

The logo for COFEM, featuring the letters 'C' and 'FEM' in white on a dark red rectangular background. The letter 'O' is replaced by a colorful, faceted gemstone graphic.

COFEM

NOURISHING FEMINIST SOULS

A Joyful Self-Care Toolkit

INTRODUCTION

HELLO, FELLOW CHAMPIONS OF EQUALITY AND JOY!

Welcome to our Feminist Joy Toolkit, a celebration of the vibrant and uplifting spirit that fuels our journey towards a more inclusive and equal world. In the realm of activism, joy becomes a revolutionary act, and we're thrilled to share this toolkit filled with inspiration, affirmations, and activities that radiate the joy of feminism. Let's spread laughter, positivity, and the transformative power of a united, joyous community. Dive in, explore, and let the feminist joy radiate far and wide!



**SECTION
01**

**THE
FOUNDATION
OF SELF-CARE**

In the dynamic landscape of feminist activism, self-care isn't merely a buzzword; it's a profound act of resilience and resistance.

Coined by **Audre Lorde**, a trailblazing Black feminist, self-care is an intentional and revolutionary practice that acknowledges the interconnectedness of personal well-being and societal change. Lorde, in her essay "A Burst of Light," argued that caring for oneself is not self-indulgence but an act of political warfare. This perspective sets the foundation for our understanding of self-care as a vital aspect of feminist activism.

Black feminist scholar **bell hooks** also emphasizes the transformative potential of self-care. In her work, hooks invites us to rethink self-care beyond individualized acts and to view it as a communal and political endeavor. She posits that self-care is a radical act when it becomes a collective practice, fostering resilience in marginalized communities. Moreover, the importance of joy in sustaining long-term commitment to the feminist cause is a theme echoed by many activists.





Moreover, the importance of joy in sustaining long-term commitment to the feminist cause is a theme echoed by many activists. Activist and author **adrienne maree brown** emphasizes the role of pleasure activism, asserting that joy is not just a fleeting emotion but a radical force for change. brown's work highlights the transformative power of joy in fueling activism and building resilient communities.

Rest, often overlooked in the urgency of activism, is championed by **Tricia Hershey**, founder of The Nap Ministry. Hershey's work centers the importance of rest as a form of resistance against a society that glorifies overworking. By reclaiming rest as a revolutionary act, Hershey challenges the harmful narrative that links one's worth to productivity.



In essence, this section delves into the profound definitions of self-care within the context of feminist activism, drawing inspiration from the insights of Audre Lorde, bell hooks, adrienne maree brown, and Tricia Hershey. Through their perspectives, we glean the wisdom that joy and rest are not just personal indulgences but essential components of the sustained, collective, and revolutionary commitment to advancing feminist principles.

References:

Lorde, A. (1988). *A Burst of Light: Essays*. Ithaca, NY: Firebrand Books. | hooks, b. (2003). *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope*. New York, NY: Routledge. | brown, a.m. (2019). *Pleasure Activism: The Politics of Feeling Good*. Chico, CA: AK Press. | Hershey, T. (2020). *Rest as a Form of Resistance*. TEDxMileHigh.



**SECTION
02**

**SELF-GUIDED
PRACTICES**

Mindful Breathing

In the whirlwind of feminist activism, where the demands for change are ceaseless, taking a moment for mindful breathing becomes an anchor to the present. Mindful breathing isn't just about inhaling and exhaling; it's a deliberate act of self-connection and grounding. Here are a few quick breathing exercises to weave into the fabric of your activism journey:



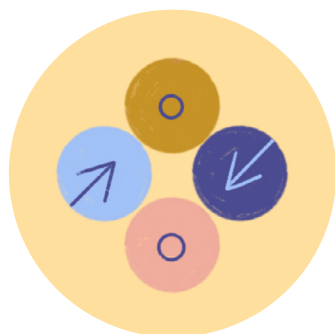
BOX BREATHING (FOUR-SQUARE BREATHING)

Inhale deeply for a count of four.
Hold the breath for another count of four.
Exhale slowly for another four counts.
Pause and empty your lungs for four counts.
Repeat this cycle several times. It's a simple yet effective method to restore balance and focus.



5-4-3-2-1 GROUNDING TECHNIQUE

Acknowledge **five** things you can see around you.
Identify **four** things you can touch or feel.
Acknowledge **three** things you can hear in your environment.
Notice **two** scents around you.
Focus on **one** thing you can taste or a taste you enjoy.



