





"SHE DIDN'T READ BOOKS SO SHE DIDN'T KNOW THAT SHE WAS THE WORLD AND THE HEAVENS BOILED DOWN TO A DROP."

Zora Neale Hurston,
 Their Eyes Were Watching God

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

To be Black is to be divine. To be Black is to be exceptional simply by existing. To breathe while Black is to thrive. To move, and wake up, and allow ourselves the glorious, Godly space to be Black, without fear of retribution or limiting the infinite space we are blessedly entitled to — is a revolution. There is nothing I love more than seeing us flourish, seeing us beam and shine and glow like the beloved moonlight on water. Yes, we too can be soft. We too create. In fact, the wombs, heartbreak, song, seeds sown by our foremothers birthed this entire nation. While their mouths suckled from our breasts, their whips cracked our back. While we used braiding to design escape routes, they call it KKK boxer braids. They hold vigils for Charleston, and metanoias against White Supremacy, only to have a White woman tell us to praise the police who pushed, shoved, lied, belittled and protected a eugenicist. A Latinx man was expelled for his artistic expression of his resistance to a Klan-run administration that served as an affirmation for those of us who aren't of the caucaus mountains.

And this is how we honor our legacy. Creating honors creation honors The Creator. Therefore we birth Light in this journal of Peace and great Truth. May you see your Self reflected in these pages, and honor the majesty You Be.

With deep Love,

Alleyha I. Dannett
alleyha i. dannett
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

contents:

TIYAH THOMPSONTIYAH'S MURAL $GINIKA\,CHI\,\,A\,SIN\,O\,K\,E$ BLEED GOLD PHOTOSHOOT $VANESSA\ GAY$ BLACK PANTHER SYMBOLISM MULTIPLE AUTHORS SELF CARE $PATRICE\ MCINNIS$ THIRFT LOOKBOOK MULTIPLE AUTHORS POETRY HOLDEN POWELL WITHOUT WARNING / MASSITA MULTIPLE AUTHORS FOOD AND NUTRTION

THE VISION







AM SAFE IT IS SAFE 444 MF 222 BF IN THIS BODY. I AM SAFE AS I AM. I AM ALIOWED 222 BE AS I AM. I AM PRAYED 444, PROTECTED, + ON MY PATH OF PROSPERITY.









TO BE A NEGRO IN THIS COUNTRY AND TO BE RELATIVELY CONSCIOUS IS TO BE IN A RAGE ALMOST ALL THE TIME.

CREATOR.
MURALIST.
ARTIST.
INNOVATOR.
SOPHOMORE.

Meet Tiyah Thompson

My mural is bigger than just a piece of art. Initially, it was a personal work customized to fit my bedroom wall, but after I saw how intrigued other people were and how controversial it became, I realized how effective it is in sharing my perspective of the world.

My goal was to portray and spread a message to get people thinking. The different contributions that have created my identity and understanding of who I am such as cultural expressions, different music, Black history, and more were vital in shaping my character. I had to use a medium other than the expression of words on a paper and utilize the small platform that I do have in order to challenge people's mindsets and see society through my eyes. I did not feel words could accurately articulate the culture and ideologies enclosed, in an effective and universal manner. I've been working on this piece since February 2017. After drafting my idea, inspired by a wall mural at East Hartford High School, I measured my bedroom wall, drew everything by hand with pencil, and began working. With the help of my high school art class, peers, and family, my 6 by 12-foot mural has become what it is today.















PHOTOGRAPHY + CREATIVE DIRECTION X GINIKACHI ASINOKE



PAINT X GINIKACHI

+
ALLEYHA DANNETT













Issa wrap



praise the ancestors







Maame Obeng Photo X





SYMBOLISM AND ITS ALLUSIONS TO THE IMPACT OF SLAVERY

Marvel's Black Panther is by far one of the most successful films in 2018, and while the presentation of the film is awe-inspiring, the plot is what stood out the most. The film dropped a plethora of symbolism that left many Black viewers conflicted on how to feel about the complex characters, and the heart-wrenching scenes attached to their narrative. The allusion to Black American History was made apparent in the film via the dichotomy between Killmonger and T'Challa, and the relationship between Wakanda and the rest of the world. Here are some scenes that I found to be symbolic:

- 1. Killmonger's father, N'Jobu, was selling rock aka vibranium to free his people, only for it to have been more beneficial to Klau (the white man). This can be a connection between how many disenfranchised Black Americans turn to selling drugs in order to keep their families afloat, only for it to be more beneficial for the prison industrial complex in the long run.
- 2. Killmonger's father was a criminal in the eyes of the Wakandans. He was killed on American soil by his own brother because of his attempts at using resources from Wakanda country to help oppressed Black Americans. This can be representative of the first wave of slaves who came directly from the continent only to die while attempting to free themselves or help free the other slaves around them.

