

Week 1: July 13th–17th, 2020



Processing Grief & Injustice

Where are you at in this moment?

Where do you want to be?



Community Agreement

By participating in the Cultural Equity Learning Community, I acknowledge and embrace that I am likely to meet many people with multiple perspectives that may challenge my own beliefs. I commit to actively listening and engaging with the community of co-learners present, and I commit to remaining humble and receptive when challenged. Further, I will share from my own personal experience, and not on behalf of others.

Above all, I recognize that by taking up the charge to join this community and work I am committing myself to the life-long practice of building anti-racist hearts, practices, communities, and organizations, with unwavering conviction in its importance. I commit to both learning and action.



Week 1

Where are you at this moment? Where do you want to be?

Processing grief and injustice.

Guiding Questions

1. How can you be mindful and intentional as an arts leader about introducing, teaching, and encouraging anti-racist practices within your organization?
2. How can you nurture awareness and empathy regarding the long history of lethal anti-Blackness in our country?

Links & References from Unit 1

1. Link on how to do audio descriptions: <https://bit.ly/38BWk0r>
2. Link on how to turn on closed captioning: <https://bit.ly/322fOll>
3. Link from Adrienne Wong of SpiderWebShow Performance: <https://bit.ly/3gEsqUz>
4. Link explaining Land Acknowledgements: <https://bit.ly/2ZNNFnG>
5. Link to native-land.ca: <https://bit.ly/2Z8ATki>
6. Link to LA Story Map: <https://bit.ly/31MIJlm>
7. Link to Shummi Land Tax: <https://bit.ly/2CbXnI3>
8. Indigenous artist Instagram handles to follow: @danzaorganica | @kentmonkman | @chiefladybird | @monique.aura | @dzalcman | @midnight.wolverine | @elceebee | @urbannativeera | @iah.q | @bgirlpyro | @dweeb.art | @dawnspears | @indigenoussvengeance
9. Link to the James Baldwin video: <https://bit.ly/3ejqFSN>
10. Link to the Toni Morrison clip: <https://bit.ly/3ejqFSN>
11. Link to Shanae Burch's guest lecture video: <https://bit.ly/38F1A3e>



Reflection Exercise Prompts

1. What has permeated your mind the most as you process what is happening in your home community, and in our country, right now?
2. How have you been impacted by the heavily circulated video and images of George Floyd's killing?
3. How has your part of the city [or community at large if you are not in a city] been impacted by the recent protests and subsequent unrest?
4. Do you have someone you can talk to about how you feel?
5. How have you practiced self-care during this time?

Homework (in prep for Week 2):

Walking into privilege, what stories do you hold?

Videos to Watch

1. The Danger of a Single Story, Chimamanda Adichie (18 mins): <https://bit.ly/2ZD5yFr>
2. Cracking The Code (4mins): <https://bit.ly/2VPBsxw>
3. Why Does Privilege Make People So Angry? (5mins): <https://bit.ly/2BFwv3s>

Questions for Danger of a Single Story:

- 1) Why did Chimamanda talk about snow and apples in her books?
- 2) What did the discovery of African writers (authors) mean for Chimamanda?
- 3) What is important about John Locke's story of Africa?
- 4) What is the role of power in defining the "single story"?
- 5) What does Chimamanda mean by stories "flattening her"?

Questions for Cracking the Code:

- 1) What privileges do you have?
- 2) How can you leverage your privilege for justice?
- 3) Do you have examples of how / where you have leveraged your privilege before?

Questions for Why Does Privilege Make People So Angry:

- 1) What is your relationship with the word "privilege"?
- 2) What privilege do you carry in this world?
- 3) How are privilege and bias interconnected?



