



CHANGING THE DISCOURSE

TEXAS CONFERENCE ON ENDING HOMELESSNESS

SEPTEMBER 12, 2024



AGENDA

- 01 INTRO & AGREEMENTS
- 02 NATIONAL HISTORY ACTIVITY
- 03 LENS OF SYSTEMIC OPPRESSION
- 04 CHANGING THE DISCOURSE
- 05 CLOSING



OBJECTIVES

- PARTICIPANTS WILL LEARN THE COMPONENTS OF TRANSFORMATIVE DISCOURSE
- PARTICIPANTS WILL CREATE STRATEGIES FOR THEMSELVES/THEIR TEAMS TO SHIFT TO TRANSFORMATIVE DISCOURSE





COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

- SPEAK YOUR TRUTH
- ENSURE EQUITY OF PARTICIPATION
- SEEK TO UNDERSTAND
- RESPECT THE DIVERSITY OF EXPERIENCE AND CONTEXTS IN THE GROUP
- LEAN IN TO BE VULNERABLE WITH ONE ANOTHER
- ACCEPT & EXPECT NON-CLOSURE



MAKING MEANING OF OUR HISTORY



“IT IS IMPORTANT FOR ALL OF US TO APPRECIATE WHERE WE COME FROM AND HOW THAT HISTORY HAS REALLY SHAPED US IN WAYS THAT WE MIGHT NOT UNDERSTAND.”

“WHETHER BORN FROM EXPERIENCE OR INHERENT PHYSIOLOGICAL OR CULTURAL DIFFERENCES, OUR GENDER AND NATIONAL ORIGINS MAY AND WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN OUR JUDGING.”

—SUPREME COURT JUSTICE SONIA SOTOMAYOR

NATIONAL HISTORY ACTIVITY

- STUDY YOUR CARD (*WHY IS THIS EVENT IMPORTANT?*)
- FIND A PARTNER AND SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS
- TRADE CARDS WITH YOUR PARTNER AND FIND A NEW PARTNER





GROUP SHARE

- WHAT CAME UP FOR YOU WHILE YOU WERE DOING THE ACTIVITY?

