

Assuming Positive Intentions

By

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CHARACTERS

QIANA (she/her): black, late 30s, Co-founder of Collective, Facilitator, Yogi, Day job: Corporate Diversity Trainer.

BRYNN (she/her): black, mid 40s, Consulting Master Facilitator, Organizational Development Specialist

ESTHER (she/her): black, early 30s, Facilitator, Herbalist, Luz's Spouse, Day jobs: Part-time High School Gardening Teacher, Manager of Urban Farm

IMANI (she/her): black, mid 30s, Facilitator, Mindful Meditation Teacher, Yogi, Day job: Program Director of Meditation Non'Profit Organization.

TRISH (they/them): black, mid 20s, Facilitator, Crystals and Reiki Practitioner, Day job: Development Assistant at Non-profit promoting Literacy.

STACIA (she/her): black, early 30s, Facilitator, Doula, Podcast Host

LUZ (she/her/they): black, early 40s, Co-founder of Collective, Facilitator, Acupuncturist, Esther's Spouse

PLACE

A meadow between two cabins on the property of a retreat center.

Column One	Column Two	Column Three
Usually the facilitator or leader of discussion.	Usually the group conversation.	Usually conversations/comments not meant for the entire group.

"SUN PORCH COLLECTIVE" RETREAT AGENDA

FRIDAY

ARRIVAL
DINNER
WELCOME & FRAMING
GOALS & AGREEMENTS
ACTIVITY: Small Group Questions
PROCESS
CLOSING: Meditation

SATURDAY

BREAKFAST
CHECK-IN
WARM-UP: Mirroring
ACTIVITY: Compass Points/ Work Styles
ACTIVITY: Paired Listening
CLOSING: Rain
LUNCH
ACTIVITY: Mission Alignment
ACTIVITY: Problems of Practice
DEBRIEF
DINNER
ACTIVITY: Reflection
PROCESS
CLOSING: Candle Ceremony

SUNDAY

BREAKFAST
CHECK-IN
WARM-UP: Knot Game
ACTIVITY: Study Group
ACTIVITY: Yoga
CLOSING: Gratitude & Commitments
DEPARTURE

DAY 1: ARRIVAL

Friday evening. Summer. A green meadow in front of a cabin. Above the cabin door hangs a large sign "WELCOME SUN PORCH COLLECTIVE" LUZ spreads blankets on the ground creating a large haphazard rectangular workshop space.

On one side is a stash of supplies for the weekend. BRYNN sits nearby writing on a newsprint pad with marker.

On the other, ESTHER fills two coolers with snacks and drinks.

One easel, with pads of large newsprint attached, stands at a far corner of the workshop space. QIANA is assembling a second easel. STACIA cradles a bundle of smudge sticks in her arms.

STACIA

So we're allowed to make a bonfire, but we can't burn sage?

QIANA

Not a bonfire. A campfire, but yeah. No burning anything else.

STACIA

Can we burn it a little bit? The main lodge is pretty far away. What they don't know...

QIANA

Let's not get kicked out before we start. You can lay it out around the space.

Deflated, Stacia places a sage smudge sticks next to the blanket.

	<p>LUZ (to Stacia) Not yet. Wait for the-.</p> <p><i>Imani exits the cabin in a rush.</i></p> <p>LUZ Where are the pillows? Where you going?</p> <p>IMANI Back to the car. (side eyes Esther) Someone didn't bring them up.</p> <p>ESTHER Oh, I'm sorry. Was my name on that bag?</p> <p><i>Imani walks off. Stacia helps Luz lay out the blankets.</i></p> <p>STACIA Is there a color story you're going for?</p> <p>LUZ Um. Should there be? Do whatever you feel.</p> <p><i>Stacia rearranges the blankets. Qiana attempts to stand the easel up but it tips over. Qiana releases a frustrated howl.</i></p> <p>LUZ You okay?</p> <p>QIANA I am.</p> <p>IMANI (O.S) (Echoes through woods) Trish is here!</p>	
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*Cheers among the groups
except Brynn.*

ESTHER
(calling out)
We're up here!

*Brynn stops writing and
stretches her hands.*

QIANA
(re: newsprint)
This ready to go up?

BRYNN
Sure.

*Qiana places the Retreat
Agenda on the first easel.*

*Trish enters wearing a backpack
and large duffel bag.*

LUZ
Hey Trish.

TRISH
Y'all are up in the cut, I swear.

*They hug. Esther hugs Trish
next.*

ESTHER
You took a bus, right?

TRISH
Yeah. It made so many stops.

QIANA
I'm sorry you missed dinner.

ESTHER
(points to cooler)
We have snacks, though.

	<p>STACIA Trish. This is Brynn. She's co-facilitating with Qiana.</p> <p>BRYNN Good to meet you, Trish.</p> <p>TRISH Yeah. Great to meet you too. I voted for you.</p> <p><i>Brynn is unsure what Trish means.</i></p> <p>QIANA Oh. Right. We had some disagreement whether we should facilitate ourselves or bring in one or two hired facilitators. So we voted.</p> <p>BRYNN Ah.</p> <p>QIANA It was close. The vote came along the lines of-</p> <p>BRYNN I don't need to know that.</p> <p><i>Beat.</i></p> <p>TRISH You right.</p> <p>BRYNN (looks to Qiana) We're expecting one more, right? Kaya?</p> <p>TRISH Kaya isn't going to make it. She said she'd text you.</p>	<p>TRISH Was it?</p>
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	<p>QIANA I don't get service here.</p> <p>TRISH I thought y'all knew. Sorry. (beat) Where can I put my stuff?</p> <p>QIANA You can leave it in your room. You'll find your name on the door. And there is a welcome package on your pillow. Just a little something.</p> <p>TRISH Nice. Thanks.</p> <p><i>Trish enters the cabin.</i></p> <p>STACIA I didn't know this was an optional retreat.</p> <p>QIANA It's not.</p> <p><i>Imani returns with a large bag of colorful pillows.</i></p> <p>ESTHER Kaya's not coming.</p> <p>IMANI What?</p> <p>LUZ Let's get these down.</p> <p><i>Luz, Stacia and Imani lie the pillows around the perimeter of the blankets.</i></p> <p><i>Trish exits the cabin, joining the group.</i></p>	
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<p>QIANA So we should get started, but before we begin, let's take a moment to address our needs. To the bathroom. To the snacks. To a quiet place. We can allow 3 minutes. Sound good?</p>	<p>ESTHER What's up with Kaya?</p> <p>LUZ I'd like us to process Kaya not being here.</p> <p>IMANI Why isn't she?</p> <p><i>Everyone looks at Trish. Trish glares at the group.</i></p> <p>BRYNN Any insight you could share with us, Trish?</p> <p>TRISH I'm not speaking for her.</p> <p>IMANI Do you know why?</p>	
<p>QIANA Trish isn't responsible for Kaya. Trish is here. So lets focus on who is in this space at present moment and be mindful-</p>	<p>IMANI (playful) Girl, I taught you mindfulness. Get out of here.</p>	
<p>QIANA (playful) Then show and prove, girl.</p>	<p><i>The group laughs, except Trish.</i></p> <p>IMANI (playful) I know you're not trying to manage me already, cause it's gonna be a long weekend. (to Brynn) This is just how we do.</p>	

