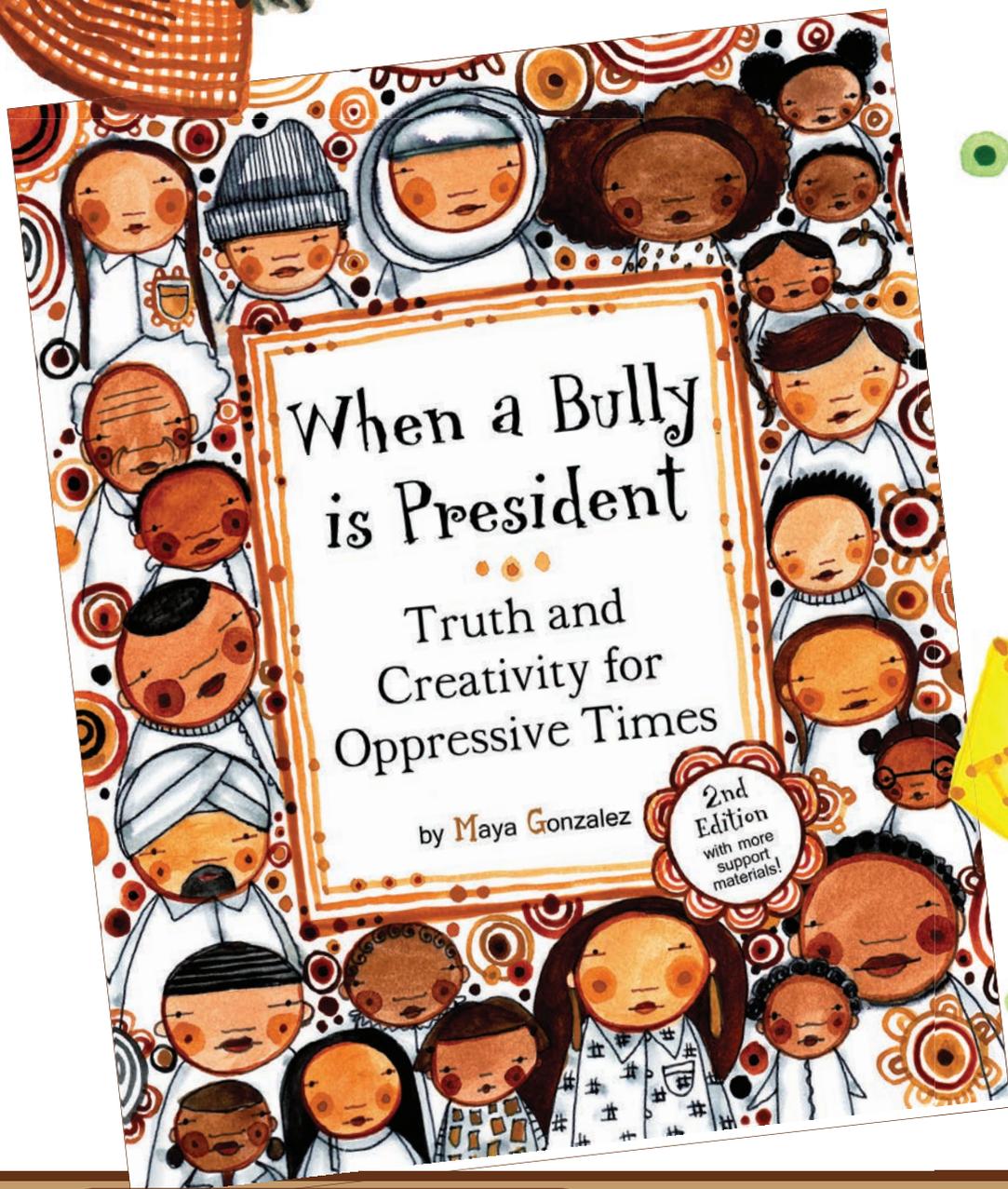
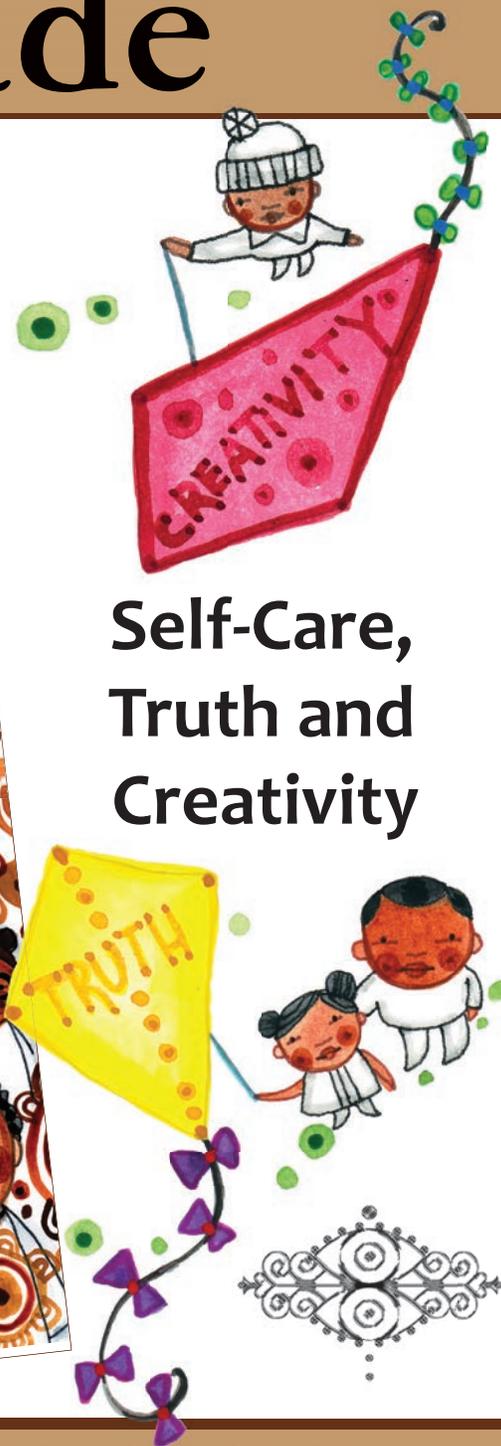