Articles to Read

- 1) La Piana, D. (2010, Summer). The Nonprofit Paradox (SSIR). Retrieved from https://ssir.org/articles/entry/the_nonprofit_paradox (4 pages, quick read)
- 2) Here's why it's not racist to talk about white privilege (2015): <https://on.mtv.com/31JjiVT> (quick read)
- 3) Harmon & Burch (2020), New York Times, "White Americans Say They Are Waking Up to Racism. What Will It Add Up To?" <https://nyti.ms/2BJdHAq>
- 4) Buchanan, Bui, Patel (2020), New York times, "Black Lives Matter May Be the Largest Movement in U.S. History". <https://nyti.ms/2BFpOOR>

Questions for David La Piana's article:

- 1) What is the nonprofit paradox?
- 2) What is your organization's mission?
- 3) How does the nonprofit paradox apply to your organization's work?

Questions for why it's not racist to talk about white privilege article:

- 1) Does the term white privilege make you uncomfortable? Why?
- 2) If you are white, how have you benefited from white privilege?

Questions for the NYT articles:

- 1) Do you feel like you are waking up to racism at this moment? If not, what woke you up to racism earlier in your life's trajectory?
- 2) How do you feel about the Black Lives Matter movement?
- 3) Are you engaged in the Black Lives Matter movement? How? If not, why?



UNIT 1, WEEK 1 TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 1

MARIAN: Welcome to the Cultural Equity Learning Community, Unit 1, week 1. We are thrilled to be with you. A few housekeeping things to go over before we get started:

- First, welcome to my home! We are excited to be filming live from our home locations, and as many of us have experienced in the past weeks and months, conducting work from our home environments can at times be tricky and may even lead to debuts by our loved ones, including partners, children and pets. We thank you in advance for your graciousness in hanging in there as we navigate filming in this environment.
- Secondly, I want to let you know up front that all of the words we are saying, and the links we are using in this presentation, are available in the weekly worksheet under transcript. Please feel free to refer to these as we listen along.
- Third, if you would like to watch this video recording, or any video on YouTube for that matter, with closed captioning please note in the weekly guide a link to help you locate how to do so on your personal computer or viewing device.
- Lastly, I want to introduce that we will be using audio descriptions throughout the CELC. Audio descriptions are used to describe all visual images throughout a presentation. Audio descriptions are important in ensuring that work we are engaging in is accessible, and follows a Universal Design for Learning. If audio descriptions are new to you, please take a look at the weekly guide for more information on how to get started with growing yours, and your organization's capacity to do this work for future presentations and lectures you may give.

With this, I'll ask Alyssa to model what an audio description sounds like for us now.



Audio description read by Alyssa: This slide presents the CELC logo with a large orange rectangular shape with white writing, spelling out Cultural Equity Learning Community, with four diagonal lines to the left of the writing.

Link on how to do audio descriptions: <https://bit.ly/38BWkOr>

Link on how to turn on closed captioning: <https://bit.ly/322fQll>

SLIDE 2:

MARIAN: The CELC is made possible due to core project partners, including Arts Connect International, the Anti-Racism Collaborative, The Mayor's Office of Arts & Culture, The Boston Foundation, Artists Thrive, an initiative of the Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation, the Cambridge Community Foundation, the Cambridge Arts Council, MassHumanities, the New England Foundation for the Arts, ArtsBoston, Creative Generation, Boston Art Review, Deidra Montgomery Consulting, Quisol Consulting, Meena Malik Consulting, Alyssa Liles-Amponsah Consulting and Marian Taylor Brown Consulting.

Audio description read by Alyssa: This slide presents various logos of the project partners.

SLIDE 3:

MARIAN: As we begin our work together, we believe it is important to know the roadmap ahead. Today we'll focus on three core destinations.

- First, we will do a land acknowledgment together, looking at how to do this authentically and thoughtfully in a digital space.
- From there Alyssa and I will introduce ourselves, go over Unit 1's overview, material delivery, and our hopes and goals for Unit 1.
- Lastly, we'll dive into the core of today's work, processing grief and injustice.



Audio description read by Alyssa: This slide presents a visual of a meandering road with three stopping points in blue, red and green along the road.

