

**NOTES: 7/5**

- Sierra club info move to opening (eliza/p)
- 1:1 info move to basebuilding (harmony/steph)
- Principles move to CJ (matthew/avery)
- Set up anonymous question platform a few days ahead of time
- Invite others from the team into this panel? As a moderator?
- Generate 3-4 questions to kick-off/have on hand
  - Differences between charity-based aid non profit model v. comm solidarity
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**NOTES: 6/30**

- Clarify why panel format
- Read through and pull pieces worth keeping
- Recreate list of questions//who's gonna answer what
- Half moderated, half Q&A
- Chance for participants to ask questions in general//share our organizing stories
- Role of Sierra Club, Jemez Principles, 4 quadrants of social change

## Community Solidarity

**Learning Objectives:**

*Skills, Knowledge, and Attitude which learners should take away from this session.*

- Understand how to approach a community and speak about resources and intentions
- Be able to recognize the limitations of the Sierra Student Coalition model in certain organizing settings and learn how to adapt familiar organizing models to better suit community needs
- Recognize intergenerational, horizontal collaborations an anti-oppressive tool
- Be able to apply knowledge gained from anti-oppression trainings (identity and privilege) and begin to explore the role of power and solidarity in community work

**Achievement Objectives:**

*Tangible steps learners will take to advance real or simulated campaign work.*

- Practice relationship building to build solidarity

**Link to Written Content**

**Time: 1 Hour 45 mins**

**Icebreaker: 20 mins**

(Materials needed: pieces of paper that will act as stepping stones)

[https://www.trainingforchange.org/training\\_tools/stepping-stones/](https://www.trainingforchange.org/training_tools/stepping-stones/)

**Explanation:**

The goal is to get your entire team across the river safely and together.

The only resource you can use is the limited number of “stepping stones” which will float away if nobody is touching them. [That means no external props can be used.] The stepping stones/pieces of rug must AT ALL TIMES be in the physical touch of a team member. In other words, you can’t toss the stone into the river and then step on it; you must place your foot while still holding it lest it be swept away. [Facilitator will grab it and put it away.] As many team members can be on a stone at one time as you choose. If anyone falls into the river, your team goes back to the shore you came from and then the team tries again.

### **Reflection:**

Pair share Prompts:

- “How was that for you?”
- “What were some of the feelings you experienced during that challenge?”

Whole group prompts:

- “What worked?” “How did you arrive at a strategy? Did you all agree before you started?”
- What process did you use? Where did the leadership come from? Did you experiment before you started?
- How did you communicate? Who had to pay attention to what? What was most stressful? What happened when you made a mistake? How did the group react? What did you do with your feelings? What was the role of support? Did the pattern of communication change?
- What was it like to have to touch each other so closely? How did you handle it to maintain appropriate personal boundaries? Who thought of cooperating with the other team? How was the decision made to do so/not to do so? How did the cooperation work out?

~Transition to Training from icebreaker by explaining how the stepping stones activity embodied solidarity.

### **Defining Solidarity: 10 minutes**

Lead the group in a discussion on defining solidarity.

Below are some quotes and definitions for solidarity. Read them aloud/ have them flip charted.

Talk through each definition, see if it resonates with the group or not and why.

Work to coming to a group definition of solidarity.

Definitions of Solidarity

- “Walk the street with us into history. Get off the sidewalk.” — Dolores Huerta
- “If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.” -- Lilla Watson
- “You do not have to be me in order for us to fight alongside each other. I do not have to be you to recognize that our wars are the same. What we must do is commit ourselves to some future that can include each other and to work toward that future with the particular strengths of our individual identities. And in order for us to do this, we must allow each other our differences at the same time as we recognize our sameness.” – Audre Lorde

