

# Critical Response Indigenous

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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## SPEAKERS

Natalie, Amy, Hana, Ramy, Rejane, Ann Marie, Marika

### **Natalie** 00:01

Welcome everybody to this critical response episode of our podcast, and one of the things that we do in these spaces is really letting you all as the guests drive the conversation around the insights that you're really gathering from from the podcast. But for anyone who's kind of coming into this right after listening to part one of this particular topic, you will notice that Chris is not here because it's five in the morning for our other host, Chris, of the current moment. So I'll be hosting today with Ramy, my name is Natalie, you'll hear me as host on other episodes, but was able to step in here with Ramy to kind of take on this this piece and really see how we can navigate our way through some of the complexities that was generated for us in the first episode, things around, you know, intergenerational work and youth led movements, land reclamation, reclamation of stories, practices, ceremonies, finding, finding ways through historical records and spaces to to identify, rebuild and reimagine what those things are things around future isms. And you know, what resources we need to find or reclaim to make make this happen. And the everyday strategies for building and being in community with people. So really, we kind of are trusting this conversation in the hands of our guests who have come here to share their insights. And I'm going to hand it over to Ramy to get us started. And I really am looking forward. So what this conversation is going to be.

### **Ramy** 01:27

Thanks, Natalie. Thanks, everyone, for joining. Honestly, like as I was part of the conversation, indigenous way of being knowing and healing episode, I really enjoyed it. And I really enjoyed the dynamic between folks from let's say, North America, from South Africa, from Australia, it was a lot of common stories, a lot of common struggles with colonialism and what had been happening. And it was really nice to hear their experiences and how their communities were able to, or they are working on overcoming a lot of those challenges and colonial systems especially enjoyed hearing how ceremony and land back movements, we see it across in South Africa, in Australia, and in North America. There's a lot of land back kind of initiatives. And they include within those perspective within those that say approaches the ceremony, so they can definitely ground it within their culture, sense of community and create a heating kind of circle for their communities. So I really appreciate being part of that and hearing folks.

### **Natalie** 02:31

I'm going to ask you to share your name or part of the world or what land are you calling in from maybe one sentence on what work you do? Topic Area focus of what you do? And then a little something on why are you here? How do you connect to today's topic? Like why are you a guest on this podcast? So I will put that in the chat. But you can think about that. Okay, Hana, can we start with you?

**Hana** 02:55

Sure. Thank you for inviting me to be part of this conversation. My name is Hana Masud and I am a Palestinian community psychologist. I'm currently living in Chicago, the work that I do, how do you summarize your life journey in one sentence, it's kind of intense. Well, given that I'm Palestinian, I live in an occupied colonized territory. So I didn't, it was not a choice that I fight against colonialism and capitalism. It's a choice that was pushed upon me. So my life journey, my identity is as to fight all forms of oppression. So I can access my dignity and I can access my womanhood and I can access my humanity. And through the fighting, it's a struggle and it's a channel to find your ways back to to yourself to your being and, and find ways that you can heal in community and also and individually. Yeah, I think what brought me to to today's topic is that I've spent the for last four months in Palestine, I was engaging in olive harvest, with the indigenous peasants, so I feel like it's, there's a calling for, for, for me to be here so I can respect and honor the stories and, and the rituals and the practices that that I was honored and privileged to be part of. I'm here to represent all the farmers, all the peasants, all those women who would wake up in the 5am leave their families that leave their children, kiss them goodbye, go to the farms, where they're really close to the settlements, put their lives in danger, and do the olive harvest and go back home at 3pm. So it's just that that kind of structure that kind of timing, so thank you.

**Natalie** 04:44

Thanks. I'm gonna welcome Rejane

**Rejane** 04:46

I'm Rejane Williams, I'm from South Africa. I'm currently in living in Simon's Town and Simon's Town previously, was inhabited by so called Black communities who were relocated. Fortunately for me, my partner was born here. And so we've actually reclaimed some of the land. So it's a good place to be. What do I work on? I work mainly on the issue of race and subjectivity how people are racialized, how they mediate racism, what the journeys are, in terms of dealing with with racism. Why I'm here today is because I think psychology has focused on trauma. And I think in South Africa, we are dealing with a lot of trauma and healing from colonialism and apartheid and slavery. Our only response to it at the moment is individual psychology. And so I'm really interested in what collective healing looks like in terms of trauma. So that's why I'm yeah, thank you.

**Natalie** 05:53

Thanks for Rejane. Ann Marie

**Ann Marie** 05:56

Quay Quay folks. Yes, I'm Ann Marie. I am to spirit Indigi-queer, Afro-Indigenous person who hails from the territory of MC moggy, which is on the east coast of the settler nation state known as Canada. I am currently on the lands of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, and Neutral Peoples. And as always, I'm

very grateful to be here, to be welcomed to these lands, and stating that I am indeed a visitor, as an Afro-Indigenous person, I guess some of the work that I do is understanding the erasure, mixed blood Indigenous and Black peoples in northern Turtle Island, and how that interconnects with imperialism, colonialism and capitalism, and you know, not having land and having land back with it looks like for food insecurity, for our people on these lands, and various other things that we do in that regard. But basically, I like to focus on the reversal of the colonial gaze, you know, because we often are pathologized. And then as Amy had mentioned, you know, they look at us for, for trauma porn. So my work looks back at that and say, you know, like, maybe perhaps it's you that needs to have a look at what you're doing and how you could have caused and are continuing to cause, you know, things that are happening in our communities. And you know, where you fit in regards to that, and doing that work. Right. So that's kind of what I focus on, I guess, in a broad way. And yeah, I'm a member of land back. My work is community based, just in the struggle with land back as a grassroot movements. And just, Yeah, I can't I don't know if we will ever, you know, reform the systems, but maybe burn down to systems and starting fresh or something of that nature and a more equitable, just world large, larger picture kind of thing. But just what does that look like here in our community? That's something that's in the realm of, you know, what we can actually control? That's kind of what?

