

Episode 209: “Your Support Mattered in 2019”

Please note: This transcript has been lightly edited to remove filler words or sounds.

LINDSAY KOLSCH: You're listening to the To Write Love on Her Arms podcast, a show about mental health and the things that make us human. Each episode we'll be talking about the things that can often feel hard to talk about, like depression, addiction, self-injury, and suicide. We'll be sharing stories and exploring big themes like hope, healing, and recovery.

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LINDSAY: Hey, podcast family, this is Lindsay Kolsch. We're coming close to the end of 2019 and we wanted to let you in on some of the amazing things that we've accomplished together this year. But before we get into that, we want to mention that today is Giving Tuesday, Giving Tuesday is a day of global generosity, but we believe that it can be more—a day of hope. Together we can use our voices as a reminder to those who are struggling with depression, addiction, self-injury, and thoughts of suicide that hope is real, that they are not alone. And given that you're listening to this podcast right now, we think it's safe to assume that you also want to live in a world where it's okay to talk about mental health and it's okay to ask for help. With that in mind, one way you can help make this possible is by supporting TWLOHA. Today is not only giving Tuesday, but it's the start of our into night, but it's the start of her into20 campaign where we've set a goal to raise \$150,000 by December 31st and to be able to reach this goal, we need to raise \$25,000 today. Now we know that sounds like a big goal, but we believe we can hit it.

LINDSAY: If you're someone who has listened to this podcast, read a TWLOHA blog, or connected with any of our FIND HELP resources, we hope you'll consider making a gift today. To do that, just visit twloha.com/donate that's T W L O H A .com/donate or you can visit us on Facebook and give there. And if finances are hard right now, we want you to know you still have something very valuable to offer. We're asking people right now to share why TWLOHA matters to you. We are specifically inviting you to add your voice to the conversation by completing this statement: “Better days are ahead because...” We want you to share this on your social media. Add your answer.

LINDSAY: And when you post, we hope you're going to tag To Write Love on Her Arms and use the hashtag #into20, that's I N T O, the number 20 and if you want to double your impact on Facebook, add a donate button. This is a huge help and it's a way to invite your community, your friends, and family to support this movement to please that every dollar donated will make it possible for TWLOHA to reach new communities, share more stories of hope, and connect thousands of people to the help that they need and deserve. And we just want to say one more time: We're so grateful for your support and we're so excited to be able to share some of the impact this movement has had this year. In order to do that, I've invited back the director of outreach, Chad Moses, we're going to talk a little bit about how your voice and your support has made this year better.

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LINDSAY: Chad. Welcome back to the To Write Love on Her Arms podcast.

CHAD MOSES: Yeah, thanks. It's starting to feel like home.

LINDSAY: So today we get the chance to share some of the amazing impact that this movement has had this year. So it's really an honor to be able to pause, to reflect and to get to bring these updates to the folks listening here on the podcast. I think when we sit back, we do have just this overwhelming sense of gratitude. We truly believe that because of your support this year in 2019, we've been able to carry the message of hope to millions of people online and in person. And one thing that doesn't really come across all the time in these podcasts is that a large part of what we do is, is sharing stories online. So we do that on social media and through our website and our blog.

LINDSAY: And we've actually been able to reach more than 8.3 million people online every month. What that says to me is that there is a groundswell of hope happening. There are people in their everyday lives carrying this message into their, into their communities, into their friend groups, family groups. And we've been able to share this year over a hundred different stories. And these are stories that help people understand the experience of walking through depression, addiction, self-injury, thoughts of suicide, loss of someone to suicide. And then just so much more of the hard stuff in life that so rarely we get to talk about. That's the place our blog serves. And, and so that's really incredible. Of course, if you're listening to the podcast, you know we have a podcast and this is season two. Last year we launched our podcast not really knowing exactly where it would go or how it would serve this mission, but we're excited to say that here we are and have a couple more coming.

LINDSAY: And it's been really great to bring this storytelling into this format.

CHAD: And I think the opposite is true also, if you're listening on podcast, we also have a blog. Yeah, exactly. The conversation through, uh, through the digital page.

