

Witnessing Whiteness

The Need to Talk About Race and How to Do It



Workshop Series

A companion curriculum to the book,
Witnessing Whiteness 2nd Edition

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Why Pay Attention to Race?

Witnessing Whiteness Chapter 1

Workshop 1.1

Dear Facilitator(s),

This workshop series was carefully crafted, reviewed (by a multiracial team), and revised with several important issues in mind.

The series is intended to...

1. **Offer an 11 part, sequential process that corresponds to the reading of the book, Witnessing Whiteness, 2nd Edition.** Understandably, facilitators, for various reasons, might want to use one or more of the workshops as stand alone events without sufficient time for participants to a) read the corresponding book chapters or b) move through the entire series. Yet, please understand that **moving through these workshops without having read the corresponding book chapter will markedly reduce its effectiveness. It will make moving through the workshop more challenging and is NOT recommended.** Understandings gained from one workshop are also important for subsequent workshops.
2. **Respond to particular group needs.** Recognizing that some groups may not be able to implement each workshop for the entire time suggested, some approved modifications can be found at the end of each workshop agenda. Only modify these workshops when absolutely required.
3. **Create a welcoming, inviting space where participants feel free to speak the truth of their experience without fear of shaming or reprisal.** It is essential for facilitators to understand that even when participants hold views that are counter to the themes in the book/series, a hallmark of both the book and the series is that people should be gently led into a new way of seeing.
4. **Follow logical threads of understanding related to each theme.** The language provided in the "scripts" that both precede and follow each section of the workshops are very important. Deviating from the essential themes and tone in those statements may create confusion and undercut the building nature of each individual workshop.
5. **Enhance leadership capacity within the community.** Detailed facilitator notes are provided for each activity so that one or more members of the group can practice their facilitation while leading this workshop series. A few notes of caution: a) the same facilitation team should run the entire series, b) the team should read the entire book in advance of leading any of the workshops, and c) sufficient debrief opportunities should be created to discuss how each workshop went so that facilitators' skills can be developed.
6. **Provide community building opportunities for either racially caucused white groups OR multiracial groups.** Although still focused on whiteness in general, the series seeks to frame activities and questions in ways that allow people of color to benefit from the experience.

Best wishes,
Shelly Tochluk

Why Pay Attention to Race?

Witnessing Whiteness Chapter 1

Workshop 1.1

Goals:

- Explore why we use certain strategies that keep us from paying attention to race
- Investigate the intentions and impacts of using race-distancing strategies
- Discuss the value of becoming race conscious

Materials:

- Discussion Guidelines
- Butcher Paper and Markers
- Intent and Impact (Handout 1.1.1)
- Resources (Handout 1.1.2) (distribute at facilitator's discretion)
- List of Terms/Context (Handout 1.1.3) (distribute at facilitator's discretion)

Book Anchor Quote: (Can be read aloud or distributed to the group during opening if desired.)
Our avoidance of race can manifest in several different forms. We can deny the continuing effects of race and its categorizations, move toward ethnicity, become colorblind, and believe that we transcend race altogether. Important to acknowledge is that we can take up one or all of these approaches with the best of intentions. For many of us, the flight from paying attention to race is not made consciously. We are not aware that we are distancing ourselves from the problem instead of working toward a solution.

SESSION 1 - *Why Pay Attention to Race?*

3 hours

Section I

(20 min)

OPENING

Materials: Goals for day written out and communication guidelines posted ([download with discussion guide](#))
butcher paper and markers

Purpose of piece:

To discuss communication guidelines and review the goals for the workshop

Instructions: *Facilitators introduce themselves, ask participants to say their name and one sentence to describe why they decided to come to the workshop. Ask participants to read the discussion guidelines posted on the wall aloud (one after the other). Ask participants what questions they have. Invite participants to add to the list any additional discussion guidelines they think would be helpful. Write them on the piece of butcher paper. Use this modified list for all future workshops.*

WHAT I MEAN IS...

Purpose of piece:

To explore why we use certain strategies that keep us from paying attention to race

Facilitator Set Up: Post three butcher paper posters around the room. Each one should have one of the following statements and both sentence starters:

<p>When someone says, “race is not real”</p> <p>What s/he means is...</p> <p>What s/he hopes is...</p>	<p>When someone says, “he transcends race”</p> <p>What s/he means is...</p> <p>What s/he hopes is...</p>	<p>When someone says, “I’m colorblind”</p> <p>What s/he means is...</p> <p>What s/he hopes is...</p>
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Instructions: Explain to participants that they are going to travel around the room and write an ending to each of the sentences written on each of the three posters. Offer a few examples to ensure that participants understand what to do. (see “say to group” section for examples.)

Say to group: For our first exercise today we are going to explore a few really common ways that people talk about how they see themselves in terms of race.

- The three we’ll concentrate on today are 1) colorblindness, 2) transcendence (or being “beyond” race), and 3) believing that race is not real. What I’d like you to do is think about moments when you’ve either thought these things yourself or heard someone else say these things.
- Think about what ideas and hopes underlie the use of these statements. Go around the room, in any order, and write what you believe the person means and hopes when using these statements. For example:
 - When I used to say I was **colorblind**, I meant I wasn’t racist. What I hoped was that the person hearing me would see me as a good person.
 - When I used to say I said I **transcended** race, I meant that I felt like my deeply spiritual/religious sense is beyond race. What I hoped was that we could see each other for the beauty of what lies beneath our skin.
 - When I used to say **race is not real**, what I meant was that although biology might determine someone’s appearance that race categories don’t coherently accommodate all groups when you try to fit them into traditional terms. The whole idea is a confusing mess that humans made up. So, when I said race isn’t real I hoped that people would stop concentrating on race so that we can just worry about treating each other as human beings.
- Are there any questions? **(10 minutes)**

Instructions: Once all participants have written on each of the posters, ask one person to read each of the posters aloud. Stop after each one and ask if anything should be added to the poster or if anything needs to be clarified. Allow discussion if participants feel prompted to explore the intentions and hopes. **(20 minutes)**

Facilitator Notes: Allow participants to explore their answers and ask each other some questions. But, if they begin to speak on issues treated in later exercises (such as the negative impacts of using those terms), you can inform participants that those ideas will be part of our later discussion and that the essential point for THIS exercise is to explore INTENT. Try to ask follow up questions to expand on the various intentions that people have for using these approaches.

Wrap up: What we want to highlight through this short exercise is that many of us use these statements as a way to tell ourselves and the people we talk with that we don't see ourselves as racist and don't want to be seen as holding prejudices. Unfortunately, believing we are colorblind or beyond race can create problems for us. This is what we will explore in our next exercise.

Section III

(1 hr)

INTENT VERSUS IMPACT

Materials: Intent/Impact resource for each participant to be distributed at end of section (Handout 1.1.1).

Purpose of piece:

To investigate the intentions and impacts of believing that 1) race is not real and therefore we shouldn't pay attention to our race, 2) we are colorblind, and 3) we transcend race.

Say to group: Just because a person's intentions when using the three approaches we just talked about are good, that does not necessarily mean that they lead to positive outcomes.

- For this exercise we need to be in small groups – Create small groups of 4-5 people by determining how many groups you'll need and then counting off by that number. (For example, a group of 12 should have 3 groups of four people, so you would count off 1, 2, and 3. All ones get together, all twos get together, all threes get together to make 3 groups.)
- Once participants are seated in their small groups...continue with the following...
- What we'd like to do now is explore our own beliefs about the statements we just discussed.
 - As we do this, let us keep in mind that all of us have developed our approaches to these things out of our life experiences.
 - The activity we are going to do is NOT about naming anyone as being WRONG.
 - Our purpose is to have discussions with people who can help us explore why we believe what we do and what that might mean for people around us.
- To do this I am going to ask you a series of questions.
- For each question, you will decide how you feel about the issue and show me by putting up between 1 and five fingers next to your chest so that only I can see them. For example, if I ask "To what degree do you believe orange juice helps you get energized in the morning?" and you feel orange juice is VERY helpful you will put up 5 fingers. But if you feel orange juice is NOT AT ALL helpful you would show me only 1 finger. If you feel somewhere in the middle, you could show either 2, 3, or, 4 fingers.
- Are there any questions?

There are three main questions, each with a follow up question. **(15 min. for each = 45 min total)**

QUESTION #1: To what degree do you believe that saying you are colorblind can be helpful in terms of us dealing with race?

- Participants show the facilitator their current position by showing from 1-5 fingers near their chest.
- Invite participants to talk to their small group about why they picked the number they did. (2 minutes).
- Invite participants to share out with the group. Take a few responses.

- Ask the follow up question:
 - **How might saying you are colorblind impact someone negatively? In other words, even if it is meant positively, how might people understand it in a way that can be hurtful?**

Facilitator's Note: Move about the room, listening in to the conversations. As participants dialogue on the follow up question you'd like to help draw out the following ideas if they are not already being discussed.

Saying that you are colorblind can give the message that...

1. *Race shouldn't matter in a person of color's life...when it usually does – so it can deny someone's lived experience*
2. *We will likely ignore them if they tell us there is subtle racism present in what we say or do*
3. *We are inattentive to how racism and privilege play out in our society and institutions*

Use the following questions as needed:

Ask participants:

1. *Think about an aspect of your life that is significant and meaningful for how you are treated in the world. Perhaps it's your gender or some other visible characteristic. Imagine that someone tells you that s/he doesn't see that part of you. How would that feel? What are the implications of that if you feel that you are treated poorly because of that characteristic? What if it's an aspect of yourself that makes you feel really good, and the person is saying that it is irrelevant to how they experience you?*

QUESTION #2: To what degree do you believe that thinking you transcend race can be helpful?

- Hold up fingers
- Invite dialogue (2 minutes)
- Invite share outs to the whole group
- Ask the follow up question:
 - **How can saying you are transcend race impact someone negatively? In other words, even if it is meant positively, how can people understand it in a way that can be hurtful?**

Facilitator's Note: Move about the room, listening in to the conversations. As participants dialogue on the follow up question you'd like to help draw out the following ideas if they are not already being discussed.

Saying that you transcend race can give the message that...

1. *We are not going to see that we might carry lingering racism within us*
2. *We don't see how race has shaped our attitudes and behaviors*
3. *We see race conscious people as less evolved than those who believe they have moved beyond race*
4. *We believe seeing racism is the problem in itself*

Use the following questions as needed:

Ask participants:

1. *If you are saying you are "beyond" something, as though it's not important, what does that say to a person who is still finding it very meaningful? What does it suggest about how open you might be to talking about the subject?*

QUESTION #3: To what degree do you believe that avoiding labeling yourself as having a race is helpful? For example, by saying something like, "The only race I'm part of is the human race."

- Hold up fingers
- Invite dialogue (2 minutes)
- Invite share outs to the whole group
- Ask the follow up question:

- **How can saying that you don't have a race impact someone negatively? In other words, even if it is meant positively, how can people understand it in a way that can be hurtful?**

Facilitator's Note: Move about the room, listening in to the conversations. As participants dialogue on the follow up question you'd like to help draw out the following ideas if they are not already being discussed.

Saying that you don't have a race can give the message that...

1. We don't want to see ourselves as part of our racial group and we don't want to see how our group's general tendencies might affect our attitudes and behaviors
2. We refuse to see ourselves as part of supporting societal racism since we don't see ourselves as part of a "race issue"

Use the following questions as needed:

Ask participants:

1. If we say we're not part of a certain group, what does that say about how we feel about that group? What message do you think it gives about our willingness to consider how we might behave similarly? What might it say about our openness to learning something new about how we relate to that group?

Large Group Debrief: (15 minutes)

All participants can be asked to take their seats in the circle.

- **To what degree have the conversations during this section either shifted, clarified, or validated your perspective?** (Give a couple of minutes for people to share with a person sitting next to them. Then share out with the group.)
- **Why is it important for us to know about the negative impacts that can be generated from race distancing strategies?** (Give a couple of minutes for people to share with a person sitting next to them. Then share out with the group.)

Wrap Up: The point of this activity is to acknowledge that there are many people who avoid seeing themselves as paying attention to race or being a part of a racial group with good intentions.

- Usually, this is because we were taught this as a way to move forward and end discrimination.
- Unfortunately, there are some serious downsides to each of those approaches, and they are serious enough to make us take a close look at what it would mean for us to start paying attention to race.
- Our next activity will help us do that.

BREAK BREAK BREAK BREAK BREAK BREAK BREAK (15 min)

Section IV

(50 min)

MOVING FORWARD: BECOMING RACE CONSCIOUS

Materials: Small group questions written on butcher paper

Purpose of piece:

To talk about what it would mean for a person to become race-conscious

Instructions: Ask all participants to sit in a circle and get comfortable.

Say to group: A lot of people are hesitant to give up saying they are colorblind or transcend race because paying attention to race brings with it a lot of challenges.

- For all of us on this journey, paying attention to race can be at times frightening and learning how to avoid hurting people's feelings, deciding to become conscious of race and pay attention to it can be really frightening.

- So, now what we are going to do is take some time to imagine what life could be like once we've developed some skills. **(10 minutes)**

(Facilitator reads meditation script in a slow, calm voice.)

Let's start by getting comfortable in your chair or on the floor.

Close your eyes.

Feel your body relax.

Feel your shoulders start to sink down into your body.

Feel the weight of your body press down into the chair (or ground).

Now imagine that you are walking into a room with a mixed race group to have a discussion about race.

What concerns do you have?

What emotions arise?

What skills do you wish you had to be able to navigate the discussion you're about to have?

Now imagine that you have all the skills you need to talk about race with people in the room.

You understand why people are reacting like they are.

You know what to say to help the group come to some resolution.

You don't have to walk on eggshells because you know how to say what you mean in ways that don't cause someone to become offended or upset.

You are not weighted down by guilt or shame. Instead, although you may not be perfect, you feel authentic, open, and curious. And, you feel proud that you've learned as much as you have.

You are not worried about how you are going to be seen. Instead, you feel confident.

You are confident enough in your antiracism practice to answer anyone who might ask you a question.

Not only do you feel more confident when you're with this group...but you have also been able to develop deeper relationships across race with other people in your life.

Your friends and/or colleagues trust you and tell you things that they don't share with other people who they don't think would understand.

You are also able to share your whole self with them, all of your questions and concerns.

You are trusted by people of different races as someone who can be counted on as an ally, who is part of a movement to call out racial injustice in ways that helps people learn and grow.

Think about this for a moment...

What if all this was true for you?

What if all this was true for you?

Take a moment to consider this while you prepare to open your eyes and come back into the room.

Say to group: We're now going to divide up into small groups to talk about what it could mean for our lives to develop this level of skill and confidence. Recall that we are prompted to do this because of the serious negative consequences of avoiding race by seeing ourselves as colorblind, transcending race, etc.

Count off from 1 to 4, divide into four groups (no more than 6 people per group) --- hopefully each group can have an experienced facilitator. *(Questions should be written and posted on butcher paper)*

Small group dialogue questions: **(25 minutes)**

1. What feelings come up when you think about feeling this confident about your ability to handle race issues?
2. In what ways could having this level of understanding and skill benefit you in your home, work, or school environment?
3. What kinds of support would you need to develop this level of skill and understanding?

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Available for free download at www.witnessingwhiteness.com - rev. 12/09

Large group debrief: **(15 minutes)** *(It is okay if all questions cannot be answered fully due to timing)*

1. What feelings do people have when they think about trying to create an antiracist practice that requires them to pay attention to race?
2. What is at stake if we do not take up this work to develop this level of skill?
3. What kind of support do we need in order to make antiracism an active part of our lives?

Wrap Up: The strategies we use to avoid dealing with race, like saying we're colorblind or that we transcend race, come with some pretty big negatives.

- On the other hand, if we decide to pay attention to race, we often have to face a great deal of fear and other difficult feelings.
- One way to move forward is to concentrate on what skills we would like to develop.
- Then, we can get together as a group to help each other learn more about race, reduce our anxieties, and become confident in our antiracist practice.

Section V

(5 min)

CLOSING

Purpose of piece:

To acknowledge what we did today, bridge to next workshop, and allow people to check out of the space

Instructions: *Ask participants to name one type of support they identified that would help them develop their skills and understanding. Tell participants what comes next in your program plan. Review what they might consider as they prepare for your next session.*

WORKSHOP 1 MODIFICATIONS

Suggested

If you are unable to complete the entire 3-hour workshop, here are some alterations that could satisfy some goals:

- **2 hour option**
 - Limit Section II to reading out posted statements and clarifying. Do not offer time for participant engagement, explaining that a later exercise will give them time to explore the issues. (reduces by 10 minutes)
 - Reduce the amount of sharing allowed for Section III questions to 10 minutes per issue, and ask only the second large group debrief question at the end. (reduces by 20 minutes)
 - In Section IV, stay in large group, but only treat the small group questions. (reduces by 15 minutes)
 - Eliminate the break (reduces by 15 minutes)
- **1 hour, 30 minute option**
 - **(use only if absolutely necessary, as section III is essential for building motivation and investment)**
 - Open briefly (don't ask for additions to guidelines)
 - Ask the questions in Section II, but participants can share out with the group orally instead of writing on the posters (very abbreviated)
 - Most essential piece is Section III, but can reduce some of the time on particular questions
 - Skip Section III completely
- **1 hour option**
 - **(use only if your purpose is purely community building and creating a sense of buy in. This strategy will not increase essential understandings)**
 - Opening with no discussion guidelines except agreement around confidentiality, move directly to Section IV, and close

Paying Attention to Race?

The following are very common intentions and impacts of strategies used to avoid race.

The INTENT	The IMPACT
<p>Seeing oneself as colorblind may be intended to...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell people we are against racism 2. Tell people we plan to treat everyone equally 	<p>Seeing oneself as colorblind often has a negative impact because it can...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell people that race shouldn't matter in their lives...when it usually does – so it denies people's lived experience 2. Tell people that we will likely ignore them if they tell us there is subtle racism present in what we say or do 3. Tell people we are inattentive to how racism and privilege play out in our society and institutions
<p>The idea that we transcend race may be intended to...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell people we want to heal from our history of racism 2. Tell people we do not want to focus on the differences between people 	<p>The idea that we transcend race can have a negative impact because it can...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell people that we are not going to see that we might carry lingering racism within us 2. Tell people that we don't see how race has shaped our attitudes and behaviors 3. Tell people that we see race conscious people as less evolved than those who believe they have moved beyond race 4. Tell people that we believe seeing racism is the problem in itself
<p>Seeing myself as without a race can be well intentioned when we mean for it to...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell people we recognize that we are all part of one group – the human race 2. Tell people we do not want to focus on the differences between people 	<p>Seeing myself as without a race can have a negative impact because it can...</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell people we are not going to see that we might carry lingering racism within us 2. Tell people we don't want to see ourselves as part of our racial group and we don't want to see how our group's general tendencies might affect our attitudes and behaviors 3. Tell people we refuse to see ourselves as part of supporting societal racism since we don't see ourselves as part of a "race issue"

Selected Resources List

For more information on science and the concept of race:

Race – Are We So Different? – www.understandingrace.org - Engaging website offering information developed for a traveling museum exhibit. A project of the American Anthropological Association

American Anthropological Association, *Statement on "Race,"* May 17, 1998, <http://www.aaanet.org/stmts/racepp.htm>.

Information we miss if we concentrate on being “beyond race”:

P. McIntosh, “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack,” in *Peace and Freedom* (Philadelphia, PA: Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, 1989).

AWARE-LA, “Doubletake 08: Taking a Second Look at Race and Racism in the 2008 Presidential Elections.” <http://doubletakeblog.wordpress.com/>

T. Wise, “This Is Your Nation On White Privilege.” Red Room: Where the Writers Are, <http://www.redroom.com/blog/tim-wise/this-your-nation-white-privilege-updated>

For more information on why it helps to pay attention to race:

B. D. Tatum, *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?* (New York: Basic Books, 1999).

B. D. Tatum, “Racial Identity Development and Relational Theory: The Case of a Black Woman in White Communities,” in *Women’s Growth in Diversity: More Writings from the Stone Center*, ed. J. V. Jordan (New York: Guilford Press, 1997)

R. Frankenberg, *The Social Construction of Whiteness: White Women, Race Matters* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997)

J.E. Helms, *A Race Is a Nice Thing to Have: A Guide to Being a White Person or Understanding the White Persons in Your Life* (Topeka, KS: Content Communications, 1992)

List of Terms/Context

Intent vs. Impact

Paying attention to this difference can help during conversations about race and racism.

- **Intent:** What one intends through speech or action.
- **Impact:** How one's speech or action is perceived or experienced by another

**** When dealing with race it is usually far more productive to deal with IMPACT, not INTENT. Most people do not intend to speak or act in ways that reinforce bias, prejudice, or racism. Unfortunately, people often unconsciously act in ways that hurt or offend others. If we hope to have productive dialogues on race, we need to stay open to hear about how even our best efforts are experienced in unintended ways.*

Colorblindness (book excerpt)

There are three basic problems with using the term *colorblind*. First, the entire idea of colorblindness is a lie. Of course we see color. Of course we perceive different skin tones and the physical features most commonly associated with racial categories. To tell ourselves differently denies reality. Colorblindness is a complete fabrication. Alone, this argument might appear unimportant, calling up a response such as, "Sure, I see color, but what I mean is that a person's color doesn't *mean* anything." This moves us into the second area of trouble with colorblindness.

When we say that we do not see another person's color, what we essentially are saying is that we do not see a person's racial placement as meaningful. Basically, we are saying that we do not see the ways that a person of color experiences the world differently than does a white appearing person. Worse, being colorblind usually means that since we do not see differential experiences, people of color will have to convince us that race continues to matter in their lives.

Finally, white people tend not to speak of being colorblind when speaking of interactions with other whites. Colorblindness really only comes up when we speak of how we see, or do not see, people of color. We are essentially saying that there is something about people "of color" that should not be seen. This implies that there is something negative about being associated with color and that there is no value in being recognized as a person of color. In essence, we are saying, "I don't hold this part of who you are against you." Although there are many people of color who use this term to indicate they do not hold our whiteness against us, there are far more who reject the colorblindness approach for the above reasons.

Transcendence (book excerpt)

When we see ourselves as "beyond race," we often align our belief system with our sense of spiritual being and a more hopeful future. It does not really matter to which faith community we belong. From this perspective, we focus on what is most inherently meaningful about our lives. We very often search for what "resonates" with us, that which fits with our individual experience of the world. Race, as a fabricated concept itself, understandably does not fit with our deep sense of self. And racism is something that strikes such painful chords that we wish for it to disappear altogether.

For many white people, our belief that our experience of the world transcends race also comes with additional values. Many of us who are dedicated to transcendence as a broader ideal also have a sense of spirituality that manifests as a deeply felt connection with all people and things. This sense of connection can translate into a desire and push toward creating community, wholeness, togetherness, or oneness. Spiritually oriented people are oftentimes committed to expanding consciousness, continued growth, and becoming more compassionate people in the world as well.

Although paradoxical, our efforts toward racial transcendence can sometimes thwart our ability to truly live out those spiritual goals. Transcending race can sometimes mean remaining unaware of how racial identity affects our way of being in the world. But if part of life's effort is to be more connected to others, then being less aware of how our whiteness plays out seriously jeopardizes our chances of truly coming together with other individuals. How can people tell us about how racial dynamics affect them if we refuse to acknowledge that race remains significant in people's lives?

If the majority of whites choose transcendence and claim we are living in a post-racial society, and the majority of people of color call out for an increased focus on race in efforts to hold whites accountable for continuing racism, then who is the more evolved? Whose perspective receives attention? In white people, the idea of transcending race can unintentionally perpetuate a sense of superiority that can prove damaging when people of color and whites come together in dialogue and community building.

Race is not Real (book excerpt)

Many of us reject racial whiteness as a personal identifier when we are ready to say that we disagree with the divisions that race perpetuates, the false categorizations that do not offer exact, accurate self-reflection. Through this argument, we hope to demonstrate that we will not be fooled into continuing a fundamentally flawed system of naming.

Deciding that we are not white also, however, allows us to scratch racial identity off of our already crowded to-do list. We can move on with our lives, imagining that issues of race are taken care of as far as it relates to us. Sure, there are plenty of people who identify with race and prejudiced viewpoints—but we are no longer part of the “race problem” because we are not part of the race. Those of us taking on this approach generally are philosophically opposed to prejudice, so we do not see ourselves doing anything that would cause distress in anyone from another group.

Unfortunately, there is also a subtle implication in this approach that often goes unnoticed by white people, but it is hardly lost on a good number of people of color. The implication is this: If we reject being called white, we also reject the idea that we are connected to a broader, white culture.

Distancing ourselves from our discomfort with racial identity by claiming that we are not white betrays our hopes. Although we hope that the distance excuses us from being a part of the problem of race, our denials do not stop us from being treated as white. Philosophically rejecting whiteness does not stop us from escaping racial profiling.

The American Anthropological Association put out a “Statement on Race” to reflect the thinking of most contemporary scholars. Within the statement they note:

“In the United States both scholars and the general public have been conditioned to viewing human races as natural and separate divisions within the human species based on visible physical differences. With the vast expansion of scientific knowledge in this century, however, it has become clear that human populations are not unambiguous, clearly demarcated, biologically distinct groups. . . . Historical research has shown that the idea of ‘race’ has always carried more meanings than mere physical differences; indeed, physical variations in the human species have no meaning except the social ones that humans put on them.”

Additional Working Definitions and Context for Discussions on Race:

Prejudice

1. an unfavorable opinion or feeling formed beforehand or without knowledge, thought, or reason.
2. any preconceived opinion or feeling, either favorable or unfavorable.
3. unreasonable feelings, opinions, or attitudes, esp. of a hostile nature, regarding a racial, religious, or national group.

**** Everyone likely has prejudices by virtue of us receiving a constant stream of inaccurate messages about people through media sources.*

Bias

1. a particular tendency or inclination, esp. one that prevents unprejudiced consideration of a question; prejudice.

**** The behavioral inclination that arises out of a prejudice. This may be conscious OR unconscious. You may have biases of which you are not consciously aware.*

Racism

1. a belief or doctrine that inherent differences among the various human races determine cultural or individual achievement, usually involving the idea that one's own race is superior and has the right to rule others.
2. a policy, system of government, etc., based upon or fostering such a doctrine; discrimination.
3. hatred or intolerance of another race or other races.

**** The belief in inherent differences that has at one time translated into policies or systems that have perpetuated and/or fostered those beliefs. One may enact racism on a personal level OR racism may be systemic, reinforcing or arising out of old systems of discrimination*

An example to illustrate how these three terms can be distinct, but build upon each other:

- **Prejudice:** My family lived in a middle class neighborhood and thought that people with less money were also sloppy, dirty, and didn't have clean homes. (**Belief based**)
- **Bias:** My parents didn't want me playing with the kids from the nearby apartment complex because they thought they kids would be a bad influence (**Belief turns into action**)
- **Racism:** I had little opportunity to interact with kids of color because the kids of color lived in the apartments because of institutionalized systems of economic benefits for white people that my family enjoyed (GI bill, family transfer of wealth, etc.) (**Action supports the continuation of segregated lives set in place via public policies such as red lining**)

Culture, Tradition, and Appropriation

Witnessing Whiteness Chapter 1 Workshop 1.2

Dear Facilitator(s),

This workshop series was carefully crafted, reviewed (by a multiracial team), and revised with several important issues in mind.

The series is intended to...

1. **Offer an 11 part, sequential process that corresponds to the reading of the book, *Witnessing Whiteness, 2nd Edition*.** Understandably, facilitators, for various reasons, might want to use one or more of the workshops as stand alone events without sufficient time for participants to a) read the corresponding book chapters or b) move through the entire series. Yet, please understand that **moving through these workshops without having read the corresponding book chapter will markedly reduce its effectiveness. It will make moving through the workshop more challenging and is NOT recommended.** Understandings gained from one workshop are also important for subsequent workshops.
2. **Respond to particular group needs.** Recognizing that some groups may not be able to implement each workshop for the entire time suggested, some approved modifications can be found at the end of each workshop agenda. Only modify these workshops when absolutely required.
3. **Create a welcoming, inviting space where participants feel free to speak the truth of their experience without fear of shaming or reprisal.** It is essential for facilitators to understand that even when participants hold views that are counter to the themes in the book/series, a hallmark of both the book and the series is that people should be gently led into a new way of seeing.
4. **Follow logical threads of understanding related to each theme.** The language provided in the “scripts” that both precede and follow each section of the workshops are very important. Deviating from the essential themes and tone in those statements may create confusion and undercut the building nature of each individual workshop.
5. **Enhance leadership capacity within the community.** Detailed facilitator notes are provided for each activity so that one or more members of the group can practice their facilitation while leading this workshop series. A few notes of caution: a) the same facilitation team should run the entire series, b) the team should read the entire book in advance of leading any of the workshops, and c) sufficient debrief opportunities should be created to discuss how each workshop went so that facilitators’ skills can be developed.
6. **Provide community building opportunities for either racially caucused white groups OR multiracial groups.** Although still focused on whiteness in general, the series seeks to frame activities and questions in ways that allow people of color to benefit from the experience.

Best wishes,
Shelly Tochluk

Culture, Tradition, and Appropriation

Witnessing Whiteness Chapter 1 Workshop 1.2

Goals:

- Examine the cultural experiences and traditions that are meaningful in our lives
- Discuss the origins of our valued cultural traditions and our personal/family's relationships to them
- Investigate issues related to cultural appropriation and how they might affect cross-race interactions

Materials:

- Communication guidelines
- Markers and pens
- Blank 8 x 11 sheets of paper
- Butcher paper
- "And I Still Question Myself" Narrative (Handout 1.2.1)
- List of Terms/Context Resource Page (Handout 1.2.2)
- Resource Page (Handout 1.2.3)

Book Anchor Quote:

I benefit when feeling connected to something ancient, like when I read old Germanic fairytales and feel somehow related to them. I will continue exploring my ethnicity as I move forward, searching for fragments of a culture long lost to my family— For the truth is that my cultural connection is lost; I am not German. That culture is too disconnected. My Germanness was traded in long ago for the benefits available in this country for European immigrants able to fit into the white group. Feeling connected with my ancestry is essential, but I cannot kid myself into believing that I share the same culture as contemporary Germans. I do not....

White people who cannot fully recapture a lost cultural heritage, like myself, often experience a real sense of loss. Sure, there might be subcultures of whites that feel attached to what they see as a particularly American culture, like those who would claim a "Southern" culture. However, many of us find ourselves looking at other groups and longing for the connection we imagine they feel with their roots, their homeland, their culture. Many white people can be heard saying, "We don't have culture. They have culture."...

The more we understand ourselves, the reasons for our actions, and how our cultural explorations might be perceived in relationship to an oppressive history, the more we are able to navigate our way through challenging conversations, build authentic relationships and break down the wounds built up over years of injury. Perhaps even more important, we might be able to avoid enacting a disrespectful form of appropriation.

Session 2 - Culture, Tradition, and Appropriation

3 hrs

Section I

(15 min)

OPENING

Materials: Goals for day written out and communication guidelines posted ([download with discussion guide](#)).

Purpose of piece:

To discuss communication guidelines and review goals for the workshop

Instructions: *Facilitators introduce themselves, ask participants to say their name and one sentence to describe why they decided to come to the workshop. Ask participants to read the discussion guidelines posted on the wall aloud, one after the other.*

- *Ask participants what questions they have.*
- *Invite participants to add to the list any additional discussion guidelines they think would be helpful. Write them on the piece of butcher paper. Use this modified list for all future workshops.*
- *Invite participants to choose one of the guidelines to work on throughout the workshop.*

Section II

(50 min)

Drawing on our influences

Materials: Butcher paper with guiding question and categories, markers, 8 x 11 sheets of paper

Purpose of piece:

To explore participants' cultural influences and their origination

Say to group: To begin, we are going to explore the various ways we value culture in our lives. To do this, we are going to spend some time creating a representation through pictures, symbols, and/or words that reflect all the different cultural influences we value.

- These cultural influences may have been passed down from our families, or they might be aspects we've picked up along the way.
- To get started, please take a look at each of the categories written on the butcher paper.
- Think about which words or images symbolize the cultural influences that are important to you.
- You'll have about 10 minutes to create your symbolic representation.
- We will have time to share them later, but at this time this activity should be done silently.

Guiding question/categories written on butcher paper and posted:

- Guiding question: What cultural influences make you feel connected to a valued tradition?
- Categories: Faith, philosophy of life, values, holiday/ceremonial traditions, home décor, dress, music, food, art, style, etc.

INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION/DRAWING (10 MINUTES)

Now that you've completed as much as time will allow, find a partner and explain what you've drawn and why - Each of you will have about 5 minutes to share.

PAIR SHARE (10 MINUTES)

Say to group: We'd now like to have you count off from 1-? (*however many groups you'd need to make 4-5 persons per group. For example, if there are 10 participants you count 1,2,1,2 to get 5 in each group*) We're now going to form small groups to discuss some additional questions.

Small groups should be given a piece of butcher paper and markers so a group member can take notes.

Small Group Questions: (20 MINUTES)

1. Where do your cultural influences come from?
2. For those influences that have not come from your family traditions, how did they become incorporated into your life and what makes them meaningful to you?

Large Group Share Out: (10 MINUTES)

1. What cultural influences were most important to people in your small group, where did they come from, and why are they meaningful?

Wrap Up: Each of us has been influenced by a host of experiences and cultural backgrounds. Knowing how important and personal these things are to each of us is really important so that we can continue exploring what the experience of "culture" means for our lives.

Section III

(55 minutes)

Cultural Orientations

Materials: Butcher paper posters with statements, Butcher paper with small group questions written and posted

Purpose of piece:

To consider our individual relationship to culture

Instructions: *To prepare for this exercise, create four posters to display at the four corners of the room. Post prior to the workshop but keep them covered (flipped up and secured) so they aren't visible.*

1. "I don't really have a culture"
2. "I'm a world citizen that draws from any culture that inspires me."
3. "My culture has been passed down to me from my family and/or community."
4. "My culture is American culture."

Say to group: Now that we've spent some time looking at how specific cultural influences have become meaningful in our lives, we'd like you to think about how you see your relationship to culture in general.

- Around the room are four posters. On each is a statement that reflects how a lot of people feel about their relationship to culture.
- **Facilitator reads each of the posters aloud.**
- As you think about these four statements, which one seems to capture your experience best?
- This is a forced choice exercise, so you have to choose one, even though we acknowledge that any one particular statement may not represent you fully. But, for the sake of this exercise, please think about which one of the four best represents how you feel right now.
- **Give about 20 seconds for thinking**
- Now please move to stand near the poster that you've chosen.

