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NO BOUNDARIES

A Manual For
Unlearning Oppression and Building Multicultural Alliances

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PREFACE

In 1985, a Jewish woman named Ricky Sherover-Marcuse, an African American man named Harrison Simms, and a Latino man named Hugh Vasquez co-founded a program designed to eliminate social oppression from the lives of our young people. Called New Bridges, this program brought together a group of highly committed adults and youth to find a way to reduce the divisions created by society — divisions of racism, sexism, anti-semitism, and heterosexism.

Three years later, Ricky Sherover-Marcuse died of cancer, and, 16 short months after her death, Harrison Simms died of a sudden heart attack. Although the world lost two of the greatest minds and hearts in eliminating oppression, they left behind a foundation from which we could continue and make even greater strides in liberation.

Many others worked non-stop with youth under our New Bridges program. They all provided thoughts, hearts, minds, and souls to our alliance building framework. We are forever grateful to: Rama Selassie-Barnwell, Al Elpusan, Carmela Chase, Donna Ozawa, Heather Barth, Dean Yabuki, Ben Fratecelli, Michael Graves, Jason Saffer, Tony Harris, Cameron Hubbe, Meadow Killoran, Teresa Rattler, Louis Knox, Meira Kunis, Gil Lopez, Kenna Benitez, Jamal Maggard, Josefa Molina, Richard Orona, Wanda Rollins, Yvonne St. John Dutra, Richard Shapiro, Jerry Atkin, Ticka Simon-Rosetto, Xochitl Solis, Michael Spokane, Tracey Packer, Michael Frank, Hilda Gutierrez-Baldoquin, John Sixkiller, Betty Wong, Michael Yamagata, Amy Bingamon, Greg Dettman, Carol Ford, Mario Emanuel Grammer, Teale Jones, Iris Montgomery, Racheal Neumann, Eligio Ruiz, Sonny Aranaydo, Kiki Borchardt, Allan Creighton, LynnA DeBeal, Mary Ellen Dunbar, Steven Falk, Narcissa Gomes, Linda Gonzalez, Laurie Goodstein, Gil Guillermo, Lakota Harden, Heru Nefara Amen, Rivka Mason, Sandra McGee, Ann Park, Yeshi Sherover-Neumann, Maryel Norris, David Righton, Marcela Rodriguez, Michael Taller, Matthew Wurzel, Catherine Guerra, Brenda Blasingame, Jose Cazares, Rich Dutra St.-John, Ben Grant, Sabi Guerra, Mike Honda, Ruth Ichinaga, Cesar Lagleva, Kosta Bagakis, Angie Foo, Scott Klein, Gene Calhoun, Jamal Walker, Moogi-Ayana Mogengege, Ted DesMaisons, Tracy Clouse, Chris West, Adele Horn, Jenny Mish, Paul Judge, Julie Nesnansky, Inbal Kashtan, Ernesto Alegria, Patty Castaneda-Davis, Susan Freundlich, Aturo Catbagan, Jim Eitel, Tere Carranza, Kenny Hall, Carrie McCluer, Sandy O'Neill, Jeff Isenberg, Sunflower Andersen, Jay George, Beth Freedman, Loren Moye', Kevin Lynch, Eleya Fugman, Rose Dady, Elesha Miranda, and Jose Ruiz.

Nell Myhand, who is now Director of Youth Programs, has given much in the way of insight, support, brilliance, and creativity in re-establishing New Bridges as a powerful force in the world. Her leadership will empower many to live in peace.

A special thanks and appreciation goes to Rob Friedman who became Co-Director of New Bridges after Ricky died. Rob took on what seemed to be an impossible task and made sure New Bridges would continue. Rob taught many of us what it really means to be an unconditional allie. She courageously met the challenge of leading youth yet another step towards liberation.

Also, the Oakland Men's Project shared in the development of many of the exercises. In a sense, New Bridges and OMP grew up together as organizations.

Finally, Allan Creighton with Paul Kivel, contributed greatly to this effort through their work and publication of *Helping Teens Stop Violence: A Practical Guide for Counselors, Educators, and Parents*, Hunter House Publications, Alameda, CA, 1990.

The TODOS Institute and this manual are created in honor of Ricky Sherover-Marcuse and Harrison Simms.

The work of the Institute is in honor of all of us.

HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

Section One consists of the theoretical base upon which this liberation model is built. It is intended to teach the participant the assumptions and philosophy that guide every step of the unlearning and alliance building process. This section may best be used as a reference to re-learning and reviewing the guiding elements of this approach. Chapter One discusses the importance of creating an environment from which to conduct liberation work. Chapter Two delineates the working assumptions or framework upon which this model is based. Chapter Three presents definitions important to know in order to work with others. Chapter Four reviews how to design a workshop, the critical elements of a workshop on liberation.

Section Two is a resource for conducting workshops. Chapter Five presents fact sheets or context settings on various oppression issues. Each page in this chapter is designed to become a handout for any given workshop. Information contained in Chapter Five should be used to stimulate one's thinking before giving a workshop on a particular issue. In addition, this information may be useful when conducting context settings. Chapter Six is a compilation of the exercises used in this model. Trainers may use these exercises when conducting workshops.

Section Three is the Appendix. Here one will find handouts used in workshops and a bibliography or reference list for additional reading on liberation issues.

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SECTION ONE

CHAPTER 1

Creating The Environment

Introduction

The environment around us has tremendous influence over our lives. It influences our attitudes, beliefs, and values about ourselves and others. As we move around in the world, our experiences with family, peers, school, media, religious institutions, workplaces, etc. all reinforce what we think and feel about who we are and about others. Each day we get cues from our environment that reminds us of our worth and the worth of others. Each day the environment informs us of where we can feel comfortable and safe and where to be uneasy. Liberation work demands that we pay attention to the environment. We cannot expect individuals to change long held attitudes and beliefs about self or others if the environment around them is not safe to do so, or if it does not reinforce the changes made. Thus, our first task is to create the safest environment possible in any setting or group with which we are working. We must understand the effects each person's environment has had on them.

Environments are often discussed in terms of systems. That is, ones' environment consists of spheres of influence which include the family, peers, schools, other institutions, and community. Let's discuss environment in a more concrete way. What one sees, hears, smells, and touches around them is the environment. It is physical such as buildings, trees, roads, signs, open fields. It is visual such as soothing, inviting colors in buildings, greenery, interesting art, graffiti, vandalism, metal detectors, fences, barbed wire, no windows. It is auditory such as sounds of birds, wildlife, traffic, gunfire, praise, put downs, laughter. It is olfactory with smells such as flowers, soil, freshly cut grass, exhaust, trash, newly laid asphalt. It is kinesthetic such as a feeling of openness, warmth and invitation to belong, ostracized, comfortable, trusting, relaxed, on-edge, dangerous, sense of well-being, contempt. How might these environmental aspects influence one's attitudes, thoughts, beliefs, and actions, and especially one's sense of safety?

The Environment and the Molding of Armor

At a remote site north of San Francisco, 80 teenagers representing a wide range of cultures were brought together for a weekend workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to take a look at racism and sexism and help youth learn how to build alliances across differences in ethnicity and gender. The site was foreign to most of them — the beach, 45-90 minutes away from anyone's homelurf. Most of the youths came from inner city neighborhoods, a few from the suburbs.

The program began Friday evening and ended Sunday afternoon. First on the agenda was a welcome and overview of the weekend. This involved stating the goals, explaining the process to be used, and describing the program. The speaker for this section was only two minutes into her presentation when she began to get interrupted by youths making comments, laughing, distracting others, throwing things, etc. Although scheduled next was the establishment of ground rules, increased interruptions forced the speaker to get directly into the rules (we call agreements). However, interruptions continued even when asking for their agreement to the ground rule called "respectful listening." One could almost visibly see whatever level of safety existed in the group deteriorate with each interruption.

So what happened? Why would a group of young people coming to a program to learn how to get along better treat each other and the facilitators with such disrespect? Why would youth who are crying out to be respected and valued behave in exactly the opposite manner? Why was it so difficult to establish the agreements needed to create a respectful environment?

These young people have brilliantly learned how to survive in an environment full of disrespect. They get off the bus at the weekend facility, walk through the doors, and are welcomed by smiling strangers. The staff asks them to put aside their ordinary way of being, their survival mechanisms, and join with us in a new way of relating to each other. They are asked to cease posturing at each other, one ups-manship, being in control, rebelling against authority figures, etc. Many have been reared in an unsafe environment where their very survival depends upon sizing people up, acting fearless, and taking control over others in order to feel some sense of power, and perhaps, as a way of staying alive.

If everyone comes into the world full of brilliance, hope, enthusiasm, vigor, excitement, zest, and a desire to be connected to others, then how does one's environment influence our holding on to these traits or not? Our experiences force us to mold armor around ourselves, to design protective shields in order to keep from being hurt. As we get more experience in the world, the armor takes on different protective forms. The armor, however, is a reaction to hurtful messages and experiences occurring in the environment, it is not our true self or nature. As we meet others in the world, all of whom are molding their own protective armor, their own protective shields, we actually meet the person's armor first before meeting the individual. It is not unusual that when someone's armor meets another a large clash/bash occurs.

The armor of each young person is what adult staff first met at the youth workshop. For some youth, interrupting was a way of establishing safety. For others, "acting out" or "challenging authority" was familiar, known territory, a way of being in control, and therefore comfortable to do. Clowning helped bring others to one's side and let one know who was for or against you. Silently watching and listening (which could look like apathy) is how others survive in their environment. These are a few of the forms the armor takes. Thus, the adult staff and every other young person first met each other's armor, not the real person underneath.

The youth program staff initially reacted in a fairly typical and customary way to those who are "acting out" and disturbing the program — an intense desire to send them home! The interruptions and apparent disrespect for others created an attitude from staff to youth that essentially said "why did you come here anyway; get with the program or get out?" Fortunately this was only the initial reaction. Staff were quick to realize that what we were witnessing with these youths was their armor, not their true selves. Had we not understood the effects of the environment on these young people, we would have incorrectly concluded that they were unfit for the program or simply did not care about others. Our ability to recognize environmental effects helped us to better think about how to create the safest environment possible.

We understand that certain messages are communicated to a young person who lives in dilapidated housing, goes to school in a cold, concrete building with asphalt covered playgrounds and metal detectors, and sees drug abuse, alcohol and violence around them everyday. Although these children may be told from some parts of their environment that they are worthwhile human beings to be honored and respected, they routinely

and pervasively receive many more messages to the contrary. The messages our children see, hear, smell, touch from the environment contributes to their sense of worth and how they feel about others. Look at the messages below and think about the degree to which our children get these messages, and what impact these messages have on them. What would someone's armor look like who constantly got messages such as:

"You are not deserving of clean, safe, esthetically pleasing places to live and learn."

"We just don't have enough resources to beautify your living space."

"You are not important enough to guarantee safety, health, and education without fear."

"You can do anything you wish to do."

"You deserve the best."

"Your welfare is our number one concern."

Liberation work often brings people together who live in very different environments. However, in this day and age it is unlikely that any one individual has not seen or had information fed to them about others. Each of us has seen what people from third world countries have to do to survive. Children from the city learn about the environment of the suburbs. Youth from the country learn about the inner city. And, one does not have to have personal experience with any environment to form judgments about it. In fact, many of our opinions about another environment is formed with little or no actual contact with it.

Our current environments do not systematically, institutionally, pervasively, and routinely perpetuate dignity, honor, and respect for each individual. Most of us come from, or currently live in environments that do not fully honor us. We go from our families to schools, to other institutions to work sites where we become accustomed to disrespect. Thus, the challenge in liberation work is to create an environment that is unlike what most people experience.

Although the environment heavily influences us, it does not totally determine the outcome of our lives. I have met many amazing individuals who have held on to positive beliefs about oneself and others, who have maintained respect and honor despite overwhelming environmental

reinforcements to the contrary. Imagine how life would be if we all lived in an environment where each and every day we were shown respect and honor for what we bring to the human race. Imagine how our families, schools, religious organizations, workplaces would be if everyone knew without a doubt that they were valued contributors. Imagine an environment that did not judge a person's potential, capabilities or worth based on the color of their skin, gender, religious affiliation, affectional orientation, age, class, weight, hair style, type of music listened to, etc.

This is the type of environment envisioned in multicultural work. The message that everyone is of value is reinforced daily. What one hears in the schools, on the job, in the media, and at home are messages of respect and honor for each of us existing on this planet. In other words, images and messages valuing every individual would be pervasive in all of society.

Now, back to the young people. Bring them into adulthood as members of the diverse work force. They carry with them attitudes and beliefs learned during their formative years. On their shoulders are experiences and behaviors cultivated by their environment. Past influences are brought into the work place and impossible to leave outside the factory or office door. Consider the following story of an African American male:

I have found I must put my true self outside the door when I come to work. This place does not allow me to be me. I have to adapt to a culture that does not ask me for my thoughts; does not make room for my experiences or brilliance. I have to wait until I walk out of those doors to get my full self back. At work, I can't speak the way I normally speak at home. I have to leave 'Black English' outside. I go home and have to shed the way I am at work in order to become normal once again. In the morning, it starts all over again as I get ready for work.

Many adults spend most of their waking hours in a work setting. And, for an ever increasing number of workers, the experiences of the worker described above is a daily reality. Demographically, the work place has, and continues to dramatically change. Soon, the group that used to dominate the work sites, white men, will be a minority. Yet, the environment at most work places continues to demand assimilation into a dominant culture's way of being.

Does the work place invite everyone to bring 100% of their being to the job? What are employees asked to leave out the door when they

come to work? What aspects of one's competence and brilliance is unseen, unheard, and under-valued on the job? These are the questions to ask when examining the cultural environment at work.

To illustrate the impact of the work environment on another cultural group, consider the following:

In one workshop, an employee who is lesbian described her work environment. She was not "out" to her colleagues and felt very constrained participating in normal office conversation about family and friends. She was unable to put family photographs in her office for fear that someone would notice she is not pictured with a man. She could not participate in lunch room or hallway conversations about partners, spouses, children, family outings, or what one did over the weekend because talking about her partner would put her at risk. The result was that a large part of her self had to be checked at the door each day. She could not participate in company parties and holiday celebrations as they often involved family members. In order to protect herself from mistreatment due to being lesbian, she had to withdraw from most of her co-workers. Others interpreted this as proof she was aloof, a loner, individualistic, uncaring, not a team player — attributes disliked by the management.

Once again, the environment informed this worker of what to say about herself, what to reveal, where there was safety to bring one's full self into the room, and where to hide. What is the impact here? It is our premise that when a work place denies an individual the opportunity to bring their full self to the job, also denied is the opportunity for this person to fully contribute their ideas, intelligence, creativity, loyalty, and commitment. Neither the employer nor the employee benefit from this condition.

Steps to Creating a Safe Environment

The success of building alliances and eliminating oppression depends upon the degree to which a safe, open, and respectful environment is created. This is true for youth groups, school faculty, agency staff, government workers, or any other group participating in workshops. To create such an environment, we must first pay attention to the environments the participants come from and live in on a daily basis in order to understand how to create an open environment for them. Understanding what they bring to the workshop in terms of how their environment has affected them helps us to know how to create safety.

It takes intentionality to make it safe, to create an environment that honors everyone. This doesn't happen simply because we will it or demand it. A safe environment is not created by a staff group or facilitators saying this is a safe place, so treat each other well. A caring environment does not happen by saying we are all here together and we want everyone to treat each other well, so here are the ground rules follow them. We cannot expect respect to suddenly happen just because we got the participants out of their normal setting and we are nice people.

To create an environment that values each and every individual we must:

Step 1: Recognize how one's environment reinforces disrespect.

Pay attention to the messages one receives from their environment about their group and what the effect is of these messages. Know that each individual comes to you with an overwhelming experience of being disrespected.

Step 2: Recognize the survival strategies people have developed to cope with societal divisions.

Know that each person has, to the best of their ability, figured out how to survive under whatever conditions they live. Notice that their attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs represent brilliant strategies to survival.

Step 3: Make the following agreements on how to communicate with each other (ask them for additional agreements needed):

Listen With Respect: One person talks at a time. Listen to each other with the attitude of having been waiting your entire life to hear what this person has to say.

Confidentiality: What is said in any groups, small or large, stays in the group. One can tell others generally what has occurred in the workshop or say what has happened for you, but not say anything that reveals someone's identity. Also - confidentiality means that others need to ask your permission to speak with you about something you said or did before discussing it further with you.

This allows the speaker to be more honest without worrying they are going to have to explain, defend it over and over again.

"I" Statements: Speak from one's own experience. Encourage people to begin their statements with "I feel/think...." instead of with "you." This reduces people speaking for others or making their statement sound as though everyone feels/thinks that way.

No Cross Talk: There is no need for anyone to agree or disagree with anyone else's statement. Each person's statement stands on its own. No one needs to attach what they believe/feel to someone else's comment. In addition, no cross talk means someone's experience cannot be debated. For example, if someone shares an experience of racism, no one can argue that person's experience.

Right To Pass: Everyone has the right to not speak, or not participate in the activities or discussion.

Amnesty: Especially important in work settings, nothing that is said or done in the workshop will be used against you in any way. Forgive each other, in advance, for any mistakes one might make on cultural issues.

No Put Downs: Agreement is made to not put each other or yourself down.

Risk Taking OK: As it is agreed to have the right to pass, people have the right to take risks, share information, experience and to show emotions if they are so inclined.

Step 4: Make sure everyone gets to bring something of themselves into the room.

Conduct an introductory activity where each person says their name and responds to one of the questions below. Conduct ice breaker activities that allow people to come along at their own speed, bringing them

slowly, respectfully into the process. Potential opening questions after stating their name include:

"what is your ethnic background?"

"what is a cultural background to which you belong?"

"what is one thing you want others to know about you that they do not already know?"

"why is this place (work group, organization, youth group, etc.) better because you are here?"

"who, from your own ethnic/cultural background, do you look up to, admire, is a hero/heroine, or has been important to you?"

Step 5: Provide a structure for understanding how the environment influences the way one acts.

This is done by the facilitator talking to the group about environmental effects, armor, stating our working assumptions, and allowing discussion of these points.

Step 6: Allow time for people to discuss what they need to let go of to be fully present, discuss hopes and concerns.

This can be done in an ice breaker, in dyads or in the large group. Since doing this in the large group takes more time, it is best to do it as an ice breaker or dyad activity. As with any activity, getting a few people to share their responses to the questions in the large group is useful. Ask questions such as:

"what would you rather be doing right now?"

"what do you need to let go of to be completely here today?"

"what is your highest expectation for the workshop?"

"what do you want to make sure does not happen?"

Step 7: Model hope, delight, vulnerability in your leadership.

Assume each person wishes to participate in the process no matter how they may be acting at the moment. Share your stories.

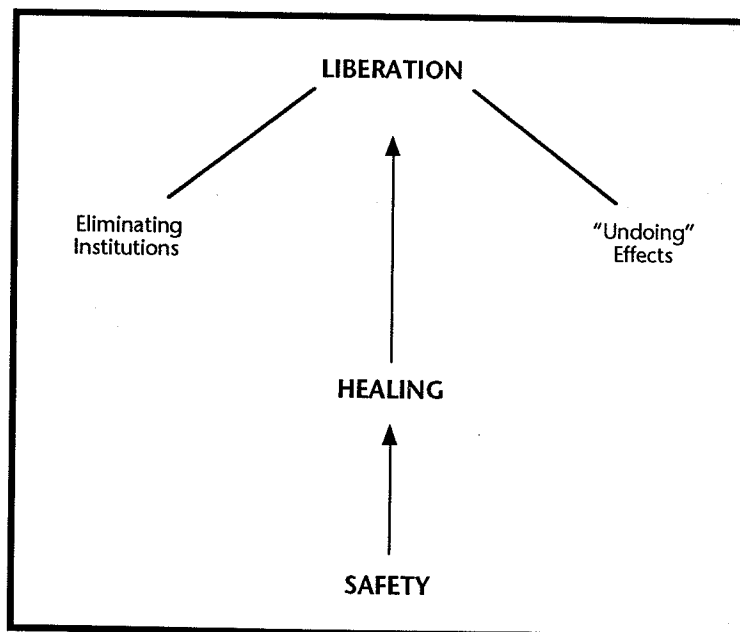
CHAPTER 2

The Framework/Working Assumptions

This chapter delineates the framework or theory upon which this form of liberation work rests. The content, process, and activities of this approach stem from the theory. Use this chapter to remind you of the theory as you proceed in your liberation work. The liberation theory below is adapted from the work of Ricky Sherover-Marcuse. The full text of Ricky's last version of the theory is in the appendix.

Liberation - Healing - Safety

Many have an urgent desire to end the many isms that are threatening the human race, however, our efforts will be futile if our approach frightens people into silence or intimidates them into sabotaging behaviors. When the dust settles, we find there is no substitute for compassion, no short cut to the hearts of humans, where the desire to establish justice and unity originates. Creating an environment within which people can begin to see the possibilities for alliance is no small task. It must be approached with an awareness of what people are bringing to the process, as well as a clear commitment to making sure each person is able to maximize the experience.



Many people are and have been doing great work on establishing social justice. In the past decade there has been an explosion of information, theories and programs whose aims are to advance the movement toward multicultural understanding and social equity. We owe much to the good thinking and hard work of these creators and facilitators. And, we have a long way to go yet. The work that has been done, while admirable and courageous, has not taken us as far along the path of liberation as it should. One of the reasons that we've not enjoyed more success has to do with our lack of understanding about what is needed. In our search for a simple solution, we often overlook the essential elements for building "multicultural" and other alliances. The key concepts are safety and healing as the predecessors to the establishment of liberation and justice.

Liberation

The ultimate goal of multicultural alliance building is the establishment of liberation. Its establishment will mean that human kind will be that much closer to the achievement of unity. In some settings, the use of this word is likely to bring about the thought that we are not here to do liberation work. Our belief is that every individual, group, organization, and institution in this country needs to be about liberation — or at the very least contribute to establishing a liberatory process.

What is liberation? Is it simply a rhetorical term, or is it an attainable state which can be defined? In our view liberation has at least two distinct components. It is the elimination of systems, or aspects of systems, that perpetuate mistreatment of a particular group due to their cultural background, and it is the "undoing" of the effects on individuals of living in an oppressive society.

Elimination of system — Multicultural work involves the dismantling of oppressive structures, the creation of equitable policies and fair treatment for everyone. In its broadest sense it is the elimination of discrimination. It means that one would be able to look at the institutions which comprise our social and economic systems and see equity from top to bottom. Opportunities would exist for all members of the society to participate to the extent of their desire and potential. Policies and procedures would no longer reflect the needs of the few nor the many, but of the whole. Justice would be swift and equal for all. It is action oriented with people coming together to use their collective power to bring about institutional change.

Should entire systems be dismantled? Perhaps, but what is more likely to be the case is the need to eliminate aspects of a system. For example, there are aspects of the criminal justice system that perpetuates mistreatment of blacks and latinos, as evidenced by the disproportionate number of blacks and latinos in jail as compared to whites. Which aspects of this system perpetuate this form of institutional racism? In our educational system, boys are typically valued over girls as evidenced by a study showing for every time a girl is called upon (with a raised hand), nine boys have been called upon first. Which aspects of our educational system perpetuate this form of discrimination against females? Liberation work necessitates all forms of institutional mistreatment be eliminated.

"Undoing" the effects. The elimination of inequality, though necessary and desirable, does not cure the pain which marks our divisions and weakens us as a people. To do this, we must go further, we must dig deep and heal what we find embedded in our individual and collective consciousness. "Un-doing" the effects of living in an oppressive society focuses on the individual. This component focuses on remediating the effects of years of mistreatment and disequity. Each and every one of us have been negatively affected by the conditions that separate us from other human beings and from ourselves.

Healing

There is a tendency to push past this crucial stage in the alliance building process. The expectation is that once the pressure of mistreatment has eased up a bit, people should be able to move on. Most of us make a valiant effort to live up to this expectation with mixed results. Eventually what tends to happen is that the stress of repressing the pain and anger, coupled with the desire to have our experiences and difficulties acknowledged, cause us to get mired down at each turn in the process. We are likely to take every opportunity to heal from the effects of living with oppression. Often we do this by insisting that the people around us listen to our anguished tales, or by blaming others for what has happened to us; others hasten to point out that they too have been hurt, or deny that things are really all that bad. Ultimately, confusion and discouragement can drain the enthusiasm and sense of purpose from even the most well intentioned group.

The healing stage in liberation work requires the courage to look squarely at the depth of our anguish and despair; to make the space

for each to come forward with her/his truth without fear of reprisal, and to commit to hanging in with each other. It means gaining more liberation from the areas where one gets hooked or clashes with others. It means becoming completely powerful in places where one is the target for mistreatment. It means becoming capable of being an ally to every other human being on the planet and learning to see others as allies to me.

