GBV AoR HELPDESK
Gender Based Violence in Emergencies

Annotated Bibliography: Collective Care Processes and Practices

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Introduction

Collective care is a strategy that can be used by gender-based violence (GBV) programmers, researchers, activists, and other GBV specialists to sustain each other in work to prevent and respond to GBV in emergencies. This annotated bibliography provides an overview of relevant literature and material (including articles, blogs and podcasts) on this topic, to signpost those working on GBV in emergencies to relevant sources of information. The GBV AoR Helpdesk has also produced a tip sheet that provides additional information on collective care.[1] .

Collective care refers to groups having a communal responsibility for every individual member of that group.[2] A group could be of any kind—for example, work colleagues, activist and advocacy colleagues, friend groups, etc. The key to collective care is that everyone in the group supports strategies for the health and well-being of individuals in the group, rather than individuals managing that responsibility alone.

Collective care can take a variety of forms according to the needs and preferences of the groups who agree to support each other. It can be formalized or informal, enduring or temporary, lasting until it meets the needs of the group and the individuals within the group. Importantly, collective care is a **process** as well as **practice**, one that should be considered iterative—that is, a source of ongoing learning and adaptation.

> Collective care is a radical and necessary "Feminist, political strategy to ensure the feminist movement sustainability and our personal resilience." (FRIDA, 2016).
>
> Practicing Individual and Collective Self-care at FRIDA

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[1] The tip sheet is available here. https://www.sddirect.org.uk/sites/default/files/2024-02/GBV%20AoR%20HD%2024%20-%20Collective%20Care%20Tip%20Sheet.pdf
[2] From ActBuildChange

Articles

Bloom, S. (2003). Caring for the Caregiver: Avoiding and Treating Vicarious Trauma. In *Sexual Assault: Victimization Across the Lifespan*. Publisher: GW Medical Publishing, eds. A. Giardino, E. Datner, J. Asher.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/242223206_Caring_for_the_Caregiver_Avoiding_and_Treating_Vicarious_Trauma

Bloom discusses the risk of vicarious trauma for caregivers who support survivors of traumatic experiences and how challenges to healing can include a bias towards individualism and the need for strategies to address vicarious trauma within an ecological model. She also observes that organizations need to take 'universal precautions' in protecting their staff against the impact of secondary exposure to violence.

Cárdenas, A. & Méndez N. (2017). Self-Care as a Political Strategy: Reclaiming Civic Apace. SUR International Journal of Human Rights, v. 14, n. 26, 171-180.

https://sur.conectas.org/en/self-care-as-a-political-strategy/

This article discusses self and collective care as a political strategy used by women's human rights defenders to support the sustainability of social movements. It contains the reflections from the authors experiences of developing a self and collective care strategy for the Mesoamerican Initiative of Women Human Rights Defenders and the Casa La Serena Project developed by IM-Defensoras and Consorcio Oaxaca which provides short residential stays for women's human rights defenders experiencing exhaustion, burn out, grief and other crises where they can engage in a range of healing individual and group activities.

Çayır, E., Spencer, M., Billings, D., Hilfinger, M., Robillard, A., & Cunningham, T. (2020). "The Only Way We'll Be Successful": Organizational Factors that Influence Psychosocial Well-Being and Self-Care Among Advocates Working to Address Gender-Based Violence. Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 36. 088626051989734. 10.1177/0886260519897340.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338535354_The_Only_Way_We'll_Be_Successful_Organizational_Factors_That_Influence_Psychosocial_Well-Being_and_Self-Care_Among_Advocates_Working_to_Address_Gender-Based_Violence

This paper describes a qualitative research study on well-being of staff working on GBV, which involved 25 interviews with GBV advocates in the United States. The aim of the study was to identify and better understand the organizational-level factors that impact on GBV advocates' self-care and psychological health and well-being. Three main areas emerged from the analysis: (i) Management and Leadership Style; (ii) Interpersonal Relationship Dynamics; and (iii) Culture of Self-Care. The data indicated that the ways in which leaders established rapport with other advocates to accomplish organizational goals, how advocates developed alliances and connections with their coworkers, and shared norms around self-care directly influence advocates' willingness and ability to engage in individual and collective self-care. Researchers concluded that non-profit organizations have a responsibility to create and sustain workplace practices and culture that support staff well-being and care.

Chamberlain, L. (2020). From Self-Care to Collective Care: Institutionalising Self-Care to Build Organisational Resilience and Advance Sustainable Human Rights Work". (February 2020). SUR International Journal for Human Rights, v.17, n. 30, 215 – 225.

https://sur.conectas.org/en/from-self-care-to-collective-care/

This article discusses self-care as a resistance strategy used by women's human rights defenders and argues it is most effective when these strategies are operationalized and institutionalized within NGOs

and foster a collective care approach. The author suggests that taking concrete action and formulating policies is an important recognition of self-care and the prioritization of staff welfare.

Cruz, S. & Dordevic, J. (2020). Protection, Self-Care and the Safety of Human Rights Defenders. SUR International Journal on Human Rights, v. 17, n. 30, 239-249.

https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3825130

This article, which is based on interviews with nine feminist activists in Brazil, discusses the increased risks and threats that diverse human rights defenders (including women's human rights defenders) experience, and the need for action to protect and sustain their work by deepening reflection on the mechanisms that enable violations of women's human rights. It considers some of the contradictions felt by feminists in practicing self-care when there are so many abuses and so much work to be done. The black activist feminists engaged in the study drew attention to how individual violence, racism and structural violence that happen within activism impact on self-care.