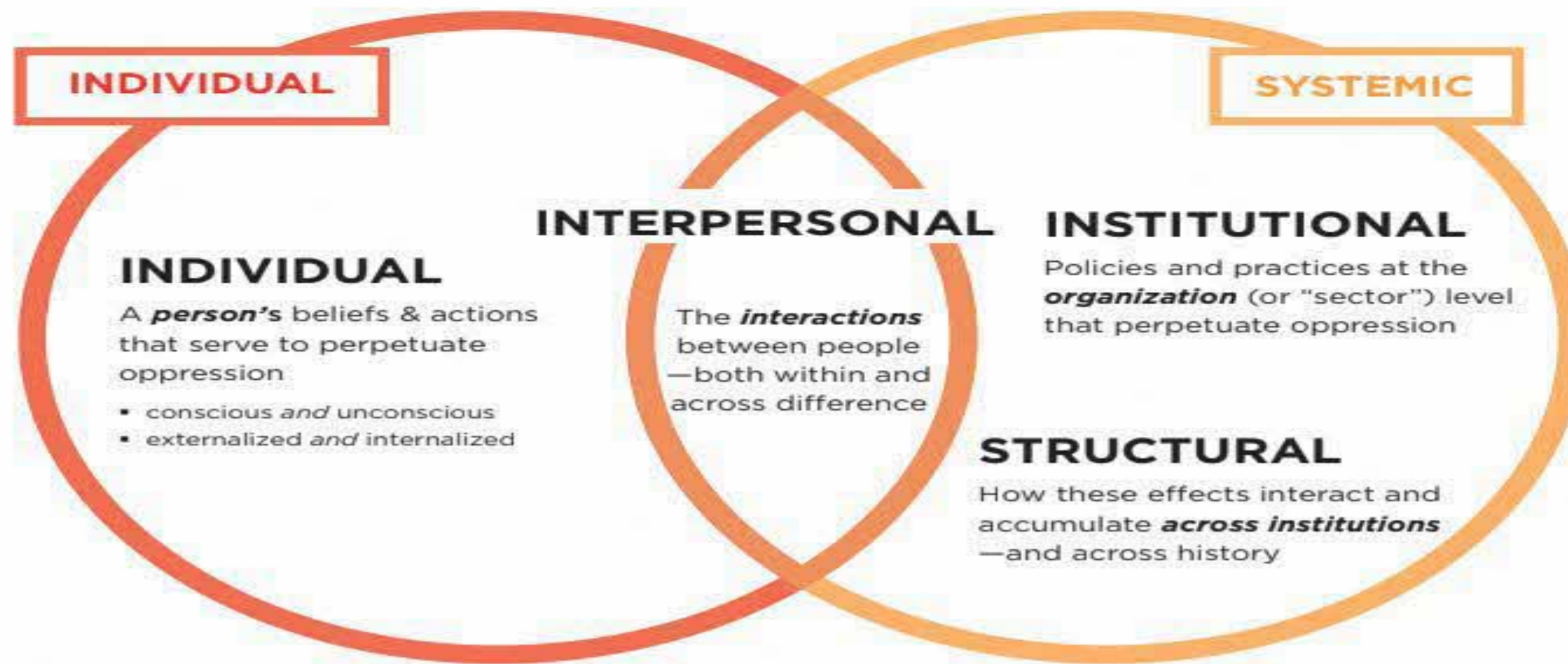


LENS OF SYSTEMIC OPPRESSION



“INEQUITABLE RACIALIZED OUTCOMES
DO NOT REQUIRE RACIST ACTORS.”

— JOHN A. POWELL (PROFESSOR AT UC BERKELEY)



Some overlapping phenomena playing out at each level.

INDIVIDUAL	INTERPERSONAL	INSTITUTIONAL	STRUCTURAL
• Individual advantage and disadvantage • Explicit bias & Implicit Bias • Stereotype threat • Internalized oppression	• Reproductive discourse (single truths, blame, externalization) • Microaggressions • Racist interactions • Transferred oppression	• Biased policies and practices (e.g. in hiring, teaching, discipline, parent-family engagement) • Disproportional (e.g. racialized) outcomes and experiences • White dominant cultural practices	• Systems of advantage and disadvantage • Opportunity structures • Societal history of oppressive practices and policies

CORE

- **ASSUMPTIONS** SYSTEMIC OPPRESSION HAS HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS: WE MUST FACE OUR NATIONAL LEGACY AND MANIFESTATIONS OF RACISM & ECONOMIC INEQUALITY IN ORDER TO TRANSFORM THEM
- SYSTEMIC OPPRESSION EXISTS AT THE LEVEL OF INSTITUTIONS AND ACROSS STRUCTURES THAT ARE INTERCONNECTED AND REINFORCING OVER TIME
- WITHOUT RIGOROUS EXAMINATION, BEHAVIOR IS REPRODUCTIVE
- OPPRESSION AND INJUSTICE ARE HUMAN CREATIONS BUILD INTO OUR CURRENT ECONOMIC SYSTEM, AND THEREFORE, CAN BE UNDONE

