

The **SHAPE** of **TRUST**



RACE & SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE

RSJI



VIDEO FACILITATION GUIDE



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We first want to acknowledge that this project was created on Indigenous land, the traditional territories of the Coast Salish People. We acknowledge the legacies of genocide, enslavement, exploitation, displacement, and other forms of structural violence that make our current reality possible. We are committed to a future of justice and **coliberation** which brings us together to do this important work. We uplift and honor the traditional stewards of these lands who continue to build vibrant communities here today.

We also want to acknowledge and honor the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) employees at the City of Seattle, particularly women, who have organized for workforce **equity**. *The Shape of Trust* performance and videos are built on their stories. This project exists because of their **organizing** for **racial equity** and **social justice** within city government. Their experiences highlight patterns that have been playing out inside of government and across all institutions and organizations for generations. This project is dedicated to their leadership, healing, and calls for change — the center of our collective liberation.



THANK YOU

We would like to thank the following partners and individuals for their leadership in the development of *The Shape of Trust* performances, video, and facilitation guide.

BIPOC City employees who contributed their stories.

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Playwright and director Sara Porkalob and the cast of *The Shape of Trust*: Monique Aldred, Tricia Castañeda-Gonzales, Christi Cruz, Anasofia Gallegos, Aishé Keita, Ayo Tushinde, and Nina Williams-Teramachi.

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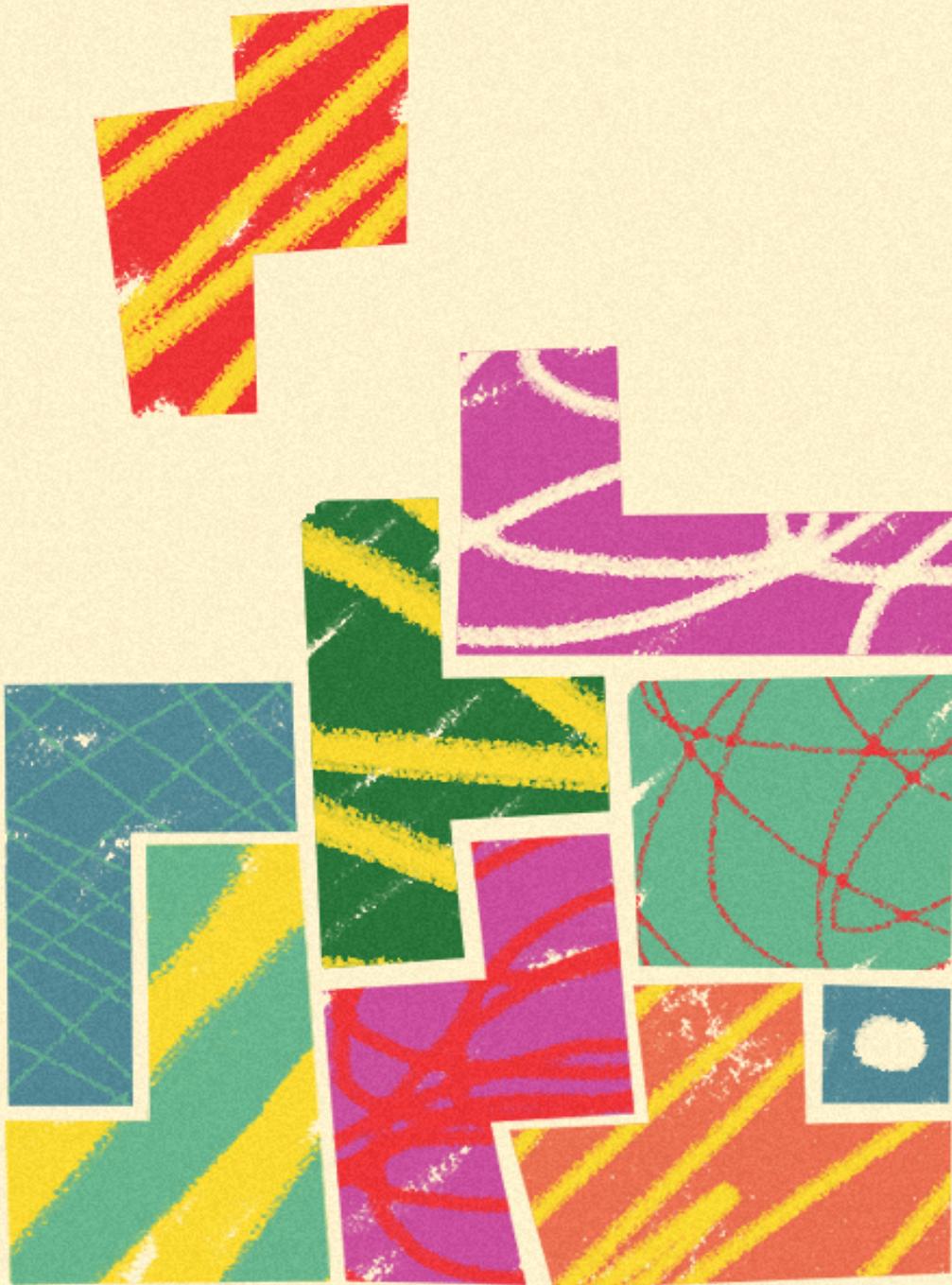
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OUR OFFERING



OUR OFFERING

Welcome

The Shape of Trust Video Facilitation Guide offers frameworks, tools, questions, activities, and **practices** that root our **anti-racism, racial equity, and social justice** work in the undeniable reality of our **inter-connection, collective health, creativity, and drive to belong**. This work calls us to create a world beyond our current experience, a place that is relational, interconnected, and emergent. To be and stay in this place together requires that we tend to the contours of our authenticity, the rhythms of our vulnerability and resilience, and the constellation of connections within and between us. We must shape trust with ourselves, between each other, on our teams, across our organizations, and with our communities to transform our world.

All people benefit from a workplace that centers care for relationships and each other's wellbeing. This care is particularly imperative for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) who are already reeling from the forces of structural **racism**, settler colonialism, nationalism, and other intersecting forms of **oppression**. This larger reality exists within the workplace where BIPOC experience **racism** and other forms of **oppression** at the internalized, interpersonal, and institutional levels. These realities within our workplace are reflected in our relationships with the community. How we support each other inside our organizations and institutions — how we cultivate **spirit**, resilience, and **wellbeing** — ripples out into how we engage with and support the communities we serve and are part of.

The Shape of Trust project is anchored in a creative, living-systems approach that centers BIPOC, through a partnership with [Our Bodhi Project](#) and integration of the [Embodying Belonging and Coliberation Frame](#). This Earth-based, **ecosystemic** way of knowing, being, and organizing is often denied and negated as part of traditional **racial equity** work. Project contributors, designers, and facilitators included artists, cultural organizers, and healers who work in a variety of settings, from government to grassroots community. Project components integrate arts, **culture, mindfulness, and embodiment** as vehicles for learning and as **practices** to support supervision, management, and all forms of decision-making.

Ending institutional racism

The Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) is the City of Seattle's commitment to eliminating racial disparities and achieving **racial equity** in Seattle. When we look at all areas of our lives — housing, jobs, transportation, the environment, the criminal legal system, education, healthcare, finance, **arts and culture**, and more — life outcomes for BIPOC are worse than those for white people. BIPOC are directly targeted by the system of **white supremacy**, resulting in costs to **health, wellbeing, livelihood, and safety**. Institutional and structural **racism** also negatively impact white people, because all people are worse off in a society in which there is inequity and disparity, and in which our **collective health and wellbeing** is not supported.

There are also spiritual costs to **racism**. It erases BIPOC humanity and positions white people to ignore or dilute their humanity in order to uphold it.

For more information on some examples of institutional and structural racism and their impacts on BIPOC, see the [RSJI Racial Equity Research](#). National racial justice organizations [Race Forward](#), [PolicyLink](#), and the [Othering & Belonging Institute](#) also offer many resources on institutional and structural **racism**.

The Shape of Trust history

In 2017, staff from the Seattle Office for Civil Rights (SOCR), Seattle Human Resources (SHR), and the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture (ARTS) began discussing ways to interrupt white dominant workplace **culture** that perpetuates **racism** and other forms of **oppression**. How could visual arts, theater, music, movement, ritual, **embodiment**, and **mindfulness** support a shift in our institutional culture? How could these **practices** cultivate the integration of all four types of **racism** and other forms of **oppression**, and the **interconnection**, collective care, and **belonging** needed to sustain our **anti-racism** work? Government and other institutions have historically resisted a holistic, **transformational** approach that requires us to change the **culture** of our institutions and, in some instances, the ways we have learned to do our **racial equity** work.

Staff from SOCR, SHR, and ARTS reached out to artist Sara Porkalob to discuss a project that would tell the stories of City of Seattle employees, predominantly BIPOC women, through a performance that would be experienced live, recorded, and used as a learning tool. Through an iterative and collaborative process, Porkalob and the actors brought these stories to life for more than 1,250 people who attended the live performances and countless more who will experience the video.

Much has changed in the world since *The Shape of Trust* performances in June 2019. We have endured a global pandemic that has caused disproportionate physical, economic, and psychological impacts to BIPOC communities in the United States and around the world. We have experienced a global, Black-led movement for racial justice of a scale and depth unseen since the Civil Rights era.

The work of **anti-racism**, **racial equity**, and **social justice** has also shifted. The City of Seattle has expanded a collaboration with [Our Bodhi Project](#) and trained RSJI Key Leaders across departments in a **transformational, anti-racist organizing** framework. We have embraced **arts and culture**, along with **embodiment** and **mindfulness**, as indispensable components of an impactful **organizing practice**. We have dedicated capacity to voluntary, optional caucus spaces that clarify our roles in collective change and foster healing.

Just like the performance, our journey contains stories of resilience, speaking up, coming together, having each other's backs, and practicing collective care. These are among the signs of change within our

Barry Johnson, Untitled II, 2017, House paint, wood, roofing material and skewer sticks, 48" x 36"

Seattle Public Utilities 1% for Art Portable Works Collection



institution and others. We are reckoning with **white supremacy**, colonization, **anti-Blackness**, **anti-Indigeneity**, and other **power** structures that have guided all of our institutions for far too long. This work has opened us up to Black, Indigenous, and other cultural ways of being that strengthen our commitment to each other and the planet. New patterns are emerging. And we know that not all of us are on this journey yet. The journey toward embodying a **transformational, anti-racist** approach across the City is long and this Guide is only a moment in its unfolding.

The contents of this guide incorporate **transformational practices** that were present but less integrated into our **organizing** when *The Shape of Trust* was created in 2019. As organizers working within government, we know exactly what this moment is asking of us: we must live into our shared vision of transforming our public institutions into instruments of **anti-racism**, shared **power**, mending, and justice. We must work together to carry out strategies that move us through the crumbling and the letting-go so we can harness emergence and do the necessary re-shaping. We know that we can only do this in an intentional relationship with ourselves, each other, our communities, and our Earth. And we know that trust is the glue that binds us through it all.

Who created this guide?