<p>QIANA Let's take three.</p> <p>BRYNN It does feel like there is enough interest to discuss Kaya's absence.</p>	<p><i>Brynn nods.</i></p> <p>TRISH I'm really not interested in talking about someone who isn't here to defend themselves.</p> <p>LUZ No one's attacking her.</p> <p>TRISH I'm going to take the three.</p> <p><i>Trish gets up, digs into the cooler and grabs a couple of snacks. She enters the cabin.</i></p> <p>STACIA I don't want us to dwell on this. Obviously, it's making Trish uncomfortable, which I don't want. I'll just offer, that in order to be here I had to talk to two clients that might be delivering any day now and make an alternative doula service plan with them. I'm sure a lot of y'all did the same with whatever obligations you have going on. So I just want to acknowledge that we took the steps to honor this commitment, while Kaya chose not to show up.</p> <p><i>Nods among the group.</i></p> <p>STACIA And I am in gratitude that you all are here and I'm looking forward to spending this time with you.</p>	
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<p>BRYNN Thank you, Stacia. Anyone else want to add?</p> <p><i>Qiana takes a moment, waiting patiently to see if anyone else chimes in.</i></p> <p>QIANA Lets take three.</p> <p>QIANA Imani, no.</p> <p><i>Imani puts her finger over her own lips "Shhhh"</i></p>	<p><i>A pause.</i></p> <p>LUZ I think Stacia named it.</p> <p>IMANI Yes. It's been named.</p> <p><i>No one does.</i></p> <p><i>The group disperses. Brynn crosses out "ARRIVAL" and "DINNER" on the agenda. Stacia lays the sage smudge sticks down outside the circle of pillows. Imani picks up a smudge stick of sage and smells.</i></p> <p>IMANI Why are you putting sage on the ground?</p> <p>STACIA We can't burn it, but we can build a bonfire.</p> <p>QIANA A campfire.</p> <p><i>Imani sucks her teeth, takes out a lighter and lights the stick of sage.</i></p>	
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<p>IMANI You can go inside or look the other way. But y'all ain't catching me out in these here woods without a cleansing.</p> <p><i>The sage catches fire. Imani puts it out, so smoke billows from it.</i></p> <p>IMANI I release negativity. I let go of the sound of my daughter's cries as I packed the car this afternoon.</p> <p><i>She hands it to Trish. Then lights the next one.</i></p> <p><i>Imani hands one billowing smoke to Esther.</i></p>	<p><i>Trish exits the cabin.</i></p> <p>TRISH I release frustration. I'll try.</p> <p><i>Stacia lights a stick.</i></p> <p>ESTHER I let go of the argument I had with my Mom last night. I release tension.</p> <p>STACIA I release my need to make everyone happy all the time.</p> <p><i>Stacia hands hers to Qiana and lights a new one.</i></p> <p>QIANA I release doubts.</p> <p><i>Qiana hands it to Brynn.</i></p> <p>BRYNN I release knowing what will happen next.</p> <p><i>Esther passes hers to Luz.</i></p>	
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<p>IMANI Yeah. That feels better.</p> <p>QIANA It's Imani's world. Alright. Checking in. Names, again for Brynn. Pronouns. Any needs you have for this weekend. And share a fun fact?</p> <p>QIANA Okay. Two truths and a lie?</p> <p>QIANA So. Names. Pronouns. Needs for the weekend, if you have any. And a guilty pleasure. I'll start. Qiana. She. Her. My guilty pleasure is sour cream & onion potato chips.</p>	<p>LUZ I release all the obligations I have back home.</p> <p><i>They move about the space filling it with smoke from the smudge sticks. They are silent as the smoke clears.</i></p> <p><i>Everyone takes their time sitting and I settled in.</i></p> <p>TRISH Boo.</p> <p>IMANI C'mon Qiana.</p> <p>STACIA What about guilty pleasures?</p> <p>TRISH Yes.</p> <p>LUZ I never feel guilty about my pleasure.</p> <p>TRISH (Snaps) Oooooo.</p>	<p>LUZ I don't have a fun fact. (to Esther) Do I?</p> <p>ESTHER Not Particularly. No.</p> <p>IMANI Go 'head, Luz.</p>
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<p>QIANA I do. Don't worry.</p> <p><i>Qiana gestures to Brynn.</i></p>	<p>IMANI Girl, enjoy your chips.</p> <p>BRYNN I'm Brynn. My pronouns are she/her. I need time alone to recharge, so I might not be around during breaks or meals. I'm not being antisocial, I just need that space. My guilty pleasure is really problematic video games. They relieve stress.</p> <p>TRISH How bad are we talking?</p> <p>BRYNN Just take my word for it.</p> <p>TRISH Trish. They and them. I'm allergic to bees, so if one rolls up, I'm out. Um. This spot in my hood that makes these amazing sandwiches, but they're like 15 dollars.</p> <p>ESTHER What the what?</p> <p>TRISH I know. Next.</p> <p>IMANI I'm Imani. She/Her. A need? I gotta think more about that. I'll let y'all know. Guilty pleasure. Real Housewives.</p> <p>STACIA Which one?</p>	<p>ESTHER Respect.</p> <p>IMANI Wow. Okay.</p> <p>STACIA For a sandwich?</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">QIANA Let's keep it moving.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">IMANI Potomic. And Atlanta.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TRISH They are addictive.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI And Beverly Hills.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER Girl.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER Alright. Esther. She, her. I got low blood sugar. Not officially, but I am pretty sure I do. Thank you very much. So I need to eat constantly or I almost pass out. Guilty pleasure is hmm.... Had one, lost it. Um. Scented candles. Yeah. I have a lot and they make me feel just a little bit sick, but I keep lighting them.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA I'm Stacia. My pronouns are she,her,hers. I wake up very early so if you hear creaking in the morning, it's probably me.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI I'll hope it's you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA Yeah. And Foie Gras. That's my guilty pleasure.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TRISH You know what they do to the ducks, right?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER Yes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">LUZ You do not.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER For real?</p>
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<p>QIANA Guilty pleasure?</p> <p>QIANA Already, we've learned some new things about each other, so I'm really excited about all we will discover as we spend this weekend together. It's been almost two years since Luz and I dreamed up the Sun Porch Collective and got y'all together in my living room. We talked about the sun's capacity to facilitate growth. And the porch, a long-cherished space for Black</p>	<p>STACIA Yes, I know. And it tastes really good. I'm not proud.</p> <p>LUZ Luz. She. Her. They. I have my period so... Kinda achy. Will need to check on things in the bathroom frequently.</p> <p>IMANI Are bears into menstrual blood?</p> <p>LUZ I don't know, Imani, but thanks for raising that.</p> <p>TRISH Or pleasure? Since Luz don't feel guilty.</p> <p>LUZ Stacia made me think of a guilty one. My mom's fur. I love it. I've only wore it like twice. She was so proud of that coat.</p> <p>STACIA I wanna see it. You gotta wear it for us.</p>	<p>Groans.</p> <p>TRISH Sorry.</p> <p>STACIA Oh no.</p> <p>IMANI Oooooooo.</p>
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<p>Women to fellowship and have necessary conversations. This weekend is an opportunity to check-in with our work and one another. Some of you felt very strongly about having a guest facilitator. You were heard. Here she is... Stacia kindly introduced me to Brynn and she will help guide our conversations but help us consider how we lead discussions and workshops going forward. Welcome Brynn.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN</p> <p>Glad to be here.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>Some housekeeping. The retreat center kindly placed us in a cabin with lots of privacy. (pointing) That trail is the shortest to the main cabin where they serve our meals. Meals are vegetarian. Y'all really gotta read my emails. We have our snack/beverage corner when you need a pick up through-out the day. There is no cell service, but the main cabin has a payphone and business center with computers, if you need them. No smoking. We have a pit for camp fires. Quiet hours are 10pm to 7am. Each day we'll get started after breakfast and go until sundown. Questions?</p> <p><i>Qiana nods to Brynn and crosses out "WELCOME & FRAMING."</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">STACIA</p> <p>Yay!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>Yeah. Well. Wait and see on that one.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA</p> <p>Hmmm?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>Smores.</p> <p><i>There are none.</i></p>	<p><i>Claps & Snaps.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>All of them?</p>
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<p>BRYNN Let's take a look at the goals we've set for this retreat. (reads) Fellowship. To realign with our mission. Support one another in our work and share best practices.</p> <p><i>Brynn looks at Qiana and so does everyone else.</i></p> <p>BRYNN Okay. So let's talk this out. First. Are you all okay with these goals?</p>	<p>TRISH When did we set these goals?</p> <p>QIANA The e-mail I sent out a couple weeks ago. I synthesized all of your suggestions.</p> <p>TRISH I don't remember getting an email.</p> <p>STACIA I got it.</p> <p>IMANI So did I, but I don't see my input here.</p> <p>QIANA I took overlapping themes and created goals that expressed what the group wants most out of this retreat.</p> <p>ESTHER This isn't really it though.</p> <p>LUZ Yes.</p>	
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<p>BRYNN Then let's add on. Thoughts?</p> <p>BRYNN Say more.</p> <p>BRYNN So you cancelled it. And it became this.</p> <p>BRYNN How can we take Imani's statement and turn it into an intention for our time together this weekend?</p>	<p>ESTHER Why wouldn't we be? They're mad generic.</p> <p>ESTHER We're supposed to be running a Summer Solstice retreat right now. A time to reflect and celebrate with the community of black women we've cultivated. A rejuvenating weekend. We planned for 50. At least 40. We couldn't get 15 to sign up.</p> <p>LUZ It's a good opportunity for us to reflect on our work.</p> <p>TRISH But we need to figure out what happened. There seemed to be a lot of excitement about the retreat and then like no one registered.</p> <p>IMANI We've failed to create spaces where black women feel safe.</p> <p>STACIA Who's we, Imani?</p> <p>IMANI I'm just saying somewhere along the way, there must have been some missteps. So we need to talk about how to restore that safety.</p>	<p>QIANA There could be any number of reasons.</p>
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<p>BRYNN Go for it, Luz.</p> <p>BRYNN What would that look like to you, Imani?</p> <p>BRYNN So I can add to the goals “Discuss how to create space where black women feel seen, heard and taken into account in a real way. Okay?”</p>	<p><i>A beat.</i></p> <p>LUZ Can we unpack the word “safe” a bit?</p> <p>LUZ I’m wary of the idea of “safe space.”</p> <p>TRISH Same. It’s an unrealistic expectation.</p> <p>IMANI I can say “safer.”</p> <p>IMANI Being seen, I guess. And heard.</p> <p>ESTHER Understood?</p> <p>IMANI No. But taken into account. In a real way.</p> <p>STACIA We can discuss how to create that.</p> <p>QIANA Does the best practice goal not cover that?</p> <p>STACIA No.</p> <p><i>Nods all around.</i></p>	
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<p>BRYNN</p> <p>Anything else? Keeping in mind we're only here for 3 days. Great.</p> <p>So. I didn't know this retreat was not your original plan. I'm grateful you shared this with me cause it's heavy. Let's acknowledge that loss. What would it have looked like, sounded like and felt like. 50 black women affirming your collective with their presence. Take a moment.</p> <p>BRYNN</p> <p>Qiana will review Community Agreements.</p> <p><i>Brynn nods slightly to Qiana, who posts a list of "Community Agreements" on an easel. Qiana stands beside the easel. Brynn sits joining the group's circle.</i></p> <p>QIANA</p> <p>Anyone can volunteer to read these to the group.</p>	<p><i>It is an uncomfortable silence. Luz and Qiana hold slightly defensive postures. Imani looks at the others. Stacia stares at the ground.</i></p> <p><i>Luz nods and shifts her body to face the list.</i></p> <p>LUZ</p> <p>(reads)</p> <p>One Mic Do what you need to be present (i.e. bathroom, snacks, walks) Move up, Move up The story stays, the lesson leaves We can't be fully articulate all the time</p>	
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<p>QIANA Anything to add. Take away. Discuss.</p> <p>QIANA Move-up, Move-up is encouraging taking up space.</p>	<p>Lean into discomfort and each other. Expect and accept a lack of closure</p> <p>ESTHER I'm wondering about Move-up, Move-up.</p> <p>ESTHER But what happens when someone takes up too much space. What do you do then?</p> <p>STACIA I reject that notion when the entire group are members of marginalized communities. Brynn put me on to that.</p> <p>ESTHER (to Brynn) So what about that person who won't stop talking?</p> <p>BRYNN Personally, I embrace that person because I feel like they're doing it out of a need. And I find if I embrace it, so will the rest of the group. And then something really interesting happens. They adjust to the group and start moving to the same rhythm.</p> <p>ESTHER But how long does that take? If I'm running a 3 hour workshop, by the time they adjust we're approaching the closing.</p>	
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<p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>I propose revising “Move Up, Move Up” to “Take Space, Make Space” Sound good? Any objections?</p> <p><i>Qiana makes the revision on the newsprint.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>Any other thoughts on our community agreements?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">LUZ</p> <p>I like “Take Space, Make Space.” It encourages everyone to pay attention to others in the room, but it’s not silencing.</p> <p><i>Nodding in the group.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA</p> <p>Cause we don’t want black women experiencing yet another space where they have to suppress themselves.</p> <p><i>Trish and Esther snap in agreement.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>I know some groups stopped using it because the word “move” isn’t inclusive.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER (to Brynn)</p> <p>I wanna hear more best practices to facilitate that kind of participant.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN</p> <p>Sure.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">LUZ</p> <p>That’s some advanced stuff.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN</p> <p>It’s a shift in mindset. That’s all.</p> <p><i>Another beat of contemplative silence.</i></p>	
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<p>QIANA Can we add it?</p> <p><i>Qiana adds it to the list.</i></p> <p>QIANA Can we add it? How should I word this?</p> <p><i>Qiana transcribes what Trish says to the newsprint.</i></p> <p>QIANA Excellent.</p> <p><i>A beat.</i></p> <p>QIANA Sure.</p>	<p>IMANI I always use “Throw glitter, not shade.”</p> <p><i>Smiles and snaps among the group.</i></p> <p>TRISH Please.</p> <p>STACIA I like that. I’m stealing it.</p> <p>IMANI I stole it myself. Do your thing.</p> <p>TRISH Do y’all use “Oops and Ouch”? It’s “Respect intent, recognize impact” I really like it because people can’t hide behind “It wasn’t my intention” or “I didn’t mean to.” Intention doesn’t override the outcome.</p> <p><i>Snaps all around.</i></p> <p>TRISH “Oops and Ouch: Respect Intent, Recognize Impact.”</p> <p>BRYNN I have one I’d like to add, if I may make a suggestion.</p>	<p><i>No one else is familiar.</i></p>
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<p>QIANA Okay let me propose something: "Lovingly name elephants in the room." How is that?</p> <p>Luz? QIANA</p> <p>You sure? QIANA</p> <p><i>Qiana adds the proposed statement to the Community Agreements.</i></p>	<p>BRYNN Considering conversations we've had today already and some of our goals for our time together, lets be brave about naming elephants in the room. Or in our midsts.</p> <p><i>Imani and Esther snap in approval.</i></p> <p>LUZ Okay, but for those who approve, what does that mean to you?</p> <p>IMANI To me it means, we need to be willing to call each other out.</p> <p>ESTHER I like the idea of naming elephants.</p> <p>STACIA We need to be aware of how we approach it. I want us to lead with love.</p> <p><i>Nods.</i></p> <p>LUZ That's fine.</p> <p>LUZ Yeah.</p>	
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<p>QIANA We can revisit these at any point.</p>	<p>ESTHER I'm okay with "Expect and accept a lack of closure," but at the same time there better be some closure, you know? I don't want that agreement to become a cop out or a way to postpone important discussions. I don't need it changed, I just wanted to put it out there.</p> <p><i>Imani and Trish snap in agreement.</i></p>	
<p>QIANA Anything else?</p> <p><i>Qiana waits.</i></p>	<p><i>Silence. Some heads shake.</i></p>	
<p>QIANA Thank you. I was going to ask ya'll to pair up, but looks like we'll have one dyad and one triad.</p>	<p><i>Brynn crosses out "GOALS & AGREEMENTS."</i></p>	
<p>QIANA No. It's fine.</p>	<p>BRYNN Should I come in?</p>	<p><i>Esther and Stacia make contact and sit together.</i></p>
<p>QIANA This should be a free flowing conversation. Make sure each of you has a chance to speak. We had a few questions, but in the interest of time I'm going to pose</p>	<p>IMANI C'mon, Luz.</p> <p><i>Luz scoots over to Imani. Imani and Luz sit next to each other, looking to Qiana for directions.</i></p>	<p>STACIA Join us, Trish.</p> <p><i>Trish, Esther and Stacia form a triangle facing one another.</i></p>

<p>one for you to discuss with your partner or partners.</p> <p><i>Qiana flips the newsprint to reveal the question.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>“When leading workshops, how do we stretch some comfort zones without violating others?” So we’ll take 10 minutes. We’re not expecting a definitive answer in that time. We’ll come back and keep the discussion going. Good? You can begin.</p> <p><i>Qiana observes from one side of the space and Brynn from the other.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">LUZ</p> <p>Wow.</p> <p><i>Imani laughs.</i></p> <p><i>The dyad settles in.</i></p> <p><i>The next moments should move fast and feel like highlights of these small group conversations as they pose questions.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">LUZ</p> <p>Should we start by asking participants to name their boundaries?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>Can you name yours?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>Do we have the resources to support someone who is in pain after stretching their comfort zone at our direction?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">STACIA</p> <p>Okay.</p> <p><i>Trish laughs.</i></p> <p><i>The triad settles in.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA</p> <p>This really makes me wonder, do people know and understand their own comfort zones?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>Or does getting triggered teach us our comfort zones?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TRISH</p> <p>Are we asking them to do what we’re unwilling to do?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA</p> <p>But what happens when everything stays on the surface and no one takes any risks?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TRISH</p> <p>Is the stretching of comfort zones necessary for a successful workshop?</p>
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<p><i>Brynn stands up.</i></p> <p>BRYNN And that is time. Sounds like great discussions were had. Can we get a share out from each group? Where did the discussion go?</p> <p>BRYNN To be expected.</p>	<p>LUZ Are we qualified to ask people to disclose personal trauma?</p> <p>IMANI What do we do when a group is spiraling out?</p> <p>LUZ Can we develop better ways of getting and giving feedback?</p> <p><i>Qiana crosses out "ACTIVITY: Small Group Questions."</i></p> <p>LUZ Feels like we had more questions than anything. But we were interested in the challenge of self-awareness and our own ability to know when we're approaching a danger zone. Maybe when we know a topic may be difficult, we can invite a group to think about how their bodies warn them.</p> <p>STACIA I like that.</p>	<p>ESTHER How do we move past the assumption that emotional breakdowns are a credit to our work?</p> <p>STACIA If the safety of our spaces have been compromised, how do we rebuild it?</p> <p>TRISH Are we really ready to hear why they're staying away from us?</p> <p><i>Laughter.</i></p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN</p> <p>Describe a facilitator's role as you see it, Trish.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>I used to work with a guy back in the day, who was like the facilitator everyone emulated, me included. He could get someone to share their deepest secrets in a room full of people . What?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(smiles)</p> <p>You probably do. We'll talk later.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(to group)</p> <p>Anyway they'd share, sometimes shaking and crying. He perfected that compassionate listening face. But I knew him. So I could see how elated he was. And I could also tell how disappointed he was when there wasn't a big emotional moment.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>Would there be any follow-up if there was one?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>A brief one after. He'd offer a hug and thank them for sharing in his sincere voice. He'd walk away feeling real good about himself. And Stacia asked me if I ever had that in a workshop and I did. It felt like a breakthrough for about 30 seconds, until I realized it didn't feel good to me. I was afraid.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TRISH</p> <p>I'm clear that I am not a therapist, or any type of stand-in for one. That's not my role.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>Oh. I think I know who you're talking about.</p>
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<p>BRYNN Let's keep talking about the facilitators role. Anyone want to add to Trish's take?</p> <p>BRYNN So I'm hearing the role of a facilitator is to not only create space for people to talk and listen, but to be a conductor of sorts.</p> <p>BRYNN Say more, Esther.</p>	<p>TRISH Creating the conditions for people to speak and listen to each other. And I guess giving everyone the opportunity to interrogate their own perspectives.</p> <p>IMANI I think of myself as organizing the discussion. Like you just did. You said. "let's keep talking about this." So we are. And make space for agreement and disagreement. Which requires me to listen deeply and imagine where it can go. (to Luz) The discussion.</p> <p>ESTHER How thin is the line between that and manipulation?</p> <p>ESTHER Like I said with the guy. If I know where I want a conversation to go, I can get it there. But that's not about the group at all. That's about me and what I think is important.</p> <p>STACIA But that's the point of the goals. If everyone agrees to certain goals for the discussion, you must stay within those parameters right?</p>	<p>LUZ Where what can go?</p>
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<p>BRYNN</p> <p>This sounds like a great question to explore tomorrow as we look at the challenges of our work. Any other thoughts about the role?</p>	<p>TRISH</p> <p>I have a question for you, Brynn. How do you think about your role with us this weekend?</p>	
<p>BRYNN</p> <p>Hmm. Everything you've said so far applies. It's a unique situation, entering a space where everyone knows and works together. Right now, I am observing these webs of communication between all of you. And I'm looking and listening for where the flow is open or not. Where it's stifled, I want us to find ways to clear whatever is in the way to restore that flow. You've made agreements for the work you intend to do this weekend and I will hold ya'll accountable to them. Stacia and I know one another, which means I must be intentional about not prioritizing her voice. Does that...I hope I answered your question.</p> <p><i>Brynn lets a few beats pass.</i></p>	<p>TRISH</p> <p>You did. Thanks.</p> <p><i>Nods all around.</i></p> <p><i>Qiana crosses out "PROCESS."</i></p>	
<p>BRYNN</p> <p>Well. It's getting late. We have a full day planned tomorrow. But we know sometimes we learn more about one another and ourselves in the times we are unwinding together. So let's close now?</p>	<p>QIANA</p> <p>Imani? You ready.</p>	

