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J.E.D.I Guidebook

SvN

A research group with the purpose of creating a culture of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion at SvN.

Justice

is acknowledging and denouncing racism, removing barriers, and promoting equitable opportunities in the profession.

Equity

is allocating resources to ensure every practitioner has access to the same opportunities and outcomes.

Diversity

is encompassing an array of practitioners who represent varied experiences and perspectives.

Inclusion

is fostering a sense of belonging for all voices and perspectives to feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate.

J.E.D.I ARE DRIVEN BY FOUR IMPERATIVES:

Drive just, equitable, diverse, and inclusive organizational growth through hiring and workplace practices, allowing diverse voices and perspectives to flourish.

Educate and conduct research to enhance our practices and provide an industry benchmark as we work towards equitable and just project processes and outcomes.

Equip people with the skills to have meaningful conversations that affect change, and authentically reflect the diverse perspectives and values of the people we serve.

THE COMPANY IMPERATIVE

THE INDUSTRY IMPERATIVE

THE HUMAN IMPERATIVE

THE COMMUNITY IMPERATIVE
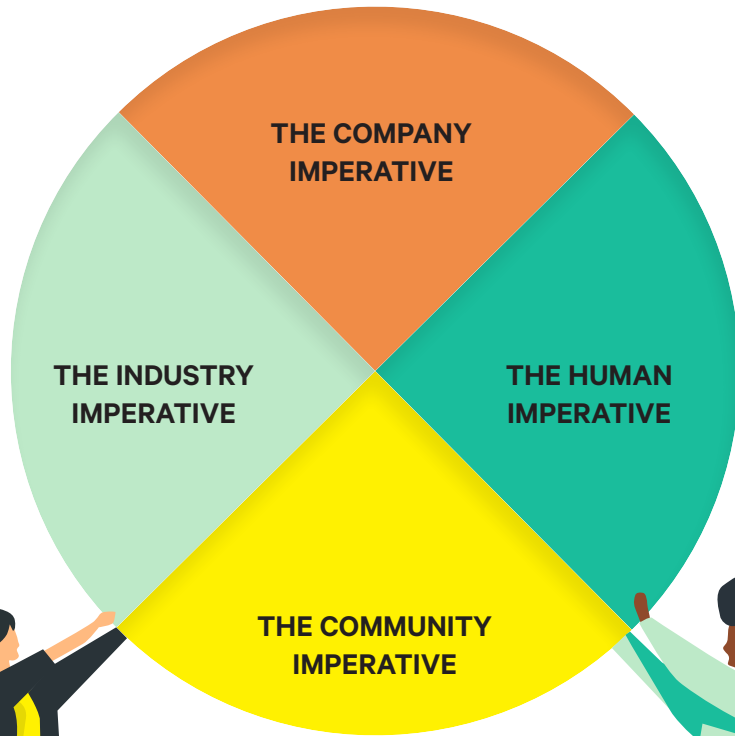
Develop cultural competence - that is, the ability to understand the cultural aspects of our communities and the intercultural interactions that affect our work and our business.

HOW TO CREATE A CULTURE OF JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

We see the urgency of advancing justice, equity, diversity and inclusion, and we see the four imperatives as important reasons to drive change. What's next?

Let's start with a shared foundation.

