

## Montreal Anarchist Bookfair Presentation Script

### 1. Introduction I (5min)

#### - Land acknowledgement:

We are sitting upon the unceded territory of the Kanien'kehá:ka. The Kanien'kehá:ka are the keepers of the Eastern Door of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. The island called "Montreal" is known as Tiohtià:ke in the language of the Kanien'kehá:ka, and it has historically been a meeting place for other Indigenous nations, including the Algonquin peoples, and continues to be a set of meeting and exchange amongst nations.

This acknowledgement serves as a recognition and respect to the Kanien'kehá:ka as custodians of the lands and waters on which we gather today. This recognition serves to ground us in the reality that "Canada" as we know it is built on, and continues to build through violence and bullshit; this recognition serves to help ground us in a decolonial awareness that understands our resistance, resurgence, renewal and healing as needing to start from a place of decolonization

- Thanking the M-ABC, thanking attendees, and thanking everyone holding it down, all the work paid and unpaid, recognize and unrecognized, going in to surviving, thriving, organizing, mobilizing, healing resisting, rebuilding, unweaving and reimaging new realities based on a better fucking world, and recognizing all those just trying to fucking live

- Description of pieces of paper

- Content warning and disclaimer on language (language is powerful):

- discussion of fucked up reality

- professionalism and policing language tools of oppression, control, management, subversion, dismissal

- helping to legitimize the collective anger and burning soul we feel everyday, in particular those most marginalized and oppressed

- helping to relax me and ease the anxiety and depression that I feel living in this fucked up reality

- \*\*get cat saying fuck meme and professionalism photo

## 2. Introduction II (10min)

- Outline of presentation
  - mixing my story with what I've found
  - Solidarity Economy organizing: embodying anarchism and pillars of decolonization
    - J. K. Gibson-Graham, capitulo-centrism, and the diverse economy (i.e. iceberg image)
  - Infrastructure of Dissent: thinking about active networks, coalitions of resistance, dissent, resurgence, and renewal
  - reconcili-action, decolonization, and thinking through how and why unsettling settler-colonialism needs to be at the centre of movement building
  - "Shaping change, changing worlds" reading of Emergent Strategy
  - Conclusion: thinking about intersections of everything

\*Point about wanting to create a handout but not having time // life getting in the way // please email me if you'd like my notes and resources from this, or if email doesn't work feel free to talk to me after the event and I'm sure something can be worked out

- Who am I? Where am I coming from? How did this project start?
  - Echoing standpoint theory, a quote from Indigenous scholar Margaret Kovach: "We know what we know from where we stand. We need to be honest about that"
    - Was born in "Hamilton, Ontario" but grew up in so called Brantford; accurately the territories of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Anishinabek nation). → Brantford's a very conservative town
    - very privileged fuck // more academic than activism
    - Very fucking lucky for the influences in my life that have helped me to move towards and stay on a path of far-left radicalism
    - So I am still a fuck, and learning, moving through holding myself to account, and building healthy relationships with people who hold me to account. But I'll always be a fuck → as a settler, a colonizer, an occupier on this land, I am complicit in this fucked up system of power, domination and extermination. I will always seek to unsettle and decondition my mindset, my worldview and my being, but I will nevertheless always be a product of my society, and as such [I am] never free of [my] culturally formed perspectives and political locations. Attempting to talk about decolonization in my presentation, my use of the word 'attempt' is intentional because for settlers like myself, any attempt to "decolonize" one's thinking, actions and

research is a process with no final “just”, “correct” or “right” arrival point. Many, many mistakes will continue to be made [...] In taking on this self-reflexivity and working to unsettle my ways of thinking, being and knowing, I strive to be less of a fuck.

- How this project started? LSPIRG (Jaydene) and anarchism → McMaster → The Tower and Cooperation Jackson → Reconciliation throughout

