

# INTIMACY IS...

MICA SEGAL DE LA GARZA

Intimacy is..

The piano teacher who comes to the wedding of their student a decade after their final recital

The falling in love with the colleague you later find has curated your favorite education newsletter

The songs sung together

Intimacy is..

The sharing of hopeful political organizing memes with your solo-poly nomad teacher friend, lovingly connecting them to community in places where they will next travel

The student who organizes a walkout on behalf of her favorite teachers, as they live in a state where it is illegal for staff to protest

The crushing on other attendees of the peace conference simply after reading their bio

The Israeli student confiding in a Palestinian classmate about their sexuality

The violist caringly, carefully conducting the band of youth musicians before leading them in dialogue on divided societies

Intimacy is..

The 18-year-old daughter brought to the workshop with her teacher who is her mother

The four month old's smile beaming at the learning community that applauds his inclusion in their collective learning

The baby arm visible on the chest in the frame of the TikTok as the parent speaks truth to power

The serendipitous support system of teachers who all take (unpaid) parental leave within three months of one another

Intimacy is..

A long embrace after a long time

Frienducators who become chosen family

The passion, evident in fast paced breaths. When they race to present every slide and when they race to connect their bodies' geographies.

The openness and patience in exploring new kinks together with the tenderness of curious, vulnerable learning

The whisper translation of the workshop into their ear

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The high school yearbook advisor who knits a blanket for her students' newborn

The invite to an ex-lover and forever friend to an abolitionist meeting in their hometown in another country

The monstera deliciosa plant sent in the mail to thank the Delicious Monsters (read: complicated, loving, strong women) after they hosted an event

The hand holding on a hilltop while conspiring to Feed'em Freedom

Intimacy is..

The teacher coming out to their students on day one of classes

The open bathroom door conversations with your roommates

The living vicariously through queer youth for a supported adolescence we queer elders only dreamed of

Intimacy is..

The first use of the honorific Mx. coming from one of your trans students, and the following consistency of use from a cis student

The play where the cast proudly applauds their own trans senior actor who once played the Pink Girls in middle school theater and now bows beaming as part of Danny's guys

The trust when a student comes out to you and shares their true name and pronouns

The warm pao de queijo for your train ride home, freshly baked by the wife of your beloved

Intimacy is..

The sharing of resources in the form of air travel mileage points

The screenshots of most recent STI tests in the morning

The birthday poem written in your non-native language so the gift of your care might be more clear

The serendipity that multiple lovers' have the same favorite book with magical realism

Intimacy is..

The calls to make sure you're okay after a hurricane

The nicknames given to those we love and loved

The witnessing of co-creation by actors who did not know one another before a Theater of Hope scene

The crying together in a role play that mourns the death of modernity and channels grief for mentors and friends passed

Intimacy is..

The melding of worlds when your chosen family come to move you into a new classroom and they meet your teacher family

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The melding of worlds when your mom and baby come to be with you at the International Institute of Peace Education

The joy of watching another sleep safely and soundly, holding their head

A peace that we gift each other.....

is intimacy.

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