

**BYP100**

# **THE BLACK JOY EXPERIENCE**

## **Resource Guide**





# THE BLACK JOY EXPERIENCE RESOURCE GUIDE



## Authors:

**Jonathan Lykes**  
Artistic Director & Co-Producer,  
The Black Joy Experience  
National Board Member, BYP100  
[jonathan.lykes@cssp.org](mailto:jonathan.lykes@cssp.org)

**Fresco Steez**  
Minister of Culture  
Digital Strategist, BYP100  
[fresco@byp100.org](mailto:fresco@byp100.org)

# BYP100 National Cultural Production Team:

Jonathan Lykes (DC)  
Fresco Steez (DC)  
Makia Green (DC)  
Katrina L. Rogers (NOLA)  
Ryan Fielder (Detroit)  
Kai M. Green (National)  
Johnaé Strong (Chicago)  
Halee Curtis (Chicago)  
JeNae Taylor (DC)  
Je’Kendria Trahan (DC)  
Andrew Campbell (Jackson)

Rahmann Mannsaray (DC)  
Tracey Corder (Bay Area)  
Valerie Papillon (Chicago)  
Kwan Moonlite (NOLA)  
Jessica Pierce (National)  
Alyx Goodwin (Bay Area/Chicago)  
Mina Ezikpe (Durham)  
Tanea Lynx (Bay Area)  
Jonathan Butler (DC)  
Jawanza Williams (NYC)  
Jessica Lykes (National)  
Aaron Talley (Chicago)



[www.byp100.org](http://www.byp100.org)  
[facebook.com/BYP100](https://facebook.com/BYP100)  
[@BYP\\_100](https://twitter.com/BYP_100)

# Preface: Purpose of the Black Joy Experience Resource Guide

Shortly after the 2016 presidential election, BYP100 members were leaving a focus group that was being conducted for the get R.E.A.L Initiative's Marvelous Whirlwind Project and heading to a BYP100 organizing meeting. One comrade mentioned that often times, if certain gatekeepers of BYP100's chant culture were not in attendance, then the collective was less likely to chant or sing during our weekly community gatherings, to set the tone of holistic energy. This reality surprised some. Many assumed that everyone was familiar with BYP100's song/chant culture and that we at least had a designated group of people that had been around long enough to lead several of our frequently used chants. So when we were told by members in the same political home (BYP100) that many did not know how to utilize freedom songs and liberation chants as a healing tool for centering, connecting and communicating, we knew then that the Black Joy Experience Resource Guide was a needed tool for all young Black organizers seeking to uphold BYP100's holistic energy value system.

This interaction made us realize that it would be necessary to equip BYP100 members, Black organizers, Black radical thinkers, Black daydreamers, and Black futurist with the power of the holistic energy spirit that has fueled the freedom movement of our time, and many freedom movements that came before us. The song and chant cultural practices that take place in BYP100 are not particular to this organization, but it builds on and is woven into the long history of the Black radical tradition.<sup>1</sup> The BYP100 National Cultural Production Team now seeks to make that tradition accessible

---

<sup>1</sup> A Term formalized by Dr. Cedric Robinson, He writes, "The Black Radical Tradition is not a biological reflex, but a reconstitution of historical, cultural, and moral materials, a transcendence which both transfers and edits earlier knowledges and understandings among the several African peoples enslaved." When used throughout this document this term building on Dr. Robinson's work, while extending further into the history of the resiliency practices that relied on faith, joy, family and love to navigate white supremacy and state sanctioned violence.

<sup>2</sup> To me this term refers those individuals (usually a small amount of people) who hold the knowledge, history, skills and decision making power over a body of resources, practices or expertise. I seek to undo the gatekeeper pattern, and make Freedom songs and liberation chant culture accessible to all Black youth between the ages of 18-35 who are organizing through a Black queer feminist lens.

to BYP100 members, Black led organizations within the Movement for Black Lives and core partners throughout movements with whom we hope to draw meaningful links between our experiences of joy, work, struggle, vision and futures.

The Black Joy Experience Resource Guide was created to disrupt the idea of having “gatekeepers”<sup>2</sup> when it comes to freedom songs, liberation chants and the administration of holistic energy and healing in Black movement spaces. We want organizers working through a Black queer feminist lens -- like the Black trans, queer and gender non-conforming founders of the Keeping Ballroom Community Alive Network (KBCAN) to be able to lead, learn and create chants as a strategic tool for centering, communicating and connecting, regardless if we are at a Kiki Ball in New York, a healing circle on the southside of Chicago, conducting direct actions in District of Columbia or at one of the many weekly BYP100 general body meetings that take place in one of our eight chapters around the country. This resource guide is about accessibility, creativity and joy.

We know, with these tools, we will get a bit closer to freedom, because joy is not a means to an end, but the experience of joy and love, is the end, it is the point, it is the reason we come together. To be able to joyfully live out our self-determined lives without limitations or barriers is why we exist. The BYP100 collective imagines a day when we no longer have to fight for this reality, but for now, we must keep fighting for power and sustaining ourselves thru holistic energy. We must do this for those who will be here, for the future of Black lives.

## Working Definition of Holistic Energy

BYP100 cultural workers understand that energy can neither be created nor destroyed, only transferred to create movement. We seek to transform the energy in collective spaces and have them be consumed by holistic energy, which is the process of providing an interdisciplinary approach to artistic articulation, erotic truth, music, and anti-oppression work. We merge political education, artistic expression and musical healing towards the goal of curating artistic spaces that create awareness, promote personal healing, surmount institutional barriers and generate Black joy, love, self-care and healing. Through the Black Joy Experience we seek to tap into a

long history of joy and holistic energy that has been woven in the black radical tradition, especially when our freedom is at stake. Holistic Energy, is also one of BYP100's Core Values. Standing true to this value, we seek to always, without apology, bring our entire selves to the work. Our efforts are driven with love, using a culture-centered approach (art, music, dance, call and response, songs and chants), while nurturing individual leadership, and building power through our collective. We apply energy to BYP 100's work and in the solidarity work we engage in with other marginalized groups. To see full values statement go here: <http://bit.ly/BYP100Values>

## Working Definition of Freedom Song and Liberation Chant

Freedom Song/Liberation Chant: The BYP100 National Cultural Production Team understands freedom songs and liberation chants to be rhythmic tones that are dedicated to the praise of liberation, justice, and freedom, especially from institutional and systematic oppression. Freedom songs and liberation chants are inherently political. In BYP100 we encourage our members to sing and chant at every protest, gathering, community meeting, and/or demonstration. We center ourselves in a turn-up styled, rhythmic, call and response griot tradition that allows us to bring our voice, bodies and entire beings into the holistic energy praxis. In other words, freedom songs are how we tap into the healing, joy and spirit work of our time.

## What is included in the Black Joy Experience Resource Guide?

This guide is a multimedia resource, information and capacity building booklet that (1) provides history and context about healing through freedom song/chant culture; (2) gives case studies and lessons from grassroots organizers about how local communities (at home and abroad) are using chants and songs to resist institutional barriers to self-determination; (3) uplifts practical curriculum and utilization guide for anchoring a holistic energy praxis in movement spaces, as defined in BYP100's core values; (4)

offers primary source narratives on how freedom song and chant culture has impacted the lives of young Black organizers across the country during the Movement for Black Lives (2013 - Present).

**More specifically, the Black Joy Experience Resource Guide contains the following:**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Personal Narratives and Testimonials</b> . . . . .	1
<b>Chant Academy: Origin Stories of BYP100 Chant and Song Culture</b> . . . . .	4
<b>Timeline of BYP100 Choir</b> . . . . .	12
<b>The Black Joy Experience Holistic Energy Curriculum</b> . . . . .	16
<b>Freedom Music Case Study</b> . . . . .	52
<b>Freedom Songs performed by Black queers and femmes</b> . . . . .	62
<b>Black Struggle Freedom Songs from Around the World</b> . . . . .	63
<b>The Black Joy Experience Music and Chant Track List</b> . . . . .	64
<b>BYP100 Chant and Song Lyrics</b> . . . . .	66



# PERSONAL NARRATIVES AND TESTIMONIES FROM BYP100 MEMBERS:

## Why Freedom Songs and Liberation Chants are Critical to Black Liberation

Chanting is a centering activity that allows us to touch freedom, to create a space where our chakras are aligned, our spirits in sync, and our bodies connected by the fluidity of rhythm and verse. Hear from BYP100 Members about the importance of chants, music and the holistic energy movement:

*“We were just bringing ourselves and sharing our tools, when you have a history in the Black radical tradition this is critical to our success. BYP100 is almost four years old now, and we are still a new Black led organization. In that original meeting when Cathy Cohen brought us together, all 100 of us pulled tools and resources from the work we did in our own communities. We all had local influences. So we need to learn that history. We want the world to know we are practicing this now, but it didn’t come from us, so we need to share it with others, just as it was shared with us”*

**-Tiara Phalon, BYP100 Oakland, CA Chapter**

*“This resource is critical because whenever you start to archive praxis, it becomes a part of history, a legacy isn’t what you lead behind, it’s more about what evolved from the holistic energy that one shared with the world. So that’s why it’s important to us to lift up Javod, who led chants at Oakland Freedom School, it is only right to keep that spirit in BYP100’s chant/song culture. The Black Panther Party was the same way, it wasn’t about just marching and knowing formation, but one thing that was missing from the panthers was the healing aspects that we’re emphasizing in our movement. BYP100 has transformed how we use these things and is leaving behind something that will continue to evolve, most of all, BYP100 is talking about healing thru a black*

*queer feminist lens. I think this is dope and has to be a part of the revolution”*

**-Jazz Hudson, BYP100 Oakland, CA Chapter**

*“When we are tired, exhausted, drained, or hurt, sometimes a slow hum can bring our heartbeats back and connect the room in a familiar, fulfilling way, that no person could do singularly. Freedom songs are our rhythm”*

**-JeNae Taylor, BYP100 DC Chapter**

*“Black Youth Project 100 has emphasized the need for “joy at the roots” in every initiative we have taken on. Regardless if we are shutting down the National FOP office, building a language around reparations on Capitol Hill, building political education in our local communities or convening our members from around the country, in every moment, joy and holistic energy and liberation chants have been baked into our core values at the very inception of our organizational culture.”*

**- Jonathan Lykes, BYP100 DC Chapter**

*“Freedom songs and liberation chants are the spirit of faith in movement building. They are critical to black liberation because they give voice to the real experience, wisdom and feelings of black joy and resilience, in our own words. It is crucial because our own words are power, liberation chants build a shared power when we voice them together as a collective”*

**- Johnae Strong, BYP100 Chicago, IL Chapter**

*“The holistic energy and freedom songs are critical because they can say the things that we may not be able to say or don’t know how to say. Freedom songs reach down into our very souls and pull out the ancestral knowledge we have of black resilience, family and strength. It can bind us together in solemn solidarity or move us to tear things apart. Freedom songs and chants are the battle cry of black people across the diaspora.”*

**-Natt Offiah, BYP100 Jackson, MS Chapter**

*“Black joy comes alive and stays alive through our music. There is no way to think about the Black radical tradition without including how our ancestors, and we today, carry our resistance through sound. The Black Joy Experience Album is the manifestation of our imaginations and our ancestors dreams. It is raw energy. We must use it to remind us to build rigor and discipline with joy. When I feel that all else is lost, sounds from our people lift me up. My deepest*

*hope is that the sound of the Black Joy Experience moves and fuels you to join, or continue, the struggle for our collective liberation.”*

**-Charlene Carruthers, BYP100 National Director**

*“Freedom songs are essential to Black liberation because they give life to the daily struggle of being Black that we dare not utter. They offer us the opportunity to build off of the labor of our ancestors and press towards a vision of an unshackled people that renews the mind and fortifies the spirit. I also believe freedom songs and liberation chants provide us with a critical window in which we can be of service to our people through the bringing of joy, embracing of struggle, and the securing of a brighter future.”*

**-Jonathan Butler, BYP100 Washington, DC Chapter**

*“There is a strong tradition of black culture being passed from generation to generation by mouth. This takes the shape of religious practices, stories of great victory and defeat, recipes and even escape plans. Freedom songs and liberation chants are an important aspect of this tradition because they give voice to the dreams of our ancestors and the struggle of our work. There is hope and determination woven into the lyrics of these song and chants. This aural tradition is healing as it is one of the many ways we are able to tap into the wisdom of our ancestors and strength of our fellow abolitionists.”*

**- Ryan Fielder, BYP100 Detroit, MI Chapter**

# Add your voice in!

[www.Bit.ly/BYPChant](http://www.Bit.ly/BYPChant)

# CHANT ACADEMY 101: Origin Stories of BYP100 Song and Chant Culture

The history of BYP100's chant culture is rooted in the history of the Black radical tradition. Therefore, no one individual can "take credit" for any chant or song, they belong to Black people, the community, and the membership body of organizers who come together as a collective to share in the griot tradition of knowledge gathering, wisdom sharing, think tanking, and cultural production. This chant history lesson seeks to highlight the ways in which movements throughout Black struggles across the diaspora, have learned, shared and built on traditions that take root in the universal connection between ALL Black people that are united by the multi-generational struggle against anti-blackness around the world.

Furthermore, a chant that is labeled "By BYP100" signifies a specific moment of group creation relating to frequently utilized rhythmic verses. Many chants either originate or are popularized through remixes of songs, cultural moments, or chants popularized in other black struggle movements, organizations and entities. Some songs and chants were written by individual BYP100 members, but most were not. This section aims to give a historical glimpse into some of BYP100's community shared chants. This is not to signify ownership, but to uplift the diversity of our membership, and what has been group-shared in our spaces seeking to uplift the holistic energy of those who came before us.