# Reader's Guide

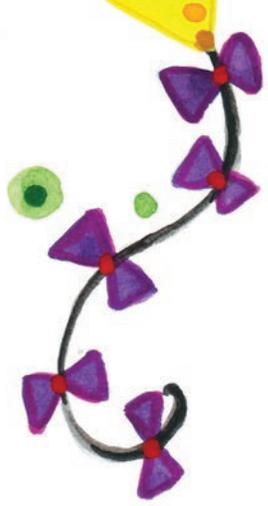


**Self-Care,  
Truth and  
Creativity**



*When a Bully is President:*  
*Truth and Creativity for Oppressive Times*  
written and illustrated by Maya Gonzalez  
published by Reflection Press. 2017

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Reading Guide created by Maya Gonzalez ([www.mayagonzalez.com](http://www.mayagonzalez.com))

More resources for the book at [www.reflectionpress.com/truth](http://www.reflectionpress.com/truth)

*When a Bully is President: Truth and Creativity for Oppressive Times* is available internationally and can be purchased through Reflection Press ([www.reflectionpress.com/truth](http://www.reflectionpress.com/truth)), through most online retailers or ask your local bookstore to order.

Bookstores, Libraries and Retailers can order through Ingram within the US and internationally.

Welcome! This guide gives adult readers some background and support to help kids on their journey through the book.

## Introduction

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We live in powerful times. The tradition of marginalized people gathering together to work toward equity is on the rise. Reclamation of suppressed history, genuine representation in media, singing out in own voice, creative expression in full force are signs of this change. Business is not as usual. We are strengthening ourselves like never before to make this final leap into a world that respects and values all people. In this spirit, this is not your usual children's book. While it does rise from over 20 years of working with kids of color and creativity, it moves into the areas that we must reclaim.



This book is not a hero's tale or the journey of a brave fight. **This book is for the in between moments**, the middle of the night, the long afternoon: those moments when kids are haunted by what someone said to them in the hallway, a sideways stare at the store or what they heard on the news. It's about gathering strength for life's every day journey and supporting a strong full self all the time.

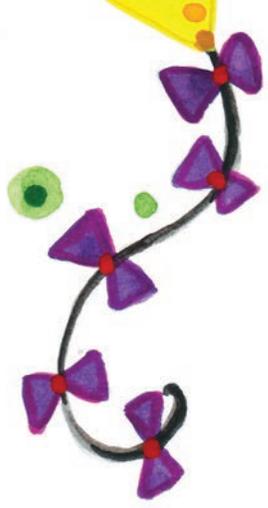
I'm calling it a self-care book for kids because at the end of the day, that's what it boils down to. **Self-care is about centering ourselves and our communities as marginalized people.** This is the heart of social justice. This is what creates equity first within ourselves and from there seeds out into our communities. As Gloria Anzaldúa said, *"I change myself, I change the world."*

**This reader's guide begins with the foundations:**

- *The 4 Basics*
- *The 4 Lessons*
- *Notes*

**The guide then moves on to the book and how to use it:**

- *Journey through the Book*
- *Ways to Use the Book in Different Settings*
- *Additional Reading List for Adults*



We are stronger together.

We see the truth in each other.

We focus on self love and community love first.

We use our creativity to create a new reality.

Together truth, love and creativity are rising within us.

Together we are strong.

# THE 4 BASICS

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Brief description of the frame, lens and tools

1. *HOLISTIC FRAME*
2. *LENS CENTERS POC/INDIGENOUS/LGBTQ*
3. *TRUTH*
4. *CREATIVITY*

## 1. EXPANDING PERSPECTIVE/EXPANDING SELF: the Holistic Frame

To begin, I use a Holistic frame. I want to mention this for those who like to see the big picture but also because it's a slightly different way of thinking. While parts of the Holistic frame may sound similar to SEL (Social and Emotional Learning) it is structurally and dynamically different. The Holistic begins by acknowledging and welcoming each person's full experience. 'Holistic' means that we make room for *everything*. This makes all of our personal resources available which makes us stronger.

