



Washington State  
**OFFICE OF EQUITY**  
EQUITY and JUSTICE for ALL



# Relational Partnership *in Practice*

A GUIDE TO MAKING WASHINGTON  
A **BELONGING** STATE



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Please email your questions about the Relational Partnership Guide to [sharedpower@equity.wa.gov](mailto:sharedpower@equity.wa.gov)



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# Meet the Shared Power Consultants



## Rauneisha Larkins

**Pronouns:** She/Her/Diva

**Favorite food:** pasta

**Fun fact:** Loves to take naps

*“My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some compassion, some humor, and some style.” –Maya Angelou*

Rauneisha (pronounced Ron-Nee-sha) is a charismatic leader who tends to win people over with her warm and infectious smile. She is a native of Cincinnati, Ohio but relocated to Washington when she was stationed here as a service member. Rauneisha is now a proud veteran who enjoys traveling, being a newlywed, and being a dog mom!



## Sabrina Njoroge

**Pronouns:** She/Her/They

**Favorite food:** tacos

**Fun fact:** Fluent in American Sign Language

*“Your willingness to look at your darkness is what empowers you to change.” –Iyanla Vanzant*

Sabrina (pronounced Suh-Bree-Nuh Ja-Row-Geh) is a passionate social justice advocate and steadfast champion of equity. Sabrina embraces the role of being a single mom, nurturing her energetic, neurodivergent 3-year-old while inspiring them with her dedication to making the world a better place. Her love for connecting with people is evident in her warm interactions, where she finds joy in building bridges and fostering meaningful relationships. When she’s not busy advocating or parenting, you can find Sabrina immersed in the world of music, enjoying soulful tunes, and even sharing her own melodious voice through singing.





## Jean Paul

**Pronouns:** He/Him

**Favorite food:** Haitian Legum

**Fun fact:** Fluent in Haitian Creole and French

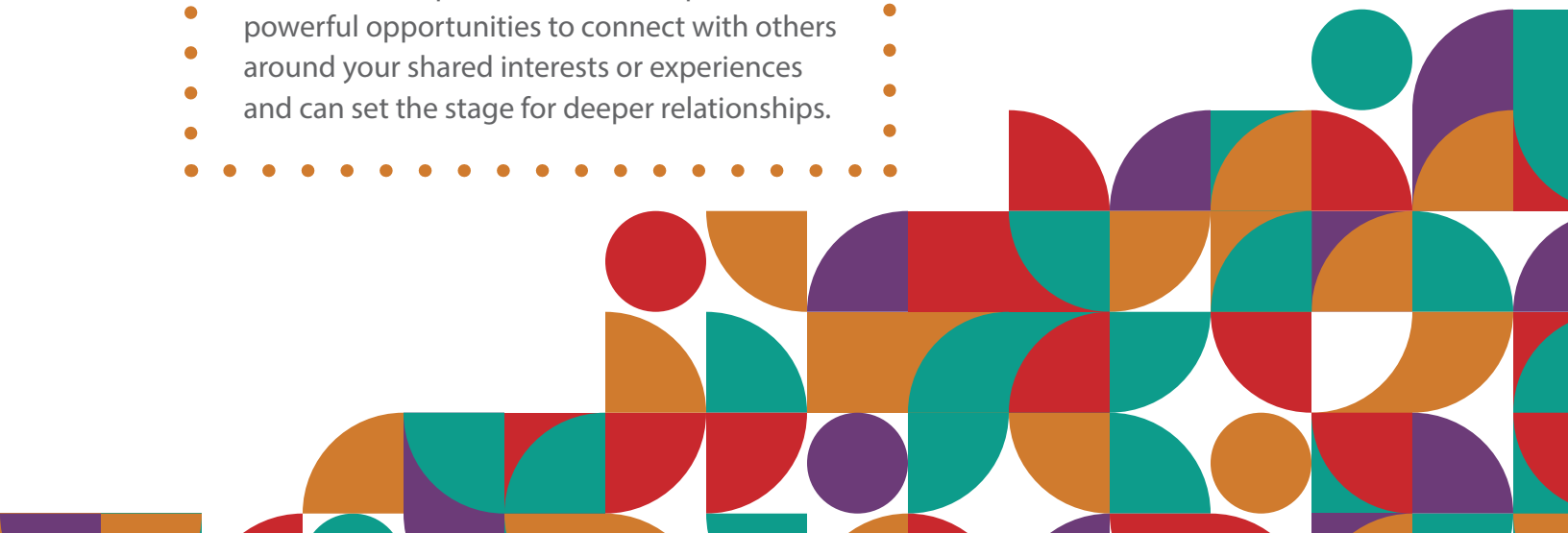


*“We are what we imagine. Our very existence consists in our imagination of ourselves. Our best destiny is to imagine, at least, completely, who and what, and that we are. The greatest tragedy that can befall us is to go unimagined.” –N. Scott Momaday*

Jean Paul is a committed equity, diversity, and inclusion professional whose background includes introducing marginalized youth to STEM careers, helping at-risk fathers with child custody, and achieving economic freedom and now being a part of the Washington State Office of Equity. Born on the beautiful island of Haiti, Jean relocated to the U.S. as a teenager. He is now a proud husband, father of two, community leader, and doggy dad. In his spare time, you can Jean playing with his children, tending to his garden, bird watching, and taking long walks with his dog Onyx.

### Relational Partnership in Practice: Personal Biography

We invite you to reimagine your biography by including more personal details, fun facts, and a favorite quote. These details provide powerful opportunities to connect with others around your shared interests or experiences and can set the stage for deeper relationships.



# Acknowledgments

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- Ken Sauby – CSO Administrator in the Department of Social & Health Services (DSHS)
- Thanh Tran - Respect, Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion (REDI) Program Manager with the Department of Social & Health Services Headquarters (DSHS/HQ)

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## Special Thanks

We would particularly like to thank Ricardo Ibarra, Creative Director for Trio Group, for serving as a valued co-creator of this guide and for modeling shared power in action. We know your commitment to equity and belonging serves as an example for all those you partner with.

# What is Relational Partnership?

Relational partnership is a new approach to how state government operates that centers the needs and values of marginalized people in Washington State. Instead of our current model of transactional management where government dictates to historically and currently marginalized groups how they should interact with government services, relational partnership includes the affected communities in every decision.

## Why Relational Partnership?

Relational partnership addresses the historical and current inequities that have deprived many communities in Washington State of their protected rights. **When state government operates through a lens of relational partnership, all people who are affected by legislation, policy, and action are included in the decision-making process.** The result is a more equitable distribution of power that centers the needs and values of the most marginalized people. This also increases government efficiency because resources can be allocated to the communities that need them the most, in the ways that benefit them the most.

## Relational Partnership Requires New Ways of Being

The framework we present in this workbook is designed to help you develop and practice the interpersonal skills and values that foster relational partnership. Note the opposite of each value in the table below:

<b>Relational Partnership</b>	<b>Transactional Management</b>
Trust	Mistrust
Vulnerability	Defensiveness
Healing	Harm
Mindset	Prejudice
Community	Individualism
Intentionality	Carelessness
Reflection & Accountability	Recklessness
<b>Result: Equity &amp; Belonging</b>	<b>Result: Exclusion &amp; Inefficiency</b>

## Our goal is Belonging

The Office of Equity’s vision is for everyone in Washington State to have full access to the opportunities, power, and resources they need to flourish and achieve their full potential ([RCW 43.06D.020](#)). All people need to feel as if they belong and Washington intends to become a state in which everyone belongs.

Belonging is a journey, it is a feeling, a value, and an action. The goal of creating a belonging state is for you to feel as though you belong, value belonging for yourself and others, and act in ways that let others know they belong.

Washington state government is beginning that journey with relational partnership. We understand that each agency is starting from a different place and from different experiences. It is important that we are all taking the first step toward becoming a true belonging state. By being intentional in our interactions with ourselves and others, we ask you to take this journey to achieve equity and justice for all.

***“We are the ancestors of the future and what we do now will have an impact.”*** ***–Luisah Tiesh***

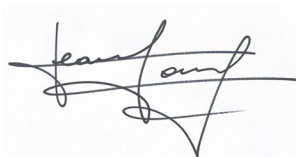
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## About the Relational Partnership Guide

This guide was created as a resource to embed relational partnership in how Washington State government operates, with the intent of addressing past harms and current inequities in Washington State. In order to achieve Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) outcomes, we must be relational.

In today’s work environment, it is critical that we lean in and explore ways to build trust, practice accountability, self-reflection, vulnerability, inclusion, and belonging in our work relationships. Building these traits will not only help you work better with your colleagues but with the communities you serve.

In this interactive workbook, we will explore strategies that can help you build and sustain the skills and values that lead us on our journey to a belonging state. Thank you for choosing to take this journey with us to make Washington a true belonging state!



Rauneisha, Sabrina, & Jean, Washington State Office of Equity Shared Power Consultants



# Relational Partnership: The Seven Pit Stops Toward a Belonging State

Relational partnership empowers individuals, agencies, and groups to work together in a mutually beneficial way to achieve common goals. It creates a sense of shared responsibility and ownership that can lead to long-term success and sustainability. Rather than relying on a traditional checklist mindset, think of these pit stops as a more holistic approach to achieving our goals.

To learn more, visit [equity.wa.gov](http://equity.wa.gov)

## Belonging

To achieve belonging, we must create spaces where people can be their authentic selves. Through belonging, we make the connections needed for meaningful, sustainable change.

## Reflection & Accountability

Accountability is about doing the work of self and organizational reflection to understand how we play a role in oppressive systems and realigning to create pathways for change and healing. When we reflect on our own biases and lived experiences that differ from others, we are able to serve our communities better.

## Intentionality

Pivoting our focus to the impact and moving with purpose to continuously incorporate pro-equity anti-racism (PEAR) values in everything we do. PEAR values are: justice, access, Ubuntu, equity, love, dignity, and belonging.

## Mindset

Changing mindset begins internally and requires self-reflection to change old behaviors, patterns, and thoughts. Mindset also requires a willingness to embrace new perspectives to empower an inclusive environment.

## Healing

Healing takes place when we take responsibility for our actions, understand the harm we've caused, and create opportunities to redeem ourselves. Healing is vital to move toward our future. We must take ownership of the harms created and continue to put in the work to create a better environment for generations to come.

## Trust

Trust is built over time. We cannot assume we already have it. Trust is foundational to co-creation and allows us to show up as our authentic selves. Trust is what gives us confidence when engaging with people and reassures that we treat one another respectfully. Remember, trust is built out in the open, not behind closed doors.

## Vulnerability

Being vulnerable means creating an environment where individuals feel safe to take risks, share their ideas, and be authentic without fear of judgment or reprisal. It encourages open communication, trust, and co-creation among team members. Vulnerability reflects psychological safety in workplace culture.







# Trust

## Introduction

What is trust? What does trust look like between state government and community? What does trust look like between two people? What actions demonstrate trust? In this section, we will explore some strategies to help you build trust in your work relationships. A team that is grounded in relationships is a well-connected and efficient team. Trust allows us to collaborate and co-create effectively. When conflicts arise, teams are better equipped to handle tough conversations because they have invested in relational equity.

Trust is built over time. We cannot assume we already have it. Trust is foundational to co-creation and allows us to show up as our authentic selves. Trust is what gives us confidence when engaging with people and reassures that we treat one another respectfully. Remember, trust is built out in the open, not behind closed doors.

## Scenario

Since the beginning of the pandemic, you and your entire team have been working from home. As restrictions start to fade, more and more people start to come back to the office to work in person. During your team's first in-person weekly check in, your supervisor assigns projects. As the team gathers around the conference table, you can't help but feel anxious. This is your first in-person project since returning to the office. Before anyone has the chance to get situated, two people in the group start delegating tasks. You can tell that everyone is frustrated, but no one speaks up. Although you have been working as a team virtually, you realize that you don't really know anyone in the group.

Noticing the tension in the room, what do you do? How would you initiate building trust? What conversation needs to happen in order to facilitate relationships with your team?

## Activity 1: Connecting with Others

How many times have you started a meeting and started on the agenda without welcoming and acknowledging the people in the room? While this may seem to increase productivity, it does so at the expense of developing trust and honoring our shared humanity.

One of the ways to build trust is to witness and honor the other person's internal landscape. When we interact with others, we tend to default to cliches ("Wow, the weather is so nice today!") or facts and figures ("There's an accident on the interstate, it took me 40 minutes to get here."). Try sharing your opinions and real feelings the next time you get to know someone. Then, ask for the opinions and feelings of the other person.

1. Choose three different people to connect with intentionally: someone in your department that you don't normally interact with, someone from a different agency, and someone from community.
2. Set regular check-ins with them and get to know them better by practicing whole-hearted listening.

**Whole-hearted listening instructions:** Slow down your thinking and put your entire self into the conversation with others. Your goal is to listen closely and carefully for the facts, feelings, and values that might be present to the storyteller. Do not offer solutions or take a side. You can ask clarifying questions, but do not talk about what they should have/could have done or what you think about the story. After the storyteller is finished, thank them for sharing.

*Whole-hearted listening was developed by Nichole Ossa, Chief of Proactive Equity, Access Planning, and Belonging for the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). Special thanks to the many ambassadors, champions, and leaders in the Community Services Division of DSHS who have influenced and grown the REDI program over the last ten years.*

## Activity 2: Trust and Boundaries

It is important when building trust to also establish boundaries. Iyanla Vanzant said, "[Boundaries] create a structure and parameter for what is and is not accepted, permitted, accommodated, and tolerated in your presence and space." Boundaries create space for us to be our best selves and respect our own needs. When we honor the boundaries of others, we honor their needs and demonstrate respect for their humanity.