A multi-racial, largely BIPOC group of City employees and contracted artist-facilitators created this guide. We hold different gender identities but many of us identify as **cisgender** women. We range in age from our late 20s to our early 60s. Many of us work within city government, and several of us have been working as partners to city government. We are curriculum designers, facilitators, artists, policymakers, coaches, healers, and organizational change strategists. We are, in our best moments and in our heart of hearts, anti-racist organizers, coming to this with all of the intention and imperfection that holds. This includes feeling our way through acknowledgment, reflection, and repair when we make mistakes.

Additionally, this guide is shaped by the lived experiences of the predominantly Black RSJI Strategy Team, which holds the vision and implementation of **anti-racism**, **racial equity**, and **social justice** efforts City-wide. So much of our workforce equity work has been led by those who are most marginalized and have been most harmed, in particular Black women. Invariably, the Black experience deeply informs all of our work, including *The Shape of Trust*.

Tensions of this guide

As a group of almost all BIPOC women who are deeply committed to **transformational, anti-racist organizing**, the creators of this guide recognize there are unavoidable tensions in it:

- The stories in *The Shape of Trust* are adapted from City employees who have chosen to share their experiences and in some way, organize for racial justice in their jobs. These stories are a sampling of the range of **racism** and **sexism** that manifest in the workplace. We expect that some parts will be relatable to each facilitator and participant, while other parts may not.
- The racial and gender identities of many BIPOC characters are not named in the performance, making it possible for facilitators to adapt the content for a variety of lived experiences. Still, some of those using this guide will feel their experiences are not represented.
- We all have internalized **racism**, and the work to understand and heal from it is different for people based on their locations within the **racial hierarchy**. To organize for **coliberation**, we need voluntary, optional caucus spaces and multi-racial spaces. The facilitators of this guide will need to determine which type of space is most appropriate for each group at each moment in time.

All movements powered by people require grappling with these and other tensions. We know they will come up for facilitators and their participants, and for everyone watching the video. We invite you to engage with these tensions, and live into the inquiries and learning they offer.

“

“Are we just saying this for the white people?”

“Hah. We’re saying this especially for the white people. AND the people of all races...”

“This is for all of us and it’s different for all of us because of race.”

– Actors, *The Shape of Trust*”

”

Who is this guide for?

This guide includes activities for people of all races as well as specific pieces to support BIPOC healing, with an emphasis on BIPOC people who are women, **transgender**, and non-binary. This guide also assumes that our journey in **anti-racism**, **racial equity**, and **social justice** is uniquely tethered to our human experience and our development is uniquely individual. Every developmental stage, every experience, and every story is critical as we build a movement that liberates us all.

This project was designed to develop the **anti-racist practices** of supervisors, managers, and HR advisers, but the resources can be used by people in all kinds of organizational roles.

The discussions and activities in this guide should be led by experienced facilitators working within organizations, institutions, and groups seeking to transform employment conditions. Facilitators should have strong **anti-racism**, **racial equity**, and **social justice** knowledge, and be skilled at building trust.

Maya Milton, Alignment, 2018, Mixed media, 24"x 19"

Seattle Public Utilities 1% for Art Portable Works Collection



USING THE GUIDE

This guide IS...

... a way to help us deepen and expand our **anti-racist practices** within institutions and organizations.

... intended for experienced facilitators of **anti-racism, racial equity, and social justice** learning. Experienced **anti-racism** learning facilitators will know how to adapt curriculum content — including how, when, and in what ways to use **embodiment**-based activities — to meet a group where they are at in their **anti-racism, racial equity, and social justice** journeys, and to build trust. They will have **practices** to check in with other experienced facilitators for feedback on their outlines with care for the group, and in particular those most impacted by **racism** and other forms of **oppression**, in mind. Critically, they will know how to do their utmost to avoid harm to BIPOC in these learning spaces and how to repair when they inadvertently cause harm, as we know can happen.

... based on stories from city government employees. It can be used by all kinds of organizations and groups. You might use this guide for teams, divisions, departments, agencies, boards of directors, commissions, and more.

... only one part of how we do our **anti-racism, racial equity** and **social justice organizing**.

This guide IS NOT...

... a replacement for foundational training or an answer to real-time problems affecting your teams, organizations, and groups.

... designed to be used by people who are new to **anti-racism, racial equity, and social justice** facilitation. If you are new to this work, have only done it a few times, or don't do it regularly, we strongly suggest that you partner with experienced facilitators and do not facilitate a group alone.

... restricted to facilitators in a government setting. The manifestations of **racism** and other forms of **oppression** within government are unique in some ways, but people who work for non-profits, for-profit businesses, corporations, and foundations will recognize and relate to the experiences presented here.

... a complete sharing of all of that is possible or needed to build capacity for **anti-racism, racial equity** and **social justice**. We expect and hope that, in putting this out into the world, experienced facilitators will weave in their own creative additions to build upon and re-imagine what is here.

A note on the use of the terms anti-racism, racial equity, and social justice

We know that these three terms have different meanings and that there are differences between their north stars and goals. (See the [Glossary](#) for how we currently define them.) An increasing number of people of all races are striving for **anti-racism** as a lived **practice** at work and in life. We also know that within government and other institutional spaces, we sometimes have to choose a **racial equity** or **social justice** strategy to move closer to **anti-racism** and **coliberation**.

A note on gender in this guide

For women who are also **transgender** or gender nonconforming, their gender identity isn't a qualifier for their womanhood. Rather, it is an aspect of their experience as women. When we refer to women, we are referring to all women including **cisgender** women, **transgender** women, and women of **transgender** experience.

USING THE GUIDE

Preparing to facilitate

We know that all of us, in our different racial, social, and hierarchical positionalities, are needed to transform our world. And we know that this video is going to impact people differently. In particular, the scenes in this video could invoke past traumas or initiate experiences of trauma for BIPOC and women of all races who watch it. They may feel re-traumatized because they lived through experiences similar to the instances of **racism** or **sexism** portrayed in the video and received no support, or even retaliation, from their supervisors or HR. People who identify as white also may experience strong feelings in reaction to the content of this guide.

With this in mind, we offer some ways to help facilitators prepare for these possibilities and set up learning environments that tend to the health and wellbeing of everyone involved.

Providing a content warning: racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression

It is important to provide a content warning for facilitators to support their own wellbeing and that of the people they facilitate — especially BIPOC of all genders and women of all races who will witness **racism** and **sexism** in the video scenes. The following framing may be helpful for you to share with others when you invite them to participate in a facilitated session, and again before you invite them to watch the video.

For more information on content warnings, sometimes also called trigger warnings, check out [This Geek Feminism Wiki](#).

Drafting a content warning for participants

We offer this language as a starting point to help facilitators draft a content warning for participants.

- *Content warning: Racial and gender discrimination, harassment, and **oppression**, including **racism** and **sexism**, are depicted in *The Shape of Trust* video. The reflective questions, Activity Spotlights, and resources in this guide also explore these topics.*
- *This video can be re-traumatizing for BIPOC of all gender identities and women of all races. It may feel “too close to home” because *The Shape of Trust* takes place in a workplace that is similar to ones where people currently work or have worked.*
- *Many of the external resources linked to in this guide, such as videos and articles, include graphic and detailed depictions of **racism**, **sexism**, and other forms of **oppression**.*
- *You are invited to participate in this facilitated session but you are in no way required to do so.*

USING THE GUIDE

Additional considerations for facilitators

- We invite you to heed your need to pause and care for yourself as you prepare to facilitate and while you facilitate learning around the video.
- Be aware of your own social positionalities and positionalities within the organizational hierarchy, as well as those of your co-facilitator and the people you're facilitating. Being mindful of the interpersonal and group dynamics these positionalities present is central to an **anti-racist**, anti-oppressive facilitation **practice**.
- You also may find that viewing the content through a facilitation lens, and viewing it more than once, may make you somewhat desensitized to its content.
- If participants have seen the live performance of *The Shape of Trust* in 2019, they may experience small or large moments of re-traumatization.
- Be aware of your organization's mental health resources (Do you have an employee assistance program? Is that resource race and gender-informed?) and research local and online resources to support people around experiences of re-traumatization.
- The activities in this guide work best when the facilitators have lived experiences with race and gender that enable them to empathize with participants who have similar lived experiences. For example, because all scenes include **racism**, make sure one of the facilitators is BIPOC for groups that include BIPOC participants. Or, if you choose to watch the full video or a scene that includes sexual and gender harassment, including **cissexism**, make sure that one of the facilitators is either **transgender** or a **cisgender** woman.

Are you a mandatory reporter?

A mandatory reporter is someone who, because of their role or profession, is required by law to report facts and circumstances that lead them to suspect some form of abuse or harm — to another or to one's self — is occurring. If you are unsure, check with your HR department. If you are a mandatory reporter, let the people you're facilitating know what this means for what is shared in the session regarding harassment and discrimination.

“ The work we do together in BIPOC caucuses is so important. It allows us to get super clear about how we are positioned within the racial hierarchy, without getting defensive, and address that each racial group pays a different price to participate.

— Tamar Zere, RSJI Manager, Office for Civil Rights ”

USING THE GUIDE

FOR FACILITATORS

WHO IDENTIFY AS: BIPOC IN GROUPS THAT ARE: BIPOC OR MULTI-RACIAL

- Consider whether this is the right moment to use this resource for this group of people who are directly targeted by white supremacy and institutional and structural racism. Is there a reason why this may not feel supportive to BIPOC at this time?
- Watch the video in advance and be able to speak to your own experience of it. Take note of how white supremacy culture and heteropatriarchy move through our organizations and through BIPOC communities and sometimes position BIPOC against each other. Reflect on the following questions:
 - Where have you personally experienced or witnessed the patterns in these scenes?
 - What feelings do they bring up for you?
 - How can you use these experiences and feelings in ways that are caring for yourself and others?
 - How can you use this as an opportunity to be present with the ways BIPOC might be perpetuating white supremacy culture and heteropatriarchy within organizations and within BIPOC communities?
- Offer BIPOC participants the opportunity to view the video and reflection questions in advance of the session.

FOR FACILITATORS

WHO IDENTIFY AS: WHITE IN GROUPS THAT ARE: WHITE OR MULTI-RACIAL

- Consider what the impacts of using this resource might be at this moment. If you are co-facilitating a multi-racial group, check in with your BIPOC co-facilitator about what feels most supportive for them and the group at this moment.
- Watch the video in advance and be able to speak to your own experience of it. Take note of how **white supremacy culture** and **heteropatriarchy** move through our organizations and through white communities, and can create a sense of superiority over BIPOC and also between white people. Reflect on the following questions:
 - Where have you experienced or witnessed the patterns in the scenes?
 - What feelings do they bring up for you?
 - How can you use these experiences and feelings in ways that are caring for yourself and others?
 - How can you use this facilitation as an opportunity to present the ways white people might be perpetuating **white supremacy culture** and **heteropatriarchy** in multi-racial groups and communities and with other white people?
- Offer participants, especially BIPOC, women, **transgender**, and non-binary people, the opportunity to view the video and reflective questions in advance of the session.

Using this guide in voluntary, optional racial caucus spaces or for individuals to reflect on their own

Many reflective question sections include specific questions designed for people who identify as BIPOC and people who identify as white. We offer these as questions for voluntary, optional racial caucus spaces or as personal reflective questions for individuals to engage with outside of group learning spaces.

