

# Welcome

SPRING 2021: Collaborative Learning Session



# Oceans Collaborative

## SEASONAL PATHWAY

### Spring

#### PLANTING NEW SEEDS

What are the questions, curiosities and opportunities for new growth together?

#### FOCUS:

- Influence
- Knowing Self
- Knowing one another

### Summer

#### TENDING THE GARDEN

What are the conversations, practices and policies that we can pivot toward decolonization and liberation?

#### FOCUS:

- Practice
- Policy
- Unlearning

### Fall

#### COMMUNITY FEAST

What relationships, learning, convening can continue to inform our work into the future?

How can we best exemplify our gratitude for the learning and connection?

#### FOCUS:

- Reflection
- Engagement
- Connection

### Winter

#### LABOUR OF HIBERNATION

What labour is required of us as we reorient toward a way of thinking and doing differently after this journey?

What must we integrate, shed, release, make visible, put aside?

#### FOCUS:

- Integration

## QUESTIONS TO CARRY



## CHECK IN:

What wisdom can we uplift from these in between moments to nourish us in our shared work?





Working on articulating JEDI needs/ areas for growth to leadership

Courage lies at the heart of this work. And courage is only gained by letting go of fear and ego. And that can only be released by prioritizing collective good over individual priorities.

I've found carving out time for conversation is so important. We've had some really good internal discussions -- prompted by the work of The Circle -- that are leading to changes in practice.

New voices bring new ideas and approaches. The foundation I work for has two new board members who are shaking up the joint.

tension between addressing white "feelings" that come up in equity work as critical to move the needle while also centering BIPOC individuals.

# Reflections & Resonance

The power of putting thoughts and learning into words offers opportunities for reflection/holding self accountable

being more present and mindful about the words I use to describe the work of the foundation

Pushing leadership and working the angles of those in power is so critical. And having the courage to bring our voices, conviction, and full selves in these spaces - already skewed by power - requires courage and faith in ourselves and a refusal to center whiteness.

Support Indigenous governance as often/deeply as possible

How to create a culture within our organization that continues these values as a core practice.

support and learn from community-based power where I live

Sometimes it seems that we know where we want to go and what the future could look like - and the path to get there should be straight forward, but it's not. It's challenging to figure out where to start and how to move things forward. I think the first few bold steps may be hardest.

Keep focusing on sharing power in relationships with partners

it all comes down to relationships

Challenging donor community to be more inclusive and participatory

Feelings around speed: 2020/2021 has been transformative with so many exposed broken systems. But what am I doing day to day? How are individual choice points adding up to reduce pain and increase joy for BIPOC and marginalized ppl?

being patient when building new relationships

What action is required of us in this new season?

work on language, translation between institutions, and just doing the work (funding) as efficiently as possible

work at all levels - personal, interpersonal, structural, and systemic - that requires new learning and ways of being/knowing. some days, we are contributing more to one of those than

Bridging and making connections between: personal and professional learning, theory and practice, strategic and transformational philanthropy

sharing power as much as possible while using language that drives toward narrative shifts/ changes in norms/ expectations that lead to org/inst. shifts within our foundations

get the men back into these conversations!

Truly reflect on the last year of learning and really embed them in how we move forward. Not just tick off boxes and add a sentence two to the terms of reference.

Take the conversation wider.

As WOC, shedding our old ways to reacting to the world around us (acting in ways that white supremacy forces us to in order to get by). Instead, grounding in our inner power, voice, and conviction. To create new ways and spaces of being that are more abundant.

Opening up new pathways for energy and transformation to flow through (neural pathways, relationship pathways, funding pathways etc...). Some of them will be underground.

**Hold up the Oceans Collaborative and the journey it's been on, and the work that will come, as an example for what's possible in other organizations.**

**Working to connect self, family and community through relationship building on all levels**

**continue to have hard conversations with my family and inside my institution as we grapple with this work and some very white feelings are threatening the work**

**Recognize that we need both pushing and pulling. If you built it they will come vs. excluding people who haven't gone on the journey.**

Model more relational, personal, and vulnerable ways of being in the spaces where we hold power and privilege. In order to center (and not silo) JEDI work in everything we do.

**Create an inclusive organizational culture with these values at it's core.**

**increase capacity and recognize voices**

**Help team members understand that EVERYONE needs to be part of these conversations/would benefit from them**

**work on actively positioning the OC as an agent of transformation**

keep setting norms/ expectations so that the white men i work with and who hold power will change

**Continue the socialization process; lead by example**

How might I use MY influence for change this season?



What skills/capacities/ways of doing do I need to:

# LEARN

**Devika:** how to hold space for making the unconscious, conscious as a tool for facilitating the transformative shifts I want to see in our sector .... aka how to be like Kris when I grow up :)

**mary** - how to help achieve transformative change in organization while being strategic about it

**Thea:** How to be willing to express thoughts/concerns etc I may have or think and bring them forward, even if they may ruffle some feathers. This may be the courage thing...

