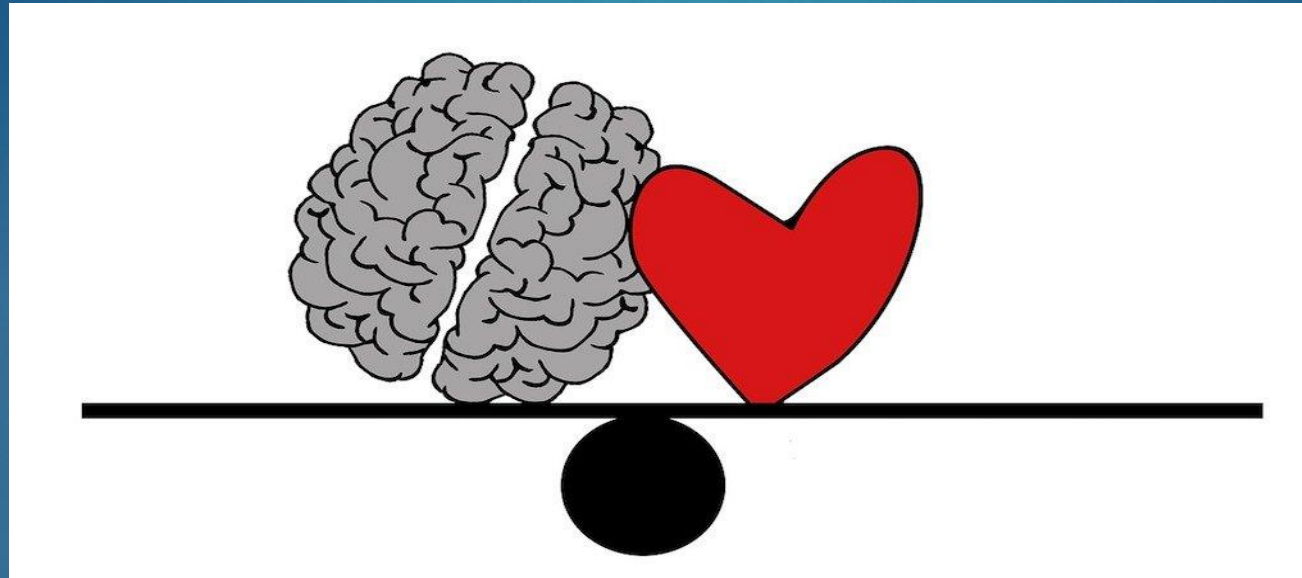


# It's An Inside Job: Conversations about DEI at the Intersection of our Heads and Hearts



PROFESSOR NATASHA L. ROBINSON  
LEGALEAZE PLEASE!

# The Logo and Ethic of Legaleaze Please!



The official logo is an Adinkra symbol. It is named “Nea Onnim”, (pronounced Nee-ya O-nim). Its translation is “He Who Does Not Know”. It is a symbol demonstrating the commitment to lifelong learning in all forms.

This is the ethic that we embody through Legaleaze Please! We commit to lifelong learning of legal language for the purpose of empowerment and liberation.

Language can be liberating and our goal is to liberate ourselves and others through relevant and accessible legal education and comprehension of the law.

This is our calling. This is our charge.

# Introductions

*“I am...and I show up in the world as...”*

The background of the quote features stylized, overlapping leaf shapes in various shades of brown and tan. The text is centered and written in a clean, black, sans-serif font.

REMEMBER, YOU ARE IN CONTROL OF  
HOW YOU SHOW UP IN THE WORLD. I  
HOPE YOU CHOOSE TO BE BIG AND  
NOT SHRINK FOR THE COMFORT OF  
OTHERS. GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION  
TO TAKE UP SPACE, AND BLOOM WIDLY  
WITHOUT REGRET.  
– ALEX ELLE –

# Community Covenants



What additional community covenants would you like to create in this space?

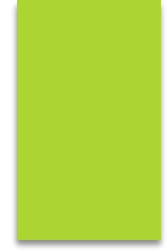
(Type into the chat.)