**Natalie 08:07**

Thanks Ann Marie. I'm very excited for all the things we're going to talk about today. Marika over to you.

**Marika 08:13**

Hello, my name is Marika Hanfield. I'm a white settler living in Tiohtià:ke, Montreal, with the land of the Kanien'kehá:ka. I work in partnership with an Indigenous organization on white people. So trying to better understand how to raise awareness amongst the privileged people that are not concerned by those realities, and how we can contribute to broader social change. But also, yeah, having a critical perspective on that work and being careful of like, the negative effects that can have on the indigenous peoples doing that work, briefly. And today well, I'm here because I listened to the podcast, and it was amazing. So I'm just I'm just really happy to hear from people doing amazing work that I aim to do.

**Amy 09:07**

Yeah, thank you.

[Introduction in Kanien'kéha : Shé:kon sewakwékon, Amy Smoke iónkiáts, Kanienkeha'ka ni'i, wakenon:wa.]

Hello everyone, my name is Amy Smoke, I am Kanienkeha'ka (Mohawk), I am 2 spirit LGBTQ.

So my name is Amy Smoke, and I am Mohawk Nation, Turtle Clan. I'm from the Six Nations of the Grand River. And I am also a Two Spirit Indigequeer person, my pronouns are they them, and I'm also a parent. And a community organizer, one of the co founders of O:se Kenhionhata:tie, which means actually, it's actually the name for the Grand River here in so called Kitchener Waterloo. And we used to refer to it as the place where willows are. So Willow River, and we named Land Back camp after the major waterway running through our territory. And I'm also a sessional instructor at the University of Waterloo. And last semester, I taught community organizing and this semester, I teach indigenous perspectives in social work, so I teach in the Bachelor of Social Work program. So we began to create spaces for indigenous folks start removing some barriers and obstacles for youth to thrive in these

colonial states and institutions, and started Land back camp, which brought out all of the indigent queer youth, trans, non binary youth who clearly did not have space to be on the land here, and so called Kitchener Waterloo. So I was not born on my reserve. But I am only 45 minutes away, so very connected to these lands, and we are on the Haldermen tract, I am Haudenosaunee. So I'm not far from where my mom grew up, but I am very much an urban, First Nations person.

**Ramy 10:47**

I think it will be nice to hear each one of you maybe like Hannah, you can start? Can you tell us a little bit what resonated most for you with what had been shared in the episode?

**Hana 10:59**

Sure, thank you, Ramy. What resonated honestly the most. There's a lot of elements and practices that there were just so empowering to listen to. But what I love the most is the introductions. And when people were sharing about their names, their stories of behind their names, that was so beautiful to me, I felt like it's another way of embodying the colonial attitude, that we're setting up the attitude and the tone for this conversation. So when people are listening to the podcast, like I didn't even like even not finishing the entire, the entire hour of the podcast was like, This is it, this is gonna give me, I already know the energy behind this podcast. So I love that it really resonated, I felt like it really set up the tone, the attitude, that this is a place for Community and practice. This is a place where we this is the we're sitting together in solidarity we are, we are reinforcing the idea of radical love. And the idea that we come together to deepen our relationality to deepen our bonds, so we can unfold the systems of dominations that make us who we are as humans, and they make our profession. So this just it? Honestly, it's, it's the name, it's the stories behind the names was just so beautiful.

**Ramy 12:25**

And how did it resonate for you, especially coming from the Palestinian background and the Palestinian struggle, listening to the folks about their struggles and what they're doing? What resonate for you most? When you reflect based on let's say, your experiences back home?

**Hana 12:40**

I'm working currently with younger generation, I'm working to support and to accompany community health workers in refugee camps and Palestine. Working with youth is always that struggle between what is traditional and what it's modern, they're trying to they have those arguments where they have they have those cultural shocks between what is their ancestral and community practices versus what is it that the they find liberating or margarine, or is just today's you know, whatever the trends that they're trying to follow. So you always hear that the stories or you hear the practices that they hear from their grandmothers or grandfathers that, oh, this is outdated, or this is we were living in 2022, or 2023, where these practices are not valid anymore. We live in a different context, we have this technology that our families didn't have before. So it's, it's the under it's the undermining of these practices and feeling like this is, this is not the time, this is not the space to engage in those cultural practices, because we're just basically in a different time or different, basically, in a different space. So it's trying to reset those attitudes or reset those intentions that let's discuss that even more like where are you coming from? Where's your family or your ancestors are coming from? Let's find a common ground where we can connect with one another. And we can find meaning in those rituals, we can find

meaning in those practices that yet you, you you're basically arguing against or you're saying they're they don't have the same meaning or the same impact or the same feeling that will be generated for other people. So it's not that kind of conversation, or it's that kind of dialogue that you will have with youth in their communities, is just teaching them how to be patient, teaching them how to, and this is I think it's a common problem, and it's a common challenge with with all of us working with youth members that we still need to work on patience, working on experiential learning where let's engage in these practices and let's not rush for conclusions because we're working against those trained thing we send our kids to schools and we teach them ways that they have to expect or anticipate an answer. And this is the product, Aand, you know, one plus one equals two. And it when it comes to Indigenous practices, usually this is not that equation. So you're working against your youth, your own communities training, where you have to tell them, that the end product, there is no end product, the end product is that you have to feel it. And you have to allow your body to generate its own knowledge, you have to allow your body to travel back in time. So you can live in those healing practices, and you can appreciate them and you can generate your own. So it's that kind of, you know, challenge that you're working against your community's training. And you're telling them this is not most of the practices that we're doing are not cognitive. So they don't have to be logical. They don't have to be irrational. So you're teaching them you're, you're teaching them and you're helping them unlearn that, you know, rational and logical. And this makes sense, or that doesn't is another way of colonialism, that it's impacting the ways that we think and the ways that we're calculating what matters and what doesn't. And that that rushness that we have to come up with, with something that it's tangible, like, what is what is the product? What are we doing here? So that's also it comes from histories and decades of intervention, and prevention approaches that have been done in our communities where when they see you, the expectation is, what is it that you have to offer? Give me something tangible, tell me exactly what you're doing. So that this is, you know, I felt that we're working against a history of the violence of even helping, so like, Hope was violating people's ways of being because it was not honoring their ways, or their own pieces, or the, or how they would solve a problem. So it's just, they're importing even their own emotions from other contexts, if it makes any sense.