**Holistic SELF:** The whole self includes the BODY, HEART, MIND, SPIRIT as well as the UNKNOWN.

Each of these areas is important and has power, strength, wisdom and often something to heal or transform. The areas are not separate but one self. Bringing our awareness to all of these resources as a whole makes us stronger whether we're at home, in the classroom, in the neighborhood or in the world.

This may be a shift in perspective. Ironically we are commonly taught to divide our self, and limiting or sacrificing parts of our self may be considered noble. Self hate may even be considered noble. But we need these resources and shifting our perspective can make them more accessible.

This step leads to the next.

**Holistic CONTEXT:** It is equally if not at times more important to include a person *in context*.

Historical context allows everything affecting the self to also be present, whether the full self is consciously aware of its impact or not, as can be the case for kids and many of us.

Context includes the FAMILY, COMMUNITY, SOCIETY, HISTORY and ANCESTRY.

Beginning with a Holistic frame both inside and out helps to ensure that kids from marginalized communities are welcomed and seen for who they really are, including cultural differences and any and all survival skills that may have been or still are necessary. Without a framework of the full self in full context, elements of the self that don't fit into the Western perspective may be easily judged, dismissed or made to comply either by the child or the educator in a school setting. We need to reframe coping skills within a historical context, especially if they've been maintained over many generations for survival. The more we can see the context, the more compassion and empathy will rise for ourselves and for our kids and help reframe any blame or burden that may have been falsely taken on.

Acknowledging the full self in context has another important effect. It immediately begins to engage aspects of the self that have previously been considered dormant, off limits or nonexistent. Simple awareness often activates the imagination, helps emotions move or inspires curiosity and action where before there was none.

In fact, the power of acknowledging the full self in context cannot be underestimated. This above all else has been denied marginalized people and is often an unconscious weight we carry. Embracing a perspective that makes us visible is an immediate equalizer and transformative agent. It begins to undo an entire education system based on partial or complete erasure of us from history. When we see our full self in context all the time we begin to see through the illusion created by consistent and persistent invisibility, silence and stereotypes of us in public media and educational materials. We begin to see the larger systems of bullying and how they are affecting our lives right now. This kind of critical thinking is exactly what we need to nurture in our kids to stay aware today and always.

As an adult reader, you can begin by holding a Holistic perspective inside and out for yourself first, and for your students or kids second. Always begin with yourself, that way you speak from firsthand experience. And you benefit from having your full self and power!

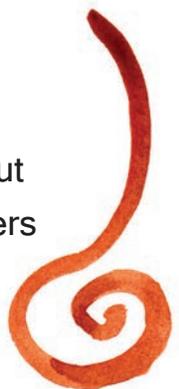
Because the book is created from a Holistic frame, it can hold you as you become more familiar with your own Holistic nature. As your self-awareness grows, you will see the Holistic frame in the book more clearly and be able to address it more confidently and directly with kids when needed. Give yourself time to grow into this. Know that the stronger you are from the inside out, the stronger your support for the kids will be. Let your thinking expand. Don't hurry or pretend. The slower you go the stronger you are.

## 2. REFOCUSING THE LENS/BALANCING POWER

The Holistic frame sets a new stage. It calls forth the whole person in full context which begins to map out our *larger reality*, one that naturally includes us and our real experience, different than the one taught in schools and seen in popular media. Holding this greater awareness of our own identity teaches us about equity firsthand. It creates a reality wherein you can grow beyond individual experience and see yourself as part of the larger sweep of history. The more we see real history and ourselves in it, the more our current reality comes into focus and we can see how it has been shaped by the past. We begin to see the past in the present and where inequity still lies.

Speaking of inequity. Just as acknowledging the full self engages the full self, when we center our most marginalized communities we create a more whole society. Using a POC/Indigenous/LGBTQ lens is a respectful move toward balancing and reframing social value. It is a commitment toward self and community love.

It mirrors the current Western frame and similarly includes ALL PEOPLE, but instead of centering the experience and lives of the most privileged, it centers the most marginalized. This refocus opens up the possibility of true power rising instead of perpetuating the current dynamic of power-over and models an immediate and accessible step to help transform generations



of discrimination. Those not immediately reflected in this lens are invited to dive deeper in order to understand their own experience in this context and uncover their own tools toward equity.



### 3. TRUTH

How much truth we can have in our life is often an indicator of how much well being and support we have available, even during stressful times. But those of us from marginalized communities seldom see our truth out in the world. Instead we witness truths about humanity, privilege, colonization even history and science go by the way side to make room for stereotypes about us and our experiences. Lying is a tool to maintain bullying and create a massive distortion of reality.

What can we do to make life more real for us in the here and now?

We can call OUT truth: truth about what a bully is, what our real history is, truth about our cultures, our communities and experiences, even truth about ourselves. We are not invisible. We are not the history that has been told about us or the lies that we hear in the media or the schoolyard. We are living truth. When we claim the truth of who we are we create a foundation of support beyond the lies. Calling out truth helps us build on our own history, our own cultures and communities even our own selves. It helps us build up a reality that is respectfully ours and separate from a culture that marginalizes us. It allows us to stand separate and witness the lies without letting them in.

It is important to remember that each community is different and unique. But experiences of discrimination in America have similarities. Again, because communities are different, marginalization is also different, but it can all fit under one umbrella. Bullying. Speaking the truth about bullying helps us see the overall patterns of discrimination that connect us and the potential of working together more to dismantle it.

