

# Week in Review

DEPT. OF SOCIAL WORK ♦  
4 March, 2025

Client: so I took your advice and did it

Me: \*not remembering what I said and waiting to hear what my advice was



In this newsletter you can expect:

Weekly Local and National Updates

Policy Highlights

Resources

Weekly Somatic Practice

Action Corner

Share you feedback with us?

Joy is a radical act!

## Welcome!

Welcome to our weekly informational newsletter! We are living in what is often described as “interesting” times. In general, the world is moving at warp speed. News reports coming out of the new administration has the potential to impact our community in broad terms. From those we serve, to our own personal and professional experiences, and the field of social work.

Because of the fast pace of news and our belief that this pace is an intentional tactic to keep us dysregulated, confused, and in fear. Our intention is to resist this temptation by becoming a hub for information sharing that highlights weekly happenings, connects them to the multitude of spaces we occupy, and clarify where our energies are needed.

Each week you will find updates regarding what’s happening in politically both locally and nationally, what policy implications these have, and what we understand to be possible. In addition, you will find multiple resources, ways in which you can get involved and take action, care practices, and encouragements to continually seek moments of joy and peace.

*Critical Response  
Team x*



Department of Social Work  
College of Health and Human Sciences



## What's Happening?

This past week we have witnessed protests across the country in support of federal workers. The mass firings within many federal organizations, as well as the cancelling of federal contracts has had widespread impacts. The people have gathered on capital steps, at national parks, and in other spaces to voice their opposition to these firings. While for years many of us have screamed, "burn it down," we have also argued that if you want to burn it down, it requires having something to replace it. The result of a vacuum is much more threatening and harmful, then an unreflective system, this chaos tests our capacity, energy, and commitment. In a week, where you're CRT is seriously considering the role of protest and activism within higher education, we will spend the next few weeks focusing on what we do, not just what we know. What we know now, is that these firings are impacting nearly every sector of our lives. We've seen impacts on transportation, particularly at the FAA, that has corresponded with an uptick in incidents in the air and on flights across the country, I reiterate here that this right now is just a correlation, we don't have enough information to blame the firings on the impacts we've seen; however, it is worth paying attention to. Firings at the National Parks is impacted the public's ability to access and enjoy our shared, protected natural spaces. Firings at the SEC and executive orders regarding the Federal Reserve appears to be leaving Wall Street to its own vices, with little to no regulation from the federal government (Charlie Savage, New York Times). Finally, the firings at the IRS are very concerning. It appears that they are firing tenured agents who have the knowledge and training to audit the rich, severely limiting the capacity of the IRS and giving open access to commit fraud with no accountability. We recognize that this is not a comprehensive list of those impacted by these firings, if you or someone you know is being impacted by this and would like to share their story, please connect with a member of the CRT. We will continue to follow these firings and the longer-term impacts.







## A Reflection...

This week we saw the President of the United States, declare himself King and post to X, "he who saves his country, breaks no law." I read this and struggled a bit, as I think an important part of resistance is being consistent, it matters, otherwise we devolve into the world of hypocrisy that has come to define our political system. I don't want to be a hypocrite; I want to uphold the value that sees the dignity in each human life and fights to achieve equitable access for all people. And, this caused me to reflect on the purpose and meaning of civil disobedience. Civil disobedience is a form of non-violent protest that states one should follow their conscience, rather than the law (Henry David Thoreau, 1849, Civil Disobedience). Thoreau writes,

Unjust laws exist: shall we be content to obey them, or shall we endeavor to amend them, and obey them until we have succeeded, or shall we transgress them at once? Men generally, under such a government as this, think that they ought to wait until they have persuaded the majority to alter them. They think that, if they should resist, the remedy would be worse than the evil. But it is the fault of the government itself that the remedy is worse than the evil. It makes it worse. Why is it not more apt to anticipate and provide for reform? Why does it not cherish its wise minority? Why does it cry and resist before it is hurt? Why does it not encourage its citizens to be on the alert to point out its faults, and do better than it would have them? Why does it always crucify Christ, and excommunicate Copernicus and Luther, and pronounce Washington and Franklin rebels?

