

Camp Anchor Health Survival Guide



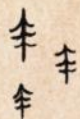
Pride Zine
No. 4





"It is in collectivities that we find reservoirs of hope and optimism."

- *Angela Davis*





About Anchor Health

Anchor Health

is Connecticut's leading health center for the LGBTQ community. We provide groundbreaking, radically inclusive, gender-affirming, and sex-positive medical, mental health, and pharmacy care as well as supportive services to thousands of patients across Connecticut and beyond. Anchor Health continuously works to advance health equity for LGBTQ people through advocacy, community-building, education, and research.

We are health care for queer people by queer people.

anchorhealthct.org
[@anchorhealthct](https://twitter.com/anchorhealthct)





Camp Anchor Health 2025 *scorecard*


It's undeniable that 2025 was a year of growth, resilience, and perseverance for Anchor Health. In the face of tyranny, we stood our ground and refused to waver. We remain dedicated to our mission of embracing and promoting the health and well-being of queer, trans, and gender diverse people.

Our 2025 accomplishments include:

- 3,667 patients
- 12,339 visits
- 6,475 total patients
- 7,797 HIV/STI tests
- 3,099 vaccines
- 1,902 pharmacy patients
- 43,756 prescriptions filled
- 1,090 case management clients
- 321 name and gender marker changes
- 621 mental health referrals



This was only possible through your continued support of our cause. Your belief in our mission fuels our determination to create a future where everyone has access to the groundbreaking, radically inclusive, gender-affirming, and sex-positive care they deserve.



SCAN THE QR CODE



or text **ANCHOR** to **301301** to make a tax-deductible donation today. Your gift helps ensure we can continue to provide LGBTQ people with life-saving health care and supportive services.



We cannot thank you enough for being a part of our impact.

Date: _____

Initials: _____

Date: _____

Initials: _____

Date: _____

Initials: _____





Picture it:

a warm, rainy Saturday in June of 2025. It wasn't the sunny weather we hoped for, but nothing can stop Pride. Queer people show up. We make the most out of our circumstances, no matter how bleak they might be. We survive.

From the Connecticut State Capitol to Westchester, New York, we welcomed folks to Camp Anchor Health. As our annual Pride retreat, camp counselors - aka our beloved medical assistants, patient care associates, case managers, and others - created a safe space to celebrate queer survival. Although the campfire was inflatable and the pinetree plastic, the connections we made were very real.

We wanted to explore with our community what a queer camp like this could actually stand for. Not just rules, but ideals to guide us in our everyday lives:

- Pack what you need to thrive
- and share your extras ✨
- Listen to the wisdom of those who came before you and pass down your own
- Honor your unique journey 💕
- Take care of yourself and your fellow campers

This zine is a brief snapshot of what people shared with us. It's a survival guide created by the community for the community.



See your response
in the zine? Share a
pic and tag us!
[@anchorhealthct](https://www.instagram.com/anchorhealthct)



The sure way to have fun this Pride Month...
shopping the latest camp Anchor Health designs!

Every purchase fuels our mission to provide LGBTQ people
with life saving health care and supportive services.



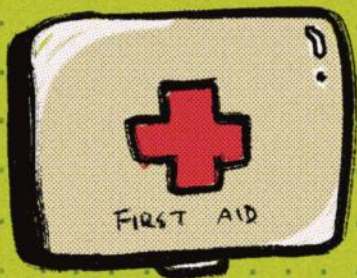
What do you need in your SURVIVAL KIT to thrive?

"We are powerful because we have survived, and that is what it is all about - survival and growth."

- Audre Lorde



1. A novel and a work of nonfiction from every decade to document queer lives of yesteryear!
2. Representation
3. As an autistic lesbian, I always have plushies around me for comfort! Whether it be traditional or crocheted, it's a way to double on self-expression and comfort - Shannon
4. I need my T in my survival kit to thrive - Steve
5. Accessible mental health care - Emmie
6. I need self-love, queer joy, and a blend of family and community. It takes a village to reparent yourself.



Everyone is welcome!
(to put my tummy)



self care is not optional!



Good Food in community

7. Patience **8. In my survival kit, I need warmth. A hot cup of tea, a handmade blanket from a loved one, silly socks, fresh baked goods, a hug, a softly glowing candle, gently becoming the future - Tally** **9. PEP** **10. Caring** **11. Cats** **12. Mutual liberation** **13. A welcoming government for trans people** **14. Anti-capitalism** **15. Queer art** **16. Laughter** **17. Trauma-informed framework** **18. Thrifting** **19. Decolonization** **20. Bubble-blowing** **21. Friendship** **22. Pride** **7.**
.....AND MORE!

