

Race to Equity Toolkit for Conversation

ywcamadison.org/R2EToolkit



eliminating racism
empowering women

ywca

Welcome to the YWCA Madison's Race to Equity Toolkit for Conversation!

The Wisconsin Council of Children and Families (WCCF) presented a Baseline Report on the State of Racial Disparities in Dane County (download PDF at racetoequity.net) at the 2013 YWCA Madison Racial Justice Summit. The report shines a light on our community's profound racial disparities in health, education, child welfare, criminal justice, education, and employment, and left many wondering, what's next? What can we do to narrow these disparities and help Dane County become a stronger more racially equitable place to live for all of its residents?

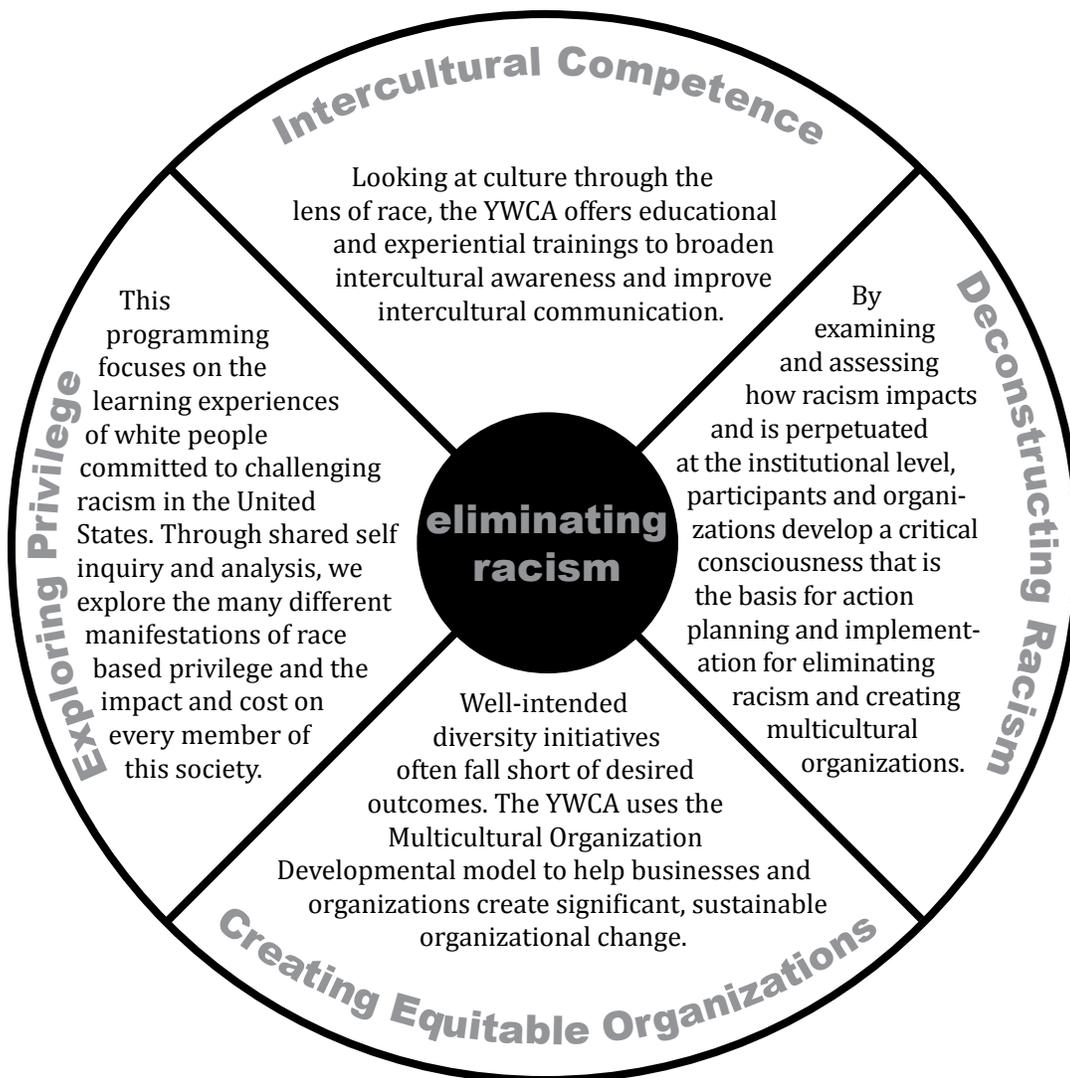
This toolkit offers facilitation assistance to school, faith, and community groups that want to discuss the data presented in the report and what steps they can take to narrow racial disparities in their organizations. Feel free to modify this toolkit in order to address the needs and priorities of your specific group.

