

# CULTURAL APPROPRIATION ROUNDTABLE

**September 2021**

Hosting the event from Portland Oregon,  
where we exist on the unceded land of  
the Multnomah, Clackamas, Willamette,  
Kalapuya and Chinook peoples. Now also  
known as the Confederated Tribes of  
Grand Ronde

This roundtable was facilitated by Rhea Shapiro, Suzette Payne,  
Susan Kocen and Lane Arye.

Thanks to the many people who attended and contributed.

Graphic facilitation by Lynn Lobo

## **Roots of PW - wisdom traditions**

Daoism  
Buddhism  
Shamanism  
Aboriginal wisdom  
Physics  
Jungian psychology

We honour these traditions,  
cite them and speak of them.  
We need to better understand  
*how* to speak of them.

**PWI is a white centric  
organisation. PWI works  
with different cultures &  
spiritual traditions.**

**Cultural appropriation  
has been an issue and we  
want to learn together.  
We welcome all points of  
view.**

**We are  
listening and  
sharing**

**We have  
received  
critical  
feedback**

## **Cultural appropriation wikipedia definition:**

the adoption of elements of one  
culture or identity by members of  
another culture or identity. This  
becomes problematic when  
members of a dominant group  
appropriate cultural ideas and  
practices from a more marginalised  
group.

1. How do you understand cultural appropriation?

2. How may you have felt your own culture may have been or has been appropriated?

3. How have you felt impacted?

4. Where and how have you appropriated other cultures?

9. What questions could we ask that we might have missed?

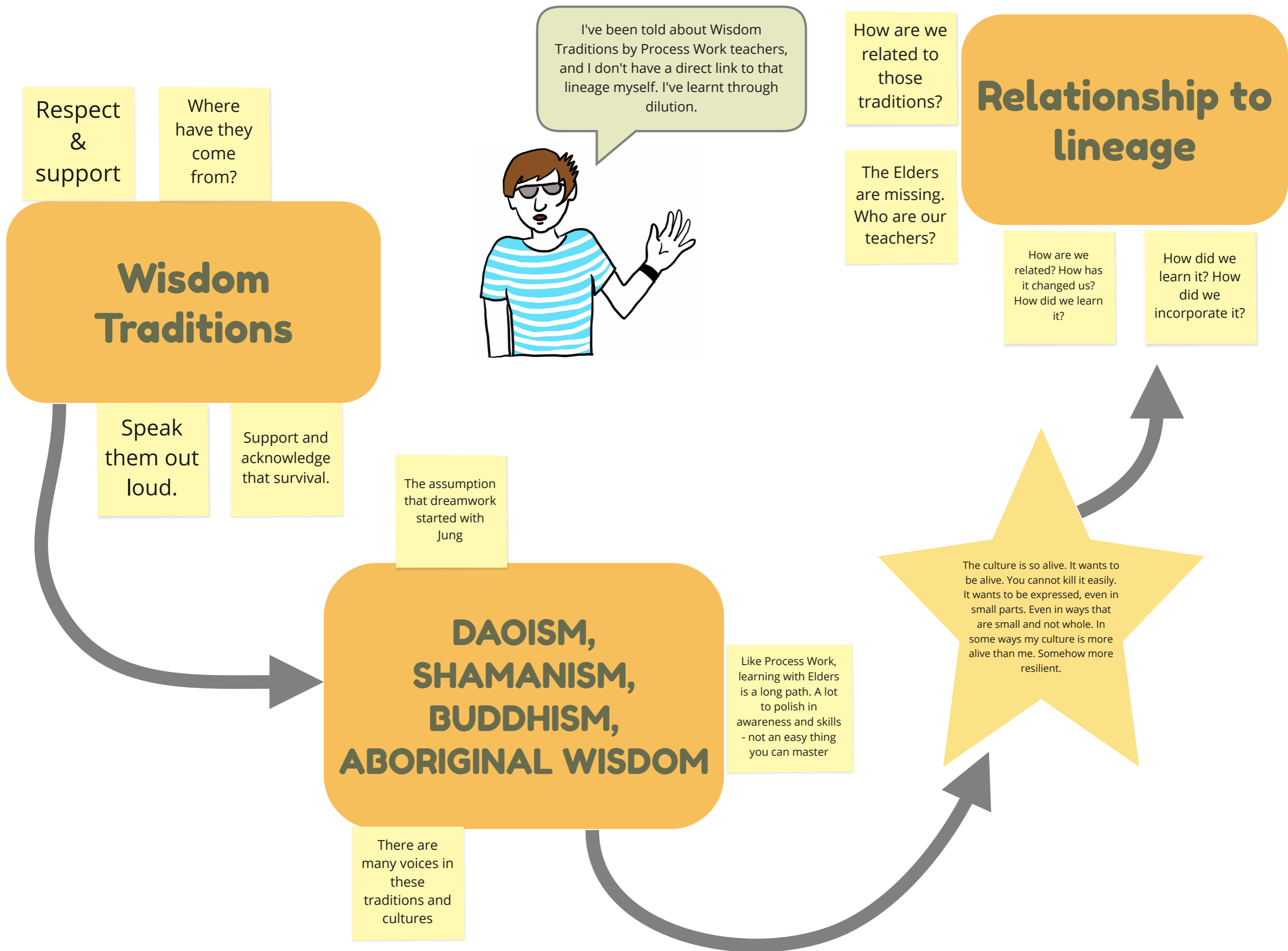
# QUESTIONS?

