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Maintaining Our Wellness on the Way to Ending Gender Based Violence

Kata Issari, Praxis International

October 16, 2019

>> Please stand by for real time captions.

>> Hello everyone, we are ready to get started.

>> I want to welcome all of you. As a part of the course, we would like to provoke some subject matters. Community organizers are working in different communities, for justice and for social change. Today we are very lucky to have an activist with us today. Who is also the Executive Director of Praxis International. We have with us Shamita , who wants to end gender violence. She is part of many domestic violence organization. Before we [Indiscernible], we would like to talk about our purpose. So, let me tell you what our keynote addresses do. They occupy a very poor place; it is designed to inspire thinking. And a desire to talk about social change. It allows us to stretch our imagination. To stretch our analytical muscles. We want to take a critical look, at coalitions that shape our work. At in fact what we learn here today, it will challenge us to do our work better. I am going to invite Alayna, to talk a little bit about how to negotiate technology that we are going to talk about today.

>> It is great to be here with all of you. You should be familiar with the webinar technology but here are a few reminders -- you can use a Q&A pod to send a question to the host or presenters. And if you want to adjust the color settings, go to the icon to the phi -- far right. If you are having issues getting audio through your computer, you may use the telephone number to dial in. And use the Q&A pod also if you have any issues and if you would like to communicate with our

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team, for assistance. And this webinar is going to be recorded. And it will be available within a week.

>> Let me introduce Shamita she has done amazing work on gender-based violence and ending gender-based violence. Working with women of color to prevent violence. She has a 24-hour crisis line. She has sexual assault prevention center. She has served as a board member of the national correlation -- coalition. She is also part of the women's funding alliance in Washington. She serves as the program director, together at the family peace Center. She has also served as a director of the Hawaii [Indiscernible] foundation against domestic violence, and intervention. To talk about what Kata Issari has done we need more than an hour and a half to talk about what she has done . I am so happy that we have Kata Issari , who will talk about our wellness.

>> Thank you so much Shamita . What a very warm and affirming introduction. Especially from someone who has such a talent. I am happy to be with all of you to talk about something that is near and dear to me. This is something that I have been working on for many years. I am going to share with you, what you see on the screen, what we would like to focus on your what happens when we do not attend to our own well-being as an advocate? We also have to look at the impact of not addressing the advocates well-being. Hopefully we can think about together what is happening and what we might be able to do. What I am going to ask everyone to do, as we start the session, take a moment, take a full -- take a few deep breaths with me. I know that many of you have been practicing this. I often talk about it when I am talking to my daughter, I want to in like we are smelling flowers and XL if we -- [Indiscernible] I know we have so many demands on our time. For a few moments I want you to focus on your breathing. This is a reflection on how you are. Let's start with, how are you? Breathe in and out. If I

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had an opportunity to talk to each of you individually, what I would ask you, I would say how are you? Tell me about your day. Think about it in terms of a tree in the forest. What would be a metaphor? On the screen right now, you see many different trees in the forest. I will share with you, for 35 years when we talk about advocates and how we are, I have been every one of these examples. I have been everything from a flourishing tree to being actually on fire. I hope all of you are a flourishing tree that is in the middle. But often, we range between these different metaphors, and we are not always in a flourishing place. That is why I am here with you to die -- with you today. As I have heard from many of you and advocates throughout the year, we inspire, and we have a desire to create a better just world. It gives us much peace back -- and love. And bring [Indiscernible]. Often, I will talk to an advocate who is very tired or stressed or depressed. Or have many symptoms that show that negative aspects of this work. What are both the highs and the lows of doing this work? I want to ask you, what happens when we do not attend to our own well-being? When I first started in this work, and some of you may recall, I was lucky enough when I was introduced to this work when I was very young. I was in college and I was involved with the community and the local town. I did my internship at a local crisis center. I was very fortunate that one of my early teachers and mentor, asked the question, how is everybody doing with this work? Really asking the question, what can we do to attend to our own well-being? This is powerful in helping others come up for advocates and other community organizers. What I found out, when I talk to people about this, many of us, not only do not attend to our own well-being, also by the organization, peers and supervisors. Ultimately, I will say, we are going to look at this in a few minutes. But just to start with a definition. A lot of you have probably heard about trauma. And compassion fatigue. I came to believe that advocates, experience what I call, burn out. What I have up on the screen right

