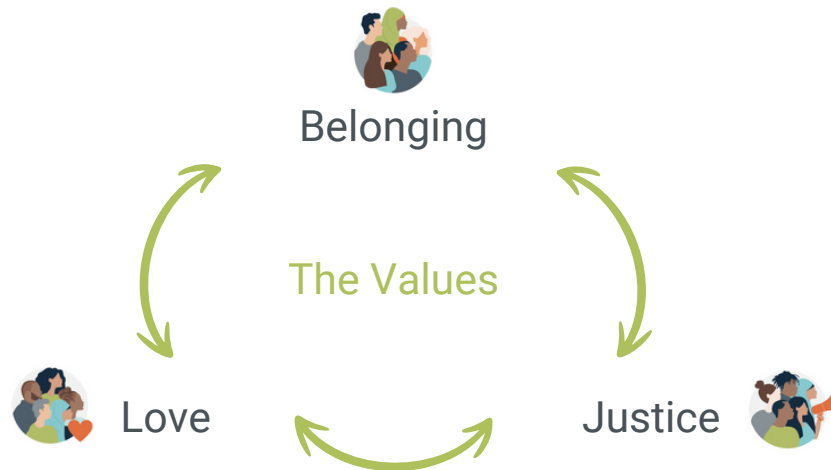




2023 Toolkit

Compact for Belonging

See humanity in one another, allow all to exist and take up space as they are, we are more alike than we are different



Abundance mindset, compassionately share resources, grow a bigger and better world for all

Targeted universalism, injustice, and inequity impact us all in many ways, a better future for everyone is necessary

The Practices

Conversations

Share stories, lean into discomfort, be curious, weave stories together.

Advocacy

Lend support in public, work towards common ground and accessibility for all.

Personal Growth

Examine assumptions and tendencies, intentional and adaptive.

Community

Acts of kindness, pass along wisdom, show compassion, seek diverse viewpoints.

The Compact

1. Work together to operationalize our values.
2. Hold self and others accountable to our values.
3. Government, private businesses, and social leaders publicly commit to our values.
4. Communities put our values to practice through discussions with neighbors, local businesses, and community.
5. Everyone declares and displays our values.

Core Questions that Build Belonging

Conversation Guidelines:

Lead with curiosity. Listen for what the other person values. Irrespective of your own experience, deepen your understanding of the other person's stories.

Create space. Try not to talk over one another. Generously provide airtime for others. Allow them to fill the space as they'd like.

Be real. To grow, one has to be willing to be vulnerable.

Make this your own. This is a guide with suggestions. Select questions that stand out to you. Ask follow-up questions. Create your own questions.

Deepen as you converse. If folks are less familiar with one another, build relationship by beginning with lower-stakes questions and evolve to deeper topics.

Surface [think Green Lake]

- If you could spend your birthday with one person, who would it be? What would you like to do with them?
- What is the most important quality you look for in a friend?
- Is it more important to be on-time or fully present? Why?

Shallow End [think Lake Washington]

- What is one thing you are grateful for?
- What do you think makes someone a "good person"?
- What makes you feel most accomplished? How might accomplishment change in a different context (work, community, family, etc.)?
- How can someone earn your trust? How can someone lose your trust?
- Where are you most at peace? When was the last time you experienced peace?
- What brings you joy? What ticks you off?
- Where is one place you can truly be yourself? What does it look like? Sound like? Smell like?

Deep End [think Puget Sound]

- When was the last time you felt like you belonged? What does it look like? Feel like?
- What does community mean to you? What attributes in your community build you up?
- When you want to give up, what keeps you going?
- When you consider your identity, what elements are most significant? Which environments allow you to be your truest self?
- If you could relive one moment in your life, which moment would it be?
- What is one of your favorite stories about yourself? What is essential to the person you are?
- What does family mean to you? How do you connect to generations before our time? Why is this so?

Community



What can people do every day to cultivate belonging in the community?

- Get to know your neighbors – introduce yourself and say hello. Be open and vulnerable.
- Start from a place of curiosity – be open to learning about your neighbors and ask open-ended questions.
- Set up a phone tree, neighborhood directory, Facebook, or WhatsApp group to share local news and connect.
- Visit local small businesses and meet the owners.