LINDSAY: Yeah. And I come back to the blog and you know, but this started with a story and we've never lost the power or the, we've never lost the desire to stop sharing stories because we think everyone is simply unique and everyone has a unique gift to offer when they do share. And so I love that when I get to meet people at events. I actually recall, I was in Boston a couple of like a year ago and someone said that, you know, I said, "where did you hear about To Write Love on Her Arms?" And they said, "I was just Googling, uh, you know, depression or stories of depression."

LINDSAY: And they found our website, they found the blog, they started reading and she shared with me, I consumed all of them because for the first time I had the language, I had a

way to frame what I was experiencing and I, I felt less alone in that, that comment. It was just exactly what we hoped for. You know, it's exactly what, what and why we do what we do every day.

CHAD: Yeah. I think one really awesome in an intentional piece about our blog is that it's not just stories, we're not a collection of memoirs per se, but just like you linked it back to the original story, that story was first written because Renee held the belief that her story wasn't necessarily unique, that there was going to be people that could relate to aspects of her experience. So a huge tip of the hat to, to our communications team, to Becky, our editor, who really does some wonders working with so many stories coming from all over the world. And these stories are being shared, not from a position of venting or not from, uh, the desire to, to just kind of narrate one's life, but it's about sharing some wisdom along the way about things that we've learned in different points or aspects of our story.

LINDSAY: No, I mean I agree. I think the people who share their story are, are doing so from a place of not necessarily wanting anything for themselves. It's really a statement of hope for the people around them or the people they don't yet know, but who they believe, perhaps by sharing they might bring some comfort or they might bring some solidarity to those who are going through it. And I, and I love that about it because we have so many contributors and they're offering up some of the most sacred parts of their journey and what they've learned in the gifts from that to be shared freely.

CHAD: Yeah. And even just awareness that these are conversations that are happening and you are welcome to join in at any point you feel comfortable. But I remember reading the original story, you know, 11 years ago now being blown away by the fact that people were talking about things that sounded familiar in my own life, things that I didn't think we were allowed to talk about. So like you mentioned Lindsay, this blog, uh, it covers how much ground, everything from depression, addiction, self-injury, suicide on into eating disorders and disordered eating, on to PTSD, on to anxiety, on to, you name it. And we've likely been able to find someone to give voice to an underrepresented story arc.

LINDSAY: I'm really excited also to kind of share some of the things from your world, some updates from your, your team. I would love if you would share a little bit about what this year has looked like for the events team and our impact face to face.

CHAD: Well 2019 for my team, for our entire staff, but particularly for Elizabeth and Kendra and I who, who make up the core of the events team. This year, you know, we could easily talk about travel, but it's really felt like time travel. Like it's wild to, to look back on the year and see that we're already 11 months into this, that we have one month to go until this starts over. This was a remarkable year in terms of outreach, being able to connect with so many people. And, and that's meant us getting in vans, hopping on planes, getting on tour buses and traveling over 130,000 miles. And that was taking us into fields for music festivals, that was taking us into venues for individual concerts, that was taking us to high schools and college campuses.

CHAD: That was taking us to a lifestyle events right in your own backyard, but we really made a concerted effort to be in as many places as possible this year. Now looking back, that means that we spend about 170 days on the road. That was 170 times that the general public had an opportunity to see us face to face, to prove that everything you believed about us online can be enacted with, with a smile, with a hug, with a touch of some sort. So that, uh, encompasses over a hundred events. Some of those events lasts more than one day, but yeah, it's been a nonstop year. In fact, as we're speaking now, we have a team that's getting ready to head up to Nashville. We have, Elizabeth just set up in San Diego for a festival and we have another team had now to Tampa. So just in the next week and a half in November, mid November, we are getting ready to be in as many places as possible.

LINDSAY: Yeah. And we love that we get to be in so many places and we get to be in places that people might stop and think, *Oh, I've never talked about these issues at a hardcore show or I've never talked about these issues, issues at a yoga festival.* And it serves as a reminder that these are things that regardless of where you are or what's going on, it's okay to talk about. But I love also that we have this core group of supporters. We don't get to thank very often. We have a core group of supporters that we just want to highlight. They are our TWLOHA Blue members. There's 541 of you, you are monthly donors you give every month to support the outreach, the connection face to face on the road. But you're committed to making hope go further by your gifts.

