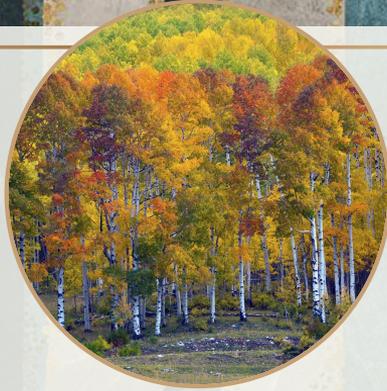




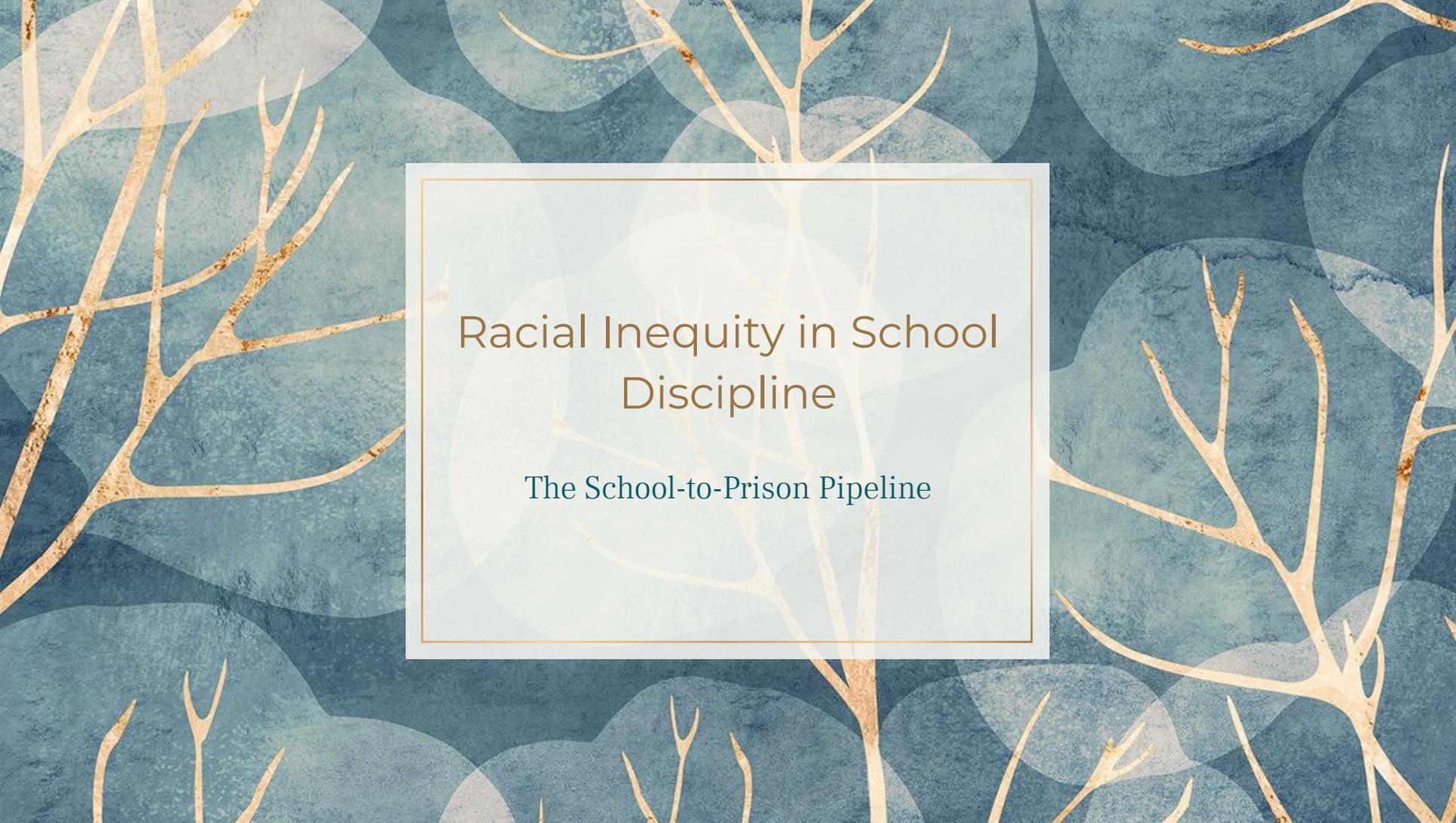
Restorative
Justice Practices
& Racial Justice



HELLO!

