



# Eagle's Nest Foundation All Staff DEI Workshop

Session #2

Belonging

January 22, 2024



How do we know who we are? This may seem like a profound, philosophical question. The exhortation to know yourself is, after all, one of the most famous and ancient utterances in Western civilization. But it is also an interesting question to ask yourself in a more literal sense. Because what we discover, if we are really honest with ourselves, is that most of the time we know who we are because someone told us.”

- Lydia Polgreen, (“There is No Way to Live a Life Without Regret,” *NY Times*, December 3, 2023, 6-7.)

# Resources for Workshop Today:

- Othering & Belonging Institute- part of the Blueprint for Belonging project-based out of UC Berkeley and the Director of the Institute is john a. powell
- *Teaching For Justice & Belonging: A Journey for Educators & Parents* by Tehia Starker Glass and Lucretia Carter Berry
- *How to be a (Young) Antiracist* by Ibram X Kendi and Nic Stone
- “What We Know About Belonging from Scientific Research” by Carissa Romero in Student Experience Research Network
- “Poverty and Race Through a Belongingness Lens” by john a. powell. *Policy Matters*, Vol. 1, Iss. 5, March 2012, 3-26
- “The Problem of Othering” john a. powell and Stephen Menendian
- Podcast “Classy” by John Menjivar

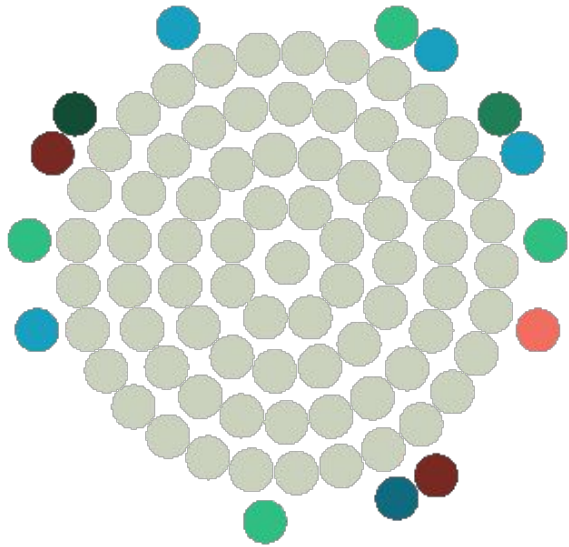
# Agenda and Outcomes

- Develop an Understanding of the Concept of *Belonging*
- Learn *Why Belonging Matters*
- Develop an Understanding of the Concept of *Culture* and how this relates to Belonging
- Learn *4 Essential Practices of a Cultural Strategy* we can use to create a community of Belonging
- Analyze how these cultural strategies were employed in real world cases to create communities of Belonging
- Self-reflect and visualize ways we can *Implement* the framework of Belonging in our work here at ENF