LINDSAY: And we love to share the stories on the road with them. When we get to meet them in person, it's even more powerful. They're the reason we get to keep doing this. So we just want to take a second and thank those people for supporting our events team, supporting this effort to be, like you said, in, in person, face to face, and one part of the events set up that I love this year that really resonated and kind of reminded me of what all of this is about was actually a mat that we would lay down at certain events. And it says "I'm here now, in good company." And it was a, it was just a gesture, a reminder, an invitation that you are present, you're alive, your story is going, but you're, you're not alone, like in a very gentle and kind of not subversive way, but it invited you into, into this larger story. And so, if you're listening, you're here now and you're in good company.

CHAD: Yeah. And like you just mentioned, so much of our ability to be in so many places this year was manifested through the, the help of our Blue members, our TWLOHA Blue members, they, they do so much more than just, you know, help pay for the gas to get us from spot to spot or, or make sure that we have a safe and dry place to lay our head in between different festivals. But so often I think people misunderstand kind of the, the magic of, To Write Love on Her Arms. And I know that I've mentioned this on previous podcasts, but one of the most beautiful things about my job is that most of the time when people come up to the booth saying that they've heard of us before, it's not because I've told them about us.

CHAD: It's not because they had served as an intern or they were told directly from a staff member. But so often people become familiar with us through you, the listener, through you, the TWLOHA Blue member, through you, just the curious individual sharing with other people. It's, it's really just kind of this, this subtle subversive passing of a torch. And what we thought was a dark place really becomes illuminated quite, quite quickly. And I love hearing the stories about how people, not just heard about us, but how they found unique ways to continue to share us with other people. So one story that's kind of ringing in my ears, actually goes back to April. I remember meeting this young woman at a festival. Uh, actually we've, we've connected at the same festival in previous years. But she said, "Hey, could I, can I tell you about a TWLOHA experience that I had just last year? Right after the festival?"

CHAD: I said, "Yeah, go for it." So this was at a rock festival and, uh, this gal is a huge fan of music, so she wanted to be in the thick of it, in the pit, she wanted to be, you know, within spitting distance from her, her favorite band, and, uh, that can take a toll. There are risks to be accounted for. And she ended up leaving that show with a pretty bad twisted knee. So she tried to, you know, muscle through it for the rest of the festival, but wiser voices prevailed and she said, "maybe I should go get this checked out." So she did go to an urgent care to, to get an X Ray on her knee. And while she was getting loaded into the x-ray, a nurse asked her what that wristband was that she was wearing.

CHAD: Uh, it was a wristband of ours that she'd picked up just a few hours earlier. And she shared our mission statement with that nurse. And the nurse said, "you know, that sounds a lot like my daughter, what she's going through." And with no hesitation, took off her wristband, gave it to the nurse and uh, and said, "please check them out when you get home." And I'm sure that the supporter would have wished that she didn't have to go to an urgent care. But even despite that kind of unfortunate situation, she had the, the courage and she had the, the pride to share this movement tangibly with someone else.

LINDSAY: That's awesome.

CHAD: I think a huge part of the importance behind our activity as an events team is just sharing a space with as many people as possible. You can never plan how different conversations are going to unfold. You don't know if you're going to have, you know, uh, life altering conversations. But I do remember one night, um, this was the second night of Riot Festival this year in Chicago and a young man named Enrique. He stopped by with his girlfriend and he had a general idea of who we were and who we are, what we're all about. But he decided that he did want to dig a little bit deeper. So he pulled me aside and he said, "so who are you guys?" And I told him our mission statement says, "yeah, but, but what do you do?"

CHAD: And I explained to him that we aim to connect people that are looking for help to options for help. And then he says, "but what can you do to help me?" And that's when he presented his left arm to, to show some scars and you know, some of them older than others. But,

immediately my eyes bounced off of his arm and back to his eyes. And I saw what looked like a dam, getting ready to break. I told him, "Look, man, I get it." I told him, "I am just like you. I've had the same questions. I had the same struggles. We share a history, but I'm convinced that our future is going to share a common theme as well." I told him that "the moments where the tides began to shift for me happened when I started to realize that this wasn't a me versus the world conversation. This is an 'us' thing, that this magic word of 'we' exists."