Most of us have anxiety about delving into our subconscious beliefs, feelings and attitudes about people of other groups, as well as our own. For many, past attempts to sort through these confusing and often frightening areas were met with disapproval, criticism and even rejection. Thus, the prospect of having others hear our stories of the messages we got about them, about ourselves, where we are stuck, and what painful emotions we carry can be daunting. We might want to free ourselves from the baggage, but we need some reassurance that to do so will not leave us feeling more disheartened, guilty, blamed or fearful than we already are.

The healing aspect of liberation work is multifaceted. Not only must we grieve our hurts which result from living with oppression, we need the opportunity to be outraged, discouraged, confused and exhausted. We need to tell our stories and have them be held. We need to speak our truths unapologetically. Understanding how one is hurt is often obscured by privilege and isolation. We need to see how the oppression of those outside our group/s is disastrous for us.

What gets in the way of liberation is the lack of healing. Everyone in this society is/has been hurt by the conditions producing mistreatment. As human beings, our ability to empathize with others is what makes us hurt when we see others being hurt. It has been hurtful to be taught one is better than, more human than another individual. It is hurtful to be on the receiving end of discrimination. We carry these experiences around with us no matter where we walk — be it the classroom, church, neighborhood, stores, shopping centers, or work place. Our liberation is directly connected to the extent that we can heal from these experiences. The extent to which we can create a healing space helps us let go of hurtful experiences.

Safety

What does it mean to establish safety in order to further the work of liberation? How are we defining safety in this context?

If the environment around us is not safe to bring out our experiences of hurt, thoughts, and beliefs then healing cannot occur and liberation cannot be realized. How can we expect a white person, for example, to say how they have been conditioned to see people of color as less, to notice how they perpetuate racism, if they are bashed for being who they are? How can we expect a person of color to heal from hurtful experiences of racism if they are blamed, ridiculed, or ignored for what has happened to them? Our multicultural work is about creating a sanctuary for people to bring their experiences out without being blamed.

Does creating safety mean making things "nice" and comfortable? No. Safety is not comfort.

Liberation work is about change, and change is never comfortable. One will have uncomfortable feelings and experiences with others as they continue on this path. Confronting one's attitudes about others is never comfortable. Embarking on a healing process does not mean one will feel good during the treatment for the hurt. However, the change can occur in an environment of safety with discomfort. There should be a commitment to not create more hurt or re-create a past hurt.

These are the three elements necessary for multicultural change in our society: Liberation - Healing - Safety. The framework for this model guides how as a society we can address these elements.

Liberation Theory/Working Assumptions

Assumption #1

No one is naturally or genetically oppressive. No one is born with an "oppressor" gene, thus no one is born an oppressor. No human being is born with a destiny to be oppressed or to oppress others.

We are all facing serious and difficult challenges in our struggle to eliminate oppression, find ways to create alliances between groups that have for centuries been divided, and become liberated from the forces that keep us down. In our struggles it appears as though it is in our very

nature as humans to think less of someone because of their skin color, to believe someone is less human because of their class background, to believe someone is less capable because of their gender. It appears as though it is our natural state to be divided from each other, to judge one another based on physical attributes. However, we rarely get an opportunity to notice that what we think is true about human nature is actually not so - but instead a great number of myths about who we really are.

Picture for a moment a new baby arriving into the world. This child begins its journey through life with certain characteristics, qualities, and traits. We can clearly see these traits or qualities if we were to hold the child up to a mirror. The reflection in the mirror tells us this child is full of wonder, excitement, and anticipation. This child believes strongly and has no doubts that the world belongs to her/him. This child knows that everything and everyone exists just for her benefit. This child is without doubts that you and I are here on this earth to please her. If she could speak she would say "Hey, look everyone, I'm here, come on, come make me happy."

Reflected in the mirror is brilliance, curiosity, a sense of power, and a desire to be connected to others. Notice the power of a young child. Parents agree that a new baby rules the home. Everything changes once this new being arrives. The household becomes immersed in the care of the child. If the baby is in need of attention, he/she powerfully asserts his/her self to communicate their desires. If a baby was in the middle of one of your meetings, workshops, or trainings, and began demanding attention by crying, laughing, or cooing, could you continue the meeting? This is power. This is how young babies come into the world, with a strong sense of power.

Young children are able to quickly figure out what they need to do to get their needs met. How does a young baby communicate their needs to you? If they are hungry, wet, uncomfortable, too cold, too hot, want to be held, or tired, they let you know. Now, adults may have forgotten (for a moment) the language of the child. We usually have to go through trial and error to discover what this baby wants, but eventually we figure out what they need. It is the child's ability to figure out what they need and communicate this to us until we understand that we call brilliance.

The reflection tells us that children are very curious. What is the number one question that parents get sick of hearing? What is the question we get exacerbated with most? The answer — the "why" question.

Child: "Why are those trees there?"
Adult: "Because that is where we decided to plant them."
Child: "Why did you decide to plant them there?"
Adult: "Because we thought they would look good there and give us shade?"
Child: "Why do you want shade?"
Adult: "So we can keep cool when it gets hot."
Child: "Why does it get hot?"
Adult: "Because....(I don't know, it just does)"

When a young child sees someone in a wheel chair, what do they do? They ask questions such as "what is the matter with that person's legs? Why are they in that chair?" They point at the person and look intently at him/her (adults call this staring). They ask "can I have a ride?" They are curious. When they see something new, something interesting, they look at it, ask questions, touch, and taste until their curiosity is answered or something else of interest grabs their attention. And, they do all this without hesitation or embarrassment. Remember, the world is theirs and everyone and everything in it belongs to them.

When my son Lucas was almost two years old, I took him to the hospital for a check up. As we were waiting our turn to see the doctor, a young girl, about 4 years old, came out of the nurses station, saw Lucas sitting in the waiting room, evidently thought he was someone interesting that she'd like to check out. She walked over to him (he was sitting on a chair), looked at him without blinking for what seemed like forever (about 15-20 seconds), then turned around and walked away. Lucas simply unblinkingly returned her look until she left. Neither one said a word. They simply checked each other out and went about their own business when finished. There was no anxiety, no embarrassment, no intimidation, no humiliation, no judgements made on either part. This young girl saw someone she wanted to get connected to and got connected. If we take a close look at the mirror of young children, we can see that they have desire and skills to be connected with others.

The reflection of this child in the mirror also shows us that they are present, able to live in the moment, and expect nothing less than for others to respond to their needs. When a child wants to be fed, does he say "Excuse me, excuse me. I know you are busy but when you get a moment could you please get me something to eat?" When a child is wet do they say "I hate to bother you, but when you get a chance will you change my diaper?" No, children are in the moment, wanting things to happen NOW, and do not feel apologetic for their needs, asking for help,

demanding to be cared for. We come here confident that the world will be responsive to our needs.

Children do not come into the world looking in the mirror and saying to themselves "God I'm ugly." They do not come here thinking that they cannot do things. In fact, most children at an early age will frustrate adults around them saying "leave me alone, I can do it myself." Ever heard that one? They do not think that their hair color, hair texture, skin color, gender, size, shape of eyes are bad or less than someone else's. Even babies who have some kind of physical abnormality do not think that they are ugly. They instead believe that they are beautiful and deserving. Before they begin to notice differences in people they may in fact believe that everyone else in the world looks just like them!

Children come here full of their emotions and demonstrative at every moment. Take a look around you at a few two year olds or three year olds. Notice that they do not walk anywhere? They either run, jump, skip, or hop. They sing and chat, touch or swat things as they go by, stop and look at the most interesting things (such as a leaf, crumpled piece of paper, old gum on the sidewalk). How do they respond when there is a knock on the door or the door bell rings. They immediately run, jump up and down, and scream with excitement. Why? Because they are convinced that whomever is at the door is there for them. They are just as excited if it is a best friend or someone selling magazines. When is the last time you answered the door with this kind of excitement and enthusiasm? Children are fully into their feelings, unencumbered emotionally, and unafraid of showing them.

What has been stated above is how we believe each of us enters the world. The reflection in the mirror is a reflection of our true human nature. However, as we grow up, things begin to happen that results in our "misbelieving" that our real nature as human beings is to be divided from each other. Our traits and qualities that were the first reflections of our nature get covered up. And, as we grow up, the un-true reflection of us and others is reinforced by experiences. The greatest malignancy in this country, perhaps in the world, is the conditioning we all get to see ourselves as inherently bad as a species. What would it be like if suddenly we all woke up realizing no matter how it looks on the outside, we are worthy, deserving, brilliant, beautiful, and connected? What would it be like if we were able to hop, skip, run, jump from meeting to meeting, place to place without ridicule? What would it be like if we were able to freely express our emotions without judgement or embarrassment?

Assumption #2

The oppression of young people, called adultism, is the first oppression we all experience. All young people are the targets of systematic mistreatment. This mistreatment lays the foundation for the perpetuation of other forms of mistreatment.

What happens to children that makes them think that they are powerless, not very smart, incapable, ugly? What causes children to be embarrassed about themselves or others, to feel unsure of themselves in relation to those who are different from oneself?

Take a look at a few examples of what happens to children. Picture yourself in a room with a new born infant. At first, the baby is content, looking around, making a few grunting noises, and generally delightful and easy to be with. But then he/she begins to whimper and within seconds is wailing with an ear piercing cry. What is your first reaction? For most of us, our first move is to try to get the baby to calm down. We immediately jump to any intervention that will make the baby stop crying. In fact, our goal in the moment is to stop this infant from crying.

Most of us has had the training/conditioning that says "if an infant is crying, make it stop — something is wrong." While it is true that the infant might be crying due to discomfort, hunger, or pain, it may also be true that they are simply needing to express themselves. They might just feel like screaming (by the way, have you ever felt like screaming?). Now check it out! A two year old who has not yet been taught to be bothered by the crying, who has not yet learned that the goal is to stop the baby from crying — will often either ignore the crying baby or give it attention but without the desire or urgency to make it stop. I have seen young children run up to the crying infant, pat it on the head and return quickly to their play. What is different about the two year old versus the adult is that the two year old has not yet received mountains of messages that say "don't be so emotional."

Have you ever been in a situation where a child was saying or doing something that was embarrassing to you? How do adults react to the child who expresses curiosity about the person in the wheelchair. Responses are usually along the lines of "don't stare, that's rude; leave the poor man/woman alone; put your finger down and don't point." The message given is don't be so curious, or, curb your curiosity, or, it is rude and impolite to notice differences. The adult is usually reacting out of ignorance, embarrassment, paralysis about how to be with a disabled person. Our

conditioning has never taught us how to relate to this person. In fact, our conditioning has taught us to stay away from "them."

Now, take this curiosity trait into the arena of racism and relations with those from a different ethnic group. The messages are the same: "those people are different from you so stay away, watch out, don't be with them." And why these messages — because the adult has never learned how to relate to people from different backgrounds.

Young people hear things like:

"Don't get so excited."

"Calm down."

"You think you're so smart, you don't know anything."

"Because I said so."

"Don't point."

"That's embarrassing."

"You ask too many questions."

"Can't you ever just sit still."

"There's no need to cry about that."

"Play over here away from those people."

What is the message behind the statement:

"You are not as smart as you thought you were."

"Those people are to be feared."

"There is something wrong with those people."

"Not everything in this world belongs to you."

"You are weird if you are too curious, too inquisitive."

In addition, our experiences as young people set in motion the way we will later respond to other cultural groups in the future. As we notice the ugliness of the conditioning, we begin to develop coping strategies to protect oneself from the hurts. Consider the following story of one young man:

T. is a young, white male participant in a workshop for college students who took up a great deal of space in conversation. He was often the first to speak, first to have his hand in the air to make comments immediately after someone else spoke. He forced his thoughts onto others. He was a terrific participant, but could not state his thoughts and feelings without going on and on. He spoke so

long that others were becoming extremely frustrated with him and wished he would sit down and shut up. Eventually, other participants began to tune him out and would be visibly agitated when he spoke again.

It is easy to assume that this individual was exhibiting a great deal of white, male privilege by taking up so much space. However, assumption #2 directs us to exploring what may have happened in his life that led to such behavior, rather than assuming the obvious. T. was asked to look at how he had been targeted as a child and told the following story:

As a child, I was quite big, overweight, fat. I remember other children coming up to me and slugging me — hitting my body just to see how it felt to hit someone fat. I soon learned that if I could tell someone was about to punch me, I could avoid being hit by quickly starting to talk to them. I could talk my way out of it. I learned how to protect myself from getting hurt by talking — and it took a lot of talking sometimes.

Looking at how T. was hurt as a child helps to understand why he had this “talking to extreme” pattern. It was a brilliant strategy to survive mistreatment, and it had consequences later with women and people of color being alienated by what seemed to be white, male privilege.

The result is that the mirror that was once very clear begins to get covered over with a layer of mud. We do not get less smart, less curious, less emotional. We do not have fewer desires to be powerful, fewer desires to be connected to others. These qualities, characteristics or traits do not go away, they simply get covered up. We believe that the mirror is not broken, that our qualities are not forever gone, but that they have been covered up a bit.

The mirror and conditioning mentioned above happens with every child. But for some, additional layers of mud get heaped upon their traits and bury them even deeper. Let's look at the mirror of a child who is female. What additional mud is flung on her mirror to cover up her traits? One example is that young girls get mud that says you can't do that, only boys can. Children of color also get an additional layer of mud with messages such as “you're not as smart as...”, “you're ugly, you're dirty, you smell bad.” Another layer of mud comes to those children who are poor. They get told “you will never amount to much”, “why can't you just pull yourself up by your bootstraps.” Others get their traits covered

because they are Jewish, working class, living in a rural area, disabled, and on and on.... We all get mud from different sources and for different reasons, but the outcome is the same for everyone, covering up our innate characteristics. And, mud is mud no matter how it gets tossed on.

All of this discussion may seem a bit hopeless and have one wondering how we all made it as far as we have if we grew up under such horrible conditions. Well, each of us has figured out a way to hold on to some aspects of our innate qualities. We have all learned how to hold on to at least part of our belief in our brilliance. We have learned how to deal with our emotions, finding the safest and best place to run, scream, holler, love. We have held on to our sense of power, zest. We would not have made it to whatever age one is and as intact as one may be without having held on to these traits about ourselves that came with us at birth. And... along the way, we all got some affirmation, validation, and permission to stay human. This is the concept of resistance — despite the forces around us, we all resisted the mud slinging to the best of our ability.

Assumption #3

The perpetuation of oppression is made possible by the conditioning of new generations of human beings into the role of being oppressed and the role of being oppressive.

Everyone gets socialized into both these roles. Those who receive the mistreatment are referred to as the target group. These people are socialized to become victims. Those who do not receive a particular form of mistreatment are referred to as the non-target group. People who are non-target on a particular issue are socialized to become perpetrators.

The conditions in this society that have groups divided from each other were set in place long before any of us were born. No one came into this world full of hate, desires to dominate, or beliefs of superiority. No one was born believing that they were less intelligent, less capable, or less deserving than someone else. There is not a one of us who is naturally an oppressor, for there is no such thing as an "oppressive gene." It is our assumption that it is not in anyone's biological makeup to be oppressive or to be oppressed.

What then can account for the vast divisions between groups? How did our society get to be the way it is in terms of racism, sexism, anti-semitism, ageism, heterosexism, and homophobia? What happened to divide people from each other? Who started it?

Our assumption is that each one of us has received conditioning from many aspects of society that teach us to be divided from one another. We have been taught to be in a role of being a victim of oppression or that of perpetrator. The roles teach us how to think, treat, and believe about others. Lessons we learn about who we are in relation to others becomes powerful glue that bonds a system together that perpetuates divisions between various groups. We all get taught these lessons by family members, peers, and the social institutions of our society. Look for a moment at the stories people have told us about how they learned, were conditioned, were taught to take on victim or perpetrator roles.

K. is a middle aged white female who grew up in Texas. She relates the following story:

My parents owned a restaurant in a town that practiced great segregation between Black and White. In fact, Black people were not allowed to eat in our restaurant. My father used to cook more food than could be served on any one day and with the extra food he would instruct me and my brothers and sisters to go out the back door and feed the "colored folks. I was learning that Black people are less deserving, and not quite human enough to sit in a restaurant.

L., a white man related this story:

I grew up in the South and was given the middle name of Leroy. Now the usual way to pronounce this name is Leeroy with the accent on the first syllable. But in my family we pronounced it Luroy, accent on the second syllable. The reason for pronouncing my middle name this way was stated and clearly understood by everyone in the family. Pronouncing it the usual way sounded too Black." I was being taught that you do not want to be anything like a Black person because there is something wrong with them.

Another young man, 18 years old and white, told this story of conditioning:

When I was little I used to play super heroes with my friends in the neighborhood. We would divide up the roles of who was to play the heroes and who was to play the villains. We tried not to allow girls to play with us because they would always mess up the fighting by trying to make peace." I was learning that women were inferior and that men had to learn to fight in order to be men.

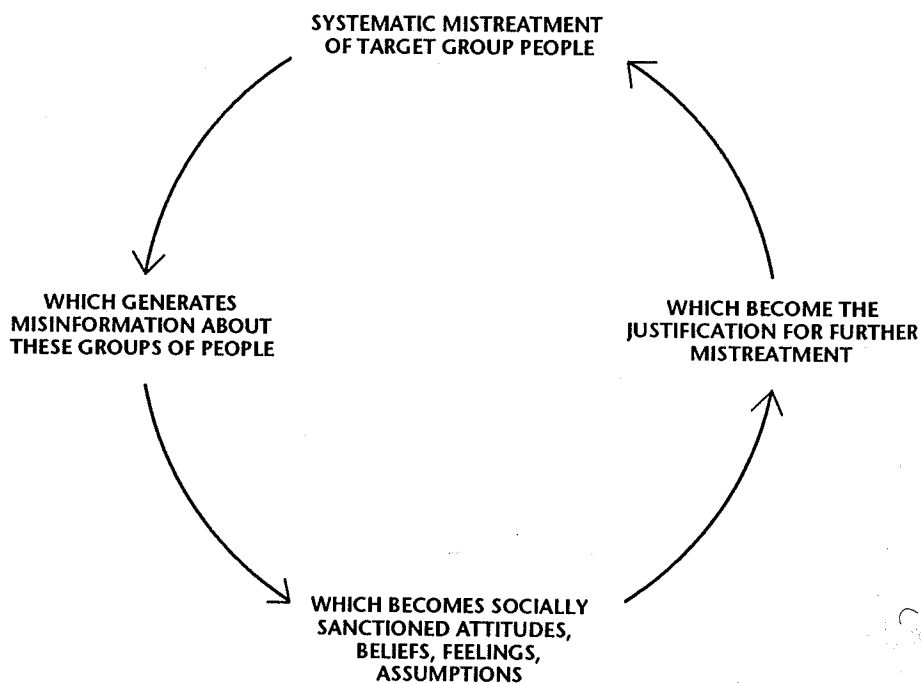
The father of a young son told this story:

When my son was a little over two years old he once said, "little boys grow up to be men don't they daddy." I replied "yes", and asked him what do little girls grow up to be. His answer was "they grow up to be girls." Where did he get this notion? How is it that by age two he had the concept that boys are men and women are girls?

Assumption #4

Oppression is perpetuated through force, the threat of force, and the recycling of misinformation and lies (sometimes called stereotypes) about the nature, history, and abilities of the target group. This misinformation is socially sanctioned and allows the non-target group to justify the continued mistreatment of the target group.

THE CYCLE OF OPPRESSION



The conditioning takes the form of generational recycling of misinformation about a particular group of people. Generation after generation pass on stereotypes, misinformation, or what we call lies about others. Below is a partial list of the misinformation or lies that are taught to us about various groups:

Blacks

- lazy
- uneducated
- on welfare
- drug addicts
- gang members
- to be feared
- violent

Asians

- smart
- don't show emotions (inscrutable)
- sneaky
- gangs
- taking over the country

Latinos

- alcoholics
- large families
- not intelligent
- only good at manual labor
- gangs
- dropouts
- dirty

Indians

- alcoholics
- savages
- violent
- all live on reservations
- primitive
- not intelligent

Women

- can't take pressure
- too emotional
- overly sensitive
- weak
- poor leaders

Gays/Lesbians/Bi-Sexuals

- sick
- perverted
- child molesters
- only interested in sex
- always looking to "turn" heterosexuals into homosexuals

Rural

- backwards
- not intelligent
- talk funny
- not motivated

Elderly

- not interested in anything anymore
- slow in their thinking
- can't remember things
- frail
- can't learn anything new

Children

- can't make good decisions
- not serious
- too young to understand
- frivolous

Disabled

- incapable
- not intelligent
- needy
- must always get help
- don't know what's going on around them

Poor

- lazy
- they like to be poor
- not intelligent
- only interested in a handout
- dirty, unclean

It is the misinformation about these various groups that leads to socially sanctioned attitudes, beliefs, feelings, and assumptions about them.

The cycle of oppression goes something like this: mistreatment leads to misinformation which leads to socially sanctioned attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors which leads to justification for further mistreatment which leads to mistreatment which leads to ... and so the cycle goes.

For example, if a young man learns misinformation about women that says they are weaker than men and will fall under pressure by becoming overly emotional and therefore ineffective, this same young man can justify why women should not be in combat, should not be in leadership positions, or would not make good company executives. The conditioning he has received about women enables him to believe that they will not be able to handle the pressure. This belief about women becomes socially sanctioned. That is, this young man will find support, encouragement, and reinforcement for believing this way. Socially sanctioned means that the person gets affirmed in their beliefs by society in general.

While looking at heterosexism and homophobia one can see that misinformation exists that gays, lesbians, and bi-sexuals are sick, perverted people. This misinformation is also taught throughout society such as in our families and social institutions. As the belief becomes sanctioned by these institutions, one begins to believe that homosexuals should not be on the cabinet of the President of the United States, should not be Boy Scout leaders, and should be kept away from children. Why - because we are conditioned to believe that they are sick people who molest children and always out to turn young people into homosexuals. The misinformation leads us to our beliefs, which get reinforced throughout society, which enables us to justify the mistreatment.

Two aspects of conditioning add to the difficulty of "unlearning" what we have learned. One, we get the misinformation from the very people who love and care about us. I have heard many workshop participants ask "why did my grandparents, parents, etc. teach me this awful stuff about other people?" The very fact that the initial conditioning comes from the very people who we loved, trusted, and depended upon makes for a painful realization. However, this realization is an important step in "unlearning" for we can then look at the conditioning generations before us received and understand why it was passed on to us.

The second aspect of conditioning that makes it difficult to unlearn is that the misinformation is combined with systematic hiding of facts that perpetuates the myths. The absence of facts leaves us with very few alternatives than to believe the lies. For example, history lessons in

schools are full of omissions about the traits, characteristics, abilities of Native Americans. In addition, these lessons hide facts about how Europeans really treated the indigenous peoples of this continent. Thus, the misinformation young people are taught about Indians being primitive, savages, etc. is reinforced by the absence of true information about how Native American's contributed to this society as well as how primitive, savage, uncaring European conquerors were.

Assumption #5

Each group targeted for oppression inevitably "internalizes" the mistreatment and the misinformation about itself.

Over time, the target group begins to believe the lies that pervade the society about one's group. This is called internalized oppression. Individual members of the target group begin to act, feel, see, and think of themselves in the ways society has dictated. Internalized oppression shows itself in a variety of ways. Internal effects include believing one is less intelligent, less articulate, less deserving. Self hatred and self doubt are results of internalized oppression. Intra-group conflicts that include hurtful behavior and interactions between members of one's group is another way internalized oppression shows itself.

Internalized oppression is always an involuntary reaction to the experience of oppression which originates from outside the group. That is, no one willingly accepted these beliefs. The conditioning to believe the misinformation about who we are begins before we are able to screen out the lies. Every target group member fights valiantly to resist internalizing these messages, but the onslaught of the ism is relentless, and eventually, through no fault of their own, they begin to wear the scars and misconceptions about themselves like ill-fitting garment.

Additional ways internalized oppression is manifested include:

- Trying to assimilate to "prove them wrong."
- Rigid refusal to assimilate which often results in giving up what one wants because it might be considered a "white thing," a "male thing," to do.
- Self blame for lack of success.

- Dependency — having been conditioned to see the non-target group as more powerful, target members will expect non-target people to “fix” the problem.
- Mistreating other members of one’s own group.
- Setting unrealistic standards for group inclusion manifesting in insisting one prove he/she is _____ enough (black, chicano, etc.)
- Explaining away oppressive and hurtful behaviors within the group under the guise of “culture.”

