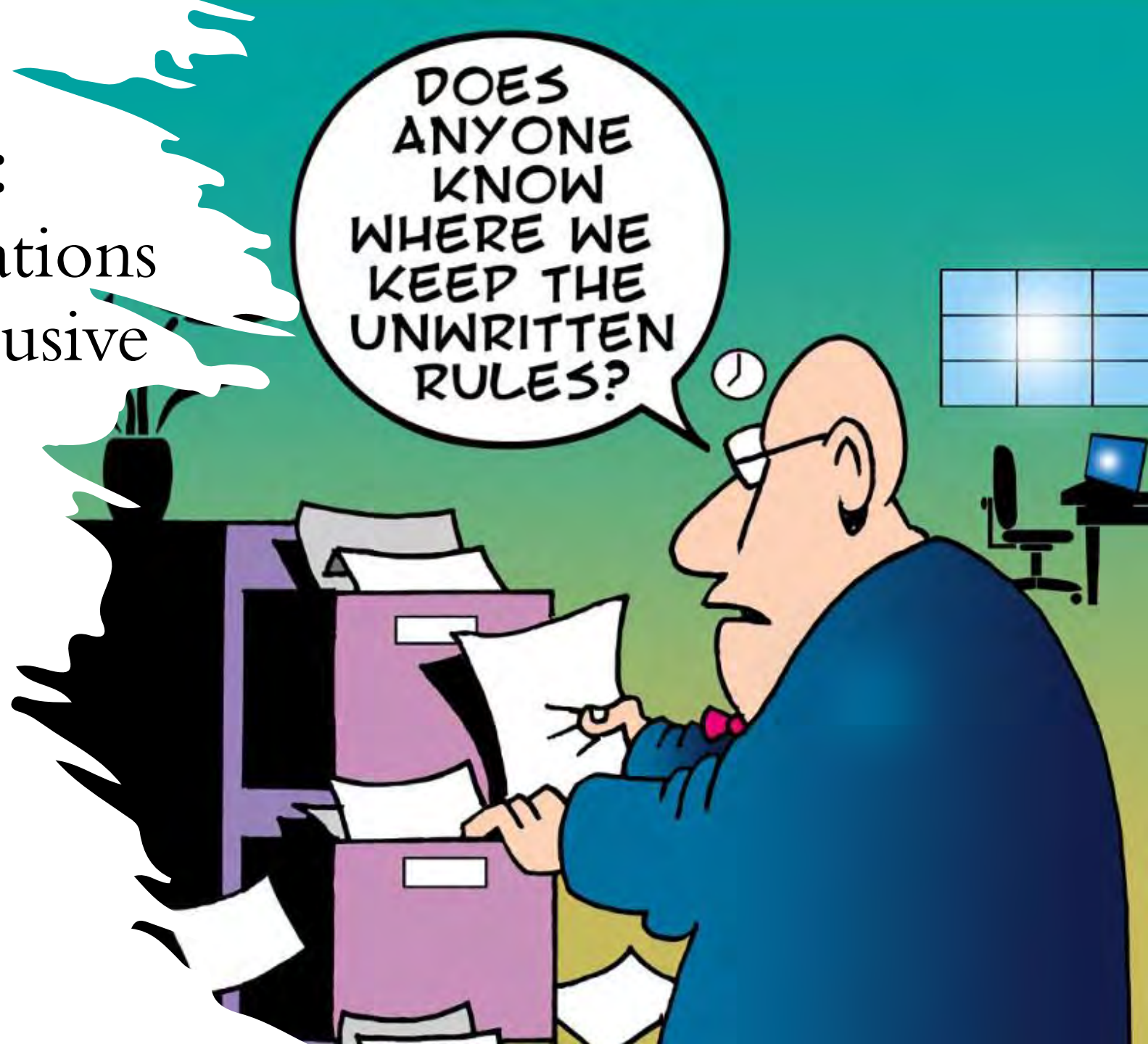


# Talking about Race: Courageous Conversations for a Diverse and Inclusive Workplace



Ilsa Marie Govan

[CulturesConnecting.com](http://CulturesConnecting.com)



# I am on Coast Salish Land



<https://native-land.ca/>  
Text Zip Code: 907-312-5085  
Landback.org



# Cultivating our Virtual Community

- Turn on video if you can
- Rename: **Right click** or “...” in upper right of your image
  - Add pronouns
- Hide self-view option
- Make chat text larger: **Command +**
- Using chat to show support or connect
- All are welcome!