5. Where have you witnessed that? Where have you not spoken up?

8. What is your emergent thinking about this?

7. What might repair look like?

6. How can we do that differently?



My Family history of survival limited my exposure to other cultures.

I was guilty of appropriation when I was young. But now I know what I was doing.

I FEEL SHAME

Conflicted  
Poor working class background. Catholic. PW had a semblance of a spiritual practice that was missing for me. I didn't look at the roots of it, or the colour of my skin, or where I had taken it from. I was just so happy to find it. I feel bad about it. And I feel good about it because it sustained me.

TIME

From my urban living I was giddy with excitement in learning about ceremony and ritual. I was young and not thinking!  
  
I never asked where am I taking this from?



We do cherry pick. And many of us value and thank these traditions.

**Cherry picking**  
-selecting the parts we want

We weren't clear about the elements we've taken. I took the elements that suited me as a white person, without acknowledging the persecution of the people where it came from. These elements sustained me in my white lifestyle.

I don't want the guilt and self-flagilation

Difference between appropriation and appreciation?

How do we represent ourselves? Are these the roots of Process Work or do we borrow elements from these traditions? This may be closer to what we do.

Speaking of maths and physics in a Process Work setting feels bad. It feels like a disrespect to how profoundly complex those things are that are being referenced.

When you meet an Elder, your questions will be answered mythologically. You have to know the mythology. The tools to grasp the things they are saying.

Traditions have oriented and served communities in ways we don't fully understand.

There are other aspects of those traditions that are hard to relate to from a modern perspective.



It's difficult to explain process work



Its also a hard thing to learn. It takes time and personal investment.

Cultures nourish one another. There are levels of understanding things. Concepts are taken more lightly to grasp difficult and hard concepts.  
  
There are many barriers to learning a tradition. It's disorienting and a different world.

# Confusion

Migrants absorb culture. Where is the line between appropriation and learning? I don't know where I have overstepped the line!

When to speak/ not to speak as a white person around this topic.

I feel an internal paralysis from my cultural history of oppression (Jewish), and as a coloniser. I feel the mental bars of oppression.

It's easier to talk about the Jungian and physics aspects of Process Work.

**Asking is important**

Cultural confusion: where culture is lost

I don't have access to my roots.

Growing up without, creates a hunger.

The double standard of who gets to use what?

I thought appreciation was enough. Cultural appropriation is an entitlement issue. To look wise, be cool, wanting to fit in. The roots matter.



A forboding sense of identifying with something you got killed for.

Taking without consequence or awareness of the impact of colonisation, racism & white supremacy on people's ability to live, participate and be safe.

