

HEART & SOL COLLECTIVE

# Sol Connection



**SPRING ISSUE**

Rooted in Change, Rising in Light.

MARCH 2025

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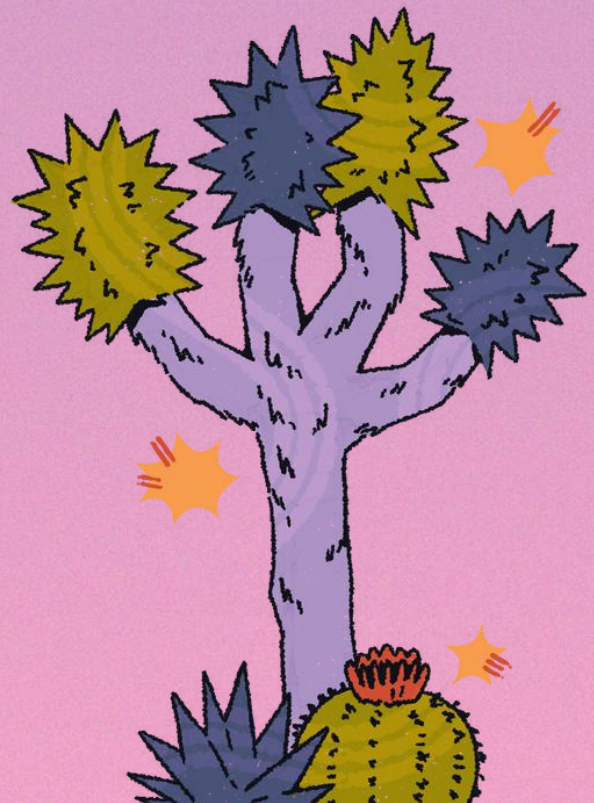
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# Founders Corner

## Winter Reflections and Spring Beginnings

By Kaleigh Mancha (she/her) and Rikki Jenkins (she/her)

Winter, when we are attuned and aligned, is a time of rest and recovery as we gather with community to celebrate holidays and nourish ourselves. However, much has happened this past Winter politically that did not allow for many of us to rest or slow down. It is reasonable if you feel overwhelmed, disoriented, confused, apathetic, emotional or uncertain during this time.

While Spring is a time of rebirth, awakening, sprouting, blooming and action we encourage you to first pause and take a breath. There is a long journey ahead. We must remember we have each other and all of us has a role to play in the revolution. Resting and recovering when we can is how we're going to make it through this. #RESTISRESISTANCE

We as a collective people cannot continue to go about our daily lives pretending to be unchanged or unimpacted. We cannot ignore the calls to show up and do our part, though we may be tired or unsure how to. We cannot ignore the undeniable impacts of COVID, quarantine, economic instability, multiple genocides around the world and now mass deportations, declining civil



liberties and the gutting of social programs that so many people in our country and communities rely on. Grief and change are inconvenient and painful, sometimes terribly so, but they are necessary and sacred. We must grieve to move forward. We must embrace change in order to shape the future. We must do these things together.

Last year our board and co-founders transitioned to a mutual aid model anticipating that grant funding would be uncertain and unsustainable in 2025. This was a wise shift, and we raised \$21,892 in donations and \$36K in grants between October-November 2024. We have been and will continue to use these funds to provide mutual aid scholarships for labor and postpartum doula services, emergency lactation consultations, mental health therapy and herbalism mentorship, as well as pay educators, artists and wisdom keepers to offer their services at our community events. We also stock our period pantry monthly. This is grassroots, community led activism. This is what we are passionate about!

However, we also have a responsibility to use our power and privilege for good. We have been shaping the next generation of students by becoming a practicum site for public health interns so they can gain hands-on experience in influencing the field of maternal.



child health AND speaking fiercely through legislative advocacy. We have been providing feedback on proposed bills, meeting with senators and just this week spoke at the NV Senate legislative meeting. We adopted a policy identifying our responsibility to community when harm has been caused by a provider (to learn more about this check out our website [here](#)).

We have requested listening sessions with practices and organizations that have caused harm, to repair and rebuild trust. We are uplifting voices in our communities and doing what we can to resist.