The Race to Equity Project Summary

Profound and persistent racial disparities in health, education, child welfare, criminal justice, employment, and income are common across the United States and in Wisconsin. These racial disparities compromise the life chances of many children and families and thwart our common interest that every child grows up healthy, safe, and successful.

The Wisconsin Council on Children and Families' (WCCF) Race to Equity project aspires to make a greater contribution to narrowing and ultimately eliminating racial disparities in Wisconsin. The project is beginning with a multi-year "Project to Reduce Racial Disparities in Dane County" and WCCF hopes subsequently to move into a broader effort to reduce racial disparities across Wisconsin.

Recognizing that many people have identified, studied, and worked on the problem of racial disparities for many years, Race to Equity will learn from and build on prior efforts, and will rely heavily on the advice and guidance of leaders and residents of Dane County's communities of color. These past efforts will inform their collection and analysis of information on the key contributors to disparate racial outcomes in order to identify and advance comprehensive and effective solutions. WCCF hopes that the contribution of their core organizational strengths in data and policy analysis, advocacy of effective solutions, and engagement of stakeholders, can foster the necessary political and public will to enact solutions.



Racism affects all of us regardless of what we look like. The elimination of racism is an ongoing process that requires persistence, commitment, and continuing dialogue between individuals and groups. The YWCA is committed to helping individuals, organizations, and companies in the Madison community improve race relations and find ways to eliminate racism through constructive dialogue and meaningful action.

Trainings are both educational and transformational, with an intentional focus on providing an open forum to discuss race in ways that we seldom do together.

Guidelines

Suggested Guidelines

- What you share within the context of the conversation is confidential, honored, and respected.
- Use “I” statements—avoid speaking for another or for an entire group.
- Avoid critiquing others’ experiences; focus on your own experiences.
- Be honest and willing to share—if you tend to be more quiet in groups, challenge yourself to share.
- Listen with curiosity and the willingness to learn and change, resist the desire to interrupt.
- Be mindful of the time—if you tend to share a lot, challenge yourself to listen more.
- Suspend judgment. Be open to the wisdom in each person’s story.

For some, the information revealed in Race to Equity was shocking and new. For others, it was a validation of their experiences living and working in Dane County. The report offers, to everyone, a starting point to talk about race, equity, and what can be done to narrow the racial disparities in our community. These conversations will be challenging. They will touch on issues of power and privilege, fear and anger, hopes and disappointments. But these conversations also offer opportunities for reconciliation, growth, and creative problem solving.

It is important that everyone feels welcome and every voice is heard. Please consider using the following guidelines and assumptions as you begin your conversation.

Guidelines are intended to

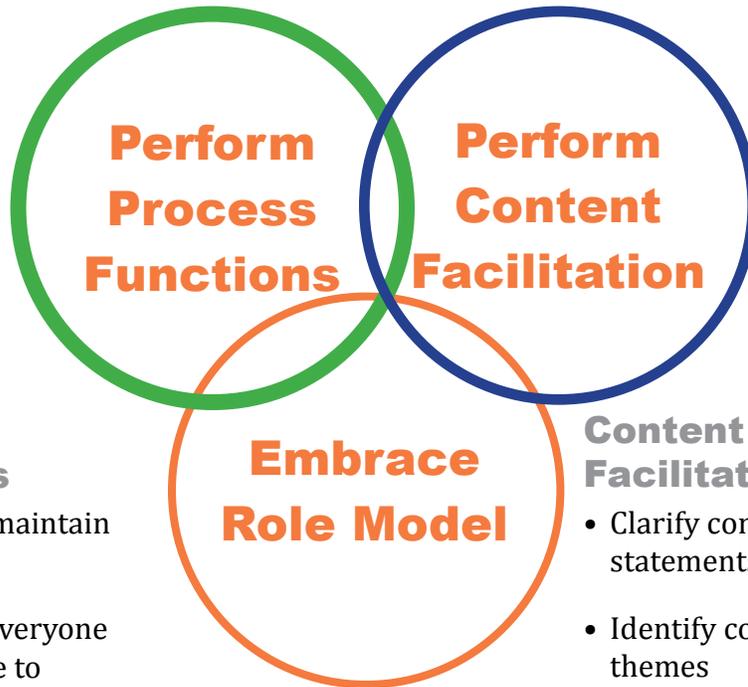
- Promote honesty and vulnerability while maintaining respectful environment. Clarify assumptions about how we want to behave and be treated by others.
- Develop a space where open and clear communication will occur.
- Help participants take responsibility for how they act toward each other.