Make a list of boundaries that you want to set for yourself. What will you not permit or tolerate in your presence? What do you welcome into your experience? Think of how you want others to treat you and behave. Think of how you want to feel and be seen in the spaces you visit. When you are done, think about the ways in which you will hold yourself and others accountable to the boundaries you set.

## Activity 3: Trust Indicators

What are the trust indicators that help you know you can trust someone? We've listed below a number of indicators that help build trust. Place a check in the box next to the three trust indicators that are most important to you personally.

Then, in the columns to the right, describe a time when you experienced that trust indicator in your personal life and describe how that looks in government to community interactions. We've left space for you to add other trust indicators that are important to you.

✓	Trust Indicator	I experienced this in my personal life...	In government to community interactions...
	<i>Example: Follows through on commitments</i>	<i>Example: my partner said they were going to complete the laundry on the weekend, and they did.</i>	<i>Example: We ensured that the brochures we promised were delivered to our community partners on time.</i>
	Follows through on commitments		
	Demonstrates congruence between words and actions		
	Shows authentic interest in other people		
	Makes decisions in the best interest of those affected		
	Acts in alignment with their stated values and goals		
	Communicates transparently, offers clarification and reasoning		
	Listens deeply and reflects back what they heard		

***“Trust moves us beyond what is wrong and what is missing into taking any next best step that will make a difference.” - Iyanla Vanzant***

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## Reflections

**On a scale from 1-10, rate yourself on the following statement:**

**“I actively seek to build trust in all my relationships and act in ways that foster trust.”**

*Ranking and measuring yourself is a powerful way to grow and identify opportunities for improving skills. We are not trying to place blame or shame, rather our intent is to provide an opportunity for self-evaluation and growth. If you don't score as highly as you like, don't be hard on yourself! Commit to learning and seeking more opportunities to reach the next level of this value.*

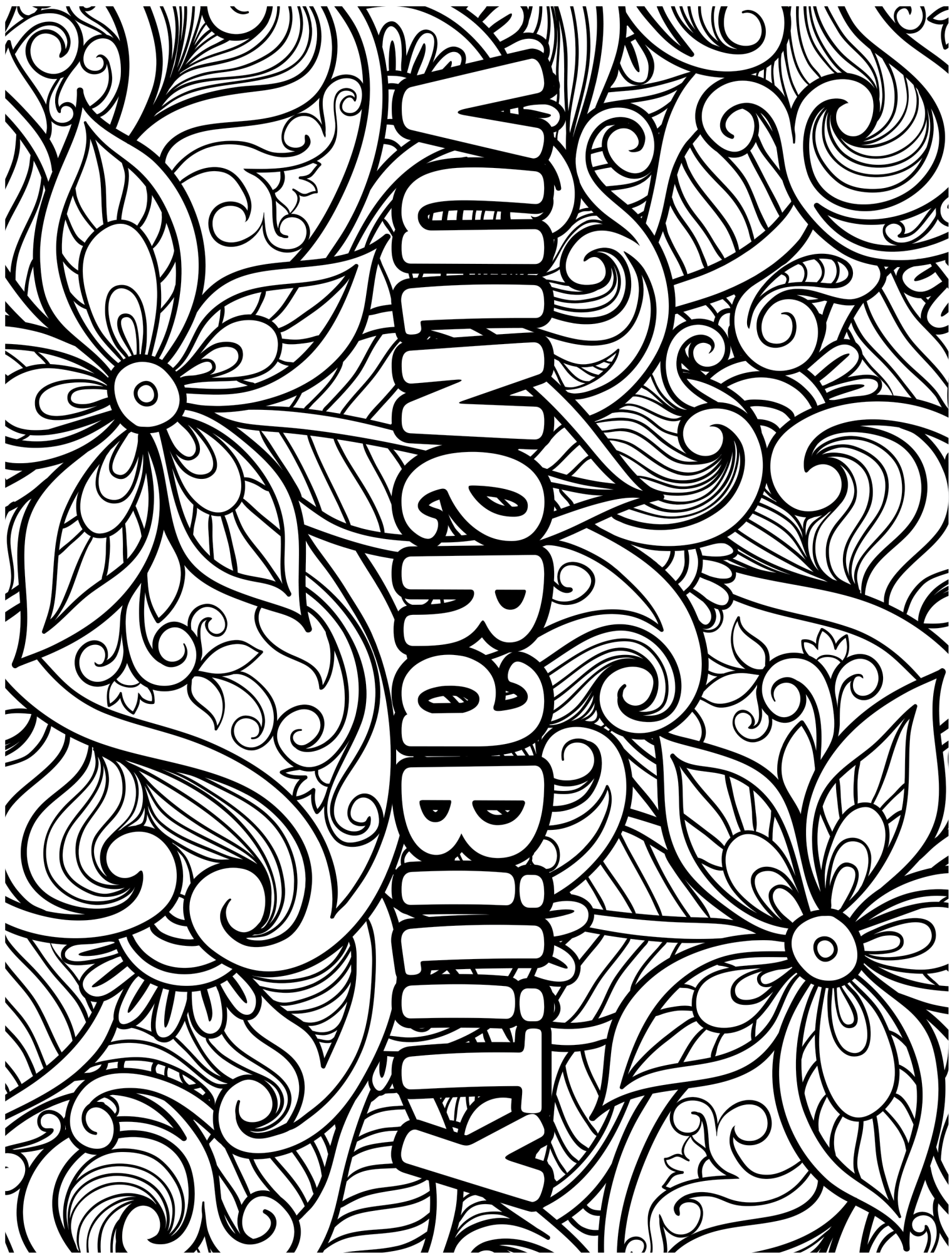
**One way that I commit to building trust within my work group for the next 7 days is...**

**One thing I can communicate to my colleagues that shares my real feelings is...**

**When I feel like I can trust someone, it's because they...**

## Now, Let's do the Work!

1. Take the time to connect with one or two new coworkers and get to know them by sharing your feelings, opinions, and values.
2. Get involved with Business Resource Groups, Employee Resource Groups, Committees, and interagency groups.
  - [Statewide Business Resource Groups | Office of Financial Management \(wa.gov\)](#)
  - [Interagency Committee of State Employed Women \(ICSEW\) | Inside OFM \(wa.gov\)](#)
  - [OFM Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council | Inside OFM \(wa.gov\)](#)
  - [Wellness Committee | Inside OFM \(wa.gov\)](#)
  - [Combined Fund Drive \(CFD\) | Inside OFM \(wa.gov\)](#)
  - [Board & Commission Profiles | Governor Jay Inslee \(wa.gov\)](#)
3. Engage in whole-hearted listening. As we described earlier, whole-hearted listening is a practice that you can use whenever you are communicating with colleagues, coworkers, and most of all, community.



Vulnerability



# Vulnerability

## Introduction

Being vulnerable means creating an environment where individuals feel safe to take risks, share their ideas, and be authentic without fear of judgment or reprisal. It encourages open communication, trust, and co-creation amongst team members. Vulnerability reflects psychological safety in workplace culture.

Vulnerability is the willingness to expose one’s authentic self, emotions, thoughts, and imperfections, without the fear of judgement or rejection. It is a state of openness, honesty, and transparency in which individuals allow themselves to be seen and heard, even when it involves admitting limitations or uncertainties. Embracing vulnerability in the workplace is essential for fostering a healthy and productive organizational culture.

Dr. Brene Brown’s work on vulnerability emphasizes that vulnerability is not a weakness but a strength. She argues that vulnerability is the birthplace of courage, creativity, and meaningful connections. By creating a workplace culture that values vulnerability, organizations can tap into these qualities and create an environment where employees feel empowered, engaged, and supported.

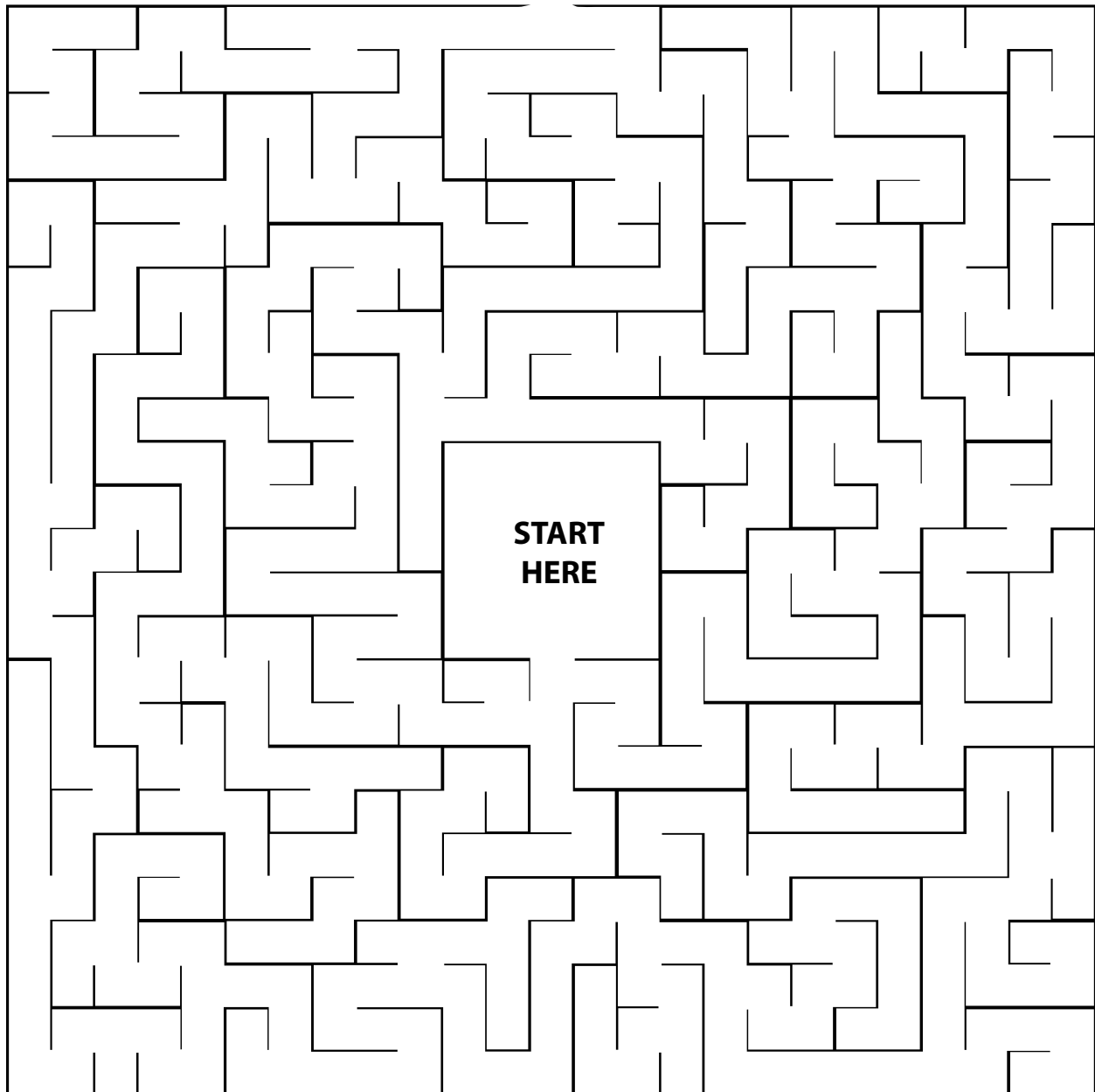
## Scenario

You have been tasked by your manager to create a resource that will be used to conduct agency-wide training. You have many concerns about producing a training that reaches the entire agency. You feel as though you lack resources, clear instructions, and fear that the training will be a “failure.” How would you voice your current concerns to your manager?



## Activity 1: Under Construction Maze

Attempt the maze on the next page twice. How many barriers did you encounter while attempting to complete the maze the first time? Now, consider a different route on your second attempt. How many roadblocks did you encounter? Find the solution on page 21.



## Roadblocks to Vulnerability

The path to vulnerability can be full of obstacles. It's natural to want to protect ourselves from these barriers, but these are the gates to true vulnerability and the strength that comes with sharing our authentic selves. Below, we've listed common barriers to vulnerability. Identify which barriers may impact you and give yourself permission to be exactly where you are. Then, choose one barrier you will be more aware of in your daily life.

- **Rejection:** When an individual is deliberately excluded from a relationship or interaction.
- **Fear of not belonging:** An innate feeling of not being accepted and not being a part of the community, group, or organization.
- **Emotional exposure:** A calculated and balanced way of letting others know what you are experiencing, if you're sad or frustrated you let someone know.
- **Risk:** Exposure to the chance of injury or loss; a hazard or dangerous chance.
- **Uncertainty:** The state of being uncertain; doubt; hesitancy.
- **Perfectionism:** A personal standard, attitude, or philosophy that demands perfection and rejects anything less.
- **Shame:** The painful feeling arising from the consciousness of something dishonorable, improper, ridiculous, etc., done by oneself or another:
- **Traumas:** An emotional response to an event or an experience that is deeply distressing or disturbing
- **Lack of self-awareness:** Is a problem that affects one's ability to recognize, understand, and regulate one's own emotions, behaviors and thinking.
- **Lack of trust:** Having low levels of confidence or belief in someone or something. To regard with doubt or suspicion; to have no trust in
- **Cultural expectations:** Shared beliefs about acceptable behavior in a particular society. They are the messages we internalize from our social systems about what is and is not acceptable, given the standards and rules that govern behavior.

