

RESILIENCE & COMMUNITY CARE

TOOLKIT



A TOOLKIT FOR IMMIGRANT JUSTICE LEADERS



CONTENTS

- 04** Our Mission
- 05** About the Toolkit
- 06** The 7 Steps to Keep Calm & Organize
- 08** Mindful Breathing 101
- 12** Whole-istic Tools for Energetic Replenishment
- 15** Mental Health & Wellness Resources





OUR MISSION

Every day our immigrant community faces uncertainty as the federal government fails to deliver a pathway to citizenship and states across the country pass legislation that targets our people.

Organizing and showing up on behalf of our community can sometimes feel like swimming against the current, pushing us into a state of survival mode and chronic stress. We at United We Dream shout “no more living in fear, no more living in the shadows, and no more living in survival mode, we deserve to thrive!

As freedom fighters, cultivating resilience and community care in our work is necessary for the longevity of our movement. For this reason, United We Dream created the UndocuHealth program, to ensure that we were investing in the joy and healing that our liberation efforts require.

UndocuHealth believes in the power of healing and transformation as fortifying forces that will hold our organizing for generations to come. We create trainings, tools and develop skills to aid with the dismantlement of generational and systemic trauma, we create awareness and normalize conversations around the value of mental health and we aim to decolonize hearts and minds by engaging immigrant youth of color in traditional forms of healing rooted in Indigenous and decolonial wisdom such as body-centered practices, plant based healing and spiritual ceremonies.

The UndocuHealth program invites us to embody the transformation and liberation we seek for our immigrant communities by honoring our daily practices and our spiritual resilience for we know that when we heal ourselves, we heal our world.

Undocuhealth invites you to become a thriving leader by embodying liberation through the radical care practices in this toolkit.

ABOUT THE TOOLKIT

The UndocuHealth Program Resilience and Community Care Toolkit was designed to support you as an immigrant justice organizer and leader. In this toolkit we have curated a variety of community-based healing care tools and resources. Our hope is that you can incorporate these wellness practices into your daily organizing and lead them for others in your community.

1. The first section titled The Seven Steps to Keep Calm & Continue Organizing is designed to give you a step-by-step process in how to lead a community care circle for your local community.
2. The 101 Mindful Breathing section is for you to explore the power of breathing through meditation as a resilience tool that lives inside of us.
3. The Whole-istic Tools for Energetic Replenishment section is for you to explore traditional care practices that allow you to pour into yourself and restore your energy.
4. Lastly, we have compiled a list of relevant mental health and wellness resources to support you and your community.

“

No more living in fear, no more living in the shadows, and no more living in survival mode, we deserve to thrive!

”

7 STEPS TO KEEP CALM AND ORGANIZE

In moments of distress and uncertainty, creating spaces for collective reflection and mutual support is vital for our organizing. The following steps will aid you in leading a community healing circle to process/digest and move through difficult conversations with each other.

1. Set a time of gathering

Set a date that best work for most folks in your community, set an intention for the purpose of the space and remember to practice self compassion.

2. Pick a safe place

Most members of the community already have safe places established in the community. These can be a community center, a local food market, a church, a mosque, a spiritual place, a park, etc. Be aware of spaces where your community already feels safe to be themselves and utilize them to gather.

3. Identify community healers, therapists or mentors for support

Most members of the community already have safe places established in the community. These can be a community center, a local food market, a church, a mosque, a spiritual place, a park, etc. Be aware of spaces where your community already feels safe to be themselves and utilize them to gather.

4. Facilitate a group reflection/platica

Create an inviting energy by burning incense, a candle, or sage. Have folks sit in a circle and invite them to get comfortable. Begin the reflection with a prompt question like “How are you really feeling after the news we received?”. Once folks have shared and processed, wrap up the discussion with a hopeful question like “What makes you feel alive and human?”.

5. Transform the energy into a moment of resistance

Shake off the heaviness and close the space by doing a fun and light activity-encourage folks to lead! If no one volunteers a great activity is our Loving Kindness Meditation. End with a collective chant “I believe that we win!”

6. Provide resources

Have access to updated information regarding the latest news with DACA and other important issues that impact our community across state lines. Have a list of resources for local legal support, mental health, health care, and crisis hotlines.

