



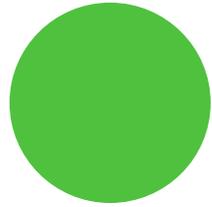
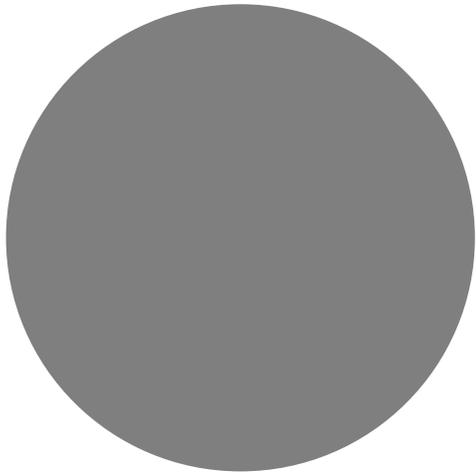
Communities We Live and Work

Dr. Felicia Washington Sy, MSW, Ph.D., LICSW

Agenda

- Introductions
- RECLAIM's History
- Healing Justice
- Allyship
- Systems of Oppression and Intersecting Identities
- Engaging Individuals, Families, and Communities for Change

The logo for RECLAIM is displayed within a white circle on a blue background. The word "RECLAIM" is written in a bold, black, hand-drawn font. To the right of the word is a small black silhouette of a person with their arms raised, standing on a small star.



Who is this person in
the front of the room?

Introductions

Name, preferred pronouns, and something about who you are?

Introductions



What are you most passionate about
and what are you most grateful for?

Introductions





Our history

Making a way out of no way....



As possible.

Reclaim's Mission

RECLAIM works to increase access to mental health support so that queer and trans youth may reclaim their lives from oppression in all its forms.



Relationship/Change/Gratitude/
Sustainability/Deconstruction

*Intersectionality/Connections/Associations/integration/deep healing over time/name and resist oppression/
relational/inclusion/partnership/continuity/accompaniment/whole bodies-whole minds/humanization/value individual components of collective identity*



RECLAIM 

Healing Justice

Theory of Change

Social Justice as Healing Justice

Healing Justice

“healing justice” is understood as a broader framework that aims to describe the relationship between social justice work and spirit by focusing both on the consequences of systemic oppression on the hope and agency of community members as well as how communities can heal and be restored to vibrant ways of living”