Assumptions we make going into this discussion

- Racism exists and needs to be acknowledged
- Racism = racial prejudice + power
- Racism is pervasive and complex
- Racism is destructive—it keeps us apart
- Racism has many levels and is manifested in many ways: internally, interpersonally, structurally, institutionally
- Racism is a learned behavior; therefore, racism CAN be unlearned and eliminated
- Individual beliefs and actions can perpetuate inequality
- All types of oppression are interrelated

Facilitation and Discussion Strategies When Talking About Race

Introduction



Process Functions

- Create and maintain guidelines
- Make sure everyone has a chance to participate
- Become aware of emotional climate and power dynamics
- Guide participants to work through conflict
- Keep the discussion on topic when needed
- Be flexible to let the group detour when needed
- Pace and keep track of the time
- Maintain confidentiality
- Always choose questions before judgments

Embrace Role Model

Role Model

- Illustrate with personal examples
- Embody empathic listening
- Stay present
- Connect with participants
- Avoid side conversations

Content Facilitation

- Clarify confusing statements
- Identify common themes
- Summarize ideas
- Acknowledge directions/decisions that appear to emerge from the group

Facilitation Dos and Don'ts

- **Do** listen attentively
- **Do** be prepared for the session. If you are feeling "off," that will reflect in the tone.
- **Do** practice empathy
- **Do** guide conversation back to focus
- **Do** refer to stories that people have shared (in a large group setting)
- **Don't** teach
- **Don't** preach
- **Don't** cut people off
- **Don't** single anyone out
- **Don't** make anyone a spokes-person
- **Don't** monopolize the conversation
- **Don't** allow intolerant speeches

Distancing Behaviors Commonly Used in Discussions of Racism

These behaviors are often used in an effort to avoid dealing with very painful subjects, such as racism. Use these to notice when it is happening and try to re-focus.

Definitions Game: Requests for clear definitions of racism or related terms, usually leading to an involved discussion.

Where are the People of Color? Assuming/insisting that in order to make progress in combating personal racism, we must be in a discussion with people of color. Combined with this is the idea that if there are no or few people of color in a given community, that racism is not a problem.

Racism is not the only problem: Assuming/insisting that racism is only a facet of a larger problem, or that we can't just deal with it; we have to talk about how we are hurt also, etc. While it is true that there are other oppressions, this behavior is often simply a form of resistance to dealing with and focusing on racism.

Being an Expert: Thinking you are an expert on the experience of another race or culture and how to deal with racism. Seeking the "I'm the okay white person in the group" distinction. This leads to intellectualizing and not dealing with the ongoing need to change.

Instant solutions: Oversimplification by choosing and pushing single solutions to racism may be a kind of avoidance and might, even if sincere, be unproductive because it is not looking deep enough.

Find the Racist: Rather than acknowledging that we are racist by socialization and that all white people benefit from racism, it can be easy to focus on the person in the group who is more open about his/her racism, or has intellectualized least about racism, or has thought least about it. Regardless of how much we have done, we still have more to learn.

After I...: Focusing on all of the things which prevent me from acting right now to challenge racism. It will be done when...(some magic occurrence).

Geography: Focusing on places with the reputation for racism, rather than looking to discover how racism is affecting my own community. For instance, in the sixties everyone thought racism only existed in the South. Now, many of us might think it only exists in large cities. In a white-dominated society, racism is everywhere.

