



DIALOGUE & DINNER

2020 has got you stepping up your work and you want to be as prepared as possible to handle those conversations and comments that can come up in groups where people feel comfortable being their true selves.

You have the power to change yourself and those around you, use your voice.

01

COLONIZATION

How did we end up here?

02

NO ONE BENEFITS FROM WHITENESS

Not even white folks!

03

USE YOUR VOICE

Planting seeds ... over dinner.

04

BEYOND THE TABLE

Additional reading.

01

COLONIZATION

How did we get here?

A very, very, very, very, very, very brief look at history.

Colonization is the domination of land and people.

Let's go way back. The Roman Empire set up colonies as it expanded, but the documents signed during the Middle Ages most informed the way the Americas were colonized.

MIDDLE AGES

In 1095 Pope Urban II issued a decree called *Terra Nullius* (aka 'nobody's land') giving European kings the right to 'discover' land uninhabited by Christians.

In 1452 Pope Nicholas V issued the decree, *Dum Diversas* reducing Non-Christians to chattel slavery. This was a new form of slavery in Europe. At the time people of African descent made up the majority of enslaved people in Europe.

In 1455 Pope Nicholas V issued another decree, *Romanus Pontifex* declaring war against non-Christians and authorizing the take-over of their lands.

THE ENLIGHTENMENT

In the 1600's Europe was leaving the Middle Ages (Dark Ages) behind and entering the Age of Enlightenment - making new discoveries (some great, others questionable...)

Francois Bernier classified the humans into 'races' according to the color of their skin. This developed into *scientific racism* which argued that some 'races' were superior to others. This laid the foundations of the idea of white supremacy.

During that same time, a new form of trade emerged in Northwestern Europe, establishing modern capitalism.

These ideas have shaped Western culture. They have resulted in the severing of people's ability to see the humanity in others and in themselves, and our interconnectedness to nature. Instead our systems are based on seeing land and people as resources to be exploited in order to accumulate capital.

THANKSGIVING - WHERE IT STARTED

All over the world communities celebrate the end of harvest season. It is usually a time of plenty, food is redistributed, and merriment.

In the USA many celebrate Thanksgiving Day, but many others celebrate the National Day of Mourning and Unthanksgiving Day (aka Sunrise Gathering).

In 1620, Europeans arrived at Patuxet (later renamed Plymouth Rock), where the Wampanoag natives had lived for thousands of years. A year after their arrival, there was a feast with both settlers and Native Americans, (this type of gathering is only recorded to have happened once) - the reason is unknown but it is speculated that it was to secure a treaty.

In 1637, the Governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony declared: "A day of Thanksgiving, thanking God that they had eliminated (murdered) over 700 men, women and children." It was signed into law that, "This day forth shall be a day of celebration and thanksgiving for subduing the Pequots."

This is the Thanksgiving Day on record.

Thanksgiving, as we know it now, is an intermixing of both of these stories and many more. There are several different accounts about how this day originated, but what we do know is that it is not a day of thanksgiving for both of these groups.

THANKSGIVING - WHERE WE'RE AT

Expansion and land acquisition by the colonists continued through genocide, forceful removal, disease and usually deceptive treaties, until all of the original peoples been dispossessed of their lands.

Native Americans continue to resist the oppressive systems that have been stacked against them since 1620.

2020 has been a year of reckoning. This year we can choose how we commemorate this day.

