

STATEMENT.

We are not okay. We, the collective. We, the Black, Brown, Indigenous bodies. We, the ones on the frontlines, in grassroots organizations, in non-profits. We, the ones that participate in small and big ways as sentinels to justice and humanity. We are not okay. We are in the midst of feeling the weight of it all.

While we watch our world burn figuratively, and now literally, when we add more names to the list of injustices, we are grieving. And our grieving is both public and personal, it is collective and intimate. It is done in crying, in yelling, in being so frustrated, and mad - oh so mad! - that devastation seems to be the only logical next step.

We are not okay. We acknowledge our pain and anger in public as an act of liberation. Part of the white supremacy system, which we are so indoctrinated into, dictates that we must just move forward, suffer in silence, just keep fighting the fight, just keep showing up, just be civil. The white supremacy system continues and counts on depleting our energy and resources. It counts on us betraying ourselves, our bodies, our minds, our movements, and each other.

The system expects, demands, that we present ourselves with civility, with decorum. They expect that from us, while taking our lands, placing our children in camps, shooting our Black brothers, sisters, siblings with impunity. They demand civility when the man they elected to in their highest office is unable to exhibit that himself.

They want us to participate in their circus while we are in so much pain. They want us to articulate our stands, to present the data, to analyze their reports, to become more literate in their games. They want us to become more like them, and less like the highest truth of divinity that we truly are.

And so the contradictions of their system; the system that says they want us, but not with our whole humanity. The system that says they want us, but not in their governments, their cities, their neighborhoods. They want us but not enough to fight for and with us. They want us but not our grant applications, not our grassroots movements. Not if it doesn't look like them. They want us but only in the lanes to apply for crumbs. They want us as the victims that justify their savior behaviors and fill their pockets. A system full of contradictions.

And so the contradictions also want to be rooted in our movements, in our love for our pursuit of the freedom they so much proclaimed. In our desire to be part of the small spaces they give us like crumbs. We want our organizations, our nonprofits to be on their lips, to be listed in their budgets, to be the checked-box that gives them an out for being equitable. We want them to call on us and to listen. We want their gifts. We want to keep believing in justice regardless of the thousands of times the system keeps betraying us. Regardless of how many times they have shown their true collective racist face, we hope. We show up. And in the pursuit of that dream,

our own movements at times replicate the division, the hostilities, the power-hungry dynamics that they do so very well. Oh, the contradiction!

And all that hurts. The eternal contradictions hurt. It hurts, the fact that we have to shrink ourselves, that we have cut pieces of ourselves to participate in that charade, that we have participated in the collateral damage of our own brothers and sisters with our silence. By participating in that system that denies our humanity.

It hurts to be a visionary, a prophet in a system that in small and big ways betray us by not condemning the killing of our Black brothers and sisters, a system that creates processes so complicated that even trying to change it seems daunting and impossible. And the contradiction and tension is there. To be or not to be, they want us NOT TO BE while we suffocate in their hallways.

How do we keep on going? Where do we go from here? We wish we had the answer. What we do know is that our pain deserves to be tended to, our pain deserves to be listened to. Our pain is deserving of our time. Because part of the fallacy of productivity is to move us away from our humanity while creating a false identity centering our ego and production.

So we are stopping to tend to our collective pain, to take care of our needs, to give space for imagination, to play, to experience our child-like joy, to hold ceremonies for those taken away from us by the system. To rest in the arms of our beloveds, to experience the expansiveness of our change, to dance, to nap, to laugh. We are taking the time to tell you with pride that we are not okay. The wound is too old and too vast.

We are not okay, and our pain does not have to follow your expectations, your timelines. Our pain does not want your pity. We have been working intentionally in a slow and intimate creation of coalition building and that does not answer to white supremacy's sense of urgency. We are acknowledging the basic need to heal ourselves.

We, the BIPOC Alliance, wish that if you are in a Black, Brown, Indigenous body, you also take stock of the trauma and the pain. That you can rest even for a minute, for a nap, for a laugh with friends and chosen family. That you have a loved one who you can look into their eyes and say "I am not okay" without the fear of an answer that requires fixing, that requires a plan. That you are loved in the pursuit of freedom and movement towards reclaiming our humanity.

If you are a Black, Brown, Indigenous brother, sister, sibling seeking a place just to rest for a day, for a second, hit us up.

With love,

The BIPOC Alliance