REFLECTION GUIDE FOR ORGANIZERS

This reflection guide is designed to help organizers take stock of their growth and to identify opportunities for further development and support. We structured this guide to give organizers and organizational leaders concrete questions and activities to reflect on organizing careers, areas of growth, and needed support.

Many community organizing groups struggle to find resources for ongoing and consistent support of organizers' development. Organizers often have to prioritize the day-to-day work of organizing over the space and time they need to reflect on and integrate the skills, insights, and knowledge gained from organizing practice.

Using this guide requires some understanding about the **Phases and Nutrients of Organizer Growth** developed by the **Organizing Learning Project**. The heart of our project findings is that organizers move through a universal arc of growth throughout their careers, regardless of their organizing context and tradition. An organizer's lifecycle is marked by five Phases. Development through these Phases is catalyzed by a set of Nutrients — critical experiences and relationships that propel and guide organizers.

THIS GUIDE IS FOR...

Individual organizers to self-reflect on their development.

To support organizers to make sense of, ground in, celebrate, and take stock of their careers and development.

To identify how and what they need to further develop, preparing them to advocate for and pursue growth opportunities and support.

Organizers to use with one another in one-to-one or group conversations. This could include use in organizer cohorts and trainings.

To build community between organizers by giving them a common vocabulary about the organizer lifecycle, allowing them to better see, validate, and understand one another's experiences.

To create the conditions for organizers to support, agitate, and hold one another accountable to future development.

Project Resources:

Summary: The Phases and Nutrients of Organizer Growth
Full Report: Tilling the Soil: Cultivating Organizer Learning and Growth

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Reflecting on the Present

What **phase of growth** are you in? How do you know you are in this phase? How does it feel to be in this phase?

What **relationships and experiences** were critical to your growth into and through this phase? What skills or lessons did you learn from those relationships and experiences? How have you applied those skills or lessons to your organizing?

Have any relationships or experiences **constrained or limited** your growth? How have you processed the ways in which these experiences or relationships have influenced your organizing practice?

Reflecting on the Future

In what ways do you want to grow to level-up your **organizing skills and effectiveness?** What skills could improve your practice as you grow towards the next phase?

What **experiences and relationships** would support you to level-up your organizing skills and effectiveness and help you grow in your current phase or to the next? How can you access those experiences and relationships?

REFLECTION ACTIVITIES

The Phases and Nutrients of Organizer Growth lend themselves to a range of **creative and collaborative activities** that support organizers to not only understand organizer development, but to build community and collectively identify opportunities to deepen investment in organizer development. Here, we provide some activity ideas.

Self-Reflection

Set aside time at a regular interval (e.g., monthly or quarterly) to take stock of where you are in the phases, what experiences and relationships have helped you to grow since you last reflected, how you want to grow next, and what new support you may need to grow in those ways. **Keep a journal or notes on your reflections so you can see how you grow over time and how your needs change.**

One-to-One Reflection

Identify someone within or outside of your organization who you could meet with on a regular basis (e.g., monthly, quarterly) to reflect on your growth. This could include a peer or an external mentor. Use the questions to guide a conversation about your growth. If you reflect regularly with a peer, you can use these conversations to check-in on progress and hold one another accountable.

Group Reflection

Identify a group of organizers you want to reflect with about your growth two to three times per year. This could be a training cohort, a group of organizers at your organization or across organizations. Use the questions to guide conversations about your growth.

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