**Ramy** 17:06

Yeah, thank you. We can ask also the same question to your Rejane, and especially, how does it resonate with what you heard, like Puleng, share or even other regions shared in relation to the South Africans struggle in relation to colonialism and apartheid history and how it still manifests in some way today?

**Rejane** 17:24

So there were a number of things in this episode that really struck me, and that I estimated with very strongly. The one idea, I mean, of course, Amy's provocative statement about trauma porn is still sort of bouncing around in my head, because I think a lot of what has happened in the first period post was the beginning of our democracy and the building of our democracy, was that healing was thought to be about telling your stories and telling your stories to people who haven't heard that. And I think there's been a lot of that in this country, but at the same time telling those stories, and then having people question them, having people try to poke holes in them having people deny their own privilege. And people defend their own role in our past. And all of it caused a lot of secondary trauma. And I think people are tired of that. And so this idea that we no longer want to ingage in, in what he called trauma

porn was very powerful, for me, that was the first thing. And the second thing was about reclaiming and shaping our own spaces. So for me, if community psychology or psychology is going to help at all with healing in communities, and particularly in relation to collective trauma, I think that the way that they can best help is to work alongside communities or as part of those communities, to design programs, models, ways of reclaiming spaces, ways of Healing that are originated out of those communities. So I don't think that any of the Western psychological models are necessarily useful with the kind of psychological distress that comes from a collective trauma. And so this idea about the creating our own spaces, creating our own yielding pods, designing those ourselves is important. And for me, you know, the idea that we all speak very globally about trauma and and healing, but I don't know Whether, as people who have been at the receiving end of racism, for example, we even fully appreciate the extent to which it has damaged us, and what that damage looks like. And we can't talk about it openly, because I think it comes with a lot of shame. And so for me, creating spaces that are, are centered on, and we, we people who have experienced racism, are at the center of creating those spaces, then becomes very, very important. And so the, you know, Chris mentioned the concept of social death, but I also think, that is multiple layers of death, that come with the kind of trauma from colonialism and, and racism. It's social, its economic, its political. It's also spiritual. And it's also a way in which a lot of what we experience has become embodied. And so I think, when we think about healing, you know, all of that gets activated for me, in terms of what we should be looking at, as community psychologists as holistic healing models.

**Ramy 21:22**

Thank you, Rejane, like I hear you and, and from what have been shared in the previous episode, and it resonates a lot in relation to that pain and trauma that continuously is experienced by folks specialists, specifically, due coloniality and modernity, and how the institutions that are supposed to quote unquote, organize us or to help us heal or to give us the service that needs that they're recreating these kind of systems, even in our own countries, as we were liberated, but that are not liberated, like, we're able to kick out the colonizers from our countries, but we're still living within the rules of those colonizers. So definitely, I hear when you're talking about like social death, when like, we're talking about the experiences of Palestinians that continuously experienced that violence by just existing, for example, under the occupation, it's definitely sad to see those system continuously exist. But yet, it's really good to see that folks are resisting and pushing back against these. And that's why I especially also enjoyed what Amy and Bangishimo were sharing about Turtle Island and North America, about specifically in the regions that were in, which I'm interested to hear like Ann Marie your perspective about it, as a guest that came to live in this region here, and the experiences that you experienced back home, as well as Marika about your work. And if you relate to some of what have been said in relation to the communities, Indigenous communities that you're working with in Quebec also,

**Ann Marie 22:57**

Thanks Ramy, and wow, yeah, so thank you so much, folks who have already has spoken about this. And I think one of the key things that I'd like to pick up on is resistance, as a similarity, I think, across lands and resisting against imperialism, and its arms of colonialism and capitalism, neoliberalism and what they all look like. And, you know, in my work, resistance also kind of manifests as healing, as in a critical consciousness of understanding, you know, when we understand, you know, where we been, and where we come from, and how we came to be, we can then resist with the knowledge that, you

know, these systems are here to oppress us, and we may not realize it or not, in our everyday lives. So what that looks like, and just also thinking about Canada is still a colony, we like to think that it's post colonial, but you know, there's the Indian Act of 1876, as still controls for stations on these lands, which is just antithetical to Indigenous sovereignty, which is the fight and that's what land back resists against. And with this work, you know, I think healing becomes a part of that when we understand why all of this is happening, and how it affects in our daily lives. And, you know, there's also pushback on that and thinking that, you know, we're rather radical and wanting to have a thriving life, a good life for seven generations to come that was talked about in the episode. And being a visitor to these lands, I say, I see the same things that I would see in Mi'kma'ki the same things that in other colonial states and apartheid states and Indigenous nations around the world, and that the maintenance of a dominant system is key to oppression. and that those, who believe and benefit from white supremacy will continue to oppress in any ways possible, on the ground that might look like what Amy was describing in the last episode. I've just so much so many barriers and just having a space and just having some land back where we can gather from the regulatory bodies that control and attempt to control our daily lives. I hope that kind of answers your question, but I just I really see resistance as the key here. And also built building spaces where community matters, and the people in community matter. And we work to support the people in our community. As a community psychologist, I think it's my duty to use my privilege and power that I've gained in the academy to promote our land back, and Indigenous sovereignty, as well as dismantling these systems of oppression.