Ginwright 2015





Disability
Justice

Gender
Justice

Healing
Justice

Economic
Justice

Indigenous
Sovereignty

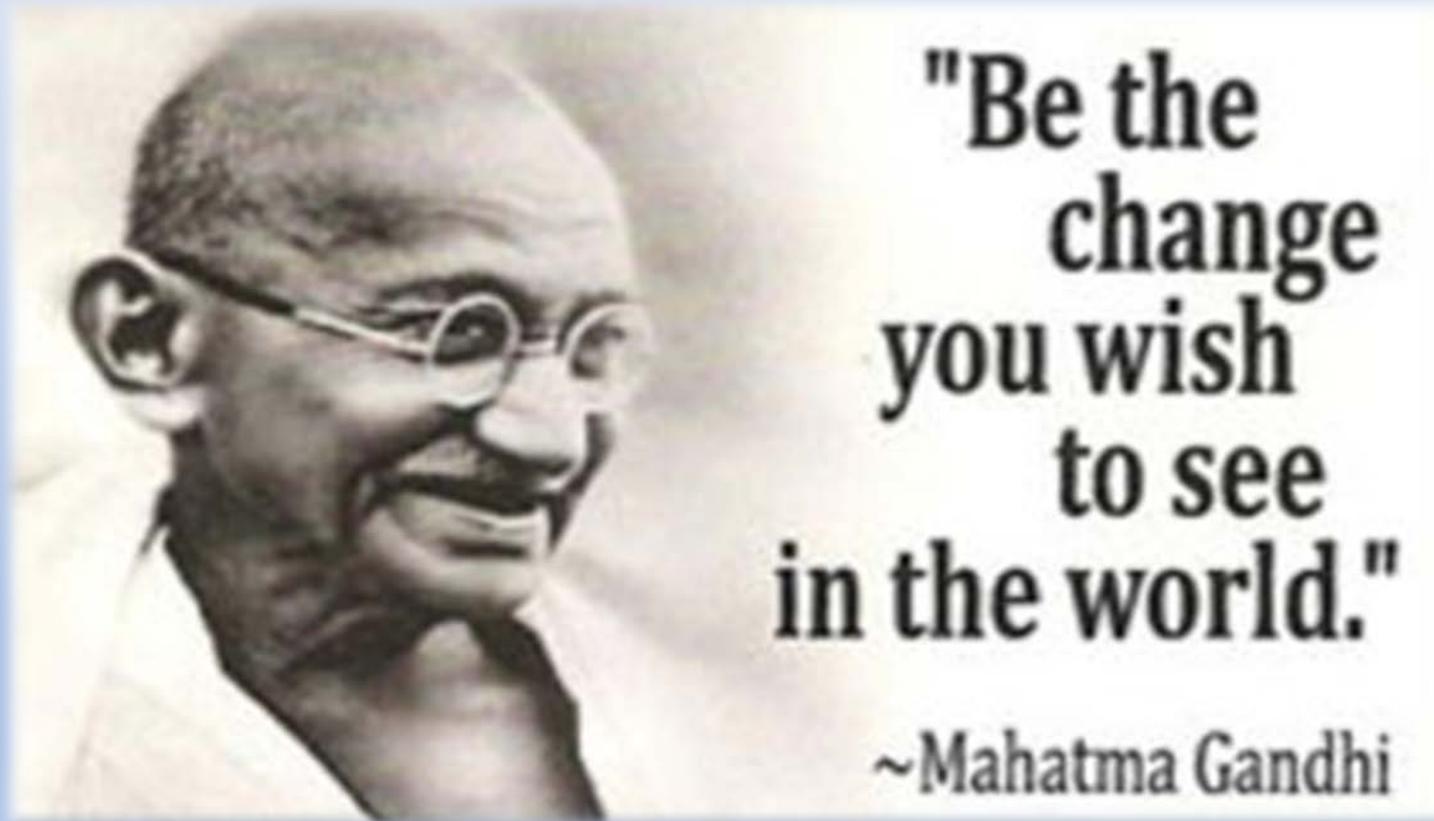
Immigration
Justice

Racial
Justice

In this way, “healing justice organizers” are acutely aware of the ways in which stress, lack of resources, failing educational systems, violence, and prolonged exposure to trauma all diminish the capacity to foster optimism, empowerment, and social change. In addition, healing justice organizers are critical of public policies that create more violence, stress, hopelessness and lack of opportunities in schools and communities and treat these policies as harmful to the individual and collective, social, spiritual and emotional well-being of community members”.

From this understanding RECLAIM seeks to engage a healing justice model of care that engages individuals, families, and community partners to create ecological systems change in resistance to racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, cissexism, and ableism.

Be the change....



RECLAIM



Allyship

Being in Allyship With....

An active, consistent, and arduous practice of unlearning and re-evaluating, in which a person in a position of privilege and power seeks to operate in solidarity with a marginalized group

An ALLY
is not an noun.
It isn't an identity, a label, or something to claim.
Being an ally is taking action,
making a stand
doing something to make a difference
by standing up
against oppression and marginalization.
You are an ally
when someone else recognizes you as an ally

- Allyship is not an identity—it is a lifelong process of building relationships based on trust, consistency, and accountability with marginalized individuals and/or groups of people
- Allyship is not self-defined—our work and our efforts must be recognized by the people we seek to ally ourselves with
 - it is important to be intentional in how we frame the work we do, *i.e. we are showing support for..., we are showing our commitment to ending [a system of oppression] by..., we are using our privilege to help by...*

Responsibilities of Allyship

“We are not acting out of guilt, but rather out of responsibility”

- we actively acknowledge our privilege and power and openly discuss them
- we listen more and speak less
- we do our work with integrity and direct communication
- we do not expect to be educated by others, we build our capacity to receive criticism
- we embrace the emotions that come out of the process of Allyship,
- our needs are secondary to the people we seek to work with we do not expect awards or special recognition

