The most meaningful presentation I have ever seen on race, power imbalances and the exercise of authority.

-Circuit Court Judge, State of Oregon
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INTRODUCTION

Since its founding in Portland, Oregon in 2011, the Red Door Project (RDP) has been recognized as a change leader. Funders, government agencies, media, and the community have identified the RDP as unique in its approach to issues of race and equity. RDP’s founding mission was to change the racial ecology of Portland through the arts. From 2018 to 2021, RDP’s reputation as a change leader has grown beyond Portland. In that time, RDP has worked with justice system leaders across the state of Oregon and beyond, been featured in national news stories, and been requested by theatres, universities, courts, and police departments across the country. The Red Door Project has expanded its mission, reaffirmed its non-binary, systems theory approach to change, and solidified its place as an innovator in arts and culture.

Red Door Project Brief History: How Did We Get Here?

A quick look at initial programming and the goals of previous strategic plans (all of which have been accomplished) reveals a clear path to RDP’s current success and promise.

● 2011-2015 Activities + Goals
  ○ Facilitate post-show talkbacks on challenging topics at Portland’s major theaters.
  ○ Launch PEAC (Portland Equity in the Arts Consortium) to support leaders in five Portland theaters to grow artistic and organizational practices that are authentically conducive to diversity, equity and inclusion.
  ○ Offer national arts education programming to groups of racially diverse Portland high school students through nationally-based August Wilson Monologue Competition.
  ○ Secure revenues from contributed and earned income.

● 2015-2017 Activities + Goals
  ○ Continue facilitating challenging community conversations.
  ○ Continued successful August Wilson Monologue Competition.
  ○ Develop and deliver consulting services based on systems theory perspective.
  ○ Build producing arm of RDP to elevate work of theatre artists of color, especially Black theatre artists (led to production of Hands Up: 7 Playwrights, 7 Testaments).
  ○ Increase revenues from multiple funding streams.

● 2018-2020 Activities + Goals
Identify core values that drive our work:

- Take a Non-Binary Approach
- Be Authentic
- Go There and Have Fun
- Grow the Good
- Stay Humble
- Keep Learning

Pass on successful monologue competition to a local arts organization firmly embedded in Black community and schools (World Stage Theatre).

Build on success of theatrical production, *Hands Up* based on Black playwrights’ experiences with profiling, to create *Cop Out: Beyond Black, White & Blue*, based on interviews with law enforcement, and a third show (*Evolve*) that interweaves both perspectives.

Ground all activities, programming and services in non-binary, systems theory perspective (everything is a system which does three things: Protect, Expand, Evolve). This is what RDP uniquely has to offer.

Combine consulting with productions. Focus on clients primarily from the criminal justice community.

Increase revenues from multiple funding streams.

Current Opportunities and Obstacles

Opportunities/Assets

Unique Collaboration Behind the *Evolve Experience*:

- A remarkable working relationship between the arts and criminal justice sectors is the result of the years-long personal relationship between RDP co-founders Kevin Jones and Lesli Mones, and retired Portland Police Bureau Deputy Chief, Robert Day. Kevin, an award-winning actor and director is RDP’s CEO and Artistic Director. Lesli is an executive and team coach and co-founder of the P2Leaderlab, a leadership development program for women. Bob is a staunch champion for the work and the bridge to criminal justice partners.

Demonstrated Success of the *Evolve Experience*:

- Our preliminary data, based on 104 responses to our post-event surveys, show that 95.9% of participants would recommend this workshop to a colleague. Additionally,
72.1% reported that the workshop made them question or challenge their point of view, 75.1% reported an increased motivation to listen to people with vastly different life experiences, and 70.8% reported an increased motivation to consider an opposing point of view.

- Continuing professional education credits for *The Evolve Experience* offered by government agencies.
- Strong relationships with criminal justice leaders/potential partners across Oregon and nationally.

**Evolve 2.0 - The Online Evolve Experience**

- A digital option for *The Evolve Experience* moves front and center during the pandemic, but it has been in RDP consciousness since *Evolve* was conceived. An online *Evolve Experience* is scalable and could produce considerable income as RDP takes its unique product to a national market.

