

An illustration depicting three individuals engaged in a communal activity of watering plants. On the left, a Black woman with glasses and a purple top waters a plant. In the center, a person with long red hair waters a plant. On the right, a person in a purple cap and shirt sits in a wheelchair, also watering a plant. The scene is set at night under a dark blue sky filled with white stars. The ground is dark with several green plants, some of which have glowing white star-like flowers. The overall mood is peaceful and hopeful.

**Thinking beyond the  
system: Liberation through  
transformative justice**



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# AGENDA

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- **Introduction**
  - **Orientation and Grounding**
  - **History of the anti-violence movement**
    - **Criminalization vs Accountability**
  - **Restorative Justice**
  - **Transformative justice**
  - **Scenario discussion**
  - **Q&A**
  - **Closing**

- ❖ In the chat, please tell us your name, pronouns, and native land you currently occupy and what has brought you joy this week.



**“While the work has been good and important, it has never spoken to the needs of women of color.” Mary Scott-Boria**

## HOW DID IT START?

Early on, gender-based violence was used by colonizers and slave owners as a tactic to control black, brown and indigenous women

Tied to the rise of the civil rights, anti-war and black liberation laid a foundation for the movement

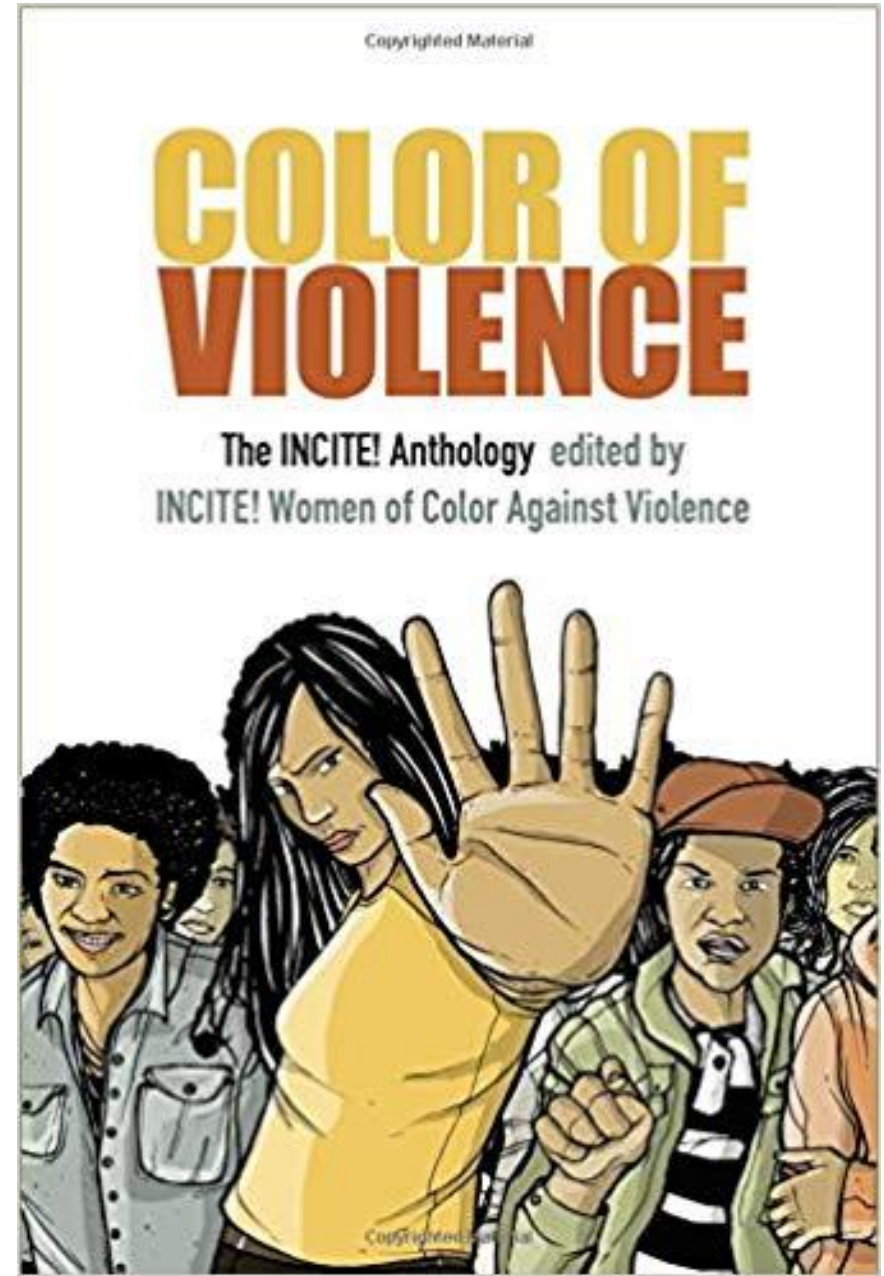
Women of Color have been pivotal in the anti-violence movement, but their efforts and advocacy have been invisible

