

Belonging without Othering

DATE

November 13,
2024

PRESENTER

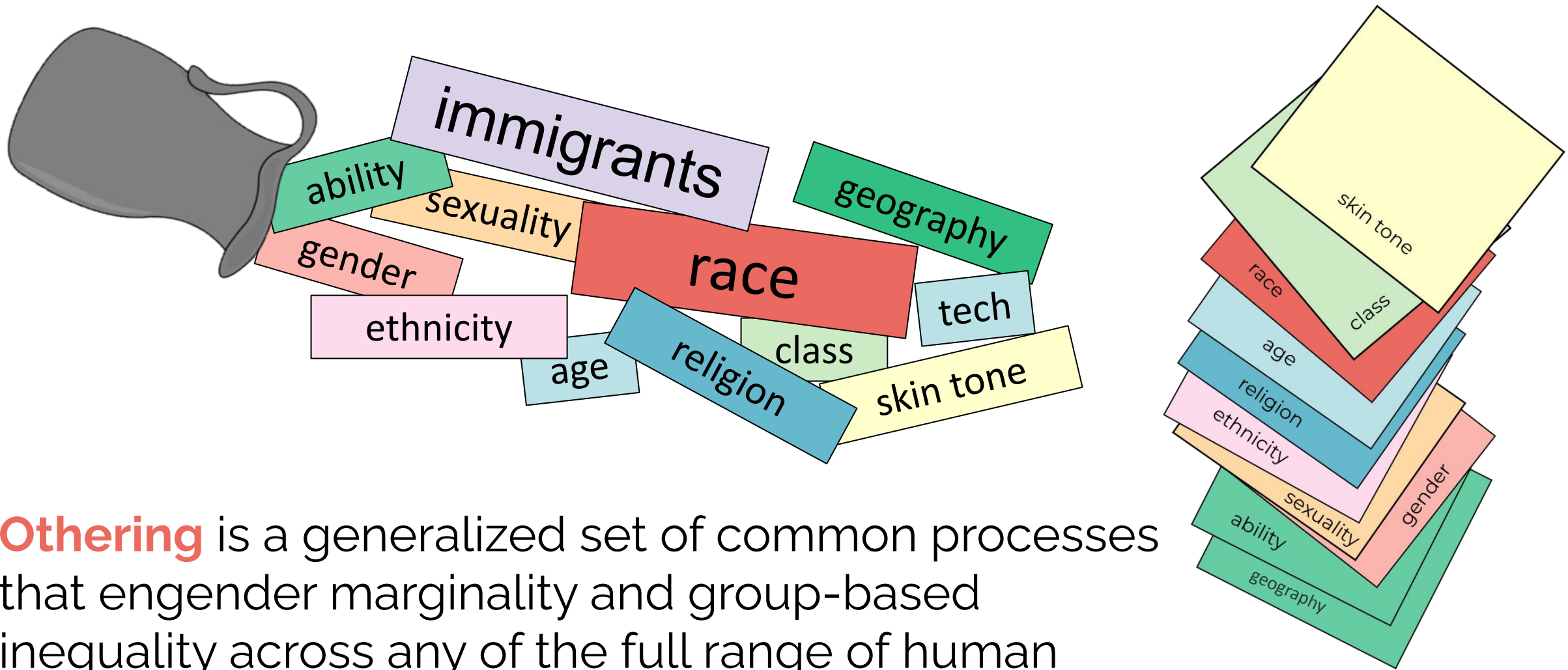
john a. powell,
Director
Othering & Belonging
Institute

AUTHORIAL SUPPORT

Emily Chuah
and Shadrick
Small

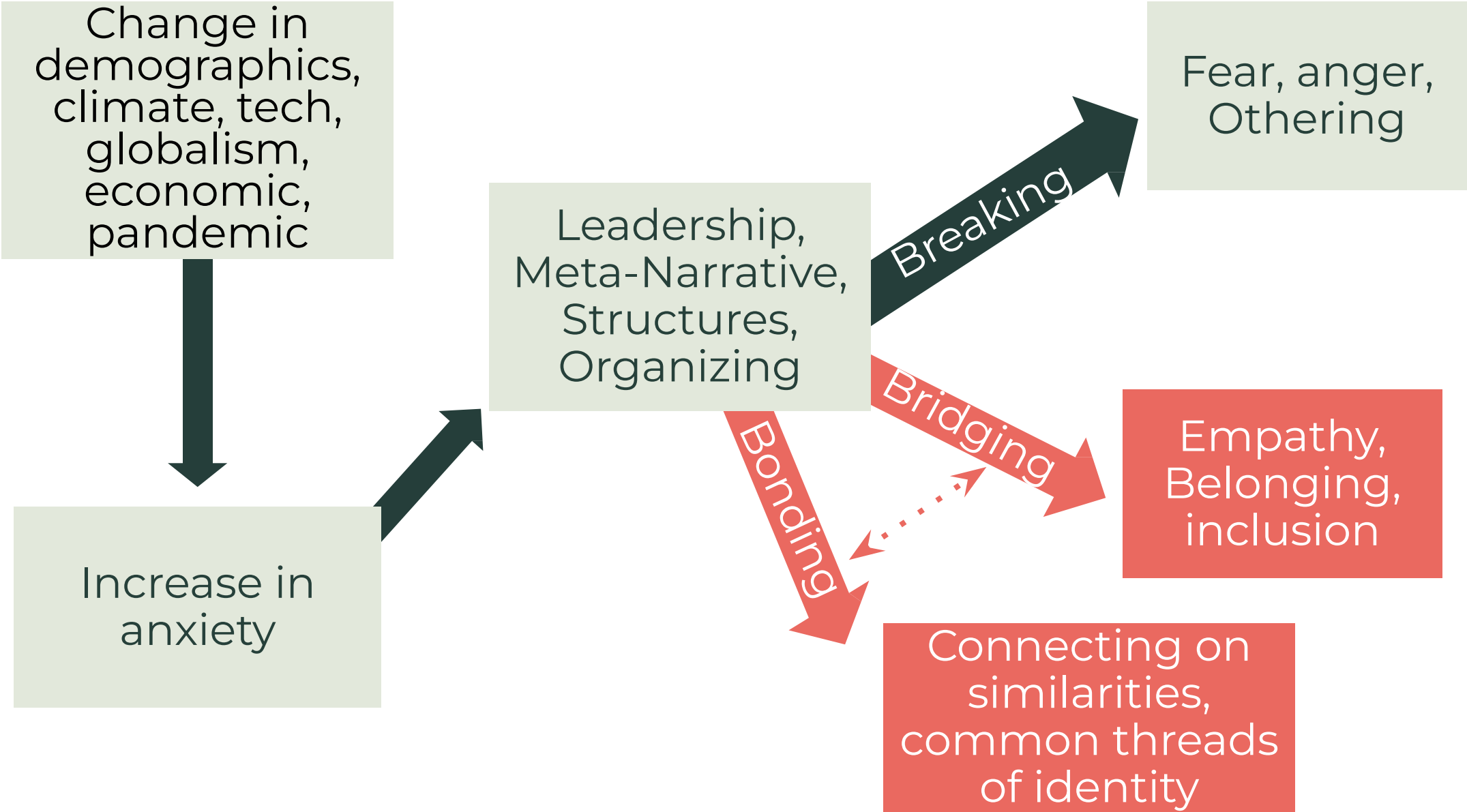
The problem of
“Othering” is the
problem of the
21st century.



