UNSETTLING TEACH-IN

# GHOSTLY MATTERS OF THE HEART

## Collective Grief and the Decolonial Struggle

<The embodied grief of the young generation>

A Toolkit for Navigating Collective, Political and Historical Grief



proyek dekolonial

**Context of the Document**

On Sunday, March 24, 2024, Milk Tea Alliance Indonesia and Perkumpulan Pamflet Generasi organized group activities for their Zine Club: Hari Ini Kita Sedih Dulu (Zine Club: Today We're Sad First).
ProyekDekolonial also collaborated with these activities.

This document serves as material for archives documentation, working methods, and the exploration of issues/topics within a framework of decolonization and anti-colonial praxis. It is intended as an introductory toolkit for young people.

At ProyekDekolonial, this pedagogical material is part of the praxis of the Unsettling Teach-in.

**Disclaimer**

This material is a work in progress and is meant to evolve over time. The current ideas reflect the voices of the contributors and reviewers, Frendy Kurniawan and Kinanti Munggareni, from ProyekDekolonial.

We are always seeking to incorporate more voices from people with knowledge and experience on this topic. If this applies to you, please contact us at proyekdekolonial@proton.me.

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## Introduction

As young people, we inherit a world fraught with complex challenges, deep-rooted injustices, and the lingering ghosts of colonialism. This toolkit invites you to embark on a journey of collective praxis and decolonial thinking to confront these daunting realities.

At the heart of this journey lies the exploration of 'collective grief' — the shared experience of loss and trauma that has profoundly shaped the lives of marginalized communities. This concept, described by Avery Gordon as 'social haunting,' transcends individual experience and reflects a haunting presence rooted in systemic oppression and our colonial past.



Collective grief is not merely the sum of personal tragedies, but a manifestation of the collective trauma inflicted upon marginalized communities over generations. It is the pain of displacement, the anguish of cultural erasure, and the sorrow of lives lost to violence and injustice.

Through this toolkit, we invite you to join us on a journey of exploration and collective healing. By delving into the depths of our communal sorrow, we can cultivate the resilience and the radical imagination necessary to dismantle oppressive structures and build a more equitable world.

The road ahead may be arduous, but it is one paved with the potential for profound personal and societal transformation. So let us walk this path together, guided by the ghostly matters of the heart and the unwavering commitment to a future where all lives are truly grievable.

# PART 1:
# The Western Way of Seeing Grief

A lot of the popular ideas about grief and loss come from Western, or European and North American, thinkers. These Western perspectives tend to focus a lot on the individual experience – how one person feels and copes when they lose someone or something important.

The problem is, these Western ideas about grief don't always capture the full picture, especially for people from non-Western cultures and communities. They see grief as something that happens mostly inside one person's mind and heart, without recognizing how grief can be a shared, communal experience.

**Grief as a Shared Experience**



Some scholars have introduced the idea of "social mourning" to challenge this individualistic view of grief. They recognize that grief can be a collective process – something that a whole group or community goes through together.

For example, after a big tragedy, you often see people coming together to grieve as a community, not just as separate individuals. The grief is shared and experienced together, as a group. This is very different from the Western idea of grief as a private, personal matter.

# Decolonizing Grief

Decolonial thinkers and activists have pushed us to look at grief in an even deeper way. They argue that the dominant Western ideas about grief are actually shaped by the history of colonialism and the power structures that have marginalized certain communities.

From this decolonial perspective, grief isn't just about individual feelings – it's also about the collective trauma and injustices that marginalized groups have faced over generations. Things like the pain of displacement, cultural erasure, and lives lost to violence are all part of the collective grief experienced by these communities.



By challenging the Western frameworks and centering the diverse ways that different cultures understand and express grief, decolonial approaches open up new possibilities for healing, resistance, and social change. Grief can become a powerful force for transformation, rather than just a burden to be borne alone.



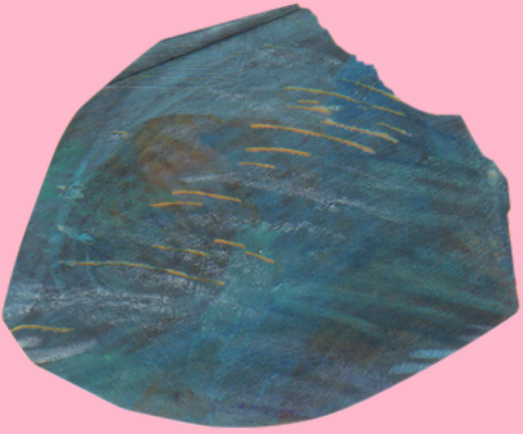
# PART 2:

# Decolonizing Grief: Southeast Asian Perspectives

The experience of loss and the expression of grief are deeply rooted in the cultural and linguistic contexts of Southeast Asia, challenging the universality of Western-centric concepts like 'bereavement' and 'grief.' In this region, the terms used to describe these profound human experiences often defy direct translation, revealing the rich diversity of how different communities navigate the complexities of mourning and healing.

For example, in Indonesia, the term 'dukacita' in the Indonesian language encompasses a broader range of emotions and social obligations than the English word 'grief.' The Javanese concept of 'pasrah' reflects a profound acceptance and surrender to the will of God or fate in the face of loss.

In the Philippines, the indigenous Lumad communities of Mindanao have a unique understanding of grief and mourning. The Tagalog people use the term 'kasubo' to describe a deep sense of sorrow and longing, but this emotion is often expressed through communal rituals and the sharing of stories rather than individual displays of grief.