<p><i>Imani stands and faces the group.</i></p> <p>IMANI</p> <p>Can we all stand real quick? Take a few seconds to stretch. And sit. Let's make a closed circle. Find a comfortable position. Close your eyes. Relax your shoulders. And your lips. Let them soften. I'm looking at you, Esther. (Beat.) Notice your breath. How it feels as you take air into and out of our nose. Or your mouth, if mouth breathing's your thing. For now though, take a deep breath in through you nose. And out through your mouth. Focusing on your breath. Again. In.</p> <p><i>Imani looks around at the group.</i></p> <p>IMANI</p> <p>Whenever I do this work with us, I notice the tension we hold in our shoulders and the back of our necks. Out. As you breathe in, think about the air entering your neck and chest, then expanding to your shoulders. In. When you let it go, imagine the breath as purifying, pushing away the tension with every cycle. And Out.</p> <p><i>Satisfied with the group's level of relaxation, Imani closes her eyes.</i></p>	<p><i>Everyone stands. The group stretches. Everyone sits and follows Imani's directions.</i></p> <p>ESTHER (laughing) Girl. Don't call me out.</p> <p><i>Group breathes out</i></p>	
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<p>IMANI And Breathe in. And blow it out slowly. (Beat.) Deep breath in. And when you blow out, let your voice express a note.</p> <p><i>Imani exhales with a light hum.</i></p>	<p><i>Lips wrap in o's as the group audibly blow.</i></p> <p><i>The group follows Imani.</i></p>	
<p>IMANI Deep breath in. A note on your exhale. Y'all can find whatever note. We can harmonize. And out.</p>	<p><i>Soft chuckles in the group. A lovely, harmonized group hum as they all exhale.</i></p> <p><i>NIGHT FALL.</i></p> <p><i>In the near darkness, everyone but Stacia heads to the cabin.</i></p> <p><i>Stacia sits and stretches. Her position emphasizes her neck. She winces.</i></p> <p>LUZ You good?</p> <p>STACIA My neck. I did something. Maybe when I was driving.</p> <p>LUZ Want a little treatment?</p> <p>STACIA Sure. Now?</p> <p>LUZ Yeah. Just give me a second.</p> <p>STACIA Thanks.</p>	

	<p><i>Brynn crosses out CLOSING: Meditation”</i></p> <p><i>Everyone, but Stacia and Brynn, has entered the cabin.</i></p> <p>STACIA Great start, Brynn.</p> <p>BRYNN You think so? I was thrown by the cancelled retreat thing. You never mentioned it.</p> <p>STACIA I thought Qiana would fill you in.</p> <p>BRYNN Nope.</p> <p><i>Beat.</i></p> <p>STACIA I’m waiting for Luz.</p> <p>BRYNN Oh. Okay.</p> <p>STACIA You gonna stay up and chill for awhile? I heard Imani brought some wine up.</p> <p>BRYNN No. Too tired. Maybe tomorrow. Have a good night.</p> <p>STACIA Good night. And thank you.</p> <p><i>Brynn puts her hands on her heart and enters the cabin.</i></p> <p><i>Luz exits the cabin with a small box. Laughter from inside the cabin.</i></p>	
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	<p>STACIA What's going on in there?</p> <p>LUZ I don't know. Some mess.</p> <p>STACIA I can't believe you brought your needles.</p> <p>LUZ Came here straight from work and I'm not leaving my stuff there. Can't trust Acupuncturists.</p> <p><i>Luz smiles and kneels next to Stacia.</i></p> <p>LUZ From 1-10. How painful?</p> <p>STACIA 6? Feels more like a strain.</p> <p>LUZ Where?</p> <p>STACIA (Touching section of neck) Here.</p> <p>LUZ Okay.</p> <p><i>Luz arranges her needles.</i></p> <p>LUZ I was wondering...where have you heard bad word of mouth about us.</p> <p>STACIA Just around. It's a look people give. A tone. It's been off for awhile. You haven't noticed anything with your clients?</p>	
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	<p>LUZ No. But there isn't much overlap between my clients and the Sun Porch community. I wish there was. It's been a goal. My clients tend to be white.</p> <p>STACIA Really?</p> <p>LUZ Overwhelmingly.</p> <p>STACIA Why?</p> <p>LUZ Stacia. That is the question. I'm telling you the blacker the stock photos in my marketing, the more white women come in. Make that make sense. And when I have a black woman come in, it's been tough to get them to come back.</p> <p>STACIA Oh.</p> <p>LUZ Is it me? Esther thinks it's the studio and I should switch. But I have a great relationship with the owner. I like her, which isn't easy to come by.</p> <p>STACIA So it's a white studio.</p> <p>LUZ Basically.</p> <p>STACIA I agree with Esther. Why would black women go to a white studio, when they could go to a</p>	
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	<p>black studio? Even if they like you, it's a comfort thing.</p> <p>LUZ Can I arrange you?</p> <p>STACIA Sure.</p> <p><i>Luz physically encourages Stacia into an appropriate position for treatment.</i></p> <p>LUZ Rest your legs this way. Lean. Yes and then you can place your head here. Comfortable?</p> <p>STACIA Yes.</p> <p>LUZ So I'm going to place the needles now. Let me know if any are too intense or painful.</p> <p>STACIA I will.</p> <p><i>Luz places the needles.</i></p> <p>LUZ So relax. Take some time. I'll let you know when it's time for me to remove them. (Beat.) Change is hard.</p> <p>STACIA It is.</p> <p><i>Luz sits off to the side, as Stacia relaxes.</i></p>	
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	<p>DAY 2: AFTER "BREAKFAST"</p> <p><i>Morning. Qiana exits the cabin. Imani follows her out and stops.</i></p> <p>IMANI Why not?</p> <p>QIANA Because it's unnecessary.</p> <p>QIANA I don't want to dwell on the negative.</p> <p>IMANI Did you call Kaya?</p> <p>QIANA No. You said you would. Did you?</p> <p>IMANI I thought it would be better to wait until we could talk face to face. Didn't think she'd skip this. (Beat.) Our workshop story is a learning opportunity for everyone. Why is Brynn with us this weekend, if we can't talk about what we hold as a collective? She's good.</p> <p>QIANA She is. But Brynn's much more at ease with things veering off course than I am. And some kind of chaos is the last thing I want. (Beat.) My Dad always said "Don't give people a stick to hit you with." Not every story is worth telling, Imani. Forgive yourself and let it go. Sun Porch is gonna be fine.</p> <p><i>Trish enters from the cabin.</i></p>	
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<p><i>Qiana posts Saturday agenda on easel and crosses out "BREAKFAST."</i></p>	<p>TRISH I'm hungry.</p> <p>IMANI We just ate.</p> <p>TRISH That wasn't breakfast. That was a morning snack. A nibble.</p> <p><i>Luz enters from the cabin.</i></p> <p>IMANI You should have said something. I could've hooked you up. The granola was crazy filling.</p> <p>TRISH (like it is ridiculous) Granola.</p> <p><i>Brynn and Stacia enter from the cabin.</i></p> <p>BRYNN Good Morning.</p> <p>QIANA We missed y'all at breakfast.</p> <p>STACIA We took our breakfast out by the lake.</p> <p>LUZ Oh, I like that. I'll do that for lunch.</p> <p><i>Esther enters from the cabin. Luz embraces her from behind.</i></p> <p>LUZ I forgot the plants.</p>	<p>THE OTHERS Good Morning. (or) Morning. (or) Hi.</p>
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	<p>ESTHER Hmm?</p> <p>LUZ I didn't water the plants before we left.</p> <p><i>Exasperated, Esther sighs.</i></p> <p>LUZ This is why we shoulda got cactuses. Not so bad if I forget about them.</p> <p><i>Esther shoots her a look.</i></p> <p>ESTHER One job, Luz.</p> <p>LUZ I know, baby. Sorry.</p> <p><i>Luz tiptoes away.</i></p> <p><i>Luz and Trish pair up, face one another and commence a mirroring activity in silence. Trish leads. At first it is awkward, but becomes seamless.</i></p> <p>ESTHER (a realization) I'm like starving.</p> <p><i>Esther and Brynn pair up for the mirroring activity. Esther leads.</i></p> <p>STACIA (to Imani) You called home?</p> <p>IMANI Nah. Way too early. Davis sleeps late and Tia is just like him.</p>	
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<p><i>Qiana crosses out "CHECK-IN."</i></p> <p>QIANA And switch. The reflection becomes the reflected.</p> <p><i>Qiana takes four newsprints and posts each facing one another in a square formation. "Workstyle Compass Points" one each for North-East-South-West. She watches the group for a moment.</i></p> <p>QIANA Let your current gesture come to an end. And have a seat.</p> <p>QIANA Last night, we tackled a large question about our work. This morning, we will locate ourselves within Sun Porch and identify</p>	<p>STACIA You're lucky.</p> <p>IMANI You called?</p> <p>STACIA Yeah. Zion's been up for hours.</p> <p>IMANI Wow.</p> <p>STACIA I know.</p> <p><i>Stacia and Imani pair up and do the activity. Stacia leads.</i></p> <p><i>A few beats.</i></p> <p><i>The other partner leads the activity.</i></p> <p><i>The partners finish up, regard one another and find a seat around the space. Brynn crosses out "WARM-UP: Mirroring" sits a little outside as an observer.</i></p>	
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<p>how we each approach our work. Brynn shared this activity with me and I thought it would be eye-opening to think about what it means when people with different work-styles collaborate. We'll explore the benefits and the challenges. So if you look around. I've placed Workstyle Compass Points around the space. Anyone want to read them out loud?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>Okay. I recognize one person can lean toward more than one style. Different situations can bring out various qualities. Right? So if you aren't sitting with South, that doesn't mean you don't approach your work with empathy. We're asking you to think about what style usually leads you into your work with us. When I say go, sit with the style you lead with.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>No right answer. Go.</p>	<p><i>The group looks at the work styles. There are some snickers of recognition.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA (reading)</p> <p>North: Action. Wants to Plunge in and do the work. East: Vision. Wants to create the big picture before doing the work. South: Empathy. Wants to know how everyone else feels before doing the work. West: Detail. Wants to know who, what, where, when and why before doing the work.</p> <p><i>A pensive silence.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA</p> <p>I can't decide.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>Me.</p> <p><i>Esther points at Luz, who smiles.</i></p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN</p> <p>Let's not assign work styles to one another. It's really important everyone is able to self-identify.</p> <p><i>Qiana looks at Brynn.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN</p> <p>I have no problem stepping in.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>Okay.</p>	<p><i>Everyone gets up and moves about the space. Imani sits with East (Vision) immediately. Esther sits with North (Action). Luz sits with West (Detail). Trish stands by West, but is still looking at East.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">TRISH (pointing to both)</p> <p>I feel like I'm both of these.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>With all the questions you ask? You're West.</p> <p><i>Trish sits with West. Stacia sits with South.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>Shouldn't you choose one too, Qiana? We're all working together. I think it would be helpful.</p> <p><i>Qiana sits with East. Exchanged looks all around. Silence. Esther walks over to Qiana.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>Qiana. Would you like to take a walk with me?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>What? Where?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>Up North.</p>	<p><i>Nods in agreement all around.</i></p>
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<p>QIANA We get things done cause someone has to.</p> <p>ESTHER Yeah. But I know I can jump the gun and get really impatient. Also, diving in can make others feel shut out of the process.</p> <p>QIANA Yeah, we can take things over, especially if there's a deadline.</p> <p>ESTHER I'm more like that at work. I'll order seeds and equipment before it's an agenda item. With y'all, I just let it ride.</p> <p>QIANA Do you feel like I takeover? <i>(Beat.)</i> Cause I feel like if I don't do it, who will?</p>	<p>TRISH For strengths, it's like what Imani just said, we ask lots of questions. We can identify gaps in the plan.</p> <p>LUZ Remember that meeting we had planning the Solstice retreat. I feel like you and I raised so many concerns. I felt like the group was annoyed cause we were slowing the process down. So, that's a limitation.</p> <p>TRISH It's not, if we were right.</p>	<p>IMANI Sure. <i>They meet halfway.</i></p>
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<p>ESTHER I think that feeling is a North quality.</p> <p><i>Qiana and Esther resume writing.</i></p>	<p>LUZ East can drive me crazy.</p> <p><i>Luz and Trish laugh.</i></p> <p>LUZ Y'all are so macro-level. And I'm trying to get to the micro.</p> <p>LUZ True. But the endgame is unreachable without a plan. And sometimes East doesn't consider reality.</p> <p>LUZ And here it is. Friction that can create wonderful things.</p> <p>TRISH I appreciate how South reminds me to care how people feel. Cause when I'm in the middle of a project I can be like "Feelings? Who cares about feelings?" And then I gotta check myself cause that is on some white supremacist hetero-patriarchal BS.</p> <p>LUZ Oh no. Are we the workstyle of the white patriarchy?</p> <p>TRISH (softly) I think maybe we are.</p>	<p><i>Imani side-eyes them.</i></p> <p>IMANI Why?</p> <p>IMANI But what good are details without an endgame?</p> <p>IMANI Why let reality stand in the way of vision?</p> <p>STACIA Don't put South in the middle of that. I don't work well around tension.</p> <p><i>Stacia and Imani resume writing.</i></p>
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<p>ESTHER (overhears Luz) What's North?</p> <p>ESTHER Take that back. Just because we're not overthinking every little step.</p> <p>QIANA The one still dipping their toe in the pool is always gonna resent those who jump right in.</p> <p>BRYNN Alright. Maybe we should get back to the questions at hand.</p>	<p><i>Luz and Trish look at the descriptions of other styles.</i></p> <p>LUZ No. We're good. It's North.</p> <p>TRISH Imperialists.</p> <p>LUZ Y'all roll in and do everything with little regard for anyone else.</p>	<p>IMANI I feel uncomfortable with the term visionary. It's so individualistic. Like some man's idea of himself back in the day. One person shouldn't get credit for the work of many.</p> <p>STACIA True, but someone must hold space for radical imagining. Like your idea for the workshop series for high schoolers. I was like "What is Imani talking about?" And it went so well.</p> <p>IMANI Thanks for saying that, Stacia.</p> <p>STACIA I was so moved by the bonding and the self-assuredness that emerged from them.</p>
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<p>QIANA Right. Sorry. (Beat.) What I like about other styles. East sets a framework. I appreciate West's ability to pick a process apart. And South brings everyone else along.</p> <p>BRYNN Go on, Imani.</p> <p>ESTHER How very East of you.</p> <p>ESTHER You just reimagined the whole activity so...</p>	<p>TRISH I would like to be more South.</p> <p>TRISH All I would need is a complete personality change.</p> <p>LUZ I wouldn't mind being able to shut off that super practical voice in my head. And leap a little more.</p> <p>LUZ I found it useful.</p>	<p>STACIA Come through, Trish.</p> <p>STACIA My limitation is not speaking my mind. I don't want to take sides, so I don't share my opinion when I should.</p> <p>IMANI I don't think I like this. (speaks up) Yeah, I'm not into this.</p> <p>IMANI It would have been cool for us to create our own styles, instead of fitting into one narrow description or another. I realize that's a longer process.</p> <p>IMANI Is it?</p> <p>IMANI (sighs) Fine.</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN</p> <p>I appreciate that feedback. This is only meant to be a tool to start a conversation. I think an activity creating your own workstyles would be worth developing. It's a good idea.</p> <p><i>Brynn crosses out "ACTIVITY: Compass Points/ Work Styles."</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>We have a paired listening activity scheduled next, but I think perhaps we could use a bit more unstructured time before lunch. Brynn, what do you think about ending for the morning now?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN</p> <p>Fine with me, if that's what everyone wants.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>Should we break now or go on with paired listening?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>Just more thinking about how you as an individual enter our work together. We bring our experiences, preferences...</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN</p> <p>Expectations and triggers.</p>	<p><i>Trish nods.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>Who wants to break?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA</p> <p>I'm fine with breaking but what were we supposed to discuss as pairs?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA</p> <p>That feels important.</p>	<p><i>All hands go up but Stacia's.</i></p>
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<p>BRYNN It is. Perhaps we can all make a commitment to reflect on that and even discuss it with one another before or perhaps during lunch. Sound good?</p> <p><i>Brynn circles "ACTIVITY: Paired Listening"</i></p> <p>QIANA Esther. Wanna make it rain?</p> <p>ESTHER You know I do. Let's close up the circle.</p> <p><i>Esther leads activity by gently rubbing her palms together. She increases the volume by switching to snapping her fingers or fitting the ground beneath her.</i></p> <p><i>The sound subsides as Esther reverses all the movements, until she is back to rubbing her palms.</i></p> <p>ESTHER That's it. See you at lunch.</p> <p><i>Qiana and Brynn take down the compass point signs.</i></p>	<p><i>Nods all around.</i></p> <p><i>Everyone sits in a circle.</i></p> <p><i>The others follow.</i></p> <p><i>They follow. It should sound like rain, from light rain to a storm.</i></p> <p><i>Everyone gets up.</i></p> <p><i>Luz heads back to the cabin. Stacia, Imani, Trish, and Esther remain sitting on the pillows.</i></p> <p>IMANI Stacia. I'm starting a podcast.</p> <p>STACIA Yeah?</p> <p>IMANI I'm trying to be like you, girl.</p>	
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	<p>STACIA What's your focus? Mindfulness?</p> <p>IMANI Yeah. Like each episode will introduce one mindful activity to add to your practice. Like gardening. You wanna be a guest on my podcast, Esther?</p> <p>ESTHER Uh-uh. I can't stand the sound of my voice.</p> <p><i>Esther gets up.</i></p> <p>IMANI You got a great voice.</p> <p>ESTHER Yeah. Yeah.</p> <p>IMANI C'mon. I want people to get their horticulture therapy on.</p> <p>ESTHER You in my mind, girl? I've been thinking about going back to school for that.</p> <p>IMANI You should. What's stopping you?</p> <p>ESTHER The school part.</p> <p>STACIA I hear you. I've been thinking about midwifery school and I'm gonna keep on thinking.</p>	<p>STACIA I love your voice.</p>
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	<p>IMANI (to Esther) Will you consider it?</p> <p>ESTHER No ma'am.</p> <p><i>Esther enters the cabin.</i></p> <p>IMANI Trish?</p> <p>TRISH. Imani.</p> <p>IMANI An episode about Reiki?</p> <p>TRISH I'd do it.</p> <p>IMANI Yay! You are booked.</p> <p>TRISH Imma work on my sexy spiritual voice, just for you.</p> <p>STACIA Don't buy any equipment without talking to me. I can tell you the best mics or whatever.</p> <p>IMANI How many listeners do y'all have now?</p> <p>STACIA It's not always the same week to week, but we're in the low five figures. A lot of listeners are douglas. It took time to build that following. And I gotta say, it is so helpful to have a co-host. Ruby</p>	<p>IMANI Wow.</p>
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	<p>and I can split all the posting and writing you do to engage people.</p> <p>QIANA We should have a podcast for Sun Porch? We have some brand recognition already.</p> <p><i>Awkward beat.</i></p> <p>IMANI That's definitely something to think about.</p> <p><i>Qiana lingers a bit before heading back to the supplies.</i></p> <p>IMANI Don't let me leave without some pose pics.</p> <p>TRISH Take some now. I got you.</p> <p>IMANI Yeah? Okay.</p> <p><i>Imani stands. She hands Trish her phone.</i></p> <p>IMANI Tell me which one. (does yoga pose) Or this one. (another yoga pose)</p> <p>STACIA The first one.</p> <p>TRISH Yeah.</p> <p>IMANI Cool.</p>	
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	<p><i>Imani holds the first pose, with the cabin as backdrop. Trish takes a couple of pictures.</i></p> <p>TRISH Got it.</p> <p>IMANI (taking phone) Thanks. These are great.</p> <p>STACIA I want one. What pose should I do, Imani? Make it easy.</p> <p><i>Imani does a pose. Stacia tries it.</i></p> <p>IMANI How does it feel? You look good.</p> <p>STACIA Weird. Take it fast.</p> <p>TRISH Where's your phone?</p> <p>STACIA On the blanket.</p> <p><i>Trish picks up Stacia's phone.</i></p> <p>TRISH I need your finger.</p> <p><i>Trish holds Stacia's phone out to her. Stacia maneuvers to place her fingerprint. Trish takes the photos.</i></p> <p>TRISH Done.</p> <p><i>Stacia sighs as she releases the pose. She takes her phone.</i></p>	<p>QIANA (notices Imani) I need to do that.</p> <p>QIANA I hope you didn't mind me ending early. I thought the air was getting a little thick.</p> <p>BRYNN Thick? How?</p> <p>QIANA You know. With the pushback. You don't want that to get on a roll.</p> <p>BRYNN It was fine.</p> <p>QIANA Just felt like everyone needed to relax. The afternoon is busy.</p> <p>BRYNN I'm concerned skipping the listening activity left us with an incomplete thought for the morning.</p> <p>QIANA I think it'll be fine. Should we set up?</p> <p>BRYNN We can dip out of lunch a little early. Don't want to give it all away.</p>
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	<p>STACIA Thank you. You want one?</p> <p>TRISH Definitely not.</p> <p><i>Imani and Stacia enter the cabin.</i></p> <p>TRISH How you holding up, Brynn?</p> <p>BRYNN Pretty good. What about you?</p> <p>TRISH I'm not facilitating, so I'm great.</p> <p>BRYNN Right. I wonder how our conversations would be different if Kaya was with us. Y'all sound close. What do you think?</p> <p>TRISH Everyone thinks we're super tight, but it's not like I talk to her all the time. And she hasn't been in touch much for a minute.</p> <p>BRYNN That's too bad.</p> <p>TRISH I mean, we're good. Just busy. She's an organizer. Food justice. So her job is all day and evenings and weekends.</p> <p>BRYNN I see.</p> <p>TRISH Like if she did that last activity. She's a South. Definitely. She's</p>	<p>QIANA Right. See you at lunch.</p> <p><i>Qiana walks off.</i></p>
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kinda quiet when everyone is together. We sidebar a lot.