Mine: the stories stay, the lessons leave. (Confidentiality)

# Learning Processes and Outcomes

By the conclusion of today's session, we can increase our ability, capability, and willingness to:

- ▶ Assess our current (teaching) mindset and heartset;
- ▶ *Assemble* the ingredients we need to create and curate our mindset and heartset; and
- ▶ *Align* our heartset and mindset by understanding that our success and our students' success are intertwined



# Today's Focus

**Advancing Institutionalized Equity:** Develop tools and strategies that identify and address equity gaps that directly or indirectly impact labor market access and outcomes for underrepresented and marginalized populations.

**Aligning Policy & Practices:** Align, apply and connect with business policies and initiatives to better student/job seeker/incumbent worker and employer conditions that support improved longer-term outcomes.

# Part One: Assess





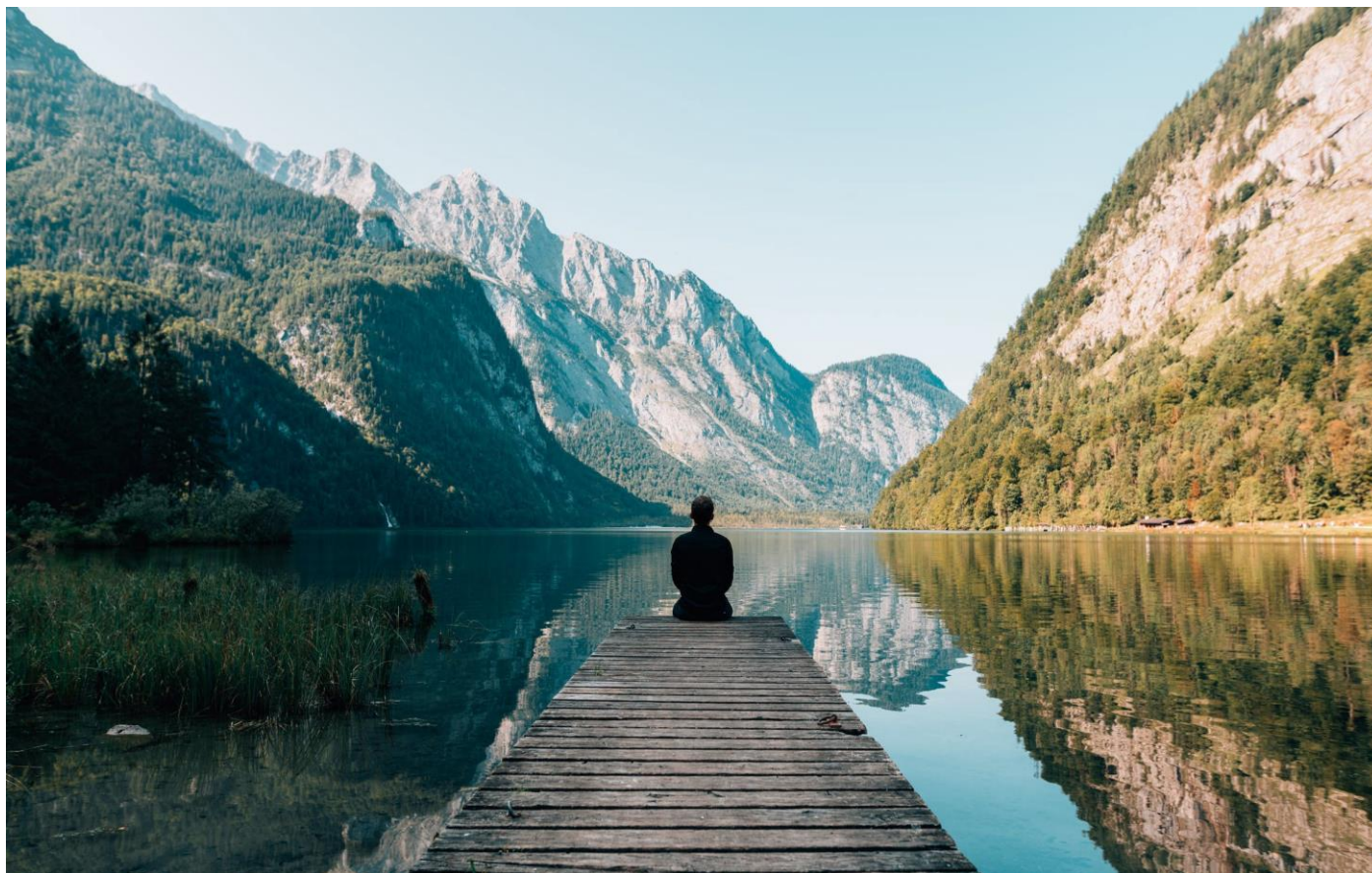
# Free Write

- ▶ While listening to the song, please answer any ONE or TWO of the following questions. You may use written words and images / doodles / drawings / GIFs / memes / lyrics / etc. to express your responses. Your responses, unless you choose to share, are for your eyes only.

