

# Co-Creating and Leading: *Moving Forward a Society of Belonging in a Time of Othering*

DATE

February 3<sup>rd</sup> , 2020

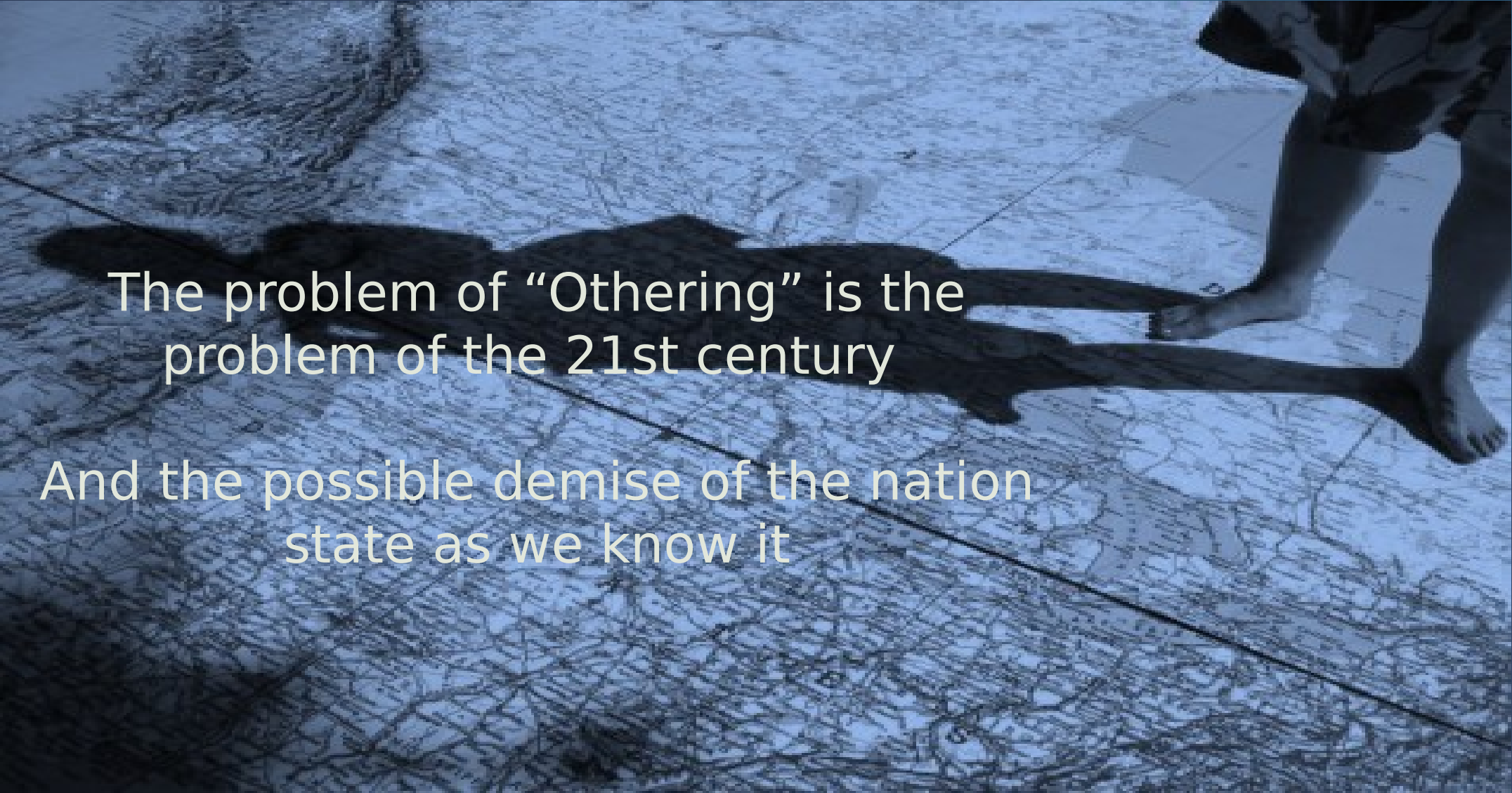
PRESENTER

john a. powell, Director  
Othering & Belonging Institute

AUTHORIAL SUPPORT

Othering & Belonging  
Institute



A photograph showing the lower legs and feet of a person walking on a cobblestone path. A long, dark shadow is cast across the stones, extending from the person's feet towards the left. The image has a blue tint.