**Ramy 25:59**

Thank you. Ann Marie. Marika, what I would like to hear more about in relation to what have been shared specifically in relation to Quebec, since like, there is a national French national movement and Quebec. And like you're in sharing once with me the struggle to make people more aware about the Indigenous communities. So I'm interested about your work with white folks. And let's say Quebec, and those communities to spread awareness about the reality and the struggles of those Indigenous communities there, and what kind of struggles or awareness or good lessons that you have learned across that?

**Marika 26:35**

First, I really agree with everything that was said, there were so many interesting things in the podcast. There's something with what Ann Marie just said, with the dismissal and the denials, I think there's something very present especially in so called Canada of like, the "good Canada" myth. So the idea that in Canada, we're so just, so, everyone is equitable, there is no racism, everything is great. You know, like a Prime Minister said in, I think it was 2011. He said: Canada is the only developed country that has no history of colonialism. He said that a few years before, or after apologizing to First Peoples for colonialism. So there's like a very, very strong denial with that. And this denial is not just that, it's entertained, it's maintained, which is, of course, a characteristic of settler colonialism, where you need to justify constantly the occupation of the land. So that's present already, in so called Canada. And then in Quebec, there's also the additional stories that are told and taught in school, like in primary school of the "good settlers". So there's like that dichotomy of French settlers as being a good settler, while the English settlers were the bad ones. They were the violent ones. So when I was in school, I'm, you know, I'm 28 now, so when I was in primary school, everything we learned was that, you know, the settlers came, it was fun, it was great, everybody was trading there was, you know, a mutual exchange.

So that idea of like, equalness, and then they go up to a certain point, and then you stop learning about anything. So there's never that recognition of any part of the, of colonialism, especially not naming it. And French, French speaking people also identify as a minority. So they identify as a linguistic minority, but also like a cultural minority. So it's like, they there's a, there was a strong appropriation of the identity of being colonized in the 60s. So in 1960s, there was like a strong movement for French speakers because there was a bit of, there was some... I don't know how to say - there was some discrimination, for maybe in the 1900s English speaking people in Quebec were more privileged than French speaking. So in the 60s, there was a strong movement of contesting that, but since then, French speaking people kept that identification to being colonized, while completely disregarding what is really colonization, because, of course, we cannot say that we were colonized, there was some discrimination, linguistic discrimination, but of course, it is not colonization. It is, you know, we are settlers, so there is definitely a denial of the identity of being settlers, even though there was this double colonization. So people like french french descendants will both often feel like they're not settlers, because they were "colonized". And I'm doing air quotes right now. So this feeling of being threatened, this supposedly minority, makes it even harder when you try to deconstruct and raise awareness about colonialism. It comes, you know, which relates, of course to white fragility. So it's like all those kinds of fragilities that are related to being privileged you know, I feel like it's the same, you know, for like, let's say cismen, fragility, white fragility, you know, all those fragilities? Oh, yeah, exactly. I just saw Ann Marie saying, yeah, the best friends trope. Yeah, there's, and I don't want to take too much too much time. But there's a lot, you know, there's a lot of French speaking people will will think that they have Indigenous descendance, which is a whole problem by itself. And then, there's also yeah, of course, the many tropes of this kind of romanticization of what the settlers were. Voilà.

**Ramy 30:59**

Thank you, Marika. And like, really like, for me, it resonates for what you said in relation to like, a lot of the French speakers feel like they're the minority or they're, like colonized to what like Rejane have shared with me, and like the graduate collective in relation to, like in South Africa having a white minority, but the black majority, but yet the black majority is still experiencing the oppressive systems and structures of like apartheid, South Africa, and in relation to how a lot of the white folks, although let's say they're technically a numbers, minorities, they are still like privilege, wealthier, and all that, which we can talk more about in a bit. Rejane, I just wanted to link that because I found it really interesting to see the parallel between these two cultures. In relation to that, I just want to let like Amy, which was one of the guests in the original episode to talk to us a little bit about what thinks about what had been discussed here, especially in relation to what we discussed earlier in the other episode.

**Amy 32:06**

I'm just sort of Yeah, sitting with what folks have offered on the first episode. I don't know what resonated for me, I guess, going back over it was the the different ways in which we are resisting and healing, you know, to speak to Ann Marie's point across the planet, in relation to colonization and oppression and the systemic ways in which we are constantly being pushed down. I'm just done teaching, I teach in University of Waterloo, Bachelor of Social Work program. And yeah, we had an anti-racism meeting today, because it always comes up, that the students, these future helpers, and leaders in the world that are going to have so much power, simply don't want to talk about these conversations, they don't want to have these difficult conversations, they just want to get to the work, is



what one students said to me. They don't want to look at their whiteness, the whiteness as a structure, their fragility and privilege, yet, the majority people that they were going to work with in the future, right are going to be Black, Indigenous, racialized, marginalized folks. So yeah, the the sharing of the stories of resistance is an act of resistance itself, but the ways in which we can create these safer, braver spaces for us to be authentically, you know, Indigenous, Black, racialized, and, and share the narratives that should have been shared in the first place. Right, like we all have access to every white sis white male, who has access to publishing, right, we want to look at the other stories, the other voices and the ways in which we've resisted since the beginning of time, really, all across the planet. So I'm really loving the whole, the sharing of the ways in which we've all done this work and continue to try and do this work, you know, in in colonial states.

