

# COLLECTIVE CARE GUIDE FOR WHITE MEN DURING TIME OF COVID-19

## INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The Corona-virus pandemic is a scary and uncertain crisis forcing many of us to stay at home and distance ourselves from other people while others are forced to choose between their own health and feeding and sheltering themselves and their families. Among those of us staying home, many have the added stress of losing our jobs or having our income reduced. This has led to elevated stress, depression, and crisis for many, with Black, Indigenous and other people of color, immigrants, women, trans, nonbinary, poor and working class folks being hit the hardest by the pandemic. White men are susceptible to a particular type of painful isolation that makes us vulnerable to depression, self-medication with alcohol and other drugs, and suicide. To make matters worse, we have been socialized to turn our confusion, pain, anger, and frustration into verbal, emotional and physical harm against ourselves and others. It is deeply important that white men take care of themselves and each other mentally, emotionally and physically at this time and neither hurt or allow others to hurt those in our communities.

We need to use this crisis to dismantle white patriarchal roles, practice collective care and create a network of support for White men so we don't add to the emotional labor burden women, trans and non-binary folks, and Black, Indigenous and other people of color (BIPOC) often carry. In crisis, it becomes critical to learn how to self-assess and take better care of ourselves precisely so that we can show up in fullness and liberation. It is also essential we reach out to other White men to offer connection and support, as well as inviting each other into communities of mutual aid and support. The onus is on us White men to develop new habits and skills as we respond to crisis in a liberated and liberatory spirit. We must step up at this time for decarceration, single payer health care, debt relief for all and direct government support for those in need. We must also survive and thrive for ourselves, for our own wellness, and enrich the movement in solidarity with our BIPOC, trans and non-binary, and women leaders.

Please take some time to read through this guide with an open heart. Find the pieces you can learn from and the places you can be of help. Take care of yourself. Share time (virtually!) with loved ones. And please - Wash Your Hands!!

**ORGANIZING  
WHITE MEN FOR  
COLLECTIVE  
LIBERATION**

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*Let's start with where you are. Disasters can be the source of pain and trauma in our lives. Sometimes they can surface pain that preceded the disaster.*

*Use these prompts as a tool to reflect in a way that works for you: Journaling, sharing with someone, silent reflection, etc. Be aware of what is happening in your mind and body as you do so.*

# ORGANIZING WHITE MEN FOR COLLECTIVE LIBERATION

## SELF-ASSESSMENT

**Consider: Movement/exercise, hygiene, nutrition, medications, sleep, illness/disability, awareness/dissociation, trauma/history, physical space, outdoors, physical touch**

**What has changed? What does your body need?**

**BODY**

**Consider: emotions, needs, worries, longing, spirit, creativity, joy, fun, comforts, connections, family, lovers, intimacy**

**What is this bringing up? What do you need?**

**HEART**

**Consider: finances (self and others), work, school, organizing, volunteering, physical space/home space, projects, responsibilities, memories, trauma/history**

**What has changed? What do you need?**

**MIND**

**Consider: intimate partner(s), family, children, friends, colleagues, comrades**

**What do I need from my people? What do my people need from me?**

**COMMUNITY**

### CREATING A NETWORK OF SUPPORT

## ORGANIZING WHITE MEN FOR COLLECTIVE LIBERATION

As White men, we can sometimes lose sight of our feelings - and each other. In this challenging moment, it's important that we affirm our connections and build relationship. Can you think of a few White men in your life - family members, friends, colleagues, or guys you encounter in the various parts of your life? Why not reach out to them and make contact? Maybe connecting to some type of intention or mutual interest - e.g. Impact of the pandemic, economic uncertainty, isolation, war, or global climate change.

When you reach the person, you might begin by sharing some of the reflections you had in doing the self-assessment above. What feelings were you able to identify? What ways of taking care of yourself are you considering or exploring? By sharing some of this upfront, you might make it easier for the man you're connecting with to do the same. You can ask him things like:

- **What is happening in your life right now? Name some things that have shifted from the norm for you.**
- **What feelings are coming up for you during this period of social distancing and health crisis?**
- **What are you doing to take care of yourself? What kinds of things do you find soothing to do during trying times?**
- **Are there other people that you are feeling concerned about? What have you been able to do or could you do to support them?**
- **What's happening in your community to support folks who are more vulnerable at this moment?**

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### FOLLOW UP, MUTUAL AID AND EMOTIONAL LABOR RESOURCES

After engaging in your self-assessment, continuing to practice collective care by reaching out to your network of white men and providing them support, we suggest some of these follow up action items:

*Suggest to the folks you reached out to that they reach out to the white men in their circles who could appreciate a call like this (you can share this document with them so they can follow the same prompts).*

*Schedule a time to check in again with them in the next week.*

*[Read through this comprehensive resource guide on mutual aid efforts happening around the country and ways for you to plug into those efforts](#) in your community. [Mutual Aid Hub](#) is another good resource. If you need help getting mutual aid efforts started at a hyper-local level or if your community doesn't have mutual aid efforts yet, [check out this guide](#), and [this guide](#). Remember, as white men it's important to take on more of the care-taking, administrative, logistical and emotional labor roles in those mutual aid efforts. We must center the leadership of women, non-binary folks, Black, Indigenous and other people of color and we need to support them. Encourage your network of white men to look into mutual aid efforts in their area and inspire them to get involved. Share those resources with them.*

*In the spirit of internal and collective liberation, OWMCL is hosting a weekly gathering every Monday night to support one another and lift/ preempt some of the emotional-labor load on women and people of color in white men's lives. Join and Invite your network of white men to the next OWMCL mutual support on-line video gathering over Zoom. They are weekly gatherings every Monday at 8:30 EST. To receive the registration information, email [againstsexismandr racism@gmail.com](mailto:againstsexismandr racism@gmail.com).*

*[Read through this guide on emotional labor](#) and hold yourself and other white men accountable for not creating extra emotional labor for women and non-binary folks. Share with your network of white men.*

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Thank you for reading through this guide and we hope this provides you the resources and support you need to get through this difficult time. Please contact [againstsexismandr racism@gmail.com](mailto:againstsexismandr racism@gmail.com) if you have any questions or need more info. Don't forget to check out the [OWMCL website](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). If you would like to get involved with OWMCL organizing efforts, [fill out this form](#).