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

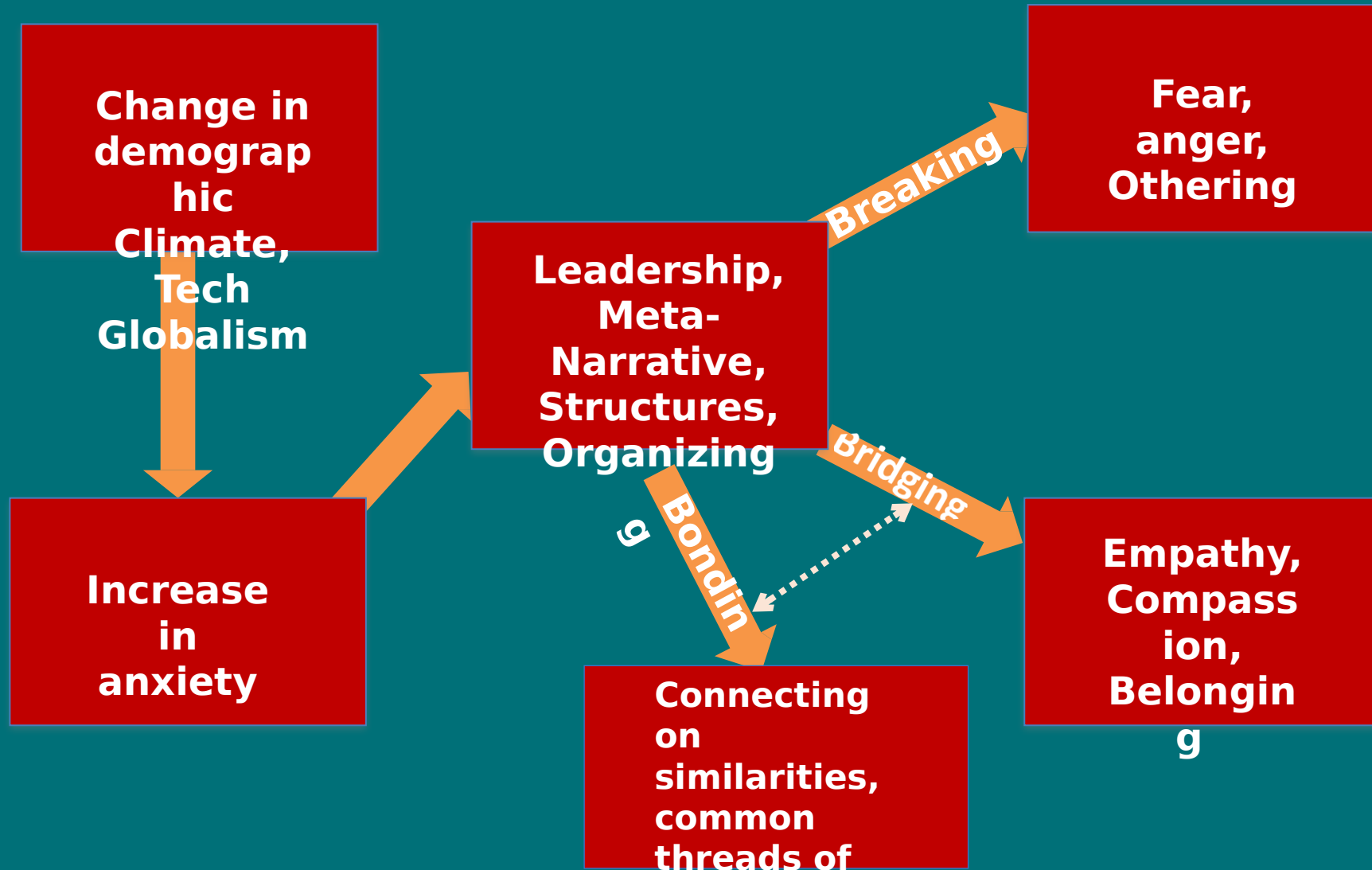
And the possible demise of the nation  
state as we know it





[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PGcbFj4L\\_gc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PGcbFj4L_gc)

