

PodcastS3_StaciKHaines

Mon, 10/12 11:01AM 43:59

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

people, trauma, healing, systemic, belonging, transform, deep, power, movements, systems, deeply, feel, book, white supremacy, uproot, social justice, access, understand, dignity, domination

SPEAKERS

Staci K. Haines, Omkari Williams



Omkari Williams 00:20

Hello, and welcome to Stepping Into Truth, the podcast where we take on the issues of race, gender and social justice. I'm your host Omkari Williams, and I'm very glad you're here with me today. I love doing this podcast. I'm privileged to speak with people who are out in the world making a difference with their day jobs, their programs, their art, their activism. If you would like to support me in doing this work, you can do so for as little as \$3 a month by becoming a member of my Patreon community. You can go to [patreon.com/Omkari Williams](https://patreon.com/OmkariWilliams) and sign up. There's also a link on my website: omkariwilliams.com.



Omkari Williams 01:02

This interview is being recorded in October of 2020. Just a few weeks ahead of the presidential election and still in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic. Both of those events have made it abundantly clear that there are two Americas. Communities of color have been disproportionately impacted by covid 19 and the conversation about race has become prominent in recent months in the wake of increased awareness of police violence against the Black community. The impact of both these things is profound on groups of people already experiencing the effects of trauma.



Omkari Williams 01:41

My guest today is someone who engages with trauma as a core part of her work, and in particular looks at the broader impacts of our systems on marginalized groups of people. Staci K. Haines is the author of the newly released book, *The Politics of Trauma: Somatics, Healing, and Social Justice*. Haines' book explores the connections between personal and social transformation. She is the co founder of Generative Somatics, a multiracial social justice organization bringing somatics to social and climate justice movements. She has been teaching and coaching in the field of somatics for the last 25 years. And it is my great pleasure to have Staci K. Haines on the podcast. Hi, Staci, how are you?



Staci K. Haines 02:33

Hi, great to be with you.



Omkari Williams 02:35

Thank you. I'm so happy that you're here with me today. So because we don't have a ton of time, and your book is deep and multi layered, I really want to focus on just one area of what you write about. And that is systemic trauma as it applies to race and the movement for racial justice. Now, having said that, I want the listeners to know that there is way more to this book than this subject. And I really highly recommend this book to anyone dealing with trauma of any sort. So to start, what I'd like to do is get a definition of terms because not everyone may be familiar with what the term "somatic" means. Tell us what that means.



Staci K. Haines 03:21


Thank you, yes, somatics is really a different way of understanding both kind of how we're shaped and also how we change that goes from a holistic approach. So it really considers kind of our thinking, our emotions, how we act, how we relate as one whole integrated system. So when we look at changing, it's not just changing our thoughts, it's really changing what we've embodied over time, so that so that our changes, our transformation can actually show up in how we act and how we relate.




Omkari Williams 03:55

Okay, that's very helpful, because I think that one of the things that we often do is we kind of fragment ourselves into different pieces. And we'll work on one piece of ourselves and


leave the rest out. And ultimately, I don't believe that works as well as we hope for it to work. So somatics feels like a more integrated approach to that whole idea of addressing whatever issue is coming up. Is that an accurate restatement?

 Staci K. Haines 04:28

Yeah, absolutely. Also, you know, a lot of our survival strategies, and when when we start talking about systemic trauma this will make sense, but a lot of our survival strategies are automatic and become unconscious. And so we're like dealing with all these symptoms of having been hurt or a systemic trauma, and not having access about how to transform them or how to become more whole or more empowered again. And somatics really helps us understand how to do that in a more holistic way. So I trust, we'll dive in more.


 Omkari Williams 05:01

Absolutely. Yeah, absolutely. Well, okay, so now that we've got that sorted, I really want to move on to what feels like the crux of the issue to me. And I'm going to start in a way that may sort of feel backwards, but I think it's going to work. You talk a lot in this book about, "power over" structures. And the, the phrase "power over" is fairly self explanatory. But again, just so we're on the same page, all of us, would you talk about what you mean by that, and where "power over" structures shows up in US society.

