

# Disabled Leadership and Power

A companion guide for a presentation by The Curiosity Paradox

## What To Expect.

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The Curiosity Paradox will present definitions of Leadership and Power. They will then present an equity lens as a way of contemplating and slowing down the process of distributing power and growing leadership among multiply-marginalized Disability community.

## Materials.

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During our session, we recommend bringing things that will allow you to reflect on topics. For example, a journal, notebook, or coloring book. You may reflect in words, drawings, movements, or in other ways. We also encourage you to bring other materials that will bring you comfort, such as a blanket, water, etc.

## Access.

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This presentation was organized by Disability Art and Culture Project to include baseline access such as ASL and captions. There will also be video and transcripts available later. During the session you may use the Discord to share reflections and questions. Please let us know if you do not want your comments read out loud.

You may also let us know in the Discord or by Zoom chat if you would like to come on video to share thoughts during discussion. If you would like to connect with The Curiosity Paradox, send an email to [work@thecuriosityparadox.com](mailto:work@thecuriosityparadox.com).

## Sources.

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The definitions of "Leadership" and "Power" come from the course *Leadership, Organizing, and Action* by Marshall Ganz. Readings from this course can be shared upon request. [Link to course.](#)

"The People's Solutions Lens" was taught by Michelle Mascarenhas-Swan during Movement Generation's *Decolonize the Future: Course Correction #4*, on July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020. [Lesson.](#)

A definition of Threshold Practice can be found in this [glossary](#).

## Agenda.

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Our agendas are relaxed to adapt to in-the-moment access needs. These times are estimates.

3:00 – DACP Introduction.

3:05 - 3:10 – The Curiosity Paradox Intro and Access Check Ins.

3:10 - 3:20 – Read definition of "Leadership," followed by time to reflect. Participants can share reflections in the Discord or wait until discussion.

3:20 – 3:30 – Read definition of "Power," followed by time to reflect. Participants can share reflections in the Discord or wait until discussion.

3:30 - 3:35 — Break (Digestion and Aftercare)

3:35 - 3:55 — Invitation to group to share thoughts in Discord or join panelists to discuss reflections.

3:55 – 4:00 — Break.

4:00 - 4:20 — People's Solutions Lens will be read. Participants will be invited to reflect on these questions alone, then there will be ten minutes to share reflections.

4:20 - 4:30 — Begin close out, mention Threshold Practice.

4:30 — End.

## A Definition Of Leadership.

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"Leadership is **accepting responsibility** for **enabling others** to achieve **shared purpose** in the face of uncertainty."

This definition comes from Marshall Ganz, a non-disabled organizer and teacher.

During the presentation, we invite you to reflect on this definition by answering these questions in a way that feels joyful for you. That could be words, images, movement, etc.

1. What does "accepting responsibility" mean for Disabled leadership?
2. What does "enabling others" mean for Disabled leadership?
3. What does "shared purpose" mean for Disabled leadership?

## A Definition Of Power.

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"Power is having the **resources** to pursue your **interests**."

This definition also comes from Marshall Ganz.

During the presentation, we invite you to reflect on this definition by answering these questions in a way that feels joyful for you. That could be words, images, movement, etc. After the break, you are welcome to share your answers.

1. What "resources" are held by members of the multiply-marginalized Disability community?
2. What are some "interests" of Disability community?

## The People's Solutions Lens As A Way To Question Power.

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- Who tells the story?
- Who decides?
- Who benefits?
- Who else will this impact?
- How is land, capital, control over labor, knowledge, or power transferred?

This Lens was taught by Michelle Mascarenhas-Swan. These questions guide action for a project, policy, or idea and ask if they are real solutions or false promises. [Lesson video](#).

Reflect on this question in a way that feels joyful for you.

1. How can the People's Lens be used by Disabled non-profit leadership to build power for multiply-marginalized Disabled people?

## This Presentation Is Influenced by Threshold Practice.

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Threshold Practice is an assistive technology that centers Negotiating Witness and Collective Care. It is a performance technique that frames space, time, and bodies. It was designed for and within anti-ableist spaces.

When it is first learned, Threshold Practice usually follows the following phases in this order: Call a Chamber, Negotiate Witness, Chamber, Digest, Aftercare, and Reflect.

We adapt these phases for facilitations, presentations, meetings, devised theater, hang-outs, and other kinds of performance.

Threshold Practice originated in the artistic crisis of Grotto Worlds, a collaboration between Larissa Kaul, Grant Miller, Jonathan Paradox Lee, and Dare Sohei.

We will hold a workshop on Threshold Practice later in this series.