

Getting Free of the Cage Within

SCRIPT

Pancho Argüelles Paz y Puente - Rio Castañeda
Project: Abolition, Radical Healing and Popular Education
Pancho Argüelles - CJE 2023

1st segment - Our Delusional “Democracy” - The historical context of our present

Migration has always been essential for life on earth. Migration for humans, however, has been criminalized across the world through history and particularly over the past decades in the United States.

Militarized borders and repressive enforcement policies direct people of all ages towards dangerous migrant routes where they suffer and perish due to extreme environmental conditions and violence. For most people - migration is the only choice for survival.

"The US has capitalized on bondage since the perpetration of Native American genocide, profiting off the enslavement of African people and their descendants and by exploiting migrant workers over time. This has morphed into the prison industrial complex we know today.

The US makes up only 4.25% of the population worldwide but houses 25% of the world's prisoners - policies designed to make migration a crime have given rise to multibillion dollar industries profiting off mass incarceration, detention centers, trafficking, bonds, and surveillance.

Our “Delusional Democracy” allows these industries to operate in a vicious circle of social control where they eventually pay for the campaigns of politicians who make laws, so criminalization policies can keep evolving, increasing profits.

Surviving or getting released from Militarized borders, cages or prisons has little to do with justice. These systems find ways to legalize corruption while criminalizing humanity. It is personal strength, family and community solidarity that make it possible for detainees to get out. But state surveillance, trauma, and other forms of social control can still follow you.



2nd Segment - The Cage Within: Unhealed Trauma and the Colonial Gaze

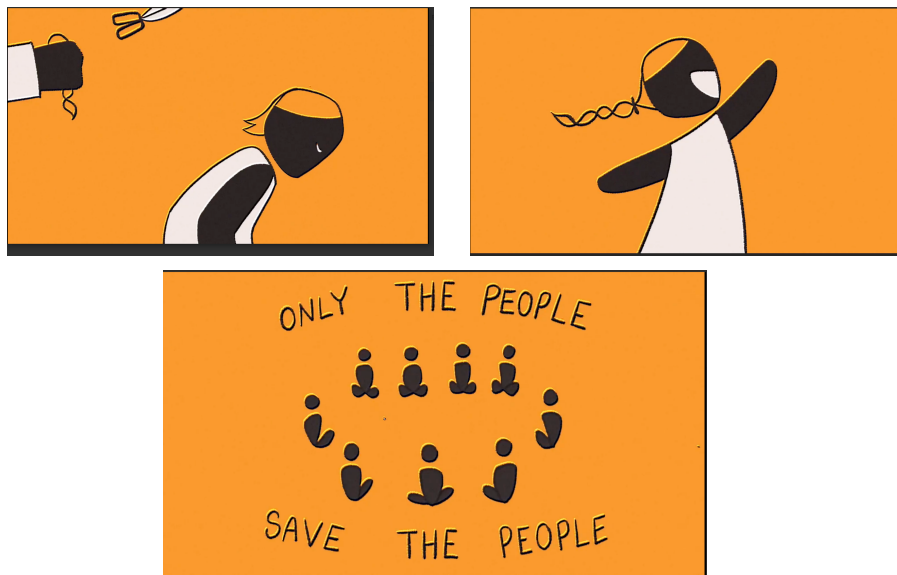
Unhealed trauma becomes a cage inside us, infecting our mind, body and souls, distorting how we see ourselves as human beings.

In order to abolish this immoral system and free ourselves of these physical and psychological cages, we need to better understand the violent history of the Dehumanizing Colonial Gaze and Systems and reflect (Patriarchal, White Supremacist, Heteronormative, Ableist, Capitalist), on how they influence this cage we carry. Cage built of fear, shame, guilt, anger, anxiety and of course, pain.

The Colonial gaze and its systems can follow us through our lives, no matter the country, so it is important we learn how to identify them. The gaze perpetuates itself through law, institutions, history books, and sometimes by ourselves and the people who love us unconditionally.