On Partnership & Play: How Designing a Game Helped Us Through a Pandemic

By Erinn Webb and Chris Andrea Nash

Chris and I were a stone's throw away from our wedding when the world shut down in 2020. We had spent over a year meticulously planning every detail, down to binding little cookbooks by hand with our favorite recipes for guests. The creative energy we had been channeling into our wedding suddenly came to a screeching halt, and everything was stowed away for two years. We needed another outlet - everyone did. Some people took up sewing or knitting. Others baked bread. We made a game...



Dragonlings the card game

To be fair, Chris has been creating games since she was little. She worked with friends for years on Ectype, an online multiplayer combo of Smash and Mega Man®. I, Erinn, am a board gamer and thespian who has loved drama games since my days in camp as a kid. The idea for Dragonlings came to Chris in a dream-like vision. It merged elements of Pokémon®, Magic: The Gathering®, Wingspan®, and Solitaire. In the game, you play as a dragon trainer, evolving your dragons from eggs into hatchlings that learn abilities as they grow.

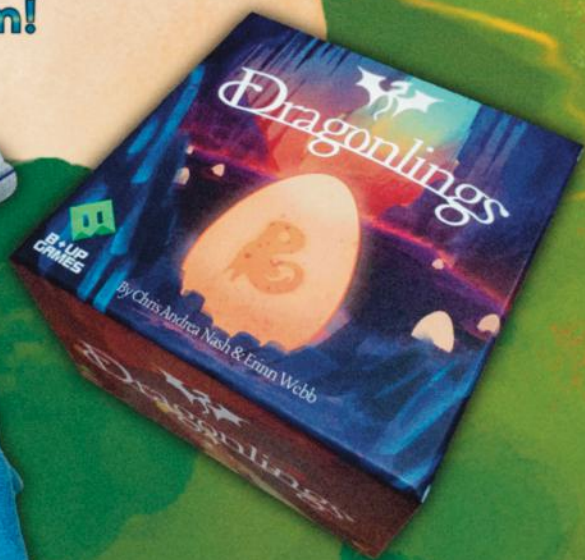
Together, Chris and I bantered in our pajamas about dragon abilities, game mechanics, art design, and how to make it more fun, more interactive, more complex, less complex, and so on. I watched as, one line at a time, she tirelessly drew every single dragon in digital watercolor. When it came time for a trial run, we cut paper game pieces by hand and tested it with our pandemic pod while six feet apart. Chris learned about incorporating a business, manufacturing, warehousing, international fulfillment, advertising, networking, and everything it takes to make an idea a reality. Something that started as a distraction from the anxiety and depression of quarantine and political terror, became a part-time job, an obsession, and an amazing bonding experience for us.



By the time we wrapped our Kickstarter campaign in December 2024, Chris and I had gotten married, gone through the gestational carrier process, and had a child. One of the positive outcomes of our delayed wedding was Chris having time to finish her gender transition and feeling freer to be herself around family on our wedding day. By the time we delivered *Dragonlings* to our backers, Chris had also earned her master's degree in business administration.

Now, the magic is watching people discover our game for the first time, after we raucously debated every detail for five years. We're also working on our second card game, *Fairy Go Round*, inspired by my nostalgia for playing *Trouble*® with my dad. Although we don't have as much time to play games since becoming parents, we hope we'll get to play them with our kid someday. That alone makes it worth it! Whatever keeps you going, despite everything going on in the world, do that. Make stuff. Bend the rules. And remember to have fun. :)

**Get your copy of
Dragonlings and
our cute little
dragon plushie at
bupgames.com!**



Erinn Webb (she/her) is a queer intersex woman, drama therapist, and creative who enjoys being silly about serious things. **Chris Andrea Nash** (she/they) is a transfemme nonbinary gaymer, game designer, artist, programmer, and all-around IT geek.

Art credit drawn or inspired by **Chris Nash** in digital watercolor. All product names are trademarks™ or registered® trademarks of their respective owners, and used for identification purposes only.

Finding Pride in the Fight

By Reia Massaro,
APRN, FNP-BC



Like 2025 before it, 2026 has been a challenging year for queer and trans people. Amid a widespread escalation of attacks on our human rights, it's impossible not to feel the weight of "right now." It's heavy. Some days might feel like too much. How can we even begin to celebrate Pride when so many of us are focused solely on survival?

Pride this year marks a point of reflection for me. Around this time last year, many trans adolescents and their families in Connecticut suddenly had barriers to accessing safe, effective, and essential medical care. It was a devastating assault on the autonomy of patients to make health care decisions with their families and clinicians, free from political interference. Throughout many late-night phone calls, early-morning meetings, and double-booked appointments, we became a lifeline. This is community caring for community, and hope exists there.

Anchor Health stands ten toes down in our commitment to building a future where everyone can access the care they need. Our priorities are firm and steadfast - bridging gaps in our fragmented care system, building relationships with community resources, and expanding access to our services. It's through community care that Anchor Health continues to grow. In the near future, we plan to relocate to a larger space, open additional locations, and offer new services to meet the ever-evolving needs of our population.

