



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?

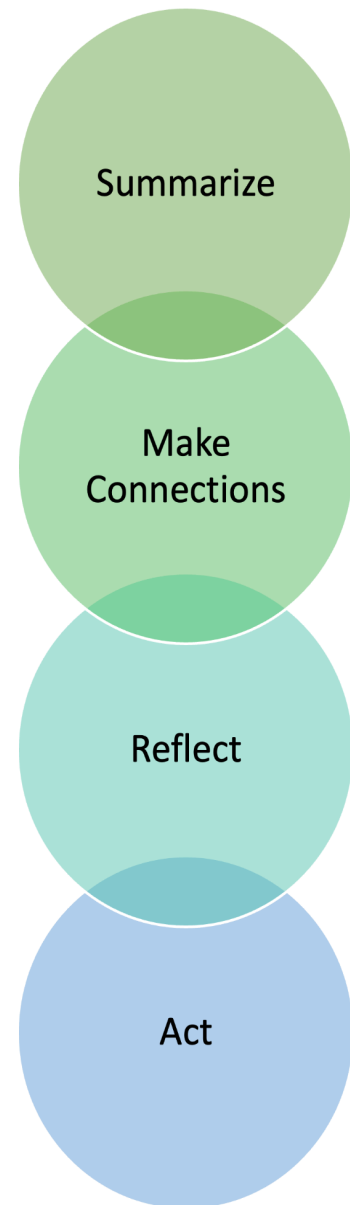
— **A**s you listen to the podcast, we ask that you actively engage in learning and unlearning with yourself and others to deepen your understandings. We offer the following format in support of your journey in unlearning:

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:

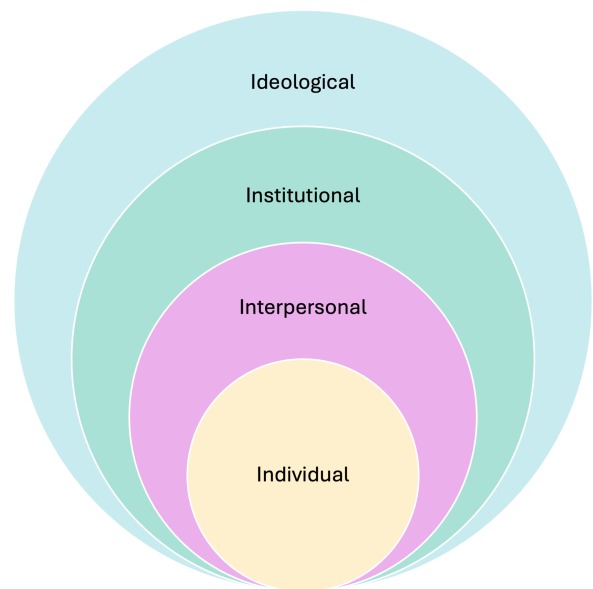
This is a journey towards building new insights and frames of reference while sitting with questions and wonderings that lead to changes in our thinking and meaningful actions in our practices. It is an invitation to recognize the limitations and biases we may have in our understanding of leadership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



— 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)

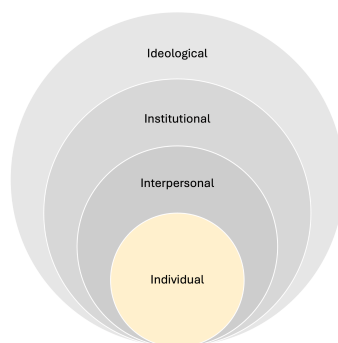
“What does leading to invisibility look like in everyday practices? It looks like in very simple words, my visibility is used to make my leadership invisible” (Gen Ling Chang)



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)

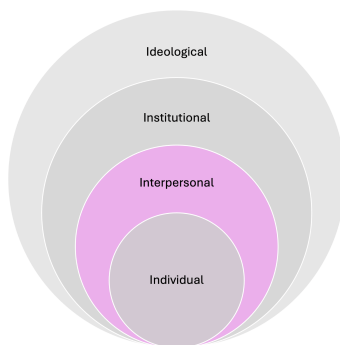
“Underground collectives is an indicator, is a consequence of invisibilizing, is a consequence of racialization, is a consequence of politics of hate.” (Gen Ling Chang)