### **Definition from [Organizing Cools The Planet](#)**

“When you align your organizing with someone else’s frontline, you’re practicing a form of “solidarity.” Solidarity organizing isn’t one-directional. We don’t practice solidarity just because we’re ideologically

committed to it; we practice solidarity because it's strategic. Instead of trying to motivate our peers through altruism, we help them understand that this is the way we can win. This helps us move beyond patterns of paternalism—i.e. those with resources “helping” those who do not. It's when the solidarity activist is unrooted, disconnected from their own history or impact, that the worst patterns of appropriation, arrogance, or savior complexes rear their ugly heads. You need to know who you are in order to work well with those different from you. You will be effective to the degree that you understand how your frontline relates to others. The process of “alignment” is the painstaking work of organizing—taking into account strategy, power, privilege, access, impact, difference, similarity, trust—but it produces a movement in which we're not acting on behalf of one another; we can take meaningful action in an interlocking way”

## History of the Sierra Club [30 min]

Important to name the problematic history to be able to move forward

### SIERRA CLUB: [15 MINS]

Overview in Large Group

- Environmentalism and Conservation (saving) → environmental justice (solidarity)
- John Muir, founder of the Sierra Club, worked with military to assist the genocide of native peoples, Yosemite & Yellowstone
- John Muir's Environmentalism puts a pretty face on ugly issues
- <https://www.citylab.com/equity/2016/08/the-us-national-park-system-grapples-with-its-racist-origins/497615/>
- Muir's beliefs that people of color were biologically inferior are completely inseparable from his work with the Sierra Club. The language of “diversity and inclusion”
- The way that Muir framed environmentalism was not only exclusive of indigenous people but actively violent, dismissive of their forms of environmentalism, and based on a system which would only allow white settler colonists access to ‘pristine’ natural spaces devoid of human life.
- “The rise of the conservation movement in the late-19th century came at the expense of America's racial promise to the black Americans it had enslaved for almost 250 years. In 1907, when President Teddy Roosevelt was looking to make America great again, he wanted to pull together what had been cast to ruin during the Civil War, which ruptured the nation fewer than 50 years prior. Roosevelt's understanding of greatness, however, meant setting certain sections of the United States apart from the growing population of black people and immigrants who were filling American cities. The U.S. government had promised land to newly emancipated black citizens after the Civil War, but those properties were [yanked away from them](#)—and from many Native American tribes—to [make room for new national parks](#) and monuments.
- This was done at the behest of white men who are considered the first class of environmentalists: men like John Muir, Frederick Jackson Turner, and Madison Grant. They are called the fathers of [conservation](#), the [public parks system](#), and the nation's hunting societies and forestry movements. Many were also leading proponents of much darker philosophies.
- Similarly, Turner saw the western frontier as the basis for white American nationalism, and his ethnocentric theories framed the suspicion about immigration that we're still seeing today. Noted historian and environmental studies professor William Cronon once explained in a [PBS interview](#), “If you believe that wilderness is fundamental to American national identity, then you need to protect wilderness to protect that part of America. And so, curiously, the frontier thesis can support immigration restriction, extra-national imperial expansion, and national park formation all at the same time.”

In Small groups: Read through [Letter to the Big Ten](#) (have printed copies) 15 mins

- Initial reactions/feelings to reading the letter
- Discuss connections between accountability and solidarity
- Facilitators pop into each group and have more questions on deck to steer discussions if they are stagnant, but can be mostly be an open ended discussion on the letter and the concept of solidarity

### 3. Principles of Working with New Community [10 min]

[Principles of Environmental Justice](#) (have printed copies)

- Solutions oriented
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So how do you ensure that you operate under mutual self-interest? Here are some principles but a good way to begin framing this in your head is from the ideas of reciprocity. Robin Wall Kimmerer a botanist, ecologist, writer extraordinaire talks a lot about reciprocity in her book “Braiding Sweetgrass”. She

#### A. Know the Lay of the Land

If you are re-entering your group, you will likely know a lot of the Lay of the Land already, but still, there is always something new to learn.