SLIDE 4:

ALYSSA: We understand that it is important to acknowledge and pay homage to those whose land we currently live on. I will now read producer and artist Adrienne Wong's Digital Land Acknowledgement:

- "Since our activities are shared digitally to the internet, let's also take a moment to consider the legacy of colonization embedded within the technology, structures, and ways of thinking we use every day. We are using equipment and high-speed internet, not available in many indigenous communities. Even the technologies that are central to much of the art we make, leaves significant carbon footprints, contributing to changing climates that disproportionately affect indigenous people worldwide. I invite you to join us in acknowledging all this, as well as our shared responsibility to make good of this time and for each of us to consider our roles in reconciliation, decolonization, and ally-ship."

Audio description read by Marian: This slide has a small picture of Adrienne, where she is pictured in nature, wearing a blue V-cut shift and red lipstick, with dark shoulder-length hair.

Link from Adrienne Wong of SpiderWebShow Performance: <https://bit.ly/3gEsgUz>

Link explaining Land Acknowledgements: <https://bit.ly/2ZNNFnG>



SLIDE 5:

MARIAN: What lands are you on? One resource you can use to locate the lands you are on is native-land.ca

Audio description read by Alyssa: This slide has a picture of a map from native-land.ca, showing the various territories of Indigenous peoples.

Link to native-land.ca: <https://bit.ly/2Z8ATki>

SLIDE 6:

MARIAN: There are many ways to acknowledge the land(s) that we are on. Today I'll share 5 steps that can help us to do so.

Step 1: locate the Indigenous community lands you are on via www.native-land.ca

Step 2: learn about the Indigenous communities through research

Step 3: follow and support story maps

Step 4: pay a land tax -- a voluntary annual financial contribution that non-Indigenous people can make, look for this type of work and fund in your home communities and on the land(s) you occupy

Step 5: follow Indigenous artists and pay for their work

Link to native-land.ca: <https://bit.ly/2Z8ATki>

Link to LA Story Map: <https://bit.ly/31MIJlm>

Link to Shummi Land Tax: <https://bit.ly/2CbXnI3>

SLIDE 7:

MARIAN: There are a plethora of incredible artists to follow on Instagram, as well as on other social media platforms. Here we share a few of our favorites via their handles, which I invite



you to scroll through with a cup of tea in hand. We highly encourage you to check out their work, and further support and pay for their work. The best way to support artists successfully is often to ask what type of support is desired, particularly in the role of ally, accomplice and co-conspirator.

@danzaorganica | @kentmonkman | @chief ladybird | @monique.aura | @dzalcman |
@midnight.wolverine | @elceebee | @urbannativeera | @iah.q | @bgirlpyro | @dweeb.art |
@dawnspears | @indigenoussvengeance

Audio description read by Alyssa: This slide has three images from Instagram, the first by @chief ladybird where two hands hold up a traditional painted drum with a pink circle in the middle, branches and flowers throughout, with a bird in the middle over the pink circle. The second image by @elceebee shows the artist standing with their grandmother, with a painted self-portrait below them. The third image by @urbannativeera shows a neon sign with white writing on a black background, which says: "you are on native land".

SLIDE 8:

ALYSSA: Let's talk a little bit about our purpose now. Why are we here? We are here to move towards acknowledgment and shared liberation. We know that acknowledgment is really the first step to change and we know that our shared liberation will bring about the kind of society we hope to build together.

