

OUR APPROACH TO EQUITY, POWER & BELONGING

"People are aware that they cannot continue in the same old way but are immobilized because they cannot imagine an alternative. We need a vision that recognizes that we are at one of the great turning points in human history when the survival of our planet and the restoration of our humanity require a great sea change in our ecological, economic, political and spiritual values."

- Grace Lee Boggs, Civil Rights Activist

From our point of view, the traditional language of diversity, equity and inclusion replicates the assumptions of society's dominant model. As we work together, you will see that we offer different framing and phrasing as a result, and this is why we focus on equity, power and belonging as the foundation for our work. The dominant model is based in scarcity and has any one in a subordinated group feeling excluded, unwelcome and potentially unwanted. We have created a road map for individuals and organizations to travel from this place of scarcity to what we call Sustainable Abundance.

SUSTAINABLE: ethical, reciprocal, just.

ABUNDANCE: grateful, radiant and present to the bounty everywhere.

The Seven Laws:

1. Stories Matter
2. I Am Enough
3. I Belong
4. No One is Exempt
5. Resting is Required
6. Joy is Available
7. Love is the Answer

This road map, as articulated in our book *The Seven Laws of Enough*, begins with taking time to look at the larger context that generated inequity and abuse of power in the first place. From an awareness and clarity of how much the contexts we inhabit are shaping our thoughts and beliefs and assumptions, we can begin to shift them. Only a context that is generative and sustainable for all is sufficient to the task of undoing centuries of inequity. Bold leaders can declare new stories and then invite, inspire, call to action others to join them in bringing new stories and ultimately a new context to life in their organization.

We need all of the laws to orient from and point us towards a new way of living and working together.



Once we shift to seeing clearly the interwoven nature of all of life, we can begin to re-weave the social fabric of creation and embrace our shared humanity.

The shift we need to make is not just about including those left out. It's not about making room for "others." It is about realizing that systems of inequity cause harm to us **all** in different ways. If we are always operating out of a context of "scarcity," it will always seem like the "pie" is limited and not everyone can live in a context of Sustainable Abundance.

Each of us is shaped by the context from which we come, and most of us have a foot in both worlds. We have some dominant group privileges and some of the mindsets and difficulties associated with being of the subordinated group. For example, a white woman who is a lesbian has privileges as a white person but also has experiences being in the subordinate group of non-dominant sexual orientation.

If all of us are suffering from the impact of these mindsets, how can we have a generative conversation about the future of living and working together?

DIMENSIONS OF CHANGE

When we look at supporting change, we ask people to see through three lenses: the personal, interpersonal and the structural.

THE PERSONAL

We all have personal work to do to unwind and build and take responsibility for the lenses through which we see life. For those in subordinate groups, oppression lives in the body as trauma. If we do not do the work to heal trauma, we cannot move forward together. **We recommend:**

- Affinity groups for heartfelt small group discussions about race and racism.
- Each staff member is clear about their own racial journey and trauma.
- Personal understanding where we all hold privilege and where we are in the subordinate group.

THE INTERPERSONAL

We must build our capacity to speak truth between dominant groups and subordinate groups. People in dominant groups usually do not know how to truly listen and hear concerns of those in subordinate groups. They get defensive or make other moves that dismiss or minimize or outright squash what is being said. People in subordinate groups are so tired of talking and not being heard, so tired of having their anger pathologized and minimized they stop attempting to communicate. **We recommend:**

- Team values alignment.
- Practices for seeing, handling and taking accountability for micro-aggressions.
- Authentic and responsible communication training.
- Ritual(s) to support repair when rupture happens.
- Group coaching to support on-going shared learning and trust building.

THE STRUCTURAL

As leaders it behooves us to examine how structural inequities are woven into our teams and organizations. We have become capable of identifying how our human resource policies, compensation plans, hiring and promotion are continuing the inequities we are trying to combat. We were all trained in a system of separation, fear and power over. We must all find our way to a new sustainable and bountiful way of living and working together. We offer practices to be done individually and collectively. We practice seeing the stories and contexts that drive our organizations and seeing ourselves within them. We practice learning to take things less personally while simultaneously holding each other with much more respect and clarity. **We recommend:**

- Systemwide anti-racism workshops.
- History education to understand race relations and its impact in the United States and globally.
- Structured inquiry to ask ourselves how our team or our organization is replicating the larger social system.

Begin to build group interventions to shift into a new context that is life-giving and sustainable for all.