So, how do we celebrate Pride right now? We celebrate our survival. We celebrate the support systems we create to take care of one another. And, most importantly we celebrate together.



Reia Massaro, APRN, FNP-BC, (she/her) is the Clinical Lead for Gender-Affirming Medicine at Anchor Health. She oversees all aspects of our gender-affirming care, ensuring the continued delivery of high-quality, groundbreaking services.

WANT TO BE A CRITIC?

DAENERYS TARGARYEN-GAME OF THRONES!

EDDIE MURKINSON-STRANGER THINGS!

GOMEZ ADDAMS-ADDAMS FAMILY!

ILYA ROZANOV-HEATED RIVALRY!

LAURENT R-CAPTIVE PRINCE!

ASTARION ANCUNIN-BG3!

BUCKY BARNES-MARVEL!

JARETH-GOBLIN KING!

VIKTOR-ARCANE!

CLARK KENT-DC!

SANJI-ONEPIECE!

STEVE ROGERS-MARVEL!

GIFREY-WITCH HAT ATELIER!

THCAZI FANG-CRITICAL ROLE!

ESSEK THELYSS-CRITICAL ROLE!

KOLLYMAUK TEALFAF-CRITICAL ROLE!

LAIOS TOUDEN-DELICIOUS IN DUNGEON!

FITZWILLIAM DARCY-PRIDE AND PREJUDICE!





What story or advice would you pass down to the next generation of queer people?

When I go to the gay bar, I stand in a community of people who understand me, and of people who I am connected to with something beyond words. We are connected by millenia of humans who want nothing more than to dance and enjoy music with their friends. Cherish that connection, and never underestimate the power of something that may otherwise seem shallow to onlookers.

- Melissa

Keep living in spite of everything. Trans people deserve to grow old and to THRIVE!

- Liz

Act UP, Fight AIDS!

- Kaleb & ACT-UP CT

You're fabulous. We've always been fabulous. Nothing can stop our fabulousness! Your queer ancestors LOVE YOU ALWAYS.

- Lindasusan

When you find yourself in a world that seems hellbent on ruining you and your loved ones, look for your loved ones. One stick is weak, together a faggot is STRONG!

- Logan

All of life is a journey, not a destination. Never be afraid to adjust the words you use to describe yourself as you learn about yourself on that journey.

- Ally

Silence = Death

I grew up in a conservative, homophobic Christian school in Thailand. On senior prank day, in the middle of the night, I changed: "For nothing is impossible with God" - Luke 1:37 and I was very happy. Fight back. Stay strong. Be gentle with yourself.

- Premmy

Remember your elders have wisdom from their struggles.

Being queer means a level of self-knowledge that you can take so much pride in. You've had to think about what love means, what gender means, what it means to truly live in the world as yourself (usually) despite everything you've been told. No one can ever take that knowledge away from you. It's the knowledge that scares some people who don't want to go that deep. Too bad for them!

Embrace and learn from older queer folks! We are one big community and can all learn from each other!

There is still time.
"I Saw the TV Glow"



choose joy!
Joy is resistance.

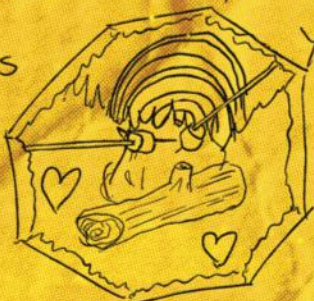


Be kind to your
past, present, + future
self. We all discover
ourselves at different
rates. ♡



Find a community that
loves you

for



you

you!

Watch out for each
other + take care!



Spread the word!
You can be yourself
We are still
Here



Rainbows Bright

By Kristen R. Hall



Light the fire, let it glow
That we might dance wildly
By its undulating light
That our rainbow bodies
Might guide others here
Might guide them home
That they will not die
Believing that the light
Has fled from this place
That their most sacred truths
Are naught but delusions
No, let them know
Let them see the truth
That they are not alone
That they are not defective
But that we are many



Let our joy be as manna from heaven
Let our love be as fierce and strong
As the souls of our ancestors demand
That the light of us all
Of all our luminous pride
All queer and queer and all
Shall yet pierce that darkest shroud
Of ignorance frozen solid
And caustic corrosive hate
Rend it asunder, cast it down
Raise our holy flag in its place
Because it is always darkest
Before warm dawn breaks
And the sun sheds its light anew
In every sacred color
Of every blessed spectrum



Kristen R. Hall (she/her) is a trans woman, lesbian, and aspiring poet. She's a lover of nature, music, and her wonderful support network. A consummate romantic, she longs for the day some beautiful sapphic will drive here and devastate her.



