



Reflections on Self-Care and (In)Justice: Commemorating the 4th Anniversary of Educators Doing Justice (EDJ)

EDJ Collective

Social pollution threatens our humanity.

We are in survival mode.

Depleted

Low on oxygen, low on light, low on food, low on ICU beds, low on hope
and kindness

Environmentally contaminated, socially toxic

Emotionally drained from continually trying to heal from the wounds of

Apathy, disrespect, sexism, racism, poverty, and neglect

Unemployment, food lines, evictions

Black lives gone.

Let's begin ... again.

Our eyes look out onto the world;

train them to look inward.

Now is the time for taking stock.

Imbalance happens

When I engage in the woke/critical/radical/revolutionary olympics.

Imbalance happens

When only anger feeds my action and

I can tell others the things I cannot tell myself.

when I have to have all the answers, because I am afraid to say, "I don't know."

Imbalance happens

When I think I'm a savior, when I'm the only one.

Let's begin, again.

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Now is the time for action,
And yet good things take time
 It takes time to build coalitions that weave a tight-knit community of support
 To honor the beauty of Ventura County
 To speak truth
Yes, I am building, too.

If good things take time,
let me enjoy the journey.
I tell my students just do the best you can.
Focus on what you can do.
I can say that to myself too!
If good things take time,
let us enjoy this journey.
The best learning comes from humility and being in community.

Listening to our realities is an ongoing challenge.
In our school districts
in Oxnard, Simi, Santa Paula, Hueneme
the seeds of institutional racism and exploitation
were planted
centuries ago
 in the missions,
 in segregated schools
 in the fields.

Look around you.
Who is reaping the benefits of this harvest?

Let's begin. Again.

In every situation, examine equity:
job, housing, and food security,
comforts not afforded to all. Let's move forward with agency.

We trust that we know what is best for our students and community
We will be brave
To decolonize our minds
To improve our part of the world while we're here
We will sustain our social justice family.

Teach the whole person.
Focus on supporting students' basic needs.
Acknowledge our responsibility.
Share our wealth, share our light.
With students and families

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Food, clothing, shelter.
In solidarity with others
From the individual to the collective, from the well-known to the unknown,
And back around.
Connect,
Hold space for families and students
Affinity spaces
In languages families speak
To share the weight of caring.
Inviting and welcoming the whole child into all learning spaces
Into libraries, classrooms, zoom,
Into our hearts and minds
Sharing.

Pull the curtains.
Throw open a window.
Let the light in.
Feel the ocean breeze over Silver Strand,
And the Oxnard Plain,
Nyland Acres, Saticoy, and Fillmore
From Saviers to the Avenue
Embracing the possibilities for transformation and
Connecting our communities.

Let's begin again.

I affirm that ...

I keep my heart protected so it doesn't get damaged in the unjust world.
I keep my heart content because therein lies my balance.
I keep my heart singing because I learned that from nature.
I keep my heart rested so I can serve when I see troubles weigh down others' hearts.
I keep my heart colorful to reflect the beauty around me.
I keep my heart safe.
 It's the only one I have.
I keep my heart.

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About EDJ

EDJ requires of its members a firm commitment to upholding the equal dignity, worth, and humanity of all people and to promoting educational equity, access, and success for all students. These ideals are inspired by Martin Luther King, Jr.'s wisdom, that "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere," and by Audre Lorde's caution, that "The master's tools will never be used to dismantle the master's house." We understand these teachings to mean that those who pursue justice only for themselves (e.g., white feminists who are racist, for example, or racial equality workers who are heterosexist, or advocates for people with disabilities who are classist), can achieve only limited gains in their single-issue efforts. We believe, with Lorde, that "There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle, because we do not lead single-issue lives." EDJ is committed to cultivating and enacting a coalition mindset, networking with other inclusive justice workers in the region, and building a system for shared communication and positive, productive action in pursuit of social justice in and through education

<https://www.educatorsdoingjustice.org/>