**NATIONAL EQUITY PROJECT*



QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN APPLYING THIS



LENS

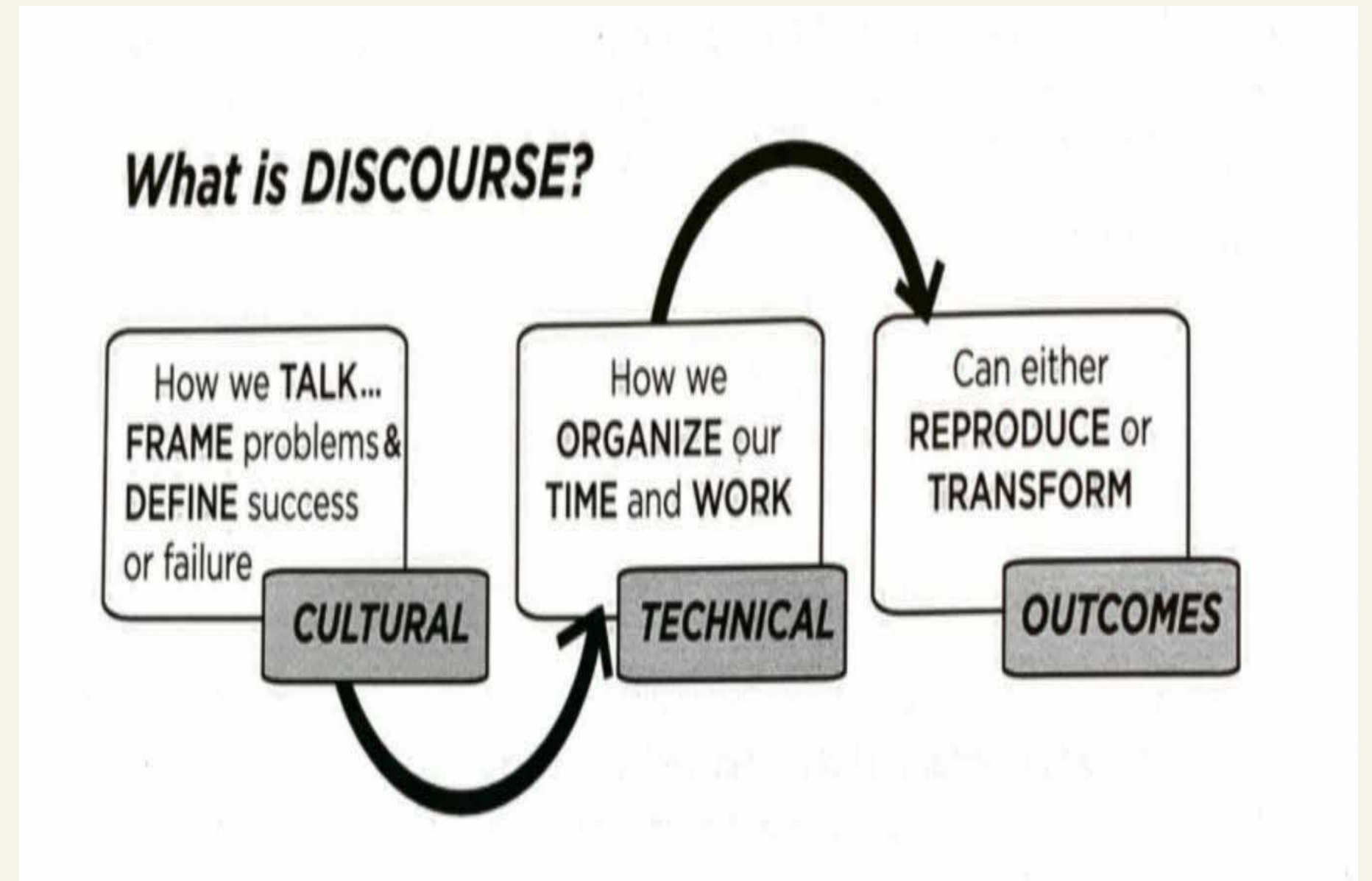
- *WHAT LEVEL OF CONSCIOUSNESS DO COLLEAGUES, ETC, POSSESS ABOUT THE FORCES UNDERLYING INEQUITY?*
- *WHO DOES AND DOES NOT HAVE POWER? WHAT IS POWER BASED ON?*
- *WHO ARE THE PEOPLE AFFECTED BY THE CURRENT STRUCTURE OF OPPRESSION? ARE THEY AT THE TABLE?*
- *HOW ARE WE TALKING ABOUT THE PROBLEM WE ARE TRYING TO SOLVE? IS THE CONVERSATION DIGGING DOWN TO ROOT CAUSES IN A WAY THAT COULD LEAD TO PRODUCTIVE ACTION?*



CHANGING THE DISCOURSE

DEFINING DISCOURSE

OUR BELIEFS INFLUENCE
OUR ACTIONS, WHICH CAN
EITHER REPRODUCE OR
TRANSFORM RESULTS AND
OUTCOMES



CHANGING THE DISCOURSE

CHANGING THE DISCOURSE HAS
US THINK ABOUT:

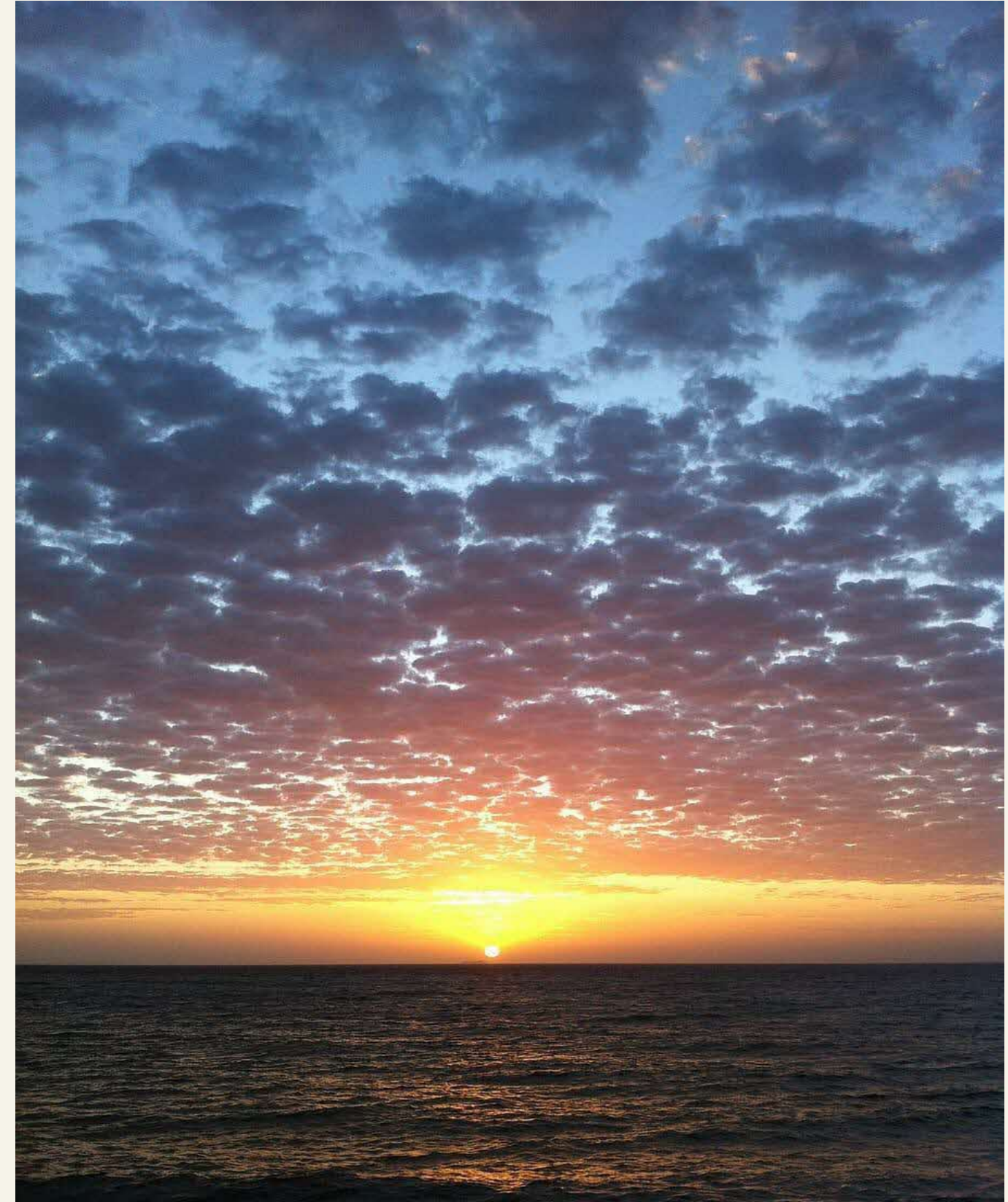
- WHAT ARE OUR FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS?
- HOW DO WE DEFINE PROBLEMS, SUCCESSES, AND FAILURES?



CHANGING THE DISCOURSE

WE RE-EXAMINE DISCOURSE IN ORDER TO:

- SHIFT THE CONTEXT, RELATIONSHIPS, AND LANGUAGE WITHIN WHICH WE TRY TO SOLVE PROBLEMS
- CHANGE OUR IDEAS ABOUT WHAT CONSTITUTES ACTION
- CALIBRATE WHAT WE MEAN BY "EQUITY"



DISCOURSE 1

EXAMPLES BLAMING A GROUP OF PEOPLE FOR THEIR STATION IN LIFE

- UNCONSCIOUSLY PERPETUATING STEREOTYPES OF PEOPLE IN POVERTY OR PEOPLE OF COLOR
- LOOKING FOR A SILVER BULLET/QUICK FIX “SOLUTION” – PUTTING BAND-AIDS ON PROBLEMS THAT REQUIRE SURGICAL-LEVEL CARE

**NATIONAL EQUITY PROJECT*

DISCOURSE 1: THE LANGUAGE OF COMPLAINT

- SINGULAR TRUTHS
- IMPROVING WHAT EXISTS
- ANSWERS & TECHNICAL FIXES
- EXTERNALIZATION/BLAME– “LOOK OUT THE WINDOW”
- LIMITED TIME & ABILITY



DISCOURSE 2

EXAMPLES SLOW DOWN AND INTERROGATE ROOT CAUSES OF THE PROBLEMS WE FACE

- UNCOVER AND TEST THE INVISIBLE BELIEFS AND ASSUMPTIONS SHAPING YOUR CURRENT STRATEGY
- LISTEN DEEPLY TO THE STORIES OF THE PEOPLE WE AIM TO SERVE