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now is a definition what I think is advocate fatigue. Normal expression of tiredness and stress resulting from little to no attention to our own well-being by our own organization, ourselves, in the context of social injustice, expressed of lack of resources, lack of value and limited power and limited change. I want to focus on what is normal and natural. All of us have had advocate fatigue at some point in our work. We are taught and it is often practice around us that there is little attention to our own well-being. We need to look at our own actions. It is also organizational practices that do not value or attend to our well-being. And it is also depression. This is something that I believe is part of the four pillars. It is the four pillars of depression that we talk about as an advocate. And it can contribute to our own internalized depression. Over the next course of 45 minutes, what is the impact? And what can we do about it?

>> Let me posit for a moment Shamita to see if you have any questions .

>> Absolutely, thank you so much for stopping. Because we have about 200 questions. I want to remind everyone, please do write in your questions or comments that you might have in the Q&A. And we will bring it to Kata, or someone will answer your question. Kata one of the issues I feel, and maybe you can respond to it, but we want to feel. Sometimes we feel like we have to be immune to people, pay and inequity. We do not want to do that but at the same time, over many years when we do this work can drain us. Sometimes dealing with the person does motivate us to do better. Especially when we work with a survivor. Sometimes it will way people down. I am not sure if you can address that, but do you have any comments?

>> I will give you specifics later on. But the first thing that I would say, the top 20 that we are looking on this list are normal. Too often when people help others, we should not have our own reactions to what we hear, or we want to share

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those reactions with others. The one that he is going through this difficult deserves the care and attention. Both medical and psychological. Trauma says there is a medical and psychological perspective. There is trauma about listening to other trauma people are communicating. So, they get worn out. The compassion, there is a different aspect to all of this, anyone who is helping someone and supporting them through a difficult time will get tired of doing that. We know this with military personnel who come back from conflict and they have fatigue. And so, for the family and for the challenge [Indiscernible]. We have especially in the United States have not attended to the well-being of those who are caring for others. I think it takes a unique, what is the word that I am looking for? I think there is a unique aspect for the advocate. It is compounded by the circumstances, specifically gender-based violence, there are so many horrific acts that we hear about. It can be so complicated and [Indiscernible] by the way in which people experiences multiple forms of suppression. Often, we have to look at fatigue, we have to look at trauma and burnout, but they do not take into account survivor contact. We have to look at depression and they impact on us. I believe that advocate fatigue is created and supported and promoted by depression. We are able to have a very clear analysis that allows us to do something different. Did that respond to what you were raising Shamita ?

>> Yes. I think it is a tricky question an issue. How do we balance it? And what you say of course is important. And we need to think a lot more about that. And how do we support each other? But thank you so much.

>> But that is a great segue into, why do we downplay or ignore advocates well-being? Whether it is ourselves or those who are around us. I think this is when we have to step back and say, or take a view. In our country it takes on a unique quality. This is a quote that I found several years ago, and I read a lot about how

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we think about working in America. And this quote says, America is a country that has a long prided itself on sweat, determination, and hard work. We love stories about people putting in long hours, working harder than anyone else and pulling themselves up by their bootstraps to enjoy financial success.

>> So, there was a strong individually [Indiscernible]. And we prove our worth in the United States by how much we work. Not only how well we work but how long we work. And that work is caught up in our own identity. And how the promotion of the work, and the value of someone being a good worker, because they work so much or so hard. And this is why we need to think about this issue. We know in the United States, the majority of people, and thanks to the labor union we have a 40-hour workweek. Many other countries workers are taken advantage of. And horribly abused and misused. And with advocacy work we have a 40-hour workweek. But most people work more than 40 hours. This is like when people check email when they are not at work. And this is not necessarily true for the rest of the world. At least 134 countries have laws setting the maximum length of a workweek that the US does not. We do not have paid parental leave. We are just one country that does not have a mandated vacation leave. And it is not just the option of the organization, but it is legally mandated vacation. There are other countries in the world that mandated a number of vacation days and we have zero. And to me this really speaks to how we value our work. And the concept of work. We have to demonstrate how much we are worth by demonstrating how long we can work. So, there is a lot of research, on the impact of not attending to the well-being of the workers in the United States. It is more in the private sector. I am always shocked by this statistic. Even though we have not mandated vacation but most organizations, where most of us were, we do have vacation. Even when it is given to us, we do not take it. We for Fred -- we forfeit \$52 million in the United States every year. And for me, that really speaks

