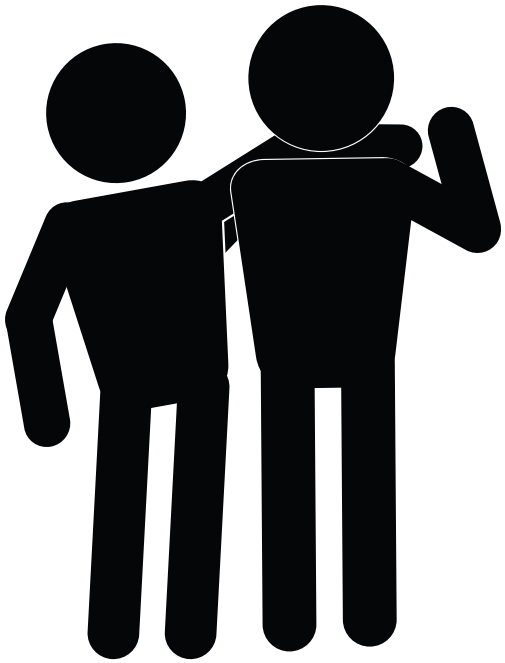
Towards Liberation:

Beyond Anti-Racist "Allies"

Beyond Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

A Zine by the WildSeed Society
Based on the work of the Aaron Goggans and the Insight-Incite Collective

Beyond Allies



The modes of anti-racist or anti-oppression based relationships we tend to see in movement spaces are usually some form of charity or performative ally-ship. In the charity model, white people are the heroes while the poor, POC or other marginalized folks are the victims and the villains are often unfortunate events or nebulous evils like "inequality." In charity models everyone is denied complexity and the power dynamics that created the problem are not challenged. Often white people get to feel better while nothing actually changes.

While the allyship model is in someways less harmful it often results in a simple inversion of the drama triangle. The heroes become the marginalized organizers and revolutionaries, the victims become their communities and the villain is the system. Those with privileges are seen as villains by association of their with the benefits of the system.

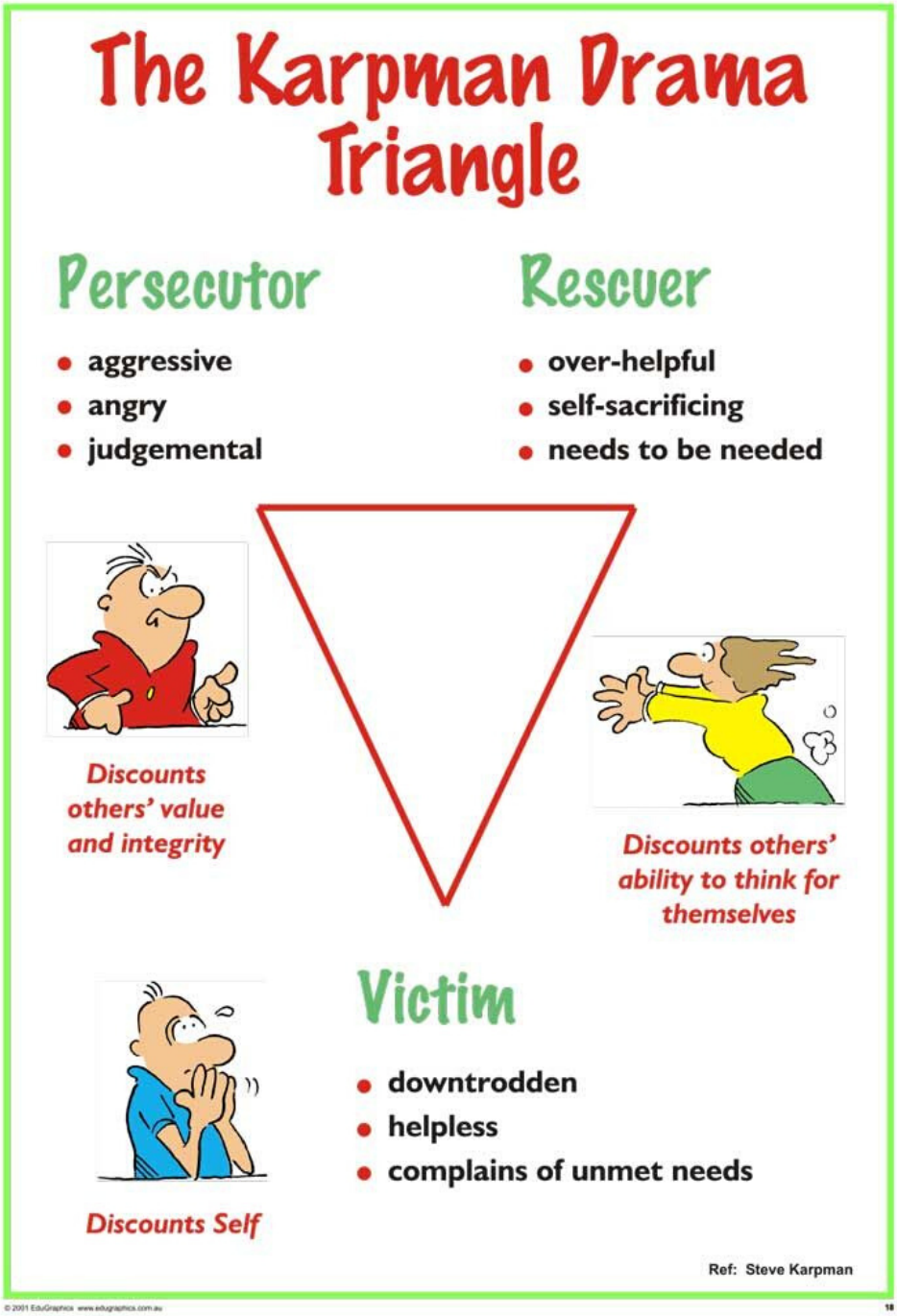
In allyship, marginalized people are supposed to be perfect and unchanging revolutionary leaders while the white people are irredeemable villains who can only be redeemed by listening to the directions of others [despite how much work needing to be directed puts on the marginalized.]

Transformative Relationships invite us to step outside of the drama triangle and allow ourselves to be fully seen by each other. They ask us to be full human beings: strength, weakness, quirks and all. The force us to be accountable to actions and grow rather just be punished without changing. The also require us to be honest about who we are and what brings us into the movement.

In short, they require us the hold the full complexity of ourselves and other people.

This means each person being clear about their skin in the game. It requires men to know why they want to smash the patriarchy and white people to envision who they will be after we abolish white supremacy. With that level of honest and accountability we can find refuge in relationships by offering it to each other.

Drama vs Co-Creation



Actively engaging in Co-Creative relationships is easier said then done. This is especially true when we try and form relationships across identities and power.

The stories we tell about change as a society often leads us to fall into whats called the Drama Triangle. Rather than seeing each other as unique individuals shaped by social conditions trying to get our needs met in the best way we know how, we often see and think in two dimensional roles.

Someone is either a hero/rescuer, villain/persecutor or the victim. The Hero is to be praised and unquestioned. The Villain is to be punished. The Victim is to be rescued.

Often times, people's identities decide which role society automatically places them.

