Deeper Anti-Racist Organizational Change: More Tools & Resources
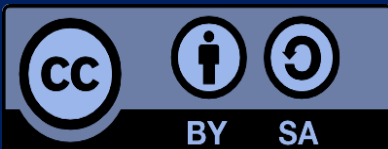
CommunityWise Resource Centre is located in the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region, which includes the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai of the Blackfoot Confederacy; the Tsuu T'ina First Nation; and, the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations of the Stoney Nakoda. The city of Calgary is also home to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region III. We acknowledge First Nations and traditional territories because the purpose of CommunityWise is about sharing space and because it's one way to locate ourselves in the process of reconciliation. We aim to make CommunityWise more accessible for Indigenous peoples.

Contents

"Prior to connecting with AROC, I had witnessed and experienced individual and systemic racism and discrimination within the non-profit sector that had serious detrimental impacts and led to significant, long lasting effects on the people and organizations involved.

These experiences led me to believe that racism was such a massive and firmly entrenched problem that it couldn't be confronted, and efforts to understand and challenge racism could never succeed in creating positive change."

- AROC Working Group Member

"I no longer feel as lost,
or like I don't have a place here."

- AROC Advisory Group Member

Introduction

CommunityWise Resource Centre (CommunityWise) is a nonprofit centre based in Mohkinstsis, Treaty 7 territory (Calgary, Alberta). We provide affordable office and community space. We also provide backbone infrastructure (for example, shared internet access and office equipment) and collaborative capacity-building and programming supports to our nonprofit member organizations. We support around 90 grassroots organizations and projects whose work spans a diverse spectrum of social, environmental, and cultural issues.

Since early 2016, CommunityWise has been working on Anti-Racist Organizational Change (AROC). Through our AROC process, we have been using **anti-racism** as an approach to strengthen our commitment to **diversity**, **inclusion**, and **equity**. To understand the story of how the AROC process began, please take a look at the first AROC Toolkit: *Anti-Racist Organizational Change: Resources and Tools for Nonprofits*.

Why Anti-Racism?

Racial inequity is a systemic issue. To address systemic issues, we must go beyond individual-level analysis to observe larger patterns in the systems and societal structures that combine to create unequal outcomes. To do this, we examine racism on four interconnected levels: internal, interpersonal, institutional, and cultural.

Anti-racism is the active, on-going process of dismantling systems of racial inequity and creating new systems of racial equity. Anti-racism demands that this work be done at internal, interpersonal, institutional, and cultural levels in order to effectively address systemic racism.

Anti-racism is an approach, not an end-point, and thus provides a useful frame for an organizational change process. We start with race and intersectionally view other systems of oppression within that analysis. We have found that when organizations start with a different focal point, analyses of race and racism are often overlooked. This is a major barrier to becoming more diverse, inclusive, and equitable. When organizations do focus on race, explicitly but not exclusively, it proves to be a powerful lever that affects many equity-seeking groups.

How to Use This Resource

This Deeper Change Toolkit is a companion to the first Anti-Racist Organizational Change Toolkit published by CommunityWise. The first AROC toolkit focused on laying the foundations for an emergent AROC process.

This companion resource looks more closely at our experiences of developing a Theory of Change and undertaking a Most Significant Change evaluation process. We focus more deeply on important concepts like race awareness, white normativity, and intersectionality. We share tools to help build awareness of race and social location, reveal organizational culture, engage in racial caucusing, and develop more accountable spaces.

These tools and resources are designed for groups engaging in an AROC process. Because anti-racist work is always tied to context and location, there is no standard approach. These tools, concepts and ideas are a starting point, and will need to be adapted to fit your context. If you are interested in more details about the AROC process at CommunityWise, please connect with us to learn more.

"I feel like my participation in AROC gave me new eyes through which I see the world. I used to see only overt acts of racism as the main problem that needed to be addressed in society.

Through the activities and conversations and learning in AROC meetings, I am now far more aware of how covert racism operates in our society - like how systemic racism and microaggressions play out and work to keep people oppressed.

Now that I have seen society through this lens, I can't unsee it. I have developed a greater awareness of racism in society, in my own non-profit organization and in myself."

- AROC Working Group Member

Getting Started

Understand Why

Before starting an Anti-Racist Organizational Change (AROC) process, your group has to decide why you want to do this work. In the first toolkit, we talked about the steps CommunityWise went through to understand our own reasons for doing anti-racist organizational change (*Before Change Starts)*.

We have learned that there are *principled* and *practical* reasons why a group might undertake this work.

Principled reasons for addressing racism include:

- Because it's the right thing to do (there is a moral imperative to do it);
- Because it's a matter of justice and human rights;
- Because we value equity, diversity and inclusion in and of itself.

Practical reasons for addressing racism include:

- Because it's a powerful strategy to more effectively meet our organizational goals;
- Because it helps us reach more people;
- Because diversity makes us more creative, innovative and better at solving problems.

This list is adapted from: Network for Better Contracts, Ontario Public Service Employees Union (2000-2002), developed by Jojo Geronimo.

While both principled and practical reasons are important, the principled reasons must be the foundation of anti-racist work. Otherwise the process is at risk of becoming superficial and unaccountable.

Principled reasons will ensure the work is a priority even when it becomes difficult—financially and emotionally—to do.

We made a simple five-question assessment tool that can help organizations start a conversation about why they might want to undertake a process like AROC.

These questions are meant to get you started thinking about how well your group is addressing **organizational racism**.

It is important to note that racial diversity is not the only measure of equity and anti-racism within organizations. If an organization scores as 'very diverse' across staff, board, volunteers, and community, this may be a signal to focus in on who holds decision-making power.

If you want to learn about more comprehensive organizational assessments, more tools and resources are listed in the Resources section.

Self-Assessment Tool: Organizational Racism

Developed by CommunityWise Resource Centre

Questions		Comments
How racially diverse is your organization (staff, board, volunteers)?	O Not diverse O Somewhat O Very diverse	
Does your organization (staff, board, volunteers) reflect the racial diversity of the communities you serve?	O No O Somewhat O Yes	
Do people of diverse racial backgrounds hold positions of power (CEO, executive director, chair of board, president, etc.)?	O No, never O At times O Yes, always	
Does your organization understand that addressing racism is critical to creating thriving communities?	O No O Somewhat O Yes	
Does your organization collect data by race about your impact on the communities you serve?	O No O Somewhat O Yes	

Set Priorities

Equity has always been an important organizational value at CommunityWise. But when we chose to take steps to be more equitable, we found it difficult to meet the needs of the many different equity-seeking groups that we serve. Many groups struggle with this when they start diversity and inclusion work.

By undertaking AROC, we agreed to make race and racism a priority. Using the Toronto Arts Council's Equity Framework as our guide, we started using the term **Equity-Priority Groups**.

This framework helped us make meaningful progress towards being more equitable. For example, in the Employment Equity Policy developed through AROC, we state the following:

CommunityWise recognizes that many equity-seeking groups face barriers to employment in the non-profit sector due to various and intersecting forms of systemic discrimination.

However, in order to respond to the needs of our most underserved Members,

CommunityWise has identified specific equity-seeking groups that have experienced especially restricted access to employment and representation at CommunityWise.

These groups have been designated Equity Priority Groups, and specific measures have been adopted to ensure their full inclusion at CommunityWise. CommunityWise's current Equity Priority Groups are those who self-identify as:

1. Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit); and/or,

2. Racialized ("Racialized" is used here instead of the more outdated and inaccurate terms "racial minority", "visible minority", "person of colour", or "non-white").

CommunityWise commits to monitoring the changing diversity of our Membership, understanding what their needs are, and measuring the impact of our efforts to serve them more equitably so that we can add to or change this list of

equity priority groups as needed.

Each organization's Equity-Priority Groups need to be developed in response to community needs, and may change over time.

Plan for Resources

When a group has a goal of being more diverse, inclusive, and equitable, the work to get to this goal needs to be supported by resources. This means resourcing staff time appropriately - which in itself takes time and financial resources to bring about.

It is not sustainable to plan for just one 'Equity Coordinator'. Equity work must be distributed amongst all staff, so that one person is not burdened - and **tokenized** - with the task of making an entire organization more equitable. In terms of process, it is also important to prioritize hiring staff who represent the equity-priority groups identified by the organization. It is critical to plan for a supportive community around these staff, in order to increase resiliency and reduce burnout related to this work.

