

UNDOCULOVE

spread love &
self-care



By
the
Undocu
Creatives

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Letter to the Reader:

Welcome! I'm so glad you're here. Like me, you know how hard it is to live as an undocumented person in this country. The feeling of loneliness, uncertainty, and limitations can take a heavy toll on you. Not knowing what job you are going to have or where you are going to live, it all builds up stress and a lot of emotions. Constantly comparing yourself to other people's lives and asking yourself, why me? Having no other choice than to live to survive, which takes a lot of strength.

UndocuLove is dedicated to all undocumented folk out there. Each page of this zine was written and created by young undocumented artists to share their experiences, methods, and tips for self-care. Together, they illuminate and make space for the importance of mental health, self-care, and personal wellness in our journeys. They remind us that, during the times we feel most marginalized, we must remember to prioritize our well-being above all.

It is my hope that, within this collection of articles, stories, and art, you will find the inspiration and guidance you need to begin caring more intentionally for your mental and emotional health.

So take a moment for yourself to indulge in the words and artistry featured here, and let this zine serve as a gentle reminder to embrace self-care in all its forms! I hope that this zine will help you in guiding you towards a better, healthy life.

with love,
Jamie

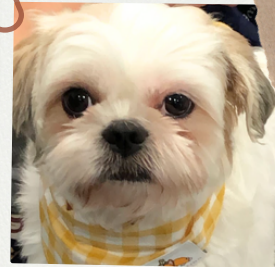




By Anonymous

Working at Woori Center and participating in events such as voter registration helps my mental health by allowing me the opportunity to work in a team-oriented environment. Furthermore, I feel like my time is being spent towards addressing an important issue in our society and that gives me the motivation to work as hard as I can. It is also nice that I get to meet and talk to strangers and hopefully make a positive impact on their lives.

I enjoy looking at my plushies. The dolphin (shown in picture) is named Ellie because I got her at Ellis Island and the panda is named Po. They do not disturb me and gives me peace. I appreciate their companionship during stressful times



My dog, Happy, is very playful. I like to play catch with Happy and give him belly rubs. He is 7 years old now. I first got him at the beginning of quarantine and my love for him grew since



These activities help me balance self-care during stressful times by giving me peace and comfort. These activities help reduce my stress as I enjoy interacting with all of them.

Ben K.



~ Beverlyne Michaels ~



The tree has different seasons, so are you
Today is different from yesterday and Tomorrow
Just like the tree do not lose your attachment
to your roots they keep you strong to

Endure all the seasons

- You are Never Alone

- Be Calm when need be

- Swing when you feel the breeze

- Shed when you feel you are bugged

- Don't Forget to stay strong

- And above all bear fruits

Just like the tree does

- The end is always Beautiful

The *Intersections of* Anger

To those who have considered expressing their anger

Anger is an explosion of repressed emotions caused by triggers we have experienced since the physical manifestation of the soul. Some of us are experiencing generational anger.

This makes anger walk a fine line between liberation and oppression.

Like how anger can affect us not only by gender but by culture & societal norms.

The distinctive quality of emotions is a result of social neuroscience and emotional patterns.

Which provides a different interpretation depending on the social and cultural environment we grow up in.

Living through the motions of oppression and colonization

Every individual has distinctive ways of acting and reacting.

Thus proving we are a byproduct of our nature and environment

Anger is not a flickering flame of annoyance, it is more of

Blinding storm, removing all individuals from senses and logic.

So what influences raged?

Situations that are perceived as unjust or that transgress moral principles and individual liberties, which serve as triggers.

Is being labeled alien when you identify as a human?

Or a criminal?

Or the exploitation of each individual working for less than a livable wage never knowing their rights?

Taking jobs that no one wants.

Working more than one just to survive.

Wouldn't these circumstances make you angry,

By those who physically or verbally attack us, leading to repressed emotions being triggered to erupt.

Knowledge is important.

Transmuting this anger will liberate as, we can learn to access emotional recovery.