White men have historically gotten to be the hero in America, while Black people and indigenous people are often the villain with white women being the victim that needs to be saved.

In stories of colonialism, the white man's burden is often seen as having to save indigenous people from themselves. Making them both the backwards villains and hapless victim at the same time.

Overtime and different contexts, the identities of may change but the underlying dynamic remains the same.

Though inaccurate and effective, these stories are powerful and often complicate our ability to have consensual co-creative relationships. If we think we are the hero we are unlikely to listen to the villains needs or believe that the victim is capable of really knowing what they need. If we think we are the villain because we are white or male then our sense of shame is likely to make mutuality impossible as we keep our needs to ourselves. If we are operating from a place of victim-hood then we might expect others to for us what only we can do for us or we can misread genuine offers for help as Trojan horses designed to hurt us further.

But what if we all stepped out of the drama triangle took 100% responsibility for our role in the dynamic and use empathetic understanding to see where others are coming from?

From Allyship to Liberatory Co-Creation

To step out of the drama triangle isn't forgive people for their racism and it certainly isn't to let the system off the hook. The system needs to be burned down. Rather, it is recognize that for better or for worse we are in this fucked up racist-sexist-ablest-capitalist-imperalist system together. We are all complicit in the system that feeds us, even as it oppresses us to different degrees. **If we want a new system we will have to enact new relationships to meet our needs in non exploitative ways.**

We don't need behavior police or anti-racism police. We don't need to show that we are "woke." What we need is a culture of radical consent as co-creation.

That's when people come together to share their needs with honesty and vulnerability while working together to build a world where all their needs can be met with dignity. Its a joyful alternative to a watered-down comprise or prioritizing one persons needs over another.

Mutual agreement is the part of consent most talked about but its hardly the most important. While it may be a useful legal concept, it hardly helps us create the kinds of bursting with love/joy/dignity/connection experiences that we all deserve.

Viewing consent as co-creating our joy and dignity is a much more vibrant and exciting way to think about relationships. It opens us up to explore the many unique paths that are possible in meeting different needs and desires rather than trying to prioritize whose needs are more important.

Consent as co-creation also doesn't let the system's role in creating lack-luster options off the hook. Consent doesn't assume the options we've been presented with by media or past relationships are the only options. Relationships, narratives, values and systems can change in order for us to all meet our needs with dignity and joy. Sometime a change in location is needed, sometimes the system that decides which locations are available needs to be abolished.

In political relationships this means all sides sitting deeply with what they want and why. Its not enough for white people to think racism is bad or men to denounce sexism. White people need to be real about which aspects of humanity they will gain by abolishing whiteness. How not being policed by the desire to belong to whiteness could allow them to experience less false scarcity and more openess. Men need to be clear about the ways patriarchy limits their own ability to feel and have meaningful relationships.

This mutual clarity allows us to more easily move from asking for an end to oppression and visioning the world we want based on new, more humane values. It also removes the burden of implementation from the oppressed people. If our political partners are clear about how our freedom supports there's we don't need to keep one eye on them to make sure they are "doing what they are supposed to be doing."

Rethinking Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

We have called the work of constructively handling difference in society many different things. From cultural competency to diversity training to equity work to social justice.

Far from being simple semantics, the words we use to describe the work are a direct result of how we understand the problem we are facing, or perhaps more accurately, which aspects of the problem we are willing to acknowledge and address. Each term is sensing a real problem in society but often in a deliberately limited way.

Cultural Competency often assumes that problem is ignorance, that racial inequities are a result of lack of mutual understanding between white and non-white people. It views getting folks talking to each other as enough.

Diversity often assumes that the problem about current or historical bias. It sees the problem as a result of individual people's prejudice against "minorities." It sees integration as enough.

Equity often assumes that the problem is about equal access, that there are structural barriers to people of color's success. It assumes that ensuring everyone has the same chance to succeed is enough.

Inclusion often assumes that the problem is that directly affected people are not at the decision making table about the issues that affect them. It sees including directly affected people at every stage of the process as enough.

Rethinking Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

On there own, each of these terms are very limiting. However, taken together they can help us ensure that no group of people are marginalized and set the basis for actual co-creation of space and society as a whole.

Yet, ensuring that no one is marginalized is not the same thing as ensuring that people get what they truly, deeply want and deserve. Everyone *being together* doesn't mean everyone is ***thriving together***.

So often our calls for diversity or inclusion lead to spaces based on the least common demoninator. It means being inoffensive and "safe" from additional harm but not actually dealing with past harm or getting what we actually want.

To get to place of thriving together we need to talk about Liberation. Liberation can be thought of as both a process and a state of being. As a state, its an unchained way of being--unique to each individual but only found in community--that is always possible. Its a feeling of flow and purpose and pure being that is often made momentary or inaccessible for systemic oppression.

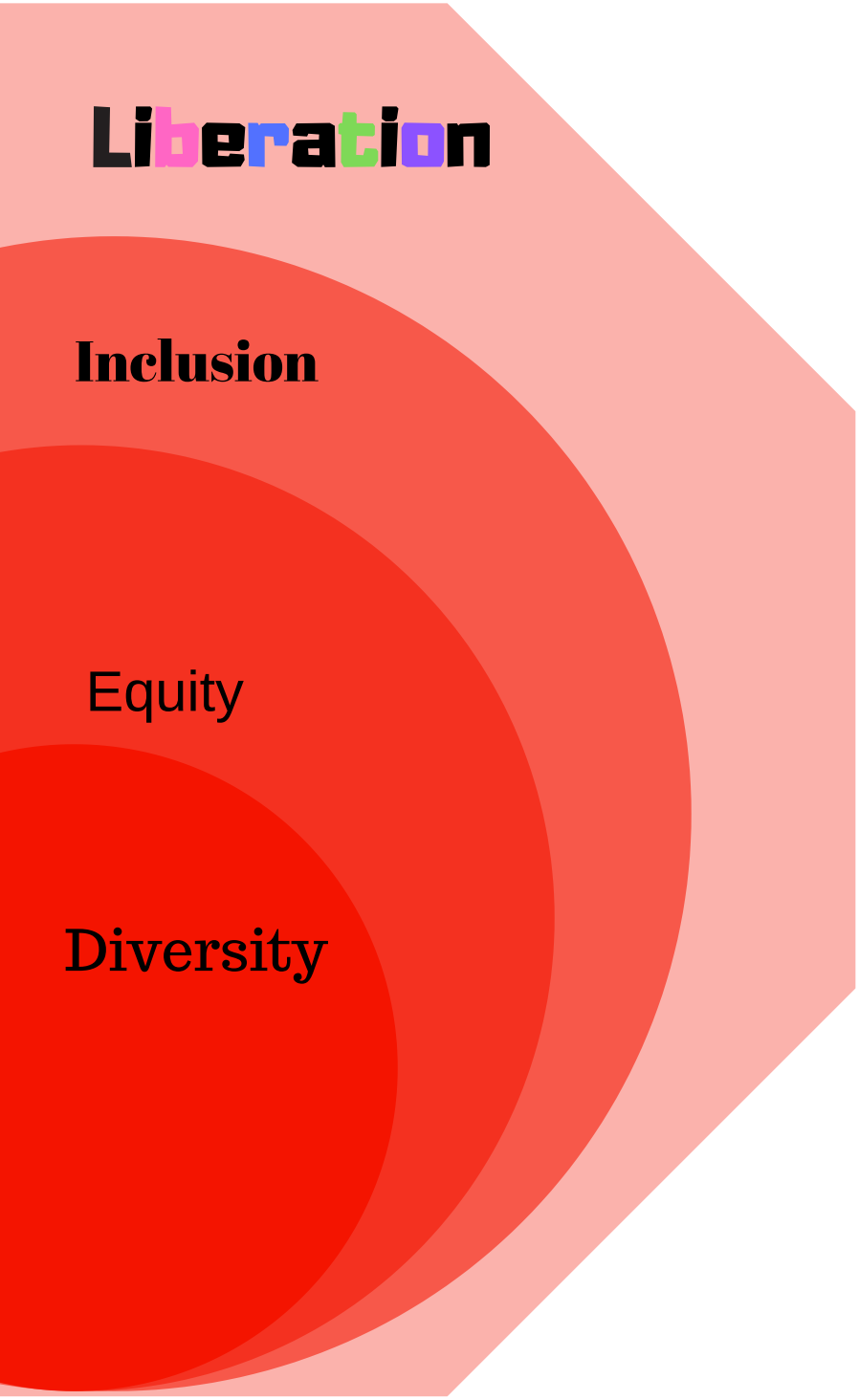
Liberation is not the license of liberty but an empowered freedom where we have the **capacity, skill and willing partners** *to co-create our freedom to thrive and freedom from harm*. Liberation is the creative-love-force inside of us, waiting to be unleashed.

