



UnLeading invites us to challenge common-sense assumptions and center often-silenced approaches to leadership, allowing us to re/imagine possibilities for leading, learning, and being in relation to ourselves, each other, and the more than human world.

<https://www.yorku.ca/edu/unleading/>

Facilitator Guide

“UnLeading asks us to engage in the praxis of leadership, a continual interplay of action towards systemic change and deep, inner reflection. In this way, it is a process of becoming, with no predetermined destination or finite goal.” (The UnLeading Project, York University)

UnLeading also asks us to look for leadership in unfamiliar places and challenge the notion of the individual leader.

This podcast series will highlight voices of leaders in classrooms, communities, homes, schools, school districts, and beyond.

The series asks how might we:

- Trouble taken-for-granted assumptions about leadership and learning that reinforce the status quo?
- Engage conceptions of leadership that disrupt, challenge and work against the status quo?
- Center the experiences, knowledge systems, and leadership approaches of the global majority, including Indigenous people, Black and African diasporic people, and people of colour as well as people with multiple and intersecting marginalized identities?
- Redefine leadership to be responsive to the socio-political realities of local, regional, and global contexts in service to historically and systemically underserved students?
- Reclaim and imagine future possibilities for leadership that create radically different possibilities for schooling?

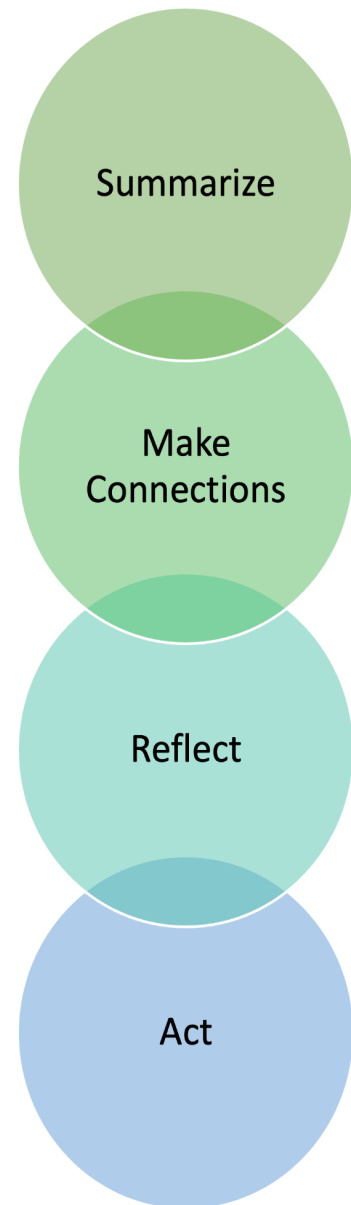
— **A**s you listen to the podcast, we ask that you actively engage in learning and unlearning with yourself and others to deepen your understandings. We offer the following format in support of your journey in unlearning:

SUMMARIZE by identifying several themes/concepts that arise in this conversation with the guest speakers. Note similarities, differences, tensions, connections, and possible contradictions between and among them. Additionally, note the perspectives, ideas, and voices that might be missing as well in this conversation. You are also invited to draw out compelling quotes from the speakers and comment on them

MAKE CONNECTIONS to your experiences in/with communities and to larger socio-political and historic contexts. Think about and comment on how the thoughts and ideas presented by the speakers connect to similar themes/concepts in other contexts of leadership.

REFLECT on how the conversation with the speakers informs your understandings of leadership outside of familiar frameworks using the guided reflection questions posed below.

ACT by committing to possible actions (immediate and long-term) that you will engage in to disrupt the status quo, which will steadfastly guide you in actualizing the type of leader you hope to be in and with communities.





— The Four I's: From Thinking to Actions in the 4 Domains:

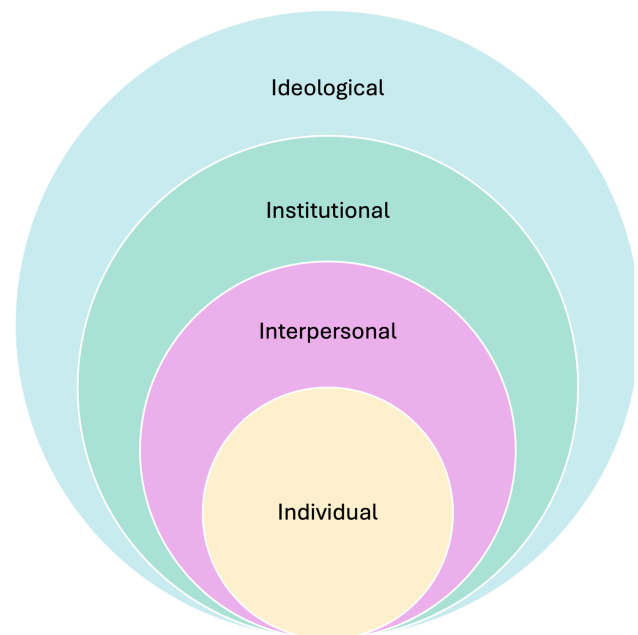
This is a journey towards building new insights and frames of reference while sitting with questions and wonderings that lead to changes in our thinking and meaningful actions in our practices. It is an invitation to recognize the limitations and biases we may have in our understanding of leadership across 4 domains

Individual Relates to the emotions, biases, perceptions, thoughts about ourselves.

Interpersonal Concerns relationships, how we treat one another as individuals and communities.

Institutional Applies to structures, policies, curriculum, professional learning, parent and family engagement, classroom and school climate, and larger policies.

Ideological Connection to ideas about each other and the world.



Season 2

INNER LANDSCAPES OF LEADERSHIP

(Click image to listen)



Guiding Reflection Questions:

What are the inner landscapes of our lives, and what is the impact of these landscapes on the purpose and possibilities for leaders and leadership in education? (J. Zuberi & M. Saver)

Reflection Questions:

1. How do we bring more of our whole selves to our work?
2. What is the role of awareness, healing, embodiment, joy, and creativity in leading and living?
3. How do we make sense of the discrepancies between our inner lives and our outer presence and work in the world? How might our fears, fantasies, desires, worries, etc. influence who we are and how we lead, especially those that lie beneath conscious awareness?
4. Who do we need to be to live and lead with greater authenticity, integration, and wholeness?
5. How might we apply this understanding to the work we do in communities, schools, and academies?

Individual Relates to the emotions, biases, perceptions, thoughts about ourselves.

Quotes to provoke our thinking and guide us in our actions:

“The inner leadership practice in the classroom starts with the teacher, as the leader showing up as their authentic self and facilitating spaces with students and communities where they can be their authentic selves in the learning process.” (Jamea Zuberi)

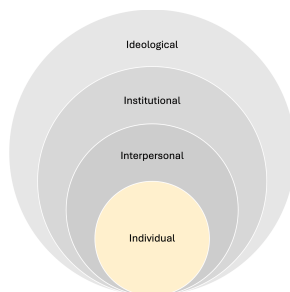
“Dr. Richard Schwartz, founder of Internal Family Systems Therapy and whose description of the self makes sense to my experience, describes the self as having these characteristics: calmness, curiosity, compassion, connectedness, confidence, creativity, courage, and clarity. This is the kind of leader, the kind of person that I aspire to be.” (Michael Saver)

“There's a lot of clutter in there that needs to be cleared out and composted. So we are then projecting that onto the outer world from our inner worlds because we haven't worked through it and figured out what would be generative and what wouldn't be.” (Sharon Stein)

“The personal is political. We need to like, start with ourselves. We need to unlearn, but what does that mean when we are in constant functional freeze and how that is embodied by different bodies.” (Yamikani Msosa)

Reflection:

How do these statements resonate with you in terms of how you see yourself as a leader, showing up as your authentic self?



Action:

- Take some time to journal about ways you have disconnected from your authentic self.
- What are some commitments you can make to cultivate a connection to your authentic self?

Interpersonal Concerns relationships, how we treat one another as individuals and communities.

Quotes to provoke our thinking and guide us in our actions:

“This really puts me in mind of students that I've seen over the years who come from Caribbean or African heritage or Indigenous heritage, and who are forced to create socially constructed identities that resemble my heritage more than their own because we only teach Shakespeare or we only teach history where their experience is absent. And this creates a gap between their true self, who they are and their expected way of being in the world if they're expected to show up somehow like me.” (Michael Saver)

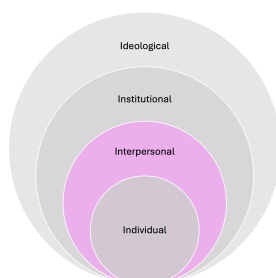
“Engaging in an ongoing journey of self knowledge is kept honest and truthful by the presence of others who help create a safe and brave trustworthy space to articulate, reflect on and lean into self knowledge in service of change, personal, interpersonal, systemic, and ideological.” (Jamea Zuberi)

“We are not separate and there's a lot of illusions about the fact that we're separate from each other and from the land around us. And so I think in order to talk about inner landscapes, it's also important to talk about physical landscapes and just acknowledge that I have the privilege of joining today from stolen territory.” (Sharon Stein)

“Really centering that that path of migration has had an important impact on how I view myself and how, you know, I'm in relationship with the outer world, as well as inner.” (Yamikani Msosa)

Reflection:

How might we collectively make space to bring our whole selves in with the understanding of the impacts of our inner landscapes?