“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)

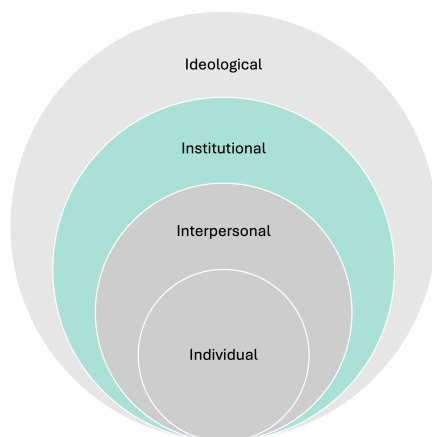
“Those who choose to be around and in education, choose to make those who are visible, invisible in their contributions, in their work, in their genius, in their creativity and in their intellectualism because they feel threatened and therefore, the need to ‘other’.” (Gen Ling Chang)

“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. Consider the way these people have shaped the culture in your workplace.
- 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:

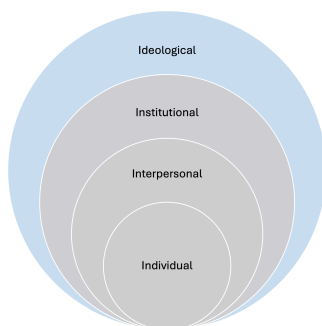
“It's so complex how the different systemic forms of racism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, Islamophobia, anti-Palestinian racism, all of these different forms, anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous racism, anti-Asian racism, all of the different forms of racism, how they come together to create those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

“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 recognize culturcide (killing of sense of self), politicide (killing of representation), and educide (killing of knowledge) visible to also raise the visibility of leadership ideologies and practices that are ignored.

LEADING FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

(Click image to listen)



Guiding Reflection Questions:

How will we move forward on climate justice in education when it remains such a siloed, periphery topic? (M. Vamvalis)

Reflection Questions:

1. How do we move people to a focus on climate justice instead of climate change?
How does the climate crisis impact communities differently, locally and globally?
2. How might we acknowledge the important roles that Indigenous communities and youth have on this movement without absolving the rest of us in our responsibilities to end climate injustice?
3. How do we understand and work with eco-anxiety? How do we support people in acknowledging the existential and physical threat that is the climate crisis?
4. Who do we need to be as leaders to lead for climate justice?
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:

“What ways of knowing and being can support the healing of harm to ecological webs to each other and to ourselves?” (Maria Vamvalis)

“So that justice piece is really about thinking beyond our current paradigms, thinking about beyond the people that we currently center and thinking beyond the current power structures that we operate in to imagine what that possible future could be.” (Julius Lindsay)

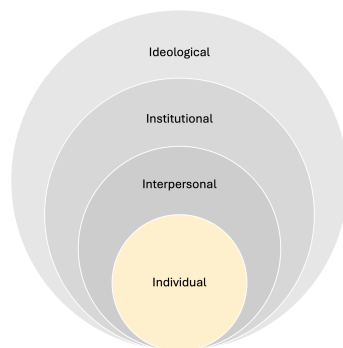
“I think climate justice really disrupts normative ideas of schooling and leadership because ultimately climate justice requires collective liberation.” (Naomi Leung)

“It is a call for all of us that are involved in education to really take a good look at how disjointed and disconnected education is from the environmental violence and crisis in which we exist.” (Cristina Delgado Vintimilla)

“The possibilities of reconnecting and feeling, the beauty that has to offer is what comes out of this really important, and I would even say sacred work that's being done. Because what we do to the earth we do to ourselves, we see it in our bodies” (Jodie Williams)

Reflection:

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



Action:

- Think about a time when you became aware of both your complicity and struggle with human-centric ways of being that impacted the environment in both small and significant ways.
- What are some initial steps you can take to including climate justice as part of your leadership work?

