| **Norm of “Whiteness”** | **Organizational Examples** |
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| **In a Perfectionist Culture:**   1. mistakes are seen as personal, i.e. they reflect badly on the person making them as opposed to being seen for what they are—mistakes; 2. there is little appreciation expressed for the work that others are doing. When appreciation is expressed, it is directed at those who already receive the most credit; 3. it is more common to point out how the person or their work is inadequate. Moreover, it is common to talk to others about the inadequacies of a person or their work without ever talking directly to the person in question; 4. making a mistake is confused with being a mistake. Doing wrong is confused with being wrong; 5. there is little time, energy, or money put into reflecting as a group and identifying lessons learned that could improve practice—in other words, little or no learning from mistakes; 6. there is a lot of splitting hairs/nitpicking. People bring up every imperfection in others’ contributions or find exceptions to generalized observations that are offered. 7. Perfectionist organizations are very good at identifying what’s wrong, but have little ability to identify, name, and appreciate what’s right. 8. Perfectionist culture is often internalized by individuals. In other words, the perfectionist fails to appreciate their own good work, often pointing out their faults or ‘failures.’ Fixating on inadequacies and mistakes rather than learning from them, the person works with a harsh and constant inner critic and this is reinforced by the organizational culture. 9. Perfectionist workplaces struggle with:    1. a poisonous level of stress and anxiety, self-blame, difficulty with teamwork, avoidance of feedback and reflection, and significant indecision;    2. holistic and systems thinking that might allow them to innovate or solve the root cause of issues. 10. Perfectionism is closely linked to a culture of blame. It relies on guilt, fear and shame as motivators for work, which contributes significantly to employee burnout and stress. |  |
| **Worship of the Written Word**   1. “If it’s not in a memo, it doesn’t exist.” Written communication is overvalued above all other forms of communication that organizations rely on for their functioning; 2. The organization does not take into account or value other ways in which information gets shared, potentially losing out on valuable information or skewing its meaning along the way; 3. Those with strong documentation and writing skills are more highly valued, even in organizations where the ability to relate to others (via methods other than the written word) is key to the mission; 4. The organization undervalues or dismisses the emotion, tone and relational impact of communication since much of this is lost or de-emphasized in written communication; — 5. There exists a culture of low trust and micromanagement (e.g. using unreasonable demands of documentation as a way to surveil an employee); 6. The multitude of ways individuals integrate and process information (i.e. not just reading) are dismissed or ignored; 7. Often based on an erroneous belief that institutional memory is largely communicated in writing. |  |
| **Only One Right Way**   1. The belief that there is one right way to do things. Once people are introduced to ‘the right way,’ they will willingly adopt it; 2. When someone does not adapt or change, then something is wrong with them (and there is nothing wrong with those who are expecting that change or conformity in the first place). Think, for instance, of the missionary who does not see value in the culture of other communities; 3. Causes significant barriers to change, agility, innovation, and teamwork; 4. Creates a sense of exclusion and isolation for people who are not comfortable or at ease with ‘the right way;' 5. Often involves stubbornness and dogmatism: a position is final and not up for discussion, even in fairly low-stakes decisions and conversations. |  |
| **Either/Or Thinking**   1. Things are either/or: good/bad, right/wrong, with us/against us. There is reduced capacity for recognizing multiple or co-existing truths and complexity. Lots of sentences start with “but;" 2. Closely linked to perfectionism. Perfectionists tend to aspire to a singular view or end goal, which makes it difficult to learn from mistakes, take feedback, and deal productively with those who do not agree; 3. Incapacitates an individual’s or organization’s ability to deal with complexity. The resulting analysis is usually superficial and not holistic (e.g. believing that poverty is simply the result of a lack of education); 4. Creates conflict and increases a sense of urgency. People feel they have to make decisions to do either this or that, with no time or encouragement to consider alternatives, particularly those requiring more time or resources; — 5. Often used by those with a clear agenda or goal to push those who are still thinking or reflecting to make a choice between ‘a’ or ‘b’ instead of acknowledging a need to come up with more options. |  |