EQUAL BREATHING (SAMA VRITTI)

Inhale and exhale for the same count. Start with a count that feels comfortable (e.g., inhale for four, exhale for four).

Gradually increase the count as you feel more comfortable.

The steadiness of equal breathing brings equilibrium to your mind and body.



BELLY BREATHING (DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING)

Place one hand on your chest and the other on your belly.

Inhale deeply through your nose, allowing your diaphragm to expand and your belly to rise.

Exhale slowly through your mouth, feeling your belly fall.

Repeat several times, focusing on the rise and fall of your belly.



ALTERNATE NOSTRIL BREATHING (NADI SHODHANA)

Use your right thumb to close off your right nostril.

Inhale deeply through your left nostril.

Close your left nostril with your right ring finger, releasing the right nostril.

Exhale slowly through your right nostril.

Inhale through the right nostril.

Close the right nostril again, releasing the left.

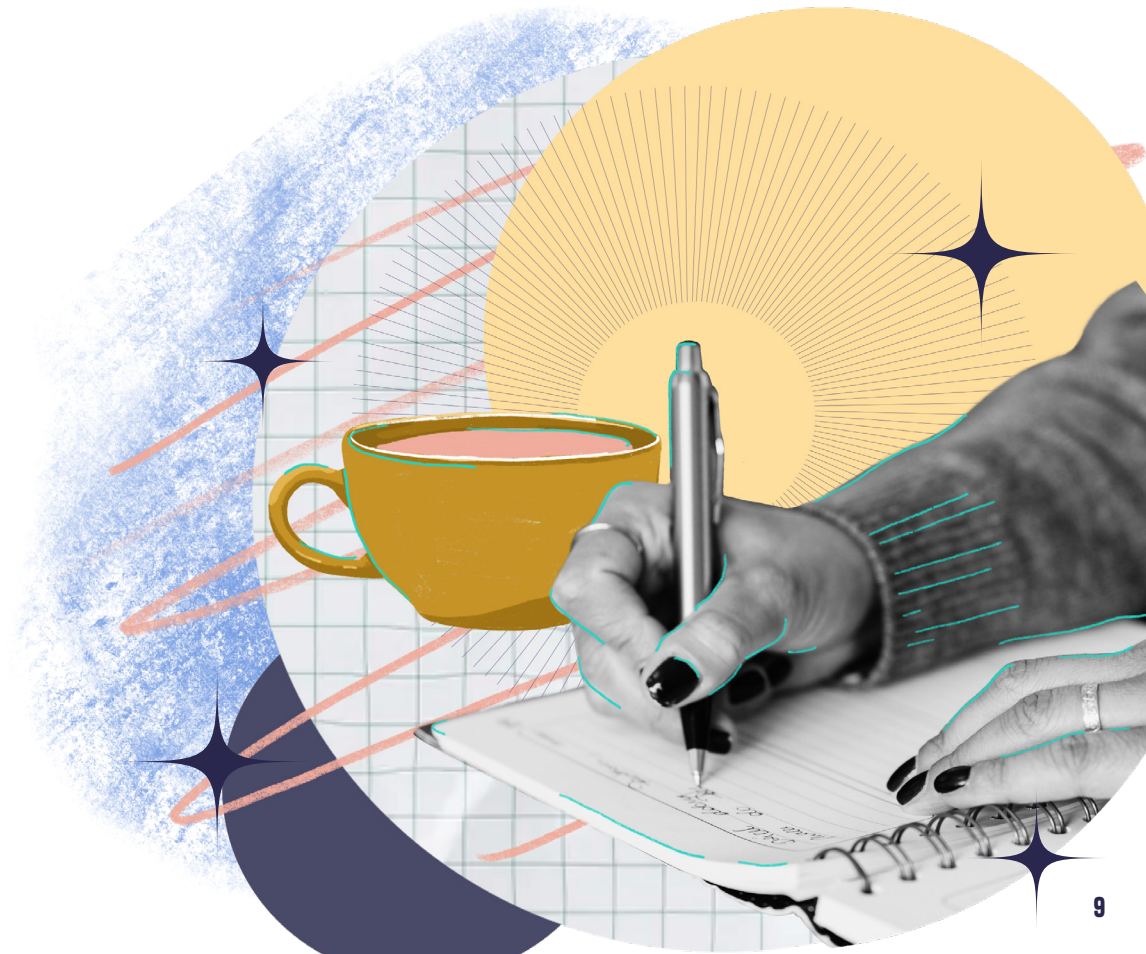
Exhale through the left nostril.