- Introduce “This is nothing new” as a theme of the presentation
  - recognizing the work, the organizing, the struggle I’m building on,
  - and that telling us this is nothing new in terms of the system being fucked up is what oppressed and marginalized people have been saying for fucking ever // has been at the core of my critical thinking around how I as a person who holds a lot of privilege can help disillusion other white people, other cis-men, other settlers, - - it’s also about building on and from our collective memory and our consciousness → how we get free is rooted in spirit and in nature, practices that Indigenous people have known and practiced for fucking ever, how we get free is nothing new, and this is part of why colonization has been at its core about oppressing spirit, and destroying nature → it’s about the control and suppression of humanity and our evolution
- Quoting decolonial scholars Catherine E. Walsh and Walter D. Mignolo “Some say we are up against a civilizational crisis, a crisis in which the universalized model or paradigm of the West is crumbling before our very eyes. Others, such as the Zapatistas, speak in a related way of the Storm brewing, the Storm already upon us, the Storm whose force is rapidly growing. This Storm, say the Zapatistas, is the catastrophe that we all feel. It is the war against life in all of its practices, forms, and manifestations” (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018, p. 15).
- “However, as coloniality-capitalism plot their advance, so too spread resurgences, shifts, and movements toward a decolonial otherwise, resurgences, shifts, and movements of decoloniality in/as praxis” (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018, p. 16).
- “Decoloniality has a history, herstory, and praxis of more than 500 years. From its beginnings in the Americas, decoloniality has been a component part of (trans)local struggles, movements, and actions to resist and refuse the legacies and ongoing relations and patterns of power established by external and internal colonialism— it’s all nothing fucking new

- \*\*“I don’t want to be the owner of this, just a joyful conduit” Adrienne  
Maree Brown

### 3. Solidarity Economy Organizing (15min)

Solidarity economy organizing generally refers to the creation of interdependent and interrelated collaborative networks of cooperative, democratic and solidarity based economics. Based on values consisting of direct democracy, mutual aid, equality, equity, and social responsibility, solidarity economies are, a common source of struggle against political, social, cultural and economic domination and exploitation.

I'm not sure the exact origins of the concept, but from what I gather one of the earliest uses was in 1937 during the Spanish Civil War when anarchists advocated for a solidarity economy between workers collectives in urban and rural areas. Taking root in both Latin America, expanding into the global south and eventually the global north, the language of building solidarity economies has developed into an international movement with thousands of initiatives on every continent except Antarctica; it's fucking everywhere, with a common theme of pushing for the co-creation of equitable, just and directly democratic societies.

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The example that first introduced me to the practice of solidarity economy organizing was Cooperation Jackson, a solidarity economy movement in Jackson, Mississippi. The Tower actually hosted a book launch a book they released almost two years ago entitled Jackson Rising, and that's how I found out about it.

The product of decades of radical black organizing involving the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement and New Afrikan People's Organization, Cooperation Jackson is an ongoing movement striving for economic democracy and black self-determination in the heart of Jackson, Mississippi. Aiming to develop a counterhegemonic, liberating economic and social infrastructure Cooperation Jackson offers an example of participatory, bottom-up democracy, anchored through worker self-organizations and a guiding network of cooperatives encompassed by systems of mutual aid and communal solidarity.

Through a solidarity economy model, Cooperation Jackson has been able to build robust and dense mutual-aid networks consisting of worker cooperatives, community land-trusts, eco-friendly community gardens, a financial cooperative, a cooperative school and training center, and democratic assemblies. On a structural basis, Cooperation Jackson consists primarily of four interconnected and interdependent organizations,

1. A Federation of emerging local cooperatives and mutual aid networks [...] 2. A Cooperative Incubator. The Incubator is the start-up training and development center of Cooperation Jackson [...] 3. A Cooperative School and Training Center [ensuring] that Cooperation Jackson serves as an instrument of social transformation by constantly broadening the social consciousness of all its cooperators and continually enhancing their skills, abilities, and overall capacities to act as conscious actors in improving their social context and environment. 4. A Cooperative Credit Union and Bank [serving] as a means of self-capitalization and democratic investment to expand the initiative (Akuno, 2017, p. 15-16).

Through this model Cooperation Jackson is both organizing now towards new or revived mass organization and providing the means to develop and sustain radicals within the broader umbrella of mass organizing.

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Thinking about systemic transformation, part of the foundation of solidarity economy organizing is plurality and non-linear thinking. The way that I've learned to think about this best is starting from a place of story-telling. I'm sure many of you are familiar with the story we live in a capitalist economy, it's reach is all pervasive permeating every aspect of our lives and there's no escaping it.