It requires resourcing the process as well as the outcomes of the work. This means planning for funds that make the process as inclusive as possible. Examples include: honoraria for volunteers, food at meetings, child care, and transportation.

Evaluation work is another important process to fund. Action and reflection are key parts of any anti-racism work. The outputs of our evaluation work have helped to make the case for resources to continue the work over time. Evaluation shows the complexity of the problem we are taking on and the need for long- term, predictable funding to support the work.

Evaluation also makes it more possible to transfer strategies, knowledge and learnings between organizations, making the process of anti-racist work more effective and efficient across the nonprofit sector.

"Beginning with AROC, I was able to see that it was possible for racism to be understood as a systemic problem that could have solutions beyond just addressing problematic and discriminatory beliefs and behaviours of individuals.

Even just being in a group of people who were open and willing to have conversations about systemic expressions of racism was a new experience for me, and helped me feel like there could be hope for change."

- AROC Working Group Member

Theory of Change

Overview

A Theory of Change shows the outcomes we are hoping to create and the logic by which we hope to create them. When we first started AROC, we didn't have a Theory of Change (ToC); we approached it as an emergent process.

The first year was a divergent period, where we discovered insight into the problem of organizational racism and defined areas to focus on.

The following 10 months was a convergent period, where we developed and tested potential responses to the problem; we also shared our lessons from AROC in a series of tools and resources.

At this point, a ToC began to emerge, and we mapped it out with our evaluator. When choosing an evaluator, it is important to prioritize someone who is experienced and comfortable with complexity, deep listening, and emergent change.

The following ToC Diagram describes the change paths that emerged to become the AROC ToC:

1. The first path involves the AROC Advisory and Working Groups. Initially conceived as a way to engage the community and get input into AROC, the groups soon transformed into the learning and knowledge generating engine of AROC.

2. The second path focuses on organizational changes at CommunityWise. This was always the primary goal of AROC, but the ToC allowed us to clearly articulate how and why we are undertaking AROC internally.

3. The third path describes how we want AROC to impact our racialized and Indigenous member groups. The desire to equitably support the important work of our members provided the initial impetus for AROC.

4. The fourth path is about AROC's impact in the broader community. We want to share our lessons with others, and there are many that want to hear them.

The AROC ToC provided more clarity about how to plan our activities; however, we continued to manage the process as emergent, following the energy where it took us.

Instead of being a road map for change, it became more of a dashboard, highlighting dynamics in timing, tensions, and relationships that were not otherwise obvious.

AROC Theory of Change

1: AROC Working Group & Advisory Group Members

AROC encourages thoughtful dialogue, opportunities for reflection, and facilitates discussion

SO THAT individuals can explore personal transformation and realizations

AND individuals can reflect and learn in a shared space

SO THAT there is increased capacity at individual and group levels to discuss and activate our shared learnings

SO THAT we can use our unique and defined approach to race awareness to influence all aspects of AROC

2. CommunityWise Resource Centre

CommunityWise facilitates capacity- building of its staff and board members through training and a shared anti-racist framework

AND CommunityWise strengthens its structures, policies, and guiding documents to reflect anti-racist organizational development practices

SO THAT CommunityWise is more equitable, inclusive and diverse

SO THAT we are effectively meeting our organizational goals, demonstrating anti-racist organizational change

SO THAT

3. CommunityWise Resource Centre Members

CommunityWise assesses its services and relationships to understand the impact and inequitable effects on racialized and Indigenous member organizations

SO THAT CommunityWise offers services and builds relationships that are responsive to the inequities and needs identified by racialized and Indigenous member organizations

SO THAT racialized and Indigenous member organizations are benefitting from CommunityWise services, relationships and networks.

AND members are individually better equipped to reach their organizational goals

SO THAT

4. Sector-Wide

CommunityWise commits to and implements anti-racist organizational change

AND develops and shares tools, content, and resources with the larger nonprofit sector.

SO THAT CommunityWise supports organizations in their anti-racist organizational change

AND champions the strengths and challenges faced by grassroots and nonprofit organizations that are served by and for racialized and Indigenous communities

SO THAT Calgary's grassroots and nonprofit sector becomes more equitable

SO THAT

We cultivate a community by and for everyone

Timing

The **AROC Advisory and Working Groups** became the sites of much learning and knowledge generation.

The pace at which these groups were learning about how organizational racism manifests and how to address it was rapid. This new knowledge base soon began to outpace CommunityWise's capacity to translate that knowledge into changes in our organizational structures and culture.

There was a lag between the first path of the AROC ToC and the second path, and this lag widened every time the AROC Advisory and Working Groups were actively meeting. This was an important lesson: actual organizational change is a slow, long-term process that will not happen as fast as conversations about change. We should not mistake conversations for organizational change itself.

At the same time, there was a growing appetite in Calgary's broader nonprofit community to learn from AROC at CommunityWise.

As the AROC Advisory and Working Groups created resources to share—the first resource toolkit, a podcast, and a storytelling project, all shared through an AROC social media campaign — the fourth path of the AROC ToC began to balloon. CommunityWise's Equity Framework Coordinator and members of the AROC Advisory Group received and fulfilled requests to provide anti-racism trainings, be on panels, do presentations, and provide organizational consultations.

CommunityWise became a local resource for anti-racism education, and this was a sign that we were building meaningful capacity in the community. However, with limited resources, this created tensions within the AROC ToC, and within CommunityWise itself.

Tensions

While it was important to follow the energy of the AROC Advisory and Working Groups and to meet the external demand for our anti-racism resources, it became apparent that without specific attention (and resourcing), the second and third paths of the AROC ToC would not be fully realized. This was a flag for CommunityWise. Our desire to implement AROC internally and attend to the needs of our racialized and Indigenous members and to 'practice what we preach' was being compromised. This led us to take breaks from convening the AROC Advisory and Working Groups and to develop specific criteria about how we would share our resources externally.

The internal versus external tension that CommunityWise faces is not one any organization that undertakes AROC will necessarily face. It is possible to create an entirely internal process that attends to the needs of the organization and its immediate stakeholders. However, there is a great desire in the broader community to talk about race and racism and to learn how to address it, and this may attract attention and demands that may not be anticipated.

Board / Staff Relations

All members of our board and staff have been involved in various parts of AROC. Some have participated in the AROC Advisory and Working Groups since the beginning. Some were involved in building the principles of equity into specific pieces of work, like updating our organizational theory of change and values. All were involved in reviewing and eventually passing an Employment Equity Policy, and a representative Hiring Committee is convened whenever a job opens up. A small group make up an AROC Committee of the board, which is learning how to bring racial equity into all board related conversations.

These have all been important ways in which the board and staff have advanced the process of AROC.

"I've grown up in Calgary my whole life, and there hasn't been much of an opportunity for me to go to like-minded people who want to listen.

I've also sat at AROC to listen to some really powerful and moving stories that have really helped me to explore some of the privileges that I hold and really challenge some of those notions.

That's been really impactful on me."

- AROC Advisory Group Member

However, changing organizational documents, like policies and strategies, does not automatically translate into changes in organizational culture. This requires simultaneous and sustained effort at the level of individuals and the organization over a long period of time.

Throughout AROC, we have regularly tried to incorporate pieces of anti-racism education into meetings and retreats in order to build our individual and collective capacity to be aware of and respond to issues of racial inequity. This is not always easy to do in a nonprofit with a volunteer board and few staff who have a lot of work to do.

At times, months would pass before the board had an AROC related conversation or the staff collective reflected on how AROC was being incorporated into their daily work. This is not uncommon, as any kind of organizational change is challenged by the force of inertia and the comfort of the status quo. AROC is even more difficult to work through and may never gain momentum all on its own, which means it needs to be a long-term priority.

We also made more deliberate efforts to increase the racial diversity of our board and staff, and this was both successful and challenging. CommunityWise serves a diverse membership, and our board and staff are now more reflective of this diversity.

At the same time, diversity can bring new tensions and conflicts, particularly if principles of inclusion and equity aren't also prioritized and worked toward in an active way.

For instance, diversity brings together a wider array of experiences, perspectives, and communication styles. If sufficient time isn't spent building skill in intercultural communication (particularly on the part of non-racialized and non-Indigenous staff and board members) or exploring ways of working together and making decisions that are potentially new to the organization, communication breakdowns can occur, dominant voices can

continue to carry more weight, and dominant perspectives can continue to be the ones put into practice.

