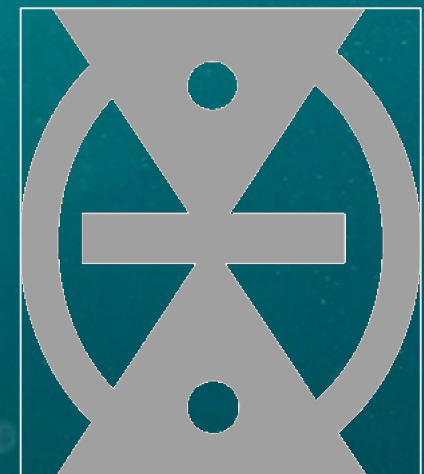


Communal Grief Communal Lament

MMERE DANE
"time changes "
symbol of change, life's
dynamics





Time Changes....Changing Times

- How can we grieve when our regular communal rituals are no longer safe or even allowed?
- What kinds of rituals can we create to facilitate healthy mourning in this time?
- We can situate lamenting and grieving as bearing witness
- Such that we make it (lament and grief) a communal response to an individual occurrence

When we do this,

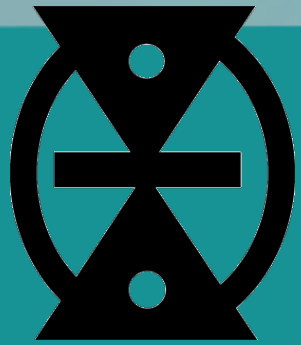
we create space and
welcome the intent of
lament and grieving.



Time Changes...Changing Times

The intent of:

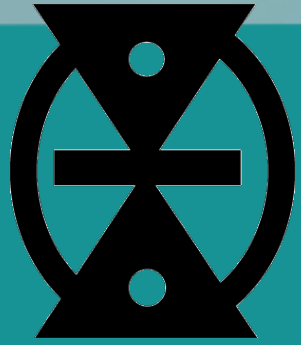
- its occurrence as a disruption to the rhythm of life;
- as a disruption, it cannot be ignored as to cause further disruptions;
- it is our collective responsibility; we all have a role in restoring balance.



How Do We Restore Balance? Ritual Work

Declaring what has been lost or what is no longer in place, so that everyone in the community can contribute to adding it back (Roll Call/Sounding of the Bells—
“A Moment of Silence”)

Creating the written or visual poetry
(21st Lamentations on the disruption)



How Do We Restore Balance? Ritual Work

Illuminate the entire journey to balance as sacred

—the way we get strength to wail; the wailing itself, the possibility of self-forgiveness, the change that has occurred because of the loss, and the courage to hold space for all of the journey.



Sacred Memory Work

- We, as people of African descent have had significant experience with the lament and grief from a great disruption...we perhaps just have not taken sufficient time to learn from those prior experiences:
- **Great Disruption of Enslavement**—*The Language We Cry In*---songs were and still are important;
- **Lynching**—Initially folks did not get what Bryan Stevenson was doing—we get it now—sacred memory—markings helps us to honor what has happened and our collective responsibility;
- **Police Killings**—Social Media created a platform that expanded the communal compassion and responsibility to address the disruption

Our Ancestors Know & Are With Us...Hebrews 11:39-40

”These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised, since God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect”.