BRYNN

You must miss that.

TRISH

I do. She abandoned me. But whatever. It's fine.

Luz exits the cabin.

BRYNN

See you after lunch.

Brynn enters the cabin.

LUZ

Did you message them yet?

Trish shakes their head.

LUZ

Do it.

TRISH

You don't think it's presumptuous? I never told them I'm unreachable this weekend, cause it's really new. Who says they'd try to contact me anyway?

LUZ

When we go down for lunch, send them a message. If you like them, then what's the problem with letting them know. Esther wasn't having any of my aloof nonsense. I had to let her know or she'd be gone.

TRISH

I like Jean a lot.

LUZ

Send it.

	<p>TRISH I will. I will. I will.</p> <p><i>Esther exits the cabin.</i></p> <p>LUZ (to Esther) You ready. (to Trish) We're taking the long trail. Wanna join?</p> <p>TRISH No, thanks. Gonna try to take a little nap.</p> <p>ESTHER Oh, to be able to nap.</p> <p><i>Luz and Esther walk off.</i></p> <p><i>Trish heads to the cabin just as Stacia steps out.</i></p> <p>STACIA Can you do me a big favor and take another photo for me, Trish?</p> <p>TRISH I thought it came out good.</p> <p>STACIA I want the trees in the background.</p> <p>TRISH Sure.</p> <p><i>Stacia hands Trish her phone. She does the same pose as before with the woods as backdrop.</i></p> <p>STACIA Do I look okay?</p>	
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	<p>TRISH Yeah. Great. Got it.</p> <p><i>Stacia releases the pose, takes her phone and reviews the photos.</i></p> <p>STACIA Much better. Thank you. I can post this. (quieter) Be careful about that.</p> <p><i>Stacia gestures to the collective's banner on the cabin.</i></p> <p>TRISH What?</p> <p>STACIA Don't have the collective's name in your photos, on hashtags or whatever. Let them figure their stuff out. You have your clients like I do and you don't need your people mixing you up in this.</p> <p>TRISH It's that bad?</p> <p>STACIA I'm not risking it. (walking to cooler) Are there anymore of those chocolate granola bars?</p> <p>TRISH I don't know. <i>Stacia rummages through the cooler. Trish enters the cabin.</i></p>	
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<p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN</p> <p>Good Afternoon. I hope everyone feels nourished and satisfied after our lunch. This morning we asked you to explore what you bring to the work individually. This afternoon we're zeroing in on one of the goals for our time together, realigning with the mission. How do you all work together with purpose? As I heard when y'all came up, you are familiar with this activity. Heat Spectrum. I will read a statement and you will stand between Agree or Disagree, with the rope representing the line of neutrality. We can do a lightning round or we can discuss where we're standing and why.</p>	<p>DAY 2: AFTER LUNCH</p> <p><i>Brynn and Qiana enter. Brynn crosses out "LUNCH." Brynn digs through the supplies sack and pulls out two signs: one says AGREE, the other DISAGREE. Brynn places each on two trees across from one another. Qiana takes a thin rope unravels it and lays it out on the ground between the trees.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">LUZ (O.S.)</p> <p>Uh-Oh.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI (O.S.)</p> <p>We know what this is.</p> <p><i>Luz, Stacia, Esther, Imani and Trish enter the space from down the hill. They sit.</i></p> <p><i>Qiana hands Brynn a paper and sits with the others.</i></p> <p><i>Nods. Maybe a little boredom.</i></p>	
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<p>BRYNN You know what? I'm gonna honor our conversation from this morning.</p> <p><i>Brynn rips up the statements paper.</i></p>	<p>QIANA (eyes widen) Ummm.</p>	<p>IMANI Yoooo.</p>
<p>BRYNN Y'all should create the statements.</p> <p><i>Brynn grabs index cards and pens from the supplies stash. She distributes them.</i></p>	<p>TRISH Oooo.</p>	
<p>BRYNN Write a statement. Connected to the group. To group process. To the mission. Don't think too hard about it. Follow your instincts on this one.</p>	<p>STACIA But wait. Are we discussing these, or will it be a lightning round?</p>	
<p>BRYNN Thoughts?</p>	<p>ESTHER Whatever. Either way.</p>	
<p>BRYNN Stacia brings up a good point. Perhaps it is beneficial to do a lightning round. Agreed? A statement that leaves room for others to make a choice. No need to write your name on the card. I'll destroy them after.</p>	<p>STACIA It will make a difference in what I write.</p> <p><i>Nods. Everyone is thinking or writing. Qiana is stumped. Esther and Luz hand their index cards to Brynn. Laughs. Stacia hands her index card in. Then Trish. Imani hands her index card in.</i></p>	<p>IMANI Really?</p>