SLIDE 9:

ALYSSA: Hello everyone, my name is Alyssa Liles-Amponsah and I use the She/her series pronouns. I currently reside in Philadelphia on the Native Lands of the Lenopi people. I am a Visual Artist and Educator. I earned my BFA in Painting and Printmaking from Virginia Commonwealth University, and a Masters in African American and African Diaspora Studies from Indiana University, Bloomington. I also went on to earn my Arts in Education Master's



degree from Harvard University. I currently work as a Visual Artist and administrator at Temple University. My title at Temple is Associate Director of Diversity Initiatives and Community Relations. In the photos here you will see me hanging out with my professional colleagues from graduate school as well as images of my artwork and children's book that I illustrated, *The Beauty of My Skin* written by Cecily Cline Walton. You will also notice an image of me graduating with my father next to me, Ted, was an artist and really helped to encourage me as a visual artist. I also have a picture here from one of my first jobs teaching at YouthBuild in Cambridge, MA. I have also worked as a Fellow at the Silk Road Project, The Harvard Graduate School of Education, and worked as an In-school Education manager at the Urbano Project in Boston. Additionally I worked at the JFK Presidential Library and Museum as Outreach Coordinator and more recently worked as Associate Director of K-12 Programming for the Division of Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity at the University of Missouri.

Audio description read by Marian: This slide contains an image in the top left corner. there is a group picture of Alyssa with her colleagues from the Arts in Education 2012 cohort. There are four individuals on each side of Alyssa, (Alyssa has short hair, with glasses, brown skin, and is wearing a striped black and white shirt with black cropped pants and low cut brown boots). In the image directly beneath that one, Alyssa (short, curly dark hair, brown skin, with glasses) is with Marian (Long light brown hair pulled back, white skin) only faces, and top parts of their shoulders are showing. Next to this image is a group picture of many young adults who participated in YouthBuild programming in dark green shirts sitting in chairs in the Massachusetts State House, Alyssa is seated in the center wearing a dark green shirt as well. Alyssa is wearing glasses and has short dark curly hair. There is a black and white image on the top semi-center of Alyssa (dark curly hair, glasses-wearing a graduation cap and robe) with her father (bald black man with glasses in a casual suit) holding her toddler daughter with her hair tied into two puffs. The image in the center of the slide is an image of a painting titled, "Together Series-Dancing I". The painting is of a brown-skinned young woman dancing and holding the hands of a 9-year-old brown-skinned girl, painted brightly with a bluish-white background, and the figures both wearing warm bright colors of white, reds, and yellows. On the top right corner, there is an image of two sets of children reading *The Beauty of My Skin*, a



children's book Alyssa illustrated. All four of the children are African American (two younger male children and two Pre-teen/Teen girls). Beneath that image is another painting by Alyssa that features two African American adult women with afro hairstyles, wearing dresses, heels, and face masks accompanied by a small African American girl in a dress wearing a face mask. The figures are wearing warm colors of reds and yellows, while the background is painted with bluish brown and white energetic strokes.

SLIDE 10:

MARIAN: Hello everyone, my name is Marian Taylor Brown. I use the she series for pronouns. I grew up in Rochester, New York, lands of the Onöndowa'ga and Haudenosaunee peoples and I currently reside in Dorchester, Massachusetts, lands of the Massachusett peoples. I am a studio artist where my work focuses on using art as a tool for reflection and healing. I earned my bachelor's degree in studio art & education from Colorado College, my master's in arts in education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and my doctorate in global inclusion & social development from UMass Boston.

Within the arts and culture sector, I've had the incredible opportunity to work with organizations using art for social change locally, nationally, and internationally. I founded Arts Connect International, aka ACI, in 2014, having previously worked with Open Door Arts, the Art & Global Health Center Africa, ARTZ: Artists for Alzheimer's, Project Zero, and the Institute for Community Inclusion. All of these organizations work at the nexus of art for social change and social justice.

I am committed to, and rooted in, practice and application of cultural equity, creative justice, intersectionality, systems leadership, systems change, and emergent strategy -- focused on authentic and community-driven leadership development. The guiding question to all of my work is: How can we build, and support, inclusive and equitable communities both in, and through, the arts? A few other components of myself and my identity - I'm a former



professional skier, I practice Buddhism, I identify as disabled and queer, I am partnered, and I am a proud cat mom.