## Activity 2: Where I'm From Poem

Using the template below, take some time to reflect on your unique experiences, history, and roots. Think about your whole life and all that you've been through. Think about the things you've done, the foods you enjoy, and the people you spend time with. Think about where you have lived and the sights, smells, and sounds that were around you. Think about your ancestors, the stories that were passed down to you, the sayings and phrases people said, and the shared history of your family and community. Use the poem template as a guide to help you complete your poem. **Remember, there is no wrong way to do this. This is about YOU so whatever comes to your mind, whatever you choose to include, is perfect.**

# Where I'm From

I am from \_\_\_\_\_, from \_\_\_\_\_.  
*(a specific item from your childhood home) (two products or objects from your past)*

I am from \_\_\_\_\_  
*(a phrase describing your childhood home)*

and \_\_\_\_\_.  
*(more description of your childhood home)*

I am from \_\_\_\_\_, whose \_\_\_\_\_.  
*(a plant, tree or natural item from your past) (personify that natural item)*

I am from \_\_\_\_\_,  
*(two objects from your past)*

from \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.  
*(a family name) (another family name)*

I am from \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
*(a family trait or tendency) (another family trait or tendency)*

and from \_\_\_\_\_, from \_\_\_\_\_.  
*(another family trait, habit or tendency) (another family trait or tendency)*

I am from \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_,  
*(an ancestor) (another ancestor)*

from \_\_\_\_\_,  
*(two foods from your family history)*

from \_\_\_\_\_,  
*(a specific event in the life of an ancestor)*

and from \_\_\_\_\_.  
*(another detail from the life of an ancestor)*

I am from \_\_\_\_\_.  
*(a memory or object you had as a child)*

**I am from those moments**

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(conclude by finishing this thought or by repeating a line or idea from earlier in the poem)*



## *Where I'm From*

by the Shared Power Consultants

I am from Barbies, from footballs and cookouts.

I am from non-existence, and constantly moving.

I am from aloe vera, whose healing properties were needed for bumps, bruises,  
and regrowth.

I am from peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and Ramen noodles,  
from Nee-Nee and Mooney Moo.

I am from endless cycles and independent women, and from guarded truths,  
from "stay in a child's place".

I am from Teresa and Nickole, from collard greens and neckbones,  
from being named after my aunt who passed away as an infant,  
and from a grandmother who was raised without parents.

I am from a mistrust of family members due to lack of safety.

I am from those moments that forced me to "stay in a child's place" but  
simultaneously grow up and be exposed to life events that made me grow up  
faster than others.

***“Vulnerability is the birthplace of innovation, creativity and change.”***

***–Brené Brown***

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## Reflections

**On a scale from 1-10, rate yourself on the following statement:**

**“I share my authentic self with others and provide a nonjudgmental space for others to be vulnerable around me.”**

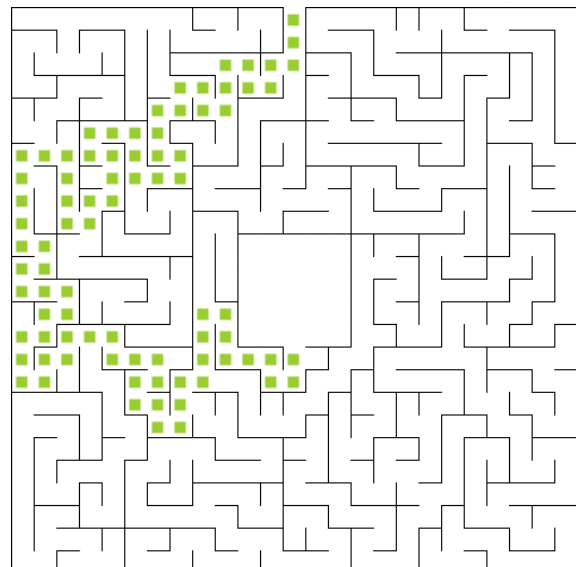
**What are the roadblocks/obstacles that stop you from bringing your authentic self to your workplace?**

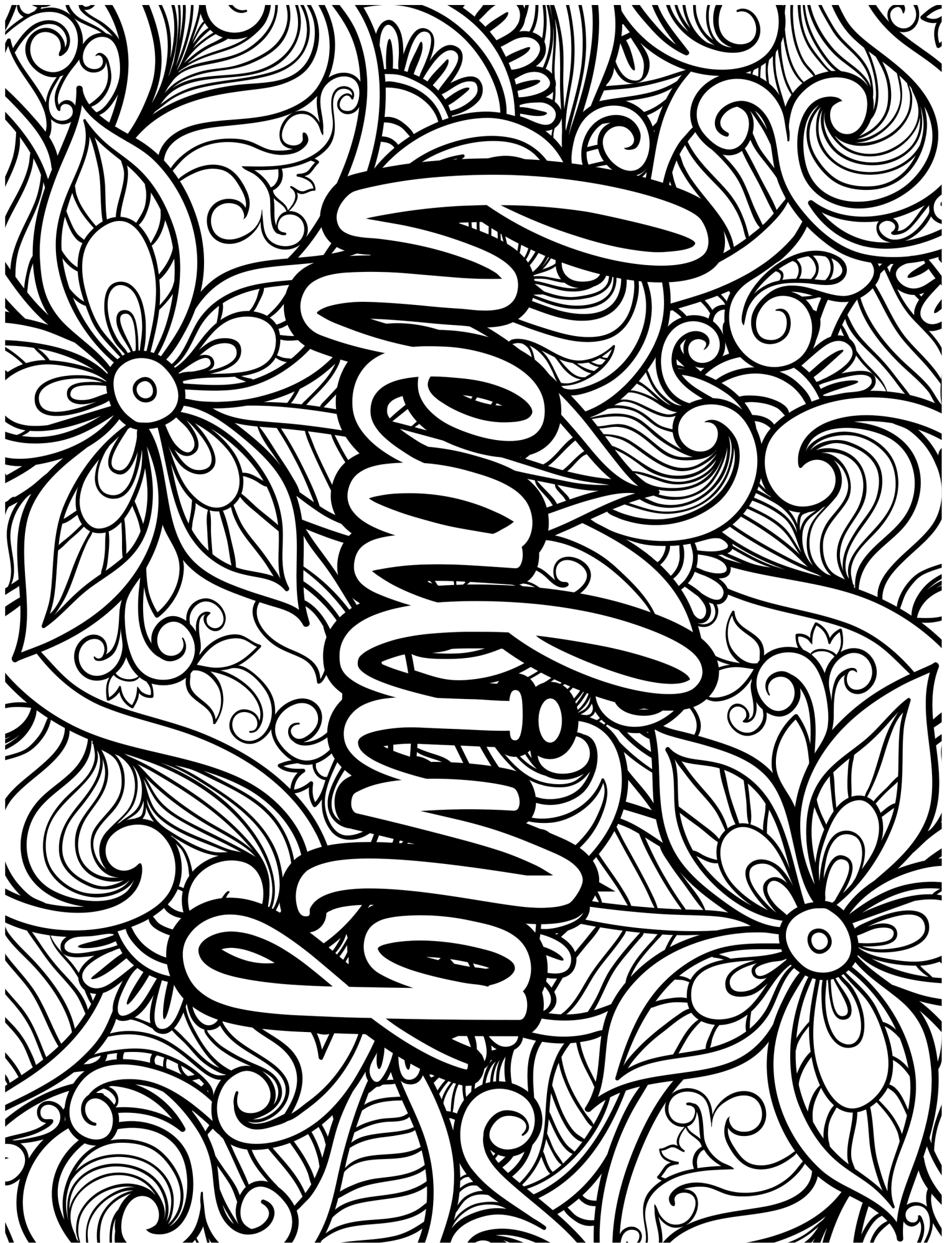
**One thing I can say or do around my colleagues that welcomes vulnerability is...**

**The next time I am worried about being vulnerable in front of people, I’ll tell myself:**

## Now, Let’s do the Work!

1. When challenging conversations occur, acknowledge your feelings in the moment and practice sharing them.
2. Practice being patient with yourself and others.
3. Set professional boundaries for yourself and respect others’ boundaries.







# Healing

## Introduction

Healing takes place when we take responsibility for our actions, understand the harm we've caused, and create opportunities to redeem ourselves. Healing is vital to move toward a better future. We must take ownership of the harms we created and continue to put in the work to create a better environment for generations to come.

Healing plays a crucial role in fostering understanding and cooperation. This process, encompassing three key areas – self, relationships, and community – serves as a foundation for rebuilding trust, rectifying past grievances, and paving the way for harmonious co-creation. As wounds mend on individual, interpersonal, and collective levels, the path toward a stronger, more resilient partnership becomes illuminated.

We all need healing in some way or another. To navigate this odyssey we call life, healing is the most radical decision we can make. Healing yields the possibility to own our narrative. It helps us find ways to show up for ourselves and others. As public servants, it is vital we take the necessary time to heal. Please be mindful that healing is a journey, often a difficult one. The process of healing starts with being intentional about how we show up for ourselves. If we can show up for ourselves, we are better able to show up for others.

## Scenario:

Imagine one of your colleagues is processing a personal or professional loss. You are concerned about their wellbeing. They are adamant they are “fine” and don't want to take their leave but instead are taking on more responsibilities. You notice your colleague is keeping busy to not feel the pain of their loss. As a colleague, who has perhaps gone through a similar situation, you understand unprocessed grief yields emotional exhaustion and untimely burnout. How do you show up for this colleague?

## Activity 1: Self-Healing

Self-healing starts with living in alignment with our values and the best version of ourselves. It also requires us to recognize and meet our own needs. Complete the phrases below:

**The three words that describe me when I'm at my best are:**

**The three words that describe how I want to show up in my relationships are:**

**The three words that describe my contributions to my community are:**

Self-healing continues by recognizing, honoring, and fulfilling our needs, especially when we are hurt or upset. Complete the phrases below:

**When I'm feeling sad, I need...**

**When I'm feeling angry, I need...**

**When I'm feeling unsure, I need...**

**When I'm feeling discouraged, I need...**

## Activity 2: 30 Days of Healing

Print out the 30 Days of Healing calendar on the next page. Starting today, complete each healing activity for 30 days. To get the most out of this exercise, complete this with a friend and share your progress with each other. There are 35 activities, so take 5 days to rest!

## Activity 3: Affirmations Board

Create a board of positive affirmations and reminders of who you are at your very best. This is similar to a vision board. It can include words or quotes, photos of loved ones, greeting cards and notes, anything that will help you tap into your consciousness and be more positive in your thinking. This is a great tool to use in both the personal and professional realms of life.



# 30 DAYS OF Healing

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Deliver a surprise gift	Make someone smile	Pick up litter in a public place	Treat yourself to your favorite meal	Read something that inspires you	Send a written thank-you note	Find or visit a therapist who looks like you
Write three things you love about yourself	Complete a chore for someone	Acknowledge someone for their character	Utilize your leave for a mental health day	Get 8 hours of quality sleep	Write out 5 times when you were successful	Identify one thing to let go of that you cannot change
Choose a boundary and share it with a partner or friend	Pay for someone's meal	Text a positive affirmation to someone	Donate clothing or used goods	Remove triggers from your life	Find or visit a doctor who looks like you	Drink an extra glass of water
Move or nourish your body for 30 minutes	Communicate your needs with a partner or friend	Get support from the DES Employee Assistance Program	Take a quick break from your desk every hour	Attend a community listening session	Close your eyes and take 10 deep breaths	Leave a positive review online
Skip social media for the day	Spend time in nature	Avoid screens 2 hours before bed	Listen to uplifting music or a podcast	Volunteer for a cause you believe in	Forgive yourself for being imperfect	Avoid complaining for 24 hours

*“Healing isn’t about changing who you are; it’s about changing your relationship to who you are. A fundamental part of that is honoring how you feel.” -Suzanne Heyn, Spiritual Advisor*

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## Reflections

**On a scale from 1-10, rate yourself on the following statement:**

**“I take responsibility for the harms that my actions or inaction have caused and seek to heal myself and others from those harms.”**