Finally, this is also a living document. That is to say, it will never be "complete" and there are always multiple origins stories for any particular chant. If you would like to add any additional information about the history of these songs and chants, please contact BYP100's National Cultural Production Team, at [info@byp100.org](mailto:info@byp100.org)

<b>Chant Title</b>	Freedom Side
<b>History</b>	<p>This chant finds its origins in the CDF Freedom School Model, but was taught to BYP100 at the very first convening in Chicago by Tiara Phalon and Jazz Hudson. Both BYP100 members were trained in holistic energy culture from Camp Akili and Oakland Freedom School, which was launched under the programming umbrella of Leadership Excellence.. When Cathy J Cohen brought together the very first BYP100, on July 13-15, 2013, she reached out to Dr. Shawn Ginwright and Nedra Ginwright (founders of the Leadership Excellence based in Oakland), along with Dereca Blackmon, whom Cathy asked to invite Black youth from Oakland. This connection brought Jazz Hudson and Tiara Phalon to the inaugural 2013 BYP100 Convening, and they both played an instrumental role in creating BYP100's chant/song culture by teaching BYP100 our very first chants, including Freedom Side, We Ready, We Coming, I'm Hype for BYP, and more.</p>
<b>Lyrics</b>	<p>What side are you on my people,          What side are you on?          I'm on the freedom side!</p> <p>Ella Baker was a freedom fighter,          And she taught us how to fight,          We gon' fight all day and night,          Until we get it right.</p>

<b>Chant Title</b>	I Love Being Black
<b>History</b>	<p>JeNae Taylor taught the "I Love Being Black" chant to her students on the southside of Chicago in 2012.</p> <p>BYP100 members in Oakland stated that they remembered the chant origins from their Freedom School tenure, being reminiscent of the "boom chikka boom" rhythm and beat.</p> <p>The BYP100 DC chapter meetings were founded at the old sigma house in DC, hosted by Jonathan Lykes. After one of the meetings, during an herbal healing session at Jonathan's house, he heard JeNae get the group of members together to connect thru the "I Love Being Black" Chant. Jonathan immediately grabbed his guitar and spontaneously turned the chant into music, and the chapter joined in and sang it as a choir<sup>3</sup> for the first time. The chant has now been spread far and wide in movement spaces and has been remixed into several different version.</p>
<b>Lyrics</b>	<p>I said I love being Black,          I said I love being Black,          I love the color of my skin,          cuz it's the skin that i'm in,          I love the texture of my hair,          And I will rock it everywhere.</p>

---

<sup>3</sup> The term Choir throughout this document and on the credits of the album, does not only refer to a collective group of people who are singing in harmony, the term extends to large groups of Black people, rooted in the holistic energy praxis, coming together to utilize rhythm and verse to create connections, coded languages, rapid response tactics, safety checks and energizing methods, towards the goal of experiencing joy, while simultaneously resisting the state, and in some moments, directly confronting the state with your body.

<b>Chant Title</b>	I Believe That We Will Win
<b>History</b>	The "I Believe the We Will Win" Chant originates from sports games across the country for many decades now. The chant was introduced to movement organizers by the Dream Defenders, which was the entity that organized rapid response protest in defense of Trayvon Martin's life, and calling out the systemic violence perpetuated by the state of Florida. Black and brown youth from around the country, joined the Dream Defenders at the State Capitol take over, where they stayed for 40 days to demand justice. It's also important to note the close knit network of relationships that existed between Black led organizations and Black organizers at the inception of the Movement for Black Lives. Umi Selah and Charlene Carruthers knew each other from growing up on the southside of Chicago. It is these long term connections of trust and community that allow us to build the coalitions that will be critically engaged to challenge Regime 45.
<b>Lyrics</b>	I I believe I believe that I believe that we I believe that we will I believe that we will win  I believe that we will win x5

<b>Chant Title</b>	<b>Mama-Mama Can't You See (Chant)</b> <b>By BYP100 Choir</b>
<b>History</b>	Mama Mama Can't You See, originates as a march call and response chant that has been used in many settings, including as work music, cadence chants used by soldiers in various settings fighting for a collective goal, and most recently has been remixed and used at several marches and actions across the country. Many have seen Charlene Carruthers sing this song at one of the Chicago chapter's very first acts of civil disobedience as they shut down the city hall building and did a 12-hour sit-ins that demanded freedom from state sanctioned violence.
<b>Lyrics</b>	Mama, Mama Can't you see, What the system's done to me, They lock us up, they keep us down Ain't no justice in this town  Mama, Mama Can't you see, What police have done to me, They lock us up, they shoot us down Ain't no justice in this town



Chant Title	The Mandate
<b>History</b>	Mary Hooks created The Mandate, while connecting with the ancestors at her home in Atlanta, GA. Hooks is the director at Southerners on New Ground, furthering the values of relationships, our spirituality which connects us, and our service to the work of Black liberation. The values of SONG are reflected in the Mandate chant. This chant was popularised in BYP100 during the National Freedom Now Actions that took place on July 21, 2016, where BYP100 chapters around the country were locking down police unions, and calling out the Fraternal Order of Police for their role in protecting murderous police officers that are furthering a white supremacist agenda. The Mandate is now frequently used across the Movement for Black Lives, and is often a chant that is utilized to close out events and chapter meetings as a critical time to reflect on those who came before us, the world we are dreaming up in the present and respect from those who will come after us.
<b>Lyrics</b>	The Mandate for Black people in this time, Is to avenge the suffering of our ancestors, Earn the respect of future generations And to be willing to be transformed in the service of the work

Chant Title	We Ready, We Coming
<b>History</b>	This chant, along with other Freedom School/Camp Akili chants from Oakland, were built through an African centered cultural lens. The chants are interchangeable with a week long transformative camp that happens with young Black teenagers in Oakland during camp Akili. Brother Javad Jahi (Rest in Power), spent his life in the service of the work for Black liberation, and created many of the chants from camp Akili <sup>4</sup> . Mr. Jahi was an organizer of the San Francisco eight working to get political prisoners out of prisons, and was one of the lead Oakland organizers of Malcolm X organizing committee and grassroots movement. The chant became popularized in BYP100 spaces during the very first convening in July of 2013.
<b>Lyrics</b>	Chant down, Babylon, Black people are the bomb, We ready, We Coming, We ready, We Coming.

---

<sup>4</sup> Source: Conversation with Jazz Hudson and Tiara Phalon, who both knew Javad and grew up in the freedom school tradition through camp Akili.

<b>Chant Title</b>	<b>Unapologetically Black</b>
<b>History</b>	<p>The term “Unapologetically Black” has been used by Black organizers throughout the years. Some BYP100 members found that the term was popularized at Trinity Church on the southside of Chicago by Reverend Jeremiah Wright. A member of the church was quoted in 2012 saying “Unapologetically Black, unashamedly Christian was the motto, and we all came to live by it. I took that up as a challenge: to wear my Blackness and my faith with pride, but not conceit. These were precisely the words I needed to hear as a Black person growing up in a society that often looked at me with fear and distrust.” Janae Bonsu, gave our UB hoody to the rapper common, and he mentioned how he reminded about his first experience at Trinity Church, hearing the phrase “Unapologetically Black” at Jeremiah Wrights Church.</p> <p>Aaron Talley took this phrase and made it into a chant during a chapter meeting in Chicago in 2015.</p> <p>Members from our BYP100 Oakland chapter recognized the terms local origins being taught to them by Dereca Blackmon, the director at Leadership Excellence, the umbrella organization that led Camp Akili and Freedom school through an African centered framework.<sup>5</sup></p>
<b>Lyrics</b>	<p>Unapologetically, Black  Unapologetically, Black  Unapologetically, Black, Black, Black, Black, Black.</p>

<b>Chant Title</b>	<b>Build Black Futures</b>
<b>History</b>	<p>Build Black futures, was a chant created out the divest/invest campaign led by BYP100 Chapters around the country. In January 2016, BYP100 released our second policy agenda, the Agenda to Build Black Futures. The chant received national recognition when it was first utilized with BYP100 members from chapters across the country at the International Association of Chief of Police direct action on October 25th, 2015.</p> <p>This was originally a remix of the original chant:</p> <p>Indict, convict,  send that killer cop to jail,  The damn system  is guilty as hell</p> <p>Some BYP100 members first experienced this chant during the uprising in Ferguson. Several members felt if we want to transform the system, we are not fighting to put anyone in prison, we are trying to abolish prisons. We often name what we’re against, but what not what we are fighting for. This chant stands as an example of the importance of shaping narrative and story-telling through holistic energy culture. This culture is often how we shape our movement and how we communicate our message for liberation.</p>
<b>Lyrics</b>	<p>Build Black futures,  keep our people out of jail  the whole damn system,  is guilty as hell.</p>

Chant Title	Ancestors Watching/Say Her Name/Black Magic
<p><b>History</b></p>	<p>Taught to BYP100 members at the Atlanta National Coordinating Council Convening in December of 2015, where CFreedom, the inaugural co-chair of the New Orleans chapter gifted to us the chant/song Ancestors Watching. The message is rooted in local New Orleans cultural expression, when honoring those ancestors to have came before us.</p> <p>Say Her Name was trans and femme led national movement for Black Lives campaign response to the Sandra Bland police murder that took place on July 13th 2015. This became an out cry chant to lift up the names and voices of Black femmes impacted by systemic violence.</p> <p>Black Girl Magic was a term popularized by Cashawn Thompson in 2013. She created the term to represent the joy, beauty, power and resiliency of Black people living on the margins. In this chant we declare the importance of Black magic, led by Black women, to be conjured up by movement organizers, as we observe our pure magic tapping into a radical imagination and creating a thru faith, love and joy.</p> <p>In 2016, Jonathan Lykes created a polyrhythmic exercise weaving these three concepts together. He did this believing that if we can encourage folks to sing, it not only shifts the energy in the room, but it also allows for deeper moments of vulnerability and truth in movement work. If we get a generation of people to sing together, it becomes a metaphor for the power we are building in the world.</p>
<p><b>Lyrics</b></p>	<p>I know they're Watching, Ancestors Watching, I know they're watching, I know, I know</p> <p>Say her name, Say her name, Say her name, Say her name</p> <p>Black Magic, Black Magic Raining Down, Black Magic, Black Magic</p>

---

<sup>5</sup> Phone Conversation with Jazz Hudson and Tiara (on Feb 11th, 2017) both grew up in the oakland community. And were instrumental in creating BYP100's chant and holistic energy culture. Both of them grew up in the tradition of Freedom School and Camp Akili (the teenage freedom school camp) by the way of the Leadership Excellence Program. All of these entities have strong roots and can find their roots in the history of the Black radical tradition, including going back to the Black power movement, Black Panther organizational culture, and 1964's Freedom Summer as part of the Civil Rights Movement in Mississippi.

<b>Chant Title</b>	<b>I'm Hype for BYP!</b>
<b>History</b>	<p>I'm Hype for BYP, originated as a Children's Defense Fund Freedom School chant, imagined by Black youth who attend their summer orientation in Tennessee. An important thing to note about the Freedom School in Tennessee is that group creation and collective creativity is encouraged and woven into their cultural practice, this is one of the best values that have been passed down to a new generation of BYP100 members.</p> <p>The original chant was "Im hype for freedom school aye, turn up turn up, turn up turn up." But there were many iterations before and after this particular chant moment. This is one example of the community ownership of the holistic energy culture, it is created in community with Black people and passed down, reimagined, shaken up, remixed and utilized in new and magical ways. This runs parallel to the concept of negro spirituals that remain in our movement culture today.</p>
<b>Lyrics</b>	<p>Are you hype, are you hype,          Yea im hype, yea im hype          Are you ready, Are you ready,          Yea i'm ready, yea i'm ready          For What? What You Mean For What?          Im Hype for BYP! Aye, Turn Up, Turn Up, Aye. Turn Up, Turn up. Aye.</p>

<b>Chant Title</b>	<b>What's Wrong With You?</b>
<b>History</b>	<p>This chant finds its origins from the Mary Mary Song (<a href="#">Erika Cambell</a>) "I Luh God." The chant was remixed during the BYP100 national convening in March 11th - 15th 2016, where the BYP100 Choir used the chant to open up their performance set. In the choir rehearsal the day before the performance, Dr. Kai M. Green offered that the choir should perform the chant, but the chant origins are found in a post that JeNae Taylor posted on Instagram leading up to the convening. Although the religiosity of the Black church is often seen as violent in spaces that seek to work through a Black queer feminist lens, the traditions of call and response, mutual connection, and collective chanting, cannot be discussed without recognizing the significance of the Black church, and how spirituality, in many forms is still essential to our survival. In many ways, these chants allow BYP100 members to connect to their spiritual selves, but they also build bonds with those who come together with a collective purpose.</p>
<b>Lyrics</b>	<p>I love Black people,          You don't love Black people?          What's wrong with you?          What's wrong with you?</p>

<b>Chant Title</b>	<b>Assata</b>
<b>History</b>	<b>Quote from Assata Shakur:</b> This quote by Assata Shakur was used by facilitators in organizing trainings around the country, including trainings put on by YP4 & Wellstone. The chant was introduced to BYP100 by Jessica Pierce at the original BYP100 Convening in July 2013. In BYP100 history, the chant has more commonly be used close out meeting, actions and events. It is the chant the finalized the Black Joy Experience Album. It has always been critical for BYP100 members to uplift the voices of Black women in our movement, so every time we repeat these words at the conclusion of a collective spaces it is also a sacred moment of reverence for the work that Black women (Cis and Trans) have put into movement spaces, often with no recognition.
<b>Lyrics</b>	It Is our duty to fight for our freedom It is our duty to win We must love and protect each other We have nothing to lose but our chains

## List of Additional Chants not included in the 101 list (but still important to learn):

- Red, Black and Green - **Camp Akili origins**
- Come on my people, let's get free all my african people, lets get free - **Camp akili, created by Mizan Abakah**
- We Love You! - **By BYP100 Chicago Chapter - outside of the youth jail (Assata's Daughters)**
- They Left Us Dead x3 And We Ain't Suppose to Be Mad? - **Malcolm- Black friday 2014**
- The people will rise, the people will rise, The people will rise - **Meleni Samps (sang by Serena, United Front Meeting March 2017)**
- Power, Miracles, Transformation...I want it. I need it. I gotta have it. Right now. Right now. Right now, Right now. - **Taught to BYP100 members at the M4BL Convening in Cleveland July 2015**
- Middle fingers to the law. Say no-no to the po-po. Say fuck 12, say fuck 12. These cops have got to go. Let my people go, set my people free. - **Written by Damon Williams**
- We gon be alright! We gon be alright! X4 - **Remixed from a Kendrick Lamar Song**

# BYP100 CHOIR TIMELINE

## • July 12th - 14th, 2013:

Songs and Chants were taught to BYP100 by Jazz Hudson & Tiara Phalon at the first BYP100 Beyond November Convening in Chicago on July 12-14th 2013, which was organized by Dr. Cathy Cohen. In this moment the BYP100 holistic energy culture was formed, as we held hands 100 Black youth strong, and wept together as we heard the live George Zimmerman verdict. We were broken, but we started to heal, and we started to do the base building work necessary to bring into fruition what we spoke into existence during that very first meeting in Chicago, “We are here to launch our generation’s freedom movement. To ensure that the government immediately meets the interest of the poor”. Almost four years later, and here we are, right in the thick of our generation’s movement for the lives of Black people.