You've come a long way...: Focusing on what changes have or may have occurred since people of color began the recent struggle for civil rights, as though to suggest that they should be satisfied. Though we should acknowledge victories hard won, it is important not to discount what still needs to be done.

Race to Equity Presentation and Discussion

Module 1

Outline of Activities

1) 5 minutes—Introductions

Have people turn to one person sitting next to them, and respond to the following prompts:

1. Introduce yourself: share your name and how you identify culturally
2. Share what brought you to the discussion
3. Respond to the following quote: “A community that excludes even one of its members is no community at all.” Dan Wilkins

2) 60 Minutes—presentation from Race to Equity, or view as a group at www.racetoequity.net.

3) 5 Minutes—Introduce the conversation guidelines (see page 4)

4) 10 Minutes—Pair Share

Have people return to their partner. Give them 10 minutes total to respond to the following questions.

- Assuming the problem is the racial disparities, what do you think is the cause of the problem?
- How do you think these gaps affect African Americans? White people? Other people of color in our community?
- What do these facts say to you about our community?
- Do you see what you would expect?
- Does anything surprise you?

5) 20 Minutes—Small Group Discussion

Have your pair join another pair. Discuss the following questions in your small group.

- What has stopped us or what is holding us back from creating a community in which racial equity is realized?
- What are some examples in our community of where we are moving towards equity? What else will help us make progress? What problems will we face?
- What is one thing that we as a group could identify as an area where we could work towards equity in our sphere of influence (school, faith community, neighborhood, workplace, etc...)?

Timing

2 hours

Materials Needed

Race to Equity Report or presentation from racetoequity.net

Framing

This is intended as either a stand-alone activity or as the first in a series of gatherings.

6) 20 Minutes—Large Group Reports and Closing

Bring everyone back to the large group. Ask for a volunteer from each small group to share one area they identified where they could have an influence on equity.

Thank people for coming. Remind people that the work of equity is never done—it is a process. This session was one part of the process, but the work must continue. You can share the resource page (see page 54) to give people ideas of ways to stay involved and/or encourage them to continue to work together.

Close with the following quote

“Utopia lies at the horizon.

When I draw nearer by two steps, it retreats two steps.

I walk ten steps more, it retreats ten steps further.

What is, then, the purpose of utopia?

It is to cause us to advance.”

—Eduardo Galeano

Looking at Our Community*

Outline of Activities

1) 5 Minutes—Welcome everyone and remind people of the Conversation Guidelines.

2) 20 Minutes—Creating Community Values

1. Instruct the participants to write one or two values that they consider important for discussion on an index card. Inform participants that they will have the opportunity to share their value in our circle. They can also choose not to share.
2. Go around in a Circle—consider passing a talking piece. Have each person share:
 - his or her name
 - the value(s) they wrote down
 - why that value is of particular importance to them as they have this type of discussion
3. After a participant shares, they are invited to put their card in the center of the circle.
4. Ask the group to look at the cards in the center of the circle and reflect on the shared values. What values are important for this workshop?

Facilitator Note

The YWCA Madison utilizes the Circle Process in much of our Racial Justice work. Drawn from indigenous cultures, Circles are used in the restorative justice movement to bring together diverse sectors of the community for an open, egalitarian, and respectful dialogue. In a Circle, participants sit in a circle and utilize a talking piece. A talking piece is an object participants hold and pass during the Circle. The talking piece can be any item that has meaning for the facilitator, such as a special stone. When you have the talking piece, you have the opportunity to talk; when you do not have the talking piece, you have the opportunity to listen. The talking piece always goes in one direction around the circle—it does not get passed back and forth across the circle.

The first time you use the Circle Process with a group, introduce the concept of the Circle and the talking piece. Explain that while in circle we all have an equal voice. We are all responsible for the circle. Share the role the talking piece has and remind people that the talking piece only travels in one direction around the Circle. Also make sure participants know that they have the right to pass when the talking piece comes to them. When the Circle has concluded, the facilitator can acknowledge that we will now suspend the talking piece and thank the participants for sharing.

