



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?

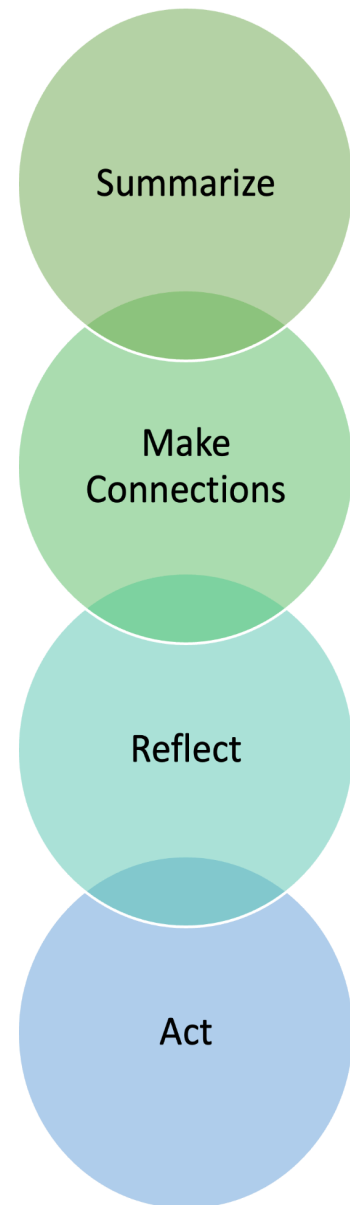
— **A**s you listen to the podcast, we ask that you actively engage in learning and unlearning with yourself and others to deepen your understandings. We offer the following format in support of your journey in unlearning:

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:

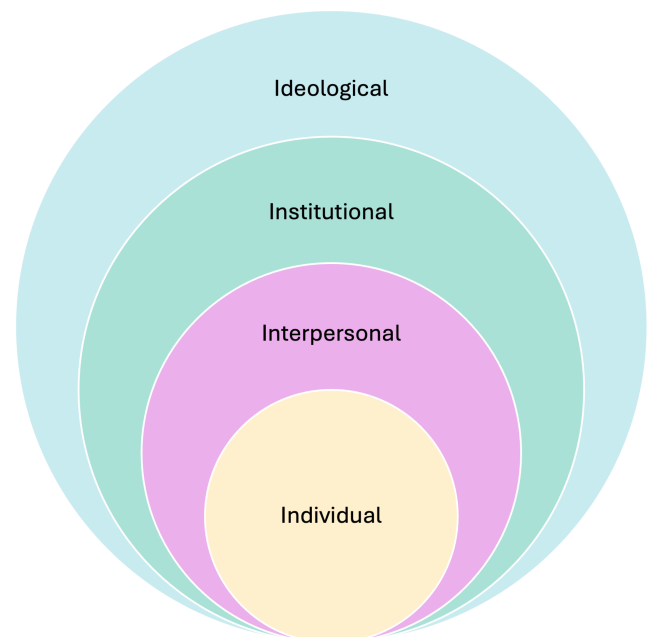
This is a journey towards building new insights and frames of reference while sitting with questions and wonderings that lead to changes in our thinking and meaningful actions in our practices. It is an invitation to recognize the limitations and biases we may have in our understanding of leadership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

LEADING THROUGH INVISIBILITY

What if, instead of locating leadership in an individual, we locate it in the spaces between people, structures and ideas committed to racial and other forms of justice.



Guiding Reflection Questions:

How do educational leaders push through the experiences of their own invisibility and honour the current generation of learners who look to them for voice and validation?
(Harpreet Ghuman)

Reflection Questions:

1. What experiences, realities and forms of oppression are not visible/not included in more mainstream understandings of oppression?
2. Which identities and experiences are actively ignored?
3. How does the racialization of these identities make them simultaneously hyper-visible (difference, accent, political, etc.) and invisible?
4. How do we lead through invisibility? Who do we need to be as leaders to lead in ways that challenge this in/visibility?
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:

“Leading through invisibility...a lot of it is really listening intently, finding out the stories of people in not just in my community, but in many other communities. Finding out their needs, finding out their stories and then engaging in plans of action.” (Cristina Guerrero)

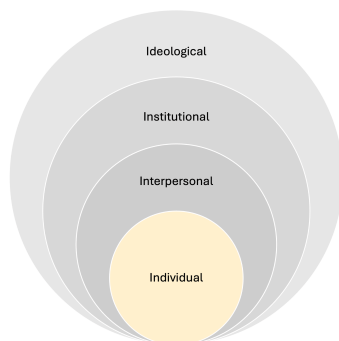
“Tamil and Palestinian students have recently shared with me their perspectives of feeling invisible or at times not feeling represented or acknowledged in the education system. I've heard similar sentiments from families from Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen.” (Harpreet Ghuman)

“What does leading to invisibility look like in everyday practices? It looks like in very simple words, my visibility is used to make my leadership invisible.” (Gen Ling Chang)

Reflection:

How do these statements resonate with you in terms of how you see yourself leading?