Audio description read by Alyssa: This slide shows six images of Marian with friends and colleagues. Marian's complexion is white and she has long brown hair. In the first image, she is standing with two colleagues, both Black women, taken at ACI's Arts Equity Summit. The second image shows Marian sitting on her porch, drinking a cup of coffee with a black German shepherd dog in front of her, and a brown tiger cat in a chair to her left. The third picture shows Marian's partner, Avanish. Marian's partner is male and has a brown complexion with curly dark brown hair and large frame glasses. The fourth picture shows Marian and two colleagues from ACI receiving an award from the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture. The fifth image is a group of 12 people in front of a sign at the School for Global Inclusion and Social Development, taken right after Marian defended her Ph.D. dissertation. The final picture is of Marian and the team she worked with in Malawi at the Art & Global Health Center Africa, taken while they were conducting a strategic planning process. There are five people in the image, with black tape and yellow post-it notes on the wall behind them.

SLIDE 11:

MARIAN: As we dive into Unit 1 Alyssa and I wanted to pause to go over our week to week overview.

Week 1: Where are you at this moment? Where do you want to be?

Week 2: Walking into privilege, what stories do you hold?

Week 3: Language matters, let's discuss: diversity, equity, inclusion, ability, anti-racism, anti-Blackness.

Week 4: Language matters, let's discuss: implicit bias, microaggressions, intersectionality, cultural equity, creative justice.

Week 5: What are your assets? Diving deeper into creative justice.

Week 6: Tracing roots of institutional and systemic oppression, what history were you taught?



Week 7: Manifestations in the arts and culture sector, are we unique?

Week 8: Revisiting lessons from Unit 1, preparing for next steps.

SLIDE 12:

MARIAN: Unit 1 includes many core components.

Weekly lectures & homework: every Monday you will receive pre-recorded lectures to your inbox. Each lecture will have guiding questions, and you will receive a weekly worksheet to complement the lecture, which also includes the weekly homework.

Drop-in's: we will host drop-in "office hours". A week prior to the drop-ins we will email a signup sheet, with up to 20 practitioners joining per drop-in. This is a great place to ask questions and address sticky points.

Peer-to-Peer Mentorship Match: the CELC will conduct the initial "match" for the P2P mentorship, which you'll receive more information about this week. From there it's up to you and your colleagues to figure out how you want to learn alongside one another through meetings and check-ins.

Expert panel: at the end of Unit 1 we will host an expert panel featuring BIPOC | QTPOC leaders in order to deepen knowledge and community learning, live-streamed by our partners at HowlRound.



SLIDE 13:

MARIAN:

The core objectives of the CELC are to:

- Reduce harm towards Black, Indigenous, Queer, Trans and/or Person of Color arts leaders.
- Increase skill sets and accountability of white arts and culture sector leaders.
- Build co-conspiratorship, deeply examine what it means to build anti-racism co-conspiratorship
- Build equitable orgs, deeply examine what it means to build anti-racist orgs

Our hope is to:

- Eradicate apathy, create empathy
- Activate confident co-conspiratorship
- Foster and evolve learning communities
- Move beyond learning to action

SLIDE 14:

ALYSSA: Thank you to all of you for being here with us to think about Processing Grief and Injustice Together. You will notice at the bottom of the slide there is a quote by activist and artist, James Baldwin. "A person is more important than anything else, anything else." I pulled this quote from a youtube video of Baldwin explaining that he learned from a young age that a person is more important than anything else. Thinking of the killings and murders of several Black people by state-sanctioned violence does lead us back to remembering that each person mattered, and each life is important. I thought that was a very poignant quote for us to stop and think about at the top of this session.

SLIDE 15:



ALYSSA: At this time we would like to take a moment of silence to honor and remember the lives lost to state-sanctioned violence.

Audio description read by Marian: This slide has a black background with three words written in large white font writing, spelling out Black Lives Matter.

SLIDE 16:

ALYSSA: There are two guiding questions that I would like for you to hold as you process this session today. As we watch our media clips, and process please hold these questions at the front of your mind.