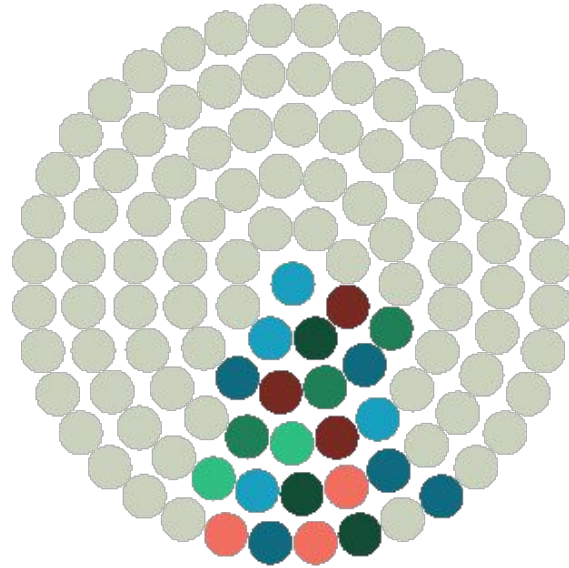
# Belonging

Develop an Understanding of the Framework of Belonging

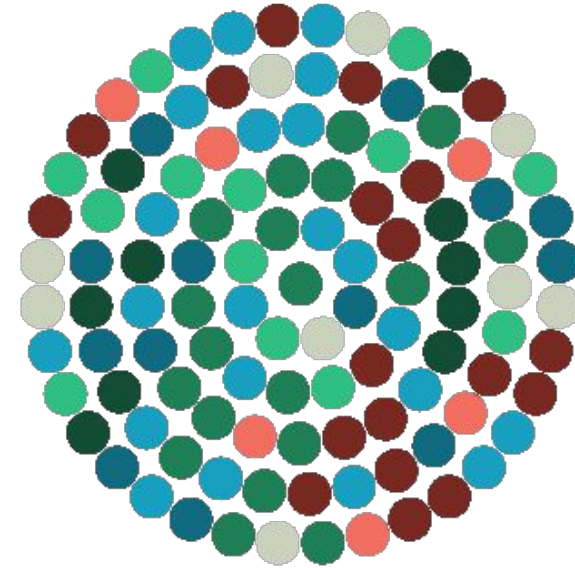
# What do the images in this slide mean to you?



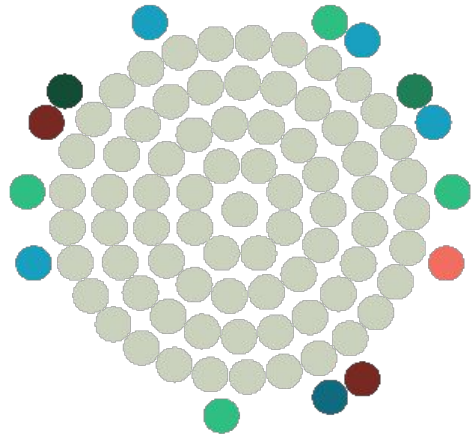
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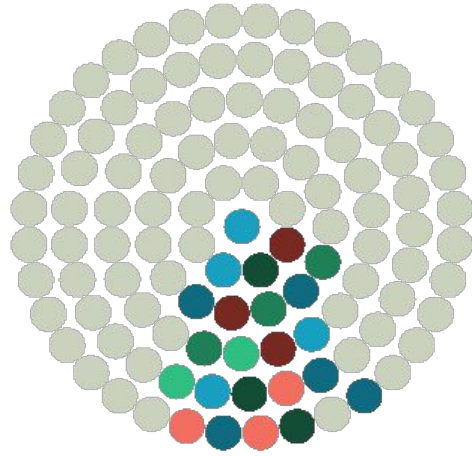
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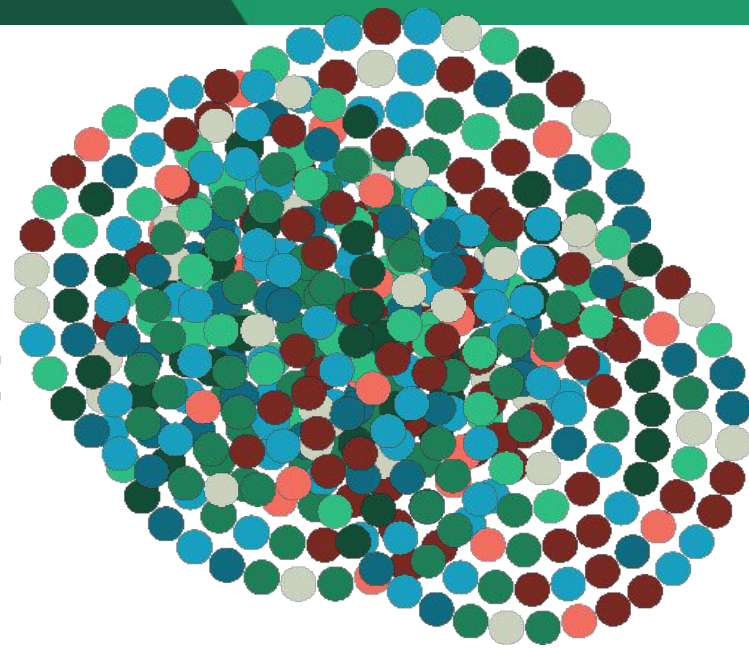
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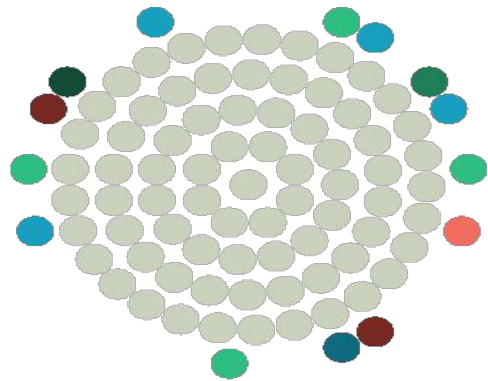
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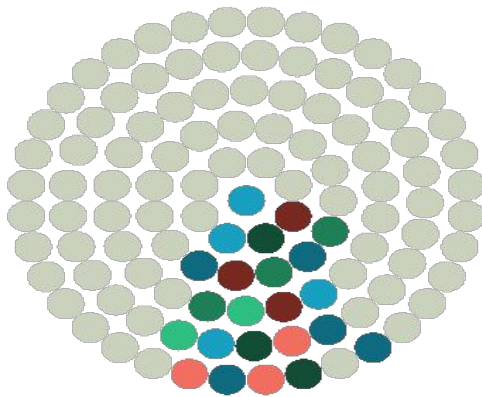
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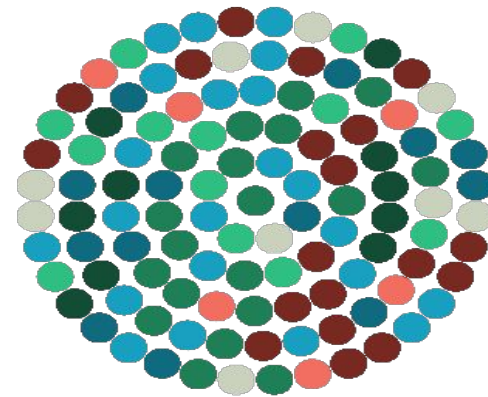
**Belonging**