| **Power Hoarding**   1. There is little value placed on sharing power. Power is understood to be limited, with only so much to go around; 2. Those with power feel threatened when anyone suggests changes to how things could or should be done in the organization. Leaders perceive suggestions for change as a criticism of their leadership and fail to recognize this response as part of power hoarding; 3. Those with power assume they have the best interests of the organization at heart and assume ill intent from those wanting change, characterizing the changemakers as uninformed (stupid), emotional or inexperienced; 4. Ideas of leadership are rooted in a culture of 'leader worship,' conceiving of leaders as saviours and/or heroes; 5. Power hoarding often requires secrecy. Those with power control what, when and with whom the information is shared; opaqueness in decision-making and schisms within the organization can cause additional problems. |  |
| **Paternalism**   1. Paternalism is the policy or practice of people in positions of authority restricting the freedom and responsibilities of those subordinate to them in the subordinates' supposed best interest; 2. In a paternalistic organization, decision-making is clear to those with power and unclear to those without it; 3. Those with power think they are capable of making decisions for and in the interests of those without power, often without meaningfully consulting the people being affected; 4. Those with power often don’t think it is important or necessary to understand the viewpoint or experience of those for whom they are making decisions; 5. There is often a lot of 'speaking in capital letters'—that is, presenting opinions and solutions like they are the final word on the matter, an attitude that is reinforced by tone and body language; 6. Direct condescension and infantilization of others, particularly people who are new to the group (e.g. “you’ll definitely need my help in order to get that task done”); 7. Those without power in the organization might tacitly accept their powerlessness and/or fear the very real repercussions of challenging those with power; 8. People without power understand that they do not have it and understand who does. Those without power do not really know how decisions get made; they are, however, completely familiar with the impacts of these decisions. |  |
| **Defensiveness**   1. The organization spends significant time and energy trying to protect power as it exists and covering up abuses of power; 2. The structure and procedures of the organization are optimized to protect the organization as is and to prohibit or dissuade growth and change; 3. Criticism of those with power is viewed as threatening, inappropriate, or rude; 4. People respond to new or challenging ideas with defensiveness, making it difficult to raise these ideas. People are not listening to each other or helping each other feel heard; 5. A lot of energy in the organization is spent working around particular defensive individuals (often those with power). Ensuring that their feelings are not hurt is prioritized overthinking and working through important changes that need to be made for people with less power; 6. White people spend energy defending against charges of racism instead of examining how racism might actually be happening and how their behaviors could be adding to organizational racism; 7. Lashing out, wherein people seeking emotional control adopt a defensive attitude and respond to any opinion contrary to their own as a personal attack, may occur; 8. Organizations rooted in defensiveness can unwittingly encourage the role of a solution giver: those who give a response or solution before others have had a chance to contribute to the exchange, or before the problem has been given adequate time and consideration. |  |
| **Right to Comfort**   1. The belief that those with power have a right to emotional and psychological comfort. This belief is broadly related to another characteristic to be discussed, the valuing of ‘logic’ over emotion; 2. Scapegoating those who cause discomfort. For instance, people of colour who risk calling attention to organizational racism often become the subject of scrutiny rather than those who are complicit in perpetuating oppressive dynamics within the organization; 3. Holding onto views wherein individual acts of unfairness against white people are conflated with or placed within the same analysis as systemic and structural racism that targets people of colour. |  |
| **Fear of Open Conflict**   1. People in power avoid conflict and disagreement; 2. When someone raises an issue that causes discomfort, the response is to interrogate the person who highlighted the problem instead of interrogating the problem itself; 3. Politeness is used to deny people the space to feel and to be themselves. For instance, when an employee is angered by racist acts committed against them, they are expected to mute their emotional reaction in the name of politeness and cordiality; 4. Raising difficult issues is equated with being impolite, rude, or out of line. People in power might use this as a way to maintain control and silence those who challenge the organizational status quo. |  |
