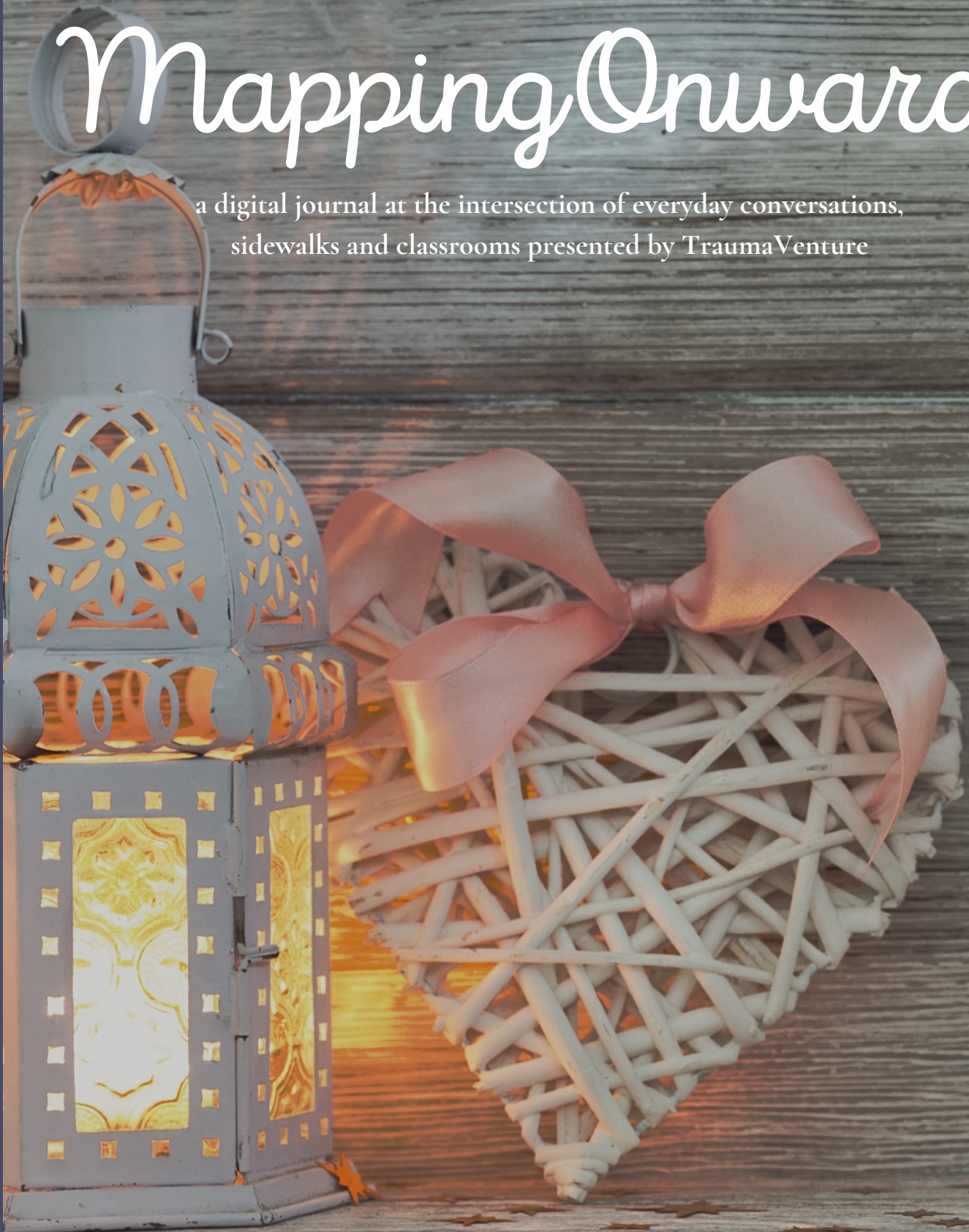


Mapping Onward

a digital journal at the intersection of everyday conversations,
sidewalks and classrooms presented by TraumaVenture