<p><i>Brynn glances at the cards and shuffles them.</i></p> <p>BRYNN Ready?</p> <p>BRYNN Everyone okay with losing the line of neutrality?</p> <p>BRYNN You good with that, Qiana?</p> <p>BRYNN So I'll read a statement. Give you time to quietly find your spot. We'll take a few seconds to silently notice where others are standing and then on to the next. Good?</p>	<p>QIANA Gimme a second.</p> <p><i>Qiana writes quickly.</i></p> <p>QIANA Okay.</p> <p><i>Qiana hands her index card to Brynn.</i></p> <p>ESTHER Yup.</p> <p>TRISH (pointing to rope) Can we get rid of that?</p> <p><i>Nods. Qiana doesn't nod.</i></p> <p>TRISH Neutrality is bullshit, though.</p> <p>ESTHER Truth.</p> <p>QIANA Fine. Sure.</p> <p><i>Trish and Esther pick up the rope and toss it to the side.</i></p> <p>TRISH Got it.</p>	<p>IMANI Let's do this.</p> <p>IMANI Take a stand, people. You a little dangerous, Brynn.</p> <p>LUZ Ready.</p>
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<p>BRYNN First statement: (reads from index card) Even though we just ate lunch, I am still hungry.</p>	<p><i>Chuckles. Esther, Trish stand at Agree. Stacia is closer to Agree.</i></p>	<p><i>Qiana, Luz and Imani stand at Disagree.</i></p>
<p>BRYNN Look around. (reads from index card) My voice is heard and honored in this collective.</p>	<p><i>Everyone looks around. Some smiles. A tougher one. Some hesitation. Qiana and Luz stand at Agree. Imani and Stacia are closer to agree.</i></p>	<p><i>Trish stands at Disagree. Esther is closer to Disagree.</i></p>
<p>BRYNN Look around. (reads with air quotes) When people “ what if,” and “but” everything to death, there is little chance for progress. Please refrain from comment.</p>	<p><i>They do. Solemn nonverbal acknowledgments of Trish and Esther. A beat. Some perplexed looks.</i></p>	<p>TRISH Woah.</p>
<p>BRYNN (reads) When people “ what if,” and “but” everything to death, there is little chance for progress.</p>	<p>LUZ Can you repeat that? <i>Qiana stands at Agree. Luz is closer to Agree.</i></p>	<p><i>Trish stands at Disagree. Imani stands with Trish.</i></p>
<p>BRYNN We’re not explaining.</p>	<p>ESTHER It’s a depends for me. <i>Esther stands in the middle. Stacia joins Esther.</i></p>	

<p>BRYNN Take a look around. (reads next card) Sun Porch's mission should include trans and gender non-binary folk. Look around. (reads next card) Until we confront our own internalized anti-blackness, we will inflict harm on communities we seek to heal.</p> <p>BRYNN (reads) Until we confront our own internalized anti-blackness, we will inflict harm on communities we seek to heal. Do your best.</p> <p>BRYNN Look around. Last one. (reads) Although we claim Sun Porch is a collective, there is still a hierarchy resistant to change.</p>	<p><i>They do.</i></p> <p><i>Everyone moves to Agree. They do.</i></p> <p>LUZ Hmm?</p> <p>ESTHER We as in us?</p> <p>TRISH Can we hear it again?</p> <p>QIANA This one assumes a lot.</p> <p><i>Stacia and Esther stand closer to Agree. Trish and Imani stand at Agree.</i></p> <p><i>They do.</i></p> <p><i>A beat. Hesitation.</i></p> <p><i>Trish and Imani remain at Agree. Stacia remains closer to Agree.</i></p>	<p><i>Qiana stands at Disagree. Luz is closer to Disagree.</i></p> <p><i>Qiana stays at Disagree. Luz moves closer to Disagree. Esther moves closer to Disagree.</i></p>
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<p>BRYNN One more look around. (beat) You can be seated.</p> <p><i>Brynn sits with them.</i></p> <p>BRYNN And lets take a deep breath. Breathe in. And out. (beat) Thank you. For your candor. For your generosity and care for one another. As we move on, think about the ways you can support one another no matter where y'all stood. Yes?</p> <p><i>Brynn nods to Qiana.</i></p> <p>QIANA (standing up) I'm going to be honest. I'm not sure how to transition into this discussion, but I'm gonna try my best.</p> <p><i>Qiana unveils The Sun Porch Collective's mission statement on the Easel.</i></p> <p>QIANA So we're revisiting our mission to think about how this statement reflects the work we do. Brynn, can you read our mission statement to us?</p>	<p><i>They look around. This moment feels revelatory for some. Everyone sits in a circle.</i></p> <p><i>Everyone breathes in. Everyone breathes out.</i></p> <p><i>Nods.</i></p> <p>STACIA We're with you.</p> <p>BRYNN Of course. (Reads statement) The Sun Porch Collective is a thriving, supportive community centering the voices and bodies of black women through workshops, retreats and discussions with wellness leaders and practitioners.</p>	
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<p>QIANA Does anyone need clarity on any part of this? (Beat) Any questions?</p> <p>QIANA Sure.</p> <p>QIANA (looking around) Anyone? We've been clear that they are welcome to all of our events.</p> <p>QIANA Right. But from what I remember, we weren't sure the exact language to use. We didn't want to take a chance on excluding anyone. So we should create an action plan to figure out the wording.</p> <p>QIANA Trish, maybe you can take the lead on proposing that revision. (beat) What do you think?</p>	<p>TRISH I have an observation and a question, I guess.</p> <p>TRISH I noticed everyone ran to Agree about the inclusion of trans and gender non-binary folk. But we still haven't made it happen. So that's my question. Why?</p> <p>LUZ Welcoming isn't the same as inviting.</p> <p>TRISH Can we figure it out right now? This is a major piece of the mission. It's important.</p>	
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<p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>If we have time tomorrow, we can talk about it. But this is a look back, so let's deal with the current wording of the mission.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(gesturing to mission)</p> <p>Lets have a go around and everyone can say what words or phrases here stand out to you.</p> <p><i>Qiana circles Voices.</i></p> <p><i>Qiana circles Wellness.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>Sure.</p> <p><i>Qiana hesitates, then draws a square around Thriving.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>Luz? Stacia? Did either of you want to add context to your words?</p> <p><i>Qiana draws a square around Women.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>I don't feel comfortable with Trish making a very valid suggestion and it being thrown back at them as a task.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TRISH</p> <p>We won't but whatever.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">LUZ</p> <p>Voices.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA</p> <p>Wellness.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>Thriving. Do you want to know why?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>Cause I don't think we are.</p> <p><i>Luz and Stacia shake their heads.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">TRISH</p> <p>Women. Cause it's exclusionary.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>Supportive. Got questions about that one too.</p>	<p><i>Imani and Stacia snap in agreement.</i></p>
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<p>QIANA Do you have a specific question in mind?</p> <p><i>Qiana draws square around Supportive.</i></p>	<p>ESTHER Are we really as supportive as we say we are?</p> <p>LUZ I think we are.</p>	<p><i>Esther glares at Luz.</i></p>
<p>QIANA Do you have an example, Luz?</p>	<p>LUZ Our Shape of Wellness event. Many women in that room talked about being seen. They Encouraged each other. Contact info was exchanged to keep in touch. It was a supportive environment for women facing constant negative assumptions about their health.</p> <p>ESTHER I have positive stories too. I hope we all do. I doubt any of us would be here if we didn't.</p>	
<p>QIANA Would you like to share one, Esther?</p>	<p>ESTHER (frustrated) Can we talk about what's real? What about those squares or are you gonna do this memory lane thing?</p>	
<p>QIANA (irritated) Did you read the agenda, Esther?</p>	<p>ESTHER Yes.</p>	
<p>QIANA What's the next activity, Esther?</p>	<p>ESTHER I can read, Qiana.</p>	