## • August 24-26, 2013

BYP100 organizes our second convening in August 2013, during the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington. We quickly realized that our generation’s freedom movement would not be launched by the non-profit industrial complex, it will not be launched by a Black Cis-Het<sup>6</sup> charismatic scholarly leader, and it will not take place on the national mall of Washington, DC. It was in this moment that we realized that the revolution would happen through placed based organizing and building a grassroots base with local communities. The 50th anniversary of the March on Washington taught us a lot, but most of all, it was a foreshadowing of the innovative tactics and strategies and Black informal Systems of Liberation that we would have to create to survive. No surprise that many new Black-led organizations and networks were built around this time. Including, BYP100, BLM

---

<sup>6</sup> Cis-Het refers to cisgendered heteronormative value systems that are often connected to themes around patriarchy, sexism, & femmephobia, transphobia, gender binaries and queer invisibility.

DC, Black Bird, and more. Fortunately, this is also the exact moment that BYP100 brought members from around the country to DC to create our mission and vision statement. This was the first time we had a discussion about the holistic turn-up power we feel when we are in exclusive Black space together.

## • **March 2014:**

Princeton Convening: At the Princeton convening the holistic turn-up continued as BYP100 members used this time together to solidify our core values and launch our capacity building and training culture. But it was also the space in which the BYP100 collective felt one of the deepest points of vulnerability and emotional energy towards each other. This was also the first of many times that BYP100 came in contact with the SNCC Legacy Project, as Courtland Cox provided a wisdom and perspective that only a movement elder could. There was a 5-hour culminating activity that took place, that literally had the entire convening in tears. Each member walked down parallel hallway of comrades standing on both sides, each person received a public message of affirmation and love, as we solidified the BYP100 bond for many years to come. Additionally, the Princeton Convening was very crucial for us to understand the role of Black professors with access to power and resources that often found money for movement organizers to build capacity and construct a path towards liberation.

## • **July 14th, 2015**

BYP100 Choir very first paid performance at Movement for Black Lives National Convening July 2015 in Cleveland, Ohio. One of the very first exclusively Black convenings where over 1500 organizers from around the country came together to love, learn, heal, grow and build together. One of the first impromptu direct actions took place in Cleveland, as organizers created a human blockade to prevent the local police from arresting a Black youth just trying to live their life. The young person was able to go home to with their mother, and the movement in this small symbolic moment felt powerful. During this direct action we chanted as we created the blockade, we chanted as we

were pepper sprayed by police, and we chanted when the young person was set free. The chants kept us centered, focused and disciplined in our abolitionist praxis. One of the most LIT moments from this convening was when Kendrick Lamar's song titled "Alright" played and for just a moment we all knew, that we would get free. It's also not well known that even as we wanted to live out our Black joy experience without limitations or barriers, the police were still sprinkling white supremacy all over place, by canceling a prearranged artist showcase where BYP100 Choir was scheduled to perform, due to "security issues"...we all knew they was hating on us. The BYP100 Choir worked with Damon Turner from BLM Los Angeles to launch an impromptu M4BL and BYP100 Choir performance in the courtyard of the conference, the conference drum circle joined in and Black magic (as always) won, yet again. The performance can be viewed here: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r6L-S94Cv70>)

## • **March 2016:**

BYP100 Choir performs at the very first BYP100 National Convening. This was BYP100's first convening where we brought nearly 200 of our members together, which doubled the original beyond november convening numbers that took place in July 2013.

## • **August 2016:**

BYP100 Choir Performs at Night Out for Safety and Liberation in DC August 2016. BYP100 announces that it will work with OnRae LaTeal Productions (a Black queer magical indie artist and producer who worked at Howard Radio Station in Washington, DC) to produce the inaugural album "The Black Joy Experience." This was the BYP100 Choir's first performance in the District of Columbia.

## • **January 20th 2017**

Regime 45 has taken over the federal government, and holistic energy in movement work becomes even more critical to equip the movement



with the musical and rhythmic tools from the ancestors. This moment in history inspired Jonathan Lykes to direct and co-produce the very first BYP100 Freedom Song and Liberation Chant Album, titled “The Black Joy Experience.”

## • April 6-9, 2017

The first national album listening session to get membership feedback on “The Black Joy Experience” took place at the inaugural BYP100 Healing and Safety Council Retreat at the Franklinton Center at Bricks in North Carolina. At this retreat, the very first BYP100 Polyrhythmic Cipher took place, where we continued to cultivate the meaning of holistic energy and what Rose Berry defined as “Spirit” work.

## • May 2017

The National Cultural Production Team was launched and co-created by Jonathan Lykes and Fresco Steez and The Black Joy Experience second round of song and chant recordings took place at Classick Studios in Chicago, IL.

## • June 2017

The Black Joy Experience, Freedom Song and Liberation Chant Album release scheduled and planned at the BYP100 National Convening in New Orleans. There is a live choir music recording that takes place at the convening, and hundreds of BYP100 artist, holistic energy curators and cultural producers came together to continue the development of BYP100 holistic energy praxis.

# THE BLACK JOY EXPERIENCE HOLISTIC ENERGY CURRICULUM: Guided Activities and Workshops for Cultural Production, Healing and Joy Cultivation

*Each activity in this curriculum guide is built into five sections:*

## Liberating Knowledge:

The liberating knowledge section expresses clearly what participants should leave away with by the end of the session. The facilitator can use participants' pre and post understanding of the knowledge to evaluate the effectiveness of the session and reflect on what changes should be made in future sessions.

## Key Terms & New Language:

This section serves two purposes towards cultural production. The priority is to constantly be creating new language that more accurately details how Black people are experiencing this world. But we must also learn existing terms so we have a common understanding of how we can shift the atmosphere in community spaces, so more people are allowed to show up in their full and authentic selves. Start each activity off by defining key terms through popular education and shared language strategies, the goal is to come up with shared definitions. Note: While important, participants do not have to agree on definitions of key terms. It is just important to get the group discussing the term and getting a sense of what group ideas are about the various key terms. Alternatives forms of discussion and learning:

- (1) Have participants discuss the term in small groups before sharing out.
- (2) Have groups self-reflect quietly or in written form before sharing out.
- (3) Have participants draw a picture of what the key term means to them.
- (4) Bring to the workshop an object of what the key term means to each participant.

## Prompting Questions:

Each section will provide a prompt for discussion. We must always ask questions, challenge each other and be comfortable with dissent. This allows us to build community by more precisely communicating our resilience tactics, and how we move from survival to thrival.

## Blacktivity:

The core of the holistic energy curriculum is the activities that have been built in Black organizing spaces throughout the international struggle against both anti-Blackness and white supremacy. This section will detail various mechanisms that allow BYP100 members to better understand holistic energy praxis and BYP100 chant and song culture.

## What Resonated?/What shifted how you felt?:

This section seeks to serve as a constant reminder of reflection. So often we feel things and are impacted in moments, but not allowed to pause to assess how having a political home and community, shifts how we move, act, respond, and grow. We must document and retell how healing, joy and production came about through an experience in community with others.

# Living Document and Additional Resources:

This section is to cultivate an extensive resource guide that goes beyond this booklet, and provides a multimedia experience to make this content more accessible to multi forms of receiving knowledge and information. This could include uploading recordings of this workshop in local BYP100 Chapter cities. This entire guide will never be done, only strengthened through the years of community content and knowledge being added into a centralized access point.

**WE HAVE  
NOTHING  
TO LOSE  
BUT OUR  
CHAINS**



# Activity #1 Creating Place-Based Chants

<p><b>Liberating Knowledge:</b></p>	<p>Participants will discuss the significance of and develop place-based liberation chants in order to understand that liberation chants are key to centering joy in our movement.</p>
<p><b>Defining Key Terms &amp; New Language (5 mins)</b></p>	<p>Key Terms: Liberation Chant, Place-Based</p> <p>Place the term “liberation” in a visible space. If resources allow, ask participants what does liberation mean to you? Chart responses. Use the shared terms to construct a definition wherein the group can reach consensus.</p> <p>Note: See introduction for opening strategies on defining key terms.</p>
<p><b>Prompting Questions (10-15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Ask participants: What examples of liberation chants do you know? How do liberation chants make you feel? What would be missing if we never chanted in BYP100?</p> <p>Tell participants that liberation chants are integral to centering healing and joy in our movement. In light of that, we will be developing our own place-based liberation chants.</p>
<p><b>Blacktivity (15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Divide participants into evenly split groups. Give each group 5-7 minutes to create a chant that is approximately 30 seconds long. It must reflect something about their local community.</p> <p>Optional: For examples, you might want to provide participants access to the Holistic Energy Case Study: Chapter Chants from BYP100 2016 National Convening (Find resource link at <a href="http://bit.ly/bjeresource">bit.ly/bjeresource</a>)</p> <p>New Orleans Chicago DC Bay Area Durham NYC Detroit</p>

<p><b>Energy Shifts and Resonations</b> <b>(10 mins)</b></p>	<p>Bring participants back together. Ask participants: How did healing, joy and production come about through this activity? What resonated with you? What shifted how you felt? How might these shifts translate into broader liberation work?</p> <p>As a closing, ask participants to invent a new word that best describes an experience or feeling that occurred.</p>
<p><b>Living Document and Additional Resources</b></p>	<p>Living Document: This guide is a living document. We encourage BYP100 Members to add submission here, including videos, voice recordings, written materials and more: <a href="https://bit.ly/bjesubmission">bit.ly/bjesubmission</a>. All submissions will be archived by our National Cultural Production Team.</p>

# Activity #2 History of Black queer, trans and femme folx creating holistic energy through freedom music in Black struggle movements today.

<p><b>Liberating Knowledge:</b></p>	<p>Participants will discuss the importance of highlighting Black queer, trans and femme folx creating holistic energy during the Movement for Black Lives.</p>
<p><b>Defining Key Terms &amp; New Language (5 mins)</b></p>	<p>Key Terms: holistic energy, freedom song</p> <p>Place the term “Holistic Energy” in a visible space. If resources allow, ask participants what does holistic energy mean to you? Chart responses. Use the shared terms to construct a definition wherein the group can reach consensus.</p> <p>Note: See introduction for opening strategies on defining key terms.</p> <p>At the conclusion of this activity, ask participants to invent a new word that best describes an experience or feeling that occurred?</p>
<p><b>Prompting Questions (10-15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Ask Participants: Do we know about any LGBTQ, GNC, or femme identified creators and performers of freedom music? Say their names.</p> <p>Why is it important to uplift queer, femme, trans and and GNC freedom singers and cultural producers in our movement?</p>
<p><b>Blacktivity (15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Go thru the list of contemporary queer, trans and GNC freedom singers. Add people to the list. (List found at <a href="https://bit.ly/bjeresource">bit.ly/bjeresource</a>)</p>



<p><b>Energy Shifts and Resonations</b> (10 mins)</p>	<p>Document how healing, joy and production came about through this activity. What resonated with you? What shifted how you felt?</p>
<p><b>Living Document and Additional Resources</b></p>	<p>Living Document: This guide is a living document. We encourage BYP100 Members to add submission here, including videos, voice recordings, written materials and more: <a href="https://bit.ly/bjesubmission">bit.ly/bjesubmission</a>. All submissions will be archived by our National Cultural Production Team.</p>

