



Resiliency & Self-Care Newsletter Winter/Spring 2021, Issue 6

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Hello, and welcome to a new year and a new season. We hope this latest newsletter edition finds you keeping well and steady. The year 2020 felt like an unending marathon of “Groundhog Day.” Yet breakthroughs are finally on the horizon: medical and societal.

What may seem a silly holiday like Groundhog Day is actually rooted in ancient earth-based wisdom traditions. The celebration of Imbolc marks the

midpoint between the Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox. It is a hopeful time of year. Sunlight increases more each day, plants and animals begin to emerge from hibernation, and new growth is on its way.

We hope these offerings to you this season help you find the power in the pause, growth during the time in-between. You have done so much already to take care and stay resilient. Just one more push through this last stretch...

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A few practices to take a moment to breathe, release, and be present:

[Poem: “Right Here” by Dane Anthony](#)

[Aly Halpert](#) is an LGBTQ Jewish activist, educator, and organizer who writes songs to build community and liberation. This song honors the grief of these times, inviting us to let go.

[Song: “Loosen Loosen” by Aly Halpert](#)

In “the rush and pressure of modern life,” are there places where you over-do or take on too much? Paula Gamble-Grant offers a quick practice inspired by a quote from Thomas Merton.

[Practice: “Pause...breathe deep” by Paula Gamble-Grant](#)

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[Parker Palmer](#), author, educator, activist, founder of the Center for Courage and Renewal, and former community organizer, offers a meditation on the turning seasons and the possibilities found within.

[Blog: “Spring is Mud and Miracle”- The On Being Project](#)

Waiting can be excruciating. We want to always keep going and doing. But this article from Mindful magazine asks if we can see that “there’s wisdom in waiting. Sometimes, it’s the only sane thing to do. Delays can be providential. And time has a way of honing our perceptions and skills in meaningful ways.”

[Practice: The Wisdom of Waiting](#)

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Undoubtedly, caring for ourselves and our communities throughout this time has been no easy feat. Yet remember that even small actions and brief moments add up. We all have access to take a few deep breaths, to rest our eyes, or to place a hand on our heart and feel its steady beat. Contemplative practices offer us a way to strengthen those inner muscles of resilience and then act from a place of wisdom and peace.

Take pride in your continued grassroots efforts. Like gardeners who work to loosen the soil and prepare it for new seeds, through your organizing work, political and societal gridlock loosens, too. All our hands and voices are needed in the months ahead. To do your part and tend “the root of inner wisdom which makes work fruitful” is more than enough.

As we collectively move towards restoring health and new ways of being together again, what are some things you can do to gain a sense of balance this season?

Let’s [“look well to the growing edge”](#) as Dr. Howard Thurman reminds us. Be safe, be well, and keep looking for the light.

"It is the extra breath from the exhausted lung, the one more thing to try when all else has failed, the upward reach of life when weariness closes in upon all endeavor. This is the basis of hope in moments of despair, the incentive to carry on when times are out of joint and men and women have lost their reason, the source of confidence when worlds crash and dreams whiten into ash. Such is the growing edge incarnate.

Look well to the growing edge."

- Dr. Howard Thurman

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Take care,

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on behalf of the Virginia Organizing Self-Care and Healing Justice team:

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