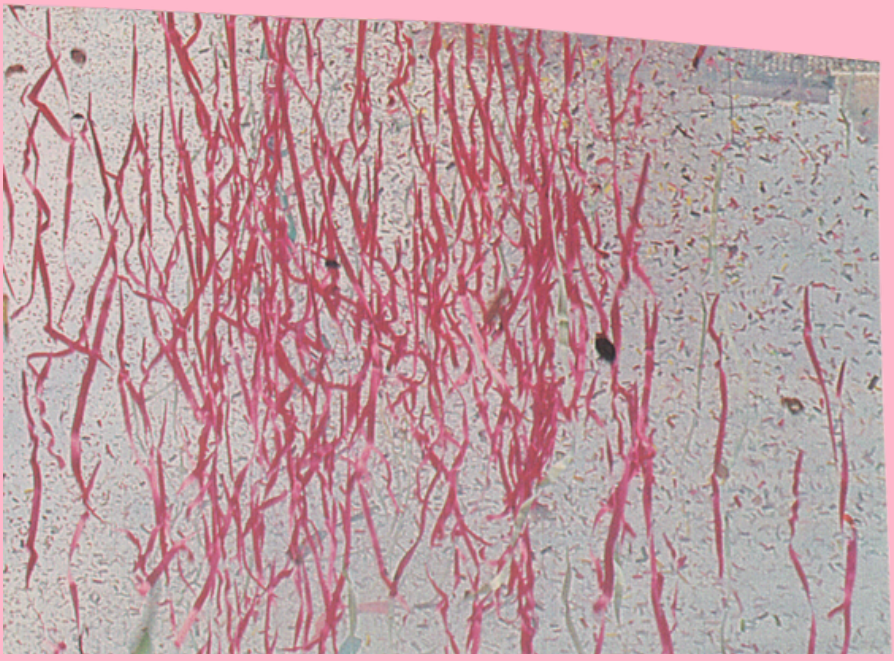
## Collective Grief in the Context of Authoritarianism and Human Rights Abuses

The contemporary political landscape in Southeast Asia has had a profound impact on the collective grief experiences of various communities, particularly those living under authoritarian regimes or facing human rights abuses.

In Myanmar, the military junta's violent crackdown on pro-democracy protests and the ongoing human rights violations against ethnic minorities, such as the Rohingya, have led to immense collective grief and trauma. The Rohingya people, who have faced genocide, mass displacement, and the loss of loved ones, have experienced a profound and collective sense of grief that transcends individual experiences.

In Indonesia, the ongoing human rights abuses and political repression faced by the Papuan people have led to a profound and collective sense of grief. The concept of 'Memoria Passionis,' which captures the shared memory and experience of suffering and trauma, resonates deeply with the Papuan community as they grapple with the legacy of colonialism, the displacement of their communities, and the continued marginalization of their cultural and political aspirations.

Decolonization efforts in Southeast Asia must grapple with these complex and challenging situations, where collective grief is inextricably linked to the struggle for human rights, democracy, and the recognition of marginalized communities. By acknowledging and addressing the unique grief experiences of these communities, we can work towards more inclusive and equitable approaches to supporting collective healing and resilience in the face of oppression and injustice.






So, common definitions in western science ...

## COLLECTIVE GRIEF OCCURS WHEN A COMMUNITY COLLECTIVELY EXPERIENCES AN EXTREME CHANGE OR LOSS.

(Eisenbruch M. (1984) points out that Western psychiatry has conventionally considered the individual to be at risk, but that attention could usefully be shifted from individuals to an entire uprooted people.)

If we want an ALT path for the definition ...

'DECOLONIAL COLLECTIVE GRIEF IS THE COMMUNAL, RELATIONALLY-EMBEDDED PROCESS OF MOURNING AND HEALING, ROOTED IN MARGINALIZED EXPERIENCES. IT HOLDS A TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL TO CHALLENGE DOMINANT NARRATIVES AND WORK TOWARDS JUSTICE. BY CENTERING SILENCED VOICES AND WAYS OF KNOWING, THIS APPROACH OFFERS A FRAMEWORK FOR EMPOWERMENT AND COLLECTIVE ACTION'

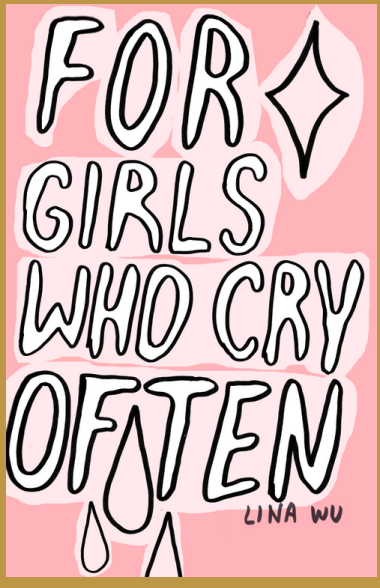
# PART 3:

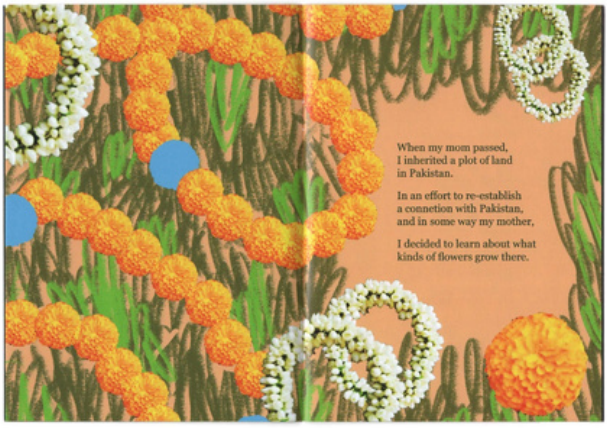
# A List of Zine Art, Rejecting Single Narratives

### Centering Marginalized Voices and Experiences

This rich collection of zine art provides a valuable source of inspiration for developing alternative workshops and praxis-oriented approaches to exploring collective grief from a decolonial standpoint. These zines collectively demonstrate the need to embrace diverse definitions and expressions of collective grief, rather than adhering to a single, dominant narrative.