CREATING AND HOLDING A CARING CONTAINER

Our goal as facilitators is to create the right conditions for deep learning, reflection, relationship building, and **organizing**. All of this requires trust. A significant part of our learning method and **practice** is the container that facilitators create and hold for participants.

We offer some tips below to help create a caring container that promotes trust and centers the health and **wellbeing** of the whole group. This list is not comprehensive and we know that seasoned facilitators will have more to add.

Planning the Session: Elements of a Caring Container

- See the section “[Some Notes on Accessibility & Trust in Learning Environments](#)”, for tips for designing an accessible learning environment.
- Create a dynamic flow, moving between different ways of engaging with the content and each other (e.g., individual reflection, pair share, drawing, small groups, word webs, song, whole group conversation, check-ins with the self/body). Include a section at the beginning that lets people know what to expect and include estimates of when breaks will happen so they can plan.
- Understand the greater purpose for the learning you’re facilitating. What realities of structural **racism**, **sexism**, and other forms of **oppression** is this session about? What opportunities for **coliberation** does the content of this session offer? How will you invite the group into that **ecosystemic** awareness throughout your time together?
- Familiarize yourself with RSJI’s [Building a Relational Culture](#), paying particular attention to how you can integrate and nurture manifestations of **relational culture** in your outline for the session.
- When you create an agenda, build in ample breaks, as well as unstructured time that allows for emergent conversations and feelings.
- Build in time for participants to experience silence, to be with their own thoughts nonverbally, or in guided reflection.
- Know your own talents, skills, capacities and limitations, and those of your co-facilitators. Work together to build off of each other’s strengths and support each other’s learning. Some things you might consider in preparing to facilitate this curriculum:
 - Do you or your co-facilitator have experience facilitating body-based activities such as breathing, visualization, or inviting people to notice what’s coming up in their bodies?
 - If not, are there related activities that you may choose to adapt so you feel capable of supporting others in them?
 - Do you or your co-facilitator have experience facilitating arts-integrated activities? If not, what adaptations to the activities can you make so you feel capable of supporting others?
- Know what activates your nervous system. As facilitators, we carry our own experiences of historical trauma and trauma currently playing out. Touching in with our own bodies and minds consistently is crucial so that we can care for ourselves and others.
 - What language or actions from others can bring up strong feelings for you? What happens to you in those moments? Do you tense up, become silent, get flushed, get cold, disassociate, freeze, get more vocal, want to leave, etc.?
 - What **practices** support you to be with your body when you are activated?

CREATING AND HOLDING A CARING CONTAINER

- What **practices** support you to return to facilitation?
- How can you and your co-facilitator support one another in these moments?
- Consider how you will “hit pause” for yourself or the group when needed.
- Be flexible and plan to give space for factors that might affect participants’ presence, such as current events, team dynamics, the physical or online space you’re in, time planned for the experience, and your own capacities to facilitate on any given day.
- Reflect on which participants will be most impacted by the video scenes you’re working with, and which lived experiences you are centering in your facilitation.
- After the session, dedicate time for vulnerable reflection on your own work and **practice**. You might do this both with your co-facilitator and alone, paying particular attention to what moved you, if and when you became activated, how your experiences of positionality came up during the session, moments of confusion, moments of connection with others, moments when you felt you had the intended impact, moments when **relational culture** was cultivated, and moments when you might have needed some assistance.



ACTIVITY SPOTLIGHT: [Principles to Cultivate a Community of Practice](#)

by Sonali Sangeeta Balajee & Diana Falchuk

Facilitation During the Session: Holding a Caring Container

- State the intention to set up a space of collective care and the **practice** you will use to hold that. Invite participants to engage with you to offer their ideas, as well.
 - Lead a grounding or centering activity from [the Design Impact article](#) or one that you already use. The Activity Spotlight Grounding through a Living Systems Meditation, is a slightly longer centering activity that you may choose to use. Always give participants a choice to participate or not. See the section below, “Before you facilitate a grounding or centering activity”, for more information.
 - For voluntary, optional BIPOC caucuses or BIPOC-only groups, consider doing the Activity Spotlight *A Healing Invitation for BIPOC*.
 - Consider doing all or parts of the Activity Spotlight *Principles to Cultivate a Community of Practice* or co-creating your own with the group, if time.
 - Name and intentionally consider race, gender, and other social positional **power** dynamics — those in the videos and those in the group — as well as dynamics related to positioning within the institutional hierarchy.
 - Take both regular and impromptu moments to pause, breathe, and silently reflect. You may also invite a few participants to briefly share what is coming up for them, out loud or in writing.
 - Remind participants to be mindful of what’s coming up in their bodies as they watch the video, to notice when they might get activated, and to distinguish between more intense nervous system activation and strong discomfort.
 - Stay tuned-in to the energy of the group and invite participants to notice it, too. Periodically name, out loud, what you notice: “This group has been quiet/communicative/hesitant/enthusiastic and I’m curious if anyone else notices that.”
 - Model flexibility. Receive feedback with presence, authenticity, and accountability.
- Dedicate time to connect with your own breath and body before you begin facilitating. You may have a centering **practice** that you like to use for this. You might try some of these [Weekly Centering Activities](#) by Design Impact.

CREATING AND HOLDING A CARING CONTAINER

Some notes on accessibility and trust in learning environments

This guide is designed for in-person learning, though many of the pieces can be easily adapted for the online learning environment. The COVID-19 pandemic taught us the many benefits of virtual spaces, most significantly the inclusion of individuals with disabilities and neurodiverse people for whom in-person learning can be challenging. We also must consider the needs of staff who work outside of 9 to 5 business hours or office buildings. We hope this guide can be a tool to support varied learning styles, modalities, and environments.

To help design an accessible learning environment — whether virtual or in-person — invite participants to share their access needs in advance, if they choose, so you can plan to meet those. These may include needs that help them stay present and connected, and experience **belonging** in the space such as those related to disability, illness, caring for others, and more. You might request this in the sign-up form or some other format that allows everyone to share. Ask participants who don't have any needs to indicate that by writing, "My access needs are met".

Provide opportunities for follow-up conversations with those who share access needs, in case you need to check in about the details of their requests and how to best support them. At the beginning of a session, invite participants to share their access needs as part of their introductions, if they choose.

We encourage you to explore this sampling of resources to support accessibility in the learning environments you facilitate and to add your own to this list.

- [Disability Language Style Guide](#) by the National Center on Disability and Journalism
- [Accessible Venue Assessment Checklist](#) by City of Seattle's Department of Finance and Administrative Services
- [How to Support Neurodiverse Learners](#) by Cognassist
- [Supporting Neurodiversity in Online Teaching](#) by Joanne Newton and Hafiz Burkan Fashir for the British Council. This resource is for youth learners but offers strategies that can support adults as well.

We have also ourselves experienced and received significant feedback about the challenges of building trusting relationships from scratch in a multi-racial online learning community (even more so

amidst a pandemic and a racial reckoning). Some ways to build trust virtually include:

- Slowing down
- Creating smaller sessions
- Increasing voluntary, optional racial caucusing opportunities
- 1:1 check-ins
- Increasing the use of breakout rooms
- Being ready to switch gears to make space for emergent needs

Before you facilitate a grounding or centering activity

A few healing-informed and trauma-informed considerations

- Be honest with yourself and your co-facilitators regarding whether you feel capable of facilitating **practices** that connect to body, breath, and spirit. If you don't, there are many other ways to ground people, such as through a free-write or free-draw in response to a prompt.
- Every activity requires the consent of the participants. Let participants know upfront that you know it can be triggering and even re-traumatizing for some people to connect with their breath and body, and that they have a choice. They can choose to do something else such as draw, free-write, listen without participating, or skip the activity altogether.
- Help participants understand how the feelings that may come up for them during a centering activity exist on a spectrum of feelings that can range from being at-ease to being overwhelmed. Sometimes people may need support to understand the difference between feeling uncomfortable and a genuine concern that doing the activity would trigger a past trauma or make them feel overwhelmed. Discomfort can also be a sign of healthy growth and openness to new possibilities.
- If you're online, you may offer participants the option to turn off their cameras during the activity.

ACTIVITY SPOTLIGHT: [Grounding through a Living Systems Meditation](#)

by Sonali Sangeeta Balajee

FRAMEWORKS & TOOLS

We're inviting people to use these frameworks and tools with the reflective questions and activities throughout this guide. Additional resources are shared in connection with specific scenes of the video. We expect you will also use resources from your own **practice**.

4 Types of Racism

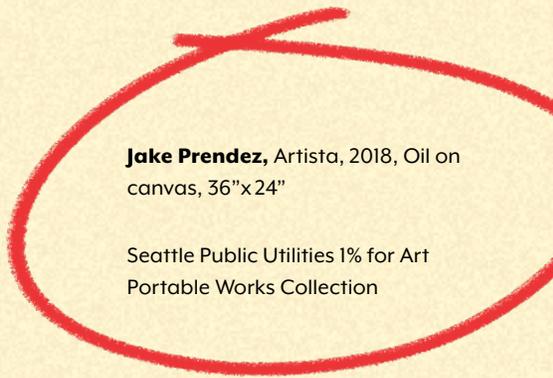
This framework provides visuals and a set of definitions for the four, interconnected types of **racism**. The [Glossary](#) includes more language for understanding **oppression**.

Building a Relational Culture

This document explores **practices** to interrupt **white supremacy culture**, the ways of being and norms that uphold the system of **white supremacy**, and create a **relational culture**, one that promotes **equity, belonging, health, wellbeing, and interconnection**.

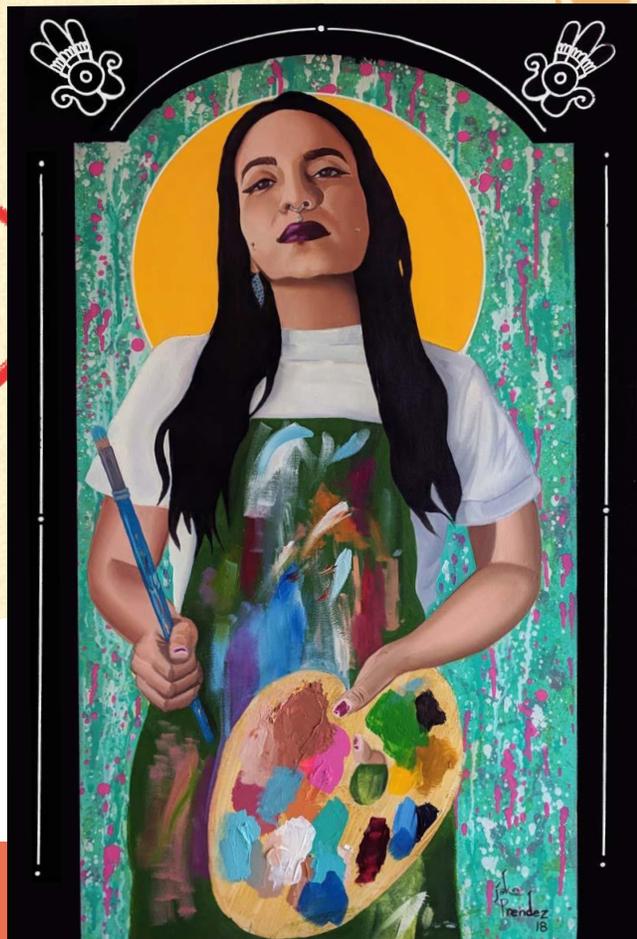
The RSJI Truths

These 10 truths about race, **racial equity**, and racial justice represent an accumulation of experience, awareness and learning over nearly 18 years since RSJI's inception.