Autumn 2023



editor's note

Welcoming you to this Issue —

I am delighted to write you after engaging in a *Do-It-Yourself* sabbatical. It had been such a long time since I had gifted myself with time to really rest and reset. This intentional moment of respite was a welcome blessing, and one I had been working toward for many months. As a Latina, an immigrant and a small business owner, I did not have a sabbatical framework in my mind for what time off would look like for me and, mainly, how I would/could financially support myself. While I did not have a sabbatical framework in mind, what I did have were meaningful points of reference from small bouts of time off I had taken over the years to attend spiritual retreats over the years. Tapping into what those—often silent—retreats had looked like for me in the past, my *DIY* sabbatical was rather frugal by design and a return to self; grounded in Ignatian-centered *examen of consciousness* meditations.

My time for self-full-ness included daily prayer and meditation at 5:30AM each morning, cutting off my hair to about 2 inches in length and refraining from dyeing it, getting rid of my car—relying instead on public transportation, biking and lots (lots) of walking, and, just as intentionally in my *DIY* sabbatical, setting healthy boundaries and unplugging from social media. Over the course of my time off for time *within*, I got to genuinely pause and reset. I said 'yes' to a couple of projects or initiatives *here and there* and got to spend time with my family.

One of the reflections emerging from my at-home wellness sabbatical was discerning on how, at its core, this digital journal lives at the intersection of academic scholarship and sidewalk wisdom with everyday lived-experiences. The articles in this issue of *MappingOnward* are centered in the role of hope in our lives as a framework supporting our imagination and intention to live in a world that upholds feeling peace, both within ourselves and in our lives. While the articles cover a multitude of peaks and valleys in the mountain range that is life, they aim at unpacking significant factors—people, places and projects—show up for us, and, hopefully, how they can help us create meaning.

In the first article, I explore the interconnected worlds of music, math, and well-being. For the second article, I situate moral distress and lift vicarious resilience. The last article sheds light on mainstreaming hope-centered practices as we learn more and more how to move away from what's wrong with you to *what's strong* with us.

The musical theme gently embracing this Issue is a throwback to my high school days in the '90s. While writing you this note, I lovingly hum:

“...these days you might feel a shaft of light make its way across your face,
and when you do, you'll know how it was meant to be,
see the signs and know their meaning, it's true...”
These Are Days by 10,000 Maniacs

As always, I hope the words, lived experiences and literature in these pages support our—mine and your—collective imagination for a new day from here.

Curated with love and wishing you well-being,

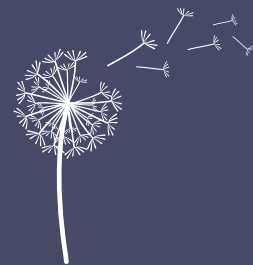
Cecilia

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Exploring the Interconnected Worlds of Music, Math, and Well-Being

By Cecilia Cardesa
Cecilia@MappingOnward.com

Exploring the Interconnected Worlds of Music, Math, and Well-Being



Harmony of Healing: Exploring the Interconnected Worlds of Music, Math, and Well-Being

Music, a timeless art form, has the remarkable ability to transcend boundaries and evoke profound emotions. Beyond its aesthetic appeal, there is a fascinating interplay between music, mathematics, and healing that has captivated researchers and enthusiasts alike. In this article, we will delve into the intricate relationship between music and mathematics, specifically exploring the mathematical principles that underpin musical composition. We'll then explore the intersection of music and healing, shedding light on how music serves as a therapeutic agent for emotional and physical well-being.

The Mathematical Symphony: String Theory and Musical Composition

The world of music and mathematics converges in a mesmerizing dance, where composers use mathematical principles to craft harmonious compositions. String theory, a branch of theoretical physics, posits that the fundamental building blocks of the universe are not particles but tiny, vibrating strings. Interestingly, this concept finds resonance in the world of music composition. Composers use mathematical patterns, ratios, and harmonics to create melodies that resonate with the natural vibrations of the universe. The link between string theory and musical composition highlights the intricate mathematical beauty woven into the fabric of music ([The Mathematics of Musical Composition](#)).