CHAD: When I first started to believe that I didn't have to process this or really anything alone, that my joy and my despair are equally worth sharing. That we're not the only ones to have wrestled with these questions, not the only ones to have wrestled with shame and all. I'd probably say that our interaction lasted seven, maybe 10 minutes tops, but I could see what looked like a decade of shame flee as the three of us, Enrique, his girlfriend, and I just chatted about hope and help and questions and progress and setbacks and support. And I believe that Enrique is someone worth believing in. I offered that look this "we" piece, that can include more than just the three of us standing here. This can include the beliefs of this organization, people that have supported us and the people that are going to continue living, fighting, and working together to make sure that we feel in good company.

LINDSAY: That's awesome. Thanks for sharing that, Chad. So the next thing, uh, that kind of is also a part of our events is, is our merchandise. I like to joke with people that when we go to events, we kind of go under the guise of, of selling merch, we're vendors often, but it's so much more than that. And if you are listening, you might have seen our merchandise, you might have seen how this message is literally carried with the people through clothing, backpacks, and hoodies and lanyards and just things that will help represent this conversation before we even have to say a word. And I love that piece of it. And so I'd love for you to kind of give us some updates on, on how, how this reach has continued.

CHAD: Yeah. And you know, we, we say it all the time behind the booth on the road that the shirts, the apparel, on one level, it is a means to an end. It helps us fuel all of our, our programs. It directly makes our programs possible. But I think it really points to something deeper than that, that so often, you know, as as a community, as a society, we don't prioritize conversations about mental health, but we do talk about clothing all the time. *Where'd you get that shirt? What's that mean?* And you know, I, I kind of passively say at the booth, look, if a piece of cotton can, or a cotton polyblend, depending on your selection, if that can fuel a conversation that results in someone having to change of direction in life, then so be it. Then there, there's so much more value in that shirt than just, you know, the hours of work that went into paying for that shirt.

CHAD: So these shirts and these wristbands and these hats have made it all over this world of ours. Just this year alone, we've been able to send them to thousands and thousands of different homes. That's representing all 50 states in the US and that's also 64 other countries. We were able to fulfill over 23,000 orders, 23,000 packages. But, but like I mentioned, you know, it's more than just the shirts. It's more than just the funds raised. It's a walking billboard in

communities of messages that say: we need you here. Other ones saying, "I'm living a story I will not give up," which that one is probably our, one of our most popular phrases on the road. Um, our, our world suicide prevention day campaign. How many people were walking around with shirts that say "you make today better"? So these have been since all over the globe and really just inviting people to believe that you're not alone.

LINDSAY: Yeah. And I love the fact that we get to see the merchandise travel throughout the world because I think what it's pointing to is the thing we say all the time that, that these issues affect everybody. It doesn't matter that you are in the US, it doesn't matter what your income level is, you know, the, the human experience of these issues is just that, it's human. And so wherever there are humans, we're so excited that they find this, that they embrace it, that they try to get something shipped all the way from the US, you know, to have that patience.

CHAD: Yeah. And I think, you know, kind of, you add another layer of excitement to it when you consider the people who have bought merchandise for other people as, as gifts. And I, I mean, you can call it arrogance, call it whatever, but whenever I see someone wearing a shirt or a pin or a hat at a festival, I assume, okay, I probably sold that to at some point. And uh, I was reminded of the power of, of gifts, at a festival called welcome to Rockville, just up the road in Jacksonville. And this young woman approaches the booth and she's wearing a pin that, that we put out. And you know, that was a hectic festival. I could not remember every name and every face, but I saw the pin and I said, "Oh, hey, welcome back." And she goes, "Oh, actually this is the first time I've, I've been here.

CHAD: This is the first time I've ever seen you guys." And I said, "That's amazing. I'm sorry for that assumption, but where'd you get the pin?" She said, "Oh my, my therapist gave this to me. She said that you're going to be here and you know, I wanted to give her something to." So you know, it's, it's so cool how, how this message gets, gets spread and you know, this, this shirt it really holds as much value as you need it to hold That pin it holds as much value as you need it to hold. And uh, and yeah, it's, we never get tired of hearing how these conversations play out.

