

We DON'T WANT to be STARS

A 21ST-CENTURY
INTERSECTIONAL
FEMINIST
ORGANIZING
CURRICULUM
FOR THESE
TIMES

"We don't want to be STARS, but parts of CONSTELLATIONS" - Gloria ANZALDÚA

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HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

This is a grassroots organizing and training curriculum rooted in lessons from multi-racial, cross-class, feminist organizing. It is for emerging or established groups and organizations working to get into good trouble here and now in 2020 and beyond, as we confront a world where our economic, governance, and ecological systems are literally on the brink of collapse. **The curriculum is built off of the political assumption that the values of the groups using it are rooted in, or working to root down into, the best of our feminist traditions. These traditions are intersectional in practice, rigorous, interdependent and loving, anti-imperialist, visionary, often socialist and communist yet not dogmatic;** in other words, Pro-Black, Pro-Worker, Pro-Queer, Pro-Immigrant, and Pro-Planet values.

This curriculum was developed and tested with amazing local cohorts of emerging and existing leaders in New Orleans, Phoenix, and Cheyenne through Auburn Seminary's Feminist Leaders for Reproductive Justice cohort from 2019-2020. Auburn is equipping leaders with the organizational skills and spiritual resilience required to create lasting, positive impact in local communities, on the national stage, and around the world.

This curriculum does not go into digital organizing or communications work. There are tons of training entities and plenty of leadership around that area of work. We acknowledge the ways our world and political landscape are fundamentally transformed by media, technologies, and the digital age. We don't have our head in the sand about this and we are fans of distributed organizing. Many parts of this curriculum could be tailored to those contexts. But we decided to root this program and accompanying curriculum in the most humble and fundamental building block of social change and transformation: flesh, breath, spirit, and the profound longing and necessity for us to learn and relearn over and over how to be in right relationship and move collective work together, across power, identity, and experience. **No matter how big we get, without this, we stay small.**

After much deliberation, the sections of this workbook were chosen to answer the question: ***What are the kinds of organizers we need in this time? What do we need to have inside us and between us to wage the fights that are calling our names?*** How do we build adaptable, focused, and courageous teams and projects? Are there parts of the magic of SONG and other red-state organizing projects that can be offered more broadly to movement? How do we inoculate ourselves against the despair and infighting knocking at our door?

This is just a humble offering to that line of thinking and questioning and, of course, organizing. This does assume facilitators of the content will have a baseline of understanding of facilitation and grassroots organizing experience. There are certain political assumptions that underlie this curriculum. Some of those that are important to name are that **social movements are our best bet for long term structural progressive social change, that leadership is a collective endeavor, and that this moment requires us all to try new things in pursuit of liberation and justice.** There is also an underlying assumption that when we say 'feminist leadership,' we are implying interdependent, intersectional, and collectively oriented leadership rooted in praxis. This feminism is a marathon and not a sprint, and our work is only possible because of what has come before.

THIS CURRICULUM IS:

**SUPPORTED BY ILLUSTRATIONS AND
INTERACTIVE GRAPHIC WORKSHEETS**

**FOR FACILITATORS THAT HAVE
A BASELINE UNDERSTANDING OF
FACILITATION AND GRASSROOTS
ORGANIZING EXPERIENCE**

ARRANGED THEMATICALLY

**DESIGNED FOR YOU TO PICK AND
CHOOSE FROM WORKSHOP TEMPLATES,
ACTIVITIES, WORKSHEETS, GRAPHICS, AND
ADDITIONAL READINGS AND RESOURCES**

THIS CURRICULUM IS NOT:

**FOR DIGITAL ORGANIZING OR
COMMUNICATIONS WORK**

**AN IDEOLOGICALLY FOCUSED TRAINING
CURRICULUM**

**A TRAINING CURRICULUM FOR CIVIL
DISOBEDIENCE OR NONVIOLENT DIRECT
ACTION (NVDA)**

ONE-SIZE FITS ALL

This workbook is arranged thematically. Each section contains some framing of the topic, followed by workshop templates, activities, and graphic worksheets to help you dig deeper into the topics. There are also additional, optional resources to choose from, since every context is different. The six themes are:

WHO ARE YOU AND YOUR PEOPLE?

POWER, LEGACY & HISTORY

BUILDING THE TEAM OF THE WILLING

GET ME BODIED: BODILY & SPIRITUAL SELF-DETERMINATION

THE BEST OF OUR ORGANIZING TRADITIONS

A GOOD TEAM IS HARD TO MAINTAIN

In the appendix there are some additional tools for working with groups, including notetaking and debrief templates, a cache of icebreakers and energizers, and a glossary of key terms.

PREPARING *The Space*

FACILITATION TIPS & TRICKS

READINGS/RESOURCES:

- Facilitation Station Session (p. 108)
- *Alchemy: The Elements of a Collective Space*, a tool from Southerners on New Ground (SONG)
- Training for Change (many tools available on their website)

Manage expectations by conveying that **all** parties are responsible for the success of the meeting, not just the facilitator. As facilitator, you have a particular responsibility to prepare adequately: familiarize yourself with the content of the session and read the suggested readings.

Tailor the curriculum to your needs. Prepare anecdotes relevant to your conditions, place, group culture, past or current work, and supplement with additional readings, activities, or materials. Expect to model candidly answering the prompts or questions you are asking the group to engage.

Your role is to ensure democratic participation and engagement, and to foster space for hearty dialogue, debate, and nuance. Use the curriculum to create a process that specifically suits your group and connects to your work and needs (as opposed to facilitating a one-off workshop that you never come back to).

Your role is also to track the group and figure out why folks may be disengaged or quiet. If someone is talking all the time, address it directly by saying something like, "You've shared a lot, and I want to make sure others have a chance to speak."

Prepare materials and visuals beforehand and decide if you want a note taker, time keeper, or other support roles from others. This will clarify roles and give people various ways to engage with the material.

Check-ins at the beginning of meetings and workshops allow everyone the space and time to speak, briefly share how they are, and provide a heads up to the group if there is other stuff going on. This allows people to share their truth at the beginning; otherwise, folks often end up being disruptive. A one-sentence or even a one-word check-in can help people start the time together. Do not let check-ins eat up all of your time though.

Group agreements can be helpful. Consider suggesting a few to start off with so you don't spend 30 minutes creating a laundry list of agreements. Expect disruptions, tangents, and sticky moments, and engage them directly. This will ensure that they aren't just symbolic wallpaper.

Watch the energy: yours and that of the group. If you need to take a break or collect yourself, or if the room needs to take a break, do it!



Who ARE YOU and your PEOPLE?

As communities facing and fighting oppression, we are nothing without our relationships. By relationships, we don't mean just friendships, but the politicized communal relationships that shape our lives and our organizing spaces. We have been cut off from this root. Glued to our phones, alienated from one another, we have sometimes forgotten to ask each other: "Who are your people?"

Part of organizing inside the fullness of ourselves is reaching beyond labels or assumptions and actually sharing our stories and experiences. Asking and inviting people into structured ways to share pieces of themselves that aren't visible helps us know each other and gives us a way to build intimacy and understanding. These activities can be done with a new group or a seasoned team to share and learn about each other's stories and values. They also invite us to think collectively about how fruitful it is to ask and listen to each other and then reflect on what was told and how it compares to our assumptions. This gives people a chance to collectively identify how their group wants to orient around leadership and the types of leadership needed in this time – a theme running through this whole curriculum.



STORY Circles

"To acknowledge our ANCESTORS means we are aware that
WE DID NOT MAKE OURSELVES,
that the line stretches all the way back, perhaps to God; or to Gods.
WE REMEMBER THEM BECAUSE IT IS AN EASY THING TO FORGET:

that we are not the first to **SUFFER,**
REBEL, FIGHT, LOVE, AND DIE.

The grace with which we EMBRACE LIFE, in spite of the PAIN, the SORROW,
is always a measure of what has gone **BEFORE."**

- ALICE WALKER

Her Blue Body Everything We Know, p. 155

HOW DID IT FEEL TO DO THIS EXERCISE?

WHERE AND HOW MIGHT YOU USE STORY CIRCLES IN YOUR OWN WORK OR LIFE?

STORY CIRCLES

[1 - 2 HOURS]

OVERVIEW

Part of our feminist practice is about attribution and lineage. The SONG folks who put this curriculum together learned this activity from John O'Neal, a Black cultural worker and organizer from New Orleans, a lifelong freedom fighter, father of Wendi Moore-O'Neal, and founder of Junebug Productions. Story circles are also a popular education method from the Global South. SONG has used story circles for years, internally and in coalitional gatherings as a tool for connecting with, and listening to, each other deeply. They are also used to find patterns and distinct differences in our experience.

GOALS

- To build relationships
- To introduce popular education, deep listening, and story circles as a key method of work
- To connect our individual selves to legacy and to each other

TIME NEEDED

1 - 2 hours, depending on size of group

MATERIALS NEEDED

- A room with enough space for people to comfortably break out in small groups. You can have flip charts and markers available if you want to scribe themes at the end of the session.
- Optional Handout: **Story Circles** (p. 8)

READINGS/RESOURCES

- *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by Paulo Freire
- *Building Clarity and Political Unity* tool (SONG)
- *History Memory Legacy* (SONG)

FRAMING

Begin by sharing this quote from Alice Walker:

"To acknowledge our ancestors means we are aware that we did not make ourselves, that the line stretches all the way back, perhaps to God; or to Gods. We remember them because it is an easy thing to forget: that we are not the first to suffer, rebel, fight, love, and die. The grace with which we embrace life, in spite of the pain, the sorrow, is always a measure of what has gone before."

-Alice Walker *Her Blue Body Everything We Know*, p. 155

PREPARATION

Break people out into small circles of four or five sitting and facing each other. Then share the following instructions:

- Introduce purpose, goals, and background of Story Circles.
- **Say:** I will share a prompt with you, and each person in your small group will have a chance to respond to it.
- Our intention is active listening as each member of our group shares a story with us, not formulating responses as people speak. Please do not interrupt anyone else.
- Use open body language: arms uncrossed, phones down, etc.
- Respect multilingual spaces by honoring the languages people use.
- We are working towards holding anti-oppressive space.
- We will have 5 minutes for everyone to think quietly before starting. Please do so without note-taking.
- Time is kept by one member of each group, so everyone knows when it's time to move on to the next story.
- Each person will have 3 minutes to respond to the prompt. If they do not use their time, you can sit in silence as a group.
- Once all the stories have been shared, groups will have time for small group discussion. Then we will do large group discussion.

Choose one of the following prompts:

- *What stories do we know about how our ancestors and elders survived hard times?*
- *Who is a feminist ancestor you claim and why?*
- *What's one thing you learned from your ancestors or elders on how to get by?*
- *Who and what do you carry with you 'in your joints' (Cherrie Moraga)?*
- *When did you realize all was not right with the world?*

Small group reflection time:

- After everyone has had their turn to speak, ask the small groups to reflect on highlights of the stories they heard and the things that resonated. As the facilitator, you should remind people that resonating is not about adding your opinion of someone else's story but rather sharing what moved you.
- People can ask each other for more information, not to challenge what is being shared but to learn.

Full group reflection time:

- *Were there any recurring themes or commonalities among your stories?*
- *Were there differences or complexities that stood out?*
- Pull out systematic and institutional themes to the stories.
- You can scribe themes out on a big piece of paper if desired.

POPULAR EDUCATION

If you choose, distribute the handout (p. 8) of Alice Walker's words and space for people to take notes from this discussion. Lay out the practice of popular education as a strategy for creating collective analysis and taking action.

- Story Circles are **just one example** of popular education.
- Popular education helps us **gather information** from the experts. **People are experts in their own lives.**
- We use popular education to **connect individual stories to collective experiences.**
- It also helps us draw out **themes and patterns** (of both difference and commonality) among our experiences.
- We use popular education to **build shared analysis** that allows for complexity.
- We can then connect our analysis to **systems of power**, and make plans to challenge them.
- In popular education, we **hear from many voices** and get to work on **being present with one another.**
- We also use popular education to train our bodies to **take bold action together.**

Invite participants to pair up and talk about how they felt doing this exercise (or to journal silently). Where and how might they use Story Circles in their own work or life? Remind people that their life includes social and communal spaces, not just political work!

I AM FROM POEMS

[30 MINS- 1 HOUR]

OVERVIEW

This exercise was originally created by the Appalachian poet George Ella Lyon and is good to do when you are getting a day-long or half-day meeting started because it includes quiet reflection, memory, moving around, and creative writing. It is generally really powerful even if it takes people a minute to get into it. It's often good to follow this exercise with more 'heady' or challenging content.

GOALS

- To offer participants a chance to reflect, creatively engage, and share parts of themselves they might not get a chance to share otherwise
- To connect participants to their own legacy and memory, as well as to those of others
- To engage and center the other senses beyond the analytical brain

TIME NEEDED

30 mins - 1 hour

MATERIALS NEEDED

Flip charts, tape, markers, writing utensils and paper for people if they don't have their own, nice music to play

DRAWING FROM THE MEMORY WELL

Before the session begins, write up each of these prompts on a sheet of big paper and place around the room:

- **Favorite foods growing up**
- **Family members' names**
- **Items found inside your childhood home** (for example, incense, sewing kit, anger)
- **Items found outside your childhood home** (for example, red clay, dogwoods, scooter)
- **Optional: Memories of your terrain or landscape** (for example, cicadas, trailers, McMansions)

NAMING OUR ORIGINS

- Home is your house, apartment, where you stayed. To begin, everyone will do two things. First, everyone will write silently on each paper. Then, everyone will do a gallery walk and read what others have written.
- Next, everyone will have some time to write a poem using the refrain of **'I AM FROM'** This poem can be inspired by or using what was written on the papers or anything else that comes to mind.
- Poems are then shared in either small groups or the full group, and participants give each other love! If time permits, people can reflect on the process and share their noticings.
- For another variation, create a group poem together. Then read it collectively, with each person reading one line at a time until the poem is finished.

FEMINIST LEADERSHIP

[1-2 HOURS]

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this workshop is to give your group a chance to reflect together on how you want to show up as leaders in *this* time. Together, you will consider:

- *What values or practices have we learned or inherited about leadership?*
- *What does society value, and what do movements value?*
- *How do we want to think about leadership?*
- *How can we step collectively into more effective leadership, and how will we need to transform to make this possible?*

In *Truth or Dare*, Starhawk writes that there are “two myths about leadership: The first is that someone must always be in charge or nothing will get done. The second is that leadership is always oppressive. Although both myths contain kernels of truth, each is based on an essential confusion between power-over and power-with...Power-over is decision-making power, control. Power-with is influence.”

GOALS

- To have small and large group discussions about values and principles
- To consider different types of leadership
- To discuss leadership practices and postures

TIME NEEDED

1 - 2 hours

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Flip charts, sticky notes, and audio if you will play Danez Smith piece
- Handouts: **Feminist Leadership** (p. 16) & **Feminist Leadership Reflection** (p. 17)

READINGS/RESOURCES

- Ella Baker 'Strong People Don't Need Strong Leaders'
 - *Do you agree? Disagree? Why or why not?*
- *Truth or Dare* by Starhawk; Leadership Archetypes exercise on page 276
- *SONG Code of Conduct*
- *Responsive Leadership in Hierarchical Organizations*

FRAMING

- We're going to spend the next hour and a half talking about leadership and what is needed in this time. We're thinking about leadership primarily in the context of what is needed to move forward collective work, so we're focusing on groups, teams, and organizations. We are concerned with how leadership functions communally, not just as traits or practices of individuals.
- Yet, of course, organizations are made up of us: squishy people! So this is also about how we work to grow, evolve, and deepen our relationships to ourselves and to others.
- We are approaching this conversation open to **transformation**. After all, if we want something different, we've got to be prepared to **be** different. And this requires practice. As adrienne maree brown explains in *Emergent Strategy*, "It takes three hundred repetitions for muscle memory and three thousand repetitions for embodiment. What do you need to practice?" (p. 188).
- Invite people to find a comfortable spot to listen to a poem (or include this as prep work for the session), and listen to or reflect on Danez Smith's performance of 'Principles'. Hold some time to discuss/hear reflections.
- As Grace Lee Boggs used to say, "What time is it on the clock of the world?" This is a question we will revisit multiple times and from multiple angles over our time together. **What time is it for feminist leadership?** In this session, we'll move from a full group conversation about trends and patterns in leadership through some reflection about why leadership looks this way in this time. Then, in pairs and quads, we'll scheme together about the kind of leadership we need and desire.

WHAT IS THE LEADERSHIP WE SEE & PRACTICE?

Full group question: *What are some patterns or trends we see and experience around leadership now?*

Scribe up a list of patterns as folks are naming them. You can make offers from this list if folks don't name them:

Consider:

- We honor the front-of-house, public work more than the back-of-house, sustaining work
- The leadership we celebrate is often glossy, glamorous, and optics-centered
- We are 'followers' obsessed, and social media fuels this
- We're still moving from a framework of power-over not power-with
- We cultivate leaders or desire leadership because we think it means visibility or affirmation
- Broadly, we have a politically fraught relationship to power: *Do we want it? Do we trust ourselves to hold it? What will our comrades say and do if we get it?*
- We are anxious about reproducing patterns that have damaged us: *Is it ok to be the boss?*

Follow-up questions (to offer as folks are naming trends and/or as the list is nearing completion):

- *Why are these trends prevalent, do you think?*
- *Where do they come from?*
- *How do you feel about this list?*
- *Are you as sick of these dynamics as I am?!*

WHAT IS THE LEADERSHIP WE NEED & DESIRE?

Divide folks into pairs and discuss the following question. Ask that they write their answers on sticky notes; then, that they decide together on their top three stickies and put them up on the wall.

Pairs question: *What type of leadership do we need in this time? Put another way, what do we need our leadership to embody, and why?*

Consider:

- In this time, we need leadership that is deeply **grounded in legacy and lineage**.
- As leaders, we need to embody and model **courage and humility**.
- The leadership we need in this time **counters our cultural conditioning and hegemonic training**, and will therefore require active struggle to embody!
- We need to be **praxis-based**. We need to try things and be willing to experiment.
- We must learn to be **direct and non-competitive**. The leaders we need are not neutral.
- We need **more leaders**, and more leaderful movements.

Next, invite the pairs to link up with another pair to form a quad and discuss the next question: ***What are the obstacles to the feminist leadership we need and desire? How might we creatively transform or bypass these obstacles?***

Consider:

- The barriers are **internal** (inside ourselves and our groups) and **external** (structures and systems).
- **Hidden leadership** means we don't have a shared understanding of what's really happening, or we're not willing to acknowledge collectively what we all know is going on.
- **Loyalty and friendship are often prioritized over principles**. *What is this protecting?*
- Some of us are **power hoarding**, and some of us are **power averse**. These are both obstacles.
- Patriarchy especially teaches women an **indirect and manipulative relationship to power**.
- Folks who have been socialized towards leadership, power, and supremacy **won't recognize it**.
- There's a lot of **denial**, and a lot of **fear, pain, and grief** we don't want to look at or deal with.
- For whites, there are **mixed messages** and often guilt; some folks are afraid to contribute.

CLOSING SKITS

Quads can then develop a short skit in which they play out a scenario twice: first, highlighting some of the challenges and obstacles around feminist leadership, then transforming the scene with some of the qualities of feminist leadership we've named. Each quad performs their two skits for the whole group. Afterwards, debrief the skits. ***How does it feel in our bodies, as performers and audience members, when we change forms of leadership?*** Congratulate all the groups on building muscle memory by practicing new postures!

FOLLOW UP

Invite participants to use the following pages to reflect even more deeply on the qualities of feminist leadership they value, desire, require, and aspire to. This can be done in the full group setting or on people's own time.

FEMINIST Leadership

WHAT DOES LEADERSHIP GROUNDED IN
FEMINIST VALUES LOOK LIKE, AND HOW IS
THIS DIFFERENT THAN OTHER VALUES AROUND
LEADERSHIP?

...A Leader GROUNDED in FEMINIST Values:

- SHOWS UP HUNGRY FOR POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT AT EVENTS, MEETINGS, RALLIES, ETC.
- FOCUSES ON PITCHING IN TO GET THINGS DONE, RATHER THAN PICKING APART PROCESS
- TAKES ON TASKS THAT OTHERS FIND BORING OR TOO DIFFICULT
- COMES TO AN ORGANIZATION WITH AN UNDERSTANDING THAT THEY HAVE MUCH TO LEARN & ALSO A LOT TO GIVE
- DOESN'T STRIVE TO BE THE STAR OF THE ROOM & DOESN'T HAVE TO BE SELF-CENTERED
- IS DIRECTLY AFFECTED BY ISSUES A GROUP IS WORKING ON
- SHOWS HUMILITY & COURAGE
- IS CONSISTENTLY DIRECT, NOT MANIPULATIVE OR PASSIVE AGGRESSIVE
- ACTIVELY WORKS TO SUPPORT OTHER NEW LEADERS, NOT BRING THEM DOWN
- PROBLEM SOLVES, EVOLVES ON ISSUES & DOESN'T GET BOGGED DOWN BY SHORT-TERM
- IS RELIABLE (BECAUSE EVEN PEOPLE WITH REALLY LIMITED TIME AND CHAOTIC LIVES CAN GIVE US A HEADS UP ON WHERE THEY ARE AT)
-
-
-
-



LEADERSHIP Reflection

HOW DO WE PRACTICE AND STRENGTHEN
THE TRAITS AND VALUES OF FEMINIST LEADERSHIP WE
THINK ARE NEEDED IN THIS TIME?



CONSIDER THIS QUOTE FROM
ADRIENNE MAREE BROWN:

"IT TAKES THREE HUNDRED REPETITIONS FOR MUSCLE MEMORY AND THREE THOUSAND REPETITIONS FOR EMBODIMENT."
-Emergent Strategy, p.188

What do you need to **PRACTICE?**

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO PRACTICE DOING
DIFFERENTLY, BOTH INDIVIDUALLY AND
COLLECTIVELY?



POWER, Legacy & HISTORY

We are all inheritors of different legacies, both from our individual blood families and from our communal and cultural traditions. We are also inheritors of the broader legacies of our societies and our movements. These include resistance and profound, violent oppression, often walking hand in hand, as they do in the legacy of chattel slavery: an inescapable inheritance that touches all of us, in all corners of this country.

Inside of a movement context, we are all beneficiaries of a long tradition of social struggle, whether we have learned it or not, whether we acknowledge it or not. All young trans and gender nonconforming people deserve to know that Black trans women, trans women of color, and working-class queer people gave birth to the modern LGBTQ movement by resisting transphobic police violence and assaults at the Stonewall Inn in New York City. Knowing that trans people have been living and loving and resisting since the beginning of time could literally save a young person's life. There is power in connecting to legacy.

Understanding, excavating, learning about, and grappling with our varying legacies - beyond sound bites or the little we glean from internet memes - is profoundly important. Legacy is in many ways the antidote to the exceptionalism, individualism, and ego that plague our movements today.

Many of us have been transformed by the understanding that we as movement *did not make ourselves*, that our individual pain is the result of systems, and that *we are not the only ones to ever suffer*. This feminist principle can connect us to history as well as to our comrades today; we never really know fully what it has taken for folks to get here.

This section begins with series of conversations about power in order to give us a common framework to understand both past and current realities. Our histories and legacies are not neutral; often, they are about a struggle for resources, power, and meaning-making, and those with power work tirelessly to maintain and expand it, often at the expense of the rest of us. We need to be able to study, define, and diagnose how power works in our society - internally, interpersonally, institutionally, and internationally - and to articulate its current realities. We also need to contextualize our current liberation struggles inside the struggles of communities that have been oppressed for millenia. As Ruby Sales taught many of us, we have to have hindsight in order to have insight and foresight.

This section is a combination of new content and content adapted from or inspired by SONG's Organizing Schools, running from 2011-2019 and laying the baseline for collective understanding around how power works. These sessions could easily be rearranged or broken down into multiple smaller units.

DEFINING POWER

[2+ HOURS]

OVERVIEW

As social justice seekers, it is critical that we establish a common understanding of power in our group so we can be clear in our relationships and our work. It is also critical that we share power, fight power, or contend with unjust power relationships as they affect our economy, climate, and society. These session will help groups establish a baseline around power, resistance, and the different forms of oppression: interpersonal, internalized, and institutional. This then allows us to be more precise at diagnosing how power is playing out and what to do about it.

GOALS

- To create shared language and frameworks inside the group
- To develop a shared understanding of different forms of power and oppression
- To establish a baseline from which to better discern and organize for transformation and against oppression

TIME NEEDED

Two hours, or two 1-hour sessions without Family Feud, which can take 20 to 45 minutes depending on the group. There's a good natural break after Family Feud and defining key terms.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Flip charts, markers, and tape, or easel. Optional items for Family Feud: buzzers, 'prize' for winning team, Facilitator copy of the Glossary (p. 137) or put the terms on a PowerPoint and project them.
- Handouts: **3 Pillars of White Supremacy** (p. 22), **3 I's of Oppression & Resistance** (p. 25), **Glossary** (after Family Feud)

READINGS/RESOURCES

- '3 Pillars of White Supremacy,' by Andrea Smith

FRAMING

As feminists, we understand that an **intersectional power analysis** – an understanding of how forms of oppression connect – provides the critical set of lenses through which we view the systems and issues that shape our world.

Intersectional power analysis also reminds us that no one issue is more important than any other in our work, and that oppression and domination affect **all of us**, not just one group, though the consequences vary enormously. A robust, shared understanding of how power works is central to how we think about the world and how we will create justice and transformation through shared struggle.

We have already talked a lot about power and the oppressive forces that shape our reality, but we must also remind ourselves and each other that **oppressive systems do not fully define who we are**, determine how we live our lives, or constrain what is possible for us.

NAMING POWER

Ask the full group to discuss (or to think quietly about before we get started):

- What do you think about when you hear the word power?
- Why is it important to have an intersectional power analysis?

Next, read together the following definition of **POWER**, from Charlene Carruthers' *Unapologetic*:

"The word [power] has many meanings. **Power is the ability to act and get what you want.** Power is built and maintained through organized people and organized resources. Power is not inherently good or bad. For people from marginalized groups, experiences with power are often negative. We are used to people having power over us. The amount of power other people and institutions have over our lives, our children, our mobility, our access to basic needs (food, water and shelter) and even our desire is immeasurable ...Power relationships are based on individuals, but they are intrinsically connected to the systems of power maintained by capitalism, patriarchy, white supremacy and anti-Blackness.....What type of power do we want? Creating changes requires building and harnessing power. Anyone committed to transformative change must also be committed to building transformative power."

-Charlene Carruthers, *Unapologetic* (p105)

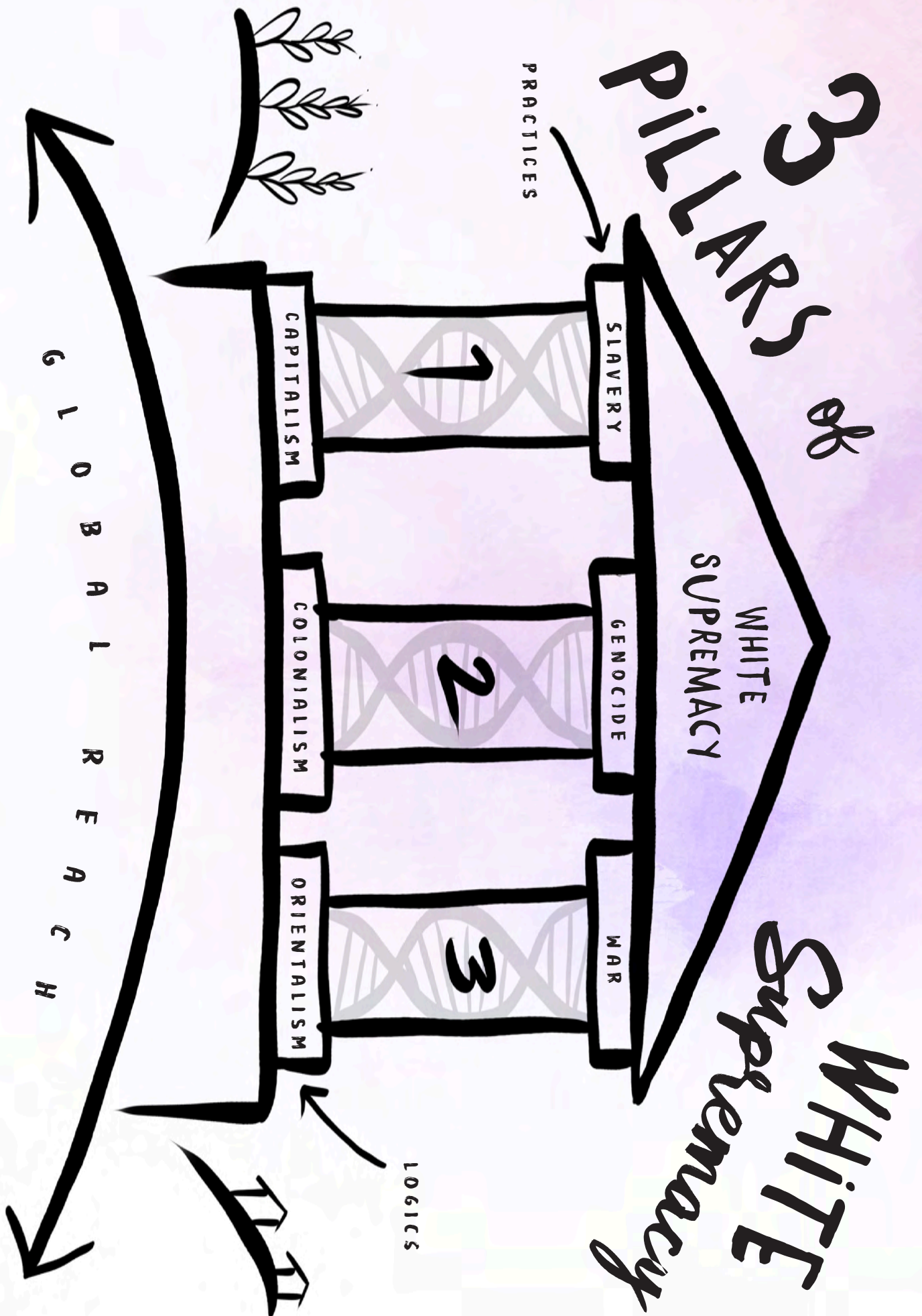
FAMILY FEUD

Language matters, and is constantly also being co-opted by our opposition, capitalists, or liberals. As Charlene Carruthers further explains in *Unapologetic* (p.60):

"The words 'intersectionality' 'queer' 'anti-racist' and 'anti-capitalist' roll off the tongues of so many radical Black activists. No one learns those words and what they mean on their own. Black feminists, Ballroom legends, queer folks and folks who fit no binaries have done the groundwork but are taken for granted in far too many movement spaces today. What is common terminology and practice in social justice circles today was theorized, written about, organized around, and fought for by people whose names we may never know."

This activity is a great energizer, and could easily be sprinkled elsewhere (such as before or after lunch), depending on how you are using the curriculum. Here, the goal is also to relax and laugh at ourselves a bit, while landing on some clear shared vocabulary that will inform the rest of the session.

Break the group into four teams total; each should pick a team name. Each group should be physically together. During each round you will read out the definition of a term from the Glossary (p.137) without revealing what the term is. For each round, a different team member should step up as the contestant. The contestant who has the answer first can raise their hand (or use a bell or buzzer if you have one). Otherwise, give people 15 seconds to come up with an answer; all contestants should be invited to share before the answer is revealed. For each correct answer, a contestant earns their team 1 point. Potential extra credit: Include a 'Fast Money' Round for finalists!



