introduction to
Community Organizing Toolkit

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to acknowledge that my work takes place on the stolen, traditional, and ancestral homelands of the xwməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səl̓ílwətaʔɬ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) peoples — colonially known as Vancouver, BC. As a non-Indigenous person, I am accountable to the laws, rules of engagement, and protocols of those who have stewarded these lands and waters since time immemorial. I recognize that a land acknowledgement is not enough and am committed to working towards decolonial futures by centring Indigenous voices and stories, engaging in solidarity with Indigenous communities, unlearning colonial narratives, and honouring Indigenous sovereignty. To learn about the lands you are situated on, please visit **Native Land's digital map**.

ABOUT THE TOOLKIT

At its core, community organizing is the coming together of people to reimagine what is possible and shift power to the people in order to generate transformative change. The "Introduction to Community Organizing Toolkit" was created by Michelle Xie (she/her) with three main goals: 1) to resist the gatekeeping of knowledge by making a publicly available community resource, 2) to dismantle the elitism within organizing spaces that can often feel overwhelming and inaccessible, and 3) to empower folks to take action in their communities by cultivating spaces rooted in care, collective liberation, and the onboarding of new people to build long-term capacity.

> A lot of time and care went into creating this toolkit. If you have the means to, please consider **supporting Michelle and her work**! It helps make projects like these possible ♥

Please note that I do not claim to be an expert. Learning is a lifelong process that involves constant growth, mistakes, and an openness to feedback and change. This toolkit is not meant to be read like a rule book, nor a rigid approach to organizing that distinguishes right from wrong. It is a compilation of insights and knowledge that celebrates the wisdom of community organizers from across so-called Canada and beyond. Both alt-text and image descriptions are available throughout this document.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to all those beginning their organizing journeys and encourage folks who are already involved in justice-centred work to reflect upon their current practices. You are welcome to share this toolkit and reference it. My only ask is that you provide appropriate credit (see below) and refrain from reproducing content for profit because there are several organizers, writers, and artists who have not given consent to republishing their work elsewhere. Thank you!

> Suggested Toolkit Citation & Link: **Introduction to Community Organizing Toolkit** (Michelle Xie, 2023)

This offering is constantly being updated to better reflect the landscape of organizers' needs, ensure links are still working, and incorporate changes to content based on suggestions from community, new / expanded learnings, and more. Last updated: September 6, 2023

COVER ARTWORK

Cover artwork for this toolkit was beautifully illustrated by Charm Batilo (she/her). To learn more about her work or get in touch about a commission, email her at **charm.batilo@gmail.com**

[Image Description: Title reads "Introduction to Community Organizing Toolkit" in half cursive and half bold, white font against a black background. Beneath this is a digital illustration of a city skyline with a warm purple and magenta sunset seeping past a set of fluffy clouds. Two oak trees are found in the midground, while the foreground consists of many hands of varying skin colours. Some are raised in a power fist; others extend towards each other in solidarity. There are protest signs for affordable housing, another of broken handcuffs and chains to represent prison abolition, one with leaves to symbolize sustainability, a pride progress flag, and a skytrain that stands for free public transit. Between this is a microphone, megaphones, a pen, and a phone.]

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Language is fluid and ever-evolving, meaning it changes within the context of space and time. As such, these definitions are not concrete, nor absolute. Different people will have different interpretations of what certain words mean, particularly when it comes to language surrounding one's identity. Instead of making assumptions, listen to how people refer to themselves and, when appropriate, ask because this will always override any "formal" definition you will find.

Abolition & Transformative Justice

[Image Description: Pastel red background with line art of a bouquet of flowers in the bottom left and top right. Text reads "Abolition and Transformative Justice" in bold, black text.]

abolition: a political vision that seeks to create a society that addresses harm and conflict beyond punishment and incarceration; not simply the absence of prisons and policing, but the presence of new infrastructure, social networks and institutions that are not structured through violence, domination, capitalism, and disposability (adapted from the work of Mariame Kaba)

capacity building: strategies implemented to build knowledge and skills, often in the context of welcoming new people to a project, campaign, or movement; efforts to sustain and strengthen engagement through care work, opportunities to upskill, and community-based learning (Michelle Xie)

carceral state: institutions, structures, ideologies, and practices that engage in punitive "solutions", especially as a means of responding to crime, poverty, migration, and those living with health issues and addiction; a complex web of social institutions that includes the prison industrial complex, medical industrial complex, surveillance culture, and border patrol — all of which perpetuate harm through criminalization and institutionalization (Ruby Tapia & Michelle Xie)

care work: practices rooted in radical feminist, abolitionist, and disabled communities that build access, solidarity, and safety; the many ways we tend to each other's needs, often with little to no compensation or acknowledgement that this work is essential and valuable; an occupational category that includes those who work in childcare, healthcare, elder care, etc. (Michelle Xie)

community accountability: strategies that focus directly on addressing violence and transforming the conditions that create oppression and harm; implementing anti-oppression education, fostering relationships built on mutual aid, and nurturing a culture of collective responsibility to provide safety and support for both survivors of harm and those who cause harm (adapted from the work of Rania El Mugammar)

community care: all the ways we ensure each other's survival needs are met and prioritize wellness while living within systems of oppression; building community infrastructure through acts of mutual aid that do not rely on governments or oppressive systems; an inseparable practice from radical self-care which understands community wellbeing as part of our own and vice-versa (Michelle Xie)

cycle of violence: a cyclical pattern — typically used in relation to abuse — where tension builds in a relationship, followed by a peak in violence, and then a period of remorse, pursuit, and denial; the repetitive nature of a person who causes ongoing harm that hinders others' ability to escape abuse (White Ribbon Campaign & Michelle Xie)

mass incarceration: the imprisonment of a large portion of a country's population, especially in comparison to historical rates of imprisonment; a rapid influx of incarceration in nations like the U.S. that disproportionately impacts poor, racialized, and disabled communities (adapted from the Brennan Centre for Justice)

mutual aid: acts of care, reciprocity, and solidarity people engage in to meet each other's needs without support from the state or charities, particularly during times of crisis or changes in political conditions; building new social relations to create more survivable conditions (adapted from the work of Dean Spade)

pod map: a document — used in and outside of transformative justice circles — to map out relations between people who would turn to each other for support when violence, harm, or abuse occurs; a way of visualizing people in one's life who help keep them safe and accountable, while supporting collective healing, resilience, and changes in behaviour (adapted from the work of Mia Mingus)

prison industrial complex (PIC): all the ways the government and the private sector benefit by using surveillance, policing, and imprisonment as "solutions" to economic, social and political problems; the intertwining of structures that enable profit to be generated from incarceration and, by proxy, continued oppression (adapted from Critical Resistance & the work of Angela Davis)

punitive response: addressing harm, conflict, or abuse through punishment; how the carceral state arbitrarily pursues retribution and punishment instead of true accountability or restorative outcomes for people who have been harmed (adapted from the work of Jennifer Loubriel & Rania El Mugammar)

state violence: the use of governmental authority to cause deliberate harm and suffering to groups and individuals with the goal of implicitly or explicitly maintaining power; genocide, torture, war crimes, police brutality, and other forms of systemic oppression (The Learning Network & Michelle Xie)

transformative justice (TJ): framework for addressing harm that centres accountability, mutual aid, and social relations that do not rely on carceral approaches; movement that aims to transform the conditions that allow harm to happen in the first place (adapted from Generation Five)

Climate Justice & Sustainability

[Image Description: Pastel orange background with line art of a sun in the bottom left and top right corners. Text reads "Climate Justice and Sustainability" in bold, black text.]

Big Oil: the fossil fuel industry's largest oil and gas corporations worldwide; Exxon Mobil, Shell, BP, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, and Total Energies (adapted from The New York Times)

carbon footprint: the amount of carbon being emitted by an organization or person through their daily activities; created by the fossil fuel industry to shift responsibility onto individuals for causing and mitigating the climate crisis rather than corporations (Footprint Network & Michelle Xie)

circular economy: type of economy that emphasizes preservation and enhancement of materials, longer circulation cycles, and reduced waste; economic framework that involves minimal raw material extraction, the reintroduction of materials already in the economy, and as little waste as possible (adapted from the Circular Economy Practitioner Guide & Ellen MacArthur Foundation)

climate action: actions taken by individuals, corporations, and governments to combat climate change through efforts to decarbonize, build climate resilience, decolonize, reduce inequities, and shift towards a just transition for all (Michelle Xie & UN Sustainable Development Goals)

climate justice: framework that recognizes the roots of climate change in systems of oppression and strives to dismantle these systems to build more equitable and livable futures; movement grounded in anti-oppressive values and the acknowledgement that climate change will impact not only the environment, but human communities worldwide (adapted from the UBC Social Justice Centre)

climate migrant: those who are forced to leave their homes, livelihoods, and cultures — either temporarily or permanently — due to climate chaos like extreme weather events; people who are forcibly displaced due to changes in the environment that make areas uninhabitable; a term that holds no universal legal definition which has led to inadequate protections for climate-induced migrants who are seeking asylum (Intersectional Environmentalist & Michelle Xie)

climate resilience: the bolstering of our collective ability to adapt to, mitigate, and build capacity around responding to the climate crisis — specifically in ways that prioritize community wellbeing and lived experience as expertise; the labelling of communities as "resilient", which upholds colonial agendas by praising marginalized communities for withstanding injustice in place of transforming systems that perpetually disadvantage these same communities, leaving them vulnerable to climate chaos (Michelle Xie & Atlanta Grant)

divestment: intentionally removing investments from a particular company, industry, or sector; commonly used in reference to divesting from the fossil fuel industry and extractivism in favour of moving towards a regenerative economy (adapted from the Divest Canada Coalition)

eco-ableism: see section on disability justice

eco-anxiety: response to the harm that has been, and will be, caused by climate change; heightened or prolonged distress, worry, or guilt to environmental harm and ecological degradation stemming from human action; often portrayed in media as something privileged folks living in the Global North experience in regards to future ecological collapse, decentring communities who live in areas most impacted by climate change (adapted from the work of Meghan Wise & Mitzi Jonelle Tan)

eco-feminism: term coined by Francoise d'Eaubonne to explain how women's liberation cannot be achieved without a simultaneous fight for the preservation and liberation of all life on this planet; framework that understands how women and the environment are both harmed by patriarchal, capitalist systems (Dr. Vandana Shiva & Michelle Xie)

emissions: the release of gasses such as carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and fluorinated gas that get trapped in the atmosphere and cause a rise in global temperatures (adapted from the United States Environmental Protection Agency)

environmentalism: social movement attempting to curb resource depletion, ecological collapse, and the destruction of the environment; predecessor of the climate justice movement with origins that are more closely tied to white supremacy and settler colonialism via the values of conserving wilderness at the expense of Indigenous peoples, notions of unconquered land, and the eco-fascist approaches like attempts to control overpopulation (Jedediah Purdy & Michelle Xie)

environmental racism: term coined by Benjamin Chavis to describe policies and practices that target racialized communities as places for toxic waste facilities and the life-threatening presence of poisons and pollutants; historical exclusion of racialized people from leadership within the environmental movement (adapted from the work of Benjamin Chavis)

extractivism: the exploitation of natural resources on a mass scale, creating significant economic profits for a few powerful people and corporations in the short term, but too often resulting in minimal benefits for the communities resources are found in; driver of displacement, health inequities, human rights violations, ecological degradation, and colonial violence (adapted from the Columban Center)

fast fashion: clothing created with low-quality materials by underpaid / unpaid garment workers in largely unsafe working conditions that are often sold at cheap prices; the vicious cycle of overproduction, waste, overconsumption in the fashion industry; an approach to designing, creating, and mass producing fashion items based on microtrends (Remake Our World & Michelle Xie)

food justice: the right for everyone to grow, sell, and have access to foods that are fresh, culturally appropriate, nutritious, and affordable; movement that aims to transform food systems by prioritizing the wellbeing of workers, animals, and the environment (Black Creek Community Farm & Michelle Xie)

fossil fuels: sources of energy like coal, oil, and natural gas formed by fossils decaying in conditions of immense pressure over millions of years; burned by humans as a cheap way of staying warm, powering industrial machines, and vehicles of all kinds (adapted from the Climate Reality Project)

frontline community: communities experiencing the first and worst effects of crises like climate change; those most impacted by the climate crisis who have also been leading the resistance against systems of oppression, including but not limited to Indigenous communities, racialized people, low-income folks, and disabled communities (adapted from the Initiative for Energy Justice)

greenhouse gases (GHGs): gas that traps heat in the atmosphere and contributes to rising global temperatures; carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, etc. (adapted from the Footprint Network)

greenwashing: term coined by coined by Jay Westerveld to describe practices of branding or marketing that mislead consumers about social and environmental benefits to generate profit without meaningfully acting on the issues they claim to support; a common strategy adopted by the fast fashion and fossil fuel industries (adapted from Remake Our World)

Indigenous sovereignty: see section on Indigenous sovereignty

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC): a joint project by the UN's Environment Programme and the World Meteorological Organization, created to assess scientific information relating to climate change to better understand its consequences (IPCC)

just transition: a transition away from an extractive, fossil fuel dependent economy and towards a regenerative economy that provides dignified, productive, and ecologically sustainable livelihoods, democratic governance, and community resilience (adapted from the Climate Justice Alliance)

traditional ecological knowledge: ways of understanding one's environment based on detailed personal observation and experience; knowledge about the land and ecosystems that is passed down through the generations (adapted from Indigenous Corporate Training)

zero-waste: set of principles focused on waste prevention that encourages the reusing of items with the goal of producing no trash that would be sent to landfills, incinerators, or the ocean; a social movement that has largely become associated with wealthy White vegan environmentalists who undermine the contributions of racialized communities by turning their sustainability efforts into a marketable aesthetic and fail to adequately address the access needs of disabled people (Michelle Xie & Colors of Climate)

Disability Justice

[Image Description: Pastel yellow background with line art of sunflowers in the bottom left and top right corners. Text reads "Disability Justice" in bold, black text.]

ableism: system that places value on people's bodies and minds based on societally constructed ideas of normalcy, intelligence, excellence and productivity; form of oppression that determines who is worthy & valuable based on appearance / ability to fulfill what society expects of them (Talila A. Lewis)

accessibility: the practice of making a space, event, or item tailored to meet the access needs of all those in attendance; the process of deconstructing ableism by creating ways to engage and move through space that allow disabled and non-disabled folks to feel held, valued, and respected (National Disability Rights Network & Michelle Xie)

access needs: what a person needs in order for an environment to become accessible, which would allow for their full participation in whatever that looks like to them (adapted from the work of Lydia X. Z. Brown)

accommodation: a way of making spaces, experiences, and interactions more accessible; institutional accommodations such as those in schools and workplaces often require forced disclosure of medical information to *prove* one's disability and rigid eligibility criteria of what / who counts as worthy of accommodations; an individualized approach to challenging ableism (Michelle Xie)

alternative text (alt-text): written descriptions added to images that convey the meaning of the visual; assistive technology like screen readers help read alt-text out loud, so that users can hear and understand the visual content on their page (adapted from Web Accessibility in Mind)