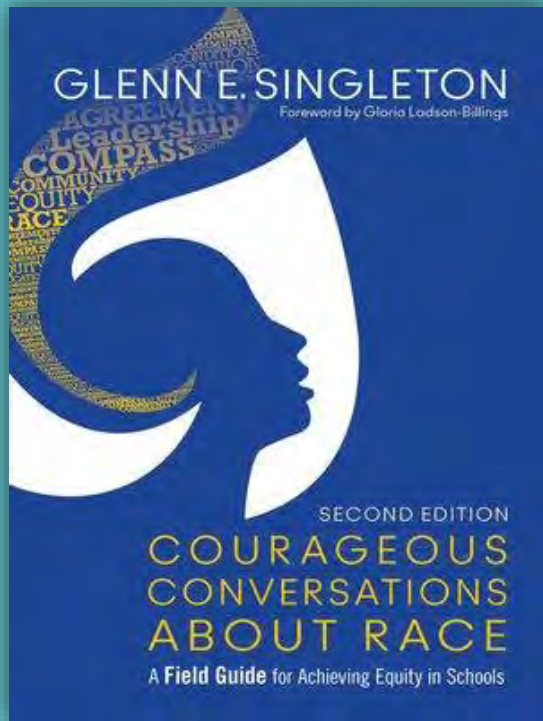
# Objectives

- Tools
- Strategies
- Practice
- Insight

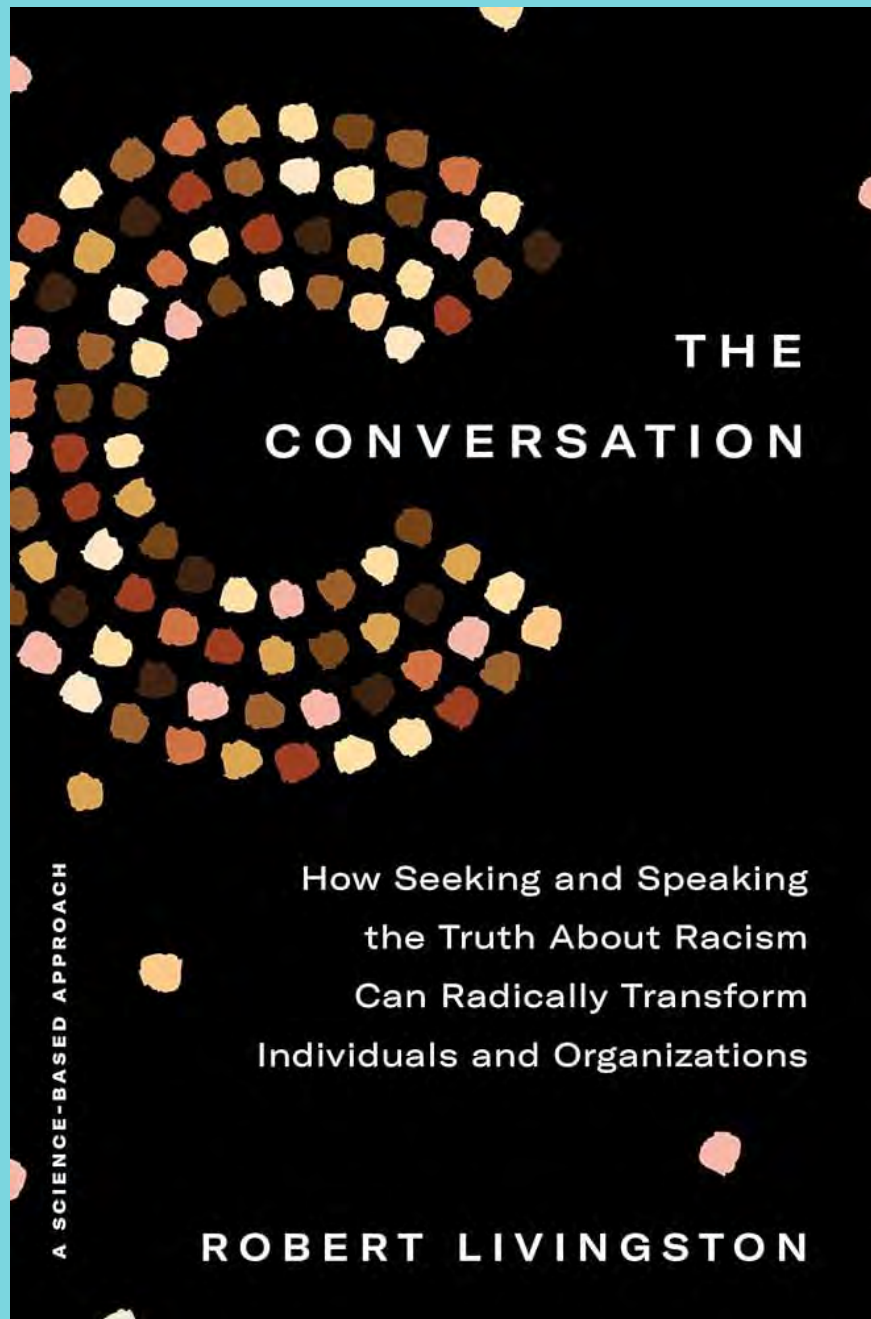


**Goals.**  
**Set them.**  
**Be them.**  
**Reach them.**

# Courageous Conversations



Adapted from Glenn Singleton: *Courageous Conversations about Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools*



*Conversation* is one of the most powerful ways to build knowledge, awareness, and empathy, and ultimately to affect change.

*Conversation* is also a primal way for people to form bonds, build trust, and create community.

# Experience Discomfort

- *“Is your comfort more important than someone else’s pain?”*
- Lean in
- Push yourself to grow
- If not you, then who?
- Whose interests are being served?
- What happens when you remain silent?

You can choose **courage**, or you can choose **comfort**, but you cannot choose both.