Jake Prendez, Artista, 2018, Oil on canvas, 36"x24"

Seattle Public Utilities 1% for Art
Portable Works Collection



VIDEO SCENES, ACTIVITIES, & RESOURCES

Streaming the Video

[Trainer version](#) (full version with breaks)

This version fades to black between each scene for easier navigation when facilitating learning around specific scenes. Scene timecodes are listed with each scene, below, and hyperlinked to the beginning of each scene.

[Screener version](#) (full version without breaks)

This version plays the entire 36 minute, 21 second performance at once without breaks between scenes.

Each scene comes with:

- 1** A brief **description of the scene** and its timecode in the trainer version. These descriptions include a simple summary of what happens, the primary forms of **oppression** involved, and the mutual care and resilience that plays out.
- 2** **Links to resources** that illuminate or go deeper on content within specific scenes and also can be used to support learning connected to other scenes. Many of these links are external, non-City of Seattle resources that we have found to be interesting and helpful. We are providing these links as a courtesy and part of our commitment to lifting up and honoring the many authors, organizers, artists, journalists, researchers, teachers, healers, and others whose insights help to propel important **anti-racism, racial equity, and social justice** work. We recommend that you explore these for yourselves to see whether they might support your facilitation and intended learning outcomes. See "[Using external resources](#)" for information on abiding by the terms and conditions for each resource so you're aware of how to share them and suggestions for how you can lift up, honor and give proper credit to the content creators.
- 3** A set of **reflective questions** that facilitators can select to use with participants. Questions speak to both the **oppression** playing out and the moments of collective care and resilience; some also invite participants to consider opportunities for **transformational, anti-racist practices**. You might choose one or more questions as the basis for group learning sessions or assign them in preparation for facilitated group discussions.

Some questions are designed specifically for people who hold particular racial or gender positionalities. For example, people who identify as Black.

There are so many questions that could be asked. We offer several for each scene and know you will build upon those and devise your own.

VIDEO SCENES, ACTIVITIES, & RESOURCES

4 Ten Activity spotlights placed throughout the guide in connection with specific scenes:

Principles to Cultivate a Community of Practice

Grounding through a Living Systems Meditation

“Why why why why why”

Tableaus of Truth

2 Minute Story

Pause / Breathe / Reflect

A Healing Invitation for BIPOC

The Two Webs

The Human Machine, the Living System, and Building a Relational Culture

Rewriting the Scene

These activities integrate **arts, culture, mindfulness, and embodiment**. Most can be adapted for use with any of the scenes or to support a screening of the entire video. We expect that experienced facilitators will adapt them as needed.

USING EXTERNAL RESOURCES

The City has not obtained explicit permission for each resource we link to. As you explore these resources, please make sure to check out each resource's unique rules for use. These can be found on their websites in sections with names like “terms of use” or “terms and conditions”. You, as a consumer of their content, are responsible for complying with whatever restrictions and uses are described. Whether you, the user, comply with those terms is up to you. Please use each resource in a legal way, in compliance with whatever specific terms its owner has put on it.

We also ask that you join us in giving credit to those who created that content and any content that you use or share — their efforts and vision make our work possible. Please give them the due they are requesting and deserve (for example, a citation, an attribution for a quote or idea, or, in some instances, a set fee). We do this to honor the emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and physical labor of those who created these resources. This also helps protect the content creators from misuse of their content.

VIDEO SCENES, ACTIVITIES, & RESOURCES

Before you facilitate: a note about the actors and who they portray

The actors in *The Shape of Trust* are sometimes playing characters with identities that are different from how the actors present or may be perceived. For example, an actor may play someone of a different race, gender, age, ethnicity, ability, or other identity from their own. Sometimes the characters' specific racial or gender identities are not named. This allows those watching and those facilitating learning to imagine beyond the specifics of the scene.

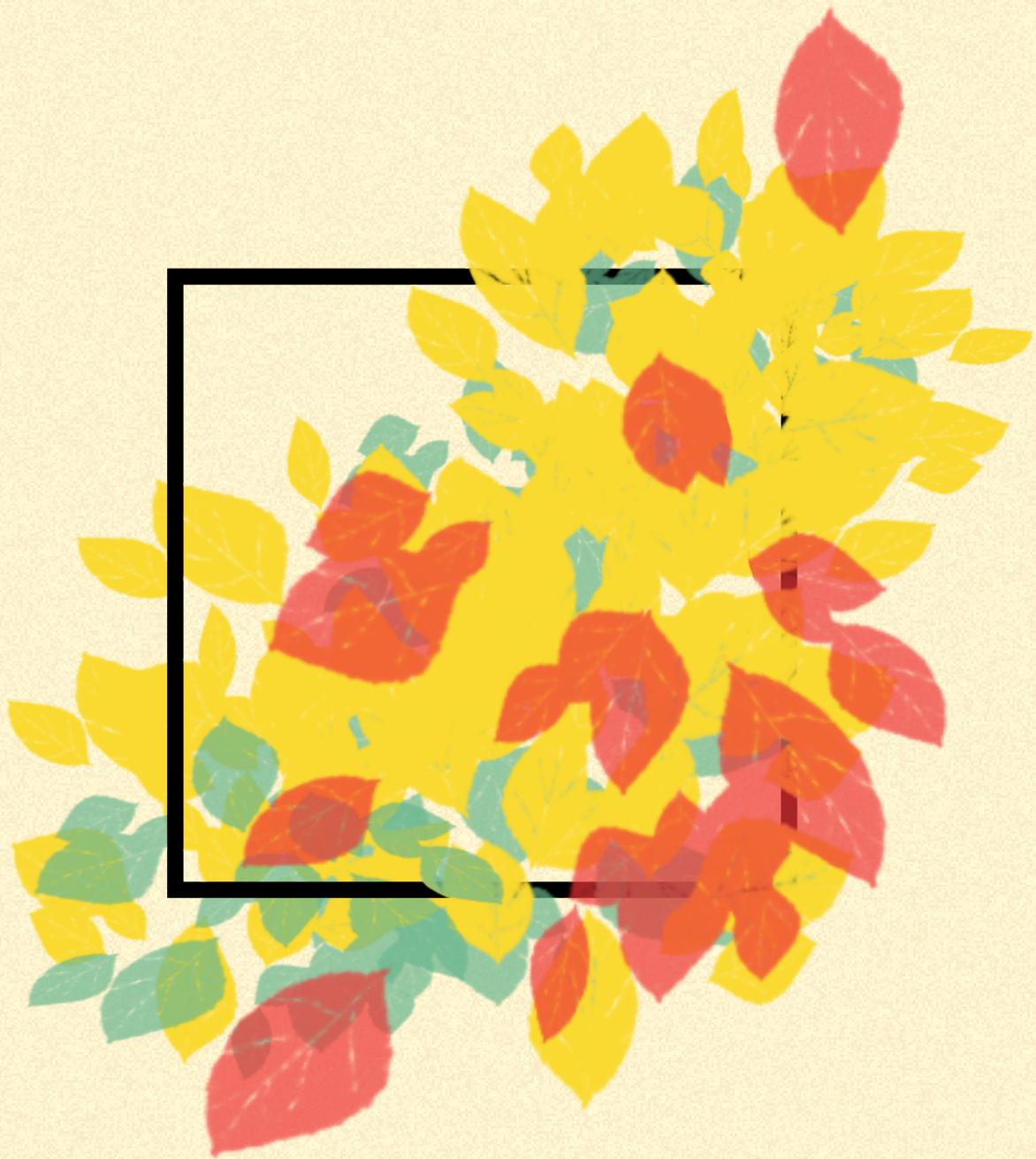
Facilitators can adapt reflective questions to support the specific experience of participants. For example, you might ask how a character's experience would be different if they were Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI), Indigenous, or Middle Eastern. In an AAPI caucus or a Latinx caucus, for example, facilitators might explore the differences between different racial subgroups.

To support this exploration, you might invite participants to consider how the structural, institutional, and interpersonal contexts described in a scene affect people of different races and other positionalities. You might also invite participants to consider how strategies for building relationships differ based on where organizations and individuals are at in their commitments to **anti-racism** and their journeys toward **coliberation**.

George Littlechild, *Warrior of Education: Graduate*, 2017, Mixed media on paper, 30"x 22"x 0.25"

Seattle Public Utilities 1% for Art Portable Works Collection





Opening Scene (0:00 – 6:40): Welcome, What is Racism?

Description of the Scene

In this opening scene, the actors explain what to expect in the performance and respond to the question, “What is racism?” They explore their reasons as BIPOC people for sharing such intimate stories: “This is for all of us and it’s different for all of us because of race.”

Reflective Questions

- 1 In the opening of the performance, playwright and director Sara Porkalob invites us to reflect on the “legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that bring us together here today” and our opportunities to repair them. What from this land acknowledgment resonates for you and your organization? How is your organization complicit in ongoing colonization? Does your organization explicitly recognize the ways that its current **practices** are connected to the history of kidnapping and enslavement of Black Africans, and displacement and attempted erasure of Indigenous Peoples and lands? What is your organization doing to honor and support the leadership, knowledge, experiences, and histories of Indigenous People? How does your organization compensate Indigenous communities, such as for the labor and use of land acknowledgment creation or by paying real rent?
- 2 Does your organization have accountable relationships with Indigenous communities and Indigenous-led organizations? How does your organization honor, respect, and take guidance from these relationships? Does your organization have a **practice** of land acknowledgment? Does your organization have a practice of naming and addressing **anti-Indigeneity**?
- 3 How does your organization respect the Earth and take into account the economically-motivated **practices** that have led to the destruction of communities of living systems such as Indigenous Peoples, animals, and natural ecosystems?
- 4 As the ensemble names different examples of each of the four types of **racism**, notice which examples resonate with your life experiences. Which ones have you experienced or witnessed in the workplace?
- 5 *For voluntary, optional caucuses for people who identify as BIPOC and all-BIPOC groups:*
How is “I don’t want dark-skinned children” an example of internalized racial inferiority? How does this reinforce **anti-Blackness**?
- 6 *For voluntary, optional caucuses for people who identify as white and all-white groups:*
How are some of the moments described — doing a Racial Equity Toolkit without any BIPOC or believing the most trained white person is always the best person for the job — examples of internalized racial superiority?

ACTIVITY SPOTLIGHT: “[Why Why Why Why Why](#)” by Sara Porkalob

ACTIVITY SPOTLIGHT: [Tableaus of Truth](#) by the Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI)

RESOURCES

These resources are curated to provide opportunities for facilitators and participants to deepen their learning in connection with this scene. Before using these resources, please re-read the section, “[Using external resources](#)”.