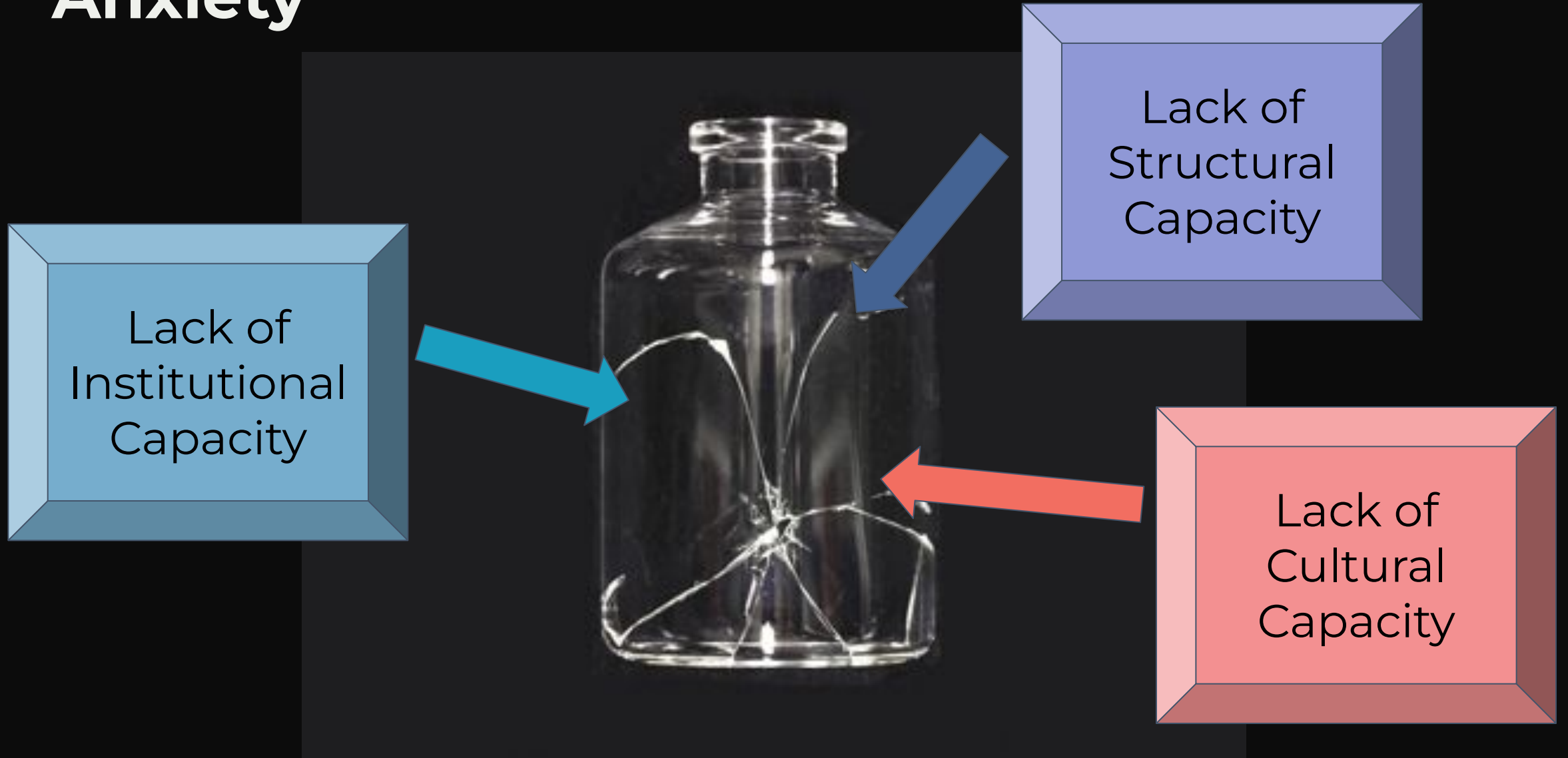


Othering is a generalized set of common processes that engender marginality and group-based inequality across any of the full range of human differences.

Rapid Change Produces Collective Anxiety



Structural Forces Contribute to Our Anxiety





For example,
front porches
vs.



Back porches

Time spent away from home on an average day before and after the pandemic in Spain

Age	Before Lockdown		After Lockdown	
	18–24	25–34	18–24	25–34
Less than an hour	0	1.6	7.7	13.7
Around 1 h	4.7	7.5	11.2	21.5
Around 2 h	12.4	22.5	28.4	24.8
Around 3 h	13.6	19.5	13	14
Around 4 h	17.2	16.9	16.6	11.7
Around 5 h	10.7	7.8	9.5	4.2
Around 6 h	13.6	7.5	3	2.6
Around 7 h	5.3	2.6	1.8	1.3
Around 8 h	8.9	3.9	1.8	2.3
9 h or more	10.7	8.1	5.9	2.6
Do not know	3	2	1.2	1.3
(N)	164	301	167	303
Mean (hours)	4.93	3.94	3.26	2.58
Standard deviation	2.37	2.32	2.21	2.02

Source: [Segado, Morales, Paez](#)

Source: The authors from Survey on social and affective relationships during the COVID-19 pandemic (I) (2021).

Global Trends

1. **Demographic Change & Mass Migration**
2. **Technology & Social Media Communication**
3. **Globalization (minus)**
4. **Income and Wealth Inequality**

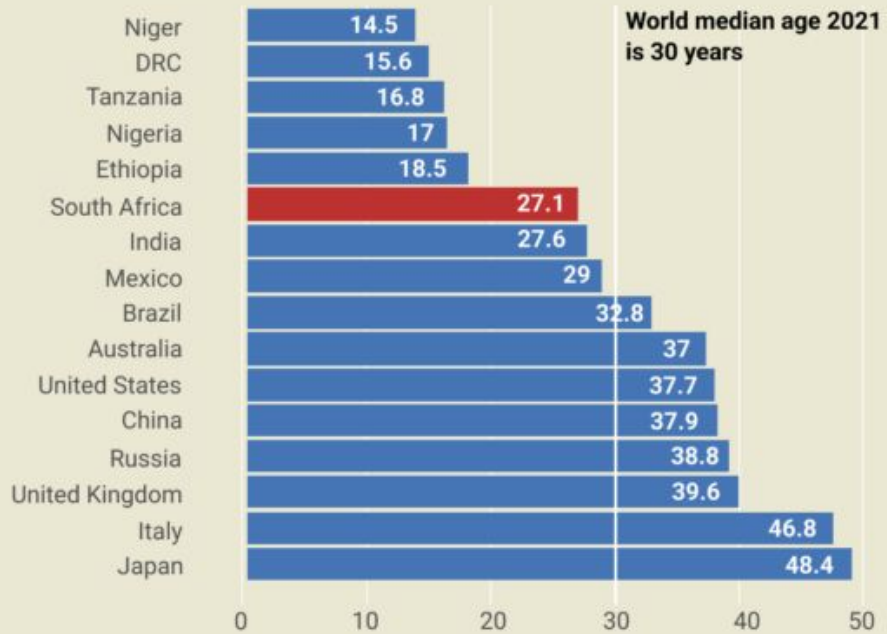
The result is a cataclysm of xenophobic populism, reactionary ethno-nationalism, demagoguery, and fear of the other.



