

*What does
giving
care from
afar mean
to you?*

5-word sentences

Stories of Care 2021



Our Land

Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the sacred land we print this zine is on the ancestral, traditional territory of many Nations including the Mississaugas of the New Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples. We also acknowledge that long before European settlers stole the land on which Tkaronto exists (what is colonially known as Toronto), this territory was subject to the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Chippewa, and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes.

We acknowledge these Nations and any other Nations who care for the land - recorded and unrecorded - as the past, present, and future caretakers of this land.

Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous Peoples from across Turtle Island (what is colonially known as North America) and we are grateful to have the opportunity to live, work, and connect on this land. As Filipinx folks in the diaspora, we recognize the parallels between the experiences and histories of colonization in the Philippines and here in Turtle Island.

We recognize that, regardless of when we arrived, we are uninvited guests on these lands and we are all responsible for uprooting and dismantling the colonial white supremacist forces that continue to oppress Indigenous Peoples today.

As we share and reflect on our individual and collective stories of resilience, hope, and connection, let us also remember and honour the stories of these lands and all Indigenous Peoples from across Turtle Island and across the globe, whose stories continue to be forcefully stolen, silenced, and rewritten without their consent. Our hope in acknowledging this is that we all keep this in mind as we share knowledge and space in our journeys of continued learning; that we engage in conversations openly, respectfully, and most importantly, together; and that we continue to work towards justice, decolonization, and reconciliation.

Daisy N.; Co-Founder of Bayanihan Empowerment

Bayanihan Empowerment is an emerging organization by and for Filipinx youth in Toronto. We hope to empower Filipinx youth through community, conversations, and the recognition of our shared humanity.

For more information, visit bayanihanto.com or follow along on social media at [@bayanihanto](https://www.instagram.com/bayanihanto).

Stories of Care

The aim of the 'Stories of Care' project is to capture and amplify the stories of Filipinx/a/o care workers - including but not limited to caregivers, nurses, therapists, personal support workers, grocery store workers - those who didn't have the luxury of working remotely but needed to be on the frontlines. The project revealed stories of employment, unemployment, family, grief, healing, community and resilience.

Beginning in June 2020, we have met over 35 care workers from across Canada who have graciously spent time writing, telling and sharing their stories with us in a variety of different ways.

This booklet holds a small collection of those stories in the form of 5-word sentence poems. These frontline workers share what love from afar means to them, in the context of this pandemic and in the diasporic experience.

From Caitlin

'Pa-pasok na ako. Ingat'
My dad leaves for work.
The greeting is mentioned everyday
It's a reminder of my place.
Im reminded of his sacrifices
My day is always busy
But exactly at five pm,
I jump into the kitchen,
Asking what will papa eat?
Is the bahay clean enough?
How can I help distress?
Although our days are distant
I care for him afar,
In small acts of kindness
And reminders of my love.



From Clarissa

Never been this much together
Never been this much apart
Hugs through unexpected messages
Massages right before shifts start
Whispering a prayer while walking
And then so suddenly, so randomly
Receiving care tips for a new plant



From Olivia

Let's start with my name.

You can call me Ollie!

A community worker in training.

This is what I pledge.

Finish schooling, be an advocate

Be among those that act.

Together we fight for injustice.

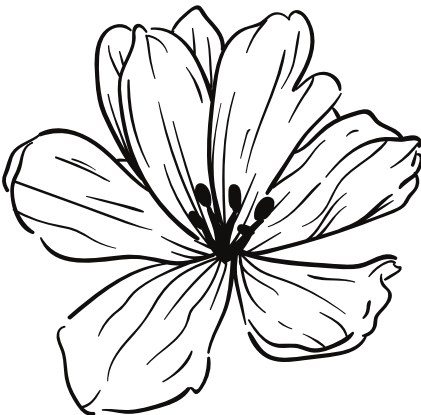
The voice of the marginalized.

And those that are oppressed.

These types of social actions.

I know that I can do.

Lobbying, campaigning so does petitioning.



I can gather allies and foes.
That will shut down my campaign.
And maybe discourage me too.
Help me challenge the system?

I want to be involved.
I can challenge the system.
Many will oppose our proposal.
It may take a long time,
to get what I am asking.
It will be all worth
The change that is happening.
All I am asking is
They know, we are united...



From Michelle

I saw you last week.
So I waved at you.
As you hurriedly walked past.
I saved you some plants.
Each one was carefully selected.
Different plants for different spots.
Some for under the sun.
Others quite content in shade.
These plants are constant reminders.
That we live far away.
From the place called Home.