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to this issue, you know we talk about depression. And how depression can affects us in different ways. And the way we experience depression in society, and I think it affects all of us. And so, it is about the concept of work and the value of the work. That we all take in. Then it becomes [Indiscernible] and this is based on the color of people and transgender people. And this is how we can approach our work as an advocate. I did an exploration work, and I have been doing this for 30 years. I wanted to find out, how advocates can [Indiscernible] depression? And I just made up that term. Let me pause again. Let me see if you have any questions or any comments.

>> Can you elaborate on the first point?

>> But I am not sure what first point you are talking about.

>> She is writing at this point.

>> But you mentioned people of color and trans people. And in some ways oppression does work against them in terms of getting a job or how long they work. It is assumed that people of color do not want to work and that they are lazy. They do not have enough motivation to work. So that is a big issue for women of color. For the immigrant in particular. For the immigrant of color. To ask for legitimate vacation. Or to say, I need to take care of my family or I need a little more time. It actually is against us.

>> It is so important that we bring this up. Because this is so near and dear to my heart and I literally could talk about this for hours. The first point on this slide, there is research that shows that Americans in the United States who have vacation time, let's say you work in an organization and you get 12 vacation days a year. There is a monetary amount associated with that vacation program. And it is in their financial statements. So, if you get 12 days of vacation time that means

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every day that you do not take, you attached amount of money to that. And research found, people in the United States consistently do not take all of the vacation days to the tune of \$52 billion a year. If I have 12 vacation days and I only take two, and it could be that I do not have time or that my supervisor does not want me, or maybe i.e. am too busy. That means there are 10 days' worth of money that I earned, that I am not getting. And this is a test just -- and this is a statistic that is about five years old. One thing that I want to say, the whole thought about work, having a conversation on depression. What we know that women and trans people are disproportionately pay and that is exasperated when you have a black woman or a one month -- or a woman of color. Despite all of the affirmative action, people are discriminated because of their color. We also know that educational opportunities, that lead to employment opportunities are reduced for people of color. Or people who are immigrants. Then you have those folks, who want to get into a work environment and there is a pressure to demonstrate they are hard workers. Also, it is the lens by which employers evaluate the employee and also it affects their raises. In particular about racism in the workplace, there are expectations at the end, expectation for people of color are much higher than for white people. Thinking about intersection reality, think about the picture of the black woman sitting in the middle of the circle with all of that oppression. And again, there is medical research. That shows us that stress in the United States, there is a disproportionate impact of people of color, Native Americans and women. In terms of health and well-being. And oppression. As a result, for those of us who have these characteristics have more emotional challenges, more family challenges and more financial challenges. And often there is not [Indiscernible] to attend to those aspects. Which is a normal part of your well-being in society. The American Association of Black psychologist said at one point, it is normal for people to be paranoid or afraid that society is out to get

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them. So, it is normal for us, because of the way oh oppression functions. And this is really hard work. The issues are really hard. Do we have a question?

>> Something that we are seeing is limited PTOWOC doing direct service work.

>> It looks like it was just a comment.

>> For women of color they are pushed more in two -- to direct service work.

>> That is a good example about oh oppression. If people have historically less opportunities or less education, the job that often get our direct -- often are direct services work. And I have seen this happen a lot. There is always a sense that we can never interrupt service of the survivor because they are endangered, they are in crisis and they are in need. What that means is, organizations do not create a structure for these people. It is harder for someone living in a shelter to be away from work. I think workplaces probably unintentionally contribute to these types of activities. And that creates fatigue. And this leads into the piece that I want to share with you. I have been talking and speaking about this issue, because I was very fortunate that I had this great supervisor when I was a young person. But I have had this opportunity to work, to really explore this when I worked at Hawaii. I did work with advocates throughout the state. It was just about information sharing and having a dialogue. So, we were a group of advocates. We spent time with them talking about practicing self-care and sustainability. That is how I treated how advocate fatigue is so different from what is out there. As I was talking to those advocates and collecting information over the years, there are specific sources of fatigue. One is the volume of work. I am imagining that everybody is knighting -- nodding their heads yes. There is also a lack of resources and funding. We have insufficient resources, for the volume of people who are asking for help. We have low salaries. And there is also

