

Welcome!

NACRP

National Association of
Climate Resilience Planners

COMMUNITY-DRIVEN PLANNING

for racial and climate justice

FACILITATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM



**Facilitating
Power**

IN THE CHAT:

***What gives you inspiration
and courage to take risks?***



Community Agreements

1. **BE FULLY PRESENT**
2. **PRACTICE RESPECT FOR ALL**
3. **HONOR MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES**
4. **TAKE SPACE, MAKE SPACE**
5. **BE OPEN TO NEW POSSIBILITIES**
6. **CULTIVATE MUTUALITY**
7. **ASK FOR WHAT YOU NEED**

JULY 15, 2025

Facilitating Alignment

PURPOSE

Increased confidence in and tools for facilitating alignment, navigating conflict

20 min Welcome, Overview, and Grounding

25 min Sharing story with **Abi Shakur**

5 min Review toolsets

5 min Break

35 min Peer Consultancy with **Sheila J. Babauta**


15 min Personal Reflection

30 min Peer Coaching

5 min Closing Reflection

OBJECTIVES

- Increase understanding of how to put tools for facilitating alignment into practice
- Articulate how decisions are made within the planning process + an outline of the key steps in the decision making process
- Identify practices of mutuality to counter dominant culture habits, as well as healing-informed practices to strengthen capacity to navigate conflict

A photograph of a group of people, likely students, holding hands in a circle. The image is overlaid with a teal color filter. A large, thick yellow circle is drawn around the center of the group, framing the text. The text "Grounding & Centering" is written in a bold, white, sans-serif font with a black outline, positioned in the center of the yellow circle. The background shows the arms and hands of several people, some wearing wristbands, all reaching towards the center.

Grounding & Centering



In the Chat:

(choose 1)

What are the practices that will help me ground when I'm dealing with conflict?

What small actions affirm my connections with others?

What reminds me to see my experience within a bigger picture of history and relationships?



Welcome Abi Shakur

A proud DMV native, Abi spent their formative years growing up in DC and Baltimore. After attending Georgetown University, Abi began community organizing in a number of grassroots projects in DC, including the establishment of **Baldwin House, an affordable housing cooperative and mutual aid hub in the Shaw/Columbia Heights neighborhood**, and local progressive advocacy.

Having grown up in multiple cities facing issues of displacement and resource inequality, Abi is passionate about organizing to resist these trends and building horizontal support structures and connectivity in local communities.