Example of Demographic Shifts

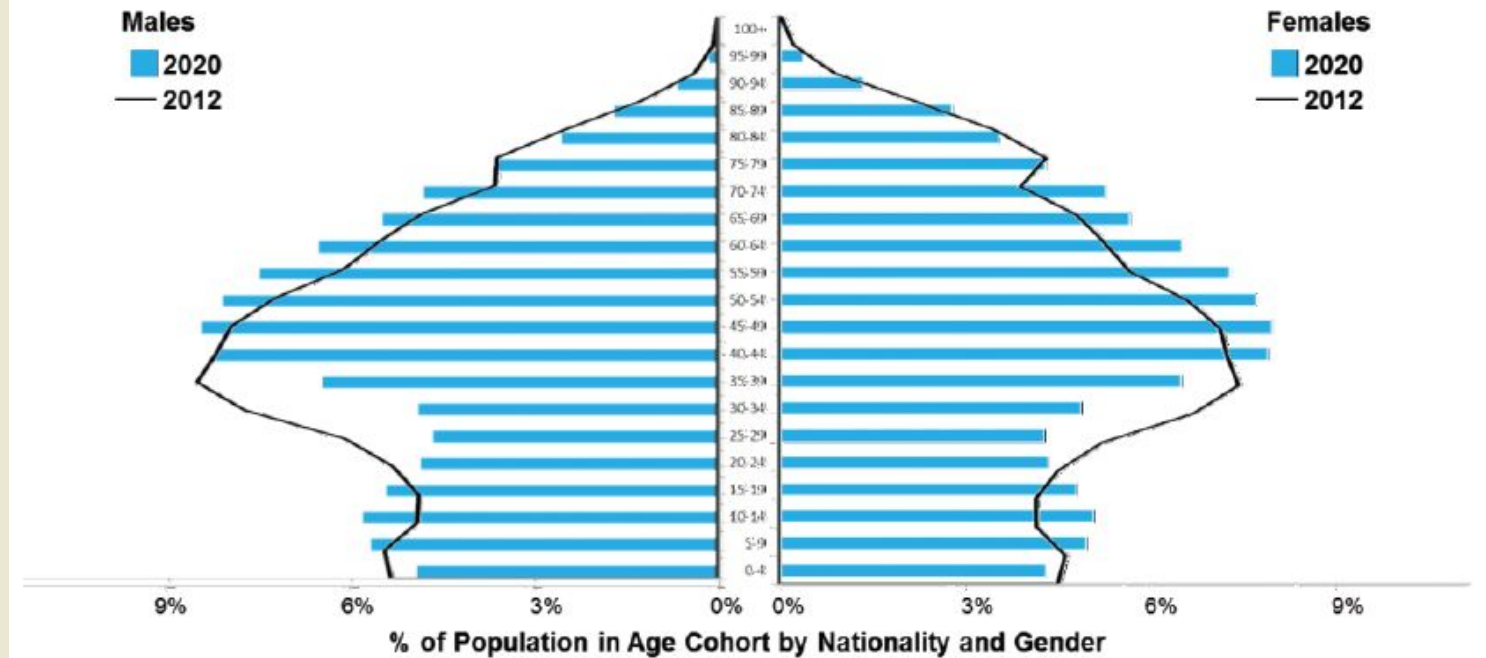
Young at heart

Half of the people in Africa are under the age of 19



Source: UN World Population Prospects 2022

Evolution of Spanish Resident Population Pyramid Gender, 2012 to 2020

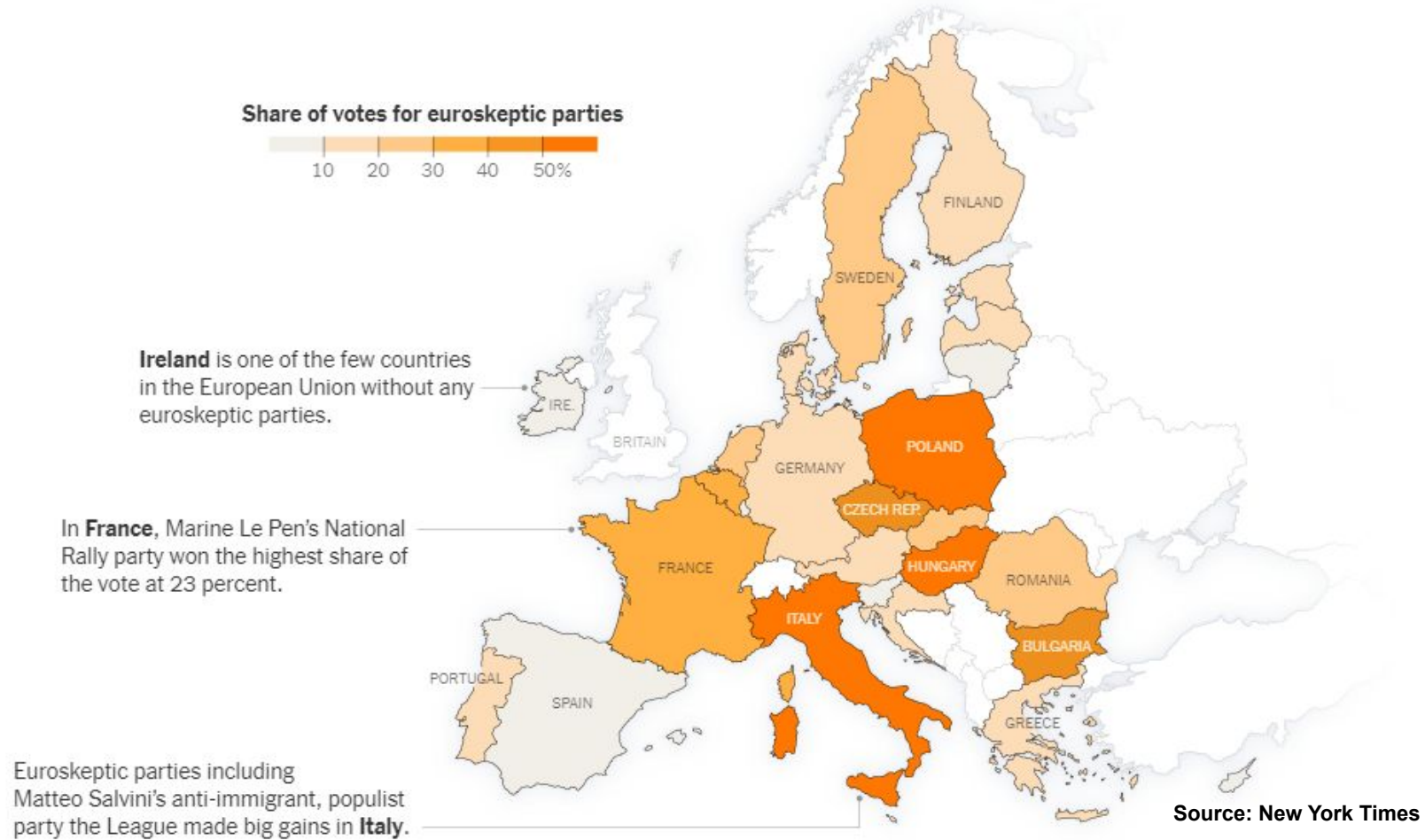


Sources:

- <https://www.theoutlier.co.za/economy/undefined/85203/what-a-young-population-means-for-africa-in-7-charts-and-a-map/>
- <https://ucronin.wordpress.com/2014/05/04/fade-to-grey-the-failing-demographics-of-spain/>

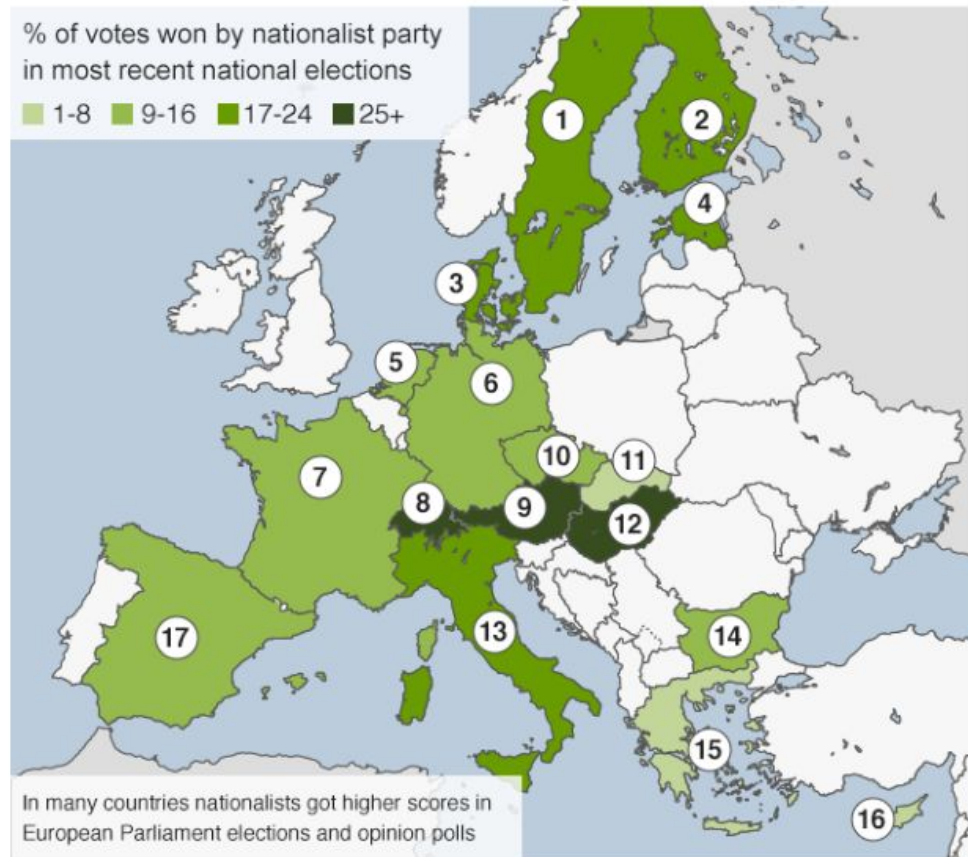
Nationalist Surge – The Rise of Anti-EU Sentiment

Where Voters Rallied Behind Anti-European Union Parties



Rise in Votes for Nationalist Parties

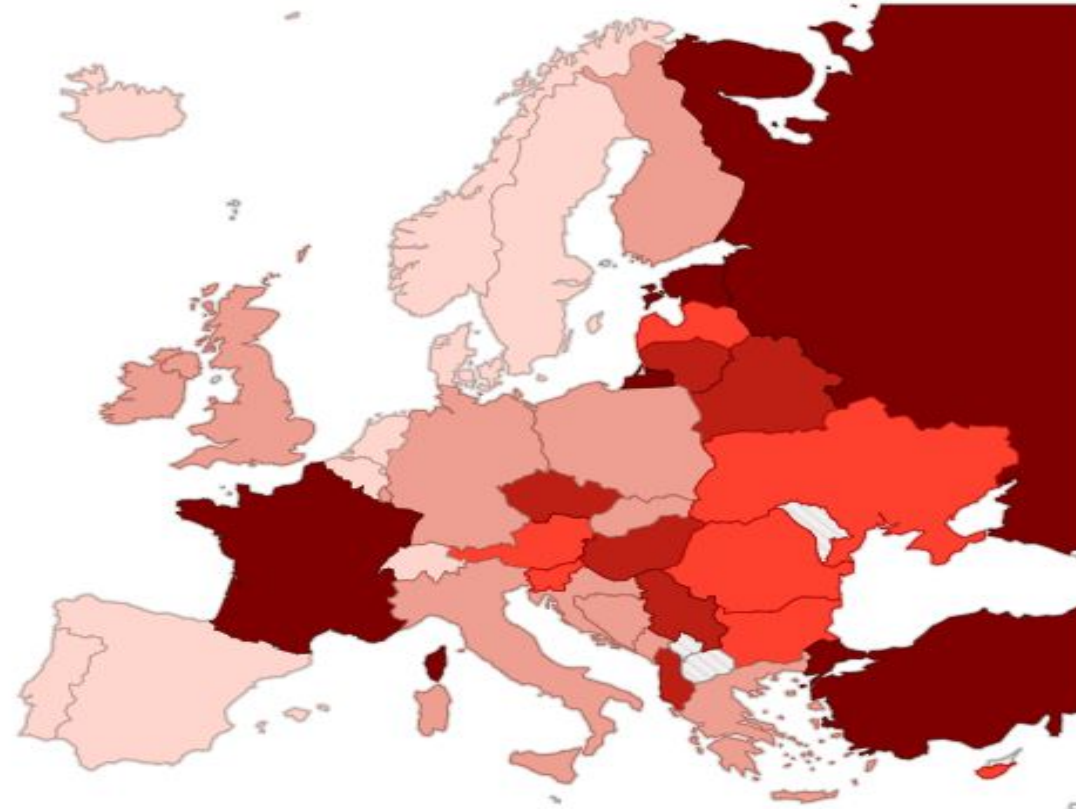
Rise of nationalism in Europe



- 1 **Sweden**
Sweden Democrats **17.6%**
- 2 **Finland**
The Finns **17.7%**
- 3 **Denmark**
Danish People's Party **21%**
- 4 **Estonia**
Conservative People's Party **17.8%**
- 5 **Netherlands**
Freedom Party **13%**
- 6 **Germany**
Alternative for Germany **12.6%**
- 7 **France**
National Rally **13%**
- 8 **Switzerland**
Swiss People's Party **29%**
- 9 **Austria**
Freedom Party **26%**
- 10 **Czech Republic**
Freedom and Direct Democracy **11%**
- 11 **Slovakia**
Our Slovakia **8%**
- 12 **Hungary**
Fidesz **49%**, Jobbik **19%**
- 13 **Italy**
The League **17.4%**
- 14 **Bulgaria**
United Patriots **9%**
- 15 **Greece**
Golden Dawn **7%**
- 16 **Cyprus**
ELAM **3.7%**
- 17 **Spain**
Vox **10.3%**

Measuring Xenophobia

Percent of Respondents in Europe Who Wouldn't Want Immigrants or Foreign Workers as Neighbors, 2005-2009





Percent of Individuals Surveyed Who Did Not Want an Immigrant or a Foreign Worker as a Neighbor



Source: [World Values Survey, 2005-2009](#) | [Get The Data](#) | [Embed](#)

Atlantic

Populism isn't just...

