

Fostering Fortalezas:
Resiliency Building Skill
Practices during Stressful
Times

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Setting an Intention

- Acknowledge of the land, our roots, our community and our ancestors
- Blessing this moment
- Intention and Purpose

Learning Objectives

- ❧ 1. Practice culturally adapted self-care skills focused on stress release, relaxation, and resiliency building.
- ❧ 2. Discuss how to incorporate self-care in participants' work with BIPOC communities.
- ❧ 3. Engage in and practice self-care.

LET US SHARE

As a community helper what have been some of your experiences regarding the pandemics? (COVID, social injustices, wildfires)?

What feelings and experiences do you have witness in the communities you help?

Community Helpers Experiences

- Community helpers who serve BIPOC communities may experience high emotional stress levels due to witnessing the suffering, inequities, oppression and social injustices within these communities.
- Stress levels may be greater in those who identified as BIPOC due to the feelings of duty, collectivistic perspective and responsibility to care for their communities.
- BIPOC community helpers may place their own needs to one side, forfeiting any time or space for engaging in self-care and wellness.
- Ongoing feelings of distress can contribute to a sense of 'burnout' as well as poor emotional and physical health.

Toxic stress, vicarious trauma and the Pandemics

Healthcare and community workers showed higher stress levels, leading them to perceive more serious tensions and difficulties in teamwork, physical fatigue, somatic illnesses, irritability, and difficulty in maintaining control over the situation, in taking decisions, and in predicting the consequences of their actions

(Vagni, Maiorano, Giostra, & Pajardi, 2020)

- Community helpers may be at risk of developing burn out, compassion fatigue and/or vicarious trauma.

What can be done?

- One method of coping with the emotional distress experienced in the workplace, is by focusing on building strength and resiliency.
- Minimal research, resources and supports focused on promoting emotional wellness and positive psychological well-being of individuals working in helping professions focused on supporting BIPOC communities.
- Models of resiliency and self-care can be informed by cultural factors related to BIPOC communities

Charlemos (Let us chat)

What words or images come to mind when you think about resiliency? What does resiliency mean to you?

What is Resiliency?

- Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress
- “Bouncing back” from difficult experiences-thriving and not just surviving
- Being resilient does not mean that a person never experiences difficulty or distress
- The road to resilience is likely to involve considerable emotional distress-growth in the mist of difficulties
- Help us identify **buffering** variables that reverse, prevent, or heal this process

Resilience includes...

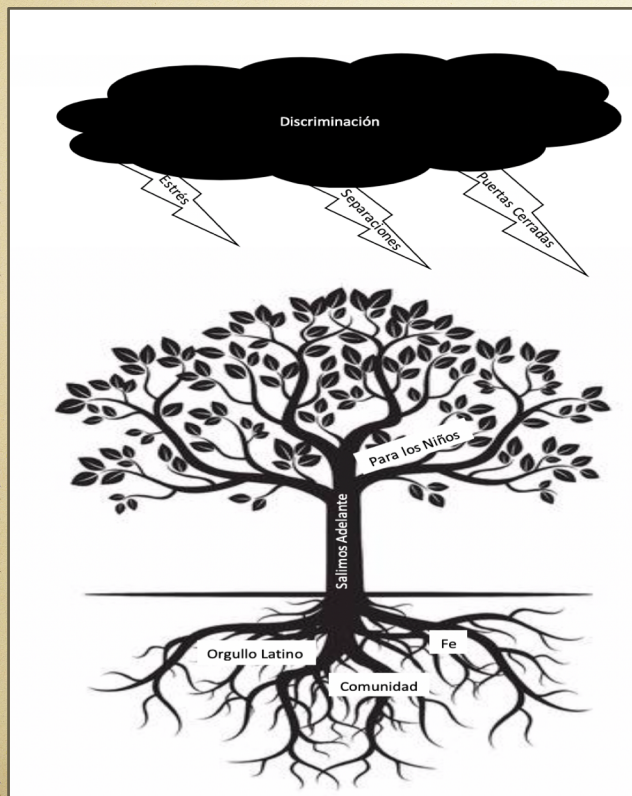
- Behaviors, thoughts, and actions that can be learned and developed by anyone-not a trait
- The capacity to meet demands, make realistic plans and take steps to carry them out
- A positive view of yourself and confidence in your strengths and abilities
- Skills in communication and problem solving
- The capacity to manage strong feelings and impulses
- Taking action to deal with challenges, problems and setbacks
- Seeking support and assistance-know when to ask for help
- Knowing when to stop, rest, and replenish inner resources
- Ability to form and maintain healthy relationship

Does the previous definitions
consider BIPOC communities?

What does resiliency means to us?

