

## Session 4: Resilience

*To the facilitator, remember on each chance to share, let each person share in a circle or to each speak from the silence. If the group speaks from the silence, keep track of who has spoken and do not let another speak until each have had a turn or chosen to pass. If you're on zoom, you can establish an order with the first sharing and put that order of names in the chat.*

### Opening Words:

"I do not believe the acts of oppressors are my people's shame. For me, that my people became, created, and imagined from a position of unfreedom is a source of deep pride, not shame... What better evidence of human beauty and resilience could there be?" - Imani Perry

### Sitting in Silence:

As a facilitator, at the first meeting, invite everyone to sit together in silence. In later meetings you may not need to make such an invitation, as people will know. This should be at least a minute, perhaps more. It gives each person a chance to really “arrive” in the space.

**Reminder:** This is just a reminder that we are living in some strange times. The strength and resilience we draw on now, and will continue to draw on, is not built overnight. We are growing every day. Like the various athletes and musicians who build ability with years of practice, we do as well. Invite patience with yourself and others to this time of practice and continued growth..

**Revisit the Covenant:** Have someone read the covenant allowed, so it is present in our minds.

### Check In:

What do you want to emotionally put away in order to be fully present for this gathering today? What do you want to bring instead?

### Meditation:

We are going to do a simple calming meditation today, that you can call on whenever you need it. It is based on simple breathing. Sit in a comfortable position. Close your eyes, or soften your gaze if you like. We will just be breathing in and out, but the out breath will last twice as long as the in breath. I invite you to inhale, as deeply as you feel comfortable, to the count of four, 1 2 3 4. Then slowly exhale to the count of eight, 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8. Lets try that again. Inhale 1 2 3 4. Exhale 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8. Do this kind of breathing at your own pace for a few minutes....Many people find this kind of breathing, with the longer exhale than inhale, to be a good way to seek calm and help you call on your resilience.

### Readings: (choose two or read all three)

**A Recipe for Resilience** By [Margaret Weis](#)

This recipe has been tweaked over time, so adjust as necessary.

Sometimes it yields more servings than anticipated.

Sometimes it needs a bit more of this ingredient or that.

It comes from generations who have gone before me, and I've added my own flavor along the way.

A Recipe for Resilience

One part courage

Two parts tears of failure and doubt

One part deep listening

One part each of both silence and laughter

A dash of trust

A pinch of wonder

A heaping scoop of naps and snacks

In a separate bowl, mix together family, friends, and those who challenge you to be your best self, those with whom you disagree.

Add slowly to the larger pot, add a bay leaf for ... well, whatever it is bay leaves do, and let simmer for as long as you need (which is often longer than you realize or anticipate).

Keep the heat at an even temperature – hot enough to cook throughout, but not so hot it burns the bottom.

Can be served at room temperature, warm, or even cold if necessary.

Serve alongside your favorite soft blanket, dog, cat, or other soft item.

Make often,

Share with others,

Hold onto the leftovers – you'll need them after a long day that challenges your soul.

**Bessel A. van der Kolk, The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma**

“Children and adults alike need to experience how rewarding it is to work at the edge of their abilities. Resilience is the product of agency: knowing that what you do can make a difference. Many of us remember what playing team sports, singing in the school choir, or playing in the marching band meant to us, especially if we had coaches or directors who believed in us, pushed us to excel, and taught us we could be better than we thought was possible.”

**Our Roots of Resilience** By [Kimberlee Anne Tomczak Carlson](#)

Feel the gravity of the earth holding you in place.  
Wiggle your toes as if they were roots.  
Roots connect you to the earth lending you strength.  
Gently sway in the wind, turning your body like a trunk of a tree,  
Leaning this way and that, bending as the air pushes and pulls.  
What surrounds you, may sway you,  
Make you bend and feel unbalanced  
Wiggle your toes.  
Know that your roots can hold you as you grow and learn.  
A tree is nourished by the soil and water.  
You are nourished by food the earth grows and the water it provides.  
You are cared for and loved by many people.  
Breathe deeply (*repeat or pause*)  
Still yourself (*wait till everyone is still*)  
Know that your roots are strong.  
Wiggle your roots.

**Questions for Discussion:**

- Tell of a tough time in your life that you got through and what helped you to do that.
- Have you had any people who acted as coaches or teachers that helped you build your resilience during tough times?
- What lessons have you learned about resilience so far in your life?

**Likes and Wishes:**

What did you like about this meeting? What do you wish could be different in future meetings?

**Closing Words:**

“Fall down seven times, rise eight” - Japanese proverb