## 4. CREATIVITY:

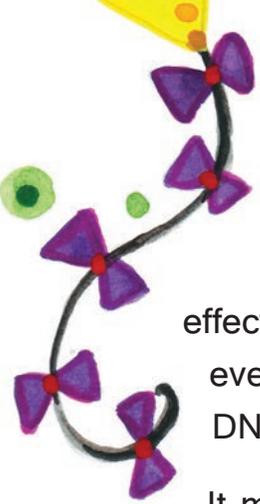
We are each born with a powerful resource to help us navigate the world, our creativity. When we are very young it keeps us investigating, learning and curious. As we grow older our creative thought revises, reorganizes, rebirths, renews, keeping life relevant and fresh. It's how we learn about ourselves and digest the world. Creative expression is the foundation of culture and why the suppression of creativity/culture is often at the root of maintaining control over a people. It's one of the first and most effective ways to sever a person or people from their sense of meaning and value in the world. For a long time, it's been the first thing cut from schools and federal budgets.

Your creativity gives you heart and spirit, power and renewal. Exercising your creative power, especially for yourself is an act of reclamation honored in many of our cultures. It makes you naturally stronger, because it makes you more you. Expression not suppression is the key!

This is especially potent for kids. They are learning about power during a time when they have very little agency in the things that affect their lives. It lets them explore the power that is theirs, value their own resources and center themselves. This makes our kids more resilient from the inside out as they grow up and into their power using creativity as a learning ground. They will have a better understanding of true power and how it can rise because they will know their own.

In the Holistic frame, creativity is used for processing experience and knowing the self. This is how I learned to negotiate my own life experiences and what I teach through my *Claiming Face* curriculum. For over 20 years I have shared with kids and educators how to use self-portraiture as a tool for self-awareness that helps build the powerful bond between self and creativity. I have witnessed amazing shifts in kids who needed this same kind of support and reflection to become stronger in the classroom and in their selves as I did. The more stressed out a child is the more effective this kind of work can be.





## A NOTE ABOUT OPPRESSIVE TIMES

Research is finally exposing what many of us have known all along.

Living with oppression creates mental health issues. It can have lifelong effects on the heart and mind that extend to the body and spirit. They're even finding that over many generations this kind of stress can change DNA.

It makes sense that we have toughened to survive or set parts of ourselves aside to get on with what needs to be done. We don't want our kids any more vulnerable or at risk on the streets. Talking about self love in the face of reality can seem frivolous and light, but I encourage you to try the work yourself. Self love is not light and fluffy. In fact it is one of the most radical things you can do in the face of oppression. It takes great strength to stand in the full truth of who you are without judgment.

**Reclaiming simple, but deceptively powerful tools like truth and creativity are evolutionary steps that lead away from America's power-over history and instead support true power rising from the inside out, from the bottom up.** This is the change we're looking for, a shift in the use of power and where it comes from. Building on the amazing work of our ancestors, we're ready to make a leap into new approaches. We're ready to bring our ancestors with us and continue a new way toward equity.

Experiment with the exercises in the book. Draw your own self out. You may be surprised. As you begin to see bullying behavior in the world around you, you may also begin to see it in yourself, often directed towards yourself. This is how change begins. Just seeing. This is probably the most supportive thing you can do for our kids. Come to love your own self. Truth and creativity will support you.

Remember the Holistic frame too. Current research confirms why this approach is necessary to create lasting and effective change for ourselves and our communities. Every aspect of the self is affected by oppression. We need every aspect of our self to address and finally be resolved with it. Let's do this.

# THE 4 LESSONS

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Brief descriptions of the underlying lessons

1. *MAKING THE CONNECTIONS/When a Bully is President*
2. *SELF LOVE VS. SELF-ESTEEM/ACTION VS. ENGAGEMENT*
3. *READ ALOUD, SHARE ALOUD/MAKING ROOM FOR MARGINALIZED EXPERIENCE*
4. *THE IMPORTANCE OF REFLECTION/PAINTING A NEW AMERICA*

## 1. MAKING THE CONNECTIONS

What does *When a Bully is President* mean?

**First there is the literal meaning**, when a bully is actually the president. Many bullies have been president. Although the Constitution includes some wonderful ideas, our history is clearly rooted in bullying and it's still an integral part of the US today. It appears that a country founded on bullying gives rise to leadership positions that bully. Bullying begets bullying.

Even presidents who contributed a great deal of overall good in their time bullied many marginalized communities through their position as president.

**Second there is the metaphorical meaning**, a bully can feel like the boss of everything or they may be the boss in some way. This means a bully *can be anybody* in authority or power. It might be the 'president' of the playground. Or the 'president' of a group of kids at school. It might even be a family member or a teacher, a principal or a cop. These lessons are not exclusive to when a bully is president, but whenever anyone bullies.

By framing it within the history of the US we come to understand the larger historical context of bullying in America and how that story sifts down into everyday experience. We can't have a country based on bullying without bullying being valued and acted out in smaller ways.

