



**DOWNERS GROVE
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

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To the Downers Grove community: a message about continued violence, coping, and mental health

We recognize that recently there have been numerous demonstrations of violence, aggression, and hate against marginalized communities in our nation and around the world. As a library, we continue to strive to be a place for everyone to discover, grow, play, and learn. We believe in lifelong learning, and especially in moments of crisis, we view it as our responsibility to provide resources to help cope, process, and understand these types of events as well as draw attention to reliable sources of information. Like many members of our community and beyond, library staff members have needed time to practice self-care and to reflect on the painful events that have happened and continue to happen. We would like to reiterate that the Downers Grove Public Library is a place for everyone and that you are welcome here.

To the impacted communities, we recognize your personhood, struggles, and continued oppression. Over the past two months, our country has grappled with numerous tragedies, including, but not limited to ([content warning](#)):

- Seven immigrant farmworkers killed in Half Moon Bay, California ([NBC](#))
- 11 Asian Americans murdered on Lunar New Year in Monterey Park, California ([CNN](#))
- Brutal arrest and murder of Tyre Nichols in Memphis, Tennessee ([CNN](#))
- A rise in violent anti-Semitic attacks (Bloomfield, New Jersey: [NPR](#), Los Angeles, California: [CNN](#), and Jerusalem: [CNN](#))

These horrific acts against human life are sadly becoming more common as evidenced by the epidemic of mass shootings ([Gun Violence Archive](#)) and hate crimes ([NPR](#)) in the United States. We recognize that there are many other tragedies not named above. It does not exclude our concern and care for other losses of human life and victims of hate, oppression, and/or random acts of violence.

It would be impossible for us, like the news, to list and capture each of these instances. Nonetheless, each of them impacts all of us regardless of our identity. We invite community members to join us in exploring some ways in which these events can have an effect on our relationships with each other, ourselves, and society.

With the frequency of violence, the spectacle created by media and social media has a tremendous impact on mental health ([APA](#), [EveryDayHealth](#), [VeryWellMind](#)). Effects can range from desensitization to contributing to the development of or worsening of conditions such as anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). In addition, increasingly, a murder has been centered and celebritized over the human life that was lost such as in the case of Tyre Nichols and other killings.

It is essential to look at the larger picture and consider impact versus intent with each act of violence. Intent is what a person means with words and actions, whereas impact is how those words and actions are experienced, felt, and/or understood by others ([ADL](#), [NEA](#)). When historically, intentionally, and traditionally marginalized people groups (HITMPGs) experience an act of hate, the entire community can be thrown into crisis, as demonstrated by the California shootings that killed numerous Asian Americans on Lunar New Year.

Across the world, society imposes stereotypes on people, which impacts us all. Over time, people who are oppressed can internalize the stereotyped and racialized ideas about themselves and their community ([NCCJ](#), [Community Tool Box](#)). This misinformation can manifest itself in harmful ways against a HITMPG by a member of the same identity group in hostile and/or brutal ways.

Whether we are members of the privileged majority or of the oppressed minority, we all have a responsibility to confront those stereotypes to create a more just and inclusive place for everyone to exist.

Our hearts break for the families who continue to lose their loved ones. Beyond these words and feelings, we've gathered helpful resources for community members to explore. To our staff and our entire Downers Grove community, we share in your difficulty reacting to and processing these horrific events. We want to express that it is okay not to be okay.

Especially in times of hate and horrific attacks, we encourage all community members to remember the humanity in all of us and to treat ourselves and one another with kindness, dignity, and empathy.

Book Lists

- [Kids](#)
- [Teens](#)
- [Adults](#)

Additional Resources

- [Calm4Calm Emotional Support Line](#)
- [Community Tool Box: Working Together for Racial Justice and Inclusion](#)
- [Crisis Text Line](#)
- [DuPage County Crisis Support Line](#)
- [DuPage County Health and Social Service Resources](#)
- [Grit2](#)
 - [New Resource Guide by Grit2](#)
- [Mental Health America: Free Mental Health Screening & Resources](#)
- [National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\)](#)
- [National Education Association: EDJustice](#)
- [988 Suicide and Crisis Hotline](#)
- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#)
- [Veterans Crisis Line](#)

Content warning: We acknowledge that each person has their own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive various types of information. Prior to clicking on any of the linked news articles and the links contained within them, we would like you to be aware that the articles may contain graphic information and/or multimedia pertaining to violence and death.