

## I'm the Only One

### Looks like:

- The belief that if something is going to be done right, **I have to do it**. Connected to the organizational characteristic of individualism.
- Individuals with this belief often have little or no ability to trust and delegate work to others—those on the receiving end of this **lack of trust** have difficulty feeling respected and valued.
- Linked to a culture of **perfectionism and disempowerment**.
- This belief can contribute significantly to **burnout and resentment** in organizations given individuals' reduced capacity to ask for help and share the work, to be open to other perspectives or ways of doing, and to trust others' abilities.

### Key Questions to Help Y'all Reflect and Discuss:

- What are my relationships to the people, places, and ideas involved in this project?
- Who are the different people, and what are the different perspectives, that are necessary for the success of this task, project, or mission? What skills, resources, and initiatives already exist in the team? Am I seeking out existing team knowledge and expertise?
- How am I/are we perceived by others with whom I/we collaborate? How does this affect the work I am/we are engaged in? How do I/we acknowledge and address unequal power dynamics within a relationship? What kinds of accommodations or changes do I/we need to make in order to form relationships that are more equitable and more collaborative?
- How am I integrating our learning into the work as it moves forward?
- How are we supporting our staff and volunteers to reflect, learn and improve their abilities to work as a team?

## I'm the Only One (cont.)

### Antidotes:

- **Embed teamwork and collaboration** in the organization's values, structures, policies and ways of doing.
- Ensure that the organization is working toward shared goals and that people have a collective will to learn from mistakes together. Understand growth and success to be a matter of collective, rather than individual, achievement.
- Foster a **culture of mutual support** where people feel safe bringing problems to the group.
- Use team meetings as a place to solve problems and break workplace isolation, not just as a place to report activities.
- Articulate that **collaboration is a key skill** you need in yourself and your team, and evaluate people based on their ability to work as part of a team (and other 'soft skills') and to accomplish shared goals.
- Make sure that recognition is given to all those who participate in an effort, not just the leaders or most public person.