Brené Brown



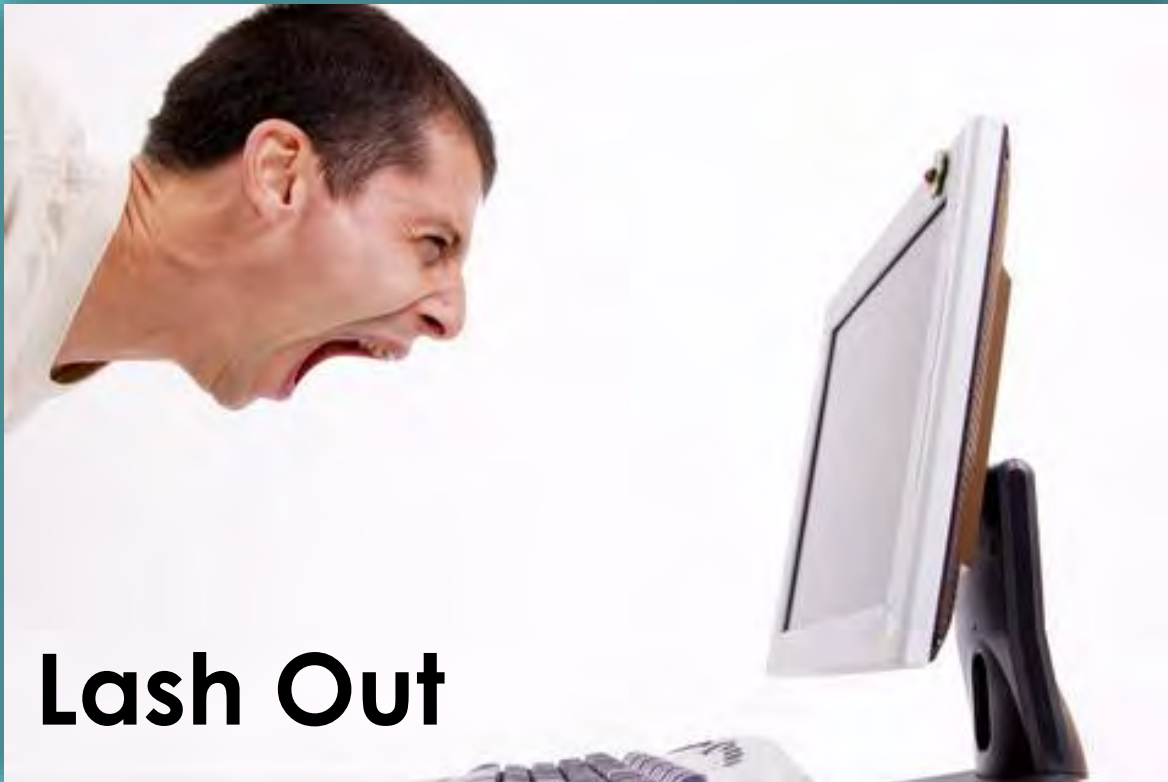


# Take Risks





# Stay Engaged rather than...



- *You don't see differences?*
- *Say more...*
- *Help me understand...*
- *What might be missing in that perspective...?*
- *I'm guessing your intent was... What might be the impact on PoC if...?*
- *I'm worried if we think of it that way then...?*



# Poll:

*When racial conflict arises, I tend to...*

