

*The  
Gifts  
of Our  
People*

**The  
New  
Mentality**  
DISABLE THE LABEL

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bienvenue

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maburika  
to'shikwa

welcome

WAH' GWAN स्वागत हे



# of the Land...

The New Mentality office is located in TKARONTO, the traditional territory of the Petun, Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee and Huron-Wendat peoples. We acknowledge their descendants, ancestors, and spirits as stewards of this land.

In this illegal occupation of the land we call Canada, we are called to recognize the role we all play in sustaining this system, and through right actions, seek to restore harmony with nature & all Her Inhabitants.

# WE HAVE TRAVELLED

a land acknowledgement



# Ancestral Acknowledgement

You are welcomed into this intentional space to participate in the honouring of sacred expression, through Divine inspiration, and the powerful ancestry of diverse peoples who originate humanity.

We carry these legacies in our bodies and spirits, and call on their guidance to imbue this manifestation with magic. We honour the cultivators of the soil, merchants, creators, healers, wisdom keepers, and navigators.

May their legacies be remembered always.

You are invited to own your role in this space and actively participate in the collective healing & liberation of all peoples. Open your minds and hearts as we embark on this journey together.

àṣẹ.

[pronounced ah-SHAY - Origin: Yoruba]  
meaning: the power to create that which you speak

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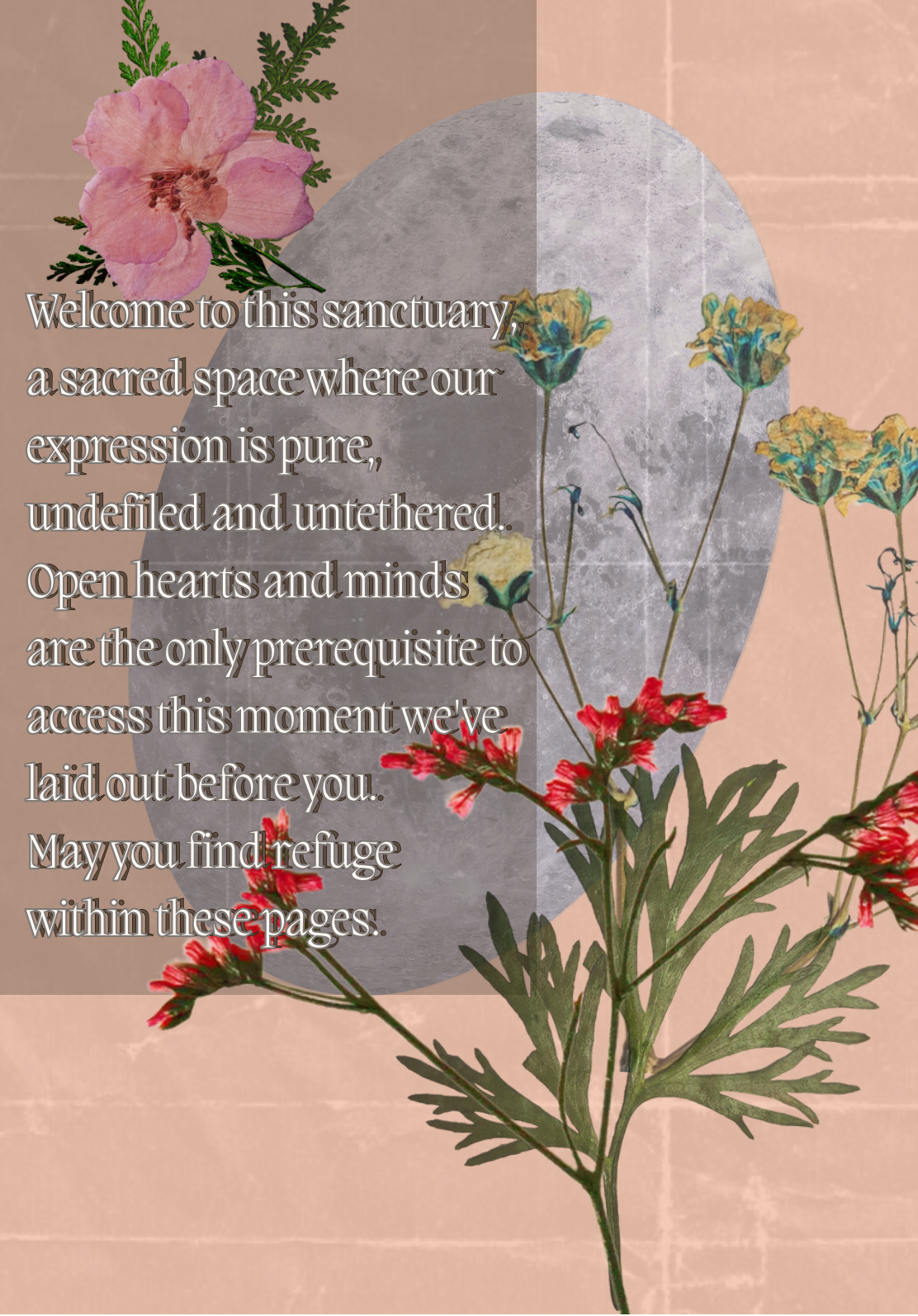
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Welcome to this sanctuary,  
a sacred space where our  
expression is pure,  
undefiled and untethered.  
Open hearts and minds  
are the only prerequisite to  
access this moment we've  
laid out before you.  
May you find refuge  
within these pages.



# origins

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# origins

## The New Mentality

The New Mentality (TNM) is a not-for-profit network of youth and adult allies working together to Disable the Label of mental illness. We work to amplify youth voice to create change in the mental health system & beyond.

We are a program of [Children's Mental Health Ontario](#).

Every year since its inception, TNM has hosted the Disable the Label (DTL) retreat. DTL is a space for our network to develop skills, share about our work, build relationships, and reflect on our purpose as a network.

## BIPOC Affinity Group

Our BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) Affinity Group was created as a brave space for racialized youth to engage in meaningful dialogue around their lived experiences and the impacts of racism within the sector.

# In Our Words

BIPOC Affinity Group  
Reflects on TNM

The New Mentality is a safe space to be myself, a space where I can learn and grow. A brave space where I can push the envelope in a safe, yet courageous way.

In this space, I experience:  
Unconditional Acceptance, Comfort,  
Vulnerability, Recovery & Community.

From day one, TNM has challenged me to show up as me, and that has been one of the most life-changing gifts I have ever received. They have recognized my gifts and has given me space to explore them.

The New Mentality has a special place in my heart for being my first venture into community work. The network is such a positive and supportive space to explore, learn, and advocate, and I absolutely love being a part of everything we do!

# THE ELEPHANT

## *in the Room*

Imagine walking into a room without knowing anyone, searching frantically for your reflection.

You feel self-conscious about being "the only one" or "one of three." You scan the room for something familiar... You worry about who you will sit beside. You want to blend in but you know you stand out. Rejection is your worst fear. Will they accept you? Will they make fun of the way you speak?

These insecurities flooded my mind the first time I attended DTL. The feeling seemed to linger despite doing my best to suppress my self-consciousness. When I was presented with the opportunity to discuss how my racial identity impacted my daily life, I was met with blank stares and deafening silence. I questioned the validity of my experience. Was I making a big deal out of nothing? I was filled with disappointment, and rage, to be honest.

# THE ELEPHANT

## *in the Room*

Thankfully, I had other BIPOC folks to discuss my feelings with, and many of them had similar experiences. Through my years of working within TNM, I realized how emotional conversations of race can be - and how important it is to have people you can trust to unpack your delicate feelings.

We cannot have these conversations or create these spaces without acknowledging why the need for them is so urgent, so desperate, so much like a breath of fresh air that it makes you wonder what air you've been breathing this whole time. This is a space we are creating for you to explore and find yourself in, however we would be amiss if we didn't carve out this moment of awareness to contextualize the experiences and expression held within. Be mindful as you journey these pages. Continue to challenge the way you consume this content.

# "BIPOC"?

## **Who does "BIPOC" refer to?**

The term "BIPOC" is an acronym for Black, Indigenous, & People of Colour. "People of Colour" is generally used to refer to those who are non-White who have been historically disadvantaged in the North American context, but we acknowledged this label may not reflect how people view themselves.

