Coming Together

Commitment to Cultural Contributions to the Organization

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> *If you have come here to help me you are wasting your time, but if you have come here because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.*
>
> **—Lila Watson**

When educators come together, sharing a laser-like focus on diminishing the negative experiences and outcomes of far too many students in our educational system, the results can be powerful. Cultural diversity has steadily increased in the United States and thus in our schools. Since 2014, the majority of students in our public schools have been non-white. Our students enter our classrooms with a rich array of identities including race, gender identity, sexual orientation, social class, religion, cognitive ability, language proficiency, physical ability, and family structure. These dimensions of identity can have a significant impact on how our students (and staff) are seen and how they are received by educators who serve them. When we intentionally understand, honor, and celebrate the dimensions of identity, we can impact teaching, leading, and learning for all.

Coming Together Through Our Shared Truth

Coming together and focusing on equity creates a pathway for effective communication and action. To begin, the members of the learning community must have a shared sense of purpose and desired outcomes. This is accomplished by co-constructing working agreements and protocols that bolster shared truths. **Shared truths** are behaviors, beliefs, values, and realities that are agreed upon across an organization. Creating shared truths requires us to develop a common language, foster

a community of trust, be authentic, and honor **equity in voice**. The following are examples of shared truths:

- We believe that teaching is hard work, and we have what it takes to reach and teach all learners

- We believe that our purpose as teachers is to ensure that every student experiences academic success

- We believe that a community learns together

- We believe that impact happens when we update, unlearn, reconsider, and refine

At the same time, shared truths must never negate our unique identities and backgrounds. Being authentic means embodying sincerity that is congruent with our beliefs and value system and supports positive relationships. When we come together to focus on equity in organizations, we commit to developing shared beliefs and values that also honor varying lenses of difference and one another's cultures. Although we value individual contributions to the group's efforts, our collective motivation to create equitable opportunities for learning is driven by cooperative experiences and shared resources and workloads, rather than individualistic achievement and working in silos.

Reimagining schooling through a collectivist lens takes effort because so much of our current system is grounded in principles of individualism and competition. Yet when we consider that many of our students are products of collectivist (rather than individualist) cultures (Hammond, 2015), it stands to reason that the adults in our school communities should practice and model cooperative relationships.

These cooperative relationships depend upon collaborative structures for learning and decision making that are grounded in relational interdependence (Hofstede, 1980). Again, replacing deeply ingrained competitive values and behavior takes work; however, an impetus for forming a collective is the group's commitment to shared wisdom, common ambitions, and a willingness to embrace inclusivity. These actions emphasize the importance of relationships and working cooperatively in collaborative spaces that are culturally inviting.

Think of this learning process as a continuum. As we progress along the continuum toward a higher degree of interdependence, we develop a greater awareness of our own cultural identity, as well as those of others, in a manner that values individual differences and supports collaboration.

The will to understand and display curiosity about others provides the on-ramp into safe spaces of interacting as we become a collective and meet intended group outcomes. In schools, this translates to collective equity. **Collective equity** is a shared responsibility for the social, cultural, academic, and emotional fortification of students and adults that enables learners to achieve their goals and aspirations on their own terms. It addresses systemic barriers, historic racism, educational disparities, and levels of oppression by fostering culturally fortifying experiences.

How do groups make decisions, problem-solve, and create instructional plans with a lens on equity? By establishing **enabling conditions**, which serve as connective tissue to position learning communities to focus on collective equity:

- removing barriers that impede growth

- generating open communication

- creating relational trust

- enacting high levels of engagement

- providing equitable opportunities and resources for each learner's (student, educator, parent) success

These enabling conditions provide opportunities to engage at all three levels: cognitive, emotional, and behavioral. We do this both internally (with ourselves) and externally (with others). Figure 1.1 provides examples of collective equity in practice.

FIGURE 1.1 Collective Equity	
ENABLING CONDITIONS	**WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICE?**
Removing barriers that impede growth	• Providing access and exposure to relevance and rigor in instruction • Courageously calling out inequities that exist in the system and acting upon them
Generating open communication	• Defining equity to question practices of existing educational disparities in all modes of communication • Providing feedback and coaching as we unlearn, update, refine, and reconsider our ways of being • Listening to others and their perspectives and providing opportunities of equity of voice

(Continued)

FIGURE 1.1 (Continued)

ENABLING CONDITIONS	WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICE?
Creating relational trust	• Cultivating structures of mutual respect by acknowledging and valuing that everyone has cultural differences • Designing opportunities in which members feel safe, brave, affirmed, and protected when sharing their individual insights and beliefs about topics of equity • Disrupting the status quo of siloed equity work and fostering a culture of collectivism
Enacting high levels of engagement	• Focusing on the three levels of engagement (behavioral, cognitive, and emotional) to tap into the individual and collective strengths of members of the learning community • Building equity skills, knowledge, and stamina through engagement activities such as book studies, affinity group discussions, article analysis, viewing TEDx talks, and highlighting one's lived experiences
Providing equitable opportunities and resources for each learner's (student, educator, parent) success	• Inviting and welcoming parents based on their interests and specific needs that have been voiced by them • Strengthening classroom practices to include affirming cultural connections, centering on individual and collective identities while engaging in topics that are meaningful to them • Affirming and appreciating staff for their educational knowledge, instructional input, schoolwide contributions, and cultural representations by elevating their voices and creating the conditions for increased engagement

Working Together

Working together in schools has become a cultural norm. **Culture** is the traditions, values, and beliefs that make up an organization and norms are the written or unwritten rules for how we engage with each other. However, working together was not always a part of educational culture. In the past, educators were accustomed to working in isolation with little time carved out for collaboration. The term *professional learning community* (PLC) first emerged among researchers as early as the 1960s to counter the phenomenon of teachers working in isolation. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the research on deprivatizing practice addressed how to generate PLCs and the benefits of educators having a common time to learn together. This research concluded that, when done right, working together in a PLC or collaborative community benefits teachers as well as students.

Have PLCs lived up to their promise? Michael Fullan (2020) reports that interest in PLCs has moved beyond the "whisper" of researchers to a growing "rallying cry" among practitioners. Teacher team meetings are now ubiquitous fixtures of schools across the nation. However, Fullan also cautions that the term *PLC* has traveled faster than the concept, and

many schools are engaged in superficial activities under the banner of PLC that will have little effect on student achievement.

What does "working together" look like in your organization? Some of us have participated in meetings with very structured agendas (often written by someone not participating in the meeting) calling for deliverables from the group. Typically, such endeavors are framed by the lens of accountability and are rarely informed by shared goals, shared wisdom, or levels of interdependence. This isn't very surprising, especially when someone outside the group determines the group's agenda. In other instances, team meetings have an identified leader who is seeking information from team members. In such cases, the members rarely collaborate; instead, they work together to complete a list of tasks. Such task orientation is also indicative of individualist cultures in which product invariably supersedes process.