**Exclusion**



**Integration**



**Inclusion**

# Belonging Versus Inclusion

## Belonging

- Everyone is represented and no one is marginalized or pushed to the outside of the process of creating the structures or functions of institutions
- Everyone has a meaningful voice
- Everyone's well-being is considered so that everyone thrives not just survives
- Belonging is more than having access; it is about the power to co-create the structures that shape a community so everyone has a stake in those systems
- To create a community of belonging we must identify and challenge structures established and sustained by excluding lives, experiences, and stories of historically marginalized peoples
- Peering through a belonging lens, we have to ask not whether campers and students can survive in our current spaces but can they thrive
- Ask whose perspectives are informing decisions being made; what voices and contributions are absent from these conversations and decisions

## Inclusion

- Inviting historically marginalized peoples into these spaces and structures but the structure and functions of institutions remain the same
- Individuals are included whether because they *assimilate with integration* or they are included as their *full selves as with diversity but have no say in what that order or community looks like or how it functions*
- So it's diversity, but diversity within a restrictive order that doesn't allow for all people in the community to thrive, just to survive
- Students and campers are navigating structures and functions within an institution that was not built to incorporate all voices, needs, and overall well-being
- Existing order or structure is retained and not recreated or restructured through the lens of belonging with the input of the experiences, voices, and stories of historically marginalized or excluded peoples for whom this current structure or order was not originally built or created
- Input from historically marginalized groups is absent from discussions and decisions