# Activity #3 BYP100 Freedom Song and Liberation Chant 101

<p><b>Liberating Knowledge:</b></p>	<p>Participants will discuss the significance of Freedom Songs and Liberation Chants, towards the goal of understanding how we currently utilize chant and song culture and how it fits into the history of the Black radical tradition.</p>
<p><b>Defining Key Terms &amp; New Language (5 mins)</b></p>	<p>Key Terms: Freedom Song, Remembrance</p> <p>Place the term “Freedom Song” in a visible space. If resources allow, ask participants what does Freedom Song mean to you? Chart responses. Use the shared terms to construct a definition wherein the group can reach consensus.</p> <p>Note: See introduction for opening strategies on defining key terms.</p> <p>At the conclusion of this activity, ask participants to invent a new word that best describes an experience or feeling that occurred?</p>
<p><b>Prompting Questions (10-15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Discussion on Freedom Songs: When was the first time you heard a freedom song? Did you grow up listening to freedom songs, in what context? What is the Black freedom song tradition? What is a freedom song?</p> <p>Discussion on Liberation Chants: When you chant, what feelings or emotions come to mind? What energy does chanting produce for you? How does chanting help you connect with your intuitive/ discernment side? Some of us are able to feel the emotional release of those around us. Its an emotional intelligence, does chanting allow you to discern anything from the atmosphere?</p>

<p><b>Blacktivity</b> <b>(15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Play the 3 following chants from the Black Joy Experience Album. Are You Hype I Love Being Black Freedom Side</p> <p>Write a four stanza poem or song your freedom dreams. Define what a freedom song is to you (literal or figurative). Share out what you write.</p> <p>BYP100 Working Definition of Freedom Song/Liberation Chant: A song, chant and rhythmic tone dedicated to the praise of liberation, justice, and freedom, especially from institutional and systematic oppression. Freedom songs and liberation chants are inherently political. In BYP100 we encourage our members to sing and chant at every protest, gathering, community meeting, and/or demonstration. We do this in a turn-up styled, rhythmic, call and response tradition that allows us to bring our voice, bodies and entire beings into the holistic energy praxis. Freedom songs are how we tap into the healing, joy and spirit work of our time.</p>
<p><b>Energy Shifts and Resonations</b> <b>(10 mins)</b></p>	<p>Document how healing, joy and production came about through this activity. What resonated with you? What shifted how you felt?</p>
<p><b>Living Document and Additional Resources</b></p>	<p>Living Document: This guide is a living document. We encourage BYP100 Members to add submission here, including videos, voice recordings, written materials and more: <a href="http://bit.ly/bjesubmission">bit.ly/bjesubmission</a>. All submissions will be archived by our National Cultural Production Team.</p>

# Activity #4 Chanting Improv Activity/ Communication Style/Performance Workshop

<p><b>Liberating Knowledge:</b></p>	<p>Participants will learn the significance of Chant Dynamics, towards the goals of building more chant leaders in BYP100. Participants will begin to deconstruct norms around having gatekeepers within BYP100’s holistic energy culture.</p>
<p><b>Defining Key Terms &amp; New Language (5 mins)</b></p>	<p>Key Terms: Chant Dynamics, Chant Leaders, Gatekeepers</p> <p>Place the term “Chant Dynamics” in a visible space. If resources allow, ask participants what does chant dynamics mean to you? Chart responses. Use the shared terms to construct a definition wherein the group can reach consensus.</p> <p>Note: See introduction for opening strategies on defining key terms.</p> <p>At the conclusion of this activity, ask participants to invent a new word that best describes an experience or feeling that occurred?</p>
<p><b>Prompting Questions (10-15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Ask Participants: Why is it important for us all to be chant leaders? How do we make sure there are no “gatekeepers” of chants?</p>
<p><b>Blacktivity (15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Work on Chanting dynamics: You can practice the following skills to become a more effective chant leader. Remember chanting can be extremely important when resisting the state directly, so you should practice to ensure you are ready to communicate and connect with your comrades in the movement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projection/Volume</li> <li>• Rhythm</li> <li>• Inflection</li> <li>• Verse</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eye Contact</li> <li>• Pacing/Speed</li> <li>• Stance</li> <li>• Breathe</li> </ul> <p>Improv movement workshop: Power Circle and Jig-A-Low!</p> <p>A huge fear of mankind is public speaking, so we use this activity as a fun way to connect with those around us, get us out of our comfort zones, and use rhythm and verse to share our Black and magical personalities with one another.</p> <p>Example 1: The power circle is a popularized movement activity, that has taken place in many youth development and organizing spaces. It goes like this: “P-O-W-E-R we got the power cuz, we are BYP! My name is Charlene yea, and I’m next on this list, and I got the power cuz I (add in a movement) do it like this. (She do it like this, She do it like this *repeat movement twice*)”</p> <p>Example 2: Community: Are you ready? Individual: To What? Community: To Jig! Individual: Jig What? Group: A-Low! Individual: Oh! My hands up high (raises hands) My feet down low (hangs hands to feet) This is the way I “Jig A-Low” (Insert original body movement). Group repeats: Their hands up high (raises hands), Their feet down low (hangs hands to feet), This is the way they “Jig A-Lows” (repeat body movement)</p>
<p><b>Energy Shifts and Resonations (10 mins)</b></p>	<p>Document how healing, joy and production came about through this activity. What resonated with you? What shifted how you felt?</p>
<p><b>Living Document and Additional Resources</b></p>	<p>Living Document: This guide is a living document. We encourage BYP100 Members to add submission here, including videos, voice recordings, written materials and more: <a href="https://bit.ly/bjesubmission">bit.ly/bjesubmission</a>. All submissions will be archived by our National Cultural Production Team.</p>

# Activity #5 Strategic Chanting During Direct Action Organizing

<p><b>Liberating Knowledge:</b></p>	<p>Participants will learn how chanting is used strategically in various contexts. This will build the capacity for BYP100 members to better understand chant styles and strategies when engaging in direct action organizing.</p>
<p><b>Defining Key Terms &amp; New Language (5 mins)</b></p>	<p>Key Terms: Strategic Chant</p> <p>Place the term “Strategic Chant” in a visible space. If resources allow, ask participants what does strategic chant mean to you? Chart responses. Use the shared terms to construct a definition wherein the group can reach consensus.</p> <p>Note: See introduction for opening strategies on defining key terms.</p> <p>At the conclusion of this activity, ask participants to invent a new word that best describes an experience or feeling that occurred?</p>
<p><b>Prompting Questions (10-15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Ask Participants: Who in the room has been involved in direct actions? How have we used chanting as a tool?</p>

<p><b>Blacktivity</b> <b>(15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Go Through 4 Chant Styles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Call and Response Chant</li> <li>2. Unison/One Voice Chant</li> <li>3. Shout Chant</li> <li>4. Song Chant</li> </ol> <p>In Black Youth Project 100, five categories of strategic chanting have been used to help organize the collective. This practice is utilized in the following way:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chants to call on and/or honor the Ancestors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Ex: Ancestors Watching</li> <li>◦ Ex: The Mandate</li> <li>◦ Ex: Freedom Side (Ella Baker was a freedom fighter)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Chants to Energize spirits/Celebrate Wins <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Are you Ready</li> <li>◦ I Believe that we will win</li> <li>◦ Future oriented chants</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Chants to Check for safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Ex: Holler Back, We Got Yo Back</li> <li>◦ Ex: Who got my back? I got your back!</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Chants to Rapidly respond/create alert systems in a moment's notice (while experiencing pain) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Ex: "You're hurting me..."You're hurting them"</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Chants to Communicate our message <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Mic Check (Repeat after me)</li> <li>◦ Power! Power! I want it, I need it, I gotta, gotta, gotta have it. Right now. Right Now. Right now. Right now.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Create and act out a movement organizing scenario with a group of 4-5 people. Place the scenario into the context of one or several of the strategic chant categories. See if the audience can guess which chant styles you were displaying.</p>
<p><b>Energy Shifts and Resonations</b> <b>(10 mins)</b></p>	<p>Document how healing, joy and production came about through this activity. What resonated with you? What shifted how you felt?</p>
<p><b>Living Document and Additional Resources</b></p>	<p>Living Document: This guide is a living document. We encourage BYP100 Members to add submission here, including videos, voice recordings, written materials and more: <a href="https://bit.ly/bjesubmission">bit.ly/bjesubmission</a>. All submissions will be archived by our National Cultural Production Team.</p>

# Activity #6 Visioning & Zines

<b>Liberating Knowledge:</b>	Participants will engage in a visioning exercise that encourages them to tap into their radical imagination and began to dream up the world we want to live in.
<b>Defining Key Terms &amp; New Language (5 mins)</b>	<p>Key Terms: Faith, Black Imagination, Zine Creation, Vision Boarding</p> <p>Place the term “Black Imagination” in a visible space. If resources allow, ask participants what does Black imagination mean to you? Chart responses. Use the shared terms to construct a definition wherein the group can reach consensus.</p> <p>Note: See introduction for opening strategies on defining key terms.</p> <p>At the conclusion of this activity, ask participants to invent a new word that best describes an experience or feeling that occurred?</p>
<b>Prompting Questions (10-15 mins)</b>	Ask Participants: What is the definition of faith? How can we start of imagine a world that does not currently exist? What is a Zine?



<p><b>Blacktivity</b> (15 mins)</p>	<p>The BYP100 DC Chapter has created a zine comprised visual art, poetry, creative writing and local artistic curators. (Have members view the first edition of MelaNation and discuss what resonates with participants).</p> <p>In this activity participants will create a visioning board based off of magazine clippings related to a particular chant. Choose a chant themes of focus on for the magazine clippings. Create a impromptu Zine that reflects one of the BYP100 chant themes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chants to call on and/or honor the Ancestors</li> <li>• Chants to Energize spirits/Celebrate Wins</li> <li>• Chants to Check for safety</li> <li>• Chants to Rapidly respond/create alert systems in a moment's notice (while experience pain)</li> <li>• Chants to Communicate our message</li> </ul>
<p><b>Energy Shifts and Resonations</b> (10 mins)</p>	<p>Document how healing, joy and production came about through this activity. What resonated with you? What shifted how you felt?</p>
<p><b>Living Document and Additional Resources</b></p>	<p>Living Document: This guide is a living document. We encourage BYP100 Members to add submission here, including videos, voice recordings, written materials and more: <a href="http://bit.ly/bjesubmission">bit.ly/bjesubmission</a>. All submissions will be archived by our National Cultural Production Team.</p>

# Activity #7 Ensembles and Sound Circles

<b>Liberating Knowledge:</b>	Participants will learn about the importance of making space and holistic energy praxi accessible to all BYP100 members, towards the goal of getting us all to communicate better through various formats.
<b>Defining Key Terms &amp; New Language (5 mins)</b>	<p>Key Terms: Sound Circle, Diverse Communication, Accessibility</p> <p>Place the term “accessibility” in a visible space. If resources allow, ask participants what does accessibility mean to you? Chart responses. Use the shared terms to construct a definition wherein the group can reach consensus.</p> <p>Note: See introduction for opening strategies on defining key terms.</p> <p>At the conclusion of this activity, ask participants to invent a new word that best describes an experience or feeling that occurred?</p>
<b>Prompting Questions (10-15 mins)</b>	Ask Participants: Why is it important for us to create sound together? If sound is not available, what other resources will we use to communicate?

<p><b>Blacktivity</b> <b>(15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Sound circle</p> <p>We're going to add on sounds, to create an ensemble...we're going to start, you can use your voice, sounds, hands, or feet.</p> <p>Radical Love! Radical Love! Radical Love! Snap, snap, snap, snap Beat boxer starts Add more sound, Add more sounds</p> <p>Break up into groups of 4 and decide what your collective sound will be. The first group will start with 4 bars of sound, and each additional group will be added in, after each bar of sound. Have a discussion about if we could not use any sound, how can we create a similar ensemble using other senses?</p>
<p><b>Energy Shifts and Resonations</b> <b>(10 mins)</b></p>	<p>Document how healing, joy and production came about through this activity. What resonated with you? What shifted how you felt?</p>
<p><b>Living Document and Additional Resources</b></p>	<p>Living Document: This guide is a living document. We encourage BYP100 Members to add submission here, including videos, voice recordings, written materials and more: <a href="http://bit.ly/bjesubmission">bit.ly/bjesubmission</a>. All submissions will be archived by our National Cultural Production Team.</p>

# Activity #8 Movement and Voice

<p><b>Liberating Knowledge:</b></p>	<p>Participants will learn guerrilla theater movement and sound tactics, that are utilized towards the goal of better understanding abolition, migration and liberation.</p>
<p><b>Defining Key Terms &amp; New Language (5 mins)</b></p>	<p>Key Terms: Voice, Body Movement</p> <p>Place the term “Body Movement” in a visible space. If resources allow, ask participants what does body movement mean to you? Chart responses. Use the shared terms to construct a definition wherein the group can reach consensus.</p> <p>Note: See introduction for opening strategies on defining key terms.</p> <p>At the conclusion of this activity, ask participants to invent a new word that best describes an experience or feeling that occurred?</p>
<p><b>Prompting Questions (10-15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Ask Participants: How have movements across the world shared tactics? Provide examples. What is Guerrilla Theater?</p>
<p><b>Blacktivity (15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Break up into groups of people between 3-5, Create a sound or phrase that you want to say about a particular topic (abolition, migration, liberation), create a movement and sound that works as a machine on a loop.</p> <p>This was created by a Puerto Rican Guerrilla Theater Group that does movement work: <a href="http://www.whenwefightwewin.com/activists/agitarte/">http://www.whenwefightwewin.com/activists/agitarte/</a></p> <p>To watch an example of this activity go to <a href="http://bit.ly/bjeresource">bit.ly/bjeresource</a>. BYP100 members experienced this activity at the United Front Meeting Facilitated by Serena Sebring who is affiliated with Southerners on New Ground</p>

<b>Energy Shifts and Resonations (10 mins)</b>	Document how healing, joy and production came about through this activity. What resonated with you? What shifted how you felt?
<b>Living Document and Additional Resources</b>	Living Document: This guide is a living document. We encourage BYP100 Members to add submission here, including videos, voice recordings, written materials and more: <a href="https://bit.ly/bjesubmission">bit.ly/bjesubmission</a> . All submissions will be archived by our National Cultural Production Team.

