

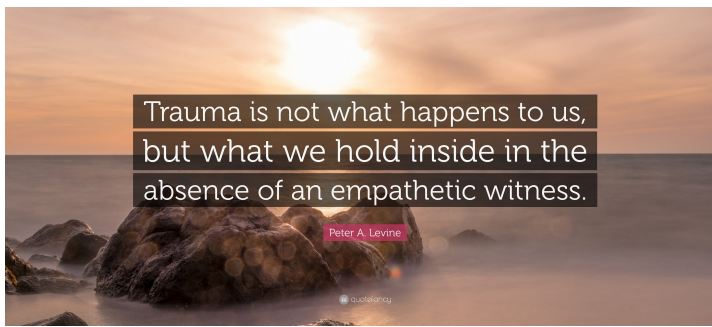


Estero Bay Indivisible Newsletter for August 12th, 2025 Heroes Among Us and the Power of Empathetic Witnesses

On Friday, August 1st members of Estero Bay Indivisible as well as other 'better angels' in our community carpooled or loaded up on Freedom Buses and headed down to Santa Maria for a very important rally. These people took six hours out of their day for the opportunity to LISTEN and show their support for 17yr old high schooler, Cesar Vasquez, at La Marcia De La Puebla: Heroes Not Villains Rally hosted by the dedicated young organizers from the group La Cultura Del Mundo.

With horns honking and protest signs held high, young rally organizers told heart wrenching stories about the fear and horror of being separated from their family members by the Trump ICE Raids. These inhumane Trump ICE Raids are happening on our nation's streets everyday and are traumatizing all of our immigrant family friends and neighbors.

Cesar Vasquez spoke about his 4am safety patrols but Cesar also impressed upon the crowd the power of finding and creating glimpses of hope and fighting for 'the people's dream'.



Being A Witness To The Victims Of Trauma Under the Trump Regime

Cesar and other protesters later marched about 3 miles to the local ICE Detention Center as a symbol of solidarity with those who have been taken without cause or due process.

Exactly a week after the rally we were notified by Judith, our amazing SLO County Indivisible Group media person that Cesar would be appearing live that night on MSNBC's The Jed Psaki Show Live to discuss his mission and important work in Santa Maria.

Jen Psaki asked Cesar "Is it fair that you have had to give up just 'being a kid' and many 'high school firsts' to continue to fight for your community?" Cesar replied "I do this so that no other 17yr old will have to do this again and my sacrifice is nothing compared to the 7 and 8 year old children who are being separated from their parents and traumatized every day." If you haven't had a chance to watch the video we sent to the group please take a moment to watch.

Many (including me) are now wondering what can we do not only to protect our immigrant family neighbors but also continue to defend our nation from the dismantling of our government and rule of law.

One path is the power of societies that encourage and honor their Empathetic Witnesses.

Empathetic witnesses are the people who listen and acknowledge the stories of trauma, cruelty and injustices that are happening everyday, everywhere and all the time in our nation. Trauma experts believe that people start to heal from their trauma the moment they feel heard from an empathetic witness.

There are many ways right now that we can tap in to the power of being an empathetic witness during these dark times. Some make personal donations to organizations like La Cultura Del Mundo or an Indivisible group and political party. Some become legal observers, use the '5 calls' APP, 'One Million Rising' training, write post cards from home or invite a friend to attend a local community meeting or rally....and we VOTE !

Do not underestimate the power of standing together, Indivisible, and proudly in our communities as the empathetic witnesses.

As always,

Joanne Coghlan

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