**An Unfortunate Opportunity**

- The fact that the system is failing communities of color and society at large is front and center in public consciousness during the pandemic, and in the wake of George Floyd's murder. This is an unfortunate, even grisly opportunity, but one that exists and cries out for change. In *The Evolve Experience*, RDP offers a way for leaders to successfully navigate needed change.

**The Right Time**

- In recent years, law enforcement has included trainings on “soft skills” such as unconscious bias and mindfulness. This paves the way for *The Evolve Experience*, which takes this area of learning to the next level by moving leadership capacity beyond increased self-awareness to the skills necessary to navigate change and work effectively with conflict and difference. This is the right time to plan, develop and evaluate, work out bugs, and move toward replication.

**Obstacles/Challenges**

**Red Door Project Internal Capacity**

- RDP capacity and/or access to the right consultant(s) to develop, market and implement digital products.
• Artist (actor) availability without assurance of steady work/income: Having an available acting troupe without running a regular season is an ongoing issue.

• Appropriateness of content: Hands Up and Cop Out monologues were not developed specifically to achieve Evolve’s learning objectives. Is there still a place for them?

Systems Protecting
• A major threat, such as the pandemic and protests, puts people and institutions in “protect” mode. This brings resistance to trying something new, no matter how highly it is recommended.

• Recent events have catalyzed a hardening of attitudes toward police, a shift toward breaking down police systems as opposed to improving them.

Markets
• Within the realm of professional training, RDP needs to deepen its understanding of what the market will bear, and whether it's realistic to expect to cover our costs.

• If RDP is seen as a “theatre,” criminal justice leaders coming to the product “cold” might doubt its efficacy. Yet, theatrical storytelling in the Evolve Experience is the “special sauce” that creates emotional resonance and creates space for conversations that otherwise wouldn’t happen.

• Apathy and/or change of focus in the criminal justice community might limit interest and funding.

• In 2020 we identified law enforcement, judicial, and corporate sectors as our target audiences. While it’s certain that all 3 are interested in our work, are their needs too different to be served by the same product? Would we be better served by a narrower focus, or perhaps, a wider one?

• Competition – Who else is doing similar work? How is RDP different? Better? Complementary to?

• By the time the digital products are developed, there could be burn out from online meetings/learning.

**Bringing the Red Door into 2020**

On the eve of our 10th anniversary, we decided it was time to revisit the Red Door Project’s core identity. We changed our name to “The Red Door Project” - a simpler name that will be easier to remember; we reassessed our mission, vision, and values to bring them into alignment with our current direction; and we worked with HUB Collective to update our visual identity to more clearly reflect our level of professionalism and experience.
Updated Mission

**Founding mission:** The Red Door Project’s mission is to change racial ecology through the arts.

**New mission:** The Red Door Project’s mission is to leverage the power of stories to change racial ecology.

RDP updated its mission to more accurately reflect its work. While RDP has often integrated a variety of art forms into its work, the key component in its theory of change is the power of stories. Stories are how people learn from one another; when we allow ourselves to be impacted by the stories of other people, we see ourselves in those stories. This builds empathy and provides the opportunity to “walk a mile in another person’s shoes.” Participants report that using storytelling, in contrast to more traditional training paradigms, accesses emotional truth and creates a safe environment for exploring different perspectives.

“It’s a powerful experience that challenges your preconceived ideas on racial and social justice inequalities. It provides you with a safe environment to share your feelings and not feel like you’re walking on eggshells which I very much appreciated.”

“The program does a nice job of removing your defenses by presenting people’s stories. You can argue with an idea, but it’s harder to argue and easier to identify with one’s story.”

“You offer different perspectives and through the stories are helping create empathy and through the conversations we can connect and hope for a better future.”

Updated Vision

**Founding vision:** The Red Door Project envisions a society where people from diverse racial backgrounds and experiences live, work, play, and create together, and all people have the confidence, capacity, and opportunity to fulfill their highest human potential.

