



# Family-Care, Community-Care and Self-Care Tool Kit: Healing in the Face of Cultural Trauma



*“African people throughout the world have a worldview that is conceived as a universal oneness. There is interconnection of all things that compose the Universe.” ~Na’im Akbar*

Community Healing Network: [www.communityhealingnetwork.org](http://www.communityhealingnetwork.org)

The Association of Black Psychologists, Inc.: [www.abpsi.org](http://www.abpsi.org)



## Crisis and Opportunity

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

This Tool Kit is for us—developed by and for people of African ancestry--to comfort and inspire us in these difficult times. It provides resources to help us take care of ourselves and each other, and strengthen our sense of community for the journey ahead.

This moment of crisis is also a moment of great opportunity. The Black community has been through a lot lately. But these events are just the most recent in an ongoing assault on our humanity that began more than 400 years ago in enslavement, with the telling of the poisonous lies of White superiority and Black inferiority. We believe that these lies are the root causes of the devaluing of Black lives and nearly all the other challenges we face as a people. Now is the time to strike at the heart of these lies with all of our might--by working together to free ourselves, our children, and the world from them once and for all.

Community Healing Network (CHN), in collaboration with the Association of Black Psychologists (ABPsi), is leading the global grassroots movement for emotional emancipation – to help Black people heal from and overturn the lies. Among CHN’s strategies for building this movement are: Emotional Emancipation Circles<sup>SM</sup>, an evidence-informed, psychologically sound, culturally grounded process to help Black people heal from the trauma caused by the lies; and Valuing Black Lives: The Annual Global Emotional Emancipation Summit<sup>SM</sup>, to bring together Black leaders from across the Diaspora to develop and implement action plans to extinguish the lies.

In the words of the late Dr. Maya Angelou, founding chair of CHN’s Board of Advisors, we are moving “beyond the pain of the blues to the sky blue of unlimited possibilities!” CHN is working to engage a critical mass of Black people in the journey toward emotional emancipation by 2019, which will be the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the forced arrival of Africans at Virginia colony, in the hopes that by the year 2020, we as a people will begin to see ourselves in a whole new light.

Four hundred years of dehumanization are enough. Marcus Garvey said. “We have a beautiful history and we shall create another in the future that will astonish the world.” We will. Now is our time!

We invite you to join the movement for emotional emancipation at [www.communityhealingnet.org](http://www.communityhealingnet.org).

Peace, beloved,

Enola G. Aird, Founder and President, Community Healing Network, Inc.

Dr. Cheryl Tawede Grills, Past President, The Association of Black Psychologists

Prepared July 2016

[www.CommunityHealingNet.org](http://www.CommunityHealingNet.org)

[www.ABPsi.org](http://www.ABPsi.org)



## Healing in the Face of Socio-Political Cultural Trauma

Beloved Brothers and Sisters,

Undoubtedly, these are trying times for persons of African ancestry, as well as for our nation. Trauma can be defined as when one experiences, witnesses, or is confronted with an event or events that involve actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others and evokes intense fear, helplessness, or horror (Boon, 2011). The long-standing complexities of historical oppression and contemporary socio-political cultural trauma experienced in our communities and lives can take their toll, contributing to self-harm, family violence, and community violence. These are the symptoms of internalized oppression. It is imperative that we honor and sustain our long history of courageous resiliency and humanity in the face of madness.

*While we have come far, and survived immense assaults, these remain trying times. We must take charge of the affairs affecting our lives for our own sake and the sake of our children, our families, our communities, and the generations yet to come. As Dr. Martin Luther King (1967 speech) said "... we must massively assert our dignity and worth. We must stand up amidst a system that still oppresses us and develop an unassailable and majestic sense of values. We must no longer be ashamed of being black." Forty-five years later, Dr. King's charge to us as a people is needed even more. (Grills & Rowe, 2016)*

In 2011, after creating and piloting Emotional Emancipation (EE) Circles<sup>SM</sup>, support groups to help Black people heal from and overturn the lies of White superiority and Black inferiority, Community Healing Network (CHN) reached out to the Association of Black Psychologists (ABPsi) to ask for its help in further developing and refining the EE Circles process. Since then, CHN and ABPsi have been working together to build the movement for emotional emancipation—to help Black people heal from and extinguish the lies.

In light of our collaboration and shared mission, CHN and ABPsi felt compelled to create this Tool Kit for our community. It is an evolving document. It is not meant to be *the* answer to all questions, but to contribute to on-going dialogues, raise awareness, and share strategies so that in times of chaos we still stand our ground and define our destinies.

We invite you to share this document widely, use what works for you, add what is missing, and give us your feedback. To share your suggestions and to inquire about training in the Emotional Emancipation Circles process, please contact CHN at [EECircles@CommunityHealingNet.org](mailto:EECircles@CommunityHealingNet.org).