- [The Combahee River Collective Statement](#) by the collective of Black feminists for the Combahee River Collective
- [Why All Inequality Is Not Created Equal](#), a TED talk on **intersectionality** with Kimberlé Crenshaw
- See the definition of **Intersectionality** in the [Glossary](#).
- [1619, Episode 2: The Economy That Slavery Built](#), hosted by Nikole Hannah-Jones; produced by Annie Brown, Adizah Eghan, and Kelly Prime, with help from Jazmín Aguilera; and edited by Lisa Tobin and Lisa Chow from The New York Times
- [Towards Braiding](#) by E. Jimmy and V. Andreotti from the *Towards braiding report*
- [7 Things US History Class Should Have Taught Every American Student about Indigenous History](#) by Halee Kirkwood on The Body Is Not an Apology
- [The Anti-Indigenous Handbook](#) by Tristan Ahtone, Lorena Allam, Leilani Rania Ganser, Kalen Goodluck, Brittany Guyot, and Anna V. Smith, on the Economic Hardship Reporting Project, created in partnership with the [Indigenous Investigative Collective](#)
- [The myth of the ‘model minority’](#), a video by Darren Taylor for the Washington Post
- [What Does It Mean to Be Latino? The ‘Light-Skinned Privilege’ Edition](#) hosted by Shereen Marisol Meraji, produced by Kumari Devarajan, and edited by Leah Donnella on NPR Code Switch

Scene 1 (begins at [6:41](#))

There are three stories in this scene. Each story has separate reflective questions.

Daniel Cohen, *Queen of Heaven*
(Nebula), 2018, Oil on panel, 30"x30"

Seattle Public Utilities 1% for Art Portable
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RESOURCES

These resources are curated to provide opportunities for facilitators and participants to deepen their learning in connection with this scene. Before using these resources, please re-read the section, "[Using external resources](#)".

- [The Messy Link between Slave Owners and Modern Management](#) by Katie Johnston in Forbes
- [Accounting for Slavery: Masters and Management](#), by Catilin Rosenthal
- [Call It What It Is: Anti-Blackness](#) by kihana miraya ross in the New York Times
- [A Global Commitment to Combatting Anti-Blackness: Why the World Needs a Permanent Forum on People of African Descent](#) by Amara Enyia in Ms. Magazine
- [When Agreement Is Not Consent](#) by Rae Johnson and Nkem Ndefo on the Rae X Nkem blog
- [The "Problem" Woman of Colour in the Workplace](#) by Kira Page on the Centre for Community Organizations
- [Transmisogyny Primer](#) by Julia Serano from *Whipping girl: A transsexual woman on sexism and the scapegoating of femininity*.
- [Working at the intersection: What Black women are up against](#), a report and set of resources created under the leadership of the Black women on the Lean In team
- [How Communities of Color Perpetuate Anti-Blackness](#) by Janice Gassam Asare in Forbes magazine
- [Interview with Angela Davis](#) on Frontline about the undeniable connections between economic and racial justice
- [Reading List](#) by Organizing White Men for Collective Liberation; we particularly recommend the sections on Feminism for Men, Antiracism for White Folks, White Supremacy, and Patriarchy

Scene 1, Story 1 (6:41–10:48)

Description of the Scene

Types of oppression playing out: **Racism, sexism**/misogyny, ageism.

Themes: Women of color are problematized in the workplace; white comfort is prioritized; **racial equity** work is sidelined; affinity spaces provide essential care and relief.

A woman of color who was hired to support racial equity work is called into her white male boss's office to discuss an invitation she sent to her white colleagues to discuss their racial equity work. Her supervisor, having received feedback from these white colleagues that her email made them feel uncomfortable, has rewritten her email "to make it more approachable". The scene changes to a BIPOC affinity group meeting where she recounts how her email was received as "bossy and demanding" because she didn't focus on making her white colleagues feel comfortable. She describes her boss's pattern of critiquing her attitude rather than strategizing around their collective efforts and why going to HR about this pattern is not a viable option. The BIPOC affinity group members support her open and honest sharing of her frustration and pain, and affirm her experience. She expresses relief from their understanding and support.

“ I haven't been hired to hold their hands in this racial equity journey, I'm here to hold them accountable, and that requires work from them, too. ”

Reflective Questions

- 1 Describe the types of **racism** playing out in this scene. How are they connected to the **sexism** playing out?
- 2 Name what is harmful about the white male supervisor's comments and behaviors. What are the impacts of those comments and behaviors in a professional setting? What are some of the ways in which BIPOC women are objectified or exoticized in the workplace?
- 3 Consider how the employee's race may have factored into her email being received as "demanding". Where is this characterization of "demanding" coming from? What is received as non-threatening behavior from BIPOC women in the workplace? How is this different for BIPOC women from different racial groups?
- 4 At one point during the affinity group meeting, the other people encourage her to go to HR with the concerns she has. She responds:
"What would I say? Hi HR. My white supervisor is consciously and unconsciously prioritizing the needs and desires and concerns of my white colleagues, which hinders the work that I've actually been hired to do as a **racial equity** team lead. Also, I haven't been hired to hold their hands in this **racial equity** journey, I'm here to hold them accountable, and that requires work from them, too. Thanks for listening, HR. I'd appreciate it if you could pass that along."
Where does this mistrust of HR come from? Why did her colleagues in the affinity group meeting agree with her?

Scene 1, Story 1 (6:41–10:48 Continued)

Reflective Questions

- 5 The woman of color explains that if she did talk to HR: “I would be moved around, ostracized, or let go. Or told that ‘It would be taken care of’, but of course, nothing happens! Again.” Have you seen or experienced this pattern play out in your workplace? What are other ways you have experienced BIPOC who identify as women, **transgender**, or gender non-conforming treated as problematic? How do your own race, gender, or other social positionalities, as well as your position within the organizational hierarchy, affect your ability to trust that HR will take action to support you or others?
- 6 The BIPOC woman shares, “I just started this job and I need a vacation already.” What are the costs of experiencing **racism** and **sexism** for BIPOC women — to their health and wellbeing, and their sense of **interconnection** and **belonging** in the workplace? What are the costs of **racism** to all BIPOC employees? To all employees and the organization as a whole?
- 7 Imagine what a commitment to equitable, collective care that centers the health and wellbeing of BIPOC employees, would look like in the workplace. What **practices**, policies, procedures, and ways of being and relating would this include? How would centering the health and wellbeing of BIPOC employees support the overall health and wellbeing of all employees in the organization? (What impact would that have on the communities the organization serves and is part of?) How might the **practices** in [Building a Relational Culture](#) support this vision?
- 8 How does the BIPOC affinity group support:
1. BIPOC health and wellbeing?
 2. The health and wellbeing of all employees?
 3. The organization’s ability to take action for **anti-racism**, **racial equity**, and **social justice**?
- 9 *For voluntary, optional caucuses for people who identify as BIPOC or all-BIPOC groups:*
- In what ways are different BIPOC racial groups perceived as threatening or not threatening? How are **anti-Blackness**, actual or perceived national origin, and religion factors in these perceptions?
 - How have you internalized these perceptions about BIPOC groups (others or your own)?
 - What are some ways that BIPOC from different racial groups can have each other’s backs?
- 10 *For voluntary, optional caucuses for people who identify as white or all-white groups:*
- How do you see yourself in the white manager? How does seeing ourselves in other white people enable us to cultivate **wellbeing**, **interconnection**, and **belonging** in our **anti-racism**, **racial equity**, and **social justice** work? How does this support BIPOC?
 - How are the behaviors of the white manager and white colleagues perpetuating **racism** in this scene? How could the white people in this situation interrupt this as it’s happening, in a way that simultaneously challenges and supports everybody involved?
 - Why is prioritizing white comfort over the health and **wellbeing** of the whole, as the supervisor does here, actually harmful for both BIPOC and white people?
 - What would happen if the white supervisor directly addressed the discomfort, shame, or fear of white employees? How might this encourage white people to develop a healthier relationship with themselves, each other, BIPOC, and the greater ecosystems of which they are part?

ACTIVITY SPOTLIGHT: [2 Minute Story](#)

by Sara Porkalob

Scene 1, Story 2 ([10:49-16:06](#))

Description of the Scene

*Types of **oppression** playing out:* **Sexism, racism**, ageism.

Themes: Known sexual harassment by men is allowed to continue; BIPOC women are problematized; BIPOC who name systemic **oppression** are punished, ignored, or denied opportunities to advance.

At a BIPOC affinity group meeting, a Black woman recounts a recent experience applying for a director position. In the interview, she was asked to detail an experience in which leadership failed to address an employee concern. She described her experience supporting a young BIPOC woman who was sexually harassed by men at work and how that woman, despite fear of retaliation, filed a harassment complaint with HR. Instead of the men's behavior being addressed, the young woman was moved to another office and the pattern of harassment continued; sexual harassment training was provided but was superficial and not about **equity**. **Oppression** also occurs between the two the interviewers (one white, one BIPOC but whose specific racial and gender identities are not named) and between the interviewers and the Black woman interviewee. Ultimately, despite her being highly qualified for the job, they hire a white man. Throughout her re-telling, the other affinity group members express support with their words and body language.

Reflective Questions

- 1 How does this scene show some of the ways that women struggle to be accepted, respected, and experience **belonging** in the workplace? What aspects of our workplace **culture** reinforce those struggles? How does age affect this?
- 2 How are professionalism and standards of beauty used to control and harm women in this scene, and in the workplace?
- 3 What does the phrase "male-dominated" suggest about a profession or a workplace? What might women and non-binary people feel they need to do to fit into something "male-dominated"? How is this related to their experiences of safety and security? Their experiences of health, wellbeing, and **belonging**?
- 4 In what ways does the older Black woman support the younger BIPOC woman? How is this treatment an act of both interpersonal and collective care and resilience?
- 5 The Black woman describes the department's anti-harassment training as not "about real **equity**" but rather a "check-box test to see if people knew the difference between what was politically correct or not in the workplace." She goes on to say that "they couldn't even name the problem", referring to sexual harassment in the workplace.
 - When in your life have you been unable to "name the problem" when it comes to interpersonal or institutional **oppression** in the workplace? What was coming up for you, in your body, as you remained silent? How is being unable to name the problem different based on whether you are an **agent** or a **target** of the particular form of **oppression** at play? (See [Glossary](#) and the [4 Types of Racism](#).)
 - Have you ever had an experience like the BIPOC woman who was harassed and didn't want to report what happened to her? What is the wisdom of that choice?
 - What is the role of men in naming and interrupting sexual harassment by other men? What is the role of **cisgender** men and women in naming or interrupting sexual harassment of **transgender** and gender nonconforming people?
 - Imagine an approach that seeks the wellbeing of the whole team, division, or department and centers the needs and experiences of those who are most impacted by **racism** and **sexism**. How could practices such as those in [Building a Relational Culture](#).

Scene 1, Story 2 (10:49–16:06 Continued)

Reflective Questions

support that vision and help management to address this incident and the pattern it's part of? What policies and procedures could help to sustain these **practices**?