 Staci K. Haines 05:41
Everywhere. (laughter)

 Omkari Williams 05:42

A few places, pick a few. (laughter)

 Staci K. Haines 05:45

"Power over" is basically the assumption that some people, some genders, some races, are inherently better than and more deserving of than others. So it's a domination based set of beliefs, ways we learn to relate, ways we learn to think about God, the land, each other resources that really concentrate worth. We'll talk about this more, but concentrate safety, belonging, dignity and resources into very, very few people. And that power over is predictable. It is structured along the lines of white supremacy and racism. So white people are considered better. It's structured along the lines of gender. So that, really,

cisgendered males, along sexuality along class, right. So it's very predictable lines of domination. And really, everything gets structured along those lines from how our school systems work, to media to who gets access to resources, or how capitalism works like that.



Omkari Williams 06:56

Okay, so given that, there is no place that that does not impact us, these power over structures, it seems like, it would be a really challenging thing to even begin to discern how you take those apart. And you in your book reference of famous Audre Lorde, quote, and it's the one, "For the Masters tools will never dismantle the Masters house". And many people are familiar with that quote, but I don't think that as many people recognize that Lorde went on to say, "they (referring to the Masters tools) may allow us to temporarily beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change". And, to me, that last part is really critical, especially as it relates to social justice movements, like Black Lives Matter, or climate change movements and these power over strategies. So could you walk us through how these power over strategies manifest in, just pick one area of, our thinking and how we need to really shift that dynamic in order to move towards a more just society?



Staci K. Haines 08:19

Yeah, well, thank you for bringing up Audre Lorde, I feel very, I have learned so much from her writings and got the opportunity in the 90s to meet her before she passed, I just really hold her as a teacher and a guide for many. You know, a lot of what I focus on in the book is really looking at how is personal transformation and systemic transformation connected. And one of the things we look at in somatics, is that we end up embodying things that we actually don't believe in or that aren't our values.



Staci K. Haines 08:54

And so even those of us who have a deep set of values for justice, for equity, for sustainability of the planet, still really get shaped by and embody power over ideas, ways of relating, of course, ways of surviving that power over when you're in a group that's targeted and oppressed. So this connection, really what we're looking at is how do we transform to be more and more whole and more aligned with our values? So that the visions and the strategies we come up with for how we want society to transform are really more aligned with those values. So, you know, one of the things we talk about is personal transformation, to really transform deeply, personally, we definitely need support and a group and a community of practice. And let's say we could do that with

like, 12 people a small number, right. But when we look at really transforming systemically, we need movements.



Staci K. Haines 09:57

So the bigger the system is, the more people, we need to transform that system. And like you said, it isn't about reform. You know, something that I love so much that's coming out of the Movement for Black Lives, is this whole call to defund the police not to reform the police. But to actually transform how we think about justice, how we think about transforming poverty. How many people are imprisoned for survival crimes due to poverty and oppression. To really uproot and transform how we see the whole system and keep moving toward economic equity. To transform conflict and even violence using community based or transformative justice models. So it is this like growing our own capacity to vision equitable systems, while we then get better and better at organizing, right? As masses of people in movements to really call for that vision and then practice and learn our way into that vision. Does that make sense?



Omkari Williams 11:04

It does, it makes perfect sense. What I'm hearing you say is that we need to change ourselves in order to change society. And we need to change the structures of society in order to change ourselves at scale, that they sort of work in concert, is that fairly... Is that accurate?



Staci K. Haines 11:25

It was so beautifully said. You know, I think a lot about like in public health, they talk about primary, secondary and tertiary prevention. And, you know, I, I've always been an activist, and my deep kind of training and calling has really been about, let's say, healing work. But I couldn't, like why I never became, let's say, a healer or a therapist only, is because that is prevention work or healing work, that is way down the line from the source of the harm or the source of the trauma. And, you know, really, when I look at systemic trauma, and particularly the trauma caused by white supremacy, and through racism, the source of the trauma are unjust systems of white supremacy. That's the root cause of the trauma. So we could do personal healing all day long around transforming the impacts of racism, right? Or white people really transforming how we've been shaped by white privilege. But that won't change the root cause, right, of all those traumas, unless we uproot white supremacy, and really change the systems of structures and the social narratives that keep you know, forwarding this kind of domination model. Yeah, and do so much harm.

