

We, of course, want spring to come back. But for a lot of us, a seasonal expectation for joy causes paralysis, exacerbating loud minds and self-loathing. Spring is when most suicides happen around the world - not winter!

Let's celebrate the effort of living with depression and anxiety, and if you have attempted or considered suicide before, this day is for honoring a time/times when you survived it, an "other birthday" if you will. Depressed people, people with other birthdays, and people who have lost loved ones to suicide - all deserve beautiful celebrations where conversation with platitudes isn't the primary mode of connecting with others. So let's go outside and walk across Chicago, not talking much, while listening to the obvious and less obvious places where rebirth happens.

Feel free to meet at only one location, or come for the whole walk. We will have a water/bathroom break at Union Park (approximately halfway), however please feel free to stop whenever and wherever. Call me if you lose the group: 773-712-1796.

2pm: Meet at Humboldt Park lagoon across from the Boathouse cafe, externalized internal mind crown construction and other party favors, hearty snacks

3pm: Deep Listening\* walk towards Canal and Roosevelt

6pm approximately: Arrive on the roof of Whole Foods at Canal and Roosevelt, Other Birthday celebration

7pm: Dinner at White Palace Grill (also at Canal and Roosevelt), watch the spinning cakes on display

Why this route:

In early April of 2012 I reached my limit with depression: I sat at the Humboldt Park lagoon, looked at the water, then biked to the Whole Foods at Canal and Roosevelt to determine the feasibility of falling off the rooftop parking lot. Since then, I sometimes visit that parking lot as a lovingly cathartic check-in on my own self-worth and broader cosmic perspective. Not dying via Whole Foods is worth a party alone, but this event isn't just about my past; the intention is that the effort of walking for 6 miles through Chicago honors the effort of everyday life when depressed, and focusing on listening opens us to soft and powerful experiences of connection.

\* Deep Listening is a practice that aims to enhance people's listening skills, and is a registered trademark of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

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All party favors and materials purchased at the WasteShed in Humboldt Park, a reused craft supply store. Thank you Nathan, Kristin, Meredith, Norman, Sara, and Freddie for helping set up and share this event. And, naturally, thank YOU. Keep in touch: [gwyneth.anderson@gmail.com](mailto:gwyneth.anderson@gmail.com), [gwynethvanderson.com](http://gwynethvanderson.com).

# HAPPY

other

# BIRTHDAY

Depression party and Deep Listening\* walk  
Sunday April 8, 2018  
with Gwyneth Anderson

*At any given time, consider the following:*

Honor your senses. Listen, smell, taste air, feel your body's sensations, and look with as much attention to the periphery as to what's in front of you.

What are the shapes of the sounds you are listening to?

What are the distances between you and what you perceive?

Where is rebirth happening? What are its shapes and sounds?

When your mind has been making noise and distracting you from listening, make more noise with your balloon to (A) remind everyone else to listen and (B) celebrate the effort of living with a noisy mind.

Imagine any hopelessness, sadness, numbness, anger, etc. as a shape walking next to you. Help it cross streets safely.

What systems are we encountering? Transportation, consumerism, street sanitation, decomposition, gentrification, homelessness, policing, etc. What are the sounds of these systems? What is the sound your body makes in relation to them?

In what ways do systems of oppression manifest internally? Do you police yourself?

What are you listening to as you notice one of your extremities is particularly cold?

What are you looking at when you sense the need to pee?

What absurdities and coincidences are you experiencing?

What are the sensations of earth's cycles?

What are the sensations of your body's cycles?

What are the sensations of your mind's cycles?

Can you wrap pain in iridescence to better understand its shape and edges?

What is the sound of a boundary?

What is the shape of feeling destroyed by the slightest change?

What is the sensation of being separate from everything else?

What is the sensation of being part of everything else?

What is the sound of oscillating between the two?

What is the sensation of being filled and carried by what surrounds you?

Can our suffering be a source of awe, as if we are watching at a slight distance?

Can we experience ourselves as phenomena?