Left ←   Right

It's


Up
Down




**What does one
need to belong?**

Example: who can be Spanish or Catalan?



Example: who can be European? Who can speak on the global stage?



Reflection: Who is the designated formative other and who is the implicit other in their respective spheres?

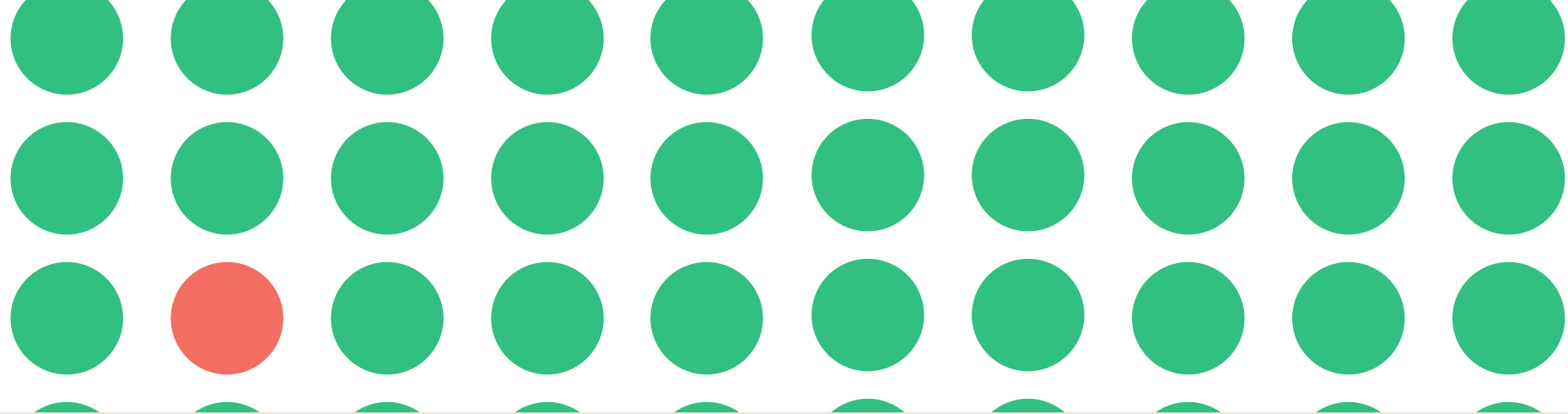
W.E.B. Du Bois



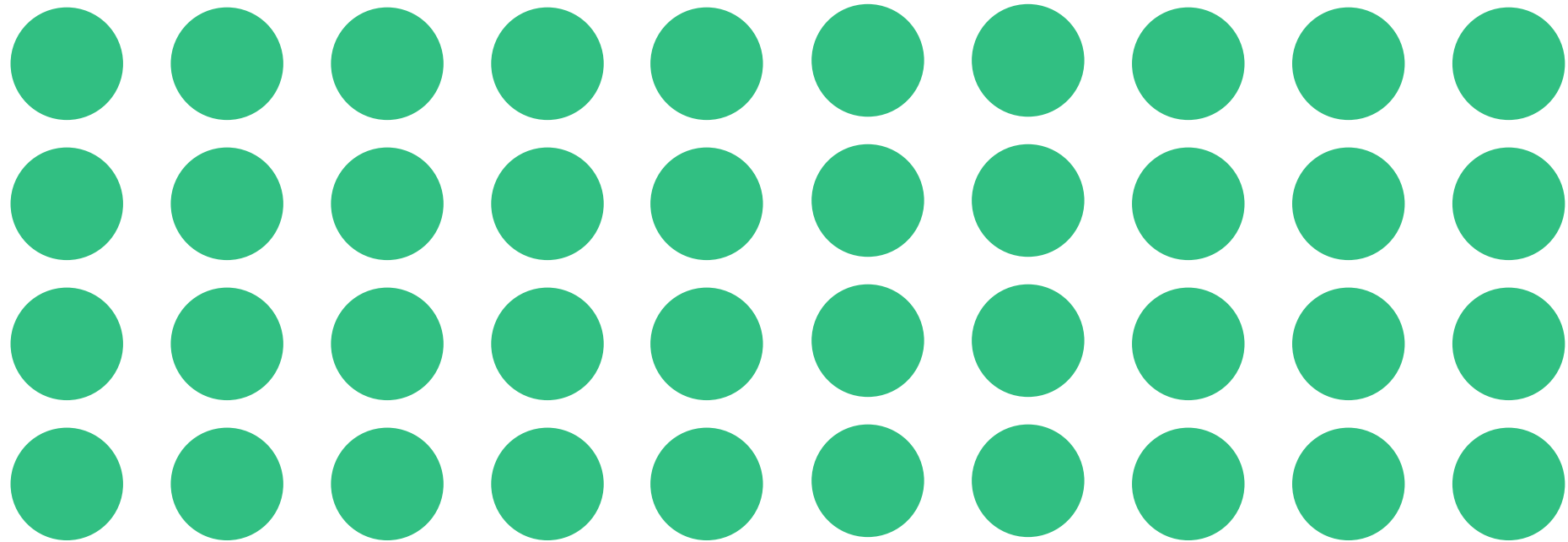
Not speaking or being heard can involve othering.

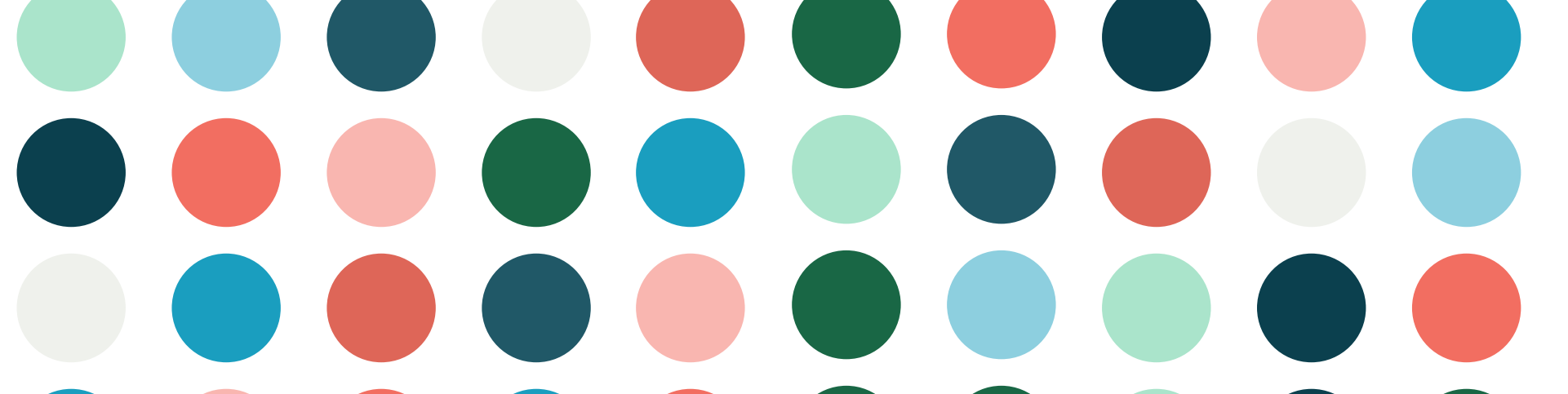


For example, being color-blind or choosing not to “see race” involves othering.

