

MICRO-CARE

SMALL ACTS OF RESILIENCE
FOR LIVING WITHIN THE EARTH'S
CARRYING CAPACITY

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This work took place on the unceded territories of the xʷməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish) and Səlílwətaʔ (Tseil-Waututh) Nations and the territories of the Jicarilla Apache, Pueblos, and Núu-agma-tʼavv̥-p̥ (Ute).

As uninvited guests, we humbly acknowledge where we are, and also that Indigenous ways of knowing—shared through writing, storytelling, and responsibility to place—have guided this work.

While a land acknowledgment is itself a small act, it is a prompt to all of us to remember that we are on Indigenous land. Let this be an opening for all of us to contemplate ways to support movements for Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination.

Avi Farber, Jean Chisholm, Julie Van Oyen
and Laura Kozak, 2020

In April of 2020, while we and the world scrambled to come to terms with a global pandemic, a small group of us assembled to answer a call from the Canadian Association of Graduate Studies. The call was to respond to a Policy Horizons Canada report called *The Next Generation of Emerging Global Challenges: Living within the Earth's Carrying Capacity*, produced to “identify the next generation of global challenges for consideration by SSHRC”. This 114 page report felt so heavy, so mammoth, so intimidating—and yet so important—to reply to. How could we, from the humble makeshift workspaces of our kitchens and bedrooms, generate something in response? And how could we do this while managing our own mental health and well-being through a time where everything felt like quicksand?

This project began from a place of searching for some optimism and agency in the shadow of massive and systemic forces. We documented and discussed modest actions of resilience and care for ourselves, each other and the systems surrounding us: our weekly discussions, secret instagram, and informally shared reading list themselves becoming a typology of care. Weekly calls evolved into reading and writing, and we let the project be led by our instincts through the spring of 2020, a period of time where each week felt new in tone; the result of almost-daily bombshells in the news.

We wanted to open the project to voices beyond our own, without replicating the vacuous generalism of an open call. Relationality being an important part of care that we discussed, we each decided to invite one person from within our own circles to contribute a text and take part in a discussion. This approach is something we



learned from Holly Schmidt and Justin Langlois (Float School), and is a way of working that we offer to others. Mimicking fractals, where “infinitely complex patterns are self-similar across different scales” (maree brown, 51, 2017) we hoped to bring together divergent thinking and interdisciplinary approaches that started with a group where everyone had a social stake. This report holds our divergent but intersecting reflections on care, beginning from the smallest seed of ourselves. We think strategies and approaches like this are vital in meeting the complex challenges of existence as 21st century humans. Through remaining humble relative to the global challenges laid out in the Policy Horizons Canada report, we hope our work can create a container for complex and meaningful interactions to spill from.

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JULIE VAN OYEN

“A leaf a gourd a shell a net a bag a sling a
sack a bottle a pot a box a container. A holder.
A recipient.”

Ursula Le Guin, *The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction*¹

In the face of staggering ecological and sociopolitical turmoil, I am submerged. Daily reports of burning rainforests, leaking pipelines, rising temperatures, viral pandemic, police brutality, white supremacy: I am engulfed. Adrift in Story's End, a roiling sea of hindsight and impotence and blame, drowning in human shame. How did we get here? Is the story, as Le Guin says, truly reaching its end? The Hero's story, the killer story of mammoth-slayers, conquerors, colonizers, seems to have run out. All of the mammoths are dead. As a container, Earth is full. Less full of life, now, yet heavier than ever. As a bag, it is leaky; pierced through by the straight, sharp arrows of the Heroes and their linear stories. Its capacity to carry us in this form is waning.

A small wooden boat appears, more of a canoe than an ark. Hands reach over the side to grasp my sodden collar and pull me in. We are small, here in the vast ocean, but we are sheltered. Inside this bobbing bottle, we tell stories to pass the time. We relate and collect tales of small moments making small lives, and weave them into wind socks and nets of our own hair. We are Le Guin's scattered people. The people of the wild-oat patch, and their kids. The gatherers, the snackers, the makers, the thinkers, the singers. The ones who hold bags that hold things like seeds, slings that hold babies. This boat holds no Heroes, just people.



People: Tree and rock people, river people, human people of all kinds, fur and feather people. Some of us hold bowls brimming with Kimmerer's strawberries;² gifted to us by an earth who still loves us despite everything. As Kimmerer relates, by being holders, recipients of these gifts, we are inextricable from the land who gave them. Some of us hold McIntosh's invisible knapsack;³ a bag to be unpacked and sorted through. These containers are holding things in "a particular, powerful relation to one another and to us" (Le Guin, 34, 1988). Through our relating to each other, holding with each other, we carry together. Care together. In the following pages, we think and write together and collect our stories like beads on loops of string. We gather together and pour words like cupped hands holding water. This small collaborative effort emerges as one of many in "this vast sack, this belly of the universe, this womb of things to be and tomb of things that were, this unending story" (Le Guin, 37, 1988). Suddenly, the boat doesn't seem so small, nor so lost.

1 Le Guin's (1988) *The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction* offers an alternative way of being human to the usual story of pre-historic hunters and weapon-wielders. This one theorizes that before "the luxury" of sharp tools and weapons, humans quite possibly had already been using containers for storing food, valuables, children and even themselves (via houses) for a very long time. This is important to allow space for humans to be collectors and sharers as well as (and perhaps before) killers and consumers, a space we need now possibly more than ever.

2 From the chapter entitled "The Gift of Strawberries" in Kimmerer's (2013) *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants*. The chapter invites us to consider the relationships produced through the practice of gift-giving (and receiving). For example, when we receive wild strawberries from the giving earth, and understand them for the gifts they are, we are entangled in ongoing relations of reciprocity that requires us to in turn care for the earth.

3 McIntosh's (1988) "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" metaphorically describes white privilege as a knapsack filled with 'tools' ready to be used at any moment of need—"special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools, and blank checks". McIntosh asks those of us that carry this bag to be accountable to the unearned advantages we carry with us.

BEADS ON STRING

TEXTS ON CARE FROM OUR OWN
COLLECTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS,
STRUNG TOGETHER

MOUSY MOUSE

AVI FARBER

“Mousy Mouse!” “Mousy Mouse!”