**Natalie** 34:02

Thanks, Amy. Thanks, folks. One of the things we knew, as we were kind of coming into this episode is we could make this just, you know, 10 hours and come back tomorrow. And so trying to figure out how we can really draw some tangible do I think we have like one of the things that I'm hearing around this kind of healing narrative is that we have, you know, kind of colonial systems of healing that in and of themselves are quite dramatic. We then have kind of this idea of what Rejane offered to us of like healing is sharing of stories, which also can continue to like re-traumatize or have kind of secondary trauma impacts. And then I and Ann Marie kind of offering like resistance as healing and so there's this underlying narrative like Amy just said, of like resistance kind of across these different spaces. And so, and moving towards, you know, how your draw, how these insights that we're drawing from what Amy and other folks from the first episode have generated for us. Well What does this look like in your own practice your own work your own context? I love that example, Amy of what it looks like in terms of teaching, right? Like how do we use this in curricular spaces to have these conversations, disrupt disciplines like social work, but I'd love to hear from folks. And maybe now we can just kind of open it up to whoever would like to jump in to, you know, how are you applying? Or could you see yourself applying some of the insights or knowledge that came up for us in the first episode?

**Ann Marie** 35:28

Maybe I'll jump in, this is Ann Marie. So we're on a zoom call here. And I don't, I don't know if you can see, but in my little black square there, I have my pronouns as they/them. In the Mi'gmaq language they, them is agender like, there's no gender attached to it. And so I use that in describing who I am as resistance to the colonial binary, that was imposed since first contact with the white man, and setting up that dichotomy of what gender is supposed to look like and all of the imperialist notions that go along with that misogyny-noir, misogyny, the patriarchy, all of that. So language as resistance, I find can be subversive and a good way, just in reframing conceptually, the language that we that we hear everyday in our lives, that that can be violence on our bodies. So resisting against that language, that you know, within the academy, is based in western hegemonic ideas of superiority and inferiority of who we are, as was shared in the last episode. The dehumanization, of black and indigenous peoples for the purposes of oppression for the purposes of subjugation. So, resistance as language is something that I use, and that I did pick up from the last episode as well. And just bringing that forth as education, to some thinking about, again, something from the work in Australia, talking about the Black Power movements that happened during the 60s, and the resistance that happened all across many lands on Mother Earth, and the pushback of that just harkening back to those times in a way that reframed

language again, and reversing the lens back on to white supremacy. So I I use language as a way to resist. Yeah,

**Natalie 37:44**

I love that, sometimes it can feel so big. And it's kind of Yes, and what is those everyday ways of resistance and reclamation? Rejane, wanna hop in there ?

**Rejane 37:56**

Yeah, you know, I'm, I'm struggling personally a lot at the moment. And so I'm going to say something that may just sound stupid, but but I would like to test it with this group, because all of us are involved in Praxis of some sort. And that is I'm really tired of talking about white privilege. I'm really tired of talking about, you know, conscientizing other people. I feel like we've done that a lot. And it's not for lack of lot of knowledge that people won't give up privilege of any sort. On any dimension with its class, race, sexual orientation, gender, religion, language, you know, if you have a privilege in that regard, why would you give it up? And in South Africa, for example, why would anybody give up the privilege? And so I'm starting to feel like, like talking about it all the time is, is killing our spirit. And is wounding us even more? Because why would it shift? And so, my work at the moment, and I am struggling with it, because I don't I don't know how to move forward with it is, is about the focusing on self. And, and I think about this as a lot of the work up until now being about deconstructing systems of power, deconstructing dominant systems deconstructing dominant ways of being. But is there enough reconstruction taking place alongside that? Is there enough that gives us hope for living the kind of lives that we want to live in the future, or in the now even? And so my question really is around? Are we focusing enough on journeys of reconstruction, are we focusing enough on creating the kinds of lives we want to live? Or is that impossible? If we don't deconstruct privilege? I don't know if that makes any sense.

**Natalie 40:16**

I mean, absolutely, I think that resonates, I can see just in the emojis and hand gestures showing up on our zoom call that this is resonating across across different different people and different parts of the world. Does anyone want to hop in and respond to what Rejane is? Is kind of offering in the space?

**Ann Marie 40:37**

Marika, I don't want to put you on the spot. But you have a unique perspective on this. Do you have thoughts on this coming from your social location?

**Marika 40:47**

Yeah, no, it's fine. Thank you. Yeah, definitely. Well, it's really interesting, because it's, it's part of the, the thinking I'm doing actually with the organization I'm working with, I think, so from, as you said, you know, as a white settler, how I came to do this project is actually from hearing from multiple people, you know, from like, across different events, trainings, whatever, gatherings. So, indigenous peoples, talking about the importance of white people, or non Indigenous peoples stepping in to do that awareness raising work. So the idea that this, this work is almost only on the shoulders of the people that are living those realities, which prevents them from doing actual, you know, like hope work or reconstruction work, as you said, Rejane, but is also much more violent. So all those micro

aggressions, well micro, we could debate the fact that it's micro, but so also the idea that, you know, as a white person- there was actually a study done on this, like, sometimes when a white person intervenes, you know, saying, "Oh, well, that's racist, don't say that". It can be more efficient than when it's like a black person in the case of anti-black racism, for example. So I that's why as, as a white settler, I think, it can be interesting or important for us to start picking up that, that part of the work, because definitely, you know, I started my study, and I think it's very minimized how harmful it can be. And there's the whole idea of like, distraction politics as well, you know, like how mobilizing people, like Indigenous leaders that are so strong, full of energy, wanting to do radical work, and then putting them into those, those spaces of doing education, and repeated microaggressions can actually prevent social change, because it can actually increase, like system justification. There's also some studies that show that when you're marginalized, intergroup contact can actually increase the idea that the world is just and it's fine. And, you know, we don't need to do radical changes. So I think there's definitely, there's definitely something there. And I think Rejane what you said, there definitely needs to be more focused on reconstruction work. And I think, you know, in this case, Indigenous peoples should lead of course, that reconstruction, that Land back, that, all those things, while maybe white settlers or other peoples can lead the education or like the basic work, maybe ? That's what I, that's my thoughts at the moment.

