

BREAKING ISOLATION: SELF CARE AND COMMUNITY CARE TOOLS FOR OUR PEOPLE

“Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.”

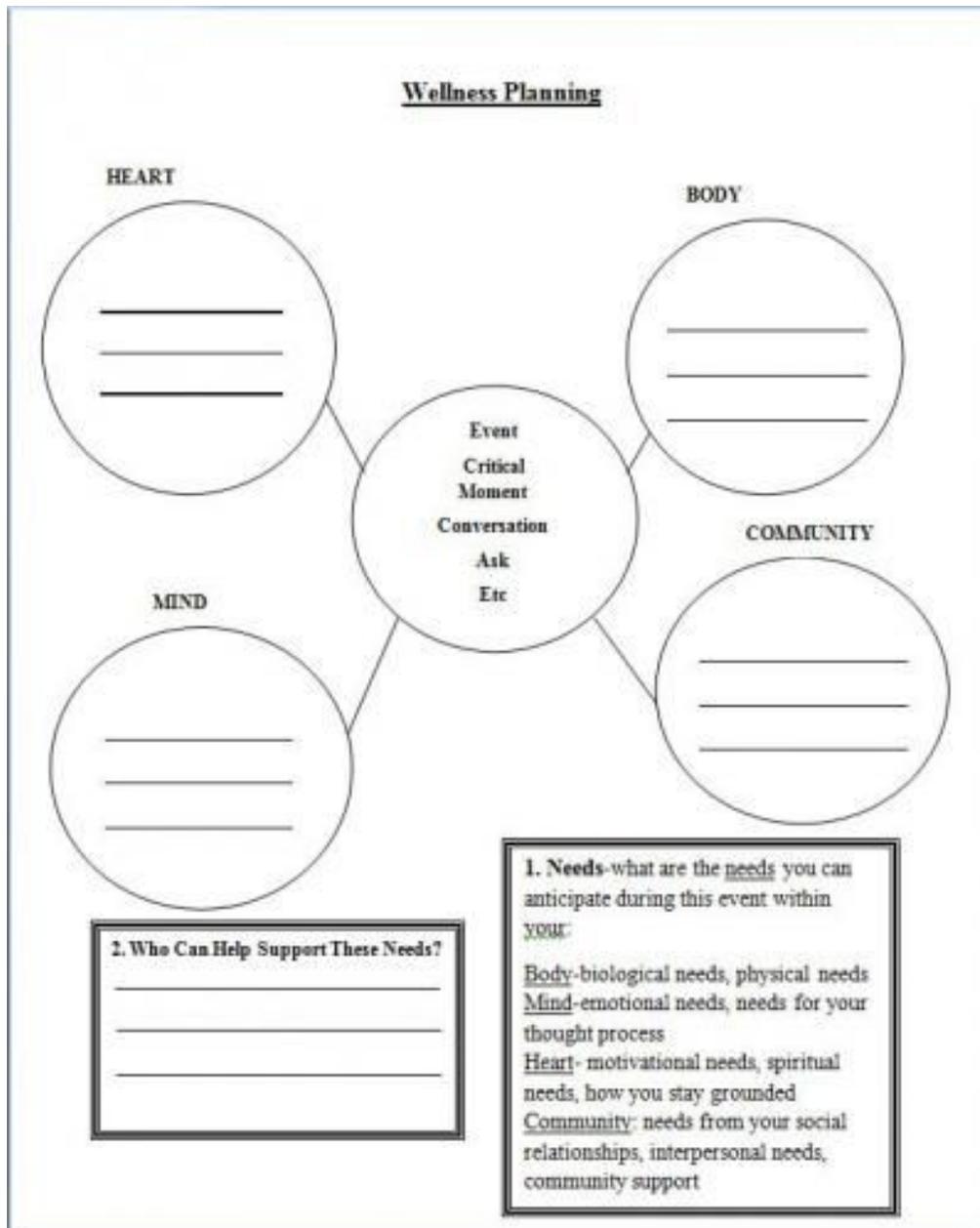
--Audre Lorde

In moments of grief, crisis, or trauma, and in the time before and after, we need each other to survive and thrive. We are obliged to lift up, honor, and hold space for our self-determination, to fight for our lives, and to remind each other of our worth and that none of us are disposable. In a time and place where we LGBTSTGNC POC are hurt, isolated, silenced, murdered, imprisoned, disappeared, and deported, it is a radical act of self and community love to name our trauma and needs, and to love each other fiercely to meet those needs. We have been taught and conditioned to turn to the state in moments of crisis and trauma, to turn out and away from the communities and relationships that hold us. In this moment of community grief, let us find each other, and radically turn in to each other with love, consensually present each other with our hurts and needs, and strategize as community to get those needs and desires met. We must remember, share, and practice strategies for grounding, support, resilience, transformation, and accountability.

We must support each other's wellness. One way to do this is to create a wellness plan for yourself, and encourage folks in your community to create a wellness plan for themselves. Strategize with your community about your wellness plan and meeting your needs.

Here's a template for wellness planning:

Event/ Critical Moment/ Conversation/ Ask/ Etc.:			
What are the needs you can anticipate during this event?	Is it a heart, body, mind, or community need?	Who can help support these needs, and how?	Is there anything you'd like us to know?



Your wellness plan can look however you want it to, but the point is to name your current or anticipated needs, and who can support you in getting your needs met. Be sure to communicate your needs to the people who will support you. If your community is a web-based one, maybe create a private online shareable spreadsheet that folks can contribute to and edit. If your community isn't online, maybe set up an in-person group meeting, a conference call, or make individual calls or meetings.

When folks ask you for support, remember to listen and follow their lead in lifting up their own self-determination. This is about the person requesting support, so don't make it about you. If you feel you aren't able to meet a need, be clear and honest about that, and help strategize another way to meet that need. Folks experiencing or dealing with their own triggers, crisis, or trauma may or may not be able to support. Ask. Don't assume anyone is or isn't able to provide support. If you do commit to supporting the needs of community, you may also need support in meeting those needs, so consider creating a wellness plan for yourself.

We are enough, and we are all we need to survive. We always have been. We're all we've got. Be good to each other. Take care of each other.

No comrade left behind!

Rest in power, Taueret Davis.

Resources:

- Queering Herbalism, <http://queerherbalism.blogspot.com/>
- suicidal ideation 2.0, queer community leadership, and staying alive anyway: part one of a work in progress, <http://www.brownstargirl.org/blog/suicidal-ideation-20-queer-community-leadership-and-staying-alive-anyway>
- Trans Lifeline, (877) 565-8860, <http://www.translifeline.org/>
- AVP hotline, (212) 714-1141
- Mental Health and Sexuality: A Guide to Practicing Radical Consent as a Mad Person <http://radicalsexeducation.tumblr.com/post/17172556637/mental-health-and-sexuality-practicing-radical>
- The Icarus Project <http://theicarusproject.net/>