It’s Maya’s way of saying don’t come out of your hiding places as she walks through the kitchen. Either the mice have taken over my house, or I have intruded on theirs. Hard to tell. They like it above the decorative wood poles that make up the ceiling. It must remind them of the fields of brush that surround the house as far as you can see, though more welcoming of course. I hear them moving around up there at night snuggling into their beds of insulation. During the daytime they sprint out of the cozy nook behind the oven making Maya jump back and scream “AH! Jesus!”

They leave hantavirus poop bombs around my tooth brush that stain the tile grout brown as they dissolve under my sprays of disinfectant. It’s pretty gross actually. I don’t like to kill things but they got used to the ultrasonic pest deterrents I bought on Amazon after two weeks. I start trapping them. Seven in three days. I put on my respirator and rubber gloves. These aren’t just mice. They are Deer Mice, and potentially carry Hantavirus in a region of Northern New Mexico close to where the virus originated. Hantavirus, though rare, is similar to Covid-19 in both pathology and presentation. Though it cannot be transmitted between humans, it has a fatality rate of 36%, and starts with a fever and body aches that can progress to respiratory failure.



Image – Avi Farber

Beads on String

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These mice are walking manifestations of the danger we all feel surrounded by Covid-19 and I can kill them. But should I? The act doesn't kill my fear, nor change the fact that I now assume all Deer Mice are guilty carriers. Mouse 8 was partially trapped and ran across the room the other night. I wait to dispose of the trap until the next afternoon because I hate doing it so much. Balancing on one leg, my other one is broken, I bend over to pick up the trap and notice the mouse is still alive. Their leg has been broken by the trap. Pain shoots through my calf as the bones twist, I feel nauseous. I'm losing my balance.

Avi Farber is a multimedia artist working with woodfired ceramics, documentary photography, 3D Printing, and new media/sound, based in New Mexico, USA. Drawn to the moments that break through the distractions of daily life, Avi documents people in environmental frontiers. His projects explore human relationships with the natural phenomenon of our changing climate, and explore alternative modes of production deeply connected to place. He is currently working on a Masters in Interdisciplinary Design at Emily Carr University.

GROWING THINGS

JEAN CHISHOLM

april . balcony

The first week was scary. I'm trying to remember now, but I think the second week was scary too. Panic attacks over every scratch in the throat. Searching daily for reassurances in news and social media streams. Bracing myself for this great upheaval and trying to prepare for its wholly transformative potential. I want to be flexible, but it feels like whiplash.

By the third week I feel okay. Guilty, over how quickly I seemed to adjust. Settling into the comforts of my domestic space, I worry about how these privileges are entombing me. But there is also a tremendous calm. I feel untethered from meetings and emails and expectations. I find liberation in the limitations, and I can move slowly,



Image – Jean Chisholm

simply, and closely. My partner and I wake up at 6 am and sit on the balcony, waiting for the sun to round the corner as we figure out how to spend whole days together. I buy a bag of dirt and carry it home in my arms. We plant seeds—parsley, dill, lupin, peas and bean—and take time-lapse videos of sprouts emerging. Sheltering-in-place seems to imply a hunkering down and tucking in, but this feels a bit like dissolving. I'm not sure in what way exactly, but the edges are getting fuzzy and porous.

may . katie's garden

An impressive block of community gardens grows across the street from our apartment. There's a notoriously long waitlist for a plot, and we never felt like we'd have the time or skills to do it justice, so we were content to just admire them. Now that we suddenly find ourselves with more time and motivation, we regret not putting our names down sometime in the last 9 years.

My friend Katie is subletting a plot in Mount Pleasant, and I ride my bike over and help her tie up trestles and plant beans and peas and radishes. We harvest kale and she shares half with me. We talk to her garden neighbours, and discuss growing strategies. Katie has carefully put together a spreadsheet of what vegetables grow best beside each other, and we try to take ideal partnerships into consideration as we plant. Back at home, my partner and I carefully waded through emergency benefit forms and read books about trees and make music for friends and place baskets in front of the sprouts so our cat doesn't eat them.

june . janine's garden

Katie and I bike over to Janine's new garden plot in Hastings Sunrise, in a small make-shift community garden a block away from her apartment. We sketch possible growing arrangements and meet her neighbours and figure out how to turn the hose on. We talk about the protests and anti-racist reading lists and social media missteps and how to hold each other close and accountable.

The world is trying to open up, and it seems like the foot keeps slipping off the peddle, catching on movements and momentum. The weight of expectation is pressing back down again; we've stopped waking up at 6 am. I'm trying to hold onto those dissolving edges, but it might be a matter of tuning my attention to them now. All my balcony seeds have sprouted, now the tricky part: keeping them going.

Jean Chisholm (BA, BDes, MDes) is a communication designer, design researcher, and educator. Her interest in community building, local identities, and transitions towards socially sustainable ways of living informs her research and design practice. In 2020, she completed her Master's in Design from Emily Carr University of Art + Design, exploring relational, place-based practices in her hometown of Prince George, BC.

WESTBRIDGE, B.C.

JULIE VAN OYEN

I am back where the world began. Sunk into an old couch, gazing out of the house my brother built with his own hands, on the land my father and mothers and those before them worked with their own hands. I close my eyes and hear the voices I must have heard still in the womb, grasshoppers and magpies and mosquitoes (it's been a wet June in the valley). From here, I can see the ponderosa pines who raised me, and wonder who raised them. I do not know their names, but I feel close to them in our love for the pines.

I can see the forest-fire-scarred face of the mountain. Unexpectedly, the awareness of an age-old cycle of destruction and renewal is soothing; it eases me into a reassuring feeling of being very small. Maybe it isn't shocking that being reminded of my own insignificance is supremely comforting, while the world burns with fires set by people that are also like me. We are breaking things, and some will be lost forever. But the thing about natural disasters (the mountain seems to say), whether they be fires or



Image – Julie Van Oyen

certain human cultures, is that eventually they burn out. “I am still here,” the mountain says, “and I will be long after you are gone, a soft human animal returned to dirt under the pines.”