Our experience over more than two decades as educational leaders and consultants has shown us that the definition of "working together" is rooted in a tradition of *what* we do as individuals, rather than in *how* to focus and drive impactful decisions that result in thriving communities of learning. Merely working together has yet to consistently exert a powerful impact on student learning as it was intended. For us, this is regrettable considering the countless hours, policies, practices, procedures, professional development, and value that have gone into carving out this time for educators.

Coming Together to Work Together

By now, it should be clear that simply "working together" is not the same as "coming together." Collectivist cultures come together "for the good of many" to achieve a common goal (Hofstede, 1980). When focusing on the good of all, we focus on equity. In collectivist cultures, integrated groups perceive their interdependence and obligations to the community as unstated norms. In most schools, the PLCs are groups of educators *working* together. Most researchers, as well as practitioners, would agree that PLCs should create a collective process whereby educators engage in the following:

- Achieving a clear, common purpose for student learning

- Creating a collaborative culture to achieve the purpose

- Taking collective—rather than individual—responsibility for the learning of all students

- Coming together with relentless advocacy, efficacy, agency, and ownership for learning

✎ Jot Thought

Relentlessly Coming Together in PLCs

With members of your learning community, identify ways in which advocacy, efficacy, agency, and ownership are evident in your PLCs.

COLLECTIVE ACTIONS FOR COMING TOGETHER IN PLCs	HOW DO THESE COLLECTIVE ACTIONS SHOW UP IN YOUR PLCs?
Advocacy	
Efficacy	
Agency	
Ownership	

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Teams that come together to focus on historical educational disparities, current inequities, and opportunity gaps share momentum to fulfill the promise of equity. In our consulting work coaching teams and delivering professional development, we emphasize an overarching focus on equity. Equity-focused PLCs are spaces where members identify and apply specific evidence-based practices that affirm the cultural connections and backgrounds of every student. Such teams strive to incorporate culturally fortifying practices that enhance the cognition, engagement, and learning of all students. Culturally fortifying practices are shared and implemented among all the members of the learning community. In addition, the team interrogates the cultural relevance of curriculum, instruction, and assessments in the interest of improving student engagement and closing instructional gaps. As PLCs confront the brutal facts of our quantitative and qualitative data and the current realities faced by students and their families, we evolve in our practice and are committed to continuously asking, "Who benefited and who did not?" (Fisher, Frey, Almarode, Flories, & Nagel, 2019).

Although these are all laudable pursuits, there is one critical aspect of the process that is missing: *understanding*. More specifically, how can we take a collective approach to this work if we don't know or leverage

the *cultural* dimensions of working as a collective? Without an understanding of the dynamics of cultural differences between ourselves, our colleagues, our students, and members of our greater community, we cannot come together as a collective or focus on the learning of all students.

More plainly stated, you cannot be a quilt with just one square.

In the remainder of this chapter, we will highlight how understanding ourselves and each other when considering the dimensions of identity and levels of culture is foundational to creating collective equity in our learning communities.

Connecting Dimensions of Identity

What impedes the interlacing of cultures? Humans long for connections, attachments, and relationships, but through societal structures that are rooted in individualist ways of making meaning (e.g., the US Constitution, the three branches of government, the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, the Pledge of Allegiance, and unwritten [Eurocentric] cultural norms), we are forced into independence, silos, and autonomy rather than interdependence. A relentless focus on competitiveness prevents the community from coming together by creating structures where we only work together but never come together. This dismantles our opportunity to produce and fortify outcomes that have a positive impact for everyone.

To achieve the vision of coming together, we must first engage in personal cultural awareness by unlearning, updating, reconsidering, and refining our knowledge, attitudes, skills, and beliefs in a manner that frees us to deeply engage with colleagues, students, and families. What does this look like and why is it important? Too often we make statements that negatively impact individuals, such as,

- "Good morning ladies and gentlemen."

- "Today boys and girls…"

- "Where are you going on Christmas break?"

- "What did your family have for Thanksgiving dinner?"

- "That is so gay!"

- "You are retarded!"

✎ **Jot Thought**

Negative Statements

What other statements have you heard that could negatively impact individuals?

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FIGURE 1.2   Constrained and Unconstrained Equity

CONSTRAINED EQUITY EXAMPLES	UNCONSTRAINED EQUITY EXAMPLES
There is no need to change because we have come a long way. *(We had a Black president—President Barack Obama)*	There is a desire to expand our knowledge of other cultures and the dimension of identities in order to see the plight of historically marginalized groups of people. *(Approval of state reparations for Black people)*
America is not a racist country. *(All lives matter)*	Awareness of the "isms" that exist for oppressed cultures that are outside of the dominant cultures *(Pride commemorative celebrations for LBGTQIA+ individuals)*
America is a melting pot that embraces everybody. *(Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals)*	The hiring of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion leaders in all industries *(Walmart, Zoom, Gucci, Amazon, and many school districts across the US)*

In order to evolve to where you embrace cultural differences, you must display *unconstrained equity.* To embody **unconstrained equity,** one must have an openness and capacity to appreciate differences; display a **crisis of consciousness** in which we recognize and own the internal dissonance that comes along with challenges to what we have always known, believed, and valued; and have a personal and ongoing commitment to be better. This requires listening, learning, questioning, reflecting, and collaborating with a deep sense of humility to transform our individualistic ways of working together into collectivist actions where we come together. Unconstrained equity is a lifelong growth process.
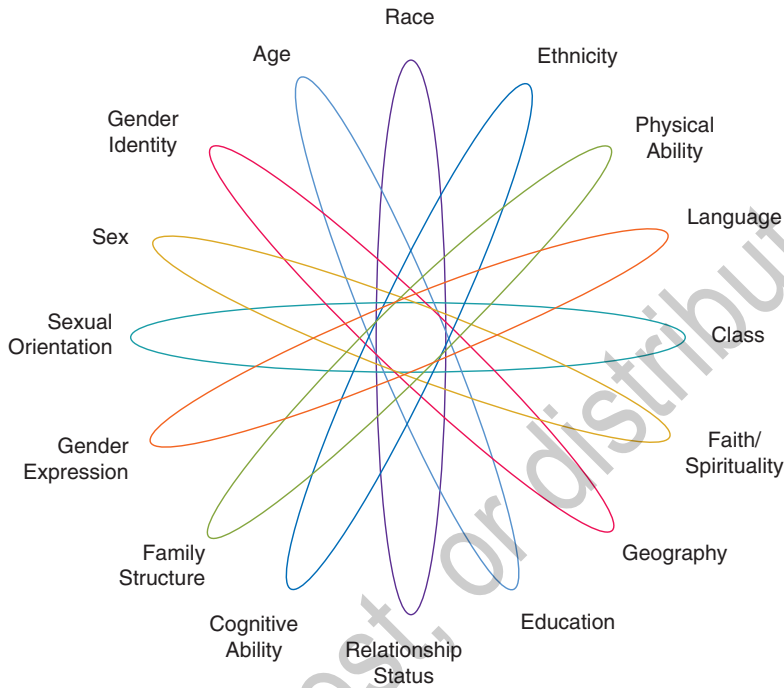
In contrast, **constrained equity** is typically performative and has an endpoint at which our growth stops and we are no longer conscious of our blind spots (see Figure 1.2). Constrained equity often ends with the belief that we have progressed to a post-racial society or, as individuals, we have acquired a sufficient degree of cultural competency and "wokeness."

