



# Chalice Circle Packet

March 2021

## *Suffering*



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Unity Church-Unitarian, St. Paul, Minnesota

[unityunitarian.org](http://unityunitarian.org)

# Suffering

Story tells us, the Buddha was once asked how he crossed the great flood of suffering. The exchange went like this:

*“How, dear sir, did you cross the flood?”*

*“By not halting, friend, and by not straining I crossed the flood.”*

*“But how is it, dear sir, that by not halting and by not straining you crossed the flood?”*

*“When I came to a standstill, friend, then I sank; but when I struggled, then I got swept away. It is in this way, friend, that by not halting and by not straining I crossed the flood.”<sup>1</sup>*

The first of the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism and lived reality itself teach us that suffering is inevitable. Each of us, *because* we are alive, knows suffering. The question, then, is not how to avoid it, but what we will do with it. As the writer Ben Okri put it, “The most authentic thing about us is our capacity to create, to overcome, to endure, to transform, to love and to be greater than our suffering.”

Certainly, the natural inclination to prevent or diminish suffering, our own and others’, is an important skill for survival and wellbeing. But avoidance is another thing, and the Buddha’s answer about crossing the flood of suffering offers the wisdom of a different way. Notice, the Buddha did not step back or turn away from the flood. Nor did he look for, or even build, a bridge to cross it from on high. He stepped *into* it and, neither halting nor straining, he crossed it.

It calls to mind another story from Hebrew scripture, when the Israelites are fleeing slavery and coming to the Red Sea with the Egyptian army on their heels. Trapped between the shore and the approaching soldiers, the Israelites complain to Moses that he has led them on a quest for freedom only to be slaughtered there. Moses, turning to God for guidance, receives God’s reply: “Tell the Israelites to move on!”

As this story tells us, the Red Sea parts, offering the Israelites safe passage to the other side, then closing again and destroying the Egyptian army in pursuit. One Midrash, though, suggests the sea did not part before the Israelites moved on. Only when one bold Israelite, a man named Nachshon from the tribe of Yahudah, stepped into the rising waters and kept going did the sea finally open, making a path on dry land to the other side.

When suffering comes, as we know it will – and as it has with abundance this year, flooding us with loss and illness, with despair and grief, with fear and anger – these stories and others advise us not to hold back, not to turn or look away, but to wade into the waters. To neither halt nor strain, but to move on, passing through the suffering that comes.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://suttacentral.net/sn1.1/en/bodhi>

Life will always involve suffering, sometimes in such large measure we cannot see the other side of it. How will we approach it? What might it mean to cross it without halting and without straining?

One step at a time we move through it. Staying present to our own pain and that of others, we discover that being present to pain means we are also available to love and joy. Remembering that pain, like all experiences, will not be permanent. That change is as surely a part of life as suffering is. That being present to this moment asks only that we take one more step; and then, one more after that, neither avoiding suffering nor straining against it. We keep moving, one step and one moment at a time. Especially when we don't know where we're headed or how long it will take to get there, we let go of how we were before and with each step, we begin again. Opening our hearts to how it is now, we begin to participate in shaping how it might be tomorrow.

By stepping into the present, we give ourselves to a deeper and wider truth that began before us and continues after us. We discover that under the floodwaters of suffering run the currents of love and connection and change, ready to carry us as we cross. Not halting, not straining, we begin again in love.

*Reprinted from the March 2021 issue of CommUNITY, by Karen Hering on behalf of this month's theme team: Ahmed Anzaldua, Drew Danielson, Rob Eller-Isaacs, Ray Hommeyer, KP Hong, Ruth MacKenzie, and Laura Park.*

# Spiritual Practices

## *Option A*

### *Tonglen Meditation*

Take the time to read through the entire meditation before beginning this practice.

#### **Naming:**

Take out your journal, or just a piece of paper. Write down what you're feeling right now, what suffering you are holding. Name exactly how you feel, what you are experiencing at this moment. Don't try to talk yourself out of your anger if you're feeling angry, or make excuses for your jealousies if you're feeling jealous, or deny your heartache, or your boredom, or feeling overwhelmed by work, or doing something well. Whatever it is, take a moment to figure out what you're feeling, and write it down.