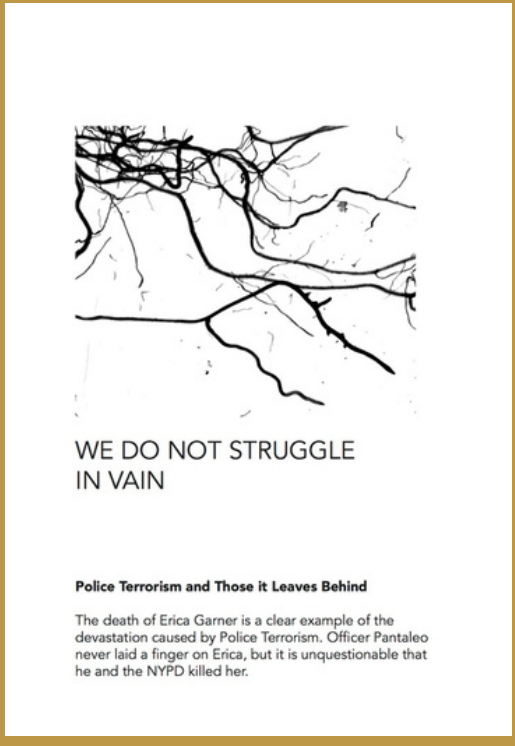
Zines like 'For Girls Who Cry Often' by Lina Wu and 'Flowers of Pakistan' amplify the personal narratives and creative expressions of women, female-presenting individuals, and those from marginalized communities. This aligns with the decolonial approach of centering silenced voices and ways of knowing, as explored by scholars like bell hooks in 'Teaching to Transgress.'






## Connecting Grief to Larger Socio-Political Contexts

Zines like 'WE DO NOT STRUGGLE IN VAIN' by Daniel Mokano and the 'Texte zur Kunst' issue on mourning situate grief within the broader contexts of systemic oppression, violence, and the struggle for justice. This reflects the decolonial approach of contextualizing grief within histories of marginalization, as discussed by Judith Butler in 'Precarious Life.'



## Promoting Healing, Resilience, and Collective Care

Several of the zines, such as 'A Survey of Joyful Sensations' by Denise Shanté Brown and 'Reconnect with your Habit, Habitat and Critters' by Taeyoon Choi, offer a more holistic and community-oriented approach to grief, emphasizing the potential for healing, resilience, and collective care. This aligns with the work of scholars like Ann Cvetkovich, who explores the political dimensions of grief and trauma in 'Depression: A Public Feeling.'

This diverse collection of zine art collectively rejects the notion of a single, dominant narrative around grief and loss. By centering marginalized voices, connecting grief to larger socio-political contexts, and promoting healing and collective care, these zines align with the decolonial principles of this toolkit.

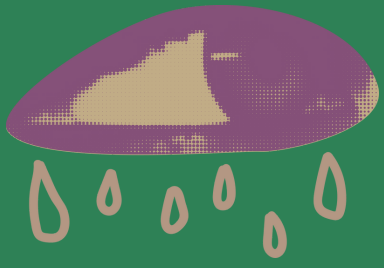



This diverse collection of zine art collectively rejects the notion of a single, dominant narrative around grief and loss. By centering marginalized voices, connecting grief to larger socio-political contexts, and promoting healing and collective care, these zines align with the decolonial principles of this toolkit. They provide inspiration and models for developing workshops and praxis that empower participants to explore collective grief through a multifaceted, transformative lens.

# PART 4: Political Collective Grief

**Limitations of Western, Individualistic Frameworks**

The study of 'democratic erosion,' 'democratic decline,' and the 'erosion of democratic systems' has long been a central focus for political scientists, economists, and social scientists. However, this field of research has been predominantly shaped by Western-centric frameworks and perspectives, which have often failed to adequately capture the collective, relational, and political dimensions of grief experienced in the face of democratic backsliding.



The dominant Western models of grief and bereavement, such as the work of Elisabeth Kübler-Ross and William Worden, have long emphasized the individual, psychological experiences of loss, often failing to recognize the inherently political nature of these emotional responses. These frameworks have treated emotional responses to political events as sources of individual-level psychopathology, rather than acknowledging grief and trauma as manifestations of systemic oppression and the unequal distribution of power.

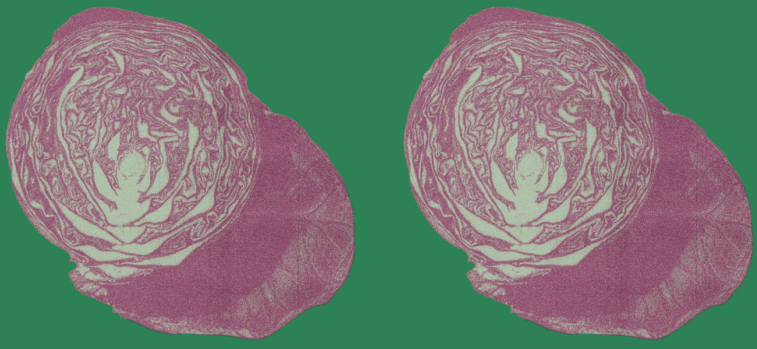
# Decolonial and Postcolonial Perspectives on the Politics of Grief

In contrast, decolonial and postcolonial theorists have emphasized how the unequal distribution of grief and the differential recognition of certain lives as 'grievable' are deeply rooted in power structures and the politics of inclusion and exclusion. As Judith Butler states in 'Precarious Life,' 'some lives are grievable, and others are not,' and this unequal distribution of 'grievable lives' is a manifestation of the ongoing legacies of colonialism and the systematic marginalization of certain communities.



By centering the perspectives and experiences of non-Western scholars and communities, the study of the politics of collective grief can challenge the dominant, Western-centric frameworks and develop a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the ways in which grief is inextricably linked to the struggle for social, economic, and cultural justice.