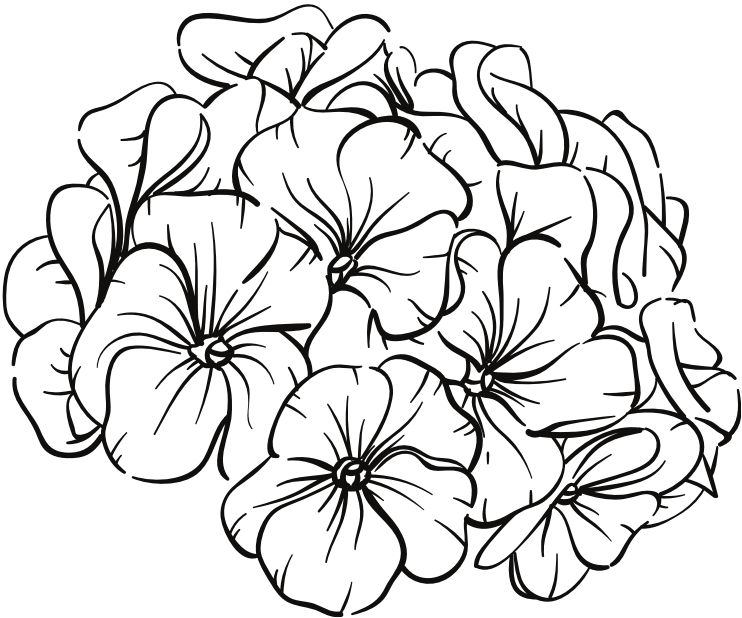
From Louisse

Guilt.

Almost like a survivor's guilt.
An imposter syndrome of sorts.
To be on the frontlines
— just not that one.
To be heralded a hero,
I am feeling anything but.
I hear about COVID, though
Not see it, live it.
I'm fighting a different battle.
Caring for a different cause.
It's not any less important.
Though at times it feels as such.
I cry, not for the same losses.
I smile, not for the same victories.
What I do is care.
Sometimes I care too much.
Perhaps we are all on
Different fronts, under different spotlights.

From Rainna

Sending messages from a distant
Showing love without seeing them
Staying in touch without touching them
Reaching out without holding them
Love and care from afar.



From Nina

To love is to care.

Care can be seen everywhere.

Care seeps through the cracks.

Care is carefully counted pills.

Care blossoms from smiling patients.

To care is to love.

Show care by loving others.

However, be careful, for yourself.

Care is patience for yourself.

Care to love your growth?

Care to love your strength?

Yes, care and love yourself.

After, care and love others.



Sharing

The 'Stories of Care' lives on through your stories. If you are receiving this booklet and feel inspired to share your own stories through 5-word sentences, we invite you to do so on social media using the #storiesofcare and tagging @livinghyphen @nychonline @dia_space

These poems are just one of many artifacts created as a part of this project. There are 5 longer written stories capture in The Stories of Us library, in English and Tagalog side-by-side as a resource for ESL learners. There are 3 art installations created by Filipinx artists as a part of the 2021 DesignTO festival. There are 6 media pieces speaking about the impact of this project.

This project was centred around storytelling as tools of healing, self-care, community building and learning. This project was built on relationships and trust, the stories that were shared on "paper" were not the same as the ones shared verbally or confidentially. Those stories are safe until the storyteller is ready, if ever, to share them publicly.

This project archive lives on at
www.dia.space/projects/storiesofcare/

Work of many

This project was a collaborative effort between North York Community House, Living Hyphen and the Department of Imaginary Affairs.

North York Community House (NYCH) is committed to building strong, vibrant communities – serving over 15,000 residents in northwest Toronto every year. For more information, visit nych.ca or follow along on all social channels at @nychonline.

Living Hyphen is a community that explores the experiences of hyphenated Canadians – individuals who call Canada home but with roots elsewhere.

Living Hyphen's aim is to reshape the mainstream and to turn up the volume on voices that often go unheard. For more information, visit livinghyphen.ca or follow along on all social channels at @livinghyphen.

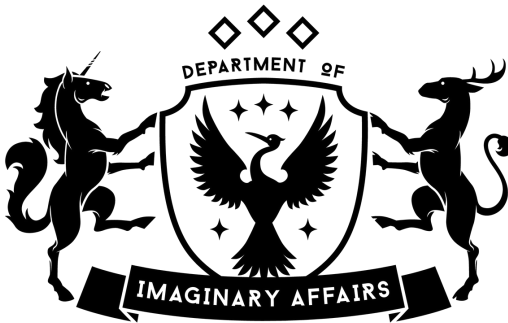
Department of Imaginary Affairs works to elevate and amplify the stories of first-generation Canadians and Youth who are amongst our most underestimated communities because we believe their stories need to be central to more empathetic programs, policies and services.

Department of Imaginary Affairs aims to make artifacts of the future and then asks why they didn't already exist. For more information, visit dia.space or follow along on all social channels @dia_space.



North York Community House

Living Hyphen



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