#### **Getting Ready**

Now, find a comfortable spot.

- Sit up straight but relaxed in your chair or cushion.
- Place your hands on your thighs with your palms down to ground yourself, or facing up in a gesture of receiving.
- Close your eyes, if that feels comfortable, or soften your gaze. If you have a chalice, try lighting it and gazing softly at the flame.

#### **Working with Breath**

Now, work with the texture of your breath. Really sense the air coming into your body, and leaving your body. Feel the air move past your nostrils and fill your chest. Then feel your breath as you exhale, as your belly moves in ever so slightly as your breath leaves your body. Begin to imagine your whole body breathing. Breathe in completely, through all the pores of your body, and breathe out, radiate out, through all the pores of your body.

#### **Practice**

Bring to mind what you wrote down. Whatever your personal situation may be, breathe it in. If you are feeling inadequate, breathe in inadequacy. If you are feeling worried, breathe in worry. If you are feeling anger, breathe in anger.

As you breathe out, breathe out relief. Breathe out confidence, and compassion, adequacy and relief. Do this for several breath cycles. Breathe in what you're feeling and breathe out compassion for yourself, confidence, and relief.

Now, widen the circle of your concern. Breathe in the feeling of your suffering and bring to mind all those who are in your family or social circles who might be feeling that same feeling, that same discomfort or fear or whatever you are trapped within. So if you're feeling worried, think about others who might be feeling worried, in all kinds of different circumstances. Now, breathe out relief. Breathe out confidence, and compassion, and relief for all. Hold your friends and family who are suffering in your heart for several breath cycles, breathing in that suffering and breathing out compassion and relief.

Now, widen the circle even further, breathe in your feeling and bring to mind all those who might be feeling that same way, people or communities you don't know personally but might be holding a similar kind of suffering. The circumstance that caused the suffering may be different than your own, but the emotional response is similar. So if you're feeling worry, think about others who might be feeling worry in all kinds of different circumstances. Breathe in the suffering and breathe out relief. Breathe out confidence, and compassion, adequacy and relief for all.

Sit in this compassionate exchange for a while.

Gently release your concentration. Blink your eyes open, if they were closed.

### **Reflection**

Now, observe any shifts in your mood, in how your body feels, in how you're thinking. Open your journal and write what you're feeling now.

## ***Option B***

### ***Nourish Your Positive Emotions***

This practice, from Buddhist teacher and poet Thich Nhat Hanh offers an antidote for suffering by nourishing our positive emotions. "The war stops and starts with you and me," he notes.

1. Breathing in, I experience calm in me. Breathing out, I smile to the calm in me.
2. Breathing in, I experience joy in me. Breathing out, I smile to the joy in me.
3. Breathing in, I experience equanimity in me. Breathing out, I smile to the equanimity in me.
4. Breathing in, I experience openness in me. Breathing out, I smile to the openness in me.
5. Breathing in, I experience happiness in me. Breathing out, I smile to the happiness in me.

— Thich Nhat Hanh in *Creating True Peace*

## ***Option C***

### ***Build an Altar for Strength***

This practice is inspired by a talk given by Rev. Dr. Pamela Ayo Atunde at the University of Minnesota's 2021 Colloquium Series: Black People Healing for Justice and Peace on February 5, 2021.

This is a practice that provides a focal point for building and nourishing your strength and constructive power in troubled times. Rev. Ayo instructed participants to build altars of strength and then use them.

#### **Build an Altar:**

Gather items that represent strength for you. It might be a necklace your mother wore. It might be a rock. It might be a feather or a piece of clothing. Whatever the objects may be, place the items together in a way that creates an altar of strength and constructive power. You might clear off a bookshelf in your bedroom or make space on a corner of your desk. Find a chalice or candle and place it on the altar. Make your altar something pleasing and life giving to look at.

At different points of your day, stand before your altar and breathe in the strength of these items, their meaning and their power. As you breathe out, ask how you might join with this constructive power to create wholeness and right relationship with yourself, your neighbors and community, the earth, and God (if this is your faith).

