



haas institute
FOR A FAIR AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

Othering and Belonging in the 21st Century

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PRESENTER:
john a. powell, Director, Haas
Institute

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Disenchantment

Max Weber used the term “disenchantment” to describe the condition of the world post-enlightenment. For Weber, the advent of scientific methods and the use of enlightened reason rendered the world transparent and demystified. Theological and supernatural accounts of the world ceased to be plausible.



Mission & Vision



“I realized that the story of ourselves as told by science —our cosmology, our religion — was incomplete and likely flawed. I recognized that the Newtonian idea of separate, independent, discreet things in the universe wasn’t a fully accurate description. What was needed was a new story of who we are and what we are capable of becoming.”

-Edgar Mitchell

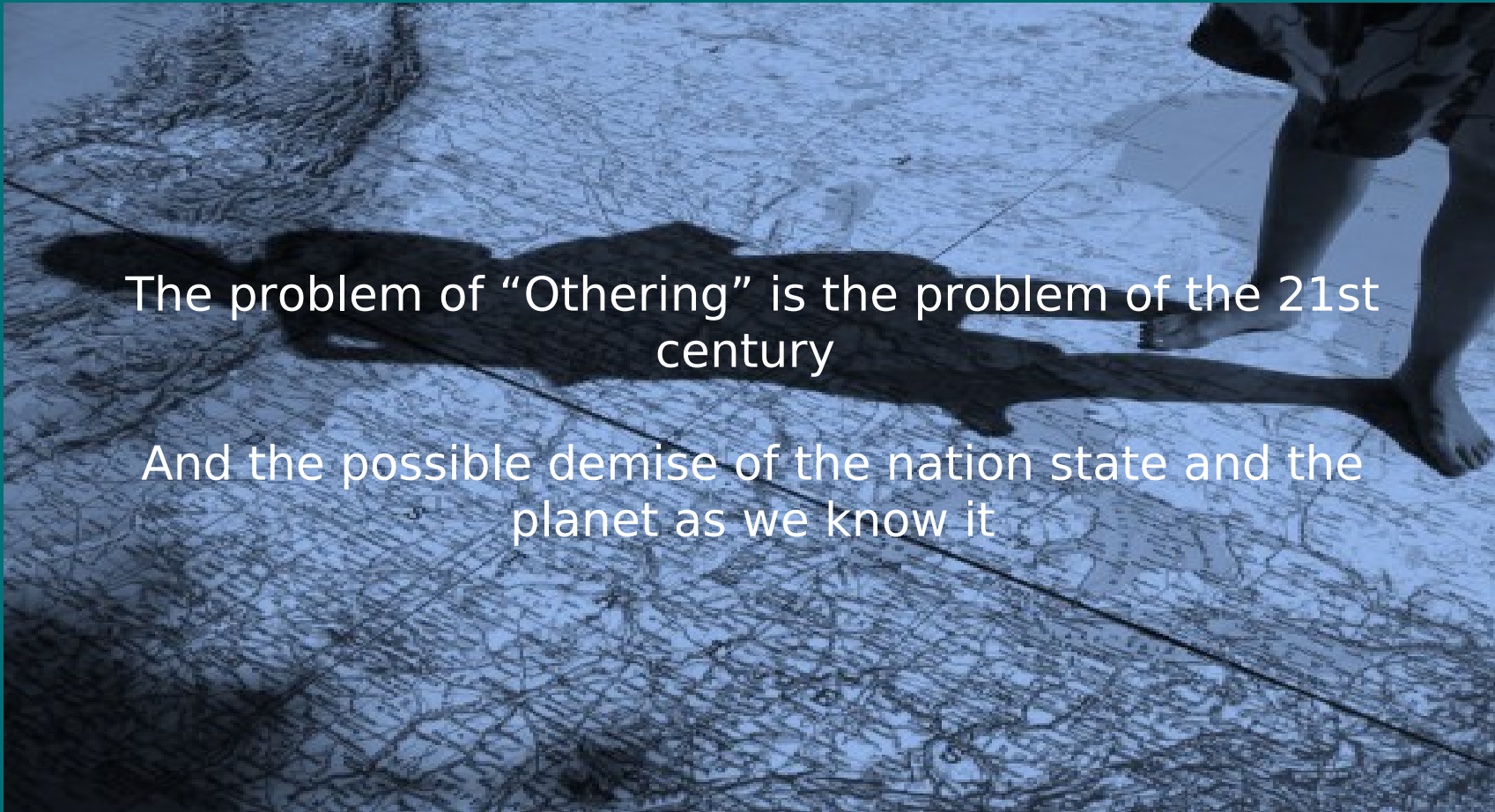
The Big Picture



Two of the greatest human needs are to make meaning and to belong.

How can belonging help us in this stage of our spiritual, social, and scientific evolution?

What do science and spirituality teach us about how we can turn belonging into practice?

A photograph showing a person's legs and feet standing on a large map of the world. The person's shadow is cast onto the map, stretching across several continents. The map is detailed, showing country borders and geographical features. The person is wearing dark shorts and is barefoot. The lighting is from the side, creating a long, dark shadow.

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

And the possible demise of the nation state and the planet as we know it

Othering



Othering is a generalized set of common processes that denies someone's full humanity based on them being less than and/or a threat to the favorite group.

Four Separations

From God or the Divine

From Nature/Earth

From each other

From self



Neanderthals vs. Homo sapiens

There is evidence which shows that neanderthals actually had bigger brains and may have been “smarter” than homo sapiens. How and why then did neanderthals die out and homo sapiens survive and continue to evolve?

Two Things:

1)The ability to imagine

1)Tell a bigger story with a larger “we.”



We are “Meaning People”



Our identities are forged by stories. One of the reasons why we are in crisis right now is that the narratives and stories we tell no longer fit the world we live in.

“...life in the age of bewilderment, when the old stories have collapsed and no new story has emerged so far to replace them. Who are we? What should we do in life? What kinds of skills do we need?”

—Yuval Harari, 21 Lessons for the 21st Century.