- **Research.** Find out past and present social, political, economic, and cultural principles and norms that already exist. It’s important to have a good understanding of the existing norms in order to wholly communicate with those who are involved in the community already. Find out the past and present status of organizing and activism around community issues. Finally, research any groups working on similar or related issues. How have they operated within the community?
- **Listen.** A listening project is the process of meeting with many community members with the intention of listening to their stories and experiences with their community and the issues at play in your campaign. Listening projects are one of the most important tools we have to identify community concerns and build preliminary relationships with community members.
  - *Emphasize that it is imperative that the perspectives/concerns/issues of the local community are at the forefront of the campaign work.* Listening projects provide a great foundation for us to come to understand these localized perspectives and concerns.
- **Identify Leadership.** Find out who are the official leaders of the community or group: local politicians, elected club leaders, church leaders, etc. Also notice who has influence or power within the community or group. Who are the folks that others really listen to and look to for direction? These people aren’t always the official leaders, e.g. old group leaders, faculty advisors, popular community members.
- **Build Relationships.** Don’t just walk through a neighborhood, or site where you are scheming of making change, talk to people! You don’t have to get to know someone’s life story in one sitting but at least greet people, tell them your story too, and ask what they have experienced and

thought about as a community member in the area. Don't expect people to be friendly right away, and don't expect folks to trust you right away either. If we build relationships then connection and solidarity (working together to support each other in reaching a common goal) should be evident.

## B. Respect Existing Knowledge

Communities know their own struggle best. As we discussed, in many marginalized communities there is often a history of outsiders coming in and taking advantage of people. Sometimes, even well-intentioned people entering marginalized communities replicate cycles of oppression by telling people what they think is best for a community. It is important that you are aware of and respect pre-existing norms that have already been established within a community (officially and unofficially).

- **Listen to the Concerns of the Community.** Be an active listener: listen to understand, not to respond. Spend a lot of time listening, especially to concerns and difficulties. At the same time, there cannot be the expectation that community members will have the capacity to come up with jobs for you to complete. Do not expect direction, but create space for it to be voiced. Articulate your resources, not your plans.
- **Adapt your vision.** Often when we wish to work with a community we will realize that what is needed may not be what we initially envisioned. People may need child care, not leadership development; they may want help mapping graveyards and encouraging local economic development, not massive protests. It's important to have dialogue in these situations, but as the "outsider" it's also important to be flexible.
- **Adapt your style.** The SSC teaches "the matrix" style of planning and operating a campaign. However, local groups might have a different system entirely. They might also have to organize without as much planning due to immediate survival concerns.
- **Be Flexible and Adaptable.** This bears repeating. It is important to be flexible about the types of work you're doing, when you're doing the work, and how you do the work. Reflection is the key to ensuring that you remain flexible. Ask yourself, "Do I want it to be done in this way, or do community leaders want it to be done in this way?"

## 4. 1-on-1's: Building Relationships [10 min]

Below is a framework for [courageous conversations around race](#)



Before beginning go over norms and principles that exist already like the [Jemez](#) principles and the 4 principles for courageous conversations and then reference community agreements that have been

already made for the space this workshop is taking place in \*\*\* unpack why this is intersectional to add as a rooting factor for 1;1's?

So far, we've gone over a lot of work and relationship building that one has to do in order to respectfully enter a community. Now, we are going to give you one tool to help you do all that in a way that is accountable and accomplishable. That tool is 1-on-1's. 1-on-1's are natural but uncommon conversations with someone you want to know better, about their values, vision, life, and motivations.

1-on-1's should be very natural and human. They should never become mechanical. Rather, they should be the opposite, dynamic and risky. It is important to throw yourself into a 1-on-1 and put yourself on the line. There are some ideas you can keep in mind which can provide a powerful framework for 1-on-1's.

### **Objectives**

- Build relationships
- Uncover self-interests.
- Clarity for the person being interviewed
- Create tension that leads to growth

### **Overview**

- Direct the conversation
- Be disciplined about time
- You should talk no more than 30% of the time. This is a listening visit, an interview.
- Go deep, not broad – ask “Why?”

### **Nuts & Bolts**

- 45-60 minutes long
- Scheduled in advance
- Face to face
- Ask respectful but probing questions

### **What a One-to-One is NOT**

- Indy meeting (*Note: The objective of an indy meeting is to get commitments from someone to complete a task. The objective of a 1-on-1 is to build relationships and learn a person's story. There are not any “action items” that come away from a 1-on-1.*)
- Survey
- Chit-chat
- Psychoanalysis
- Sales job

Be clear and honest about your objectives in a 1-on-1: don't hide your motives, talk to them about what they are planning for the year, share your experiences and look for opportunities to offer what you learned to them or their group.