JUSTICE

EQUITY

DIVERSITY

INCLUSION
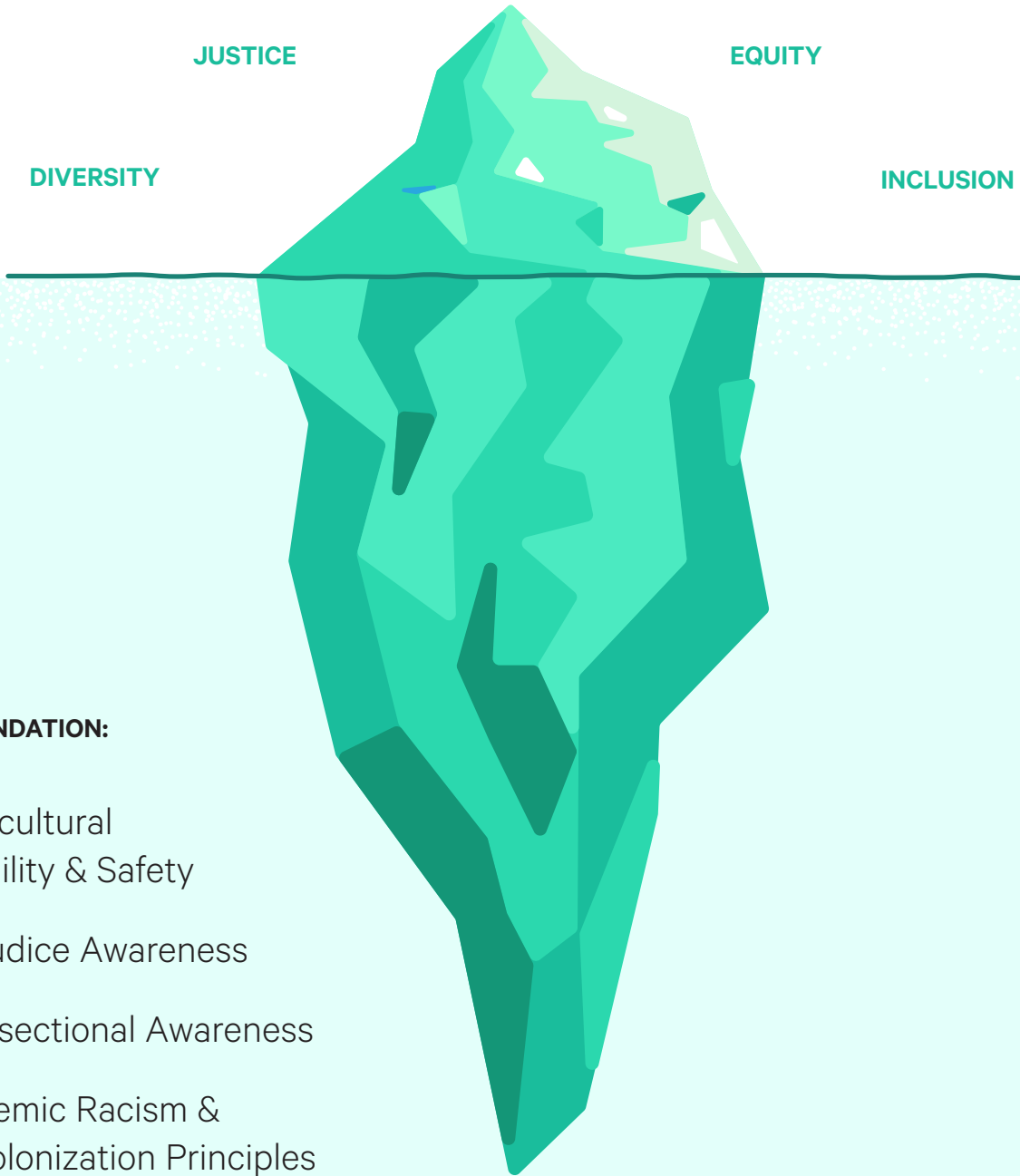
THE FOUNDATION:

1. Intercultural Humility & Safety

2. Prejudice Awareness

3. Intersectional Awareness

4. Systemic Racism & Decolonization Principles

5. Equitable Placemaking
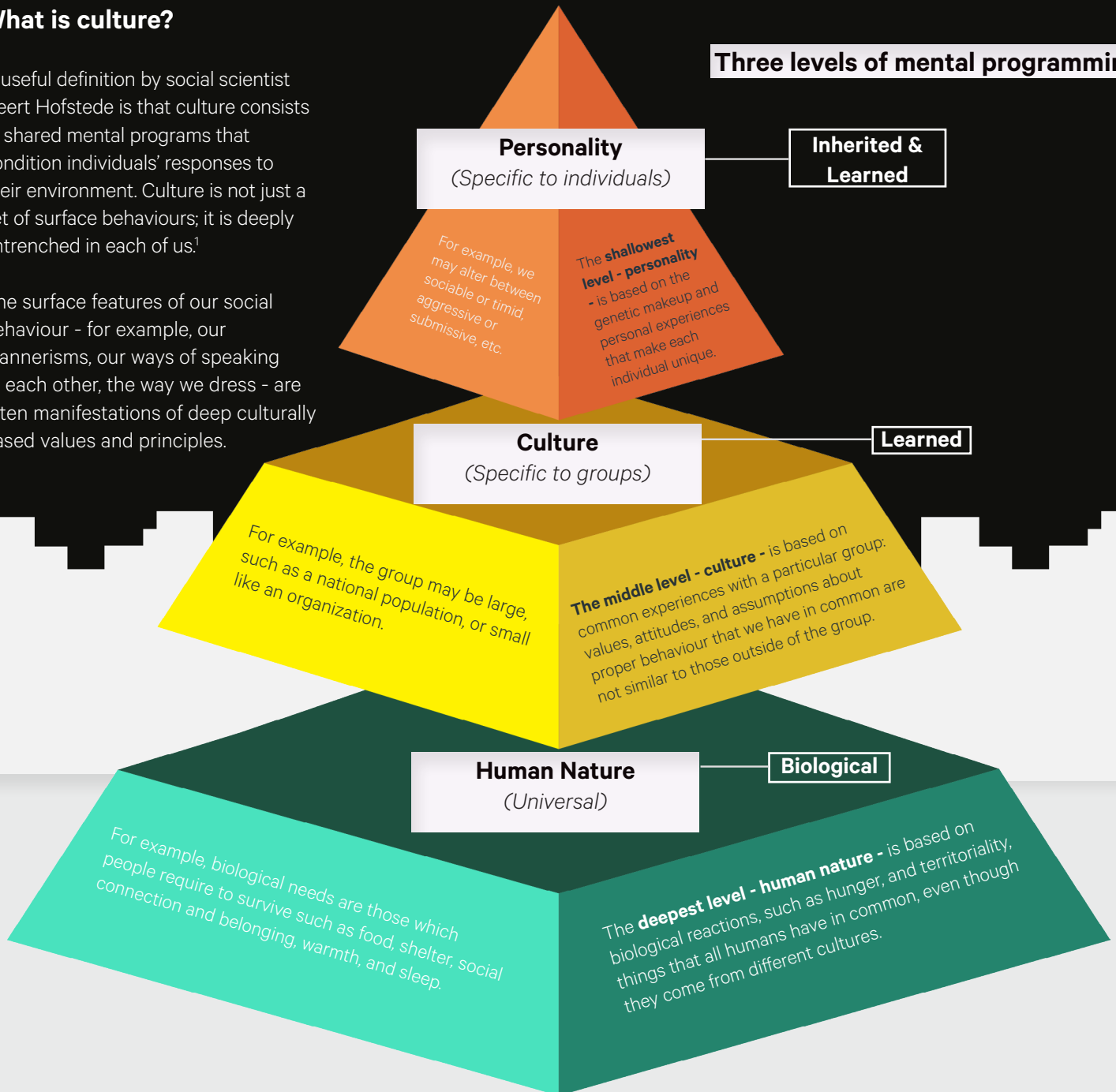
1 Intercultural Humility & Safety

What is culture?

A useful definition by social scientist Geert Hofstede is that culture consists of shared mental programs that condition individuals' responses to their environment. Culture is not just a set of surface behaviours; it is deeply entrenched in each of us.[1]

The surface features of our social behaviour - for example, our mannerisms, our ways of speaking to each other, the way we dress - are often manifestations of deep culturally based values and principles.

Three levels of mental programming

Personality
(Specific to individuals)

Inherited & Learned

For example, we may alter between sociable or timid, aggressive or submissive, etc.

The **shallowest level - personality - is** based on the genetic makeup and personal experiences that make each individual unique.

Culture
(Specific to groups)

Learned

For example, the group may be large, such as a national population, or small like an organization.

The middle level - culture - is based on common experiences with a particular group: values, attitudes, and assumptions about proper behaviour that we have in common are not similar to those outside of the group.

Human Nature
(Universal)

Biological

For example, biological needs are those which people require to survive such as food, shelter, social connection and belonging, warmth, and sleep.

The **deepest level - human nature -** is based on biological reactions, such as hunger, and territoriality, things that all humans have in common, even though they come from different cultures.