- ▶ **Why are you here?**
- ▶ **What led you here?**
- ▶ **Why do you continue to be here?**
- ▶ **How do you feel when you are here?**

You have five (5) minutes to complete this exercise.

# Reflection



# Intersectionality

## HISTORY



### Kimberlé Crenshaw

Renowned law professor and civil rights advocate. Credited with coining the term “intersectionality” to explain complex structures of inequality and racism as they relate to multiple factors such as race, gender, class, and more.

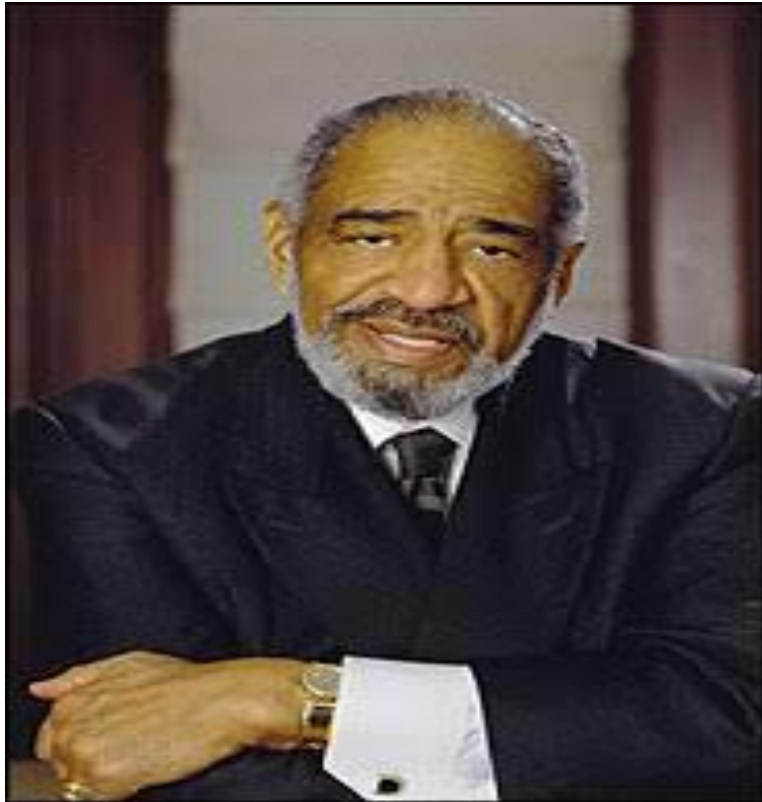
**“Intersectionality is just a metaphor for understanding the ways that multiple forms of inequality or disadvantage sometimes compound themselves... they create obstacles that often are not understood within conventional ways of thinking about anti-racism or feminism or whatever social justice advocacy structures we have.” – Kimberlé Crenshaw**

# Who are our communities? How do they show up in the world?




# A pivot...

Dr. William Augustus Jones



**“Dr. Jones, in his book, *God in the Ghetto*, argues quite accurately that one’s theology, how I see God, determines one’s anthropology, how I see humans, and one’s anthropology then determines one’s sociology, how I order my society...” .**

*“The Book of Jeremiah: the Life and Ministry of Rev. Dr. Jeremiah A. Wright, Jr.”* by Dr. Susan Williams Smith



For the purposes of this discussion, I expand the definition of “God” as representing a school of thought, pedagogy, collection of ideals, policies, beliefs, canons, dogmas, scholarship, i.e., anything or anyone a person is allegiant to, reveres, or endears.