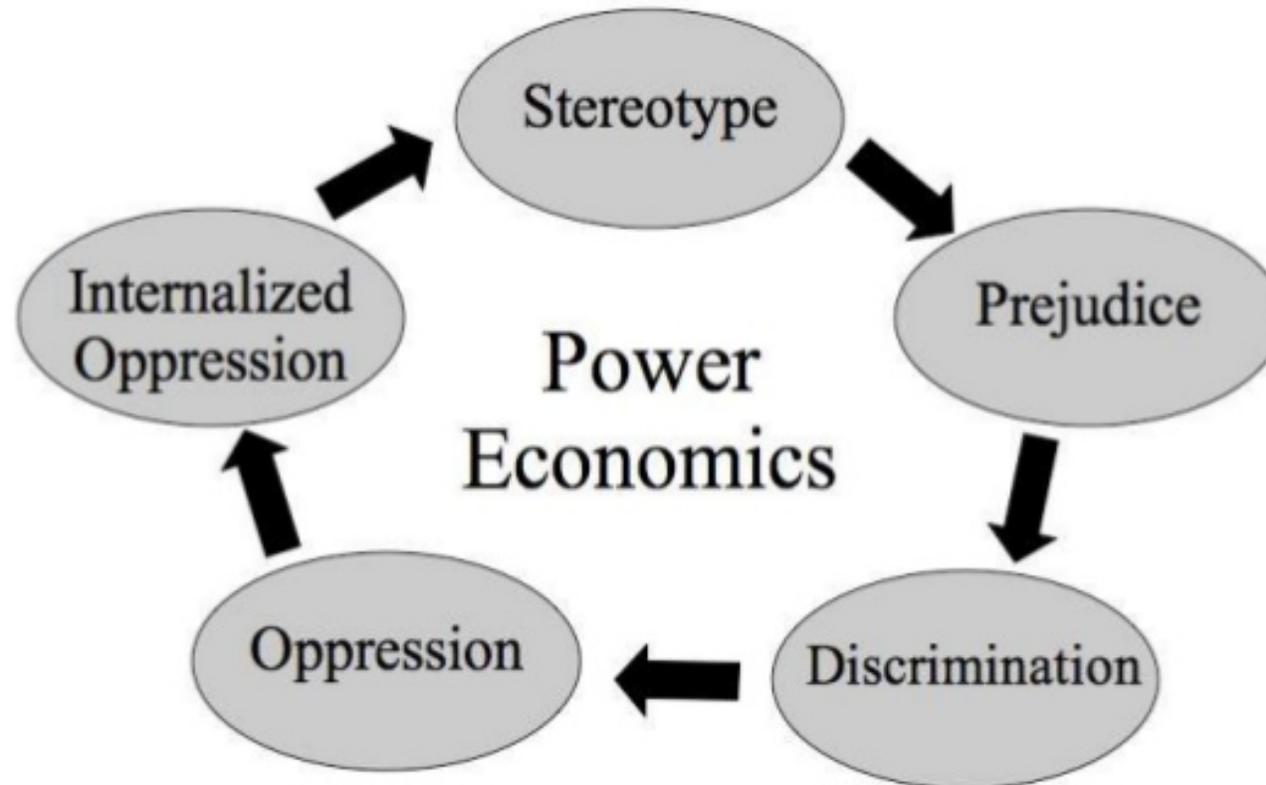
We invite to begin a path toward Allyship

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Systems of Oppression and Intersecting Identities

Social oppression is the socially supported mistreatment and exploitation of a group of individuals. Social oppression is based on power dynamics and an individual's social location in society.

Cycle of Systematic Oppression



Acts of Resistance

Begin with...

A fearless searching of the soul and
self reflection



**"WE NEED TO BE WEAPONS OF
MASS CONSTRUCTION,
WEAPONS OF MASS LOVE.
IT'S NOT ENOUGH JUST TO
CHANGE THE SYSTEM.
WE NEED TO CHANGE OURSELVES."**

Individual Identity and Change

“To know who I am is a species of knowing where I stand. My identity is defined by the commitments and identifications which provide the frame or horizon within which I can try to determine from case to case what is good, or valuable, or what ought to be done, or what I endorse or oppose. In other words, it is the horizon within which I am capable of taking a stand.”

[Charles Taylor, Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity](#)

INTERSECTIONALITY

in·ter·sec·tion·al·i·ty

/in(t)ərsɛkʃHə'nælədē/

- *noun*

the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

- "through an awareness of intersectionality, we can better acknowledge and ground the differences among us"

White	Non-White	Racism/White Supremacy
Man	Woman	Sexism/Patriarchy
Theist	Atheist	Religious Oppression
Heterosexual	Homo/Bisexual	Heterosexism
Thin	Fat	Sizeism
Rich/Middle Class	Working Class/Poor	Classism
Able-bodied	Disabled Body	Ableism
Cis gendered	Transgender	Cisgenderism
Privileged Position	Oppressed Position	System of Enactment



Engaging Individuals, Families, and
Communities for Change

The Power of Identity and Narrative in Creating Change

“We must move people to see, think, and feel differently about social issues and how they work so that they respond differently to social problems.”

By Nat Kendall-Taylor / Chief Executive Officer at Frameworks Institute

Healing *is* Resistance



“RECLAIM TOOK ME IN AND COMMITTED TO HELPING ME BUILD MYSELF BACK UP WHEN EVERYONE AND EVERYTHING ELSE TOLD ME TO GIVE UP. WITHOUT THEIR LOVE, THEIR OPEN HEARTS...I WOULD NOT BE ALIVE TODAY. HEALING IS MY RESISTANCE.”

-LUCIAN, 23

RECLAIM 

The Power of Narrative

The Story of Self

- invites a relationship with you
- Who are you? Why are you here?

The Story of Us

- invites to people come together as a community/ collective
- Who are we? Why are we here?

The Story of Now

- invites us to take action
- What do we need to do? Why do it now?



The Role of Narrative in Social Change

While the conventional stories of our history and our social roles provide a powerful gravitational pull, storytelling has always played a significant part in challenging the status quo.

American Values Institute, 2013

THOSE WHO TELL
THE STORIES
RULE SOCIETY.

PLATO

Questions?

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