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uncertainty of the funding. There is a sense of a lack of organizational support and communication. For many of the advocates that I talked to, shared that they did not have access to the information in their organization. Because of limited resources and high-volume, you do not have time to be with your supervisor to ask questions or to continue learning. Leaders would often impose [Indiscernible] and also the lack of resources and funding. This could cause all lot of fatigue for people. And also, there was a lack of control. This has to do with a lack of positive response from the community and from the system. We have heard a lot of stories, how we cannot get integration to respond or we cannot get the court to do this. They are demoralized from having a non-supported community. And I think a really important piece for me, it goes back to the work concept conversation, which is the lack of value. All lot of hard work. With a gender-based field it is not valued. There is lack of training and leadership development. And also, it makes it harder to interact with the community. So, this is what we have learned when we had a conversation over the last three years. It resonates to what I said about the advocates and my own experiences. What is interesting to me, it also mirrors research by psychologists in terms of the source of burnout in general for people in any settings. There is the lack of control, insufficient reward, work overload, breakdown of the community and depression. And so, for me this was validating. And alarming. It was also a way asserting our experience as advocates, was valid with or without psychology or medical science doing any research about it. And it is a very specific impact that we have. There is a very specific way that this work does impact us and that is why I created this advocate well-being and I think it is very important that we name it. For this work. And it is very important to talk about and what we can do about it. Let me pause again to see if there are any questions.

>> Again, I want to remind everyone, please write your questions in the Q&A box.

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>> One thing when you were talking directly with me, about the evaluation of this work. In particular I think with the community of color, it is seen as airing your dirty laundry and sometimes we are seen as the enemy in the community. Or what is wrong with these women? I often wonder, I would never dare to tell a chemist professor or a doctor, on how to do their work, but everybody tells us what we are doing wrong. I think it is a constant. And it is demoralizing. And that is problematic. And at the same time, what I find, because of the funding that we get, it pushes into a corporate model. But yet it does not give us a corporate reward. Most of us are so underpaid. We can hardly manage to make ends meet. And this is so important for our well-being but how can we change that?

>> Yes, that is so important. I think the demoralizing aspect of about the value and validity cannot be understated. I believe it is road source. -- There used to be a movie that I would show there was a woman who identified as a crisis counselor. She said if you go to a party, and if you talk about being a crisis counselor pretty soon you are standing by yourself. But it is reality. Many times, we are told not to talk about it. But it is rare that people tell me, tell me more about what you did today. Laura wow, that is so great that you do that. Especially for communities of color, the value is really not there. And I think you can sap our spirit. And this is just another expression of oppression, where we talked about characterizing the O pressed object -- O pressed. We look at getting validation for our work. And sometimes we are overreliance on government resources so we struggle with what we can do. And we hear more about organizations that have no background in the field, but they have a background in business. And the idea is that the funding problem will get solved with this approach. I am saying that we are not getting to the root cause. We became too reliant on these funding sources and not assessing the way in which our work is conceptualized. Let me talk a little bit about the results about not addressing the advocates well-being. And again,

