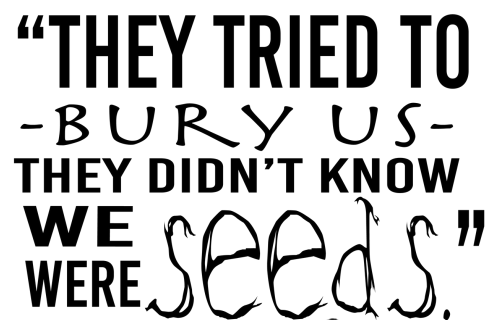
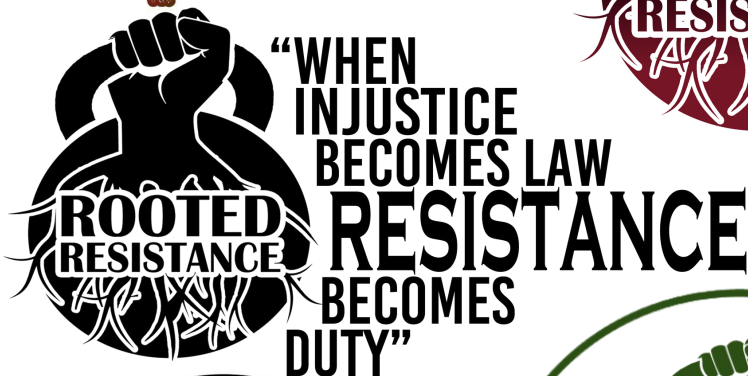


ROOTED RESISTANCE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER | SPRING 2020



MARCH 22ND IS ROOTED RESISTANCE'S 4TH BIRTHDAY

Four years ago today, on March 22, 2016, I made a Facebook post sharing the joy that I was finding in my body through physical activity and strength training. I felt gratitude towards the powerlifting community and relationships that I was forming with local queer and trans artists in the Greater Tampa Bay Area. My experiences as a community organizer and former student-athlete, who was learning how to continue lifelong training, led me to create Rooted Resistance. Below is a collage of how the Rooted Resistance message has changed and grown stronger. Through your care and support we are building and extending this movement across the US South.





QUEER + TRANS SOUTH RISING #WEGOTOURBACKS

At Rooted Resistance, we organize for our own survival. That means we have an intensive responsibility to one another in this moment. We are currently experiencing a global pandemic. COVID-19 is shining a spotlight on the violent operations and infrastructures of capitalism. The reality is that many of us have been suffering and are overwhelmed for a long time. COVID-19 did not create inequity it is exasperating; it and further making visible the entanglements of power and oppression in our world.

OUR CENTERING MANTRA:

STAY ROOTED

DAY 1:

"LIFE HAS NO MEANING. EACH OF US HAS MEANING AND WE BRING TO IT LIFE. IT IS A WASTE OF TIME TO BE ASKING THE QUESTION WHEN YOU ARE THE ANSWER." - JOSEPH CAMPBELL

14-DAYS OF CENTERING OUR STAY ROOTED MANTRA

In collaboration with The Halfway Point, we started 14-Days of centering our "Stay Rooted" mantra to offer queer and trans folx a space to intentionally share what they are doing to stay rooted. This virtual engagement is happening from March 19- April 1st. Our goal is to be able to offer a virtual & in-person Queer Craft Night on April 1st via livestream. If you're down to try out this with us, we will be sharing stories, stream free DIY craft tutorials and connecting about our days. Find out more at The Halfway Point; <https://www.halfwaypointtlh.com/>.



OUR BODIES ARE POWERFUL: FSUnifed DAY

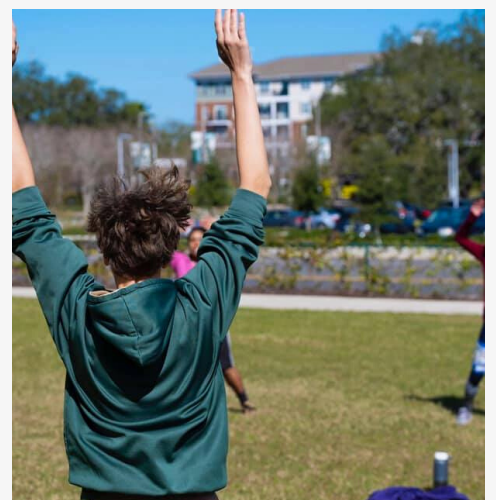
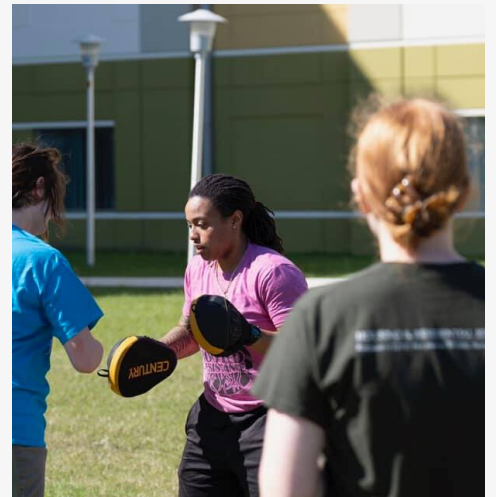
At Rooted Resistance we believe that sport and physical activity need to be accessible to everyone, because everyone should be able to feel powerful and capable in their own bodies. Last month we led a dynamic warmup for athletes at the Special Olympics Unified Partners of Florida State University United flag football tournament. We are grateful to Mel Dammel for the invitation to participate.





