



THE WAKE UP: How to Create Real DEI Transformation

*with Michelle MiJung Kim &
Michelle Meow*

DIVERSITY
EQUITY
INCLUSION
BELONGING

About the Series

Increasingly, Out & Equal's member companies recognize that, while necessary, standard DEI efforts fall short in addressing the most vital component of retention and growth: feeling like you belong. Developing an organizational culture of belonging is hard – especially right now. COVID realities, Gen Z and Y redefining the workplace, and increased racially charged bias and violence all are driving the urgency and importance of establishing cultures of belonging now. *Practitioners for Change* brings critical conversations about racial equity and mental health and wellness to the forefront of DEI praxis.

Powered by [Capital One](#), the series is designed to help sustain practitioners both as professionals, and as people by weaving together critical conversations about racial equity, mental health, and well-being.

[Visit our website to learn more about the series and to access other sessions.](#)



About the Session

As practitioners in the DEI space, we know that achieving lasting DEI change is hard work. You've probably had a conversation with someone who says, "I really want to be a good ally, but..." That "but" often leads to fears about saying or doing the wrong thing, or not doing or knowing enough to make a big impact. How can you respond in a way that supports, educates, and inspires that person to overcome their fear or insecurity and take action?

Join Michelle Meow and Michelle MiJung Kim for a deep dive into what it takes to go beyond performative allyship to enact real transformation within ourselves and our organizations. Through her four key principles (grounding, orienting, showing up, and moving together) Michelle MiJung Kim will not only build up your own capacity for change-making, but give you the tools to inspire others to act, too.

We encourage you to host internal viewings and discussion of this talk using the recording and discussion questions outlined in this resource.

Michelle MiJung Kim



Michelle MiJung Kim (she/her) is a queer immigrant Korean American woman writer, speaker, activist, and entrepreneur. She is the author of [The Wake Up](#) and the CEO and co-founder of [Awaken](#), a leading provider of interactive equity and inclusion education programs facilitated by majority BIPOC educators, where she has consulted hundreds of organizations and top executives to spark meaningful change.

Michelle currently serves on the board of [Asian Americans for Civil Rights and Equality \(AACRE\)](#). Her work has appeared on world-renowned platforms such as Harvard Business Review, Forbes, The New York Times, and NPR, and she has been named Medium's Top Writer in Diversity three years in a row.

Michelle Meow

Michelle Meow (she/her) is the host and producer of the Michelle Meow Show on radio and TV. The program's tag line is: 'Your A-Z, covering the LGBT, LMNOP, and everyone in between.' Michelle's show can be heard in San Francisco and nationally on the Progressive Voices Network and her local TV show can be seen on KBCW TV and Channel 44.

She also produces programs at the iconic [Commonwealth Club in San Francisco](#) where she also serves on their Board of Governors. Since 2006, Michelle has been a co-host of the San Francisco Pride Parade broadcast and she served as the President of their Board of Directors from 2014-2018.

She has interviewed notable thought-leaders such as Olympic medalist Adam Rippon and first American woman in space, and Sally Ride's widow Tam O'Shaughnessy.



“On our path to collective liberation, we must continuously strive to understand the web of interconnectedness of different systemic oppressions while reminding ourselves that these interdependencies while complex, are also what bind us together in solidarity”

Source: Michelle MiJung Kim, *The Wake Up*, (2021).

Discussion Questions

1. What is your "why" for doing the work of diversity, equity, and inclusion?
2. Why is it important to consider the intentions behind our inclusive practices, and how do we avoid making performative changes?
3. What does it mean to "center the most marginalized?" What's the trap that individuals can fall into when using the term and how do we solve for that?
4. What is important to remember about the evolution of language? How is a to-do list of action items incomplete in DEI work?

When it comes to social justice work, we often default to asking for the "what" first because we've been trained to crave immediate actionable solutions... what many fail to understand is that the what without the "why" can bring about shallow and misguided outcomes¹

¹ Michelle MiJung Kim, *The Wake Up*, (2021).



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