THE SOCIAL CHANGE ECOSYSTEM MAP (2020)

In our lives and as part of organizations, workplaces and movements, many of us play different roles in pursuit of equity, shared liberation, inclusion, and justice. And yet, we often get overwhelmed, lost, and burned out. Some of us are newcomers to ongoing social change efforts and don't know where to start. Still others are catalyzed into action in the midst of a crisis in our community.

The Social Change Ecosystem Map is a framework that can help individuals, networks, and organizations align with social change values, individual roles, and the broader ecosystem.

What you're reading now is the most recent version of the social change ecosystem framework created by Deepa Iyer (BMP's Senior Director of Strategic Initiatives). Deepa first developed the map in 2018, and this 2020 version incorporates her new and revised text. Below you'll find a *Frequently Asked Questions* section. Following that are the three components of the framework: the map, the description of roles, and a reflection guide.

The Social Change Ecosystem Map

Weavers

Guides

Experimenters

Storytellers

Frontline Responders

Equity
Liberation
Justice
Solidarity

Healers

Visionaries

Disrupters

Builders

Caregivers

<div align="center">**Frequently Asked Questions**</div>

Who developed the framework?

My name is Deepa Iyer, and I'm a writer, facilitator, and activist. Learn more about my original concept of the social change ecosystem map [here](). As I utilized the framework with others, it began to evolve; see more about that [here](). You're working with the most current version of the framework.

What are the components of the framework?

The map, the description of the roles, and the reflection guide can all be found in this document. If you'd like to access individual components, you can find them [here]().

How do I use this framework?

It's a three-step process: (1) identify your values and cause in the middle circle; (2) map your roles and those played by your ecosystem; and (3) reflect, observe, and plan.

Who can use this framework?

Anyone. Individuals can use it to reflect, assess, and plan. Organizations can use it at staff and board retreats, team-building meetings, orientations, and strategy sessions. Workplaces can use it to assess their effectiveness. Coalitions and networks can use it to clarify different lanes. People new to equity and inclusion issues can use it to identify how to begin. Those of us who have been doing social change work for some time can use it when we feel fatigued or overwhelmed.

When should this framework be used?

As an individual, you can use it when you need a re-set, when you feel stuck, burned out or confused, or when you don't know how to begin. I use it often when there is a community crisis and don't know how to respond. For example, people have been using the framework to figure out their roles during COVID-19, in the struggle for Black liberation, and for post-election response.

What are the permissions and restrictions on using this framework?

This framework is for individual and public use - *with boundaries*. Due to creative and commercial infringements that occurred in 2020, I have placed new parameters on the use of the map. As of October 2020, all previous licenses are revoked. Please read the permissions and restrictions below and if you have any questions or doubts, please email me (diyer@buildingmovement.org). Please do not send direct messages on Twitter or Instagram; email is the most effective route.

This is Permitted:

✓ You can use the map, framework and the guide **individually and internally within your organization, workplace, faith group, board, or campus/school** for meetings, retreats, orientations, check-ins, evaluations, workshops, classes, self-discovery/group discovery sessions, leadership mapping and more, with the following attribution: *Deepa Iyer, Building Movement Project. SM, © 2020 Deepa Iyer. All rights reserved. All prior licenses revoked.*

✓ You can **share, post, and repost** the map online on your social media platforms and within emails, newsletters, internal communications and as part of a list of resources **as long as you include** the full and original image of the map, the original link and the following attribution: *Deepa Iyer, Building Movement Project. SM, © 2020 Deepa Iyer. All rights reserved. All prior licenses revoked.*

This is Not Permitted:

× **No adaptations or remixes.** This includes but is not limited to changing the colors, the text or the roles, adding artwork or new elements, or visually reorganizing the roles. **NOTE:** I'm open to the possibility of collaborating with all you visionaries and storytellers if we can come to an explicit agreement before you alter and create. Please contact me via email.

× **No public-facing workshops.** Please contact me first to discuss/partner.

× **No commercial use is permitted.** The map or any derivations of its content can never be used to accrue money for yourself or your organization, *ie.,* charging people or asking for donations in a session that includes the map or framework; or making and selling products based on or including the map or framework.

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Characteristics of the Roles

Weavers: I see the through-lines of connectivity between people, places, organizations, ideas, and movements.

Experimenters: I innovate, pioneer, and invent. I take risks and course-correct as needed.

Frontline Responders: I address community crises by marshaling and organizing resources, networks, and messages.

Visionaries: I imagine and generate our boldest possibilities, hopes and dreams, and remind us of our direction.

Builders: I develop, organize, and implement ideas, practices, people, and resources in service of a collective vision.