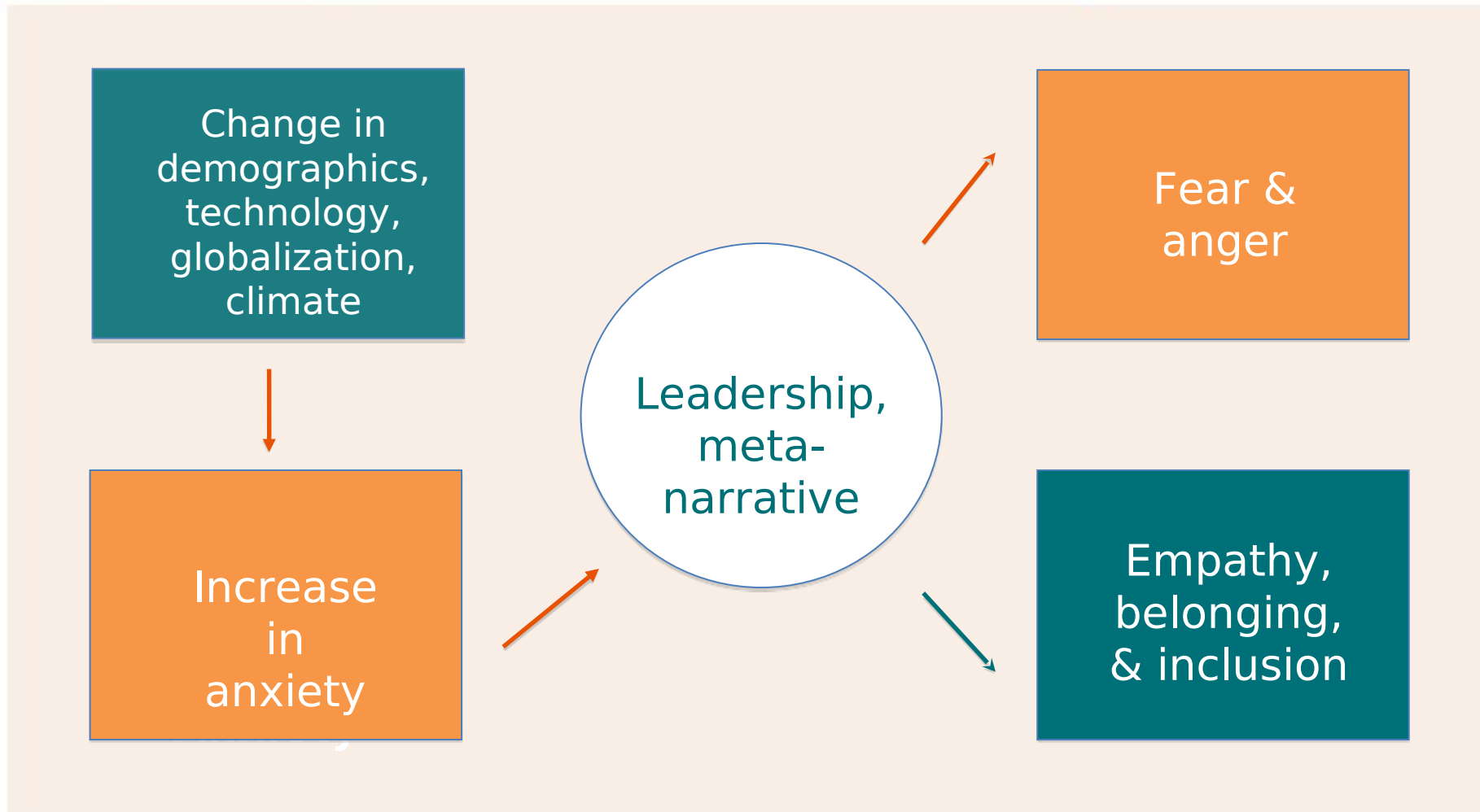
Bridging, Breaking, Bonding



CLICK
→

<https://haasinstitute.berkeley.edu/bridging-towards-society-built-belonging-animated-video-curriculum>

As change increases, so does anxiety...



Difference in 2019: As diversity grows, so does

anxiety...

- Demographic Change & Mass Migration
- Technology & Social Media Communication
- Globalization (minus)
- Income and Wealth Inequality
- The result is a cataclysm of xenophobic populism, reactionary ethno-nationalism, demagoguery, and fear of





Two Competing Global Visions



- The first vision is of a smaller hierarchical exclusive “We”
 - This is based on fear, control, and purity, and one that dominates and controls the “other” and the earth.
 - Anti-spiritual, anti-science
- The second vision is of an inclusive, connected “We”
 - This vision is one where we learn to share the earth and love and care for one another.
 - Interconnected “we”
 - Spiritual and scientific

Imagination and Storytelling

The ability to imagine a larger “we” is very human. The ability to create a larger “we” is made possible by telling stories.

“Humans think in stories rather than in facts, numbers, or equations, and the simpler the story, the better.”

--Yuval Harari, 21 Lessons for the 21st Century.





