

BOXING AS HEALING

SQUARING UP & LETTING GO: TOOLKIT

- REFLECTION EXERCISES
- FIGHTING FOR YOUR LIFE - TIME TO RESET AND RESTORE
- RITUAL OF CARE AND LETTING GO



REFLECTION EXERCISES

Thank you for your participation in the Boxing as Healing video. Thank you for taking time to tend to yourself, for holding space for what is difficult, and for remembering your power.

We created a few tools that can support deeper reflection building upon the inner work you began through the boxing exercises. You can use these prompts as a way to continue processing your feelings. You may be feeling grief, rage, sadness, longing, hurt, despair, dissociation, joy, hope, connection, peace, frustration. Whatever you are feeling is okay.

The Chicago Torture Justice Center (CTJC) works through a politicized healing model. Politicized healing is the belief that our healing is political and our politics are healing. Politicized healing addresses the harm—felt by individuals and communities—caused by historic and evolving systems of oppression such as policing, prisons, torture, racism etc.

Through the practice of politicized healing, we are able to:

HEAL

Engage in a self-determined process of restoring ourselves and connecting to others and what we care about

DISMANTLE

Unapologetically expose and deconstruct systems of harm

CREATE

Build reparative power towards new paradigms that we collectively imagine for our communities.

Politicized healing includes telling our truth without qualifications, releasing shame, building empathy and power, and being re-membered into community.

See the next page for three reflection prompts that are themed around politicized healing principles of: **heal, dismantle, create**. Each exercise has a poem in theme with healing, dismantling, and creating. All of these poems are written by poet and writer **Naayirah Waheed**.

Healing is difficult work. It is lifelong work. Systems of oppression like racism, policing, prisons, create additional barriers to healing for Black folks and folks of color. So we affirm that we deserve to heal. We are worthy of healing. Though healing feels impossible at times, we affirm healing is possible for ourselves and our communities.

Fortunately, we can begin or deepen the process of healing by simply giving ourselves space to heal. A little can go a long way.

HEAL

in our own ways
we all break.
it is okay
to hold your heart outside of your body
for days.
months.
years.
at a time.

—heal

- Think of a small example of healing you've experienced in your life. What does it feel like to remember that you can heal?
- So often, healing can feel impossible because we beat ourselves up mentally for not being where we believe we "should" be. Think about your healing journey. How might it be different if you give yourself permission to 'break' as Nayyirah Waheed says in the poem?
- What are one or two things you are healing from?
- **My healing is inevitable.** If this affirmation felt true for you, how might this change your feelings or your perspective?

DISMANTLE

when you remove them from your nucleus.
your being is then
allowed
to
focus
its power
on
turning your life.
into.
your soul's work.
you become yours.
again.

—decolonization | center

- What thoughts came up for you as you read the poem? Did it resonate with you at all?
- How would your life be different without oppression? What does your 'soul work' look like to you?
- Think about Naayirah Waheed's phrase 'you become yours'. What does this mean to you? Do you feel like you are yours? Why or why not?

CREATE

you will find your way.
it is
in the
same place
as
your love.

—seek

- What, if anything, stands out to you in this poem? What inspiration does it raise for you?
- Repeat the first line of the poem to yourself 3-5 times (or however many times feels right to you). How does it feel to say that to yourself? Does it feel true? Does it feel phony?
- In the spirit of the poem, answer this question: where is your love? What are you seeking to create in your life? Dream into that for the next 10 minutes. Revisit it as often as you need to and allow it to be a grounding force of hope and inspiration for you.

FIGHTING FOR YOUR LIFE - TIME TO RESET AND RESTORE

Healing and Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation
and that
is an **act of political warfare.**