American Sign Language (ASL): a complex language comprised of many hand gestures, facial indicators (eyebrow motion, lip-mouth movements, etc.) and body orientations; one of many regional sign languages that should not be considered broken or mimed, nor should it be understood as a gestural form of English (adapted from the Deaf Resource Library)

assistive technology and devices: any piece of equipment or device used to maintain, promote, or increase function for a disabled and/or chronically ill person; wheelchairs, crutches, hearing aids, prosthetic limbs, screen readers, etc. (adapted from the TCG Equity Diversity and Inclusion Institute)

bodymind: used to emphasize the interdependence and inseparability of the body and mind where mental and physical experiences inform one another (adapted from the work of Margaret Price)

carceral ableism: the institutionalization of disabled / Mad / chronically ill / neurodivergent people; acknowledgement of the links between racial capitalism's influence on confinement and how disability justice is central to abolition work (adapted from Rustbelt Abolitionist Radio)

care work: see section on abolition and transformative justice

chronic illness: conditions that last 1+ years and require ongoing medical attention or limit activities of everyday life; arthritis, diabetes, asthma, epilepsy, lupus, fibromyalgia, polycystic ovarian syndrome, multiple sclerosis, sleep disorders, etc. (adapted from the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention)

collective liberation: approach to organizing that recognizes how all fights for justice are deeply connected; the understanding that because all systems of oppression rely on each other to function and maintain the status quo, we must form a united front to collectively dismantle these systems and create a more just world for all (Michelle Xie & People & Planet)

crip: a slur, short for *cripple*, that has historically been used to stigmatize, oppress, and enact violence upon physically disabled people; a term that has been reclaimed by certain disabled folks in an act of resistance against ableism (Critical Disability Studies Collective & Michelle Xie)

disability justice: framework that moves beyond the legislation-centric approach of the disability rights movement; a social movement guided by ten principles: intersectionality, leadership of those most impacted, anti-capitalist politic, commitment to cross-movement organizing, recognizing wholeness, sustainability, commitment to cross-disability solidarity, interdependence, collective access, and collective liberation (adapted from Sins Invalid)

eco-ableism: all the ways ableism is reproduced within the climate movement; pushing for present individual solutions like single-use plastic bans and veganism, which detract attention away from systemic changes and fails to account for the many reasons why disabled people may not be able to engage in these practices — explanations for which range from injury risk and financial barriers, to allergies and sanitization (Michelle Xie & Jo Moss)

healing justice: framework that identifies how we can respond to and intervene in generational trauma / violence and engage in collective practices that impact and transform the consequences of oppression on our bodies, hearts, and minds (Abolition & Disability Justice Collective)

identity-first language: way of asserting the importance and necessity of recognizing the humanity of disabled people by proving how it neither reduces a person to just their disability, nor insinuates that there is something bad or negative about being disabled; saying "disabled person" instead of "person with disabilities" — it is important to honour how an individual identifies, whether they use identity-first language or person-first language (adapted from the work of Lydia X. Z. Brown)

inspiration porn: when disabled people are viewed as inspirational solely because of their disability; form of ableism guised as a compliment or celebration of a disabled person doing something *normal* because their bodyminds are thought to be less capable (adapted from the work of Stella Young)

intergenerational trauma: the legacy of traumatic events (abuse, poverty, loss, etc.) and community experiences (forced migration, war, the residential school system, slavery, etc.); the passing down of historical oppression and its negative physical, psychological, and socioeconomic consequences across generations (Journal of Interpersonal Violence & Michelle Xie)

invisible disability: disabilities and chronic illnesses that are not immediately visible when you see or meet a person; brain injuries, learning disabilities, mental health struggles, chronic pain, etc. (adapted from the Invisible Disability Project)

medical industrial complex: network of corporations and institutions which supply healthcare services and products for profit and at the expense of promoting care and wellness; complex, overlapping web of eugenics, charity and ableism, population control, and desirability (adapted from the Abolition & Disability Justice Collective and the work of Mia Mingus, Patty Berne, and Cara Page)

medical model of disabilities: framework that views disabilities as diagnosable conditions that require medical intervention as a way of solving or eradicating the particular disability or condition (adapted from the work of Amanda Leduc)
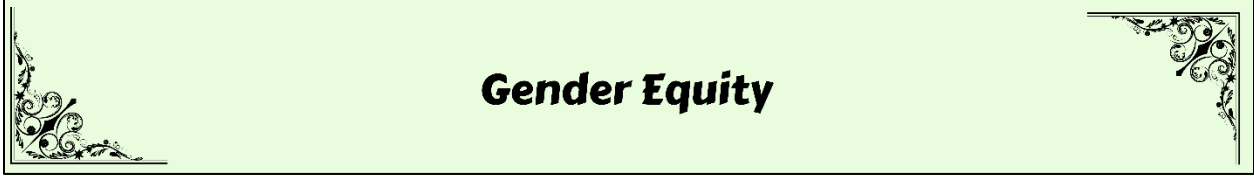
neurodivergent: people with brains and minds that function in ways that society does not consider *normal* or *typical*; an umbrella term that includes, but is not limited to, autistic people and those with ADHD, dyslexia, OCD, etc. (adapted from Autistic UK)

person-first language: puts the person before the disability or condition they have and emphasizes their value and worth by recognizing them as a person; saying "people with disabilities" instead of "disabled people" — it is important to honour how an individual identifies, whether they use identity-first language or person-first language (adapted from the work of Lydia X. Z. Brown)

social model of disability: framework that views the concept of disability as a product of systemic barriers, exclusion, and negative attitudes toward disabilities rather than the limitations of the conditions themselves (adapted from the work of Amanda Leduc)

trauma-informed: engaging in practices that promote a culture of safety, empowerment, and healing; to be politically engaged and consciously aware of power dynamics and personal biases that can affect someone living with trauma (Ravideep Kaur & Michelle Xie)

universal design: design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or accommodations; sidewalk curb cuts, tactile differentiators, automatic doors, translation, etc. (adapted from the Centre for Universal Design)

Gender Equity

[Image Description: Pastel green background with swirls and leaves in the bottom left and top right corners. Text reads "Gender Equity" in bold, black text.]

cisheteropatriarchy: wider definition of the patriarchy used to explain the privileges and power of men over girls, women, trans, and gender non-conforming people; framework that recognizes how the oppression of those who do not identify as cisgender or heterosexual / straight is enforced through the existence of a gender binary (adapted from The Anti-Oppression Network)

eco-feminism: see section on climate justice and sustainability

emotional labour: the expectation that female-identifying, and other marginalized people, suppress or induce certain feelings, adhere to the rules of an organization / group / person, avoid confrontation, and maintain a professional image — often at the expense of their own wellbeing (Arlie Hochschild & Michelle Xie)

gender: see section on LGBTQIA2S+ terms

gender-based violence: physical, sexual, and/or psychological harm that is incited against someone because of their gender; threats, coercion, deprivation, abuse, harassment, etc. (adapted from the Western University Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women and Children)

gender binary: a system that views gender according to two discrete and opposite categories of boy/man and girl/woman; rigid way of thinking that is deeply rooted in Western colonial worldviews, as many cultures have a history of embracing the fluidity of gender and recognizing identities beyond the gender binary (Gender Spectrum & Michelle Xie)

gender equity: working towards justice and liberation for all genders, especially those that have been traditionally marginalized and challenge the gender binary (Michelle Xie & Human Rights Campaign)

gender roles: social and behavioural norms within a specific culture that are widely considered to be appropriate for individuals of a specific gender; determines what a person's perceived appearance, responsibilities, and manner of living "should" be (adapted from the work of Angelica Neculaesei)

harassment: persistent, ongoing behaviour conveying negative attitudes towards an individual or group to make them feel intimidated and/or humiliated; an exercise of power that includes any action that a person knows, or should know, are not welcome such as name-calling, slurs, insults, threats, crude gestures, abuse, etc. (adapted from the Learning Network)

intersectionality: framework that challenges single issue lenses by highlighting how systems of oppression like racism, sexism, ableism, and classism are deeply interconnected; term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw to explain how various aspects of power and injustice overlap and connect to create different lived experiences (Kimberlé Crenshaw)

intersectional feminism: tackling gender inequity by using an intersectional lens that does not see social justice issues in isolation, but rather understands how systems of oppression like the patriarchy are inherently linked to all other oppressive systems (adapted from the Learning Network)

misogynoir: term coined by Moya Bailey to describe the fear and/or hatred of Black women that lies at the intersection of racism and sexism; misogynoir is not always blatant or intentional and can manifest in how one responds to the presence, stories, and thoughts of Black women like the anti-Blackness of first and second wave feminists (adapted from the work of Leila Moumouni-Tchouassi)

misogyny: the enforcement of strict gender roles and expectations on girls and women that directs results in violence, active hostility and/or opposition towards those who do not identify, present, or express themselves as masculine and/or men (adapted from The Anti-Oppression Network)

patriarchy: historically used in reference to how fathers passed on their status, land, property, and rights to their sons; used more commonly today to define a society that is organized around sustaining male power, often by upholding racist, classist, queerphobic, transphobic, and ableist ideas (adapted from the Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy)

period poverty: the lack of access to sanitary products and menstrual hygiene education which can create stigma, as well as financial and cultural barriers for people who menstruate (adapted from Shado Magazine)

pronouns: see section on LGBTQIA2S+ terms

rape culture: myths, stereotypes, and oppressive beliefs about rape and other forms of sexual violence that justify, tolerate, normalize, and minimize sexual violence; societal attitudes rooted in a so-called criminal justice system that is not accountable to survivors or their communities (Michelle Xie & The Learning Network)

reproductive justice: the right to maintain personal bodily autonomy, have or not have children, and raise said children in safe and sustainable communities; an expansion upon reproductive rights, which focus on legal abortions and access to birth control (adapted from SisterSong)

toxic masculinity: expected attitudes and behaviours of men which cause harm to men and those they interact with; socialized reflections of the patriarchy, as well as cultural and traditional gender stereotypes that men "should" be aggressive, strong, and unemotional (adapted from the work of Will Courtenay & Alex Blank Millard)

Indigenous Sovereignty

[Image Description: Light pastel blue background with line art of tropical Swiss cheese plant leaves in the bottom left and top right corners. Text reads "Indigenous Sovereignty" in bold, black letters.]

colonization: the violent acquisition of land and/or labour through domination, conquest, and subjugation of people which imposes new systems that uproot existing communities' ways of living and knowing (adapted from Future Ancestors Services)

cultural genocide: attempted destruction of a group's culture; may involve acts like language bans, prohibition of cultural expression, education reform to promote assimilation, or physical attacks on cultural institutions like monuments, religious sites, and land (adapted from the Yellowhead Institute)

decolonization: active resistance against colonial powers towards self-determination for colonized peoples; reparations and the returning of land, livelihoods, and cultures; deconstructing Western ideologies and assumptions that paint systems of oppression as "how things have always been" (adapted from Future Ancestors Services, Eve Tuck & K. Wayne Yang)

Elders: those who have earned the respect of their community through wisdom, harmony and balance of their actions in their teachings; individuals who instill respect in their community members for the natural world (adapted from Indigenous Corporate Training)

First Nations: Indigenous peoples of so-called Canada who are neither Métis nor Inuit; term that includes both those with and without Indian status (Indigenous Foundations)

Idle No More: Indigenous-led movement that calls on all people to join in a peaceful revolution which honours and fulfills Indigenous sovereignty and protects the land, water, and sky; resistance of Indigenous peoples in response to ongoing settler colonialism (adapted from Idle No More)

Indigenous: used to encompass a breadth of global Aboriginal and Native identities; peoples with a long history of stewardship and connection to the land, who have been disproportionately impacted by industrial economies, displacement, and colonial efforts (adapted from Indigenous Foundations)

Indigenous sovereignty: the spiritual ways, culture, language, social and legal systems, political structures, and inherent relationships with lands and waters that exists regardless of what a colonial state does or does not do; recognition of the right to Indigenous self-determination and self-governance (adapted from the Indigenous Environmental Network)

injunction: court order directing someone or some group to stop an action like a blockade; tool of resistance used by Indigenous peoples against colonial governments to temporarily halt or delay projects (adapted from the Yellowhead Institute)

intergenerational trauma: see section on disability justice

Inuit: Indigenous people who live in the Arctic regions of so-called Canada, Greenland, Alaska, and Russia (adapted from Indigenous Foundations)

land acknowledgement: formal statement that recognizes the enduring and culturally significant relationship that exists between Indigenous peoples and their homelands; these acknowledgements do not exist in a historical context, as settler colonialism is an ongoing process; acknowledging the lands you are situated on is an Indigenous protocol (adapted from Native Land)

land back: movement that strives to build decision-making power and autonomy for Indigenous peoples, including the returning of their territories and more equitable access to resources; not just the physical returning of land, but the confronting of colonialism at its root, the preservation of Indigenous languages and traditions, pursuit of food sovereignty, and assurance of clean air and water (adapted from the work of Jesse Wente & Kanahus Manuel)

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit (MMIWG2S): the epidemic of extreme violence against Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit peoples, including but not limited to a disproportionate number of assaults, abductions and murders that have occurred over decades with little to no meaningful action (adapted from the work of Dr. Glenna Stumblingbear-Riddle)

Métis: refers to a collective of cultures and ethnic identities that resulted from unions between Indigenous and European people in so-called Canada (adapted from indigenous Foundations)

residential school system: an extensive system set up by the Canadian government and administered by churches with the objective of indoctrinating Indigenous children into Euro-Canadian and Christian ways of living; sites that were rife with abuse, malnutrition, abhorrent violence — legacies of which can be found in the intergenerational trauma and colonial violence many Indigenous communities continue to face (adapted from Indigenous Foundations)

reserve: an area of land held by the Crown that is set aside by colonial governments for the use and "benefit" of First Nations under treaties or other agreements; many reserves are located in isolated areas that lack adequate housing, running water, and electricity (The Indian Act & Kory Wilson)

self-determination: the right and ability for Indigenous communities and nations to freely pursue their political, social, economic, and cultural paths into the future; ability to decide who their people are rather than basing this process on colonial legislature (adapted from Yellowhead Institute)

settler colonialism: when colonial powers forcibly create permanent or long-term settlements on the lands of Indigenous people and other local communities; the ongoing assertion of new systems and worldviews, dismantling of Indigenous cultural forms, and elimination of Indigenous peoples (adapted from the work of Dina Gilio-Whitaker, Eve Tuck & K. Wayne Yang)

Sixties Scoop: the mass non-consensual removal of Indigenous children from their families and into the child welfare system during the 1950s-80s; term coined by Patrick Johnston to describe the stealing of Indigenous children from their communities and culture to be placed in non-Indigenous, middle-class households that reached its peak during the 60s; legacies of the Sixties Scoop continue to exist in the drastic overrepresentation of Indigenous children in the child welfare system (adapted from Indigenous Foundations)

solidarity: see section on movement theory

traditional ecological knowledge: see section on climate justice and sustainability

treaty: documented agreements between a colonial government and Indigenous peoples that are often viewed as a legal transferring of land; many Indigenous people saw the signing of treaties as a means of building relationships with settlers while maintaining sovereignty over their lands, whereas the Crown saw treaties as a way of legally acquiring Indigenous land to assert power and control (adapted from The On Canada Project & the work of Shanese Indoowaaboo)

Turtle Island: the name given to North America by some Indigenous peoples that originates from various Indigenous creation stories (Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy Network)

Two-Spirit: umbrella term used by some Indigenous communities to describe a range of sexual orientations, spiritual identities, and gender expressions; sacred shapeshifters who traditionally take on a role of service to the meet the needs of their community (adapted from Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy Network & the work of Gabe Caledron)

unceded: Indigenous homelands that were never surrendered to the Crown; land where no formal treaties were signed or treaties were signed but the lands were not willingly surrendered (adapted from the Indigenous Perspectives Education Guide)

LGBTQIA2S+

[Image Description: Pastel blue background with fancy swirls in the bottom left and top right corners. Text reads "LGBTQIA2S+" in bold, black letters.]

assigned sex: the sex doctors assigned you at birth based on biological characteristics such as chromosomes, hormones, external genitalia and reproductive organs; includes being assigned female at birth (AFAB), assigned male at birth (AMAB), or being intersex (adapted from Egale Canada)

cisgender: a person who identifies with the same gender they were assigned at birth (QMUNITY)

cisnormativity: societal bias that assumes all people are cisgender and will express their gender in a way that aligns with perceived gender norms, which leads to the oppression of trans, non-binary, and gender diverse people (Michelle Xie & Egale Canada)

gender: a system that operates in a social context to classify people that consists of a person's gender identity and their gender expression (The Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity)

gender fluid: a flexible range of gender expression with interests and behaviors that may change over time; people who do not feel confined by the restrictive boundaries of the gender binary (adapted from QMUNITY)

gender identity: a person's internal concept of self as male, female, a blend of both, or neither; how a person perceives and refers to their own gender (adapted from the Human Rights Campaign)

gender expression: how a person outwardly expresses their gender identity, whether through behaviour, clothing, hairstyles, voice, or body modifications, which do not always align with their gender identity (adapted from The Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity)

genderqueer: umbrella term used to describe people who do not identify with the conventions of the gender binary (adapted from QMUNITY)

heteronormativity: a cultural, and often unconscious, societal bias that privileges heterosexuality and ignores or underrepresents diversity in attraction and behaviour by assuming all people are heterosexual / straight (adapted from Egale Canada)

homophobia: hatred of those who are, or perceived to be, queer that manifests as prejudice, discrimination, violence, and oppression (adapted from Egale Canada)

intersex: a term used to describe people who are born with anatomy or chromosomal patterns that do not fit typical definitions of male or female; many intersex people are subjected to non-consensual and medically unnecessary surgical intervention at birth for aesthetic purposes (adapted from The Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity)

LGBTQIA2S+: acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer / questioning, intersex, asexual, and Two-Spirit; the plus sign (+) represents the infinite variety of gender identities and sexualities that fall outside of, or are not represented by, this acronym (adapted from UBC Equity & Inclusion)

pronouns: a word used to refer to someone without using their name(s) such as she/her/hers, he/him/his, they/them/theirs, or a mixture of any of these (adapted from QMUNITY)

sex: the physical and physiological characteristics used to assign humans as male, female, or intersex; determined by characteristics such as one's anatomy and genetic makeup (adapted from PFLAG)

trans-exclusionary radical feminist (TERF): individuals who sometimes refer to themselves as "gender critical" and often attempt to transphobically argue that trans women are men who threaten the safety, freedom, and empowerment of cisgender women and girls (adapted from PFLAG)

transphobia: hatred of any perceived transgression of traditional gender norms; the prejudice, discrimination, and violence perpetuated against anyone who identifies as, or is assumed to be, transgender (adapted from Egale Canada)

trans and gender non-conforming (TGNC): umbrella term used to refer to anyone who does not identify as cisgender (adapted from PFLAG)

Two-Spirit: see section on Indigenous Sovereignty

QTBIPOC: acronym for queer and trans folks who are also Black, Indigenous, or People of Colour; QTBIPOC often experience intersecting forms of oppression on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation and other factors (QMUNITY)

queer: an umbrella term for an identity and political movement that seeks to encompass a broad range of sexual identities, behaviours, and expressions; a term that has historically been used as a homophobic and transphobic slur, but is now in the process of being reclaimed by some, but not all (Michelle Xie & The Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity)
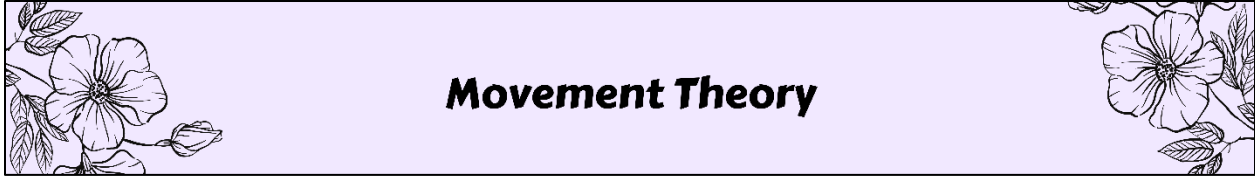
Movement Theory

[Image Description: Pastel lavender background with line art of pansies in the bottom left and top right corners. Text reads "Movement Theory" in bold, black letters.]

