



Indigenous Leaders Circle: Decolonizing Organizational Culture

Guide for Personal Reflection and Group Conversation

INTRODUCTION

Decolonization is like a Wave. It is not a linear process. It is a journey... You are never at the end of your journey with Decolonization.

JB Webster, AMSSA E-Learning Module:
[Decolonize Yourself – Connecting to Your Indigeneity](#)

This discussion guide is intended to accompany the Indigenous Leaders Circle on Decolonizing Organizational Culture. The questions are designed to provide gentle guidance for your personal reflections and to support conversations within your organization. We encourage you to follow the flow of your conversations, allowing discussions to take their natural course.

Decolonizing organizational culture is an ongoing journey. True transformation requires more than policy change - it demands meaningful shifts in organizational culture at every level. Policies alone cannot guarantee equity or inclusion, as they are only as effective as the culture and attitudes that underpin them.

We are invited to foster organizational cultures that actively listen to Indigenous voices, value relational ways of working, and prioritize accountability and collective care. As we embark on this journey, we can begin by taking time to connect, share, and reflect. We can consider how we work together, how we treat one another, whose voices are heard, how decisions are made, and how people feel within our organization.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

We all have a role to play in the journey of decolonization. It is not the work of one person or one community – we all hold a unique and evolving role.

Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers steer with memory, teachings, and lived experience. They guide the direction of the work with relational insight and cultural grounding. It is not their job to paddle hard for everyone else; they are not here to pull others forward, but to offer vision, clarity and reminders of our responsibilities.

Service Provider Organizations, including AMSSA, hold the responsibility to translate that vision into action. We honour this generosity of Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers by acting with care, fulfilling our commitments, and carrying their guidance forward in our work.



GUIDING QUESTIONS



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Grounding and Purpose

- We all have indigeneity to somewhere. Where did your ancestors live for thousands of years?
- Why do we each do this work? What brought us to this organization or this sector?
- What values do we bring into our work, and where did those values come from?
- When we think about welcoming newcomers to this land, what responsibilities do we feel personally and professionally?

Initial Reflections

- How did you feel while listening to the Indigenous Leaders Circle conversation?
- What stood out to you most from the Indigenous Leaders Circle conversation?
 - What made you reflect on your work or organization in a new way?
 - Was there anything that challenged your thinking or made you uncomfortable?
 - What is one idea or teaching that stayed with you?

Why Change? Reflecting on Systems and Organizational Culture

- Where can we feel disconnection, hierarchy, or isolation in workplaces or systems?
- Who might feel unseen, unheard, or alone in organizational environments?
- How can strict timelines and formal policies sometimes take priority over people and relationships?
 - How might this impact staff?
 - How might this impact newcomer clients that you serve?

Policy, Culture and Organizational Change

- What does it mean to you when we say, 'policies are only as effective as the culture and attitudes underpinning them'?
- What brings policy to life in everyday work?
 - What are some approaches that would help decolonized policies to be lived and felt in an organization, not just written down?

Creating Cultures of Connection and Belonging

- What helps you to feel seen, valued, and supported at work?
- How could we welcome colleagues or clients into our spaces in a good way?
- How could we make sure people do not feel alone?
- What is one small thing we could do differently to bring more connection, joy, empathy and belonging into our workplace?
- What is one small thing we could do differently to help clients feel a stronger sense of connection and belonging when they arrive at our offices?
- How do we make sure this work continues over time, even when staff or leadership change?



RESOURCES FOR FURTHER LEARNING

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/indigenous-people/aboriginal-peoples-documents/calls_to_action_english2.pdf

Booklet: Tending to the Disconnect a Framework for Relational Accountability & Decolonizing in Relationship

<https://www.amssa.org/resource/tending-to-the-disconnect-a-framework-for-relational-accountability-decolonizing-in-relationship-booklet/>

AMSSA E-Learning Course: Indigenous Worldview vs Colonized Worldview

<https://www.amssa.org/resource/bcsis-e-learning-course-indigenous-worldview-vs-colonized-worldview/>

AMSSA E-Learning Course: Decolonize Yourself – Connecting to Your Indigeneity

<https://www.amssa.org/resource/decolonize-yourself-connecting-to-your-indigeneity/>