Which brings us to Spring... while we have events coming up, like Black Maternal Health Week ([link here](#)), we have made another shift. We are slowing down to assess the changing landscape of our society, systems and community's needs during these transitions. As a smaller non-profit, we have to honor our individual capacities and needs to truly live our organizational values of rest and health.



Slowing down looks like sharing information in our monthly newsletters to reduce spending time sharing information on social media only for it to be suppressed or offering and attending fewer events. Our focus currently is on redistributing donations and resources in meaningful and impactful ways through our

scholarships and period pantry, in addition to heavily amplifying and promoting other grassroots organizations and resources. So how do you show up to do “the work” when you’re overworked, underpaid, trying to caretake for people you love and feeling big emotions (or nothing at all) about everything that’s happening? I often share the words of Mother Teresa with the people I support in therapy, **“Never worry about numbers. Help one person at a time and always start with those nearest you... Love begins at home, and it is not how much we do, but how much love we put in that action.”** Look around. Practice more patience with the littles, elders and animal companions in your life.

Commit to being more compassionate and kinder to yourself. Rotate making dinner with friends to offset the rising cost of food. Volunteer with an organization close to you or that you have benefitted from in the past. Support small businesses. Plant a garden. Host a book club. Upcycle, recycle, donate. Put boundaries around your social media/ news consumption. Check in with people in your circle, maybe even call them. Move your body. Hug and kiss people you love. Laugh. Make space for emotions. Take a nap. Slow down. The point is, if you don’t create space to be authentically you or to be with others intentionally, you will be consumed by the chaos. We need you here. What you do and who you are matters. We need the strength of an empowered and unified community to navigate this season.

May we rise together, como el sol!

Con amor,  
Kaleigh Mancha and Rikki Jenkins



# Event Spotlight

## NEVADA *Black* MATERNAL HEALTH WEEK EVENT



**Saturday April 12, 2025**  
**Join us for a 2-Part Event!** 🎉

**8:30am - 9:30am | Part I**

Kick off the day with our **Maternal Wellness Walk** to promote health, advocacy, and solidarity.

**10:00am - 1:00pm | Part II -**

Stick around for the **2nd Annual Kinship Cookout**, a vibrant community gathering with food, vendors, resources, and entertainment!

Learn More & Register! <https://bit.ly/NVBMHW25>



# Birch Story

## New Beginnings Amidst Uncertainty: A Journey into a Home Birth

By Edna Martin (she/her)

Our family has undergone a whirlwind of changes in the past three and a half years. First, we bid farewell to Guam, our lifelong home. The transition wasn't a breeze, but I didn't anticipate the challenges of being pregnant again in a place so far from our roots.

As parents, my husband and I have faced our fair share of ups and downs. Our first child was a preemie, spending time in the NICU. Our second child arrived just three hours after I started labor, while our third sadly passed at 37 weeks. I also had my first cesarean, a late miscarriage, and our fifth child was induced and a VBAC. Each experience left us with a sense of uncertainty for our sixth child.



This time, I approached things differently. I'd become a birth worker and gained a newfound confidence in supporting clients at hospitals, their homes, and birthing centers. This experience led me to embrace the idea of a home birth. In fact, every mother I've supported and their strength, even in the face of unexpected changes, inspired me to make this decision.



Despite my certainty, the preparation process was different due to the inherent uncertainty of pregnancy, labor, and birth. This journey was a beautiful testament to that uncertainty.

Preparing for a home birth, or a still birth? The answer lies in embracing the journey and finding strength within ourselves.

I'm so grateful for the support and blessings from my community during my postpartum and baby gear journey. Without them, I wouldn't have a thing. I was terrified of another stillbirth, so I refused to buy anything for the baby.



I tried to push the thought aside, but it kept haunting me. I wish I could explain why. Even when early labor started three weeks before our son was born, it didn't make me feel prepared. Gosh, why did I let my fear hold me back?

Then there was the Mother's Blessing Circle.

In addition to refusing to buy anything for the baby, I also didn't want a baby shower. I didn't want to be celebrated. I just wanted to protect myself and my baby. I was afraid that if we celebrated and it turned into a loss, I would be devastated.