**NATIONAL EQUITY PROJECT*

DISCOURSE 2: THE LANGUAGE OF COMMITMENT

- MULTIPLE STORIES
- ADDRESSING ROOT CAUSES
- INTERNAL REFLECTION: "LOOK IN THE MIRROR"
- GETTING STARTED ANYWAY





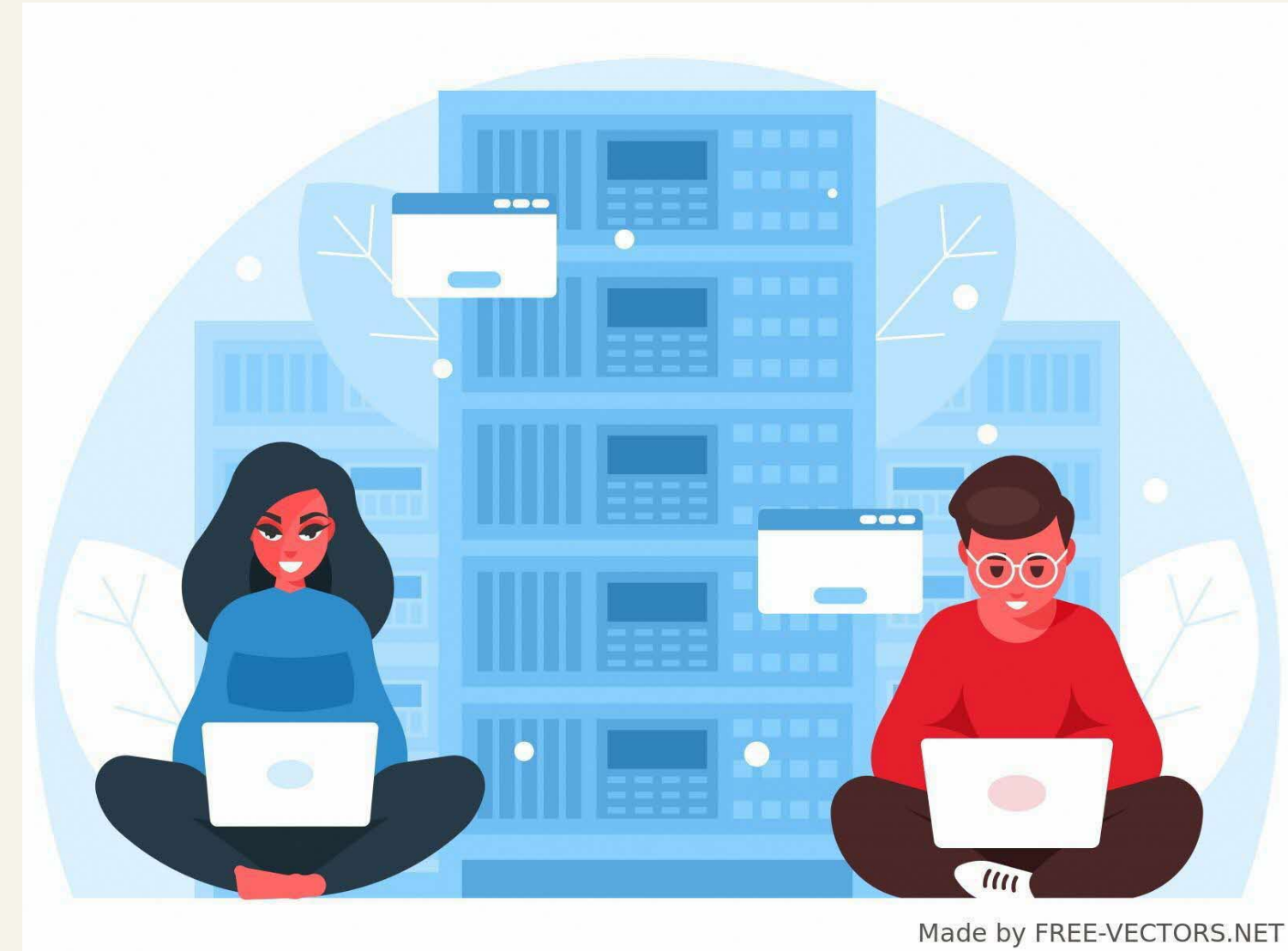
CREATING CULTURES FOR ACTION

DISCOURSE 1 DEALS WITH...	DISCOURSE 2 DEALS WITH...
SINGULAR TRUTHS IMPROVING WHAT EXISTS TECHNIQUES, METHODS, & "BEST PRACTICES" SYMPTOMS THE WAY THINGS ARE DISCIPLINE AND CONTROL ANSWERS AND SOLUTIONS ABILITY AND MERIT REPRODUCTION THE FAMILIAR LIMITED TIME, ABILITY, AND RESOURCES	MULTIPLE STORIES CHANGING SOMETHING SIGNIFICANT LEARNING & RELATIONSHIPS CAUSES WHAT COULD BE ALIENATION AND RESISTANCE DILEMMAS AND INQUIRIES PRIVILEGE AND OPPRESSION TRANSFORMATION THE UNCOMFORTABLE GETTING STARTED ANYWAY

IDENTIFYING DI/D2

A CORPORATE ORGANIZATION HAS A GOAL TO HIRE MORE PEOPLE OF COLOR IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS. THEY POST THEIR DIVERSITY PLEDGE ON THEIR WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA.

WHEN THEY LOOK AT THE DATA OF WHO IS APPLYING FOR LEADERSHIP POSITIONS, THEY ARE DISAPPOINTED TO SEE ONLY 3 CANDIDATES OF COLOR APPLY. THEY SHARE THIS DATA WITH THEIR TEAM AND SAY, "WE DID ALL WE COULD DO, THERE JUST AREN'T THAT MANY CANDIDATES IN THE PIPELINE."



