



The Point ***eneus February 2022***



It all Starts With Love

Almost all relationships start with love, including those that disintegrate due to domestic violence, at least on the victim's part.

Love is one of the many reasons people stay. They stay to honor the love that once was, not because they don't know what love is or because they don't love themselves.

Survivors often share the belief that they thought they could "fix" things. And even in healthy relationships, there is a lot of *fixing* things so that makes sense!

Abuse can be very complex and not look like abuse from the inside, due to gaslighting or other circumstances. Because of these complexities it can take time, sometimes years, to untangle oneself from an abusive relationship even when to other's it seems imminent.

As a friend or loved one of someone who is involved in an abusive relationship it's helpful to understand that the staying isn't weakness, it can in fact be a powerful resource. Once out of the relationship that strength to repair turned inward can be impressive.

Self-love, like self-care, is another one of those catch phrases that can get marginalized in its overuse or in the perception of

selfishness. Loving oneself is complicated *and* can lift all things up when it is actualized, for this reason it is anything but selfish.

It's complicated in part because we all know our own *dark* secrets. We know that little devilish spirit that sits on our shoulder and occasionally whispers unkindness toward others or suggests ways to be troublesome and we think others don't have the same untoward thoughts. "Oh, if you only knew!" we think to ourselves when congratulated or admired for our humanity. Or as can be the case with many survivors they often think they are responsible for the abuse or deserving of less than love, which is a residual effect of emotional abuse and gaslighting.

Survivors can have difficulty understanding the true essence of love. They have had their hearts broken so can be turned off by the idea of being loved or ever loving again. Sometimes they forsake love and enter new unhealthy relationships because they've decided love isn't real, or at least not real for them.

Starting Point advocates understand this confusion and the risk it puts survivors at for future abusive relationships. Part of the work advocates do is to help survivors love themselves. This is accomplished through empowerment, helping them reclaim their lives one step at a time, and to recognize the importance of focusing on themselves.

People too often talk about what love isn't, "love isn't putting others down" love isn't hitting", "love isn't jealousy". This isn't wholly helpful in determining what love is though. Advocates help by reframing what love IS, by taking it out of the "Hallmark" envelope and deconstructing its parts.

We recognize that love is not pristine or perfect, it's fluent and is accepting of our true humanity *especially* when we are less than perfect. True self-love helps us recognize this and be accepting of our own imperfections which opens us to be more accepting of others.

In our prevention programs, we talk a lot about what romantic and friendship love is. It is kind, thoughtful, without jealousy, non-judgmental and often very honest in its perception of one's behavior, meaning it is not necessarily unconditional but instead accountable in its offerings.

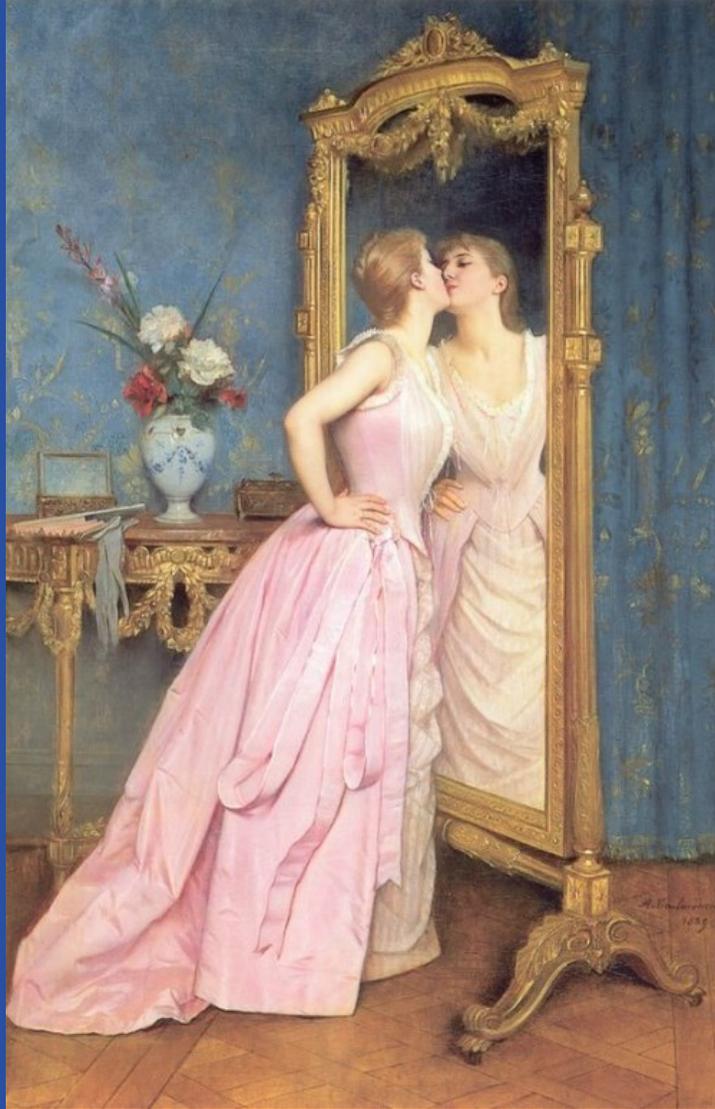
With survivors, advocates help reframe ideas of love and show them how to lovingly embrace themselves and create an enduring love that will know the don'ts, as well as the dos, of