# Rapid change produces collective anxiety:





Michael Jordan



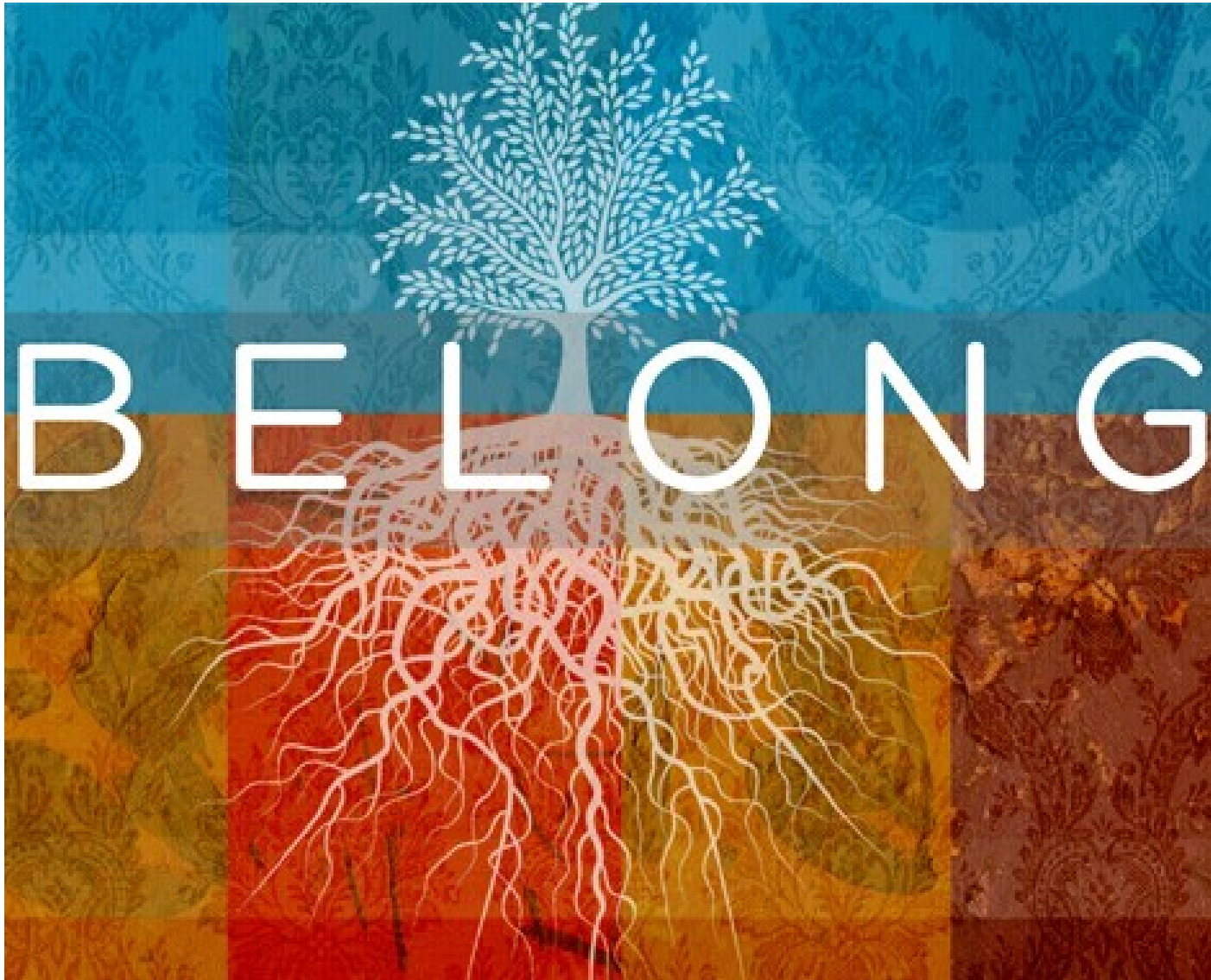
Magic Johnson