IDENTIFYING DI/D2

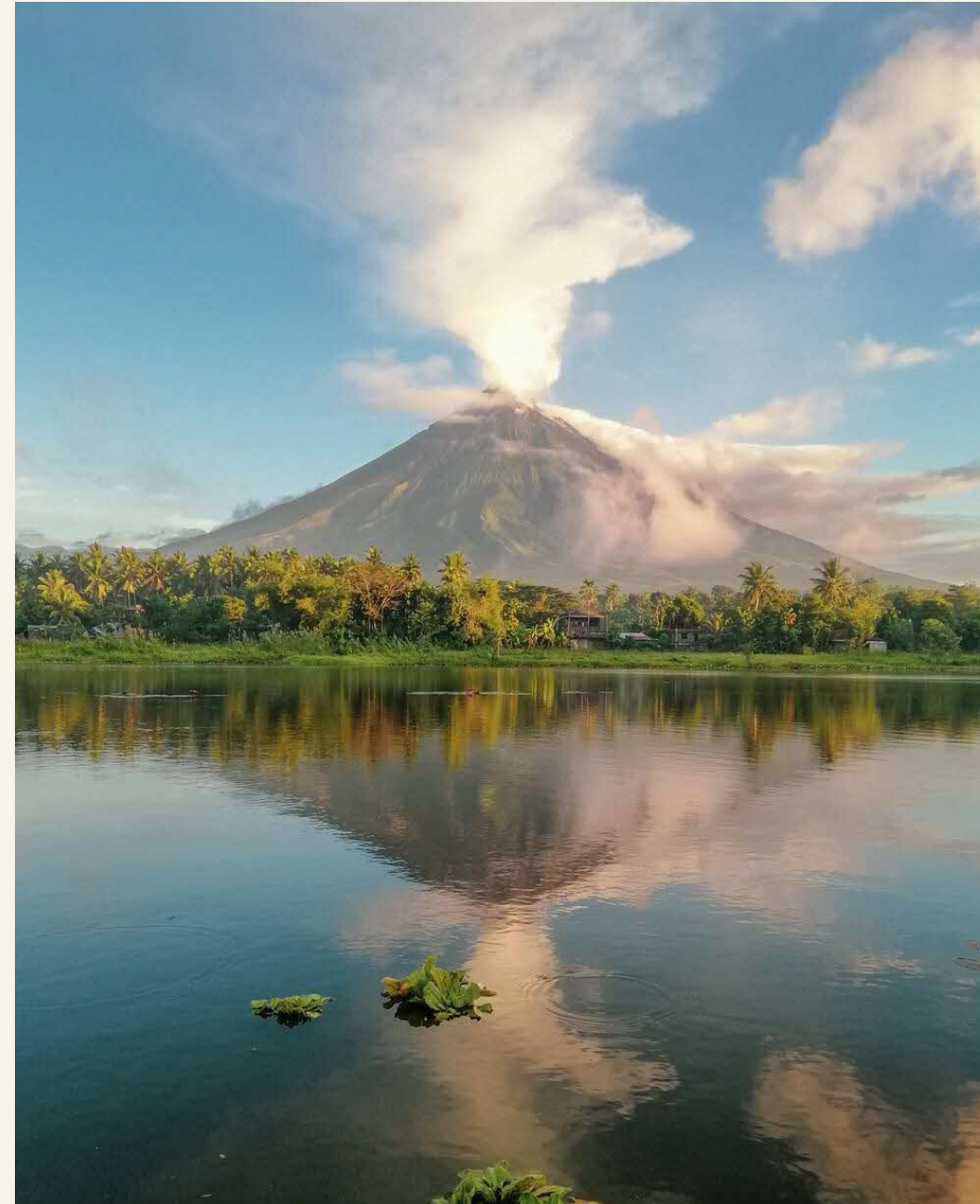
A SCHOOL IS FRUSTRATED WITH THEIR ACHIEVEMENT RESULTS FOR THEIR MULTI-LINGUAL LEARNERS. THEY HAVE IMPLEMENTED A NEW CURRICULUM AND CREATED AN INTERVENTION CLASS FOR MULTI-LINGUAL STUDENTS, BUT THE STUDENTS STILL AREN'T MAKING ACADEMIC GAINS.