# Activity #9 Genres

<p><b>Liberating Knowledge:</b></p>	<p>Participants will discuss the significance of genres, and how they grow out of local community culture and context.</p>
<p><b>Defining Key Terms &amp; New Language (5 mins)</b></p>	<p>Key Terms: Genre, Beats, Rhythm</p> <p>Place the term “Rhythm” in a visible space. If resources allow, ask participants what does rhythm mean to you? Chart responses. Use the shared terms to construct a definition wherein the group can reach consensus.</p> <p>Note: See introduction for opening strategies on defining key terms.</p> <p>At the conclusion of this activity, ask participants to invent a new word that best describes an experience or feeling that occurred?</p>
<p><b>Prompting Questions (10-15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Ask Participants: What is your favorite genre of music? What are the rhythmic qualities of that music, or how does the beat make you move, feel and act?</p>
<p><b>Blacktivity (15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Listen to the following chant from the Black Joy Experience Album:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Come On My People</li> </ul> <p>Have participants translate the chant into a different genre. Have beats to choose from representing different geographies. Facilitator will have four styled rhythms. Ex: A trap beat rhythm, an acoustic rhythm, a go-go beat rhythm, a NOLA Bounce beat. Find these beats uploaded to <a href="http://bit.ly/bjeresource">bit.ly/bjeresource</a></p> <p>Have a discussion about where different rhythms come from. Choose different BYP100 holistic energy chants to perform with different localized beat rhythms.</p>

<b>Energy Shifts and Resonations (10 mins)</b>	Document how healing, joy and production came about through this activity. What resonated with you? What shifted how you felt?
<b>Living Document and Additional Resources</b>	Living Document: This guide is a living document. We encourage BYP100 Members to add submission here, including videos, voice recordings, written materials and more: <a href="https://bit.ly/bjesubmission">bit.ly/bjesubmission</a> . All submissions will be archived by our National Cultural Production Team.

# Activity #10 Democracy Remixed

<p><b>Liberating Knowledge:</b></p>	<p>Participants will learn how to remix songs and chants through the cultural production process.</p>
<p><b>Defining Key Terms &amp; New Language (5 mins)</b></p>	<p>Key Terms: Remix</p> <p>Place the term “remix” in a visible space. If resources allow, ask participants what does remix mean to you? Chart responses. Use the shared terms to construct a definition wherein the group can reach consensus.</p> <p>Note: See introduction for opening strategies on defining key terms.</p> <p>At the conclusion of this activity, ask participants to invent a new word that best describes an experience or feeling that occurred?</p>
<p><b>Prompting Questions (10-15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Ask Participants: Can you name a freedom song that you heard in your childhood? What is your favorite song remix?</p>
<p><b>Blacktivity (15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Name traditional freedom songs that you heard growing up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wade in the water</li> <li>• We shall overcome</li> <li>• Ain’t gonna let no-body (insert original YouTube link song here)</li> <li>• Troubles of this world</li> </ul> <p>What songs have been remixed through the Black radical tradition?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Ain’t Gonna Let Nobody”: This negro spiritual utilized heavily in the Civil Rights Movement originated as a fast song, but got remixed into a slow version by the BYP100 Choir (Listen to the original version here: <a href="http://bit.ly/bjresource">bit.ly/bjresource</a>)</li> <li>• What other songs have we remixed?</li> </ul>

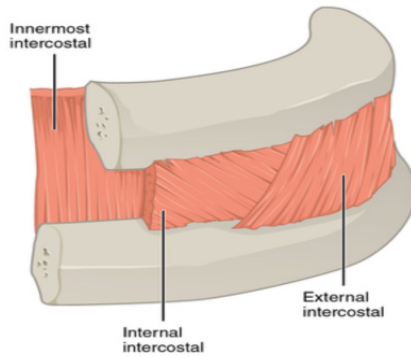


<b>Energy Shifts and Resonations (10 mins)</b>	Document how healing, joy and production came about through this activity. What resonated with you? What shifted how you felt?
<b>Living Document and Additional Resources</b>	Living Document: This guide is a living document. We encourage BYP100 Members to add submission here, including videos, voice recordings, written materials and more: <a href="https://bit.ly/bjesubmission">bit.ly/bjesubmission</a> . All submissions will be archived by our National Cultural Production Team.

# Activity #11 Remembering to Breathe! Lessons in Rhythmic Breathing

<p><b>Liberating Knowledge:</b></p>	<p>Participants will learn about the importance of deep-breathing and how rhythm breathing tactics can facilitate mindfulness and centering processes.</p>
<p><b>Defining Key Terms &amp; New Language (5 mins)</b></p>	<p>Key Terms: Deep Breathing, Rhythmic Breathing</p> <p>Place the term “Rhythmic Breathing” in a visible space. If resources allow, ask participants what does Rhythmic Breathing mean to you? Chart responses. Use the shared terms to construct a definition wherein the group can reach consensus.</p> <p>Note: See introduction for opening strategies on defining key terms.</p> <p>At the conclusion of this activity, ask participants to invent a new word that best describes an experience or feeling that occurred?</p>
<p><b>Prompting Questions (10-15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Ask Participants: Is it possible to forget to breathe? Why is it important to breathe?</p>
<p><b>Blacktivity (15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Listen to Healing retreat 2017 Breathing Exercise Clip (find this clip at <a href="http://bit.ly/bjeresource">bit.ly/bjeresource</a>)</p> <p>When you are conducting a deep breathing exercise the goal is to flex the Intercostal muscle around the rib cage and diaphragm. Intercostal muscles are several groups of muscles that move between the ribs and provide support and form for the chest wall. The intercostal muscles are predominantly involved in the mechanical aspect of breathing. These muscles assist in expanding and shrinking the size of the chest cavity to facilitate breathing.</p>

Here is a visual:



A cutout of the thoracic wall showing the three layers of intercostal muscle - from the left wall.

Your diaphragm acts like a flexi-cup, and you want it to expand downward...when you inhale, your muscle and belly should literally fill up and expand, when you exhale it should deflate.

Mix the breathing with Practicing beats and counts, to create rhythmic air/oxygen vibrations, with your voice and breath.

Often times your body is not accustomed to having so much oxygen in your body, you might feel a physical difference after a five minutes of this exercise:

- Breathe in and out once, on an 8 count
- Breathe in and out once, on a 4 count
- Breathe in and out once, on a 2 count

**Energy Shifts and Resonations (10 mins)**

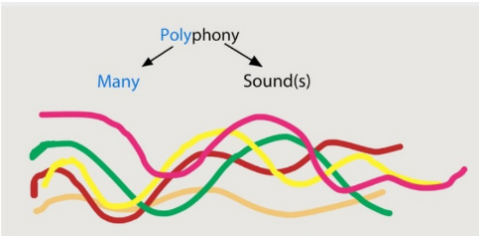
Document how healing, joy and production came about through this activity. What resonated with you? What shifted how you felt?

**Living Document and Additional Resources**

Living Document: This guide is a living document. We encourage BYP100 Members to add submission here, including videos, voice recordings, written materials and more: [bit.ly/bjesubmission](https://bit.ly/bjesubmission). All submissions will be archived by our National Cultural Production Team.

# Activity #12 Polyrhythmic Exercise

<p><b>Liberating Knowledge:</b></p>	<p>Participants will learn how polyrhythms can metaphorically represent the importance of utilizing a diversity of tactics in movement spaces and allowing people to lead with their passions and talents in movement work.</p>
<p><b>Defining Key Terms &amp; New Language (5 mins)</b></p>	<p>Key Terms: Polyrhythmic, Polyphonic, Griot, Storytelling</p> <p>Place the term “Polyrhythm” in a visible space. If resources allow, ask participants what does polyrhythm mean to you? Chart responses. Use the shared terms to construct a definition wherein the group can reach consensus.</p> <p>Note: See introduction for opening strategies on defining key terms.</p> <p>At the conclusion of this activity, ask participants to invent a new word that best describes an experience or feeling that occurred?</p>
<p><b>Prompting Questions (10-15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Ask Participants: How do we get a bunch of different people to move in synchronized energies? What is a griot? Should we all be griots?</p>
<p><b>Blacktivity (15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Polyrhythmic: Multiple simultaneous functioning rhythms  Polyphonic: Multiple simultaneous functioning sounds and voices  Griot Tradition: A group of traveling poets, musicians, and storytellers who maintain a tradition of oral history. They bring truth thru an historical lens of remembrance.</p> <p>Polyrhythmic Praxis how we get a whole bunch of people, doing different things, moving in their individual energies, to come together, not in unison, but in differentiated coordination...this is called a diversity of tactics. We have to be nimble, fluid, and our talents must show up everywhere, so we must also be able to show up fully in all the places where we are building. So polyrhythms allow us to demonstrate metaphorically, through the power of our own voice, what is taking place in the larger movement.</p>

	<p>Polyphony is not one person doing many things (as we often see in movement building)...polyphony is also not many people doing the same thing (homophony), it is many people taking up many spaces, to coordinate organized progress.</p> <p>Sing the polyphonic rhythm of ancestors watching:</p> <p>Ancestors Watching, I know they're watching,  Ancestors Watching, I know, I know      Say her name, Say her name,      Say her name, Say her name  Black Magic, Black Magic Raining Down  Black Magic, Black Magic</p>  <p><b>Polyphonic Definition:</b> Producing many sounds simultaneously, many voiced. In music, polyphony is one type of musical texture. The way that melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic aspects of a musical composition are combined to shape the overall sound and quality of the work. In particular, polyphony consists of two or more simultaneous lines of independent melody, as opposed to a music texture with just one voice, monophony, or a texture with one dominant melodic voice accompanied by chords, which is called homophony.”</p>
<p><b>Energy Shifts and Resonations</b> (10 mins)</p>	<p>Document how healing, joy and production came about through this activity. What resonated with you? What shifted how you felt?</p>
<p><b>Living Document and Additional Resources</b></p>	<p>Living Document: This guide is a living document. We encourage BYP100 Members to add submission here, including videos, voice recordings, written materials and more: <a href="https://bit.ly/bjesubmission">bit.ly/bjesubmission</a>. All submissions will be archived by our National Cultural Production Team.</p>

# Activity #13 Discussion on White and POC Participation in BYP100 Chant/Song Culture

<p><b>Liberating Knowledge:</b></p>	<p>Participants will learn the importance of chanting in exclusively black space and how to work with allies to support Black leadership within the holistic energy praxis.</p>
<p><b>Defining Key Terms &amp; New Language (5 mins)</b></p>	<p>Key Terms: Exclusively Black Space, Black Chants</p> <p>Place the term “Black Chant” in a visible space. If resources allow, ask participants what does Black Chant mean to you? Chart responses. Use the shared terms to construct a definition wherein the group can reach consensus.</p> <p>Note: See introduction for opening strategies on defining key terms.</p> <p>At the conclusion of this activity, ask participants to invent a new word that best describes an experience or feeling that occurred?</p>
<p><b>Prompting Questions (10-15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Ask Participants: <i>Why is exclusive Black space important? Are all chants for all people? Can you name a BYP100 chant or song that was created exclusively for self-identified Black people to sing and chant?</i></p>
<p><b>Blacktivity (15 mins)</b></p>	<p>BYP100 is an exclusively Black space, that celebrates the complexity of Blackness and honors the sacredness of all Black space. We understand in the Regime 45 Era cross coalitional work will be critical to our collective liberation. We also understand that it important to do or not do the following things:</p> <p><b>*Discussion about how white Allies and POC communities can support in holistic energy spaces</b></p> <p>1. Understand that certain chants should not be done in spaces that are not exclusively Black. Many of the chants are directly speaking to Black people, Black experiences and Black futures. We trust that ally communities who seek to fight against anti-Blackness in our society, will respect that on some chants, silence and reflection will be greatly</p>

	<p>appreciated. In many (but not all) circumstances this will be a song or chant that is directly speaking to Black ancestors, Black love, being unapologetically Black, we ask that chants around these themes be respected and held in exclusively Black space.</p> <p>2. Throughout many of our chapters, we have done coalition work with Showing Up for Racial Justice, if you are white and want to organize, we suggest you start with the white people in your community, at your workplace, or within various ally coalitional bodies.</p> <p>3. Examples of cross coalitional efforts that are taking place:</p> <p>a. The movement for Black lives DC spokescouncil has been doing strategic work to unify the local organizing landscape for police abolition, unifying the following organizations to join a campaign to get the NEAR Act in DC funded. A policy that will take money away from over policing Black communities, and put money into funding Black futures (including paying for a new department of health and human services to work with a transformative justice and healing lens, pay for returning citizen to enter into educational/vocational programs, and support poor communities) M4BL DC has also created an election strategy that will force city governments to ask “are they serving the interests of Black and poor communities, urban and rural.) Organizations in the spokes council include: BYP100 DC Chapter, BLM DC, Stop Police Terror Project, One DC, API Resistance, Showing Up for Racial Justice, and Pan-African Community Action.</p> <p>b. BYP100 organizing the United Front to bring together ally base building organizations and organize a mass movement to resist the regime 45 era.</p>
<p><b>Energy Shifts and Resonations</b> (10 mins)</p>	<p>Document how healing, joy and production came about through this activity. What resonated with you? What shifted how you felt?</p>
<p><b>Living Document and Additional Resources</b></p>	<p>Living Document: This guide is a living document. We encourage BYP100 Members to add submission here, including videos, voice recordings, written materials and more: <a href="https://bit.ly/bjesubmission">bit.ly/bjesubmission</a>. All submissions will be archived by our National Cultural Production Team.</p>