By combing the lenses of cultural competency, diversity, equity and inclusion with Liberation Logic we can ensure that our journey for finding our own Liberation supports the collective Liberation of all people.

Liberation Logic also moves us past the false idea that the problem is only inequality. That things would be solved if we were all the same and lived the same kind of lives. This is neither desirable nor possible. We are all different and we want different things out of life. Our goal isn't for Black people and people of color to "have it as good as whites." White people should not be our standard nor should we pretend as if they do not have their own problems and their own dissatisfaction with their lives and communities.

Liberation Logic does not ask for more "just share" of what already exist but rather a way of moving through the world that can allow space for multiple worlds. Where we can all get our needs met with dignity according to our cultural and personal ways of moving through the world.

From Diversity to Liberation



When we think of diversity, equity and inclusion as building blocks towards Liberation, these terms lead us to ask different questions.

Liberation asks, not only what do we personally want, but **how can we collectively live into our greatest joy? How we create the conditions where all of desires can coexist?**

Inclusion asks, not only how do we make people feel welcome, but **how the do the agenda, outcomes and process need to shift to accommodate people's needs?**

Equity asks, not only what support do people need, but **what specific interventions are necessary to overcome present and historical oppression on both a interpersonal and systemic scale?**

Diversity asks, not just who is in the room, but **how do we hold everyone in the same room with dignity and respect?**

Liberation
A Framework For Freedom
Logic

The Liberation Logic Framework is a gift of the heart; a new way of making an old truth deeply felt, compiled by Aaron Goggans based heavily on the workshop of the same name co-created with Rebecca Mintz with support from dozens of participant-co–creators.

The Liberation Logic Framework is practical tool to help people move through the world. The framework is a **heart logic,** not a mind logic; it is a way of feeling critically. It's a tool to help movements and organizations make maps ***to*** and ***of*** a different plane of living where we can see the world and our path to Liberation in this moment from a higher frequency. It invites us to see Liberation as an unchained way of being--unique to each individual but only found in community--that is always possible.

What if we saw Liberation--not as the license of liberty--as an empowered freedom where we have the *capacity, skill* and ***willing partners*** to co-create our *freedom to thrive* and *freedom from harm*? What if we saw Liberation as the creative-love-mind/heart/body-force inside of us, waiting to be unleashed?

Liberation Logic is an invitation to a practice of *holding* ourselves and each other without **grasping**. It means ***sensing*** what truly *is* with spaciousness and through multiple layers of perspective--accepting what is without accepting it has to be--
and ***responding*** by *embodying* our true selves rather than who we want to be seen as.

Liberation Logic is a practice of using the best means for the best ends. Using the strategies of previous movements for Liberation as tactics for our collective liberation.

Liberation Logic cannot be learned academically because it is a framework for unlearning moving with the grasping, purely analytical and defensive egoic-mind without overlooking the systems of domination that seek to occupy our very being.

Liberation Logic is an invitation to a practice of unlearning the illusion of certainty, control or absolute truth in favor of relearning how to bring love, joy and support to each other, while holding multiple truths and building power. Rather than using the logic of domination in our collective theories of change [**denial, coercion and vilification**], Liberation Logic pushes us to use **Insight**, **Interdependence,** and **Transformation** to move us collectively towards freedom as our most authentic selves.

Before we

Insight-Incite Collective Presents:

DOMINATION

AND

LIBERATION

COMPARING TWO WAYS WE TRY TO MEET OUR NEEDS

Liberation Logic invites us to use love, joy and a deep understanding of our selves and our context to co-create a better world.

Its about getting our needs met with love and dignity together.

Interdependence:
Being together through balancing **Autonomy** and **Collectivism**.

Seeing that the community's role is to support the genius of the individual so their unique talents can bear fruit for the community

Insight: Understanding the world through being **Head-Smart** and **Heart-Wise**

Combining analytical, systems thinking with emotional awareness and checking in with our bodies

Transformation: Creating change through **Evolution** and **Revolution**.

Evolving our relationships to be more of a give and take of love, support and co-creation while revolutionizing power by shifting it to those who have been historically denied it.

Domination logic tries to single-highhandedly limit options to control outcomes. It often uses force and makes those who oppose it methods inherently wrong or otherwise makes them seem unworthy. It also often uses binary [good/bad or black/white] thinking to justify exploiting "bad" people for the sake of "good" people.

Denying Reality or Ignoring Impact:

Telling ourselves and others that what we are experiencing isn't really happening. Includes gaslighting and victim blaming.

Denying Worth or Complexity:

Often looks like saying that that people are monsters or inherently bad. Sometimes looks like pretending people are perfect or beyond scrutiny. Usually involves deny them the capacity for growth, change, learning, or complexity.

Seeking the Illusion of Control:

Believing that we have the ability to bend the world and other people to our will. Trying to use force to coerce action or limit outcomes and options.

Why do we need Liberation Logic?

Understanding A World Run By Domination

Domination logic is a worldview in which we believe that the best way to meet our needs is by using force [physical, emotional, economic etc] to control outcomes.

Domination logic is an ego-driven logic that organizes our lives on both a large and small scale. It determines how countries interact, how parents interact with their kids, and how we relate to our own bodies.

Systems like White Supremacy, Patriarchy, and Capitalism are how groups of people use domination logic on a social level. They are ways in which the tools of domination are deployed for and against specific groups.

Denying Reality and Impact: Telling ourselves and others that what we are experiencing isn't really happening, or isn't really a big deal.

We see this in everything from Holocaust Denial, victim-blaming survivors of sexual violence, and our habit of telling children that they don't know their own emotions.

