

*Decolonizing Workspaces*

---

# Cultivating Safe Spaces

---

Jen Greenway  
Tahltan-Kaska Writer & Speaker  
Cultivating Safe Spaces Facilitator

---

# Who Am I, and Who Do I Belong To?

---

My name is Jen Greenway. I'm a Tahltan-Kaska Two-Spirit person and Medicine holder. I'm a member of the Talakoteena House of the Tahltan Nation. My lineage on my father's side traces back to the last Great Chief Nonok of Tahltan Country. I also follow the footsteps of my late Grandmother Violet Nehass Greenway, who played a huge part in Yukon First Nation advocacy and Indigenous Rights.

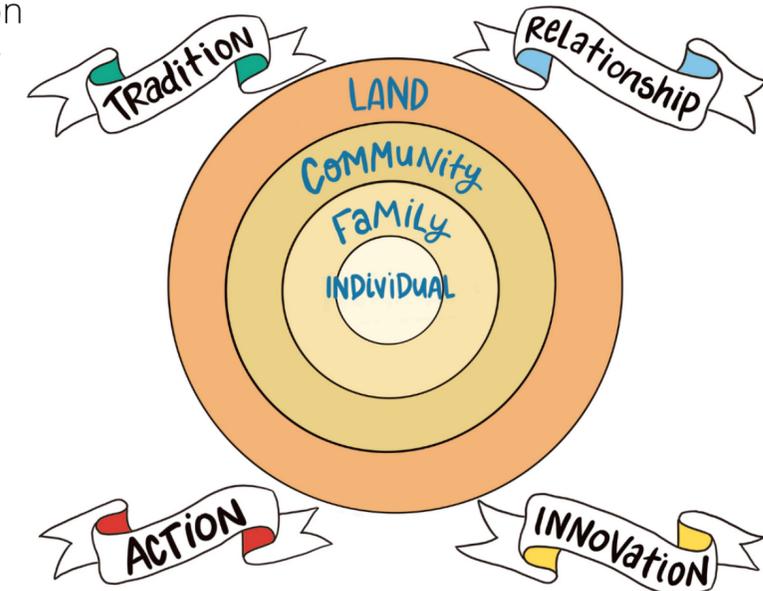


# Understanding the Four Perspectives

- The Four Perspectives (Traditional, Innovation, Relationship and Action)
- Communication Styles
- Problem Solving Techniques
- What Each Perspective Needs to Feel Safe
- How to Use This Knowledge as a Mediation Tool

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2MSeBZZ8NKI>

- Storytellers
- Knowledge Keepers
- Language Speakers
- Likes to share knowledge with next generation
- Corporate memory



- Wants to include everyone
- Don't leave anyone behind
- We will take the time we need to
- Like to hear everyone's thoughts

- We've been talking about this for too long we need to see action
- Get to the point
- How will we implement

- Thinks outside the box
- Looks at systems to improve or change
- Visionaries
- Asks a lot of questions, needs a lot of information
- Needs time to think

## *The Four Perspectives*

---

# Traditional Perspectives

---

Tradition. Preservation. Storytelling.  
Culture. History

## Who Are Tradition People?

- Knowledge Keepers and storytellers
- Corporate knowledge holders (often the most long standing employees)
- Their focus is on preserving Knowledge and Traditions, and ensuring that everyone and everything is remembered

## Communication Style

- There's a story for everything
- They take as much time as needed

## Problem Solving Techniques

- Lessons and solutions come from history and Traditional Knowledge
- Storytelling as a chance to teach, think, connect the dots, etc.
  - Knowledge needs context

## What They Need to Feel Safe

- TIME
- Telling a Tradition person that you don't have time for their stories is a BIG misstep
- Validation of their Knowledge Keeping and the preservation of history and culture that they take part in

## *The Four Perspectives*

---

# Innovation Perspectives

---

Innovation. Creativity. Systems  
Thinkers. Problem-solving. Growth.

## Who Are Innovation People?

- Creative system thinkers
- Innovative problem-solvers
- They have big visions for what the future can hold and an eagerness to help promote growth towards that vision.