true self-love.

Love is one of the many services Starting Point offers!

Let self-love lead you into February and always.

**Finally finding that one person
who you're supposed to be with**





Starting Point was the recipient of a \$5000 donation from Valley Originals this month!

The Valley Originals have been serving up community support for years and are closing in on \$2M of giving back!!

We could not imagine a Valley with out the Valley Originals in it, both as a group and as individual business leaders. Donations and sponsorship are one of the ways VO give back as a group but the Dine to Donates and countless gift certificates for fundraisers is another way that they support local charities.

In return those local charities provide services that change lives AND often those services relieve tax payers! So, one very fun and delicious way to support your local non-profits, and maybe lower you property taxes, is to eat out at Valley Original establishments!

[Valley Originals Website](#)

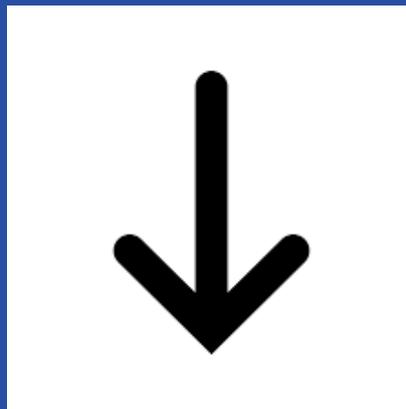
Another **BIG** Thank you to [Altrusa](#) and the [Lions Club](#) for their donations of cleaning products, personal care items, and various items for the children's room at the Starting Point Shelter.



Although the Grace House is a comfy and cozy shelter it is still a shelter and it can be very overwhelming for victims and their children to have to stay. These items are always greatly needed and additionally they help to welcome guests, which helps alleviate some of the stress of having to come into shelter.

With the help of our community we've been able to supply each guest with some creature comforts...including handmade quilts that were delivered over the holidays and seem to show up whenever they are needed thanks to [The Material Girls!!](#)

If you are looking for ways to contribute, Starting Point has an ongoing needs list at Amazon.



[Amazon Wish List](#)

If you shop on Amazon 'Smile' you can choose Starting Point as the receiving charity! It all adds up! \$350 so far!!

For more information on Amazon Smile you can check out the link here: [Amazon Smile For Starting Point](#)



Starting Point Services

In a recent conversation with a community member our Outreach Coordinator realized how often people are surprised by the breadth of services offered by Starting Point.

So, we thought we'd dedicate a little space here to highlight the range of services provided by Starting Point.



Court Advocacy

One of the many free and confidential services that Starting Point provides is court advocacy.

Whenever a person presents at the Conway or Ossipee courthouse and requests a form for a protection order the court clerk calls Starting

Point and an advocate is immediately dispatched to the courthouse.

Even during COVID lockdowns Starting Point advocates were able to provide this service without interruption, via phone when necessary.

Having a court advocate can make a difference in obtaining a protective order or not. According to the DOJ victims are 87% more likely to get an order when they have a court advocate. Starting Point's rates are actually in the 90% range for obtaining PO. This can make a difference in providing protection to a victim and their children, and on some occasions between life and death.

Facing an abuser in court can be revictimizing, as can the

whole process for some victims. Court advocates are not lawyers, nor do they play one on TV or otherwise. They are there to support the victim in navigating court procedure and to provide emotional support as they move through the process.

It has often been said that a protective order is *just a piece of paper*. If that is taken to mean that in and of itself, it cannot act as a shield than that is true. Starting Point advocates understand though that a protective order can be a step toward providing greater protection, just by beginning the process. They also understand that in some cases a protective order can provoke greater violence and that other routes to secure safety may be necessary, such as shelter or transportation away from the area where the abuser lives. These are all services that Starting Point also provides.

Court advocates from Starting Point are very different from “Victim Advocates” provided by the court. Both are meant to offer a guide to how the court works, helping victim's navigate the barrage of procedure, filings and dates. The difference is that Starting Point Court Advocates are guided by the highest level of confidentiality according to NH law, and that they work only for the victim. This is an important distinction for a victim and their supporters to grasp.

