



Personal reflection

Spaces of bravery and belonging

Audre Lorde said, “The true focus of revolutionary change is never merely the oppressive situations that we seek to escape, but that piece of the oppressor which is planted deep within each of us.”

...One of the ways we confront oppression is to do the concentrated work of bravely facing what needs healing on the inside, which—in some strange dance of inner and outer work—is revealed as we are doing the work of dismantling the larger systems of oppression.

It is a both-and proposition. Doing the work reveals more of the work to be done in us. The means are the ends. If we simply confront the oppression “out there” (the white supremacist, capitalist, heteropatriarchal structures) and not “in here” (ourselves) and “in here” (our movement communities), we will only be creating more culturally familiar versions of the systems we say we want to dismantle.

adrienne maree brown, in *Holding Change*

Note

See the resources in the “Extra stuff, good stuff” step in Kit 2 for further doses of useful insight and practical example.



Personal reflection

Instructions for writing activity

You need...

20 to 30 minutes

Stuff for writing and/or drawing

A place as distraction-free as you can muster

The following questions, plus your own listening for questions that are present for you

Reflection / writing prompts

How are you feeling in this moment?

Can you adjust anything so that you feel more open and present?

We enter the conversation around racial justice from many starting points. Where are you in your journey to see “the piece of the oppressor” planted deep inside yourself? Maybe this is new to you, or maybe you have been working with this for a long time.

Name some of the effects that living in a culture of white supremacy has had on yourself, your relationships and your group work.

What are some of your habitual response(s) when you meet oppression inside yourself or in others? Do you seek to eradicate it, ignore it, name it, criticize it, greet it with honesty, hold it with care or ask it to leave or...?

When you think about hosting yourself, being in relationship to each other and hosting groups, what practices might bring you closer to co-creating brave spaces?

What else needs to be noticed, named or be in conversation with?



Team for this kit

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OSU Racial Justice Pathways

This document is part of the OSU Racial Justice Pathways set of learning and reflection kits. Visit racial-justice-pathways.mn.co to listen to the audio mixtape that accompanies this guide, find more resources and guides, and join your colleagues in applying these ideas to your own life and work.

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