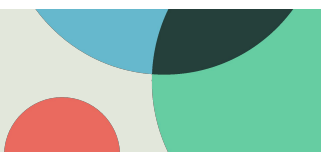
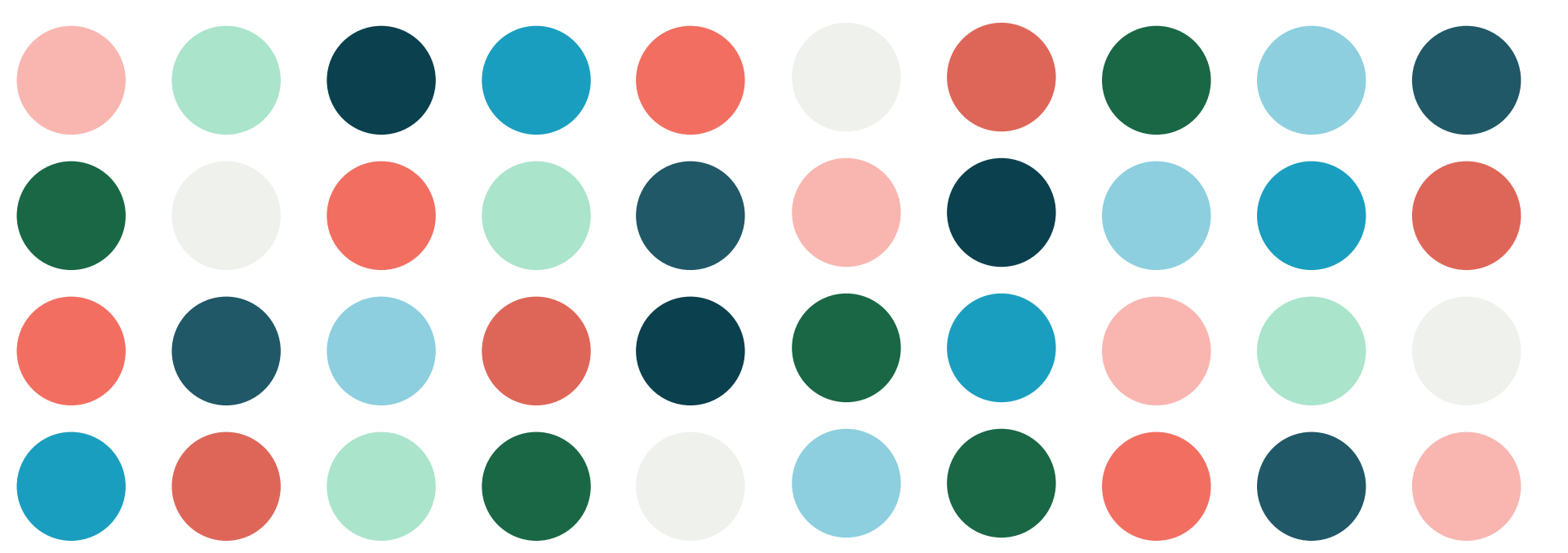


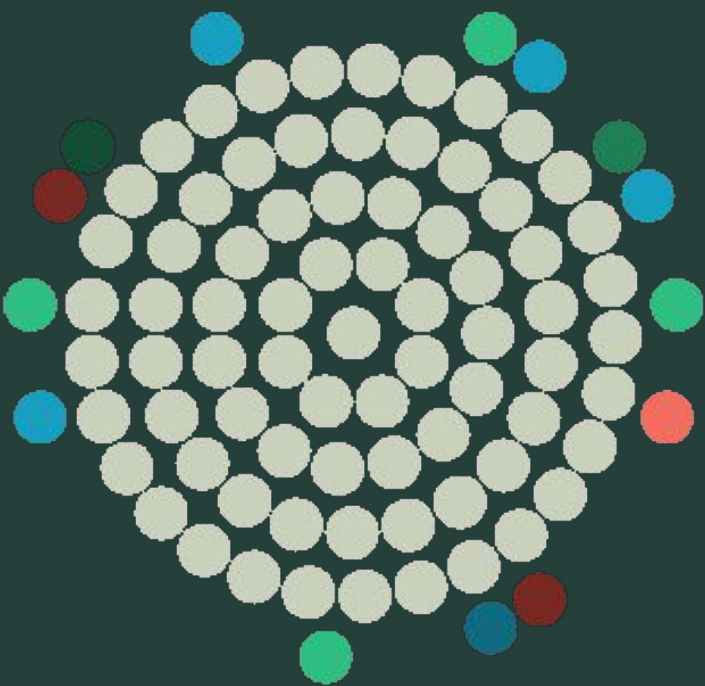
The opposite of Othering is not “saming.”



