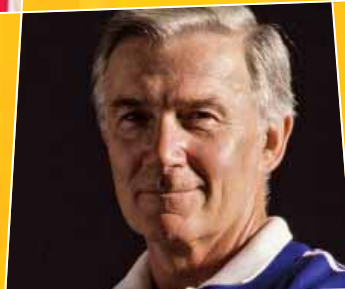




FACING RACISM
IN A DIVERSE NATION





FACING RACISM
IN A DIVERSE NATION





Everyday Democracy (formerly known as the Study Circles Resource Center) is a national organization that helps local communities find ways for all kinds of people to think, talk and work together to solve problems. We work with neighborhoods, cities and towns, regions, and states, helping them pay particular attention to how racism and ethnic differences affect the problems they address.

Everyday Democracy has been helping people do this work throughout the nation since 1989. Our organization has grown — we now have 13 full-time staff members, plus associates across the country and a network of hundreds of communities. We provide advice and training, and then use what we learn to benefit other communities. This work has yielded innovative, effective tools and processes with a proven track record of furthering the efforts of people who are looking for ways to organize dialogue that leads to change where they live.

We want to help you work for long-term change in your community. Please see our website at www.everyday-democracy.org for information about how to create large-scale dialogue-to-action programs that engage hundreds (and sometimes thousands) of residents. Call us for help at 860-928-2616, or e-mail us at info@everyday-democracy.org.

Facing Racism in a Diverse Nation is available in English and Spanish on our website and in print from Everyday Democracy.

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A NOTE TO OUR READERS

Dear Reader,

We want to share some of the challenges we faced in writing this guide. We want to tell you about what went into our thinking and some of the choices we made along the way.

For some of us, it can be difficult to talk about racism. These conversations will touch on issues of power and privilege, fear and anger, hope and disappointment. But they are well worth the effort. We have seen that many people are ready to take the risk. They tell us that honest listening and sharing are powerful forces for making change — in themselves, in their relationships, in their organizations, and in their communities.

It can also be challenging to *write* about racism. We want this guide to help everyone feel welcome in a conversation that takes on tough issues. We are a biracial writing team, and we have worked closely with a team that is ethnically diverse. We have had many honest and hard conversations during the creation of this guide. In the process, we developed even greater trust, deeper understanding of the issues, and an even greater commitment to take on the issues of racism.

As we wrote, we kept coming back to three important issues: the power of language; our commitment to be inclusive; and our commitment to include the institutional and structural aspects of racism.

Finding the best language to help people talk about racism isn't easy. What words contribute to productive dialogue? Should we use the word "race," even though modern science tells us that there is no basis for the concept? How should we name different groups of people? Should we use phrases like "people of color," "minorities," "cultural groups," "ethnic groups"? What about terms like "institutional racism" or "white privilege"?

We know these words mean different things to different people or may be new to some. We decided to use a variety of words and expressions, and we invite you to talk about language in your dialogue. Be open to listening to others. Find the words that work for you and explore labels and descriptions. Talk about the different meaning and impact of the words people use. This guide provides the openings: We hope that you will do the rest of this important work with others in your community.

We also faced another challenge. How can we make sure the discussions aided by this guide will be inclusive? We want to make sure that people from every background feel they have an important place in the dialogue. We listened to the experiences of many groups, including recent immigrants and people of mixed backgrounds. One challenge is that people often think of racism as

just a “black-white” issue. While it is essential to recognize the unique history of African Americans in the United States, racism affects people of all backgrounds. In order to make progress, people from all racial and ethnic backgrounds must have a place in the conversation. We provide a broad range of examples and ask probing questions. Whatever your background, we invite you to speak about your own experiences and to listen as others share theirs.

Finally, we struggled with how to help people talk about the many aspects of racism. Racism is a complex issue that shows up in many ways — in personal relationships, in inequities that appear along racial and ethnic lines, and in the institutions and basic structures of our society. We have dedicated major parts of the guide to each of these ways, and to helping you consider racism from a variety of perspectives. We hope that it will help you work with others to find solutions and take action.

If you are organizing a dialogue-to-change program, the most important thing you can do to create inclusive dialogue is to bring in participants from all parts of the community. Diverse programs offer participants a rare opportunity to explore these issues from a range of experiences and views. Think about diversity in terms of beliefs as well as identity. Include all kinds of people who share your community — European Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, Native

Americans, Latinos, men and women, liberals and conservatives, young and old, rich and poor, recent immigrants, and people of all faiths. While the discussion materials play a key role, remember that the heart of your work is to get the whole community involved, and to show people that their involvement can make a difference.

Since the first edition of this guide was published in 1992, it has been used in thousands of dialogue-to-change efforts across the United States. These efforts have taken place in communities as diverse as Los Angeles, California, and Lima, Ohio. Participants, facilitators, and organizers from all over the country have given us valuable feedback. To all those who have shared their ideas and observations, we say thank you. We have listened carefully, and we have done our best to build on your wisdom and insight. We hope this discussion guide will inspire and support productive dialogue. And we hope that your dialogue will lead to meaningful action and change. We welcome your thoughts and ideas about these materials, so that we can continue to improve them.

We hope that *Facing Racism in a Diverse Nation* will help you create a democratic process where everyone feels welcome and every voice is heard. But the guide is only a place to start. It is when you bring all kinds of people to the table to take part in the dialogue that you will bring the process to life.

**Carolyn Miller Abdullah
and Susan McCormack**

INTRODUCTION

Racism affects every community and every person's quality of life. It shows up in inequities between groups and in tensions among people from different ethnic backgrounds. In order to have healthy communities and a strong country, we need to face racism head-on. In a democracy, there must be ways for everyone to have a voice in finding the solutions and in carrying them out.

When it comes to facing issues of racism, this is a moment of transition in our country. This moment offers new challenges. It also provides new opportunities to make things better.

One sign of change happened after hurricanes devastated the Gulf Coast in 2005. There was an important shift in our national conversation. More people began to talk about the ways that racism can show up — not just in individual attitudes, but in institutions, in public policies, and in the

culture. More people began to pay attention to gaps among racial and ethnic groups in key areas — education, housing, health care, the justice system, and job opportunities. Though everyone does not agree about the nature of racism in our country, people of all backgrounds and political views see that it is a serious challenge.

Another sign of change is that communities across the United States are becoming more and more diverse. Many communities are looking for better ways to manage the changes. They want to create places where all people can thrive. More and more people see that racism is not just an issue for “blacks” and “whites.” It affects all of us — African Americans, European Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos, Arab Americans, those of mixed backgrounds, and those who just describe themselves as “American.”

The Role of Racism in Our National History

It is no wonder that race is important today. Racism has played a key role throughout our history. It has worked against our founding principles of equality and justice. In our history we have seen:

- wars against Native American tribes and discrimination against native peoples;
- the enslavement of Africans and the oppression of African Americans after the end of slavery;
- the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II; and
- discrimination against immigrants.

All of this, and more, comes from the belief that people are inferior or superior based on their ethnicity or the color of their skin.

The struggle for racial equality has also played a key role in our country. Because of individual and collective struggles, there have been many positive changes. The civil rights movement won many important victories. It became a beacon for democratic movements around the world.

Yet, today, problems of racism are emerging in new and complex ways. A growing number of people recognize that racism and its effects are imbedded in our institutions, our practices, and our culture, preventing all of us from having the kind of country and communities we dream of. As we continue to talk about the importance of democracy around the world, issues of race, here at home, present an opportunity to work on our own democracy.

Organizing Dialogue to Create Change

If we are going to make progress in our communities and our country, people from all backgrounds and views must work together to address racism and inequities.

We need democratic dialogue, organized on a large scale, so that people of all racial and ethnic backgrounds can:

- > **Listen respectfully to one another.** Through dialogue, people can share experiences and concerns, and rethink stereotypes. They can understand one another better, and build relationships that help them work together.
- > **Look at different sides of an issue and explore common concerns.** When people learn more about public problems and explore disagreements, they begin to find common concerns. Then, they find out that they can work together, and they begin to solve problems.
- > **Come up with practical ways to address racism and inequities.** Through dialogue, people develop new community networks and new ideas for action and change. Strong, community-based organizing helps them work with others to connect their talk to action.
- > **Take action on their ideas, and test their solutions over the long run.** Dialogue on racism can lead to democratic problem solving on many issues in the community — education, community-police relations, poverty, and others. Over years, communities can begin to take stock of their progress. Some may join other communities — in their state and around the country — to come up with regional and even national solutions.

A growing number of communities are creating ongoing democratic dialogue and action on racism. They are finding ways to involve people from all racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds, all political beliefs, all faiths, all education levels, all income levels, and all walks of life. They are finding ways to move from dialogue to individual change and collective action.

As more of us move ahead with this challenging work, we will find ways to honor the ideals of equality and justice. Together, we can build strong communities where everyone has a voice.

Moving Forward in Your Community

This guide is a tool to help you facilitate community-wide conversations for change. Please, don't just read it. *Use it!*

In 1992, Everyday Democracy published its first issue guide on racism and race relations. Since then, we have helped hundreds of communities, all over the United States, create dialogue-to-change programs. And we have learned a lot about what works. This guide has new features that will help you:

- Create ways for people from all racial and ethnic backgrounds to speak honestly and listen to each other.
- Create ways for participants to see and understand the “invisible” effects of racism.
- Have conversations that are meaningful to “beginners” *and* to those who have worked on these issues for a long time.
- Hold conversations that look at the “black and white” nature of race, and at other ethnic and cultural aspects.
- Look at the national situation and see how it plays out at the local level.
- Take stock of your community's challenges and assets, and create plans for change.

A Dialogue-to-Change Program...

- is organized by a diverse group of people from the whole community.
- includes a large number of people from all walks of life.
- has easy-to-use, fair-minded discussion materials.
- uses trained facilitators who reflect the community's diversity.
- moves a community to action when the dialogues conclude.

Each Small Group Dialogue...

- is a small, diverse group of 8 to 12 people.
- meets together for several, two-hour sessions.
- sets its own ground rules. This helps the group share responsibility for the quality of the discussion.
- is led by an impartial facilitator who helps manage the discussion. He or she is not there to teach the group about the issue.
- starts with personal stories, then helps the group look at a problem from many points of view. Next, the group explores possible solutions. Finally, they make plans for action and change.

These conversations — when they are part of a large-scale, diverse, community program — can be at the heart of long-term change in the culture, institutions, and policies of your community.

Where Will This Lead?