Systemic oppression, causes trauma in millions of people. And I, that's why it's so important to do social change work, tied to personal personal transformation work. So we can really uproot those, the root causes of the harm.



Omkari Williams 13:12

So what I'm hearing you say is, you know, obviously, there is personal trauma, people have personal things that happen to them as individuals in their lives, that negatively impact them, That they are then, if they're fortunate enough to have the resources of all sorts, financial, emotional, familial resources, if they're fortunate enough to have those that they can then try and confront them. But that the systemic trauma is sometimes a separate issue, sometimes part of the same issue, but is almost inevitably layered upon whatever personal trauma we have. So we're dealing with both things potentially, at the same time, and while we can do all of that personal work, if we don't address the systemic issues, it ultimately isn't going to be, I'm not going to say it doesn't matter, but it's not going to be as fruitful as if we address the systemic issues as well.



Staci K. Haines 14:15

That's right. Yeah. I appreciate you frame things very, very well. So let me give a couple of examples. So I was sexually abused as a kid. And one could say that's a very deeply, deeply, obviously, personal experience of trauma. And if I kind of scale out, that is, to me, one of the tools of oppression, it's like it trains us into, like, child abuse, child sexual abuse trains us into that domination model so young and so vulnerably. And I also look, it's like okay, so, you know, me and my sisters all got sexually abused, that was also really an expression of patriarchy, right? And sexism and a deep training into that system.



Staci K. Haines 15:06

So while child sexual abuse was a very deeply personal experience for me, it was also a form of systemic, right, trauma of experiencing



Staci K. Haines 15:15

So it's really the both/and, and I think for many forms of trauma, it's also interconnected, there's a both/and. It's like poverty is traumatizing. Poverty is a systemic issue. And then I want to, I want to flip this over and say one thing about about different healing modalities, because there's so many really potent healing modalities. And sadly, there's a lot of mainstream healing modalities that don't actually integrate an understanding of

oppression and liberation. And so there can be healing modalities that inadvertently keep supporting systems systemic oppression, even when they're trying to do individual healing. And, you know, when we look at, you know, mainstream Western frames of one on one therapy that don't have a social analysis, again, inadvertently, those can reinforce like, remember when people used to talk about like shopping therapy?



Omkari Williams 15:16

Yes



Omkari Williams 15:17

Yes.



Staci K. Haines 15:17

And I'm like, Oh, no, no, no, that is a contradiction in terms. Okay?



Omkari Williams 16:21

Yes.



Staci K. Haines 16:22

So you, you get what I'm saying?



Omkari Williams 16:24

I totally do. So that's very interesting to me, because I think that one of the things that I've observed over the years having, you know, done so much of the let me work on myself stuff and all of the things that people do.



Staci K. Haines 16:40

Yeah



Omkari Williams 16:40

Is that there is a way in which it actually is undermining because what it supports is the notion that this is all about me, and problems with me, and that it doesn't really include the problems that are outside of me. I mean, not to say I don't have problems. Of course I do. But there are problems that are outside of me that have impacted me throughout my whole life. That, that sort of pull yourself up by your own bootstraps, thinking does not really address and actually, it makes it worse, because you feel like, well, I'm failing at fixing whatever it is.



Staci K. Haines 17:30

Exactly. I mean, there's there's a deep individualism built into a lot of models of healing and therapy, in many Western contexts, right? Not in the history of healing. If we look at human history, writ large healing has been seen as a collective process. And I'm really hoping in healing justice work, or in how much social change movements are really starting to integrate more trauma healing approaches, I really hope that there's more and more access to collective healing.