Frey, LL., Beesley, D., Abbott, D., & Kendrick, E. (2017). Vicarious Resilience in Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Advocates. Psychol Trauma, Jan 2017, 9(1):44-51.

https://doi.org/10.1037/tra0000159

This study of 222 GBV advocates' experiences of vicarious resilience, personal trauma, peer and organizational support finds that it may be useful to think of advocates' personal development at work through a multidimensional lens of "vicarious resilience." Organizational strategies promoting vicarious resilience (e.g., shared organizational power, training components, etc.) are indicated as having positive effect, and the value of trauma-informed care for fostering advocates' vicarious resilience is also discussed.

FRIDA & Ezquerro, M.D. (2016). Practicing individual and Collective Self-Care at FRIDA.

https://youngfeministfund.org/practising-individual-and-collective-self-care-at-frida/

This article from FRIDA Young Feminist Fund is aimed at young feminists – it integrates a description of individual and collective self-care, its purpose, and how it can be expressed. The authors recognize the contributions of young feminists to feminist movements and social change, and identify some of the challenges that young activists face, as well as strategies and practical examples of self and collective self-care.

Gill, R., & Orgad, S. (2018). The Amazing Bounce-Backable Woman: Resilience and the Psychological Turn in Neoliberalism. Sociological Research Online, 23(2), 477-495.

https://doi.org/10.1177/1360780418769673

Through three case-studies, this article considers how resilience operates in neo-liberalism in ways that restrict critique of its class and gender dimensions. Resilience related 'self-help' messaging is often promoted and designed to target middle-class women and their children. Notions of elasticity, inspiration, and affirmation put the onus of responsibility for resilience on the individual and do not sufficiently recognize the social contexts of inequality nor the need for social transformation to support resilience of diverse women.

Hobart, H. & Kneese, T. (2020). Radical Care: Survival Strategies for Uncertain Times. Social Text, 1 March 2020; 38 (1) (142).

https://uwethicsofcare.gws.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Hobart-and-Tamara-Kneese-2020.pdf

The authors discuss care as fundamental to social change movements and how it re-emerged as a trending topic following the 2016 US presidential election. The authors define radical care as "a set of vital

but underappreciated strategies for enduring precarious worlds" (p.2). They acknowledge the positive aspects of care and its potential (such as positive impacts from collective mutual aid projects), as well as some of the potential negative impacts some care strategies can have, such as promoting unpaid labor and introducing new types of surveillance.

Horn J. (2019). Self and Collective Care. GBV Prevention Network.

https://preventgbvafrica.org/resources/publications/other-resources/zines/129-self-and-collective-care/file

This practical zine focuses on what self and collective care is and ways in which it can be practiced from feminist perspective. It provides suggestions for how to make the case for self and collective care, how to recognize the signs of pressure and burnout, and some questions to support reflection and action.

Horn, J. (2020a.). Thoughts on Radical Care in African Feminist Praxis. The Sociological Review Magazine.

https://doi.org/10.51428/tsr.pwbu2107

This article discusses the intersecting axes of exclusion and marginalization felt by feminist communities across Africa. The author reviews the work of several African feminists in relation to radical care, for example, Hope Chigudu's concept of nurturing an "organization with a soul", and how African feminists at the height of the HIV and AIDS crisis formed women's support groups to take care of each other's practical and emotional support needs. The author considers the ever-growing challenge within civil society of meeting women's social and economic needs, particularly in the face of public sector cuts and privatization of services previously led by state actors, and considers the need to ensure feminist activists do not succumb to a "nurturing trap."

Horn, J. (2020b). Decolonising Emotional Well-Being and Mental Health in Development: African Feminist Innovations. Gender & Development, 28:1, 85-98.

https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13552074.2020.1717177

This article explores what a decolonial approach to emotional well-being and mental health looks like in humanitarian and development settings. It references African feminist praxis in relation to the emotional well-being and mental health of African women impacted by injustice, and the practitioners (including those focused on GBV and AIDS/HIV) that work in solidarity with them. It argues for a decolonial feminist approach that celebrates the knowledge produced by communities of African women affected by collective distress and pays attention to the structural roots of trauma in African women's lives and the techniques they have used to heal from this. It calls for emotional well-being interventions to integrate understanding of inequality and promote women's agency as part of emotional resilience. It also explores the practitioner–community relationship, arguing for the concept of vicarious resilience to be accepted as much as that of vicarious trauma.

Ilyas, M. & Velásquez, T. (2017). Collective Care in Human Rights Funding: A Political Stand.

https://www.openglobalrights.org/collective-care-in-human-rights-funding-poli/

This article discusses the importance of donor engagement in transparent and open discussions around their own ethics and burnout, which can in turn help them facilitate two-way conversations with activist grantees. It acknowledges the gendered nature of threats and burnout that women activists experience when working to change patriarchal systems and structures. The article acknowledges that whilst the donor community may not be located on the front lines, they nonetheless can experience secondary trauma, frustration and burnout and feel triggered by some of the information and data they process. The article also reflects on the privilege and assumptions donors may make about collective care and caring practices. The article calls for donors to provide funding for the wellbeing and safety of their funding recipients, as well as to apportion time and space for reflection on the risks associated with high

workloads and activism and sustainable care practices.

Joscelyne A., Knuckey S., Satterthwaite M.L., Bryant R.A., Li M., Qian M., et al. (2015). Mental Health Functioning in the Human Rights Field: Findings from an International Internet-Based Survey. PLoS ONE 10(12): e0145188. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0145188

This article discusses a study on the risk factors adversely impacting the mental health of over 300 human rights activists. It used an internet-based survey approach which covered depression, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), trauma exposure, occupational burnout, and resilience. The results suggest that many human rights workers are resilient; however, human rights work is linked with elevated rates of depression and PTSD. The authors recommend further research, training and education programs in human rights-focused organizations.