Julie Van Oyen is a Vancouver-based designer and graduate student. She grew up on a farm in the Kootenay Boundary region of the Southern Interior of BC, but has lived in the city now for 13 years. Mid-way through a Masters in Interaction Design at Emily Carr University, her practice involves investigations and propositions towards an opening-up of interaction design perspectives and processes through embodied experiential practices and interspecies collaborations, such as with fermentation. Other ways of making, such as writing, place-based embodied actions, and digital/non-digital visualization and prototyping inform her work as well.

MOMS

LAURA KOZAK

April 2020. In these weeks as my circles of travel and contact have shrunk, I’ve been paying attention to how deeply and reciprocally reliant I am on other moms in my neighbourhood. Most of the ways we are accustomed to helping each other have been put on hold: we all notice that absence, but have also been finding new ways to support each other. We laugh and struggle our way through the days with different and the same worries in our heads. We are so tired together. On any given day I might witness 100 extensions of kindness—a moment of childminding while a forgotten thing is retrieved, an offer to pick something up from the grocery store, the loaning of a quiet place to work outside a crowded house, the sharing of riches from a garden plot. These women work so hard and so invisibly, yet, I feel we are making something together, also an invisible thing.

I was reading some of forest ecologist Suzanne Simard’s research about mother trees the other day—the oldest trees in the forest with complex fungal root systems underground. Through this unseen network, the trees



Image – Laura Kozak

can communicate, adapt to threats or changing conditions, recognize their seedlings, and store massive amounts of carbon. They do all this while staying in just one place.

In the bike room of my apartment building, we have an old stroller that's filled with a few different sizes of bikes and trikes and scooters. Most of these have arrived at just the right time from another family nearby, or are waiting to be passed on to the next-biggest kid. There is nothing transactional about these neighbourhood bikes—they're all old and seem to just move when and where they're needed. I wish more objects in the world could be this way—distributed locally to where they're needed, without cost, and without needing to make or buy anything new.

For all its elasticity and adaptability, I am so aware of how many conditions need to be intact for this network of moms to work the way it does: families able to stay where they are, without displacement; safe and peaceful streets and parks where we see and come to know each other; working conditions that allow us the time to make friends and build trust; children whose basic needs are not under threat. This way of being together—of helping out no questions asked, of pooling our knowledge and methods and points of view—is so simple, but it's also an indicator of things much more complex. The amplifying forces of climate change, racism and inequity feel louder than ever, and I really hope that some version of these place-based networks of care will continue to exist for my kids to participate in as they grow up.

Laura Kozak is a design researcher and community organizer. Since 2005 she has built partnerships and collaborated on projects with local and international artists, designers and community organizations. A core interest in relationality and collaborative design of the urban environment informs her research and teaching practice. She is on the Board of Directors at 221A Artist Run Centre Society and teaches in the Jake Kerr Faculty of Graduate Studies at Emily Carr University of Art + Design.



Image – Jess Sung

UNSUNG HEROES

JESS SUNG

East West Market is a small locally owned grocery store serving the heart of Vancouver's Mt. Pleasant neighbourhood since 1996. Located on 26th and Main, they pride themselves in carrying a unique and carefully curated variety of groceries that reflect and represent the needs of their multicultural customers. Providing diverse, healthy and affordable options for the community is their main focus. It's the place to go for all those hard to find ingredients, even going so far as tracking down customers' requests for international delicacies. Their aim is to accessibly offer the seamless blending of all cultures through quality food.

David Lee Kwen, a Chinese-Trinidadian Canadian biologist and foraged mushrooms wholesaler decided to take over the business in 2018 after the original owner retired. He immigrated to Canada with his parents and eight siblings at the age of 14. Having previously grown up running a grocery store with his family back in Trinidad and Tobago, he felt it was a natural full circle orbit back to his familial roots. Family, both genetic and found, are very dear to the core of David's life philosophy—treating everyone like family, and in turn creating an environment that breeds unity and connectedness with those around us. He strives to enrich the community by giving back in any way he can, whether through environmental awareness and sustainability or charitable donations to local food banks and organizations. The success and comradery on display at the Main street location encouraged David to open a second East West Market in Kerrisdale. He hoped to perpetuate the message of conscious consumption, that knowing where your food comes from and how ethically it is sourced will uplift sustainable choices and recycle wealth, in all its forms, back through the local community.

Covid-19 has been a challenging time for many, and this little market has been a guiding light in the process. Upon entry, there is a dedicated staff member to provide social distancing education and wellness protocol along with free masks and hand sanitizer. The head of the produce department, Eric Sung, a wholesale produce vet with 50+ years experience, has taken on the task of helping local farms, like Barnston Island, whose sole purveyors were restaurants. When the closures occurred, many farms whose business models relied wholly on restaurants were left stranded with thousands of pounds of perishable produce and no distribution channels. A recipe for bankruptcy. Mr. Sung worked for two months straight during Covid to ensure that their products found its way into customers hands. Assuring that their customers would have access to a fresh and consistent abundance of organic produce. At the same time, East West started doing online purchases and delivery to maintain access for all ages during quarantine, as many big box retailers were unable to fulfill online purchases. Once every week a seniors home received a direct order fulfilled with next day delivery service.

Environmental sustainability and reducing their carbon footprint are important tenets in the East West ethos. Partnering with a local design firm to create cheekily branded, sustainable canvas totes, as well as pledging to do away with single use plastics. They are a market on a mission to make life more personal, health more attainable and food more excitable.

Jess Sung is an analog film photographer based in Vancouver, BC. Her mission in life is to help humans, more specifically, BIPOC feel less alone in their experience by opening up the dialogue through conceptual art and journalism. Wrestling with her own identity as a fourth generation Chinese Canadian womxn, she examines the entangled influence between East and West in her photography. Seeking to lay the foundation to help those who grapple with their place in this world.