Staci K. Haines 18:04

But the individualism of kind of, let's say, straight up mainstream therapy, can be then disempowering, either self blaming, like, "Well, why can I get over this"? When it's like, how do you get over white supremacy and racism? We have to change as a group, you know what I mean? Or it doesn't inspire us into collective action. And I think one thing that we forget is collective action can be so transformative and healing in and of itself. Like when we come together and say we share a vision toward equity. We share a vision toward transforming society to justice and reconnecting ourselves to the planet, that collective action or that collective visioning is so healing in and of itself as a part of our individual healing.



Omkari Williams 18:54

I think that we've seen that manifest this past few months, when we saw the hundreds of thousands of people who marched in condemnation of what happened to George Floyd and Breanna Taylor, and Elijah McLean, and the list goes on. And the diversity of those groups and just even if you were watching on television, the power that I experienced watching those people, that just was really remarkable to me to just see that many people have such diverse ethnicities and ages and experiences and socioeconomic levels, all coming together and saying, "No, this is not okay with us. This is not who we want to be

going forward. We need to fix this". was really impactful and gave me hope that maybe we're turning a corner and I'm wondering what your experience was.



Staci K. Haines 19:59

I mean, very similar, inspiring, motivating, mobilizing healing enraging, right. Yeah, but I want to remind us it's like, anger is also a part of healing, right. Anger is a part of reclaiming dignity. I actually think that's one of its core roles as it helps us to reclaim dignity and reclaim boundaries. So there's, you know, obviously, a wide range of emotions go along with healing, but very, very inspiring. And then, you know, I think a lot about obviously, there's a lot coming up in this election. But really, the mobilization and how many different types of people are mobilized toward justice gets to continue, no matter who wins on on November 3, or December 3, or whenever all the ballots come in.



Omkari Williams 20:49

Right.



Staci K. Haines 20:50

Right. But that mobilization is really about, it's like a call for healing, a call for justice, and equity, and really a call for collective transformation. And all of those things are so life affirming. You know, I really feel like deep inside of our, you know, somatics would say deep inside of our soul, mm, our deep inside of our mind, body spirit, is a really yearning toward life. Right, and toward healing and toward justice. It's one of the reasons I've stayed in somatics so long, because I really notice as people get access to coming deeply back into their own aliveness, or into our own skins, that there's something inherent in us that really does want to heal, transform, and move. Move toward life, move toward interdependence. And I think healing helps us access that more deeply. And also, being a part of, you know, movements together for life and justice help us access that.



Omkari Williams 21:54

Yeah, I think you're absolutely right about that. And something you said, just now reminded me of part of the definition of somatics that I highlighted when I was reading your book was that it includes a sense of belonging and an experience of dignity, as things that we actually need in order to be healthy in the world. And that really struck me because I have never heard it put that way, I've never heard belonging and dignity, just framed as essential pieces of our emotional and mental health. Yeah, that struck me really

powerfully.

S

Staci K. Haines 22:41

It's one of the things that I really love in the somatic approach too is it really looks at they're automatic ways that we adapt to what our inherent needs. And somatics really considers three things: safety, belonging and dignity as inherent needs for all human beings. And we have this big, evolutionary history and it's a deep in our biologies, right deep in our mind, body spirit, that will adapt to find safety, will adapt to belong, and will adapt to find dignity. And one of the things that's so destructive about trauma is that it breaks our experience and betrays our ability to access safety, belonging and dignity. So when we look at white supremacy, or we look at systemic racism, it basically is telling masses of groups of human beings so that they don't belong, and masses of groups of human beings, that they're not inherently dignified, and that they're not permitted safety, right, like all these police killings are a systemic expression of anti Black racism. That's saying, "You don't deserve safety" right? That's, that's why or it's one way to understand how traumatizing racism is because it breaks safety, belonging and dignity, enmasse that way.