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

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

“It is distinct Indigenous knowledge systems rooted in particular places that offer ways of knowing and being that deepen a sense of interconnection and support the development of a consciousness that understands our interrelationships with all forms of life, informing our actions from a place of decolonial solidarity.” (Maria Vamvalis)

“I am a woman from the Andes and I work there with Indigenous communities and Campesino Communities to, on one hand unsettle and trouble, and also understand the intricate, monstrous work of Canadian neo-colonialism through mining corporations” (Cristina Delgado Vintimilla)

“a lot of Indigenous, Black and communities of colour with a lot of youth organizers and land defenders who've been doing this work far longer than a lot of white youth. I think it's really important to honour those voices and to seek out those voices and not only to tokenize them, but to really listen” (Naomi Leung)

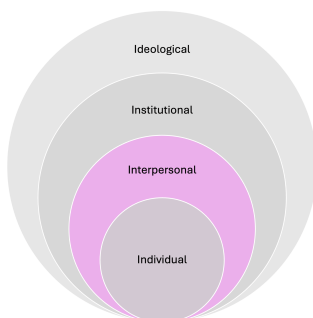
“How many amazing ideas we're missing out on because we're centering experts and we're centering these systems that ultimately do not work for the majority of our society.” (Julius Lindsay)

Reflection:

How might we collectively center and uplift the work of Indigenous, Black, 2SLGBTQIA+, and racialized communities and youth towards climate justice?

Action:

- Practice creating relationships with the natural world. Reflect on how building relationships with the natural world connect to challenges and possibilities you might encounter with other equity deserving 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:

“Recognize the important role educational policy plays in creating the conditions for social and ecological justice through education. Climate justice, more explicitly than climate action, reflects the recognition that the adverse impacts of a warming climate are not experienced or caused equitably.” (Maria Vamvalis)

“So Indigenous knowledge systems, and when I say that, it also means the languages, our languages hold the code on how to live on these lands. Just like if we were to go to some other land, the languages from those lands hold the code on how to live sustainably, on how to live in balance.” (Jodie Williams)

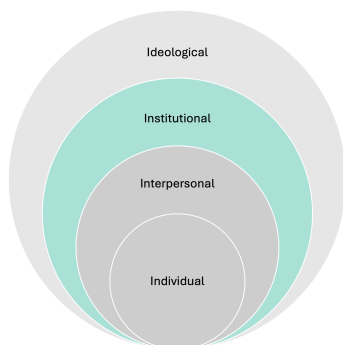
“We are trying to take climate action on a paradigm of leadership that is based in 1913. And our planners who are working in cities are being trained in a paradigm that was created in 1913.” (Julius Lindsay)

Reflection:

How can educational institutions put climate justice at the forefront and support educational leadership approaches that support climate justice?

Action:

- What might climate justice look like in the systems you work within? What is needed to disrupt the supremacy of values rooted in consumption, human-centrism, and an attachment to modernity in these systems?



Ideological Connection to ideas about each other and the world.

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

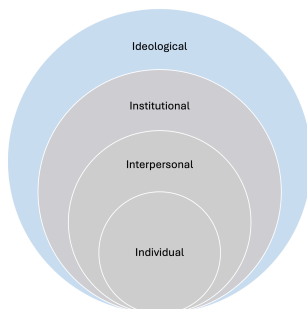
“Petro-pedagogies work to center, legitimate and entrench a set of beliefs related to climate change, energy and environmentalism that align with the interest and discourse of industry actors.” (Maria Vamvallis)

“Before we even have a conversation about climate justice in education, which is where I reside, we have to back up the conversation to really get at the root causes of it and understand that there's a direct correlation between colonialism and climate change.” (Jodie Williams)

“Part of taking climate action is about de-centering the government and about de-centering the power structures that we operate within.” (Julius Lindsay)

Reflection:

What might it mean to undo and unlearn educational leadership ideologies and practices that perpetuate environmental degradation and climate crisis?