Caregivers: I nurture and nourish the people around me by creating and sustaining a community of care, joy, and connection.

Disruptors: I take uncomfortable and risky actions to shake up the status quo, to raise awareness, and to build power.

Healers: I recognize and tend to the generational and current traumas caused by oppressive systems, institutions, policies, and practices.

Storytellers: I craft and share our community stories, cultures, experiences, histories, and possibilities through art, music, media, and movement.

Guides: I teach, counsel, and advise, using my gifts of well-earned discernment and wisdom.

REFLECTION GUIDE for SOCIAL CHANGE ECOSYSTEM MAP

The Roles

• What values call to you? Circle the ones in the middle of the map that connect with you or add more/others. When do you feel most aligned with these values?

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• What are you seeking to change? Is it a system of power, a mindset or a policy? You can also choose to write in a particular issue, campaign, or crisis that calls to you to take action (i.e. COVID-19, solidarity with Black communities, campaign to center immigrants, post-election response).

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• Locate yourself on the map and put your name inside the circles that you find yourself playing most frequently. Add other circles if needed and label them with roles (not job titles). Recognize that you can be playing multiple roles, and that these roles can even shift depending on the context. Write the roles below and identify their characteristics (check the definitions for ideas).

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• What role(s) do you feel comfortable and natural playing, and why? What role(s) make you come alive, and why? Are there any differences between these two responses for you to explore? Reflect on how your roles embody the values you identified earlier.

• What is the impact of playing these roles on you - physically, energetically, emotionally, or spiritually? What/who sustains you?

• In your role(s), how often do you vision and dream? What is the effect of repetition and redundancy, or compromise and sacrifice in the roles you play?

• How does your role connect to your privilege and power? For example, are there roles where you might be taking too much space (or not enough)?

• What story emerges about you when you review the map and your reflections?

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• How could you stretch yourself? Where can you take bolder risks?

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• Social change can be fulfilling but it can also be draining at times. It's natural to feel burn out and fatigue. People who have been subjected to generations of oppression carry trauma that shows up in behaviors and responses. And, in times of crisis, we can cycle through fogginess, exhaustion, and numbness. All of these responses are natural. We can also learn more about their roots and triggers, and build sustainability plans to tend to ourselves – and each other. _Below_, reflect on a time when you felt fatigued from social change work. What led to that experience & how did you cope? Knowing what you know now about your roles and your ecosystem, reflect on activities that you can take to sustain yourself through challenging times (ex. setting boundaries, relying on a mentor, asking for help, switching roles, or taking breaks). Then, think about a person in your ecosystem that you can support and check in on regularly.

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Ecosystems and Connections

Social change cannot happen at an individual level when we work in silos. It happens when we are connected to others. Our bodies, nature, and organizations all comprise of ecosystems. As Grace Lee Boggs reminds us: "We never know how our small activities will affect others through the invisible fabric of our connectedness. In this exquisitely connected world, it's never a question of 'critical mass.' It's always about critical connections."

• Who are you connected to? What roles do they play? Start with your immediate ecosystem (usually your organization) and then zoom out to include mentors, supporters, co-conspirators, friends, and colleagues outside of your organization. If you are working with the map from an organizational lens, you can have staff/volunteers map themselves, or you can map partners/allies that are part of a coalition or network.

• The middle circle in the map identifies the values of the communities and the world we seek to create. Which resonate with your ecosystem and why? How does your ecosystem create the conditions for justice, liberation, solidarity and inclusion to be realized?

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• What observations emerge about your team, organization, network, or movement when you review the complete ecosystem, and your role in it?

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• An effective, healthy, and sustainable social change ecosystem requires people playing diverse roles. Is your map imbalanced in any way? If so, how could the ecosystem provide support, alter objectives, or course correct?

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• Often, social change ecosystems are prone to maintaining cultures of overwork, productivity, and performance at the cost of individual well-being and long-term sustainability. Does the mapping process provide insights into the culture of your ecosystem? Are there roles that need to be strengthened in order to cultivate a more sustainable culture?

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Alignment and Aspirations

• There are times when we all feel confused and lost about the roles that we should play, especially during community crises. When you don't feel in alignment with my roles, how can you re-set? Who can you turn to for guidance? When you are in right relationship between your roles and values, how do you feel?

• Based on the reflections above, set 2 goals for yourself to try out before your next check-in. Identify 1 SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timely) goal and 1 B-HAG (Big, Hairy, Audacious, as defined by Jim Collins) goal. Check in every quarter to reflect on what's changed, and if possible, work with a partner, coach, or team-member for accountability and momentum.