For clarity and shared vocabulary, briefly name together the specific systems of power we're talking about:

- white supremacy
- capitalism
- colonialism
- heteropatriarchy

KEY TALKING POINTS

- **Each of these systems were built by people**, and they are maintained, reproduced, and developed by people, too. Whereas we (as individuals or as groups and formations) often accommodate or replicate power systems through our participation in them, we can also transform and resist them. The good news is, **we are responsible**. The bad news is, **we are responsible**.
- If we can understand power and control, then we can understand why domestic violence and rape occur, why one country colonizes another, and why white supremacy survives. Power, whether wielded over others or shared, affects how we move in the world: our wellness, freedom, life or death, and all of our choices.
- **People debate the root cause of unjust power**. Some say it's capitalism, some say patriarchy, some say white supremacy. There may not be a clear chicken-or-egg answer here. All these systems are intertwined, and all are destructive to the mind, body, and spirit. **All these systems are lethal**. Our goal is to learn how to create shared power – power **with** instead of power **over**.

IF YOU ARE DOING THIS IN TWO SESSIONS, THIS IS A GOOD PLACE TO PAUSE.

Use this space to record insights from this session. *What is on top? Where is there shared understanding brewing in the group, and where is more discussion needed? What do you want to make sure to return to (or hold space for) when you reconvene?*

3 I'S OF OPPRESSION & RESISTANCE

- **Draw a large triangle** on a board or flip chart, with each of the three points labeled “Interpersonal,” “Internalized,” and “Institutional.” Pass out a handout with the same drawing on it (see opposite).
- **Frame for the group:** Power and oppression function in multiple ways. Three of the most common are **Interpersonal**, **Internalized**, and **Institutional** oppression (the 3 I's!).
- Most mainstream conversations about injustice or oppression focus exclusively on the interpersonal (for example, one bad teacher or one bad cop) rather than on the generations of policies, practices, and laws that literally weave oppression and bias into the DNA of institutions and the law of the land.
- **This focus on the interpersonal is intentional.** It serves to keep us divided and focusing on symptoms not root causes. It also oversimplifies things, making us believe that we can fix things by removing that one bad teacher or one bad cop. It is a kind of scapegoating, and it **protects and shields the oppressive system**.
- **Next, workshop examples in the full group:**
 - Provide at least one example for each corner “I” of the triangle that’s relevant to your group.
 - Then, solicit examples from the group for each corner. People will commonly mistake one for the other, and it’s good and ok to gently correct them. The purpose is to gain clarity together.
- **Invite people to do their worksheet in pairs, small groups, or alone with any number of instructions:**
 - Give everyone one type of oppression and have people come up with examples for all 3 corners.
 - As a full group, brainstorm further examples in society. This is the simplest option.
 - Focus specifically on local examples.
 - Ask people to first brainstorm two examples for each type of oppression and write them on the outside corners of the triangle. Then have people write examples of interpersonal, internalized, institutional **resistance** inside the triangle.

KEY TALKING POINTS

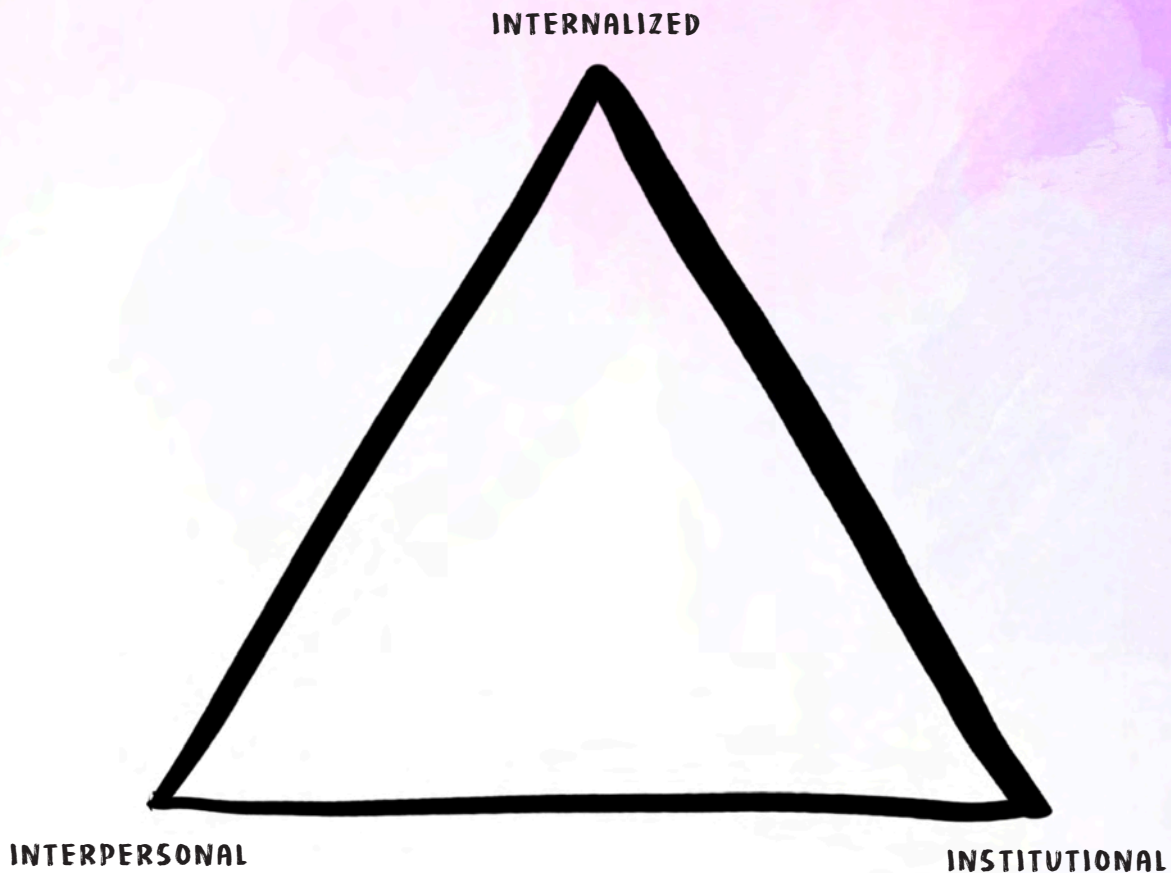
- Tokenism works to obscure real power dynamics and who the decision-makers are. **Tokenism and multiculturalism maintain power in the hands of dominators.**
- **Horizontal hostility**, aka shooting the messenger, also obscures power. For example, the DMV employees denying undocumented people licenses are Black women; they are the front people for the state’s horrific and oppressive policies.
- **Internalized superiority and inferiority:** Domination corrupts the soul and humanity of those who receive benefits and unearned advantages in society at the expense of others. It’s good to spend some time here, too, naming some examples of those manifestations, especially when in a multi-racial and/or cross-class group so focus isn’t only on oppression.

CLOSING

To transform power and oppression, we need to move all three sides of the triangle, not just one side. Our strategies need to take on all three. *How will our work do that? What are times our work has or hasn’t taken on all three? Where do you find yourself spending the most time? Where does your work currently live? Why?*

3 "I"s OF Oppression & RESISTANCE WORKSHEET

WRITE EXAMPLES OF EACH "I"
OF OPPRESSION OUTSIDE THE TRIANGLE.
YOU CAN USE A SPECIFIC LENS TO FOCUS ON, LIKE LOCAL
EXAMPLES, OR ONE TYPE OF OPPRESSION, LIKE
WHITE SUPREMACY AND RACISM.



YOU CAN ALSO ADD EXAMPLES OF RESISTANCE FOR EACH "I" INSIDE THE TRIANGLE.

MOVEMENTS FOR LIBERATION: WE DID NOT MAKE OURSELVES [1.5 HOURS]

OVERVIEW

This is a movement timeline exercise to explore different tendencies inside movements for liberation and self-determination, and to untangle our individual and collective relationship to a variety of feminisms.

GOALS

- To collectively ground ourselves in various movement lineages
- To explore how history informs our current reality
- To engage in dialogue around our different understandings and experiences with feminism

TIME NEEDED

1.5 hours

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Flip chart, tape, markers to write up prompts and capture key report-backs, writing materials for participants
- Handouts: **Timeline** (pp. 30-31) copied at expanded scale on ledger-sized paper & **Timeline Worksheet** (p. 29)

READINGS/RESOURCES

Project South's toolkits all have incredible historical timelines; see their *Timeline of Scientific Racism*, as well as the *Timeline of the Medical Industrial Complex* from Changing Frequencies (due out in 2020)

FRAMING

This is a timeline activity to connect contemporary work to different feminist organizing legacies, and to explore **both the power and limitations** of different waves of work. Ruby Sales talks about the importance of engaging our **hindsight, insight, and foresight**. We practice hindsight by studying history and engaging collective memory; we practice insight by honestly taking stock of our current work in light of that historical context in order to have foresight for what lies ahead. Our mandate is not just to appreciate what has been made possible by those who've come before us but to build on this legacy and leave something behind for those who will come after.

Through practice, we believe in the possibility of creating a feminist framework by confronting current systems of oppression (such as white supremacy, capitalism, and heteropatriarchy) and building a new world with a **vision of liberation for all**. We know that feminism – as a framework and practice – can and must be rooted in ending domination in all its forms, including gender-based oppression and violence stemming from patriarchy.

These poison all of us, from those of us who are read as masculine or feminine women, to those of us who are “gender outlaws,” to straight cis men, to those of us who are trans. **Our focus is more about politics and practice and less about identity**; all people can and could (and should!) be feminists, and women are by no means the only ones with a stake in the fight to end patriarchy. At the same time, we know that while those who have experienced oppression hold many of the solutions and antidotes we need most to transform it, we are simultaneously denied access to shaping strategy or solutions because of ongoing racism, classism, and elitism. This is one of the ways feminism has been distorted and flattened. It is therefore completely understandable that so many of us have **baggage associated with the word feminism** because of how it has been commodified, white-washed, and de-fanged. Questions of race, class, and gender are the fault lines along which the majority of the social movements in this country have fractured and faltered, and feminism is no different. It is also important to note that Black, Indigenous, lesbian, queer, trans, working class Chicanx and Latinx feminists, and feminists across the Global South continue to stake claim to feminism and **hold a crucial political counterweight** to the ‘pop feminism’ of this time.

WE GOT BAGGAGE

Discussion questions for pairs or full group:

- What is your relationship to the word ‘feminist’? Who is the first person you thought of as a feminist?
- Read together the definition from bell hooks: “**Feminism is a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression. This includes political, social, and ideological methods and work.**”
- How is your relationship to the word different than the actual definition? Do you understand yourself to be a feminist, and has that changed over time?

Next, discuss as a full group:

- What makes you a feminist, or not?
- Where is there discord or alignment between our associations with feminism and the definition above?
- What’s the current legacy and what legacy are we trying to create?

Key places people get stuck:

- Folks have understandable pain and rage about **white women’s domination**, shrillness, and co-optation of feminism.
- The narrow notion within privileged feminisms that gender oppression is “the only oppression that really matters” denies the experience of the majority of the world’s women who navigate a daily reality shaped by their gender, race, class, **and** sexuality. This legacy of **misunderstanding the reality of interlocking oppressions** is damaging to everyone.
- When feminism is focused on a set of principles rather than on a set of practices or issues, it can feel abstract and irrelevant to people’s lives.
- Folks can get stuck around **not feeling connected to womannness** (as queers, dykes, fags, sissies, gender nonconforming folks, femmes, etc).
- **Often, the core of our fraughtness about feminism is that we are stuck on individual identities rather than targeting patriarchy and misogyny as systems of domination that harm all people across gender** (while targeting all feminized bodies and specific bodies that are deviant or outside normative gender roles). In addition, those that benefit from sexism and are conferred power in patriarchy can and should fight against it and demand its downfall!

HINDSIGHT ACTIVITY

- Break people out into groups to analyze and assess five different eras of history. Depending on your group size, you may have two groups discussing the same era.
- After people are in their groups, reveal their assignment. **They will discuss, scribe, then write a slogan.**
 1. **Discuss:**
 - *What were the key strengths of your era?*
 - *What were the key weaknesses (or contradictions) of your era?*
 - *What can we take forward? (For report-back)*
 - *What should be left behind?*
 2. **Scribe:** Each group should write key moments from their era – either liberatory or limiting – on big paper (or a worksheet), to be shared with the full group in a gallery walk.
 3. **Write a slogan:** Ask each group to prepare a report-back focused on what we can take from this era moving forward. Top it off by giving their era a slogan or motto that captures its core themes.

GALLERY WALK AND FINAL DISCUSSION

- Have the groups present their slogans and very brief reportbacks. As they share, each group can put their written work on the wall.
- Give everyone five minutes to walk around and review the work, then bring folks back for a **final discussion**.

Consider:

- *What do we want to keep, fortify, or embody from our history? What do we want to leave behind?*
- *When you look back at this timeline and collective body of work, how does it change how you think about feminism or understand feminism, if at all?*
- *Where do you find inspiration and possibility, and where is your heart broken? What do you grieve?*
- *What does our feminist legacy teach us as we shape and embody this work together? What is our mandate? What insight or foresight does this provide us?*
- Name the pushes and pulls we can see inside freedom movements: for assimilation, for reform, for complete and utter transformation.
- See how movements have grappled over the decades: *Do we want to obtain what cis white men have inside this current structure or transform the whole?*
- Take a stand. We want to pull from the best traditions of feminism for the many: militant, radical, embodied for transformation (reform or assimilation), and requiring personal and collective work!
- One manifestation of Black feminists creating space for themselves and their communities was and is through reproductive justice.

JOURNAL ACTIVITY

Close with an opportunity for participants to take the collective reflections of the group as a foundation for personal reflection and writing (see worksheet opposite).

TIMELINE

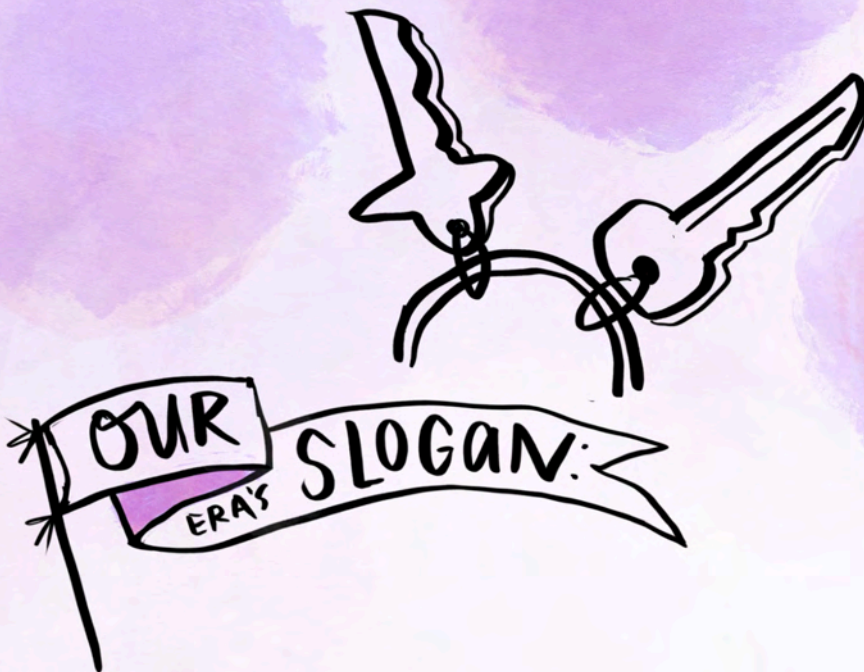
Worksheet

Our
ERA:

HOW DO WE UNDERSTAND THE TIME PERIOD? WHAT WERE THE KEY STRENGTHS?
WHAT WERE THE KEY WEAKNESSES OR CONTRADICTIONS?
WHAT CAN WE TAKE FORWARD, AND WHAT SHOULD BE LEFT BEHIND?

WHAT ARE THREE KEY
MOMENTS THAT EITHER...

...MOVED THIS ERA TOWARDS
LIBERATION OR HELD IT BACK?



TAKE THE LESSONS OF HISTORY AND THE TIMELINES YOU'VE BEEN OFFERED TO HEART, AND THINK ABOUT A MOMENT OF HINDSIGHT AND INSIGHT FROM YOUR OWN MORE RECENT FEMINIST ORGANIZING.
WHAT FORESIGHT MIGHT COME OF THIS?

HEGEMONIC FORCES

1600-1847	1848-1949	1950-1975	1976-1995	1995-2019
<p>THE AMERICAN COLONIES</p> <p>Cultural: Systems of control were designed to advance the larger colonial project that relied on increased white presence and the subjugation, assimilation, or massacre of Indigenous people, enslaved Black people, and anyone seen as non-white. These systems require regulation of the body and of masses of bodies for the function of hard.</p> <p>Political: Displacement and genocide of Indigenous people's beliefs with first colony slavery is legalized, women are the legal property of their husbands or fathers; abortion is a common medical practice and legal in British colonies.</p> <p>Economic: Mercantile economy.</p>	<p>CIVIL WAR</p> <p>Cultural: 1861 - 1865 the Civil War, the South seceded from the Union when the white supremacy of Southern society was threatened by calls to end slavery.</p> <p>Political: 1863 the Emancipation Proclamation declared that all persons held as slaves within the rebellious states are, and henceforward shall be free.</p> <p>Economic: The Civil War radically shifted the economic power of the US. By ending slavery the enormous wealth of the South no longer existed; this and the rise of industrialization made the North the economic power.</p>	<p>RED SCARE</p> <p>Cultural: Anti-Communist ideas rise after WWII, anything counter hegemonic culture is labeled as potentially Communist.</p> <p>Political: Shift from the New Deal common good to conformism and consumer capitalism.</p> <p>Political: McCarthyism, the hearings and culture of fear that encouraged accusations of Communism and ended the careers and lives of many, from actors to activists.</p> <p>Economic: Consumer capitalism is a response to the US empire established after WWII, superpower status, and advances in technology that create cheaper goods, as well as the economic boom from WWII and increased purchasing power of men and women.</p>	<p>CULTURE WARS</p> <p>Cultural: Right-wing backlash to movements for liberation, includes the founding of Family Values and Evangelical political movements, both racialized and gendered to reinforce hetero white patriarchy. Advent of new anti-Black, women, LGBTQ, immigrant, etc rhetoric in the public sphere through media and political campaigns. Works to dismantle the gains of liberation movements.</p> <p>Political: Political work to shrink democracy and limit economic and political power of women, Black folks, immigrants, and workers. Consolidation of think tanks, media, churches, politics, and resources to advance right wing agendas.</p> <p>Economic: Consumer capitalism is a response to the U.S. empire established after WWII, superpower status, and advances in technology that create cheaper goods, as well as the economic boom from WWII and increased purchasing power of men and women.</p>	<p>CULTURE WARS</p> <p>Cultural: The last phase of the Reagan-era culture wars, the right wing has learned that their target audience has to include not just their base; shift in recruiting strategies and language to make their base the majority of Americans.</p> <p>Political: The anti-choice movement attacks reproductive rights and the ability to make informed choices about one's own sexual practices through incrementally dismantling advances in reproductive rights laws. Right-wing government obstructionism begins and grows from Gingrich to McConnell.</p> <p>The Tea Party movement ultimately delivers Trump the White House, embracing white nationalism as its core political philosophy.</p> <p>Economic: US economy weathers several serious recessions, including the 2008 recession fueled by the housing crisis. The right wing positions these recessions and the dismantling of the white working class not as the result of their policies but as the result of immigration from the Global South and the shift from a majority white nation to an increasingly Black and Brown nation.</p>
<p>THE PURITANS</p> <p>Cultural: The Puritans enacted strict legal and cultural codes that still influence our notion. These codes were heavily gendered.</p> <p>Political: Laws about gender and sexuality were strictly enforced, including sodomy and dress code laws. Women were subject to greater social penalties than men; Biblical ideas of race and gender made the witch moral panic and persecution possible.</p> <p>Economic: Agriculture and small-scale craftsman production.</p>	<p>THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION</p> <p>Cultural: Cementing of racial and gender hierarchies through citizenship/enfranchisement. Only humans are rich Christian white men, women exist to serve men, Black people exist to serve white men.</p> <p>Political: Founding of the United States and Revolutionary War 1775-1791</p> <p>Economic: Pursuit of Happiness, in founding philosophies is understood as right to own property.</p>	<p>RISE OF THE MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX</p> <p>Cultural: Including CONTELPRO the response to liberation movements, the systematic dismantling of Civil Rights and liberation movements through surveillance and infiltration by the FBI, the Vietnam War, and the backlash against the peace movement.</p> <p>Political: The government illegally to conducted CONTELPRO operations and to continue the Vietnam war so that private corporations could financially benefit. JFK, MLK, Malcolm X, and other movement leaders. Political, police, and vigilante violence as force of repression.</p> <p>Economic: Massive economic gains from militarization and private corporate support of that militarization.</p>	<p>US IMPERIALISM</p> <p>Cultural: Punishment of anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist, and socialist experiments through coups, sanctions, and media</p> <p>Political: The US government disrupts the Global South through political interventions and illegal wars. The School of the Americas's aids in the training of freedom fighters who align with an imperialist agenda.</p> <p>Economic: Massive economic gains from militarization and private corporate support of that militarization. Organized crime is able to grab power in the the power vacuums left by the US.</p>	<p>9/11</p> <p>Cultural: Massive political shift toward authoritarianism and nationalism. Reinforcing traditional modes like the family, the church, and the country as the backbone of the nation. These are even embraced by some elements of the LGBTQ, immigrant, and feminist movements. Movements splinter into pro-nationalism and anti-war groups.</p> <p>Political: Resurgence of law and order agenda, new wave of anti-immigrant laws with SB 1070, and the establishment of a nearly absolute surveillance culture through the Patriot Act.</p> <p>Anti-war factions fight to make visible the US role in the creation of modern-day terrorism globally.</p> <p>Economic: Massive economic disruption as anti-immigrant policies weaken many of the nation's industries and the constant drain on the US economy of foreign wars. Work to dismantle the military-industrial complex on many fronts.</p>
<p>CHARTERED SLAVERY</p> <p>Cultural: By the time of the Civil War, enslaved Black people had reached 4 million in population generating money wealth for the US state that exceeded \$3.5 billion before legal emancipation.</p> <p>Political: 1619 Transatlantic Slave Trade Begins with first Dutch ship to Jamestown, 1808 Congress outlaws the African Slave trade, but does not abolish chattel slavery; cementing of racial hierarchy of whiteness</p> <p>Economic: Slavery is 200% and 300% of the nation's income.</p>	<p>WESTWARD EXPANSION</p> <p>Cultural: All legitimated through 'Manifest Destiny', Christianity aka 'God-given rights', scientific racism. By 1876 Indigenous populations had been decimated from 10 million to less than 300,000, and 2 billion acres of land had been seized.</p> <p>Political: Manifest Destiny, refusal to honor treaties, runaway slave laws, and gold rush/land rush fuel creation of policing.</p> <p>Economic: Agricultural economy begins to transition to an industrial economy in the 1830s.</p>	<p>MODERN RIGHT-WING MOVEMENT</p> <p>Cultural: 1st mass media and consolidation of resources and begins to mobilize resentment against liberation movements; anti-feminists start to gain steam and build platform. Eagle Forum and Phyllis Schlafly. Anti-gay rights movement begins with Anita Bryant and the Rally for Decency.</p> <p>Political: 1973 Roe vs. Wade turns abortion into a conservative issue, ignites the Evangelical Christian right into action. States' rights mobilization and Southern strategy in response to Civil Rights, Black Power, Chicano, and Women's movements.</p> <p>Economic: 1973 marks official beginning of neoliberalism with the Volcker Shock from the Fed and rise in interest rates and subsequent recessions</p>	<p>NEOLIBERALISM</p> <p>Cultural: Displacement of the values of economic liberalism, which emphasized common good economy, for an economy and society based on free markets and decoupling government and politics.</p> <p>Political: Economic policy shifts subordinated Carter's presidency and made possible the rise of Reaganism as backlash to failed economic policies of liberalism (that were actually neoliberalism)</p> <p>Economic: Consumer capitalism combined with the opening of global free markets and the devaluing of government and union checks and balances on corporate power</p>	<p>ANTI-IMPERIALIST, ANTI-HOMOPHOBIC, AND ANTI-BLACK MOVEMENTS</p> <p>Cultural: People of color are scapegoated by conservatives for everything from social to economic moral panics of white Americans of every class - a full realization of the Southern strategy. Consumerism co-opts what it can from these movements, robbing the mainstream of the powerful critique of the movements. White Nationalism comes out of hiding, using the digital space to radicalize people, to take actions like the rally in Charlottesville.</p> <p>Political: Criminalization policies spread throughout the US to the present-day concentration camps at our borders. Police murders of Black folks persist at endemic rates. The murder and persecution of trans women persists at endemic rates.</p>

LIBERATION FORCES

1600-1847	1848-1949	1950-1975	1976-1995	1995-2019
<p>ABOLITION MOVEMENT Cultural: Black and white people fighting for abolition of slavery in the U.S. Female Anti-Slavery Society (Black women 1832 in MA), Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society (white women 1833). More conservative and more radical elements of the movement, from not slaves to full autonomy. Frederick Douglass, William Wells Brown, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman. Political: Out-lawing of the slave trade was a small win, but resulted in the creation of the peculiar institution, referring to the brutality of intergenerational slavery. Underground Railroad moves people out of slavery, but is such a threat that laws are enacted (culminating in Fugitive Slave Act of 1850) locally to return 'property to owners'. Economic: The economic interests of the South were threatened by abolition.</p> <p>LABOR MOVEMENT Cultural: First strike in U.S. 1768 when New York journeymen tailors went on strike; 1794 formation of Federal Society of Journeymen Cardmakers is first sustained trade union for U.S. workers. Political: Industrialized capitalism gives rise to working parties and unions tied to the Industrial Revolution (1830s). Subversion, sabotage, work stoppage, revolts, and more become tactics. Economic: Industrialized capitalism gives rise to the critique that there is an intention to create two separate classes of people, rich and poor.</p> <p>WOMEN'S MOVEMENT Cultural: Begins in the 1840's, many first wave feminists are also abolitionists and are fighting for citizenship for men of color and all women (in theory) Political: Focused on suffrage, property rights, which include right to a woman's children. Frederick Douglass becomes most prominent feminist.</p> <p>Retention and teaching of language, culture, religious and spiritual traditions - despite flogging, torture, mutilation, threat of death, and murder. Midnight Schools.</p>	<p>SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT Cultural: First wave shifts to white women's enfranchisement, rise of white supremacy in the movement. Political: White women prioritize their right to vote and it creates a split in a larger movement for equality. Many suffragettes also abolitionists. Won Right to Vote 1919. Middle- and upper-class women resist being property and 'standards of womanhood imported from Victorian era' (corsets, beauty standards, Christian uplift kind of stuff, no economic self-determination). 1848 1st US Woman's Rights Convention, first draft of the ERA is introduced. Economic: Women of all races are still the property of men, sexual violence reinforces compliance. Industrial capitalism requires a more rigorous notion of female inferiority, women at home not work.</p> <p>LABOR MOVEMENT Cultural: Rise of labor unions and organized labor: segregated and integrated working-class organizing. Labor becomes a real check to industrialized corporate power, but is weakened by the Great Depression and later the Red Scare. Political: Major wins include the 8-hour work day, minimum wage, and safety standards for the workplace. The Great Depression reassesses the need for more control and checks on corporate power and greed, as they grow not just through exploitation of labor but of the financial system. The New Deal shifts responsibility for the worker away from unions to the government in some ways by redistributing resources and increasing infrastructure. Working-class white and Black women still struggle and don't benefit greatly from these changes. Seeds for Second Wave of feminism begin, 'Make us [white women] more like you.' Economic: Women grow their presence in the workplace throughout the first half of the 20th century, with a large boom for white women during WWII.</p>	<p>BLACK POWER AND CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENTS Cultural: Movements for cultural power, personal power, and political power for Black people. Some focused on winning real access to rights and full citizenship, some focused on deconstructing the culture of white supremacy and elevating a culture where Blackness is valued and powerful. Political: End of Jim Crow laws that restricted access to voting, juries, and inclusion in political life for Black people with the Civil and Voting Rights Acts. Black Power movement shifts the public imagination for what the end goal of a liberation movement is and created a true alternative to white supremacy ideologically. Economic: Poverty was identified early on a major Civil Rights and Black Power issue. Civil Rights worked to gain more economic access for Black people while Black power included an anti-capitalist critique calling for an economic revolution and rejection of property and ownership.</p> <p>WOMEN'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT Cultural: Second wave of feminism marked by emphasis on gender and sexual, emotional, and economic liberation. Focused on cisgender women, with white straight women leading the mainstream movement and lesbians and women of color leading other sections of the movement through anti-imperialist, anti-colonial, and lesbian separatist movements. Mainstream seeks for women to be part of power structures while radical feminism seeks to entirely dismantle heteropatriarchy. Political: 1973, Roe vs. Wade, but not the win it should have been due to being founded on the right to privacy. Women's health movements like the Jane Collective creating women's knowledge for women in reproductive care. 1972 ERA is passed and proposed as the 27th Amendment to the Constitution. Economic: Women have new visibility in the workforce, particularly white women. Economic and emotional power dynamics shift in households as cisgender men begin to feel threatened by the economic power of women.</p> <p>GAY LIBERATION MOVEMENT Cultural: A queering of the cultural revolution (for anti-war and women's movements), sex for pleasure and not reproduction embraced by LGBTQ people. Pushback on cultural and legal discrimination and violence. Moments that sparked a cohesive movement include Compton's Cafeteria, Cooper's Donuts, and Stonewall, the Mattachine Society, and the Gay Liberation Front. LGBTQ people begin to come out. Political: 1969 Stonewall riot, 1970 Christopher Street Liberation Parade, 1975, first gay rights bill introduced in Congress. 1978, Harvey Milk wins supervisor seat, repealing of sodomy laws, gender-appropriate clothing laws, and laws on selling alcohol to queers. Economic: The LGBTQ begin to come out and exercise limited economic power as a group.</p> <p>OTHER LIBERATION MOVEMENTS Time of massive social change: Chicano@/Xicanismo, poor people's, back to land, and and others movements.</p>	<p>GLOBAL ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT Cultural: South African and global movement and Apartheid in South Africa; spreads and informs other struggles like the Zapatistas and the First Intifada. Political: South African Apartheid ends in 1994. The African National Congress wins 63% of vote in first open election and Nelson Mandela elected President.</p> <p>ANTI-GLOBALIZATION MOVEMENT Cultural: Globalization as an outcrop of social and economic neoliberalism faces global opposition from the Zapatista Revolution in Chiapas to the beginning of resistance movements in the Global North. Economic: American workers begin to feel the impact of outsourcing, deregulation, and the dismantling of organized labor in their workplaces and paychecks.</p> <p>THIRD WAVE FEMINISM Cultural: The third wave included many more specific movements like the anti-domestic violence movement, anti-sexual violence movement, body positivity, reproductive rights, sex positivity, and rights in the workplace. These movements continued to be less than fully inclusive of lesbians and women of color. Political: Expansion of laws that were meant to 'protect' women from abusers and violence. Decades later it was clear these laws were frequently used to harm women, the victims of violence. Economic: 'Girl power' becomes a branded feminism like that does not include a critique of patriarchy, heteronormativity, white supremacy, or capitalism, but does serve as a potential entry point for a new generation of feminists.</p> <p>EXPANSION OF THE NON-PROFIT SECTOR Cultural: Movement groups become organizations, from informal - consciousness raising or radical activist groups, legal non-profit corporations in their modern-day form, form a new sector dedicated to charity and some justice work. This sector is limited by their legal standing as corporations and professionalization both help to create social and policy wins, but also takes the movements from the leadership of the people most impacted. Political: The non-profit sector uses advocacy to fight for policy wins, like the repeal of sodomy laws, reproductive rights, and affirmative action protections. Economic: The development of a new economic sector moves philanthropy into a powerful position as foundations and donors see a way to leverage and hide wealth.</p>	<p>THE MOVEMENT FOR BLACK LIVES Cultural: The endless murder of Black people by the state forces the community to mobilize; in addition to the persistent and disproportionate persecution of Black people in the criminal justice system and economic war waged against Black people. Political: The movement reinvigorates movements for liberation in the US, creating new ground in terms of a progressive agenda, and influencing the election of a wave of progressive candidates to all levels of office in 2016 and 2018, policy change, and the mass mobilization of Black and ally people in the US.</p> <p>QUEER AND TRANS LIBERATION MOVEMENT Cultural: After marriage, the queer and trans movement for liberation began to expand beyond homonormative standards for our lives and families, creating room for a new imagination for queer and trans liberation.</p> <p>REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE Cultural: The reproductive rights movement proved too narrowly focused to fight off the advances of the anti-choice Evangelical movement. The repro justice movement pushes against the repro rights movement and its emphasis on white middle-class cisgender straight women, by centering in Black feminism and queerness.</p> <p>IMMIGRATION MOVEMENT Cultural: The Latino civil rights and workers' rights movements have shifted focus to immigration - from the anti-crimmigration movement to the DREAMers. This movement has many goals, from abolishing ICE and borders to fair asylum processes for LGBTQ and other vulnerable immigrants, to in state college tuition for DREAMers. Political: DACA, defeat of Trump's immigration bans for Muslim countries, delay and exposure of the failure of Trump's border wall, defeat of Sheriff Joe Arpaio.</p>

GLOBAL POLITICAL ASSESSMENT

[1 +HOURS]

OVERVIEW

"To defy or deny reality, alone and isolated, is not the same as to change it." Starhawk, *Truth or Dare* (p. 83)

This section works to push us collectively, as US-based rabble rousers, to think more broadly about global realities of power and domination, and how they have morphed and changed over the last decade across the globe.