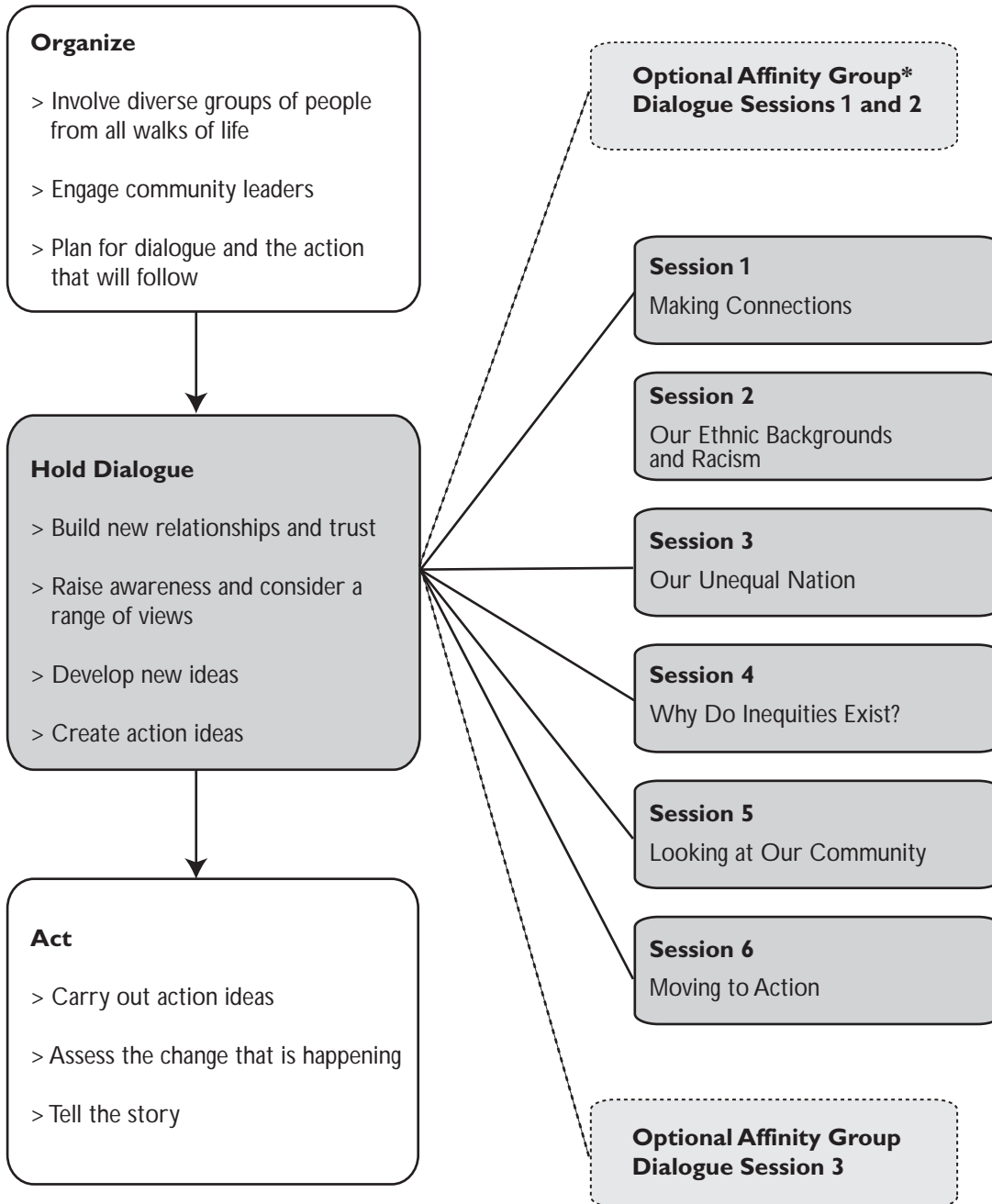
In your dialogue, you will be creating a vision for change in your community. During the last session of your dialogue, you will focus on action ideas. In most programs, these ideas are presented at a large community “action forum.” This takes place after all the dialogues finish. Then, those who want to stay involved will work together with other community members to carry out these ideas.

The results of dialogue-to-change programs differ from one community to the next. Below, you will find examples of outcomes in communities that used this process to address racism.

When you start planning your program, please go to our website, www.everyday-democracy.org, for organizing advice. And be sure to read stories about program results in other communities. You can also call Everyday Democracy for assistance. We can share lessons and results from other communities, and put you in touch with people who are organizing similar programs. Everyday Democracy can provide technical assistance to fit the needs of your community. We want to learn along with you. Working together, we can create new ways to address these critical issues and make a difference.

Examples of Program Outcomes	
Changes in individual behavior and attitudes	Many people have begun to speak out against negative stereotypes. People are more likely to interrupt or question actions that are hurtful to others.
New relationships and networks	The City of Fayetteville, North Carolina, Fayetteville State University, Fayetteville Technical Community College, and the school district partnered to create a new firehouse and a new fire sciences program. Their goal is to bring more people of color into the city's fire department.
Institutional changes	Based on ideas and relationships from dialogues, the city of Springfield, Illinois, changed its hiring practices and is working to create a more diverse city work force.
Changes in public policy	The state of Vermont passed a statewide anti-harassment law. Calls of support from many program participants, from all walks of life, helped make this possible.
Changes in community dynamics	Since 1996, in Aurora, Illinois, at least 4,000 people have taken part in dialogue and action on issues of racism and diversity. The city and many public officials have taken the lead to help create a community where people of different races now mix more easily. Bullying is decreasing in the schools where students, from middle school on up, are involved in dialogue. And neighborhood groups have resolved a range of issues.

Overview of the Dialogue-to-Change Process



* For more information about affinity groups, see pages 42-43

SESSION 1

Making Connections

Facilitator Note for Part 1

- Introduce yourself as the facilitator. Explain that your job is to help group members have a conversation that makes room for all voices. Make it clear that you will not share your own views or stories, or try to push an agenda.
- Refer to page 9 in the discussion guide for an overview of the process.

Facilitator Note for Part 3

- Invite people to share their hopes and concerns. This can be done as a whole group, or one-on-one. For one-on-ones, ask people to turn to their neighbor or to stand and switch partners until they have shared hopes and concerns with several other members of the group.
- Record hopes and concerns on newsprint and post them where everyone can see them.

Let's set the stage for our dialogue. Today, we will share our own stories and views. For many of us, it is not easy to talk about these issues. This dialogue will help us.

Some people will want to act, and not just talk. Our whole dialogue will build toward action and change in the community.

PART 1: Introductions/Who We Are (15 minutes)

.....

Say your name and where you live.

PART 2: Overview of the Process (5 minutes)

.....

Before we begin we will spend a few minutes talking about how the process works. Take a look at the overview on page 9.

PART 3: Our Hopes and Concerns for this Dialogue (15 minutes)

.....

What do we expect from this process?

1. What are your hopes as you begin this dialogue?
2. What are your concerns?

PART 4: Guidelines for this Dialogue

(15 minutes)

To help the dialogue work well, let's agree about how we are going to talk together. We can use the following list to start us thinking about our own guidelines.

- Be respectful.
- Everyone gets a fair hearing.
- Share “air time.”
- One person speaks at a time. Speak for yourself, not for others.
- If you are offended or upset, say so, and say why.
- You can disagree, but don't make it personal. Stick to the issue. No name-calling or put-downs.
- Everyone helps the facilitator keep us moving and on track.
- Personal stories stay in the dialogue unless the group decides it's OK to tell them to other people.

PART 5: Making Connections

(60 minutes)

1. Talk for a few minutes about your racial or ethnic background.
2. Tell a story or give an example to show how your background or experiences have affected your ideas about racism and other ethnic groups. When did you first realize that people come from different racial or ethnic backgrounds? What is your first memory of that?
3. Have you experienced racism or discrimination? Have you seen it? How has it affected you or people you know?
4. How do you think young people see racism today? Compare your views with your parents' beliefs about different racial or ethnic groups. How are they the same? How do they differ?
5. You may have heard family members, friends, co-workers, or neighbors make prejudiced remarks. How do you think they learned their prejudice? How do you feel when you hear people talk this way? How do you react?

Facilitator Note for Part 4

- Help the group members make a list of guidelines for a respectful, productive dialogue. For a start, refer to the list of sample guidelines (sometimes called ground rules).
- Record the guidelines on newsprint, and post them where everyone can see them.

Facilitator Note for Part 5

It is not necessary for participants to answer all of the questions. Some groups may prefer to have a deep discussion about one or two questions, while others may touch on all the questions.

Facilitator Note for Part 6

- After the closing questions, invite a few people to share highlights of their one-on-ones.
- Invite people to bring something to Session 2 that represents their racial or ethnic background. This can be a picture or drawing, a poem, food, or music to share with the group.

PART 6: Closing (10 minutes)

Turn to your neighbor and discuss the following.

1. How did it feel to take part in this conversation? Did you hear any common themes?
2. Talk about how the dialogue went. Is there anything you would like to change for the next session?

For Next Time:

Bring an item to share with the group. It should be something that tells about your racial or ethnic background. It may be a picture, a drawing, an object, a poem, food, music, or whatever you like.

SESSION 2

Our Ethnic Backgrounds and Racism

Often, we think about racism as something that only affects “blacks” and “whites.” However, our challenges are much more complex than that. Now, we will learn more about who we are and where we came from. We will look at how our background affects the way we relate to each other and to the community. This will help us learn more about the nature of racism. And it will help us work together to improve our community.

PART 1: Making Connections

(30 minutes)

1. Review the guidelines.
2. Share cultural items.
 - Describe what you brought.
 - Why did you choose it?
 - What does it say about your background and who you are today?
3. What do the things we brought have in common? Where are there differences?

PART 2: Case Studies (60 minutes)

The case studies on the next page will help us talk about ethnic and racial conflicts. Read the list of cases and choose a few to discuss.

1. Which cases stand out for you? Why do you think people acted the way they did?
2. Do the same things go on in our community? Tell a story about how this has happened to you or your family. Why is it important to you?

Facilitator Note for Part 1

Post and review the discussion guidelines from Session 1.

Facilitator Note for Part 2

Read all the case studies out loud, OR invite volunteers from the group to take turns reading them. Let the group know that there probably won't be time to discuss all of the case studies. Ask members of the group to pick a few to discuss.

Case Studies

Case 1

A Latina speaks English with an accent. She feels that her co-workers don't take her seriously.

Case 2

In one diverse neighborhood, families struggle to make ends meet. People who just came from other countries move in. They get lots of attention and help from the community. The long-time neighbors are angry because their own needs aren't being met.

Case 3

A white person who wants to be on the police force is not hired. A person of color with the same scores on the test gets the job.

Case 4

An African American couple tells their children to be extra careful at the shopping mall. They remind the children to stay together. They also tell them to keep receipts for everything they buy.

Case 5

The leaders of a multi-cultural fair are upset. They invited a community member of Sioux descent to perform a native ceremony, but he refused.

Case 6

After a terrorist attack is in the news, a man who is from the Middle East cancels his travel plans. He is afraid of being bullied by airport guards.

Case 7

A loan officer at a local bank often refuses to make loans to people of color. This happens even when they have good credit ratings.

