

**Leading White Accountability  
Groups:  
Create Racially Inclusive Teams and  
Anti-Racist Organizations, #2**

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**BREATHE, then BREATHE again!**

# **My Intentions**

- **Share some approaches, insights, activities, resources, and experiences**
- **Explore dilemmas and questions**
- **Offer space for whatever else can support folks leading White Accountability Groups**
- **Learn with you**

[\*\*www.drkathyobear.com/leading\*\*](http://www.drkathyobear.com/leading)

**V8: Radio Show on Leading White Accountability Groups, February 2020**

**V9: Radio Show on Leading White Accountability Groups, March 2020**



**As a \_\_\_\_\_, I enter feeling....**  
**(feel free to name your racialized group  
identity(s) and other related group  
memberships)**

# **More ways to co-create the learning container**







# PANNING

## Pay Attention Now

Reference: Elsie Y. Cross Associates “Tracking”

- Notice behaviors and practices
- With an Equity/Inclusion Lens, by Group Membership
- Describe the “facts” of what you PAN, notice
- Without Judgment, Interpretation or Assumption
- Pay attention to patterns of behaviors, impact, and outcomes



# **PAN Dynamics at the **GROUP LEVEL****

- **Who is talking? Who doesn't speak as often as others? Or at all?**
- **How are people reacting nonverbally?**
- **Whose ideas get considered?**
- **Whose ideas are discounted? Or “plop” without comment?**
- **Who interrupts others? Who gets interrupted? Who is never interrupted?**
- **How much air-time do people take?**
- **Who has changed their way of engaging recently?**
- **Who looks at who at different moments?**

# **Equal Justice Initiative (EJI.org)**

## **2023 Calendar**

**1930: white neighbors thrown bricks, fire gunshots and use iron bars to smash house windows where 6 Black college students, Greeley, CO**

**1912: white prisoners lynch a Black man, Wyoming State Prison**

**1916: white mob lynches William Spencer**

**1920: white mob lynches 4 Black men in Fla**

**2009: A Louisiana justice of the peace refuses to marry an interracial couple**

**1963: State troopers join local deputies in beating and using cattle prods to shock 350 Black citizens in line to register to vote, Selma, AL**

# **Common Concerns & Fears in White Accountability Groups Sessions**

- 1. Say something offensive**
- 2. My biases could show**
- 3. Hurt relationships**
- 4. Hurt my reputation; Lose credibility**
- 5. Make a career-impacting move; Experience repercussions**
- 6. People will see how little competence I have**
- 7. Hurt or disappoint others**
- 8. Realize I have more biases and unproductive behaviors than I believed**
- 9. Drop out if this gets hard**
- 10. Conversations will get out of control**
- 11. Will I be disappointed?**
- 12. Will I experience microaggressions?**

# **Common Problematic Behaviors of Participants in Discussions About Race and Racism**

- 1. White savior**
- 2. Distance ourselves from white participants**
- 3. Compete to be the “best white”**
- 4. “Find the racist” in the room**
- 5. Get defensive if confronted, PLEs (Perfectly Logical Explanations)**
- 6. Critiquing white leaders & change agents ~ social justice elitism**
- 7. Stuck in our heads**
- 8. Here is how to fix it!**
- 9. All talk, no behavior change, learning**
- 10. Drop out**



**What types of *Engaging Guidelines* could help minimize concerns, unproductive behaviors, and enhance our collective learning, unlearning, and healing?**

# Engaging Guidelines

1. Open and honest communication; **anticipate impact** on others before you speak
2. **Participate fully (beyond comfort zone); Expect discomfort if learning**
3. Speak from personal experience
4. **Listen respectfully; Listen to learn**
5. Seek to understand; Expect disagreement & listen harder
6. **Share airtime: Move in, move out**
7. Be fully present
8. **Be open to new perspectives**
9. Explore & take responsibility for impact; acknowledge intent
10. **Expect people to learn and grow; don't freeze-frame others**
11. Take risks; Lean into discomfort; Be brave; Engage
12. **Respect, maintain confidentiality**
13. Notice/describe what you see happening in the group, in you
14. **Recognize your hot buttons; Share if you feel triggered**
15. Trust that dialogue will take us to deeper levels of understanding
16. **Engage & embrace this opportunity; We won't be finished**

# What would help you be more authentic, engaged, and open to learning and unlearning?

Individually, review the *Engaging Guidelines* and **identify**, which ones:

- Will help you engage in **authentic dialogue & learning?**
- Are easy for you in this group?
- May be a stretch for you in this group; any concerned about?
- **Any additional ones? Wonders about any of these?**

**How can we navigate hierarchical,  
supervisory relationships in the  
group?**



What can you do if **you hit a hot button,**  
**feel triggered** in our sessions?