<p>QIANA Problems of practice.</p> <p>QIANA I've only asked one question, Esther. How do you know?</p> <p>QIANA You wanna run this, Esther?</p> <p><i>Brynn stands.</i></p> <p>BRYNN Okay. We're gonna take a breath and a break. Take a breath.</p> <p>BRYNN Does anyone feel a need to discuss what just transpired between Qiana and Esther as a group?</p> <p>BRYNN We'll come back together in 5 minutes. Yes?</p>	<p>ESTHER Can we start that? Cause these rosy questions feel like a waste of time.</p> <p>ESTHER Cause you have to actually listen to people, if you want to ask good questions. That's why your debriefs are always surface.</p> <p><i>Group takes a breath.</i></p> <p>Heads shake all around.</p> <p>TRISH Uh-uh.</p> <p>STACIA No, thank you.</p> <p><i>The group disperses. Qiana walks off. Brynn, Stacia, Imani and Trish enter the cabin. Luz stands, watching Esther, who remains seated.</i></p>	<p>TRISH (stunned)</p> <p>Oh.</p> <p>Nope.</p> <p>IMANI</p>
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	<p>LUZ What's going on? Why'd you pop off like that? Did that feel okay to you?</p> <p>ESTHER (Imitating Luz) "I think we are" Don't correct me.</p> <p>LUZ Correct you? I disagreed with you. First you write the silliest statement in the spectrum.</p> <p>ESTHER That was anonymous. <i>Luz gives her a look.</i></p> <p>LUZ Qiana picked this place, so when you keep joking about the food, it's taking a shot at her.</p> <p>ESTHER No it isn't. She ain't cooking.</p> <p>LUZ It hurt me to see you talk to her like that. (beat.) She does all the work.</p> <p>ESTHER Nobody asked her to. Stop feeling guilty and deal with her. She would actually listen to you. You're probably the only one who could tell her about herself.</p> <p>LUZ (a reminder) Is it kind? Is it necessary? Is it the right moment?</p>	
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	<p>(beat) That's all I'm saying.</p> <p><i>Luz walks away and enters the cabin. Esther watches her go.</i></p> <p><i>Brynn enters from the cabin. She sits across from Esther. They sit in silence for a moment.</i></p> <p>BRYNN Feel like talking?</p> <p>ESTHER Nah. I'm good.</p> <p><i>Esther gets up, gets a snack and walks off.</i></p> <p><i>Qiana enters and looks through the supplies.</i></p> <p>BRYNN What do you need?</p> <p>QIANA The post-its.</p> <p>BRYNN Under the markers.</p> <p><i>Qiana digs and finds the post-its.</i></p> <p>QIANA I know you meant well, but ripping up the questions we crafted really threw everything off. And brought in a lot of negativity.</p> <p>BRYNN If the group needs to have some things out, then it will happen.</p>	
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	<p>QIANA It's like everyone was feeling good and then they weren't.</p> <p>BRYNN That wasn't my impression.</p> <p>QIANA Well, you don't know them like I do.</p> <p>BRYNN So what do you want to do, Qiana?</p> <p><i>Beat.</i></p> <p>QIANA Might be a good time to split up into groups.</p> <p>BRYNN We owe the Paired Listening activity, if that's helpful.</p> <p>QIANA Yeah. It is.</p> <p>BRYNN So we can still ask a question similar to what you asked. When Sun Porch is most aligned with the mission statement, what are you doing? And then a question about what y'all still need to do.</p> <p>QIANA I would rather focus on what is going right for now. I think we dug up enough dirt.</p> <p><i>Beat.</i></p> <p>BRYNN Okay. And for the pairs. It makes the most sense if you join this one.</p>	
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<p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN (calling out) We're coming back.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN We're gonna break out into dyads for a paired listening activity. Qiana has requested Luz as her partner. Is that alright, Luz?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN The rest of you can choose as well.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN So sit together. Get close, so you can hear each other well.</p> <p><i>Standing by the easel, Brynn unveils a question written on newsprint.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN (Reads.) When Sun Porch is most aligned with our mission statement, what are we doing?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">QIANA Only if I'm with Luz.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN We can't ask them to stretch their comfort zones, while staying firmly in our own. But if that's what you want.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA It is.</p> <p><i>Imani, Trish and Stacia exit the cabin. Esther walks up. Luz exits the cabin.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">LUZ Sure.</p> <p><i>Luz stands with Qiana. Imani gestures to Esther. Esther nods.</i></p> <p><i>The pairs follow Brynn's directions, gesturing to each other silently deciding who will speak first.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">STACIA Yay Trish.</p> <p><i>Trish smiles and joins Stacia.</i></p>
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<p>(to the group) And you can start now.</p> <p>QIANA We're committed. Even when we all have so many other things going on. If we're not, this can't work. I'm happy when I walk into a Sun Porch event. I could be in a mood where the last thing I want to do is facilitate. But I know our work can turn a bad week around. That's what it does for me. I spend the week struggling to get suited up white people with folded arms to talk about diversity. And when I say struggling. I mean struggling. So walking into a room full of us. It's a relief. When we all want to be there, we're a force. We're connected and our groups feel like they're a part of our energy. But whenever folx form a group, there's going to be uneven levels of commitment. That's just how it is. If we all step up a level or two, that would help. If it's always the same couple of people running an event or workshop, it gets tiring. Or if you can't run a workshop, help with logistics, marketing or registration. I'm not a control freak, but if no one steps up, what am I supposed to do? Can't leave me with the whole bag and then get mad at me for holding it. That really drives me-</p> <p>BRYNN (addressing group) Please switch if you haven't already.</p> <p><i>Qiana gestures to Luz to go.</i></p>	<p>IMANI I think we're most aligned with our mission when we provide black women with a soft place to land. And I realized recently that even though I know our community needs that, I haven't put it into practice like I should. I've been judgmental, where I should have been supportive. The women who come to our workshops face sharp edges constantly, so when there is an opportunity to counter those negative forces, we should. It's our responsibility. We only move forward if our community sees us as worth their time. Sees our events as fortifying in some way. So if we're not providing that experience, this collective can't exist. Shouldn't exist. I've had to ask myself a lot of questions this year about what I carry into a room with me. And I found some real internalized stuff. Anti-blackness. Misogynoir. Things I really thought I left at the side of the road a long time ago. I really did. But it's manifesting in different ways. So that's part of my work. It's individual work, but we can all support each other in that examination.</p> <p>ESTHER I try to create a space where everyone feels they can contribute equally. You know how some folx come in with more knowledge, they attend workshops like ours all the time and they are like... dropping lingo every 3 words to show</p>	<p>STACIA What are we doing? Listening. We don't just walk in like, 'lets rip through this agenda and get out of here'. We're really in tune with the needs of the group. Whatever group. Luz and I ran the natural fertility workshop awhile back. And we had an information packed day planned reviewing several practices, but the group kept interrupting us with personal stories. At first, I felt a little frustrated cause I'm thinking about all the stuff we wanted to cover, but Luz and I had to accept there was a need to talk about their experiences with infertility and pregnancy loss. So we sat down and listened. It became a share circle and that was one of the best workshops I've done with Sun Porch. What about you?</p> <p>TRISH I like what you said about letting the group steer the workshop. I really believe the more flexible we are, the more capable we appear, even if we don't have a clue. And that is more likely to happen when we as co-facilitators have our practice down. That's why I love facilitating with Kaya. We know each other's strengths and interests, so whatever direction it goes in, we know who should address it. So. Yeah.</p> <p>(waves at the hair) These bugs keep buzzing around my hair.</p>
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<p><i>Brynn enters the cabin.</i></p> <p>LUZ</p> <p>When we're most aligned with our mission statement. Okay. We have relevant topics that attract people to our events. Good titles. Anything with the word goddess in it. Also sex. So if we got a goddess workshop about sex. It'll be packed. I think we're more effective when we also share useful information. Discussions are fine, but I like when everyone can learn something new and take that back to their communities. We need to keep our own assumptions in check. About our work. About our groups. About each other.</p> <p>(Beat. Qiana gestures to keep going)</p> <p>I don't know what else to say about that. Just ask questions. Talk to each other and not around each other. Communication. That's it. That's when I feel like we're successful.</p> <p>(Beat.)</p> <p>Why did you only want to talk to me?</p> <p>QIANA</p> <p>I wanted a moment to talk to you. Reflect. We're the OGs, so our perspective is maybe a little different.</p> <p>LUZ</p> <p>Hmm. I imagined after some time, it wouldn't matter who founded Sun Porch. I mean, I'm proud of the work we did to gather the group together. But then the point is to be a</p>	<p>what they know. And that can be really intimidating in a room, cause people without that lingo feel like they shouldn't participate. Can't blame them cause I've seen people get criticized on their terms. It can make the air mad thick. I like when we have an openness that empowers those who know but also empowers those who don't. Like, there are no extra points to be won, so relax. I still don't think we've set up adequate ways to evaluate our work.</p> <p>IMANI</p> <p>Agreed.</p> <p>(stops herself)</p> <p>Sorry.</p> <p>ESTHER</p> <p>Why aren't we spending any time this weekend creating feedback and assessment forms? Very few workshop attendees submit feedback, so it's probably something we're doing or not doing. If we don't have a way to measure our work, it'll feel pointless. I mean, at my job, either our crops grow or they don't. The soil is healthy or it isn't. So that's what I'm used to. I know this is a different situation.</p> <p>IMANI</p> <p>But we should create our own benchmarks.</p> <p>ESTHER</p> <p>Definitely.</p> <p>(looks around)</p> <p>Where'd Brynn go?</p>	<p>STACIA</p> <p>What product you using?</p> <p>TRISH</p> <p>Coconut hair milk.</p> <p>STACIA</p> <p>Oooooo. Lemme find out.</p> <p><i>Trish and Stacia meet in the middle as Stacia smells Trish's hair.</i></p> <p>STACIA</p> <p>So good.</p> <p>TRISH</p> <p>Yup. Everybody loves it. People. Flies. Mosquitoes.</p> <p>(Beat.)</p> <p>So. I think I wanna quit my 9 to 5 sometime in the next couple of years.</p> <p>STACIA</p> <p>Why?</p> <p>TRISH</p> <p>To practice full time. I'd probably have to pick up more training and another certificate. Massage maybe? I don't think I could go full time with Reiki alone.</p> <p>STACIA</p> <p>That would be really difficult.</p> <p>TRISH</p> <p>When did you make the move?</p> <p>STACIA</p> <p>Around four years ago.</p> <p>TRISH</p> <p>When did you know it was time?</p>
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<p>collective, right? I don't think there should be a co-founder status forever.</p> <p>QIANA Right. Of course not.</p> <p>LUZ I'm always happy to touch base and talk things through. But you and I need to open that up to everyone. I think it's time. What do you think?</p> <p>QIANA I don't know, Luz. I guess I don't expect everyone to care as much about Sun Porch as we do.</p> <p>LUZ Maybe not yet, but I think it's possible if we let them.</p> <p>QIANA I feel like I'd need to see it to believe it though.</p> <p><i>Brynn steps out of the cabin.</i></p> <p>BRYNN And finish your thought.</p> <p>LUZ Gotta give people a chance to surprise you, Qiana.</p> <p>QIANA I know.</p> <p>BRYNN Hope your conversations were enlightening.</p>	<p><i>Imani shrugs.</i></p> <p>ESTHER Wanna make a fast food run tonight?</p> <p>IMANI What? Where?</p> <p>ESTHER I remember a few spots by the highway.</p> <p>IMANI We haven't even had dinner yet.</p> <p>ESTHER I mean later. Late night run.</p> <p>IMANI Girl, it is pitch black out here at night. There's no lights on the side roads. Uh-Uh.</p> <p>ESTHER I'll drive.</p> <p>IMANI Not in my car you won't.</p> <p>ESTHER (laughs) I'll ask Stacia then.</p> <p>IMANI You go 'head and do that.</p>	<p>STACIA I had enough clients as a Doula that I couldn't hold a 9 to 5 anymore.</p> <p>TRISH Was it scary?</p> <p>STACIA Uh-huh. Almost didn't make it through the first year. But I started writing articles, which became a stream of cash. Tiny, but still.</p> <p>TRISH And the podcast.</p> <p>STACIA That's more of a marketing thing. We barely break even on that. But clients have found me by listening in and it did open the speaking circuit to me.</p> <p>TRISH Where does Sun Porch fit into all that?</p> <p>STACIA I'm still figuring that out.</p>
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<p><i>Brynn crosses out the circled "ACTIVITY: Paired Listening" and "ACTIVITY: Mission Alignment w/ Heat Spectrum"</i></p> <p>QIANA Anyone have a problem for the group to troubleshoot.</p> <p>QIANA Okay, tell us about it. What was the event?</p>	<p>LUZ We had one. Esther and me. And no, we don't make a habit of facilitating together but Stacia had to back out last minute.</p> <p>LUZ (to Esther) You want to?</p> <p>ESTHER No. Go 'head.</p> <p>LUZ It was a goal setting workshop. A few activities. Pretty good group</p> <p>ESTHER Yeah the vibe was open, which I think made some people feel more familiar that they actually were.</p> <p>LUZ So I'm running the closing circle. Basically, the workshop is over.</p> <p>IMANI Can we get into this? Let's get all the way into this.</p> <p>LUZ Okay. Roleplay it?</p>	<p>STACIA So whatever happened is all my fault.</p> <p>TRISH Uh-oh.</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>Are we ready?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>There was a lot of chatter all around. So feel free to react to what is happening.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI (in role)</p> <p>Yes, and what a workshop this has been. We've set goals and created action plans to meet them. So let's work our way around the circle. Each of you will enter the center and make a movement with a sound that expresses how you are feeling right now. Then the rest of us will complete that sound and movement too. Questions?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA (in role)</p> <p>So all of us have to copy the person in the middle?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI (in role)</p> <p>That is correct. Does anyone have a smart question? Great. Can we start to my right?</p> <p><i>Brynn enters the circle and makes a simple sound/movement. Everyone follows. Brynn exits the circle.</i></p> <p><i>Trish enters the circle and dances as they beat box. The rest of the group follows with varying degrees of accuracy. Trish exits the circle.</i></p> <p><i>Esther enters the circle and does the most with her sound and movement. It is a cry for</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>Got it.</p> <p><i>Luz and Imani join the circle. Luz stands next to Esther.</i></p> <p><i>Some chuckles.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">TRISH</p> <p>Imani is silly.</p>
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	<p><i>attention. The group follows. Esther exits the circle.</i></p> <p><i>Luz enters the circle. Simple sound/movement. Everyone follows. Luz can't get out of the circle fast enough.</i></p> <p><i>Esther reaches out to Luz but doesn't touch her.</i></p> <p>ESTHER Touch.</p> <p>LUZ (in role) Did you just grab my ass?</p> <p>ESTHER (in role) I'm sorry, sis.</p> <p>IMANI (in role) Wait. Let's take a pause.</p> <p>LUZ (in role) Did y'all see that?</p> <p>STACIA (in role) I did.</p> <p>IMANI (in role) Can we talk about what just happened?</p> <p>LUZ (in role) Talk about what? This bitch grabbed my ass.</p>	<p>TRISH (in role) Whoops.</p> <p>BRYNN (in role) What happened?</p> <p>TRISH (in role) I think she said she was grabbed.</p> <p>BRYNN (in role) Wow.</p> <p>TRISH (in role) Now hold up.</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>Freeze? This feels like a good place to stop. Let's come back.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER (in role)</p> <p>What'd you call me? No one was trying to grab you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI (in role)</p> <p>Let's all have a seat.</p> <p><i>The group sits except Luz and Esther.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER (in role)</p> <p>I was just being encouraging, sorry you ain't used to nobody wanting to touch you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI (in role)</p> <p>Esther and Luz, please step out with me?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">LUZ (in role)</p> <p>I'm leaving. (to Esther)</p> <p>And you don't want to run into me outside. Trust.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER (in role)</p> <p>You better be able to cash that check.</p> <p><i>Everyone comes out of role, laughing and shaking their heads. They look at Luz. A pensive energy.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA</p> <p>It really went down like this?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">STACIA (in role)</p> <p>She has the right to be mad.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TRISH (in role)</p> <p>Whoa.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI (to Esther)</p> <p>You still use checks, sis?</p>
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<p>QIANA How did that feel for you, Imani?</p>	<p>LUZ Basically. <i>Esther nods.</i></p> <p>LUZ We may have added some embellishments.</p> <p>ESTHER The name-calling was real.</p> <p>IMANI It escalated so quickly. I felt like I couldn't keep up.</p> <p>LUZ That's how it felt for me at the time.</p> <p>IMANI Removing them from the situation seemed like the best option, but it makes sense that Luz would reject that and just leave.</p> <p>TRISH Is that what happened?</p> <p>ESTHER Yeah. We tried to have one come with me and the other go with Luz. One left and the other refused to talk. What would be the incentive, if it's a one day thing?</p> <p>LUZ But the rest of the group stuck around for awhile talking about what happened informally. It was a disappointing way for the day to end.</p>	
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<p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN</p> <p>I'd take it back to the agreements and where they aren't clear, I would take that responsibility. And maybe that would help others to admit their own. You never know if that'll happen though.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN</p> <p>Um. Something like... (modeling) Alright everyone. Let's review our community agreements for our time together.</p> <p><i>Brynn stands besides Community Agreements newsprint.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN (modeling)</p> <p>What agreements can guide us through this moment?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>We tried to let everyone have their say respectfully. "One mic" and all that, but we couldn't calm it down. Thoughts?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>Brynn, I'm curious what you would do in this situation.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TRISH</p> <p>What would that look like?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA</p> <p>One mic.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>Opps and Ouch. Respect Intent, Recognize Impact.</p>	
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<p>BRYNN And you can ask the group: How can we implement this now? You know the drill. (modeling) Great insight. Anything missing? (out of modeling) This is where responsibility comes into play. (modeling) Anything?</p> <p>BRYNN (modeling) I recognize we did not set a clear agreement for this type of situation and I regret that. (out of modeling) What do you think that does?</p>	<p>STACIA Right</p> <p>QIANA Boundaries? Physical Boundaries.</p> <p>ESTHER Acknowledges our part in it, so maybe there won't be as much finger pointing?</p> <p>LUZ I gotta say, it's weird even after that experience we still didn't set any agreements about touch for this weekend.</p> <p>IMANI Have you seen that on many community agreements? Cause I haven't.</p> <p>TRISH Why did we leave that out?</p> <p>ESTHER Cause no men are here? (chuckles) Messed up, but we're not thinking about it. We assume it doesn't need to be said.</p>	<p>TRISH That's it</p>
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<p>BRYNN How should we word it?</p>	<p>STACIA But it clearly does. Let's add it.</p> <p>LUZ Respect physical boundaries?</p> <p>TRISH We don't know the boundaries of everyone in the room.</p> <p>LUZ Be aware everyone has different physical boundaries?</p> <p>IMANI Don't touch anyone unless they invite you to.</p> <p>ESTHER That's a clear way to avoid the "I'm a hugger" person who just goes in.</p> <p>STACIA I don't enjoy that person.</p> <p>ESTHER Nope.</p>	
<p>BRYNN We're good with "Don't touch anyone unless they invite you to."</p>	<p>TRISH Can we add 'explicitly', cause people think you're inviting them in with your eyes or your posture.</p>	
<p>BRYNN "Don't touch anyone unless they explicitly invite you to."</p>	<p>LUZ I like it.</p> <p><i>Nods and Snaps.</i></p>	