- lash out, avoid, or engage in conversations with **family**?
- lash out, avoid, or engage in your **community**?
- lash out, avoid, or engage in conversations with **colleagues**?





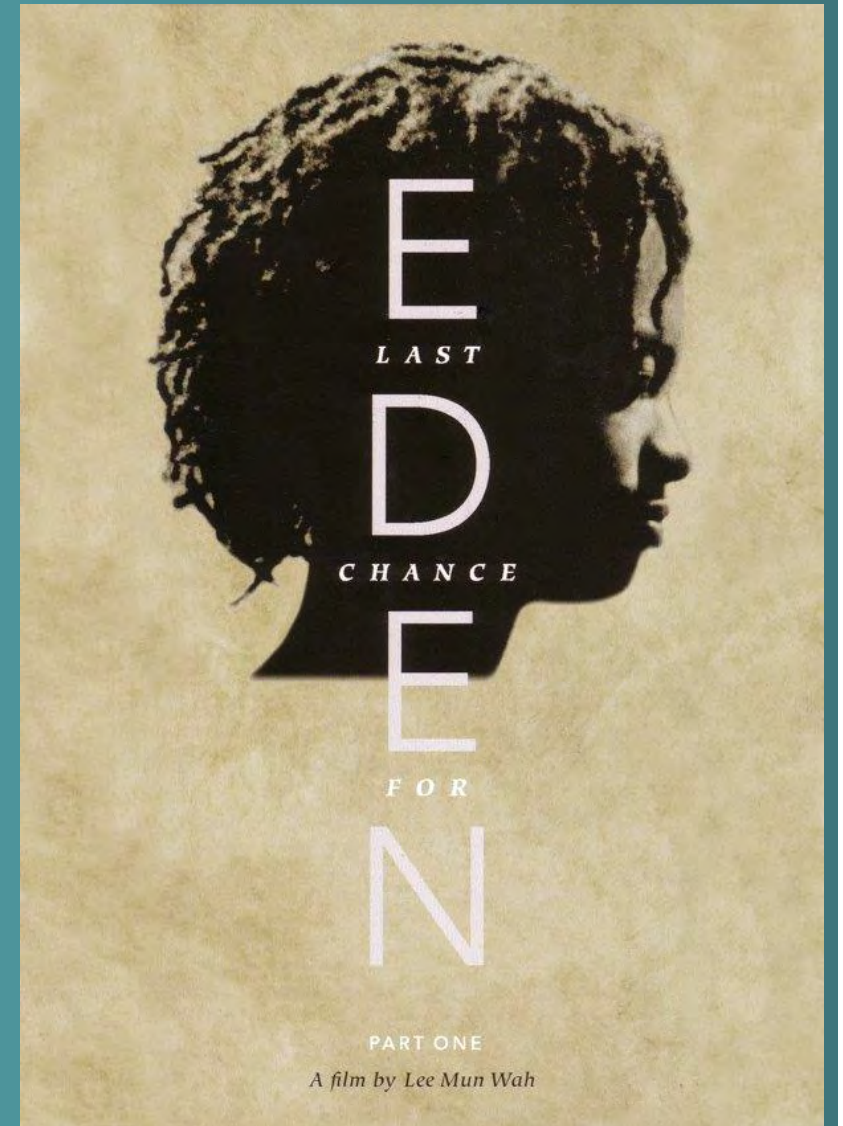
# Listen for Understanding

- Impact vs. Intent
- *Say more*
- *I'm not sure I understand*
- *Are you saying...*
- *What is the hardest thing about what I did?*
- *What was it like for you to...?*