"The idea of the individual personality reminds us that huge variation exists within any given culture and that one of the biggest barriers to effective intercultural interaction is basing our behvaiour on stereotypes, which assumes that members of a given cultural group are identical."

- Kerr Inkson, Author of Cultural Intelligence (2017)

How culture affects behaviour

"Behaviour can be based on cultural cruise control, in which our mental programming directs our behaviour without much conscious thought, allowing us to continue to do things without actively thinking about them. Through selective perception and stereotypic expectations, we may misjudge the behaviour of others who are culturally different"

- Kerr Inkson, Author of Cultural Intelligence (2017)

Culture is like an infinite galaxy

Knowledge of what culture is and how it varies and affects behaviour is a positive step towards developing cultural humility.

Watch out for...

1) Selective perception

sorting other people (and ourselves) into different categories, just as postal workers sort mail into pigeonholes. In order to be similarly efficient, we may select based on limited information.

2) Stereotyping

putting people into categories, influences our attitudes and expections about them. Stereotypes may be based on limited infomation or on the views of influential others.

Cultural safety

Culturally safety is about interacting in respectful ways with people who are different from us, and reducing the number of assumptions we make about people. [2] Along this journey, we can begin to understand and appreciate the gifts that everyone brings to the table.

http://www.culturallyconnected

Embrace humility, not certainty	Exercise self-reflection and critique	Recognize dynamics of power and priviledge
Adapt approaches and interactions	Empathy for yourself and others	Life-long learning

2 Prejudice Awareness

What is prejudice?

A simple way to understand the term prejudice is to break down the word into **'pre' and 'judice/judge'**. It occurs when we make preconceived judgements about another person based on an internal bias or a number of physical characteristics. [1]

Prejudicial behavior extends to physical spaces as well. We may subconsciously form opinions about people based on where they live, or conversely, behave in a certain way within a space based on what connotations it has.

Bias is something we all have and, most importantly, it is learned. Whether it was a family member with very traditional views, or being persistently bombarded with negative news surrounding an **equity seeking group**, we unconsciously learn to be biased towards certain people.

The most important thing to remember about prejudice is that because it is a learned behavior, it can be **unlearned**.

http://www.cookross-bias

Start by **asking yourself** :

Q1 Do I interact with people that have different lived experiences than me?

Q2 Do I have an automatic feeling about this person?

Q3 Am I being reminded of someone?

Q4 What is this person triggering in my background?

Q5 Which issues do I not care about as much?

Q6 Which priviledges do I have that others do not?

Q7 How might I consciously intervene to mitigate the impact of my bias?

"The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn."

- Alvin Toffler

The process of unlearning bias

http://www.youtube.com/TED-how-to-reduce-bias

+ Acting

Ask ourselves whether our leadership or communication perpetuates prejudicial behaviour. This can be as simple as only choosing teams of a certain ethnicity or gender. We can facilitate situations in which diverse groups work together, and in turn, this can override pre-existing biases.

+ Acting

+ Listening

+ Recognizing and reflecting

+ Recognizing and Reflecting

Understanding your own personal bias takes humility and self-reflection, but is the beginning of what is required to unlearn prejudicial behaviours.

+ Listening

Push against our biases and engage with different people belonging to equity seeking groups. Often times, they will be welcoming to those who genuinely want to learn from them.

3 Intersectional Awareness

What is intersectionality?

Intersectionality is a term coined by Kimberle Crenshaw, law professor at UCLA and Columbia University. It focuses on the nature of social categories (such as race, class, age, and gender) as they apply to a given individual or group. The social categories create what Kimberle called **"overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage"**. [1]

For example, Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) are often disadvantaged by multiple and interconnected sources of oppression that compound historical patterns of exclusion. This philosophy implies that social identities, such as race, gender identity, sexual orientation, class, marital status, religion, ability, age, citizenship, and other characteristics interconnect in dynamic ways.