## **Why is BIPOC the preferred label?**

Because it's an inclusive term that centers the historically oppressive experiences of Black and Indigenous people. The importance of BIPOC is that 1) It was created (at least partially) by POC, and 2) It centered the voices of the Black and Indigenous community

## **Why does the term change so much?**

Previous terms to describe People of Colour (including the term POC), that were not created by us, allowed for many outside voices to be centered. Naturally, as time passed, these terms would be rejected by the community.

# The History of the BIPOC Affinity Group



## Pivotal Beginnings

Our network's first experience with affinity groups occurred during DTL of July 2020 in response to the heavy climate of racism, police brutality and discrimination experienced that summer following the murder of George Floyd. Since our first session, we've realized the need to continue the BIPOC Affinity Group as a safe space for the BIPOC youth in our network.

The purpose of this project is to build/regain trust and meaningful relationships, and to understand the experiences of BIPOC youth in our network. Our hope is that this Affinity Group will create a culture of belonging, allowing BIPOC youth to bring their culture, identity, spirituality, religion, and lived experience to the space. This project is a part of TNM's long-term commitment to embed anti-racism into all our practices.



# Disable the Label 2020 Exploration of Racism – Week 5



During Disable the Label 2020, the network dove into an exploration of race & identity, the intersections of mental health and needs of our BIPOC Members, shortly after the death of George Floyd in response to this brutality and the activism of Black Lives Matter in Canada and across the globe.

This 14-min art navigation by D3VYNN3 & lighthaus carved out a moment in time to create space for these powerful voices and experiences.



# Dear White Colleagues (Our Experiences of Racism)



During our deep dive into this topic, we reached an impasse that called for the leadership of our BIPOC youth to use their powerful voices to bring light and share their perspective.

The result was this groundbreaking 5-min Art Navigation, which created a potent moment in the proceedings for reflection, vulnerability and understanding.





# Disable the Label 2020

## Exploration of Racism – Week 8



In our final week of DTL 2020, Art Navigators D3VYNN3 & lighthäus, and an adult ally from our network, Val, shared their vulnerability and expressed the impact of the conversations we've had during Disable the Label.

This video can be watched or listened to with your eyes closed.



# Disable the Label 2020 Reconnect & Reconvene



In November 2020, we felt a need to reconvene our network for 3 weeks as an important first step to continue our conversations around cultivating anti-racist frameworks within the child and youth mental health sector. We hosted DTL 2020: Reconnect and Reconvene and heard from the youth and adult allies in our network about the urgency to have more conversations surrounding race and mental health.

Reconnect and Reconvene allowed us to widen our circles and deepen our work. We as a network recognized that exploring racism and whiteness in the mental health sector is not linear. We used the time in affinity groups to explore what our individual needs and goals are as we do anti-racism work together.



# The New Mentality's Open Forum



In December of 2020, TNM co-hosted an Open Forum with Anima Leadership exploring "Why is it so hard to talk about race in our network?" The Open Forum was an opportunity for a facilitated conversation that allowed for our network members' voices to be heard.

Many wanted to talk about specific moments of racism they had experienced in the network, but didn't get a chance to talk about them as they felt that the conversations were around problem solving and centering white folks' feelings. The randomized breakout room sessions felt, as one racialized individual called it, "a game of Russian Roulette" where they were unsure of what uncomfortable experience they were going to experience or witness.

In hindsight, TNM recognizes that the Open Forum should have ended with a debrief in affinity groups rather than in randomized small groups after having such difficult conversations.

The Open Forum was another step towards establishing an ongoing BIPOC Affinity Group.

# Anti-Racism Advisory Team



In February 2021, TNM provided an update to the network, recognizing that there was a need to slow down the processes in order to do it with intention. DTL 2020, DTL 2020: Reconnect and Reconvene, and the December 2020 Open Forum had to move at a pace that was so quick it didn't allow for TNM to adequately communicate the purpose, goals, and plan of their work.

TNM shared that their work had not stopped and their commitment to anti-racism work remained strong. TNM began working with an advisory team of incredible individuals to evaluate, reflect, and to create documentation. It highlighted the journey TNM had taken thus far, lessons learned and things we would continue to do and develop 1-3 actionable strategies for TNM to embed anti-racism frameworks into their advocacy work and network culture.

Through the advisory team's meetings came the vision for a monthly BIPOC Affinity Group that would start in the fall of 2021 – a step towards building a community of belonging.



# BIPOC Affinity Group Launch



In November of 2021, The New Mentality's Black, Indigenous, People of Colour (BIPOC) Affinity Group launched! The purpose of the BIPOC affinity group is to build trust and meaningful relationships with BIPOC network members, provide leadership skills, and understand the experiences of BIPOC youth. To ensure the emotional safety and comfortability of our BIPOC youth, TNM hired a BIPOC social worker to provide mental health support during the calls.

During our BIPOC Affinity Group calls conversations centered around creating a brave space for youth to share their gifts and offerings and what they need to fully participate and be themselves in this space. Additionally, BIPOC youth discussed the barriers they face and what empowers them to show up as their authentic selves in spaces.



# The BIPOC Affinity Group Today



The New Mentality's BIPOC Affinity Group continues to meet monthly for the second year! The BIPOC Affinity Group has grown into a special and unique brave space for racialized youth within the network.

Topics for our discussions have centered around: Breaking Cultural Barriers, How Our Cultures Display Love, and On Our Own Terms - Embracing Our Culture & Identities, The Beauty of Our Names, The Importance of Rest as Racialized Advocates and more!

TNM Advisors Duane Hall (lighthaüs), Devonna Munroe (D3VYNN3), and TNM's Network Coordinator, Fizza Abbas, host the BIPOC Affinity Group. To ensure the emotional safety and comfort of our BIPOC youth, our social worker Schantel Spencer is present to provide mental health support during the calls.



# A Social Worker's Experiences With a BIPOC Affinity Group



Schantel Spencer

After multiple school years were upended by the pandemic, we've witnessed more starkly than ever the necessity of building relationships to enhance one's growth and development. This level of isolation and loss of connection has been devastating for many, but not more felt than the BIPOC communities. Not to mention the murder of George Floyd, which only served as a grim reminder of the pervasive racial inequities and injustices in those very same BIPOC communities. The timing of the New Mentality BIPOC Affinity Group was right on time, as the members of the group were able to find solace among each other every month.

I should state that my role is that of a social worker, who's job is to support the youth should they require during our zoom calls. This role quickly became one which saw me participating and engaged in activities, discussion and at times healing.

As a social worker, I have run many groups throughout my career and the structure is to facilitate and create goals in which the clients would partake in the programming set forth. But within the BIPOC Affinity Group, I could be present and be part of the process, and I must say it was refreshing.

Let me start with how it has shaped me as a professional. The BIPOC Affinity Group has helped me to see my role as a social worker as one who is creating an antiracist society. As a professional I have begun my practice with pausing and looking inward, and using that understanding to propel me toward action for meaningful social change. This group has helped me to think of my role in a way where I have an ethical duty to dismantle racism, both personally and professionally, in order to demonstrate what it means to be an anti racist.