Case 8

A white couple is walking to their car after seeing a late movie. They see a group of young black men coming toward them. The couple crosses the street.

Case 9

On an Internet chat room, a group of students makes racial insults about a classmate.

Case 10

A man enters a neighborhood store. He feels that the manager, who is from a different ethnic group, is keeping an eye on him. He thinks the manager doesn't trust him.

Case 11

A European American man is upset that most of the newspapers at his local newsstand are in Spanish.

Case 12

An Asian American student feels pressure from teachers and other students. They expect her to be at the top of her class in every subject.

Case 13

A town manager hires a Latina. Her job is to work with the town office and the growing Latino community. Some African Americans wonder why no one has been hired to address their needs.

Case 14

A Vietnamese woman, who doesn't speak English, is very ill. Her doctor thinks she may die. He asks the woman's child, who speaks Vietnamese and English, to tell her mother how sick she is.

PART 3: Understanding Key Words (20 minutes)

Let's talk about words that people often use when they discuss these issues. Using the case studies, talk about what these words mean to you.

Racism

Institutional Racism

Discrimination

Stereotyping

Prejudice

PART 4: Closing (10 minutes)

Turn to your neighbor. Discuss the following.

1. How is the dialogue going so far? What is most interesting?
2. What have you heard that inspires you? What have you heard that concerns you?

For Next Time:

Watch TV, listen to the radio, or read the newspaper. Look for examples of the words we talked about. Also, watch for signs of progress.

Facilitator Note for Next Time

For next week's session, the group will take part in an activity about advantages and disadvantages based on race or ethnicity. Before the group meets, pick one of the two activities in Session 3. Pick the one that you think will work best for the group. If you select Activity 1, bring a ball of yarn or string for the group to use.

Facilitator Note for Part 3

- List the following words on newsprint: "Racism," "Institutional Racism," "Discrimination," "Stereotyping," "Prejudice."
- Record the group's key ideas next to the words.
- If more information is needed, invite volunteers from the group to bring definitions of the words to the next session.

Facilitator Note for Part 4

After the closing questions, invite a few people to share highlights of their one-on-ones.

SESSION 3

Our Unequal Nation

Facilitator Note for Part 1

- Post and review the guidelines.
- Post the definitions of “Institutional Racism,” etc., from Part 3 of Session 2.
- After the group has discussed the questions, ask if they would like to add anything to their definitions.

Facilitator Note for Part 2

- Let the group know which activity they will be doing.
- After the activity, it might be helpful to take a five-minute break before moving on to Part 3, “Looking at Inequities in Our Country.”

Even though there has been some progress, important gaps still exist. Before we talk about what we can do, let’s learn more about what is happening in our country. Then, we will have a better idea of how to make progress — as a country, and in our own community.

PART 1: Making Connections (20 minutes)

Discuss the following.

1. What examples of institutional racism or prejudice did you find since our last meeting?
2. What examples of progress did you find?

PART 2: Deepening Our Understanding (50 minutes)

Interacting with people from other groups can help us understand one another. But, even when we have the chance to talk and work together, it’s hard to know what it’s like to walk in another person’s shoes.

The following two activities are designed to show how gaps often occur based on skin color or ethnic background. We will do one of the activities and then talk about it.

Activity 1: Move Forward, Move Back

Section A of this activity shows some of the advantages and disadvantages related to skin color or ethnic background. Section B will help us talk about where there has been progress.

This activity works best when:

- The group has built some understanding and trust over the first two sessions.
- The group is racially and ethnically mixed, and most participants have a family history in this country for several generations. It may not work as well when you have a majority of youth or recent immigrants.
- The facilitator is experienced with group processes and race work.
- The facilitator has the skills to manage strong emotions that participants may feel and/or express.
- The facilitator has been trained to introduce and debrief this exercise.

Facilitator Note for Activity 1

This activity should be conducted in a large open area where participants can move around easily.

- Ask participants to stand and form a line in the middle of the room. They should be touching shoulders with the people on both sides. (Use your judgment about asking people to stand so close together. If you think this would be awkward for the group, another way to do this is to ask everyone to hold a short piece of string with the person next to them. As the activity progresses, they will hold the string for as long as possible, dropping it when they are too far apart to hold onto it.) If participants are not able to take a step (for example, if they are in a wheelchair), invite them to “move forward or back.”
- Read the statements in Section A to the group. Participants will respond according to what is true for them — that is, they will step forward, or step back. If the statement doesn’t apply, participants will stand still.
- Give people time to think before they move.
- Ask people to observe how others move as you read the statements.
- Advise people that, if their parents’ experiences were different, they should do this activity with one parent in mind.
- Let participants know that this activity may bring up strong emotions, and that’s OK. Let them know that they will have a chance to talk about how they feel at the end of the activity.

About this Activity

Activity 1 is used by many trainers in the anti-racism field to show how long-term accumulation of advantages based on skin color or ethnic background can produce gaps among groups. Many people who have participated in dialogue-to-change efforts on racism have added this exercise to their dialogues because it adds to their knowledge of the impact of racism. This is a starting point for dialogue about how we can address these gaps.

Let's begin...

Form a line in the middle of the room. The facilitator will read a series of statements. Think about how the statements apply to you. Then, take one step forward, stand still, or take one step back.

SECTION A

- If you were ever called names because of your race or ethnic culture, take one step back.
- If your relatives (or ancestors) could not go to a college or university because of their race, take one step back.
- If you expect an inheritance from a family member (property, cash), take one step forward.
- If your relatives (or ancestors) were detained and held during World War II, take one step back.
- If you often see people of your race or ethnic group playing heroes or heroines on TV or in movies, take one step forward.
- If you often see people of your race or ethnic group in negative roles on TV, or in the movies, take one step back.
- If you have at least one parent who earned a Master's or Ph.D. degree, take one step forward.
- If you had a relative or family member who was beaten because of their race, take one step back.
- If U.S. laws prevented members of your race from voting, take one step back.
- If most of your teachers were from the same racial or ethnic background as you, take one step forward.
- If you come from racial groups that have ever been considered by scientists as "inferior," take one step back.
- If you see people from your racial or ethnic group as CEOs in most Fortune 500 companies, take one step forward.
- If your relatives (or ancestors) were forced to come to the U.S., take one step back.
- If you believe you have been harassed by the police because of your skin color, take one step back.
- If your parents spoke English as a first language, take one step forward.
- If you believe you have been treated with distrust — followed by the mall police or a clerk in a store — because of your skin color, take one step back.

- If a relative (or ancestor) was lynched, take one step back.
- If you had a parent who inherited wealth, take one step forward.
- If you, or a relative, have been questioned or detained since the September 11th attacks, take one step back.
- If your school textbooks strongly reflected your racial or ethnic group, take one step forward.
- If your ancestors' land was made part of the U.S., take one step back.

Debriefing Section A:

Stand in place where you are. Look around and see where others are.

Turn to two or three others who are closest to you and talk a little about how you are feeling.

As a whole group, discuss the following questions:

- What patterns, if any, did you notice about where everyone ended up in the room?
- At what point did you stop touching shoulders or have to let go of your connection with your neighbors?
- Why did people end up where they are?
- When you think about where everyone ended up, what does this say about our country? What might this mean for our community?

Facilitator Note for Debriefing Section A and Setting Up Section B

- After the last statement in Section A is read, ask people to freeze in place and notice where everyone is standing.
- After people discuss the questions for Section A, have them form a large circle.
- As you read the statements in Section B, invite people to step forward toward the center of the circle if the statement applies to them.
- Debrief Section B of this activity, using the questions provided.

Let's move on.

Form a circle. The facilitator will read a series of statements in Section B. Step forward if the statements apply to you. Otherwise, stand still.

SECTION B

- If you have spoken up to defend the rights of people who are not from your own background, take one step forward.
- If you have access to opportunities that were not available to your parents, take one step forward.
- If you live in a racially or ethnically diverse community, take one step forward.
- If you have worked to defend your racial or ethnic group, take one step forward.
- If you or your parents supported the civil rights movement, take one step forward.
- If you or your parents attended a racially diverse high school, take one step forward.
- If you attended a college or university noted for its diversity, take one step forward.
- If you have adopted, married or provided care for others who are not from your own racial or ethnic background, take one step forward.
- If you have participated in programs or activities that deal with issues of racism or inequities, take one step forward.

Debriefing Section B:

1. What did you notice about where people ended up after the second part of this activity?
2. How does it feel to have gone through this experience?

Activity 1, "Move Forward, Move Back," is adapted from exercises developed by Paul Kivel, Martin Cano, and Jona Olsson.

Activity 2: Opportunities and Challenges

This is another activity that shows how challenges and opportunities are tied to racial and ethnic groups. Break into small affinity groups and answer the following questions:

Facilitator Note for Activity 2

- Ask people to divide into groups along racial or ethnic lines (“affinity groups”). If there is only one person from a particular racial or ethnic group, offer a choice: They may answer the questions on their own, OR they may join any group they like and make comments after hearing what the group has to say.
- Give each group 30 minutes to talk about the following questions.
- Bring the whole group back together for 20 minutes and invite them to share the highlights of their conversations with each other.

1. Is your racial or ethnic group the largest one in your community? How about in our country? If so, how do you think this affects you?
2. Does your racial or ethnic group make up a small number of people in our community? In our country? If so, how do you think this affects you?
3. What challenges have you or your group faced that are directly related to your background?
4. What opportunities do you or your group have that are directly related to your background?
5. What challenges do people from other backgrounds face?
6. What opportunities do people from other backgrounds have?

PART 3: Looking at Inequities in Our Country (30 minutes)

In many ways, we have made progress. At the same time, there are still people in our country who are behind in areas like education, health, and employment. Let's look at data that shows us some examples of gaps among groups in our country.