Harmony in Numbers: The Mathematical Foundations of Music

Delving deeper into the relationship between music and mathematics, we explore the mathematical foundations of musical scales, chords, and rhythms. From the Fibonacci sequence in the spirals of a nautilus shell to the golden ratio in the proportions of ancient architecture, mathematics has an uncanny ability to manifest in nature's beauty. Similarly, musical compositions often adhere to mathematical principles, creating a symphony that resonates with both the ears and the mind ([Musical numbers: Math and music nurture a deep and complex relationship](#)—discover how math and music intertwine in creative expression, from John Coltrane's Circle of Tones to the shared skills needed to master both subjects).

Exploring the Interconnected Worlds of Music, Math, and Well-Being



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Healing Harmonies: The Intersection of Music and Well-Being

Beyond its mathematical intricacies, music has been recognized for its therapeutic potential. The intersection of music and healing is a profound realm where the emotional and physical well-being of individuals can be positively influenced.

In Your Brain on Music, Dr. Alan Harvey, who is both a neuroscientist and a musician, has explored the influence of music on our brain waves. Thus, I think about how music has served as a form of therapy for me. Music has been a life partner for me accompanying me and it is one of the reasons for adding a playlist to MappingOnward since its inception.

In the intricate tapestry of our world, music, mathematics, and healing are interconnected threads, weaving a narrative that transcends disciplines. As we explore the mathematical foundations of musical composition and the healing potential of music, we uncover a profound synthesis of art and science.

The harmony of healing is a melody that resonates with the very essence of our existence, reminding us that the beauty of music goes beyond what meets the ear—it touches the soul.

I end with words sang by the one and only Miss Jill Scott in "One is the Magic Number":

“There is, there is just me...
If I subtract one plus me to the 5th degree, use any theorem
There's just me...”

Take good care today.

Onward with love and wishing you well,

Cecilia



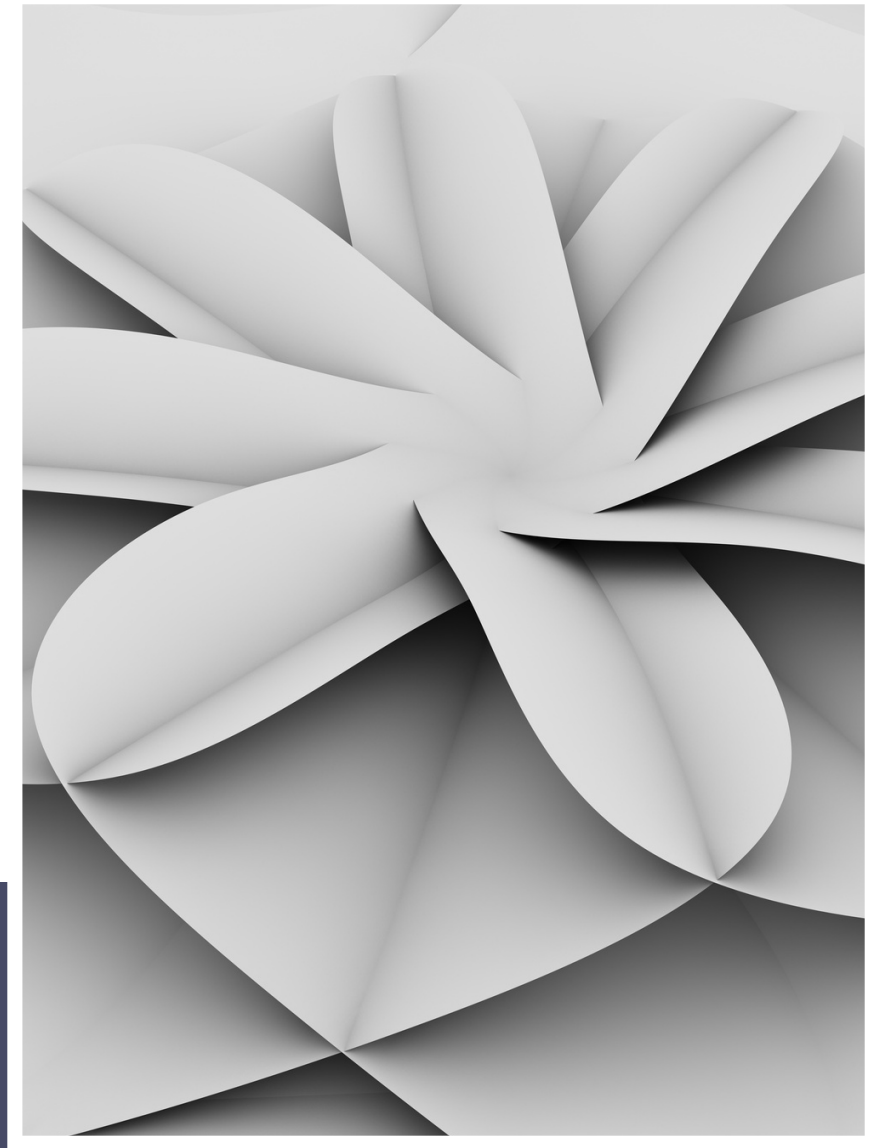
Dr. Cecilia Cardesa is the founder and editor of MappingOnward. She was diagnosed with PTSD in 1999 and launched MappingOnward in November 2020..