Denying Worth or Complexity: Saying that people are monsters or inherently bad. Pretending people are perfect or beyond scrutiny. Usually involves denying people the capacity for growth, change, learning, or complexity.

We turn our opponents into monsters and our heroes into saints. In doing so, we limit our ability to grow, change, and experience complex emotions. We get limited to feeling what a monster or hero is supposed to feel.

Seeking the Illusion of Control: Trying to use force to coerce actions, or limit outcomes and options.

We police ourselves and each other, hoping to be rich enough, pretty enough, thin enough, or white enough to receive social sanction. We create rules to punish potential deviants instead or supporting people to thrive together.

What is Domination Logic?

A Note From Rebecca

For me, domination logic is an understandable response to the possibility of famine and death.

We live in a world where nothing is certain. We never know when a drought will come, when a fire will start in our home, when our parents and children will get sick or when we will fall in love. This is the basic, horrible, and gorgeous reality of being alive.

We can respond to that basic uncertainty by trying to manufacture a sense of control, even when there isn't one, at all costs. When we respond by trying to manufacture control, that is what we are calling domination logic.

On the inner work level, it looks like suppressing emotions and trauma-responses.

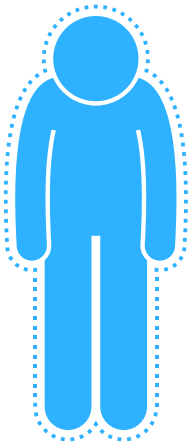
Interpersonally, it looks like trying to control other people's behavior so that we never have to deal with the emotions and traumas that we are trying to suppress, or retreating from the risk of deep relationship and living in superficial relations.

Organizationally, it looks like a machine mindset, where we try to get everything in one perfect order and make it stay that way forever, using pyramid organization charts, marching orders, bosses, and firings.

Systemically, domination logic looks like capitalism. Domination logic in the form of capitalism is a way for classes of people to ensure that they are not subject to the whims of draught and famine.

The only way these classes can keep themselves buffered from famine is to hoard and amass enough (food, money, space, power) to never be vulnerable to anything. And the only way they know how to amass enough of those resources is to exploit and enslave others. Oppression is a systemic-scale version of trying to control enough resources to never be vulnerable to the basic premise of being alive: uncertainty.

The most visible problem with this approach is, of course, is that we harm each other over and over again throughout human history, trying to get a sense of control over the uncontrollable.

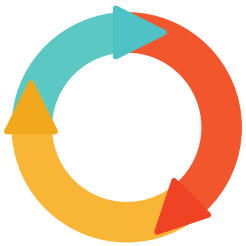


Another problem is that place of vulnerability are the sites of both pain and healing simultaneously. Shielding ourselves from vulnerability might lower the amount of certain kinds of pain that we have to experience in life: physical hunger, being too hot or too cold, consciously feeling rejected by someone we want to know. But shielding ourselves is also wildly alienating.

This shielding takes us out of relationships with ourselves, out of relationships with other people, out of deep community, and out of relationship with nature and spirit. If we never let ourselves be vulnerable to other people through really risking love, to the ups and downs of natural cycles and disasters, we also shield ourselves from the possibility of healing, love and belonging.

How Is Domination Logic Spread?

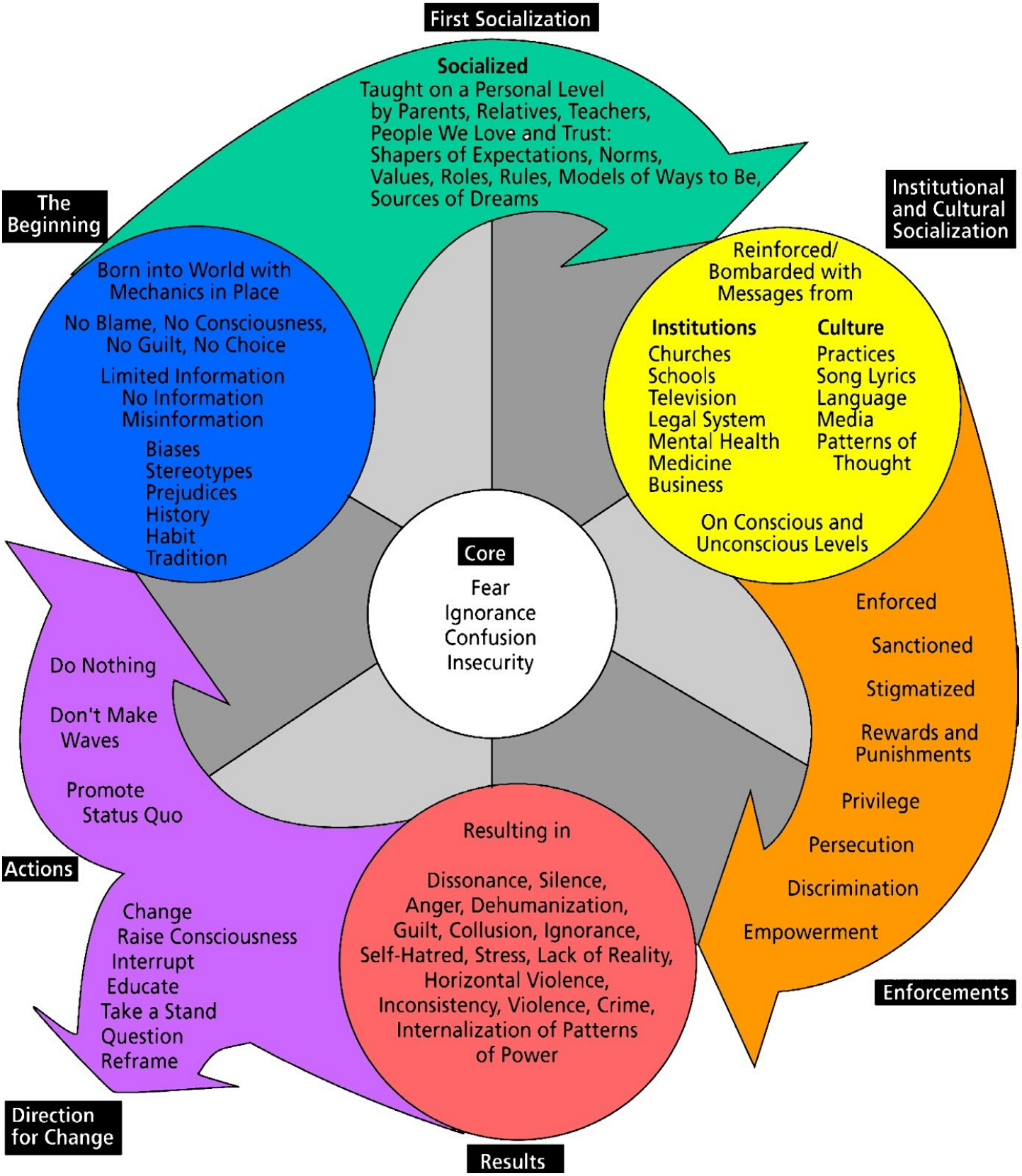
Domination Logic, like racism or sexism, is a learned way of thinking. We learn it from parents who try to protect us from uncertainty and police who punish us when we "step out of line."