<p><i>Qiana adds that statement to the Community Agreements.</i></p> <p>QIANA Whew. Okay. This was a helpful discussion. Any other thoughts?</p> <p>QIANA We're coming to our dinner break. We actually don't have much time before we have to get down there.</p> <p>QIANA We already have an evening activity. But we can put it in the parking lot.</p> <p>BRYNN We never established a parking lot.</p> <p>QIANA I'm happy to sidebar with you, Imani, if you need. So let's break now. I wanted to put a word in for us eating together in the dining room. Not required of course, but it can be a nice chance for us to break bread together. See you in a few.</p> <p><i>Qiana crosses out "ACTIVITY: Problems of Practice" and "DEBRIEF"</i></p>	<p>IMANI I have a problem of practice I'd like to discuss.</p> <p>IMANI After dinner?</p> <p>IMANI It's fine.</p> <p><i>Esther and Luz, Trish, Stacia and Imani head to the cabin.</i></p> <p><i>Brynn resets the space. Qiana joins Brynn in resetting the space.</i></p> <p>QIANA That felt good. Went well.</p> <p><i>Brynn nods.</i></p>	<p>STACIA Do you think they took the argument outside?</p> <p>LUZ I'm not even sure. Hope not.</p> <p><i>Everyone but Qiana and Brynn enter the cabin.</i></p>
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	<p>BRYNN How are you feeling about the agenda for tonight?</p> <p>QIANA I'm excited about it. It's meditative, which is perfect after a long day. Why?</p> <p>BRYNN There's a lot we haven't discussed. Between tonight and tomorrow, there isn't much opportunity to dig into the providing space and recommitment goals?</p> <p>QIANA They weren't even original goals.</p> <p>BRYNN The group added them.</p> <p>QIANA No one is expecting us to cover everything. That's not even realistic. We're starting conversations we'll continue.</p> <p>BRYNN I am receiving such a resistant energy from you and all I want is for y'all to be satisfied with this retreat experience.</p> <p>QIANA We're back on track. It's good. (to the others) Y'all heading down?</p> <p>IMANI Yeah.</p> <p>QIANA Wait for me. Just a sec.</p>	<p><i>Imani, Esther and Trish exit the cabin. Trish wears a headwrap.</i></p>
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	<p><i>Qiana enters the cabin.</i></p> <p>IMANI I don't think Tia will go to sleep without me saying goodnight.</p> <p>TRISH Are you away much?</p> <p>IMANI No. That's the thing.</p> <p>BRYNN What are you using to call?</p> <p>IMANI My debit card.</p> <p>BRYNN Oh. Okay. I should check in with mine. Make sure they're eating more than pizza for every meal.</p> <p>IMANI How many do you have?</p> <p>BRYNN Two. 12 and 9.</p> <p>ESTHER Ooo. Almost a teenager.</p> <p>BRYNN I know. I'm not ready at all. 12 has been enough.</p> <p>IMANI 9 is cute.</p> <p>BRYNN He just turned, but yes, still a cuddly age so far.</p> <p>ESTHER I love your wrap, Trish.</p>	<p>TRISH Big kids.</p>
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	<p>TRISH Thanks. I couldn't with the bugs</p> <p>ESTHER Usually they'd be eating me up by now, but I'm okay.</p> <p>QIANA This breeze is nice.</p> <p>IMANI Might be chilly tonight.</p> <p><i>Qiana and Imani walk the trail. Esther and Trish follow.</i></p> <p><i>Stacia exits the cabin.</i></p> <p>STACIA They went down?</p> <p>BRYNN Yeah. You can catch them.</p> <p>STACIA I'm fine. You going?</p> <p>BRYNN In a few.</p> <p>STACIA That last activity was helpful. What would we do without you?</p> <p>BRYNN Guess you'll never know.</p> <p><i>Beat.</i></p> <p>STACIA You okay?</p> <p>BRYNN I wanna show you something.</p>	<p><i>Qiana exits the cabin.</i></p>
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	<p><i>Brynn walks over to the supplies stash and opens a bag.</i></p> <p>BRYNN These are the materials for tonight.</p> <p>STACIA Art supplies?</p> <p>BRYNN Yup. For an art project. That's the reflection piece.</p> <p>STACIA Oh.</p> <p>BRYNN Oh? Imagine what Imani will say. Or Trish. Or Esther. And what was that between Qiana and Imani?</p> <p>STACIA (shrugs) Whatever happens, we'll process it as a group.</p> <p>BRYNN Qiana's running the activity and she can't handle feedback.</p> <p>STACIA Did you share your concerns with her?</p> <p><i>Brynn glares at Stacia.</i></p> <p>STACIA If it goes left, you can step in.</p> <p>BRYNN (raises voice) I'm exhausted. I've been on 10 all day working around Qiana.</p>	
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There needed to be two of me here. This isn't right, Stacia. This collective can't deal with its own issues but want us to trust y'all with our hearts, bodies and spirits. Right now, I am encouraged by the black women who refused to come here and put themselves in harms way. I could be in my warm bed with my warm man. My kids make pancakes on Sunday mornings. I'm missing some blissful things to be here.

STACIA
(warmly)
Hey Luz.

LUZ
Y'all coming down?

STACIA
Right behind you.

Luz heads down the trail. Beat.

STACIA
(takes a breath)
How can I help you?

BRYNN
I feel like you occupy a backseat in this group. And I need you to change seats.

STACIA
Okay.

BRYNN
And y'all ain't paying me enough neither.

*Brynn enters the cabin. A beat.
Stacia heads down the trail.*

Luz exits the cabin.