pause. breathe. repeat.



MAPPING HOPE

What gives you a sense of hope?
What has given you hope over the years?
What is one way you can create hope today?



Moral Distress and Vicarious Resilience

By Cecilia Cardesa
Cecilia@MappingOnward.com

Moral Distress + Vicarious Resilience



Over the years, I have courageously been sharing the role of trauma in my life and ways I have personally found ways to recover from it. Back in 2009 when I began my doctoral dissertation at the University of Pennsylvania, I set out to write a new chapter in academic literature aiming to cast and recast the post-traumatic stress narrative because, as I argued then and still do today, the word “disorder” in the diagnosis is deficit oriented.

Since those many days (from 2009 to 2014) I spent at Penn’s Lippincott Library, researching and writing multiple iterations of my dissertation, I am happy to see that we are moving toward discussing post-trauma recovery and ways to situate war trauma and the moral injury that percolates from it during the healing journey—or at least it is what came up for me.

As more and more mental health conversations continue to take place—around dinner tables, working spaces, classrooms and playgrounds, the marketplace and public squares—globally, I am grateful we are pulling back the veil of trauma and secondary trauma (Also known as vicarious trauma), which can emerge from hearing, knowing or witnessing the harm others endured.

For me, my work has been a healing agent. In fact, my doctoral dissertation (2014), situates business ventures as healing agents among post-war entrepreneurs. However, I also know first-hand what moral distress feels like and the toll it takes.

In the evolving landscape of mental health conversations, the intertwined concepts of moral distress and vicarious resilience have emerged for me as critical components in understanding the emotional toll for individuals working in various professions. This article delves into the intersection of moral distress and vicarious resilience and explores the potential for positive growth and resilience.

As coined by Andrew Jameton (1984), moral distress occurs when individuals are aware of the right course of action but are hindered by institutional constraints. This internal conflict can have profound implications for one’s personal emotional well-being and emotional regulation. In contrast to the negative impact of witnessing others’ suffering (vicarious trauma), vicarious resilience refers to the positive transformation individuals undergo when exposed to the strength and resilience of others. It acknowledges the potential for growth and strength derived from witnessing the triumph over adversity.

Moral Distress + Vicarious Resilience

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I did not know (for many years) what to call the powerlessness I felt in my work and my life many times. While I had experienced a sense of empowerment in many significant ways at various times in my life such as marching for democracy in Argentina when it was too dangerous, standing up for injustices, engaging in community organizing for social change and justice, working on legislative policies from an asset-based community perspective and a plethora of other examples, I am grateful to say, but there have been many other times when I just simply felt utterly powerless; no matter how I showed up or tried.