**What is one way you will support healing in each of the three spheres of self, relationships, and community?**

**Self:**

**Relationships:**

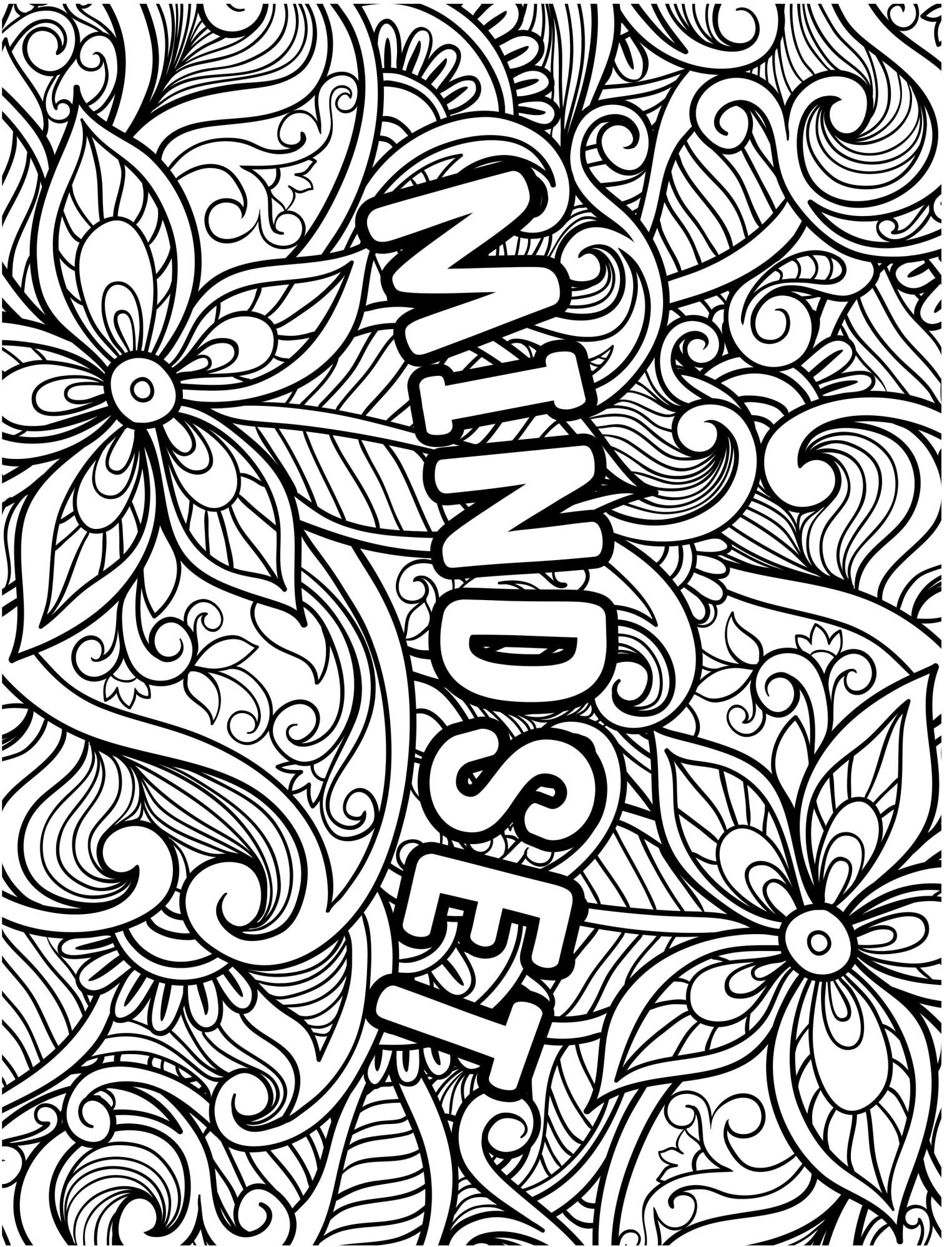
**Community:**

**Someone I will partner with to complete our 30 Days of Healing exercise is...**

**The next time I notice harm or pain in others, I will do this to support their healing:**

## Now, Let’s do the Work!

1. Use the 30 Days of Healing calendar to practice self-care activities.
2. Use a journal to track your progress on your healing journey.
3. Identify how you may have harmed someone in the past and make amends.





# Mindset

## Introduction

Changing mindset begins internally and requires self-reflection to change old behaviors, patterns, and thoughts. Mindset also requires a willingness to embrace new perspectives to empower an inclusive environment.

In this section, we will explore research by Carol S. Dweck, Ph.D., where she identified two mindsets: fixed and growth. A fixed mindset is “believing your qualities are carved in stone,” while a growth mindset is “the belief that your basic qualities are things you can cultivate through your efforts” (Dweck, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, 2006, pp. 6–7).”

## Scenario

Imagine you are on a subcommittee for a workgroup that is tasked with improving community outreach efforts. The team has hit a roadblock in their brainstorming session. One team member, Estella, approaches the problem with a fixed mindset, stating, “We’ve always done it this way and it’s worked fine. There’s no need to change things up.”

Another team member, Li, embodies the growth mindset. They remark, “I believe we can serve our community even better if we keep learning and trying new approaches. We should consider experimenting with different strategies to see what resonates with our community members.”

Which approach do you identify with most? Which type of approach have you heard more of in your work?

## Activity 1: Mindset Language

One part of having a growth mindset involves understanding acceptable risks and how those risks can lead to failure and also learning. A fixed mindset is less likely to learn from or recover from failure. According to Dweck (2006), people who consistently develop and maintain a growth mindset share these characteristics:

- They embrace challenges.
- They persist in the face of setbacks.
- They see effort as the path to mastery.
- They learn from criticism.
- They find lessons and inspiration in the success of others.

In the list below, identify which phrases embody a fixed or growth mindset by selecting the appropriate checkbox. Then, compare your answers with others and discuss any differences.

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| I'm not good at this. ....                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth Mindset | <input type="checkbox"/> Fixed Mindset |
| I love challenges. ....                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth Mindset | <input type="checkbox"/> Fixed Mindset |
| I don't like making mistakes. ....         | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth Mindset | <input type="checkbox"/> Fixed Mindset |
| There's only one right way to do this..... | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth Mindset | <input type="checkbox"/> Fixed Mindset |
| I guess I'm just built that way.....       | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth Mindset | <input type="checkbox"/> Fixed Mindset |
| Failure is not an option.....              | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth Mindset | <input type="checkbox"/> Fixed Mindset |
| It is what it is.....                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth Mindset | <input type="checkbox"/> Fixed Mindset |
| This is too difficult! .....               | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth Mindset | <input type="checkbox"/> Fixed Mindset |
| Practice makes perfect. ....               | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth Mindset | <input type="checkbox"/> Fixed Mindset |
| There's no reason for this!.....           | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth Mindset | <input type="checkbox"/> Fixed Mindset |
| I want to try again. ....                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth Mindset | <input type="checkbox"/> Fixed Mindset |
| What's the point of this? .....            | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth Mindset | <input type="checkbox"/> Fixed Mindset |
| She's one of those smart people.....       | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth Mindset | <input type="checkbox"/> Fixed Mindset |
| I'll figure it out. ....                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth Mindset | <input type="checkbox"/> Fixed Mindset |
| Why does it have to be this way?.....      | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth Mindset | <input type="checkbox"/> Fixed Mindset |

## Activity 2: Cultural Connections

The growth mindset celebrates learning. We invite you to learn about celebrating with three other people in your work group. Use the discussion questions below to learn about each other's cultural practices. As each person shares, look for both similarities and differences. How can you acknowledge and celebrate the values that unite your different cultural practices?

- What is your favorite holiday and how do you celebrate it?
- How do you honor the life of someone who is recently deceased?
- What do birthday celebrations look like in your family or community?
- What is an important life occasion or milestone that you recognize, and how do you celebrate?
- How is music, dance, or artistic expression included in celebrations?

## Activity 3: Progress, Not Perfection

The dominant culture often tells us that nothing is worth doing if it cannot be perfect. But all great things come through a very messy, nonlinear process. We can resist perfectionism and foster innovation when we celebrate progress over perfection.

**What is a project you are currently working on?**

**How has perfectionism held you back in this work?**

**What are three things you learned as part of this project?**

**What are three milestones of progress you can celebrate?**

*“Your emotions are a mirror of your thoughts, when you change your way of thinking, you will change the whole world inside of you.”*  
–Melanie Moushigian Koulouris, Blogger

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## Reflections

**On a scale from 1-10, rate yourself on the following statement:**

**“I embody a growth mindset and seek opportunities to learn and try new things every day.”**

**What are three areas where the fixed mindset shows up in your work?**

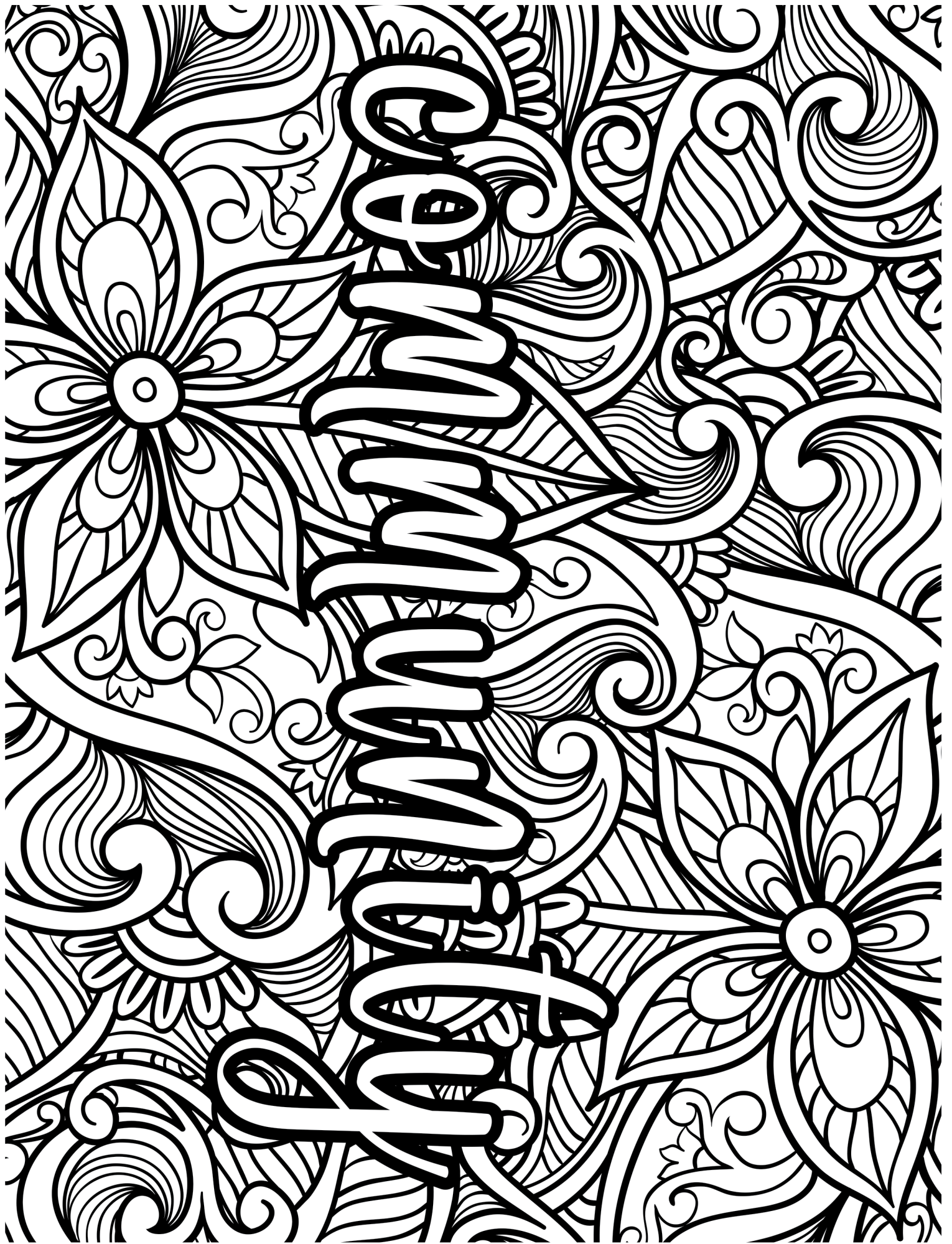
**When I notice myself in the fixed mindset, I’ll get back in the growth mindset by reminding myself that:**

**One way I will celebrate my learning and progress toward an important goal is:**

## Now, Let’s do the Work!

### Call to Action:

1. Pay attention to things you say or do that reflect either a growth or a fixed mindset as you go through your day. Keep a tally on a sticky note or your phone. Then, challenge yourself to embody the growth mindset more the next day!
2. Commit to celebrating progress that your work group makes at every meeting, no matter how small that progress may be. How many times can you acknowledge, celebrate, or name meaningful progress in a week?







## Community

We must utilize the lived experiences of those in the community and co-create solutions that benefit those most affected. **In order to be truly equitable, community must be at the center of all of our work.**

The [PEAR Plan and Playbook](#) states, “Community is the guiding light for planning, implementing, continuously improving, evaluating, and measuring government actions to achieve pro-equity anti-racism outcomes in the state of Washington.” To achieve this, we must build relationship with community.

### What does it mean to build relationship with community?

The true essence of building relationship with community begins with “empathy in action.” As public servants, it means taking the time to engage in meaningful interactions with the people we serve. Historically, the government has engaged with community in a transactional way, which has led to people being a “business.” By shifting our mindset and refocusing on building relationships, it requires taking the necessary steps to build trust, center those with lived experience, and promote autonomy amongst the community.

The needs of community are immense, complex, and ever-changing. For us to solve the pressing issues of our time, we cannot continue to serve our fellow Washingtonians with a checklist mindset. We must be intentional and shift away from “chequity” when engaging with community. This “chequity” mindset perpetuates a system where people have and continue to slip through the cracks.

## Scenario

It’s April and a co-worker makes a comment that appears to be harmless about an upcoming holiday. You are proud of your religion, but your co-worker has a different religion. You are offended by your co-worker’s comment but unsure of how to approach the situation. Within this scenario, how can building community be used to address this situation?

# Activity 1: Community Bingo

When developing relationships with community, it's important to understand and value people's lived experiences. Take an active approach to get to know the people you work with through community bingo. It's simple: strike up conversations with different people and learn about them. As you do, see if you can find folks whose name you can write on your bingo card! With this activity, step out of your comfort zone to connect with people that you do not speak with regularly.