GOALS

- To engage in conversation about global systems, power, and patterns from a wide-angle lens
- To analyze trends in how power is changing globally
- To connect participants to the realities and impacts of US hegemony around the world

TIME NEEDED

1 hour

MATERIALS NEEDED

Flip chart, tape, markers to capture conversation and write up prompts, write up of hegemony. If you choose to do the modification of the chart with images and examples, those must be printed ahead of time.

OPENING

Optional poetic tone-setting: 'Imagine the Angels of Bread' by Martín Espada (opposite).

FRAMING

In this session we will be examining some of the (often unseen and invisibilized) values that drive how our current economic, political, and social systems are organized. **All of the them are decidedly unfeminist and anti-feminist!**

To start, let's briefly list, *Who or what is valued most in our world today?* Folks may name very specific things or people, and that's fine. Use follow-up questions to get to generalizations and patterns.

Consider:

- **wealth and markets**
- **technological connectivity**
- **profits to elites** (no matter the cost)
- **success** (survival of the fittest, might makes right)
- **military dominance**
- **disposability** (of people and planet)
- **individualism**

Today we'll focus on three core values that underlie all of these: **greed, domination, and forced/high-speed chaos.**

IMAGINE *The Angels of Bread* MARTÍN ESPADA

This is the year that squatters evict landlords, gazing like admirals
from the rail
of the roofdeck
or levitating hands in praise
of steam in the shower;
this is the year
that shawled refugees deport judges, who stare at the floor
and their swollen feet
as files are stamped
with their destination;
this is the year that police revolvers, stove-hot, blister the fingers
of raging cops,
and nightsticks splinter
in their palms;
this is the year
that darkskinned men
lynched a century ago
return to sip coffee quietly
with the apologizing descendants
of their executioners.
This is the year that those
who swim the border's undertow
and shiver in boxcars
are greeted with trumpets and drums
at the first railroad crossing
on the other side;
this is the year that the hands
pulling tomatoes from the vine
uproot the deed to the earth that sprouts the vine, the hands
canning tomatoes
are named in the will
that owns the bedlam of the cannery;
this is the year that the eyes
stinging from the poison that purifies toilets awaken at last to the
sight
of a rooster-loud hillside,
pilgrimage of immigrant birth;
this is the year that cockroaches
become extinct, that no doctor
finds a roach embedded
in the ear of an infant;
this is the year that the food stamps
of adolescent mothers
are auctioned like gold doubloons,
and no coin is given to buy machetes
for the next bouquet of severed heads
in coffee plantation country.
If the abolition of slave-manacles
began as a vision of hands without manacles, then this is the year;
if the shutdown of extermination camps
began as imagination of a land
without barbed wire or the crematorium,
then this is the year;
if every rebellion begins with the idea
that conquerors on horseback
are not many-legged gods, that they too drown if plunged in the river,
then this is the year.
So may every humiliated mouth, teeth like desecrated headstones,
fill with the angels of bread.

UNDERSTANDING CULTURAL HEGEMONY



Hegemony is a fancy word for a simple concept:

*leadership or dominance, especially by
one country or social group over others.*

Much of the thinking on the more nuanced Marxist concept of **cultural hegemony** comes from the scholar Antonio Gramsci, who developed a theory of dominance rooted in the unwitting consent of the dominated. Gramsci explained that the ruling class can so successfully manipulate the values system of a society that their view becomes **the** view that everyone holds by default. It's not even something we think about or notice; rather, it feels like common sense. This makes it hard for us to identify or explain it, and even harder to disrupt it!

A good analogy is a goldfish swimming in water inside a goldfish bowl. The fish wouldn't have a concept of wetness, having never experienced dryness, and the idea that there are other realities beyond the bowl would be almost unthinkable. We don't need to worry about the fish trying to escape; **she can't imagine it**, so she's unlikely to try.

We can say that **the values of greed, dominance, and forced/high-speed chaos that underlie our current economic, political, and social systems are hegemonic** because they are like the water and our bowl alike: everywhere, always, rarely if ever mentioned, and almost universally accepted by the elites they serve and the people they harm alike.

21ST CENTURY POWER SHIFTS

The way power and resources are organized is always shifting, though the dynamics of systems of domination and oppression are timeless. Before we delve further into how these hegemonic values are showing up around us, we need to zoom out and place ourselves in a broader context. *What are some key global patterns of the 21st century?*

In the past 25 years, there has been a massive push by global elites to reduce the power of nation states and increase the power of markets and their biggest players, multinational corporations. This liberalization of barriers to trade and commerce (though not to the movement of people seeking work), coupled with unprecedented environmental degradation and erosion of labor protections, is called **neoliberalism**, and there are lots of book and resources to pull from to explore this in more depth.

At the same time, the 21st century has already see a terrifying rise of **far-right authoritarianism** not witnessed since the 1930s. Combining xenophobia, nationalism, and supremacy logic with economic protectionism and populism, countries from within the EU to India to the US to Brazil to the Philippines have experienced a dramatic and violent rightward swing. Meanwhile, the real existential threats come not from 'outsiders,' minorities, or those from former colonies trying to survive, but from the interlocking crises of climate, health (as the current Coronavirus pandemic shows), unsustainable and exclusionary economies, and massive global inequity and injustice, enforced from the block to the borders with increasingly militarized, increasingly carceral states and para-states (like ISIS).

Hyperconnectivity and technological changes, increasingly globalized markets, a turn towards authoritarianism and nationalism, and the looming threats of climate catastrophe are all major themes of the past two decades.

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR US, HERE, NOW?

When we talk to our elders about the past or younger people about the world they are growing up in today, what are some of the patterns that distinguish our lives in the US in the 21st century from those of the past?

Consider:

- Unprecedented loneliness and widespread social isolation
- Unprecedented digital interconnection and constant screen-based demands on our attention
- The rise in mental illness
- The rapid development of social media
- The continued trend of mass incarceration
- A huge increase in mass shootings and massacres by young white men
- Layers of response to the climate crisis (despair, denial, distraction, corporate hoarding, and more)
- 'Data is the New Oil': rapid development of surveillance, communication, and military technologies
- *What else?*

Since this is a session of global perspective taking, it may be useful to recall that these experiences are specific to a US, global north context, and that even within that there are of course a range of experiences.

CHARTING POWER

Explain that for the rest of the session, we will dive deeper into the hegemonic values of **greed, domination, and forced/high-speed chaos** that underlie these experiences. This is especially meaningful in the context of social isolation, where it is easy to feel that our problems and struggles are personal failings rather than structural realities that are happening to us collectively. We will identify some local, national, and global examples of how these values play out as well as their spiritual implications and the toll they take on us and our movements. Track the conversations on a flip chart; you can workshop each value in the large group, break up into small groups with a single value, or do an around-the-world exercise where small groups each get a chance to workshop every value.

	INTERNATIONAL	NATIONAL	REGIONAL/ STATE
GREED	EXAMPLES: CORPORATE GLOBALIZATION, WATER PRIVITIZATION, RESOURCE EXTRACTION, ALWAYS LOOKING FOR NEW "FRONTIERS," MARKETS & PROFITS	EXAMPLES: ENERGY MONOPOLIES, RESERVATION SYSTEM, MASS INCARCERATION, US HEALTH INSURANCE SYSTEM, CORPORATE BAILOUTS, ABUSE OF WORKERS	EXAMPLES: EXCLUSION FROM BASIC RIGHTS & COMMON GOODS, LIKE EDUCATION, UNAFFORDABLE HOUSING, MONEY BAIL, GENTRIFICATION
DOMINATION	EXAMPLES: DEPORTATIONS, RAPE CULTURE, MISSING & MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN, SURVEILLANCE, MILITARISM, OCCUPATIONS	EXAMPLES: MASS INCARCERATION, COPS IN SCHOOLS, CRIMINALIZATION OF TRANS FOLKS, THE WHOLE EDUCATION SYSTEM	EXAMPLES: INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS DISPLACING NEIGHBORHOODS, 'DEVELOPMENT'
FORCED/ HIGH-SPEED CHAOS	EXAMPLES: CLIMATE DISASTERS, DISASTER CAPITALISM, SHOCK DOCTRINE, 24-HOUR NEWS CYCLE, MEDIA USING CRIME STATISTICS TO FEARMONGER, SOCIAL MEDIA	EXAMPLES: TRUMP TWEETS, FAKE NEWS, WHITE MEN COMMITTING MASS CRIMES BUT NO NARRATIVE ABOUT THIS IN THE PRESS	EXAMPLES: DEVELOPER GASLIGHTING, PERFORMATIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESSES

GREED

Our planet is experiencing unprecedented consolidations of power in the hands of the few, who already have far, far more than any human or group could need. Greed is a driving value of global social systems, governments, and economies.

Guiding questions:

- *What are some examples of greed as a hegemonic and systemic value on an international level?*
- *What are some examples of greed as a hegemonic and systemic value on a national level?*
- *What are some examples of greed as a hegemonic and systemic value on a local level?*

Core examples: Unfair taxation, charity models, elite leaders who made crises and profess to fix them, corporations as people, corporations outside the rules, white colonial taxing (large sections of Africa taxed by France, for example), privatized healthcare/transportation/housing, etc.

Spiritual implications and examples: Scarcity, hoarding, widening imbalance, rapid and hastened destruction of bodies and land

DOMINATION

White supremacy and patriarchy are key elements of domination. The will to dominate and control other humans' bodies, minds, actions, and labor is another core hegemonic value of global social systems, governments, and economies.

Guiding questions:

- *What are some examples of domination as a hegemonic and systemic value on an international level?*
- *What are some examples of domination as a hegemonic and systemic value on a national level?*
- *What are some examples of domination as a hegemonic and systemic value on a local level?*

Core examples: Slavery, colonization, voter suppression, murders by police and ICE, reproductive injustice, population control, 'patriarch knows best,' etc.

Spiritual implications and examples: Internalized inferiority, internationalized superiority, etc.

Variation for facilitation:

Before the session, collect, print, or copy different images from the US and around the world that show examples of the three values of greed, domination, and chaos: privatization, colonialism, voter suppression, murders by police and ICE, Trump, Russian bots, post-Katrina New Orleans, etc. Instruct people to put the images into the categories: greed, domination and forced/high-speed chaos. Then the whole group can discuss. Why did they put that image there? What did they notice? Once they have put all the images in the three categories, go over each.

Review all three as a group: greed, domination, and chaos. Do they want to move anything? Do they want to add? What's missing? Finally, as a group talk about the spiritual implications. Looking at the categories and the images, what are the spiritual implications of greed? Of domination? Of forced/high-speed chaos?

FORCED / HIGH-SPEED CHAOS

In order to consolidate and maintain power, elite systems of power force chaos on general populations. Disaster capitalism and shock doctrine are key examples, and the current US president's approach to governing exemplifies this as well. The goal of power holders here is to confuse, control, and demoralize mass constituencies who might contest or disrupt their power. Interestingly, this value and its tools are being used more and more often as the nature of power itself is changing: leaders of all kinds come to power more quickly and struggle harder to hold onto power. This is true of individuals, groups, and regimes. This value also relies on a fast news and information cycle to keep us confused. There is a positive side for us in the digital age: an ability to not only wield power at unprecedented levels but to lose power at an unprecedented rate, often because of public pressure.

Guiding questions:

- *What are some examples of forced/high-speed chaos as an emerging and systemic value on an international level?*
- *What are some examples of forced/high-speed chaos as an emerging and systemic value on a national level?*
- *What are some examples of forced/high-speed chaos as an emerging and systemic value on a local level?*

Core examples: Trump news cycle, Russian bots, family separation, post-Katrina New Orleans, Iraq War, Missing girls in DC, murder of Black trans women, Venezuela, etc.

Spiritual implications and examples: Cynicism, numbness, emotional weariness, helplessness, hopelessness, substance abuse (zombie apocalypse, religious fanaticism)

UNPACKING PATRIARCHY [2 HOURS]

OVERVIEW

This workshop explores **patriarchy** and **misogyny** and the different ways they manifest inside all of us in this time.

GOALS

- To clarify what patriarchy and misogyny are
- To explore the ways patriarchy manifests in all of us, even across our different experiences
- To identify some of the antidotes to patriarchy and provide a structured way to cleanse ourselves

TIME NEEDED

2 hours, depending on size of group

MATERIALS NEEDED

Flip chart, tape, markers, materials for rinsing (pitcher or bowl, water, essential oils, etc.) & Darnell Moore excerpt

FRAMING: On a flip chart, write up all or parts of the definitions of **patriarchy** and **misogyny**.

One working definition of **PATRIARCHY** is **a social system in which men hold primary power** and predominate in roles of political leadership, moral authority, social privilege, and control of property. Patriarchy is associated with a set of ideas – a patriarchal ideology – that acts to explain and justify this dominance. It can be understood as **a system for splitting every aspect of reality, including people, into two groups – masculine and feminine – and then assigning value and priority to the masculine while relegating the feminine to a secondary, submissive, or even shameful status.** Any person that threatens this binary, dominant/submissive division – including but not limited to trans and gender nonconforming people and queer people – are a threat to heteropatriarchal ideology and may be targeted by violence within it.

MISOGYNY is **the hatred of, contempt for, or entrenched prejudice against women, girls, and all feminized people within patriarchy.** Misogyny functions as an ideology or belief system that has accompanied patriarchal societies for thousands of years, and continues to place women in subordinate positions with limited access to power and decision-making.

Patriarchy and misogyny are part of the core ideology of domination that feeds other systems of oppression, including white supremacy, colonialism, homophobia, classism, and ableism.

WHY IT MATTERS

Patriarchy is important to engage and understand in this time because:

- **Patriarchy is not only about sexism; it is about paternalism.** In the case of those exercising internalized masculine superiority, this may look like acting as though you know what's best for others (with the logic that they are weak, so you must control them). For those internalizing feminized inferiority, this may mean believing that you are helpless and that someone else knows what's best for you (with the logic that you are weak, so you need them to control you or save you). It boils down to a mutual agreement that 'white daddy knows best,' and may masquerade as caretaking or helping. As we work to dismantle the paternalism of white supremacy, colonialism, and capitalism, we must be simultaneously vigilant for patriarchal paternalism.
- **People of all genders can exhibit a wide spectrum of patriarchal behaviors** and do so in our communities every day (and on national public stages). A nuanced understanding of patriarchy allows us to move collectively beyond tokenism and simple binaries (men: bad; women: good) to celebrate those who threaten patriarchy from every body, every identity, and every social position.
- **Our survival and that of the planet actually depend on freeing ourselves from the 'white daddy knows best' mentality, because no one is coming to save us.** This means that, for many of us socialized as women, we have to overcome this patriarchal sense of inferiority that assigns us (especially those of us marginalized in other ways) to the quiet back row in the theater of our own lives. At the same time, we know that overcoming that paradigm could make us individualistic, which would simply recreate patriarchy in another form. **We need to resist this!**

Ask in pairs or triads:

- *How have you seen this play out in your own life?*
- *How have you or others **exerted** patriarchal control?*
- *How have you seen yourself or others **bending to (or embracing)** the patriarchal control of others?*

Big group discussion:

- *How has patriarchy and the impact of patriarchy **played out in our lives**?*
- *What has **shifted or loosened its grip** inside us? Put another way, **where is it coming undone within us**?*
- *What is the **feminism we need to build** in order to contend with patriarchy?*

Consider: Where patriarchy teaches ...

- ... individualism and celebrity activism ... **we need collaborative leadership**
- ... stoic and rugged individualism ... **we need interdependence**
- ... posturing ... **we need authenticity**
- ... false strength ... **we need vulnerability**
- ... foregone conclusions ... **we need aspirations and hope.**
- *What else?* Recap key points from the conversation, then move the group toward close.

CLOSING EXERCISE: “I’m gonna wash that man right out of my hair”

Rinse yourself clean: Tailor this exercise to your group, but it is okay if it makes some people uncomfortable. **Create a space for people to energetically wash off the patriarchy.** This can look like everyone standing in a circle with a bowl and pitcher, and each person’s neighbor holding the bowl and helping pour water over their neighbor’s hands. It can be a station people visit in pairs and wash each other’s hands. It can be a foot washing station where people soak their feet in warm and soapy water and then the other person dries them. It can be making wands and people banishing the patriarchy. It depends on the contours and dynamics of your group. But the goal is to have people work together intimately to bear witness and help each other get clean.

Optional: Incorporate any number of Theater of the Oppressed exercises in this workshop, for exploring where patriarchy manifests and the feminism we need. At the end of this conversation (or before the “What is the feminism we need to build?” portion), some groups may want to revisit the 3 I’s exercise and work through it together, specifically focusing on patriarchy, and then finally run the 3 I’s exercise looking at the inverse of patriarchy, aka feminism.

Final optional exercise: have people read and reflect on the following excerpt from Darnell Moore’s memoir *No Ashes in the Fire*:

“All boys are taught that the world is theirs. But black boys learn early on that the world they are required to rule is the home – the place often sustained by the visible and invisible labor of black women and girls we share homes and relationships with. The home is likened to a kingdom black boys are expected to provide for, fight to protect, and lord over. Outside the home, the streets black boys navigate are controlled by the state and the wealthy and black boys’ freedoms are restricted and policed.

White boys are raised to rule the home, the streets, the banks, the courts, the legislative halls, the church, the academy, the medical industry, the military, and the country. They are granted permission to travel through the world never questioning their need to control others’ bodies and properties, never reflecting on their incessant demand for respect and entitlement, never removing themselves from the center of the public imagination. Black boys are taught to replicate the white boy game, but eventually they realize the game was never in their favor ... I wounded myself not realizing that patriarchy – male dominance – takes aim at girls and women and the humanity of men, too.” (*No Ashes in the Fire*, p. 160)

POWER DOESN'T HAVE TO DOMINATE

[1+ HOURS]

OVERVIEW

Inspired by Starhawk's writings in *Truth or Dare*, an excellent book from the 1980s, this exercise runs people through a framework for power: **Power Over** (dominance and control), **Power Within** (spiritual fortitude and creative force), and **Power With** (non-coercive social influence). It also gives people a chance to identify and discuss individual and collective responses to Power Over: **comply, withdraw, rebel, and manipulate**.

GOALS

- To collectively explore different modes of power that do not rely on domination
- To explore *Power With* in our bodies
- To explore *Power With* through a case study of WOZA's Zimbabwean feminist organizing

TIME NEEDED

1 hour

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Flip charts, with *Power Over*, *Power Within*, and *Power With* headings, each on one page, before the session.
- Handouts of Starhawk quotes (optional)

POWER MOVEMENT EXERCISE

Put some slow music on. Ask people to pair up. One person will be the lead, and one will be the follower. Ask the lead to slowly move about the room, being mindful of people and things around them, while the follower is asked to silently follow by mimicking each move of the lead. After about five minutes, ask people to pause, and pair two groups together, asking the lead from one group to follow the follower from the other group. Now ask this group of four to move throughout the space. Continue this for three minutes, then ask people to have a seat.

DISCUSSION

- What was that experience like?
- How did it feel in your body to have the role you had?
- What did you notice?



FRAMING

Our current realities are all grounded in *Power Over* models.

Power Over: “is linked to domination and control,” allowing one individual or group to make decisions that affect others, and enforce control. “Our conditioning to obey authority is the foundation of the culture of domination.” (p. 11) *Power Over* and all systems of punishment, domination, and control generate four basic responses, **which all confirm the power of the system because they respond to rather than challenge the reality the system has created.** They are:

- **Comply** (do what the authority asks of you)
- **Withdraw** (avoid or remove self or energy away from the authority/what the authority asks of you)
- **Rebel** (fight the authority on your own and lose)
- **Manipulate** (secretly advance your own agenda without the authority catching on)

While we may feel that we don’t have power, we actually have more potential for power now than in previous eras of human history. We are in a period of cascading crises and conflicts, with huge upswells in both authoritarianism and popular resistance and growing social movements. Feminist possibility shows us there are other forms of power:

Power Within: is linked to the mysteries that awaken our deepest abilities and potential. (p. 9) “Although power over rules the systems we live in, power from within sustains our lives. We can feel that power in acts of creation and connection, in planting, building, writing, cleaning, healing, soothing, playing, singing, making love. We can feel it in acting together with others to oppose control.” (*Truth or Dare*, p. 10)

Power With or Influence: is social power, the influence we wield among equals. (p. 9) “The power of a strong individual in a group of equals, the power not to command, but to suggest and be listened to, to being something and seeing it happen. The source of power with is the willingness of others to listen to our ideas.” (*Truth or Dare*, p.10)

WORKSHOPPING POWER

Lay these three concepts of power out for investigation and discovery, using some or all of the following exercises:

- Write up the different definitions and have a discussion
- Give people time for quiet reflection and pair shares
- Break people into small groups for theater exercises or story circles

Make sure to highlight that often **our organizations are a combination of multiple forms of power;** this needs to be expressed and agreed upon formally, and adhered to through our structures.

THESE ADDITIONAL **STARHAWK** QUOTES CAN HELP UNPACK SOME OF THESE CONCEPTS. ANY OF THESE QUOTES CAN BE WRITTEN UP, READ ALOUD, OR EXPLORED IN SMALL GROUPS WITH PEOPLE HAVING A CHANCE TO RESPOND, INVESTIGATE, DEBATE, AND SOURCE EXAMPLES FROM THEIR OWN LIVES.

“POWER OVER ENABLES ONE INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP TO MAKE DECISIONS THAT AFFECT OTHERS, AND TO ENFORCE CONTROL. VIOLENCE AND CONTROL CAN TAKE MANY FORMS. POWER OVER SHAPES EVERY INSTITUTION OF OUR SOCIETY. THIS POWER IS WIELDED IN THE WORKPLACE, IN THE SCHOOLS, IN THE COURTS, IN THE DOCTOR’S OFFICE. IT MAY RULE WITH WEAPONS THAT ARE PHYSICAL OR BY CONTROLLING RESOURCES WE NEED TO LIVE: MONEY, FOOD, MEDICAL CARE, OR BY CONTROLLING MORE SUBTLE RESOURCES: INFORMATION, APPROVAL, LOVE.” (TRUTH OR DARE, P. 9)

“POWER OVER IS CONTROLLED THROUGH PUNISHMENT: PUNISHMENT CAN BE INFLECTED OVERTLY IN A VARIETY OF WAYS: THROUGH THE INFLECTION OF PHYSICAL PAIN AND DAMAGE, THROUGH THE WITHHOLDING OF RESOURCES NECESSARY FOR SURVIVAL OR DESIRED FOR PLEASURE; THROUGH RESTRICTION OF ACTION AND MOVEMENT; THROUGH HUMILIATION; AND MORE SUBTLY, THROUGH THE ERODING OF A PERSON’S VALUE AS EXPERIENCED BY THE SELF AND VIEWED BY OTHERS.” (TRUTH OR DARE, P. 73)

“POWER WITH IS ALWAYS REVOCABLE ... FOR WOMEN POWER WITH IS ESPECIALLY ELUSIVE ... WE FEAR THE ACHIEVEMENTS THAT MIGHT GAIN US RESPECT AND ADMIRATION FOR LONELINESS IS THE PRICE WE EXPECT TO PAY FOR ESTEEM. PERHAPS WE ALSO FEAR POWER WITH BECAUSE WE DO NOT RECOGNIZE IT AS DIFFERENT FROM POWER OVER. WOMEN HAVE BEEN VICTIMS OF POWER-OVER, AND WE HESITATE TO STEP INTO THE ROLE OF DOMINATORS. WE ARE AWARE OF THE HOSTILITY DIRECTED TOWARD WOMEN WHO WIELD POWER. FOR WHILE WE RARELY REACH THE HIGHER ECHELONS OF POWER-OVER, WOMEN MOST OFTEN FILL THE RANKS OF THOSE WHO ADMINISTER THE DECREES OR IMPOSE THE SANCTIONS OF THE AUTHORITIES.” (TRUTH OR DARE, P. 13)

“IN A CULTURE BASED ON DOMINATION, AUTHORITY AND POWER-WITH ARE OFTEN CONFUSED AND BOUNDARIES CAN BE FUZZY.” (TRUTH OR DARE, P. 11)

REFLECTION

Leave time for folks to reflect on these questions in a journal, small group, pair, or world cafe:

- *What is the emerging and systemic value of Power With: personally, locally, globally?*
- *What are the examples of Power Over, Power from Within and Power With in your own personal life?*
- *In your work or collective life?*
 - **For Power With, consider:** #MeToo movements, mutual aid networks, Black Mama's Bailouts, community saving circles in Black and Latinx communities (Tandas or Susu's)
 - **For Power from Within, consider:** creation of new spiritual communities outside religious institutions, Al-Anon and co-counseling or peer support
- *What are examples from the wider world?*
- *Which do you feel most uncomfortable with personally, and why?*
- *How can we reshape power?*

POWER FISHBOWL

A fishbowl is a popular education technique that allows a group to have a focused conversation and also makes room for different voices to enter into the conversation (as opposed to a panel or lecture format). Set up the room so that there is a smaller circle of chairs (2-4 depending on the group) surrounded by a wider circle of chairs. The fishbowl participants sit in the smaller set of chairs facing each other, and everyone else sits in the outside circle, facing inwards. Start the conversation with a prompt, and offer a couple of questions at a time throughout. The participants in the inner circle will talk to each other, loud enough for everyone to hear. Everyone who isn't in the inner circle should be listening (active listening!), and when they have something to contribute they can stand up and tap the shoulder of someone in the inner circle to indicate they would like to switch places. People in the inner circle can also ask to be tapped out.

- *What are the strongest ways you have seen Power With or Power Within (requires self-reflection, responsibility, deliberate check-ins)?*
- *What are powerful ways you've seen Power Within operate within organizing? What does it take?*
- *What are 1-2 things you can do right now when you go back to your work or organizing communities to shift towards Power With and Power Within?*

POWER WITH AND FROM WITHIN CASE STUDY: Women of Zimbabwe Arise!

After reading the case study about WOZA, bring folks together in small groups to discuss:

- *How does WOZA organize. and what can it teach us about the ways we can build Power With and Power Within?*
- *While WOZA was organizing under very different circumstances, what can we learn from them that we can apply in our own groups?*

CASE STUDY: *Women of* ZIMBABWE ARISE (WOZA)

BACKGROUND

Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA) is a social movement organisation (SMO) led and run by women. The group was born when a small group of women came together to discuss how to change the negative odds dominating their everyday struggles and concerns.

WOZA WAS FORMED IN 2003 AS A WOMEN'S CIVIC MOVEMENT TO:

- Provide women, from all walks of life, with a united voice to speak out on issues affecting their day-to-day lives
- Empower female leadership that will lead community involvement in pressing for solutions to the current crisis
- Encourage women to stand up for their rights and freedoms
- Lobby and advocate on those issues affecting women and their families
- Expose injustices

Like many social movements, WOZA uses **SLOGANS AND SYMBOLS** as a way to create a shared meaningful identity. WOZA colours are black and white. As co-founder Magodonga says:

"Black reminds us that we are mothers of a nation in mourning loss of life due to political violence and lack of service delivery due to love of power at the expense of the nation. The turmoil in

our communities is caused by the hate language from political leaders. White shows our peaceful stand and reminds us that even though we are hurting, we will always conduct ourselves in peace as the mothers of the nation."

WOZA uses the slogan 'Woza Moya - Huya Mweya' (Come Holy Spirit) to demonstrate their intention to serve as a healing force within Zimbabwe. The slogan forms a call and response, one leader says 'Woza Moya' and the reply from the group is 'WOZA!'

THE SISTERHOOD BOND

All members of WOZA commit to a 'sisterhood bond' when they join the organization. In doing so, they commit to a series of guidelines (below) and 'give their word' to stand up in support of all the sisters in the movement as they struggle together towards equality and justice for women and all the people of Zimbabwe.

- To speak out and encourage other women to do the same, so that the female voice is heard. (Women should no longer suffer silently.)
- To participate in peaceful assembly to discuss our challenges and act rather than complain

- To be a comfortable shoulder to lean on or lend a listening ear. 'A problem shared is a problem halved.'
- To demonstrate love and courage in our homes and community so that people can shake away fear
- To work to restore gender equality. In Zimbabwe, women are the mothers of the nation hence they must demand dignity and respect.
- By signing this bond, I agree to be disciplined if I endanger the lives of my sisters.
- To be a promoter of non-violence so that people can see and believe that problems can be solved peacefully
- To honour and respect my religious belief and the beliefs of others so as to promote spiritual health and wellbeing
- To promote democratic participation with tolerance for differing views and opinions
- To seek out, recruit, and be in solidarity with like-minded women and to believe that 'an injury to one is an injury to all'
- To promote and protect children's rights and help children to participate in defending all rights

BUILDING THE MOVEMENT

Historically, women in Zimbabwe had tried to organize through petitions or letter-writing, but the government ignored them entirely. The leaders of the newly formed WOZA understood that they would need to take higher risk actions to get the attention not just of the government but of the wider public. To recruit women to take public action, WOZA organized through in-person 1:1 and group meetings only. Consider this: in a country with poor infrastructure and difficult travel, WOZA leaders refused to use social media or WhatsApp as an organizing tool. Indeed, all recruitment, training, and decision-making are still done in-person wherever possible. The idea was simple: women telling women about WOZA, explaining the mission, vision, and objectives, and inviting them to join.