Omkari Williams 24:12

I completely agree. And I have to say, I hadn't thought of it in those terms before I read your book. But once I did, it was so obvious. It's like, "Well, of course that's true". And something else you say in the book, and I'd love for you to talk about, is you specifically talk about how colonization impacts these needed experiences. And if you could speak about that, I would really love that.

S

Staci K. Haines 24:42

Well, God it's just so heartbreaking. I think I'm just connected for a moment with just the the pain, you know, just the just the unnecessary pain caused by all of this. So yeah, when we really, when we look at colonization, I think but one thing that's so, can be so hard to face. And I, I think there's a whole bunch of white people in the United States that are newly facing, or more deeply facing, the legacy of colonization. The legacy of slavery and white supremacy in the US. And it's so, so important. Because there's this process also of white people feeling deeply, and white people mobilizing other white people toward equity, right. And following, of course, the lead of people of color.



Staci K. Haines 25:34

But in colonization, it was so systematically designed, that's what's so painful, is it was really uprooting people from thousands of years of relationship to land. It was literally un-belonging, right, Indigenous people from land, from identity, from language, from each other. And then when, and I know you know this history, but when indigenous people and enslaved Africans started organizing together, and even when some Europeans who were brought as indentured servants started organizing together, that was the moment in US history that the idea of whiteness was created. It was really to break alliances between Indigenous, African, and European indentured servants. And to basically give those European indentured servants access to wealth and whiteness, if they played along, right, with the oppression. But the multi generational trauma of that breaking relationship with land, with language, with culture, is still being healed in Indigenous communities today.



Omkari Williams 26:48

Yes, I mean, it's, it is one of the most painful parts of American history, for me, is that experience of just such disruption and with such intent. I mean, this was not an accident. This was intentional. And that's, that's hard to wrap your mind around. And it's hard to even begin to see how we undo the damage that that has done. I don't know that that's possible. And that's tragic.



Staci K. Haines 27:27

Yeah. I think one of the things that just blows me away, and maybe one of the places I do keep getting hope, is the level of continuity both of many Indigenous cultures, and many, you know, when I when I think about like the also the very literal uprooting of people who are brought here enslaved, the uprooting from land culture of belonging. And yet this deep, deep continuity, and that's one of the places that I really look and go, Wow, that continuity, there's something so powerful, whether we call it in spirit, in culture, in the capacity to heal. But just the sheer survival and then thriving, of so many peoples who have been so profoundly oppressed, there's something in that that is profound and beautiful, and so deeply worth listening to and learning from.



Omkari Williams 28:26

Yes, it is so true. My friends who are Native American, I watch what they do in their communities. And it's so beautiful, and it's incredible. And I always feel uplifted. Because I think, wow, you know, you got shoved onto a corner of bad land. And still have persisted in the same way that African Americans have still persisted. And this gives me hope, and

just makes me feel like, fundamentally, there is a grit to Black and Indigenous people in this country that will not allow for this to continue indefinitely. And as I said before, hopefully we're at a turning point.



Staci K. Haines 29:23

Now, may that be so, really may that be so.



Omkari Williams 29:27

Well, another thing that you said that I found really interesting was about the impact of power over systems on those with systemic privilege. And I don't think we think about that very often, but it's really important. So I want you to tell us about how you have witnessed that and what you think that means for society at large.



Staci K. Haines 29:55

Yeah. So this feels important to unpack in a really like grounded way. Because the shaping and sorry to use that word. It's a somatic word, but it's like how we're shaped by and how we embody systems of oppression, of course are different. We're impacted differently depending on our social location. So since we're looking at really the systemic trauma of racism, when we look at white folks, there's a way that that shaping is about misunderstanding, that our sense of safety, belonging and dignity is based on power over.