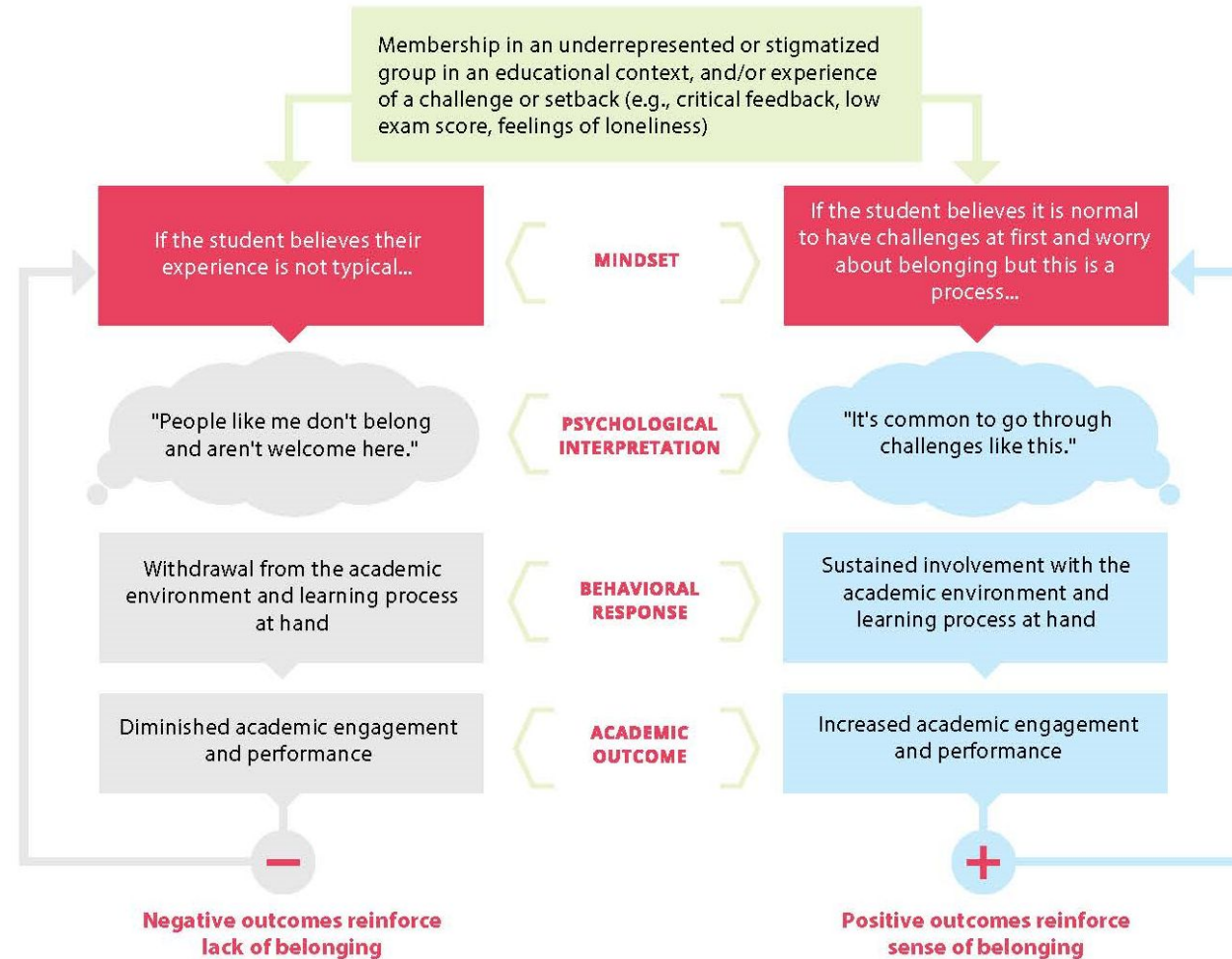


## Why Does Belonging Matter?

Students with a sense of belonging in school feel socially connected, supported, and respected. They trust their teachers and their peers, and they feel a sense of fit at school. They are not worried about being treated as a stereotype and are confident that they are seen as a person of value.”

-Carissa Romero in “What We Know About Belonging from Scientific Research”

An example of how students' sense of belonging can shape their responses in school



# Excerpt from *How to Be a (Young) Antiracist*

# Responses to Excerpt:

- What stood out to you from this excerpt?
- How does the content of this excerpt relate to what we just saw in Carissa Romero's graphic on Belonging?
- What are some sites of belonging mentioned in the excerpt, where belonging is experienced:
  - Language
  - Food
  - Music
  - Clothes
- In this excerpt, does Kendi feel like he belongs at John Browne High School?
- Is he thriving or surviving?
- What do we mean by the term culture as related to Belonging?
  - The sum total way of life, including shared beliefs, customs, and art forms, created and recreated by a group of people and transmitted from one generation to another.
  - Culture is a foundational part of how we make meaning as human beings. How we view and digest the world around us.
  - Therefore it is the site where we can feel a sense of belonging or a lack of belonging.

# Podcast Jon Menjivar's "Classy" Stories:

- Showcase two very different real life experiences from two people, in different institutions or orders where they are members of a historically marginalized or stigmatized group and face a setback or challenge:
  - Amechi Ugwu Story
    - Where do you see culture show up here?
    - Is Amechi thriving or surviving?
    - What is code switching?
      - Slipping into a different language or accent sometimes without realizing it sometimes consciously. Often this is done to "fit-in." Sometimes this is done to ingratiate yourself with another person or people, maybe to sell something for instance.
    - Have you experienced anything similar to Amechi's story? This lack of belonging?
  - Brenda Equihua
    - Where do you see culture show up here?
    - Is Brenda thriving or surviving?
    - Does anything in this story stand out to you? Anything feel familiar to you?

# How Do We Create a Community of Belonging?

- Culture informs the way we see and interpret the world around us and so is a critical site from which to build a community of belonging.
- A cultural strategy can be used to recreate or reform the existing structure.
- Through cultural strategies we can center all community members' voices, input, knowledge, and experiences.
- There are 4 Essential Practices of a Cultural Strategy we can use to create a community of belonging and 12 Attributes of a Cultural Strategy we can use to guide our practices.