Timing

2 hours

Materials Needed

- *Community Report Card* handout
- *Why do these Inequities Exist?* handout
- *Race to Equity Quick Facts* handout
- Flip chart paper or newsprint
- Markers
- Index Cards
- copies of *The Wisdom of Experience* story

Framing

This is intended as the first in a series of gatherings. The goal of session two is to gain an understanding of the disparities in our community and to consider the impact of these disparities as a basis for future discussion.

*This module is informed by the guide *Facing Racism in a Diverse Nation*. Details can be found in the resource appendix on page 53.

Looking at Our Community, continued

3) 35 Minutes—Creating our Community Report Card

Invite people to take turns reading the statements on the Community Report Card out loud (see page 19). As each statement is read, ask people to think quietly for a moment. Refer back to the information they received through the Race to Equity presentation in session one and review the Race to Equity Quick Facts handout (see page 21). With that in mind, have them write their “grade” on the Report Card handout. Invite people to share their grades with the group. Record all of the grades on the flip chart or newsprint version of the Report Card.

Ask everyone to choose several categories to discuss as a whole group. You probably won’t have time to discuss every category. Ask people how they selected the grades, where they think we are doing well, and where they identify need to improvement. Record current successes and challenges on the other piece of flip chart paper or newsprint.

Facilitator Note

Prepare two pieces of flip chart paper or newsprint ahead of time. On one, draw the Report Card from page 19, omitting the “Section” column, so it will look something like this:

Category	A	B	C	D	F	Q
Education						
Employment						
Criminal Justice						
Leadership						
Social Services						
Media						
Health Care						
Public Works						

On the other piece of flip chart paper or newsprint, make two columns. Label one column “Successes.” Label the other column “Challenges.” Review the grading system.

Looking at Our Community, continued

4) 35 Minutes—Why Do Inequities Continue?

Distribute the handout (see page 23). Invite volunteers from the group to take turns reading each view out loud. Or, ask the group to spend a few minutes looking over the views silently. Then, invite volunteers to read the heading of each view.

As participants read the views, ask them to think about these questions:

1. Which views come closest to your own way of thinking?
2. Which views seem most important?
3. Is there a viewpoint that's missing?
4. Is there anything that you don't agree with?

Give participants a chance to share their responses to the above questions with a partner. Then come back to the full group and discuss the questions.

Facilitator Note

People have many ideas about why inequities exist. We may agree with each other on some points, and disagree with each other on other points. Each view stated on the handout is in the voice of a person who thinks it is a very important idea. It is critical to identify the cause of the problem before trying to think of solutions.

5) 25 Minutes—Closing

The Wisdom of Experience by Tatanka Hunkesi

Instructions: Read the story (see page 25) aloud, then spend 1 minute reflecting quietly on the story. Pass the talking piece and invite participants to respond to the following questions:

- Can you think of an example in your life when you had a shift in perspective?
- Did it lead to a change in your behavior?

Activities to Prepare for Module 3

Read: *Levels of Racism: A Gardener's Tale*

See page 27 or read online at <http://goo.gl/ehJRjH>

Read “Invisible Bias” for background about the Implicit Research Project (now called Project Implicit) on page 31 or read online at <http://goo.gl/uglHvF>. Then participate in the Invisible Bias Exercise at <http://goo.gl/Ow927z>. You’ll start by either registering with the project or continuing as a guest in the Project Implicit Social Attitudes box (see below.)

Continue to the exercise by reading the Preliminary Information, then clicking “I wish to proceed.” Once you are on the page where you can select your test, choose the RACE IAT. You can also experiment with any of the other tests.



The screenshot shows the Project Implicit website interface. At the top, there is a logo for Project Implicit and a book cover for "BLIND SPOT". Below the logo, there are three main sections:

- PROJECT IMPLICIT SOCIAL ATTITUDES**: This section includes a login/register form with an "E-mail Address" input field, "LOGIN" and "REGISTER" buttons, and a dropdown menu for language/region (currently set to "United States (English)"). A "GO!" button is next to the dropdown.
- PROJECT IMPLICIT MENTAL HEALTH**: This section has a "GO!" button.
- PROJECT IMPLICIT FEATURED TASK**: This section has a "GO!" button. A large black arrow points to this "GO!" button.