Turning Towards Each Other

A Conflict Workbook



Jovida Ross & Weyam Ghadbian

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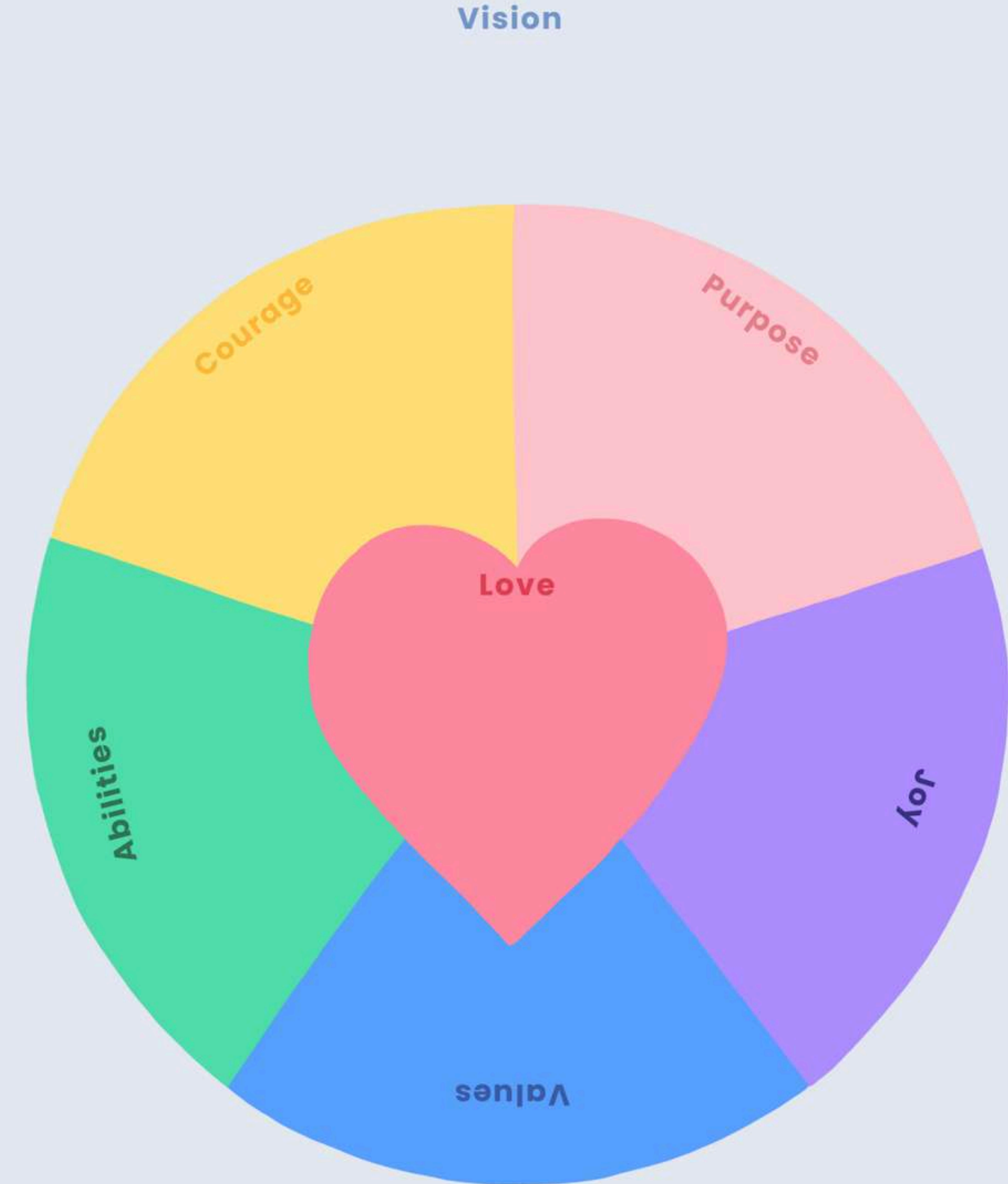
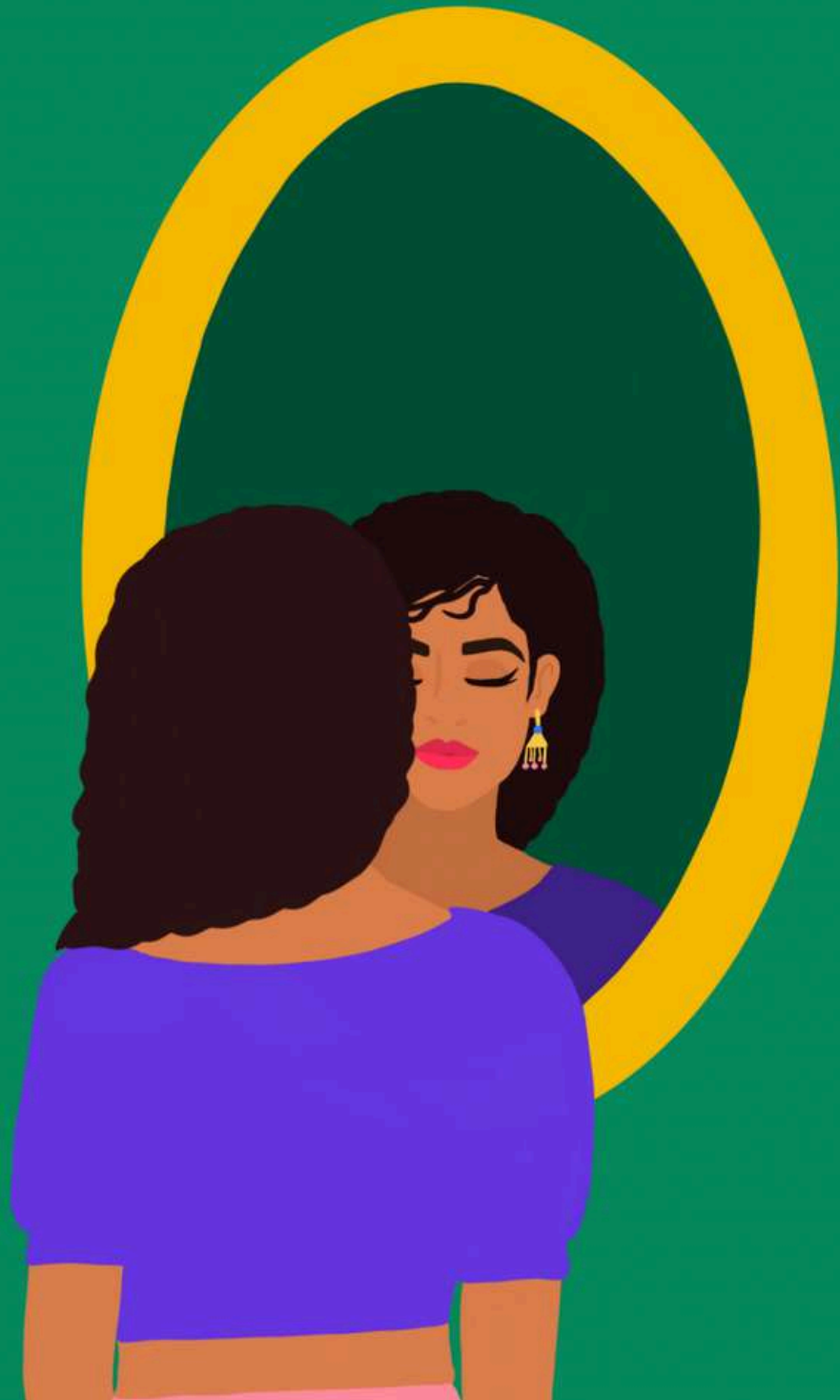
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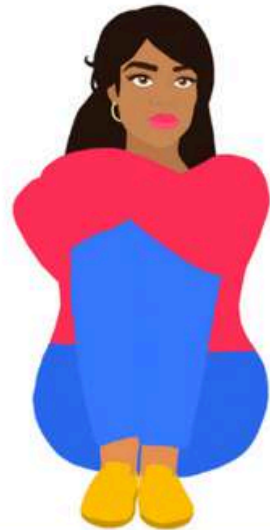
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Self Explorations



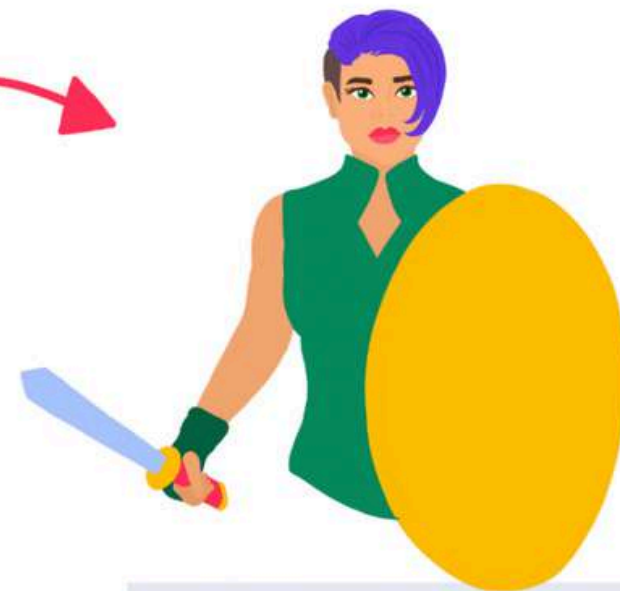
Four Archetypes in My Conflicts

Victim



What supports me when I am in *Victim*?

