

Discussion Guide for

Disability Visibility:
First-Person Stories from the Twenty-First Century

By Naomi Ortiz

To order *Disability Visibility*:

<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/617802/disability-visibility-by-alice-wong/>

Suggested citation:

Ortiz, Naomi. (June 30, 2020). "Discussion guide for Disability Visibility First-Person Stories from the Twenty-First Century." Disability Visibility Project. <https://disabilityvisibilityproject.com/>

Welcome to *being, becoming, doing and connecting* with disabled storytellers

How to Use This Guide

Disability is part of community, culture and daily life. *Disability Visibility: First-Person Stories from the Twenty-First Century* offers readers the opportunity to delve into layers of perspective in each essay. Yet, reading a book is not always the same as knowing how the ideas shared connect to us and our lives. How do we bring this wisdom home?

This discussion guide is for educators, book discussion groups, facilitators, organizers, and anyone interested in examining the themes and questions shared by the authors. This guide supports you to ask how these stories connect with your life, family and communities.

In this guide, you will find overall questions focusing on themes which run through multiple essays. There are suggested activities and projects for individuals or groups to do after reading the book. In addition, for each individual chapter, there are questions that explore the essay's themes. Finally, there is a glossary including some of the terms multiple authors use in their essays.

The goal of this guide is to provoke thoughtful conversation and introspection. Some of the questions focus on essay content. Other questions relate to personal self-reflection, exploring how topics relate to you and your life.

The Discussion Guide questions are only a place to start. As we ask ourselves how to bring the wisdom shared by these authors home, notice what piques your curiosity or challenges you, and ask yourself, "Why?" A good question can hold the surprise of joy, and the satisfaction of self-discovery. Enjoy!

Note: If a word in this guide has an asterisk after it, then the definition is located in the glossary. Definitions were sourced from recommendations, research, or from the author's own words. In*

some cases, the definition from the dictionary gave a basic understanding in order to engage with the question.

Overall Discussion Questions

- Alice Wong, the editor of the book, describes the disability community as, “*political, power, resistance and magic.*” What examples for each of these categories can you locate or identify from the stories in the book?
- Harriet McBryde Johnson says, “We enjoy pleasures other people enjoy and pleasures peculiarly our own.” What pleasures might be unique for disabled folks?
- What are some of the disability rights issues the authors identified? How did people discuss fighting or advocating for their rights?
- If *crip time**, as described by Ellen Samuels, was accepted and valued in society – how would it impact the topics other authors discussed (such as: incontinence, climate change, advocating for disability access, fashion, parenting)?
- What stories have stayed with you? How have they impacted your worldview?

Activities After Reading the Book

Create a Work of Art

Alice Sheppard discusses that her work often incorporates unexpected movements. Think about “unexpected movements” you might make in a day – dropping an object, sliding your cane into something, misunderstanding directions and going to an incorrect location, etc. Create a piece of art (dance, poetry, song, or painting) about your unexpected movement.

Variation: Make a work of art that reflects your body, your disability, or the aspects of you which are unique. This work of art can be a drawing, collage, painting, performance piece, dance, or poem.

Write a Letter

The Harriet Tubman Collective describes what incorporating disability solidarity* can look like in *Disability Solidarity: Completing the “Vision for Black Lives.”* Think about cultural communities you are part of and write a letter, or make a video, for an organization or political entity about how disability solidarity could be incorporated. Consider questions: What would be different about the group if disability as a social and political issue was included? Why is disability an important part of the community/movement?

Group instructions: Brainstorm ideas for how disability solidarity can be incorporated into an organization or political entity, then craft your letter or video from these ideas.

Plan for Crip Space

Imagine an event that you'd like to plan, (party, webinar, poetry reading) through the lens of crip space*.

What would need to change from how you would typically plan it? What would be different?

Consider that you may need to do some research about different kinds of disability access, but also remember crip space is more than access. What elements would specifically cultivate crip space?

