De-escalating Patterns of Harm in White Dominant Spaces:
a Guide for the Work That Reconnects Facilitators andParticipants

The two charts that follow are an incomplete but nevertheless lovingly curated offering from members of the Anti-oppression Resource Group (big shout out especially to Carmen Rumbaut who spent many hours getting this information into chart form and editing it) which has thus far been an all-volunteer effort. They look at some patterns of harm seen in WTR spaces and offer some suggestions for what to do to address them.

The first chart arose out of a list of harms generated at a February 2018 gathering convened by Mutima Imani and Aravinda Ananda in Ohlone territory to explore patterns of harm happening in Work That Reconnects spaces. A pattern is seen when a harm recurs commonly over time rather than just as an isolated event. The list of harms that gave rise to this document was generated in the United States and people contributing to the content of this document are all located in the United States, so this is an acknowledgment of some US-centrism that is present in the document. We know some of it is broadly applicable, and acknowledge the ways in which some of it may be more context specific. Given how much of the Work arose in the context of the United States, there are also ways that that context is embedded in the Work and therefore globalized.

In the first table, the left-most column is a summary of the pattern of harm. In the middle column are some examples of what that may look like and some mentions of impact, and in the right column are some examples about what one may do to not replicate the harm. Rather than presenting the third column as absolute authority or exhaustive, there are some initial suggestions and the invitation is to view it with curiosity and try it on and see how it works.

Most of these suggestions have been tried with helpful results, but that does not mean they will work for all people! You might discover better approaches to addressing and not replicating these harms. You may encounter additional harms as you try these approaches! If so, we hope you will share your learnings with the wider community. The Work That Reconnects Network is launching a community forum on workthatreconnects.org which could be one place to share; please consider writing an article, poem or graphic for the Deep Times journal about your learning experiences with undoing oppression in Work That Reconnects spaces (the Evolving Edge section of the Journal is emphasizing learning of this nature); or contributing to a community cafe or webinar.

The list of harms is not exhaustive either. You may have experienced or witnessed others you would like to bring to the attention of the Work That Reconnects facilitation community.

The content is primarily geared towards facilitators, but some content may also be applicable for participants. There are a lot of different categories of action needed for facilitators to attend to the harm that is happening in Work That Reconnects spaces caused by systems of oppression (much of this harm is not specific to the Work That Reconnects, some of it is. Some of the harm is context specific to the United States, for example which commonly has white-dominant demographics in Work That Reconnects workshops) such as lifelong learning about systems of oppression and how to dismantle them; facilitator preparation and design of the workshop; and facilitator cultural competency and skillfulness with recognizing and responding to dynamics in the moment.

The second table has content that is directly from Tema Okun's Characteristics of White Supremacy Culture that has been slightly paraphrased to condense the content, but content is entirely drawn from Tema Okun's work and is only reformatted here into three columns to illuminate ways white supremacy culture is operating in Work That Reconnects Spaces and what one might do instead.

One note on our use of language: the authors of this document use the language of "Person of Color" or "People of Color" (abbreviated to POC) to refer to people not exclusively of European descent. There are some serious concerns with this language including that it centers whiteness and is US-centric. For that reason, some people are using the language of People of the Global Majority (PGM) instead. Some people also use BIPOC - Black, Indigenous and People of Color, to emphasize and highlight that all struggles and experiences within People of Color and of the Global Majority are not the same. Anti-Black racism and Indigenous erasure are particular. We encourage you to reflect on what language you use and the impact it has in our collective work towards liberation.

The authors of this document invite you to this orientation: "We are not here to "fix" each other; rather our work is to love ourselves into who we are, knowing how conditioned we are by white supremacy [and other interlocking systems of oppression]." May this offering help to shift some patterns of harm recurring within Work That Reconnects spaces.

Table 1.