Assumption #6

People who are targets of any particular form of oppression have resisted and attempted to resist their oppression in any way they could.

From infancy to death human beings continue to put up a struggle when our own or other’s humanity is challenged or denied. When we first attempt to resist the messages that are coming at us, we often encounter more difficulty and become confused about our true nature. Target group members resist internalizing the misinformation that says they are less valuable, less intelligent, less beautiful, etc. Valiant attempts are made to prevent one from believing the lies. We learn to adapt modes of survival that help us at the time, but may not work for us in the future.

L. is a Native American who grew up on the reservation. She remembers at age five going into town with her grandmother and noticing that the White people always stared at them. Curious about why this was so, L. asked her grandmother for an explanation. Grandmother said, “White people are like the cows. They sit there and chew and stare.” To a five year old, this explanation made perfect sense and allowed L. to not think something was wrong with her for being stared at.

The act of resistance was Grandmother fighting off the lies that says something is wrong with Indians. She protected her grand daughter from internalizing these lies at age five. L. noticed that while this particular form of resistance worked for her as a child, it was not very useful to think of White people in this way as she became older.

Assumption #7

People who are the non-targets of any particular form of oppression have also resisted their socialization into the oppressive role.

Being socialized into the role of perpetuating mistreatment is a painful experience for people in the non-target group. Early in life, however, non-target people resisted the misinformation that said people from another culture/group are less. Young boys, for example, strongly resist messages that make young girls out to be less capable.

My three year old son Lucas was at his day care one day when a male teacher told him boys do not wear dresses. Lucas' instant response was "Uh uh, that's not true, boys can wear dresses if they want to!" The teacher tried for awhile to convince Lucas otherwise, but soon had to concede to his resistance to the message.

Teaching non-targets about their conditioning is something like trying to teach a fish the concept of wet.

Assumption #8

The perpetuation of any particular oppression requires that the pain of being socialized into either the target or non target role be forgotten or discounted. People believe that their conditioning was simply a "normal" part of growing up.

There are some commonalties of how conditioning looks for those in the non-target group as well as for those in the target group. For both, to perpetuate mistreatment requires the pain of being socialized be forgotten or discounted. This is revealed by people saying "I just don't remember how I learned this or that about myself or others."

I believe that a very strong survival strategy kicks in so that we can forget about our conditioning. We gradually think of what happened to us or what was taught to us as just normal. Normalizing is a very powerful process in that whatever is normalized becomes ok or righteous. When this occurs, one stops questioning the rationale behind the conditioning and instead accepts what is being taught. Being socialized into the victim or perpetrator role is a painful experience for everyone. Part of the conditioning experience is the misinformation that socialization into these roles is not painful. In some cases the pain is recognized for people in the target group, but not those who are non-targets.

There is an interesting scientific analogy to this particular assumption. If you were to put a frog in a pot of water and begin to slowly heat the pot, the frog will stay in until it cooks to death. If you first heat the pot and then put the frog in, it will immediately jump out of the water because of the danger of death. This is how society has conditioned each of us. We have become accustomed to the heat to the extent that we no longer recognize the water is boiling.

If, instead of being born young and impressionable we came into the world a young adult with full facilities, self esteem, etc. we would react to the conditioning process much like the frog placed in hot water. We would not accept the harmful messages about others. We would react with outrage to anyone attempting to put us in the pot.

Assumption #9

The conditioning process that leads to divisions between groups of people is catastrophic for both sides.

It's as if we are all on a cruise ship, and there is a leak in the bottom of the boat. Now, the people on the bottom are well aware of the leak and are doing everything they can to bail the water out and plug the hole so that the ship does not sink. Those on the next deck are hearing the noise, talking with people on the bottom and beginning to help out. People on the next level are getting a few rumors about the hole, but are not taking it very seriously, thinking if there is a problem someone will take care of it. And the folks in first class (the top deck) are completely oblivious to the problem. Meanwhile, the hole is getting bigger, more water is coming in than can be taken out, and the ship is going down. Everyone is going down with it, whether they know it or not.

Like the sinking cruise ship, the conditions of any ism are catastrophic for everyone.

Oppression has worked to divide us from each other so that we will not effectively coalesce to change the conditions that perpetuate mistreatment. One way this is manifested is by what we call the "ranking of oppression." Ranking oppressions is when one group believes that their oppression is worse than another's. This, however, ignores the conditioning process and presents a hopeless split between groups.

For those in non-target groups, this theory holds that the "positive reinforcements" and social rewards one receives for going along with their conditioning would not in itself be sufficient to secure acceptance of perpetuating misinformation and mistreatment of people in the target group. Referring back to Assumption #2, it is the existence of adultism and the mistreatment that every child experiences that opens the door or allows for one to perpetuate the mistreatment of another group. In other words, if it hadn't been done to us we would not do it to others.

Assumption #10

Pervasive messages as well as the conditioning process can be contradicted and replaced with new ways of interacting.

As our awareness increases of how oppression works and as we heal from the effects, we begin to set in motion a new process that conditions us to see everyone's full humanity. We look at the world around us, at other cultures, through a different lense. Once one develops this new vision, he/she can no longer view the world as they once did. Once one uncovers the mirror their sense of justice will shine and deflectors of new attempts to teach them injustice will be developed. Change is hard, but it can occur, and in fact does, on a daily basis.

Working Assumptions about the Process

Process Assumption #1

A respectful environment is desired by everyone and is possible to create. People want to live and work in such an environment.

In this society we learn how to create environments that are full of dread, fear, and uncertainty. Each of us experiences being thought less of, being told we are not worthy or not as good as someone else. We are all full of experiences that say the world, or at least aspects of it, are not safe. We learn to be competitive, to wield power over others, to be independent, to dominate — all ways that teach us how to create an unsafe environment.

Pick an environment around you. It may be a family setting, a school classroom, a worksite, peers, colleagues, or friends. How comfortable and safe is it to bring your full self to that environment? What do you not

dare reveal about yourself? What do you hold back from letting them know about you? Why do you hide this information? Usually the answer is because there is a lack of openness, trust, respect, and safety for you to be your complete self. The environment is not conducive to you bringing 100% of you. What would happen if you were to reveal your complete self to them?

So we each walk around hiding, sublimating, covering up, holding in various aspects of ourselves because the environments around us give clear messages that it is not safe to bring 100% of us. We have to consciously assess each particular environment to know what to let loose on and what to hold onto. Messages given to us say,

- *"You better not reveal _____ in this group."*
- *"You can only succeed if you act this way, so learn how to act."*
- *"You must put aside your self and get into the swing of things."*
- *"Be sure not to show any emotions."*
- *"Don't let them know what you are thinking."*

So what do we do? How do we survive in the environment? Well, we brilliantly figure out what part of our self is ok to bring to what setting. We get expert on adapting our personalities to the environments around us. We sometimes get confused, however, and bring out a part of us that is not welcomed in a particular setting. Having to select where one can bring his/her whole self, where one can only bring part, which part one can bring now, which part later, creates much discomfort.

This assumption holds that everyone desires a respectful environment for ourselves and others. Holding on to this assumption allows one to understand what is in the way of creating such an environment. This assumption allows us to let go of blame, anger, resentment of those who seem to be the creators of unsafe environments. Those in power of creating environments (parents, teachers, community leaders, business leaders, the President of the United States) are passing on what they have learned — and there has been very little teaching about creating respectful environments. But, if we can put this assumption into practice, it will be easier to understand why and how unsafe environments exist and how to create something different.

Process Assumption #2

Liberation work involves beginning with the individual then moving to the institutions. We must work from the inside out.

The conditions that maintain divisions between groups were set up long before anyone currently alive was born. Each and every one of us was taught how to maintain these divisions — lessons that were usually wrought with great pain and suffering. But through time, these lessons were presented to us as a “normal” part of growing up and thus the pain of the conditioning gets forgotten.

Many people ask for assistance on multicultural issues. They want to know how to work and live with people from different backgrounds. They want to know how to better serve diverse cultures. They want their organizations, institutions, etc. to become more responsive to the needs of diverse communities. What they say they want in terms of assistance is usually vague, unclear, and confusing at best. They say:

“We want to be more sensitive and aware of the issues.”

“We want to be able to attract more POC into the agency.”

“We want to get better at dealing with diverse populations.”

“We want to get set up to deal positively with the demographic changes occurring.”

“We want to take the next step in multiculturalism.”

Our assumption is that everyone needs to take a personal look at how the divisions have affected us personally before anything else can be accomplished. We must first pay attention to the individual before looking at the institution. This is what we mean by working from the inside out. We all have much grief to shed regarding how we have been divided from each other. This grief is imbedded in our unsuccessful attempts to resist the conditioning process. The grief is about being worn down by society in our attempts to fight off the messages that said someone else is less human, less capable, less deserving because of the color of their skin, gender, class, age, religion, sexual orientation, etc. The grief is about our attempts to intervene on injustice and being left isolated. The grief is about negative experiences we have had with members of various groups and the messages that were internally etched in our hearts from these experiences.

But in addition, we all have success stories of how we resisted the conditioning, how we fought off internalizing messages about ourselves.

and how we intervened to stop the mistreatment of others. This too is important "inside out" work to do — for it helps us notice hope versus despair.

What if each of us was able to intervene in every oppressive situation? What if we all knew who to call as a resource person to us when we got stuck? What if we were able to work through our discomfort with someone from a different cultural background? What if we had the confidence to try and learn how to communicate with someone who is different from us?

It is the misinformation about those different from us and our feelings about "failed" attempts to resist injustices towards others that must be shed in order to be able to think clearly about how to change an institution. Actually, would not institutional change follow from individual change? Are not institutions made of up individuals who create the structure, policies, etc?

This approach is about finding ways, facilitating people's reconnection to each other, that is, helping people re-discover each others humanity.

Process Assumption #3

A non-blameful approach will allow for maximum safety for one to change long held attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors towards others.

Several years ago a mother was arrested for child abuse after she forced her young child to stand outside wearing a pig mask on because he had been "bad." Community people throughout the entire area were outraged at her for doing such a hurtful act to her son. The cries from the community were to get this child away from this awful mother and punish her.

What level of change would result from this parent walking into a social service agency and getting clobbered with blame for being such an awful parent? This assumption holds that no one will be open to changing their ways when they are humiliated, blamed, or ridiculed for their actions.

While I agree that this child needed to be protected from such hurts, what good does it do to shower anyone with blame? Few seemed to focus on the parent analyzing what might have led her to such a drastic move.

What resources did she have to discipline in a more healthy way? Who taught her how to raise children? Where does she get support and guidance when things are hard?

The point is not to let anyone off the hook for their behavior, for we all need to be held accountable for our actions. However, change does not happen by banging someone over the head with demands, punishing them for their survival strategies, blaming them for how oppression looks on them. Change comes by being open to the experiences of the individual, listening to them well, finding where it gets hard for them, and searching for resources to help them. It means rising above the incident, believing that this person has been hurt in some way to bring on the behaviors or attitudes, and hold on to the expectation that they will change.

Process Assumption #4

Liberation is the dismantling of oppressive systems and healing from the effects of the conditioning and mistreatment. Liberation cannot be truly accomplished without the opportunity to heal from the past.

The conditioning process, whether we are target or non-target, is catastrophic for both sides. Each of us has been hurt by forces ripping us away from ourselves and others. Thus, a process of healing from what happened to us in the past is essential. For members of a target group, this healing takes the form of shedding layers upon layers of internalized oppression, ridding ourselves of the lies told about us, and putting mechanisms in place to protect us from internalizing this misinformation.

For non-targets, healing is about becoming guilt free and ceasing to blame ourselves for the conditioning we got about others. Ricky Sherover-Marcuse referred to non-target healing as grief work. She would say guilt is simply coagulated grief — guilt is the accumulated grief from not being able to effectively intervene when we saw mistreatment occurring or when we were getting conditioned to believe someone else was less human. The healing work for each of us helps to restore our humanity.

CHAPTER 3

Definitions

Introduction

The terms defined below, along with the theoretical assumptions, lay the foundation for this approach to eliminating oppression. Is it necessary for everyone to agree on the definitions? The answer is yes and no: Yes if you are going to use this particular approach with others; no if you are merely exploring this framework as a participant in a workshop. It has been useful to define these terms to workshop participants so a more complete understanding of the framework occurs. I have found it valuable to tell participants I am not looking for agreement in these definitions, but for understanding. Those who have difficulty accepting these definitions are better able to stay with the process and consider this framework when they are given the option to not have to agree, only understand. The terms defined when working with people using this framework are:

- Definition of oppression
- Target/non-target
- Reverse oppression
- Liberation

Definition of Oppression

Oppression is defined as the systematic, institutional, pervasive, routine mistreatment of individuals on the basis of their membership in various groups which are disadvantaged by imbalances of power in society. Oppression is evidenced by institutional as well as individual acts of mistreatment. Institutional mistreatment manifests in society's political, educational, health care, employment, legal, and economic institutions, to name a few. Individual mistreatment is evidenced by violence, invalidation, denial, and non-recognition of one's complete humanness.

Systematic means that oppression has an order to it. There is a cycle which begins with the circulation of lies, stereotypes, and misinformation about various groups of people. This misinformation leads to socially sanctioned attitudes, beliefs, and assumptions about others. These

attitudes lead to the justification of further mistreatment, which results in continued mistreatment. The cycle allows for actions, policies, and behaviors that put and keep a group of people without social and economic power.

Institutional mistreatment means that individuals and groups are treated differently, have less social and economic power with the very institutions that govern their lives. Examples of institutional mistreatment are inequalities in educational opportunity, health and medical treatment, economic disparities, and differential treatment in the judicial system. Consider the following examples of institutional mistreatment:

Blacks and Latinos are more likely to get severe forms of punishment on the job (fired or demoted) while white workers get suspended or pay docked (study by the California Personnel Board).

Hate crime statistics show that 60% of the nation's hate crimes are prompted by racial bias and that Blacks were the main target of these crimes.

African American and Latino students are far less likely to attend college than white students.

Women are hired as often as men for entry-level economics jobs in the federal government but after five years of employment they receive fewer promotions than men.

"Minorities" living in California earn less than their white counterparts. Average full time pay for whites in 1989 was \$36,468, compared to \$30,027 for Asians, \$21,423 for Latinos, and \$26,898 for blacks.

The state of Colorado approved an amendment to forbid the passage of any laws protecting gays from discrimination.

Fifteen percent of all adolescents, almost 5 million youths, are without health insurance — and a majority of them are Latino and African American.

Black homeowners in the city often pay higher insurance premiums for less coverage than whites with similar incomes living in similar settings.

The average weekly wage for men in the United States is \$504 compared to \$379 for women.

Black babies are born with lower birth weights and die before their first birthday at rates higher than White babies. For Blacks there were 10.2 deaths per 1,000 births compared to 5.4 per 1,000 births among whites.

There are more Blacks and Latinos in prison and on parole than any other ethnic group. One out of every three black males aged 20-29 is in prison, on parole or probation. Black males are jailed 16 times more often than whites in San Francisco.

Until the 1992 elections, there were only two women in the 104 members of the United States Senate;

Blacks and Latinos are refused loans for homes at a higher rate than whites even though they have adequate incomes and good credit.

Those who are on the down side of the power imbalance do not have influence or abilities in the society to change the economic conditions that would give them stable and sufficient incomes. They do not have power to create conditions where each person receives adequate education, health care, and legal representation. They do not have the ear of those in power to effect change in the conditions that perpetuate the disadvantages.

Pervasive oppression means that mistreatment occurs in all corners of society, everywhere one looks. Oppression is woven into the fabric of our society. As it is impossible to look at a rug and follow any one thread that makes it whole, it is impossible to look at society and simply pick out the "bad" or "evil" threads that perpetuate oppression and remove them. Oppression is woven into the policies and actions of society's health care, political, economic, educational, legal, housing, employment, media, entertainment, and religious institutions.

Routine means that mistreatment occurs every day, at all hours. This does not mean that any one individual experiences oppression every minute of every day. Rather, when one is not being targeted at the moment, the effects of mistreatment are always present. For example:

One of the ways women have been victimized by sexism is to be attacked, raped, and beaten by men. The result has been a fear of men that every young girl learns at one time or another. As a result, women are routinely afraid to walk to their cars at night. It does not matter whether they have been hurt or assaulted for this fear to exist. It is always present. Therefore, each day brings another experience of fear as they walk to their cars.

Similarly, a day does not pass where a person of color does not feel strange, looked at suspiciously, made fun of, etc. If this does not occur on any particular day, people of color are always waiting for it to happen and thus walk around with an edge of fear and upset at impending doom.

Target/Non-Target

Look at the grid on this page. What do you notice about it? What do the groups on the right side have in common? How about those on the left? Notice where you fall on the grid. Are you a member of several groups on the right? Which groups do you belong to on the left side?

TARGET	NON-TARGET
Women	Men
Children	Adults
People of Color	Whites (Euro-Americans)
Jews	Gentiles
Gay/Lesbian/Bi-sexual	Heterosexual
45 Years old and older	30-45 Years old
Under Age 21	Over Age 21
Immigrant	U.S. Born
Working Class/Poor Background	Owning/Middle Class Background
Disabled	Able Bodied
Parents non-college educated	College Educated Parents
Single Parent	Two Parent Family
Adopted/Foster Child	Not Adopted/Foster
English is Second Language	English Primary Language
Catholic	Protestant
"Fat"	"Average or thin"
↓	↓

We call this the Power Grid. It represents a partial list of groups in this society referred to as Target and Non-Target Groups. Target groups are those that are on the down side of the economic and social power imbalance while non targets are on the up side. Target groups are the recipients of both individual and institutional mistreatment as defined above. Non-targets are in a role of perpetuating the mistreatment and generally fall into a privileged position in terms of social and economic power compared to the target group.

Do you notice that you are on both sides of the grid depending on the social group being identified? All of us are on both sides. Everyone has experienced being targeted for mistreatment at one time or another. If you are having trouble finding yourself on the target side, simply look at the "child" category. All children experience being targeted regardless of one's ethnicity, gender, or class background. In fact, we often refer to this as the first oppression and the one that sets in motion the mistreatment of other groups.

In addition, we have all been members of non target groups. These groups generally do not receive day-to-day, systematic mistreatment. White people do not receive institutional mistreatment due to their ethnicity. Men do not have to watch out for their safety every day in the same way women do. Men can expect to earn the going wage while women are still paid 70 cents on the dollar. Thus, non-targets are the recipients of certain privileges simply because they belong to a non-target group.

Some people are targeted in many groups while others are primarily members of non target groups. Some groups are those we are born into and cannot change no matter what we do to our looks, clothing, accents, way of speech, where we live. If you are born a person of color, you will remain on the target side your entire life (that is until our world does away with racism). No matter how hard we try, we remain a member of this group.

For other groups, we either begin as a member of this group or become a member and then at some point move out of this group. This is true for class and age target groups. We were all children once and as an adult have moved out of the target position into a role of perpetrator. Whereas once we were victims, we are now perpetrators. Some people move out of class backgrounds where they used to be in the target group and are now non-targets.

Reverse Oppression

The notion of "reverse" discrimination/oppression often arises in the work. It is not unusual for someone from the non-target group to come out "what about me - I have been the victim of racism/sexism/etc." However, under our definition of oppression, reverse "isms" do not exist. Remember, the definition is institutional, systematic, pervasive, and routine mistreatment. Thus, although there are many instances where a target group member mistreats a non-target person, it is not useful to call this reverse oppression.

For example, in all the work we have done, we have yet to find a woman who has not been mean, cruel, insensitive, and perhaps abusive to at least one man at some point in her life. Is this "reverse sexism?" No, for no matter how mean and cruel she may be towards a man, she is still on the down side of social, economic, and political power as compared to men. She still makes less money on the dollar, she is still victimized routinely by men, she is still not well represented in power positions, etc. She simply does not have the power to wield over men.

Liberation

Liberation is both the undoing of the effects and the elimination of the causes of social oppression. The achievement of human liberation will require far reaching changes at the institutional level and at the level of group and individual interactions.

ICE BREAKERS

Introduction

Purpose: Whereas the work involved in breaking down barriers and building alliances is often very difficult, any workshop on these issues should allow for fun and play. People need opportunities to laugh and enjoy one another while working through tough issues. Those doing deep personal work that is accompanied by various emotions need to get their attention off of the subject from time to time in order to be able to move the next step. Ice breakers help to do this. In addition, ice breakers serve to help participants get acquainted with each other. Some ask people to reveal certain beliefs, values, or life events to others in the group while other activities are simply fun.

Placement: Ice breakers should be used throughout the workshop. Particular points where they work well are:

- the beginning of the workshop;
- after breaks;
- when transitioning from one topic to another;
- when a lot of emotional work has occurred;
- after meals;
- when the energy or participation level of the group is low.

Reactions: Much laughter, fun, some feel tentative at being playful. Relieves the tension and helps get the energy moving. People tend to like ice breakers even if they moan and groan about doing them.

Facilitation Hints

1. The developmental stage of the group should be considered when selecting an ice breaker. For example, an ice breaker in the beginning of a workshop where participants know very little about each other should be low threatening allowing each individual to be as revealing as they wish. It would not be appropriate when the group is in an early stage of development to ask people to share deep, inner experiences, beliefs, or values.
2. As the group becomes closer and more intimate, ice breakers that ask for more personal openness can be used.

3. For some people, playing games where they must move, games that produce a lot of laughter, games involving touching, and games that lead to some embarrassment can be threatening. Do not assume that the only type of ice breakers that are threatening are those that ask for deep, verbal, sharing.
4. Be aware of the physical abilities and disabilities of the participants. If you are doing a physically active ice breaker and you have disabled people in the group, ask them how it would be to participate or watch the ice breaker. If they are comfortable with it, you may proceed. If they are not comfortable, you need to do a different ice breaker.
5. If you have participants with invisible disabilities (you should always assume you have at least one such person), tell the group what you are doing before beginning the ice breaker and give people the option to not participate.
6. Do not let the group's energy intimidate you into **not** doing ice breakers. Remember that conducting ice breakers is critical to the success of the workshop. They are just as critical as the Power Shuffle.

Ice Breakers - Partial List

1. Body Parts
2. Elephant, Palm Tree, Giraffe
3. I Love My Neighbor
4. Hug Tag
5. Hello, My Name Is Jean (Gene).
6. Electric Handshake
7. Follow the Leader
8. Smile If You Love Me
9. Hokey Pokey
10. Log Role
11. Hey Look There's A Bear
12. Rain Forest
13. Theater Greetings
14. Top of Hand Tag
15. Barnyard

PRACTICE DYAD

Introduction

Purpose: The purpose of the dyad is to allow everyone to state aloud what is going on with them at the moment. It is usually impossible in the large group to hear from everyone, but it is critical to the success of the workshop that people process their thoughts, feelings, and reactions aloud. Doing this helps participants to move through barriers, tell their stories, heal, make room for new thinking, etc. Getting the "stuff" outside of oneself is how movement takes place on any issue. It is not as important for people to speak to everyone as it is to tell at least one other person of their experiences in the moment.

This method sets up a communication pattern where one person speaks at a time while their partner simply listens and encourages the speaker to say more. Most of us have had experiences where we have something important to discuss and someone else interrupts or dominates the conversation. This method prevents this from happening and creates safety in that people agree to listen knowing they will get their turn to talk.

Placement: The practice dyad should be used early in the workshop, shortly after introductions and agreements.

Dyads can be used at virtually any point in the workshop. However, it is of utmost importance to use one after each experiential exercise. Participants should not be left at any time without an opportunity to openly share what is going on for them. In addition, dyads should be used when, in the facilitators judgement, the group is expressing a lot of tension or someone has done intense emotional work. Finally, dyads should be used to allow the facilitator time to regroup, take a breather, gather thoughts, etc. There have been many times when the group has opened a very emotional, intense door that was not in the plan of the workshop and the facilitator called a dyad simply to have time to think about what to do next.

Reactions: Some like the opportunity to speak without interruption. Others are uncomfortable not verbally responding to their partner or not getting any verbal response when it is their turn to speak. Some just do not like the structure because it feels unnatural. And others are thankful for the opportunity to say what they think and feel without being led in any direction by the listener.

Facilitation Hints

- 1) Demonstrating a "good" and "bad" way to do it helps people see the difference and quickly teaches everyone how to do dyads in this model.
- 2) Be prepared to say how to conduct the dyad without cross talk.
- 3) In processing the activity, some people may say it feels awkward and artificial to do dyads this way. Thank them for their feelings and ask them to just try doing it this way despite any uncomfortableness they may have.