## 2. SELF-ESTEEM VS. SELF LOVE/ENGAGEMENT VS. ACTION

With a POC/Indigenous/LGBTQ lens the focus changes and everything turns toward bringing awareness, authority and value into ourselves as marginalized people. To accomplish this self love is preferable over self-esteem. Self love is ours. It cannot be taken away because it lives within. It's the love to accept all of our self, even the stressed out parts. This centers our focus inward making us powerful agents regardless of the changing tides around us.

Self-esteem on the other hand can catch us in a trap. It comes from evaluating our accomplishments and receiving outside validation and approval of who we are or what we've done within a system that marginalizes us. This is external approval and can come and go or never come at all. It's self love and community love that will make us stronger from the inside out. This will make us whole.

As we change the focus toward self love something else shifts. The power of the bully to make us focus on them decreases. We value ourselves more than listening to their bullying of us or defending who we are to them. Walking away from a bully disengages us from them and engages us with ourselves. When we engage with ourself first, we can more easily open a path toward more action that supports self and community love. This shift in focus or disengagement dismantles bullying in the moment while opening up the much needed energy to dismantle the root causes of bullying in our life and the world.

Just as bullying begets bullying, self love begets more love and moves us toward more action that centers ourselves and our communities. The more we value ourselves and disengage from bullying, the more we embody this kind of action. Eventually self love and right action become a way of life and activism becomes a part of every moment.

## 3. READ ALOUD, SHARE ALOUD

Allow kids to read as much of the text aloud as possible. Literally giving voice to truth about our communities is an act of self love and breaks the silence and invisibility of marginalization, even if we're acknowledging challenging experiences.

In fact, it's especially important when we're acknowledging the hard parts

of our history and experience because this is what's been hidden or lied about in our popular media and school books.

Voicing our kids with what a bully is, the basics of historical bullying and the names of marginalized communities makes it easier for them to make connections within themselves about their experiences and even reach out to other kids who may be having similar experiences.

And lastly, invite kids from different communities, especially the ones featured in the book, to share what they love about their communities. And if and when it feels right how they experience marginalization.

## 4. REFLECTION

The statistics from the Cooperative Children's Book Center document the level of silence and invisibility occurring for marginalized communities within the children's book industry. 2016 Statistics show that in order for POC/Indigenous communities to have equal representation in children's books as white Americans, we would need to create over 1400 more books per year.

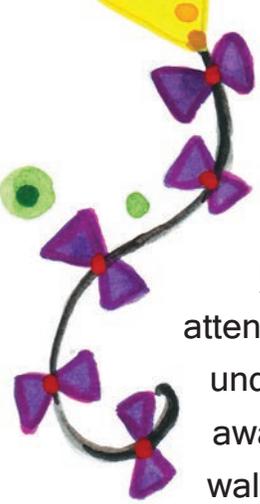
The message is unavoidable. Kids from marginalized communities aren't important, their invisibility is.

But kids can do something about it. They can use their own creative power to literally paint a new picture of America. One where they are centered and seen and can step forward to be heard.

In fact, reflection is so important and we are in such desperate need of POC/Indigenous/LGBTQ children's book authors and artist that I included the link to my free online program for kids inside the book, *Write Now! Make Books*: [www.writenowmakebooks.com](http://www.writenowmakebooks.com). Please encourage kids to learn the book making process. We need their voices!

You can also learn more about my 3Rs of *Children's Books as a Radical Act* along with infographics related to the invisibility of POC/Indigenous communities in children's books at [www.reflectionpress.com/radicalact](http://www.reflectionpress.com/radicalact)





# NOTES:

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**BULLY:** You will notice that very little is said about bullies and little attention is paid directly to them in this book. Very little. This is not about understanding or engaging with them, or judging them. It is about bully awareness and learning to center ourselves. The book literally models walking away from bullying and centering ourselves.

**NATURE:** None of the imagery in the book is indoors. It's outdoors or in nature. Nature is always and forever our home. We are a part of nature and nature is a part of us. If nothing else, this is a constant truth you can rely on.

**REPETITION:** This is used to help the main ideas take root and become part of casual thinking and speaking.



# JOURNEY THROUGH THE BOOK/PLACES TO PAUSE:

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With the 4 basics and the 4 lessons in mind,

## THE JOURNEY OPENS:

- **We come together and share why it's important to be together. (pp4/5)**

It's valuable for PoC and Indigenous people, even kids, to have space and time that are just us sometimes. It opens up the possibility of sharing with each other what it's like to be Americans. We have very different experiences (to varying degrees) than white Americans and seldom have places to talk to each other about the similarities and how our experiences are related. Sometimes it's not about talking, but just being able to learn about each other and play. Relax.

***\*Pause:** look at the art. See who is present. As the reader you can keep in mind that the same words open and close the book. They mark the opening and closing of the journey. When you reach the end, take a moment to come back and look at the first spread again.*

## ESTABLISHING TRUTH:

- **Calling OUT what a bully is. (pp6/7)**

Truth begins by stating OUTLOUD what a bully is. This keeps you aware of exactly what bullying is so you can recognize it and name it when needed. It also creates a base of truth and clears the path for more truth.

