

Dismantling Internalized Dominance: Increasing the Capacity of Whites to Partner for Meaningful Change

What are Your Inclusion Values and Intentions?

- create greater inclusion
- leave people feeling whole
- engage in respectful dialogue
- do no harm
- “go with the flow;” trust the process
- deepen learning and growth
- meet the people “where they are” without judgment
- use the triggering moment to deepen understanding
- relate in, connect to the person
- create space for honest, authentic dialogue; sharing of feelings, perceptions
- invite people to learn from the situation
- model the social justice behaviors you espouse: authenticity, empathy, self-reflection, engagement...
- deepen understanding across differences
- identify deeper issues fueling feelings, perceptions and behaviors
- create safety for the expression of differing viewpoints
- treat others with respect and dignity
- encourage more people to engage in the dialogue
- support people to disagree with each other in respectful ways
- model effective recovery skills after making an inappropriate comment or when your behavior results in negative impact
- identify inappropriate behaviors and explore the negative impact
- interrupt unproductive, inappropriate behaviors and group dynamics
- build a “bridge” and a connection with the other person
- encourage identity development and growth
- demonstrate compassion and empathy

Have You Ever Had These Less Productive Intentions?

- win the argument
- get even; get them back
- to be right; prove the other person wrong
- to prove you are competent, smart
- assert your power and authority
- gain status and prestige; be admired
- be in control
- intimidate the other person
- “put them in their place,” shut them down
- punish the other person
- embarrass or put down the other person
- make them feel the pain and hurt you feel
- change the other person’s views, feelings or behaviors
- to make people learn
- trick and “out fox” the other person
- avoid confrontation and conflict
- keep the conversation “under control”
- avoid intense emotions: in self and others
- make everyone feel happy and harmonious
- avoid feeling or being viewed as “incompetent”
- control how others feel about you
- To seen as a “good one,” an ally
- use the current opportunity to “right the wrongs” you experienced in your past
- change the other person to account for times you either didn’t or couldn’t change oppressive people earlier in your life
- ignore them
- seek approval of others
- to be liked, to fit in

Authentic Dialogue Prompts

Directions ~ With your partner, share and relate to each other as you discuss:

1. Share an example of a time you spoke up and effectively engaged someone whose comment or behavior was biased or misinformed: How did you feel? What did you do/say?
2. When are you at your best as an ally or change agent?
3. What are some of your fears as you engage issues of race and racism?
4. What biases or stereotypes do you still notice within yourself?
5. When and where do you get stuck? How do you feel when you are stuck and less effective?
6. What would feel supportive from colleagues? To help you continue to grow and develop skills?
7. When have you:
 - a. Felt fear when interacting with people of color?
 - b. Felt fear when interacting with whites?
 - c. Felt guilt or shame?
 - d. Felt anger towards people of color?
 - e. Felt anger towards whites?
8. What are 5+ ways you see people benefiting from white privilege?
9. What are some examples of how whites have intentionally used white privilege to help dismantle racism?
10. When have you seen others use white privilege to gain an advantage or greater access?
11. What insensitive or racist thoughts do you still have?
12. What are 1-2 examples (over the past 1-2 years) when you have acted based on some racial stereotypes or racist thoughts?
13. When do you remember realizing that **whites** believed they were superior to people of color, people who were biracial/multiracial? (smarter, more organized, better leaders, more competent, etc.)
14. When do you remember realizing **that you** believed whites were superior to people of color, people who were biracial/multiracial? (smarter, more organized, better leaders, more competent, etc.)

Privileged Group Dynamics: **Common Patterns of Whites**

Directions: review these common group dynamics:

- a. Check-off any dynamics which you have observed or heard a credible story about.
- b. Make a note next to the dynamics that you have personally experienced, felt, or done.
- c. Add any additional common patterns/dynamics you have witnessed or experienced.