## Common Unproductive Reactions

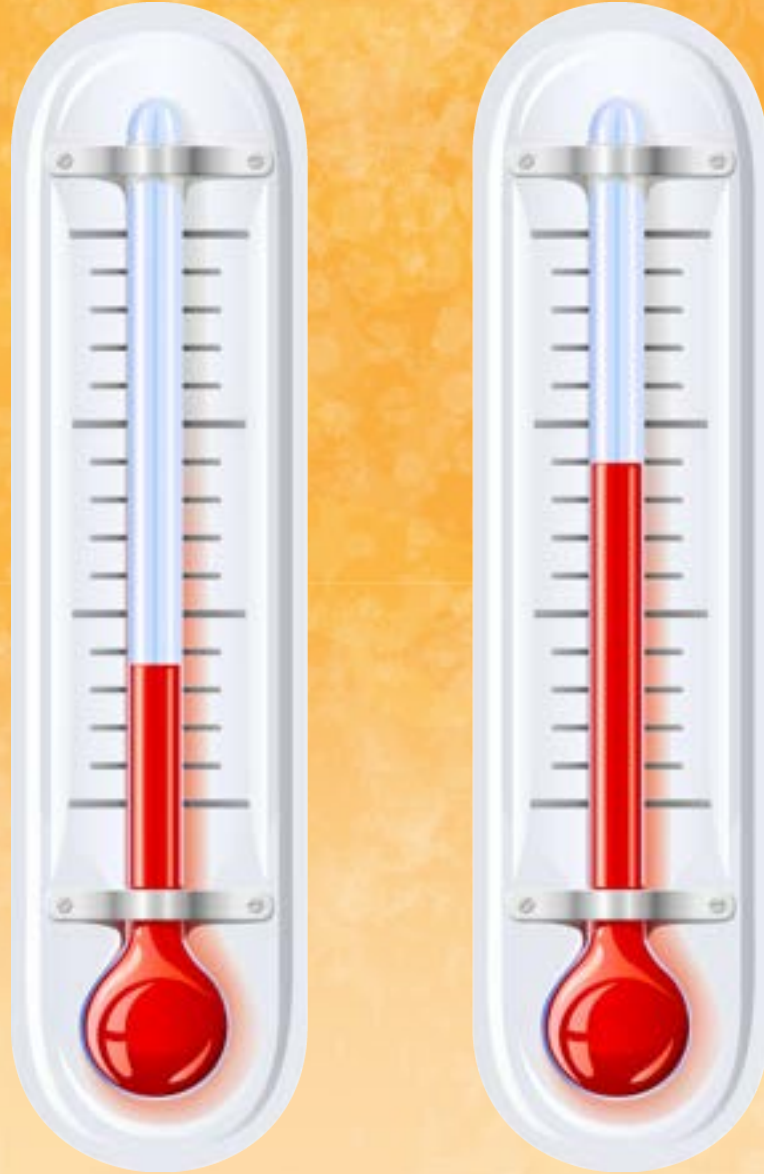




**What can we do when...**

# **Dialogue Tools to Broaden the Conversation if You Need Time to Re-Center:**

- **What do others think?**
- **Let's hear from those who haven't shared lately....**
- **Who has some additional ideas or perspectives?**
- **Let's take a moment to reflect on our current dynamics...**
- **I need a moment to pause... to reflect...**