# Activity #14 Ancestral Remembrance

<b>Liberating Knowledge:</b>	Participants will learn about the importance of remembering, honoring and acknowledging those who came before us, while participating in the ritual of ancestral remembrance.
<b>Defining Key Terms &amp; New Language (5 mins)</b>	<p>Key Terms: Ancestral Remembrance, Resistance</p> <p>Place the term “Ancestral Remembrance” in a visible space. If resources allow, ask participants what does ancestral remembrance mean to you? Chart responses. Use the shared terms to construct a definition wherein the group can reach consensus.</p> <p>Note: See introduction for opening strategies on defining key terms.</p> <p>At the conclusion of this activity, ask participants to invent a new word that best describes an experience or feeling that occurred?</p>
<b>Prompting Questions (10-15 mins)</b>	Ask Participants: <i>How did our ancestors heal through music? How did they resist through music? How do we heal in our current movement?</i>



<p><b>Blacktivity</b> <b>(15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Ancestral Remembrance chant together: Ancestors Watching, while calling out ancestors from your family and from Black struggle movements. Write a passage (song, poetry or journal entry) about a person in your family who came before you. What music made them feel free? What music makes you feel free?</p> <p>Watch the clip from Nina Simone, “What Happened to Nina Simone”?</p> <p>Nina Simone spoke often about the freedom of fear in her life. And how music made her feel the most free from fear. How does fear stop us from achieving freedom and liberation? How does music give us an opportunity to be vulnerable in movement spaces? Vulnerability allows you to say yes to intimacy, and honesty and truth. Tell a story about your ancestral heritage. If we’re going to be fighting against white supremacy we need a team of people that knows we will make mistakes, and be vulnerable enough to show up in our truth and hold ourselves accountable.</p> <p>Define Restorative and Transformative justice. How did our ancestors heal through music? How did we resist through music? How do we heal in our current movement?</p> <p>Take a sheet of paper and write a love song to Black people now, Black ancestors and Black futures. You can sing, speak, or post your love song to one of your social media pages.</p>
<p><b>Energy Shifts and Resonations</b> <b>(10 mins)</b></p>	<p>Document how healing, joy and production came about through this activity. What resonated with you? What shifted how you felt?</p>
<p><b>Living Document and Additional Resources</b></p>	<p>Living Document: This guide is a living document. We encourage BYP100 Members to add submission here, including videos, voice recordings, written materials and more: <a href="http://bit.ly/bjesubmission">bit.ly/bjesubmission</a>. All submissions will be archived by our National Cultural Production Team.</p>

# Activity #15 Closing Chants and Leaving Sacred Space

<p><b>Liberating Knowledge:</b></p>	<p>Participants will learn why it is important to leave sacred all Black space with intentionality and purpose. Closing chants will be highlighted to teach the practice of how to leave sacred space.</p>
<p><b>Defining Key Terms &amp; New Language (5 mins)</b></p>	<p>Key Terms:</p> <p>Place the term “Sacred Space” in a visible space. If resources allow, ask participants what does sacred space mean to you? Chart responses. Use the shared terms to construct a definition wherein the group can reach consensus.</p> <p>Note: See introduction for opening strategies on defining key terms.</p> <p>At the conclusion of this activity, ask participants to invent a new word that best describes an experience or feeling that occurred?</p>
<p><b>Prompting Questions (10-15 mins)</b></p>	<p><i>Ask Participants: What does it mean to leave a space and enter into another? Why are concepts of love, protection, ancestors, futures, and transformation important tools as we fight in regime 45 era?</i></p>
<p><b>Blacktivity (15 mins)</b></p>	<p>Popular Education Session:</p> <p>What does leaving a space mean? We are constantly asking about safety obstacles, traps, and struggles that come the daily navigation of a white supremacist world. This is a belief that says “white people are superior to those of all other races, especially the Black race, and should therefore dominate society. Domination is a critical word to understand in the time of regime 45. Dictator, Authoritarian, Fascism &amp; and violent financial systems are concepts that will actualize an anti-Black world that we are living in. So our closing chants are a reflection of the world we are returning to, a world where...</p>

**Blacktivity**  
**(15 mins)**

- Blackness is marginalized, not centered
- Trans-misogynoir is constantly creating violence in the lives of anyone who doesn't fit into a white centered understanding of gender binaries that don't actually exist.
- queerness is embodied in all the complex iterations of Black resiliency. The creator of the Black Youth Project, Dr. Cathy Cohen in her article "Punks, Bulldaggers and Welfare queens" begins a discourse about the inherent nature of queerness and Blackness, as the othering of Black single mothers, Black queer folks, Black gender liberators, Black femmes, Black immigrants and
- The more we distance ourselves from Blackness the closer we get to trying to join the invention of "whiteness" and legitimize white supremacy.
- The labor is not on Black people. Many of us, do not have time to teach you about racial politics, if you want to learn, there are many resource list that we can forward to you. But please don't ask us to teach unless you have funding to pay. BYP100 is committed to focus our transformative leadership development for Black youth between the ages of 18 - 35. As you may know by now, we have been able to shape and reshape many aspects of Black life in this anti-Black world, but somehow we move thru centuries of white supremacy that creates intergenerational trauma, please do not expect Black people to carry your trauma (or guilt) for you.

Have a 20 min discussion on the importance of taking time to create intentional space to reflect and connect before you leave a BYP100 space.

Play these two chants from the Black Joy Experience Album:

- Assata
- The Mandate

The mandate and assata chants are utilized most often to end meetings. Why is this? What do these closing chants have in common? Why are concepts of love, protection, ancestors, futures, and transformation important tools as we fight in regime 45 era?

<p><b>Energy Shifts and Resonations (10 mins)</b></p>	<p>Document how healing, joy and production came about through this activity. What resonated with you? What shifted how you felt?</p>
<p><b>Living Document and Additional Resources</b></p>	<p>Living Document: This guide is a living document. We encourage BYP100 Members to add submission here, including videos, voice recordings, written materials and more: <a href="https://bit.ly/bjesubmission">bit.ly/bjesubmission</a>. All submissions will be archived by our National Cultural Production Team.</p>

I BELIEVE  
THAT WE  
WILL WIN



# HOLISTIC ENERGY CASE STUDIES

- Voices from the Grassroots of Black America: Chant Culture and Systems of Liberation in the Ballroom Scene
- Equal Education Using Freedom Songs and Liberation Chants to Energize a Movement of Black Youth in Khayelitsha/Cape Town, South Africa

*Holistic Energy Case Study, Voices from the Grassroots of Black America: Chant Culture and Systems of Liberation in the Ballroom Scene*

## What is the Ballroom Scene?

House and Ball community (i.e. ballroom scene) is an international subculture comprised of Black and Latino/a LGBTQ youth and adults. Evolving from Harlem drag balls throughout the Harlem Renaissance (1930's), ballroom provides a platform, which celebrates all forms of gender and sexual expression. The House and Ball scene provides many Black and Latino youth and adults with a chosen kinship structure through which collective impact, resiliency and vital resources are obtained. Balls are extravagant, competitive social events held by House and Ball participants. During balls, houses compete in a variety of artistic categories towards the goal of visibility and cultural production.

The get.R.E.A.L Initiative hosted the first ever Ball on City Hall Black Pride Celebration. This event was designed to unite Washington DC's House and Ball members in an effort to highlight the collective talents of the community via art and civic engagement. The Ball took place at the District of Columbia City Council Building and was co-hosted by Councilman David Grosso. The 2016 theme focused on keeping the community alive and asked the following question: "In the face of structural oppression and growing health disparities, how do we ensure that LGBTQ youth are mentally, physically, and spiritually viable?" The event not only provided a space for Ballroom members to engage directly with policy makers, but

also aimed to make visible and celebrate the culture of the Ballroom Scene in one of the most historic buildings in Washington, DC.

## **What is Ballroom Scene Liberation Chant Culture? What does it sounds like? And how is it utilized in the Ballroom Scene?**

Chanting in the ballroom scene dates back to the 1920's drag balls, where participants would join in the holistic exercise of call and response. Chanting during live balls and in pre-record ballroom music is facilitated by commentators who serve as the community griot, often utilizing free-styled and improvisational tactics. The commentator or ballroom chant leader serves as the documentarian, archiver and remembrance holder of names for community members. Narratives told in chants range from stories of fierceness, survival, iconography, resiliency and legendary status mobility within the community. Overtime the style of chanting evolved as the contemporary house scene became politicized through the Black radical tradition, including having a presence at the Stonewall Riots and throughout the Black HIV/AIDS movement.

## **How are Black queer youth in the Ballroom Scene creating their own Systems of Liberation?**

We are all watching, as nearly every federal governmental system is being led by individuals who want to see those systems fail (DOE, DOJ, DOL, EPA, HUD, HHS), and through the Orwellian chaos, I am reminded that these same systems have been failing my community for several centuries. And somehow, we —queer communities of color— always find ways to survive, organize and fight for the visibility of our worth. Now more than ever, I am encouraged by the organic creation of Systems of Liberation by

queer youth who have always had to fill in the gaps, when government systems have failed our community.

A recent manifestation of the system concept was an event that the getR.E.A.L Initiative co-sponsored and put on by the Keeping Ballroom Community Alive Network (KBCAN). KBCAN launched their second annual Ballroom Symposium, as they organized the Ballroom community to envision a world where queer communities of color are liberated through unapologetic radical love, self-mobilization and transformative healing. The Ballroom Symposium was inspiring, creative and a launch of a series of similar events that will take place in locales across the country. A year ago I became a member of the House of Garçon and a founding member of Comme De Garçon Pro (CDG Pro), an intentional space within the House that seeks to harness community knowledge and skills, to create opportunities for House and Ballroom members to grow spiritually, professionally and civically. KBCAN and CDG Pro are just a few examples of spaces created through resiliency, working to get closer to liberation.

Let's just be clear. Black and Brown communities, since the inception of this country, have been living in a world where systems are designed to disrupt our lives, criminalize our bodies, patrol our behaviors and police our humanity. This is a world that has intentionally— and in most cases— strategically created mechanism to ensure that our lives be devalued, pathologized and left to fend off a set of historical, harmful and institutionalized policies and practices. So out of necessity, queer Black and Brown communities have created our own connected parts, our own community of resiliency, our own sub-cultures, our own spaces and our own systems where we can experience liberation, self-determination and the power to radically shape (and reshape) our lives.

The word radical finds its origins from the Latin word “radicalis.” It simply means “of the root.” Thus, if my community feels the bruises of broken systems, if we regurgitate the ztrauma of multi-generational state sanctioned violence against our core identities, and if we can clearly see the strategic design of systems of oppression, then we must find radical solutions that tug at the very root of white supremacy, heteronormativity, gender-based violence and trans-misogynoir. Fortunately, communities that stand nearest to the margins, are doing just that. While creating direct confrontation



at the very core of systematic harm and violence, queer communities of color—learning from the Black radical tradition— have created societies that are building within them Systems of Liberation. I define Systems of Liberation as fluid and sustained spaces created only through resiliency for the purpose of co-investment in radical acts of love, recognition, joy, affirmation, growth, support, and healing.

In this time, nothing is more important than being radical. “Radical” allows youth learn to survive (and thrive) when a generation of people preaching the politics of respectability are more concerned about policing our gender expression. “Radical” is how Black girl magic built movements and sustained them throughout decades. “Radical” is how one taps into the imagination of the beyond, to be able to conjure up a just world that we have never known.

Systems of Liberation are radical. They are a response to rotten roots that have plagued this country since its inception. They can be found at the intersections, in compounds, through nuance and complexity. They are adverse to monoliths, norms and respectability. Systems of Liberation are the small informal and interconnected systems that were conjured up at the crossroads of freedom, self-determination and mobilization. They are a resistance to oppression, hatred and bigotry, but more importantly, they are a response to a core need for chosen-family, love and acceptance.

I am honored to be a part of the System of Liberation that has been longstanding within the House and Ballroom Scene, since it was created by Crystal Labeija, a Black trans women nearly half a century ago. In times like this, we will continue to organize, mobilize, advocate and fight to hold government systems accountable. But as they continue to fail, we will continue to create Systems of Liberation that allow us to never abandon our hope. And through hope, I know that freedom and liberation will be actualized in this world. Forever forward.

# What is the Keeping Ballroom Community Alive Network?

The getR.E.A.L Initiative launched the very first Keeping Community Alive Network meeting on August 21st, 2015 as a part of the inaugural NYC Ballroom Symposium. At the launch meeting, Ballroom house-parents and leaders came together to strategize what a network could do to support the infrastructure of the ballroom scene, fight against systemic oppression, advocate for systems-change and lift-up the voices and experiences of LGBTQ youth impacted by deep-end systems (child welfare, mental health, homelessness, criminal justice). Prospective network members engaged in a variety of topics ranging from grassroots mobilization, asset mapping, leadership development, expanding visibility, empowerment, and building on the collective knowledge and consciousness of Ballroom participants.

Highlights from the Launch Focus Group Meeting with Transgender and GNC Leaders in Ballroom Scene:

- There has to be an equal balance of trans grassroots mobilization in addition to strong effort to provide legitimization of the network, through grants and scholarships with national organizations. This will help keep the network thriving, but also expand reach to create visibility of how the ballroom scene fills a need that systems cannot.
- The Keeping Community Alive Network has to be “Uncut-Grass-Roots.” It will only be successful if it is driven by the people who have investment in the Ballroom Scene and investment the survival of those who live in the scene. There was a discussion around stigma, and how the Ballroom Scene can cultivate a space that allows youth to navigate systems and often create their own response to the needs that impact their lives.
- It would be helpful if the network could help with Asset mapping. So much of the wisdom and knowledge we need, already lives inside of the ballroom scene, unfortunately, we don’t always have a way of knowing who holds what knowledge, or who has particular skills. It would be great if the network were able to map out the skills from the house parents and leaders, and create a way for house kids to access that collective knowledge.