## A pivot in perspective:

**What and whom do I revere?**



**How does my reverence become the lens by which I view other people?**



**How do I rank what and whom I see?**

# An inventory of our heart and mind

- ▶ To what and to whom are we allegiant? In our pedagogy? In our policies? In our syllabi? Resources? Curriculum?
- ▶ In the context of equity and inclusion, what hierarchies exist in our feeling and our thinking? Do those hierarchies materialize in our institutions?
- ▶ How does our heartset and mindset show up
  - In our pedagogy?
  - In our language?
  - Our teaching styles?
  - Our classrooms (virtual, face-to-face, remote)?
  - In how we interact with students?
  - Our content, policies, and our procedures?
  - Our acknowledgment of real world events?



## ALIGNING POLICIES & PRACTICES

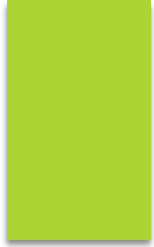
Does your program align, apply, and connect with business policies and initiatives such as greater transparency in recruitment and hiring or creating policies and practices informed by worker voice to better student/jobseeker/incumbent worker and employer conditions that support and improve longer-term outcomes?

<p><b>ACE-UP</b></p> <p>Programs that rate as a “3” will have the following qualities in place:</p>	<p><b>RATING (check one)</b></p> <p>1 =We do not have this at all                  2 =We have some of this sometimes                  3 =We have this in place now</p>	<p>We are interested in learning more about strategies in this area:</p>	<p>We have Promising Practices to share in the following areas:</p>
<p>We have identified best or promising practices to help our employer partners recruit and retain a skilled, diverse workforce.</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Describe rating briefly:</i></p>	<p><i>Briefly describe:</i></p>	<p><i>Briefly describe:</i></p>
<p>We have identified best or promising employer initiatives which, when implemented, lead to improved, long-term outcomes for current and future workers.</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Describe rating briefly:</i></p>	<p><i>Briefly describe:</i></p>	<p><i>Briefly describe:</i></p>
<p>We have worked with employer partners to recommend best practice and policy examples which if applied could lead to improved longer-term outcomes for current and future workers.</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Describe rating briefly:</i></p>	<p><i>Briefly describe:</i></p>	<p><i>Briefly describe:</i></p>

## ADVANCING INSTITUTIONALIZED EQUITY

**Does your program develop tools and strategies that identify and address equity gaps that directly or indirectly impact labor market access and outcomes for underrepresented and marginalized populations?**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ACE-UP</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Programs that rate as a “3” will have the following qualities in place:</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>RATING (check one)</b></p> <p>1=We do not have this at all 2=We have some of this sometimes 3=We have this in place now</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>We are interested in learning more about strategies in the following success factor areas:</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>We have Promising Practices to share in the following areas:</b></p>
<p>We have identified institutional or programmatic gaps in training or support services and have leveraged resources to fill those gaps, either within our organizations or through our external partnerships.</p>	<p><b>1</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>2</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>3</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Describe rating briefly:</i></p>	<p><i>Briefly describe:</i></p>	<p><i>Briefly describe:</i></p>
<p>We regularly review and identify institutional policies, practices, and course designs that impact student success and perpetuate inequities in campus life/campus culture.</p>	<p><b>1</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>2</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>3</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Describe rating briefly:</i></p>	<p><i>Briefly describe:</i></p>	<p><i>Briefly describe:</i></p>



