

AORTA's Theory for Change

THE ISSUE:

Our movements to win social and environmental justice and a solidarity economy will become more effective by ending internalized hierarchies and oppressive dynamics, and working towards equity and justice for all.

VISION:

AORTA envisions a world where people are able to live meaningful lives full of sovereignty, honest work, and joy, free from dispossession, exploitation and violence and rooted in right livelihood and relationship to place. We desire for resources to be distributed equitably and power shared, and for solidarity to be cultivated amongst people bridging our common humanity and recognizing our fundamental interdependence.

ASSUMPTIONS/STANCES:

- We assume our own power and maintain our humility.
- We anchor our approach in systemic, cultural, and organizational transformation.
- We all both benefit from and are harmed by systemic oppression.
- Dismantling systems of oppression will benefit everyone
- All systems of oppression are interconnected.
- The work is not the workshop.
- Significant change often comes slowly & requires effort.
- Collective liberation is possible. Conflict and change are moments of great potential. We move into these powerful opportunities with a spirit of hope, love, and willingness to transform.

CORE CONSTITUENCIES:

- Groups whose work nourishes our souls.
- Movements, organizations, cooperatives, and their constituent leaders and future leaders committed to winning justice and a solidarity economy.
- Community Organizations and Coops; National and Regional Organizations; Networks, Foundations and Funders; Healer Groups; Federations and Intermediaries; Academic Institutions; Artist Organizations; Social Service Providers; Unions.

ANALYSIS (ROOT CAUSES AND INFLUENCING FACTORS):

Decades of neoliberal policy have erased histories of enslavement and genocide, and the movements that fought and resisted along the way. Today's social movements are often disconnected from local, regional, national, and global movement history, which can lead to a sense of isolation and alienation. Additionally, mainstream culture does not encourage skill-building around cooperation and collaboration, the types of activities that can bridge us into life after capitalism, colonialism, and imperialism.

BIG PICTURE GOAL/IMPACT:

We will help grow and sustain successful, leaderful movements composed of skilled, principled, and courageous organizations that are able to do their best.

WHAT WILL BRING ABOUT THE CHANGE? – BIG PICTURE

- Liberatory education
- Leadership development
- Cross sector/issue pollination
- Conflict transformation and healing

OUR NICHE OR ROLE IN SUPPORTING CHANGE:

We bring an intersectional analysis of systemic oppression and movement building into the world of consulting, facilitating, educating and training. We teach the critical skills people need to learn in order to change their behavior, interactions, conflicts, internal dynamics, and organizational culture.

CORE METHODS:

Consulting, planning, organizational development, coaching, conflict transformation, and curriculum and resource design. Moving leaders and orgs along the spectrum of allies. Flexible delivery of content and code-switching. Building networks and connections. Being present as leaders. Making movements irresistible. Practicing popular and participatory education.

CORE COMMITMENTS (VALUES AND BELIEFS):



SOLIDARITY: We stand in solidarity with all struggles that uphold collective liberation and cooperation.



PROCESS IS POLITICAL: We strive to enact and model our principles and vision through our processes.



INTIMACY: We stay intentionally small to develop trust and depth



RESPECT: We honor the contributions of future generations along with those of our elders, political ancestors, and contemporaries.



PRIORITIZE THOSE MOST AFFECTED: We prioritize leadership development of young people and communities who are and have been most directly affected by oppression and colonization.



COLLECTIVE CARE: Running a cooperative business demands that we center care for self, others, and community.