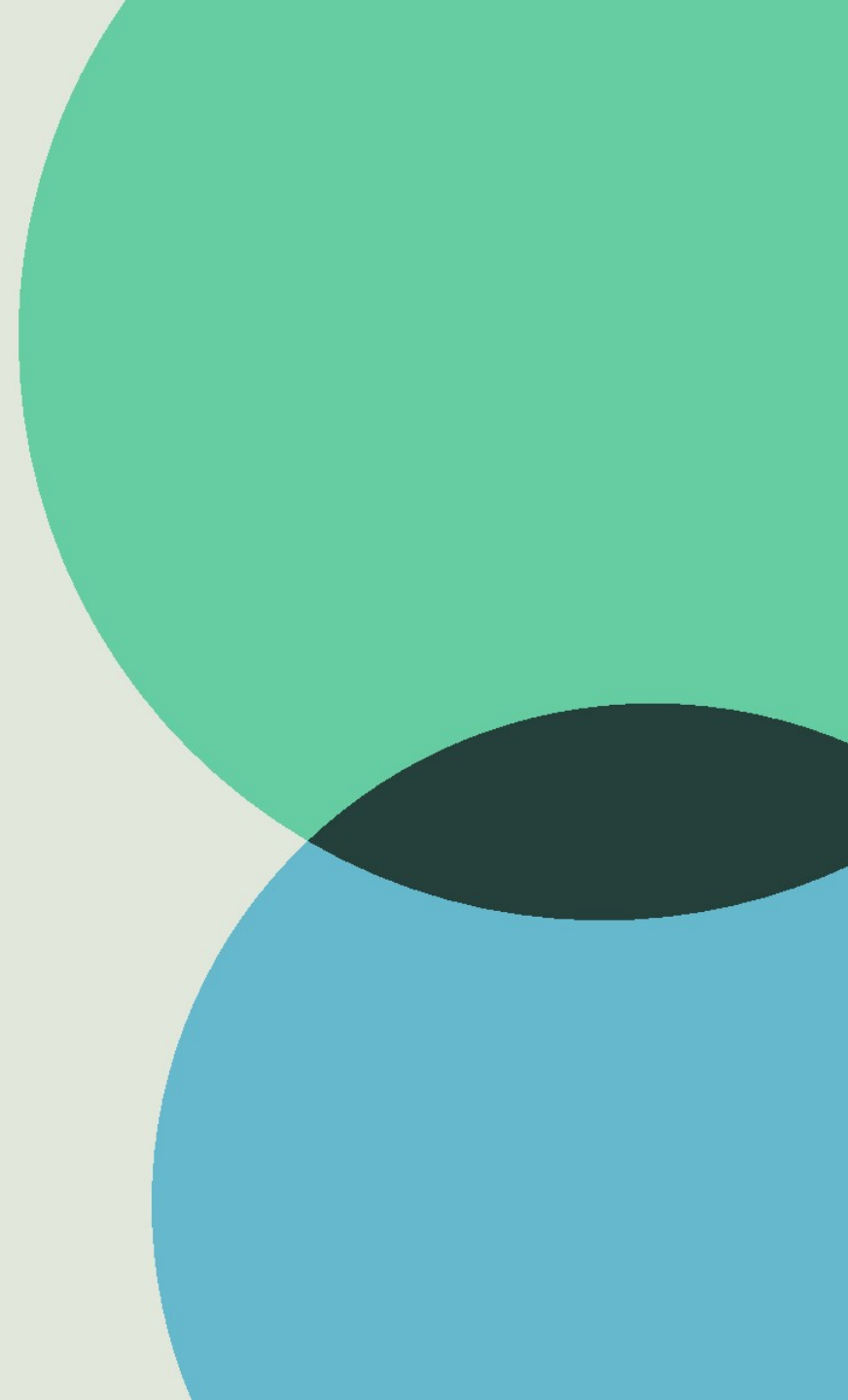
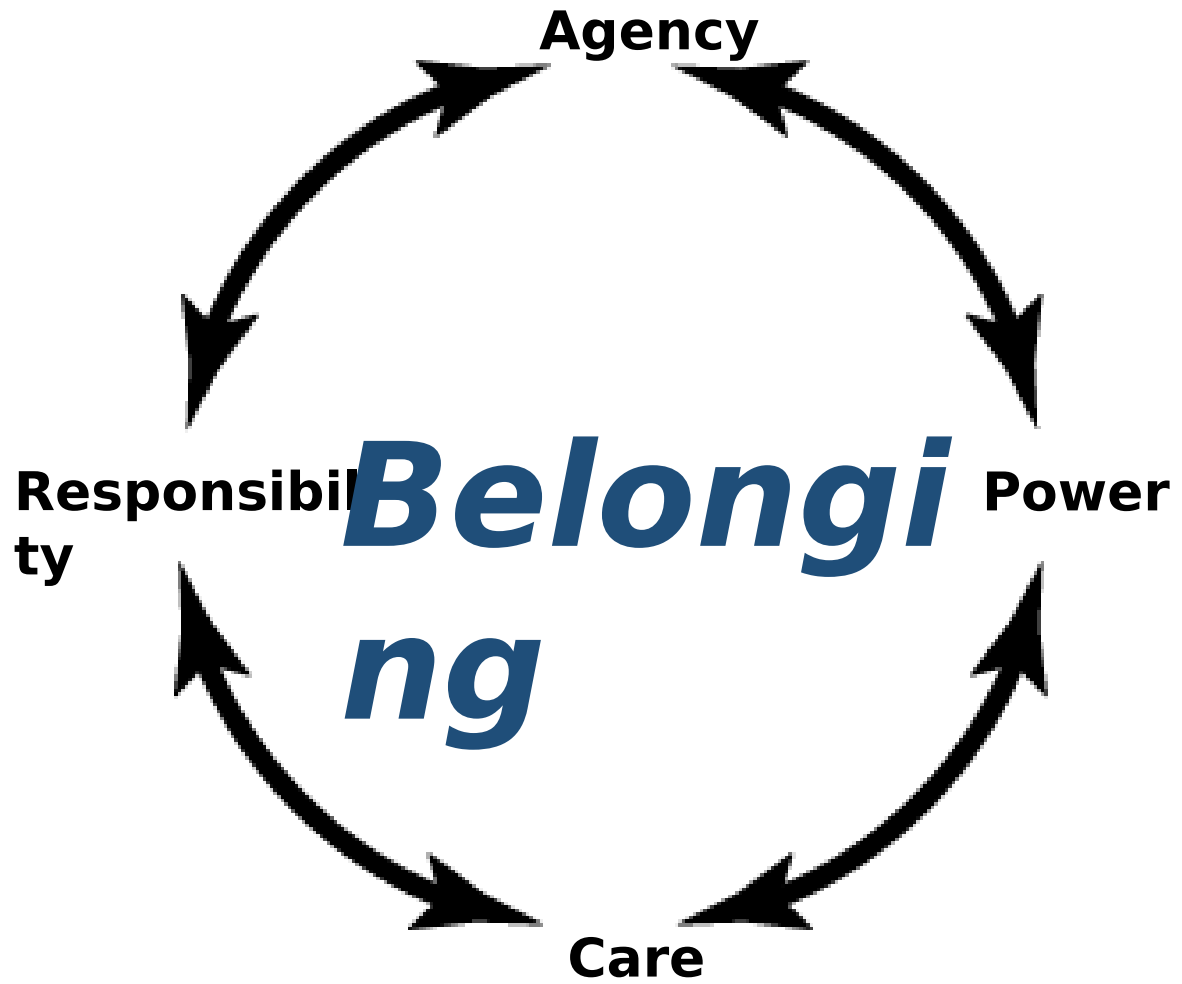