Knuckey, S., Satterthwaite, M., & Brown, M. (2018). Trauma, Depression, and Burnout in the Human Rights Field: Identifying Barriers and Pathways to Resilient Advocacy. Columbia Human Rights Law Review, v. 49, 267.

https://scholarship.law.columbia.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3808&context=faculty_scholarship

This article discusses an international online survey of human rights advocates and shares findings in relation to trauma, depression and burn-out, as well as advocates' limited access to mental health support from employers/ schools. It concludes with recommendations for a research and action agenda. These include further research on human rights organizations' responses to mental health concerns around the world; further studies of non-stigmatizing interventions aimed at preventing harmful consequences of exposure to traumatic events; and development of a community of practice devoted to advancing well-being among human rights activists.

Michaeli, I. (2017). 'Self-Care: An Act of Political Warfare or a Neoliberal Trap?' Development, 60:50–56.

https://doi.org/10.1057/s41301-017-0131-8

This article discusses how self- and collective care is politicized within feminist movements globally as well as how self- and collective care are being used creatively to support sustainable and gender transformative organizations. It highlights care practices designed to support inter-generational solidarity and support.

Norwood, G. (2013). Promoting Self Care and Well-Being Among Feminist Activists and Women's Rights Defenders: Reflections from Burma and Palestine. Santa Fe: Upaya Zen Center.

https://www.upaya.org/uploads/pdfs/NorwoodPromotingSelfCare.pdf

This article discusses factors limiting activists' well-being and the importance of identity and social context in relation to self-care. The author uses Glassman's analogy of the Supreme Meal of Life, which is applied as 5 courses: spirituality, study and learning, livelihood, social action, community and relationships. The author considers how these interplay with the physical, emotional, mental, spiritual and relational aspects of well-being, and reflects on learning from delivering self-care and well-being trainings and workshops in Myanmar and Palestine. The author concludes that, "community as support system is an essential element of women's rights organizations" (p.44) and can be particularly so for refugee or exiled women's activists.

Reddy, D., Hollowell, C., Lona Liong C.A., Nyabol G., Mängu, B.J., Mayen Ker J.A., Lado, J. & Kiden M. (2019). Using Feminist 'Reflexive Practice' to Explore Stress and Well-Being of Local Researchers in South Sudan. Gender & Development, 27:3, 555-571.

https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/citedby/10.1080/13552074.2019.1664048?scroll=top&needAccess=true

This article discusses the experiences of a research team in South Sudan, drawing particularly on discussions and interviews conducted by two expatriate team members with local members of the research team. The article explores the use of reflexivity – a process of self-awareness and ongoing reflection on the research process- and highlights how unequal power relations often mean that the professional contributions from local researchers have been minimized and that they actually had different wellbeing needs compared to the needs the expatriate research team members had anticipated/ hypothesized they may have. The article describes the methods that were co-developed and instituted to support the local researchers to contribute in a way that acknowledged and addressed their specific needs.

Satterthwaite, M., Knuckey, S., Sawhney, S.R., Wightman, K., Bagrodia, R. & Brown, A. (2019). 'From a 'Culture of Unwellness' to Sustainable Advocacy: Organizational Responses to Mental Health Risks in the Human Rights Field' Review of Law and Social Justice, Vol 28, 2019, NYU School of Law, Public Law Research Paper No. 19-12.

https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3393638

This study mapped how human-rights focused organizations support the psychological and emotional wellbeing of the advocates and activists they employ. The study interviewed staff from 70 organizations in 35 countries. It examined harms and stressors, obstacles to improving health and well-being and positive organizational practices for fostering and improving well-being. It finds that some stressors are in-built due to the focus of the work on human rights violations and therefore need mitigation-type measures, however, other factors such as discrimination, overwork, funding pressures, poor working conditions and mismanagement/-leadership need recognition and require collective organizational change efforts.

Wakefield, S. & Zimmerman, K. (2020). Re-imagining Resilience: Supporting Feminist Women to Lead Development with Transformative Practice, Gender & Development, 28:1, 155-174, DOI: 10.1080/13552074.2020.1717198.

https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13552074.2020.1717198

This article outlines how practices rooted in feminism and social justice can help sustain and support feminists working in development settings. At a collective and organizational level, these practices align to feminist principles and practices of collective action, reflexivity, equity, and justice and have potential to be transformative.

Schulz, P., Kreft, A.-K., Touquet, H., & Martin, S. (2023). Self-care for Gender-based Violence Researchers – Beyond Bubble Baths and Chocolate Pralines. *Qualitative Research, 0*(0).

https://doi.org/10.1177/14687941221087868

This study focuses on and outlines the needs of GBV researchers in relation to self and collective care given the all too common gaps in training and institutional support. It indicates how much of the literature to date has focused on neo-liberal individualistic interpretations of self-care and related self-care strategies. The authors note instead that, "strategies of coping with the emotional and psychological toll of GBV research require relationships and collaborations." (pp.1461-2). This could include developing peer support groups or fostering collectives of people "who get it" (p.1463). The authors indicate that these strategies can be particularly relevant for lone researchers or groups of researchers working on GBV / violence against women and girls where there is a lack of organizational and institutional-wide support structures or buy-in.

