Coming Home To Self And Each Other During The Age Of COVID-19
Webinar Wednesday
May 27, 2020

The presentation will begin at:
2:30pm ET/1:30pm CT/12:30pm MT/11:30am PT
Thank you for joining us!
The Promise of Community Action

Community Action changes people’s lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.
**Purpose:** The purpose of the LCRC is to analyze Community Action outcomes and identify effective, promising, and innovative practice models that alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty.

BUILD CAA CAPACITY TO FIGHT POVERTY!
THE LCRC TEAM

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Today’s Presenter

Denese Shervington, MD, MPH
Director
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Dr. Shervington has an intersectional career in psychiatry and public mental health. She is a Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Tulane University School of Medicine and the President and CEO of the Institute for Women and Ethnic Studies (IWES), a community-based translational public health institute. At IWES, Dr. Shervington directs a federally funded trauma-informed Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Program as well as the community-based post-disaster mental health recovery division at that she created after Hurricane Katrina. At Tulane, Dr. Shervington provides psychotherapy supervision for Psychiatry residents. She has an illustrious career in public mental health and population health, with posts at the national, state and local level. She also has extensive clinical and community expertise in PTSD and trauma-informed response.
COMING HOME TO SELF AND EACH OTHER DURING THE AGE OF COVID-19

Denese Shervington M.D., M.P.H. Institute of Women and Ethnic Studies (www.iwesnola.org)
The time will come when, with elation
you will greet yourself arriving at your own door, in your own mirror.
And each will smile at the other's welcome, and say, sit here. Eat.
You will love again the stranger who was your self.
Give wine. Give bread. Give back your heart
to itself, to the stranger who has loved you
all your life, whom you ignored
for another, who knows you by heart.
Take down the love letters from the bookshelf,
the photographs, the desperate notes,
peel your own image from the mirror.
Sit. Feast on your life.

Derek Walcott: Love After Love
What is Self-Care

Coming home to our true self – a self that is freer of its usual conditioning, fears, impulses, habits – returning, embodying, embedding our self back into self

Living from a space of emotional and ethical intelligence

Living from a space of compassionate wisdom – using knowledge for the good of self and others
How to Achieve Self-Care

I. Care for the Mind
   ▪ Uncovering
   ▪ Witnessing
   ▪ Accepting Existential Givens
   ▪ Cultivating Mental Hygiene
     ○ Ritualizing / Ancestral Reverence
     ○ Centering in nature / Play
     ○ Creativity / Imagination

II. Care for the Physical Body
   ▪ Purposive Movement – mind / body harmonizing
   ▪ Intentional Relaxation / Sleep

III. Care for the Spirit / Essence / Soul / Qi

I. Balancing Other-care / Knowing Edge States
Care for the Mind

- **Introspection**
  - Understanding / reflecting on the relationship between feelings, thoughts, and actions / behaviors – self awareness
  - Naming hurts, exploring sources of pain that arises from losses and disappointments – grief work / releasing suffering

- **Contemplation**
  - Quieting the mind – awareness of interiority, witnessing, being mindful
  - Seeing inside mental processes and connecting them to outer reality / macrocosm
ACCEPTING EXISTENTIAL GIVENS: Minimizing Anxiety
FREEDOM
One is solely responsible for oneself and one’s choices

MEANING
Why do I live?

ISOLATION
No one can fully share one’s experience of consciousness

DEATH
Inevitable end to conscious being
Existential Pondering

I. **Freedom:** Life is boundless - I am solely responsible for myself – to create my life story.
   Q: How do I make choices about how to live my life?

II. **Isolation:** I was thrown into the world alone and will die alone– I alone experience my being.
   Q: Do I cling and try to fuse with others or can I befriend my solitude?

I. **Meaning:** I cannot fully pierce the mystery of why I exist.
   Q: How do I make meaning of my life and make purpose?

I. **Death:** When I die, all of who I was, my unique experience of life, will perish despite my desire to continue to be. Death is certain – the time is uncertain!
   Q: How do I live in each moment?
Cultivating Mental Hygiene – HITR

HEALING IS THE REVOLUTION
DENISE SHERVINGTON MD MPH
Ancestral Reverence / Ritualizing
Centering in Nature
CREATIVITY

Bringing the beauty of imagination into our sensations:

Creative fantasies
Care for the Physical Body
Care for the Physical Body
Care for Essence / Spirit
Care for Essence / Spirit
Balancing Care for Others

By being at home in ourselves we can best be at home with another
Compassion Fatigue

- Being on the edge of slipping from health into pathology – on the edge where opposites meet [Roshi Joan Halifax]
  - Edge states brought on when the high edges of caring, connection, virtue, strength slip into ‘a mire of suffering – toxic and chaotic’
  - Altruism becomes pathologic and harms us or the institutions we serve
  - Empathy slides into empathic distress – take on too much of someone’s suffering and we become damaged or paralyzed
  - Struggling over acts that lack integrity create moral suffering
  - Engagement in work becomes overwork and we develop
    - Burnout
    - Vicarious trauma / STS
Compassion Restored

- Adopt humility – selfless respect for reality – [Murdoch 1970]

- Learn the difference between futility (uselessness) and courage (conquering fear)

- Practice self-compassion

- Learn lessons from the breakdown
  - ‘No mud, no lotus’ – transform from suffering - Thich Nhat Hanh [2014]

- Reset sense of meaning and purpose
In generosity and helping others: be like the river
In compassion and grace: be like the sun.
In concealing others’ faults: be like the night.
In anger and fury: be like the dead.
In modesty and humility: be like the soil.
In tolerance: be like the ocean.
Either you appear as you are, or: be as you appear

RUMI – Seven Advices
For the love of my grandbabies
References


• Batchelor S. The Art of Solitude. 2010. Yale University Press
Questions
June 2020


June 3: Civic Action 101

https://communityactionpartnership.com/events/category/webinars/
Community Action Academy

Moodle is an online learning platform designed to provide trainers and learners with a single robust, secure, and integrated system to create personalized learning environments. [https://moodle.communityactionpartnership.com](https://moodle.communityactionpartnership.com)

- Free & Accessible to the entire Community Action Network!
- ✓ On-demand courses, videos & resources
- ✓ Peer Engagement & Virtual Networking
- ✓ Virtual space for Learning Community Groups
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1) Search your App Store (Apple) or Google Play (Android) for the official moodle app (can simply type "moodle").

2) Once the app is downloaded to device, enter URL: moodle.communityactionpartnership.com

3) Login on the Moodle app using your same credentials for Community Action Academy on the computer.

For more information, you can visit this link.
For More Info

For more information or questions contact The Learning Communities Resource Center Team:

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This presentation was created by the National Association of Community Action Agencies – Community Action Partnership, in the performance of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Community Services Grant Number, 90ET0466. Any opinion, findings, and conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.