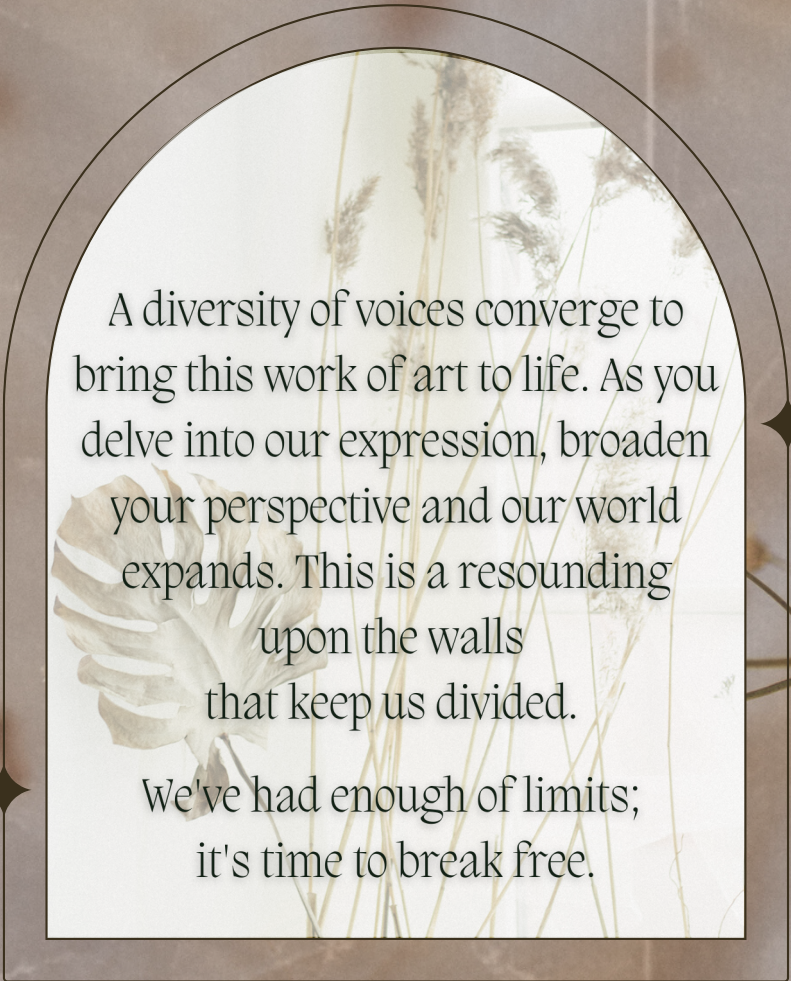
Personally, I have grown within the group, which sounds funny coming from one of the adults in the group, but it is true.



As a black woman, I see the need for a BIPOC Affinity Group as important to allow for one to find their authentic self without fear or judgment. As a result, we were able to tackle various topics with ease and comfort. We were able to reclaim parts of ourselves that have been repressed. We were able to redefine ourselves and support one another in embracing who we are, not who we felt society needed to see in order to make them feel comfortable.

The necessity of these spaces is obvious to me as a black woman and I am sure the impact is felt by the other adults and youth as well. We are learning to embrace the wonderful layers of ourselves that for many was encapsulated within, all to survive the injustices and marginalization we faced throughout the years. The BIPOC Affinity Group also serves as a space where people have a chance to converse without needing to explain racism or white supremacy culture to white participants who may not understand. This in itself is powerful to witness. We were able to take our power back within this space. Whether it is through art navigation, storytelling, mindfulness, song or various videos, and other forms of social media, healing has emerged many times in that space. This group is seen as a healing space both individually and collectively.

It is a place where people are sharing their triumphs and sorrows, their own culture, and inner beauty. We are constantly empowering one another by lifting each other up, with snaps, claps and with occasional one word..... YASSSSS! The BIPOC Affinity Group has moved from being a group to simply being a community, or might I say, a FAMILY.



A diversity of voices converge to  
bring this work of art to life. As you  
delve into our expression, broaden  
your perspective and our world  
expands. This is a resounding  
upon the walls  
that keep us divided.

We've had enough of limits;  
it's time to break free.





# change maker

**appropriation vs. appreciation**

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# culturally appropriate

## appropriation vs appreciation

This next part of the Zine will encourage you to step out of your comfort zone as a changemaker.



The beauty of The New Mentality network is the awe-inspiring stories of youth and adult allies from different backgrounds, coming together to collaborate, exchange ideas, and work to make the Child & Youth Mental Health sector a place for us all. However, it is vital to recognize the difference between appropriation and appreciation as a changemaker.

Appreciation is when one seeks to learn and better understand another culture to widen their knowledge and perspective, deepen their understanding and connect with others cross-culturally.

Appropriation is when one takes one cultural aspect that is not theirs and uses it for their gain or interest. Attending a spiritual ceremony for likes on Instagram or wearing a cultural garment as a fashion statement is harmful when you are not seeking to understand the culture.

Remember to appreciate by actively listening, self-reflecting, and sharing your culture.





**Cooking  
Up  
Change**

# Taste of Home

S A U M Y A A .

सौ ऋ या



It's a running joke between me and my childhood friends that you have to say "no auntie I don't want any more rotis" at least three times before my mom will stop offering. And whenever I visit them, the script is the same. It's polite to refuse something the first time, and just as polite to be offered it again, until you inevitably give in and say yes like you wanted to in the first place. I don't know how or when I learnt that, but I know it just as much as I know that my grandmother will bring me five kinds of homemade sweets from across the ocean, and my mom will always make my favourite things when I come home to visit.

Food is a love language. Cooking for someone else, making their favourite things, sharing your culture with them - all of those things are an expression of care. Hearing echoes of that care reflected in the experiences of other racialized youth made me feel seen in a way that was delightfully affirming.

There is something both relieving and empowering about being reassured that your experiences don't exist in a vacuum, and I am grateful to the BIPOC Affinity Group for being that reassurance for me.

# Shan

## T . K h a t t a k

Can you really call your cooking authentic if the spices are pre-packaged? It's something that weighs on the mind much heavier than the 60g packets themselves. There's a sense of artistry in blending spices yourself, balancing flavours solely by instinct. In truth, the origins of many cultural dishes are contentious. For even biryani the debate rages on from region to region. Do potatoes belong? Peas? The list is endless.

The fact of the matter is that prepackaged mixes exist is to fill a niche. Today it can be convenient to pick up each ingredient individually to your own taste, but I imagine years ago, or in areas without such imports, it would be very difficult. Quite frankly, it's very convenient, and by experimenting with different boxes and brands it's possible to find something to your taste.

Even households where such cuisine is the norm can find them useful. Tradition has its place but taste is, after all, subjective. If you've never made any of these dishes before it's fair to give them a try. I wouldn't worry too much about authenticity unless you're set on claiming it. At the very least, you'll learn more about what your own tastes are regarding what you've tried.

If spices like cardamom, turmeric, and fenugreek are strangers to your kitchen I highly recommend giving them a try. But if you're hesitant to buy them all, and you're interested in trying out a new recipe, you could always check out the back of a spice box.






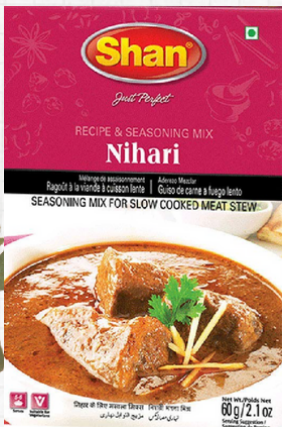
# NIHARI | نهاری

Nihari comes from the word "Nahar", meaning "morning" or "dawn". This dish was eaten by Nawabs (prince/governors) as a breakfast dish. Nihari is a slow-cooked meat stew originating in Lucknow, the capital of 18th-century Awadh under the Mughal Empire in the Indian subcontinent.

**EN INGREDIENTS**  
 Red Chili, Salt, Paprika, Nigella, Garlic, Dehydrated Onion, Cumin, Bay Leaf, Aniseed, Green Cardamom, Black Pepper, Ginger, Clove, Fennel, Maltodextrin, Hydrolyzed Soy Protein, Sugar, Canola Oil, Silicon Dioxide.  
**Allergy Advice:**  
 May contain traces of Sulphite, Sesame, Mustard, Gluten and Tree Nuts.

*Ingredients Required*

		
<b>Meat, boneless</b> 1kg / 2.2lbs, 4-6 large portions	<b>Bones</b> 2kg / 4.4lbs, (knuckle & marrow)	<b>Onion</b> 1 medium, finely sliced
		
<b>Farina/Flour</b> 1 cup / 100g, dissolve in 2 cups water	<b>Cooking Oil</b> 1 cup / 175 ml	<b>Shan Nihari Mix</b> 1 packet, mix in ½ cup water



**Shan** <sup>®</sup> **NIHARI**

  **STEPS OF COOKING**

1. Heat ½ cup oil, add meat and **Shan Nihari Mix**. Stir fry until oil separates from masala.
2. Add 18 cups / 3 ½ liters water and bones. Stir and bring to boil. Cover and cook undisturbed on low heat (for: Beef 6 hours, Goat / Lamb 4 hours, Chicken 3 hours).
3. Remove bones, collect marrow and discard bones. Add marrow to gravy.
4. Gradually add dissolved flour in the gravy. Stir and mix. Bring to boil and cook for 15 minutes. Stir occasionally.
5. Heat remaining oil and add sliced onion. Stir fry until golden and pour into Nihari. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes on low heat.