Practice Dyad - Instructions

1. Tell them you are going to demonstrate a communication activity and ask for a volunteer to work with you.
2. Bring two chairs into the middle of the group and ask the volunteer to sit down across from you.
3. Tell the rest of the group to simply watch what happens in this demonstration.
4. Ask your partner to talk about what they did this past week.
5. After a minute of listening, begin to do and say things that are distracting and clearly show you are not really interested in what he/she has to say.
6. End this part of the demonstration after a few minutes and ask people to comment on what they saw. Tell them the obvious, that this is not the way to do a dyad.
7. Repeat the dyad, this time modeling how to listen
 - each person has uninterrupted time to speak;
 - facilitator will call switch when it is time for the listener to now speak;
 - the listener is to encourage the speaker to go on.
8. Ask participants to comment on what they saw. Break them into dyads giving them two minutes each to discuss a topic (eg. "autobiography").
9. Process by asking people to comment on how it felt to listen to their partner without interrupting. After a few responses, ask them how it was to speak for two minutes without interruption.

POWER SHUFFLE

Introduction

- Purpose:** To demonstrate how we have all been divided from each other simply because we belong to various groups, to allow participants to see the absurdity of these divisions, and to notice how it feels to be separated. This exercise is about power and divisions, not differences. The Power Shuffle serves as an anchor to the oppression context settings allowing the facilitator to draw on the experience in the exercise to present the theory of this model.
- Placement:** This exercise is the most important experiential activity in this model. It should be conducted early in the workshop, especially if the facilitator only has one day or less with the group. During weekend workshops, the Power Shuffle typically occurs on Saturday morning.
- Reactions:** This exercise can bring to the surface many feelings (anger, hurt, resentment, pride, isolation, confusion, singled out, curious, sad, exposed, self conscious, lucky, protective, guilt, ashamed, embarrassed). Some participants have a tendency to "lash out" at the facilitators saying that they came here to get closer to other people, not to be separated and that the exercise did nothing but increase separation. Others may feel as though old wounds have been opened and resent the facilitator for reminding them of past hurts.

Facilitation Hints

- 1) It is important to remember that the participants are not being mistreated or receiving new hurts during the power shuffle, but that the exercise is triggering memories of past experiences. The exercise does not create the above feelings, everyone is walking around feeling this way all the time.
- 2) With any of the above reactions, the facilitator must simply listen to the various responses and not become defensive. Remember the purpose of the exercise is to get participants to see the absurdity of the separation and to notice how it feels to be separated. The facilitator will have ample opportunity during the context settings to speak to participant's reactions.

- 3) The primary thing for the facilitator to watch is for all participants to have moved to the target side at least one time. Pay attention to the white men in the group and be sure to call categories that may apply to them. Once the white men have moved, you know everyone has also moved at least once.
- 4) There is no particular order to calling categories, however, it is helpful to get everyone to move as early in the exercise as possible. Therefore, again responding to the white men, call a few categories early in the exercise that may apply to them.

Power Shuffle - Instructions

1. Tell participants the name of the exercise and the purpose.
2. Ask everyone to stand and gather at one end of the room.
3. Say that you will be reading a list of categories and you would like them to move across the room if they are a member of the group being called.
4. Say this is not an exercise about "coming out" and that each participant needs to only move if they are comfortable and safe enough to publicly identify with a particular group. No one is being forced to move across the room.
5. Some of the categories called will be obvious in that everyone will know who is a member of that group and who is not. It may look a little peculiar with those categories if someone doesn't move, but that is OK. Other categories are not so obvious and each participant will have to decide for her/himself whether they belong to that group or not.
6. There is no middle ground. The facilitator will not tell people what to do, so participants must figure out for themselves what a particular category means and whether or not they belong to it.
7. Ask them to do the activity in silence. The reason for silence is to allow each person to stay with their own thoughts and feelings without distraction or interruption from others. Resist the temptation to talk.
8. State that they are to simply notice their own thoughts and feelings as they go through the exercise. Notice how it feels to be separated. State that they may see others having feelings during the exercise (such as sadness via tears) and if this happens just to notice it.
9. After you read each category, ask them to look at who is with them, who is across the room, and what they are thinking and feeling .
10. Give each group approximately 10 seconds to stand across the room then ask them to move back with everyone else.
11. Tell them when only 3 or 4 more categories are left. Be sure to end with the category "child." Break them into diads to discuss their feelings as they participated in the exercise.

12. Before processing there experience in the large group, ask them to state (as you record on chart paper) feelings that came up for them during the exercise.

Power Shuffle Categories:

1. woman
2. 25 years old or younger
3. 45 years old or older
4. raised in a working class home
5. African heritage
6. Asian/Pacific Islander
7. Latino/Latinas
8. Native American/Indian
9. Middle Eastern Heritage
10. Jewish
11. raised poor/ever received public assistance
12. from a home where alcohol/drugs were a problem
13. held back in school/tracked for non-college prep
14. immigrant
15. have a hidden/obvious physical disability or suffered from a catastrophic illness
16. gay, lesbian, bi-sexual (may need to call "or family member is...")
17. first language other than english
18. raised catholic
19. ever been called fat (not if you feel fat)
20. raised in single parent home or are a single parent
21. have ever been incarcerated, part of juvenile or adult justice system
22. you or family member ever been labeled mentally ill
23. grew up in a home where there was violence
24. veteran of armed services
25. parents are non-college educated
26. mixed heritage
27. part of an inter-racial marriage or relationship
28. you were adopted or foster child
29. live in a rural area
30. left handed
31. ever been a child

TARGET VISUALIZATION

Introduction

Purpose: This is sometimes referred to as a resistance exercise because the purpose is for participants to learn that everyone has been targeted for mistreatment and everyone has resisted the best way they could.

Placement: The Target Visualization is conducted after the General Context Setting in the large group. Sometimes it is more effective to conduct this exercise in the White ethnic group.

Reactions: The exercise asks participants to remember a time they were targeted for mistreatment by a member of a non-target group. This produces understanding and empathy for others and makes the theoretical point that everyone is an expert in both the target and non-target experience. It can be an emotional exercise since it draws on past experiences. Participants have said that the part on resistance and allies helped them to be less self-blaming regarding the incident.

Facilitation Hints

- 1) It is important to move slowly through the exercise so that participants have time to remember their experience.
- 2) Some find it difficult to find a category where they have been targeted. If so, have them remember a time they were mistreated as a child.

Target Visualization - Instructions

1. Have everyone take a deep breath, get comfortable in their chairs, and close their eyes.
2. Remind them of the various target categories on the power grid and ask them to pick a target category that they are a member of (if people are having difficulty finding a category, have them select the category "child").
3. Have them remember a time where they were being mistreated (something said or done to them) by someone from the non-target group. Remember:
 - who it was doing the mistreatment,
 - who was there,
 - where you were at the time,
 - what was said or done,
 - what was the tone of voice of the person mistreating them,
 - what did he/she look like
4. Have them remember how they felt or thought as they were being targeted. How has this feeling stayed with them even to this day. What changed for you after that experience.
5. Ask them to remember how they resisted the mistreatment. Remind them that resistance can be an action, thought, words, etc.
6. Ask them to imagine that if someone from the same non-target group as the person hurting them could have intervened, what would they have wanted that person to say or do?
7. Ask them how their resistance would have been different had an allie been there to lend support.
8. Tell them to open their eyes when they are ready and come back to the group. Once everyone is back, put them in a diad for four minutes each. In the diad have them share their experience and talk about how they carry the experience with them and how they resisted.
9. Once the diads are completed, ask a few individuals to share their experience with the entire group. Be sure to ask them about their resistance.

NON-TARGET VISUALIZATION

Introduction

Purpose: As with the Target Visualization, this is also referred to as a resistance exercise. The purpose is for participants to learn that just as everyone has been targeted for mistreatment, so has each of us been in the non-target group.

This visualization also helps participants recognize how they learned misinformation about target group members and how they resisted this early learning about target group people.

Placement: The Non-Target Visualization is conducted after the General Context Setting or in one of the non-target caucus groups.

Reactions: These memories can be buried deep and so normalized that some participants may have trouble doing this exercise.

Facilitation Hints

1. It is important to move slowly through the exercise so that participants have time to remember their experience.

Non-Target Visualization - Instructions

1. Have everyone take a deep breath, get comfortable in their chairs, and close their eyes.
2. Remind them of the various non-target categories on the power grid and ask them to pick a non-target category of which they are a member.
3. Have them remember a time where they were being taught something about a target group by someone from the non-target group. Remember:
 - who it was doing the teaching,
 - who else was there,
 - where you were at the time,
 - what was said or done,
 - what was the tone of voice of the person(s),
 - what did he/she look like
4. Have them remember how they felt or thought from this experience. How has this feeling stayed with them even to this day. What changed for you after that experience.
5. Ask them to remember how they resisted. Remind them that resistance can be an action, thought, words, etc.
6. Ask them to imagine that if someone from their same non-target group could have intervened, what would they have wanted that person to say or do?
7. Tell them to open their eyes when they are ready and come back to the group. Once everyone is back, put them in a diad for four minutes each. In the diad have them share their experience and talk about how they carry the experience with them and how they resisted.
8. Once the diads are completed, ask a few individuals to share their experience with the entire group. Be sure to ask them about their resistance.

TARGET GROUP SPEAK OUT

Introduction

- Purpose:** To increase communications and the building of relationships between target and non-target people. For non-targets to have an opportunity to listen to the experiences of target people and to learn what they can do as allies. For target members to experience being listened to by non-targets.
- Placement:** This exercise is part of the alliance building section of a workshop. It usually comes towards the end of the workshop after participants have been with each other awhile and a level of openness and safety has been created. The Speak Out exercise follows a context setting on alliance building.
- Reactions:** This can be a challenging exercise to facilitate. Members of the non-target group in the audience may try to interrupt the speak out. Those speaking out may insist on being given more time. Experience has shown the following reactions from participants:
- feeling a sense of power from speaking powerfully
 - tears of sadness and joy from being listened to
 - anger at the non-target group
 - relief from getting it out
 - feeling grateful for this valuable learning experience
 - grateful for knowing more of what to do to intervene
 - guilt
 - non-targets sometime desire to speak out too ("what about how they have hurt me?")
 - resistance to doing the exercise because of not wanting to hold the non-target people present accountable ("they didn't do anything to me.")
 - fear of being yelled at for the past.

Facilitation Hints

1. For the most part, the Speak Out exercise should not be conducted without target and non-target group caucuses.

Target groups need to spend time working out their own issues within their group before being fully able to speak to non-targets. For targeted people, issues of internalized oppression have kept them from resolving issues within their group and experiences of mistreatment have kept them from speaking to non-targets in a powerful, non-victim way.

Non-target people need time to work through feelings of shame, guilt, frustration, anger, etc. at the target group or the system that has orchestrated this division. Non-targets need an opportunity with members of their own group to look at how they perpetuate this oppression, to become aware of the misinformation they carry about the target group, and to recognize how they have resisted the learning of misinformation. Only then will they be able to fully listen to a speak out.

- 2) Facilitators need to be bold to keep participants following the rules of the exercise.
- 3) Explain to them that this exercise is designed to reverse the power imbalance that usually keeps targeted people from honestly speaking out and non-targets from listening.
- 4) Characterize the exercise as a gift for each group: it is a gift for non-targets to hear directly and honestly from targets; it is a gift for targets to have an opportunity to speak to allies.
- 5) The length of each speak out can depend on the size of the group. In general, give each ethnic caucus 10 minutes to speak out, and three minutes for non-target allies to report back (this works well if the caucus has anywhere up to 20 people in it. Give two to three more minutes if there are more).
- 6) For women, especially if the group is larger than 20, it works well to do 10 minutes on the first two questions, allowing for report backs of two to three minutes, and then 3-5 minutes for the last question, again followed by a report back.
- 7) If non-target members interrupt the speak out, the facilitator must gently, but firmly ask them to just listen.

- 8) In report backs, non-target members may paraphrase what they heard, apologize to the group, or say "I will never do that..." The facilitator must firmly remind them to use the words they heard and to not add anything. If necessary, explain that it is not useful to hear paraphrasing, apologies, etc. and that the power of the exercise comes in stating exactly what was heard.
- 9) With ethnic group speak outs, sometimes members of another ethnic group will report back what they heard (for example: African-Americans are speaking out; a Latino starts to say what he heard). Remind them that this is time for the non-targets to report back and that in a few minutes everyone will have a chance to say what they heard.
- 10) If you are dealing with more than one oppression issue in the workshop, there are a few options of conducting speak outs. One is to conduct the speak out in the order of which you addressed the issues. For example, if the workshop looked at racism and sexism and you addressed racism first, then start with ethnic group speak outs and end with sexism. Another option is to conduct speak outs in the reverse order of the issues addressed.
- 11) When conducting ethnic group speak outs, the most effective order is:
 - a) African Americans /Blacks
 - b) Asians, Pacific Islanders
 - c) Latinos/Latinas
 - d) Native Americans/Indians

We have used this order for several reasons: One, it is alphabetical which makes it easier to justify when someone feels as though the most important group goes first, least important last. Second, we have discovered from past experience that African Americans are excellent role models to the other ethnic groups on speaking-out. African-Americans can often set the tone for a powerful speak-out.

Target Group Speak Out - Instructions

1. Explain the process and rules of the exercise, specifically telling them the purpose of it.
2. Ask the first target group to come to the front of the room. Make sure there is a visual separation between the target and non-target groups, but not too much distance so that everyone can be heard.
3. Tell the target group that you will read all three questions first, just so they hear them and then that you'll read each one as they are to answer them.
4. Remind them that their non-target allies will be reporting back as precisely as possible what they heard, so that it is important that they speak out with short, concise sentences so their statements can be repeated with accuracy.
5. Tell the target group that they will have 10 minutes total to speak out, roughly three minutes per question. Explain that you will keep time and move them to the each question when appropriate.
6. Ask them to share the time with others in their group so that everyone gets an opportunity to speak out.
7. Tell the allies to listen to the speak out and once it is finished they will have a few minutes to say what they heard.
8. Begin the speak out reading all three questions. Then have them answer the first question: "What do you want your allies to know about you and your group?" (give 3 minutes to respond).
9. After 3 minutes, read the second question: "What do you never want to see, hear or have happen again to you or a member of your group?" (again, give them three minutes to respond.)
10. After another 3 minutes, read the third question: "What do you expect from your allies in order to end this oppression?" (allow the rest of the time to respond).

11. Once time is up, say "that's time" and thank the group. If someone insists on continuing, you have to decide what to do. Options are to be equally insistent that we have to go on and ask them to hold on to what they wish to say, or, allow that individual to say one more thing. Ask the target group to remain up front for the report back from allies.
12. Ask everyone to take a deep breath (model it, or they may not do it).
13. Turn to the audience and say that the first half of the report back is from non-target allies and that after a few minutes everyone will be invited to report back. Ask the non-target allies to report back what they heard as closely as possible, without paraphrasing. Make sure to say who the allies are (eg. "this is for the white allies"). If there is confusion as to why only the allies report back first, explain again why the exercise is done this way.
14. Begin the report back suggesting the following phrase be used: "I heard you say that..." (allow 2-3 minutes for report back).
15. After the report back, thank the target group and ask them to return to their seats. Then call up the next target group.
16. After the last report back, have everyone do a dyad: two minutes apiece talking about what feelings are up for them from the exercise. (if you are conducting several speak outs, you may want a dyad in the middle of the exercise to allow people to release feelings so that they can be present for the next group).
17. Process the exercise with the large group getting their reactions.

ONE ON ONE ALLIANCE BUILDING WITH A NON-TARGET

Introduction

Purpose: This exercise brings attention to those in the non-target group. It helps non-target allies heal as well as assisting them to take another step in being an allie to those in the target group. Overall, this exercise should help the non-target identify ways in which he is an allie, what he has done as an allie, where he has made mistakes.

Placement: This work can be done after the speak-outs (if it isn't too late in the evening) or the next morning in the community meeting, after the last sharing group.

Reactions:

- Often those in the audience will be thinking and feeling about their own ability to be allies as they watch whomever is working in front of the group.

- People tend to do a lot of their own work while someone's up in front--often people will be crying/emoting in some way as they watch.

- Since the work is with only one person, some may feel left out by not getting the attention they want to work on their own issues.

- The person getting the one to one work often reports great learning, healing, and confidence in working on oppression issues.

- Feelings of relief, validation, affirmation that they can, have, and should be working on this particular oppression issue.

- Non-targets (especially those who have been non-target throughout the workshop) may have anger and/or resentment from having to listen to all of the speak-outs. They may start this exercise with a "what about me?" feeling.

Facilitation Hints

1. Volunteers are solicited by the facilitator and one individual is selected to do some work in front of the

entire group. Ideally, this work should be done with a white, heterosexual, gentile (non-Jewish) male.

2. Keep an eye out during the workshop for potential candidates. If you have identified someone you want to work with, ask him privately, before the community meeting if he would like to work with you in front of the group on being a better allie. If he flatly refuses, you'll have to find someone else by asking, during the community meeting, for a volunteer who wants to try it. In the latter instance, the facilitator is still looking for a non-target person.
3. This is one of the more difficult exercises to instruct. The facilitator needs to "fish" around a bit to discover areas where healing needs to occur. Thus, the instructions are general guidelines and not meant to prescribe a script. The power of this exercise comes from the individual having an experience that contradicts what he has learned about himself and others.
4. Keep in mind the reason we work one on one with a non-target. Remember the theory behind this method so that you can stay focused and delighted with the person, **no matter what they say**. Remember, it is impossible to create alliances among people if they do not have an opportunity to speak about how they have been impacted by the conditions of social oppression. As increasing attention is given to target groups (rightfully so since target group issues have been hidden or ignored for years) people in non-target groups begin to feel alienated, guilty, blamed, etc. Working one to one with a non target bridges the gaps that they feel as the target group begins to assert more and more power.

One on One With Non-Target - Instructions

1. After you have brought him up in front of the group, ask if you can hold his hand.
2. Instruct the audience on their role: ask them to pay close attention to the person up front, watching with an attitude of delight and respect.
3. Ask him to look around, and notice how it feels to be up in front of the group. Let him talk about this for a minute.
4. Ask him what group he would like to work on being a better allie, (for example- racism or sexism). If he can't decide, you can remind him that he will of course be working on both by choosing just one this time--the work is applicable to all social oppressions.
5. Depending on the oppression he chooses, ask him to tell everyone how he has been a great allie so far to (people of color, women). Be sure to stop him when he starts to qualify what he's saying (well, I did this, but I didn't do this and this). You can ask him to restate just the positive. What characteristics or traits does he have that makes him a wonderful allie to ____.
6. Have him talk about the conditioning he received about people in the target group. What does he remember learning about them? Who taught? What misinformation has he learned?
7. Have him talk about what he felt as a younger person learning this information. What was his response to the learning? Look for examples of hurtful experiences here, that is, how has the conditioning been painful to him?
8. Have him select one or two people from the target group that he wishes to get closer to. Direct him to repeat appropriate statements that contradict the things that he was taught never to say, or has always wanted to say but couldn't. For example, direct him to say, "hey, I got a little misinformation about you when I was growing up," or "I want to get to know you better," etc.
9. From time to time ask him what he is feeling right now. Also, remind him to remember the qualities he has that makes him a wonderful allie.
10. Ask him to identify a few things that are still in his way of being an allie to _____. Get specific. Ask him what he is most worried about, what is the worst thing that could happen.

11. Have him talk about the ways he resisted the conditioning and how he continues to resist. Have him talk about times he was targeted for mistreatment and what messages he internalized about himself.
12. Close by asking him to once again state his qualities that make him a wonderful allie.
13. Call for a two minute diad.
14. Process with entire group.

STAND UP/SIT DOWN EXERCISE: RACISM

Introduction

- Purpose:** To show the pervasiveness of the mistreatment of people of color which is accomplished by the entire group witnessing the number of people of color who stand up for the statements. Experience has shown that all or most people of color will stand up for each statement.
- Placement:** This stand up/sit down exercise is for use in the large group during the portion of the workshop focusing on racism. It can be used either before the context setting on racism or on alliance building.
- Reactions:** There have been varied reactions to this exercise. For the target group, some feel a sense of strength from seeing that they are not alone in their experience. Others feel protective of white people and upset at the separations. White people have responded with guilt and embarrassment for being white and realizing what people of color have faced. Some have become angry because they have been hurt by people of color and want this to be acknowledged too.

Facilitation Hints

1. Although it may bring up feelings for some, we have found the exercise to be effective with an allie (white person) facilitating. Any feelings brought to the surface from this should be allowed and acknowledged.
2. Letting the group know the purpose is crucial to create a better sense of safety for both people of color and whites.
3. Setting the context for this exercise means explaining that the intent is to show the pervasiveness of mistreatment to people of color. This does not mean that whites have not been hurt too or that all whites have been "guilty" of all forms of mistreatment. The facilitator should state this to the group and predict for them the feelings that may arise (eg. "some of you may feel embarrassed; others guilty; others angry, etc.").
4. After the dyad, facilitate the feelings and reactions of individuals. Remember to just listen and ask others to

listen to the various reactions. Do not try to "fix" anything, justify or defend the exercise - just listen. Once several people have shared their reactions (be sure to get reactions from both people of color and whites), tell them to move to ethnic separate caucuses, or if the exercise is preceding the speak outs, move to the next part of the program.

5. It is not unusual for a white person to stand up for some of the statements. They forget that standing up is for people of color only. If this occurs, gently remind them that standing is for people of color only. Do not debate this point with them at the time, just remind them and move on. You may have to tell them to follow the instructions and we will discuss their feelings after the exercise is completed.

Stand Up/Sit Down: Racism - Instructions

1. State that we are going to do an exercise which will show the pervasiveness of racism.
2. Tell them you will be reading a number of statements and the people of color in the group are to stand if the statement applies to them. If necessary, define what you mean by people of color. Tell them to simply notice their thoughts, feelings, and reactions as they participate in the exercise.
3. Tell the white people that their role is to look around the room and notice who is standing, who is sitting, and their own reactions as they observe.
4. Ask everyone to do this exercise in silence.
5. Tell the people of color that if someone does not want to stand, even if the sentence applies, that's okay.

NOTE TO FACILITATOR

Choose six or seven of the statements to read (a maximum of ten, five the least, in order to have an impact). Read the ones which are easier for people to disclose on first, building up to the ones that may be more emotional or revealing.

Read each statement clearly and slowly. When the people of color stand, allow 10 seconds after everyone has stood for them to remain there, then gently say "thank you" or "please sit now."

6. Begin by saying "Stand up if you have ever..." Repeat this phrase before each statement. "Stand up if you have ever..."
 - a. been called names because of your ethnicity.
 - b. heard jokes told about members of your group.
 - c. been treated unfairly by teachers, counselors in school because of your ethnicity.
 - d. seen other members of your ethnic group mistreated.
 - e. heard stories of mistreatment from your family because of ethnicity.
 - f. been the target of violence because of your ethnicity.
 - g. felt out of place because of your ethnicity.

- h. been told you weren't good enough or couldn't do something because of your ethnicity.
 - i. looked around the room, restaurant, or other gathering trying to notice if there are other people of color present.
 - j. heard others told or told yourself to go back where you came from.
 - k. been told that you are not like the other _____ (blacks, latinos, asians, native americans).
 - l. been told you don't act _____ (black, latino, Asian, native american).
 - m. been stopped by the police or other authority because you "looked suspicious."
 - n. tried to change how you look or speak for fear of being put down for being of your ethnicity.
 - o. had a white person come up to you assuming you speak a language other than English.
 - p. been followed around in a store.
 - q. felt alone or uncomfortable in a group because you were the only representative of your ethnicity.
7. After the statements have been read, break into dyads (two minutes each way) for participants to process any thoughts or feelings they had from the exercise.
8. Process thoughts and feelings in the large group.

STAND UP/SIT DOWN: WHITE ALLIES

Introduction

Purpose: Just as the effects of oppression are pervasive for those targeted for mistreatment, so to is the painful conditioning of people in the non-target group. This exercise is designed to illustrate this pervasiveness. Everyone needs to witness how non-targets have been hurt. This experience reinforces or validates the assumption that "it is a catastrophe for both targets and non-targets for racism (etc.) to exist."

Placement: There is question about where this exercise should happen. It could be during or after the context setting on racism, after speak outs.

Reactions: • It is anticipated that all or most of the whites will stand up for most of the statements. The act of standing up (or staying seated for that matter) makes an individual take action on the statements which then tends to bring feelings more to the surface.

• Target group members get an opportunity to observe just how pervasive the conditioning has been for whites. Target people may feel anger and resentment at having to see this, especially since they continue to be hurt by the oppression.