But the Mother's Blessing Circle changed everything. It was exactly what I needed to step away from my fears. The energy and the space that my friends created for me were exactly what I needed to openly welcome what was to come.

We welcomed our son at home on February 15th. Amidst my overwhelming sense of relief, he and I were surrounded by love, respect, and calm.

For as long as I can remember, I've been a part of the support system for many people. I've poured my love and energy into them, and it's always come naturally to me. But this pregnancy and especially after birth, I felt seen and loved in a

way I never thought possible. I received it and it made a world of difference. I think I've said "I get it now" a million times when I was checked in on, when food was dropped off, and when company came over. And especially when I was able to say my truth without judgment.

But the most important thing was how I moved on and spoke to myself. Especially during the hard days. I practiced what I preached, talked kindly to myself, and gave myself grace... as much as I could. Allowing myself to receive love and care this way, as well as showing myself love and grace, didn't come easy. It's not something I was used to.







***I have a newfound understanding of the phrase, it takes a village.***

For an uncensored series about my recent experience, you can find it on [Instagram.com/thebirthtribe](https://www.instagram.com/thebirthtribe)

Mothers Blessing Circle was facilitated by Monica with Baring Petals

Birth photos by Lisa with Little Loo Photography





# Advocacy Spotlight

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD

## SUPPORT SB192

DOULA WORKFORCE EXPANTION IN NEVADA

### WHAT IS SB 192?

Every family in Nevada deserves access to quality maternal health care support regardless of income, location, or insurance status. Senate Bill 192 is a health care omnibus bill, sponsored by Senator Dina Neal, that is designed to make a meaningful impact on Nevada's maternal health crisis by expanding Doula support access.

### WHY IT MATTERS

- In Nevada specifically:
  - The maternal mortality rate is approximately 16.7 deaths per 100,000 live births
  - Rural counties face up to 40% higher rates of maternal complications due to limited access to care
  - 30% of Nevada counties are classified as maternity care deserts with limited or no access to maternity care providers
  - 100% of Nevada is considered a Healthcare Provider Shortage Area

### HOW DOULAS HELP!

- 28% reduction in the risk of cesarean birth
- 34% decrease in reports of negative birth experiences
- 12% increase in the likelihood of spontaneous vaginal birth
- Significant improvements in breastfeeding initiation and continuation rates
- 15% reduction in maternal mortality among Medicaid recipients.



# FOOD & WELLNESS



*Cooking is an act of love*

*Ang pagluluto ay isang gawa ng  
pagmamahal*



# Oh So Sweet, Ube Halaya

By Mary Dee Moralita, she/her  
**Cultural Background:** Filipina x  
Kapangpangan x Visayan



Please let me introduce Chef Mary Dee, owner of OG Lola's! I first met her back in 2020 (maybe earlier), when she hosted an intimate traditional Kamayan\* dinner, in an art gallery, with a female DJ. It was as badass as it sounds! I've LOVED every meal I've ever gotten from OG Lola's so I was so grateful when she offered to share a recipe with us. Filipino style of eating with one's hands\*

## Where did you learn this recipe?

Mostly with my ma. She used to cook more traditional desserts like Ube Halaya and Sapin Sapin when I was really young for parties and holidays. But, I've also made Ube desserts with both of my Lola's. These days, me and my cousin Ann Klein have made it kind of a tradition to make a batch every Christmas when she visits. It's super nostalgic for us.

## What significance does this recipe have for you?

Ube root is native to the Philippines and is found all over the island so it's pretty abundant in a lot of our recipes, especially sweets. The vibrant purple color is so inviting and the flavor is very unique and always brings me back to happy childhood memories with my mom, singing in the kitchen.

## Does your family/ cultures have any sayings or quotes about food/ eating / nourishment?

They say Filipino Food cures all problems lol. Every single individual in my family loves to get down with food. We love grubbing together, sharing our love for food and uplifting each other's spirits when we do. For Filipinos, it's not just about nourishing the body, but the soul first and foremost.