Once women join WOZA, they are quickly invited into the training program and from there, to take on roles within the movement. There are three levels of engagement that folks can plug into:

SUPPORT:

This includes providing child care and other caregiving for women taking direct action or being arrested, holding prayers for women who've been arrested, and spreading news of the arrests

LOW RISK:

Attending meetings; handing out flyers, cooking for-high risk action takers

HIGH RISK:

Protesting, willing to take arrest



Women are organized into units (which vary in size and scope based on geography, age, etc.). Almost all organizing, recruitment, and social events (as well as many actions) take place within these units to ensure that the organizing resonates with the issues and needs of people at the most local level. To take on leadership roles within their unit, women first complete an apprenticeship. For larger actions, units may come together to form clusters. Leadership elections are held at the regional and national level of the organization.

As Magodonga says, while “WOZA has a reputation for peaceful protest and direct action, this is just 5% of our work. 95% is training, civic education, and low-risk activities.”

From an initial group of 50 members, the movement has grown to ~110,000 members, including 68,000 women who have some role in the organizational structure.

BUILDING POWER

When WOZA first began, its new leadership approached different existing civil society organizations and NGOs to engage in partnership or find solidarity. WOZA’s leaders were at once ‘ridiculed’ and derided as ‘naive community women’ who didn’t understand the way power and domination worked in Zimbabwe and the brutality that they would face. Some gave WOZA a three-month life span. WOZA’s leadership continued, undeterred. They committed to working as a direct-action protest movement until they had the critical mass they believed was needed to run a successful inside strategy. Indeed, WOZA saw in the derision an opportunity: no one expected ‘naive women’ to lead a high-risk nonviolent movement – any actions taken would get immediate public attention.

In 2006, WOZA conducted an eleven-month listening campaign with over 10,000 rural and urban participants in 284 meetings. The People’s Charter that emerged formed the basis of WOZA’s campaigns moving forwards.

These campaigns included fighting corruption, i.e., protesting costs of government-run electricity to households across Zimbabwe, even when there were power cuts for as much as 18 hours/day, and fighting government violence, i.e., the home abductions of activists. The women used high-visibility actions such as die-ins, mock funerals, and sit-ins to gain attention and increase their membership. Once arrested, the women refused to pay the equivalent of bail for their release – they weren’t looking to enrich the police – and instead stayed in jail for up to 6-8 weeks at a time, while other members of WOZA delivered food, prayed, and continued to keep watch outside the police stations and jails. WOZA members were beaten, tortured, incarcerated, and abducted. But the women continued to organize, and the movement grew in both size and respect.

By July 2009, WOZA decided they had reached the critical mass they needed to engage in the elections with a campaign for a new people-driven constitution. They helped print and distribute over 80,000 copies of a guide to ‘helping Zimbabweans write their own Constitution’ in three languages and conducted 314 workshops for 5754 participants to help draft 90 talking points that they wanted to see included. In 2013, Zimbabweans voted YES on a People’s Constitution; the final draft included 77 of WOZA’s 90 talking points.

This case study is based on a presentation given by WOZA co-founder Magodonga Mahlangu at a gathering of international organizers in New York, April 2018.



BUILDING The Team WILLING of the

'Team of the willing' is a term Paulina Helm-Hernández used often at SONG as a way to reframe the organization's thinking around coalitions and chapters. She called on all of us to build such teams, instead of structures or systems designed to contain the same few activists, friends, or groups.

Sometimes, we stay small and stagnate in our coalitions or campaign structures because of loyalty or habit, and we focus on structure to the detriment of the work. Because our movements and organizations for racial, economic, and gender justice are (or feel) small, we may feel safer keeping it tight with the people we know, even if they don't necessarily want to work with us!

In reality, we need more and more people organized in groups, formations, and organizations, and in motion, not just in networks or fan clubs. We need to ask: *How do we find the people that want to rock out with us on pieces of work? We need to be out there looking for and welcoming the millions of people who have not yet been invited into movement. How to build a team of the willing is at the heart of this project and this curriculum, and it is a 21st-century feminist praxis.*

As Gloria Anzaldúa wrote, 'We don't want to be stars, but parts of constellations.' This section is about building your constellation, inside and out. *How will you grow your team? And once you recruit people, what will they find once they join up? How can we build and repair our relations, find our people (whether we like each other or not), and actually do what it takes to try to save humanity and the world from the chokehold of white supremacy and late-stage capitalism?*

OUTREACH IN CYNICAL & LONELY TIMES [3 HOURS]

OVERVIEW

"If our organizations are not growing, we are dying." This is a mantra that was drilled into many of us as young organizers. *How do we do this inside of – and not just in spite of – the conditions we live in? How do we confront the plague of cliquishness and boldly go out and find our people across difference, politics, and experience?* The question of growing the organization is the responsibility of all members, with different people playing different parts. This workshop begins to address some of these questions and practices.

GOALS

- To learn how to think about and do outreach
- To learn to make and use an outreach plan
- To troubleshoot issues or challenges your team faces around outreach
- To learn how to organize our teams to best recruit and retain new people

TIME NEEDED

3 hours, or can be broken up over multiple sessions

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Flip charts, tape, markers to capture conversation, writing tools and blank paper for participants if needed
- Handout: **Outreach Worksheet** (p. 55)

FRAMING

We will use this time to talk about finding our people and making a plan to bring them into our work, team, or group. We believe in organization, we believe that our power lies in our numbers, and we know that most people aren't part of organizations right now. Part of our ongoing, sustained work in our groups is to bring more people in so we can achieve our shared purpose. It is one of the hardest things, and also one of the most important things. Otherwise, we are just a clique.

THE LOW ROAD

MARGE PIERCY

What can they do to you?
Whatever they want...

They can set you up, bust you,
they can break your fingers,
burn your brain with electricity,
blur you with drugs till you
can't walk, can't remember,
they can take away your children,
wall up your lover;
they can do anything you can't stop them doing.

How can you stop them?
Alone you can fight, you can refuse.
You can take whatever revenge you can
but they roll right over you.
But two people fighting back to back
can cut through a mob
a snake-dancing fire
can break a cordon,
termites can bring down a mansion.

Two people can keep each other sane
can give support, conviction,
love, massage, hope, sex.

Three people are a delegation
a cell, a wedge.
With four you can play games
and start a collective.
With six you can rent a whole house
have pie for dinner with no seconds
and make your own music.

Thirteen makes a circle,
a hundred fill a hall.
A thousand have solidarity
and your own newsletter;
ten thousand community
and your own papers;
a hundred thousand,
a network of communities;
a million, our own world.

It goes one at a time.
It starts when you care to act.
It starts when you do it again
after they say no.
It starts when you say We
and know who you mean;
and each day you mean
one more.

Full group go-around:

- *When have you joined something?*
- *Who invited you?*
- *Why did you join?*
- *Did you stay?*

If time or interest allow, you can also ask:

- *When have you done outreach before?*
- *What did you do?*
- *How did it go?*

This could also be done in pairs or groups of three.

Pull out themes around the reasons people joined,
such as:

- They were asked/invited
- Friends/social relationships
- Interests
- Particular political urgency
- And more

OUTREACH: WHAT IS IT?

Ask the group or just share definition:

- **Getting the word about your work out to your audience or base and creating an on-ramp for people to join in that work.**
- Outreach is sometimes used interchangeably with **base-building, advertising, or recruitment**. All groups do outreach unless they are secret societies, cliques, or cadres. However, not all groups build base. Many groups are not necessarily looking for new leaders or to increase their numbers.
- **Remember our power comes from people!** We are organized **people** going up against organized capital.

NAMING THE CONDITIONS OF THIS TIME

Ask these questions in the full group and scribe answers on flip chart paper:

- *What is true about organizing in this time and how does that affect our outreach?*
- *What are we dealing with right now that makes it easier and harder to do outreach than in past eras (such as before the cell phone, or earlier)?*

Consider:

- Phone addiction and isolation
 - Folks are working many hours and sometimes multiple jobs
 - Many people are not in organizations, but are more interested in “networks”
 - High rates of alcohol and substance addiction
 - Suicidal tendencies are also very high
 - Folks are over-reliant on social media to “get the word out.” While social media can allow us to reach a lot more people, we know personal connections and offering folks meaningful ways to get involved is how we recruit future leaders. It’s a double-edged sword.
- *Given these truths and based on these times, how do we need to think and act differently with our outreach?*
 - *Where must we be extra vigilant and proactive?*

You can also come to these questions at the end.

Consider:

- The world is shrinking because of social media, and at the same time people are more lonely
 - We lack rigor, persistence, and follow-up in our outreach practices
 - Fear results in folks not doing outreach or only talking to friends or people “like us”
 - Internally, we’re pretty disorganized and bad at delegating and having things for people to do, resulting in some people acting like activist martyrs while others drift away
 - We talk too much and don’t know how to observe, listen, and see context clues (when we engage new people, we should be listening 80% of the time and talking only 20%!)
 - For middle- and upper-class whites, folks have been trained to be comfortable in homogeneity and racial entitlement. Discomfort with or fear of Black people (which can look like lack of eye contact, white folks lacking situational awareness or monologuing, and other behaviors) means folks don’t do outreach out of desire to obscure that fear.
- *What are some best practices we can do organizationally or institutionally to ensure that building new relationships and recruiting new people is a constant part of the work?*
 - *What are some “guard rails” we can put in place to prevent us from slipping into insularity?*

Consider:

- **Is recruitment built into our theory of change and organizing model?** Looking back at WOZA, we see that recruiting new people and fully welcoming them into the organization (in this case through training) is central to their organizational DNA.

PREPARING FOR AN OUTREACH PLAN

- **Decide on your systems** for recruitment and absorption so they are baked into your infrastructure, not just based on the personal interest or enthusiasm of individuals.
 - **Clarify your on-ramp(s)** to participation for new people and **roles for your team members** from beginning to end. For example, you could have one role be to coordinate the outreach team and another to welcome and load people in.
 - **Consider having one person (or a pair of people) hold onto your big contact list** and be responsible for data entry. With one person to coordinate and delegate, a bigger team can be mobilized to do outreach.
 - **Update your list of volunteer / member needs quarterly**, so it's clear where people can plug in.
- **Decide how social media will be part of** your outreach strategy, not **be** the outreach strategy
- **Clarify your base and constituency** if needed. Your **constituency** are people who are impacted by whatever it is you work around; **base** are people that already know about you. You can dig deeper into this if helpful for your group:
 - *Who is your constituency?*
 - *Who **isn't** in your constituency?*
 - *Who is part of your base (follows you on social media, is on your email list, etc.)?*
 - *How does your social location/identity and experience shape your understanding of outreach and your approaches?*
- **Confirm audience, constituency, event or outreach goals.** We need goals! We tip towards being so relational that we refuse to have goals or metrics. We can be relationship-focused and still have target numbers, because we have countless people to organize and invite into movement.
 - *Who are you targeting?*
 - *If organizing outreach for an event, what's your attendance goal?*
 - **Observe this general rule of thumb for events:** If you want 50, you have to get 100 commitments, and to get 100 commitments, you need 200 invites.

THREE WAYS TO LOOK AT OUTREACH AND RETENTION (Keeping the people you got)

We will be focusing on #3 for much of this time, but #1 and #2 need to be attended to as well.

1. **How will we retain and/or engage our existing list?** What do we know it takes to turn our people out? What is the difference between outreach, retention, engagement? Come up with examples.
2. **How will we reach out to and engage aligned organizations, groups, and institutions?** What are the existing relationships that each person in the group can leverage (see worksheet opposite)?
3. **How will we find our people we haven't met yet?** This is sometimes called cold or street outreach. What are the ways we can do this?
 - Street preaching
 - Guerilla theater
 - Public performance or spectacle
 - Tabling
 - Making announcements at clubs, parties, or events
 - Standing on a street corner
 - Door knocking / canvassing

FINDING OUR FOLKS MAPPING ACTIVITY

Before beginning this mapping exercise, **establish for what you are recruiting and your target constituency.**

First, break people into groups of three or four. Begin with solo brainstorming: *Where in your town or area are your people self-organized?* (This is helping us address questions #2 and #3 from the list above.) Then, work as a small group to **make a map together of places, organizations, or events where our people gather and self-organize.**

Your map should change based on the seasons, political conditions, and many other factors. You can invite people to share their actual relationships to your constituency and target audience in their small groups, so they can identify people's relationships (and, in some cases, lack of relationships).

Finally, prioritize the brilliance on your map into your best outreach plan, filling in the worksheet opposite!

Consider: Specific social service agencies or state agencies, public transportation hubs, specific bars or clubs, specific neighborhoods, specific public spaces. Domestic worker organizers often do outreach at parks, libraries, and bus stops or on public transportation where a lot of their constituency is. Queer and trans youth of color organizers in Atlanta used to go to Piedmont Park during and after school, as well as a new shopping district in a wealthy part of mid-town, because that is where that constituency gathered.

OUTREACH

worksheet

FOR WHAT ARE
YOU RECRUITING? _____

WHO IS YOUR TARGET
CONSTITUENCY? (WHO ARE THE PEOPLE YOU NEED?) _____

WHERE ARE THEY?

WHAT ARE THE LOCATIONS, SPACES, ORGANIZATIONS, OR INSTITUTIONS
WHERE THESE FOLKS CONGREGATE OR CONSISTENTLY ARE?
HOW DOES TIMING (OF THE DAY, WEEK, OR MONTH) OR SEASONALITY AFFECT THIS?

HOW MANY
PEOPLE
DO YOU
NEED?

WHAT IS YOUR TARGET ATTENDANCE,
TURN OUT, OR PARTICIPATION? _____

IF _____ IS THE TARGET, MULTIPLY THAT BY TWO:
THIS IS HOW MANY CONFIRMATIONS YOU NEED. _____

NOW, MULTIPLY THIS NUMBER BY TWO:

THESE ARE THE NUMBER OF INVITATIONS YOU NEED TO CIRCULATE!

Now, go through your phone...



LIST THE NAMES OF TEN PEOPLE YOU KNOW YOU COULD REACH OUT TO:

-
-
-
-
-

-
-
-
-
-

Some options for report-backs:

- Teams could present and you could all vote on the best plan.
- Teams could present and your outreach team (or new outreach point person!) could collect and synthesize the work.
- Teams could present and you could play a game where the team gets a point for one place or idea that no other group had.

SUMMARY & KEY TAKEAWAYS

Write these key takeaways up on a flip chart. To be successful you need to:

- **Plan ahead and build routine practices.** This is a time to be like the Jehovah's Witnesses: always have literature, be profoundly consistent, and go to where the people are (such as, at home!).
- **Make a good tracking system for data.** When meeting people, always collect contact information, and have one consistent place all that contact information actually goes.
- **Build coherent systems around roles.** Clarify on-ramps to participation and roles for team members from beginning to end.
- **Bake it in.** Like WOZA, ensure recruiting new people and fully welcoming them into the work is central and systematized.
- **Have goals.** Make them specific.
- **Look for your people where they are.**
- **Practice makes perfect, and it will always be hard.**

NEXT STEPS

- Invite people do the **Outreach Worksheet** for identifying their individual contacts and leveraging resources.
- If the group hasn't yet, make space to address the question: *How will our outreach plan function?*

CLOSING QUESTIONS

- *What's giving you hope?*
- *Where do you see promise?*
- *How is that connected to outreach?*

COMMON NEEDS OF DEMOCRATIC GROUPS [1-2 HOURS]

OVERVIEW

This session contains tools for groups to use to uncover common patterns in group building. It also brings us down to the fundamentals of working together: decision-making, meetings, power, and roles. While these things are basic, they are also where we often get stuck. As developers of this curriculum, we are not neutral; we take a political position that organizations, groups, and collectives need more people to bring about transformation, and that we cannot win with just “networks.” If our people are our power and there is power in numbers, then we need organizations, and people in relationship and in motion together. We need to be in formation. We need containers. Organizations doesn’t mean non-profits; street tribes are organizations, Alcoholics Anonymous is an organization, sports teams are organizations. We need teams to do anything. Nothing has ever been accomplished alone.

GOALS

- To identify and confront assumptions and challenges that arise when working in democratic groups
- To discuss and agree on common needs for democratic groups
- To identify agreements and practices for meetings and decision-making that will strengthen the group and reflect the group’s values

TIME NEEDED

1-2 hours

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Flip charts, tape, markers for mapping, writing tools for participants
- Handouts: **Collective Plagues** (pp. 60-61), **Facilitation Tools** (p. 69), **Decision-Making Structures** (p. 66), **Morale-Killing/-Supporting Meetings** (p. 63), **Leveraging Resources & Radical Hospitality** (p. 69)

READINGS/RESOURCES

- *Tyranny of Structurelessness* by Jo Freeman
- *Ethical Communication* handout by Vanessa Jackson
- *Organizational Culture Chart* by Dean Spade

FRAMING

Working together is hard. It is also fundamental to our values around community organizing, popular education, and sovereignty. In an era of profound isolation, cynicism, and hyper-individualism, there are new and increased challenges. **Without collective self-awareness and organizational attentiveness, many groups fall into similar dysfunctional pitfalls around power.** To begin, use flip charts to write up the following quotations (p. 58):

"We believe in collective process and a nonhierarchical distribution of power within our own group and in our vision of a revolutionary society. We are committed to a continual examination of our politics as they develop through criticism and self-criticism as an essential aspect of our practice"

- Combahee River Collective Statement

"Governing is the process of making decisions that impact groups of people. How are we governing in our organizations and communities?" Charlene Carruthers, *Unapologetic* (p. 109)

As we fight to reshape the power of institutions and systems, we are also in struggle across the board around power inside of our organizations. It gets real funky real quick. Because we live in a culture of such intense hierarchy and domination (not to mention the non-profitization or professionalization of 'organizing'), we sometimes see knee-jerk reactions inside of ourselves and our groups. That knee jerk often sounds like 'all structure or hierarchy is oppressive,' 'all decisions need to be made together,' 'we all need to be best friends to be able to work together,' or 'you silenced me by not doing my idea even though I only came to that one meeting!' It keeps us stuck in internal battles that harm our collective morale, alienate people, confuse us, and **detract from our ability to build trust through shared work and shared risks.** Power is tricky, our pain is real, we are deeply flawed and damaged, **and yet** we must build containers within which we can tend to our internal team dynamics and keep our eyes on the prize: **bringing about big change for the many, not the few.**

Often in SONG, we have found that the **over-emphasis on internal team dynamics obscures deeper pain,** confusion, cynicism, or despair that people in the group are battling with: we don't know what to do 'out there' so we eat each other alive internally.

Opening pair share:

- *What's the best team you have been a part of? What made it so?*
- *What's a team you have been a part of that fell apart, and what caused that to happen?*
- *What's your diagnosis about what happened (not just your feelings, but your felt assessment)?*

Invite each pair to share back one thing from their conversation with the full group.

IDENTIFYING COMMON NEEDS

- Sharing power and resources is one of the common needs of all democratic, participatory groups. Remember, democratic does not necessarily mean horizontal.
- Dean Spade talks about the common needs being:
 - **Transparency and participation**
 - **Accountability**
 - **Planning and Clarity**
- *Do we agree with this? Why or why not?*
- *What do we think are the common needs of democratic groups? Are there others to add?*
- Discuss common needs and key highlights from Jo Freeman's article.

REFLECTIVE

- SLOW THINGS DOWN
- SUPPORT INTROVERTS
- CEMENT LEARNING

ELICITIVE

- HEART-CENTERED
- SUPPORT FOLKS TO SHARE
- DRAW PEOPLE OUT
- MAKE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO ALL

DIAGNOSTIC

- TAKE THE TEMPERATURE OF THE GROUP
- SHARE WHAT WE KNOW
- ASKS: WHAT'S GOING ON?

ENERGIZING

- GET WHOLE SELVES ENGAGED
- EMBODIMENT

GENERATIVE

- ARTS-BASED
- MEDIA MAKING
- CONNECT WITH SPIRIT



Types of FACILITATION TOOLS

DISCUSSION SUPPORTING

- BALANCE EQUITY & EFFICIENCY
- PREVENT SPINNING
- STAY ON TASK
- BUILD TRUST, MORALE & CULTURE

INTEGRATING/ DECISION-MAKING

- MOVE TOWARDS CLARITY
- MOVE TOWARDS ACTION
- ASKS: HOW ARE WE IN ALIGNMENT? WHAT WILL WE DO?

DIFFERENTIATION

- NAME & EXPRESS DISAGREEMENT OR DIFFERENCE
- EXPLORE OPTIONS
- PARALLEL TRACKS
- ASKS: WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT WISDOMS INFORMING THIS GROUP?

COLLECTIVE PLAGUES AND ...AND THE MEDICINE WE NEED...

Through discussions at SONG, we identified these four patterns plaguing our organizations and our movements.

FRAGILITY: We leave or divest from processes at first sign of discomfort; we misname discomfort as trauma or violence; we expect movement and organizations to be perfect and/or provide everything and be everything for us; we assume our pain is the only pain.



MEDICINE: We can exercise the habit of self-critique so we don't become defensive when someone offers a grounded assessment; we can practice patting ourselves on the back and giving each other praise when we do good work, as this builds confidence through a culture of appreciation within our teams; we can build resiliency and self-work practices in order to unplug our triggers; we welcome discomfort and difference as a chance to grow; we can process with people outside the group; we can check our assumptions, either internally or literally with others on our teams; we can remember that impact is different than intention and people's intentions matter; we can manage our expectations by asking: What is reasonable for this team to provide?

INFIGHTING: Afraid of taking on the real enemies that are systematically attacking our people and confused about how to even do that, we instead turn on each other; we pick fights; we refuse to set conflict down or move on after conflict; we harbor grudges; we gossip; we are ego driven.



MEDICINE: 'Let It Go': sing the *Frozen* song! We can ask: what is underneath our habits around infighting and constant conflict? If we want something different, we must be willing to be something different; we can get in our bodies; we can take or keep conflict offline; we can say NO to Facebook drags; we can intervene; we can practice courage in naming what we are losing when we just keep fighting and fighting; we can all do our work on our own egos; we can set an expiration date for when conflict expires.

AFFLICTIONS OF OUR TIME

...TO HEAL AND TRANSFORM THEM

CYNICISM: This plague walks with loneliness and fragility; it often shows up because we are overwhelmed, and often covers up nihilism and despair; we are hypercritical; we over-critique.



MEDICINE: We can cultivate flexibility; we can take a break from the work sometimes; we can identify collective ways to build and flex our hope and vision muscles; we can find ways to add fun to our days; we can hold good boundaries to prevent exhaustion; we can have clarity on roles and a culture of proposals instead of critique.

CLIQUEISHNESS: We engage in gatekeeping; we are suspicious of new people; we refuse to expand the circle; we only want to work with our friends.



MEDICINE: We can allow people the opportunity to build trust by doing what they say they will do through taking action and being consistent and honest; we can understand that not everyone has to be a friend in order to organize with them, but that is an extra treat; we can cultivate curiosity; we can remind ourselves and each other that we need more people; we can name cliquishness to increase self-awareness; we can identify shared practices to build new habits; we can build a culture of 1-on-1s and hospitality.

To use this framework as a popular education tool, move people into breakouts to discuss one or more of the plagues: how they show up or manifest, and the medicine we have or need to transform them. Share back and scribe visually, placing plagues in the middle of the page (represented as poison) and medicinal plants all around them, containing and healing them. *This tool was developed at Southerners On New Ground.*

MEETINGS

Let's talk about the lifeblood and downfall of most democratic groups, the place where it all happens: **meetings**.

WHAT ARE MEETINGS FOR?

- Coordination
- Updates across teams
- Relational decisions that need the full team.

WHAT ARE MEETINGS NOT FOR?

- Only relationship building
- Only orienting new people
- Only brainstorming

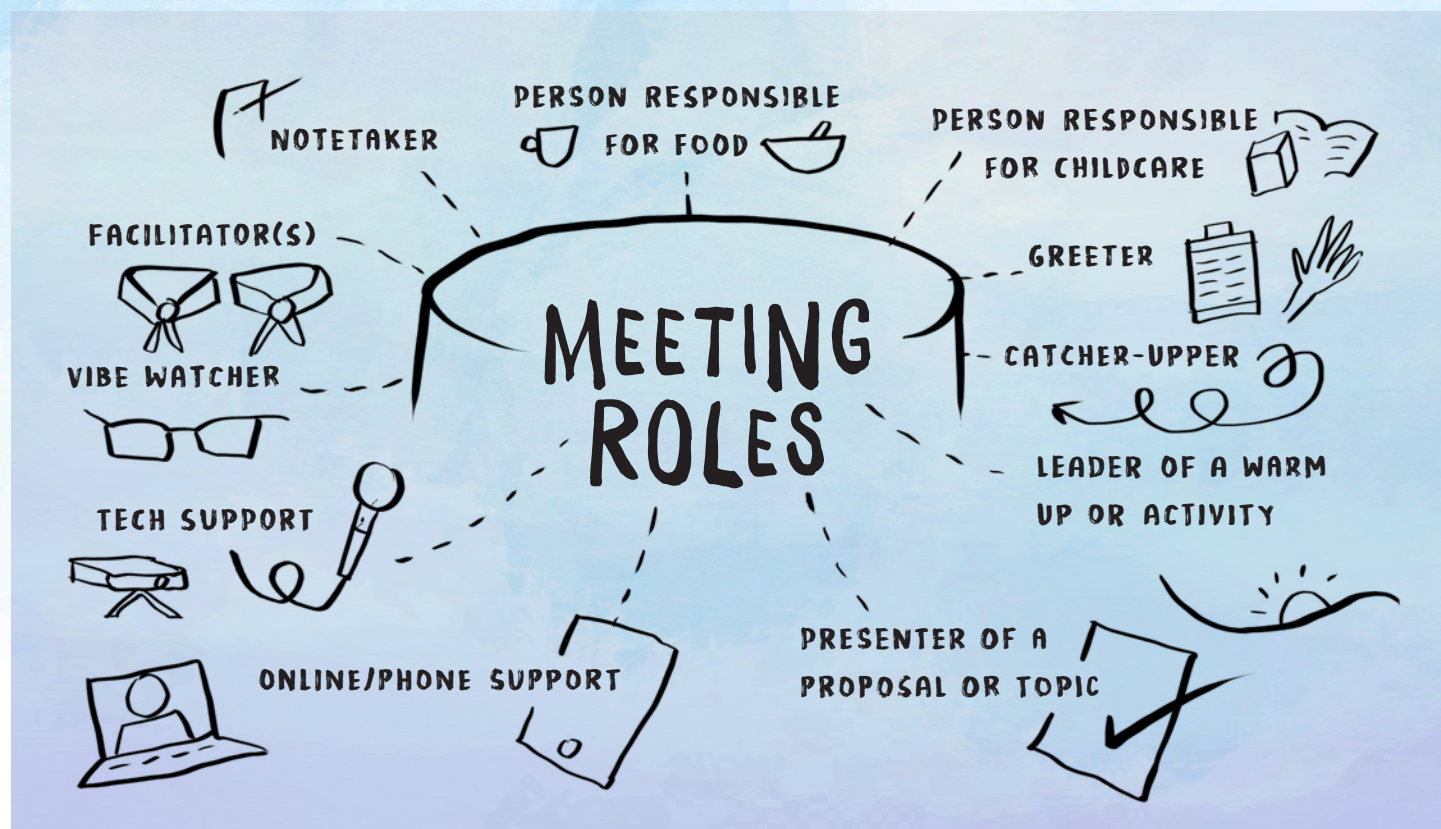
Of this list, what are we doing? Can we stop?

WHAT MAKES A MEETING GOOD OR BAD?

As people talk about their experiences with meeting, fill in a two-column chart contrasting **morale-killing meetings** with **morale-supporting meetings**. Consider sharing some items from the list opposite.

MEETINGS WRAP-UP

A big weak spot of many meetings is spotty facilitation, underdeveloped facilitation skills, or lack of rotation in facilitation. This often goes unacknowledged. Many of us know this; we just don't always do anything about it. But to truly step into feminist leadership and build a world worthy of our people, we need to stop being spectators or participant-observers in our own lives and groups. Meetings aren't rocket science, but they do take time, attention, and consistency.



MORALE-KILLING MEETINGS:

- Have no clear purpose
- Have no agenda
- Have weak facilitation (loud mouths or rabbit-hole lovers not redirected) or no facilitation
- Are so insular you feel like people are speaking a different language or shared shorthand
- Result in too few or no clear decisions
- Result in too few or no action items
- Happen when people haven't done their action items from last time
- Don't remind people of previous decisions
- Result in notes that no one ever looks at again, verbatim notes, or notes no one can find later
- Have rigid agenda reliance with no flexibility (This often shows up as out of touch with the experiences of people in the room. If this is a problem for you or in your group, encourage facilitators to practice balancing where folks are at with where the group needs to go.)
- Rely too heavily on movement practices that are actually stale or unused in the group, such as agreements that are symbolic, a parking lot folks don't use, a vibe watcher who only worries about individuals' feelings and is conflict avoidant, etc.
- Are too long for the task at hand or too short to feel connected and human
- Fail to balance the need for authenticity and presence with the realities of people's lives and other commitments

MORALE-SUPPORTING MEETINGS:

- Have prepared facilitators. Kai Lumumba Barrow often says that for bigger trainings, you need to spend just as much if not more time preparing for the meeting as in it.
- Have agendas shared with participants beforehand. Facilitators have reminded people of their parts or action items.
- Have stuff written up; are visual and verbal
- Include a check-in. Alternate silly and real so people can get to know each other.
- Rotate who is responsible for food, childcare, agenda prep, facilitation, and presentation
- Use a consistent agenda format (with action items from last time highlighted each time so it's easier to rotate facilitation)
- Result in notes that are always stored in the same place and reviewed by the facilitators before each meeting
- Are fun!
- Have an ethic that team members are all responsible for the success of the meeting
- Have facilitators with awareness to step out of the role if necessary, because they need to briefly participate or because they need to fully tap out
- Have a tone that encourages a sense of joy, hospitality, and belonging for all
- Are transparent about facilitator rank and power while inviting more folks into leadership
- Have defined roles for meeting (see chart p. 62)

Bad HABITS Self-Assessment

MOST OF US HAVE SOME BAD HABITS WE STRUGGLE TO BREAK. INTERRUPTING, SCROLLING THE PHONE, ENGAGING IN CONFLICT OVER TEXT, NOT READING MEETING NOTES, TALKING TO OUR FRIENDS BUT NOT THOSE WE NEED TO HEAR FROM, LACK OF RIGOR ABOUT TIME, BEING NOSY, AND BEING UNAVAILABLE THEN WEIGHING IN HARD ARE SOME CLASSIC EXAMPLES!

What bad habits do you KNOW you need to break?

BAD HABIT

INTERVENTION

FOR EACH HABIT, MAKE ONE COMMITMENT TO AN INTERVENTION.
THEN TELL SOMEONE ELSE IN THE GROUP YOUR PLAN.

