

Book Review

Pyles, L. (2018). *Healing justice: Holistic self-care for change makers*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

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Journal of Social Work Values and Ethics, Volume 16, Number 2 (2019)
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This text straddles an interesting line between self-care texts for practitioners and a call to arms for the social justice minded who are also interested in individual self-care. The theme of healing justice is the driving force throughout. Practitioners do not live and practice in a vacuum – they are both a part of and transformers of the societies and communities they serve. Healing and making changes outside of ourselves cannot happen fully unless we are also working to heal and to make necessary changes within ourselves, is the driving message.

The 302-page text is broken down into three sections, each with multiple chapters. Each chapter in each section begins with a case study, a thorough review of the literature and comprehensive introduction to the concept and full explorations of the topic under review. The author “...attend[s] other ways of knowing, such as practice wisdom and the insights from contemplative mind-body practices, particularly modern Buddhism, modern postural yoga, and contemporary Ayurveda” (p. xx). Each chapter ends with a “Putting it Into Practice” section

that includes “Inquiry,” a chance for reflection and contemplation, a “Self-Care Practice Skill,” and an “Experiment for the Day.”

This is a wonderful combination of old and new, lost and found lessons about how we can only be as good to those communities we serve as we are to ourselves. Ranging from teachings of the Buddha to modern neuroscience, from meditation to movement, this is a wonderful new step in helping to understand that taking the time and energy to know and care for ourselves is vitally important if we are to care for others. Emphasized throughout is that we are not silos, but citizens. The notions to some may be new worldly, but there is no “woo woo” metaphysical treatise here – there is a compelling and very well researched collection of approaches to appreciate and see the different aspects of our lives, and practices and techniques to help ourselves so that we can help others.