Our crisis of consciousness creates a "knowing-doing gap" in our respect, responsiveness, and relationships within our collaborative communities. This gap exists between what we know versus what we should or choose to take immediate action on. For some (most significantly, those who are members of the dominant majority), the dimensions of identity that show up in these communities are an unwanted intrusion. Consider the norm of so-called colorblindness ("I don't see color"). Unfortunately, it is still a reality in many of our schools and organizations, and one that invalidates a person's sense of being, belonging, and becoming. When you don't see color, you don't know the fullness of that person, ignoring who they are and impacting the rich opportunities of being in a collective. When we don't feel seen or included, we are unable to come together; therefore, the team is not a collective.

There are multiple facets of identity that are integral to our sense of belonging and inclusivity. If we do not know ourselves, how can we come together to achieve our common goals? In our schools and our pluralistic society as a whole, our lives are impacted by intersectionalities of identities: race, gender identity, social class, sexual orientation, language, religious affiliation, age, physical ability, gender expression, and ethnicity, to name a few. The theory of intersectionality posits that there are systems in society that give some people advantages over others based upon their intersecting identities (Crenshaw, 1989). The intersections of aspects of identity may create modes of discrimination and privilege. Facets of identity are linked to corresponding systems of oppression (e.g., racism, sexism, heteronormativity, cisnormativity) that perpetuate inequities.

Figure 1.3 is a representation of the dimensions of identity, which include intersectionalities that make up who we are as individuals. When we cultivate an understanding of the dimensions of identity we not only become more self-aware, but we increase our understanding and appreciation of others' identities. This understanding impacts and influences who we are as professionals.

When we embrace who *we* are, we can recognize the multi-dimensional identities of others. The result—increased group harmony—makes us more effective as a collective. Returning to our quilt metaphor, dimensions of identity can be individually represented as quilt squares. In

FIGURE 1.3   The Dimensions of Identity

Race
Age
Ethnicity
Gender Identity
Physical Ability
Sex
Language
Sexual Orientation
Class
Gender Expression
Faith/ Spirituality
Family Structure
Geography
Cognitive Ability
Education
Relationship Status

order to become a collectivist community, each square must be inter-woven with threads of social fusion: creativity, compassion, communi-cation, collaboration, courage, and conscious curiosity about ourselves and others. Considering the intersectionalities of the dimensions of identity increases understanding of the privilege, power, and oppres-sion that hinder individuals and communities from appearing in the fullness of who they are. As we reflect on our own experiences of how we enter personal, professional, and societal spaces, we share with you a glimpse of our world.

Nicole was born in Blythville, Arkansas to a college-educated mother who was married to a military officer. Her mother decided after many years of marriage that she could no longer be married. She became a divorced mother. When Nicole and her family moved to Gary, Indi-ana it was a life of joy, comfort, and pain. For Nicole, this dichotomy of emotions and experiences was born out of her intersectionality of physical health and the family dynamics. A genetic disorder (sickle cell anemia) created a world where hospitalizations were normal for Nicole. Nicole also became well aware of the judgments and mental models that surfaced in her interactions with others—particularly

the belief that her family was not good enough for a community filled with two-parent homes. As an adult, Nicole navigates and negotiates spaces as a Black woman with a debilitating illness who also holds a PhD. Because of these intersectionalities, she is forced to constantly survey whether she can show up in the fullness of who she is.

Sonja was born in Anderson, South Carolina and enjoyed the laughter and love that her family and other children gave to her at a very young age. As a result of desegregation, she landed in an all-white elementary school at the ripe age of 6. A Black child who was taught the value of an education from a very early age by grandparents, parents, aunts and uncles, all of whom had graduated from college, she entered this space with excitement and curiosity about the world around her. Although she was excited and curious, she faced the ugliness of racism in the South on the very first day of school when none of the other children even called her name, nor did the teacher acknowledge her. Think about it: How does one who grew up in a world where education is valued as a gift enter into another world where, because of her race, she is no longer afforded that gift? As an adult, Sonja has realized that in many spaces, being educated and Black is not seen and valued as a gift. In this case, the intersections of Sonja's Blackness with her status as a well-educated American (she holds a doctoral degree) have had a significant impact on how she shows up in the world.

After completing the engagement activity below, consider how each dimension might bring benefits and burdens for Nicole and Sonja.

✎ Jot Thought

Personal Awareness

Reflect upon the intersectionalities that are meaningful for you. Be real in this space as you explore past and present realities of who you are.

	As a child, which of the following dimensions of identity were pronounced for you?	As an adult, which of the following dimensions of identity are pronounced for you?	As an educator, which of the following dimensions of identity are pronounced for you?	Which ones are the most important to you now?	Which ones do you believe others typically notice about you?	Which ones impact your existence the most in society?
AGE						
APPEARANCE						

(Continued)

(Continued)

	As a child, which of the following dimensions of identity were pronounced for you?	As an adult, which of the following dimensions of identity are pronounced for you?	As an educator, which of the following dimensions of identity are pronounced for you?	Which ones are the most important to you now?	Which ones do you believe others typically notice about you?	Which ones impact your existence the most in society?
BODY IMAGE						
COGNITIVE ABILITY						
DIALECT						
EDUCATION						
ETHNICITY						
FAMILY STRUCTURE						
GENDER EXPRESSION						
GENDER IDENTITY						
GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION						
HEALTH STATUS						
IMMIGRANT STATUS						
INDIGENOUS ORIGIN						
LANGUAGE						
MENTAL HEALTH STATUS						
NATIONALITY						
PARENTAL STATUS						
PHYSICAL ABILITY						
PROFESSIONAL STATUS						
RACE						
RELATIONSHIP STATUS						
RELIGION/ SPIRITUALITY						
SEXUAL ORIENTATION						

SKIN COMPLEXION						
SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS						
STATURE						
OTHER						

Which dimensions of identity have been most prevalent throughout your life?

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Do the members of the collective share your dimensions of identity? How so?

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What did you experience from this engagement activity?

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Community Agreements and Equity Fatigue

Below are examples of how three schools approached the practice of building collective equity by celebrating dimensions of identity.

