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Decolonizing Self-care: Towards Caring Communities & self-preservation

Audre Lorde wrote in her cancer journals that "Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare." (Audre Lorde Cancer journals)

"We need to move the self-care conversation into community care. We need to move the conversation from individual to collective. From independent to interdependent."
www.organizingupgrade.com/index.php/component/k2/item/88-yashna-communities-of-care

What practices, processes will support collectives of caring in the work we do with children, youth, students and families/communities who have experienced trauma/violence?

Decolonizing trauma work requires us to challenge the privilege and Western language of self-care and instead consider ourselves and our work as requiring political self-care within webs of communities and collectives of caring.

When we are triggered in this work we can take care of ourselves through sensory and community wellness approaches. These include smell, taste, touch, sight and sound.

I encourage my students and survivors I work with to create a wellness vision board that includes physical, emotional, mental, spiritual and cultural safety/wellness

(see Loiselle, M. & McKenzie, L. 2006. *The Wellness wheel: An Aboriginal contribution to social work. First North-American Conference on Spirituality and Social Work*. University of Waterloo, Renison College, Waterloo, Ontario.)

- *What practices, processes will support collectives of caring in the work we do with children, youth and families/communities who have experienced trauma/violence?*

- *What tools to support reflexivity and wellness do I currently practice?*

- *Who are my support systems? Who do I turn to? Do I belong to a community of caring?*

- *What is my vision for my wholistic wellness?*