This alternate nostril breathing balances energy and promotes focus.

Gratitude Journaling

Gratitude journaling is a transformative practice that encourages individuals to reflect on the positive aspects of their lives, fostering a sense of appreciation and mindfulness. Taking a few moments each day to jot down things you are thankful for can significantly improve your overall wellbeing. It's a simple yet powerful tool to shift your focus from what may be lacking to the abundance present in your life. To help you get started on this journey of gratitude, we've attached a template that guides you through the process. Embrace the opportunity to cultivate gratitude daily and witness the positive impact it can have on your mindset and outlook.

[Reflecting on daily moments of joy.](#)



Feminist Affirmations

I Am Worthy of Equality

I embrace my inherent worthiness, and I stand unapologetically as an equal force in the world.

My Voice Matters

I speak my truth with conviction, knowing that my voice has the power to spark change.

I Celebrate My Strength

I honor the strength within me, recognizing that resilience is my superpower.

I Embrace Diversity

I celebrate the richness of diversity, acknowledging that our differences make us powerful and united.

I Choose Self-Love

I love and care for myself unconditionally, understanding that self-love is the foundation of empowerment.

I Embrace Diversity

I assert my autonomy over my body and choices, recognizing that bodily autonomy is a fundamental human right.

I Break Glass Ceilings

I shatter limiting beliefs and break through barriers, paving the way for generations of women to come.

Sisterhood Empowers Me

I uplift and support my sisters, understanding that together, we create an unstoppable force for change.

Equality Knows No Gender

I challenge gender norms and stereotypes, advocating for a world where equality transcends binary limitations.

I Am a Force of Change

I embody the change I wish to see, knowing that my actions contribute to a more just and equitable world.

My Mind Is a Powerful Tool

I cultivate my intellect and wisdom, recognizing the strength of my mind in dismantling oppressive structures.

I Stand Against Injustice

I am a relentless advocate for justice, confronting and challenging systems that perpetuate inequality.

My Emotions Are Valid

I embrace the full spectrum of my emotions, understanding that they are powerful guides on my journey.

I Support Other Women

I am a source of support and encouragement for other women, fostering a community of empowerment.

I Am a Work in Progress

I embrace growth and acknowledge that my journey is ongoing, understanding that each step is a victory.

I Learn and Unlearn

I commit to continuous learning and unlearning, recognizing the importance of evolving perspectives.

My Boundaries Are Sacred:

I set and maintain boundaries that honor my well-being, understanding that boundaries are an act of self-respect.

Feminism Is Inclusive

I champion an intersectional feminism that acknowledges and addresses the interconnectedness of all forms of oppression.

I Am Resilient

I bounce back from challenges with strength and resilience, knowing that setbacks are opportunities for growth.

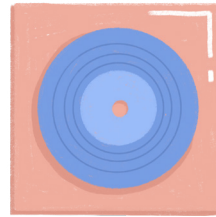
My Dreams Are Valid

I pursue my dreams fearlessly, recognizing that my aspirations are valid and achievable.

