

AuthoraCare Town Hall

Protecting Your Peace and Finding Healing in this Moment

Say:

Our nation and our community have been rocked at its core over the past few weeks and which resulted in a shared trauma that it is important for all of us to recognize, honor, and provide space for. If we do not provide safe and open, non-judgmental spaces for this trauma to be processed, we cannot learn what is to be learned that can bring about the healing we all seek.

This is our attempt to provide that space for you, our community members, especially those in our community that are the most deeply affected by the deaths of and subsequent calls for justice of the deaths of George Floyd. Breonna Taylor. Tony McDade. Ahmaud Arbery. And countless other Black Men and woman that have lost their lives to centuries of racism and oppression in the United States of America.

Opening Introductions/Icebreaker:

5-10 minutes

Say:

To begin, consider how the events of the past couple of weeks have made you feel. We'd like to open up with the following:

Say your name and (Choose one of the following options):

- If you could attribute a color to that feeling what would it be and why?
- Where in your body are you carrying these feelings (are your shoulders tense? Are your eyes and face heavy?)
- Show us how you are feeling through your expression through video *(optional)*

Say:

Many of us may be feeling overwhelmed right now and that's perfectly understandable, you're allowed to feel hurt by this as it is closely related to your identity therefore deeply personal.

- What is one word or phrase that you would use to describe how you feel?

NCCJ Mindfulness Exercise

5-10 minutes

Say:

To help process your feelings in this moment let's consider the following mindfulness exercise to bring things into perspective:

Now let's take a moment to just take a few deep breaths.

After about 20 seconds ask folks to bring into their consciousness something that is affecting them or someone they know directly in relation the events of the past couple of weeks.

N-Name what is affecting you

- Brené Brown says that when we name and own hard things it does not give [the hard things] power, it gives us power."

After about 15 more seconds, say:

Now consider how those that something is making you feel

C-Consider how it makes you feel

- Be honest about how what is causing you suffering makes you feel. When we consider our true feelings, we are able to consider other possibilities that may bring about just enough peace to get me through to the next moment.

After about 15 more seconds, say:

Now continue to connect with those feelings...

C-Connect with those feelings

- Thich Nhat Hahn says we have to care for our emotions like we would a younger sibling, we shouldn't cast them aside, but embrace them, get to know them, intimately. If it is necessary, console your emotions too. Emotions are not the enemy, they are the guideposts that give us access to how what we are experiencing makes us feel, a gift, if examined and embraced.

Let 10 seconds pass and allow folks to (Say):

J-Just be with your emotions

- The goal of the exercise is to simply be aware of your feelings, not to judge them. The less we judge, the easier it will be for us to put our feelings into proper perspective.

Mindfulness Debrief:

What were some things that came up for you during that exercise?

How did connecting with your feelings help you process them?

Releasing Through Writing Exercise:

5-10 minutes

Say:

Many of us may be feeling anxious about what we are experiencing in our communities? What is something that you feel anxious or worried about in relation to events of the past few weeks

It is important that in times of crisis we protect our peace by creating boundaries around the things that bring us peace and releasing those things that do not.

First, **write a list of things that bring you peace?** What are ways that you are providing yourself these things in this time?

Next, consider things that you feel like **you need to release right now** to protect your peace (this doesn't mean "cut off or out" but more so taking a pause or break from something while you to protect your physical and mental well-being).

Finding Hope in Healing

5-10 minutes

One questions that people might have right now is who will we be on the other side of this? It's important that we form a collectively vision a future where needs are met, people are safe, and our community is stronger than ever.

Final Questions

- What is something that you hope the next generation can look back on and say that we did now that contributes to their world being a more fair and just society?
- What will the next generation say about us and what we did in this time to make it a better place?
- What might you have to do, in increments to set the foundation for that possible future?