Reading in Community: A Conversation Companion for *The Black Healing Project* by Tokeya C. Graham



Age Range: 13+ | **Audience: Teens and Adults**

OBJECTIVE
To support thoughtful communication about healing, grief, community, support, exploring what these experiences mean and look like for Black people.

THEMES
Healing • Grief • Black Identity • Community • Black Joy

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Note: Non-Black people can and should engage with the activities in this workbook. However, when participating in spaces with Black people and other people of color, practice intentional listening. Honor their experiences and perspectives without interruption and ask questions when invited. Approach these conversations with humility, respect, and a willingness to learn.

Before You Read
Begin with a brief check-in. Participants may speak, write, listen, or pass. Make room for different experiences without asking anyone to represent an entire community. Here are some ideas to explore before you start:

- What does healing mean to you at this moment?
- What comes to mind when you hear the phrase "community care"?
- What do you hope to explore or better understand through this workbook?

While You Read
Use the workbook's four parts—"Grief Be Like," "The Pillars," "We All We Got," and the Toolkit—to guide the conversation. Pause as needed for reflection. Be mindful of sharing anything that is triggering or too personal. You don't have to share what you write. These prompts are to encourage broader conversations, not inflict trauma.

- How does "Grief Be Like" invite us to think about grief beyond a single event or experience?
- The SHAWL pillars are Self-Care, Healing, Anti-Racism, Wellness, and Literacy. Which pillar resonates with you, and why?
- What connections do you see between personal healing and collective responsibility?
- What do the workbook's images, poems, or activities add to your understanding?

After You Read
Allow a moment of silence before inviting responses. There is no expectation that participants share personal experiences.

- What idea, passage, or activity stayed with you?
- How has your understanding of Black joy, grief, or healing shifted or deepened?
- What does "We All We Got" suggest about relationships, lineage, and mutual support?

For Book Club and Discussion Group Facilitators
This workbook invites reflection on personal and collective experiences. Support a conversation grounded in care, accountability, and respect.

- Invite participants to listen without interruption and honor the choice to pass.
- Do not ask Black participants or other people of color to explain or defend their lived experiences.
- Make room for quiet reflection, differing emotions, and conversations that continue beyond the gathering.

ACTIVITIES

- Gratitude check-in: What is going well? What are you feeling? What are you thankful for?
- SHAWL reflection: Choose one pillar and identify a small practice that would help sustain it.
- Community care: Name a person, tradition, or support system that has shaped your understanding of healing.
- Joy practice: Write down one thing you need and one action that could create space for joy or rest.

Closing Reflection
Take a comfortable breath and notice the support beneath you. Consider one feeling, reminder, or truth you want to carry forward. If helpful, silently repeat: "I am here. I am enough." Return to the group when ready.

Ways to Use This Workbook
Book Clubs • Community Reading Circles • Healing Conversations • Individual Reflection • Youth Groups • Community Conversation • Grief Support Groups • Affinity Groups

Remember
Healing is not linear. Honor each person's experiences, listen with compassion, and make space for reflection and silence Healing is both personal and communal. We do not have to do it alone.