- It would be great if the Keeping Community Alive Network could work in collaboration with system leaders and other non-profit organizations to fight against systemic oppression. Many of these systems were not made for us, so how do we tailor them to work for us, and not make our lives worse.
- We must have an intersectional approach to this network and whatever we do with it. We need to think about how we are often in the Ballroom Scene because it allows us to engage mutually with all of our identities, struggles, and intersections. We want to bring our full-selves to the table.
- The network will strategize as to how to get trans and GNC young people more access to resources. This network needs to be about sensitivity, leadership, funding and accountability.
- What is the process of becoming “socially conscious” and how we can use the network for internal consciousness and external trainings to those we interact with for resources?
- This network is about building up LGBTQ leaders that are able to voice the needs that are met inside of the scene, and the gaps that systems have perpetually failed to meet. The network must serve as a way to empower ballroom scene participants to be able to create stronger internal bonds, and become active and shifting the systems that seek to make our lives better, but often fail and make our lives worse in the process.

What is KBCAN’s Mission: The Keeping Ballroom Community Alive Network (KBCAN) seeks to actualize liberation through confronting systemic oppression by building power, organizing Ballroom styled direct actions, and connecting the Ballroom Scene to resources. KBCAN will educate and advocate through radical love by addressing trauma, emphasizing health and wellness, protecting safe and sacred space, and intentionally lifting up the self-care and self-determination of the House and Ballroom Community.

The Keeping Ballroom Community Alive Network will serve several functions:

- Internal Capacity Building: The KBCA Network will provide the House and Ballroom Scene with support in existing infrastructure,

leadership development, and capacity building.

- **Education and Training:** The KBCA Network will provide internal consciousness building within the Ballroom Scene and external trainings for system leaders. This will be an opportunity for Ballroom leaders to go thru train the trainer’s curriculum and offer cultural competency workshops to social workers, administrators, policy makers, and system leaders.
- **Technology and Resources:** The KBCA Network will provide asset mapping (capturing the wisdom of ballroom legends) and create an information clearinghouse to match the needs of Ballroom participants with existing supports. This will be aligned within social media spaces, where youth will have access to Facebook groups, Instagram pages, websites, and/or web applications that connects them to resources and information that meet specific gaps in need.

## The Critical need of Supporting Black Trans Leadership:

In 1977 a Black transgender women named Crystal Labeija started the very first “House” in the Ballroom Scene, it was deemed the legendary “House of Lebeija.” This historic moment launched and solidified the contemporary House and Ballroom Scene (HBS). Not only was the HBS founded by a Black transgender women, but it was built as a response to discrimination and trans-misogynoir that Black transgender women and gender non-conforming individuals experience far too often. Thus, it is only appropriate for the Keeping Ballroom Community Alive Network (KBCAN) to further the Black radical tradition of transgender leadership by launching the Crystal Labeija Organizing Committee (CLOC). KBCAN members now meet once a month and are starting to develop an action agenda focused on internal capacity building, advocacy, education and training, and technology and resource.



## Equal Education Using Freedom Songs and Liberation Chants to Energize a Movement of Black Youth in Khayelitsha/Cape Town, South Africa

E.E. Likhaya Lam means equal education is our home in Xhosa. This is now the title of a the CD I was able to record with 15 high school youth who were young radical Black activist, about how they came to join a movement, and sing to tell about it. Every time I hear the voices of these 15 young people I am inspired and encouraged for what it symbolically means for them to use to sing about their struggle for equality in the education system. But more important than the movement itself, is the process of bringing youth together for a common good. If equal education never

actually achieves the title of its own name, what they have built would have been worth the time, money, sweat and effort. E.E. Likhaya Lam is more than a titled of a CD, it is testament to what it means to build of safe space for youth to learn, grow, and act collectively for a universal purpose.

The title of Equal Education Choir's first CD is both figurative and symbolic. E.E. Likhaya Lam is for those young people who didn't have a cause, purpose, or mission that honed their interests, talents, and skills. E.E. Likhaya Lam is for the transgender youth who find it difficult to locate a community of acceptance in townships where transphobia runs rampant. E.E. Likhaya Lam is for the parents who for the past two generations spoke out because they knew that their children were being cheated out of a high quality education. E.E. Likhaya Lam is for those gay and lesbian youth and marginalized women, who regardless of how much they encounter the "ism" never back down from declaring their place and strength in society. E.E. Likhaya Lam is for the original songs that are stirred up out of the depths of a young person's soul right at the very moment where they commit civil disobedience and decide that being arrested means nothing, because a poor education will keep them jailed for a lifetime.

Equal Education is a movement, and has made substantive progress over the last five years, however, campaigns won is only the second largest accomplishment of this social movement. The first is the people they have managed to bring together into one safe, honest, and tolerant space to work together on movements that impact the lives of youth across a nation and the world.

So when I hear the voices of these 15 high-school-aged E.E. choir members singing out with all of their might, I am only led to think about what an "equal education home" offers them. What does it mean to have an equal education family and an equal education dinner table? What does it mean to sit around that dinner table and talk about your fears, your vulnerabilities, your weaknesses, and your struggles?

When you hear their voices, then you will know. You will know what it means to build a home and bridge families across communities. When you hear their voices you will hear a history of young people who have been ignored, silenced, and pushed into the margins. But through their voices

you will also hear them rising out of that history, like a phoenix from ashes which were once oppressed. You will hear them rising to reclaim a peaceful and honest activism, to reclaim equality in education, because that is where their home is. And it might be a cliché, but home is definitely where the heart is. Amandla.

### **Additional Multimedia Resources on Equal Education's Song and Chant Culture:**

- To listen to E.E. Likhaya Lam, the Equal Education South African Freedom Song Album go here: [\*http://bit.ly/SouthAfricanFreedomSongs\*](http://bit.ly/SouthAfricanFreedomSongs)
- To view a live video of the Equal Education Choir studio recording go here: [\*http://bit.ly/EEChoir\*](http://bit.ly/EEChoir)
- To view the song book lyrics of Equal Education Choir's freedom song and liberation chant culture (in Xhosa and English) go here: [\*http://bit.ly/EESongLyrics\*](http://bit.ly/EESongLyrics)

# FREEDOM SONGS PERFORMED BY BLACK QUEERS AND FEMMES

## **25 Freedom Songs Performed By Black Queers and Femmes during the Movement for Black Lives**

To listen go here: [bit.ly/bjeresource](https://bit.ly/bjeresource)

**Jamal Lewis**

**BoomScat**

**Kristen B**

**Dannie**

**J Chase**

**Jamila Woods**

**Tasha Viets-VanLear**

**CFreedom**

**Big Freeda**



# BLACK STRUGGLE FREEDOM SONGS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

**Freedom Songs from Black Struggle Movements Around the World**

To listen go here: [bit.ly/bjeresource](https://bit.ly/bjeresource)

**Nina Simone**

**Bayard Rustin**

**Fela Kuti**

**Sweet Honey on the Rock**

**Ali Ganda**

# THE LIBERATION LYRIC MANUAL FOR THE BLACK JOY EXPERIENCE:

## Freedom Songs and Liberation Chants from the Movement By The BYP100 Choir

### The Black Joy Experience Track List:

1. **Confront the State (Message)** - Elle Hearn
2. **Woke**- Ratasha Elise, Jonathan Lykes & OnRaé LaTeal
3. **Freedom Side (Chant)** - Charlene Carruthers & BYP100 Choir
4. **I Love Being Black (Chant)** - BYP100 Choir
5. **I Love Being Black** - Jonathan Lykes & BYP100 Choir
6. **Mama-Mama, Can't You See** - Charlene Carruthers & BYP100 Choir
7. **The Mandate (Chant)** - Mary Hooks
8. **I Believe That We Will Win (Chant/Song)** - Aflocentric & BYP100 Choir
9. **Black Joy** - Jonathan Lykes & Lee Anderson
10. **BYP100 Healing and Safety Council (Message)** - JeNae Taylor
11. **Healing** - Jonathan Lykes & OnRaé LaTeal
12. **Radical Imagination (Message)** - Charlene Carruthers
13. **Come On My People (Chant/Song)** - OnRaé LaTeal & BYP100 Choir
14. **Freedom Dreams** - KOKUMO KINETIC
15. **Unapologetically Black/We Ready (Chant/Song)** - Llerre Ailith, Sam Grant & Choir
16. **Sovereignty** - Ratasha Elise & BYP100 Choir
17. **Holistic Energy (Message)** - Jonathan Lykes

18. **Build Black Futures (Chant/Song)** - BYP100 Choir, Jonathan Lykes & Elle Hearn
19. **Hype for BYP100!!! (Chant)** - BYP100 Choir
20. **Ancestors Watching (Chant/Song)** - BYP100 Choir
21. **CDG Freedom** - Diamond Xavier Garcon
22. **Dark Skin** - Jonathan Lykes & OnRaé LaTeal
23. **What's Wrong Witchu? (Chant)** - BYP100 Choir
24. **I Love Being Black (Remix)** - Jonathan Lykes & Ratasha Elise
25. **Assata (Chant)** - Sam Grant & April Goggans



# Freedom Side (Chant)

By BYP100 Choir

What side are you on my people,  
What side are you on?  
I'm on the freedom side!

Ella Baker was a freedom fighter,  
And she taught us how to fight,  
We gon' fight all day and night,  
Until we get it right.

# Confront the State

By Elle Hearn

Freedom is at its truest when we can all sing. Bringing Black people together to celebrate the fullness of what we've created, a commitment to confronting the state until all of our people are free, celebrating music now and forever as we get free...this is the Black joy experience!

# Woke

Music by Ratasha Elise, Jonathan Lykes & OnRaé LaTeal

Lyrics by Ratasha Elise

I gotta gotta, I gotta gotta RIGHT!  
I gotta gotta, I gotta gotta RIGHT!  
I gotta gotta, I gotta gotta RIGHT!  
I gotta gotta, I gotta gotta RIGHT!

Early this morning,  
I woke up from my sleep

I could feel the freedom,  
All up in my bones,

Standing on the shoulders,  
of my ancestors,  
those who came before us,  
they who make us strong

(Rap Verse)

One time for the blessings from above,  
Two times for my homies spreading love,  
No times for the haters and suckas brutalizing our brothas fronting cause  
they tryna stunt,  
One time for one DC,  
B-L-M reppin the DMV,  
Two steppin on inequities,  
A Benjamin thrown to B-Y-P,  
March wit a lean cause i keeps it so fresh,  
Our liberty is imminent I profess,  
My history marks a S on my chest,  
Tell the police we ain't takin no mess,  
We protest with no stress systemic grotesque steady aiming for the top and  
no less,  
You feel me, we taking down this whole city nigga,  
You feel me, we taking down this whole city

## I Love Being Black (Chant/Song)

Music By Jonathan Lykes

Lyrics By JeNae Taylor

I said I love being Black,  
I said I love being Black,  
I said I love being Black,

I said I love.

I love the color of my skin,  
cuz it's the skin that i'm in,  
I love the texture of my hair,  
And I will rock it everywhere.

## **Mama-Mama Can't You See**

By BYP100 Choir

Mama, Mama Can't you see,  
What the system's done to me,  
They lock us up, they keep us down  
Ain't no justice in this town

Mama, Mama Can't you see,  
What police have done to me,  
They lock us up, they shoot us down  
Ain't no justice in this town

## **I Believe That We Will Win (Chant)**

By BYP100 Choir

I  
I believe  
I believe that  
I believe that we  
I believe that we will  
I believe that we will win x4

# Black Joy

Music By Lee Anderson & Jonathan Lykes

Lyrics By Jonathan Lykes

Black joy feelings,  
Black joy creating,  
Black joy dancing,

My Black joy rising, rising, right in front of me  
Cuz its Black feelings, until eternity,  
My Black joy dancing, celebrating life with me  
Its Black joy magic, with my family

My Black joy magic, ancestors magic,  
My joy Black magic, with the family

My Black Joy gets me over

# Message, BYP100 Healing and Safety Council

By JeNae Taylor

Healing

Music By OnRaé LaTeal & Jonathan Lykes

Lyrics By Jonathan Lykes

I need some healing in my life, someone who cares  
like granny cares, yes, someone who shares,  
all of the joy of family, one who believes,  
we can be free, yes, we will be free.

Healing, Healing, Healing, Healing, Healing, Healing  
Mind, Body and Soul Yes.  
Mind, Body and Soul.

I need some incense and some sage,  
a natural capacity to pray,  
live off the land, yes, live off the land  
Lend me some oil from the tree,  
give me some lavender quickly,  
heal from the pain, yea, heal from the pain.