Facilitator's Note: *If there are not at least two people at each location, facilitators can engage in dialogue with those who are alone at one position OR a single can join another small group for the discussion. Ideally, there would be one facilitator working with each small group.*

Say to group: Take a look around the room and notice how many people are at each corner. At this time, we'd like you to talk with those who have chosen the same statement as you did. Please sit together (as location groups) and answer the questions posted. Please choose someone to take notes, as we'll ask you to share your answers with the large group in about 20 minutes.

Location group discussion questions: (20 minutes)

1. Why did you choose this statement?
2. How does it feel to experience culture this way?
3. What are some ways your experience of culture could complicate and/or enhance your interactions across race?

Large group discussion: (30 MINUTES)

1. Each group shares their thoughts – 5 minutes each, 20 minutes total
2. Continued discussion of important ideas raised - 10 minutes

FACILITATOR'S NOTES: Some ideas you might draw out of participants during the small (location) and large group dialogues could include the following:

- **“I don't really have a culture”**
 - *Complicate* --- if you don't feel connected to a culture, you might...
 - Not easily appreciate how meaningful certain aspects are for others
 - Be more likely to want to take on someone else's culture in a way that offends people
 - Feel less able to share of yourself, like there's less to offer of value
 - *Enhance* --- if you don't feel connected to a culture, you might...
 - Be more open to learning about someone else's traditions
- **“I'm a world citizen that draws from any culture that inspires me.”**
 - *Complicate* ---- if you feel that you can draw from any culture that inspires you, you might...
 - Take on other people's cultural traditions in ways that are offensive
 - Ex. wearing symbols that are considered sacred
 - Benefit from traveling and accumulating artifacts for personal enjoyment while the culture as a whole fights for its survival (an offensive practice to many people from cultures around the world)
 - Ignore how ancient cultural practices have regularly been co-opted for profit by white Americans while the originators of the tradition receive no benefit
 - *Enhance* --- if you feel that you can draw from any culture that inspires you, you might...
 - Know some of the ins and outs of some cultural traditions in ways that open doors for you, increase trust
 - Develop greater respect for other cultures
- **“My culture has been passed down to me from my family and/or community.”**
 - *Complicate* ---- When your culture reflects your heritage, you might...
 - Assume everyone has received the benefits of cultural transmission as you have
 - Feel less empathetic for those who feel a lack of cultural grounding
 - *Enhance* --- When your culture reflects your heritage, you might...
 - Operate from a solid and rooted sense of self and cultural identity that supports interest and appreciation for other cultures.
- **“My culture is American culture.”**
 - *Complicate* --- when you see your culture as American culture, you might...
 - Assume that everyone in the U.S. has or should experience similar cultural traditions

- Have left your home (ethnic) culture behind through assimilation and expect that all others should do the same thing
- Ignore how American culture is a product of many different cultures, and the people of color who contributed their traditions were often not the beneficiaries of the profits earned as those traditions became widespread
- *Enhance* --- when you see your culture as American culture, you might
 - Feel a sense of belonging and therefore feel secure and rooted

Wrap Up: The intent with this exercise was to highlight that our understanding of culture and what it means to us affects our interactions with people across race.

- If we don't take the time to explore how people's approaches to culture have historically been used in ways that injure others, we run the risk of falling into or continuing problematic patterns ourselves.
- When we return from break we'll begin a deeper exploration of how what we might think of as *cultural exchange*, which can be a valuable thing, can go awry and become something called *cultural appropriation*, a problematic pattern.

BREAK 10 MINUTES

BREAK 10 MINUTES

BREAK 10 MINUTES

Section IV

(40 minutes)

Cultural Appropriation

Materials: "And I Still Question Myself" Narrative (Handout 1.2.1), small and large group questions written on butcher paper and posted

Purpose of piece:

To explore the negative effects of cultural appropriation and its complexity

Say to Group: A really challenging issue we need to talk about involves what is called "cultural appropriation" and how it can damage cross race relationships.

- Essentially, **cultural appropriation** is a term that refers to one group taking a particular cultural form from another group and using it for their own advantage.
- Often, this includes economic exploitation.
- It also can include using a cultural form in ways that do not honor the original intent or spiritual tradition of the culture.
- Cultural appropriation has a long history in the U.S. with many people participating and benefiting, both knowingly and unknowingly.
- This has created significant injury for many people of color, whose traditions have been more often exploited and cultures' decimated.
- White people who respond to charges of cultural appropriation by saying they "aren't hurting anyone" and mean "no offense" often only exacerbates the injury.
- Important to note is that cultural appropriation, usually seen as highly negative, is not the same thing as cultural exchange.
- Questions of 1) control and 2) profit lie at the heart of cultural appropriation and so that is what we want to keep in the back of our minds as we listen to a narrative written by a white woman who has struggled to understand these issues and how her life does or does not include cultural appropriation.

Ask participants to sit comfortably and close their eyes in preparation to hear the narrative about a white woman questioning issues of cultural appropriation and how she might play a role in it.

Read Narrative (distribute copies after completion of section)

Say to Group: Important to note as we move into small group discussion is that these are really challenging issues and our task today is not about assigning blame to anyone or creating a sense of guilt.

- The effort here is to try to get our heads wrapped around this issue so that we can better evaluate how our lives might be either affected by, or contributing to, continuing cultural appropriation.
- Once we are able to recognize the patterns, then we can further explore the nuances and do our own self-examination about how we might need to learn more and/or make some personal changes.

Small group questions: (20 minutes)

1. What feelings arose as you listened to the narrative?
2. What experiences in your own life does this narrative prompt you to think about?
3. What questions does the example in this narrative raise for you?

Large group share (10 minutes)

1. In what ways can cultural appropriation complicate interactions and relationship building across race?
2. What are the questions you are sitting with as we prepare to finish this workshop?

Wrap Up: As we move toward our close, it's important to acknowledge that we only scratched the surface of issues surrounding cultural appropriation.

- For many situations, there will be disagreement among people in terms of what is offensive behavior or not, as everyone has different sensitivities.
- However, now that we have some awareness of the issue, it is important for us to really listen to what people say and try to avoid becoming defensive.
- Ultimately, even if we are leaving with some confusion – the questions we have can help lead us into important conversations that will help us as we move forward.

Section V

(10 min)

Closing

Materials: List of Terms/Context Page (Handout 1.2.2), Resource Page (Handout 1.2.3)

Purpose of piece:

To acknowledge what we did today, bridge to next workshop, and allow people to check out of the space

Wrap Up: Thank you for your participation today. If you are interested in learning more about cultural appropriation, we are handing out a resource sheet that offers easily accessed, short videos that are available for viewing on the internet.

- You might also want to consider watching the videos with others from the workshop and discussing the questions that follow each video link on the resource page.
- Now, as we close today's workshop, let's go around the circle and name one thing you found valuable about the time we spent together here today.

WORKSHOP 1.2 MODIFICATIONS

Suggested

If you are unable to complete the entire 3-hr workshop, here is an alteration that could satisfy some goals:

- **2 hour option**
 - Opening without adding to discussion guidelines or choosing a focus (reduces by 5 minutes)
 - Eliminate section III (reduces by 55 minutes)
 - Eliminate break, and retain those minutes for a more thorough discussion of section IV.

And I Still Question Myself

New shoots sprang up in the meadow the first day I entered a sweat lodge. The evening was crisp, hawks hung on the breeze, and the fire crackled. A peace I'd not known previously settled upon me as I waited, watching. The elder prepared the prayer ties, arranged objects on the altar, and filled the pipe with a mixture of sage and tobacco.

Later, having crawled inside the dome-shaped lodge, supported by willow branches and covered with tarps and blankets, I sat in a community circle. Warmth filled the lodge as glowing stones were brought in one by one and placed in the center. After the first seven stones entered and prayers were said, the elder offered an explanation.

"This is the safest place on earth," he began.

"It is a return to the womb of our mother", he continued.

We enter the sweat lodge as a purification ceremony. It is where we pray to be reconstructed, made anew. It is where we acknowledge the gifts of our ancestors, pray for help and health, both for ourselves and our loved ones. It is a place of healing, where medicine envelops and toxins are purged.

Sitting on the earth, feeling the fire from the stones, seared by the steam that arose each time the elder poured water, longing for the coolness of the night air outside, I felt the sacrificial nature of this ceremony. Choosing to sit in this place to pray reminded me of the essential elements of life: fire, water, air, earth, interconnection, and humility.

In this place we pray for the creepy crawlies, the four leggeds, the winged ones, as well as our two-legged brethren. The full circle of life is honored in this place. We sit in the lodge so that when we re-emerge we are better able to offer ourselves to our community.

Exiting the lodge for that first time, crawling out with an acknowledgment of "all my relations", a centered, although exhausted, gratefulness overwhelmed me. The moon shone above and we dressed slowly, silently, each incorporating the medicine offered in that symbolic womb.

The sweat lodge has become a sanctuary for me, one that I've returned to on a monthly basis for the last 14 years. It's my home, it's a church, and it's sacred.

And, my practice has been a source of tension for me. As a white woman trying to be diligent about disrupting racism and dismantling privilege, I have recognized the need to interrogate my participation.

"I was invited in", I'd say, thinking about my elder, trained in the Lakota tradition. I'd recall his words, "You are doing what your ancestors should have done when they first arrived on this land." "You're praying to make the way clearer for us all as we move forward."

And yet, I'd hear people talk about "cultural appropriation" and what it meant that white people participated in traditions not their own.

Yes, it's true. I found solace in the sweat lodge in ways not found through my American customs.

Yes, it's true. My various European ethnic heritages did not provide me with a tradition that resonates with me and offers me this level of community.

"But, I'm not trying to be what I'm not." I'd console myself, knowing that I don't try to claim that the fullness of my life represents Native American religious practices.

For years, I wondered, I struggled, I sat, I sweated, and I admitted what felt like a contradiction. I am committed to this practice, and in doing so I've adopted another's cultural practice as my own. Is this cultural appropriation? Is it wrong what I'm doing?

To some, they do see my participation as problematic. For others, my level of respect and devotion satisfies. From my elder's point of view, this practice is for everyone, regardless of cultural origin. But, not all people of Native American descent share his perspective.

For me, I remained both devoted to the practice and simultaneously a bit self-critical.

I then read the newspaper in October 2009.

Sonoma, Arizona. A white man named James Arthur Ray charges people upwards of \$9,000 to participate in a week long initiation journey that utilizes various spiritual practices and trials to help the individuals find their warrior within...or something like that.

The culminating experience is a community sweat lodge. People died.

That lodge was not the safest place on earth. Instead, it was rendered deadly.

The ego and hubris of a white man turned a sacred ceremony into a money-making venture.

A purification ceremony within mother's womb was turned into a trial to be overcome.

A sanctuary space for prayer was turned into a prison from which people begged for release.

We spoke about the tragedy the following week in our lodge. We prayed for the victims. We prayed for those responsible. And, we prayed that there would not be a reaction against those who participate regularly in this ancient ceremony.

For that is also one of the dangers. Cultural appropriation often distorts the beauty of the original form.

Worse, blind appropriation and defensive egos shield people from recognizing the harm they perpetuate on others. Within weeks of the deaths the white man was busy offering workshops and lectures, telling audiences that he prays for the families of those who died. At no time does he publicly recognize the role he played, his lack of humility and use of privilege to take and modify what he had no right to desecrate.

Weeks later, I sit, I consider, I write...

Must I still question myself regarding how my life might involve cultural appropriation?

Yes, of course. It's a healthy question to ask, repeatedly.

But, can I speak out, as a white woman, against a white man, charging him with an offensive and deadly form of cultural appropriation even though I am not part of the culture from which the practice was taken?

Yes, of course. It's my duty.

List of Terms/Context

Culture

The customary beliefs, social forms, attitudes, material traits, values, and practices characteristic of a particular racial, religious, or social group

Appropriate

To take or make use of something without authority or right

Cultural Appropriation

Legally allowable, but objected to by group's whose cultures are exploited

Individuals frequently use ethnic groups' cultural artifacts, artistry, customs, and/or styles even though they are not part of that groups' culture or ancestral heritage. This is a pattern often associated with white American tourists and individuals raised to believe that modifying ancient forms into new, modified versions for personal or business purposes is acceptable.

The negative connotation associated with this term arises because all too often the use of another's cultural art or customs involves 1) commodification and 2) desecration (see below).

Commodify

To turn something that has intrinsic value (such as a work of art) into a commodity

Making a profit off of something that has traditionally been created to exemplify another's cultural tradition often involves exploitation of the cultural group of origin. The economic benefits that come from commodification rarely benefit the cultural group of origin. Instead, commodification undermines a culture's ability to maintain its activities and artistry as previously practiced.

Desecrate

To violate the sanctity of something

To treat something considered sacred in a disrespectful, irreverent, or outrageous manner

Any time a group's spiritual forms, objects, or practices are used in ways that deviate from its original intentions, there is risk of rendering them profane, dangerous, and/or offensive.

Very often, commodification and desecration are found together.

Cultural Exchange vs. Cultural Appropriation

As people migrate and interact with cultures other than their own, it is normal for native populations, visitors, and/or immigrant groups to begin to adopt some of the customs and practices of groups they have newly encountered. When this level of exchange is mutually beneficial and done with respect, appreciation for the participating cultural/ethnic groups and/or individuals may be heightened.

On the other hand, when one group takes cultural forms from another group and then utilizes and/or modifies those forms in ways that are economically exploitative or disrespectful, it negates the claim that there is an underlying appreciation for the culture of origin.

Some examples include: 1) the wearing of the Hindu “bindi” in the center of the forehead as an ornament without the corresponding spiritual understanding and practice or 2) use of Native American objects considered sacred as decorative pieces for use in a home or business without the corresponding spiritual understanding and practice

(see Handout 1.2.3 for additional examples and resources)

Whiteness, Cultural Loss, and Appropriation (Book Excerpt)

Unfortunately, so many whites have trampled people of color as we ran away from our whiteness that many people of color are highly suspect when whites demonstrate an interest in their culture and participate in traditional ceremonies and practices or wear their cultural symbols and dress.

If we can understand that our cultural exploration or adoption is often warily perceived as related to appropriation, the exploitation of another group’s culture for another’s benefit, and a history of oppressive behaviors, then we can more effectively explain our intention to people of color. If we can avoid becoming defensive, we might be able to hear the concerns of people of color, then be offered the opportunity to explain the respect we have for the cultural tradition or faith. Further, we can enter a discussion about how our interest in a particular culture is related to our own sense of cultural loss. Even more helpful is an ability to discuss how we understand our approach in terms of our relationship with our own whiteness and the social and economic benefits that have traditionally come with membership in that group.

Overall, the more we understand ourselves, the reasons for our actions, and how our cultural explorations might be perceived in relationship to an oppressive history, the more we are able to navigate our way through challenging conversations, build authentic relationships and break down the wounds built up over years of injury. Perhaps even more important, we might be able to avoid enacting a disrespectful form of appropriation.

RESOURCES FOR UNDERSTANDING CULTURAL APPROPRIATION

Faith or Fashion: The Appropriation of Mexican Culture - < 10 min.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9k2_1aC-zM

Question to consider:

- Which messages in this piece struck you most? Why?

White Shamans and Plastic Medicine Men, Part 1 of 3 - < 10 min.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VCLmT_M-qtK&feature=Playlist&p=CF415FFC28273D0A&index=0

White Shamans and Plastic Medicine Men, Part 2 of 3 - < 10 min.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1CPxoSp58pE&feature=related>

Questions to consider:

- What does it mean that there are many white people who are offering workshops and experiences clearly tied to ancient Native American practices (even with the same names, like 'vision quest' and 'sweat lodge'), but without a thorough understanding of how those practices have been implemented, their purpose, and intent? In what ways is it a problem?
- Which messages in this piece struck you most? Why?

Yellow Apparel: When the coolie becomes cool – 33 minutes

<http://www.vimeo.com/3846269>

Question to consider:

- Why is it important to consider how a cultural form is consumed versus how the people originating that culture are treated?

I'm a Wigger (Music Video) – 3 min.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdDXHKngYNI&feature=related>

Question to consider:

- How does it demean the origins of hip hop when white kids from the suburbs try to look and sound like they have experienced harsh inner city life?

Young, J. and Brunk, C. (Eds.) (2009). *The Ethics of Cultural Appropriation*: Wiley-Blackwell

Ziff, B. (Ed.) (1997). *Essays on Cultural Appropriation*: Rutgers University Press

Authentic Interactions

Witnessing Whiteness Chapter 2

Workshop 2

Dear Facilitator(s),

This workshop series was carefully crafted, reviewed (by a multiracial team), and revised with several important issues in mind.

The series is intended to...

1. **Offer an 11 part, sequential process that corresponds to the reading of the book, Witnessing Whiteness, 2nd Edition.** Understandably, facilitators, for various reasons, might decide to use one or more of the workshops as stand alone events without sufficient time for participants to a) read the corresponding book chapters or b) move through the entire series. Yet, please understand that **moving through these workshops without having read the corresponding book chapter will markedly reduce its effectiveness. It will make moving through the workshop more challenging and is NOT recommended.** Understandings gained from one workshop are also important for subsequent workshops.
2. **Respond to particular group needs.** Recognizing that some groups may not be able to implement each workshop for the entire time suggested, some approved modifications can be found at the end of each workshop agenda. Only modify these workshops when absolutely required.
3. **Create a welcoming, inviting space where participants feel free to speak the truth of their experience without fear of shaming or reprisal.** It is essential for facilitators to understand that even when participants hold views that are counter to the themes in the book/series, a hallmark of both the book and the series is that people should be gently led into a new way of seeing.
4. **Follow logical threads of understanding related to each theme.** The language provided in the "scripts" that both precede and follow each section of the workshops are very important. Deviating from the essential themes and tone in those statements may create confusion and undercut the building nature of each individual workshop.
5. **Enhance leadership capacity within the community.** Detailed facilitator notes are provided for each activity so that one or more members of the group can practice their facilitation while leading this workshop series. A few notes of caution: a) the same facilitation team should run the entire series, b) the team should read the entire book in advance of leading any of the workshops, and c) sufficient debrief opportunities should be created to discuss how each workshop went so that facilitators' skills can be developed.
6. **Provide community building opportunities for either racially caucused white groups OR multiracial groups.** Although still focused on whiteness in general, the series seeks to frame activities and questions in ways that allow people of color to benefit from the experience.

Best wishes,
Shelly Tochluk

Authentic Interactions

Witnessing Whiteness Chapter 2

Workshop 2

Goals:

- Enhance awareness and skills regarding approaching dialogues in racially mixed, but predominantly white situations
- Explore the need for white people to be open to critical feedback while engaging in community service

Materials:

- Discussion Guidelines
- Butcher Paper and Markers
- Personal Self-Survey (Handout 2.1a)
- Personal Self-Survey (Facilitator's notes) (Sheet 2.1b)
- Keys to Remember (Handout 2.2)
- Scene Study (Handout 2.3a)
- Scene Study (Facilitator's notes) (Sheet 2.3b)
- List of Terms/Context (Handout 2.4) (*distribute at facilitator's discretion*)

Book Anchor Quote: (Can be read aloud or distributed to the group during opening if desired.)

When white people see that racism continues, we often dedicate ourselves to work toward improved race relations and increased social justice. We recognize that current social ills are rooted in an unjust past and present, and we offer ourselves—and the influence we can have in various communities—as part of corrective actions. Yet we often experience difficulty in multiracial situations. Two common challenges are our lack of confidence and our overconfidence.

When we enter multiracial spaces, we often take with us our own discomfort with our racial selves. Especially for those of us who have only recently begun to recognize the ways that the more subtle forms of racism emerge, our earlier lack of sensitivity can turn into an awkward oversensitivity. Where once we never noticed race (or at least claimed not to), increased awareness makes issues of race appear ever-present. Race consciousness is at its height and we can often feel paralyzed while trying to figure out how to behave in order to subvert the racism in the room while not appearing racist by concentrating on race in the room! What will the person of color think? What if I say the wrong thing? Our deep sense of guilt over our history and our current ineptness damages our ability to relate.

SESSION 3 - AUTHENTIC INTERACTIONS

2 hrs 45 min

Section 1

(15 min)

OPENING

Materials: Goals for day written out and communication guidelines posted ([download with discussion guide](#))
butcher paper and markers

Purpose of piece:

To discuss communication guidelines and review the goals for the workshop

Instructions: *Facilitators introduce themselves. Ask participants to say their name and two sentences. The first one is a sentence describing why they came to the workshop. The second sentence should speak to the person's curiosities or concerns.*

- *Example:*
 - *Sentence #1 - I am here today because a lot of anxiety that arises in me when I'm in cross-race situations.*
 - *Sentence #2 - I am really nervous because I'm a pretty new facilitator and I hope I can help lead this workshop well.*

Let participants know that you are starting out asking them to risk exposing their feelings because that is at the heart of what we're talking about today – the risk taking necessary in order to create authentic relationships across race.

Ask participants to read the discussion guidelines posted on the wall aloud (one after the other). Ask participants what questions they have. Invite participants to add to the list any additional discussion guidelines they think would be helpful. Write them on the piece of butcher paper. Use this modified list for all future workshops.

*Section II**(60 min)***Questioning Ourselves**

Materials: Personal Self-Survey (Handout 2.1a), Facilitator's notes (Sheet 2.1b)

Purpose of piece: To explore feelings that arise when we are in racially mixed, but predominantly white situations

Say to Group: Our first exercise today will start with each of us taking a self-survey to get a sense of how we feel when we enter racially mixed, but predominantly white situations and how we navigate conversations in those contexts. You will have about 5-10 minutes to silently consider the questions on the handout. Please write down your answers and remain silent until everyone has finished.

Distribute Personal Self-Surveys – Give up to 10 minutes for participants to complete the surveys

We'd now like you to get into small groups to discuss each of the following questions posted on the wall. You'll have 30 minutes. Please take notes on a sheet of butcher paper for later large group share-outs. Determine small group membership (4-5 per group) by counting off numbers from 1 to the number of groups you'd like to have. (Example: If you have 12 participants, you'd want participants to count off 1 to 3. This will create 3 groups of 4 people.)

Small Group Questions: (30 minutes)

1. What struck you most as you answered the questions on the survey?
2. Where are there similarities and differences in how you answered the questions?
3. What concerns are raised through this survey?

Large Group Debrief (20 minutes)

Each group will have about 5 minutes to share what was discussed in their group.

Facilitators can ask...

- What were the main points of your discussion?
- What were some things that surprised you that you or someone else said?
- What questions are you sitting with after this discussion?

Wrap Up: We recognize that we may not be able to fully work through all the issues that are raised today in this discussion. But, something for us to walk away with is that in order for us to interact authentically, we need to check to see what motivations underlie our actions. Are we trying to take care of people in a way that could be offensive? Do our feelings change depending upon the person we're talking to? It is really helpful if we have considered these types of situations well enough to know to what degree we're experiencing emotions that limit us in developing our practice and voice regarding race issues.

Section III

(20 min)

Keys to Remember

Materials: Keys to Remember handout

Purpose of piece: Introduce a few general guidelines that can help reduce anxiety and increase our skills for navigating conversations.

Say to group: We'd like to move forward with some general ideas to consider how we can feel more confident in our cross-racial conversations with people we've just met.

Distribute the "Keys to Remember" (Handout 2.2)

Keys to Remember

1. **Admit feelings of nervousness:** It's helpful if we admit that we are anxious or unsure about how to engage the conversation. It's okay to say that we have recently been exposed to some new ideas and are trying to make use of this information. In this way, we allow ourselves to become vulnerable in the situation and are more likely to receive support and understanding.
2. **Ask permission prior to getting personal:** Lots of people are told that expressing interest is a great way to initiate conversation across race. And that may be true. But, it's also important to recognize that many people won't be interested in delving into a conversation about race. And, even fewer might be interested in readily opening up regarding their feelings. Remember to ask if the person is willing to talk with you about his/her personal feelings before you ask about them.
3. **Treat everyone as an individual:** The worst thing we can do is only focus on a person's racial background. This can translate into questions such as, "How does it feel as a _____ person when _____?" Instead, we should ask "how does it feel for YOU when _____?"
4. **Prepare for rejection:** There will be plenty of people who will NOT appreciate your approach. No matter what you do and how sincere your motivations, since people have widely varying expectations, you are likely to offend or annoy someone at some point. Be prepared to hear that you've made a misstep in that person's mind. It's okay to ask what that person would have preferred...or to simply apologize. Listen to the critique. Accept that person's truth. Consider how you may change your approach based on that person's critique. And then continue to do your best as you move forward.

Instructions: *Invite participants to read each key aloud and invite questions or comments regarding how they are understood and how useful they appear. Allow participants to offer additional suggestions based on experiences where their approach proved helpful. Also, invite participants to discuss moments where they tried some other approach that didn't go well and what they learned from the situation.*

Then, use a piece of butcher paper to extend this discussion into a brainstorm for what other "keys" participants have found useful. (Be aware that not all ideas offered will necessarily be good ones. Be prepared to ask other participants to share understandings that might prompt us to not add some of the offered additions on the paper.)

Wrap Up: Unfortunately, there are no absolute keys that are guaranteed to make interactions successful. But, continuing to keep our eyes and ears open for moments when we can become more honest about our feelings and intentions in a way that demonstrates respect for our acquaintances is a step in the right direction. We can then regroup, reflect on our experiences, and decide how we can learn from moments when things haven't gone as well as we would have liked.

BREAK 15 minutes

BREAK 15 minutes

BREAK 15 minutes

BREAK 15 min.

Section IV

(50 min)

Making a Scene

Materials: Scene study (Handout 2.3a), facilitator's note page (Sheet 2.3b)

Purpose of piece: Explore the need for white people to be open to critical feedback while engaging in community service

Instructions: *Distribute the Scene Study handout to the group. Invite them to read the entire scene silently to themselves, taking note of areas where they see difficulty arising.*

Say to Group: We're now going to spend some time discussing what can happen when white people walk into racially diverse situations with positive intentions, but also a lack of awareness regarding their impact.

- This can also include the impact of someone not listening to someone else in a discussion.
- In this scene, we are not dealing with a sense of anxiety and nervousness, as in our earlier exercise.
- Instead, what we encounter are people who are really confident about their ability to contribute to community service efforts.
- What we'd like to do with this scene study is identify where some challenges arise, imagine what might lie underneath the problematic behaviors, and talk about how we might help stop these types of things from occurring as we move forward.

10 minutes to introduce and read Scene Study

Facilitator's Notes: *Some personal reflection questions that participants can silently consider include:*

- *How might you respond if you were in this meeting?*
- *In what ways does this scene resonate for you personally?*
- *Have you ever been part of or witnessed a similar dynamic play out?*
- *What did you notice about the exchange?*

(Post these on a piece of butcher paper, or write them on a sheet of paper to distribute.)

Now that we've all had a chance to read the scene and think about it for a few minutes, let's consider: (40 minutes)

1. What stands out from this scene?
2. Where do you see defensiveness arising?
3. How might some of the exchanges betray a sense of superiority or a savior complex?
4. What did see in this scene that could have a negative impact?
5. What could be done to help stop this scene from playing out as it does?

Facilitator's Notes: *To help guide the discussion, begin by asking participants to focus on statements (1-6). Try to draw out the issues discussed in the facilitator's notes. Offer some hints yourself (based on the notes) if the participants cannot name them on their own. Try to get a sense of whether or not participants understand. If participants feel that someone in the scene is being attacked unfairly at some point in the discussion, ask the participant to identify which statements spark that belief.*

Then, ask participants to focus on statements (7-12). Continue prompting discussion.
Then, ask participants to focus on statements (13-18). Continue prompting discussion.

Wrap Up: Hopefully what we can see from this dialogue is that even when we think we are engaging in positive efforts with our best intentions, we might be participating in unproductive ways that have destructive impacts.

- It is really important that we stay open to hearing critical feedback from people we interact with in order to reduce the detrimental effects that defensiveness and a sense of superiority or savior mentality can have on community service efforts.
- Important messages can come from people of color and white people, if only we're open enough to hear them.

Section V

(5 min)

Closing

Purpose of piece:

To acknowledge what we did today, bridge to next workshop, and allow people to check out of the space

Say to Group: Please take a moment to reflect on the exercises we did today.

- There have been a lot of challenging questions raised and it's likely that there are many lingering questions and points of confusion.
- Please think for a moment, whom in your life do you have that you can turn to for help in continuing to discuss how to navigate racially diverse situations in ways that supports authentic communication?
- If you can't think of someone, what might you be willing to do to find support?

Wrap Up: Thank you for your participation today. Let's now go around and just say one phrase that captures how you feel as you leave the space and either one person you can turn to for further support or one thing you can do to generate support.

WORKSHOP 2 MODIFICATIONS

Suggested

If you are unable to complete the entire 2hr 45minute workshop, here are some alterations that could satisfy some goals:

- **2 hour option**
 - Eliminate Section III, Keys to Remember (reduces by 20 minutes)
 - Eliminate the break (reduces by 15 minutes)
 - Shorten the discussion portion of Section IV by 5 minutes
- **1 hour option (A)**
 - **Use only if the sole purpose is for participants to explore their feelings when in mixed race, predominantly white settings. This section alone will offer participants no new skills.**
 - Opening with no discussion guidelines except agreement around confidentiality, complete Section II, and close
 - Reduce small and large group discussions by 5 minutes each
- **1 hour option (B)**
 - **Use only if the sole purpose is to show the negative impacts that can arise when white people do not listen to critical feedback. Use only with groups who already have experience with these concepts.**
 - Opening with no discussion guidelines except agreement around confidentiality, move directly to Section IV, and close

Authentic Interactions Personal Self-Survey

1. Imagine that you are attending a social gathering wherein you expect to know only the host and a few additional people. All the people you anticipate knowing in the room are white. As you walk into the room, you see that there is a person of color sitting alone at a nearby table looking at something resting on her lap. Everyone else you see at the event appears to be white. Some people are seated, while others are standing in groups talking. The host makes an announcement that there are 30 minutes until food will be served.
 - What feelings arise when you consider the racial make-up of the situation?
 - Would you feel obligated to approach the person of color sitting at the table to introduce yourself?
 - Why or why not?
 - What experiences have you had that lead you to feeling as you do?
 - If you did engage the person of color in conversation, would you mention your observation about how the vast majority of participants are white?
 - Why or why not?
 - What would be the pros and cons of naming the racial make-up of the situation?
 - Would you be likely to observe and/or name the racial make-up of the situation when speaking with white attendees?
 - Why or why not?
 - What would be the difference, if any, between naming your observations to white attendees versus people of color?
2. At some point during this event someone says something that could easily be perceived as racist, or at least disrespectful, toward people of color. It is sure that the entire room heard the comment.
 - What would you do?
 - What factors would inform that choice?
 - What feelings arise as you think about that situation?

Keys to Remember

1. **Admit feelings of nervousness:** It's helpful if we admit that we are anxious or unsure about how to engage the conversation. It's okay to say that we have recently been exposed to some new ideas and are trying to make use of this information. In this way, we allow ourselves to become vulnerable in the situation and are more likely to receive support and understanding.
2. **Ask permission prior to getting personal:** Lots of people are told that expressing interest is a great way to initiate conversation across race. And that may be true. But, it's also important to recognize that many people won't be interested in delving into a conversation about race. And, even fewer might be interested in readily opening up regarding their feelings. Remember to ask if the person is willing to talk with you about his/her personal feelings before you ask about them.
3. **Treat everyone as an individual:** The worst thing we can do is only focus on a person's racial background. This can translate into questions such as, "How does it feel as a _____ person when _____?" Instead, we should ask "how does it feel for YOU when _____?"
4. **Prepare for rejection:** There will be plenty of people who will NOT appreciate your approach. No matter what you do and how sincere your motivations, since people have widely varying expectations, you are likely to offend or annoy someone at some point. Be prepared to hear that you've made a misstep in that person's mind. It's okay to ask what that person would have preferred...or so simply apologize. Listen to the critique. Accept that person's truth. Consider how you may change your approach based on that person's critique. And then continue to do your best as you move forward.

Authentic Interactions

Scene Study

Meeting Participants

Kim	Asian-American woman, director of programs with the organization for the past 2 years
Darron	African American man, volunteer with the organization for 3 years
Tracey	White woman, volunteer with the organization for 7 months
Jose	Latino man, ad hoc volunteer, community member
Gloria	White woman, staff with the organization for the last 2 years

- 1 - Kim: Thank you all for coming. Now that we've had a chance to check in with each other for a few moments, I'd like to move to our agenda. Tonight's meeting is focused on our upcoming community event, the family film night. There's a lot that we need to do, so let's get started. One agenda item has to do with some community feedback.
- 2 - Darron: Yes, I've been hearing some people concerned about our planning process and decisions we've made regarding outreach.
- 3 - Tracey: Well, I, for one think we've been doing a really good job at bringing community voices in. I mean, Jose has been coming regularly and we've been really responsive to what he's had to say.
- 4 - Jose: I'm not the only important voice in the community though.
- 5 - Tracey: Of course, I know. But, I mean, we can only respond to issues that we hear.
- 6 - Darron: Well, that's just it. There are things that we're hearing. And, one of the things we're hearing is that we've missed quite a lot that we could have known because we didn't ask the community for their ideas way in advance.
- 7 - Tracey: I'm just not sure how productive it is to worry about making everyone happy. I've talked to a lot of people who are really excited about this event. I've been the one who took up responsibility for outreach, remember, and I think we're going to have a really successful event.
- 8 - Kim: The point of this meeting, though, Tracey is to hear what feedback is available so that we can do things better as we move forward. Darron has some things to share that we should listen to.
- 9 - Gloria: Yeah. It's really important to know what Darron's hearing. I mean if there's anything we can do better to get more people involved and comfortable with what we're doing, we've got to do it. I mean the people living in this community have so little to look forward to that it would be a shame for them to miss out on really great events because we didn't listen well enough.
- 10 - Kim: Darron, why don't you go ahead and share what you have heard.
- 11 - Tracey: First, though, I just want to say that I understand why this process is necessary, but if we could just wait for a minute. I want to understand, if there's so little that the community has in terms of safe, healthy family community activities, then why would the community be so quick to criticize? I mean, shouldn't we really be spending our time continuing to get the word out instead of using our valuable time this way?

