

Cultivate practices that move us from surviving to thriving.

Spaciousness

Collective Thriving:

Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence

www.engagingvoices.org

Spaciousness

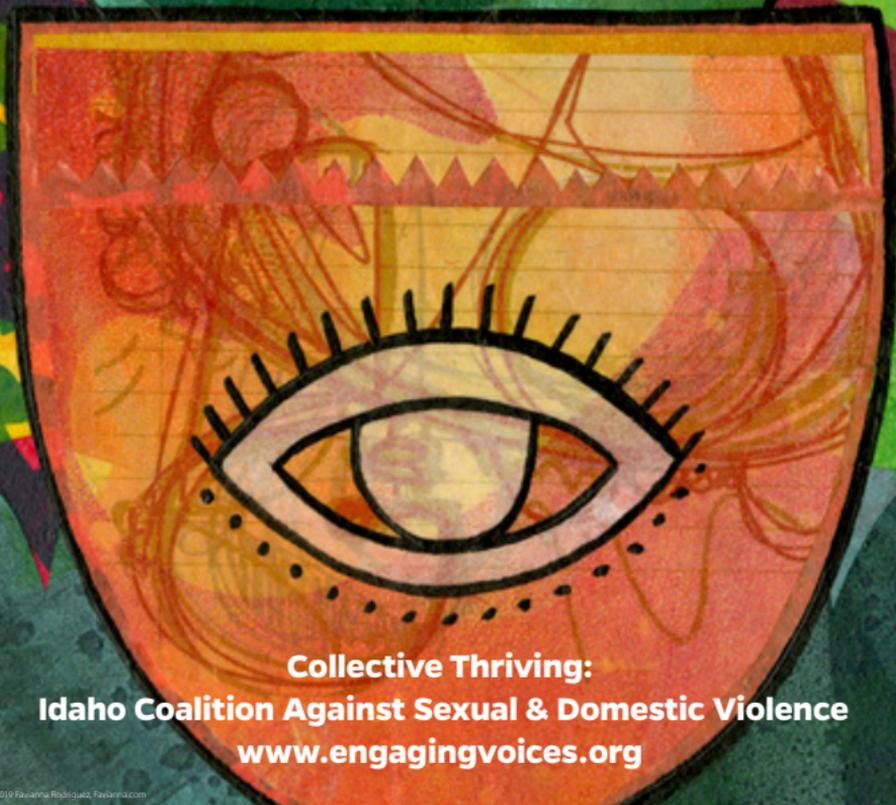
Time for reflection or being in nature can increase our awareness to see things for what they are in that very moment.

Practicing spaciousness helps us to be in the present moment and can help us heal from the harm of violence. Habits, like busyness or taking on more than we can handle, can interrupt the healing journey. Here are practices to cultivate spaciousness:

- **Breathe.** When we breathe low and s-l-o-w all the way down to our bellies, we expand our vision and our possibilities. Taking five deep breaths with long exhales while looking at the horizon can bring us to a sense of calmness whenever we feel overwhelmed. Even one mindful breath can help us reset when we are in the middle of an activity.
- **15 Minutes of Spaciousness a Day.** Opening time and space away from tasks, technology, and tension can create possibilities for healing. Taking even 15 minutes a day to breathe and do something we enjoy will open our hearts and minds.
- **Say “No.”** When we choose what is truly important in our lives, we can cut out enough to create the space to thrive. Reflecting on things we may do out of habit will help us let go of the things that no longer serve us.

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Abundance



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Abundance

Noticing the resources around us, we can make choices that sustain us and the ones we love.

When times are difficult or challenging, we may focus on the limits, or scarcity, of what is available to us. Here's what we know: by making choices throughout the day, we can regain our sense of self. Here are practices to cultivate choices and abundance:

- **Gratitude.** Even in difficult times, reflecting on gratitude can help us grow what is possible with what we have. At least once a week, we can reflect on three things we are grateful for. We can write, draw, or speak them to ourselves.
- **Generosity.** When we and those around us choose small ways of sharing what we have, we plant the seeds of generosity. We can think of one small act a day – anything we have time for – which would spread our generosity.
- **Notice.** Sometimes all it takes is five low and s-l-o-w breaths and the intention to notice what is within and around us. When the time feels right, we can take five, slow, mindful breaths and notice the things around and inside us that give us energy.

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Compassion



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Compassion

Cultivate compassion and generosity for ourselves, increasing the possibility that we can do it for others as well.

When we are not at our best, we often have a habit of judging and blaming ourselves and others. Developing kindness and compassion for ourselves and others can push out our feelings of despair and hopelessness. Here are practices to cultivate compassion:

- **Self-love.** Our compassion for the world begins within ourselves. Before we start our day, we can do something kind for ourselves – drink a glass of water, say a kind word to yourself, eat a healthy meal. By doing this, we are caring for ourselves.
- **Forgiveness.** Forgiving ourselves first is the most important act towards thriving and being able to understand that our future is not tied to our past. With forgiveness we open new choices for what comes next. Repeat to ourselves: “I did the best I could and can move forward.”
- **Deep Listening and Knowing.** Listening is more than being quiet while others have their say. It is about being actively present; it is about connection more than observing. Real listening involves us being fully who we are, a willingness to be surprised, and letting go of assumptions.

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Connection



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Connection

Share moments of joy and experiences of pain with people who see us and know us.

One of our deepest human needs is to be seen by other people — to really be connected with and be known by someone else. We need to find ways to come together in moments of joy and pain. Here are practices to cultivate connection:

- **Authentic.** Being authentic means that we act in ways that show our true selves and how we feel. Rather than showing people only a particular side of ourselves, we can express our whole selves genuinely. That means we first have to know who our true self. And this requires self-awareness, mindfulness, and self-acceptance.
- **Share.** Keeping our thoughts and feelings to ourselves can be overwhelming. People who we trust may help us see the situation in a new light or different perspective. Sharing also creates an opportunity for authentic connection.
- **Commit.** We can schedule time to connect or reconnect with people who are important to us. By making time to connect, we can improve the quality of our relationships.

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Be Present



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Be Present

Being firmly rooted in the present, we can appreciate the moment, heal the past, and align our actions with our dreams.

Especially when our lives feel out of control, we may have a habit of dwelling on the harm of the past or feel anxiety about the future. Here are practices to cultivate being present:

- **Attention.** We can feel curious about where we are right now. “Am I here?” We can pay attention to what is around us and where our attention is. “Where am I and who am I with?”
- **Physical Body.** Our physical body is always in the present moment – be present with it. We can feel what is happening inside our bodies and do not need to name the feelings (anxiety, exhaustion, pain, excitement, anticipation, etc.) or explain why they are happening. We can just observe them as they happen.
- **Sounds.** Listen to or feel the vibrations of the sounds that are happening around you right now. No effort is needed. Just listen to them ebb, flow and change.