- How can you be mindful and intentional as an arts leader about introducing, teaching, and encouraging anti-racist practices within your organization?
- How can you nurture awareness and empathy regarding the long history of lethal anti-blackness in our country?

SLIDE 17:

ALYSSA: Now a word from 1963 and James Baldwin. I think it's important to hear from and pay homage to those who have done the work of advocating for the liberation of African Americans. James Baldwin is an amazing writer and activist, and was also openly gay during the Civil Rights Movement and beyond. The clip we are showing today is from 1963 and was recorded after James Baldwin and several of his high profile artist/activist/scholar African American friends met with the then Attorney General, Robert F. Kennedy Jr. (Artists and scholars such as Lorraine Hansberry, Harry Belafonte and Kenneth Clark were present at this meeting). They left the meeting disappointed as they felt Kennedy did not understand the sense of urgency they felt about the treatment and violence against black people in our country. After this meeting, Kenneth Clark, famous for the "The Black Doll Test" decided to



interview Baldwin. One could claim that Baldwin is processing grief and injustice in this very clip. We are going to play this clip for you now. Again, from 1963.

Audio description read by Marian: This slide has a white background with a black and white media clip icon showing the face of Black writer and activist, James Baldwin.

Link to the James Baldwin clip: <https://bit.ly/3ejqFSN>

SLIDE 18:

ALYSSA: So now we want to think a bit more about your reactions and thoughts, not only to Baldwin's interview clip with Kenneth Clark but also how are you processing our current situation. What has permeated your mind the most as you process what is happening in your home community, and in our country right now?

- Now would be a good time to grab your notebook, journal, or sketchbook and reflect for 5 minutes, both on what we just saw from Baldwin in 1963, and what is on your mind now.
- So please take 5 minutes of peace to process, and we will join you through doing the same.

SLIDE 19:

ALYSSA: We are now going to think a bit more about grief and empathy by listening to the words of the wise scholar and artist, Toni Morrison. Again, keep holding those guiding questions in mind as you process Toni Morrison's words, as well as this question, How do you grapple with the long history of apathy on the part of the majority in regard to the persecution of Blackness in the United States and beyond?



Audio description read by Marian: This slide has a white background with a media clip icon showing the face of writer and activist, Toni Morrison. Toni is a Black woman with white/gray locks wearing a blue shirt.

Link to the Toni Morrison clip: <https://bit.ly/3ejqFSN>

SLIDE 20:

ALYSSA: We would now like you all to take another 5 minutes to reflect by answering all or any of these coping and reflection questions.

- How have you been impacted by the heavily circulated video and images of George Floyd's killing?
- How has your part of the city [or community at large if you are not in a city] been impacted by the recent protests and subsequent unrest?
- Do you have someone you can talk to about how you feel?
- How have you practiced self-care during this time?
- Do you have suggestions for us that you would like to share with the group?

Let's take 5 mins of reflective processing with these questions.

SLIDE 21:

MARIAN: Each week we will hear our parting words, or food for thought, from an esteemed guest speaker. This week we will hear from Shanae Burch.

Audio description read by Alyssa: This slide has a white background with a media clip icon showing the CELC logo. The clip goes on to play where Shanae is in her home environment, a young Black woman with curly hair, large black-framed glasses, wearing a black shirt with a white, hand-printed across the chest with a red heart in the middle of the hand.

Link to Shanae's video: <https://bit.ly/38F1A3e>



SLIDE 22:

MARIAN: Thank you for joining us for Unit 1, week 1. The next step in this process involves engaging with the homework found in the weekly guide. Within this, please choose a path that makes sense for you and matches your learning objectives. We invite you to go as deep with these resources as you'd like to. If you're able to, we also encourage sharing what you're learning with both your colleagues and loved ones. The ultimate goal is to move toward action. With this, we ask you, what will your action step be this week?

SLIDE 23:

MARIAN & ALYSSA: We look forward to seeing you next week for week 2 and our first round of drop-in sessions. Thank you, goodbye!