In the Spirit of Service,  
Community Healing Network and The Association of Black Psychologists, Inc.



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**\*IMPORTANT NOTICES. PLEASE READ: The Community Meetings described in this Toolkit are *not* Emotional Emancipation (EE) Circles<sup>SM</sup>--an evidence-informed, psychologically-grounded, culturally-centered process for helping Black people heal from the trauma caused by the lies of White superiority and Black inferiority. Emotional Emancipation Circles, EE Circles, EECs, Valuing Black Lives, and related copyrights, marks and logos are service marks owned exclusively and stewarded by Community Healing Network and may not be used without CHN's permission. For information on trainings in how to conduct an EE Circle, please contact CHN at [EECircles@communityhealingnet.org](mailto:EECircles@communityhealingnet.org). Neither the Community Meetings/Circles described in this Toolkit nor Emotional Emancipation Circles should be used as a substitute for professional counseling, advice, or therapy. If and when necessary, participants should be urged to seek the help of qualified mental health professionals. If professional services are needed, please share this Tool Kit with the provider to help inform treatment. Local Community Meeting/Circle and EEC volunteers, leaders, facilitators, trainers, organizers, fundraisers, and/or others in similar roles are independent, and are not employees, agents, partners, joint venturers, or corporate affiliates of Community Healing Network, Inc., or the Association of Black Psychologists.**



## **Addressing the Root Causes of Anti-Black Racism: Dealing with Historical and Continuing Racial Trauma**

1. Know that our feelings are real and warranted.
2. Our feelings have emerged out of 400+ years of systemic racial oppression rooted in the lie that Black people are inferior to White people.
3. We cannot overcome this oppression overnight, but, as a community of elders and young people, we can work together to free ourselves emotionally--and completely. *None but ourselves can free our minds!*
4. We need to respect and understand the psychological and emotional effects of racial oppression so that we do not fall into traps laid for us by the system---and hurt ourselves and/or loved ones.
5. The first step toward healing is to acknowledge the systemic racial trauma, stress, anger, pain, frustration, and hurt that we are experiencing, and recognize how they might affect our feelings, our thinking, our actions, and our interactions.
6. If we understand how the system of racial oppression affects us, then we can *strategically and collectively* take the necessary steps to short-circuit the system; taking full control of our hearts and our minds--acting instead of reacting.
7. One way to begin to do this is to *honestly and sincerely* ask ourselves with respect to everything we do, "is this good for me and is this good for Black people." If the answer is no, don't do it.



## **Enfocando desde su raíz las causas del racismo en contra de los africo-americanos: Lidiando con el histórico y continuo trauma racial.**

1. Sepa que nuestros sentimientos son reales.
2. Nuestros sentimientos surgieron de 400 años de opresión racial sistemática, enraizada en la mentira de que la raza negra es inferior a la raza blanca.
3. No podremos eliminar esa opresión de la noche a la mañana, pero, como comunidad de jóvenes y ancianos podemos trabajar juntos para liberarnos emocionalmente. *Solo nosotros mismos podremos liberar completamente nuestro mente.*
4. Necesitamos respetar y entender la psicología de los efectos emocionales de la opresión racial, para no caer en las trampas que nos pone el sistema, lo que puede lastimarnos.
5. El primer paso para sanar es identificar el trauma racial, el estrés, el enojo, el dolor, la frustración y el dolor que estamos experimentando. Debemos reconocer como todos esos factores pueden afectar nuestros sentimientos, nuestra forma de pensar, nuestras acciones y la forma en que interactuamos.
6. Si entendemos como ese sistema de opresión racista nos afecta, entonces *estratégica y colectivamente* podremos tomar los pasos necesarios para sabotear ese sistema tomando control total de nuestros sentimientos y mentes, actuando en vez de reaccionar.
7. Una forma de actuar es *honesto y sinceramente* preguntarnos en relación a todo lo que hacemos: “Es esto buena para mí? Es bueno esto para la gente de color? Si la respuesta es no, no lo haga!



*“At the end of the day, you can focus on what’s tearing you apart or you can focus on what’s keeping you together.”--African Proverb~*

### Keeping You Together: Self-Care Strategies

Racially, these are trying times that weigh on our hearts, minds, spirits, and even the very core of our souls. Incident after incident, constant social media, witnessing the pain, anguish, loss of life, and managing personal fears for the safety and well-being of our families and communities can cause race-based traumas. Psychological trauma results from events that involve actual or threatened death, serious injury, or from emotionally painful and distressing experiences that at least temporarily causes great distress, disruption, or overwhelms the ability to cope. As long as they are not too severe or last for too long, these symptoms are normal reactions to trauma. For some, the trauma doesn’t heal as quickly. Self-care is an antidote to promote healing. How do you know if you are experiencing racial stress or trauma?