## Communication Style

- Full of questions (they need clarification and direction)
- Need time to produce information

## Problem Solving Techniques

- Systems thinking.
- Brainstorming and expanding on ideas
- LOTS of questions and check-ins to make sure they have all the information

## What They Need to Feel Safe

- Lots of time. Don't rush them or they shut down and produce nothing.
- Access to check-ins and clarification
- Don't stunt their imagination or limit their working styles

## The Four Perspectives

# Relationship Perspectives

Relationship Building. Interconnected.  
Deep Bonds. Inclusion.

## Who Are Relationship People?

- View the world through interconnectedness - they love to check-in with people
- No one left behind!
- The people in their life are how they see themselves.
- Maintain the Spirit and Intent of “good work”

## Communication Style

- If you ask a Relationship person who they are, they’ll tell you who their family is
- Inclusive – They want everyone to have a chance to talk

## Problem Solving Techniques

- Consensus
- Everyone is heard, and no voices are lost or silenced
- Problem-solving can take a long time to ensure the Spirit and Intent of the work is good.

## What They Need to Feel Safe

- Time to catch up and check-in with everyone
- Everyone needs a chance to speak and weigh in
- Atmosphere nurturing and preservation of the Spirit of the work they do

## The Four Perspectives

---

# Action Perspectives

---

Taking Action. Concise. Efficient.  
Direct. Ready to work.

## Who Are Action People?

- Efficient, fast-working people who don't like to waste time
- Primed for work and eager to start
- You'll *know* if you're an Action Perspective

## Communication Style

- Usually direct, often blunt (can be considered rude)
- Concise – They only use what they deem relevant to the work
  - Nothing frivolous is included
  - “Need to Know” Basis

## Problem Solving Techniques

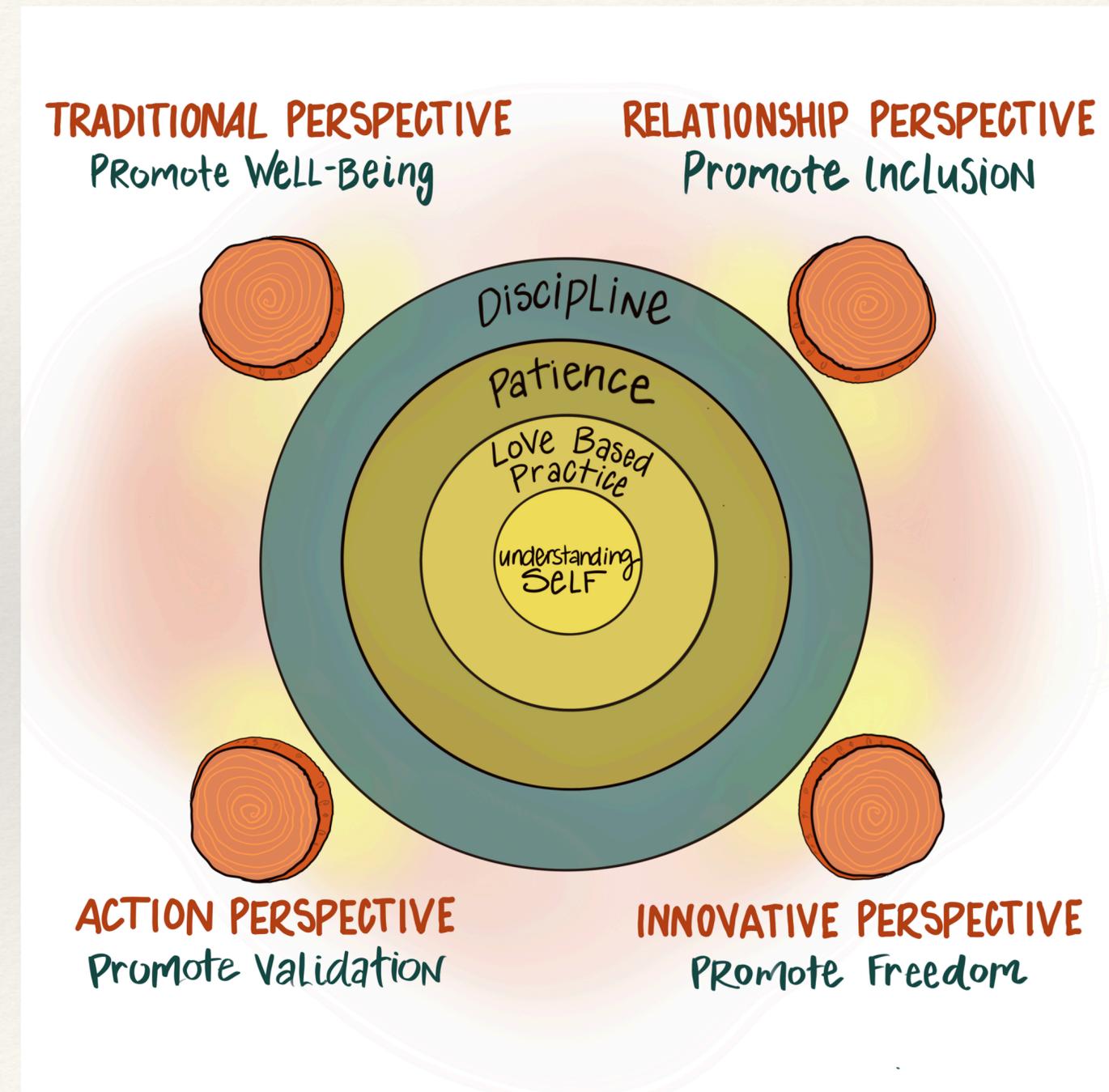
- They don't waste any time
  - The most direct and efficient route is preferred
- Eager to find solutions and work fast – They speed run problem-solving
  - Others may even feel bulldozed or left out because they can't keep up