#### **Invocation:**

Create an invocation that you can hold in your heart and mind, and say it aloud as you look at the altar. It might be a quote from the poems you find in this packet, or from another source. Keep it short and memorable. Say it as you look at your altar. Some examples might be:

- Your silence will not protect you. (Audre Lorde)
- feel it. the thing that you don't want to feel. feel it. and be free. (Nayyirah Waheed)

Hold compassion for yourself and others as we journey in this life together.

## ***Questions to Ponder***

Read through the questions below and notice which one(s) resonate with you. One or more of the questions might seem particularly compelling – or some might stir resistance in you. Either of these reactions might make the question fruitful to consider. Choose just one and take time to consider it, over several days if possible. Write it down on a piece of paper you carry in your pocket. Or take a picture of that paper with your phone. Or record it in your journal – and spend some time, each day if you can, reflecting on it in writing or otherwise, noticing where it leads you and what you learn from it and your response to it.

1. What suffering do you see around you? How does it affect you? What do you do when you encounter it?
2. What is causing you suffering?
3. Naomi Shihab Nye talks about the relationship between suffering and kindness (See poem in the Poetry section and the video of her story about writing the poem). What experiences of suffering have created greater expressions of kindness within you?
4. What are practices that have helped you move through suffering?
5. How might you accompany those who are suffering around you, not fix it, or deny it, but walk alongside it?
6. Is suffering the same thing as grief?
7. What stories of resilience or strength have been helpful to you when you have found yourself in times of suffering?
8. Have you ever experienced suffering that got stuck in your heart or your body? What impact did that have on you? What helped you to process it?
9. Does your faith help to transform your suffering?
10. What principles or tenets of Unitarian Universalism do you find important to hold close when you or others are holding hardship and suffering?
11. What wisdom, if any, has been imparted by suffering?



# ***Resources***

## **Recommended Resources for Personal Exploration & Reflection**

The following resources are not required reading. They will not be analyzed in our circles. Instead they are here to companion you on your journey this month, get your thinking started and open you to new ways of thinking about what it means to develop a spiritual practice of curiosity.

### ***Word Definitions & Roots***

#### ***Suffering***

- to undergo or feel pain or distress:
- to sustain injury, disadvantage, or loss:
- to endure pain, disability, death, etc., patiently or willingly.
- to undergo, be subjected to, or endure (pain, distress, injury, loss, or anything unpleasant)

#### ***Word Origin***

from Anglo-French *suffrir*, Old French *sofrir*  
"to bear, endure, resist; permit, tolerate"

### ***Wise Words***

Contrary to what we may have been taught to think, unnecessary and unchosen suffering wounds us but need not scar us for life. It does mark us. What we allow the mark of our suffering to become is in our own hands.

~bell hooks, **All About Love: New Visions**

Is your religion helping you to transform your pain? If it does not, it is junk religion. We all have pain—it's the human situation, we all carry it in a big black bag

behind us and it gets heavier as we get older: by betrayals, rejections, disappointments, and wounds that are inflicted along the way.

If we do not find some way to transform our pain, I can tell you with 100% certitude we will transmit it to those around us. We will create tension, negativity, suspicion, and fear wherever we go. Both Jesus and Buddha made it very clear to their followers that "life is suffering." You cannot avoid it. It is no surprise that the central Christian logo became a naked, bleeding, suffering man.

At the end of life, and probably early in life, too, the question is, "What do I do with this disappointment, with this absurdity, with this sadness?" Whoever teaches you how to transform your own suffering into compassion is a true spiritual authority. Whoever teaches you to project your doubt and fear onto Jews, Moslems, your family, heretics, gays, sinners, and foreigners, or even to turn it against yourself (guilt and shame) has no spiritual authority.

~Richard Rohr

feel it. the thing that you don't want to feel.  
feel it. and be free.