In 1996 J.K. Gibson-Graham, the pet name for two feminist economic geographers Julie Graham and Katherine Gibson, coined the concept capitalocentrism. Building off of the feminist critique surrounding phallogentrism, capitalocentrism refers to the dominant representation of all economic activities being understood in terms of their relationship to capitalism. Coining capitalocentrism was a way to destabilize the hegemony of capital, of understanding everything in how it relates to capitalism → ultimately it was about removing capitalism from the centre of our stories. From this Gibson-Graham developed the concept of the diverse economy; The diverse economies framework is a holistic conceptualization of the way we understand the economy and economic activity, it breaks open capitalo-centrism and argues we should not understand the economy as a noun, as a box that can only fit one economic system, but instead understand the economy as a verb, as a process, a process by which we sustain ourselves. Based on this framework's understanding capitalism is not this omnipotent system, we should not be looking to replace capitalism with socialism but smash the box entirely and realize there is a plethora of economic processes happening in addition to capitalist processes. The diverse economy framework

allows for a language paralleling prefigurative politics and many Indigenous and other marginalized worldviews that understand reality as fundamentally fluid and process based, as non-linear, where the idea is not to wait for something to happen, but to act in the here and now; recognizing that capitalist processes have indeed taken up a lot of space, but we can reclaim that space, connect existing space, and create new space that supports the growth and interconnection of alternative economic space for people and the planet.

This image of the iceberg demonstrates nicely this idea of the diverse economy. The image of the iceberg with wage labor producing for a market in a capitalist firm at the top of the iceberg symbolizing the way in which capitalism seeks to stay on top so that we do not notice or accept the rest of the iceberg as legitimate or worth caring about, and capitalism can thus enjoy dominance without mainstream competition, eventually devouring itself and melting the iceberg entirely, literally... but it remains that there is and always has been a vast and diverse array of grassroots economic initiatives, often hidden, marginalized, and/or oppressed... worker, consumer and producer cooperatives; fair trade initiatives; intentional communities; alternative currencies; community-run social centers and resource libraries; community development credit unions; community gardens; open source free software initiatives; community supported agriculture (CSA) programs; community land trusts, time banking, barter networks, volunteering, gift-exchange, just helping each other out.. all of this amounts to the idea that in the larger picture economics is about how we as human beings collectively generate livelihoods in relation to each other and to the Earth. From here we can begin to identify those spaces and initiatives that are embodying liberating, life-affirming, non-capitalist values. This phase of solidarity economy organizing is about community-based research. Looking around us, we can then start to ask questions: What kinds of alternative economic practices or relationships can we find in our own lives? In the communities that we're a part of? In our regions? Where are the spaces in which people are already meeting their needs with practices that value cooperation, equality, diversity, autonomy and self-determination? Reading about solidarity economy organizing in Brazil, organizers began by seeking out and identifying thousands of small, local solidarity-based initiatives and groups in each state and listed them in a public database, using this as the groundwork for relationship-building, building connections, strengthening interdependencies, and ultimately forging networks of resistance, resurgence, rejuvenation and revolution. It's this idea that seeds of solidarity economy organizing have always been there, and that this is nothing new. The task then is making existing and emerging alternatives visible and to link them in mutually-supportive ways [...] not to invent a new economic blueprint from scratch and then

convince the world to adopt it, rather to participate together in ongoing work to strengthen, connect and build upon the many economic practices of cooperation and solidarity that already exist.

In this way, solidarity economy is not so much a model of economic organization as it is a process of economic organizing, it's about building a new way of thinking, living and being it is not a vision, but an active process of collective visioning, and by appealing to basic human values and principles such as equality, equity, mutual aid and social responsibility, solidarity economy organizing creates a platform for the collective consciousness of wanting to be fucking free to manifest into visions for the future. It's this understanding that allows advocating to being from a place of basic human values and principles, and being a privileged fuck who see's my as disillusioning other white people, other cis-men, other settlers, I as I'm sure many of you do, have struggled with starting from anarchism as my launching point, but starting from a place of "working together to build better livelihoods" is much more effective.

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But yeah, this collective visioning points to the next significant part of solidarity economy organizing which is thinking through solidarity, direct democracy and the fucking state. Solidarity economy organizing is trying to normalize direct democracy and mutual aid through post and anti-capitalist economic organizing so that non-statist and nonliberal communal forms of politics are seen as not just natural but necessary. It's about introducing self-managed forms of the economy and engaging with the state, but only to dismantle its colonial rationality, while reorganizing society on the basis of local and regional autonomies,

In this context power is not anchored in the individual but in the collectivity, sought to be decentralized and practised horizontally ensuring responsibility and accountability based ethics are fostered as the base of solidarity. It's about the autonomous restructuring of the spaces we work and live in, recognizing, linking, expanding, and creating autonomous spaces beyond the logic of the State and capital in the form of nonliberal, non-State, and noncapitalist forms of being, doing and knowing.