Intent vs. Impact: Uncovering Unconscious Bias

Module 3

Outline of Activities

1) 5 Minutes—Welcome everyone and remind people of the Conversation Guidelines.

2) 15 Minutes—Community Building

Pass the talking piece around the Circle. Ask people to reflect on the reading *Levels of Racism: A Gardener's Tale*.

3) 30 Minutes—Identifying Levels of Racism

1. Pass out the Levels of Engagement: Situating Discourse handout (see page 37).
2. Read page one aloud in the full group.
3. Distribute the Levels of Racism handout (see page 39). Individuals spend a few minutes reviewing the handouts, reflecting quietly or journaling any insights or questions. What level speaks to you? Which point of view do you relate to?
4. Break into small groups to work on page two. Each group should read the statements and discuss:
 - What level is each student speaking from?
 - How can we work to validate these experiences but still reach common ground?
 - What can you do to be aware of these dynamics in the midst of a difficult conversation?

4) 60 Minutes—Examining Explicit versus Implicit Bias

5 minutes—Give out the Implicit/Explicit Bias handout (see page 41). Ask people to review independently. People can remain in their small groups.

5 minutes—Give out the Dropped Out or Pushed Out? handout (see page 43). Ask for volunteers for each of the different parts. Have the volunteers read the scenario and instruct everyone to be listening for where the different levels of racism may be playing out.

20 minutes—In their small groups, participants will analyze the scenario by identifying examples of individual and institutional bias, and where these examples may have been implicit or explicit.

30 minutes—Come back to the full group. Share some identified examples from each level.

- Individual/Implicit
- Individual/Explicit
- Institutional/Implicit
- Institutional/Explicit

Timing

2 hours

Materials Needed

- Scrap paper
- Pens
- *Levels of Engagement: Situating Discourse* handout
- *Levels of Racism* handout
- *Explicit vs. Implicit Bias* handout
- *Analyzing a Scenario* handout

Framing

This is intended as the third activity in a series of gatherings. The goal is to gain skills in analyzing the different levels at which racism plays out and to deepen the understanding of how to craft policies that target different levels of racism.

Intent vs. Impact: Uncovering Unconscious Bias, continued

Discuss as a group. [Note that different people will put the same example in different categories. Use that as an opportunity to discuss how different people can interpret the same thing differently.]

- Structural racism is where multiple institutions reinforce inequity. Were there any examples of structural racism in the story? If so, what were the multiple institutions at play?
- Review the Race to Equity report or Quick Facts handout. What are some examples of disparities that could be a result of the examples of bias that you discussed?
- Consider the difference between strategies you develop to intervene at these different levels. The facilitator can pull out some examples given in the previous activity for people to consider. How is it different to interrupt individual racism as compared to institutional racism?

Facilitator Note

Some of the disparity data from the Race to Equity report that is relevant to the scenario is:

- 86% of the county's Black third graders tested below the proficiency level in reading in 2012.
- In 2011, Dane County Black eighth graders were more than 4.5 times less likely to be proficient in math than their White peers.
- Over 20% of Dane County's African American students were identified as chronically absent from school in 2011, compared to 2.2% of Whites.
- In 2011, suspensions involving Dane County African American students numbered 3,198, compared to 1,130 involving White students.
- In 2011, almost half of Madison's Black high-schoolers failed to graduate on time (compared to 16% of Whites).
- Black families in Dane County are 15 times more likely to have a son or daughter spend time in juvenile detention than a White family.
- In 2011, Dane County African American youth were 25 times more likely to be admitted to the state's secure correctional facility than a White youth.
- The unemployment rate for Dane County's African American adults was 25% in 2011, compared to 5% for Whites.
- A significant fraction of Dane County's low-income Black households live in isolated neighborhoods that are at some distance from major employment sites and are unevenly served by public transit.

4) 10 Minutes—Closing

Ask participants to imagine that it's ten years from now. Imagine the racial or ethnic makeup of the community. Picture how we will interact with each other. Picture the chances for success people will have. Pass the talking piece and ask people to read and complete the following sentence:

“Ten years from now, I hope my community will be _____.”