CHAD: Yeah. So if you are someone who has purchased To Write Love on Her Arms merch or have received it as a gift and wear it and share about the movement, we would just want to say thank you.

LINDSAY: You know, a lot of the programs that we were talking about, a lot of the way that this mission continues to reach communities is through our programs. And we first want to thank our interns. Uh, we've had 18 people from across the globe actually join us here at our headquarters and they've served as interns for three different semesters. They've given their time and their energy to really give up a season of their life to come and work hands on with our team. They work tirelessly to interact with supporters one-on-one through our info account, now through social media. They are really the backbone of everything we do. So we just wanna thank our 18 interns this year who have helped us in so many ways.

CHAD: I think one really awesome thing about this organization and the fact that we've been around for 13 years now, is that we often talk about having the ability to, to grow up with our audience. But after reaching that decade mark, we've found that there's been kind of the subtle reset. So we are so excited that this year we were able to pioneer and plan a brand new campaign specifically for high schoolers. And we call that Between the Bells. And it really exists just to spark some authentic conversations to remind high schoolers that hope and help do exist.

LINDSAY: Yeah. And that's live now. It's a one week campaign that's going to equip students and administrators to have these conversations on their campus and connect students. We really believe that if students have access to the resources and they know that they can ask for help, that they will. We're excited to see this come to campuses across the country. And if you would like to get involved or if you'd like to learn more, you can visit TWLOHA.com/highschool. It's brand new, but we're very excited to see how, how communities are going to be empowered and how they're going to carry this message in 2020.

LINDSAY: This year we've also seen some really exciting collaborations. We had over 300 new individuals and companies collaborate with us this year. They all wanted to bring the message of hope and help to their community in a really unique way. And so while every collaboration or partnership looks different, this is groups as diverse from the Child Mind Institute out of New York City to four players on the US Women's National Soccer Team who donated their jerseys to help us raise money for treatment and recovery. I mean, there's just such a wide range. And so if you're listening to this podcast and wonder, 'Oh, like how could I get involved or what could I do?' We would love for you to send us an email to partnerships@twloha.com.

[music playing]

LINDSAY: I do want to just highlight one of our biggest campaigns of the year and just kind of share a bit of the reach and the impact. It was World Suicide Prevention Day, it feels like almost centuries ago, but it was really just a couple months ago, two months ago in September, the You Make Today Better campaign in honor of World Suicide Prevention. And throughout that month, we were actually able to reach 9.5 million people with the message that 'you make today better' connecting them to local resources. That was 4,675 suicide prevention packs distributed. We also raised over \$250,000 for treatment and recovery and that completely exceeded our goal. I think our goal was \$175,000. And we mentioned that there were unique people showing up and wanting to add their voice. And that was how we exceeded our goal.

LINDSAY: It was people continuing to be passionate about the conversation, to help people understand what still exist surrounding suicide and what we can do to prevent it. It was just so incredible to see people continuing to make this message as loud as possible. And the funds that we raised are at work right now. There are people sitting in counseling offices right now because of the funds that were raised. So if you had any help or support in that, we want to just

thank you. If you bought a pack, if you retweeted, if you shared, if you liked, if you donated, if you fundraised, if you held an event, if you showed up at one of our events, there were so many different ways that it's a bit, it's a bit hard to, to capture it all.

CHAD: So just looking back over the couple of weeks surrounding world suicide prevention day, the events team had a chance to collaborate with so many other individuals and companies. Uh, our efforts were, were made possible through working at a collective workspace in Nashville. Three One Three. We made a, an exclusive coffee roast with Stone Creek up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. We were able to work with the, the great folks, uh, that make Bassnectar events possible. Our friends at Electric Forest, we're constantly banging the drum for us online. I mean, this was such a global conversation in ways that, we've never felt before and it's makes us so excited to see what can be possible, you know, and what is possible when, when we think creatively when we work together.

LINDSAY: The funds that we raise are truly lifesaving for individuals who do not have the financial means to sit with a counselor, to receive different levels of care.