<b>ECONOMY + SOLIDARITY = SOLIDARITY ECONOMY</b>		
The many different ways in which we human beings collectively generate livelihoods in relation to each other and to the rest of the Earth.	The process of taking active responsibility for our relationships in ways that foster justice, equality and equity, accountability, autonomy (both individual and collective), cooperation and mutual aid, horizontal communication, healing, and shared-power (direct democracy).	Interconnected and diverse ways of generating our livelihoods that encourage and embody practices of solidarity.  An "economy of economies" that resists the colonizing power of the individualistic, competitive, and exploitative economy of empire.

Looking at the question of the state here is context specific. Along with identifying where anti- and non-capitalist practices already exist, solidarity economy organizing entails identifying where non-state publics already exist. I mean fuck the colonial state, but of course things are not this simple. Looking at the example of Cooperation Jackson, their stance is a position of dual power: by collectively building autonomous power separate from the state in the form of democratic assemblies while engaging electoral politics on a limited scale, they're seeking to create and exploit tension between the state as a facilitator of capital accumulation and a guarantor of 'basic' democratic rights in order gain control over the aspects of state policy that supports their struggles, democratizing the power and resources currently monopolized by the state. Ultimately, the opportunity to engage state politics is context-specific and cannot be translated to every situation. To reiterate, the point is not to embrace the state, but to take back, take advantage, and exploit its political, economic, social and cultural resources. As Cooperation Jackson acknowledges, this is simply a strategic development, and must be treaded upon lightly.

Of course inequities persist in solidarity economy organizing, but anti-oppression has generally permeated through solidarity economy organizing across the world. Going back to Cooperation Jackson as an example, they institutionalized space for women and queer leadership, they have educational programming around male allyship. Through time banking, the process of exchanging services using

time as currency. Allowing anyone to contribute to the production of value in the community in a way that values everyone's time equally, which has helped Cooperation Jackson push for do things such as revaluing care work and allow those presently excluded from the monetary economy to engage in the emerging solidarity economy on an equal footing. Through these types of practices that open space for those existing on the margins, Cooperation Jackson has helped members develop an intersectional practice essential to building transformative action from the bottom-up.

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So, overall, Solidarity economy frameworks have enabled people to survive, to resist, and to thrive by weaving activity and relations that support their livelihoods. There are a lot of similar images like this that have been produced ... made by Ethan Miller who presented on solidarity economies at last year's Grand Tradition conference ... but yeah, it's this circular representation of a solidarity economy model moving through the states of creation, (re)production, transfer, use, and surplus, and at the core governance characterised by direct democracy, town meetings, participatory budgeting, restorative justice, the commons and community land trusts, among other means.

This focus on our livelihoods provides a material base for sustaining our dissent as the autonomous and directly democratic core allow for organizing within, against and beyond state while power is sought to be decentralized and hierarchy dismantled. And then the focus on solidarity, on beginning from a place of responsible and accountable based ethics ... all of this allowing for better being able to embrace the chaos and complexity that is our reality.

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## 5. Infrastructure of Dissent (10min)

From here when I was working through this project I kept wanting something more in terms of a framework for building widespread resistance. I was really drawn to the practice of solidarity economy organizing but the name itself felt a bit compartmentalized, if that makes sense. I remembered back to in my undergrad, when I was volunteering with a fight for \$15 and fairness working group on my campus, one of the main organizers held an event around canvassing and brought in Alan Sears, a prof in sociology at Ryerson university and a long-time activist, Alan introduced to us his concept of infrastructure of dissent.