- Remove excessive oil before serving, if desired.

**Serving Suggestions:** Garnish with sliced green chilies, fresh julienne ginger & lime. Serve hot with naans.

**Tips:** For meat, use shank cuts. For chicken, use drum sticks.

COOKING UP CHANGE











# BIRYANI | بریانی

Originating from Persia, biryani became a popular dish during the Mughal Empire who ruled India for centuries. This dish is made with Indian spices, rice, vegetables and usually some type of meat. From Iran to India, this dish is loved by many around the world.

**EN INGREDIENTS**  
Salt, Red Chili, Dried Plum with Pits, Fenugreek Seed, Dill Seed, Turmeric, Cinnamon, Black Pepper, Cumin, Nigella, Bay Leaf, Fennel, Brown Cardamom, Ginger, Garlic, Clove, Dried Papaya Powder, Maltodextrin, Hydrolyzed Soy Protein, Citric Acid, Sugar, Canola Oil, Natural and Artificial Food Flavor, Silicon Dioxide.

**Allergy Advice:**  
May contain traces of Sulphite, Sesame, Mustard, Gluten and Tree Nuts.

**Ingredients Required**

 <b>Meat on Bones</b> 1 kg / 2.2 lbs, small portions	 <b>Rice, Basmati</b> 3 ½ cups / 750g, washed & soaked	 <b>Onions</b> 3 medium / 300g, finely sliced
 <b>Tomatoes</b> 3-4 medium / 300g, diced	 <b>Potatoes</b> 2 medium / 250g, peeled and quartered	 <b>Garlic Paste</b> 2 tablespoons
 <b>Ginger Paste</b> 2 tablespoons	 <b>Plain Yogurt</b> 1 cup / 200g, whipped	 <b>Cooking Oil</b> 1 cup / 175ml
		 <b>Shan Special Bombay Biryani Mix</b> 1 packet, mix in ½ cup water



**Shan**  
Just Perfect  
RECIPE & SEASONING MIX  
Special  
**Bombay Biryani**

Mélange de assaisonnement / Assaisonnement  
Filaf à la couche de viande et de pomme de terre / Avec du Canari et Potatoes Cubes  
SEASONING MIX FOR MEAT & POTATO LAYERED PILAF



Net Weight / Poids Net 60 g / 2.1 oz

**Shan** SPECIAL BOMBAY BIRYANI

  **STEPS OF COOKING**

1. Fry onions in hot oil until golden. Add tomatoes and fry until oil separates.
2. Add meat, garlic paste, ginger paste, yogurt, potatoes and **Shan Special Bombay Biryani Mix**. Stir fry for 10 minutes. Add water (Beef/Lamb 4 cups, Chicken 2 cups). Cover and cook on low heat until meat is tender. Then increase heat and stir fry until oil separates from the gravy.
3. **Separately:** In 15 cups / 3 liters of boiling water, stir in 3 tablespoons of Shan Salt and soaked rice. Boil rice until ¾ cooked. Remove and drain thoroughly.
4. Spread half rice in pot and pour meat curry. Top with remaining rice. Cover pot and cook on low heat until rice is fully cooked (5-10 minutes). Mix before serving.

**Tips:** For meat, use breast, ribs & shoulder cuts.

COOKING UP CHANGE

# COOK-UP RICE

Typically served on Ole Year's Night (New Year's Eve), cook-up rice is a one-pot meal served as a representation of prosperity and celebration. Traditionally, cook-up rice is cooked in a big pot cooked over a wooden fire outdoors. Coconut milk, rice, black eye peas, okra, callaloo & meat lend their flavors beautifully to each other in this hearty dish.



## INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 lbs chicken thighs diced into 1 inch pieces (optional)
- 1 cup dried black-eyed peas soaked over night and drained
- 2 cups of jasmine rice washed and drained
- 2 tablespoon of oil for cooking
- 3 cups of freshly made coconut milk, or
- 1 cup of canned coconut milk diluted with 2 cups of water
- 4 cups of water
- 1 small onion diced
- 2 tomatoes diced
- 1/4 cup of fresh Asian Basil or Marridman poke finely chopped



COOKING UP CHANGE

# COOK-UP RICE



## INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a medium bowl, add chicken, garlic or granulated garlic, cassareep, brown sugar, salt and black pepper. Then mix together well and let marinate for at least 30 mins.
2. Then add coconut oil to a large stock pot on medium heat and bring up to temperature.
3. When the oil is hot add the marinated chicken and sauté for 10 mins or until it has a great sear and is brown on all sides.
4. Then add the onions and tomatoes and continue to sauté for about 3 minutes.
5. Next, add black-eyed peas and 4 cups of water and mix together well. Then increase the heat, cover and cook until the peas are tender enough to be crushed with your finger tips. This should take about 30 minutes.
6. When the peas reaches the desired tenderness and all the liquids cook down, add the rice. Mix together well, then sauté for about 2 minutes to toast the rice a little before adding the coconut milk.
7. Next add the coconut milk and the Asian basil, stirring the pot constantly to remove any stuck on bits from the bottom of the pot.
8. Continue to stir as the coconut milk comes up to a boil, then reduce the heat to the lowest possible heat, cover the pot and let it steam until the rice is completely cooked. This should take about 30 minutes.
9. Remove from the heat and fluff with a fork.

## COOKING UP CHANGE

# JOLLOF RICE

Jollof Rice is native to West Africa. Many of the countries argue about the best way to make it and who actually gets to claim it as theirs. With that being said, there are so many ways to prepare this dish so I've put together the simplest way to prepare it based on some research. You can enjoy Jollof Rice with some fried meat and ripe, fried plantains.



## INGREDIENTS

- 5 Roma tomatoes, roughly chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, roughly chopped
- 1 medium sized onion, roughly chopped, set aside
- 2 scotch bonnet (habanero) peppers
- 1/4 cup of groundnut oil
- 3 tbsp tomato paste
- 2 cups of parboiled rice
- 2 1/2 cups of chicken stock
- 1 tsp salt to taste
- 1/2 tsp curry powder
- 1/2 tsp thyme
- 1 tsp All purpose seasoning
- 1 Knorr stock cube
- 3 bay leaves
- Water, as needed



COOKING UP CHANGE

# JOLLOF RICE



Yield: 6

Time: 55 MINUTES

- Blend your tomatoes, red pepper, scotch bonnet peppers in a food processor or blender for about 45 seconds, make sure that everything is blended well.
- In a medium sized pot, heat your oil on medium-high heat. Once the oil is heated add the onions you set aside and fry just until they turn golden brown. Once the onions, have turned brown in color add the tomato paste and fry for 2-3 minutes. Then add the blended tomato mixture (reserve about 1/4 cup and set aside) and fry the mixture with the onions and tomato paste for about 30 minutes. Make sure you stir consistently so that the tomato mixture does not burn.
- After 30 minutes, turn the heat down to medium, and add the chicken stock. Mix and add your seasonings (salt, curry powder, thyme, all purpose seasoning, and the Knorr stock cube). Continue to boil for 10 minutes.
- Add the parboiled rice to the pot. Mix it very well with the tomato stew. At this point if you need to add water so that the rice is level with the tomato mixture/chicken stock go ahead and do so. Add the bay leaves, cover the pot, and cook on medium to low heat for 15-30 minutes.
- When the liquid has almost dried up, add the remaining tomato stew, cover, and let it cook for another 5-10 minutes heat until the liquid has completely dried up. Turn off the heat, mix thoroughly, and your Jollof Rice is ready to be eaten!