Pattern	Examples of how this can be expressed and some of the impact	Examples of alternative behaviors

Not noticing or ignoring that systems of oppression, such as white supremacy, racism, sexism, classism, cisheteronormism, and ableism, all replicate when not consciously interrupted and transformed. **Not noticing or ignoring dynamics of power, privilege and oppression when they arise in groups.**	Not using pronouns requested, allowing men to take over the discussion, creating exercises that are physically impossible for some, not allowing silence, not allowing loud expressions, not taking the heat when a participant begins to get hostile and deflecting onto another. Centering white comfort and white culture. Silencing feedback loops about power, privilege and oppression - shutting down the person who provides feedback.	Commit to lifelong learning of deconditioning hierarchical and extractivist conditioning. As Ijeoma Olou says, in "So You Want to Talk About Race," check your privilege. Engage in ongoing learning about areas in which you have power and privilege. Explore your patterns of flight, fight, freeze, appease when it comes to feedback and confrontation. Build the muscles of being able to respond to feedback rather than reacting and shutting it down so that you can model taking corrective feedback from people experiencing oppression. Include people on your facilitation team who are able to notice oppression dynamics and intervene. Gain in experience noticing group dynamics by observing others with these skills. Practice to develop your skills both with noticing dynamics and intervening. Normalize that it is ok for anyone to speak up about harm, and build community muscles of treating this feedback as a gift rather than meeting it with pushback and silencing. Addressing this feedback takes time. Be willing to pause the agenda and adapt the agenda so as to respond to as much incoming feedback as possible. One of the responsibilities of the facilitator is making some process decisions for the group. Get as much feedback as possible from the group, and make your best intuitive guesses about which feedback to respond to at which

		level(whole group, on the side, etc.) as there will not be time for addressing every harm in the whole group. Experiment with more facilitators sharing the load so that one person is not responsible for both content and process can always be watching for harm and what to do about it. Discuss ahead of time options for what to do when harm occurs. Build in mechanisms for receiving and responding to feedback, especially about harm.
Harm not addressed.	Not naming the harm; wanting to be polite rather than providing needed feedback.	Name the harm, describe the hurt, be flexible with the container's time, allow for a moment of silence after the harm while being careful that the silence leads to further communication, ask the group for suggestions on how to avoid such harm or suggest it yourself.
Ignoring harm that is happening in the room. **Not responding when toxic material is spilled, when someone throws out hurtful speech that is coming from defense or trauma.**	Allowing racist (or any other oppressive) behavior to go unmentioned. Allowing toxic speech without comment, restraint, or structure. Not having community agreements that take this possibility into account. Allowing microaggressions to play out unchecked.	Normalize that it is ok sometimes to pause when harm happens. One time to do this is at the start of a group's time together, such as during an agreements process. Add "ouch" into the community agreement and explain the process of who gets to say anything further after an "ouch." Create mechanisms for harm to be addressed. One option may be to get in identity affinity groups to reflect on microaggressions when they happen. Create a mechanism for healthy conflict resolution.
Inability to receive feedback non-defensively about	Launching into an explanation about your intentions and not acknowledging the impact.	Normalize at the start of a group's time together the difference between intention and impact and ask people

impact, and not being able to give feedback that is free of further harm.		to commit to taking responsibility for impact. As a facilitator it is important to practice this skill so that you can hopefully model it for the group. Check out different proposals for receiving feedback about harm in a non-defensive way, and practice with role-plays.
Assuming that one's own (i.e. white) culture is the only, main, or best one, and thereby centering it to the exclusion of others.	Using the word "we" in a way that another identity (i.e. a Black, Indigenous or Person of Color) feels left out, as if their experience were being ignored or even erased. The language of "seeing with new eyes" centers people for whom these insights are new.	Use "I" statements; be very careful of who is included and excluded in a "we" statement. I.e. If you are white, you could speak to a racially diverse group to your own experience by saying, "Those of us who are white…" Speak from personal experience and encourage others to do so. You could have an explicit agreement to use "I statements" and speak from personal experience rather than universalizing your experience as if it is the experience of all. Engage in ongoing self-education on interlocking systems of oppression to better understand when you may be centering dominant cultures and identities.
A limited view from only one culture's point of view.	Telling the story of the Great Unraveling as if it were something new rather than something that has been experienced by some peoples for centuries; those people feel non-belonging. Framing "Seeing With New Eyes;" from the European perspective as if it were true for all peoples, when a lot of the concepts covered there are not new for some cultures.	Study the stories of history as told by other cultures, in particular, the cultures that may be represented in your group and in the region you are in. Undergo cultural competency training; interact with and learn about cultures different from your own. See Patricia St. Onge's section in Chapter 12 in the most recent edition of *Coming Back to Life* to learn more about why "seeing with ancient eyes" is more accurate for her and her