# Orphan cultures

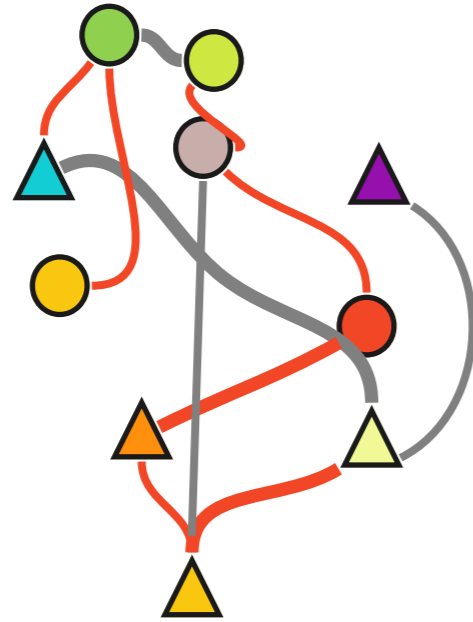
How did you get so much access when there is so much loss. Recognition of the significant amount of pain.

# Commodification



Much infiltrates because we are so interconnected. Cultural styles and ways get unconsciously integrated into our paradigm through how we interact with each other.

Difficulty when we don't consciously acknowledge what we are appropriating.



## Multi-leveled appropriation

SPIRITUAL APPROPRIATION  
Wisdom Traditions that have taken thousands of years to develop.

Getting a diploma in Process Work doesn't mean that you become a Buddhist or a Taoist or a Shaman.



As a participant speaks we hear a call to prayer in the background. . .

World Channel

## THE LAND

Listen to the land. A deep knowing that is beyond all cultures.

Shamanism is what our bodies do when we breathe, eat, alchemising from our mother earth.

Earth based psychology, the earth of my own body  
the signals that are there and believing in them.  
My own way belonging, feeling myself connected to the earth and to others.

The practice of supporting signals and the many ways we have awareness.



Different lineages of Shamanism and practices.

Going deep and bringing something up that is valuable to me and my community

The access of spirituality does not belong to any tradition or teacher. Good shamanism is expensive. you have to spend a lot of time to train your awareness.

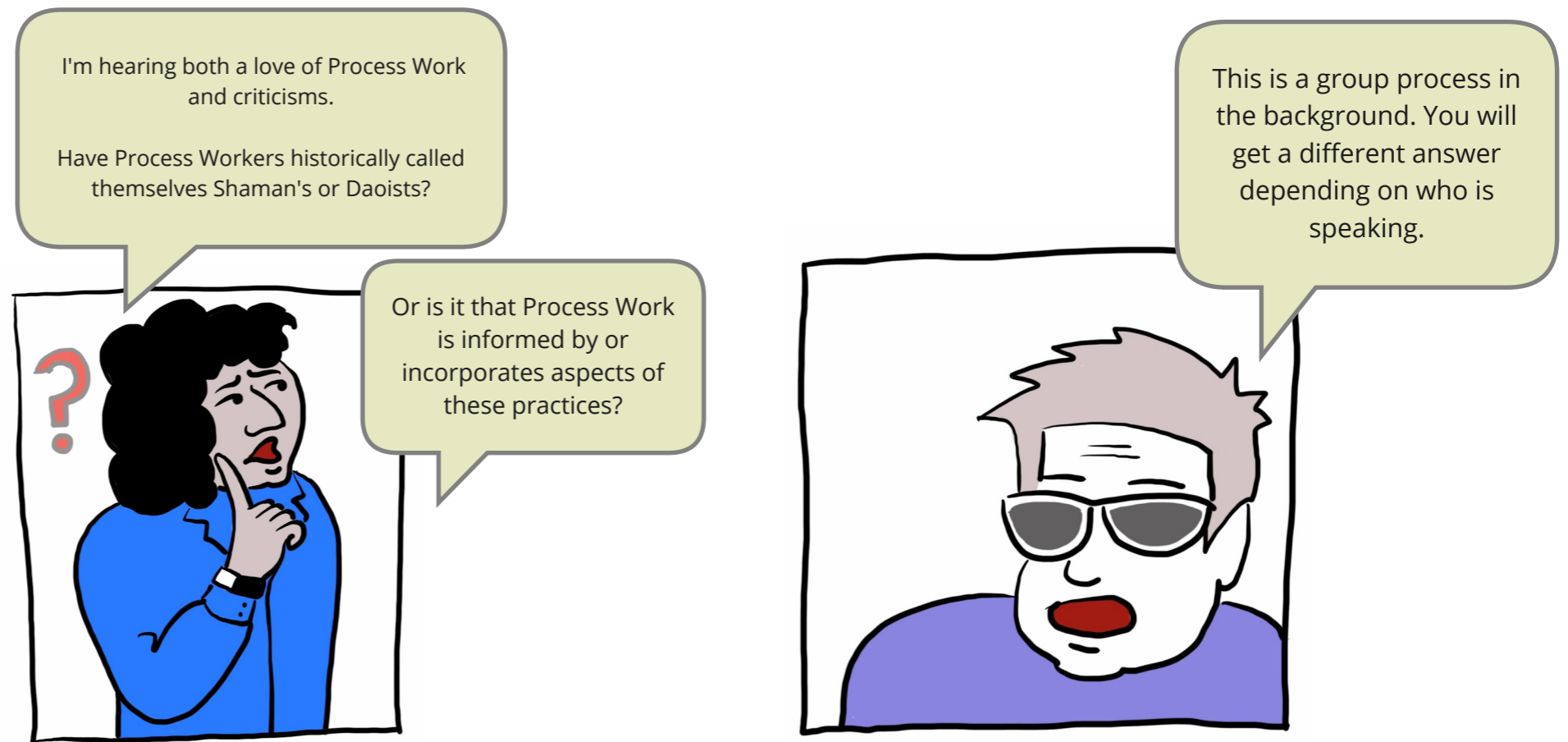
## ARCHETYPES the heroines/ heroes journey.

