

# NEWSLETTER

WELCOME TO THE

## The Guidance of Hope Corner

### The Girl Who Wanted to Be a Boy!

This **Women's Herstory Month**, I found myself thinking about the girl I once was. The little girl in Haiti who noticed very early that boys seemed freer.



Growing up in Haiti, I realized that there was a hierarchy and distinct roles that women and men played in my culture. The men moved with visible autonomy. My mother was an educator with a love for baking. My father owned businesses. Culturally, we had au pairs and maids who tended to the house and us, but even in that structure, I saw something: men appeared to have options. I remember telling my father, "I want to be a boy." Not because I disliked being a girl, but because I wanted freedom. That longing shaped me.

I became mischievous, adventurous, and rebellious. When I moved to the U.S., I leaned into being a tomboy, bold, loud, and aggressive at times. Add ADHD to the mix, and I challenged anyone who suggested I couldn't do something "because I was a girl."

Underneath that fire was a deeper belief: Power belonged to boys. It wasn't until my sophomore year of high school that something shifted. I watched my mother rebuild her life after a divorce. The odds were stacked against her. Yet she stood faithful, determined, unshaken in her commitment to her children. That's when I began to understand something profound: Power didn't look like freedom from responsibility. Power looked like resilience.



Her Health . Her Power . Her Story

I could be nurturing and assertive. Soft and outspoken. Loyal and discerning. I loved imperfectly. I mistook avoidant attachment for independence. I gave fiercely, sometimes losing myself in the process. But growth has a way of refining you.

Now, in my 40s, I no longer chase freedom by resisting womanhood. I embody it. My faith anchors me. Radical acceptance steadies me. I focus less on what I cannot control and more on where I can make an impact.

**This is Dominion for me. Not dominance. Not rebellion. But ownership. Ownership of my voice. Ownership of my healing. Ownership of my softness and my strength.**

Herstory isn't just about the women who came before us. It's about the woman you are becoming.

With intention,  
**Judeline**



## Women's Health Spotlight

### The Cost of Being Strong

Women, especially women of color, are often praised for resilience. But resilience without rest becomes survival.

### THIS MONTH, WE ACKNOWLEDGE:

- \* Black women face disproportionately high maternal mortality rates. (Black women in the U.S. face a maternal mortality rate nearly 3 times higher than White women, with 50.3 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2023. This crisis is driven by systemic racism, implicit bias, unequal access to quality care, and higher rates of underlying chronic conditions.) NIH
- \* ADHD is underdiagnosed in women, especially women of color. Due to intersecting factors of racial bias, gender stereotypes, and masking behaviors. Many women with ADHD develop strong, exhausting coping mechanisms (perfectionism, high-effort management) that hide their struggles. Be mindful that for women and specifically women of color, what constitute as "laziness" or "disruptive" is the underlying layers of ADHD, which is the emotional fatigue and internalized failure.
- \* Depression and anxiety are often masked as "strength." Let's break down the archetype of the "strong black woman" and examine how we find true strength in seeking help when we feel weak or don't possess it. Now that's real strength. The "Strong Black Woman" narrative can silence vulnerability.
- \* Immigration stress and racialized gender bias increase chronic stress. such as anxiety, depression, PTSD, alcohol misuse, suicidal ideation, and increased vulnerability to sexual violence

### The body keeps score.

Chronic stress shows up as:

- Hormonal imbalance
- Sleep disruption
- Autoimmune flare-ups
- Digestive issues
- Burnout masked as ambition

### **Reflection:**

Where have you been strong at the expense of being supportive?



"Invest in yourself unapologetically and find outlets to expand your gifts." – Dear Black Women

