

## CompassPoint Program Design Principles

*We committed to creating programs and learning experiences that:*

- a. **Are radical.** Long-time freedom fighter [Dr. Angela Davis](#) shared a definition of radical that resonates with us; “Radical simply means ‘grasping things at the root’”. We have been taught to be afraid of this term, but we can all embrace more radical and critical thinking because in doing so it’ll give us a more clear understanding of the world. Our trainings will explore the root problems of oppression, dissect power, and create solutions.
- b. **Center people who are most marginalized as a result of multiple and intersectional systems of oppression.** We design programs with, and for, people with multiple and intersecting identities (centering Indigenous people, Black people, and leaders of color) healing from and dismantling white supremacy and oppression in themselves, their organizations, and their communities. We are inspired by [bell hooks’ book, Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center](#), the [Cohambee River Collective’s understanding of identity politics](#) and by [Intersectionality](#), a concept created popularized by leading Black feminist and Civil Rights attorney, [Kimberle Crenshaw](#).
- c. **Uphold self-determination.** Our programs will invite more safety for participants to unlearn and unlock their lived experiences with white supremacy, classism, the gender binary, ableism and other oppressions, while supporting them to develop their own alternatives and solutions towards transformation. Freire writes, “What the educator does in teaching is make it possible for the students to become themselves.”
- d. **Focus on healing.** We will invite safer space for individual healing, organizational healing, and transformative healing for our world. This can only happen when we are radical with our approach and content, center people most impacted, and honor that those closest to the problems have their own alternatives and solutions. Healing also requires us to honor the multiple ways of knowing and being, including Ancestral and spiritual ways. Freire writes, “No one can be authentically human while he prevents others from being so.” This return to our humanity and the humanity of others is the core of healing.
- e. **Create space for praxis.** Drawing from Freire’s popular education tenets, we create space for participants for praxis. That is, to surface ideas and theories, and test them out and reflect on them , as a method to solving problems. He

writes, “Liberation is a Praxis; the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it.”<sup>1</sup>

- f. **Draw in everyone as teachers and learners.** The traditional [banking model of education](#), that supposes teachers as experts and students as empty vessels, is broken and replicates paternalistic / oppressive habits. We need a different approach in order to create democratic and generative learning spaces for all.
- g. **Builds power by building community.** Power is the capacity to shape the outcomes of our circumstances. We believe in developing people’s power to transform and liberate ourselves by bringing people together in community to dialogue and share their experiences and learnings towards transformative action. Freire writes, “...the great humanistic and historical task of the oppressed: to liberate themselves and their oppressors as well.”

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<sup>1</sup> *\*We quote this directly from Freire’s writing, but we reject the gender-binary and embrace a non-binary or genderqueer understanding of the world. For more information read Black Futures Lab 2019 [report](#). “[Beyond Kings and Queens](#)”.*