#### STRESS and TRAUMA REACTION (SIGNS) \* (See longer list below)

<p><b><u>Re-experiencing</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Thoughts &amp; feelings pop into one’s mind</li> <li>● Re-living what happened - feels like it’s happening again</li> <li>● Getting upset at reminders</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Avoidance</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Try to block it out &amp; not think about it</li> <li>● Try to stay away from reminders</li> <li>● Feel numb or no emotions</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Increased arousal</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Always afraid something bad will happen</li> <li>● More easily startled / jumpy</li> <li>● Trouble with sleep or concentration</li> <li>● Go into <i>fight or flight mode</i></li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Dissociation</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Things feel unreal -- like a dream</li> <li>● Trouble remembering parts of what happened</li> <li>● <i>Freak out (disorganized and behavior no longer predictable or regulated)</i></li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Other possible signs:</u></b> increased sleep, trouble sleeping, increased or loss of appetite, sense of sadness and/or hopelessness, isolation or withdrawal from others, alcohol or drug use to cope, anger, heightened irritability with others, increased body aches and pains, headaches, muscle fatigue.</p>	





## **Common Responses to Stress and Trauma – Things to Look Out For**

### **Changes in Your Behavior or Actions**

◆ Increase or decrease in activity level ◆ Short-temper, ◆ Non-stop talking, ◆ Fidgeting ◆ Changes in substance use or abuse (alcohol or drugs) ◆ Difficulty communicating or listening ◆ Irritability, outbursts of anger, frequent arguments ◆ Inability to rest or relax ◆ Decline in job performance; absenteeism ◆ Frequent crying ◆ Hyper-vigilance or excessive worry ◆ Avoidance of activities or places that trigger memories ◆ Becoming accident prone

### **Changes in Your Body**

◆ Stomach aches or problems ◆ Headaches, other aches and pains or body tension ◆ Visual disturbances ◆ Weight loss or gain ◆ Sweating or chills ◆ Tremors or muscle twitching ◆ Being easily startled ◆ Chronic fatigue or sleep disturbances ◆ Immune system disorders (e.g., catching more colds)

### **Changes in Your Emotions**

◆ Feeling heroic, euphoric, or invulnerable ◆ Denial ◆ Worry, anxiety, fear, or confusion ◆ Depression ◆ Guilt ◆ Apathy ◆ Grief ◆ Hopeless or suicidal thoughts ◆ Loneliness

### **Changes in Your Thinking**

◆ Memory problems ◆ Disorientation and confusion ◆ Slow thought processes; lack of concentration ◆ Difficulty setting priorities or making decisions ◆ Loss of objectivity ◆ Negative self-talk ◆ Negative attitude ◆ Poor judgment ◆ Lack of self-confidence

### **Social**

◆ Isolation ◆ Blaming ◆ Difficulty in giving or accepting support or help ◆ Inability to experience pleasure or have fun.

*\*Adapted from CMHS, 2004-- Center for Mental Health Services. (2004). Mental health response to mass violence and terrorism: A training manual.*





**SELF-CARE: When we are experiencing racial stress or trauma, self-care is essential to avoid inadvertently causing more pain for ourselves and those we love. Here are a few things we can do.**

1. **Self-monitor for signs of stress and trauma.** Be familiar with the signs of too much stress and get help or support. Accept that you may not be able to self-assess problematic stress reactions...be open to feedback from others.
2. **Restore the well that is you.** Take a break from all the social media and the news – fill the depleted well with positive, comforting thoughts and experiences, rest, relaxation, energizing activities. Remember that our social resources are important to our well-being. Be intentionally kind and gentle with yourself *and* those around you—especially loved ones.
3. **Let others replenish the well.** Ask for help. Seek out comfort and conversation with those who love and understand you. A crucial source of our strength and well-being comes through the quality of the nurturing relationships we have with others.
4. **Stay spiritually grounded; this may include prayer and/or mindfulness.** Whatever your higher power is...this is the time to connect with it and allow it to steady the ground beneath you, restore balance to your mind, still your heart, calm your spirit, and embolden your soul.
5. **Remember your body.** Practice relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, meditation, and gentle stretching. Release energy, tension, and the strain to the body that comes from carrying stress and trauma. Walk, exercise, dance, stretch,--whatever suits you...but do something physical. Get rest....getting enough sleep is important. And remember to BREATHE. Stress can make us hold our breath. Breathe deeply. Let go. Relax those shoulders and breathe deeply. Watch the comfort junk food...feed yourself healthy food that brings energy and recharges the body. Avoid/minimize alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and excessive caffeine to cope.
6. **Stay informed but monitor how often.** This can be triggering. Periodically turn off the news and tune into self-care. Pace yourself between low and high-stress activities.
7. Again, **be intentionally kind and gentle with yourself and those around you**—especially loved ones! Laugh more. Practice random acts of kindness. Use positive self-talk and positive attitudes and talk to people you trust.