"...WE ARE EACH BORN INTO A SPECIFIC SET OF SOCIAL IDENTITIES...AND THESE SOCIAL IDENTITIES PREDISPOSE US TO UNEQUAL ROLES IN THE DYNAMIC SYSTEM[S] OF OPPRESSION. WE ARE THEN SOCIALIZED BY POWERFUL SOURCES IN THE OUR WORLDS TO PLAY THE ROLES PRESCRIBED BY AN INEQUITABLE SOCIAL SYSTEM. THIS SOCIALIZATION PROCESS IS **PERVASIVE** (COMING FROM ALL SIDES AND SOURCES), **CONSISTENT** (PATTERNED AND PREDICTABLE), **CIRCULAR** (SELF-SUPPORTING), **SELF-PERPETUATING** (INTRADEPENDENT) AND **OFTEN INVISIBLE** (UNCONSCIOUS AND UNNAMED)."

Bobbie Harro "Cycle of Socialization"

How Is Domination Logic Spread?



By Bobbie Harro "Cycle of Socialization"

What is Domination Logic?

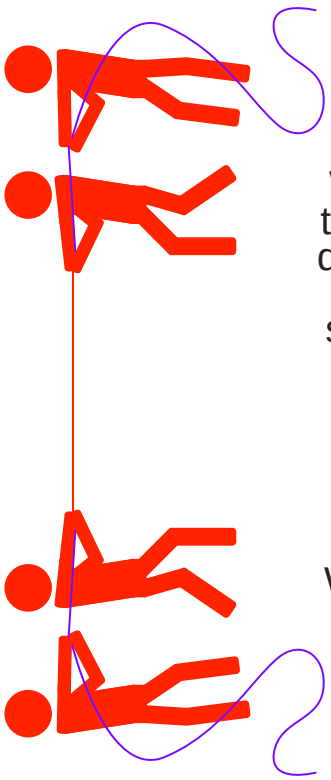
A Note From Rebecca

We have grown up in a world where domination logic is everywhere:
in our families, our schools, our media, our presidents.

No wonder we are so well trained in it.

In our movement spaces, we often live out domination logic by focusing on the ends of our work rather than the means of how we do that work. We talk about changing systems, which is absolutely critical. But we work toward changing those systems in the same way that capitalist interests work toward their own ends: disconnected from our own traumas and emotions, in controlling or alienated relationships from one another, in organizations that drain and dehumanize us.

We say that our work is so important that we don't have time for healing, for building genuine community, for working collaboratively.
That is exactly what corporate CEO's say too.
If we are using the same logic as capitalist white supremacist patriarchy, how will we ever really create something different, even when we win campaigns?



Another way we live out domination logic in our movement spaces is by seeing all of our struggles as separate. Many of us join movement work through organizations working on individual "issues." We often join organizations working on issues that we have personally experienced, fighting systems of oppression in which we are those being marginalized.

When we haven't done any healing around the wounds that we have from that marginalization, we can get neurotically obsessed with our own issues, demanding that they are the most important ones. We argue about whether racism or classism is the "real" issue, rather than understanding that all systems of oppression are just different manifestations of domination logic.

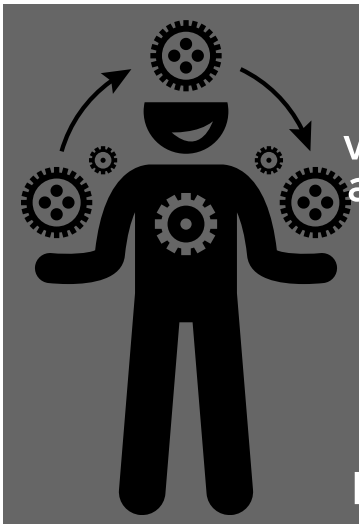
Finally, we live out domination logic in our movement spaces by thinking about our work as "struggle." Many of us are carrying so much harm from living in this toxic world that we get into a psychological pattern of always looking for a fight.

We end up organizing as if fighting is not only the only strategy we can use to get free, it is often the only way we can conceptualize our work. Fighting becomes our reason for being. We come to believe that the struggle is endless, that we will be struggling our whole lives and that generations after us will do the same.

What's more, we get so attached to the concept of fighting that we end up fighting each other rather than genuinely collaborating to build liberation ecosystems.

Why do we need Liberation Logic?

How does Domination Logic show up in movement spaces?



Domination logic is deeply tied to what we think is "effective" and how we assume change happens. In movements we often still think that the ends justify the means because we are so results- and production-focused.

From corporate non-profits to business unionism, many movements are anchored by people and institutions that care about quantitative results, measurable outcomes, and an obsession with things being legible.

Our collective egos need proof that we are worthy by doing, and our doing has to be more or better than the doing of others.

Even in more radical spaces, we are often subtly obsessed with being seen as powerful by those who oppress. We seek to beat them in a struggle, rather than carving out a space to be free and only fighting when that space is threatened.

Denying Reality or Ignoring Impact: Allows us to avoid feelings of shame for what we have done. It also allows us to ignore the recognition of our own suffering that arises when we acknowledge other people's suffering.

We sacrifice our mental, physical, and relational wellness in the struggle for being free. Our path to liberation is literally killing us, but rather than decide to have "no more martyrs," martyrdom is the baseline expectation.

Denying Worth or Complexity: Those who disagree with and push back on our ideas are revisionist, liberals, cops, toxic, or "unstrategic."

Often we try to play the role of the freedom fighter. We take risks and make bold moves because that's what our ego tells us struggle looks like, even if we get arrested, increase repression, and nothing actually changes.

Similarly, we often see a need to cover our pain in an analysis so that it will be taken seriously. We re-interpret our life based on radical theory. Suddenly, harm only matters if we can tie it to an established narrative of oppression. This leads to us overstating the harm tied to our identities so that it will be acknowledged. Over time, this can lead to us identifying with our pain instead of working to heal it.

Seeking the Illusion of Control: We believe that if we use the right theory and have a detailed plan, we will make the revolution happen in three easy steps.

Movement strategy can sometimes seek to force the change we want to see. Rather than asking ourselves what seeds of Liberation the conditions we live in are right for, we force the conditions to be what we want or overlook them completely. We get ego-attached to our strategies, discrediting that everyone else's approaches.

Understanding Domination and Liberation

Basic Human Needs

Physical Needs: Food, Water, Shelter, Touch

Social Needs: Status, Certainty, Autonomy, Relatedness, Fairness

Spiritual Needs: Connection, Groundedness, Alignment

Somatic responses to those needs

Love
Connecting Response

Fear
Disconnecting Response

Stories we tell about meeting those needs

Liberation Logic	Domination Logic
Liberation Justice Equity	LIBERALISM OPPRESSION
Holistic	Dehumanizing

PRACTICES	Insight	Interbeing	Transformation	Deny Reality/Ignore Impact	Seek Control	Vilify
Inner Work						
Interpersonal						
Organizational						
Systemic						

Settler Colonialism
Imperialism
Capitalism
White Supremacy
Patriarchy
Ableism
Xenophobia
Neo-liberalism
Trans-Antagonism
Genocide
Consumerism

Understanding Domination and Liberation

As we mentioned earlier, we can respond to life's basic uncertainty by trying to manufacture a sense of control. Systems like capitalism are the artifacts of cultures responding to scarcity and uncertainty with domination logic. These systems are generally responding to real material needs in society but through strategies that cause more harm in the long run. We can also respond to that basic uncertainty with loving, wondrous acceptance and go along for the ride. For us, this choice of "the story we tell" about how to meet our needs in an uncertain world is the difference between using a Domination Logic and using a Liberation Logic.