Argued that issue of GBV cannot exclude other forms of oppression



## HOW DID IT START?


- ❖ Some of the first shelters emerged out of organized grassroots and community-based efforts
- ❖ Most of these shelters relied primarily on volunteers, community members, donation
- ❖ These shelters were more than just a safe space for women and children
- ❖ Rape crisis centers and domestic violence shelters became symbolic spot for organizing, political movement




# Violence Against Women Act

- Part of 1994 Crime Bill that caused mass incarceration
- First comprehensive federal legislative package designed to end violence against women
- Provided \$1.6 billion over 6 years toward investigation and prosecution of violent crimes against women
- Pushed police to respond to complaints of domestic violence, sexual assault and other gender-based violence
- Has led to mass incarceration and state sanctioned violence



A stylized illustration of a hand gripping a vertical black bar, representing imprisonment. The hand is rendered in a light skin tone with black outlines, set against a light blue background. The bar is part of a series of vertical bars, suggesting a prison cell. The overall style is graphic and minimalist.

**“Carceral feminism describes an approach that sees increased policing, prosecution, and imprisonment as the primary solution to violence against women. This stance does not acknowledge that police are often purveyors of violence and that prisons are always sites of violence”. Victoria Law**




U.S. accounts for nearly one-third of the world's total incarcerated women

As of 2018, there are approximately around 219,000 incarcerated women

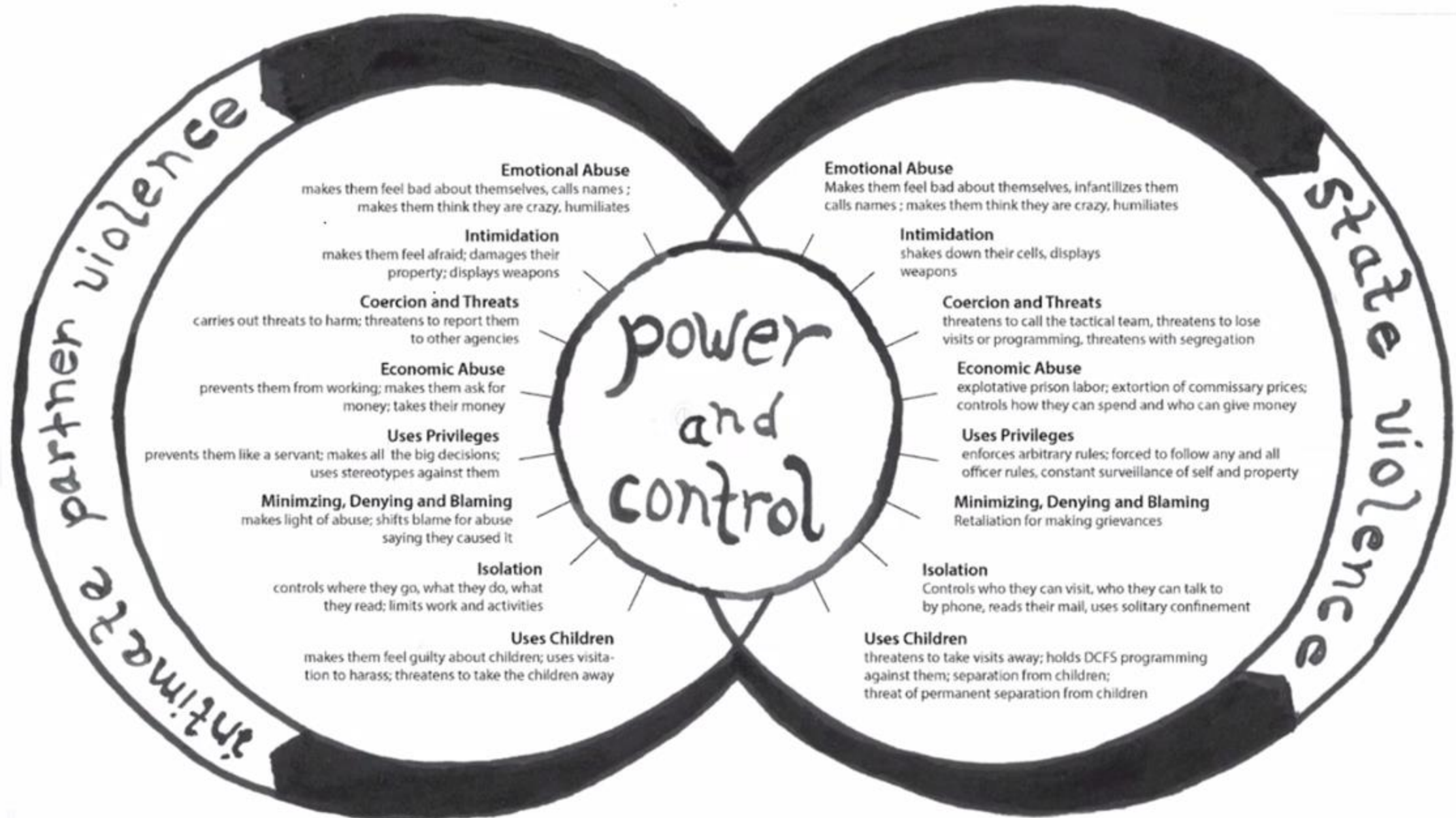
Around 94% of some women's prison populations have a history of physical or sexual abuse before being incarcerated