http://www.what-is-intersectionality
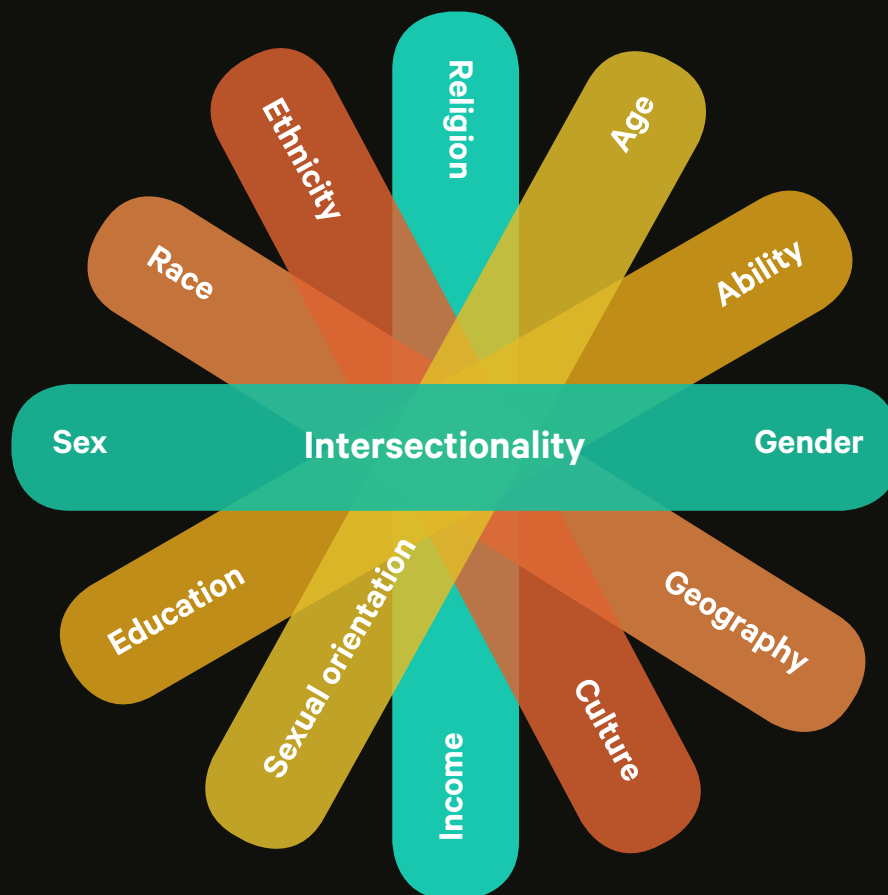
"Failing to acknowledge this complexity, scholars of intersectionality argue, is failing to acknowledge reality"

- Arica L. Coleman

Intersectionality is multi-faceted

An LGBT African Canadian woman and a heterosexual white woman, both working class, do not experience the same levels of discrimination, even when they are working within the same structures.

While the other may experience gender or class discrimination, her whiteness will protect and insulate her from racism.

Example: In Canada, the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls is a tragic example of how intersecting barriers impact women's safety and well-being.

Equity from a lens of intersectionality

There are various ways that individuals are disempowered, and not just from racism or sexism alone. We must acknowledge that there are complex layers and identities for individuals that place them in different systems of oppression.

Every decision we make either reinforces or challenges equitable systems and can have long-term consequences when developed without specific attention to the factors that support identity formation.

Example: On average, Indigenous women earn 65 cents for every $1 earned by non-Indigenous men. Racialized women earn 67 cents for every $1 earned by non-racialized men. [2]

4 Systemic Racism & Decolonization Principles

What is systemic racism?

Systemic racism consists of government and non-government practices that disadvantage racialized groups or create unfair barriers for them to access valuable benefits and opportunities. [1] Resulting practices may appear neutral but have the effect of privileging some groups and disadvantage others. [2]

In settler colonial states like Canada, systemic racism is deeply rooted in systems, meaning institutions were designed to benefit white colonialists while disadvantaging Indigenous populations. [2] This power dynamic continues to be reinforced in our society, extending its impact on racialized citizens.

http://www.systemic-racism

What is decolonization?