Document Injustice

Oftentimes discriminatory incidents are overwhelming and unexpected. In the chapter, *On NYC's Paratransit, Fighting for Safety, Respect, and Human Dignity*, Britney Wilson shares about a bus driver's assault/inappropriate behavior. List three different ways to capture and document incidents, in the moment.

Group Instructions:

- Work from Wilson's story or pick an example of disability discrimination from the members in your group. Make sure people understand the details of the story.
- Break into pairs and brainstorm three different ways to capture and document this specific incident. (It's ok to imagine using objects the person may not have actually had at the time.)
- Come back as a large group and compare answers.
- Next, brainstorm ideas for the next steps once an incident is documented.

Variation: Break into groups of 3 and discuss ideas for what someone could say or do in the moment to deal with the situation while it is happening. Come back as a large group and compare answers.

Honor History and Legacy

Stacey Milbern shares about honoring relationships with crip ancestors. Create an individual or group altar to reflect cultural ancestors.

An altar is usually in a quiet, designated place with items that are meaningful to the person or group. Think about what objects could represent the lessons or love from ancestors. Pictures, writings, candles, incense, rocks, religious symbols, seashells and leaves are some examples of what can be found on an altar. (Remember to never leave candles or incense lit unattended.)

Is there a historical or special location where you can place an altar in celebration or in remembrance?

Journal and Reflect

Write about a time when you took a risk.

What happened? How did friends or family react? How did the potential to fail impact your experience?

Think about how Ricardo T. Thornton Sr. talks about choice. How does dignity of risk* affect our choices?

Chapter Discussion Questions

Introduction - Alice Wong

- Do you see images which look like you in the media? How has that impacted your worldview?
- Why do stories from everyday people matter?
- Wong states, “Staying alive is a lot of work for a disabled person in an ableist society...” What examples does the author discuss of this work in the introduction?

PART ONE: BEING

Unspeakable Conversations - Harriet McBryde Johnson

- If the presence or absence of a disability doesn't predict quality of life, what does?
- Why is *killing* such an appealing solution to the “*problem*” of disability?
- What elements of Harriet McBryde Johnson's story present the case for why disabled lives are valuable?
- Can *care*, as the author states, be profoundly beautiful?

For Ki'tay D. Davidson, Who Loves Us - Talila A. Lewis

- In response to Ki'tay's challenge, do you find yourself relying on leaders, or high-profile community organizers to do advocacy on your behalf?
- How do you see yourself as an advocate?
- Think of something you want to advocate for. How would the perspective – “love wins” – impact how you go about your efforts?

If You Can't Fast, Give - Maysoon Zayid

- What traditions do you have that require discipline and/or sacrifice?

- How does your family or community respond to your participation or lack of participation in traditions?
- Have you had a situation where you break with tradition due to your disability? What was that like?

There's a Mathematical Equation That Proves I'm Ugly — Or So I Learned in My Seventh Grade Art Class - Ariel Henley

- Have you experienced what the author describes as, "...obsessed with bridging the gap between the person I was and the person I felt I should be"? If so, what was that like? If not, why do you think you haven't experienced this feeling?
- How do the unique ways you look set you apart and make you beautiful?
- The author states that, "my appearance was my art." How does the statement make you feel? What thoughts or feelings does the statement inspire in you?

The Erasure of Indigenous People in Chronic Illness - Jen Deerinwater

- What are some facts that struck you that the author shared about healthcare for Indigenous peoples?
- How are health issues caused by colonialism*?
- What practices by the US government are designed to kill Native peoples?

When You Are Waiting to Be Healed - June Eric-Udorie

- How is *cure* connected to *shame* for the author?
- What does the author gain by owning disability as an identity? What do they lose?
- The author discusses their family's hope that God or a doctor could cure their disability. Have you experienced similar attitudes from your family or faith communities?