<p><i>Brynn crosses out "DINNER"</i></p> <p><i>Qiana lays a sheet of hard stock paper in front of each of them. As Qiana speaks, she and Brynn place crayons, paints, brushes, markers, magazines, scissors, glue, stickers and other art supplies in the middle of the circle.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>This morning, we took a moment to explore what we, as individuals bring to this collective as we work and build together. In the afternoon, we thought about ways to align our mission with our practice. Now, we're asking you to reflect on all we've accomplished, even when there were challenges. Think about the moments you feel proud to be a member of Sun Porch. What does it look like? What does it feel like? How can we create those moments for ourselves as we enter the next season. Open your eyes.</p> <p><i>Brynn sits just outside the circle.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA (with "this is special" tone)</p> <p>So for 20 minutes, we will create art pieces that express our hopes for Sun Porch. For ourselves. For each other. For our larger community. We have materials for drawing, painting, collage, mixed media.... Do your thing.</p>	<p>DAY 2: AFTER DINNER</p> <p><i>Luz, Imani, Esther, Trish and Stacia sit in a circle with their eyes closed.</i></p> <p><i>They open their eyes and look over the explosion of arts and crafts in the circle.</i></p> <p><i>They stare at the pile.</i></p>	
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<p><i>Qiana reaches for the paints.</i></p> <p><i>Qiana reaches for paints and brushes.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA We're all born artists.</p> <p><i>Qiana works on her art piece.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA And to connect with one another. An activity like this is just as important as problems of practice.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA I hear y'all, but there is a reason we are doing this activity right now. So let's take these 20 minutes and reflect.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">LUZ Trish. Can you pass the colored pencils?</p> <p><i>Trish passes them.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">LUZ Thanks. Don't expect much. I'm not an artist.</p> <p><i>Besides Qiana, only Luz is creating an art piece. Luz looks around.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">LUZ Is something wrong?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI I didn't believe y'all would try it. When Stacia told me, I was like "Well, even if that's the plan. Nah. Not with everything we still need to discuss.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA We're all together. This is the moment to dig in.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER But we haven't discussed developing our feedback and assessment models. This isn't a great use of our time.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI I got a reflection.</p>	
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<p style="text-align: center;">QIANA We're not sharing yet.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA You're making a bigger deal of it.</p> <p><i>Qiana resumes making her art piece.</i></p>	<p><i>Imani grabs paper and a marker. She writes furiously and holds the paper up for the group.</i></p> <p><i>It says "Where do you feel loved in a world that wants you dead?"</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA What is that?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI This is a question. The question. We asked it. And it broke the room.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">LUZ "Where do you feel loved in a world that wants you dead?" Can we back up. Where was this?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI The Yoga and Social Justice workshop. Very well-attended. It was me, Qiana and Kaya. We probably could have used one more to help lead it. Some people knew each other. And the yoga intervals were great. Each of us ledd one. But when we would introduce topics and reflection exercises, there was a lot of chatter and laughing. They weren't taking us seriously. We had a quick huddle and agreed we were having trouble getting the group engaged with the social justice sections. It was like they just wanted to hang out and do a little yoga. So Kaya was about to lead a reflection piece, so we brainstormed new</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TRISH Yeah. I'm gonna need context.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER Who thought that would work well?</p>
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	<p>questions. I wanted to ask one that would get their attention and acknowledge the urgency of the moment. I came up with this.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>And asked this to a room of black women.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>Kaya asked it, but it was my question.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>We all agreed on it.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>Qiana did ask me, "Isn't that depressing?"</p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>We didn't have enough time to discuss it.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">LUZ</p> <p>What did they say?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>Kaya asked the group to reflect on the question at the end of her yoga interval, so we could transition into a discussion about self-care in times of unrest and resistance. So they weren't expected to answer it.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TRISH</p> <p>So what happened?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>Someone started to cry and got louder. Kaya went to her and then someone else and then someone else. It sounded like half the room was weeping. And</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">ESTHER</p> <p>Shit.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">TRISH</p> <p>Oh, Kaya.</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN</p> <p>Qiana. Do you need me to step in?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA</p> <p>I'll step in with you.</p> <p><i>Brynn nods.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA (to group)</p> <p>Can we take a second to breathe? I want to organize this process.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(to Brynn)</p> <p>Consultancy? Makes sense?</p> <p><i>Brynn nods. As Stacia describes the process, Brynn gets up and jots down the steps on newsprint. Stacia takes Imani's paper and tapes it to the newsprint.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA</p> <p>Okay. So we've heard the story from Imani, and we'd like to introduce a way to work our way through thinking and talking about this situation.</p> <p>Now that Imani presented the situation. We'll start with asking clarifying questions about the situation. Just the details.</p>	<p>that turned into anger just a quickly. How could we do that? They were expecting something totally different.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>It became about us because someone was triggered. It could have had a completely different result with another group.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>Y'all do what you want. I'm painting.</p>	
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<p>Then we'll open up to probing questions to encourage deeper thinking about what happened. Then. Then.</p> <p><i>Stacia looks to Brynn.</i></p> <p>BRYNN The discussion.</p> <p>STACIA Yes. Thanks. Brynn and I will lead a discussion about the situation and Imani, and for this Qiana as well, will not speak. Once they listen to the group discuss, we'll ask them to share what they heard and what they'll take away. Any questions?</p> <p>STACIA No. Just listening, so you can take in everyone's perspectives.</p> <p>BRYNN As we move forward, please review our community agreements, one person speaks at the time, take care of your needs, don't expect perfect expression of thoughts and feelings, lean into discomfort and respect intent while recognizing impact.</p> <p>STACIA Are we ready? Imani?</p>	<p>QIANA In the part where Imani and I can't speak, We can't even ask clarifying questions?</p> <p><i>Everyone gets more comfortable. Esther gets snacks from cooler. Trish follows. They spread the snacks around.</i></p> <p>LUZ Do we have pens?</p> <p><i>Trish passes along pens and paper.</i></p>	
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	<p>ESTHER You mentioned social justice topics were explored. What were they?</p> <p>IMANI Health care disparities. The self-care/resistance piece.</p> <p>QIANA Environmental justice, specifically related to how climate gentrification affects health.</p> <p>IMANI And workplace stress as black women navigating bias.</p> <p>LUZ Did they show interest in any of your topics?</p> <p>IMANI A little bit for the workplace stuff, but I heard a few comments about not wanting to go there on a weekend.</p> <p>ESTHER At any point, did you consider the group disrespectful?</p> <p>IMANI At the time, yes.</p> <p>ESTHER Were you angry at them?</p> <p><i>Beat.</i></p> <p>IMANI Probably.</p>	
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<p>STACIA Let's move on to probing questions. Trish, you had one.</p>	<p>TRISH Did you apologize to the group when they confronted you?</p> <p>IMANI No.</p> <p>QIANA We acknowledged their discomfort.</p> <p>ESTHER Did the three of you debrief?</p> <p>QIANA We talked a little bit about it afterwards.</p> <p>LUZ But no formal debrief.</p> <p>IMANI No.</p> <p>TRISH Yeah. Um. Why didn't you follow up with those who submitted negative feedback?</p> <p>QIANA That's not something we do. And we didn't have a great sample size.</p> <p>LUZ But how many people usually submit feedback?</p> <p>QIANA Around 20%.</p>	
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<p><i>Stacia raises her hand.</i></p>	<p>LUZ So we received more for this workshop than usual, which makes sense because people are more likely to respond to complain than to praise.</p> <p>QIANA Right. I know.</p> <p>ESTHER But it still didn't seem like something to be addressed?</p> <p>QIANA No. It was a workshop that didn't go well. Just like the event we talked about earlier, with the closing circle. They don't all succeed.</p> <p>TRISH At what point did you realize there was a bigger problem?</p> <p>IMANI I started hearing things among other practitioners. Word was going around. How many of y'all heard bad stuff about Sun Porch?</p> <p><i>Trish and Imani raise their hands.</i></p> <p>IMANI So by the time no one wanted to come to our retreat, it was already pretty clear.</p>	<p>TRISH Or shared with us?</p> <p>QIANA But they're competitors, right?</p> <p>TRISH Cancelled.</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">STACIA</p> <p>Deal with the moment and you can reflect after we discuss.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>I want to go back to your question, Imani. I'm trying to understand what you were feeling when you came up with it.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI (to Stacia)</p> <p>Am I speaking from a place of hindsight or just my feelings in that moment?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">- -</p> <p>Okay. So I felt frustration. The group wasn't receiving our questions. They were making jokes. It felt like we were a stop for them on the way to brunch.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>And what's wrong with that?</p> <p><i>Beat.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>I don't know.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>It felt like we were losing control of the room.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">LUZ (reading)</p> <p>'Where do you feel loved in a world that wants you dead?'</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(beat.)</p> <p>I'd like to unpack it. I'm interested in the choice of "Where" instead of "How do you feel loved" or "Why do you feel loved" By asking where, the group was being forced to locate spaces where they feel loved, and what happens when a participant comes up empty?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">LUZ</p> <p>So do I.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TRISH</p> <p>Uh-Oh. Say it, Luz. Speak your truth.</p> <p><i>Trish snaps.</i></p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">STACIA</p> <p>And with that Luz has taken us into the next phase, which is discussion of the situation. Unless, there are any other questions at this point.</p>	<p>“How” would have been more about their own actions and intentions. To me, “where” feels very external, and that could be what set participants off. Even asking “Where do we feel loved, in a world that wants us dead?” feels more like an opportunity for dialogue and collaboration. Less intrusive. Sometimes we need to shake up a room, but the design of the question might have undercut that intention.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TRISH</p> <p>I’d like to hear more about the reactions from the group. You mentioned the room transitioned from weeping to anger. What did folx say and what were you thinking as they said it?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>I remember someone making the point that everything was going well, until that moment. That stuck out cause none of us thought it was.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>They were having a good time.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>Which wasn’t the point of the day.</p>	
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<p style="text-align: center;">STACIA</p> <p>Qiana. Qiana. You will have your opportunity after the discussion. Please only listen for this phase. Thank you. Esther? Did you have anything else to add?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN</p> <p>So Esther is concerned about the impact of that moment. Can y'all name any other concerns?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">LUZ</p> <p>I understand. It felt like things weren't going well and they needed to do something. I can also see how telling the group the world wants them dead might be disturbing to them.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TRISH</p> <p>But it's a truth. And they already know it.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">LUZ</p> <p>Well. It's provocative.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>Why that moment though? The only explanation I heard was the group was having too much fun. Basically.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>Can't it be a call to arms? We are all we have, so confronting these systemic-</p> <p><i>Annoyed, Qiana backs off.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>Just that it sounds to me the women in that room wanted to do yoga and kee-kee and not have a conversation about injustice. And the call was made that they couldn't have that. Cause why? We're not allowed to have that. And so this question was dropped on them. That feels cruel to me.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Imani nods.</i></p>
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<p>BRYNN</p> <p>We've talked about what did or didn't happen after the workshop. I'd like us to think more about decisions made in the moments during the workshop. What are the valuable lessons or takeaways you can apply to your work going forward?</p>	<p>TRISH</p> <p>I'm really feeling for Kaya, cause she was in the middle of it. And I don't understand the secrecy. We needed to know as soon as it happened, so we could interrupt the harm.</p> <p>ESTHER</p> <p>We should have reached out to everyone months ago.</p> <p>LUZ</p> <p>We don't want anyone leaving our workshop feeling worse than when they entered.</p> <p>TRISH</p> <p>I've facilitated with Kaya many times. So I know if she took that question to the group, there was something going on in that room that needed to be addressed. We're not gonna get it right all the time, but we have to acknowledge harm in real time.</p> <p>LUZ</p> <p>Maybe we need a kind of Problems of Practice manual with go to solutions for certain situations or group dynamics. So we're not just caught out there.</p> <p>TRISH</p> <p>I like that.</p>	
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<p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN</p> <p>Imani, Esther wanted to hear your thoughts on the question. So let's move to the last phase. Imani?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">LUZ</p> <p>We can't anticipate every challenge, but it can help to have some standards around this.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>I would like to hear from Imani about what lessons she has taken away. She shared some things with me earlier in our dyad that connects to this, I think.</p> <p>Personally, I don't think that group would have set me off. But another dynamic could. I get that. So the manual could work. I also think it's okay to tell the group non judgemental observations of their behavior. Like "We're noticing y'all are talking with each other when we bring up social justice." Ask them why. Maybe they'll dismantle the whole thing. Maybe it becomes only a yoga workshop. I would like us as a collective to center our participants.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>Something said as y'all were talking. I believe it was Esther. Like why couldn't these black women in that moment just be easy and do their thing. And that...hurts my heart. Cause I was in my feelings resenting them for resisting the pain, the frustration of those issues.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>Real talk. Y'all were trying to cover too much.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">TRISH</p> <p>The powerlessness.</p>
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<p>STACIA I gotta go. I gotta go. I'm going.</p> <p><i>Stacia stands up.</i></p> <p>STACIA I will always feel honored that y'all invited me to be part of this.</p> <p>BRYNN Stacia, can you clarify what's happening?</p> <p>STACIA I'm going home.</p> <p>STACIA Thing is, I've worked really hard to build what I'm building.</p> <p>STACIA But it's me. No 9 to 5. No fallback. My reputation is it.</p> <p>STACIA Are you though, Luz? Cause I'm not depending on white clients to carry me through. What happens at Sun Porch has no effect on your money.</p>	<p>IMANI In my mind the group became part of the problem. And I feel like I dragged Qiana and Kaya into my interpretation.</p> <p>QIANA You didn't.</p> <p>LUZ Where are you going?</p> <p>IMANI You're leaving? In the middle of a process.</p> <p>IMANI And what do you think we've been doing?</p> <p>LUZ I'm in the same situation, Stacia.</p>	<p>TRISH Stacia.</p> <p>ESTHER You're not the only one working hard.</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">STACIA</p> <p>Attracting black women to my practice is not a challenge for me. I've been weighing the costs and weighing the benefits. And I like y'all. I do. But a lot of the stuff you dealing with, I've worked out for myself. And I need to move forward and not get pulled back.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN</p> <p>Stacia. Take a moment. Deal with where you're at. Just you. Speak from that.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA</p> <p>I'm honoring the group and myself with honesty. I could sit here and nod and smile and then ghost you when we're back in the city. And that wouldn't be right. I guess there is no good way to do this. But I'm trying to be as upfront as I can be.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(beat. to Brynn)</p> <p>I'll bring the car up, so we can get our stuff and go.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN</p> <p>Uh. Stacia.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA</p> <p>Right. I'm taking Brynn home. She's professional, so she's not gonna just walk out of here. Please tell her she's done, so we can go.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">LUZ</p> <p>Wow.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>Oh my god. Are you for real, right now?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>Is that what you think you're doing?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>Very noble, Stacia.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>It's not Luz, it's the studio.</p>
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<p>BRYNN I'll get my things.</p> <p>STACIA Sure. Pack up.</p> <p><i>Brynn enters the cabin. Stacia heads down the hill.</i></p>	<p>LUZ Brynn, you're done.</p> <p><i>Trish gets up.</i></p> <p>TRISH Can I ride back with you?</p> <p>LUZ Trish. No.</p> <p>TRISH I don't feel like riding the bus tomorrow.</p> <p>LUZ So you're still with Sun Porch.</p> <p>TRISH Um.</p> <p>LUZ No pressure.</p> <p>TRISH No. It's okay. I don't really know. I'd like to get back home, maybe see Jean tomorrow.</p> <p>LUZ Can I give you a call when we're back in the city?</p> <p>TRISH Sure, but texting is better for me.</p> <p>LUZ Right. I'll do that then.</p> <p><i>Trish enters the cabin. The remaining group sits stunned. Stacia drives her car up. She gets out and enters the cabin.</i></p>	<p>IMANI What is happening?</p> <p>QIANA At least you got your chance to share.</p> <p>ESTHER Let them go.</p>
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	<p>ESTHER I want smores. Anyone want smores?</p> <p><i>Esther gets up and clears out the fire pit.</i></p> <p><i>Brynn and Trish exit the cabin with their bags. They place their stuff in Stacia's car.</i></p> <p><i>Stacia exits the cabin with her things.</i></p> <p>IMANI Stacia. Stacia. (re: the space with fury) What's supposed to happen to all this?</p> <p><i>Stacia looks around.</i></p> <p>IMANI Do you think everything can fit in my car?</p> <p>STACIA If you need me to put some in my car, I'll put some in my car.</p> <p>IMANI You didn't even stop to think about that? We both brought shit up here, but I'm gonna get stuck with it all. Uh-uh.</p> <p>STACIA Can I put my things in the car, first?</p> <p>IMANI You got no problem calling us out. But when your lack of consideration is named... Oh, you got attitude now.</p>	<p>BRYNN We're happy to take our share.</p>
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<p>ESTHER Qiana, can you collect some twigs and sticks?</p> <p>QIANA Yeah.</p> <p><i>Qiana looks around, collecting twigs from the ground.</i></p> <p><i>Esther takes fuel logs from the side of the pit and arranges them in the center.</i></p> <p>ESTHER You got some damn nerve lecturing anybody about grace after what you pulled her tonight.</p>	<p><i>Salty, Stacia puts her bag in her car.</i></p> <p>IMANI And not some. Half.</p> <p><i>Brynn collects supplies in one of the supply bags.</i></p> <p><i>Stacia surveys the space.</i></p> <p>IMANI (points to easel) And one of those.</p> <p><i>Stacia removes the newsprint pad from the easel. She struggles to collapse the easel.</i></p> <p>STACIA Qiana. You know how to do this?</p> <p><i>Qiana puts the sticks and twigs on the side of the fire pit. She goes to the easel. Stacia stands by. Qiana looks at her.</i></p> <p>QIANA This is gonna take a minute, so if you have anything else to do.</p> <p>STACIA I hope we can do this with some grace.</p> <p>LUZ Grace? Grace. You took my kindness and spit it back in my face.</p> <p>STACIA I didn't do any such thing, Luz.</p>	<p>BRYNN We'll take half.</p> <p>TRISH (re: the pillows) Should I take some of these or the blankets?</p> <p>LUZ Both would be good.</p> <p><i>Luz pulls up a couple of blankets and hands them to Trish. Trish folds them.</i></p> <p><i>Trish collects half the pillows.</i></p> <p>IMANI (sucks teeth) Okay. I see you. You just fake as hell.</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">QIANA (Raises voice) We. Are. Not. Doing. This.</p> <p><i>Qiana collapses the easel and lies it down on the ground.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">LUZ You are really something. Stacia.</p> <p><i>Silence.</i></p> <p><i>Stacia grabs the easel and puts it in her car.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA (Re: Box of supplies) This ready?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN Yup.</p> <p><i>Brynn and Stacia carry one of the supply boxes to the car.</i></p> <p><i>Trish follows with folded blankets and a bag of pillows.</i></p> <p><i>Brynn approaches the food stash. Esther intercepts.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER We got this. We'll take it.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN I was hoping for some water.</p> <p><i>Esther hesitates, then steps aside.</i></p> <p><i>Brynn opens the cooler.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN Stacia? Trish? Do you want a bottle of water?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA Yes.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN This is devolving.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI What did you expect?</p>
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	<p style="text-align: center;">TRISH</p> <p>Me too.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">STACIA</p> <p>Are there chips left?</p> <p><i>Brynn looks at Esther, who glares at her.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN</p> <p>I'll look.</p> <p><i>Stacia sits in the car. Brynn digs into the food stash and takes three bags of chips.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">TRISH</p> <p>See y'all later.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">LUZ</p> <p>Bye Trish.</p> <p><i>Trish sits in car. Arms full, Brynn makes her way to the car.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">BRYNN</p> <p>I just want to say-</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>Parting words of wisdom? Keep them.</p> <p><i>Beat. Stacia starts the ignition. Brynn gets in the car and the car pulls away.</i></p> <p><i>Half the space Sun Porch created is gone.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>There aren't a lot of small twigs, can I use this?</p> <p><i>Esther feels the newsprint with the agenda written on it.</i></p>	<p><i>Esther and Qiana wave weakly.</i></p>
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	<p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>Yeah.</p> <p><i>Esther tears the agenda into shreds with Qiana's help.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>The smaller the strips, the better.</p> <p><i>Esther places the shredded paper between the fuel logs in the fire pit.</i></p> <p><i>Esther searches the supply bag.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">ESTHER</p> <p>They took the matches. Imani, please say you still have that lighter.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>Lemme look.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>And the wine.</p> <p><i>Imani enters the cabin. Luz takes bottled water from the cooler and drinks.</i></p> <p><i>Esther picks up three remaining blankets. She places one on Qiana's shoulders, another on Luz's.</i></p> <p><i>Esther and Luz hold one another for a moment.</i></p> <p><i>Imani exits the cabin, lighter in one hand. Bottle of wine in the other. Esther jumps for joys. She puts the remaining blanket</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">LUZ</p> <p>I don't understand why Stacia came for me like that.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IMANI</p> <p>You need a hug?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">LUZ</p> <p>I think so.</p> <p><i>Imani and Luz hug.</i></p>
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	<p><i>around Imani's shoulders and takes the lighter.</i></p> <p>ESTHER Parting words of wisdom. Keep them!</p> <p><i>Esther and Qiana burst into laughter.</i></p> <p>IMANI Look.</p> <p>LUZ Imani wasn't having it.</p> <p>IMANI I heard about enough from Miss Brynn.</p> <p><i>Esther lights the tinder. She blows lightly as the fire takes.</i></p> <p><i>Qiana, Luz and Imani sit around the fire pit. They watch the fire. Esther sits back.</i></p> <p>LUZ What now?</p> <p>ESTHER Get the marshmallows, chocolate and crackers.</p> <p>LUZ Not what I meant.</p> <p>ESTHER But that's the answer.</p> <p>IMANI I'll get 'em.</p> <p><i>Imani grabs marshmallows, chocolate and crackers from the food stash. She sits.</i></p>	<p>QIANA Keep them!</p>
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	<p style="text-align: center;">QIANA</p> <p>At one of my first jobs, actually, my second real adult job after college, there were only two of us in the office. And she hated me. I thought she did. I don't really know for sure. Anyway, I didn't like her either. Which was the worst cause I was so excited when they hired her. Finally, I'm not the only black woman in the place. And then we actually met and stayed away from each other. Or I avoided her. I don't know. It was someone's birthday. Not hers or mine. Everyone gets together with a little cake. Sings Happy Birthday. And she does it. She sings our song. Yup. And everyone is looking at her funny. Real side-eye. And she kept singing but she tensed up. And then she looked at me, eyes all big, pleading me to join her. It would have diffused the moment. If I had just opened my mouth and started to sing. If I liked her I would have, but I didn't. So I gave her a confused look, like I had no idea what she was singing. Mind you, my family been singing that since as far as I can remember. And they fired her not long after that. Bad fit, they said. I never thought about what it meant to be the good one.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">IMANI (sings Stevie Wonder MLK version) Happy birthday to 'ya.</p>
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	<p>I don't know whatever happened to her. In another space, we could have connected. Maybe? I'm not saying we'd be best friends. But a mood, a flow, a porch? A place where she and I could...</p> <p><i>Qiana searches for the word. Esther, Imani and Luz anticipate the rest. Nothing comes. They relax.</i></p> <p>END OF PLAY</p>	
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