7. Follow up: Set another time to meet and continue practicing healing and community care activities together!

Healing and resilience must be prioritized for the sake of the future of our movement, healing is not linear therefore it's crucial that we invest in creating on-going spaces for joy and care. Encourage folks to also practice self care as a form of leadership, our practices make us who we are.



MINDFUL BREATHING 101

Mindful breathing is an ancient indigenous practice that has served throughout the globe as the base spiritual practice for humans to relax and ground despite the ever-changing conditions of our world. ***Our bodies are resilient, we carry healing medicine within us; our breath.***

The breath is the bridge between the body and mind, it allows us to activate our calm or “parasympathetic system” when we feel triggered or dysregulated, and ultimately can serve as an inner tool to sustain us as freedom organizers and leaders.

In your body you have two different response mechanisms: the Fight or Flight response, and Rest & Digest response. These two response systems are based in our nervous system and help your body to decide how it will respond to its surroundings.



66

Our bodies are inherently political in a system that seeks to oppress our full humanity, freedom to move and be. When we are connected to our breath and in relationship with our own bodies, we reclaim our agency and become more bold to take action. Mindful breathing is an inner healing tool all of us can tap into to bring balance, clarity and grounding to our lives.

67

Belly Breaths

To activate our Rest and Digest response that allows us to feel centered and calm, we can tune into our breath through the following step-by-step practice called “Diaphragmatic Breathing” or Belly Breathing. Remember to release all expectations and compassionately focus on your breathing, surrendering our thoughts to the Earth/Pachamama.

1. Sit or lie down in a comfortable position on a flat surface.
2. Sit up straight and pull your shoulders back to relax, check in with yourself and your body: “How am I really?”
3. Focusing on the breath, lovingly place one hand on your chest, and one hand on your stomach.
4. Breathe in through your nose for about two seconds.
5. Allow your stomach to expand like a balloon and exhale slowly through your mouth.
6. Repeat 6-10 times, notice what shifts! And remember to practice in community.





WHOLE-ISTIC TOOLS FOR ENERGETIC REPLENISHMENT

Adopted from the “Chingona Guide to Self-Determination in Healing” by Jessica Aranda.

Compassionate Deer Medicine, The Antidote to Fear

Each of us are going through the current crisis in our own unique way, but ALL of us are experiencing some type of trauma, consciously or unconsciously. In such times, it's common to repress difficult emotions like fear and anger in an effort to remain positive and support others. It's also common to find ways to take action, busying ourselves with important work and setting emotions aside to be dealt with later.

Deer remind us to be gentle and compassionate with ourselves and others. Deer look with and heartfelt acceptance at the parts of our lives that are difficult. She listens deeply, encouraging us to feel our emotions as the first step in healing. Deer medicine counteracts violence, harshness, and that which undermines human dignity. It is compassion and loving kindness. Deer medicine is the antidote to fear.

Supporting us in this moment, Deer offers some lessons on how animals process trauma. A deer that has been hit by a car may not sustain serious physical injuries but does not simply jump up into the forest after the car drives off. Instead she lays on the side of the road, shaking. Following her natural somatic (bodily) response, Deer gives herself a moment to process what has happened, allowing her body to reverberate and release trauma on a cellular level. After taking a moment to literally “shake it off”, Deer then stands up and goes on her way.

Human beings also tremble after experiencing trauma, an automatic response we can harness for healing as seen in Trauma Release Exercises (TRE). To harness this same healing, we can also make an extra effort to be gentle with ourselves and others. Deer teaches us to take time to FEEL without judgment or thinking about what we “should” do. Anger, fear, confusion, joy, elation, and excitement are part of a whole range of feelings that are needed in this moment. Emotions are a valuable part of our healing process and it's important to experience them

authentically. Deer offer spaces for emotion while meeting each person with love and deep compassion.

How can you offer Deer Medicine to yourself?

How can you offer Deer Medicine to others?

Radiating Deer Energy: Loving Kindness Meditation

Relaxing before bed or during another still moment, taking a few minutes to do the following meditation can be another very powerful tool for cultivating compassion toward ourselves and others.

1. May_____ be happy
2. May_____ be healthy in body and mind
3. May_____ be safe and protected from inner and outer harm
4. May_____ be free from fear, the fear that keeps them stuck

Recite the mantra 5 rounds:

Round 1: recite for someone in your life that's easy to care about (a family member, a friend, your partner, your pet)

Round 2: recite for yourself

Round 3: recite for someone you don't know very well (someone you've seen in passing, a friend of a friend, a neighbor, someone at work, etc.)