**Ube Halaya  
(Purple Yam Jam) topped with  
Latik (toasted coconut milk  
crumbles)**

Ingredients:

2 lbs of fresh Ube root  
3 cans of coconut milk (2 for the  
Halaya 1 for the Latik)  
1 cup of coconut sugar  
Dash of sea salt  
1/4 cup of avocado oil  
1 Tbsp non toxic Ube extract

Steps:

1. Carefully peel and cube Ube root
2. Boil until tender
3. Drain and rinse
4. Add to pan on medium low heat with avocado oil and coconut milk

5. Mash until smooth (this is a long and slow process, can take anywhere between 1-3 hours depending on the amount of Ube)

6. Add in the coconut sugar, dash of salt and Ube extract & continue mashing and mixing for another 20 minutes

7. Make the Latik. In a separate pan, on medium, add the last can of coconut milk. This is a fine balance between letting it sit and stirring it until the coconut milk separates from the fat and leaves toasted crumbles for garnishing.

8. Place Ube Halaya into a glass jar or traditional oval shaped pan

9. Sprinkle with Latik

10. Set in fridge for 2 hours or overnight for best results

11. Enjoy as is by the spoonful, in desserts & drinks or spread onto bread!

Do you have a recipe you'd like to share with our community? Consider sharing your favorite meal with us in future issue! Email us at [hello@heartandsolcollective.org](mailto:hello@heartandsolcollective.org).



# Upcoming Events



## MONTHLY WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP & GROUNDING SESSION

A two part gathering for an open space of understanding and healing from violent trauma

Part 1. Support Group | 11am  
Facilitated by @Dr.SandraLeonvilla



Part 2. Grounding Sesh | 1pm  
Yoga by Brenda Blanco - @bee\_luna\_y\_sol

Location: Signup for more info\*  
Date: Sunday, April. 6th • 11am - 2pm





## Beyond the Recovery: My Journey After a Hysterectomy

By Sumer Gill, she/her



After a few months of recuperation and healing from my hysterectomy, I am shocked at what has affected me greatly and what has not. I feel everyone has a bit of preconception of how things will go during a medical procedure such as this. Personally, I expected to have pain but over time feel better physically and mentally. This was and was not the case. It was a very complex experience.

For context, I was sterile since birth and have been on hormone therapy for a majority on my life. I was always told I could not have my own children or at least not through extensive IVF treatments, egg donors, and

high likelihood of complications that could affect pregnancy from a very young age of 10. Honestly, I didn't give it much thought, at least that is until I met my husband, and we started talking about starting a family.

Luckily, I have a supportive partner that told me that yes, he wants a family but only if I am comfortable going through this process. Many conversations later we ended with adoption being our way to become parents in the future. We came to terms with the decision even with some concern from our families as they wanted us to have biological children.



Then I started having pain and heavy and prolonged periods. To the point of anemia for nearly 2 years. This was so concerning and had to have iron infusions to help keep up with the blood loss. Eventually we tried different medications to no avail. In fact, this made it worse to where my periods would last months. After some time, I decided to get a second opinion, something needed to give.

This OBGYN was so supportive and validated my experience. In the end we decided to move forward with a hysterectomy. Surgery day came and there was unfathomable anxiety and adrenaline. Cannot help but think "Is this the right decision? Will there be complications?".

My support network of my parents and husband were amazing and held my hand throughout this. Immediately I

was in pain and went home to rest.

After a couple days of pain management and taking it easy I started to see myself recovering. Yay! A light at the end of the tunnel. As we went through the 6-week monitoring my doctor was impressed with my healing progress. I am starting to feel like myself again. Plus, no more periods! I should be happy and ready to move on to the next phase of my life. Was I ever wrong?

I have always had issues with self-confidence, but this is an all-time low. Even though my body was doing better than expected my mind was not. I developed some body dysmorphia. Thinking how I am not a "full" woman anymore or whole in general. Taken back by these new feelings that were not on my plan of recovery. Especially, after preparing for



years for this moment. What I wish I knew was it is ok to feel, and they are valid even if you weren't expecting them. If applicable, take your time and get all the help you need. Therapy or even things to make you comfortable like a new set of pajamas or favorite snacks. Self-care as often as needed or can.