*This recipe is from Ev's Eats*

COOKING UP CHANGE

# BANNOCK

Bannock is an adaptation of an Irish recipe for bread that the Indigenous peoples of North America began to make with what they had during colonialism. Indigenous Peoples adapted it into many different things like bannock tacos, scone dog/wiener bannock, etc. The recipe here is specifically for fried bannock.

- 4 Cups of flour
- 4 Teaspoons of baking powder
- 1/4 Teaspoon of salt (most people will say enough to fill a small part of your hand while cupping it!)
- 1 & 1/2 Cup of water



- Mix all ingredients and slowly add water till you reach the right consistency.
- It should be a little sticky but still hold together.
- Afterwards, you can fry it, or even air fry it!

COOKING UP CHANGE

# metemgee

Guyanese Metemgee (metem/mettagee) is a hearty creole stew of root vegetables and dumplings simmered in a rich coconut milk broth with herbs and peppers. Serve this national dish as comfort food on cold days or whenever the craving strikes.

Ground Provisions: plantains, cassava (yuca), eddoes/dasheen (taro), sweet potatoes & cho cho (chayote). Any root veg works here.  
Duff: Guyanese flour dumpling  
Aromatics: Onion & garlic  
Pepper: Wiri Wiri/Scotch Bonnet  
Sprigs of Fresh Thyme  
Whole / Frozen Coconut  
OR Coconut Milk (can).  
Coconut Oil  
Preferred Seasonings  
Water



Warm coconut oil on medium heat, add onions and garlic, cook until soft. If using fresh or frozen coconut, blend with 5 cups of water and put through sieve to get your coconut milk. If using can, simply add coconut milk to pot, followed by the cho cho, thyme, peppers, salt and seasonings of your choice. In separate pot, boil cassava on high heat until tender, add remaining provisions and continue to cook until tender. Strain and add to stew, include duff (flour dumplings) and serve when cooked through.

*option to add protein of choice:* growing up it was saltfish cooked into the coconut milk broth, but other meats, plant-based alternatives or even boiled egg are favorites that work well with this dish.





## WHAT YOU *Water* GROWS

Take time to feel, to grow, to learn and unlearn. This work is heart centered.

Encourage and empower yourself, your staff, youth and community.

What you water grows, what you appreciate grows. When you show an abundance of love, encouragement and positivity the work will be received ten-fold. Recognize peoples' gifts and create structures for them to keep giving and receiving.





*Learn  
to  
Unlearn*

# Where Do I Start?

Fizza Abbas | فضة عَبَّاس

Where do I start? How do I start?

You may be having these thoughts come up for you when it comes to conversations around anti-racism. If you're reading this and are a part of the TNM network, you know that we have been trying to have conversations on race in the mental health system for quite some time now.

Through our work, we've heard from many that they want to learn, grow, and be a true ally to racialized communities. We want you to know that we are proud of you for taking this step towards learning and unlearning.

It's not an easy road but it's an important one to take.

We know that everyone is at different stages of learning, and also that everyone has different learning styles.

Which is why you will find a compiled list below of podcasts, movies/TV shows, and books for you all to read, listen, and watch at your own pace.

We believe it's important to learn from all different folks from all walks of life when it comes to conversations around anti-racism. One book won't give you all the answers to solve systemic racism but we hope it will inspire and encourage you to embark on a lifelong journey of learning.

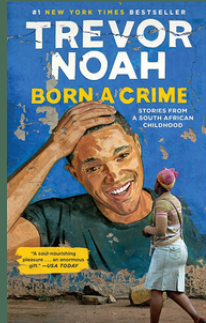
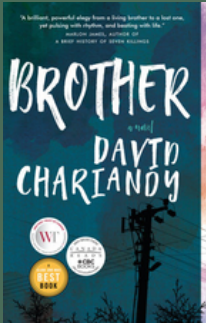
For our racialized folks in the network, I know we many times bear the weight of having to educate others. I want you to know that it is not your job to do so. We hope this list of resources provides you a space of solace, a sense that you are not alone in feeling that weight, and a sense of community.

# Where Do I Start?

## PODCASTS

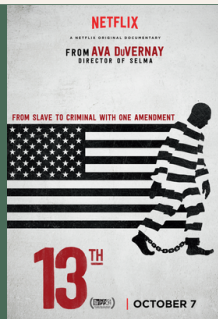


## READING



Decolonization is not a Metaphor (2012)  
by Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang

## MOVIES/ TV SHOWS



Our complete list of podcasts, books and movies/tv shows can be found [here](#)

# Where Do I Start?

## *Reflection Questions*

Begin with some inner reflection work. As you embark on this journey, here are a couple questions to get you started:

What was an insight or an ah-ha moment while reading, listening, or watching a resource from the list above?

How do you plan on continuing your learning journey?

A graphic of a spotlight beam shining down from the top center, with white lines radiating outwards on a light beige background.

# spotlight

**Make Space**

*48*

---

**Inspiring Creators**

*73*

---

**Final Words**

*79*

# Love In Any Language.

*We are seeing eye to eye. I find this to be good.*

In one of our sessions this year we discussed what the word for Love is in our home languages. We ended up having a beautiful and eye-opening conversation and were amazed to see many similarities. Here's "Love" in our native tongue:

**ZAAGI' ິP**

"To treasure." or  
To be (cause to be), or to act.

**FIK'IRI ᄒᄒᄒ**

The owning of love or  
to take ownership of love

**SARANG 사랑**

The intimacy of love  
and affection.

**ISHQ عشق**

"Extremely passionate love."  
Made up of three letters meaning  
worship, doubt and sacrifice

**MOHABBAT मोहब्बत محبت**

Friendship, love, affection, amour

**'AHABAH אהבה**

"To provide and protect that which is  
given as a privilege."  
An intimacy of action and emotion.

**IHUNANYA**

"The meeting of the eyes"  
or "To see eye to eye".

The link between love and the eyes  
goes beyond the physical.

**PYĀAR प्यार**

Derived from the root words for love and act.  
Thus Pyaar represents an act of love.



make  
space.





# Bloom.

*Fall deeper, and deeper within,  
to the sound of the bell. Undo the knots  
of fear, and gift yourself the room to breathe.  
Sink deeply into the heart & unfold, like petals blooming*

Like a tiny seed planted, brimming with potential  
Embedded so deeply within the soil  
Your roots have yet to grow. Engulfed in confusion,  
Pain prickles the surface of your fresh skin.  
Years and years of abrasions leave you tender

Sore and bruised, scrapes turn to scars,  
scars turn to calluses, protecting yourself has created  
a hardened shell that you hardly recognize  
Sensitivity has been discarded for a shield  
to ward away everything that might view you as prey  
Sacrificing your essence in the process.

Thorns wrap around your stems  
Striking all the searing fingers  
that reach to pluck your gentle nature  
The same twisted hands at the same twisted time everyday  
Persistently clawing at the fruit you bear  
Blocking the sun from your vision

*I see your light. Though shadowed by the darkness  
of oppressive forces intending to hold you down,  
I see you reaching up past the limiting layers,  
like a stigma growing in the midst  
of a dense blanket of petals,*

*You, persevering, trying to reach the light.  
your soul, though under assault, striving to overcome.*

**You, like the roots that grow,  
And twist & tangle into something new  
Amongst those who bloom in tandem with you.  
Endlessly bright and charming like butterflies  
and church bell chimes. With a history as deep & rich  
as the soil your souls sprung from,  
Ever beautiful like both the roses and it's thorns**

**You bloom with new life, breathing new air, but you, you are old.  
Look below, you'll find thousands of years of roots.  
Ancestors that lift you up, that keep you uplifted  
and they have faced brutality, they have faced pain,  
and they gift you their strength, they gift you their glory  
Every ray of sun you consume is because of the power they  
possess. Possess your power. You are powerful!**

**I see your light, and trust me, you got it,  
I wish, above all, that you would take a moment  
to recognize yourself, and know who you truly are.**

**Look back on your path and see how far you've come.  
What you've been able to accomplish.  
Look at how you've made a difference wherever you're planted  
Like new pistils rising up all around from where you've  
germinated your environment with absolute brilliance!**

*You are the light. You are the key.  
You are powerful!*

**ART NAVIGATION BY GIN, ERIN, DIYA, D3V & LIGHT**

# Soft Place to Land

S A U M Y A A .  
सौ ँ या

As a youth of colour, it's easy to find yourself in the spotlight. You're always the one who has to explain: your clothes, your food, your festivals. Sometimes it's fun. Sometimes you want to step up to the microphone and talk about all the things you love about the place that you come from. But sometimes, that spotlight gets too singularly focused, too painfully bright, and you don't know if you're allowed to step away.

