LOVE. HUMANITY. BELONGING.

Website Report 2018-2026

A shared practice of (Un)Learning

Through (Un)Learning, we center love and humanity as a form of resistance against oppression. We create space to reflect, heal, reimagine, and practice the relationships and conditions of a world where we all BElong.

Our story

The foundations of this work reach back to Lydia Mercer’s leadership experience beginning in 2018. Founded in December 2020, (Un)Learning Space brings those foundations into community and organizational practice. This report reflects that journey through October 2026.

Our work has taken shape across education, youth development, nonprofit leadership, public service, philanthropy, and community spaces. Across settings, we invite people to examine inherited beliefs, recognize their humanity, and consider how their everyday choices can support belonging and liberation.

The commitments that guide us

(Un)Learning - Examining beliefs and practices that can reproduce oppression.

Reimagining - Making room to dream, create, and consider new possibilities.

Loving - Choosing compassion and care for ourselves and one another.

Belonging - Creating conditions in which people can be whole and well.

Liberating - Moving toward freedom through reflection, relationship, and action.

THE WORK & THE NEXT CHAPTER

Reflection into practice

Learning and leadership

We offer workshops, coaching, and facilitated learning that invite people to explore identity, power, bias, and belonging. Our approach connects personal reflection with how people lead, learn, and relate.

Healing and community

Circles and community gatherings create space for listening, connection, and reflection. We hold care and shared humanity at the center of how people come together.

Organizational practice

We support teams in examining culture, relationships, and the conditions that shape their work. Retreats, dialogue, and continued learning provide opportunities to practice more intentional ways of working together.

Resources for continued reflection

Curriculum and reflective tools extend learning beyond a single gathering, inviting people to return to questions of identity, care, and possibility over time.

Looking ahead

Our next chapter centers depth, accessible community spaces, sustainable capacity, and learning about change within people, relationships, and systems. We continue to build a practice rooted in care for both the communities we serve and the people who hold the work.

Honoring the trust behind the work

We share our work at a high level to honor the people and relationships at its center. Individual experiences, internal learning, and the details of partner engagements remain within the spaces where they belong.

About this report: This public overview describes broad areas of work. It intentionally omits partner-specific programming, participant stories, internal findings, and engagement details to honor the trust held in our relationships.

THE RELATIONSHIPS BEHIND THE WORK

In relationship

Our work is made possible through relationships across schools, nonprofits, public agencies, universities, and community organizations. We are grateful to the people who have invited us into their spaces and contributed to this shared practice.

Selected current and past partners

Names are shared here independently of the areas of work described in this report. Some names refer to programs within a larger institution.

- Aon
- AMPT
- Youth Guidance
- 4.0 Schools
- Chicago Public Schools
- Success Bound
- Intrinsic Schools
- Alternatives Inc.
- Chicago Department of Family and Support Services
- Project Restore Initiative
- Praxis Institute
- Northwestern STEAM
- ACT Now
- National Louis University / Accelerate U
- Teach For America
- Evanston District 65
- Vermont Community Foundation
- Ignite Afterschool
- Surge Institute
- University of Illinois Chicago
- To&Through Project
- Girl Scouts of Central Indiana
- Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana
- One Lawndale Arts and Activism Incubator

Stay in relationship

Join a community circle, explore a partnership, or support accessible spaces for reflection, healing, and belonging.

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