<b>LOVES PASTA</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>LOVES MUSIC</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>HAS A BROTHER</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>PLAYS PIANO</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>LOVES TO READ</b> <input type="text"/>
<b>CAN SALSA DANCE</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>HAS A DOG</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>SINGS IN THE SHOWER</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>VEGAN</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>HAS BEEN SKY-DIVING</b> <input type="text"/>
<b>WRITES WITH LEFT HAND</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>IS ENGAGED</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>FREE SPACE</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>IS AN ONLY CHILD</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>SAME AGE AS YOU</b> <input type="text"/>
<b>BORN IN THE FALL</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>DOES YOGA</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>LIKES TO ARRIVE EARLY</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>DISLIKES COFFEE</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>FAVORITE COLOR IS BLUE</b> <input type="text"/>
<b>HAS A VACATION PLANNED</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>LOVES EGGNOG</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>PLAYS A SPORT</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>KNOWS HOW TO SKATE</b> <input type="text"/>	<b>ENJOYS PUZZLES</b> <input type="text"/>

## Activity 2: Four Square

1. Give each participant a piece of poster paper and some markers.
2. Ask them to divide their poster paper into four quadrants.
3. Ask them to DRAW their response to four questions, one question for each quadrant. No words or letters are allowed!
4. Give them about 5-10 minutes to work individually.
5. Then, regroup and give each person 4-10 minutes (depending on your time frame) to share their chart and responses with the group.

### Example Questions

- What do I bring to the group?
- What do I need from the group?
- What is your hobby?
- What is your vision for this group?
- What do you bring to this organization?
- What do you need from this team?
- What legacy do you want to help create through this organization?
- What is one event that fundamentally shaped your life?
- A current challenge I am facing outside of work...
- The types of things that stress me the most at work...
- What I need you to understand about me when I am under stress...
- What I need you to do when I am under stress...
- Defining moment (personal or professional)
- Moment of pride (personal or professional)
- Worst fear (for the group, personally or professional)
- Desired outcome for this day/session/series of meetings
- Greatest challenge for this group
- Greatest success for this group

## Activity 3: Community Service & Engagement

Community can represent a multitude of settings, groups, and/or places. Community can be within your home, neighborhood, workplace, and any other space you may want to feel connected to.

One of the ways that we build community is to work toward a shared goal or outcome. Often times, we will find ourselves working with others but fail to recognize that it is an opportunity to build relationships and create a shared vision.

We encourage you to reflect on the respective community and/or communities you are connected to or wish to be connected to, both personally and professionally.

When connecting with folks, think about the following: *How can I/we embrace the diversity within a specific community while still fostering a shared vision for progress and unity?*

Below are questions that may help you and your teammates connect with the impact you are having.

- The community we are serving today is...
- The reason why we are serving this community is...
- The impact we are seeking in and for this community is...
- How we want the community to feel when we're done is...
- We want to feel this way when we are done with our project...

## Engage Community with S.P.I.C.E.:

Beyond serving a community is authentically engaging with that community.

The Office of Equity has developed the SPICE framework to center community experience in our programs and services as well as create a path towards intentional and comprehensive community interaction.

To create a comprehensive and inclusive community engagement strategy, every element needs to be consistently attended to and improved.

Washington state is home to over 7 million people. We need a strong strategic foundation so that we are not always relying on the same voices to represent different communities. If this is to be a government for, by and of the people, we should strive to make it about ALL the people.

Review the model below, and reflect on how you can engage with community on a deeper level beyond service. How can you embody these five principles? For more information on community engagement best practices, contact the Office of Equity.



**Seek new partners:** Learn and understand how to interact with other communities in a culturally appropriate and respectful manner. Seek out community instead of waiting for the public to reach out to government.



**Partner:** Work in a shared decision-making model. Being a partner means sharing in investment, benefit, and risk even if they don't look the same on either side.



**Inform:** Provide updates in an accessible manner and share information that will reach different communities.



**Connect, collaborate, compensate:** Make contact to build or strengthen relationships. Focus on co-creation and compensate people in the community for their ideas, time, and energy instead of extracting insights.



**Engage:** Interact with others through activities or events and listen to understand the perspectives of community members.

*“Community is not an ideal; it is people. It is you and I. In a community, we are called to love people just as they are with their wounds and their gifts, not as we want them to be.” – Jean Vanier*

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## Reflections

**On a scale from 1-10, rate yourself on the following statement:**

**“I seek to center and serve those that have been and continue to be historically marginalized as well as contribute to initiatives that eliminate barriers.”**

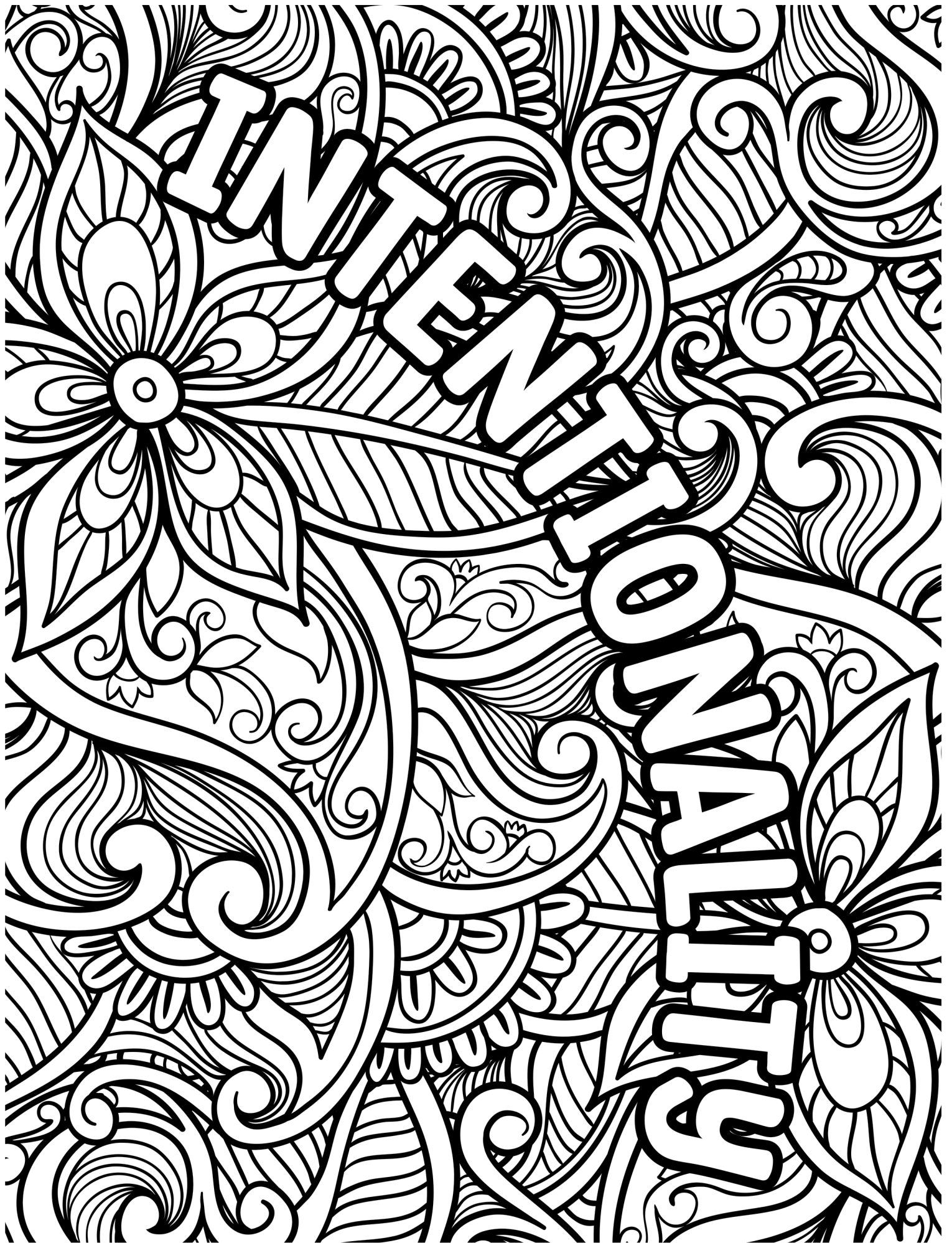
**What did you learn about yourself and the people you work with? How are they different from you? How are they similar to you?**

**When I engage with people at work and in community, I’ll remind myself to share or do this:**

**One way I will honor and celebrate the communities I am a part of is:**

## Now, Let’s do the Work!

1. Reflect on activity one. If you were unable to answer five ways you are connected to community, write down five ways you plan to get connected.
2. Get engaged with leadership roles and opportunities with business resource groups (BRGs) and/or employee resource groups (ERGs).
3. Participate in community listening sessions.





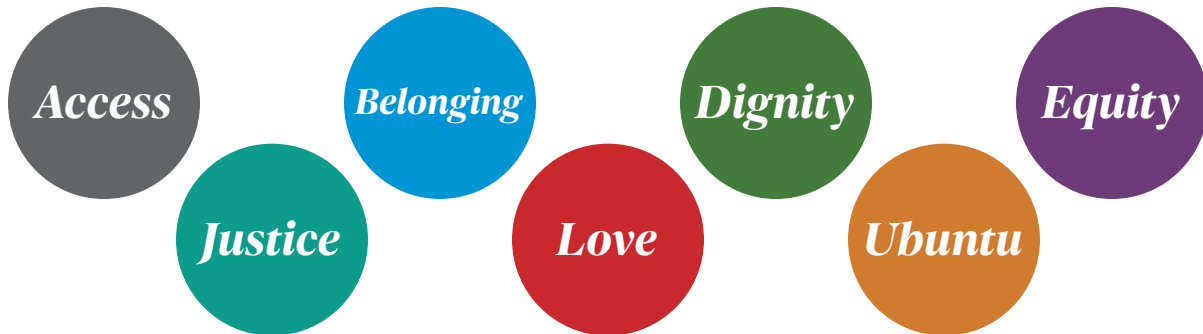
# Intentionality

## Introduction

*“Values are basic and fundamental beliefs that guide or motivate our attitudes or actions. They help us to determine what is important to us. Values are the motive behind purposeful action.” –Steven Mintz, Ph.D.*

In this section, we will explore the Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) Ecosystem Values. Please see the glossary at the end of this document for our definition of PEAR and more. The following values reflect the common themes that surfaced during the listening sessions conducted by the Office of Equity and state agencies between May and September 2021.

## PEAR Ecosystem Values



## Scenario

Imagine the start of your career when you may have set ambitious goals and dreams. You may have stated, “I want to grow in my job, develop deeper connections with the people around me, and become an empathetic leader who inspires others to make change.”

But with time, your goals may have shifted and even disappeared from your radar. With our busy schedules, we can be so consumed with work that we lose sight of our goals and dreams. It’s easy to go through the motions instead of setting intentions and being present with the people around us.

Have you experienced a time when you felt as though someone didn’t take the time to get to know you but instead focused only on getting the job done. Did that inspire trust or contribute to your relationship with that person? Why or why not? How might have that person brought more intentionality to the experience?



## PEAR Values

**Access:** Creating and supporting barrier-free design, standards, systems, processes, and environments so that all individuals, regardless of ability, background, identity, or situation, can participate in, use, and enjoy the benefits of: employment, programs, services, activities, communication, facilities, electronic information technology, and business opportunities.

**Belonging:** Values and practices that ensure no person is left out of our circle of concern. Belonging means more than just having access, being seen, or feeling included. It means that every member of society has a meaningful voice, that their well-being is considered, and that they can participate in the design of political, social, and cultural structures.

**Dignity:** We respect the sacred nature of each individual's personhood. We honor the worth due each person by virtue of their existence as a human being. Human lives have an unimpeachable value simply because they are human, and therefore deserving of a baseline level of respect. That baseline requires more than the absence of violence, discrimination, and authoritarianism. It means giving individuals the freedom to pursue their own happiness and purpose.

**Equity:** Systemic, full, and true access to opportunities, power, and resources that allow all people to achieve their full potential and thrive. Equity is not equality. Equity requires developing, strengthening, and supporting policies and procedures that distribute and prioritize resources to people in identified groups who have been historically and currently are marginalized, including tribes; equity requires the elimination of systemic barriers that have been deeply entrenched in systems of inequality and oppression; and equity achieves procedural and outcome fairness, promoting dignity, honor, and respect for all people.

**Justice:** We make or do right that which has been done wrong. We embody what love looks like in action.

**Love:** Sometimes defined as a strong affection for another arising out of kinship or personal ties. Love requires us to understand we are all doing the best we can with the tools, conditions, and knowledge we have. We will have compassion and care for one another as we grow. We create and support belonging by expressing love to one another and treating others as they want to be identified and treated. We admit we do not know everything, in fact no one does, and that instead, we all have something to learn from one another. We acknowledge there are things we do not know so we can approach each other with love.

**Ubuntu:** A South African (Nguni Bantu) term meaning "humanity," often translated as "I am because we are," stresses the importance of the interconnectedness of humanity. We recognize that our destinies are linked and we need each other to survive.

## Activity 1: PEAR Values Word Find

Can you find the following PEAR Values in the word find below?

**ACCESS · BELONGING · DIGNITY · EQUITY · JUSTICE · LOVE · UBUNTU**

Words can appear horizontally, vertically, and diagonally, both in reading direction (left to right) and reverse (right to left).

