



# How gs is changing



Past gs leadership forwarded a longstanding commitment to racial justice and movements led by working class Black, Indigenous, People of Color. The current staff and board are building on that foundation and responding to **calls for transformation** to more deeply embody **racial justice and collective power**. We approach organizational change as both relational (how we are with one another) and systemic (how that is codified in structures and policies).



The power structure at gs now includes more of our voices, vision, and a renewed commitment to a community shaping the organization rather than a few leaders. A beloved elder of mine has always mentioned that "many hands make light work." I can see that this is one of the guiding ethos in this iteration of gs and the work it is forwarding."

- Nazbah Tom,  
gs teacher, practitioner,  
and organizational  
development advisor

## New practices and actions

### CENTERING BLACK, INDIGENOUS, PEOPLE OF COLOR

- Consistently dedicating the majority of organizational time and resources to collaborate with BIPOC leadership and decenter whiteness.
- The wisdom of BIPOC bodies, multiple embodied paths, and indigenous knowledge is reflected in who leads gs programs, what programs we run, and how programs look and feel.

### SHARED POWER

- Building a culture of belonging and care.
- Distributing organizational leadership.
- Supporting a wide circle of gs teachers and practitioners to lead and experiment with gs' methodology and collectively hold the commitment to offer it accountably.





**In an all-BIPOC environment, there was spaciousness for participants to share stories, tend to their wounds, and become more whole. By taking care of the contractions that often happen for BIPOC when there are white people in the room, what emerged was freedom."**

- Donaji Lona, gs teacher, practitioner, and community organizer



## ORGANIC PACE

- Being responsive to the urgent needs of our communities and movements, while prioritizing relationships, accepting limitations, and finding gs' right role amongst many leaders and organizations doing similar work.
- Deciding programmatic offers collaboratively based on teachers and practitioners' collective vision and capacity.

## TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY

- Communicating transparently about organizational struggles while holding past and current leadership with dignity.
- Listening generously to critical feedback, taking what we learn seriously, and taking timely action toward change.

## Highlights



### IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS:

- We ran gs' first BIPOC-only course and started a training to specifically develop BIPOC practitioners as somatic supervisors.
- The Daily Practice Space is led by a wide group of majority BIPOC teachers and practitioners who are learning from each other's bodies, valuing one another's contributions, and being paid the same wage. (learn more and register [here!](#))
- In response to feedback that working and teaching with gs was unsustainable, pay rates were substantially increased and we actively consider teachers and consultants' personal lives (and how they intersect with their class/race/gender/ability) and invite their boundaries in our work together.
- gs staff shifted to a 30-hour workweek grounded in lessons from COVID, current political conditions, our ongoing caregiving responsibilities, values of racial and economic justice, collective care and wellness.



## Current Priorities


- **Address anti-Black racism** in gs by responding to requests, developing vision, organizing our community, and strengthening our capacity to support Black leaders and movements.
  - **Decolonize the gs lineage** and acknowledge and visibilize BIPOC roots and current contributions.
  - **Widen organizational culture change** by inviting all teachers and practitioners to be in new practices together.
  - **Integrate shared power** into gs systems and decision making structures.
  - **Build a culture of accountability** and practice generative conflict.
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Photo: BIPOC Embodied Leadership course, Fall 2021

### Who contributed to this document:

gs staff (Danielle Feris, Saima Husain, Usa Lee Prompongsatorn), through conversation with gs teachers, practitioners, students, donors, funders, and other community members; with focused input and feedback from gs board (Clay Smith & Sam Jung) and gs teachers/practitioners (Donaji Lona, Erika Lyla & Nazbah Tom).

[www.generativesomatics.org](http://www.generativesomatics.org)

Do you have questions, feedback, or ideas for gs?

**Email us.**