3.5% rule: drawn from the research of political scientist Erica Chenoweth who found that since 1900, no movement aside from Brunei (1962) and Bahrain (2011-2014) has failed when 3.5% of the population actively participated during the peak of civil resistance (Erica Chenoweth)

capacity building: see section on abolition and transformative justice

coalition: building community infrastructure and justice-centred networks based on shared goals, responsibilities, and/or cross-movement solidarity; the coming together of various individuals or groups who form an alliance to collectively fight for shared demands (Michelle Xie)

collective liberation: see section on disability justice

equity: just distribution of power, opportunities, and resources; the understanding that people have different privileges, resources, and circumstances and thus require different amounts of support to have fair opportunities; deconstructing the systems, practices, policies, and programming limit the full participation of, and oppress, marginalized people (Michelle Xie and UBC Equity & Inclusion)

grassroots organizing: localized community organizing done by the people for the people instead of relying on the state or non-profits to deliver solutions; taking a bottom-up approach to justice-centred work (Michelle Xie & Asian American Activism: The Continuing Struggle)

lived experience: knowledge about the world that is gained through direct, first-hand experiences; the sharing of personal stories to carry on oral traditions and voice perspectives that have historically been ignored, silenced, or erased, especially by academia (Michelle Xie)

marginalization: process that keeps groups or individuals from having access to power within social, economic, cultural and political institutions; the exclusion, relegation, stigmatization, and oppression of certain communities by dominant / oppressor groups (Robert Schaefer & Michelle Xie)

movement building: the act of building capacity and mobilizing people on an individual and institutional level to tackle various social issues; process of changemakers engaging power holders and decision-makers in addressing injustice (Michelle Xie & Movement Strategy Centre)

non-violent direct action: form of protesting / civil resistance work characterized by actions that place pressure on those in positions of power to respond to fulfill a set of demands; die-ins, strikes, sit-ins, blockades, vigils, boycotts, teach-ins, lobbying, etc. (adapted from the work of George Lakey & the Global Nonviolent Action Database)

onboarding: the intake process of bringing in new people to strengthen organizing teams, movements, coalitions, and other such groups working towards transformative social change; creating opportunities to learn and upskill in order to ensure sustained involvement, interest, and action (Michelle Xie)

positionality: coined by Linda Alcoff to emphasize how lived experiences and social identities — such as race, class, and gender — shape our worldviews; the process of unpacking one's position, or social location, within systems of oppression (Alison Hope, Julian Agyeman, and Michelle Xie)

privilege: access to power enjoyed by a dominant group, giving them economic, political, social and cultural advantages at the expense of members of a marginalized group; examples of privilege include, being White, non-disabled, wealthy, straight, etc. (adapted from The Anti-Oppression Network)

social movement: organized community efforts that aim to reach a certain set of goals; networks of people who share some basis of collective identity / shared values and engage in political or cultural conflicts — examples include the climate justice movement, #MeToo, Black Lives Matter, and Idle No More (adapted from the Dictionary of Human Geography & the work of Mario Daini)

solidarity: deep relational ties between individuals and groups who share struggles and long-term commitments to mutually supporting one another; unity between and across individuals, communities, or movements who are experiencing oppression and/or have made a conscious commitment to challenging a situation of injustice, violence, or tyranny (Michelle Xie & Sally Scholz)

spectrum of allies: concept that examines the potential opposition and support of people and groups, ranging from those who are most dedicated opponents to the most active supporters; helpful tool for deciding what tactics to employ based on a team's relation to specific allies (adapted from 350.org)

systems of oppression: systems that dehumanize and devalue groups of people in ways that result in violence, dispossession, disempowerment, and displacement; systems that grant power and privilege to some at the expense of others and creates barriers in allowing us to care for one another (adapted from the UBC Social Justice Centre)

theory of change: statement that follows a "if we do [insert tactics], then [strategic goal] because [insert reason]" format and captures what a group or movement intends to do, as well as how they plan to create change; the guiding vision or overarching purpose of a group or campaign (Leading Change Network & Michelle Xie)

Racial Justice

[Image Description: Pastel pink background with an assortment of geometric shapes in the bottom left and top right corners. Text reads "Racial Justice" in bold, black letters.]

anti-racism: the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social spheres; tends to be an individualized approach to combatting racism rather than a systemic solution to racial injustice (adapted from Racial Equity Tools)

anti-Semitism: a hatred, fear of, and discrimination against Jewish people; anti-Semitic hate crimes include violence propelled upon Jewish people, their property, community institutions, and/or religious facilities (adapted from the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance)

African-American Vernacular English (AAVE): a form of English that is spoken most consistently amongst working-class African-Americans and often associated with harmful stereotypes of Black people as improper, uneducated, or backwards; a set of distinct pronunciations, grammatical rules, and slang that differ from "Standard English" (adapted from Lisa Green)

Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI): acronym used to account for all those who were born in, or hold ancestry from, Asia and/or the Pacific Islands of Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia (adapted from AAPI Women Lead)

Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC): acronym that builds upon the term POC — meaning people of colour— by acknowledging how the legacies of colonialism have differently impacted Black and Indigenous communities (adapted from Sandra Garcia)

colourism: a form of oppression rooted in anti-Blackness that values and privileges light skinned people over those with darker skin (adapted from Asian American Activism: The Continuing Struggle)

cultural appropriation: the act of stealing, copying, and often profiting off of the use of certain cultural elements by someone who is not from said culture; the harm caused when pieces of one's culture are sexualized, stereotyped, exoticized, and detached from their original contexts / significance (Michelle Xie & Colours of Resistance)

diaspora: the voluntary or forcible movement of peoples from their homelands into new regions; people who live away from their ancestors' homelands (adapted from the work of Leong Yew)

diversity: increased representation for marginalized groups in all facets of society; diversity without equity and inclusion can lead to tokenism (adapted from Baltimore Racial Justice Action)

environmental racism: see section on climate justice and sustainability

equity: see section on movement theory

ethnicity: identity rooted in cultural differences such as language, religion, shared history amongst a group of people; Arab, Scandinavian, Romani, Inuit, etc. (adapted from Racial Equity Tools)

implicit bias: also known as unconscious or hidden bias; negative associations that people unknowingly hold, which may lead to behaviours that diverge from the explicit attitudes many people profess (adapted from the work of Cheryl Staats)

inclusion: changes in culture that enable individuals who are marginalized to share power, thrive, and feel valued, heard, and respected for the identities they hold (Michelle Xie & OpenSource Leadership)

institutional racism: the underlying racial injustices embedded deeply within institutions and corporations that were / are strategically built to keep racialized people out of leadership positions in society (adapted from Racial Equity Tools)

internalized racism: when a racialized group upholds white supremacy culture by maintaining or participating in the set of attitudes, behaviors, social structures, and ideologies that uphold the power of their oppressors (adapted from the work of Donna Bivins)

intersectionality: see section on gender equity

invisible knapsack: metaphor used to describe white privilege as an invisible, weightless knapsack of special assurances, opportunities, and resources racialized folks are not equipped with; some examples include seeing your race widely represented in media, doing well and not having that success be attributed to your race, never being asked to speak on behalf of your entire race, etc. (adapted from the work of Peggy McIntosh)

Islamophobia: a fear or hatred of Muslim people that results in discrimination, exclusion and violence that can also impact those who are perceived to be Muslim; rooted in false and problematic ideas that Muslims are demonic, terrorists, or people who are trying to take over the country (Rivers of Hope)

migrant justice: movement that calls for an end to displacement, detainment, and deportations; the fight for immigration status for all migrants, refugees, students, workers, and undocumented people (adapted from Radical Action With Migrants in Agriculture & Migrant Rights Network)

model minority myth: an extension of white supremacy used to falsely explain how marginalized people, primarily those of Asian descent, have *overcome* oppression due to their cultural values as law-abiding, docile, hardworking people; belief that Asian people exist as a monolith and are closer to Whiteness than other racialized people, which gives power to white supremacy while pitting racialized communities against each other (Michelle Xie & Asian American Activism: The Continuing Struggle)

privilege: see section on movement theory

race: social construct based on perceived differences in physical traits or biological characteristics; creation of racial identities by white supremacy as a means of *justifying* enslavement, exploitation, and genocide (Race: The Power of an Illusion & Michelle Xie)

racial justice: systematic fair treatment of people of all races, resulting in equitable opportunities for all; going beyond anti-racism and the absence of discrimination and inequities; the presence of deliberate systems and supports to achieve and sustain racial equity through proactive and preventative measures (adapted from Race Forward)

racial microaggression: seemingly subtle, everyday exchanges that harm racialized people; pulling at one's eyes to mimic slanted "Asian eyes", asking where a person is *really* from, commenting on how articulate one is for their race, the use of racial slurs, etc. (adapted from Sharing Our Stories)

structural racism: the normalization of systems where White people have an advantage at the expense of racialized folks; all forms of racism emerge from structural racism (Racial Equity Tools)

tokenism: hiring or placing marginalized peoples in positions of leadership for the sake of having an inclusive image without working to transform the structures that create barriers to access and propel injustice onto marginalized people (Michelle Xie)

white fragility: states of anger, fear, and guilt in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable for White people, especially when confronted about their racist tendencies; defensive responses to being held accountable (Robin DiAngelo & Michelle Xie)

white privilege: the unquestioned and unearned set of advantages, entitlements, benefits and choices bestowed upon people solely because they are What, most of which are largely unseen to the person who possesses it (adapted from World Trust Educational Services)

white saviorism: when a White person volunteers, donates, or supports racialized people in a way that is self-serving; mindset that it is a White person's duty to *civilize, modernize,* or *save* poor, racialized people living predominantly in the Global South (No White Saviours & Michelle Xie)
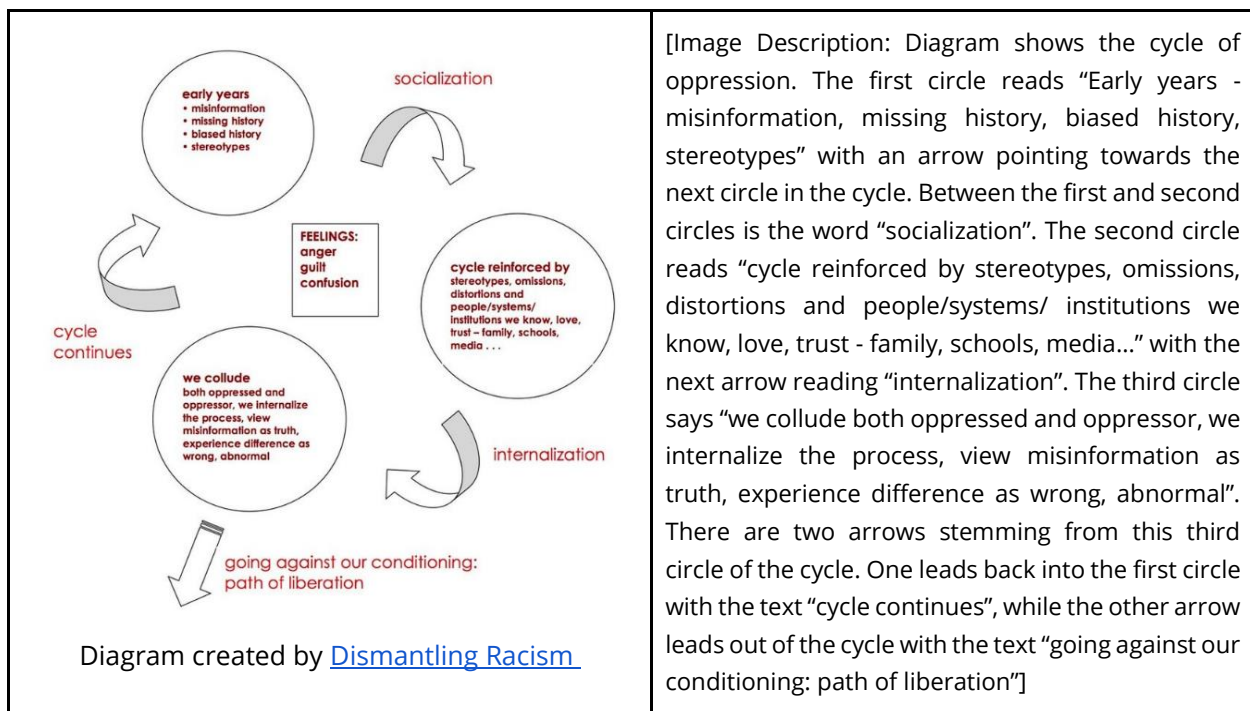
white supremacy: the ideology that White people and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions of are superior to those of racialized folks; often used in reference to extremist groups like the KKK and neo-Nazis, but also a system of oppression that is ongoing and exists covertly in our institutional and cultural values (adapted from Dismantling Racism Works)

xenophobia: fear and hatred of those who are, or are perceived to be, foreign, strange, or dangerous, that is often reflected in anti-immigration rhetoric (adapted from Asian American Activism: The Continuing Struggle)

Anti-Oppression

Before we delve into what it means to create anti-oppressive spaces, let us begin by exploring what systems of oppression are and how they operate. As defined in this toolkit's glossary section, systems of oppression dehumanize and devalue groups of people in ways that result in violence, dispossession, disempowerment, and displacement (UBC Social Justice Centre). Within these systems, the oppressor group have the power to shape what is considered desirable, acceptable, and worthy, which then becomes embedded into a society's institutions. Everyone born into said society is socialized to adopt the rules of the oppressors, often without question because they are seen as *correct* and *normal*. This can lead to the internalization of the oppressor group's values and perspectives. Through this process, the oppressed people are deprived of their histories and attempts at bringing forth the truth are suppressed and denied as a means of maintaining power. Individuals are thus made to feel like their circumstances are a product of personal faults rather than a result of systemic injustices.

Diagram created by Dismantling Racism

[Image Description: Diagram shows the cycle of oppression. The first circle reads "Early years - misinformation, missing history, biased history, stereotypes" with an arrow pointing towards the next circle in the cycle. Between the first and second circles is the word "socialization". The second circle reads "cycle reinforced by stereotypes, omissions, distortions and people/systems/ institutions we know, love, trust - family, schools, media..." with the next arrow reading "internalization". The third circle says "we collude both oppressed and oppressor, we internalize the process, view misinformation as truth, experience difference as wrong, abnormal". There are two arrows stemming from this third circle of the cycle. One leads back into the first circle with the text "cycle continues", while the other arrow leads out of the cycle with the text "going against our conditioning: path of liberation"]

Privilege and power are two components of anti-oppression work that are commonly visualized using a wheel. Though this format is great for understanding the many layers of privilege and oppression that exist, it can fall short in trying to classify a wealth of different identities into simple binaries of this or that. The binary of privileged vs. oppressed is itself problematic because people are capable of inhabiting both spheres at the same time. For example, a White, queer, disabled, cisgender, woman holds marginalized identities as a queer and disabled woman, but also occupies a position of privilege as someone who is White and cisgender.

Another thing wheels of privilege fail to acknowledge are how forms of categorization like race were created by oppressor groups—in this case European colonizers—to *prove* their supposed superiority and *justify* acts of slavery, genocide, and colonial violence. Engaging with the nuances of identity labels can also result in folks focusing on change at the individual or interpersonal levels without giving enough thought to the root causes of injustice and inequity. As an example: redistributing a portion of one's income through mutual aid efforts and other such acts of radical community care is wonderful and important, but what could economic justice look like on a systemic level? How are our current social structures widening/perpetuating the wealth gap? What are some ways we can engage in both individual and structural change?

Graphic adapted from the work of Kimberlé Crenshaw by Slyvia Duckworth

[Image Description: Twelve multicoloured circles overlapping to create a larger circle with a title that reads "Intersectionality" in empty block letters. Each of the smaller circles represents a category of one's identity such as race, ethnicity, gender identity, class, language, religion, ability, sexuality, mental health, age, education, body size, and many more. Beneath this is a quote from Kimberlé Crenshaw that is highlighted in lime green, yellow, light pink, and red. It reads "Intersectionality is a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it locks and intersects. It is the acknowledgement that everyone has their own unique experiences of discrimination and privilege." in black text.]