This decolonial approach recognizes that the restoration of democratic systems must be accompanied by a deep reckoning with the legacies of colonialism, the dismantling of oppressive structures, and the collective healing of marginalized communities.



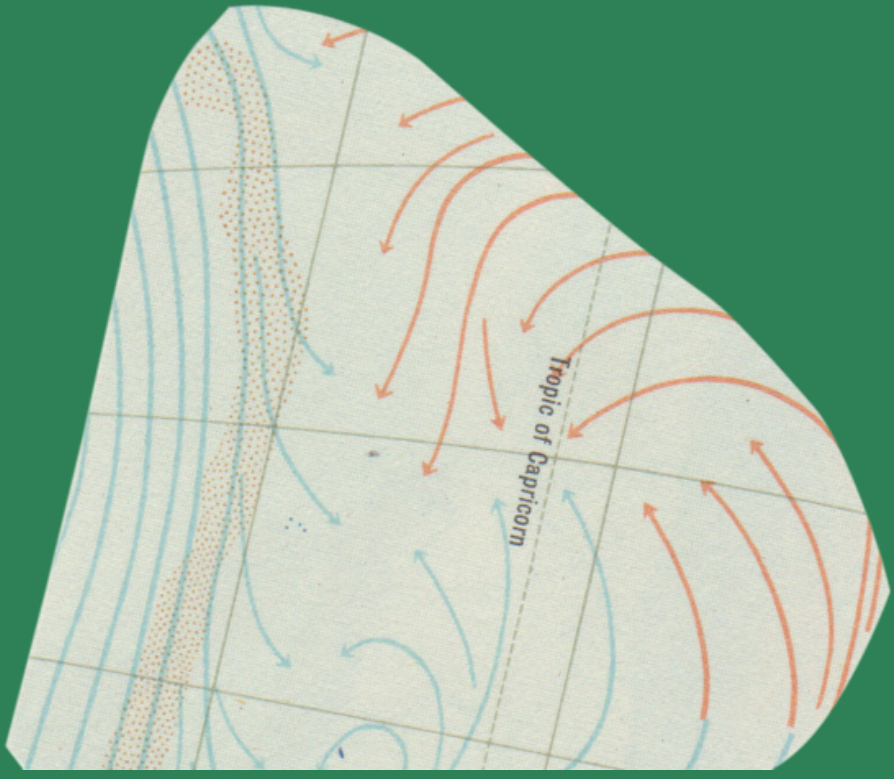
## Recognizing Grief as a Manifestation of Systemic Oppression and the Struggle for Justice

As Ann Cvetkovich argues in 'Depression: A Public Feeling,' grief and trauma are inherently political experiences, rooted in systemic oppression and the unequal distribution of social and economic resources. By centering the perspectives of non-Western scholars and communities, the study of the politics of collective grief can shed light on how the erosion of democratic norms and the normalization of exclusionary rhetoric contribute to the collective trauma and political grief experienced by marginalized groups.



This decolonial approach to understanding the politics of collective grief is crucial, as it challenges the dominant Western tendency to medicalize emotional responses to political events and to treat them as sources of individual-level psychopathology. Instead, it recognizes grief and trauma as manifestations of the ongoing legacies of colonialism, the systematic marginalization of certain communities, and the unequal distribution of power and resources within democratic systems.

By embracing this decolonial framework, this toolkit can equip participants with the critical tools necessary to navigate the complex and often obscured political dimensions of collective grief, and to develop strategies for addressing the root causes of these challenges through collective healing, solidarity, and decolonial praxis.






Political grief, from a decolonial perspective, refers to the collective experience of loss, trauma, and sorrow that is inextricably linked to the ongoing struggle for social, economic, and cultural justice. It is a manifestation of the unequal distribution of "grievable lives" and the enduring legacies of colonialism, systemic oppression, and the erosion of democratic norms. This decolonial understanding challenges dominant Western frameworks that medicalize and depoliticize emotional responses to political events, and instead recognizes grief and trauma as inherently political experiences shaped by power structures and the politics of inclusion and exclusion.



# Do No Harm Principle

## Centering Diverse Grief Experiences

The 'do no harm' principle means prioritizing the well-being, self-determination, and empowerment of participants, especially those from marginalized communities. This involves centering the diverse ways people experience and express grief, beyond dominant Western frameworks.

## Trauma-Informed Facilitation

Implementing this principle requires trauma-informed, participant-led facilitation that responds to the emotional needs of the group. Facilitators must create a safe space for exploration while being attentive to potential triggers and providing appropriate support.



## Amplifying Voices Without Re-Traumatization

Amplifying marginalized voices and narratives is crucial, but it must be done carefully to avoid re-traumatization. Facilitators must be mindful of power dynamics, and ensure informed consent, and allow participants to share on their own terms.

## Fostering Collective Healing

Ultimately, the 'do no harm' principle is about fostering collective healing and resilience, while ensuring the ethical handling of personal narratives and creative works. This may involve collaborating with local organizations and advocates to meet the needs of participants.



# Promoting Safe, Brave, and Accountable Spaces

**Safe Space:**

- Establish clear ground rules and guidelines to foster emotional and physical safety.
- Provide trigger warnings and opportunities for participants to opt-out of activities if needed.
- Ensure the space is accessible and accommodates the diverse needs of participants.
- Have trained mental health professionals or peer supporters available for emotional support.

**Brave Space:**

- Encourage participants to step out of their comfort zones and engage in vulnerable, honest sharing.
- Create opportunities for participants to challenge dominant narratives and explore alternative perspectives.
- Foster an environment of mutual respect, where participants feel empowered to speak their truth.
- Acknowledge and address power dynamics within the group, working to create more equitable participation.

**Accountable Spaces:**

- Establish clear guidelines and processes for addressing harm or conflicts that may arise.
- Encourage participants to take responsibility for their actions and the impact they have on others.
- Provide opportunities for restorative justice and community-based accountability measures.
- Ensure facilitators and organizers are accountable to the participants and the broader community.