Alan was seeking to understand how working-class movements in Canada and the United States throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century built up the resistance capacities that created conditions for mass mobilization and insurgency, and how as activists we can learn from these movements to build the same foundations of dissent in our current reality. The result of this endeavour led Alan to coin the concept 'infrastructure of dissent'. Drawn from literature on social movements as developed by resource mobilization theorists, Alan refers to the infrastructure of dissent as the means of analysis, communication, organization and sustenance that nurtures the capacity for collective action that goes beyond spontaneous expressions of protest to building sustained mobilization and dissent. Based on four dimensions:

1. Collective memory: challenging, "the invented traditions and official stories of how things got to be this way", using our collective memory to educate and motivate.
2. Capacity for analysis together: employing a counter-hegemonic analysis to understand the history of the systems of control/ oppression we live under, and doing it in a way that centres accessibility and inclusion.
3. Own channels of communication; being able to access and use both formal and informal channels of communication to build stronger networks.
4. Forms of Solidarity for Taking Action: "not only finding ways to work together, but to build solidarities based on the needs of the most vulnerable and oppressed".

Furthermore, out of these four dimensions Sears like many others discussed the need for a centring of decolonization, both in the immediate term focusing on Indigenous rights, and in a broader sense in the way that the core of our systems function.

After remembering and reflecting on this I realized that solidarity economy organizing completely overlaps with this concept. Remembering the plurality of life and challenging the official story of capitalism; working together in horizontal,

decentralized fashion to be able to understand and analyze together; a foundation of autonomy through economic, political, social and cultural spaces along with alternative forms of media creating a context of formal and informal channels of communication; and of course the centring of solidarity. Alan also stressed the importance of offering a viable alternative, referring explicitly to the apparent apathy of the general population, arguing that the apparent apathy was rooted neither in satisfaction with prosperity nor in a numbing powerlessness, but rather in the absence of a sense of alternatives and more specifically the absence of an alternative rooted in their own activity. Solidarity economies offers a viable alternative to capitalist, liberal and statist relations, and it does so through an explicit effort to root people in their own activity.

The use of the word dissent was drawn from Antonio Gramsci's understanding of hegemonic rule, that ultimately the capacity for dissent, for breaking through structures of consent in thought and action, is crucial for building the kind of mass, democratic insurgency that powers transformative resistance, and it's this capacity that I see in solidarity economy organizing. A practice that challenges official stories, is not proposing something new but proven, talks about and embodies radical politics without actually needing to use the word radical by grounding itself in basic principles and value, creating stronger community through networks of mutual aid, cooperation and solidarity, meeting material needs, all these things help to foster breaking through the kind of consent in thought and action that colonial-capitalism requires, laying groundwork for mass democratic insurgency. And so what all of this showed me was that solidarity economy organizing represented, or had the capacity for contributing to the creation of what Alan conceptualized as an infrastructure of dissent.

Now, I want to get back to the theme that this is nothing new. Solidarity economy organizing is nothing new; while the language itself may be relatively new, the practices, processes, principles and values that it embodies is nothing fucking new at all. You know it's just fucking reciprocal, cooperative and democratic based ways of organizing our livelihoods, it's the recognition that life is fluid and chaotic, and that the way we sustain and thrive needs to reflect that. These are understandings that Indigenous worldviews have understood and practised for fucking ever. I really like the title of Leanne Simpson's book about Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance titled "As We Have Always Done"... you know it's exactly that, they've always know that heteropatriarchal colonial-capitalism was fucked up and that our system was built by and continues to be run by genocidal pieces of fucking shit. Which brings me to the next part of my presentation ... thinking through reconcile-action and decolonization.

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### 3. Reconciliation and Decolonization (15min)

As a settler, an occupier on this land I benefit from the spaces, systems and stories that form and perpetuate “Canada” as a peaceful, multicultural champion of human rights. I am complicit in settler-colonialism; I have to be accountable to that, along with other intersections of colonial-capitalism that I benefit from.

Settlers refers to a broad collective of peoples with commonalities through particular connections to land and place. For settler people, however, those connections are forged through violence and displacement of Indigenous communities and nations. This is a really complex situation, where in people who are displaced by external colonialism, and minoritized by internal colonialism, still occupy and settle stolen Indigenous land.

Ultimately, as Tuck and Yang argue, the settler-colonial nation-state requires the complete appropriation of Indigenous land and life, and thus, reconciliation under a settler-colonial framework is not about providing justice and healing to Indigenous nations, but is about rescuing settler normalcy, about rescuing a settler future. Genuine reconciliation, Tuck and Yang argue, is instead concerned explicitly with decolonization, an inherently fluid process that must be predicated on having no common measure or standard of comparison. because decolonization is fundamentally an experimental act involving the simultaneous dismantling of colonialism and the creation of a post-capitalist society through place-based practices.