My name is Allison Meier.

I have supported the implementation of restorative practices in schools across Colorado.



Racial Inequity in School Discipline

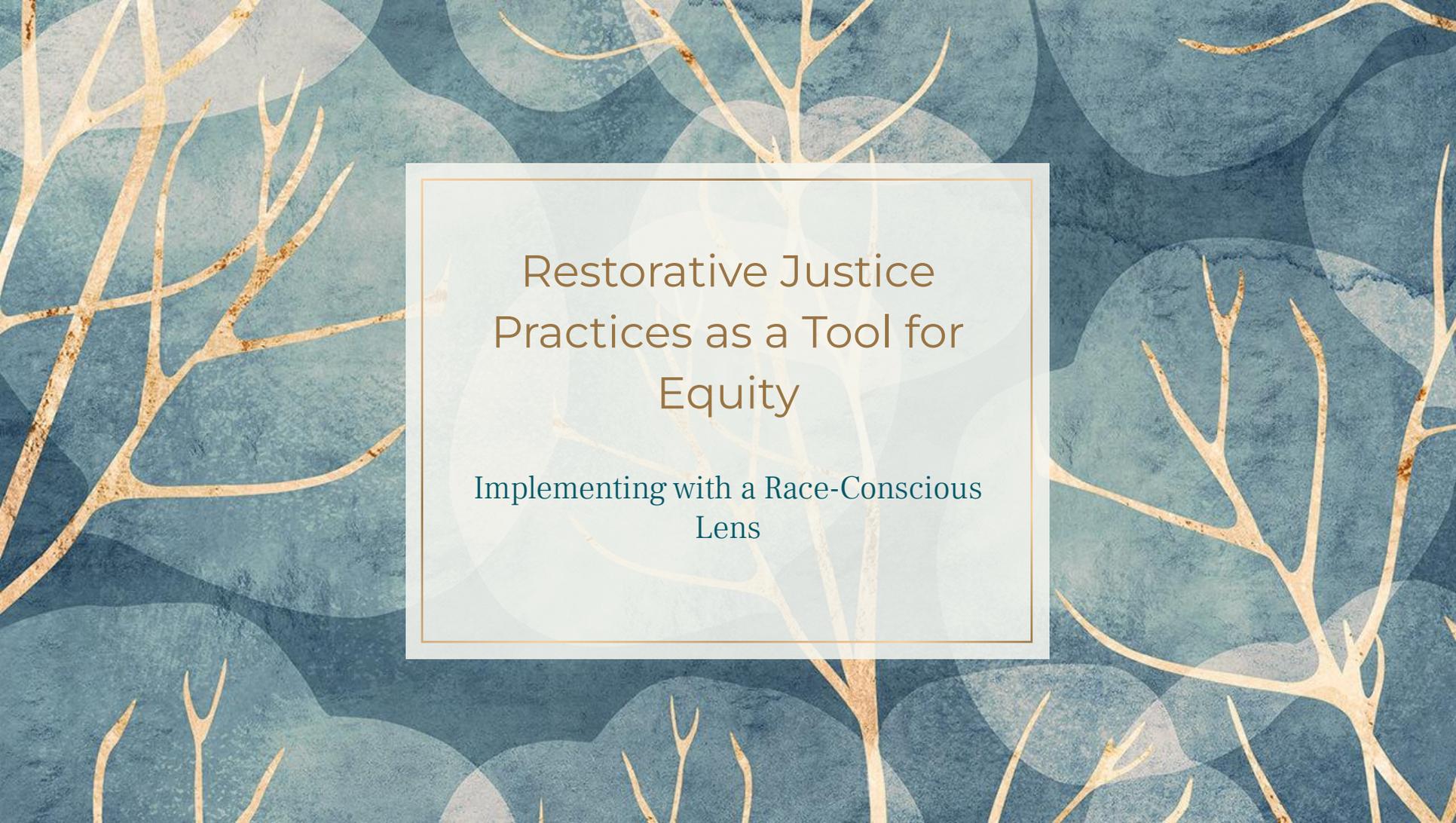
The School-to-Prison Pipeline

The School-to-Prison Pipeline

“A disturbing national trend wherein children are funneled out of public schools and into the juvenile and criminal justice systems. Many of these children have learning disabilities or histories of poverty, abuse, or neglect, and would benefit from additional educational and counseling services. Instead, they are isolated, punished, and pushed out.”

-As defined by the ACLU





Restorative Justice Practices as a Tool for Equity

Implementing with a Race-Conscious
Lens

Community-Building Circles

How Circles Promote Equity & Inclusion

- Circles create a space for **sharing perspective across identities**. Storytelling, especially from voices that are traditionally marginalized, gives the individual the power to create their own narratives.
- By honoring oral tradition and by valuing both the individual voice and the collective experience, circles are a **culturally responsive** practice.
- When we feel connected to someone, we are less likely to act on our pre-conditioned biases and **more likely to make more generous assumptions** about them as an individual.
- When we feel a sense of belonging, we are more likely to vocalize when our needs are not being met. This **culture of feedback** is essential to equitable spaces.

Community-Building Circles

Additional Considerations:

- Do my guidelines take into account how power and privilege might be operating in my space? Do they contribute to an environment where we can practice authentic listening?
- Have I considered how circles might place an additional burden on our marginalized community members? Have I included supports for those folks? Have I created an environment of and avenues for getting feedback?
- Are our circle prompts culturally responsive? Are they trauma-informed?

Restorative Conversations

How Restorative Conversations Promote Equity & Inclusion

- Adults pause before reacting to a behavior to hear the student's perspective and provide **a more individualized and supportive response**.
- Slowing down, when coupled with training and reflection, can help adults **recognize when we are acting on biases** and when we are intentionally making decisions.
- Rather than being escalated through a classroom management ladder, students are able to share their perspective and give feedback to the adult, which ultimately **strengthens relationships and trust** between adults and students.
- When we engage in a reflective conversation with the student, **the student has voice and choice** in determining the consequences for their behavior.

Restorative Conversations

Additional Considerations:

- Are our school or classroom rules and policies culturally responsive?
- Did students have a voice in designing classroom and school-wide expectations?
- Do adults value student feedback?