# Grief Rituals and Practical Approaches

These grief rituals aim to create sacred, inclusive spaces for participants to engage with the complex, multifaceted nature of collective grief from a decolonial perspective. By centering diverse cultural practices, fostering dialogue, and empowering creative expression, these rituals can support the personal and communal healing necessary for transformative change.



## Memory Jar Ritual

- Participants decorate a jar or container to represent their personal and communal experiences of grief.
- They write down the names of loved ones, memories, or symbols that hold significance for them on small slips of paper.
- Participants take turns sharing about what they've written and placing their papers in the jar, creating a collective repository of memories.
- The group can then engage in a moment of silence or a brief sharing circle to honor the grief they've expressed.
- This ritual allows young people to tangibly represent their grief in a personal way, while also connecting to the collective experience.



## Grief Flower Garden

- Participants create paper or fabric flowers, each one representing a person, community, or aspect of grief they want to honor.
- They can decorate the flowers with words, drawings, or other symbolic elements that hold meaning for them.
- The group then arranges the flowers together to create a communal "grief garden" or installation.
- Participants can take turns sharing about the significance of their flowers and the stories they represent.
- This ritual encourages young people to express their grief through a collaborative, creative process that visually represents the collective nature of their experiences.

## Grief Zine Exchange

- Participants create their own individual or collaborative zines exploring themes of grief, loss, and collective healing.
- They then have the opportunity to share their zines with the larger group, engaging in discussions about the diverse ways grief is expressed.
- Participants can also exchange their zines, fostering connections and a sense of community.
- This ritual empowers young people to use the accessible medium of zine-making to document their grief narratives and learn from each other's perspectives.



These more hands-on, interactive rituals provide young participants with tangible ways to engage with the complex themes of collective grief. By encouraging personal expression, collaborative creation, and the sharing of stories, these rituals can help foster a sense of community, resilience, and collective healing among the participants.

## Decolonial Grief Journaling

This individual ritual provides a structured, yet open-ended, space for young participants to explore their personal and collective experiences of grief through journaling. It aims to create a safe environment for them to express a range of emotions, from anger and anxiety to resilience and hope.

Materials Needed:
- Journals or notebooks
- Pens, pencils, or other writing/drawing materials
- Optional: Soothing music, essential oils, or other sensory items to create a calming atmosphere

Instructions:

1. Set the Stage: Begin by inviting participants to find a comfortable, private space within the workshop area. Encourage them to arrange their space in a way that feels safe and conducive to self-reflection.

2. Grounding Exercise: Lead the group in a brief, guided breathing exercise or body scan to help them settle into the present moment and connect with their physical and emotional states.

3. Decolonial Grief Prompts: Provide participants with a series of open-ended prompts that invite them to explore their grief through a decolonial lens. For example:

- Describe a time when you or your community experienced a profound loss or injustice. How did this make you feel?
- What are the ways in which your cultural or ancestral traditions have shaped your understanding of grief and mourning?
- How have the legacies of colonialism and systemic oppression impacted your ability to grieve and heal?
- What does collective healing and liberation look like for you and your community?

4. Journaling Time: Allow participants ample time (20-30 minutes) to freely write, draw, or express themselves in their journals. Encourage them to let their emotions and thoughts flow without censorship.

5. Sharing (Optional): If participants feel comfortable, invite them to share excerpts from their journals with the larger group. Emphasize that sharing is entirely voluntary and that the space should remain a safe, non-judgmental environment.

6. Closing Ritual: End the session with a brief, collective ritual or meditation that acknowledges the grief and resilience expressed during the journaling process. This could involve a moment of silence, a group affirmation, or a simple closing statement.



By providing a structured yet open-ended journaling experience, this ritual empowers young participants to explore their personal and collective grief through a decolonial lens.

The emphasis on creating a safe, non-judgmental space allows them to express a range of emotions, including anger and anxiety, without fear of stigma or re-traumatization.

This individual practice can also serve as a foundation for the group-based rituals and activities explored in the Unsettling Teach-in and zine-art-making workshops.

## Ghostly Matters Ritual

- Participants engage in a guided visualization or meditation led by a facilitator, drawing on Avery Gordon's concept of "social haunting."
- The meditation invites participants to connect with the "ghostly matters" of their personal and communal grief, acknowledging the lingering presence of colonial trauma and oppression.
- Participants are encouraged to embody and express the emotions, sensations, and memories that arise during the meditation through movement, sound, or other creative modalities.
- This ritual aims to create a space for participants to directly engage with the "haunting" nature of collective grief, honoring its spectral, relational qualities.

## Grievable Lives Ritual

- Participants create collective altars or shrines to honor the lives that have been deemed "ungrievable" by dominant, Eurocentric frameworks, as per Judith Butler's concept.
- Using a variety of materials, participants construct visual representations of the marginalized individuals and communities whose losses have been obscured or devalued.
- The group engages in a ritual of collective mourning and remembrance, sharing stories and bearing witness to the lives memorialized on the altars.
- This ritual challenges the politics of inclusion and exclusion that shape the unequal distribution of "grievable lives," empowering participants to reclaim the dignity and humanity of those who have been systematically dehumanized.

## Decolonial AestheSis Ritual

- Participants collaborate to create multimedia, sensory-based installations or performances that explore the themes of collective grief and decolonial praxis, drawing inspiration from the work of Mignolo, Vázquez, and the "Decolonial AestheSis" framework.
- The creative process involves experimenting with diverse modes of knowledge production and expression, moving beyond traditional Western notions of "art."
- Participants engage in the full embodied experience of the installations, using their senses to connect with the emotional and political resonances of the work.
- This ritual encourages a transgressive, emancipatory approach to art-making, empowering participants to reimagine the ways in which grief and resistance can be expressed and experienced.