Court advocates arrive at the courthouse with an expertise in the laws pertaining to domestic and sexual violence and stalking. As such, they are expert in their own limitations and know when a lawyer is best. They also arrive with resources that can help a victim move forward over time such as support groups and other transitional services or urgently with gas cards, safety planning or emergency shelter provision.

Court advocates are advocates first, there to provide the emotional support needed at any given moment, along with boxes of tissues and occasionally chocolates.



Gifts Gift Cards!

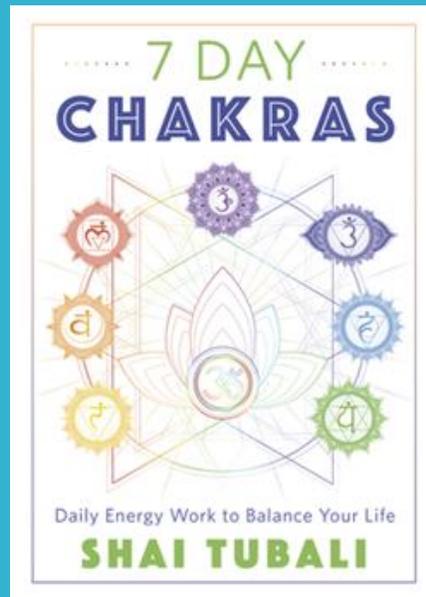
One of the most helpful donations, at anytime of the year, are gift cards. Gift cards provide immediate aid and a sense of empowerment to victims.

Please consider picking up a gas or food card the next time you shop! It makes a huge difference in the lives of victims and

supports the effectiveness of our services.

Cards can be dropped off at Starting Point's new Advocacy Center in Conway on Pleasant Street or mailed to: Starting Point PO Box 1972, Conway, NH 03818

The Library Corner: 7 Day Chakras by Shai Tubali



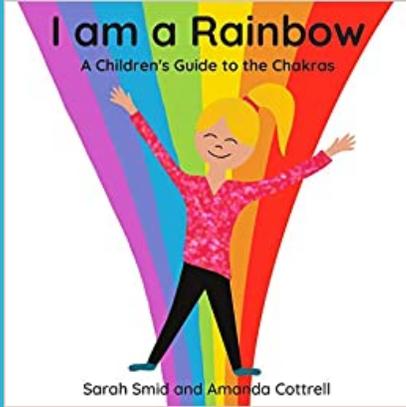
February is all about opening up the heart. Shai Tubali's "7 Day Chakras" is a beginner's guide but also a practice to help anyone who is interested in exploring wholistic health practices.

Some might think of Chakras practice as being new-agey or trendy but the Chakras system is not new, dating as far back as 1500 to 500 BC to the Vedas, ancient Hindu scriptures.

Although Chakras can't be mapped on a scientific level there is some evidence that they align with certain endocrine systems. However, practically every experienced doctor believes that the mind influences the body and that's the magic of Chakras practice.

As a result of domestic and sexual violence, survivors can often end up feeling separated from their own core, a form of disassociation. Helping survivors connect to their core (the heart of their bodies) can be very healing.

"I Am a Rainbow" by Sarah Smith and Amanda Cottrell is a sweet, illustrated introduction to centering



for children.

Learning how one's body feels when it is centered or off-center can help a child recognize situations that are unhealthy or unsafe.

Don't have a child to buy books for? Don't worry - we do! Books, games, and activity packs are always welcome donations for our shelter and young clients!

Contact community@StartingPointNH.org to learn more.

We've been reserving this spot of our enews for the count down to Boots n Bling 2022.

Oh!? Thanks for asking...it's just 128 days away!

Save the Date!



DINNER, DANCING,
SILENT & LIVE
AUCTIONS TO
BENEFIT THE
VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC
& SEXUAL VIOLENCE

STARTING POINT'S
10TH ANNUAL
BOOTS N' BLING
THURSDAY,
JUNE 9TH
2022 AT 5PM
THE
WENTWORTH INN



TICKETS:
STARTINGPOINTNH.ORG

Our team is currently working on soliciting auction items and

packages. If you would like to volunteer before or during
Boots 'n Bling, or if you are interested in sponsoring
our annual fundraiser please contact us at
raetha@StartingPointNH.org
or call 603-901-2237.

June 9, 2022 at the Wentworth Inn in Jackson!



Starting Point | PO Box 1972, Conway, NH 03818 603-447-2494

[Unsubscribe admin@startingpointnh.org](mailto:admin@startingpointnh.org)

[Update Profile](#) | [About Constant Contact](#)

Sent by community@startingpointnh.org in collaboration
with



Try email marketing for free today!