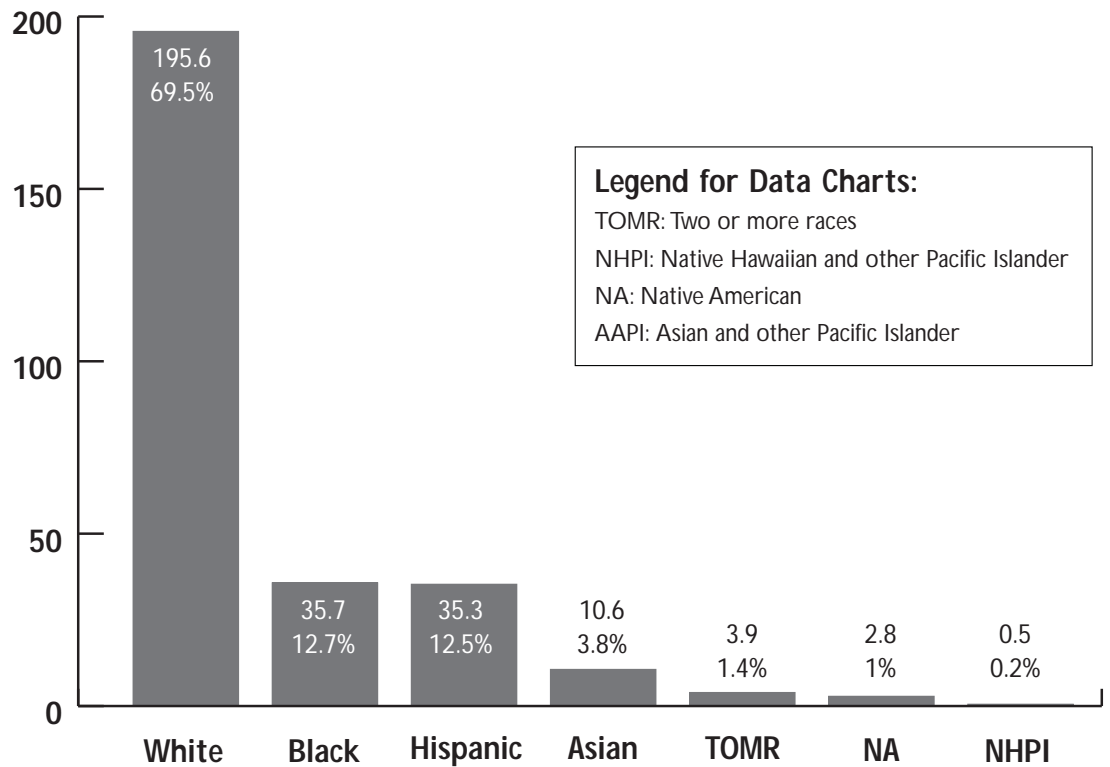
Discuss these questions:

1. From what you have seen, what are the biggest gaps among people from different racial or ethnic groups? What are the hardest to overcome?
2. When you look at the data, do you see anything that surprises you?
3. How do you think these gaps affect people? Our country?

U.S. RESIDENT POPULATION: 2000

Source: U.S. Census 2000 Data *

281.4 Million



Legend for Data Charts:
 TOMR: Two or more races
 NHPI: Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander
 NA: Native American
 AAPI: Asian and other Pacific Islander

(Statistical Abstracts 2006, Table 14)

* Percentages will not add up to 100% due to rounding; total figures will not add to 100% due to double counting of some people.

Facilitator Note for Part 3

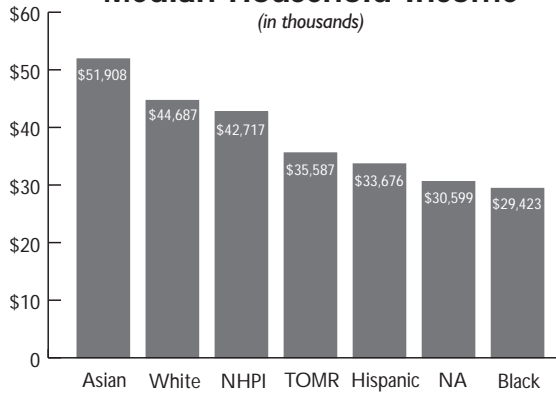
- Help people keep their focus on the big picture — remind them that the data is a springboard for discussion. There will always be exceptions, but the data offers a useful snapshot of what is happening nationally. If people start to debate the statistics, encourage them to check the sources and invite them to do their own research between sessions. Later, they can share what they've learned with the group.
- Explain that there are many different ways to think about why these inequities exist. Let the group know that they will have a chance to discuss this during the next session.

CHARTS ILLUSTRATING GAPS AMONG RACIAL & ETHNIC GROUPS

Source: U.S. Census 2000 Data

Median Household Income

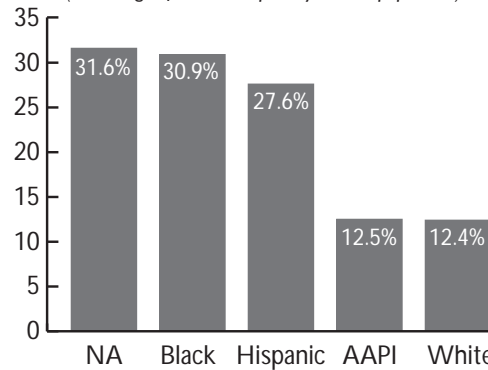
(in thousands)



(Statistical Abstracts 2006, Table 672)

Childhood Poverty Rates

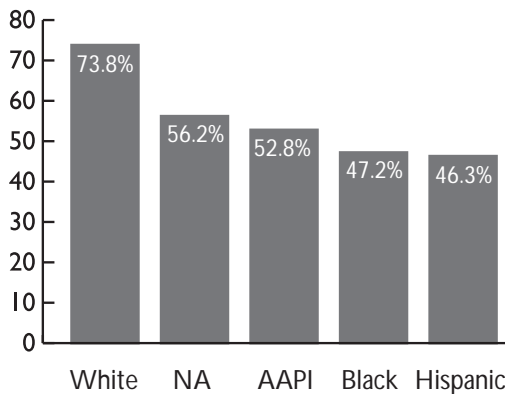
(Percentage of children in poverty in each population)



(American FactFinder; Statistical Abstract 2006, Table 694)

Home Ownership Rates

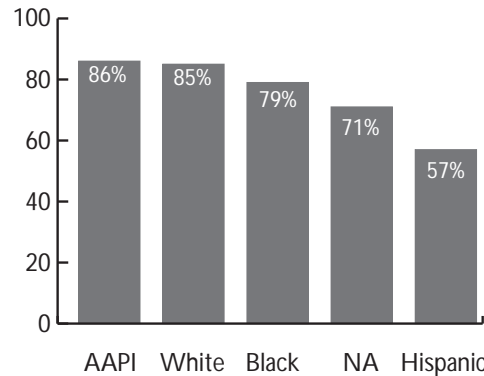
(Percentage of homeowners in each population)



(Housing Vacancies & Homeownership Annual Statistics: 2004, Table 20)

High School Graduation Rates

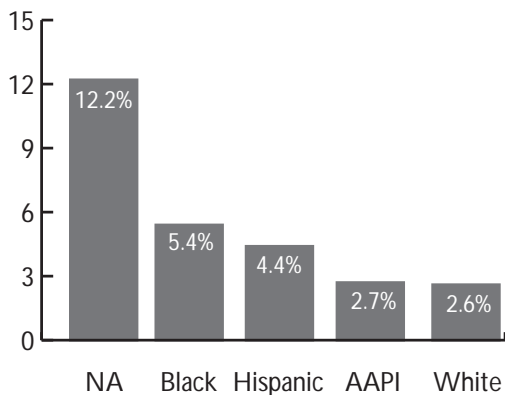
(Percentage of graduates, including equivalency, in each population)



(American FactFinder; Statistical Abstracts 2006, Table 214)

Unemployment Rates

(Percentage of unemployed in each population)



(American FactFinder; Statistical Abstracts 2006, Table 615)

Legend for Data Charts:

TOMR: Two or more races

NHPI: Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander

NA: Native American

AAPI: Asian and other Pacific Islander

Facilitator Note for Part 4

- After the closing questions, invite a few people to share highlights of their one-on-ones.
- List "Signs of Progress" on newsprint (please see question two).
- **Reminder:** During Part 3 of Session 4 (page 28), participants will be looking at a **Community Fact Sheet**. Get copies of the fact sheet from your local program organizers to share with participants (You may also wish to refer to "How to Make and Use a Community Fact Sheet," on page 41).

PART 4: Closing (20 minutes)

.....

Turn to your neighbor. Talk about the following.

1. How did this session go?
2. Where have we made progress in closing the gaps? What will it take to keep making progress?

For Next Time:

When you watch TV, listen to the radio, or read the newspaper, look for examples of inequities. Also, watch for signs of progress.

SESSION 4**Why Do Inequities Exist?**

There are many ideas about why gaps exist among different groups of people. We will discuss some of these ideas and learn more about the nature of the problem. We will also look at what is happening locally. This will help us get ready to move to action.

PART 1: Making Connections

(20 minutes)

Talk about these questions.

1. Have you seen or heard any stories in the media (TV, radio, newspaper, Internet) that show inequities among people from different backgrounds?
2. Have you seen any signs of progress?

PART 2: Why Do Inequities**Continue?** (60 minutes)

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. That is OK.

Each view stated on the next page is in the voice of a person who thinks it is a very important idea. As you read the views, 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?

**Facilitator Note
for Part 2**

- Read all the views aloud, or invite volunteers from the group to take turns reading them. Or, ask the group to spend a few minutes looking over the views silently. Then, invite volunteers to read the heading of each view.
- If all people in the group seem to agree, ask them to imagine what someone with a different point of view might say.

VIEWPOINT 1**Pop culture and the media show negative stereotypes of different groups.**

On TV or in the movies, we see Arab Americans as terrorists. We see Latinos as maids, gang members, or drug lords. African American males often play gangsta rappers or thugs. This is damaging. It makes people think these groups are problems. It feeds people's prejudice and makes us feel hopeless.

VIEWPOINT 2**The effects of our history are still with us today.**

Racism has always been part of American life. When our country began, European settlers kept slaves. They took land that belonged to Native peoples. Our government made laws and policies against people of color. Even after slavery was ended, government favored whites. For example, after WW II, few homes were owned by non-whites. Government housing loans were not given to people of color. Native peoples and African Americans have suffered most. They live with the effects of hundreds of years of racism.

VIEWPOINT 3**Policies based on race are the problem.**

We must stop hiring and promoting people based on their race. We need to move to a color-blind society. We need policies based on merit and not on ethnic background. This is what's wrong with affirmative action. Some resent it when people of color get special treatment. People of color wonder if their success is tied to ability or to some hiring goal. This is bad for everyone.

VIEWPOINT 4**Institutions have racist policies and practices.**

Many public and private institutions still exclude people of color. And privileges associated with "whiteness" are built into the cultures of our institutions. For example, people rarely think about the needs of different ethnic groups when they decide where to locate their businesses. Schools in poor neighborhoods lack resources. Banks make it hard for people of color to get loans. And racial profiling is a big problem in law enforcement. Even though we have new laws, the system really hasn't changed.

VIEWPOINT 5

People of color lack economic opportunity.

Without good jobs, people of color can't move up in society. When big business cuts jobs, it affects people of color more than whites. This is mostly true in our cities, where many people of color live. Cities and neighborhoods with more poor people have a smaller tax base. This means less money for schools and other human services. It is hard to succeed without a good education, housing, and other basic services. Without skills and jobs, there is little to support a family.

VIEWPOINT 6

The government often fails to enforce laws against discrimination.

We have some good laws against discrimination. When they are not enforced, people suffer. For example, it is against the law to refuse to sell or rent a house because of skin color. But many people of color still have trouble when they try to rent, or buy housing. The government should make everyone obey the law.