These challenges are not impossible to deal with, but they do highlight the ways in which deep AROC requires constant, on-going work.

Key Learnings

The AROC ToC has provided a map in understanding how anti-racist organizational change is happening at CommunityWise.

It helps us decide where to focus our attention and resources, and spot emerging tensions and imbalances. It's been a useful operational tool, and it is also always changing and evolving.

Pieces of our AROC ToC may be useful to your organization at different phases of your process and some may not be relevant at all. There is no universally applicable AROC ToC, so it is valuable to map your own path to the changes you seek to make.

Evaluating Emergent Change

AROC at CommunityWise was conceived and undertaken as an emergent process.

"Emergent change processes engage the diverse people of a system in focused yet open interactions that lead to unexpected and lasting shifts in perspective and behaviour."

- Peggy Holman

Understanding that the change path (the AROC ToC) would emerge as the process unfolded, our evaluator worked with us to ensure that our approach to evaluation followed suit.

Evaluation in emerging change contexts is adaptive, flexible, and iterative.

Early in the process, we used in-meeting observations, post-meeting surveys, one-on-one interviews, and output mapping to understand what change paths were emerging.

As the AROC Theory of Change became clearer and began to guide the work of AROC, we wanted to understand what impact this work was having on the individuals that were involved in it.

Specifically, we wanted to surface the learning and change that occurred for individuals since they began their participation in the AROC Advisory and Working Groups (i.e., the first path of the AROC ToC).

Why Most Significant Change?

*"We chose **Most Significant Change** because it*

helps identify tangible changes in knowledge, thought, and behavior. The

change is often described in detail by the individuals who are experiencing it and offers a rich picture of what is happening. The process is quite participatory and is guided only by a few simple questions that help structure the participant's input. It is broad enough that the individual is free to share a range of thoughts and perspectives.

Most importantly, it encourages analysis at the story- telling level. This means that individuals are engaging in their own meaning-making and analysis of the change that is occurring, and this action-reflection process can further influence their participation in the change process. Often, the final product of a MSC process is the sharing of the change story by the participants in their own words and in a variety of formats."

-   Rida Abboud,
CommunityWise Evaluator

Activity: Storytelling Reflection

Note: This is a modified version of the "Most Significant Change" evaluation methodology. We worked with our evaluator to adapt the process to fit our needs and values. While this activity can be used as a guide, we encourage you to work with an external evaluator to do the same.

In order to guide the Most Significant Change storytelling reflection process, give people two simple prompts:

Write a story of what has changed for you since you started with AROC.

What has been a most significant change?

During a three-hour facilitated session with an external evaluator, give participants time to reflect on these questions and write or record their change stories.
People who are not in attendance or who require more time are invited to share their stories by email.

Findings

Through our process, a total of 16 stories were shared. The stories represent perspectives from CommunityWise staff, board members, and members of the community at large.

The evaluator organized the larger themes that emerged from the MSC session into four key areas of change:

Individual
Change in knowledge, awareness, attitude and/or behavior.

Group/Caucus
Change as a result of the Working Group and Advisory Group sessions.

Individual's Immediate Environment
Change in environments the individual has direct impact on: workplace, organizations, groups, etc.

Individual's Outside Environment
Change that may be occurring in the larger community where individuals reside: sectors, neighborhoods, city, province, etc.

The full report from this evaluation process, including a narrative summary of these findings, can be found on our website:

AROC Evaluation Report: Most Significant Change (September 2018)

Quotes from the MSC stories have been included throughout this resource booklet.

Most Significant Change Findings

Individual's
Outside Environment

Individual's
Immediate Environment

Group / Caucus
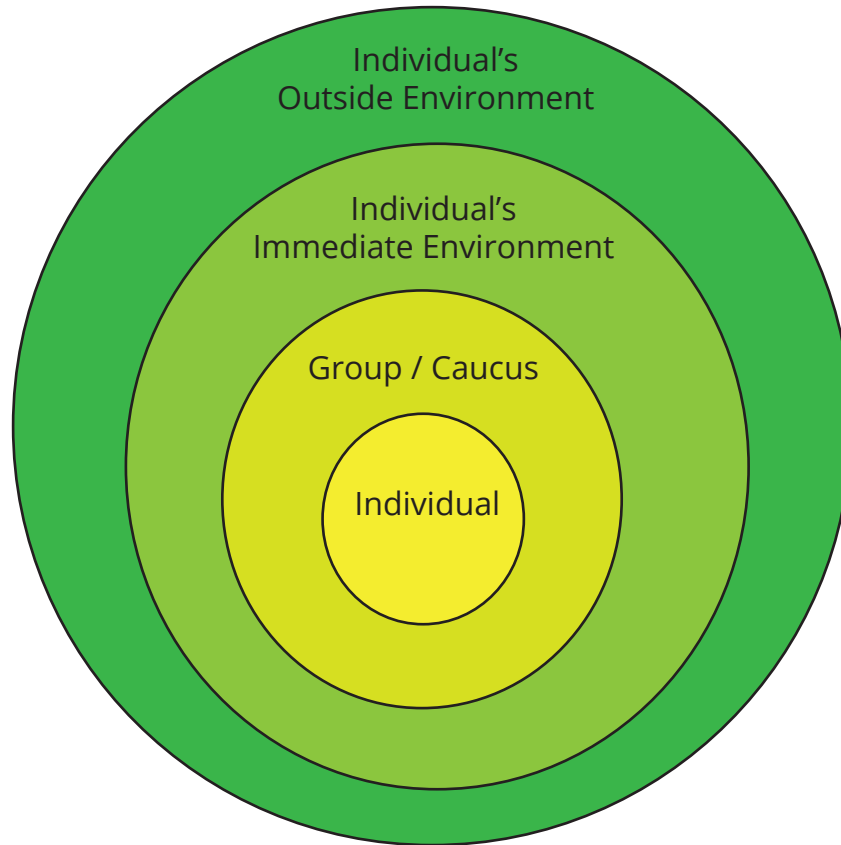
Individual

INDIVIDUAL

RACIALIZED

• Gained confidence in being able to talk about racism in ways that encouraged communication and understanding, rather than shutting down conversation.

• It has offered language and an understanding for racialized people to be able to express anger with oppression and colonization.

• The space to make sense of personal experiences of racism and to be able to manage the lingering emotions from those experiences.

BOTH

• Far more aware of how overt racism works in society, as well as how subtle and structural racism works.

• More nuanced understanding of own ethno-racial identity.

• More skills to engage people in discussion, instead of just calling people out or shutting down.

• Focus on decolonization and on unlearning all the norms we absorb and experiment with new ways of being in the world.

WHITE

• A lot of previously unconscious actions and efforts have become more conscious.

• Better equipped to change how racism is perpetuated by the individual

• Heightened awareness of having "white privilege" and "white fragility" and what that means for their day to day

• Far more aware of how overt racism works in society

CAUCUS

WHITE

• Space to hold self and other white people accountable.

BOTH

• Gained an incredible array of tools to discuss racism with others.

RACIALIZED

• Moved beyond individual understanding of racism to a collective understanding.

• Have learned exactly what a safe space is: Come as you are and you will be respected, listened to and sometimes challenged.

• In a shared environment, learning that racism can and is experienced differently for different individuals – the forms and intensity.

• Felt validated in the truth that is common experiences.

• Freedom to discuss things people have not felt free to discuss elsewhere.

INDIVIDUAL'S IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENT

RACIALIZED

• New awareness of the racism that exists in their workplace.

BOTH

• Demand more accountable spaces for marginalized people.

• Bringing more explicit emphasis of race into organizations meetings and into life contexts outside of work.

• New language and understanding so that individuals can see racism, speak up more confidently and take leadership on addressing oppression and marginalization in the workplace.

WHITE

• Increased personal responsibility to address racism and to ensure equitable opportunities and representation for racialized people.

"I no longer deny that my own non-profit organization is racist.

I no longer see that as a scary fact that should be denied and justified away.

It's simply a true fact.

And once it's accepted as true, it's easier to see that we can work to change it."

- AROC Working Group Member

Deeper Change: Race Awareness

Post-Racial Society

In conversations about race, you may hear statements like "I simply don't see race," or, "I'm **colour-blind;** I treat everyone equally." It's common to hear people state that they, as individuals, are not racist. Phrases like these grow out of a false belief that we live in a **post-racial society**, where the institutions, patterns and processes of **racialization** no longer cause social or economic inequities.