- 3. Ironically, this killing was at the hand of Killmonger's uncle which could have deliberately been done to draw a parallel between the role that Africans had in the trading off other Africans, who were often seen as criminals to their respective empires, during the triangle trade.
- 4. N'Jobu's dead body was left in the apartment for his son to return to and thus be left a without his biological father, which is the case of about 60% of Black american children today. This can be representative of the part that slavery had in the destruction of the Black nuclear family.
- 5. Instead of taking his nephew in and raising him in Wakanda, the former BP abandons him and leaves him to fend for himself. This can represent the belief that Continental Africans abandoned the Africans who were taken against their will and sold into slavery. Even before Europeans began to colonize the continent in the 19th century, which for many Africans countries started more than 200 years after the start of slavery in the West, there was very little evidence of there being a will or desire to intervene or send reinforcements to help Black people obtain their freedom. Killmonger then grows up to resent Wakanda because of the fact that they willfully sat down and allowed Black people throughout the world to continue to be oppressed when they had the resources to help them the entire time.
- 6. Interestingly, Killmonger is displayed to be the villain due to his cutthroat approach at reaching his goal by any means necessary, including killing his own girlfriend. This seems to be conveyed to be a very "American" approach to solving issues in direct parallelism with the Black Panther ideology. In this sense, Killmonger is also a Black Panther, just a different kind. The Black Panther Party was started in Oakland, which can be why Coogler decided to change Killmonger's hometown from New York City to Oakland. This can also be used to highlight the Malcolm vs Martin ideologies during the Civil Rights Movement.

This can also be the reason why Killmonger was able to wear the Black Panther armor. Many critics of Killmonger state that although his heart may have been in the right place, his misogynistic tendencies prevented them from being able to fully side with him. This was a very popular critique of the Black Panther Party. Many women who were apart of the movement stated that the men of the party disrespected them and violated them far too often.

While there is so much more that can be highlighted in terms of symbolism in the film, especially pertaining to the balance of traditionalism and progression, I won't give it all away.







Caning for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is am act of political warfare.



AUDRE LORDE



self-care

/self/ker/

by Ruth Hadis:

- 1. Care for oneself
- 2. The practice of taking action to preserve or improve one's own health.
- 2.1 The practice of taking an active role in protecting one's own well-being and happiness, in particular during periods of stress.

I always thought self-care required me being alone with Netflix alongside a bag of pretzels and Nutella.

"I have two papers, a quiz, an exam, and copious chapters to read this week," just speaking the words into existence triggers anxiety deep in my core. My mind says "keep your ass in the library"; but my heart says "binge-watch A Different World in the comfort of your own sheets". The classic tale of The Overwhelmed College Student.

It wasn't until one of my peers invited me to their apartment for a night of self-care that I realized my routine was aff, to say the very least.

In times of stress, I found myself shutting down and doing the exact opposite of self-care: Ignoring my responsibilities for a night (or three) to increase my caloric intake and consume hours of mindless television. The more I partook in my destructive ritual, the more I realized how little I was actually taking care of myself. After this absence, I was left completely submerged in work, hopelessly trying to tread for dear life. This left me determined to find the perfect regimen to put my soul ease, so I interviewed some of my peers to get their perspective.

MENTAL HEALTH ACADEMIA

part 1 of a reflection by Chineze Osawake

I was first introduced to the emotional and physical toll that "school," as a collectivized unit, can take on every student when I attended boarding school from 9th to 12th grade. I watched my so-called "friends" morph into " A- thirsty" animals that sacrificed sleep and social life for a perfect GPA. I witnessed other kids slowly suffer from various mental-illnesses, as junior year took its toll on their academics, athletics, and family relationships. And I was even a somewhat oblivious bystander to other students' newfound appreciation- or in other words "addiction" to drugs such as Adderall, Xanax, and good- olefashioned Cannabis. Although boarding school is in some respects, a more sheltered and strict version of college, I thought that I would be more than prepared to maintain my grades and mental and physical wellness in college, but halfway through the semester grew weary and started noticing signs of chronic stress.

As a college student on the pre-law track, I am more than aware of the years and years of school to come and decided to look into the resources my school offers to soothe students' stress, and tend to their mental health. William Deresiewicz's article, "Don't Send Your Kid's to an Ivy League," calls into question how students respond to an ever-changing and increasingly demanding education system.

You see, mental health has become increasingly prominent in modern- day society, but oddly enough, has become stigmatized in an educational setting. As more and more students across the country are educated on the matter, there has also been an increase in students reporting symptoms of mental illnesses. Mental illnesses have become extremely prominent in the college and university setting, as students find themselves engulfed with so many responsibilities ranging from academics, to athletics, friends, and family. Colleges are expected to provide their students with resources to ease both their academic and social transition from adolescence to adulthood, however, recent studies have shown that many colleges across the United States are failing to provide their students with enough resources: counselors, therapists, and other mental-health professionals.





At the start of 2017, students that attended colleges across the country drafted a petition to the top 20 schools where students have died from suicide or drug overdose. By early February of the same year, over 700 students had signed the petition and a few included personal experiences as well. An overarching theme within most colleges across the US is that when students reach out to their school's counseling department, there are long wait times before they receive a mental health evaluation or meet a psychiatrist.

"A few weeks' wait may not seem like much. After all, it often takes that long, or longer, for adults to land a medical appointment with a specialist. But such wait times can be brutal for college students — who may be away from home for the first time, without a support network, and up against more academic and peer pressure than ever before. Every class, every meal, every party can become a hurdle for students struggling with eating disorders, depression, and other issues," (Thielking).

However, if a student reports that they are suicidal or leaning towards other forms of self-harm, they are pushed to the front of the waiting line. Although, in theory, this is a safe and productive process, issues can arise when not every student feels comfortable enough to fully disclose their feelings. In other cases, the student may downplay the severity of their emotions, in order to reassure themselves that they are overreacting or something. Because only six in ten college counseling centers have psychiatrists, they do not have the time, availability, or resources to fully treat each student, but instead, ensure that students are temporarily doing well

"Nationally, about six in ten undergrads seeking counseling are women, and 5 percent are international students. There are roughly an equal number of freshman, sophomores, juniors, and seniors," (Thielking).