LINDSAY: So this year we've been fortunate enough to be able to invest \$207,000 into treatment and recovery that has made 2,600 counseling sessions and 4,320 hours of group counseling possible. There are actually, that number is actually rising right now. It's still going. Um, we anticipate that people will continue to connect with us, continue to have access to these funds and we're just so grateful for every person who used their voice. We had streamers, online on Twitch and YouTube and mixers raising money. We had fundraisers using their platforms on social media. We had Alex Morgan, Tobin Heath, Christian Press, and Ashlyn Harris who donated jerseys to help all of this come together. And to really say, we believe that there are better days ahead and we can invest. We want our money to be invested in people. And that's what this campaign did. And we're just so grateful to have seen that.

LINDSAY: We love being able to share some of the feedback we get from TWLOHA scholarship recipients. And so I want to read this one statement. We got back from a recipient, they said, "without my TWLOHA scholarship, I'm afraid I wouldn't be here to write this. I'm afraid that darkness would have won. I know I would not be the same recovering person that I am today without this scholarship." So we just want to take a second and say thank you. Thank you for believing in hope. Thank you for believing that, that people deserve to have access to treatment. You know, and last but not least, one of the things we're incredibly proud of and continue to be in awe of is some of the impact of our FIND HELP Tool.

LINDSAY: If you make it to the end of the show, it's always in our closing credits, but if you haven't heard of it, the FIND HELP Tool is a resource on our website where you indicate just what level of care you're looking for. A lot of people start with counseling and they choose counseling and then they put their zip code in and what's going to come up is a list of local mental health resources to you that works every zip code in America. And what you're going to find is a combination of free and reduced-cost services, but also counselors that To Write Love

on Her Arms has connected with, you know, we meet counselors at events, we meet them online who say, 'You know what, I've got space in my practice to be able to work with someone on a sliding scale' and then we're able to add them and really expand what's possible for people.

LINDSAY: We know that there are disparities between resources, and sometimes you even find people who are just, who fall in that gap. They don't qualify perhaps for certain government programs, but they also are under insured and they can't, they can't meet a deductible or they can't actually access their, their benefits. And so we try to meet people there and eliminate those, those barriers. But this year alone, we saw 41,000 program searches. So that was 41,000 searches to look for mental health in a community. And for every four searches we are seeing that people are taking next steps. The amazing thing is this platform has the ability to connect you right to that counselor.

LINDSAY: But it does give you the option to kind of call right from your phone and it gives you a chance to go right into a contact form for a lot of these. And so we love seeing that people are not only just looking for help, but they're taking that step to actually call the counselor and make the appointment and to pursue that. And, and while sometimes that's the extent of what we get to see of the journey, we do get to hear back often from people saying, 'you know what? For the first time I found, I found a resource I could, I could afford. And I'm taking that time in that investment for myself to move forward.' So we love that.

CHAD: And one thing I love about the tool is that it's constantly growing. It's constantly evolving. It's constantly learning more. So if you are a mental health professional and you are curious about what it takes to add your services to this database, you can go to, twloha.com/find-help. And at the bottom of that page you'll see a link about adding your program. But again, just to revisit those numbers, you said there were 41,000 searches on that platform and you said one out of four takes the next step. That's 10,000 people in just 13 months of this tool being live that now have had the access to life-saving services.

CHAD: So we know that everything that we've done through 2019 has already enabled 2020 to really start off in fantastic fashion. So we're going to be touring on the West coast and down through Texas in mid January with our friends, Scary Kids Scaring Kids. Uh, Jamie's gonna start his year in the UK, uh, hitting some dates with Noah Gunderson and we really anticipate that it's just gonna continue to take off from there. We're constantly learning of new opportunities to engage with people. We're constantly dreaming up new ways to give this message to you through merchandise, through programs. And uh, we can't wait to see all the ways that, that our lives will collide, that we'll get to overlap.

LINDSAY: Yeah. And I want to encourage you, if you're listening or if you work in a community that wants to bring this message in a unique way and you want To Write Love on Her Arms involved, please reach out to us. Let us know what you're up to. Send us an email at booking@twloha.com.