SPELLBOUND SYRUPS

MONIQUE S. CARR

Spellbound Syrups, my beverage company, happened by accident. It started when a friend gifted me a book from the Downtown Albuquerque Public Library. The book included recipes, history, and etymology-sort of all of the areas of study I was then fascinated with. During this time, I was finishing my undergrad studies in Speech Language Pathology and Linguistics at the University of New Mexico. I was not interested in a graduate degree in either of these studies at the time, and decided to explore small business in beverage. I've always been a very sensory person. I grew up dancing ballet and loved the idea of digesting every feeling the music inspired in me and becoming one with it. I love hobbies and work that are meticulous and slow—they feel gentle to me. I love stumbling upon magic, joy, beauty, creation, and delight in Albuquerque and Northern New Mexico's desert, forest, and aquatic landscape—this is what Spellbound embodies for me.

I harvest fruit by hand, I process fruit by hand. I macerate melons, currants, green and copper apricots, magenta cactus fruit. I love to watch them melt, open up, spill, merge into one another. These fruits are available to me by foraging or via my generous community. Strangers will contact me and offer fruits from their properties that would otherwise go to waste. If I'm honest this is one of the less comfortable parts of making. I'm a bit of a hermit and like my time with fruit to be uninterrupted. This does not mean I do not appreciate the time and efforts shared by these strangers; it simply takes more emotional labor than any other part of my making process. These small acts of kindness certainly accumulate in my heart and some strangers have become dear friends, some even teachers.



Image – Monique S. Carr

It is an immense privilege to find peace and make a living as a maker. For the majority of the time, since the beginning of *Spellbound*, I struggled with feeling like it was “enough” to work and make sustainably. I felt as though it was only a small lens of a larger and overlooked story. I began to ask myself “who benefits from me making sustainably, from my handcrafted, carefully made, consumable product”? As a minority—a Black-mixed woman of color and someone who is not originally from New Mexico—I started to look at my very own privilege and found that a lot of people who shared similar cultural traits did not have the same access to food and education as me. Once I began to donate time and money in supporting food sovereignty, access to clean water on Navajo Nation, Food Banks for Tohali School on Navajo Nation, NDNCollective, and advocating for Black and Indigenous People’s rights in Albuquerque, did I feel like my work and my interest in creating from the land was more than extraction or appropriation.

I’m honored to continue to learn from and build with the Indigenous communities of New Mexico-Diné and Pueblo Peoples. I’ve learned to work from a timeline of trust, of self-reflection, of healing, and reciprocity. Over time I have disengaged with ideas that value urgency, production, consumerism, and appropriation. In doing so, I have successfully streamlined my business into making and selling the way that I want which allows me to engage more thoughtfully and actively with my community.

*Monique S. Carr is an Afro-Mexican maker, land steward, and business owner based in Albuquerque, NM. *Spellbound Syrups*, her beverage company, is about creating with food that might otherwise go to waste and celebrating the richness of our harvest seasonally. She is asked to pick fruits from properties where the fruit will not be used. With these fruits she makes cold-processed or raw botanical syrups for soft drinks and cocktails. When she’s not foraging, harvesting, and processing edibles she is redistributing foods and resources to communities who have little or no access.*



'Oya show me your power' by Oluwasola Olowo-Ake

I CARE

OLUWASOLA OLOWO-AKE

As I am reminded that my skin is a threat by the news
and social media,
As I bury my black brothers and sisters in hashtags,
poetry and black canvas,
As I mourn their deaths and ask when this will be over,

I care,

I care as I write out my bottomless frustrations at the situation, at Trump, at the excruciating experience to trying to explain to white people that white privilege is real so that they can be convinced of my argument that people like me deserve to live.

I care by talking,

Talking to other black friends like me who cannot seem to process the time we're in.
It's been happening for a while but somehow this time it feels heavy.

I care to dance away my frustrations because embodied practice relieves me of my pain.

I care to dance in definition because words don't punch the same.

I care to sit with friends, socially distanced at a park and have dinner while we watch the sunset
We don't all look the same but the care is in the friendship. And they get it.

I care by having movie nights with friends every Saturday.
For me the care is in the little steps I take to Reconciliation everyday.

Another poem, another song,
another dance, another talk
As laughter fills our bellies for good
tears fill our eyes for bad
and we repeat this cycle of emotions day and night.

Oluwasola Olowo-Ake is a Nigerian from the Yoruba tribe, born in Lagos State. She grew up in Nigeria and left to study Fashion Design at the age of seventeen in the UK and is currently doing her Masters in Interdisciplinary Design at Emily Carr University. Her practice is centred around expressing her Yoruba culture in order to restructure black race narratives the diasporic environment holds by presenting alternative epistemologies that can sit in the diaspora and contribute to decolonizing ways of being. Story-telling is also heavily foundational to her work as she uses mediums like dance, poetry and music to share these narratives.

ADAPTED FROM INSTAGRAM STORIES

JUNE 5 2020

JACQUIE SHAW

Just got out of therapy. My therapist asked me before we logged off what was the one thing I'm going to do today to support myself in the work we did today. It seems simple, but today I'm just making sure I drink enough water; to keep myself hydrated and healthy in the western science way but also to flush out whatever got uprooted in our session—whatever is getting uprooted on the daily. So for today's sharing time for resistance, I'm going to share with you how drinking enough water is indeed a resilience practice, based in social justice.

First, I/we must acknowledge and reflect: Safe accessible drinking water is not a given. In what is currently Canada 100+ boil water advisories exist for Indigenous communities. Being able to go to the tap, fill a bottle, glass, or ice cube tray, isn't as simple as it sounds; I'm privileged to be able to do it.

Our bodies are holding a lot right now: excess endorphins, muscle tensions, waste in your blood system—science-y things I don't know off the top of my head linked to this if you're super invested in western “modern” medicine. With these there are other things, like trauma (personal and intergenerational), energy, hurt, and feelings. Things that you know are real and feel. Your body is processing them even if you don't know, give your body a way to

flush it out of the system. Allow yourself to feel nourished by the water you drink. Your little dried out cells. Your blood is around 90% water, keep your insides slippery! Allow things to move around easier. Things like feelings, but also things like oxygen.

Make sure you drink water in the ways you like it. Make it a little treat. I'm lazy today so I'm just drinking some cold water from the fridge, but usually I don't like just plain water. If you know me, you know I love sparkling water. I have a Sodastream—a problematic fave—but I also haven't had a working CO₂ canister since pre-pandemic so I'm drinking my water flat. When I need some extra water encouragement I like to keep lemons, limes, cucumber, mint, and lately frozen watermelon/mango on hand to pop in. Don't forget ice cubes, I often overlook the effectiveness of adding some ice.