The Isolation of Being Deaf in Prison - Jeremy Woody as told to Christie Thompson

- The author states that not having access to ASL interpretation in prison was a deprivation. Explain why.

- What examples does the author give of ableism* and audism* from the staff and others in prison?
- Why is the incarceration of Deaf and disabled people a human rights issue? Why is it a disability rights issue?

Common Cyborg - Jillian Weise

- How does the author explain the difference between a cyborg and tryborg?
- Why are people so in love with the idea of making bodies part machine? How does this affect disabled people when they ask for accommodations?
- How do we look to technology to bring equality? Can equality only be achieved by taking away our differences?

I'm Tired of Chasing a Cure - Liz Moore

- How can *cure* lead to eugenics*?
- How did the author try to *overcome* their disability? What was the result?
- What does the author hope will happen by accepting their chronic pain?

PART TWO: BECOMING

We Can't Go Back - Ricardo T. Thornton Sr.

- How does the author describe the transition from living in an institution, to living in the community?
- How do low expectations of disabled people impact their lives and opportunities? How do high expectations impact us?
- Why do we as disabled people deserve the right to fail, as well as succeed?
- How does living in an institution affect a person's choices?

Radical Visibility: A Disabled Queer Clothing Reform Movement Manifesto - Sky Cubacub

- Why should there be clothing options which celebrate us?
- What kind of fashion piece do you wish existed that would be specific for your body or personality? (Write about or sketch out your dream piece.)
- How does your clothing conform to what society expects (including size, disability, race, perceived gender, etc.)?
- Do you feel the pressure to *pass*? How do you wish you could dress? What would be different?

Guide Dogs Don't Lead Blind People. We Wander as One. - Haben Girma

- How did the author develop their confidence to move around?
- Why does the author describe it as ableism* when someone assumes that their guide dog brought them to where they were going?
- How did the author's description of working together with a guide dog change what you thought having a guide dog is like?

Taking Charge of My Story as a Cancer Patient at the Hospital Where I Work - Diana Cejas

- The author says, "I learned as much through eavesdropping as I did in therapy." How has learning from other disabled folks supported you?
- How does the author talk about the tension of being both doctor and patient?
- How does the author explain the power of telling their story?

Canfei to Canji: The Freedom To Be Loud - Sandy Ho

- The author says, "Now I understand the exchange of silence for the comfort of others as oppression..." How do you decide when to be silent or when to make others uncomfortable?
- "Whether in East Asia or the United States, cultural values validate the narrative of worthy versus unworthy bodies." How does your culture talk about disability?
- Why does the author talk about having hard discussions with family members as a legacy for future generations?

Nurturing Black Disabled Joy - Keah Brown

- How does pop culture betray disabled people? What are some examples you can name?
- How does the author describe living unapologetically? How would you define this for yourself?
- The author says, “The reality of disability and joy means accepting that not every day is good but every day has openings for small pockets of joy.” What are the openings for small pockets of joy for you in your daily life?

Last But Not Least—Embracing Asexuality - Keshia Scott

- How did your peers affect how you thought about sex and pleasure?
- How does disability and sexuality intersect?
- How does the author come to peace with being asexual?

Imposter Syndrome and Parenting with a Disability - Jessica Slice

- What adaptations does the author make in order to parent?
- How do you think parenthood and ableism* connect? For the author? In society?
- What does the child do to let the author know they are needed as a parent? How do you think this will change over time?

How to Make a Paper Crane from Rage - Elsa Sjunneson

- As a disabled adult, how do you experience ableism*? What do you do with your rage?
- When talking about ableism, the author says, “Society paints my rage as a tantrum.” How does society treat your rage?
- How does the author talk about transforming their rage?

Selma Blair Became A Disabled Icon Overnight. Here's Why We Need More Stories Like Hers - Zipporah Arielle

- The author says, “The embarrassment around unfashionable mobility devices and the limited selection of stylish accessible clothing has long been a problem for many disabled folks.” Do you agree or disagree? Why?
- How does the author explain *internalized ableism*?
- Why is having disabled people visible on TV and in movies important?