Some/Many Whites Tend to (consciously and unconsciously):

1. believe they have “earned” what they have, rather than acknowledge the extensive white privilege and unearned advantages they receive; believe that if people of color just worked harder...
2. not notice the daily indignities that people of color experience; deny them and rationalize them away with PLEs (perfectly logical explanations)
3. work to maintain the status quo and protect the advantages and privileges they receive
4. believe that white cultural norms, practices and values are superior and better
5. internalize the negative stereotypes about people of color and believe that whites are smarter and superior to people of color
6. want people of color to conform and assimilate to white cultural norms and practices
7. accept and feel safer around people of color who have assimilated and are “closer to white”
8. blame people of color for the barriers and challenges they experience; believe that if they “worked harder” they could “pull themselves up by their bootstraps”
9. believe that people of color are not competent and are only hired/promoted to fill quotas
10. interrupt and talk over people of color
11. resent taking direction from a person of color
12. dismiss and minimize frustrations of people of color and categorize the person raising issues as militant, angry, having an “attitude,” working their agenda, not a team player...
13. focus on their “good intent” as whites, rather than on the negative impact of their behavior
14. focus on how much progress we have made, rather than on how much more needs to change

15. want people of color to “get over it” and move on quickly
16. get defensive when people of color express their frustrations with current organizational and societal dynamics
17. “walk on eggshells” and act more distant and formal with people of color
18. segregate themselves from people of color and rarely develop authentic relationships across race
19. exaggerate the level of intimacy they have with individual people of color
20. fear that they will be seen and “found out” as a racist, having racial prejudice
21. focus on themselves as an individual (I’m not racist; I’m a good white), and refuse to acknowledge the cultural and institutional racism people of color experience daily
22. pressure and punish whites who actively work to dismantle racism to conform and collude with white racism; criticize, gossip about, and find fault with white change agents
23. expect people of color to be the “diversity expert” and take the lead in raising and addressing racism as their “second (unpaid) job”
24. minimize, under-value, ignore, overlook and discount the talents, competencies and contributions of people of color
25. rephrase and reword the comments of people of color
26. ask people of color to repeat what they have just said
27. assume the white teacher/coach/facilitator/employee, etc., is in charge/the leader; assume people of color are in service roles
28. rationalize away racist treatment of people of color as individual incidents or the result of something the person of color did/failed to do
29. dismiss the racist experiences of people of color with comments such as: That happens to me too...You’re too sensitive...That happened because of _____, it has nothing to do with race!
30. judge a person of color as over-reacting and too emotional when they are responding to the cumulative impact of multiple recent racist incidents
31. accuse people of color of “playing the race card” whenever they challenge racist policies and practices; instead of exploring the probability of negative differential impact based on race, or that racist attitudes and beliefs are operating

32. if confronted by a person of color, shut down and focus on what to avoid saying or doing in the future, rather than engaging and learning from the interaction
33. look to people of color for direction, education, coaching on how to act & what not to do
34. compete with other whites to be “the good white:” the best ally, the one people of color let into their circle, etc.
35. if a white person makes a racist comment or action, aggressively confront them and pile on the feedback to distance from them and prove who is a better ally
36. seek approval, validation, and recognition from people of color
37. if confronted by a person of color, view it as an “attack” and focus on and critique HOW they engaged me, not my original comments or behaviors
38. disengage if feel any anxiety or discomfort
39. avoid confronting other whites on their racist attitudes and behaviors
40. when trying to help people of color, feel angry if they don’t enthusiastically appreciate the help
41. believe there is one “right” way, meaning “my way” or the “white way”

42. *track patterns of differential treatment of people of color and intervene to stop inappropriate actions and educate others*
43. *continually learn more about the experiences of people of color and racism*
44. *recognize when people of color might be reacting out of cumulative impact, and offer space to talk about issues and their experiences*
45. *analyze policies and practices to assess any differential impact on people of color and intervene to create change*
46. *constantly track daily organizational activities to ensure fairness, respect, and inclusion for all people with respect to group dynamics, communication, task assignments, professional development opportunities, decision-making, conflict management, mentoring, networking, etc.*

Developed By: Kathy Obear, (413) 537- 8012, Kathy@drkathyobear.com

Liberating Behaviors and Attitudes from Members of Privileged Groups that Shift the Status Quo