2ND ANNUAL COLLABORATION WITH USF

Our annual 2-Day Rooted Resistance Workshop and RootCamp with the University of South Florida's Department of Housing and Residence Education was in late February. We appreciate the opportunity to dialogue and dream up affirming exercise spaces and institutional practices by and for queer and trans students living in the Stonewall Suites Living Learning Community.





ROOTED RESISTANCE IS MORE THAN FITNESS AND ALWAYS HAS BEEN

In the last issue we shared "Decolonization is not a metaphor" by Tuck & Yang (2012). This piece calls us to reckon with decolonization not as a buzzword that gets thrown around but as an ongoing practice of indigenous sovereignty and land reclamation. We acknowledge the holistic spiritual presence of the earth and the ancestral knowledges of those who have come before us. We understand what it means for queer and trans people to be visible outside and to be moving our active bodies as an act of refusal on unceded indigenous land.

BUILDING BEYOND ROOTCAMPS

Starting in 2020 we have been working together to document who we are and where we want to go. Here are a few of the quarterly events through which we are practicing new ways of healing through our own bodies with each other in the outdoors.

- Rooted Family Potluck
- Somatic Healing Retreat
- Camping in Leon or Wakulla County
- "Sibling City" rural Movement, Arts & Culture Festival
- Horticulture project with Griffin Heights Farmers
- Engaging in local and national public policy

QUOTE OF THE QUARTER

"Where did we ever get the strange idea that nature-- as opposed to culture--is ahistorical and timeless? We are far too impressed by our own cleverness and self-consciousness...we need to stop telling ourselves the same old anthropocentric bedtime stories."

-Steve Shaviro (1997)

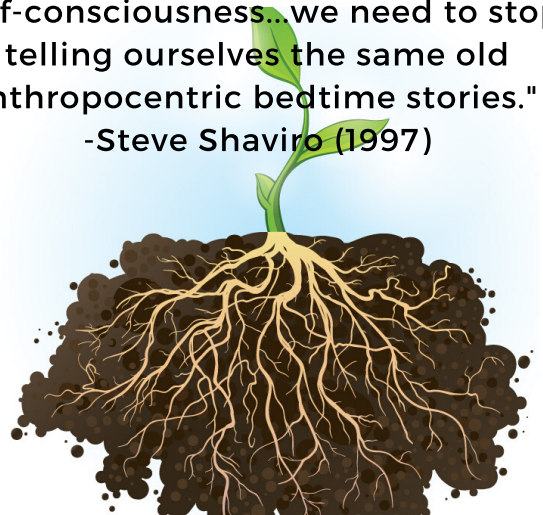




Image with rainbow colors that reads "Queer and Trans Yoga"

A MESSAGE FROM TRACEY

Daily life often requires vigilance and advocacy to be recognized as our authentic selves. This class is intended to be a chance to rest the constant-advocate part of the brain, and to reconnect with breathing and moving in the present moment.

My approach to teaching is to offer a buffet of options for students to feel comfortable choosing what they'd like throughout the session. The class is slow paced and usually focuses on stretching. I do not perform hands-on assists or adjustments, but blocks, straps, blankets, and foam pads are all available for use. The class is donation-driven, but not donation dependent- everyone is encouraged to come regardless of funds.

Folks usually hang around to chat before or after, but there is never a formal naming/pronoun sharing time. If you have more questions please feel free to email Tracey at fletcherL@yahoo.com or click the photo header at the top of this page to join the Facebook group Queer/Trans Yoga Tallahassee.



MIND, BODY AND BRUNCH #MBB

The Project No Labels #MBB and Rooted Resistance series in the Greater Tampa Bay Area offers the LGBTQ+ community a range of health, wellness and practical skill-based workshops. Sam O. will partner with Dr. Sara Barnard Flory, Associate Professor of Kinesiology at the University of South Florida in facilitating "Movement Matters" the second collaborative event. This event was scheduled for 3/15 but will be rescheduled.



READ OF THE QUARTER

an evocation of Homer. He calls our attention back to the dawn of Western civilization and to its earliest extant literature. Some three thousand years have elapsed, Leopold reminds us, since the days when Odysseus's black-prowed galleys clove the wine-dark seas, headed for beautiful Ithaca, headed home. Must we not do our utmost to sustain that civilization, per se, so that it can endure and evolve for at least another three thousand years? Isn't that an object to which we owe allegiance? Isn't that a living entity that we know and love? Isn't it in our hearts to work to preserve it?