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this is the kind of thing that, oftentimes we do not take time to recognize it. Research tells us if we are going to address an issue, we need to name it and name the impact. What we know, often we feel we are disconnected. From our families and from the community. More importantly in my belief, we buy into the values of, the harder we work the better we are. Many people in my life that I have known in the last 20 years who have at cancer, who have worked throughout their treatment not because they had to bet because it was their choice. Many people who work through their cancer treatment, and I would hear, is that great? That they Working? I think this makes us turn on each other. That it creates [Indiscernible] that we do not get adequately paid or benefits. It makes us less effective over time. And it does not do anything to challenge oppression . I do not want to lose the sense that we also have a lot of benefits from this work. It is not all lot of [Indiscernible]. There is a lot that we get out of this work overtime and I think it is something that we need to acknowledge. People feel they are empowered, by the accomplishments that we have made over the last 40 years of this work. We can look at the models that others have provided for us. But I also think, is naming the impact that it has. I want to talk a little bit about solutions. One of the things for me that I think about, when we address advocate fatigue, that we have to provide support. We have to do this at the individual, organizational and the community level. It really starts with the organization, I believe. I take there is a lot of work to do at the community level around this work. Sometimes I joke about my own mission in life. I want to invert the concepts of work in the United States. I want us to focus more on the product. But as a [Indiscernible] I think organizations, all of the advocacy programs, can do a tremendous amount, to promote well-being. That challenges advocate fatigue. At the same time as an individual, having been a program manager of an organization where we extended [Indiscernible]. One of the biggest challenges

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was, they did not feel like they had a right to take advantage of the well-being [Indiscernible]. It creates a lens that we can look at everything. We can see it as not an add on. It is not letting everybody off once or twice a year to do something fun. It is a regular part of everything that we do, and it is not optional. Especially of those who tend to resist this. And we have to clearly articulate that as part of our values. It should be reflected in policies and procedure and practices. Everybody should participate in the balance in one way. So, here are some ideas. Having reasonable expectation about the workload. There is a lot of information about organizational development about how to create consistent workload that is a balance for the staff. Where advocates can work and get support. They are allowed to do brief. We give people an opportunity to slow down and talk about how they are. They do not have to always go at 100 miles an hour every day. Many of us do not have financial resources to have what the private sector always has. Often, I think we can do more. One time we had a couch that was donated. So, we took an opportunity to sit down. We need to have an opportunity to get away and have fun. At the individual level I would say again there is a lot of literature that shows, first recognizing that we all have a right to be in a balance place. Although advocate fatigue is part of the work, but it should not define the work. And finding ways, to promote balance in your life. I have been talking and thinking about this for about 40 years. There is a lot that we can learn from many practices around the country and around the world. That will help us as an individual to promote a balance in our well-being. What can you do every day? Just take a few minutes to do some breathing. Getting up and moving around. Have a journal that you keep at work. Sharing stories. One thing that we often undermine, trusting our own instincts. And expressing gratitude. There is a lot of research as well as experience that we have, in many different settings, about how the simple everyday practices can be a value. With your particular practice.

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Just to recognize, that it adds a value not only inside with your work but outside. We want to work towards justice. We are doing so much to mitigate the impact and promote our own balance. Shamita you brought up some great questions along with the participants. Is there anything else we should address?

>> We do have time, and you do not need to rush through this.

>> We have 30 minutes.

>> I apologize everyone.

>> I again would like to invite all of the listeners to write in their questions. There were a couple of things that I still would love to hear from you, which is the issue of balancing and wellness, not just at work but in the larger community. How do we do that? How do we balance? How do we work on so many different fronts?

>> That is a great question. The nice thing about having an extra half hour, I am sorry that I was not prepared but maybe we can share some stories. I would love to hear from other folks. Or even from you Shamita are Diana . If you go back to the slide about organizational responsibility. And there is a Proton piece of articulating. We need to know what it is that we are trying to balance. Again, it is common wisdom and ancient practices, and medical research tells us the importance about having a balance in our personal well-being as well. And eating in a certain way. Drinking a lot of water. And having productive time and downtime. I know whenever I set out, I have to articulate. So, I think starting with a place in the organization sagging, -- saying this is not an add on. I cannot think of the word. It is both practical and philosophical that we value the well-being of our staff. So that they can be well and have a balance across all of the aspects of the work. We will pay them to the best of our ability and what we can afford. We will make sure that they have a [Indiscernible] workload and we will ensure that