The term 'intersectionality' was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989. It explains how systems of oppression work together to empower certain groups of people, while marginalizing others. In other words, it describes how the different components of a person's identity *intersect* with one another to shape different lived experiences. As writer and feminist bell hooks once said, "Until we are able to accept the interlocking, interdependent nature of systems of domination and recognize specific ways each system is maintained, we will continue to act in ways that undermine our individual quest for freedom and our collective liberation struggle."

Anti-oppression work understands that all forms of injustice are intimately connected and, thus, solutions to injustice cannot be viewed as singular issues. Having an intersectional approach to organizing is essential, as it not only looks to our shared struggles as proof of our interconnectedness, but also gives us the chance to build and sustain cross-movement solidarity.

Art by Danielle Coke
@ohhappydani on Instagram
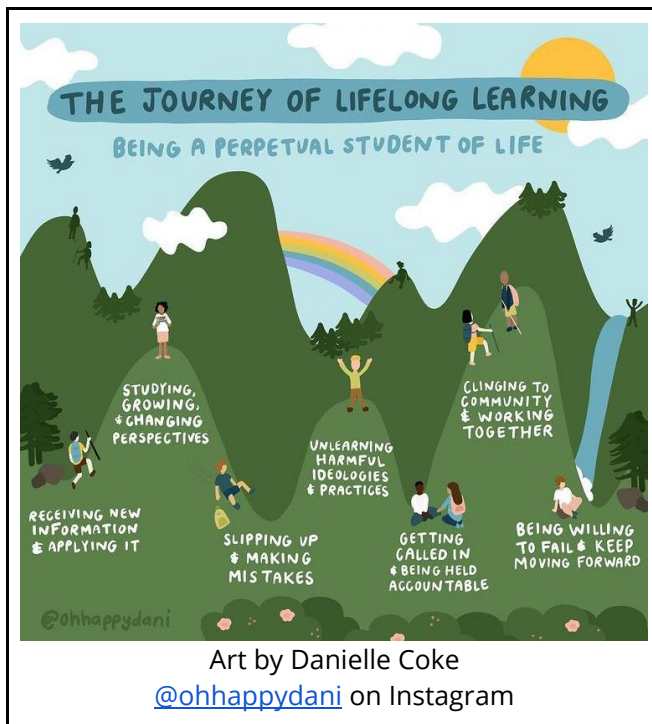
[Image Description: Title reads "The Journey of Lifelong Learning: Being A Perpetual Student of Life" in blue lettering. Background is a bright sunny day with clouds in the sky, a waterfall, birds, and a rainbow peeking out from behind a range of green mountains with climbers and people picnicking. First valley reads "Receiving new information and applying it", followed by a grassy peak that says "Studying, growing, changing perspectives". Another valley reads "Slipping up and making mistakes", followed by a peak with "unlearning harmful ideologies and practices." After this is a valley that reads "Getting called in and being held accountable" with a peak that says "Clinging to community and working together". The final valley reads "Being willing to fail and keep moving forward."]

Let us not forget that anti-oppression work also means creating spaces to learn more about systems of oppression and how harm can be replicated within our movements, coalitions, and organizing groups—something we touch upon later in this toolkit. Challenging our current social structures means first addressing and taking accountability for the ways in which we have internalized oppressive behaviours and thoughts. Self-education should always be encouraged, as well as opportunities for communal learning like trainings, workshops, book clubs, and film screenings.

Voices From Our Community
"It's both/and, not either/or. We have potential to command more power when we realize all the different identities we hold. Being oppressed doesn't mean we are weak. It means we have generations of survival and resistance under our belt to draw from." - Kayla Li
"As far as empathy goes, I believe everyone needs to incorporate empathy in their everyday lives… [especially] in activist spaces. Fight with empathy, argue with empathy, teach with empathy. By understanding and feeling our fellow humans, we are that much closer to reaching a goal that benefits all peoples." - Sigfried Hemming (he/they)
"[Anti-oppression work means] radically shifting organizational policy to center wellness through generous leave/vacation/mental health/bereavement allowances." - Anonymous
"There's so much stuff that happens behind the curtain in order to keep up a good public image and I wish the same amount of effort was put into how we can build caring environments… [because] otherwise it's just a performance." - Trent Hayek (he/him)

Social Change Ecosystem

The Social Change Ecosystem is a wonderful visualization of the versatility in skills and responsibilities found within movements and organizing spaces. Framing this concept as an ecosystem is also a brilliant way of calling attention to the concept of interdependence as essential to creating and sustaining healthy group dynamics. You can begin finding your role(s) by reading through the following descriptions and identifying what aspects you most naturally gravitate towards. Another thing to consider is what roles you already take on in your faith communities, sports teams, families, school clubs, cultural communities, etc.

- ☞ **Disrupters**: comfortable with shaking up the status quo, clear and strategic about targets and goals, and has the capacity to take risks and handle criticism

- ☞ **Healers**: recognize and tend to trauma, understand personal repair as intrinsically tied to systems repair, and ensure the creation of supportive, sustainable, and caring spaces

- ☞ **Storytellers**: craft and share community stories, experiences, histories, and possibilities through art, music, media, and movement; have creative energy and vulnerability

- ☞ **Guides**: possesses wisdom through experiences and expertise, interest in sharing and mentoring others, and skills to coach and teach through inquiry

- ☞ **Weavers**: see points of connection and intersections, understand the larger whole, and holds space for networks, coalitions, and other containers that bring people together

- ☞ **Experimenters**: enjoy problem-solving, are skilled at formulating new ideas, innovating, pioneering, and inventing creative solutions

- ☞ **Frontline Responders**: skilled in articulating movement goals and addressing community crises by marshaling and organizing resources, networks, and messages

- ☞ **Visionaries**: imagine and explore bold possibilities, hopes, and dreams that remind movements of their goals

- ☞ **Builders**: organized and detailed, capable of transforming vision into reality, and collaborative in working towards co-liberation, equity, and justice

- ☞ **Caregivers**: nurture and nourish the people around them by creating and sustaining a community of care, joy, and connection

You may find yourself taking on more than one role or moving between what feels right in different moments and that is completely okay! It takes time to test the waters and figure out which role(s) make you feel most fulfilled, balanced, safe, and empowered. Time should also be taken to think about what roles within the ecosystem are frequently unoccupied. How can capacity be built around these areas, so that organizers feel more confident stepping into these roles?
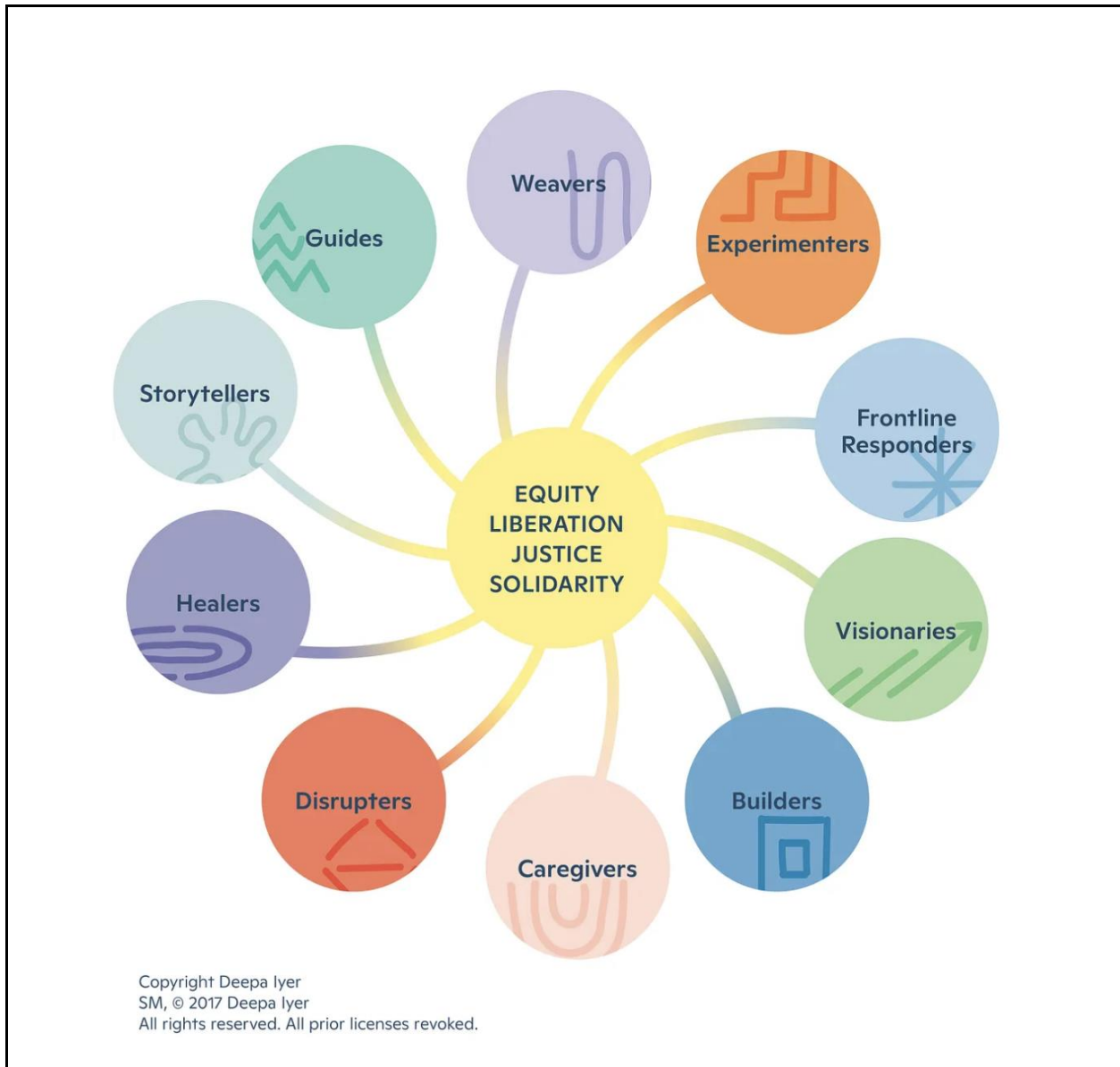
[Image Description: A multicoloured graphic with a title that reads **"The Social Change Ecosystem Map"** in bold, black lettering. The pale yellow circle in the middle of the web reads "Equity, Liberation, Justice, Solidarity" with ten branches extending outwards into each role. These roles include disruptors, caregivers, builders, visionaries, frontline responders, experimenters, weavers, guides, storytellers, and healers. Text at the bottom of the diagram credits Deepa Iyer.]

Building Your Campaign

This section contains a curated set of resources to help guide you and your team in building a campaign! The introductory materials offer a starting point for each sub-topic, while the deeper dive links explore the complexities of each concept in greater detail and are often longer reads.

Before embarking on a new campaign, take a moment to consider what work that is already being done in your communities. Who else might share a similar goal or vision and how can collective power be leveraged to generate greater people power? Forming coalitions is a wonderful way to unite people, pool resources, knowledge, and sustain people power.

Coalition Building	
Introductory Materials • Networked Coalitions Guide • Campaign for Youth Justice: Coalition Building Guide • Commons Library: Coalition Building Resources	Deeper Dive • Coalition Building 101 (1:05:20) • Power in Coalition: Strategies for Social Change by Amanda Tattersall • What White People Can Do Next: From Allyship to Coalition by Emma Dabiri

Now that you've assembled a group of people, it's time to structure teams and brainstorm strategy! Movement theory can feel very dense, but these resources help break down the basics of what is needed to create a clear plan for what you are doing and why you are doing it. Identify key players (decision-makers you are targeting, potential allies, and stakeholders) through power mapping exercises; learn to differentiate between tactics and strategies, nested goals and mountaintop goals, and brainstorm your action plan!

Brainstorming Strategy	
Introductory Materials • 350.org: Spectrum of Allies • Commons Library: Power Mapping • Organizing for Power: Action Planning	Deeper Dive • Organizing for People, Power & Change • Systems Thinking for Campaigns • Power Analysis in Organizing

When movements and community organizers engage in the same form of protest again and again over an extended period of time, it can become easy to lose momentum and power. Having multiple methods of taking action helps keep things interesting and purposeful; it is one of many ways folks can continue pushing for their demands to be met, whilst also sustaining engagement amongst organizers and the general public alike.

Ideas for Taking Action

Storytelling Project

Telling stories allows us to connect with people on a more personal level, rather than relying on facts and statistics to spark interest/involvement in a cause. It helps contextualize issues in meaningful ways, while also offering space for joy, grief, anger, sadness, and vulnerability.

- [Climate & Collective Liberation Project](#)
- [Voices: Indigenous Women on the Frontlines Speak](#)
- [University of Washington: Black Lives Matter Student Storytelling Project](#)
- [UBC Climate Hub: Youth Climate Ambassadors Project](#)

Die-In or Sit-In

Visually demonstrating what the impact of a crisis would look like if government inaction and corporate unaccountability continues is a powerful way of communicating the severity and urgency at hand. Taking up physical space also asserts power to the people, a strategy that has historically been used by many movements and organizing groups to fight for change.

- [504 Sit-In for Disability Rights](#) (18:20) - content warning: ableism
- [Teen Empowerment Boston: Die-In Against Gun Violence](#) - content warnings: mentions of mass shootings, students simulating death
- [ACT UP: Die-In for AIDS Awareness & Government Action](#) - content warnings: mentions of the AIDS epidemic and images of queer folks simulating death

Postering

Use creativity as a tool for changemaking by designing a series of posters that can be put up around one's community. Help spark conversations, use QR codes to get more people involved, and publicize information about upcoming actions your team is organizing.

- [350.org: Art for a Just Recovery](#)
- [Amplifier: We The Future Posters](#)
- [Defund604Network Posters](#)

Social Media Campaign

Hashtag campaigns have erupted across the world in call for mass systemic change. These calls for justice and accountability are shared by millions. Social media campaigns are especially great for spreading information about local injustices that don't tend to get mainstream media coverage. In this past year alone (2020), it's been hopeful to see how social media activism has translated into ongoing solidarity with marginalized communities.

- [#BlackLivesMatter and Digital Intersectionality](#)
- [#IdleNoMore and the Twitterverse](#)
- [#MeToo Movement From Grassroots to Virality](#)
- [#IceBucketChallenge for ALS Awareness](#)

Public Installation and Murals

Happen to have some extra paint on your hands? Consider designing and painting a mural in a public space that is frequented by many.

- Sustainabiliteens: Climate Emergency Action Plan Mural
- Brooklyn Stop Asian Hate Murals
- Discovery of Unmarked Graves at Kamloops Residential School Memorial
  content warnings: mentions of colonial violence (residential schools) and death

Banner Drop

Find prominent public areas like bridges, overpasses, building hallways, rooftops, etc. to hang large banners from. Raise awareness for issues with a bold and succinct statement that catches the attention of passersby!

- Wet'suwet'en Solidarity Banner
- Fossil Free UK: University of Glasgow Divestment Campaign
- Bridges Not Walls: Queer Solidarity Smashes Borders

Flash Mob

A fantastic way to create mass creative disruption in public spaces. These performances are hard to look away from, which make them perfect for filming and sharing online, as well as getting a message across to audiences in a theatrical format!

- Extinction Rebellion Australia: Stayin' Alive (5:48)
- BLM Toronto: They Don't Care About Us (1:49)
- Phoenix Pride: Born This Way (4:26) - content warnings: homophobic and transphobic hate speech and signs, misogyny; the flash mob begins at 5:58

Open Letters and Pledges

Though these two tactics can differ widely in usage, we have grouped them together because they both involve getting people and/or groups to sign in support of a cause. Pledges are typically created to boycott brands, corporations, or practices. Meanwhile, open letters typically address specific decision-makers with a list of demands that people have expressed collective support for.

- Banking on a Better Future Pledge
- Remake Our World: #NoNewClothes Pledge
- Ban Conversion Therapy in the U.K. Open Letter - content warnings: mentions of suicide and conversion therapy

Festival or Live Performances

Create memorable experiences through festivals and live performances that call attention to justice-based issues. Showcase local talent, amplify the work of marginalized creatives, and fundraise to support local mutual aid efforts!

- Climate Live: Global Climate Concerts
- Intersectional Environmentalist: Earth Sessions
- Sins Invalid: Full Performances

Petitions

A great way to show solidarity, particularly with those outside your region; it is a representation of power in numbers that allows us to continue putting pressure on decision-makers.

- [Parliament of Canada: Petitions Proposed by MPs](#)
- [David Suzuki Foundation: Climate & Sustainability Petitions](#)
- [PayUp Fashion: Keep Garment Workers Safe](#)

Phone Zaps

Mobilizing support around call-ins is one way we can express collective discontent, show decision-makers what we care about, and assert our demands. For some offices, flooding their lines can temporarily block their ability to operate, which creates necessary disruption!

- [College Climate Coalition: Stop Line 3 Pipeline](#)
- [Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee: Jermaine Reynolds](#)
- [Fight for $15 and Fairness: Paid Sick Days](#)

Divestment

Calling on corporations, universities, and governments to divest from certain sectors of society or specific projects is a crucial tactic in shifting power away from those who profit from injustice and into the hands of the people. This approach focuses on how systemic solutions can be sought after, rather than relying on individualized models of change.