** Unthanksgiving Day.

** National Day of Mourning

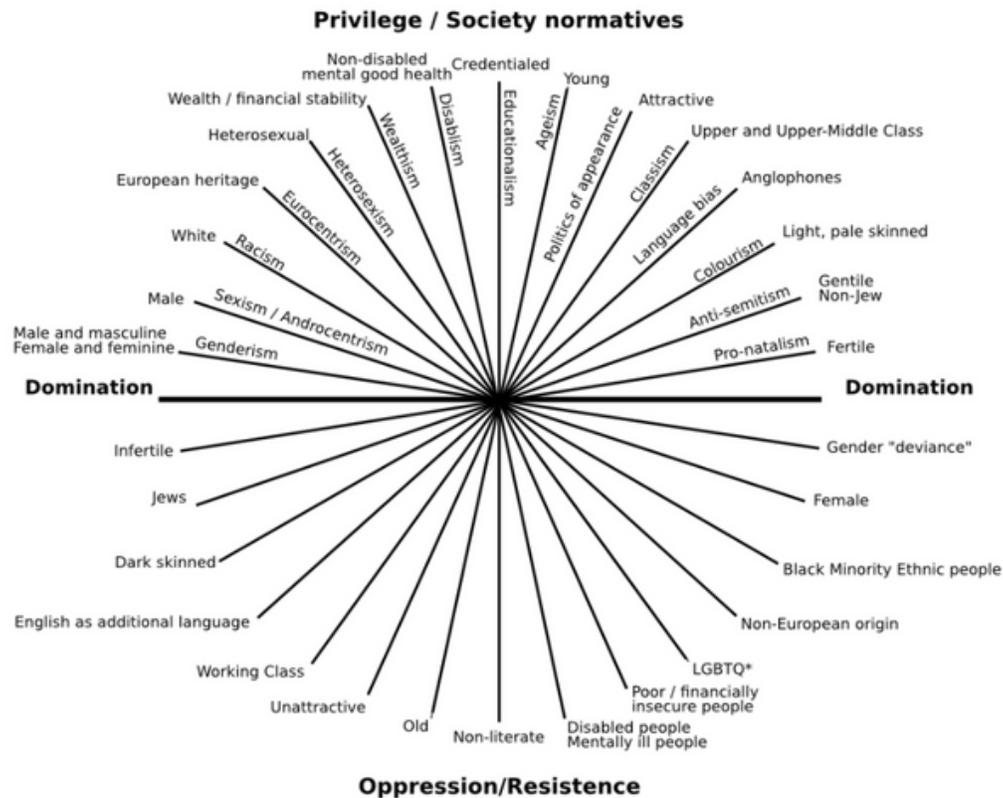
02

NO ONE BENEFITS FROM WHITENESS

Not even white folks!

Whiteness is the culture that colonialism created. It is the centering of white, straight, cisgendered, able bodied men. Since the Middle Ages this group has held the power to shape Western society. Now many of the things that many of us aspire to (white or BIPOC) are rooted in the ideas of 'success' or ideas of 'rightness' that we have inherited from this group.

We all have many intersections. Some may provide us privilege and others may cause us to experience oppression. Our intersections may also change depending on factors like age and ability. The standard set forth by White Supremacy doesn't allow us to all live as our full authentic selves.