~Nayyirah Waheed

### ***How I Pray in the Plague***

*I was rehearsing the ecstasies of starvation  
for what I had to do. And have not charity,  
I found my pity, desperately researching  
the origins of history, from reed-built  
communes  
by sacred lakes, turning with the first  
sprocketed  
water-driven wheels.*

—Derek Walcott

In these silences, the bubbles of hurt are  
indistinguishable from the terror  
that lurks in the body—the phrase, “ecstasies  
of starvation” will have a music  
that lures us to peace, but how do I stay with  
a tender heart of peace and calm  
when I slow in my walk in the face of an old  
saying that has hidden its conundrum  
of theology from me—perhaps not hidden,  
perhaps what I mean is before  
I found my pity, my charity, my love, I could  
slip over the conundrums,  
*lead us not into temptation*—that imperative  
that has no sensible answer,  
for is this the way of a father, and what kind  
of father must be asked not to tempt  
me?  
And what of the mercy of temptation, and  
what of the lessons of temptation,  
and what of the diabolical cruelty of  
testing—you see why I slip over this  
with the muteness of the faith that must  
grow in increments of meaning?  
In these silences, the bubbles of anxiety, the  
hurt I cannot distinguish from terror  
is my daily state, and you teach me to pray in  
this way, and in this way, you teach me

the path of being led into terror. I will say  
this and let it linger, and what I mean  
is that this is the way of poetry for me, for  
much of what I offer, I am sure of  
nothing,  
the knowing or the outworking, but the trust  
of its history of resolution—so that I will  
say,  
this is the origin of history, and by this, I mean  
this small conundrum: “Lead us not,  
lead me not, lead them not, lead them not,”  
And what is this were it not the way  
we know the heavy hand of God—that to  
pray, “Lead *them* not into temptation”,  
is a kind of mercy, and to say, “Lead *us* not”,  
is the penitence of a sinning nation  
desperate for the lifting of the curses of  
contagion and plague. The subtext is the  
finger  
pointed at the culprit. So that what kind of  
father do I tell this to? Might I have  
said,  
“Neville, please, lead me not into  
temptation”, what would it mean to tell  
my old man  
not to lead me into temptation? Must that  
not be the same as a reprimand to my  
father,  
a judgment on his propensity to fail me?  
Do you  
want answers? You have come to the  
wrong  
place. I am selfish with answers. I am  
hoarding all answers. Go, instead, to  
the prophets  
and the preachers, the soothsayers and  
priests, go to the pundits and the dream  
readers,  
to the pontiffs and kings, to the presidents  
and mayors, to the brokers in answers.  
But me,  
I hoard the secrets of my calming beauty, and  
I walk this road, not as a maker of  
questions—

this would be a crude wickedness—but with  
the fabric of our uncertainty, a net  
stretched  
across the afternoon sky, this is beauty and in  
this I will trade until all music ends, and  
the air  
grows crisp as airless grace. They say that if  
you find honey in the stomach of the  
baobab tree,  
you must leave the better part for the spirit  
of the tree, and then share the remnant  
sweetness  
with your neighbors. And what they say,  
among the reeds, what they say, in the  
arms of the trees,  
what they say in the shelter of the sky, that is  
enough for the days of terror and  
sorrow. Amen.

~**Kwame Dawes**

## ***Poetry***

### ***On Time Tanka***

(Japanese tanka is a thirty-one-syllable  
poem, traditionally written in a single  
unbroken line)

I refuse to choose  
between lynch rope and gang rape  
the blues is the blues!  
my skin and my sex: Deep dues  
I have no wish to escape

I refuse to lose  
the flame of my single space  
this safety I choose  
between your fist and my face  
between my gender and race

All black and blue news  
withers the heart of my hand  
and leads to abuse  
no one needs to understand:  
suicide wipes out the clues

Big-Time-Juicy-Fruit!  
Celebrity-Rich-Hero  
Rollin out the Rolls!  
Proud cheatin on your (Black) wife  
Loud beatin on your (white) wife

Real slime open mouth  
police officer-true-creep  
evil-and-uncouth  
fixin to burn black people  
killin the song of our sleep

Neither one of you  
gets any play in my day  
I know what you do  
your money your guns your say  
so against my pepper spray

Okay! laugh away!  
I hear you and I accuse  
you both: I refuse  
to choose: All black and blue news  
means that I hurt and I lose.

~**June Jordan**

### ***The Cure***

We think we get over things.  
We don't get over things.  
Or say, we get over the measles,  
But not a broken heart.  
We need to make that distinction.