Dr. [Samantha Stein](#) wrote in Psychology today that “that powerlessness you feel is called 'moral distress'”. She states:

“

Powerlessness is at the heart of moral distress. It is the feeling that we have had to, or must seriously, compromise ourselves or something we hold dear due to external forces seemingly beyond our control.”

Further, according to Dr. Stein, examples of how moral distress can show up in our lives:

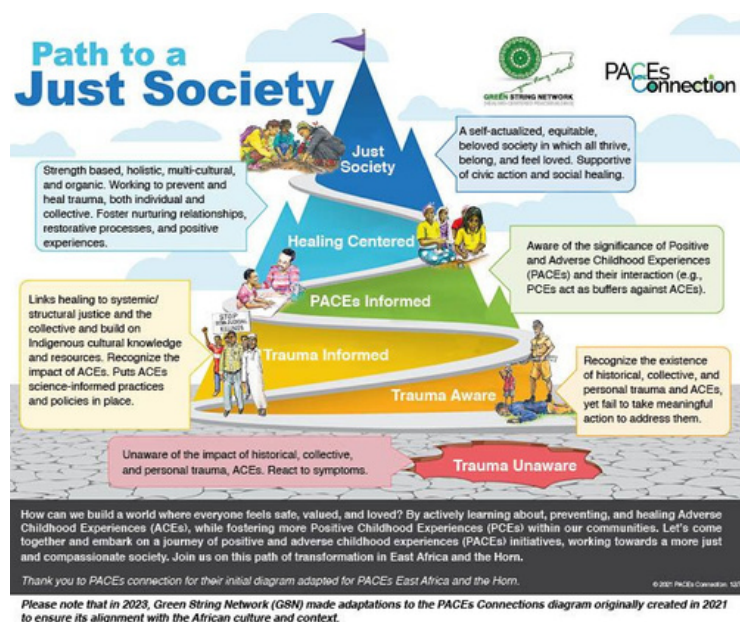
- Parents caught between homeschooling and sending children to in-person classes.
- Individuals whose values and beliefs are in conflict with state and federal safety guidelines (or lack thereof).
- Small businesses having to close their doors, despite feeling a fiduciary responsibility to their employees and their own families.
- Families needing the security of a home, but because of unemployment or financial issues no longer being able to afford it.
- People desperate to spend time with elderly or solitary family members, or those who are sick or dying, but being unable to because of health dangers.
- People caught within sociocultural grievances or injustices, and the impending sense that nothing will ever change.
- Tectonic shifts in what is considered acceptable “civic” and “civil” behavior, and not having those values respected — individually or collectively.
- The sense that the “other side” of the sociopolitical divide is wreaking existential harm and feeling powerless to do anything about it.

Moral Distress + Vicarious Resilience

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As always, learning to name what I had experienced and/or what was emerging for me in my life's work has also served as a lighthouse illuminating my path when feeling a fog all around me. For years now, I have reflected on not only what has happened to me, but also how those traumatic experiences manifested in/within me, which I believe is at the core of understanding not just trauma but also begin to map out a way to move forward. After journaling and meditating on how moral distress had shown up in my life, I began reading more about it; learning, re-learning and also unlearning ways to process my thoughts and emotions.

I have found it helpful to tap into the anthropological framework I employed when writing my dissertation, which is rooted in phenomenology and meaning making, This is a portal I have applied in my life has been to muster the energy and courage to ask, what is the meaning behind this life-altering event in my life and/or how can I create meaning after this critical event in my path?