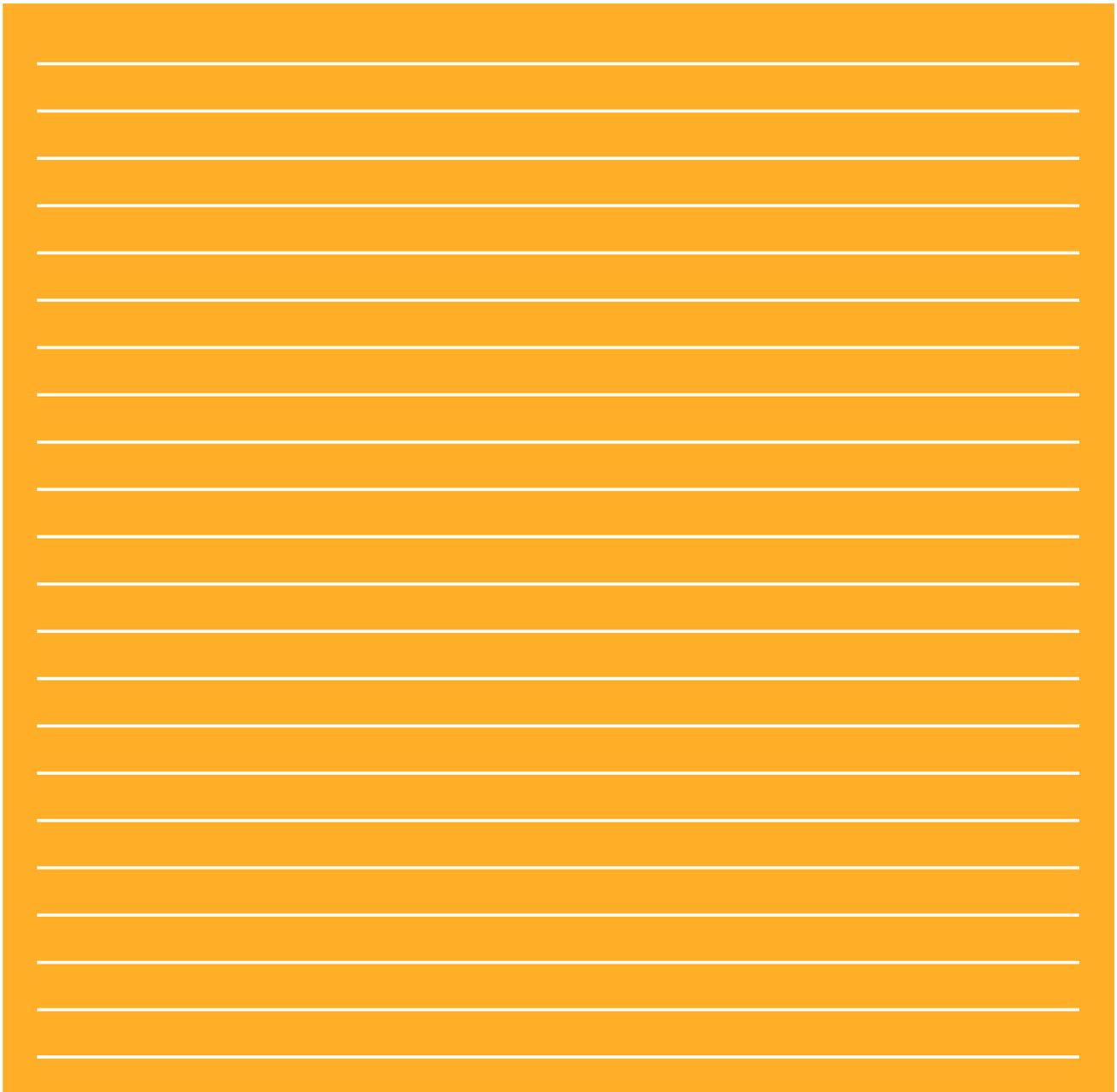


Based on the work of Katherine Pauly Morgan

Reflection

The above diagram illustrates many of the -isms that contribute to colonialism. All of us hold intersecting identities, on the next page identify yours:

- Where you hold identities that give you privilege?
- Where do you hold identities that cause you to experience oppression?
- In this society privilege gives us power, how can you use your power to address systems of oppression?

A large orange rectangular area containing horizontal white lines for writing. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the orange area, providing a space for the user to answer the reflection questions.

03

USE YOUR VOICE

Open a conversation over dinner.

For dialogue to occur, both parties need to feel safe.

STEP 1 - EDUCATE YOURSELF

You now have a basic understanding of colonialism, it's history and how we engage in it today.

Unlearning colonialism is a lifelong practice.

STEP 2 - HOW DO YOU ENGAGE?

What are you bringing to the table?

Where do you hold privilege at the table? Are you looking to be right or to engage in dialogue?

STEP 3 - REFRAME YOUR MINDSET

Approach dinner with a sense of curiosity.

What experiences shape people's belief systems? What values have they extracted from this belief system?

STEP 4 - WHATS THE GOAL?

If you can have a calm conversation based in curiosity, then an open a line of conversation might be your goal.

STEP 5 - LISTEN DEEPLY & REFLECT

By understanding where people are coming from, you will be able to engage in better dialogue.

Also, we usually do dinner with loved ones, if they hold some of these beliefs, it is possible you do too in some way.

STEP 6 - STAY SAFE

Understand your intersections, take care of your mental health and create a supportive community around you as you continue to unlearn and stand up.

Anger at your own oppression is valid, and you get to choose how best to engage.

AVOID using 'you' statements, use 'I' instead. Discuss the topic, not the person.

Reflection

Write down some of the questions you can ask (coming from a place of curiosity), regarding some of the topics that might come up over dinner. (Instead of, "Why are you racist?" ask "Where does the racial hierarchy come from?")

04

BEYOND THE TABLE

Additional reading.

THANKSGIVING

[The Myths of the Thanksgiving Story](#)

[Healing From Colonization on Thanksgiving and Beyond](#)

[Everything You Learned About Thanksgiving Is Wrong](#)

FIRST NATIONS

[Native Land - Map of Indigenous communities around the world](#)

[Native American History by State](#)

[Native American Heritage Month](#)

ALLYSHIP

[What is Allyship?](#)

[How can I Pay Reparations?](#)



Do the best you can until you know
better. Then when you know better,
do better.

MAYA ANGELOU



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