Warrior



What do I need to move through *Warrior*?

Creator



What allows me to embody *Creator*?

Leader/Healer



How can I use power wisely in *Leader/Healer*?

My Conflict Archetypes

Instructions: These questions are for your own reflection and self awareness.

1. Calling to mind a conflict I've experienced...

- What are the archetypes that I inhabited in that conflict?
- How did the archetype I was inhabiting shape my responses (how I showed up, what choices I made) in the conflict?
- What did I most need when I was in those archetypes?

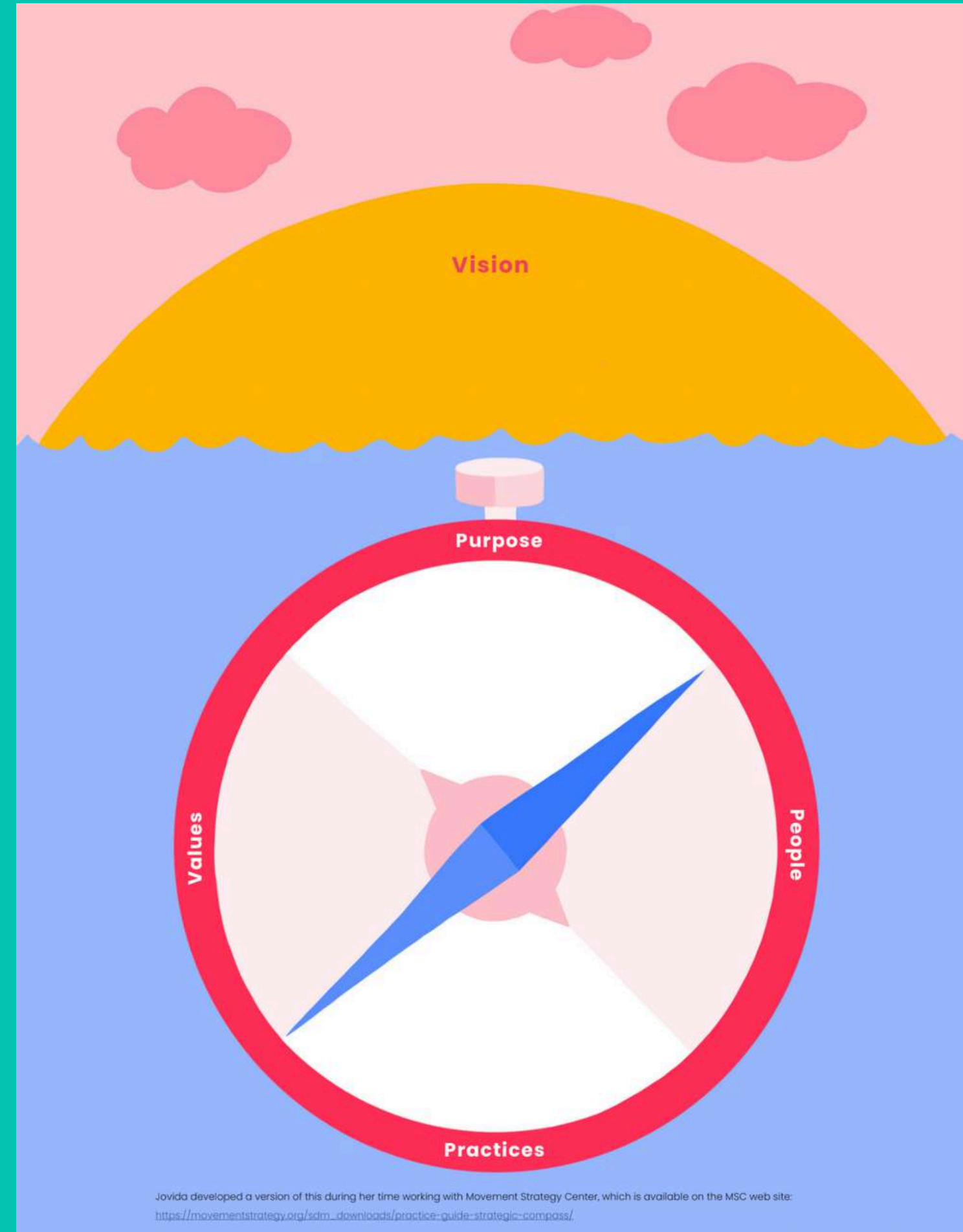
2. Calling to mind another conflict in which I inhabited a different archetype...

- What are the archetypes that I inhabited in that conflict?
- How did the archetype I was inhabiting shape my responses (how I showed up, what choices I made) in the conflict?
- What did I most need when I was in those archetypes?