The things that become part of our  
experience  
Never become less a part of our experience.  
How can I say it?  
The way to “get over” a life is to die.  
Short of that, you move with it,  
let the pain be pain,  
not in the hope that it will vanish  
But in the faith that it will fit in,  
find its place in the shape of things  
and be then not any less pain but true to  
form.  
Because anything natural has an inherent  
shape and will flow towards it.  
And a life is as natural as a leaf.  
That’s what we’re looking for: not the end  
of a thing but the shape of it.  
Wisdom is seeing the shape of your life  
without obliterating (getting over) a single  
instant of it.  
~**Albert Huffstickler**

### **Blessing for the Brokenhearted**

Let us agree  
for now  
that we will not say  
the breaking  
makes us stronger  
or that it is better  
to have this pain  
than to have done  
without this love.

Let us promise  
we will not  
tell ourselves  
time will heal  
the wound,

when every day  
our waking  
opens it anew.

Perhaps for now  
it can be enough  
to simply marvel  
at the mystery  
of how a heart  
so broken  
can go on beating,  
as if it were made  
for precisely this—

as if it knows  
the only cure for love  
is more of it,

as if it sees  
the heart’s sole remedy  
for breaking  
is to love still,

as if it trusts  
that its own  
persistent pulse  
is the rhythm  
of a blessing  
we cannot  
begin to fathom  
but will save us  
Nonetheless.

~**Jan Richardson**

### ***Kindness***

Before you know what kindness really is  
you must lose things,  
feel the future dissolve in a moment

like salt in a weakened broth.  
What you held in your hand,  
what you counted and carefully saved,  
all this must go so you know  
how desolate the landscape can be  
between the regions of kindness.  
How you ride and ride  
thinking the bus will never stop,  
the passengers eating maize and chicken  
will stare out the window forever.

Before you learn the tender gravity of  
kindness you must travel where the Indian  
in a white poncho  
lies dead by the side of the road.  
You must see how this could be you,  
how he too was someone  
who journeyed through the night with plans  
and the simple breath that kept him alive.

Before you know kindness as the deepest  
thing inside,  
you must know sorrow as the other deepest  
thing.

You must wake up with sorrow.  
You must speak to it till your voice  
catches the thread of all sorrows  
and you see the size of the cloth.  
Then it is only kindness that makes sense  
anymore,  
only kindness that ties your shoes  
and sends you out into the day to gaze at  
bread,  
only kindness that raises its head  
from the crowd of the world to say  
It is I you have been looking for,  
and then goes with you everywhere  
like a shadow or a friend.

~Naomi Shihab Nye

[\(In a brief video, hear Naomi Shihab Nye explain the experience that led to the writing of this poem:](#)

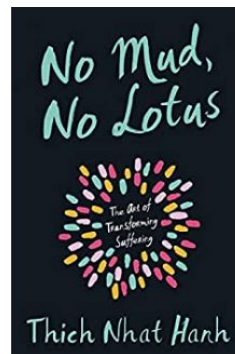
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bBYzMsUVvtQ>)

## Music

For a playlist inspired by the opening reflection on this month's theme and prepared by a Unity member, visit this Spotify link. (Note: you may have to register for a free Spotify account to listen to more than 30 seconds of each song.)

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5ujkbGD9uPADS9uTJxmCzf?si=SYM0IRBrRpupDnJ3cUilNw>

## Books



### No Mud, No Lotus

~Thich Nhat Hanh

Suffering can feel so bad, we often want to run away from it or cover it up. We eat too much or sit in front of a screen, scrolling for hours. But unless we're able to face our

suffering, we can't be present and available to life, and happiness will continue to elude us.

*No Mud, No Lotus* introduces ways to be in touch with suffering without being overwhelmed by it. "When we know **how** to suffer," Nhat Hanh says, "we suffer much, much less."