Because anger is an accumulation of repressed emotions that can be regulated before reaching the eruption of a burnout.

Rather these emotions may be utilized to improve the quality of collective liberation.

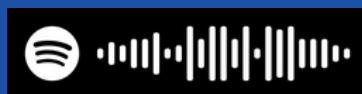
Understanding how to handle anger is different based on the individual circumstances.

This anger assessment will help you understand how you assess arguments and tension between family relationships, friendships, acquaintanceships, and romantic relationships is important to assess.

I want to recommend to you; Dr. Gary Chapman's Anger assessment as this assessment can provide insight into what gets you angry and how to regulate it.

<https://linktr.ee/brillanteglow>

By Brillante Glow



CHASING DREAMS

As an individual who is continuing to learn what self-love and self-care look like, I want to dedicate this work to those who resparked my love of nature. I remembered that adventure is not escapism from reality, but a return to what makes me, me. An adventure-loving, challenge-seeking dreamer. In honor of those people (undocumented or not), I wanted to take this opportunity to test myself artistically for the first time. With a LOT of help from Youtube tutorials, I drew this piece of me at the top of a mountain surrounded by nature and glow of moonlight, where I feel the most alive. Shooting stars represent my connection to the universe and remind me that I'm going in the right direction while also symbolizing a hopeful future and incredible dreams. Seeing shooting stars is a moment I've shared only with those I care deeply for.

But in this piece, it's all for me.

- Inhauck (Johnny) Choi



JUST KEEP FOLDING

BY NATHANIA A

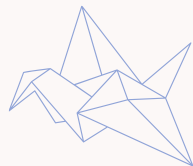
*Fold. Crease. Turn. Unfold.
Edge to edge, as precisely as possible.
I analyze the ends for flaws.*

As the myth goes, one who creates **1,000 origami cranes** will be granted a wish. I took this as a challenge. To my parents' confusion, junk mail and money would often transform into these little creatures. My childhood aspirations were folded up into these paper birds until the doors of LAX International Airport opened. I was three years old when my parents chose to uproot their comfortable lives in Jakarta, Indonesia, to Newnan—a suburb 45 minutes south of Atlanta.

I had yet to hear about my immigrant status, and I overlooked the implications until my first year of high school. As my peers began to test for their learner's permits, I was frustrated when my request to get one was shut down by my parents: "We don't want you on the roads." However, I knew it was much deeper. Though no one openly told me I was undocumented, I could reason. People often asked, "Why haven't you gotten your permit? Aren't you 17?" Consequently, I found myself scrambling to make the same excuses to friends my parents made to me.

At the same time, I grew up feeling disconnected from my racial identity. On social media, I only saw East Asians at the forefront of Asian activism. Not to mention, I never saw any undocumented representation—Painting our community as a monolith. Throughout my school years, I would always have people tell me, "You're not Asian because you're Indonesian." However, if I ever scored high on a test, the same people would say, "It's only because you're Asian." So, which one is it? I felt I was never enough.

Plagued by the Model Minority Myth, I needed to fit the East Asian narrative. Not conforming to this narrative, being undocumented and Southeast Asian pushed me to compensate by pursuing cliché activities like math team and academic bowl. Did I do these for my happiness or validation? Believing I was designed to engage with society this way, I fell into that role.



As years passed, I pushed myself to keep working and returned to my childhood habits of folding cranes. In the summer after sophomore year, my enthusiasm was reinvigorated. I folded my thousandth paper crane. As I opened my jar, brimming with origami pieces in various colors, I felt a rush of fulfillment. Not only was 1,000 cranes an achievement on its own, but I proved to myself that I could finish what I started because I chose to. I began to apply this philosophy to every aspect of my life. I realized I influenced my decisions. Not some “stereotype.”