PART THREE: DOING

Why My Novel is Dedicated to My Disabled Friend Maddy - A.H. Reaume

- How does the author explain, and talk about, *interdependence**?
- How do you care for other disabled people? How do they care for you?
- Why do we need the work of disabled writers?

The Antiabortion Bill You Aren’t Hearing About - Rebecca Cokley

- Why does the author say disabled people are at the center of the abortion debate?
- What are the contradictions the author describes within the anti-choice movement when it comes to disability? What about the contradictions within the pro-choice side?
- What are the issues for disabled people themselves, around abortion?

So. Not. Broken. - Alice Sheppard

- How does the author talk about their wheelchair as an extension of their body?
- What does the author share about how disability is connected to their development as an artist?
- Why does the author talk about learning how using their wheelchair on stage and in the world as different from learning how to move their wheelchair?

How a Blind Astronomer Found a Way To Hear the Stars - Wanda Díaz-Merced

- What kinds of adaptations have you made to participate in your passions and career?
- How did the author's adaptations to *seeing* stars help others and contribute to the development of their field?
- If the adaptations you've made were adopted by professionals in your field (work or school), how would that impact things?

Incontinence Is a Public Health Issue — And We Need to Talk About It - Mari Ramsawakh

- Would treating incontinence as a human rights issue have given the author a different experience in childhood? Why or why not?
- Why is incontinence a public health issue?
- What could incontinence products look like that are geared to young people?

Falling/Burning: Hannah Gadsby, Nanette, and Being A Bipolar Creator - Shoshana Kessock

- Why does the author say that they will forever thank Hannah Gadsby for telling people that artists don't have to suffer for their art?
- How does the author describe their journey with medication and their art?
- Where do you go for *checks and balances* - to seek advice, support or help?

Six Ways of Looking at Crip Time - Ellen Samuels

- How does the author define *crip time**?
- How does the author compare crip time with grief?
- Do you relate to any of the author's six ways of looking at crip time?

Lost Cause - Reyma McCoy McDeid

- How did being labeled as a "lost cause" affect the author?
- The author shares their story about doing a work exchange at a commune and how the matriarch decided a person the matriarch lived with was autistic and

medicated them. How do you feel about this? What was the author's perspective?

- How does the author use their own journey to respond to what others define as a "lost cause?"

On NYC's Paratransit, Fighting for Safety, Respect, and Human Dignity - Britney Wilson

- How does the author explain how paratransit works?
- The author says, "The concept of entitlement is familiar jargon in discussions of race and class, and it is just as widespread in the realm of disability. It's the idea that we are acting as if someone owes us something rather than merely asking to be treated with the respect and human dignity we deserve." How is this statement reflected in the chapter?
- Where do you seek support when you experience discrimination?

Gaining Power Through Communication Access - Lateef McLeod

- What kinds of technology do you use? How does it help you communicate? What are its limitations?
- Wong and McLeod discuss assistive technology which, when medicalized, oftentimes is extremely expensive and not designed by disabled people. If you use devices which are medicalized, can you imagine them combined with technology which readily exists, like phones and tablets? How would that change things for you?
- What are Ugly Laws?

PART FOUR: CONNECTING

The Fearless Benjamin Lay—Activist, Abolitionist, Dwarf Person - Eugene Grant

- Who is Benjamin Lay? Why is Lay historically important?
- "Lay is not just a role model; he is a *dwarf* role model." Why does the author make this distinction?

- Why is it important to include disability identity when we write about or discuss historical figures?

To Survive Climate Catastrophe, Look to Queer and Disabled Folks - Patty Berne as told to and edited by Vanessa Raditz

- How does our government and society respond to climate-related disasters? How do these responses affect those of us who live at the intersections?
- "... diversity is our best defense against the threats of climate change." Do you agree or disagree with the author's statement? Why?
- What are ways you think governments and communities could become better at meeting the needs of the earth and disabled, queer, trans, people of color?

