

Mapping My Journey

A guide for your healing journey



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The background of the entire page is a teal-colored water ripple texture. A dark blue horizontal band is positioned at the top, containing the title text.

Welcome to Mapping My Journey

Thank you for picking up the "Mapping My Journey", a guide created by Asian/Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project (DVRP).

Since 1996, the Asian/Pacific Islander Domestic Violence Resource Project (DVRP) has provided services to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault in Washington DC, Maryland and Virginia. We have learned over our time with our community the need for creating space for care and healing. We have learnt that often times we are told that we don't have the power and resources to care for ourselves and our communities - we truly believe in disrupting that by providing ourselves and our community the means to support our healing.

This guide is a space for self exploration and container of toys for you to use in your healing journey. We also want to note that this guide is limited - we do not cover the expansive ways in which we can work through our traumas. Additionally, all that is offered here is an invitation. We invite you to use this guide as it works best for you. There is no one right way or wrong way to use this guide.

This is your space to play, learn, and be.

My Journey

Understanding Trauma

“

Trauma is a psychic wound that hardens you psychologically which then interferes with your ability to grow. It pains you and makes you act out of pain. It induces fear and makes you act out of fear. Trauma is not what happens to you, it's what happens inside you as a result of what happened to you. Trauma is that scarring that makes you less flexible, more rigid, less feeling and more defended.

Gabor Maté

”

A Moment of Reflection

- How does this quote about trauma make you feel?
- Do you feel like it is something you resonate with?
- How would you define trauma?

Trauma can show up in many ways: intergenerationally, collectively, through direct impact, vicariously or second hand, environmentally etc.

We invite you to understand that trauma is different from crisis, and can have long-term impacts on our body, mind and spirit. Trauma is expansive and cannot always be neatly categorized.



Understanding Trauma Responses

Our bodies and minds create strategies as responses to various of layers of violence caused by systems of supremacy and interpersonal violence. These strategies are also known as trauma responses. We invite you to understand that these trauma responses are helpful in keeping us alive, they help us survive, and thus they are also called survival strategies. It is important for us to stay away from labeling our strategies as "good" or "bad" but rather to work on understanding how and when they serve us and when they don't. There are 6 commonly known trauma responses:

Fight

Posturing against or confronting the perceived threat.

Flight

Fleeing or symbolically fleeing the perceived threat by way of a "hyperactive" response.

Freeze

Dissociating in response to the perceived threat.

Fawn

Placating the perceived threat in an attempt to forestall imminent danger.

Flood

Being flooded with emotions in response to a perceived threat.

Fatigue

Feeling tired or sleepy in response to a perceived threat.

A Moment of Reflection

- Have you heard of these responses before?
- Have you noticed any of these responses within yourself? If so, when?



What is Healing?

Our mind, body, and spirit are all connected; survival strategies developed from trauma can be physical, emotional, spiritual and are all connected. Healing looks like doing the work to align all parts of ourselves and reconnecting to our bodies. We work to hold space for our trauma responses and release them to build patterns that support our growing and thriving.

“Trauma decontextualized in a person looks like personality. Trauma decontextualized in a family, can look like family traits. Trauma, decontextualized in a people, can look like culture.”
– **Resmaa Menakem**

Healing is not a linear process. There isn't one way to heal, there is no manual to heal. You have the power to define what healing looks like for you and find a path that works for you; in this space we invite you to explore that:



Moment of Reflection

- What is the first word that comes up for you when you think of the word "healing?" Why does this word come up for you?
- Now say the word out loud. How does saying it feel in your body? Notice if any part of your body feels tight or light? Is there a change in temperature?
- Allow these sensations to guide you into exploring the question: **"What does healing mean for me?"**

Journaling Moment

What does "healing is not linear" mean for me?

Understanding Myself

As you are diving deeper into your healing journey we invite you to explore the following questions to understand yourself better

My People

- Who are the people who I love and feel safe around?
- Who supports me the most?
- How do they support me?

My Strengths

- What do I value the most?
- What are some things I am good at?
- What makes me unique?

