

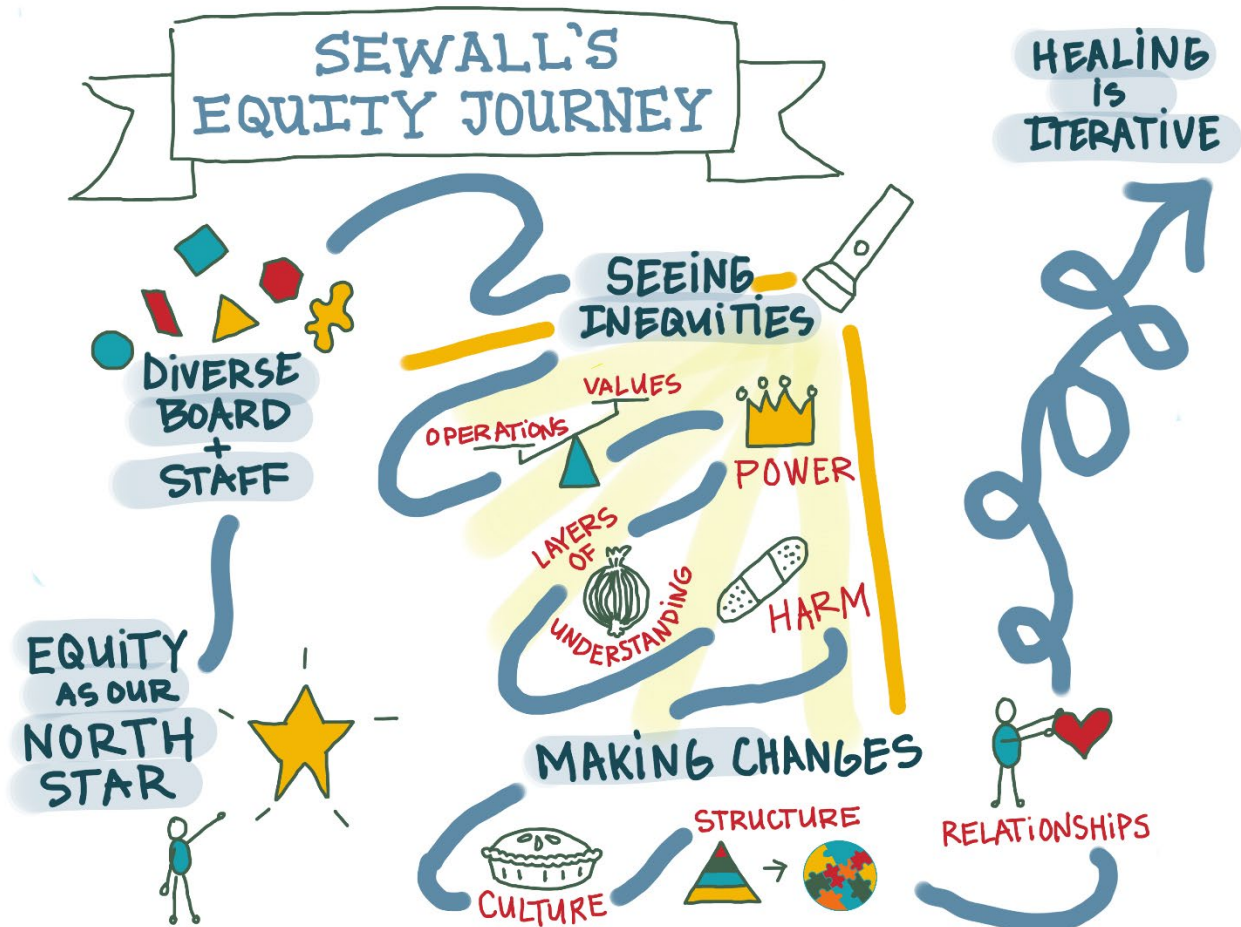


Sewall Foundation Staff Acknowledgement Work

As the Sewall Foundation works to align our values and mission with everything we do internally and externally, staff examined with honesty, courage and empathy our internal structures and culture to ensure that we are creating a space that reflects our values. Through a series of conversations, and with the support of consultants, we collectively have shared our stories, experiences and perspectives with each other, prompted by the following questions:

- What aspects of Sewall’s structure support equity and how do we amplify them?
- What aspects of Sewall’s structure do not support our equity journey?
- How are we changing to support our equity journey?