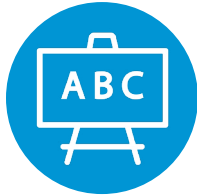
D	B	H	J	Z	A	I	U	B	Q	D	G	K	K	F
G	M	F	A	C	G	D	F	B	M	X	T	B	Y	Y
I	S	Z	C	S	U	J	X	Y	U	H	P	P	T	H
Y	Z	E	V	Q	E	H	K	A	T	N	M	W	I	U
L	S	P	D	R	J	Q	P	R	F	I	T	G	U	O
S	I	G	N	I	G	N	O	L	E	B	N	U	Q	U
L	O	V	E	V	W	J	L	X	B	V	M	G	E	I
U	Z	O	H	W	L	U	E	D	Z	G	X	K	I	J
T	N	X	A	H	S	E	L	N	N	Y	W	M	E	D
X	O	T	Y	G	C	Y	J	L	T	N	F	K	L	N
T	Q	H	M	I	T	R	J	A	G	A	P	T	V	C
F	H	X	T	V	I	S	P	J	L	E	U	G	S	O
Z	H	S	K	Z	M	A	J	S	Q	Y	S	G	E	P
R	U	S	Q	Z	H	X	D	M	N	H	G	P	L	Y
J	I	L	M	Q	Q	X	R	A	H	T	I	U	U	O

# Determinants of Equity

Washington will achieve PEAR ecosystem outcomes by cultivating and measuring state agencies' impact on **15 Determinants of Equity**, the social conditions that everyone in Washington needs to flourish and achieve their full potential:



**Equity in State & Local Practices**



**Early Childhood Development**



**Quality Education**



**Equity in Jobs & Job Training**



**Health & Human Services**



**Food Systems**



**Parks, Recreation & Natural Resources**



**Healthy Built & Natural Environments**



**Transportation & Mobility**



**Economic Justice**



**Strong, Vibrant Neighborhoods**



**Housing & Home Ownership**



**Community & Public Safety**



**Equity in Justice Systems & Laws**



**Digital Equity**

## Determinants of Equity Defined

**Equity in State & Local Practices** provides equitable access, outcomes, and treatment for all.

**Early Childhood Development** that supports nurturing relationships, high quality, affordable childcare, and early learning opportunities that promote optimal early childhood development and school readiness for all children.

**Quality Education** that is high quality and culturally appropriate and allows each student to reach his or her full learning and career potential.

**Equity in Jobs and Job Training** that provide all residents with the knowledge and skills to compete in a diverse workforce and with the ability to make sufficient income for the purchase of basic necessities to support them and their families.

**Health and Human Services** that are high quality, affordable and culturally appropriate and support the optimal well-being of all people.

**Food Systems** that support local food production and provide access to affordable, healthy, and culturally appropriate foods for all people.

**Parks, Recreation & Natural Resources** that provide access for all people to safe, clean and quality outdoor spaces, facilities and activities that appeal to the interest of all communities.

**Healthy Built & Natural Environments** for all people that include mixes of land use that support: jobs, housing, amenities and services; trees and forest canopy; clean air, water, soil and sediment.

**Transportation & Mobility** that provides everyone with safe, efficient, affordable, convenient and reliable mobility options including public transit, walking, carpooling and biking.

**Economic Justice** that supports local ownership of assets, including homes and businesses, and assures fair access for all to business development and business retention opportunities

**Strong, Vibrant Neighborhoods** that support all communities and individuals through strong social networks, trust among neighbors and the ability to work together to achieve common goals that improve the quality of life for everyone in the neighborhood.

**Housing & Home Ownership** for all people that is safe, affordable, high quality and healthy.

**Community & Public Safety** that includes services such as fire, police, emergency medical services and code enforcement that are responsive to all residents so that everyone feels safe to live, work and play in any neighborhood.

**Equity in Justice Systems & Laws** provides equitable access and fair treatment for all.

**Digital Equity** supports access to computing equipment, technology, and resources so that all people can access the Internet and digital information in a way that is perceivable, operable, understandable, and robust.

## Activity 2: Determinants of Equity

Review the Determinants of Equity on the previous pages. Identify the top three determinants that your agency or department most closely impacts.

Then write a program, product, or service that your agency or department provides in the space below. Next, reflect on whether your work has a positive, neutral, or negative impact on that determinant. Finally, reflect on ways you can create more equity and belonging through that program, product, or service by removing barriers or closing gaps in outcomes.

### Determinant of Equity:

Program/Product/Service:

Impact on equity and belonging:  positive  neutral  negative

One way we can improve this area is:

### Determinant of Equity:

Program/Product/Service:

Impact on equity and belonging:  positive  neutral  negative

One way we can improve this area is:

### Determinant of Equity:

Program/Product/Service:

Impact on equity and belonging:  positive  neutral  negative

One way we can improve this area is:

## Activity 3: Continuous Improvement/Education

Choose one of the resources at the end of this guide. Read, watch, or learn from it and add an agenda item to your next meeting to share with your colleagues what you learned.

*“Wanting to win isn’t enough. You have to go through a process to improve. That takes patience, perseverance, and intentionality.”*

*–John C. Maxwell*

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## Reflections

**On a scale from 1-10, rate yourself on the following statement:**

**“I am committed to embedding Pro-Equity Anti Racism\* (PEAR) values in my work.”**

**Which Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) value can you identify with the most? The least?**

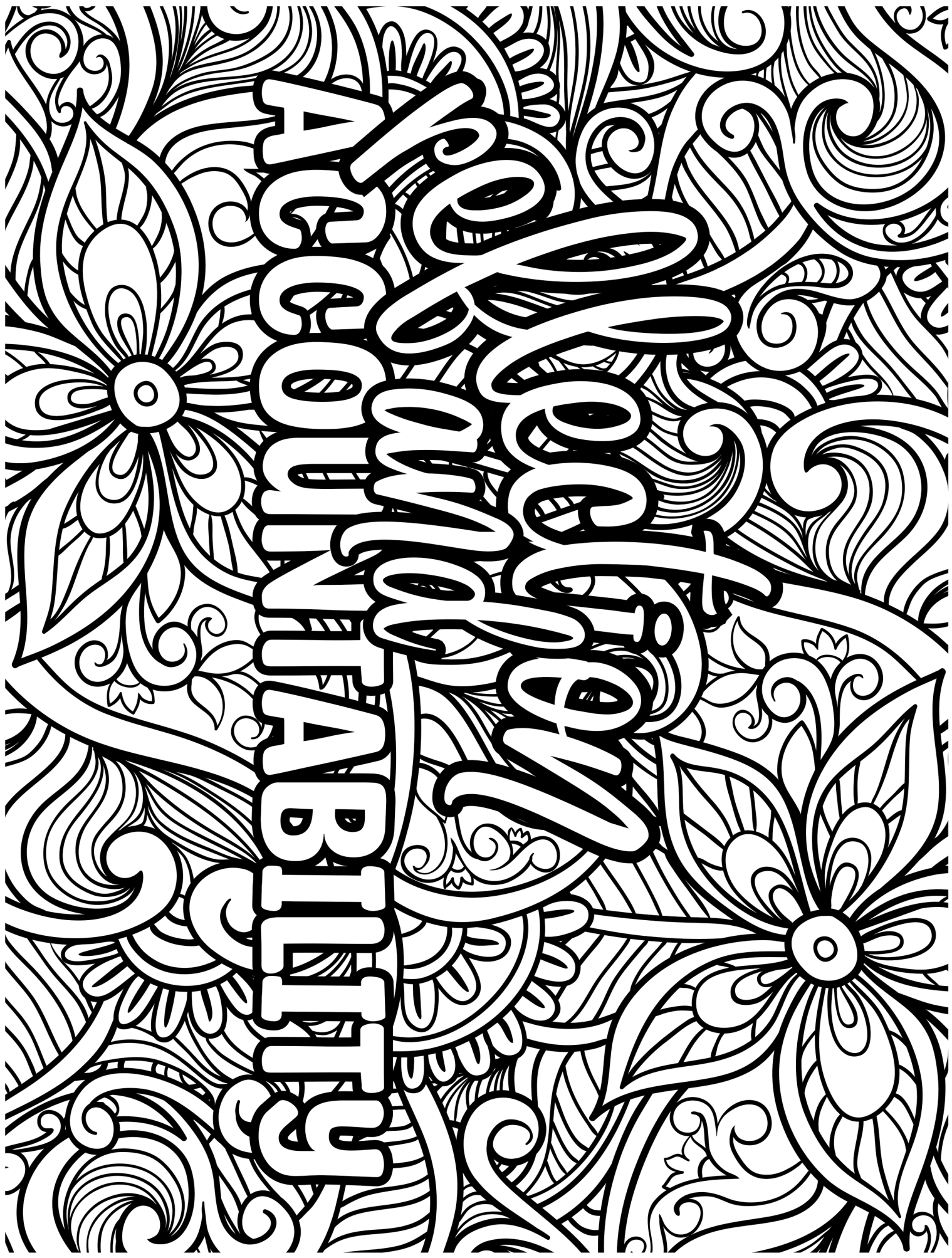
**When I engage with people at work and in community, I’ll remind myself to embed the PEAR values by:**

**One way I will honor and celebrate the PEAR values is:**

## Now, Let’s do the Work!

1. In the spirit of Ubuntu, be intentional about the connections that you make with colleagues and partners.
2. Do not be content with the “status quo” and be willing to have challenging conversations to break down barriers.
3. Choose one of the PEAR values to embody each day this week.

\*You can find our definition of pro-equity anti-racism in the glossary at the end of this document.



Accountability

Love



# Reflection & Accountability

## Introduction

*“Where civil society thrives, governments operate with more transparency and accountability. This creates a tangible impact on the lives of everyday citizens.” –Ben Rhodes, American Writer, Political Commentator and Former Deputy National Security Advisor*

We have a tremendous opportunity to impact the lives of people in Washington. For us to serve our fellow residents well, it is paramount that we reflect on our actions, decisions, and how we co-create with one another. After reflection comes accountability. Accountability is about doing the work of self and organizational reflection to understand how we play a role in oppressive systems and then choosing to create pathways for change and healing. When we reflect on our own biases and lived experiences that differ from others, we are able to serve our communities better.

Reflection and accountability provide us all with an opportunity to learn from our day-to-day experiences. Through these two principles, we can build crucial skills that help us thrive in the workplace such as empathy, communication skills, adaptability, emotional intelligence, and compassion. Reflection and accountability are also critical for continuous improvement and realizing efficiencies in our processes and services.

## Scenario

You arrive at work, and you recognize you are in a bad mood because of some personal issues. A co-worker reminds you that you are responsible for completing a task that needs to be completed as soon as possible. You disregard your co-worker, telling them to, “mind their business.” Your supervisor sees and hears the entire interaction. Within this scenario, how can reflection and accountability be used to address this situation?



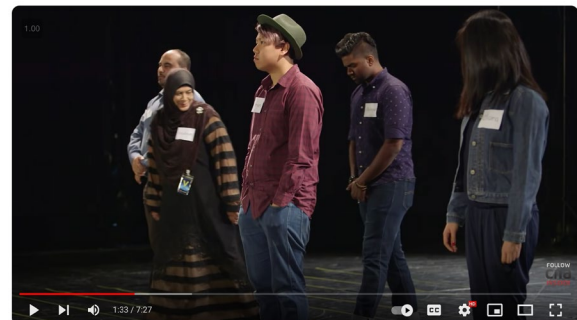
## Activity 1: Learn About Power & Privilege

Everyone has power and privilege, whether we are aware of it or not. In every situation, there are some people with more power and privilege, and some with less. Many of us go through our day without thinking of our power and privilege. That's because many social privileges are not because of something we've done or a decision we made. The power and privilege we carry is often a result of how we are perceived by others, or circumstances beyond our conscious choice. **Please view the two videos below and take a moment to reflect on what you've learned and how your perspective on the dynamics of power and privilege may have changed.** Please see the glossary for definitions of power and privilege.



### Social Inequalities Explained in a \$100 Race

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4K5fbQ1-zps>



### Race & Privilege: A Social Experiment | CNA Insider

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F2hvibGdg4w>



## Activity 2: Wheel of Power & Privilege

You might be surprised to learn that many everyday activities can be looked at through a lens of power and privilege. Review the examples below and identify how power and privilege are used to help in the situation:

1. Marco is returning to his truck after shopping at the grocery store. He notices an elderly man nearby with a full cart of groceries. Marco offers to help the man load his vehicle.
2. Pei is hosting a movie night at her apartment. She knows that one of her friends is hard of hearing although most of the group are not, so she turns on the subtitles for the movie to ensure everyone can understand the dialog regardless how well they hear.
3. Ravi's parents are interested in applying for a permit, but the materials are only available in English. Ravi spends the afternoon translating the required documentation to ensure his parents receive the permit they need.

**Step 1:** Review the Wheel of Power/Privilege on the following page. Then, mark where you are in each section of the wheel with a star or asterisk. It's important to note that there may be elements of power that are not reflected on this graphic. Explore your identity for other ways power and privilege affect you.