From a recent study with Latinxs

(Fuson, Koslofsky & Zúñiga, 2020)



- Resiliency is rooted in community, faith, and cultural pride (orgullo Latino)
- Resiliency is strengthened by a desire and a need to “salir adelante” (move forward, go ahead, rise up and flourish)
- Resiliency is maintaining wellbeing and hope
- Resiliency is about “hope” for the children

Steps for Resiliency BIPOC communities: A theory/praxis in progress

- Conciencia y Paxis: Self-Reflection and Self-care (other care)
- **Resistencia:** Relaxation and Restoration
- **Orientación Social:** Community and Connection
- **Liberación:** Attention, Action and Acceptance



Conciencia: Self-Reflection and Self-Care

- Understand who and where are we coming from? (orgullo Latinx)
- Understand who and what is my energy force (por los niños)?
- Understand our own strengths, weaknesses, emotions, values, natural inclinations, tendencies, motivation and **culture**?
- Understand if trauma mastery is a factor in our life? And Reclaim spaces for healing?
- Find meaning by exploring the significance of an experience and situation-(Hope for the children)
- Look for opportunities for self-discovery

Self-reflection Practices

- Talking with others
- Praying and/or asking for guidance (ancestors guidance)
- Journaling or other writing exercises
- Talking to yourself out loud
- Writing a story
- Practicing mindfulness
- Doing yoga or Tai chi or other meditative/self-reflective practices
- Being in nature
- Tracking and paying attention to your feelings and thoughts
- Reading about the topics
- Identifying important questions
- Identifying strengths
- Identifying the role of acculturation, acculturative stress, internalized oppression, intergenerational trauma and intergenerational healing
- Reading about social justice topics and reflecting upon as BIPOC individual

Questions to ask oneself

» What is my cultural pride? What gives me energy? What is life giving to me? Why I am doing what I am doing? How are I am feeling? What are my motivations? What is going on with my body? Where is my mind and my heart? What is going on with my spirit, my relations? What are my gifts, strengths and my talents? What was going on for me when XX was happening? What did I want to happen today? What went well? What did not go the way it was intended? What did I learn? What will I do differently next time? What do I need to let go of in order to move on? Is this working? What are my values? Is what I am currently doing live giving?

A quick Self-reflection

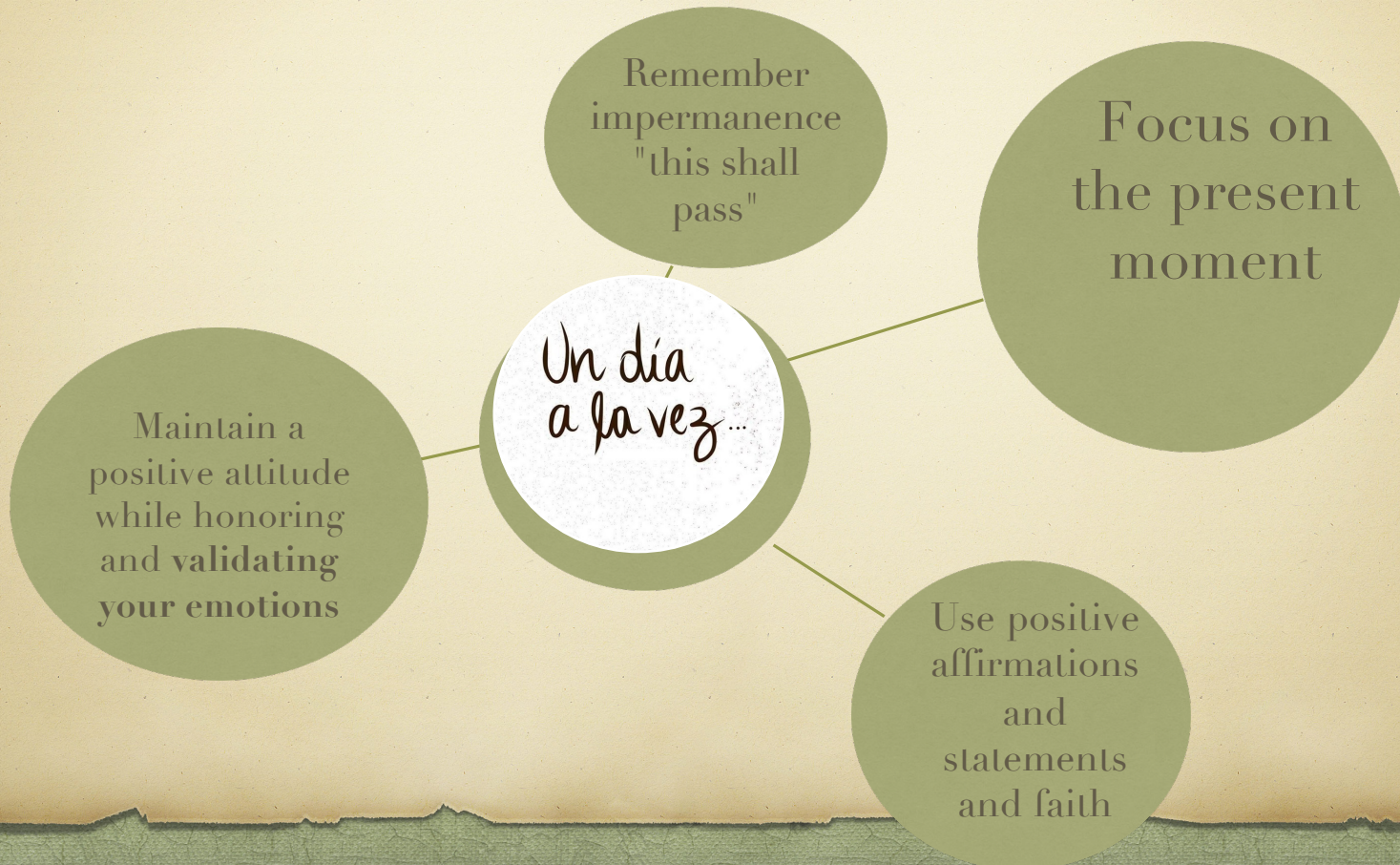
<https://app.sli.do/event/zruyyrv/embed/polls/2d585184-815e-4389-9060-ebf5ec3fdcb1>