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With decolonization needing to be at the core of our movement building, I want to move through here some aspects of what I’ve learned decolonization to involve as described by Indigenous and other marginalized people.

“Decoloniality necessarily follows, derives from, and responds to coloniality and the ongoing colonial process and condition. It is a form of struggle and survival, an epistemic and existence-based response and practice—most especially by colonized and racialized subjects—against the colonial matrix of power in all of its dimensions, and for the possibilities of an otherwise.”

- Catherine E. Walsh and Walter D. Mignolo

- “Decoloniality denotes ways of thinking, knowing, being, and doing that began with, but also precede, the colonial enterprise and invasion. It implies the recognition and undoing of the hierarchical structures of race, gender, heteropatriarchy, and class that continue to control life, knowledge, spirituality, and thought, structures that are clearly intertwined with and constitutive of global capitalism and Western modernity. Moreover, it is indicative of the ongoing nature of struggles, constructions, and creations that continue to work within coloniality’s margins and fissures to affirm that which coloniality has attempted to negate [...] Decoloniality, without a doubt, is contextual, relational, practice based, and lived ... it is intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, and existentially entangled and interwoven”

- Catherine E. Walsh and Walter D. Mignolo

- This is part of why colonization is based on individualism ... it’s fundamentally about the suppression of spirit, of heart and mind, and in the history of oppressor/ oppressed realities this is nothing new.

- Decoloniality, in this sense, is not a static condition, an individual attribute, or a lineal point of arrival or enlightenment. Instead, decoloniality seeks to make visible, open up, and advance radically distinct perspectives and positionalities that displace Western rationality as the only framework and possibility of existence, analysis, and thought ... it’s about rupturing current political, economic, social, cultural, and consciousness-binding structures, creating space for the radical reimagining of our communities and relationships with each other, and with the land, and this demands the responsibility and the willingness to take many perspectives, particularly the perspectives and points of view of those whose very existence is questioned and dehumanized.

- And then lastly, Decolonization is about correcting the dispossession, dependence, and oppression that colonialism ensures → it’s an intensely political transformative process seeking the regeneration of Indigenous nationhood and place-relationships while dismantling structures of settler-colonialism

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And so, how can I help promote, create, support and sustain decolonial processes? One main aspect I hear time and time again from marginalized people is that they’re fucking tired of having to educate those with privilege. For settler

accountability, Anishinaabe scholar Jana-Rae Yerxa writes that settler comfort cannot be a burden that Indigenous peoples must carry. And so, as a settler, I have come to understand part of my responsibility should be to engage in those uncomfortable and unsettling conversations with my wider settler “Canadian” community... settler colonialism and its decolonization implicates and unsettles everyone, bringing to the fore the contingency of settler futures

Of course when I go to have these conversations with folks who aren't aware or radical in their politics, there immediate reaction is often not ideal. Decolonization is so unsettling because it's everything, it's psychological, mental, emotional and spiritual → it's about being vulnerable, and understanding decolonization is a life struggle filled with uncertainty and risk taking ... and helping other settlers move through this discomfort in healthy and transformative ways is part of where I see my role as an accomplice.

At a recent unsettling conference I attended, the keynote speaker Elizabeth Fast moved us through what she conceptualized as stages of unsettling.

### 1. Learning

- learning about history, about the theft of land, residential schools, the Indian act and other tools of colonization
  - brings frustration of history and ongoing realities being hidden, ignored, distracted against
  - sometimes leads people to stay focussed on the violence that has happened / is happening, and ignores the resilience, resistance, resurgence and rejuvenation

### 2. Shame and Guilt

- recognizing, naming emotions of guilt, shame, anger, and letting it go

### 3. Help

- solidarity not charity
- collective struggle and not saviour complex
  - “Okay but how do we help; how do we move forward?”
  - what is your relationship to the community you want to work with? What is your motivation? What does this work mean to you?
  - careful not to think we're an expert because we took a course or because we do know more than a lot of the population; there is so much ignorance → remain humble

#### 4. Balance

- in life we're always bouncing between needing help and giving help
- helper/ helpee in our value systems → so much individualization in our systems
- beware of emphasizing personal 'trauma' over need for systemic change

#### 5. Humility

- humility and moving out of the role expert
- important for all of us, Indigenous and non-Indigenous
- integral part of our value systems
- building relationships, connection, never stopping unlearning and unpacking