Field Examples of Building Collective Equity by Celebrating Dimensions of Identity

On the opening day of school at Melton City Elementary School, the staff was invited to participate in a group activity: decorating squares of a quilt to represent their personal and/or professional identities. Nancy Larson, the principal, invited staff members to tell their stories through visual imagery on their personalized squares. They then assembled the squares in a manner that symbolized who they were as a community. This quilt hung in the cafeteria and was a constant reminder to celebrate warmth, unity, and the sense of belonging of each team member.

Broad Street High School celebrates the staff by sharing "I Am From" poems. This activity embraces each member of the team through storytelling and sharing life experiences from a dimension of culture. This engagement strategy allows staff to express themselves as individuals but, at the same time, promotes an understanding that we are more alike than we are different. Time is set aside for each member to craft their "I Am From" poem using the George Ella Lyon poem "Where I'm From" as a template. Participants add layers of complexity and vulnerability as they share reflections from their life experiences. Bill Maxi and the administrative team create space for staff members to share their poems with one another. This opens the door for connections, appreciation of each other's creativity, and enhanced cultural awareness. One teacher said, "This was a powerful activity and gave me insight on my co-workers that will be an imprint in my head and heart. I have a new found level of the value of really knowing my colleagues."

Harper Middle School engages staff in a show and tell using the activity "Cultural Brown Bag." In this activity, staff members are asked to bring an item that reflects their culture. This activity provides a perfect way for coworkers to get to know each other on a deeper level. Staff have brought items from childhood, heirlooms from relatives, photographs, items of clothing, and books and items that are sentimental and valued by the individuals who are sharing aspects of their culture. It is a great way to open up conversations and questions about our colleagues in order to get to know them better.

> ### 👥 Shared Experience
>
> Create a social fusion activity representing members of the learning community coming together to celebrate dimensions of identity (e.g., quilt, "I am" poetry, cultural brown bag).
>
> | SOCIAL FUSION ENGAGEMENT |
> |---|
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The three examples above were drawn from communities that have agreements for how they work, share experiences, and come together. **Community agreements** are protocols or ground rules for guiding conversations and engagement strategies focusing on cultural awareness. Skilled facilitators lead staff members through a process of identifying the guidelines and conditions necessary for full engagement. These agreements open the door to productive conversations about personal and complex issues that we generally avoid in a working environment and can disrupt the crisis of consciousness. As the development of community agreements evolve within the collective, we must cultivate self-awareness and surround ourselves with the support of other members in the community. This is complex work requiring hypervigilance to tap into all aspects of our being. Once we decide to do this work, there is no resting. Equity is a state of being. It is not something that we do; it is who we are. This journey is known to evoke an emotional impact that at times causes feelings of hopelessness, despair, frustration, shame, anger, exhaustion, and blame. As we enter into this work and guide each other on our journey toward equity, we must attend to ourselves because *equity fatigue* is real. This term has been around for years, but it's often just used when people are tired of talking about equity. *Equity fatigue is more than that.* It is a condition of physical and mental exhaustion, and this is something many leaders of color face because inequity is relentless.

While our white colleagues may be able to walk away if they get tired of these conversations, we can't take a break; we can't walk away; we will always be of color. The world will always see us as "of color," even when it claims to be "color-blind." (Le, 2017)

While in the field we have noticed that educators of color are experiencing a reckoning as they are chosen to carry the torch for this work, sometimes by choice and other times by the mere fact that they are thought to be the spokesperson for oppressed groups because of their race. Although this can be cathartic and healing, it is also emotionally depleting.

> Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare.
>
> —Audre Lorde

Equity fatigue can occur in each of us on our journey toward equity. We must be reflective and self-aware in order to remain on the journey for the long haul. Transformation will not happen overnight. Equity work is exhausting but also rewarding and, as equity champions, we must take care of ourselves. One way is through cultivating a relationship with an equity commitment partner who will serve as a confidant and provide external support, a listening ear, shared passion, reflective feedback, a strength-based mindset, and reciprocity of trust and respect for the relationship. In order to do this work, we need each other to survive and thrive.

Jot Thought ✏️

My Equity Commitment Partner

In the chart below, identify your equity commitment partner and what that connection will entail.

My equity commitment partner is	
I need the following from my partner	↕ _____ ↕ _____ ↕ _____ ↕ _____ ↕ _____
We will check in	↕ daily ↕ two times per week ↕ three times per week ↕ bi-weekly ↕ monthly

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Community agreements are one step toward precluding the occurrence of equity fatigue in that they help to promote healthy relationships and interactions across the community. When we engage in co-constructing such agreements, we enter into a process driven by relationships and a commitment to the learning community. These agreements require trust, vulnerability, openness, safety, and bravery. A healthy culture within the learning community is foundational for sustainability. This happens when relationships are pure, authentic, and sincere. Community agreements shape how the group moves into spaces of high trust and low fear (Howard, 2015). For communities to navigate their journey to collective equity, there must be agreements that shape brave, inclusive, and supportive interactions and are grounded in their *shared truths*.

✎ Jot Thought

Examples of Community Agreements

COMMUNITY AGREEMENT	SHARED MEANING
Mutual respect	Respecting the values, ideas. and beliefs of others; not imposing our own onto others
Active listening	Fully concentrating on what is being said rather than just passively "hearing" the message of the speaker, in order to fully understand the message, comprehend the information, and respond thoughtfully
Right to pass	The right to not participate in the sharing and instead sit quietly listening to the interactions
Trust intent/name impact	Assuming the "good will" of others and identifying the personal emotional charge on oneself based upon others' actions
Stay engaged (emotionally, physically, and cognitively)	Participating by exhibiting curiosity about the topics, posing questions, and seeking feedback
Take care of yourself (emotionally, physically, and cognitively)	Monitoring what you need and managing your stress from the actions of others

Tap into your inner experience: what other agreements might be added?

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👥 Shared Experience

Using the agreements each group member added to the previous exercise, create a set of shared community agreements. A member of the group takes the lead by asking the other members to share out their individual examples through a process of synthesis and agreement. Once you have identified the common set, post them and review them prior to each time you "come together" as a collective.

SHARED COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

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Coming Together Using a Collective Equity Framework

School cultures aren't formed in a vacuum. Our schools are continually influenced by general trends, events, and actions of our society, most notably the overarching policies that are enacted in the sociopolitical arena. Author/consultant Gary Howard (2015) developed a useful framework called Levels of Engagement, shown in Figure 1.4.

FIGURE 1.4   Gary Howard's Levels of Engagement

Societal/Structural
Organizational
Professional
Personal

*Source:* Reprinted from Howard (2015).

Much of what we have experienced as "school reform" has been based on a top-down model, driven by accountability and compliance and informed by the societal/structural level. Howard (2015) refers to such carrot-and-stick efforts as "market-driven," in direct contrast to the collectivist ways of being that are at the heart of this book. After enduring decades of such policies and practices one thing remains clear: we've done little to close the opportunity gaps that have created barriers to the success of historically marginalized groups, including students of color and those living in low-income households.