VIEWPOINT 7

People don't make the most of the chances they have.

There are many programs that aim to level the playing field for everyone. For example, lots of schools and colleges use special admissions tests. They offer scholarships to students of color. Government and business have goals to recruit a diverse workforce. But they often have a hard time finding people to fill the jobs. Some people don't value these chances to succeed. On top of that, there are some people who think of themselves as "victims." They feel defeated by their race before they even try to succeed. The chances are there. People just don't take advantage of them.

VIEWPOINT 8

White people have privileges just because of the color of their skin.

White people don't face what people of color face every day. For example, people don't see whites as inferior or dangerous because of the color of their skin. They can shop in stores without being followed by salespeople. And they rarely fear that government might harass them, rather than help them. The culture and policies of many public and private institutions favor European Americans. Our system gives preference to "whiteness" and makes it harder for people of color.

Facilitator Note for Part 3

Invite people to take a few minutes to look over the **Community Fact Sheet**. (Your program organizers should provide the fact sheets.) See page 41 for more information.

Facilitator Note for Part 4

After the closing questions, invite a few people to share highlights of their one-on-ones.

PART 3: Community Fact Sheet
(30 minutes)

So far during this dialogue, we have looked at some of our own personal experiences with racism. We have looked at what we face as a nation. And we have talked about why these challenges remain. Now we are going to look at what is happening in our community.

1. Look over the fact sheet about your community.
2. What do these facts say to you about your community? Do you see what you would expect? What surprises you? What makes you hopeful? What worries you?
3. How do our local challenges compare to our national challenges? In what ways are they the same? In what ways are they different?

PART 4: Closing
(10 minutes)

Turn to your neighbor. Discuss the following.

1. How did this session go?
2. What views do we agree about? What are things we disagree about?
3. What themes keep coming up in our discussion?

For Next Time:

Take a look at the **Community Report Card** on page 30. If you aren't sure how the community is doing in certain areas, ask others what they think.

SESSION 5

Looking at Our Community

In this session we will talk more about our community. We will also look at some ways to address racism.

PART 1: Making Connections

(10 minutes)

Turn to your neighbor. Discuss the following

1. How is the dialogue going so far?
2. What are your hopes for the final two sessions?

PART 2: Creating a Community Report Card

(55 minutes)

Let's think about how our community is doing. Do all people get a fair chance to succeed? Do people from all racial and ethnic groups have equal access to services?

Facilitator Note for Part 1

Invite a few people to share highlights of their one-on-ones.

Facilitator Note for Part 2

- Prepare two pieces of newsprint ahead of time. On one, draw the **Report Card**, omitting the "Statement" column (see page 30). On the other piece of newsprint, make two columns. Label one column "Successes." Label the other column "Challenges."
- Review the grading system. (See the bottom of the **Report Card** on page 30)
- Read each statement on the **Report Card**, OR invite people to take turns reading the statements aloud. As you read each statement, ask people to think quietly for a moment. Then, if they wish, they can write their "grade" on the **Report Card** on page 30 in their discussion guide.
- Invite people to share their grades with the group. Record all of the grades on the 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. That's OK.
- When you get to questions 4 & 5, under the **Report Card** on page 30, write the key successes and challenges on newsprint, and save for Session 6.

COMMUNITY REPORT CARD

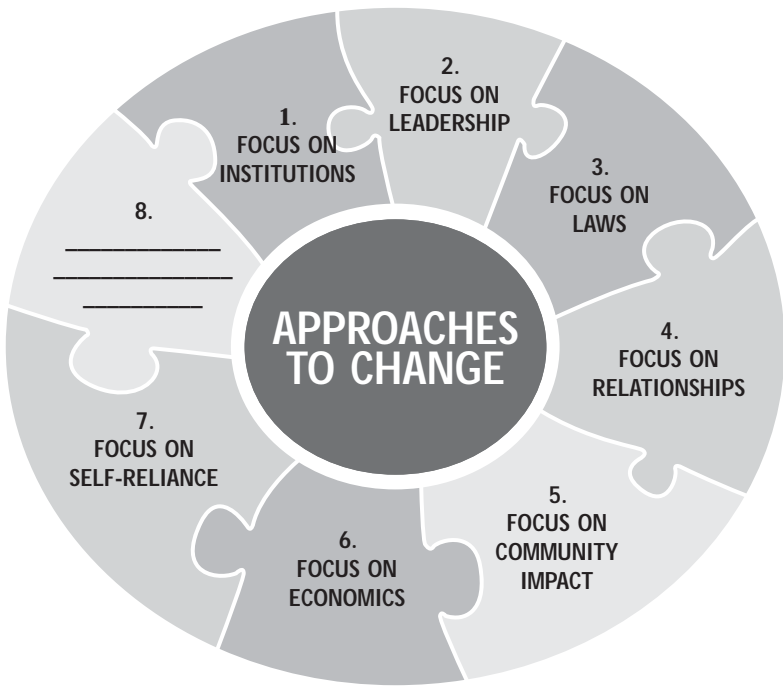
Select one grade for each question

Category	Statement	A	B	C	D	F	Q
Education	In our community, every child receives a quality education.						
Employment	Everyone in our community has an equal opportunity for a good-paying job.						
Criminal Justice	All members of the community are treated fairly by the criminal justice system.						
Leadership	Our community leaders (in government, financial institutions, education, law enforcement, etc.) reflect the diversity of our residents.						
Social Services	The social services system in our community (e.g., welfare, job training, etc.) meets everyone's needs.						
Media	Local radio, TV stations, and newspapers offer fair and full coverage about people from different racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds.						
Health Care	Our community's health care system serves the needs of all our residents.						
Public Works	All areas in our community have access to public services (such as water, trash pickup, and sidewalk and road maintenance).						

Explanation of Grading System

A - We are doing great! C - We are doing OK. F - We have taken steps backward.
 B - We are doing well. D - We've had no success. Q - Not sure.

1. Read each statement on the **Report Card**. Think about what is happening in the community. Then, give a grade for each statement.
2. Look at the grades. Where do we agree? Where do we differ?
3. How did you decide what grade to give?
4. When you look at the report card, what *successes* do you see?
5. When you look at the report card, what are **one or two challenges** we need to address?



Facilitator Note for Part 3

- Give participants a few minutes to look over the approaches.
- Invite participants to volunteer to read the approaches aloud, OR you may read the approaches to everyone.
- As participants discuss the approaches, encourage them to think about the challenges they identified in the last exercise.

PART 3: Approaches to Change
(30 minutes)

We've talked about how our community is doing. Now, we will explore some ways to improve things. What approaches will work well? What will help us deal with problems that showed up on our report card?

1. Have we already tried any of these approaches? If so, what happened?
2. Which approaches do you like best? Why?
3. What other approaches can you think of?
4. Which approaches address racism in our institutions?
5. What approaches won't work? Why?

1. **Focus on Institutions** — Change the practices and policies of community institutions (such as banks, schools, hospitals, courts, or local government).
2. **Focus on Leadership** — Develop leaders who reflect the racial, ethnic, and cultural makeup of the community.
3. **Focus on Laws** — Enforce anti-discrimination laws. Change unfair community policies.
4. **Focus on Relationships** — Bring people together to build relationships and work for change.
5. **Focus on Community Impact** — Before we start new projects, let's assess their impact on all racial, ethnic, and cultural groups.
6. **Focus on Economics** — Help create economic success for people from all racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds.
7. **Focus on Self-reliance** — Support efforts by people of color to build success.

Facilitator Note for Part 4

- Ask participants to share their words with the group. Write them on a piece of newsprint labeled "Our Community's Future." Save this piece of newsprint for Session 6.
- If there are duplications, put a check or star next to the word that was already said.

Facilitator Note for Part 5

Record "Promising Approaches" and "Action Ideas" on newsprint. Save for Session 6.

PART 4: Imagining Our Community's Future (15 minutes)

Now, let's think about the kind of community we want to have.

1. 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. What do you hope might be different from the way things are today? What do you hope will be the same?
2. As you imagine the future, read the following phrase. Fill in a word from the list below (or choose your own word):

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

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| <i>Peaceful</i> | <i>Strong</i> |
| <i>Compassionate</i> | <i>Healthy</i> |
| <i>Fair</i> | <i>Safe</i> |
| <i>Tolerant</i> | <i>Joyful</i> |
| <i>Responsible</i> | <i>Welcoming</i> |
| <i>Prosperous</i> | <i>Ethical</i> |

3. Tell the group the word you selected that describes your hope for the future of our community.

PART 5: Closing (10 minutes)

1. Did we agree on any approaches that could help our community make progress? If so, what are they?
2. What good things are we already doing? How can we build on these?
3. What else will help us make progress? What problems will we face?
4. What action ideas should be recorded?

For Next Time:

Think about the dialogue so far. What were the main issues we talked about? Next time, bring some ideas for how we can make progress.

SESSION 6

Moving to Action

Making progress on racism can be difficult. Even so, it is possible. And taking part in this dialogue is a good step. Working together, we will come up with ideas about how to improve race relations and reduce gaps among people from different backgrounds. We will use our final session to talk about what we can do — on our own, in groups, and as a whole community — to make our community strong.

PART 1: Making Connections

(10 minutes)



What are the most important issues, themes, or ideas that we have discussed during our dialogue?

Facilitator Note for Part 1

- Review this session ahead of time, and prepare several pieces of newsprint. Put “Action Ideas” at the top of one page. (Transfer ideas that have come up in earlier sessions onto this page.) Put “Community Assets” on the other page (please see samples on page 35).
- To help the group review its work, post the newsprint from Session 5: “Successes/Challenges,” “Our Community’s Future,” “Promising Approaches/Action Ideas.”

PART 2: Brainstorm Action Ideas

(20 minutes)



Before you come up with your own ideas, read the **Sample Action Ideas**.

1. Think quietly for a moment. What do you think could help our community make progress?
2. Brainstorm a list of action ideas. Try to come up with different kinds of ideas. Some actions might involve other community groups. Some could focus on things we can do with institutions. And some could focus on things small groups of people or individuals can do.

- Action ideas are things we can do. Be specific. For example:

Instead of suggesting this: “Public services need to be improved.”

Try this: “Meet with public works department to arrange weekly trash pickup along Elm Street.”

SAMPLE ACTION IDEAS

On our own or with others we can:

- Write letters to the editor. Ask for fair coverage of all racial and ethnic groups.
- Meet with hospital officials. Tell them that translators are needed for people who don't speak English.
- Host a multi-cultural event for the community.
- Work on a service project with people in your dialogue group.
- Get to know a neighbor from a different ethnic group.

Working with institutions we can:

- Work with a local bank. Make sure its loan policies are fair to all people.
- Invite area employers to work together to recruit and retain people of color.
- Work with schools to update their policies for dealing with discipline issues and bullying.
- Create programs to help all students succeed in school.