# Upcoming Events

REFLECT | HEAL | RESIST

DOWNTOWN CONTAINER PARK

**FREE SELF DEFENSE CLASS**

EVERY SUNDAY MORNING  
ON THE LAWN • 10:30AM

REGISTER NOW

SPONSORED BY:

707 E. FREMONT STREET, LAS VEGAS, NV 89101 - DOWNTOWNCONTAINERPARK.COM  
#LOCALLIVESHERE

## What is Fascism?

How Can We Organize Community Resistance, Power, and Liberation!

Come join our educational discussion and workshop on what fascism is and how we can defeat it

Those in power wish to attack our communities, WE MUST STAND UP!

Scan to RSVP (Not required but appreciated)

Location: UNLV Student Union rm 207  
Date: 4/18/25  
Time: 2:30-4:30PM

Las Vegas PUNK Coalition

1/2

obodo PRESENTS

The 2nd Annual

**Our Mothers' Gardens Book Festival**

Saturday, April 12, 2025  
10:00am - 4:00pm

1300 C St. Las Vegas, NV 89106

www.obodocollective.org

Logos: 33.G, LAS VEGAS MUSEUM OF ART, milkweed editions, CSN, SNRHA, MOWWOLF FOUNDATION, PLANET PROTECTORS NETWORK GROUP, MGM RESORTS, GRAYWOLF PRESS.

**TEJIDO!**  
at Spring Valley Library

April 6th, 11 AM to 4 PM  
A community sewing and skill-sharing event!

Learn with us, or from us!

**Mending Embroidery Sewing workshop**

Queer safe!  
Masks encouraged!

Bring a project, or clothing item that needs mending!

4280 S Jones Blvd  
Las Vegas 89103



## From Intern to Advocate: My Journey with Heart and Sol



By Lila Angela Salvacion (She/Her)

I was at the UNLV job fair not exactly knowing what to expect. I was almost overwhelmed by the bustling fair, and Heart and Sol's purple and orange booth caught my eye, like a whimsical sunset! When I approached them, I admired that their mission was centered around reproductive health, BIPOC centered entrepreneur opportunities, educational workshops, magazines, and more!

I'm a healthcare administration major, but I wanted to enhance my public health knowledge even more while also being in touch with my creative side, and I knew I would want to partner with an organization like that! Being an intern in Heart and Sol was both educational and made me feel like I was part of a community, it wasn't just work. To me, Heart and Sol puts the village in the "It takes a village" quote, but it applied to the children, parents, and anyone who needed the support.

I think Heart and Sol's approach is just as important as clinical or preventative care, and many have often undermined the feeling of a safe space. Especially in a city like Las Vegas, it can be easy to drown in the glamor and chaos, and this allowed me to figure out unique ways to give back, instead of being caught up. Which is why I was really looking forward to planning an event with the internship where I can give self-care support to parents of special needs, with the means of using art! Besides that, one of my favorite moments of the internship was when we were in the Giving Garden for the Spring Equinox Market event.



I'm happy I was given the opportunity to work with an internship whose advocacy and ideals I align with. Studying more about health disparities and social determinants was also one of the reasons I wanted to intern with Heart and Sol. I saw how much of health disparities can be improved by advocating for reproductive justice. I am always passionate for women having bodily autonomy, and never forgetting about the systematic issues still present today by finding ways to fight against it. As an aspiring healthcare leader and a unique individual, being able to advocate for that is part of my job and mindset.

Even after my internship ends, I look forward to Heart and Sol's future projects and events, and I will continue to give all of my love and support!





# BREASTFEEDING

LACTATION  
CONSULTATIONS  
&  
HUMAN MILK  
DONATIONS

[www.BreastfeedingwithMaj.com](http://www.BreastfeedingwithMaj.com)

Lactation Consultations provide comprehensive breastfeeding education counseling, support, clinical management and interventions that are provided to a person during their prenatal, perinatal or postnatal periods. It supports the initiation, maintenance and continuation of breastfeeding assisting with an individuals lactation challenges and feeding challenges with infants.