# #1 Practice: Cultivate diverse forms of cultural practice that support the growth for long-term engagement and leadership of those who have been historically marginalized

- building the power of people involved in the work by expanding notions of expertise to promote long-term engagement and leadership of historically marginalized individuals.
- Create opportunities for leadership to engage with various cultures and history of cultures in deep and personal ways that introduces broader understandings within the existing structure or institution
- The objective with this cultural strategy is to involve historically marginalized groups in the recreation of the existing order or structure in order to promote long-term engagement of historically marginalized peoples who become stakeholders in the recreated institution or structure

## #2 Practice: Amplify the knowledge, insight, and vision that stems from cultures that have been marginalized and create experiences where this knowledge, insight, and vision can be expressed and understood on its own terms

- Cultural forms and practices hold insights and knowledge in the form that they were created and they can have very specific audiences. When we are not the creators or even the intended audience, we have to work to develop understanding in that original form or practice, not as a translation.
- Illuminate practices, narratives, stories, frames, and symbols in their original form.
- This means respecting and trusting the complexity of cultural practice and knowledge.
- Avoid attempting to translate cultural practices or forms without context using the dominant vision because this can flatten, destroy, and misrepresent cultures.



# #3 Practice: Align with the efforts for material, political, and social change

- Think about change strategies for material, political, and social change outside of the existing structure and align efforts within the existing structure with these insights from these outside strategies.
- This is the mashing together of different practices, tools, and elements of change movements that align with efforts in the existing structure for material, political, and social change.
- Building on cultural strategy #2, illuminating cultures and cultural practices within their original form and aligning these efforts with change to the existing structure or institution.

## #4 Practice: Make social and cultural change into a new “common sense”

- Reframe narratives of belonging in ways that intentionally integrate various cultural narratives elevating an interconnected movement of social and cultural change in an institution or existing structure
- Recreate the existing structure with the input and vision of cultures previously marginalized. And make this the dominant narrative across the institution.
- Address multiple spheres of life—the everyday, the economic, and the cultural. This means building the infrastructure for amplifying this work in order to shift worldviews and perspectives within the existing structure. Make this work commonplace, the shared narrative of recreating the existing structure.

# Practices (How) and Attributes (What) of a Cultural Strategy to Create a Community of Belonging

## 4 Essential Practices of a Cultural Strategy

1. Cultivate diverse forms of cultural practice that support the growth for long-term engagement and leadership of those who have been historically marginalized
2. Amplify the knowledge, insight, and vision that stems from cultures that have been marginalized and create experiences where this knowledge, insight, and vision can be expressed and understood on its own terms
3. Align with the efforts for material, political, and social change outside of the institution
4. Make social and cultural change into a new “common sense”

## 12 Attributes of a Cultural Strategy

1. Insisting on humanness
2. Reclaiming cultural memory
3. Articulating and validating alternative and marginalized value systems and ways of knowing
4. Shifting and democratizing concepts of expertise
5. Trespassing across sectors and silos
6. Bridging across divides and differences
7. Convening and connecting coalitions, movements, communities
8. Activating and provoking emotion
9. Disrupting the dominant worldview through interventions of worldviews from the margins
10. Building the space and means to imagine, play and envision alternatives
11. Making complex concepts more accessible
12. Expanding and broadening the reach

# Group Work: Analyzing These 4 Essential Practices of a Cultural Strategy in Real World Case Studies

- Answer questions on handout with regard to your case study
- Each case study highlights an attribute (the “what” or attribute makes this a community of belonging)
- Identify the 4 essential practices of a cultural strategy (the how) to create a community of belonging
- Then think about how that could work here at ENF with a brainstorming vision for an “impossible” idea that could be possible.

# Conclusion: Self- Reflection

1. Think of a time when you experienced a sense of belonging. What was going on and what kind of effect did that have on you?
2. Think about a time when you didn't belong, when you lacked that sense of belonging, what was going on and how that experience have an effect on you?
3. What are some cultural strategies you could use to work toward creating a community built on belonging?

The background is a solid dark teal color. On the left side, there are several overlapping, semi-transparent geometric shapes in lighter shades of teal, creating a layered, abstract effect. These shapes appear to be large, stylized arrows or chevrons pointing towards the right.

**Thank You**