79% of women in federal and state prisons reported physical abuse



**PRISON  
IS  
NOT  
FEMINIST**

Quote by Michelle Kaba  
design by Sarah Ross, 2017



partner violence

State violence

power and control

**Emotional Abuse**

makes them feel bad about themselves, calls names ; makes them think they are crazy, humiliates

**Intimidation**

makes them feel afraid; damages their property; displays weapons

**Coercion and Threats**

carries out threats to harm; threatens to report them to other agencies

**Economic Abuse**

prevents them from working; makes them ask for money; takes their money

**Uses Privileges**

prevents them like a servant; makes all the big decisions; uses stereotypes against them

**Minimizing, Denying and Blaming**

makes light of abuse; shifts blame for abuse saying they caused it

**Isolation**

controls where they go, what they do, what they read; limits work and activities

**Uses Children**

makes them feel guilty about children; uses visitation to harass; threatens to take the children away

**Emotional Abuse**

Makes them feel bad about themselves, infantilizes them calls names ; makes them think they are crazy, humiliates

**Intimidation**

shakes down their cells, displays weapons

**Coercion and Threats**

threatens to call the tactical team, threatens to lose visits or programming, threatens with segregation

**Economic Abuse**

exploitative prison labor; extortion of commissary prices; controls how they can spend and who can give money

**Uses Privileges**

enforces arbitrary rules; forced to follow any and all officer rules, constant surveillance of self and property

**Minimizing, Denying and Blaming**

Retaliation for making grievances

**Isolation**

Controls who they can visit, who they can talk to by phone, reads their mail, uses solitary confinement

**Uses Children**

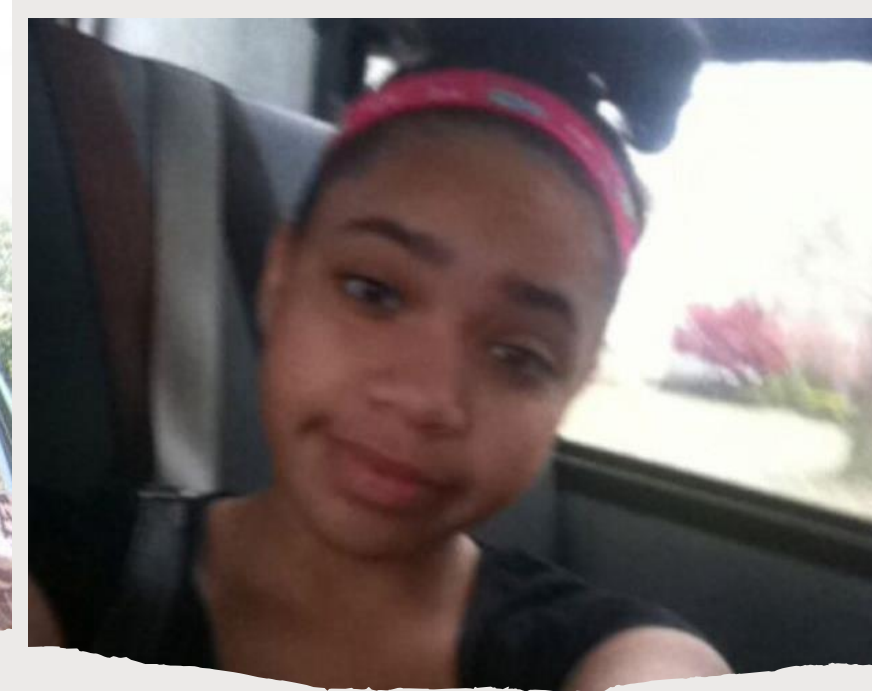
threatens to take visits away; holds DCFS programming against them; separation from children; threat of permanent separation from children



