Being on a Journey
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adapted for Nathan Hale High School April 1, 2019
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Trigger warning
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Systems of Oppression

- **Power**
  - Question: What does power mean to you?
  - Definition: capacity to enforce your worldview and will on someone else; the authority/ability to make decisions
  - Activity:
    - Think of someone who has power as you answer the following questions:
      - What do they look like?
      - How are they using their power?

- **Privilege:** unearned structural power

- **Oppression = prejudice + power**
  - Example: racism = racial prejudice + power
Systems of Oppression

- Systems of oppression: sets of interlocking structures built into the culture, laws, economics, and institutions of a society that divides people for the purposes of consolidating power and profit amongst agents by extracting from targets and nature; examples include: colonialism, capitalism, patriarchy, and white supremacy

- Agent: holder of a privileged identity

- Target: holder of a marginalized identity

- Equity and anti-oppression work is about people’s humanity; when you center the most impacted, it benefits everyone.
Climate Justice Analysis

The systems that are oppressing the earth, especially patriarchy, are the same systems that are oppressing people.

What do we mean by “system”?
• Colonialism, patriarchy, capitalism, white supremacy, industrial complexes

What do we mean by "oppressing the earth"?
• Global warming, climate change, species extinction, pollution, fossil fuel extraction, development—sprawl, deforestation, mineral extraction, landfills

What do we mean by “oppressing people”?
• Racism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, economic inequality—classism, nativism

What do we mean by “patriarchy”?
• Use of masculine power, domination, ego, and control over people’s bodies especially without consent
patriarchy noun

pa·tri·ar·chy \ˈpā-trē-ˌär-kē

plural patriarchies

Definition of patriarchy

1
: social organization marked by the supremacy of the father in the clan or family, the legal dependence of wives and children, and the reckoning of descent and inheritance in the male line

broadly : control by men of a disproportionately large share of power

2
: a society or institution organized according to the principles or practices of patriarchy

For 20 years the country was ruled as a patriarchy.

Source: Merriam-Webster Dictionary
HUMANS ARE CLOSE TO KILLING OFF TWO-THIRDS OF ALL WILDLIFE IN JUST 50 YEARS
Climate Justice Analysis

- Why is addressing oppression integral to addressing the climate crisis?
  - By the time people in power are impacted, it will be too late.
  - Oppressive systems and behavior prevent collaboration and problem solving.
  - People with first-hand experience are marginalized from decision-making.
  - Systems of oppression require erasure of interconnectedness from knowing that our survival and health is interdependent.
    - Dehumanization, disconnection, and disembodiment
    - Myth of isolation and individuality
    - Othering allows for the demonization of others as the reason for inaction
  - Less bad isn’t good enough
  - Need an underlying values shift
“For the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house. They may allow us to temporarily beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change.”

—Audre Lorde, Sister Outsider
Climate Justice Definition

A set of principles for organizing that benefits everyone by:

- Centering the people most impacted—indigenous people, people of color, immigrants and refugees, and low-income people—when making decisions and crafting solutions to the climate crisis;
- Leveraging the power of the United States globally to center the leadership of small island nations, Arctic communities, and nations in equatorial zones;
- Focusing on the people of these places—and their humanity—not specifically “the environment” as something separate, thus conserving and restoring the environment;
- Connecting and in solidarity with global social justice struggles e.g., of, by, and for the people.
Just Transition Framework
# Categories for Just Climate Action

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Criteria for Just Climate Action

People & Planet

Stop Harm

Restoration & Reparations
Practices

- Relational organizing: Creating a net that works.
- Accountability: Who are you in relationship with?
- Progressive stack: Prioritizing the voices of folks with the most marginalized identities.
- Agility: Managing failure and expectations through collaboration, self-determination, and team processes.
- Check-in
- Resilience: How are you nourishing and caretaking yourself and your community?
Closing: Centering Humanity

- “What do you need to be whole? What parts of yourself do you leave behind?” –Reverend angle Kyodo Williams

- “What is this world? What is the place of human beings in this world? How then shall we live?” –Kathleen Dean Moore