



Thank You Educators!

Healing-Centered Retreat for Secondary Educators
Summer 2022, *Swarthmore College*



REFLECTIONS ON THE »HEALING-CENTERED RETREAT for SECONDARY EDUCATORS«

SWARTHMORE COLLEGE, SUMMER 2022

"Perhaps the best way to deal with trauma besides therapy is to engage, think, and struggle collectively." - Robin D. G. Kelley

QUICK LINKS -

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[Resources on:](#)

- I. [Understanding Trauma in Schools](#)
- II. [Healing-Centered Classrooms & Schools](#)
- III. [Healing From & Promoting Resilience from Secondary Trauma Stress](#)

RETREAT RECAP -

During the week of July 18- 22, 2022, Swarthmore College professors Barbara Thelamour (Psychology) and Elaine Allard (Educational Studies) and their summer research assistants, Ruby Schlaker, Jessie Weiss, and Devin Freeman-Robinson, convened a small group of secondary educators for a "healing-centered retreat" at the Lang Center for Civic and Social Responsibility. This document provides a brief overview of the retreat as well as a collection of resources curated for educators interested in trauma-informed and healing-centered teaching or who may be experiencing burn out or secondary traumatic stress.

During the five-day retreat, which was held from 9am- 2pm daily, we began with reflective journaling and check-ins on how we were feeling in our body, mind, and heart. Each day, we offered retreatants exposure to a variety of wellness-related practices as well as opportunities for discussion of teacher well-being within a healing-centered lens (topics are listed below). We ended each day with 30- 45 minutes of exercise with fitness instructor, Dovita Devol Douglass, and a communal lunch.

Participants engaged willingly in and appreciated the various wellness-oriented activities. Nevertheless, barriers to teacher wellbeing related to working conditions were a frequent discussion theme. Poor treatment by administrators, ever-increasing workloads, and limited access to material resources were stressors that no amount of *self-care* could make up for. By the end of the week, we had collectively come to the conclusion that taking care of an individual teacher's well-being through the various methods we experienced is certainly important in helping teachers cope with these conditions (and too-often missing in the day-to-day grind). However, teacher persistence and resilience in this high-stress profession also requires positive experiences of collective struggle with other educators dedicated to changing unjust structural conditions.

HIGHLIGHTS from the week -

This guide includes information from each day of the retreat, in addition to resources that supplement the topics we broached together. Below is an overview of the highlights of each day (in addition to daily journaling and movement practices with Dovita Douglass), and includes hyperlinks to the information/resources from each day.

- MONDAY 7/18** [Art therapy for self care with Denise Wolf.](#)
- TUESDAY 7/19** [Morning presentation](#) on the health benefits of spending time in nature, followed by birding in the Crum woods with Katrina; Selected and printed [Restorative Posters](#) created by Project NIA for classrooms; Discussed the [factors](#) that contribute to teacher well-being, [brainstormed our own models](#) of an educational context that would support teacher well-being, and posed [questions](#) of the trauma-sensitive schools literature.
- WEDNESDAY 7/20** Presentation about [understanding trauma among undocumented immigrants](#) with [Germán Cadenas](#).
- THURSDAY 7/21** Individual exploration and discussion of the resources below.
- FRIDAY 7/22** [Planning for teacher wellbeing](#), and using [music to connect to self](#) with [Emily Sheehan](#).

RETREAT LEADERS & GUEST PRESENTERS -

→[Dr. Elaine Allard](#)

→[Dr. Barbara Thelamour](#)

Department of Psychology

Contact: bthelam1@swarthmore.edu

→Denise Wolf

Denise R. Wolf, ATR-BC, ATCS, LPC, LPAT is an Associate Clinical Professor at Drexel University in the graduate Art Therapy and Counseling Program. She is owner and practitioner/ therapist of Mangata Services. Denise is a Licensed Professional Counselor, Licensed Professional Art Therapist, as well as a Registered, Board Certified and an Art Therapy Certified Supervisor through the Art Therapy Credentials Board. For over 20 years, Denise has been practicing as a therapist treating adolescents and adults with histories of complex interpersonal trauma.

Contact: deniserochellewolf@gmail.com

→Germán Cadenas

Germán is an assistant professor of counseling psychology at Lehigh University whose primary research interests are focused broadly on the psychology of undocumented immigrants, including their sociopolitical activism, educational outcomes, career development, and psychological wellbeing.

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→Emily Sheehan

Emily Sheehan is a Board-Certified Music Therapist and Licensed Professional Counselor with ten years of experience working in mental healthcare. She holds a Master's Degree in Creative Arts in Therapy—Music Therapy from Drexel University. She currently works in private practice therapy, and previously led music therapy treatment in an inpatient behavioral health hospital. She has a passion for providing supervision for music therapy students and interns, as well as professionals working towards their clinical licensure. In her clinical practice, she focuses on creating space to safely explore aspects of self that might feel uncomfortable, with the goal of building a positive, authentic relationship with self and others.

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→Dovita Devol Douglass

Dovita is a fitness instructor, personal trainer, and the founder of Vita Devol Wellness. She teaches privately and at the West Philadelphia YMCA.