Working with government we can:

- Pass a state law that ends racial profiling.
- Pass a local law so that everyone has good public services (such as trash pick up, or sidewalk repair).
- Pass a city resolution on immigration reform.
- Pass a state law giving former prisoners the right to vote.

Facilitator Note for Part 2

- Read the sample action ideas out loud. OR, invite volunteers from the group to help you by taking turns reading.
- Help the group brainstorm action ideas.
- Record all action ideas on newsprint. Use the speakers' words when recording action ideas.

Brainstorming is a way for our group to come up with lots of ideas.

Purpose: To help us be creative. To come up with many different ideas in a short time.

Guidelines: All ideas are OK. Don't stop to talk about ideas. Don't judge ideas. Build on others' ideas.

How to do it: Anyone can offer an idea. You don't need to wait for your "turn." The facilitator will write down every idea.

Action Ideas		
On our own or with others	With community groups	With government

Facilitator Note for Part 3

List assets on newsprint labeled "Community Assets."

PART 3: Listing Our Community Strengths (Assets) (20 minutes)



Every town or city has strengths or assets. Assets can be people, places, or organizations. Whatever makes our community a better place is an asset. Brainstorm a list of our community's assets.

Community Assets			
People	Places	Institutions/ Organizations	Other

PART 4: Setting Our Priorities for Action (50 minutes)

Most programs end with a large action forum. At this event, people from all of the dialogues prepare to move from talk to action. People share their ideas for change. Now we will choose **two action ideas** to present at the action forum.

As a group, talk about all of your action ideas.

1. How can our community assets help us carry out our action ideas?
2. Narrow down the list. Pick the most important ideas. Think about the following questions.
 - Which ideas really address the issues we've been discussing?
 - Which ideas might have a long-term impact?
 - Which ideas seem most practical or "doable"?
3. Choose two ideas to present at the community action forum.

Facilitator Note for Part 4

- Post the list of "Action Ideas" next to the list of "Community Assets."
- Steps for prioritizing action ideas:
 - Use questions 1 & 2 to help the group talk about the action ideas.
 - Ask people to narrow down the list by combining similar ideas. Invite them to make a case for their favorite ideas.
 - Next, ask people to put a check next to their top three choices on the list of action ideas.
 - Cross out the ideas that have the fewest checks. Give people a chance to make a case for the ideas that are left.
 - Then, ask people to suggest other ideas to take off the list.
 - Repeat this process until you have only **two** ideas left. Ask for a volunteer to present these ideas at the action forum.
- If there are no plans for an action forum, ask the group if they would like to continue to meet to carry out their action ideas. If so, have them exchange contact information, and ask a volunteer from the group to schedule another meeting. Let the organizers know your plans.

Our Action Ideas to Address Racism in Our Community

TOGETHER, WE HOLD THE KEY TO CHANGE

As a group of concerned residents, we've identified these key issues facing our community:

We suggest the following actions:

Our signatures show our commitment to take these ideas to the action forum and work with others in our community:

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has."

— Margaret Mead

Pledge statements adapted from *The Ending Hunger Briefing Workbook* (The Hunger Project, 1984).

Facilitator Note for Part 5

- Urge people to attend the action forum and stay involved.
- If your local program organizers have provided evaluations, ask participants to fill them out before they leave.
- Thank everyone for participating.

PART 5: Closing (20 minutes)

-
1. What have you learned in this dialogue?
 2. Did the dialogue help you understand more about racism? In what ways?
 3. What was hard for you in this dialogue? What was helpful?
 4. What actions, if any, might you do on your own? Is there something you can do in the next 24 hours? In the next few weeks or months? In the next year? If you wish, you can fill out the personal action card on the next page.

My Pledge to Address Racism

I AM THE KEY TO CHANGE

I will talk about what I learned with the following people:

I will ask _____ number of people to join our program.

I will...

____ join an organization working on the issue

____ volunteer

____ sign up for a training

____ do independent research

In addition, I will take the following actions:

Name _____

Date _____

"I am only one; but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but I still can do something. I will not refuse to do the something I can do."

— Helen Keller

Pledge statements adapted from *The Ending Hunger Briefing Workbook* (The Hunger Project, 1984).

The Action Forum

An action forum is a large community gathering that happens after all the dialogues finish. At this event, people present their action ideas and discuss them. Action groups or task forces form to move these ideas forward. There will be many ways for everyone to stay involved.

When programs last a long time, more and more people take many kinds of action. For more information about moving to action, please visit Everyday Democracy's website at www.everyday-democracy.org.

A Sample Action Forum Agenda (Approximately 3 hours)

1. Snacks, social time, music or poetry, and time to read action ideas from each dialogue posted around the room
2. Welcome everyone and introduce the sponsors
 - Review agenda.
 - Talk about the dialogue-to-change effort in the community.
 - Thank facilitators and other key volunteers.
3. Reports from the dialogues
 - Ask one person from each dialogue to make a brief report about action ideas from their group.
 - Or, when the group is large (more than 60 people), post summaries from the dialogues where everyone can see them. Invite a few people to report out on their dialogues.
4. Overview of community assets
 - A person from the organizing group reviews key community assets. These assets will help the community move action ideas forward.
5. Moving to action
 - The MC (Master of Ceremonies) identifies the main ideas from all the dialogues.
 - People sign up for an action group or task force.
 - Action groups meet and begin their work. They also set the date for their next meeting.
6. Closing remarks
 - Closing remarks (including how the action efforts will be tracked and tied to further organizing).
 - Next steps (including plans for another round of dialogues, celebration, or check-in meeting).
 - Thanks to all.

How to Make and Use a Community Fact Sheet

Many programs develop a **Community Fact Sheet** to use along with their issue guides. A fact sheet is “hard data” about how the issue is playing out in the community. It can cover a range of information — from general to specific.

A good fact sheet paints a picture of the community and the issue. It should include:

- data about the community as a whole.
- data that gives examples about the issue under discussion.
- data about what is already being done to address the issue.

Get a diverse group together to think about what kind of information should be in your fact sheet. Include people of different races and viewpoints. Don’t forget to include young people in this process.

Here are a few ideas to think about when you

create your fact sheet:

- Include a timeline of important local events related to racism. Show this data by racial and ethnic group.
- Include data about education, housing, health, jobs, infant deaths, poverty rates, etc. (you can find much of this information at <http://factfinder.census.gov/>).

Keep the information simple, clear, and easy to understand.

Use data to help people stick to the facts when they talk. Keep text to a minimum. Present information that is clear and easy to read. Always show the sources of the data. Simple graphics — such as pie charts or bar graphs — are helpful. You can also use newspaper articles or official documents.

“Affinity Group” Dialogue Information

A number of communities have told us they would like to provide an opportunity for people from the same racial or ethnic group (also known as “affinity groups”) to talk together. In response, Everyday Democracy has developed a three-session discussion guide, *Dialogue for Affinity Groups*. We created the affinity sessions to give people a way to talk about issues that affect their group before and after they join a dialogue with participants from a variety of backgrounds.

Affinity group discussions are not stand-alone sessions. They are designed to go along with a community-wide conversation, not replace it. They are offered, as an option, to people who are already committed to taking part in the dialogue-to-change effort.

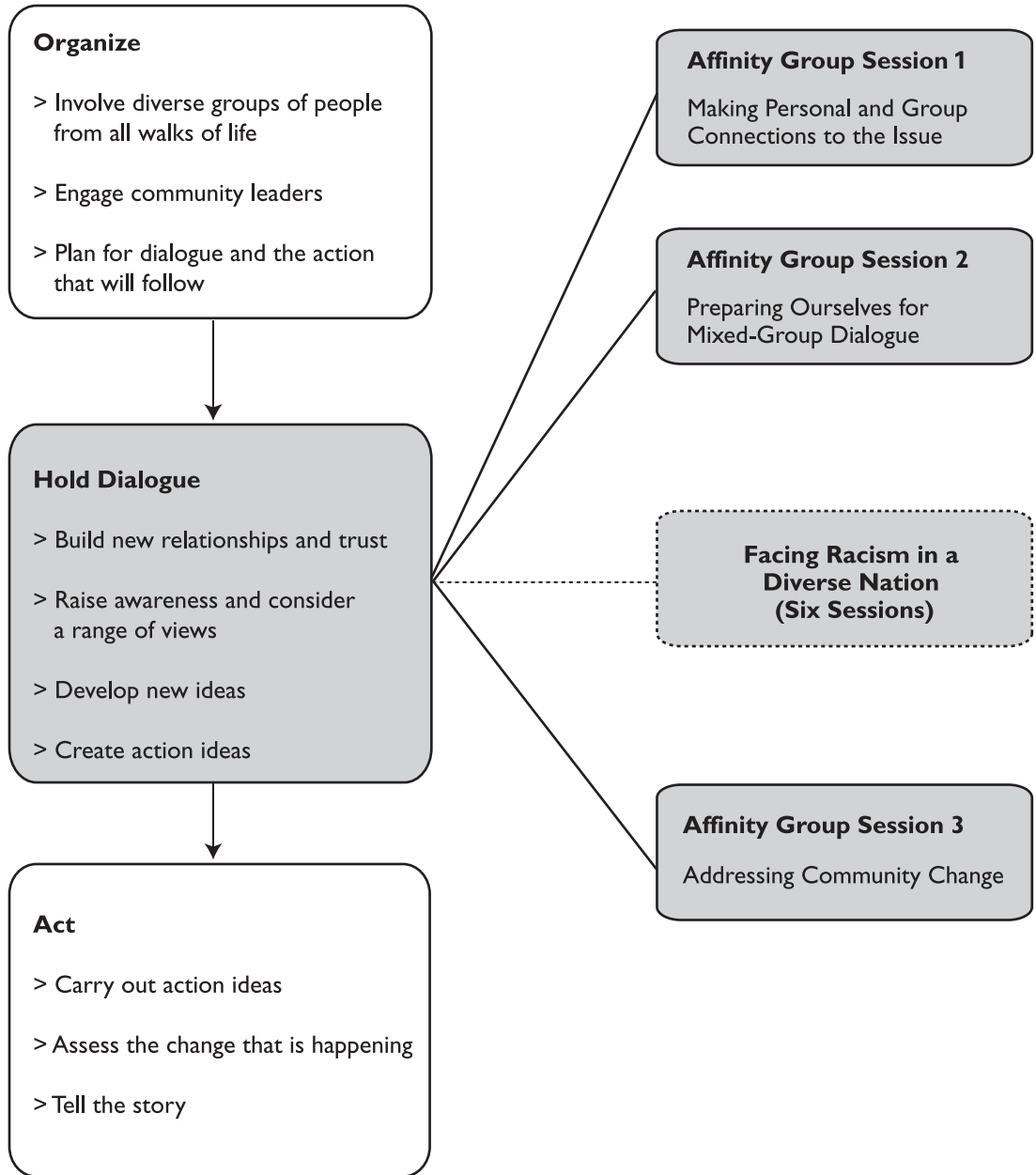
There are three affinity sessions. The first two sessions meet before the community-wide dialogues begin, and the last session happens after the conclusion of the community-wide dialogue.