Ward, L. (2015). Caring for Ourselves? Self-care and Neoliberalism. Ethics of Care: Critical Advances in International Perspective. Bristol, UK: Policy Press, 45–56.

https://bristoluniversitypress.co.uk/ethics-of-care

This collection of essays underscores the value of care ethics as a transformative approach to achieving social, including gender-justice and wellbeing within practice and policy across diverse settings globally. Lizzie Ward's contribution to the compendium outlines how neoliberalism has co-opted self-care and, yet, at the same time dismantled state-level social protection systems that provide a lifeline and safety net for people in need. She makes the point that women's movements have made a valuable contribution to notions of self-care and wellbeing and argues that governments must develop an alternative articulation of self-care based in care ethics if they are serious about the welfare of their citizens.

Wasco, S.M., Campbell, R., & Clark, M. (2002). A Multiple Case Study of Rape Victim Advocates' Selfcare Routines: The Influence of Organizational Context. American Journal of Community Psychology 30(5): 731–760.

https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1016377416597

This qualitative research study hypothesized that rape survivor advocates who provide services to survivors of sexual violence must adjust to a heightened awareness of rape and sexual assault to carry out their functions. Its results found that the advocates routinely drew on their own strengths and capacities (physical, psychological, social, spiritual, verbal) as a self-care mechanism, and this served two functions for them: (a) cathartic releasing of vicarious trauma, and (b) improving capacity to integrate the traumatic material they are exposed to in the course of their work. The study also identified 20+ features of organizations that advocates found to be supportive (e.g., weekly meetings, flexible hours) were identified. Those working in organizations with higher levels of support used more strategies that are integrative in nature.

Reports

Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice (2019). Healing Justice: Building Power, Transforming Movements.

https://www.astraeafoundation.org/microsites/healingjustice/

This report recognizes the emergence and rise of healing justice work—by which the authors mean resilience and survival practices that center the collective safety and wellbeing of communities—as a core component of a struggle for freedom from oppression. It highlights how misogynistic, anti-black, and anti-LGBTQI+ and anti-immigration violence is growing at the same time as many contexts shift towards a contracted civil society space. The Foundation asked their grantees how these practices could be deepened and used to power the sustainability of movement-building. The report documents some of their grantees' experiences (e.g., of healing resistance, application of healing justice and holistic security frameworks) as well as donors' reflections and recommendations. Overall, the report indicates that there are a multitude of ways in which this concept of healing justice can be applied and understood but should always be grounded in cultural and political context and that it is necessary to develop collective care strategies to address the psychological impacts such as (burnout, PTSD, secondary trauma) experienced by social-change activists.

Billing, L., Gevers, A., & Dartnall, E. (2021). We Care Evidence Review: Exploring Research into How Wellness and Care can be Institutionalised in the Violence against Women Field in Low- and Middle-income Countries. Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI).

https://www.svri.org/sites/default/files/attachments/2021-11-24/We%20Care%20Evidence%20Review.pdf

The evidence review focused primarily on understanding the current state of research into how wellness, resilience, self and collective care can be institutionalized in the violence against women field in low-middle income countries. The review was undertaken to inform the development of an online learning module on self and collective care.

Billing, L., Carlson, C., Namakula, S., Namy, S., Nabachwa, A., & Gevers, A. (2022). Researching with HaRT: promoting researcher wellbeing through self and collective care. Sexual Violence Research Initiative: Pretoria, South Africa.

https://svri.org/sites/default/files/attachments/2022-09-02/P5_Researching_with_HaRT.pdf

This case study report is the result of a collaboration between the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI), Healing and Resilience after Trauma (HaRT) and University of Alabama. It explores how practices of self and collective care can be integrated into the way research projects are designed and implemented to promote researchers' health and wellbeing and reduce secondary trauma risk. Strategies included: permission to be flexible, building in structured breaks, integrating moments of joy into the interview guides and setting workflow limits for the team. It shares how some of these good practice examples of how HaRT integrated care practices exceeded ethical review board requirements as well as providing further insights for diverse researchers and practitioners. For example, there is discussion of how the teams recognized the need to promote non-hierarchical ways of working including establishing practices of collective decision-making among research team members and being aware of power imbalances that need to be acknowledged and addressed when lead research team from the global north worked alongside local Ugandan researchers.

Urgent Action Fund Latin America and the Caribbean (2015). Echoes – Sounds of the Conch: Calling out to the Hearts of Women Activists, Defenders of Human Rights and Universal Goods in Latin America Bogota: Columbia.

https://fondoaccionurgente.org.co/site/assets/files/1178/echoes_of_the_sounds_of_the_conch.pdf

This report describes a workshop initiative that aimed to create and open up spaces for women's rights activists and in doing so promote self- and collective care for sustainable activism. It centers self-care as a political act of resistance and describes what a secure place looks like for activists and indicates that these are environments which when created allow for understanding, support, listening, validity, care, generosity, non-judgement, validation, and confidence to be expressed within one-self and with one another. It discusses the concept of mutual care and how feminist activists are frequently confronted with fragility when caring for others and how fragility has been gendered but can be utilized positively by feminists as a counterbalance to male dominance. The report documents the methodological framework and principles that underpinned the approach used to develop the workshops, this included exercises such as the wallet of power, self-massage, representation through mask-making and more.

Urgent Action Fund (2017). Feminist Resistance and Resilience: Reflections on Closing Civic Space.

https://urgentactionsisterfunds.org/feminist-resistance-resilience/

This report focuses on the reduction of civic space for human rights and seeks to ground this in the experiences of frontline activists, particularly those focused on women's and LGBTQ+ rights. It includes a section focused on resilience strategies which are indicated include: use of artistic expression for healing purposes (both individually and collectively); advocacy and litigation to hold states and other actors accountable for human rights violations; forging creative alliances for cross-movement building; and,

developing individual and community safety and security plans to guard against increased threats to activists.