My Journey

- Where am I with my healing journey?
- What are some challenges I have overcome?
- How do I like to be supported?

My Struggles

- What are things I struggle with the most?
- What makes these things so difficult for me?

My Thoughts

- Do I think about one thing over and over again?
- Do I feel like I have control over my thoughts?

My Coping Skills

- What coping skills have I used in the past?
- Have these coping skills worked for me?

Me



- What are some of my strong emotions?
- What color corresponds to these emotions on the wheel?
- Do many of my emotions fall under the same color?
- How do I express these emotions?
- How do these emotions impact me?
- What support do I need to hold space for these emotions?





Toys for Healing

Toys for healing are processes and practices you may utilize to support your healing journey. You may come across the word "tools for healing," however we invite you to use the word "toys" as we believe that healing doesn't need "tools to fix" something but is rather a process where play and exploration can be welcomed. In this section, we offer a few toys to support your healing journey; this is by no means an expansive list, we invite you to be creative and explore ways beyond this guide and incorporate them in your journey.

Moment of Reflection



- How does the phrase "toys for healing" make me feel?
- What are some practices I use for my healing?

Art & Artistic Expression

So much of trauma is stored in our bodies - making sense of and understanding it can be difficult solely through verbal processing and expression. The use of art and artistic expression can be used to move through your traumas and support your healing. Art is expansive - you can use painting, drawing, collaging, coloring, singing, movement like dancing, cooking, etc. to support your healing. The expression through the various artforms can help in making connections to yourself, find meaning and support, and a deeper understanding of your experience.

Cultural Wealth & Practices

Our families, ancestors, and culture provides us a wealth of resources and practices that have been used by our people for healing and for moving through life. If this is something that calls to you, we invite you to look into healing practices from your lineage and find ways to incorporate them into your journey. Some questions to consider:

- What is my relationship like my culture?
- How can cultural practices play a role in my healing?
- Who can I reach out to, to learn these practices?
- How can I incorporate them?



Somatic Experiencing

Trauma is stored in our bodies. Somatic practices encompass a series of movement forms that can be drawn together through their shared focus on body awareness. Somatic experiencing (SE) is somatic therapy, which may allow you to revisit trauma without recalling specific events and emotions. One of the main goals of somatic experiencing is to develop a body/mind connection and increase your ability to regulate your emotions. This can help you manage some of your most distressing symptoms. It is recommended that you work with a SE practitioner for formal somatic therapy. You find a [SE practitioner through this website](#) to work 1:1 with you.



Somatic Practices

In a world where we are forced to be disconnected, somatic practices allow us to feel connection. While SE is a form of trauma therapy, we invite you to try certain body-based practices, i.e., somatic practices and incorporate them in your healing journey. Here are a few:

Grounding

Grounding can help you come to the present moment. It may be particularly helpful if you're experiencing flashbacks, anxiety, and dissociation symptoms. Read more about specific grounding techniques [here](#).

Self Soothing

Somatic-self regulation or self-soothing invites you to regulate distress by turning into your body and utilizing your nervous system. Some techniques to self soothe include hugging yourself, using your hand in a cupping position to tap your body all over from your feet to your head. Learn more about somatic self soothing [here](#).

Body Scans

Body scans help you bring awareness to your body. They guide you to pay attention to different parts of your body and bring your awareness to them. [Here](#) is a body-scan guided meditation for you to practice.

Moment of Reflection

- Which of these toys feel the most helpful to me? Why do I think that is?
- Which of these toys am I the most excited to try out? What excites me about them?