- 6 Have you ever been in a job interview — either as the interviewer or interviewee — in which **racism**, **sexism**, ageism, ableism, or other forms of **oppression** played out? What came up for you, in your body, as these forms of **oppression** played out? What did you do or not do, and why?
- 7 If you were the BIPOC interviewer and were continually being cut off by your white co-interviewer, what avenues might you have for shifting this **power** dynamic while the interview is happening?
- 8 It took three months for the Black woman to hear back from the prospective employer that they had filled the position. What message does this send to her? What does this say about the employer's commitment to **anti-racism**, **racial equity**, and **social justice**?

- 9 *For voluntary, optional caucuses for people who identify as BIPOC or BIPOC-only groups:* The main character shares how, when she came into work having flat-ironed her hair, her white colleagues remarked that she looked nice and her manager, who was BIPOC, soon gifted her a flatiron.

- How is internalized racial inferiority playing out here?
- How do BIPOC internalize white beauty standards, and how is that used to reinforce notions of professionalism within **white supremacy culture**?
- Why is coiled hair often labeled unprofessional?
- How do non-Black and non-Indigenous POC use appearance to gain proximity to whiteness and therefore reinforce **anti-Blackness** and **anti-Indigeneity**?
- How could BIPOC interrupt these norms and ways of being by using **practices** found in *Building a Relational Culture*?

Marika Swan, *Deep In Our Bones*, 2015,
Limited edition giclée, 30.75"x24.63"

Seattle Public Utilities 1% for Art Portable
Works Collection



Scene 1, Story 3 ([16:07-19:04](#))

Description of the Scene

Types of oppression playing out: **Anti-Black racism, sexism**, adultism (ageism toward youth).

Themes: Black trauma vis-a-vis police; police presence in schools; white minimization and negation of Black experiences of harm; Black women and mothers expressing care being viewed as aggressive.

Another Black woman joins the affinity group late because her daughter's school had called her in to support her daughter, who was traumatized by an unannounced lockdown drill that had brought police to the school. The white secretary and teacher don't understand why her Black child would have a fear of police officers and show no care for her or her daughter's feelings. When she asks them to stop minimizing her experience, they escalate and call her aggressive. After she recounts this to the BIPOC affinity group, the members take a slow, deep breath together, in solidarity.

“ I was just being a mom and suddenly I’m a threat because I’m a Black mom. I need a break. Because while I can take a break here in this play, I can’t in real life.”

Maya Milton, *Metamorphosis*, 2019,
Mixed media, 24"x19"

Seattle Public Utilities 1% for Art Portable
Works Collection



Scene 1, Story 3 ([16:06–19:04](#) Continued)

Reflective Questions

- 1 What do you notice about the body language of the Black woman and the white school officials?
- 2 What are the different ways that **anti-Blackness** plays out in the scene?
- 3 Why does the white receptionist comment on the Black woman's hair? How is this preoccupation racially patterned throughout American history?
- 4 What are the ways that structural and institutional **racism** occur in this situation? What does the lockdown have to do with the structural and institutional realities that we live in? How is this specifically **anti-Black**? What are the impacts on the Black woman, who is also a mother?
- 5 What does this scene tell us about the assumed separation between “who we are in the workplace” and “who we are in the community”? What are the implications for BIPOC employees working to address **racism** within the workplace and through their jobs?
- 6 How does internalized racial superiority play out among the white people in this scene?
- 7 *For voluntary, optional caucuses for people who identify as Black or all-Black groups:*
 - How has your experience of **anti-Blackness** been similar to this Black woman?
 - How do you see yourself, your family, and your community in this story?
- How have you been supported or supported other Black people around experiences of **anti-Blackness** at the interpersonal and institutional levels (See [4 Types of Racism](#).)?
- 7 *For voluntary, optional caucuses for people who identify as non-Black people of color:*
 - How have you been shaped by the reality of **anti-Blackness**?
 - Do you notice any tendencies of your own toward a preference for white or a rejection of Black?
 - How do you see yourself, your family, and your community in this story?
 - How have you been supported or supported other non-Black POC to uproot **anti-Blackness** at the interpersonal and institutional levels? (See [4 Types of Racism](#).)
- 8 *For voluntary, optional caucuses for people who identify as white or all-white groups:*
 - How has **anti-Blackness** shaped you in ways similar to the white people in the scene (the secretary and two teachers)?
 - What comes up in your body as you watch them? Do you notice any desire to distance yourself from them?
 - How do you see yourself, your family, and your community in this story?
 - How have you been supported or supported other white people to uproot **anti-Blackness** at the interpersonal and institutional levels? (See [4 Types of Racism](#).)



ACTIVITY SPOTLIGHT: [Pause / Breathe / Reflect](#) by Sonali Sangeet Balajee & the Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI)

ACTIVITY SPOTLIGHT: [A Healing Invitation for BIPOC](#) by Sonali Sangeeta Balajee

ACTIVITY SPOTLIGHT: [The Two Webs \(the Web of Interconnection, Wellbeing & Belonging and the Web of Structural Racism\)](#) by Sonali Sangeeta Balajee & Diana Falchuk

Scene 3 (19:05-23:03)

Description of the Scene

A note to facilitators: Scene 2 is not named in the video, so Scene 3 comes after Scene 1, stories 1 - 3.

*Types of **oppression** playing out: **Racism**, elitism.*

Themes: Tokenism; devaluing of time and process needed to engage community; sense of urgency and individualism; collaboration.

In their regular check-in meeting, a Spanish-speaking BIPOC woman tries to get her manager, a white woman, to collaborate with her on an equitable approach to gathering community feedback. The BIPOC woman pauses the scene and observes to the viewer the racial and other **power** dynamics playing out. She then rewinds the scene and uses her **power** of imagination to explore a different way for it to unfold. In this second version, her manager exhibits self-awareness, better listening skills, and a willingness to receive honest and uncomfortable feedback.



I believe our community is more than two-pagers and checked boxes on a list.



Reflective Questions

- 1 In what ways do you relate to either or both of the characters? Notice any discomfort that comes up for you, including feelings of pain, fear, shame, or guilt.
- 2 What do you notice about the white woman manager's overall attitude toward the BIPOC woman she supervises? What tells you this?
- 3 What do you notice about the white woman manager's tone regarding the areas of her employee's performance about which she has raised concerns? How is she received by her employee when she talks about them?
- 4 The employee provides her manager with feedback in the scene. What is that feedback? How is it delivered? How is it received?
- 5 Some of the white woman manager's language is relational. For example, she asks what solution her employee is proposing and says she would love to collaborate with her. However, the employee doesn't experience this as an invitation for genuine collaboration. How are the manager's actions contradicting her words? How do the manager's tone of voice, body language, and actions support or inhibit authentic relationship and collaboration?

Scene 3 (19:05–23:03 Continued)

Reflective Questions

- 6 What are some of the differences you notice between the first and second take of the scene? How is the dynamic between the BIPOC woman and the white manager different?
- 7 Consider what you would do if you, with the social positionalities you hold, were in the position of the manager. How could you use **relational culture practices** found in [Building a Relational Culture](#) to listen to this employee and support them? What policies or procedures could help to sustain these **practices**?
- 8 *For voluntary, optional caucuses for people of all races:*
- What about your own heritage and **culture** connects you with this story?
 - What historic or recent pain might this story bring up in your body or mind? What would healing this pain look like for you? What would support and connection look like in this healing?
 - How might **anti-Blackness** and **anti-Indigeneity** be affecting the situation in this scene?
- 9 *For voluntary, optional caucuses for people who identify as Latinx and all-Latinx groups:*
- What reflections or feelings come up for you as you watch this scene?
 - How might your history or your family's history of immigration to the U.S. affect your workplace experiences?
 - How do Blackness and **anti-Blackness**, as well as Indigeneity and **anti-Indigeneity**, intersect with the experience of racism that Latinx people of different racial and ethnic subgroups might have?
 - What from your different Latinx cultures and histories can support healing, resilience, and **coliberation**?



ACTIVITY SPOTLIGHT: [The Human Machine, the Living System, and Building a Relational Culture](#) by Alan Wong, with the Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI)

RESOURCES

These resources are curated to provide opportunities for facilitators and participants to deepen their learning in connection with this scene. Before using these resources, please re-read the section, "[Using external resources](#)".

- [8 Latinx Professionals Open Up about Discrimination in the Workplace](#) by Ludmila Leiva from Refinery29
- [But You Speak So Well": How Latinos Experience Subtle Racism](#) by Sylvia Mazzula, PhD from the Psychology Benefits Society
- [A Love Letter to "the Onlys": Underrepresented People Experiencing Tokenism and Isolation at Work](#) by Michelle Kim on the Awaken blog
- [8 Ways People of Color are Tokenized in Nonprofits](#) by Helen Kim Ho on The Nonprofit Revolution
- [10 Tips on Receiving Critical Feedback](#) by Brooke Anderson on her self-titled blog
- [White People: Stop and Think before Giving Feedback](#) by Erin Okuno and Heidi Schillinger from Fakequity

Scene 4 (23:05-27:32)

Description of the Scene

Types of oppression playing out: **Racism, sexism.**

Themes: White women's complicity in **racism** as way to lessen the impacts of **sexism**; the intersectional experiences of BIPOC who are women, **transgender** and non-binary.

In the first take of this scene, two BIPOC women are having lunch with a white woman who used to be on their team before being promoted. The white woman shares that she hasn't yet interrupted the **racism** on her new, mostly white male team because it's hard to be one of the only women and she's still trying to learn the job. The two BIPOC women pause the scene and guide the white woman through a reflection on how her whiteness provides her some protection from the **sexism** she experiences and affords her the choice to not speak up about **racism**. They mention the harm this causes to BIPOC, including them, and to the communities she supports.

In the second take of the scene, the person who was promoted is BIPOC. When they express the challenges they have experienced as the only BIPOC on the team, the other BIPOC offer support. After this take, the BIPOC who was promoted pauses the scene and shares with the viewer the loneliness and pressure they experience as the only BIPOC on their team, and the fear of speaking up about racism without risking retaliation.