Many large schools have a mental health "provider" for every 3,500 students, creating a barrier for students to receive in many cases- emergent assistance. I in 3 students in 2016 who sought counseling said that they seriously considered suicide at some point in their lives; this increased from the I in 4 students back in 2010.

As there is an increase in the number of students seeking counseling with the expectation that this resource is free, colleges are forced to reveal the harsh reality of their counseling fees. In Brown, students are allotted seven free sessions a year and in some public universities, like Indiana U, students are given two free sessions a year, and must pay \$30 per each additional visit. This is yet another barrier college students are faced with when it comes to tackling mental illness on campus.

Locke, director of the Center for Collegiate Mental Health, a national network, notes that college health centers would never require a student with strep throat to wait two weeks for an appointment. Yet that is what's happening to many students with anxiety, depression, and other serious mental health concerns. "It puts the student's academic career, and potentially their life, at risk," he says." Locke poses the question: why is it that as a society, we treat physical and tangible illnesses with more care and compassion than those we cannot see? What if our neglect for these various mental illnesses forms a deeper impact in student's education?



College is a time for exploration and new experiences. Some people may come with less knowledge of their sexual health and wellbeing. According to research among Black and African American teens, parents engaging in conversations about sex -- usually focusing on pregnancy and STI prevention through condoms-- correlates to an older age of teens having sex and minimizes risky sexual behaviors.

Still, Black families are known to be more conservative in their sexual conversations. Black sex and sexuality are taboos, with remnants of the sexual mistreatment of slaves and later of Blacks as free people. Enslaved Black women were often raped; Black males were often emasculated by their masters and eventually through lynching. Black women experienced forced sterilization at alarming rates in the mid-1900s, and the Tuskegee Syphilis experiment left entire generations of poor, rural Blacks wrongly infected with the disease. Black sexuality has been punished and demeaned while being exploited in popular culture. It's no wonder the topic is so controversial.

Yet, for the Black freshman entering an environment where casual sex is the "norm," there is much to learn, especially if one comes from a conservative family. So, we have gathered some helpful tips about not only taking care of your sexual health but also exploring your sexuality on and off campus:

The Rainbow Center offers a host of opportunities for sexual health and wellness. They offer free rapid HIV and hepatitis testing once a month on a first come, first serve basis. They host Rubberware Workshops facilitated by students and health center staff which teach people how to make and use safer sex supplies such as male and female condoms and dental dams. The Rainbow Center also offers a safe space for those questioning their sexual identity and hosts confidential discussion groups on such matters. Their Husky Safe Zone workshops are open to the public and discuss gender, sexual identity, and privileges one may or may not have regarding their sexual and gender identity.

The Women's Center offers programs for people recovering from sexual assault and rape. It also offers free STI testings with the help of health center staff on a first come, first serve basis. Their Violence Against Women Prevention Program (VAWPP) hosts interactive discussions and workshops exploring sexual violence and oppression. It also runs the Men's Project, which focuses on deconstructing masculinity.

The Health Center also offers free rapid HIV and Hep C testing. They also provide birth control through their pharmacy after an appointment and prescription with a physician. That will require an insurance card, but the physician will go over the many options available on campus for birth control during an appointment. The Health Center is a good place to start if you're looking to stay safe while on your sexual journey.

Planned Parenthood is a staple in Black communities nationwide. Mostly it's known for a history of opposition to its provision of abortions. However, in addition to abortion procedures, Planned Parenthood provides a host of other services to all people.

97% of their services are preventative healthcare! They offer birth control options, STI testing, and pregnancy services.

At an appointment about birth control, an employee will speak with you about your body and expectations of birth control then inform you of your best options out of the eighteen types available. Birth control can be used for more than just preventing pregnancy. People may use a hormonal birth control to treat acne or regulate periods.

At an STI testing appointment, an employee will ask which types of STI's you'd like to be tested for then ask for either a mouth swab or a small sample of blood or urine. It's important to get tested if you are sexually active, especially if you've had unprotected sex or think your partner may have an STI. The most common symptom of STI's is no symptom, meaning even if you have an STI you may not know it -- all the more reason to get tested!

You can also speak to someone about **pregnancy options**. They'll work with you to determine if your best option is pregnancy and parenthood, pregnancy and adoption, or aborting the pregnancy.

Visit the Planned Parenthood website for information on birth control, STI testing, abortion services, or to schedule an appointment. Don't worry about payment; their motto is "Care no matter what." PPH charges on a sliding scale, so you pay what you can afford. The closest Planned Parenthood to campus is in Willimantic. You can also schedule an appointment via phone call! If you are looking for more information, I encourage you to check out each website yourself. Remember that your medical information is confidential, so should you ever find yourself in a difficult situation, please seek help.

QUESTION: What does self care mean to you?

PATRICE: It isn't something that occurs at a specific moment. It it takes place at every moment and decision in order to practice self care you need to be honest with yourself. Whether it's executed or not is up to you.

OSCAR: Making sure that all my needs are met. Physically eating right, going to the gym, sleeping. Mentally, not stressed out or emotionally drained or weighed down. And spiritually, making sure your energy is right. Got to take care of that, people overlook that.

KENNEDY: It can mean anything from taking care of your mental and physical health. And you can have a mental health day when you just relax and recuperate.

QUESTION: How often do you self care?

PATRICE: Daily, because self care is how you operate to make sure you get the most from you. Do if you know a situation is going to benefit you, you'll do that. Self care is being conscious of your behavior.