**We can be the change we want to see –but a mind, body, spirit, and soul overburdened and taxed by racial stress and trauma will turn action into inaction and burnout.**



***“Life is mutual aid.” (Obra ye nnoboa)—Akan proverb***

### **Keeping Us Together: Family-Care and Community-Care Strategies**

Self-care is absolutely essential in times of racial stress and trauma. So is family-care and community-care.

People are “pro-social” beings. Much of our sense of wellness and happiness depends on our sense of connectedness-- of being with, and doing things with, and for, other people. Communities with strong social connections within families and among neighbors and friends are more likely to have high levels of trust, and more likely to be healthy and better able to respond to crises.

As people of African ancestry, we have a rich cultural heritage that emphasizes connectedness and relationships, as expressed in the Zulu proverb *Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*, “a person is a person because of people,” or “a person is a person through other persons.”

One of the keys to the enslavement and subjugation of African people was the separating and breaking of bonds of trust between and among Black men, women, and children.

**One of the most important keys to maintaining and even enhancing our health and sense of well-being in this time of great challenge to Black people is the strengthening of our sense of family and community, and the deepening of our bonds of trust. For Black people, *family-care and community-care, like self-care, are radical acts.***

Coming together in our families and in our communities is essential for us now. It gives us a sense of safety in this increasingly hostile world. It creates safe spaces in which we can unburden ourselves, and share our feelings, concerns, fears, and our hopes. Coming together in community is a visible sign of our turning to each other for comfort, support, wisdom, and love. It is a visible sign of our commitment to take care of ourselves and each other. It is a visible sign of defiance in the face of racial oppression.

**We need visible signs of our determination to survive-- and thrive-- as a people, and there are few more powerful signs than a commitment to family-care and community-care, and regular family and community gatherings for mutual support.**



**Here are a few suggestions for enhancing your family's and your neighborhood's level of community-care.**

1. **Take care of yourself first.** Follow suggestions for self-care so that you can be a role model--and at your best as you engage with and take care of others. You must take care of yourself so that you can be there for your family and other loved ones.
2. **Reach out to other Black people in a spirit of hope and optimism for the future.** Know-- and let your family members and neighbors and especially young people know-- the truth: we are children of God and of our ancestors who made a way out of no way. We can-- and we will-- get through this turmoil and latest assault against our humanity. In fact, if we turn to each other and support one another and use this as a time to deepen our collective understanding of our history and its effects on our lives, this present upheaval can clear the way to a great renewal within the Black community.
3. **Be especially kind and sensitive to the needs of other Black people.** Practice LOVE: **Listen. Observe. Value. Empathize.** Look at one another (see each other), ask people how they are feeling, ask how their children and family are doing, take time to really listen, and ask more questions to encourage them to share their feelings, concerns, and fears, **as well as** their hopes and dreams.
4. **Create sanctuaries for Black people to come together, relax, and enjoy life.** Even in the midst of the storm, take time out to have fun. Take a long group walk, exercise, or hike. Listen to music. Have a party, dance, and eat good healthy food, and have a good laugh. Humor can soothe the soul.
5. **Spend as little time as possible talking about people outside of our community.** During times of stress, it is important to focus on what we can do for ourselves and those we love. We cannot change others, but we can change how we respond, shaping our own destiny and actions to change systems of oppression
6. **Draw on the wisdom of our elders and ancestors.** Spend time with elders in your family and community and ask them for their advice and guidance for these times. Ask your elders questions about their lives and lessons learned. And look to the words of wisdom that have been handed down to us by our ancestors. They are a great source of knowledge, comfort, inspiration, and strength. **“Wisdom for the Journey Ahead” (page 23 of this Tool Kit) contains empowering sayings. These words of wisdom are emotional and spiritual medicine: portable, handy sources of knowledge, comfort, inspiration, and strength.**



## **Taking Care of Our Children and Youth:** When one of us hurts, we all hurt. We are Family!

**Caring for your children:** They too are being affected, even if they understand or not what is happening around them. Reassure them that they are loved; monitor the amount of exposure to news (e.g., turn off T.V., check out of social media, be aware of what you say in their listening range); listen to them. Again, reassure them that they are loved. If there are significant changes in their behavior, then consult a health care provider (share this Tool Kit with the provider).

**Caring for your youth:** They may be most affected, particularly if they have been previously exposed to violence. There may be more anger, confusion, and even sadness. Ask them what they think; be sure to listen to them; do not judge or try to talk them out of their feelings and thoughts.

Reassure them of who they are, the love of their family and community, and of the greatness from which they come. Ask how they want to get involved, especially in family and/or community healing conversations. Again, reassure them that they are loved. If there are significant changes in their behavior, then consult a health care provider (share this Tool Kit with the provider).



COMMUNITY  
HEALING  
NETWORK, INC.



