

Taking Care of Each Other:

**Lessons Learned about Mutual Aid
from my Sex Worker Community**

by Cedar Salina

I speak from > decade lived experience.

Stigma, discrimination, marginalization directly shapes our ability to do everyday things:

housing, medical care, mental health care, banking, dating, using social media, traveling, going to school, etc.

The world is built against us.

So we create our own networks of care.



- 
- mutual aid is nothing new!
 - marginalized communities use mutual aid to sustain.
 - one example:
 - pandemic relief funds:
no-strings-attached cash grants.

Lessons learned~



1. Listen.

Ask people what they actually need. Don't assume. Give things away with no strings. This is mutual aid 101.

2. No one gets it like how another sex worker gets it.

My biggest advice to sex worker newbies is don't work in isolation. Don't have *no one* you can talk to about work. Find your people.

Mutual aid isn't just about tangible resources. It's about connecting with peers over shared reality.





3. Step up / step back.

Contribute

if and how you can.

If you can pick up slack when a peer needs rest, do it!

Don't burn out.

Make space for others to step up when you need a break.

Rest.





4. People are working out their shit.

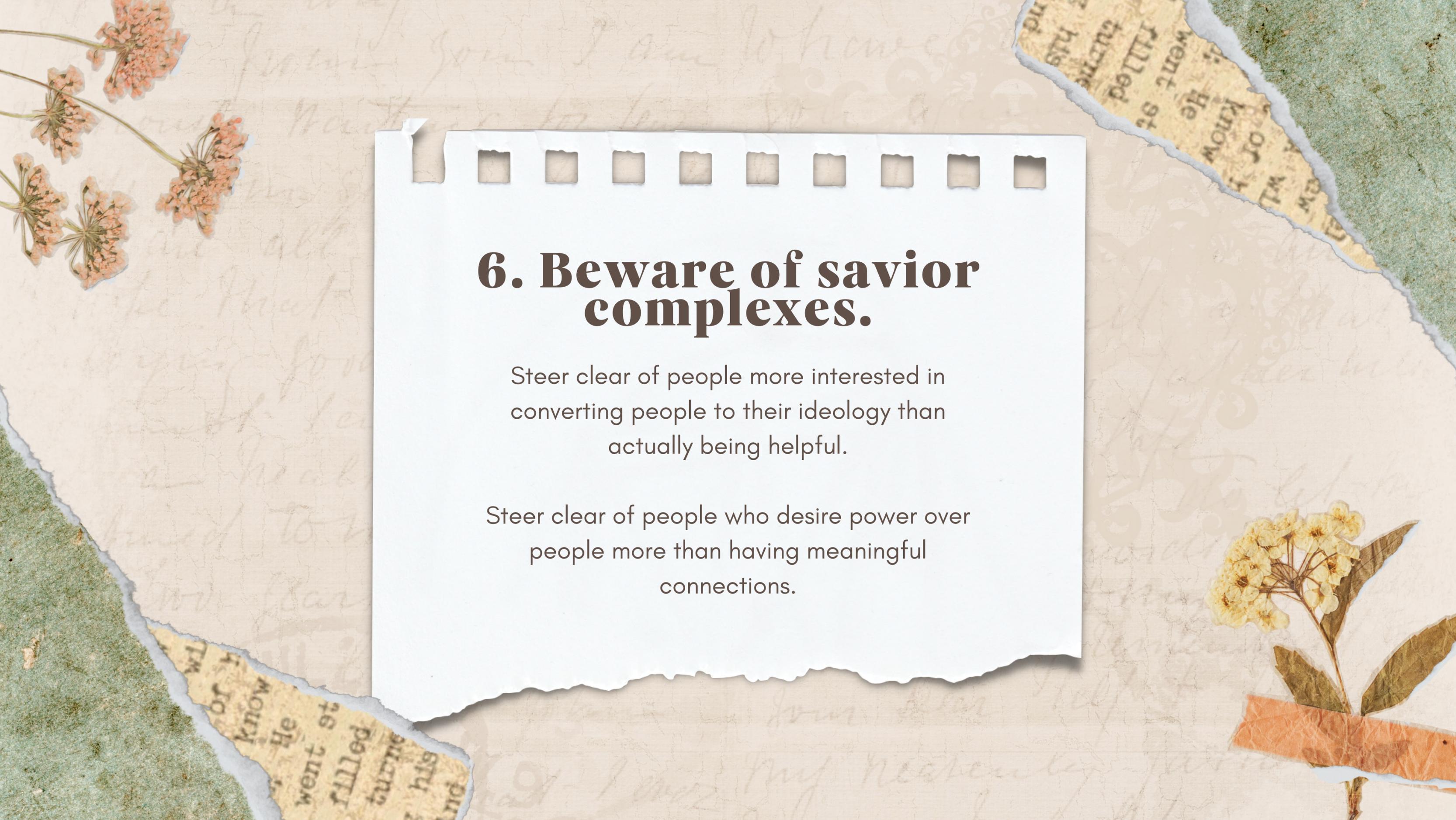
- this is normal.
- learn repair.