Action:

- What practices can you cultivate to bring your whole self into the institutions and organizations you work within?
- Consider how you connect with others in a way that supports their ability to be present in their whole selves.

Institutional Applies to structures, policies, curriculum, professional learning, parent and family engagement, classroom and school climate, and larger policies.

Quotes to provoke our thinking and guide us in our actions:

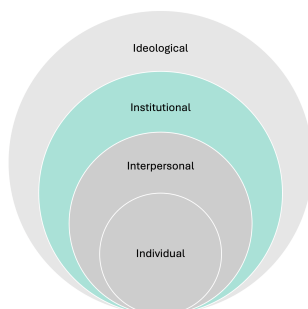
“Ontario Educational Leadership Framework, which describes school and system leadership, where it draws upon personal leadership resources to effectively enact leadership practices. So it's clear from the framework that inner resources, such as emotional intelligence and self-efficacy are foundational to educational leadership.” (Michael Saver)

“I think it is really required in order to think about leadership as doing what you can do and what is needed, rather than sort of what you want to do and what makes you look and feel good. So it's not about being self-service, but rather about being in service of something beyond yourself. And nor is it about self-sacrifice, which sometimes happens, you know, we go too far in that direction or systemically, we are sort of pressed to go in that direction and serve other people's egos and entitlements, especially Indigenous and racialized people of colour are expected to do that.” (Sharon Stein)

“Talking about care, it brings me to education, the ethical standards for the teaching profession. You know, the four points we talk about are care, respect, trust, and integrity...I was actually drawn to creating a community of trust, creating a community that can develop my inner landscape, not only as a teacher, but also as a human being to be able to take care of myself, to live with integrity, to be able to respect myself and by extension be a role model, not necessarily a leader per se, but a role model.” (Jamea Zuberi)

Reflection:

How can educational institutions hold space for leaders to deeply reflect on their inner landscapes?



Action:

- Consider a process or longstanding practice within your institution or organization that invite fragmentation of the self. Generate a list of the ways these practices and processes create barriers to show up as leaders' authentic selves.

Ideological Connection to ideas about each other and the world.

Quotes to provoke our thinking and guide us in our actions:

“Reflective practice is focused on gaining clarity about the whole of life, becoming more self-aware and accepting of both gifts and strengths, as well as challenges and limitations. This is a critical both/and. Much of leadership culture focuses on making the leader look good, rather than on understanding and accepting inner truth with humility.” (Michael Saver)

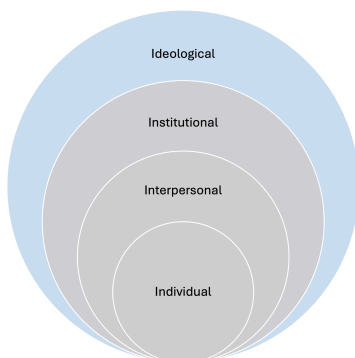
“If we don't have the self knowledge of ourselves, if we're not reading the context and thinking about how we're being read, then we can reproduce a lot of harmful patterns in the process.” (Sharon Stein)

“I think it was Jon Kabat-Zinn in their introduction to Ronda McGee's book, *The Inner Work of Racial Justice* talks about the notion of conflict and difference saying that if we, in our present state of expressing hate and differences, if we collectively, as human beings do not learn how to embrace difference in a more loving way, in a way that works, then we would not be able to sustain our existence.” (Jamea Zuberi)

“Vulnerability, wholeness, even care, collective care, they're ones that are disruptive because they don't fit into a neat package.” (Yamikani Msosa)

Reflection:

What might it mean to undo and unlearn educational leadership ideologies and practices that disconnect the personal self from that of the “professional”?



Action:

- What does leadership look like that focuses on integration of the self that recognizes the interconnectedness of the self and work?
- Identify some long held practices in institutions that facilitate the fragmentation of the self through harmful “professional” norms?

