

SAGELYCREATIVE.COM

Information for clients in the cultural heritage and museum sector

ABOUT US

We are a consulting company specializing in working with leaders in the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) space. As scholars, coaches, and mental health professionals, we offer accurate information about inequalities, biases, and their histories alongside an intentionally human, hopeful, and kind approach to healing and change.

Although DEIB can be challenging, we approach our work with as much grace, dignity, and love as possible. With our trauma-informed method, we respond compassionately to the fact that difficult content activates fight-flight-or-flee responses in us all. It is from this space that we encourage growth and help clients see a new path forward to the more inclusive community they desire.

SAGELY'S APPROACH

Our method differs from more traditional approaches that use fact-gathering or historical data as their foundations. Instead, we understand that the neuroscience of emotional processing is central to changing the experiences of people in high-stress environments where discrimination and exclusion have direct impacts. Our support extends a unique opportunity for clients to cultivate deeper self-awareness and use this to anchor their anti-oppressive practices across the heritage sector. We emphasize empathy, reflective listening, and perspective taking as a way of regulating the powerful emotions that dialogues across race, gender, sexuality, and class can evoke. We encourage participants to see themselves as active change-makers who are capable of radical shifts in experience through emotional processing, compassionate witnessing, and narrative rewriting.

We see our work at Sagely as creating a process for clients that continues to

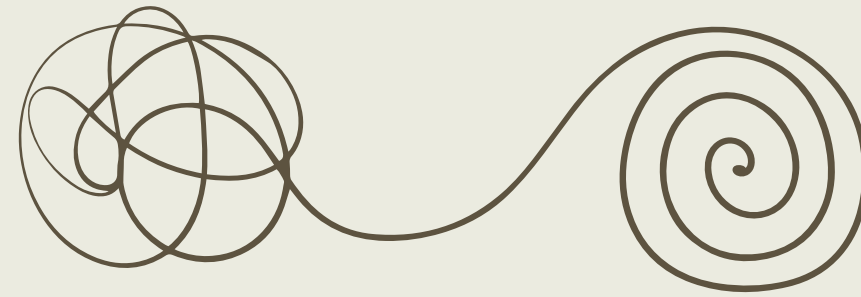
support reflection and change long after our formal work has drawn to a close.

This process features the ability to recognize and value duality, complexity, and hold dialectical positions with compassion. By design, it is not a list of strategies or outcomes that participants must strive towards. Instead, they gain the skills and tools to walk and lead others on a path to more and more inclusivity.

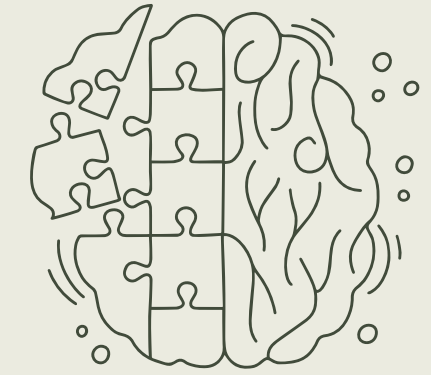
In practice, this trauma-informed approach empowers leaders to create inclusive spaces with compassion, emphasizing the potential for every staff member to deepen authentic DEIB practices through allyship. By creating avenues for compassionate dialogue, we facilitate understanding and healing and support participants to apply their insights within their institutions. As social workers, coaches, and educators, we meet people where they are and envision alongside them their highest potential.



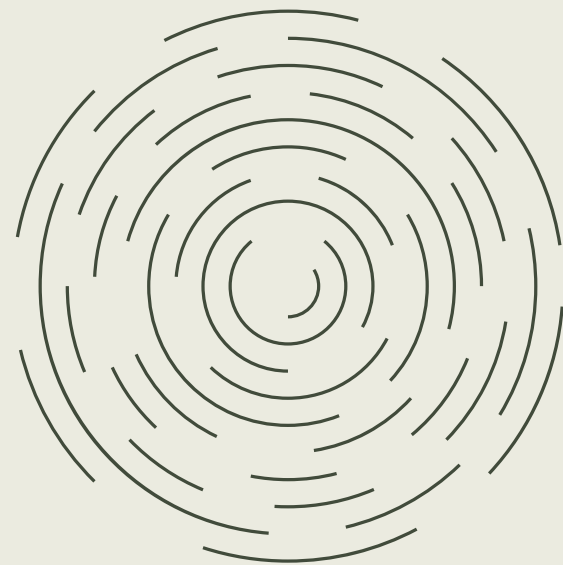
Trauma and stress can overwhelm our nervous systems and make it hard to take the most elegant and effective next step.