- Ny Noun has spent the last 16 years incarcerated for her role in a murder perpetrated by her ex who she violently abused her. She was paroled earlier this year—but now she faces being deported to Cambodia.



- Marissa Alexander, sentenced to twenty years in the Florida criminal correctional system for defending herself from her abusive estranged husband.



- Bresha Meadows was charged with aggravated murder for defending herself, and her family from a father who had a long history of abusing them at the age of 15.

# I AM POEM

I am the descendants of (Name ancestors or parents)

I am (the smell of your grandmother's/family members' home cooking that you love)

I'm (describe your personality using sound or music)

I'm from (cross streets, neighborhood, or town)

I hear (what gives you life)

I understand (something you know is true)

I dream (something you actually dream about)

I believe (something you believe in)

I try (something you make an effort toward)

I'm curious (one of your "how might we" questions)

I am (your name), (gender pronouns), (affiliation with/organization name)

What is your earliest memory of seeing/hearing about someone being **punished** for the harm they caused?

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## PUNITIVE RESPONSE

### ASKS:

- What rules/laws have been broken?
- Who did it?
- What do they deserve?

### BELIEVES:

- Crime is a violation of the law and the state.
- Violations create guilt.
- Justice requires the state to determine blame (guilt) and impose punishment.

## TRAUMA-INFORMED RESPONSE

### ASKS:

- Who has been hurt?
- What are their needs?
- How can safety, connection, and autonomy be re-established?

### BELIEVES:

- Trauma causes disconnection, a feeling of loss of control, and isolation.
- Trauma healing can be facilitated through transparency, safety, peer support, trustworthiness, collaboration, and empowerment.

## RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

### ASKS:

- What harm has been done?
- What obligations arise?
- How can repair happen?

### BELIEVES:

- Harm is violation of people, relationship and obligations to one another.
- Violations create obligations.
- Justice involves everyone in an effort to address the harm.





# RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Justice should focus on repairing harm

People most affected by the crime should be able to participate in its resolution

Uses inclusive, collaborative process

Requires a cooperative effort by communities and the government

# TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE

- Uses an abolitionist framework
- Engaging in harm reduction to lessen the violence
- Works to connect incidences of violence to the conditions that create and perpetuate them
- Community-based
- Collective responsibility when it comes to violence
- Not simply the absence of state violence but the existence of the values, practices, relationships and world that we want

# What is Transformative Justice?

**“Responding to violence and harm without creating more violence and harm”  
- Mia Mingus**

- **Distribute culpability**
- **Shared Accountability**
- **Collective**
- **Prevention**
- **Connection**
- **Support**

VAWnet TA QUESTION

# TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE

“a political framework & approach for responding to violence, harm & abuse... Without creating more violence.”  
- MIA MINGUS  
leavingevidence.wordpress.com

“A LIBERATORY APPROACH TO VIOLENCE” - GENERATION FIVE

KNOW the DIFFERENCE

**PUNITIVE JUSTICE (RETRIBUTIVE JUSTICE)**  
• How the state operates/what the state is invested in  
• Focused on laws rather than harm  
• Responds with punishment & suffering rather than accountability

**TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE**  
• Exists outside the state that allow for harm & violence to happen  
• Based in community  
• Abolition framework

**RESTORATIVE JUSTICE**  
• Acknowledges & repairs harm as possible, involves those impacted, & encourages appropriate responsibility  
• Has been adopted by institutions  
• Focused on individuals

A FRAMEWORK for our PRIMARY PREVENTION WORK

Building strong, connected, & responsive COMMUNITIES & Relationships

A LIFE PRACTICE

How have we all been complicit in this violence?