**Amy 43:51**

If I can jump in, I really appreciate those comments. I would love to think that we have the space to do the reconstructing work to do the rebuilding and revitalizing of our own systems. I would love to think that we're doing that work. I don't think we have the space yet because we're still educating. Yeah. And I just like I said, I just attended this anti-racism workshop, the very first person that spoke said I'm tired, tired. I think it is a very important aspect of ally ship for white settler folks to step up. And yes, I very much agree when they do the educating it is somewhat more valid. We knew that very much from personal experience at land back camp, when a white person is coming up angrily to meet a white person intervenes, they take the education as education and instead of being talked down to by the angry, you know, person of color, right. So I think that I would love to think that we're doing the reconstructing, the rebuilding, the revitalizing. We need the help of the white settler allies to continue the talks about white supremacy take up that work in those spaces so that we can do the reconstruction work, right. Like we someone just said, we should be leading not work. So I think it's very important that we continue the conversations, we can't know about a privilege unless we know about oppression, we can't know about oppression unless we know what privilege, right? They go hand in hand when I'm using my privilege today, who did I oppress? So I feel like they have to be discussed together. But it certainly is tiring to have to do that emotional work. Thanks, everybody, though, for sharing.

**Ann Marie 45:30**

I'm just gonna jump in one more time. Sorry. But I have to ask, though. So from what Rejane said was, why would anyone give up the benefits that they're receiving? From systems that work for them? So I guess the question becomes, like, why, like, what does that look like? If there's no shift in power, people are not going to give up their power when the power works for them. So I guess my question would be like, what does that look like? Or maybe it's not a question at all? No, we don't talk about it. But I think that, you know, it's, it's cruxst to the conversation. Because that's a shift that's not happening. We do the education, you know, we resist on the land. But the pushback is there, the barriers are there, because there's not that paradigmatic shift of power.

**Natalie** 46:32

Can you say more, Amy, about how you're connecting, how those two things are connected for you.

**Amy** 46:36

And then respectability politics come into play as well. Well, when I'm speaking in class, and I'm using language that they're perhaps not used to. I use the word genocide, you know, those kinds of things, land theft, I worry, two to three days after I taught that class, whether a white student is going to complain, or make a comment to my bosses about what I said, about me angering them. So I'm constantly worried about looking like and sounding like the aggressive, angry Indian, you know, and I have to worry about my job then. And I wonder if my white counterparts in the Academy have to worry about that at all? Or would a student even complain about that at all? Right, the speaking of, naming these things, calling these things what they are in these colonial academic spaces, but always have to worry later on, what the fall out might be?

**Natalie** 47:33

Oh, absolutely. I think naming something that's, you know, pretty nefarious inside academic institutions, right, in terms of that, oh, that's opening up a can of worms. For me really, around arguments of free speech and whose free speech those are really protecting. When we hadn't shouldn't be talking about the things that you are talking about right now. Rejane, I saw that you popped your hand in there, would you like to hop back in and circle us to whether or not we're answering what you have offered? Or other pieces you'd like to explore?

**Rejane** 48:08

Yeah, I am. I don't want to hog it on this point. Because I think there's a lot else we can also discuss. But just coming back to Ann Marie's point about power. And why would people give up power? And if they don't, what does that mean? And I don't want to think of myself as having no power. Because I was oppressed. I don't want to fall into that, because I think that's a place that a lot of us in South Africa have fallen into, because of the levels of poverty as well because of the class issues. And so there's a lot of other real disempowerment. And I feel like if I don't explore where I can have power, and we I can exert my power. And that's beyond resistance for me, then, life feels pretty shaky for me. And so, you know, as I was listening to the podcast, the imagery that Puleng used of the child being held up in the rain, you know, and being welcomed into the world through that rituals, a lot of that's been lost in communities and, and I think there are ways in which communities have to start doing work that they have to do in respective of whether there have been power shifts or not. So for example, we come from generations of families of absent parenting, we parents will literally, you know, in homelands, away from the children working away from from where the children live. For four months on in, we were based out of migrant labor, we have a history of domestic and garden service, we parents didn't pay them children. And so even just in terms of having role models, as parents, you know, that's something that we've got to learn. The other thing we've got to learn is actually how to be active citizens, and what citizenship looks like. I don't think we even know that. In terms of things, like, I don't want to call them these diseases, but ailments that are associated with just loving, violent or stressful lives, how do we take care of ourselves in relation to that? So for me, there is power in that as well. And, and I would like to spend more time thinking about the role of ritual and spirituality and community organizing and, and

the kind of power that communities can get back from that without having to go up against those who resist.

**Ramy 51:36**

So powerful by the way, and I do agree, like it can be exhausting. We have a saying in Lebanon, for each have their day. And another one that follows with that, that life is a wheel. So although you might be on the top of a wheel today, tomorrow, you're gonna get down and that we're talking about my systemic, not just from an individual kind of perspective. For me, coming from that background, it's difficult to view things as static, despite how oppressive they are right now. And although I might not have the power, or my people might not have the power, that let's say, for example, as white supremacist have or whatever people with power have today, that does not mean that we don't have power, it's just our power is different. There's this hierarchical, oppressive, they're coming over us and all that. But we do have power, the power of the community. And that's where, what what the sad thing, especially with new liberalism, that and I hear what's being said that that community itself that gave us power and those times of oppression historically, it's even like this dismantled and destroyed, which makes it even more difficult, because it becomes at least it feels more individualistic within our own collective communities that are usually heavily dependent on the healing the connections, the culture, the rituals, dancing being around each other. But yet, we don't even have that as much anymore, because we have to fight for that. So I do agree that it is exhausting. And that it feels like no matter what we do, we're not getting anywhere, because there's always these characteristics white supremacist system stopping us from moving forward by recreating reinventing language, and phenomenologies, and what systems should look like and all that. But at the same time, I definitely feel it in a lot of places, a lot of places that the previous episode shared with us or when we're talking here, that there is so much power to that is pushing. However, unfortunately, it's a slow change. And it is frustrating, I can't deny that that is exhausting, but I do feel we have a lot of power. It's just how we're manifesting this power and how it is manifesting within the world. And it is, I guess, a little bit of momentum when we can truly overcome these. But yeah, but I really hear you honestly, can be discouraged, encouraging sometimes and exhausting.