OSCAR: Everyday. It's so easy to overlook. Going through the motions of going to class and handling everyday responsibilities makes it that much more meaningful when I take up the time to take care of myself

KENNEDY: All the time because I'm my number one priority! But all jokes aside, about four to seven times a week.

QUESTION: Do you have a self care regimen?

PATRICE: No matter how embarrassing or hearthreaking a situation may be, I have to be honest with myself in order to heal properly and move forward.

OSCAR: It starts when I wake up. First thing I do when I wake up every morning is drink a whole bottle of water. It's not only good for my skin but it's good for my organs. Next, fix my bed because when there's too much clutter in my life it's indicative of my mental state. The most important meal of the day, I make breakfast because you can't think right without proper nutrition. My go to is three eggs, two slices of turkey bacon, half an avocado, and a slice of whole grain toast with a glass or orange juice. I make sure I hit the gym and because of my meal prep on Sundays I always have lunch so I'm not stressed out. I always make sure I get 8 hours of sleep. I got to bed every night at 9.30 and wake up at 6am.

KENNEDY: It includes my daily morning and night routines, which consists of showering, freshening up, moisturizing, etc. Mentally, I always take time to write down my goals, I'm spiritual so I pray, and I also write poetry for emotional release.

QUESTION: When you feel like you need to take time to yourself, what do you do?

PATRICE: Before anything, I talk to people I know I can trust an ask them for advice, and also let them know that I need my space so that no one thinks I'm ignoring them. I spend time thinking, and watching inspirational movies such as The Wiz, Hercules, and the Princess Diaries. There are a lot of motivational messages that can slip into your unconscious as you watch them.

OSCAR: Meditate for at least 20 minutes. I always set a goal of 15 and then it! Il just stretch out. I always feel better every single time. There hasn't been a time I did so and didn't feel better.

KENNEDY: I write songs. I create to-do lists because they help me refocus and organize my day, as I check each one off I feel accomplished and my stress level decreases. I always go back to writing poetry, as it's my go to outlet.

QUESTION: Do you have any other pieces that weren't covered that you'd like to include?

PATRICE: The idea of self care is becoming a trend which is more hazardous than beneficial. Most people think it's something that should happen once you've been put through extreme amount of stress, when really it's to prevent that. It's to prevent from having to cope with setbacks. It's doing what you need to do to prevent any mental stress.

OSCAR: Learning about astrology helps me to see things in a different way that allows inner peace.

KENNEDY: Self care is important but it's also important to look out for others. If you see a friend in need, you can always refer them to CMHS, a hotline, or physically be there yourself as a friend. Sometimes all people need is a shoulder to lean on.

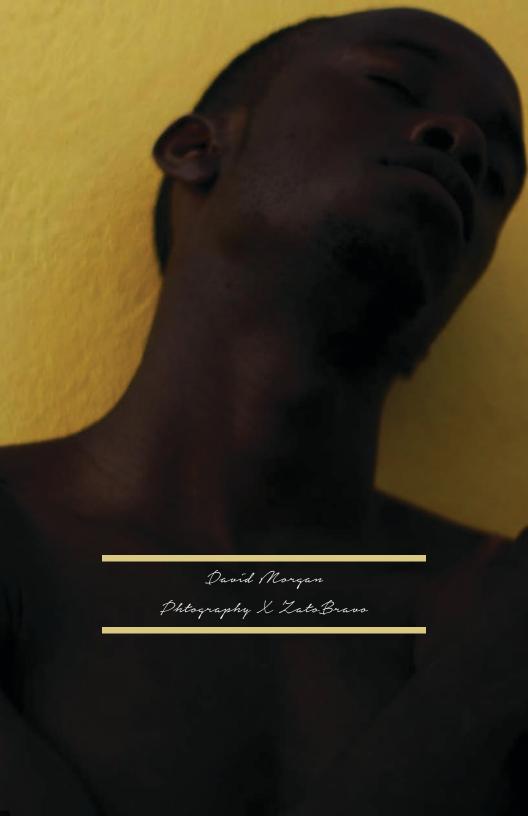
Self care is prioritizing the nourishment of your soul over anything else. Of course definitions and routines will vary from person to person, as it is not a one-size-fits-all product; however, in order to flourish, you have to listen to yourself and be honest with your needs. I know I have to give up a few of my Netflix binges for meditation, or slowly working through the day's to do list, but if it means a saner Ruth, it's essential. In a college setting, it's easy to forget your well-being is your main priority, but sometimes growing your wealth lies outside your bank account.

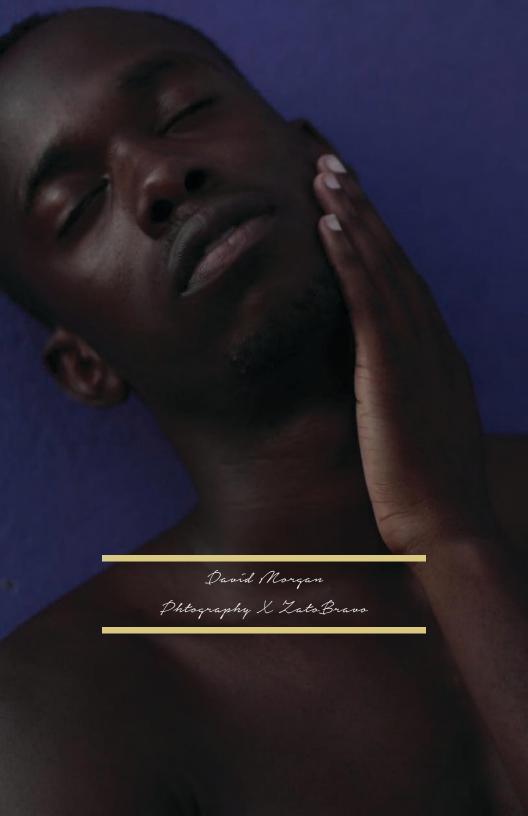
Patrice



Kennedy

























I AM WHOLE. I AM COMPLETE. I AM WORTHY. I AM LOVED AND SUPPORTED BEYOND MEASURE.