Semaj Bruce, IBCLC  
International Board Certified Lactation Consultant



The 8th Kizuna Japanese

# Spring Festival

Haru Matsuri

Sammy Davis Jr. Festival Plaza in **Lorenzi Park**  
720 Twin Lakes Dr. Las Vegas, NV 89107

Saturday  
10 am - 5 pm  
—No Pets—  
**April 5** 2025

Japanese Culture, Arts, Tea Ceremony, Calligraphy, Origami, Taiko, Koto, Music, Dance, Yosakoi, Martial Arts, Ikebana, Kimono Sake Tasting, Games, and a lot more! *Celebrate Spring Japanese Way!*

KIZUNA JAPANESE SOCIETY

(702) 626-0303  
[kizuna.lasvegas@gmail.com](mailto:kizuna.lasvegas@gmail.com)  
[KizunaJapaneseSociety.org](http://KizunaJapaneseSociety.org)

Kizuna Japanese Society is a Non-Profit Charitable Organization Under Section 501(c)(3) Of the Internal Revenue Code

NEVADA  
ARTS COUNCIL

NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
ARTS



CO-SPONSORED BY CITY OF LAS VEGAS

Parks • Rec • Arts





# ART IN VEGETS





# Do It for the Culture

## Ofelia & HERWAISTBEADS: Weaving Healing, Culture, and Empowerment By Kaleigh Mancha (she/her)

Meet Ofelia (she/her)! Owner and creatHER of HERWAISTBEADS. She has been creating waist beads since her twin's pregnancy, which will be 4 years this April 2025. Waistbeads have been a huge part of her healing and feminine journey, and she enjoys helping other women feel the same way she do. She owns a brick and mortar in Downtown Las Vegas inside the Gather House (next door to Ferguson's Downtown), and will be celebrating a year there this month. Other than creating the waistbeads, she also hosts workshops for others to learn how to make your own and women empowerment events.

**How would you describe your art style? Are there any recurrent themes in your work?**

When I am creating waistbeads, I am very free flowing. I like to create how I feel, and just let my brain go on its own







without too much criticism or second thought. I am very fond of earthy toned colors and stones when pairing. Sometimes I have to put away my gold, brown or white bead jars to focus more on the other colors lol.

**What medium(s) do you use & why? Has this changed over time?**

To create my waistbeads I use glass seed beads, gemstones (chipped and whole), and double nylon thread. Since the start of my business, I have changed my threads at least 3-4x. I don't mind trying newer threads to see what appears to be the most durable. There are rumors fishing wire/cord is the

best but I am scared how that will roughen my hands when tying.

**What compelled you to become an artist/ creator?**

The reactions and testimonials of how women felt after wearing waistbeads, is what compelled me to continue creating waistbeads for others. At first, I was only creating for myself when I made my first set during my twins pregnancy for womb protection and healing.

**How has your cultural /racial/ ethnic background played a role in your art/ creations?**





My racial and cultural background has played a tremendous role in my waistbeads business, because I have taken the responsibility to inform and educate those of the importance and history behind Waistbeads. They are not a jewelry accessory or a Tiktok trendy, waistbeads hold so much meaning and value that you will only experience once wearing. Influencers and social media play a role in deeming valuable art, and it is my duty to show its true meaning.

### **Who or what inspires your work?**

My HER tribe inspires me. They are so supportive and accept me as a human, which makes it easier to show up as a creatHER.

**If you could give one piece of advice to new artists/creatives, what would you tell them?**

One piece of advice that I would say is: "Don't take it personal." I was told to not start my waistbeads as "a real business" and to not get my brick and mortar... Here I am 4 years later with a 1 year shop anniversary coming up :)

### **Business Info/ Socials**

1020 Fremont Street, Las Vegas, NV 89101

Wednesday-Sunday 11:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Instagram/TikTok

@herwaistbeads

Website [www.herwaistbeads.com](http://www.herwaistbeads.com)





# Event Spotlight

LAS VEGAS LIBERATION X FIFTH SUN PROJECT X  
PIGEON HAT COLLECTIVE



**THEIR HOME TOO  
FEST IV**

SAVE THE DATE

**MAY 17, 2025**



# Confessions of an Avoidant

By Brenda M Hernandez  
(She/Her)

Have you ever felt paralyzed by shame? The kind that keeps you from doing the things you know you should do—the text left unanswered, the task left unfinished, the opportunity ignored? Have you ever found yourself avoiding even the smallest steps toward the life you want, only to spiral into deeper shame for not trying? I know this feeling well.