- **Truth in history--Context is EVERYTHING. (pp8-15)**

Understand that being bullied did not begin with YOU. In fact, it may have nothing to do with you personally. It's not your fault. It's about larger sweeps of history over a long period of

time with lots of twists, turns and secrets. When you know the truth about US history instead of the stories that are taught in school you can see the past in the present much more clearly and see the origins of bullying in this country.

**Pause: REMEMBER, YOU ARE HISTORY:**

*\*seek out stories about history that respectfully include all the people involved.*

*\*know how you and your family fit into US history.*

*\*do you have family stories that connect to US history?*

*\*learn about your ancestors and their experiences in the US.*

*\*question how this history may still be affecting your lineage, especially you and your family today.*

*\*why did I choose to use a bus to show everyone together?*

• **The big and the small picture. Seeing through and making connections. (pp16/17)**

As you freely engage truth you begin to see a whole system of bullying that has risen up in the US. And you can see who it's still impacting. This kind of awareness supports heart-based critical thinking, which once started cannot be stopped. You begin to see the very large and the very small and make sense out of your world in a truth based way. This is sane-making and strengthens the heart.

**Pause: bully/president as metaphor-can be anyone who bullies.**

## STRENGTHENING A PATH OF SELF LOVE:

• **Activism when you can. (pp18/19)**

DOING is important and taking action feels good especially when you begin to see the bigger truth. But living everyday life is what most of us do most of the time, especially for a kid. So this book is about what you can do every day to make you stronger.

- **Turning the Focus toward BEING over DOING keeps you stronger. (pp20/21)**

The journey began by establishing truth and with this truth you could make connections to help you better understand both the world and yourself in it. You've begun to see the big and small picture of bullying in America, now what can you do about it?

Remember the definition of bullying? It said it was *about hurting the heart and spirit even if the body is not hurt*. The antidote to bullying is simple. It's self love.

Self love is about BEING exactly who you are, no more and no less. Not a better you, not an older, smarter, cooler you. Just you. Regular awesome you, even the you that messes up sometimes, because everybody messes up sometimes.

Self love is the strongest action you can take in a world that bullies folks like us. It's revolutionary! SELF LOVE is the heart of centering PoC / Indigenous/LGBTQ people. And it starts with you. How do you do it?

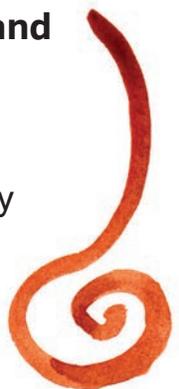
***Pause:** a great time to find out what everyone is good, medium and even bad at!*

- **BEing is more important than the bully and their bullying. (pp22/23)**

Practice focusing on yourself and not the bully. This is one of the most important ways to love yourself. Focus on yourself. Bullies are trying to distract you and make you focus on them. Don't do it. Focus on yourself first and second and third. It sounds selfish, but it's not. You will see.

- **When we center ourselves there is room for all of our Feelings and our Ancestors. (pp24/25)**

Just like there is room for truth in history, there is room for truth in feelings. It helps to remove judgment from your feelings and just pay attention to feeling them. Some of your feelings may be a result of how you or your ancestors endured difficult times. Making room for your own feelings and room for your ancestors is a way you



change the present by making room for the past, including the past that lives on in you.

***Pause:*** depending on the ages of the kids, this may be a good time to connect ancestral stories with real history with feelings with today. Note how nature imagery is used.

- **Letting the feelings flow. (pp26/27)**

Making room for your feelings and your ancestors makes a big difference. It makes you stronger when it's time to take action and your feelings can help you understand where your action is needed most and what kind of action is best. Are you a history sleuth? A neighborhood activist? A school organizer and artist? Everyone has something unique to contribute when the time is right.

- **Ancestors everywhere. (pp28/29)**

Artists, writers, activists, visionaries.

***Pause:*** has anyone heard of any of these names before? You can learn a tiny bit more about them on pages 46-47 of the book. You can learn a LOT about them in the library or online.

- **De-escalation makes more room for you. (pp30/31)**

Every step counts. As I discussed more on page 10 about action vs engagement, this book is about staying strong in yourself. From this place you know what action is right for you.

## SELF AS ART / ART AS ACTIVISM / ESTABLISHING A CREATIVE PRACTICE

- **Creativity and nature help you hold your feelings. (pp32-35)**

Self-portraits are a powerful way to express your feelings and can serve as a safe place for you to get to know yourself and your feelings better. Establishing a personal relationship with your creative power and using it to take care of yourself changes your inner and outer world and how you think about yourself. You are an artist. You have creative power. Use

art when you're having challenging feelings. This is a perfect place to put them, see them and work them out.

**Pause:** *free download of my 3 Rules of Art mini-guide available through the Reflection Press website ([www.reflectionpress.com/claimingface](http://www.reflectionpress.com/claimingface))*

- **Developing the witness self. (pp36/37)**

Practice documenting your bully experiences and showing someone, or writing it down for yourself. This takes the truth of who you are and brings it deeper into yourself. It makes you and your truth more real. The more you can see through bullying and witness your experiences for what they are, and share about them, the stronger you will become in every way. The more truth will live inside of you. The more you will know that you are truth and bullying is not.