3. Is there a particular archetype I habitually tend towards?

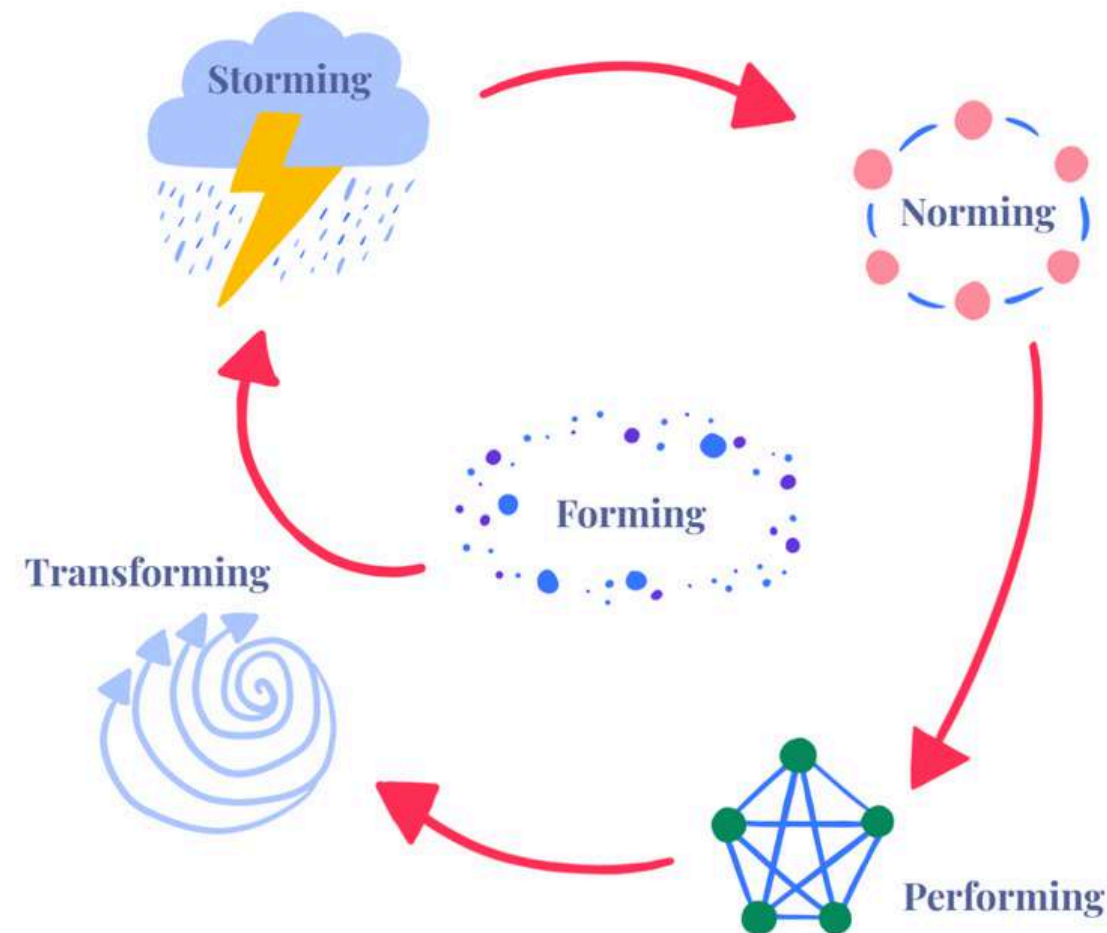
4. What are three practices I can commit to, that help me move through my go-to archetype?

Group Explorations



Four Phases of Group Development

Most groups go through common stages of development, starting from the time the group first comes together, to the time the group dissolves. As you can see below, "Storming" (often where conflict arises) is a typical part of a group's maturation process that leads to trust-building and the ability to achieve the group's goals. Recognizing that storming is a natural part of the cycle can ease fears that there is something wrong when conflict arises in a group. Groups can cycle through these stages multiple times; anytime the configuration of the group changes, a new cycle may be triggered.*



* A version of this model was first described by Bruce Tuckman, in "Developmental sequence in small groups," Psychological Bulletin, 1965. Tuckman's version ended with Performing. It's been adapted in practice by many people.

Forming. The group first comes together, begins to orient to each other, and to the group's purpose and practices. Group members are often on "best behavior" though still figuring out what shared expectations are.

Storming. In this stage the group is sorting out how to work together. Different opinions are expressed and the group may face conflict for the first time as they sort out disagreements. For some groups this can be intense, and for others, it's just another conversation.

Norming. Working through differences builds trust. The group finds their ways of working together.

Performing. With the group's roles and relationships established, the group is able to focus on achieving their goals.

Transforming. The group transforms, which can mean the project is complete so the group disperses, or may mean the initiative is reshaped, with new goals and/or group members added.



Instructions: Answer these questions for your group. You might answer them on your own first, then share, and use it as the basis for discussing what is useful to pay attention to, together.

1. What **phase** are we in?
2. What is this phase **offering** us?
3. What **challenges** are we experiencing in this phase?
4. What could we **practice**, to optimize the **gifts** without getting stuck in the challenges?

Dominant Culture Check

We live in a world shaped by hundreds of years of collective, structural harms (the legacies of brutal colonization, slavery, patriarchy) that shape the culture we live in. That means these patterns have shaped us too, and we must assume they are present in our relationships. To release the patterns of domination and violence, it's helpful to acknowledge how we may have internalized them and be unconsciously acting them out.

The resources on these pages are based on Tema Okun's work on dismantling white supremacy culture.* They are offered to support groups to talk about race, power, and how they show up in conflicts.

Dominant Culture Patterns



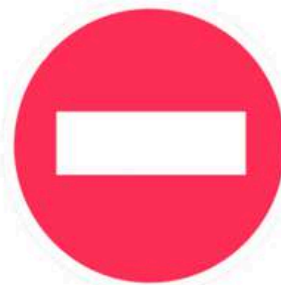
Exceptionalism, Power & Control

- **Paternalism:** Authority figures "know best" and decide on behalf of others.
- **Power Hoarding:** Power is concentrated in a few.
- **Individualism:** Everyone for themselves.
- **I'm the only one (who can do this):** No delegation or cross-training.
- **Right to Comfort:** Those in power get to protect their emotional comfort.



EXTERNAL VALIDATION: Quantification & Measurement

- **Progress = Bigger, More:** Fetishizing perpetual expansion.
- **Quantity over Quality:** If it can't be measured, it has no value.
- **Objectivity:** "Verifiable facts" and linear analysis is valued over subjective experience.
- **Worshiping the Written Word:** If it's not in a memo, it doesn't exist.
- **Urgency:** There's never enough time!



BINARY THINKING: Right vs Wrong

- **Perfectionism:** Focusing attention primarily on what's wrong in order to avoid "flaws."
- **Defensiveness:** Protecting against the perception of flaws.
- **Either / Or:** Oversimplifying everything into opposing pairs.
- **One RIGHT way:** There's a right way, and a wrong way.
- **Conflict Avoidance:** Open disagreement is considered impolite; superficial niceness is rewarded.