• INCITE! Women of color & Trans people of color against violence

• Creative Interventions TOOL KIT

RESOURCES

- transformharm.org
- BCRW - Building ACCOUNTABLE communities series
- BAY AREA transformative JUSTICE COLLECTIVE
- generation FIVE
- JUST PRACTICE
- SURVIVED & PUNISHED

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE & STATE VIOLENCE are connected

PRISONS are sites of violence, & Both Incarceration & Gender-Based violence are based in POWER & CONTROL  
Sexual violence by Police & Guards is systemic

AS MANY AS 94% of some women's prison populations have a history of physical or sexual abuse  
Addressing ROOT CAUSES of violence and Harm

Criminalization has not ended violence, but has CRIMINALIZED & INCARCERATED SURVIVORS of violence

oppression

# FRAMEWORK OF TJ

How do we build our personal and collective capacity to respond to trauma and support accountability?

How do we shift power towards collective liberation?

How do we build effective and sustainable movements that are grounded in resilience and life-affirming power?

How can we shift our response to violence so that we are supporting survivors and their self-determination, as well as supporting people to fundamentally change their abusive behaviors?



"Harm exists and will continue to exist. But the frameworks communities can use to address that harm are not static and can be improved.

Transformative justice provides space to explore and react to individual situations as they arise"- Reina Sultan



## Examples of Transformative Justice

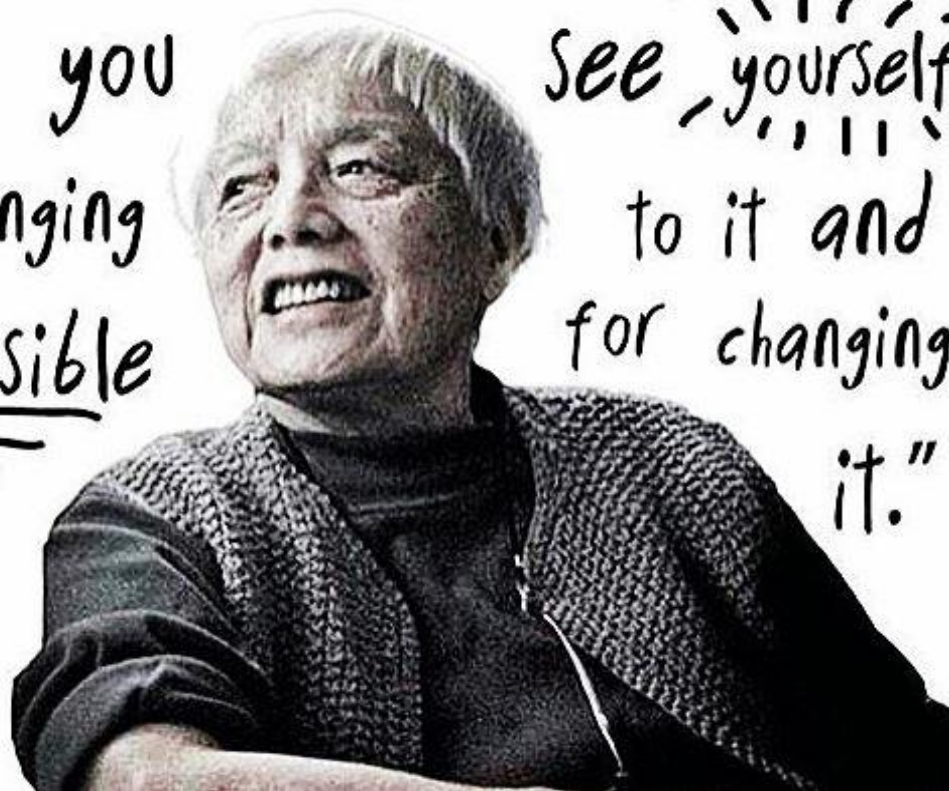


- Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective (BATJC)- Oakland, CA
- API Chaya- Seattle, WA
- Casa Segura- Oakland
- Philly Survivor Support Collective
- UBUNTU! - Durham, NC
- Incite! Women of Color Against Violence
- Critical Resistance- Oakland
  
- BYP 100- Chicago, IL
- Generation FIVE
- Women & Girls CAN in Chicago
- Communities Against Rape and Abuse- Seattle
- KAN-WIN- Chicago
- Young Women Empowerment Project
- The Northwest Network- Seattle
- Sylvia Rivera Law Project- New York



WHAT  
WOULD  
JUSTICE LOOK  
LIKE FOR  
SURVIVORS?

"You cannot change any society  
unless you take responsibility for it,  
unless you see yourself  
as belonging responsible  
to it and  
for changing  
it."





Bernie

**I am once again asking  
Check-in with yourself**

imgflip.com



Questions?

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