**Pause:** *this is a good place to read aloud. It makes the tools more accessible. You could also model a sample of what it looks like yourself.*

- **Changing your world with reflection and creative power (pp38-41)**

You always begin with you. Establishing truth in yourself is essential. Once that is in place, truth will naturally expand out into your world, to your family and friends, your community and even people at a distance. Creating a world of respectful reflection for PoC and Indigenous people changes the face of America to what is true.

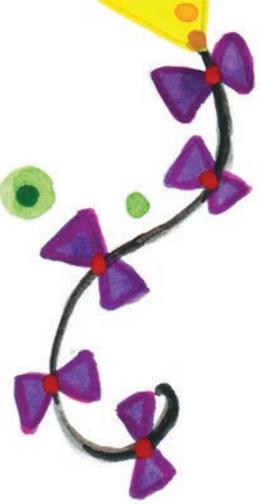
**Pause:** *You can reference the current state of affairs in children's books and why it is so important for us to paint a true picture of America ourselves.*

## THE JOURNEY CLOSSES

- **We close together and restate why it's important to come together (pp42/43)**

The journey begins and ends with the same words, but different images. This sameness and difference gives you, the reader/





listener the chance to see how you've changed and stayed the same through the book. Take a moment to notice. How are you or your understanding of the world different than before you read this book?

***Pause:*** *The first time you read the book, go back and forth between the first image and the last. Use this action as an opportunity to talk about what you thought at the beginning of the book and what you think now. About bullying. About history. About your community. About yourself. Your feelings.*



# WAYS TO USE the book:

## IN THE CLASSROOM:

My mind is exploding with the different ways to use the book in the classroom. I won't bore you with all of them. I will say that this is a great opportunity to use self-portraiture as a tool to bring art, history, social science and social justice into the classroom. The book ties into numerous subjects.

And journaling!

**Tying it in to different subjects will support the Holistic frame and give more weight to the experience.**

**It's also valuable to leave the book available for individual students or small groups of students to work with independently.** Encourage projects that celebrate one's own unique community as well as gather communities together face forward toward equity. For example, what do Mexicans and Muslims, Nigerians and Nicaraguans have in common?

**The Community Project is a good way to focus and share the work.** Doing it more than once would provide the opportunity to see what's changed over a period of time. For example at the beginning and the end of a semester. Available in the hardcover book or as a separate download at [www.reflectionpress.com/truth](http://www.reflectionpress.com/truth)

**If/when bullying occurs at school:** bring out the book and the art materials. It's better if it's already been introduced separate from actual bullying and kids are familiar with it, but life isn't always convenient that way.

Use the form to strengthen the kids from the inside out. Don't specifically focus on the bully or the bullied. Support each child in focusing on their selves. Often there are underlying stories that play into these experiences that adults don't always fully understand. Set the stage for the bigger perspective to be visible and see what happens. It may take time to

create change, but if you use the book consistently and continue to tie it to your other subjects, it will become a go to for difficult times. The kids will begin pulling it out and using it to center themselves and resolve things.

Changing the way we approach power-over situations changes everything.

My 3 Rules for ART are made for the classroom and support creative expression without judgment. Learn more at [www.reflectionpress.com/claimingface](http://www.reflectionpress.com/claimingface).

## AT THE LIBRARY OR AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS:

The sections on *In the Classroom* and *Alone* are also valuable for the Library or Afterschool Programs.

Also an opportunity to bring in:

- Community Project  
(available as a separate PDF, [www.reflectionpress.com/truth](http://www.reflectionpress.com/truth))
- Sample Claiming Face projects and the 3 Rules of Art  
(multiple free downloads available, [www.reflectionpress.com/claimingface](http://www.reflectionpress.com/claimingface))
- Write Now! Make Books: free online program for kids  
(video series and downloadable field guide, [www.writenowmakebooks.com](http://www.writenowmakebooks.com))

(P.S. LIBRARIANS ROCK!!!!)

## AT HOME:

Our kids are often affected by the world around them without their being able to fully understand yet what's going on. Moodiness, melt downs, nightmares. An increase in fear or anger or grief. Even more power struggles as the world goes through such big changes. It affects all of us.

Familiarity with the book, creating the art, keeping a journal, sharing with family and friends creates a foundation for a kid to hold onto for their selves. It helps show them their power and agency.

During especially challenging times, reading the book in and of itself has a calming effect. Begin there. Bring out the art materials. Tie them to the book. Art

will not always get made, but it's important to know that action is available.

Don't be afraid of their art. Creating challenging imagery makes sense. Witness. Try not to judge. Just describe what you see in the art in simple terms and let them say if there's more to know about it.

If you can, make your own art. Show them that this is something you too value and can learn from.

## ALONE:

**If you're an adult and you know a POC/Indigenous/LGBTQ kid who is struggling with being bullied, the book can be a lifeline.** You may not be in a position to do very much, but providing much needed reflection and personal tools that cannot be taken away will help make them stronger. Remember this is a self-care book for kids.

**Providing art materials would be another way to show you support them.**

If you can, be available. You may be someone they want to share their art or words with later. But don't push.

I wanted to create a book that could be returned to again and again for support.

If there is no one available for a child, strongly encourage them to use the book and learn to 'witness themselves' through their art and writing. Tell them I teach this and I wrote this book, because this is how I got through and how I became strong as an adult. Tell them I send love through the book.

