HEALING JUSTICE

Image: Designed for the ACLU of Southern California
HEALING JUSTICE

“Life, inexhaustible, goes on. And we do too. Carrying our wounds and our medicines as we go.”

- Alice Walker, Reading BARRACOON: The Story of the Last “Black Cargo”

I. Our Voices: What is Healing Justice?

- “healing justice...identifies how we can holistically respond to and intervene on generational trauma and violence, and to bring collective practices that can impact and transform the consequences of oppression on our bodies, hearts and minds.”
  - Cara Page and the Kindred Healing Justice Collective

“We do this work to lift up and politicize the role of health and healing in our movements as a critical part of the new world we are building…”

…”We are learning and creating this political framework about a legacy of healing and liberation that is meeting a particular moment in history inside of our movements that seeks to: regenerate traditions that have been lost; to mindfully hold contradictions in our practices; and to be conscious of the conditions we are living and working inside of as healers and organizers in our communities and movements.

We are building national relationships and dialogues to cultivate knowledge and to build reflection and exchange of our healing, transformative and resiliency practices in our regions and movements.”

- Bad Ass Visionary Healers Collective (Bay Area)
II. Self-Care Assessment


The following worksheet for assessing self-care is not exhaustive, merely suggestive. Feel free to add areas of self-care that are relevant for you and rate yourself on how often and how well you are taking care of yourself these days.

When you are finished, look for patterns in your responses. Are you more active in some areas of self-care but ignore others? Are there items on the list that make you think, "I would never do that"? Listen to your inner responses, your internal dialogue about self-care and making yourself a priority. Take particular note of anything you would like to include more in your life.

Rate the following areas according to how well you think you are doing:

- 3 = I do this well (e.g., frequently)
- 2 = I do this OK (e.g., occasionally)
- 1 = I barely or rarely do this
- 0 = I never do this
- ? = This never occurred to me

### Physical Self-Care

- ____ Eat regularly (e.g. breakfast, lunch, and dinner)
- ____ Eat healthily
- ____ Exercise
- ____ Get regular medical care for prevention (physicals, etc.)
- ____ Get medical care when needed
- ____ Take time off when sick
- ____ Get massages/physical healing therapies which support my sense of well-being
- ____ Dance, swim, walk, run, play sports, sing, or do some other fun physical activity
- ____ Take time to be sexual - with myself, with a partner
- ____ Get enough sleep
- ____ Wear clothing that I like and makes me feel good about myself.
- ____ Take vacations
- ____ Other:

### Psychological Self-Care

- ____ Allow myself to be curious
- ____ Allow myself to be a novice, student, or learner at something
- ____ Make time away from telephones, email, and the Internet
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___ Make time for self-reflection
___ Notice my inner experience - listen to my thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, feelings
___ Have my own personal psychotherapy or mental health care plan and practice
___ Write in a journal
___ Read literature that is unrelated to work
___ Do something at which I am not expert or in charge
___ Attend to minimizing stress in my life
___ Engage my intelligence in a new area, e.g., go to an art show, sports event, theatre
___ Say no to extra responsibilities sometimes
___ Experience day trips, mini-vacations, or excursions which are strictly for my enjoyment
___ Other:

Emotional Self-Care
___ Identify comforting activities, objects, people, places and seek them out
___ Spend time with others whose company I enjoy
___ Stay in contact with important people in my life
___ Give myself affirmations, praise myself
___ Love myself
___ Re-read favorite books, re-view favorite movies
___ Allow myself to cry
___ Find things that make me laugh
___ Express my outrage, concern, and vision for social change
___ Other:

Spiritual Self-Care
___ Make time for reflection
___ Spend time in nature
___ Find a spiritual connection or community
___ Be open to inspiration
___ Cherish my optimism and hope
___ Be aware of non-material aspects of life
___ Try at times not to be in charge or the expert
___ Be open to not knowing
___ Identify what is meaningful to me and notice its place in my life
___ Meditate
___ Pray
___ Sing/Dance/Create Art
___ Express creativity, inspiration, or purpose through activities that I find satisfying
___ Experience wonder or awe
___ Contribute to causes in which I believe
___ Read inspirational literature or listen to inspirational talks, music
___ Find beauty in everyday things
___ Celebrate milestones, accomplishments, or simply anything that brings joy
___ Other:
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Relationship Self-Care

___ Schedule regular dates with my partner, spouse, or significant other
___ Schedule regular activities with my children
___ Make time to see friends
___ Call, check on, or see my relatives
___ Spend time with my companion animals
___ Stay in contact with faraway friends
___ Make time to reply to personal emails and letters; send holiday cards
___ Allow others to do things for me
___ Enlarge my social circle
___ Ask for help when I need it
___ Share a fear, hope, or secret with someone I trust
___ Other:

Workplace or Professional Self-Care

___ Take a break during the workday (e.g., lunch)
___ Take time to chat with co-workers
___ Make quiet time to complete tasks
___ Identify projects or tasks that are exciting and rewarding
___ Set limits with clients and colleagues
___ Balance my workload so that no one day or part of a day is “too much”
___ Arrange work space so it is comfortable and comforting
___ Get regular supervision or consultation
___ Negotiate for my needs (benefits, pay raise, time off, reasonable hours and schedule)
___ Have a peer support group
___ (If relevant) Develop a non-stress area of professional interest

Overall Balance

___ Strive for balance within my work-life and personal life
___ Strive for balance among work, family, relationships, play, and rest

Other Areas of Self-Care that are Relevant to My Life

___
___
___

Commitments to Self:

1. I will begin
2. I will do more
3. I will pay more attention to
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III. *Pair Share Reflection & Discussion:*
How do these reflections on healing justice and personal self-care assessments inform how we organize and build movements? How does “how” we do the work impact our sustainability as movements and resiliency as movement builders? How do we build a movement that centers healing and not harm?

IV. *Community Closing Circle: I Practice Liberation By ________*
Please share one (new) practice that you will begin or recommit to in the spirit of integrating healing justice into your work as an organizer. Please use the sentence above as a prompt and fill in the blank with only a single, short phrase.