

Breaking From Negative Narratives & Embracing Our Strength

Trans communities are vibrant, resilient, powerful and diverse. While there is a lot of violence in the world around us, and a lot of harm directed at trans people, the narrative that being trans is simply suffering and pain is harmful in and of itself. Systemic oppression is debilitating, and the impact of transphobia is felt by all trans people but focusing on the pain and trauma experienced by trans people can often result in us feeling stuck and helpless. Celebrating Our Trans Identities, Histories and Communities Trans people are exceptionally resilient.

Across decades and centuries, trans people have found ways to live as their authentic selves, to survive and thrive, in different places and cultures around the world. Our communities have a rich and vibrant history, and this history is not limited to, and should not be reduced to, histories of harm and suffering. It is important to find ways to celebrate our trans identity, and to connect with the positive aspects of our communities' histories and stories.

We can ask ourselves:

- What do I like or love about being trans?
- What unique perspectives do I have to contribute because of my trans experience?
- What am I proud of about my trans identity?
- What gives me joy about being trans and part of the trans community?
- What has my experience as a trans person taught me about my own resilience and strength?

Connecting with Our Communities

Connecting with other trans people is often an effective way to find strength, community and resilience. Many trans people are consistently pushing back against negative stereotypes about trans people. By meeting other trans people, we can recognize that our experiences are not isolated, and that the harmful stereotypes perpetuated about trans people are not an accurate reflection of our communities. Connecting with our community also affords us the

opportunity to see and meet trans people of varying ages. Opportunities to connect with and learn from trans elders, for example, is an incredible way of learning for ourselves that trans people can and do live long, happy lives. Those lives may not always be easy, but there is hope and power in the capacity of trans people to survive and find joy.

We Are Stronger Than We Realize

The resilience, power and strength of every trans person is often unrecognized. As trans people, many of us have had to overcome massive barriers - coming out, changing our name and pronouns, changing how we express our gender, accessing medical interventions to change our bodies, these are all examples of our power. As trans people, we have ventured into the absolute unknown, and often drastically changed who we are, in order to be the most authentic and honest version of ourselves possible. Regardless of where you are at, all trans people are incredibly resilient, powerful and inspiring. Our communities are powerful - we are powerful.