Facilitation Hints

Stand Up/Sit Down: White Allies - Instructions

1. Explain to the entire group that you are going to do an exercise that focuses on allies on the issue of racism - this means whites.
2. Remind them that everyone, targets and non-targets are hurt by racism.
3. State that you will be reading a number of statements and that the white allies are to stand up if the statement is true for them.
4. State that after each statement you will ask those who are standing to sit down again.
5. Tell them to observe who is standing and who is not and to notice any thoughts or feelings they may be having.
6. State that this exercise is to be done in silence.
7. Begin reading the statements below.
"Stand up if you have ever..."

- wanted to know or have been curious about a person of color in your life and unable to ask about them.

- felt that you were not interesting enough or didn't have a culture.

- felt that you were the only one who really cares about ending racism.

- felt guilty for being white.

- felt responsible for everything hurtful that happened to people of color throughout time.

- been in the presence of an ethnic joke and felt unable to interrupt it.

- felt pressure to go along with someone putting down a person of color.

- unable to get close to a person of color because you were taught to fear them.

- been cut off or had to hide a relationship with a person of color to protect them or yourself from other white people.

- been put down, ridiculed, dismissed from trying to stand up against racism.

- had to give up or limit a relationship with a white person you loved because of their racism.
- 8. Divide group into dyads: "what thoughts/feelings came up for you during this exercise?"
- 9. When dyads are completed ask for a few people to share their experience of the exercise with the entire group.

ETHNIC SEPARATE CAUCUS

Introduction

Purpose: To build pride in one's own group, provide an safe environment where people of color can work to get rid of a piece of internalized racism and whites can look at what is in their way of being allies to people of color and working to eliminate racism.

Discussion can occur in separate caucus groups that would not be productive in the mixed group. The purpose is to create an environment where participants can share their stories without having to worry about what members of the other group might think and feel.

Placement: After racism context setting.

Reactions: For people of color, this group often brings out the very issues that have split them apart from each other. Internalized racism manifests in people of color judging each other by how they look, act, who they associate with, how they relate to whites, etc. Stories often surface of how they have been hurt by other people of color and/or whites. People of color sometimes feel alienated from the others in their group. Some feel protective white people. By the end of the group they generally feel more empowered, together, and supported by each other.

For white people, the group elicits guilt and anger. Guilt comes from being a non target member and realizing what one has done to perpetuate racism. Anger comes from feeling the blamed for racism. Sometimes, fear erupts from feeling the separate caucuses will divide us and create a division that will not be healed. Some whites share their stories of how racism has hurt/affected them.

Facilitation Hints

- 1) Be sure to set a context for racism either before breaking into these groups or at the beginning of each caucus.
- 2) Remember that each person has been conditioned well to take on the role of victim (internalized racism) or perpetrator this oppression. Blaming them for this

conditioning will not help. Instead, be delighted with anything they say or do and assist them to see what has happened to them.

- 3) Use diads and triads liberally since these groups tend to be large.
- 4) As participants share their stories and feelings, help them see what the conditioning has done to them.

Ethnic Separate Caucus - Instructions

1. Begin by asking them to look around and say how it feels to be in this group right now.

2. People of Color - possible process questions:

When was the first time you noticed you were a person of color?

Tell your story of early memories of being targeted for mistreatment on racism.

What messages did/do you believe about this group? Which lies about us did you believe?

What do other members of this group do that drives you up the wall?

What do you never want to hear, see, experience again by members of this group?

What do you never want to experience again by white people?

What gets hard about being a member of this group?

What are you proud of in being a member of this group?

3. Whites - possible process questions:

What are your earliest memories of being conditioned to see people of color as less than?

What get's in the way of you intervening on racism everytime you see it happening?

How has racism hurt you?

How have you resisted racist conditioning?

STAND UP/SIT DOWN EXERCISE: SEXISM

Appreciation to Allan Creighton for contributions to this exercise

Introduction

- Purpose:** To show the pervasiveness of the mistreatment of women which is accomplished by the entire group witnessing the number of women who stand up for the statements. Experience has shown that all or most women will stand up for each statement.
- Placement:** This stand up/sit down exercise is for use in the large group during the portion of the workshop focusing on sexism, specifically after the context has been set. **Optional**-- use with women only in their gender separate caucus.
- Reactions:** There have been varied reactions to this exercise. For women, some report that they felt vulnerable and exposed by having to reveal what has happened to them in front of men. Others feel a sense of strength and bonding from seeing that they are not alone in their experience. Men have responded with guilt and embarrassment for being male and realizing what women have faced. Some have become angry because they have been hurt by women and believe it to be unfair to only focus on their mistreatment.

Facilitation Hints

1. We have found that it is more effective and safer for the women if a woman facilitates (if can feel oppressive if a man seems to be "ordering" women to stand and sit).
2. Letting the group know the purpose is crucial to create a better sense of safety for both men and women.
3. Setting the context for this exercise means explaining that the intent is to show the pervasiveness of mistreatment to women. This does not mean that men have not been hurt too or that all men have been "guilty" of all forms of mistreatment. The facilitator should state this to the group and predict for them the feelings that may arise (eg. "some of you may feel embarrassed; others guilty; others angry, etc.").
4. After the dyad, facilitate the feelings and reactions of individuals. Remember to just listen and ask others to listen to the various reactions. Do not try to "fix"

anything, justify or defend the exercise - just listen. Once several people have shared their reactions (be sure to get reactions from both men and women), tell them to move to gender separate caucuses where more work will be done on the issue of sexism.

5. Thus, this exercise is designed to be used in conjunction with gender separate meetings.

Stand Up/Sit Down Exercise: Sexism -- Instructions

1. State that we are going to do an exercise which will show the pervasiveness of sexism.
2. Tell them you will be reading a number of statements and the women in the group are to stand if the statement applies to them. Tell them to simply notice their thoughts, feelings, and reactions as they participate in the exercise.
3. Tell the men that their role is to look around the room and notice who is standing, who is sitting, and their own reactions as they observe.
4. Ask everyone to do this exercise in silence.
5. Tell the women that if someone does not want to stand, even if the sentence applies, that's okay.

NOTE TO FACILITATOR

Choose six or seven of the statements to read (a maximum of ten, five the least, in order to have an impact). Read the ones which are easier for women to disclose on first, building up to the ones related to more physical, sexual or emotional abuse.

Read each statement clearly and slowly. When the women stand, allow 10 seconds after everyone has stood for them to remain there, then gently say "thank you" or "please sit now" rather than "sit down" (this sounds too much like an order).

6. Begin by saying "Stand up if you have ever..." Repeat this phrase before each statement. "Stand up if you have ever..."
 - a. felt that your needs come second to a man's.
 - b. been pressured to be sexual with a man when you didn't want to be.
 - c. been afraid to walk on the streets alone.
 - d. not spoken up for fear of the reaction of a man.
 - e. been verbally or physically abused by a man.
 - f. tried to change your appearance in order to please a man.
 - g. been told by a man that you were not feminine enough.

- h. not spoken up for fear of sounding smarter than a man.
(pretended that you are less intelligent than a man)
- i. worn uncomfortable or restrictive clothing in order to please or look good for a man.
- j. been told that you are too aggressive.
- k. been afraid of a man's anger
- l. had sex with a man when you didn't want to.
- m. been whistled at or yelled at by a man in a public place.
- n. been expected to take full responsibility for birth control.
- o. been called a bitch, whore or slut
- p. been hit by a man.
- q. felt limited about which careers are open to you because you're a woman.
- r. lied to by a man so he could get something he wanted.

ACT LIKE A MAN ROLE PLAY

(Created by the Oakland Men's Project)

Introduction

- Purpose:** This role play is designed to show how some men are abusively, violently trained to be men. The purpose is to highlight how men have learned to be perpetrators of sexism through the generational recycling of lessons about who men are. It sets the stage for looking at how men have been conditioned.
- Placement:** The Act Like A Man role play is a prelude to the context setting on sexism. It can be conducted in front of the large group or in the Men's caucus.
- Reactions:** A variety of responses could be "that was exactly my experience," "I can't relate to that since I was never treated like that." Some respond with intense anger or sadness. Some men are in denial about how they have been trained to be a man. This role play can push their denial even deeper if they cannot relate to the characters.

Facilitation Hints

1. The actors in the role play should always demonstrate the following in the role play: anger by way of loud voice, intimidation, crying, "doing the best I can" statements, disgust at crying, physically pushing. These points will get the participants ready to discuss how men get conditioned.
2. The role play takes two people. It is helpful to rehearse, no matter how many times one does it, it is easy to leave out major points.
3. Since this stirs feelings for everyone, it is good to allow time for people to process the role play. Processing could take place in the large group or gender separate meetings.
4. At times it has been useful to use this role play in the men's group rather than in the sexism context setting with the large group. Some male participants have a difficult time relating to women after this role play.

Conducting it in the men's group allows for processing time to help with difficulties and prepare men to look at their role in perpetuating sexism.

Act Like A Man Role Play - Instructions

1. Tell participants you are going to begin looking at sexism with a role play.
2. State that ____ will be playing an eight year old son of _____. Ask everyone to just watch what happens and notice how they feel.
3. Begin the role play as follows:

Eight year old son is sitting in a chair watching T.V.

Father comes in carrying a piece of paper (report card) looking very angry.

Father: (normal tone) "what are you doing?"

Son: "watching cartoons - it's Ninja Turtles."

Father: (in a louder, more stern voice) "turn it off."

Son: "But Dad, I always watch this cartoon after school?"

Father: (yelling) "I said turn it off. You are always watching junk. Always doing something stupid. Turn it off right now!"

Son: "But Dad..."

Father: (very angry voice) "Don't talk back to me. I said turn it off and I mean turn it off!"

Father: (shows report card to son) "What is this?"

Son: (glancing at report card then looking down) "My report card."

Father: (still in angry voice) "Yeah - your report card. What does this say here? Huh?"

Son: (glancing over and looking away) "It's a 'C'."

Father: (shouting) "A 'C'." This is a 'C'." Good Lord what's the matter with you. You got a 'C' in English. Shit, you know how to speak English don't you! I can't believe you aren't even smart enough to get a decent grade in English. And what is this (pointing again to report card).

Son: (very quietly) "A 'D'."

Father: (instantly begins screaming again) "A 'D'." It's a 'D' in P.E. What is the matter with you. What kind of son have I raised anyway. You can't play in P.E. well enough to get a good grade. What is the matter with you anyway?"

Son: (beginning to cry a little) "I did the best I could."

Father: "You what! You what! You did the best you could. Geez you are a poor excuse for a son. I thought you were better than that."

(Son now shows more tears, Father leans over and looks into the son's face)

"What is that, a tear? Is that a tear I see? Are you crying? Are you going to start crying now?"

(Son attempts to get up out of his chair to leave. Father puts his hand on the son's shoulder and pushes him back into a sitting position)

"Where are you going? I didn't say you could now did I?"

Son: (very choked up) "No."

Father: (incredibly disgusted) "I can't believe it. You are really crying. You are so disgusting. (Father pushes the son off the chair shouting) "When are you going to grow up and act like a man!"

Cut - end of role play.

4. Immediately call for a two minute diad asking participants to discuss their feelings from the role play.
5. Process a few of their reactions in the large group.
6. Begin context setting on sexism (Act like a man box).

BE A GOOD GIRL ROLE PLAY

Introduction

Purpose: This role play goes with the Act Like A Man one to set the stage for a discussion and context setting on sexism. The purpose is to illustrate one of the ways sexism is pervasive so that all participants become sensitized to how sexism works.

Placement: During sexism context setting, before doing the "be a good girl" box.

Reactions:

Facilitation Hints

- 1) The role play is used as a lead in to the "Be a good girl" box. The facilitator can go directly from the role play to asking for comments about what is being learned here (unless a dyad is needed to help people process feelings at this point).
- 2) Since sexism rears itself in many forms, one role play will not speak to every woman's experience. However, it should be such that every women in the group can somehow relate to it. The role play designed below represents only one way that sexism works and participants should be told this ahead of time.
- 3) As with other role plays, the facilitators playing the roles should practice it ahead of time.

Be A Good Girl Role Play - Instructions

1. Tell them you are going to do a role play on sexism. They are to simply watch and notice their reactions to what happens.

2. Begin the role play:

There are many types of roles plays. Possibilities include relationships, going to college, weight or size.

3. If the role play stimulated a lot of emotions from the group, break into dyads for a few minutes. If not, process it by asking "what did you see going on here? What was the girl/woman learning about being female? How did this role play make you feel?"

NAME LOUD AND PROUD

(Women's group only)

Introduction

Purpose: One of the ways sexism works on women is to take their pride away from being female. The training women receive on what it means to be a "good" woman often involves keeping one's voice down and not being too loud. This exercise contradicts the learning that many women have had in a simple way by asking them to state their name loudly, and to say it in a way that shows pride and honor. The purpose is to allow each individual the opportunity to feel pride in being a woman.

Placement: This exercise is usually used at the beginning of a women's group.

Reactions: Some women have reported a sense of renewed strength and power from doing this exercise. Others have difficulty being loud and are somewhat uncomfortable. Some are confused by the purpose of the exercise, wondering how this relates to sexism.

Facilitation Hints

- 1) The facilitator should pay close attention to each person as they introduce themselves making sure they comply with the instructions. Some women will have a hard time speaking loudly. If this occurs, the facilitator should not go on until the individual has said her name loudly so that everyone could hear. The same holds true for showing pride.
- 2) If necessary, the facilitator should model voice intonation as well as posture so that everyone gets what loud and proud means. Model loud and proud each time a participant says her name softly and without recognizable pride.

Name Loud and Proud - Instructions

1. Welcome the women to the group saying a few words about what will happen here today.
2. Tell them you want to start off with an exercise that goes against what most of us as women have learned. Say a few words about how we have all learned to be silent and not proud of being female. State that we will begin this group with power and pride about being a woman.
3. Tell them each person is going to say their full name in a loud and proud way. Ask who wants to begin.
4. Allow whomever started the exercise to pick a direction to continue (to her right or left). Continue listening and watching to make sure everyone complies with loud and proud. If someone gets a little stuck, help them out by demonstrating loud and proud.
5. Thank them. End exercise with applause.

STAND UP/SIT DOWN FOR MEN

(Men's group only)

(Created by the Oakland Men's Project)

Introduction

- Purpose:** The theory states that both targets and non-targets are negatively impacted or hurt by the conditions that exist. Regarding sexism, it would follow that men are hurt by its' existence. The purpose of this exercise is to notice how men have been hurt and to allow other men to see that they are not alone in their experiences growing up male.
- Placement:** The exercise is conducted in the men's group. This allows for a better degree of safety which brings out increased honesty.
- Reactions:** Tendency for some men to be angry at the exercise because they have felt targeted by women. Sometimes men say "what about reverse sexism, women have... to me." Some respond with embarrassment as they recognize how they have perpetuated sexism. Others react with guilt or shame. Some feel enlightened at the revelations, some feel less alone in their experiences seeing other men standing with them.

Facilitation Hints

- 1) In setting the context for this exercise, tell the men that they will be better able to make a commitment to unlearning and undoing sexism once they have been able to release their thoughts and feelings about what has happened to them as men. The exercise begins this process. In addition, this exercise allows men to admit how they have perpetuated the mistreatment of women in a safe atmosphere with other men.
- 2) The facilitator must read the statements loudly and clearly and continue to ask the men to simply participate and notice their reactions and feelings.
- 3) Do the exercise in silence to allow each person to notice what is happening for them without interruption.
- 4) The facilitator should be aware that some men may have angry reactions to this exercise and attempt to stop it

with questions or concerns. They may say something like: "Wait a minute, I have a real problem with this because..." The facilitator should acknowledge their feelings and ask them to just continue until the exercise is over reinforcing that there will be plenty of time to talk about reactions. Ask them to keep on noticing what is happening for them.

Stand Up/Sit Down for Men - Instructions

1. Explain the purpose of the exercise.
2. Tell them you are going to read a number of statements and they are to stand up if the statement is true for them.
3. Say that after each statement you will ask those standing to sit down and wait for the next statement. They are to stand for as many statements that apply to them.
4. State that this is to be done in silence (explain why) and that each person is to look around, notice who is standing, who is sitting, and what they feel at the moment.
5. Remind them of the agreements of confidentiality and right to pass. No one has to stand up if they do not feel comfortable to do so. State that if they chose to pass on any particular statement, notice how that feels.
6. Begin reading the statements below. "Stand up if you have ever...
 - worried you were not tough enough.
 - exercised to make yourself tougher.
 - been disrespected by an adult.
 - been called a wimp, queer, fag.
 - been told to act like a man.
 - been hit by an older man.
 - been forced to fight.
 - been in a fight because you felt you had to prove you were a man.
 - been physically injured by another person.
 - been injured on a job.
 - been physically injured and hid the pain or kept it to yourself.
 - been sexually abused or sexually touched in a way that you didn't like by an older person.
 - held back tears when you really felt like crying.

- stopped yourself from showing affection, hugging, or touching another man because of how it might look.
 - been arrested.
 - done time in jail or prison.
 - been in the military or are a vet.
 - got so mad that, while driving, you drove fast or lost control of the car.
 - drank or took drugs to cover your feelings or hide pain.
 - felt like blowing yourself away.
 - hurt another person physically.
 - hurt another person sexually, or were sexual with another person when they did not want to be."
7. Ask them to find a partner and take three minutes each in a dyad to talk about the feelings that came up for them during this exercise.
 8. After the dyad, take a few minutes to hear from participants in the large group (that is, with all the men).

TOUCHING EXERCISE

(Men's group only)

Introduction

Purpose: This activity asks men to face each other touching palms and looking into the man's eyes across from them for a few seconds. The purpose is to show how it has become "unnatural" for men to touch and look at each other in a kind, sensitive way and to discover how men in the group feel about touching or being close to other men.

Placement: This exercise is done in the men's group, usually the first thing after a few responses are solicited about the sexism context setting. It can be conducted towards the end of the meeting, but time must be allowed for processing.

Reactions: Varied reactions have occurred. Some say a man can only look at another man like this if they are preparing to fight. Some notice the man across from him was cold and unfriendly in their looks, which led to feelings of fear or intimidation. Others commented feeling discomfort and embarrassment. Some noticed openness, acceptance, and warmth in some of the men. There is a great tendency for men to laugh as they go through the exercise due to nervousness.

Facilitation Hints

- 1) When processing the activity, simply let the sharing happen and get a sense of where the group is with intimacy issues with other men without preaching or lecturing them about something you heard in their comments. You can respond later.
- 2) Be aware of, and mention, that different cultural groups have differing customs and meaning attached to eye contact and touching. Participants are to do what they are comfortable doing, ask them to simply give it a try and see what happens.

Touching Exercise - Instructions

1. Tell everyone to stand up and form two circles: an inner circle and an outer circle.
2. Have the inner circle turn to the outer one. Make sure everyone is facing only one person. If there is an odd number, the facilitator will have to participate.
3. Explain that this exercise involves touching the person across from you palm-to-palm and looking at them until the facilitator says stop. Tell them when the facilitator says stop, those on the outer circle are to move once to their left to the next man. The inner circle stays put.
4. Ask them to do it in silence and notice any thoughts or feelings coming up as they participate in this exercise.
5. Mention a statement about how different cultures have differing customs and meanings to touching and looking and that no one is being forced to do this against their beliefs. Ask them all to just do their best to go through the exercise.
6. Ask them to meet their partner palm-to-palm and look at each other.
7. Count slowly (to yourself) to five and say "Stop, outer circle move to the left." Count another five seconds and have them move. Continue until each person is back to their original partner.
8. Process reactions in the large group asking people to say how this felt to them.

GENDER SEPARATE CAUCUS

Introduction

Purpose: To build pride in one's own group, provide an safe environment where women can work to get rid of a piece of internalized sexism and men can look at what is in their way of being allies to women/working to eliminate sexism.

Discussion can occur in separate caucus groups that would not be productive in the mixed group. The purpose is to create an environment where participants can share their stories without having to worry about what members of the other group might think and feel.

Placement: After a sexism context setting. Usually takes place after caucus groups have met on racism.

Reactions: For women, this group often brings out the very issues that have split them apart from each other as women. Internalized sexism shows itself in women judging each other by how they look, act, who they associate with, how they relate to men, etc. Stories often surface of how they have been hurt by men. Stories of mistreatment inevitably lead to experiences of abuse and violence such as rape, incest, battering. Women sometimes feel alienated from the other women. Some feel protective of the men. By the end of the group, women feel more empowered, together, and supported by other women.

For men, the group elicits guilt, anger, and fear of the women. Guilt comes from being a non target member and realizing what one has done to perpetuate sexism. Anger comes from feeling the women are blaming men for things we have not done. Fear comes from feeling these groups will separate us, create a division that will not be healed. Some men share their stories of how sexism has hurt/affected them.

Facilitation Hints

- 1) Be sure to set a context for sexism either before breaking into these groups or at the beginning of each caucus. The boxes exercise works very well here.

- 2) Remember that each person has been conditioned well to take on the role of internalized sexism or perpetrator of it. Blaming them for this conditioning will not help. Instead, be delighted with anything they say or do and assist them to see what has happened to them.
- 3) Use diads and triads liberally since these groups tend to be large.
- 4) As participants share their stories and feelings, help them see what the conditioning has done to them.

Gender Separate Caucus - Instructions

1. Begin by asking them to look around and say how it feels to be in this group right now.

2. Women's Caucus:

- a. say name loud and proud
- b. set the context on internalized sexism
- c. conduct exercise (stand up/sit down)
- d. process questions for the group:

Tell your story of early memories of being targeted for mistreatment because you are a woman.

What messages did/do you believe about this group?
What lies about us did you believe?

What do other members of this group do that drives you up the wall?

What do you never want to hear, see, experience again by members of this group?

What do you never want to experience again by men?

What gets hard about being a member of this group?

- e. work with a few women to help them heal
- f. state what they are proud of in being a woman
- g. prepare for speak out
- h. power yell

3. Men's Caucus

- a. names
- b. context setting on sexism
- c. act like a man box
- d. process questions for the group:

What conditioning did you get in learning what it means to be a man?

How did you resist this conditioning?

How have you been hurt by sexism?

What gets in your way of being a complete allie to women 100% of the time?

- f. touching exercise
- g. state what they are proud of in being a man
- h. prepare for speak out

COMING OUT ROLE PLAY

Introduction

- Purpose:** To set the stage for the heterosexism/homophobia context setting by providing an emotional experience that prepares participants for listening and responding to this issue.
- Placement:** In the large group prior to a context setting on Gay, Lesbian, Bi-sexual oppression.
- Reactions:** There is a tendency for this role play to produce a lot of laughter. Many ridiculous things are said and laughter is one way to release tension. Some experience great sadness and anger from going through this scene in real life. Some are afraid of participating because they haven't resolved their beliefs about homosexuality or they do not want to make a mistake by saying something wrong. Some sit back in shock at the exercise.

Facilitation Hints

- 1) It should be noted that "coming out" is only one aspect of what homosexuals have to deal with on a daily basis and that this role play does not intend to show that coming out is the only, nor is it necessarily the most major issue faced by homosexuals. The role play should show the struggle of coming out and the varied responses one gets from family members.
- 2) Anyone can play any of the roles. For example, one does not have to be female to play the role of mom, male to be the dad, homosexual to be the person coming out as gay.
- 3) The role play is interactive. Tell participants how they can take the place of anyone in the role play.
- 4) Be sure to allow enough time for the role play to develop before inviting participants to take one of the roles.

- 5) The facilitator needs to notice the various points of view taken by the players and be prepared to jump into the role play to present views not being expressed. Often, no one in the group reacts to the person coming out with complete disgust and anger. This is understandable since the group has been feeling closer to each other and no one wants to take on a role of hurting someone else's feelings even in a role play. However, disgust and anger is a true, real life response given to homosexuals and should be acted here.
- 6) Some groups have been so uncomfortable or unsafe in dealing with this topic that no one (or only a few people) will take the place of one of the players. If this occurs, simply stop the activity and process what is going on. Ask the group what they have noticed, what is happening here, why has there been no participation? The facilitator should not do this in a blaming tone, but instead invite discussion of what is occurring. It is often the fear of saying something wrong, making a mistake, saying something that one fears others believe they really mean, and fear of being thought of as homosexual that gets in the way of open participation in this exercise.