I'll keep saying it: The work starts with yourself. Which means learning how to take care of yourself, your whole self, during these times.

Drink your water out of habit but also if you need to take a little time it's an easy little practice to dedicate a glass or a few sips to mindfully hydrating and nourishing yourself. Think of each sip as an act of self love and care and then that love goes into your bloodstream, and then into every little nook and cranny. It goes through your heart, and your brain, essential to both.

How does the water feel going down your throat? In your belly? Is it a trickle or did you take a big gulp? What is the temperature? Did you use a straw? What parts of you is it feeding? Can you feel it enter your blood and then everywhere else? Are you putting intentions into your sips? Did you know you can do that?! Where did the water come from? Do you think a dinosaur drank that water? Do you think it travelled far in the air to get to you, or maybe it was still somewhere for eons and is out here now being liquidity? When the water leaves your body (sweat, tears,

urine) what is it taking with it? What does the water in you carry? What is flushed out? A time for science, but have you checked your urine colour? It's a good indicator if you're drinking rough water, and remember to re-up on your expelled water.

There's a lot of upheaval happening inside and outside. With my therapist I always use the metaphor of a jar filled with different sediments and water. This upheaval is jostling the sediments, and as they're reorganizing and resettling they float/sink in the water. This new organization sometimes brings new things to the surface but also the things that get buried at least we can see the levels. I think about that and my body as the jar and when I keep myself with enough water it helps give more space for those sedimentary bits inside me to move around when I'm jostled. Again, keep your insides slippery.

Jacquie Shaw is a strategic futurist, and design anthropologist, with a hybrid practice that combines design, research, education, and consulting. Their work is grounded in and supports critical explorations of design's role and use in creating the future. Inspired by understanding their own lived experience as a Filipinx-Bermudian settler in what is currently Canada, their work orients towards inclusive, equitable, and liberatory futures informed by decolonial, feminist, respectful design, design justice, anti-oppressive oriented praxis. Jacquie holds a MDes in strategic foresight and innovation from OCAD University and a BDes in communication design from Emily Carr University of Art and Design. They are currently based in Tkaronto/Toronto.