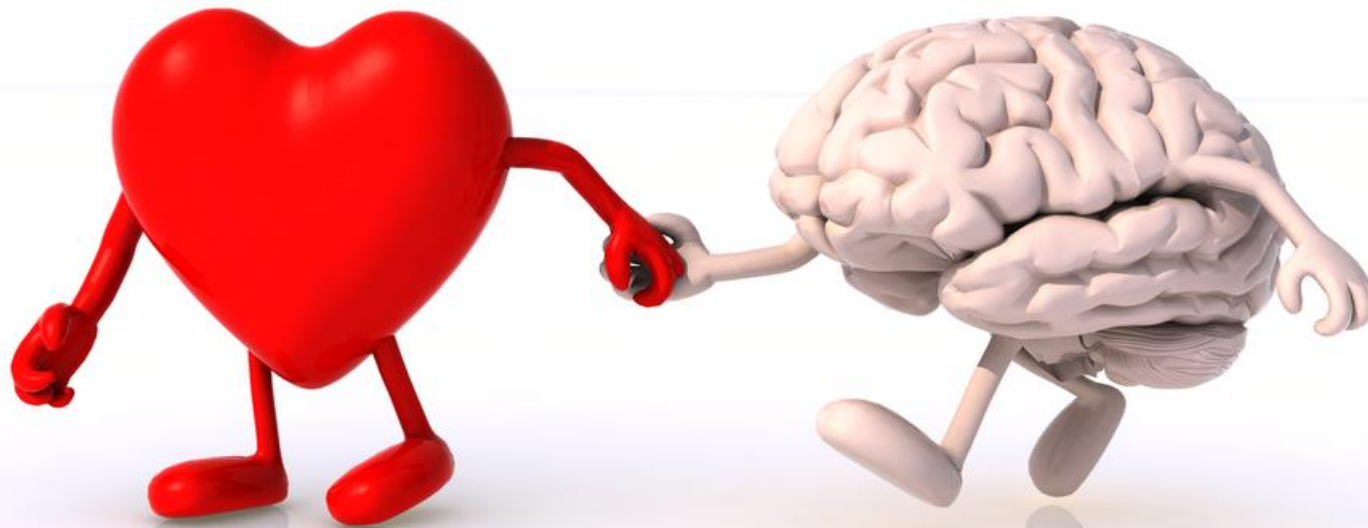
## Part Two: Assemble

- ▶ Take inventory.
  - ▶ What is present? What is missing?  
What needs to stay? What needs to go?
- ▶ What ingredients / materials / elements are needed to create and curate a heartset and mindset of equity and inclusion?

## Part Two: Assemble

- What areas represent our strengths? Why?
- What areas represent learning opportunities?
- Is there important work that we are not doing? If so, what?
- Do we have different points of view within our organization about our self-assessment scoring?
- What are our priorities moving forward?

# Part Three: Align



# bell hooks (1952 – 2021)



Author, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom* (1994)

Author, *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope* (2003)

# bell hooks

*“If we examine critically the traditional role of the university in the pursuit of truth and the sharing of knowledge and information, it is painfully clear that biases that uphold and maintain white supremacy, imperialism, sexism, and racism have distorted education so that it is no longer about the practice of freedom . The call for a recognition of cultural diversity, are thinking of ways of knowing, a deconstruction of old epistemologies, and the concomitant demand that there be a transformation in our classrooms, in how we teach and what we teach, has been a necessary revolution—one that seeks to restore life to a corrupt and dying academy.”*

**(Teaching to Transgress, p. 29-30)**



# Alignment #1: *Change your mind.*

*“Drawing strength from the life and work of Martin Luther King, Jr., I am often reminded of his profound inner struggle when he felt called by his religious beliefs to oppose the war in Vietnam. Fearful of alienating conservative bourgeois supporters, and of alienating the black church, King meditated on a passage from Romans, chapter 12, verse 2, which reminded him of the necessity of dissent, challenge and change: “Be not conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the renewal of your minds.”*

*All of us in the academy and in the culture as a whole are called to renew our minds if we are to transform educational institutions—and society—so that the way we live, teach, and work can reflect our joy in cultural diversity, our passion for justice, and our love of freedom.”*

**(Teaching to Transgress, p. 33-34)**

## Alignment #2: *Change your heart by creating community.*

*“To build community requires vigilant awareness of the work we must continually do to undermine all the socialization that leads us to behave in ways that perpetuate domination...But explanations alone do not bring us to the practice of beloved community. When we take the theory, the explanations, and apply them concretely to our daily lives, to our experiences, we further and deepen the practice of anti-racist transformation.”*

**(Teaching Community, p. 34)**

*How are you creating community within your institution?*



## Alignment #3: *Release control.*

Many folks [in academia] found that as they tried to respect “cultural diversity” they had to confront the limitations of their training and knowledge, as well as a possible loss of “authority.”

(*Teaching to Transgress*, p. 30)

## I RELEASE CONTROL

You are **an** authority,  
but not **the** authority.

# Community Conversations

To reframe bell hooks' question in *Teaching to Transgress* (p. 27),

- ▶ What values and habits of being reflect your commitment to freedom? In equity and inclusion?
- ▶ How will this look in your particular discipline and area of expertise?
- ▶ How will your heartset and mindset infuse and inform your pedagogy and practices?

# Lingering Issues

- ▶ The Imminent Ban of Affirmative Action
- ▶ The Embodiment of Equity
- ▶ Your Access Points to Assessment, Assembly, and Alignment

# Let's Stay In Touch!



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