The Association of  
BLACK PSYCHOLOGISTS

**Host healing circles for your family, neighbors, and friends, and especially for our beloved children and young people.** Here are a few tips. *For more detailed information see “The Community Healing Meeting/Circle Facilitator Guide” on page. 14.*

- Set a date and time and then call, text or email those you want to attend.
- Supplies you might want to have on hand:
  - Water and dish for libations (prepare a list of names in advance to call out during libations)
  - Kleenex
  - Incense
  - Candles
  - Appropriate healing/liberation background music
  - A talking stick
  - Healthy food or snacks and water
  - Quotes from “Wisdom for the Journey Ahead” on page 23 of this Tool Kit
- Select a location that is safe and uplifting. This can be a living room or an outdoor area that allows everyone to connect with nature.
- Set simple shared agreements (see p. 16 for more) before starting, such as:
  - Ask people to turn off phones.\*No texting, answering calls, taking pictures, recording, etc.
  - Remind everyone to not share what's shared within the circle with others not in attendance.
  - If one must leave the circle prior to the closing of the circle, ask them to step away from the circle, then gather and pack their belongings.
  - Remind people not to center conversations around White people or their issues. Identify YOUR feelings.
  - Ask everyone to be respectful of the person with the talking stick (not interrupting, etc) -- Only one person is to speak at a time.
  - Remind everyone that the healing circle is a space for sharing and healing, not debate, judgment or criticism, or politics, or religion.
- Be comfortable with moments of silence and reflections. Do not force (but encourage) engagement.
- Close your circle on a hopeful note-- with an affirmation, song or meditation.

*In every challenge, there is a blessing. The blessing of this present challenge is the opportunity for us as a people to regroup and commit to re-knit the bonds of family and community that were broken in enslavement and have been frayed ever since. Now is our time to re-connect, re-bond, and re-discover our strengths as a people of African ancestry!*



***“This African consciousness, if it is to be mentally alive, must be maintained and reinforced through creation and operation of self-affirming institutes.” ~Kobi K. K. Kambon***

### **Community Healing Meeting/Circle Facilitator Guide\***

Goal: To create a safe space for people to share, emote, decrease sense of isolation, feel connected, and be comforted

1. Participant introductions
  - a. Model first and then go around the room and ask folks to introduce themselves by sharing the following:
    - i. Your Name
    - ii. How long have you lived in this community?
    - iii. Where did you live before moving here?
2. Review shared agreements to keep the space safe (See page 16)
3. Open discussion -
  - a. Let’s talk. We want to create this space to give folks a chance to share what’s on their hearts, minds, and spirits. We want to provide a space for you to what’s at the heart of the matter for you?
  - b. Go Round: Everyone, take a second to share one word that describes the effect of the ongoing assaults (on how you are feeling; how you are doing, etc.) Model and share first.
  - c. How have the traumatic events of the past weeks affected you? For example, your:
    - i. Feelings
    - ii. Thoughts
    - iii. Problems or issues that have emerged
    - iv. Your physical wellbeing or health
  - d. What issues or concerns, fears or worries do the events of the last week raise for you?
  - e. What kind of support do you want/need?
  - f. (If time, Is there an additional thought you'd like to share that was stimulated by hearing others speak?
  - g. What do you want to see happen next?



4. Closing out the discussion:

- a. Provide closing time for folks to reflect: Are there any parting words that you'd like to share about what you've shared, heard, and learned tonight. What can you take with you to help support your own well-being?
- b. Remind people of the self, family, and community care Tool Kit provided to them....and the importance of self-care, family-care, and community care.

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## Shared Agreements for Community Healing Meetings/Circles

### A Basic Set of Proposed Agreements regarding to support the spirit of our speaking, listening, and supporting each other.

- We will respect confidentiality.
- We will share time equitably to ensure the participation of all.
- We will listen carefully and not interrupt.
- We will keep an open mind and be open to learning.
- We will not be disrespectful of the speaker even when we do not respect the views.

### Regarding confidentiality

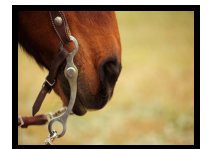
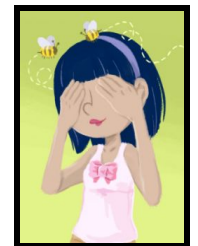
- When we discuss our experience in the dialogue with people who are not present, we will not attach names or other identifying information to particular comments unless we have permission to do so. Honoring the stories of others; ask their permission before sharing.