Activities to Cultivate Belonging in the Community

Connecting with others

- Organize a neighborhood block party or play street.
- Host a barbecue or potluck with neighbors – bring food from your culture or share a family recipe.
- Organize a monthly running club with neighbors.
- Facilitate a neighborhood book club – visit your local library together!
- Create or join a parenting or elder support group

Creating spaces for all

- Build community spaces such as a gardens, little free libraries, neighborhood pantries, pocket parks or communal art installations.
- Form a neighborhood association to discuss local issues and plan community events. Invite all to participate.

Supporting each other

- Host a community dinner or happy hour at a local restaurant to support neighborhood businesses.
- Organize community volunteer opportunities – such as neighborhood beautification events, planting parties, etc.
- Set up a meal train for a neighbor in need and deliver groceries or meals.
- Subscribe to your local paper to understand the issues facing your area.

Family



Why does belonging in the family matter?

- Belonging helps children learn life skills to make the best choices in adult life.
- It provides a firm foundation for a child's identity.
- It helps children to cope with feelings of loneliness or isolation when experiencing bullying, teasing, or hostile behaviors in their age group.

What happens when belonging is lacking in the family setting?

- Emotional separation contributing to unhealthy social outcomes
- Associated with lower self-esteem and a more negative worldview
- Searching for belonging in fringe and extreme movements

Activities to Cultivate Belonging in the Family

Talk about the difference between “belonging” and “fitting in.” Children of all ages need the reminder they are loved just the way they are. Encourage children to show up as their true selves even when they feel they are on the outside of friends or groups.

Notice your reactions: Some parents were raised to “fit in” or didn’t fit in. It can be hard to watch our children go through similar challenges. Say to your child, *when I was a kid, I was taught to fit in (to stay safe, be loved, etc.) but I want to teach you a different way. Let’s practice together.*

Building or seeking belonging is brave. Share with your child, *it may be hard to stand up for yourself and what you believe, but you have the right to feel a sense of belonging.*

Cultivate curiosity and listen to understand. When we model being curious with our children by listening, observing, and learning, we teach our children to do the same.

Flush out toxins to belonging. Teaching children to have empathy and build authentic relationships will help them be able to disrupt words that are hurtful or unfair.

Tell family stories and create family rituals. Belonging is about being connected to each other. Family stories celebrate each other's strengths and how challenges and hard times have been navigated. Rituals like reading or eating dinner together reinforce these family bonds.

Belonging in the Workplace



Why does belonging in the workplace matter?

Increased workplace belonging is associated with several benefits for organizations:

- Higher employee retention rates
- Better job performance
- More employee creativity
- Increased employee engagement

What can organizations do?

- **Model belonging** at all levels of leadership.
- **Encourage collaboration** among team members and with other teams or departments.
- **Provide honest feedback** in real-time and encourage bi-directional feedback between managers and their teams.
- **Recognize accomplishments and milestones** like birthdays, promotions, work anniversaries, project completions, etc.
- **Encourage team bonding** and provide opportunities for it. Think happy hours, team lunches, or Employee Resource Groups (ERGs).
- **Be aware of unconscious bias** and communicate the importance of managing bias.
- **Encourage open communication** modeled by leaders at all levels within the organization.
- **Practice pay equity.** Seek a pay equity certification, conduct annual market analysis of compensation, or implement a salary floor.

Activities to Cultivate Workplace Belonging

Shared Values Exercise

As a team, share what belonging looks like and feels like to you. Identify three words that you associate with “belonging.” Cluster similar ideas and look for patterns. Discuss how these values might help shape your organization's decision making.

Shared Meals

Host regular team lunches, whether that means going out to a restaurant or doing a potluck. Begin each lunch with a question and encourage everyone to answer if they are comfortable (see question ideas on page 3). Be sure to consider everyone's dietary needs.

Team Activities Outside of Work

Host some team activities outside of the workplace and consider allowing employees to bring family members or other guests. Make sure employees have buy-in on the activity itself and timing so it does not feel obligatory. Examples of team activities include sporting events, mini-golf, happy hours, etc.

Icebreakers

Kick off team meetings with an icebreaker to help the team slowly get to know each other. Icebreakers can take the form of asking a question that everyone answers (e.g., “Is a hot dog a sandwich, and why?”) or doing an actual activity. Most importantly, icebreakers should be fun, lighthearted, and inclusive.