Disability Solidarity: Completing the 'Vision for Black Lives - Harriet Tubman Collective

- How are Black disabled people impacted by state violence?
- How is white supremacy interrelated with ableism* and audism*?
- Why does intersectionality* help movements be successful? What does it mean to be in disability solidarity*?

Time's Up for Me, Too - Karolyn Gehrig

- When you hear about something traumatic happening to disabled people, how do you react? Do you feel a call to action or put it out of your mind?
- How did ableism* affect the author as they tried to prosecute for sexual assault?
- How does the author intertwine their aunt's experience with ableism while working at the sheltered workshop, with the ableism they experience?

Still Dreaming Wild Disability Justice Dreams at the End of the World - Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha

- In referencing Annie Elaine Segarra's T-shirt, *The Future Is Accessible*, the author asks audiences to, "stop, go inward, and imagine that future." What do you imagine?

- The author says, “As disabled people, we are often both hypervisible and invisible at the same time.” Do agree or disagree with this statement? Why?
- Who are your local disability or Deaf groups dreaming new ways of loving, fighting and organizing?

Love Means Never Having to Say ... Anything - Jamison Hill

- What are the easier parts of dating another person who is disabled/sick? What’s harder?
- How does the author discuss the ways that they and their partner care for each other?
- What are the different forms of communication expressed by the author and their partner?

On the Ancestral Plane: Crip Hand Me Downs and the Legacy of Our Movements - Stacey Milbern

- How does the author describe crip ancestors?
- What support do we draw from our ancestors, crip or otherwise?
- Who are your cultural ancestors? What gifts do they pass down to you?

The Beauty of Spaces Created For and By Disabled People - s.e. smith

- What about the dance performance the author described makes it an example of crip space* for the performers and audience?
- Why do we need crip spaces?
- “Members of many marginalized groups have this shared experiential touchstone, this sense of unexpected and vivid belonging and an ardent desire to be able to pass this experience along.” Have you had this experience? If so, how have you passed it along?

GLOSSARY

Ableism, 2 definitions:

ABLEISM a·ble·ism \ 'ābə-,li-zəm \ noun A system that places value on people's bodies and minds based on societally constructed ideas of normalcy, intelligence, excellence and productivity. These constructed ideas are deeply rooted in anti-Blackness, eugenics, colonialism and capitalism. This form of systemic oppression leads to people and society determining who is valuable and worthy based on a person's appearance and/or their ability to satisfactorily [re]produce, excel and "behave." You do not have to be disabled to experience ableism.

(Source: A working definition by Talila "TL" Lewis in conversation with Disabled Black and other negatively racialized folk, especially Dustin Gibson; updated January 2020. <https://www.talilalewis.com/blog/ableism-2020-an-updated-definition>)

Ableism - A pervasive system of discrimination and exclusion that oppresses people with disabilities. Ableism operates on an individual, cultural, and societal level. Deeply held beliefs about productivity, attractiveness, and the value of human life, combined with a basic fear of vulnerability, result in an environment that is hostile to people whose abilities fall outside the scope of what is defined as normal or socially acceptable.

(Source: Partially adapted by Melinda Haus and AndreAs Neumann Mascis and partially adapted by unknown.)

Audism, 2 definitions:

Audism - Audism is a social violence of practicing the dehumanization of Deaf people and DeafBlind people. Audism is something everyone is capable of practicing. When we practice audism, we are part of the larger [oppressive or supremacist] system that continues to oppress with or without power and privilege. We are not working towards to become part of the solutions together due to a lack of understanding of intercultural & intergenerational accountability.