### **Practicing 1-on-1's [20 min]**

In order to prepare you for entering your community back home, we would like you to get comfortable with the idea and form of 1-on-1 conversations. Remember, these are conversations that are meant to

push you into your stretch zone, so they shouldn't be "easy" to have. In a few minutes, we will break off into pairs and each person will get a chance to interview their partner in a 1-on-1 conversation. Before we do that, though, we will demonstrate what a short 1-on-1 might look like so that you know some questions to ask.

*Trainers model a 1-on-1 conversation, beginning with questions about **why they became involved in environmental justice organizing**. It is very important that the modeled conversation digs into uncommon territory where the trainer being interviewed shares personal information and self interest(s). Before you train, talk with your co-trainer about which one of you would feel more comfortable in this role. This can make or break the entire training depending on the success of this exercise. The 1-on-1 should last for about 8 minutes, with 2 minutes left for the group to debrief your conversation and share observations.*

Now that you have observed a 1-on-1, pair up with a partner next to you. You can go anywhere in the building, so find a quiet space. Decide who will be interviewed first, and spend ten minutes on that 1-on-1. After ten minutes, switch to have the other partner receive the 1-on-1 questions. We will let you know when we reach the ten minute mark and when time is up.

*It is recommended that you do not debrief the conversations with the entire group. The point is to get people used to the uncomfortable feeling of asking probing questions, not to make people nervous that their 1-on-1 answers could be shared with the entire group.*

## **8. 1:1 Meeting Practice [20 min]**

**Could do this practice as Parallel Lines from Training for Change**

### **Exploring options for 1:1 [10mins]**

*Have the group organize themselves into two parallel lines. Make sure everyone has someone standing directly across from them (have trainers participate for an even number). When the two lines are formed, ask them to hi five with the person across. That instruction (a) helps people bond for the exercise, and (b) sorts out those who don't have a partner. Declare one line as the "initiator" (the organizer who is meeting with the person they want to invite to take on a role in their campaign). The other line is the new volunteer who may take on a role in the campaign*

*Setting the scene: "You (the initiators) are part of a group of organizers working on a campaign to close a nearby coal plant. You have a direct action coming up in two weeks as well as a social media campaign. For this exercise, the line of initiators will be conducting a 1:1 with their partner with the goal of inviting their partner to take on a role in the campaign. Be creative! This is a space to try out different strategies and for presenting different roles someone may be interested in holding."*

*"Take a minute to get into role. For the initiators of the 1:1, think about kind of leadership you want to embody here. For the new volunteers, think about how you may respond to different leadership styles and what would motivate you take on a new task or role"*

*Observe the roleplay and stop it as soon as energy starts to slacken. "STOP!" It's OK that it takes a bit of time for people to go back to where they were, because that time is meaningful transition. Laugh along with them. For the perfectionists who worry that they didn't do it "right," the relaxed facilitator laughing is a relief! (Participants laughing after a roleplay, by the way, isn't about comedy, it's about emotional release. Needed, and welcome.)*

**Re-Run the Roleplay (Depending on time)**

*Reverse roles • Do it exactly the same way and you'll be rewarded by people doing a much better job at every point: they'll try harder to get into role, they'll be more creative, they'll be more emotional, they'll be more aware.*

*As you announce that we're doing it again reversing roles be sure to emphasize exploring options, so it's fine to do again what was done and also fine to try new things, and it's OK to try a bunch of things. Also, thank the folks who are now fulfilling a different role in advance.*

### **Debrief [10 mins]**

- For the people who played the new volunteer, how did that feel for you?  
*Hear responses, and ask more specific follow-up questions as needed: "Did you agree to take on the role you were invited to? Did anyone feel like you were being bossed around?"*
- For the people who were initiating the 1:1, how did you feel that went?  
*Hear responses, and again, ask specific follow-up questions as needed: "Did anyone find that this was harder than you expected? What went well in that meeting? What could have gone better?"*
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### **Closing: Feelings Action Go-Around [5 min]**

To close out this training, arrange the group in a circle. Everyone will go around and do one action/movement that embodies how they are feeling in this moment. The group will repeat the action back.