My Affirmations

Healing is a messy process. It is not glamorous. It is deeply *deeply* difficult. But, hey, you are here doing it. When it gets hard, visit this page to remind yourself of your worth, your power, and your magic. Repeat these affirmations in the mirror if you feel called to:

no one can take my strength from me

every action i take is from my empowered heart

i am stronger than all of the challenges life throws at me

i deserve abundant love

caring for myself is not selfish; it is a revolutionary act

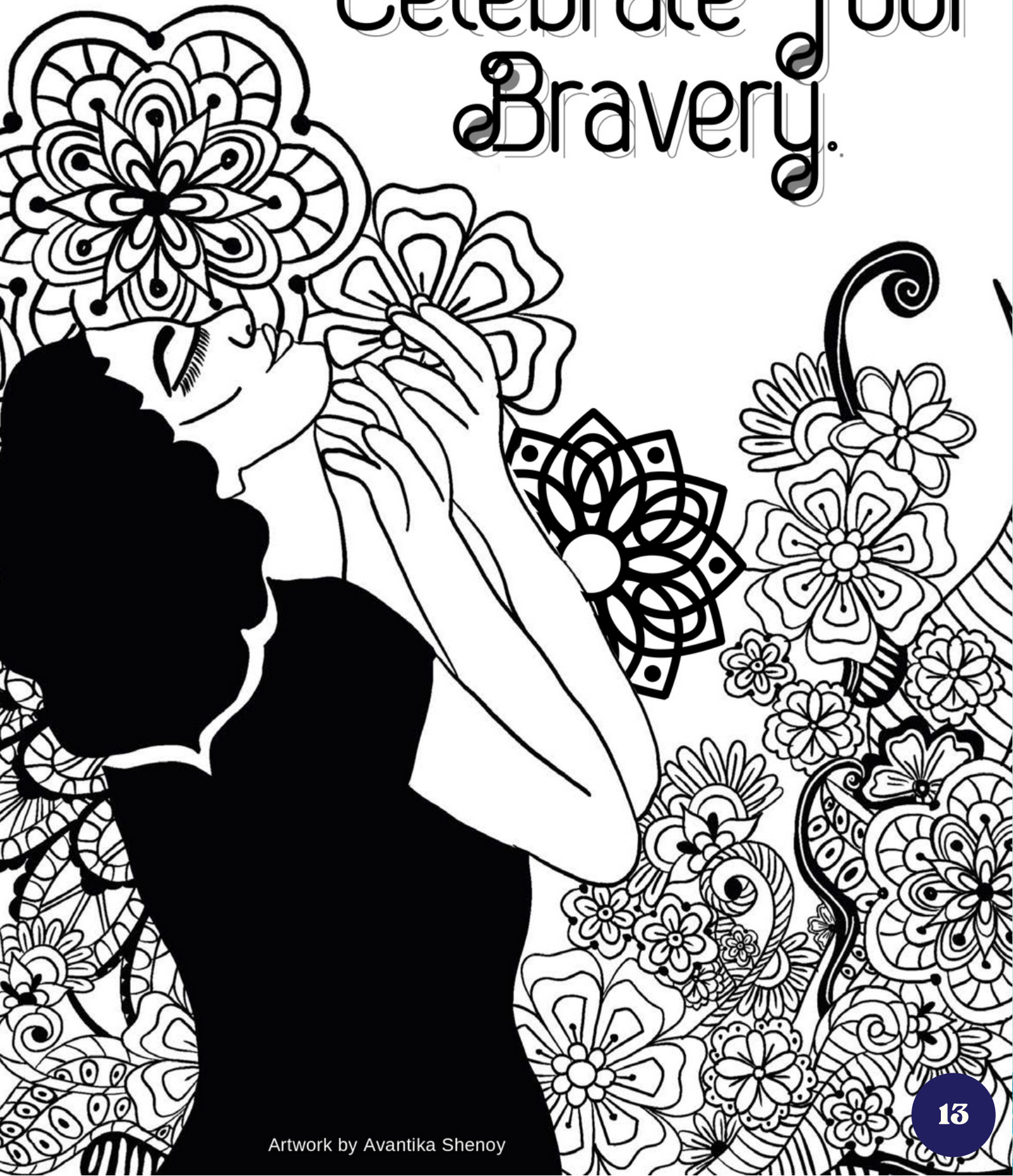
i find moments of deep joy and connectedness

my mind, body, and soul are finding healing

i am powerful and capable

**Add your
own
affirmations
here**

Celebrate Your Bravery.





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