5. *Do not narc.*

Some mutual aid strategies should not be public information because that is part of how we keep ourselves safe.

When deciding what to publish, or share with researchers or journalists, follow the needs of the most vulnerable people.





6. Beware of savior complexes.

Steer clear of people more interested in converting people to their ideology than actually being helpful.

Steer clear of people who desire power over people more than having meaningful connections.

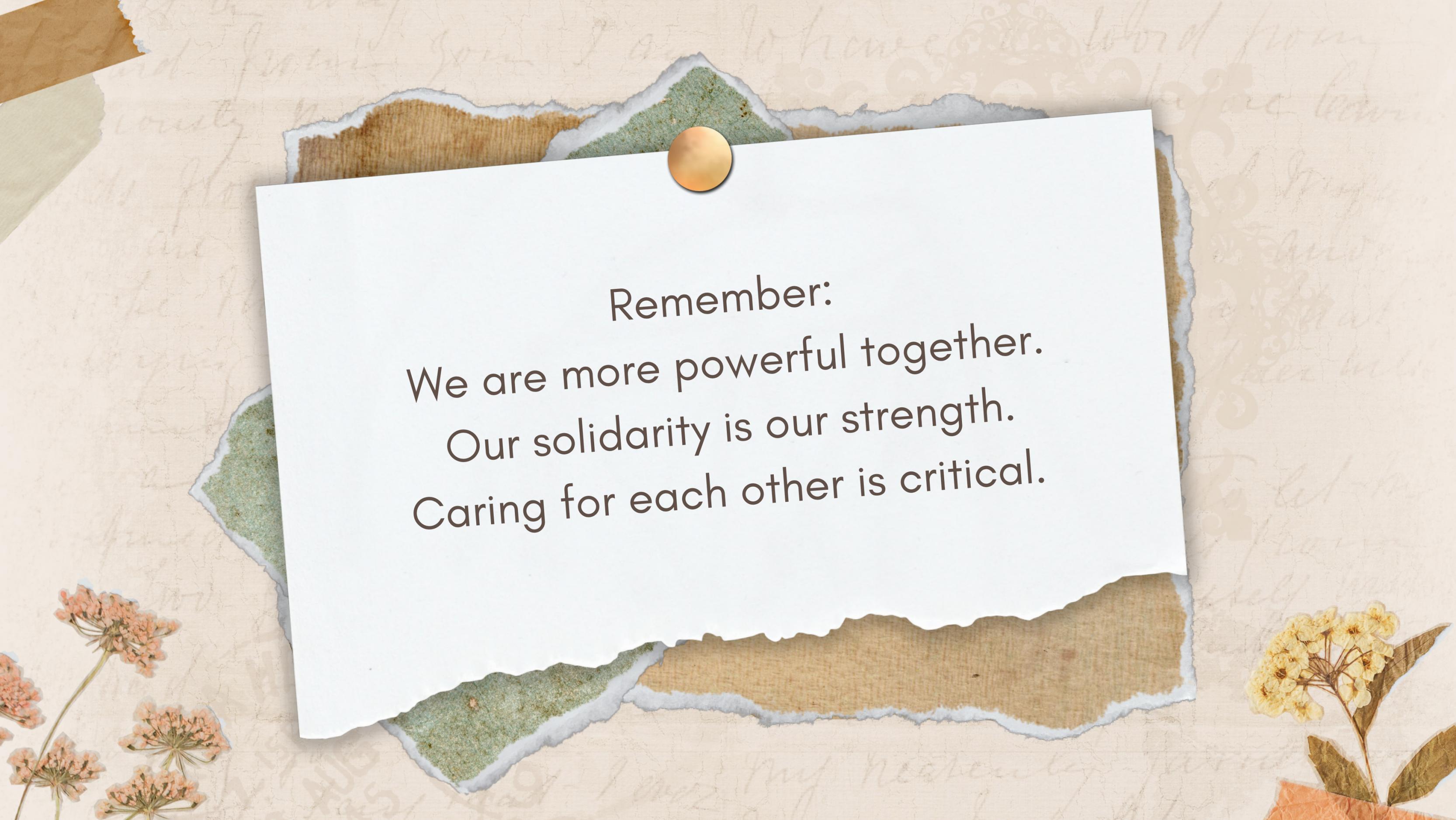


7. Have FUN.



**Be silly. Use humor.
Joy will sustain us.
Dance and celebrate wins.**





Remember:
We are more powerful together.
Our solidarity is our strength.
Caring for each other is critical.



About the Author

Cedar is a psychology student, beginner bird enthusiast, and occasional art maker. They have over a decade of lived experience as a sex worker and firmly believe in deconstructing stigma as a means of promoting the well-being and self-determination of sex workers. When not studying for school, they find delight in gardening, reading, and living a beautiful, queer life with their spouse and two dogs.