I love my _____

LOVE AND APPRECIATE MY OWN SELF. LAPPRECIATE THE BEING I AM.

I celebrate my -----

Siara Maldonado

CHAINS AND LOCKS, NOW BROKEN

Chains and locks, now broken
My mind, my thoughts, feel free like the ocean
I've always known that I was a treasure,
But I could never measure
just how glorious I was,
how glorious I am.

I was locked.
I was chained up

By a world filled with twisted definitions of beauty that I, a Latina with a sense of her own, was supposed to abide by And I did.

I hid my self worth and masked it with these ideals, but then I realized that with self-acceptance comes purification—with it I heal.

My inner scars used to eat away at me, but now they help me to realize my beauty.

I am worth it.

I am strong.
I am the azúcar that you add to your café, you can never go wrong.

I find myself filled with esperanza.

I embrace that my trials and errors were all enseñanzas.

You see, the ondas in my hair to las curvas in my silhouette,
my brown skin and thick thighs are all things that you won't forget.

Like Maya, I still rise.

My voice will not be silenced nor will it be filled with lies

Or cries that try to neutralize

My confidence

Chains and locks now broken, Was in the dark but am now golden.







Briana I Dobertson FREQUENCY



How can one define it?

That connection you can feel when you interact with someone.

Someone who's on the same wavelength as you.

Riding the same frequencies as you.

All whilst enjoying your presence.

Is it fate?

Is it lust?

Is it love?

Whatever it is, it feels right.

Your heart races as the radiant energy consumes your spirit.

Attracting more radiance.

When you feel that energy, know it's genuine.

Sometimes the best things can't be defined but only described.

Just absorb the vibe, and catch the feels of the frequencies radiating

through your spirit.





Briana I Dobertson

YOU'VE OBTAINED MY HEART, BUT CAN YOU MAINTAIN IT?

Crazy how something that can feel so right, could be poisoning you slowly.

How you thought someone loved you but really they just loved the idea of you.

They fantasized about someone like you.

Now that they have you, they're clueless as to how to keep you.

So they transform into parasites, sucking the life out of you.

Taking your confidence, and your beauty and absorbing it to boost themselves

Sucking your spirit from you and using it for themselves.

Leaving you slowly poisoned, weak and helpless.

They thought taking your spirit away from you would make them superior, but failed to realize that the heart brings out the radiant spirit that lives deep within

And it grows, and grows.

Those who want to obtain your heart, must know how to maintain your

heart

Cause in the end the only one leaving hurt is them.





"Being black and woman is knowing that you're the first and the last person to love yourself"

Said my favorite spoken word poem

Except I like to add "Hoping for someone to come along and love you in the middle"

I'm the gyal from yaad, from Jamdown, who couldn't pronounce the word "faucet" on the first day of kindergarten as my 5 yr old self prayed to a white God

Begging and pleading to be light, white, just right

The first and last to love myself
I tried to scrub the black away
The ancestral pains

I tried to be like my white grandfather Whose whiteness granted him thick eyebrows and loose hair As my ll yr old self watched my dark sista bleach her beauty away

As I perm and straighten the curls away
Begging and pleading to a white God
To be light, white, just right
Changing my voice, my tone, my pitch
So black men could still love me
And not call me that angry black bitch

And when my dad calls me beautiful
I can't hear him
I drown in my ugliness
Hide in my insecurities

But that Jamaican legacy that I so proudly claim Gave me something to hide behind

Happy that that black, that African gave me a fat ass and wide hips And my brotha a long-break the tip off inside me and validate my life Make me feel whole

Maybe someday i could be somebody's wife

Shannelle Jones

STRENGTH OF NATIONS

We are the second generation

No we're not Central American, Mexican, or South American

Some of us are Haitians and Jamaicans

Trinidadians, Antiguans, and Bajans

Proudly waving our flags and calling our former nation's havens
Yet so many of our parents flee the moment they get their papers
So many in fact that it has been said if we all go back we'd sink the
islands

But don't tell us otherwise

As far as we're concerned we're Caribbean Americans

We're black not African Americans

Our poor parents worked so hard to separate us from that culture it'd be such a shame, what a waste to assimilate

We are the second generation
No we're not Central Americans
We're black Americans
We work hard, study, and show respect
We have the love, stress, hurt, and pride of nations resting atop our
educated shoulders
Because our parents didn't come so far
From the land they loved
The food they ate
The animals they raised
They land they tamed
The family they'd came
For us to do any less than our best
For us not to be great
We're second generation

But first and second are one and the same

Shannelle Iones

STRENGTH OF NATIONS

We are the second generation

We're black and Haitian

Black and Bahamian

Our parents proudly hold onto their accents

Even after years and years of never returning to their islands

But us, we have lost ours

Some of us shunned the broken English or French to end the bullying and fit

Only to regret the one thing that made us different
The one thing we had to validate our existence
To separate us from those lazy American blacks
That thick island accent
Softly screaming hire me, trust me, admit me
I can be your token black
I can be your gatekeeper
I'm worthy

But we are the second generation Am I black or Jamaican? Census says I'm African American What's the difference anyways? To outsiders we all look the same

We are the third generation
I think somewhere along the lines my grandma was from the Cayman islands

Just call me black
Or African American
Ebonics the code
It's the language I've always known
What's patois?
There's something called Creole?