| **Individualism**   1. Individuals have little experience or comfort working as part of a team; 2. People often believe that problems and challenges are best handled alone. An individual might feel solely responsible, or there is an environment that generally lacks mutual support; 3. In hierarchical organizations, accountability is thought of in terms of top-down relationships and is rarely oriented from the bottom on up. This can apply both to lateral relationships as well as in relation to the community the organization serves; 4. Recognition is often done on an individual basis. Those in positions of power (both formal and informal) often get most or all of the credit, thus invisibilizing other contributors; 5. Leads to isolation; 6. Competition is more highly valued than cooperation. Where cooperation is valued, little time and few resources are devoted to developing these skills; 7. Individualistic organizational culture creates a lack of accountability as the group values those who can get things done on their own without supervision or guidance; In individualistic organizations, people can be aggressive or reactive to persons whose group membership is important to them; for example, a person of colour in white majority organization who offers their perspective as a racialized individual might be met with discomfort, defensiveness, or denial as a way to silence or invisible how race and racism operate within the organization; |  |
| **I’m the Only One**   1. The belief that if something is going to be done right, I have to do it. Connected to the organizational characteristic of individualism; 2. Individuals with this belief often have little or no ability to trust and delegate work to others—those on the receiving end of this lack of trust have difficulty feeling respected and valued; 3. Linked to a culture of perfectionism and disempowerment; 4. This belief can contribute significantly to burnout and resentment in organizations given individuals’ reduced capacity to ask for help and share the work, to be open to other perspectives or ways of doing, and to trust others’ abilities. |  |
| **Progress is Bigger/More**   1. The belief that success and progress is synonymous with 'bigger' and 'more' is rooted in capitalism; 2. Progress is understood as organizational expansion (e.g. adding staff or projects) or the ability to serve more people, regardless of how well the community is being served; 3. This attitude gives little to no consideration for the cost associated with expansion. For example, growth might also mean: 4. increased control over your organization by funders or other external stakeholders; 5. the exploitation, exclusion, or underserving of the community as focus shifts to quantity over quality; 6. the burnout of staff and volunteers treated as a necessary evil in the name of unchecked growth. |  |
| **Objectivity**   1. The belief that people can be (and can choose to be) objective or ‘neutral’ in their viewpoints and analyses; 2. The belief that emotions are inherently destructive, irrational, and that they should not play a role in decision-making or group processes; 3. Invalidating or punishing people who show emotion; 4. Requiring people to think in a linear or ‘logical’ fashion and ignoring, invalidating or being frustrated by those who think in other ways; |  |
| **Quantity over Quality**   1. All the time and money resources of an organization are directed toward producing measurable outcomes; 2. Things that can be measured are more highly valued than things that cannot. The organization’s impact is assessed in terms of measurable figures (e.g. event attendance numbers, newsletter circulation reach, and money spent) instead of by indicators that are less easily measured (e.g. quality of relationships, democratic decision-making, and ability to constructively deal with conflict); 3. There is little or no:    1. value attached to process;    2. comfort with emotion and feelings;    3. capacity for handling complexity; — effort to capture qualitative and experiential information. 4. Process may be sacrificed in favour of efficiency or 'getting things done.' For example, when there is a conflict between content (the agenda of the meeting) and process (people’s need to be heard or engaged), content will 'win.' That is, you may get through the agenda, but if due attention has not been paid to people’s need to be heard, the decisions taken are likely to be undermined and/or disregarded. |  |
| **Sense of Urgency**   1. A constant sense of urgency makes it difficult to take time to be inclusive, encourage democratic and/or thoughtful decision-making, to plan long-term, or to consider consequences; 2. A constant sense of urgency frequently results in sacrificing potential allies for quick or highly visible results. For example, an organization might sacrifice the interests of communities of colour in order to win victories for white people (who are seen as the default or norm community and therefore 'more valuable'); 3. This dynamic is often reinforced by funding proposals that promise too much work for too little money, and by funders who expect too much for too little. |  |

| **Antidotes** | **Organizational Examples** |
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| **Perfectionist Culture**   1. Emphasize a culture of appreciation, where the organization takes time to ensure that people’s work and efforts are valued; 2. Develop a 'learning organization,' where it is expected that everyone will make mistakes and that those mistakes offer opportunities for growth; 3. When things go wrong, don’t automatically search for someone to blame or assume there is someone at fault 4. Foster an environment where people can recognize that mistakes sometimes lead to positive results. Develop an ability to fail and transform from those failures; 5. Separate the person from the mistake. When offering feedback, always speak to the things that went well before offering criticism; 6. Ask people to include specific suggestions for how to do things differently when they offer critical feedback 7. Realize that being your own worst critic does not actually improve the work. It often contributes to low morale for everyone and does not help you or the group learn from mistakes; 8. Develop other sources of motivation in your organization such as a shared vision and a commitment to personal and organizational learning. |  |