I share all of this to highlight that the President's words are not aligned with Civil Disobedience, first it is called disobedience, because it intends to break laws, not deem the law as non-existent. Second, civil disobedience is about the people fighting back against their government, not the government lining their pockets with our misery, and rewriting our history to fit their own narrative. Civil Disobedience is a counter narrative, it does not support the dominant narrative, the narrative of the white supremacist, capitalist, patriarchy (bell hooks), it resists and persists. Civil disobedience requires a sacrifice, it requires that your body, well-being, and future are on the line, and that it is a sacrifice we are willing to make. What we are seeing out of the administration is more aligned with a form of government that does not value free speech, that does not value free thought, that does not value the proof of our own eyes, and that does value the power of the people. THIS IS NOT CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE! Civil Disobedience is a sit-in at a lunch counter, chaining yourself to a tree, hiding Anne Frank in your attic, refusing to give up your seat or cede your voice, and we want to support you, the students, in engaging with civil disobedience, in getting creative, and in claiming your power! In the words of Martin Luther King, Jr.,

**WE CAN ALL GET MORE TOGETHER THAN WE CAN APART. AND THIS IS THE WAY WE GAIN POWER. POWER IS THE ABILITY TO ACHIEVE PURPOSE, POWER IS THE ABILITY TO EFFECT CHANGE, AND WE NEED POWER. SOURCE**

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# Policy Highlights



This section of the newsletter continues to be “under construction,” We hope to begin providing more direct policy overview and impacts moving forward; however, as we continue to develop this, please continue to engage with these websites to stay up to date with our University and Social Works’ professional organizations,. Please note statement from CSWE, our accrediting body linked below.

## National Association of Social Workers (NASW)

- [NASW Policy Briefs Website](#): Get current information on the NASW position regarding important local, national, and global policy.

## Council on Social Work Education

- The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and its Board of Accreditation (BOA) are closely monitoring recent federal executive orders, state legislation, and institutional decisions regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and other restricted language. CSWE and CSWE-BOA remain committed to supporting social work programs in developing a workforce of social workers. [Read the full statement here.](#)

## MSU Denver

- [MSU Denver, Government Affairs Policy Updates](#): We know that our community is always attuned to and invested in government policies at the local, state and federal levels. Recognizing this rapidly changing policy landscape can feel overwhelming, we believe that from an institutional standpoint it’s important to take a measured and focused approach to understanding how changes may impact the University’s mission.
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# Resources

When life is moving fast, and it feels like we are facing crisis after crisis, our bodies learn to stay in a heightened state of vigilance and anxiety. When faced with a threat the body prepares to confront that threat; however, when the threat feels omnipresent our ability to regulate our response to the environment is disrupted. Somatic perspectives tell us when our body is unable to complete the regulatory process and release excess energies or emotions, we become dysregulated, leaving a memory in the with ongoing glimpses [reminders] of the threat, even after it has dissipated. When we are regulated, we are more able to ask questions, rather than trust the inflammatory headline. We are more able to organize and act, not give into the sense of powerlessness. Each week you will find resources intended to provide you access to different ways to care for yourself, including somatic practices, intended to help you move dysregulating emotions through the body, and stay regulated.

## In the Moment Practices

To stay connected to our theme this week of focusing on self and engaging in action, we encourage you to focus on the somatic practices of “Evoking kindness” and “Recalling Being Yourself.”

Both practices encourage us to deepen our personal connection with ourselves and our environment. When I consider recalling being myself, I focus on my wins, on my successes, and my lessons learned. A client’s success, a student’s growth, times of acknowledgement and appreciation, keep me going? What positive memories can you focus on? When do you feel most connected to yourself?

As I consider evoking kindness, I consider both my own acts of kindness and those I’ve received. It ties to being myself, as I feel more connected and content with, I engage with kindness. What moments of kindness bring your joy or peace? How do you know when you’ve acted kindly? How does it feel to be kind?

### Weekly Somatic Practice: [The Five Senses](#)

#### The Five Senses

- Notice five things that you can see. Cast your eyes around and bring your attention to five things you might not normally notice. Choose something you wouldn’t ordinarily pay attention to, like a shadow or a small crack in the concrete.
- Notice four things that you can feel. Bring your awareness to four things you are currently feeling, like the texture of your pants, the feeling of the breeze on your skin, or the smooth surface of a table you are resting your hands on.
- Notice three things that you can hear. Try to tune in to the sounds of your surroundings. What can you hear in the background? This might be a bird singing, the low hum of the refrigerator, or the faint sounds of traffic from a nearby road.
- Notice two things that you can smell. Tune your senses into smells you might usually gloss over, whether they’re pleasant or unpleasant. Perhaps the breeze is carrying the scent of pine trees if you’re outside, or the smell of café from the sidewalk.
- Notice one thing that you can taste. Focus on one thing you can taste right now, in this moment. You can take a sip of coffee, savor some chocolate, eat something, notice the current taste in your mouth, or even open it to search the air for a taste.

