



Creating Inclusive Environments for Youth- Led Initiatives

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+ Overview

- Review Goals
- Framing Youth
- Why Framing Youth Matters for Adult Allies: Examples from Research & Practice
- Understanding Social Context & Lived Realities
- Strategies & Tools



+ Goals

- Consider the significance and power of “how you think”
- Connection between “thought,” “action,” and outcomes for youth
- Understanding social context and lived realities
- Strategies to create inclusive environments and better relationships between adult allies and youth



+ Table Activity



What do you think comes to mind when the general public hears the “youth” or “adolescent”?

When you hear “youth” or “adolescent” what comes to mind?

+ Framing & Imagining Youth

“At-Risk”

Broken”

“In need of
saving”

+ Framing & Imagining Youth ctd.

The deficit ideologue justifies this belief by drawing on stereotypes already well-established in the mainstream psyche—stereotypes which paint disenfranchised communities as intellectually, morally, and culturally deficient or deviant.

(Baldrige, 2014; Gorski, 2010; Villenas, 2001; Weiner, 2003)



“An abundance of empirical work about youth focuses on **problems, prevention, and pathology.**”

(Ginwright, 2010)





Race, social class, &
gender dynamics;
funding streams

Youth

**Social Context
of Youth-led
Initiatives**

Philosophy and
Pedagogy

Adult Allies/Youth
Workers

+ Research

(Re) Imagining Black Youth

Race & Youth Spaces

Adult
Allies



Imagining
Youth



Pedagogy
& Funding

Dane
County



Racial
Disparities



Youth &
Adult Allies



Research Findings

Adult Allies/Youth Workers



Youth spaces are philosophically and pedagogically diverse

Current educational climate and policies targeting youth shape youth-led initiatives

The framing and imagining of youth can *inform and limit* cultural, social, and pedagogical practices.

+ (Re)Imagining Youth

“...one of the first pieces of printed material I got from [EE]... was a picture of a Latino kid and the caption said “If it wasn’t for [EE], I’d be in jail or in a coffin.’

Leah Daniels, Executive Director, 10 Years

+ (Re)Imagining Youth

“...what I look for in language is possibility, is hope, is high expectations, and support.”