		peoples. Using language like "seeing with new and ancient eyes" can include people for whom it is new and not new.
Lack of awareness of diverse cultures.	Ignoring the experience of those whose culture has included other insights, i.e. for indigenous peoples, interconnectedness is an ancient concept. Using a segment from another culture out of context from how that culture uses such a practice. Lack of credit given for art, songs or concepts. The harm done is to feel that one's culture is not represented, their insights are not valued, or that their culture is being appropriated and insulted.	Frame your story in a way that speaks from many perspectives. Use revised framing (i.e. The Three Stories of our Time which was rewritten to reflect that the Great Unraveling is not a new phenomenon for many cultures and ecosystems) and practices (see Ann Marie Davis' revised version of Harvesting the Gifts of the Ancestors which was rewritten to remove previous Eurocentrism). Give credit if using aspects of another's culture and use in harmony with that culture's intention.
Lack of consciousness in assuming only one norm around culture, only one way of being right.	Assumptions about what active listening looks like are different across cultures, but sometimes white culture normalizes only one person speaking at a time as what active listening looks like.. For some cultures it can mean not interrupting a speaker, and in other cultures, active listening can be a lot more interactive. Be aware of normalizing only one way of what active listening looks like. Speaking out against other methods or ways of perceiving without first considering if that side could have a point. People who have other views will be forced into silence.	Take some time towards the beginning of a group's time together to acknowledge diversity in the room and that there are different cultural norms around what active listening looks like. When tempted to judge, try asking more questions, "How do you come to that conclusion? Is that something you have seen work before?" Try to keep curiosity open. Acknowledge and welcome differences in the group.
Indigenous erasure in settler colonial nations.	Not acknowledging the indigenous inhabitants of the land on which the	Offer a land acknowledgement at the beginning of a gathering. If you are

	gathering is taking place, or speaking and acting as if they only exist in the past. Or speaking a name in acknowledgment but in no other way being connected in solidarity.	not indigenous to a place, go beyond just words, by getting to know local indigenous people and joining solidarity actions. These solidarity actions can be shared in conjunction with the land acknowledgment.
Discounting non-dominant religious or spiritual beliefs.	Christian hegemony, beliefs in God as spirituality. Using language that never mentions spirituality, assumes a shared spirituality, or dismisses different types of beliefs. Asking for a native prayer or using a symbol of native spirituality at the beginning without embedding that into the work. Reading a poem that presents Christianity as the only way.	Facilitators do the work to clarify their own beliefs and allow for others to share their beliefs without judgment. Ask for participants to comment on this matter, or share in break-out groups.
Discounting trauma from cultural and historical sources.	Not noticing symptoms of trauma, not interrupting harm when it is happening, not slowing down to give options for traumatic responses, not engaging with and transforming underlying patterns.	"Trauma training such as skills and experience with trauma healing and recovery methodologies (EFT, EMDR, somatics, etc.)" (Erica Peng) Read histories from the point of view of the oppressed, such as Howard Zinn's work and Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz. Training in conflict resolution, neuroscience, and somatic awareness.
Centering the comfort, learning and experience of dominant identities. **Paying more attention to the discomfort of the white participants than the discomfort of or harm done to POC. Not noticing the discomfort of the POC.**	Comforting some in the group and not others. Identifying with one identity to the point of ignoring others. Showing empathy toward expressions of white fragility by white people; feeling closer to whites who express their fear; being aware of and taking action on only the comfort of white people. POC's discomfort is ignored and shown to not be as urgent or	Ground the work in basic realities of colonization, slavery, and ongoing domination. Acknowledge historical ownership/stewardship of the land. Be attentive to the impact on and experience of others when a white woman starts crying. There is strong cultural conditioning under white supremacy to center the comfort of white people - this conditioning is present in people of all people conditioned by white supremacy,

