How to decolonize in 12 not so easy steps

Brenda Kyle
1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — that our lives had become unmanageable.

2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity

3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.
Colonization

Colonization, or colonisation, constitutes large-scale population movements wherein migrants maintain strong links with their, or their ancestors', former country - by such links, gaining substantial privileges over other inhabitants of the territory. When colonization takes place under the protection of colonial structures, it may be termed settler colonialism. This often involves the settlers dispossessing indigenous inhabitants, or instituting legal and other structures which systematically disadvantage them.  \[1\]

Colonization can be defined as a process of establishing foreign control over target territories or peoples for the purpose of cultivation, often by establishing colonies and possibly by settling them.  \[2\]

In colonies established by Western European countries in the Americas, Australia, and New Zealand, settlers (supplemented by Central European, Eastern European, Asian, and African people) eventually formed a large majority of the population after killing, assimilating, or driving away indigenous peoples.
noun

the action or process of settling among and establishing control over the indigenous people of an area.

"Africa boasts a tradition of higher education institutions that predate Western colonization"

the action of appropriating a place or domain for one's own use.

"the complete colonization of television entertainment by reality shows"
1. Admit there is a problem.

- If you cannot see the lasting effects of colonialism as a problem, you are not ready to decolonize. Ask yourself why you do not see a problem. Are you addicted to the status quo?
- If you don't think colonialism is a problem. Write down why you don't think it is. Leave it, come back to it in a month. Read it aloud to yourself. Just you and your voice. Are you angry? Are you afraid? Are you confused? Why? What will it take for you to see a problem?
2. Believe that together, we have the power to transform not only ourselves, but the institutions that perpetuate colonialism.

- Under Colonialism, only a few benefit.
- What do you or your org lose by trying to decolonize?
- What do you gain?
- Which is more important? Money? Reputation? Credibility?
- Will you be seen as an instigator?
- Will your org be seen as too liberal or woke?
- Does it matter? Why?
3. Make a decision to do things with intent in order to change colonialism as we understand it.

- Define colonialism in your own words. Google online Dictionary: the policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically.
- National Geographic: Colonialism is defined as “control by one power over a dependent area or people.” It occurs when one nation subjugates another, conquering its population and exploiting it, often while forcing its own language and cultural values upon its people.

- What are your hiring practices?
- What cultural bias is blatant?
- Which ones are less obvious?
- How can that change?
4. Take a moral inventory of your org/workplace.

- What isms do you see at your workplace?
- What ism is your org conserving? Elitism? Colorism? Accentism?
- What does the budget look like?
- What measurable actions can be taken?
5. Admit to ourselves and to others the exact nature of how colonialism has affected us.

- Have you benefited? If so how?
- How will you use your privilege to help others?
- Are you willing to give up some or all of your privilege?
- Have you suffered? If so how?
- Are you willing to share your experiences?
6. We are ready to make a change. We are ready to take personal steps in order to transform not just ourselves, but the orgs we work for.

- Are you ready?
- Are you committed?
7. Approach on-going development with humility.

- Accept it will take time.
- Accept that mistakes will be made.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. **Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.**

- Healing does not happen on your schedule.
- Healing might not even happen.
- Nobody is obligated to accept your apology.
- Will your words or actions/inaction cause harm?
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

- Decolonization is a process.
- We cannot undo a lifetime of learned behavior in 90 days.
- We cannot undo over 500 years of systemic oppression in 90 days.
11. Seek counseling.

- Follow @kweenwerk kweenwerk.com
- Teresa Baker insolidarityproject.com
- They are NOT the same as having a sponsor. They are professionals who offer insight and service. Pay them the way you would pay a therapist.
- Sponsors are peers who have gone through the 12 steps and have made some progress in the recovery program. They share that experience on a continuous, individual basis with others attempting to attain or maintain decolonization.
12. Being more aware and educated as the result of these steps, try to carry this message to other orgs and to practice these principles in everything we do.

**Jemez Principles**

- Be inclusive
- Emphasis on bottom-up organizing
- Let people speak for themselves
- Work together in solidarity and mutuality
- Build just relationships among ourselves
- Commitment to self-transformation
The Reconnection of Native plants through Yarokmok
Native Ancestors

By: Julia Wildflower Samaniego
Oak Trees (Sevi’yi). Since the 1800’s these beautiful creations have been dying off due to lack of fires.
Mugwort and Cedar. These have been used for centuries by Natives due to their healing powers that remain sacred to many tribes.
Native Milkweed. each one of these are connected and were used in similar ways.
Questions?

By: Julia Wildflower Samaniego
PODER - People Organizing to Demand Environmental & Economic Rights

Xochitl Flores
CNPS Conference Oct 2022
Hummingbird Farm 1669 Geneva Ave. SF CA 94134
Excelsior Neighborhood Background

Located on Occupied Ohlone Territory

The Excelsior has the highest concentration of children in the city

71% of students qualify for federally funded lunch programs

No farmer’s market and fewest community gardens in the city

Sends more residents to the hospital for asthma than other neighborhoods due to pollution from nearby freeways and busy roadways (Geneva Ave)
The Problems

- **Disconnection** between community members and the land, workers and their labor, communities and their indigenous practices and ancestral wisdom.
- The **exploitation** and systemic **oppression** that impacts low-income communities of color, like that of the Excelsior district.
- **Pro-development interests** and **gentrification** in the district/SF
- Historical legacy of **gatekeeping** to ecological spaces and leadership
- **Climate Chaos**
The Solution

Public lands In People’s Hands:
Hummingbird Farm was spearheaded by SF youth to aid in the ecological, social, and cultural restoration of their home. Creating access to plantcestors, native foodways, plant medicine, and green space that is cultivated in community for community.