– Monica Matthews, VP Programs, 9 years

+ Youth & Lived Realities

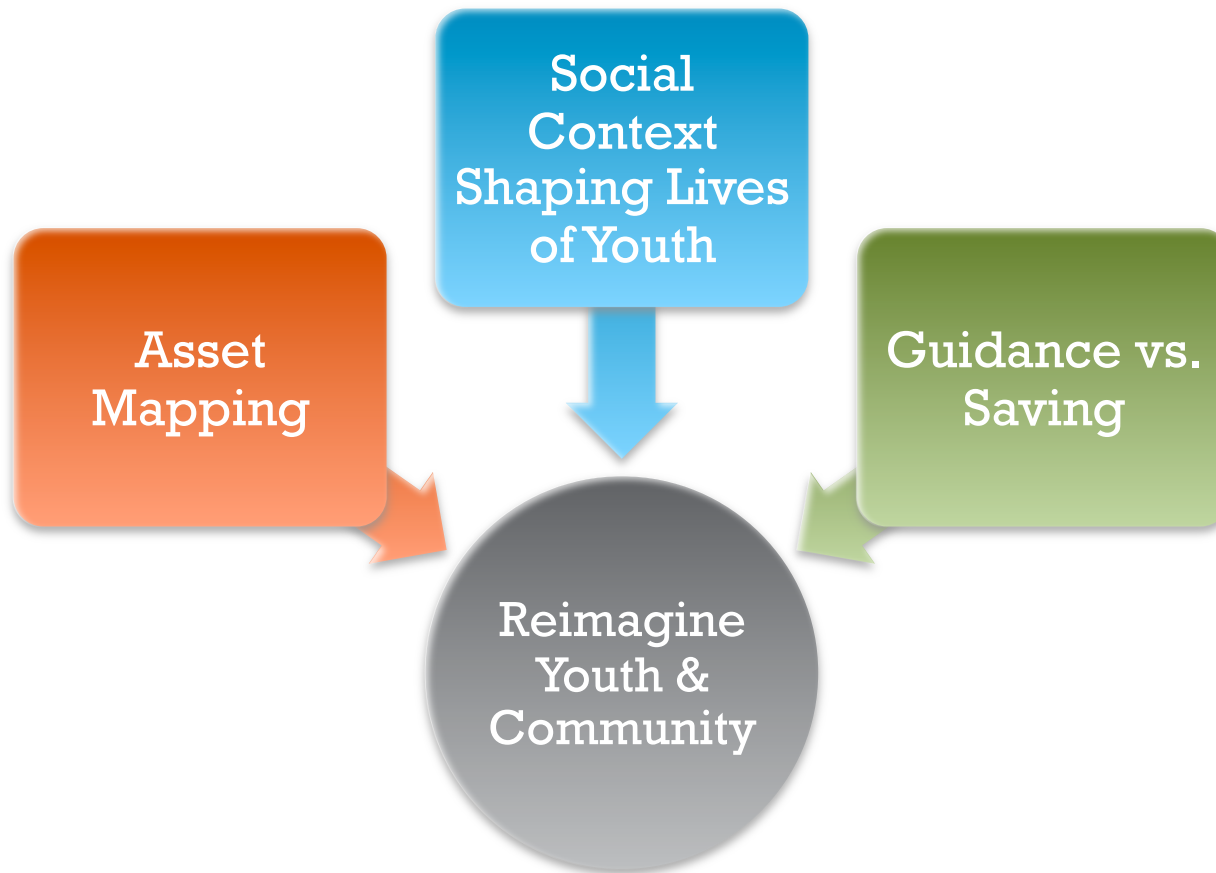
“...we are always shocked when something comes up that hints that our students may be like the other students, the other young people that are out there. To some degree, it’s almost frustrating because ...we have all this language around why our programs are important, and knowing that our students are facing these real hard social pressures, but on the other hand, we don’t accept that those social pressures are strong enough and as consistent enough to soak in for students to actually accept.”

- Solomon



Strategies for creating inclusive
environments for youth with lived
realities...

+ Surrender Your Capes...



+ Asset Mapping: Locating Support



What am I
gaining from
my community?

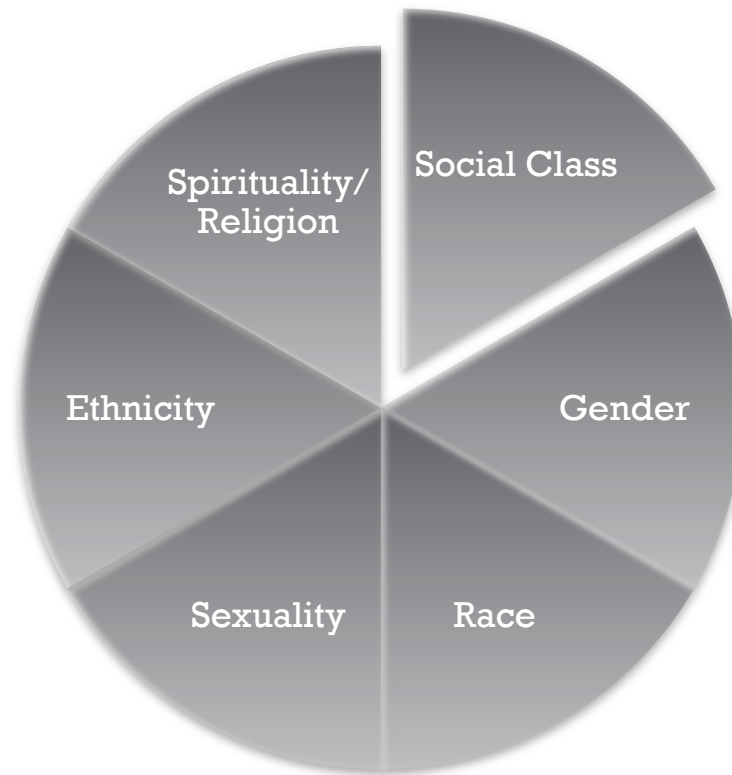
The diagram features two large, dark grey arrows pointing towards each other, creating a central space. The left arrow points right and contains the text 'What am I gaining from my community?'. The right arrow points left and contains the text 'What am I giving to my community?'. The arrows have a slight 3D effect with a lighter grey shadow on their right sides.