Round 4: recite for someone with whom you've had difficulty - not a trauma, but someone that maybe you're frustrated or annoyed with

Round 5: recite for the collective, starting with your family and friends, your community, the whole city, the state, the whole country, the whole continent, expanding across oceans to include the whole world, all of humanity


Sacred Waters to Replenish our Spirit

Water is one of the most important healing elements that we have. Water is the source of life that provides the "juiciness" for movement of illness, grief, and heavy energy. It refreshes and clarifies, bringing insight and deepened understanding in our interactions with others and with ourselves.

Banos/baths: There's nothing like soaking in a tub of warm water to clear our energy and bring warmth and freshness to our lives. Adding plant medicine to this mix can be very powerful in clearing heaviness and negativity from our spirit-bodies. Any common herbs or flowers are useful in banos and I like to use basil, sage, rosemary and or/ spearmint.

1. Boil 1-3 gallons of water in large pot
2. Place the herbs in the pot and simmer into a strong tea
3. Say a prayer, being clear about our intention for this healing bath. It could be to clear heavy energy, find clarity on a certain situation, release attachments, to get better sleep, or love ourselves more
4. Let the tea cool, leaving the plant medicine in the water.
5. Divide the tea into 3 or 7 portions, using part of the tea and the herbs in a bath everyday for 3 or 7 days.
6. Draw a bath and pour that day's worth of tea and herbs into the water and soak for at least 20 minutes. If we have a bathtub, no problem! We can just pour the tea and herbs over our heads in the shower. Soaking just our hands, feet, or hips and buttock (sitz bath style) works well too.
7. Gather the used herbs and set them aside to allow them to dry and burn later.

What types of cleanse/banos work for YOU? Which herbs or flowers call on you?



MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS RESOURCES

Hotlines and Crisis Prevention Resources:

[The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:](#) 988 (Call or Text)

- Free and confidential 24/7
- Para español: marque 988 y presione 2 o envíe AYUDA a 988

[24/7 Suicide Hotline for LGBTQ Youth:](#)

- Text START to 678-678 or call 1-866-488-7386

[Help Someone Else:](#) this resource takes you through a step-by-step guide in how to support someone going through a mental health crisis.

[Mental Health and Wellness Tips:](#) A compilation of wellness resources and tools

[Rights you have in a relationship:](#) a reminder of your rights in a relationship and boundaries for a healthier relationship.

[Know your Rights:](#) Is it safe to apply for health insurance or seek health care?

Search engines to find services:

[UndocuHealth National Mental Health Directory](#)

[Immigrants Rising's Mental Health Connector](#)

[Find a service organization near you](#)

[Find a charitable or free clinic](#)

[Find a somatic therapy practitioner](#)

[Network of Latinx Mental Health Practitioners](#)

[South Asian Mental Health Initiative & Network](#)

[Therapy that Liberates: Centering Black Liberation](#)

[Open Path Psychotherapy Collective](#)

[Agua Y Sangre Healing](#)

Recommended resources:

[Nalgona Positivity Pride](#): offers a vital space for BIPOC individuals to celebrate and embrace their bodies and identities

[Decolonizing Therapy](#): Dr. Jennifer Mullan creates community spaces to learn about mental health from a decolonial perspective.

[Rest for Resistance](#): Strives to uplift marginalized communities, those who rarely get access to adequate health care or social support. We center the experiences of Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC).

Additional Resources:

PODCASTS

[A Community of Practice in Collective Healing and Social Change](#)

[Yoga Is Dead: Decolonizing the practices of yoga](#)

[The Homecoming Podcast with Dr. Thelma](#)

BOOKS

Eastern Body Western Mind by Anodea Judith

Waking The Tiger; Healing Trauma by Peter Levine

Swagger by Lisa Bloom

Critical Race Theory by Richard Delgado & Jean Stefancic

Breaking the Chain of Psychological Slavery by Na'Im Akbar PhD

Gifts of Imperfection by Brene Brown

Pleasure Activism by Adrienne Maree Brown

INSTAGRAM ACCOUNTS

@UnitedWeDream

@Decolonizingtherapy

@Browngirltherapy

@somaticexperiencingint

@thenapministry





If you are interested in learning more and becoming an UndocuHealth leader for your community, visit us:

www.UnitedWeDream.org/undocuhealth

Text Uhealth to 787-57