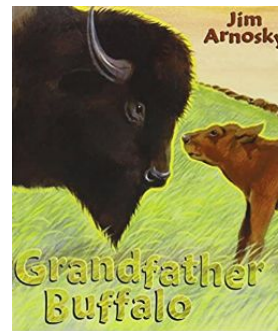


## That Bird Has My Wings

~Jarvis Jay Masters

In 1990, while serving a sentence in San Quentin for armed robbery, Jarvis Masters was implicated as an accessory in the murder of a prison guard. A

23-year-old African-American, Jarvis was sentenced to death in the gas chamber. While in the 'maximum security' section of Death Row, using the only instrument available to him - a ball-point pen filler - Jarvis wrote an astounding memoir about suffering and the tenacity of the human spirit .

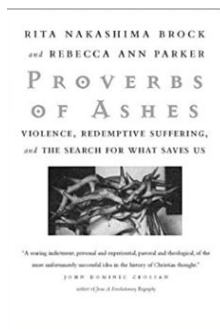


Grandfather Buffalo

~Jim Arnosky

Grandfather Buffalo is the oldest bull in the herd. Whenever the herd moves on, he is always a little behind.

But when a female buffalo is ready to give birth, he is there to protect her, and he's there to help nudge the new calf along. The youngster's liveliness puts Grandfather Buffalo to the test, but the calf learns quickly that whether the herd is braving a dust storm or stopping for a rest, there's no better place to be than right by Grandfather Buffalo's side.

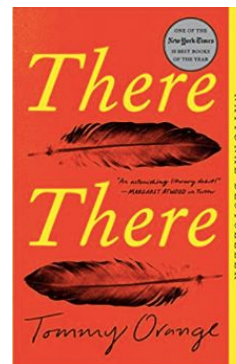


## Proverbs of Ashes

~Rita Nakashima Brock and Rebecca Ann Parker

Writing about personal experience and traditional theology Rita Brock and Rebecca Parker deliver an emotionally gripping and intellectually rich exploration of the doctrine of the

atonement and it's inadequacy in addressing human suffering and violence. They argue, the idea that the death of Jesus on the cross "saves us" reveals a sanctioning of violence at the heart of Christianity. *Proverbs of Ashes* is both a condemnation of bad theology and a passionate search for what truly saves us.



## There, There

~Tommy Orange

A New York Times bestseller and winner of the PEN/Hemingway Award, Tommy Orange's novel follows twelve characters from Native communities: all traveling

to the Big Oakland Powwow, all connected to one another in ways they may not yet realize. It is poignant and unflinching.

## Videos and Podcasts

[The Art and Science of Suffering | Julia DiGangi | TEDxDePaulUniversity](#)  
[Curiosity: we're studying the brain to help you harness it:](#)

Through her work with torture survivors, combat veterans, bereaved parents and orphans, Julia DiGangi has become intimately acquainted with the many faces of suffering—and it was through this work that she sought to understand both the scientific underpinnings and the spiritual consequences of stress and trauma. She shares what she has learned about various forms of suffering and coping strategies in her talk, “The Art and Science of Suffering.”  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EBxOUtkuL3Y>

[Why We're All Suffering from Racial Trauma \(Even White People\) -- and How to Handle It | Resmaa Menakem: an interview by Dan Harris on his “Ten Percent Happier” podcast](#)

It’s easy to think of racism as a virus that lives in your head. But Resmaa Menakem makes a compelling case that it also lives, in very profound and often unseen ways, in your body.

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/why-were-all-suffering-from-racial-trauma-even-white/id1087147821?i=1000482826916>

[Brené on Comparative Suffering, the 50/50 Myth, and Settling the Ball](#)

Brené Brown writes, “We have collectively hit weary. This is especially true for the brave folks on the front lines of this pandemic and for the people who love and support them. And, it’s also true for all of us. In this episode, I talk about strategies for falling apart, staying connected + kind, and giving ourselves permission to feel hard things.

<https://brenebrown.com/podcast/brene-on-comparative-suffering-the-50-50-myth-and-settling-the-ball/>

## Articles and Online Sources

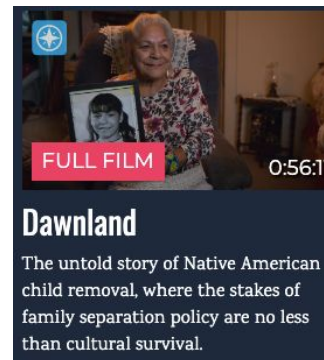
[Ta-Nehisi Coates and the Power of Lament](#)

by Zach Czaia – An article about teaching in an AP English class in Minneapolis, and wrestling with suffering and lament with young writers and scholars, predominately of color.