For so long, I believed my avoidance was a personal failing—a sign of laziness or irresponsibility. But the more I sat with it, the more I realized: Shame is not just an emotion—it is a response. A byproduct of a dysregulated nervous system.

## Shame and the Dysregulated Nervous System

When we experience stress, trauma, or prolonged pressure, our bodies enter survival mode. As a survivor of child sexual abuse, I had to remind myself that for years, I was not safe.

My nervous system had to cope. For some, stress triggers fight or flight—anger, overworking, or constant busyness. But for others, like me, it leads to freeze and fawn. We shut down. We disappear—not because we don't care, but because our bodies seek safety in stillness.

**“Shame is not just an emotion—it is a response. A byproduct of a dysregulated nervous system.”**

Avoidance, then, is not a moral failure. It is a nervous system response. And healing requires regulation, not punishment. In my quest to break free from shame and avoidance, I've come to see it as not just personal—but by design.

## Shame as a Tool of Oppression

We often hear that fear is a tool of the oppressor, but shame is just as effective. Shame isolates. It convinces us that we are the problem rather than the systems that keep us trapped.



Oppression doesn't just strip us of resources—it makes us feel unworthy of them. And when we internalize this, we stop showing up—for ourselves, for our people, for the movements that need us.

Through this lens, I had to ask myself: What if my “stuckness” isn't just personal, but something designed? If so, then breaking free isn't just self-improvement—it's an act of resistance.

But here's the thing—we don't always recognize how much grace stuckness requires. Avoidance is often misunderstood as unreliability. Yet, those caught in shame don't need more pressure or guilt—they need gentle invitations to reconnect. Reminders that they are still welcome, still valued, still part of the whole.

### **Breaking Free: My Healing Shame Plan (And How You Can Build Yours)**

I used to think healing meant making big changes overnight. That if I just tried harder, I'd wake up one day as the person I was avoiding. But shame doesn't work like that.

The most important tool isn't pushing myself harder—it's microdosing the things I resist. Small actions, done consistently, rewire the nervous system. They remind my body that I can move forward, that I am not trapped, and that action—no matter how tiny—is still action.

This plan isn't about forcing productivity but meeting myself where I am while gently moving forward. Here's what's helping me:

- **Recognizing Avoidance Without Judgment** - Instead of shaming myself, I name what's happening: "I'm avoiding this because I feel unworthy or overwhelmed." Naming it softens the charge.
- **Microdosing Action** - What is the smallest possible step I can take? Something so tiny it almost feels too easy? That's where I start.
- **Tracking Tiny Wins** - Keeping a record of small actions helps me notice progress and interrupt the narrative that I'm "not doing enough."



- Receiving Grace from Others - Avoidance makes me want to isolate, but letting others in—allowing myself to be gently pulled back into connection—is crucial.

For that, I'm grateful to my community at Heart and Sol Collective. They've given me grace when I couldn't give it to myself.

### **Taking Accountability & Moving Forward**

Part of regulating my nervous system has meant stepping away, sometimes without notice. I know I've left texts unanswered. I know I've left projects unfinished. I still feel overwhelmed by the things I've avoided. And for that, I want to acknowledge it with care and accountability.

I am learning, growing, and working through this. And if you have been impacted by my absence, please know—it was never out of disregard or lack of love. It was me, struggling with my own nervous system, trying to find my way back. I share this not as an excuse, but as an offering.

Because I know I'm not the only one who struggles with this. And if you, too, have disappeared under the weight of shame, I want you to know—you are not alone.

### **A Collective Healing**

I can't do this alone. None of us can.

The more grace I receive, the more I learn to extend it—to myself, to others, to the collective healing we all deserve. Liberation isn't just about dismantling systems; it's about unlearning the ways they've made us feel unworthy. If you're feeling stuck, please know—you are not broken. You are not lazy. You are moving through something deeply human, and you deserve grace as you find your way.