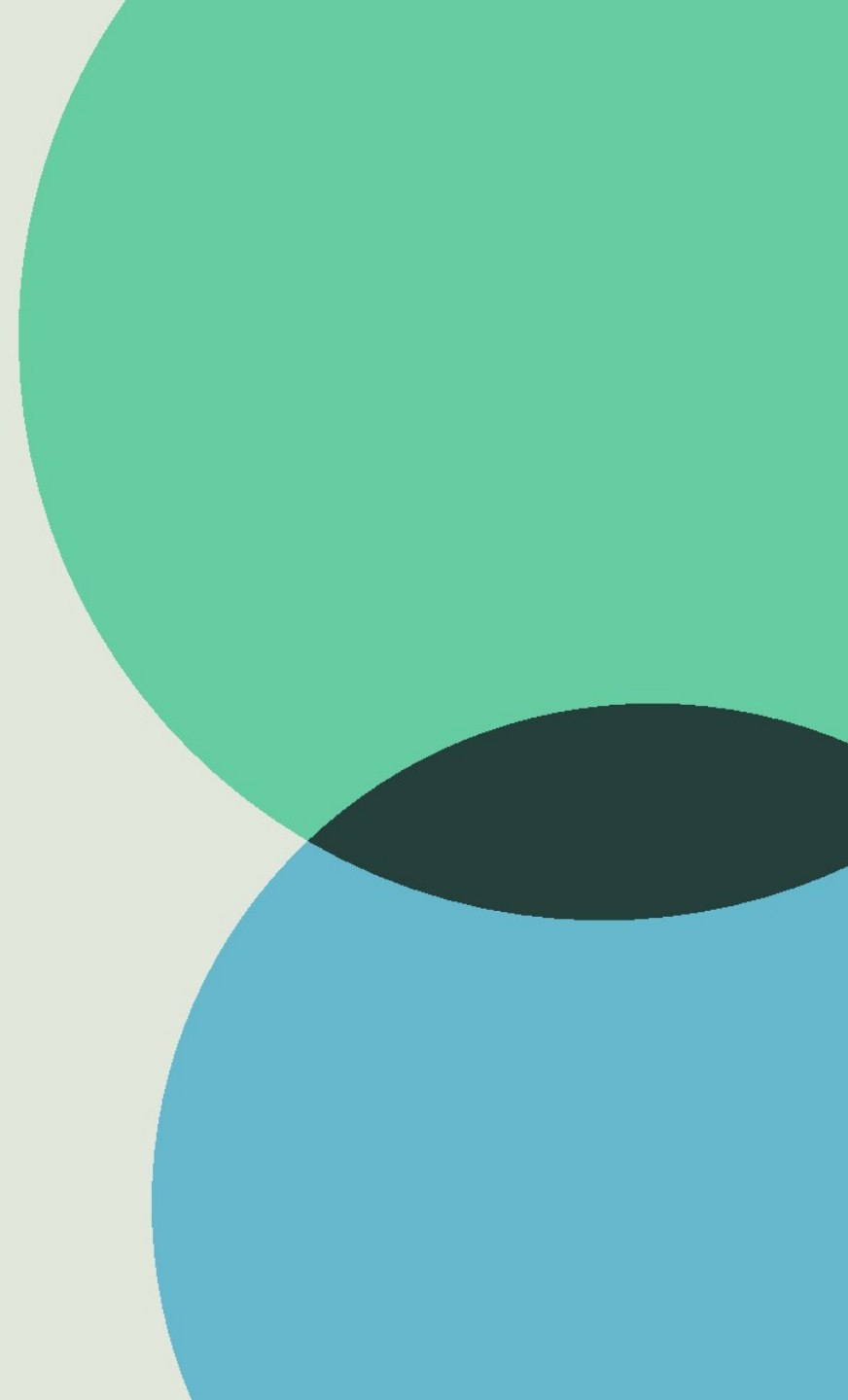


Belonging or being fully human means more than having access. Belonging entails being respected at a basic level that includes the right to both co-create and make demands upon society.

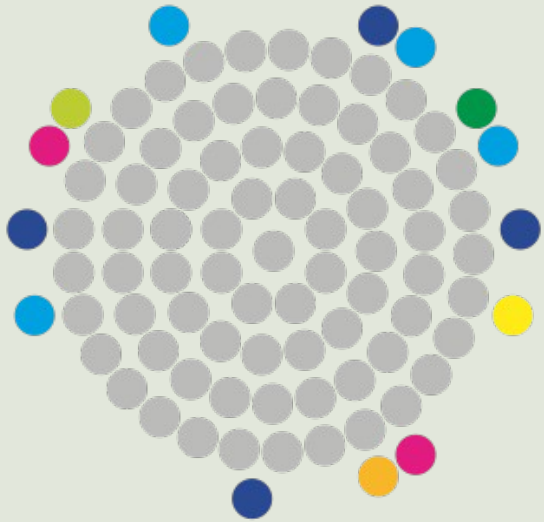
**Belonging**



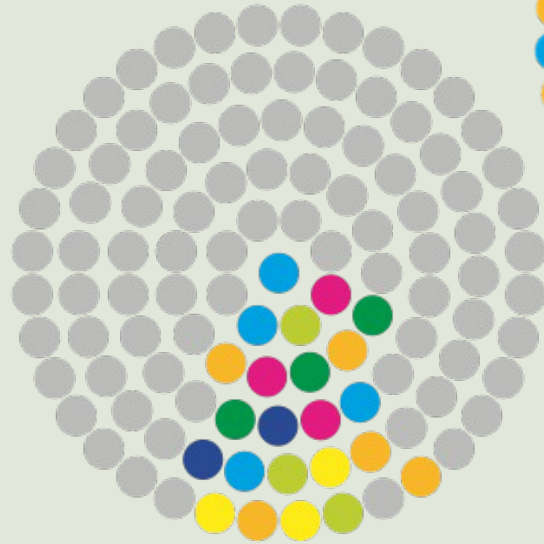
Heart of  
Belonging:  
co-creating &  
being seen







