



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?

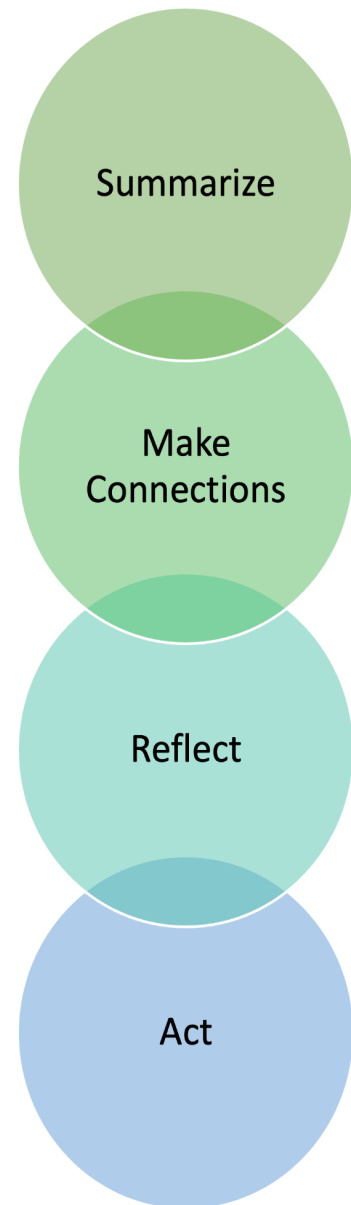
— **A**s you listen to the podcast, we ask that you actively engage in learning and unlearning with yourself and others to deepen your understandings. We offer the following format in support of your journey in unlearning:

**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:

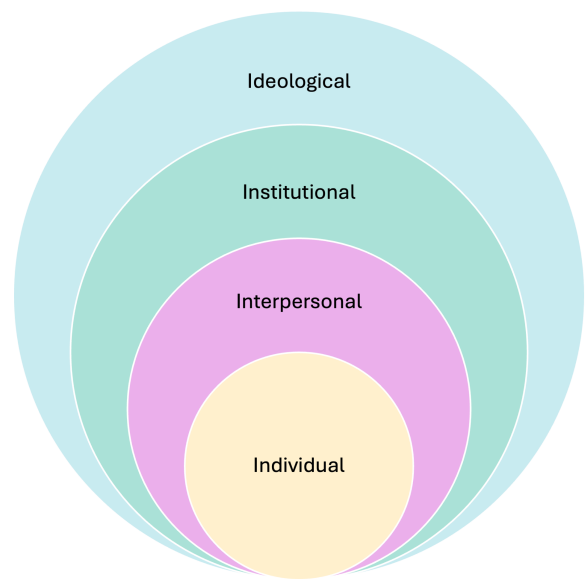
This is a journey towards building new insights and frames of reference while sitting with questions and wonderings that lead to changes in our thinking and meaningful actions in our practices. It is an invitation to recognize the limitations and biases we may have in our understanding of leadership 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 1

## LEADING THROUGH SOLIDARITIES

(Click image to listen)



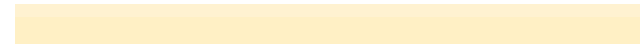
### Guiding Reflection Questions:

How and who are you standing with in your audacious freedom dreaming? (W. L. Garrett-Walker)

### Reflection Questions

1. How might we understand the relational nature of racialization within a system of white supremacy and settler colonialism?
2. How might we understand the intersectional nature of multiple systems of oppression (e.g., settler/colonialism, anti-Black racism, other racisms, casteism, imperialism, Islamophobia, and more) as well as intersectional opportunities for collective liberation?
3. What complicities, tensions, and complexities might we need to consider?
4. Who do we need to be as leaders to lead for cross-racial solidarities?
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:

“We must un-know and we must not be afraid to un-learn. We must not be afraid to be ‘called in’ especially when our fear and colonized ways of thinking and being, are showing.” (Whitneé Garrett Walker)

“I feel that when we enter spaces where people feel safe to be vulnerable, you know, there's also that capacity for love to grow.” (Joy Henderson)

“I think a lot of the work of doing solidarity is letting go of the idea of being a leader and instead doing what needs to be done.” (Maya Bhardwaj)

“It's not about your own ego and it's not about what you think is best. It's about what is best for everybody and how we work together collectively to achieve that.” (Sayema Chowdhury)

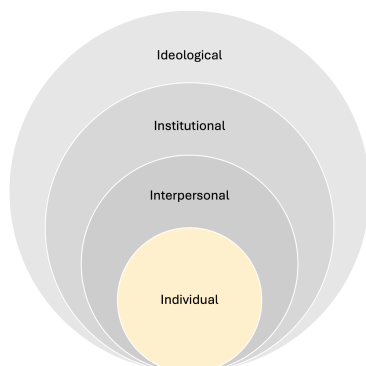


### Reflection:

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

### Action:

- What are some practices you can cultivate that encourage locating power within yourself as a practice in resistance to oppressive leadership?