To meet the challenge of global climate change, philosophers need to shift the subjects of ethics from Jack and Jill to entities that themselves exist at proportionate temporal and spatial scales: to species—including but not limited to *Homo sapiens*—not specimens; to the planet's congeries of biotic communities and ecosystems that species compose and in which they function; and to the civilization that is the signal achievement of our own species. And they need to shift the moral sentiments into a more prominent place alongside reason in their moral psychology. Then we might have a coherent, practicable, and inspiring ethics with which cheerfully to confront the moral challenge of global climate change.

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Touching the Earth

bell hooks

I wish to live because life has within it that which is good, that which is beautiful, and that which is love. Therefore, since I have known all these things, I have found them to be reason enough and—I wish to live. Moreover, because this is so, I wish others to live for generations and generations and generations and generations.

LORRAINE HANSBERRY,
To Be Young, Gifted, and Black

When we love the Earth, we are able to love ourselves more fully. I believe this. The ancestors taught me it was so. As a child I loved playing in dirt, in that rich Kentucky soil, that was a source of life. Before I understood anything about the pain and exploitation of the southern system of sharecropping, I understood that grown-up black folks loved the land. I could stand with my grandfather Daddy Jerry and look out at a field of growing vegetables, tomatoes, corn, collards, and know that this was his handiwork. I could see the look of pride on his face as I expressed wonder and awe at the magic of growing things. I knew that my grandmother Baba's backyard garden would

BELL HOOKS is an author, feminist, and social activist. She has been a professor at the University of Southern California, Oberlin College, Yale University, and the City College of New York. Her writing focuses on the interconnectivity of race, class, and gender. She has published over thirty books, including *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope* (2003) and *Outlaw Culture: Resisting Representations* (2006).

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yield beans, sweet potatoes, cabbage, and yellow squash, that she too would walk with pride among the rows and rows of growing vegetables showing us what the Earth will give when tended lovingly. From the moment of their first meeting, Native American and African people shared with one another a respect for the life-giving forces of nature, of the Earth. African settlers in Florida taught the Creek Nation runaways, the Seminoles, methods for rice cultivation. Native peoples taught recently arrived black folks all about the many uses of corn. (The hotwater cornbread we grew up eating came to our black southern diet from the world of the Indian.) Sharing the reverence for the Earth, black and red people helped one another remember that, despite the white man's ways, the land belonged to everyone. Listen to these words attributed to Chief Seattle in 1854:

How can you buy or sell the sky, the warmth of the land? The idea is strange to us. If we do not own the freshness of the air and the sparkle of the water, how can you buy them? Every part of this Earth is sacred to my people. Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every clearing and humming insect is holy in the memory and experience of my people. . . . We are part of the Earth and it is part of us. The perfumed flowers are our sisters; the deer, the horse, the great eagle, these are our brothers. The rocky crests, the juices in the meadows, the body heat of the pony, and man—all belong to the same family.

The sense of union and harmony with nature expressed here is echoed in testimony by black people who found that even though life in the new world was "harsh, harsh," in relationship to the Earth one could be at peace. In her oral autobiography, granny midwife Onnie Lee Logan, who lived all her life in Alabama, talks about the richness of farm life—growing vegetables, raising chickens, and smoking meat. She reports:

We lived a happy, comfortable life. . . . I never knew what it was like to be poor. I didn't know nothing else but the farm as it was happy and we was happy. . . . We couldn't do anything else but be happy. We accept the days as they come and as they were. Day by day until you

didn't think nothing about it. We just went along. We had what it takes to make a good livin and go about it.

Living in modern society, without a sense of history, it has been easy for folks to forget that black people were first and foremost a people of the land, farmers. It is easy for folks to forget that at the first part of the twentieth century, the vast majority of black folks in the United States lived in the agrarian South.

Living close to nature, black folks were able to cultivate a spirit of wonder and reverence for life. Growing food to sustain life and flowers to please the soul, they were able to make a connection with the Earth that was ongoing and life-affirming. They were witnesses to beauty. In Wendell Berry's important discussion of the relationship between agriculture and human spiritual well-being, *The Unsettling of America*, he reminds us that working the land provides a location where folks can experience a sense of personal power and well-being: "We are working well when we use ourselves as the fellow creature of the plants, animals, material, and other people we are working with. Such work is unifying, healing. It brings us home from pride and despair, and places us responsibly within the human estate. It defines us as we are; not too good to work without our bodies, but too good to work poorly or joylessly or selfishly or alone."

There has been little or no work done on the psychological impact of the "great migration" of black people from the agrarian South to the industrialized North. Toni Morrison's novel *The Blue Eye* attempts to fictively document the way moving from the agrarian South to the industrialized North wounded the psyches of black folk. Estranged from a natural world, where there was time for silence and contemplation, one of the "displaced" black folks in Morrison's novel, Miss Pauline, loses her capacity to experience the sensual world and her when she leaves southern soil to live in a modern city. . . . South is inscribed in her mind with a world of sensual beauty most deeply expressed in the world of nature. Indeed, when she falls in love for the first time she can name that experience only by evoking images from nature, from an agrarian world and

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With gratitude we thank you for your continued support.

#STAYROOTED

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