CHAD: So beyond bringing speakers from the organization into your schools, into your communities of faith, into your business places. Uh, we have another way for you to engage with, To Write Love on Her Arms in an interactive, and also highly educational way. So that's our move community conference. Uh, so that's our way of equipping and educating communities about topics that we address as an organization. So that's ranging from depression, addiction, self-injury, suicide on through anxiety disorders, eating disorders. Uh, just to a general sense of, of brokenness and the, the conversations within this conference go beyond just what these issues are, but how we as a community can better care for the people in our community.

LINDSAY: Yeah, that's awesome. How would they learn about that?

CHAD: Yes, so you can learn more about the program by going to twloha.com/move-conference or you can send an email to move@twloha.com.

LINDSAY: Awesome. Well the year is not quite over. We are looking forward to December 31st. We've got a couple more things in store and we're excited to keep sharing stories with you here on the podcast, but we just want to remind you today it's Giving Tuesday, it's a global day of giving back. We have set a goal to raise \$150,000 by the end of the year and we thought it would be a great way to reach that goal by kicking off today. We've set a goal to raise \$25,000 on Facebook. And while it's a big goal, we really believe that it's possible. So if you'd like to make a gift, if you'd like to see TWLOHA continue to expand into new communities, into new high schools, to tell more stories on our blog and podcast, to help grow the FIND HELP Tool and connect people to local mental health resources, we hope you'll consider giving an amount that you're comfortable giving, an amount that you can give.

LINDSAY: And even if today, or right now is a season where, uh, finances are challenging, you still have something incredibly valuable to give. That is your voice.

LINDSAY: We're inviting folks during this season to share on social media why TWLOHA matters to you, to complete the phrase: Better days are ahead because... and to insert sort of there and to share your message of why you are holding on to hope. Maybe it has something to do with TWLOHA, but maybe it's a moment of friends or family or maybe it's you're sitting with a counselor for the first time. We just invite people to share these moments. As the end of year kind of creeps up before the resolutions are sort of put forward in January before people start doing that.

LINDSAY: We just want to say your voice right now can have a huge impact on what 2020 looks like for somebody else. And so when you do that, we do encourage you if you can, to add a donate button in supportive, To Write Love on Her Arms. This is a way to say: I'm standing with To Write Love on Her Arms and you are able to really just invite your friends. And then they're going to see that this is an opportunity to give, an opportunity to stand with you as well.

And it really matters. Every dollar is going to come To Write Love on Her Arms. Facebook waives all the processing fees, and so every dollar counts. Every dollar is going to help us get towards that goal and help us continue to dream in 2020 of a better tomorrow for more people.

LINDSAY: And when you donate, every dollar is going to help us expand our high school program *Between the Bells*, which just launched. We want to reach as many high school students in 2020. It helps us bring this message to over a hundred different events. We're in front of almost 2 million people who have the chance to connect with us face to face. It's gonna help us tell new stories on the blog and on the podcast, and it's going to grow our FIND HELP Tool, which has already shown that it's connecting people to life-saving resources. We want to thank you for listening. There are more stories to come, but we're really grateful to have you standing with us.

LINDSAY: Thank you for believing that better days are ahead. And thank you, Chad, for joining me for this special episode.

CHAD: Absolutely.

[music playing]

LINDSAY: If you've enjoyed this episode and you want to hear more, we really hope you'll subscribe on iTunes or wherever you get your podcast. And if you can do us a favor, we'd really like for you to write us a review. It'll help more people find this podcast and the mission of TWLOHA. If you have any feedback or questions, please send us an email to podcast@twloha.com.

LINDSAY: A big thank you to our friends at Copeland for the original music on this episode. The To Write Love on Her Arms podcast is produced by Mark Codgen, with editorial support by Claire Biggs and Rebecca Ebert. Music assistance was provided by James Likeness and Ben Tichenor. I'm Lindsay Kolsch. Thank you so much for listening.

LINDSAY: To Write Love on Her Arms is a nonprofit movement dedicated to presenting hope and finding help for people struggling with depression, addiction, self-injury, and suicide. TWLOHA exists to encourage, inform, inspire, and also to invest directly into treatment and recovery. You can find more information about To Write Love on Her Arms at twloha.com.