And then lastly ensuring we're moving forward based on guidelines of

1. Respect and reciprocity
2. Relevance
3. Relationships
4. Responsibility

Moving through these stages, acknowledging and accepting complicity in settler-colonialism is critical for the opening of space for settler allies to begin a process of supporting decolonial struggles while attempting to forge new political spaces beyond the settler state and beyond settler-colonial sovereignty. Settler-colonial sovereignty is not an event but is constituted by relationships, and so as settlers, we have to think relationally, to see the world as networked together and to build an ethic of accountability and mutual aid (hence part of why I was originally drawn to anarchism) that is open-ended and founded on the understanding that we will make mistakes and need to ask for guidance, but that the main thrust of how we conduct ourselves has to be based on our deep engagement with respectful relationships with Indigenous communities, the long process of reconcile-action not through apologies, but through connecting our own specific circumstances, abilities, and realities to larger movements and social mobilizations that embody new relationships as part of decolonizing efforts and decolonizing social change, and this is where viable alternative are critical to the conversation.

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Solidarity economy I realized embodies a lot of what Indigenous peoples have always embodied and what decolonizing is describing: reciprocity, cooperation, equality, equity, new ways of thinking that are based on mutual aid, fluidity, place-based practices, and that seek to rupturing current political,

economic, social, cultural and conscious-binding structures, all encompassed by a collective that is meant to be interdependent, interrelated and interconnected structures of surviving, sustaining, healing, protecting and growing. While the task of decolonizing is daunting, Harsha Walia reminds us that this does not mean starting from scratch, that as a prefiguring framework, decolonization grounds us in an understanding that we have already inherited generations of evolving wisdom about living freely and communally. Solidarity economy organizing is really nothing fucking new, and I think if it's taken from this point of view, and from a point of view of decolonization and settler accountability, then it represents a viable and meaningful framework for settlers to connect their own specific circumstances, abilities, and realities within the solidarity economy framework to decolonizing efforts and decolonizing social change.

And then just one more point for this section... In Arturo Escobar's book, 'Designs for pluriverse, Radical Interdependence, Autonomy, and the Making of Worlds', core to his argument for building beyond colonial-capitalism is the co-creation of communal system, where our understanding of communal systems should begin with Indigenous societies. Indigenous societies he argues have not reproduced the patterns of differentiation nor the separation among domains (political, economic, cultural, etc.); they thus function as a single system that relates to both internal and external environments, and in the communal economy natural resources, land, and the means of labor are collectively owned. The entire system is controlled by the collectivity. The political dimension is just as important as the economic dimension; power is not anchored in the individual but in the collectivity. In the communal form of politics, social sovereignty is not delegated; it is exercised directly through various forms of, service, assembly, and so on. The proposal of the communal system he argues implies three basic points: (1) the steady decentering of the capitalist economy and the expansion of communal enterprises and noncapitalist forms of economy; (2) the decentering of representative democracy in favor of communal forms of democracy; and (3) the establishment of mechanisms for genuine interculturality". This communal economy is exactly what I see in solidarity economy organizing, and it just kind of reaffirming that this was making sense in my head... that building reciprocal and cooperative based relationships is fundamental to constructing collective capacities capable of solidarity economy organizing and solidifying an infrastructure of dissent, but decolonization must be at the heart of these projects.

Decolonization has to be about changing relationships and making them healthy, supportive, and sage, not just in spite of colonial power, but actively against it. Seeking to normalize social relations characterised by self-organization,

mutual aid, anti-oppression and a responsibility-based ethic, solidarity economy organizing is advocating exactly that, where the focus on solidarity is referring explicitly to a specific mode of relationship that recognizes our interdependent connection, and that solidarity is enacted when we recognize these connections, take active responsibility for our own participation in them, and work to simultaneously transform those relationships that are destructive or exploitative and to cultivate those relationships that embody care and mutual respect for those with whom we are connected.

The overall point of this argument is not to claim a perfect solution for addressing settler-colonialism, but to bring attention to this type of organizing that because it parallels decoloniality and aspects of Indigeneity, presents a strong opportunity for settlers to prefigure relationships and movements that support decolonial struggle and prevent settler-colonial relations from reproducing.

## 6. Emergent Strategy (10min)

- from spirit towards liberation (parallels Indigeneity)

Okay, we're almost there. Speaking to myself... The last thing I wanted to touch on is Adrienne Maree Brown's concept of Emergent Strategy: How we shape change and change worlds, as developed through and inspired by Octavia Butler's most utopian thinking. It was actually at the Hamilton Anarchist Bookfair last year that I picked up the book, and I'm fucking glad I did.