There are different types of how audism is being practiced on different levels. There are currently four types of audism:

1. Individual Audism: a practice of audiocentric attitudes and presumptions that are used to justify hegemonic privilege or social colonialism and monocultural [phonocentric] supremacy.
2. Institutional Audism: a practice of structural exploitation of Deaf people and of their cultural-linguistic existence or ancestry on the systemic level.
3. Metaphysical Audism: a phonocentric attitude believing that to be fully human is to be able to speak English well (in the United States). Phonocentrism is based on a biased

belief system preferring spoken languages over American Sign Language (ASL) or sign languages.

4. Laissez-Faire Audism: a practice of acknowledging the existence of Deaf individuals and Deaf culture while denying their cultural autonomy through social and systemic heteronomy.

These types of audism can be expressed on different levels. They can be expressed overtly, covertly and aversively. Overt audism can be expressed outwardly in plain view in practicing discrimination against Deaf/DeafBlind people or exercising superiority over Deaf/DeafBlind people. Covert audism can be difficult to identify, however, not impossible to identify and it can be practiced in disguise. Aversive audism is a practice of socially excluding Deaf/DeafBlind people from social equity opportunities to thrive on the community level.

(Source: By Ashanti Monts-Tréviska and Jessica Leung, Cascadia Deaf Nation Stewarding Leaders.

<https://www.cascadiadeafnation.co/colourful-liberation-cafe/audiocentricprivilege>)

What is Audism? Video (captioned) from “Being Her” by Hermon and Heroda

<https://www.facebook.com/beinghermonheroda/videos/1149701858712337>

Colonialism “We can begin by defining settler-colonialism as it relates specifically to Indigenous peoples of North America. The goal of settler-colonization is the removal and erasure of Indigenous peoples in order to take the land for use by settlers in perpetuity. According to Laura Hurwitz and Shawn Borque’s “Settler Colonialism Primer,”

“This means that settler colonialism is not just a vicious thing of the past, such as the gold rush, but exists as long as settlers are living on appropriated land and thus exists today.”

Historically, the settler-colonial agenda involved committing genocide by murdering Indigenous peoples (see Manifest Destiny, the Wounded Knee Massacre of 1890 and the Wounded Knee siege of 1970, the Sand Creek Massacre, King Philip’s War and countless other conflicts). That agenda also meant stealing land through treaties that were later broken or ignored (see the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie and the history of the Lakota and the unceded Black Hills). Students should understand that the United States couldn’t exist without its settler-colonial foundation.”

Source: <https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/what-is-settlercolonialism>)

Crip Space s.e. smith discusses crip space in detail in their essay, *The Beauty of Spaces Created for and by Disabled People*. The following text from their essay is meant to provide a reference and is not a formal definition.

“...crip space, a communal belonging, a deep *rightness* that comes from not having to explain or justify your experience. They are resting points, even as they can be energizing and exhilarating.”

“Crip space is unique, a place where disability is celebrated and embraced – something radical and taboo in many parts of the world and sometimes even for people in those spaces.”

Crip Time Ellen Samuels writes in detail about crip time in their essay, *Six Ways of Looking at Crip Time*. The following text from their essay is meant to provide a reference and is not a formal definition.

“I moved from someone who kept *getting* sick, over and over, to someone who *was* sick all the time, whose inner clock was attuned to my own physical state rather than the external routines of a society ordered around bodies that were not like mine.”

“Alison Kafer, author of *feminist, queer, Crip*, says that ‘rather than bend disabled bodies and minds to meet the clock, Crip time bends the clock to meet disabled bodies and minds.’”

Dignity of Risk Dignity of risk is the idea that self-determination and the right to take reasonable risks are essential for dignity and self esteem and so should not be impeded by excessively-cautious caregivers, concerned about their duty of care.

(Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dignity_of_risk)

Eugenics - “Drawn from Darwin’s ideas, eugenics upheld that biological groups could be strengthened (cleansed) by eliminating the ‘unfit’ through genetic and hereditary screening. Sickness, indigence, dependence, immorality, and race were factors in the determination of fitness.”