What am I
giving to my
community?

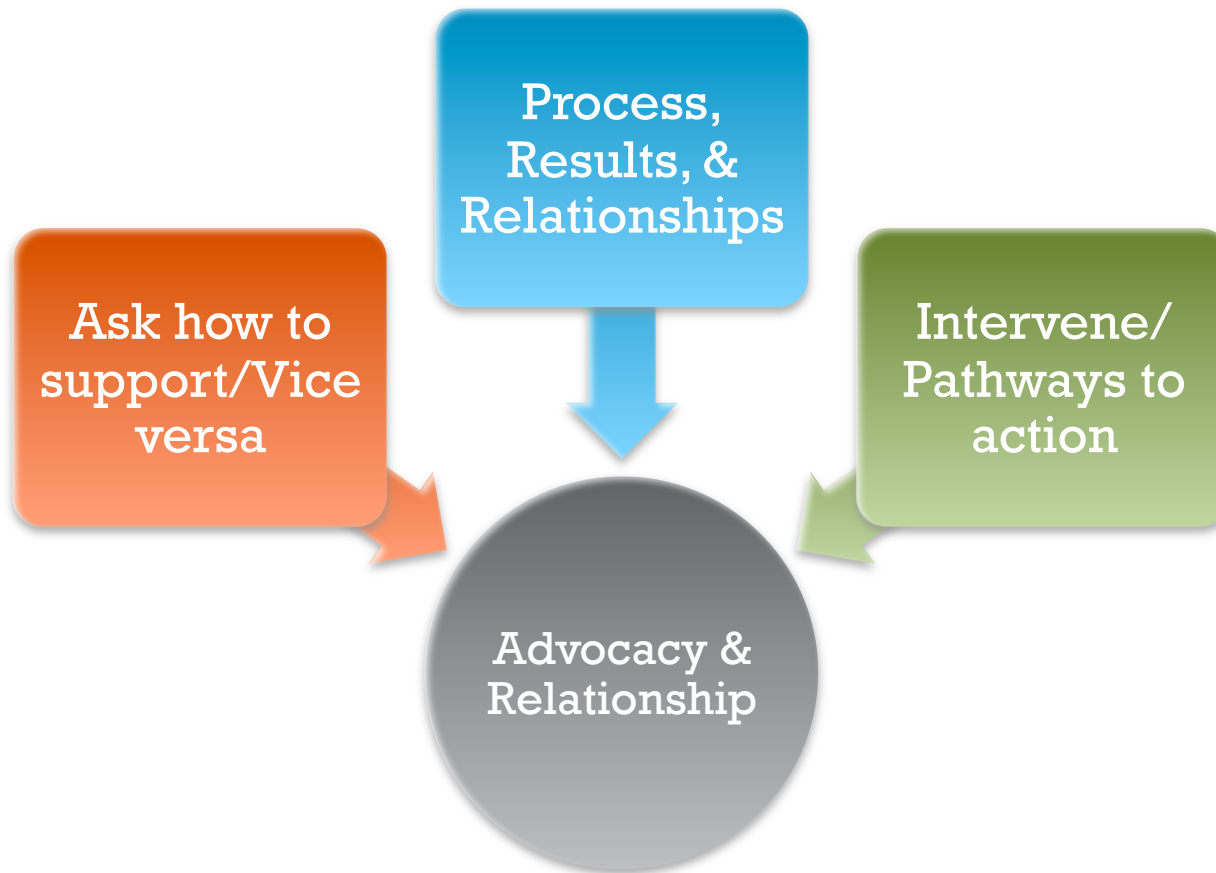