*\*From "Shared Agreements," adapted from [www.publicconversations.org](http://www.publicconversations.org)*



## Family Breathing Exercises

- **Lion's Breath**
  - Inhale through nose. Then, open mouth, stick out tongue, and exhale strongly with a 'Haaaa!'
- **Alternate Nostril Breathing**
  - Right thumb over right nostril and rest the tip of your right index finger and middle finger between eyebrows.
  - Right ring finger and pinky just above your left nostril. Press down on your right nostril with your thumb and breathe out from your left nostril and then breathe in from your left nostril. Switch sides.
- **Bumble Bee Breath**
  - Thumbs in ears, four fingers over closed eyes. Take a big breath in, filling up with air until the belly expands and exhale through the nose keeping your lips closed, making a humming as you exhale.
- **Horse Breath**
  - Take a normal inhale through the nose and keep the lips relaxed. Exhale through the mouth and notice the lips vibrate and flop around as the air passes through them.
- **Balloon Breath**
  - Breathe in and out through the nose. On the inhale, sweep your arms up overhead and imagine you are slowly filling up a balloon. Exhale slowly and lower your arms to rest on your lap imagining the balloon floating off in the sky.



Roberts, L. *Breathe, Chill: A Handy Book of Games and Techniques Introducing Breathing, Meditation and Relaxation to Kids and Teens.*



## Actividades De Respiración Familiar

- **Lion's Breath**

- Inhale por la nariz. Después abra su boca, saque su lengua y exhale fuerte con un ¡Haaa!!'



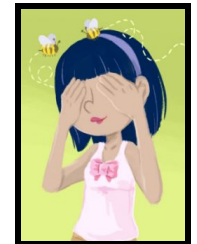
- **Alternate Nostril Breathing**

- Ponga su dedo pulgar derecho sobre su fosa nasal derecha y entre sus cejas el dedo índice y el del medio.
- Ponga su dedo anular y su dedo meñique arriba de su fosa nasal izquierda. Oprima su fosa nasal derecha con su dedo pulgar inhale despacio y después exhale. Cambie de lado.



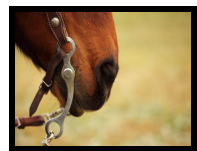
- **Bumble Bee Breath**

- Cubra sus oídos con sus dedos anulares y cubra sus ojos con los otros dedos. Respire profundo y exhale por su nariz sin abrir su boca, al exhalar haga un ruido como abeja (zzzzzzz).



- **Horse Breath**

- Inhale normalmente por su nariz manteniendo su boca media abierta. Exhale por su boca y sus labios vibran y se mueven al salir el aire.



- **Balloon Breath**

- ❖ Respire por su nariz. Cuando inhale, suba sus brazos sobre su cabeza e imagínese que lentamente está llenando un globo de aire. Exhale despacio y lentamente baje sus brazos poniéndolos sobre sus piernas, imagínese que el globo flota hacia el cielo.



Roberts, L. *Breathe, Chill: A Handy Book of Games and Techniques Introducing Breathing, Meditation and Relaxation to Kids and Teens.*



*“When lions become historians, hunters cease to be heroes.”~African Proverb~*

## Historical Trauma and Psychic Terrorism

### TRAUMA

When one experiences, witnesses, or is confronted with an event or events that involve actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others and evokes intense fear, helplessness, or horror (Boon, 2011).

### HISTORICAL TRAUMA

Historical Trauma (HT) is cumulative emotional and psychological wounding, over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma experiences (Braveheart, 2003).

Includes intersections of psychological and economical residuals of:

- American Slavery and Jim Crow Laws, Apartheid, Global Colonization

### PSYCHIC TERRORISM

Any act or thought designed to immobilize and/or destabilize one’s basic sense of security and safety (physically or emotionally) by assaulting one’s sense of self or identity (Nobles, 2014).

- Constant sense of fear and anxiety that informs decisions (parenting, employment, relationships, etc.)
- Unresolved grief, anger, shame and lack of forgiveness results in the suffering of the spirit
- Can manifest at both the interpersonal/individual level (microaggressions) and at the structural level when policies disproportionately target specific groups (stop and frisk, profiling)

### TRAUMA REACTION (INDIVIDUAL LEVEL)

<u>Re-experiencing</u>	<u>Avoidance</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Thoughts &amp; feelings pop into one’s mind</li> <li>● Re-living what happened - feels like it’s happening again.</li> <li>● Get upset at reminders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Try to block it out &amp; not think about it.</li> <li>● Try to stay away from reminders.</li> <li>● Feel numb or no emotions.</li> </ul>



<p><u>Increased arousal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Always afraid something bad will happen.</li> <li>● More easily startled / jumpy.</li> <li>● Trouble with sleep or concentration.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Dissociation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Things feel unreal -- like a dream.</li> <li>● Trouble remembering parts of what happened.</li> <li>● Unwillingness to defend, protect and advance cultural systems/traditions</li> </ul>
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**TRAUMA REACTION (FAMILY/COMMUNITY LEVELS)**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Absence of protective shield or community.</li> <li>● Increased family tension; decreased connectedness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Confusion between family structure, function and process.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Deterioration of intergenerational guidance and exchange.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Erosion of child-centeredness; increased abuse</li> <li>● Erosion of love driven relationships and sacrifice; increased domestic violence.</li> </ul>