Most so-called “immigrants” currently detained and surveilled by ICE detention centers are descendants of the indigenous people of this continent. We must celebrate how our survival is the victory of our ancestors but also accept that we are carriers of intergenerational trauma and are at risk of repeating the cycle.

So how do we rid ourselves of this cage we carry? Can we heal and transcend what happened to us? Where are those who are free of these cages? What is the first step? We start by acknowledging and by seeing each other as one collective. **Solo el pueblo salva al Pueblo**



3rd Segment: Popular Education and the Healing Power of Community

Popular education is a methodology and education philosophy. It creates a space where we can learn from one another through dialogue, and by sharing our personal experiences with concrete historical context.

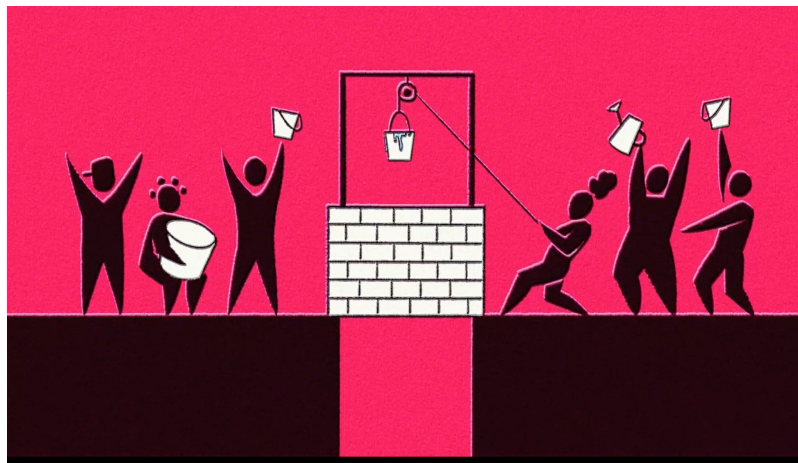
A space built on co-responsibility where all are considered teachers and learners - where we recognize that we are the experts of our own experiences!

Despair is born out of isolation, and alienation is one of the main outcomes of racialized capitalism. It's not just the separation from our humanity...but the caging of it. Our personal liberation is intertwined with collective liberation.

Healing is reclaiming power, control, and trust over ourselves, over our bodies and words; as well as thoughts, silences, actions, relationships and stories.

The long haul requires that we embrace with courage and joy the complex messiness of our everyday struggle. The need for ideological purity, or fear of not being radical enough, can make our idea of the revolution stop us from doing things that are revolutionary. Like listening with compassion and respect, and practicing a fierce love for ourselves and each other.

To navigate the crises our world faces, we must remember that through millennia of existence, and centuries of resistance, our ancestors have shown us that community is what allows us to survive, heal and thrive. Popular education is a powerful methodology that strengthens our movements and organizations by building community.



Closing: Radical Healing and Radical Hope

When we come together to open a space for dignity, participation and trust, we open a portal to a different kind of timeline. We are reminding ourselves, our community and the whole system that “another world is possible”. Radical healing requires radical hope - this is rooted in collective memory and practice.

Popular education is a long term process of accompaniment in a shared journey of survival, resistance and liberation. Respectful listening and dialogue opens the door to acknowledgment, recognition and collective action. Working collectively for our liberation can be a radical healing experience that goes well beyond the limits of individual self-care.

Being together in dignity and solidarity reminds us we are not alone and teaches our hearts how to release fear, anger and shame. By confronting the oppression and alienation we face daily, and creating our own alternatives we build a different kind of power. and in the process free ourselves and become the people our communities need us to be.

A good journey finishes with some good questions:

Healing is recovering (re-claiming) power, control and trust over ourselves, over our bodies and words; as well as our thoughts, silences, actions, relations and stories.

Let's take a moment to slow down and ask with courage and curiosity:

Today, what do you need to heal from?

What everyday practices- habits help you heal?

What are some obstacles to healing and how did you get through them in the past?

Who is your community? ¿How does your community help you heal?

What do we need to do or stop doing to create a community where we all feel safer and can heal as individuals, families, organizations and movements?

What can you commit to do every day to experience the joy of liberation and belonging?