Coming Out Role Play - Instructions

1. State that you will be conducting an interactive role play relating to homophobia and heterosexism.
2. Point out who is playing what character (do not say one of the actors is gay/lebian/bi-sexual). Just say ____ is the mother, ____ is the father, ____ is the son/daughter, and ____ is the son/daughter-in-law.
3. Tell them it will become clear what the role play is about after awhile.
4. Tell them interactive means that anyone in the group can come up and take on the role of one of the players. All they have to do is come up and tap the person on the shoulder. There is no need to maintain genders. In other words, women can take the role of father, men of mother, etc. Instruct them to wait for your signal to take on a role so that the role play gets enough time to develop.
5. Conduct the role play as follows:

Mother and father are seated next to each other. There is an empty chair across from them. Son (insert daughter if woman is playing this role) comes to visit after not seeing his parents for quite some time. He enters with his wife. They all exchange hugs and greetings. After greetings, the son says his wife has to run errands and this will give us a chance to talk. Both mom and dad nicely protest. Wife says goodbye and leaves.

Small talk is made for awhile. Son finally says he's come here to tell them something important. This sounds very mysterious and mom and dad begin to probe a bit: "You aren't sick are you? You're not getting a divorce are you? Is something wrong with the kids? Have you been demoted at work again?" Son says no to all their probes, which brings relief to both mom and dad.

Son then tells them the reason he wanted to talk is to tell them he is gay. Mom and dad both respond with puzzlement and denial: "What do you mean you are gay? You are what? What did he say? The joke is over, what did you really want to talk about?" Son answers these questions as they are asked.

Parents then begin to respond in a variety of ways including: denial, it's a phase, you can get help, anger, where did I go wrong, but you are married, who gave this to you, disgust, etc.

Facilitator ends the role play once many reactions are acted.

6. Direct people to find a partner and do a diad for two minutes each.
7. Process reactions and feelings in the large group for a few minutes before beginning the context setting on heterosexism.

HETEROSEXISM STAND UP/SIT DOWN

Introduction

- Purpose:** This exercise asks gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual participants to stand up if the statement read aloud applies to them. The purpose is for everyone to see how pervasive the mistreatment of this target group has been.
- Placement:** The exercise is used as a prelude to the context setting on heterosexism.
- Reactions:** It is anticipated that just about all of the members of this target group will stand up for each statement. The revelation to non-target group members can be quite powerful as they witness the experiences of gays, lesbians, and bi-sexuals. The exercise also helps raise the consciousness of non-targets in learning what this target group has to face on a day-to-day basis. For those in the target group, they have an opportunity to see that they are not alone in their painful experiences.

Facilitation Hints

- 1) Do exercise in silence with participants paying close attention to their feelings and reactions. Non-targets are just as much participants as targets even though they are only watching who stands and who does not.
- 2) Be sure to tell them that no one is forced to stand up. Each person needs to decide for themselves whether or not to reveal something about their life by standing.
- 3) Read the statements slowly and loudly allowing enough time for people to notice who is standing before moving on to the next statement.
- 4) Once the exercise is underway, try to refrain from answering questions, except in instances where clarification is needed about the statement.
- 5) Stress that the standing up part of the exercise is for target group members only. If participants have negative feelings about this, note their feelings and again explain that there may be instances where non-targets have been targeted by this oppression, but the pervasiveness is only there for members of the target group. Ask them to participate as directed. If it is

useful, draw some comparisons with other oppression issues (for example, an individual white person may have been called names because he/she is Italian but they are not targeted in a systematic, everyday way that an African heritage, Latino(a), Asian, or Native American person is. Thus, it would be inappropriate to have the Italian stand with the people of color during a similar exercise).

- 6) Do not let objections to the rules get in the way of conducting the exercise. Tell participants they will have time to process their feelings in the separate caucus that follows the context setting.

Heterosexism Stand up/Sit down - Instructions

1. Tell them you are going to lead an exercise that asks for members of this target group, that is, gays, lesbians, and bi-sexuals, to stand up if the statement read applies to them.
2. Ask everyone to listen to the statements, look around at who is standing and who is not, and notice their feelings and reactions.
3. Tell them that after each statement, those standing will be asked to sit down until the next statement is read.
4. State that this exercise should be done in silence.
5. Begin reading the statements below saying "If you are gay, lesbian, or bi-sexual, stand up if you have ever..."
 - had to disguise the gender identity of your partner on a date
 - had to pretend you had a partner or date to keep people from wondering about your sexual orientation
 - dated a person of the other gender when you really wanted to be with someone of the same gender
 - ever had to disguise the gender of your partner/date to your family
 - ever not done something because you might be labeled homosexual
 - ever been refused or lost a job because of your sexual orientation
 - ever been the target of violence, been with someone or know of someone who has been the target of violence because of sexual orientation."
6. If emotions are high, direct participants into a dyad. After the dyad, process feelings and reactions to the exercise in the large group.

LAP SIT

(heterosexual group only)

Introduction

- Purpose:** The purpose of the exercise is to bring to the surface feelings people have about being physically close to someone of their same gender. This exercise sets the stage for the facilitator to talk about how the conditioning process works for this non-target group.
- Placement:** The Lap Sit exercise is primarily used when the heterosexual women and men are meeting together. This occurs when there are not two heterosexual facilitators who are of the opposite gender. The exercise has been used, however, in gender separate groups dealing with heterosexism.
- Reactions:** Tremendous discomfort from some. Some participants report feeling disgust saying doing this just isn't "normal." Others get confused at the meaning or purpose of the activity. Some enjoy it and want to stay on the lap or continue holding the other person. This has tended to bring up feelings and memories about physical contact with same gender parent.

Facilitation Hints

- 1) The entire time for this group could be taken discussing reactions to this exercise. The facilitator only needs to ask people to talk about their reactions and why they reacted this way.
- 2) Focus on what they learned growing up about being close to members of the same gender. The opportunity here is to tie their learning to misinformation and mistreatment of gay, lesbian, and bi-sexuals.
- 3) It is an exciting and somewhat risky activity because it goes against the homophobia all of us have learned. Thus, the facilitator may have feelings about "forcing" people to participate. It has been our experience that if the facilitator holds out the expectation that everyone should participate in this activity and just see what happens, then everyone participates.

- 4) The amount of time to have people in laps is not all that important. One minute to works well. At the end of the minute, some will want to literally jump off the lap while others will want to stay in that position. The facilitator should give permission for either to occur.
- 5) A good follow up exercise to this one (if their is time) is the Heterosexual Visualization. A strong link can then be made to how our fear of touching others helps perpetuate conditions leading to mistreatment of the target group and to actual experiences participants had in learning about gay, lebian, bi-sexuals in the world.

Lap Sit - Instructions

1. Tell them you are going to do an exercise that looks at one aspect of homophobia.
2. Have them find a partner of the same gender.
3. Tell them that one person is to sit in the other's lap for one minute.
4. Ask them to do this in silence and just notice what thoughts and feelings arise. Acknowledge that this may be difficult and uncomfortable to do, but ask them to push through what they can and participate.
5. Have them get in the laps, time one minute.
6. Once the minute is over, tell them they can stay in that position or move, whatever they feel comfortable doing.
7. Process in the large group asking people to talk about their feelings and reactions to doing the exercise. Probe a little bit with some participants asking them to talk more about why they feel or reacted the way they did.

HETEROSEXUAL VISUALIZATION

(Heterosexual caucus only)

Introduction

Purpose: This exercise is designed to assist participants to remember early messages they received about the existence of gay/lesbian/bi-sexuals. Remembering these messages allows the individual to see how they were taught misinformation about this target group. It should become clear that everyone learned about gays, lesbians, and bi-sexuals well before they ever encountered someone from this group. The attitudes about homosexuals were formed before any incidents occurred with them.

Placement: This exercise is conducted in the heterosexual caucus.

Reactions: Most participants have a fairly easy time with this exercise. Some have trouble identifying early memories. Some become sad at realizing how they were/are separated from loved ones because of this oppression.

Facilitation Hints

- 1) The facilitator should allow everyone to get as comfortable as possible and close their eyes. It may be helpful to dim lights as well. Speak at a slow, steady pace allowing time for people to recall their experiences and focus on their feelings.

Heterosexual Visualization - Instructions

1. Have everyone take a deep breath, get comfortable in their chairs, and close their eyes.
2. Remind them of the focus of this group is on becoming allies to gays, lesbians, and bi-sexuals and that this exercise is designed to look at how and what we have learned about this target group.
3. Have them remember a time when they first learned that there were gay, lesbian, or bi-sexual people in the world. Remember:

 where you were at the time,
 who was there,
 what did they look like,
 what was the message being learned,
 what happened to begin this learning,
 what was said or done,
 what was the tone of voice of people around you,
4. Have them remember how they felt or thought as they were learning this information. How have the lessons and feelings stayed with them even to this day. What changed for you after that experience.
5. Ask them to remember how they resisted learning the misinformation. Remind them that resistance can be an action, thought, words, etc.
6. Ask them to imagine that if someone from the same non-target group as could have intervened, what would they have wanted that person to say or do?
7. Tell them to open their eyes when they are ready and come back to the group. Once everyone is back, put them in a diad for three minutes each. In the diad have them share their experience and talk about how they carry the experience with them and how they resisted.
8. Once the diads are completed, ask a few individuals to share their experience with the entire group. Be sure to ask them about their resistance.

GAY, LESBIAN/HETEROSEXUAL SEPARATE CAUCUS

Introduction

Purpose: To build pride in one's own group, provide a safe environment where gay, lesbian, and bi-sexuals can work to get rid of a piece of internalized heterosexism and heterosexuals can look at what is in their way of being allies to homosexuals and working to eliminate heterosexism and homophobia.

The purpose is to create an environment where participants can share their stories without having to worry about what members of the other group might think and feel.

Placement: After the heterosexism context setting and large group exercises on this topic.

Reactions: For gay, lesbian, and bi-sexuals, this group often brings out the very issues that have split them apart from each other. Internalized heterosexism manifests itself by target group members judging each other by how they look, act, who they associate with, how they relate to heterosexuals. Often discussion surfaces about who really belongs in this group. Stories are told of how they have been hurt by other homosexuals as well as heterosexuals. By the end of the group they generally feel more empowered, together, and supported by each other.

Heterosexuals are sometimes very nervous and uncomfortable with this issue. Often there is nervous laughter. Some are confused about their feelings about gays. The conditioning to see homosexuals as sick or perverted is strong and runs very deep. Participants tend to need a lot of safety to reveal their deep seated beliefs.

Facilitation Hints

- 1) Be sure to set a context for heterosexism and homophobia either before breaking into these groups or at the beginning of each caucus.
- 2) Remember that each person has been conditioned well to take on the role of victim (internalized heterosexism) or perpetrator this oppression. Blaming them for this

conditioning will not help. Instead, be delighted with anything they say or do and assist them to see what has happened to them.

- 3) Use diads and triads liberally in the groups that are large.
- 4) As participants share their stories and feelings, help them see what the conditioning has done to them.

Gay, Lesbian/Heterosexual Separate Caucus - Instructions

1. Begin by asking them to look around and say how it feels to be in this group right now.

2. Gay/Lesbian/Bi-Sexual Group - possible process questions:

What are your earliest memories of feeling you were gay/lesbian/bi-sexual?

Tell your story of early memories of being targeted for mistreatment because you are homosexual.

What messages did you internalize about gays? What lies about gays did you believe? What misinformation do you still hold on to about gays?

What do other members of this group do that drives you up the wall?

What do you never want to hear, see, experience again by other gays, lesbians or bi-sexuals?

What do you never want to experience again by heterosexuals?

What gets hard about being a gay, lesbian, bi-sexual?

What are you proud of in being gay, lesbian, bi-sexual?

3. Heterosexuals - possible process questions:

When did you first become aware that there were gay, lesbian, or bi-sexuals in the world?

What conditioning did you get about gays, lesbians, bi-sexuals?

What gets in your way of being an ally to gays and working to eliminate this oppression?

How has (does) heterosexism hurt you?

STAND UP/SIT DOWN: ANTI-SEMITISM

Developed by Michael Taller

Introduction

Purpose: To show the pervasiveness of the mistreatment of Jews which is accomplished by the entire group witnessing the number of Jews who stand up for the statements.

Placement: This stand up/sit down exercise is for use in the large group during the portion of the workshop focusing on anti-semitism, specifically after the context has been set.

Reactions: Reactions to this exercise mirror reactions to this oppression in general. Non-target members are often confused about anti-semitism, unsure of what it is or how it is manifested on a daily basis. Non-targets react with surprise to the statements as well as to the number of Jews standing. The exercise tends to be an "eye opener" for non-targets. Jews tend to respond with timidity, embarrassment, and wish to not make such a big deal of this issue. Again, this response is completely concurrent with how anti-semitism is manifested for Jews.

Facilitation Hints

- 1) Go slow, take your time to read the statements. Do not rush the exercise.
- 2) Immediately after the exercise break into Jew/Gentile separate groups to process the experience. Both groups need the safety of their own caucus to process thoughts and feelings. The "hidden" nature of this oppression produces much confusion which limits the effectiveness of alliance building if processing is done too soon in the large group.
- 3) If the facilitator gets confused looks or resistance to breaking into separate groups, firmly tell people working on anti-semitism is best done this way - ask them to now get up and go to their respective group. Do not engage in the resistance or confusion, deal with it in the caucus.

Stand Up/Sit Down Exercise: Anti-Semitism - Instructions

1. State that we are going to do an exercise which will show the pervasiveness of anti-semitism.
2. Tell them you will be reading a number of statements and the Jews in the group are to stand if the statement applies to them. Tell them to simply notice their thoughts, feelings, and reactions as they participate in the exercise.
3. Tell the Gentiles that their role is to look around the room and notice who is standing, who is sitting, and their own reactions as they observe.
4. Ask everyone to do this exercise in silence.
5. Tell the Jews that if someone does not want to stand, even if the sentence applies, that's okay.

NOTE TO FACILITATOR

Read each statement clearly and slowly. When the Jews stand, allow 10 seconds after everyone has stood for them to remain there, then gently say "thank you" or "please sit now."

6. Begin by saying "Stand up if you have ever..." Repeat this phrase before each statement. "Stand up if you have ever..."
 - a. been called names because you are a Jew.
 - b. heard jokes told about Jews.
 - c. been treated unfairly in a school or work situation because you are a Jew.
 - d. seen other Jews mistreated.
 - e. been the target of violence because you are a Jew.
 - f. felt out of place because you are a Jew.
 - g. heard that Jews are wealthy, sneaky, stingy, greedy, dishonest, etc.
 - h. been held responsible or felt the need to apologize for the actions of other Jews or of Israel.
 - i. been told that Zionism is racism.
 - j. felt the need to hide or downplay being Jewish for fear of being judged or treated differently.

- k. heard that Jews were responsible for the oppression of people of color or the working class in this country.
- l. been told that the Holocaust did not happen or that Jews should stop making a big deal about it.
- m. heard that Jews control or conspire to control the media, the banks, the world.
- n. not asked for what you want for fear of being called too pushy, loud, or demanding.
- o. had to make a choice between a religious observance and a work or educational requirement.
- p. been called a JAP, Jewish mother, or some other Jewish stereotype.
- q. been told that Jews are not oppressed, that anti-semitism is not an important issue to address, or that Jews do not have a place in the multicultural movement.
- r. been afraid to wear something that identified you as a Jew.
- s. been told that you do, or do not, look Jewish.
- t. been told that Jews are especially smart.
- u. learned that Jewish men are nerdy, intellectual, not sexual, or not athletic.
- v. learned that Jewish women are domineering, smothering, or unattractive.

JEW/GENTILE SEPARATE CAUCUS

Introduction

Purpose: To build pride in one's own group, provide an safe environment where Jews can work to get rid of a piece of internalized anti-semitism and gentiles can look at what is in their way of being allies to Jews and working to eliminate anti-semitism.

Discussion can occur in separate caucus groups that would not be productive in the mixed group. The purpose is to create an environment where participants can share their stories without having to worry about what members of the other group might think and feel.

Placement: After the anti-semitism context setting.

Reactions: For Jews, this group often brings issues connected to the "hiddenness" of this oppression. Some begin with confusion about why the need to caucus on this issue. Some feel anti-semitism is not that bad (or as bad) as other issues, so let's not focus on it. Others feel hurt and anger that this issue is not more out in the open. Internalized anti-semitism manifests in Jews judging each other by how they look, act, who they associate with, how they relate to gentiles, etc. When enough safety has been established, stories surface of how they have been hurt by other Jews and gentiles. Some Jews feel alienated from the others in their group. By the end of the group they generally feel more empowered, together, and supported by each other.

For gentiles, the group elicits much confusion which is manifested in comments such as "why are we focusing on this issue, can't Jews pass for white and therefore are not oppressed?" Many do not know what anti-semitism means and have difficulty identifying how it looks. Some have trouble remembering their conditioning experiences regarding anti-semitism. For most, they need more education and information about the nature of this oppression.

Facilitation Hints

- 1) Be sure to set a context for anti-semitism either before breaking into these groups or at the beginning of each caucus.
- 2) Remember that each person has been conditioned well to take on the role of victim (internalized anti-semitism) or perpetrator this oppression. Blaming them for this conditioning will not help. Instead, be delighted with anything they say or do and assist them to see what has happened to them.
- 3) Use diads and triads when these groups are large.
- 4) As participants share their stories and feelings, help them see what the conditioning has done to them.

Jew/Gentile Separate Caucus - Instructions

1. Begin by asking them to look around and say how it feels to be in this group right now.
2. Jews - possible process questions:
 - Tell your story of early memories of being targeted for mistreatment because you are a Jew.
 - What messages did you internalize about Jews? What lies about Jews did you believe? What misinformation do you still hold on to about Jews?
 - What do other members of this group do that drives you up the wall?
 - What do you never want to hear, see, experience again by other Jews?
 - What do you never want to experience again by gentiles?
 - What gets hard about being a Jew?
 - What are you proud of in being a Jew?
3. Gentiles - possible process questions:
 - What gets in your way of eliminating anti-semitism?
 - What conditioning did you get about Jews?
 - What is your next step in being a complete allie to Jews?

ADULTISM ROLE PLAYS

(Portions of this exercise adapted from Allan Creighton's
Teens Need Teens)

Introduction

Purpose: As adults, we have all been targeted for mistreatment when we were young. This is one of the few oppressions where we all start as a member of the target group and eventually become perpetrators. For adult participants of a workshop, it is important to remember how adultism worked in our lives so that we can better relate to the needs of young people today. For participants who are young people, it is important to have an opportunity to understand where some of the hardships come from.

Placement: In the large group before setting the context for adultism.

Reactions: Young people are able to identify with the roles plays and feel less alone, crazy, weird, or strange in their experiences and thoughts of how they as young people are treated in this society. Adult participants witness the variety of ways young people are targeted in this society and also are able to identify with the role play, for it reminds them of their experiences as a young person.

Facilitation Hints

- 1) This activity can produce a lot of feelings. The facilitator should be prepared to process the role play in dyads as well as in the large group. It may be important to restate that people expressing feelings are healing from past hurts. This will help participants feel more comfortable with those expressing feelings.
- 2) Preparation for the role play by selecting the scenes to be played, the role players, and practice each scene before presenting to the training group.
- 3) The scenes should move quickly. It will help to have one or two people play all the adult roles and another two play the young person. This will keep the exercise moving and make it easier for the participants to remember who is playing the adult and who is playing the young person. Of course, if you have young people on

Adultism Role Plays - Instructions

1. Explain the purpose of this exercise. Tell them you will be role playing various scenes that represent adultism, that is, scenes that show some of the ways young people are mistreated by adults.
2. Identify the players and their roles to the participants. Ask participants to notice their thoughts, feelings, and reactions to watching the role play.
3. Begin role playing. Each scene should only last a few seconds with just enough dialogue to get the point across. After the first scene is finished, move immediately to scene #2, then to #3, etc. until all the scenes have been played.
4. After the last scene, divide participants into a three minute dyad so they can discuss their reactions and feelings to the role play.
5. Allow a few minutes in the large group to hear their reactions.

Possible Role Play Scenes:

All scenes involve an adult interacting with a young person in an adultist fashion. The adult proceeds with the theme stated below and adds statements that continue the theme. The role of the young person should vary showing fear, anger, resentment, not understanding, confusion, disgust. Each scene should show a different reaction by the young person.

Themes:

- "Not now, I don't have time!"
- "Your too young to understand."
- "We'll talk about it later."
- "Wait till you grow up, then you'll understand!"
- "Because I said so, that's why."
- "Don't you talk back to me."
- "I work my fingers to the bone for you."
- "When I was your age, I had it a lot harder."
- "Not in my house you don't."

THE TRUTH SHOWER

Introduction

Purpose: For participants to have an experience of receiving contradictory messages to the lies and misinformation told to them; to remind participants of their inherent beauty, intelligence, etc. and the need for pervasive messages that contradict what is usually told about our group.

Placement: This activity is for groups with an advanced understanding of alliance building. It should be facilitated after context settings on oppression and speak out or stand up exercises have been delivered

Reactions: This exercise can elicit great pleasure from the individuals receiving the "shower." Many smile through the experience commenting later that it was very uplifting and inspiring. One person described it as "recharging my batteries," for it serves as a reminder to who we really are. Others have cried either during or immediately after the exercise. The tears are sometimes due to reminders of how much one has been told the lies and misinformation about our qualities and traits, and sometimes from the joy of hearing positive messages. In addition, some are confused by the exercise and have difficulty understanding it. Some feel the exercise continues to perpetuate stereotypes, even though positive messages are being given. This occurs most with individuals who do not understand the need for contradictions.

Facilitation Hints:

- 1) Guide those giving the contradictory message to do so opposite the message that is usually heard, which means making the message positive. Ask them not to say "You are not _____." Instead, Have them say "You are _____." If someone gives the "you are not" message ask them to rephrase it without the "not."
- 2) Stop the "shower" from time to time if you notice the participant having difficulty hearing the new messages. Have them take a deep breath. Ask them, "Are you able to hear more?"

The Truth Shower - Instructions

1. Set the context for this exercise saying: "If we never hear another lie about us or members of our group again, we have already heard too many. This exercise is about substituting the truth about us for the lies that pervade society about our traits, qualities, characteristics, etc. This exercise creates the opportunity to replace society's pervasive negative messages about us with positive ones.
2. State the goal.
3. Tell them you want a volunteer to come up to the front of the group to do some work on contradicting the lies we get about our group.
4. Have everyone silently think about the areas where they are on the TARGET side. Remind them of the list by stating aloud a few of the groups (be sure to list the category CHILD).
5. Ask a volunteer to come up to the front of the room with you. Have them identify a target group (only one) of which they are a member; one that they want to focus on in this exercise.
6. Have them say aloud to the group the target group they want to hear contradictory messages about.
7. Ask everyone in the large group to think **silently** about this target group. **Silently** recall the lies, misinformation, stereotypes that exist in society about this group. Allow about 30 seconds for them to recall the messages.
8. Ask the large group to now think of the opposite message to the lie or stereotype they recalled. Have them state this opposite message to the individual in front of the group saying "You are _____." (Example: The individual selected the target group African American. Contradictory messages might be "You are beautiful and smart," "You care for others," "You are someone I trust," "You are a flourishing species." The person in front of the group just listens to the statements.

NOTE: Be sure to stop any statements made in the negative, for example, "You are not dangerous, ugly, dumb, etc." Have them refrain the statement in a positive way if statements are made in the negative.

9. Allow up to five (5) minutes of contradictory messages then ask for another volunteer to come up. Repeat the process each time asking for the individual to identify the target group, telling the large group to silently think of lies about this group, stating contradictions.
10. After 2-4 people have been up front, process the activity first asking those who volunteered to say how this was for them, what it brought up, what feelings came. Ask others to say what this exercise brought up for them.

POWER VISUALIZATION

Introduction

Purpose: To increase one's understanding of power in this society; specifically how power manifests in day-to-day life and its' impact on each individual

Placement: This exercise can be used previous to any discussion on institutional issues or power. In some cases, the Power Visualization may be used instead of the Power Shuffle.

Reactions: The exercise tends to remind participants of times someone made these statements to them. Thus, it can bring emotions out such as sadness, anger, resentment. Some feel helpless, impotent after the activity; as if there is nothing they can do to deal with the power structure. Others recognize that they have actually said these statements to others or that they fear they might say these things, which brings on guilt and shame. It also brings about memories of pride. Some have said, "I take pride when I'm called a 'bitch' because it means I'm not caving in to power."

Facilitation Hints

1. It is useful to do the exercise before leading a discussion on the topic or before a context setting on power. This gives people a chance to get personally involved in the issue of power, which will lead to a more effective discussion.
2. Go slow -- give about 10 seconds between statements so that participants have a chance to reflect more fully on what was just read.
3. If you are working with a co-facilitator, alternate reading the statements. This puts a different voice in the exercise and allows for variety in making the statements. As you listen to your partner, you may get creative ideas on how to read the statements.