- In the first session, people get to know one another and discuss issues of particular concern to their group.
- In the second session, group members discuss how they feel about taking part in a mixed-group dialogue and explore ways to bring about community change.
- The final session gives people a chance to reconnect, reflect on their experience in the mixed-group dialogue and talk about action ideas.

Dialogue for Affinity Groups is designed to be used in conjunction with *Facing Racism in a Diverse Nation*. If you would like to offer these discussions in your program, you can download a free copy of *Dialogue for Affinity Groups* from Everyday Democracy’s website at www.everyday-democracy.org. Or call us at (860)928-2616 or e-mail us at info@everyday-democracy.org.

Please see **How “Affinity Group” Dialogue Fits in the Dialogue-to-Change Process** on next page.

Overview of How “Affinity Group” Dialogue Fits in the Dialogue-to-Change Process



Tips for Facilitators

A facilitator does not need to be an expert on the topic being discussed. But the facilitator should be the person best prepared for the discussion. This means:

- Understand the goals of the dialogue.
- Be familiar with the subject.
- Think ahead of time about how the discussion might go.
- Prepare questions to help the group consider the subject.

If you are well prepared, it will make it easier for you to give your full attention to how the group is acting and interacting, and to what individuals in the group are saying.

Here are a few more tips:

Stay neutral!

The most important thing to remember is that the facilitator must not share personal views and stories, or try to push your own agenda. Your job is to help the group members have a rich conversation.

- Set a relaxed and welcoming tone.
- Invite everyone to join in the conversation.
- Well-placed humor is usually appreciated.

Explain the purpose of the dialogue, and help the group set guidelines (also known as ground rules).

The purpose of the dialogue is to talk about an important issue facing the community.

Start with the basic discussion guidelines listed in the first session. Then, ask participants to add their own ideas.

Help the group do its work.

- Keep track of who has spoken, and who hasn't.
- Consider splitting up into smaller groups. This will give people a chance to talk more easily.
- Enter the discussion only when necessary. When the conversation is going well, the facilitator isn't saying much.
- Don't allow the group to turn to you for the answers.
- Resist the urge to speak after each comment or answer every question. Let participants respond directly to each other.
- Once in a while, ask participants to sum up important points.
- People sometimes need time to think before they respond. Don't be afraid of silence! Try counting silently to ten before you rephrase the question. This will give people time to collect their thoughts.

- Try to involve everyone; don't let anyone take over the conversation.
- Remember that a dialogue is not a debate. If participants forget this, don't hesitate to ask the group to help re-establish the discussion guidelines.
- Keep careful track of time!

Help the group look at different points of view.

- This discussion guide presents a wide range of views. Look at the pros and cons of each viewpoint. Or, ask participants to consider a point of view that hasn't come up in the discussion.
- Ask participants to think about their own values and how they affect their opinions.
- Don't allow the group to get stuck on a personal experience or anecdote.
- Help participants see the things they have in common.

Ask open-ended questions.

- Open-ended questions can't be answered with a quick "yes" or "no." They push people to think about their beliefs. Open-ended questions also encourage people to look for connections between different ideas.

General questions:

- What seems to be the key point here?
- Do you agree with that? Why?
- What do other people think of this idea?
- What would be a strong case against what you just said?
- What experiences have you had with this?
- Could you help us understand the reasons behind your opinion?
- What do you think is really going on here? Why is that important?
- How might others see this issue?
- Do you think others in the group see this the way you do? Why?
- How does this make you feel?

Questions to use when there is disagreement:

- What do you think s/he is saying?
- What bothers you most about this?
- What is at the heart of the disagreement?
- How does this make you feel?
- What experiences or beliefs might lead a reasonable person to support that point of view?
- What do you think is really important to people who hold that opinion?

- What is blocking the discussion?
- What don't you agree with?
- What do you find most convincing about that point of view?
- What is it about that position that you just cannot live with?
- Could you say more about what you think?
- What makes this so hard?
- What have we missed that we need to talk about?

Questions to use when people are feeling discouraged:

- How does that make you feel?
- What gives you hope?
- Can the problems that you are talking about be solved in any way? How?

Closing questions:

- What are the key points of agreement and disagreement in today's session?
- What have you heard today that has made you think, or has touched you in some way?

Working with cultural differences

- Awareness of cross-cultural dynamics is important in a dialogue setting. This is especially true when issues of race and ethnicity are a part of the conversation.
- Even though some of the conversation may revolve around differences, set a tone of unity in the group. We may not agree on everything, but we have enough in common as human beings to allow us to talk together in a constructive way.
- Sensitivity, empathy, and familiarity with people of different backgrounds are important qualities for the facilitator. If you have not had the opportunity to spend time with all kinds of people, get involved in a community program that gives you that opportunity and helps you understand cross-cultural dynamics.
- Remind the group, if necessary, that no one can represent his or her entire culture. Each person's experiences, as an individual and as a member of a group, are unique and OK.
- Encourage group members to think about their own experiences as they try to identify with people who have been victims of discrimination — in the workplace or elsewhere. Many people have had experiences that make this discussion a very personal issue. Others, particularly those who are usually in the majority, may not have thought as much about their own culture and its effects on their lives. It might help to encourage people to think about times in their own lives when they have been treated unfairly. Be careful not to equate the experiences. To support participants who tell how they have been mistreated, be sure to explain that you

respect their feelings and are trying to help all the members of the group understand. Remind people that no one can know exactly what it feels like to be in another person's shoes.

- Encourage group members to talk only about their own experiences and cultures. This way, they will be less likely to make false generalizations about other cultures. Also, listening to others tell about their own experiences breaks down stereotypes and helps people understand one another.

Be aware of the ways that cultural differences show up when people from different cultures interact:*

○ **Communication styles**

- Verbal communication — shades of meaning differ (even in the same language) from one culture to another. Volume: shouting may mean a person is excited, not angry.
- Non-verbal communication: facial expressions and body language; personal space (seating arrangements matter!); sense of time; touching.

○ **Attitudes toward conflict**

- In some cultures, people deal with conflict directly.
- In other cultures, face-to-face conflict is embarrassing, and people prefer to work things out quietly, perhaps in writing.

○ **Approaches to completing tasks**

- People have different notions about time and relationship building. In some cultures, more value is placed on getting down to work first, and building relationships along the way.
- Other cultures start by building relationships; then, people are ready to work together to complete the task.

○ **Decision-making styles**

- In some cultures, managers delegate responsibility for decision making to an assistant.
- In some cultures, people value being able to make decisions themselves.
- Sometimes, group decisions are made by majority rule.
- Sometimes, groups make decisions by consensus.

○ **Approaches to “knowing”**

- People in some cultures learn by measuring, and counting — quantifying things.
- In other cultures, “knowing” comes from experience and intuitive reasoning.

Working with groups where literacy is a concern:

- At the start, give a simple explanation of how the dialogue will work, and tell participants the goal of each session. (Each time you meet, restate the goal of the session.)
- If the people in your group can't read, or have trouble reading, limit your use of the flip chart.
- If participants are required to fill out forms, assign someone to ask the questions and fill out the forms with/for them.
- Be prepared to read aloud to the group, if participants are uncomfortable doing that.
- Ask people to rephrase or summarize to make sure everyone understands.
- Avoid using jargon or acronyms. When these terms come up and people look puzzled, ask: “What does that mean?”
- In between sessions, check with participants to make sure they know that what they have shared is very important to the group.

*Adapted from an essay, “Working on Common Cross-Cultural Communication Challenges,” by Marcelle E. DuPraw and Marya Axner in *Toward a More Perfect Union in An Age of Diversity* (Topsfield Foundation and Marci Reaven, 1997).

- Give people extra time to collect their thoughts before they talk. Remember, this may be the first time they have spoken in public, and/or in a different language.
- Consider putting people in small groups, but don't separate people by language groups. (You may need more than one interpreter per dialogue.)

Working with interpreters:

- Remind interpreters that their job is to translate accurately, not to add their own opinions.
- Give interpreters written materials ahead of time, and go over the process with them.
- Make sure the interpreter feels comfortable letting the facilitator know if s/he needs more time.
- Speak in short sentences and keep ideas simple. (This gives the interpreter time to catch up.)
- Pay attention to the interpreter. Even if you don't speak the language, you can tell if s/he is translating everything, or not.
- After every session, ask interpreters to translate ground rules and notes that were posted on newsprint.

Close with a summary of the discussion. Provide time for evaluation, and set the stage for the next meeting.

- Give participants a chance to talk about the most important thing they got out of the discussion. You may wish to ask them to share new ideas or thoughts they've had as a result of the discussion.
- If you will be meeting again, remind the group of the readings and subject for the next session.
- After the last session, provide time for the group to do a written evaluation. This allows participants to comment on the process and give feedback to the facilitator.

THANK EVERYONE!

For More Information

This is a sampling of resources that address racism, ethnic relations, and inequities.

Internet

- **Advancement Project:**
www.advancementproject.org
A democracy and justice action group that works with communities seeking to build a fair and just multi-racial democracy in America.
- **American FactFinder of the U.S. Census Bureau:** ***factfinder.census.gov***
Information from the U.S. Census website can be sorted by zip code or by city/town name within a state or by the entire state. Each category can be expanded to provide even more detailed information.
- **AntiRacismNet:** ***www.antiracismnet.org***
An online resource, including a “portal” that offers information about anti-racism activities to the general public.
- **Artists Against Racism:**
www.artistsagainstracism.org
Teaches youth that we are all one people, regardless of religion, ethnicity, nationality, or skin color. Works to prevent prejudiced attitudes among young people.
- **Black Prof:** ***www.blackprof.com***
A blog that takes a new approach to tackling race and culture, including facilitated dialogue among eight professors and varying guest contributors.
- **CensusScope, Social Science Data Analysis Network (SSDAN):** ***www.censuscope.org/segregation.html***
A resource for doing original quantitative research on segregation by selecting neighborhoods in cities and then analyzing the data on race.
- **Changing the Rules of the Game: Youth Development & Structural Racism:**
www.racialequity.org
A project of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund. Increases resources aimed at combating institutional and structural racism in communities through capacity building, education, and convening of grantmakers and grantseekers.
- **ColorLines:** ***www.colorlines.com***
National newsmagazine on race and politics published quarterly by the Applied Research Center.
- **Civilrights.org/Book Club:**
www.civilrights.org/research_center/book_club.html
A collaboration of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund, providing relevant and up-to-the-minute civil rights news and information. Each month, leaders of today’s progressive movement review five books on topics including voting rights, immigration reform, economic inequality, women’s rights, and educational equity.
- **Race Talks, Multiracial Learning Communities:** ***www.racetalks.org***
Offers operating principles for group learning and for setting up multiracial learning communities — learning environments that encourage people to see their own potential to affect the world around them. Promotes collaborative problem solving on issues, such as race, that create conflict.
- **Research and Action for Change and Equity (RACE), Program of the Western States Center:** ***http://speedy.wscpdx.org/programs/race/***
Supports research, education, and action on race-related issues at the community level. Includes issues research and education; strategic convening of allied organizations working towards racial justice (including immigrant and refugee rights); and focused organizing and organizational support within communities of color.