Let's take a second to break down the chart on the previous page.

Basic Human Needs

Physical Needs: Food, Water, Shelter, Touch

Everyone has needs. Some of these needs are physiological or biological. They are things our bodies need in order to continue living. If you don't eat you die, if you don't drink you die, if you get too hot or too cold you die and if babies aren't touched they die [if adults are touched we might wilt emotionally and will eventually see our immune systems weaken.]

Social Needs: Status, Certainty, Autonomy, Relatedness, Fairness

Some of those needs are social. Humans are social creatures and in order to not feel so hopeless, alienated or worthless that we give up we need to make sure our social needs are meet. I find the SCARF model really helpful here. It states that based on neuroscience there are 5 basic motivates for human behavior. Those are status (our sense of personal worth), certainty (our sense of what the future holds), autonomy (our sense of control over our life), relatedness (or sense of safety with others), and fairness (our sense of everyone getting what we feel they "should"). While these needs arise from parts of our brains, the way we think about them and how we meet them are socially constructed. This means that how one culture offers autonomy will be different from another culture.

Spiritual Needs: Connection, Groundedness, Alignment

We also have spiritual needs to be connected and aligned to the greatness that is the universe however we conceive of it. Spirituality is, to me, an embodied understanding that we are a small but beautiful part of a much larger majesty. It is sense of grounded perspective that allows us to sense our connection to the larger whole.

When these spiritual needs aren't meet we might experience life as a constant existential crises or try and feed ourselves with material things that will never satisfy our spiritual need. We can find our selves seeking connection through consumption and end up making ourselves feel more alone and isolated. Often times we can try to bury our sense of dislocation by keeping our selves busy producing things.

Understanding Domination and Liberation

Basic Human Needs

Physical Needs: Food, Water, Shelter, Touch

Social Needs: Status, Certainty, Autonomy, Relatedness, Fairness

Spiritual Needs: Connection, Groundedness, Alignment

Somatic responses to those needs

When any of those needs are not met, our body has a response. We feel something. It might be hunger, it might be fatigue, it could be feeling of emptiness that pervades our body or what Buddhist call a seed of aversion or craving. There is a lot of evidence to say that we have very little control (and very little reason to try to control) our feelings. We might be able to suppress or ignore them but we can't really change them through willpower alone.

By learning to be in touch with our feelings we can get a better handle of what needs we actually have. Knowing our needs and acknowledging them are the first steps to getting them met. Though we often use the words interchangeably, these physical sensations that we call feelings are different than emotions. The latest advances in neurobiology suggest that we are each "hardcoded" with certain feelings yet emotions are socially constructed. In fact, there is a whole discipline in academia called the sociology of emotion.

Emotional Response

Love

Connecting Response

Fear

Disconnecting Response

When our body generates a feeling we almost instantly tell a story, trying to categorize or make meaning of that feeling. Often times, the story is something like "this reminds me of the last time I felt this way." That is in essence what our emotions are. They are predictors. They tell us, the last time we got this feeling something good, bad, scary or sexual etc happened. There is a lot we could talk about in regards to feelings and emotions but the important thing to remember for now is that we don't have a lot of influence over our feelings but we do have a lot of influence over our emotions. If we take deep breath we can interpret our feelings in many different ways.

It can be helpful to think of all the emotional responses we could have to fall under two broad categorizes: connecting or disconnecting/ love or fear. Our interpretation of our feelings can either make us want to go towards something or away from it. We generally have multiple feelings about any given situation and have a mix of love and fear responses. But generally one or the other wins out and we take action from that emotional place.

Now, fear and love are not inherently good or bad in this case. If you come across a bear while hiking a fear response makes sense. It might be dangerous to have a connecting response to wild and potentially frightened animal. The problem comes when in social situations we are not conscious of the emotional stories we are telling. When we let media cultivate a fear response of Black youth or a love response towards consumption we begin to tell more complicated and problematic stories about how we meet our needs. **Yet most of us are more able to ensure we are not overwhlemed by love responses thus they generally leave us more open to possibilities than fear responses and that is why Liberation Logic prioritizes love.** Though anyone who first feel in love as teenager knows that strong connecting responses can also narrow our vision.

Complicating this further, is that our bodies don't really differentiate between physical threats, social threats and spiritual threats. We tend to experience threats to our social status as if they are threats to our body. So capitalism can teach us to try and meet a spiritual need for connection by buying something and then we might feel that thing we bought or our property in general being threatened as a physical assault! Conservative politicians have mastered using the deep unhealthy connection westerners have with property to play into their politics of fear. To counter act that message we have to untagle the real human need at play from the socially constructed story about how to meet that need.

Understanding Domination and Liberation

Stories we tell about meeting those needs

Liberation Logic

Domination Logic

Liberation Logic stories are about the possibilities of abundance that exist if you practice Insight, Interdependence and Transformation. Liberation Logic stories about getting your needs met don't change the facts. If you are hungry its not about telling yourself you are not hungry or the problematic solace of "at least you are not starving." Instead Liberation Logic stories talk about the future and ask us to meet are needs by collaborating with others and recognizing that there are multiple ways to meet our needs. Nobody needs bread, marriage and the police. But everybody needs carbs, safety and stability in relationships and security. But there are many grains to get carbs, ways to build relationships without the state regulating them and ways to get security without an armed force protecting property. The possibilities are endless which can be as emancipating as it is scary. Where Domination Logic sees the only the possibilities that make getting our needs met harder, Liberation Logic sees both and encourages us to move in ways that generate more acceptable solutions.

Like most things in the world, Liberation Logic and Domination Logic are not cut and dry. So often we seem stuck between a liberals thinking that only the most dominating things like slavery or rape are actually domination and radicals thinking that all forms are domination are equally reprehensible and punishable. Yet Liberation Logic is not interested in punishment or honestly even labels like right and wrong. Liberation Logic is not better than Domination Logic in some puritanical sense of more pure or less deserving of punishment. Rather Liberation Logic is more skillful. It is more generative and able to allow for more possibilities which increases the likelihood that everyone can get their needs met with dignity. **The idea that people getting their needs met with dignity as "prefered" is as close to moral statement that Liberation Logic makes.**

We could go deeper into why Liberation Logic eschews terms like good and bad. For now, I would sum it up by saying that many societies use terms like good or bad to demarcate people into categories of good or bad people, innocent victims and evil perpetrators. Good people do good things and bad people do bad things.This binary thinking tends to lead to domination logic which severely narrows the possibilities for action. It also leaves punishment and reward (sticks and carrots) as the only tools for avoiding unpleasant experiences. We believe that by seeing everyone as generally trying to meet their needs with systems and tools they have to meet them ***as they understand them*** we are much more likely to get everyone needs meet with dignity. Because frankly, ostracism, shame and punishment only make things worse.