	painful or the responsibility of the group. Their historical and contemporary struggles become groundless or rootless.	although in different ways. It can lead to additional labor for some people (feel the need to comfort) and a lack of freedom to express what one is feeling. Consider the pros and cons of staying together as a group or going into break-out sessions when a white person starts crying about a racial topic.
Separating environmental and social justice movements when framing.	Statements such as "This work isn't about racism, it is about gaia." Acting as if the Great Unraveling is a new phenomenon, when some cultures and ecosystems have been experiencing collapse and unraveling for millennia. POC feels that their situation is irrelevant or, even worse, safe.	"Practice articulating the connections between anti-racism, decolonization, environmental advocacy. Foreground a story about the decolonial struggle for ecological justice." ([Sarah Nahar](#)) Attend one or more undoing oppression trainings that have an intersectional analysis, and read on this topic.
Not supporting POC comments regarding their discomfort.	Nodding the head and then changing the subject. Responding but softening the statement for the comfort of the white people. POC can then feel ignored, or as though they had been rude.	Thank the person who made an uncomfortable statement. "I am glad you brought that up." Allow for silence. Be careful that your own talking isn't out of nervousness. Allow time for processing the statement. You could try asking "Is anyone else feeling the same way?" or some other attempt to get further support for the one who spoke up.
Using parts of another culture in a way that results in cultural appropriation. Taking without asking and without reciprocating by people with privilege from marginalized peoples, especially stealing of medicine from cultures that have already experienced a lot of theft.	Use of indigenous practices by people who are not indigenous. POC are left feeling robbed, uncredited, used, exploited.	Research any part of a culture that you want to use. For example, a talking stick from the Native cultures, music from Africa, food from Latin America. Be clear about what your power relationship is with the culture from which you would like to borrow to help ascertain if it is cultural appropriation or cultural sharing. Give credit to where the idea, song or practice came from, how you

		found it, and be humble, e.g. "This is the way I have come to understand this but there may be a more full way."
Using terms that show an underlying judgment against, or ignorance of, certain peoples	For example, Latin Americans, hearing the words "Banana Republic" sounds like you are saying that only the USA knows what democracy is and can sustain it. That Latin America is laughable for petty dictators. It dismisses the history of US exploitation, extraction, bribery, and election interference in Latin America. Another example is use of "America" as though it is only the United States when America refers to two continents. Another example is use of the slang "going south" as indicative of failure.	Ask for help. Invite others to please bring such terms to your attention, and be receptive when they do. Learn how to listen to such feedback with the humility born of knowing one's own ignorance. Watch for defensiveness in self and others. For U.S. facilitators, take time to learn the history of U.S. attacks on other countries through corporate extraction and military involvement.
Not taking time to explore complexity in the room and ignoring difference	Using the fact that time is short to not look at the present moment of expressions. Ignoring body language that expresses isolation.	Get curious about every person in the room. In the initial framing the work for the group, reach out to each subgroup of diversity. "A welcome can include acknowledgment of visible uniqueness (gender, race/ethnicity, language, ability, age, size, nation/tribal/diaspora status) *and* less visible differences (medical conditions, religious adherence, class, education level, profession, sexual/relational orientation)." ([Sarah Nahar](#))
Going too fast	Pushing through in a rigid way to stick to the pre-planned agenda.	Build in extra time to slow down and pause as needed.
Not building trust slowly enough in general, but especially	Lacking skills and experience for facilitating practices that build participants' capacity to	Take time to know your audience. You may send out a short survey ahead of time to ask about their

| not building trust before race work | successfully engage and connect with each other.

Placing POC in positions where they must speak up rather than inviting them.

Leaving insufficient time to process or skipping processing entirely out of one's own discomfort. | experience with anti-oppression work.