Healing, Healing, Healing, Healing, Healing, Healing  
Mind, Body and Soul Yes.  
Mind, Body and Soul. x2

I need some healing in my life, healing in my life. X2

(Rap Verse)

You know,  
My galaxy was built for you in two fold,  
I recognize us in these constellations,  
It ain't complicated,  
Your prototype is algebraic,  
You fit my equations,  
Hold up Jon let me sang it,  
I need... x6  
Your body and soul,  
And I'm done explaining,  
Cause I told you that I want you

# Freedom Dreams

Music & Lyrics By Jonathan Lykes



Keep Holding My Hand, My Hand, My hand  
Keep Holding My Hand,  
I lift my palm, to Freedomland  
I gotta birth my dreams, and stand x2

## **The Mandate (Chant)**

By Mary Hooks

The Mandate for Black people in this time,  
Is to avenge the suffering of our ancestors,  
Earn the respect of future generations  
And to be willing to be transformed in the service of the work

## **Let the Voices Rise**

Music By OnRaé LaTeal

Lyrics By Ratasha Elise & OnRaé LaTeal

Let the people rise from the bottom of the water,  
Let the people rise, from the bottom of the water  
Let the people rise, from the bottom of the water

## **Let the Voices Rise (reprise)**

By BYP100 Choir

Let the people rise from the bottom of the water,  
Let the people rise, from the bottom of the water  
Let the people rise, from the bottom of the water

## **We Ready, We Coming/Unapologetically Black**

# (Chant)

By BYP100 Choir

Chant down, Babylon,  
Black people are the bomb,  
We ready, We Coming,  
We ready, We Coming

Unapologetically, Black  
Unapologetically, Black  
Unapologetically, Black, Black, Black, Black, Black.

# Unapologetically Black

Music By Jonathan Lykes

Lyrics By Jonathan Lykes

Unapologetically, Black  
Unapologetically, Black  
Unapologetically, Black  
I'm taking my power, I'm taking it back  
I'm taking my joy, I'm taking it back  
I'm taking my peace, I'm taking it back

# Sovereignty

Music By Ratasha Elise

Lyrics By Ratasha Elise

Freedom, I got freedom in my bones  
Freedom, I got freedom in my blood  
Freedom, I got freedom in my voice

So I'm taking my sovereignty

Freedom, I got freedom in my heart

Freedom, I got freedom in my love

Freedom, I got freedom in my joy

So I'm taking my sovereignty

They tried to take it away from me

They just won't let me be

They can't see, what I'm born to see

so I'm taking my sovereignty

See them coming for me, trying to take my sovereignty,

Attacking my body, but can't touch my dignity (I'm free, I'm free, I'm free)

## **Build Black Futures (Chant)**

By BYP100 Choir

Build Black futures,

keep our people out of jail

the whole damn system,

is guilty as hell

## **Build Black Futures**

Music By Jonathan Lykes & Elle Hearn

Lyrics By BYP100 Choir & Jonathan Lykes

Build Black futures,

keep our people out of jail

the whole damn system,  
is guilty as hell

I don't want another life, taken away  
I don't want another life, taken away  
I don't want another life, taken away (please not today)  
I don't want another life, taken away (please not today)

I choose to stay, I choose to stay

## **I'm Hype for BYP! (Chant)**

By BYP100 Choir

Are you ready, Are you ready,  
Yea i'm ready, yea i'm ready  
Are you hype, are you hype,  
Yea im hype, yea im hype

For what?  
What you mean for what?  
Im hype for BYP! Ayeeee  
Turn-up Turn-up, Turn-up, Turn-up Aye  
Turn-up Turn-up, Turn-up, Turn-up Aye

## **Ancestors Watching**

Lyrics: By BYP100 New Orleans Chapter

Music: By Jonathan Lykes

Ancestors Watching, I know they're watching,

Ancestors Watching, I know, I know

Black Magic, Black Magic Raining Down  
Black Magic, Black Magic

Say her name, Say her name,  
Say her name, Say her name

## Dark Skin

Music: By Jonathan Lykes and OnRaé LaTeal

Lyrics: By Jonathan Lykes and OnRaé LaTeal

My dark skin is, opulent  
My mind is, intelligent  
My love is, radical  
And I want, it to grow

For the movement, for the heart  
For the children, surviving in the dark

(Rap Verse)

I got a love jones for your chocolate covered skin tone,  
Sweet as a melanated kiss your beauty's ingrown,  
Lips full broad hips a queens throne,  
A-typical your presence a true dominion,  
Radical you got a mind uh your own,  
A Nyongo with hershey's painted on your bones,  
Impenetrable time stops you bear the toughest weather,  
Your beauty epitomizes grace upon the heavens.

My dark skin is, beautiful  
My mind is, brilliant  
My love is sometimes insecure  
We will build, through the storms

For the movement, for the heart  
For the children, surviving in the dark

Im thriving in my dark skin, I'm thriving in my dark skin,  
Im thriving in my dark skin, my dark skin

## What's Wrong With You? (Chant)

By BYP100 Choir

I love Black people,  
You don't love Black people?  
What's wrong with you?  
What's wrong with you?

I Love Being Black (Remix)

I said I love being Black,  
I said I love being Black,  
I said I love being Black,  
I said I love.

I love the color of my skin,  
cuz it's the skin that i'm in,  
I love the texture of my hair,  
And I will rock it everywhere.

## Assata (Chant)

Quote from Assata Shakur

Read By. Samantha Grant

“It Is our duty to fight for our freedom  
It is our duty to win  
We must love and protect each other  
We have nothing to lose but our chains”

## Freedom Side

(Call and Response)

What side are you on my people? What side are you on? (we on the freedom side)

What side are you on my people? What side are you on? (we on the freedom side)

(insert name of ancestor/elder) was a freedom fighter and they taught us how to fight! (say what?)

And we gon’ fight all day and night until we get it right (say what?)

Examples:

- Marsha P Johnson
- Ella Baker
- Anna J Cooper
- Audre Lorde
- Barbara Ransby
- Harriet Tubman
- Angela Davis
- Etc.

What side are you on my people? What side are you on? (we on the freedom side)

What side are you on my people? What side are you on? (we on the freedom side)

side)

[repeat verse with different ancestor name] (x2)

What side are you on my people? What side are you on? (we on the freedom side)

What side are you on my people? What side are you on? (we on the freedom side)

## Come on my people, let's get free

(Call and Response)

Come on my people! (let's get free!)

All, my, African people! (let's get free!)

All of my people (let's get free!)

(Unison)

Get free! Live free! Be free! Truly! (ayyyy!)

## Power

Power! (power) x3

Transformation! (transformation) x3

And miracles! (and miracles) x3

I want it! (I want it) x2

I need it! (I need it) x2

I gotsa have it (I gotsa have it) x2

Right now! (right now)

Right now! (right now)



Right now! (right now)  
Right now! (right no0w)

# What's Wrong With You?

I love Black people  
You don't love Black people?  
What's wrong with you?  
What's wrong with you??

I love Black people  
You don't love Black people?  
What's wrong with you?  
What's wrong with you??

# Revolution

You can't stop the revolution  
Black power is the solution

# The Black Joy Experience

The Black Joy Experience is a musical compilation dedicated to freedom songs, liberation chants and uplifting the holistic energy that keeps JOY at the center of our movement organizing work. We know that to truly bring every form of Black liberation into fruition, we must center joy as a political act of resistance and as a point of survival and sustainability for movement organizers.

The Black Joy Experience is one of many movement soundtracks that will be created in this time. The BYP100 cultural workers seek create spaces consumed by holistic energy, providing an interdisciplinary approach to art, music, and anti-oppression work. We merge political education, artistic expression and musical healing towards the goal of curating artistic spaces that create awareness, promote personal healing, surmount institutional barriers and generate Black joy, love and healing. Through the Black Joy Experience we seek to tap into a long history of joy and holistic energy that has been woven in the Black radical tradition, particularly when our freedom is at stake.

Let's be clear. Without joy, we will not win. Without joy, we won't survive. Without joy, we will never heal. And without joy, we cannot love radically. But through the experience of Black joy, we will conjure up our freedom dreams and the ancestors will be pleased.

We know that in this movement we will continue to fight against the oppressive Regime 45 and all that it stands for. This means we will be relentless about fighting against anti-Blackness, systemic oppression, trans-misogynoir, sexism, homophobia, capitalism, imperialism and white supremacy. But MORE IMPORTANTLY, we know that this movement, at its CORE, is NOT about what we're fighting against, but actually what we are fighting FOR. The Black joy experience is the antithesis of the oppression we experience and it allows us to develop the faith to believe in this radically different world that we are fighting for.

We are fighting for the perpetual joy of Black people. We are organizing for a "joy" that conjures up a politics of survival, healing and love. It is both

joy as a feeling and an action. This is an experience that allows us to tap into the realm of the Black radical imagination, so we can create our own Systems of Liberation that offer concrete supports to meet our needs as we recover from historical trauma. We are producing a “joy” that will bring us closer to our own freedom and our self-determined lives to keep us woke about what it means to proactively love Black people. This is a “joy” that was built into the fabric of our ancestral lineage, a “joy” that allowed those who came before us to navigate an anti-Black world.

Black Youth Project 100 has emphasized the need for “joy at the roots” in every initiative we have taken on. Regardless if we are shutting down the National FOP office, developing a new language and narrative in regards to reparations on Capitol Hill, building political education in our local communities or convening our members from around the country, in every moment, joy and holistic energy have been baked into our core values at the very inception of our organizational culture. There is little choice for us, wherever Black people share sacred space, joy naturally comes to that place with us. Before BYP100 was fully developed, our membership body wrote holistic energy into our values statement: “we bring our entire selves to the work. Our efforts are driven with love, using a culture-centered approach (art, music, dance, call and response, songs and chants), while nurturing individual leadership, and building power through our artistic and political collective. We apply this love, joy and holistic energy within BYP100’s work and in the solidarity work we engage in with other marginalized groups.” This is who BYP100 is, and who we will continue to be, as we make our life work, the fight for Black lives.

So we declare that we shall sing, we will shout, and we will make a beat to the sounds of a movement and allow the rhythm of Blackness to lead our generation to be transformed by the community and relationships that we have created with one another. Our ancestors would have it no other way. We ready, we coming. Forever forward. Ashe.

### **Jonathan Lykes**

Artistic Director and Co-Producer, The Black Joy Experience  
Founder, J. Lykes Production

Black joy comes alive and stays alive through our music. There is no way to

think about the Black radical tradition without including how our ancestors, and we today, carry our resistance through sound. The Black Joy Experience Album is the manifestation of our imaginations and our ancestors' dreams. It is raw energy. We must use it to remind us to build rigor and discipline with joy. When I feel that all else is lost, sounds from our people lift me up. My deepest hope is that the sound of the Black Joy Experience moves and fuels you to join, or continue, the struggle for our collective liberation.

---

### **Charlene Carruthers**

BYP100 National Director

As creators living during a time of r/evolution for Black lives, it is our duty to use our gifts and talents to perpetuate universal change, resistance, love and most importantly, joy. Music is a language that has the unique ability to shift hearts, move spirits and spark liberation. Therefore, I offer my contributions to The Black Joy Experience with the expectation of extending supernatural transformation through my love language, music.

### **OnRaé LaTeal**

Founder, OnRaé LaTeal Productions

Co-Producer, The Black Joy Experience

## **Credits:**

The Black Joy Experience includes 10 freedom songs, 12 liberation chants, and 4 political education messages, to reflect the Holistic Energy that has been built through the organizing, healing and cultural production/reproduction work of femmes and queer people working throughout the Black and Brown diaspora to spread the message of joy. The very same joy and holistic energy that allowed Lucille Clifton to declare the world to “come celebrate” with her. With these songs and chants, we too ask that Black and Brown communities come celebrate with us, as we survive the 45 regime and beyond.

It is through our coalitional efforts that we will truly build the power to achieve Black liberation. BYP100 is committed to working with comrades across the United Front organizational landscape to ensure that we are “earning the respect of future generations.” A special shout-out goes to the following organizations for their support and artistic contribution: Black Youth Project 100, Southerners on New Ground, Movement for Black Lives, Black Lives Matter DC, Freedom School, Keeping Ballroom Community Alive Network, The House of Garçon, The Ballroom Scene House of Comme De Garçon, OnRae LaTeal Productions, J. Lykes Productions, and the getR.E.A.L. Initiative.

## **Song and Chant Lyrics Written and Remixed By:**

**Jenae Taylor**

**Charlene Carruthers**

**Aaron Talley**

**Jazz Hudson**

**Tiara Phalon**

**Jonathan Lykes**

**OnRaé Watkins**

**Mary Hooks**

**Ratasha Elise**

**Steven Masson**

**Fresco Steez**

**Damon Turner**

**Llerret Ailith**

**The Ancestors, The Elders and Freedom Schools In the Black Radical Tradition**

## **Performers (Singers/Chanters/Rappers):**

**Asha Carter, BYP100**

**Llerret Ailith, BYP100**

**Sam Grant, BYP100**

**Halee Curtis, BYP100**

**Kokumo Kinetic, KK Productions**

**Jonathan L. Butler, BYP100**  
**Sam Grant, BYP100**  
**Charlene Carruthers, BYP100**  
**Dominique Hazzard, BYP100**  
**Jordan DeLoach, BYP100**  
**Erin Shields, BYP100**  
**Fresco Steez, BYP100**  
**JeNae Taylor, BYP100**  
**Jonathan Lykes, J. Lykes Productions/BYP100**  
**Jonathan L. Butler, BYP100**  
**Ratasha Elise, Movement for Black Lives**  
**Lee Anderson, Movement for Black Lives**  
**Steven Pearson, Movement for Black Lives**  
**Elle Hearn, Marsha P. Johnson Institute**  
**Omolara Williams, Black Lives Matter DC**  
**April Goggans, Black Lives Matter DC**  
**Diamond Xavier Garcon, The House of Garcon**  
**Mary Hooks, Southerners on New Ground**  
**OnRaé LaTeal, OnRaé LaTeal Productions**







Design and layout by Rich Gutierrez  
[www.richgutierrez.com](http://www.richgutierrez.com)

**BYP100 is committed to the  
long-term struggle for  
Black liberation,  
human dignity,  
and transformative justice.**



Copyright 2017 © by Black Youth Project 100 (BYP100)  
info@byp100.org  
P.O. Box 903  
Chicago, IL60609