

# THEORY OF CHANGE



## W.O.M.A.N., INC.

WOMEN ORGANIZED TO MAKE ABUSE  
NONEXISTENT, INC.



# THEORY OF CHANGE

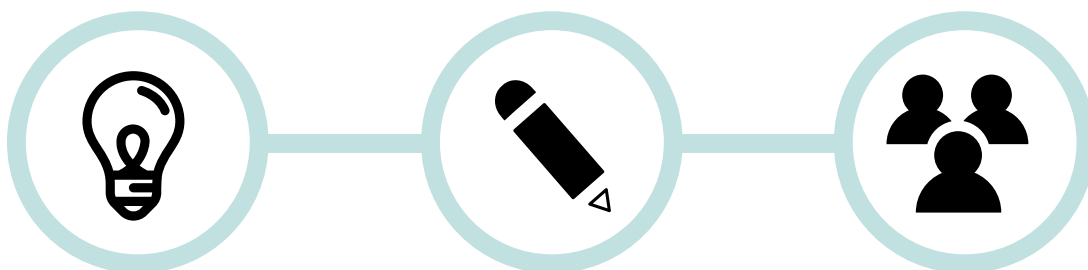
As you may know, our previous strategic plan "sunsetted" in July of 2018. Setting organizational goals and objectives was pivotal in creating work plans and evaluating the quantitative elements of our services. Nevertheless, we encountered a greater need along the way: the need to flesh out our organization's DNA, and to create connective tissue between our and objectives and the social change we work toward every day. Having surfaced this need, we understood that developing a new strategic plan would not be enough given our current circumstances and we entered into a six month long theory of change process.

**A theory of change (TOC) serves as a conduit between an organization and the larger community, communicating long term vision, serving as an organization's North Star for years to come.** It can be utilized as a litmus test of sorts as an organization considers new programming, in key decisions or when grappling with potential

organizational growth, for example. **It goes deeper than a strategic plan by offering organizational context along with setting goals and programmatic milestones.** Having defined key messaging in values in the years past, we saw the creation of a theory of change as the perfect culmination of these efforts.

The Leadership Team, on average, met twice a month, and established our assumptions, hypotheses, and goals. Along the way, we found the need to revise our mission statement to better reflect our ultimate impact. Our work was bolstered by the expertise and facilitation of our beloved 'free radical', Sharon Turner. Her guidance toward the end of our process helped us solidify consensus on the content.

We hope this theory of change resonates with you; it is what we think needs to happen in the domestic violence field in this moment, and what we want to build together, moving forward.