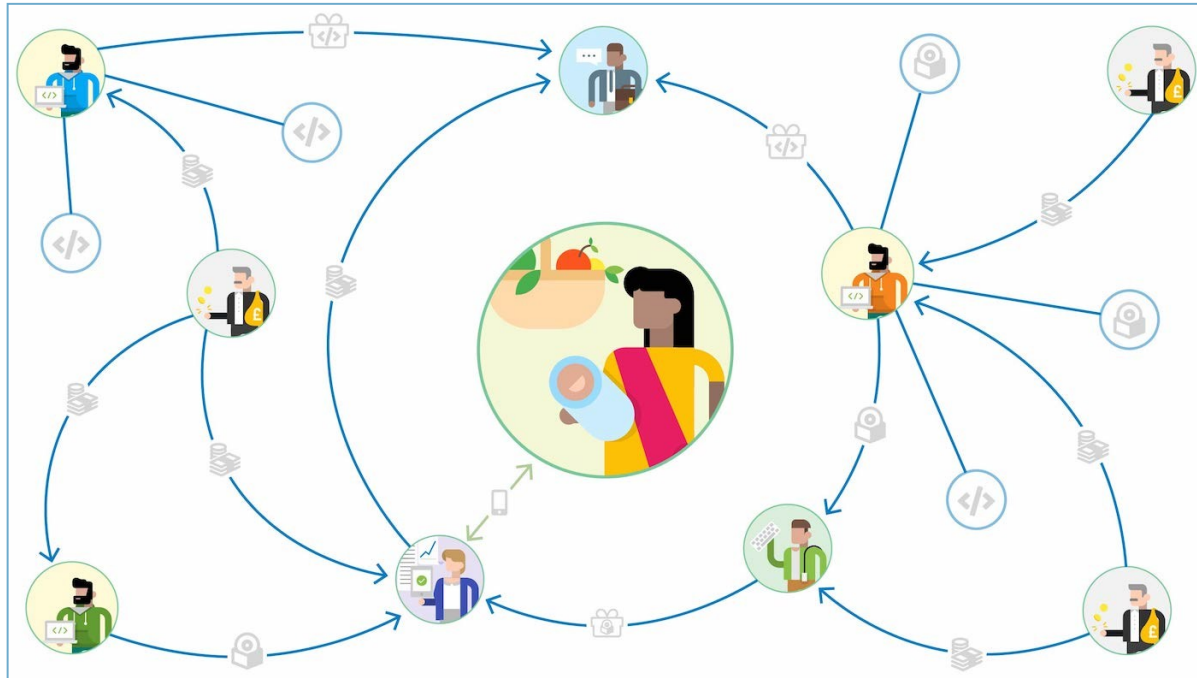
Exclusion



Inclusion



Belonging



A just and inclusive society will see all of its members as inside our circle of belonging.

# Breaking and Bridging

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

Some bridges require more effort to build and maintain. Others are a short distance.



As bell hooks reminds us, bridges are walked on.



# Power Matters

- Bridging may look different where there is a power differential. Power is positional, structural, and hierarchal.
- People can gain power through *linking* social networks and creating social capital.
  - Individuals can build relationships with institutions and individuals who have relative power to access resources.
- Power also shifts.
- For example: people of color may have more power than whites in certain settings (e.g. an anti-racism conv



# Creating space where everyone is heard

- This does not require flattening the hierarchy of the organization but understanding **investment, experience, and responsibility**.
  - Those with the same investment, experience, and responsibility will have the same say.
- A leader's role is to create space and make sure everyone can contribute, considering the multiple identities in the room.
- Leaders must contend with an emphasis on making sure marginal voices are heard and an emphasis on empathetic listening
- We all need to be **recognized and heard**. This is not the same as getting everything we want or being right but valuing each other.

## Consider:

Who has the most power in the room?

Who has the most authentic voice?

How can leaders reinforce marginalized voices and ideas?

Design of the room



# Targeted Universalism Operationalizes Belonging

- Goals and universal, strategies are targeted based on situatedness.
- Each group's differences must be taken into account
- T/U is designed through careful consideration of positionality and situatedness
- It is inclusive of all regardless of differences, it expands the 'we'
- T/U is both a communications strategy and operational strategy
- It promotes bridging and avoids breaking and scarcity





Bridging  
or  
Breaking  
?

The stories we  
tell will  
**create** the  
both future  
we inhabit.

Who belongs?  
Who is in the we?  
We need a better story  
The leader holds the story of  
us

# Q&A

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS SESSION