What comes to mind when seeing these results?

Conciencia: Self-care (other care)

- Behaviors, thoughts, and attitudes that support your social, spiritual, cognitive, emotional well-being and physical health.
- Strategies to reduce stress and rejuvenate
- In BIPOC communities self-care may mean other care/community care
- Five (5) activities for everyday Self-care for Latinx people

Live 1 day at the time (day by day-moment by moment)



Practice 2 cycles of 4-7-8 breathing

- Empty the lungs of air
- Breathe in quietly through the nose for 4 seconds
- Hold the breath for a count of 7 seconds
- Exhale forcefully through the mouth, pursing the lips and making a “whoosh” sound, for 8 seconds
- Practice 2 to 4 cycles a day!

Let us Practice



Count 3 blessings

- » Share with others 3 of your talents, abilities, gifts or blessings
- » Write, journal, share, talk, observe, notice, meditate, pray, use social media
- » Write letters, practice in meetings, make it a tradition/ritual, say it to your family, your love ones, your community
- » Practice gratitude-significant research about the positive outcome of gratitude

Gratitude Prompts

- I'm grateful for three things I hear:
- I'm grateful for three things I see:
- I'm grateful for three things I smell:
- I'm grateful for three things I touch/feel:
- I'm grateful for these three things I taste:
- I'm grateful for these three blue things:
- I'm grateful for these three animals/birds:
- I'm grateful for these three friends:
- I'm grateful for these three teachers:
- I'm grateful for these three family members:
- I'm grateful for these three things in my home:
- I'm grateful for these three people who hired me:
- I'am grateful for these three _____:

Consider the 4 Legs of Emotional Balance

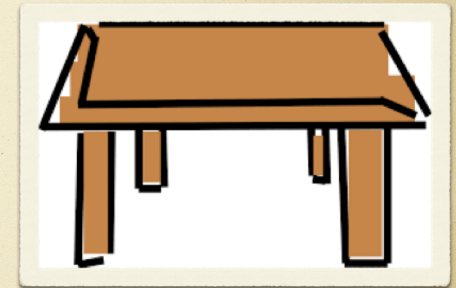
Every
Day

Set a reachable
goal-
appropriate for
current
conditions and
culture

Find an
element of
pleasure/Joy
(cultural joy)

Focus physical
health (eat,
hydrate, sleep,
move) as taught
by granparents

Connect with
another person,
being (e.g. pet,
friend, family,
God, nature) &
community



Adapted from Hitch
and Flemming

Use the 5 Senses to Reduce Stress

- 5. Sight: Look around and find 5 different things in your environment that you can see, and describe them in as much detail as you can,
- 4. Hearing: Close your eyes and try identify four different sounds you can hear and describe them in detail.
- 3. Touch: Find three ways to interact with your environment using your sense of physical touch.
- 2. Smell: Seek out two things you can smell:
- 1. Taste: Is there something in your environment you can safely taste? A drink or food nearby? If not, simply notice the taste inside your mouth.

Let us Practice: Culturally
Adapted Activity using 5 senses



Other Components of Resiliency for BIPOC Communities

- **Resistencia: Relaxation and Restoration**
- Refugee/sanctuary versus safe places
- Need to be reclaimed-may involve self-reflection about the role of oppression on our life (what prevents me from saying No? What prevents me from resting?)
- Involve making time and space to enjoy life and celebrate your culture, history, traditions
- Intergenerational wisdom

Other components continued...

Orientación Social: Community and Connection

- Cornerstone of emotional health and wellness
- Built community-give to your community
- Amplify voices

Liberación: Attention, Action and Acceptance

- Identify ways that are likely to

work well for you as a cultural being as part of your own personal strategy for fostering resilience

- Reclaim your culture, your value, your position
- Recognize intergenerational wisdom-Sabidurias (e.g. Serenity Prayer)
- Advocacy (start small/local level) and social justice

Discussion

- How can you incorporate self-care in your work with BIPOC communities?
- How can you reclaim resiliency and self-care for yourself and/or BIPOC communities?

Muchas Gracias!

For more information please reach out to...

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