



January 2023

Confronting Tragedy While Seeking Grace, Mercy, & Justice for All

Where to begin... simply, many of us are reeling and this message won't be one that diminishes that painful reality with carefully placed words that feign understanding when it's impossible to find. Loss is difficult but when it is a consequence of violence, it is compounded by the violation of theft. Something feels stolen from us- a life or lives, a sense of safety, a sense of stasis, a sense of belonging. We can feel unmoored. In short, many of our community members are experiencing this unmooring. The mass shootings that gripped our Asian/ Asian American/ Pacific Islander communities in California during the Lunar New Year celebrations in Monterey Park and in Half Moon Bay advanced fear and uncertainty for a community that has been confronting a wave of hate crimes in recent years. Please know that your healing is paramount and doesn't have to be rushed or explained at the expense of decentering yourself during this time.

Recently, Tyre Nichols became the latest hash-tagged name on the lips of many in mourning, as Tyre was the latest victim of the systemic plague that is police brutality. Another life stolen. Snatched from the comforting embrace of those who called him "son," "father," "loved one." Robbed from years of life yet lived. For those of us continually bearing witness to these tragedies, healing can feel short-lived. There doesn't seem to be time to recover from the seismic shift that systematic violence visits upon the community that it impacts, particularly for those who share an identity with the victims. For we are them and they are us and often, our mourning begins well before the footage goes viral to the rest of the world.

For those of you in the midst of exhaustion, frustration, and or emotional toil- I won't ask you to lean in. I won't ask you to be brave. I won't ask you to labor. I won't ask you to share your personal traumas to advance the understanding of others who haven't lived it. I won't ask anything of you because you owe none of us anything more than simply *being* while you grieve. Your courage comes through in your insistence to continue to exist. Please give yourself grace. Take the time you need; take up the space you need, even if it's through the choice of silence as you process, and please access the resources of support available to help you get to the other side.

May not only justice but a sense of peace, find us all...

Humbly Yours in Solidarity,

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