Decolonization is about fundamentally changing the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. It suggests an end to the settler effects on Indigenous peoples with respect to their:

» governments;

» ideologies;

» religions;

» education systems; and

» cultures. [3]

For Indigenous Peoples, decolonization begins with learning about who they are and recovering their culture and self-determination. [3] Continuous reinforcement and teaching of Indigenous language, cultural, and spiritual practices empowers people to move forward in their growth as proud Indigenous citizens.
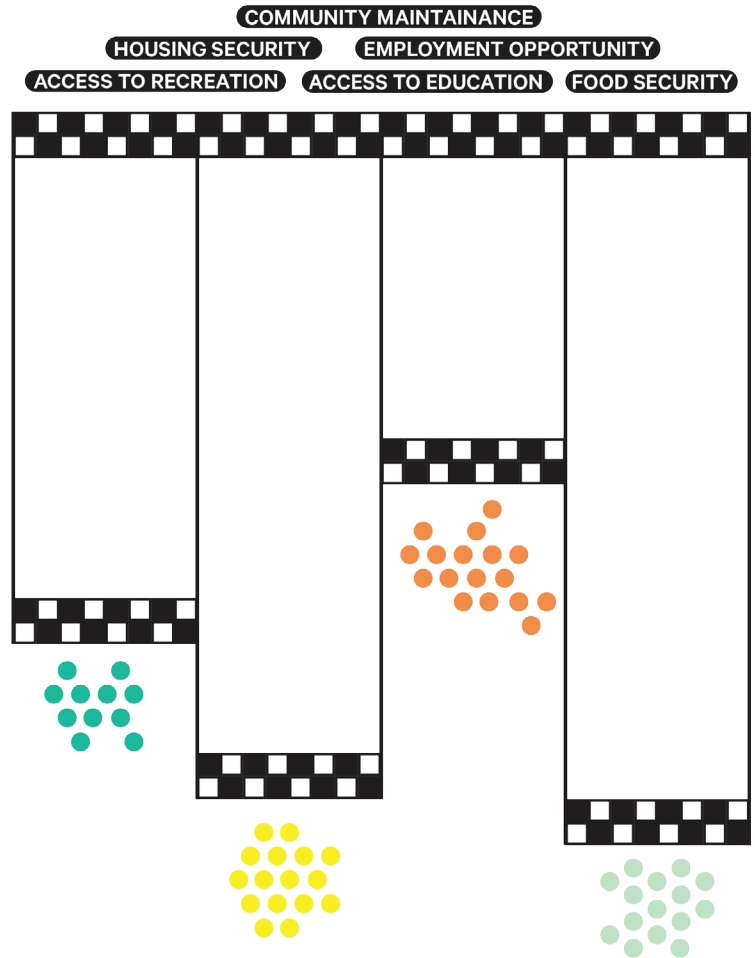
http://www.decolonization

Colonizing practices

Physical features in communities such as the location and frequency of garbage disposal and recycling bins, the location and frequency of green space, police, hospital or fire services, and the quality and frequency of dining and restaurants priviledges a community. These neighbourhood features often indicate differences in the allocation of services to communities.

As designers and planners, we can identify colonizing practices by asking:

» is this what equity-seeking groups want / need? Did we engage them?

» what systems might already be in place that contradict their wants/ needs? How can we change them?

http://www.calls-to-action

COMMUNITY MAINTAINANCE

HOUSING SECURITY   EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

ACCESS TO RECREATION   ACCESS TO EDUCATION   FOOD SECURITY

What else can you do?

We encourage you to seek out deeper awareness:

» review the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action available online.

» research the Treaty territory and Nations that you may live and work within or near.

» visit a Friendship Centre;

» read Indigenous news media such as The Narwhal;

» take a course on Indigenous Peoples history and culture (see X-University and University of Alberta among others);

» read books by Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) authors; and

» Follow social enterprises such as On Canada Project for educational content and resources about BIPOC issues.

5 Equitable Placemaking

What is equitable placemaking?