**New vision:** The Red Door Project envisions a society where our differences catalyze listening, learning, and thoughtful action.

RDP’s new vision, much like its new mission, aims to more specifically address the impact that RDP hopes to have in the world. All of RDP’s work is based on an ecological model, where everything and everyone has a place, and where our differences are the very thing that leads to wholeness. Rather than provoking polarization, RDP’s work seeks to soften the boundaries between us all, and use this welcoming of difference to work together more effectively.
Listening, learning, and considering the mechanisms of change were key takeaways from *Evolve* participants:

“As I continue through programs like [the Evolve Experience], I am learning more and more that my experiences are only my experiences. To move this conversation further, I need to listen more and explain less. And I need to encourage others with privilege to listen more, helping connect them to voices that they can hear.”

“The monologues provided powerful perspectives that most of us don't get to experience. Diverse thought and perspective is the key to growth and innovation.”

“Though it may be trite to say so, I am really going to try and be a better listener, less quick to judge and more willing to truly hear what those I might disagree with have to say.”

**Updated Values**

**Take a non-binary systems approach.**

In life there are no good guys and no bad guys. There are only systems within which individuals function, and understanding this complexity without judgement is the best approach to progress. Be curious about conflict, about systems, about improvements, about yourself, your co-workers, and the organization.

**Be contextually authentic.**

The RDP honors where people are and seeks congruence among their thoughts, words and actions. Candor helps us maximize our limited time together. Different contexts call for different behaviors (you wouldn't behave the same around your spouse, your grandmother, and a visiting dignitary) but the RDP asks you to bring the beautiful specifics of your experience to every day at the Red Door.

**Take risks.**

Nothing has ever grown without taking a risk. You must step into the unknown in order to expand your awareness, and to learn about boundaries and possibilities. There's no failure, only feedback, which empowers us to adopt corrective measures and redouble our efforts to strive for a positive outcome.

**Be accountable.**

Take ownership over your work. To paraphrase August Wilson; Success is heavy. You got to put your shoulder to success. Sometimes that means taking a project into your own hands and making sure that it is completed. Sometimes that means asking for help when you need it. Be aware of what you need to be successful and pursue that.

**Stay flexible.**
The person with the most flexibility will have more choices and, therefore, have the most influence.

**Diversity is more than skin deep.**
The Red Door Project believes that diversity is inherent. It is not limited to race, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, or physical ability. In fact, within each of these groups there is a diversity of life experience, beliefs, values and perspectives. RDP is dedicated to moving beyond thinking about diversity based solely on race, or any given identity, because this approach concretizes our differences in artificial ways.

**Updated Branding**
Clean and simple is the name of the game in modern design, and our new branding communicates that the Red Door is an experienced, multi-faceted group working together with organizations and businesses to facilitate personal transformations that address societal issues centered around race and criminal justice. Our new visual identity communicates a clear, consistent, and compelling message about our mission and vision to all audiences.

**Principles**

- Red Door uses the power of storytelling and dialog to facilitate transformation
- Red Door works with organizations and groups interested in learning about and engaging on cultural issues to bring about personal change and understanding.
- Red Door uses a framework to engage and connect with audiences, providing access to personal stories that may be unfamiliar to them to foster empathy and drive discussions that tackle some of today’s most pressing issues.
- Red Door employs a guiding framework in all products they provide.
- Red Door programming promotes curiosity, empathy, and dialog, in order to create an environment where meaningful change can occur.
### Attributes
Attributes describe our organization, programs, and initiatives.

- ESTABLISHED
- IMPACTFUL
- FOCUSED
- DESCRIPTIVE
- AGNOSTIC
- EFFECTIVE
- PASSIONATE
- TRANSFORMATIONAL

### Emotions
Emotions describe how staff, communities, donors, and the public feel about who we are and our work.

- HEARTFELT
- CURIOUS
- IMPORTANT
- OPTIMISTIC/HOPEFUL
- CONNECTED
- MOTIVATED
- CONFIDENT

### Logo
The Red Door logo exemplifies more than just a passageway. The three rectangles represent movement, growth, and the transformational journey that comes along with embracing the uncertain.