Tools

Medica Mondiale (2021). Self-care and Wellbeing for Activists.

https://medicamondiale.org/fileadmin/redaktion/_Migration-alte-Website/Mediathek-Migration/Self-Care-Tips-for-activists_CR_Ngadi-Smart_medica-mondiale.pdf

This two page artistically illustrated document aims to provide inspiration to activists for how they can integrate self-care practices to support their well-being.

Tarshi Tools and Resources (n.d.)

https://www.tarshi.net/selfcare/resources-collective-care/

TARSHI has developed various resources and activities that cover stress management, burnout prevention and general wellbeing. It has a collection of both collective care resources and self-care worksheets. The collective care resources include video footage discussing case worker and activist stress, focusing on assessing needs particularly for activists and case workers working with populations who are stigmatized and marginalized or on topics which meet resistance. Tarshi also signposts to a range of external resources and agencies working in the realm of self and collective care.

Ramirez, P. (2022). Trauma-informed Meditation Exercises for those Seeking to Establish their own Meditation Practice. Practice 1 and Practice 2 videos. (SVRI).

In these two brief videos Paula Ramirez – a humanitarian and Trauma Sensitive Yoga facilitator - provides two short breathing and movement exercises to support individuals and groups who wish to practice meditation to help ground them if they are finding that they are having hectic thoughts and behavior impacting them and wish to restore calm to their nervous system.

Cane, P.M. (2005). Capacitar Emergency Response Toolkit.

https://capacitar.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/English-EmKit.pdf

This brief Capacitar Toolkit takes an educative and empowerment approach to trauma healing. It contains a range of tools and practical guidance on practices which can be done by individuals and collectively to support care. Examples provided include breathwork, emotional freedom technique (EFT) and acupressure.

Guides

Chigudu, H. & Chigudu, R. (2015). Strategies for Building Organizations with Soul, African Institute for Integrated Responses to VAWG & HIV/AIDS (AIR).

https://airforafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Strategies-for-Building-an-Organisation-with-Soul-WEB.pdf

An organizational development guide 'with a difference'. Developed by two African feminists it focuses on the what and the how of organizational leadership rather than aspect of management. This guide includes a focus on self- and collective care as critical components of feminist power and sustainability. In the guide, Hope explains in dialogue with Rudo that,

"Wellness is not an additional responsibility or luxury. It's actually the work. It's about an organization

being so well that it has the energy to produce sustainable results for its constituency. It's about enabling all of us to break free of limits created by power dynamics, resentment, suspicion and brokenness." (Chigudu, H & R. 2015: 20).

Billing, L., Ghebrebrhan, N., Michau, L., Gevers, A. (2022). Creating and Maintaining a Culture of Self and Collective Care at Raising Voices. (Raising Voices and SVRI).

https://raisingvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/SelfCollectiveCare.RaisingVoices.SVRI_.sept2022.pdf

Raising Voices with support from SVRI set out to understand and define what self and collective care means in practice for them as an organization in order to create 'a culture of care' for staff and 'within their partnerships.' This case study summarizes their organizational journey and findings through a case study approach and provides a framework for power relations and power dynamics in organizational care.

FRIDA – The Young Feminist Fund (2019). Happiness Manifesto.

https://youngfeministfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Happiness-Manifestx-final-single-pages-2-2.pdf

The FRIDA team described how they have "re-imagined the scope of self-care and collective well-being, giving importance to the practices that will keep us mentally, physically, and emotionally healthy. We created this manifesto of happiness that will accompany us along the journey. We are holding each other accountable for our individual and collective well-being." This manifesto uses illustrations and messages to illustrate the thoughts and actions the FRIDA team wish to embody and implement looking at the personal strategies they wish to use, how they will invest in themselves, how they will work together to create a sisterhood, and work as disruptors to the patriarchal system.

Gender-Based Violence AoR (2020). Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Considerations for Staff during Covid-19 crisis.

https://gbvguidelines.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/MHPSS-forStaff_COVID-19.pdf

This briefing note summarizes some key MHPSS considerations for those working on GBV prevention and response during COVID-19. It includes information about stressors, and ways in which organization and individuals working within them can support health and wellbeing.

Kenway, E. & Allen, N. (2021). Together: A Guide to Creating Collective Care Circles.

https://www.emilykenway.com/carecircles

This guide was developed to promote confidence for those wishing to set up their own collective care circles. It references the red tent movement of feminists of the 1970s and how the authors have been involved in women's circles. This specific guide explains the steps of setting up a collective care circle and provides guidance including templates for circle meetings (e.g. agendas, group agreements) as well as activities and facilitation tips. Finally, it discusses considerations such as communication outside of group gatherings and how collective care circles can flourish into continuous care beyond the group setting.

Khan, F. (n.d.). Caring for Yourself is A Radical Act: Self Care Guide for Youth Working in Community.

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58ba4d7886e6c0c5a7fae401/t/5a763a9171c10bcbfb59da4c/1517697690805/caring+for+yourself+is+a+radical+act.pdf

This guide emerged from a self-care workshop for youth workers in Canada and their wish to share their self and collective learning and practices more widely for collective benefit. It is developed in a 'choose your own adventure' format so that the reader can select where they want to start and go next. The content includes information on trauma, boundaries, self-care practices, reflection practices, disability

justice and guidance on how to celebrate ourselves. It is written in an accessible format with built-in space for journalling notes.

Raising Voices (2020). Guidance Note 3: How Can we Amplify Self and Collective Care? Series on Preventing Violence Against Women During the COVID-19 Pandemic. Raising Voices, Uganda.

https://raisingvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/VAWCOVID_3.pdf

This guide examines the challenges and necessity of self and collective care during the COVID-19 pandemic. It acknowledges that certain groups are more at risk and may be more likely to struggle as a result of changes. These groups include women, LGBTIQ+ populations, persons with disabilities, people with unstable employment and/or insecure income. The guide proposes three actions to amplify self and collective care: i) sharing self-care suggestions amongst each other, ii) integrating self-care within programs and practice and iii) taking positive actions for stronger collective care.

