

# OHIO COUNSELORS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

"There can be no love without justice." - bell hooks

## Greetings from the President

**SHANICE LOCKHART**  
**OCSJ PRESIDENT 2023-2024**

Greetings to all!

We are back and looking to reignite the fire to fight for justice!

Hope that the first half of this new year has brought about new inspiration and renewed passion to continue your journeys on this road of social justice. As we reflect on the past few months, we are all faced with the reality that some individuals in this world are going to great lengths to prevent and hinder the progress of the social justice movement.

The obstacles and barriers that we are beginning to see are new to some but very familiar to others. Social justice advocates throughout history have dedicated their lives so many of us today can have rights and freedoms they were not granted. We must show gratitude for those trailblazers that have come before us and continue to honor their legacies by contributing to social justice advocacy efforts.

We at OCSJ hope that you can join us on our social justice journey for the remainder of this year 2023 and beyond!

Keep an eye out for our announcements of upcoming events and if you have any questions about membership or how to get involved, you can always reach us at [OhioCSJ@gmail.com](mailto:OhioCSJ@gmail.com)!



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# Navigating Advocacy Burnout

**LAURA DUNSON CAPUTO**

It's happened to the best of us. We open up a social media account and begin to scroll, only to be bombarded with stories of police violence, environmental disasters, and systemic oppression. As we scroll more and more, encountering seemingly endless stories of pain and suffering, we may start to feel jaded and hopeless. How can our steps towards social justice make any difference? We may wonder if anything could ever change.

Or maybe we feel like we run into barriers at every step in our advocacy. Our emails to other community stakeholders fall into the void. We're thrilled leaving an impassioned conversation with a colleague, but lose faith as nothing seems to come of it months later. We keep adding our advocacy efforts to our weekly lists, only to have work and relationships demand center stage. It feels like we're stuck, despite our heart for change.

Or maybe we have experienced tremendous pain in our advocacy, and the thought of returning to this space of social change hurts too deeply.

If any of these experiences resonate with you, you may be experiencing a form of advocacy burnout. As counselors, we are familiar with the concept of burnout and how it shows up in our work with clients. However, even if we do not feel burnout in our work with clients, we may experience burnout with advocacy.

Maslach and Gomes write that "activists also have other unique characteristics that can make them vulnerable to burnout. The very nature of activist work involves cultivating and maintaining awareness of large and overwhelming social problems, often carrying a burden of knowledge that society as a whole is unable or unwilling to face. This can lead to feelings of pressure and isolation that easily feed into burnout" (2006, pg. 43) In this sense, facing the magnitude of social concerns can be debilitating, particularly when faced with the enormity of social change.

What are some solutions to advocacy burnout?

1. Recognize the journey. Shields (2008) suggests that many activists experience burnout when change doesn't happen as quickly as expected. Focusing on winnable goals and small changes can help us stay present in the work.
2. Move from individual to collective action. Individualized social justice is not sustainable. Working within communities and coalitions to collaboratively support change is. Take time to find (or create!) a community for change.
3. Rest. As both counselors and activists, we oftentimes under-estimate the power of stepping back. But rest can allow for deeper awareness, thoughtfulness, and a better recharge before returning to the work.
4. Learn from other social movements. Explore how other historic or modern social movements gathered and maintained momentum. Reach out to other activists to learn how they manage burnout. Take time to reflect.
5. Take your activism offline. Many activists express frustration with the toxicity or hopelessness that can come with social media. Further, activism that lives completely in retweets and Instagram stories can fall flat. Give yourself permission to advocate offline, and focus on engaging with your surrounding communities.
6. Recognize burnout as an important experience. Burnout is telling you something. What needs to change in your advocacy to make it more sustainable? Consider if your role, community, or career could be adjusted to better serve your passions.

As Rep Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez writes, "We don't need you giving 500% for 6 months. We need everybody doing what they can, every day, as a way of life." Continuing to show up in small, sustainable, everyday ways, can keep us grounded in meaningful advocacy throughout our lives.

For more information on navigating activist burnout, consider these sources:

- Cox, L. (2011). How do we keep going? Activist burnout and personal sustainability in social movements. Helsinki.
- Maslach, C. and Gomes, M. (2006). "Overcoming burnout". In Rachel McNair and Psychologists for Social Responsibility (eds.), Working for peace: a handbook of practical psychology and other tools (new ed.) Impact
- Shields, K. (1991). In the tiger's mouth: an empowerment guide for social action. Newtown (NSW): Millennium.

# GET INVOLVED WITH OCSJ

## MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

OCSJ is looking to hear from YOU! We want to know the sort of social justice work you want to see in OCSJ. Please fill out our [Member Engagement Survey](#) at the QR code below so we can better engage with you and assure your voice is represented!