Rather than a top-down model in which our actions and decisions are driven by the outer ring of the circle in Figure 1.4, we propose that the levels of engagement are interdependent, thereby creating the Collective Equity Framework (Figure 1.5). Moreover, the evolution of the collective begins with personal consciousness—the inner circle. If we do not have an understanding of our own culture and how it informs our beliefs and values, we are not equipped to evolve with others in our professional practice in a manner that creates equitable learning experiences. We must collectively agree to value preservation of identity, honor differences, and honor individual assets. This is not antithetical to coming together as a collective. Rather than thinking of the collective as a melting pot, think back to our quilt metaphor in which each square maintains its own uniqueness and beauty, but together they form a unified work of artistry. Coming together as a collective is a relational process of respecting, honoring, and learning from one another using a lens of difference. Again, what makes it a collective is that we catalyze around the greater good. Changing systems requires changing people, and changing people requires changing systems (Fullan, 2009). In contrast to the top-down model, our enabling conditions move from the inside out, requiring *collective engagement* among everyone in the organization. As we gain new self-understanding and engage with one another in the collective, we gain greater insight into how our actions and decisions influence not only our professional practice but our organizations and society as a whole.

Equity Pathways and Equity Pavers

When we come together as learners, we become more adept at identifying how our decisions and actions can be pathways or barriers to equity. An *equity pathway* is a roadmap for equitable transformations that addresses educational disparities. It is a process

FIGURE 1.5   The Collective Equity Framework
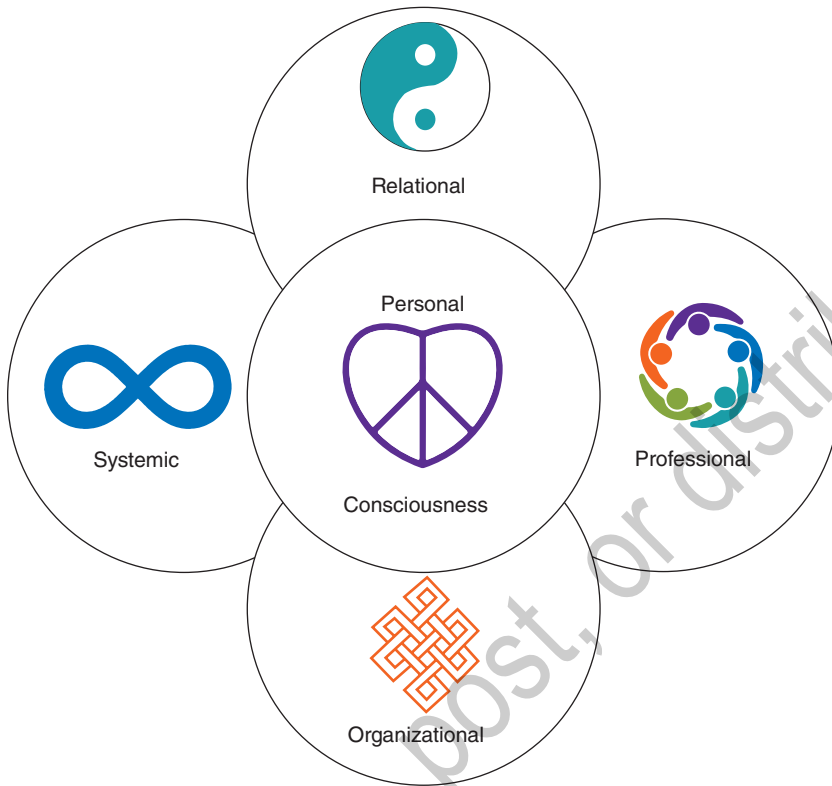
for acquiring knowledge, building skills, shaping attitudes, and strengthening stamina for collective actions to diminish inequities in our learning community. Below are examples of equity pathways that address specific inequities in our schools:

- Creating culturally fortifying environments

- Cultivating anti-racist education

- Building cultural literacy of learning community members

- Enhancing equity partnerships with families and community members

- Designing culturally relevant instruction

- Fostering equitable and inclusive working environments

As we travel toward equitable transformations, we strive to identify and validate where people are on the journey. Transforming schools into equitable environments can only be achieved if the members of the learning community increase their equity knowledge, attitudes, and skills. This is accomplished using techniques we call *equity pavers*. An equity paver is a scaffold, or step along our equity pathway, that helps us identify the prior knowledge, attitudes, and skills of the learning community. It also describes concrete action steps that we can take to realize our desired outcomes as defined by our pathways. Equity pavers provide entry points that leverage prior knowledge and determine a logical sequence for *creating communities where we all can breathe.*

An equity paver is directly aligned to the specified equity pathway. Pavers help us observe our own growth and monitor our progress toward cultural humility. For example, if your equity pathway is to culturally fortify all the students in the learning community, then your equity pavers (the actions the collective will take) could include the following:

Equity Pathway: Create a culturally fortifying environment

Equity Pavers:

- Book study: *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain* by Zaretta Hammond

- Professional learning on culturally fortifying practices

- Coaching on the implementation of culturally fortifying instructional practices

- Build a culturally fortifying school and classroom library

- Conduct an equity audit

- Engage all staff in DOT inventory (a process used to ensure that every student is known in the learning community. Students names are posted around the room and teachers place dots on names of students where they have a significant relationship. This provides a visualization to making sure every student is known)

- Create a culturally relevant welcome center for families and community members

- Regularly monitor the experiences of the adult members of our learning community (e.g., do we all feel safe in speaking our respective truths?)

- Obtain student feedback on our culturally fortifying practices. How are we actually doing?

The identification of equity pathways and equity pavers provides opportunities to give birth to collective actions for creating equitable learning environments for all. Figure 1.6 illustrates how equity pavers align with the Collective Equity Framework.

FIGURE 1.6 Examples of Equity Pavers Within the Dimensions of the Collective Equity Framework

DIMENSION OF THE COLLECTIVE EQUITY FRAMEWORK	EQUITY PAVERS
Personal	Collective engagement strategies focusing on the following: • dimensions of identity • bias recognition • levels of culture
Relational	Collective engagement strategies focusing on the following: • social fusion activities that create cultural interconnectedness • generosity and kindness toward others • interactions displaying humility
Professional	Professional learning opportunities focusing on the following: • culturally fortifying pedagogy • culturally sustaining leadership • agentic vs. communal dispositions
Organizational	Continuous school improvement actions focusing on the following: • system/school equity data • human development and empowerment • equitable strategic resourcing
Systemic	Sociopolitical actions focusing on the following: • systemic inequities impacting schools • white supremacy and public education • criminalization of students and discipline policies

Understanding the Three Levels of Culture

We have a moral imperative as a relational society to personally, professionally, and organizationally confront who we are as individuals and our relationship to the conditions that enable systemic inequities and oppression. The Collective Equity Framework informs how we interact as individuals and summon the unique assets that we bring into the community, which not only help us know one another as individuals, but also help us understand and appreciate cultures outside of our own. In exploring such differences, we gain greater insight into why we do what we do and what is important to us. Similarly, we learn how our own cultural values and assumptions may differ from others in the learning community.