Sexual Violence Research Initiative (2015). Guidelines for the Prevention and Management of Vicarious Trauma among Researchers of Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence. Pretoria: South Africa.

https://www.svri.org/sites/default/files/attachments/2016-06-02/SVRIVTguidelines.pdf

These guidelines include a section (see pages 12-16) focused on strategies for responding to and preventing vicarious trauma among researchers. It includes five common self-care strategies and a set of recommendations centered around practical and emotional support for researchers and research teams.

Sexual Violence Research Initiative (2010). Vicarious Trauma: Understanding and Managing the Impact of Doing Research on Sensitive Topics. Pretoria: South Africa.

https://www.svri.org/sites/default/files/attachments/2016-04-13/researcherhandout.pdf

This guide explains what vicarious trauma is and how it can impact researchers studying 'sensitive' topics. It outlines in very brief form considerations for responding to vicarious trauma and the seven phases of a debriefing process.

USAID (2022). USAID'S Collective Action to Reduce Gender-Based Violence (CARE-GBV): How to Embed Self- and Collective Care in Organizations Addressing Gender-Based Violence. [No.5 in a series]. Washington (DC).

https://makingcents.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/CARE-GBV_05_Self_Collective_Care-v9-508c.pdf

This how-to-note can be used to learn and communicate the importance of embedding self-care and collective care within organizations addressing GBV—both as an ethical imperative and a core component of quality programming. It explains how "focusing on self- and collective care is a central strategy for addressing GBV rather than a secondary or complementary effort." It uses a feminist intersectional framework and describes the three pillars for systematically embedding self- and collective care at different organizational levels; it reflects on the role donors can play to support and validate organizational efforts to institute self and collective care; and concludes with practical suggestions to support staff in putting these ideas and strategies into action. The three pillars are described as: i) the organizations' values, culture and leadership, ii) the organizational policies and structures and iii) staff are free and enabled to use meaningful contextualized practices for their self and collective care.

Women's International Peace Centre (2020b). Healing through Rituals: A Guide for Sustaining Wellbeing and Activism Kampala: Uganda.

https://wipc.org/healing-through-rituals-a-guide-for-sustaining-wellbeing-and-activism/

This guide was developed as COVID-19 began to impact the world. It contains tips and recommendations to guide activists through uncertain times, considering both the individual and the organizational (or group) levels of care. The author centers wellbeing throughout and discusses the significance of ensuring that the professional is not disconnected from their body, heart and mind when responding to the needs of others. It covers the prioritization of rituals or practices that help maintain connection and wellness and provides examples of such practices.

Curricula

International Rescue Committee (2018, updated 2021). Remote Offered Skill Building (ROSA) App(lication) - Self-care Module.

(Available from Apple and Googleplay App Stores)

This app was developed to support the learning needs of frontline staff working on GBV response and includes a module with content to support their self-care practice.

We Care Project (2022). Dare to Care: Wellness, Self and Collective Care for those working in the VAW and VAC Fields. SVRI, South Africa.

https://svri.thinkific.com/courses/dare-to-care

The We Care Project's *Dare to Care,* free online course module which is focused on self- and collective-care, wellness, and resilience including a focus on institutionalizing policies and practices that support staff wellbeing and resilience. It discusses burnout, vicarious trauma and compassion fatigue. This self-guided course can be taken at the learners' pace and includes techniques such as journalling to promote reflection.

Women's International Peace Centre (2020). Harnessing our Power with Soul: Bespoke Curriculum for Transformational Leadership and Wellness. Kampala: Uganda.

https://wipc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Bespoke-Curriculum-on-Transformational-Leadership-and-wellness.pdf

This curriculum targeting activists and women's human rights defenders contains practical activities which are intended to meet the needs of diverse groups at different stages of organizational growth. It is built in two parts. The first part comprises a transformational leadership curriculum which gives information to promote an understanding of feminist leadership and ways of supporting community mobilization and movements. The second part provides insights on the operationalization of feminist leadership by applying an integrated approach to wellness.

Texts

Care Collective (2020). The Care Manifesto: The Politics of Interdependence. London: Verso books.

The Care Manifesto puts forward a vision for a caring world at a time of global crisis and general carelessness. The authors aim to reimagine the role of care in all our everyday lives, making it the central principle of life, operating at all levels and in all corners. The text suggests nurturing our interdependencies with one another to cultivate a more connected world where people are not struggling to survive but are actively thriving. Ideas put forward include promotion of collective joy, expanding notions of kinship,

promoting solidarity and coalition building.

Van Dernoot Lipsky, L. & Burk, C. (2007). Trauma Stewardship: An Everyday Guide to Caring for Self While Caring for Others. Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

This book is intended as a navigational tool for anyone who may be exposed to trauma, crisis or pain whilst they are seeking to promote a safer and more hopeful world. It discusses trauma, its impacts and how it is manifested and expressed with the objective of it being named and managed effectively. It provides five directions to help guide and reflect on the trauma stewardship journey.

Haines, S.K. (2019). The Politics of Trauma: Somatics, Healing, and Social Justice, Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books.

This book sets out a restorative justice approach to somatic therapy, integrating mind-body healing with social activism. It invites the reader to explore the roots of trauma which include social, economic and political inequality. It discusses how racism, sexism, other 'isms' and poverty contribute to physiological and psychological conditions and how somatic therapy has been used to treat these with positive effect.