| **Worship of the Written Word**   1. Are the documents in our organization relevant and meaningful to the people they are meant to guide and support? 2. Are key written documents reviewed and updated as our organization and community evolves? 3. Does our organization solely rely on policies and procedures when trying to resolve conflicts or problems? What other reflexes can we develop when faced with challenging problems, uneven expectations, and miscommunication? 4. Are people given the time to read important documents, and also to engage with and ask questions about them? |  |
| **Only One Right Way**   1. Accept that there are many ways to get to the same goal and be open to alternative routes; 2. Once the group has made a decision to take a particular path to achieving a goal, honour that decision and see what can be learned from that way (even and especially if it is not the way you would have chosen); 3. Notice when people do things differently and how those different ways might improve your approach; + 4. Keep an eye out for the tendency in a group or a person to keep pushing the same point over and over out of a belief that there is only one right way—and then name it; 5. When working with communities from a different culture (whether individually or organizationally), be clear on what you have still to learn about their ways of doing; 6. Never assume that you or your organization know what is best for other communities. Humility is essential in developing meaningful relationships with communities whose cultural background is different from yours or your organization’s. |  |
| **Either/Or Thinking**   1. Notice when people use ‘either/or’ language and replace it with ‘both/and’ language; 2. When you feel stuck in an either/or situation, push to come up with more than two alternatives. If you feel you are stuck between two bad decisions and can’t see a way out, try telling your team: “I believe there is a third solution. What we need to do is figure out what it is;" 3. Notice when people are oversimplifying complex issues, particularly when the stakes seem high or an urgent decision needs to be made. Slow it down and encourage people to do a deeper analysis; 4. When people are faced with an urgent decision, take a pause and give people some breathing room to think creatively. When possible, avoid making decisions under extreme pressure; 5. Equip your team with the tools to think in more complex and nuanced ways (e.g. mind maps, relationship maps, and other forms of systems mapping). |  |
| **Power Hoarding**   1. Embed shared power in the organization’s values statement, its structures and policies, and its day-to-day operations; 2. Instill a culture of good leadership understood as supporting the development of others’ leadership skills. Relatedly, such a culture necessarily abandons the idea of 'hero leaders;' 3. Cultivate leadership ideals that incorporate an understanding of the inevitability of change. Challenges to leadership are important for the health of the team and the organization; 4. Resist and challenge competitiveness. Prioritize cooperation and collaboration. This helps shift the implicit assumptions about leaders and leadership that can prevent power sharing from occurring. |  |
| **Paternalism**   1. Cultivate transparency and open dialogue around decision-making practices. Ensure that everyone has a part in important decisions; 2. Make sure everyone knows and understands their level of responsibility and authority in the organization; 3. Meaningfully include those who are impacted by a decision in the decision-making process; 4. Be as transparent as possible about the reasons for any decisions being made without the input or against the input of people involved. Distinguish between appropriate confidentiality and discretion around sensitive information and an expedient lack of transparency. |  |
| **Defensiveness**   1. Understand that structural mechanisms cannot in and of themselves facilitate or prevent abuse; 2. Recognize the link between defensiveness and fear (e.g. fear of losing power, losing face, losing comfort, losing privilege). Name defensiveness when it is a problem; 3. Foster a culture of self-reflexivity in which people are supported and challenged to work on their own defensiveness; 4. Develop an organizational culture of caring and direct critical feedback— people are frequently capable of handling more than others expect, especially when there is a foundation of trust and care; 5. Discuss the ways in which defensiveness and resistance to new ideas get in the way of the organization’s mission. |  |