<https://theotherjournal.com/2016/12/22/ta-nehisi-coates-power-lament/>

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## Movies



### [Dawnland](#)

A PBS documentary on the untold story of Indigenous child removal in the US through the nation's first-ever

government-endorsed truth and reconciliation commission, which investigated the devastating impact of Maine’s child welfare practices on the Wabanaki people.

The Wabanaki are "the people of the dawn," in the upper Northeast. For decades, Maine’s child welfare system placed Wabanaki children in foster or adoptive homes under the presumption that assimilating into white culture would

give them a better life. Many suffered greatly with untold physical and psychological abuse.

<https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/films/dawnland/>

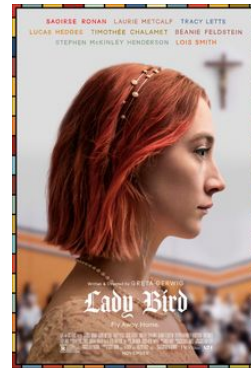


### [The Hate U Give](#)

An adaptation of Angie Thomas's bestselling novel. Stenberg plays Starr, one of the few black students in her private high school, who witnesses the police shoot her friend in

an incident that becomes a national flashpoint. The film has a great deal to say and no apologies to make about its outspoken message, even as it presents itself as a straightforward family drama. But *The Hate U Give* strikes a perfect balance between coming-of-age story and social drama. And in never sacrificing either of those two interests, it becomes a strong example of both.

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt5580266/>



### [Lady Bird](#)

A coming of age film set in Sacramento in the fall of 2002 following a high school senior as she tries to come into her own and her strained relationship with her mother.

<https://www.netflix.com/watch/80205227?source=35>



### [The Best Year of Our Lives](#)

The first war movie to ever deal with "PTSD," this film, which won the Academy Award for Best Picture, focused on a sailor, a soldier, and a Marine coming home

from World War II, each dealing with a different sort of problem. The film follows each character and their suffering as they struggle with re-obtaining employment, dealing with war injuries, and managing relationships, all while dealing with the emotional scars of battle. This film was about fifty years ahead of its time, as PTSD wouldn't be formally diagnosed or acknowledged for many decades to come.

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0036868/>



## Playlist Notes

"Wade in the Water" -- Ella Jenkins

**Ella Jenkins** (born August 6, 1924) is an American folk singer and actress. Dubbed "The First Lady of the Children's Folk Song" by the *Wisconsin State Journal*, she has been a leading performer of children's music for over fifty years. Her album, *Multicultural Children's Songs* (1995), has long been the most popular Smithsonian Folkways release. She has appeared on numerous children's television programs and in 2004, she received a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award.

"Step Lively" -- Blue Mitchell

**Richard Allen "Blue" Mitchell** (March 13, 1930 – May 21, 1979) was an American jazz, rhythm and blues, soul, rock and funk trumpeter and composer who recorded albums as leader and sideman for Riverside, Blue Note, and Mainstream Records.

"Hurt" -- Johnny Cash

**John R. Cash** (born **J. R. Cash**; February 26, 1932 – September 12, 2003) was an American singer, songwriter, musician, and actor. Much of Cash's music contained themes of sorrow, moral tribulation, and redemption, especially in the later stages of his career. He was known for his deep, calm bass-baritone voice,<sup>[a]</sup> the distinctive sound of his Tennessee Three backing band characterized by train-like chugging guitar rhythms, a rebelliousness coupled with an increasingly somber and humble demeanor, free prison concerts, and a trademark all-black stage wardrobe which earned him the nickname "**The Man in Black**".<sup>[b]</sup>

"I Will Move On Up a Little Higher" -- Mahalia Jackson

**Mahalia Jackson** (/məˈheɪliə/ *mə-HAY-lee-ə*; born **Mahala Jackson**; October 26, 1911 – January 27, 1972)<sup>[a]</sup> was an American gospel singer, widely considered the most influential gospel vocalist in history. With a career spanning 40 years, Jackson was integral to the development and spread of gospel blues in black churches throughout the U.S. During a time when racial segregation was pervasive in American society, she met considerable and unexpected success in a recording career, selling an estimated 85 million records and performing in front of integrated and secular audiences in concert halls around the world.