This work has served as a means to both articulate acknowledgement of the past and a commitment to co-creating and sustaining an emergent organizational structure and culture that embodies our values and manifests our mission going forward. On the following pages, we share lessons we are learning to provide a window into our process and experience as we continue on our equity journey, together.





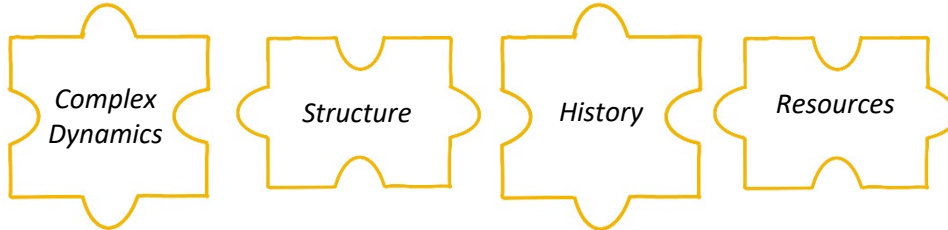
Staff Reflections

Lessons learned about equity in organizations

Systems and Power

Equity work involves unraveling the complex, multi-level intertwining threads of power, structures and relationships. It can be difficult to see a system or power dynamic when it doesn't affect you, and impossible not to see it when it does affect you. Examining power also means acknowledging the foundation's history, resources, and relationships.

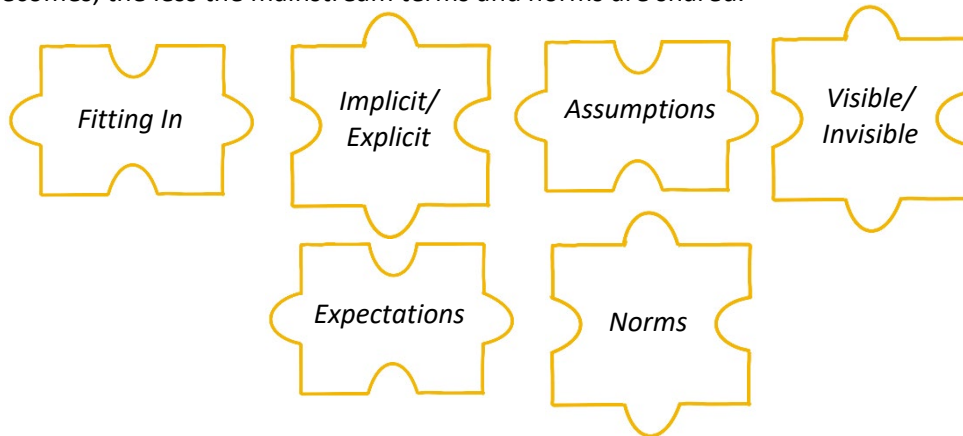
Key Words:



Organizational Culture

It is imperative to make what is implicit explicit and thereby challenge norms that are invisible because they seem so "natural." Presumed norms make sense for some, but not for others. The more diverse the group becomes, the less the mainstream terms and norms are shared.