# Reflecting on Pregnancy, Loss, and Birth Experiences in Clark County



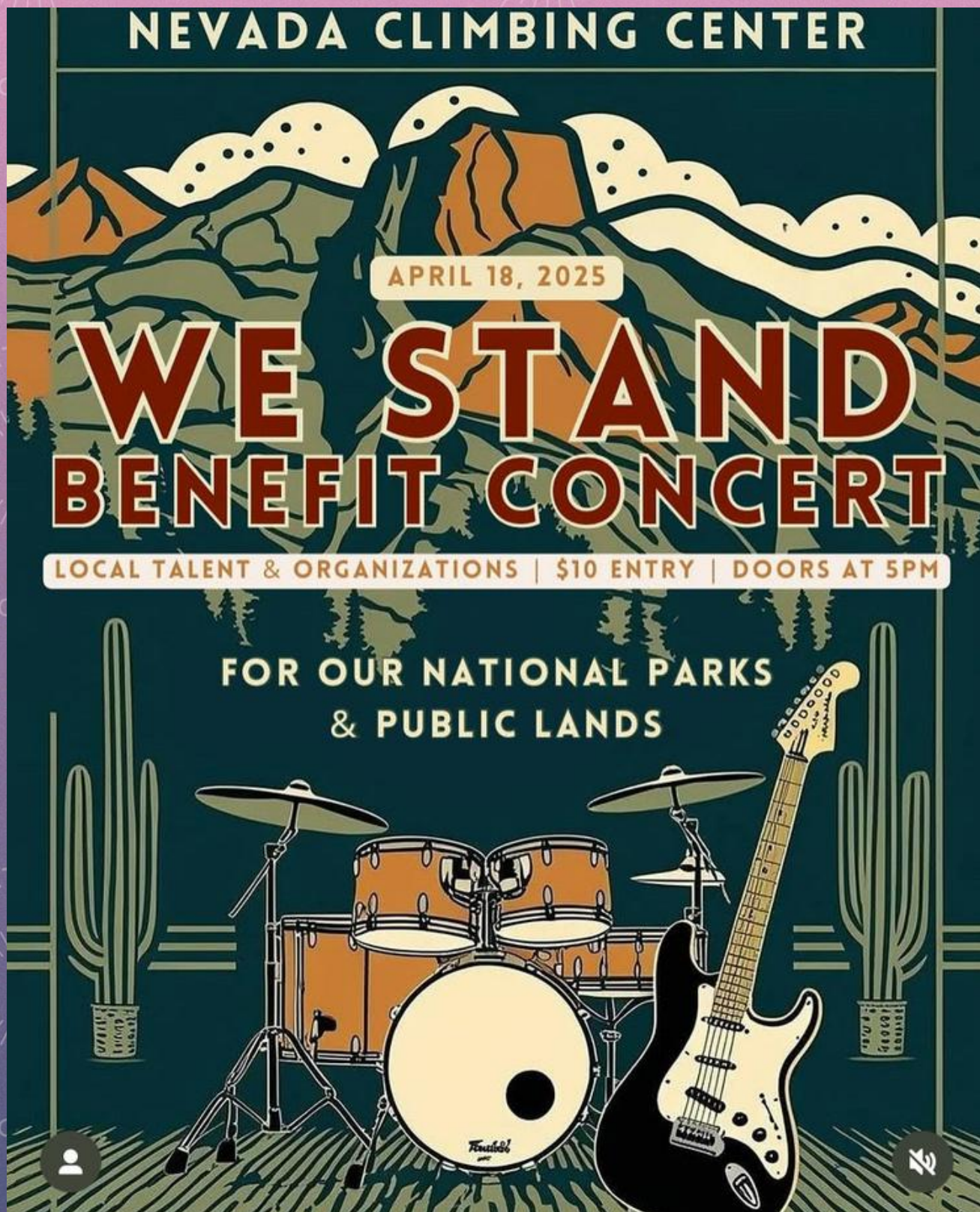
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# Event Spotlight







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