Staci K. Haines 30:34

So it's like white people, I'm generalizing, but I'm talking about the shaping, is to separate or individualize or feel threatened. Like safety is threatened when it's not concretely or pragmatically or materially threatened, because other peoples are becoming more empowered. So it's like this profound embodied misunderstanding, that separation or domination begets more safety, or separation or domination begets more worth. So it's like this profound embodiment of a lie. I think part of you know, the, the the collective work, let's say, of people of European descent in the United States, or white folks, is this profound transformation to understand that interdependence is safety. And that equity brings belonging, that it's the "we" in a much more profound way, that makes us more whole, as human beings. It's a reconnection with the land and a respect with the land that makes us more whole, rather than this idea of success, and the singular leader, like all the individualized power over ways we're trained to think of success, or think of making it or think of like, now my family safe. It's like embodying a lie, that hurts other people, and

then also hurts us in our communities.



Omkari Williams 32:07

This is really tricky, because that whole idea of individual power, of individual worth, of the individual as sort of the ultimate, in some ways, rather than the communal, has become so deeply ingrained in how we think about things. We're always competing to be higher up on the hierarchical ladder of things. And that's all about the individual and not about communal. So I completely understand what you're saying. And I agree, I just wonder how we get there, you know?



Staci K. Haines 32:48

Yeah, great, that's great. So you know what's also so interesting is all those things are true. And then people are so lonely?



Omkari Williams 32:57

Yeah.



Staci K. Haines 32:57

And I think about that loneliness. And that is something deep inside of us calling for interdependence. Like knowing something at a more profound level, or else everybody like rich, separated, and individualized would be super happy. But that's not what's happening. So so when I look at how do we change this, I think that's why I just keep coming back to this pulse, or this rhythm, or this interconnection between becoming more whole more healed more, I even want to say more fully human as individuals. Right? So cultivating our own healing, being in practices that are about becoming more whole, not just about becoming more dominating, rich or successful. But about becoming more whole, while we simultaneously connect ourselves to broader collective movements for change.



Staci K. Haines 33:58

And we can all do this. I mean, this is something I really appreciate about you, when you're like, find the style of activist you are, find your right place or your one or two issues, right. So as we want to be ourselves and then bring our full selves into a broader collective that's working toward a vision of equity and connection to the planet. So I just think it's

this rhythm of both/and, both/and, and it's like what you said, in the beginning, it's like all that individual healing helps us become better inside of social change work and all the social change helps us become more whole as humans. But I really do think that holding of ourselves, that coming more deeply back into ourselves, literally leads to more interdependence with others. That collective action keeps inspiring us to heal. So I just think there's like this double beat or rhythm where they serve each other.



Omkari Williams 35:00

Yeah, that's lovely I, that actually I could feel my body kind of go aahhhh, you know, as I sort of settled into that vision of engaging with people in that way. Which is actually part of what's so difficult right now is the pandemic has made us isolated in ways that we are unaccustomed to being. And, I mean, I'm an introvert and I find it frustrating and isolating, I can only imagine what people who are extroverts are experiencing. And trying to find our way to keep doing communal things in a setting that is not communal, if you're using your head, feels very challenging. And, you know, I, I just hope we get our heads and our hands around this soon, so that we can figure out how to move forward in doing the things we need to do without putting ourselves and others at risk. And I think that's a challenge right now.



Staci K. Haines 36:05

Yeah, I really I agree with you, you know, I'm, I'm more introverted as I age, but really, I'm an extrovert. And I cannot tell you how much how much I miss hugging people, touching people, just being being with them, or being in practice together body to body. And, you know, for those of us who can, who can access Zoom, or you know, access podcasts, there is a lot happening online. That even if we just go, "Okay, let me plug in to two things per week". There are different programs, courses, practices happening that are based in somatics, based in even collective practice that are about healing in this time.



Staci K. Haines 36:55

And then there's a lot of things online, that are about how do we engage with each other towards social change. And that's anything from like, the various things that movement for Black Lives are doing that any of us can join, or search showing up for racial justice was just really giving white people a place to organize and kind of wake up and become, you know, do the work toward ending white supremacy, you know, environmental justice, or climate justice organizations are doing gathering. So I've often thought or in talking with people, like, if we can invest in one healing thing, and one social justice thing per week, a

lot of that is now accessible. And then we get to see folks from all over, that does not replace getting together in person. But it's, it's something while we while we figure out this pandemic.