(Source: Ed. Rosenthal, Keith. [*Capitalism and Disability: Selected Writing by Marta Russell*](#). Haymarket Books. Chicago, IL. © 2019. Pg. 154)

Interdependence “...what I’ve learned about interdependence from [the] disability community is that everyone both gives and receives help. This may or may not be reciprocal (happen between the same two people). A friend without a car may bring snacks to share when someone gives them a ride to a meeting, or later, give vegetables they grew to those around at the time.

Interdependence lets me be more honest about the skills I have as well as the areas where I need help. It creates an expectation in groups where we are practicing interdependence that all of us have something to offer and that we all need support. Done well, interdependence...creates a more open environment where we can be honest about who we are, our needs and gifts.”

(Source: Ortiz, Naomi. [*Sustaining Spirit: Self-Care for Social Justice*](#). Reclamation Press. Berkeley, CA © 2018 pg. 184)

Intersectionality was coined in 1989 by professor Kimberlé Crenshaw to describe how race, class, gender, and other individual characteristics “intersect” with one another and overlap. In her 1991 article *Mapping the Margins*, she explained how people who are “both women and people of color” are marginalized by “discourses that are shaped to respond to one or the other,” rather than both.

Video (captioned): Crenshaw explains what intersectionality means. Kimberlé Crenshaw: What is Intersectionality?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ViDtnfQ9FHc>

Social Model – Liz Moore in their essay, *I'm Tired of Chasing a Cure*, refers to the social model of disability. This definition of the social model was adapted by National Kids As Self Advocates based on a version by Carol Gill at the Chicago Institute of Disability Research.

1. Disability is only a difference, like gender or race.
2. Being disabled is neither good nor bad, it's just part of who you are.
3. Problems come from the disabled person trying to function in an inaccessible society.
4. What will make the problems and issues that people with disabilities have better is a change in society (like making things accessible for everyone).
5. That change can come from the person with a disability, an advocate, or anyone who wants people with disabilities to be included equally in society.

Solidarity – “Solidarity is a deep and consistent commitment [*sic*] to the collective based on an active respect for difference. Rather than ‘tolerance’ which involves passively allowing for difference, solidarity means actively seeking and incorporating difference in meaningful ways. Solidarity within activist circles not only fosters collaboration between movements but also helps deconstruct oppression, by recognizing that everyone experiences it differently. Solidarity is the only way to resist oppression in all its forms.”

(Source: <https://rabble.ca/toolkit/guide/solidarity-activism>)

Sterilization - Surgery to make a person or animal unable to produce offspring.

(Source: Dictionary.com)

Thanks to Alice Wong for the invitation and commission to create this discussion guide as well as for the edits and comments. It was such a privilege! Additionally, I'd like to thank Rachel Scoggins for taking such time and care to provide thoughtful feedback on this guide.

About Naomi Ortiz



[Image description: Light-skinned Mestiza smiling and looking to the side with blue bandana covering their head, hoop earrings and a purple shirt. The backdrop is cacti and desert trees.]

Naomi Ortiz is a writer, poet, visual artist, facilitator, and the author of *Sustaining Spirit: Self-Care for Social Justice* (Reclamation Press), a book about how to balance activism with self-care.

Ortiz is a nationally known writer, speaker and trainer on self-care, disability justice, and intersectional organizing within movements. Currently she works with individuals and groups delving into the substance of self-care. Ortiz is passionate about organizing with the Southern Arizona Community Care Collective/Colectivo de Bienestar Comunitario and focusing on her creative projects exploring disability justice, intersectionality and connection to place.

Numerous publications have featured Ortiz's writing and poetry. She has contributed to anthologies such as *Resistance and Hope: Essays by Disabled People* (Ed. Wong) and has performed her poetry at events such as the Disability Pride Parade. Her artwork has been featured in shows in Arizona, Massachusetts, and appears on the cover of *Sustaining Spirit*. Ortiz is a proud disabled mestiza, living in the U.S./Mexico borderlands.

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