Additionally, these phrases focus on individual intention as opposed to systemic impact.

On the contrary, because we are all embedded in a society with racist institutions, systems and structures, we are all implicated in racism. Racism is always around us. Dr. Beverly Tatum likens racism to smog: sometimes it's clearly visible and sometimes it's not, but it is always there and we are always taking it in.

We are raised with attitudes that come to us from the people around us, from the media we are exposed to, and from the laws and structures that we operate within. **Implicit biases** exist within every one of us, and these can lead to prejudice and discrimination.

In truth, our society is far from being post-racial. Racialization and racial discrimination continue to create and perpetuate inequities along racial lines. Whether it be while walking down the street, or entering a hospital, courtroom, or job interview, racialized people aren't viewed or treated the same way as their white counterparts. People do 'see race', and these perceptions affect our attitudes and behaviours.

Race Awareness

Pretending that race doesn't exist doesn't make it so; race as a social construct is an unavoidable part of today's society. To be unaware of race is to be **race- oblivious**.

Instead of addressing inequities, championing the notion of racially-oblivious 'fairness' only serves to reinforce the status quo. Meanwhile, the realities of racism are obscured. The myth of the post-racial society denies racism, rather than preventing it.

Being aware of racial difference does not *create* division. Instead, it is a way of responding to *pre- existing* inequalities in a more honest and effective way. When we accept that we are not all treated equally when it comes to race, we can begin to address those differences and work towards equity.

We start our AROC sessions and trainings by discussing the need to talk about race and racism directly. Facing the reality of racial discrimination can be uncomfortable, especially for people who don't experience these realities on a daily basis, and who believe that we live in a post-racial society. We work through this discomfort, rather than avoiding it. It is important to set expectations and accept that this process will be uncomfortable.

Anti-racism needs to be an active term. It is not enough to simply say that we are not racist; being 'race-oblivious' simply means that we are accepting the current default level of racism within our social context.

If we are to create anti-racist organizational change, we need to be **race aware** instead of race-oblivious. When we practice naming and addressing things (turning a 'light' onto racism), we develop more comfort and skill in moving forward.

Locate Yourself

We develop race-awareness in order to position ourselves in relation to the issue of race and racism.

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"I've experienced more racial discomfort at work than I ever have before, especially in terms of how to act and how to be.

A lot of previously unconscious actions and efforts have become conscious.

I'm a lot more aware of how every word, every action, is potentially problematic."

- AROC Working Group Member

We start from the understanding that racism is something that has been internalized by each of us, rather than something that is happening solely outside of ourselves.

There are so many multidimensional aspects of our identities that are not immediately visible on the surface. Going deeper helps us appreciate the nuances and complexities of our own and other people's racial identities. Telling stories can also relieve some of the tension associated with beginning this work, making it more accessible and less intimidating.

In anti-racist organizational change, our **social location** impacts our role in the work. Stepping into the problem and understanding how we relate to it helps us identify where we fit into developing a solution.

Our social location impacts the kinds of work we are able to do. For example, racialized people face higher risks and consequences when engaging in anti-racist dialogue in the workplace.

For more about the dynamics of social location, see **The 'Problem' Woman of Colour in the Workplace**.

The following activities are designed to help us locate ourselves in a racialized society. We use these activities with our Working and Advisory Groups, during workshops and trainings, and with the board and staff at CommunityWise.

They are meaningful icebreaker activities which help us to avoid assumptions about each other as we work together.

Activity: Race Aware Conversation Starters

Seat participants in a large circle. Choose one of these prompts and ask participants to respond. Role-model your answer to the prompt and then start going around the circle. Use these activities every time you meet to deepen both individual and collective reflections about our relative positions in relation to concepts of race and identity.

Facilitator tip: This can take longer than the average icebreaker activity. Give participants enough time to tell the story they want to tell. If you don't have the time and numbers for a circle, have your participants share in groups or pairs.

What did your grandparents do for a living?

By reflecting on our ancestors and the work they did, we start to illuminate the places they lived in, the struggles they faced, the opportunities they took advantage of, and the journey that was made between their lifetime and our own. These reflections help us locate ourselves in time and place. If you don't know what your grandparents did for a living, reflect on what factors contribute to that not knowing.

Where is home for you?

Think about all the places you've called home. These may be places you've lived in, places you've visited family in, or places you've never known but that you feel a cultural connection to. Think about the natural landscapes of those places and your connection to them. Tell us about the place(s) that most strongly connect with your feelings and concepts of "home".

Tell us about your ethno-racial identity.

Everyone has a story to tell about the people and places they call home, about the cultures and traditions that shape them, about the ways in which they identify themselves but also the ways in which other people identify them. Tell us a little bit about how you see yourself through an ethno-racial lens.

"I hadn't previously done the work of deeply examining the ways in which my language, behaviours, skills, work style, expectations, and my implicit and affinity biases have been shaped by white supremacy and by white privilege.

...Or how I continue to both benefit from and perpetuate white supremacy in the workplace and in the sector.

I'm more aware of how the entire sector is colonial in its structure."

- AROC Working Group Member

Deeper Change: Culture and Normativity

Racism in the Workplace

Organizational racism impacts an organization's racialized stakeholders in different ways, depending on their relationship to the organization.

Employees experience racism differently than board members, who in turn experience it differently than the organization's clients, who in turn experience it differently from members of the community at large.

All of these perspectives need to be considered when undertaking AROC, but it is common for organizations to start by focusing internally, on the experience of staff.

The Centre for Community Organizations (COCo) in Montreal visualized the experience of women of colour in nonprofit organizations in *The 'Problem' Woman of Colour in the Workplace* diagram.

The diagram was adapted with permission from the [Safehouse Progressive Alliance for NonViolence](#) and is reproduced here with permission from COCo.

COCo uses the diagram in trainings and discussion groups and offers the following questions for reflection:

- What is the impact of this dynamic on the woman of colour in the organization?

- What is the impact of this dynamic on the organization?

- What is the impact of this dynamic on the community or sector at large?

The "Problem" Woman of Colour in the Workplace

white leadership

The Woman of Colour enters the organization

tokenized hire

Honeymoon

- the Woman of Colour feels welcomed, needed, and happy

repetitive injury & microaggressions

Reality

- the Woman of Colour points out issues within the organization
- she tries to work within the organization's structure and policies
- she pushes for accountability

denial of racism

Response

- the organization denies, ignores, and blames
- the responsibility of fixing the problem is placed on the Woman of Colour
- People of Colour are pitted against one another

Retaliation

- the organization decides that the woman of colour is the problem and targets her
- the organization labels the conflict as a "communication issue" or claims that she is not qualified or "not a good fit

target & attack

The Woman of Colour exits the organization

Adapted from "The Chronicle of the Problem Woman of Color in a Non-Profit" by the Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence

www.coco-net.org

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Through AROC, we have also asked these questions:

- What is happening at the different levels of systemic racism (internalized, interpersonal, organizational, and cultural) to create this situation?

- What is the subtext when people talk about employees being a "good fit" versus "not a good fit"?

These questions can help identify changes that can be made to make workplaces more racially equitable for the people that work and volunteer there.

As we've mentioned before, changing organizational documents, like policies and strategies, does not automatically translate into changes in organizational culture.

We've found that *The 'Problem' Woman of Colour* diagram is useful in identifying the difference between what we say we do and what we really do.

Organizational Culture

In the first AROC resource, we described "culture" as being the core of the organizational onion. Every organization has a culture. Surface culture is reflected in the words we use to describe ourselves and the documents (policies and strategies) we use to describe how we do our work.

Below the surface, there is a vast range of deep culture. Deep culture includes attitudes, behaviours, complex concepts, and values.

Our definition of racism is that it's a system of power that structures opportunity and assigns value based on the social construct of race, where privilege is afforded to whiteness. White supremacy is both a belief that whiteness is superior and a system that creates racism. "Whiteness" in this sense is not about the skin colour of individuals, but about a

dominant cultural framework that classifies white cultural values, norms and practices as superior, while all others are framed as inferior. Whiteness can also be understood as **white normativity**.

From our research (see Resources section), we came to understand that white normativity is the norm in many organizations in North America. This white normativity is an important —but hidden— cause of organizational inequities.