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# Resources

## Self-Reflection - [Link to Reflection Worksheet](#)

As we start Social Worker Appreciation Month and turn our focus to action and organizing, we recommend starting here. All social workers should have a self-reflective practice, the models abound. The first reflection we will share is about finding your identity. As we experience this fast-paced world, it can be difficult to figure out where our energies are needed most, this reflection will help you determine your path forward. In addition, [link to this resource for creating a solidarity statement](#). Currently, our CRT is developing a solidarity statement, which we will share in the coming weeks, we encourage you all to develop your own solidarity statement to guide you in the coming days and weeks!

“Reflection is the process of intentionally focusing one’s attention on a particular content; observing and clarifying this focus; and using other knowledge and cognitive processes (such as self-questioning, logical analysis and problem-solving) to make meaningful links.” (Bennett-Levy et al., 2009, p. 121)

The benefits of reflection carry across to the learning process found within educational environments. It forms the second of the following four-stage model used by coaches engaging with students to understand the learning process (Adams, 2016):

1. Attending to and focusing on the relevant features of their experience
2. Actively reflecting on their experience
3. Extracting learning from that experience
4. Planning how to create new ways of behaving in response to the learning



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# Getting Involved

This week to highlight how to get involved, this page will provide a robust list of resources that encourage you to think about not only how to get involved with others, but how to start your own campaign for change. We make this brief switch to highlight the CRT's effort to support and mentor the students in organizing themselves. You should hear more about this from your instructors this week, and you can [link to the flyer here](#). We are asking you all to be active in your own journey towards change, to be active in creating and maintaining solidarity and community, and to create sustainable practices that allows you to leave the department of social work better than you found it. If you want to get involved because you are an organizer or activist, or if you are just get started, all are welcome, and we, your faculty and staff, commit to staying curious and ensuring spaces where you all feel supported and are willing to take risks.

We are highlighting the Common Social Change Library-[Link here](#)

The Commons Library exists to make social movements smarter and stronger. We are an online library for the change makers of the world and for those interested in social change, activism, advocacy and justice. We support the power and effectiveness of progressive social change efforts by collecting and sharing resources from Australia and around the world.

Here are some highlights:

- Wherever and however you are, we hope you are finding some joy and connection. If you need a reminder of why that's important listen to these [podcasts about joy in resistance](#).
- If you are in the USA and keen to take action we recommend you check out this guide from Choose Democracy: [What can I do to fight this coup?](#) The [Democracy Resource Hub](#).
- Disinformation in the Digital Age - online workshop for young people hosted by The Commons Library & Foundation for Young Australians, 7pm AEDT on Wednesday 19 March. Reply to this email for more information.
  - [Power: Training and Planning Tools](#)
  - [Narrative and Storytelling: Training and Planning Tools](#)
  - [Conflict: Training and Planning Tools](#)
  - [The Visibility Brigade: A Template For Activism](#)
  - [Making a Scene & Making Sense – The Impact of Disruption & Action Logic](#)
  - [Resisting Authoritarianism](#)
  - [Finding Joy in Activism, Resistance and Movements: 12 Podcasts to Inspire](#)
  - [Can Nonviolent Struggle Defeat a Dictator? This Database Emphatically says Yes](#)
  - [Power and Connection – Exploring how Organisations Engage with Communities](#)





# EXPERIENCE JOY

## Why?

Joy is an act of resistance, particularly in an environment that is intended to keep us busy and going, feeling like we can't slow down, take a break, or find joy and happiness in life. We think you can slow down, you can take a break, and you can experience joy, and you should without guilt or shame!

## How?

Each week we will wrap this up with a moment of joy we'd like to share with you or something you take a short break with and have a good laugh. I know it can be cliché, but laughter can be a good strategy for releasing tension, getting back into our bodies, and regulating. Will you join me in a laugh?



Dear Social Worker,

You lovingly accept the messiness of your clients' lives, knowing that is what it truly means to be human. Be sure to offer yourself the same grace.

@sensitivesocialworker

Heather Turman: Social Worker -  
Stand Up