Formal Conferencing & Harm Circles

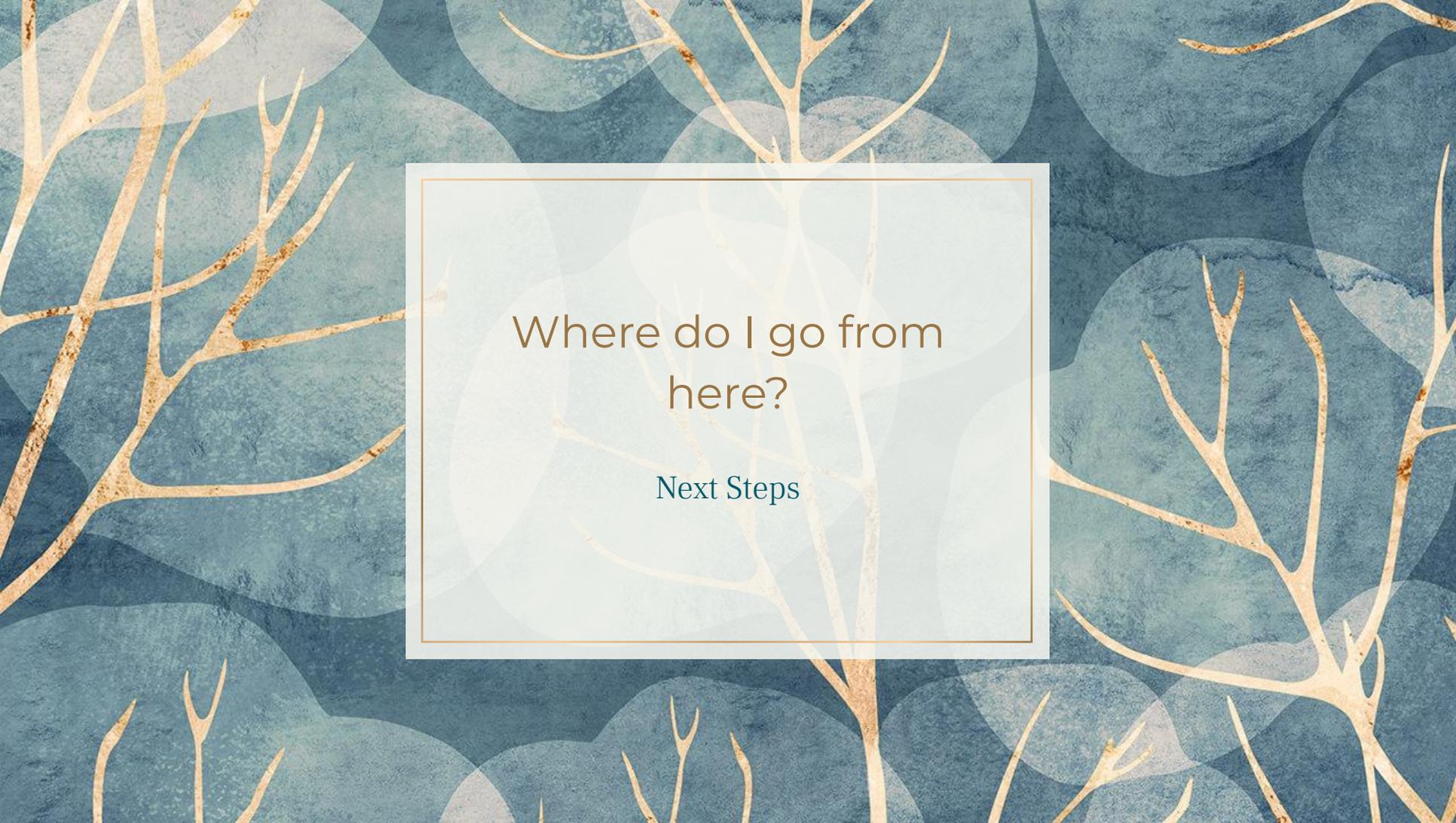
How Conferences & Harm Circles Promote Equity & Inclusion

- While this process can still honor the intentions of our behavior, it emphasizes the impact the behavior has on our community and those individuals who are a part of it. By **prioritizing impact over intention**, we can engage in conversations about how we contribute to inequity and inclusivity even when we don't intend it to.
- **Perspective-sharing** increases understanding of identities different from our own.
- Students may **not be suspended or referred to law enforcement**, which contributes to the school-to-prison pipeline and disproportionately impacts marginalized identities.

Formal Conferencing & Harm Circles

Additional Considerations:

- Do facilitators recognize and explore the underlying influence of race, gender, ability, language and other facets of identity on a given conflict? Have we asked what healing looks like for a community-member instead of inserting our own thoughts?
- Are facilitators mindful of perspective-sharing and how that can be more burdensome for folks from marginalized identities? Have we put supports in place in recognition of the imbalance of power?



Where do I go from
here?

Next Steps

POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS

IMPLEMENTATION

Review your school or classroom restorative justice practices implementation with an anti-racist lens, including school policies

Collect and analyze data that is disaggregated on a regular basis

Set intentional time for relationship-building

Create systems of accountability and feedback

Partner authentically with young people and their families

In order to be a tool for equity, training in and implementation of restorative justice practices must be coupled with anti-racism work, including implicit bias, culturally responsive teaching, and trauma-informed practices.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Read and reflect on the origins of restorative justice practices with an anti-racist lens

Ensure you are exposed to both windows and mirrors

Reflect on your own personal and cultural experiences and grow your understanding of the lens through which you see the world

Learn about the cultures of the students you serve



*In a racist society, it is not
enough to be non-racist. We
must be anti-racist.*

Angela Davis



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