Omkari Williams 37:45

Yeah. And you actually, my next and last question was going to be what are three simple actions that listeners can take to start to address trauma systemically or personally, and also just to be able to make progress in the direction of social justice, given the circumstances in which we're living? So you've already given us a couple? Is there anything else you would like to add to that?



Staci K. Haines 38:14

Yeah, I would, I'm gonna do the social justice one first, and then talk about a personal practice. So to join an organization that is supporting social transformation. And we can join literally, by just signing up our names, it could be, again, Movement for Black Lives, it could be SURJ (<https://www.showingupforracialjustice.org/>), it could be the Working Families Party. There's just amazing stuff happening online. Right now, with a little bit of research, folks can find what resonates for them and join. And it's both just joining by signing up, it could be joining by joining zoom calls or meetings. It could even be going, "great I'm gonna do some phone banking between now and the election". And also planning really with your people. What are you planning to do from election to January 21, right to inauguration.



Staci K. Haines 39:10

There's a lot of great stuff out there to help us understand what are some of the best actions we can take. Let me just get one resource, which is pretty easy to find online. And I can send it to you too. But it's an online guide called Hold The Line: A Guide to Defending Democracy (<https://holdthelineguide.com/>). There's an amazing amount of kind of how to, and what to do there.



Staci K. Haines 39:35

Then on the very personal side, I want to invite people to be in a daily resilience building practice. We are collectively dealing with so much stress right now.



Omkari Williams 39:51

Oh, yeah.



Staci K. Haines 39:51

So much stress. I don't think in my lifetime, I have seen us in this level of collective stress. So there's a pretty simple somatic resilience practice, which is to really go back to a time in your life where you had an experience where you felt resourced, you felt more whole, you felt more connected to yourself or more connected to life. And we all access that in different ways. For some of us, it's really being with people that we love. For some of us it's music and dance. For some of us it's nature and connecting to nature or animals. Right.



Staci K. Haines 40:31

So going back to a particular experience, really put yourself back in that experience, and recall what it felt like to be there. And really access in your felt senses in your body, your emotions, your feeling self. What was that like? Did my heart open more? Did I feel calmer and more settled? Did I warm up? But go back and access that experience and just let your whole nervous system recall it and feel it. And then when you can, if you can, do even a 10 minute daily practice where you purposely find yourself to something that brings you resilience. So for me that might be literally staring up at a tree, I grew up in very small town in Colorado, and boy do pine trees give me a lot of resilience. Right? For other people that might be like that song, just play that song, and then let it really inform your nervous system. So we keep resourcing ourselves every day, with a little bit of resilience. It just helps us be able to navigate through these stressful times a little bit better.



Omkari Williams 41:44

That sounds lovely. And yeah, there are definitely those moments that all of us have had. And I think too often we let them just sort of live in the past, but living into them now is definitely going to be helpful. So thank you so much for those suggestions. They're wonderful. Staci, I have enjoyed this conversation so much. I really can't thank you enough is, especially after the last four years, not to mention the past eight months trauma is such a very present subject for us. And this conversation has made me feel that healing and progress are truly possible. And thank you so much for speaking with me. And thank you for all the work that you're doing. I really appreciate it.



Staci K. Haines 42:34

You're so welcome. And I'm honored. Just thank you for our conversation and thank you for what you're contributing out into the world. I really appreciate it.



Omkari Williams 42:42

Thank you. And to all of you listening, if this conversation has resonated for you, I highly recommend that you get yourself a copy of Staci's book, *The Politics of Trauma*, it really is an important read. By the time this episode airs, we will be right up against Election Day and what the next four years will look like is going to be dramatically different depending on the outcome. Regardless of who wins, there's going to be a lot of healing to do. At its core social justice is about healing. So let's commit to doing that work for ourselves and for our society.



Omkari Williams 43:22

Thank you all so much for listening. I will be back with another episode of *Stepping Into Truth* very soon. Until then, remember, change starts with story so keep sharing yours.