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Facebook: Dovita Vedoll Douglass

Groupme with local fitness class announcements: 2678157790

RESOURCES -

I. UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA IN SCHOOLS

A. Overview: Trauma Literacy

1. [Graphic model](#) from Elaine's mini-presentation on ecosystems of trauma in schools
2. Lawson, et al. (2019). [Educators' Secondary Traumatic Stress, Children's Trauma, and the Need for Trauma Literacy](#), *Harvard Educational Review*, 89 (3), 421-447.

B. Trauma Sources & Impacts on children and adolescents

1. [About Child Trauma | The National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)
2. ["How childhood trauma affects health across a lifetime"](#) (video)
3. [Goodman Chapter 2: They put us down when we already down: Police & Juvenile Justice](#)
4. [Goodman Chapter 3: "The Legal Right to Be Somebody" Immigration](#)
 - a) <https://www.tcpress.com/Goodman-Chapter-Two>
 - b) <https://www.tcpress.com/goodman-chapter-three> (Videos)
 - c) https://www.tcpress.com/filebin/PDFs/Chapter_3_Transcripts.pdf (Transcript for videos)
5. [Germán Cadenas' Presentation](#) (Working with and counseling Undocumented Immigrants) and additional links:
 - [Immigration Is Love | Define American](#)
 - [Mental Health Providers Guide to Working with DACA Recipients - Informed Immigrant](#)
 - [IMM Schools](#)
 - [Resources for Immigrants in the US - United We Dream](#)
 - [Liberation Psychology Book \(Intro to Conclusion\)](#)

C. Trauma manifestations in the classroom

1. [How Teachers Can Recognize Signs of Trauma in Students](#)

D. How student trauma impacts teachers

1. [Secondary Traumatic Stress in Teachers](#)
2. [When Students Are Traumatized, Teachers Are Too](#)
3. [Secondary Traumatic Stress and Education](#)

II. HEALING-CENTERED CLASSROOMS & SCHOOLS

A. Overview:

1. [What Does a Trauma-Sensitive Middle/High School Look Like?](#) (video)
2. [The Power of Relationships in Schools](#) (video)
3. [Teaching deep breathing & SOS technique](#) (video)
4. [Calming/ Comfort Corners](#)

5. [De-escalation Spaces](#) (video)
6. [Restorative Posters](#) from Project NIA
7. [Healing Centered Engagement](#)

B. School Structures:

1. [When Schools Cause Trauma](#)
2. [Six Attributes of the Trauma-Sensitive School](#)
3. [Teachers' models](#) of education that would support teacher-well being (HCR Tuesday, 7/19)
4. [Take Care PHL: What role do workplaces have in preventing secondary traumatic stress \(STS\) and its consequences?](#)

C. Community Schools:

1. [Re-imagining turnaround: families and communities leading educational justice](#)
2.  [Community Schools - Family & Community and Inclusive Leadership](#)
3. [Sanctuary Schools- 5 Point Platform](#)
4.  [What Sanctuary Schools mean for Latinx families in the School Distri...](#)
5. [Translated Welcoming Resolution PDFs](#)
6. [Welcoming Sanctuary Schools](#)

III. HEALING FROM & PROMOTING RESILIENCE FROM STS

A. Self-Regulation:

1. [Helping Teachers Manage the Weight of Trauma](#)
2. [Making Classrooms and Schools Trauma-Informed and Healing-Centered](#)
3. [Emotional Self-Management Strategies](#)
4. [Developing a Personal Safety plan](#) (PHENND)
5. [Calming & De-escalation Strategies](#) (video)

B. Healthy Coping Strategies:

1. [Journal prompts for healing & self-efficacy](#)
2. [Self-Care Assessment](#)
3. [The 7 Types of Rest Everyone Needs](#)
4. [Planning for Well-being & Self-care](#) (HCR, Friday 7/22)
5. [Denise Wolf's Presentation](#) & [handouts](#) on art therapy & self-care for students & teachers
6. [Benefits of being outside](#) (Jessie Weiss presentation from HCR, Tuesday 7/19)
 - a. [Nurtured by nature](#)
 - b. [Take a Walk in the Woods. Doctor's Orders.](#)
 - c. [An 'Awe Walk' Might Do Wonders for Your Well-Being](#)
7. [Notes on Using Music for Self-Regulation](#) (HCR, Friday 7/22)
8. [Progressive Muscle Relaxation](#) (from Emily Sheehan workshop, HCR, Friday 7/22)

C. Connecting with Outside Organizations:

1. To provide mental health support for students

- a. [La Puerta Abierta](#) organization focused on providing mental health support for immigrant and refugee students; offers both individual and group therapy for students and families.
- 2. To help educators manage stress
 - a. [National Traumatic Stress Network: Secondary Traumatic Stress](#)
 - b. [Take Care PHL](#)
 - i. Check out free virtual resources for care workers in Philadelphia
- 3. [In Color Birding Club](#)
 - a. Will connect teachers (priority to Philadelphia public schools) to spaces to take awe walks in each neighborhood. Will provide funds for classes to get a bus to go to one of the spaces if needed. Can possibly provide a guide to lead the walk. Some binoculars can be shared for guided trips. Contact In Color Birding Club through Instagram or email katrina.clark@gmail.com.