Adrienne describes emergent strategy as the way complex systems and patterns arise out of a multiplicity of relatively simple interactions... It is another way of speaking about the connective tissue of all that exists – the way, the force, change, God/dess, life. Birds flocking, cells splitting, fungi whispering underground.

With our human gift of reasoning, imperialist, colonists, capitalists have tried to control or overcome the emergent processes that are our own nature, the processes of the planet we live on, and the universe we call home. The result is crisis at each scale we are aware of, from our deepest inner moral sensibilities to the collective scale of climate and planetary health and beyond, to our species in relation to space and time. The crisis is everywhere, massive massive massive. And we are small” (Brown, 2017, p. 3).

But emergence notices the way small actions and connections create complex systems, patterns that become ecosystems and societies. Emergence is our inheritance as a part of this universe; it's how we intentionally change in ways that grow our capacity to embody the just and liberated worlds we long for

Adrienne offered this book as a cluster of thoughts in development, observations of existing patterns, and questions of how we apply the brilliance of the world around us to our efforts to coexist in and with this world as humans, particularly for those of us seeking to transform the crises of our time, to turn our legacy towards harmony... the book she says is for people... who get spun into wonder about the natural world and want to know things, who feel and know more than we can say or explain, and want to know how knowing those things can transform the ways we approach changing the world... for people who want to radically change the world. To apply natural order and our love of life to the ways we create the next world. To tap into the most ancient systems and patterns for wisdom as we build tomorrow.

## *Principles of Emergent Strategy*

- from a place that understood everything is about relationships, critical connection, chaos is an essential process that we need to engage, the sharing of information is fundamental for organizational success; and vision is an invisible field that binds us together, emerging from relationships and chaos and information ... the core principles → “Small is good, small is all (The large is a reflection of the small). Change is constant (Be like water). There is always enough time for the right work. There is a conversation in the room that only these people at this moment can have. Find it. Never a failure, always a lesson. Trust the people (If you trust the people, they become trustworthy). Move at the speed of trust. Focus on critical connections more than critical mass – build the resilience by building the relationships. Less prep, more presence. What you pay attention to grows” (Brown, 2017, pp. 41-42).

## *Elements of Emergent Strategy*

<b>Element</b>	<b>Nature of Element</b>
Fractal	The Relationship Between Small and Large
Adaptive	How We Change
Interdependence and Decentralization	Who We Are and How We Share
Non-linear and Iterative	The Pace and Pathways of Change
Resilience and Transformative Justice	How We Recover and Transform
Creating More Possibilities	How We Move Towards Life

- “I like the word *biomimicry*, and I love knowing that the practices of mimicking the natural world have been happening since humans came into existence. This is actually an ancient practice, a recovery rather than a discovery” (Brown, 2017, p. 46). \*\*\*

- “We are already emergent beings, just by our very existence. But we’ve been tricked away from it” (Brown, 2017, p. 47).

- “We are still mostly misdirected, turned away from the wisdom that is our inheritance. Joanna Macy speaks of the ‘great turning,’ a collective awakening and shifting direction, away from the wanton destruction of this planet and each other, away from those practices of separation and competition listed above, towards life and abundance. I like this visual of turning and evolving, as opposed to destroying the systems in place now” (Brown, 2017, p. 49).

- “I think there are many ways to find that simple path within ourselves, and I think that those of us who wish to see a truly, radically different world must demand of ourselves the possibility that we are called to lead not from right to left, or from minority to majority, but from spirit towards liberation” (Brown, 2017, p. 12).

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## 7. Conclusion

- The oppression tree & addiction tree // What about a resistance tree? A resurgence tree? A renewal tree? A healing tree?

- ▶ Thinking about decolonial infrastructures of dissent, or ecosystems of dissent with solidarity economy organizing as one vehicle for helping us to emerge and shape the change as we want, and changing the world as is

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- The body of the butterfly as solidarity economy organizing
- how the butterfly builds relationships with other butterflies and sustains their collective flight as an infrastructure of dissent
- how the butterfly navigates while staying strong, healthy and resilient as emergent strategy
- and then where their departing from and flying towards is decolonization and liberation

## 8. Q & A (30min)