

Intergenerational Trauma vs. Intergenerational Strength: What Are We Really Carrying Forward?

Lately, I've been thinking a lot about orcas. Yes, the majestic sea creatures. These incredible beings are doing something wild (and weirdly relatable). They're passing down knowledge across generations that encompasses how to hunt, how to navigate, even how to interact with humans. Some orcas have been spotted offering fish or stingrays to humans—yes, *offering*, like a gesture. It's as if they're saying, "we see you." Marine biologists are also finding that orcas have different "cultures" including distinct dialects, diets, and even genetic subgroups that don't mingle much, kind of like human communities with their own customs and lineages.

It's not just survival, it's legacy.

And it made me pause: if orcas are building culture and sharing wisdom across generations, where do we stand as humans?

But here's the twist. I keep hearing people describe themselves as "self-made." It's a badge of honor in our hyper-individualistic culture. And don't get me wrong, there's beauty in carving your own path. I've done it too. But I can't help but wonder: in this pursuit of becoming self-reliant and "original," are we unintentionally severing the cord that ties us to our roots?

Are we forgetting the strength that comes from what's already been passed down like stories, struggles, rituals, resilience?

We talk a lot about intergenerational trauma these days (and we should), but what about intergenerational strength? Our ancestors didn't just survive, they adapted, thrived, and left behind blueprints for healing and community that many of us are only now beginning to rediscover. Funny how in our quest for wellness in newer generations and recent times, we're circling back to the same herbal teas, breathwork, nutritional diet, village care, and slow living that generations before us practiced instinctively.

Maybe the issue isn't that we need to rebuild from scratch, but that we need to remember.

In a world obsessed with productivity and hustle, maybe the most radical thing we can do is pause, and ask ourselves - What am I carrying forward? What am I leaving behind? And whose voice have I stopped listening to, thinking I had to do it all alone?

There's power in rewriting our stories. But there's also power in honoring the chapters written before us.

Let's not forget our roots. They don't hold us back. They ground us.