**TRAUMA REACTION (SOCIAL/SOCIETAL LEVELS)**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Devaluation of skills and experience.</li> <li>● Thoughts that one's experience is less valuable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Targeted as perpetrators of misbehavior and crime.</li> <li>● Judged as guilty of wrong-doing.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Disrespected and denied respect and high positive regard.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Denigration of cultural lense.</li> <li>● Made to believe that Black ways are not legitimate unless adopted by white/dominant society.</li> </ul>

~The Bay Area Chapter of the Association of Black Psychologists, 2015



## Trauma, Recovery and Resiliency

### **RESILIENCY**

It is the ability or capacity for the person or community to overcome or bounce back after exposure to trauma, including being able to access resources and be supported by one's community and/or environment.

### **POSTTRAUMATIC GROWTH**

An on-going process that refers to a set of positive changes which occur as a result of coping with traumatic event(s). Recovery from trauma includes:

- Confronting historical and contemporary trauma
- Understanding the trauma
- Releasing our pain
- Transcending the trauma

**NOTE:** Spiritual practices (tapping into our divinity and humanity) and community churches remain a primary source resiliency, healing, and recovery, serving as protective factors for African American communities.

### **National/Local Initiative: EMOTIONAL EMANCIPATION CIRCLES (EEC)**

Community Healing Network (CHN) and The ABPsi have been working together since 2011 to build a worldwide movement for the emotional emancipation of Black people--building a network of self-help groups focused on overcoming the lies of White superiority and Black inferiority and the emotional legacies of enslavement and racism. Contact information: [EECircles@communityhealingnet.org](mailto:EECircles@communityhealingnet.org)

### **Local Initiative: ENHANCING THE FABRIC OF FAMILIES (EFF)**

In 2011, the Institute for the Advanced Study of Black Family Life and Culture, Inc. designed the EFF as a healing strategy designed to purposely engage in culturally grounded restoration of the "fabric of the family" and the positive development of Black youth. It is structured to re-establish an enhanced, healthy, well and whole family process wherein the family is child-centered and grounded in love. Contact information: [admin@iasbflc.org](mailto:admin@iasbflc.org)

### **Mental Health and Other Community Healers**

It is recommended that effective services take into account the unique experiences of African Americans and culturally-congruent healing approaches such as Black psychology and Culturecology (culture is the defining substance of all human action). Service providers should be able to articulate how such realities are addressed in their work: Cultural Accountability.

~The Bay Area Chapter of the Association of Black Psychologists, 2015



***“GOD is a term that symbolizes supreme, or ultimate, reality—one infinite spirit. By the same token, consciousness is used to symbolize infinite spirit—all that is exists in consciousness.” ~Linda James Myers***

**For Reflection and Inspiration**  
(In light of your own spiritual practice)

We are human.

We have feelings

We bleed.

We cry.

We love our children.

We are not the sub-human beings they have made us out to be.

We are in pain

But we will not always suffer in this way.

We are made in the image of God\*.

We are the children of the amazing people who made a way out of no way.

We will turn to each other in love, compassion, hope, and determination.

We will draw on the strength of God and our ancestors.

We *will* rise.

And we are rising even now!

~Enola G. Aird





## Wisdom for the Journey Ahead

1. *"We have a beautiful history and we shall create another in the future that will astonish the world."*  
--Marcus Garvey
2. *"Is there something we have forgotten? Some precious thing we have lost wandering in strange lands?"*  
--Arna Bontemps
3. *"The people and the cultures of what is known as Africa are older than the word 'Africa.'... The people now called Africans not only influenced the Greeks and the Romans, they influenced the early world before there was a place called Europe."* --John Henrik Clarke
4. *"A climate of alienation has a profound effect on the Black personality. Often the effect is so crushing that some Blacks, having evidence to the contrary, find it hard to believe that we really were the first to civilize the world."* --Cheikh Anta Diop
5. *"This condition started in the 15th and the 16th centuries with the beginning of the slave trade system. The Europeans not only colonized most of the world, they began to colonize information about the world and its people."*--John Henrik Clarke
6. *"Why, after all this time, ... are we still ranked at the bottom of almost every 'good' list and at the top of the 'bad' lists?"* --Thomas Burrell
7. *"Somebody told a lie one day... They made everything Black, ugly and evil...."* --Martin Luther King, Jr.
8. *[This] culture of oppression has taken a tremendous toll on the minds and bodies of black people."* --Dr. Alvin Poussaint & Amy Alexander
9. *"Much of what we see today is the result of history, unaddressed, repeating itself. That is why people need to know the history, to truly confront it and heal from what has gone before us."* --Isabel Wilkerson
10. *"Merely by describing yourself as Black you have started on a road towards emancipation, you have committed yourself to fight against all forces that seek to use your Blackness as a stamp that marks you out as a subservient being."* --Steven Biko
11. *"We are going to emancipate ourselves from mental slavery because whilst others might free the body, none but ourselves can free the mind."*--Marcus Garvey