Image – Jean Chisholm

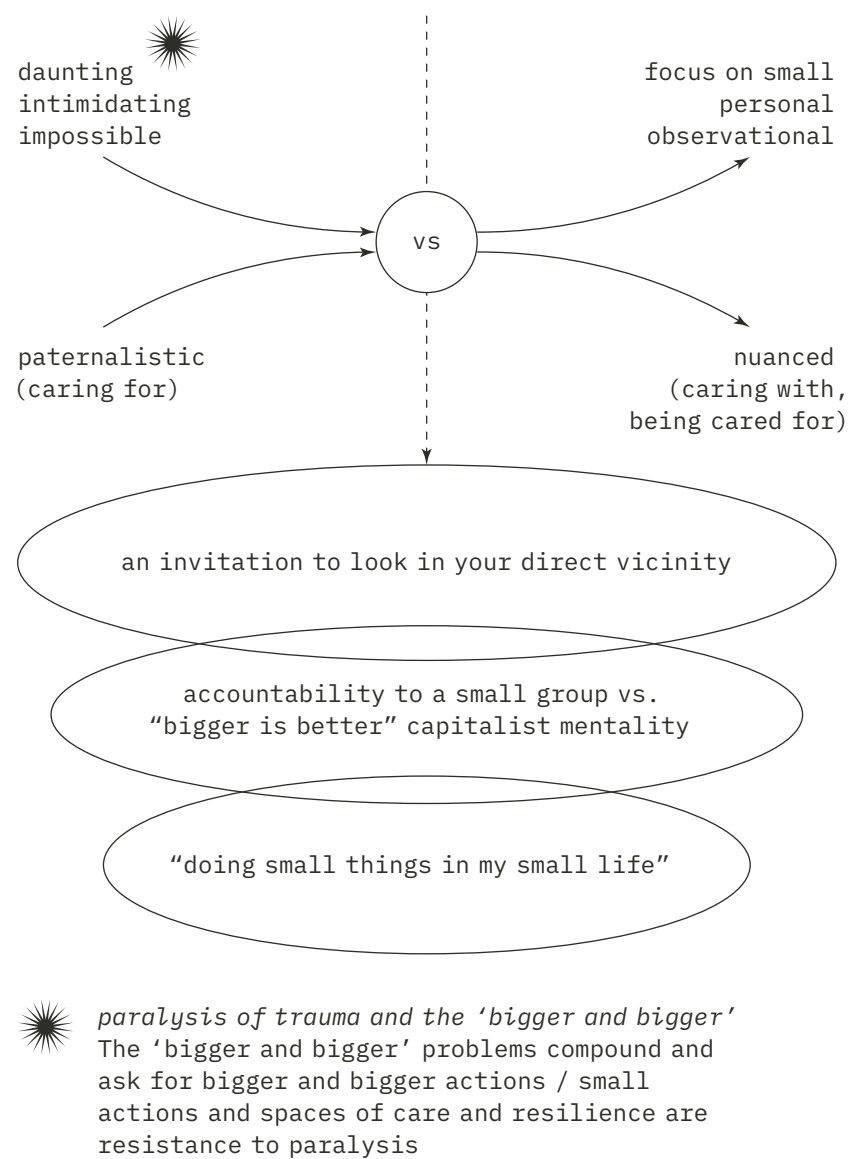
MESH

A NETWORK OF EMERGENT FRAGMENTS,
MOMENTS OF RESPITE, AND POINTS
OF NAVIGATION TO NEW PLACES

NOTES FROM A CONVERSATION / JULY 7 2020

APPROXIMATING FORMULAS FOR ACTS OF CARE

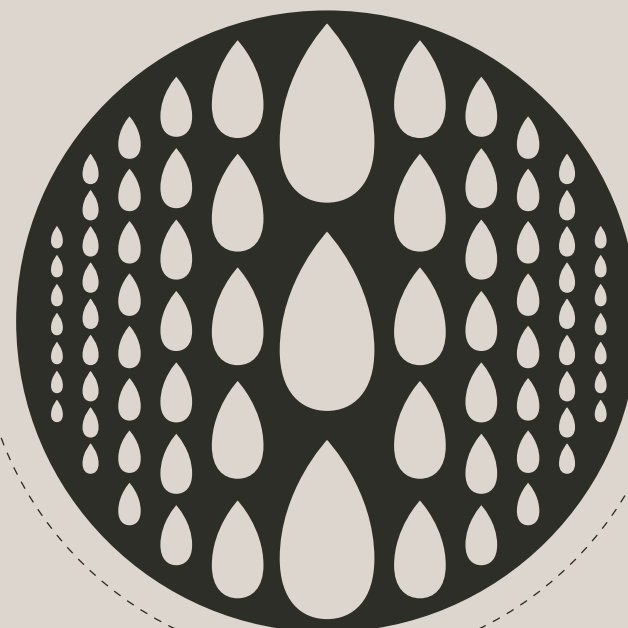
MESH / NOTES FROM A CONVERSATION / NO. 1



MESH / NOTES FROM A CONVERSATION / NO. 2

(fractals)

"the micro reflects the macro + vice versa"
—adrienne maree brown + Kat Aaron



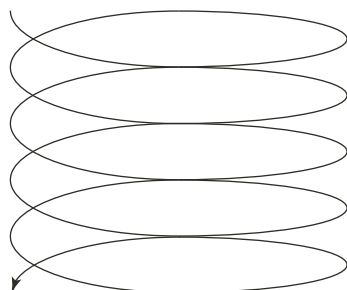
water + the body: elemental self-care

feeling your cells "plumping up" and being
able to use the combination of imagination
and actual nourishment to feed and
fill and expand yourself

keep your insides
slippery

MESH / NOTES FROM A CONVERSATION / NO. 3

trauma and triggers turn us back into the
'animal of the body;' activation of the nervous system
prevents us from being able to care for one another



am I feeling...

H ————— A ————— L ————— T
hungry ————— angry ————— lonely ————— tired

self care
if I'm feeling better, what does that do
and/or allow me to do?

serving a community < > care centered on the self

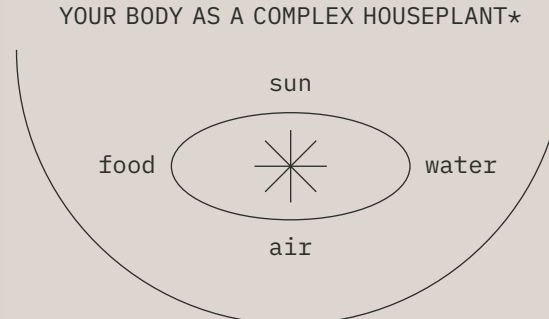


hungry in an existential/ philosophical sense;
or the animal of your body is hungry and needs to
be cared for

MESH / NOTES FROM A CONVERSATION / NO. 4



YOUR BODY AS A COMPLEX HOUSEPLANT*

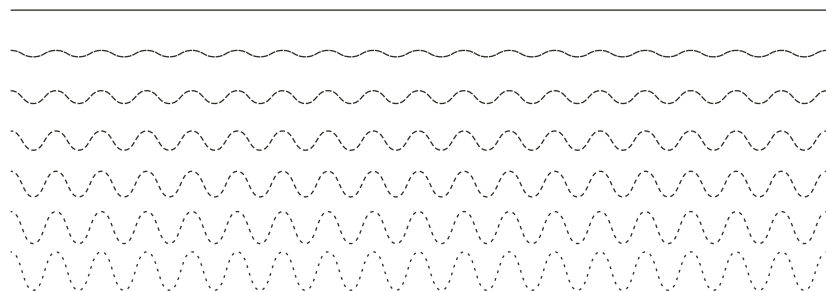


bringing us
back home into the
systems we belong
within and are
actively damaging

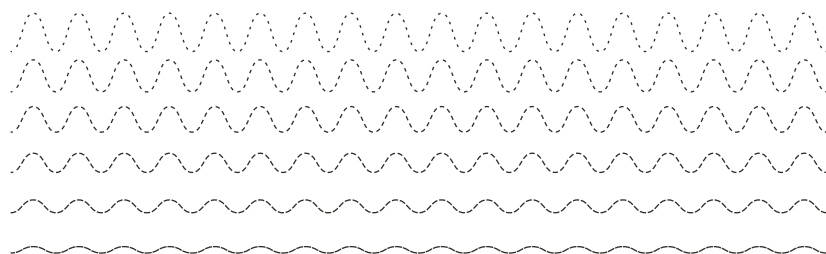
*counter to the
thought of "human
exceptionalism"

MESH / NOTES FROM A CONVERSATION / NO. 5

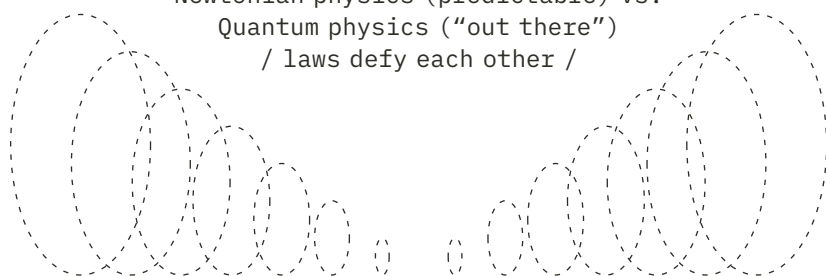
"the conditions have to be right for
healing to happen"



visible and invisible forms of care:
healing in the background (broken leg)



Newtonian physics (predictable) vs.
Quantum physics ("out there")
/ laws defy each other /