DECISION-MAKING

Everyone on your team is making decisions all the time. Working is decision-making. When we consider the matter of decision-making for democratic groups, what we're really asking is a question of discernment, or sorting, different types of decisions:

- *What decisions does the whole group need to weigh in on?*
- *What can we move forward more independently in our roles or working groups?*
- *When are we consulting or notifying each other of decisions, and when do we need consent from each other (or specific others, like a boss or work-area lead) to move forward?*

To aid discernment, consider:

- *Who has experience addressing the question or issue at hand? Who will be impacted by the decision?*
These two categories of folks should be consulted.
- *Are you starting something new? Who will it impact?*
- *Are you stopping a significant part of your work, or seeking to terminate a formal relationship?*
- *In decision-making discussions, facilitators should make sure to identify (and frequently re-state) choice points for people. Conversations can spin forever and expand endlessly, but what choice are you actually trying to make right now? What can be punted to a future discussion?*
- *Cultivate and encourage a **proposal-based organizational culture** that gives space for new ideas to emerge. This develops people's skill in crafting proposals, from identifying a need, to shaping a response, then shopping the proposal around to strengthen it and build enthusiasm, and ultimately pitching it to the group and following through on implementation. Ask folks to consider who in the group is most likely to oppose their proposal, and to make sure to workshop the idea with them before bringing it to the full group. Proposals should at minimum have been shared in writing before meeting time is spent on them.*
- *Many of these practices are widely known, and **there's often a gap between what we know we should do and what we actually do in practice** when the rubber hits the road. How do we work to close that gap?*

DECISION MENU MAKING

of Methods
& Structures

ONE PERSON
CALLS THE
SHOTS

EXECUTIVE /
LEADERSHIP
COMMITTEE

VOTING: MAJORITY,
SUPERMAJORITY

INFORMAL
ELITE
DECIDES

STREET
ACTION
TACTICAL
TEAM

WORKING GROUPS

CONSENSUS,
CONSENSUS
MINUS ONE

SPOKES COUNCIL

WHAT ARE OUR METHODS? WHY?

DECISION-MAKING KEY POINTS

- In US movements, decision-making is largely misunderstood and full of land mines. **It is perceived as a privilege, and a way to wield power** (in a context where many of us get little say in other areas of our lives). And it's true: decision-making is about power. **But it is also a huge responsibility.** We have to make choices in an often-hostile landscape (with scarcity of resources and profound opposition) in which competing commitments and diverse needs are weighed and compromises are often made, and then we have to own those decisions and their consequences (the good, the bad, and the gnarly). **Many people want to be 'in' on decision-making but are unprepared to take the heat when there's pushback or conditions are poor.**
- In grassroots and progressive groups, we often get **'lost in the sauce,'** debating minutiae and haggling over small choices. Sometimes, we do this to avoid the bigger strategic uncertainties we have in our work, as it's easier to argue about "which paper color is cuter?" than "are we really building any power here?" But building trust means honoring other peoples' calls, and building up each other's skills when needed rather than hovering and micromanaging people. **Let's trust, let go, and keep our eyes on the prize.**
- **If leaders and groups don't trust the people, then the people can become untrustworthy.** Releasing the chokehold on decision-making that doesn't need to be centralized also communicates that we're serious about building to scale, and demonstrates the values of collectivism and leadership development.
- On the flip side, **including everyone on everything, even when they lack sufficient information, context, or experience is unreasonable and liberal,** and an indicator of conflict-avoidant culture.

SCENARIOS

Break people up into small groups to work through a scenario. Use these, or invent your own, tailor-made for your challenges. Using flip chart paper, write up the questions and/or scenarios if that's useful. For each scenario, invite groups to discuss:

- *What's the issue?*
- *What is to be done?*
- *What would prevent them from solving this issue quickly?*
- *Who needs to be involved in the decision-making?*

Then, have folks prepare a skit and present it to the full group.

Scenario 1: People are "empowered" to make decisions, but the long-term leader comes in and overturns it every time!

Scenario 2: People come in and out of meetings and process, but then weigh in really hard at key decision-making moments.

Scenario 3: The team can't make a decision to save their lives! Discussions are lengthy, and decisions are consistently punted to the next meeting.

Scenario 4: A person with large amounts of information and interpersonal power refuses to delegate, share key information, or share the relationships necessary to move group forward.

BAKING IN RADICAL HOSPITALITY

Part of our work is to build teams, groups, and formations that give people meaningful opportunities to be welcomed, developed, and move up into their own leadership and support others. If people don't feel welcomed at the start, they fade away or don't show up again, and we don't have a chance to build them – or our groups – up.

When we fail to welcome new people authentically, it can be for many reasons. It can look like:

- Forgetting to welcome new people formally at a meeting
- Failing to make meetings accessible (Is there food? Childcare? Can you get there by bus?)
- Defaulting to jargon or inside talk, so new people can't follow
- Not following up with people after they come to a meeting, event, or action
- Having no entry-points for people other than business meetings

So how do you bake radical hospitality into your practice? How do you approach strangers, and how do you relate to them once you get them in the door? How can you better visibilize the warmth you want to offer?

Break into small groups, and invite people to consider these questions. It can help to remember when we were new to something (even the first day of school).

Invite folks to think about examples from their own lives (like, *Who is that cake lady or covered-dish person in your world who is so good at making people feel cared for and welcomed?*)

Then, have groups develop a recipe for ways to welcome new people and create a shared culture where we look out for each others' belonging.

What are the ingredients that we have and that we need to make our special recipe for radical hospitality?

Example:

1 part real uninterrupted **listening**, with eye contact

10 cups of **patience**

2 sticks of **copal**

1 speaker with a nice **playlist**

25 **tamales**

Mix with weekly practice of checking in on someone on the team, and bake!

CLOSING

Give folks copies of the **Leveraging Resources and Radical Hospitality** worksheet (opposite) to fill in on their own, and invite them to review their answers with one other person as part of check-out conversation

Leveraging RESOURCES and RADICAL Hospitality

Q: WHERE CAN WE GET WHAT WE NEED? HOW DO WE HUSTLE TO GET OUR NEEDS MET AS A NON-STAFFED GROUP?

A: BE A HUSTLER!

AND IF YOU WERE RAISED WITH A SILVER SPOON IN YOUR MOUTH, BE DECENT AND AWAKE!



WHAT RESOURCES DO YOU HAVE AT YOUR DISPOSAL?

MAP YOUR ASSETS OF ACCESS! EVERYONE HAS ASSETS. YOURS COULD INCLUDE:

ACCESS TO SPACES:
FOR MEETINGS,
RETREATS, AND EVENTS



ACCESS TO CHURCHES: MANY
HAVE CHILDCARE FACILITIES AND
HUGE INDUSTRIAL KITCHENS



ACCESS TO FOOD: FOR
EXAMPLE, A COUSIN THAT
HAS A RESTAURANT OR
GETTING DONATIONS FROM
A SUPERMARKET



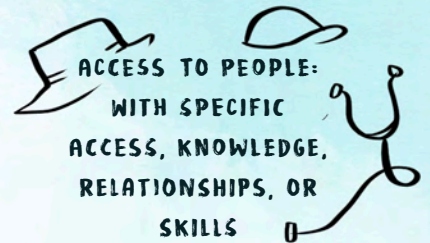
ACCESS TO MONEY:
FOR EXAMPLE, A
ROTARY CLUB \$500
ANNUAL AWARD



ACCESS TO SUPPLIES AND
TOOLS: LIKE A PHOTOCOPIER OR
EXTRA HOUSEPAINT



ACCESS TO PEOPLE:
WITH SPECIFIC
ACCESS, KNOWLEDGE,
RELATIONSHIPS, OR
SKILLS



EVEN IF WE'RE IN HARD TIMES, WE HAVE A LOT AT OUR FINGERTIPS BECAUSE OF OUR RELATIONSHIPS...
IF WE'RE WILLING TO DEEPEN OUR RELATIONSHIPS AND ASK FOLKS INTO THE WORK!

INFRASTRUCTURE, PART 1: GOOD BONES, STRONG MUSCLES [2 HOURS]

OVERVIEW

This section is a feminist intervention around “what organizing is.” It supports folks to be proactive about greasing the wheels of internal operations so they can do what they set out to do. It’s also intended to prevent folks from getting spun-out or stalled-out by common organizational hiccups like delegation, roles, and coordination.

In this culture, many of us aren’t taught how to collaborate, share, or coordinate effectively; we have to learn, practice, and overcome bad habits. We know that this is necessary because our mandate as organizers is to work with others to build power. Alone, we are just activists acting on our passions.

All roles within a political organization are political, whether you are in the front of the house or behind the scenes. Everyone in a formation is therefore accountable to the vision and goals of the organization. This means that as cooks, childcare providers, and administrators we are accountable to the politics of our formations, and as strategy heads, communications folks, and march leaders we are accountable to the infrastructure systems that hold our work together.

Infrastructure is a big topic, so we’re offering it in two parts. Part 1 is about assessing the overall values and systems in place in your group, and Part 2 tackles the question of roles and coordination.

GOALS

- To offer time for individual and collective reflection on people’s experiences working in groups
- To explore values, practices, weaknesses, and opportunities for growth in your group’s internal ecosystem
- To use interactive exercises to assess your group’s needs around coordination, roles, and systems

TIME NEEDED

2 hours

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Flip chart, markers, tape, writing tools for participants. Prepare **values** cards and **strong core** lists.
- Handouts: **Where Do I Go**, **Where do we need Coordination**, and **Information & Decision Flows**

READINGS/RESOURCES

- *Tyranny of Structurelessness* by Jo Freeman
- *Keeping Your Group Alive and Kicking* (Rural Organizing Project)
- *Database and communication systems* (Rural Organizing Project)

WHERE DO I GO?

INFRASTRUCTURE SELF-ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

WHAT WORK
COMES EASY
TO YOU?

WHAT ARE YOU GOOD
AT THAT YOU DON'T
PARTICULARLY LIKE
TO DO?

WHAT DO YOU LIKE
TO DO THAT YOU
ARE ALSO GOOD AT?

WHAT ARE THINGS
YOU ARE WILLING TO
DO THAT YOU DON'T
NECESSARILY ENJOY?

WHAT ARE YOU
ABSOLUTELY NOT WILLING
TO DO IN THE CONTEXT
OF A GROUP OR A TEAM?

IN GROUP
PROJECTS,
WHERE DO YOU
GRAVITATE?

HOW DID YOU COME
TO OCCUPY THE ROLES
YOU OFTEN TAKE ON?

HOW DOES YOUR GENDER,
RACE, AND HOW YOU LIVE
IN THIS SOCIETY INFORM
WHAT WORK YOU GO
TOWARDS?

PREP WORK

Have folks come to this session having already completed the worksheet **Where Do I Go? Infrastructure Self-Assessment Worksheet (p. 71)**.

FRAMING

The “infrastructure” of our groups is a way of talking about **the systems and structures people set up and maintain to work collectively**. Infrastructure is the way we live our values, and it has everything to do with power, informed decision-making, strategy, and our effectiveness. The dictionary defines infrastructure as:

- *the underlying foundation or basic framework (as of a system or organization)*
- *the basic physical and organizational structures and facilities (e.g., buildings, roads, power supplies) needed for the operation of a society or enterprise*

STORYTELLING

Ask people to get into pairs. Set the scene by reminding folks that in different scenarios, relationships, and contexts, we all play different roles.

1. Ask folks to think about a time when they ***had to be a maintainer***: someone holding the relational continuity necessary to get things done. *Was this in a household? Or a PTA or political organization?* Invite them to describe the experience in their pair.
 - *What resources did you have, and what did you need?*
 - *What did you do to maintain continuity?*
 - *Where did you struggle?*
2. Then ask people to respond in their pairs to one of the following questions about that group:
 - *How comfortable was the group with chaos? With order?*
 - *What rules were spoken in this group, and what rules were unspoken?*
 - *Did the group have any specific beliefs, dogmas, or ideologies, and were they articulated?*

Alternatively, you can ask folks to reflect more generally:

- *What has been your experience personally and in groups?*
- *In groups that broke down: Why did they break down? What happened?*

TAKING STOCK OF OUR GROUP

In the next section, you’ll be inviting folks to look closely at **this** group through the lens of infrastructure. Based on everyone’s prior experience, you’ll discuss what’s feeling strong and what’s a struggle. Give people a minute or two to think or write some notes, and then invite folks to share out: ***What are some strengths or struggles you have observed or participated in with this group?***

Consider:

- We’re drowning in tools, data, emails, and information
- We’re overstimulated, overwhelmed, distracted, and flakey
- We’re hyper-individualized, and struggling to think and work collectively. We’re siloed.

- We know nonprofits aren't the answer, so we're drawn towards horizontality and collective structures, but we don't really know how to work together in that way. Things just spin.
- We think structure is white, so we don't have any and our work suffers.
- We're way too rigid in our structures. Too many policies and protocols. We're not agile.
- We're not nearly rigid enough. We're spontaneous and pumped, but we're a mess.
- Conflict is tearing us apart! (You can remind folks that there's a session beginning on page 114 devoted to exploring relationships and conflict in our work, and of course it's all connected.)

A DEEPER DIVE: OUR CORE BELIEFS ABOUT INFRASTRUCTURE

- It's critical to have and apply a **strong power analysis** to all parts of our work.
- Attentiveness to shaping and sharing power is **everyone's business**, and everyone's responsibility.
- Internal organizational questions around group patterns and behavior are **structural and political**. They are not one person's individual fault or responsibility.
- **Information is power**. Having a clear place for notes, decisions, lists, and spreadsheets is critical for democratic groups. This does not mean that every random person off the street gets access to your list, but rather that for long term and emerging leaders there are formal and clear ways for people to access your organization's material. These are not one person's "property."
- **It is easier - though not good - to underdevelop this when we are in small collectives**, informal groupings, friend groups, or doing small projects. But as organizers working to bring in new people, we need many hands to work across culture, class, race, and experience, and for that we need infrastructure.
- When systems aren't clear, or are overreliant on the consolidated power of a few people, **the consequences for our movements are devastating**. This is where we get bottlenecks (everything must pass through a few people and can't scale or move with agility), broken trust and relationships, ineffectiveness, and an inability for the organization to nourish itself with energy and to grow.
- **Some activist culture is averse to building infrastructure** because it is narrowly perceived as 'corporate' or white. While it can absolutely be true that white people particularly can get extra around structure (especially in the absence of knowing how to address the external problems at hand), it is narrow and simplistic to say unilaterally that systems, operations, or infrastructure are only for some people.
- In reality, all groups have a culture, a style, and a way of working together. The tone can be more casual or more buttoned up, but the key question is **whether your methods are clear, agreed upon, and can be explained to people coming in**.
- **Lots of us are personally struggling to maintain our life systems**. We struggle to keep up with our emails, our calendars, our commitments, our families, and our communications. The pace of information tracking in 2020 is extreme (see *Being Present in an Age of Distraction* session, p. 90), and this bleeds over into sloppy organizational practices. We need to be intentional about shifting this culture in our work, while not blaming and shaming people for a condition of capitalism.
- We can draw inspiration for getting ourselves together from Ella Baker and Anne Braden, who each had a meticulous system of filing, correspondence, and tracking donations ... all in a time before Google Docs.

LIVING INTO OUR VALUES

Ask people to break into groups of 3 or more. Print or write up each of the following ways of being on a single piece of paper, and give each group one paper to discuss: ***What would it take for our group or organization to move and make decisions from this value, this way of being?***

- **We organize ourselves and others: people are our power.** We strike a balance, and avoid either focusing entirely on internal dynamics and structure (like having 50 internal working groups) or totally neglecting internal process and being action junkies.
- **We watch the margins to widen the margins.** Without systems and structures to bring people in, we default to who our friends are, who is closest to us, and who we like, which enables cliquishness.
- **We are anti-individualist.** Relationships are personal but they are also being developed on behalf of the group, and we are attentive to this.
- **We orient towards movement-building.** In order to build a mass movement, we will need a mega constellation of groups, federations, alliances, collectives, and institutions.
- **We build trust by making commitments and following through.** This includes transparency in shared decision-making and pro-actively communicating when things are not happening on a certain timeline or have shifted.

Discussion: *Based on our values, where do we want to be? What do we need to do or learn how to do?* People can pair or small group share, then discuss in full group. When you return, ask folks what came up in their small groups.

BREAK: Set up the room for the next activity.

INTERNAL SYSTEMS SPECTROGRAM

To set up for this activity during the break, clear the space so people can move around. Mark one wall or area 'agree' and the opposite side of the room 'disagree,' with 'don't know' and 'mix of both' verbally explained to be in the middle, along a spectrum. Offer the full group a series of intentionally provocative questions and invite people to answer by moving to the part of the room that represents their perspective (an accessibility modification is hand raising: high means agree, in your lap means disagree). Once they have stopped moving, either ask them to discuss their thoughts with the people near them or invite folks across the spectrum to share with the whole group why they are where they are, and engage people with follow-up questions.

As the facilitator, you can also come up with different spectogram questions tailored to the patterns and themes in your group. Questions that are provocative and polarizing and that force people to take a position are excellent here. Since this is a tool for assessment, but not for decision-making, it's ok to take and try on bold positions.

- ***I think our internal systems are functioning really well.*** (Why? Why not? Which ones?)
- ***Our internal systems are holding us back from success.*** (Give an example. Share your thoughts.)
- ***I feel appreciated inside this team.*** (When was a time you felt appreciated? Appreciated someone else?)
- ***I'm doing what I can to support and grease the wheels to make this team work.*** (For those that disagree:

What is getting in the way of doing what you can? What are the internal and external obstacles?)

- **I have some ideas for how to make our internal systems better.** (For those who agree: like what? For those who disagree: are you willing to get with the program that others design?!))
- **Structures are for corporations.** (Tease out what folks fear about too much structure. Just naming this can help the structure-phobic trust more in structure-building work).

Wrap up: What does this information mean for how we work together?

A FEMINIST LENS ON LABOR

Though internal structures are essential to our ability to maintain and grow our teams, **the contributions of operations and administrative folks can be undervalued and less visible in organizing.** It is the responsibility of the larger group to figure out meaningful ways to acknowledge and celebrate the internal work, much like we (should) do for external victories and fights, while supporting methods of sharing responsibilities and delegating tasks when it makes sense. **Combat low morale by:**

- Acknowledging labor and offering gratitude
- Clocking and tracking who is doing maintenance work and administration
- Rotating roles
- Asking where people want to grow in their organizing, regardless of their current role
- Building relationships outside of tasks and across spheres of work
- If you're pushy about deadlines and shared agreements, be gracious and firm.

BUILDING - OR TONING - A STRONG CORE

Have examples of the components of a **strong core** pre-written on butcher paper or index cards. Ask people to take a look, review, and determine what they would add. **The goal here is baseline shared work agreements**, not teasing out every tiny thing.

Consider:

- **Shared contact list** among leadership
- **Shared core documents** that are used often (sign-up sheet, flyer, meeting notes, budget)
- **Consistent forms of communication**, and clarity about what methods fit what purpose (a 1-on-1 text versus a full group email)
- **Consistent meeting time**
- **Consistent notes with decisions tracked**
- **Clarity on roles and decision-making practices**

CLOSING

Invite people to use the remainder of the time to work through the questions on the following pages, using page 77 for mapping the flow of information and decision making. As time allows, give folks time to discuss in pairs, small groups, or the full group, or use these worksheets as homework and revisit them before the next infrastructure session.

Where Do We Need COORDINATION?

1. On the worksheet opposite, draw a picture of **HOW INFORMATION AND DECISIONS ARE INTENDED TO FLOW** in a group you are a part of. *How it does it look on paper?* (For example: Clear! Confusing! Quirky, but it works!)
2. Using a different color, make notes of **WHERE THE ACTUAL FLOWS OR CHOICE POINTS ARE DIFFERENT THAN WHAT YOU DREW**. If it makes sense, use a third color to circle up to three key breakdown points. *How does the intended flow compare to how it feels (or actually goes down) in real life?*
3. **BELOW, MAKE TWO LISTS:**
WHAT ARE WE ACCUSTOMED TO? VS. WHAT DO WE NEED TO LEAN INTO?
(What are our habits, formal or informal?) (What new habits would serve us and our work?)
4. **WHAT TOOLS DO WE HAVE AT OUR DISPOSAL TO HELP US MAXIMIZE OUR EFFECTIVENESS?**
How do we (or could we) use them so they help us, not hinder us? (For example: Slack, Drive, Signal, WhatsApp, Mailchimp, text, groups, etc).
5. **HOW DO WE BECOME COLLECTIVELY THOUGHTFUL ABOUT WHO NEEDS TO KNOW WHAT?**
Not everyone needs to know everything! Consider coordination vs. control (and recall that internalized white supremacy and patriarchal conditioning fuels the need for control, order, and universal access).

INFORMATION & DECISION Flowz

THE FIRST THING
THAT HAPPENS IS...

THEN...

NEXT...

AFTER THAT...

FINALLY...

INFRASTRUCTURE, PART 2: ROLES & COORDINATION [2 HOURS]

OVERVIEW

In this second session devoted to infrastructure, we're really going to zoom in on **roles**. Having clear and established roles can help our organizations maintain long term structures, keep people engaged, and provide transparency around decision-making and who does what work.

Roles also serve as one of our "guard rails" against a host of ills: cliquishness, unaccountability (not doing what we said we'd do), and power hoarding, to name a few. This is because they are grounded in function and skills, rather than in the position or personality of individuals.

We know that some of the most emotionally fraught and interpersonally tumultuous challenges we face in our organizations are actually the result of how our structures are built and maintained. When we fail to address structural issues at the structural level, then they become personalized and tear at the fabric of relationships we know we need to fortify us and sustain our work.

GOALS

- To unpack the value of clear and consistent roles in the work of democratic groups
- To inventory current practices against clear metrics of success
- To give groups time to make proactive, forward looking infrastructure plans

TIME NEEDED

2 hours

MATERIALS NEEDED

Flip chart, markers, writing tools for participants. Pre-made scenario sheets. **Plotting Our Future** handout (p. 80).

READINGS/RESOURCES

- *Emergent Strategy* by adrienne maree brown (p. 250)
- Preparing the Space: Facilitation Tips & Tricks (p. 5 of this workbook)
- *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded* by INCITE Women of Color Against Violence

FRAMING

Open by asking folks to share what came up for them since the last meeting in regards to question 5, p. 76:

*How do we become collectively thoughtful about **who** needs to **know what**?* Have folks respond in large group.

Then forecast where this session is headed: **an in-depth exploration of the role of roles.**

SCENARIOS

Next, break people into groups of three or four. Write up each of the following scenarios on butcher paper, and give each group a different scenario to respond to:

Scenario 1: This group is only making decisions on a single WhatsApp thread, and even people that only came to one meeting are included.

Scenario 2: As a member of group 2, you run into someone at the grocery store who says they signed up with your group somehow a long time ago. They confront you about never hearing back.

Scenario 3: The person in group 3 with the most experience has their hands in *everything*.

Scenario 4: This group has endless internal meetings but little or no outward-facing work. Meanwhile, people are waiting in the wings, eager to plug in.

Scenario 5: It's a Google Doc hellscape! Everything this group has made is everywhere and nowhere.

In small groups, ask folks to discuss:

- What are the roles needed to address this scenario?
- What are the skills that really exist within **your** group to address this?
- What are the skills that would still be needed within your group to address this?
- Finally, bring a proposal for how the group in the scenario could move forward.

PLOTTING OUR FUTURE

Print out or write up the following prompts, and break people out to chart and discuss one of them:

1. How will it function?

Based on what we did in the last workshop and the scenarios above, how could we better track and engage:

- Our outreach work?
- The people we actually bring in?
- Our individual and team structures? (What are the roles and what is the flow?)

Pick one area to focus on and apply some of what we've just learned.

2. What are your metrics for internal success with your team?

They might be implicit and need to be made explicit, or they might need to be clarified or negotiated.

Consider:

- Does everyone have everyone's contact info?
- Are people on top of their cross-talk, or is one person asked to be the switchboard between people?
- Who has access to your list of contact information, and how often is it updated?
- When do people get added to your communications platforms, and by whom?
- Where are you materials, minutes, etc.? Are they organized? Can we find anything?

PLOTTING *Our Future*

HOW CAN WE BETTER TRACK AND ENGAGE OUR OUTREACH WORK? HOW CAN WE BETTER TRACK AND ENGAGE THE PEOPLE WE ACTUALLY BRING IN? HOW CAN WE BETTER TRACK AND ENGAGE OUR INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM STRUCTURES? WHAT ARE THE ROLES AND WHAT IS THE FLOW?

WHAT ARE THE METRICS FOR INTERNAL SUCCESS WE WILL USE? CHECK THE ONES THAT ARE ALREADY TRUE, AND ADD YOUR OWN METRICS. WRITE NOTES ABOUT WHAT'S NEEDED OR WHAT'S WORKING WELL.

___ EVERYONE HAS EVERYONE ELSE'S CONTACT INFO

___ WE CROSS-TALK WITH EASE AND NO ONE HAS TO PLAY SWITCHBOARD

___ WE KNOW WHO HAS ACCESS TO OUR CONTACT LIST

___ OUR CONTACT LIST IS REGULARLY UPDATED

___ WE HAVE CLARITY ABOUT WHEN AND BY WHOM NEW PEOPLE GET ADDED TO OUR

COMMUNICATIONS PLATFORMS

___ WE ALL KNOW HOW TO ACCESS OUR FILING SYSTEM, INCLUDING MEETING MINUTES

___ OUR FILING SYSTEM IS WELL ORGANIZED

MAKING SENSE OF “NON-PROFITIZATION”

Groups and organizations aren't the same as non-profits. Non-profits have 501(c)3 tax exemption, a distinction made by the IRS and federal government to make “charitable” organizations a place for foundations (often formed as tax shelters for the super wealthy) to invest their resources.

Now, with a shredded safety net, **nonprofits are being asked to do the work of the state**, providing essential services to people on the margins of our economies. **They are often controlled, explicitly or implicitly, by foundations and that can push toward centrism and moderation.** Foundations are tax shelters for the 1%, and come with rules, bureaucracy, and controls on how ‘we’ can use ‘their’ money (though we know the wealth they have was stolen from our people to begin with). Additionally, the vast majority of foundations only fund 501(c)3 work: “charity” work that effectively forbids (c)3s from doing anything “political,” including endorsing or condemning politicians or those running for office. **This often ties our hands, and this is by design.** There are strings attached with foundation money that are nonexistent when we do grassroots fundraising.

Non-profitization has in some cases also **led to the professionalization of organizing**, and people expecting that all organizing work can or should come with a paycheck. Within movement, there is a loathing and criticism of non-profit structures sometimes coupled with a contradictory expectation that all non-profits should pay everyone or anyone for any work they ever do with an organization. That simply isn't the case, and it isn't possible. The number of organizers and leaders and people we need in order to bring about the changes we seek to make in this world far exceed the number of non-profit organizing jobs. **Organizing is a vocation, a calling, and a mandate, not a just a job.** Looking to history and to people's movements in other parts of the world reminds us of this.

A group can be any set of people organized around a common interest, goal, or purpose, from a cop watch to a play group to a dance team to a committee working to get someone elected. **You don't need to be a nonprofit to organize!** You can get a fiscal sponsor: a 501(c)3 non-profit group that lends their tax status (like an umbrella) to another, usually smaller and more grassroots group, so the latter can get grants. Or, figure out other creative ways to deal with money!

HOMEWORK

Make three sample working agreements about your group's infrastructure: information, communication, decision-making, roles, or coordination. Then, have a one-on-one conversation about your three sample agreements with someone else in the group. From the six you've made between you, choose your top two or three, and bring them to the next meeting as proposals for long-term group working agreements. Alternatively, call someone over 60 and interview them about how they used to organize themselves in analogue times (in terms of information, communication, or coordination). Draw a picture of how they did it, and bring it to the next meeting to share.



Get Me BODIED: BODILY & Spiritual SELF-DETERMINATION

Organizing work is spirit work.

Spirit work isn't the soft stuff. Nor is it necessarily about organized religion, religious institutions, or individual clergy. Spirit work is needed to draw upon, use, and renew the courage we need to push to be our higher selves. This work requires stamina and humility. It requires us to come back again and again, knowing our hearts will be broken - and healed - in this work.

Everywhere we turn, communities are outpacing organized religion in their redefining of relationship to spirit. And while we know there has been so much violence embedded in religious conflict and the suppression of religious practices and beliefs, still, the longing is great.

Spirit is that glimmering feeling that the sacred lives in all. Spirit cannot be used as a vapid call for complacency, paternalism, or unity, which so often cause or endorse violence and trauma on communities. White and upper-class and institutional religion have done that for too long. The earth is sacred and alive, and people are striving to make the impossible possible; to combat the cynicism that has seeped into all of us like poison is a spiritual practice.

The exercises below are a small offering for groups around exploring spirit and fortifying spirit, individually and collectively (though our hope is that many of the other parts of this curriculum do that as well). They support our much-needed spiritual strength training.

SPIRITUAL *Origins*

WHAT, IF ANY, PRACTICES, TRADITIONS,
BELIEFS OR RITUALS DO I STILL FIND MEANING
IN OR TAKE COMFORT IN FROM THAT TIME?

HAVE I CLEANSED MYSELF OF
THIS? IF NOT, WHAT COULD I
TRY TO BE ABLE TO CLEANSE
MYSELF OF THAT PAIN?

WHAT WOUNDING
OR PAIN DID THIS
UPBRINGING CAUSE?

WHAT WAS THE RELIGIOUS OR SPIRITUAL
UPBRINGING OF MY CHILDHOOD?

WE DON'T WANT TO BE STARS

EMBODIMENT & LIBERATION

[2 HOURS]

OVERVIEW

This session is devoted to spiritual strength training. It is an invitation to cultivate communal and individual practices for spiritual grounding, to identify and revisit old wounds, and to invoke and remind ourselves that this work is spiritual work, that we are all spiritual beings and that without the recognition of this, we likely will not be able to sustain the work or design the strategies to get us to the other side.

GOALS

- To get shared clarity on concepts around spiritual self-work, self-care, and growth
- To allow time for significant contemplation and reflection
- To hold space for individuals to share with the collective

TIME NEEDED

2 hours

MATERIALS NEEDED

Flip charts, markers, index cards for blessing exercise

Handouts: **Spiritual Origins** (p. 84), **Recipe for Resiliency** (p. 88), and **Self-Inventory & Health Check** (p. 87)

READINGS/RESOURCES

- *When Things Fall Apart* by Pema Chodron
- *Emergent Strategy* by adrienne maree brown
- *The Cancer Journals* by Audre Lorde
- *Beloved* by Toni Morrison

FRAMING

The writer and thinker Joanna Macy has referred to this time as the 'Great Turning,' forecasting a much-needed mass turning away from millenia-old worldviews and practices of domination and extraction, and towards an era of recalling ancient wisdom and aligning it with new insights and methods for being together with other humans and the whole community of life. We know for sure that **we are now living in times that are unprecedented:** environmentally, socially, economically, spiritually, and in terms of public health.

People lead organizations and movements. **We are only as grounded, balanced, and well as our people are.**

Therefore, it is critical to take seriously our own wellness, grounding, balance, perspective, and ability to self-reflect and grow. Our ability to be embodied in our own selves and world is key to achieving this. **In order to feel creative, interdependent, generative, and adaptive, we have to experience enough liberation from oppression to move around.** This session is a starting place, an offering of tools around our development in embodiment and liberation. Begin by inviting folks to work through the Spiritual Origins worksheet opposite (this could also be prep work).

WHAT'S SPIRIT GOT TO DO WITH IT?

Break folks out into groups of three or four. Invite groups to discuss and then make a skit addressing the question: *what does spirit have to do with social change and transformation?* Groups should perform their skits for all.