- 12 - Jose: The issue is not that there aren't good, fun things for people to do.
- 13 - Gloria: Let me clarify what I meant. I know the people who live around here have a lot of really rich cultural traditions. But, part of our job is to help offer things that aren't already part of their norm, you know, expanding awareness of what kinds of activities can support family and learning and all that. So, whatever we need to do in order to be more effective, it's really important. And, that starts today with hearing what Darron has to say.
- 14 - Kim: Tracey, I understand that you've been doing the outreach, and so I can understand why you'd be sensitive about what must feel like criticism. But, we haven't even heard what Darron has to say yet, and I really feel that listening to community members is at the heart of what makes this organization successful and valuable.
- 15 - Darron: Trust me on this, if we can't find more ways to bring community voices in to our planning process we are going to end up with a bad reputation and lose whatever energy we've got going.
- 16 - Jose: I think that's true. Although I've been part of the planning, that doesn't mean I speak for all parts of the community.
- 17 - Gloria: Besides, inviting the community to play a stronger role in our planning is also a way to help empower them. And that's really important too, since so many of them feel powerless in so many areas of their lives.
- 18 - Kim: Ok, so I think we've spent enough time on this right now. While I think the issue of empowerment is far more complicated than you just stated, Gloria, I think it's time for Darron to go ahead and tell us what he's heard. Darron, you're up.

List of Terms/Context

Intent vs. Impact

Paying attention to this difference can help during conversations about race and racism.

- **Intent:** What one intends through speech or action.
- **Impact:** How one's speech or action is perceived or experienced by another

**** When dealing with race it is usually far more productive to deal with IMPACT, not INTENT. Most people do not intend to speak or act in ways that reinforce bias, prejudice, or racism. Unfortunately, people often unconsciously act in ways that hurt or offend others. If we hope to have productive dialogues on race, we need to stay open to hear about how even our best efforts are experienced in unintended ways.*

Overconfidence and Lack of Confidence (book excerpt)

When we enter multiracial spaces, we often take with us our own discomfort with our racial selves...Especially for those of us who have only recently begun to recognize the ways that the more subtle forms of racism emerge, our earlier lack of sensitivity can turn into an awkward oversensitivity. Where once we never noticed race (or at least claimed not to), increased awareness makes issues of race appear ever-present. Race consciousness is at its height and we can often feel paralyzed while trying to figure out how to behave in order to subvert the racism in the room while not appearing racist by concentrating on race in the room! What will the person of color think? What if I say the wrong thing?

Whereas white people can experience a *lack* of confidence when first coming to awareness of race issues, we can also be *overconfident* if we join social causes while seeing racism as existing only outside of ourselves...We can be *overconfident* when it comes to our ability to offer ourselves in service if we do not see how our racial socialization affects us and how it might be associated with adverse effects.

Savior Complex (book excerpt)

The savior complex refers to a pattern wherein white people see our participation in a community as essential...When our approach incorporates the idea that another group needs us for their betterment, we overestimate the value we bring to the situation. We ignore or justify the effects of our inexperience, saying things like, "At least I am here. Without me, they would be worse off."...Our mission can be read as missionary, and like those who descend upon another's land without sufficient cultural knowledge and respect, we can do real damage as we neglect cultural mores and unintentionally offend, thereby rendering our work less effective. This same basic scenario plays out...anywhere we find white people volunteering or hired to "make a difference" in communities other than their own.

Superiority Complex (book excerpt)

The savior complex often goes hand in hand with a sense of superiority. When we approach communities of color with an attitude of internalized superiority (usually not a consciously held opinion), we often move toward leadership positions before gaining sufficient knowledge of the community's members, concerns, and contexts. Even without this vital information, we sometimes believe that we know what the community or organization's goals should be and what needs to be done to achieve those goals.

We can also be unconscious of our tendency to take over the direction of conversations. In other words, we take up valuable time and space without dedicating enough time to listen, to learn, and to gain the skills required for success within the community. Making matters worse, we are all too often unconscious of how people of color read this lack of humility as enactments of privilege and racism.

Authentic Interactions

Personal Self-Survey

Facilitator's Notes

Caution - As you facilitate this exercise, please be careful to recognize and be prepared to discuss three important issues:

- 1. In a mixed race dialogue this exercise can easily become a situation in which people of color end up being put into a teaching role. Please be sure to acknowledge that relying on people of color to be the teachers can reinforce old patterns wherein white people don't take up the responsibility to teach each other. Please tell people of color in the space that you are aware of this dynamic and are hoping to avoid it. That said, if the people of color in the space would like to offer their suggestions that should not be discouraged.**
- 2. These notes are meant to support facilitators helping white people learn about their approaches so they can make considered choices when deciding to name race issues. Yet, this survey has also been designed so that people of color can answer the questions in a way that would be true for them. All participants should be encouraged to discover new insights regarding their feelings and actions.**
- 3. This exercise offers one very specific context. People's feelings and actions may shift markedly depending upon the context. If participants recognize that their answers to this survey would change if the context were different, let them know that this is normal and does not necessarily imply that they are being "inauthentic" by using different approaches in different situations. If this issue arises, it is a good opportunity for the participants to explore what about certain situations make them feel more or less inclined to feel or behave in a certain way.**

1. Imagine that you are attending a social gathering wherein you expect to know only the host and a few additional people. All the people you anticipate knowing in the room are white. As you walk into the room, you see that there is a person of color sitting alone at a nearby table looking at something resting on her lap. Everyone else you see at the event appears to be white. Some people are seated, while others are standing in groups talking. The host makes an announcement that there are 30 minutes until food will be served.

- What feelings arise when you consider the racial make-up of the situation?
- Would you feel obligated to approach the person of color sitting at the table to introduce yourself?
 - Why or why not?
 - What experiences have you had that lead you to feeling as you do?

Often white people who have recently become conscious of the prevalence of racism will fall into a patronizing form of caretaking for people of color. While it is friendly to approach any person and offer a personal introduction, it is important for white people to question their motivations and what are feelings are related to this. There are no correct answers to these questions.

- If you did engage the person of color in conversation, would you mention your observation about how the vast majority of participants are white?
 - Why or why not?
 - What would be the pros and cons of naming the racial make-up of the situation?

Some find it valuable when white people are able to name the situation and demonstrate their understanding that predominantly white spaces can be challenging. However, this is not always the case.

Some pros: Naming the situation highlights that we're attentive to race issues.

Some cons: Bringing race into the conversation might not be welcome by people who are constantly barraged by the impacts of racism.

It's always a risk if we do not know the person we're approaching. No way around it.

- Would you be likely to observe and/or name the racial make-up of the situation when speaking with other white attendees?
 - Why or why not?
 - What would be the difference, if any, between naming your observations to white attendees versus people of color?

If we feel more obligated to mention the racial dynamics in the room to people of color than to white people, we need to ask why?

Do we feel like we're helping out the people of color by naming it?

Are we hesitant to name it to white people because we fear they will respond badly?

Overall, as a practice, it's never bad to become someone who introduces him/herself to others. It's also really good practice to start naming the racial dynamics we see playing out. But, white people will benefit greatly if we take this up as part of a practice of improving the ability to use our voice and NOT see it as a way to take care of people of color. In other words, we choose to approach people and name these issues to ANYONE because doing so increases OUR leadership abilities as people trying to witness for racial justice.

2. At some point during this event someone says something that could easily be perceived as racist, or at least disrespectful, toward people of color. It is sure that the entire room heard the comment.
 - What would you do?
 - What factors would inform that choice?
 - What feelings arise as you think about that situation?

It would be really nice if there were easy answers to these questions. However, there are not. Every situation has its own complexity. An important thing to keep in mind is that EVERY person is an individual and will have his or her own opinion regarding what you should or should not do. While really valuable to check in with people you know who can offer guidelines to keep in mind, ultimately, if your choice is based around what you think another person wants you to do, you are likely to feel demoralized when your approach doesn't match that person's interest. Essential is that we grapple with these questions and come to decisions that are grounded in our understanding of both our intent and what will help us use our voice in effective ways to achieve that intention.

FACILITATOR'S NOTES

Authentic Interactions

Scene Study

Meeting Participants

Kim	Asian-American woman, director of programs with the organization for the past 2 years
Darron	African American man, volunteer with the organization for 3 years
Tracey	White woman, volunteer with the organization for 7 months
Jose	Latino man, ad hoc volunteer, community member
Gloria	White woman, staff with the organization for the last 2 years

SECTION ONE

- 1 - Kim: Thank you all for coming. Now that we've had a chance to check in with each other for a few moments, I'd like to move to our agenda. Tonight's meeting is focused on our upcoming community event, the family film night. There's a lot that we need to do, so let's get started. One agenda item has to do with some community feedback.
- 2 - Darron: Yes, I've been hearing some people concerned about our planning process and outreach.
- 3 - Tracey: Well, I, for one think we've been doing a really good job at bringing community voices in. I mean, Jose has been coming regularly and we've been really responsive to what he's had to say.

Notice how quickly Tracey jumps to a defensive posture. A specific criticism hasn't even been suggested yet. But, Tracey is anticipating receiving difficult feedback and is trying to create a protective barrier against it at the start.

- 4 - Jose: I'm not the only important voice in the community though.

When Tracey names Jose as the way the group has been responsive, she puts him into a position of being the speaker of the community...as though one person represents the whole.

- 5 - Tracey: Of course, I know. But, I mean, we can only respond to issues that we hear.

She's right of course. But, hearing issues had a lot to do with our openness to receiving difficult messages. Also, there's a question around who is thinking about creating channels/systems for getting the feedback. Is it possible that better systems would be in place if someone more sensitive to the community were in charge? Does it seem that Tracey is likely to hear that message?

- 6 - Darron: Well, that's just it. There are things that we're hearing. And, one of the things we're hearing is that we've missed quite a lot that we could have known if we had asked the community for their ideas way in advance.

SECTION TWO

- 7 - Tracey: I'm just not sure how productive it is to worry about making every single person happy. I've talked to a lot of people who are really excited about this event. I've been the one who took up responsibility for outreach, remember, and I think we're going to have a really successful event.

Notice that Tracey has only been part of the group for 7 months and yet she did take up responsibility for outreach. She likely did that with really great intentions...But this exchange is demonstrating that there is more she needs to learn about doing this work effectively. This aspect of the meeting is intended to help her learn new skills, but she is highly resistant and her defensiveness leads her to dismiss voices from the community which could be the very ones she needs for her own development.

8 - Kim: The point of this part of the meeting is to hear what feedback is available so that we can do things better as we move forward. Darron has some things to share that we should listen to.

It is fair to say that Tracey was allowed to take up a big job and perhaps needed some more training before she took up a leadership position. That responsibility would rest with the director. Yet, as we are seeing, the director is trying to offer a learning opportunity here and is being met with resistance. This can be a challenging dynamic when an organization wants to make use of volunteer efforts, but must balance that with the need for skills building for those volunteers.

9 - Gloria: Yeah. It's really important to know what Darron's hearing. I mean if there's anything we can do better to get more people involved and comfortable with what we're doing, we've got to do it. I mean the people living in this community have so little to look forward to that it would be a shame for them to miss out on really great events because we didn't listen well enough.

Notice how Gloria is trying to bring Tracey back to the point of the agenda item and break through her defensiveness. Yet, the language she uses to describe the community would likely be highly offensive to anyone from the community itself. It has a strong "savior complex" flavor to it.

10 - Kim: Darron, why don't you go ahead and share what you have heard.

11 - Tracey: First, though, I just want to say that I understand why this process is necessary, but if we could just wait for a minute. I want to understand, if there's so little that the community has in terms of safe, healthy family community activities, then why would the community be so quick to criticize? I mean, shouldn't we really be spending our time continuing to get the word out instead of using our valuable time this way?

Here, Tracey is picking up on the point that Gloria has made --- which helps make this conversation really guided and led by the two white women --- as she continues to deflect the critiques that are about to come.

12 - Jose: The issue is not that there aren't good, fun things for people to do.

Notice how Jose's comments are brief, but in defense of his community. It is likely that this conversation is raising a lot of internal feelings regarding how his community is being perceived and treated by the two white women.

SECTION THREE

13 - Gloria: Let me clarify what I meant. I know the people who live around here have a lot of really rich cultural traditions. But, part of our job is to help offer things that aren't already part of their norm, you know, expanding awareness of what kinds of activities can support family and learning and all

that. So, whatever we need to do in order to be more effective, it's really important. And, that starts today with hearing what Darron has to say.

Again, there is something positive about how Gloria is responding, and yet, her approach betrays a sense of superiority that would be difficult for many people to listen to.

14 - Kim: Tracey, I understand that you've been doing the outreach, and so I can understand why you'd be sensitive about what must feel like criticism. But, we haven't even heard what Darron has to say yet, and I really feel that listening to community members is at the heart of what makes this organization successful and valuable.

Here we can see Kim taking a fairly soft approach to Tracey, ignoring Gloria's comments for the time being. We can imagine what type of frustration Kim might have if this were a pattern.

15 - Darron: Trust me on this, if we can't find more ways to bring community voices in to our planning process we are going to end up with a bad reputation and lose whatever energy we've got going.

16 - Jose: I think that's true. Although I've been part of the planning, that doesn't mean I speak for all parts of the community.

17 - Gloria: Besides, inviting the community to play a stronger role in our planning is also a way to help empower them. And that's really important too, since so many of them feel powerless in so many areas of their lives.

Here again we notice Gloria's framework for seeing the community betrays a sense of paternalism that likely plays out in many ways. She's trying to help...but doing some serious damage at the very same time.

18 - Kim: Ok, so I think we've spent enough time on this right now. While I think the issue of empowerment is far more complicated than you just stated, Gloria, I think it's time for Darron to go ahead and tell us what he's heard. Darron, you're up.

So, after all this, we are just now getting to the heart of the matter...maybe. Kim is in a challenging position, as she needs the help of volunteers AND she needs to be sure that those volunteers are able to do their service effectively without doing damage to the organization. Some training experiences are certainly required. But, one of the difficulties may be offering those in a way that doesn't trigger the kind of defensive reactions we see in this dialogue.

Another important issue is the need to provide training to a staff member, Gloria, who likely believes that she's already doing a really good job with the organization. If she is not able to hear that her perspective needs some alteration, her expressions could be toxic for meetings.

Revealing Histories: Both Living and Hidden Witnessing Whiteness Chapter 3 Workshop 3

Dear Facilitator(s),

This workshop series was carefully crafted, reviewed (by a multiracial team), and revised with several important issues in mind.

The series is intended to...

1. **Offer an 11 part, sequential process that corresponds to the reading of the book, Witnessing Whiteness, 2nd Edition.** Understandably, facilitators, for various reasons, might decide to use one or more of the workshops as stand alone events without sufficient time for participants to a) read the corresponding book chapters or b) move through the entire series. Yet, please understand that **moving through these workshops without having read the corresponding book chapter will markedly reduce its effectiveness. It will make moving through the workshop more challenging and is NOT recommended.** Understandings gained from one workshop are also important for subsequent workshops.
2. **Respond to particular group needs.** Recognizing that some groups may not be able to implement each workshop for the entire time suggested, some approved modifications can be found at the end of each workshop agenda. Only modify these workshops when absolutely required.
3. **Create a welcoming, inviting space where participants feel free to speak the truth of their experience without fear of shaming or reprisal.** It is essential for facilitators to understand that even when participants hold views that are counter to the themes in the book/series, a hallmark of both the book and the series is that people should be gently led into a new way of seeing.
4. **Follow logical threads of understanding related to each theme.** The language provided in the “scripts” that both precede and follow each section of the workshops are very important. Deviating from the essential themes and tone in those statements may create confusion and undercut the building nature of each individual workshop.
5. **Enhance leadership capacity within the community.** Detailed facilitator notes are provided for each activity so that one or more members of the group can practice their facilitation while leading this workshop series. A few notes of caution: a) the same facilitation team should run the entire series, b) the team should read the entire book in advance of leading any of the workshops, and c) sufficient debrief opportunities should be created to discuss how each workshop went so that facilitators’ skills can be developed.
6. **Provide community building opportunities for either racially caucused white groups OR multiracial groups.** Although still focused on whiteness in general, the series seeks to frame activities and questions in ways that allow people of color to benefit from the experience.

Best wishes,
Shelly Tochluk

Revealing Histories: Both Living and Hidden

Witnessing Whiteness Chapter 3 Workshop 3

Goals:

- Explore how the history of whiteness lives on in our contemporary lives
- Investigate the benefits of knowing the hidden history of white antiracism

Materials:

- Discussion Guidelines
- Butcher Paper, Markers, and Pens
- Living Histories, half completed (Handout 3.1a)
- Living Histories, (facilitator notes) (Sheet 3.1b)
- Living Histories, blank (Handout 3.2)
- Butcher Paper timeline
- Antiracist stories
 - Prudence Crandall (Handout 3.3)
 - John Brown (Handout 3.4)
 - Anne Braden (Handout 3.5)
 - Robert F. Kennedy (Handout 3.6)
 - Jerry Mitchell (Handout 3.7)
- List of Terms/Context (Handout 3.8) (distribute at facilitator's discretion)
- Resources (Handout 3.9) (distribute at facilitator's discretion)
- Lyrics for song, Anne Braden, by Flobots (Sheet 3.2) (extra resource tool, not part of workshop)

Book Anchor Quotes: (Can be read aloud or distributed to the group during opening if desired.)

If we believe that we have moved beyond our racial history, we remain ignorant of the ways the history of whiteness continues to affect our lives...The history of whiteness exists just under the surface of every debate concerning American values, multiculturalism, and diversity. Very often, resistance against the language of "American values" is quickly deemed unpatriotic. But knowing the history as just presented helps us to understand why the same person can value democracy and freedom and yet resist calling them "American values" at the same time.

Witnessing this history [of antiracism] is one of the first steps on the way toward doing *ally* work. The various avenues offered by antiracist activists can offer us models of what it can look like to become responsive to oppressive actions associated with whiteness. These guides can help us know how to act on new principles, principles that go beyond being "American," loving freedom and democracy, toward those that allow us to link those ideals with witnessing actions that truly build justice for all within our society...Enacting a search for guides can be a liberating undertaking...Finding people that show us a better way to deal with racism existing today, racism that has its origins in our history, can offer us a sense of direction.

SESSION 4 - REVEALING HISTORIES

2 hrs 45 min

Section I

(20 min)

Opening

Materials: Goals for day written out and communication guidelines posted ([download with discussion guide](#)) butcher paper and markers, Butcher paper across wall with timeline (dates from 1600 to present in increments of 50 years posted).

Purpose of piece:

To discuss communication guidelines and review the goals for the workshop

Instructions: Ask participants to read the discussion guidelines posted on the wall aloud (one after the other). Ask participants what questions they have. Invite participants to add to the list any additional discussion guidelines they think would be helpful. Write them on the piece of butcher paper. Use this modified list for all future workshops.

Facilitators introduce themselves, ask participants to take a marker and go up to the timeline on the wall and add one or two incidences of racism. When everyone has returned, ask participants to say their name and one sentence to describe one of the incidences of racism they posted on the timeline. Explain that the timeline creation is a way to get our brains working because we'll be asked to generate examples of racism in one of our exercises today.

Section II

(55 min)

A Living History

Materials: Living History half-completed sheets (Handout 3.1a), Living History KEY (Sheet 3.1b), Living History BLANK sheets (Handout 3.2), pens

Purpose of piece:

To explore how the history of whiteness lives on in our contemporary lives

Say to Group: From the timeline we can see that there are things we know about our country's racist history. And yet there is also so much more that we should know about. Although it's important to acknowledge what we don't know, this first exercise today is intended to help us make connections between what we DO know about our country's history of racism and how that history continues to affect our lives today.

- In small groups, work together to fill in a Living History handout. (*Distribute Handout 3.1a*)
 - This sheet has some past issues already written on it and we'd like you to make the connections complete.
 - With the past already offered, write in how the present is affected.
 - You'll have about **10 minutes** to complete that sheet.
- Then, we'll ask you to work together to brainstorm some of your own past-present connections and write those in on a blank sheet I'm about to pass out.
 - You'll have another **15 minutes** for that.
- After the groups finish brainstorming, we'll get together to talk about the connections we've made. Keep in mind that although we have some ideas about possible answers, we will not be correcting these. It is up to you to locate the connections that make sense to you.

Divide participants into several groups of 3-5 people.

Hand out the Living History sheets, both half completed and blank. In small groups, participants will fill in the empty boxes on the sheet. Then, they will create new examples on the blank sheet.

Now that you've worked on the past-present connections, as a large group let's talk about what we found.

Large group questions: (30 minutes)

****Post** the questions on Butcher Paper, or create small half-sheet handouts with the questions printed

1. Which connections from the half-completed page struck you most?
2. What is a connection you developed within your small group that you feel is really important to name?
3. How do these past-present connections affect your life?
4. Why do you think so many people say we are living in a "post-racial" society?

Wrap Up: This exercise was meant to offer us a chance to become clearer about how our history of racism continues to affect our daily lives. But, what we should also note is that these connections are not simply old patterns of racism that are now long gone but continue to have some effects...Instead, racism is continuing in ways that remain connected to our past. Until we're able to notice these connections, it will be hard for us to convince other people who tend toward a post-racial perspective that we still have more work to do.

BREAK 15 minutes

BREAK 15 minutes

BREAK 15 minutes

BREAK 15 min

Section III

(1 hr 10 min)

Uncovering a Healing History

Materials: Butcher paper for questions (or half sheets), White Antiracist Biographies (Handouts 3.3 – 3.7)

Purpose of piece:

To investigate the benefits of knowing the hidden history of white antiracism

Say to Group: In most schools the history of racism in the U.S. is treated in some fashion, but usually not explored in depth. A few abolitionists or Civil Rights activists, like Martin Luther King, Jr. might be studied, but again, there is often a fairly superficial approach. This leaves many of us fairly ignorant about both the extent of racism and white supremacy that's pervaded our country's history, but it has also left us with a real lack of knowledge regarding those who have fought racism and white privilege throughout our country's history.

One thing we must acknowledge is that people of color have been courageously doing this work for centuries and are some of our best models. But it is also helpful to pay attention to the way white people have played a role. This is important history for us to know because it gives white people a history they can stand on that shows that there is a history of white anti-racism that can be followed.

This next exercise asks us to divide up into five small groups. Each group is going to receive a different biography to read featuring an anti-racist activist. The job of the small group is to read the excerpt together and answer the following questions on butcher paper. In about 25 minutes you will be responsible for presenting what you learned to the other groups.

Facilitators can choose to make enough copies for all individuals to leave with all biographies, or make only enough copies for each small group to have the one they are reading. If funds permit, it is good to allow all participants to have access to all biographies.

Small group questions: (25 minutes) (post on butcher paper)

1. What important contributions did/does this person make to antiracism efforts?
2. What qualities did/does this person exemplify?
3. What lessons can we learn from this person's life?

25 minutes (5 minutes each) for presentations

Facilitator Notes: *There are five antiracist white people highlighted in this workshop. Here are a few things to recognize and be prepared to discuss:*

- **Historical time period:** *Two of the individuals lived during our country's earlier history (1800's), two are known for their work during the Civil Rights era, and one is a contemporary individual.*
- **Reactions:** *Both in the earlier history and Civil Rights era, the individuals experienced violence and/or threats.*
 - *Although two lost their lives, they have each ultimately been celebrated in some way.*
 - *Although the contemporary individual is being celebrated for his work, keep in mind that his actions are oriented toward past acts by individuals. How do you imagine our society would react if his work targeted inequity in current institutions, such as our justice system?*
- **Method/Approach:** *Pay attention to which individuals try or tried to make change while operating WITHIN our systems as well as those choosing to stay OUTSIDE the system. Both can inspire violent reactions when committed action begins to disrupt the status quo.*

Large group questions following presentations: (20 minutes)

1. What feelings arise as we learn about these stories?
 - a. Fear? Inspiration? Frustration? Confusion?
 - b. What triggers these feelings?
2. Why is it important for these stories to be known?
3. How can knowing about these individuals and their actions support a witnessing practice?
4. What is the harm in these stories remaining hidden in the shadows?
5. How and where can we share these stories of anti-racism?

Wrap Up: It is essential for us to learn about some of this hidden history. For white people especially, we need to see exemplars, people that can model for us how we might work against racism. Even if we don't choose to act exactly as others have done in the past (as each time period calls for its own types of responses), these examples can help us know that we're not alone.

Yet, these stories can also raise concerns. Are we able to truly dedicate ourselves as these people did? This is why we need to continue to come together in community so that we can feel supported as we develop our skills and take our next steps in this work. Since every new step feels risky, having a community behind us can make it that much more likely we'll keep moving forward.

Section IV

(5 min)

Closing

Materials: None

Purpose of piece:

To acknowledge what we did today, bridge to next workshop, and allow people to check out of the space

Instructions: *Ask participants to go around and say one thing that they are taking away from this workshop today that seems significant to them. Thank the participants for their presence and contributions.*

Wrap Up: We hope that as you leave this workshop today you will walk away with a sense of how connected our daily lives are with our past. With this knowledge we can do two things 1) be more motivated to learn about our past in order to continue to understand our present, and 2) help other people see that even if we don't realize it, our lives are connected to our country's history of racism in really disturbing ways. But, we can't stay mired in the distress that often comes with this realization. We also need to locate the history that can support us and motivate us. There is a long-standing tradition of standing up against racism in this country. It is often hidden, but we can do our part of learn about it and hopefully learn from it.

*WORKSHOP 3 MODIFICATIONS***Suggested**

If you are unable to complete the entire 2hr 45-minute workshop, here are some alterations that could satisfy some goals:

- **2 hour option**
 - Eliminate break (reduces by 15 minutes)
 - Eliminate section II personal connection handout, use only partially filled in past-present connections handout (reduces by 15 minutes)
 - Reduce small group discussion in section III to 20 minutes (reduces by 5 minutes)
 - Reduce presentation times in section III to 20 minutes (reduces by 5 minutes)
 - Reduce group questions in section III following presentations to 15 min (reduces 5 minutes)

- **1 hour 30 min option**
 - Open with no discussion guidelines except agreement around confidentiality only, no timeline activity (10 min)
 - Eliminate section II personal connection handout, use only partially filled in past-present connections handout. (10 minutes)
 - Reduce section II group discussion (20 minutes)
 - Reduce small group discussion in section III by 5 minutes (20 minutes)
 - Reduce presentation times in section III (15 minutes)
 - Section III group questions following presentations (reduce to 15 minutes)

A Living History: Past to Present Connections

Past

Science of the time categorized people into four basic races, symbolized by four colors: red, black, yellow, and white

Present

Past

The minstrel stage showed African Americans to be dirty, lazy, clownish, sexual, flashy, comic, and stupid

Present

Past

Nativist political parties blame dire economic circumstances on recent immigrant populations. Examples are the Know Nothing or American Party of the 1850s and the Immigration Restriction League of the 1890s.

Present

Past

Sundown Towns chased people of color out of certain towns. Redlining and inequitable mortgage availability made it impossible for many people of color to live in certain neighborhoods. Local ordinances forbade people of color from living in certain areas.

Present

Past

Not all European immigrant groups were immediately considered white. Irish were not considered white until the mid 1800's and Russians, Jews, and Italians were not considered white until well into the 20th century.

Present

Past

White people shown to be individualistic (highly valued) in the colonies, while others groups denigrated as "communal"

Present

Past

Naturalization laws in effect until the 1950's required that a person be considered "white" in order to become a naturalized citizen

Present



National
Women's
History
Museum

Presents:

The History of Women and Education




1700's

1800's

1900's

Biographies

Timeline

Biographies

Prudence Crandall (1803-1890)



Prudence Crandall was a remarkable woman who opened one of the first schools for African American girls, despite the ridicule and harassment she faced because of her actions.

Prudence Crandall was born in Hopkinton, Rhode Island on September 3, 1803 to a Quaker family. She attended the New England Friends' Boarding School in Providence, where she was able to study subjects such as arithmetic, Latin and the sciences. Although most women during the early 1800's did not receive much education, Quakers (or Friends) believed that women should be educated.

In October of 1831, Crandall opened a private girl's academy in Canterbury, Connecticut. She taught the daughters of many of the town's wealthy families, and the school was ranked as one of the best in the state. Her curriculum was rigorous, as she taught her female students much of the same material being taught at prominent schools for boys.

In 1833, Crandall decided to admit an African American student named Sarah Harris, who wanted more education in order to become a teacher for African American children. The white students' parents were outraged and demanded that Sarah Harris be expelled. Crandall, however, opposed slavery and believed in educating African Americans. She refused to expel the young student and decided instead to open a new school for African American girls.

Prudence Crandall's new school met with much hostility. The four most prominent men in the town of Canterbury arranged a meeting in which they told Crandall that they were intent on destroying her school. The men objected to educating African Americans in their hometown and felt it might lead them to believe they were equal and to interracial marriages. Women in the 1800s were raised to obey men's wishes, but Crandall did not back down.

Crandall enlisted the help of William Lloyd Garrison, editor of the *Liberator*, the nation's major antislavery newspaper. Garrison supported her and directed her to several families interested in sending their girls to Crandall's boarding school. Although African Americans, these families not only were emancipated, but also affluent enough to pay the tuition. In addition, Garrison placed advertisements for Crandall's school in his newspaper.

On March 9, 1833 the town held a protest meeting in response to Crandall's school. In 1833, women did not vote, hold public office, or speak at public meetings. Therefore, Crandall enlisted Samuel Joseph May, a Unitarian minister from a nearby town, and Arnold Buffum, an abolitionist lecturer, to represent her at the meeting. The three decided that they would offer to relocate the school further away from the center of town if someone would buy Crandall's home, where she conducted the boarding school. Although they tried, the men were not allowed to speak at the meeting on the grounds that they did not live in the town of Canterbury. The town voted to protest the school. May (who was kin to future writer Louisa May Alcott) waited until the meeting was

adjourned to make his speech. Some of the people stopped to listen. However his efforts were thwarted when one of the prominent townspeople ordered everyone out of the building.

The first week in April, 1833, Crandall began admitting students. She taught the girls advanced grammar, math and science so that they would one day be able to teach other African Americans. Inside the school, the girls enjoyed the peaceful activities of lectures and study but when they ventured outside they were met with threats and violence. The townspeople jeered rude comments at the girls and threw stones, eggs, and manure at them. Most of the shopkeepers refused to sell Crandall the goods she needed to run the school; she was forced to have her supplies shipped in. The Congregational church refused to allow her students to attend services, while other townspeople contaminated the water in her well.

Despite the hardships she faced, Crandall had many admirers and became known throughout the country and the world for her courage. Crandall received letters and gifts from American abolitionists and even from supporters as far away as Scotland, praising her brave actions.

Within months, the town of Canterbury led the legislature in passing the "Black Law," which made it illegal to open a school or academy that taught African American students from a state other than Connecticut. Crandall was arrested and jailed for providing education to African Americans under this law. The first trial ended in a hung jury – with all jurors, of course, being male – but was convicted in the second trial. A higher court reversed the decision, but on a technicality, not on principle, and angry townspeople continued to harass Crandall and her students. They threw stones, eggs, and mud at the schoolhouse and attempted to light it on fire. On the night of September 9, 1834, the townspeople made one last attempt to drive the schoolhouse to close by breaking most of the windows and smashing furniture in an angry mob attack. Although she had won her legal battle, Crandall feared for her students' safety and decided to close the school.

Only a month before, Crandall had married a Baptist minister and fellow abolitionist, Calvin Philleo, who had three children from an earlier marriage. After the school closed, the couple put the house up for sale and in the spring of 1835, left Connecticut for good. The family moved in with her parents briefly and then moved to Philleo's farm in New York. From there, they moved on to Illinois, where her family owned land in LaSalle County. There, she continued to teach and ran a school from her home. She also participated in women's rights activities, making speeches for the suffrage movement and for tolerance. In 1865, they moved to the Rock Island area, but the family was in constant financial stress; Philleo suffered from mental illness from the 1840s on to his 1874 death.

Prudence Crandall Philleo then moved to Elk Falls, Kansas to live with her brother. In 1884, a man named George Thayer wrote a book chronicling his bicycle journey across the nation. During his travels, Thayer paid a visit to the famous Prudence Crandall and wrote of this interview in his book. In 1886, the Connecticut legislature awarded a pension to her. One hundred and twelve citizens of Canterbury had signed a petition requesting the pension and said they were ashamed of their actions and how they had treated Prudence Crandall. Mark Twain, then a resident of Hartford, Connecticut, even attempted to persuade the people to buy back Crandall's original home. Crandall was pleased with these actions made on her behalf and continued to give lectures on topics of social justice. On January 28, 1890, Prudence Crandall died and was buried in Elk Falls cemetery.

Prudence Crandall is remembered by many for her great influence on abolition and the education of African Americans. Crandall's old schoolhouse in Canterbury is now the home of the Prudence Crandall museum and she was named Connecticut's state heroine.

Additional Resources:

Web sites:

[Connecticut Hall of Fame](#)
[The Prudence Crandall Museum](#)
[Letters & Documents relating to Prudence Crandall](#)

Secondary Books:

- Jurmain, Suzanne. *The Forbidden Schoolhouse: The True and Dramatic Story of Prudence Crandall and Her Students*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2005.
- Strane, Susan. *A Whole-Souled Woman: Prudence Crandall and the Education of Black Women*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company Inc., 1990.
- Thayer, George B. *Pedal and Path: Across the Continent Awheel and Afoot*. Hartford,

- Conn.: Case, Lockwood & Brainard, n.d.
- Welch, Marvis Olive. *Prudence Crandall: A Biography*. Manchester, CT: Jason Publisher, 1984.

Primary Sources:

- Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Matilda Joslyn Gage, *History of Woman Suffrage*, Volume III, 1886.
- May, Samuel J. *Some Recollections of Our Antislavery Conflict*, 1869.
- William Lloyd Garrison, *1805-1879: The Story of His Life Told By His Children*, 1885.
- Contemporary newspaper coverage in *The Liberator* and the Boston-based *Colonizationist* during 1833-34.





Judgment Day

[Part 1: 1450-1750](#)

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People & Events

[Resource Bank Contents](#)

John Brown

1800 - 1859



John Brown was a man of action -- a man who would not be deterred from his mission of abolishing slavery. On October 16, 1859, he led 21 men on a raid of the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia. His plan to arm slaves with the weapons he and his men seized from the arsenal was thwarted, however, by local farmers, militiamen, and Marines led by Robert E. Lee. Within 36 hours of the attack, most of Brown's men had been killed or captured.



John Brown was born into a deeply religious family in Torrington, Connecticut, in 1800. Led by a father who was vehemently opposed to slavery, the family moved to northern Ohio when John was five, to a district that would become known for its antislavery views.

During his first fifty years, Brown moved about the country, settling in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and New York, and taking along his ever-growing family. (He would father twenty children.) Working at various times as a farmer, wool merchant, tanner, and land speculator, he never was financially successful -- he even filed for bankruptcy when in his forties. His lack of funds, however, did not keep him from supporting causes he believed in. He helped finance the publication of David Walker's Appeal and Henry Highland's "Call to Rebellion" speech. He gave land to fugitive slaves. He and his wife agreed to raise a

black youth as one of their own. He also participated in the Underground Railroad and, in 1851, helped establish the League of Gileadites, an organization that worked to protect escaped slaves from slave catchers.