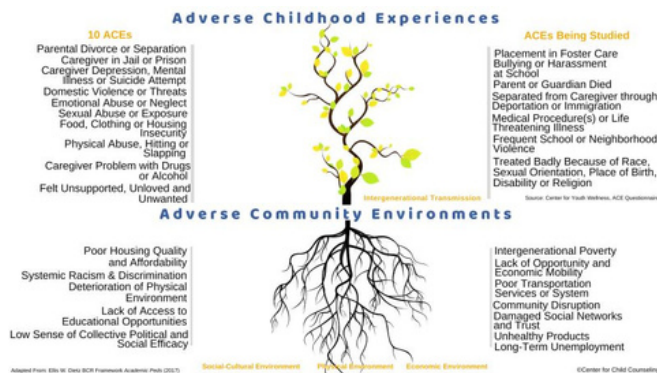


Feeling a sense of belonging and community helped. In my readings, I encountered the work of PACE's Connection, which states:

"There are a lot of terms used in describing the world we are in and the world we want to live in: trauma-informed, healing-centered, self-healing. We took the long view of where we want to see society and what it would take to get there. We developed this tool as a starting point for many conversations and actions to accelerate the PACEs science movement to prevent and heal trauma, help individuals, families, organizations, systems and communities—our world—flourish."

Moral Distress + Vicarious Resilience

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The ACEs study was a critical tool helping me understand what happened to me and how adverse childhood experiences affected my path. What PACE and others are inviting us to consider is how communities also live through adverse experiences and provide a portal opening to the way in which we process these experiences—both individually and collectively. There is extensive literature on the community resiliency model by [Elaine Miller-Karas, MSW, LCSW](#), and the [Trauma Resource Institute](#) is at the heart of awakening hope, and I also found [this video](#) to be a useful introduction to it.

Acknowledging the intersection of moral distress and vicarious resilience offers a pathway to personal growth. It emphasizes the importance of resilience-building strategies and positive coping mechanisms in mitigating the potentially detrimental effects of moral distress. Organizations can play a crucial role in fostering supportive environments that prioritize open dialogue and mental health resources. By acknowledging the intersection of moral distress and vicarious resilience, institutions can contribute to the overall well-being of their workforce such as encouraging individuals to engage in reflective practices is crucial as well as creating spaces for dialogue, supervision, and self-reflection allows professionals to process moral distress and explore ways to derive strength from the resilience witnessed. In addition, there could be the provision of training on resilience-building strategies and ethical decision-making can equip individuals with the tools needed to navigate moral dilemmas. Last but certainly not least, education around vicarious resilience can help individuals recognize and harness the positive potential inherent in their work.

Witnessing how others bounce back from life-altering events also helped me, and that brings me to vicarious resilience. Accompanying others in their journey has given me first-row seat at how human beings can and do bloom after being uprooted., is source of feeling personal and secondary resilience in my life. We have an opportunity here.

Onward with Love, *Cecilia*



What I have been reading (and re-reading):

- [Hope Rising: How the Science of HOPE Can Change Your Life](#) by Gwinn J.D., Casey, Hellman Ph.D, Chan.
- [Snyder's Hope Theory - Cultivating Aspiration in Your Life](#) (mindtools.com)
- [Hope Theory: Rainbows in the Mind](#) in JSTOR
- [Hope Theory](#) in The Oxford Handbook of Positive Psychology | Oxford Academic (oup.com)
- [Research: The Transformative Power of Sabbaticals](#) (Harvard Business Review; Feb 2023)
- [Jesuit 101: The Ignatian Examen](#)
- [Try a 5-Minute Self-Compassion Break](#)
- [These Free Bilingual Guided Meditations Will Help Center Your Practice if English Isn't Your First Language](#)
- [The Ultimate Guide to Taking a Sabbatical](#) (The Muse)
- [18 Sabbatical Ideas: Enriching Ways To Spend Your Break](#) (Indeed.com)
- [10 Guided-Meditation Videos by Latinas to Help Us Cope With Stress and Anxiety](#)
- [7 Ways to Feel Like You're on a Sabbatical - Every Day](#)
- [The Power of No: How Boundaries Help Us Live Empowered Lives](#) (Stanford Social Impact Review)
- [Moral Distress, Moral Courage](#) by Richard Savel, MD and Cindy Munro, RN, PhD, ANP in American Journal of Critical Care (2015)
- ["That Powerlessness You Feel Is Called 'Moral Distress'; how to cultivate moral resilience instead."](#) by Samantha Stein, Psy.D in Psychology Today (March 2021)
- [A Framework for Addressing Adverse Childhood and Community Experiences: Building Community Resilience Model](#) by Ellis and Dietz in Academic Pediatrics (2017)
- ["Many refugees carry a distinct type of trauma: 'moral injury'"](#) by Angela Nickerson and Philippa Specker, edited by Matt Huston in Psyche (2023)
- [Exploring the Usability of a Community Resiliency Model Approach in a High Need/Low Resourced Traumatized Community](#) by Freeman, Baek, Ngo, Kelley, Karas, Citron and Montgomery in Community Mental Health Journal (2021)