Self-Inventory and Health Check:

Give everyone time to work through the questions on the sheet opposite. Then, invite people to share reflections on their answers with a small group (this could be the same group as before, or a new configuration).

SPIRITUAL STRENGTH TRAINING

Spiritual strength, grounding, and fortitude are not linear. We do not 'bulk up' once and then stay strong in these ways. Instead, we are always in a cycle of moving through being able to access our best self and feeling far away from it. Therefore, the process of building these capacities also does not move in a linear way.

Solo write, then pair share:

- *What experiences in life have strengthened you the most spiritually? How?*
- *What people come to mind when you think of spiritual strength? Why?*
- *Who do you want to be in relationship with to deepen your spiritual strength?*

SIDE WITH LOVE: PRACTICING SPIRITUAL FORTITUDE IN OURSELVES AND OUR RELATIONSHIPS

These are activities developed and brought together as part of a project originally designed for the Unitarian Universalist Association's Side with Love (formerly Standing on the Side of Love) campaign.

Bitterness Purge Ritual

"When we face pain in relationships, our first response is often to sever bonds rather than to maintain commitment." -bell hooks

Bitterness often stems from disappointment and pain in this work. Structures, organizations, and people have deeply betrayed many of us, and let us down. When we do not purge that bitterness, it follows us into the work. We spread it to other people. The intention here is not to vent, but rather to let baggage go and move forward by naming our disappointment and pain – and the bitterness that grows from it – within a ceremonial container. Do this in pairs. After the purging, each partner offers gratitude for the other's willingness to trust, share, and grow.

Are you willing to be transformed in the service of the work?

Being honest about our own willingness and capacity can be hard. Getting feedback can also be hard. Working in pairs, each person should take a turn asking the other: 'Are you willing to be transformed in the service of the work?' If both people answer yes, they can then take turns suggesting ways that each person can transform and grow in the coming year to more deeply serve the work of justice. Adapted from SONG.

SELF-INVENTORY AND HEALTH CHECK

ON A SCALE OF 1-10, HOW AM I DOING IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE FOLLOWING:

FINDING A VISION OR HOPE FOR THE WORLD

1-----5-----10

NOTES:

ENGAGING AND WORKING WITH MY DESPAIR AND CYNICISM

1-----5-----10

NOTES:

CONNECTION TO MEANING AND JOY

1-----5-----10

NOTES:

CULTIVATING PRACTICES AND TRADITIONS THAT CONNECT ME TO SPIRIT

1-----5-----10

NOTES:

RELATIONSHIP TO MY BODY

1-----5-----10

NOTES:

RELATIONSHIP TO THE EROTIC

1-----5-----10

NOTES:

RELATIONSHIP TO MOTHER EARTH

1-----5-----10

NOTES:

RELATIONSHIP TO MY BLOOD ANCESTORS

1-----5-----10

NOTES:

RELATIONSHIP TO MY CHOSEN ANCESTORS

1-----5-----10

NOTES:

CONNECTION AND INTIMACY

1-----5-----10

NOTES:

Recipe for RESILIENCY

NAME OF RECIPE:

TIME NEEDED:

WHERE IT COMES FROM:

LIST INGREDIENTS:

PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS:

DRAWING OF RESULTS OR PROCESS:

WHAT ELSE?

RECIPES FOR RESILIENCY

This has been adapted from work we developed at Kindred Southern Healing Justice Collective and SONG.

Invite people to share recipes from their lives, traditions, or lineages that help them bounce back. Using a Story Circle format (p. 8), ask participants to break into groups of four or five.

1. (15 mins) Using the recipe card opposite, have participants silently doodle, draw, or write about a recipe from their own life, tradition, and/or lineage that helps them bounce back.
2. (20 min) Put four minutes on the clock for each person to share what they wrote about, what it brought up, and how they learned of this recipe.
3. (10 min) Gallery walk: Ask folks to tape up their recipes on a wall and review what people have made. Put on some music!
4. (20 min) Have folks return to their seats and debrief. *What are some themes, patterns, or surprises you noticed?*

BLESSINGS/INTENTIONS

Ask the group to sit in a large circle, close enough to pass cards to each other. Then, frame for the group: in many communities and cultures, people bless each other, or intentionally wish upon each other, when they part. This can mean they put towards each other the energy of their God, faith, or tradition. It could also mean that they recognize that the strength oppressed people give each other is real and has meaning. This is a closing for any gathering or session you have together, and usually lasts about 15 minutes. Everyone should engage the activity according to their own beliefs.

Write: Ask each person to take an index card and a pen and to write an intention that they would want wished upon them as they go out into the world to lead in our liberation struggles. Give each person 2 minutes to write.

Pass: Pass cards three times to the left as a group, so that each person ends up with the blessing written by the person three people to the right of them.

Read: Have a few people read the blessing they received as they are moved to do so, popcorn style. Have at least five blessings read outloud.

Close: Close with a general intention to the group: "Go with the power of our history, the sheer pleasure of our collective company, and the will and courage to push forward our work."

Suggest that people keep their blessing card if they want.

BEING PRESENT IN AN AGE OF DISTRACTION

[1-2 HOURS]

OVERVIEW

This session gives everyone the chance to take stock of how our individual and collective struggles to be present impact us, and how we might be more mindful to presence. *Where are we present? With whom?*

Prepare for and facilitate this session with a trauma-informed approach; recognize that being present and embodied can be deeply uncomfortable or even painful for people who have large amounts of unprocessed trauma, and that lack of presence and distractibility are also symptoms of PTSD. If you need to flag this for participants, shift the activities, or help individuals gauge how to participate, please do so.

GOALS

- To explore the impacts on all of us, individually and collectively, when we struggle to be present
- To share practices and reflections on being present
- To make commitments for moving forward

TIME NEEDED

1-2 hours

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Flip chart, tape, markers, audio speaker, large drawing tools like crayons, Cray-Pas, or pastels
- Handouts: **Stillness Worksheet** (p. 91), **'Mindful'** by Mary Oliver (optional)

PRESENCING ACTIVITY

Begin with a solo presencing activity. Invite everyone to close or lower their eyes and to try to find a place of quiet, present stillness for three minutes. Then, invite people to open their eyes and spend several minutes in individual written reflection on the worksheet page opposite.

Coming back together as a big group, take a few deep breaths together, then pose these questions. You can offer them as a seated spectrogram, framed as "I" statements, with hands raised high, medium, or not at all to indicate agree/disagree/don't know/mix of both responses. Then follow up with different locations in the spectrum for depth.

- **I struggle with staying present.** (*Did that come up during the activity? How did you struggle? What does it feel like when you're not present?*)
- **If I could only concentrate, I know I would be a better organizer/partner/parent/person.** (*How is difficulty concentrating interfering with your ability to show up in your own life? Why is it so difficult? Where is*

STILLNESS *Worksheet*

WHAT DID IT FEEL LIKE TO
BE PRESENT AND STILL?
WHAT DID YOU NOTICE?
WAS ANYTHING EASY, OR
ESPECIALLY DIFFICULT?

REMEMBERING HOW THIS FELT IN
YOUR BODY, REFLECT ON OTHER
TIMES IN YOUR LIFE WHEN YOU ARE
MOST ABLE TO BE PRESENT. WHEN
IS THAT? WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE?

WHO ARE THE
PEOPLE IN YOUR
LIFE THAT ARE MOST
PRESENT WITH
YOU?



WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS THAT
MOST SUPPORT OR UNDERMINE
PRESENCE? CONSIDER SPECIFICALLY:
DO PHYSICAL LOCATION AND
ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS PLAY A
BIG ROLE? WHAT ABOUT SPECIFIC
PEOPLE? WHAT ELSE?

NOW CONSIDER THE
OPPOSITE: ARE THERE TIMES
IN YOUR LIFE WHEN IT IS
ESPECIALLY DIFFICULT TO BE
PRESENT AND STILL?

MINDFUL

MARY OLIVER

Everyday
I see or hear
something
that more or less

kills me
with delight,
that leaves me
like a needle

in the haystack
of light.
It was what I was born for –
to look, to listen,

to lose myself
inside this soft world –
to instruct myself
over and over

in joy,
and acclamation.
Nor am I talking
about the exceptional,

the fearful, the dreadful,
the very extravagant –
but of the ordinary,
the common, the very drab,

the daily presentations.
Oh, good scholar,
I say to myself,
how can you help

but grow wise
with such teachings
as these –
the untrimmable light

of the world,
the ocean's shine,
the prayers that are made
out of grass?

all the distraction coming from, and how are we managing it?)

- **I have an erratic, tortured, or addictive relationship to my phone and/or social media, or to someone who does.** (*Say more; what pulls you in, and when do you push it away?*)

Distractibility is a hallmark of our times, and it serves the interests of elites and power systems who use it as a control mechanism. The fights calling our names require our best attentiveness: spiritual presence, wise analysis, and deep feeling. As with the hegemonic value of **forced / high speed chaos**, distractibility keeps our brains fried and our nervous systems misfiring. **This is both an individual struggle and a systemic condition of our times.** We are not alone, and we are responsible for finding our own return pathway to presence.

DISTRACTIBILITY BREAK OUTS

In small groups, discuss how distractibility shows up for each of us in group settings:

- *What usually makes you reach for your phone or check out in a group situation?*
- *Does it happen in reaction to a feeling, something happening in the group, a habit, or something else?*
- *Do you notice yourself doing it?*

Try to be as specific as possible.

Now think about it from the other perspective: *How does our presence, lack of presence, or distractibility as individuals impact the groups and collective spaces we're part of?*

- *What does it feel like when you're speaking or facilitating and folks are scrolling their phones, checking their emails, or seem disengaged?*
- *How else does distractibility show up negatively in our work together?*

Still in small groups, next brainstorm some ways for you to:

- **Maintain presence when you find yourself drifting off or reaching for your phone** (for example: ask for a break; feel your feet on the ground; take three deep breaths; without disrupting, step outside the room and do jumping jacks; place your phone somewhere you can't reach it, etc.).
- **Respectfully share with others what it feels like when they're checked out**

Have the groups write or draw their answers on a big sheet of paper; when groups finish, post them on the wall. You may want to have an extra blank piece of paper up and available where people can keep adding ideas and practices that occur to them while gallery-walking.

GALLERY WALK

As a big group, do a gallery walk of the room in silence. Take your time to really look at and absorb the different ideas and offerings that people have shared. Consider playing music in the background to open up different sensory experiences.

Close out the session with folks writing down some of the ideas, offerings, and practices they commit to trying. After a few minutes, read Mary Oliver's poem 'Mindful'. You may choose to read it a few times. Hold the silence in the room for a few extra minutes once everyone has finished reading.



The Best OF OUR ORGANIZING Traditions

How we refine and practice our values inside and outside of our organizations is critical to being able to advance our collective work. Trust is built through shared work, not just through potlucks, meetings, or relationship-building exercises.

So often in this time, with many things (from security culture to self-care and community care), we tend toward extremes. Many groups tend to either overly focus on their work in the streets (campaigning, projects, etc.) because the need is so great and the crises are so many. Or, they culturally get impatient (often rightly so!) with how internal and navel-gazing some of the values conversations can get with groups.

The other common extreme in this time is to get so insular and focused on internal dynamics, culture,

values, and the building of "trust" that trust is held up as this aspirational destination, and no work can move until enough "trust" is built. This feeds the plagues of cliquishness and insularity.

What we need is a balance: tending to the internal hearth and heart of our shared organizational imperative, and the knowledge that the work we do in community is the oxygen and tinder that will feed our hearth fire rather than unilaterally deplete it.

We have chosen to do hard things in a hard time, and we must expect more hard times to come. We must fortify ourselves with a robust bedrock of values and agreements and work in community that builds power and contests for power that will transform ourselves and our conditions.

ORGANIZING CULTURE, PRINCIPLES & VALUES [1-2 HOURS]

OVERVIEW

Knowing that many regular, every day folks come to movement and then promptly leave again because it is so inhospitable, *how do we take active part in creating a group culture that reflects our values?* This session gives people a chance to identify their values and core collective practices they can use to live into them.

GOALS

- To explore and define our values
- To reflect on traits of 'activist' cultures and challenges and opportunities
- To explore ways to line up our organizational culture and practices with our values (i.e., walk our talk)

TIME NEEDED

1-2 hours

MATERIALS NEEDED

Flip chart, tape, markers, printer paper or construction paper, and **Our Feminist Values** (p.98) handout

FRAMING

"What we say and what we do ultimately comes back to us so let us own our responsibility, place it in our hands, and carry it with dignity and strength."
-Gloria E. Anzaldúa

"Identity doesn't dictate behavior or values. We learn values and choose political commitments. Just because a person is Black, a woman, and queer or transgender (or both) does not mean one is automatically radical or revolutionary. Being radical is a choice and it takes work."

- Charlene Carruthers, *Unapologetic* (p. 7)

ORGANIZING CULTURES

Ask the group to list: What are the characteristics of organizing or activist culture? Which of these are legitimate and which are rooted in stereotypes? Scribe for the group on a flip chart.

Consider:

- Small
- Fundamentalist
- Dream-filled and unpragmatic
- Episodic
- Lots of talk (and talk is cheap)

Solo Reflection and/or Pair Share:

- So despite that unappealing list, *why are we here to do this work?*
- *What is calling your name? What is driving you? What is driving us?*

Popcorn back answers and discuss in the full group.

Solo Reflection and Writing Time:

- *When has someone or something broken their word or promise to you?*
- *When have you broken your word?*
- *When have you been impeccable with your word and held your integrity?*

As members of communities who are marginalized, experience various forms of oppression, and/or are living in red states, many of us have become accustomed to people not keeping their word. Institutions, families, synagogues, and other places of worship turn their backs. We experience betrayal and contradiction. Then we do it with each other. *What would it mean if we could figure out how to honor and build agreements we can keep?*

DREAMING INTO OUR VALUES

When you picture a militant, courageous, feminist organizing culture, what does it look, sound like, and smell like in a meeting? What about at an action debrief, or at City Hall? Is there food? What is the tone? What is the quality of the relationships between people? Does it smell like sweaty punks, or your lesbian auntie's cologne, or birthday cake, or something else?

1. Give people a moment to envision this with closed eyes. Then, **invite them to bring this scene to paper** with an illustration, a short script, or a recipe (see p. 88 for recipe card).
2. Returning to the full group, ask: ***What are some of the values people would need to be putting in practice to make that vision come true?*** Scribe up values in the middle column of a three-column chart as people share.
3. **Reveal the Feminist Values list** (p. 98). Read these additional (or repeat) values and ask: *What practices drive us toward living into these values? What practices slow us down or have to be overcome to be able to live these values? Using both lists, scribe these practices on either side of the values.*
4. **Dot vote as a full group to select the top 5 values** your group will prioritize workshopping. Decide how many votes each person has (based on the size of your group, usually 1 or 2 or 3), then have people mark their priorities with a dot or star (or a sticker). You can see where the energy is or narrow priorities without talking.
5. **Break folks out into small groups** with one or two of these values to discuss how to make these manifest, both internally, externally, and in your vision. *How does this get built or (re)created? What holds us back? Where does this break down?*
6. **Have groups report back and share out insights.**

OUR FEMINIST VALUES

PRACTICES THAT DRIVE US
TOWARDS OUR VALUES

OUR VALUES

PRACTICES THAT DRIVE US
AWAY FROM OUR VALUES

- ACCOUNTABILITY TO LEGACY
- MOVEMENT FIRST, NOT
ACCOLADES
- COLLABORATIVE
- INTERDEPENDENT
- GROUNDED IN A BELIEF IN
REDEMPTION AND REGENERATION
- ANTI-FRAGILE
- EQUITY
- EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE
- SELF-RESPONSIBILITY AND
INITIATIVE
- SHARING POWER AND
CARETAKING/COLLECTIVE
ORIENTATION
- ANTI-ELITISM
- COMMITMENT TO GLOBAL CROSS-
POLLINATION
- A FORMULA FOR LEADERSHIP
OF IDENTITY, VISION,
CONSCIOUSNESS, AND WORK
-
-
-
-
-
-

Optional role play:

Using the values that you have identified together, have the group enact a meeting in which participants are randomly assigned and evenly divided into one of three roles: **newcomers, welcomers, or regular participants.** *What does it look like to live out those values in this situation?* Have fun acting out different ways our feminist values can show up at an organizing meeting.

WRAP UP

Our values are a core part of the fabric that holds us together, beyond identity, beyond liking or disliking each other. Too often, they become wallpaper when in practice we really need them to be a touchstone informing our covenant, practices, protocol, and vision.

To close out, ask:

- *Who do you do this for?*
- *Who keeps you going?*
- *Whose legacy are you continuing?*
- *Who are you leaving a legacy for?*

HOMEWORK

How will we practice these values collectively? Will we sign a covenant? Have accountability buddies? Bring ideas for ways to commit to the next meeting.

CAMPAIGNS & COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

[3 - 4 HOURS]

OVERVIEW

This section explores more in depth what community organizing is and how it differs from other forms of social change. It breaks down some of the key components of organizing and campaigns.

GOALS

- To orient folks to and demystify what campaigns and community organizing are (and what they are not)
- To examine some key examples, concepts, and terms
- To describe different types of social change

TIME NEEDED

3-4 hours, or break it up into multiple sessions

MATERIALS NEEDED

Flip charts, tape, markers, campaign scenarios, writing tools for participants, **Elements of a Campaign** handout (p. 104)

READINGS/RESOURCES

- Points of Intervention framework
- *Why Campaigns* from SONG
- *How We Make Change is Changing, Parts 1 & 2*
- *Playbook for Progressives* by Eric Mann
- *Movement Action Plan* by Bill Moyer
- *Tools for Radical Democracy* by Joan Miner and Paul Gestos
- SNCC Digital Gateway
- *Everything Worthwhile is Done with Other People*, an interview with Mariame Kaba

FRAMING

We are living and working for change during a period of great turmoil, cynicism, and possibility. In this next session, we will unpack some of the different ways that we can (and people do) push for social change. Political work can and does happen in a variety of forms; in order to reshape power structures and fundamentally transform our society (politically, socially, and economically), we believe in the power of organizations and grassroots organizing.

Optional Discussion of Bill Moyer's *Movement Action Plan*:

Why is being a part of a movement important? What are our associations with this word since it's also been co-opted and commodified? What movements have we been shaped by individually? What movements is our work rooted in? Where do we want to strengthen this?

DIFFERENT FORMS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

This is a chart many folks have been using for years to illustrate different approaches to social change work. We explore this content not to shame or condescend to different forms of social change, but rather to get clearer and more precise about how groups are – or are not – contending for power. It also helps us determine how we can relate to each other across different approaches to bring about the biggest impact, and/or work to do no harm. We know these distinctions are sometimes overstated or less simple out in the world; for example, some community organizations may also include service in their outreach model (such as the Dream Defenders' Books and Breakfast program modeled on the works of the Black Panthers, or Southerners On New Ground's work bailing black caregivers out of jail). Still, the broad categories are useful to explore and important to understand.

Create an empty chart, then go through and fill it out together. It is good for you as the facilitator to have prepared some relevant examples by filling out this chart beforehand on your own.

WHAT	GOAL/ OUTCOME	WHAT'S THE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM	RELATIONSHIP TO COMMUNITY	DOES THIS ADDRESS ROOT CAUSE OF HARM OR OPPRESSION?
SERVICE EX. RED CROSS, FOOD PANTRY	RESOURCES TO ALLEVIATE SUFFERING, LEGAL RESOURCES, FOOD, CLOTHES	PROVIDE FOR PEOPLE'S BASIC NEEDS	DEPENDS - OFTEN HELPING IS CONSIDERED 'CHARITY'	NO
ADVOCACY EX. ACLU, HRC	EVENTS, LOBBYING, CALL SENATORS, PETITIONS, ETC.	SMALL GROUP USUALLY ASKING ELECTORS TO DO THE RIGHT THING	SPEAKS ON BEHALF OF A COMMUNITY, NOT NECESSARILY AS A PART OF IT	NOT USUALLY
EDUCATION EX. STUDY GROUP, BILLBOARDS	INCREASE CONSCIOUSNESS	"IF PEOPLE GOT THEIR MINDS RIGHT..."	TEACHING	NOT NECESSARILY, UNLESS PAIRED WITH ACTION...
MOBILIZING EX. VIGILS, MARCHES, RALLIES	CONNECTION! LINK TO MOVEMENT! SHOW OF STRENGTH	SHOW OF FORCE WILL CHANGE THE RULES	VARIES (ESPECIALLY IN SOCIAL MEDIA ERA, SPONTANEOUS)	NOT WITHOUT MOMENTUM, FOLLOW-UP
DIRECT ACTION/ COMMUNITY ORGANIZING	ABILITY TO BE EXPERTS IN OWN LIVES & SHAPE SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS	DIRECTLY AFFECTED PEOPLE WORKING TOGETHER TO CHALLENGE POWER	SHOULD BE OF, BY, AND FOR THE COMMUNITIES - USING DIRECT ACTION TO EXPOSE CRISIS AND TIE DECISION-MAKERS' HANDS	YES
ELECTORAL	GET PEOPLE ELECTED TO GOVERNANCE ROLES THAT SHARE YOUR VALUES	WINNING ELECTIONS THROUGH VOTING (MAJORITY RULE)	DEPENDS, BUT GENERALLY ASKING THEM TO TAKE ACTION IN THE FORM OF VOTING OR GETTING OTHERS TO VOTE	CHANGES THOSE IN POWER BUT NOT NECESSARILY POWER RELATIONSHIPS
LEGAL	PROTECT VULNERABLE PEOPLE THROUGH THE COURTS/JUSTICE SYSTEM	TRYING TO STOP 'BAD LAWS' AKA MUSLIM BAN, MASS DISCRIMINATION OF TRANS PEOPLE, ETC., THROUGH LITIGATION, CLASS ACTION, ETC.	USUALLY LAWYERS, LEGAL GROUPS GO "FIND" DIRECTLY-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES AND ASK THEM TO BE PLAINTIFF. OFTEN INCREDIBLY SLOW.	NO

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- Organizations are made up of people and are a fundamental building block of movement.
- One organization, community of people, or campaign cannot bring about liberation.
- We are part of a movement.
- Movements are made up of mobilizing, organizing, direct service, labor, media, civil society, and individual activists.
- You can do direct service and have revolutionary politics individually!
- **Organizing is the method that is working to disrupt and confront the root causes of oppression with those impacted by that oppression or injustice**, which is why it's so hard and so important.
- **People are our power**, which is why if our organizations are not growing, they are dying.
- **We must change the rules (laws) and transform the institutions that govern our lives** so they work for the many not the few.

NITTY GRITTY: CAMPAIGNS AND ORGANIZING

Throughout this curriculum, we have been talking about power: *Power Over*, *Power With*, and *Power from Within*. In our groups, we work to grow our individual and collective power and bring that to bear on the systems, institutions, and policies that harm us. We have also been talking about different forms of social change. Now we are going to focus in on **campaigns** as one crucial tool and vehicle for us to express our politics and vision.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING IS:

- **People building a base that has the shared vision to act together to build power, challenge power, and change power relationships and communities.** This is important because the power to make change lies in the hands of the people that those changes affect most directly.
- **Sustained fights (beginning, middle, end) to win concrete policy and institutional change on issues that impact your constituency.**

CAMPAIGNS ARE:

- **Time bound, specific efforts to accomplish a set of goals**, which is why there can be education or electoral campaigns.
- **Within your campaign, your strategy is your roadmap for how you are going to accomplish your goals**, and the tactics are individual steps it will take to win! You can't run a 12-month campaign to end white supremacy. Defeating white supremacy requires a lot of different campaigns taking on different parts of the system (for example, changing Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples' Day in New Mexico, plus getting cops out of schools, plus the Green New Deal, plus lots more). **For a campaign, cut it down into a smaller chunk with a target.**

WORKSHOPPING CAMPAIGN EXAMPLES

Have participants read the following example out loud to the full group:

THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE WEEKEND

Labor movement organizers worked for many years to create the concept of the 'weekend': two days of rest after 5 days of work, totaling a 40-hour workweek. According to Dean Baker, "the 40-hour workweek became the standard in 1937 with the passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act. This bill, which also put in place a federal minimum wage, required a premium of 50 percent of pay for any hours that an employer required in excess of 40 hours a week. **Unions had pressed for similar rules for decades, but it took the power of a militant labor movement, coupled with a sympathetic president and Congress** to finally make the 40-hour workweek a standard across the country."

FRAMING

- This win is so important because it shows how **an idea had to be born and spread before it could be won**.
- Because of this important campaign, **even those of us who work weekends understand the idea that workers should be entitled to a weekend**. Campaigns change the nature of how people understand power.
- This is an example of **a campaign that profoundly impacts women**, who have always done the vast majority of domestic work, both inside and outside their own homes. Weekends allow a little bit more breathing room to accomplish domestic work, and, when possible, to take a few moments of rest for oneself.

Discussion:

Ask the full group: **What is a campaign that matters to you?** Alternatively, prepare a scenario that is topically or locally relevant. For example, as a result of local organizing in 2019, the Kansas City City Council passed an ordinance making all public transportation free.

- *What was the demand?*
- *Who was the target?*
- *What impact did this campaign have on culture and policy?*

ELEMENTS OF A CAMPAIGN

This activity explores the concepts in the chart on page 101, **Elements of a Campaign**. Write up each element and its definition on large paper. Invite someone in the group to read one, and then have everyone find a partner to discuss the concept for a specified length of time. Popcorn out reflections, then read the next definition and have everyone find a new discussion partner. Repeat until complete. Save time for group conversation, if needed.

"Great Campaigns are like great love affairs: suddenly, you have time you didn't know you had - to have pizza, have sex, to take slow walks. Time moves differently, and you are swept up in it all. The same is true of great campaigns." - Ai-jen Poo

VISION: Campaigns, at their core, are about the **willingness to get specific and concrete** and **move into action** as we contest for power and justice. This requires vision about what we want, how we want to get it, and how getting it will help us build towards the town, county, city, state, country, and world we want. Every campaign organizer must be able to articulate why a campaign fits into this broader vision.

DEMANDS: The demand of a campaign is simply what you want. Your demand should be well researched and well understood by your organizing group. All organizers must be able to answer why this is the demand, what it is, and what compromises on the demand your group would and would not accept as a “win.”

INNOVATION: We are in a time when **the nature of successful campaigns is changing**. This is in large part due to the evolution of the digital sphere, and how URL and IRL (in real life) organizing interact. Additionally, technology has changed (and continues to change) how we interact with each other. Thus, **some campaign tactics that worked before no longer do, and new options are emerging**. Successful campaigns in this time will understand the need to be curious, keep learning, keep experimenting, and innovate.

ESCALATION AND DE-ESCALATION:

Just like in direct actions, an understanding of escalation and de-escalation is required for any confrontation with power. Escalating simply means “turning the heat up” on a target or situation, or being willing to ethically make a situation more conflictual, tense, or uncomfortable between your organizing group, your targets, and secondary targets. De-escalation means being willing to turn the heat down and calm a situation. This is difficult once we have escalated, and our adrenaline is high. Most organizers are better at escalation or de-escalation with targets, but **a strong organizer can do both as needed**.

TARGETS: A target is **a person who has the power to give you what you want** (i.e., meet your demands), **and to whom you address your demands**. It is helpful to conceptualize this person **as your opponent, not your enemy**. This is because there are many ways to get a target to do what you want them to do. Some require placating, and some require firm confrontation. Your group does not want to be so locked into negative feelings around a target that it will be hard to change tactics if you need to. For example, you might start a campaign that targets your mayor by appealing to their self-interest or stroking their ego. If this does not get you what you want, you will need to escalate your tactics. That could mean publicly calling out the mayor on what they have or have not done around your demand. At that point, the mayor might be ready to give you what you want and so you will have to be ready to be genuinely friendly again (de-escalate) in order to win your campaign. Secondary targets are those around a target who influence them (this could be a co-worker, a spouse, a sponsor or funder, etc.).

TIME-BOUND: Part of why campaigns can be so powerful (altering both material conditions and changing lives) is **because they have a timeline**. A campaign might be one week or one year, but it must have some time frame to keep up momentum. Long campaigns (five years or more) require different planning and execution than shorter ones.

EXPECT BACKLASH/CULTURE CHANGE AND POLICY CHANGE:

One way we can work to secure our wins or advances is by making sure we are **prepared to see through the implementation of a win**, and/or to weather the backlash that can come from local, state, or county governments who do not want rights and access expanded for marginalized communities.

LEARNING FROM OUR EXPERIENCES

Mix and match the following exercises depending on the needs of group. Reflect together on the campaign experience in the room. Consider a deeper dive with discussion questions about how campaigns fall flat, then discuss aspirational demands for your context or run scenarios for practice.

What is our personal experience with campaigns?

If you are in a red state or rural area, it's important to highlight that a lot of the materials and models of campaigns come from the coasts or blue states. In many ways, those of us navigating campaigns in red states are dealing with hugely different conditions; we have different laws, different services, different opposition and backlash, and a different safety net. A lot of us in red states have also been burned by campaigns (both issue campaigns and electoral campaigns) coming in from national organizations without relationships, humility, or a commitment to long-term investment in our places and people.

Where do you imagine (or know from experience) we often fall flat with campaigns?

- When we can't decide what to focus on
- When we get stuck in research mode
- When we forget about implementation
- When we win ... and then are totally unprepared for the backlash that meets us
- When we allow in-fighting to destroy our groups before we even start our campaigns
- When we hold on too tightly to our plans ... even as the terrain is changing

How might we put this into practice, here and now?

In small groups, look back at the 3 I's exercise to consider rules or dominant beliefs that are harming your community, or do that exercise again with a specific local lens. **Then consider:**

- *What's an aspirational demand you have for your local community?*
- *Who is the target? Who can give it to you?*
- *What's your vision this demand is tied to?*

Campaign Scenario:

Using the following campaign scenario, have small groups make an outreach and escalation plan, including three thoughtful outreach and retention activities and three thoughtful escalation plans. You can make up other details that will make this most useful to your group. Give people 45 minutes with a 5-minute report-back.

Your coalition is mid-way through a campaign for universal pre-K at the county level. This will ensure that all young people in the county ages 3 and up have full-time, age-appropriate childcare until they go to kindergarten. The target or decision-maker for this campaign is the county commission. There is organized opposition (fiscal conservatives, the local charter school, and racists).





A Good TEAM IS HARD to Maintain

We have chosen to do a hard thing. If organizing were easy there would be more of us doing it.

How can we collect ourselves, root in our values, and communally be a steady hand to the teams we are a part of? This section has a variety of offerings for how groups can engage the very live-wire reality of conflict and belonging.

We have a lot of vocabulary in movement about relationships and conflict “transformation,” conflict “resolution,” but we are called in this moment to go beyond language and dig into the practices and promises, so we are not bystanders and side commentators in our organizations, but rallying our courage to try and try again to fix what is broken (and this sometimes looks like getting much more disciplined about not processing everything)!

As humans, we are hardwired for connection. And yet, there is so much societally that also pushes us apart, from oppression to isolation to cynicism to hyper-individualism and even narcissism. At SONG, we developed a frame to talk about what we were seeing play out inside our movements called “The Collective Plagues and Afflictions of our Time” (pp. 60-61), based on a belief that so many of the challenges we’re seeing inside of movement are happening because of an undercurrent of collective, spiritual crisis. Inside our organizations and movement formations, we find ourselves spending so many of our precious resources on internal group dynamics. Almost across the board, we are struggling with power, communication, belonging, distribution of work, conflict, and hurt feelings at the expense of the other life-and-death work that we are called to do in this time. And often, we already have the medicine to heal, soothe, and cure the plagues; the question is, will we gather the fortitude to apply it?