Creating brave spaces for racialized youth is giving us a brightly lit room instead, where we're all learning and growing together. We can draw energy from one another, lift each other up, and most importantly, leave the door open so people can come and go as they need to.

Advocacy is exhausting work, and where loneliness, burn out, and a lack of safety threaten to weed us out, brave spaces provide a soft landing. They let us take risks and explore; they let us learn in a space where we know it is safe to make mistakes and push boundaries. In a world where we are inundated with so much negative news every day, it is more important than ever to have a space where we can explore our emotions, express our frustrations, and channel them towards our dreams of a better future.

The work starts at home, and sometimes, that's what brave spaces are.

*our triumph over the western waves*

the waves beat upon my skin,  
up against my cheeks,  
where my mother pinched in affection.

the waves crash into my feet,  
which i was taught to walk on with grace,  
thanking mother earth before i danced.

the waves of the west,  
eroding me day by day –  
pull me slowly closer  
while pushing parts of me away.

but while i was drawn unto the rhythm,  
the sway of the persistent waves,  
the never ending torment  
of a beach which did not want me to remember my name  
i forgot to look around

to see my friends  
standing in the water  
beckoning me to hold their hands  
in our shared time against the water  
to fight the pressure of the waves together

my people  
there all along  
reteaching me my ways  
showing me the love of our ancestors  
pulling me into the sand  
so we could dance

once more with our vibrancy  
away from the beating waves  
for just a little while

**i am safe.**

*Diya M.*

दिया

# Indian Summer



*Diya M.* दिया

Scarborough, ON

Diya (they/them) is a 19 year old first-generation immigrant from India. A gender non-conforming youth writer, singer-songwriter & producer with a passion for music and prose. They have worked in advocacy and implementation of initiatives centering marginalized communities (with a focus of BIPOC and 2SLGBTQIA+ youth) since the beginning of high school, and hope to inspire a new wave of young people to showcase their unique spirits and wishes!



*Photography by Diya*

# ENDLESS

feel the cool, damp sand between your fingers.  
it falls through your hands, little by little  
look to the sky, it's endless, endless blue  
remember your endless, endless questions  
of why waves fell to the shore  
and the air tasted salty at the beach  
and why the sky's blue remains endless  
over generations of trauma and generations of warmth  
the line where the sky meets the land never falters

we may move from place to place  
but still the blue of the sky kisses the earth,  
no matter where we are on it.  
whether we stand on the land of our ancestral home  
or left to weave tighter, safer futures for our children  
or we stand where our great great holders of bloodline  
first ran down across the earth and marked this land

many of us have travelled far from where those  
who came before us once stood. some of our parents  
left the torn up pages of photo books and diaries to  
reach here. and like the journey they took,  
the twigs and leaves of our family trees too,  
we must continue walking that path.  
not just so that we can walk to brighter, safer,  
smoother paved roads, but so that we can walk  
alongside the tired feet that allowed us to travel here.

Egin J.  
교포

# Healing Hands

Sore and bruised  
Scrapes turn to scars  
Scars turn to calluses  
Protecting yourself has created  
a hardened shell that you hardly recognize,  
Sensitivity has been discarded for a shield  
to ward away everything  
that might view you as prey.  
Sacrificing your essence in the process...

Here is our hand, an extension of  
our compassion and willingness to share.  
Here is our voice, not to drown you out,  
but to encourage you to listen,  
to guide you into a better light.  
Here is our heart, open but not bleeding,  
in hopes you see the way  
it beats in tandem with yours.  
We know we are different.  
our lines and shapes cannot be the same but,  
we are still bound to have similarities,  
and even though our roads stray from one  
another's, we may still cross paths,  
we may still end up at the same destination.  
So listen, and hear us clearly  
you still have plenty to learn on your journey,  
as all of us do. We cannot pretend  
this trail does not involve you.

*Gin P.*



# A Personal Essay on Self-Rediscovery

BOLUWATIFE O.



## prelude

Growing up as an immigrant, I have always found it hard to find spaces where I didn't feel like an outsider. As much as our society tries to promote equality and equal access to opportunities, without creating spaces for people to feel like they belong, I don't think this goal is really achievable. The BIPOC Affinity has gone above and beyond by providing a safe space. From discussing things like code-switching to the journey of the unlearning things we were taught to hate about our cultures, BIPOC Affinity allows us to have a discourse about our shared stories and experiences. Which I believe is vital in order for us to become better global citizens. I hope that everyone immigrant and BIPOC youth are able to have a safe space like the BIPOC Affinity Group.

The classic tale of the one-sided story is one we know quite well and has been repeated in various forms of media throughout history. While we cannot deny the importance of storytelling in many cultures, on the other hand, especially in the society we live in, many groups can easily fall victim to the side effects of a single story. The truth becomes tainted with lies and rumour, like a twisted game of telephone. Often they become stereotypes, which in most cases, are only half truths. But what about the stories we tell ourselves? Many at times our minds can warp and exaggerate how we see ourselves, tend to pick at the little bits and fragments of imperfections that we forget to look at the whole picture. We forget to realize that we may be bruised, but we're not broken. We choose to focus on the one side of the story which, subconsciously, gets repeated over and over until it becomes our new reality. We tell ourselves, "I'll never be enough," "people like me don't become successful," "why would anyone want to listen to what I have to say?" etc. These were the stories that I repeated to myself, over and over, until they became a reflection of how I saw myself, put into words.



For the first few years of my life, I grew up in an area of the city of Lagos known as Makoko, also known as the Venice of Nigeria, not for its beauty, but because it is a collection of houses floating on water. My earliest memories included creating makeshift toys from random objects found around the street with the other neighbourhood kids, to my mother's dismay. My mother had believed, like many prideful Nigerian mothers tend to be, that playing outside on the streets with the other children, was beneath me. Which I now can't help but laugh at; the terrible irony.

I always knew and grew up in a household where the need to strive for better was the norm and, and to put it simply, both my parents exemplified what hard work, determination and resiliency looked like. For years, they made it their sole purpose to create a better life for my brother and I. See, even though my father (who was a nurse) was born to a parents who the co-heads of a well-respected school ( at the time), due to the lack of a stable economy coupled with the deeply rooted mentality of corruption, life was the constant uphill of trying to survive till the next month or week. And for some, the next day.



My parents were thoroughly determined to find our Land of Canaan and after many years and money spent, my dad was offered a Registered Nurse position at the Cornwall Regional Hospital in Montego Bay, Jamaica. Even then, my parents could not bring siblings and I along with them, so we lived with our mother's parents in their small one-bedroom apartment along with my aunt and uncle. My time living with my grandparents is a bit of a blur. Much of my lingering memories are filled with busy Saturday mornings where the whole neighbourhood seemed to be collectively cleaning their homes. My grandfather's favourite Fuji artist, King Sunny Ade, plays in the background, as well as street hawkers calling out - selling their goods. The smell of my grandmother and aunt making akara (beans cake) in our kitchen filled the air. Looking back now, even though we didn't live in a golden palace, we were content with what we had.

About a year and a few months later, my brother and I went on to join my parents in Jamaica. The aeroplane ride was also the first time I had ever set my eyes on a white person. Even though I technically already had in western movies, it never truly sunk in that there were people whose skin didn't look mine or whose hair was, to me, absurdly straight.

