of the podcast, Unspoken: Conversations with Candace. Sanchez has been a visible leader in the survivor community for several years and was the 2023 Thrive Award honoree at Aurora Health Care’s annual Hope Shining Blue event.

The cost for the full weekend is $100, which includes access to all sessions and meals. Scholarships are available for those needing financial assistance. A vendor/resource fair will run throughout the weekend.

Friday evening will begin with “Relax,” featuring an Opening & Welcome, followed by a PhotoVoice presentation and panel, and a sound bath meditation session.

Saturday’s theme is “Restore,” starting with a morning yoga session and the keynote address. The first round of breakout sessions will take place before lunch, with additional sessions continuing throughout the afternoon. The evening will offer time for networking, dinner and a joyful dance celebration.

Sunday’s focus is “Reflect,” giving participants space to process the weekend and honor their healing journeys. The morning will include a grab-and-go breakfast, the In Remembrance of Survivors program, a breathwork session and the closing keynote.

To register or for more information; please visit:

<https://beleafsurvivors.org/paths-to-healing/>

**Registration deadline is Sunday, June 15, 2025.**

-- Breakout Sessions --

**Breakout Sessions # 1:**

*How to Go From Broken to Beautifully Whole*, by Cathy Studer

*Human Trafficking Prevention & the Power of Advocacy*, by Dawn Fielder

*Practice Compassion…Even When It’s Hard*, by LuannSimpon

*Ending Exploitation*, by Rachel Harrison & Karri Hemmig

*Purpose & Peace Check-In*, by Samantha Collier

**Breakout Sessions # 2:**

*The Art of Writing The Art of Writing our Story*, by Dawn Helmrich

*Advocacy for Growth*, by Kat Klawes

*Giving Voice, Gaining Power – The Denim Discussions*, by Scott Kinderman

*You Have Options*, by Officer Kelly Andrichik

*Proud Theater Workshop*, by Brian Wild and Proud Theater

**Breakout Sessions # 3:**

*Making Healing a Habit*, by Kelly D. Speaks

*I DECIDE: Empowering Survivors to Reclaim Their Voice Through Intentional Choices,* by Christine Welch

*Shame is a Liar*, by Robert H Marshall Jr.

*UN-MUTE*, by Erin Eregbu-Lomas

*Shining Light on Shadows: Survivor Mental Health*, by Neil Parekh

**Extra Session:**

*The Use of Reiki as Part of Trauma-Informed Care*, by Kristina Watanabe

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