Spade, D. (2020). Mutual Aid. Building Solidarity during This Crisis (And the Next). London: Verso books.

This text aims to be a handbook to support mutual aid organizing in a time of crisis. It explains the theory and practice of mutual aid including how we can work as a group to prevent and respond to conflict and counter burn-out.

Blogs

Billing L., Gevers, A. (2021). From Me to We: Reclaiming the Need for Collective Care. SVRI Blog, South Africa.

https://www.svri.org/blog/me-we-reclaiming-need-collective-care

This blog discusses the findings from a survey of SVRI members and partners (57 responses) when they are asked for their views on content for an online course (see above for information regarding Dare to Care in the curricula section) and knowledge exchange series. It also explores members' self and collective care challenges and practices.

Dhanani, P. Namy, S. & Sekaram S. (n.d.). Reclaiming our Self-Care as a Feminist Act. COFEM.

https://cofemsocialchange.org/reclaiming-our-self-care-as-a-feminist-act/

This blog promotes the perspective that self-care should be a priority and reclaiming self-care should be grounded in autonomy and choice. Key elements involve factoring in different facets of our lives such as family and community care, self-love and activism and applying four basic principles.

Mago, A., Billing, L., Gevers, A. (2022). Self care: What's Power Got to Do with It?

https://svri.org/blog/self-care-what%e2%80%99s-power-got-do-it

The authors of this blog reflect on who has limited access to self and collective care practices and how power and privilege operates in relation to self and collective care within organizations. They challenge celebration of self-care as a luxury and discuss how societal and institutional (i.e. workplace) norms can impact approaches to self-care. They also observe how organizational leaders can use their power and privilege positively to promote and build self and collective care for all.

Heimer, L., Teran, M., Garavito, T. (n.d.). Embodying collective care through decolonial feminist praxis.

This blog describes the setting up of Apoyo Communitario a London based, migrant-led, feminist collective during the COVID pandemic. It discusses their feminist decolonial collective care praxis used when supporting migrant families.

https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/gender/2022/01/24/embodying-collective-care-through-decolonial-feminist-praxis/

Kintsugi: The Mental Health Initiative (2021). The Activist Origins of Self-Care.

https://kintsugiashokauniversity.wordpress.com/2021/11/22/the-activist-origins-of-self-care/

This student-led initiative blog in Japan discusses the origins of 'community care' and how over time there has been a divergence away from this to more individualized care practices. It discusses how radical self-care becomes a process of reclaiming space denied to individuals particularly individuals and groups who have been marginalized and stigmatized and how through self-care practices activists can restore their energy and contribute to the collective.

Pandamsee, Y.M., (2011). Communities of Care, Organizations for Liberation. Naya Maya.

https://transformharm.org/hj_resource/communities-of-care-organizations-for-liberation/

This blog puts forward the point that if people become overly focused on the notion of self-care then the central point of working for (healing) justice can be missed and that the emphasis needs to shift towards collective care. It examines the notion of ableism and the 'go hard or go home' working cultures many operate in and the toll this takes on workers physically and emotionally as individuals and on those in our circle. It discusses the concept of mutuality and puts out a call for those ready to get involved in collective care to do so.

Mugabekazi, G. M. (2022). Reclaiming and Reimagining the Politics of Collective Care as an Act of Radical Existence. African Feminism.

https://africanfeminism.com/reclaiming-and-reimagining-the-politics-of-collective-care-as-an-act-of-radical-existence/

This blog calls on the reader to recognize the impact of challenging and dismantling violent systems. It also invites resistance against the notion that self-care is the solution to systems of oppression. As Gloria Mugabekazi observes, it is when there is a healthy and caring community organizing together that space is made for individual and collective healing.

Semilla (2021). Semilla's Blog: Collective Care and Radical Healing. Feminist Hiking Collective, Calala Fondo de Mujeres and Fondo Centroamericano de Mujeres.

https://feministhikingcollective.org/semillas-blog/f/collective-care-and-radical-healing

This blog discusses collective care and radical healing based within the context of Latin America and how this practice is linked and rooted to feminism, activism and is not straightforward given interconnectedness of beings at different levels and different pathways and routes to transformation.

Wakefield, S. & Cole, H. (2019). Why Care is a Political Act. COFEM.

https://cofemsocialchange.org/why-care-is-a-political-act/

This blog explores why care is collective, personal and political and challenges the assumption that feminists working for social justice should use simplistic self-care mechanisms to reduce stress only to recover and worker harder in a perpetuating cycle of work-stress-self-care. It invites readers to consider several key principles for care such as boundary setting and recognition that our own lives are valuable too.

Webinars / Videos

GBV AoR (2020). Staff Care and Support: Combatting Burnout and Vicarious Traumatization for GBV Staff in the Time of COVID.
https://reliefweb.int/training/3693969/staff-care-and-support-combatting-burnout-and-vicarious-traumatization-gbv-staff
This webinar discusses how different GBV AoR members are supporting their staff given that GBV work can be stressful and lead to burnout and other issues and calls attention to *The Inter-Agency Minimum Standards For GBV Programming in Emergencies* emphasis on the importance of staff care.

SVRI (2022). Decolonising Wellness and Self-Care Webinar with Guests Sharanya Sekaram, Dr Carol Labor and Vani Viswanathan.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NwJEurA0xjE
During this hour-long webinar efforts were made to present and engage in dialogue to shift thinking away from dominant western individual-focused models of self-care and explore alternative localized practices and approaches to self and collective care. It explores whose perspectives are included/excluded in current practices and how to advance inclusion of broader diverse experiences and perspectives.