+ Check the unconscious



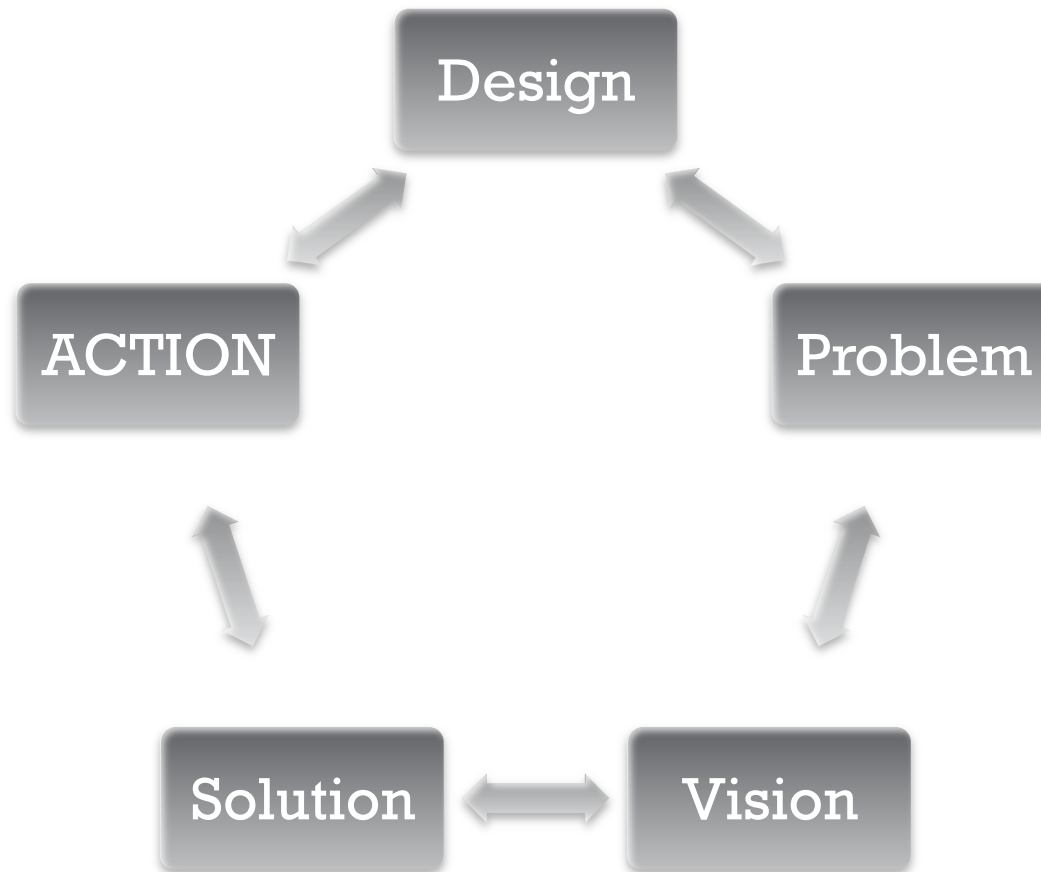
+ “Pieces of the Pie”



