

CHANCLA READING GROUP GUIDE



At the end of each chapter, Leslie asks us to consider our relationship with the content of the previous pages through three lenses: our Inner Niña, our Inner Parent, and our Future Abuelita, or Ancestor Self (for a breakdown of these categories, turn to page 28). She asks specific questions for each of these eras of ourselves, but as you work through the questions below, take some time to practice this in a new way. Think about which Self each question resonates the most with. Which part of you is called into the present, as you think about and discuss the questions below? Do your answers change when you push yourself to inhabit a particular one of these viewpoints? What is it like to think about parenting and reparenting through this multifaceted lens?

This guide is meant to be a roadmap to begin practicing the work that *Chancla* invites us into. Use this as a space to take the first steps, to investigate your own ties to Chancla culture, and to think about the kind of world you want to build, for the generations to come, and for your community, family, and culture today.

1. Chancla Culture, the way we think about parenting, and even our daily interactions with our children don't happen in a bubble—and they didn't appear out of thin air. In Chapter One, Leslie writes about worrying that her mother and other family members will take her choice to parent differently as an insult. In Chapter Two, she explains how Chancla Culture has been handed down from colonialism and often invokes modern stereotypes and prejudices, like colorism and fatphobia.

What does “good parenting” look like to you? What people, moments, or beliefs have shaped this definition for you? Now think about where those ideas came from. Are they your own, or do they come from your family, culture, or something else? Where can you turn to find new perspectives on parenting?

2. In Chapter Three, Leslie identifies some of the obstacles to ending Chancla Culture, highlighting cultural and societal expectations around who deserves respect and how we ought to show it. When you hear the word respect, what's the first thing that comes to mind?

Now, think about a moment when *you felt* respected, or about a person *you feel* deep respect for. What did you need to feel respected, in that moment? How do you show your respect? Do those experiences differ from the image of respect that pops into your mind when you hear the word, or do they look similar? Did people in the room have different reactions to the word respect, different ways of showing respect, or different things they needed to feel respected?

Does this exercise change how you think about giving, receiving, and teaching respect, with children and other adults?

3. In Chapters Four and Five, Leslie invites us to do the painful but revelatory work of looking towards the parts of our pasts that hurt. It's rare that any of us make it out of childhood unscathed, especially for those of us whose homes were impacted by legacies of colonialism and inherited violence. We are shaped by our past, whether we want to be or not, and our past shapes us in ways far beyond what our guardians may have intended.

With this in mind, how do reparenting and parenting intersect for you? What does it feel like to emphasize reparenting in your parenting journey?

In Chapter Nine, Leslie delves more into what it means to reparent ourselves, emphasizing our connection with Madre Tierra (Mother Earth), collectivism, autonomy, worthiness, and creativity. When you think about what parenting means to you, are these traits you imagined cultivating for this journey? Did you see these considerations modeled in the way you were parented? How does it feel to make space to care for yourself, within your understanding of parenting?

4. In Chapter Six, we read several examples of how our pasts impact the way we parent in the present, like the story of Inez, who became an overprotective parent because she had been taken advantage of in the past and wanted a different story for her daughter. Still, we know that even the best intentions cannot erase the impact of feeling unsafe or unwelcome in our homes, bodies, cultures, and families. At the same time, we know we cannot separate our present from our past. When you think about the parent you want to be, how does it feel to know that our actions often have much more impact than our intentions? What tools from the book or other strategies might you use to try to close that gap?

A pervasive myth of Chancla Culture is that love necessitates, or justifies, violence. How do you think about the role of harm in parenting now? Do you recognize tendencies in your adult life that you can trace back to childhood? How do you push back on inherited narratives that no longer serve you in your day-to-day life? What does it feel like to view painful moments in your past through a lens that makes space for you to feel that harm? What does it feel like to strive for something different while simultaneously placing these moments into a larger context? What does it feel like to hold space for the hurt that your parents inherited?

5. In Chapters Six and Seven, Leslie writes about *feeling*—feeling our grief, our memories, our pain, and our joy. She moves through different ways we might feel and the ways that our emotions become embodied. Take a moment to check in with your senses. Where do you hold your emotions? Do you recall painful memories or feel negative emotions in images, in physical sensations, in sounds, or in another way? Do you hold your happy memories and your joy in the same way or same place? Or, is there a difference between where and how you experience the positive and the negative? Does this change how you think about working through hard moments, with your children and with yourself?



6. In Chapter Eight, Leslie writes about how the values we hold, personally and culturally, impact the cycles of care—and of harm—that we live within and pass on. Take a moment to reflect on your values. Do you view certain values as personal, cultural, or a mix of the two? Take another moment to think about values that you know you share with other members of your community or your family. How were those shared values actualized in your household growing up? What are the steps you take now to make sure you live out your values, in your own life? Are there differences here? Do you want there to be?

Think back to the first set of questions. Sometimes, it can feel like a betrayal of our families, our upbringings, or our traditions, to rethink our values or even how we teach our kids about them. Take a moment to discuss what it might feel like to shift how you carry forward cultural and inherited values, while still honoring them. Are there ways you could hold old traditions and new values together, in your parenting?

7. In Chapter Ten, we learn about what it means to liberate our families from Chancla Culture. Take a moment to flip to the chart on page 214 that compares colonial and decolonial nonviolent parenting paradigms. Leslie writes about personifying the colonial paradigm as the Chacal, an ominous looming figure waiting for its chance to seep into our parenting. What might it look like to shift paradigms and resist the Chacal in your day-to-day life? Were you surprised by anything that showed up, on either side, on this chart? Does it make you rethink any of your routines? Are there any strategies from any of the chapters of the book that stuck with you as something that you'd like to bring into your own home and parenting practice to resist internalizing the Chacal?

8. Chapter Eleven is all about how we transform not only our own homes but our wider culture. What feelings come up when you think about practicing new ways of parenting, in community, either intentional or inherited?

Leslie writes about the fear that divesting from Chancla Culture (or any other cultural mode of parenting) might alienate our children from their roots, or from communities that we are proud to be a part of. She also writes about how our communities deserve more than this and how our children deserve nonviolent, decolonial parenting. What strategies can you use to bridge this gap? Take some time to think about what it feels like to step into this cycle-breaker role.

9. Let's return to the beginning. What does Chancla Culture mean to you? Is your definition different than what it may have been before reading this book? Were there particular sections that spoke the most deeply to you or made the book feel clear to you? Take a moment to pinpoint a particular reflection, from the book or this discussion, that you know you will carry forward with you.

If you enjoyed this conversation and want to bring this work to your community, Leslie Priscilla facilitates workshops for parents and caregivers, professional development training for those working with or within Latine communities, and speaking engagements (keynotes, conferences, and more). Contact Partnerships@latinxparenting.org to explore what's possible.