Van Dernoot Lipsky, L. (2015). Beyond the Cliff. TEDX.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uOzDGrcvmus
Laura the co-author of Trauma Stewardship: An Everyday Guide to Caring for Self While Caring for Others discusses her personal experience of the cumulative effects of trauma and stress and where they led her on her personal journey to help others. She uses systematic oppression and liberation theory as her frames.

Reynolds, V. (2018). Resisting Burnout With Justice-Doing Part 1: Collective Care & Ethical Pain. AMSSA.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RHNoFBS5a0g
Vikki Reynolds is an activist/therapist working to achieve social justice through activism and therapy. She has provided supervision and therapy to a range of clients including activists, sexual violence counsellors, mental health and substance abuse counsellors, refugees and survivors of torture. In this short clip of a speech, she gave to BC Settlement and Language Providers she highlights how convenient it is for us to be labelled as burnt-out rather than call out being under-resourced and the heart break associated with front-line community-based support work and how this is entwined with ethics. She states that self and collective care is an ethical imperative in order to be client centered. This speech also discusses the importance of managers and leaders modelling promising practices.

Podcasts

Irresistible: A Media Archive of Powerful Practices for Healing and Social Justice. (2017-2020).

https://irresistible.org/podcast

This archive contains a diverse range of healing and social justice practice podcasts ranging from pleasure activism to rest as reparation.

Women's Protection and Empowerment Podcast (2019). We Do Our Best Work When We are Also Well. International Rescue Committee (IRC), NY.

https://soundcloud.com/user-425988972/we-do-our-best-work-when-we-are-also-well-self-care-in-humanitarian-setting?utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing

This podcast with IRC staff in Sacramento, Salt Lake, Lebanon and New York explores their motivations

for working on women's and girl's protection, the stress that often accompanies GBV response work, signs of depletion and individual and group self-care techniques they've used.

Additional resources

Doshi, V. (2019). Self Care for Care Givers: An introductory self care manual for caregivers. Moraka Leadership Foundation Limited.

https://prevention-collaborative.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/One-Future-Collective_2019_Self-Care-for-Caregivers-Manual.pdf

This manual was designed to spark conversations and support for care for caregiver initiatives and provide practical information about what self-care is, why it is needed and how carers can develop a self-care plan.

Khan, F. (2020). You Matter Too: Resources for Self Care. Courage to Act.

https://www.couragetoact.ca/blog/selfcareresources

This webpage promotes permission to explore self- and collective care and provides a further list of resources on this topic ranging from apps, books, and podcasts.

Krystalli, R. Schulz, P. (2022). Taking Love and Care Seriously: An Emergent Research Agenda for Remaking Worlds in the Wake of Violence, International Studies Review, Volume 24, Issue 1, March 2022, viac003.

https://doi.org/10.1093/isr/viac003

This essay explores the practices of love and care that simultaneously co-exist alongside the violence and suffering that comes with armed conflict. The foundational question for the essay - which builds on and describes the authors' approach to research from Colombia and Uganda- is if love and care practices are centered then what routes do they indicate towards rebuilding and reshaping the world following armed violence? Krystalli and Shulz argue that taking love and care seriously as feminist researchers requires asking different questions and documenting different experiences than those that focus predominantly on violence and harms. When this is done it can allow for a "more textured representation of individuals' and communities' experiences, beyond a universalizing storyline that focuses on violence, suffering, and cruelty". (p.3). They also seek to demonstrate "not only that care is political work but also that political work requires the work of care." (p.4).

The authors discuss survivor groups (in this case psychosocial support groups for male sexual violence survivors in Northern Uganda) in some detail and this includes observing how these are often 'underpinned by loving and caring practices and relations'. (p.12). They conclude with the observation that if love and care were to be taken more seriously then this increases the potential for more careful policies and programs to be developed and applied in (post)conflict and nexus settings, which factor for the "relationalities, vulnerabilities, and interdependencies of lived experiences in the wake of violence". (p.21).

Annex: Methodology

Research strategy

Resources were identified through online desk-based research related to collective care and GBV. The search strategy used key words, phrases and acronyms associated with collective care, gender-based violence, violence against women and girls including collective care, feminist collective care, women collective care, girls collective care, healing circles, mental health, humanitarian, feminist praxis care, support system for GBV program / programme staff, support system violence against women and girls program staff. The search also included variations of terms on violence (e.g., GBV and VAWG and specific forms of violence), and search terms related to response (e.g., response, prevention, services, support, program, research, guidance etc.). The author also mined the bibliography of key texts and searched relevant journals.

Limitations

The resources in this annotated bibliography are limited to English documents, and only include publicly available online materials. It is likely that GBV actors have produced additional resources, some of which may not be available online. The search was also time-limited, and so this annotated bibliography does not claim to cover all available information on this topic.

The GBV AoR Help Desk

The GBV AoR Helpdesk is a unique research and technical advice service which aims to inspire and support humanitarian actors to help prevent, mitigate and respond to violence against women and girls in emergencies. Managed by Social Development Direct, the GBV AoR Helpdesk is staffed by a global roster of senior Gender and GBV Experts who are on standby to help guide frontline humanitarian actors on GBV prevention, risk mitigation and response measures in line with international standards, guidelines and best practice. Views or opinions expressed in GBV AoR Helpdesk Products do not necessarily reflect those of all members of the GBV AoR, nor of all the experts of SDDirect's Helpdesk roster.

The GBV AoR Helpdesk

You can contact the GBV AoR Helpdesk by emailing us at:
enquiries@gbviehelpdesk.org.uk

The Helpdesk is available 09.00 to 17.30 GMT Monday to Friday.

Our services are free and confidential.