

Adapted from
White Supremacy Culture
From Dismantling Racism: A Workbook for Social Change Groups
by Kenneth Jones and Tema Okun, ChangeWork, 2001

Manifestations of White Supremacy Culture	Manifestations of Relational Culture
<p><u>Individualism</u> Values individual problem-solving; accountability is hierarchical (to higher ups/within chain of command); desire for individual recognition/credit; competition valued over cooperation; belief that “doing it better” means less or no delegation</p>	<p>Prioritize and reward team work, shared decision making and accountability horizontally and to community</p>
<p><u>Perfectionism</u> Lack of appreciation, focus on inadequacies, little-to-no learning from mistakes</p>	<p>Appreciation, room for mistakes</p>
<p><u>Sense of Urgency</u> Focus on timelines and getting it done now over investing in long-term relationships and change; often results in prioritizing white communities over communities of color</p>	<p>Realistic planning for relationship building and inclusivity, and to shift power and culture.</p>
<p><u>Defensiveness</u> Power structure and individuals who hold power are set up to protect status quo, including their own comfort; criticism of this or individuals is seen as rude; energy is spent working around defensive people</p>	<p>Understand defensiveness and how it functions to maintain the status quo; understand the link between defensiveness and fear; work on your own defensiveness</p>
<p><u>Quantity over Quality</u> Focus on measurable goals; lack of value for process and things that can’t be measured like many aspects of relationship building (spending time in community spaces, collective decision-making, taking time to constructively deal with conflict); discomfort with emotion; ignoring process (people’s needs to be heard or engaged) for the sake of content/timelines even though this leads to lack of cohesion</p>	<p>Value/measure process goals equal to outcome goals; spend time in activities that are not easily quantifiable but that build connection and long-term cohesion</p>
<p><u>Worship of the Written Word</u> Written communication is valued most; those with strong writing skills are valued over others with other communication skills; belief in one “right” way, a way that reinforces the status quo</p>	<p>Value non-written ways of accomplishing goals and other styles of communication and beliefs that are different from the status quo</p>

<p><u>Paternalism</u> Decision-making is clear to those who hold power (not those without); those with power make decisions for others and don't find it necessary to understand or behave differently based on what those they're making decisions for express they need; those without power know they don't have it but don't know how decisions get made but they know the impacts very well</p>	<p>Clear, transparent and inclusive decision making processes; "nothing about us without us" – include those who decisions impact in the decision</p>
<p><u>Either/Or Thinking</u> No both/and thinking; can increase conflict because people feel they have to decide between this or that; this can include focusing on the positive only and not giving attention and care to harms voiced by those targeted by oppression</p>	<p>Practice both/and, creative thinking; embrace the complexity of situations with special attention to what people who are oppressed or lack positional power within the organization express as their lived experience</p>
<p><u>Power Hoarding</u> Those in power hold onto it even unconsciously and feel suggestions for how to change the organization are a threat to leadership yet they don't see themselves as hoarding power or feeling threatened</p>	<p>Share power; view challenges to leadership as healthy; embrace change; practice humility</p>
<p><u>Fear of Open Conflict</u> When someone raises an issue that causes discomfort, the response is to blame the person who raised it and run from the conflict; emphasis on being polite, on "all getting along"; equating emotion around oppression with being rude, insubordinate, aggressive</p>	<p>Build the collective muscle to raise and address hard issues, even if uncomfortable; don't require hard issues, especially related to oppression, to be raised in "acceptable" ways; honor the emotion and be willing to sit with discomfort</p>
<p><u>Progress Is Bigger, More</u> Expansion – doing more, serving more – is the goal and value; focus is on gains related to size not depth of relationship or quality of work</p>	<p>Focus on quality of process, relationships and long-term impact</p>
<p><u>Objectivity</u> Belief that there is such thing as objectivity; invalidating or diminishing the role of emotion</p>	<p>Assume multiple worldviews and challenge your own; embrace emotionality</p>
<p><u>Right to Comfort</u> The belief that those with power have the right to emotional and psychological comfort; scapegoating those who cause discomfort; equating discomfort among agent group members (such as white people) with actual oppression (such as racism)</p>	<p>Welcome discomfort as the basis for learning and growth; challenge those in power who resist their own discomfort; work on your own discomfort</p>