# International Women's Day – March 8

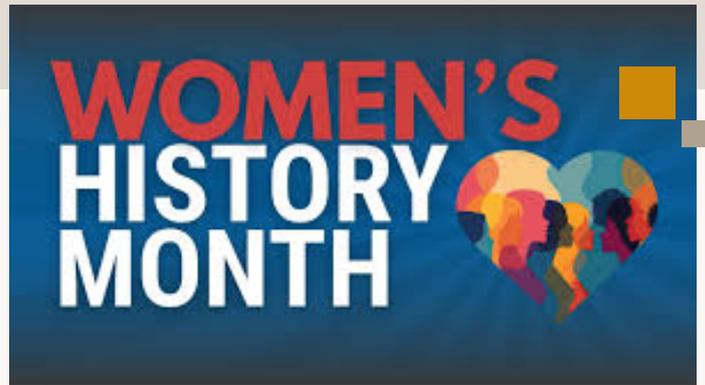
## ACCELERATE EQUITY & ACTION

### Song Hero

In 2007, Carine established a community health center in Port au Prince, which the local community continues to operate. In 2014, she was hired as the executive director of Profamil, the leading provider of sexual and reproductive health care in Haiti. She was the second woman to hold that position in the organization's 30-year history.

Carine founded the Haitian Women's Collective in 2017 to continue her commitment to women's and girls' rights in Haiti.

She also serves as the chief executive officer of Diaspora Community Services in Brooklyn, New York, and as chair of the Haiti Adolescent Girls Network, known for their internationally recognized model of safe spaces for girls.



**CARINE JOYCELYN**



**“Unless we can create space for Haitian voices, especially women’s voices, in policies that affect them, Haiti will continue to suffer. For true recovery to happen, the US and others must take responsibility for some of the abusive conditions in Haiti.” -Carine Joycelyn**

## EQUITY IN MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH REQUIRES:

**Culturally competent care**

**Access to safe providers**

**Dismantling stigma in communities of color**

**Policies that protect women's autonomy**

**Women's empowerment is not a trend, it is public health!**

### This month, honor:

**A woman who shaped your life.**

**A boundary you've been afraid to set.**

**A health appointment you've been postponing.**

## March Health Awareness Highlights

"I am a feminist and... it means that I must undertake to love myself and to respect myself as though my very life depends upon self-love and self-respect."

– June Jordan



### MARCH RECOGNIZES:

- Endometriosis Awareness Month
- National Nutrition Month
- National Sleep Awareness Week
- National Kidney Month
- Self-Harm Awareness Month
- National Social Work Month

Invisible pain deserves visible care.

If you are ignoring symptoms because “everyone depends on you,” this is your reminder: Your health is not selfish. It is foundational.

### March also recognizes:

Brain Injury Awareness Month



Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month



International Day For the Elimination of Racial Discrimination



Harmony Week. 18th to 24th March.



## Clinical Corner

### Are You Carrying Too Much?

#### Ask yourself:

- Do I struggle to rest without guilt?
- Do I feel responsible for everyone's emotions?
- Do I ignore my physical symptoms?
- Do I only slow down when my body forces me to?

If you answered yes to more than one, it may not be a motivation issue. It may be chronic over-responsibility.

Healing sometimes looks like delegation.  
Support.  
Boundaries.

## Sacred Seasons: Reflection Across Traditions

March often holds overlapping sacred observance.

**Lent, Ramadan, and Lunar New Year reflections depending on timing.**

Different traditions. Shared themes.



**When Lent,  
Ramadan & Lunar  
New Year land at  
the same time.**

**Now that's  
Unity in Diversity.**

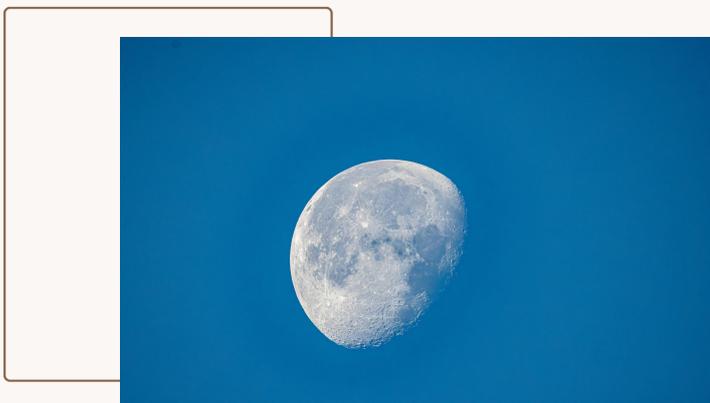
### Lent

A season of reflection, fasting, and spiritual discipline.  
What are you being called to release?



### Ramadan

A month of fasting, prayer, and community care. Where can you practice intentional restraint and compassion?



### Lunar Renewal

Cycles of cleansing, honoring ancestry, and new beginnings.