We are the fourth generation Just call me American



Siara Maldonado

66

HOME-ISH

The idea of home for me,
Is one met with complexities and discrepancies.
You see, I am New York born and raised.
I hail from the land of Hip Hop's praised.

The projects.

My nose would invite the smell of cigarettes from outside of my window.

My ears were caressed by the sounds of gunshots, Even from under my pillow.

My mini kitchen sang with flavors de Ecuador.

I swear, these were the best tostones in all of Nueva York.

My speakers roared with beats from Aaliyah to Tribe,

From Wu-Tang to Pharcyde.

81st.

Where is all of my kind?

My world of color quickly turned to a blank page of the confined, defined, the of one mind.

A sea of melanin now washed away,

Who knew that I'd see the day where my thought of home began to decay and go astray amongst the people that prey.

Run away.

Finally made it out of the projects but now I felt like one, Words shooting me like bullets in school- try to escape it but I'm always outrun

Cold sweat.

I hated that feeling, those people.

Reset.

Siara Maldonado

HOME-ISH

41st.

From the long walk there I no longer needed saving, Because this finally felt like home, like my safe haven. We were happy here, but that happiness was shattered like a glass.

Bills started to pile up and the landlords started to harass.

The rent shot up higher than my dreams,

My little apartment I called home was breaking apart at the seams.

Momma had to pull us out,

We were in desperate need of water in this drought.

Georgia.

This was our saving grace.

But to move here felt like I was moving to a place where I had to erase all that I love, all that encrypted my database.

For this wasn't home, but rather only where my loved ones were Another shot fired but this time it was with a silencer.

It broke my heart that I knew that I'd be missing out on the blossoming of my flowers

But I couldn't be there, for it was out of my power.

For months I felt broken, lost with no intent to be found But it wasn't until I started to surround myself with people whom I love,

That I started to believe in the idea of home again kind of.

For what they don't know is that they are my home.

When life gets complicated they help me comb,

Out the knots

That keep me trapped.

They help me to connect the dots.

Without them, I'd be lost with an emptiness in my heart,

A candle unlit, a house fallen apart.



Xavier Fowler

YOU AIN'T DISCOVER SHIT

I'm listening to your bullshit and reminded of what your type of people stole...call such and such Doctor, certified by such and such program, to get such and such type of marijuana for such and such pain and discomfort.

What do you know about my pain and discomfort?

You ain't discover shit! Not my land, not my grass, not any part of my culture, and damn sure not any part of my people. We been here first, and if it comes to it we'll be here last!

You ain't discover shit! You aren't first to get across the seas, the first to trade goods, the first to follow the stars, you just erase truthful origins with history.

You ain't discover shit!, The scientists, philosophers, they knew about the Earth because they lived WITH the Earth. They worshipped the Earth and the Earth responded in kind. Taught us how to live with her. so keep your damn certified such and such, by doctor such and such. Our greatest certifier the universe has prescribed OUR great remedies by the greatest doctor, earth.

You ain't discover shit! So don't clap your hands when I speak against your shit system, when I stand up for my sisters. my brothers, my mothers and my fathers. Because even my words you ain't claiming today. You wanna take my speech, my food, my swag. Then I take your words and I make them draaggg...nahhhmean?

You ain't discover shit. We been knew we were strong, spiritual, and sexy. That's the nature of us. So you damn sure ain't discover our bodies, our sweet or or sassy.

You ain't discover shit, and when you do, we taking that to.







I heard that a weak woman goes where she is smiled at

Maybe that's why she often travels from hell and back

Grin full of sin

He heaves heavy words, making her heart weary again

But tongues have tango'd in the lovers den

Leaving him has become her worldly sin

A prayer can be seen in her eyes

While he preys himself between her thighs

Pick one

Pick two

Cotton mouth for the fool

Pick three

Pick four

She's fallen to the floor

These midnight skies, often hold her cries

While beside, his drunken body lies

Underneath his bane

Which often seem inhuman

You'll find him say,

Dichelle Gray
SMILE

Colored woman, what makes your tongue so heavy?

Lady sings the blues

Painting herself in yellow

Sometimes waking up in gold

One tries to guess her color

Only if you listen, you'll find it in her tone

Yet in her reflection there is no detection

Psalm 46: 5 "God is within her, she will not fall"

See, this has become a false prophecy in this democracy.

See her god taught her the words of the wise

Has taught her that darkness is where her tongue lies And that bliss is only of her hips and secondary lips

See this is why her tongue is so heavy

Voice laced in ebony
She has become an enemy of me
The key to mass corruption
And even my destruction.