In 1847 Frederick Douglass met Brown for the first time in Springfield, Massachusetts. Of the meeting Douglass stated that, "though a white gentleman, [Brown] is in sympathy a black man, and as deeply interested in our cause, as though his own soul had been pierced with the iron of slavery." It was at this meeting that Brown first outlined his plan to Douglass to lead a war to free slaves.

Brown moved to the black community of North Elba, New York, in 1849. The community had been established thanks to the philanthropy of Gerrit Smith, who donated tracts of at least 50 acres to black families willing to clear and farm the land. Brown, knowing that many of the families were finding life in this isolated area difficult, offered to establish his own farm there as well, in order to lead the blacks by his example and to act as a "kind father to them."

Despite his contributions to the antislavery cause, Brown did not emerge as a figure of major significance until 1855 after he followed five of his sons to the Kansas territory. There, he became the leader of antislavery guerillas and fought a proslavery attack against the antislavery town of Lawrence. The following year, in retribution for another attack, Brown went to a proslavery town and brutally killed five of its settlers. Brown and his sons would continue to fight in the territory and in Missouri for the rest of the year.

Brown returned to the east and began to think more seriously about his plan for a war in Virginia against slavery. He sought money to fund an "army" he would lead. On October 16, 1859, he set his plan to action when he and 21 other men -- 5 blacks and 16 whites -- raided the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry.

Brown was wounded and quickly captured, and moved to Charlestown, Virginia, where he was tried and convicted of treason. Before hearing his

sentence, Brown was allowed make an address to the court.

. . . I believe to have interfered as I have done, . . . in behalf of His despised poor, was not wrong, but right. Now, if it be deemed necessary that I should forfeit my life for the furtherance of the ends of justice, and mingle my blood further with the blood of my children, and with the blood of millions in this slave country whose rights are disregarded by wicked, cruel, and unjust enactments, I submit: so let it be done."

Although initially shocked by Brown's exploits, many Northerners began to speak favorably of the militant abolitionist. "He did not recognize unjust human laws, but resisted them as he was bid. . . .," said Henry David Thoreau in an address to the citizens of Concord, Massachusetts. "No man in America has ever stood up so persistently and effectively for the dignity of human nature. . . ."

John Brown was hanged on December 2, 1859.



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- [John Brown's address to the court](#)
- [John Brown's black raiders](#)
- [The raid on Harpers Ferry](#)
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Anne Braden - Biography

Information from WIKIPEDIA, open source and modified by the general public
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anne_Braden

Anne McCarty Braden (July 28, 1924 – March 6, 2006) was an American advocate of racial equality. Born in Louisville, Kentucky, and raised in rigidly segregated Anniston, Alabama, Braden grew up in a white middle-class family that accepted southern racial mores wholeheartedly. A devout Episcopalian, Braden was bothered by racial segregation, but never questioned it until her college years at Randolph-Macon Woman's College in Virginia. After working on newspapers in Anniston and Birmingham, Alabama, she returned to Kentucky as a young adult to write for the Louisville Times. There, she met and in 1948 married fellow newspaperman Carl Braden, a left-wing trade unionist. She became a supporter of the civil rights movement at a time when it was unpopular among southern whites.

In 1948, Anne and Carl Braden immersed themselves in Henry Wallace's run on the Progressive Party for the presidency. Soon after Wallace's defeat, they left mainstream journalism to apply their writing talents to the interracial left wing of the labor movement through the FE (Farm and Equipment Workers) Union, representing Louisville's International Harvester employees.

Even as the postwar labor movement splintered and grew less militant, civil rights causes heated up. In 1950, Anne Braden spearheaded a hospital desegregation drive in Kentucky. She endured her first arrest in 1951 when she led a delegation of southern white women organized by the Civil Rights Congress to Mississippi to protest the execution of Willie McGee, an African American man convicted of the rape of a white woman.

In 1954, the Wades, an African American family who knew the Bradens through association, approached them with a proposal that would drastically alter all lives involved. Like so many other Americans after World War II, Andrew Wade wanted to buy a house in a suburban neighborhood. Because of Jim Crow housing practices, the Wades had been unsuccessful for months in their quest to purchase a home on their own. The Bradens, who never wavered in their support for African American civil rights, agreed to purchase the home for the Wades. On May 15, 1954 Andrew Wade and his wife Charlotte spent their first night in their new home in the Louisville suburb of Shively, Kentucky. Upon discovering that blacks had moved in, white neighbors burned a cross in front of the house, shot out windows, and condemned the Bradens for buying it on the Wades' behalf. Their fears may have been stoked in part by the timing of the move which came only two days before the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark condemnation of school segregation in *Brown v. Board of Education*, Topeka, KS.

Six weeks later, amid constant community tensions, the Wades' new house was dynamited one evening while they were out. On October 1954, Anne and Carl Braden and five other whites were charged with sedition. After a sensationalized trial, Carl

Braden—the perceived ringleader—was convicted of sedition and sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment. As Anne and the other defendants awaited a similar fate, Carl served eight months, but out on \$40,000 bond when a U.S. Supreme Court decision invalidated state sedition laws because of their capricious use. All charges were dropped and the Wades moved back to Louisville.

Blacklisted from local employment, the Bradens took jobs as field organizers for the Southern Conference Educational Fund (SCEF), a small, New Orleans-based civil rights organization whose mission was to solicit white southern support for the beleaguered southern civil rights movement. In the years before southern civil rights violations made national news, the Bradens developed their own media. Both through SCEF's monthly newspaper, *The Southern Patriot*, and through numerous pamphlets and press releases publicizing major civil rights campaigns.

In 1958 Anne wrote *The Wall Between*, a memoir of their sedition case. One of the few books of its time to unpack the psychology of white southern racism from within, it was praised by human rights leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Eleanor Roosevelt, and became a runner-up for the National Book Award. Although their radical politics marginalized them among many of their own generation, the Bradens were reclaimed by young student activists of the 1960s. They were among the civil rights movement's most dedicated white allies.

After Carl's death in 1975, Anne Braden remained among the nation's most outspoken white anti-racist activists. She instigated the formation of a new regional multi-racial organization, the Southern Organizing Committee for Economic and Social Justice (SOC), which initiated battles against environmental racism. She became an instrumental voice in the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition of the 1980s and in the two Jesse Jackson presidential campaigns, as well as organizing across racial divides in the new environmental, women's, and anti-nuclear movements that sprang up in that decade.

From the 1980s into the 2000s she wrote for *Southern Exposure*, *Southern Changes*, and the *National Guardian* and *Fellowship*. Anne Braden died on March 6, 2006. The Anne Braden Institute for Social Justice Research was established at the University of Louisville in November, 2006 and was officially opened on April 4, 2007. The institute focuses on social justice globally, but concentrates on the southern United States and the Louisville area. Over her nearly six decades of activism, her life touched almost every modern U.S. social movement, and her message to them all was the centrality of racism and the responsibility of whites to combat it.

Robert F. Kennedy

A Biographical Account of Civil Rights Activities

Information from WIKIPEDIA, open source and modified by the general public
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_F._Kennedy

Robert F. Kennedy, speaking as a public figure, expressed the administration's commitment to civil rights during a 1961 speech at the University of Georgia Law School:

“ We will not stand by or be aloof. We will move. I happen to believe that the 1954 Supreme Court school desegregation decision was right. But my belief does not matter. It is the law. Some of you may believe the decision was wrong. That does not matter. It is the law. ”

Kennedy remained committed to civil rights enforcement to such a degree that he commented, in 1962, that it seemed to envelop almost every area of his public and private life—from prosecuting corrupt southern electoral officials to answering late night calls from Coretta Scott King concerning the imprisonment of her husband for demonstrations in Alabama. During his tenure as Attorney General, he undertook the most energetic and persistent desegregation of the administration that Capitol Hill had ever experienced. He demanded that every area of government begin recruiting realistic levels of black and other ethnic workers, going so far as to criticize Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson for his failure to desegregate his own office staff.

Although it has become commonplace to assert the phrase "The Kennedy Administration" or even "President Kennedy" when discussing the legislative and executive support of the civil rights movement, between 1960 and 1963, a great many of the initiatives that occurred during President Kennedy's tenure were as a result of the passion and determination of an emboldened Robert Kennedy, who through his rapid education in the realities of Southern racism, underwent a thorough conversion of purpose as Attorney General. Asked in an interview in May 1962, "What do you see as the big problem ahead for you, is it Crime or Internal Security?" Robert Kennedy replied, "Civil Rights." The President came to share his brother's sense of urgency on the matters at hand to such an extent that it was at the Attorney General's insistence that he made his famous address to the nation.

During the attack and burning, by a vast white mob, of the First Baptist Church in Montgomery Alabama, at which Martin Luther King, Jr. was in attendance with protesters, the Attorney General telephoned King to ask his assurance that they would not leave the building until the U.S. Marshals and National Guard had secured the area. King proceeded to berate Kennedy for "allowing the situation to continue". King later publicly thanked Robert Kennedy for his commanding of the force dispatched to break up an attack that might otherwise have ended King's life. The relationship between the two men was to undergo great change over the years that they would know each other—from a position of mutual suspicion to one of shared aspirations. For King,

Robert Kennedy initially represented the "softly softly" approach that in former years had disabled the movement of blacks against oppression in the U.S. For Robert Kennedy, King initially represented what was then considered the unrealistic militancy that many in the white-liberal camp had regarded as the cause of so little governmental progress.

In September 1962, he sent U.S. Marshals and troops to Oxford, Mississippi, to enforce a federal court order admitting the first African American student, James Meredith, to the University of Mississippi. Riots ensued during the period of Meredith's admittance, which resulted in hundreds of injuries and two deaths. Yet Kennedy remained adamant concerning the rights of black students to enjoy the benefits of all levels of the educational system. The Office of Civil Rights also hired its first African-American lawyer and began to work cautiously with leaders of the civil rights movement. Robert Kennedy saw voting as the key to racial justice, and collaborated with Presidents Kennedy and Johnson to create the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964, which helped bring an end to Jim Crow laws.

He was to maintain his commitment to racial equality into his own presidential campaign, extending his firm sense of social justice to all areas of national life and into matters of foreign and economic policy. During a speech at Ball State University, Kennedy questioned the student body on what kind of life America wished for herself; whether privileged Americans had earned the great luxury they enjoyed and whether such Americans had an obligation to those, in U.S. society and across the world, who had so little by comparison. It has been argued that although this speech has been largely overlooked and ignored, due to the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr, it was one of most powerful and heartfelt speeches Kennedy delivered.

After the assassination of President Kennedy, Robert Kennedy undertook a 1966 tour of South Africa in which he championed the cause of the anti-Apartheid movement. The tour was greeted with international praise at a time when few politicians dared to entangle themselves in the politics of South Africa. Kennedy spoke out against the oppression of the native population and was welcomed by the black population as though a visiting head of state. In an interview with Look Magazine he had this to say:

“ At the University of Natal in Durban, I was told the church to which most of the white population belongs teaches apartheid as a moral necessity. A questioner declared that few churches allow black Africans to pray with the white because the Bible says that is the way it should be, because God created Negroes to serve. 'But suppose God is black', I replied. 'What if we go to Heaven and we, all our lives, have treated the Negro as an inferior, and God is there, and we look up and He is not white? What then is our response?' There was no answer. Only silence.”



November 12, 2009

Jerry Mitchell's entry and biography

He has been called "a loose cannon," "a pain in the ass" and a "white traitor." Whatever he's been called, Jerry Mitchell has never given up in his quest to bring unpunished killers to justice, prompting one colleague to call him "the South's Simon Wiesenthal."

Since 1989, the 50-year-old investigative reporter for The Clarion-Ledger in Jackson, Miss., has unearthed documents, cajoled suspects and witnesses, and quietly pursued evidence in the nation's notorious killings from the civil rights era.

His work so far has helped put four Klansmen behind bars: Byron De La Beckwith for the 1963 assassination of NAACP leader Medgar Evers; Imperial Wizard Sam Bowers, for ordering the fatal firebombing of NAACP leader Vernon Dahmer in 1966; Bobby Cherry, for the 1963 bombing of a Birmingham church that killed four girls; and Edgar Ray Killen, for helping organize the June 21, 1964, killings of James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Schwerner (popularized by the movie, Mississippi Burning, about that case).

And he continues to collect other possible evidence. Four suspects are alive in the Mississippi Burning killings, including Olen Burrage, who owned the property where the trio's bodies were buried.

An FBI informant quoted Burrage as bragging to Klansmen shortly before those killings that he had a dam that would "hold a hundred" civil rights activists. The reporter's efforts have hardly been popular. Some have complained bitterly in letters to the editor. Others have cancelled their subscriptions. One angry missive suggested that Mitchell be "tarred, feathered" and run out of the state of Mississippi: "If your paper cannot begin to represent the majority population of this state more civilly, then we do not need you."

Over the past two decades, Mitchell has endured his share of threats from Klansmen and others. The FBI is currently investigating a series of death threats against him. He recently received the Ralph McGill Medal for Courage for his work over the past two decades.

For his work, Mitchell has received more than 30 national awards, including the George Polk Award twice. In 2006 the Pulitzer Board named him a Pulitzer Prize finalist, praising him "for his relentless and masterly stories on the successful prosecution of a man accused of orchestrating the killing of three civil rights workers in 1964."

A year earlier, Mitchell became the youngest recipient ever of Columbia University's John Chancellor Award for Excellence in Journalism.

David Halberstam said in helping bestow the Chancellor award, "Mitchell pursued these stories after most people believed they belonged to history, and not to journalism. But they did belong to journalism, because the truth had never been told and justice had never been done."

Halberstam described Mitchell as "the most distinguished reporter in the entire country, an ornament to the profession and a model for any young person who ponders whether or not to enter our business, a reflection of what one reporter with a conscience can do. I simply marvel at him and what he has done."

Two other awards also recognized his entire body over work over the past two decades, including the Toni House Journalism Award and the Tom Renner Award for Crime Reporting from Investigative

Reporters and Editors, where the judges said, "Mitchell's crusading work is even more heroic because the cases he's investigated were decades old but the threats against him were modern."

In 2006, Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting recognized Mitchell's two decades of dedication, selecting his collection of work as one of 20 national stories that have made a difference over the past two decades.

Mitchell has also received the John Peter and Anna Catherine Zenger Award for Freedom of the Press for his persistence in exposing these injustices, the Vernon Jarrett Award for Investigative Reporting, and the Elijah Lovejoy Award, named after the nation's first martyr to freedom of the press.

In 1989, Mitchell was a court reporter for The Clarion-Ledger when the fictional film Mississippi Burning inspired him to look into killings from the civil rights era that had gone unpunished. Through dogged reporting, which cut across the grain of his paper and many of its readers, he investigated leads long ignored.

His work inspired others. Since 1989, authorities in Mississippi and six other states have reexamined 29 killings from the civil rights era, leading to 23 convictions. The Justice Department is now reexamining dozens of other slayings from this time period.

"It is fair to say that without Mitchell's dogged and often courageous reporting ... many murders from the civil rights era would have remained unvindicated, locked forever in the vaults of regional amnesia," wrote Tribune syndicated columnist Kathleen Parker.

In 2005, Newsweek featured Mitchell as one of "America's Best," and CNN nominated him as a Person of the Day. The day of Killen's conviction, ABC Evening News featured Mitchell in its "First Person" segment.

Nightline, USA TODAY, The New York Times, American Journalism Review, Mother Jones and others have profiled Mitchell, who joined The Clarion-Ledger in 1986. He has appeared as an expert on all the major networks, the Lehrer News Hour, CNN, National Public Radio and others.

In 1996, he was portrayed in the Rob Reiner film, Ghosts of Mississippi, and has been featured in numerous documentaries, including the just-released Neshoba, which details Killen's successful prosecution.

For his investigative work, Mitchell received the Sigma Delta Chi Award for Public Service. "The rules of this contest require that a winner be chosen based on the significance of the reporting; enterprise, including courage in the face of opposing forces, and results," wrote Jerry Ceppos, executive editor of the San Jose-Mercury News. "By every measure, Jerry Mitchell should win the Sigma Delta Chi Award for Public Service in journalism — and should win the admiration of every citizen of Mississippi and of journalists everywhere."

In addition to the Sigma Delta Chi award, Mitchell has received the Heywood Broun Award, the Sidney Hillman Award, the American Legion's Fourth Estate Award, the National Association of Black Journalists' Award for Enterprise Reporting, the Abraham Lincoln Marovitz Award and the Inland Press Association Award.

In 1999, Gannett honored him with the Outstanding Achievement by an Individual Award, the Best Investigative Reporting Award, the Best In-Depth Reporting Award and its highest honor — the William Ringle Outstanding Achievement Career Award — making him the youngest recipient ever to receive it. Two years later, he received the Best Beat Reporting Award from Gannett for his continued work to shine light on these dark crimes of the past, and in 2002, Gannett honored Mitchell as one of its top 10 journalists in the company over the past quarter century. In 2006, Mitchell received the Outstanding Achievement by an Individual Award a second time, this time for work leading to Killen's conviction. The judges called his stories "the work of a generation. People said to let it go. But Jerry Mitchell never gave up."

Peers have recognized Mitchell's work. In 2000, he received the Silver Em Award from the University of Mississippi, where he was called "a true hero of contemporary American journalism." In 2002, editors Judith and William Serrin featured his work in their anthology of the nation's best journalism

over the past three centuries, Muckraking! The Journalism That Changed America.

In October 1998, Mitchell was recognized along with three other journalists at the Kennedy Center in Washington. ABC's Chris Wallace told those gathered for the Anti-Defamation League event, "Jerry Mitchell isn't comfortable being called a hero, or being portrayed as one in the film, Ghosts of Mississippi. It is difficult, however, to find a better word than 'hero' to describe Jerry Mitchell. Today, justice — long delayed — has been served, and Sam Bowers and Byron De La Beckwith grow old in jail."

But there's more to Mitchell's work than just hard-hitting reporting. His 10-chapter narrative, "Genetic Disaster," described his family's often losing battle against a rare genetic ailment and his journey to find out if he himself had the deadly disease. In 2008, he became a human guinea pig for a University of Kentucky genetic study investigating this rare disease.

He received the Associated Press' Outstanding Writing Award for his 13-chapter narrative, *The Preacher and the Klansman*, which also received a Columbia Journalism School Citation for Coverage of Race & Ethnicity. Thousands have been touched by this story of how a preacher-turned-civil-rights-activist became friends with a former Ku Klux Klan terrorist, a true story of reconciliation. One reader wrote: "What a wonderful series, not only because of the heroic reporting and beautiful writing, but because it is at its core the embodiment of hope."

In addition to his writing, Mitchell is an inspiring speaker. In 2003, he was a featured speaker at the Ford Foundation's conference in New York City on "Journalism and Justice." In June 2005, he served as the commencement speaker for more than 10,000 graduates at Queens College, where Andy Goodman once attended. And in October 2005, he spoke at the dedication of the National Civil Rights Memorial Center in Montgomery, Alabama — an event attended by thousands. He regularly shares his stories of justice and redemption across the United States.

In 1997, Mitchell received his master's in journalism from Ohio State University, and in 2006, he received an honorary doctorate from Colby College in Waterville, Maine. He lives in Mississippi with his wife. They have two children.

List of Terms/Context

Individual Racism (excerpt from book)

On the individual side of racism a person might believe social and economic inequality are acceptable, hold an attitude of blindness to racism, say negative statements based on race, and follow both conscious and unconscious behavior patterns that reinforce inequity. Not all aspects of individual racism are necessarily conscious. Individual racism can involve following customs and patterns that people consider race-neutral but actually uphold social and economic inequity.

Systemic Racism (excerpt from book)

Institutional racism includes the maintenance of white-skin privilege, segregation, and formal and/or informal politics, practices, and procedures. Overall, this is what some people are talking about when they refer to *systematic dominating whiteness* or *systemic white supremacy*. Essentially, these terms call us to notice that white people, and our social norms and patterns, continue to wield controlling power within our social, economic, political, and educational structures in ways that maintain inequity. (The overwhelming power held by whites remains in effect even when we have isolated figures holding high positions of power, such as President Barack Obama, and when increasing numbers of people of color are beginning to influence public policy.)

Sundown Towns

A sundown town is a town that is or was all white on purpose. The term came from signs that were allegedly posted stating that people of color had to leave the town by sundown. They are also sometimes known as "sunset towns" or "gray towns". Residents were often systematically excluded from living in or sometimes even passing through these communities after the sun went down. This allowed maids and workmen to provide unskilled labor during the day. They came into existence in the late 19th century during what sociologists have described as the nadir of American race relations. Sundown towns existed throughout the nation, but more often were located in the northern states that were not pre-Civil War slave states. There have not been any de jure sundown towns in the country since the legislation in the 1960s inspired by the American Civil Rights Movement, though de facto sundown towns existed at least into the 1970s. In some cases, signs were placed at the town's borders with statements similar to the one posted in Hawthorne, California which read "Nigger, Don't Let The Sun Set On YOU In Hawthorne" in the 1930s. In some cases, the exclusion was official town policy or through restrictive covenants agreed to by the real estate agents of the community. In others, the policy was enforced through intimidation. This intimidation could occur in a number of ways, including harassment by law enforcement officers. (see wikipedia)

Redlining

Community activists in Chicago coined the term "redlining" in the late 1960s. It describes the practice of marking a red line on a map to delineate the area where banks would not invest; later the term was applied to discrimination against a particular group of people (usually by race or sex) no matter the geography. During the heyday of redlining, the areas most frequently discriminated against were black inner city neighborhoods. Through at least the 1990s this practice meant that banks would often lend to lower income whites but not to middle or upper income blacks. (see wikipedia)

Minstrel Shows

The minstrel show, or minstrelsy, was an American entertainment consisting of comic skits, variety acts, dancing, and music, performed by white people in blackface or, especially after the Civil War, black people in blackface.

Minstrel shows lampooned black people in mostly disparaging ways: as ignorant, lazy, buffoonish, superstitious, joyous, and musical. The minstrel show began with brief burlesques and comic entr'actes in the early 1830s and emerged as a full-fledged form in the next decade. By the turn of the century, the minstrel show enjoyed but a shadow of its former popularity, having been replaced for the most part by vaudeville. It survived as professional entertainment until about 1910; amateur performances continued until the 1960s in high schools, fraternities, and local theaters. As blacks began to score legal and social victories against racism and to successfully assert political power, minstrelsy lost popularity.

Blackface minstrelsy was the first distinctly American theatrical form. In the 1830s and 1840s, it was at the core of the rise of an American music industry, and for several decades it provided the lens through which white America saw black America. (see wikipedia)

Nativism

Nativism favors the interests of certain established inhabitants of an area or nation as compared to claims of newcomers or immigrants. It may also include the re-establishment or perpetuation of such individuals or their culture.

Nativism typically means opposition to immigration or efforts to lower the political or legal status of specific ethnic or cultural groups because the groups are considered hostile or alien to the natural culture, and it is assumed that they cannot be assimilated. Opposition to immigration is common in many countries because of issues of national, cultural or religious identity. The phenomenon has been studied especially in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States, as well as Europe in recent years. Thus nativism has become a general term for 'opposition to immigration' based on fears that the immigrants will distort or spoil existing cultural values. This may be expressed through criticism of multiculturalism.

In scholarly studies "nativism" is a standard technical term. However, in public political discourse "nativist" is usually used by the opposition, and rarely by nativists themselves (they call themselves "patriots."). Anti-immigration is a more neutral term that may be used to characterize opponents of immigration. (see wikipedia)

Selected Resources List

For more information on white antiracist activists featured in this workshop:

- A. Braden, *The Wall Between* (Monthly Review Press, 1958; reissued in 1999 by University of Tennessee Press, with a foreword by Julian Bond)
- C. Fosl, *Subversive southerner: Anne Braden and the struggle for racial justice in the Cold War South* (University Press of Kentucky, 2006)
- T. Clarke, *The Last Campaign: Robert F. Kennedy and 82 Days That Inspired America*. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2008)
- M.T. Kennedy, *Make Gentle the Life of This World: The Vision of Robert F. Kennedy* (Broadway, 1999)
- S. Jurmain, *The Forbidden Schoolhouse: The True and Dramatic Story of Prudence Crandall and Her Students* (Houghton Mifflin, 2005)
- S. Strane, *A Whole-Souled Woman: Prudence Crandall and the Education of Black Women* (W. W. Norton and Co., 1990)
- D. Reynolds, *John Brown, Abolitionist: The Man Who Killed Slavery, Sparked the Civil War, and Seeded Civil Rights* (Vintage, 2006)
- E. Carton, *Patriotic Treason: John Brown and the Soul of America* (Bison Books, 2009)

For more information on additional white antiracist activists:

- B. Thompson, *A Promise and a Way of Life: White Antiracist Activism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001)

For more information on history related to white identity in the United States:

- N. Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995)
- K. Brodtkin, *How Jews Became White Folks: And What That Says About Race In America* (Rutgers University Press, 1998)
- D. R. Roediger, *Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (New York: Verso, 1991)
- D. R. Roediger, *Working Toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Become White. The Strange Journey from Ellis Island to the Suburbs* (Basic Books, 2005)
- F. Haney Lopez, *White by Law: The Legal Construction of Race* (New York: New York University Press, 1996)

A Living History: Past to Present Connections

FACILITATOR'S KEY

(These are just for supportive reference...there are other connections that people might make)

Past
Science of the time categorized people into four basic races, symbolized by four colors: red, black, yellow, and white

Present
We continue to use these same color terms, with the addition of brown for Latinos, even though the American Anthropological Association now rejects the idea that race has a biological basis. (Skin color is not a consistent predictor of racial group.)

Past
The minstrel stage showed African Americans to be dirty, lazy, clownish, sexual, flashy, comic, and stupid

Present
Current stereotypical images on TV shows and in movies continue to portray African Americans in the same ways

Past
Nativist political parties blame dire economic circumstances on recent immigrant populations. Examples are the Know Nothing or American Party of the 1850s and the Immigration Restriction League of the 1890s.

Present
Reactions against immigrants and people of color when economic conditions worsen, i.e. Minutemen acting as a militia at the U.S.-Mexico border

Past
Sundown Towns chased people of color out of certain towns. Redlining and inequitable mortgage availability made it impossible for many people of color to live in certain neighborhoods. Local ordinances forbade people of color from living in certain areas.

Present
People of color are largely concentrated in inner cities

Past
Not all European immigrant groups were immediately considered white. Irish were not considered white until the mid 1800's and Russians, Jews, and Italians were not considered white until well into the 20th century

Present
Many Jewish people do not consider themselves white. Many Italians feel more connected to their ethnic heritage and often are conflicted about accepting white as their racial category

Past
White people were shown to be individualistic (highly valued) in the colonies, while other groups were denigrated as "communal"

Present
U.S. culture as one of rugged individualists where a sense of communal obligation is perceived as socialism, portrayed as severely problematic

Past
Naturalization laws in effect until the 1950's required that a person be considered "white" in order to become a naturalized citizen

Present
The U.S. is still over 60% white (although this number is declining) and many still use the term "American" as a synonym for "white"

Anne Braden, Lyrics/Music by Flobots

*The alternative hip hop group Flobots paid tribute to Anne Braden with the song "Anne Braden" on their 2007 album *Fight With Tools*. The track includes several audio samples of Anne Braden (Courtesy of Dr. Vincent Harding and the Veterans of Hope Project), describing her life and thoughts on race in her own words.*

Information from WIKIPEDIA, open source modified by the general public
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anne_Braden

Artist: The Flobots
Album: Fight With Tools
Year: 2008
Title: Anne Braden

Lyrics to *Anne Braden*

[Spoken]

What I've realized since is that it's a very painful process but it is not destructive. It's the world deliberation. And what really happened in the sixties was that this country took just the first step toward admitting that it had been wrong on race, and creativity burst out in all directions.

From the color of the faces in Sunday songs
 To the hatred they raised all the youngsters on
 Once upon a time in this country, long ago
 She knew there was something wrong
 Because the song said "yellow, red, black, and white
 Every one precious in the path of Christ"
 But what about the daughter
 Of the woman cleaning their house?
 Wasn't she a child they were singin' about?
 And if Jesus loves us, black and white skin
 Why didn't her white mother invite them in?
 When did it become a room for no blacks to step in?
 How did she already know not to ask the question?
 Left lasting impressions
 Adolescent's comfort's gone
 She never thought things would ever change,
 But she always knew there was something wrong.

Always knew there was somethin' wrong.
 She always knew there was somethin' wrong.

Years later, she found herself
 Mississippi bound to help
 Stop the legalized lynching of Mr. Willy McGee.
 But they couldn't stop it,
 So they thought that they'd talk to the governor about what'd happened
 And say, "We're tired of being used as an excuse to kill black men."
 But the cops wouldn't let 'em past
 And these women, they struck 'em as uppity
 So they hauled 'em all off to jail
 And they called in protective custody.
 Then from her cell
 She heard her jailers
 Grumblin' about "outsiders".
 When she called 'em out
 And said she was from the south, they shouted,
 "Why is a nice, Southern lady makin' trouble
 For the governor?"
 She said, "I guess I'm not your type of lady,
 And I guess I'm not your type of Southerner,
 But before you call me traitor,
 Well it's plain as just to say (?)
 I was a child in Mississippi
 but I'm ashamed of it today."

She always knew there was somethin' wrong.
 She always knew there was somethin' wrong.
 She always knew there was somethin' wrong.
 She always knew there was somethin' wrong.

([spoken] And, all of a sudden, I realized I was on the other side)

Imagine the world that you're standing within
 All of your neighbors, they're family-friends.
 How would you cope facing the fact
 The flesh on their hands was tainted with sin?
 She faced this every day.
 People she saw on a regular basis;
 People she loved, in several cases;
 People she knew were incredibly racist.
 It was painful, but she never stopped loving them,
 Never stopped callin' their names
 And she never stopped being a Southern woman
 And she never stopped fighting for change.
 And she saw that her struggle was
 in the tradition of ancestors never aware of her (?)

It continues today:
The soul of a Southerner
born of the other America.

She always knew there was somethin' wrong.
She always knew there was somethin' wrong.
She always knew there was somethin' wrong.
She always knew there was somethin' wrong.

[spoken]

What you win in the immediate battles is little compared to the effort you put into it but if you see that as a part of this total movement to build a new world, you know what could be (????? "oooh, oooh"). You do have a choice. You don't have to be a part of the world of the lynchers. You can join the other America. There is another America!

My Racial Identity

Witnessing Whiteness Chapter 4

Workshop 4

Dear Facilitator(s),

This workshop series was carefully crafted, reviewed (by a multiracial team), and revised with several important issues in mind.

The series is intended to...

1. **Offer an 11 part, sequential process that corresponds to the reading of the book, Witnessing Whiteness, 2nd Edition.** Understandably, facilitators, for various reasons, might decide to use one or more of the workshops as stand alone events without sufficient time for participants to a) read the corresponding book chapters or b) move through the entire series. Yet, please understand that **moving through these workshops without having read the corresponding book chapter will markedly reduce its effectiveness. It will make moving through the workshop more challenging and is NOT recommended.** Understandings gained from one workshop are also important for subsequent workshops.
2. **Respond to particular group needs.** Recognizing that some groups may not be able to implement each workshop for the entire time suggested, some approved modifications can be found at the end of each workshop agenda. Only modify these workshops when absolutely required.
3. **Create a welcoming, inviting space where participants feel free to speak the truth of their experience without fear of shaming or reprisal.** It is essential for facilitators to understand that even when participants hold views that are counter to the themes in the book/series, a hallmark of both the book and the series is that people should be gently led into a new way of seeing.
4. **Follow logical threads of understanding related to each theme.** The language provided in the “scripts” that both precede and follow each section of the workshops are very important. Deviating from the essential themes and tone in those statements may create confusion and undercut the building nature of each individual workshop.
5. **Enhance leadership capacity within the community.** Detailed facilitator notes are provided for each activity so that one or more members of the group can practice their facilitation while leading this workshop series. A few notes of caution: a) the same facilitation team should run the entire series, b) the team should read the entire book in advance of leading any of the workshops, and c) sufficient debrief opportunities should be created to discuss how each workshop went so that facilitators’ skills can be developed.
6. **Provide community building opportunities for either racially caucused white groups OR multiracial groups.** Although still focused on whiteness in general, the series seeks to frame activities and questions in ways that allow people of color to benefit from the experience.

Best wishes,
Shelly Tochluk

My Racial Identity

Witnessing Whiteness Chapter 4

Workshop 4

Goals:

- Explore and share important moments in our personal racial identity development
- Identify people and situations that facilitated our personal growth
- Examine the effects our racial identity has on our lives and relationships

Materials:

- Storyboard – Guiding questions and brainstorm list (Handout 4.1)
- Storyboard – Template (Handout 4.2)
- Markers, pens
- Butcher paper

Book Anchor Quote:

After a couple of years working with the violence prevention program, I began to teach at the school. Those years teaching also forced me to develop a more in-depth and complex understanding of race, class, and community. So, by the time I left my fifth grade classroom to pursue another degree, the experiences I had within the community group and my teaching practice had intertwined. They left me with a desire to learn how to inform my home (white) community of the brilliance and potential residing within people of color living in violence-ridden cities throughout the United States. Projects I designed for my new academic program focused on the struggles of inner city youth of color and the need for people to stay open and observant in order to see and support the gifts lying within these strong, vibrant individuals.

What became clear to me, however, was that the ability to truly see people and the search for life inherent in their pursuits has a lot to do with our ability to witness how our thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors are informed by our racial experiences. After years of receiving important mentorship from people of color, I felt the need to find other white people who had looked deeply within to identify how being white affected them, white people who could be my guides as well.

SESSION 5 - My Racial Identity

2 hrs 30 min

Section 1

(15 min)

OPENING

Materials: Goals for day written out and communication guidelines posted ([download with discussion guide](#))
butcher paper and markers

Purpose of piece:

To discuss communication guidelines and review the goals for the workshop

Facilitators introduce themselves. Ask participants to say their name and finish this sentence. “When I think about being part of my racial group, I think about _____.”

Ask participants to read the discussion guidelines posted on the wall aloud (one after the other). Ask participants what questions they have. Invite participants to add to the list any additional discussion guidelines they think would be helpful. Write them on the piece of butcher paper. Use this modified list for all future workshops

Section II

(40 min)

My Story

Materials: Guiding questions and brainstorm sheet (Handout 4.1), storyboard template (Handout 4.2), markers, pens

Purpose of piece:

To explore important moments in our personal racial identity development and identify people and situations that facilitated our personal growth

Say to Group: All of us have very unique stories and we may have very different understandings about ourselves in terms of race. Today will give us an opportunity to spend some time exploring the significance of our own experiences as well as learning about other people’s.