Nevertheless, ***I had 1,000 pieces of paper necessary for a wish, yet the one piece determining my status was out of reach.*** The system often says, “You’re not welcome here. Do it the right way.” I have a love-hate relationship with my identity as an Asian-American. ***What’s the benefit of pledging my allegiance to a country that doesn’t pledge its allegiance to me?*** It seems the only alternative is to quit, but I plan on continuing my education and encouraging others: Success is feasible. Nobody should exist in fear or be doubtful of their future. Being undocumented and not fitting the “Asian narrative” isn’t a weakness—it’s a drive. It helped me uncover the virtue of my endeavors. So, what did I wish for? It turns out I didn’t need the wish. I discovered I could make things happen for myself. I’m no longer the little girl who believed in legends, but I am the girl who is determined to integrate and flourish in the systems putting people like me at a disadvantage to deliver change.



Take A Deep Breath

Deep Stress, I need to register all this pain
In this crazy world, it's just so easy to go insane
Deep breath, I stay waiting for the rain
Survival mode, cause life be feeling like a game
I take a deep breath, I focus and ground myself
Cause I know deep distress can really hurt my health
A deep breath, just to collect all of my emotions
Heart rate ramping UP, but I'm moving with no motion
Depressed, I'm trying to redirect my pain
In this crazy world; I REFUSE TO GO INSANE
Deep breath, I smell the flowers, Feel the rain
Survival mode, but life always feeling just the same
Take a deep breath, I go easy on myself
Cause I might not have shit but I know Health is wealth
A deep breath, just to collect all my emotions
Heart rate ramping UP, control my breathing till I'm coasting and

I gather my composure, I'm finding my Reset
I'm not so lucky, and my life is a big mess
I'm feeling so down, but I refuse to just regress
Been fighting all alone, I swear I just need rest, |

Situations got me excreting toxicity through my blood,
Need to find a community that'll fill me up with love
Used to solving shit alone, opening up can be so tough
But you can't do it on your own, open up and learn to trust
YOU can change the world or YOU can let it change YOU,
Enrage YOU, I write rhymes so it won't faze YOU
Learn to control your mind, Don't let it cage YOU
Hope YOU learn to put the fists down, let wisdom parade YOU

I'm still standing, because of these deep breaths
Investing in myself, even though my life is a big mess,
Pick up my crown, I refuse to just regress,
Fight till I'm thriving, but I remember I need rest,

By Onion Ha



a Mix Tape curated by
undocumaknaes.



- 01 / A Little Girl / OHHYUK
- 02 / Always / Daniel Caesar
- 03 / Dog Years / Maggie Rogers
- 04 / Getting Older / Billie Eilish
- 05 / Mother / Heize
- 06 / Someday / Lee Sang-Eun
- 07 / Special / SZA
- 07 / 내 남은 서랍속의 바다 / Panic
- 09 / My Neighbor Totoro "Ending Theme Song" / Azumi Inoue
- 10 / Love Is An Open Door / Kristen Bell
Santino Fontana

10 songs
38 min, 48 sec

Dear Undocuazine Reader,

In this letter, I openly share the inner musings of my mind. I'm not one to open up easily; I prefer to bottle up my emotions until something triggers me, and then I burst into an emotional outburst. Growing up, mental health was a taboo in my household, and my parents disregarded my cries for help. They would often dismiss my struggles with phrases like "An empty mind is the devil's workshop" or tell me to "find something to do" and "keep busy." They denied that I could be depressed and questioned my faith, asking when was the last time I prayed. For a long time, repressing my feelings and silently crying myself to sleep every night was the only way I knew how to cope.

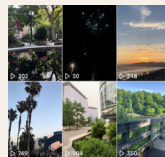
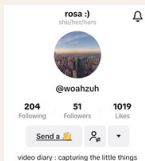
As I grew into consciousness and sought professional help, I came to realize that the primary source of my stress was a profound sense of powerlessness in my life. Living the American experience as a person labeled "undocumented" by legal standards, there's a laundry list of limitations impeding me from living and working in this country like a normal individual. As an ambitious dreamer with a strong desire to make a difference in the world while securing my financial future, I couldn't help but feel as though my wings were clipped by an invisible hand, preventing me from soaring and reaching my full potential.

