

## **Celebration of trans joy**

What is collective healing in a world powered by insular thinking?

It is not a term to be dissected in literature and discussed in lectures.

For my community, collective healing is more than an idea or an abstract concept.

It is the feeling of sharing silence or a glass of wine with your chosen family.

It is the bonds of love and protection we weave in a world that wants to destroy us.

The happy responsibility of being the caboose on a meal train for healing friends.

The unloading of groceries and squeezing hands of loved ones with fresh wounds from a procedure they've spent years planning and fundraising for.

It is felt in the joy you share with those you love most as they feel moments of true gender euphoria.

Collective healing was not taught or studied by our community; it was learned out of necessity.

It has become a life raft saving us from the turbulent waters of our experience as the "other."

And what a beautiful experience it has been.

When writing this, I drew a lot of inspiration from the topics that we discussed in this class, but specifically held onto the bit about community and what it feels like to heal within community. I wanted to write about something that was near and dear to my heart and came from my own experiences not as a patient, but as a queer transgender person who has been part of so much healing and care within my community. I think that this poem that I wrote fits nicely into the curriculum from this class as it focuses on all the complex pieces that make up the people that we care for, whether that be as a provider, or as a friend, lover, or community member. I have been inspired by the poetry specifically that we have read in this class, and it helped me decide what medium I would like to use to synthesize my experiences into a reflection of the material we worked on throughout this term. Community and community healing is such a big part of resilience for queer and trans folks, that it felt important to shine a light on when considering the complex medical procedures that so many of us receive to allow others to see us from the outside as our true and authentic selves. Receiving gender affirming care can be a big piece of comprehensive and compassionate care that many within the community seek, so I wanted to bring forth my experiences of care I have received from my queer and trans family and provided for many others. Additionally, this felt like a place to take a break from the constant barrage of anti-trans legislature and criminalization of our care just to bask in the radiance that is trans and queer joy and resilience – which is something that we deserve. All of this is to say, that by understanding the roles that we hold in our lives individually and amongst community will help us be better providers by hopefully shaping the way we give care to others.