Kink as a Resilience Practice

BY KIM ADAMSKI

Content warning: discussion of trauma, prejudice, and abuse

Historically, kink and queerness have gone hand in hand. Leather bars, bathhouses, play parties, and other alternative sexual spaces have long served as safe havens for queer people. After all, the LGBTQ+ rights movement focuses on sexual liberation – that is, the freedom to present and practice sexuality as one sees fit. Given that queer sex is culturally framed as “alternative” or “unconventional,” it makes sense that the LGBTQ+ and kink communities would ally, because sexual freedom is integral to both communities’ values.

Plus, queer people tend to be kinkier than the general population. Why is that? One theory is that since queer folks are already breaking sexual norms, they are more likely to be open to other unconventional sexual practices. In research by Richard Sprott, one of the few researchers who studies the kink community, subjects’ motivations ranged from enjoyment and self-exploration to healing and sexual autonomy.



Let's dive deeper into people finding healing and autonomy through kink. While many kinky behaviors can seem harmful at first glance - like impact play, restraint, or domination - mutual consent and respect ensure encounters are enjoyable, not abusive. Consider humiliation play. Being nonconsensually humiliated is traumatizing. In fact, frequent humiliation or degradation can have serious long-term negative effects on the psyche. However, many humiliation kink practitioners report that it has helped them process trauma from bullying, stigma, and prejudicial treatment. How is this possible?

When a person has a traumatic experience, they are not in control of the situation. Being unable to change what is happening to them is frightening, upsetting, and psychologically harmful. In contrast, participants in a kink scenario exercise complete control. The interaction is carefully negotiated and planned in advance, and a safe word is employed to ensure either party can stop the scene at any time. This helps the practitioner take back a sense of autonomy that was lost due to the traumatic event.

In her book "Enough to Make You Blush," famous former Dominatrix Princess Kali explores humiliation kinks in depth, offering practical guidance and personal insights. The author shares how one individual reported being teased as a child for being fat, yet now enjoys when her partner calls her derogatory words like "pig" during sex.



All good up there?

Slow and Steady wins the race!



It helps her reclaim disparaging comments and associate them instead with being desirable and sexy, reframing a negative experience as erotic and takes the hurtful power away from bullying words.



Certainly, this route is not for everyone, and it's important to keep in mind that while kink can be therapeutic, it is NOT therapy. However, it is not at all uncommon for queer folks to engage in kink to help them process trauma. One Redditor, SpacemanSpiff_, offered that he enjoys being called homophobic slurs during sex, because it "turns the meaning on its head to become a term of endearment." Others report using pain-related play as a mindfulness practice, allowing them to focus on the sensations they're experiencing rather than outside stressors over which they have little control - particularly in the current anti-queer national atmosphere.





Kink can play a powerful role in queer resiliency, but it's not a cure-all. If you are engaging in kink play, think about how it's benefiting you. Does it help you reframe or process trauma, or are you using it as escapism? Is it improving your confidence, or undermining it? Be honest with yourself. Make your goal self-help, not self-destruction. And of course, if you play with a partner or partners, maintain open lines of communication and practice engaged, affirmative, and informed consent with your partners. Well-negotiated kink in a safe setting can be fun, fulfilling, and beneficial to your well-being, especially for queer folks whose sexual practices have been treated as deviant. It can be a means to combat self-stigma and sexual shame, explore sexuality, and engage with difficult emotions in a controlled, safe environment.

Kim Adamski (she/they) is a sexual health educator with over 10 years of experience. She focuses on inclusive, pleasure-positive, and comprehensive sex ed.

Instagram: @kimadamskieducator

Website: kimadamskieducator.com

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- Sprott, Richard. *The Intersection of LGBTQ+ and Kink Sexualities: a Review of the Literature with a Focus on Empowering/Positive Aspects of Kink Involvement for LGBTQ+ Individuals*. Current Sexual Health Reports, 2023.
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- www.reddit.com/r/askgaybros/comments/12ioyvw/why_does_the_fslur_turn_me_on_so_much_during_sex/
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MERIT BADGES



A merit badge tells a story of an individual's experiences.



We asked folks to design one honoring their queer journey. These pages are decorated with the intimate, powerful, and sometimes silly things people shared with us.

Thank you for trusting us with your stories.



