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CCU Theatre EDI
Community Healing

Meeting Guidelines

-Housekeeping-

- Please use the “RAISE YOUR HAND” feature
- Mute your device
- Meeting will not be recorded
- Child Friendly Space
- Please keep cameras on

-Rules of Engagement-

- Be aware of non-verbal actions
- We encourage you to show love and support through the chat, however the focus should be on those who are speaking and sharing. In light of this, please refrain from spamming the chat.
- White voices practice holding space (prioritize) BIPOC theater makers voices
- Pledge not to retaliate in anyway against artists who speak out
- Thoughtful and productive conversation is encouraged among participants, following a period of contemplation and reflection, and at the will, convenience, and terms of BIPOC students and alumni
- Participants not abiding by guidelines will be removed from the meeting immediately
- Private message Sara Plensdorf for participation in story circle

Objective

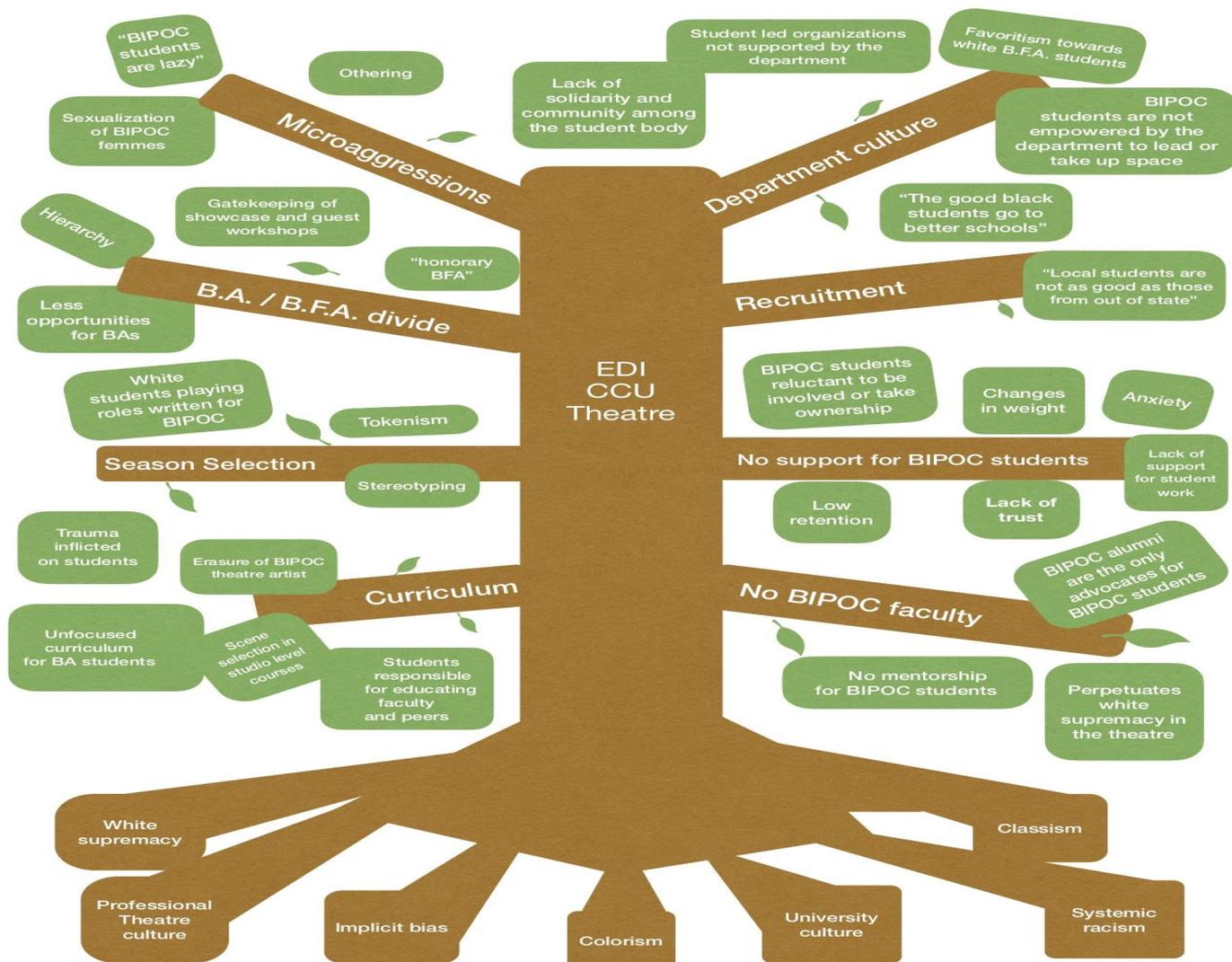
The purpose of this community meeting is to provide a container for the experiences of BIPOC students and alumni. When we ask “how” and “what,” we must also ask “why.” This investigation of our community culture through research and personal testimony helps us define and evaluate our understanding of “the human condition” so that all find belonging within the various interconnected networks and communities we inhabit: the programs, the department, the university, the discipline, the profession.