- [Choosing Real Safety: Divest From Policing and Prisons & Build Safe Communities](#)
- [Divest Canada Coalition: Campaign for Universities to Divest From Fossil Fuels](#)
- [BDS: Veolia Campaign to Divest From Israeli Rail Operations](#)

Teach-In or Conference

Creates spaces where people can learn new things, share skills, and build knowledge together! Virtual conferences are especially amazing because they offer us the opportunity to connect us with our global communities.

- [Global Just Recovery Gathering](#)
- [Stratagem: Conference for Equity, Inclusion, and Justice](#)
- [COP26 Coalition: From The Ground Up](#)

Declining Awards, Honours, Partnerships, or Funding

Rejecting an award/honour from a company, governing body, or person who does not share the same values as your organizing group can be a powerful act of resistance. It should be noted that declining awards/honours alongside a public statement is not always a reasonable ask. In cases like these, there is an opportunity to redistribute funds back into your community!

- [Adrienne Rich Refuses the National Medal for Arts to Protest Socioeconomic Inequity](#)
- [Greta Thunberg Declines Nordic Council Environment Prize in Call for Government Action](#)
- [Varinderpal Singh Refuses to Accept Golden Jubilee Award in Support of Indian Farmers](#)
- [Saacheen Littlefeather Declines Marlon Brando's Oscar to Protest Indigenous Mistreatment](#)

Your day of action or campaign launch day is fast approaching! Weeks or months of organizing have led up to this and though there is likely a shared feeling of nervousness in the air, it is likely also exciting to see the all your hard work come to life. Linked below are some safety and protest resources to help folks prepare for their involvement.

Safety Tips and Reminders	
Introductory Materials • BLM Seattle: Protest Safety Guide • Ontario Federation of Labour: An Activist's Guide to Safer Protesting • Black Cross Collective: Basic First Aid	Deeper Dive • Civilian's Guide to Direct Action • The Black Flag Catalyst: Revolt Guide & Protest Tips • CrimethInc: Guide to Direct Action

Congratulations on completing your campaign! One step that frequently gets overlooked in campaign building is the importance of debriefing an action. Being able to discuss what could be improved and what went well is fundamental to the growth of a movement. Don't forget to celebrate your wins before jumping back into intaking new members and prepping for your next action!

Debriefing Campaigns	
Introductory Materials • Running Effective Campaign Debriefs • Direct Action and What Comes Next	Deeper Dive • Lessons for Movement Building • Real Food Challenge: Organizing Cycle
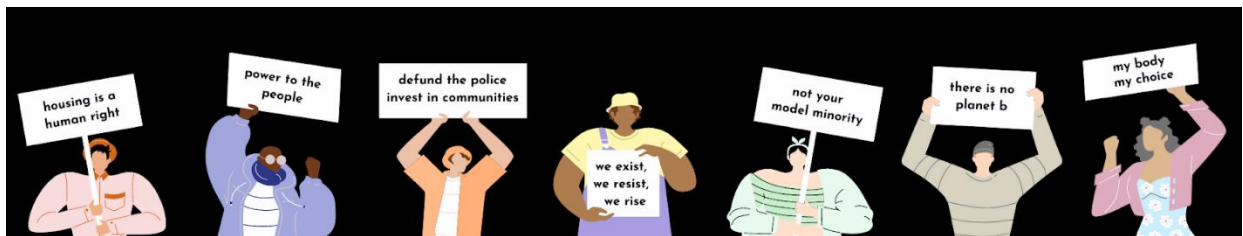
[Image Description: Illustrated person wears a pale collared red shirt with an orange hat; their sign reads "housing is a human right". Next to them is a person dressed in a white shirt with a lavender puffer jacket, blue scarf, and sunglasses, whose sign reads "power to the people." The third person is wearing a matching pale orange shirt and hat with a sign that reads "defund the police, invest in communities." In the centre, a person with a pale yellow hat and t-shirt with purple overalls carries a sign reading "we exist, we resist, we rise." The person to their right wears a pale green top, cardigan, and headband with the sign "not your model minority". The last two are wearing a grey beanie and long-sleeved shirt with a sign that reads "there is no planet B" while the other wears a cropped pink jacket and strapless daisy dress, with a sign that reads "my body, my choice". Graphic designed by Michelle Xie.]

Digital Tools for Organizing

We are in no way affiliated with, sponsored by, or otherwise compensated for mentioning the following companies. This is simply a compilation of free digital tools and/or platforms that we have found useful in our organizing, many of which offer paid versions with additional features.

	Google Workspace This collection of tools is great for those looking to organize their work in one place using a single account. Google Calendars can be used to share upcoming events and meetings within groups. Google Drive folders are a great place to store and share collaborative files. Google Meet is compatible with all those who have a Gmail account and offers chat and share screen functions. There are many more apps that can be used to create collaborative documents (Google Docs), collect survey responses or registration info (Google Forms), and interactive idea boards (Jamboard). [Image Descriptions: Text reads "Google Workspace" surrounded by various logos of the different programs offered. Beneath this row is a blue document with white lines (Google Docs), green document with grids (Google Sheets), yellow document with a rectangle (Google Slides), indigo document with multiple squares (Google Sites), purple document with bullet points (Google Forms), and yellow sticky note that is folded upwards in the lower right corner with a lightbulb in the centre (Google Keep)]
	Slack A commonly used app available on mobile, tablet, and desktop for large group communication. It includes many features such as public and private channels, direct messaging, file sharing, polls, personalized notification and accessibility settings, options to pin conversations, mark messages as unread, set reminders to respond to messages, and built-in call functions. [Image Description: Logo of a multicoloured hashtag over an auburn background with text to the right that reads "slack" in bold, white font.]
	LettuceMeet Easily map out what your team's availability looks like. A great tool for planning group calls and events! [Image Description: Green head of lettuce with text to the right that reads "lettuce meet" in all lowercase letters, half in green and half in black.]

	Canva For all your graphic design needs! Choose from a wide array of pre-made templates with customizable features or start from scratch! This is a wonderful resource for creating posters, social media posts, powerpoint slides, newsletters, logos, and more. [Image Description: Teal circle with "Canva" written in white cursive font.]
	Otter.ai Automatic live captioning and transcription for audio files. Otter.ai also has features that are wonderful for collaborative note taking where folks can view, highlight, comment, and add photos during meetings. [Image Description: Otter's logo, a blue circle with a hollow interior followed by four blue lines of varying lengths that mimic sound waves.]
	Linktree Share multiple links to resources, projects, event postings, places to donate, and more. It is especially great for putting as a link in bio on social media profiles. [Image Description: Two overlapping trees with a white arrow pointing upwards in the centre. Text reads "linktree" in black lowercase font.]
	Mentimeter Design interactive workshops, meetings, presentations by including polls, space for participants to ask questions, and using collected data to generate visuals like word clouds. [Image Description: Vibrantly coloured shapes form an outline of the letter M. The left side has two pink circles and a triangle, while the right side has a blue staircase. Text beside it reads "Mentimeter" in black font.]
	Gather Town A that's wonderful for team bonding and simultaneous group calls in one place: a video game-esque world that is customizable! [Image Description: Line art of a bunch of grapes with text that reads "Gather" in bold black letters. Beneath are five avatars. The first has black hair, a blue cap and shirt. The second has long brown hair and wears a red dress. The third has tied brown hair and wears a white dress shirt with a black blazer overtop. Next is a ginger haired person with sunglasses and a green top. Last person has ginger hair and wears a purple cap and shirt.]

Trello (logo)	**Trello** Visualize your task lists, manage projects, organize resource lists, and share opportunities. Here's an example of a Trello board. [Image Description: Blue square with two white vertical rectangles within that resemble lists. Text to the right reads "Trello"]
Unsplash (logo)	**Unsplash** Choose from a wide selection of free, high quality photos that can be used in your social media graphics and other design needs! [Image Description: Black pixel art logo of the letter U with a solid square hovering above. To the right, text reads "Unsplash" in bold, black font.]
TINYURL (logo)	**TinyURL** Have a link you want to share? Make it memorable and easy to search by using Tinyurl, which allows you to create shortened customized URLs. [Image Description: Blue background with bold, white text overtop that reads "TinyURL" in all capital letters.]
mailchimp (logo)	**Mailchimp** Noteworthy platform for creating newsletters to send out externally to community members and supporters, or internally for your team! [Image Description: Black and white monkey wearing a flat-brimmed hat. Text reads "mailchimp" in bold black letters.]
Notion (logo)	**Notion** A great platform for creating shareable resources, mapping campaigns, storing ideas, showcasing zines, and a multitude of other creative ideas. Check out Notion's guides and tutorials. [Image Description: Black and white alphabet block with the letter N facing outwards. Text reads "Notion" in black font.]
THE ACTION NETWORK (logo)	**The Action Network** Powerful tool for mass emails, petitions, letter-writing, and more! Sign up for an upcoming training or read their getting started page. [Image Description: Blue background with white text that reads "The Action Network" in white font. To the left is a circle of people with interlocked arms.]

Reflection Prompts for Accessibility

Accessibility is not a matter of adherence to some one-size-fits-all checklist; to intentionally cultivate spaces where individuals feel safe is an ongoing commitment and—above all—an act of care and solidarity. Making a digital or physical space accessible not only benefits those who are disabled or chronically ill, but helps create more inclusive environments for everyone. These prompts are non-exhaustive and partially an extension of the access suggestions created by [Sins Invalid](#).

★ **Date and Time**
Does the set date and time allow those who work and/or attend school to participate? Does the gathering fall on the same day as a religious or cultural day of significance? Is everyone who is planning to attend calling in from the same time zone?

★ **Access Survey**
Prior to convening, has an access survey been sent out to all attendees? What barriers are preventing community members from participating? Are there any tools or practices that would help support the full participation of folks in whatever form that looks like for them?

★ **Pre-Event Communication**
Is there contact information for those who may be lost on the day of? How can folks get in touch with their questions and/or concerns? Is there any way for those looking to meet people before a gathering to get in touch, so that they know someone upon arrival?

★ **Community Guidelines**
Has everyone been given the opportunity to contribute what would make a space safe and welcoming for them? Does everyone understand what is being shared? Is there consensus on what these community guidelines are?

★ **Free or Sliding Scale**
Would it be possible to make your event free? If not, is there a sliding scale for students, low-income folks, and those experiencing financial hardship? Would it be possible to seek out donations or sponsors to help cover the cost for those who would not otherwise be able to afford your programming?

★ **Distance**
Is your event or meeting located near public transit? Are there any parking or drop-off areas nearby? For those who may have trouble affording fare prices, would it be possible to provide transit tickets?

★ **Breaks**
Is there time for folks to eat, hydrate, sit with what they've learned, rest, take their medication, and/or use the bathroom? Is there a designated area for people to decompress or step away from the action at any point throughout the duration of the event?

★ **Schedule**
Has an agenda or outline for the day been sent out to attendees? Does this schedule detail when breaks will take place? If multiple venues or rooms are being used, is there a map or clear directions included? What materials should people bring in preparation for the day?

★ **Content Warnings**
Are there appropriate and specific content warnings listed on an event posting, mentioned verbally before certain information is shared, and/or written on hand-outs for participants? Is the potentially triggering content you are sharing a necessary addition to what you are discussing or are there other ways of contextualizing things?

★ **Participation**
Are there multiple ways someone can participate in this space, particularly for those who struggle with social interaction? Could a digital platform be used to anonymously submit questions? Has an adequate amount of time been allocated for people to think about their responses before answering questions or sharing thoughts with others?

★ **Alternative Formats**
Would it be possible to record the event or meeting for those who are unable to attend? Could the event be live streamed? Is there someone who could take notes? Could communal notes be taken and shared? Are large print materials and other alternative formats available upon request?
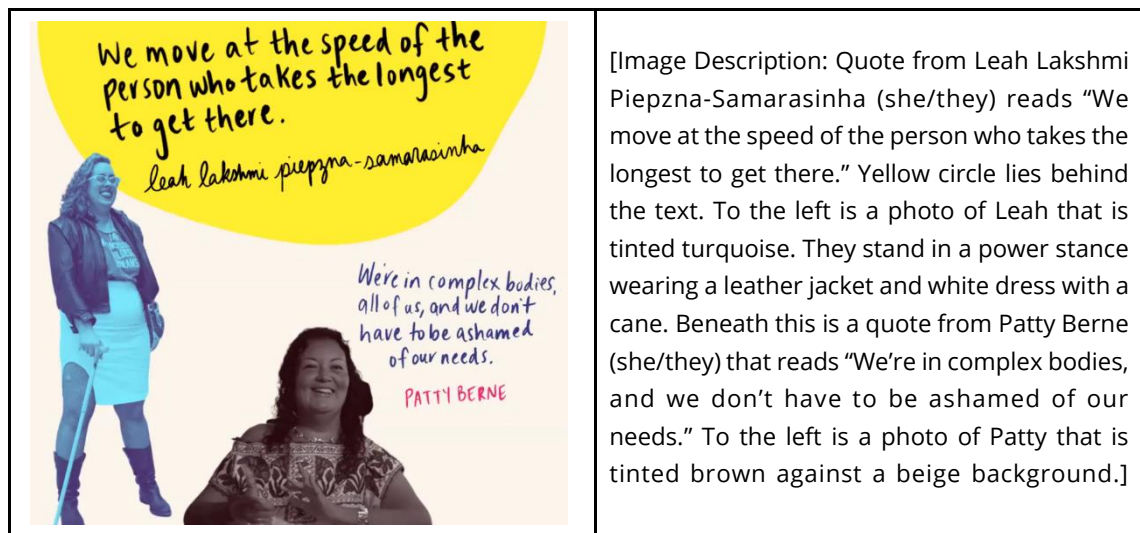
[Image Description: Quote from Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha (she/they) reads "We move at the speed of the person who takes the longest to get there." Yellow circle lies behind the text. To the left is a photo of Leah that is tinted turquoise. They stand in a power stance wearing a leather jacket and white dress with a cane. Beneath this is a quote from Patty Berne (she/they) that reads "We're in complex bodies, and we don't have to be ashamed of our needs." To the left is a photo of Patty that is tinted brown against a beige background.]

★ **Physical Space**
Are chairs or other furniture in a room easily movable to make space for mobility aids, assistive technology/devices, strollers, etc.? Can you fit a chair through the door and hallways? Are the bathrooms accessible? Does the building have a functioning and spacious elevator? Does the building have ramp access and railings?

★ **Digital Accessibility**
Are alt-text and image descriptions provided? Does the virtual gathering offer captioning and ASL interpretation upon request? Are live captioners and/or interpreters being paid for their services? Do the visuals used include high colour contrast, easy-to-read fonts and font size, and good image quality? Does the caption include a minimal amount of emojis and capitalization for each word of a hashtag to make text more screen reader friendly?

★ **Food and Beverages**
Will there be snacks, food, and/or beverages offered at this gathering? If yes, it possible to collect information about attendees' dietary restrictions/preferences prior to an event or meeting? For meals that are not packaged with an ingredient list, how can this information be visibility presented alongside dishes?

★ **Allergies**
How can people disclose their allergies to organizers prior to a gathering? Is the space being used scent free? Has there been a notice sent out to participants asking them not to bring certain foods (nuts, wheat, milk, etc.) to prevent allergic reactions?

★ **Photography and Filming**
Have participants been informed that photography and/or videography will be taking place? How will photo/video consent be collected from individuals? Have you asked volunteers or hired personnel to refrain from using flash, so as to not trigger seizures or light sensitivity?

★ **Childcare**
Are there any activities for children whose parents or guardians are participating in an event or meeting? Would it be possible to have someone look after and engage with kids for the duration of an event or meeting?

★ **Language**
Are complicated terms and jargon being defined? Could this toolkit's glossary be sent as a resource to attendees? What is the assumed level of knowledge? Are there volunteers who can help translate social media posts or events into non-English languages? Is there funding available to compensate folks for their labour?

Establishing Boundaries

Having boundaries that we each honour is an integral component of sustainable organizing. A good place to start when identifying what your personal boundaries are is by asking yourself: what do I expect from others and myself and is this reasonable? Boundaries are not set in stone. What may feel right one day could change in the next, but the important thing is constant communication. This means being honest with yourself and your team when those changes occur.