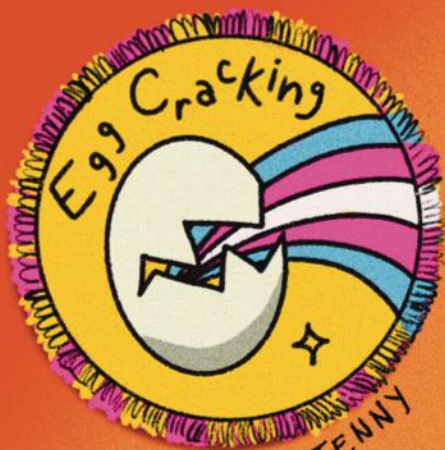
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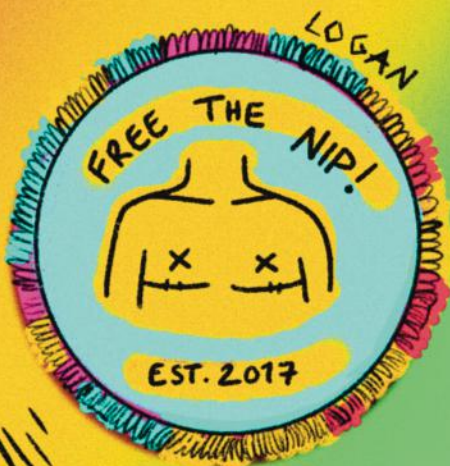
JENNY



LINDASUSAN



ERIKA



LOGAN

We had the pleasure of turning a few of these designs into real-life badges - you just might have won one!



QUEER ENVIRONMENTALISM CROSSWORD



DOWN:

- _____ ecology, a field that challenges heteronormative, binary, and colonial views of nature
- Early 20th-century term for a "flamboyant gay man"
- Jamie _____, founder of ZERO-HOUR, a youth-led climate justice organization
- The political and social movement focused on the preservation, restoration, and improvement of the natural environment
- "The _____ Carnation," 1894 novel by Robert Hichens parodying Oscar Wilde and his lover
- _____ Webber, started an LGBTQ group at EarthJustice, the largest U.S. nonprofit environmental law organization
- Perennial purple plant and long-standing symbol of LGBTQ resistance

ACROSS:

- _____ Hernandez, founder of "Queer Brown Vegan," a website devoted to environmental journalism
- _____ Day, annual event on April 22
- A drag queen, environmentalist, and advocate named after a wildflower
- "An _____ of Ghosts," climate fiction novel written by Rivers Solomon that explores the intersection of climate change, white supremacy, and heteropatriarchy (also, one of the crossword author's favorite books!)
- _____ Sandilands, Canadian writer and scholar of environmental humanities, most known for her studies on the intersection of queer theory and environmentalism



Make sure you're
PrEPared for anything
this summer!

SCAN ME!





I am an advocate for LGBTQ-inclusive medical education and health policy.



I like to remind myself that community is something to rely on but also actively participate in.
- Grace



I offer inclusive, nonjudgemental, queer-informed care as a social worker.
- Alyssa

Caring for myself and my community are intertwined. As a bi mom of a trans daughter, I pay it forward to new parents of trans kids. I tell them to love the child in front of them. Celebrate that they trusted you with their truth. Choose your child always!

- Lynn



I care for the community by showing up and supporting local Pride events, LGBTQIA+ run businesses, local bars and clubs, and volunteering for local Pride centers. I also like to be here in any way for the community.

- David



PrEP, STI testing, and condom-use!

I let my legislators know that we support ALL LGBTQ people's rights.

- Mary Ellen



Ensuring my neighbors and community have their basic needs met and are seen as whole and are affirmed in it.

- Alixe

I speak out.
I write letters.
I donate.
And I show up!



I care for myself and my community by providing gender-affirming care, excellent service, and reproductive education.

- Jasmine

I provide a safe space for my community to share and express themselves. I reassure them that they are loved and cared for. I try to support them however I can - whether that means listening, laughing, or crying together.

- Kendall



Listen! Listen to yourself.
Listen to your community.
Listen to queer elders who came before you. Your TIME and ATTENTION is the best gift you can give to anyone, including yourself.

- Paul





Kalia



Barbara



Anonymous

Anne



"SUNFLOWER WAY"

By Erik Molina



Erik Molina (HE/ÉL) IS A PATIENT CARE ASSOCIATE AT ANCHOR HEALTH WHO LIKES TO SEE THE POSITIVE IN EVERYTHING HE ENJOYS PAINTING, DANCING, LISTENING TO MUSIC, AND LAUGHING WITH FRIENDS. ERIK LIVES BY THE MANTRA, "THIS TOO SHALL PASS."



FOR REST

By Bethany Cinque

When I feel anxious or overwhelmed,
I go to the woods.

A walk among the trees can steady my nervous system
when nothing else seems to work.

When I spiral, my breathing shortens.
My memory slips.

Stress shows up in every inhale,
every forgotten thought.

But in the woods, something changes.

I breathe deeper.

I notice the sway of branches overhead.

The sound of water moving.

The soft, shifting pattern of sunlight through leaves.

In Japan, there's a name for this: Shinrin-yoku —
forest bathing.

It's been studied, measured, and proven to help.

Lower stress.

Better sleep.

Sharper focus.

Stronger immune response.