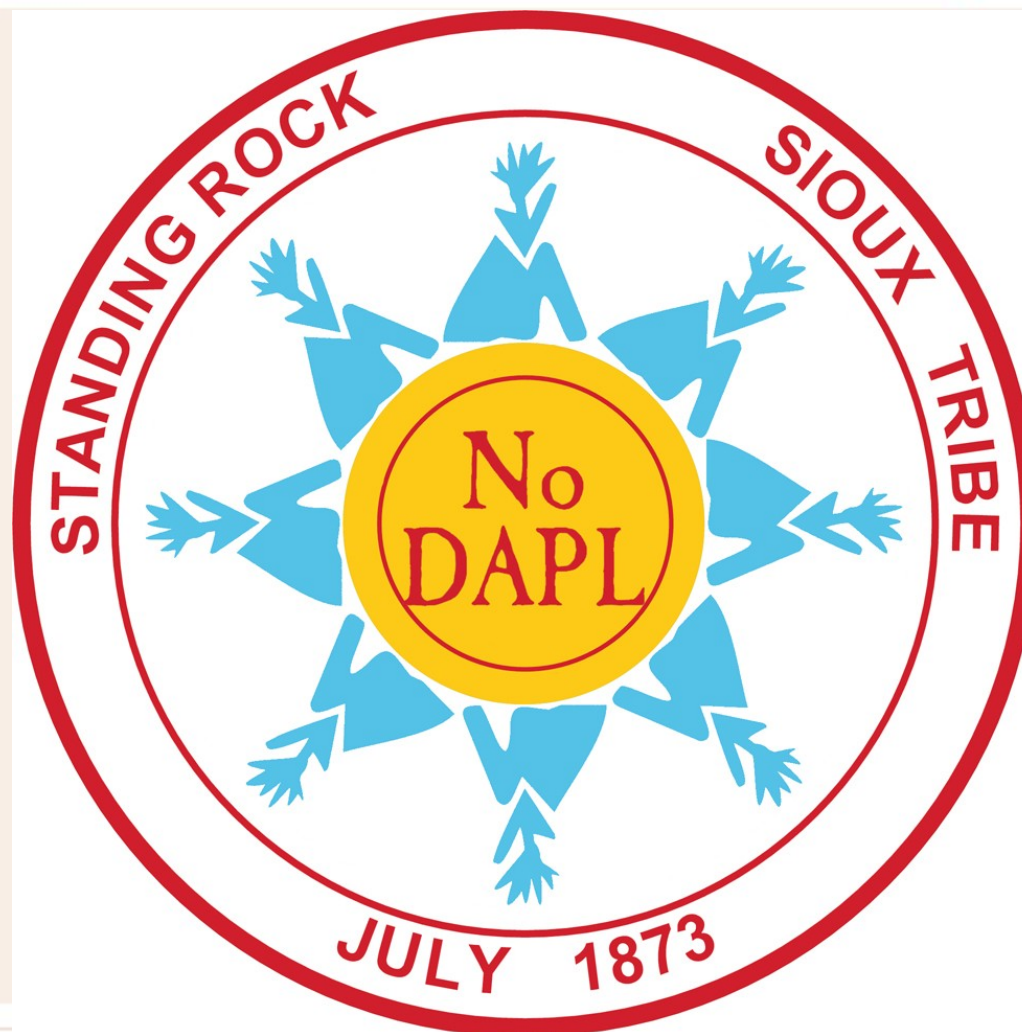
The opposite of Othering is *not* saming but belonging.

Belonging or being fully human means more than having access. Belonging entails being respected at a basic level that includes the right to both co-create and make demands upon society.



The term belonging reflects an objective position as well as the inter-subjective nature of group-based identities. In that respect, the process of othering and belonging are deeply relational and important in forming group identities and the self.

What we can learn from suicide rates during the Standing Rock era

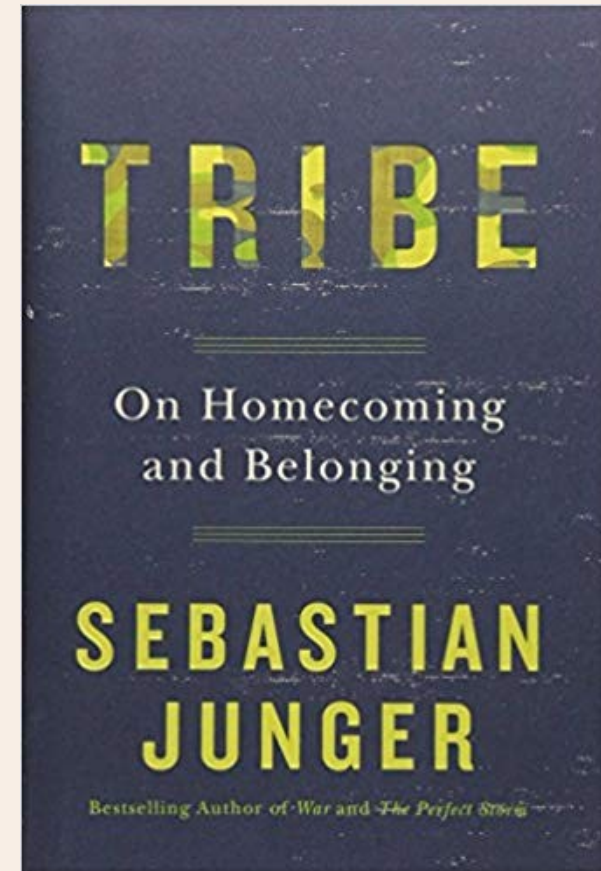


Tribe

In addition to demographic change, technological change, inequality and migration, another stressor is **hyper-individualism**.