Artwork by Roza Nozari (she/her) - @yallaroza on Instagram
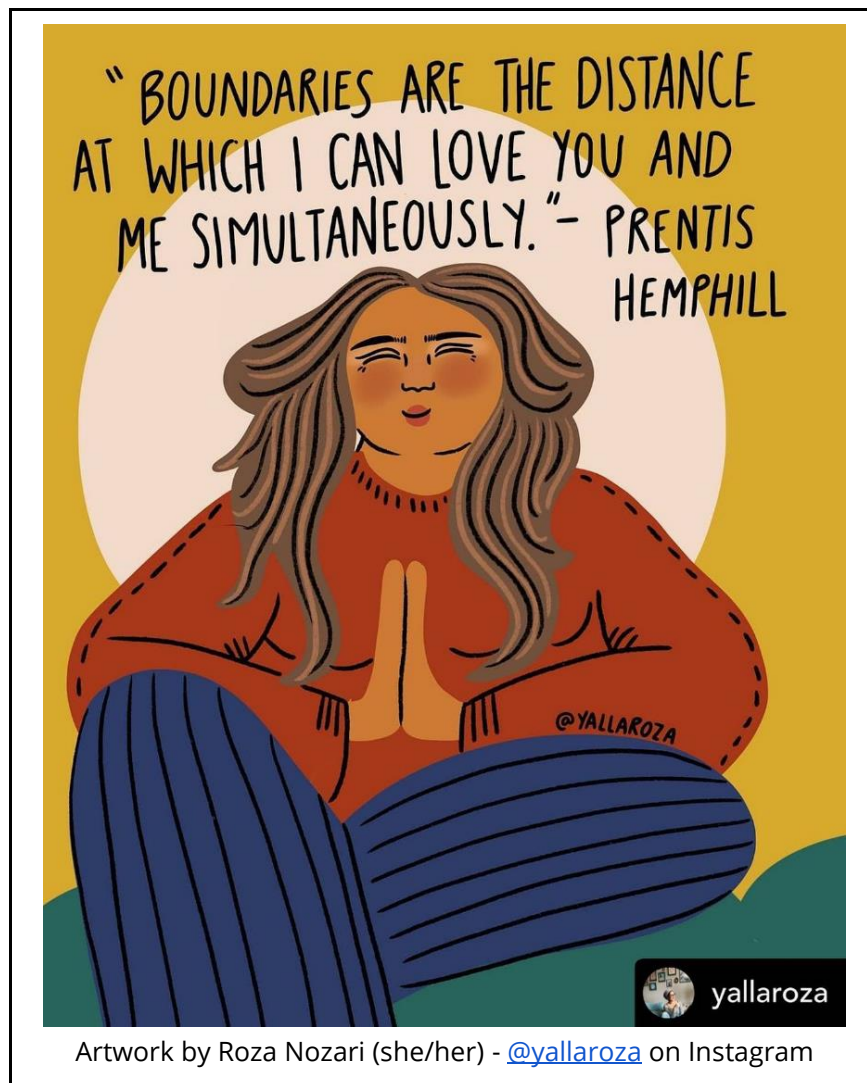
[Image Description: Quote from Prentis Hemphill (they/them) reads "Boundaries are the distance at which I can love you and me simultaneously." Beneath this is an illustration of a person with long brown hair in a red sweater and blue pants, whose hands are folded in prayer. The background is a dark mustard yellow with a pale peach circle behind the person's head and grass beneath the seated person. In the bottom right corner of the illustration is Roza Nozari's Instagram profile picture where she sits on a couch in front of a beige wall of framed photos. Next to this is her Instagram handle "yallaroza" written in small white text against a black background.]

Below you will find some information about the different types of boundaries one can establish. Ideas from this section are partially adapted from the [Disorient Blog](#).

1. **Emotional boundaries**: naming and validating our feelings, respecting our emotional well-being, and calling ourselves and others in when oversharing negative experiences
    - ⚑ overstepping these boundaries could look trauma dumping, gaslighting, apathy about our ability to shape society, or someone continuing to talk at length about a certain topic even after you've asked them not to

2. **Mental boundaries**: naming our values and beliefs, being open-minded about the opinions of others, and understanding how your lived experiences inform your perspectives
    - ⚑ overstepping these boundaries could look like a person non-consensually Speaking on behalf of others, the misrepresentation of one's thoughts/opinions, or being asked to speak on behalf of a whole community

3. **Time/energy boundaries**: how we allocate our time and the energy we have to put into tasks, particularly those that involve free labour
    - ⚑ overstepping these boundaries could look like not being compensated for your time or labour, constantly showing up late, and frequent last-minute changes

4. **Physical boundaries**: allow us to maintain our bodily autonomy, create a sense of safety, and feel comfortable being in the company of others
    - ⚑ overstepping these boundaries could look like invasions of personal space, showing up to your house/school/place of work without warning, and unwanted comments about one's appearance

5. **Material boundaries**: how people interact with our belongings and the expectations we have when lending items to others
    - ⚑ overstepping these boundaries could look like taking a belonging without asking, someone touching a prized possession that you have asked them not to touch, damaging an item one borrowed without taking accountability, and not returning something after asking to borrow it

Burnout and Capacity

A lack of respect for our boundaries can lead to burnout, which not only takes a toll on our health and wellbeing, but bars us from participating in organizing and dissuades others from taking action. The term 'burnout' is used to describe a "state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion caused by long term involvement in situations that are emotionally demanding… often caused by a combination of very high expectations and chronic situational stresses" (Ayala Pines and Elliott Aronson).

Burnout is too often accepted as an inherent byproduct of organizing/activism, when this is simply untrue. The internalization of capitalism and grind culture is what drives many of us to ignore our boundaries and push past our limits. What would it look like if we supported folks through periods of low capacity, encouraged breaks, and celebrated people for knowing when they need to take a step back to recharge?

For many organizers, capacity is something that frequently fluctuates. This does not make them any less deserving of care, nor does it indicate a lack of commitment. Everyone should be valued for showing up in whatever way(s) they can. There must be opportunities to not only rest and recuperate, but dream and connect. Examples of what this could look like include weekly wellness calls, social events, and team bonding excursions.

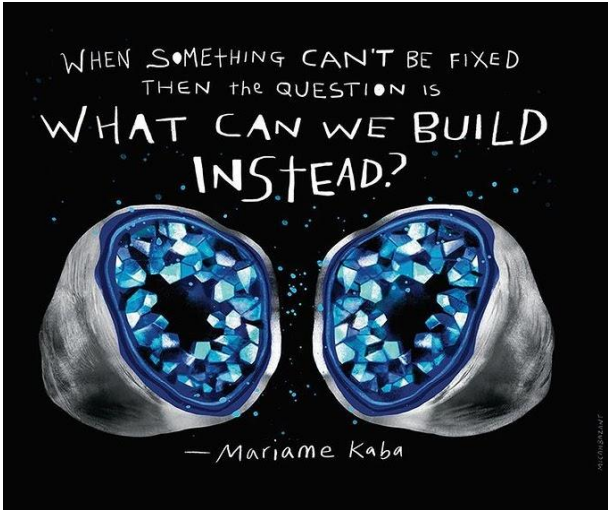| Voices From Our Community |
|---|
| "I have chronic illnesses, so I'm not always well enough to do stuff. That doesn't make me flaky, it makes me human. Judging me based on the number of meetings I show up to or things I volunteer to do is not really the kind of movement I want to be a part of." - Robin Blaine (they/them) |
| "Organizers checking in during stressful times and assisting me in task delegation, opportunities with honorariums shared with priority to BIPOC and marginalized organizers, compensation for labour (payment/food vouchers), and group chats specifically for marginalized [people] so we can safely express concern… and build a community of folks who will support each other in discriminatory experiences." - Aliya Hirji |
| "Mental illness affects many people like me. I try my best to keep up as an activist but some weeks are harder [than] others… and being surrounded by people who understand that I don't have control over when things get bad makes me feel cared for." - Liam Watts (he/him) |
| "There was rarely enough time between projects for people to recharge, so, more and more organizers were leaving because they were burned out. It also felt like we only got together to do work and never really got to know each other socially." - Nikola Marković (she/they) |

Ways to Show Solidarity When You Can't Make it to Protests

Protesting is an integral part of the fight for collective liberation; it shows those in positions of power that we will not stay silent in the face of ongoing violence, inaction, and harm. Engaging in direct action helps create the necessary conditions for transformative change to unfold. Not only does it sustain pressure on decision-makers to meet the demands of a movement or group, but also serves as a reminder to others that they are not alone in their pursuit of a more just world.

This being said, attending an in-person action is not always possible. Some barriers include sensory overload, chronic pain, being undocumented, an inability to take time off from work or school, unmet access needs, living with trauma, and inaccessible march routes or venues. Luckily, there are many other ways one can show solidarity! Here are some ideas that build upon the work of contributors to the Disability Visibility Project.

➽→ **Donate money and/or items** through mutual aid projects or directly to individuals on the frontlines through CashApp, e-Transfer, Paypal, etc.

➽→ **Use social media** to amplify calls to action and share information about upcoming events

➽→ **Get involved** in organizing efforts and behind the scenes work! For those living in the "U.S.", connect with your nearest Mutual Aid Network, Black Lives Matter chapter, or Sunrise Hub!

➽→ **Lend equipment** you have access to like tables, tents, paint, megaphones, cardboard, chalk, first aid kits, and more

➽→ **Contact your representatives** by email or phone. For those living in so-called Canada, use this tool to find your government representatives and their contact information!

➽→ **Create art** that expresses solidarity, reimagines what another world could look like, tells a story, communicates grief, etc.

➽→ **Sign petitions and/or open letters** to make your voice heard

➽→ **Educate yourself** through books, webinars, podcasts, research, and more. Resource lists are great places to start! Check out our resources for further learning.

➽→ **Look after a friend's child or pet** while they attend a protest

➽→ **Help with accessibility** by transcribing, captioning, writing image descriptions, or providing content warnings for digital content. Volunteer with collectives like Protest Access!

≫→ **Make food for and/or send snacks** to those attending a protest

≫→ **Help host a virtual teach-in** to engage others who are unable to attend

≫→ **Offer transportation** to help people or items get to and from a protest

≫→ **Have conversations** with people in your life about recent news, histories of injustices, and encourage them to take action

≫→ **Offer a warehouse or office space** for organizers to meet in

≫→ **Put up posters in your community**, if safe and with permission from organizers to publicize details

≫→ **Be someone's emergency contact** in scenarios of arrest, injury, or danger; check in with friends before, during, and after protests to make sure they're okay

≫→ **Translate material** such as social media posts, press releases, protest speeches, movement/campaign demands, etc.

≫→ **Offer a place to stay** for friends who may be commuting from another city/town

≫→ **Remember to take care of yourself** and rest in whatever form that looks like for you!

Art by Micah Bazant (they/them)
@micahbazant on Instagram

[Image Description: Illustration of a shimmering blue crystal geode broken in half against a black background with blue specks. Handwritten white text reads "When something can't be fixed then the question is what do we build instead," a quote from Mariame Kaba (she/her) on abolition work.]
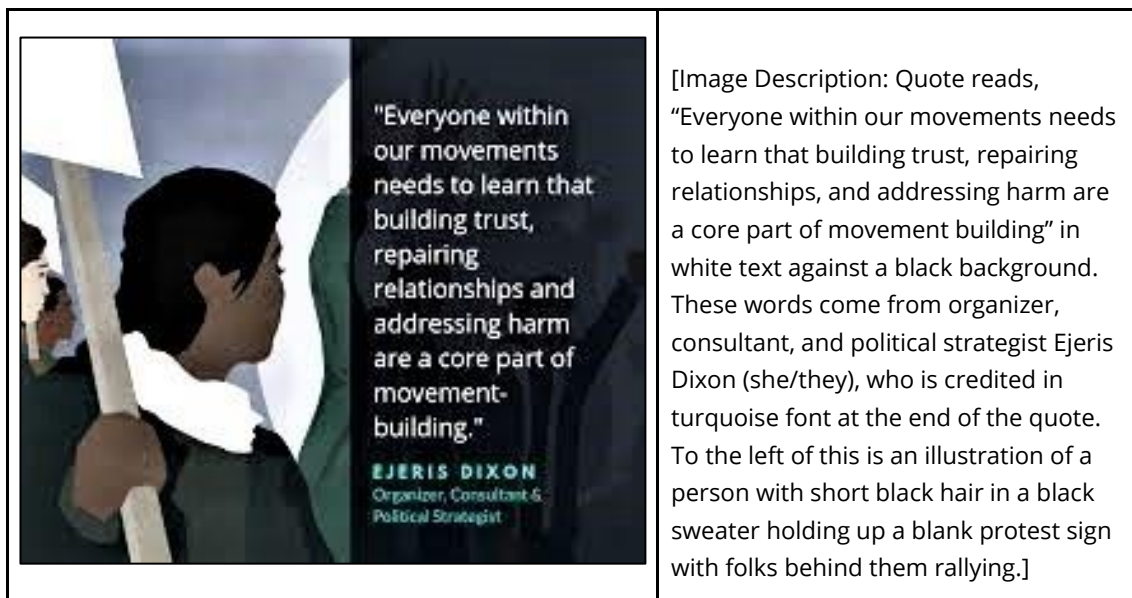
NOTES ON CARE WORK & TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE

Care work and transformative justice are not new concepts. These ideas and practices have deep roots in Black, Indigenous, racialized, queer, trans, and disabled communities, who have been building models of accountability and networks of care that do not rely on the state for generations. In other words, these practices have existed long before the terms 'care work' and 'transformative justice' were coined.

Replicating and Repairing Harm

In working towards changing our systems, we must first look to our communities and organizing networks as places where solutions can be practiced. By engaging in acts of community care and mutual aid, we begin to build alternatives—actively shaping the type of world we yearn to live in.

Transformative justice focuses on addressing and confronting carceral logic on all levels. Its main principles are: safety, healing, and agency for survivors; accountability and transformation for people who cause harm; community action, healing, and accountability; and transformation of the social conditions that perpetuate violence (Generation Five).

To learn more about transformative justice, accountability, and care work, check out our resource hub at the end of this toolkit and watch this video about Everyday Practices of Transformative Justice (14:25) created by Project Nia and the folks at the Barnard Centre for Research on Women.

"Everyone within our movements needs to learn that building trust, repairing relationships and addressing harm are a core part of movement-building."

EJERIS DIXON
Organizer, Consultant &
Political Strategist

[Image Description: Quote reads, "Everyone within our movements needs to learn that building trust, repairing relationships, and addressing harm are a core part of movement building" in white text against a black background. These words come from organizer, consultant, and political strategist Ejeris Dixon (she/they), who is credited in turquoise font at the end of the quote. To the left of this is an illustration of a person with short black hair in a black sweater holding up a blank protest sign with folks behind them rallying.]

There are so many ways harm is replicated within our movements and organizing spaces, but what matters is our ability to work towards repairing said harm. This section explores four common scenarios in which harm and repair occur within justice-centred work. Each example is followed by a short list of articles/videos/tools, as well as quotes from community members at the end of the section.

Racism, Transparency, and Tokenism

Consider what values and practices need to be in place in order for marginalized folks to feel comfortable. It is not about tokenizing select individuals as beacons of diversity, nor is it a matter of asking individuals to somehow represent entire communities. Justice will not come in the form of equity, diversity, and inclusion trainings. Reflect upon whose voices are being centred and how racial justice extends beyond performative allyship. Does everyone have the opportunity to take on positions of leadership? When folks are called in, how does the team respond to harm and work towards accountability? Are external opportunities offered to the group being shared with everyone and are folks being properly credited for their contributions?

- Seeking Accountability
- Rania El-Mugammar: Anatomy of an Apology
- List of Resources for Community Accountability

Ableism and Internalized Capitalism

Capitalism teaches us to place value in how productive we are and guilts us into prioritizing work over rest. This can not only lead to burnout—which we touched on in the challenging ableism section of this toolkit—but also devalues organizers who have less capacity to take on tasks. It is ableist to equate one's value to the amount of time they can invest into a project or the number of actions they can show up to. What would it look like if we normalized taking breaks? Are there spaces being created for folks to share their access needs? Is a culture of care being created in our expectations for ourselves and others?

- The Nap Ministry
- Radical Self-Care (27:45)
- Young Friends of the Earth Scotland: Rest, Recharge, and Resist Capitalism

Art by Morgan Harper Nichols (she/her)
@morganharpernichols on Instagram

[Image Description: Quote reads "You are worthy of love and support right here where you are" in white handwritten letters with the initials MHN for Morgan Harper Nichols in the bottom right corner. The background is a vibrant flower with yellow, orange, and pink petals. The flower also has a dark green stem with two leaves sprouting. The illustration is set against a dusty blue background with dashes of turquoise, and coral.]

Fear of Conflict

Without a supportive space for folks to voice their thoughts, conformity ensues. This can become harmful when the desire to maintain cohesion within a group is placed in higher regard than making good collective decisions or engaging in generative conflict. What would things look like if we reframed conflict as an opportunity to learn and adapt? Is your group's decision-making process happening democratically and transparently?

- [Mia Mingus: Generative Conflict](#)
- [Handbook on Conflict and Consensus](#)
- [Seeds For Change: Consensus Decision-Making](#)

Expectation of Unpaid Labour

Many organizers report working the equivalent of a part-time job on projects and meetings throughout the year. Expecting hours upon hours of uncompensated labour is extractive and exploitative. In order for our movements and campaigns to be sustainable, we must ensure that we are caring for one another and leaving no one behind. What funding is available for folks to develop small or large projects that align with your group's values? When guests are invited to help build skills and share knowledge, what forms of compensation are being offered?