1. Consistently track interactions and group dynamics: work to create balance of engagement among all members; and speak up when you notice exclusionary comments and behaviors.
2. Cultivate relationships with other members of privileged groups who actively work to dismantle oppression and create inclusive organizations. Talk honestly about where you get stuck and ask for feedback and coaching.
3. Continue to deepen your awareness about privilege and dominant culture, and how these operate in you, others, and organizations/systems.
4. Recognize and change in the moment when you are operating out of stereotypes, privilege, and/or dominant cultural beliefs.
5. Track patterns of negative differential treatment on members of marginalized groups and intervene to stop inappropriate actions and educate others.
6. Recognize and intervene when unconscious bias and prejudice are impacting opinions and decisions.
7. Continually learn more about the experiences of members of marginalized groups and oppression.
8. Recognize when members of marginalized groups might be reacting out of cumulative impact, and offer space to talk about issues and their experiences.
9. Analyze policies, programs, services, and practices to assess any differential negative impact on members of marginalized groups and shift practices to create change.
10. Track current utilization of services and assess the degree of satisfaction and usage by members of marginalized groups.
11. Regularly assess the climate and culture of organizations and analyze the data for any differential experiences from members of marginalized groups.
12. Constantly track organizational activities to ensure fairness, respect, and inclusion for all people with respect to group dynamics, communication, task assignments, professional development opportunities, decision-making, conflict management, mentoring, networking, hiring and promotion, etc.
13. Support others when they question or challenge uninclusive or disrespectful behaviors or policies so they are not alone. Recognize that marginalized group members have a far greater risk if they challenge and speak up.
14. Ask questions to seek to understand BEFORE disagreeing or defending your position.
15. If your behavior has had an impact on a member of a marginalized group, avoid defensively talking about your intent. Instead, listen thoughtfully to their feelings and perspective; acknowledge the impact; make amends and change your behavior as needed.
16. In meetings and conversations, ask these questions, “How might this impact members of different marginalized groups?” “What perspectives and input might we be missing from different marginalized groups?”
17. Talk with members of privileged groups who seem to be colluding, “going along to get along” ~ help them consider the consequences of their actions and shift their behaviors.

Developed By: Kathy Obear, (413) 537- 8012, kathy@drkathyobear.com www.drkathyobear.com

Dynamics of the Status Quo*

Privileged Group members focus on:	Marginalized Group members focus on:
Individual Acts	Patterns
Victim	Systems/Culture
How far we have come	How far we need to go
Intent	Impact

Changing the Status Quo*

- Recognize and shift Collusion
- Own Group Membership
- Intentionally use Discretionary Power
- Recognize Different impact
- Demonstrate Distinguishing behavior
- Move beyond “Vs.” and Either/Or thinking to “Both/And”
- Anticipate and Engage Cumulative Impact

Avoid Common Dialogue Pitfalls/Traps*

1. PLEs (perfectly logical explanations)
2. Yea, but....
3. That happens to me/my group, too....
4. I know someone who...and they don't agree with you....
5. I don't see it that way; therefore, it doesn't really happen....
6. That doesn't happen to me...(so it doesn't exist)
7. Don't you think that...
8. You're overreacting...you're too sensitive...
9. He/she's a good person...they never meant to do that....
10. That was not my intent! You misunderstood me!

*Adapted from materials developed by Elsie Y. Cross Associates

Personal Qualities of an Effective Ally

Knowledge of the oppression - Allies understand the oppression in its various forms and contexts which allows them to recognize and address it. They are aware of how it impacts people from the oppressed group and from the dominant group, and how it intersects with other forms of oppression.

Self-awareness - Allies have insight into how their own socialization and experiences impact their attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. They maintain vigilance about how their privilege, sense of entitlement, and internalized dominance gets enacted. This includes the ability to honestly self-reflect and assess their strengths and areas for growth.

Accountability - Allies develop relationships with people from the oppressed group and others from their dominant group to debrief and get honest feedback. They check in with themselves and others to ensure they are acting in ways consistent with their values and in solidarity with the efforts of the oppressed group.

Non-defensiveness - Allies are able to hear critical feedback and use this to continue their own learning and development as an ally. They can acknowledge mistakes and view feedback as “gifts” toward their growth.

Humility - Allies can let go of their internalized sense of superiority and value others’ wisdom and ways of doing things. They are able to work *with* people from the oppressed groups in equitable and supportive ways without needing to rescue or dominate. They are willing to admit what they do not know and continue to learn.