Additionally, thinking about Liberation and Domination Logic as spectrum makes sure we don't settle for what is nor let perfect be the enemy of the good. **There is always a more liberatory possibility**. The question is not "how can we perfect this" but does this solution meet everyone needs with dignity? If not, how can we take actions that make that make that possible. One end of the spectrum with have the words Holistic and Liberation signifying how Liberation holds multiple truths and the capacity and meeting multiple needs.

In this way we can see things like Liberalism (the political belief born out of the European enlightenment that seeks to maximize human flourishing by educating each individual person to be as rational as possible so that they can meet get there needs met through transactions with other people) as an historic step towards Liberation but ultimately far short of what is necessary.

We can also distinguish between things we don't like, things that remind us of dominate culture from things that actually limit our possibilities as human beings. It can be so easy to say that thinking in binaries is domination logic because domination logic employs the binary so often to limit options. Yet if our friend is overwhelmed with choices or unsure of what they want, a set of binary choices might be more clarify rather than limiting.

Contrasting Domination Logic and Liberation Logic is explicitly using binary logic yet its purpose is to clarify issues rather than to control outcomes. To put it plainly**, its not what you do, its how you do it and why that matters.**

Liberation Logic

Values and practices

Domination Logic is all around us, yes. And yet we have all experienced more healing, more freeing ways to live, be, and create change. We offer Liberation Logic as a mindset and a practice-set we can use to live the lives we want.

Liberation Logic is a worldview that embraces uncertainty and connection, rather than control. It allows us to live in the knowledge that there are many paths to getting our needs met with dignity.

LL is a love-driven approach to being alive and making change in which we focus on creating liberatory moments now. Instead of focusing on fighting for a future freedom, we spark moments of liberation by connecting more deeply with ourselves and with each other, and by building projects, communities, ecosystems, and movements that literally embody our values.

Liberation Logic is a set of values and practices that can help us navigate the terrains of power, mutuality, and interrelationship.

Liberation Logic offers three basic values or coordination principles: *understanding the world through* **Insight**, *being together through* **Interdependence,** and *creating change through* **Transformation.** These values can help guide our action and determine if we are heading towards freedom. They ask us to sit deeply with context, meet our own needs while working with others, and engage in changing relationships of power.

We can think of **Insight**, **Interdependence** and **Transformation** as meta-values that we can live out through actual practices in our lives. As we've learned from the work of generative somatics, practice is anything that we do repeatedly over time, intentionally or unintentionally. It can be a social skill set, cultural ritual, mental or political tool, or concrete action that we use navigate and create the world.

Every culture and even every individual already has their own practice that we use to pursue freedom. Liberation Logic's basic assumption is that we all already have everything we need to get free. This framework is merely an invitation to examine all the tools for liberation available to us, and relearn how to wield which ones when, with the love and grace to get what we need.

What is Liberation Logic?

What are these guiding values,
and how do they work?

Insight:
Head-smart and Heart-wise

Knowing yourself [your needs, desires, trauma and context]
while seeking to see others as they really are [not as you fear they are or wish they are] so that you can move peacefully and effectively through the world.

It means combining an understanding of your social, political, energetic, emotional and physical context with a felt sense of your needs and those of others.

So often we expect others to bend to our ideas of how things are supposed to be, without really thinking through why we think what we do, or if that is how we want to be. That habit is ego trying to get us to identify with form, to claim ideas and roles as who we are.

With deep self-understanding we can name our needs, capacities, and traumas. We can know what we need to get on our own and what we need from others.

With self-empathy we can free ourselves from the shame and internalized oppression that often limits us. With an understanding of our context we can see how our needs and desires have been shaped by personal and political history.

What we like least about other people is often a reflection of what we like least about ourselves. With self-understanding we can have more compassion for others. We can also see how others' actions [which we can't change] are shaped by their context [which we can co-create].

Interdependence:
Collectivity and Autonomy

Seeing the individual and community as two parts of human experience. An individual cannot exist outside community and a community cannot exist without individuals.

We neither have to deny our unique needs and desires for the community nor set our will above the collective good. When we thrive, our community is better. When we build for the community, we support ourselves.

We are the result of every event we have witnessed and every person who has touched our lives. The same is true for our communities. We can use that connection by being love, support, and dignity when alone and in community.

Transformation:
Evolution and Revolution

Building a world that can hold multiple worlds. It means evolving our relationships to be love-centered experiences of giving and accepting, while revolutionizing how we share power.

Power can be seen as our context-specific relationships to people, resources, spirit, history, institutions and ideas that allows us to make change and influence outcomes.

It is not something we hold alone in our bodies or identities, but rather something that exists when we interact with others or the world.

We can reshape our relationships to ourselves and society in order to ensure that everyone can get their needs met with dignity.

Understanding Domination and Liberation

PRACTICES	Insight	Interbeing	Transformation	Deny Reality/Ignore Impact	Seek Control	Vilify
Inner Work						
Interpersonal						
Organizational						
Systemic						

Settler Colonialism
Imperialism
Capitalism
White Supremacy
Patriarchy
Ableism
Xenophobia
Neo-liberalism
Trans-Antagonism
Genocide
Consumerism

The bottom portion of the diagram separates out the specific practices of Domination Logic and Liberation Logic. Here we connect the domination logic with the more familiar systems of oppression. In some ways this is the most radical part of the diagram and Liberation Logic because it asserts that **all these forms of systemic oppression are the outgrowth of domination logic used in specific historical context against specific groups of people.**

Rather than get into historical arguments about which system of oppression came first or which is primary, through breaking down the basic mechanism by which they function and their basic motivations we as social movements can design interventions that weaken multiple systems of oppression at a time. This is not to say that historicity (meaning putting things in proper historical contexts and understanding how a system developed over time) is not important. Rather it shifts our focus from thinking of racial capitalism as a distinct "thing" in itself with a start and end point to look for historical development of mechanisms of domination for and against groups over people over time. Such a historical look would allow us to see how they all came to be so deeply interwoven and inter-meshed.

Often in social movements, even in so called intersectional movement spaces, we get caught up trying to determine which systems of oppression lead to an outcome we didn't like. Rather than play a woker than thou version of blame game, this view allows to ask how are we practicing or refusing to call out denying reality and ignoring impact? How were we seeking to control things that are beyond human control? How we were vilifying people or denying them complexity and the ability to change?

Domination Logic is not to be taken as something other people, our opponents, do over there or to us. **Domination is a way of meeting needs that we all do from time to time. While the impacts of domination logic are multiplied by social and economic power and influence, they are always harmful.** Equally important, they are habitual because they often get results in the short them and offset the detrimental impacts onto the others. They are habits that the oppressed learn and carry with them into their revolutions. They are habits to overcome, to replace, as we organize to gain more people-power least they corrupt our wielding of it.

