Building an organization of belonging

Cheryl Thompson-Morton
What is belonging? How does it relate to diversity, inclusion and equity?

What is an approach to addressing belonging at my organization?
Principles

- Respect
- Brave Space
- Allow for vulnerability
- Put the common good first
Where is one place where you felt you truly belonged? What attribute of the group made you feel you belonged? Let us know in the chat.
Belonging
A possession

A close or intimate relationship
I’m very interested in what it means for us to cultivate, together, a community that allows for risk, the risk of knowing someone outside your own boundaries, the risk that is love - there is no love that does not involve risk.  
- bell hooks
INCLUSION
Thoughts, ideas and perspectives of all individuals matter

BELONGING
An org that engages full potential of the individual, where innovation thrives, and views, beliefs and values are integrated

EQUITY
Constantly and consistently recognizing and redistributing power

DIVERSITY
Multiple identities represented in an organization

Over saturation of similarity, homogeneous culture, and simplified points of view

The dominant group or ideology is deferred to for decision making, opportunities and promotions

Culture assimilation results in disengagement and low retention
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CULTURE ASSIMILATION RESULTS IN DISENGAGEMENT AND LOW RETENTION
Belonging means this place was designed for me.
Belonging isn't just an outcome

it's a process.
Focus on who you want to serve.
Generous Exclusion

Allows diversity to be sharpened, not diluted

Who needs to be included? Why? Who should be excluded?
Questions to ask

Who not only fits, but also helps to fulfill the organization's purpose?

Who threatens the purpose?

Who, despite being irrelevant to your purpose, do you feel obligated to invite?
Who must be centered in this work?

Who does our organization serve first?

Purpose is your bouncer
Pause & Reflect

Who needs to belong as part of your organization to achieve your purpose? Who from that group has not traditionally engaged with your organization?
Listen to them
especially those who have been marginalized in your culture

The power of the voice is its relationship with the ear.
Engaging in intentional relationship in order to make something together, using the dynamics of the relationship to build it. It may also encompass balancing power dynamics between group members.
I do think that what we have to recognize is that we can’t mistake presence for power. Power is the ability to change the rules. Presence is not bad, but when we mistake presence for power, we can sometimes think something has happened that hasn’t actually happened. - Rashad Robinson
Examples of Co-creation

In journalism and in philanthropy
Examples of Co-creation

In journalism and in philanthropy
Pause & Reflect

What is something that you can co-create with the community you are serving? How can you make sure you are including people at the margins?
having a duty to explain one’s conduct to others that have control over you
Creating a culture of accountability

- Words and actions align
- Define results and expectations
- Show commitment to the process

- Be open to feedback and problem solving
- Provide mechanisms for consequences and reinforcement
- Set a deadline
How are you creating a culture of accountability in your work? How can you include those that are marginalized in the accountability structure?
characterized by visibility or accessibility of information especially concerning business practices
What is your goal and mission?
What are you doing to meet that goal?
What is your timeline?
What is your documentation policy?
How can people access that documentation?
What is an area you can work on to increase transparency at your organization?

Pause & Reflect
Accessibility

Capable of being reached, used, seen understood or appreciated
How accessible is your organization?

- What does it take to be considered a journalist/employee/board member?

- How can people engage with your products/programs? Do they rely heavily on one medium/approach?

- How easy is it to provide feedback?

- How easy is it to exert power or influence over your work?
Pause & Reflect

What might accessibility look like for your organization?