## What They Need to Feel Safe

- They don't like showing up to the meeting with the group work unfinished
- They thrive on timeframes and knowing exactly what's expected

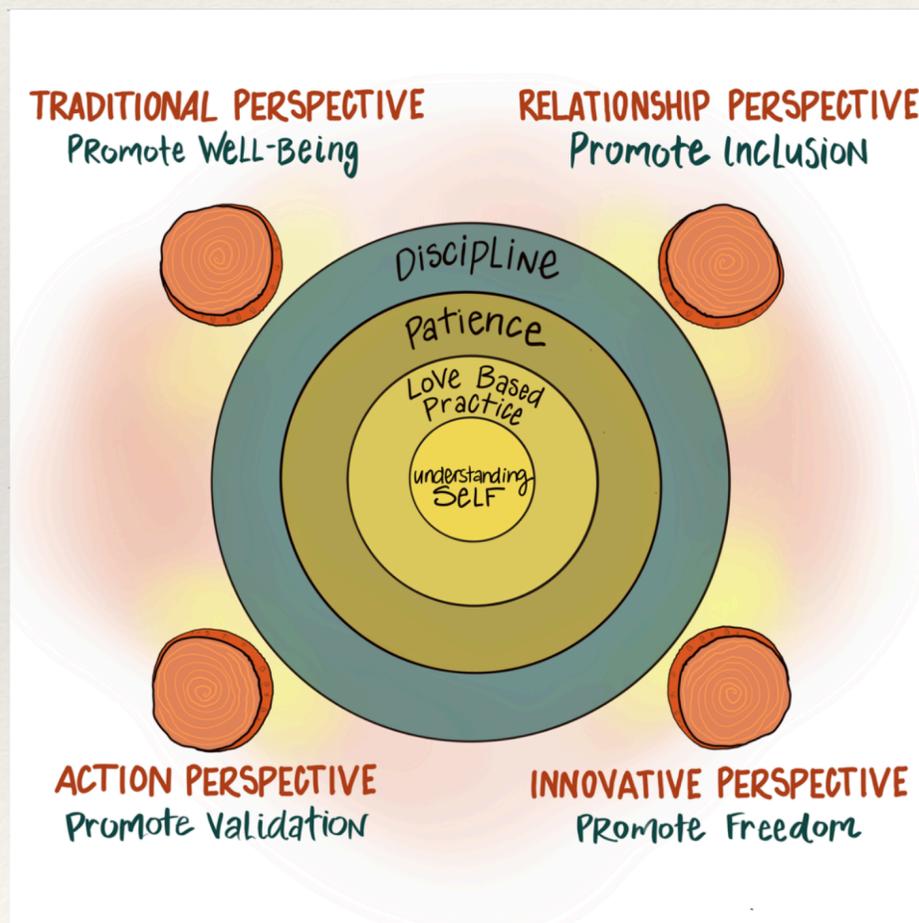
# 4 Conditions for Cultivating Safe Space