rest + reset



MINDING PEACE MOMENT

breathe in peace.
breathe in hope.
repeat.



mainstreaming: what's strong with you?
by Cecilia Cardesa

what's strong with you?



Learning about my childhood adverse experiences (ACE) helped me understand myself through the lens of what happened to me as well as learning, unlearning and re-learning the feelings arising from those experiences. The awareness of life-altering critical events in my life helped nurture my soul. As I moved further and deeper in my healing journey, I still looked for answers around my sense of hope and where it came from and how it manifested in my life. I found that hope theory first written by Dr. Snyder. With this new knowledge in hand, I went on to bring this scholarship to the virtual tables and sidewalks such as naming, citing and lifting hope theory in webinars and trainings I have given as well as written an article on way and will power.

A picture frame hangs in my office, which reads: “hope anchors the soul”. I do not recall where I bought this picture, but I do remember buying it back in 2017 when began working with US Servicemembers and Veterans. Its nautical theme moved me and over the years I have learned that hope is not an emotion but rather an intellectual exercise; an expansion on mind, heart and soul imagining what could today (or tomorrow) be like?



While preparing for a college course I began teaching last year on Asset-Based Community Development, I came across [this](#) presentation on Sustainable Community Development: from what's wrong to what's strong by Cormac Russell, Founding Director of [Nurture Development](#) and a member of the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) Institute, at DePaul University, Chicago. In the TED Talk, Russell shared:

"Today, I want to present a very simple idea and the idea is this: if we want to help people in a way that does no harm to them and their capacities in their communities, then the best place to start is with what is strong within them, and within their communities, and not with what's wrong."—Cormac Russell

Indeed... What if instead of focusing on what was wrong with individuals, and indeed with entire communities, we started focusing on what's *strong* with us, with our neighborhoods, with our communities?

Many of us have and do employ this framework as a meaningful portal to open new doors of dialogue, and strengths-affirming community development.

what's strong with you?

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I am an adjunct college professor and one course I teach presents the history of and core concepts in the emergent field of asset-based community development (Harrison, R., Blickem, C., Lamb, J., Kirk, S., & Vassilev, I. (2019). *Asset-Based Community Development: Narratives, Practice, and Conditions of Possibility—A Qualitative Study with Community Practitioners* (SAGE). The ABDC approach familiarizes students with some of the community development theoretical frameworks. It also introduces the use of capital-building in community development efforts as well as some of the challenges and current debates confronting practitioners. Overall, the emphasis of the course is on the exploration of stakeholders' utilization of community development methods to build relationship, conversation and transformation. In this spirit, I continue to find Rev. Dr. Salvarrieta's work at Fuller Seminary, a helpful frame of reference for me.

Sitting down to write this article, I began reflecting on the title I chose for these *food-for-thought* sections in MappingOnward. Written intentionally in lowercase, these articles evoke for me an ideation outlet to share a hypothesis I have been thinking about, an idea that has been ruminating in my head for some time or a way to showcasing new scholarship. Thinking about food led me down the path of climate change and disaster displacement abroad and urban agriculture here at home in the US.