- To start off today’s workshop, we’d like to spend some time reflecting on the personal journey we’ve taken so far in terms of race.
- Essentially, what we’d like to create is a visual storyboard that illustrates the significant moments in your life that have shaped your understanding of race.
- This is sort of like a personal timeline of important transformative experiences.
- To do this, we’d like you to spend a few minutes thinking about the guiding questions on the sheet we’re about to hand out.
- *Distribute the guiding questions (Handout 4.1) and read each question aloud.*
- Once some of your memories have been accessed, make a list of some of the important moments on the bottom half of the sheet.
- Eventually we’ll want this list to be put in time sequence, but you can start out with just a brainstormed list if you’d prefer.

Guiding questions:

1. When did you first realize you were a member of your race? What did it mean to you at that time?
2. How did race play a role in your childhood and/or adolescence?
3. What important events changed your relationship to race? What happened?
4. What significant people/relationships shaped the way you experience being a member of your race?
5. How do you understand what it means to be a member of your race at this time in your life?

Brainstorm a list of important events/transition moments in racial identity development (15 minutes)

Now that you’ve had some time to develop your list, please create an illustration and caption to portray what happened at that point in your life. Please feel free to draw, create symbols, make a collage, or use words or phrases to express your experience on the storyboard.

In about 25 minutes we’ll have a chance to share our stories in small groups.

Distribute the Storyboard (Handout 4.2)

Illustrate these moments and write a caption for each (25 minutes)

Facilitator’s Note: This is an area where you can cut time if you feel you need to shorten a section by a few minutes or if you got off to a late start.

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Wrap Up: One thing to acknowledge as we move ahead is that the experiences that shape our understanding of race are often filled with emotion. It's normal if emotion arises as we sit and reflect on our story here today. Feel free to allow this to come through as we move forward into our sharing process.

Section III

(30 min)

Telling our Stories

Materials: Questions posted on butcher paper.

Purpose of piece:

To share important moments in our personal racial identity development

Instructions: *Divide the group into triads. Determine how many groups of three you will need, and then have participants count off by that amount. For example, if you have 12 people, you will need 4 groups, so participants will count off from 1 to 4.)*

Say to group: We're going to have about 30 minutes now to share our stories within our small groups. Each person will have about 10 minutes to walk their group through their storyboard to share how we've come to understand ourselves as a racial being. After each person finishes his/her storytelling, the two questions we'd like you to ask the speaker are posted on the wall. We will give you time checks throughout so that you know when to switch speakers

30 minutes

Sharing with small group of 3

10 minutes per person – share the storyboard and captions

Give time checks at 8 minutes so listeners will have time to ask the follow up questions.

Follow up questions:

1. Which one of these events brings up the most emotion?
2. How does it feel to talk about this part of your life today?

Wrap Up: At this point we're going to take a break. Feel free to continue sharing if you haven't quite finished talking about these significant life moments. In about 15 minutes we'll gather back together as a large group to debrief.

BREAK 15 minutes

BREAK 15 minutes

BREAK 15 minutes

BREAK 15 min

Section IV

(15 min)

My Story and Your Story

Materials: None

Purpose of piece:

To discuss the important moments in our personal racial identity development and explore the emotion that lingers

Say to Group: Thank you for taking the risk to share your stories today. At this point we'd like to talk together about what came up for you during your reflections and sharing. Specifically, we'd like to start getting a sense of how our stories might have had some similarities or differences.

Large group debrief: (15 minutes)

1. What insights did you gain from hearing the stories of those in your group?
2. Were you surprised by any unexpected similarities?
3. In what ways did this storytelling process inspire new understandings about your life?
4. What was easy and what was hard about this process for you?

Wrap Up: Although it is often true that with reflection, we begin to see our experiences in a new light, the point of this process is not about critiquing our life experience.

- Our larger purpose is to recognize that we come to race issues with a very definite history and unless we recognize how our histories vary, we are likely to misunderstand one another.
- And yet, simply reflecting on how we've come to see things as we do is only half of our job. We also need to know how this affects our daily lives and relationships.

Section V

(30 min)

Race in my Life Today

Materials: None

Purpose of piece:

To examine the effects our racial identity has on our lives and relationships

Say to Group: We would now like to take some time to explore how our lives today are impacted by race and our relationship to it. To do so, we'd like to do a "wagon wheel" activity. This requires us to count off by 2's, 1,2,1,2, etc. Then we'll have the 1's stand in a circle facing outward. The 2's will stand in a circle facing inward. Each 2 should be standing in front of a 1. So, the 1's are the inside circle (facing outward) and the 2's are the outer circle (facing inward).

(16 minutes)

I am going to read a question in just a moment. The 1's will be the first ones to respond to the question and they will have 2 minutes. When I call time, the 2's will then have 2 minutes to respond to the question.

Read question 1. Invite participants to switch speakers after 2 minutes.

We are now going to switch partners by having all of the 2's move one person to the left. All 2's thank your previous partner and move one person to the left.

Read question 2. Invite participants to switch speakers after 2 minutes.

Continue until all four questions have been asked and answered.

1. How does being a member of your race affect your life today?
2. How do you feel about being a member of your race?
3. Does your understanding of what it means to be a member of your race inspire the desire to develop skills to interrupt racism? If so, how? If not, who do you think is responsible for addressing racism?
4. What kind of support do you need in order to take the next step on your racial identity journey?

Everyone can now return to our seats in the circle. We'd like to take some time now to hear what this process was like for you?

Group debrief (10 minutes)

1. What feelings arise as you think about and share your racial identity story?
2. What are the challenges you face as you consider developing skills to interrupt racism?
3. What do you think might be the next step on your racial identity journey?
4. What are some of the ideas you heard about the need for support and ideas you thought would be helpful when we think about our next steps?

Facilitator's Note: During this discussion we'd like to get people to be able to speak about the challenges they face, whether it is emotional or a lack of person support, that might make it difficult for them to stay open and motivated to continue or move into active antiracism work. This is a good opportunity to help people build a sense of community among one another, whether it's in the full group or small groups of people who are meeting in the space. If people feel less alone in their struggle, they are far more likely to want to participate in future activities and actions.

Wrap Up: Thank the participants for their risk taking. Reinforce the idea that we recognize that there are many challenges that people face when dealing with issues of race, racism, and racial identity. Try to wrap up the discussion by naming some of the important ideas that surfaced...particularly what additional supports people need, the ways that people's racial identity really do impact their lives, and how many of us continue to struggle with emotional wounds that have not yet healed around how race affects us.

Section VI

(5 min)

Closing

Materials: None

Purpose of piece:

To acknowledge what we did today, bridge to next workshop, and allow people to check-out of the space

Say to Group: To check out today we'd like to take a few moments to have each person say one phrase that can convey what they found meaningful about today's workshop.

Wrap Up: Our hope is that you've had an opportunity to develop a deeper sense of yourselves and the other people in this room today through these exercises. Thank you for your participation.

WORKSHOP 4 MODIFICATIONS

Suggested

If you are unable to complete the entire 2hr 30-minute workshop, here are some alterations that could satisfy some goals:

- **2 hour option**
 - Opening without thorough processing of discussion guidelines except agreement around confidentiality (reduces by 5 minutes)
 - Eliminate use of storyboard in section II and use answers to the guiding questions (Handout 4.1) as the material for triad sharing (reduces by 25 minutes)
- **1 hour 30 min option**
 - Opening without thorough processing of discussion guidelines except agreement around confidentiality (reduces by 5 minutes)
 - Eliminate use of storyboard in section II and use answers to the guiding questions (Handout 4.1) as the material for triad sharing (reduces by 25 minutes)
 - Eliminate break (reduces by 15 minutes)
 - Eliminate section IV (reduces by 15 minutes)
- **1 hour 15 min option**
 - Open with no discussion guidelines except agreement around confidentiality (10 min)
 - Complete individual reflection using guiding questions in section II (15 minutes)
 - Convert section III into a pair share, each person has 7 minutes (15 minutes)
 - Complete section V (30 minutes)
 - Close (5 minutes)

My Racial Identity Getting Started

Guiding Questions:

1. When did you first realize you were a member of your race? What did it mean to you at that time.
2. How did race play a role in your childhood and/or adolescence?
3. What important events changed your relationship to race? What happened?
4. What significant people/relationships shaped the way you experience being a member of your race?
5. How do you understand what it means to be a member of your race at this time in your life?

Significant Moments In My Life:

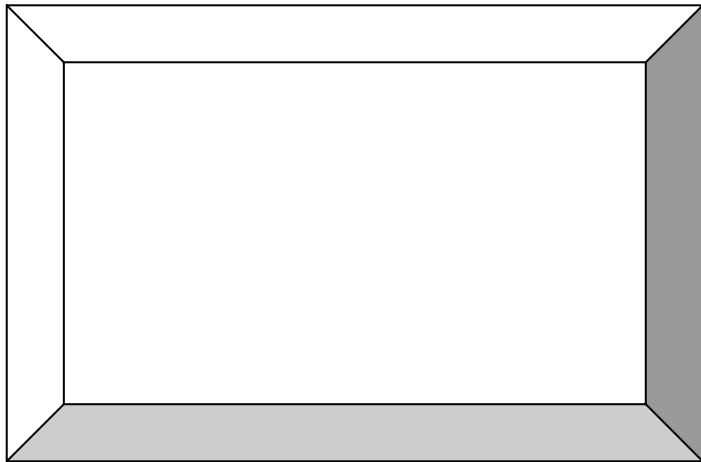
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

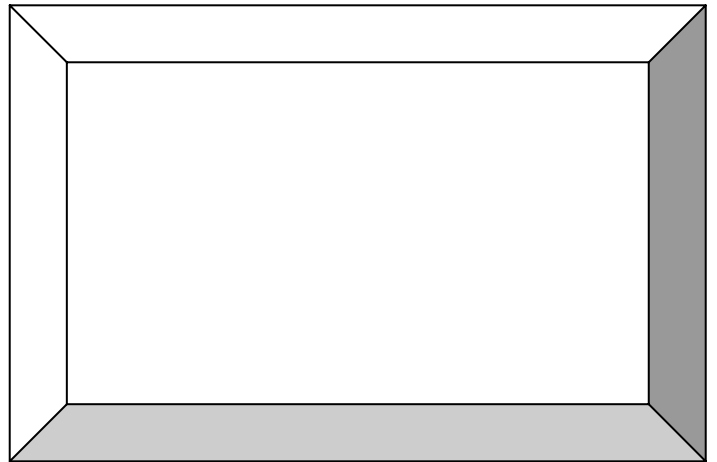
(Continue on back if you have more than six)

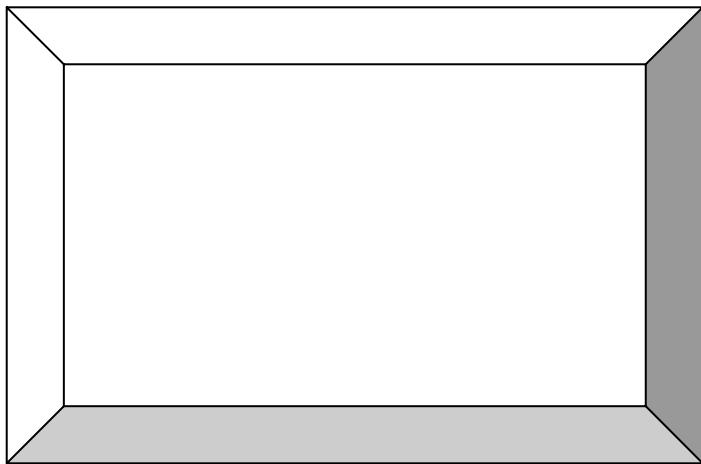
My Racial Identity Storyboard

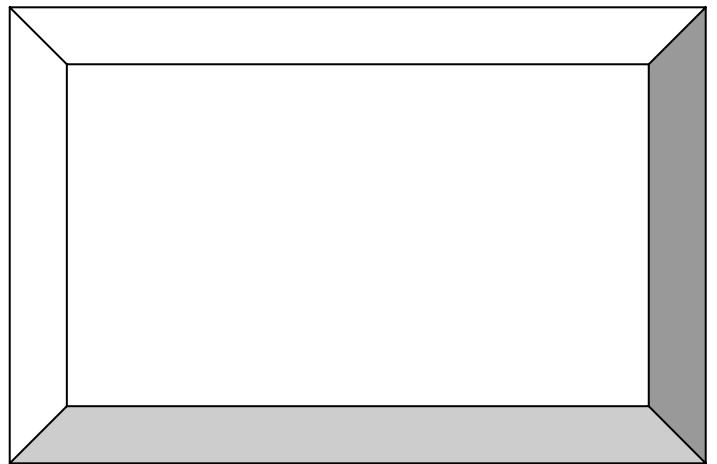












Positions of Privilege

Witnessing Whiteness Chapter 5

Workshop 5

Dear Facilitator(s),

This workshop series was carefully crafted, reviewed (by a multiracial team), and revised with several important issues in mind.

The series is intended to...

1. **Offer an 11 part, sequential process that corresponds to the reading of the book, Witnessing Whiteness, 2nd Edition.** Understandably, facilitators, for various reasons, might decide to use one or more of the workshops as stand alone events without sufficient time for participants to a) read the corresponding book chapters or b) move through the entire series. Yet, please understand that **moving through these workshops without having read the corresponding book chapter will markedly reduce its effectiveness. It will make moving through the workshop more challenging and is NOT recommended.** Understandings gained from one workshop are also important for subsequent workshops.
2. **Respond to particular group needs.** Recognizing that some groups may not be able to implement each workshop for the entire time suggested, some approved modifications can be found at the end of each workshop agenda. Only modify these workshops when absolutely required.
3. **Create a welcoming, inviting space where participants feel free to speak the truth of their experience without fear of shaming or reprisal.** It is essential for facilitators to understand that even when participants hold views that are counter to the themes in the book/series, a hallmark of both the book and the series is that people should be gently led into a new way of seeing.
4. **Follow logical threads of understanding related to each theme.** The language provided in the “scripts” that both precede and follow each section of the workshops are very important. Deviating from the essential themes and tone in those statements may create confusion and undercut the building nature of each individual workshop.
5. **Enhance leadership capacity within the community.** Detailed facilitator notes are provided for each activity so that one or more members of the group can practice their facilitation while leading this workshop series. A few notes of caution: a) the same facilitation team should run the entire series, b) the team should read the entire book in advance of leading any of the workshops, and c) sufficient debrief opportunities should be created to discuss how each workshop went so that facilitators’ skills can be developed.
6. **Provide community building opportunities for either racially caucused white groups OR multiracial groups.** Although still focused on whiteness in general, the series seeks to frame activities and questions in ways that allow people of color to benefit from the experience.

Best wishes,
Shelly Tochluk

Positions of Privilege

Witnessing Whiteness Chapter 5

Workshop 5

Goals:

- Explore our areas of privilege and oppression within the context of our multiple identities
- Discuss the effects white privilege has on our daily lives
- Consider the degree to which we can dismantle and/or resist white privilege or other dominant member privilege

Materials:

- Multiple Social Positions (Handout 5.1)
- Target/Non-target (Handout 5.2)
- Butcher paper
- Pens
- Resources for Disrupting White Privilege and Racism (Handout 5.3) (distribute at facilitator's discretion)
- List of Terms/Context (Handout 5.4) (distribute at facilitator's discretion)

Book Anchor Quote: (Can be read aloud or distributed to the group during opening if desired.)

For those who see race as continuing to make a meaningful difference in our lives, far and away the most common meaning associated with being white is privilege....

Lorraine: The first thing that comes to my mind is privilege. I have a hard time answering that question outside of the context of my everyday world that I am totally immersed in because I'm dealing with, my professional life has been dedicated to, eliminating disparities and everything that I'm reading constantly just reinforces the gap that exists between white people and Black people and particularly when it comes to Black women. We are at the very bottom of every index compared not only to white women but in many cases to Black men. So, you know, when you ask me what that means, it means access, it means less stresses, it means a totally different existence.

SESSION 6 – Positions of Privilege

2 hrs 30 min

Section I

(20 min)

OPENING

Materials: Small/soft ball, Goals for day written out and communication guidelines posted ([download with discussion guide](#)) butcher paper and markers

Purpose of piece:

To discuss communication guidelines and review the goals for the workshop

Instructions: Facilitators introduce themselves, ask participants to go around in a circle and say their name. Ask participants to read the discussion guidelines posted on the wall. Ask participants what questions they have. Invite participants to add to the list any additional discussion guidelines they think would be helpful. Write them on the piece of butcher paper. Use this modified list for all future workshops.

Then introduce a small object, like a nerf ball, and ask participants to say, My name is _____ and I am a _____ (insert one group or role that describes you, such as your family position, gender, hobby, etc.) and then throw the ball to someone else in the circle. Example: "My name is Gloria and I am an athlete." Continue until everyone has had a chance to participate one or two times.

Wrap Up: We started off with this little icebreaker today because we want to highlight right at the beginning that we each have many different aspects to our lives. We are not simply our racial background. And while we intend to recognize our whole, complete selves here today, we are going to focus on race.

Section II

(15 min)

My Multiple Social Identity Positions

Materials: Multiple Social Positions (Handout 5.1), pens

Purpose of piece:

To identify our multiple identities and whether or not they are target or non-target positions

Say to group: As we said, we want to recognize that we each occupy a lot of social positions that affect how we experience the world. Some of those positions can offer us certain advantages, while others can cause us to face increased challenges.

- Some people use the terms "target" and "non-target" positions.
 - A "target" would refer to a group that has historically or generally been subject to discrimination.
 - The "non-target" group would be the dominant group, the one that has historically or generally received advantages in the society.
 - For example, in our society, when we talk about gender we would say that men have been in the non-target position, while women and transgender people have been in the target position. They have been "targets" of discrimination. Are there any questions about that?
- To begin the day, we'd like to take a few minutes to reflect on the various social positions we each occupy and whether we are in the target or non-target positions for each of them.

Distribute Multiple Social Positions (Handout 5.1)

Take a few minutes to fill in each of the categories. Also, be sure to note whether or not your position is historically or generally considered a "target" or "non-target" position. (5 minutes)

Large group check in: (8 minutes if needed)

1. Did any questions arise regarding the categories on the sheets and what you should write in?
2. What questions remain about which groups are considered targets and non-targets?

Wrap Up: This activity is a place for us to start. It allows us an opportunity to acknowledge in a very general way where our advantages and challenges may arise.

- It also lets us consider how our experience is shaped by our group membership, and how that membership can result in the construction of a certain lens, or filter, through which we see interactions with people from our and other groups.

- Now, we are going to take this one step further and ask each of us to consider some specific advantages or disadvantages we might deal with based upon our social positions.

Section III

(35 min)

MULTIPLE MODES OF PRIVILEGE

Materials: Target/Non-target (Handout 5.2)

Purpose of piece:

To explore our areas of privilege and oppression within the context of our multiple identities

Say to group: Now we are going to get really specific and explore various ways we might receive privilege based upon our social positions.

- Although we are going to involve multiple social positions in this exercise, race will play the largest role.
- We are now going to hand out a worksheet. Everyone will need either a pen or pencil.
- Get settled in your seat and take a deep breath. This is going to be a quiet exercise.
- I am going to read a series of statements.
- After each statement you'll make a mark in the appropriate column.

Distribute Target/Non-target note sheet

Read the following statements slowly, say each one twice. (10 minutes)

Facilitator's Note: *Do not read the category aloud, that is just a note for the facilitator, 6 of 18 are based in race*

1. If you believe you have been followed around a store while you shopped because of your race, put a mark on the target side. If this has not been your experience, put a mark on the non-target side.
RACE
2. If you learned to speak English as a first language, put a mark on the non-target side. If your first language was another language, put a mark on the target side. IMMIGRATION/ASSIMILATION
3. If, as a child, you had a room of your own with a door, put a mark on the non-target side. If you had to share a bedroom or sleep in a room that doubled as another room, put a mark on the target side.
CLASS
4. If you were raised to believe people will assume your behavior is a reflection of your race as a whole, put a mark on the target side. If you were not raised to believe people will assume your behavior is a reflection of your race as a whole worry, put a mark on the non-target side. RACE
5. If you, or either of your parents, own a home, put a mark on the non-target side. If neither you nor either of your parents own a home, put a mark on the target side. CLASS
6. If you have worried that you might get paid less by your employer because of your gender, put a mark on the target side. If you have never worried that you would get paid less by your employer because of your gender, put a mark on the non-target side. GENDER
7. If you do not have to consider if a workplace, restaurant, bank, or friend's home is physically accessible to you, put a mark on the non-target side. If you do have to consider this, place a mark on the target side. DISABILITY

8. If the books you read in school largely featured people of your race, put a mark on the non-target side. If the books you read did not largely feature people of your race, put a mark on the target side.
RACE
9. If you have to worry about being hurt or harassed when holding your partner's hand in public, put a mark on the target side. If you do not have to worry about this, put a mark on the non-target side.
SEXUAL ORIENTATION
10. If your elected or appointed officials are comprised primarily of people of your race, put a mark on the non-target side. If this is not the case, put a mark on the target side. RACE
11. If the religious or cultural holidays your family celebrates are normally recognized as official holidays by most schools and employers indicated by either a day off or increased pay for working those days, put a mark on the non-target side. If the religious or cultural holidays your family celebrates are not normally recognized as holidays by most of these institutions, put a mark on the target side.
RELIGION
12. If you worry about racial profiling by the police because of your race, put a mark on the target side. If you do not worry about this, put a mark on the non-target side. RACE
13. If the union between you and your partner is or would be recognized by the federal government, put a mark on the non-target side. If your union would not be recognized, put a mark on the target side. SEXUAL ORIENTATION
14. If your parents could afford to take your family out to eat at least at a nice, sit-down restaurant a few times per month, put a mark on the non-target side. If your parents could not afford to do this, put a mark on the non-target side. CLASS
15. If, when you are told about our national heritage or about "civilization," you are shown that people of your race made it what it is, put a mark on the non-target side. If this is not your experience, put a mark on the target side. RACE
16. If you have to worry about a member of your family being deported if arrested by the police, put a mark on the target side. If you do not have to worry about this, put a mark on the non-target side.
IMMIGRATION
17. If people question you whether you're a man or a woman, put a mark on the target side. If you are never questioned about this, put a mark on the non-target side. GENDER
18. If, when growing up, there were 10 or more books in your family's home, put a mark on the non-target side. If this was not your experience, put a mark on the target side.
EDUCATION/LITERACY/CLASS

Facilitator's Note: After statements are read, ask people to look at their sheets and tell them that the non-target side represents experiences of privilege, and the target side represents experiences of oppression.

- Ask them to take a moment to notice how many marks they have on each side.
- Ask them to consider if they think their responses are consistent with patterns associated with the typical experience of the various social positions they represent? Why or why not? (For example, if the participant is a female, does she believe her experience regarding gender or gender bias is typical.)

Say to Group:

We recognize that we have weighted the list of statements to focus more on race, while trying to acknowledge our multiple social identities.

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- We did this purposefully as a way of doing two things simultaneously.
 - We need to always recognize that we are complex people with many different aspects to our life experience.
 - AND, we need to spend some time paying attention to white skin privilege because it is an issue that is very frequently swept under the rug.
- We'd now like to invite you to share with a partner. Please spend just 5 minutes talking with a person sitting next to you about the following questions.

Pair Share – (5 minutes)

1. Was there anything surprising that you noticed while we did this exercise?
2. In what ways does this exercise challenge US cultural values of meritocracy and individualism?

Debrief – large group (15 min)

1. How did it feel to do this exercise? What emotions came up for you?
2. What does it mean for us to have the areas of privilege that we do?
3. How do your areas of oppression affect you? How might your areas of oppression affect your awareness of your areas of privilege?
4. How do we hold both as true? In other words, how do we accept that although we might feel oppressed in one area of our lives, we still may be advantaged in another? How can you continue to attend to this reality?

Wrap Up: This exercise was designed to help us see that although most of us might have areas where we feel targeted, white people are granted privileges due to their race.

- This is something we have to talk about in a concentrated way, even more than was done today.
- A challenge is that a lot of emotion often comes up when we speak about privilege.
- It's easy to concentrate on the areas where we feel like we're targets.
- It's much more challenging to take up responsibility for dismantling privilege in areas where we are part of the dominant group.
- Part of the issue is the resistance that often arises.
- We need to say explicitly that the point of this activity was not to make people feel guilty for being a person of their background.
- In fact, a common issue is that a deep sense of guilt can inadvertently make us less effective allies for those who are targets.
- We'll now take a 15-minute break, and when we come back together we will look more closely at how we deal with issues of white privilege.

BREAK 15 minutes

BREAK 15 minutes

BREAK 15 minutes

BREAK 15 min

Section IV

(55 min)

DAILY EXPERIENCES WITH PRIVILEGE

Materials: Butcher paper with small group questions posted, Butcher paper sheets for each group, Markers, Handout 5.3 (Resources for Disrupting White Privilege and Racism)

Purpose of piece:

To discuss the effects privilege has on our daily lives and to consider the degree to which we can dismantle and/or resist privilege

Instructions: Get participants into groups of between 3 and 5 persons. **For consideration:** Depending upon group composition, this small group activity can be shifted (if desired) so that white participants gather together in small groups to consider the questions specific to white privilege. If there are sufficient numbers

of people of color to make a group(s), they might discuss ways they experience privilege and what that means for their lives, communities, and institutions.

Say to group: We are now going to ask you to focus on the following three questions (posted on the wall) for the next 25 minutes.

- Please take notes on the butcher paper provided, as we will share with the larger group when we're finished.
- White participants should focus on ways they experience white privilege, and people of color should choose a way they experience privilege in the world (perhaps via their gender, class, sexual orientation, ability position, etc.).

Small group questions: (25 minutes)

1. In what ways do we experience privilege?
2. How do those manifestations of privilege affect our daily lives?
3. What can we do to try and dismantle and/or resist the privilege that occurs in our lives, communities, and institutions?
4. In what ways are we unable to dismantle and/or resist the privilege that occurs in our lives, communities, and institutions?

Facilitator's Notes: Important for small group question 3 - PLEASE SEE HANDOUT 5.3, RESOURCES, FOR SOME EXAMPLES BROKEN DOWN BY CATEGORY THAT CAN SUPPORT THE DISCUSSION

Large group debrief: (30 minutes)

1. What important ideas came up in your group?
2. Recognizing how entrenched the systemic nature of white privilege is, what can we do, as individuals and/or as a group, to move forward without feeling overwhelmed or helpless?

Facilitator's Notes: Important for question 2 is that we attempt to get white people to see that simply deciding that they are against white privilege is actually not enough to change the basic structure and systemic nature of it.

- *It is important to do our individual work. The idea is not to dismiss this valuable activity, especially for those people who are brand new to the idea. But, we want to highlight that we need to do more.*
- *There are two essential ideas here:*
 - 1) *to acknowledge that even if we do our individual work, there is still going to be a need for people to work collectively in political ways to help change the system. White people need to be a part of that.*
 - 2) *The reality is that creating a personal anti-racist practice does not stop us from being complicit within a racist society.*
- *White people benefit in so many ways (even without asking for it), that we will have to grapple with what it feels like to know that no matter what we do, we are still a part of a racist system, and we benefit from it regardless of our wishes. Use these notes to help orient the conversation toward the end of this section.*

Wrap Up: What we have seen here is that white privilege is pervasive and affects people's lives in many ways. It is really important to try to resist white privilege as much as possible, and there are lots of ideas on how to do that.

- But, what we also want to acknowledge is that for white people, the benefits come even if when not invited.
- Yes, white people can try and resist the privileges.
- But, no matter what, white people will need to hold the tension between the facts that:

- 3) on one hand creating an anti-racist practice that names and resists privilege is essential and this can support positive self-regard, and
- 4) on the other hand, white people's anti-racist practice do not fully stop the benefits that come from white privilege.

Section V

(10 min)

Closing

Materials: None

Purpose of piece:

To acknowledge what we did today, bridge to next workshop, and allow people to check-out of the space

Workshop Wrap Up: Thank you for your honest sharing today. This topic is one of the most challenging and raises many questions and emotions. We encourage you to follow up with us if there are any lingering feelings or concerns. Ultimately, we'd like to leave you with a few ideas:

1. Most of us experience life as targets in some way or another.
2. It's much easier to only concentrate on the ways we feel targeted or oppressed.
3. Investigating how we benefit from the ways we are in dominant positions can help us become allies for people in targeted groups.
4. White privilege is so pernicious in our society that even when white people actively try to resist it, there are ways where white people continue to benefit from a racist system. This can create an emotional tension when it is realized that white people remain complicit in a racist system even in the face of anti-racism efforts.
5. Staying in the conversation with one another to support each other's efforts is essential.

Say to group: As we leave today, we would like you to name 1) one thing you've realized today about how privilege affects your life, and 2) one way you would like to be able to resist and/or dismantle it.

WORKSHOP 5 MODIFICATIONS

Suggested

If you are unable to complete the entire 2hr 30-minute workshop, here are some alterations that could satisfy some goals:

- **1 hour 30 min option**
 - Opening without thorough processing of discussion guidelines except agreement around confidentiality (reduces by 5 minutes)
 - Eliminate section IV (reduces by 55 minutes)
 - Eliminate break, but use those minutes for a more thorough discussion of section III
- **1 hour option**
 - Opening only 5 minutes – no processing discussion guidelines and no ice breaker
 - Complete sections II and III
 - Close only 5 minutes - ask participants only to name one thing they've realized about how privilege affects their lives.

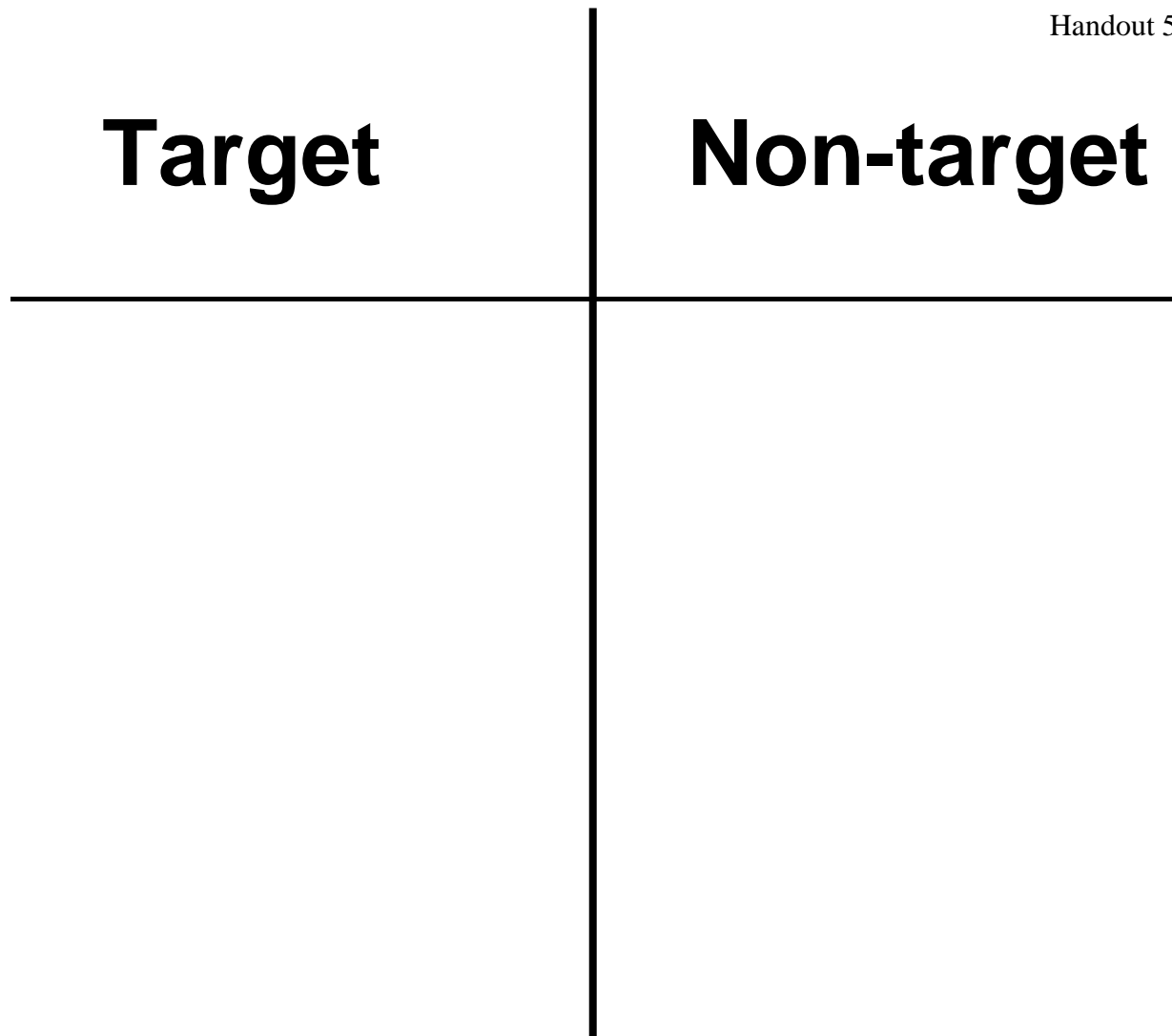
My Multiple Social Positions

Directions: Write how you self-identify for each social category below and then circle whether or not that identity has been historically or is generally subject to discrimination (target) or part of the dominant group (non-target) in the U.S. For numbers 10 through 12, feel free to add any additional aspects of your identity that you feel are essential to how you are treated in our society.

1. Race	_____	Target	Non-target
2. Ethnicity	_____	Target	Non-target
3. Gender	_____	Target	Non-target
4. Socioeconomic class	_____	Target	Non-target
5. Religion	_____	Target	Non-target
6. Ability/Disability	_____	Target	Non-target
7. Sexual Orientation	_____	Target	Non-target
8. Language	_____	Target	Non-target
9. Immigration Status	_____	Target	Non-target
10. Other _____	_____	Target	Non-target
11. Other _____	_____	Target	Non-target
12. Other _____	_____	Target	Non-target

Target

Non-target



Resource List

Disrupting White Privilege and Racism

Kivel, P. (1996). *Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work For Racial Justice*, New Society Publishers

This is just a start. Some of the questions and ideas below come from Paul Kivel's text.