White Normativity

Every culture—including every organizational culture—has a set of norms. These are the attitudes, behaviours and values which are commonly considered 'normal' and 'positive'.

Many organizations in North America have a culture of white normativity. This means that commonly rewarded behaviours and values are aligned with a culture of whiteness.

This kind of culture can exist even in organizations that claim to be "diverse". Because the norms of society are so pervasive, a culture of

white normativity can still show up in organizations led by racialized people.

Despite its pervasiveness, whiteness is a difficult concept to see and understand.

In order for all of us at CommunityWise to have a clearer idea of what this means, we designed two activities centered around white normativity in the workplace. One examines ways in which whiteness can manifest, and the other explores what it feels like to be a racialized person within a **culture of whiteness**.

"I think I have a better understanding of the concepts of internalized whiteness and white culture, and have come to notice how these have played out in our staff collective.

I think differently about the role I should be playing within the organization and the types of activities I should be taking on....

I no longer take as much for granted and I now stop to question whether I'm the right person to participate in a meeting, presentation, or other opportunity before saying yes."

- AROC Working Group Member

Activity: Mapping Deep Culture

1. Using the Iceberg Model of Culture as a reference, create a list of aspects of "deep culture" to explore in more detail.

For example, we chose to focus on the following aspects of 'deep culture':

- Approaches to decision-making
- Concepts of accountability
- Concepts of fairness and justice
- Communication styles and rules
- Attitudes towards work
- Notions of leadership

2. Place a sheet of big flipchart paper on the wall for each aspect of deep culture. Write the aspect at the very top of the page. For example, "Approaches to Decision-Making.

3. Under the title, draw a line to divide the page in half. On one side, write the heading "Culture of Whiteness". On the other half, write the heading "Other Ways of Knowing and Being".

4. Ask participants to visit each page in turn, and jot down notes based on their own experience.

5. Leave time for participants to circle through all the papers again, to see what everyone has written. Invite participants to star or underline items that resonate with them.

6. Discuss the experience as a group.

Sample Response: Mapping Deep Culture

Approaches to Decision-Making

CULTURE OF WHITENESS	OTHER WAYS OF BEING
- Quick, fast, no time to process - Hierarchy - Top down - Tokenistic consultation - Fast or defined timeframes for making decisions - Academic jargon - Exclusive meetings - Unaware of inherent power dynamics (racism, sexism, etc) "I never thought about that..." - Whoever is the most outspoken - Men over women - Whoever has time to show up gets to decide - Rational and "data driven" - Don't ever get mad or sad - Placating	- Learning/deciding through life experiences - Non-academic - Oral - Being ⇨ not "who" you are but where/how you are - Consulting community members at large - Includes impact (e.g., emotional) on people other than the ones making the decision - Valuing elders - More range in the time frame

"I've come to better understand just how strongly some elements of my self-identity and my personality are wrapped up in whiteness and white supremacy.

Attributes such as perfectionism and a yearning for recognition of my efforts, particularly at work, have been present since I was a kid.

While I'm now conscious of how these traits link with white supremacy, and while I'm hypocritically suspicious of others who display these traits, AND while I try to intervene with self-talk whenever I feel them rising up, they're still a part of me."

- AROC Working Group Member

Activity: Experiencing a Culture of Whiteness

We wanted to complement the analytic thought processes involved in *Mapping Deep Culture* with an activity centered around feeling and emotional expression. Only members of our racialized and Indigenous Advisory Group took part in this exercise. Many participants had never been asked to answer this question before.

This activity allowed participants to delve into unexplored and sometimes uncomfortable territory. At the same time, participants described this as a liberating and freeing exercise.

Ask participants to reflect on these questions:

 What is whiteness? What does whiteness feel like to you?

Provide each participant with paper and drawing materials to respond to this question in a form of their choice; for example, drawing, free writing, or poetry.

The White space is alien, foreign, not familiar, uncomfortable, not necessarily receptive, not necessarily welcoming — one misstep and you are challenged — dismissed.

ME

Example of a creative response - drawing by an AROC Advisory Group member

"My biggest awareness change has been on how racism can be and is experienced differently for different individuals - the forms and intensity to which racism is experienced.

I can better appreciate the need and usefulness of having the various caucusing groups."

- AROC Advisory Group Member

Intersectionality

Because anti-discrimination work can be more effective when we use a specific lens, anti-racism has been our entry-point for addressing structural inequality. However, we realise that it is impossible to extricate racism from other forms of discrimination.

Members of our Working and Advisory Groups have expressed that when they think about their racialized identities, it is difficult to separate these from other marginalized identities that they also hold.

Intersectionality is a term coined by lawyer Kimberlé Crenshaw and widely used among equity- seeking groups. Intersectionality is used to explore the dimensions that arise between multiple identities. Our Advisory Group decided to use this concept to explore these other identities through the lens of race.

We noticed that there was a feeling that the concept had been co-opted by other equity-seeking groups, which diluted its original intention of addressing the intersections between race and gender. Some expressed that they had a lack of understanding about what the term meant and how to appropriately use it.

We set up an activity which began with the history and meaning of the term intersectionality. We used that as a launching pad to discuss the ways that the Working Group had heard the term applied in other contexts.

Activity: Intersectionality Discussion

1. Define the meaning of the word 'intersectionality' through a one- page reference sheet. Use the definition provided on the back of this page or research and create your own.

2. As a group, discuss whether this definition is similar to definitions that participants have heard in other contexts. Break into small groups (ideally, racial caucus groups—see next section) to discuss the following questions:

   a. How do you feel that the word 'intersectionality' gets misused?
   b. In what ways can organizations implement an intersectional analysis?

3. Share discussion points that came up in small groups with the entire group.

Some of the themes that arose when we did the activity:

- White people often use the word intersectionality as a buzzword, to tokenize, or to gain social capital

- People have lost sight of the origin of the word intersectionality, thus distorting its meaning

- Intersectionality is not a sum/hierarchy/ladder of oppression

- Those claiming to be intersectional often overlook race and Indigeneity (often focusing on other intersections such as queerness among white people)

- The process of talking about intersectionality required us to become even more nuanced and accountable to power dynamics within the process

Intersectionality

Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term 'intersectionality' in 1989 as a way to examine the ways in which racial and gender discrimination overlap in the legal system to create particular experiences for Black women. These experiences had historically been overlooked in feminist theory and anti-racist politics (i.e. the focus was on white women and Black men, leading to the marginalisation of Black women).

What is intersectionality?

Intersectionality is a theory, framework, or analytic sensibility used to think about systemic oppression in a broad context. In contrast to a single-issue framework which focuses on a particular issue without broader context (for example, considering only gender, only class, or only sexuality), intersectionality emphasizes individuals' experiences of multiple identities as a way to view and understand privilege and power.

What isn't intersectionality?

Intersectionality is not an identity, but a tool used to view identities and examine their interactions with power and privilege.
"You can be a woman of color or you can be a queer woman and not necessarily have an intersectional analysis…. You can be a white woman or a man of color and have an intersectional analysis."

- Kimberlé Crenshaw, 2017

What are some problems with how people use the word intersectionality?

Intersectionality is more than discussing diversity or celebrating various identities. It's not a descriptor of how people are unique or different or have different experiences, but an analysis of how those unique or different experiences can multiply to create a particular interaction with systematic oppression and power structures. It's about power dynamics and oppression, not individual differences and recognition.

Deeper Change: Racial Caucusing

Racial caucusing is a facilitation tool we use to create structured spaces that consider shared perspectives on a question. It allows people to acknowledge, identify and talk about shared experiences and then return to the larger group better equipped to address systems level change.

To caucus, we separate participants into groups by their racial self-identification and have them discuss a topic, question, or concept. This process is not designed to be divisive, but to be 'race-aware'. The goal is not to divide people permanently, but to return to a unified group and share in a more meaningful way.

In large groups, openly sharing marginalized experiences — particularly race based experiences —is difficult given the power dynamics that may be present. Racial caucusing allows temporary space to address questions with

people who are approaching it from a similar racial location, without being denied or shut down within a larger group.

It allows a shift from individual level analyses of an issue to a group level analysis, where common factors related to identity can be identified and explored.

Importantly, racial caucusing is *not* racial segregation.

Segregation is an institutionally supported, legal division based on race where people are denied equal levels of government and private service and experience. Segregation is legally-sanctioned differential treatment.