**Ann Marie 54:10**

And that was my sentiment, Ramy, you know, when I think back to again, the civil rights movement, Black Power movements, Red Power movements that happened during the 60s, that was power, and that transformative change was happening. And then we see again, how the system's morph and shift to attempt to crush up power. And this is what is almost cyclical, in a sense and what we're witnessing, and I'm not saying that, you know, we have no power, we definitely have power, we make change. We support our communities in the ways that we can, but we've been doing this for 500 years. And yeah, it is a little exhausting and a little tiring. So you know why we do the work on the ground and we support within our communities and we protect as we can, we still face those barriers, have the power that seeks to destroy us and annihilate us and dehumanize us on any given day. Thank you all.

**Natalie 55:13**

I feel like as we knew going into this, we couldn't know where the conversation was going to go. And this is such an interesting and kind of deep turn and Hana, I wonder if we could come to you to reflect on this in the Palestinian context and knowing the work that you've shared with us kind of before this

episode. And then and then mentioned briefly about thinking about what you're offering in terms of the work you're doing on farms, and that generative kind of resistance work that is not about education, but also kind of in the context of like the Palestinian struggle, knowing that so much of the effort is on kind of like global, global information movement and bring that people out. So anyway, I'm maybe putting too much onto this Hana, can you kind of take us through how this is reflecting in the work you do? And maybe ground as an example? I think that's what I'm looking for. What does it look like in your work?

**Hana 56:10**

Absolutely. I'm hearing everybody's reflections. And it's really heavy to process, just living with those questions and living with those radical reflections on our roles, like, basically re envisioning and imagining what is it that we're doing, you know, contesting the same challenges over and over again, and we're drained and we're tired. And we're, we question the, our value and the worth of our energies that are wasting and they're not in our direct communities, we're basically direct communities that have power over us. So what does it mean to build the capacity, the language, the intellect, just to negotiate with those communities that have power over you. So we can secure yourself a living or a voice that you can talk about your communities in ways that they're being honored or at least going to spaces on the end here the how these communities are basically talking about you and disrupt those voices. So you feel like you're, you're gathering intel, you're like, subjecting your body to violence, just to hear what are the kinds of conversations or the tactics or the strategies that are that these people are building around you behind the behind your communities, basically, and they're not involved. So all of this is really heavy. I don't know maybe we need a healing ritual practice after after this. I don't know what everybody's practices are. But I would love to enclosing this podcast. In closing, we can share a bit about what is it that we do to just reground ourselves from these heavy conversations. But this has really taken me back to my journey, my political pilgrimage journey to in Palestine when I was in Palestine, I made sure that I that I go on this spiritual journey in the Kions Den houses the Lions Den for those who don't know, it's a Palestinian youth armed group. They're centered in the old city of Nablus, in the West Bank. And this group, basically, they have emerged after the killing of so many people, and they've taken an oath that that's it enough is enough. And we've organized we've talked, we've rebelled, we've done this and this, and still, there's an act of killing in our communities. And we need to stop we need to start directing our bullets to the sources of our of our oppression. This young, you know, you people basically are early 20s, mid 20s, this group of young people they've engaged in on clashes with Israeli, Israeli security forces, Like, who are shooting at their communities at their houses, and they were in attempts of protecting themselves. So it's, in the past year, they've went into this community and assassinated all of this group individually, they went into their houses, and they've just killed them all. So I've made sure that I want to go and honor that the people who, this young youth, I want to honor them, I want to honor what they have done basically putting their own bodies in direct clashes with active colonialism. And they don't have the means they're not basically equal. They don't have tools, but it made me really wonder about my role, and also about my identity and as a scholar, how do I follow their footsteps? How do I follow the their leadership? And those young youth who are basically on the frontline are frontlines of active colonialism contesting colonial oppression and they're building our communities of resistance. So how do we honor that and we respect that. And we also build upon their their attempts to re sist in ways that it's meaningful for everybody. Not as agents of like, as a scholar, we basically respond, we talk, we come into these conversations, we theorize, we strategize, we reflect, we write, and all of this is important. And all of this is amazing. And we work

together and we not work and but how do we reflect them? How do we follow their footsteps in ways that outside of our these norms and outside of these acts, but we're reflecting in ways that it's just as individuals who are living the same conditions as we're creatures who are trying to cultivate this community of change towards life towards change. So it's just a lot of reflections from my visit. But um, I hear everybody's voices. I hear everybody's hearts here. And it's, it's it's a really tough conversation. Thank you, Natalie. I don't know if this answered your question. But this is where I was, you know, thinking,

**Ramy** 1:01:11

Thanks, Hana. How do you all like think like, Where? Where can we go from there based on this conversation? How? What are the thoughts that comes to mind in relation to where we are in relation to how we can move forward? Within our own circles? What do you think, as let's say, a radical imagination kind of thing, what is needed for us to move forward? It does not have to be something truly like, let's say, within the realm of current realities, oppressive realities, but in relation to like a future for relational futurism, either Afor or Indigenous futurism, that we can imagine, beyond that, of what we are going through today. I guess, since Hannah, you ended, we can start with you, and then we can move for whoever wants to jump in and share their thoughts that will be great.