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

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

“Love is a sacred practice and is reserved for people who are determined to see the light in themselves, those around them, and in the earth. We have a responsibility to support our youth and ourselves in harnessing this love.” (Whitneé Garrett Walker)

“I don't know how to be in solidarity if we can't allow space for the whole human, which does not mean excusing bad behavior or having no accountability.” (Michelle Peek)

“Leadership also means working in coordination with the other leaders in our community, right.” (Maya Bhardwaj)

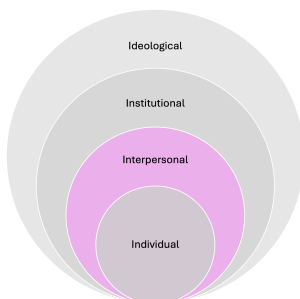
“Being confident, affirmed and proud of who you are and what you bring, including those limitations that you bring, that you turn towards your community and your relationships to help you to fill so that you can become more whole and then offer a more hell self to the larger collective.” (Sayema Chowdhury)

“You're my family now, you're my kin. Right? I know that feeling that I have with kinship, it makes you feel invincible. It makes you feel like anything is possible.” (Joy Henderson)

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### Reflection:

How might we collectively make space for intersectional identities and experiences and lead through solidarities to dream of new possibilities?



### Action:

- Notice when you are waiting to be asked to help rather than being in the practice of creating space for others, being in community with equity deserving groups, and actively engaging in learning.
- Interrogate your reliance on colonial forms of domination as a leader.

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

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

“We must operate from the space of possibility, not within the confines that of the boxes, labels, gerrymandering, politics and funding structures, put before us. The types of schools that we need, canNOT exist because of our reliance on harmful colonial forms of domination.” (Whitneé Garrett Walker)

“The challenge I'm finding these days is a lack of generosity...I really feel that it is necessary to kind of enter bravely into spaces of generosity and particularly in education.” (Joy Henderson)

“Really understanding that many of the narratives that we are working with, um, in our present day have been shaped through colonization and colonial impacts and really thinking about the global impact of that and how everything is interconnected is one way I think that I'm working towards, uh, resisting those narratives.” (Sayema Chowdhury)

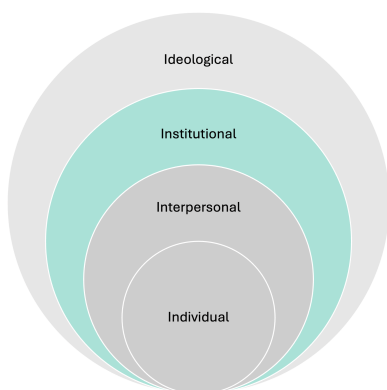
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### Reflection:

How can educational institutions make space for culturally relevant and anti-racist leaders and support anti-racist leadership approaches?

### Action:

- Make a list of processes within your organization that create barriers to creating space for anti-racist leaders or leadership approaches.
- Practice asking why certain roles, processes, and institutional practices are done a certain way over ways that are more dynamic and expansive.



**Ideological** Connection to ideas about each other and the world.

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

“Decolonizing educational leadership requires that we intentionally break free from what we know and have come to believe in our field. Decolonization requires us to think about what is possible vs what exists.” (Whitneé Garrett Walker)

“Another piece around being in solidarity. I think that what I try and work toward is just this constant commitment to process. Just knowing that it's, it's not really ever done. There's no place I'm aiming for necessarily.” (Michelle Peek)

“So the idea is being unsettled and constantly checking ourselves and checking our privileges and checking the limitations of our knowledge and asking ourselves how much do I really know and who do I need to go to learn more? And what connections am I missing and what, and why am I missing these connections?” (Sayema Chowdhury)

“Colonialism and what have you—they want us fragmented, they want us segmented.” (Joy Henderson)

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**Reflection:**

What might it mean to undo and unlearn educational leadership ideologies and practices in solidarity to dismantle systems of oppression?

**Action:**

- Consider using a bookclub to explore the ways colonization is an intentional regime that both interrupts and demands leading through solidarity.