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people can get away. Many times, as an advocate we do not have time to talk about the bigger issues of our work. After September 11 when the patriot act passed, we knew it was going to affect our work that we never had time to talk about it. But we have something where we called a think tank and once a month we would stop, for three hours we would come together as a group. We would think, talk and share and strategize on what was going on in the world. We created a structure for that, we all brought journals. We spent 15 minutes writing in her journal. -- Or we would have a discussion about an article. But there was something about the organization to give this space and encourage us to stop and think with each other. That was so nourishing. Because we have a lot of ideas and we have a lot of thoughts. And we do not have time at work to do that. So, having what we call a workload formula. Where people would create a sense of how much time does it take to do different activities? And therefore, what is a reasonable amount of work to do in 24 hours? Not only do I spent four hours on the crisis line, but I also have to write up the notes that are wreak wired from the organization -- that are required from the organization. I might have four meetings a week that are two hours long. So, we built in down time. Everybody would get 10 hours of dying town -- 10 hours of downtime and everybody could talk to their coworkers. Or they could read an article. What that did, was developing the appropriate workload. It is a way to say, when there are seven survivors that need to be taught to win one week, we have to figure out another way. And allow people to manage their work. So, there was a concept of downtime. You do not have to work at a fast pace every single moment of the day. And in fact, we want you to spend time not working. You can sit at your desk and stare out the window. Or you can talk to your coworker when you were at the water cooler.

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>> I think this is a pretty radical idea on what is a reasonable time to work. How much does it take to work with one person or how to complete that whole task? I have not seen that at all. I have seen that you work until you drop to finish everything. And then even more is put on your plate. Can people elaborate a little more? To measure time.

>> I agree with you. Actually, it started with these conversations that we started as a group when we got together, we all shared the sense that we have to get it all done. What that created was that we have to lump everything together. And we had to look at the emotional effort and [Indiscernible]. What is the word that we use? We used to talk about there was no generic worker survivor. It also says that we bring the same level of experience and background. So, first as an organization, it takes a lot of time and energy. But the organization made the commitment. And they had the will to take this on. So first we had to list all of the work that we did during the day, and during the week. We had to be very careful that it was not just one conversation. We try to break that work down into tasks. Not that we were trying to overly analyze, but we wanted to get away from the concept that we just have to work. So, when you are answering the crisis line, but there is this expectation of record keeping. But the value when you answer the phone you have to take a record of some kind. And also, sometimes it happens when you do not have the choice. Most of the time we do not want people to talk on the telephone for one hour. And then hang up and take the next phone call. So how many people does it take to get that work done? So, we had all of this list and so we attached a time. So, if you have a 30-minute phone call how long does it take you to write up the notes? And we tend to think, okay I spend an hour minimum. We have to think about what the needs are. And I am supposed to write up the notes. And I can take easily a half hour. When we tallied all of that it was a 4 1/2-hour commitment. Especially if it is an intense group you might be

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downtime. So, you need to write down all of the pieces of your work. Did you have to prepare for that meeting? And once we had that, we had people list out what they did in a week. Time studies can be a miserable thing, but people just have to take notes. Over the course of a month people wrote down what they did every day. So, in a typical day I run two groups and I met with five people individually. What I found was, most organization expected us to work 50 or 60 hours a week. No wonder you cannot get your work done and no wonder people are always calling in sick. And people were working 50 or 60 hours a week but there was no compensation. So, we had a formula. The manager of that organization, what have to say, do we have enough staff? And we did not so we had to look for funds in order to do that. Could we take advantage of other resources? But that is the general flow. Once we had this formula, and it was different from our shelters. It was different for the receptionist and it was different for the manager. So, everybody had to provide that job description. Then we had to talk about what would happen if someone got sick? Or if we had a month of high-volume calls? So, we had a fallback plan especially somebody who wanted to go on vacation. Instead of saying that person is gone we are going to all pitch in and get that work done. But it did not really help.

>> I am sure we need to do a lot more work, to have that time allotment to do the work. I am sure it is a very important part of being effective in our work. What I have seen most of the time, you just keep doing it until it gets done. So, this is really important. This is a really good point that you brought in. Thank you for bringing that up.

>> And the other thing, the concept of the work in the United States, we also have to accept that we are never going to finish our work. Until we end all violence and oppression. We have to have a heart-to-heart conversation as an organization

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about how, you know, what is the point that we feel like that we have all done it? That we have a sense of accomplishment. By lumping all of our work together, we were not able to celebrate our small successes. It always felt like there was a cloud over us. I remember somebody saying, there is so much work in my inbox. We decided that we were going to be the best that we could be. We wanted to have a workload that would keep us healthy. And part of that was recognizing that there was a misconception that wears a point at which the work would be done at the individual level. We had to attach that to the broader level as long as there is oppression and gender-based violence we are always going to be overworked. So, we need to look at a balance in our work.