"Life Ain't Always Beautiful" -- Gary Allan

**Gary Allan Herzberg** (born December 5, 1967) is an American country music artist. Signed to Decca Records in 1996, Allan made his country music debut with the release of his single "Her Man", the lead-off to his gold-certified debut album *Used Heart for Sale*, which was released in 1996 on Decca. His second album, *It Would Be You*, followed in 1998. Allan's third album, *Smoke Rings in the Dark*, was his first one for MCA Nashville (to which he has been signed ever since) and his first platinum album. His next albums, *Alright Guy* (2001) and *See If I Care* (2003), both were also certified platinum while *Tough All Over* (2005) and *Greatest Hits* (2007) and *Living Hard* (2007) were all certified gold. His next two albums *Get Off on the Pain* (2010) and *Set You Free* (2013) both reached the Top 10 on the U.S. *Billboard* Top Country Albums charts, at numbers 2 and 1 respectively.

"Move On" -- Bernadette Peters and Mandy Patinkin

**Bernadette Peters** (*née Lazzara*; born February 28, 1948) is an American actress, singer, and children's book author. Over a career spanning five decades, she has starred in musical theatre, television and film, performed in solo concerts and released recordings. She is a critically acclaimed Broadway performer, having received seven nominations for Tony Awards, winning two (plus an honorary award), and nine nominations for Drama Desk Awards, winning three. Four of the Broadway cast albums on which she has starred have won Grammy Awards.

**Mandel Bruce Patinkin** (/pəˈtɪnkɪn/; born November 30, 1952) is an American actor and singer known for his work on stage and screen.

Patinkin is best known for his portrayal of Íñigo Montoya in Rob Reiner's 1987 film *The Princess Bride* and of SSA Jason Gideon on the crime-drama television series *Criminal Minds*. His other film credits include Miloš Forman's *Ragtime* (1981), Barbra Streisand's *Yentl* (1983), *Alien Nation* (1988), and Warren Beatty's *Dick Tracy* (1990). He has appeared in major roles in television series such as *Chicago Hope*, *Dead Like Me*, *Criminal Minds*, and as Saul Berenson in the Showtime series *Homeland*.

“Look the Other Way” - Justin Townes Earle

**Justin Townes Earle** (January 4, 1982 – August 20, 2020) was an American singer-songwriter and musician. After his debut, EP *Yuma* (2007), he released eight full-length albums. He was recognized with an Americana Music Award for Emerging Artist of the Year in 2009 and for Song of the Year in 2011 for "Harlem River Blues". His father is country rock artist Steve Earle.

“The Way Out Is Through” -- Nine Inch Nails

**Nine Inch Nails**, commonly abbreviated as **NIN** and stylized as **NIM**, is an American industrial rock band formed in 1988 in Cleveland, Ohio. Singer, songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, and producer Trent Reznor was the only permanent member of the band until the official addition of English musician Atticus Ross in 2016. The band's debut album, *Pretty Hate Machine* (1989), was released via TVT Records. After feuding with TVT about how to promote the album, Reznor signed with Interscope Records and released the EP *Broken* (1992). The following Nine Inch Nails albums, *The Downward Spiral* (1994) and *The Fragile* (1999), were released to critical acclaim and commercial success.

“Be Here Now” -- Mason Jennings

**Mason Jennings** (born March 19, 1975 in Honolulu) is an American folk-pop singer-songwriter. He is well known for his songwriting and distinctive voice

“Drawn to the Blood” -- Sufjan Stevens

**Sufjan Stevens** (/ˈsuːfjɑːn/ *SOOF-yahn*; born July 1, 1975) is an American singer, songwriter, and multi-instrumentalist. He has released eight solo studio albums and multiple collaborative albums with other artists. Stevens has received Academy Award and Grammy Award nominations.

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