Activities to Prepare for Module 4

Read: *The Culture of Power* by Paul Kivel

See page 45 or read online at <http://goo.gl/fDboQc>

Watch: *We Have to Talk About Injustice* by Bryan Stevenson

Online at <http://youtu.be/c2tOp7OxyQ8>

Working Towards Equity in our Spheres of Influence

Timing

2 hours

Materials Needed

- newsprint or flip chart paper
- markers
- note paper
- pens
- planning worksheet

Framing

This is intended as the final activity in a series of gatherings. The goal is to identify the places where we—either personally or as a group—have influence where we could affect change, and to commit to next steps.

Outline of Activities

1) 5 Minutes—Welcome everyone, and remind people of the conversation guidelines.

2) 15 Minutes—Community Building

Pass the talking piece around the Circle. Ask people to reflect on the Bryan Stevenson Ted Talk.

3) 40 Minutes—Taking Action/Becoming Allies

Part One (20 minutes): Participants form triads (groups of 3) to imagine a community meeting that successfully elicits input from the entire community. What strategies would you use in the planning of the meeting to ensure an inclusive process? How would you invite people? How would you cultivate an environment where people feel welcome? How would you create a safe participatory environment?

Have small groups report back, and discuss ideas in the larger group.

Facilitator Note

Part One examples, if the group needs support:

- **Inviting:** might be done through phone calls, in multiple languages, through community leaders that have influence.
- **Environment/Support:** childcare, food, hosts from the community to welcome people, rides for the elderly.
- **Encouraging to speak:** translation, facilitators/speakers that represent the community, leadership training, include members of the community in planning of the meeting.

Part Two (20 minutes): Creating an Interview Protocol

Next, ask participants to count off and form groups of five people each. The task is to create interview questions of potential candidates either for local office or for employment to ascertain whether or not they will work for equity. This could be a potential city council member, superintendent of schools, police chief, a judge, board member of a hospital, or an employee in your workplace. You have a hand in choosing who will represent you or who will be your new colleague. What 3-5 questions would you ask to see if they can adequately represent you and your community? What types of responses would you look for/what outcomes would you seek?

Final Reflection (10 minutes): Call the groups back together, and ask one group at a time to present who they are interviewing, their interview questions, and what they would hope to hear from the candidate.

Facilitator Note

Part Two example questions the facilitator can share depending on what the group came up with:

- Tell us why it is important to you to have diverse representation across race, gender, and class in this institution's decision-making process.
- How will you ensure that happens? Can you give us an example of where you have stood up to pressure to advocate for needs of everyone?
- Where have you taken a stand for justice in the past?
- What are your principles?

4) 45 Minutes—Committing to Advance Equity

We suggest that change begins within. Rather than making an action plan to eliminate racism, which feels impossible and unreachable, we recommend that individuals and groups look at their own spheres of influence—places they have power—and begin in those spaces.

Ask the group “What brought us all together?” (examples: faith community, neighborhood, school, work, etc...)

Once the group identifies your common thread, discuss:

- What is it about our specific community (identified above) that may be perpetuating inequity?

Brainstorm ideas for about 5-10 minutes.

Then look at the list and ask:*

- Which of these ideas is the most important to address?
- Which of these ideas is most feasible to address?

*If time is limited or you have a big group, you can allow people to vote rather than taking the time to discuss and come to consensus.

Once you have identified these top two ideas, complete the planning worksheet (see page 52) for these two ideas to plan for how to move forward.

Facilitator Note

Sphere of influence example

If your group comes together through work, you could brainstorm the following list regarding possible ways our work community perpetuates inequity:

- Hiring practices
- Promotion & advancement opportunities
- Criteria for job qualifications
- Who makes decisions
- Unspoken cultural norms at work
- Monocultural communication & conflict resolution styles

Next, we select *promotion & advancement opportunities* as the **most important** and *hiring practices* as the most **feasible** place to start.

And finally, we complete the worksheet for these two priorities.

5) 15 Minutes—Closing

Pass the talking piece and ask: “What actions might you personally take within your own sphere of influence to work towards equity?” Remember, actions can include talking with others, education, volunteering, etc.

To close this Circle, read the following quote:

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” —Margaret Mead