***BREATHE***



**It's not what  
you look at  
that matters,  
it's what you see.**

**Henry David Thoreau**



*adorable*



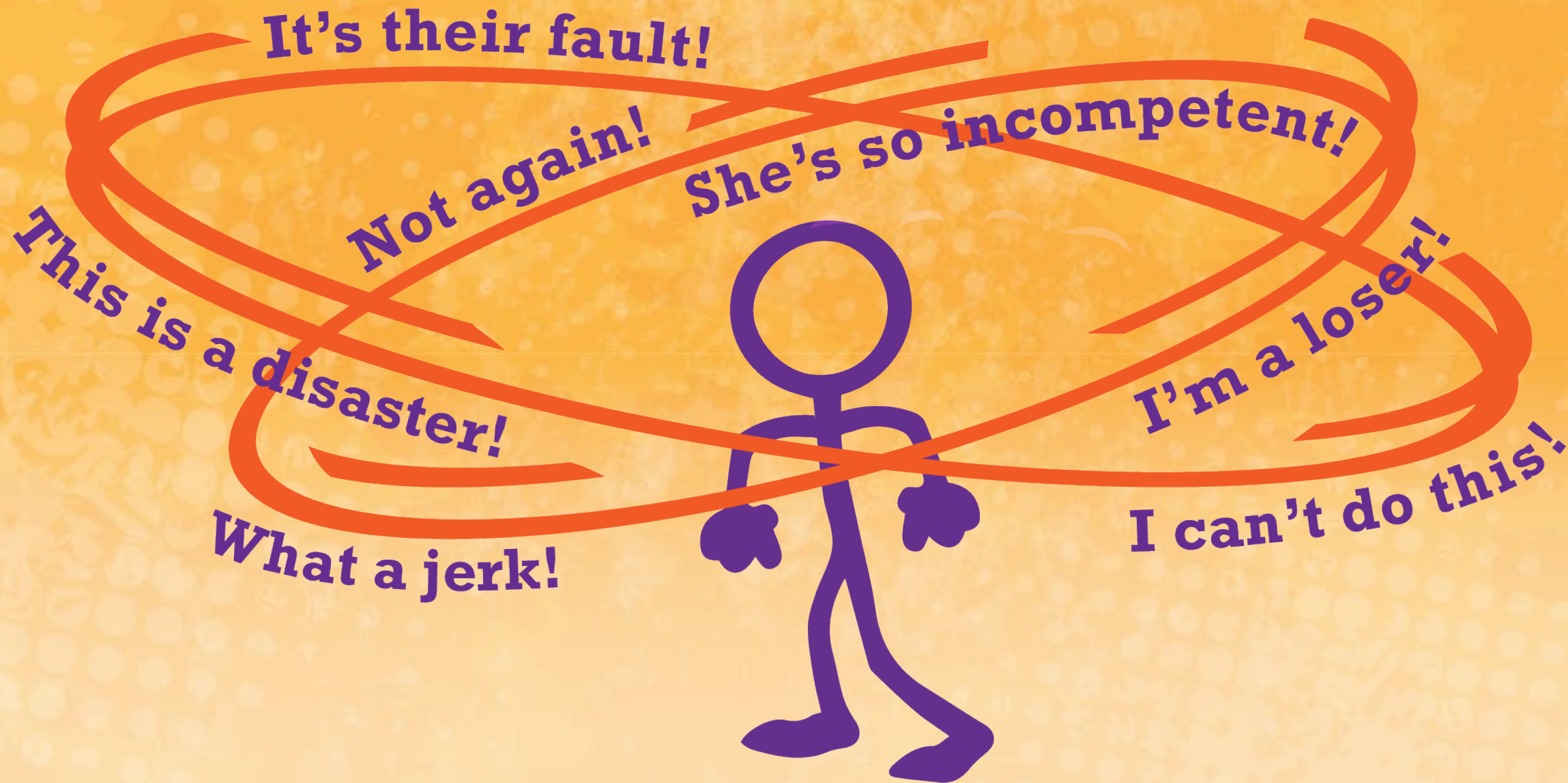
*allergies*



*loud barking*



**DON'T BELIEVE  
EVERYTHING YOU  
THINK**



**It's their fault!**

**Not again!**

**She's so incompetent!**

**I'm a loser!**

**I can't do this!**

**What a jerk!**

**This is a disaster!**



A close-up photograph of a computer keyboard. The central focus is a bright red key with the words "Change Your Story" printed in white, sans-serif font. The key is slightly raised and has rounded edges. Surrounding it are several black keys with white symbols: an equals sign, a right-pointing arrow, a left bracket, a right curly brace, a double quote, a period/underscore, a house icon, and the word "Shift". The lighting is soft, creating subtle shadows and highlights on the keys' surfaces.

Change  
Your Story

Shift

[illegible]

# Shift Your Intentions

## Less Productive

- **Win**
- **Get even; get them back**
- **Make people learn**
- **Embarrass them**
- **Keep conversation under control**
- **Prove you are competent, smart, in charge**
- **Make everyone feel happy and harmonious**

## More Productive

- **Create respectful dialogue, greater inclusion**
- **Interrupt unproductive, inappropriate behaviors**
- **Understand the impact**
- **Deepen learning**
- **Negotiate new ways of engaging**



**Make a difference about something other  
than yourselves.**

***- Toni Morrison***

**What's your story?**  
**Exploring Our  
Racialized Socialization  
Experiences, part 1**



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**Feel free to make some notes, draw  
some pictures as you reflect**

# Examine Your Socialization #1

1. Describe the demographics and dynamics around you when you were growing up by race and other related categories of difference (ethnicity, culture, language, skin color, immigration and refugee status, nationality, etc.)
2. When were you 1<sup>st</sup> aware of your racialized identity(s)?  
What were your experiences interacting (or not) with people of your racialized group(s) as well as those in different racialized & Indigenous groups?
3. When do you remember realizing people were treated differently based on their different racialized and Indigenous group identities?