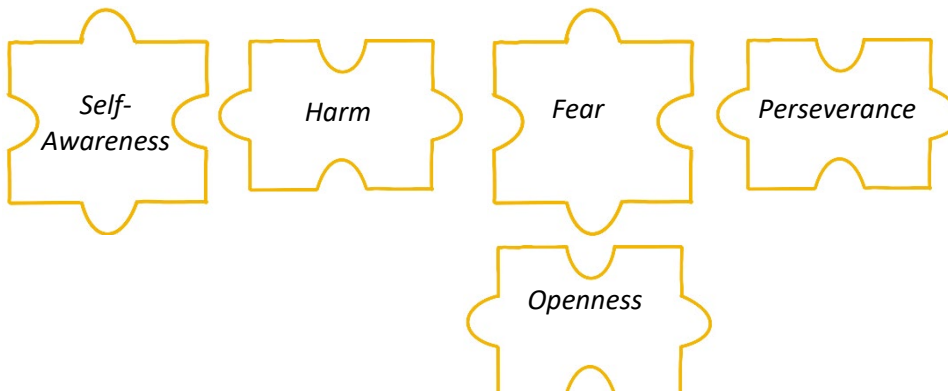
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Personal Impacts and Responses

Being willing to bring your full self to the work, being vulnerable and open through personal reflection and self-awareness - not usual for a workplace - requires patience and humility. It is important to acknowledge harm, that good intentions can have negative impacts, so we can move forward in an honest and sincere way. In our conversations, we kept returning to the importance of acknowledging and distinguishing between intent and impact.

Key Words:

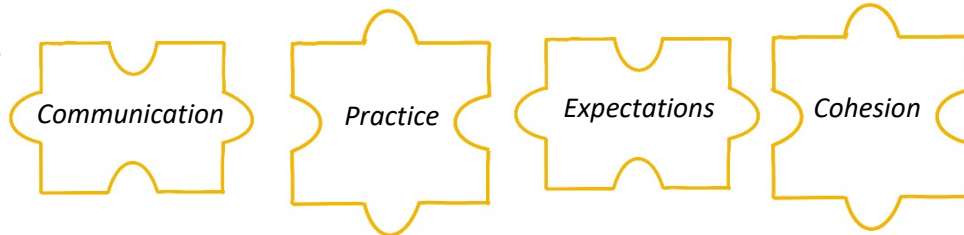




Diverse & Shared Perspectives

Everyone comes in with their own specific experiences, perspectives, and assumptions. Equity requires a regular practice of communicating, listening, and honoring each other in order to develop shared understanding.

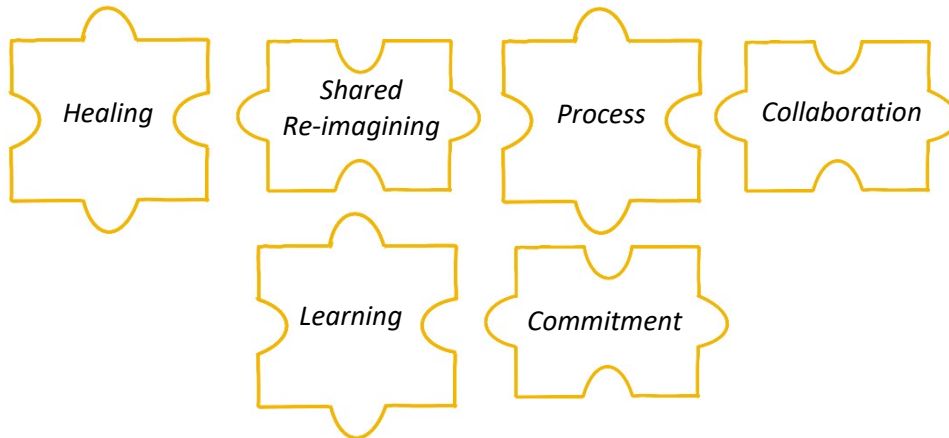
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Transition Towards Transformation

Equity work is not a linear progression. It takes a lot of energy, resources and time. Holding a “both/and” approach and understanding while in transition, recognizes the iterative nature of this work. It is both a process and an outcome.

Key Words:



The journey continues and will likely never end. We are energized by a sense of potential – for resolving bumps along the way, for learning from mistakes and adapting, and for more meaningful work and relationships.