>> Thank you so much.

>> The other thing that I would share for folks to consider, that was just one aspect, about embracing sustainable work practice for the organization. The workload balanced piece is crucial. I worked with 200 advocates. And I was an advocate myself but the biggest challenge for me was the balance. Many people felt that they were not accurately late -- they were not adequately supported in their work. It is not that they thought the coworker, manager of the community did not care about them. But that the managers were also overworked. So, we have to create a mechanism in order to slow down. One thing that we started, we kind of mandated it, what we call do not disturb time. Everybody got a minimum of four hours a week where they could shut out the entire world. Sometimes people who did not have an office that could be complicated. But basically, what we said, we are making a commitment as a coworker that we will not bother them, unless the building is burning down. And they could use that time in which way would be helpful for them. Sometimes it was an opportunity to read an article or watch a webinar. And we also made a commitment, we would not

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schedule something if there was a staff meeting, and we would not schedule their do not disturb time. Or if they were sick, we would try to find another time. That is a way that we slow down. Especially during the day or the week, [Indiscernible] and sometimes people would like to have one hour a day. I like myself to have two hours on Monday. But it was also important to build in time, for people to get away from work together. To have died down time -- just to have dialed time with each other. Because this is a very important way of making a connection with people. And maintaining a balance. I want to reiterate the importance of taking an action. There was an organization that I worked with, we encourage them to be involved and be engaged. And it should not be an add-on for people to do extra hours. Here in Seattle, it could be going to teach [Indiscernible] or maybe it is something that people can share what they are going to do after hours. It also creates a balance. To create that space for people so that they know they are not going to be in trouble. And sometimes it takes flexibility from the organization and from the staff. To accept what type of activity the individual staff would feel was a value for them. It really is about taking into account all of those different aspects in the organization and how you can put them in place.

>> We still have a couple of minutes so if you do have questions, please put them in the Q&A box. If so, please feel free to Kata Issari and she will be happy to respond to your question . I will have to tell you; I have not been very good about taking care of myself. I always push myself to do the work. And I do not take time for my own wellness. But what you have said today is so important. Maintaining balance and wellness. And we have to survive ourselves. In order to do this work. And it is so important. As you were talking, I thought about, a saying from a Roman politician, and he said, and remember at that time only he mattered. He who runs all way, [Indiscernible]. He or she who turns, and fights will survive another day. That is why we talk about surviving and surviving well. Because we

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know balancing is [Indiscernible] and so thank you for reminding us about that. Not only do we have to survive but we have to thrive. And this is why we do this work. Do you have any last words?

>> This is both philosophical and aspirational. I never quite get to what I think is my balance. But it is also practical. I have been a manager of other advocacy programs. If we do not care for each other or for our staff, then we are not going to care for the survivor award the community. I think it is important that we recognize, like I said earlier, this is our responsibility. I will leave that the folks that come into the center would be not thrilled if we worked ourselves into the ground. It is all about sustaining our health. Taking care of myself is not indulgent it is a revolutionary act. I want to ask everyone, who is listening, think about what is our commitment? What is your commitment to yourself? What is your commitment to your organization? Is it a worthwhile effort to have a conversation about these practices?

>> [Indiscernible] I do not have an answer for you. But maybe you can look at how you can meet people's needs. I have been part of an organizations that did not have leave for what people wanted. So, they created a poll where every staff could put in an extra [Indiscernible], and people could take advantage of that. I have also looked at creating extended leave. I think the fact that you are asking this question, it shows your commitment to your staff. And this is going to help us with our ability to become a strong advocate.

>> Thank you all of you for joining us today. The next one is scheduled for January, and we will have a very exciting speaker for you. Elaine I do you want to say something about the evaluation?

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>> The evaluation will pop up once the webinar is over. If you could take a minute to fill that out for us it really does help us to plan our upcoming webinars.

>> Thank you. And thank you to everyone again.

>> Thank you everyone and take care.

>> [Event