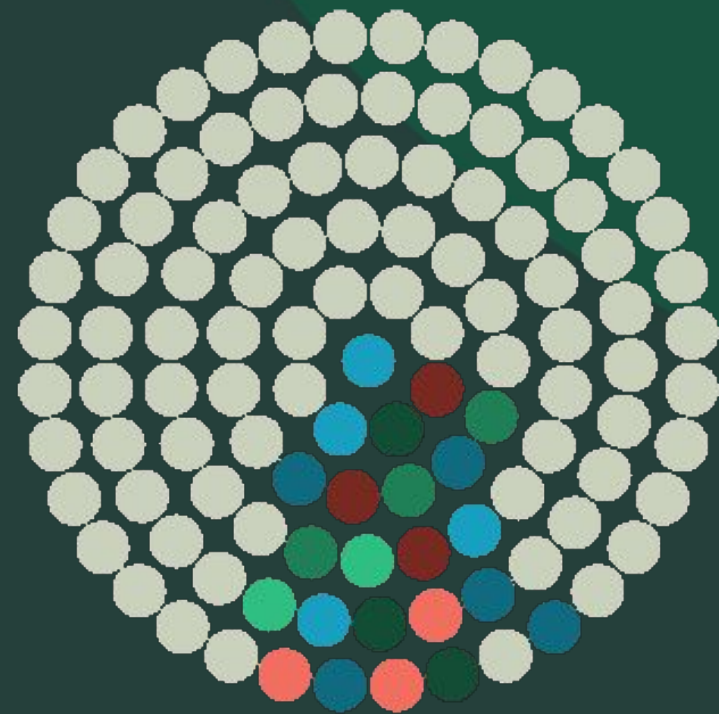


It is **belonging.**

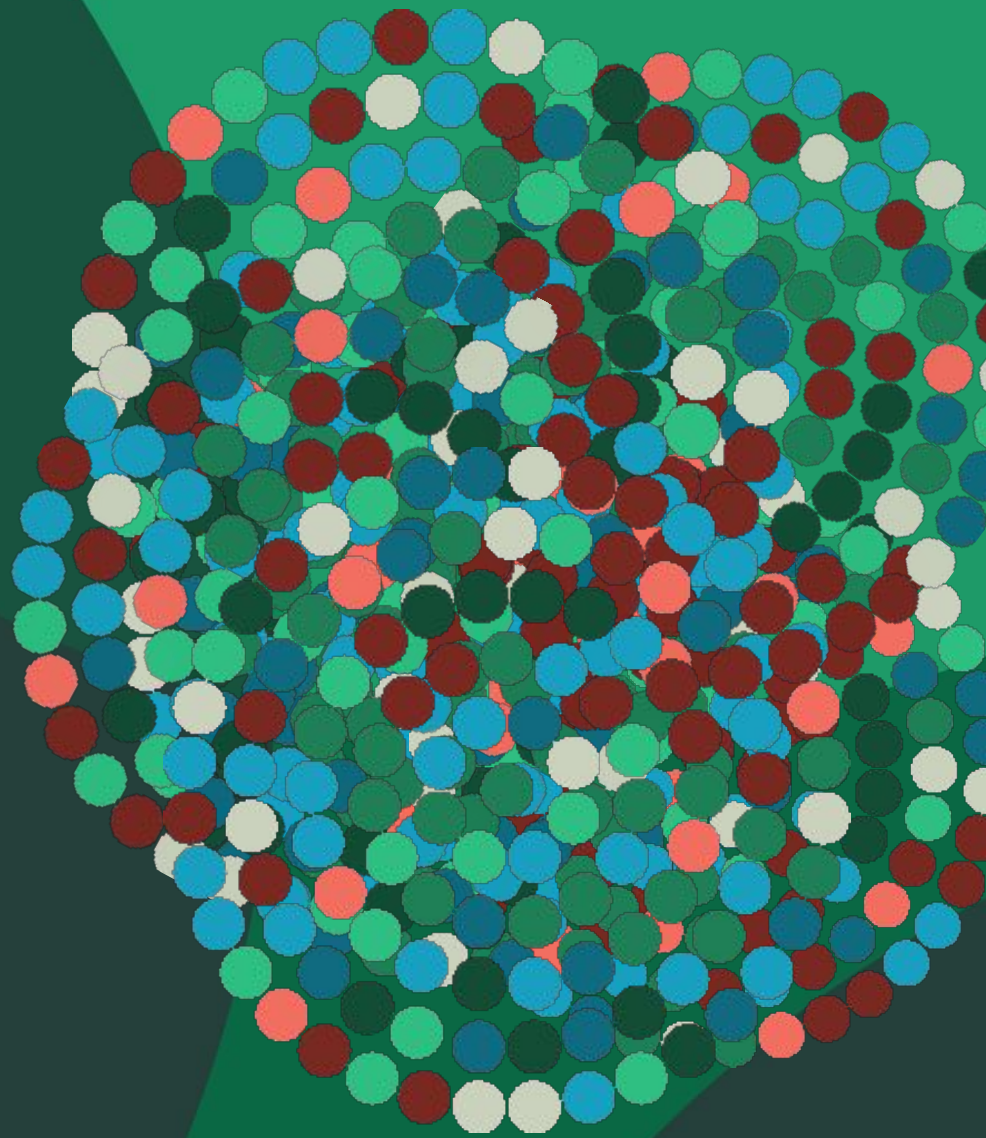




Exclusion



Inclusion



Belonging

Elements of Belonging

Inclusion

- Equity
- Absence of exclusion
- Accommodation
- Access

Connection

- Emotional / affective ties to people & places
- Sense of attachment, fondness, safety, or warmth

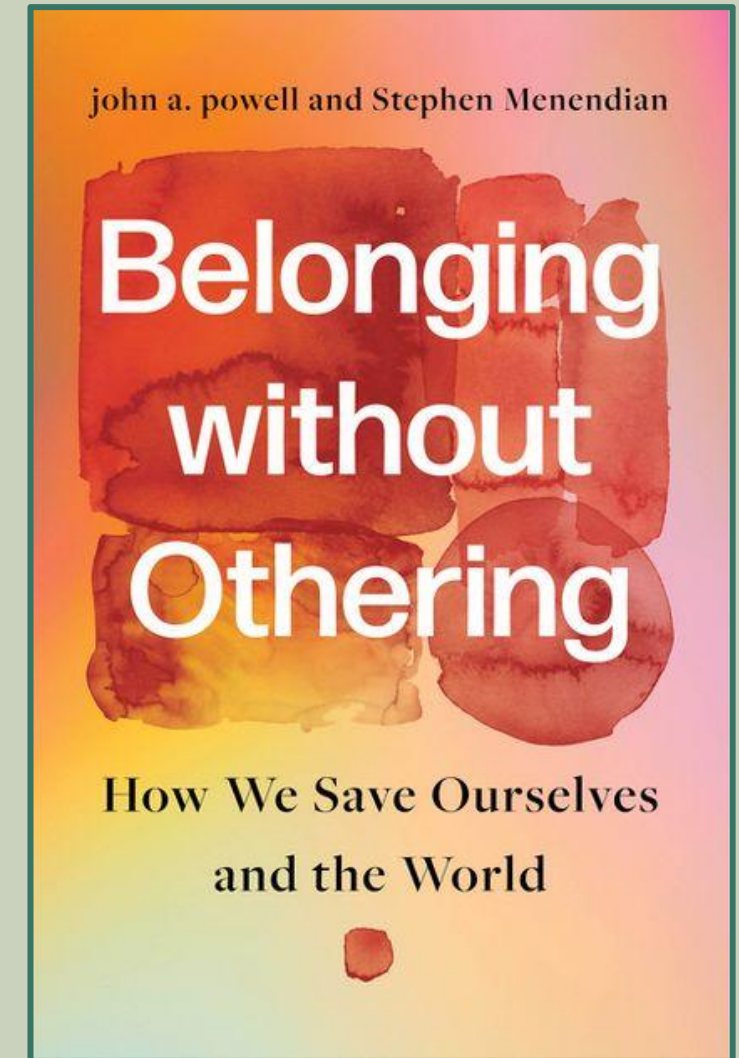
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Recognition

- Demonstration that community or institution sees, respects & values various social identities

Agency

- Individual & collective capacity to co-create the environment and wield (shared) power



**Belonging is about
co-creating and
co-owning
structures to
belong.**



Reflection

- Think of a time when you didn't belong, when you were othered interpersonally and institutionally. How did that experience impact you?



Bridging is a precondition for belonging.

Stories and Narratives

Who's in the stories? Who is left out? Who is telling story? Who is the protagonist/villain? Who is the audience?



How do we expand our circles to include everyone in our stories and narratives?

What do we want?