Meeting Agenda

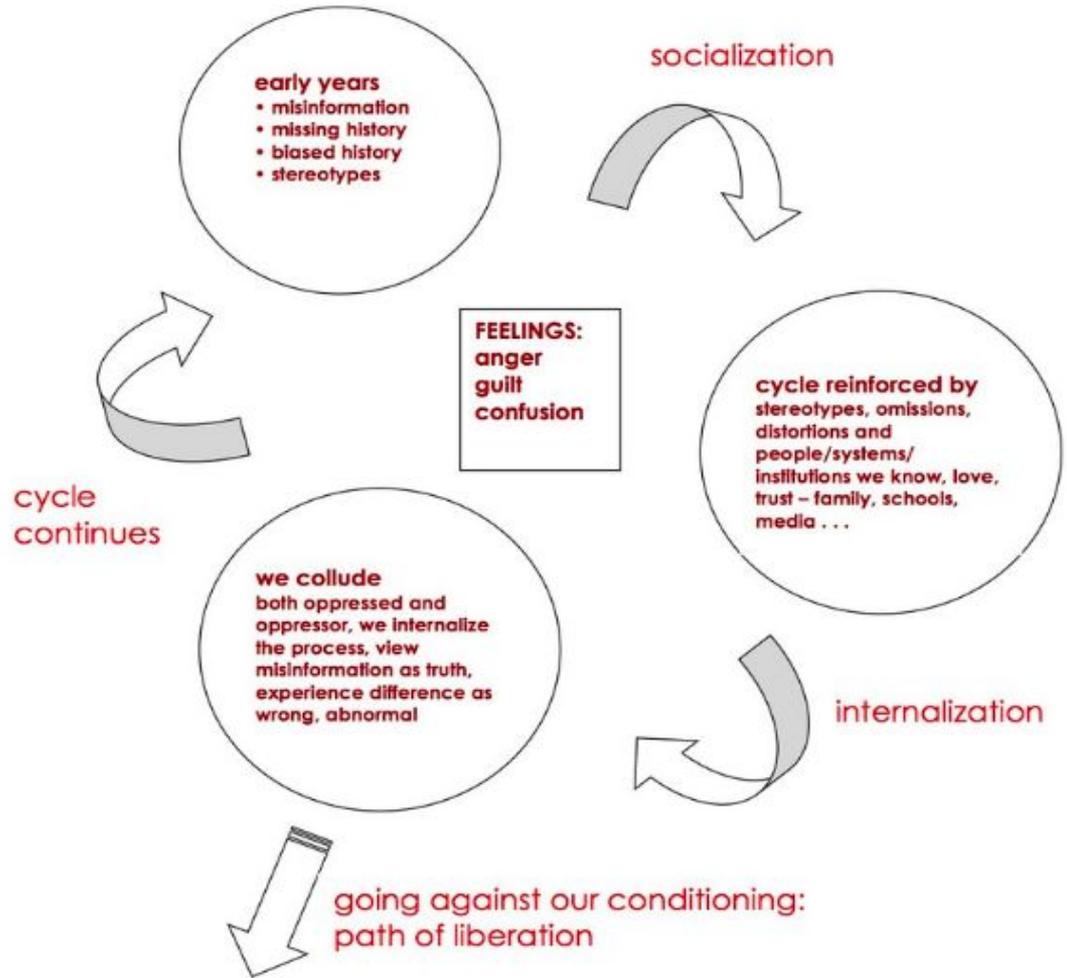
- Share student and alumni concerns through further analysis of the problem tree
- Explore the **microaggressions** and **department culture** branches
 - Story circle
 - Give space to alumni to share their specific experiences in relation to each topic
 - Each speaker will be given 2 mins to speak
 - Solutions
- Create a vision for the future

