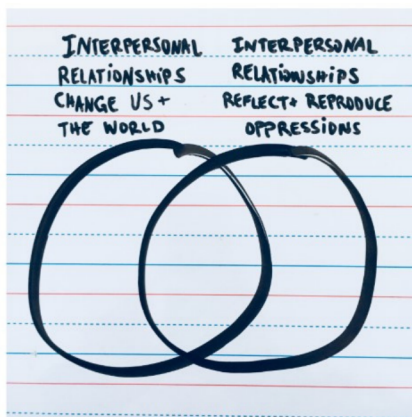


Activity 4: Tools for Addressing Conflict

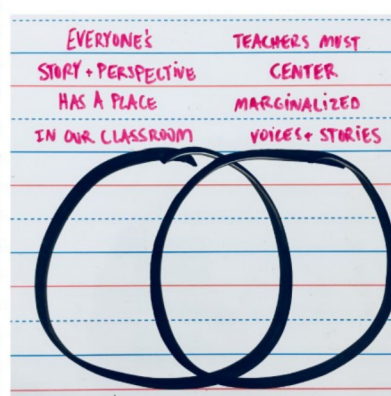
Vent Diagrams

Vent Diagrams (@vent_diagrams) was started by E.M./Elana Eisen-Markowitz and Rachel Schragis. It is a tool that can be used to work through conflict by drawing attention to two statements that appear to be true and appear to be contradictory. The overlapping middle is left unlabeled. Their description of vent diagrams notes that “Making vent diagrams as a practice helps us recognize and reckon with contradictions and keep imagining and acting from the intersections and overlaps”.

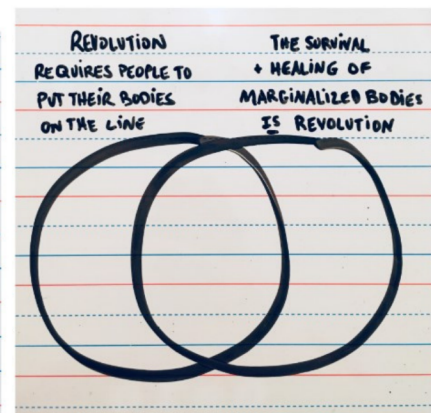
Here are a couple examples from a workshop that E.M. facilitated with a group of queer highschoolers about queer art and activism:



Interpersonal relationships change us and the world / Interpersonal relationships reflect and reproduce oppression.

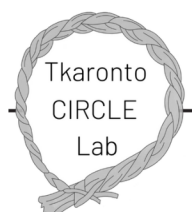


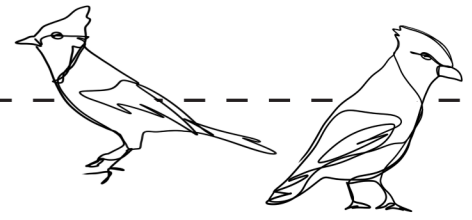
Everyone's story and perspective has a place in our classroom / Teachers must center marginalized voices and stories



Revolution requires people to put their bodies on the line / The survival of marginalized bodies is revolution

Vent diagrams can be helpful for when the conflict is arising between two things that are true and also contradictory, or between two important and opposing perspectives, values, or approaches. It can help move the conversation beyond dichotomies. The purpose is not to try and find common ground or compromise, but to acknowledge the co-existence of multiple truths.





Activity 4:
Tools for Addressing Conflict

Intention and Impact Tables

When approaching a conversation about a particular conflict, mapping out what you know vs. what you don't know can be helpful, especially in situations where someone is making assumptions about another person's motives or intentions. This mapping out can be done using an impact and intentions table.

	What you know	What you don't know
Intention	Your intentions	Their intentions
Impact	The impact they had on you	The impact you had on them

Focusing on intention and impact doesn't work unless you are willing to apologize *regardless of intention*. Even if the intention was not to harm someone, the impact can still be harmful. This can be a helpful tool if both participants have done and experienced harm, or if assumptions are being made about intentions.

Sometimes the example of playing frisbee is used to talk about why intentions matter less. If I throw a frisbee and it hits you in the face, you are harmed. Someone can be hurt whether that was the intention or not. Still, whether a frisbee was thrown at someone's face intentionally or accidentally is important - the intent can vastly impact the relationship moving forward. Intent is not irrelevant, however, where harm is done, an apology is appropriate *regardless of intention*.