### Colors
By expanding the color palette and showing a blend of warm and cool tones, we can convey the same sense of authority and assertiveness, while still remaining hopeful and light.

The use of white space is very important to The Red Door brand. White and Red will be the two colors mainly utilized, while also introducing the rest of the color palette to add pops of color throughout all collateral.

### Color Usage

![Color Swatches]
2020-2023 STRATEGIC PLAN

The Red Door Project will continue to innovate in its programming; developing and refining *The Evolve Experience* in live and digital versions, and building the internal infrastructure needed to take this work to scale nationally.

The Red Door Project is determined to create a marketable product to expand their success with in-person, theatrical performances. This will include developing more robust online offerings, including a self-paced online Evolve course for individuals; an on-demand online workshop for self-facilitated small groups; a live facilitated 2-day online Evolve workshop; a live/filmed hybrid Evolve workshop featuring recorded monologues and in-person facilitation; and a online community resource available only to members/subscribers that will provide additional resources and opportunities to connect.

In order to support this development, the Red Door Project will evaluate, expand, and systematize its operational strategies and internal structure. They aim to increase earned income; add new positions to support its growth; and make the Red Door Project sustainable with a clear plan for leadership beyond the organization’s founders.

**Strategic Direction 1: Internal Infrastructure**

Though revenues have been on a consistent upward trend from $31,000 in 2011 to $972,000 in 2020, the Red Door Project has even bigger ambitions. In order to scale its programs and impact nationwide, RDP needs a team, business model, and internal systems that reflect the vision of the founders as well as best practices for a mission-driven, innovative organization to support this growth.

**Expand Leadership**

The Red Door Project seeks to hire a new leader to take on the operational management of the organization. This person will need to have leadership experience in a national organization so they can effectively guide the RDP through the process of scaling the organization and rolling out a successful product launch. They will also be groomed to lead the RDP into its next iteration, following Kevin Jones and Lesli Mones’ retirement (likely to happen within the next 5 years).

**Desired Outcome**

The RDP will hire a new leadership position by the end of 2021.
**Measurable Success Indicators**

- The new hire stays with the organization for at least three years.
- The new leader’s business acumen will support the Red Door in continued growth in terms of earned income, number of clients, and overall financial health.
- The new leader develops a business plan for the launch of Evolve, including pricing and marketing strategies for the different modalities.

**Create a Dedicated Development position**

For the first time in the Red Door’s history, Operations and Development activities will be handled by separate, dedicated positions. Current Operations Manager Jory Bowers will move into a dedicated Development position, while Operations will be led by the aforementioned new leadership role. Separate positions will allow both Operations and Development activities to grow and flourish.

**Desired Outcome**

Jory will start in this new position by the end of 2021.

**Measurable Success Indicators**

- RDP sees an increase in both foundation and individual giving
- RDP receives new national funding
- RDP hosts its first formal fundraising event in 2022

**Hire a Sales and Marketing Team**

In order to increase earned income, RDP needs to reach their target markets of law enforcement, judiciary, and corporations and reliably close sales. A Marketing team will identify how and where to reach new clients, and a Sales team will connect with them directly to book Evolve programs.

**Desired Outcomes**

- Marketing team engaged by end of 2021.
- Sales management position hired by mid 2022.
- Widespread adoption of *Evolve* by law enforcement, judicial, and corporate sectors
- Expand to serve more locations and new audiences
Measurable Success Indicators

- A marketing plan is developed, identifying target markets, how to reach them, and what kinds of language and visuals will provide the highest ROI for each sector.
- Marketing plan identifies metrics for social media, newsletters, and other web presence, including conversion rates.
- Replicable sales systems are developed, tested, and proven.
- RDP books at least 25 events in 2022, increasing to 150 by 2024.
- RDP will double its earned income in 2022, increasing to account for at least 33% of total revenue by 2024.