High Risk, High Reward

Racial caucusing is a 'high-risk' facilitation tool. We would not recommend using caucusing with a group of strangers. To be effective, participants should be part of a pre-existing and continuing group, where there are relationships that have been formed, and accountability that extends outside of a singular session. Prior to caucusing, participants need to have done their own identity work to locate themselves in the arena of anti-racism.

However, it is not always clear to which group people should go— for example, those who have multiple racial identities may feel that they fit into more than one group, or those who are white- passing may sometimes be unsure if they should be in a racialized or a white group.

Therefore, there needs to be a space for people to go when other spaces don't fit, and the subsequent conversation should allow for discussion on how the process can be improved. Any facilitator that chooses to use caucusing as a tool in their process must be aware of the dynamics of this process.

Group Dynamics & Catharsis

Resistance may arise for participants who are not used to talking about race. Strong emotions may be released once participants have a chance to talk to peers about their shared experiences.

It is valuable to have a member of each caucus act as a facilitator. Facilitators should be prepared to handle tensions and emotions that may arise.

When we did this activity with racialized caucuses in AROC, new members needed time, space, and understanding to release their feelings of anger and hurt. In the white caucus, feelings of distress, defensiveness, guilt, and shame emerged.

We needed to remind ourselves that these expressions of honesty and emotion were an important part of an anti-racism process, not a distraction from it. Once participants had space for some level of emotional release, they were better able to get down to the work of addressing racism.

Beyond Binary Caucusing

After a year of breaking into two caucuses, we noticed that a power dynamic emerged between the racialized/ Indigenous caucus and the white caucus. This was, in part, intentional. Caucusing is a tool that allows us to re-balance unequal power dynamics that exist in the broader culture.

However, binary caucusing created a binary tension that is itself a hallmark of a culture of whiteness.

Re-balancing power in the favour of a marginalized group does not subvert the notion of a hierarchy of power itself.

To remedy this, we started making four caucused spaces available: An Indigenous caucus, a Black caucus, a racialized caucus, and a white caucus. We are indebted to Tina Lopes for this approach. This not only broke the binary but also introduced more nuance to the conversations.

The specific experiences of anti-Indigenous-racism and anti-Black racism could be better accounted for. This also created space for the experience of racialized folks to discuss being settlers on colonized lands. Having four caucuses added more complexity to the process but also acknowledged multiple locations of power instead of just one.

Anecdotally, we heard from the Black caucus that they were grateful that such a space was created. The participants said they had little to no opportunities to have conversations about the anti-Black racism they experience .

with other Black folks outside of the AROC Advisory and Working Groups.

On the other hand, we were not able to form an Indigenous caucus. Many Indigenous members of the Advisory and Working Groups were supportive of AROC but were unable to regularly attend meetings because they were busy doing important work in their own communities

While we had their support, our inability to convene an Indigenous caucus highlighted the need to develop a process within AROC that addresses anti-Indigenous racism specifically, and that will be the focus of our future work.

"I think AROC is a really great demonstration of what a safe space looks like, because we do talk about some really meaningful things, some very powerful things, and it really does allow for people to really come and talk about who they are...

And what kind of challenges they face when it comes to racism and being a person of colour or being an Indigenous person, and how that impacts them.

You're able to tell your story.

For people who also understand, and who want to listen - I think that's really important."

- AROC Advisory Group Member

Accountability

In our first resource booklet, we introduced our Accountable Spaces Guidelines. We use Accountable Spaces as a way to promote group norms that result in a space where people feel that they can learn, grow, and push the boundaries of their own comfort while taking into account their responsibilities to the rest of the group.

This year, we revisited the original guidelines to see what had been helpful or relevant, and what needed to be added or changed. The common themes that arose were sharing space and making room for others to speak, recognizing and validating different viewpoints, and "calling in" harmful attitudes rather than calling out. We have integrated these themes into our existing guidelines.

Tool: Accountable Spaces Guidelines

- **Share the space.** Be mindful of your speaking time, make space for others to speak, and avoid interrupting others.

- **Understand that individuals experience racism in different ways.** Recognize that each experience and viewpoint is valid even if they differ; validate experiences rather than lecturing or giving advice. Consider that you do not need to agree with a perspective in order to understand it.

- **Speak for yourself.** Use "I" language; don't speak for others and don't share someone else's stories or experiences. Notice your own biases/judgments and avoid making assumptions about other people.

- **Examine your own privilege and be aware of potential power dynamics that you might contribute to within a space.**

- **Recognize that we are all in a place of learning.** If you say something problematic -apologize, listen to the voices of others, and then learn and adjust your behaviour.

- **Be open to calling in harmful attitudes as well as open to critical self-reflection.** If an individual tells you that something you said was harmful to them, listen. Use these situations not to harass or call out, but as a learning experience.

- **Take care of yourself.** Think of someone you trust whom you can debrief with and plan to contact them. It's okay if you need to leave the room at any time. Facilitators are available for follow-up conversation.

Organization-Level Accountability

Beyond accountability at an individual level, AROC at CommunityWise has always been about making our organization more racially equitable.

Any organizational change process can take up to five years to be fully realized. Anti-racist organizational change is an even more difficult undertaking.

Almost three years into the process, we know what we've done to improve our organizational policies, structures, and systems. We have done some preliminary evaluation work to map out these outputs, and we have used the organizational onion model to communicate this work to our board, staff, and other stakeholders.

However, it remains to be seen how these changes have shifted deeper aspects of our organization, such as behaviours and culture, and what the impact of those changes has been to our membership and the broader community.
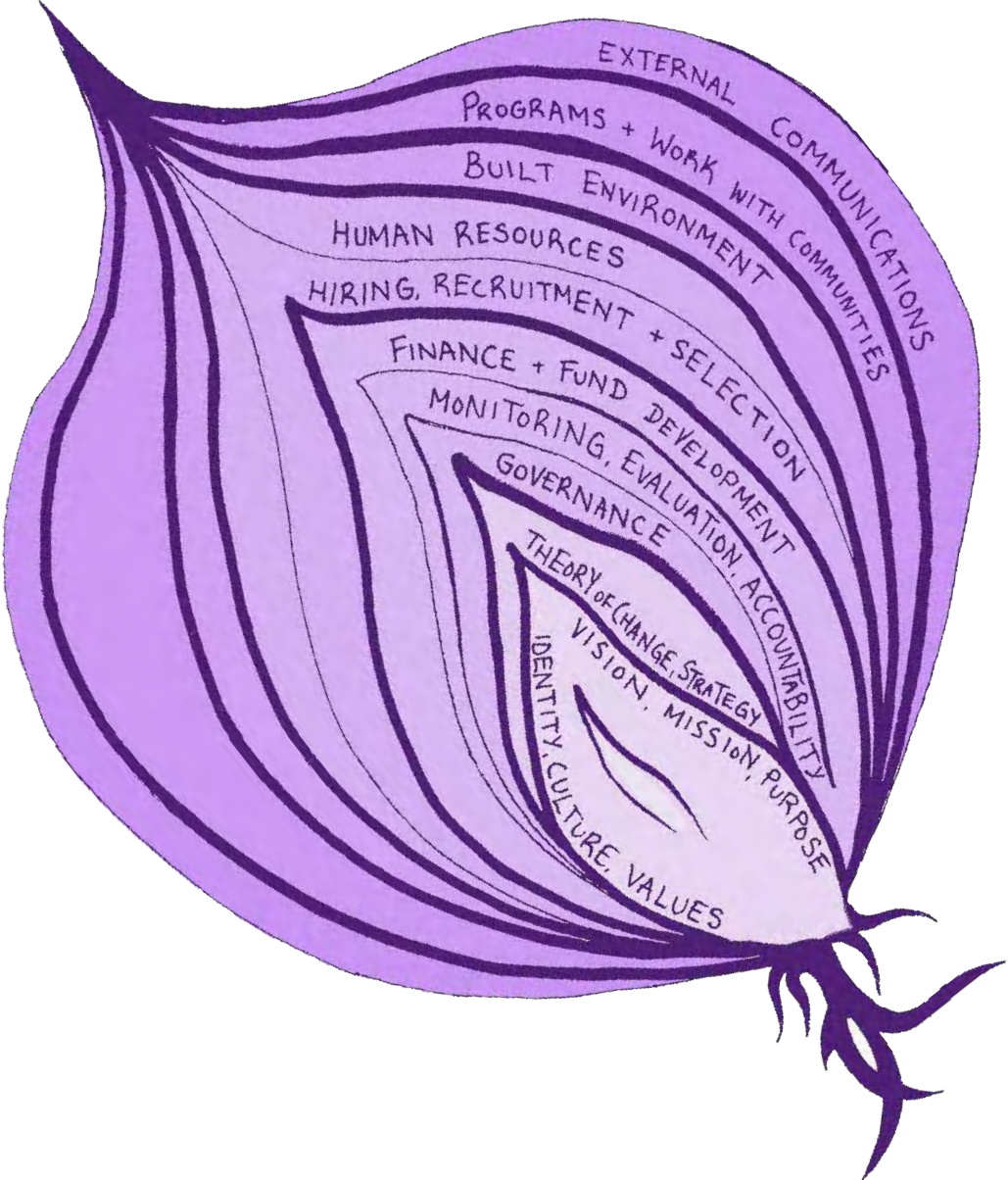
Our future evaluation efforts will focus on what has—and has not— changed within our organization as a result of AROC.