“ Being white gives me a way to belong, to fit in and gain some respect in male-dominated groups. So I stay quiet. I don't take risks and I choose not to interrupt racism. I have a feeling there's a way I can push back but I don't know how. ”

“ Being promoted was bittersweet. I was being recognized, but I was moving away from people who shared in my [BIPOC] experience. The environment is ... not explicit racism or explicit sexism, so I don't say anything. ”

Scene 4 (23:05–27:32 Continued)

Reflective Questions

- 1 What do you notice about the ways the racial positionalities of different characters in this scene shape their experiences around gender? How are their race and their gender connected?
 - 2 What support do the BIPOC women offer their white woman colleague in the first take? How is this different from the type of support they offer their BIPOC colleague in the second take? Why?
 - 3 In her book *Sister Outsider*, Black feminist author and activist Audre Lorde writes: “When I dare to be powerful, to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid.” How might this quote apply to the different characters in each take?
 - 4 *For voluntary, optional caucuses for people who identify as BIPOC or all-BIPOC groups:*
 - Have you been in a room of predominantly white people when **racism** occurred and no one addressed it? What happened? Was not addressing it intentional or not? What were the impacts on you or other BIPOC in the room?
 - Which of the *Building a Relational Culture* **practices** might help you support yourself or other BIPOC in situations like what is being portrayed in the second take?
 - 5 *For voluntary, optional caucuses for people who identify as Asian American or Pacific Islander (AAPI) or all-AAPI groups:*
 - In the second take, how would the experience on this all-white, mostly male team be different for AAPI women of different racial and ethnic subgroups, such as for those who are Indian, Samoan, Laotian, Indigenous Chamorro, Korean, or Japanese (to name just a few of the vast diversity of AAPI cultures and ethnicities)?
- How do Blackness and **anti-Blackness**, as well as Indigeneity and **anti-Indigeneity**, intersect with the experience of racism that AAPI women of different racial and ethnic subgroups might have?
 - What from your different AAPI cultures and histories can support healing, resilience, and **coliberation**?
- 6 *For voluntary, optional caucuses for people who identify as white or all-white groups:*
 - Watch the resource with [Betina Love talking about co-conspirators](#). What are some everyday opportunities to “put your hand on the pole” in small ways in the workplace? What are some bigger opportunities?
- 7 *For people who identify as white men:*
 - What feelings do you notice in your body as you watch this scene and consider the the impacts that **cisgender** men have on women, **transgender** people, and non-binary people?
 - How is the experience for women, **transgender** people, and non-binary people who are BIPOC different from those who are white?
 - Watch the resource with [Betina Love talking about co-conspirators](#). What are some of the ways that you can put your “hand on the pole” as a white man? Which **practices** from *Building a Relational Culture* can support you?

ACTIVITY SPOTLIGHT: [Rewriting the Scene](#) by the Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI)

RESOURCES

These resources are curated to provide opportunities for facilitators and participants to deepen their learning in connection with this scene. Before using these resources, please re-read the section, “[Using external resources](#)”.

- [White Women Doing White Supremacy in Nonprofit Culture](#) by Heather Laine Talley on the Tzedek Social Justice Fund blog
- [The urgency of intersectionality](#), a TED Talk with Kimberlé Crenshaw
- [Intersectional feminism: what it is and why it matters right now](#) on the UN Women blog
- [How Alice Walker Created Womanism — The Movement That Meets Black Women Where Feminism Misses the Mark](#) by Camille Rahat for Blavity
- [Betina Love vividly explains the difference between allies and co-conspirators in the fight for justice](#), discussing her book *We Want to Do More Than Survive* on C-Span
- [Brené Brown with Aiko Bethea on Inclusivity at Work: The Heart of Hard Conversations](#) by Brené Brown on the Dare to Lead podcast

Scene 5 (27:33-33:36)

Description of the Scene

Types of oppression playing out: **Racism, sexism, cissexism.**

Themes: **Cisgender** people's discomfort engaging in learning about gender; white **cisgender** people not understanding how gender and race are intertwined; defensiveness; white people calling each other in and forward.

Three BIPOC and two white people are in a training on gender pronouns and **transgender** rights. A white **cisgender** woman expresses confusion about **transgender** experiences. The BIPOC **transgender** facilitator offers her facts to expand her understanding, and two of the BIPOC participants offer her resources and other support. After the training, the white **cisgender** woman asks another white person (whose gender is not identified) to stay behind to talk, during which she expresses feeling criticized and assumes the white person will corroborate her story. The other white person engages the white **cisgender** woman in reflecting on the racial and gender aspects of her impacts. The two have a conversation in which the white **cisgender** woman is both challenged and supported. They end by agreeing to keep talking.

“ I know it’s my responsibility to reach out to other white people so we can figure out how to interrupt racism and transphobia and create spaces where people of color and all of us get to experience belonging.” ”

Angie Hinojos Yusuf, *Adelita*, 2018,
Illuminated sculpture , 48"x26"

Seattle Public Utilities 1% for Art Portable
Works Collection



Scene 5 (27:33–33:36 Continued)

Reflective Questions

- 1 At the very beginning of the scene, a white **cisgender** person expresses that “this pronoun thing is new to me and I’m trying very hard to do the right thing.” How does this person’s body language and word choice convey their comfort or discomfort? How do this person’s colleagues and the trainer, who are mostly BIPOC, respond?
- 2 [Read the Healthline article](#) on **cissexism**. How are **racism** and **cissexism** playing out in this scene? Remember that **oppression** does not require intention.
- 3 [Watch the Project Rockit video](#) on “calling in vs. calling out”. In this *Shape of Trust* scene, how would you describe the way that the white person engaged the other white person? A calling in, a calling out, or a mix of the two? Why? What is an example of a time you’ve used a calling in? A calling out?
- 4 One of white people says, “I don’t know why you’re bringing up that they were people of color. That is not what this is about.” The other white person responds, “But they are people of color. Our facilitator is a person of color and trans, so that is all a part of what this is about.” How does **intersectionality** help us understand this second statement? How does an intersectional approach to change support the health and wellbeing of the collective?
- 5 One of the white characters talks about the white savior complex. What do you think they mean by this? Do you ever notice this playing out in your organization, perhaps even within those who are doing **anti-racism**, **racial equity** and **social justice** work?
- 6 The [podcast “White Americans need to understand that their interests coincide with Black people’s interests”](#) is echoed in this scene when the white person trying to interrupt the other white person says:

“That’s the thing. It’s not for them [people of color]. White people have to do the work for us, for other white people as well, because it’s all of our world. **Racism** affects all parts of our world. And it works together with **sexism** and transphobia and all other kinds of **oppression** to keep everything in this system moving along exactly as it is. Illness, incarceration, hunger, homelessness — you name it... The lift is too big. We need everyone’s wholeness and presence, you know?”

How do you feel about this invitation for white people to understand their personal stake in ending **racism** and the many forms of **oppression** that contribute to the overall system of **white supremacy**? What would be different in our workplaces and for our communities if white people understood how all of our liberation is tied? How can we encourage this personal accountability among white people, while making sure that the lives of those most harmed by **white supremacy** — Black, Indigenous, and People of Color — remain at the center of our hearts, minds, and **spirits** as we organize for our **coliberation**?

RESOURCES

These resources are curated to provide opportunities for facilitators and participants to deepen their learning in connection with this scene. Before using these resources, please re-read the section, “[Using external resources](#)”.

- [The urgency of intersectionality](#), a TED Talk with Kimberlé Crenshaw
- [City of Seattle Gender Justice Project](#) downloadable handout on gender pronouns, located under Education, Awareness, and Training
- [What Does “Two-Spirit” Mean?](#) By Geo Netume on the *them.*
- [Healing with Two Spirit and Native LGBTQ+ Relatives](#) by Christine Diindiisi McCleave (Turtle Mountain Ojibwe) on the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition
- [Standing Up: What is calling in vs. calling out?](#) by Project Rockit
- [How Shame Can Block Accountability](#) by Spring Up
- [White People in Solidarity Against Racism: Dara Silverman and Chris Crass](#) by the Laura Flanders Show
- [What Does It Mean to be Cissexist?](#) by KC Clemments on Healthline
- [Support Housing for Black Trans Women and Femmes](#) by Leo Segovia of the Seattle Office for Civil Rights
- [Hey people with privilege, you need to be OK with making mistakes and being called out](#) by Vu Le for Nonprofit AF
- [“White Americans need to understand that their interests coincide with Black people’s interests”](#), podcast interview with Brian Lowery and Clayborn Carson on Insights by Stanford Business
- [Roots Deeper than Whiteness](#) by David Dean for White Awake

Final Scene (33:37–35:55)

Description of the Scene

Themes: White supremacy is inextricably intertwined with all other supremacy systems and forms of oppression; white male comfort is elevated above the needs of all others; BIPOC are exhausted by having to navigate the dense webs of **racism** and other forms of **oppression**; **anti-racism**, **racial equity**, and **social justice** is all of our work.

In this final scene, the ensemble comes together to share some final reflections on the very real, painful, and life-threatening impacts of the four types of **racism**, and their intersections with every other form of **oppression**. They share how the work of **racial equity** and **social justice** is a **practice**, a way of being and living in the world, and will take time.

“ There isn’t a checklist... This work must be a practice.
This work must be a way of living and being in the world. ”

Reflective Questions

- 1 The actors explain that when they say “white supremacy”, they’re also talking about “connections to colonization, colorism, patriarchy, classism” and other forms of **oppression**. What do you know about these connections, this web of different forms of **oppression**? Is your organization using this understanding to inform the development and implementation of policies, practices, and procedures? How do you feel about using “white supremacy” as an umbrella term for these interlocking systems of **oppression**?
- 2 At one point, the all-BIPOC actors name how exhausting it is to constantly “massage situations so that white people — especially white men —” feel comfortable. What are some of the ways that people navigate the discomfort, anger, and defensiveness of white men? How do white women play a role in protecting or placating white male feelings? Who is most impacted by that? In your experience, is this different when the women or men are **transgender**? In your experience, who is the “especially”?
- 3 What is your responsibility and your role in collective change? Consider your social positionality (race, gender, etc.) and position within your organization’s hierarchy. What are some **practices** you can commit to cultivating so that you can move toward embodying **anti-racism** as a way of living and being in the world?
- 4 Read the [Islamophobia 101 article](#) and [Rethinking Islamophobia article](#) in the Resources section for this scene. What do you notice about the ways Islamophobia and racism intersect? How does this play out in the workplace?

Final Scene ([33:37–35:55](#) Continued)

Reflective Questions

- 5 Read the [article on antisemitism](#) in the Resources section for this scene. What do you notice about the role that antisemitism plays in upholding white supremacy? How does white supremacy impact white Jews, white passing Jews, and Jews of color differently?
- 6 What other patterns of **racism** and other forms of **oppression** do you experience that do not come up in the video but occur in the workplace or affect people's experiences in the workplace? How might the content in [Building a Relational Culture](#) help people organize to address them through changes to **practice**, policy, procedure, and organizational culture? (Facilitators should consider whether opening up this conversation is supportive for the group or whether it may cause harm and would be most caring if asked in a caucus space.)
- 7 *For voluntary, optional caucuses or people who identify as Black, non-Black people of color, or white:*
- Read the [resource on white women's tears](#). Does this resonate with your own workplace experiences? How are white women's tears or discomfort constantly navigated in the workplace and what impacts does this have on BIPOC? How are these impacts particularly harmful for BIPOC women?
- 8 *For voluntary, optional caucuses for people who identify as non-Black people of color or for people who identify as white:*
- How does centering white feelings reinforce racism? How, specifically, does it reinforce **anti-Blackness**?
 - What do you need to ensure that Black people do not have to center other people's feelings in order to keep their jobs?
 - What can you do to support Black people's health, wellbeing, and **belonging** at work? What do you need to give up in order to do that?

RESOURCES

These resources are curated to provide opportunities for facilitators and participants to deepen their learning in connection with this scene. Before using these resources, please re-read the section, "Using external resources".

