

## KEY THEMES

The key themes are thematic focal points that anchor the conversations around care for each dispatch. They can be used by educators and facilitators to prepare for learning, drive and structure conversations, and plan for connections to media/art/current events/ personal contexts.

## **DIGNITY IN LABOR AS A PUBLIC HEALTH STRATEGY: CONTROL OF DESTINY + COLLECTIVE EFFICACY**

Control of Destiny is a concept in public health research that reflects one's ability to have agency over factors that affect their lives and their futures as a key factor in mitigating toxic stress. Collective Efficacy is a belief in your communities' ability to make change. These concepts are demonstrated in the practices of the Auntie Sewing Squad and are situated in the collective's insistence on dignity in labor.

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## PRIORITIZING CARE WORK FOR GENDER EQUITY

The Auntie Sewing Squad builds on the legacy of feminists that challenged the erasure of gendered labor roles related to caretaking and domestic work. The Auntie Sewing Squad powerfully brings this labor into the light, prompting questions on gendered labor and other forms of care work that are less visible during the pandemic.

## CRISIS RESPONSE AND EQUITY

The Auntie Sewing Squad is one group that mobilized quickly to provide masks to people most excluded by public and private systems during the pandemic. They were often able to do so in nimble and efficient ways, providing masks to people who needed them most.

# KRISTINA WONG VIDEO DISCUSSION GUIDE

## Sections

## Discussion Questions

## Supplemental Resources

### **PART 1**

0:40 - 1:35

What are some other forms of care you've heard of that compensate for what the government does not do in a moment of crisis?

Kristina did not foresee that her sewing skill would be as essential as it was. Can you identify a skill of yours that could be used to provide some form of care? What's the skill and how would you apply it?

[Occupy Sandy and Red Hook Mutual Aid](#)

[Chef José Andrés efforts to feed Puerto Ricans post Hurricane Maria](#)

### **WHY "AUNTIES"?**

1:35 - 2:53

Kristina talks about the deliberate use of the word "Auntie" in naming the sewing squad. She says that it both removes the "professional" pressure from the practice of sewing and connects people to the real people behind this labor. What does the name "Auntie" invoke for you?

What is the danger of not seeing who makes the things we use and consume? Imagine you called a worker in a restaurant or a delivery driver Auntie or Uncle or Cousin. Does this change how you would see them? How?

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### DIGNITY IN LABOR

2:54 - 4:04

How did the Aunties stay connected to the people who were receiving the masks?

What is the value in people seeing who is doing the labor behind masks or anything that is produced by other people?

What is the danger of not seeing who makes the things we use and consume?

[Ramiro Gomez paintings of immigrant workers in LA](#)

[Mierle Ukeles performance on washing the museum steps](#)

[Fred Harris sculpture of museum guard uniforms](#)

### A COLLECTIVE PROCESS

4:06 - 5:10

The process of structuring the Auntie Sewing Squad was emergent. New roles formed over time and everyone stepped up to serve in the ways they were skilled to do. What types of collective work processes have you been part of? What made them a space of belonging or othering?

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## **CARE IS POLITICAL**

5:11 - 7:20

What contributed to the political shift in the work of the Auntie Sewing Squad?

Kristina says there is an immediacy with mutual aid that the government can't attend to. Do you agree with this? How could the government support people in more immediate ways? What systems would need to be in place for the government to play a role in supporting the work of the Auntie Sewing Squad and other collectives/people/organizations that are able to provide more immediate and connective care?


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## **WORD OF THE YEAR**

7:22 - 8:03

What are some other examples of invisibilized care that were operating during the pandemic?

How did you give or receive unexpected forms of care during the pandemic?





# I. INVISIBILIZED CARE

Reflect on a time in your life you've received invisibilized care. Create something to express gratitude for a form of "invisible care." This could be a letter, a video, playlist, a card, collage or anything else you feel moved to create. In your messaging express a way you will make this form of care more visible.

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# II. ITEM FAMILY TREE

Choose one item that you use on a daily basis. Make a list of everyone who has contributed to your ability to use this item (you don't need to know their name, just what their role is). Try to go all the way back to the raw material used to make the item, include people who may have transported the item, stocked it, and so on. Once you have your list, create a family tree that shows all the people that contributed to the creation of this item.



## **III. A COLLECTIVE RESPONSE – DESIGN CHALLENGE**

Get into small groups of 4-6 people. Identify a skill that each of you have and a need in your community. Invent a new collective where your skills work together to address a need in your community. Consider that some skills might support the collective, some might deliver the need, some might help grow the group or work.

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## **IV. GENDERED LESSONS**

Think about some of the childhood games you played. What types of lessons about your gender did you learn through these games? How often did you take the role of a caretaker? What did you learn about whose job it is to care for others through play as a kid?