**Meaghan:** Learn how to better settle my body when receiving difficult feedback or getting triggered by someone else's racial awakening or violence

**meaghan:** when it's strategic to go "underground" with work to get things done and when it's strategic to be out and above ground with it.

**Darcy:** learn to trust in heart as much as head

**Carolynn:** Where to lean into the tension and fight the power holders, and where to hold onto my sense of self (and self care)

Confidence in simply taking action and not being frozen by fear of doing something incorrectly/saying something wrong or upsetting power holders.- Lauren

**Amy:** how to step up more with courage; how to go slow to go right

**Leah:** Trusting and bringing my power, voice, and conviction. Knowing my value. Emotional regulation & self care to be able to take care of myself in this work.

What skills/capacities/ways of doing do I need to:

# PRACTICE

**Mariko:** Push back against fear of conflict/desire to be liked to challenge my organization [and myself!] to reflect, grow and change

**Aware of centering, also using my voice - Carolynn**

**Anne:** to own my power, influence and agency to advance ideas I have learned from this series

**Thea:** Doing what I said I need to learn :-). Also, listening actively and really reflecting on what I've heard... and finding ways to action it...

**Devika:** how to replace the coping mechanism of taking up too much space with a more grounded and effective way of wielding power.

**mary -** sharing power in a way that maximally supports partners and is not performative

**meaghan:** practice how to accept the implicit tensions of being a white person engaging in and pushing forward equity work

**Carolynn:** participatory dec'n making, communicate my knowledge/leadership (and practice not hoarding power)

**Practice awareness of when is the right time to speak up and when the right time is to listen and absorb - Lauren**

**Leah:** Best practices in grantmaking in support of Indigenous communities (e.g., IFIP) and in particular a focus on right relationship and shifting power; facilitation approaches that open up the space for this work; how to do this work in spaces that practice more rigid, strategic philanthropy - and how to shift that culture from the inside

**Darcy:** openness in relationship

**Amy:** sharing my knowledge in internal gatherings without fear; recognizing that I'm not a lone voice



What skills/capacities/ways of doing do I need to:

# RELEASE

Mariko: prioritizing white fragility/discomfort over my core values

Leah: +1 to Mariko re: centering white comfort; imposter syndrome + closely related perfectionism; +1 to Devika on the stress/pain that my body holds in doing this work

Thea: Always trying to be diplomatic and avoid any conflict - even where it may be necessary

Devika: STRESS in my body that gets in the way of operating from grounded, personal power .... which is the key ingredient for doing anything else.

Carolynn: know everything before acting (+1 Meaghan & perfectionism)

Mariko: thinking I don't know enough to speak up

Amy: letting go of time in front of a screen to make more space for relationship building and reciprocity

meaghan: the strive for perfectionism

Darcy: conflict aversion

Release fear of not speaking from a place of knowledge - rather speak from a place of emotion - Lauren

mary - keep fighting against centering the foundation's needs in conversations with partners

meaghan: all the feelings/body reactions i get in a conflict situation that cloud my ability to respond or reflect in the moment.

learning, and reflection to do. I am part of a team leading a new partnership that aims to be transformative, but there are fundamental mismatches that will make it so hard to reach our goal at the promised pace while

Carolynn - movements were made in making a conscious choice to engage around conflict but alas I had an opportunity to practice de-centring and failed.

Carolynn - Another 'practice' movement...I may have failed at not centring but I also had the opportunity to speak which was successful. And I'm working on speaking with honesty and vulnerability which is growth.

still seem to be moving at the pace of white comfort. But on an individual level, myself and colleagues have engaged in self-directed learning. Leadership is increasingly taking a trust based approach that is open to investing in

conservation has been meeting monthly (as opposed to once or twice a year for rushed conversations about granting). This has allowed foundation family and non-family to build stronger relationships and for non-family to

representation of how much of the foundation's resources have been transferred to Indigenous-led and Indigenous-informed organizations since we signed the Philanthropic Community's

Mary - I'm trying to do my job from a sense of abundance - asking myself, "Am I funding my partners like I want them to win?" Instead of having a starting point of scarcity.

prioritize what's important over what's complete. The things I said I needed to learn and practice are things that I haven't made much progress on since I wrote them. That's because I have been prioritizing completeness over focusing on what's

Mary - owning my influence while sharing power - navigating this tension is top of mind.

heart and courage in conflict but it's hard - some deep ruts to climb out of! I see [slide 4] "it all comes down to relationships" and that feels very true in these times. Relationships = better knowledge, perspective,

Thea - I think I may be more in tune to recognizing what I want to learn, practice, release - but not sure I've fully made movement or put into practice. But perhaps recognition and awareness is an important first step :-)

My desire to avoid conflict may still trump my desire to be brave. I think this may play out more personally than professionally.