We are nothing without our teams. Our power comes from our numbers and our people, yet so often we eat each other alive inside of movement and then watch our numbers dwindle. We need each other to survive; we know this, and we must show each other we know this by how we show up, time after time.

FACILITATION STATION

[2 - 4 HOURS]

OVERVIEW

As organizers and people working in groups, facilitation is a skill all of us can and should learn. We desperately need more strong facilitators. This is not some secret set of skills reserved for consultants, experts, or extroverts. There are many tools out there to help support good facilitation but the most important part is practice. You can't study or read your way into being a strong facilitator.

GOALS

- To clarify what facilitation is (and what it isn't)
- To inventory skills and tools needed and available in your group
- To practice flexing facilitation muscles

TIME NEEDED

2-4 hours depending on the size of your group and amount of time devoted to roleplays

MATERIALS NEEDED

Flip charts, tape, markers, scenarios (handouts cut into strips), printer paper or construction paper, and writing tools for all participants

READINGS/RESOURCES

- *SOUL Curriculum Training for Trainers*
- *Critical Resistance Facilitators Manual*
- Preparing the Space: Facilitation Tips and Tricks (p. 5 of this workbook)
- *Emergent Strategy* by adrienne maree brown
- *Educating for A Change* by Rick Arnold and Bev Burke

FRAMING

We discussed the role of meetings and decision-making in the Common Needs of Democratic Groups session (p. 57). A lot of what comes up around meetings and decision-making is the role of facilitation. You could open this session with a refresher from that conversation, bringing back some key highlights.

Facilitation is a craft. It takes practice. You do not need to be extroverted to be a facilitator. It's not something you are born with, but something you practice and refine over time.

SEEING OURSELVES

1. Ask everyone in the group to **draw a picture of themselves in their power as a facilitator**. Stick figures are fine!
Ask: *What tools are you equipped with? What muscles have you built? What is in your facilitator's fanny pack?*

2. Break into small groups and share drawings then answer the question: ***What is the baseline of facilitation necessary to ensure a successful meeting?***
3. Put up your facilitator drawings and do a gallery walk (silent review of people's drawings) for five minutes.

Big group discussion:

Harvest responses to the baseline question above. The goal is not to make an overwhelming laundry list, but to hone in on more of a top five.

Consider:

- **Be prepared:** make a good and thoughtful agenda, review old notes and action items, and give information to people ahead of time.
- **Start the meeting with grounding agreements and time frames** for the meeting so people know what to expect (even if it is just a 30-second review of existing agreements).
- **Keep stack well:** call on people in a fair and timely manner. Don't allow any one or two people to take up all the space. Find fair and consistent ways to deal with interrupting.
- **Understand and embody the role of humor in facilitation.** Make fun of yourself a little bit or use yourself as an example around mistakes or imperfect behavior.
- **Push toward a culture of proposals** vs. endless discussions in meetings.

Ask the group: ***Where do we often go astray as groups (or in this group)?***

Consider (emphasize the struggles that are relevant to your group):

- **We rely too much on one person because they are a good facilitator.** *How can you solve this problem?* You could have potential facilitators shadow the existing main facilitator in your group, or do a skillshare to transfer tips and how the role works, or double up on facilitation and allow people to make mistakes and learn "on the job." The facilitator is a role of power in any group and that power should be shared.
- **We struggle to manage the expectation that only the facilitator is responsible** for how well or badly the meeting goes. In actuality, all parties are responsible for the success of the meeting, not just the facilitator.
- **We can be heavily swayed by social dynamics and are hesitant to tug the reins** (to ask people to wrap it up or come back to the topic at hand), so things don't get done in meetings. One way to solve this is to give groups a heads up and get consent to tighten up the facilitation. You can say something like, "Hey y'all, we have 30 minutes left and some of us really have to end on time. Three more big agenda items remain, so I am going to tighten up my facilitation and ask everyone to tighten up their comments too, okay?"
- **We aren't always mindful of different learning styles, languages, or literacy.** People read at different levels (overall and in English) and most of us who read at a quite high level forget this. So, write up the agenda on big paper, have ways to get information from people and hear from the whole room other than discussion. Include physical movement and drawings or other visuals.
- **Things can get difficult when the group or facilitator needs a break and they/we don't call for one.** If you need a minute, or things are heated, take a break so you can collect yourself.
- **Meetings sometimes fall apart because people block votes or offer criticism without making any suggestions.** This is unprincipled behavior. Just say no to people that block and offer no suggestions or solutions!

FACILITATION SPECTROGRAM

Use the **Spectrogram Activity** set up (p. 133) to learn more about folks' beliefs and experience with facilitation. Recall that you have options as you move through this activity; after each statement you read, you can ask follow-up questions and take a couple comments each time, or not. Tailor the questions to the specific needs of your group: *What do you need more information about? What is contentious that could benefit from more exploration?*

- **Facilitating meetings freaks me out.** (*Where is there fear? From where do you pull confidence?*)
- **You have to be a good public speaker to be a good facilitator.** (*Examples of other skills that work?*)
- **Facilitators are the people primarily responsible for a meeting being effective.** (*Who else?*)
- **It's necessary for facilitators to cut people off.** (*When does it work well? When is it needed?*)

FACILITATION MAD-LIB

The goal of this activity is to practice giving and receiving feedback. This is important for healthy relationships, strong meeting culture, and growing our facilitation muscle. We often struggle with giving and receiving feedback in direct and constructive ways for fear of "hurting" each other or being called out. But not being able to be direct with each other also hurts our relationships.

Directions: Have folks break out into pairs or small groups (by counting off, not by choice). Give people five minutes to reflect on the following prompts and then share the following reflections:

All parties offer personal reflection:

- The places I feel solid in my facilitation skills are _____.
- I feel like my growing edges are _____.

All parties offer feedback to the other:

- I experience you as strong (or have seen growth around) when you _____.
- I feel like some ways you could grow are _____.

All parties thank each other for the feedback and then work on answering the final question together.

Two ways we could support each other are _____ and _____.

Debrief:

- *What was uncomfortable?*
- *What did you notice about how you **felt** when giving and receiving?*
- *How will you take this as a gift even if it was challenging?*

The support lists could also be put on the wall (and written in the notes!) and folks could look for patterns.

SCENARIOS

Practice, practice! Have people pick different scenarios from the list on pages 112-113 and then roleplay them out with the group. The goals are to have everyone practice common challenges in facilitation and to have non-facilitators reflect on their responsibilities in making a meeting, event, or workshop successful.

As the facilitator, you should have each scenario typed or written onto a slip of paper (or photocopy the scenarios and cut them into strips). If it is a big group, you can break people out into smaller groups or even triads. This can be a timed exercise; 5 or 8 minutes per scenario would work well.

The person doing the roleplay should read, take a minute to collect themselves, and then proceed. Some scenarios everyone will have to be in on, and in others, the facilitator will have to assign roles as needed before you start. But don't spend too much time "prepping."

After the scenario, the group can discuss what was successful or unsuccessful. Another option is to have someone else in the group give it a try.

POWER DYNAMICS IN GROUPS

Conditions of oppression and domination are so real and woven into the fabric of our lives that throwing up our hands or not working to reshape those dynamics means Power Over wins.

Ultimately, no curriculum can offer a cookie-cutter method for addressing power dynamics in groups. While sometimes dynamics show up in ways that are pretty obvious and clear-cut (like when white entitlement shows up in the form of interrupting, talking over people, or itching to be the first to speak on everything), other times the dynamics at play are much muddier, murkier, and dynamic. Context, relationships, experience, identities, and conditions inform our diagnosis of health in our groups, and like our physical health, there are patterns *and* things are different every day.

In addition, we know that some of our political spaces can get pretty twisty around power. Some have adopted the toxicity of academia, so we revolt against white supremacy or classist institutions, and then those with oppressed (or many oppressed) identities are given free reign to take over meetings or enact bad habits. Sometimes, people are afraid to cut folks off or hold everyone to shared standards based on perceived need or identity. There's also a reflex in some spaces to try to bypass oppressive dynamics by working with people "like me." But homogenizing your group will not eliminate the need to address power because people are not one-dimensional. This is not to say don't work with your folks, but to acknowledge that **wherever we work in groups, we've all got our work cut out for us.**

To navigate power dynamics effectively, we must first acknowledge that they are always gonna be there. Navigating power will **always** be a thing. We will **always** be strengthening our collective will and skills to reshape power and create spaces of liberation. Second, we must build a shared toolbox and culture of norms and agreements and stick to it, rather than sidelining folks or exempting individual people from responsibility. We must nurture courage and humility in naming and addressing power dynamics.

CUTTING AN AGENDA:

Because of rain, everyone arrived late to the meeting. Your meeting is about getting three new playgrounds built in your county. Your group meets every other month, and it is clear the group needs to cut the agenda down by at least one hour. *What do you do?*

POWER DYNAMICS:

Facilitator: Engage a member in the group without allowing them to bulldoze the process and overturn decisions already made.

Participant: You are a person with power in the group (because of age, experience, race, gender) pushing the group to overturn a decision they weren't present for at the last meeting.

NO ONE DID ANYTHING THEY COMMITTED TO:

Facilitator: You are asking working groups or committees to report back on their progress and no one has done anything. This is an ongoing challenge in the group: lots of ideas and enthusiasm, but little follow through. You have to decide what to do.

Participants: You have a variety of individual and collective excuses for why you have not done what you committed to doing, for example, "Why didn't you remind us?"

NEW PERSON WITH A LOT OF OPINIONS:

Facilitator: Hold a warm tone for new members and reset expectations on meeting culture. Hold the need for this person to get brought up to speed but not take over the whole meeting or weigh in hard on things they don't know anything about.

New Person / Participant: You are a new member of the group coming in with a lot of enthusiasm and a lot of critique, taking up a lot of space. Perhaps you haven't been oriented or brought up to speed.

CUTTING PEOPLE OFF:

Facilitator: You have to keep the meeting going in a respectful way.

Participant: You are running your mouth non-stop, not only about random stuff but about things that are very important to you. When the facilitator tries to intervene, you keep on going. You are a seasoned activist/organizer with a lot of relationships in the room and strong commitment to the group.

MEDIATING CONFLICT / DIFFUSING A TENSE SITUATION:

Facilitator: You are facilitating a meeting about "Fighting for Self-Expression." You need to mediate the inevitable conflict that comes up between people in the room.

Participants (2): You are in a fight. You know each other well from this group and community. There seems to be some history about the fight. The meeting you are at is about "Fighting for Self-Expression." The fight is about picking or not picking your nose in public.

BEING DISRUPTIVE:

Facilitator: You are responsible for diffusing a situation with someone in the group who is being disruptive, and resetting the tone in the group.

Participant: You seem to have come to the meeting today with a bee in your bonnet, and because the group never did a check-in, you never got to share with the group that your car broke down (for good) and your mama's sick. So you are doing everything in your power to get some attention and are accidentally hijacking the meeting.

HARD FEEDBACK:

Facilitator: You need to give Sophia some hard feedback. She has been making some disrespectful side comments, rolling her eyes, and not following through on tasks she signed up for. Use your discretion: either let her know how this is impacting you and the group during the meeting, or pull her aside when you are done.

DRAWING PEOPLE OUT & MAKING A DECISION:

Facilitator: You need to decide if the group is going to spend its budget on the Día de los Muertos event.

Everyone else: You are not interested in participating; you are bored, distracted, cranky, quiet, shy, etc.

LOOKING FOR CLARITY:

Facilitator: You need to make sure that everyone fully understands the report that you just gave about _____ (topic) _____ and determine if the group wants to continue with participating on the leadership council of the local _____ (coalition) _____.

RECAPPING:

Facilitator: You are at the end of a hearty meeting. Practice recapping: scan and name decisions, flags, or outstanding things that aren't resolved, and push for deadlines and people. Put a name by each task.

THOUGHTS V. FEELINGS:

Facilitator: Your group is discussing a proposal. Push people to say what they think or suggest and why, versus just sharing feelings. The goal is making a decision at the end of the meeting.

Participants: One person only has criticisms and no suggestions; two other people are just saying their feelings in regard to a proposal on the table.

NO CLEAR DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURE:

Facilitator: You have decisions to make but no clear decision-making structure established. What do you do, and why?

NURTURING RELATIONSHIPS, NAVIGATING CONFLICT [4 - 6 HOURS]

OVERVIEW

Some of us are good at starting relationships, others are good at maintaining them, and some of us struggle with relationships and connection, period. There is a rightful emphasis on “relational organizing” these days. Relationships are critically, vitally important, and we need to make sure they are authentic, can withstand challenges and discord, and are not performative or transactional. Real, hearty political relationships take time and attention to build. **Of course, where there are relationships we know there will also be conflict. Not only is it inevitable, it's healthy:** the question is how we deal with conflict once it arises. Included in this section are a variety of exercises for groups to use to reflect on their individual relationships to conflict and what agreements and protocol approaches they have at their disposal to address conflict.

GOALS

- To establish a shared baseline of understanding of how conflict impacts our work
- To reflect on and share our individual patterns, experiences, and approaches to conflict and trauma, and to discuss how that plays out in groups
- To strengthen our muscle of discernment and diagnosis of individual patterns and collective dynamics
- To determine shared commitments and practices for navigating conflict

TIME NEEDED

This content could be done over the course of a day or spread over multiple days

MATERIALS NEEDED

Flip charts, tape, markers, scenarios (1/breakout), **Conflict Reflection** (p. 116), **Principled Struggle** (p. 124) and **Conflict Worksheet** (p. 117)

READINGS/ RESOURCES

- Imago Dialogue
- *Fumbling Towards Repair, A Transformative Justice Workbook* by Mariame Kaba and Shira Hassan
- *Emergent Strategy* by adrienne marie brown

NURTURING RELATIONSHIPS FRAMING

When we lean into relationship in an intentional way, we can build more stable organizations. At Auburn Lives of Commitment, an annual ceremony honoring spiritually rooted movement leaders hosted by Auburn Seminary, Stacey Abrams said, “When we think about belonging we often think about how we fit in, but our responsibility is to invite others to be there with us.” In other words, **how do we reframe our attention to belonging to focus on the belonging of others?**

Deliberately nurturing relationships is a feminist practice, a leadership skill, and critical to organizing and building robust teams. Our relationships are not just personal relationships but relationships on behalf of and in the service of the group.

Solo reflection: Bring to mind some of the groups you've been a part of where the collective relationships have felt most nurturing. Take some time to write about those experiences. *What in particular made them so nurturing for you? How were you treated? How did support show up practically?*

Small groups: Share your reflections in a small group. Write them up on a big piece of paper as you go. After everyone has shared, ask: *Can any of these examples of nurturing support be grouped or categorized together?*

Consider:

- **Attention to small details** (including regular check-ins about how you're doing, folks following up with you)
- **Feminist policies** (like childcare support and rotation of roles)
- **Transparency** (including everyone in the group knowing how money is spent and who makes what decisions)

Share out as a full group and discuss: What are other ways we can be nurturing relationships more in a political, collective way? This does **not** mean we need to all be best friends or have pajama parties, rather that we really know and fortify our relations with each other. These practices and tools can be social, such as monthly dinners, or functional, like making sure everyone knows who they can talk to if conflict arises. They can also be more spiritually-oriented, like making time for quiet reflection (not just always doing doing doing).

Embodied Reflection: Bring the group to stillness. Ask people to bring back to mind one of the examples of nurturing collective relationships that you considered at the beginning of the session. *Can you picture the physical space that you're in? Who else is there? What is happening to make you feel supported? Now note: How does that feel in your body? To your heart rate? Where are your shoulders? How is your breath?* Sit with this feeling awhile. As we move into the section on conflict, you can use this feeling of being nurtured as solid ground to return to.

BREAK

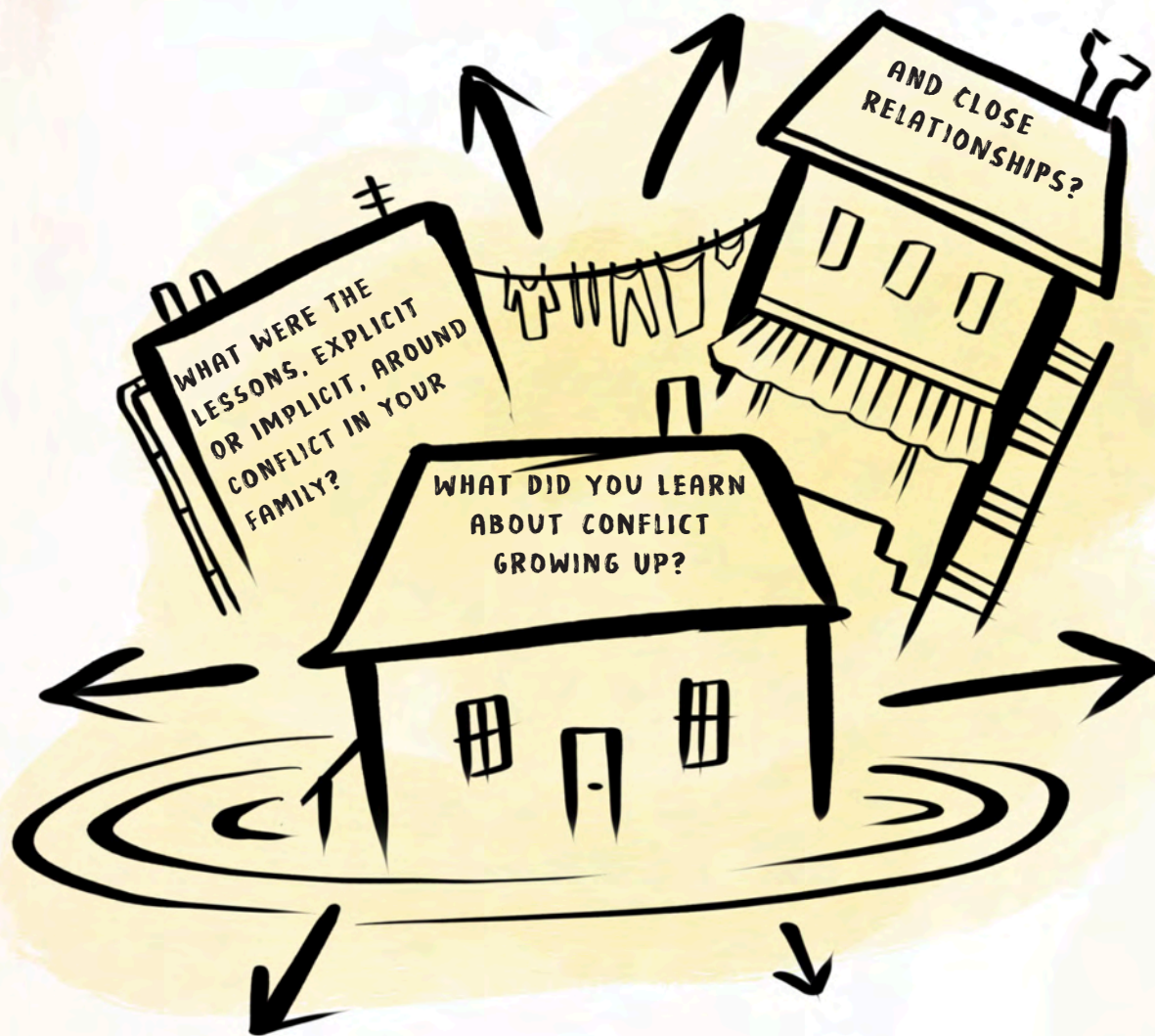
NAVIGATING CONFLICT I FRAMING

It is hard for us to keep our agreements with each other, with so much broken between us. We splash and lash. Sometimes even more so in democratic groups, where we have direct access to each other. Black Lives Matter Global Network talks about the importance of turning up on the state – **not each other**. We believe it, **but how can we do it better?**

Conflict is inevitable, and how we deal with it matters. Let folks know you're going to spend time looking at conflict, both interpersonally and communally. Say: we will look at our own individual patterns and training, consider how conflict plays out in groups, and identify ways we can fortify or build muscle for different ways to address conflict.

Invite participants to meditate on and write about early experiences and current practices around conflict on p. 116.

CONFLICT Reflection





HOW ARE
YOU MOST
COMFORTABLE
IN CONFLICT?



HOW ARE
YOU
LEAST
COMFORTABLE?



CONFLICT



WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN
WORKING ON GROWING
AROUND? AND HOW
HAVE YOU BEEN DOING
THAT? (GET SPECIFIC)



HAVE TO
ADDRESS
CONFLICT?
WHAT, IF
ANYTHING,



HOLDS US BACK
FROM USING THEM?

Share the following quotes or do a body scan exercise to begin:

"All groups have conflicts. Conflict is not a sign of a group's failure, but a necessary and potentially healthy aspect of its growth. Groups conflict because needs, directions, and dynamic forces are not always in harmony. Through open conflict, needs can be balanced, changes made, and new directions forged. Conflict is not the same as violence." – Starhawk, *Truth or Dare* (p. 258)

"You know as well as I, Old Wife, that we have not been scuffling in this waste howling-wilderness for the right to be stupid. All this waste. Everybody all up in each other's face with a whole oote who struck John – you ain't correct, well you ain't cute, and he ain't right and they ain't scientific and yo mama don't wear no drawers and get off my suedes, and he hit me, and she quit me, and this one's dirty and that one don't have a degree, and on and on ... But, Old Wife, we gonna have to get a mighty large group trained to pull us through the times ahead. Them four horses galloping already, the seven trumpets blasting. And looks like we clean forgot what we come to do, what we been learning through all them trials and tribulations to do and it's now. Come in here after abusing themselves and want to be well and don't even know what they want to be healthy for."

–Toni Cade Bambara, *The Salt Eaters* (p. 46)

Pair share: Have folks pair up with someone they don't know very well in the group to share their journal reflections.

Bring back: 1) a lesson from growing up, 2) a place were you are comfortable, 3) a practice you been cultivating.

Full Group: Have pairs share back. Scribe folks' responses into three columns (one for each question). Then, have a broader discussion about what holds us back from resolving conflict. Prompts to guide the conversation could include: *What are we so afraid of? What are the consequences of not resolving conflict? What is the difference between how we handle our personal business and how we handle group conflict? Why are lines so blurry?*

Consider:

- Social pressures, exclusion, bullying, exile, or being alone again
- Sometimes the "personal is political" means everyone's personal business is open to discussion
- Naming discomfort or disagreement as trauma or violence
- Fear of messing up or not doing it right
- Waiting for someone else to fix it
- Underdevelopment – we've only ever done it the way we did it

Groups often break down when one of these three areas isn't clear:

Scribe these up if it's useful, or adapt this to your team (for example, work in small groups if the group too big).

- **We're unclear on purpose:** What are we doing? Why? If you aren't clear on this you shouldn't be a group.
- **We're unclear on roles:** Who is doing what? Why? Everyone on the core team should have a role. A common recipe for disaster is people in a group not doing anything but still leveraging their opinions.
- **We're messy in our relationships:** Gossip, side talk, and interpersonal dynamics ultimately impact the group.

You can add an explicit layer of conversation about power and culture:

- White middle- and upper-class domination in society and in organizational culture means **passive-aggressiveness** and **conflict avoidance** are often mandated, enforced, and rewarded.
- We need **constant vigilance and an analysis of power** that is interpersonal, structural, and factors in other forms of power and the way they manifest.
- Leftist political culture means that inside of movement **some people are given immunity** to act or speak however they want because of multiple oppressed identities. Bottom line, though, **this ultimately harms them and the group.**

WHERE DOES CONFLICT SIT IN THE BODY?

How do you respond to conflict when you are inside of it, causing it, or witnessing conflict around you?

We have survival strategies that we have learned to sustain and protect ourselves from conflict in our lives. On a physiological level, the body responds immediately to traumatic incidents and events. Our nervous systems are trained to respond to situations differently depending on current triggers and our previous experiences of trauma.

On a psychological level, the body and mind have four distinct responses to traumatic events:

- **Freeze**
- **Appease**
- **Flight**
- **Fight**

Dissociation, an adaptive process of psychological detachment from reality, is a part of all of these responses. Without judgment, work to identify what these look like in individual and collective bodies. This can be done in a big group, in small groups, or in an around-the-world format, with time at the end for everyone to look and discuss.

- **What does freeze look like individually? Collectively?**
- **What does appease look like individually? Collectively?**
- **What does flight look like individually? Collectively?**
- **What does fight look like individually? Collectively?**

Invite participants to break into groups based on which of the above responses they most identify with. In the small groups, have people work together to make a collective shape/tableaux or physical gesture that best describes what this response can look like. *How can they show the response with their bodies?*

Ask the groups to keep track of who they worked with and the results of this activity for later.

NAVIGATING CONFLICT II FRAMING

While our nervous systems have been wired over tens of thousands of years to react to perceived threats with fight/flight/freeze/appease, **there are practices and tools we can adopt and nurture within ourselves and our groups to override these survival responses.** Being attuned to the dynamics of the wider environments we're working in – whether that's what's going on within our own organizations, communities, or within social justice movements more broadly – can also offer useful perspective and help us depersonalize what's happening around us.

Recall adrienne maree brown's assertion that "the 3 things that are tearing our movements apart are 1) ego, 2) we're all lying, and 3) we don't know how to address conflict."

- *What are peoples' reactions to that?*
- *What do you think she means?*
- *How do these three things show up in our organizing?*

Engage in a full group discussion, or start with the small groups folks are already in and then move to the full group. For the purposes of this conversation, we're looking at **the ways ego keeps us in competition with each other**, seeking – even subconsciously – accolades and recognition for our work or our opinions and prioritizing the individual over the collective. **This leads to puffing up: lying about our achievements and "metrics."**

Often what gets us to this place is a real or perceived sense of scarcity and a competition for funding or other resources. Failure to address 1) ego and 2) lying is often a primary source of conflict that we then fear and don't know how to address.

BUILDING SHARED COMMITMENTS

Pair share: Thinking about everything we've discussed to date, share a time when you were part of a conflict and you wanted to intervene constructively or take a particular action but **didn't**, and a time when you wanted to do something to address it and you **did**. *What was the conflict about? What was it really about? What did you do that was different?*

Full group: Bringing it all together, **what are some of the practices and tools that we can use to address conflict instead of avoiding it?**

Consider:

- We can take responsibility for our own actions.
- We can develop personal practices (such as breathing, or writing down thoughts before speaking) and weave those practices into group culture.
- We can lean into nurturing relationships, investing in each other so we have reserves of goodwill.
- We can get rigorous about naming the behavior of the person, not the person, when we have beef.
- Similarly, let's name the impact of another's behavior on us instead of assuming someone's bad intention (for example, "When you did X, I felt Y," as opposed to, "I know you were trying to make me feel Y!").

- We can have a practice of getting events clear in conflict (versus just living in a sea of feelings).
- We can keep away from buzzwords (like “accountability”), and instead get clear and specific.
- We can take breaks! And use them to help emotions settle and support everyone to do their best.
- Recall that building trust – and rebuilding trust – takes time. Trust is not a given, *and* trust can be rebuilt!
- We can commit to never dragging each other online.
- We can practice rigor around confidentiality by avoiding side talk and gossip and bringing our beef up directly.
- We can be mindful of timing by acting swiftly to address issues rather than letting them fester.
- We can ask for facilitative help in navigating conflict when we need more support.

SCENARIOS

Return folks to the small groups they were with for the fight/flight/freeze/appease enactment. Then, give each small group a scenario to workshop, and ask them to create a shape with their bodies that illustrates it. Next, using the ideas for navigating conflict that have been discussed (or new ideas!), have folks consider: *What is needed here? Is it a group conversation? Is it a one on one? A series of interventions?* Then have each group build and embody a new shape that reflects how their situation might be handled. Use one or more of the following examples, or make up your own. We don’t recommend workshoping an active conflict in the group at this time.

Scenario 1: Someone with a lot of social power (experience, relationships, and esteem) continually drops the ball on work that they sign up for or is part of the role they agreed to. When approached, they get defensive and take things personally. Then, they get a new boo, and the boo starts coming to all the meetings and is granted extra access. The new boo even weighs in on existing conflicts in the group in ways that leave people uncomfortable and negatively impacts the work.

Scenario 2: Someone no one really knows pops off on Facebook, dragging both the group and individuals in the group for being exclusive, elitist, and “dangerous.”

Scenario 3: You have a multi-racial group. A white/light-skinned person is told they are racist and their presence is “traumatizing and triggering” people.

Scenario 4: Younger and newer members confront older members of the group, saying that their lack of attention to gender pronouns is causing violence and trauma to them.

Scenario 5: New members of a group come in with a lot of energy and criticism of the group’s existing work, pushing to change the group’s focus from A to B and stating that if the group doesn’t change its focus it is bad and hates trans people.

Close with a group discussion. *How did the way your body changed shape change the way you felt? What are some ways to turn these embodied experiences into protocols or recommendations for your group?*

HOMEWORK: Have folks fill in the worksheet on navigating conflict (p. 122).

Navigating CONFLICT...

"ALL GROUPS HAVE CONFLICTS.

CONFLICT IS NOT A SIGN OF A GROUP'S FAILURE, BUT A NECESSARY AND POTENTIALLY HEALTHY ASPECT OF ITS GROWTH. GROUPS CONFLICT BECAUSE NEEDS, DIRECTIONS, AND DYNAMIC FORCES ARE NOT ALWAYS IN HARMONY. THROUGH OPEN CONFLICT, NEEDS CAN BE BALANCED, CHANGES MADE, AND NEW DIRECTIONS FORGED.

CONFLICT IS NOT THE SAME AS VIOLENCE."

- STARHAWK, TRUTH OR DARE (P. 258)

WHAT IS YOUR SELF-WORK AROUND CONFLICT?

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO PRACTICE OR TRANSFORM?



WHAT'S YOUR GROUP WORK?

WHERE DO YOU COLLECTIVELY NEED TO CULTIVATE BETTER PRACTICES?

GO BACK TO THE PREP QUESTIONS YOU ANSWERED FOR THIS SESSION (P. 115). FROM THE EXPERIENCES YOU DESCRIBED...

- **WHAT CAN YOU BRING FORWARD?**
- **WHAT CAN YOU LEAVE BEHIND?**
- **WHAT CAN YOU TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR OR SET DOWN?**

WHEN IS A TIME YOU HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN A GROUP CONFLICT THAT WAS RESOLVED OR SETTLED IN A WAY THAT YOU WERE PROUD OF? WHAT'S YOUR DIAGNOSIS OF WHAT ELEMENTS WERE PRESENT TO ALLOW RESOLUTION?

WHEN IS A TIME YOU HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN A CONFLICT THAT YOU AREN'T PROUD OF, OR IN RETROSPECT FEEL YOU WEREN'T BRAVE ENOUGH IN? WHAT'S YOUR DIAGNOSIS OF WHY THAT HAPPENED, AND WHAT DO YOU WISH YOU HAD DONE DIFFERENTLY?