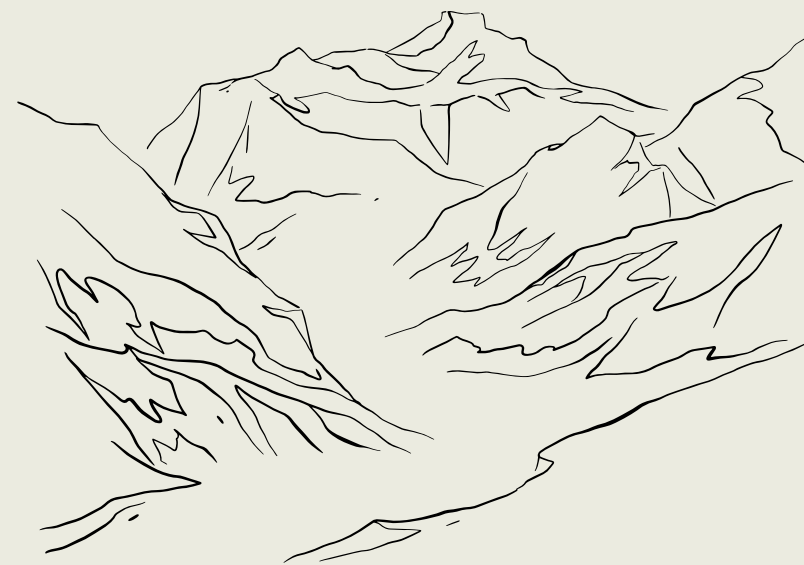
We seek to ground clients and organizations so that safety and calm remain central in our interactions. This opens up space for more nuanced, regulated, and reflective conversations.



Through small group cohorts, participants explore their responses to case studies and deepen self-awareness of personal experiences with inclusion and belonging.



As participants gain awareness about their own experiences at the micro level, their capacity to influence macro anti-oppression work within their institutions grows.



We approach our work as teaching a *process*, rather than a list of technical DEIB solutions. This process continues to support reflection and change long after our formal work has drawn to a close.



Sagely's process is one of constantly bringing attention to what generates healing: relatedness, transparency, interconnectedness, hope, and belonging.

SUPPORTING MUSEUMS

Trauma inheres in museum spaces, informs people's experiences of their work, generates feelings of urgency, encourages workers to erase granularity and nuance, and leads to the desire to fix systemic injustices as quickly as possible. Staff working on the frontline of these complexities experience emotions in line with the historical origins of museum practice. In essence, they are responding naturally to their environment, much like a tree growing according to its soil. Our support fertilizes and aerates the soil, helping you create lasting and effective change.

Fortunately or unfortunately, systems science teaches us that the fastest way-

out of a system is often the fastest way back in. Change requires reflection.

At Sagely, our approach illuminates this dynamic by helping individuals observe the link between their immediate experiences of discomfort and stress and their social, cultural, historical, and political contexts. This allows client team members to approach problem solving and community building with creativity, poise, and confidence in ways that are sustainable and rewarding. Building a person's and a team's capacity to sit with pain and discomfort takes the burden of change off any one individual's shoulders and instead allows more sustainable solutions to emerge. This method is particularly effective in museum spaces.

SERVICES

EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS

We all have the capacity to be present and move through high stress environments without overwhelm. When we do, it helps those around us return to a sense of safety—that's where inclusion starts. Our workshops give leaders the chance to practice engaging in this manner.

We share with you concepts and skills that therapists and coaches use to help others heal. Most importantly, you learn how to protect yourself from burnout while building inclusion, which gives you more calm and energy to do your work well.

Skills we cover:

- accessible details about the neuroscience of trauma healing so that you can promote connection and inclusion
- how to use systemic-level thinking to engage with others in a non-activated way
- how to spot fight-flight-or-flee activation in others, including in inherited stories about self worth that surface more readily in times of stress
- practices to regulate your nervous system in order to be present with activated people

SERVICES

LEADERSHIP PLANNING AND SUPPORT

We work with key leaders to create the framework for a centralized and thorough culture change program. Our initial plan begins with 20-30 hours of support and evolves according to your needs. We help you spot themes, identify patterns, and envision solutions. You benefit from our bird's eye perspective and, most importantly, you know and feel that you are not alone in the process. We determine together where to focus your efforts, what you can accomplish internally, and where external help is most effective.

REFLECTIVE GROUP SPACES

We create group programs and events that foster connection. Employees feel more supported because they clearly see what is impacting their experience and they do not feel alone in seeking resolution. Our groups are tailored to the needs of each organization we work with. They meet regularly and respond to the needs of the participants.

SERVICES

SUPPORT FOR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

We combine our expertise in coaching and trauma-informed pedagogy to support museums as they build educational experiences. We help you communicate information in a non-activating way; create experiences that allow for processing rather than activation; and prepare employees to support visitors in a trauma-informed way.

SYSTEMS MAPPING

We combine micro and macro methodologies to build systems maps for heritage institutions that act as a visual compass, illuminating the institutions current realities. Seeing data visualized in this way helps to create more intentional and sustainable organisational change. Alongside mapping the systems of your organization, we build capacity within the institution for transformation.

OUR TEAM

Sagely co-founders, Lesley Curtis and Cord Whitaker, are trained academics specializing in the literature and history of racism and movements challenging its impact. Alex Rose is an internationally experienced social worker with expertise in cultural heritage and museums. Robyn Smith is a licensed clinical social worker and therapist. She gives inclusive leaders the knowledge and practice that trauma therapists receive, helping them act and respond in high-stress situations with clarity and ease.

As a team, we keep one eye on the specific challenges of the heritage sector and another on the complex social and cultural contexts in which leaders are striving to make change. Our method combines the expertise of educators, neuroscientists, therapists, and social workers to support inclusive leaders. We provide not only intellectual knowledge, but a felt sense of belonging and hope. Our clients, in turn, model this experience in their respective communities.



LESLEY CURTIS



CORD WHITAKER



ALEXANDRA ROSE



ROBYN SMITH