

# Survive & Thrive: A Journal for Medical Humanities and Narrative as Medicine

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Volume 6  
Issue 1 *"I Think You're Muted': Voices from the  
Coronavirus Pandemic"*

Article 37

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2021

**"We can't escape the cultural and historical moment that we live in. I can fully accept that"**

Stories of Wisdom from Bodies in Separation (SWaBS)

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## Recommended Citation

Stories of Wisdom from Bodies in Separation (SWaBS) (2021) *"We can't escape the cultural and historical moment that we live in. I can fully accept that"*, *Survive & Thrive: A Journal for Medical Humanities and Narrative as Medicine*: Vol. 6 : Iss. 1 , Article 37.

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**Cover Page Footnote**

Stories of Wisdom from Bodies in Separation (SWaBS): Archiving the Coronavirus Pandemic Through the Lens of Humanities has been made possible by a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities: Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this project, do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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*Connection by Toko Nakajima*

It's hard to have good mental health in this context, even if you started out with fairly decent mental health, and many of us didn't start out with that. I think it can be very destabilizing for people, and I know it has been for me.

It's taken a lot of effort every day to make sure that I am doing healthy things and staying with my values around good health and what the elements of that are for me, movement, good food, regular exercise, all of that stuff, having a schedule, for me anyway. I know for a lot of people, the freedom to not necessarily follow exactly the same pattern all the time can be very stabilizing too. But for my nervous system, I need the stability of more or less rising at the same time every day, more or less going to bed at the same time every day. I know that if I start to feel depressed or anxious or overwhelmed, that those are things I can do to re-stabilize myself.

I feel more creative at the moment. I'm doing more writing and more creative work in general, and I'm not sure whether there would be a pandemic or not be one, whether it would make any difference. I'm not sure if it's a factor. I think I have more grief and sadness and depression and anxiety than I would otherwise have, for sure. But I think we can't step out, we can't escape the cultural and historical moment that we live in, and that's the nature of it right now, so I also can fully accept that. -- *Mitra Emad*