- [Bad Activist Podcast: Compensating Activists](#) (30:01)
- [Diversity Shouldn't Mean Asking People to Work for Free](#)

Voices From Our Community
"As someone who is neurodivergent and struggles with mental illness I have found that my needs are not always prioritized or met as an organizer… I always make it clear when I am at capacity with organizing or specific accommodations I may need, but oftentimes I feel I need to prove myself and what I am going through" - Megan Breau (she/her)
"The amount of discrimination against Indigenous peoples is so disgusting. I grew up in a rural town where people would regularly call me and my family 'redskins', damage our property, and other act aggressively towards us… My aunt had schizophrenia and I too know what it's like to be labelled as 'crazy' for not acting [in a way that society considers] normal. Canadian healthcare is violent. The last thing on their minds is caring for Indigenous peoples. There's a long history of injustice and [we] must make ourselves aware of how these problems are still here today." – Anonymous
"Identifying somebody's pronouns… just seems like a base-line of respect. It also makes me feel really welcomed when people are educated about autism. I'm autistic, and very good at masking, but… when I say I'm autistic, I can tell when people's first thoughts are ableist or stereotyped. I may be bad at reading facial expressions, but I'm not stupid." - Sigfried Hemming (he/they)

Holding Space for Trauma and Grief

We all come into community organizing with different lived experiences. For some of us, this means grappling with trauma and unprocessed grief. The word 'trauma' is used to describe the ways in which people hold onto distressing and/or harmful experiences—whether it was a singular incident, something that spanned over a long period of time, or ongoing struggle. Trauma looks different for each person who lives with it, but generally should not be used in reference to situations that are minorly unpleasant or temporarily upsetting. This definition is offered not as a means of gatekeeping what is or is not trauma, but rather provide some context as to how we will be engaging with this topic.

When harm goes unprocessed, it can manifest in our ways of being. The trauma responses we adopt are coping mechanisms that help(ed) us make it through everyday life. Some examples of trauma responses include people pleasing, hypervigilance, rigidness to ideas or schedules, shutting down during confrontation, avoidance, dissociation, cynicism, and much more. Sometimes these survival skills unintentionally cause harm to ourselves and others. What is important to note is that *everyone* is capable of harm, but we are all similarly deserving of care and capable of accountability.

Diagram created by Alan Greig,
generative somatics, and generationFIVE
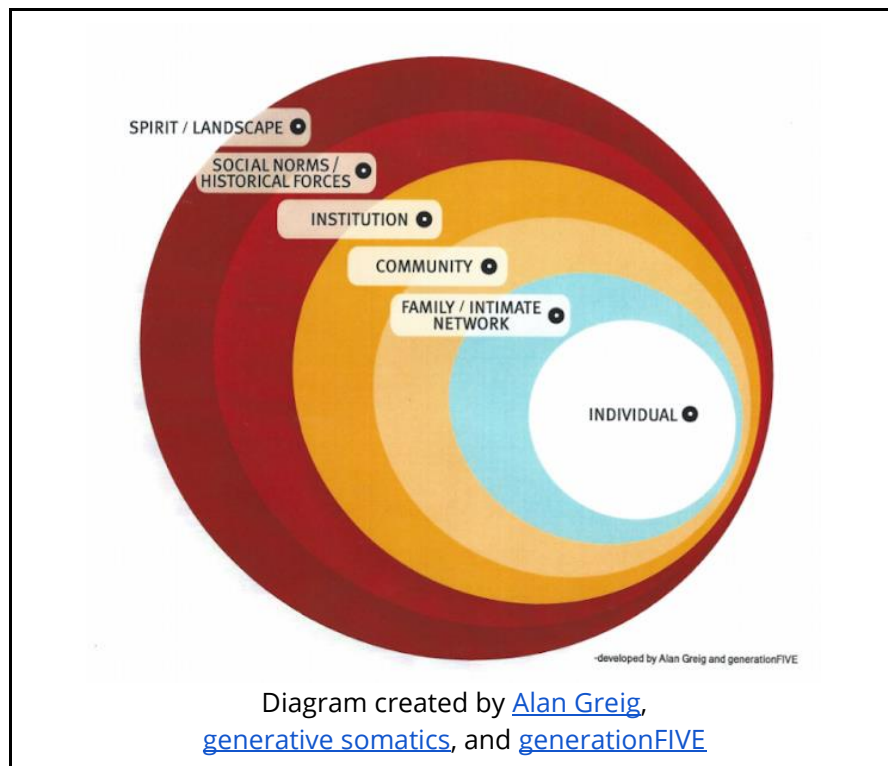
[Image Description: Euler diagram that explores the spheres of trauma. In the innermost centre is a white circle that represents the individual. The circle around it is blue and symbolizes our families and intimate networks. Branching out further we have a light orange circle for community, followed by a darker orange circle for institutions. The two outermost layers are red and represent social norms and historical forces, as well as spirit and landscape.]

Being trauma-informed requires an understanding of how many individual/interpersonal traumas are a product of violence caused by systems of oppression. The diagram above, on page 41, explains this concept by outlining spheres where trauma and healing occur. Adopting a trauma-informed lens goes beyond trigger warnings and the acknowledgement that trauma is real. It is a commitment to implementing practices within our organizing spaces that not only "promote a culture of safety, empowerment, and healing", but are also "consciously aware of power dynamics and personal biases that can affect someone living with trauma" (Ravideep Kaur).

To hold space for trauma is to radically care for one another as we navigate the messiness of existing in this world. When we lean into one another and share knowledge/skills around responding to traumatic experiences, we actively push back against systems of oppression. Doing so also enables us to repair harm and evade re-traumatization.

Reflection Questions: What are the barriers that are preventing us from learning about each other's needs? How can we begin to frame self-care as something inseparable from community care? What resources are being offered to organizers about trauma-informed approaches and trauma itself? How can we create environments that are built on mutual trust and care? In what ways do our approaches to wellness and healing centre consent and self-determination?

Voices From Our Community
"I think of communal healing as a big part of anti-oppression work because healing can't just be individuals reaching out for help. If we are talking about real community care… then we all need to participate in creating environments that are safe and supportive. We need to practice mutual aid and [find other] solutions that aren't dependent on punitive responses to harm caused by capitalism and colonialism." - Wyatt S. (they/them)
"When people invalidate my past or shame me [for] prioritizing my own wellness, it's hard to explain the situation without going into the details. You really don't have to know personal information about someone to care about them." - Bita Nejad (she/her)

Let us preface our discussion on grief by understanding it as a natural and justified response to change and loss. Though grief is most commonly associated with the passing of a loved one, it applies to a multitude of experiences. Some examples include, but are not limited to, grief stemming from the childhood we wish we had, a loss of trust, being away from home, loss of mobility, mourning the way things used to be, relationships ending, missed opportunities, and loss that our ancestors carried and/or experienced.

Much like trauma, grief is differently experienced by each individual. It is incredibly important to not make assumptions about a person's situation or adopt a 'fix mentality' when offering support to folks who are grieving. They are not obligated to share information with you, but if they do, remember to be present, actively listen, and focus on affirming rather than giving advice.

"*If, as a culture, we don't bear witness to grief, the burden of loss is placed entirely upon the bereaved, while the rest of us avert our eyes and wait for those in mourning to stop being sad, to let go, to move on, to cheer up. And if they don't... well, then we pathologize their pain; we call their suffering a disease.*"

– Cheryl Strayed (she/her)

[Image Description: Rosy brown background with bold, black text of a Cheryl Strayed (she/her) quote that reads "If, as a culture, we don't bear witness to grief, the burden of loss is placed entirely upon the bereaved, while the rest of us avert our eyes and wait for those in mourning to stop being sad, to let go, to move on, to cheer up. And if they don't... well, then we pathologize their pain; we call their suffering a disease." To the left is an illustration of a light pink bouquet of paper-wrapped roses.]

Grieving can feel like your world has stopped while everything and everyone else goes on without you. This is partially due to the haste that the digital age and late-stage capitalism demands. When so-called unproductive feelings and experiences arise, we are taught to package up the negativity and move on with our lives. The priority given to efficiency has a large impact on our ability to properly grieve and process trauma; they are seen as obstacles to *overcome* instead of ongoing states we are constantly learning to navigate. As Malkia Devich-Cyril writes, "To have a movement that breathes, you must build a movement with the capacity to grieve."

Reflection Questions: What if instead of praising people for pushing through their pain, we created spaces within our organizing groups and movements that do not force those who are grieving to disengage from their communities? What would things look like if we were given the time to sit with our feelings and properly hold space for grief instead of rushing to return to business as usual?
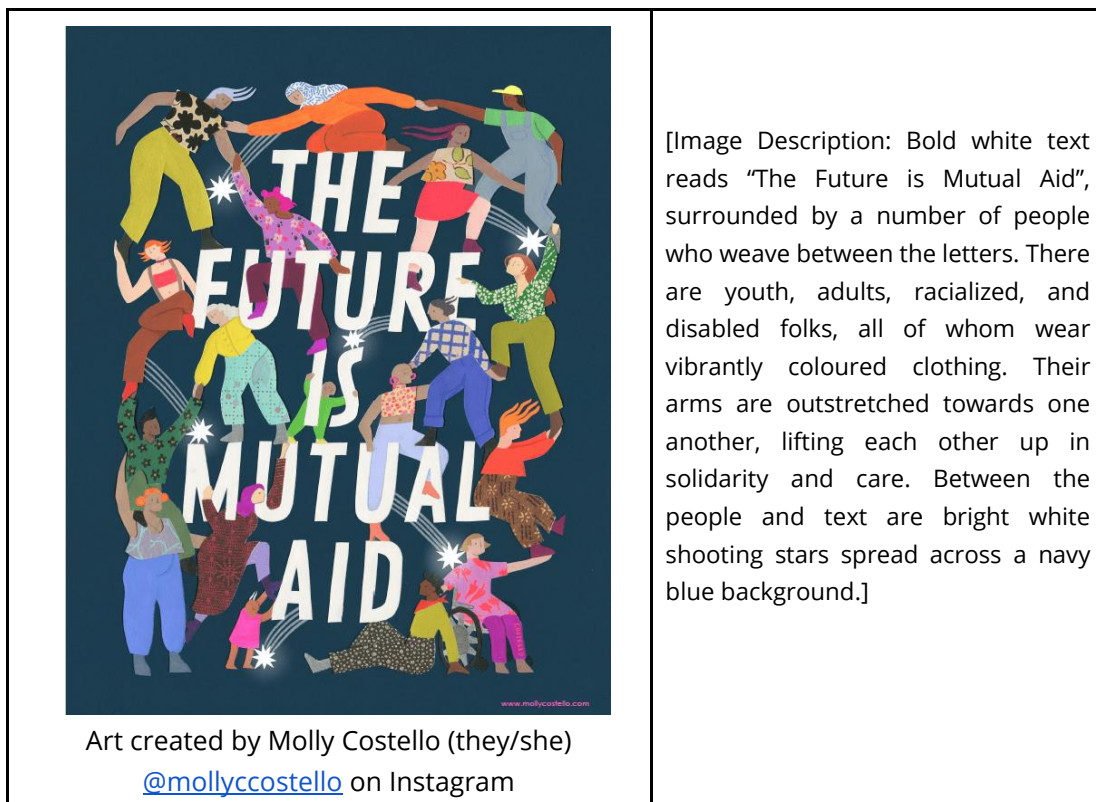
Voices From Our Community
"Experiencing months and months of loss in this past year because of COVID has been extremely isolating... [and] the times when I needed my community the most were also the times they pushed me away since I could not work as much as I wanted to. We leave a lot of people behind by acting like this." - Daniel Hyun Chung
"I grew up not being able to outwardly express grief. I bottled everything up and sealed the lid so tightly. When I eventually got involved in organizing, I found myself stuck in this deep deep pit of gloom. Having spaces for people like me to work through our grief and heal together would have made me feel more welcome." - Emma G. (she/her)

Mutual Aid vs. Charity

Mutual aid can be defined as communities coming together to meet each other's needs; it is built upon reciprocity and the notion that solutions cannot be found within our current systems (Big Door Brigade). This includes things like community fridges and pantries, lending or book-sharing libraries, sending money to folks on the frontlines, community loan funds, care packages for unhoused folks, and much more!

Principles of reciprocity and interconnection between people and the planet have long been central to Indigenous ways of knowing. Racialized communities are especially familiar with mutual aid practices, as they have been instrumental in the survival of their cultures and peoples. Since first contact with European settlers, mutual aid has helped in tending to the wounds of colonial violence and ensuring the longevity of Indigenous resistance. Throughout the 1960s and 70s, The Black Panthers set up networks to provide clothing, food, education, healthcare, and transportation for members of their communities. The Black Panthers also practiced cross-movement solidarity, perhaps most notably providing daily meals to disabled folks during the 504 Sit-In.

Art created by Molly Costello (they/she)
@mollyccostello on Instagram

[Image Description: Bold white text reads "The Future is Mutual Aid", surrounded by a number of people who weave between the letters. There are youth, adults, racialized, and disabled folks, all of whom wear vibrantly coloured clothing. Their arms are outstretched towards one another, lifting each other up in solidarity and care. Between the people and text are bright white shooting stars spread across a navy blue background.]

Another example of mutual aid is the concept of عونا (ouna), an Arabic word that describes the deep-rooted cooperation within Palestinian communities where families and community members in need of material and/or emotional support are able to access the resources needed to ensure good health and wellbeing (Adalah Justice Project).

The following table draws upon ideas from the book "Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)" by trans activist, writer, and teacher, Dean Spade.

Mutual Aid	Charity
uses people power to resist efforts by government to regulate/shut down activities	does not seek to transform the conditions that (re)produce injustices
open meetings with as many people making decisions and doing the work as possible	maintain hierarchies of pay, status, influence, and decision-making
do not gatekeep who can receive support through strict rules/eligibility requirements	eligibility criteria for services that define who is deserving and undeserving of support
people participate voluntarily because of their passion about justice and care	rely on grant money to operate, which leads to influence of corporations/philanthropists
values autonomy of people impacted or targeted by harmful social conditions	single-issue work serves particular population or works in only one area of policy reform
accountable to the people and communities being supported	accountable to corporations/companies, wealthy individuals, and other funders
connected to other tactics aimed at the root causes of distress where those most affected have a say in matters	benefits the rich by giving them a good image and tax cuts, while upholding capitalist system that allows wealthy folks to remain wealthy
help people develop skills for collaboration, participation, and decision-making	people are hired based on their credentials & Board of Directors make the bulk of decisions
to learn more about the roots of mutual aid, check out this Visual History of Mutual Aid created by Ariel Aberg-Riger	to learn more about the non-profit industrial complex, read the article Nonprofit Industrial Complex 101 by Sidra Morgan-Montoya

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER LEARNING

Because this toolkit is meant to be an introduction to community organizing, many things were only briefly touched upon or intentionally left out in order to keep things digestible and concise. Below, you will find a number of articles, books, toolkits, and other such resources we have compiled to help guide you on your path towards further unlearning, growth, and organizing.

Have a comment, question, or resource you think would make a valuable addition to this toolkit? Please fill out our **feedback form**.

Keep in touch about future projects and offerings via Instagram **@waterdamagedpaper** or email Michelle at **communityorganizingtoolkit@gmail.com**

Abolition and Disability Justice Coalition: Alternative to Policing Based on Disability Justice
A collective of abolitionist psychiatric survivors, disabled people, and their accomplices who work towards the liberation of all. Their zine examines the intersections of abolition and disability justice.

Adriana Laurent: Climate Migrants on Unceded Lands
Climate change is already threatening the lives of marginalized people. Unfortunately, there is no international and legally binding recognition for climate migration. Global North nations have the resources and responsibility to alter migration pathways and accommodate climate migrants. The world needs to prepare in a way that centers the humanity and dignity of impacted communities.

adrienne maree brown: Emergent Strategy
This is a radical self-help, society-help, and planet-help book designed to shape the futures we want to live. Change is constant. The world is in a continual state of flux. It is a stream of ever-mutating, emergent patterns. *Emergent Strategy* is an invitation to feel, map, assess, and learn from the swirling patterns around us in order to better understand and influence them as they happen.

Alt-Text As Poetry Workbook
Alt-text is an essential part of web accessibility, but it is often overlooked or understood solely through the lens of compliance, which fails to showcase its tremendous expressive potential. This workbook reframes alt-text as a type of poetry and provides exercises to practice writing it.

Apathy is Boring: Media Literacy Toolkit
Can you spot real news from fake news? Disinformation and misinformation campaigns have come to the forefront in recent years, eroding the trust between citizens, the government, the media and other institutions that's needed to ensure we have a strong, functioning democracy.

A Starting Guide to Transformative Justice Practice for Climate Organizers
Created by A. Mylvaganam, Lucy Wicken, and Sarah Day to explore transformative justice, disability justice, and climate justice. It includes sections on generative conflict, cultivating collective access, decommissioning psychiatric institutions, and a syllabus for abolition learning communities.

Amanda Leduc: Disfigured - On Fairy Tales, Disability, Making Space
This book challenges the ableism found within fairy tales and offers new ways to celebrate the magic of all bodies by examining how these fairy tales have shaped our expectations of disability. It points towards a new world where disability is no longer a punishment or impediment but operates, instead, as a way of centering a protagonist and helping them to cement their own place in a story, and from there, the world.

