

Developing a Reflective Practice (in the Legal Profession)

Choose one case, issue, or area of the law that you regularly practice in or an example related to court, legislative and/or community advocacy work that you are involved in (e.g. Immigration, Voter Registration, Muslim-ban, Rights of women to access reproductive healthcare, etc). Check off each question that seems meaningful to you, responding with your own questions about how you might approach this issue coming from a place of solidarity.

Learning

___ What do I need to learn about my own history, privilege, and/or possible biases and how these might impact my perspective about the individuals and/or the community I will be interacting with? *(e.g. What is my personal relationship to this issue? Is there a sense of disconnection from how I interact with this issue?)*

___ What do I need to learn about the individuals and/or communities with whom I will engage? *(e.g. history, migration stories, intergenerational trauma, etc)*

___ What sources of information am I referencing and how does this impact the type of information I receive? *(e.g. am I gathering information from those most impacted or from other attorneys, activists, researchers with backgrounds similar to my own? What types of knowledge am I valuing or centering?)*

___ What do I need to learn about the historical and/or current relationship between my organization and the community that my work is most likely to affect?

Connecting

___ Who do I need to engage in conversation with about this? *(e.g. people from the community? current community and/or cultural leaders involved with the issue? other practitioners or volunteers from outside the community or issue who have struggled with this issue? other people who work or volunteer with me?)*

___ Do I know anyone in this community to engage in conversation with about this? If not, why?

___ How could I engage more/deeper with individuals and groups from the community? In what ways would I/the world need to shift to transform my engagement with this community to come from a place of solidarity, rather than bringing a savior complex to this work?

___ In what way could I act in solidarity with this community's current struggles and traditions of resistance? In what tangible ways could I move my organization towards a model of solidarity?

Understanding Power

___ How might white supremacy culture or the savior complex be showing up in this work? In my actions?

___ What power dynamics or marginalization does it perpetuate when I (or others like me) bring a savior complex to my work on this issue? *(e.g. disappearing, displacing, co-opting forms of resilience and resistance, criminalizing, commodifying/profitting off of...)*

___ What are the stories I have been told and tell myself about why it is okay for me to get involved in this work and/or make decisions on behalf of these families and communities?

___ What feelings do I get from this work/my role *(e.g. pride, satisfaction, sense of superiority)?*

___ How can I move into a deeper relationship and awareness of power and impact with regards to my place in the struggle around this issue/case/work?