Both post-traumatic stress disorder and post-partum depression are exacerbated by our hyper-individualistic society, that does not make people feel cared for or connected to each other or the earth.

“Modern society has gravely disputed the social bonds that have always characterized the human experience.” – Sebastian Junger



Ambient Belonging and Physical Space

Our physical environment affects our sense and feeling of whether or not we belong.

What are some examples of physical or geographic space that inhibits belonging?



Ambient Belonging and Physical Space, continued....



What are some examples on the flip-side?

Where have we seen successful efforts to co-create spaces of belonging and inclusion?

What works about these spaces and places?

How and where can we re-create additional efforts?

Doing the work, finding solutions...



Think of a time when you felt you **didn't** belong.

What were the circumstances?

How did you feel?

What did you do?

Doing the work, finding solutions, cont...

Think of a time when you
felt like you **did** belong.

What were the
circumstances?

How did you feel?

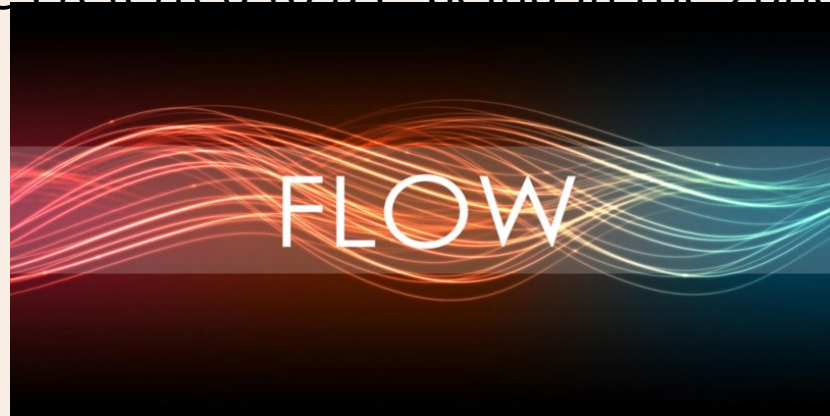
What did you do?



Fear, Science, and Spirituality

One concept that's been central over the millennia, is the idea of getting out of our own way, or giving up control to some higher power/consciousness/energy, etc. In other words, being "in the flow."

But, this concept of "flow" is not specific to spirituality. Writers, athletes, and scientists alike can all relate to this flow state of mind, sometimes referred to as "being in the zone."