Anne: Be more intentional about building awareness on decolonizing philanthropy in spaces that seem particularly deaf to the issues

getting better at creating spaces that are more abundant. Have been less afraid to challenge white comfort and leading with my values, though hold the tension of being penalized professionally for doing so. Have

of of my white dominant behaviors that were once unconscious - busying myself with the work, timelines, schedules, transactional relationships. Catch myself often and rethink how I should proceed and decenter

meaghan: synapses of awareness when i'm not living up to my intentions

meaghan: movements internally of racial equity in leadership expectations, talent lifecycle. white comfort is still centered. we persist.

also my appetite for this work continues to grow, and i need to remember that there is time for everything.

Reflections, movement, updates?



What are the wisest steps required to move thru the threshold ?

Amy: Resist the urge to revert to the status quo because it feels easier. Take the opportunity afforded by our internal transition period to work toward different ways of doing things.

Darcy: trust in the power of relationships, "tend and befriend" as a strategy for transformation.

Laure: don't let fear of missteps be an excuse for inaction. I am not going to get it right all the time. that is ok as long as each moment is also an opportunity for learning and growth

Amy: Continue to bring new voices and experiences to the table to help prepare for and shape what's beyond the threshold.

**Mariko: Speak your truth, hold yourself accountable**

**Thea - Somehow find time to be present...**

Thea - Struggling with how to articulate this - so maybe I should simply say, don't overthink. To quote Nike, Just Do It. :-)

Lean: creating more relational spaces (we need to do the work personally, and together, to effect change externally/professionally); caring for ourselves and each other in this work (to stay in it and resilient for the long haul)

Darcy: take time for presence in the moment even in the midst of chaos & competing pressures. (thinking of a line from an early ecologist: it's important to look from the tidepool to the stars and back again)

anne: raise profile of indigenous led work in a variety of philanthropic communities where it has been marginalized

Carolynn - practice, believe that the conflict element will get easier, and regardless, just do it (but not in silos or alone).

anne: build more self awareness about my own familial relationship to a colonial past and don't be afraid to share it

what is truly important and what is not. Push whatever is not to the backburner. I've absorbed an aspect of white supremacy culture that causes me to prioritize completion over meaning, and this really is about

**Listen more, talk less, create space for others to share their voice. Lauren**

meaghan: settling down my body. creating spaciousness. pushing back against the system of white supremacy by being/acting the way we want to be.

meaghan: navigate what centering Indigenous communities means in our "strategic philanthropy" context.



Knowledge to share  
with others

Amy: I'll be  
promoting the  
Circle's  
upcoming  
sessions  
internally.

Laure: I'd like to  
explore The Circle's  
programing and  
other offerings to  
bring to the broader  
blue nature alliance  
team.

Thea - We will  
be doing the  
same! Sharing  
and  
promoting  
opportunities

Mariko:  
Vulnerability  
and  
abundance  
mindset is key  
<3

meaghan: the heart,  
head, hands  
framework as one  
that puts a whole  
person into the  
healing and work.

Leah: big +1 to  
Meaghan's note.  
Committing to this  
holistic approach  
ourselves and in the  
spaces in which we  
hold power.

Darcy: +1 and also  
the Spheres of  
Influence - linking  
personal to  
community &  
professional actions

Thea -  
Honesty,  
Openness,  
Accountability

Values to keep  
activated for this  
labour

Wisest actions to invite  
peers into

Carolynn - I have  
some internal process  
creation and  
accounting to do,  
which will be  
transformed into  
something shareable -  
the values being  
practice of  
imperfection and  
vulnerability. With  
whom? Not sure yet.

Amy: humility:  
importance of  
relationship  
building (internally  
and externally);  
inviting in and  
nurturing new  
voices

Thea - Be willing to  
talk about and share  
learnings of what  
we've done together  
- but more  
importantly, make  
sure it is reflected in  
the way we do our  
work...

Darcy - exploring  
how to activate  
'process over  
content' in the  
process-oriented  
work of renewing  
OC ToR

Action  
over  
perfection  
- Lauren

Leah:  
compassion,  
relationship,  
responsibility,  
accountability,  
humility

meaghan:  
connection

Laure:  
humility

Darcy: love of and  
connection to place,  
ocean, community,  
family & friends &  
colleagues

Mary - Organize  
internally to promote  
disentanglement of  
foundation from  
white supremacist  
culture by changing  
norms about how we  
talk about our  
grantmaking, our  
endowment, and  
racism/bias

OC, staying in the  
work together, not  
letting each other off  
the hook, especially  
within the OC work. In  
my head/heart/hands,  
I worry that I haven't  
yet merged our work  
w/the Circle and daily  
OC collaboration. time  
to practice conflict

Mariko - invite  
colleagues to  
recognize [white  
dominant]  
culture/worldview,  
how it influences our  
work and what we  
value, and consider  
who the status quo  
serves

to slow down to go  
fast. Knowledge to  
share: personal  
reflection and safe  
containers for sharing  
and being vulnerable  
are the most effective  
way to bring about  
organizational change  
(beyond strategic  
plans, metrics, etc.).  
Wisest action to invite