AFTER LOOKING AT THE DATA, THE LEADERSHIP TEAM DECIDES TO EACH TAKE A DAY TO SHADOW AN MLL STUDENT TO OBSERVE HOW THEY ARE EXPERIENCING THEIR CLASSES AND THE SCHOOL DAY IN ORDER TO DETERMINE HOW TO MOVE FORWARD



REFLECT & SHARE

- IS THERE A “HOT” POLICY OR INITIATIVE WHERE YOU FEEL DISCOURSE 1 MAY BE AT PLAY?
- HOW IS YOUR COMMUNITY TALKING ABOUT THE PROBLEM YOU ARE TRYING TO SOLVE?
- IS THE CONVERSATION DIGGING DOWN TO ROOT CAUSES IN A WAY THAT COULD LEAD TO PRODUCTIVE ACTION?
- WHAT WOULD IT TAKE TO BUILD YOUR DISCOURSE 2 MUSCLE? HOW WOULD YOU GET STARTED?





GROUP SHARE

- WHAT RESONATED WITH YOU DURING THIS SESSION?
- WHAT IS ONE ACTION YOU WANT TO TAKE AS A RESULT OF THIS SESSION?



“NOT EVERYTHING THAT IS
FACED CAN BE CHANGED, BUT
NOTHING CAN BE CHANGED
UNTIL IT IS FACED.”

— JAMES BALDWIN



TAKING IT FORWARD

- **PRIORITIZE** YOUR OWN INNER WORK
 - EXAMINING YOUR OWN TRIGGERS CAN HELP YOU FIGURE OUT HOW TO GET OUT OF DISCOURSE 1
- **ATTEND TO** BUILDING CONDITIONS THAT SUPPORT YOU AND YOUR COLLEAGUES TO CREATE A CULTURE THAT NORMALIZES AND VALUES NAMING & INTERRUPTING DISCOURSE 1
- COLLABORATE WITH OTHERS TO **RE-DESIGN STRUCTURES & PRACTICES** THAT MITIGATE AND ELIMINATE DISCOURSE 1

LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH!



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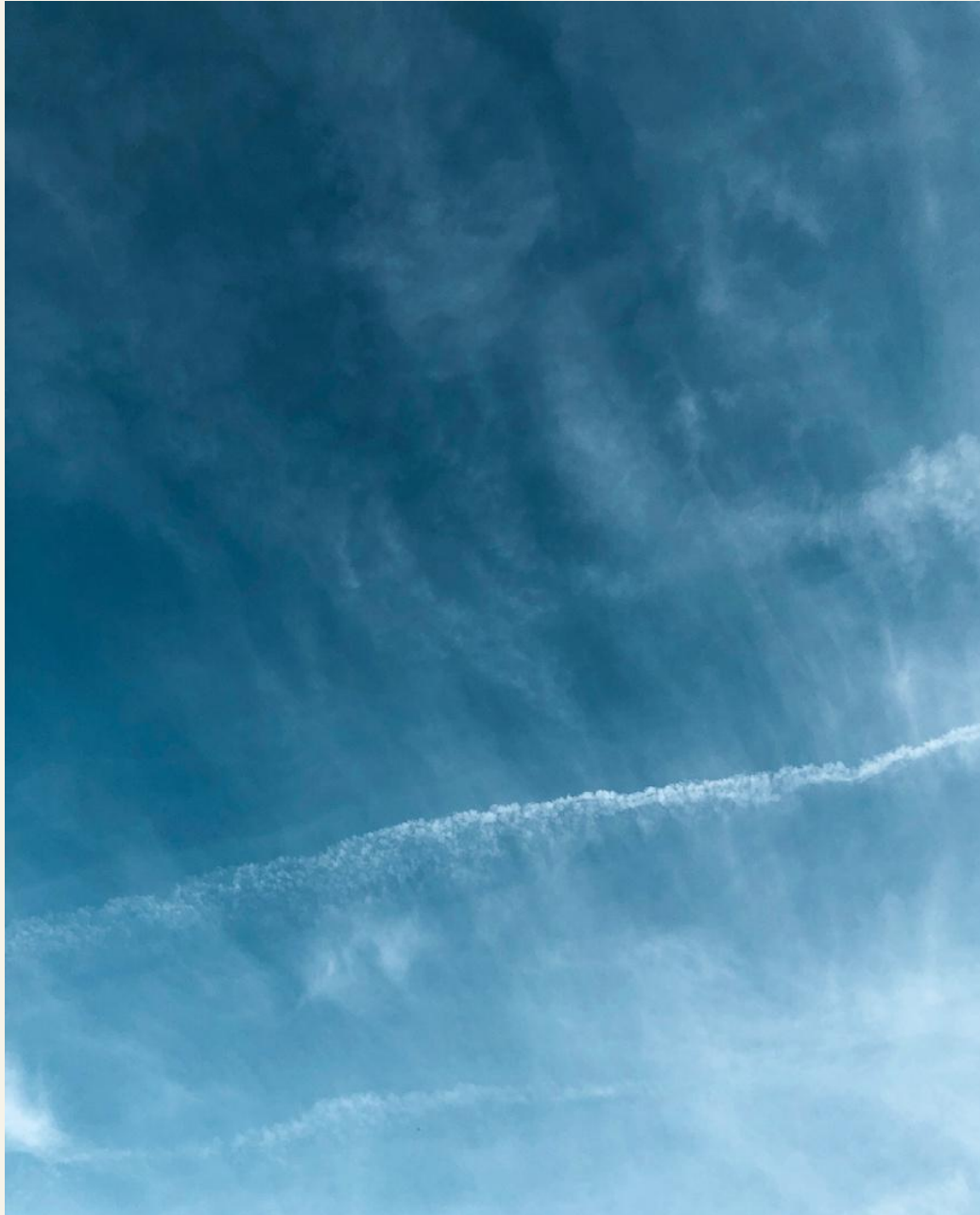
THANK YOU!