Train New Facilitators

As the Red Door expands its program offerings and books more workshops, it can no longer rely on Kevin and Lesli to facilitate every session. A facilitator training program will need to be developed and implemented to equip new facilitators with the skills to successfully embody the Red Door’s approach.

Desired Outcomes

- RDP will develop and implement a facilitator training program by Q1 2022.

Measurable Success Indicators

- 2-6 new RDP facilitators are trained and able to run Evolve events by the end of 2022.

Build out the Board

In addition to having the right staff, it is essential that the Red Door Project have the right Board of Directors to support its continued growth and development. Over the next two years, RDP aims to ensure its Board of Directors is composed of the right people to help it grow and succeed.

Desired Outcome

Recruit the right people to join the RDP’s Board of Directors. The “right” people will champion the RDP non-traditional approach, help provide financial support, and identify other major donors and investors.

Measurable Success Indicators

- A fully engaged board, with each member actively contributing to RDP success
Strategic Direction 2: Innovation in Programming

The original _Evolve Experience_ was an in-person event that combined the live performance of thought-provoking, emotionally resonant monologues from _Hands Up_ and _Cop Out_ with a curriculum designed to increase participant capacity to navigate change.

However, the actual cost of producing a full, live _Evolve Experience_ performance was largely outside the budgets of most organizations hoping to book Red Door programs. The advent of COVID-19 and the ensuing moratorium on large gatherings provided the Red Door the opportunity to translate _Evolve_ to an online medium, which can reach organizations across the country with no added travel costs, and which relies on an initial investment of filming monologues, making each session far more affordable for clients.

During 2020-2021, RDP piloted a live facilitated online workshop developed in coordination with three key partners representing the law enforcement, judicial, and corporate sectors: The Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST), the National Center for State Courts (NCSC), and Tillamook County Creamery Association. After the preliminary development period, Red Door extended the pilot program to the Alaska State Court System, the Nevada Supreme Court, Portland General Electric, and the West Linn and Beaverton Police Departments.

**Features of the _Evolve Experience_:**

- Reaches people at a deep emotional level.
- Presents various points of view without asserting that any one is “right” or “wrong.”
- Recognizes that we live in a racialized and polarized environment in which listening to perspectives of people you disagree with is often discouraged.
- Based on a non-binary, systems perspective that everything is a system that is naturally inclined to protect, expand, and evolve in an ongoing cycle of change. When change is afoot, systems often move into “protect” mode, which can hamper change.
- Can help participants soften protective walls by increasing their awareness, curiosity, and capacity to tolerate dissonance and complexity, therefore increasing their ability to thoughtfully champion change.

The Red Door Project will continue to build on the success of the Evolve Experience with new versions of the program, outlined below:
**Self-Paced Online Course**

- A fully online self-paced version of the Evolve Experience that allows individuals to complete the curriculum on their own and in their own time. This online course will feature filmed monologues, activities, and other real-world content that addresses the topics of race, the justice sector, bias, power, polarization, and more.

**Self-Facilitated On-Demand Small Group Workshop**

- A live, self-facilitated online Evolve Experience for small groups that will include recorded monologues, other content, interactive activities, and discussion prompts for the group to address in real-time. We have explored VoiceVoice and Junto as potential platforms for this modality.

**Live Facilitated Online Workshops**

- To build on the success of our online workshop pilots, we will expand the curriculum for the live facilitated online Evolve Experience from its current three-hour format to a two-day workshop. With the additional time, the expanded program will provide the opportunity to have more in-depth discussions and allow participants to practice implementing the “Protect, Expand, Evolve” model.

**Hybrid Workshops**

- Hybrid workshops will marry filmed monologues with live, in-person facilitation. While online programs have become widespread during COVID, we know that there is something about being in the same space with others that we simply cannot capture across computer screens. The creation of a hybrid workshop will allow us to take advantage of the benefits of in-person facilitation at a lower price point compared to a fully in-person, live theatrical event.