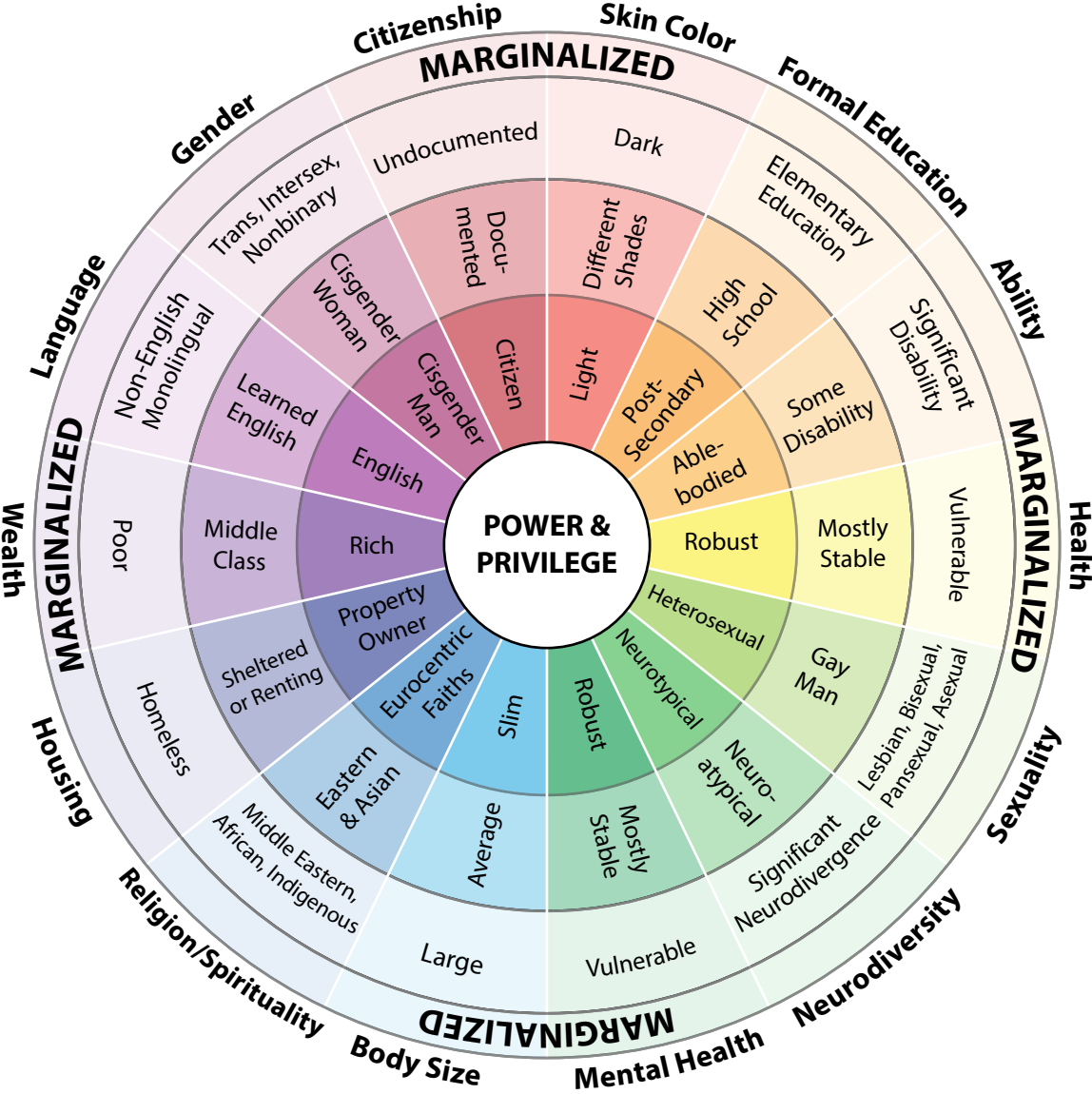
**Step 2:** Read the personal stories below. Then, for Carlos mark their position in each section with a square shape, and for Naomi mark their position in each section with a circle shape.

**Carlos:** I grew up in Yakima the son of a Latino father and a White mother, who provided me a middle class childhood. I have a medium build and light brown skin that pales in the winter and becomes more dark in the summer. I learned both Spanish and English when I was young, so I am fluent in both languages. I was bullied in high school for not being manly enough. Later, once I had a job of my own, I came out to my friends and family as gay. Some of my family had a difficult time with that and decided not to speak to me. I decided to move away after high school and get a job. Now, I live in Tacoma with my partner. We have a nice apartment, and we are saving up for a down payment to buy a house.

**Naomi:** My parents and I immigrated to the United States as refugees from Somalia in the 90's. I was about 12 years old. We were fortunate that my uncle was already living in the Seattle area and was able to help us get settled. I spent most of my high school years trying to learn English and fit in while remaining true to my history and culture. I wear a hijab and have dark skin. When I was younger, I dreamed of attending a university and being the first person in my family to earn their bachelor's degree. When I started college, I was diagnosed with ADHD which helped me receive accommodations and graduate with my degree in social work. Now I work at a hospital helping immigrants and refugees find housing and create new lives for their families here in the Pacific Northwest.

**Step 3: Reflect on the differences between your story and the stories of Carlos and Naomi. In what places or circumstances do you hold more power and privilege? How might you leverage your power and privilege to support them? How might they leverage their power and privilege to support you in other circumstances?**

# Wheel of Power & Privilege



Adapted from James R. Vanderwoerd's Web of Oppression and Sylvia Duckworth's Wheel of Power/Privilege

## Activity 3: Acknowledge Your Privilege

[Dolly Chugh](#) writes in the Harvard Business Review, “Each of us have some part of our identity which requires little attention to protecting oneself from danger, discrimination, or doltish humor. For example, in America, if you are white or Christian or able-bodied or straight or English-speaking, these particular identities are easy to forget. It is just an ordinary way of being. Ordinary privilege is ordinary because it blends in with the norms and people around us, and thus, is easily forgotten.”

What’s important to note is that privilege changes depending on the space we are in and who is around us. We invite you to reflect on the privilege and power you carry not to place shame or blame. Instead, we encourage you to look at the privilege you have as a potential tool for helping or supporting others who have less privilege.

Using your notes on the Wheel of Power & Privilege, identify for each facet of privilege how your position has helped or hindered you.

Element of Power	How this helped me	How this hindered me
Skin color		
Formal Education		
Ability		
Sexuality		
Neurodiversity		
Mental health		
Body size		
Housing		
Wealth		
Language		
Gender		
Citizenship		
Religion/Spirituality		
Health		

*“There are two primary choices in life: to accept conditions as they exist or accept the responsibility for changing them.”*

*–Denis Waitley*

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## Reflections

**On a scale from 1-10, rate yourself on the following statement:**

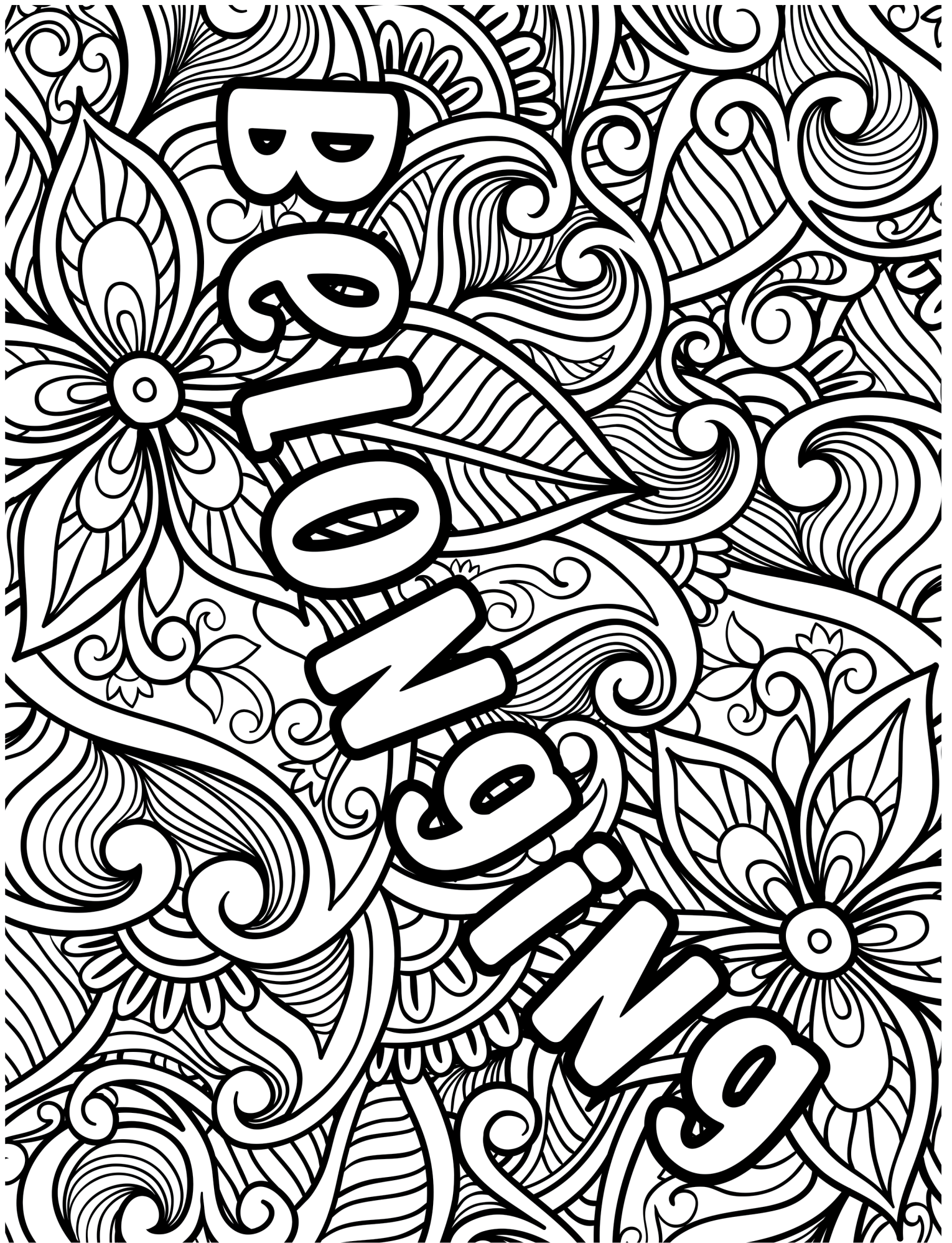
**“I am aware of the privileges that I hold and how they appear in different spaces and situations.”**

**How can I leverage my privileges to benefit those who may have less?**

**When I was completing this chapter, the most surprising privilege that I hold is:**

## Now, Let's do the Work!

1. If you could change one aspect of how power and privilege operate in the world, what would it be and why?
2. Reflect on how you use your power and privilege to help or advance others.
  - You might speak up for folks who aren't in the room
  - You could amplify the voices of people with different or less privilege than you
  - You may bring people into the room who weren't invited
3. As you wind down at the end of your work week, schedule take time to reflect on the opportunities you had to authentically show up for yourself and others. How did you show up for your team and for yourself?



# Belonging

## What is Belonging?

Belonging means having your basic needs met and feeling safe, loved, and empowered within a community, and it is our responsibility to create a state where people feel they belong. Belonging is different than inclusion. Belonging requires us to step beyond including others and instead actively empower and honor their differences, needs, and values.

We are moving from inclusion to belonging. This journey requires all of us to act. Washington can only become a belonging state when everyone is valued, empowered, and has the power and opportunities they need to reach their full potential.

John A. Powell, Director of the Othering & Belonging Institute, challenges us to move “From Inclusion: ‘This is my party. You’re invited, but you’re a guest.’ To Belonging: ‘this is our party. We decide the music, we decide the food, we decide the venue, we co-create together... not showing up as a guest adhering to someone else’s rules and cultures, showing up to something we’ve created together.”

## Why Belonging?

The Office of Equity uses [John A. Powell’s definition of belonging](#). Belonging calls for something more than Inclusion and Equity, yet also includes them in meaningful ways.

Belonging is both objective and subjective.

It can be quantified and measured, but it is also a perception found in the eye of the beholder. In this respect, Belonging, unlike both Equity and Inclusion, contains a psychological component — an affective component, which shapes the way social groups regard whatever it is they are regarding: an institution, a city, or even society writ large.

If members of a social group feel as if they belong, then belonging exists. But if they do not, despite being included and having few tangible resource inequities or other disparities between groups, then belonging is lacking.

A core element of belonging: the expressive or communicative message that a group belongs.

It can be expressed explicitly, through representation, or by signaling that members of a particular group are welcome in a particular space, institution, or community.

It can also be expressed implicitly, as when accommodations are made, such as when special food or holidays are provided for.

Belonging is perceptual and tangible; it is a feeling and a practice. Belonging requires more than accommodation; it also demands agency. Belonging is realized fully when included groups have more than a voice — they are actually able to reshape the institution together with existing stakeholders.

Brené Brown defines belonging as “being part of something bigger but also having the courage to stand alone, and to belong to yourself above all else. Belonging is the opposite of fitting in, which means changing ourselves to make other people like us. Belonging doesn’t require us to change who we are; it requires us to be who we are. Fitting in is the greatest barrier to belonging because it says, ‘Be like them to be accepted.’”

Belonging isn’t an additional hurdle that individuals should have to overcome; rather, it emerges as a natural product when organizations prioritize diversity, inclusion, and equity. When diverse voices are welcomed and valued, and when inclusion becomes the norm, individuals from all backgrounds can genuinely connect and contribute. Equity ensures that everyone has an equal opportunity to thrive, fostering a sense of belonging where individuals feel respected, heard, and appreciated within their communities and workplaces.

Belonging is not an extra step but a powerful consequence of creating environments that prioritize fairness, understanding, and unity. For Washington to achieve true belonging, this work cannot be done without everyone being involved.

It is all of our responsibilities to use this framework to create a sustainable ecosystem that will positively impact those that have been and continue to be systematically marginalized. We challenge you to defy the status quo in order to do the unprecedented. We call on you to shift your mindset and be welcoming to new concepts and relationships. Lastly, we challenge you to call out injustices and be a true champion for Pro-Equity and Anti-Racism (PEAR) work!