What are you ready to begin again?

Across faiths and cultures, the message is consistent:

**PAUSE. REFLECT. REAL.**

Dominion begins internally before it is expressed externally.



## Relationship Corner: Love, Growth & Dominion

Relationships are often where our healing and our patterns meet. Whether you are single, partnered, married, or navigating something in between, the work is often the same: self-awareness, communication, and intentional care.

### For Singles: Building a Relationship With Yourself

Being single is not a waiting room for life to begin.

This season can be an opportunity to understand your patterns, your needs, and the kind of partnership you truly want. Many people discover that the work of healthy relationships starts long before another person arrives.

#### Questions to reflect on:

- Do I know what emotional safety feels like?
- Am I choosing partners out of loneliness or alignment?
- What boundaries do I need to protect my peace?

Healthy relationships start with self-respect.



### For Married or Partnered Couples: Partnership Requires Evolution.



Many couples assume that love alone sustains a relationship. In reality, healthy partnerships require adaptation, emotional accountability, and intentional care.

Over time, people change. Stress changes. Responsibilities change.

#### The question becomes:

Are you growing together or simply coexisting?  
Healthy couples regularly practice:

- ” Honest Communication
- ” Emotional repair after conflict
- ” Shared responsibility
- ” Curiosity about who their partner is becoming

Love is not static. It evolves when partners are willing to grow.



## UPCOMING WORKSHOP

### BUILDING BONDS COUPLES WORKSHOP

An 8-Part group experience is designed to help couples strengthen their relationship through effective communication, emotional connection, and deeper intimacy.

### Building Bond: Strengthening Connection in Relationships (8 Weeks)

Starting March 21, 2026

A therapist-led couples workshop focused on:

- Communication & emotional safety
- Trust-building and repair
- Redefine intimacy
- Mindfulness in relationships
- Reconnecting through shared values

Ideal for couples at any stage seeking a deeper connection.



### Why Wasn't I Enough? (6 Weeks) Healing from the Loss of Love

Starting May 23, 2026

A supportive workshop for individuals grieving:

- Breakups or divorce
- Unanswered questions after loss
- Identity shifts after relationship endings

This space centers meaning-making, self-compassion, and reclaiming your narrative.



# Guidance of Hope Resource Corner

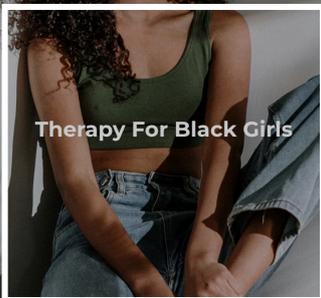
## TRAUMA & COPING

- 01 **Grounding exercises (5-4-3-2-1)**
- 02 **Insight Timer (app): guided anxiety & trauma practices**
- 03 **Read: The Body Keeps The Score by Bessel Van Der Kolk**  
The Pain We Carry: Healing from Complex PTSD for People of Color by Natali Gutierrez
- 04 **Body-based regulation (stretching, walking, breathwork)**



## BIPOC-Centered Mental Health Resources

Inclusive Therapy directories





## Community-based healing spaces

### BEAM

Supports the mental health and well-being of marginalized communities through training, funding, and healing-centered resources for therapists and wellness practitioners.

### LOVELAND FOUNDATION

Supports Black women's mental health by funding therapy, providing resources, and investing in BIPOC therapists

### THE NAP MINISTRY

Was founded in 2016 by Tricia Hersey and is an organization that examines the liberating power of naps.



## Culturally responsive podcasts and readings

Couch Chronicles  
Therapist After Dark  
(My podcast)

Therapy For  
Black Girls

Just Lyfin Podcast

Rest of Us Podcast

All Relations Podcast



**So this month, I invite you to reflect:**

Who was the girl you once were?  
What did she crave?  
What did she misunderstand about power?  
And how are you honoring her now?

**Dominion is not about controlling everything. It is about choosing yourself amidst everything. It's about recognizing your inner power so that it reflects outwardly.**

WITH CARE,

**JUDELINE ALTEMA-COMMEY, LCPC  
FOUNDER, GUIDANCE OF HOPE, LLC**

Interested in therapy, workshops, or future newsletters? Visit the Guidance of Hope website or follow us on social media for updates.