Disrupting white privilege and racism within your personal, daily lives:

- Notice and take a step back when you dominate conversations. Slow down and make room for others to speak
- Notice and mentioned it when you see others dominate conversations. Invite them to make room for others to speak
- Courageously approach people who have made remarks based on stereotypes and engage them in conversation about why that type of speech is a problem. It's not about winning an argument. It's about letting the person know that prejudice and racism is unacceptable to you.
- Ensure that you have a community to turn to on a weekly or monthly basis that keeps you thinking about privilege and racism and generating new ideas for how to confront issues that arise

Disrupting white privilege and racism within your community:

- Locate local community groups of color dedicated to social justice efforts. Find out what they're doing and support their efforts
- Help create an expanding network of people who are working to spread an understanding of privilege and racism
- Work with your community to build in a system of accountability so that you are expected to use your voice in opposition to racism and privilege when it you see it around you
- If your primary social groups are segregated, ask members why this is so and question how the group could become more open and welcoming

Disrupting white privilege and racism in systems and institutions:

- Advocate in favor of tax structure changes that make the system simpler and fairer
- Question how public policy proposals will affect the great numbers of people of color who are not living in the middle or upper class economic levels
- Investigate how people are evaluated for hiring or firing in institutions with which you are affiliated. Are people of color likely to be negatively impacted by the policies?
- Consider the leverage and power you hold in various institutions. Might you be a potential change agent?
- Notice who works the service and low-paid jobs around you. Are people able to live decently if working 40 hrs a week? Can you support their unionizing efforts?
- If people of color are disproportionately killed/injured by police in your area, attend a city council board meeting to register your objection and call for the development of an *independent* police review board

List of Terms/Context

Multiple Social Positions

The term “multiple social positions” refers to the various ways people are classified by society. For example, we are classified by race, gender, class, age, ability, sexual orientation, etc. Each of these is a “social position”. We have “multiple” of them. Each of these categories can have profound affects on the way we experience the world. The combination of social positions we occupy affect our lives in unique ways.

For example:

- A white, middle-class, lesbian woman will experience life differently than a Black, middle-class, lesbian woman.
- A Latino, working-class, gay man will experience life differently than a Latino, affluent, straight man.

Target vs. Non-Target

The terms “target” and “non-target” are often used to name the way different groups experience our society. A “target” group refers to a group that has historically or generally been subject to discrimination within that particular society. A “non-target” group refers to a group that has historically or generally received advantages or has been politically, economically, or socially dominant within the society.

For example, in U.S. society, when we discuss gender we would say that men have been in the non-target position, while women and transgender people have been in the target position. Women and transgender people have been the “targets” of discrimination.

When we discuss race, we would say that white people have been in the non-target position, while people of color have been in the target position. People of color have been the “targets” of discrimination.

When we discuss socioeconomic class, we would say that affluent people have been in the non-target position, while low SES people have been in the target position. People from low SES backgrounds have been the “targets” of exploitation and discrimination.

(When considering both “multiple social positions” and “target vs. non-target” status, we see that each person might occupy targeted social positions in some areas, but occupy non-target social positions in other areas. Exploring the range of our experience and its affects on our lives is necessary.)

Ethnicity vs. Race

Confusion over the distinction between ethnicity and race is common and completely understandable. The use of language in regards to race and ethnicity has shifted over time. Centuries ago, people used the term “race” to indicate cultural groups (as in the “French race”). This is more in line with the way we use the term “ethnicity” today.

The use of the term “race” changed during the late 1700s when early scientists began classifying people into four color groups; white, black, red, and yellow. Since then, race has been used to mark large, ill-defined and confusing categories of people. Legal definitions have been created through judicial decision-making, although those decisions are marked by racism and contradiction.

Currently, the five race categories as defined by federal regulations are:

- **American Indian or Alaskan Native** - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.
- **Black or African American** - A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa. Terms such as “Haitian” can be used in addition to “Black or African American.”
- **Asian** - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, India, or the Pacific Islands.
- **Hispanic or Latino (All races)** - A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
- **White** - A person having origins in Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East.

Note how a person of Hispanic or Latino descent can be considered part of a different race. This is, in part, due to an extremely complicated and long history wherein Mexican people were originally (sometimes) considered legally white. Confusion is justified.

For the sake of our purposes, it is helpful to use the term “race” to describe a socially created classification that is based on skin color/appearance and region of origin, whereas “ethnicity” tends to refer more to a cultural background that is also usually tied to region of origin.

Reciprocal and Transformative Relationships

Witnessing Whiteness Chapter 6 Workshop 6

Dear Facilitator(s),

This workshop series was carefully crafted, reviewed (by a multiracial team), and revised with several important issues in mind.

The series is intended to...

1. **Offer an 11 part, sequential process that corresponds to the reading of the book, Witnessing Whiteness, 2nd Edition.** Understandably, facilitators, for various reasons, might decide to use one or more of the workshops as stand alone events without sufficient time for participants to a) read the corresponding book chapters or b) move through the entire series. Yet, please understand that **moving through these workshops without having read the corresponding book chapter will markedly reduce its effectiveness. It will make moving through the workshop more challenging and is NOT recommended.** Understandings gained from one workshop are also important for subsequent workshops.
2. **Respond to particular group needs.** Recognizing that some groups may not be able to implement each workshop for the entire time suggested, some approved modifications can be found at the end of each workshop agenda. Only modify these workshops when absolutely required.
3. **Create a welcoming, inviting space where participants feel free to speak the truth of their experience without fear of shaming or reprisal.** It is essential for facilitators to understand that even when participants hold views that are counter to the themes in the book/series, a hallmark of both the book and the series is that people should be gently led into a new way of seeing.
4. **Follow logical threads of understanding related to each theme.** The language provided in the “scripts” that both precede and follow each section of the workshops are very important. Deviating from the essential themes and tone in those statements may create confusion and undercut the building nature of each individual workshop.
5. **Enhance leadership capacity within the community.** Detailed facilitator notes are provided for each activity so that one or more members of the group can practice their facilitation while leading this workshop series. A few notes of caution: a) the same facilitation team should run the entire series, b) the team should read the entire book in advance of leading any of the workshops, and c) sufficient debrief opportunities should be created to discuss how each workshop went so that facilitators’ skills can be developed.
6. **Provide community building opportunities for either racially caucused white groups OR multiracial groups.** Although still focused on whiteness in general, the series seeks to frame activities and questions in ways that allow people of color to benefit from the experience.

Best wishes,
Shelly Tochluk

Reciprocal and Transformative Relationships

Witnessing Whiteness Chapter 6 Workshop 6

Goals:

- Describe the qualities of reciprocal and transformative relationships
- Explore how conflict is dealt with in cross race relationships
- Identify strategies that can enhance and/or deepen cross race relationships

Materials:

- Relationship Qualities Brainstorm (Handout 6.1)
- Venn Diagram example (Sheet 6.2)
- Four corners answer sheets (posted, two sets – one green, one blue ink)
- Conflict Scenarios (Handout 6.3a)
- Conflict Scenarios – Facilitator’s Guide (Sheet 6.3b)
- Butcher paper for note taking
- Pens

Book Anchor Quote: (Can be read aloud or distributed to the group during opening if desired.)

Courageously choosing to engage the journey toward witnessing whiteness entails continually bumping into our blind spots. What do we still not see about ourselves? How are we supposed to respond to critique? Just as with our literal eyesight, there are gradations to our capacity to see ourselves clearly. This can pose serious problems. We operate amidst a sea of relationships and we need to be able to communicate effectively and consider the needs of our friends and colleagues.

Although we might already have some really deep and meaningful relationships across race, it can be helpful to remind ourselves that everyone has different needs and sensitivities. Learning more about some frequent patterns of conflict can help us as we form new and deeper cross race relationships and collaborations.

SESSION 7 - Reciprocal and Transformative Relationships 3 hrs

Section 1

(15 min)

Opening

Materials: Goals for day written out and communication guidelines posted ([download with discussion guide](#))
butcher paper and markers

Purpose of piece:

To discuss communication guidelines and review the goals for the workshop

Instructions: *Facilitators introduce themselves, ask participants to go around in a circle and say their name and how old they were when they formed their first cross race friendship or relationship.*

- *Ask participants to read the discussion guidelines posted on the wall.*
- *Ask participants what questions they have.*
 - *Invite participants to add to the list any additional discussion guidelines they think would be helpful. Write them on the piece of butcher paper. Use this modified list for all future workshops.*

Section II*(10 min)***True for you...?**

Materials: None

Purpose of piece:

To allow participants to reflect on past experience with cross race relationships

Say to Group: To get warmed up today we are going to reflect briefly on a series of questions about how we have experienced and learned about cross race friendships and relationships.

Instructions: *Invite all participants to stand up in a circle. Tell them you are going to read a set of statements. If the statement is true for them, then they should take a step forward. If the statement is not true for them, then they should stay where they are. After the group has had a chance to consider the statement and decided whether to step forward or not, participants should be asked to step back to their original position.*

We'll start with a practice one just to make sure we all understand. Step forward if this is true for you. "I came to participate in this workshop today." Everyone should take a step forward. Ok, now everyone take a step back to your original position and I'll read the next statement.

Facilitator's Note: *For questions that might require some reflection, such as questions 4 through 8, ask participants to listen and reflect for about 10 seconds before stepping forward.*

Step forward/Stay back statements:

1. I attended schools that had a lot of racial diversity.
2. I have had several people of a different racial background as teachers.
3. My parents taught me that people of a different racial background have a lot of important information to convey to me.
4. I have learned a lot from people of a different racial background than me.
5. I have considered a person of a different racial background than me a very close friend.
6. I have considered a person of a different racial background than me a mentor.
7. My cross race friendships/relationships have significantly influenced my beliefs and behaviors.
8. In my experience, cross race friendships and relationships are usually very challenging.
9. I enjoy engaging in conversations that involve conflict.
10. I have been known to shut down or leave a conversation when it starts to involve a lot of conflict.

Facilitator's Note: *This activity can produce discomfort in individuals whose life experiences are marked by segregation. Be prepared to validate the tension and emotion that can arise when one begins to acknowledge an absence of cross-race connections throughout one's lifetime. A simple statement*

recognizing that this activity can be difficult might be said to the group if the facilitator notices that there are individuals who are never taking a step forward.

Wrap Up: Since today's workshop asks us to explore how we can create more reciprocal and transformative relationships across race, what experiences and tendencies we bring to the table will be important to acknowledge.

- As you can see... (facilitator should name a few patterns noticed from watching participants step forward or stay back, while avoiding naming any particular individual.)
- We are now going to go deeper into questions about the qualities of relationships we find valuable.

Section III

(50 min)

My Friend and Mentor

Materials: Relationship Qualities Brainstorm list (Handout 6.1), blank venn diagram example (Sheet 6.2) (draw on butcher paper), pens

Purpose of piece:

To describe the qualities of reciprocal and transformative relationships through an inquiry into valued qualities of friends and mentors

Say to Group: One of the really wonderful and challenging aspects of cross-race relationships involves the way they can teach us important lessons.

- A frequent challenge is that quite often cross-race relationships end up relying heavily on one person to do the teaching and the other to do the learning.
- On the other hand, a mutual and reciprocal learning can also take place.
- As we move forward in considering how to create reciprocal and transformative relationships across race, it may be helpful for us to spend some time considering what we think about friendship and mentorship in general.
- Then, we might be able to tease apart how these two ideas are operating in our current relationships.

Divide the participants into groups of 4 or 5 and distribute Handout 6.1 to each participant.

To begin, we'd like each person to take a few minutes to quickly make three lists. First, write a list of your closest cross race friendships/relationships. Second, make a list of qualities you believe are part of a valuable friendship. Third, make a list of the qualities that are part of a valuable mentorship relationship. (10 minutes)

Once they have done that, invite participants to share their lists regarding the qualities of relationships with their small group. Ask them to notice areas of similarity and difference. (5 min)

Instructions: Now take your ideas and create a large venn diagram on a piece of butcher paper

- Show participants the example (Sheet 6.2) for those who haven't used a venn diagram recently.
- You should label the right circle "mentorship" and the left circle "friendship"
- For the qualities that ONLY apply to friendships according to your lists, put them in the section of the circle that only applies to friendships. Do the same for mentorship on the other side of the page. For the qualities that apply to BOTH friendships and mentorship, be sure to write them in the center section, the part that is within both circles. (15 minutes)

When you finish creating your Venn diagrams, post them on the wall.

When all are posted, invite participants to walk around to read each of them, observe them as though it were a gallery. When they have all read the diagrams, participants should return to their seats in the circle. (5 minutes)

Large Group Dialogue (15 minutes)

1. What did you notice as we did this activity?
2. To what degree would you characterize your deepest cross-race relationships as 1) friendships, 2) mentorship relationships, or 3) both?
3. When considering your cross-race relationships, to what degree do you find yourself acting as either the mentor or the mentee when discussing cross-racial differences?
4. To what degree do you consider these relationships reciprocal? In what ways?
5. To what degree do you consider these relationships personally transformative? How?
 ***For questions 4 and 5 participants can discuss any aspect of the relationship. It may include learning about cross-race differences, or it may involve professional roles, etc.

Wrap Up: The point of this process was to explore to what degree our cross-race relationships are experienced as friendships and/or mentorship relationships.

- This is important because there is a long history of cross race relationships between white people and people of color where the person of color ends up spending an inordinate amount of energy teaching the white person.
- If we are going to create honestly reciprocal AND transformative relationships that serve each person, it's really important that we be able to honestly 1) observe to what degree mutual benefit is present and 2) talk about what qualities are desired in the relationship.
- To do this, the relationships have to be sufficiently deep so that trust can develop on both sides.
- Often, this means that we need to be able to navigate areas of conflict.

Section IV

(25 min)

The Question of Conflict

Materials: Four corners answer pages (two sets), posted at four corners of the room

Purpose of piece:

To explore how conflict is dealt with in cross race relationships

Say to Group: We'd now like to spend some time talking about how we have experienced conflict in our cross race relationships. To do this we are going to do a four corners activity. Everyone please stand in the center of room to begin.

I'm now going to ask a question. Please go to the corner where the sign best characterizes what has been true for you. This is a forced choice activity so even though it may be really hard to only choose one, for the sake of this activity, please choose the answer that has been most true for you.

1. What has been the primary role conflict has played in your deepest cross race relationships?
 Answer choices (written in green):
 1) No conflict, 2) Increased tension, 3) Inspired Growth, 4) Affected trust

Once participants have moved to a corner, ask them to find a partner where they are standing and talk about what made them choose that location. (5 minutes to discuss)

After 5 minutes (or when discussion dies down), invite participants back into the center of the room. Tell them they will now hear a second question and now they will choose one of the blue signs as their answer.

2. How has conflict been dealt with when it has arisen?

Answer choices (written in blue)

- 1) No conflict, 2) Smoothing over, 3) Avoidance, 4) Engaged/Encouraged Discussion

Once participants have moved to a corner, ask them to find a partner where they are standing and talk about how their approach to conflict has affected their relationship. (5 minutes)

Invite participants to return to their seats in the circle.

Large Group Debrief: (10 minutes)

1. Were there any surprises or important realizations?
2. To what degree do you believe your relationships would benefit from you having more strategies for dealing with conflict?

Wrap Up: One of the hardest things we might have to do is self-reflect and acknowledge that the way we deal with conflict is not as healthy or productive as it could be.

- A particularly challenging part might be looking at how we distance ourselves so much from conflict-laden issues that we simply avoid the whole thing.
- Unfortunately, this might leave us with a lesser level of trust and/or a more superficial relationship than we otherwise might have.
- Whatever our experiences have been, it can be useful to spend time looking into some common areas of conflict and talking about how we can best navigate through them. This is what we'll pick up on when we return from our break.

BREAK 15 minutes

BREAK 15 minutes

BREAK 15 minutes

BREAK 15 min

Section V

(60 min)

What would you do?

Materials: Scenario sheets (Handout 6.3a) and Facilitator's Key (Sheet 6.3b)

Purpose of piece:

To identify strategies that can enhance and/or deepen cross race relationships

Say to Group: For this final exercise of the day, we are going to explore some really common conflict situations and collectively imagine how we could more effectively handle them.

- This is important for each of us even if we believe that our cross race relationships do not need us to improve in this area.
- We can think of it in terms of creating our own anti-racist practice. It helps us when we can recognize common themes and helpful strategies, as that can help us support other people when they run into difficulty.
- We will be exploring different scenarios and preparing a short role-play to present to the larger group. Although all groups will go through the discussion and preparation, we may not have time to actually see all groups present, depending upon the depth of conversation that is sparked.

Facilitator's Notes: *It may be helpful to cut the scenario page (Handout 6.3a) into thirds and only distribute the portion of the sheet necessary for each group. If the entire sheet is distributed it could lead to confusion or distraction.*

Divide the participants into 3 groups, assign each group a scenario, which they will read through silently, choose roles, and present to the larger group. Give each group a scenario and time to prepare. For

participants who have had extensive experience in cross-race relationships, alert them that they are welcomed to improvise or alter the content to make the scenario more meaningful for them. (10 minutes)

Also, ask participants to begin by reading the scenario silently. Participants should be asked to stay attentive to how role plays can often degenerate into actors utilizing stereotypes. Be cognizant to avoid people “acting” like a person of a different racial background than themselves in a way that draws on stereotypes. This should be named aloud to the group as a potential problem that all participants should be on guard to avoid. If the scenarios are followed, much of the difficulty may lie in gesture, tone of voice, and improvised statements. Tell people to be especially careful regarding these areas. One way to help people reduce feeling the need to act using stereotypes is to have participants name the racial background of each character being acted out when introducing their scenario.

Group 1 presents and when finished invites the audience to offer responses, what they observed that was problematic and what they would suggest could be done differently. (10 minutes)

Group 2 presents and when finished invites the audience to offer responses, what they observed that was problematic and what they would suggest could be done differently. (10 minutes)

Group 3 presents and when finished invites the audience to offer responses, what they observed that was problematic and what they would suggest could be done differently. 10 minutes)

Facilitator’s Note: You may find that a rich discussion arises after one or two groups and you will need to determine if time should be spent staying with just one example or moving forward. This is a very tight agenda in terms of time, so you might want to focus on only two groups. It is okay if not all groups have a chance to present as long as they have been prepared for this possibility ahead of time.

Large Group Debrief Questions: (15 minutes)

***Facilitator should take notes on BP as participants are sharing out. This can become a saved list.*

***The idea is to end up with two different lists, the things people should avoid, and the things people could do that might be helpful.*

1. What did people in the scenes do that you think would negatively affect their relationship? Explain
2. What did people in the replayed scenes do that you think would enhance or deepen their relationship? Explain

Wrap Up: Creating reciprocal and transformative cross race relationships that benefit both parties is not easy.

- It is really common for one of us to come into the relationship having a lot to learn about race and this often leaves our friends needing to take up more of a mentorship position than they’d really like. This is especially true for white people who are newly learning about racism and white privilege.
- If we have any hope of working through these situations, what we really need to do is learn to deal really well with the conflict that would inevitably arise.
- The more we can learn some strategies for staying in difficult conversations and really staying open to the learning that we can get from those moments, the more we will be able to have deeply trusting relationships. This is really a fundamental need for our relationships to be mutually beneficial.

Section VI

(5 min)

Closing

Materials: None

Purpose of piece:

To acknowledge what we did today, bridge to next workshop, and allow people to check-out of the space

Say to Group: Thank you very much for your participation today. As we go around the circle to check out, please say one word that describes how you are feeling as you leave the workshop today.

Tell participants what comes next in your program plan. Review what they might consider as they prepare for your next session.

WORKSHOP 6 MODIFICATIONS

Suggested

If you are unable to complete the entire 3 hour workshop, here are some alterations that could satisfy some goals:

- **2 hour option (focus on goals re: conflict and strategies to enhance cross race relationships)**
 - Opening without thorough processing of discussion guidelines except agreement around confidentiality (reduces by 5 minutes)
 - Complete sections II, IV, V, and VI
 - Eliminate break
- **1 hour 15 min option (focus on goal re: exploration of qualities of cross race relationships)**
 - Complete sections I, II, III, and VI
 - Eliminate break

Relationship Qualities Brainstorm

Close Cross Race Friendships/Relationships

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

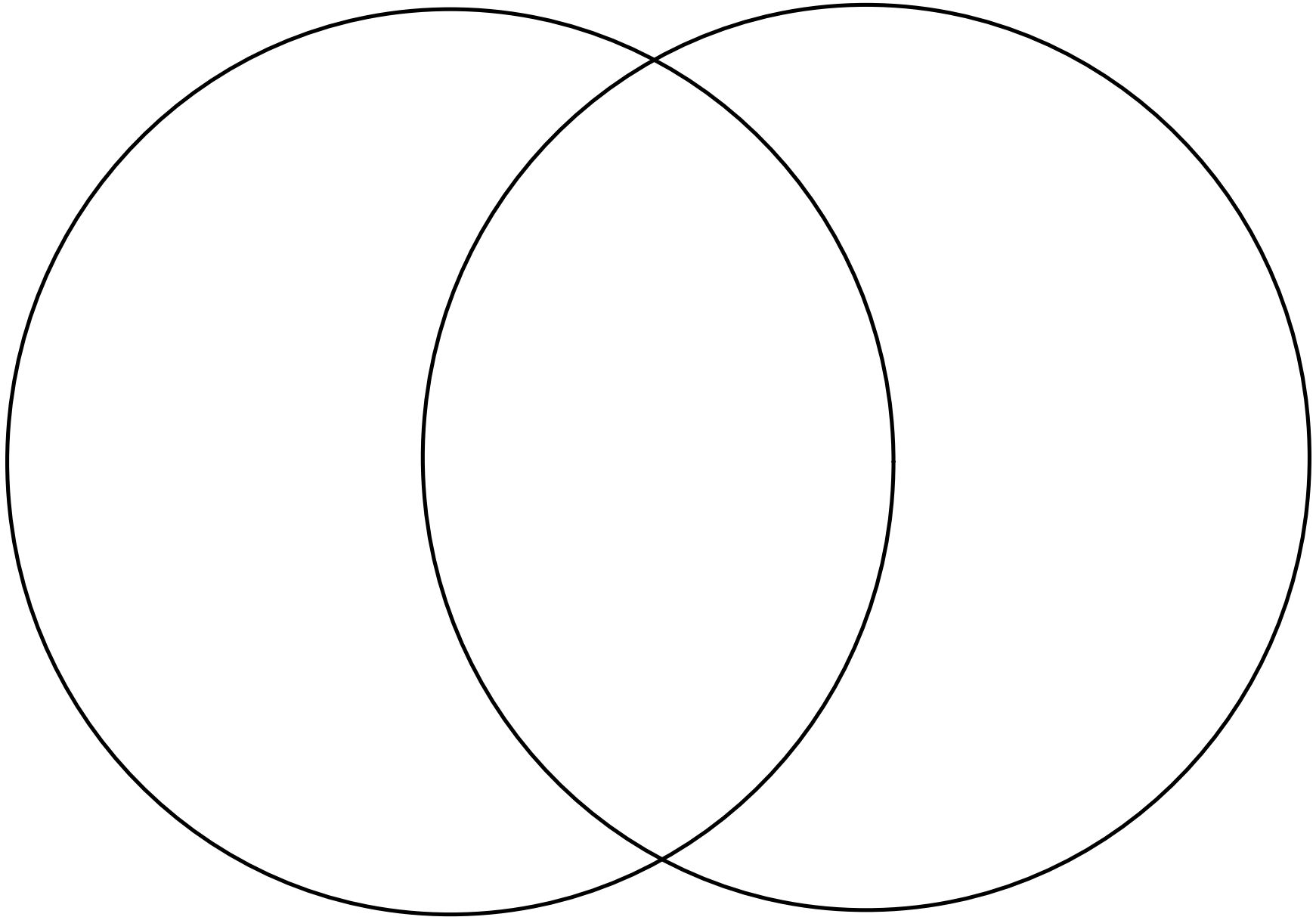
Qualities of a Valuable Friendship Relationship

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Qualities of a Valuable Mentorship Relationship

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Venn Diagram



Reciprocal and Transformative Relationships Conflict Scenarios

SCENARIO 1

Two friends, one Latino/a and one white, are walking down the street in a college town on a Friday night. It is rather late in the evening and both are laughing and joking around as they talk about their evening's experiences. Suddenly, a patrol officer approaches the pair who asks them where they are going. The Latino/a friend replies that they are legally not required to answer that question. The white friend is silent. The patrol officer tells the Latino/a friend to face a wall, does a pat down, and proceeds to offer a warning about being careful about how to respond to authority. The white friend is silent. The officer leaves. The Latino/a friend complains loudly about the racism of the officer and how often this happens to people of color in the US. The white friend says, "You know, I'm not sure how much it had to do with race. I mean, if we'd just told the cop that we were going home that might have never happened." The two then continue with the Latino/a friend describing how racism and racial profiling are usually ignored and the white friend talking about how our individual attitudes make a big difference in how we are treated.

SCENARIO 2

Two close work colleagues, one African-American and one white, spend time together after work one evening. They enter a bookstore to look around and wander off in different directions in the store. A few minutes later, as the African-American colleague is standing near a table of books, a white woman approaches from behind and starts to touch the colleague's dreadlocks, saying "Wow, how did you get your hair to do this? It looks so interesting." The colleague offers a hasty reply about it being a lot of work and moves away quickly. As the colleagues meet up with each other and leave the store, the African-American friend tells the white colleague what happened and turns to her with a shake of her head, releasing a sigh, saying, "I just don't understand the nerve of white people? What makes you do something like that? The lack of respect is completely ridiculous." The white colleague responds by talking about how not all white people are like that and that it's wrong to generalize that one experience to all white people.

SCENARIO 3

An interracial group of friends who belong to the same organization are in a meeting together where they are listening to a presentation by a guest speaker. The speaker is unusually brash and tells jokes that some might interpret as sexist and racially prejudicial. Several people in the audience laugh at the jokes, but some are also uncomfortable. After the event, the multiracial set of friends leave to grab a bite to eat. As they sit to talk about the evening, one person begins to talk about the racism of the speaker and how someone really should have done something to stop the barrage of insults being thrown out. One of the white friends suggests how helpful it can be to just see the speaker as being rather ignorant instead of emotionally reacting to that kind of nonsense. The discussion continues with several people of color arguing that white people really need to stop other whites from acting so ignorantly. The white friends in general suggest that doing something to interrupt the speaker would just make things worse and that refusing to engage it is smarter.

Reciprocal and Transformative Relationships Conflict Scenarios KEY

SCENARIO 1

Two friends, one Latino/a and one white, are walking down the street in a college town on a Friday night. It is rather late in the evening and both are laughing and joking around as they talk about their evening's experiences. Suddenly, a patrol officer approaches the pair who asks them where they are going. The Latino/a friend replies that they are legally not required to answer that question. The white friend is silent. The patrol officer tells the Latino/a friend to face a wall, does a pat down, and proceeds to offer a warning about being careful about how to respond to authority. The white friend is silent. The officer leaves. The Latino/a friend complains loudly about the racism of the officer and how often this happens to people of color in the US. The white friend says, "You know, I'm not sure how much it had to do with race. I mean, if we'd just told the cop that we were going home that might have never happened." The two then continue with the Latino/a friend describing how racism and racial profiling are usually ignored and the white friend talking about how our individual attitudes make a big difference in how we are treated.

Issues that could be pulled out in discussion:

- **White friend dismissing the Latina/o friend's experience of the situation**
 - **Unhelpful to act as the Devil's advocate, acts as a complete invalidation of something that very well might be true**
- **Silence of the white friend in the face of a police officer's abuse of power**
 - **What might underlie the choices to speak up or stay silent?**
 - **What might the effects be on the relationship if one person feels unsupported and left to fight for his/her rights alone?**
- **Compliance in the face of power for the sake of getting through without challenging authority figures overstepping their bounds**
 - **How were we taught to deal with authority? Why?**
 - **How has our group's historical experience trained us to see this situation?**
 - **How does our personal relationship with institutional racism affect our willingness to just "go along"?**

SCENARIO 2

Two close work colleagues, one African-American and one white, spend time together after work one evening. They enter a bookstore to look around and wander off in different directions in the store. A few minutes later, as the African-American colleague is standing near a table of books, a white woman approaches from behind and starts to touch the colleague's dreadlocks, saying "Wow, how did you get your hair to do this? It looks so interesting." The colleague offers a hasty reply about it being a lot of work and moves away quickly. As the colleagues meet up with each other and leave the store, the African-American friend tells the white colleague what happened and turns to her with a shake of her head, releasing a sigh, saying, "I just don't understand the nerve of white people? What makes you do something like that? The lack of respect is completely ridiculous." The white colleague responds by talking about how not all white people are like that and that it's wrong to generalize that one experience to all white people.

Issues that could be pulled out in discussion:

- **Well-intentioned approaches to people of different backgrounds can actually be infuriating to people. Can we understand why?**
 - **Imagine this happening over and over and over, small slights that add up to a lifetime of being treated as unusual and an oddity. Can we imagine what that would feel like?**
- **Immediate move to distance oneself from a generalization**
 - **Although true that not ALL white people act in this way, the immediate focus on that element of the complain invalidates the essential message being conveyed by the African American colleague.**
 - **How can we work to hear one another better when emotion is sparked and, if necessary, discuss the trouble with generalizing at a later time**

SCENARIO 3

An interracial group of friends who belong to the same organization are in a meeting together where they are listening to a presentation by a guest speaker. The speaker is unusually brash and tells jokes that some might interpret as sexist and racially prejudicial. Several people in the audience laugh at the jokes, but some are also uncomfortable. After the event, the interracial set of friends leave to grab a bite to eat. As they sit to talk about the evening, one person begins to talk about the racism of the speaker and how someone really should have done something to stop the barrage of insults being thrown out. One of the white friends suggests how helpful it can be to just see the speaker as being rather ignorant instead of emotionally reacting to that kind of nonsense. The discussion continues with several people of color arguing that white people really need to stop other whites from acting so ignorantly. The white friends in general suggest that doing something to interrupt the speaker would just make things worse and that refusing to engage it is smarter.

Issues that could be pulled out in discussion:

- **Why would the white friends suggest interpreting the situation as someone being “ignorant” instead of being “racist”?**
 - **Many white people are uncomfortable speaking up publicly because they are not sufficiently skilled at knowing how to approach a situation or what to say**
 - **Many white people have learned to be conflict avoidant – culturally seeing even polite confrontation as rude and frightening**
 - **Where does that leave us, if white people are generally afraid of speaking up and people of color are tired of carrying the burden of naming when racism occurs? How would that affect our relationships with one another?**
- **What room is there for white people to approach the speaker privately? Does the confrontation have to be done publicly in order to be satisfying?**
 - **Given the white cultural framework of confrontation being rude, a middle ground can be white people learning to take the risk of naming the issue at the end of a presentation. But, where does this leave the people of color who are not able to see this intervention? How can white people become vocal enough to allow the message to be conveyed that the situation is recognized and being attended to in some way?**

Racial Scripts

Witnessing Whiteness Chapter 7 Workshop 7

Dear Facilitator(s),

This workshop series was carefully crafted, reviewed (by a multiracial team), and revised with several important issues in mind.

The series is intended to...

1. **Offer an 11 part, sequential process that corresponds to the reading of the book, Witnessing Whiteness, 2nd Edition.** Understandably, facilitators, for various reasons, might decide to use one or more of the workshops as stand alone events without sufficient time for participants to a) read the corresponding book chapters or b) move through the entire series. Yet, please understand that **moving through these workshops without having read the corresponding book chapter will markedly reduce its effectiveness. It will make moving through the workshop more challenging and is NOT recommended.** Understandings gained from one workshop are also important for subsequent workshops.
2. **Respond to particular group needs.** Recognizing that some groups may not be able to implement each workshop for the entire time suggested, some approved modifications can be found at the end of each workshop agenda. Only modify these workshops when absolutely required.
3. **Create a welcoming, inviting space where participants feel free to speak the truth of their experience without fear of shaming or reprisal.** It is essential for facilitators to understand that even when participants hold views that are counter to the themes in the book/series, a hallmark of both the book and the series is that people should be gently led into a new way of seeing.
4. **Follow logical threads of understanding related to each theme.** The language provided in the “scripts” that both precede and follow each section of the workshops are very important. Deviating from the essential themes and tone in those statements may create confusion and undercut the building nature of each individual workshop.
5. **Enhance leadership capacity within the community.** Detailed facilitator notes are provided for each activity so that one or more members of the group can practice their facilitation while leading this workshop series. A few notes of caution: a) the same facilitation team should run the entire series, b) the team should read the entire book in advance of leading any of the workshops, and c) sufficient debrief opportunities should be created to discuss how each workshop went so that facilitators’ skills can be developed.
6. **Provide community building opportunities for either racially caucused white groups OR multiracial groups.** Although still focused on whiteness in general, the series seeks to frame activities and questions in ways that allow people of color to benefit from the experience.

Best wishes,
Shelly Tochluk

Racial Scripts

Witnessing Whiteness Chapter 7 Workshop 7

Goals:

- Identify the racial messages we received from family, friends, and society, which ones we have discarded, and which ones we have internalized
- Imagine and develop strategies and approaches to cope with lingering racism and reduce its effects on our lives and relationships

Materials:

- Butcher paper
- Markers
- Pens
- Support request slips (Handout 7.1)

Book Anchor Quote: (Can be read aloud or distributed to the group during opening if desired.)
I can feel the lingering traces of racism in my own body. . . . It's easy to test. Put my white body next to a black body. What do I feel? What reactions kick in, immediately, before I have a chance to think? What facts about race can I feel in my body in that moment? How honest can I be about that? The fact is, I feel something different—a certain kind of fear—next to a black body than I feel next to another white body. The difference matters, still, after years of actively trying to overcome that learned reaction.

—Robert Jensen (2005)

SESSION 8 - Racial Scripts

2 hrs 45 min

Section I

(15 min)

Opening

Materials: Goals for day written out on butcher paper and communication guidelines posted ([download with discussion guide](#))

Purpose of piece:

To discuss communication guidelines and review the goals for the workshop

Instructions: *Facilitators introduce themselves, ask participants to say one phrase to capture the feeling they are bringing into the room today.*

- *Ask participants to read the discussion guidelines posted on the wall.*
- *Ask participants what questions they have.*

- Invite participants to add to the list any additional discussion guidelines they think would be helpful. Write them on the piece of butcher paper. Use this modified list for all future workshops.
- Ask participants to silently reread the guidelines and choose one of the guidelines that they want to work on today as they move through the workshop. (Participants may be asked to share their choice with a partner, or this can be a silent, internal process.)

Section II

(15 min)

Messages Received

Materials: None

Purpose of piece:

To identify the racial messages we received from family, friends, and society

Say to Group: To get started today, we are going to start with an exercise done in pairs to explore the various messages we received about race over the course of our lives. These messages might be negative, positive, or neutral. But, the idea is to reflect and explore the range of messages we received.

Count off 1,2 around the circle. The 1's should turn their chairs so that they form an inner circle facing outwards. The 2's should put their chairs in an outer ring facing the 1's – forming pairs.