Activity: Annotating the Organizational Onion

In the first AROC Toolkit, we used the Onion Model to map change across different 'layers' of an organization. This is an accountability tool, to ensure that change isn't just skin-deep.

To learn more about the organizational onion model, please see the first AROC toolkit.

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS
PROGRAMS + WORK WITH COMMUNITIES
BUILT ENVIRONMENT
HUMAN RESOURCES
HIRING, RECRUITMENT + SELECTION
FINANCE + FUND DEVELOPMENT
MONITORING, EVALUATION, ACCOUNTABILITY
GOVERNANCE
THEORY OF CHANGE, STRATEGY
VISION, MISSION, PURPOSE
IDENTITY, CULTURE, VALUES

The following list demonstrates how your group can map concrete cultural changes and actions taken as part of an AROC process. This mapping process can help identify areas of the organization where more attention is needed.

Example: The Annotated Onion

Vision, Mission, Purpose / Identity, Culture, Values

- Updated organizational values
- Accountability to Indigenous Communities initiative

Theory of Change / Strategy

- Updated organizational Theory of Change

Governance / Finance & Fund Development / Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability

- Race-specific data collection updated in Member Survey
- Policy audit
- Board terms of reference
- Board agreement

Human Resources / Hiring, Recruitment & Selection

- Equity updates to Staff Collective Agreement
- Ongoing anti-racist learning and reflection with board and staff
- Employment equity policy
- Equitable hiring procedure

Built Environment

- No action on the built environment to date

Programs & Work with Communities

- Child-minding policy

External Communications

- Communications strategy

"What does a 'safe space' mean?

I think alot of the time, people don't really understand what that means.

I think that AROC really demonstrates how to create a safe space. One of the major caveats to it is that there is no guarantee.

You can come as you are, come as yourself, and who that person is.... is going to be respected.

Your opinion and your values are going to be listened to. And maybe even then they will be challenged, and you'll be accountable to that."

- AROC Advisory Group Member

Accountability to Indigenous Communities

We started AROC with the goal of engaging community members from diverse racialized backgrounds.

We wanted to pay special attention to Black and Indigenous community members whose voices have historically been overlooked.

While we had Black and Indigenous members involved in our AROC process, we didn't get the Indigenous engagement we had initially hoped for.

Canada has had a long history of colonialism and systemic discrimination against Indigenous communities.

Because of this history and context, anti- Indigenous racism is different from the racism faced by other racialized communities.

We realized that our process had not accounted for this context. We met with Indigenous consultants who made us aware that we need a different approach.

We learned that instead of expecting Indigenous community members to come to the AROC process, it is our job as CommunityWise to make connections and build trust.

Going forward, we are undertaking a process that will ensure that CommunityWise is accountable to Indigenous communities in an ongoing way, guided by the leadership of Elders and members of the Indigenous communities of Treaty 7.

"These days I can reflect on my time in AROC as a series of invaluable learning episodes that have reinforced the importance of equity in all the things I do at [my workplace].

It drives me to want to do better and helps me prioritize my work in ways that challenge the seemingly normal and "natural" ways priorities were justified in the past.

I hope that I am moving from a place where saying and thinking that I actually care about equity and anti- racism can have actionable and accountable activities demonstrated or played out in more meaningful ways."

- AROC Working Group Member

Closing

Three years into our AROC process, members of the AROC Advisory and Working Groups and CommunityWise staff and board have deepened their shared knowledge and seen transformations in themselves and their immediate environments.

Organizationally, CommunityWise has implemented several changes but has yet to evaluate the impacts of those changes. That important changes have occurred while many have yet to surface speaks to the slow, simmering nature of our experience of the AROC process.

In facilitating AROC, it has been important to keep the "heat" on— to continue to challenge the process and not get too comfortable—but to ensure the heat doesn't get so high that the whole process is compromised. It is difficult to sustain this level of productive tension over a long period of time.

While energy for AROC persists here at CommunityWise, periods of rest and reflection will be necessary going forward.

We have also identified the need to establish a "community of care" for the racialized and Indigenous folks that find themselves at the front- lines of this work.

The fear of "not doing enough" or "reverting back" is ever-present. But the beauty of taking an anti- racism approach is that it asks us to question the notions embedded in a culture of whiteness -- urgency, perfectionism, quantity over quality, and progress as bigger, more (Okun, 2001) --and slow down, appreciate what *is* happening, and take a more complex and expansive view.

"I think that AROC needs to be something that is rolled out in any group of individuals, any organizations (public, private sector, nonprofit sector - it doesn't matter).

I think it would be hugely valuable in creating a work culture and a space where people actually see each other."

- AROC Advisory Member

"The most significant change has likely been a greater ability to dance in the face of not knowing, to feel comfortable there, to feel ok knowing that we aren't going to change things right away, that there is no "final state" that we can even aim for, it's all just a process.

So instead of a forward march, I feel I am in some sort of contemporary dance, pushing and pulling at forces unseen and getting stronger because of it, but mainly staying in one place.

And that's ok. I'm ok with that now."

Thulasy Lettner,
- CWRC Equity Coordinator

Key Words & Ideas

Anti-Racism

Anti-racism is the active, on-going process of dismantling systems of racial inequity and creating new systems of racial equity. Anti-racism demands that this work be done at the internal, interpersonal, institutional, and cultural levels in order to effectively address systemic racism. Anti-racism is an approach, not an end-point, and thus provides a useful framework for an organizational change process. (CommunityWise)

Catharsis

Catharsis is a feeling of emotional release that is often accompanied by new insights and positive change. An individual may experience catharsis when they are able to release emotions that they have been repressing or are typically unable to discuss. (CommunityWise)

Caucus

A caucus is a group of people who are gathered to discuss a common issue. This term is often used in political contexts, but can be used in other contexts too. The word caucus may have roots in the Algonquin term for 'speaker'. (CommunityWise)

Racial Caucus

A racial caucus is a type of caucus where people discuss a common issue with members of their respective racial identity groups. (CommunityWise)

Colour-Blind and Colour-Oblivious

The term 'colour-blind' is used to indicate that a person is not race-aware. In the context of a society where individuals continue to experience unequal

social, economic and psychological outcomes based on race, 'colour-blindness' serves to support the status quo. In the context of race and racism, the term 'colour-blindness' is unrelated to the physical condition of Colour Vision Deficiency (CVD).' For this reason, a more useful term is 'colour-oblivious', as used by Robin D'Angelo. (CommunityWise)

Diversity

Diversity refers to the wide array of differences among people and their perspectives on the world. Diversity is an important organizational goal in its own right, but it may or may not be linked to the issue of equity. A diverse workplace is not necessarily an equitable workplace. Nor does the presence of people who are diverse necessarily produce decision-making that optimizes results for the groups their diversity reflects. (Race Matters Institute)

Equity

Equity refers to achieved results where advantage and disadvantage are not distributed on the basis of race and ethnicity. Strategies that produce equity must be targeted to address the unequal needs, conditions, and positions of people and communities that are created by institutional and structural barriers.