Power Visualization - Instructions

1. Explain the purpose of the exercise.
2. Tell them you are going to read a number of statements that highlight the issue of power.
3. Ask them to simply listen to the statements and notice their thoughts, feelings, or other reactions.
4. Tell them that after the exercise, they will get with a partner to discuss their reactions and then there will be time for the entire group to comment.
5. Have them get comfortable in their chairs, close their eyes or look down, take a deep breath, and just listen to the following statements.

"Shut up."

"Your are not college material."

"The Board has decided to not use those text books anymore."

"You are herby ordered to appear..."

"I regret to inform you that your loan request has been denied."

"Sorry, that apartment was just rented."

"The department cannot pay for those materials, you'll have to pay for them if you want them."

"Roberto, no that's too long. I'll call you Bob."

"We don't have the money to give you a raise this year."

"Why? Because we must now downsize."

"I brought you into this world, I can take you out."

"Levinsky, now you are known as Levin."

"English only here."

"We are increasing the class size, you'll be getting four new students."

"When we have three more complaints about having to climb the steps, then we'll consider building a ramp."

"No dogs or Irish."

"Bitch."

"You have 10 days to pay the balance or your electricity and gas will be turned off."

6. Allow a few more seconds of silence after the last statement then ask them to open their eyes and find a partner.
7. Give them 3 minutes each in the dyad to just say what their reactions were to the statements. If necessary, remind them of the rules for the dyad.
8. Bring everyone back and open the discussion to the entire group.

AGREEMENTS

Purpose: To assist the group in creating a safe, open, honest, and respectful environment in which to address diversity issues.

Listen with Respect

Confidentiality

"I" Statements

No Cross Talk

Right To Pass

Amnesty

No Put Downs or Zaps

Risks/Emotions OK

TODOS: Sherover Simms Alliance Building Institute, 1203 Preservation Park Way, Oakland, CA 94612 (510) 444-6448, (9/94).

LIBERATION THEORY: WORKING ASSUMPTIONS

(adapted from Ricky Sherover-Marcuse)

1. No one is naturally or genetically oppressive. People are not born with an "oppressor" gene. Thus, no one is born an oppressor. No human being is born with a destiny to be oppressed or to oppress others.
2. The perpetuation of oppression is made possible by the conditioning of new generations of human beings into the role of being oppressed and the role of being oppressive. Everyone is socialized into both of these roles. Those who receive mistreatment (referred to as the **TARGET** group) are socialized to become **victims**. Those who do not receive a particular form of mistreatment (referred to as the **NON-TARGET** group) are socialized to become **perpetrators**.
3. The conditioning takes place through a specific form of oppression, that is, the oppression of young people. All young people are the targets of systematic mistreatment. This mistreatment lays the foundation for the perpetuation of other forms of mistreatment.
4. Oppression is perpetuated through force, the threat of force, and the recycling of misinformation and lies (sometimes called stereotypes) about the nature, history, and abilities of the target group. This misinformation is socially sanctioned and allows the non-target group to justify the continued mistreatment of the target group.
5. Each group targeted for oppression inevitably "internalizes" the mistreatment and the misinformation about itself. Over time, the target group begins to believe the lies that are told about them, lies that pervade the social system. This is called internalized oppression. Internalizing these lies expresses itself in behavior and interactions between members of the target group. Internalized oppression is always an involuntary reaction to the experience of oppression.
6. People who are targets of any particular form of oppression have resisted and attempted to resist their oppression in any way they could.
7. People who are the non-target of any particular oppression have also resisted their socialization into the oppressive role.
8. The perpetuation of any particular oppression requires that the pain of being socialized into either the target or non-target role be forgotten or discounted. People believe that their conditioning was simply a "normal" part of growing up.
9. The conditioning process that separates us from others is catastrophic for everyone.

ASSUMPTION: HOW WE ALL ENTER THIS WORLD
The Mirror

**You At Birth
Clear Mirror**

brilliant, powerful, open,
curious, self absorbed, emo-
tional, without judgement,
zestful, connected, loving,
capable, soft, wet, excited,
vulnerable

Mirror Muddled

"Don't cry"

"Calm down"

"Shut up"

brilliant, powerful, open,
curious, self absorbed,
emotional, without judge-
ment, zestful, connected,
loving, capable, soft, wet,
excited, vulnerable

Abuse

"Who do you
think you are"

"Let me do that
for you."

"Some day you'll
understand."

**Female
More Mud**

"Good girls
don't..."

"Be
Nice"

brilliant, powerful, open,
curious, self absorbed,
emotional, without judge-
ment, zestful, connected,
loving, capable, soft, wet,
excited, vulnerable

"Girls
can't do
that"

"Your kind not
welcomed here"

**Child of Color
More Mud**

"You're dirty"

brilliant, powerful, open,
curious, self absorbed,
emotional, without judge-
ment, zestful, connected,
loving, capable, soft, wet,
excited, vulnerable

"Not as capable"

DEFINITIONS

Liberation: Liberation is both the undoing of the effects and the elimination of the causes of social oppression. The achievement of human liberation will require far reaching changes at the institutional level and at the level of group and individual interactions.

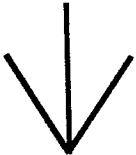
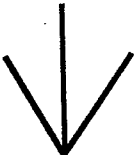
Oppression: Oppression is the systematic, pervasive, routine, institutionalized mistreatment of individuals on the basis of their membership in various groups which are disadvantaged by imbalances of power in society. It is the invalidation, denial, or non-recognition of the complete humanness of others. Oppression takes the form of institutional as well as individual mistreatment, including violence.

Systematic = Oppression has an order. There is a cycle which starts with the circulation of lies and misinformation about the target group(s). This misinformation becomes socially sanctioned attitudes, beliefs, feelings, and assumptions about the group(s). These attitudes lend to the justification of further mistreatment of target group members.

Pervasive = The mistreatment occurs everywhere one looks. Oppression is woven into the fabric of our society.

Routine = It occurs every day, at all hours. It feels normal and customary.

Institutional = Mistreatment occurs in all of our social institutions -- economic, political, educational, judicial, health care, housing, employment, etc.

TARGET	NON-TARGET
<p>Women</p> <p>Children</p> <p>People of Color</p> <p>Jews</p> <p>Gay/Lesbian/Bi-sexual</p> <p>45 Years old and older</p> <p>Under Age 21</p> <p>Immigrant</p> <p>Working Class/Poor Background</p> <p>Disabled</p> <p>Parents non-college educated</p> <p>Single Parent</p> <p>Adopted/Foster Child</p> <p>English is Second Language</p> <p>Catholic</p> <p>"Fat"</p> 	<p>Men</p> <p>Adults</p> <p>Whites (Euro-Americans)</p> <p>Gentiles</p> <p>Heterosexual</p> <p>30-45 Years old</p> <p>Over Age 21</p> <p>U.S. Born</p> <p>Owning/middle Class Background</p> <p>Able Bodied</p> <p>College Educated Parents</p> <p>Two Parent Family</p> <p>Not Adopted/Foster</p> <p>English Primary Language</p> <p>Protestant</p> <p>"Average or thin"</p> 

MAJOR POINTS ABOUT THE POWER CHART

The issue of power is not about differences, but division between people.

No one had control over the groups into which we were born or the ways that these various groups would be separated from one another.

The primary dynamic between the target group and the non-target group is that there exists between them a power imbalance.

The non-target groups are on the up side of power and are the recipients of unearned privilege, power and protection.

All of us have been conditioned to take on the role of both agents and victims of oppression. No one is always target and no one is always non-target.

The mistreatment of various groups of people is justified through the circulation of lies and misinformation, often called stereotypes.

The misinformation about non-target people is that they are good, just, beautiful, moral, etc.

The misinformation about target group people is likened to smog in that it is everywhere and unavoidable. It is in the media, the language, the literature, the sciences, etc.

Each of us has resisted taking on the role of victim and/or agent of oppression.

Oppression hurts not only the target groups but the non-target groups as well.

Target people can be prejudiced against non-target people, but because they do not hold power, they cannot oppress them.

RACISM: GENERAL CONTEXT

Racism is the institutionalized, day-to-day mistreatment of people of color for no other reason than that they are people of color. This mistreatment takes on many forms including but not limited to economic, social and physical violence. This mistreatment is held in place by the continuous circulation of misinformation about various groups of people of color.

Included as people of color are: indigenous North, Central and South American Indians and their descendants; and people of African and Asian descent. The racism faced by most Latinos is based on their Indian heritage.

It is also true that people of some European countries, such as Greece, Portugal and Italy face a particular brand of colorism or discrimination based on color and ethnocentrism. However, for the most part this oppression does not seem to get institutionalized in the same manner as with the above mentioned groups.

The elimination of racism will require not only the restructuring of racially oppressive systems and ideologies, but the undoing of the effects of over five hundred years of hurt and degradation. This will mean changing the ways we look at our institutions and our interactions with each other, as well as the development of new strategies for creating alliances between people of color and white people.

Examples of Institutionalized Racism

- Latinos and Black men are grossly overrepresented in the nation's prisons and jails
- People of color appear in the media as part of crime stories more often than not
- Black males have the lowest life expectancy--65 and decreasing
- A Black child is three times as likely to live in poverty and twice as likely to die in the first year of life as a white child
- In San Jose, CA, a first grade, anglo teacher assigned his students numbers by which they were referred throughout the year because he said that their names were too hard to pronounce
- the population of UC Berkley is less than 50% white and yet 1,457 of the faculty is white, compared to 47 Latinos, 39 African Americans, and 101 Asians, and 5 Native Americans
- between 1979 and 1989 the number of Latino children living in poverty increased by nearly 33%

Internalized Racism

See handout: **Taking A Look At Internalized Racism**

INTERNALIZED RACISM

When setting the context for internalized oppression (I.O.), it is important that we be able to move beyond a cursory description. The following is the beginning of a working draft on the many manifestations of internalized racism. While they are all interconnected, the faces of I.O. can be better understood when we look at them in the contexts of the self, the relationships of people of color to white people, relationships within particular ethnic groups of color and between two or more different ethnic groups of color.

Some thoughts to keep in mind: Internalized racism is always an involuntary reaction to racism which originates from outside the group. The training begins before we are able to screen out the lies, etc. All people of color fight valiantly to resist taking on the effects of racism but the onslaught is relentless, and eventually, through no fault of their own, they will begin to wear the scars and misconceptions about themselves like ill-fitting garments. It is vital that we look at each of the faces of internalized racism and find a way to acknowledge and celebrate the fact that it was the best strategy we could come up with at the time.

It is also crucial to keep in mind that while the effects of internalized racism appear on the whole to be negative, there are many ways in which people of color have held fast to their humanity. It is important that they and their white allies continue to identify the ways in which this has been true.

Try imagining internalized racism as a form of self/group defense.

Internal Effects

- 1) Self hatred -- of how one looks; for having been born into the group; for feelings of hostility, passivity, etc.
- 2) Self doubt -- of one's abilities, worth, goodness, etc.
- 3) Fear -- of own power
- 4) Urgent pull to assimilate or "prove them wrong"
- 5) Rigid refusal to assimilate (often resulting in giving up what one wants because it might be considered "a white thing" to do.)
- 6) Isolation from and denial of one's own feelings
- 7) Self blame -- for lack of success, for how things are, etc.

Target to Non-target Effects

- 1) Dependency -- having been conditioned to see the non-target group as more powerful, the target group will often expect white people to "fix" the problem.
- 2) Believing that white people are in fact more just, more capable, more reliable, etc. and so confers "righthood" upon them.
- 3) Never feeling equal or powerful in relation to white people,

though person of color might cover this with bravado, hostility, feigned indifference, etc.

- 4) Taking on the qualities of perceived whiteness without examination.
- 5) The "Push/Pull Syndrome" -- Caught in a bind between pull to please and refusal to please.
- 6) Fear of non-targets resulting from societal and cultural conditioning (can appear inordinate.)

Effects Within a Particular Target Group

- 1) Relationships strained as result of group inability to see goodness, brilliance, beauty of others in the group.
- 2) Mistreatment of other members of the group.
- 3) Setting unrealistic standards for group inclusion which themselves tend to be oppressive -- insisting that one prove they are *black, chicano*, etc. enough. This also takes on the form of restricting each others' movement or right to be "different."
- 4) Explain away oppressive and hurtful behaviors within the group under the guise of "culture."
- 5) Deny that diversity within the group exists.
- 6) Deny other members of the group a right to their full range of human expression (little room for fear or softness in many groups.)
- 7) Hatred and blame toward the group for being victims of racism.
- 8) Feeling unable to count on the group (sometimes because of not wanting to put more strain on the group's meager resources and sometimes because of the belief that others in the group are unwilling to support each other.)
- 9) Feeling "different" from others in the group (often result of regionalism, language oppression, class oppression, etc.)
- 10) Colorism-intergroup targeting on the basis of skin color, hair texture, facial features, etc.

Between Groups of Color (Asian to Latino; Black to Asian, etc.)

- 1) Ranking oppressions
- 2) Judging -- Based on which group is closest to white
- 3) Denying each others' oppression.
- 4) Scrambling for and fighting over the smallest slice of the

economic pie (allowing selves to be pawns in the game of divide and conquer.)

- 5) Inability to turn to each other for coalition building.
- 6) Targeting each other for mistreatment based on misbelieving the lies, etc.
- 7) Failing to appreciate the uniqueness of and beauty of each others' cultures.
- 8) Jealousy over the small and large triumphs of each others' groups; (African Americans might find themselves jealous of the fact that Latinos have a language; Latinos of color may resent the fact that African Americans get more attention, etc.)

RESISTANCE -- WHAT IS IT?

From infancy to death we humans continue to put up a struggle when our own or others' humanity is challenged or denied. When we first attempt to resist the messages that are coming at us from all directions, we often encounter more difficulty. Therefore, we learn to adapt modes of survival that help us at the time, but may not work for us in the future. It makes sense to celebrate the ways in which we tried to hang on, for what we did helped us to make it through. Celebrating how we survived also helps us to counter feelings of helplessness and victimization. In addition, appreciating ourselves and others for how one resisted allows for courage and resource to try more effective forms of resistance. The following is a partial list of the ways in which we cope with or resist our own and other people's mistreatment.

- Act out
- Cry
- Pretend to go along
- Organize others on our behalf
- Isolate
- Use drugs, food or other devices
- Hurt others
- Get even
- Wait
- Be confused
- Act as though we don't care
- Be super good, nice
- Escape into fantasy, books, etc.
- Reach out
- Ask questions
- Act like you agree
- Conform
- Get sick
- Get involved in community

- Eat
- Refuse to comply
- Use persuasion
- Hide out
- Segregate
- Argue
- Hurt ourselves
- Join gangs
- Get depressed
- Run away
- Prove them wrong
- Excel at something
- Laugh
- Be polite
- Intellectualize
- Comply
- Get enraged
- Find new friends
- Come to workshops

RACISM IS HARMFUL TO WHITE PEOPLE

In our years of doing this work, we have heard from countless numbers of people of European descent that racism has hurt them in a number of ways. Examining the ways in which this is true for you and/or those you love is necessary for the establishment of alliances between white people and people of color.

Racism coerces white people into giving up aspects of their own humanity.

Racism demands that white people not see themselves as people with rich and varied cultures and pasts.

Racism leaves white people feeling paralyzed with feelings of guilt and shame about racist atrocities which have been perpetrated against people of color.

Racism asks white people to go into denial about how pervasive racism is, causing them to appear dishonest and uncaring when concerns about racism are raised.

Racism divides white people from other white people whose racism runs unchecked. Often these are most loved relatives.

Racism causes white people to feel the need to choose between their communities and the communities of color.

Racism instills undue fear in the hearts of white people towards people of color.

Racism forces white people to construct a reality of who they are based on lies about other groups of people. White people are lied to about who they are as well as the majority of humans on the planet.

Racism sets white people up to receive the backlash of rage and indignation of peoples of color all over the world.

Racism denies white people the opportunity to join with brilliant people of various cultures to solve the critical problems which face not only the nation but the Earth and her inhabitants.

Context Setting On Sexism

Sexism is the institutionalized, pervasive, day-to-day, routinized mistreatment of women for no other reason than that they are women.

There is no genetic characteristic which makes women deserving of mistreatment.

Sexism is justified by the circulation of lies and misinformation about women (hysterical, overly emotional, not as smart, weak, their role is to nurture, be nice, clean, etc.).

The effect of the lies is that it becomes normal for women to be seen as sole proprietors of child care, cleaning up, following the lead of men, being objectified as bodies and baby making machines, and more.

Examples of Institutionalized Sexism

- Women still make 71 cents on the dollar that men in comparable positions make;
- Women own roughly 1% of the world's property;
- In the U.S. there are only 2 women Senators;
- Women are half as likely to receive state of the art treatment when they have a stroke; 26% of the men received heart medication compared to 14% of the women
- Women with four year college degrees receive as much pay as a man with a high school diploma;
- A man with one year of experience on the job increases his earnings by 24 cents per hour; for women, the increase is only 7 cents per hour.

Internalized Sexism: The ways in which sexism affects women's views of themselves and each other. It is the internalization of the lie which says, "as a woman you are worth less; you are *just* a woman, etc." The subject of internalized sexism is very complex and deserves close consideration not only for women, but for their male allies as well. Some characteristics of internalized sexism might be:

- Women settling for less than everything they deserve (I'll be a nurse since I probably can't make it as a doctor);
- Eating disorders born of a deep dissatisfaction with body size/type;
- Staying in a non-supportive, abusive relationship out of feelings of not deserving better or thinking it's her fault;
- Competing with other women for the attentions of men;
- Trying to be as much like a man as possible to "prove them wrong;"
- Judging other women for not being feminine enough or for being too feminine;
- Hiding their intelligence to avoid being attacked or targeted;
- Believing that it is their fault that they are oppressed or not doing as well as men.

Resistance

Both men and women have attempted to resist sexist conditioning. One of our jobs is to uncover the memories of how we all did that.

A COMMITMENT TO END RACISM

I resent and will fiercely oppose racism's crippling limits to the progress of my beloved human race. Always keeping in mind my proud heritage of fighting oppression, and wanting to enrich my present and future, I will engage and join with others to eliminate racism so that we all may live in a free world.

Authors Unknown

ACTION STEPS FOR ALLIES AGAINST RACISM

As an ally to people of color in the elimination of racism, I will...

- ✓ interrupt racist jokes.
- ✓ be outraged by the perpetuation of racism.
- ✓ notice the contributions made in the world by people of color.
- ✓ join resistance celebrations.
- ✓ notice when people walk across the street when they see a person of color approaching.
- ✓ not follow people of color around in stores.
- ✓ stop all violence against them.
- ✓ be proud for them when I see expressions of pride.
- ✓ stand behind their formation of support groups within their ethnicity.
- ✓ re-tell the true history of this country.
- ✓ notice when internalized oppression is operating and not blame the person for it.
- ✓ not argue with their experience of racism - when they say they have experienced racism, believe it.
- ✓ work to become proud of my own heritage.
- ✓ educate children of the racist conditioning taking place every day in children's movies, cartoons, and books.

ACTION STEPS FOR ALLIES AGAINST SEXISM

As an ally to women in the elimination of sexism, I will...

- ✓ Take responsibility for at least 50% of the child care duties.
- ✓ Be responsible for birth control.
- ✓ Know that "no" means "no" and educate other men about this.
- ✓ Interrupt sexist jokes, cat calls, whistles.
- ✓ Educate my brothers as to how sexism exists, how it is manifested.
- ✓ Stop rape, incest, molest.
- ✓ Refrain from referring to women with derogatory names such as bitch, etc.
- ✓ Make room for women's voices to be heard.
- ✓ Notice when I and other men dominate the discussion.
- ✓ Notice and call attention to when women's ideas, thoughts get ignored.
- ✓ Not be violent with women and intervene when I see it occurring.
- ✓ Promote women's leadership.
- ✓ Work to expand my expression of emotions.

UNLEARNING RACISM WORKSHOPS

Ricky Sherover-Marcuse Ph.D.

LIBERATION THEORY: A WORKING FRAMEWORK

1. Liberation is both the undoing of the effects and the elimination of the causes of social oppression. The achievement of human liberation on a global scale will require far-reaching changes at the institutional level and at the level of group and individual interactions. These changes will involve transforming oppressive behavioral patterns and "unlearning" oppressive attitudes and assumptions.
2. No one is naturally or genetically oppressive; no human being is born as an oppressor. No one is naturally or genetically destined to be oppressed; no one is born to be oppressed.
3. Oppression is the systematic and pervasive mistreatment of individuals on the basis of their membership in various groups which are disadvantaged by the institutionalized imbalances in social power in a particular society. Oppression includes both institutionalized or "normalized" mistreatment as well as instances of violence. It includes the invalidation, denial, or the non-recognition of the complete humanness (the goodness, uniqueness, smartness, powerfulness, etc.) of those who are members of the mistreated group.
4. Biological/cultural/ethnic/sexual/religious/age differences between human beings are never the cause of oppression. The use of these differences to explain either why certain groups of people are oppressed (or) why certain groups of people behave oppressively, functions as a justification of oppression.
5. Differences in class, in social and economic power, in educational opportunity and achievement, in health and physical well being, are the expression and result of institutionalized inequalities in opportunity. Such differences perpetuate and increase the social imbalances in power and thereby serve to maintain all forms of oppression.
6. The perpetuation of oppression is made possible by the conditioning of new generations of human beings into the role of being oppressed and the role of being oppressive. In a society in which there is oppression, everyone (at one time or another) is socialized into both of these roles. People who are the target group of a particular form of mistreatment are socialized to become victims; people who are the non-target group of a particular form of mistreatment are socialized to become perpetrators- either in a direct, active form or in an indirect, passive form. Neither of these roles serves our best interests as human beings.
7. The conditioning of both groups, the target group and the non-target group of any given oppression takes place through a specific form of oppression, the oppression of young people. In a society in which there is oppression, all young people will be the targets of this systematic mistreatment, i.e. all young people will be oppressed.

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8. In addition to force and the threat of force, oppression is perpetuated through the generation and recycling of systematic misinformation about the nature, history, and the abilities of the target group. Because this misinformation is socially empowered and sanctioned, it functions as the justification for the continued mistreatment of the target group.
9. Each group targeted by oppression inevitably "internalizes" the mistreatment and the misinformation about itself. The target group thus "mis-believes" about itself the same misinformation which pervades the social system. This "mis-believing" expresses itself in behavior and interactions between individual members of the target group which repeat the content of their oppression. Internalized oppression is always an involuntary reaction to the experience of oppression on the part of the target group.) To blame the target group in any way for having internalized the consequences of their oppression is itself an act of oppression.
10. The "positive re-enforcements" and social rewards that people in a non-target group receive for going along with their conditioning would not in themselves be sufficient to secure their acceptance of the social role of the perpetrator. The "acceptance" of this role is first made possible as a result of the individual's own experience of oppression, originally as a young person.
11. People who are the targets of any particular form of oppression have resisted and attempted to resist their oppression in any way they could. The fact that their resistance is not generally recognized is itself a feature of the oppression.
12. People who are the non-target of any particular oppression have resisted and attempted to resist their socialization into the oppressive role. The fact that this resistance is not generally recognized is also a feature of the oppression.
13. Being socialized into the oppressed role is a painful experience for all people of the target group. Being socialized into the oppressor role is a painful experience for all people of the non-target group --- in spite of the positive re-enforcements and material benefits that go along with this role.
14. Part of the conditioning experience is the misinformation that socialization into these roles is not painful. In some cases the pain of the conditioning is recognized for people in the target group. It is seldom recognized for people of the non-target group. The conditioning experiences are portrayed as "a normal part of growing up". For the most part the original awareness that this socialization was painful is obscured, or forgotten.
15. The perpetuation of any particular oppression requires that the pain of being socialized into either the oppressed or the oppressor role be forgotten, or discounted. The discounting or "normalizing" of the painful aspects of the conditioning process thus becomes a means of perpetuating all forms of oppression.
16. Liberation is possible. It is possible to recover the buried memories of our socialization, to share our stories and heal the hurts imposed by the conditioning, to act in the present in a humane and caring manner, to rebuild our human connections and to change our world.