PRINCIPLED STRUGGLE

BY N'TANYA LEE

**WE STRUGGLE FOR THE SAKE OF DEEPENING OUR COLLECTIVE
UNDERSTANDING AND GETTING TO GREATER UNITY.**

- 1. BE HONEST AND DIRECT - WHILE HOLDING COMPASSION**
- 2. TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR OWN FEELINGS AND
ACTIONS**
- 3. SEEK DEEPER UNDERSTANDING (ASK & READ FIRST)**
- 4. CONSIDER THAT THIS MAY/MAY NOT BE THE CONTAINER TO
HOLD WHAT YOU NEED TO BRING**
- 5. SIDE CONVOS SHOULD HELP US GET BETTER UNDERSTANDING,
NOT CHECK OUT (TEST: COULD I BRING THE ESSENCE BACK
TO THE GROUP?)**

CLOSING & EVALUATION

This curriculum was designed for groups, teams, and leaders to pick and choose from as you see fit. Evaluation and reflection is an important feminist practice, and one our groups struggle to hold in balance; often, we go too deeply internal and analyze everything, or we totally neglect honest, rigorous evaluation. Below is a list of some closing exercises you might choose from as you land this arc with your people. There are many others out there, and no doubt the closing you design will be tailored to the group you now know well. You may not know what is needed until you get there. *What is still open (an altar, a wound, a question) that needs to be tended or closed? What would ceremonially mark the transition from this season of learning and growing to the next? How can you say thank you?*

CLOSING PRACTICES

- **Review of Feminist Leadership Module:** Have people lift up their practices and commitments. Write them up somewhere and set calendar reminder to review.
- **Blessing exercise** in Embodiment and Liberation
- **Rose, Bud, Thorn** collective process. You can use the worksheet in the Appendix (p. 136)
- **Letter from the Future:** All members of the group write themselves a letter from the future, describing their future feminist self to their current self. You can send them or distribute them in a year from now!

SIGNING OFF

At the time of first publication of this curriculum it is summer 2020. **All of us – and the workings of empire – have literally been brought to a halt because of the global pandemic COVID-19.** The final closing convening for Auburn Seminary's amazing cohort of leaders from red states in March 2020 had to be cancelled. We send love and gratitude to those leaders who inspired, tested, critiqued, and grappled with the live-action version of this curriculum, and who are continuing to hold work and community down in their homeplaces through these acute crises.

To date, 90,000 people in the United States have lost their lives needlessly. The United States, the wealthiest country in the world with just 3% of the global population, has over half of the world's confirmed cases, a statistic that lays bare a stark reality for all to see and grapple with (and one that working-class people, Black and people of color communities, LGBTQ communities, and more have known forever): **this system was designed to protect some at the expense of others.**

The content within these pages remains relevant and timely, even as we all scramble to take care of ourselves and each other, grieve and rage under quarantine, and work to organize. These building blocks – of how to work together, fight together, and be together – remain vitally important as we navigate relationships mediated through technology as never before and battle with loneliness, loss, and uncertainty far from our beloveds. Cut off as we are from the hearth of relationship, confronted with the need to sustain ourselves and our spirits inside unfolding turmoil, we also long for each other. Most especially, **we find ourselves at yet another crossroads here in the heart of empire; can we galvanize the vision and will to build a new world inside this rubble, while the 1% works to enact their vision of the world? We can, we will, we must.**

APPENDIX

More Tools for Group Work

- Check-in questions & grounding
- Energizers & icebreakers
- Activity formats
- Blank notes sheet
- Healing Circles, Inc.
- Land/Body/Spirit/Work
- Rose/Bud/Thorn debrief sheet
- Working Glossary of Organizing Terms



CHECK-IN QUESTIONS & GROUNDING

CHECK-IN QUESTIONS

- How is your head? Heart? Body? Spirit?
- What's your favorite smell? (Connect to multiple senses, not just head and brain)
- Who are your people? Whose shoulders do you stand on?
- What is the story of your name?
- What did it take for you to get here?
- What is your intention for this time together today?
- Who's your movement hero/shero?
- When did you decide to work for justice? What was the moment?
- When did you realize all was not well with the world?
- What do you do that helps you bounce back from hard times?
- What's one thing about yourself that we don't already know?
- What would be your superpower? What is your superpower?
- What are 2 or 3 things you know for sure at this moment ? (From Dorothy Allison's book, *Two or Three things I know for Sure*. In it she says...Two or three things I know for sure and they are never the same things. What we know for sure can change all the time.)
- What is your favorite pair of socks?
- What is your favorite way to eat potatoes?

GROUNDING

- **Altar building** - folks bring and share a sacred object and share the intention for themselves in the time together (that represents peace, tranquility, strength, etc.)
- **Poetry** - Audre Lorde, June Jordan, Gloria Anzaldúa, Marge Piercy
- **Hand massage** - with consent
- **Shoulder rub** - with consent
- **Stretches** - Down to the grass roots, out to your friends and neighbors, up to the heavens ... and a couple deep breaths
- **Songs**
- **Body scan** - from toes to head, scanning body for tingly, tightness, pain, discomfort, cold, hot, pay attention, breathe into our depth, height and width. Release the tension and acknowledge the sensation. Connect to our body before proceeding - and pay attention to sensation throughout meeting

ENERGIZERS & ICEBREAKERS

Questions ask yourself when creating an icebreaker:

- Who are the people breaking the ice?
- What is their relationship to each other? Think specifically about outliers and bringing everyone in.
- What is their organizational culture (silly, stiff, emo)?
- What is the purpose of the gathering? What are we breaking ice in order to do?
- Are there other important factors? Underlying tensions? Huge differences between the group members?

WHAT IS/IT IS (FROM GABRIEL FOSTER)

- Need as many small pieces of paper as there are people, pens, and a hat or something to put the scraps in.
- Ask everyone to write a question on one side starting with 'What is ...' i.e., what is your mom doing right now, what is queer love ..., whatever.
- Then have everyone fold those pieces of paper and put 'em in a hat in the middle, mix 'em up and have everyone pick a new one (WITHOUT LOOKING).
- Without looking at what is written on the other side, have them answer a question starting with 'It is...' i.e.; it is a pony, it is raining in Pittsburgh, etc.
- Then have folks read and share. Hopefully you'll get some good funny ones.

DANCE TELEPHONE

This requires people to move around so it depends on mobility and comfort level of the group. It is great though cuz everyone loosens up and everyone is laughing by the end.

You need one brave volunteer to come up with a dance move (like a little sequence). Then have everyone get in a line, everyone with their back to everyone else, with the 1st dancer at the head of the line. The first dancer taps the shoulder of the 2nd person in line, who turns around so they are facing each other, and the 1st dancer does the dance move once and the 2nd person mirrors it back. Then the 2nd person taps the 3rd person on their shoulder and the 3rd person turns around so the 2nd and 3rd person are facing each other. The 2nd person does the dance move for the 3rd person ... and on and on until everyone has gone. Then you compare what the dance was at the beginning and what it transformed into at the end. It is hilarious. With 20 people, you could do one long game of telephone or you could do 2 teams. That could be fun, too.

A LITTLE WIND BLOWS

There is a circle of chairs with one missing. One person stands in the middle; they state something that applies to them "A little wind blows for anyone who likes to watch *The Real Housewives of Atlanta*." Anyone that applies to has to get out of their chair and find a new seat not directly next to the one they just got up from.

MUSICAL CHAIRS

Play musical chairs and the last person checks in.

THE QUESTIONS GAME (FROM CAAAV)

Everyone writes a question. One person picks the mixed-up questions out of a hat. They answer the question without giving away the actual question and pass the same question to the next person. This continues until the question gets to the person on the left or right of the person who first answered the question, depending on which way you went. The last person to not see the question has to guess the question based on the answers people gave. That means no yes/no or number questions.

WRITEY DRAWAY

For this you need long strips of paper, at least 5-inches wide, and an odd number of people. People should be in a circle/ish but it doesn't really matter. Best with 7+ people. Someone starts at the top of the long strip of paper by writing a sentence. Any sentence! Then they pass the piece of paper to the next person and that person draws a PICTURE of what the person's SENTENCE is. Then this person folds the paper over so you can't see what the original sentence was (with only the image showing) and passes it to the next person who WRITES a sentence describing the PICTURE, and so on ...

FIRE (FROM TANUJA)

Create a fire ... Everyone takes a note card and write an intention. Think about what makes you stuck ... and throw it into the fire. Then you have to show the fire your intention.

ELEPHANTS & PALM TREES

Everyone stands in a circle. One person volunteers to stand in the middle. They point at one person and say either 'elephant' or 'palm tree.' If they say 'elephant,' the person in the middle has to put their hands forward and the two people on the right and left of that person have to make elephant ears with their arms. If they say 'palm tree,' then the person in the middle has to put their arms up like a palm tree and the two people on the right and left have to put their arms out like palm tree branches. If anyone messes up then they become the person in the middle of the circle.

TOILET SECRETS

Pass around a roll of TP and everyone takes a much or as little as they want. Then, for each square of TP that they took, they have to tell the group a secret about themselves.

SPEED DATING

Facilitator(s) come up with a list of questions – from funny to serious. Everyone stands up and finds a partner (someone they don't know). The facilitator has the list of questions, each person in the pair will take turns answering the question. Facilitator asks the question. The pair has 30 seconds or a minute to answer the question – switching off half way. You can ring a bell or clap or yell for them to switch. Then after the time is up, people have to find a new partner and you ask a new question. Repeat!

ID GUESSING GAME

Pass out an index card and a pen to each person who is playing. Then each person has to write two things they have done and one they haven't. The more unique and interesting, the better, but the object is to make it hard for the others to guess that it is your card. Then the cards are collected, and the group votes on who they think the card represents and which item they haven't done.

THE BOWL GAME *LONG, FUN

Cut paper into small pieces, yet big enough to write on. Have the players write down virtually anything that can be used for guessing: objects, famous people, movies, places, anything that comes to mind. Fold the pieces up and put them into the bowl. Divide into two teams. Each team has one minute to describe as many pieces of paper from the bowl as possible without saying the word on the paper. Each team gets one pass per turn, and after that it is minus one point for every pass. Whoever has the most points when the terms in the bowl run out, wins. Variations include: doing charades with the same set of clues for the second round, followed by being allowed to say one word only for the third round.

FINGER

Everyone is in a circle, and each person puts their left hand out, palm up, and their right pointer finger in the palm of their neighbor's left hand. The goal is to grab your neighbor's finger, and not get your finger grabbed! Start on a count of 3; if you get your finger grabbed, you're out! Once you're out, you leave the circle and become a cheerleader for the remaining people playing until you have a 'winner.'

ROCK, PAPER, SCISSORS TOURNAMENT

This is a good energizer to get the energy up. It is a standard game of Rock, Paper, Scissors, so clarify the rules beforehand ('1,2,3, shoot!' and if you are doing 2 out of 3). Everyone pairs up and plays a first round. Whoever loses becomes the cheerleader for the person that beat them, standing behind them and chanting their name. Then that person finds someone else to face off with, and the game repeats until you have a grand finale.

NOTES...

TOPIC

DATE

KEY IDEAS



QUESTIONS...

ACTIVITY FORMATS FOR GROUP WORK

Training for Change has many ideas.

PAIR SHARE: Important and simple activity for building relationships and ensuring all people in the room can share and contribute. People can have the same pair over the course of a full day or training, or be requested to switch pairs. This can also be modified into groups of 3 aka triads.

JOURNAL/WORKBOOK PAGES/WRITTEN

REFLECTION: Time for group participants to do silent reflection in the form of writing, doodling, drawing. Helpful for giving people a chance to digest and reflect on information and/or for people to have a break from verbal processing of information.

SMALL GROUPS/BREAK-OUT GROUPS:

Smaller work teams so that people can work together and contribute more actively than in a larger group. Helpful to give groups clear instructions so louder, bossier, more assertive people don't take over.

SPECTROGRAM: Also can be called 'Yes No Maybe' or 'Agree Disagree Don't Know.' This is an exercise that gets people moving, where they place their body in space based on their response to a question being asked. The questions can be silly, serious, or a mix. Helpful to visually and physically represent the range of opinions, experiences, thoughts on a subject, and to get people out of their heads. One side of a room is 1 response ('YES!') and the other side is the other ('NO!') with 'Maybe' being the in the middle. It's helpful but not needed to put up signs for folks to expedite setting up the exercise. If moving around isn't available to members of your groups, you can give those members a set of signs that they can hold up with Yes/No/Maybe.

FISHBOWL: Interactive group exercise, really good for storytelling and sharing of history. Facilitator should use it for a very specific topic with specific questions. A set of people sit in the middle of the circle of participants, they are the fish in the bowl. Facilitator asks them to respond to a specific question, other people in the bowl can also ask questions and/OR when someone in the middle is ready to swap out, they can leave and someone from the bowl can replace them. So, many people can come in and out.

GALLERY WALK: Good tool for having small groups share the results of their work on a topic. All groups put their 'report-back' on the wall and everyone silently looks and reads for a set amount of time. Then afterwards the full group can discuss.

AROUND THE WORLD/WORLD CAFE: This is a method for group learning where you have multiple topics being workshopped or discussed in small groups simultaneously for a set amount of time. After time is up, each small group goes to the next area, reads the previous group's notes, and then adds on. By the end, people have gone around the room and visited or engaged each topic. There can be one facilitator that stays in each group, or good notes on flip chart paper for each team to read and add on to.

FULL GROUP-DISCUSSION TOOLS: GO ROUND:

Have everyone in the circle share. A good activity to do for a check in. **POPCORN:** a discussion/convo/meeting that is open and not structured (vs a go round). **DOT VOTING:** good tool to get a temperature check from a group on a specific topic and to narrow down. Facilitator collects the options, then everyone gets a certain number of dots (1-2) and they vote for what they support.

HEALING CIRCLES, INC.

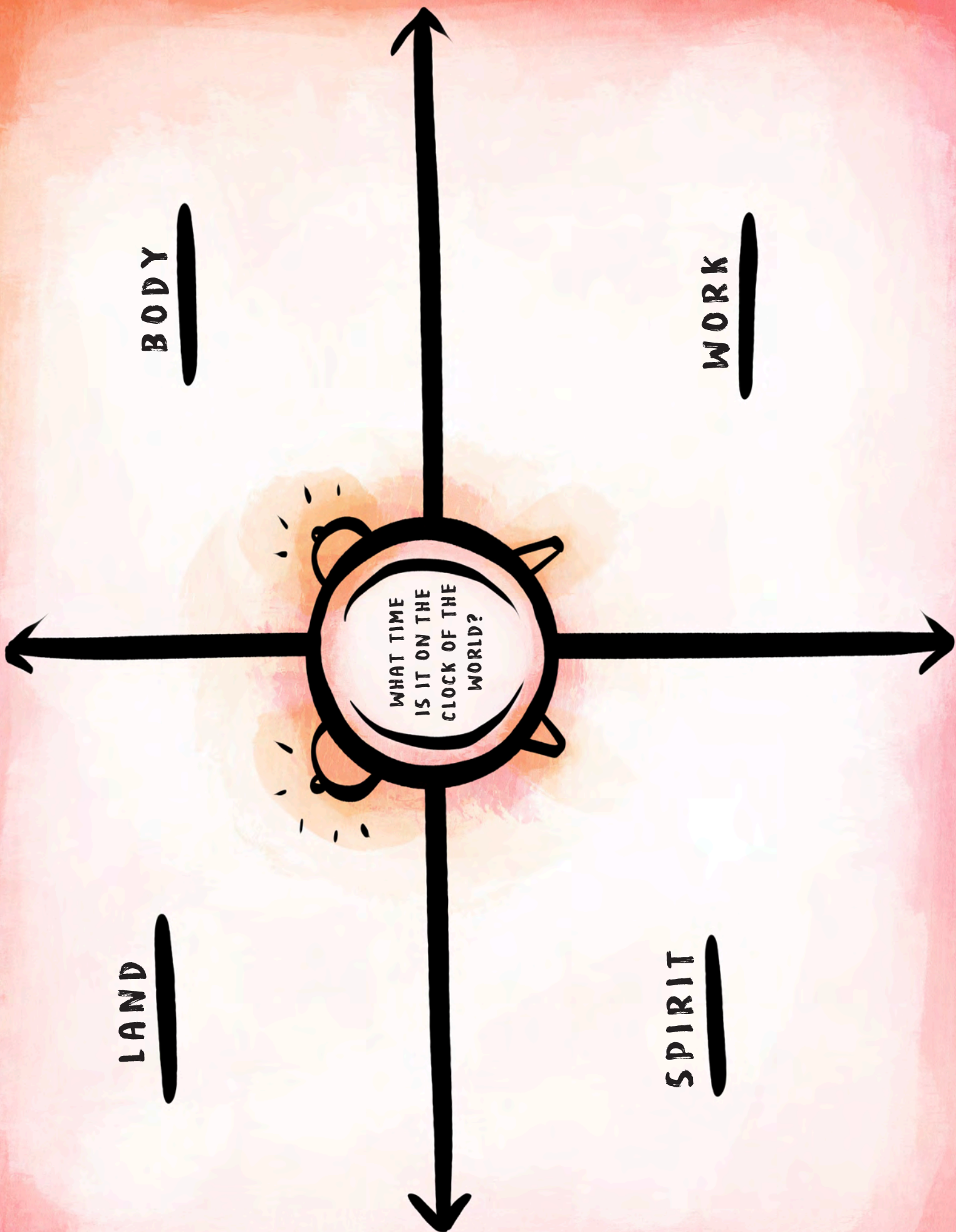
ETHICAL COMMUNICATION, AUGUST 2001

The information below is adapted from *Feminist Perspectives on the Ethics of Communication Explored in the Context of an On-going Group of Women with Decision-Making Responsibility* by Kit Evans (1980). The language has been modified to be inclusive of progressive male participants and is not designed to obscure the origins of this work as a feminist treatise on ethical communication.

'It is time to face reality that how we treat each other and how we feel we are being treated affects the direction of our movement and deeply affects our view of working with progressive people issues which challenge our communities ... Each time we communicate with each other, we create a negative or positive thread in our weaving/work.'

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF ETHICAL COMMUNICATION BY KIT EVANS:

- Personal agendas are valid. Secret agendas are anti-group and invalid. Dishonesty/secretcy of purpose creates dishonest/unethical communication.
- Invalidating another person is an unethical means of advocating a point of view.
- Seeking power over group direction by blocking the voices of others is not-consensual in intent/outcome.
- It is the group's responsibility to make sure that no person is alone, though s/he may share a singular viewpoint.
- Empowerment of each member is the responsibility of each other member.
- Persons have a right to information that affects them.
- Each member has an obligation to get/be/stay clear with each other member. Each person owes it to each other person to do that clearing with him/her, not by speaking it out with others.
- The purpose of each individual's communication within a group is to work toward agreement, not to shape decisions in his/her own image.
- There are times when it is valid for members to agree that what is said in the room stays in the room. It is fair for the group and its members to demand that some things be spoken about only as a group, in the group.
- Progressive people know/notice when there is a conflict, pain, or mistrust among members. There is a patriarchal process that ignores feelings in business. It is progressive (women-inspired) pioneering to seek a way that acknowledges and validates feelings as part of our work.
- Every personal relationship between members of a group affects the group and, therefore, may be personal but not always private.
- **THE MEANS IS THE END.**



ROSES:

WHAT ARE WE REFLECTING ON?

DATE



THORNS:

BUDS:

WORKING GLOSSARY OF ORGANIZING TERMS

ABELISM: 1) Oppression, prejudice, stereotyping, or discrimination against disabled people on the basis of actual or presumed disability; 2) the belief that people are superior or inferior, have better quality of life, or have lives more valuable or worth living on the basis of actual or perceived disability (autistichoya.com)

ABOLITION: As defined by Critical Resistance, a long term political vision with the goal of eliminating imprisonment, policing, and surveillance, and creating lasting alternatives to punishment and imprisonment

ACTIVISM: 'People who take action on behalf of things we care about. Activists attend rallies, make phone calls, write letters and speak out against injustice. But not all activists are community organizers.' Charlene Carruthers, *Unapologetic* (p. 89)

ADVOCACY: Literally, the act of pleading or arguing in favor of something publicly. In social justice work, this usually involves groups or individuals (who may or may not be directly affected by the issue or conditions surrounding it) pushing for certain kinds of changes, laws, or issues. For example, a disability rights activist /advocate argues for accessible bathrooms in public buildings, whether or not that person would personally benefit from said advocacy. (SONG)

BASE: A base is a group of people who can think together, work together, and grow together. (SONG)

BASE BUILDING: Increasing the number of people who share the same vision, and who are developing the strategies and doing the work for moving that vision. (SONG)

CAMPAIGNS: Sustained, time-bound, organizing fights, with a target (someone who can give you what you want) to win concrete policy and institutional change on issues that impact your constituency. (SONG)

CAPITALISM: An economic system in which the means of production, access to goods, and the value of goods are controlled by private individuals and corporations. Racial Capitalism, as theorized by Cedric Robinson, argues that this system was built and flourished through the exploitation of people through slavery, imperialism, and genocide. Neoliberalism is a model of capitalism that operates through the privatization of public goods, deregulation of trade, diminishment of social services and emphasis on individual freedoms. – Charlene Carruthers, *Unapologetic*

COLONIALISM: Colonialism is a practice of domination, which involves the subjugation of one people to another. One of the difficulties in defining colonialism is that it is hard to distinguish it from imperialism. Frequently the two concepts are treated as synonyms. Like colonialism, imperialism also involves political and economic control over a dependent territory ... the practice of colonialism usually involved the transfer of population to a new territory, where the arrivals lived as permanent settlers while maintaining political allegiance to their country of origin. (<https://plato.stanford.edu/>)

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING: Organizing is people together building a base that has the shared vision to act together to build power, challenge power, and change power relationships and communities. This is important because the power to make change lies

in the hands of the people that those changes affect most directly. Organizing has won concrete gains for oppressed people in the US and around the world, like the two-day weekend for workers, an end to segregation of certain public spaces, and the legal rights of people with disabilities to demand equal access to public spaces. (SONG)

"What does community organizing entail? I believe that the two essential elements of it are developing leaders and strategizing to take action. The model of community organizing I learned and practice is rooted in relationships between individuals working towards the same goal, often with various tactics. Organizers can work within cultural spaces, within issue-focused campaigns, and many other places ... I believe in community organizing that works to dismantle systems of oppression and replace them with systems designed to allow collective dignity and power ... Community organizing is not automatically radical or liberating and no one person or group has a monopoly on it. Some people organize to restrict access to human dignity for others, to dominate and oppress others." Charlene Carruthers, *Unapologetic* (p. 89)

CULTURAL HEGEMONY: Cultural hegemony functions by framing the worldview of the ruling class, and the social and economic structures that embody it, as just, legitimate, and designed for the benefit of all, even though these structures may only benefit the ruling class. (ThoughtCo)

DISSOCIATION: Intentional or unintentional compartmentalizing of consciousness and/or behavior. Often used to detach oneself from dealing with a collective problem or condition. Often a self-preservation coping mechanism to dealing with (or rather NOT dealing with) conflict, accountability, contradictions, trauma, traumatic events.

DOMINATION: Stems from 'dominant.' Proximity to power and control in order to effectively subjugate or control people, resources, and more.

EUGENICS: A pseudoscience with the stated aim of improving the genetic constitution of the human species by selective breeding. Eugenics is from a Greek word meaning 'normal genes.' The use of Albert Einstein's sperm to conceive a child by artificial insemination would represent an attempt at positive eugenics. The Nazis notoriously engaged in negative eugenics by genocide in World War II. It is important to note that no experiment in eugenics has ever been shown to result in measurable improvements in human health. (Medicine Net)

FEMINISM: In the view of bell hooks, a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression. This includes political, social, and ideological methods and work.

GREED: A selfish and excessive desire for more of something (money) than is needed (Miriam-Webster)

HOMOPHOBIA: "The irrational fear and hatred of those who love and sexually desire those of the same sex." Suzanne Pharr, *Homophobia: A Weapon of Sexism* (p. 1)

INFRASTRUCTURE: What connects and links people together (in a town, a region, a country, etc.) so that they can act collectively. Infrastructure can be things like a group of trained fire fighters ready to act together, or a group of organizers who have built our own community neighborhood watch, or something bigger like a network around the South of organizers who are doing local work in communities with one vision in mind. Governments also build infrastructures—like our network of highways and roads. (SONG)

INTERSECTIONALITY: Coined by critical race theory scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, intersectionality refers to interlocking and mutually reinforcing systems of oppression and inseparable categories of identity, most notably race, class, gender, and sexuality. This analytical and political approach preceded Crenshaw's naming of it and is reflected in the work of Black feminist scholars and activists, including Audre Lorde, Angela Davis, bell hooks, Barbara Smith, and Beverly Guy-Sheftall, and in the *Combahee River Collective Statement* of 1977, considered a foundational Black feminist manifesto (Barbara Ransby, *Making All Black Lives Matter*, p. 202). "How our lives, issues, and identities are connected." (SONG) "There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not lead single-issue lives." (Audre Lorde)

IDENTITY POLITICS: First coined by Black feminist Barbara Smith, 'the laden phrase "identity politics" has come to signify a wide range of political activity and theorizing founded in the shared experiences of injustice of members of certain social groups. Rather than organizing solely around belief systems, programmatic manifestos, or party affiliation, identity political formations typically aim to secure the political freedom of a specific constituency marginalized within its larger context. Members of that constituency assert or reclaim ways of understanding their distinctiveness that challenge dominant oppressive characterizations, with the goal of greater self-determination. (<https://plato.stanford.edu/>)

MISOGYNY: A hatred of women (Miriam-Webster)

NEOLIBERALISM: "First advanced in the nineteenth century, it currently refers to privatization, deregulation, and a kind of laissez-faire capitalism, according to which the government plays a minimal role and the free market supposedly governs the

economy. Milton Friedman is closely associated with neoliberal policies, such as those he advised the Pinochet government to implement in Chile after the US-backed coup that ousted the democratically elected president Salvador Allende. David Harvey, Marxist geographer and critic of neoliberalism, views it as the capitalist instrumentalization of politics. In a neoliberal frame, the market is supreme." (Barbara Ransby, *Making All Black Lives Matter*, p. 202)

NON-PROFITIZATION: The practice of relying on state-sanctioned non-profit incorporation status to legitimize leadership, social justice work, activism, or political formation and ideology.

As a phenomenon, 'non-profitization' is problematic in that: 1) non-profits have the capacity to raise funds that are tax-deductible to advance their mission, and many use non-profits as capital structures to co-opt the work of movements and grassroots leaders; 2) structural inequality in society often mirrors structural inequality in the non-profit sector, and in organized philanthropy, which often funds and fuels non-profit organizations as vehicles for social change or to maintaining the status quo; and 3) even as many movement organizations have a non-profit tax status, non-profit management as a field is steeped in the norms and values of white supremacy inherent in its original "charity" and religious institution model, ultimately designed to buffer the state from organized resistance by controlling the institutions that provide the safety net and social services the state should be providing (as well as institutions that educate the public, evangelize and/or provide religious education and/or support movement building).

For more background and context, see *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded* by INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence.

PRAXIS: The act of turning theory and political education into practical action in the struggle against oppression and for liberation.

ORGANIZERS: "Every Organizer has two jobs – build organizations and develop other leaders. Organizers get people to come together and do the work as a group. Organizers also develop the skills and leadership of other people in order to strengthen the organization. An organizer builds community with purpose, and provides/supports a means by which people solve their own problems." Michael Jacoby Brown, *Building Powerful Community Organizations* (p. 14)

RADICAL BLACK FEMINISMS: Are 'rooted in the lived experience and interlocking oppressions of Black people on the basis of race, class, and gender and aim to dismantle all forms of systemic oppression.' Charlene Carruthers, *Unapologetic* (p. XI)
(US focused for the scope of her book)

PATRIARCHY: 'Patriarchy – an enforced belief in male dominance and control – is the ideology and sexism is the system that holds it in place. The chatchesim goes like this: who do gender roles serve? Men and women who seek power from them. Who suffers from gender roles? Women most completely and men in part. How are gender roles maintained? By the weapons of sexism: economics, violence, homophobia ... heterosexism is backed by institutions, i.e., marriage laws, to ensure its predominance. It's the institutional enforced of homophobia.' Suzanne Pharr, *Homophobia: A Weapon of Sexism* (p. 8)

POPULAR EDUCATION: A learning methodology attributed to Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire. Popular education aims to support marginalized people in taking control of their own learning. (SONG)

POPULATION CONTROL: A policy of attempting to limit the growth in numbers of a population, especially in poor or densely populated parts of the world, by programs of contraception or sterilization.
(Dictionary.com)

POWER: "The word [power] has many meanings. Power is the ability to act and get what you want. Power is built and maintained through organized people and organized resources. Power is not inherently good or bad. For people from marginalized groups, experiences with power are often negative. We are used to people having power over us. The amount of power other people and institutions have over our lives, our children, our mobility, our access to basic needs (food, water, and shelter) and even our desire is immeasurable ... Power relationships are based on individuals, but they are intrinsically connected to the systems of power maintained by capitalism, patriarchy, white supremacy, and anti-Blackness ... What type of power do we want? Creating changes requires building and harnessing power. Anyone committed to transformative change must also be committed to building transformative power." Charlene Carruthers, *Unapologetic* (p. 105)

REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE: SisterSong defines Reproductive Justice as the human right to maintain personal bodily autonomy, have children, not have children, and parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities. (SisterSong)

THE RIGHT: "The Right consists of individuals and groups that range from conservative, free-market capitalists to white supremacist neo-Nazis. It is not monolithic but a confederacy of loosely related individuals, groups, and organizations, some of which work in coalition with each other, some of which simply work toward similar goals, and some of which oppose each other ... their work advance[s] the effort

to control the economic and cultural climate ... to limit access to social and economic equality and justice.” Suzanne Pharr, *In the Time of the Right* (p. 39)

TOKENISM: A means for institutions, organizations and companies to refuse to address structural inequality and maintain hegemony. Not genuinely valuing a person’s work or leadership on its own merit; rather it is the act of valuing or utilizing someone’s identity (political, race, ethnicity, class, gender, nationality, etc.) over their skills, values, and life experience, for the sole purpose of using them as a “token” representation of a collective group of people, while simultaneously excluding others of that same identity group (from leadership, power, visibility, etc.).

RACIAL CAPITALISM: Refers to the inextricable connections between white supremacy and modern capitalism, as exemplified by the transatlantic slave trade and race-based slavery in the Americas, colonialism and imperialism, and various forms of racial segregation that reinforce economic subordination and exploitation. Barbara Ransby, *Making All Black Lives Matter* (p. 203)

SELF-DETERMINATION: The ability of a person or community to make choices for themselves about their own lives, bodies, and futures. Often put well in the slogan, “Nothing about us without us!” (SONG)

SOVEREIGNTY: the full right and power of a governing body over itself, without any interference from outside sources or bodies. (Wikipedia)

TRAUMA: Physical, psychological, or spiritual harm inflicted intentionally or unintentionally by learned behaviors or deliberate actions that co-create a polarization of values (e.g., rape culture); interactions (any form of assault / microaggressions, etc.); or physical space (war zones / occupations / gentrification, etc.).

WHITE SUPREMACY: A global paradigm shift and assertion of power, aligned with Judeo-Christianity, that reenforces a racialized social order that benefits white people at the expense of everyone else. The cultural practice of valuing people of European descent, as well as their physical or cultural traits and history, over people from other cultures and ethnicities.

White supremacy has many manifestations such as white nationalism and racial caste systems. All manifestations assert that ‘whiteness’ exists in direct opposition of ‘Blackness,’ purposed to isolate, devalue, criminalize, and ultimately control the labor, land, wealth, reproduction, language (and every aspect of their lives from the cradle to the grave) of Black people, Indigenous people, mixed-race people and people of color.

White supremacy perpetuates settler colonization, and relies on notions such as “racial purity” and punitive violence as a means of social control to assert institutional, interpersonal, and internalized oppression.

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