*To read Tema's powerful work, check out <https://www.dismantlingracism.org/white-supremacy-culture.html>

There are also hundreds of years of non-dominant cultural practices of caring, interdependence, and resilience that we can each draw on to cultivate a life-giving culture!

When we are proactive about reflecting on these dynamics, and talking about them regularly, we become more aware of when our behaviors are shaped by dominant culture. When we are more aware we can choose regenerative practices instead.

Practices that cultivate Mutuality



Acknowledge Power (in all its manifestations)

- Acknowledge power differentials and how they impact individual and group experiences
- Clarify which decision-making practices to use, when (see Pages 34 & 35).
- Support individual freedom and autonomy within our group's purpose.
- Determine the decision-making autonomy each person needs to be effective in their role/ contribution to the group.
- Sit with our own discomfort with differing opinions, especially if we have more positional, social, or economic power.
- Actively invite feedback on a regular basis.
- Cultivate a culture that values learning, frames mistakes as learning experiences, and practices taking responsibility for impact.
- Cultivate clearly defined leadership roles across the group.



Lead With Purpose, Practice Values

- Regularly (re)connect with purpose and values.
- Develop a long term vision for the future.
- Take time to agree how we'll put our values into practice.
- Clarify and make space for what we're saying YES to.
- Discuss a spectrum of success to align on goals (see strategy section of resources in the Appendices).
- Define goals that speak to how the group wants to work together, not just what we want to achieve.
- Create realistic work plans and timelines for projects, and be willing to adjust when reality plays out differently.
- Leave space in work plans for reflection, breathing room, big picture thinking, and the likelihood of needing to adapt as conditions change.
- When facing a truly urgent and important decision, create breathing room for creativity.



Appreciate our Diverse Strengths & Evolve Together

- Celebrate the diversity of our group's strengths and approaches.
- Actively express appreciation.
- Create opportunities to reflect.
- Explore mistakes as learning opportunities.
- Practice giving and receiving concrete feedback.
- Explore both/and, listening for nuances, and balancing polarities (see resource in the Appendices).
- Create active feedback loops to interrupt assumptions and inform decision-making.
- Embrace tensions in the group as opportunities for reflection, surfacing new insights, and rebalancing.
- Notice and name how our worldviews and cultural influences shape us and our work together.

Decision-Making Models



Self-stewarded

I alone decide



Consensus

We all agree



Consent

I have a proposal; no one objects so we try it



Consultative

I decide, with substantial input



Democratic Vote

Majority rules



Mix & Match

Blend two or more of these

Our Decision Making

Decision making can be a place where a lot of assumptions and unconscious power dynamics come into play, which can be a set-up for conflict. But it doesn't have to be! By agreeing on how we are making decisions we can avoid those pitfalls. Different models can be useful for different types of decisions. Below are some examples.



Instructions: You can use the questions on the right side to reflect on your group's decision-making needs. This could also be used as the basis for a group discussion on how you want to make decisions together.

Self stewarded (solo): Operational decisions that don't impact others substantively. **Example:** The timing of a particular task. **And/or:** Decisions concerning physical safety (be sure to define what that means for your group) or compliance with laws that the group has to operate within.

What are the decision calls that I'd like full authority to make on my own?

Consensus: Decisions that really require full buy-in for successful implementation. **Example:** What's our group's purpose or core values?

What are the decisions our group needs to make together?

Consent: Decisions that are useful to make quickly, which will directly impact others but in a limited way. **Example:** I propose moving the date of an important meeting. Any objections?

What decisions does our group make together that could be simplified with a consent model?

Consultative: Decisions that will impact others significantly, and, it's useful to have a single point of accountability. **Example:** Setting strategic goals related to a specific function that is led by one person (such as, in an organization, marketing). Or, say in a living situation, the group divies up responsibility for different kinds of maintenance.

What kinds of decisions do I have responsibility for, that I want others to weigh in on (and share their expertise or experience with me)? What are the decisions I want a group-mate to own responsibility for, with input from others?

Vote: Decisions with clearly defined choices that impact many, for which consensus is impractical or not necessary. **Example:** A network changing their dues structure.

What kinds of decisions does our group make that would be useful to put to a vote?

Mix & Match: Fist to Five (see the Appendices), can be used as a temperature-check for consensus decision-making, and/or it can be used as a blend of voting and consent decision-making (consent is established when enough votes are over a pre-established dividing line). Another way to mix and match is to identify our group's preferred decision-making approach, and identify a fall-back that only comes into play in specific circumstances.

When would it be useful to blend decision-making models in our group?