Sonja and Nicole have had the experience of asking five different people from a school how they would define their school culture and receiving five very different answers. As well, most of our school improvement plans are heavily laden with activities that require us to focus on building a positive school culture and climate. Paradoxically, the objectives very rarely take into account the people who actually make up and create the culture. These are surface-level activities that provide an introduction, but by themselves will not create a culture where everyone feels seen, heard, valued, and validated.

Many of us have participated in superficial events in the interest of "culture building." An example of this is the "international day" ritual that is typically scheduled with little thought given to its objective or any follow-up to the activity. As we wrote this chapter, we reminisced about how we enjoyed the food, snapped our fingers to the music, danced and moved to the rhythms of the cultural expressions, and adorned ourselves with a variety of clothing items that were even called "costumes." (Consider the culturally insensitive implications of even using such a word in this context!) However, did we know any better?

After the day was over, after we cleaned the cafeteria, after we went back to our rooms and offices, nothing about our school culture had changed. One of our reasons for writing this book is the knowledge that educators (ourselves included) may have great intentions, but we don't know what we don't know. If an isolated activity like international day does not create a community of inclusivity, what are schools to do to provide authentic experiences that will build a pluralistic school culture that allows us to connect in ways that extend beyond our one-time "cultural events."

So, what does culture have to do with it? As it turns out, everything. Simply stated, the people in an organization build the culture. We become collectivist around our cultural expressions. Culture is highly nuanced, but fundamentally it operates on three levels: the surface culture, the shallow or intermediate culture, and deep culture (Hammond, 2015, p. 22). We are wired to cognitively operate this way, and because of this, everyone embodies their culture regardless of their specific dimensions of difference. Our culture drives our attitude, actions, and our affirmations for one another and ultimately makes meaning of what happens with us and to us every day.

Surface culture consists of the type of music we listen to, the attire that adorns us, food that we savor, the traditions and stories that we tell, and dancing to the rhythm of cultural expressions. Although it's imperative to understand and embrace these patterns of observable culture, this level has low emotional impact on trust, and low trust impedes relationship building. Other examples of surface culture are hair styles and speaking styles, which often stimulate biases and judgments from the dominant culture. Why are these aspects of surface culture uncelebrated? When we pick and choose the aspects of culture that we are uncomfortable embracing, we choose to not see people. We also choose to decrease the opportunity for us to connect beyond a surface-level, thereby impacting the way we work together and support a healthy, thriving learning community.

Immersive Experience

Read the three narratives below and engage in the **Jot Thought** to tap into your inner experience using the three levels of culture.

Narrative 1: Author Paul Gorski highlights an example of a surface cultural experience.

Taco Night by Paul C. Gorski

I remember the invitations: red text on a white background, the name of the event in a curly bold face surrounded by a crudely drawn piñata, a floppy sombrero, and a dancing cucaracha. A fourth grader that year, I gushed with enthusiasm about these sorts of cultural festivals—the different, the alien, the other—dancing around me, a dash of spice for a child of white flighters. Ms. Manning distributed the invitations in mid-April, providing parents ample time to plan for the event, which occurred the first week of May, on or around Cinco de Mayo.

A few weeks later my parents and I, along with a couple hundred other parents, teachers, students, and administrators, crowded into the cafeteria for Guilford Elementary School's annual Taco Night. The occasion was festive. I admired the colorful decorations, like the papier mâché piñatas designed by fifth-grade classes, then watched my parents try to squeeze themselves into cafeteria-style tables built for eight-year-olds. Sometimes the school hired a Mexican song and dance troupe from a neighboring town. They'd swing and sway and sing and smile and I'd watch, bouncing dutifully to the rhythm, hoping they'd play La Bamba or Oye Como Va so I could sing along, pretending to know the words. If it happened to be somebody's birthday the music teacher would lead us in a lively performance of Cumpleaños Feliz and give the kid some Mexican treats.

¡Olé!

Granted, not a single Mexican or Mexican-American student attended Guildford at the time. However, I do recall Ms. Manning asking Adolfo, a classmate whose family had immigrated from Guatemala, whether the Taco Night tacos were "authentic." He answered with a shrug. Granted, too, there was little educational substance to the evening; I knew no more about Mexico or Mexican-American people upon leaving Taco Night than I did upon arriving. And granted, we never discussed more important concerns like, say, racism faced by Mexican Americans or the long history of U.S. imperialist intervention throughout Latin America. Still, hidden within Taco Night and the simultaneous absence of meaningful curricular attention to Mexicans, Mexican Americans, Chicanx people, or Latinx people more broadly, were three critical and clarifying lessons: (1) Mexican culture is synonymous with tacos; (2) "Mexican" and "Guatemalan" are synonymous and by extension all Latinx people are the same and by further extension all Latinx people are synonymous with tacos (as well as sombreros and dancing cucarachas); and (3) white people love tacos, especially in those hard, crunchy shells, which, I learned later, nobody in Mexico eats.

Thus began my diversity education—my introduction to a clearly identifiable "other." And I could hardly wait until Pizza Night.

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✎ **Jot Thought**

Tap Into Your Inner Experience

What was your Taco Night?

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What cultural events have you participated in?

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Do you recall any cultural insensitivities?

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What was the intent of these events?

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What was the impact on others?

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What considerations can be made to create a fortifying experience for all?

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Shallow culture consists of the unstated norms and unspoken rules that impact our social interactions, such as appropriate touching, rules about eye contact, and our nonverbal ways of interacting. It colors our thoughts around being courteous, such as how to treat adults if you are a child and elders if you are an adult. It is the nucleus of budding friendships and who we choose to spend time with, how we spend time with them, and how we communicate with others or perceive how they communicate with us. "It's at this level of culture that we put into action our deep cultural values. Nonverbal communication that builds rapport and trust between people comes out of shallow culture" (Hammond, 2015).

At this level of culture, we make our decisions about how (or whether) we will come together with our colleagues, parents, students, and community. Coming together is about us identifying the purpose of the learning community and considering the outcomes up front. This includes co-constructing community agreements and protocols that bolster shared truths. At this juncture of creating a school culture, we move into spaces that are often laden with highly charged emotional expressions.