| **Right to Comfort**   1. Understand that discomfort is at the root of all growth and learning—its presence is often signaling the need for deep self-reflection; 2. Welcome discomfort as much as you can; 3. Deepen your political analysis of racism and its intersections with other axes of oppression; 4. Personalize your reflections on racism and systemic oppression, rather than remaining within theoretical and hypothetical ways of thinking. These personal reflections can make for difficult work, but they strengthen analysis and help one see lived experiences and emotions as they fit into a larger picture. |  |
| **Fear of Open Conflict**   1. Role-play ways to handle conflict before conflict happens; 2. Distinguish between being impolite and bringing up difficult issues. Learn to hold truth-telling conversations as a team and help each other feel heard in these moments; 3. Unlearn attitudes around 'acceptable' ways of calling attention to painful truths. Make space for emotions and think expansively about how problems are flagged in the organization; 4. Once a conflict is resolved, take the opportunity to revisit it at a later point and consider how it might have been handled differently. |  |
| **Individualism**  See original source document for content | **Community & Collectivism** |
| **I’m the Only One**   1. Embed teamwork and collaboration in the organization’s values, structures, policies and ways of doing; 2. Ensure that the organization is working toward shared goals and that people have a collective will to learn from mistakes together. Understand growth and success to be a matter of collective, rather than individual, achievement; 3. Foster a culture of mutual support where people feel safe bringing problems to the group;      1. Use team meetings as a place to solve problems and break workplace isolation, not just as a place to report activities; 2. Articulate that collaboration is a key skill you need in yourself and your team, and evaluate people based on their ability to work as part of a team (and other ‘soft skills’) and to accomplish shared goals. Make sure that recognition is given to all those who participate in an effort, not just the leaders or most public person; |  |
| **Progress is Bigger/More**   1. Take the time to think about the vision you have for your organization in 25, 50, or even 100 years—not just the upcoming season or your five-year strategic plan. Foster 'seventh generation thinking' by asking how the actions of the group now will affect people seven generations from now; 2. Make sure that any cost-benefit analysis includes all (i.e. human) costs, not just financial ones. Human costs may include, for example, the impacts on morale, credibility, and use of resources; 3. Include process goals in your planning, such as how you want to do your work, not just what you want to do; 4. Ask the people you work with to evaluate how growth and change management affects them. |  |
| **Objectivity**   1. Realize that everybody has a worldview and that these worldviews inform the way they understand things; 2. Work to expand your perspectives on what is counted as 'legitimate knowledge' versus what is dismissed. Validate emotional/affective, experiential, and ancestral knowledges as legitimate and powerful that are able to work in tandem with other knowledge forms to create expansive understanding and thinking; 3. Realize this means you, too. It might be easy to detect another person’s dismissiveness or rigidity, but we all have to check ourselves and notice when we engage in this kind of narrow thinking; 4. Challenge yourself to sit with discomfort when people are expressing themselves in ways which are not familiar to you. Continue to listen; + 5. Respect that everybody has a valid and useful perspective, and it is the job of the collective to understand what that perspective is—even and perhaps especially through discomfort and/or disagreement. |  |
| **Quantity over Quality**   1. Include process or quality goals in your planning, and look for ways to measure them (e.g. if you have a goal of inclusivity, think about key indicators you can measure to assess whether than goal has been achieved); 2. Make sure your organization has a values statement or some other anchor that expresses how the group wants to do its work. Consider this a living document, one that people ought to use in their day-to-day work; 3. Learn to recognize those times when you need to get off the agenda in order to address people’s underlying concerns. |  |
| **Sense of Urgency**   1. Learn to make practical work plans that set up people for success; 2. Write realistic funding proposals with realistic time frames; 3. Understand that things take longer than anyone usually expects. Leadership should build in flexibility and suppleness during times when urgency seems to pervade the workflow and/or workplace culture; 4. Discuss what it means to set goals around anti-racism, anti-colonialism, and other forms of resistance to structural oppression. Dedicate time to support individual and organizational learning, and collectively herald structural changes that give rise to inclusion and diversity; 5. Take the time needed to learn from past experiences and find a feasible, consistent method for documenting and/or preserving these learnings; 6. Realize that rushing decisions takes more time in the long run. Inevitably, people who didn’t get a chance to voice their thoughts and feelings will at best resent and at worst undermine the decision because they were left unheard; 7. Be clear about how you will make good decisions in an atmosphere of urgency. |  |