12. *"We have to talk about liberating minds as well as liberating society."*--Angela Davis
13. *"If we don't know who we are, then we are whoever somebody says we are."*--Amos Wilson
14. *"The Negro will only be free when he reaches down to the inner depths of his own being and signs with the pen and ink of assertive manhood his own emancipation proclamation."*--Martin Luther King, Jr.
15. *"Take a day to heal from the lies you've been told and the ones you've told yourself."*--Maya Angelou
16. *"Sometimes I feel discriminated against, but it merely astonishes me. How can anyone deny themselves the pleasure of my company?"* --Zora Neale Hurston
17. *"When you stand in the blessings of your mother and God, it matters not who stands against you."*  
--Yoruba Proverb
18. *"I am of the African race ... and it is under a sense of the most profound gratitude to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe."* --Benjamin Banneker
19. *"Let the sky and God be our limit and eternity our measurement"* --Marcus Garvey
20. *"The conqueror writes history. They came, they conquered and they write. You don't expect the people who came to invade us to tell the truth about us..."*--Miriam Makeba
21. *"If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."*--African proverb
22. *"Thus imperialism, like the prehistoric hunter, first killed the being spiritually and culturally, before trying to eliminate it physically. The negation of the history and intellectual accomplishments of Black Africans was cultural, mental murder, which preceded and paved the way for their genocide here and there in the world."*--Cheikh Anta Diop
23. *"You have seen how a man was made a slave; you shall see how a slave was made a man."*--Frederick Douglass
24. *"If your dreams do not scare you, they are not big enough."*--Ellen Johnson Sirleaf
25. *"If you don't like someone's story, write your own."* --Chinua Achebe
26. *"The basic tenet of Black consciousness is that the Black man must reject all value systems that seek to make him a foreigner in the country of his birth and reduce his basic human dignity."*-- Steven Biko
27. *"Freedom is not something that one people can bestow on another as a gift. They claim it as their own and none can keep it from them."*--Kwame Nkruma



28. *"The most potent weapon of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed."*--Steven Biko
29. *"Until the philosophy which holds one race superior and another inferior is finally and permanently discredited and abandoned, everywhere is war..."*--Halie Selassie
30. *"Any movement for the Negro's freedom that overlooks this necessity [of psychological freedom] is only waiting to be buried..."*--Martin Luther King, Jr.
31. *"Our grandfathers had to run, run, run. ...We ain't running no more."*--Kwame Ture
32. *"And we are beautiful."*--Kwame Ture
33. *"I find in being Black, a thing of beauty; a joy; a strength; a secret cup of gladness."*—Ossie Davis
34. *"I am not a descendant of slaves. I am a descendant of human beings who were enslaved."*--Makota Valdina
35. *"Hide nothing from the masses of our people. Tell no lies. Expose lies whenever they are told. Mask no difficulties, mistakes, failures. Claim no easy victories..."* —Amilcar Cabral
36. *"I am not African because I was born in Africa but because Africa was born in me."* —Kwame Nkrumah
37. *"Our lives are a battlefield on which is fought a continuous war between the forces that are pledged to confirm our humanity and those determined to dismantle it.."* —Ngugi wa Thiong'o
38. *"I must identify myself with Africa. Then I will have an identity."*--Fela Kuti
39. *"If you are silent about your pain, they'll kill you and say you enjoyed it."*—Zora Neale Hurston
40. *"You must be unintimidated by your own thoughts ..."* --Nikki Giovanni
41. *"...I write to keep in contact with our ancestors and to spread truth to people."*—Sonia Sanchez
42. *"The work of healing is work for inspirers working long and steadily in a group that grows over the generations, until there are inspirers, healers, wherever our people are scattered, able to bring us together again."* – Ayi Kwei Armah
43. *"It becomes more necessary to see the truth as it is if you realise that the only vehicle for change are these people who have lost their personality. The first step therefore is to make the Black man come to himself; to pump back life into his empty shell; to infuse him with pride and dignity..."* – Steve Biko



44. *“If you don’t understand white supremacy – what it is, and how it works – everything else that you understand will only confuse you.” - Dr. Neely Fuller, Jr.*
45. *“Every man has two educations: that which is given to him, and the other which he gives himself. What we are merely taught seldom nourishes the mind like that which we teach ourselves.”-- Carter Woodson*
46. *“When an individual is protesting society's refusal to acknowledge his dignity as a human being, his very act of protest confers dignity on him.”--Bayard Rustin*



*~NOTES~*