We observe and judge the actions of our colleagues or others in many different ways that can be positive or negative. If the latter, our interactions may be interpreted as disrespectful, hostile, and aggressive. Violations of cultural norms at this level impede trust, force social silos, and can even cause high anxiety and distress. It is our recommendation that when professionals enter this level of building and creating a productive and positive culture, they engage in surface-level activities and create "community agreements" that respectfully consider the intersectionality and awareness of the cultures that make up our beautifully diverse community.

Narrative 2: Author Justin Hauver highlights an example of a shallow cultural experience.

Student Transgressions by Justin Haver

Ms. Regis, the counselor at Redline Middle School, took a deep breath and settled back into her chair as the conference room door softly clicked shut. She glanced at the eighth-grade teachers sitting around the table and felt uncertain about how to begin. In her two decades at Redline, she had never encountered a transgender-questioning student, at least not one who was open about it. Times were changing and she wondered if she could keep up—or if she wanted to. Mr. Guler, a veteran science teacher, saved her the trouble of starting the meeting, "So, what do we do about Keith?" "That's what we're here to figure out," Ms. Regis responded. "I've spoken with his mom"—should she say "her mom"?

Ms. Regis wondered—"and Ms. Carter is at a loss. She has tried talking with Keith and taking away his phone and his XBox. Nothing seems to work. She did make clear that she did not want Keith to be allowed to wear the wig at school and she's going to try to prevent him from posting any more pictures on social media." Last month, Keith had come to school wearing a blond wig and asking to be called "K'Brianna." The results had not been positive for Keith or for his teachers. Other students at Redline had bullied him mercilessly during breakfast even though teachers, somewhat dumbfounded, had tried to intervene. Keith's first period class had been so disrupted by his appearance that Mrs. Thomas, his math teacher, had sent him to the office just to get the class calm. When he refused to take off the wig, he was sent home for violating the school's prohibitions of hats and "provocative clothing." He came back the next day without the wig, claiming that the whole thing was an experiment. "Call me Keith, stupid," he said when students made jokes about "K'Brianna." His teachers continued trying to enforce Redline's anti-bullying policy whenever they heard someone making fun of Keith, but they were left confused by the whole event. Many staff members came from the local community, a very conservative town in the southern United States, and they had no direct experience with transgender issues. Some were also reluctant to defend transgender expressions for personal or religious reasons.

The final level of culture that Hammond (2015) defines is *deep culture.* "Deep culture is what grounds the individual and nourishes his mental health. It is the bedrock of self-concept, group identity, approaches to problem-solving, and decision making (Hammond, 2015, p. 24). At this level, we make unconscious assumptions that govern the way we see the world. Those things we know and hold as our truths are understood and implied without being stated. As an example, if one person makes a statement to another person who remains silent, the silence can be interpreted as agreement or approval. In our current time of social crisis around justice for Black and brown people, we have heard the phrase "silence is an agreement to the ills of our justice system," particularly for facets of our community that have the privilege.

In school organizations where we come together and work together, deep culture governs how we learn new information. This level also has an intense emotional charge, and the mental models we have created for ourselves influence our thoughts and our interpretation of threats and rewards in the environment. In other words, how we see ourselves and how the world views us. At this cultural level, the

threats can be deemed microaggressions, which harm the working relationship. Microaggressions are the subtle snubs, inappropriate jokes, and unintentional discrimination against marginalized groups that emotionally disrupt feelings of connectivity and how we do our work. These aggressive acts are expressed as invalidations, insults, and the most destructive, assaults. If we feel that cultural values are being challenged, our brains revert to the fight or flight response—a response that inherently moves us farther away from coming together.

Source: Reprinted from justiceinschools.org. Used with permission.

✎ Jot Thought

Tap Into Your Inner Experience

What was your transgression conversation?

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Identify inclusive conversations you have participated in.

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Do you recall any cultural insensitivities?

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What was the intent of these conversations?

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(*Continued*)

(Continued)

What was the impact on others?

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What considerations can be made to create a fortifying experience for all?

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Image Source: istock.com/LeoPatrizi

Narrative 3: Authors Heather Johnson and Ellis Reid highlight an example of a deep cultural experience.

Politics, Partisanship, and Pedagogy: What Should be Controversial in the Classroom? by Heather Johnson and Ellis Reid

The 10th-grade social studies team at Northern High School is meeting to identify topics for this year's Power of Persuasion (PoP) assignments, a core element of their curriculum. PoP required students to

research an issue, critically evaluate it, take a position, and present their arguments to classmates. After agreeing on the Dakota Access Pipeline as their first topic, one teacher proposes the creation of a Muslim registry as another. There seems to be general agreement that the topic is empirically controversial—that is, an active debate in the current political landscape. However, the teachers disagree that a Muslim registry should be treated as an open topic in their school. Just because something is being publicly debated, does that mean it should be? On the one hand, they are a department that is committed to preparing students to be informed and engaged citizens who can think critically about complex issues. On the other hand, some had trouble imagining how an open, balanced debate on a Muslim registry squared with a commitment to democratic ideals of tolerance, equality, and human rights. How had religious discrimination become something that is controversial, not just wrong? Some argue that it is ethically problematic to present both sides. Others argue that it is ethically problematic to present it in an unbalanced way or to avoid it altogether.

Source: Reprinted from justiceinschools.org. Used with permission.

✎ Jot Thought

Tap Into Your Inner Experience

What was your Muslim registry?

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What controversial curriculum decisions have you participated in?

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Do you recall any cultural insensitivities?

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(Continued)

(Continued)

What was the intent of these conversations?

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What was the impact on others?

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What considerations can be made to create a fortifying experience for all?

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Figure 1.7 provides examples of the three levels of cultural representation.

FIGURE 1.7 Levels of Cultural Representation

Surface Culture: Observable patterns Low emotional impact on trust	• Speech patterns • Cooking • Holidays • Songs • Art • Language • Music • Hair styles • Food • Clothes • Dance • Games • Drama • Literature • Stories

Shallow Culture: Unspoken rules High emotional impact on trust	• Concepts of time • Acceptable food sources • Personal space • Eye contact • Ways of handling emotion • Nature of relationships • Tempo of work • Being honest • Nonverbal communication • Theories of wellness & disease • Child-rearing principles
Deep Culture: Collective unconscious (beliefs & norms) Intense emotional impact on trust	• Decision making • Concepts of self • World view • Definitions of kinship & group identity • Cosmology (how the world began) • Spirituality & concept of a higher power • Relationship to nature and animals • Preferences for completion or cooperation • Notion of fairness

Source: Text reprinted from Hammond (2014).