**Hana** 1:02:00

I think I've done that. Without even thinking, I just lost my mother, in January. And what felt right to me is, is planting honestly, in ways that we're honoring our ancestors and honoring ourselves in imagining what is it that we want to do and stepping into the future and also being intentional about our purpose and intentional about our presence, so it really felt, when we're, you know, saying goodbye to somebody who's becoming an ancestor in transition, we want to become this intergenerational trees, we continue to build, we continue to grow. So future generations will come and harvest the fruits, harvest, and even if they don't harvest, they can just sit under these humongous trunks and cover from the from the shades of, of oppression and racism, and all of these heartbreaking systems that have been forced upon us. So this is honestly what i've what I've done in grief. And what I have done, without even thinking is just it felt in my body, this is a healing and Indigenous way of being with with, with our, you know, communities who are transitioning, and it continues to honor that mother line. And to me trees and earth, they outlive us as creatures and the planet as our as our is our mother. So how do we how do we build rebuild that intimate relationship, and we recenter and reground ourselves? And to me it was through planting, planting together and planting and community? Yeah, and building and creating those communities of resistance and communities that recenter the idea of, as you said, radical imagination and radical love. So even questioning what the what does that mean, in practice, in our decolonial practice, what does of those elements mean? You know, from not an abstract idea, but from from a practical sense.

**Ramy** 1:04:13

Thanks, Hana, Amy, aaN Marie, Rejane, Marika. Any final thoughts would like to continue based on what kind of Futurism or radical imagination you have in mind.

**Ann Marie** 1:04:26

Maybe I'll jump in here. This is Ann Marie. I think about this a lot. I think about this a lot in the context of segregation and sovereignty. So I mean, obviously, it would have to be Indigenous sovereignty on these lands, with self governance and relational within these lands and being fun to land and then in relation to a Canadian government, government, for example, I really don't feel like the systems are going I need to dismantle, I may work towards that. But that I don't think that as Audrey Lord says, we're ever going to dismantle the Masters House with the Masters tools, I just don't see that happening as being realistic. Because there's just too much of a grip guy, that ideology is too strong. But I would love to see self governing communities, where we would segregate by choice as it were. And we would have the resources and everything that we need, as Hana was talking about, you know, we have our, our own ways of sustaining ourselves at work in ways for us that don't require a capitalist model of mass overproduction, and, you know, predatory extraction of resources from lands. So I that's how I envision it segregation by choice, having the resources that we need to sustain ourselves in a good way and being connected to the land in a good way, which is all wrapped up in Indigenous sovereignty, at least in Turtle Island.

**Amy** 1:06:07

Yo, and I'll add on to that to it, it sucks. It also that's land back. All that just go hand in hand with land back. I was just speaking to my class today about, you know, we are struggling to decolonize systems that are inherently colonial, they are foundationally colonial Yeah. Do I want to die on this hill? Do I want to dismantle this system? I want to build my own. Yeah, I want to build my own. We walk softly on Mother Earth prior to colonization, we had these systems in place. So like speaking, you know, to what Ann marie was saying, the autonomy, the sovereignty, the liberation to do what we need to do for our communities, as we have always done and as we know, to be beneficial for us, and for many people, many indigenous people, you know, all over the planet. So I think, yeah, like, now is the time to be taking up that work. But there's always going to be that work in our communities, to either try and fight within the system, or let's build our own. Let's get out on that land. Let's take up our space and our rightful place on these lands. Yeah, you know, if I'm not being invited to the table, I'm going to build my own.

**Ramy** 1:07:29

Thank you, Ann Marie and Amy, Rejane and Marika, any final thoughts?

**Rejane** 1:07:33

Yeah, I think the original podcast has definitely activated a lot more thinking in me and, and I think some of what we were talking about here was definitely also part of the podcast. So I'm definitely going to listen to it a lot more carefully for the practical examples and things that were given in the but as Amy was suggesting, was part of that conversation. The thread in there was a reminder for me in the podcast, is sort of captured in the words that Bangishimo, I think used, they said something, I'd written it down. They said, "This is just the beginning of Indigenous peoples starting to reclaim what is ours. I look forward to seeing this happening globally now, when people just you know, just take it up, take it back, take it back without permission." And I suppose that's what I'm feeling empowered, emboldened by this, this idea. If we thought more about what it is we need to take back, but take back without permission and create and build on and rejuvenate that which will really have within us. I think my work would start to feel a whole lot more enlivening then going up against with white supremacy, for sure.



**Ramy** 1:09:01

Thank you, Rejane. Marika?

**Marika** 1:09:04

No, I don't think I have any, anything to share. Well, it just made me think I think Ann Marie and Amy, what you were talking about. I just made me think of the Zapatistas, in Mexico, imagining what could be. Sometimes it's hard to imagine how it could be possible. So just the Zapatistas are a group, Indigenous led, that were able to kind of create their own community that functions outside of capitalism and took back land. And this kind of forcing the government to recognize them or not, or just rejecting the government. It's always nice to see that it is possible, despite how strong the systems are. That's it and just thank you, everyone. It was really nice to hear all of this.

**Natalie** 1:09:56

Thanks. Thanks, folks. I think that You know, as we leave all these episodes, I always feel like my head is just full of new threads weavings together, you know, those, everything's just kind of processing. And this critical reflection, I think helped us hope for me connect some of those threads. And I hope the same thing happened for, for you. And I just want to thank you for being here.

**Ramy** 1:10:27

I'm really glad to be part of this conversation, and to be part of the previous episode as well. It's really nice to hear all these stories and how they're manifesting. I really hope that like, for example, a lot of us come from, like Community Psychology, and I really hope that Community Psychology will start taking these Decolonial forms of resistance within Academia or even within their collaborations with certain communities as they were working with force from different backgrounds, whether it was when working with white communities to help them better understand the impact that they have the power that they have in relation to oppression and Indigenous communities of this land and other lands, or whether it was working with different minority groups and marginalized groups across North America, Asia, South America, Europe, even or Africa, so in Australia, so it'll be interesting to see the stuff happening. I just want to thank you all and thank you for letting us be part of this conversation.