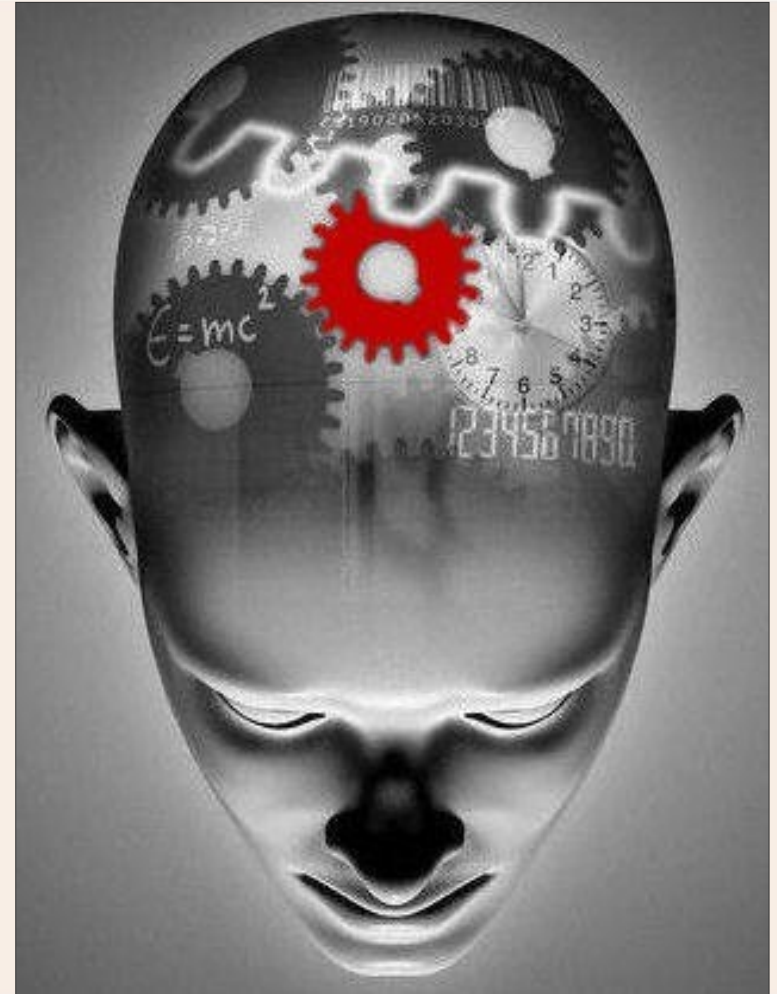


The Lizard Brain



Making Meaning

- **The human brain processes 11 million bytes of information per second**
- **We attend to this information consciously and subconsciously**
- **At best, only 2% of emotional cognition is available to us consciously**



Pathways Toward New Stories



- ❖ **Direct Intergroup Contact:** Direct interaction between members of different racial and ethnic groups can alleviate intergroup anxiety, reduce bias, and promote more positive intergroup attitudes and expectations for future contact.
- ❖ **New identities and narratives:** We must not only create inclusive structures, but we must foster new identities and inclusive narratives that can support us all. This means generating stories of inclusion that reframe our individual and group identities while rejecting narratives that pit us against others.
- ❖ **The Spiritual Self:** We must not only create inclusive structures, but we must foster new identities and inclusive narratives that can support us all. This means generating stories of inclusion that reframe our individual and group identities while rejecting narratives that pit us against others.

Bridge — Listen, engage, organize, love



EXCLUSION



INCLUSION



BELONGING

WE NEED TO CREATE A CULTURE OF *BELONGING*.

Sawubona: Zulu greeting “We see you”

1. An invitation to a deep witnessing and presence
2. This greeting forms an agreement to affirm and investigate the mutual potential and obligation that is present in a given moment



UBUNTU

I AM BECAUSE WE ARE

“The inside is not, the outside is too.” –Don Cherry





appendix

Breaking and Bridging



There is **hard breaking** and **soft breaking**. Hard breaking is building a wall, a travel ban, or outright exclusion.

Some bonding/breaking is defensive:

Booker T. Washington's campaign for self-help under the oppression of Jim Crow segregation is an example of this.

Similarly, break away or autonomous movements such as those initiated by the Kurds of northern Iraq is defensive breaking.

Breaking and Bridging

There are **short bridges** and **long bridges**.

Some bridges require more effort to build and maintain. Others are a short distance. Bridge with the other, including in our selves.

As bell hooks reminds us, bridges are walked on.



**BLACK
LIVES
MATTER**

BLACK
LIVES
MATTER
TOO



“The crisis consists precisely in the fact that ***the old is dying and the new cannot be born***; in this *interregnum* a great variety of morbid symptoms appear.”

—Antonio Gramsci (1971)
Prison Notebooks

Earthquakes and connection



Not Belonging Has Consequences

A Black Yale Student Was Napping, and a White Student Called the Police



The Yale campus. A graduate student in the university's African studies program said she was harassed for taking a nap in a common area. Dave Sanders for The New York Times



Starbucks C.E.O. Apologizes After Arrests of 2 Black Men



Inclusion vs. Belonging



“Welcome home; what a wonderful place that we have created together.”

VS.

“Come on over to my house; you are welcome anytime.”