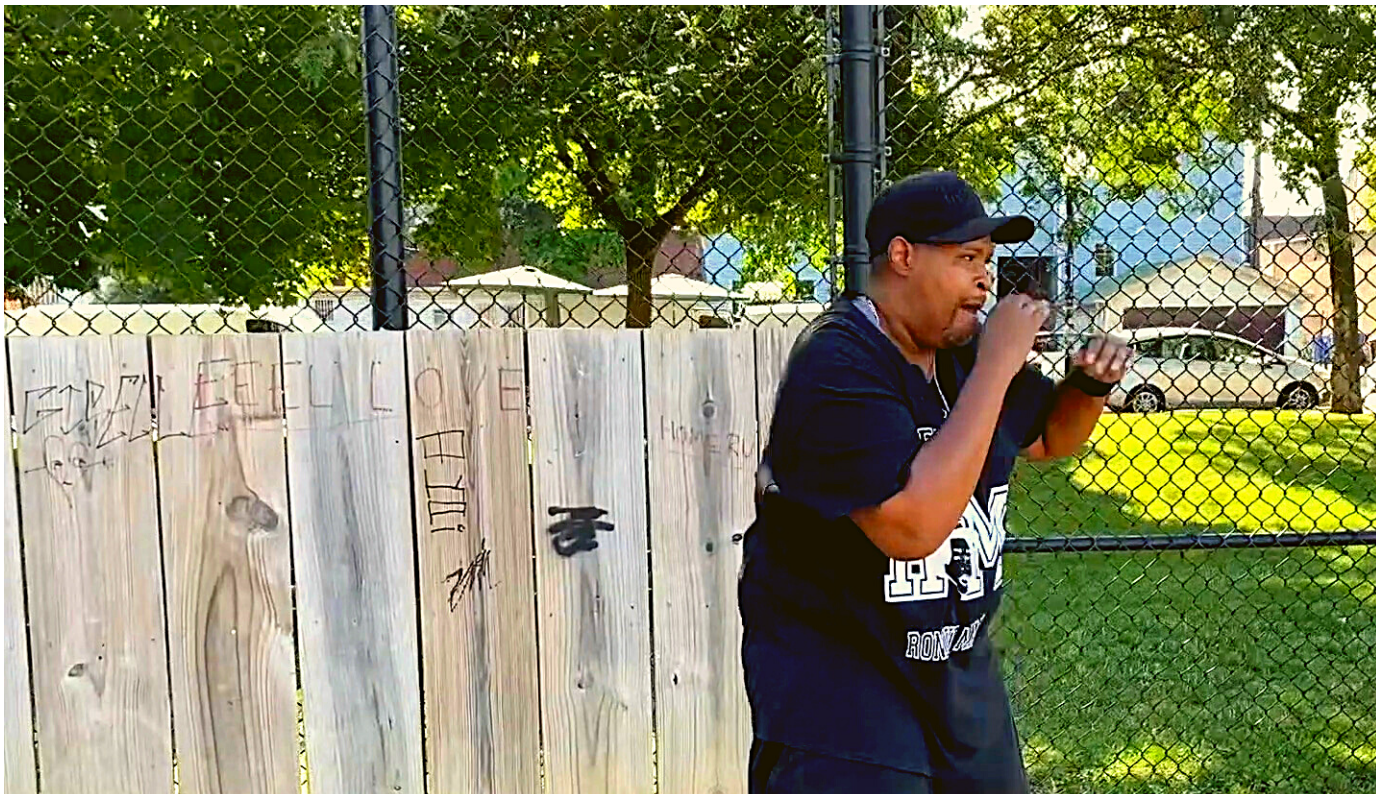
- Audre Lorde

Fighting for your life is no joke. It takes a lot. Every time we step up for our right to exist, the nervous system pumps up to help our bodies get the job done.

But what about when that amped up feeling lasts for too long, and we can't seem to come down?

That feeling of being wide awake at all times, even when all we've been doing is thinking about the fight or even preparing like we did here with the boxing exercise?

If we want to stay in the game for the long-haul, we have to be able to fall back and reset so that we can find our balance and simply rest (so that we're ready for the next time).



Check out these clips from folks who know that liberation requires healing and restoration.

Prentis H: Street Somatics: Tips for Regulating Nervous Systems in Uprisings
(Self-regulating/Co-regulating Practice)

https://www.instagram.com/tv/CA3RW0uA8CW/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

The Collective St. Louis: A Moment to Breathe (A Breathing Practice)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pH2ObA0pr_4

Micky Scottbey Jones: Brave Space (A Guided Meditation)

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?t=577&v=959459594501552>

RITUAL OF CARE AND LETTING GO

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you

- Isaiah 43:2

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

A vessel to fill with water (a cup, a mug, a glass, a vase, a bottle, a bowl, etc.)

A clear space either outside in the grass or dirt, or inside perhaps over a sink or a plant

5-20 minutes

RITUAL

Dedicate a time and space to your personal healing

Fill the vessel with water and gather all of the materials listed above into the space

Sit or stand comfortably, and place one hand over your heart and another on your stomach

Now breathe

Notice your beating heart, and your hands rising and falling with your heart and lungs

Bring both hands in front of yourself

Rub them together and think about how much they help you everyday

Rub them...they are yours and yours alone

Are they tight anywhere? Rub them to work out the tension and soreness

Now take the water

Pour it out onto your hands

Lift some water to rinse your face

Wash over your hands and face as many times as you like

Each time, thank your "self" for:

Breathing

Showing up (for yourself and others)

Not quitting

Existing

Being love

With the last of the water, think of what you want to let go

Speak it aloud

Pour the water out over your hands and face one last time

And

Let it let go

If there are tears

Let them go too..

Down

Into the sink, onto the earth, into a plant

Release it

Let it go

Knowing That You Are:

Sacred

Powerful

Important

Unalone

And

Worthy of this healing moment.

Say a prayer/affirmation (if you like)

Repeat this ritual (as many times as you like)