## Pedagogy of the Oppressed Ritual

- Participants engage in a series of interactive, dialogical activities inspired by the critical pedagogy of bell hooks and Paulo Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed."
- The facilitator creates a brave space for participants to share their personal narratives of grief and loss, while also exploring the collective, political dimensions of their experiences.
- Participants are encouraged to draw on their own cultural knowledge, frames of reference, and performance styles to express their grief and envision pathways for collective healing and liberation.
- This ritual fosters a transformative learning environment that empowers participants to become active agents in the decolonial struggle, using their voices and experiences to challenge dominant narratives and imagine new possibilities.



## Reclaiming Our Narratives: A Collective Grief Ritual

Objectives:
– Create a safe space for young progressive activists to process their emotions of defeat, sadness, anger, and anxiety in the aftermath of the 2024 Indonesian elections.
– Empower participants to reject the dominant narratives that seek to dismiss, stigmatize, and erase their experiences.
– Facilitate the reclaiming of personal and collective narratives as an act of resistance and healing.

Materials Needed:
– Paper and pens/pencils for participants
– A communal vessel or container

Steps:

1. Acknowledging the Burden
   - Invite participants to take a moment to reflect on the weight of the accusations, dismissals, and attempts to erase their voices.
   - Encourage them to feel the heaviness in their hearts and bodies.

2. Rejecting Imposed Narratives
   - Ask participants to write down the words, labels, and narratives that have been imposed upon them by the dominant voices.
   - One by one, invite participants to come forward and ceremoniously tear their papers, symbolically rejecting these narratives.
   - As they tear the papers, have them declare: "This is not my story. This is not our story."

3. Reclaiming Our Truths
- Create a space for participants to share their own memories, experiences, and visions that have been silenced.
- Encourage them to speak their truths, allowing their voices to rise and be heard.

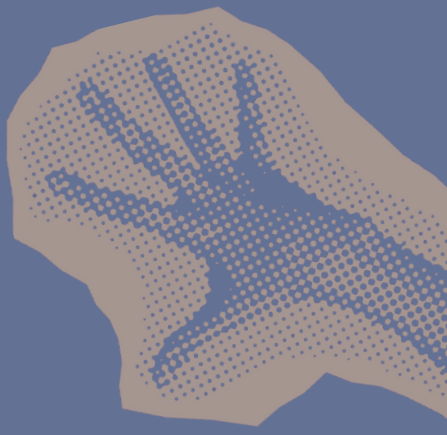
4. Envisioning Collective Healing
- Facilitate a discussion on what healing and justice look like for the participants and their communities.
- Invite them to share their dreams and aspirations for the future.

5. Weaving a New Tapestry
- Have participants gather the torn papers and place them in a communal vessel or container.
- Explain that this represents the reclaiming of their narratives and the collective power of their stories.

6. Closing Reflection
- Close the ritual by emphasizing the importance of carrying this experience forward as a reminder of their resilience and commitment to the struggle.
- Encourage participants to support one another and continue the work of reclaiming their narratives and fighting for the future they deserve.

This structured ritual provides a framework for young progressive activists to collectively process their grief, reject the dominant narratives that seek to silence them, and reclaim their stories as an act of resistance and healing.

## News Detox Ritual



Objective: To create a space for young activists to step away from the constant flow of news and information, allowing them to focus on their inner experiences and process their political grief.

Materials Needed:
– Journals or notebooks
– Pens/pencils
– Timer or clock
– Optional: Candles, incense, or other calming sensory items

Instructions:

1. Begin by acknowledging the overwhelming nature of the news and information landscape, and how it has impacted the participants' emotional well-being.

2. Invite participants to turn off or silence their electronic devices and commit to a designated "news detox" period (e.g., 30-60 minutes).

3. Provide prompts for participants to reflect on in their journals, such as:

– How have you been feeling in the aftermath of the 2024 elections?
– What narratives or perspectives have you been exposed to in the news and on social media?
– How might stepping away from the constant flow of information affect your ability to process your grief?

4. Encourage participants to focus on their embodied experiences, sensations, and inner dialogue, rather than external stimuli.

5. When the timer goes off, invite participants to share their reflections and insights with the group, if they feel comfortable.

6. Close the ritual by emphasizing the importance of maintaining a balanced, mindful approach to consuming information, and the role of introspection in processing political grief.




By incorporating key insights from Dobelli's "Stop Reading the News" into the grief rituals, the young activists can develop a more critical, mindful, and decolonial approach to engaging with information and media. This can ultimately empower them to process their political grief and continue their work towards social and political transformation.

**Key insights from Rolf Dobelli's "Stop Reading the News" can be incorporated into the grief rituals for young activists in Indonesia.**

**This is just a few key insights, not all of them that can be incorporated into the grief rituals for young activists in Indonesia.**

1. News is to the Mind what Sugar is to the Body:
   - Just as excessive sugar consumption can be harmful to the body, Dobelli argues that constant news consumption can be detrimental to our mental health.
   - In the individual "Unplugged Reflection" ritual, participants can explore how their news consumption has impacted their emotional state and ability to process their political grief.

2. News is Irrelevant:
   - Dobelli suggests that much of the news we consume is ultimately irrelevant to our daily lives and decision-making.
   - The collective "Mindful Grief Circle" ritual can encourage participants to reflect on the narratives and information they've been exposed to, and how it has (or has not) been relevant to their lived experiences and the decolonial struggle.

3. News Obscures the Big Picture:
   - News media often focuses on sensational, isolated events rather than providing a broader, contextual understanding of complex issues.
   - The individual ritual can prompt participants to reflect on how the news has shaped their perception of the political landscape, and how stepping away from it might allow them to gain a more holistic, decolonial perspective.