- ❖ UnderStanding Self
- ❖ Love-Based Practice (the Four Protocols)
- ❖ Patience
- ❖ Discipline



# The Four Conditions

of Cultivating Safe Spaces



## Understanding Self

- Foundational to everything else
- Requires deep introspection to understand why you see the world the way you do
- Everything that bothers you about others, is something that you fear in yourself
- How you understand yourself impacts how you understand your cognitive biases

## Love- Based Practices

- The Four Protocols (up next) vs. Fear-based practices used by the Colonial State
- Entering every scenario with love and understanding, instead of with the desire or need to control everything
- Giving up CONTROL to create safe spaces ruled by love and acceptance

## Patience

- Having patience with the other Perspectives and Worldviews
- Validating different communication styles, working styles, and what people need to feel safe
- \*\* also involves patience with yourself!
- There is no universal understanding or Way of Being

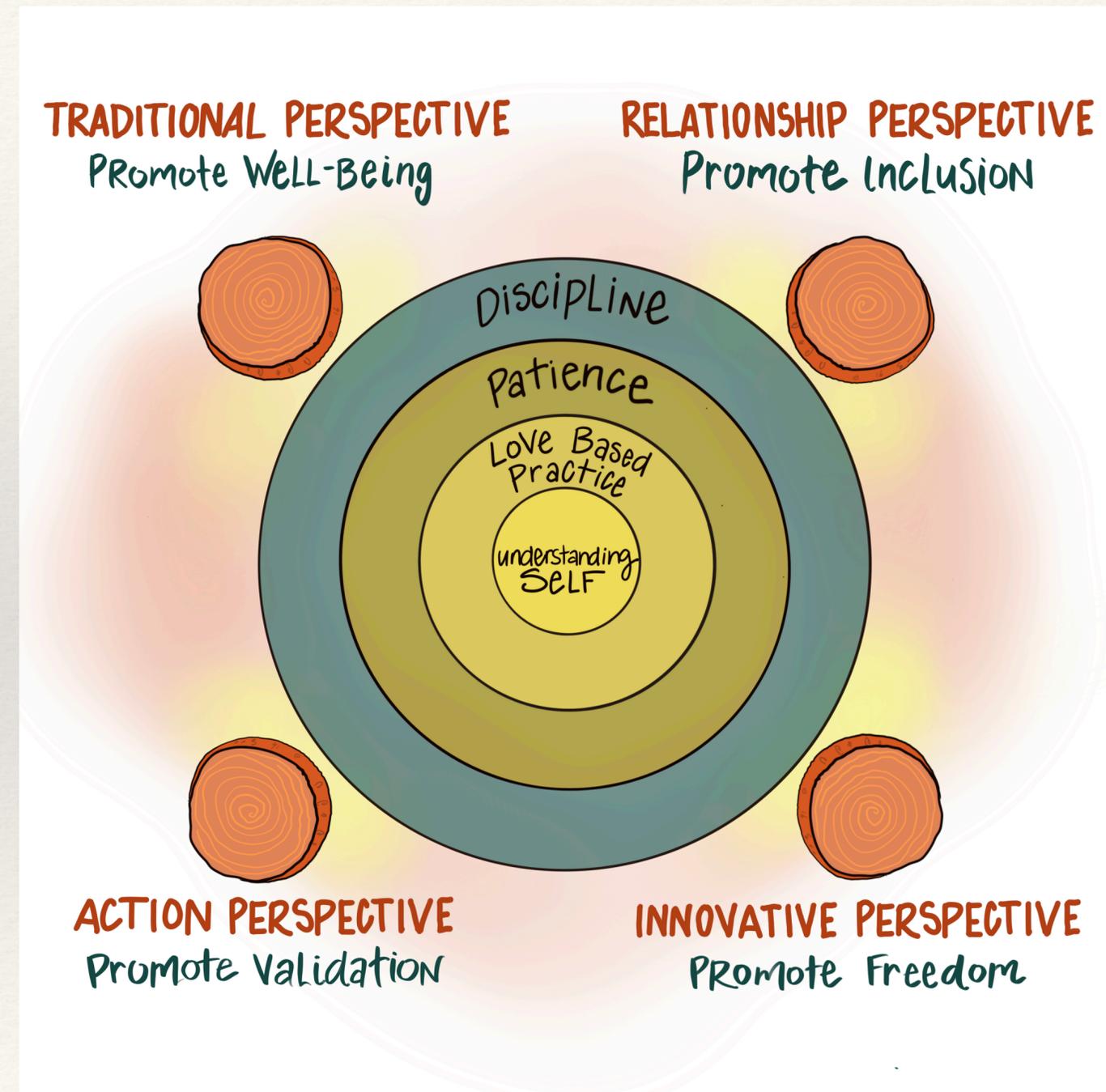
## Discipline

- Listening/Acting with Discipline \*\* extra important for Action Perspectives to focus on this one
- Hearing people with the intent to hold space, instead of hearing to respond (don't finish someone's sentence to speed up the interaction).
- Honouring what the people in a space need + you're not always the right person for a job
- Giving Space for Knowledge CO-CREATION instead of a 1-way flow

# 4 Protocols for Cultivating Safe Space

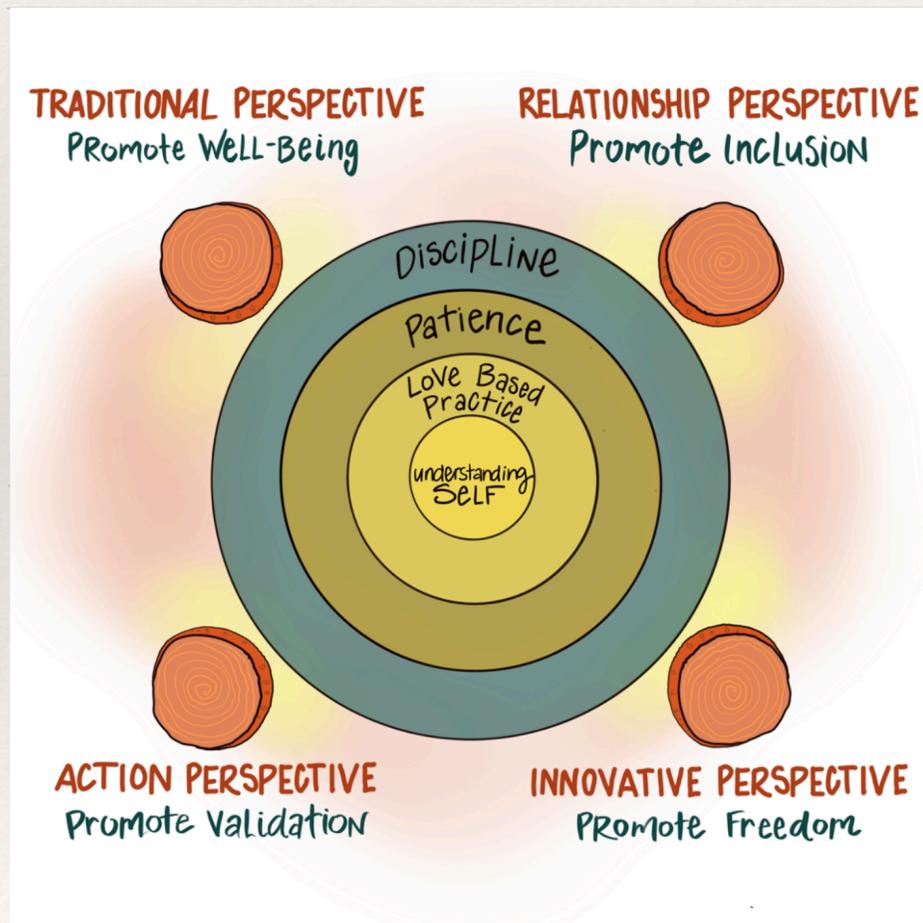
Promote:

- ❖ Well-being
- ❖ Inclusion
- ❖ Validation
- ❖ Freedom



# The Four Protocols

*of Cultivating Safe Spaces*



## Promote Well-Being Instead of Sickness and Death

- Giving everyone permission to exist in their bodies without judgement or discrimination
- Allowing everyone to take care of themselves physically, mentally, emotionally and Spiritually
- Making space for vicarious trauma

## Promote Inclusion Instead of Exclusion

- People who don't face specific intersections of discrimination don't naturally see discrimination, but still think they're inclusive.
- Colonial systems are built upon the disenfranchisement of anyone who isn't a White Cis-Het Able-Bodied Man —stop measuring people by this standard
- Build teams of different Perspectives, races, ages, genders, sexualities, etc..
- Not about getting along with everyone

## Promote Validation Instead of Shame

- "I made a mistake" instead of "I am a mistake." "I did something bad" instead of "I am bad."
- Validate all Perspectives (the way people work and their role in the group)
- Validate vulnerability and showing up as your authentic self
- Understand and dismantle how Western Academia heralds itself as the ultimate source of Knowledge
  - picking and choosing who you validate is STILL a hierarchy. It's actively working against all the other Protocols

## Promote Freedom Instead of Oppression

- Understand forms of oppression causing fight or flight (limits creativity and innovation)
  - Condemn and dismantle institutions that promote micro aggressions, the colonizer eye, the male gaze, etc.
- Build spaces that allow movement and self-care, and recognize that disabilities can be invisible
- People aren't robots

*Cultivating Safe Spaces*

# Lateral Violence and Vicarious Trauma

## Lateral Violence

- What is lateral violence?
  - Lateral violence is violence rooted in the effects of oppression that has been turned outwards towards those who are perceived to be equal or of less power than the one perpetrating the violence.
  - Bullying, gossip, verbal harassment, physical abuse, sexual abuse, theft, taunting, etc.
  - Largely aimed at women and Two-Spirit individuals in Indigenous communities
- **Spaces with high lateral violence and oppressive violence have less creativity and innovation**
  - **The inverse is true as well**
  - **Being in fight-or-flight kills creativity and innovation**
- **Lateral violence also impacts everyone's ability to show up to work with their best ideas**

## Vicarious Trauma

- Trauma experienced when we learn about the traumatic experiences others have faced
  - That includes reading books about residential schools or topics like True Crime
  - Symptoms include hypervigilance, feelings of hopelessness, feeling numb or seeking numbing behaviours, inability to listen or pay attention, insomnia, fear, and so much more...
  - Take care of yourself when you do work with traumatized individuals or if you're educating yourself on our real shared history between "Canada" and Indigenous Peoples

*Cultivating Safe Spaces*

# Spiritual Self-Care

## 1. Use Fire

- Smudge (if your people own the smudge or it has been gifted to you)
- Incense (used by Pagan Settlers prior to appropriating the Smudge, so it's more appropriate for Settlers)
- Camp fires or sacred fires

## 2. Establish an Exercise Routine

- Yoga or gentle exercise is best for stress
- Low intensity gym sessions

## 3. Go to the Water

- Take a bath or a shower
- Visit a lake, river or beach

## 4. Meditate or Practice Breath Work

- Have a conversation with Air while you breath— ask for courage, ask for healing
- Visualize Air pulling pain out of your body and bringing healing in

## 5. Ground Yourself

- Visiting the Land to reconnect
- 3 Senses Grounding Technique: 5 things I see, 5 things I hear, 5 things I feel (around me)

**For More Spiritual Self-Care, Listen to the Go Smudge Yourself Podcast Episodes:**

- 10 Ways to Care For Your Spirit When You're Stressed or Disconnected
- Cultivating a Safe Space for Your Spirit