**What were you taught “race” was?  
How were racial disparities explained? Justified?**

**For instance:**

- a. Race is a “social construct”, made up to justify racist and white supremacist actions;**
- b. Different racial groups have inherent traits and character strengths or flaws, such as white are smarter, better leaders, more deserving... Indigenous Peoples & People of Color are deficit, less deserving;**
- c. The negative behaviors and low capacities of Indigenous Peoples & People of Color are due to their under-privileged upbringing, and with education and support, they can assimilate, thrive and succeed (become more like whites);**



**What were you taught “race” was?  
How were racial disparities explained? Justified?**

**For instance:**

- d. We need to be “color-blind” and not focus on race**
- e. We are “post-racial;”**
- f. People of Color have equal opportunity to work hard, and just need to pull themselves up by their bootstraps to succeed.**
- g. Everybody has a hard life; life isn’t fair;**
- h. Others?**

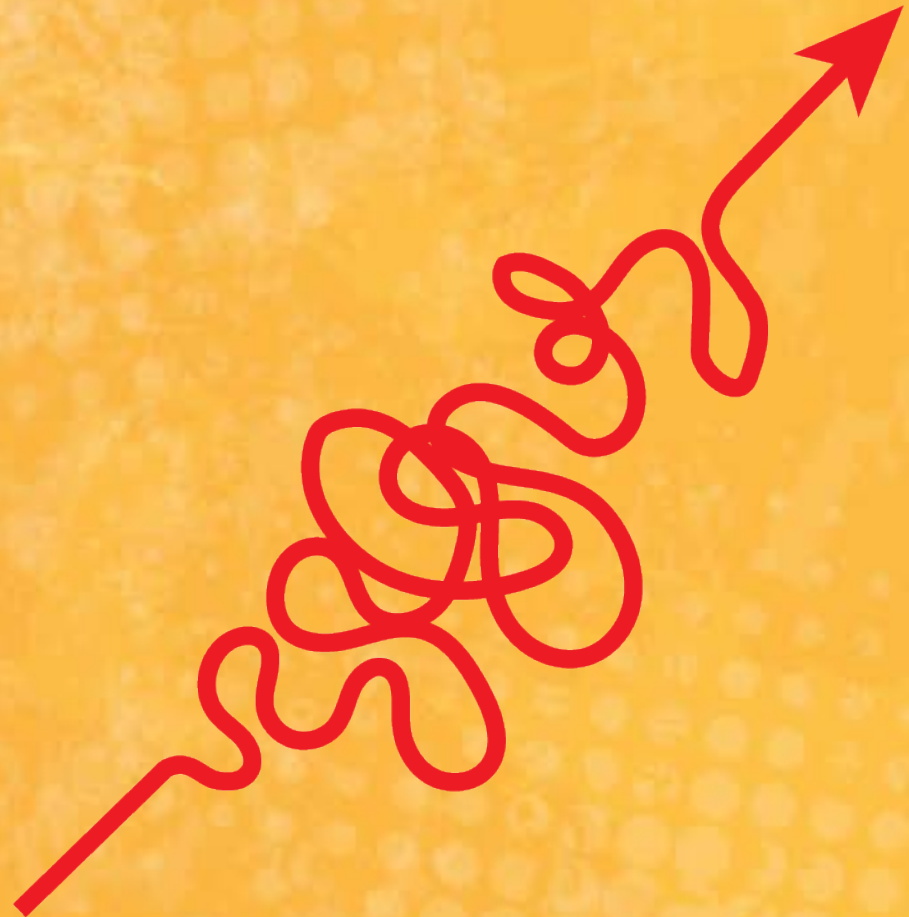
**What else? Questions, dilemmas,  
resources, strategies....**

**SUCCESS**



**what people think  
it looks like**

**SUCCESS**



**what it really  
looks like**





**It's easy to feel helpless —  
like you can't fight the tide.**

*But Remember...*

**Small actions can have a huge impact,  
and one person like you can  
inspire others to action.**

**- Celeste Ng**