4. News Confirms Our Mistakes:
 – Dobelli argues that news reinforces our cognitive biases, leading us to seek out information that confirms our existing beliefs and assumptions.
 – The collective ritual can create a space for participants to challenge their own biases and preconceptions, and to engage with alternative narratives and perspectives presented by their peers.

5. News Reinforces Hindsight Bias:
 – The news media's tendency to present events as predictable and inevitable can lead to a distorted sense of hindsight, undermining our ability to learn from the past.
 – In the individual ritual, participants can explore how the news has shaped their understanding of past political events, and how stepping away from it might allow them to develop a more nuanced, decolonial interpretation.

6. News Reinforces Availability Bias:
 – Dobelli suggests that news media's focus on recent, salient events can lead us to overestimate the likelihood of similar events occurring in the future.
 – The collective ritual can encourage participants to critically examine the narratives they've been exposed to and consider how their perceptions of risk and probability have been influenced by the news.

7. News Rewires Our Brains:
 – Constant news consumption can have neurological impacts, altering our attention spans and cognitive processes in ways that may be detrimental to our overall well-being.
 – The individual ritual can prompt participants to reflect on how their news consumption habits have affected their ability to focus, think critically, and engage in deeper, more contemplative forms of learning and activism.

8. News is Invented by Journalists:
 – Dobelli argues that news is fundamentally a product of the journalistic profession, with its own inherent biases and agendas, rather than an objective representation of reality.
 – The collective ritual can encourage participants to critically examine the role of media institutions in shaping the narratives and discourses surrounding the political situation, and to seek out alternative, non-Western sources of information.

9. News is Manipulative:
 – Dobelli suggests that news media often employs manipulative tactics to capture and retain our attention, prioritizing sensationalism over substance.
 – In the individual ritual, participants can explore how the news has influenced their emotional state and decision-making, and how stepping away from it might allow them to regain a sense of agency and control.

10. News Kills Creativity:
 – Constant news consumption can limit our ability to engage in creative, imaginative thinking, which is crucial for envisioning and working towards alternative, decolonial futures.
 – The collective ritual can provide a space for participants to tap into their creative potential, using art, storytelling, and other expressive modalities to process their political grief and envision new possibilities.

11. News Gives Us the Illusion of Empathy:
 – Dobelli argues that news media can create a false sense of connection and empathy with distant events and people, without actually fostering meaningful understanding or action.
 – The individual ritual can prompt participants to reflect on how their news consumption has (or has not) translated into genuine empathy and solidarity with marginalized communities, and how stepping away from it might allow them to develop more authentic, decolonial forms of care and activism.

## Collective Grief Mapping

Objective: To create a collaborative, visual representation of the young activists' collective grief and its connection to the broader political and social context.

Materials Needed:
- Large sheets of paper or poster boards
- Markers, colored pencils, and other art supplies
- Sticky notes or index cards

Instructions:

1. Invite participants to reflect on the key events, narratives, and emotions that have shaped their political grief in the aftermath of the 2024 elections.

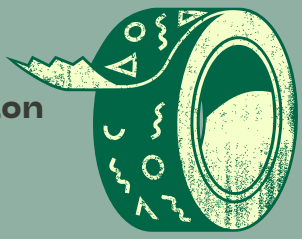
2. Provide participants with sticky notes or index cards and ask them to write down or illustrate these elements.

3. Encourage participants to work together to arrange the sticky notes on the large sheets of paper, creating a collective "grief map" that visually represents the interconnected nature of their experiences.

4. As the map takes shape, facilitate a discussion on the patterns, themes, and connections that emerge, allowing participants to share their insights and perspectives.

5. Invite participants to add additional elements to the map, such as symbols, quotes, or images that capture the decolonial, anti-oppressive nature of their grief and activism.

6. Close the ritual by reflecting on the collective power of the grief map and its potential to inform future strategies for healing, solidarity, and transformative change.



**Individual Ritual: Unplugged Reflection**

Materials Needed:
- Journal or notebook
- Pen or pencil
- Timer or clock

Instructions:

1. Find a quiet, comfortable space where you can be alone without distractions.

2. Set a timer for 30-45 minutes and turn off or put away all electronic devices, including your phone, laptop, and any other screens.

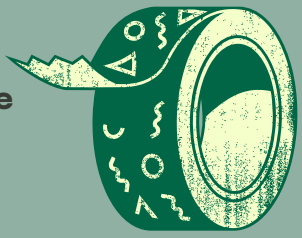
3. Take a few deep breaths to center yourself and quiet your mind.

4. In your journal, reflect on the following prompts:
   - How have you been feeling in the aftermath of the 2024 elections? Describe the emotions you've been experiencing, such as defeat, sadness, anger, or anxiety.
   - What narratives or perspectives have you been exposed to on social media and in the mass media that have contributed to these feelings?
   - Imagine what it would be like to step away from the constant flow of information and news. How might this affect your emotional state and your ability to process your grief?

5. As you write, try to focus on the present moment and your inner experience, rather than getting caught up in the external narratives and information.

6. When the timer goes off, take a few more deep breaths and reflect on the insights or clarity you've gained during this unplugged reflection time.

7. Close the ritual by expressing gratitude for the space to process your emotions without the distractions of technology and media.



## Collective Ritual: Mindful Grief Circle

Materials Needed:
- Comfortable seating arrangement (cushions, chairs, etc.)
- Talking stick or other symbolic object
- Candles or other ceremonial items

Instructions:

1. Gather a group of fellow young activists in a comfortable, distraction-free space.

2. Begin by acknowledging the collective grief and challenges you've all been facing in the aftermath of the 2024 elections.

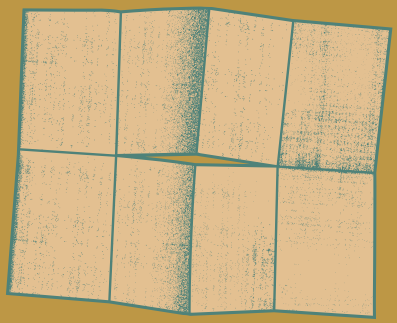
3. Invite participants to take a few deep breaths together, settling into the present moment and releasing any tension or anxiety.