Communicating What Matters



Addressing Pain Points

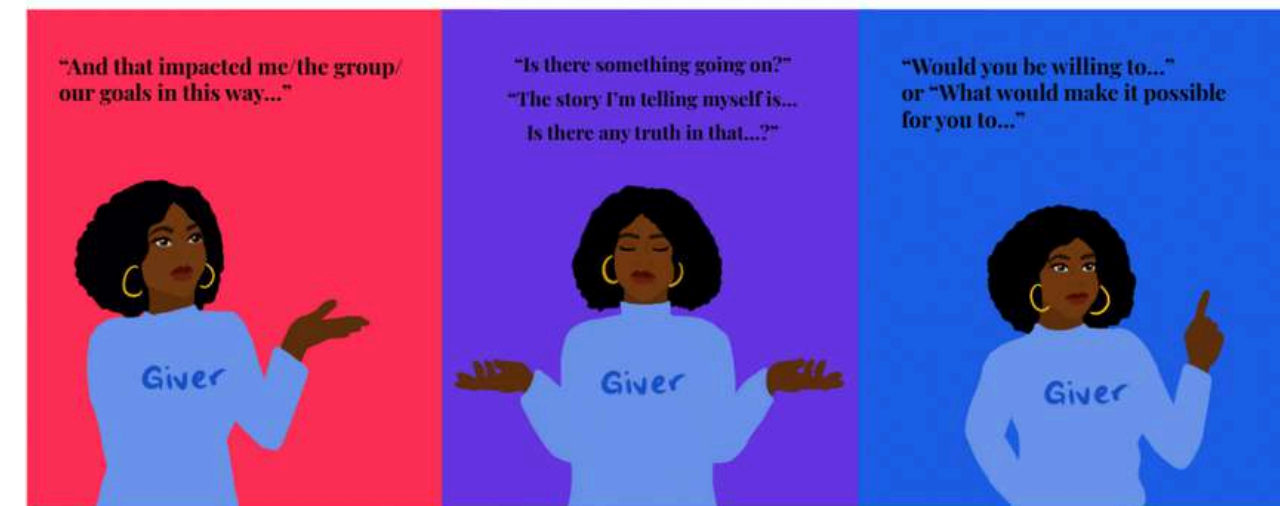
Bringing up what's not working in real time is the best way to prevent future conflict. Having these conversations again and again builds trust and deepens group resiliency.

Begin by resourcing yourself and preparing for a courageous conversation, on Pages 42 & 43. When you're ready for the conversation, here's a resource for how to go about it!



Begin with an **affirmation** of shared commitment as context.

Share specifics of what activated the pain points and underlying needs using this handy nonviolent communication method.



Share further **impacts**: group, personal, or goal-related consequences.

Express **curiosity**. Find out what might be underlying this behavior; check your assumptions and possible projections.

Share concrete actions and **requests** kindly, without demanding.

Learning Together

Practicing feedback is an investment in shared purpose. It strengthens our relationships and helps us do what we want to do, well.

Instructions: Discuss together. How might our group incorporate regular feedback into the ways we work together?

Giving Useful Feedback



Regular & Timely

Feedback is strongest when the experience is fresh. Plus, if we do it often, in low-stakes situations, we'll get comfortable doing it, and it'll be easier to do it in the higher stakes situations.



Descriptive

Use language like I saw, I heard, I noticed... and use verbs to describe the action you observed. This grounds your observations in specifics.



Appreciative

Feedback about what works is incredibly useful, especially when we let each other know why or how it worked well.



Constructive

Offer specific suggestions to get stronger. Language like *I wish...* or *What if...* can be helpful to communicate options.

Receiving Useful Feedback



Consider it a gift

Your teammate took time and energy to support your learning. They may have also taken emotional risks to share their experience with you.



Listen Actively

Start by seeking to understand what they're saying. Ask clarifying questions. Summarize what you heard to check that you're understanding.



Kernal of truth

Feedback is not the absolute truth, it is one perspective. If most of what your teammate shared feels strange to you, look for what you can learn from in it, even if it's a small piece.



Work with it

Look for opportunities to apply the lesson you heard in the feedback. Even small adjustments can create big changes, over time.

COLLECTIVE DECISION-MAKING

This is an experiential activity that starts with making a simple decision as a group in order to reflect on decision-making in general. It provides an opportunity for a group to decide how it will make important decisions together. It ends with a decision made about how the group will decide things collectively in the future.

PURPOSE

To agree on how and when decisions should be made together.

OUTCOMES

Clear understanding about why decisions should be made collectively.

An agreed upon process for making decisions and for what to do when collective decision-making is challenging.

TIME

10-30 minutes

MATERIALS

None

SOURCE

Written by Partners for Collaborative Change, loosely based on a process developed by Quakers.

PREPARATION

Decide on a low-stakes decision to use, such as what snacks you will bring for the next session.

PROCESS

1. Tell the group that they will be deciding together what snacks we will have at the next session. To start the discussion about this, ask:

- What are factors that we should think about when making this decision?
- Who should be part of making the decision?
- Do we have enough information to make a decision at this time?
- What do we do if we disagree?
- What happens if everyone agrees, except one person?

2. Next try to reach consensus about the snacks. To do this:

- Request that someone make a proposal for what snacks to bring, based on the previous discussion.
- Check to see how people feel about this proposal. You can ask for people to show their thumbs up for support, down for strong opposition, or thumbs to the side to indicate that they have an issue with the proposal, but they won't block it. You can also use a spectrum for more complicated decisions as described below.
- Next, one by one ask for each person in a circle with a thumb to the side or down to share what their concern is, and ask the original proposer (or someone else) to make a new proposal that includes all of the concerns that were expressed.

- Check again (repeat steps B & C) until everyone either agrees, or is not opposed.
- If it seems that everyone does agree, rename the proposal and ask everyone again to affirm their agreement. Write this decision on flipchart paper so that it is very clear.

3. Now that you've made a decision about your snacks, talk about the different types of decision making.

- Consensus: everyone agrees
- Two-Thirds Consensus: We attempt to reach consensus, but then go to a two thirds vote if impossible
- Voting in which the majority wins
- One person decides

4. Using the same process as before, make a consensus decision about what kind of decision-making process the group will use for decisions that affect everyone.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

Different types of decisions may require different types of decision making. For the really important decisions that impact the whole group and the whole project, we recommend consensus. A strong principle of Community Driven Planning is that the people who are impacted by a decision should be at the decision-making table. This applies within the group too. If someone is left out of deciding the research goal for example, they may lose interest in the project, and the whole group will likely be impacted by their disinterest or absence.



VARIATIONS

When a decision can't be reached, use a Spectrum.

- Show visibly the two ends of the spectrum and the invisible line along which people will place themselves.
- Say, "Move to this side of the room if you are 100% agreed with this proposal, if you are 100% opposed, move to that side of the room (point) and if you're somewhere in between go
- where feels right." Make sure to say, "Be wherever is true for you, there are no right or wrong answers."
- Ask, "Does anyone want to share why they are where they are?"
- Adjust the original proposal to address concerns shared, and re-state.
- Repeat this process until everyone is on the agree side.