[Image Description: Cover is an illustration of a cottage in the woods surrounded by dark green bushes. Within its leaves are black and white drawings of a hand, eye, crutch, ear, and foot. A purple square in the lower right corner reads "Amanda Leduc - Disfigured, On Fairy Tales, Disability, and Making Space".]
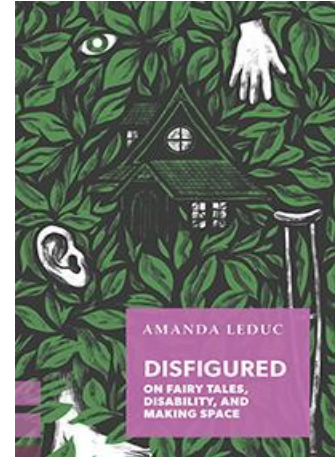
Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective
The Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective (BATJC) is a community group working to build and support transformative justice responses to child sexual abuse. Their work secures safety and intervenes in current violence, while also building long term spaces of accountability and strategies for healing and resilience for all survivors, bystanders, and those who have caused harm. Learn more about pod mapping and read about some transformative justice case studies!

BCCIC: Climate Justice Toolkit for Municipalities
This toolkit presents a review of the current climate justice work being done in municipalities across "B.C." It compiles a list of action items that can be incorporated into decision-making and planning processes to address existing gaps and forefront the importance of climate justice in municipalities.

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives: Challenging Racist "British Columbia"
This document examines how this recent cycle of anti-racist activism is part of a broader history of Indigenous, Black and other racialized communities challenging white supremacy for over 150 years. It is co-authored by activists and scholars from diverse communities.

Centre for Sustainable Food Systems at UBC: Food Justice Modules
These learning modules are a set of open-access multimedia resources to facilitate classroom exploration of concepts relating to power, privilege and more within the food system. Topics include food justice, agriculture as a colonial project, diasporic foodways, migrant labour, local food movement, food systems governance, gender, equity, and food security.

Climate Emergency Toolkit for Christians and Churches
This toolkit was created to encourage faith communities to recognize climate change for the crisis it is. It is split into three parts: prepare, declare, and impact. The toolkit centres the importance of conversations and storytelling, encourages churches to make public and formal statements that understand the urgency of climate change, and highlights the power of connecting with others locally.

Colonization and Decolonization: Manual for Indigenous Liberation in the 21st Century
This manual is divided into four sections. The first section defines colonialism, its methods, and its ongoing history. The second section details the impact colonialism has had on Indigenous peoples, including individual impacts. The next section examines the concept of decolonization, while the fourth discusses decolonization within a North American context.

Creative Approaches to Climate & Peace Education
This book shows how storytelling and art can help educators address climate change and peace by offering students new channels of engagement beyond traditional classroom methods.

Creative Wildfire: Resist & Build
A five-part series shares stories of grassroots power and struggles for community self-determination. Key topics include land back and Indigenous sovereignty, community-controlled healthcare, housing as a human right, just transition & climate justice, and regenerative finance.

Criminalizing Survival Curricula
This guide was conceived and coordinated by Mariame Kaba. It includes curriculum units and activities focused on the intersections between racialized gender-based violence and criminalization, problems of carceral feminisms and crimmigration.

Crip Camp: A Disability Revolution (1:46:42)
In the early 1970s, teenagers with disabilities faced a future shaped by isolation, discrimination and institutionalization. Bonds between those at Camp Jened endured as many became involved in activism. Crip Camp is the story of one group of people and captures one moment in time from hundreds, if not thousands, of other equally important stories from the Disability Rights Movement.

Critical Resistance
An international movement to end the Prison Industrial Complex by challenging the belief that caging and controlling people makes us safe. They believe that basic necessities such as food, shelter, and freedom are what really make our communities secure.

Daria Garina: Accountability Mapping Course
A guided course with graphics, videos, and check your understanding quizzes that focus on learning transformative justice skills through the body/somatic healing. Shift old patterns, open up new possibilities, and align with what matters. Free access for queer and trans BIPOC!

Defund the Police, Fund the People, and Defend Black Lives
Concrete steps toward divestment from policing and investment in community safety. This toolkit was created by the Movement for Black Lives Coalition. It outlines their common demands, how to defund the police, potential pitfalls on the road to safety, strategies being used across North America, and a section of further resources.

Dina Gilio-Whitaker: Why Settler Fragility is So Hard to Talk About

An introduction to settler colonialism, settler fragility, and settler privilege. It includes some examples of how settler fragility shows up across the political spectrum. Part two, Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack of Settler Privilege, reimagines Peggy McIntosh's work through a colonial lens.

Disability Visibility

An anthology edited by activist Alice Wong, which highlights the stories of disabled people. It is a powerful collection of blog posts, manifestos, articles, and more—all of which give a glimpse into the rich complexity of the disabled experience. It celebrates and documents disability culture in the now and looks to the future and the past with hope and love.

Economics for Emancipation

Free course created by the Centre for Economic Democracy and the Centre for Popular Economics, which includes modules introducing economics, capitalism, redistribution recognition paradox, alternative economic systems, fiscal & monetary policies, and solidarity economies.

Em Mittertreiner: Guide to Gender-Affirming Care

This guide was created to help future top surgery patients and their loved ones understand and access the resources they need in order to make this process as smooth as possible. It includes information about hormone therapy and top surgery that are specific to so-called British Columbia.

Fossil Free: Divestment Creative Action Manual

This manual is designed to share some of the most creative ideas for divestment actions. Learn more about how to form your own campaign group through this self-paced guide on divestment group trainings.

[Image Description: Bright orange background with a white silhouette of an arm poking a black balloon with a white X in its centre. Bold black and white text reads "Divestment Creative Action Manual" and "Fossil Free".]

Fostering Healthier Masculinities

This curriculum brings up questions that masculine youth may have never been given the space to think about before - questions about interpersonal support, body image, and emotional expression. Boys and masculine folks want to be free from the narrow set of expressions that cultural expectations limit them to. This curriculum is designed to bring this vision to life.

Generation Five: Toward Transformative Justice

Transformative Justice is also about building the capacity of individuals and collectives to address larger conditions of inequality and injustice as well as to challenge state violence. Generation Five works to interrupt and mend the intergenerational impact of child sexual abuse on individuals, families, and communities. This paper focuses on ways to secure both individual and social justice.

Hua Foundation: Anti-Racism and Solidarities Resource Collection

A list of resources that unpack the model minority myth, explore the history of anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism in North America, delve into performative activism and ways to hold ourselves accountable, as well as build solidarity for resilient neighbourhoods.

If You're New to Abolition: Study Guide

A six-week study guide filled with readings/viewings/listening material each week. It introduces abolition as a practice rooted in dismantling and building, but also transforming. Weekly themes include: prisons and policing in the U.S., the prison industrial complex, policing and imprisonment as racial violence, reforms vs. abolition, feminist & queer and trans abolitionism, and alternatives.

Interfaith Rainforest Initiative: Toolkit on Forest Protection

These toolkits are meant to inform and inspire faith communities to action to help safeguard tropical forests and their inhabitants. It presents a series of reflections, verses, prayers, talking points, and lesson plans. There are toolkits for people of Jewish, Buddhist, Catholic, Protestant, Islamic, Hindu, Evangelical, and Baha'i faiths.

Interrupting Criminalization: Defund the Police - Invest in Community Care

This guide serves as a tool for individuals and communities organizing for non-police mental health crisis responses. It offers considerations for what can be a complex, costly, and long-term intervention strategy that highlights considerations for meaningful shifts away from law enforcement and towards community-based responses.

[Image Description: Pale blue square with bold black text that reads "Defund the Police - Invest in Community Care: A Guide to Alternative Mental Health Responses". Beneath the text is a black and white photograph from a protest where a person holds up a sign that reads "Defund the Police".]
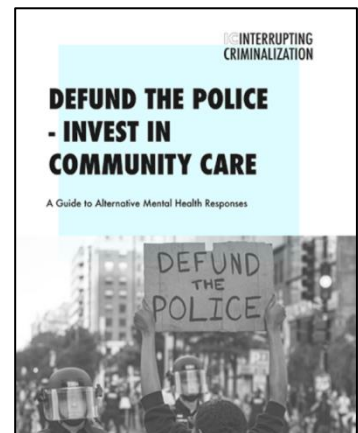
Jay Timothy Dolmage: Academic Ableism

Academic Ableism brings together disability studies and a critique that recognizes the ways that disability is composed in and by higher education. This book examines everything from campus accommodation processes, to architecture, to popular films about college life. Dolmage argues that building more inclusive schools means better education for all.

LGBTQ History Digital Collaboratory: Oral History Hub

This hub acts as a growing resource for oral histories practitioners and the public. It features audio collections that chronicle stories told by queer, trans, and gender non-conforming folks in so-called America that have been erased from our history books.

Madness & Oppression - Paths to Personal Transformation and Collective LIberation
There are four sections in this guide. In sections one and two you'll find an introduction to oppression. Section three explores how we cope with it. Section four asks how we can address oppression in our communities and achieve collective liberation.

Mariame Kaba: TransformHarm
TransformHarm is a resource hub about ending violence. We are not an organization. This site offers an introduction to transformative justice. The site includes material on abolition, community accountability, healing justice, restorative justice, and carceral feminisms.

Mia Mingus: The Medical Industrial Complex
An explanation of the medical industrial complex (MIC) with an accompanying visual. The MIC cuts across all of our work and continues to be a major site where ableism is manufactured, perpetuated and fed. We cannot simply fight for the right to receive care, but also the right to refuse care.

Micah Herskind: Prison Abolition Resource Guide
A large collection of posts, articles, videos, books, and toolkits about prison and police abolition. Topics range from abolition and COVID-19, criminalizing Blackness and anti-carceral feminism, to transformative justice, prison labour, child welfare, the non-profit industrial complex, and more!

Migrant Justice
Resource list created by Migrant Justice, who strive to build the voice, capacity, and power of the farmworker community and engage community partners to organize for economic justice and human rights. They work to create access to dignified work and quality housing, freedom of movement and access to transportation, freedom from discrimination, and access to healthcare.

Naomi Klein: This Changes Everything
Klein builds the case for how massively reducing greenhouse emissions is our best chance to reduce inequalities, reimagine our broken democracies, and rebuild our local economies. She documents the inspiring movements that have already begun this process and exposes the myths that are clouding the climate debate. It's not about carbon—it's about capitalism.

[Image Description: Bright blue book cover reads "Naomi Klein" in big bold black letters. Beneath it reads "This Changes Everything" in bold white text, followed by "Capitalism vs The Climate'' in smaller bold black letters.]
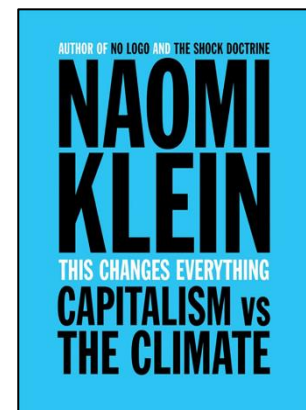
Navigating Queerness and Faith
A short toolkit created by the Nova Scotian Youth Project to support your religious 2SLGBTQ+ friends! It includes information on the misinterpretation of religions being against queer and/or trans people, ways to assert boundaries with your religious communities, and more!

No Cop Academy Organizing Toolkit

Though the campaign ended in 2019, this organizing toolkit was developed to share knowledge about taking action to defund policing, get cops out of our schools, and build abolitionist futures!

Patty Berne: Disability Justice Working Draft

A detailed explanation of Sins Invalid's ten principle framework for disability justice. Also check out the film she helped create called Sins Invalid: An Unashamed Claim to Beauty.

Project NIA: Building Accountable Communities Toolkit

We know there are more productive ways to hold each other accountable and to address harm in our communities than the criminal legal system. Use this toolkit to learn more about transformative justice practices and reducing the reliance on arrest, detention, and incarceration.

Radical in Progress: Study Guides

These study guides are for those who want to learn about the theory behind social justice and how to apply that theory in their own community organizing. It provides a summary and comprehensive look at a number of key social justice texts. There are also key themes, terms, and reflection questions to either work through by yourself or with those in your organizing circles.

Racial Justice Bookshelf

A list of non-fiction and fiction anti-Black racism books. This resource includes work from Black authors and creatives that range from race and policy to food and fantasy. It also includes links to a number of Black-owned bookstores to buy from and support.

The Red Deal: Indigenous Action to Save Our Earth

The Red Nation invites allied movements, comrades, and relatives to implement the Red Deal, a movement-oriented document for climate justice and grassroots reform and revolution. We cannot expect politicians to do what only mass movements can do.

Rivers of Hope: Toolkit on Islamophobic Violence

Written by Sidrah Ahmad-Chan, this toolkit touches on hate crimes and Islamophobic violence against Muslim women living in the so-called Greater Toronto Area. It includes quotes from survivors, poetry by Muslim women about Islamophobia, tips on bystander intervention, etc.

Settler Responsibility: Lack Back - No Liberation on Stolen Land

It is imperative that settlers take meaningful action and hold themselves, their communities, and governments accountable. This digital resource guide interrogates the ways we have been compliant to the settler state and introduces important concepts pertaining to Indigenous solidarity.

Solidarity for Settlers in So-Called Canada

A resource guide with action items for settlers to support Indigenous land defenders on the frontlines of the climate crisis. It includes petitions, donation links, and a number of readings.

[Stonewall Forever: The Past, Present, and Future of Pride](#) (21:48)
A documentary from NYC's LGBT Community Center directed by Ro Haber. The film brings together an array of BIPOC, queer, trans, and homeless voices from over 50 years of the LGBTQ+ rights movement to explore LGBTQ+ activism before, during and after the Stonewall Riots.

[Victoria Law: Resistance Behind Bars - The Struggles of Incarcerated Women](#)
The August Rebellion of 1974 saw women prisoners band together in protest of the brutal beating of a fellow prisoner. The inmates at New York's maximum-security Bedford Hills prison fought off guards, holding seven of them hostage and taking over sections of the facility. Resistance Behind Bars documents the collective organizing and daily struggles inside women's prisons, including the challenges faced by incarcerated trans, intersex, and gender diverse folks.

[Water Damaged Paper Anthology](#)
This anthology was created as a testament to the undeniable power youth have when they come together. It is a collection of artwork and writing created by young people from across the world. [Volume 1](#) is on climate justice, [Volume 2](#) centres intersectional feminists & queer, trans, and gender non-conforming creatives, and [Volume 3](#) is about disabled identities, cultures, and communities!

[Xwi7xwa Library: Critical Indigenous Research Toolkit](#)
The word 'research' is probably one of the dirtiest words in the Indigenous world's vocabulary. When mentioned in many indigenous contexts, it stirs up silence, it conjures up bad memories, it raises a smile that is knowing and distrustful. The ways scientific research is implicated in the worst excesses of colonialism remains a powerful remembered history for many of the world's colonized peoples.

[Yellowhead Institute Red Paper: Land Back](#)
This report breaks down the current status of land dispossession in Canada, focusing on alienation through resource extraction. It examines various forms of redress, recognition, and ends with examples of reclamation — meaningful Indigenous economies outside of state policies and legislation. It is divided into four sections: spectrum of consent, denial, recognition, and reclamation.

[Youth Climate Lab & Climate Caucus: Infiltration Manual](#)
The Infiltration Manual aims to demystify municipal governance structures and provide youth with practical knowledge and tools on how to take climate action.

[Image Description: Brown text reads "Infiltration Manual: Pushing for Ambitious Climate Action at the Municipal Level over a pale yellow background. Surrounding the text is a number of white icon designs of a lightbulb, solar panel, windmill, sun, recycle symbol, water droplet, sprout in soil, carbon footprint, tree, greenhouse, and electric car.
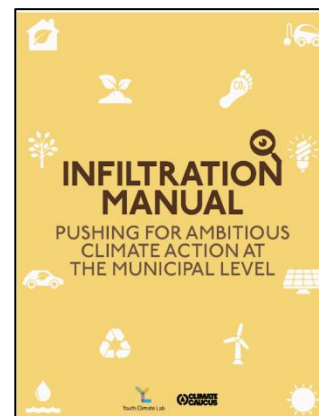
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to everyone who took the time to share their stories, skills, and wisdom with us: Nina P., Megan Breau, A. Mylvaganam, Nikola Marković, Robyn Blaine, Sigfried Hemming, Daniel Hyun Chung, Josie Roy, Bita Nejad, Ryan Jenkins, Samantha Mai, K.M. Reid, Veronica Castillo, Liam Watts, Kayla Li, Aliya Hirji, Sophia L., Wyatt S., Trent Hayek, Emma G., and the five other participants in our community consultation who have asked to remain anonymous.

I would also like to extend my utmost gratitude to you for reading and/or sharing. Being open to learning and confronting the ways we have internalized oppression in our lives is no easy feat. It is an ongoing process that can feel daunting, but part of the joy in finding community is knowing there are others who share our dreams for a better world.

To quote revolutionary activist Grace Lee Boggs, "Our challenge, as we enter the new millennium, is to deepen the commonalities and the bonds between these tens of millions, while at the same time continuing to address the issues within our local communities… that is to not only say 'no' to the existing power structures but also empower our constituencies to embrace the power within each of us to crease the world anew."