How do you reconcile leading through visibility and invisibility?



Action:

- Identify some books you have relied on to support the reclamation of your identity.
- Reflect on the missing books on your bookshelf that can support a validation and recognition of the self. Consider authors that are outside of the “go to” list for leaders. Think about what artists and individual community members have to offer in respect to this conversation on invisibility and identity to leaders.

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

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

“People talk a lot about intergenerational transmission of trauma, but I've really been thinking about the intergenerational transmission of knowledge, of strength, the intergenerational transmission of wisdom.” (Muna Saleh)

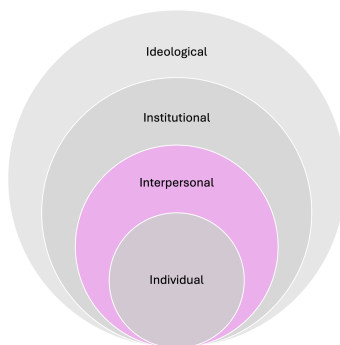
“Underground collectives is an indicator, is a consequence of invisibilizing, is a consequence of racialization, is a consequence of politics of hate.” (Gen Ling Chang)

“We have become visible and oftentimes that visibility was not on our own terms. We've been made visible for whatever way that it is that other people have read us. And it is time for us to take that back and determine in our own words and on our own terms what that means. And we get to move forward and create our own futures together like that.” (Cristina Guerrero)

“We are all connected in this work. This is for students sitting somewhere in a classroom and their family. When we do so their humanity is further honoured and recognized. And to students everywhere, may you see yourself always.” (Harpreet Ghuman)

Reflection:

How might we recognize and honor identities that are invisibilized and lead in solidarity?



Action:

- Practice building relationships with people outside of your affinity group. Consider the challenges and possibilities in relationship building that support leadership opportunities with cross-racial/gender/cultural/faith groups.

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:

“So many identities perhaps never discussed, seen or heard, not made visible through books, lessons, conversations, announcements, assemblies, school, and community events, professional learning conversations, staff meetings, and systemwide forums.” (Harpreet Ghuman)

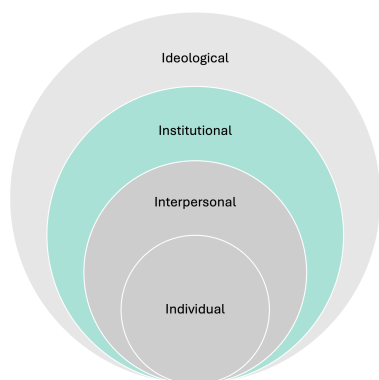
“Those who choose to be around and in education, choose to make those who are visible, invisible in their contributions, in their work, in their genius, in their creativity and in their intellectualism because they feel threatened and therefore, the need to ‘other’.” (Gen Ling Chang)

“Curriculum violence, I think is also when you aren't able to see yourself reflected in any way when you're, like we said, invisibilized and it's purposeful.” (Muna Saleh)

“We'll move away from a tokenistic checkmark.” (Cristina Guerrero)

Reflection:

How can educational institutions make space for in/visibilized anti-racist leaders and support leading through in/visibility?



Action:

- Journal about the scholars, artists, public figures, scientists, and communities that guide the culture in your sector/institution/organization.
- Create professional learning opportunities that invite voices from the Global South, disability justice groups, and people whose identities intersect in multiple ways.

Ideological Connection to ideas about each other and the world.

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

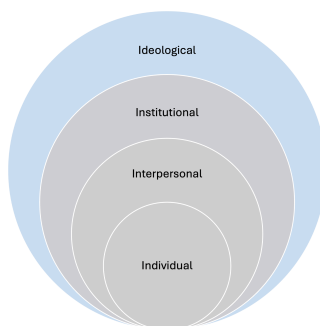
“It's so complex how the different systemic forms of racism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, Islamophobia, anti-Palestinian racism, all of these different forms, anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous racism, anti-Asian racism, all of the different forms of racism, how they come together to create those experiences.” (Muna Saleh)

“When you internalize racism, you begin to put your head down and do the good work and be quiet. And by being quiet, we are complicit.” (Gen Ling Chang)

“(There is the) idea of people of colour in leadership positions being seen as a threat. And oftentimes that's because we are speaking back to that white supremacist system, we are refusing to conform and we're finding other people and making our circle larger so that we can get out of that.” (Cristina Guerrero)

Reflection:

What might it mean to undo and unlearn leadership ideologies and practices that in/visibilize certain identities to maintain systems of oppression?



Action:

- How can you make practices that make culturcide (killing of sense of self), politicide (killing of representation), and educide (killing of knowledge) visible? How does this support raising the visibility of leadership ideologies and practices that are ignored?