Quick Guide to Reaching Consensus:

- Discuss the decision and all of the information that people will need to have in order to make an informed decision
- Check that this is the right time and the right group of people to make this decision
- Develop a proposal that synthesizes people's ideas
- Check or test for consensus. Using thumbs, hands or a spectrum to learn who is not 100% on board, and hear their concerns and ask for changes
- Make a new proposal that synthesizes all of the new information that was just shared
- Check or test for consensus again
- Repeat until there is no more opposition
- Write up the decision clearly for all to see



**Facilitating
Power**

Tools for Facilitating Alignment

www.facilitatingpower.com



**Facilitating
Power**

These tools compiled and adapted from multiple
sources and from much practice!

www.facilitatingpower.com



Contents

1 CONSENSUS-BUILDING PROCESS

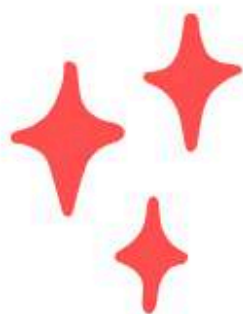
This step-by-step breakdown can be used to design an inclusive decision-making process designed to cultivate genuine alignment. The other tools in this toolkit can be integrated into the overall consensus-building process

2 ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS

Root cause analysis can be integrated into the information gathering step of the consensus-building process to generate insights that will inform prioritization of solutions that address the underlying causes of the problems the community faces

3 LEANING INTO TENSIONS

Opposing viewpoints are bound to arise when working to build consensus. This section offers an approach to leaning into those tensions as a strategy for developing whole solutions, or solutions that meet the common good



Leaning into Tensions



Transforming Binaries
to arrive at whole
solutions



Leaning into Tensions

GOAL: To uncover the values and wisdom behind opposing viewpoints to help a group arrive at comprehensive solutions that meet the common good

1 • Identify

Name the two poles or opposing view points that are arising

2 • Inquire

Create space for folks to share their differing viewpoints; invite deep listening and honoring of perspectives

3 • Reflect

Invite people to name the core values behind each of the opposing viewpoints, as well as the draw backs of each.

4 • Design

What solution(s) or approach speaks to the core values behind each view point, while addressing or avoiding the challenges?

5 • Align

Once folks can see a possible way forward together, start the consensus-building process to propose, discuss and align

Emphasize that the truest answer lies in the tension and uncertainty

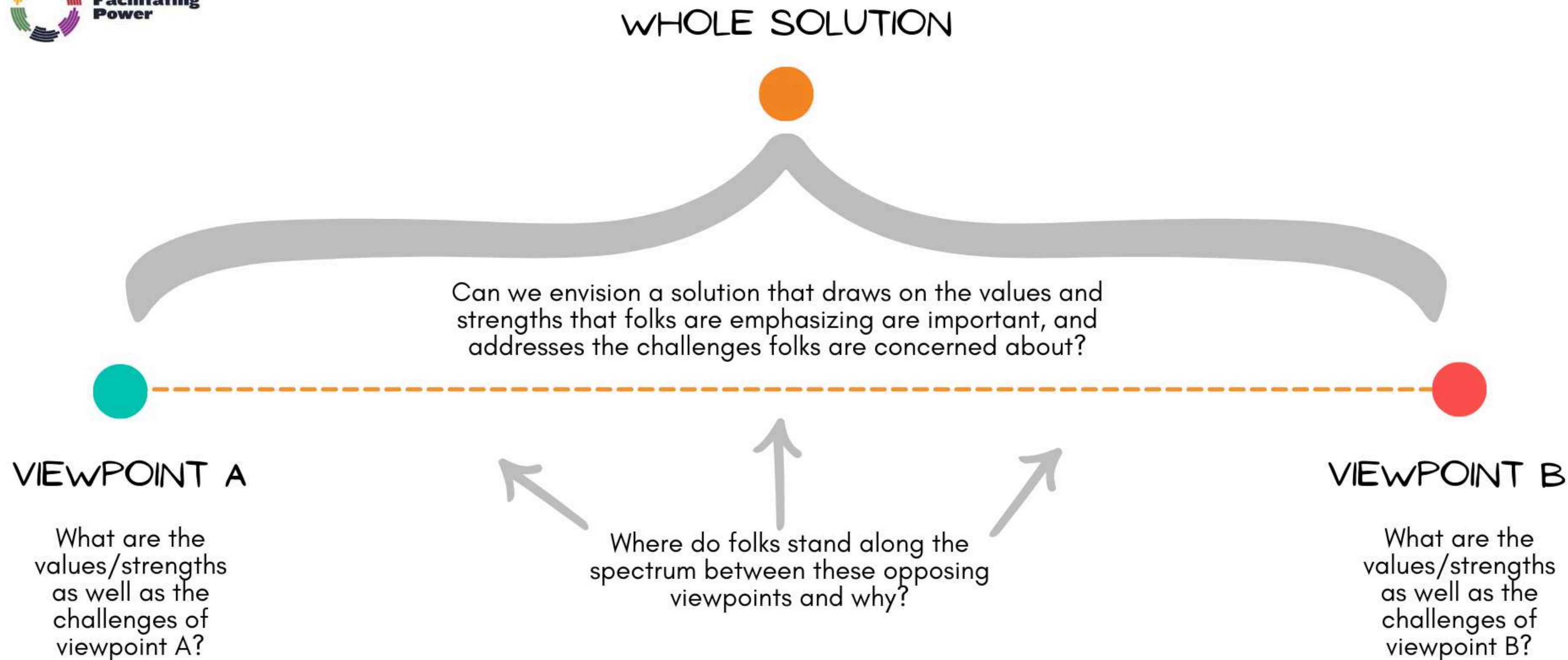
As needed come back to the goal (common good) and that which unifies the group

Avoid judgement attached to each



Facilitating Power

*Adapted from the Building Consensus Manual and Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision Making



Transforming Binaries

A teal-tinted photograph showing a group of people from the chest down, holding hands in a circle. They are wearing various wristbands and casual clothing. The image has a grainy, artistic feel. A black rectangular box is centered over the image, containing the word "BREAK" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters.