- [White Woman Tears: These Tears Taste Like Oppression](#) by Alexandria Bennett on Medium

- [Skin in the Game: How Antisemitism Animates White Nationalism](#) by Eric K. Ward for Political Research Associates
- [Islamophobia 101](#) by the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR)
- [Rethinking Islamophobia](#) by Khaled A. Beydoun on Al Jazeera

GLOSSARY

Below is language that we currently use to describe some of the terms we use. Our language and how we define terms is constantly evolving, along with our world. We invite experienced **anti-racism**, **racial equity**, and **social justice** facilitators to adapt these terms to meet the participants you're supporting where they are at.

Agent Group

When talking about a specific kind of **oppression**, an agent group is the social identity that carries out the **oppression**. Examples: **racism** positions white people as agents; **sexism** positions non-**transgender** men as agents; classism positions people with greater economic means as agents. See **Target Group**, the counterpart to *Agent Group*, below.

Anti-Blackness

The specific form of racism that targets Black people from the African diaspora. Anti-Blackness both establishes and affirms the racial hierarchy of white as top, most deserving, and fully human, with Black and Indigenous as bottom, least deserving, and not human. Anti-Blackness relies on structural violence against Black bodies through enslavement, policing, experimentation, surveillance, and more. Like all forms of racism, Anti-Blackness exists at the internalized, interpersonal, institutional, and structural levels. For more information, read [The Argument of Afropessimism](#) by Vinson Cunningham in *The New Yorker*.

Anti-Indigeneity

The specific form of racism that targets Indigenous people. Anti-Indigeneity both establishes and affirms the racial hierarchy of white as top, most deserving, and fully human, with Black and Indigenous as bottom, least deserving, and not human. The co-authors of the [Anti-Indigenous Handbook](#) write: "The core of anti-Indigeneity is in opposition to self-determination, political and cultural autonomy, and the right to maintain, use and protect traditional territories and resources." Anti-Indigeneity is anti-Earth and anti-spirit. Anti-Indigeneity relies on structural violence against Indigenous Peoples through attempted erasure, invisibilization, forced separation, genocide, ecocide, and more. Like all forms of racism, anti-Indigeneity exists at the internalized, interpersonal, institutional, structural levels.

Anti-racism

A daily embodying of strategies, **practices**, and **culture** that uproot the social and historical inequities embedded in institutions and systems. Anti-racism rejects neutrality and actively resists injustices based on race or other social identities such as Indigenous status, gender, class, sexuality, age, religion, ability, national origin, language, and educational attainment.

Arts & Culture

An inclusive term that covers visual, literary, performing, movement-based, musical, graphic, and digital art forms in all kinds of mediums and all kinds of settings (schools, galleries, theatres, museums, dance halls, public infrastructure, the streets, etc.). It also includes food,

language, crafts, customs, ritual, festivals, and spiritual practices, as well as other ways that communities gather, connect, make meaning, and express themselves. See more in **Culture**, below.

Belonging

Dignity, choice, connection, finding common cause with the other, and being whole. In the context of **collective health**, belonging is created by conditions that seek to eliminate what harms and destroys living systems, and promote what is life-sustaining. **Equity** and decolonizing **practices** are required to embody belonging in our daily lives at work and beyond.

Cisgender

The designation for a person whose gender identity matches the identity they were assigned at birth.

Cissexism

Gender **oppression** that targets people who are **transgender** or gender non-conforming. Activist and scholar [Julia Serrano](#) defines cissexism as "the belief or assumption that **cis[gender]** people's gender identities, expressions, and **embodiments** are more natural and legitimate than those of **trans[gender]** people." [Healthline](#) states that the "foundational belief of this system is that there are only two genders".

Coliberation

The meaning of coliberation is best expressed by a long-stated truth from generations of community **organizing**: "My freedom is tied up with yours, and yours with mine". It is a process that involves reflection and repair, and acknowledges the reality that all things are interconnected and inseparable. We all need personal and community healing in order to experience coliberation across different communities, histories, and current realities.

Collective Health and Wellbeing

The acknowledgment that the physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing of all living systems is connected. Requires deconstructing systemic patterns of harm and **oppression**, moving towards life-sustaining actions, and shifting our awareness.

Culture

Conscious or unconscious habits, attitudes, beliefs, norms, and ways of being of a particular group or society. A workplace or team has a culture. In many of our organizations and institutions, the dominant culture is one that — consciously or not — upholds the overall system of **white supremacy** in our society.

Ecosystemic

The awareness of, or engagement with, the interactions between living systems, both human and non-human. An ecosystemic approach is one that notices, acknowledges, and takes into consideration the reality of the **interconnection** and interdependence among all living systems.

GLOSSARY

Embodiment

The conscious knowing and being that comes from the **interconnection** of our body, thinking brain, breath, voice, **spirit**, and sense of purpose. A **practice** that we cultivate in order to support authenticity and presence in the face of challenge and conflict. Embodiment is fundamental to our ability to transform ourselves, the groups to which we belong, and the systems that shape our society. Embodiment is an antidote to disembodiment, one of the primary conditions that enables **white supremacy** and structural **racism** to thrive, along with other forms of **oppression**.

Equality

When everyone gets the same thing, regardless of the difference in their needs. Unlike **equity**, equality does not provide everyone with what they need to thrive.

Equity

When a person's socioeconomic outcomes are not determined by their race, Indigenous status, gender, class, sexuality, age, religion, ability, national origin, language, and educational attainment. When everyone has what they need to thrive. Equity is not the same as **equality**.

Heteropatriarchy

A social and political system that favors heterosexuality, monogamous relationship structures, and **cisgender** men as the rightful holders of **power**. It causes inequity and disparity for people who identify as **cisgender** women, **transgender**, gender nonconforming, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer. It defines heterosexism (sexual attraction to those of the opposite sex) and patriarchy (**cisgender** male dominance) as normal and those who identify as **cisgender** women, **transgender**, gender nonconforming, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer as abnormal. Heteropatriarchy helps to normalize and uphold other social hierarchies, including white supremacy and settler colonialism.

Interconnection

The reality that everything is connected, inseparable, in relationship with, and affecting everything else. This includes the Earth, land, air, water, non-humans, and humans. Our communities, our systems, and our organizations are made up of interconnected living systems.

Intersectionality

[Merriam-Webster defines intersectionality](#) as “the complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as **racism**, **sexism**, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups.” For more information on intersectionality, read [Columbia Law School's 2017 interview with Kimberly Crenshaw](#), who coined the term in the 1990s.

Mindfulness

Conscious awareness of the present moment. Non-judgment toward one's feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations. Mindfulness practices are essential to cultivate and sustain transformative, anti-racist organizing.

Oppression

Systematic mistreatment and exploitation that creates inequity and disparity for members of **target groups**, unearned benefits for members of **agent groups**, and inequity and disparity in society as a whole. There are different types of oppression attached to different **target groups** and **agent groups**. How an individual experiences oppression is a reflection of the ways their agent/target positions interact. This may change from moment to moment, and over time based on immediate institutional or cultural context.

At any given time, it is possible to experience multiple forms of oppression and social agency simultaneously. Unlike discrimination, oppression takes into account **power** — who is positioned to hold **power** and who is positioned not to hold **power** as a result of the ways society has been set up and functioned for generations. In other words, oppression takes into account **agent** and **target group** membership.

Organizing

Building relationships and aligning strategies and actions to create collective **power** for the sake of realizing equitable, just, and liberatory outcomes. In order for organizing to be equitable, just, and liberatory, those who are most impacted by a form of **oppression** and the issue related to it must lead the organizing (e.g., Black and Indigenous people lead organizing for prison abolition). People can organize in the community or from within organizations, and organizations can organize in support of the community. For more information on organizing, check out the video [Community Organizing Definition \(The Secret to Social Change\)](#) by Rashad D. Hawkins.

Power

The ability to define reality, to write the narrative. Power is inherent to living systems, while also wielded and hoarded by institutions that control, limit, and extract from living systems. Power is both a resource and a pathway toward greater wellbeing. Power is needed to organize. Power *over* often maintains **white supremacy**. Power *with* is an essential part of **coliberation**.

Practice

The intentional cultivation of attitudes and actions toward a particular purpose. Practice is crucial for transformation. Rather than being about “getting it right,” transformation is about accumulating the mind-body-**spirit** memories, attitudes, and actions that allow you to be present for what's needed in the moment and over the long term. See *the related term*, **Embodiment**, above.

Racial Equity

When resources are available to people according to their need, creating a world where race no longer determines one's outcomes in any aspect of their life. When everyone has what they need to thrive. Racial **equity** is always intersectional. When we say “racial **equity**”, we know that this includes these other dimensions of people's lived experiences.

GLOSSARY

Racial Hierarchy

The United States is built upon a racial hierarchy that places white at the top with Black and Indigenous at the bottom. Sandwiched in the middle are Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI), Latinx, and all people who are mixed race, bi-racial, multi-racial and non-white. This hierarchy rewards proximity to whiteness and punishes proximity to Blackness and Indigeneity. Examining this reality, our places within it, and the impacts it has on our health, wellbeing, economic security, life expectancy, relationships, spirit, families, communities, and more is at the heart of the individual and collective healing we all need to do.



Racism

The form of **oppression** based on race. See **Oppression**, above. Also see the *handout*, [4 Types of Racism](#).

Relational Culture

The ways of beings, norms, habits, attitudes, beliefs, and expectations that counter the system and **culture of white supremacy** and support **belonging**, **interconnection**, and **wellbeing**. Relational **culture** can exist within organizations and in society at-large.

Sexism

The form of **oppression** based on gender. See **Oppression**, above.

Social Justice

Active **organizing** to create a world in which all people, regardless of their social positioning (race, gender, etc.), experience the same economic, political, and social rights and opportunities.

Spirit

That which connects all living beings, and which gives us breath and purpose. What animates the experience of wholeness. Spirit and spirituality must be centered and engaged with deeply for our **collective health and wellbeing**.

Target Group

When talking about a specific kind of **oppression**, a target group is the social identity that is targeted and oppressed. Examples: **racism**

targets BIPOC; **sexism** targets women and **transgender** people; classism targets working class and poor people. See **Agent Group**, the counterpart to *Target Group*, above.

Transformational

Consciously and explicitly focused on interconnected, relational, and **ecosystemic** ways of thinking, being, and doing; based in an analysis of **power** that holds space for all people to make authentic contributions toward **racial equity** and **social justice** outcomes. Transformation requires both systemic changes and deeper internal **practices** of awareness and reorganization. Transformation occurs when going back to what was becomes unthinkable. (This last line is inspired by Dr. Daraya Funches.)

Transgender

The designation for a person whose gender identity differs from the gender identity they were assigned at birth. Transgender is an umbrella term that encompasses different identities and expressions.

White Supremacy

The social, political, and economic system that maintains the dominance of white people by providing advantages to white individuals and groups. White supremacy is also the belief that white people are superior to people of all other races, and therefore have a right to dominate people and the planet.

White Supremacy Culture

The ways of beings, norms, habits, attitudes, beliefs, and expectations that uphold the system of **white supremacy**, both within organizations and in society at-large. For more on this term, see [White Supremacy Culture](#) by Tema Okun, updated from her seminal collaboration with Kenneth Jones, and [Building a Relational Culture](#).



RACE & SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE

RSJI