I remember vividly, wanting to ask a man what happened to his nose and why it is so long. My memories of our time in Jamaica aren't much but of the things that stuck out to me was how clean and pristine everything was. Most houses on the street we lived on had been painted white to reflect the rays of the sun and were beautifully adorned with flowers of all sorts. So compared to dust covered houses back home, I thought we had won the lottery. My most prized memory of Jamaica was the first time I had ever seen a library. It wasn't a massive one like the one we have in downtown Barrie but it had books. Books of all shapes and sizes filled with colourful images. The truth was, I thought it was unfair. Growing up, the only books I knew of were my math and English textbooks, and the newspapers my grandpa read, which simply bored me. It didn't seem just to me that other kids my age got to have so much more than I had back home, Honestly, a part of me felt left behind.

This only got worse when my family finally arrived at our Promise Land, Canada. Even though my family and I had been absolutely grateful, the air of the dream finally realized was short-lived.



My parents were constantly faced with relatives from all over asking for financial support. The belief was that once you have arrived at Oyinbo Land (white people land) you have officially made it in life and your neighbour is Oprah Winfrey and you have oil wells in your backyard - which is as far as you can get from reality. We chose to settle in Parry Sound (which is very predominantly white) at the start of my grade four year. The transition to Canada was hard. I had a weird mixture of Jamaican Patois and Yoruba (my native tongue) accent. I remember on the first day of school, the teacher began the day with a discussion of what we had done during summer. Some had spoken about how their family had gone on a vacation to Mexico or any of Caribbean Island. Many of them shared the adventures they had at their cottages, which simply puzzled me. I couldn't believe how possible it was for one to have a home solely for the purpose of vacationing. My teacher had mentioned that everyday in Jamaica was probably a vacation for me. The truth was that the closest my family ever went on a vacation was to the beach, which had only been on two occasions. In fact, none of us knew how to swim so going to the beach seemed redundant.



At the time, there was only one other black family at my school (and in Parry Sound), so for the first time ever in my life, I felt like an outsider. From the constant stares and hidden snickers, mixed with the backhanded compliments, it was as if the world was in on a joke to which I was the punchline. Some students went as far as to ask me if I used an eraser on my skin, would my colour rub off also? On a different occasion, one student had said I couldn't play basketball with them because I was Black. I had never for once considered that some might penalize me for something as unchangeable as my skin colour. Most people couldn't pronounce my name nor even tried to. I wasn't expecting perfection (since I couldn't pronounce most of theirs either) but some students had just decided to "joke" around by calling me beluga whale, balloon, bologna, or whatever their 4th grade mind could come up with. As each "joke" was said, I felt as if parts of my identity were being stripped away. I wanted to just shrivel up and vanish. One's name isn't something that should be taken lightly. It is a key that opens up a door to who they are and their identity. When people ask, "who are you?", we often don't respond by saying, "I am a sister," or "I am a mother."





Instead, we answer by merely stating our name, knowing quite well it encompasses the things that make us who we are. Looking back now, I can say that I was going through an identity crisis. I wanted to be just like the other skinny Caucasian girls who had straight long hair and had a “normal” name like Emma, because maybe then people would like me. What had happened to me was not just about racism, to me it is about lack of self respect. In the essay, "Self-Respect: its source, its power", published in a 1961 American Vogue edition, Joan Didion wrote about the importance of self-respect and what it looks like in an individual. She put it best when she'd stated, “...people with self-respect exhibit a certain toughness, a kind of moral nerve; they display what was once called character, a quality which, although approved in the abstract, sometimes loses ground to other, more instantly negotiable virtues...”

When I first heard the statement while watching *Joan Didion: The Center Will Not Hold*, I immediately paused it, then reversed and watched it again. Again and again. I did this about 5 times before settling for recording it on my phone. In absolute awe, I couldn't believe how eloquently she had been able to simply present the meaning of the word self-respect in its purest form.

I believe that many at times we are ever so willing to sacrifice who we are, just so we could be like the rest, and we do so at the expense of our identity and self-worth. I think the type of society we live in has a lot to do with the lack of self-worth in many individuals. When we see a person walking with a spring in their step, “exhibiting a certain nerve” that doesn’t allow people to take them for granted and instead demands their worth, we say that they are full of themselves and arrogant. It has truly made me understand that self-respect isn’t something people grant you but is more so something that stems from knowing who you are, and allowing it to ground and steady you.

For so long, I was ashamed of who I was. I was ashamed of my heritage and my story. Whenever people would ask me where I was from, I would simply reply by saying I was from Jamaica, since it painted the picture of a beach paradise rather than a poverty ridden picture of my home country. I repeated this lie so much that even I almost believed it to be nothing but the truth. Sharing that part of myself meant exposing myself to judgement-filled eyes of those whose only knowledge of Nigeria is of homeless children on the streets, terrorist attacks, and a “Nigerian Prince” promising to give you his hand in marriage as long as you give him your credit card information.

We all have these scars (whether mental, physical or emotional) that follow us through our lives. Like me, many allow them to become the lens to which we see the world through. For some, it could be a parent who was never present and as a result, causes the individual to have attachment issues because they believe they weren't good enough for their parents to stay. We choose to hide parts of ourselves for fear of judgement and rejection, allowing the world to only see the parts we deem worthy enough.

Our hearts become coated with self-imposed pejorative words that, in time, start to alter our belief systems. In *The Courage to be Yourself*, E.E. Cummings explains the difficulty that is being oneself in a world that is overly saturated with ordinariness. When Cummings said "To be nobody-but-yourself — in a world which is doing its best, night and day, to make you everybody else — means to fight the hardest battle which any human being can fight; and never stop fighting." Cummings is simply stating that to be authentically oneself in one's purest form is a never-ending challenge. I couldn't agree more. We live in a time and age where trends are constantly changing. One week, the talk of a new workout routine that has been proven to work is all we want to talk about. The next, we're going back to the body positivity movement.

Being like the others and mediocrity is evidently prized above celebrating individuality and the struggle it took to become who we are. It is when we allow ourselves to tap into the potent essence that is our identity, without the cage of conformity, that we can achieve the highest, truest expression of ourselves.

One of the most resounding words I have ever heard is a quote by American novelist, James Baldwin. He says, “your crown has already been bought and paid for. All you have to do is put it on your head.” I cannot help but reflect back on the series of events that have had to occur for me to be who I am today, through the might of the divine in me and my ancestors. It humbles me to know there are greater forces at work in my life. Each moment of pain and joy that I have had to go through had to occur - which has forced me to understand that each and every stage of my life is undoubtedly preparing me for the next. My aspiration for my life is to leave an indelible mark on the people I come across and the world, whatever form that may take.



I often think back to the young girl I was back in Makoko. The world from her eyes was pristine and pure, and I look at myself now. I think about the things I've seen and heard. The good parts, the ugliness of the others. As I move through life, I choose to keep that part of myself alive and thriving. I choose to forgive the parts of me that fall short of grace, the part of me that was ashamed of her beautiful dark skin. The part of me that was ashamed of her story.

*fin.*

*Boluwatife (Bow-loo-wah-tee-feh), pronouns she/her, is currently a second-year pursuing a double major in Global Health and Bioethics with a minor in History and Philosophy of Science and Technology at UofT. She is very passionate about healthcare, mental wellbeing and wellness, specifically for youths and students.*

# COMMUNITY

*Arwen Cooke*

*Biigtigong Nishnaabeg | Sault Ste. Marie*

Hi, I'm Arwen. I'm Anishinaabe from the Biigtigong Nishnaabeg area. I am currently not in school as I am taking care of my health, but I am applying to Psychology at a local university. Equal access to mental health care for all, but especially Native individuals in remote communities, is my passion. I hope to someday provide this.

In this piece, I wanted to show the community I felt when I first got to hang out with the BIPOC Affinity Group at DTL, then continuing this year. I have never felt much community, being from a largely white town, and not living on my own reservation anymore. I don't feel so much like an alien anymore.