Action:

- Identify a way to address climate change that will recognize the justice component of the work. As you engage in this practice, consider professional learning opportunities that will support thinking about the practices that overlook the experiences and voices of certain communities.

LEADING TOWARD DISABILITY JUSTICE

(Click image to listen)



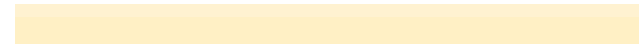
Guiding Reflection Questions:

How do we imagine and rebuild an education system that is relevant and responsive to the communities that we serve through centering the experiences, knowledge systems, and leadership approaches of the global majority?

Reflection Questions:

1. How has the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated challenges for disabled people and highlighted the urgent need for disability justice?
2. What does it mean to center disability justice in our thinking, in our practice, in our relations, in our structures?
3. What would schools and communities look like if they were designed around principles of disability and transformative justice?
4. Who do we need to be as leaders to lead for disability justice?
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.



“Whether students are successful or unsuccessful, good, bad, non-disabled, disabled. We use a logic where we locate the blame within the student, and we find medical, psychological, and other proof to then supposedly verify the fact that the problem lies within the child” (Nirmala Erevelles)

“It’s important for educators to really see their role also as advocates...see yourself as being part of a system and having more power, more social power than the children that you work with and making it also part of your practice to be an advocate, and to actually be able to look at those macro level systems that result in poor educational outcomes for the children that you’re working with when you shift in that way, and I think it can really empower.” (Yasmine Gray)

“My sort of outlook of disability and also recognizing how my own historical internal ableism has been shaped as well” (Jeff Hall)

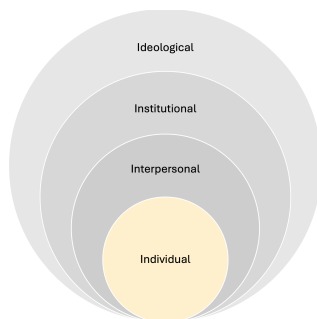


Reflection:

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

Action:

- Spend some time journaling about the way ableism has been implicated in your path to leadership.
- Consider how your achievements are directly connected to ableist values.



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

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

“centering the experience of disability and promoting opportunities for students to consider what disability identity means and what could be possible in schools if we adopted notions of disability pride.” (Gillian Parekh)

“one of the core things about disability justice is about building community, building communities of care, building communities of interdependence, building communities that resist the actual violence that gets reproduced on a day to day basis in schools and outside schools” (Nirmala Erevelles)

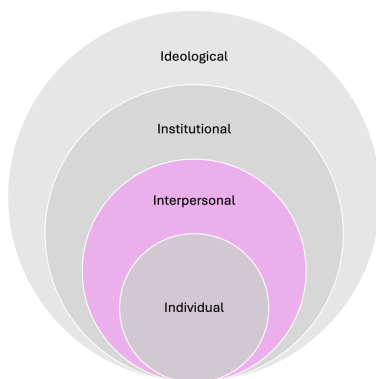
“There needs to be more of an openness around disabled educators and specifically disabled education leaders too, because I think students need to see those perspectives. Students need to see disabled students often, They never see themselves represented in schools.” (Jeff Hall)

Reflection:

How might we collectively center the experiences of disability and work towards disability justice?

Action:

- Consider the ways you have internalized ableism and how that has created barriers for those around you.
- Challenge yourself to consider the ways you have centered and celebrated ableist logics within leadership roles.