But honestly,
you don't need a study to feel it working.

In the past two years,
I've been returning to what I think of as the "old ways."

Slowing down.

Living seasonally.

Paying attention.

Not just to what I consume,
but to time itself —
how it moves,
how it asks different things of us.

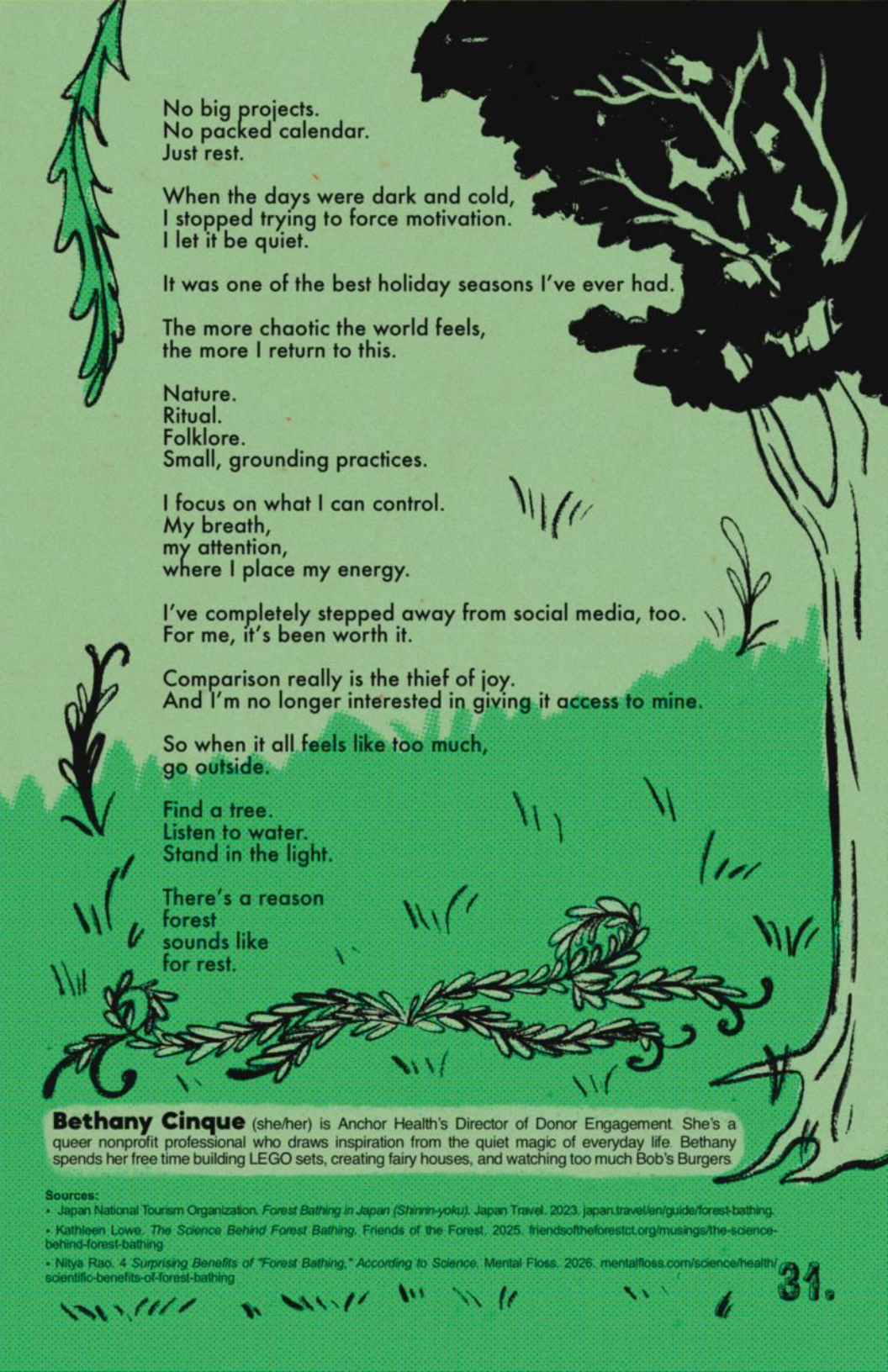
Winter is not meant for constant output.

This year, I let myself hibernate.

I said "no" more often.

Stayed home.

Kept things small.



No big projects.
No packed calendar.
Just rest.

When the days were dark and cold,
I stopped trying to force motivation.
I let it be quiet.

It was one of the best holiday seasons I've ever had.

The more chaotic the world feels,
the more I return to this.

Nature.
Ritual.
Folklore.
Small, grounding practices.

I focus on what I can control.
My breath,
my attention,
where I place my energy.

I've completely stepped away from social media, too.
For me, it's been worth it.