*Love maya*





# ADDITIONAL READING LIST for ADULTS:

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## FREE DOWNLOADS:

- Claiming Face Sample Projects and the 3 Rules of Art
  - [www.reflectionpress.com/claimingface](http://www.reflectionpress.com/claimingface)
- Community Project & Coloring Pages
  - [www.reflectionpress.com/truth](http://www.reflectionpress.com/truth)
- Write Now! Make Books
  - [www.writenowmakebooks.com](http://www.writenowmakebooks.com)

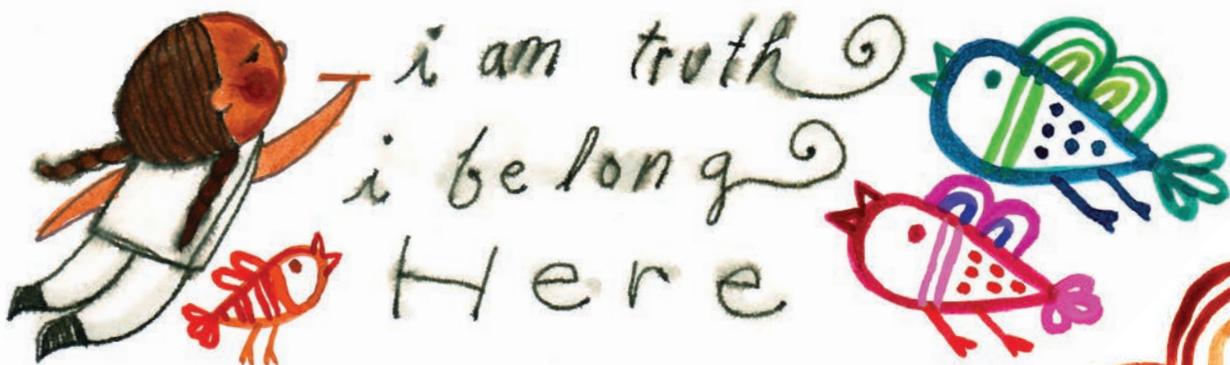
## ARTICLES ONLINE:

- [greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/why\\_dont\\_students\\_take\\_social\\_emotional\\_learning\\_home](http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/why_dont_students_take_social_emotional_learning_home)
- [www.pacer.org/bullying/resources/stats.asp](http://www.pacer.org/bullying/resources/stats.asp)
- [www.goodtherapy.org/blog/psychpedia/oppression](http://www.goodtherapy.org/blog/psychpedia/oppression)
- [www.psychologytoday.com/articles/199911/self-esteem-vs-self-respect](http://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/199911/self-esteem-vs-self-respect)
- My blog posts about When a Bully is President book
  - [www.mayagonzalez.com/blog/tag/when-a-bully-is-president/](http://www.mayagonzalez.com/blog/tag/when-a-bully-is-president/)
- 3R's of *Children's Books as a Radical Act* and related articles, blog posts and infographs
  - [www.reflectionpress.com/radicalact](http://www.reflectionpress.com/radicalact)

## BOOKS:

- *The Prophet* by Kahlil Gibran
- *The Fifth Agreement* by Don Miguel Ruiz and Don Jose Ruiz
- *The Five Levels of Attachment* by Don Miguel Ruiz Jr.
- *Summerhill, A Radical Approach to Child Rearing* by A. S. Neill
- *Braiding Sweetgrass, Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teaching of Plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer
- *1491 New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus* by Charles C. Mann

- *The Other Slavery, The Uncovered Story of Indian Enslavement in America* by Andres Resendez
- *Waking the Tiger: Healing Trauma* by Peter A. Levine
- *Trauma-Proofing Your Kids, A Parent's Guide for Instilling Confidence, Joy and Resilience* by Peter A. Levine and Maggie Kline
- *The Nature of Personal Reality* by Jane Roberts
- *Parenting from the Inside Out* by Daniel Siegel
- *A General Theory of Love* (for its Limbic references) by Lewis, Amini and Lannon
- *Arching Backwards: The Mystical Initiation of a Contemporary Woman* by Janet Adler
- My other books available through Reflection Press:
  - » *Claiming Face: Self-Empowerment through Self-Portraiture - An Educator's Guide to building the powerful link between creativity and a sense of self*  
(free resources and excerpts available at [www.reflectionpress.com/claimingface](http://www.reflectionpress.com/claimingface))
  - » *Gender Now Coloring & Activity Books*  
(free resources available at [www.reflectionpress.com/genderguide](http://www.reflectionpress.com/genderguide))
  - » *The Gender Wheel: a story about bodies and gender for every body*
  - » *They She He Me: Free to Be!*
  - » *I See Peace* - available in paperback and e-book  
(e-book is free every 1st of the month, [www.reflectionpress.com/ebook](http://www.reflectionpress.com/ebook))
  - » *Believing is Seeing: Daily Journal of Transformation - 31 Day Workbook*



Always remember.

We are stronger together.

We see the truth in each other.

We focus on self love and community love first.

We use our creativity to create a new reality.

Together truth, love and creativity are rising within us.

**T**ogether we are strong.