Say to Group: We are going to ask you three questions. For each question, partner A will have 2 minutes to respond and then the partner B will have 2 minutes to respond. Be sure to listen carefully and stay silent until your partner has finished completely. We will help you know when it's time to switch.

Invite participants to choose who will be partners A and B.

Questions: (approx. 12 minutes, 4 minutes per question)

1. What did you learn from your family about race?
2. What did you learn from your friends about race?
3. What did you learn from society (including media and school) about race?

Wrap Up: We need to acknowledge that some of the messages we received about race may not have been negative toward another group. However, the main point of this short exercise is to remind us that we didn't invent the racism that surrounds us. We have been living with racism all around us since our birth and it is inevitable that we would need to do a lot of work to recover from that exposure.

Section III

(30 min)

Discarded Messages

Materials: Butcher paper posted with race category names, markers

Purpose of piece:

To identify the racial messages received by family, friends, and society that we have discarded

Say to Group: We are now going to do an activity to acknowledge that a good amount of what we learned about race we may already have dismissed.

- There likely have been prejudices and stereotypes that we have discounted and they no longer arise in our thoughts.

- We'd now like to explore those messages that have ALREADY been dismissed. In other words, these are messages that you do NOT currently ascribe to, messages that you have **ALREADY REJECTED**.
- To do this activity we'd like each of you to take a few minutes to consider the various messages you received about each of the racial groups named on the posters on the wall.
- Write the messages that you've already REJECTED.
- To be clear, this activity is NOT asking you to simply write out a long list of stereotypes you've heard in the past. But, this is specifically asking you to name which prejudices or stereotypes you **USED to believe and now REJECT**.
- If you can't think of something to write for any particular group, that is ok.
- As you think about this, some areas to consider can include issues of:
 - Safety
 - Social/economic advancement
 - Relationship/Family
 - Ethics
 - Loyalty

Hang five butcher papers on the wall with the following titles:

White, Black, Asian, Latino, Native-American

Participants write examples on each poster. (10 min)

Once the participants have completed the posters, they should sit back in their seats and volunteers should be asked to read each of the posters in full...one poster at a time. (5 minutes total)

Say to Group: It is likely that just hearing these prejudices and stereotypes raise challenging emotions, even though we are naming only beliefs that we reject.

- It's possible that people will feel targeted as we move through this exercise even if that is not our intent. We need to acknowledge that anger, frustration, and sadness may enter the room as we remind ourselves of the racist messages that have been delivered to us, about us, and/or affect us, on a consistent basis.
- As we move into small groups, let us think about our communication guidelines.
 - Remember to use the "I" voice, speaking of our personal experience.
 - Allow that challenging emotions might arise, but know that we need to do this work.
- Our intention is to support one another in a space of honest sharing so that we can look more deeply within ourselves without being shamed for what we find.
- Especially important is to recognize that our discussion should concentrate primarily on identifying messages we have **rejected** as well as those we are **trying to reject**.
 - This is **not** intended to be a space for us to present statistical arguments or discuss stereotypes we believe are true. This is a space for us to work together to develop strategies for how to understand and disrupt what we believe is **not** true.

After all posters have been read, participants are divided into small groups to consider the following questions:

Small group questions: (15 minutes)

1. Is there anything surprising about these lists? Any places where someone put something on a list that you personally still struggle with?
2. What emotions do these lists bring up?
3. What made it possible for you to reject the prejudices or stereotypes you wrote on the posters? (Contact/exposure to communities? Critical analysis of the message?)

Facilitator's Notes: Depending upon the racial composition of the group and your own needs, grouping can be done randomly by counting off by number in order to develop groups of 4 or 5. Or, you can decide to separate into racially caucused groups. These will be the same groups that continue into the next exercise.

To the degree possible, try to organize groups so that each small group has someone in it that is experienced in race work and can help facilitate a potentially challenging conversation.

Also, be prepared to remind small groups of the intentions of this exercise if someone begins to use statistical or anecdotal information in order to argue FOR a particularly prejudicial or stereotypical view.

Large group popcorn share:

From where they are sitting in small groups, invite participants to share just one word or phrase that captures what they have been taking from the discussion so far.

Wrap Up: The messages we have received are so pervasive that it makes sense that some of them would be released and rejected either immediately or over time.

- Unfortunately, there are some things that we are exposed that just seem to stick in our brains.
- Even if we consciously reject the ideas...somehow we either understand the issues less well or the arguments have been so entrenched in our society that the message has become an internalized script.
- Sometimes it may just be an image that just keeps rising to consciousness even when we recognize that it's a problem.
- We are now going to pay attention to those messages...the ones we are having trouble releasing, the ones that still plague us.

Section IV

(40 min)

Lingering Messages

Materials: Butcher paper with small group questions written out, butcher paper for small groups to take notes, markers

Purpose of piece:

To identify our internalized racial messages, even if consciously recognized as problematic

Say to Group: Sometimes we just can't stop our brains from reminding us about some racist idea.

- For example, many white women immediately think of their safety when coming upon a group of Black young men. Even if the white women consciously reject the stereotype that the men are dangerous, they might still experience a fear reaction even if just for a few moments or seconds.
- These are the types of experiences we are trying to name in the next part of our workshop.
- We want to think about this question: What are all the ways that racist scripts and racial messages have become lodged in our brains, as horrible as they might be, as unwanted as they might be?
- Remember that the point isn't to make us feel like bad people.
- Society has done quite a number on most of us, and this process is meant to give us a chance to name some of the damaging effects living in this society has had on our lives and relationships.

Divide the participants into small groups of 4-5.

Show the participants the questions on butcher paper that they should use to guide their discussion.

Tell them they will have 25 minutes to discuss the questions and will then have some time to share out with the large group (so they should be encouraged to write notes on the butcher paper).

Facilitator's Note: Remind participants that we are NOT trying to solve the issues raised in this discussion. Ask them to concentrate on the four questions posed and try to stay with their feelings (even if they are hard) and not try to use problem solving to get away from naming the effects of these internalized scripts.

Small Group Questions: (25 minutes)

1. What racial messages still live in you even though you want to reject them?
2. When do those ideas come into your mind?
3. How does it feel when it happens?
4. In what ways could the racial messages affect one's life and relationships? How might they affect your life and relationships?

Large Group Share: (15 minutes)

1. What came up during your discussion that you'd like to share?
2. What new information did you learn from the discussion?
3. In what ways is it powerful to name our feelings around these issues?

Wrap Up: Thank participants for taking the risk to share these very difficult thoughts and feelings. It's hard to admit that we are still affected by socialized scripts. So, take a minute or so to validate people's efforts to be honest about the way they have struggled. Try to name some of the main themes you heard arise and let the participants know that in the next section we are going to see how we can help each other work toward releasing racist messages with which we disagree.

BREAK 15 minutes

BREAK 15 minutes

BREAK 15 minutes

BREAK 15 min

Section V

(45 min)

Coping Strategies

Materials: Support request slips (Handout 7.1), same colored pens

Purpose of piece:

To imagine strategies and approaches to cope with lingering racism and reduce its effects on our lives and relationships

Say to Group: Now that we've spent time talking about the various ways that racist messages have gotten embedded in our psyches and continue to affect our lives, we now have an opportunity to support one another so that we are in a better position to challenge the remaining scripts.

- For this last exercise of the day we are going to each name at least one area where we struggle and the group will have an opportunity to brainstorm together how to move forward in ways that increase our vigilance and reduce these scripts' impacts our ourselves and our interactions with others.

Facilitator's Note: Depending upon the group's dynamics, it may be helpful to take a few moments at this time to review the guidelines to help ensure that the group is able to support one another through an exercise that invites them to take significant risk in sharing their needs.

Pass support request slips to each participant (half sheet from Handout 7.1). Each participant should get one, but you can have extras if your group is rather small and you think you can move through more than one per person.

Participants are directed to fill out a slip naming an area of challenge and then crumple up the slip. The group is then invited to throw all the papers into the center circle on the floor.

Once all papers have been thrown in, each participant should be asked go pick one of them up (all at the same time). In this way, all the papers will be able to be read aloud, but no one necessarily knows who wrote out the issue.

Facilitator's Note: *Anonymity will be more likely if facilitator's take care to provide the same color pen, but depending upon how well the group knows one another, it is appropriate to acknowledge that true anonymity may not be possible.*

Participants are asked to go around the circle and read the slip s/he picked up.

Facilitator Note: *The group should be asked to stay attentive to how these issues might be grouped. One facilitator can take notes on butcher paper to try and sort issues as they are mentioned, if desired.*

Once all slips have been read, the group can see the various topics that need to be addressed. Heavily named topics can be discussed first, and then single issues can be treated one by one.

The group works collectively to imagine what could be done to deal with the consequences of the racial message named.

Wrap Up: All of us in our society encounter negative racial messages that are destructive as we live out our daily lives.

- It is so pervasive that it is no wonder that some of this gets entrenched within our minds.
- It's even more understandable that we need to learn more about certain issues in order to fully reject these scripts.
- Hopefully the type of dialogue shared here today can be something that we do more often, admitting where we are struggling in order to receive support and gain ideas for how to better move forward.

Section VI

(5 min)

Closing

Materials: None

Purpose of piece:

To acknowledge what we did today, bridge to next workshop, and allow people to check out of the space

Instructions: *Thank participants for their honest sharing and supportive statements to one another. Acknowledge that difficult emotion arises around these really hard topics, a lot can be hurtful to hear, and that you value that people stayed in the struggle in order to help people work on these difficult issues.*

Ask participants to check out of the space by going around the room and naming one thing they heard today that they will carry with them, something that was meaningful for them.

WORKSHOP 7 MODIFICATION

Suggested

If you are unable to complete the entire 2hr 45 minute workshop, here are an alteration that could satisfy some goals:

- **2 hour option**
 - Eliminate section III
 - Eliminate break

The racial message says _____

For whatever reason, it still shows up when _____

It affects me because _____

This affects my relationships because _____

Can anyone offer any supportive or creative ideas for how I can deal with this?

The racial message says _____

For whatever reason, it still shows up when _____

It affects me because _____

This affects my relationships because _____

Can anyone offer any supportive or creative ideas for how I can deal with this?

Self-Evaluation and Action Planning

Witnessing Whiteness Chapter 8 Workshop 8

Dear Facilitator(s),

This workshop series was carefully crafted, reviewed (by a multiracial team), and revised with several important issues in mind.

The series is intended to...

1. **Offer an 11 part, sequential process that corresponds to the reading of the book, Witnessing Whiteness, 2nd Edition.** Understandably, facilitators, for various reasons, might decide to use one or more of the workshops as stand alone events without sufficient time for participants to a) read the corresponding book chapters or b) move through the entire series. Yet, please understand that **moving through these workshops without having read the corresponding book chapter will markedly reduce its effectiveness. It will make moving through the workshop more challenging and is NOT recommended.** Understandings gained from one workshop are also important for subsequent workshops.
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4. **Follow logical threads of understanding related to each theme.** The language provided in the “scripts” that both precede and follow each section of the workshops are very important. Deviating from the essential themes and tone in those statements may create confusion and undercut the building nature of each individual workshop.
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6. **Provide community building opportunities for either racially caucused white groups OR multiracial groups.** Although still focused on whiteness in general, the series seeks to frame activities and questions in ways that allow people of color to benefit from the experience.

Best wishes,
Shelly Tochluk

Self-Evaluation and Action Planning

Witnessing Whiteness Chapter 8 Workshop 8

Goal:

- Determine individual needs, goals, and next steps

Materials:

- How Segregated Is My Life? Survey (Handout 8.1)
- Knowledge Questions/Self-Evaluation (Handout 8.2)
- Knowledge Questions Resource Page (Handout 8.3)
- Knowledge Building Bibliography (Handout 8.4)
- Skills Building Resource Page (Handout 8.5)
- Role Play Guidelines Resource Page (Handout 8.6)
- Personal Action Plan Survey (Handout 8.7)
- Blank Paper
- Markers
- Pens

Book Anchor Quote:

Once we decide to include taking a stand against racial injustice as part of our practice, the question to ask is, how do we do that? What exactly can we do to effectively witness in our professional and social lives? One key is recognizing that witnessing is a verb, an action. We have to *do* something.

A second key is that we have to become responsible, or better yet, *response-able*. Moving from intellectually understanding racism and privilege toward developing a way of life that effectively deals with race requires us to have the *ability to respond* to what we see. This type of *response-ability* means engaging the journey toward becoming active in justice pursuits in both our social and work settings. This is required since developing knowledge without a shift in action simply reinforces our role as bystanders. Witnessing, therefore, requires movement, some action that brings us at least one step closer to ally work.

...we need to continue to *build knowledge* and make use of knowledge gained. We have to *build skills*, a set of tools we can use when witnessing either subtle or overt racism. Many of us also feel intense emotions when dealing with issues of race. We must *build capacity* to make use of our skills in the face of our emotions, a process that takes courage and practice. Finally, we need support to continue to practice these skills during moments when we feel confused, disappointed, or frustrated. For this reason, part of witnessing also includes *creating community*, consciously developing a community of people around us who understand our striving, inspire us when we fail, and celebrate our successful efforts.

SESSION 9 - Self-Evaluation and Action Plans 3 hrs

Section I

(15 min)

OPENING

Materials: Goals for day written out and communication guidelines posted ([download with discussion guide](#)) butcher paper and markers

Purpose of piece:

To discuss communication guidelines and review the goals for the workshop

Instructions: *Facilitators introduce themselves, ask participants to say one phrase to describe what they hope to get out of the workshop.*

- *Ask participants to read the discussion guidelines posted on the wall.*
- *Ask participants what questions they have.*
 - *Invite participants to add to the list any additional discussion guidelines they think would be helpful. Write them on the piece of butcher paper. Use this modified list for all future workshops.*
 - *Ask participants to silently reread the guidelines and choose one of the guidelines that they want to work on today as they move through the workshop. (Participants may be asked to share their choice with a partner, or this can be a silent, internal process.)*

Section II

(20 min)

Segregation in our Lives

Materials: How Segregated Is My Life? Survey (Handout 8.1), pens

Purpose of piece:

To offer participants an opportunity to reflect on the level of diversity they experience in their lives and imagine how they would like to see this shift

Say to Group: The first few exercises of today's workshop will be focused on self-evaluation in multiple ways. To start, we are going to take some time to consider some questions posed within the book *Witnessing Whiteness*.

- The questions for consideration today are specifically asking us about how segregated our lives are and to what degree we'd like to see this change.
- As we get started, we do want to acknowledge that there are likely some really important differences in experience among participants. Particularly, we'd like to note that oftentimes, people of color may spend a lot of time navigating predominantly white spaces, and this may make a difference in how some people answer the questions.
- To get started, we will hand out the self-survey and give you each 5 minutes or so to complete it silently.
- Once you've finished, please wait quietly until everyone has finished the survey.

Distribute surveys

Once time is up, have participants divide into pairs and give them about 10 minutes to do the following:

1. Share the answers to their surveys with their partner
2. Ask each other – What does this mean for your life?

Facilitator's Note: *It is quite likely that one or more pairs might raise the question of how to intentionally build relationships with people of a different background without feeling like they are "using" the person. Also, people may need support distinguishing the fine line between seeking new experiences and treating a person or group as exotic.*

Post a sheet of butcher paper on the wall and invite participants to spend a few minutes (no more than 5) brainstorming some guiding principles that might be used to help know how to expand our experiences without undermining potential relationships or treating people like objects to be studied.

Possible brainstorm answers:

DO

Be humble
 Ask if it's ok to ask questions
 Admit your nervousness
 Admit your intentions and reasons
 Take your time to get to know people
 Commit to building a real relationship
 Find new avenues when one door shuts
 Join community groups

DON'T

Act like you're doing someone a favor
 Assume someone should be open to answering your question's
 Pretend that you are not consciously making this effort
 Approach people like they are part of a study
 Plan to swoop in somewhere to grab knowledge and retreat
 Be offended if you are rebuffed
 Give up after initially unsuccessful efforts
 Simply observe

If participants need an example, read the following scenario aloud:

Scenario: *A group of white folks from a segregated area of town decides to expand their experience by traveling together to another area of town populated primarily by people of color. They decide they will go to a local restaurant in that area and ask the other patrons questions about their lives.*

What about their idea is worthwhile?

- It's good to go to new areas.
- It's good to want to talk to new people

What about this idea is problematic?

- It's wrong to assume that restaurant patrons will want to answer personal questions without knowing you.
- It's a problem to go to the area as a drop-in tourist. It's better to try to join groups or organizations where you have an honest opportunity to build an authentic relationship and get to know one another over time.

Facilitator's note: *Be cautious to not allow this discussion to continue beyond the time allowable. Stop the group's process. Acknowledge that this is a really important issue, a lot of nuance exists, and paying attention to this issue is a big part of how we plan to move forward. Then, ask participants to hold their questions around this topic until the end of the workshop when we create our action plans.*

Wrap Up: One of the important aspects of creating an anti-racist practice is ensuring that our lives offer us sufficient opportunity to hear from people of different backgrounds about their experiences.

- This helps create a level of mutual understanding that is essential if we are going to be able to come together and work to eliminate racism in our lives and communities.
- But, we cannot expect our colleagues and friends to be our primary educators.
- There is too much we need to know about, and we need to take up our own responsibility for building our knowledge base.
- For that reason, we'll now shift into an exercise that can help us identify exactly which types of knowledge we need to learn more about.

*Section III**(20 min)***Off the top of our heads**

Materials: Knowledge questions/evaluation sheet (Handout 8.2), Knowledge questions RESOURCE PAGE and Knowledge Building Bibliography (Handouts 8.3 and 8.4, for distribution at end of workshop)

Purpose of piece:

To consider the categories of knowledge in which we need further study

Say to Group: Part of being a witness to injustice is being knowledgeable enough to help educate people when they are using stereotypes or racism as they talk about race related issues.

- Many times, race issues will get raised in a conversation at unexpected times and in unexpected ways.
- The degree to which we are knowledgeable about the issues is the degree to which we will be able to respond quickly enough to disrupt whatever racist or prejudicial view is being suggested in the moment.
- We're now going to do an exercise where we will explore how we would respond to certain issues and how confident we would feel doing it.
- The idea is to do a self-evaluation to determine which types of knowledge we need to learn more about.
- We recognize that this exercise might inspire you to want to talk more about the issues raised in the questions, and we have a resource sheet to offer you at the end of the workshop if anything piques your interest.
- BUT - For the sake of our agenda we need to concentrate on the goal of this section, which is for us to simply identify the topics we need to know more about.

KNOWLEDGE GAME: (10 minutes)

Divide the group into pairs, person A and person B. Each person has a copy of the knowledge question/evaluation sheet (Handout 8.2) and a pen/pencil.

Tell the participants that person A will be responsible for asking the odd numbered questions and person B will ask the even numbered questions.

This game will be timed (facilitator led) to keep it going quickly and all pairs will move through it together.

Start with Person A asking question #1. Give only 1 minute for person B to answer the question. Then switch, with Person B asking question #2 and Person A answering.

As soon as the 1 minute is completed, ask each person to write down how competent each of them thinks he or she would feel explaining the issue if a person approached them who held a racist or prejudiced view? Give just a few seconds for them to answer.

Facilitator's Note: *Even though only half of the participants had the opportunity to try to answer each of the questions, ALL participants should evaluate themselves on ALL of the topics. Reiterate that the person is rating his or her perceived competence level, NOT the partner's.*

This is intended to be a quick exercise, just to get their immediate, gut reactions. Continue until you complete question #8.

Remind participants that the point of this exercise is simply to evaluate the depth of our knowledge base and comfort level discussing these topics. A resource sheet will be available for those who are interested in knowing more about the particular issues raised in the questions.

Partner Share: Give 5 minutes for pairs to discuss their most essential areas for future knowledge building.

Wrap Up: Although we know that there is always more to learn, it is really helpful when we can create some priorities for our own knowledge development.

- Creating a list of topics that we need to explore and keeping it visible and handy can be a helpful motivator.
- We should also keep these in mind as we create our personal action plans.
- We may each have different needs, but we can figure out ways to encourage and learn from each other.

Section IV

(25 min)

Run, Hide, or Engage?

Materials: Paper and pens

Purpose of piece:

To explore the emotional tendencies of participants and what kind of work might need to be done to more effectively use practiced skills.

Say to Group: So far we've spent time looking at how much knowledge we might need to confidently respond to racism.

- However all the knowledge in the world isn't going to help us build an effective anti-racist practice if our emotions shape our responses in unhelpful ways.
- In this section we are trying to go beyond surface emotions, such as nervousness about having the required skills or fears around saying the wrong thing. These emotions tend to lessen over time with experience and practice.
- The interest here is to talk about deep issues that arise when we confront racism and enactments of privilege:
- For example:
 - How do I experience anger when racism and privilege are present? Does this make me want to punish or shame people acting prejudicially?
 - Am I afraid of being associated with people acting in racist ways? How will my response reflect my desire to be seen as "different" than them?
 - In what ways does frustration arise? Can I muster the patience I need to convey my knowledge effectively?
 - How does my tendency to avoid conflict cause me to silence myself, fearing that I will become the focus of a disagreement?
- Each of these questions speaks to the issue of emotional health. How well do we know our emotional tendencies? How able are we to manage our emotions in order to choose effective responses?
- This is important because unchecked emotions can negatively affect the way we respond and undercut our efforts.
- Only by exploring this aspect of ourselves will we be able to start to control our responses and make better choices.
- To explore this a bit, we are going to do a guided meditation that will allow us to consider our emotional habits and what we might need to work on in order to respond effectively when confronting racism.
- Before we get started, though, I'd like each of you to take a few moments to consider a time when racism was present around you and you struggled to respond effectively

Give a few moments for people to think, and then proceed toward the meditation.

Read the meditation slowly, giving sufficient pause between statements for participants to respond internally:

- Take a moment to get comfortable.
 - Sit with your feet in front of you on the floor, hands relaxed in your lap.
 - Take a deep breath.
 - Close your eyes.
 - Feel yourself relax into your chair.
 - Feel your leg muscles relax.
 - Let your back press into the chair as it supports you.
 - Breathe deeply.
 - Become heavy as you let your shoulders release their tension.
 - Let your arms fall more heavily into your body.
 - Let the small muscles in your face relax.
 - Take another deep breath.
 - Focus on the space behind your eyes.
 - Allow your mind to create a blank canvas....a space where images can arise.
- Now think about the time you already identified when racism was present around you and you struggled to respond effectively.
 - Take a moment to consider...
 - What was going on in that situation? Who was there?
 - What was the mood? How did it feel to be there?
 - Did you stay silent? Did you yell or lash out? Did you try to leave the situation as soon as you could?
 - What prompted you to say or do what you did?
 - Was there something that you were afraid of in that moment?
 - How did you feel about the people involved in the situation?
 - What emotion was strongest?
 - What happened in your body during that moment? Was there a surge of energy? Tension?
 - What did you want to accomplish in that moment?
 - Why was that goal so important to you?
 - In what ways did your emotion in the moment affect your response?
 - If you could return to that situation and do it over again, what would you do differently?
 - To what degree would your success depend upon you managing your emotions?
- Now start to return from this past experience and move back into your present reality.
 - How does your body feel at this moment?
 - Are you still relaxed, or has your body become tense in some areas?
 - Feel your body sitting in your chair.
 - Feel the temperature of the room, its coolness or warmth.
 - Take a moment to take one last deep breath before opening your eyes again and returning to the circle.
- Open your eyes and take a few moments to draw an image or write some words that reflect the way you experience emotion in challenging situations like this one. (5 minutes)

In pairs, discuss the following questions: (5 minutes)

- How might your emotions get in the way of your anti-racist practice?
- Who could you turn to for conversation that might help you respond differently?

Large group debrief: (10 minutes)

- How can emotions get in the way of our ability to use our knowledge and skills?
- Why is it important to have a place where our emotional responses to racism can be discussed?

Wrap Up: Building our knowledge base is essential, but so is working on our capacity to stay emotionally balanced in the situation so that we can respond effectively.

- The point is not that releasing raw emotion is wrong.
- Instead, what we'd like to do is become better able to choose how to respond and not respond out of an emotion that undermines our intent.
- This is really hard work. But, what can make it easier is if we are conscious of some strategies and skills we can use to navigate difficult situations.

BREAK 10 minutes

BREAK 10 minutes

BREAK 10 minutes

BREAK 10 min

Section V

(35 min)

Got skills?

Materials: Posters with Feeling Words, Skills Building Resource Page (Handout 8.5), Role Play Guidelines Resource Page (Handout 8.6)

Purpose of piece:

To consider what types of skills we have and might need in order to respond to racism

Say to Group: Now that we have a sense of what we bring to the situation in terms of our emotions, we also need to acknowledge that if we don't know what to do when faced with racism, we will likely do nothing.

- This next exercise is intended to 1) prompt our thinking regarding how skilled we feel and 2) allow us to name some skills we've learned already.
- This activity asks us to reflect on how skilled we are at navigating challenging situations and how this offers a certain degree of confidence.
- This confidence then makes us more likely to interrupt racism in action.
- For example, do we know what type of approach might be effective or appropriate in a particular circumstance?
- What we are going to do now is a four corners exercise where we will read some scenarios and you will decide which word best describes how you would feel in the situation.
- From the previous exercise, we understand that what might lie at the heart of our feeling response may be different. But, we are concentrating here on confidence levels as they relate to awareness of strategies and/or skills that can help us in the situation.

Ask the group to stand together in the middle of the circle.

Four Feeling Descriptors posted on wall:

1. Confident
2. Somewhat confident
3. Uncomfortable
4. Highly Anxious

Read the following situations one at a time. For each one, give participants a few moments to decide which corner best represents their feelings.

1. You are in at a dinner party where some of the guests who you know as acquaintances begin to say things that you find offensive, prejudicial, or perhaps downright racist. When you consider what to do in order to interrupt the tone of the conversation, how do you feel?

2. You are in a large formal setting (like a class or professional meeting) that is largely white, and the person leading the discussion is asking a question about what factors might have contributed to the particular problem being discussed. Many people are offering ideas and they are being written down on a board in front. When one of the very few people of color in the room mentions that race may be a factor, the person facilitating the discussion ignores the offering. It's the only time someone's statement hasn't been written on the board the entire time. When you consider what you should do, how do you feel?
3. You are riding in a car with someone very close to you, a family member or very close friend who is of the same racial background as yourself. The person surprises you by making a statement that is really prejudicial regarding another racial group. When you consider how to respond, how do you feel?

Once participants have moved toward one of the corners, give them 3 minutes to discuss one of the following questions:

Corner group questions:

- What strategies, skills, or knowledge would help make you more comfortable or less anxious in this situation?
- What strategies, skills, or knowledge would you use to respond in this type of situation?

After the corner group discussions, invite the corner groups to share out (8 minutes for each share/out discussion, 1 for each scenario)

- What do they know, or what skills do they have, that would help them in this situation?
- What skills or knowledge do they wish they had when thinking about the situation?

Wrap Up: The only way we become consistently active dealing with racism around us is by practicing responding. Practicing helps us develop the skills we need to feel confident. Without a sense of confidence, we're likely to be too anxious to do anything effectively.

- Waiting until we are confronted by a situation is kind of like being on a sports team or in a music group and only showing up for a game or gig but avoiding all of the practices.
- If we know that we need support in certain areas, then we can get together to practice responding to situations where privilege or racism needs to be disrupted.
- At the end of the workshop, we will hand out some resource sheets with guidelines for how to do this type of practice in preparation for real situations. (*Handouts 8.5 and 8.6 – Skills Building and Role Play Guidelines*)

Section VI

(15 min)

Building among friends

Materials: Butcher paper or half sheets for small group questions, Skills Resource Page (Handout 8.5, distribute at facilitator's discretion)

Purpose of piece:

To discuss how we feel about building community around our anti-racism work

Say to Group: If there's any single theme running through the activities today, it is that we need people with whom we can develop our knowledge, practice our skills, and explore areas where we need to work on our emotional responses.

- Because of that, we need to take some time to talk about building community around our anti-racism work.
- To do this we are going to break into small groups.

Small group questions (posted on butcher paper or distributed on a half sheet of paper): (15 minutes)

1. To what degree do you feel that you have a community where racism and anti-racism can be discussed regularly and openly?
2. How open are you to creating community with new people to extend your anti-racist support system?
3. In what ways would it be helpful to set goals for yourself in terms of anti-racism and have a community hold you accountable for following through on those goals?

If time allows, ask people if there is anything they'd like to share aloud to the whole group.

Wrap Up: Thank you for your honesty as we did this exercise. We know that some of these questions asked us to take risks to admit how we feel about moving forward.

- Although it would be great if everyone had plenty of time to really dedicate to a committed process around this work, the truth is that we all have different life responsibilities, and sometimes we simply have trouble imagining that we could commit to any additional work.
- What is important, though, is to take care that however we choose to move forward, it should be done with an eye toward sustainability.

Section VII

(30 min)

Personal Action Plans

Materials: Personal Action Plan (Handout 8.7)

Purpose of piece:

To determine each person's individual goals and next steps

Say to Group: Now that we've spent some time exploring the areas we need to pay attention to and how community supports can be an important part of our movement forward, it's time to reflect on what this means for our life and practice. To do this, each of us is going to complete a personal action plan survey so that we can figure out what our next steps might be. We'll then share our ideas with a partner.

Distribute surveys and give participants 10 minutes to fill them out.

Triad share for 15 minutes

Wrap Up: Each of us has our own needs, our own hopes for our progress. Although we didn't have time to share our ideas with everyone, these are great conversation starters. As we move forward it would be great to check in with others in our groups around what we wrote for ourselves to see if others feel the need to work on the same things we'd like to work on individually.

Section VIII

(5 min)

Closing

Materials: None

Purpose of piece:

To acknowledge what we did today, bridge to next workshop, and allow people to check out of the space

Instructions: Ask participants to say one word that describes how they are feeling as they leave the workshop today and one part of their personal action plan they intend to implement. Thank them for their participation and let them know what comes next in your program plan.

WORKSHOP 8 MODIFICATIONS

Suggested

If you are unable to complete the entire 3 hr workshop, here are some alterations that could satisfy some goals:

- **Split into two, 1 hour 30 minute workshops**
 - **Focus – Personal reflection**
 - Complete sections I, II, III, and IV
 - Abbreviated closing
 - Eliminate break
 - **Focus – Supporting the development of an anti-racist practice, personal goals**
 - Complete sections I, V, VI, and VII
 - Eliminate break

NOTE: As this workshop is meant to build toward a comprehensive action plan, it is highly recommended that if this splitting of the workshop into two pieces occurs that both shortened workshops be completed.

How Segregated Is My Life?

1. What is the racial makeup of my surroundings?
 - a. My family? _____
 - b. My housing community? _____
 - c. My place of employment or educational institution? _____
 - d. My place of worship? _____
 - e. My various social circles? _____
 - f. My favorite entertainment centers (i.e. theatre, mall, or local hang outs)?

2. Are any facets of my surroundings racially diverse? _____

3. How often do white people dominate my environment? _____
 - a. When do I experience places where 50 percent or more of the population is composed of people of color? _____

4. Am I ever one of only a few faces in a crowd of my racial background? _____

5. How would I like my life to change in terms of the diversity of my environment? _____

Knowledge Building - Self-Evaluation

	Question	Degree of Competence					Area of Knowledge
1	Why do so many People of color live in inner cities?	Low 1	2	3	4	High 5	History of Racism
2	Isn't the history of the Black Panther Party evidence that activist groups do not work effectively across race?	Low 1	2	3	4	High 5	History of Resistance to Racism
3	Aren't white people now being discriminated against as much as people of color?	Low 1	2	3	4	High 5	White Privilege
4	Isn't identifying oneself as part of a "race" encouraging a false construct? So, isn't seeing how we are all beyond race the best way to move forward?	Low 1	2	3	4	High 5	White Racial Identity
5	Isn't it better to just recognize that people are evolving every generation and hope that things will improve over time as racist people die?	Low 1	2	3	4	High 5	Building an Anti-Racist Practice
6	Hasn't every group had to struggle similarly to be successful in the U.S.?	Low 1	2	3	4	High 5	Roots, Cultural Histories, and Assimilation
7	Isn't economic class really more important to talk about than race?	Low 1	2	3	4	High 5	Intersections of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, etc.
8	White privilege doesn't help me at all. Even though I'm white I've had to deal with discrimination most of my life because I'm not straight.	Low 1	2	3	4	High 5	Intersections of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, etc.

Knowledge Building - Resources

	Question	Things to know about...	Area of Knowledge
1	Why do so many People of color live in inner cities?	Redlining Sundown towns	History of Racism
2	Isn't the history of the Black Panther Party evidence that activist groups do not work effectively across race?	Collaboration with Young Patriots and the Rainbow Coalition (Fred Hampton)	History of Resistance to Racism
3	Aren't white people now being discriminated against as much as people of color?	Studies showing people of color groups still experiencing significant discrimination in employment, housing, and educational opportunities Affirmative action statistics	White Privilege
4	Isn't identifying oneself as part of a "race" encouraging a false construct? So, isn't seeing how we are all beyond race the best way to move forward?	Distinction between "biological reality" and "social reality" Articles, book, and stories revealing the downside of colorblindness and the post-racial ideal	White Racial Identity
5	Isn't it better to just recognize that people are evolving every generation and hope that things will improve over time as racist people die?	History of fighting for liberties currently enjoyed - 40 hr. work week, voting rights, unemployment benefits, civil rights, etc all had to be fought for. Change requires active effort	Building an Anti-Racist Practice
6	Hasn't every group had to struggle similarly to be successful in the U.S.?	Legal history re: groups: their classification and rights Histories of various people of color groups	Roots, Cultural Histories, and Assimilation
7	Isn't economic class really more important to talk about than race?	Interconnected history --- historic wealth accumulation for whites based on discriminatory regulations affecting people of color, inheritance laws Race and class as structurally intertwined	Intersections of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, etc.
8	White privilege doesn't help me at all. Even though I'm white I've had to deal with discrimination most of my life because I'm not straight.	Imagine two gay individuals with similar style and appearance, except for skin color. How might light skin privilege change those individual's experiences. Know various ways that skin privilege is granted even in the face of other areas of oppression.	Intersections of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, etc.