**SECTION
03**

**RESOURCES
FOR JOYFUL
ACTIVISM**

Playlist for
Empowerment



Together Is A Beautiful Place To Be

Credits: The Black Feminist Fund and timiebi

Book
Recommendations



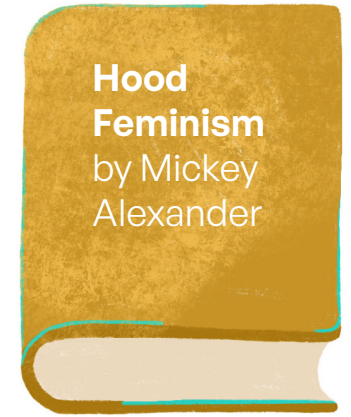
**Bad
Feminist**
by
Roxane Gay



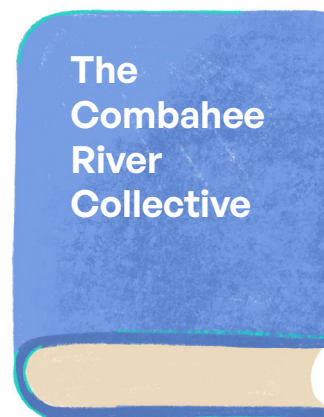
**Pleasure
Activism**
by Adrienne
Maree



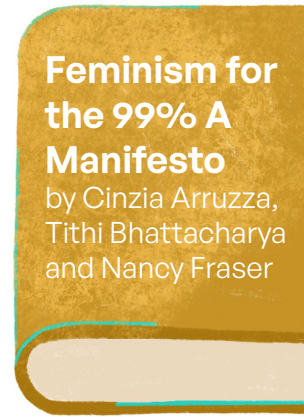
Changes
by
Ata Aidoo



**Hood
Feminism**
by Mickey
Alexander



**The
Combahee
River
Collective**



**Feminism for
the 99% A
Manifesto**
by Cinzia Arruzza,
Tithi Bhattacharya
and Nancy Fraser



Sula
by Toni
Morrison



**The
Awakening**
by Kate
Chopin

SECTION
04

RESTFUL APPROACHES

Power of Naps

In the hustle of feminist activism, where the pursuit of justice can be both rewarding and demanding, the often-overlooked power of naps emerges as a potent tool for self-care. Embracing short naps becomes a revolutionary act of self-love, offering a myriad of benefits for our mental and physical well-being. Consider the magic of a 20-minute nap—an express journey to rejuvenation. During this brief respite, our minds undergo a reset, shedding the fatigue accumulated in the battle against systemic injustices. Energy levels soar, and focus sharpens, empowering us to return to the front lines with renewed vigor. Let this be a reminder that in the realm of feminist activism, where every moment is a conscious choice, the intentional act of embracing a short nap becomes a radical declaration—a commitment to sustaining the fires of change within ourselves. So, dear activists, let the power of naps be your secret weapon, a small yet mighty rebellion against burnout in the pursuit of a more equitable world.





Digital Detox Tips

In the realm of digital activism, where screens are the canvas for revolutionary change, the call for a digital detox becomes a crucial chord in the symphony of self-care. Amid the constant stream of tweets, posts, and shares, the need to unplug and recharge takes center stage. Consider designating specific times for a deliberate disconnection from the virtual realm, allowing yourself to embrace the simplicity of offline activities. This intentional break serves as a balm for the mind, offering respite from the ceaseless scroll and the weight of online advocacy. It's a moment to reclaim your time, to revel in the analog pleasures that often get overshadowed by the digital cacophony. Let the act of a digital detox be a revolutionary pause—a conscious choice to step back, breathe, and find solace in the tangible world beyond the screen. In this space of intentional disconnection, you nurture the roots of your activism, ensuring it grows from a well-nourished and balanced foundation.

SECTION
05

**BUILDING A
SUPPORTIVE
COMMUNITY**



Networking and Peer Support

Cultivating connections within the feminist community is a transformative journey that extends beyond shared ideals. It involves actively engaging with fellow feminists, fostering meaningful dialogues, and building relationships that go beyond the surface. Whether through attending events, participating in online forums, or collaborating on community projects, this process entails a conscious effort to nourish connections. Knowledge exchange becomes a powerful force, contributing to a broader understanding of diverse perspectives within feminism. Actively supporting one another, from collaborating on projects to celebrating achievements, strengthens the feminist movement and creates a vibrant network that uplifts and sustains its members.

Example: Attend virtual meet-ups or forums to share experiences and ideas, including the Coalition of Feminists for Social Change (COFEM), The Feminist Republik for African Women's Human Rights Defenders, Healing Solidarity, KERI: Caring for Activists, amongst other examples

Collective Celebrations

Intentionally planning periodic moments of joy and celebration within the feminist community is an essential practice for sustaining collective wellbeing and resilience. Amid the challenges and struggles inherent in activism, taking the time to come together and celebrate achievements, both big and small, creates a sense of unity and shared purpose. These joyous occasions serve as powerful reminders of the collective impact of the feminist movement and contribute to building a supportive and uplifting community. Whether it's commemorating milestones, acknowledging individual contributions, or simply enjoying each other's company, these planned moments of joy foster a sense of camaraderie and rejuvenation within the activist community.

Example: Virtual gatherings to celebrate achievements and milestones.