# 10 Ways to Foster Belonging in the Workplace

To achieve belonging, we must create spaces where people are psychologically safe and able to bring their authentic selves to work. Through belonging, we make the connections needed for meaningful, sustainable change.

- 1. Open communication:** Create an environment where everyone understands their roles, responsibilities and goals. This also is a way to build trust in the workplace.
- 2. Promote a sense of trust:** Trust is at the foundation of all meaningful relationships. Promoting a sense of trust improves productivity, collaboration, and decreases stressors.
- 3. Create a sense of community:** A sense of community is creating space for all parties to feel that they belong. It is an essential part in co-creating endeavors we partake in.
- 4. Lead by example:** A good leader is one with the ability to lead by example. This means the ability to “walk the talk.”
- 5. Build relationship:** Take the necessary time to get to know one another. This is what we call relational equity. It illuminates our path to better serve our fellow Washingtonians in a way that honors our humanity.
- 6. Embrace diversity:** Historically associated largely to race, culture, gender, and sexuality, but there are many factors to explore and to create space for. True diversity is an approach, not a criteria or checklist. A criterion will only lead us to a limited concept of what diversity is. Diversity is embracing a comprehensive intersectional approach of honoring our humanity.
- 7. Be inclusive:** Being inclusive is one way to showcase a sense of belonging. Inclusivity is the driving force to effectively share power and create space for people groups who have historically been excluded.
- 8. Prioritize stability:** All of us need safety (both physical and psychological) to contribute our best ideas and talents. Finding ways of increasing certainty and stability, especially for marginalized people, is a powerful indicator of belonging.
- 9. Give regular feedback and recognition:** This symbolizes appreciation, attentiveness, and is a key component to active listening while engaged with others.
- 10. Encourage collaboration/co-creation:** Be teachable and understand we all bring a vast amount of knowledge and experiences to the table. These different collaborative spaces inspire creation and foster partnership.

## Becoming Anti-Racist

Oftentimes, we declare ourselves as anti-racist without fully understanding what it truly means. Verywell Mind states “anti-racism is rooted in action. It is about taking steps to eliminate racism at the individual, institutional, and structural levels.” Race is a social construct, meaning it is a concept created by society, not biology. This is essential for distinguishing between merely being non-racist, which is passive, while being anti-racist, involves actively challenging and eliminating racial discrimination and inequalities woven within our society.



The above graphic was developed by Dr. Andrew Ibrahim, inspired by the work of Dr. Ibram X. Kendi. This diagram reflects the journey toward becoming Anti-Racist and is a way to hold yourself accountable. The graphic can also be amended for becoming anti-ableist, anti-classist, anti-oppression in general, or any of the other -isms entangled in white supremacy.

Ibram X. Kendi, in his book “How to Be an Anti-Racist”, offers a powerful exploration of racism and its impact on society. Kendi argues that being ‘not racist’ is not enough; individuals must actively strive to be ‘antiracist’ by recognizing and challenging their own biases, as well as actively working to dismantle racist systems and policies. Through personal anecdotes, historical analysis, and a call to action, Kendi offers readers a thought-provoking and transformative perspective on the journey toward a more just and equitable society.

Becoming anti-racist is critically important because it represents a proactive and conscious effort to combat the pervasive and destructive force of racism in our society. Racism, deeply ingrained in historical, systemic, and individual structures, perpetuates inequality, discrimination, and violence against marginalized communities.

By actively embracing anti-racism, individuals and communities commit to challenging their own biases, dismantling racist systems, and advocating for social justice. This commitment not only helps rectify historical injustices but also fosters a more inclusive, equitable, and harmonious society where everyone has an equal opportunity to thrive, irrespective of their racial background. Ultimately, becoming anti-racist is a moral imperative and a vital step toward a more just and compassionate world.

## Reflection

### What makes you feel that you belong?

Take some time to imagine what belonging looks like to you. Make a list of what the components are for you to truly belong. Once you are done developing your list, now let’s work toward it together.

1. Watch The Office of Equity’s Belonging Video, “Welcoming Belonging to Washington State” at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dmo-SMDVa-U> or scan the upper QR code on this page.
2. Share the Relational Partnership Trailer Video, “The 7 Pit Stops to Belonging in Washington State” at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ub7CWD5QvbE> or scan the lower QR code on this page.



# Relational Partnership Resources

The following resources are a curated list that is meant to help you explore and create your own pro-equity anti-racism (PEAR) learning journey. We encourage you to explore these and other resources with a sense of curiosity and openness.

**For additional resources, ideas, and links, visit our website at <http://equity.wa.gov>**

## TED Talks & Videos

- Danger of a Single Story - <https://youtu.be/D9lhs241zeg>
- Power, Privilege, and Oppression - <https://youtu.be/LTDikx-maoM>
- Get comfortable with being uncomfortable - Luvvie Ajayi Jones  
<https://youtu.be/QijH4UAqGD8>
- Racial Microaggressions: Comments That Sting, The New York Times  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=85JVcniE\\_M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=85JVcniE_M)
- How Do You Handle a Racist Joke?, MTV News  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bg1aTLsS69Y>
- Are you racist? 'No' isn't a good enough answer, Marlon James, Comment is Free  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jm5DWA2bpbs>
- Systemic Racism Explained, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YrHIQIO\\_bdQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YrHIQIO_bdQ)
- Embracing Vulnerability, Brené Brown,  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AO6n9HmG0qM>
- Amanda Gorman Inauguration Poem, 'The Hill We Climb'  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZ055illiN4>

## Podcasts

- Breaking Green Ceilings: Podcast amplifying the voices of environmentalists from historically underrepresented communities including Disabled, Queer, Trans, Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and accomplices
- Equity Rising by Trae'Anna Holiday
- Allowed: Conscious Leadership and Personal Growth with Dr. Caneel Joyce
- "Street Widows" by the 29-Year Old Widow, Ashlee Johnson
- Centre for Public Impact - Reimagining Government
- National Public Radio (NPR) Throughline Podcast and There Goes the Neighborhood
- Broken Justice by PBS News Hour

## Books/Audiobooks

- Becoming a Conflict Competent Leader: How You and Your Organization Can Manage Conflict Effectively by Craig E. Runde
- Decolonizing Therapy by Jennifer Mullan, PsyD
- Do the Work: An Antiracist Activity Book by W. Kamau Bell & Kate Schatz
- My Grandmothers' Hands by Resmaa Menakem
- Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome by Dr. Joy Degruy
- How to be an Antiracist by Ibram X. Kendi
- The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America – by Richard Rothstein
- Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents by Isabel Wilkerson
- When Affirmative Action Was White: An Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America by Ira Katznelson
- Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates
- The Color of Money: Black Banks and the Racial Wealth Gap by Mehrsa Baradaran
- Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America by Ibram X. Kendi

## Websites/Documents

- Dismantle Poverty in Washington, <https://dismantlepovertyinwa.com/>
- Racial Equity Tools, <https://www.racialequitytools.org/>
- Race Forward, <https://www.raceforward.org/about/our-story>
- Othering & Belonging Institute, <https://belonging.berkeley.edu/>
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/index.html>
- Coping with the Psychological Impact of Racism <https://des.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2022-06/CopingToxicRacismOppression.pdf>
- Beyond Thinking with Casey Tonnely, <https://www.beyondthinkingwithcasey.com/home>
- Disability Etiquette: Tips On Interacting With People With Disabilities, <https://www.unitedspinal.org/pdf/DisabilityEtiquette.pdf>
- “Ableist Words and Terms to Avoid”, Autistic Hoya — A blog by Lydia X. Z. Brown (2011-2020), <https://www.autistichoya.com/p/ableist-words-and-terms-to-avoid.html>

## Music

- This is America, Childish Gambino
- Alright, Kendrick Lamar
- Keep Your Head Up, Tupac
- What's Going On, Marvin Gaye
- We The People, Tribe Called Quest
- A Change Gon' Come, Sam Cooke
- Born This Way, Lady Gaga
- A Sun Lady for All Seasons Reads Her Poetry, Spoken word poetry by Sonia Sanchez.
- Strange Fruit, Billie Holliday
- Fight the Power, Public Enemy
- Inner City Blues (Make Me Wanna Holler), Marvin Gaye

## Movies

- The Stroll, HBO/HBO Max
- Race: The Power of an Illusion, PBS
- 1619 Project Six-Part Docuseries with Nikole Hannah-Jones, Hulu
- 13th, Netflix
- High on the Hog: How African American Cuisine Transformed America, Netflix
- Rising Against Asian Hate: One Day in March, PBS

## Wellness

- GoodTherapy | How Emotional Intelligence Can Be Key to Workplace Success  
<https://www.goodtherapy.org/blog/how-emotional-intelligence-can-be-key-to-workplace-success-0104167>
- 10 Tips for Building Strong Professional Relationships  
<https://www.businessinsider.com/10-tips-for-appreciating-your-network-contacts-2012-8>
- Healing & Wellness – BIPOC ED Coalition of Washington State  
[bipocedcoalitionwa.org](http://bipocedcoalitionwa.org)
- BIPOC Mental Health  
<https://www.mhanational.org/bipoc>
- Multicultural Counselors  
<https://www.multiculturalscounselors.org/>
- Box Breathing Exercise  
<https://www.webmd.com/balance/what-is-box-breathing>
-

# Glossary

It is important to have a shared vocabulary in equity and social justice work. Below is a short list of common terms and abbreviations used throughout this document, along with their meanings.

## Anti-Racism

Anti-racism is a process of actively identifying and opposing racism. The goal of anti-racism is to challenge racism and actively change the policies, behaviors, and beliefs that perpetuate racist ideas and actions.

“Anti-racism is rooted in action. It is about taking steps to eliminate racism at the individual, institutional, and structural levels.” Source: [Verywell Mind](#)

## Belonging

The Office of Equity uses [john a. powell’s definition of belonging](#). Belonging calls for something more than Inclusion and Equity, yet also includes them in meaningful ways.

Belonging is both objective and subjective.

- It can be quantified and measured, but it is also a perception found in the eye of the beholder. In this respect, Belonging, unlike both Equity and Inclusion, contains a psychological component — an affective component, which shapes the way social groups regard whatever it is they are regarding: an institution, a city, or even society writ large.
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Belonging is perceptual and tangible; it is a feeling and a practice. Belonging requires more than accommodation; it also demands agency. Belonging is realized fully when included groups have more than a voice — they are actually able to reshape the institution together with existing stakeholders.

## **BIPOC**

Black, Indigenous, and People of Color

## **DE&I**

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

### **Diversity**

Building diversity in our state agencies is only a starting point. Diversity is defined broadly as any difference whatsoever, all of the characteristics that make individuals unique. It is used to describe the various combinations of group/social differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, class, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, country of origin, and ability, as well as cultural, political, religious and other affiliations) and human differences (e.g., personality, learning style, and life experiences). Our working definition of diversity is to foster a work environment of belonging for every employee, recognizing and effectively utilizing their talent, skills, and perspectives to create a unified and high-performance workforce.

### **Equity**

The most important construct among DE&I, equity, refers to the creation of opportunities for historically underrepresented populations to have equitable access to equitable opportunity. Equity is also the process of allocating resources, programs, and opportunities to employees, customers, and residents to address historical discrimination and existing imbalances. Therefore, equity requires an organizational commitment that all employees, customers, and residents will be provided equitable access to opportunities, resources, and the ability to fully contribute to the agency's mission and goals.

The work of the Office of Equity must be guided by the following [principles of equity per RCW 43.06D.020](#):

- Developing, strengthening, and supporting policies and procedures that distribute and prioritize resources to those who have been historically and are currently marginalized, including tribes;
- Eliminating systemic barriers that have been deeply entrenched in systems of inequality and oppression; and
- Achieving procedural and outcome fairness, promoting dignity, honor, and respect for all people.

### **Historical(ly)**

This term refers to a 10-year or longer trend at a given department, agency, organization, or state.

## **PEAR**

Pro-equity, anti-racism (see Pro-Equity)



### **Institutional Racism**

The policies and practices within and across institutions that, intentionally or not, produce outcomes that chronically favor or place one racial group at a disadvantage. The overlapping and intersectionality of personal characteristics, including race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability, determine the degree of disadvantage. Examples of institutional racism can be found in school disciplinary policies in which students of color are punished at much higher rates than their white counterparts; in the criminal justice system; and within many employment sectors where day-to-day operations, as well as hiring and firing practices, significantly impact workers of color in a negative manner.

### **Power**

By “power”, we mean the ability to make decisions that are crucial for a specific outcome.

### **Privilege**

A special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group

### **Pro-Equity**

“...[T]he proactive way of doing equity work... the knowledge that we live in a society permeated by racism and bigotry... combat or control... in every action...” Source: Caroline Hill.

### **Relational Partnership**

Empathy-centered collaboration between government and people groups who have been excluded and marginalized by government decisions and actions... to undo harm and advance pro-equity anti-racism (PEAR) outcomes.

### **Structural Racism**

A system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing, ways to perpetuate racial group inequity. It identifies dimensions of our history and culture that have allowed privileges associated with “whiteness” and disadvantages associated with “color” to endure and adapt over time. Structural racism is not something that a few people or institutions choose to practice. Instead, it has been a feature of the complex social, economic, and political systems in which we all exist.

### **Underrepresented**

This term refers to populations, of employees, for example, that are disproportionately lower in number relative to their number in the national/state population.

# Notes

# Notes



# Relational Partnership in Practice:

A GUIDE TO MAKING WASHINGTON A **BELONGING** STATE

Access additional resources and trainings:  
<http://equity.wa.gov>

