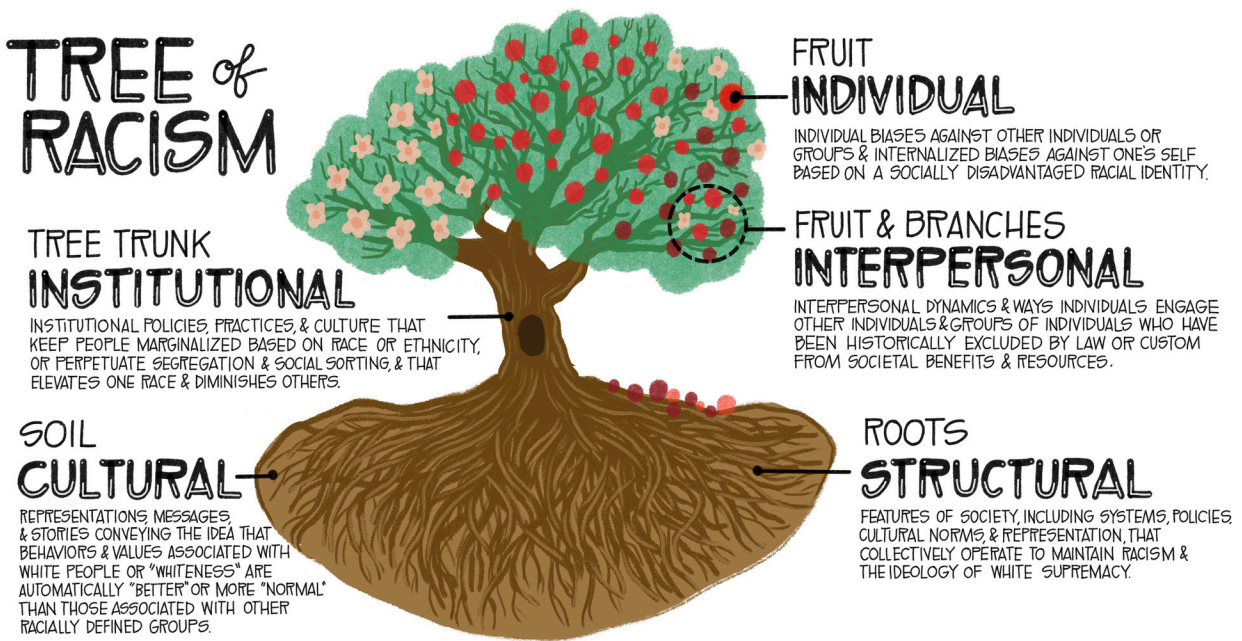


Activity #2: An Ecosystem Lens



Purpose: This activity is designed to help practitioners apply a Fruit and Root Analysis™ to their ecosystem context.



Grounding: In order to effectively work through these questions, think about the way that your ecosystem functions: the spoken and unspoken rules of operating, the ecosystem culture including who has power and who doesn't, how power is wielded or shared, the ways workers and learners are valued, honored, and supported or not.



Time: This activity will take approximately 3.5 hours.



Process:

1. Getting Started (10–15 min.)

- a. Silently, each individual will write down all of the key actors in your workforce, education, or career pathways ecosystem. Consider the following groups as you write down the key actors (individuals directly impacted, those involved in training, those providing funding, significant employers in your region, key legislative leaders):
 - i. Students, learners, and workers

- ii. The education system (including K–12, CTE, post-secondary partners)

iii. Nonprofit training partners (CBOs, workforce providers)

iv. Public partners (the public workforce system, human and social service partners)


v. Employers and business partners

vi. Advocacy, policy, and legislative partners

vii. Philanthropic partners and funding avenues (private, corporate, and individual giving)

b. At the end of the 15 min., move to the next step in the process.

2. **Discussing the Responses** (5 min. per person):

- a. Each person will share their list of key actors with the team.
- b. Designate one person on your team to capture all of the key actors identified through the team discussion.
- c. Identify where there are similarities and differences among who has been identified as key actors. Discuss differences.
-  d. **ACTION:** Finalize your comprehensive list of key actors.
- e. After discussion is complete, move to the next step in the process.

3. **Asking Questions** (30–60 min.):

- a. While looking at the list of key actors, the team will engage in an open discussion using the following prompts.
- b. Designate one person on the team to capture responses to the questions below.
 - i. How might these levels of racism be manifesting in your workforce, education, or career pathways ecosystem?

ii. How and where have you seen the levels of racism manifesting among the key actors in your ecosystem?

iii. Which levels of racism do you see manifesting more than others (if any)?

iv. Which actors hold power and which ones do not?

v. What are the spoken and unspoken rules of operating among key actors?

vi. How do key actors engage and partner with one another (or not)?

vii. How are workers, learners, and students treated and engaged among key actors (e.g., undervalued, valued, dismissed, engaged, seen as assets or liabilities)?

- c. Review and discuss the responses and themes to the questions.
- d. After discussion is complete, move to the next step in the process.

4. Speculating about the Meaning (60 min.)

- a. Review the responses to the questions in step 3 and answer the following questions.
- b. Designate one person on the team to capture key themes and takeaways to the below questions.
 - i. What does this tell us about how racism is manifesting in our ecosystem?

ii. Which actors appear to be unintentionally perpetuating racism?

iii. Which actors appear to be actively disrupting the manifestations of racism?

- c. Review the key themes and takeaways and discuss collective responses as a team.
- d. After discussion is complete, move to the next step in the process.

5. **Discussing Implications for Our Work** (60 min.)

- a. One person on the team invites everyone to share key takeaways from the meaning making discussion.
- b. One designated person will whiteboard the takeaways, themes, and implications. Answer the following prompts in your discussion about implications.
 - i. What is our role in addressing or disrupting the manifestations of racism in our ecosystem?

ii. What role are we best suited to play in addressing or disrupting the manifestations in our ecosystem?

iii. Who can we partner with to address or disrupt the manifestations of racism in our ecosystem?

iv. What is our immediate next step?



- c. **ACTION:** The team will work together to identify immediate next steps that can be taken to ensure that this new analysis is reflected in their work. Consider using [this action planning template](#) to outline the action steps identified.