Barriers

Decisions we can make

Outcomes



Power Matters

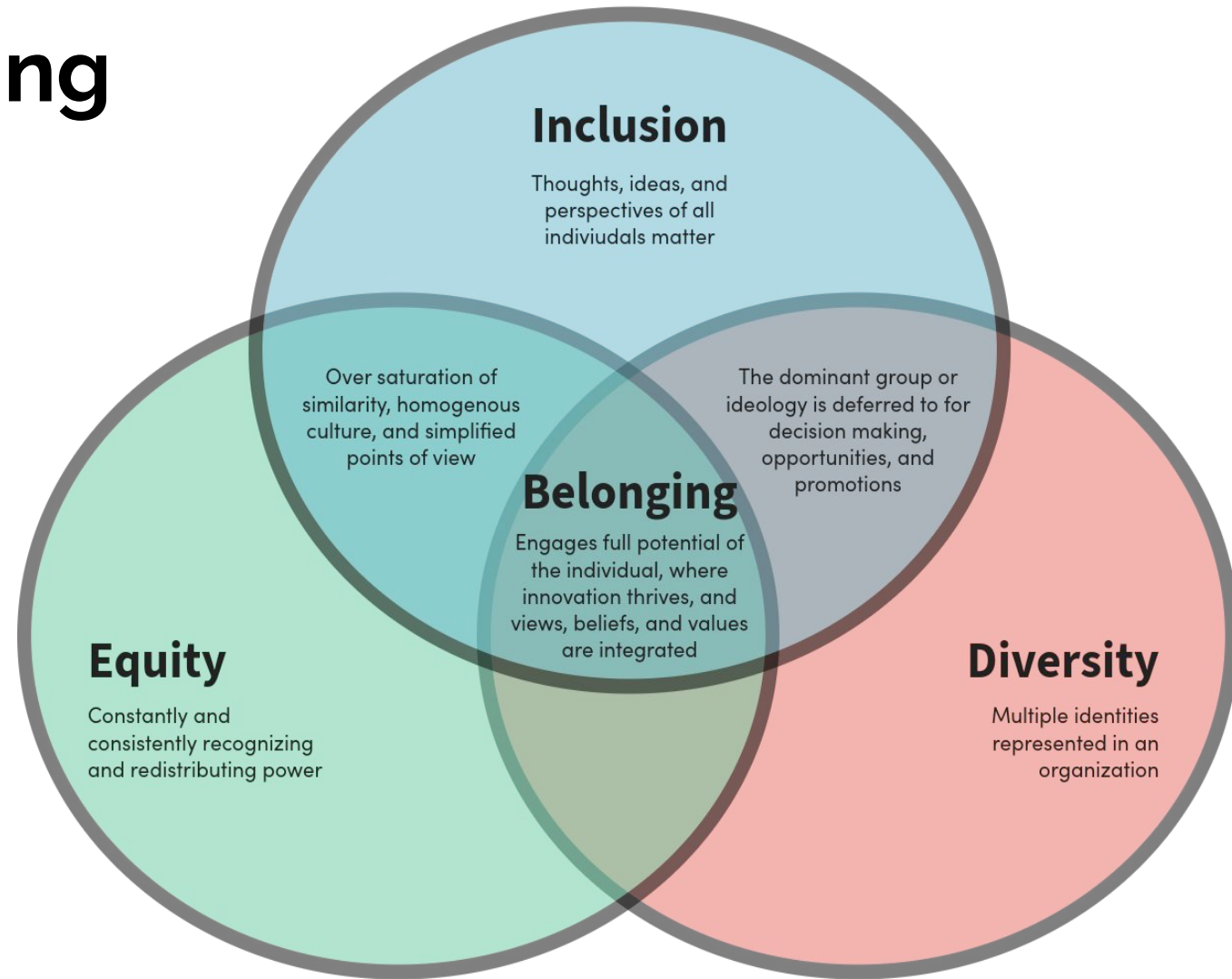
- Bridging may look different where there is a power differential.
- Power is positional, structural, and hierarchal.
- Individuals can build relationships with institutions and individuals who have relative power to access resources.



From Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to Bridging and Belonging

Why move from DEI to Bridging and Belonging?

- We don't want to just welcome people into existing structures
- We want people to **co-create structures and institutions**
- The **work of bridging happens through co-creation**



Source: <https://medium.com/@krysburnette/its-2019-and-we-are-still-talking-about-equity-diversity-and-inclusion-dd0c9a66113>

Moonshot:

Belonging without as a global norm in 15 years



**Can we imagine (build) new structures
that honor our multiple identities?**

**A world where we all belong and no one
is othered. A new story.**

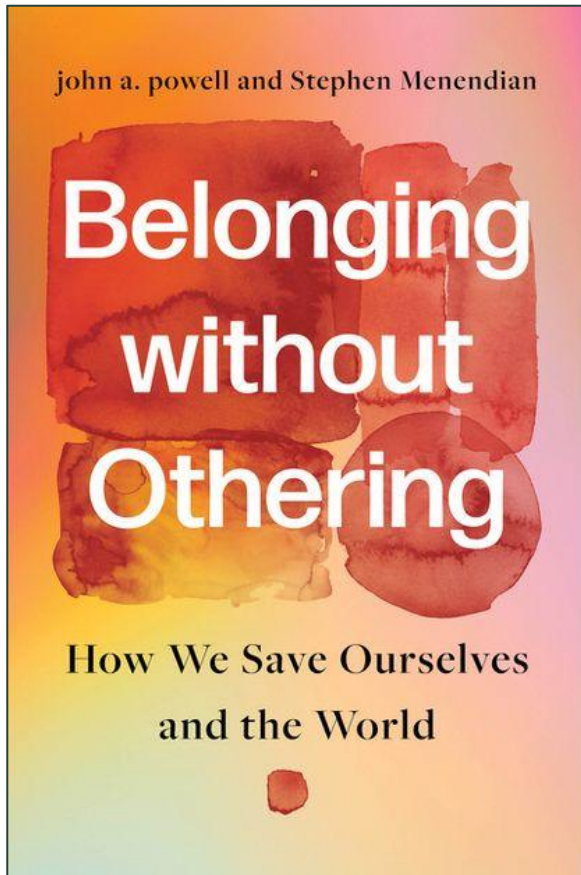
Conclusion

Any Questions?

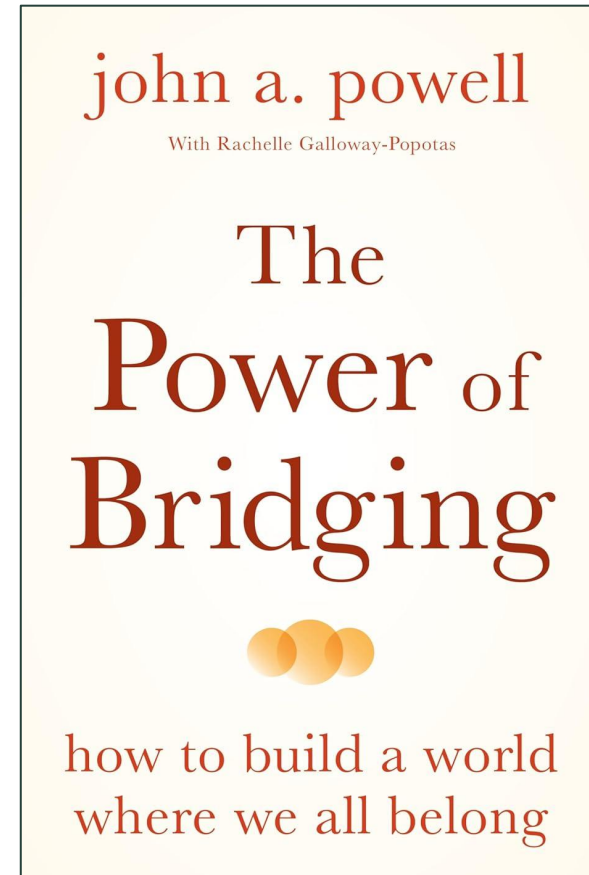
For additional information, check out OBI
University at <https://obi.org/>.



Available now
***Belonging without
Othering***



Available December 2024
***The Power of Bridging:
How to Build a World Where
We All Belong***
by john a. powell



Other OBI Resources



<https://linktr.ee/obi2024>



Thank you!