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

“And we know that disabled people are disproportionately vulnerable to multiple forms of incarceration as scholars who investigate the implications of schooling on the trajectories and futures of disabled students, we really need to be asking schools to consider and address how their policies and practices may be contributing and reproducing these hierarchies that end up impacting students' futures, you know, well beyond graduation.” (Gillian Parekh)

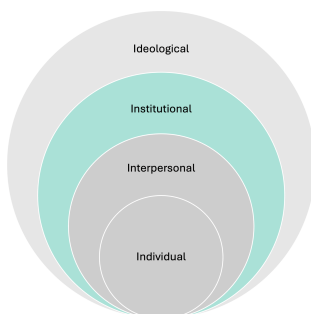
“I wasn't always working with children who explicitly identified as disabled, but were actually moving through the world and moving through the education system while experiencing extreme levels of violence as a result of anti-black racism and ableism and how those two things intertwine and overlap onto each other” (Yasmine Gray)

“When we use the word access, access, then puts responsibility on the people who are in power in that particular space. It is their responsibility to make the space and the space could be the physical space, the intellectual space, I mean, any kind of space” (Nirmala Erevelles)

“If we had the slight spin of disability justice in our schools, we would be uprooting so many different aspects of our education system from assessment practices to the discipline practices.” (Jeff Hall)

Reflection:

How can educational institutions make space for disability justice and support anti-ableist leadership approaches?



Action:

- Choose one or two policies/practices in your workplace and look for ways they contribute to reproducing hierarchies based on ableism.
- List several ways your institution/organization supports disabled leaders through a pathologizing approach. Consider the actions necessary to disrupt these practices?

Ideological Connection to ideas about each other and the world.

“These ideas of normal, what is normal, who is normal, are all based in white supremacy. They make whiteness the standard, they make the white cisgender non-disabled body, the norm, and then anyone who's far, apart from that, anyone who's different from that gets labeled and gets separated out and gets excluded in a subject to, to different forms of, of violence and disability” (Yasmine Gray)

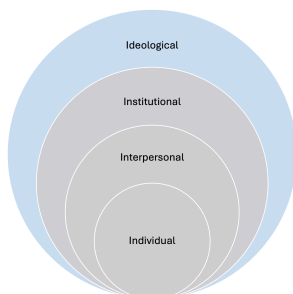
“One of the structures of schooling is that we are supposed to break down difference. In other words, we say celebrate, we have, you know, diversity, equity, and inclusion committees, but the whole logic of schools is to produce a kind of conformity to rules. And for most disabled students, particularly what's most dangerous is this logic of the conditional acceptance into the mainstream. And this hurts particularly students of color, but actually most disabled students too” (Nirmala Erevelles)

“Students and their families have to navigate a system that often positions students through a deficit lens, and that recurring message can be really harmful” (Gillian Parekh)

“Anti-racist, queer, feminist movements of like people who do those kinds of pedagogies are also very adept at reproducing ableism. And then of course Gillian had pointed out in an introduction, the disability rights movement also, or people who are like, who have successfully been able to, or even if they've struggled through, through school systems, most of them are being predominantly white, upper class English speaking” (Nirmala Erevelles)

Reflection:

What might it mean to undo and unlearn ableist leadership ideologies and practices and lead towards disability justice?



Action:

- The myth of normal stands as a barrier to disability pride that centers the experience of disability. Challenge yourself to recognize the way the myth of normal shows up in everyday leadership experiences.

LEADING THROUGH SOLIDARITIES

(Click image to listen)



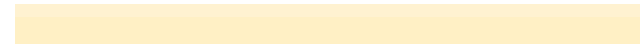
Guiding Reflection Questions:

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)

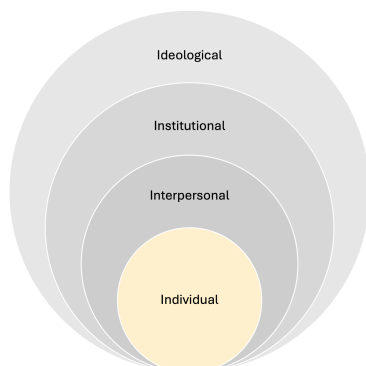


Reflection:

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.

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)

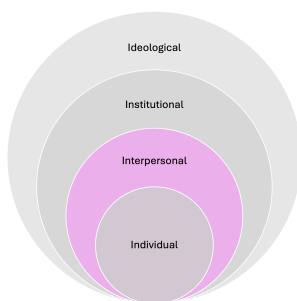
“leadership also means working in coordination with the other leaders in our community, right.” (Maya Bhardwaj)

“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. And I'm like, and you're my kin. Right? And the possibilities are kinship... I know that feeling that I have with kinship, it makes you feel invincible. It makes you feel like anything is possible.” (Joy Henderson)

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.