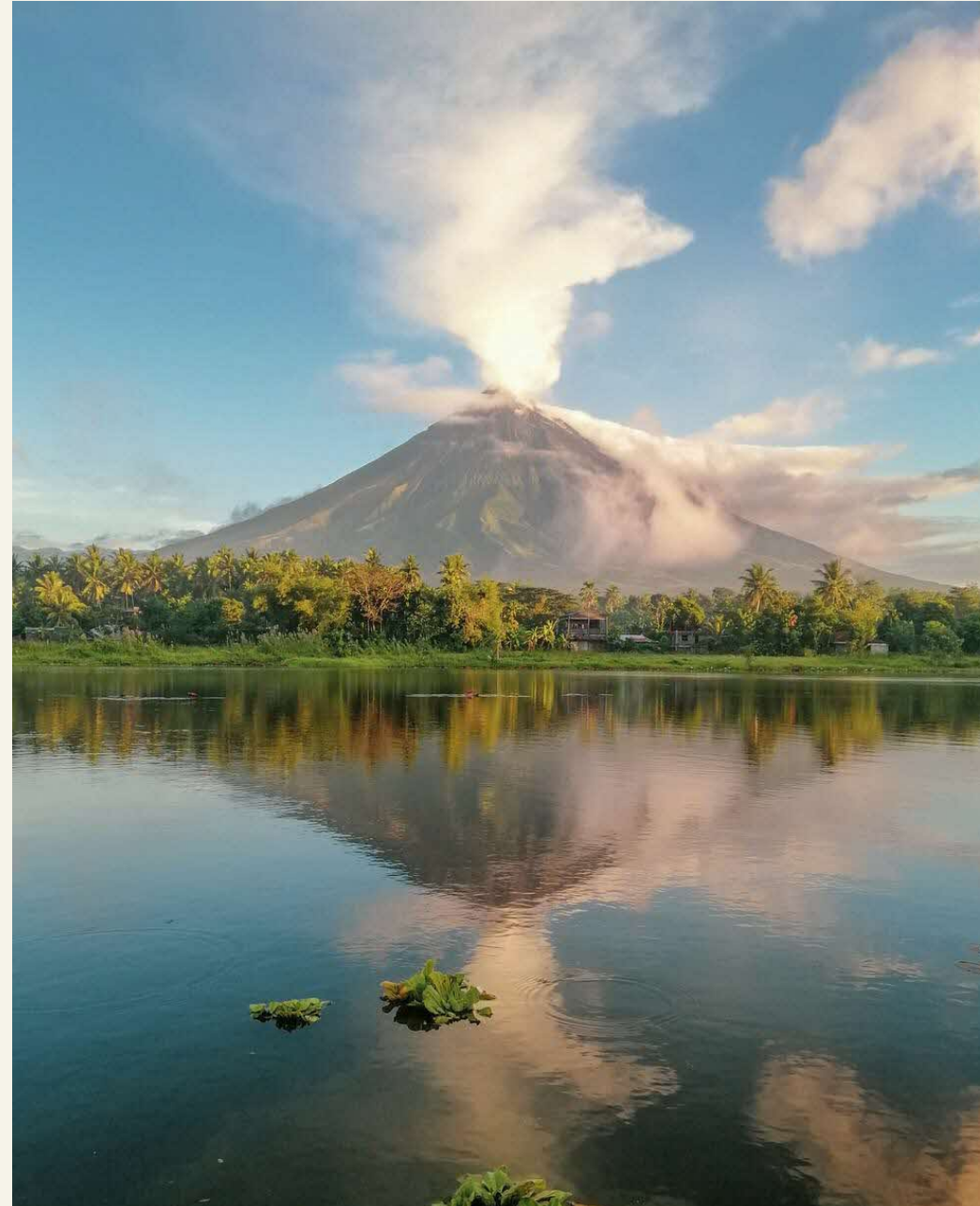
LET'S
BREAK

SLIDE WITH THREE IMAGES

Add a main point



Add a main point



Add a main point