- **Statistical Abstracts of the United States Census Bureau:** www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/statab.html
A resource for finding census tables that include data ranging from the most recent edition to the historical abstracts compiled throughout the decades.
- **Students Challenging Racism and (White) Privilege (SCRAP):** www.canopyweb.com/racism
Uses various forms of media to develop understanding of racism: how it works on many levels (institutionally and individually); how it functions at the level of everyday assumptions, actions, and representations; how white people benefit from the disadvantages of people of color; and how not discussing or confronting racism perpetuates it.
- **Tolerance.org:** www.tolerance.org
A web project of the Southern Poverty Law Center that promotes and supports anti-bias activism in every aspect of life, helping people dismantle bigotry and create communities that value diversity.
- **Yale Library Research Guides:** www.library.yale.edu/rsc/ethnic/internet.html
A resource for researching ethnic identity.
- **Eyes on the Prize:** www.eyesontheprize.info
Created to serve as an information source for anything that has to do with *Eyes On The Prize*, the critically acclaimed 14-part series dealing with the American Civil Rights Movement. *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years (1954–1965)* and *Eyes on the Prize II: America at the Racial Crossroads (1965–1985)*.
- **Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia at Ferris State University in Michigan:** <http://www.ferris.edu/jimcrow/>
Promotes racial tolerance by helping people understand the historical and contemporary expressions of intolerance. Offers a virtual tour and scholarly and informative essays on racist images.
- **MediaRights:** www.mediarights.org
A nonprofit community website designed to help you use social issue documentary films. Offers ways to find films you are looking for, organize events around a specific film, or make more meaningful films about issues in your community.
- **Public Broadcasting Service (PBS):** www.pbs.org
Holds a collection of videos on race and ethnicity about different groups.

Media/Video/Film

- **California Newsreel:** www.newsreel.org
The oldest nonprofit film production and video distribution center in the country — a leading resource center for the study of race and diversity, African American life and history, and African feature films and documentaries.
- **The Color of Fear:** www.stirfryseminars.com
Film about the state of race relations in America as seen through the eyes of eight North American men of Asian, European, Latino, and African descent.
- **Viewing Race Project, National Video Resources (NVR):** www.viewingrace.org
Gives grass-roots organizations, libraries, and other nonprofits access to the best of independent films and other resources on the subjects of race and diversity.

Organizations

- **The Advocacy Institute:**
www.advocacy.org
Helps social justice leaders in the U.S. and abroad work more effectively for change through training in advocacy skills, networking with other activists, and one-on-one coaching.
- **Applied Research Center (ARC):**
www.arc.org
A policy, educational, and research group emphasizing issues of race and social change.
- **Arab American Institute (AAI):**
www.aaiusa.org
Committed to the civic and political empowerment of Americans of Arab descent. Represents both policy and community interests, focusing on two areas: campaigns and elections, and policy formulation and research.
- **Asian American Justice Center:**
www.advancingequality.org
Works to advance the human and civil rights of Asian Americans through advocacy, public policy, public education, and litigation.
- **The Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change:**
www.aspeninstitute.org
A forum in which people engaged in the field of comprehensive community initiatives (CCIs) — including foundation sponsors, directors, technical assistance providers, evaluators, and public sector officials — meet to discuss the lessons that are being learned in initiatives across the country, and to work on common problems they are facing.
- **California Tomorrow:**
www.californiatomorrow.org
Works with schools, family-serving institutions, early childhood programs, and communities to create a just and inclusive multiracial, multicultural, and multilingual society. Promotes equal access to and participation in major social, economic, and educational resources and institutions, and embraces diversity as a great strength.
- **Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP):** *www.clasp.org*
Works to improve the economic security, educational and workforce prospects, and family stability of low-income persons. Seeks to secure equal justice for all Americans by promoting and protecting programs to expand access to our civil justice system for low-income persons, by promoting racial justice, and by stimulating innovations in the delivery of civil legal assistance.
- **Center for Social Inclusion: A Project of the Tides Center:**
www.centerforsocialinclusion.org
Works to build a fair and just society by dismantling structural racism. Partners with communities of color and other allies to create strategies and build policy reform models to end racial disparity and promote equal opportunity.
- **The Civil Rights Project, Harvard University:**
www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu
Helps renew the civil rights movement by bridging the worlds of ideas and action, and by becoming a preeminent source of intellectual capital and a forum for building consensus within that movement.
- **Committee Against Anti-Asian Violence (CAA AV):** *www.caaav.org*
Focuses on institutional violence that affects immigrant, poor, and working-class communities. Founded by Asian women in 1986 as one of the first organizations in the United States to mobilize Asian communities to counter anti-Asian violence.
- **ERACE:** *www.eracismneworleans.org*
Seeks ways through person-to-person communication to develop a commitment to treating fellow human beings of all colors with love and respect. Promotes dialogue between people of all races to help them live and work together harmoniously and to erase racism.

- **Hope in the Cities:**
www.hopeinthecities.org
An interracial, multi-faith network providing a framework for honest dialogue and collaboration among citizen groups. Works to create just and inclusive communities through reconciliation among racial, ethnic, and religious groups based on personal and institutional transformation.
- **Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race & Ethnicity, The Ohio State University:**
www.kirwaninstitute.org
A university-wide interdisciplinary research institute working to deepen our understanding of the causes of and solutions to racial and ethnic disparities and hierarchies.
- **Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF):**
www.maldef.org
Seeks to ensure that civil rights for Latinos throughout the country are protected through litigation, public policy, advocacy, and civic education.
- **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP):** ***www.naacp.org***
Seeks to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination.
- **The National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ):** ***www.nccj.org***
A human relations organization dedicated to fighting bias, bigotry, and racism in America. Promotes understanding and respect among all races, religions, and cultures through advocacy, conflict resolution, and education.
- **National Council of La Raza (NCLR):**
www.nclr.org
Works to improve opportunities for Hispanic Americans. Conducts applied research, policy analysis, and advocacy, and provides a Latino perspective in five key areas — assets/ investments, civil rights/immigration, education, employment and economic status, and health.
- **National Issues Forums (NIF):**
www.nifi.org
A network of civic, educational, and other organizations, and individuals whose common interest is to promote public deliberation in America. Provides citizens the opportunity to consider a broad range of choices, weigh the pros and cons of those choices, and meet with each other in a public dialogue to identify the concerns they hold in common.
- **National Urban League:**
www.nul.org/contact.html
Devoted to empowering African Americans to enter the economic and social mainstream, and to enabling them to secure economic self-reliance, parity, power, and civil rights.
- **Not In Our Town:** ***www.pbs.org/niot***
Encourages community response (nationally) to hate crimes. Combines PBS broadcast, grass-roots events, and educational outreach and online activities to help communities that are battling hate to learn from and talk to each other.
- **The People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond:** ***www.pisab.org***
Created to develop more analytical, culturally-rooted, and effective community organizers through anti-racism and organizing training.

- **Project Change: www.projectchange.org**
Strengthens anti-racist infrastructures and networks for civic engagement and democratic renewal. Works to dismantle institutional policies and practices that promote racial discrimination; ease tensions between majority and minority groups and reduce inter-ethnic conflict; promote fair representation of diversity in the leadership of community institutions; and stop overt or violent acts of racial and cultural prejudice.
- **Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC): www.sclcnational.org**
A nonprofit, nonsectarian, interfaith, advocacy organization committed to nonviolent action to achieve social, economic, and political justice. Implements national programs such as voter registration, improvement of education, and direct action against racial injustice.
- **Southern Regional Council: www.southerncouncil.org**
Works to promote racial justice, protect democratic rights, and broaden civic participation in the southern United States.
- **United for a Fair Economy (UFE): www.faireconomy.org**
A national nonprofit that raises awareness of how concentrated wealth and power undermine the economy, corrupt democracy, deepen the racial divide, and tear communities apart.
- **William Moses Kunstler Fund for Racial Justice: www.kunstler.org**
A nonprofit organization working for racial justice, civil rights, and human rights.
- **A World of Difference Institute, Anti-Defamation League (ADL): www.adl.org/education/edu_awod/default_awod.asp**
An agency that fights bigotry worldwide through its regional and satellite offices.
- **Young Women’s Christian Association of the U.S.A. (YWCA): www.ywca.org**
Works to eliminate racism and empower women. Provides safe places for women and girls, builds strong women leaders, and advocates for women’s rights and civil rights in Congress.

Readings

- The Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change. *Structural Racism and Community Building* (The Aspen Institute)
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- Glover Blackwell, Angela, Kwoh, Stewart, and Pastor, Manuel. *Searching for the Uncommon Common Ground: New Dimensions of Race in America*. (W.W. Norton & Company)
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- Guinier, Lani. *Lift Every Voice: Turning a Civil Rights Setback into a New Vision of Social Justice*. (Simon & Schuster)

- Hacker, Andrew. *Two Nations: Black and White, Separate, Hostile, Unequal*. (Simon & Schuster)
- Hartman, Chester. Editor. *Poverty & Race*. (Poverty & Race Research Action Council) www.prrac.org/news.php
- Johnson, Allen G. *Privilege, Power, and Difference*. (Mayfield Publishing)
- Kivel, Paul. *Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice*. (New Society Publishers) www.paulkivel.com
- Marable, Manning. *The Great Wells of Democracy: The Meaning of Race in American Life*. (Basic Books)
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- Potapchuk, Maggie. *Cultivating Interdependence: A Guide for Race Relations and Racial Justice Organizations*. (Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies)
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- Shapiro, Thomas M. *The Hidden Costs of Being African American: How Wealth Perpetuates Inequality*. (Oxford University Press)
- Shipler, David K. *A Country of Strangers: Blacks and Whites in America*. (Vintage Books USA)
- Smiley, Tavis. *The Covenant With Black America*. (Third World Press)
- Steele, Shelby. *The Content of Our Character: A New Vision of Race in America*. (Perennial)
- Stone, Rebecca, and Butler, Benjamin. *Core Issues in Comprehensive Community-Building Initiatives: Exploring Power and Race*. (Chapin Hall) www.chapinhall.org.
- Takaki, Ronald. *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America*. (A Back Bay Book)
- Tatum, Beverly Daniel. *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? And Other Conversations about Race*. (Basic Books)

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Ideas & Tools for Community Change

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