CONCLUSION

EMBRACING JOY AND REST IN FEMINIST WORK

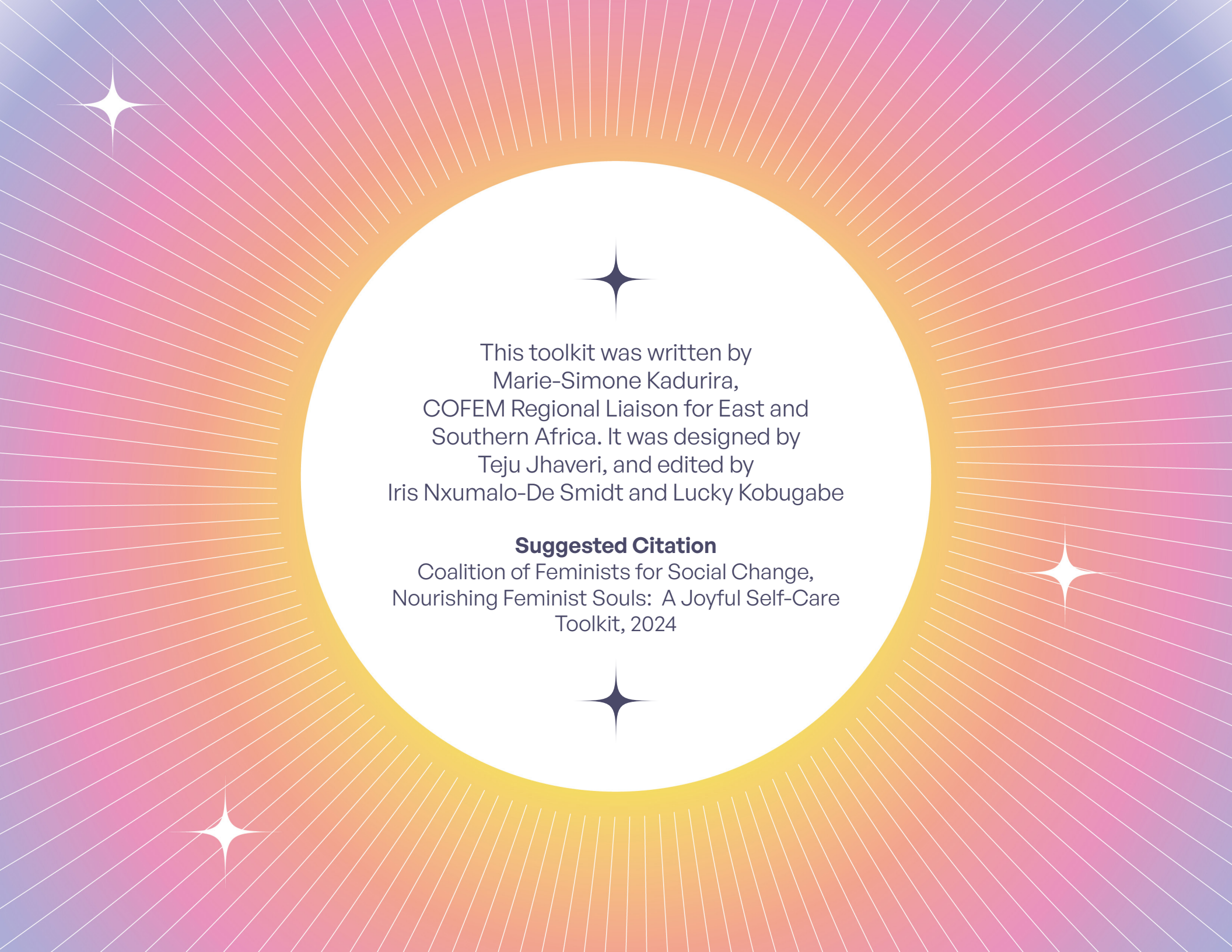


At the heart of feminist activism lies the potent synergy of joy and rest—an indispensable duo that fortifies our commitment to advancing gender justice. In the relentless pursuit of justice, it's crucial to recognize that our strength emanates not just from the battles we fight, but from the joy we cultivate and the rest we allow ourselves to indulge in.

Joy is not a luxury but a revolutionary act, a defiant ● celebration that echoes in the face of adversity. It is the melody that harmonizes with our resilience, adding rhythm to our journey.

Similarly, rest is not a sign of weakness but a strategic pause, a moment to replenish and rejuvenate in the face of sustained challenges.

As we navigate the complexities of feminist work, this toolkit advocates for a personalized approach. Recognize that self-care is not one-size-fits-all; it's a bespoke tapestry woven from your unique needs, experiences, and aspirations. Feel empowered to curate your self-care practice based on what nourishes your soul and fuels your activism. This is an invitation to delve into the toolkit not just as a guide but as a canvas—a canvas for you to paint your self-care portrait, incorporating the hues of joy and the strokes of rest that resonate with your individual rhythm. So, let this be a reminder to infuse your activism with joy, to honor the power of rest, and to embark on a self-care journey that is authentically yours. After all, a well-nurtured activist is an unstoppable force for change.



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