Comparison really is the thief of joy.
And I'm no longer interested in giving it access to mine.

So when it all feels like too much,
go outside.

Find a tree.
Listen to water.
Stand in the light.

There's a reason
forest
sounds like
for rest.

Bethany Cinque (she/her) is Anchor Health's Director of Donor Engagement. She's a queer nonprofit professional who draws inspiration from the quiet magic of everyday life. Bethany spends her free time building LEGO sets, creating fairy houses, and watching too much Bob's Burgers.

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* USING * WRITING

* TO FIND YOUR WAY *

By Violet Scherer

So, you're lost. Struggling to find your way through your thoughts, unsure of yourself and what you're feeling, or daunted by the sheer scale of the task in the first place; whatever you're struggling with, I'm here to teach you how to use writing as a navigator and show you how I used it to find the person I've always wanted to be.

A little bit of background about me: my name is Violet, I use she/her pronouns, and I'm a trans woman. I have ADHD, OCD, and I'm on the Autism spectrum--and these were things I didn't find out about until I was 28 and 22 years old, respectively. As you can probably imagine, not knowing I was on the spectrum or that I was trans combined to make understanding myself and my emotions a challenge; and trying to communicate those feelings to somebody else was even harder. But I was able to use writing to parse those feelings and thoughts, which made me into someone with a deep understanding of myself, and a much better understanding of others.

The best part of using writing this way is that you can do it anywhere, at any time. You can write in your notes app, or a Google Doc, or using pen and paper in a notebook. Whatever is most accessible for you. And this accessibility is important to the process, because the best time to figure out what you're feeling and why is while you're feeling it. Anyone who's ever tried to keep a journal at the end of the day could tell you that trying to remember what you experienced earlier just leads to you summarizing the events, and not exploring them. It's so important to let yourself feel your emotions, and writing can help you channel them out of your body, so you're not stuck feeling miserable or angry.

Speaking of journaling, that's not what I'm telling you to do here (unless you want to!). As a poet, I channel my emotions and thoughts into imagery, finding ways to describe my internal feelings with physical images. When I do, I'm transforming my conscious thoughts into something perceivable--or as I like to call it, making the ethereal, real. The reason I find this so effective is that you're not summarizing. It's impossible to summarize in poetry. By writing a poem, you create a tangible thing you can return to. Something that captures whatever feeling you were experiencing, allowing you to return to it later with a different perspective. Also, the act of writing itself, and exploring the words and images that come to mind when describing how you feel, will often give you a much better insight into what those feelings actually are.

Now, I'm sure some of you are saying to yourself: "But Violet! I can't write!" and to that I say, you absolutely can. You do it all the time. You're writing text messages and emails and social media posts. You might be writing conversations in your head that haven't happened yet, or writing a world that would be much more enjoyable to live in than the one we inhabit. What you've probably experienced is not a difficulty with writing, but a difficulty with stopping yourself from editing a piece of writing that doesn't exist yet. My biggest advice for anyone who wants to write is to stop editing before you're done. Who cares if you think the words you're writing are awful? You're the only one who has to see them. Once you're done and they're on the page, you're free to edit away. If you try to edit words you haven't written yet, you end up staring at a blank page, while you prevent the words you already have in your head from flying free.



Mountain Laurel

What did you imagine the outcome would be
of bathing my growing body in acid?
Your words burned the holes in my broken body
where you poured your bubbling liquid flame.
But in the end, what you couldn't foresee
is that I became the only mold that could hold
the flowing toxicity you forced upon me.

Beard Tongue

Perennial pinpricks pierce my placid facade
in perpetuity, despite my persistent pleas.

Tears of flame blaze down my charred
visage, rendering me an unrecognizable
charcoal interpretation of whatever God
created me. Perhaps when all that remains is ash
and burnt hair, a phoenix will emerge, unmarred.



Witch Hazel

a gnarled rune surrounds me, warping, writhing,
illegible; scribbled and scrawled in language lost
to time--ineffable commands that I can feel chastising
my attempted guise, creating a condemning cage,
imperceptible. Yet here I lay, with continued conniving,
contriving my plan of escape: shatter these symbols
with new language, forged in violet flames bent on surviving.



New England Aster

Bound to me by a ribbon of spectral starlight,
your tears glistened as they traversed
the topography of your cheeks. One life's twilight,
another's dawn. Your celestial guidance,
a string through this maze. A neophyte
made of floral patterns, fabrics, and face paint--
suddenly glows bright enough to be seen by satellite.



Violet Scherer (she/her/hers) is the 2026 Anchor Health Pride intern, a poet, and an aspiring teacher and musician. She is the secretary of the Connecticut Poetry Society, and frequently attends open mics and events all across Connecticut, but particularly in Manchester. She is passionate about education and helping people in her community find the resources and knowledge they need to not just survive, but thrive.