## *Which of the following “fixes” have you said?*

1. It's okay or It will be okay.
2. It's not that bad. Things have improved.
3. I've experienced that too because I (other identity).
4. You shouldn't let it bother you.
5. What if you tried...? or Have you tried...?
6. Are you sure it was about race and not just...?
7. They say that to everyone. That's just how he is.
8. You're strong. You'll be fine.
9. I would never do that.
10. Well at least you... (minimize situation)



# No Fixing

## More Questions than Statements

- Do you feel like talking about it?
- What was that like for you?
- How can I support you?
- What are you needing?
- I'm here for you if you want to talk.
- I imagine it's not easy to...
- Thank you







# PoC No Fixing

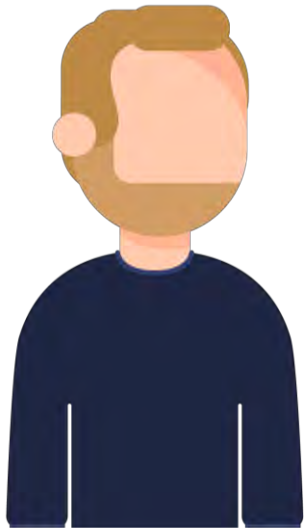
Rather than saying, “that’s okay”, “Don’t worry about it”, “Not a big deal”, “I know you didn’t mean it that way”...

**R.E.S.T.**

- Recognize: You are keeping someone from their own growth.
- Embrace: Silence.
- Say: What you need to.
- Think: “Is their comfort more important than your pain”.

Is my comfort more important than their pain?

Is their comfort more important than my pain?



# Speak Your Truth

- Speak from a place of “I”
- Brings us closer to you.
- Creates space for other stories, experiences, feelings, etc.



“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”

~Martin Luther King, Jr.



Expect  
and  
Accept  
Non-Closure



# Norms

- Take Risks
- Experience Discomfort
- Stay Engaged (ask questions)
- Listen for Understanding (impact vs. intent)
- No Fixing (sit with the emotions)
- Speak **Your** Truth (locate self)
- Expect and Accept Non-Closure

What's one norm  
you are  
committed to  
working on  
and why?



Adapted from Glenn Singleton: *Courageous Conversations about Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools*

# An Invitation to Brave Space

Based on original poem by  
Beth Strano



By Micky Scottbey Jones

Together we will create brave space  
Because there is no such thing as "safe space"  
We exist in the real world  
We all carry scars, and we have all caused wounds.  
In this space  
We seek to turn down the volume of the outside world,  
We amplify voices that fight to be heard elsewhere,  
We call each other to more truth and love  
We have the right to start somewhere and continue to grow.  
We have the responsibility to examine what we think we know.  
We will not be perfect.  
This space will not be perfect.  
It will not always be what we wish it to be  
But  
It will be OUR brave space together,  
And  
We will work on it side by side.



- **Inside Out: The Equity Leader's Guide to Undoing Institutional Racism** by Caprice Hollins  
<https://newsociety.com/book/inside-out/>
- **What's Up with White Women** by Ilsa Govan and Tilman Smith  
<https://newsociety.com/books/w/whats-up-with-white-women>
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Strategies for Facilitating Conversations about Race** by Caprice & Ilsa Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Strategies for Facilitating Conversations on Race - 9781475814996 (rowman.com)
- **Caprice Hollins TEDx Talk:**  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ikn\\_xhxEn1o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ikn_xhxEn1o)
- **Cultures Connecting Mailing List:**  
<https://www.culturesconnecting.com/join-our-mailing-list>



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