> If identity and integrity are more fundamental to good teaching than technique—and if we want to grow as teachers—we must do something alien to academic culture: we must talk to each other about our inner lives—risky stuff in a profession that fears the personal and seeks safety in the technical, the distant, the abstract. (Palmer, 2012)

From Culturally Conscious to Culturally Humble (An Equity Pathway)

In the previous section, it was noted that culture *drives our affirmations for one another and ultimately makes meaning of what happens with us and to us every day.* An established culture represents who we are as an institution, organization, or group (Páez & Albert, 2012). Within these environments, we may or may not be conscious of our interactions and how they are interconnected and, in turn,

FIGURE 1.8   The Cultural Consciousness Matrix

Level 2	Level 3
Consciously Unskilled	Consciously Skilled
• You know that you don't know	• You know that you have the skill
• Beginning of growth	• Comfortable with being uncomfortable
• Crisis of consciousness	• Focused confidence
• Enlightened	• Intentional
Being	**Becoming**
Level 1	Level 4
Unconsciously Unskilled	Unconsciously Skilled
• You don't know what you don't know	• You know the skill and the skill is second nature
• Complete lack of knowledge and skills	• Completely confident
• Fixed mindset	• Automaticity, accountability, humility
• Oblivious	• Graceful
Existing	**Evolving**

Source: Adapted from Burch (1970).

influence our culture. The Cultural Consciousness Matrix (Figure 1.8) is a guide for members of learning communities as they interact and engage with one another and the world around them and evolve from cultural competence to cultural humility. It scaffolds their movement through four levels of knowing.

Level 1: Unconsciously Unskilled The individual does not understand or know the value of recognizing and appreciating dimensions of difference; for example, they are insensitive to oppression, microaggressions, and the systemic disadvantages of others. They have not identified the deficit that restricts their ability to nourish others and themselves. They deny the skill of being **culturally conscious**, which means they don't understand the three levels of culture. The individual must acknowledge their lack of skill and the value of a new skill before moving on to the next level. The duration of time an individual spends at this level depends on the strength of the stimulus to learn.

Level 2: Consciously Unskilled The individual does not understand the skill of being culturally conscious, although they recognize their deficit as well as the value of new skills to address the deficit.

They are cognizant of microinvalidations, microinsults, and their own biases. At Level 2, individuals experience growth and have to function in brave spaces where they take risks, ask questions, share perspectives, and listen to the stories of others. It is uncomfortable because the individual must confront their cultural shortcomings, for example by sharing their own cultural journey, personal background, and racial lenses. The learning community needs to engage in rich and diverse conversations at this level.

Level 3: Consciously Skilled The individual is deliberate in their personal cultural development and utilizes skills to move toward cultural competence by demonstrating a personal cultural expansion and the ability to connect across dimensions of difference. At this level, they are starting the journey of acceptance and, depending upon the context, moving toward appreciation. The movement at this level is contingent upon learning how to manifest behaviors that strive to benefit humankind. This pathway to cultural competence leads to intense consciousness of the realities regarding the systemic maltreatment of others. At Level 3, the individual can recognize the differences between equality and equity and is willing to call out injustice in the world around us. They will experience an emotional charge as they engage in uncomfortable discourse that requires recovery affectively, behaviorally, and cognitively. *"When you can't recover you can't move, and when you can't move you can't breathe."*

Level 4: Unconsciously Skilled The individual has mastered the dimensions of identity and levels of culture and has evolved from cultural competence toward cultural humility. For example, the individual supports the constructs of unconstrained equity, values all aspects of cultural identity, expresses unconditional positive regard, creates spaces of relational trust, and dismantles the "isms" (racism, classism, sexism, ableism, antisemitism, genderism, ageism, nationalism, sizeism, heterosexualism, ethnocentrism, etc.) while displaying a curiosity regarding differences unknown. **Cultural humility** is a process of self-awareness and grace in which we relentlessly challenge the imbalances of power and privilege that impact the way we see ourselves, others, and the world around us as we uphold the principle that human growth is never-ending—it is a journey. At this level you accept that you never really *master* cultural competence. We believe that cultural competence is a paver toward cultural humility—a destination at which

we never fully arrive. We must offer ourselves grace and accept guidance for braving the true quest of collective equity.

These levels of knowing position individuals to progressively evolve from being unconscious to conscious, unskilled to skilled, which in turn creates the movement toward collective equity in the learning community and empowers the collective to bridge the knowing-doing gap of cultural consciousness. According to Robbins (2005), cultural proficiency in an organization is reflected in its policies and practices; in an individual, it is the values and behaviors that enable that person to interact effectively in a culturally diverse environment. In a culturally proficient school or organization, the culture promotes inclusiveness and institutionalizes processes for learning about differences and for responding appropriately to differences.

Summary

As we move into the next five chapters of this book, we wish to reinforce the ways in which we engage with each other to ensure there is a consistent focus on decision making and actions required to create brave spaces of learning in schools where systems are transformed so that the learning community:

- comes together as a collective

- fulfills the promise of collective equity

- builds relational trust and motivation

- cultivates cultural humility

Chapter Highlights

- Cultural diversity is consistently increasing in our country and thus in our schools. Since 2014, the majority of students in our public schools have been non-white.

- Our students enter our classrooms with a rich array of identities including race, gender identity, sexual orientation, social class, religion, cognitive ability, physical ability, and family structures.

- When we intentionally understand, honor, and celebrate the dimensions of identity, we can impact teaching, leading, and learning for all.

- There are three levels of culture that impact who we are and how we appear.

- Through our understanding of who we are as educators, who our students are as learners, who the teachers and leaders are as an organization, and who we are as a community, we can engage in consideration of how we close our knowing-doing gap using the Cultural Consciousness Matrix.

Invitation to Collective Thinking

- How will your organization utilize the Collective Equity Framework to foster rich and rigorous conversations and actions to create collective equity?

- How do we capitalize on the personal level of engagement to position ourselves in order to make an impact on the professional and organizational levels? How can we consider the enabling conditions and take action?

- How does knowing yourself culturally impact your relationships and coming together as a collectivist community?

- How can you learn more about your colleagues' deep cultures to cultivate trusting environments and sustain positive working relationships?

Reflection

The Cultural Consciousness Matrix outlines the levels of knowing that empower a collective to bridge the knowing-doing gap.

THE CULTURAL CONSCIOUSNESS MATRIX	
Level 2	Level 3
Consciously Unskilled	Consciously Skilled
• You know that you don't know • Beginning of growth • Crisis of consciousness • Enlightened	• You know that you have the skill • Comfortable with being uncomfortable • Focused confidence • Intentional
Being	**Becoming**

(Continued)

Level 1	Level 4
Unconsciously Unskilled	Unconsciously Skilled
• You don't know what you don't know	• You know the skill and the skill is second nature
• Complete lack of knowledge and skills	• Completely confident
• Fixed mindset	• Automaticity, accountability, humility
• Oblivious	• Graceful
Existing	**Evolving**

Source: Adapted from Burch (1970).

In what ways has the information in Chapter 1 closed your knowing-doing gap?

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Who are you culturally as collective?

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At what level of the matrix are you, as a collective?

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Where do you need to go as a collective to move from being culturally conscious to culturally humble?

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