Encouraging the inclusion of diverse voices in processes and decision-making. While there is an obligation towards the client, the extent to which community enagement is part of the project depends on the negotiated scope and can sometimes be influenced by consultants. Aligning good intent with good outcomes by knowing how to discuss issues and connect authentically in an engagement process is an important skill.
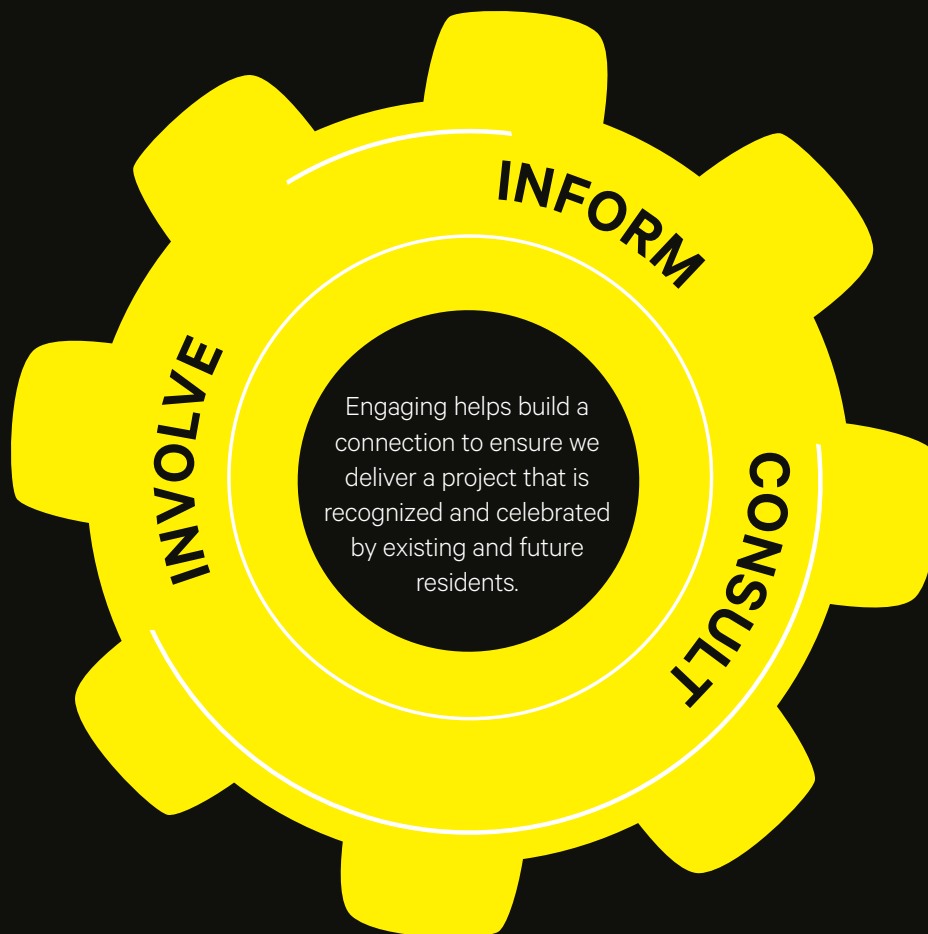
Why does early and effective community engagement matter?

» Acknowledges and honours the impacts caused by changes to a place, from physical character to sound, smell, and memory.;

» Leads to more responsive design and leads to enhanced quality of life for a greater number of people; and

http://www.urban-consulate

» Builds trust and produces designs that meet the needs of stakeholders while respecting community values.

INFORM

INVOLVE

CONSULT

Engaging helps build a connection to ensure we deliver a project that is recognized and celebrated by existing and future residents.

Jay Pitter's
10 Principles of Placemaking[1]

This resource, developed by Jay Pitter in 2020 as part of an urban equity professional development series, highlights approaches for applying equity-based placemaking principles and transforming them into tangible outcomes.

1 Urban design is not neutral; it is fraught with histories of restrictive ordinances and bylaws, top-down practices and exclusionary public processes.

2 People must be centralized in placemaking processesintended to increase urban equity— access to personalwellness/health, social, and economic opportunities.

3 People are always self-organizing and pushing the conventional bounds of spaces + places— positively respond to this.

4 The practice of placemaking requires an embrace of discomfort.

5 Bodies are constantly regulated and read differently in spaces + places.

6 People have varying levels of spatial entitlement informed by their identities and power relations with systems and the world around them.

7 The programming of public spaces creates a culture with unspoken rituals and expectations.

8 Notions of safety and belonging have physical, historical, and emotional dimensions - all of which should be equally considered.

9 The character of spaces + places is shaped by important intangible heritage and untold stories.

10 Placemaking is an ongoing process predicated on meaningful engagement, equity, and imagination.

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"Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, **do better**".

- Maya Angelou