Develop "Skills and experience facilitating intra-, inter- and group process and dynamics, with specific experience 1) building psychological safety, trust and rapport among a diverse group, and 2) naming and facilitating dynamics (which may involve conflict, difference, anger, etc.) related to social identity, diversity, power, status, privilege, bias, blind spots, conflict, etc." (Erica Peng)

Trust is easier given when two people are talking to each other rather than the whole group.

Trust can sometimes be more easily built among groups who share some similar experiences - having identity affinity groups for vulnerable content can often be helpful for building trust.

Find ways to measure trust.

Give a way out for those who are too uncomfortable, such as leave the circle momentarily to take a time-out and reflect on how they can re-enter the circle. Try going for a short walk or doing some journaling and then bring back reflections. |
| **Not understanding trauma – how it happens, what are the effects in the short and long term, symptoms, how to adapt and heal** | Ignoring symptoms being expressed in the group. Ignoring one's own trauma. | Learn about trauma and its effects. Give information about the trauma of oppression and discuss how to create an anti-oppressive atmosphere. Invite participants to be alert for their own reactions as well as others.
Have a plan for when toxic material is thrown out, regardless of identity. |

Inadequate preparation and framing of power, privilege and oppression	Not preparing participants ahead of time, especially for the complexity of conversations around race, power and privilege. This lack of preparation particularly means that the nervous systems of people in positions of privilege are not calmed and defensive moves are activated (fight, flight, freeze). People are caught off guard/destabilized when anti-oppression language and framing are not offered.	Name clearly and define power, privilege, oppression, trauma, intersectionality, etc. towards the start of a group's time together. This can be building on information sent out ahead of time. There are also exercises that allow the group to define such terms. Notice the effect of words such as power, privilege and oppression. Be ready to hold the responses of defensiveness. Have a plan on how to refute the defensiveness of privilege. Know several styles of privilege defense. Include a glossary of terms. Provide community agreement and guidelines.
Lack of attention to the body and its sensations	Not creating a space that allows for flexibility of body types and comfort...i.e. everyone sitting in chairs for long periods of time. Lack of ability to read the body or not attending to fight, flight, freeze. Not grounding participants in their own body.	Create options that allow for people to meet their own body needs without shame or judgement. Use exercises that place attention on bodily sensations and support resourcing and regulation. Build structural safety by offering options such as leaving the room momentarily to walk or shake off the harm; have someone informed in the physical expressions of trauma to support an overwhelmed participant; give optional sitting arrangements or, if online, a variety of activities to stop sitting and staring at the screen.
Allowing some people to be left out	Lack of attention to interpersonal dynamics, in and out of the circle. Allowing the same people, including people of the same dominant identities, to speak over and over again in the whole group.	Ask people to switch partners, to reach out to someone they don't know, to introduce themselves to everyone in the group, even after the group intros. Include an agreement like "Make space, take space" to encourage people who tend to speak

		a lot to speak less, and people who don't tend to speak a lot, to also share some. Use phrases like, "let's hear from someone who hasn't spoken yet in the whole group" to make space.
Lack of understanding of racism and responsiveness to how it is operating in the space	Wanting to be nice, clinging to the self-image of being a good person, not calling racism out in the moment, forgetting to focus on both the harmed and the one who expressed racist thoughts. Upholding social taboos against talking openly about race, using the binary of racists are bad and everyone else is good, forgetting the deep fear and resentment against people of color, assuming you are objective, forgetting deep investment in racism and internalized superiority. *(Robin DiAngelo, White Fragility)*	Explain that racism isn't just on or off; all of us conditioned by dominant culture have all been steeped in racist attitudes, which result in different kinds of harm for those who are targeted and those who are privileged. Take time for healing/resolution after racism is called out.
Not having done inner work and ongoing learning leaves facilitators underprepared for noticing and addressing oppression in the moment	Glossing over the harm done, not calling it out. Not preparing participants to use the workshop as a place to look within and find places that need change. Not believing that participants can change. Inability to notice and/or interrupt oppression in progress.	Shifts need to be made within oneself; renew commitment to stop replicating systems of oppression; understanding that habits are changed by daily mental hygiene.
Misuse of identity caucuses (in the event that they are even used)	Inadequately framing the identities; not clearly setting the context; not having a facilitator in a caucus; not allowing caucuses to report to each other afterwards.	Sarah Nahar encourages people to "Try identity based caucuses, around race/ethnicity or another social location that significantly influences how one experiences the world and copes with the impacts of the IGS. This will give a chance, for example, for all the weirdo POCs to have the chance to see each other and go deep on some of our stuff (what a gift as we do not have those spaces