BREAK

Peer Consultancy Process with Sheila

Generate ideas and practices for facilitating alignment in challenging contexts

Support a peer in identifying opportunities for potential breakthrough

Reflect on one's own context and what practices would best support your efforts to facilitate alignment

1. Share challenge and context

2. Reflect using Turning Towards Each Other Conflict Workbook

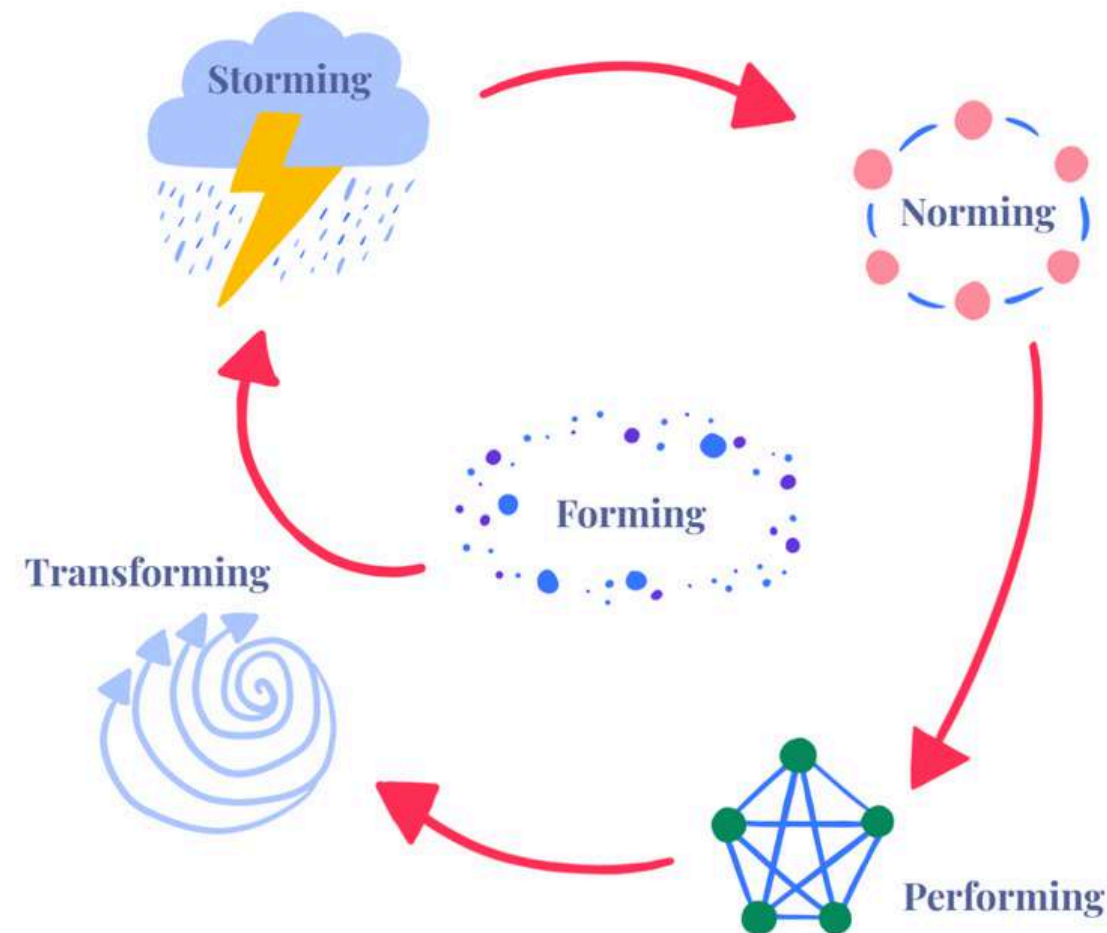
3. Ask clarifying questions

4. Generate ideas and practices for cultivating mutuality

5. Identify next steps

Four Phases of Group Development

Most groups go through common stages of development, starting from the time the group first comes together, to the time the group dissolves. As you can see below, “Storming” (often where conflict arises) is a typical part of a group’s maturation process that leads to trust-building and the ability to achieve the group’s goals. Recognizing that storming is a natural part of the cycle can ease fears that there is something wrong when conflict arises in a group. Groups can cycle through these stages multiple times; anytime the configuration of the group changes, a new cycle may be triggered.*



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DOMINANT CULTURE PRACTICES

Exceptionalism, Power & Control

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- **Urgency:** There’s never enough time!

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PRACTICES THAT CULTIVATE MUTUALITY



Acknowledge Power (in all its manifestations)

- Acknowledge power differentials and how they impact individual and group experiences
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Lead With Purpose, Practice Values

- Regularly (re)connect with purpose and values.
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Appreciate our Diverse Strengths & Evolve Together

- Celebrate the diversity of our group's strengths and approaches.
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- Embrace tensions in the group as opportunities for reflection, surfacing new insights, and rebalancing.
- Notice and name how our worldviews and cultural influences shape us and our work together.

MUTUALITY: Our commitment, our love, our liberation, etc. go both ways

Note: This isn't advice for Sheila; this is general ideation using Sheila's story as a springboard

Personal Reflection Time

- A.** Use your project tracker (or other space) to think through establishing a healthy process for alignment
- B.** Reflect on pages 12–15 of the Turning Towards Each Other Conflict Workbook to explore your conflict archetype and the practices that support you to move with courage through group tensions

Peer Coaching

Share either:

A. Where you are at with your process / tracker and any questions / challenges coming up for you

OR

B. The practices you are looking at to deepen your capacity to navigate conflict and any questions you might have for your peer coach