# THE BIPOC AFFINITY GROUP

visualize a peaceful scene,  
maybe one that's close to your family's ancestral home,  
a beach, a meadow, a mountain, a river or body of water,  
a temple, mosque or shrine...

a place you can see the sights and hear the sounds  
that bring you right back to your roots.

feel the roots of your culture running deep into the earth,  
deep down into the home where we all come from.

feel your ancestors behind and all around you.

feel their pride, the depths of their love, their truth.

rest deeply into this moment and let it envelope you.

breathe

we are embracing all of who we are  
empowered by those who have come before us  
standing on your ground, embracing the energy and radiance  
standing in the sun, your face - a mosaic of all the features  
your ancestors loved and found beautiful  
standing in the fullness of who you are. loving thy self daily  
breaking mental slavery and generational curses  
forgiving the hurt you received both in your family and community  
and embracing your culture wholeheartedly!

dressing up in traditional clothing,  
rocking those kurtas & kurtis, sarees, head scarves and dashikis  
feeling good about yourself uncompromisingly

for you are a Legend  
a God or Goddess of your own temple  
powerful and beautiful beyond measure  
and this is your time to rise.

# AN ART NAVIGATION BY

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# Deeper Still...




Deeper Still

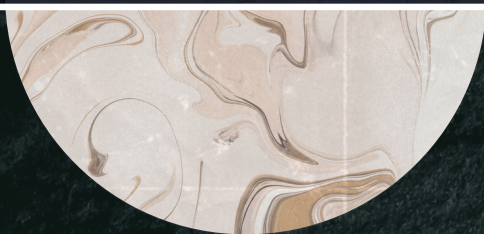


Copy link

DEEPER  
STILL



Watch on  YouTube



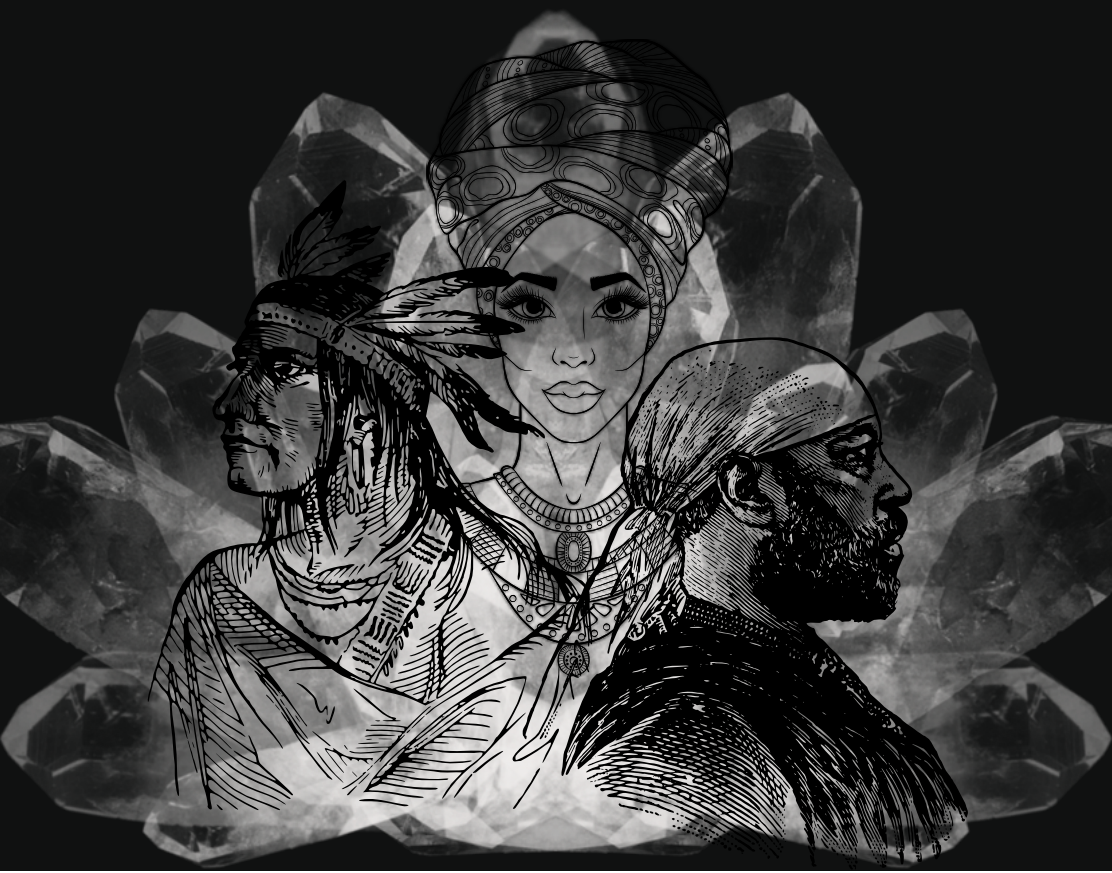
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AN ART NAVIGATION - BY D3V & LIGHT

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# INSPIRING CREATORS



INSPIRING CREATORS

# TikTok



@notoriouscree

James Jones brings Indigenous education and cultural hoop dancing to the forefront of TikTok!

@indigenous  
baddie

Michelle Chubb makes educational content for non-Indigenous Peoples and inspires Indigenous youth to be proud of the beauty of their cultures and encourages them to express themselves.



INSPIRING CREATORS

# TikTok

@Tiamiscihk

Tia Wood uses her platform to promote her Cree and Salish cultures through dance, singing and Indigenous history and education!



@ShinaNova

Shina Nova is an Inuk media personality known for her fashion, activism, and throat singing!



INSPIRING CREATORS

# Instagram

[@Brownhistory](#)

Brown History is run by one individual who as they say "share a rich tapestry of stories from various South Asian Communities across the globe." Grab a cup of chai, as these stories will transport you to the motherland.



HISTORICAL DOSES OF SOUTH ASIA

[@Bfunk](#)

Interested in learning Bhangra or Bollywood dance styles? Look no further, Shivani and Chaya bring the energy and the fun as they take you through step-by-step tutorials.



INSPIRING CREATORS

# Youtube

**Panwar**



**@vaishnavip**

Hemant and Vaishali Panwar teach and perform Kathak and Indian music in the Greater Toronto Area! They are also active members of their community, and host monthly events for elders and youth to provide a cultural space for connection.

**@metemgee**

Althea is the creator and cook behind metemgee - a blog dedicated to traditional and modern Guyanese cooking with easy to follow instructions and videos.



INSPIRING CREATORS

# YouTube



## F.D. Signifier

Fig is a thorough video essayist committed to explaining the intricacies of being Black in America. His detailed analysis of capitalism, masculinity and respectabilities politics makes him a trusted source.

## Shanspere

Shanspere is another video essayist. She blends comedy, wit and hard cold facts to analyze pop culture, mental health and history.



# Final Words



# Message to Audience

It will be easy to scroll through this offering and wonder after the creativity and vulnerability of those who contributed, without much consideration to your place in this equation; the personal connection, the tugs on your heart, the engulfing unfamiliarity, the otherness.

We encourage curiosity so get curious, but not that of observing an animal from the sidelines. Be brave and get close. Have the courage to place yourself in this midst of this creation and see yourself: where you're at, how far you've come, what you lack and need, how vulnerable you are willing to become. Be open to learning & unlearning. Our cultures, our expression, may not be at all what you expected. You may learn something new, reunite with a part of yourself long forgotten, or enjoy cuisine previously thought to be strange or undesirable.

Truth is, it's not about "us vs them". Why should it be when it can be "us and them"? You only truly become an enemy when you refuse to grow. Our race & culture does not define us, nor should yours define you. They are apart of a wonderful tapestry that brings color, vibrancy, and abundance to our experiences.

Tap into your courage as we fan the flame in your heart. At times it may cut and burn, but it will always lead to growth. Have the courage to not only see us but be in this space with us. We are carrying the fire with you. Let's work together to create communities of belonging.



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# Thank You

Thank you for coming along on this journey with us!  
Thank you for stepping outside of your comfort zone.

Anti-racism requires tremendous courage and strength, and we commend you for showing up.

We'd like to thank the BIPOC youth and elders who generously offered their time and energy to the creation of this zine. We thank our ancestors for their inspiration and guidance.

Instead of striving for perfection, let us strive towards learning, unlearning, and building brave spaces for the BIPOC youth around us.

The impact of inclusion is always transformational.  
We need YOU to create a braver space for ALL.

Thank you. Miigwech. Give thanks. شكريه

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