**In-Person Performances**

- Due to the high cost of producing in-person theatrical Evolve performances, these events will serve as our most high-end offering, to be presented at national conferences and other large events where attendees are likely to invest in the more scalable Evolve modalities for their own organizations.
**Membership**

- All of these modalities will be supported by the creation of an intentional online community/membership program, wherein members gain access to educational content and resources such as new filmed monologues, podcasts, blog posts, live discussions, and other opportunities to connect both online and in-person.

**Desired Outcomes**

- Develop an online self-paced *Evolve Experience* course for individuals
- Develop a live, self-facilitated online *Evolve Experience* for small groups
- Polish the online facilitated *Evolve Experience* with the creation of a 2-day session
- Develop a hybrid *Evolve Experience* program with recorded monologues and in-person facilitation
- Continue fully live-in person productions for exclusive events
- Create an online community platform/membership program

**Measurable Success Indicators**

- Complete the development of a 2-day version of the live facilitated online workshop by the end of 2021
- Conduct 25-50 sessions of the live facilitated online workshop in 2022
- Launch self-paced online *Evolve* course by June 2022
- Pilot hybrid version of *Evolve* with at 2-4 key partners in 2022
- Launch self-facilitated online *Evolve* workshop by end of 2022
- Commission and film 4-8 new monologues to further explore the relationship between the justice system and the community each year
- Engage 300,000 members of the RDP’s online community by 2026
Strategic Direction 3: Assessment and Evaluation

To ensure these new programs are meeting the desired outcomes and success indicators, the Red Door Project will develop a rigorous evaluation plan for its programs. RDP will work with an experienced researcher with expertise in institutional change efforts and evidence-based best practices. Working closely with the RDP team, the researcher will create and implement an evaluation plan for the Evolve Experience.

**Desired Outcome**

- All Evolve programs are established as evidence-based programs with replicable, demonstrable positive effects.

**Measurable Success Indicators**

- Identify client(s) with whom to have a long-term relationship in order to conduct a robust longitudinal study.
- Identify a researcher with whom to conduct longitudinal study.
- Develop and implement a plan for longitudinal study over the next 1-5 years.
- Identify metrics to measure in both the short term and long term on individual, organizational, and community levels, refining our current learning objectives:
  - Increased self-awareness about one’s opinions, biases, reactions and behavior.
  - Increased curiosity about opinions and reactions that differ from one’s own.
  - Increased ability to hold a multiplicity of complex ideas.
  - Increased capacity to advocate one’s point of view while being curious about another point of view.
  - Increased capacity to skillfully lead change knowing that resistance to change is a major part of the change process.
  - Increased critical thinking skills.
  - Increased confidence in communicating with people with different backgrounds and beliefs.
CONCLUSION

While the Red Door Project was founded in 2011, the Evolve Experience premiered in May 2019, and has fundamentally altered the course of our organization. We are able to take the experience of the last ten years into the development of a new product and new business model. These next few years will be a turning point for us, as we aim to grow from a mid-sized local organization to a national organization, providing services across the country. In order to succeed we will need to attract top talent with experience in scaling a business and rolling out a product launch, including marketing, sales, and delivery. Our goals are ambitious, because anything less than ambition in the face of today’s challenges and injustices will fall short.

As Red Door Project Co-Founder Lesli Mones says, “When we humans rigidly adhere to what we believe, or overly identify with a particular identity, we potentially sacrifice our mental and emotional health as well as our capacity to continue to grow and evolve. Regardless of our point of view, if we are unwilling to change our minds in the face of contradictory data or information, our capacity for critical, complex thinking is diminished. And without the practice of complex, critical thinking, we are rendered incapable of solving the gnarly and critical challenges we are facing as a society.

We created the Evolve Experience for just this reason. It provides people with a safe opportunity to step out of what is known and familiar and be confronted by worlds and lives that are unfamiliar. And the beauty of it is that people quickly see that what was previously unknown, perhaps even scary, is simply another facet of themselves, of their humanity. It is precisely this shared sense of humanity that creates the foundation for building a world we all want to live in; a world where we can individually and collectively evolve. And we better evolve, because we have a lot of work to do together.”