| | | often enough!). In white caucuses, this can be a time to grieve the impacts of white supremacy on the souls of you and your children, and sort through the shame and anger that's coming up that you may have toward yourself, other whites, and the system itself. It is a place to find accountability partners to counter defensiveness and strategize change, and more importantly a white caucus is a great space to both get more resources and cultivate courage and self-love." ([Sarah Nahar](#))

However, this is a more advanced facilitator activity because facilitators need to have some racial competency to hold these spaces well. Experiment with hosting identity caucus spaces and learn from others with more experience. |
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| **Not taking the hyperindividualism of intersectionality into account** | Allowing one person to get hurt so that the group can get along and be comfortable with their unstated assumptions and privileges. Disposing of the individual rather than dismantling the system of oppression. Believing that you have to do it all by yourself. Blaming others for not knowing enough.

The harm is burn-out in facilitators and an experience of further oppression for participants. | Explain sacrifice zones (Naomi Klein). Discuss ways that pattern could play out in the group.

Define intersectionality in the glossary. Distribute the glossary ahead of time. Commit to using the glossary during the workshop.

Model asking for feedback and help; encourage others to do so.

Develop robust support systems for facilitators. |
| **Maintaining dominant identities and dynamics of dominance in leadership, culture and demographics** | Not choosing a diversity of facilitators.

Ignoring dynamics between a facilitation team and allowing such dynamics to ripple into the workshop space. | Assemble a diverse co-facilitation team including people of color and other non-dominant identities such as LGBTQ, class, age, and physical ability. (Erica Peng) |

	Not preparing the participants ahead of time for what they may encounter. Ignoring disabilities. Not choosing an accessible location. Not notifying workshop participants that social identity, social location, and undoing oppression will be part of the focus. The harm can be that participants are not prepared so that their nervous systems are reactive and not receptive to undoing oppression.	Involve the whole team in the planning from the start. Attend to relationships between co-facilitators and set up systems of support for one another. Have at least one co-facilitator who can recognize dynamics of oppression in operation and has experience with interrupting and shifting them. Pick a location that can accommodate folks with limited mobility and is ideally accessible by public transportation. Offer information in your marketing materials about physical accessibility. Gather relevant information in the registration forms, such as their social identities. Be transparent both in advertising about the nature of the event and in the welcome/registration materials. Reflect on what activities and topics that will be relevant, resonant and culturally competent for those participants. Send self-education materials to participants to help support dominant identities to take self-responsibility and not replicate patterns of harm such as silencing of feedback about impact of racism, i.e. prepare white folks to withstand some "racial stress." Decide on which guidelines or community agreements process you will use. Possibly make some norms available in advance of the workshop, i.e. taking self-responsibility for

		managing their own triggers during the workshop.
Imbalances in power sharing that replicate historical exclusions	Not being transparent about how power is shared within leadership teams. Not including facilitators of color in decision-making processes.	Have explicit and transparent conversations among the facilitation team about how power is operating and being shared or not shared. All facilitators are included in the aspects of decision-making that they want to be included in.
Centering on facilitator/trainer and consequent lack of participant-centering	Participants give away all energy and power to sage on the stage. Not holding facilitators accountable. Not spending enough facilitation preparation time together.	Everyone needs to use their power to hold healthy boundaries. Discourage guru worship. Consider that a large group (100) will tend toward mere listening to the facilitator if adequate opportunities for connection are not built in such as breakout groups and adequate breaks.
Lack of facilitator accountability	Not building in mechanisms for collecting feedback. Not acting on feedback that is given.	Don't only allow feedback on the facilitation, but also encourage it by having explicit mechanisms for gathering it. One strategy is to have a person on the team who is not in a lead facilitation role with content and process to collect feedback and relay it to others on the facilitation team. Sometimes it is necessary to provide & receive feedback in the moment, and sometimes it can be more easily integrated during a break.
Unfair compensation	Uncompensated labor – facilitation labor, emotional labor, educational labor, especially for identity groups that have historically had labor stolen from them. Not taking a facilitator's financial status into account in how income is allocated.	Explore different income streams such as fundraising to generate adequate income and not replicate patterns of exploitative unpaid labor. Have a transparent discussion among the facilitation team about how income will be allocated to