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)

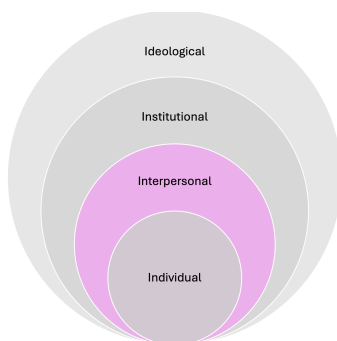
“Really understanding that many of the narratives that we are working with, um, in our present day have been shaped through colonization and colonial impacts and really thinking about the global impact of that and how everything is interconnected is one way I think that I'm working towards, uh, resisting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

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.

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. If decolonization requires us to think about what is possible vs what exists” (Whitneé Garrett Walker)

“Another piece around being in solidarity. I think that I, that I try and, and work toward is just this like constant commitment to process. Yeah. 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)

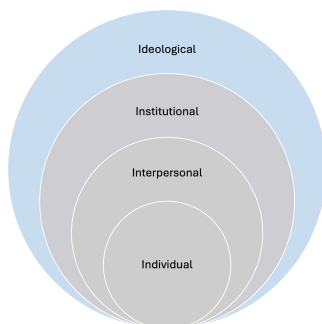
“Colonialism and what have you, like, they want us fragmented, they want us segmented.” (Joy Henderson)

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.



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:

“Geneva Gay and Gloria Ladson-Billings in the practice of culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy. I would extend this to self, 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)

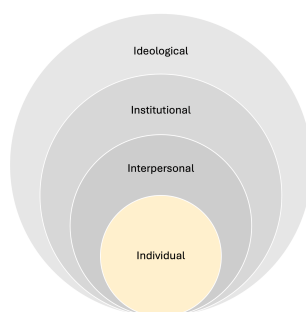
“The personal is political. We need to like, start with ourselves. We need to unlearn, but what does that mean when we are in constant functional freeze and how that is embodied by different bodies.” (Yamikani Msosa)

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)

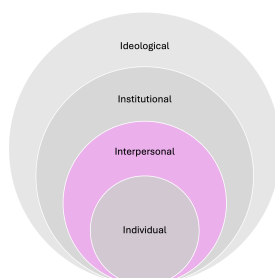
“We are not separate and there's a lot of illusions about the fact that we're separate from each other and from the land around us. And so I think in order to talk about inner landscapes, it's also important to talk about physical landscapes and just acknowledge that I have the privilege of joining today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

“Consistently holding the complexities of being an insider and an outsider.” (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 as their true 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:

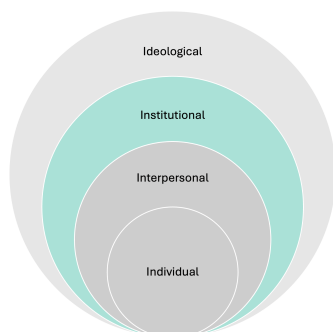
“Ontario Educational Leadership Framework, which describes school and system leadership, where it draws upon personal leadership resources to effectively enact leadership practices. So it's clear from the framework that inner resources, such as emotional intelligence and self-efficacy are foundational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

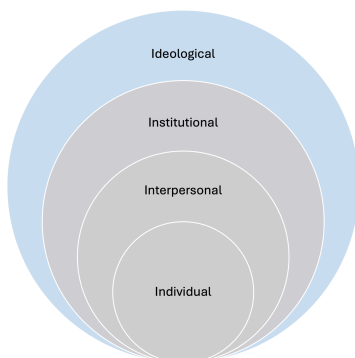
“If we don't have the self knowledge of ourselves, if we're not reading the context and thinking about how we're being read, then we can reproduce a lot of harmful patterns in the process.” (Sharon Stein)

“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.