If I learned anything throughout my journey of acceptance and self-care, it is that perception is key. I have come to terms with the reality of it all. The way I view my place in society matters more than what society thinks of me. I remember being a thirteen-year-old girl, watching presidential election speeches and hearing Trump's scheme to "build a wall." During that time, anti-immigrant sentiments peaked, and I felt extremely unsafe. It pains me to think that my mere existence in this country is a topic of much contention. However, I've come to understand that as a five-year-old child, I did not consent to crossing the border illegally. But as an educated young woman, I can control how I perceive myself and how I let others' prejudices towards immigrants affect me. Despite not having legal citizenship in America, I am just as deserving and capable of having a seat at the table. I've learned that as an undocumented individual, I will often have to negotiate the terms of my presence at the table and bring my own chair. Nevertheless, my perception has shifted to view limitations as opportunities.

I've often felt as though I have to work twice as hard to get to the same spot as everyone else. This work cycle often leaves me feeling burnt out. Though I've accepted my place in the world and strive to make the best of my circumstances, I still struggle to find a healthy coping mechanism. To this day, I am working on developing healthy habits to manage my stressors. Something that eases my mind is embracing gratitude. As part of my healing process, I've been focusing on what's within my control and learning to let go of the things I cannot change. I am celebrating the positives and romanticizing the little things that make me feel alive. I started filming and photographing things that I appreciate, capturing moments in time when life felt okay for a little while, and holding onto that feeling. Amidst the overwhelming aspects of life, having something tangible to look back on helps me stay grounded. When the weight of it all comes crashing down on me like a big wave, I cling onto those moments I documented. They encourage me. They encourage me to keep moving forward and believe that there are more days like that worth living for.

Feel free to view my personal TikTok by scanning the QR code

*The video pinned to my profile encapsulates how I felt after writing this letter and reflecting on my life as an undocumented immigrant trying to navigate a system that was designed to exclude me.



When life is taking a toll and
I'm reminded of my barriers,
I enjoy taking my 35mm film camera
around, taking photos of random
sceneries/subjects, then doodling
over them. The concept of using a
film camera is special.

You have 36 tries to capture something
that you won't be able to see until a
few weeks/months later.

Like being undocumented, like using a
film camera, I'm learning to get use to
the uncertainties of life while learning
to enjoy the process of it.



I hope I submit on
study to happy ending for her
Kendall on it will
be long

Mental Health Resources





National Resources [undocu-friendly]

Immigrants Rising Wellness Support Groups

Available nationwide

Many different support groups are available

Immigrants Rising Mental Health Connector:

Provides undocumented people with free 1:1 therapy, completely confidential services, tailored to meet the needs of each individual

Has a super long waitlist

Edu Light Inc

Career consulting firm that specializes in providing educational services to student-serving organizations in high schools, higher education institutions, and non-profit organizations.

Employing education as a catalyst for serving others and advancing principles of justice, equality, and empowerment.





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Q&A

Q: What do you enjoy doing in your personal time?

A: "I like to play guitar and learn new songs." -Inhauck Choi

A: "I enjoy playing basketball." -Beverlyne Michaels

Q: One advice everyone should know

A: "Everyone should know that everyone's process and success looks differently." -40

Q: Who or what inspires you, why?

A: "What inspires me is everyone who is fighting for social and environmental justice. Activism to me is about making a collective choice to stand for equity. Being surrounded by likeminded individuals inspires me to create and evolve as an artist." -Brillante Glow

A: "Tupac Shakur for his involvement in the black panthers movement and because he was able to use his art to heal and educate people and influence politics by speaking his truth."

-Onion Ha

Q: How much sleep do you get? Do you think it's enough?

A: "I get 6 hours of sleep and it's not enough, I need more." -Ben K

A: "I get anywhere between 5-6 hours of sleep throughout the week. It might not be enough but my body is used to it by now."

-Woahzuh

spread love & self-care