		compensate people for their labor. Take into consideration class.

Table 2: Paraphrase of Characteristics of White Supremacy Culture by Tema Okun

Perfectionism	Pointing out inadequacies to a third party rather than directly; appreciation, if expressed, goes to the person getting the credit; judging mistakes as character flaws; little effort by the group to analyze and learn from a mistake.	Develop a culture of appreciation for people's work and efforts; expected that everyone will make mistakes and those mistakes offer opportunities for learning; separate the person from the mistake; when offering feedback, always speak to the things that went well before offering criticism; ask people to offer specific suggestions for how to do things differently; realize that being your own worst critic does not improve the work, and often contributes to low morale.
Sense of Urgency	Not taking time to be inclusive, encourage democratic and/or thoughtful. long-term decision-making Sacrificing potential allies for quick or highly visible results.	Consider consequences. Create realistic plans; expect things to take longer; set goals of inclusivity and diversity, and consider what that would require; learn from past experience; propose realistic time frames; clarify how you will make good decisions if urgency arises; realize that rushing decisions may take more time in the long run because some voices were left unheard.
Defensiveness	Trying to prevent abuse and protect power as it exists rather than facilitating each person; not clarifying who has what power; limiting thoughts to either/or; viewing criticism of those with power as threatening, inappropriate, or rude; responding to challenging ideas with defensiveness, silencing those voices; over-avoidance of hurt feelings and defensive people; white people defending against charges of racism instead of examining how racism might actually be happening. Defensiveness of people in power creates an oppressive culture.	Understand that structure cannot in and of itself facilitate or prevent abuse; understand the link between defensiveness and fear (of losing power, losing face, losing comfort, losing privilege); work on your own defensiveness; name defensiveness as a problem when it is one; give people credit for being able to handle more than you think; discuss ways in which resistance to new ideas gets in the way of the goal.

Quantity Over Quality	Valuing things that can be measured more highly than more intangible goals: valuing numbers of attendees over profound experience; valuing decision-making over quality of relationships or democracy, valuing efficiency over the ability to constructively deal with conflict.	Include process or quality goals in your planning; have a values statement which expresses the ways to do work; refer to that statement during processing; set measurable process goals; recognize when addressing people's underlying concern is more important than the agenda.
Only One Right Way	Believing in one and only right way to do things; if people do not adopt that right way, then something is wrong with them, like a missionary who devalues other cultures.	Accept that there are many ways to get to the same goal; honor group's decision and learn from that choice, especially if it is not the way you would have chosen; notice when people do things differently and how those differences might improve your approach; watch for and name any insistence based on the belief that there is only one right way; let others know that you have some learning to do about different communities' ways of doing; never assume that you know what is best in isolation; form meaningful relationships with other communities.
Paternalism	Not clarifying decision-making to those affected; assuming capability of making decisions for and in the interests of those without power; not understanding the viewpoint or experience of those for whom the decisions are made; not realizing that those without power understand they do not have it but do not really know how decisions get made and who makes what decisions, and yet are completely familiar with the impact of those decisions on them.	Make sure that everyone knows and understands who makes what decision, everyone's level of responsibility and authority; include people who are affected by decisions in the decision-making.
Either/Or Thinking	Perceiving things are either/or, good/bad, right/wrong, with us/against us, (rather than both/and,) making it difficult to learn from mistakes or accommodate conflict; trying to simplify complex things, for example believing that poverty is simply a result of lack of education; creating conflict and sense of urgency, as people feel they have to	Notice when people use either/or and simplifying complex issues, particularly when the stakes seem high or an urgent decision needs to be made; suggest more than two alternatives; slow it down and encourage people to do a deeper analysis; when people are faced with an urgent decision, take a break to think

