

## 2023 November Chalice Circle: Collectively

### Opening Words and Chalice Lighting by Carolyn Hayek

We light our chalice in gratitude for  
The Joy we experience when we come together  
The Insights we receive from one another  
The Challenges we encourage one another to meet  
And the Satisfaction we receive from listening to one another and sharing our ideas and beliefs.

### Song "One Voice" by the Wailin Jennys [LINK](#)

This is the sound of one voice  
One spirit, one voice  
The sound of one who makes a choice  
This is the sound of one voice  
This is the sound of one voice

This is the sound of voices two  
The sound of me singing with you  
Helping each other to make it through  
This is the sound of voices two  
This is the sound of voices two

This is the sound of voices three  
Singing together in harmony  
Surrendering to the mystery  
This is the sound of voices three  
This is the sound of voices three

This is the sound of all of us  
Singing with love and the will to trust  
Leave the rest behind, it will turn to dust  
This is the sound of all of us  
This is the sound of all of us

This is the sound of one voice  
One people, one voice  
A song for every one of us  
This is the sound of one voice  
This is the sound of one voice

**Check-in:** Without crosstalk or interruption, briefly describe where you are in your life now, and notice what needs to be shared in order to be fully present in our circle.

### Reading

Do you have the car today? Hayati, I'm at the bus stop, I hurt so bad, can you pick me up? Hey, can I borrow twenty dollars? Can you go buy groceries for me when you're out and drop them off? Here's a list. Do you want to go to community acupuncture together?

Hey, B. needs more care shifters, can you repost this Facebook note? Can we share the access van ride over to the city? If you come, you can say you're my personal care attendant and you won't have to pay. Do you have anemone tincture you could bring over? I'm flaring. Holding me would be good too. If I take your manual wheelchair and load it up with takeout, we'll all have food. Can you go with me to the clinic and take notes while I talk to my doctor? Can I use your address for the Easy Does It pickup?? I'm just over the border into Oakland. Let's pass the hat so we can afford ASL for the event. Do you have the interpreter list? Here's the list of accessible event spaces we made on Google docs.

Can you be part of my mad maps crisis fam? Wanna Skype if you can't get out, even if we live in the same city? Wanna go with me to the food stamp office? Can you pick up an eighth for me when you go to the dispensary?

What does it mean to shift our ideas of access and care (whether it's disability, childcare, economic access, or many more) from an individual chore, an unfortunate cost of having an unfortunate body, to a collective responsibility that's maybe even deeply joyful? What does it mean for our movements? Our communities/fam? Ourselves and our own lived experience of disability and chronic illness?

What does it mean to wrestle with these ideas of softness and strength, vulnerability, pride, asking for help, and not-all of which are so deeply raced and classed and gendered?

If collective access is revolutionary love without charity, how do we learn to love each other? How do we learn to do this love work of collective care that lifts us instead of abandons us, that grapples with all the deep ways in which care is complicated?

This is an essay about care - about the ways sick and disabled people attempt to get the care and support we need, on our own terms, with autonomy and dignity.

It's specifically an essay about some experiments that have taken place over the past decade by sick and disabled predominantly Black and brown queer people to create networks of care by and for us. It's about our attempts to get what we need to love and live, interdependently, in the world and in our homes, without primarily relying on the state or, often, our biological families the two sources disabled and sick people have most often been forced to rely on for care, sometimes, well, often, with abuse and lack of control. This is about some of the ways we are attempting to dream ways to access care deeply, in a way where we are in control, joyful, building community, loved, giving, and receiving, that doesn't burn anyone out or abuse or underpay anyone in the process.

This is for us and by us, and it is also for everyone who thinks of themselves as able-bodied and normatively minded, who may not be, who will not always be, who the ghost of the need for care still dances with as deepest fate-worse-than-death fear, as what you want the most but can't even let yourself speak.

From [Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha](#)

### **Questions to Consider**

1. What does it mean to act collectively?
2. What does it mean to shift our ideas of access and care from an individual chore to a collective responsibility?
3. Are there elements of our western culture that impede or promote collective action?
4. Describe a time when you worked together with a group. Was it a success? Why or why not?

**Sitting in Silence:** We will sit in silence for 3-5 minutes. Take this time to reflect on the readings, questions, and theme. Center yourself and consider what you want to share with the group.

**Sharing/Deep Listening:** Please share your own experiences and thoughts about the topic and readings with no crosstalk or interruption. Please ensure everyone gets an equal opportunity to share.

**Additional Thoughts/Crosstalk:** As time allows, after listening to others, do you have additional thoughts to share?

**Checkout:** What are you taking with you as you leave the circle? How can we support you in the month ahead?

### **Closing Words/Extinguishing the Chalice** by Robin F. Gray

The flame is extinguished, but not our hope for the future, our courage in the face of crisis, or the love we share in all the world.