---

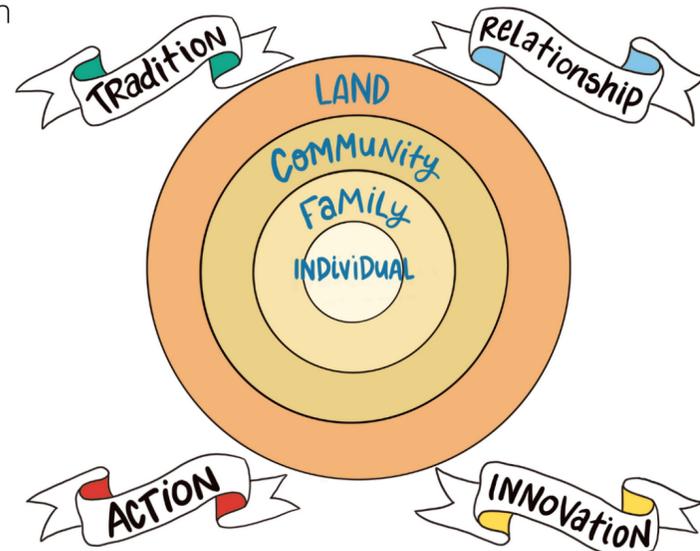
# Final Tool - Who Am I? What's on My Heart?

---

- Hosted in a Circle — rearrange the chairs if needed
  - Rooted in Egalitarian Worldviews - Syilx Traditional Knowledge
  - Every voice is as important as the ones before and after them
- Everyone enters the Circle with the right to say exactly what's on their heart
  - Others are to listen with discipline, and to accept what's being said without judgement
- Can be used as a SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)
- The main objective is to increase vulnerability and safety in the space
  - Drives innovation and creativity through vulnerability and safety

# 30 Minute Student Discussion Panel

- Storytellers
- Knowledge Keepers
- Language Speakers
- Likes to share knowledge with next generation
- Corporate memory



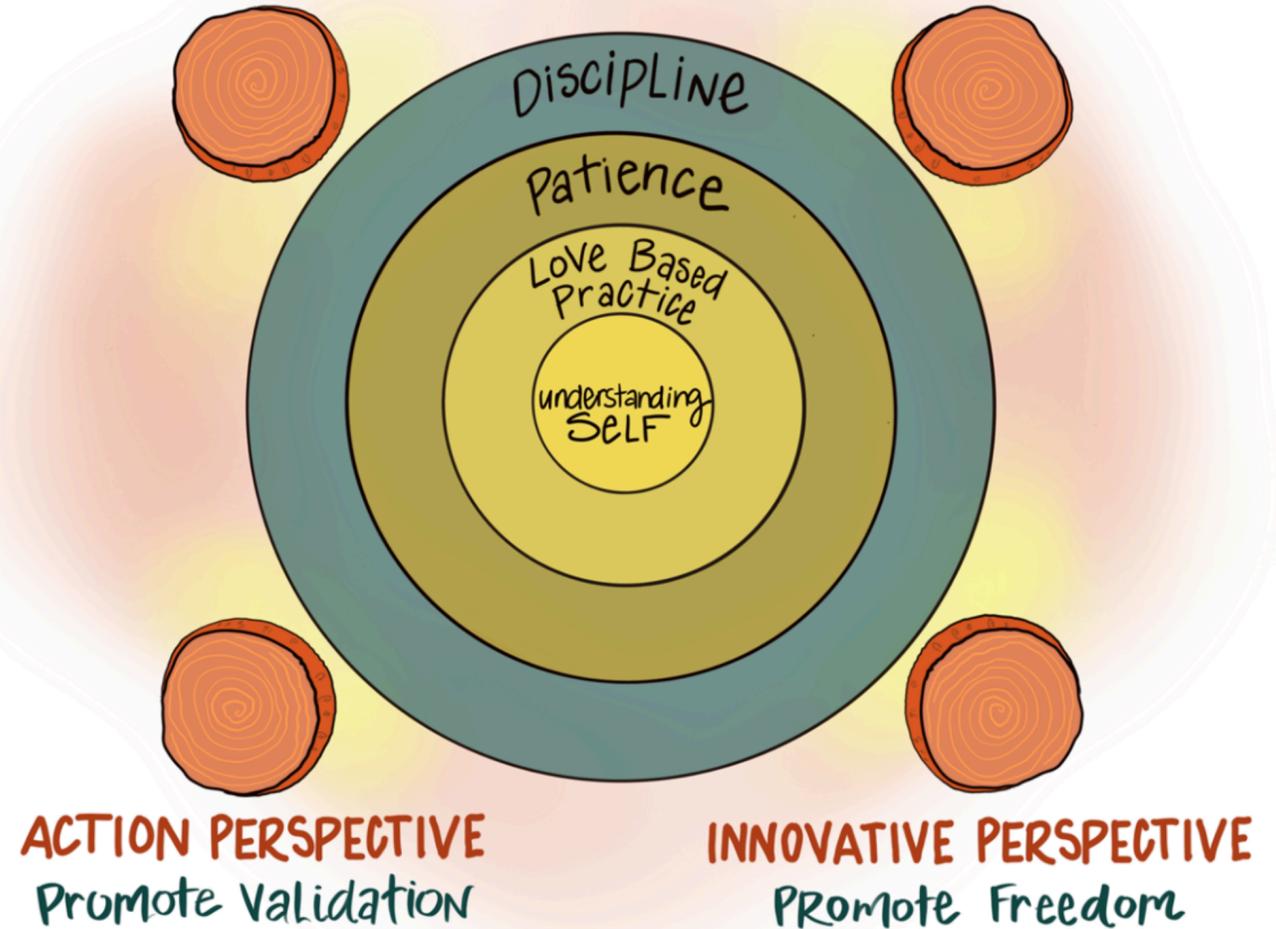
- Wants to include everyone
- Don't leave anyone behind
- We will take the time we need to
- Like to hear everyone's thoughts