4. Pass a talking stick (or other symbolic object) around the circle, allowing each participant to share their experiences, emotions, and reflections without interruption.

5. Encourage participants to speak from the heart, focusing on their inner experiences rather than external narratives or information.

6. After the sharing, guide the group in a brief, mindful meditation or visualization exercise. This could involve imagining a peaceful, natural setting or connecting with their ancestral roots.

7. Conclude the ritual by lighting a candle together, symbolizing the collective commitment to healing, resilience, and the pursuit of justice, even in the face of adversity.



## Zine-Art-Making as a Grief Ritual

The process of creating zines can itself be a grief ritual, providing a structured yet creative space for young activists to document, process, and share their personal and collective experiences of political grief.

Zine-making workshops can be incorporated as part of the Unsettling Teach-in, allowing participants to engage in a collaborative, multi-modal exploration of the themes and insights discussed during the other grief rituals.

## Centering Marginalized Narratives

- The zine-art-making process aligns with the decolonial principles of the toolkit, as it empowers participants to amplify marginalized voices and narratives. Participants can create zines that center the experiences of women, LGBTQ+ individuals, and other communities whose grief has been historically overlooked or dismissed.

## Connecting Grief to Broader Contexts

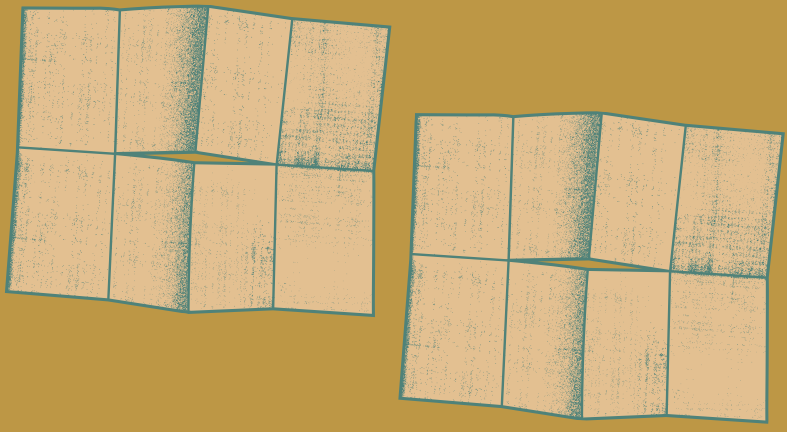
- Zines can also be used to situate personal grief within the larger socio-political contexts, much like the Collective Grief Mapping ritual. Participants can create zines that explore the connections between their individual experiences and the systemic oppression, colonial legacies, and power dynamics that shape their communities' collective grief.

## Promoting Healing and Resilience

- The collaborative nature of zine-making can foster a sense of community and collective healing among the participants. Zines can incorporate elements of mutual care, ancestral wisdom, and visions for a more just future, aligning with the toolkit's emphasis on cultivating resilience and decolonial praxis.

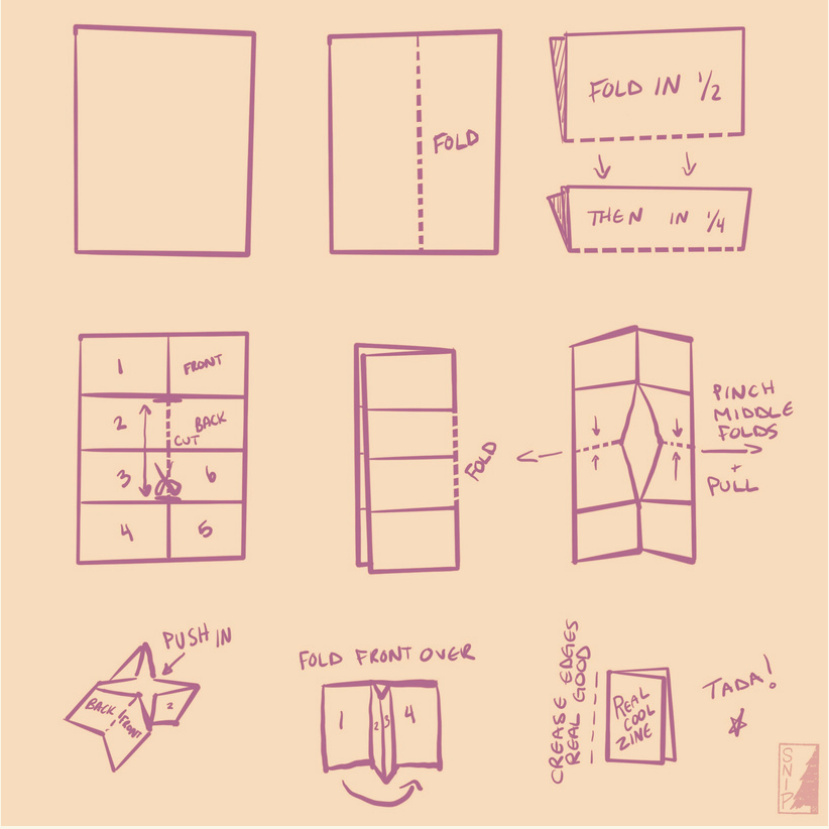
## Zine Library and Exchange

- The Unsettling Teach-in can include a dedicated "zine library" or exhibition, where participants can share, exchange, and engage with each other's self-published works. This can further strengthen the sense of community and solidarity, while also providing a platform for the dissemination of alternative narratives and decolonial perspectives.



# zine template

8 Fold Zine – one sided print creates a small 6 page zine with cover and back. requires: folding, minimal cutting.




Source: zine resource! by snipes

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