

Telling Our Stories of Communities in Crisis Workshop

Notes for Session Planners:

You may use or adapt this video resource for a Children's Sabbath gathering. This session is based on a workshop led by MILPA Collective leaders at CDF's 2021 Proctor Institute in July. The full video can be found here: https://youtu.be/V0qA4_SWIIE

About the MILPA Collective The MILPA Collective's goal is "to cultivate change makers for the Next Seven Generations by creating opportunities for cultural healing, intergenerational leadership, and empowerment through community-driven decision making for healthier communities."

They describe themselves this way: MILPA Collective (MILPA) is first and foremost a movement space designed for, and led by, formerly incarcerated and system-impacted individuals. We are committed to supporting next-generation infrastructure and leadership within communities, organizations, and systems. We center cultural healing, racial equity and LOVE in our practices and advocacy."

MILPA describes its history: "The vision and idea behind MILPA are rooted in the history that our health, well-being, and liberation are intergenerational. Many of us are second-generation activists, coming from migrant workers whose parents or grandparents were involved in the farmworker movement or women-led cannery strikes. MILPA comes from a lineage of abuelos and abuelitas who provided for their families and fought, protected, and prayed for this generation to have a future."

"They prayed for us to engage the intentions set by our ancestors. MILPA was formed because we answered the call to begin re-asserting our indigeneity, cultural traditions, and interconnection to this continent we call Turtle Island. We hold that government-based identification does not determine our connection to this land or our right to self-identify as indigenous. For us, the work we do is an unfolding prayer, and we thank the Four Sacred elements, the Fire, Water, Air, and Earth. Our history reminds us of questions that guide our values and future: Who are we? What do we value? Where do we come from? And, where are we going?"

You can learn more about their work at <https://milpacollective.org/>

- Preview the video resource to decide who you will invite to engage in this session. For instance, will you invite only adults, or adults and youths for an intergenerational program? Will you use it with a social justice committee of your place of worship? Will you invite other places of worship to join you?
- Review the session outline and the entire video ahead of time. Determine if you will use all or some of the segments for your program, depending on how long your session will be and what is appropriate and useful for your setting.



TELLING OUR STORIES OF COMMUNITIES IN CRISIS WORKSHOP

- The following outline would be used for a ninety-minute gathering. You can shorten it by omitting sections, or lengthen it to two hours by adding in the optional segments omitted in the outline and allowing for more discussion time in small groups and as a whole.
 - Welcoming (15 minutes)
 - Circling Up Around the Fire (20 minutes)
 - W.E.B. DuBois' Four Questions and Know Your Poder/Power (30 minutes)
 - How Does the Work Show Up in Your Body and the Movement? (20 minutes)
 - Closing (5 minutes)
- Because the workshop uses segments of the video, session facilitators are encouraged to have a second co-leader whose primary responsibility is getting the video keyed to the appropriate segment, so that the primary facilitator can focus on guiding the conversation.
- You may wish to print the questions for various parts of the discussion on flip chart paper or make handouts to distribute to participants.

Welcoming (15 minutes total)

- **Greeting:** Greet participants. Thank them for joining in this session for the Children's Sabbath. Let them know that the session will combine segments of a video workshop led by MILPA in July 2021 at CDF's Proctor Institute with in-person discussion among participants here.

Invite them to engage with open minds and hearts; some of the practices and traditions incorporated in the video segments may be new to participants.

Remind them of group discussion agreements--for instance, all are free to share, no one should feel they must share, and what is shared in the group stays in the group (is confidential).

- **Video Segment: Welcoming:** [Play the video](#) from the start to minute 11:25, which includes:
 - Introductions
 - Land Acknowledgments and Black Reparations
 - Four Directions

Optional: Breathing, Movement, and Poetry (12 minutes)

The outline above for a 90-minute session omits this segment. If you are including this segment, continue playing the video from minute 11:26-23:07. Encourage participants to engage in the deep breathing practice and the movement as they are able and comfortable.

Disclaimer and Approach (at minute 23:26)

Disclaimer:

- We are not experts; we are just facilitating a process.
- We don't mean harm; you might disagree, feel triggered, or upset.
- We apologize beforehand if we offend anyone.
- We ask for permiso [permission], because we acknowledge that people have been trespassed, betrayed, hurt, abused, and have never been asked for consent.