During one of the sociology classes I taught last semester, my students and I were discussing climate change. Among the many wonderful interactions, examples and reflections we had, one of these conversations centered on individuals and families forced to leave their communities and homelands due to drought and food scarcity. Environmental climate change is an 'everything' issue affecting temperature changes has been manifesting in our lives from food price increases and health issues to disaster displacement and forced migration:

"Through rigorous statistical methods, Professor Abel and his team of researchers have finally isolated the impact of climate change on conflict-induced migration. Their study used a prominent drought index as a proxy for climate impacts between 2006 and 2015. The researchers concluded that climate change has indeed increased the number of people seeking asylum, but so far, the effect has been time- and location-specific".

—Nathan Empsall; Climate Change and refugees:
How drought and war lead to more asylum seekers
in Yale Environmental Review (July 2019)

what's strong with you?



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According to the United Nations Committee on Human Rights (UNHCR) [website](#), "climate change is the defining crisis of our time and displacement is one of its most devastating consequences". As global warming continues to rise, so do sea level waters, which leads to flooding. I reflect on this [Environmental Refugee](#) article:

"...coastal cities throughout the world are located in low-lying areas vulnerable to sea level rise: Manhattan, New York, United States; London, England; Shanghai, China; Hamburg, Germany; Bangkok, Thailand; Jakarta, Indonesia; Mumbai, India; Manila, Philippines; and Buenos Aires, Argentina."—National Geographic Education

Professor [Radhika Iyengar, PhD.](#) who serves as Research Scholar at the Center for Sustainable Development with Columbia University's Earth Institute, urges us to "..include climate education as a key climate risk mitigation strategy — along with energy transformation, land uses and water—and to make climate education a mandatory part of the national curriculum" ([February 2023](#)). I totally agree with Dr. Iyengar and hope we can all move toward a meaningful level of school funding, environmental policies and dinner conversations that mobilize climate change; as in climate justice.

Addressing climate change will require solutions rooted in meaningful legislation, actionable policy, political will to move include equitable voices at the grassroots. leadership that will equitably integrate the wisdom of our elders with the innovative mind of our generation for the We have the power to tap into what is strong with us and approach a global crisis with both urgency and strength. As I end, I pray:

"The locust in the Horn of Africa,
the floods in South Sudan,
the ice in Chicago,
the fires in California and Australia.
The threat of rain that won't stop
or rest that won't come
We are at the precipice of possible change
A turning point that can and will define us."
[Di Baladna \(Our Land\)](#), by Emtithal Mahmoud

Dr. Cecilia Cardesa, EdD, MEd, MA serves as Adjunct Professor at [Esperanza College](#) of Eastern University in Philadelphia's Hunting Park neighborhood.

Supporting MappingOnward



your support matters.

With themes of resilience and hope, this digital journal strives to make a positive impact in our world. I invite you to join me on this literary journey, writing a brighter chapter in our applied humanity.

Visit [this link](#) to make a financial contribution.

Muchas gracias!! Thank you!!



current playlist

These are Days — 10,000 Maniacs

Closer to Fine — Indigo Girls

I am — Edie Brickell & New Bohemians

A Sky Full of Stars — Coldplay

I Will Wait— Mumford & Sons

Lazy Eye — Silversun Pickups

Shake It— Metro Station

Steal My Sunshine— Len

Clandestino — Manu Chao

Paper Planes — M.I.A.

Flowers — Miley Cyrus

Cold Heart — Elton John featuring Dua Lipa

Two Wrongs— Wyclef Jean featuring City High

Say Something— Justin Timberlake featuring Chris Stapleton

Put Your Records On— Corinne Bailey Rae

Dream Angel No.2— Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers

Perfect Symphony. — Ed Sheeran featuring Andrea Bocelli

Don't Worry. — Leon Bridges featuring Ink

Eres Para Mi — Julieta Venegas

Vasos Vacios — Fabulosos Cadillacs featuring Celia Cruz

Volver Al Valle — Carlos Vives

Wrapped — Gloria Estefan

Caminando Por Calle — Gypsy Kings

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Mapping Onward

a hope-grown digital journal