	make decisions to do either this or that, with no time or encouragement to consider alternatives, particularly those which may require more time or resources; using your own agenda to push those who are still thinking or reflecting to make a choice between two options without acknowledging a need for time and creativity to come up with more options.	creatively; avoid making decisions under extreme pressure.
Power Hoarding	Placing little value in sharing power; seeing power as limited with not enough to go around; feeling threatened when changes are suggested in how things should be done and taking it personally; not being aware of hoarding power or feeling threatened; assuming they have the best interests of the organization at heart and assume those wanting change are ill-informed (stupid), emotional, inexperienced.	Include power sharing in your organization's values statement; discuss what good leadership looks like and make sure people understand that a good leader develops the power and skills of others; understand that change is inevitable and challenges to your leadership can be healthy and productive; make sure the organization is focused on the mission.
Fear of Open Conflict	Fearing expressed conflict, ignoring, avoiding, or feeling discomfort with differences in opinion, blaming the person who raised the issue rather than to looking at what is causing the problem; emphasizing on being polite equating the raising of difficult issues with being impolite, rude, or out of line.	Role play ways to handle conflict; distinguish between being polite and raising hard issues; don't require those who raise hard issues to raise them in "acceptable" ways, especially if you are using the ways in which issues are raised as an excuse not to address those ssues; once a conflict is resolved, take the opportunity to revisit it and see how it might have been handled differently.
Individualism	Feeling uncomfortable working as part of a team, believing you must solve problems on your own; accountability, if any, goes up and down, not sideways to peers or to participants; wanting individual recognition and credit; feeling isolated; valuing competition more highly valued than cooperation; allowing little time or resources devoted to developing skills in how to cooperate; valuing those who can get things done on their own without needing	Include teamwork; work towards shared goals; teach how working together will improve performance; evaluate people's ability to work in a team as well as their ability to get the job done; make sure that credit is given to all those who participate in an effort, not just the leaders or most public person; make people accountable as a group rather than as individuals; create a culture where people bring problems to the group to solve problems, not just to report

	supervision or guidance; not being able or willing to delegate to others.	activities; evaluate people based on their ability to delegate to others; evaluate people based on their ability to work as part of a team to accomplish shared goals.
Progress is Bigger and More	Defining success as bigger and more; expanding staff & projects or serving more people regardless of how well they are served; not focusing on how those we serve may be exploited, excluded, or underserved as we focus on how many we are serving instead of quality of service.	Asking how the present actions of the group will affect people seven generations from now; ensure that any cost/benefit analysis includes all the costs, not just the financial ones, for example, the cost in morale, the cost in credibility, the cost in the use of resources; include process goals in planning, for example, make sure that goals speak to how you want to do your work, not just what you want to do; ask those you work with and for to evaluate your performance.
Objectivity	Believing in objectivity or Neutrality; believing that emotions are inherently destructive, irrational, and should not play a role in decision-making or group process; invalidating people who show emotion; requiring people to think in a linear (logical) fashion and ignoring or invalidating those who think in other ways; showing impatience with any thinking that does not appear logical.	Realize that people's world views affect the way they understand things, including oneself; learn to sit with discomfort when people are expressing themselves in ways unfamiliar to you; assume that everybody has a valid point and your job is to understand what that point is.
Right to Comfort	Believing that those with power have a right to emotional and psychological comfort; scapegoating those who cause discomfort; equating individual acts of unfairness against white people with systemic racism which daily targets people of color.	Understand that discomfort is at the root of all growth and learning; welcome it as much as you can; deepen your political analysis of racism and oppression so you have a strong understanding of how your personal experience and feelings fit into a larger picture; don't take everything personally.