She's been taught to hate herself

Dichelle Gray
SMILE

But you've been crafted carefully and critically
From your fingertips to your smile, you are perfect
Even when quiet and alone, your skin is your tone
Outspoken is your flavor
The taste is not for everyone
Yet those whom possesses such esthete
Have yet to fleet from your loving grace

Passion is your food Fueling the fire of life within you

Your back, although it may carry the burdens of many Has been rooted in security and serenity

Got can be seen in your eyes
Felt in your hugs
And remembered with your love

Your name hits the tongue like a stick to a drum Your presence fills the room I love that you have become unapolegtically you

I heard that a weak woman goes where she is smiled at

And I've never seen a smile quite like mine

99





WITHOUT WARNING

model: @sofiaaaat Photography: @holdenpowell creative assistant: @r_hads

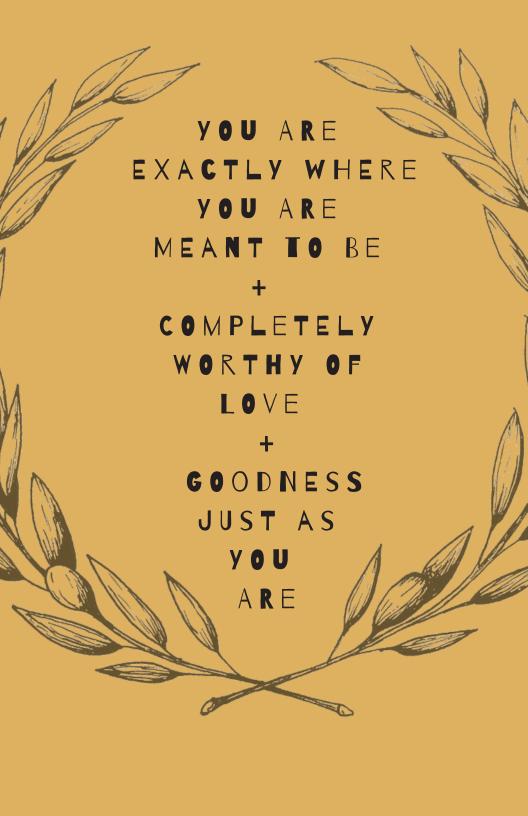
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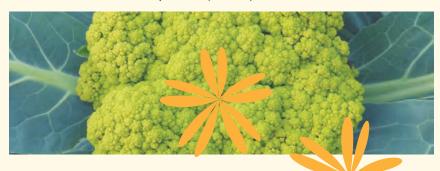






7 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE BECOMING PLANT-BASED

A piece by Abby Latz



1. READ ALL ABOUT IT.

There is a lot of information out on the internet about transitioning to a plant-based diet—read it all. It's important to be aware of any health benefits, concerns or limitations. And honestly, books and articles aren't the end of information about plant-based living! A lot of information is available on social media and internet forums. Try to actively seek out information against your view as well. That might seem odd, but it will challenge you and prepare you for your transition and questions you might get along the way. Some common information includes incorporating a vegan multivitamin (with B12), eating more frequently or larger meals, and managing macronutrient intake.

2. BE KIND TO YOURSELF.

Changing to plant-based is a huge lifestyle change! Don't get down on yourself if you're having trouble adhering to the diet at the beginning. Provide small steps for yourself along the way, and before you know it, you will be completely adjusted. And if you are changing your diet to lose weight or become stronger, remember progress takes time and effort. You cannot just change your diet and expect results.

3. BE KIND TO OTHERS.

Becoming plant-based is **not a competition**. Maybe you really want people to understand your perspective, that is totally ok! But remember, we all have unique and diverse backgrounds that sometimes shield us from other information. Try to speak (and listen!) from a place of **understanding** and empathy.

4. WE ALL HAVE DIFFERENT REASONS.

As you read and absorb information about a plant-based lifestyle, you will realize people have all sorts of reasons for changing their diet. Some common reasons include: animal rights, health, weight loss, and environmental sustainability. Recognize some people might be very strongly tied to their reason, while others might not. Ultimately, we are all on the same side-- we see becoming plant-based as a positive in our lives-- so no one reason is better or more impactful than another.

MIND, BODY, SOUL

5.PLAN AHEAD.

Unfortunately, eating a plant-based diet can be difficult when it comes to social events. Make sure you know whether your diet can be accommodated before you attend a catered event. You can even carry a snack in your bag like a granola bar just in case. In certain settings, it might even make sense for you to pack an entire meal before going somewhere. If you need to do that, try to prepare something that is not temperature sensitive like a rice bowl or salad, instead of something like soup where you need access to a microwave or stove. If you are going out with friends, speak up when they ask where you want to eat. If you are unfamiliar with a certain restaurant's menu, look it up online or call ahead of time. Also, if a restaurant does not appear to have a vegan option, inquire about substitutions. Sometimes a chef will even be willing to prepare you something different from the menu offerings.

6. FIND YOUR STAPLES, DON'T GET CAUGHT

As people become more conscious about their health, they often become interested in superfoods. Although many superfoods have amazing nutritional benefits, they are typically not any different from what you can get from eating whole foods (fruits, vegetables, grains, legumes, etc.). Maybe you are interested in matcha, turmeric or spirulina powder. Sure, if the price is within your means, try them! But you are are not missing out if the chance to try superfoods passes you by.





DINING HALLS ON THE
STORRS CAMPUS SUCH AS
WHITNEY AND PUTNAM
TEND TO HAVE YUMMY
PLANT-BASED OPTIONS
ON WEEKDAYS.
IN PARTICULAR—

IN PARTICULAR—
WHITNEY'S WARM VEGGIE BAR
LUNCHES + PUTNAM'S COLD
GRAIN BAR + SMOOTHIES!

(6. Continued)

Especially if you are eating plant-based on a budget, it is important to find pantry staples that you can easily convert into a meal. I always have a leafy green vegetable, grains, and beans on hand. I also like to have a few spice mixes like Italian seasoning and curry powder. Oats and plant milk are also essentials for me.