- We've been talking about this for too long we need to see action
- Get to the point
- How will we implement

- Thinks outside the box
- Looks at systems to improve or change
- Visionaries
- Asks a lot of questions, needs a lot of information
- Needs time to think

**TRADITIONAL PERSPECTIVE**  
Promote Well-Being

**RELATIONSHIP PERSPECTIVE**  
Promote Inclusion



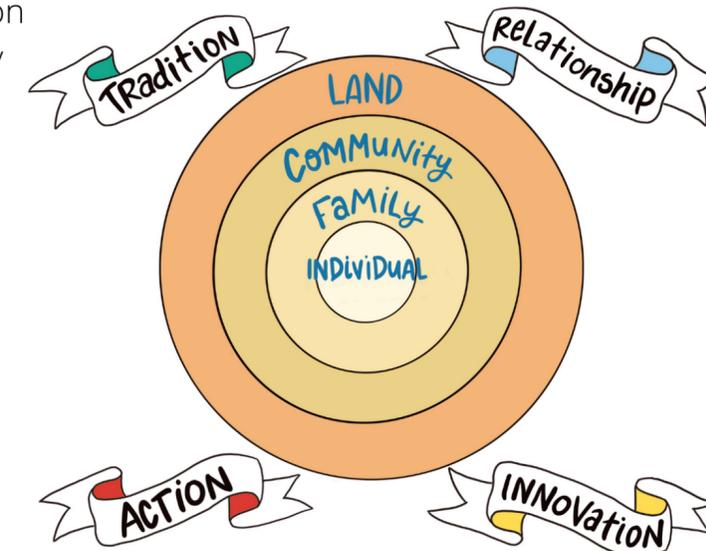
**ACTION PERSPECTIVE**  
Promote Validation

**INNOVATIVE PERSPECTIVE**  
Promote Freedom

# 15 Min Breakout Groups

- 15 Minute Breakout Session (organized by 4 Perspectives) to practice CSS Protocols
- With decolonizing education and learning spaces in mind:
  - In what ways can we promote Inclusion?
  - In what ways can we promote validation?
  - In what ways can we promote well-being?
  - In what ways can we promote freedom?

- Storytellers
- Knowledge Keepers
- Language Speakers
- Likes to share knowledge with next generation
- Corporate memory



- Wants to include everyone
- Don't leave anyone behind
- We will take the time we need to
- Like to hear everyone's thoughts

- We've been talking about this for too long we need to see action
- Get to the point
- How will we implement

- Thinks outside the box
- Looks at systems to improve or change
- Visionaries
- Asks a lot of questions, needs a lot of information
- Needs time to think

# Closing Circle

---

Mahsi. Meduh. Thank You.

---

Jen Greenway  
Tahltan- Kaska Writer & Speaker  
Cultivating Safe Spaces Facilitator

[jengreenway.com](http://jengreenway.com)  
Go Smudge Yourself Podcast & Blog

Contact:  
[jengreen.business@gmail.com](mailto:jengreen.business@gmail.com)