+ Being an Adult Ally



+ Intervening: Pathways to Action



+ Build Authentic & Reciprocal Relationships



+ Culturally Relevant and Sustaining Practices



Youth and adult allies are represented in space equally

Honest dialogue about youth lived realities/experiences

+ Affirm and Validate

Create a climate where everyone is affirming and validating one another

Celebrate Success

Process disappointments

Share*

+ Creating Inclusive Spaces



+ Inviting Full-Self



**Relevant Personal
Check-Ins**

**Group Cultural
Practices/Standards**

+ Resources

Activities

Community Asset Mapping

Self Reflection Journaling: Youth & Adult Allies

“Pieces of the Pie:” Understanding Social Identity

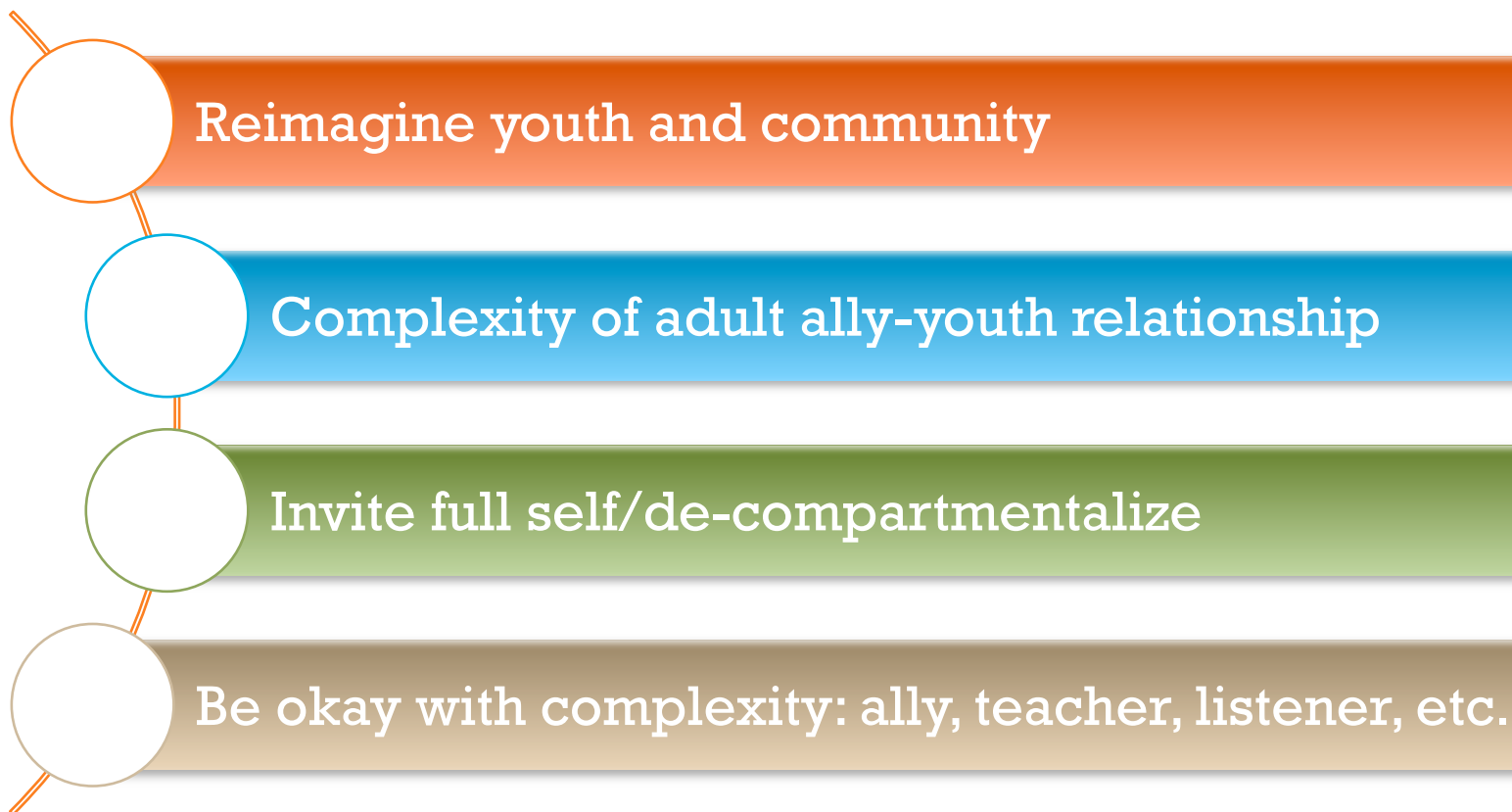
Shared Agreements and Expectations

Conscious Intervention: “Pathways to Action”

Building Community: Frequent & Honest Dialogue

Affirmation & Validation

+ Concluding Thoughts





THANK YOU.

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+ Historical Community Memory



- The terms we use are relatively new, but the practices are not new at all
- The desire to educate youth and subvert hegemonic discourses was/is essential for marginalized groups.