7. JUNK FOOD STILL EXISTS.

Just because something is vegan does not mean it is healthy. This is true for many other labels too! Organic, low-fat, no added sugar...just because a package says these things does not mean a food is holistically healthy for you. Vegan alternatives for dairy or meat products are especially notorious for being unhealthy, so make sure to read your labels before purchasing.

by Brandice Neal HOW TO LOOK LIKE A SNACK WITHOUT SACRIFICING SNACKS



Ladies and Gentleman and Gentlefolk, the time comes in every college students life when they hit that wall after eating Dominoes and Ramen for breakfast, lunch and dinner the last three days that they say to themselves I need to get in shape. If this is you, you've come to the right place because I'm about to show you how you can eat right, exercise, and feel right in order to look like the snack you were destined to be.

And fellas, stick around because ya'll can be snacks too!

Diet

You can exercise all you want but if you don't have a good diet then it means nothing. And when I say diet I mean your food intake not circumscribing your meals to a handful of food. You should not be starving but you should be actively involved in what you eat. More specifically, it is important to figure out what works for you. But if you need help in knowing what works for you should be happy to know that there is a free dietician on campus, yes you heard that right! Just search UConn Nutrition Counseling, you can make an appointment and meet with a specialist to find the right diet for you.

Exercise

We're all college students I get it. Finding the time in between studying, sleeping, and working on that group project with that kid Jeff you hate, to exercise seems unlikely. But, if you could spare 30 minutes a day to go on a run, walk, or hit the weight room you can see an improvement in your health. But I don't know how to use the weights in the gym you say' hold your horses because there is a free Physical Activity Counseling on Campus as well. Just search UConn physical activity counseling and your one step closer to making your appointment.

Self-Care

Self-Care is important and in the Black community taking care of your mental health is often overlooked and sometimes even scrutinized. So, I'm here to tell you, forget the negatives and just focus on what taking care of yourself will mean to you. And here at UConn we have the resources to do so. From group counseling to individual therapy, you can discuss topics related to stress such as death, sexuality, bullying and so much more. You can head to UConn Counseling and Mental Services for more info.

Remember changing your diet, exercise, and selfcare routine is a process. So, if you slip up don't quit just use that as motivation to keep going. Be proud of the little milestones and be proud of the journey your partaking for you mind, body, and soul!

VEGAN DOUBLE CHOCOLATE PANCAKES

Decipe by Abby Katz

Ingredients:

1 cup flour

1-2 tbsp cacao or cocoa powder

Dash of cinnamon

4 tbsp applesauce (I used unsweetened)

Dash vanilla extract

Liquid sweetener to taste (I used light agave nectar)

"I cup plant milk (I used unsweetened original almond)

1/4 cup vegan chocolate chips

Directions:

Whisk together dry ingredients in a mixing bowl. Then add applesauce, vanilla, and liquid sweetener. Add plant milk in increments until you achieve a batter-like texture. Mix until well combined, then fold in chocolate chips.

Use ¼ cup measure to pour batter into even pancakes. Cook on a lightly greased pan (or non-stick) at medium heat until edges start to firm and bubbles appear. Flip, and continue to cook until second side is cooked through.

Serve with maple syrup, "caramel" (recipe included!) and/or vegan butter.

Notes:

Be mindful of sweetness! Agave, chocolate chips, applesauce and syrup can all add a lot of sweetness if you're not careful! If you choose to use sweetened applesauce, perhaps omit the agave nectar.

Sweetened or flavored plant milk can impact the overall taste of the pancakes.

Although cacao has many health benefits, it can produce a bitter flavor if you are heavy handed. Add one tablespoon first, you can always add

You could also omit cacao and just make standard chocolate chip pancakes.

"STANDING IN MY PLACE OF POWER,
I AM WALKING A PATH OF
EMPOWERMENT WITHIN MYSELF,
SPREADING HEALING TO THE PIECES
OF THE WORLD IN WHICH I CAN
REACH.

IN ACTIONS THAT SPEAK OF A
FUTURE BLESSED BY SPIRIT, AND IN
HONOR OF THE GODS OF ALL TIME.
ON THE SHOULDERS OF MILLIONS I
STAND,

ON THE PATH TO GREATNESS I AM CREATING.

A LIGHT ON THE OPPORTUNITIES OF TOMORROW I AM SHINING SO THAT I MAY SEE MY PATH TOWARDS ACTUALIZATION, AND SHOW MY CHILDREN THE ROAD TO THEMSELVES."

- C. RLANTON

much peace, love, and deep gratitude 222 the ancestors who paved the way + lit the path of our lives 444 this edition 222 b possible. those visionaries who birthed this publication, 444 creating the space 444 this legacy 222 continue. ever-vibrant, ever-sacred, ever-Black. thank you 222 those who submitted, who photographed, who added their own divine creations from a place of courage & curiosity. we thank you 444 Your Light.

Your Love.

Thank you God, Goddess, Godis, Creator, Universe, Peace, Grace, Love. All That Is. may all beings embody their Truest Light & radiate it unconditionally. stay Black & beautiful.

disclaimer: to be Black you are innately Beauty-full, however, if an affirmation is redundant is it not a reaffirmation? you already know this. you shine like the twinkling night sky.

you are indeed your ancestors wildest dreams. never have you been anything shy of a

miracle.
know dat, too. You already do.

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We poppin, u poppin. Let's be poppin together.
Positions open, please email to submit or inquire. Yee.