MESH / NOTES FROM A CONVERSATION / NO. 6

bombardment of social
media and news cycle is
distracting/surface

a minefield
of potentially
triggering images

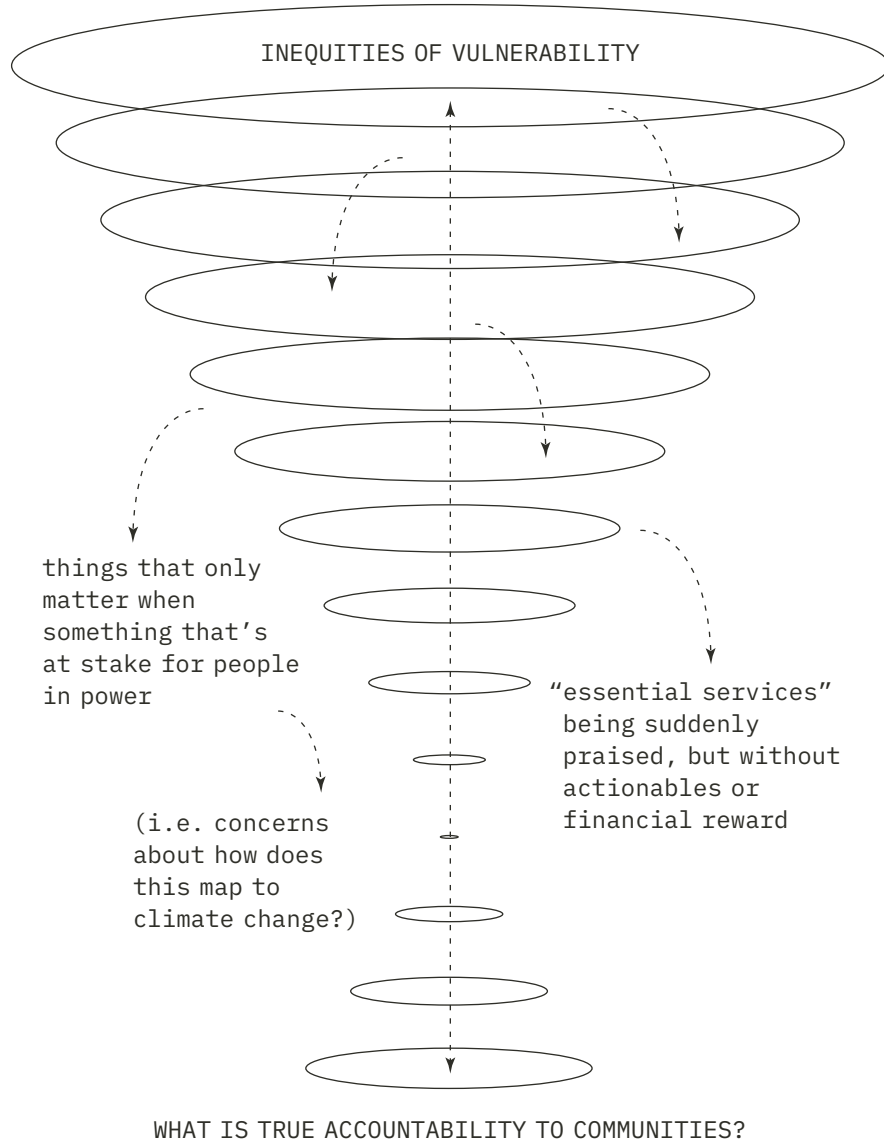
a stale pool

do those
connections
exist when
you log off?

Places of refuge,
respite and connection
(social media) can also
revolve into spaces for
work and change

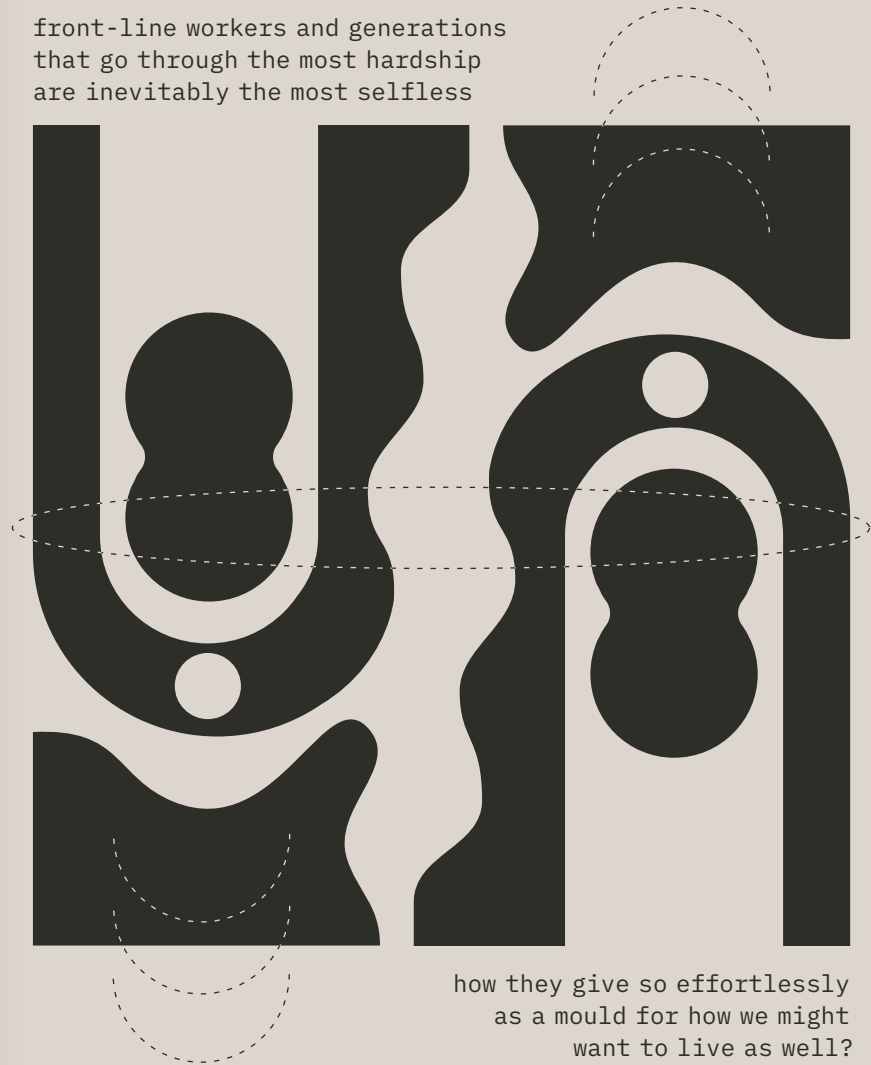
social media as a place
of connection to place
and grassroots news