Knowledge Building Bibliography (abbreviated)

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<i>White Privilege</i>	<p>Bush, Melanie E. L. <i>Breaking the Code of Good Intentions: Everyday Forms of Whiteness</i>. Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004.</p> <p>Jensen, Robert. <i>The Heart of Whiteness: Confronting Race, Racism, and White Privilege</i>. San Francisco, CA: City Lights, 2005.</p> <p>Lazarre, Jane. <i>Beyond the Whiteness of Whiteness: Memoir of A White Mother of Black Sons</i>. Duke University Press, 1997.</p> <p>Lipsitz, George. <i>The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit from Identity Politics</i>. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998.</p> <p>McIntosh, Peggy. "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack." <i>Independent School</i>. 49:2 (1990): 31-36.</p> <p>Sullivan, Shannon. <i>Revealing whiteness: the Unconscious Habits of Racial Privilege</i>. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006.</p> <p>Wise, Tim. <i>White Like Me: Reflections on Race from a Privileged Son</i>. New York: Soft Skull Press, 2005.</p>
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	<p>Howard, Gary R. <i>We Can't Teach What We Don't Know: White Teachers, Multiracial Schools</i>. Teachers College Press, 2006.</p> <p>Ignatiev, Noel. <i>How the Irish Became White</i>. New York: Routledge, 1997.</p> <p>Brodkin, Karen. <i>How Jews Became White Folks & What That Says About Race in America</i>. Rutgers University Press, 1998.</p> <p>Roediger, David. <i>The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class</i>. London: Verso, 1991.</p> <p>Tatum, Beverly. <i>Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?: and other conversations about race</i>. New York: Basic Books, 1997.</p>
<p><i>Developing an Anti-Racist Practice</i></p>	<p>Kivel, Paul. <i>Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice</i>. Philadelphia, PA: New Society Publishers, 1995.</p> <p>Robin Parker and Pamela Smith Chambers – “The Anti-Racist Cookbook: A Recipe Guide for Conversations About Race that Goes Beyond Covered Dishes and “Kum-Bah-Ya””. Crandall, Dostie & Douglass Books.</p> <p>Burton, M Garlinda, <i>Never Say Nigger Again!: an Antiracism Guide for White Liberals</i>. Nashville, TN: James C. Winston Pub. Co., 1995.</p> <p><i>Disrupting White Supremacy from within: White People on What We Need to Do</i>, edited by Jennifer Harvey, Karin A. Case, and Robin Hawley Gorsline. Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2004.</p> <p>Derald Wing Sue. <i>Overcoming Our Racism: A Journey to Liberation</i>. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2003.</p> <p>Tochluk, Shelly. <i>Witnessing Whiteness: First Steps Toward an Antiracist Practice and Culture</i>. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2008.</p> <p>Katz, Judy H. <i>White Awareness: Handbook for Anti-racism Training</i>. Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 2003.</p> <p>Website: White Privilege: an Anti-racist Resource: http://www.whiteprivilege.com/</p> <p>Website: Anti-Racist Alliance: http://www.antiracistalliance.com/</p>
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Skills Building Resource Page

Practiced Approaches for Confronting Racism

Questioning: Speak in a way that gives people the benefit of the doubt, acting as though they could not possibly mean what they appear to be saying. For example, when a person offers an analysis that appears either subtly or overtly racist, we might respond with a question such as, "When you say _____, it sounds like you are saying that _____, but I am not sure if this is what you mean?" This offers the person an opportunity to reflect and perhaps alter his or her speech. If the person truly holds racist ideas, this approach surely will not change his or her point of view. But, at least it might disrupt the conversation enough for the speaker to find out that racism is not welcomed or acceptable in your presence. This pattern can continue as needed, with the questions becoming more explicitly challenging. We might actually have to say, "I'm sorry, but that sounds rather racist. Are you comfortable sounding that way?" The essential idea is simply that we act a bit dense, as though we simply cannot believe that an intelligent person would ever say something with such obvious racist overtones.

Educating: This approach asks us to make use of the knowledge that we gain and try to inform the people around us why their statements are troubling for us. Note that this approach is not called lecturing. Instead, we can make short statements, such as, "You know, when I hear what you are saying, it reminds of when I thought something similar. But, then I read something that made me realize that _____." Or, we might say something like, "Hey, I know sometimes the media makes it seem like that, but I found out recently that _____." In both of these sample statements, we avoid directly naming either the person or his or her speech as involving racist elements. Depending upon the need and our own comfort, we can go further. We can say, "Hey, I am sure you don't mean it this way, but it sounds like that idea comes from a perspective that can be seen as pretty racist." With this approach, the words we say may or may not be heard. The person may or may not continue with the subject, stick around to continue the dialogue, or feel comfortable with us. But, whatever the result, we will have let that person know that we are not someone with whom he or she can safely speak using racist speech.

Expressing personal emotional reaction: This approach asks us to tell a person making racist comments or jokes what it is like for us to hear those things. By letting the person know how we feel, we are avoiding directly challenging the content of what is being said, but instead asking the person to respect who we are and notice that his or her speech is not okay with us. We might say something like, "When you say that, I feel _____ and that makes it hard for me to be here with you." This approach can be especially effective with people close to us because we are not directly challenging the content of what the person is saying as much as the level of respect existing within the relationship. If these folks care about us, won't they want to make sure that we feel good about spending time with them? At least, that is the question we can ask to try and get the person to shift his or her use of language.

Empathetic relating: This approach asks us to invite the person speaking to imagine how he or she would feel if a similar negative statement were applied to him or her. We might respond to a racist comment or joke by saying, "Wow, when you say that, I can't help but imagine what those folks would feel if they heard that. Can you imagine what it would feel like if people were sitting around talking about us like that? What if they were teasing about the way...? (Here, we might include something that we sense might be a meaningful stereotype that is used to injure that person's group). We can then ask, "Wow, how would that make you feel?"

Returning later: Lastly, we also can give ourselves permission to return to a person once the situation has shifted and deal with the issue at a later time. We might return to a colleague and say, "You know, yesterday (or last week) you said _____, and I just want to ask you what you meant. I felt _____ hearing it and wanted to check in with you about it." We can choose to question, empathize, educate, or express our own feeling. But this way, even if we miss a moment, we can create a chance to respond once we have developed more clarity about the issue and a plan of approach.

<p><i>Engaging in Conversations around Race with People Close to Us</i></p>	<p><i>Begin slowly.</i> No need to speak out on every new piece of knowledge all at one time if they are not asking for more. These are our closest relationships. We have plenty of time to initiate our loved ones into this way of seeing the world. Besides, jumping in too quickly might very likely only push them away.</p> <p><i>Speak from the heart.</i> Refer to recently acquired information and how it has been personally affecting. Ask only for them to listen and to try and understand why we feel as we do.</p> <p><i>Demonstrate excitement.</i> If we offer some of our new realizations with excitement and interest, we stand a better chance of getting people on board. A sudden shift into anger will likely be alienating and make our journey less appealing.</p> <p><i>Challenge sensitively.</i> Using the previously described strategy of expressing our personal emotional reaction (from previous page) to statements can be extremely helpful when we need to challenge something said within a dialogue.</p> <p><i>Be humble.</i> Becoming angry with our families and close friends for not seeing issues of race as we do is a sure way to get shut down and turn them off.</p> <p><i>Pick battles carefully.</i> Some people will just not be ready to hear what we have to say. Reserve energy for moments when our efforts can make a difference. Retreat and come back a different day, or a different year, depending upon the individual.</p> <p><i>Plant seeds.</i> Know that we plant seeds every time we witness actively. We might not see immediate results. But, some new epiphany might be growing in someone that will someday emerge, even if we never see the tangible results.</p> <p><i>Extend the invitation.</i> Invite family and friends to join this journey with you. Give a book on racism or white privilege as a present to someone. Ask someone to watch a movie with you featuring a cast of people of color. Invite someone to attend a culturally/racially diverse art show, musical performance, or other event with you. Ask questions and prompt conversation to see what friends and family are thinking.</p>
<p><i>Inviting Dialogue in Diversity</i></p>	<p>We need to recognize common mistakes often made when engaging in cross-race conversations.</p> <p><i>We must learn to avoid enacting the following...</i></p> <p><i>Being rude.</i> We have to really question ourselves about how we approach people. Can we see how our approach might unwittingly dehumanize? Are we conscious of the degree to which we ask a stranger to trust and accept us? Do we ask permission before we attempt to enter a personal, racially loaded dialogue?</p> <p><i>Being too self-focused.</i> We have to be ready for someone to say “No thanks” to our friendship without feeling personally insulted. History has given a lot of people good reason to be wary of discussions across race. If we can get out of our own head for a while and see that we are not the only ones taking risks, we stand a better chance of getting through the rough spots.</p> <p><i>Turning people into objects.</i> When we become oversensitive to race issues, we run the risk of treating people more like racial beings than human beings. We must be careful not to turn people into representatives for their race.</p> <p><i>We must be able to...</i></p> <p><i>Be both vulnerable and strong.</i> Sometimes we have to extend our hand in friendship and keep it humbly extended in the face of refusal. We must be ready to admit our nervousness, as uncomfortable as it may be.</p> <p><i>Dismiss the devil's advocate.</i> Arguing facts and possible misinterpretations gets us nowhere. Listening to the felt experience of our friends is far more important.</p> <p><i>Value new information.</i> If a person of color offers critical feedback, take it as a gift. Resist defensiveness.</p>

Role Play Agenda/Guide

This agenda is designed to help groups look at and *practice* skills for responding to moments when people act in ways we perceive as prejudicial, racist, or problematic in some way.

(1 hour)

Skill-building: Brainstorm: Open/Shut and Skills Role Plays

Materials: For brainstorm: Chart on the wall with two columns: What opens us up? What shuts us down? For role-play: statements written up on butcher paper, sets of cards with skills

Purpose of piece:

First, to brainstorm the difference between responses that ‘open us up’ to change or shift our thinking, or ones that ‘shut us down’. We want to build this awareness to set the tone for effective, constructive responses to racism. Then, we want to dive into some real-life situations that people might be facing and how to respond.

Assumption

No matter how long we’ve been doing anti-racism work, there is always room to practice and develop our skills as we grow and change in our awareness and understanding of racism, whiteness, and white privilege. This work is never done, and one of the best ways to build our skills is through practice, and getting positive and constructive feedback from each other to learn from our successes and our mistakes.

Part I: Brainstorm: “Open and Shut”

5-8 min

- Have a chart on the wall w/ two columns: What opens you up to change? What shuts you down?
- Say to the group:** First we want to begin with a quick brainstorm. We’re working from the assumption that in our interactions, our ultimate goal is to engage people to raise consciousness and foster change. There are ways to engage and challenge people that shuts them down, and there are ways that a better chance of fostering an openness to further dialogue or a shift in thinking/feeling.
- Start with a quick brainstorm. Think: when people challenge you to shift the way you think or feel about something (doesn’t have to be about race - can be anything that you have been asked to shift your thinking/feeling about), what qualities in their approach make you shut down? (or to restate: When someone challenges you to change, what make you shut down or close up?)
- Take a few answers, and then ask the same question about “What make us open up?”
- Make the point: Our skill-building focuses on ways to engage with other people to open them up for further dialogue, to build awareness, etc. etc. We want to figure out together how we can engage, respond, and challenge each other and other people in ways that open us up to change.

Part II: Ways to Respond:

10 min

- Explain that we are going to move into practicing skills in responding w/ role plays. Before that, we are going to review some possible ways to approach our responses.
- Hand out every 3rd person a set of cards with the examples/explanations of the different possible approaches to responding to racism. **Make as many sets as you will need for your group. See different approaches in chart at bottom of agenda. Make four cards for each set, one card with each approach. (If you prefer not to use cards, simply make copies of the chart and use for reference.)**
- Review the approaches: The cards being handing out have some ideas on ways to respond to other people when you hear avoidant statements. There are four cards in each set, and each card

has a different “skill” or “tool” that you will have a chance to practice using today. **This agenda with these responses are specifically designed to deal with avoidant strategies. Feel free to create additional strategies or use Handout 8.5 for examples of more general statements.**

- ❑ Go around and ask people to read the approaches out loud. Ask people to give some examples of times they may have used that strategy, when they have or might use it, questions or comments they might have about it.

Part III: *Role-Plays*

30 min

- ❑ Have people get into groups of 3.
- ❑ **Instructions:** Each person in your group will play a role. One person will be the “commenter”, one person will be the “responder”, and someone will be the “observer”. Everyone will have a chance to play each role.
- ❑ The “commentor” will make a statement. (This is the person who is speaking in prejudicial or racist ways.) The “responder” will use one of the skills from the cards to practice responding. The “observer” will observe the interaction and will then take a few minutes to give feedback to the person responding. The responder can then take another minute to practice again, incorporating the feedback.
- ❑ Create a brainstorm list of possible statements you might hear from people that you want to challenge. The commenters can use these statements so that the person responding can use the exact issue they are struggling with as part of the practice.
 - If you’d like to create a particular agenda around dealing with avoidant strategies, here are 3 possible statements that you may hear from white folks or that we often find ourselves responding to.
 - Racism is not really a problem anymore. Obama being the President proves that our political system has transcended race.
 - I don’t see people in terms of race. We’re all part of the human race, so none of this matters anymore.
 - This identity politics stuff is an old way of thinking. We live with so much more diversity now that race just doesn’t matter.
- ❑ **Instructions:** The responders decide the topic or statement they want to respond to, and which skill they would like to practice using. Once they’ve decided, “commenters”, make the statement. “Responders”, take a few minutes to respond. “Observers”, listen and offer feedback to the “responder”.
 - Rotate roles until everyone has taken at least 1 or 2 turns in each role, using at least 2 different ways to respond from the skill cards if you have enough time. Gently remind one another to take turns, and have space for feedback.

Large group Debrief:

10 min

The group should gather before ending to have a large group discussion on the following topics:

- ❑ How was the process for you?
- ❑ Take some share-outs about what came up: what was challenging? Why? What worked well? Why?

Points to draw out:

- Feelings that come up towards the “commenter”
- Can refer back to brainstorm poster as well regarding “open” and “shut”.
- Remind one another that the practice role plays are not meant to set us up as the righteous “good people” and the others as “bad racists”. If we assume that we are all on a journey

towards anti-racism and that some people may not be as far along in their process as others, it can help us develop compassion and be better allies.

Closure:

- Go around the room and say one word that captures the way you feel as you leave this workshop.

Feel free to use this chart as a model. Create alternative approaches for various issues you might concentrate on as a group.

<p>Practiced Approaches for Confronting Avoidance Strategies</p>	<p>Questioning: When a person says something that denies the impacts of race, ask a question that challenges the avoidant strategy. <i>“When you say _____, it sounds like you are saying _____, but I am not sure if this is what you mean?”</i> Continue as needed, with the questions becoming more explicitly challenging. Here are some places to start:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>“Do you really mean that you don’t see color? How is that possible?”</i> 2. <i>“Even if you don’t believe in race, do you believe everyone feels that way?”</i> 3. <i>“What if someone else believes that being a member of their race impacts their life? Can you accept that? What if they tell you they have experienced racism coming from you? If you don’t see race, then how do you know it’s not true?”</i> 4. <i>“What if believing you are colorblind makes you less able to see racism? How would you feel about that?”</i> <p>Educating: Inform people why their statements are troubling. Make short statements, such as, <i>“You know, when I hear what you are saying, it reminds of when I thought something similar. But, then I read something that made me realize that _____.”</i> Or, say something like, <i>“Hey, I know sometimes that seems the best way for us to move forward, but I found out recently that _____.”</i> To be more direct, say, <i>“I understand that you mean it as a way forward, but what comes with that idea are often attitudes that ignore and deny continuing racism.”</i></p> <p>Expressing personal emotional reaction: Tell people making avoidant statements what it is like for you to hear those things. Ask the person to respect who you are and notice that his or her speech brings up challenging feelings for you. Say something like, <i>“When you say that, I feel _____ and that makes it hard for me to be here with you.”</i> (This strategy may be most effective with close friends and family.) Be sure to explain why you hold the perspective you do, how you came to understand it, and why it’s hard for you to hear the person speaking as he or she does.</p> <p>Empathetic relating: Invite people using avoidant language to imagine how they would feel if an important aspect of their lives was being negated. Say, <i>“You know, when you say that, I can’t help but imagine what people who see their race as important would feel if they heard that. Can you imagine what it would feel like if people were sitting around denying how meaningful it is for us to _____?”</i> Then ask, <i>“Wow, how would that make you feel? I know for me it would be hard to have part of my life experience dismissed in that way.”</i></p>
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Personal Action Plans

Knowledge Building

The areas of knowledge I really need to work on are: (Rank from 1 to 7)

- _____ History of Racism
- _____ History of Resistance to Racism
- _____ White Privilege
- _____ White Racial Identity
- _____ Building an Anti-Racist Practice
- _____ Roots, Cultural Histories, and Assimilation
- _____ Intersections of race with other social positions

The people who could support my growth in this area include:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

The context that would suit me best would be: (Mark all that apply)

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| _____ Conferences | _____ Books | _____ Informal gatherings |
| _____ Meetings | _____ Workshops | _____ Friends/Family |
| _____ Other (describe) _____ | | |

Skills Building

Some areas I really need to work on are: (Mark all that apply)

- _____ One on one situations
- _____ Small groups of people I know
- _____ Large groups
- _____ Challenging powerful figures
- _____ Challenging close friends and family
- _____ Multiracial contexts

On the scale below, rate how much you would like to have some practice sessions scheduled where you could do some “role playing” with peers who could help you develop your skills at responding to racism?

Not at all					Very Much
1	2	3	4	5	

The skills I feel most confident with and could help support others include:

Creating Culture

Witnessing Whiteness Chapter 9

Workshop 9.1

Dear Facilitator(s),

This workshop series was carefully crafted, reviewed (by a multiracial team), and revised with several important issues in mind.

The series is intended to...

1. **Offer an 11 part, sequential process that corresponds to the reading of the book, Witnessing Whiteness, 2nd Edition.** Understandably, facilitators, for various reasons, might decide to use one or more of the workshops as stand alone events without sufficient time for participants to a) read the corresponding book chapters or b) move through the entire series. Yet, please understand that **moving through these workshops without having read the corresponding book chapter will markedly reduce its effectiveness. It will make moving through the workshop more challenging and is NOT recommended.** Understandings gained from one workshop are also important for subsequent workshops.
2. **Respond to particular group needs.** Recognizing that some groups may not be able to implement each workshop for the entire time suggested, some approved modifications can be found at the end of each workshop agenda. Only modify these workshops when absolutely required.
3. **Create a welcoming, inviting space where participants feel free to speak the truth of their experience without fear of shaming or reprisal.** It is essential for facilitators to understand that even when participants hold views that are counter to the themes in the book/series, a hallmark of both the book and the series is that people should be gently led into a new way of seeing.
4. **Follow logical threads of understanding related to each theme.** The language provided in the “scripts” that both precede and follow each section of the workshops are very important. Deviating from the essential themes and tone in those statements may create confusion and undercut the building nature of each individual workshop.
5. **Enhance leadership capacity within the community.** Detailed facilitator notes are provided for each activity so that one or more members of the group can practice their facilitation while leading this workshop series. A few notes of caution: a) the same facilitation team should run the entire series, b) the team should read the entire book in advance of leading any of the workshops, and c) sufficient debrief opportunities should be created to discuss how each workshop went so that facilitators’ skills can be developed.
6. **Provide community building opportunities for either racially caucused white groups OR multiracial groups.** Although still focused on whiteness in general, the series seeks to frame activities and questions in ways that allow people of color to benefit from the experience.

Best wishes,
Shelly Tochluk

Creating Culture

Witnessing Whiteness Chapter 9 Workshop 9.1

Goals:

- Describe the dominant white culture in the U.S. today
- Consider our relationship to the dominant white culture
- Imagine what it would look like to create a witnessing culture and how it could be created

Materials:

- Butcher paper
- Markers

Book Anchor Quote:

The goal: Transform the current, dominant form of white culture into an antiracist white culture that regularly names and dismantles racism and white privilege. This work may be started at home, extended into our social lives, and infused into our work settings. This is long-range work. Transforming culture understandably requires much time and collective effort. But, in the midst of our individual struggle, we must simultaneously hold a larger view of our collective role. Yes, we may start this work with a small circle of friends, family, and colleagues. However, our ultimate goal must remain the transformation of white culture overall.

SESSION 10 - Creating Culture

2 hrs 45 min

Section I

(15 min)

OPENING

Materials: Goals for day written out and communication guidelines posted ([download with discussion guide](#)) butcher paper and markers

Purpose of piece:

To discuss communication guidelines and review the goals for the workshop

Instructions: *Facilitators introduce themselves and then ask participants to think about the word “culture” and what it means to them.*

Facilitator’s Note: *Participants are likely to enter the space with different working definitions for the word “culture” – For the sake of this workshop you can orient around the following – **Culture refers to the beliefs, attitudes, values, and practices characteristic of a particular group.***

- *As participants to go around the room, ask them to say their name and two words that come up for them when they think of the word “culture”.*
- *Ask participants to read the discussion guidelines posted on the wall.*
- *Ask participants what questions they have.*

- Invite participants to add to the list any additional discussion guidelines they think would be helpful. Write them on the piece of butcher paper. Use this modified list for all future workshops.
- Ask participants to silently reread the guidelines and choose one of the guidelines that they want to work on today as they move through the workshop. (Participants may be asked to share their choice with a partner, or this can be a silent, internal process.)

Section II

(40 min)

Dominant White Culture

Materials: Butcher Paper and markers

Purpose of piece:

To describe dominant white culture in the U.S. today

Say to Group: If we are going to consider how to create a witnessing culture that supports anti-racism, we need to take some time to stop and situate ourselves within the culture that exists around us.

- For this reason, we are going to start today by describing what we see as dominant white culture.
- In small groups, we are asking you to first do a brainstorm to consider what dominant culture in the U.S. looks like.
 - In other words, what characterizes the dominant culture we have in this country?
- Then, we'd like you to discuss which aspects of the dominant culture you think are good and which ones you think are problematic in some way.
- Something to keep in mind is that although we want to acknowledge that there are pros and cons to everything, today we are intentionally focusing on those aspects that we consider problematic. We do this not to suggest that everything is negative or bad, but to help us locate areas where our lives and society can improve.
- We'll get back together to share these with the larger group in about 15 minutes.

Facilitator's Note: *It is suggested that each small group include a facilitator or someone who is relatively advanced in their thinking on these issues. Facilitators should help pull out some of the following themes as they brainstorm with their groups: individualism, consumerism, meritocracy as an ideal, superficiality, competition, ambition, productivity, extreme exploitation of labor/resources for profit, etc.*

Small group dialogue (4-5 people in each group) (15 minutes)

1. What does the dominant culture in the US look like? How is it characterized? Create a brainstorm list
2. Which of these aspects do we like and which do we dislike? Create a T-chart

Share out with the large group (15 minutes)

1. Report what you shared
2. What feelings come up as you discuss this? Why?

Dominant white culture sculpture: (10 minutes)

Count off the group by 1 and 2. All the 1's will be part of the dominant culture sculpture. They are to reflect briefly on the conversation we all just had and get together in the middle of the circle (or in front of the group) to enact what kind of physical human sculpture they can create to symbolize dominant white culture as it is.

Facilitator's Note: *If participants need an example --- you might offer that a sculpture representing "unity" could be a circle where everyone is holding hands. Or, a sculpture representing "exploitation" could include one person standing above people (in a controlling stance), while the others are crouched on the ground.*

- As the 1's create the sculpture they can talk amongst themselves to figure out the form that will represent their feelings and ideas. The 2's stay in their seats and observe the creation of the sculpture.

- Once created, the 1's hold their position.
- The facilitator should ask the 2's to state what they see represented.

Wrap Up: Summarize for the group what was discussed, to what degree people find dominant white culture to be problematic or not. Then mention that it is important to explore the various ways dominant culture is reflected in our life patterns.

Section III

(35 min)

White Culture in My World

Materials: Sheets of paper, pens, questions on butcher paper (2 sets)

Purpose of piece:

To consider our relationship to the dominant white culture

Say to Group: For our next exercise we are going to do a combination of personal reflection and pair questioning. There are essentially two aspects to this exercise.

- First, we want to consider how our lives have been influenced by and continue to reflect the dominant white culture we have in the U.S.
- Second, we want to consider the ways that our lives do NOT reflect this culture.
- An important thing to note is that although ALL of us absorb elements of dominant culture in some way, regardless of our racial category,
 - for some people, the dominant culture reinforces their sense of value in the world
 - for others dominant white culture can undercut one's positive experiences.
- So, as we move forward, let us do so knowing that we arrive with varied experiences.

Individual journaling (5 minutes)

1. How does your life reflect dominant white culture in the U.S.?

Structured Pair Questioning (10 minutes)

Partner A answers all three questions first while Partner B listens silently – 1 minute given per question.

Facilitator times the answer periods and reads out questions

Then, Partner B answers all three questions while Partner A listens silently

1. How does your life reflect dominant white culture?
2. How do you feel about these aspects of your life?
3. Are there any aspects that you'd like to see change?

Facilitator's Note: You can instruct participants that if their partner falls silent before the end of the 1 minute period, the partner can prompt deeper and continued thinking by restating the original question.

Individual journaling (5 minutes)

2. How does your life NOT reflect the dominant culture in the U.S.?

Structured Pair Questioning (10 minutes)

Partner A answers all three questions first while Partner B listens silently – 1 minute given per question.

Facilitator times the answer periods and reads out questions

Then, Partner B answers all three questions while Partner A listens silently

1. How does your life NOT reflect dominant culture?
2. What led you to adopt these ways of living?
3. How are these ways of living supportive of or aligned with the idea of creating a witnessing culture?

Wrap Up: The important point of this reflection and sharing process is to acknowledge that all of us have our own very distinct relationship to dominant white culture.

- For some of us, our lives might thoroughly reflect this culture in ways that we both like and don't like.
- On the other hand, there are those of us who either have always felt on the outside of this culture or have moved further and further away over time.
- Only by knowing where we all stand in relation to this can we start to imagine how we might hope things could be different.
- Important to acknowledge is that we will not be able to "fix it all". Believing that we have that kind of power can oftentimes reflect a privileged sense of entitlement that some of us carry wherein we feel that we can simply "fix" things and then move on with our lives.
- A more sustainable and honest approach is to have a goal that includes creating better conditions, dialogue, and fighting the good fight.

BREAK 15 minutes

BREAK 15 minutes

BREAK 15 minutes

BREAK 15 min

Section IV

(40 min)

Summoning our Imagination

Materials: Butcher paper, tape, markers

Purpose of piece:

To imagine what it would look like to create a witnessing culture

Say to Group: One of the most significant barriers to shifting how this country operates is the lack of power many people feel.

- Yet, there is so much power that comes from people getting together and making decisions amongst themselves regarding how they want to live and what they want to value.
- Eventually, when a community of voices becomes strong enough it can and does get noticed and can create real change.
- So, for a while at least, let's try to imagine what we would like to see created if we had the power to start from scratch and create a new culture.

Large group brainstorm (5 minutes)

If there are areas of our culture that we dislike and we believe help perpetuate racism...

- How would we like to see it change?
- What would we like to see our dominant culture in the U.S. look like?
- What values would it hold?

Create a brainstorm list.

Graffiti process: (15 minutes)

What would it look like?

Invite participants to write on separate posters hanging on the wall with the following titles:

Art? Traditions? Interaction Style? Customs?

Read out what was written

Witnessing culture sculpture: (10 minutes)

The 2's now take their turn in the center determining how to physically represent this new culture. Once completed, they hold their position and the 1's state what they see represented.

Large group discussion (10 minutes)

1. What does it feel like to imagine these possibilities? Why?

2. What are the struggles we will face if we try to move toward this vision? (Take notes on butcher paper)
3. What supports can we draw on to help us move toward this vision? (Take notes on butcher paper)

Facilitator's Note: Let participants know that you can type up the ideas written on the butcher paper pages and email them out to the entire group, if desired.

Wrap Up: Reflect back to participants that there is a lot of beauty and possibility when we get together to imagine a new way forward...and acknowledge the challenges that we do face.

- Most importantly, highlight the need to make use of the supports that we identify so that we don't go into this will rose-colored glasses.
- This IS hard work, and we need to both acknowledge it AND plan for how we can stay focused and motivated in the face of resistance and distress.
- We have to remember that our goal is to steadily improve things.
- A sustainable approach includes determining short term goals and prioritizing what we need to do as we work toward our larger goal so that we don't feel that we have to do everything immediately, which is not realistic.

Section V

(20 min)

Closing

Materials: Paper, pens

Purpose of piece:

To imagine how we can start to create a witnessing culture, acknowledge what we did today, and allow people to check out of the space

Instructions: To close out our workshop today we'd like to take a few minutes to do one last reflection.

Journaling: What action steps can we each take that will help us move our communities toward this new way of relating? (5 minutes)

Pair share (2) minutes)

Check out: Name one action step you are able to take to help move us closer to this vision AND how you feel as you leave this workshop today (10 minutes)

Wrap Up: Make linkages for the group of how their action steps might work within the group's action plan (if one was developed from the chapter 9a workshop).

- If there is no concrete plan for continued group participation, suggest strongly that participants find their own small group supports so that this work does not become too individualized.
- It is in community that we find our strength for this work.
- Thank participants for their honest sharing and time.

WORKSHOP 9.1 MODIFICATIONS

Suggested

If you are unable to complete the entire 2 hr 45 min workshop, it would be preferable to simply skip this workshop completely and use the time to ensure that workshops 8 and 9.2 are completed in full.

This workshop is not easily modified, as eliminating any of the three main sections would result in either confusion or the risk of ending without appropriately handling the emotions that this content can generate.

Group Action Planning

Witnessing Whiteness Chapter 9

Workshop 9.2

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Best wishes,
Shelly Tochluk

Group Action Planning

Witnessing Whiteness Chapter 9

Workshop 9.2

Goal:

- Consider group formation, goals, and next steps

Materials:

- Butcher paper
- Markers
- Pens
- Moving Forward in Community (Handout 9.2.1)

Book Anchor Quote:

If we construct witnessing groups to keep us accountable to each other as regards the development of our antiracist practice, the potential for growth and expansion increases. Our self-identity becomes involved and we experience increased motivation and dedication...The beauty here is that there is no reason to feel alone and powerless. We have concrete steps to take that can connect us with a movement of people. We can capitalize on the massive wave of change already underway, albeit seemingly hidden from view.

SESSION 11 - Group Action Plans

1 hr 30 min

Section I

(15 min)

OPENING

Materials: Goals for day written out and communication guidelines posted ([download with discussion guide](#)) butcher paper and markers

Purpose of piece:

To discuss communication guidelines and review the goals for the workshop

Instructions: *Facilitators introduce themselves, ask participants to say their name and one reason why they feel that being part of a continuing group to work on anti-racism is important.*

- *Ask participants to read the discussion guidelines posted on the wall.*
- *Ask participants what questions they have.*
 - *Invite participants to add any additional discussion guidelines they think would be helpful. Write them on the piece of butcher paper. Use this modified list for all future workshops.*
 - *Ask participants to silently reread the guidelines and choose one of the guidelines that they want to work on today as they move through the workshop. (Participants may be asked to share their choice with a partner, or this can be a silent, internal process.)*

Section II

(20 min)

Group Goals and Planning

Materials: Group Planning Notes (Handout 9.2.1) and pens

Purpose of piece:

To offer participants an opportunity to brainstorm individually regarding goals and structure for a continuing group.

Say to Group: *Today we are going to concentrate on figuring out how we wish to move forward as a group. We will start by us each taking about 10 minutes to use a Moving Forward in Community handout to generate some initial ideas. Then, we'll have about 10 minutes to share our ideas with a partner.*

Distribute handout and ask people to answer questions silently until the majority of participants are finished.

Ask participants to get into pairs (self-selected) to discuss their ideas.

Section III*(50 min)***Group Goals and Planning**

Materials: Butcher paper, markers

Purpose of piece:

To consider group formation, goals, and next steps

Instructions: The essential discussion of the day is what we can see ourselves doing as a group and how we'd like to move forward.

Large Group Discussion: (30 minutes) (Use butcher paper to take notes)

1. How do we want to structure the group?
 - a. What would be the objective(s)?
 - b. How often would the group meet?
 - c. Who would be present/invited?
 - i. Is this a multiracial space or a racially caucused space?
 - ii. Is it a space that is open to new persons, or do members need to go through a defined process before joining?
 - d. What are the supports and processes that we might need to create a strong, vibrant, worthwhile process?
 - i. How will we know if we are meeting the group's objectives AND individual's needs?

Next Steps: Continued Large Group Discussion: (20 minutes) (Use butcher paper to take notes)

1. Who will act as the coordinator? What does leadership look like?
 - a. Will facilitation roles be shared or rotated? Or, will there be a primary team that does agenda planning?
2. What are the dates we can commit to in order to start the process?
3. What other concerns do we have regarding creating a sustained group to work on building our anti-racist practice?

Wrap Up: *Offer a summary of what decisions the group came to through the discussion.*

Section IV*(5 min)***Closing**

Materials: None

Purpose of piece:

To acknowledge what was accomplished and allow people to check out of the space

Instructions: Ask participants to say one word describing how they feel as they leave the workshop. Thank them for their participation and restate what comes next in your newly designed program plan.

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Moving Forward in Community

Directions: Jot down some initial thoughts in answer to the following questions. These are simply prompts to get your thinking started.

For you, an ongoing group dedicated to developing an anti-racist practice would...

1. Have the following as agreed upon objectives:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

2. Meet every _____

3. Include as members...(circle all that apply)

- a. Anyone who wants to join, anytime they want to join, starting now
- b. Only those who completed the workshop series together
- c. Anyone who has already done some serious work on race issues
- d. Only those who are willing to commit to ongoing attendance
- e. At first only the workshop participants, but open membership later on once the group is established
- f. Other: _____

4. Engage the next steps as...

- a. A racially caucused group
- b. A multiracial group
- c. A two group system, where some time is spent in caucuses and some time is spent in a multiracial group

As you imagine the group and the work necessary to meet its objectives...

1. What are the supports and processes that the group might need to create a strong, vibrant, worthwhile process?

2. How will the group know if it is meeting both the group's objectives as well as individual's needs? What specific structures or processes will need to be put in place?

3. Do you imagine one person as the bottom line coordinator, one person who will ultimately take responsibility for ensuring that things move forward? YES NO

If so, who do you imagine this person would be? _____

4. What do you imagine leadership looking like?

- a. One or two primary coordinators
- b. Shared leadership team including a handful of the most dedicated persons
- c. Shared leadership where all take on duties and roles
- d. Other structure

5. Which would you like to see?

- a. A dedicated and consistent facilitation team takes responsibility for moving the group forward
- b. Facilitation duties are shared and rotated
- c. Other system

6. Who EXACTLY do you hope will agree to create and facilitate agendas...(write names)

for planning meetings? _____

for workshops? _____

7. Are you willing to see yourself as an eventual....

workshop planner or facilitator? Yes No

Meeting planner or facilitator? Yes No

8. When are you most available for meetings?

Weekday evenings Weekends

9. What concerns do you have regarding creating a sustained group to work on building your anti-racist practice?