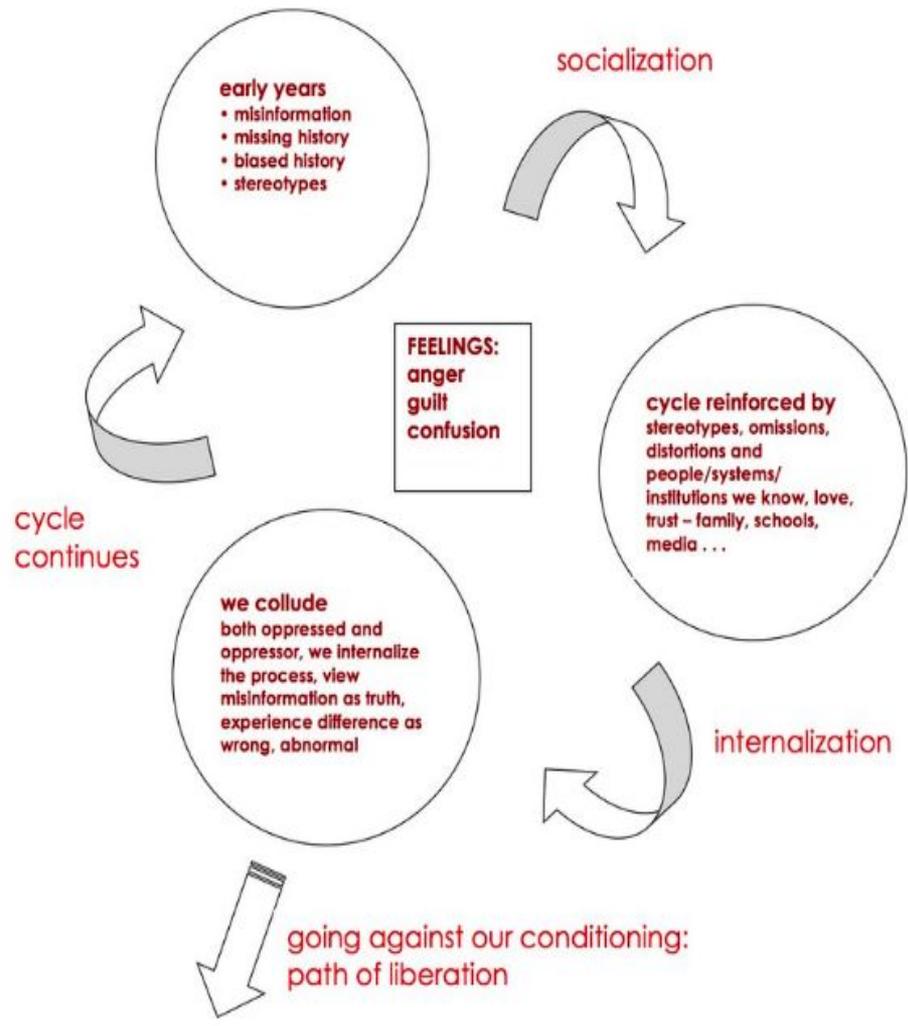
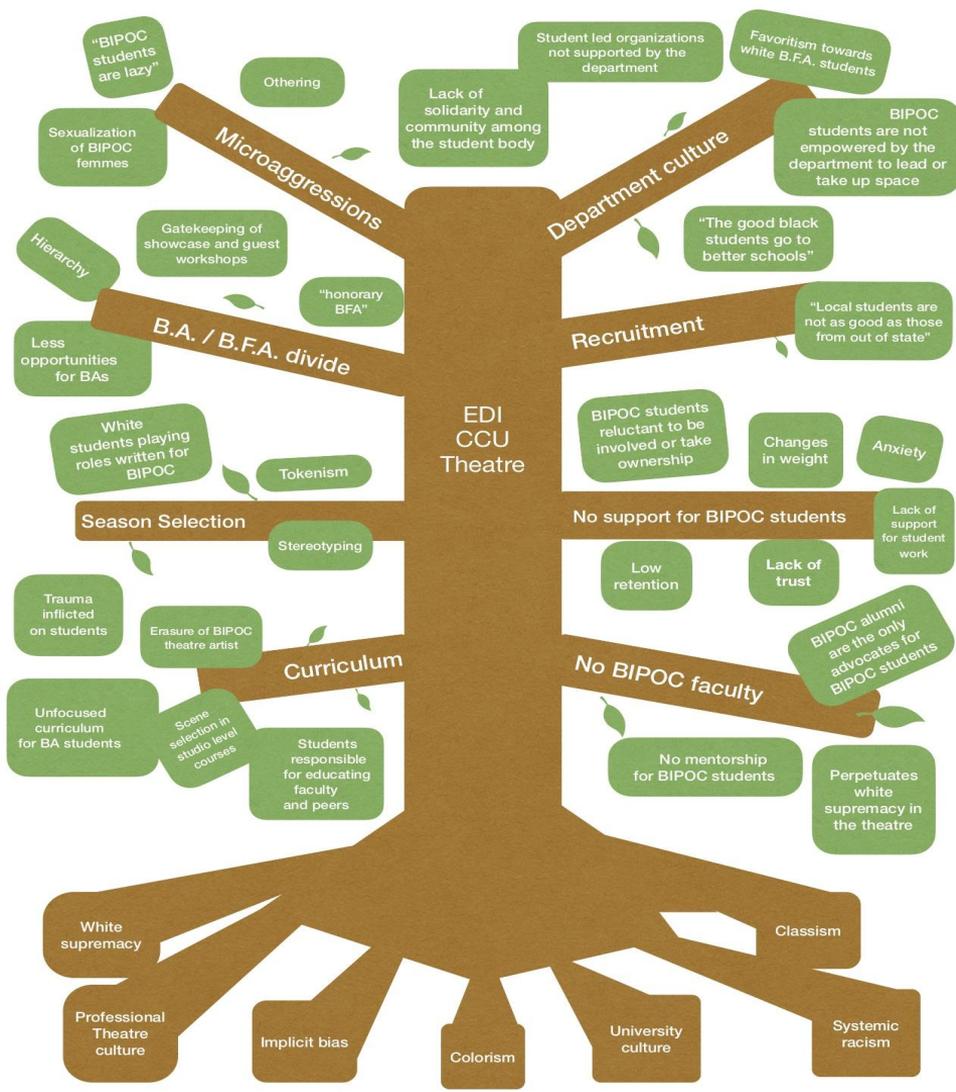
Transformative Justice Model created by Kai Cheng Thom