Instagram: @violetscherer08

RESOURCES

COMMUNITY CENTERS & PROGRAMMING

Bethel CT Pride

Location: Bethel
Website: bethelctpride.com



Bridgeport Pride Center

Location: Bridgeport
Website: bridgeportpridecenter.org

East Rock House

Location: New Haven
Instagram: @eastrockhouse

Lighthouse (Kids in Crisis)

Location: Fairfield County
Website: kidsincrisis.org/get-help/lighthouse

New Haven Pride Center

Location: New Haven
Website: newhavenpridecenter.org

North Haven Pride

Location: North Haven
Website: northhavenpride.org

Our Trans Life

Location: Bridgeport
Website: ourtranslife.org

Out in the Corner

Location: Litchfield County
Website: outinthecorner.org

OutCT

Location: New London
Website: outct.org

PFLAG

Location: Enfield, Hartford, Norwalk, Stamford, Tolland, Mansfield, Waterbury
Website: pflag.org

Punq Noire

Instagram: @punqnoire
About: an arts initiative curating punk events by and for QT/BIPOC creatives

Q Plus

Location: Hartford, Middletown, New Haven, North Haven, Portland, Southington, West Hartford, and Wethersfield
Website: qplusct.org

Queer Third Space

Website: sites.google.com/view/ct-queer-third-spaces/home
About: a community-led effort to promote queer connection

Trans Haven (PeerPride)

Location: New Haven, Hartford, and more
Website: peerpride.com/transhaven

FERTILITY

Gay Parents To Be (Illume Fertility)

Location: Norwalk
Website: gayparentstobe.com



HEALTH CARE



Anchor Health

Location: Hamden and Stamford
Website: anchorhealthct.org

Apex Community Care

Location: Danbury
Website: apexcommunitycarect.org

Circle Care Center

Location: Norwalk and Glastonbury
Website: circlecarecenter.org

Middlesex Health's Center for Gender Medicine and Wellness

Location: Middletown
Website: middlesexhealth.org

Planned Parenthood

Location: Bridgeport, Danbury, Enfield, Hartford, Manchester, Meriden, New Haven, New London, Norwich, Stamford, Torrington, Waterbury, West Hartford, and Willimantic
Website: plannedparenthood.org

The Health Collective

Location: Hartford
Website: healthcollective.org

HIV/STI TESTING SERVICES

APNH: A Place to Nourish your Health

Location: New Haven
Website: apnh.org

Mid Fairfield AIDS Project

Location: Norwalk
Website: mfap.org

Stamford CARES

Location: Stamford
Website: familycenters.org/Stamford-CARES



SEX & KINK



Debauchery CT

Instagram: @debauchery.ct
About: a kink and play party by and for the queer community, centering education and liberation

F.E.M. Shop

Location: Middletown
Instagram: @f.e.m.shop
About: queer, feminist sex education and community space

Queer Munch CT

Location: Central Connecticut
Instagram: @queermunchct
About: a safe, inclusive community for LGBTQ+ folks to explore kink and BDSM in a non-sexual, pressure-free environment

Sex Workers and Allies Network (SWAN)

Location: New Haven
Website: facebook.com/swannewhaven

To view additional resources, please visit bit.ly/ahpz-resources or scan the QR code below.



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DREAM

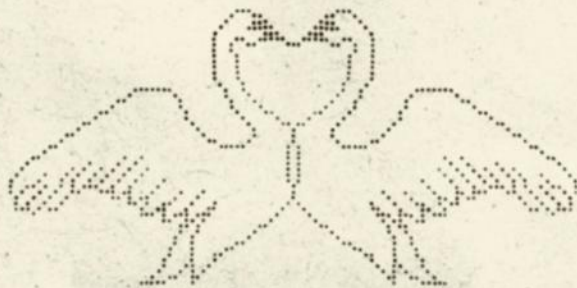
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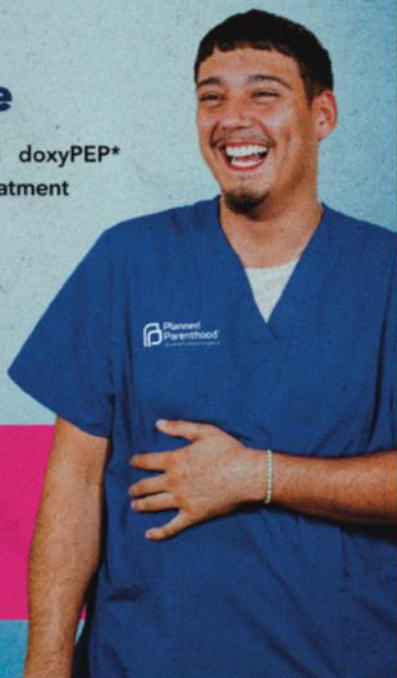
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