This point cannot be emphasized enough. It is crucial to both tend to how power changes impact and to challenge Domination Logic even in its most banal forms. Domination Logic is so pervasive that we often do not know how to collaborative without it. We are so used to denying impact that we end up naturalizing the labor of Black women in movement spaces for example. When we don't make the role of caring exploit and supported it will be taken up by people who have been socialized to play that role. When we let this go because "no one is upset with it now" we rob our collaborations of an opportunity to practice a more liberatory technique. Later, when we are all stressed we end up asking more from Black women that they can give and put them in position to feel like they have to choose between the groups needs and their own. Most often we will not becoming aware of how deep the culture of denying impact is until its too late and we are all burnt out.

How Do We Stop Using Domination Logic In Movement Spaces?

It must be said that our use of Domination Logic is deep. As we uncover it one aspect and seek to replace it with Liberation Logic it will likely open up a lot for other people. I have personally seen groups seek to use a feminist analysis to talk about naturalized care labor and this lead to great dissatisfaction in the group as a whole. In these spaces everyone is invited to ask themselves why they play the roles they play and if that's who they really want to be in these spaces. The most common answer to that question will be "I don't know." That honestly can feel liberating to some but can produce anxiety for others. As we noted, certainty is a basic social need. It is also a need that gets met in most spaces through really unhealthy unsustainable ways. Many middle-class folks and white folks expect a level of linearirty and predictablity that is incompatible with really giving people to space to explore their socialization and their needs. While giving them that space might feel liberation it can also feel nerve racking. Secondly, giving space for white and middle class people to process their feelings and needs can be incredible triggering for people of color and cash poor people.

There are many ways to deal with these complications from caucus spaces to providing spaces for people to name their needs and have people who agree to help people met their needs so the meetings can continue. Hopefully I can make another zine about the ways I've seen this be handled well. Yet, if we take Liberation Logic seriously and the ethic of getting everyone's needs meet with dignity, there is no way forward without things getting messing and sometimes having to throw agenda's out the window. It will require groups to take a completely different frame of mind toward "the work."

Rethinking what "the work" Is

I want to end here talking about work. Many of you are going to reading this hoping to make your workplaces less racist or maybe even anti-racist and I think that is great. But I would be remiss if I didn't point out the larger problems of work. Not just work undercapitalism but how we think about work in general.

If you have read anything else by me then you know that I am very very anti-work. I hate our modern conception of work. I think it would be abolished as one of the most destructive concepts ever created. First, its important to get clear on what we are talking about. When I say work I don't mean labor. Labor is act of doing something or putting effort into one thing to make it another thing. What I mean by work might be better described as "productive work." What I mean by work is what we mean we say someone should be "a productive member of society." It's not just doing things (as stoners who smoke all day are technically doing things) nor is really concerned with making a product per say (think about teaching or the service industry in general). Productive work is a lot like porn, hard to define but we know it when we see it.

Perhaps the easiest definition is "things you get paid to do" though for some reason being a weed dealer selling things that people need to deal with the anxiety of their work life isn't "real" work but being a pharmaceutical sales rep selling male "enhancement" is. This question of what is or is not productive is at the core of my problem with work.

Part of the idea of "productive labor" is that it is opposed to leisure time and what might be called social reproduction. The idea of "8 hours of sleep, 8 hours of work and 8 hours for what you will" (an old union organizing demand) typifies this belief. 8 hours for sleep is stand in for all the things you need to do to keep yourself alive. 8 hours of work is the productive time you work for some one else, making, storing, counting and distributing the various things of society. 8 hours for what you will is the beautiful things we call "life" where we get to decide how best to spend our lives pursuing what some might call the "human vocations" of art, self improvements and human fellowship and others might call leisure.

Thus you could think of the modern work regime as having three parts: 1. subsidence work or reproductive work, 2. productive work, 3. Leisure. The problem with this is that subsistence or reproductive work is almost always done on an unpaid term by women, femmes, children, slaves and colonized people. The work of feeding, clothing and cleaning of the household overwhelmingly falls on women, children and domestic laborers (depending on culture and class). The work of producing food and cooking it falls on the most marginalized members of global society. Exploitative farmer workers in the global south and the lowest wage workers in the global north (both migrant and domestic).

This work is often naturalized. We often don't think of it has work at all. House-wives are considered unemployed or otherwise "outside the workforce" yet bizarrely if they did those same things for someone else and got a wage they would be domestic workers. Even those domestic workers are heavily invisiblized. They are written out of most legislation covering working conditions and workers rights. Until the rise of the domestic workers alliance in New York, there had not been many contemporary formal labor organizations for domestic workers. In the amazing and highly recommend book "Patriarchy and Accumulation at a World Scale" Maria Mies describes the problems like this:

It is my thesis that this general production of life, or subsistence production–mainly performed through the non-wage labour of women and other non-wage owning labourers such as slaves, contract workers and peasants in the colonies–constitutes the perennial basis upon which 'capitalist productive labour' can be built up and exploited. Without the ongoing subsistence production of non-wage labourers (women, colonies, peasants) upon which wage labour exploitation is possible. I define their exploitation as super-exploitation because it is not based on the appropriation (by the capitalist) of the time and labour over and above the 'necessary' labour time, the surplus labour time, but of the time and labour necessary for people's own survival or subsistence production. It is not compensated for by a wage, the size of which is calculated on the 'necessary' reproduction costs of the labourer, but is mainly determined by force or coercive institutions. This is the main reason for the growing poverty and starvation of Third World producers.

In other words, the divide between leisure and work is Domination Logic that denies the impact of our divisions of labor and denies complexity to life. In order to be a functional professional in a modern U.S city you have eat, wash yourself and your clothes, groom yourself and maintain the vehicles that take you too and from work. If your spouse or child is person doing most of this for you then they are doing work that makes your having a job possible.

In reality, there is only social reproductive activities, there is only living by making a living. When we can only get a living by producing for others we are colonized. By separating cleaning the house or getting our emotional needs met from building a revolution we separate our own material reality, joy and belonging from revolutionary consideration. Maria Mies outlines a different way to think about labor in the segment "Towards a feminist concept of labour."

The conception she outlines has four major points:

- *"A unity of work as a burden and enjoyment…"*
- *Moving beyond "economies of time"*
- *"The maintenance of work as a direct and sensual interaction with nature, with organic matter and living organisms."*
- *"Maintain that work retain its sense of purpose, its character of being useful and necessary for the people who do it and those around them."*

Mies suggests that work need not be drugery or seperated from liesure. Why can't we cook and clean together while singing and dancing? Why can't childrearing be a collective process where older kids look after and entertain younger ones? Similarly, we could live in a world where time is not money. Where we are not so driven to produce that we seek to make every moment as productive as possible. What if really being together differently was both a mean and an end? This to me is the theory behind Alexis Pauline Gumbs icon line "life isn't easy but it is life all the time." A feminist praxis of labor would be us stop doing things to be able to do things to be able to buy things to be able to meet our needs. Instead everything we do could feed us and those around us, directly, through our relationships.

To me, moving towards this sort of purpose driven work, deeply based in interconnected community where people are taken care of regardless of what they can contribute (thus freeing them up to contribute what the are most uniquely suited to) is the end goal of any real holistic anti-oppression process within an organization. It cannot be completed without the co-creation of alternative systemic conditions. In other words, there is not anti-racist business under capitalism. No fully accessible space under patriachy.