- **Listen**
 - Without becoming defensive
 - Without minimizing or denying the extent of harm
 - Without trying to make oneself the center of the story being told
- **Take responsibility**
 - Engage critically with your actions and not delegating all of the thinking to somebody else
- **Accept that your reasons are not excuses**
 - Reasons help us understand abuse but they not not excuse it
- **Take the survivor's lead**
 - Needs of survivors can change over time
 - survivor-lead does not mean the oppressed are solely responsible for transformation
- **Separate shame from guilt**
 - Guilt is feeling bad about something you've done; shame is feeling bad about who you are
- **Don't expect anyone to forgive you**
- **Forgive yourself**



CYCLE OF OPPRESSION





Department Culture

Implicit Bias

Attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner

- “*The good black students go to better schools*”
- Favoritism towards white students in the B.F.A.

Collusion through silence

“Collusion through silence” is another form of “community violence”. -*Mimi Kim*

- The acceptance of oppressive microaggressions and systemic racism as “just the way things are” leads to alienation and feelings of inferiority in BIPOC students

Indifference to the success of BIPOC students

Lack of support for student work or empowerment by the department for BIPOC students to lead or take up space

- BIPOC B.A. students undervalued as a part of the community

Lack of solidarity amongst the student body

The culture that is fostered by our educators and mentors is manifested in relationships between and among students, who model the actions and speech of the educators and mentors they look up to.

- **students model antagonistic relationships or alienating conditions for their peers.**

Story Circle #1

- How did your identity affect your educational experience?
- How did the academic and/or social culture of the department shape your experience?

Department Culture: Actionable Solutions

- Personal and department-wide accountability for actions
 - Ending the practice of favoritism in and out of the classroom working towards equity
 - Department-wide disciplinary policies for perpetuating gossip, segregation between fields of study, defamation of character of students, and personal retaliatory action taken by faculty against students (both in the classroom and on stage) for reasons other than poor academic performance
- Create a culture of solidarity that beings in the classroom
 - Radical change in curriculum to include and uplift BIPOC artists
 - Actively create systems of support, mental and emotional wellness
- Make public the specific actions being taken towards racial equity in the Dept of Theatre
 - **Fulfill previous demands for individual statements of accountability from the faculty, chair and dean**
 - A reworking of the Departments mission statement that is adhered to by all faculty

*Individual microaggressions and systematic cultures of alienation are **co-created**. They don't function in isolation of one another but **inform and propagate** one another.*

Microaggressions

- Microaggressions may appear as a compliment or joke, but insult and invalidate the experiences of marginalized folk in the space.
- Microaggressions are an integral part of the cycle of oppression. As we internalize these beliefs, they become fact to us.
- The implications of this are that experiences of difference are seen as abnormal and wrong, instead of simply human.

“The everyday slights, indignities, put downs, and insults that marginalized folk experience in their day-to-day interactions with people”

-Derald W. Sue, professor of psychology at Columbia University

Story Circle #2

- What were microaggressions you experienced within the Department (in the classroom, in rehearsals, backstage, within the culture of the department)?
- As a BIPOC student, when did you feel othered or unseen?

Microaggressions: Actionable Solutions

- Mandatory and continuous EDI training for all students, faculty, and staff
- Department-wide quarterly temperature checks
 - Open and continued discussion within the department with students, both in groups and one-to-one
- Faculty and department-wide support of all student run organizations, productions, or projects both in and out of the department
- Honoring demands for change in curriculum and in person to person interaction
- Active listening and accountability for trauma caused by faculty
- Practicing “impact over intent”

Community Planning

What is your vision for the next generation of BIPOC students in CCU Theatre Department?

Final Thoughts

Reflect with “why” as a framework

- Ask “why” even when we are scared of the answer
- “Why” allows us to uncover the humanity of transgressions

Ask what can I/we learn from this?

- What can this teach us about our interconnectivity?
- How will we create a different reality?

How can my real time actions contribute to transforming this situation vs. making it worse?

- Real-time is slower: reflection, growth, processing, accountability
- It requires stating needs and setting functional boundaries.

(derived from *What is/isn't TJ?* by adrienne maree brown)