Ability to choose appropriate action - Allies are able to analyze situations and their own competence in order choose strategies appropriate to the situation. They recognize the power of collective action, rather than just individual efforts, for creating social change.

Adapted from: Diane J. Goodman, *Promoting Diversity and Social Justice: Educating People from Privileged Groups*, Routledge, 2011. www.dianejgoodman.com drdianegoodman@gmail.com

Barriers to People from Privileged Groups Working Collaboratively with People from Subordinated Groups

Taking over. Individuals from dominant groups are often in positions of power and have confidence in their knowledge, skills and ability to get things done. Add to this internalized (often unconscious) superiority. People from privileged groups can share their resources in ways that enhances rather than controls or diverts the group.

Wanting things to be done according to the norms of the dominant culture. When people from the oppressed group get to set the norms, whether it be about communication, conflict, food, time, or process, it may be different from how the dominant group usually does it. This requires people from privileged groups to value other ways of thinking, being and doing. They need to be willing to be flexible and out of their comfort zone.

Trying to be one of them. Whether out of shame, lack of rootedness in one's own culture or wanting to be accepted, people from privileged groups cannot pretend to be someone they are not. More likely, people will be seen as "wannabes", making it more difficult for trust to develop. People from dominant groups can be sensitive to their enactment of privilege while being clear about who they are and their values.

Seeking emotional support. People who work together ideally can develop relationships that are mutually caring and respectful. However, people from the privileged group should not expect emotional caretaking from people from the oppressed group.

Expecting to be taught. People from dominant groups can learn a lot from working with people from marginalized groups. However, this can be done without looking to people from the oppressed group to teach them.

Expecting gratitude or praise. Everyone likes to feel that her/his efforts are recognized and appreciated, but as an ally in social justice work, that is not the purpose. Social justice work is done for one's own and others liberation, not as charity or to be seen as a good person.

"The main goal [of allies] is to develop relationships of solidarity, mutuality and trust, rooted in a praxis of intentional anti-racist thought, action and reflection." (Raible, 2009)

Adapted from: Diane J. Goodman, *Promoting Diversity and Social Justice: Educating People from Privileged Groups*, Routledge, 2011. www.dianejgoodman.com drdianegoodman@gmail.com

The Joy of Unlearning Racism: What White People Have to Gain

Knowledge and Clarity

People gain information and perspectives that offer new lenses for viewing themselves and the world-- becoming more conscious, informed and insightful.

- Intellectual understanding-of other their own and other racial groups, of theories manifestations and dynamics of racism.
- Self-knowledge and awareness of own biases, culture, socialization, internalized superiority.

An Enriched Life

People live with greater meaning and purpose with a broader range of relationships and experiences.

- Engagement with issues they feel passionately about and that feel significant.
- Connections with a greater array of people, particularly people of color.
- Exposure to the cultures and wisdom of different racial groups.
- Improved relationships with other white people.

Authenticity and Greater Humanity

People feel more authentic within themselves, in their relationships, and in their lives.

- Expanded emotional capacities--greater compassion and feelings for and about other people.
- Less guarded, deeper, and more spontaneous relationships with people of color.
- Inner peace and spiritual integrity.

Empowerment, Confidence and Competence

A greater understanding of racism, a clearer sense of themselves, and more diverse relationships builds empowerment, confidence and competence to address racism and social justice issues.

- Less defensiveness--easier to admit their errors, learn from them and keep going.
- Greater competence and effectiveness educating others about racism and social justice issues.
- Improved ability to work with and serve people from other racial groups.
- Improved ability to work with others from dominant groups, whether the same or different from their own.
- Greater ability to be a role model/resource for other white people.
- Greater ability to be an effective ally, challenge racism and work for social justice.

Liberation and Healing

People experience this is a transformative, freeing process that infuses their whole being and life.

- Fewer fears -- about what they'll find out about themselves, engaging with those who are different, doing or saying the wrong thing, offending others, or how their life would change for the worse.
- Healing from the myriad ways they are damaged psychologically, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually by living within a system of racial inequality and white supremacy.

Adapted from: Diane J. Goodman (2011). *Promoting Diversity and Social Justice: Educating People from Privileged Groups* 2nd ed., Routledge. drdianegoodman@gmail.com www.dianegoodman.com