Public lands to repair the communities’ connection with the land and one another, while bringing us together to pushback against pressures of food insecurity, gentrification, and climate chaos.
Hummingbird Farm

Six Acres Lease with the SF Public Utilities commission

3 acres grassland habitat - Geneva Meadow
3 acres of urban agricultural lands

No borders or gates to keep people out - open to the public at all times

Vast improvement from previous use - trash, loitering, sketchy
Urban Campesinx:

Five Organizing Pillars: Intergenerational, Intercultural, Educational, Restorative, Community governance

Queer ecology - Land stewardship is for every body
Intergenerational
Educational
Restorative
Intercultural
Community Governance
Food, Flower, and Herb Production
Food, Flower, and Herb Production
Access to Plancestors
Grassland Restoration
Riparian Restoration
Future Growth
Hummingbird Autumn Volunteer Days
Wednesday 3 pm - 6 pm
Thursday 9 am - 12 pm (Restoration)
Sunday 11 am - 2 pm

Sat Dec 3rd - Grassland Restoration Plug Transplants

Follow Us:
@urbancampesinx
Gracias

Xochitl Flores
xochitl@podersf.org
415.857.2085
The CNPS BIPOC Group
(BIPOC - Black, Indigenous, and people of color)

By Michael Viramontes
Disclaimers!

- I am not an expert in DEIJ (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Justice)
- I might be the opposite
- I have major imposter syndrome about it
- I got involved with the group to:
  - Learn more about DEIJ
  - Meet other BIPOC people in conservation
  - Figure out what I can do to help
How it Started

- Founded by Cris Sarabia and Tecolote of CNPS South Coast Chapter
- First meeting was held (via zoom) on February 18, 2021
- Echoing first impressions:
  - Much needed space
  - Many shared negative experiences of being BIPOC in conservation/native plants
    - Tokenization
    - Racism
    - Prejudice
  - Excited to participate in CNPS in this new way
  - Therapy/Support group
What We Do

- Host monthly-ish zoom meetings
- Share jobs
- Share skills
- Share/practice presentations
- Share/organize group events
- Talk about DEIJ
- Promote each other
- Provide a safe space for BIPOC CNPS members

**March CNPS BIPOC Group Meeting**

**THURS MAR 17TH**
7PM – 8PM
**JOIN EARLY (6:30PM) TO CHAT & MEET OTHER GROUP MEMBERS**
VIA ZOOM!
DM FOR LINK

**Willow Springs Hike**

Saturday
June 19 at 10AM
Long Beach, CA

Space is limited, RSVP at membership@scnpss.org

**CNPS Conference Call for Presentations**

SESSION TOPIC: “BIPOC PERSPECTIVES”
WHAT WE’VE DONE TOGETHER!
GROUP CAMP-OUT!

Irish Hills Natural Preserve, Los Osos, CA

Montaña de Oro State Park

El Moro Elfin Forest, Los Osos, CA
Milo Santos (7 years old)
BIPOC Group Camping at Cero Alto Campground, Los Osos, CA
Theodore Payne Foundation 2022 Native Plant Garden Tour (Thanks Brenda!)

Kuruvungna Sacred Springs
Los Angeles, CA

The Gottleib Native Garden
Beverly Hills, CA
Theodore Payne Foundation 2022 Native Plant Garden Tour (Thanks Brenda!)

LAX Sand Dunes
Los Angeles, CA
Presentations!

Welcome to My Container Garden
Barbara Chung | May 2022 | Santa Monica, California

THE RARE SAND DUNES OF THE INLAND EMPIRE

MICHAEL VIRAMONTES
MVIRAMONTES@RIVERSANDLANDS.ORG
Native Plant Origami at Pitzer College (Claremont, CA)
Native Plant Origami by Esme Cabrera
PROMOTE BIPOC ART!

Adriana Barrera, @adrianabarrera.art
Lola Camacho, @littl.rain
Esme Cabrera, @ma_mi_gami
Connect BIPOC People!
How to Join!

- Follow our Instagram page: @bipoc.ifornia
  - Send us a message letting us know you identify as BIPOC and a little about yourself
  - If not, we’ll message you!
- No Instagram? Email me!
  - Michael.max.viramontes@gmail.com
THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?

Michael Viramontes
Email: Michael.max.viramontes@gmail.com
Instagram: @beardamontes, @bipoc.ifornia
BIPOC Perspectives Panel

Brenda Kyle
12 Steps to Decolonization

Xochitl Edgar
Pueblote: Public Lands in People’s Hands

Julia Samaniego
Our Ancestors Through Native Plants

Dino Santos
CNPS BIPOC Group Member
CNPS
2022 CONFERENCE
ROOTING TOGETHER