the process is in me and everybody

I don't see you need to call that Shamanism any longer.



## The new comer



## EDGES

To connect to my own nature through my own process and the signals that are happening. It's a path out of appropriating without deeply honouring those cultures.

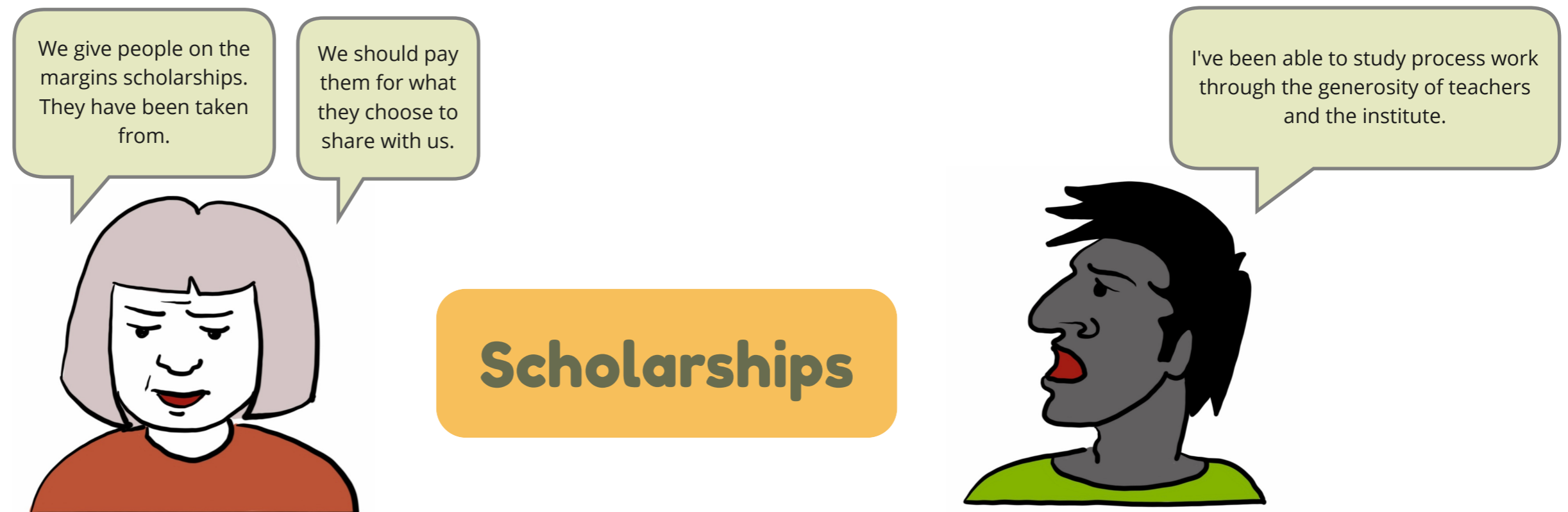
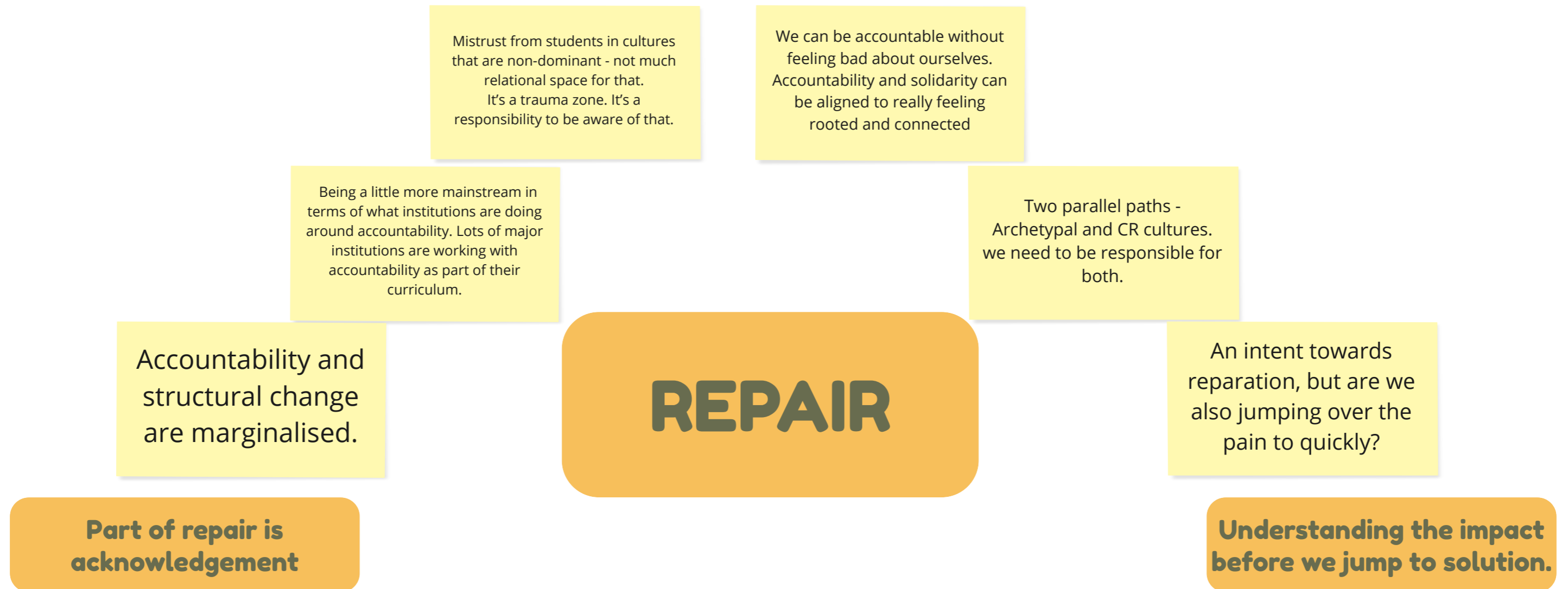
I have glossed over it and I didn't know the depth of the tradition. I was trying to serve a teaching goal without framing what I didn't know.

I continue to learn about the impact and my white washing

The arrogance that I know more about your culture than you do. Really I know nothing.

To learn more about the interface of what we really want to teach.

A barrier around ACCOUNTABILITY.  
A fear that if we are accountable we will lose the mystical roots of Process Work and the deep impact of bringing in the dreaming.



These discussions are co-creative, emergent and working towards repair. with people from around the world who want to offer something to Process Work.

## **CLOSING**

**Process Work is fluid and we can be the Process Workers we want to be. We can grow, develop and shift how we talk about these things.  
We are excited.**