Equity requires a set of informed policies and practices, intentionally designed to promote opportunity and rectify disparities, as well as informed people positioned to implement them effectively. (Race Matters Institute)

Equity-Priority Groups

An equity-priority group is a community that has historically faced challenges in participating fully in society. Recognizing that marginalized groups each have different needs and require different accommodations, equity-priority   groups receive specific measures to reduce these disadvantages, such as improved access to funding support. (CommunityWise)

Inclusion

Inclusion is reflected in the ability of diverse peoples to raise their perspectives authentically, and for those voices to matter and impact decisions, where the organizational culture has been enabled for that to happen. Inclusion promises a broader view of the world and a more democratic process of decision-making. Inclusion is an important organizational process goal, but it does not on its own guarantee equity in an organization's mission-critical results. (Race Matters Institute)

Implicit Bias

Stereotypes are the belief that most or all members of a group hold a certain characteristic. Bias refers to the subjective attitudes that one holds about a group based on stereotypes or assumptions about that group. These attitudes can be positive or negative. Implicit bias refers to biases that are generally inaccessible to conscious awareness but affect our beliefs and actions in an unconscious manner. These biases occur automatically and may be at odds with one's explicit, conscious beliefs. For example, a person might explicitly feel that white people and racialized people are equally likely to commit crimes but may hold the implicit bias that racialized people are more likely to commit crimes than white people. (CommunityWise)

Intersectionality

Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term in 1989 as a way to examine the ways in which racial and gender discrimination overlap in the legal system to create particular experiences for Black women. These experiences had historically been overlooked in feminist theory and anti-racist politics (i.e. the focus was on white women and Black men, leading to the marginalisation of Black women). Intersectionality is a theory, framework, or analytic sensibility used to think about systemic oppression in a broad context. In contrast to a single-issue framework which focuses on a particular issue without broader context (for example, considering only gender, only class, or only sexuality), intersectionality emphasizes individuals' experiences of multiple identities as a way to view and understand privilege and power. Intersectionality is not an identity, but a tool used to view identities and examine their interactions with power and privilege. Intersectionality is more than discussing diversity or celebrating various identities. It's not a descriptor of how people are unique or different or have

different experiences, but an analysis of how those unique or different experiences can multiply to create a particular interaction with systematic oppression and power structures. It's about power dynamics and oppression, not individual differences and recognition. (CommunityWise)

Most Significant Change (MSC)

Most Significant Change (MSC) is a project monitoring and evaluation technique. It uses a participatory approach where those involved in the project generate stories of change that they have experienced over the course of the program. The evaluator then selects the most significant of these stories and draws together the themes that emerge in order to identify tangible changes in knowledge and behaviour that have resulted from the project. (CommunityWise)

Organizational Racism

Organizational racism refers to the way seemingly normal, neutral or objective organizational policies and systems (e.g., the way we hire people, recruit board members, develop programming, etc.) can create disparities in access and outcomes for racialized and Indigenous individuals and communities. If not addressed, these policies and systems can reproduce and exacerbate disparities in power. It refers to organizational practices, which are related to but different from the racist behaviour or unconscious bias of individuals. (CommunityWise)

Post-Racial Society

A post-racial society would be one where race is no longer a significant factor in causing discord or inequality, and one where a dominant culture does not impose its norms upon minority groups. In 2008, some felt that the election of American President Barack Obama would usher in a post-racial society. (CommunityWise)

Race-Aware

To be race aware means to acknowledge the effects of racialization on social, economic and psychological outcomes. In contrast, colour-obliviousness accepts the status quo of a racist or white supremacist society by ignoring the effects that race has on injustice. (CommunityWise)

Racial Binary

The racial binary is traditionally used to refer to the tendency to view racialization as a split between white and Black, effectively erasing the impact of racialization on other groups. This limits discussion about the specific ways in which race and racism affect particular groups. The racial binary can also be used to refer to white/ non-white. (CommunityWise

Racialization

The term racialization can be used to understand how the history of the idea of "race" is still with us and impacts us all, though differentially. The term emphasizes the ideological and systemic, often unconscious processes at work. It also emphasizes how racial categories are socially constructed, including whiteness, but are socially and culturally very real. (Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre)

The process through which groups come to be socially constructed as races, based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, language, economics, religions, culture, politics, etc. That is, treated outside the norm and receiving unequal treatment based upon phenotypical features. (Canadian Race Relations Foundation)

Segregation

Racial segregation is the legal separation of people into racial groups with the intention of discrimination. Segregation can affect access to many areas including public spaces, housing, schooling, and medical care. The voluntary separation of one group from another does not constitute segregation. (CommunityWise)

Social Capital

Social capital refers to connections and shared values and understandings between people that allow them to foster trust and gain membership within interpersonal groups. (CommunityWise)

Social Location

Social location is a person's place in society based on markers such as race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability. Social location dictates access (or lack thereof) to power and privilege, and influences how people interact with the world. (CommunityWise)

Tokenizing

Tokenism occurs when an organization hires one or a few members of a marginalized community in an attempt to convey that the organization is diverse or equitable. Being the token racialized member of an organization can be harmful for the racialized person because of the inordinate burden placed on them as the only representative of their group. (CommunityWise)

Whiteness

A social construction that has created a racial hierarchy that has shaped all the social, cultural, educational, political and economic institutions of society. Whiteness is linked to domination and is a form of race privilege invisible to white people who are not conscious of its power. (Henry & Tator, 2006, p. 353, as cited in the CARED Glossary)

Whiteness", like "colour" and "Blackness", are essentially social constructs applied to human beings rather than veritable truths that have universal validity. The power of whiteness, however, is manifested by the ways in which racialized whiteness becomes transformed into social political, economic, and cultural behaviour. White culture, norms and values in all these areas become normative and natural. They become the standard against which all other cultures, groups, and individuals are measured and usually found to be inferior. (Henry & Tator, 2006, p.46-47, as cited in the CARED Glossary)

White Normativity / Culture of Whiteness

A culture of whiteness centres the actions, thoughts, and behaviours aligned with white cultural standards and norms as more valid than those of other racial groups. The groups that are defined as 'white' can change over time. (CommunityWise)

White Supremacy

This term is often connected to extremist, right-wing hate groups. However, the term is used in anti-racist work to force an acknowledgement of the belief systems underlying whiteness. Thus, white supremacy is seen as the ideology which perpetuates white racism. This ideology exists in both the overtly prescriptive form (i.e. the white supremacy that we attach to white power groups), and as the self-perpetuating cultural structure also known as whiteness. (CARED Glossary)

More Resources

Organizational Assessment Resources

Assessing Organizational Racism
(Western States Center)

Racial Equity Organizational Assessment
(Race Matters Institute)

Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Organization
(Crossroads)

Organizational Culture Resources

Nothing to add: A Challenge to White Silence in Racial Discussion
Robin DiAngelo (2012)

Robin D'Angelo challenges the phenomenon of 'white silence' within interracial conversations about race, and how this kind of silence can play a role in maintaining white privilege.

[10 Ways to Practice Institutional Racism at your Non-profit Organization](#)
Korbett Mosesley (2016)

Satirical list of the ways non-profit organizations uphold institutional racism while putting forth a face of diversity/willingness to listen to the community.

[White Supremacy Culture](#)
Tema Okun (2001)

A look at how a culture of whiteness relates to key characteristics valued in the workplace.

[Ways of Being White (Excerpt from We Can't Teach What We Don't Know: White Teachers, Multiracial Schools)](#)
Gary Howard (2016)

Analysis of white identity with reference to dynamic racial relations. Discusses different framings of 'whiteness' and how they can positively or negatively affect movements towards equity and social change.

[White Normativity: The Cultural Dimensions of Whiteness in a Racially Diverse LGBT Organization](#)

Jane Ward (2008)

This article builds on examinations of whiteness in organizations by considering how white normativity—or the often unconscious and invisible ideas and practices that make whiteness appear natural and right—is sustained even in organizations that are attentive to structural factors.

[Organizational Culture is like an Iceberg](#)
Torben Rick

[Cultural Heritage Below the Water Line](#)
Sheron Long

Intersectionality Resources

[Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics](#)
Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989)

[Why Intersectionality Can't Wait](#)
Kimberlé Crenshaw (2015)

[Rebel Girls: What we're talking about when we talk about intersectionality](#)
Carmen Rios (2016)

[No Single-Issue Politics, Only Intersectionality: An interview with Kimberlé Crenshaw](#)
Laura Flanders (2017)

Racial Caucusing Resources

[Racial Identity Caucusing: A Strategy for Building Anti-Racist Collectives](#)
Crossroads

[Caucus and Affinity Groups](#)
Racial Equity Tools