SCAN ME



## LEADERSHIP ROLES

Are you a passionate advocate interested in the social justice movement? Have you been eager to lead and make a difference? OCSJ may be the perfect fit for you!

We are looking for members to contribute their skills in our newsletter, and members to join our executive board. We have plenty of leadership opportunities available!

For more information, please fill out our [Membership Engagement Survey](#) at the QR code.

## NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

Do you have passion, expertise, or experience to share with the OCSJ community? We're looking for newsletter writers to contribute to future newsletters. For more information, please fill out the [Membership Engagement Survey](#) at the QR code!

## Social Justice Spotlight: Wake Up and Live Actors Studio

**SHANICE LOCKHART**

According to their website, <https://www.wualstudio.org/> Wake Up and Live (WUAL) is a 501©3 non-profit performing arts, and education organization committed to using an integrative approach to enrich aesthetics in northeast Ohio through empowering artistic, educational, and media programs and services. WUAL initiated a Healing Arts project and further solidified the bridge between art and mental health. WUAL states that their project is designed "to help those dealing with mental health issues, through drama, vocal and instrumental music, dance, poetry, and discussion with mental health experts who will provide helpful resources."

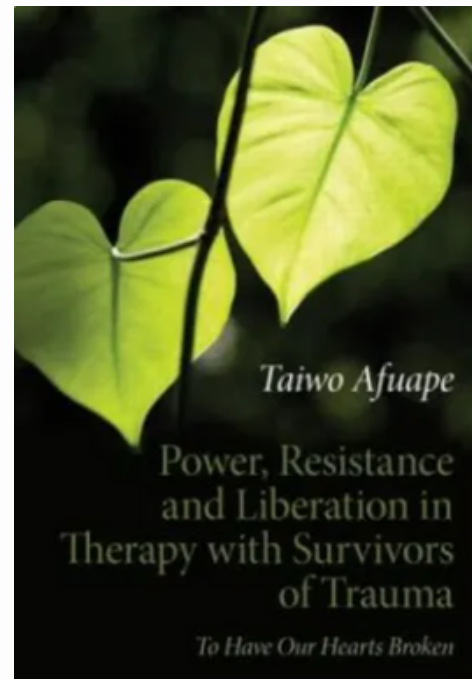
In June of this year 2023 Shanice Lockhart had the pleasure in virtually meeting with a few of the Board of Directors at WUAL to discuss the healing arts. The dialogue was recorded and posted on Youtube to inform the public of how art can be integrated into the therapeutic environment.

Scan QR Code or Go to Link for Shanice's interview with WUAL!



## Book Review: Power, Resistance, and Liberation in Therapy with Survivors of Trauma by Taiwo Afuape

**LAURA DUNSON CAPUTO**



Psychotherapist Taiwo Afuape reconceptualizes concepts of resistance through the lens of trauma therapy, liberation psychology, narrative therapy, and creativity. Blending memoir, scholarly analysis, and practical application, Afuape illustrates what it looks like to undermine systems of oppression and truly collaborate with clients.

Afuape described the book by sharing, "the aim of this book is to explore how we do therapy as a fully heart-opening activity. Once our heart is open it can be broken, and anything that breaks inevitably changes" (p. 14).

This is a must-read for any counselors passionate about trauma-informed and liberatory counseling practices.

Purchase the book [here](#)

## Virtual Meet & Greet

For those with general questions, inquiries, or just wanting to stop by and say “Hi”

We will be hosting a **Meet & Greet via Zoom on Friday September 22nd at 6pm!**

Topic: OCSJ Virtual Meet & Greet  
Time: Sep 22, 2023 06:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

### Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 857 1884 2471  
Passcode: 230180

## Fundraising

Ohio Counselors for Social Justice has a store! Shirts, water bottles, stickers, mugs, and sweatshirts are available featuring OCSJ logos.

Ohio Counselors for Social Justice is paying homage to the late John Lewis, a former U.S. Representative who spent much of his life getting in “Good Trouble” for the sake of justice. All profits will be donated to the Ohio Justice Foundation, a statewide nonprofit organization committed to ensuring that civil legal aid is available to all low-income and underserved Ohioans.

Visit our website at <http://ohiocsj.org> or the <http://teespring.com/stores/ohiocsj> to order a shirt today.

## OCSJ will be at AOCC



We hope you'll join us at the **2023 All Ohio Counselors Conference this October 16-18!** Stay tuned for OCSJ community events, table information, and other ways to connect.

**Early Bird Registration ends Sunday October 1st.** Register now [here](#)