MESH / NOTES FROM A CONVERSATION / NO. 7

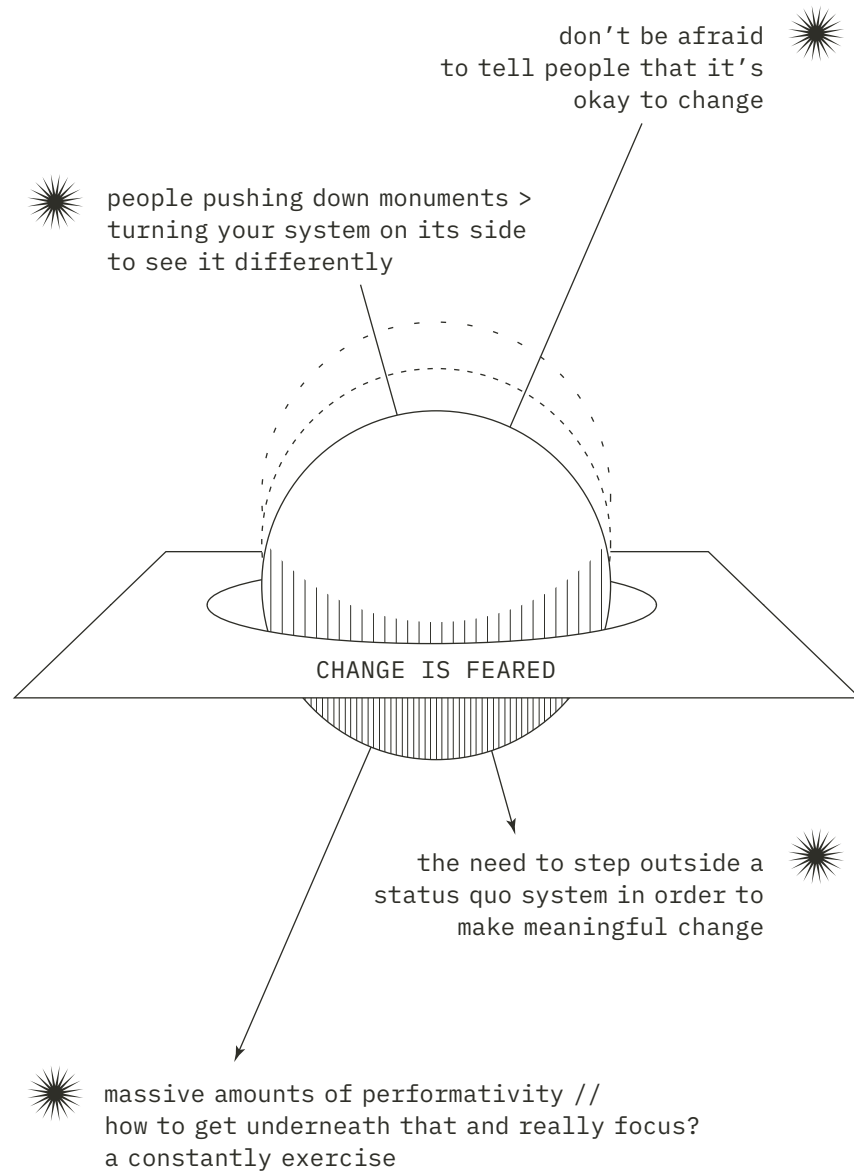


MESH / NOTES FROM A CONVERSATION / NO. 8

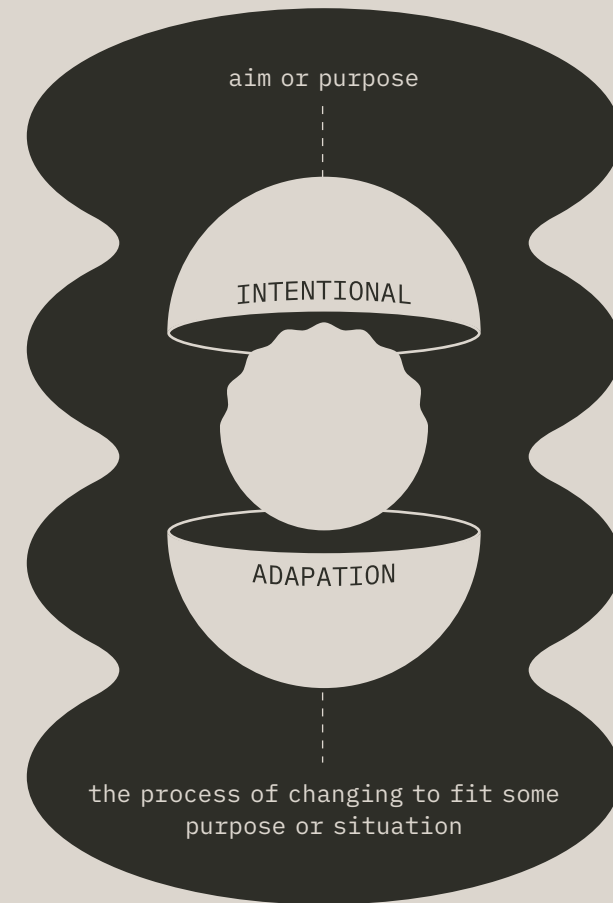
front-line workers and generations that go through the most hardship are inevitably the most selfless



MESH / NOTES FROM A CONVERSATION / NO. 9



MESH / NOTES FROM A CONVERSATION / NO. 10



what are our strategiets for making change?

"what is easy is sustainable.
birds coast when they can."
-adrienne maree brown

MESH / NOTES FROM A CONVERSATION / CREDITS

TEXT ADAPTED FROM
TRANSCRIPT WITH

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Oluwasola Olowo-Ake
Jacquie Shaw
Jess Sung
Julie Van Oyen

NOTE NO. 2 and NO. 10 quote
Emergent Strategy:
Shaping Change, Changing Worlds
by adrienne maree brown

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MICRO-CARE



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