## HYPOTHESES

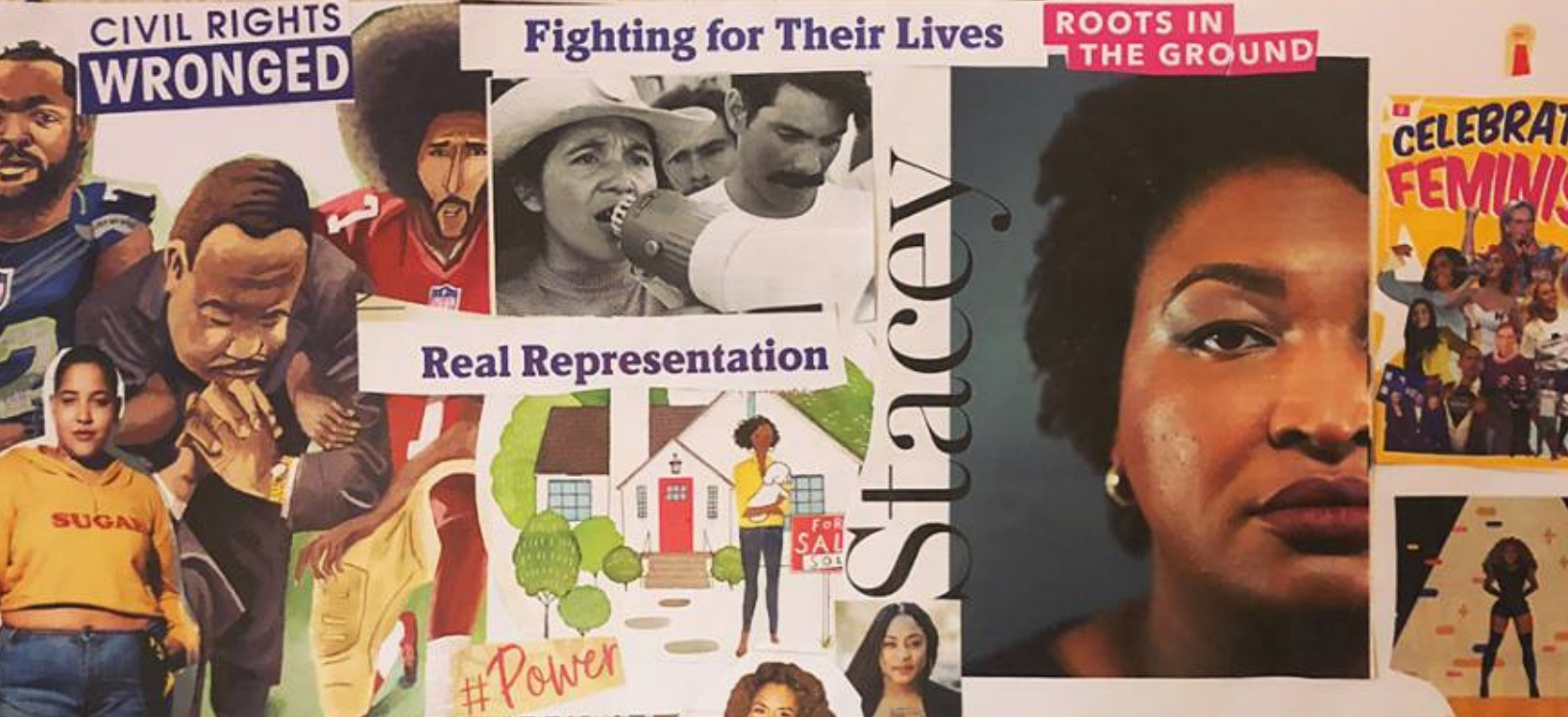
Brainstorm assumptions & desired goals

## STRATEGIES

Delineate action items to obtain desired goals

## OUTCOMES

Establish short term & long term projected impacts



## MISSION

W.O.M.A.N., Inc.  
supports survivors of  
domestic violence  
and their loved ones  
along their healing  
journeys, bridging  
value-rich networks  
designed to address  
intersections of  
violence.

# ULTIMATE IMPACT

We work toward collective liberation; everyone deserves to feel safe in their bodies, in their homes and in their community.

## Guiding inferences

- Domestic violence (DV) intersects with other levels of oppression such as racism, xenophobia, homophobia and transphobia.
- The DV field has a history of being insulated from other fields and social justice movements. Often times, this isolation comes at the price of innovation and lack of relevant needs assessment, leading us away from collective liberation.
- An opportunity lies in embracing cultural humility and individual healing practices rooted in ancestry, art, natural helpers, and grassroots support.
- Womxn of color, especially black womxn, have been systematically marginalized both as program participants and as staff in the DV field. This, in part, has led to the replication of white dominant culture habits reflected in our services, practices, policies and procedures.
- "Power-over" dynamics present in unhealthy relationships, can be mirrored within an organization between advocate and survivor. This approach negates the potential of survivors, without making space for their leadership development. In addition, this "power-over" approach can result in the centering of advocate need and comfort, versus a survivor-centered approach.
- When an advocate or an organization is viewed as 'the expert', we marginalize and disempower survivors, and potentially disconnect them from their established networks of natural helpers and support systems.
- Finally, this replicated power-over approach can result in a lack of leadership development for staff; especially staff who are women of color who are consistently sidelined and othered in our field, and society as a whole.

# DESIRED OUTCOMES & STRATEGIC GOALS

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**IF WE EMBRACE TARGETED UNIVERSALISM\* AND SURVIVOR CENTERED APPROACHES IN OUR WORK, THEN WE CAN BETTER RESPOND TO THE EMERGING NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE WE SUPPORT.**

**01** Bolster intersectional collaborations and networks to encourage communities to build on their own strengths.

**IF WE ELEVATE HISTORICALLY MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES, THEN WE WILL INCREASE OUR CULTURAL HUMILITY AS WE LEARN FROM AND WITH OUR PARTICIPANTS.**

**02** Engage natural helpers within specific communities to address domestic violence.

**IF WE SUSTAIN A LEADERFUL ORGANIZATION, THEN WE WILL HAVE CREATED A CULTURE OF SHARED POWER.**

**03** Create funding model that is diverse and allows for experimentation in approach, programming and community engagement.

**04** Uphold racial equity as a key tenet of our work.

\*Targeted Universalism: A strategy that seeks to impact a universal change while paying particular attention to how a policy, approach or guideline might specifically impact members of historically marginalized groups.