The Relational Approach:

- Rhythm and flow vs. power and control
- Social emotional vs. physical mental
- Conversational vs. confrontational
- Healing vs. trauma
- Strength based vs. deficit based
- Relational vs. transactional

Optional: Teaching through Symbolism

The outline above for a 90-minute session omits this segment. If using this segment, play video from 26:01-32:29.

Circling Up Around the Fire (20 minutes)

- **Video Segment: Circling Up Around the Fire:** [Play the video](#) from minute 32:30 to 33:54. After the leader introduces the idea of “circling up around the fire” and poses the question “What types of challenges can you anticipate dealing with as we come back from the pandemic?” on the video, pause the video (leaving the image of the fire visible).
- **Group Discussion:** Invite participants to respond to the following questions:
 - Where has the pandemic created individual and communal trauma and crises?
 - Where has the pandemic exposed existing individual and communal trauma and crises?
 - What types of challenges can you anticipate dealing with as we come back from the pandemic?

W.E.B. DuBois’ Four Questions and Know Your Poder/Power (30 minutes)

- **Video Segment: W.E.B. DuBois and Know Your Poder/Power:** [Play the video](#) from 40:00-43:37 in which Juan Gomez provides background on W.E.B. DuBois and introduces DuBois’ four questions from *The Ordeal of Mansart*. Then, pause the video on the screen with the four questions:
 - What does integrity do in the face of oppression?
 - What does honesty do in the face of deception?
 - What does decency do in the face of insult?
 - How does virtue face brute force?
- **Small Group Discussion:** Depending on the size of the group, divide into small groups of four. (If your group is seven or fewer, stay as one group.) Invite participants to share their responses to the four questions. They can move through the questions in order, with each person responding to the first question and then each responding to the second, or they can invite responses to any or all of the questions at the same time.
- **Large Group Discussion:** After 15 minutes of small group discussion, bring the group back together. For the next 10 minutes invite any who wish to share briefly from their experience of the small group discussions and any additional thoughts prompted by the reflection questions.

How Does the Work Show Up in Our Bodies, in the Movement? (20 minutes)

- **Video Segment:** [Play the video](#) from 54:25 to 55:35. Juan Gomez notes that this is “ancestral work, future work, now work.” It is “life or death, health and well-being work.” He asks,
 - How does it show up in your body?
 - How does it show up in the movement?
 - [What is your] cultural analysis of what is happening when we go up against power?
- Note that elsewhere in the video (a segment that won’t be shown), Gomez asks:
 - As you’re doing this work, what are you asking of yourself?
 - What do youths or the community you work (or live in) ask of you?
 - What is one question the movement should be asking of itself?
- **Video Segment: 13 Vientos/Winds:** [Show the video](#) from 1:03:15-1:06:42 and pause it on the screen showing the 13 Vientos/Winds:
 1. Susto (trauma)
 2. Espanto (“supernatural fear” on the video, also translated “terror”)
 3. Miedo (fear)
 4. Tristeza (sadness)
 5. Coraje (anger)
 6. Celos (jealousy)
 7. Resentimiento (resentment)
 8. Pena (sorrow)
 9. Egoism (egotism)
 10. Envidia (envy)
 11. Verguensa (shame)
 12. Culpa (guilt)
 13. Angustis (anguish)

Optional: Continue the video through 1:10:39 to include the slides “Stress and Emotion Creation Cycle” and “What Happens When You Let Stress and Negative Emotion Affect Your Body”

- **Discussion:** Depending on the size and other dynamics of your group, the following discussion may take place as a whole group conversation or in smaller groups. If small groups will be best for sharing, divide the group into small groups and then bring them back together for the last five minutes to share insights with the whole group.

Invite participants to respond to the questions: How does this work for justice, for children and youths, against oppression and injustice, show up in our bodies? How does it show up in our organizing, in the movement, in our work for justice? What happens when we go up against power? What are we asking of ourselves? What are young people and the community asking of us? What is one question the movement should be asking itself?

Closing (5 minutes)

- Close the session in a way that is appropriate for your setting. This may mean spending time in mindful, meditative deep breathing. It may mean closing in silent or shared prayer. It may mean developing plans to meet again or take next steps to respond to what was discussed in this session.