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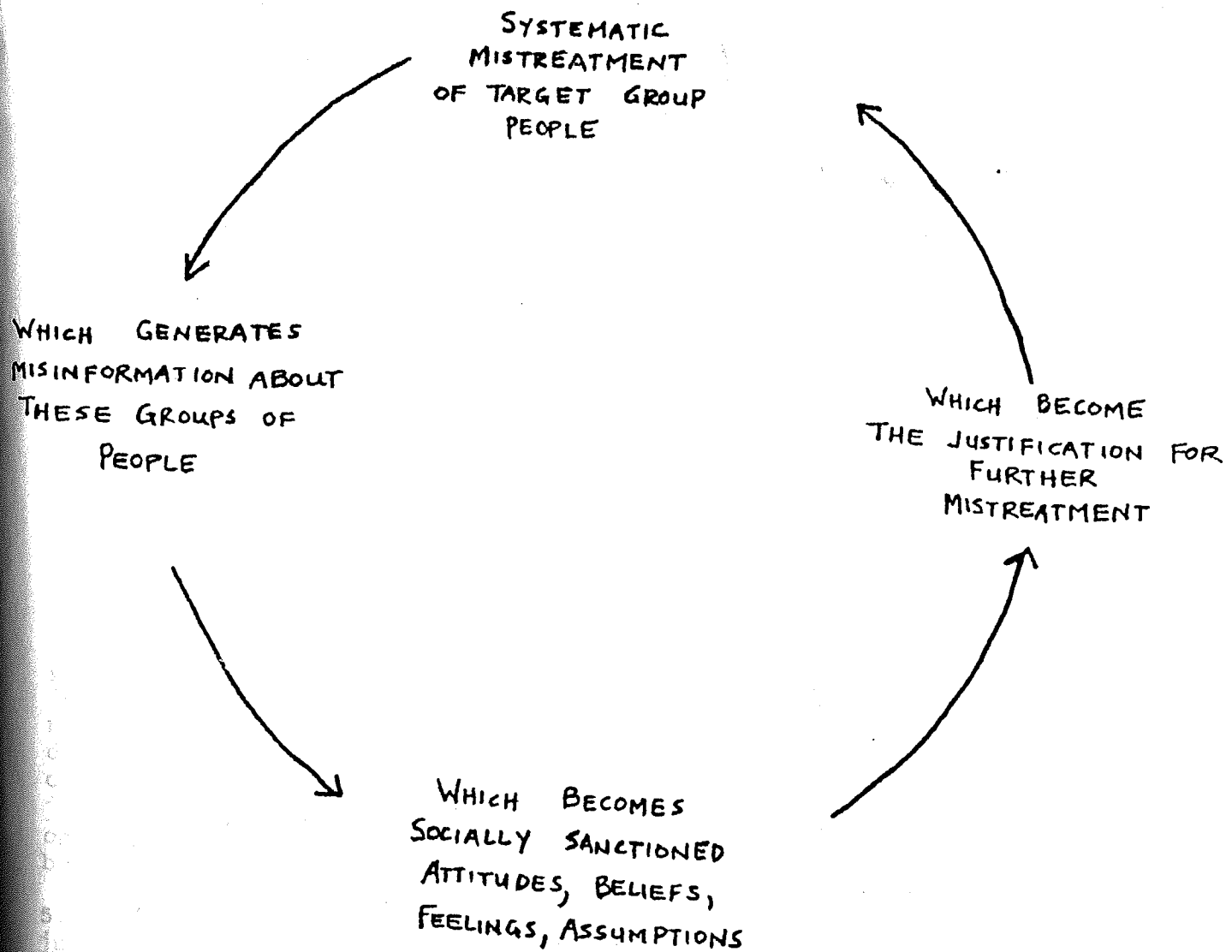
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UNLEARNING RACISM WORKSHOPS

Ricky Sherover-Marcuse Ph.D.

THE CYCLE OF OPPRESSION



OPPRESSION IS ONE CONSEQUENCE OF A SELF-PERPETUATING IMBALANCE IN ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, AND SOCIAL POWER.

• OPPRESSION HURTS ALL OF US, WHETHER OR NOT WE ARE MEMBERS OF THE TARGETED GROUP.

UNLEARNING RACISM WORKSHOPS

Ricky Sherover-Marcuse Ph.D.

A WORKING DEFINITION OF RACISM: REVISED (7/88)

1. Human beings are members of the same species. The term 'racism' is useful as a shorthand way of categorizing the systematic mistreatment experienced by people of color and Third world people both in the United States and in many other parts of the world. But this term should not mislead us into supposing that human beings belong to biologically different species. We all belong to one race, the human race.
2. The systematic mistreatment experienced by people of color is a result of institutionalized inequalities in the social structure. Racism is one consequence of a self-perpetuating imbalance in economic, political and social power. This imbalance consistently favors members of some ethnic and cultural groups at the expense of others. The consequences of this imbalance pervade all aspects of the social system and affect all facets of people's lives.
3. At its most extreme, systematic mistreatment takes the form of physical violence and extermination, but it occurs in many other forms as well. Pervasive invalidation, the denial or the non-recognition of the full humanity of persons of color also constitutes the mistreatment categorized as racism. Putting the matter in these terms may clear up the confusion which is generated by thinking of racism merely as 'different treatment'. If we examine the facts, we will see that what is often called 'different treatment' is in reality **inhuman treatment**, i.e. treatment which denies the humanity of the individual person and their group.
4. The systematic mistreatment of any group of people generates **misinformation** about them which in turn becomes the 'explanation' of or justification for continued mistreatment. Racism exists as a whole series of attitudes, assumptions, feelings and beliefs about people of color and their cultures which are a mixture of misinformation, fear and ignorance. Just as 'the systematic mistreatment of people of color' means 'inhuman treatment', so 'misinformation about people of color' designates beliefs and assumptions that in any way imply that people of color are less than fully human. These beliefs and attitudes are not just neutral errors; they are **impacted misinformation**: ideas and opinions which are glued together with painful emotion and held in place by frozen memories of distressing experiences.
5. Because misinformation about people of color functions as the justification for their continued mistreatment, it becomes **socially empowered** or sanctioned misinformation. It is recycled through the society as a form of conditioning that affects everyone. In this way, misinformation about people of color becomes part of everyone's 'ordinary' assumptions.

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6. For purposes of clarity, it is helpful to use the term 'internalized racism' or 'internalized oppression' to designate the misinformation that people of color may have about themselves and their cultures. The purpose of this term is to point out that this misinformation is consequence of the mistreatment experienced by people of color. It is not an inherent feature of their culture.

7. The term 'reverse racism' is sometimes used to characterize 'affirmative action' programs, but this is inaccurate. Affirmative action programs are attempts to **repair** the results of institutionalized racism by setting guidelines and establishing procedures for finding qualified applicants from all segments of the population.

8. The term 'reverse racism' is also sometimes used to characterize the mistreatment that individual whites may have experienced at the hands of individuals of color. This too is inaccurate. While **any** form of humans harming other humans is wrong because no one is entitled to mistreat anyone, we should not confuse the **occasional** mistreatment experienced by whites at the hands of people of color with the **systematic** and institutionalized mistreatment experienced by people of color at the hands of whites.

9. Racism operates as a strategy of divide and conquer. It helps to perpetuate a social system in which some people are consistently 'haves' and others are consistently 'have nots'. While the 'haves' receive certain material benefits from this situation, the long range effects of racism short change everyone. Racism sets groups of people against each other and makes it difficult for us to perceive our common interests as human beings. Racism make us forget that we all need and are entitled to good health care, stimulating education, and challenging work. Racism limits our horizons to what presently exists. Racism makes us suppose that current injustices are 'natural', or at best, inevitable: "someone has to be unemployed; someone has to go hungry." Most importantly, racism distorts our perceptions of the possibilities for change; it makes us abandon our visions of solidarity; it robs us of our dreams of community.

UNLEARNING RACISM WORKSHOPS

Ricky Sherover-Marcuse Ph.D.

WORKING ASSUMPTIONS AND GUIDELINES FOR ALLIANCE-BUILDING

Since, under present world conditions, everyone either is now, or has been, or will be at some time a **target** of social oppression, and since everyone is now, or has been, or will be in a **non-target** group in relation to some other group's oppression, alliance-building is for everyone. Everyone of us needs allies, and everyone of us can take the role of an ally for someone else. The following guidelines are based on this premise. They should be equally applicable from the perspective of the target and the non-target group.

STRATEGIES FOR WINNING ALLIES

1. Assume that you and all members of your group deserve allies.
2. Assume that your liberation issues are justifiably of concern to all people outside your group.
3. Assume that people in other groups are your natural allies; assume that all people outside your group want to be allies for you and that it is in their interest for them to do so.
4. Assume that it is only other people's own oppression and internalized oppression that prevents them (temporarily) from being effective allies to you at all times.
5. Assume that your allies are doing the best they can at the present time, given their own oppression and internalized oppression. Assume that they can and will do better.
6. Assume that you are the expert on your own experience and that you have information which other people need to hear.
7. Speak from your own experience without comparing your oppression to theirs.
8. Assume that your experience is also an experience of victories; be sure to share these- as well as the stories of how things are hard.
9. Expect perfection from your allies; expect them to be able to deal with the "difficult issues" in your struggle. Assume that allies make mistakes; be prepared to be disappointed, and continue to expect the best from them.
10. Assume that you have a perfect right to assist your allies to become more effective for you. Assume that you can choose to do this at any time. Take full pride in your ability to do this.

STRATEGIES FOR BEING AN EFFECTIVE ALLY

1. Assume that all people in your own group including yourself want to be allies to people in other groups. Assume that you are good enough and smart enough to be an effective ally. (This does not mean that you have nothing more to learn- see # 6, below.)
2. Assume that you have a perfect right to be concerned with other people's liberation issues, and that it is in your own interest to do so and to be an ally.

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3. Assume that all people in the target group want you and members of your group as allies. Assume that they recognize you as such- at least potentially.
4. Assume that any appearances to the contrary (any apparent rejections of you as an ally) are the result of target group people's experience of oppression and internalized oppression.
5. Assume that people in the target group are already communicating to you in the best way they can at the present time. Assume that they can and will do better. Think about how to assist them in this without making your support dependent upon their "improving" in any way. (Hint: think about what has been helpful for you when you were in the target group position).
6. Assume that target group people are experts on their own experience, and that you have much to learn from them. Use your own intelligence and your own experience as a target group member to think about what the target group people might find useful.
7. Recognize that as a non-target person you are an expert on the experience of having been conditioned to take the oppressor role. This means that you know the content of the lies which target group people have internalized. Don't let timidity force you into pretended ignorance.
8. Assume that target group people are survivors and that they have a long history of resistance. Become an expert on this history and assist target group people to take full pride in it.
9. Become an expert on all the issues which are of concern to people in the target group, especially the issues which are most closely tied in to their internalized oppression. Assume that making mistakes is part of the learning process of being an ever more effective ally. Be prepared for flare-ups of disappointment and criticism. Acknowledge and apologize for mistakes; learn from them, **but don't retreat.**
10. Recognize that people in the target group can spot "oppressor-role conditioning"; do not bother with trying to "convince" them that this conditioning did not happen to you. Don't attempt to convince target group people that you "are on their side"; just be there.
11. Do not expect "gratitude" from people in the target group; thoughtfully interrupt if it is offered to you. Remember, being an ally is a matter of your choice. It is not an obligation; it is something you get to do.
12. Be a 100% ally; no deals; no strings attached: "I'll oppose your oppression if you oppose mine." Everyone's oppression needs to be opposed unconditionally.

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UNLEARNING RACISM WORKSHOPS

Ricky Sherover-Marcuse Ph.D.

WORKING ASSUMPTIONS FOR WHITE ACTIVISTS ON ELIMINATING RACISM: GUIDELINES FOR RECRUITING OTHER WHITES AS ALLIES

1. Assume that all human beings desire warm, close relationships with each other. This is also true of you and of all other white people.
2. Assume that you are a regular white person (not an exceptional white person) and that all whites are good people, caring, intelligent, compassionate, and hard-working.
3. Recognize that we have much to celebrate about our histories and our diversities; we have rich traditions of music and dance, and proud histories of struggle.
4. Assume that all white people have undergone some variety of systematic conditioning or 'training' to take on the 'oppressor role' in relation to people of color. Sometimes this training has been to participate in acts of violence, or to join in racial slurs or jokes; sometimes this training has been to keep silent in the face of injustice. Sometimes this training has been to be 'extra nice' towards people of color...
5. Assume that no human being would have ever agreed to take on any aspect of an oppressor role if they had not first been mistreated or oppressed themselves- originally as young people, and in a variety of other ways.
6. Assume that no white person ever chose to acquire any of the conditioning or training and that every one of us attempted to resist taking on any aspect of the oppressor role.
7. Assume that the history of our own acts of resistance has been obscured and hidden from us and that many of us feel no pride in our own heritages and traditions.
8. Recognize that most whites in the United States have a history of immigrant oppression in which their own ethnic group has been the target of mistreatment at the hands of other white ethnic groups who were in a position of relative social power.
9. Recognize that all people need the acknowledgement that their liberation issues are legitimate.
10. Assume that in spite of the material rewards and preferential treatment that our society gives to white people, these 'advantages' do not offset the real costs of racism to us as human beings.

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11. Assume that the conditioning which white people have undergone has been hurtful to us as human beings: it has betrayed our sense of ourselves, robbed us of close and trusting relationships with our families, given us a false picture of reality, isolated us from the majority of the world's peoples, blunted our imagination, limited our vision, enforced a sense of powerlessness, hampered our ability to love.
 12. Assume that at some level, all white people know this. Accordingly the task of the white activist is not to persuade or convince other whites of this truth, but to make their own buried awareness accessible to them.
 13. Assume that the elimination of racism is in the real self interest of all people.
 14. Assume that all white people are eager to join in the project of eliminating racism and that appearances to the contrary are the result of feelings of despair and powerlessness caused by the individual's own experiences of oppression and mistreatment.
 15. Recognize how the temptation to classify other whites into 'good whites' and 'bad whites' is often a mechanism for perpetuating other forms of oppression such as classism and regional oppression.
 16. Recognize that engaging in anti-racist activity commits us to the building of real connections with all people and functioning as allies for them.
 17. Assume that white people (like all other human beings) will change their minds and let go of deeply ingrained attitudes and behavior patterns when 1) they feel acknowledged and appreciated as individuals; 2) they are listened to with complete respect on their own grievances and liberation concerns; 3) they trust the person presenting the new perspective; 4) the new perspective makes sense to them; 5) they are not blamed for their prior conditioning or behavior.
 18. Recognize that recruiting other whites to join us is also an opportunity to learn from them, and that they have much to teach us.

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UNLEARNING RACISM WORKSHOPS

Ricky Sherover-Marcuse Ph.D.

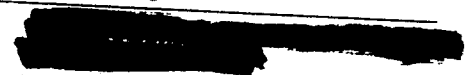
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GUIDELINES FOR IMPROVING COMMUNICATION WITHIN A DIVERSE WORKING GROUP

1. Begin with the assumption that all human beings are natural communicators, and that we all desire warm, close relationships with each other.
2. Assume that biological/cultural/ethnic/sexual/religious/age differences between human beings are never the real cause of difficulties in communication.
3. Assume that the real cause of such difficulties is the division and separation resulting from institutionalized imbalances in social and economic power, i.e. social oppression. The conditioning which perpetuates the divisions between us separates us into **target** and **non-target** groups.
4. People who are the **target** group of a particular form of mistreatment are socialized to become **victims**; people who are the **non-target** group of a particular form of mistreatment are socialized to become **perpetrators**- either in a direct, active form or in an indirect, passive form. Neither of these roles serves our best interests as human beings.
5. Assume that no one wanted these roles; no one wanted these divisions. Everyone resisted the social conditioning to take on these roles as best they could. But the hurts from this conditioning cling to us and make it difficult to see and hear each other clearly. We make unaware assumptions about what other people are thinking and feeling. We forget to check in with each other and to really listen.
6. Assume that issues of oppression always have some connection to difficulties in communication. Assume that racism, sexism, job status, etc. always figure in somewhere.
7. Assume that target group people are always the experts on their own experience and that they have perspectives and information which non-target people need to hear.
8. Assume that when everything is taken into account, every human being has always communicated as clearly as they could, and in general has always done the best that they could in every single situation.
9. Assume that in spite of the ways we have been divided, it is possible to reach through those divisions, to listen to each other well and to change habitual ways of acting which have kept us separated.

UNLEARNING RACISM WORKSHOPS

Ricky Sherover-Marcuse Ph.D.



III. JEWISH LIBERATION AND THE ROLE OF NON-JEWISH ALLIES

1. Jewish liberation is the concern of all people-- not only of Jews.
2. Jewish liberation means: 1) the ending of any mistreatment of Jews, 2) the elimination of all anti-Jewish attitudes, 3) the undoing of all 'echoes' of Jewish oppression in the hearts and minds of the Jews themselves. The achievement of Jewish liberation will mean that Jews will be and will feel themselves to be cherished- fully welcomed in the world.
3. Like other peoples, Jews are entitled to a national homeland, a nation state in a world of nation states. Allies need to remember that the right of the Jewish people to a national homeland or state is in no way contradictory to the right of the Palestinian people to a national homeland or state. Allies need to be for both sides in the Arab-Israeli conflict. To support Israel at the expense of the Palestinians is to force Jews to choose between security and justice- an impossible choice.
4. Allies need to find out as much as they can about Jewish history, Jewish cultures, religious practices and traditions--not only from books and films but also from individual Jews themselves.
5. Allies need to listen to the unique perspective of every individual Jew and to remember that every Jew is an expert on her/his experience of being Jewish.
6. Jewish oppression need not be a permanent state of affairs. It can be ended---just as other forms of oppression can be ended.
7. Allies need to remember that they are good enough and smart enough to intervene when anti-Jewish acts occur or when anti-Jewish jokes or comments are made.
8. Every non-Jew has the exciting and challenging possibility of being a committed ally of Jewish liberation.

UNLEARNING RACISM WORKSHOPS

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TOWARDS A PERSPECTIVE ON ELIMINATING RACISM 12 WORKING ASSUMPTIONS

Because racism is both institutional and attitudinal, effective strategies against it must recognize this dual character. The elimination of institutionalized racism requires a conscious project of attitudinal transformation. The deliberate attempt to transform racist patterns of thought and action must be accompanied by political and social change. The following assumptions offer a perspective for beginning the work.

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1. The systematic mistreatment of any group of people isolates and divides human beings from each other. This practice is a hurt to all people. The division and isolation produced by racism is a hurt to people from all ethnic groups.
2. Racism is not a genetic disease. No human being is born with racist attitudes and beliefs. Physical and cultural differences between people are not the cause of racism; these differences are used as the excuse to justify racism. (Analogy with sexism: anatomical differences between human males and females are not the cause of sexism; these differences are used to justify the mistreatment of females of all ages.)
3. No young person acquires misinformation by their own free choice. Racist attitudes and beliefs are a mixture of misinformation and ignorance which is imposed upon young people through a painful process of social conditioning. "You have to be taught to hate and fear."
4. Misinformation is harmful to all human beings. Misinformation about peoples of color is harmful to all people. Having racist attitudes and beliefs is like having a clamp on one's mind. It distorts one's perceptions of reality. Two examples: the notion that "flesh color" is several shades of pinkish beige; the use of the term 'minorities' to describe the majority of the world's people.
5. No one holds onto misinformation voluntarily. People hold onto racist beliefs and attitudes because this misinformation represents the best thinking they have been able to do at this time, and because no one has been able to assist them to change their perspective.
6. People will change their minds and let go of ingrained attitudes under the following conditions: 1) the new position is presented in a way that makes sense to them; 2) they trust the person who is presenting the new position; 3) they are not blamed for having had misinformation.

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7. People hurt others because they themselves have been hurt. In this society we have all experienced systematic mistreatment as young people- often through physical violence, but also through the invalidation of our intelligence, the disregard of our feelings, the discounting of our abilities. As a result of these experiences, we tend both to **internalize** this mistreatment by accepting it as 'the way things are', and to **externalize** it by mistreating others. Part of the process of undoing racism involves becoming aware of and interrupting this cycle of mistreatment in day to day encounters and interactions.
8. As young people we have often witnessed despair and cynicism in the adults around us, and we have often been made to feel powerless in the face of injustice. Racism continues in part because we feel powerless to do anything about it.
9. There are times when we have failed to act, times when we did not achieve as much as we wanted to in the struggle against racism. Eliminating racism also involves understanding the difficulties we have had and learning to overcome them, without blaming ourselves for having had those difficulties.
10. The situation is not hopeless; people can grow and change; we are not condemned to repeat the past. Racist conditioning need not be a permanent state of affairs. It can be examined, analyzed and dismantled. Because this misinformation is glued together and held in place with painful emotion, the process of dismantling it must take place on the experiential as well as on the theoretical level.
11. We live in a multicultural, multi-ethnic world; everyone is "ethnic." Misinformation about other people's ethnicity is often the flip side of misinformation about one's own ethnicity. For example the notion that some ethnic groups are 'exotic' and 'different' is the flip side of the notion that one's own group is just 'regular' or 'plain'. Thus a crucial part of eliminating racism is the acquiring of accurate information about one's own ethnicity and cultural heritage. Reclaiming this information will show us that we all come from traditions in which we can take justified pride.
12. All people come from traditions which have a history of resistance to injustice, and every person has their own individual history of resistance to oppressive social conditioning. This history deserves to be recalled and celebrated. Reclaiming one's own history of resistance is central to the project of acquiring an accurate account of one's own heritage. When people act from a sense of informed pride in themselves and their traditions, they will be more effective in all struggles for justice.

UNLEARNING RACISM WORKSHOPS

Ricky Sherover-Marcuse Ph.D.

A WORKING PERSPECTIVE ON JEWISH LIBERATION

I. WHO ARE THE JEWS?

1. Jews are people with a common early history which originated more than 5000 years ago.

2. There are many Jewish cultures: Jews speak many languages. Arabic, Ladino, Yiddish and are three languages traditionally spoken in various Jewish communities. The language of Jewish religious tradition and of the state of Israel is modern Hebrew. Being Jewish is not identical with speaking any particular language.

3. Judaism is the name of the religion which has played a major part in shaping Jewish cultures. There are a variety of ways to practice Judaism. Many Jews do not identify as religious.

4. "Jewishness" is a learned social identity, not a set of genetic traits.

5. There are various procedures in Judaism whereby non-Jews (Gentiles) can convert and become Jews. But it is not necessary to be Jewish in order to learn about and to enjoy the richness of Jewish traditions and cultures.

6. Every Jew has and is entitled to have a unique (self-defined) relationship to Jewish traditions, Jewish cultures, Jewish religious practices, Jewish history, and to the state of Israel.

II. JEWISH OPPRESSION (since the late 19th century, known as ANTI-SEMITISM)

1. Jewish oppression is real; it affects the life of every Jew. As a people and as individuals Jews have been the targets of systematic mistreatment and of anti-Jewish attitudes.

2. The key difficulty in understanding the nature of Jewish oppression is that except in periods where Jews are the targets of mass physical violence, they are invisible as an oppressed group.

3. The reasons for this invisibility are that the ruling powers have traditionally used the Jews as scapegoats for prevailing economic and social problems. As a result the Jews have been isolated from other oppressed groups; they have been seen as oppressors or as the cause of other people's misfortunes.

4. Jewish oppression has a cyclical form: there have been alternating periods of violence and temporary "safety" under specific conditions. The historical experience of the Jewish people is one of recurrent expulsion and temporary shelter.

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5. The historical predicament of the Jews as a people without a homeland created a situation in which Jewish communities were always in potential danger of being expelled and consequently had to bargain for the right to remain in a given place.
6. The bargain required the carrying out of the "dirty work" for the ruling powers by a tiny minority of Jews. For example, during the Middle Ages some Jews functioned as tax collectors. The majority of tax collectors were non-Jews.
7. The fact that there have been a few Jews in positions of relative power (Henry Kissinger as U.S. Secretary of State) has made the misinformation about Jews as oppressors seem plausible.
8. The existence of the state of Israel has given the Jews a homeland but the fundamental feature of Jewish oppression remains unchanged: as a result of the need to bargain with the dominant powers for the right to exist, Israel is made to take on the task of carrying out the "dirty work" of supporting oppressive regimes and is isolated from other oppressed groups.
9. The cyclical nature of Jewish oppression means that even in situations in which Jewish communities are flourishing (such as is the case in the United States today), the undertone of instability remains a presence in Jewish lives.
10. Jewish oppression has generated misinformation about Jews as a group and as individuals which functions as the "explanation" or "justification" of Jewish oppression. This misinformation confuses both Jews and non-Jews.
11. Some of the commonest bits of misinformation about Jews are:
 - Jews run the economy and own the banks
 - Jews have special inborn abilities with money
 - Jews are smarter or more intelligent than other people
 - Jews are not working class people
 - Jewish women are pushy, aggressive, domineering, smothering
 - Jews did not resist during the Holocaust
 - Israel is oppressive because it is a Jewish state
 - Jews are more exclusive or clannish than other people
12. Jewish oppression hurts everyone. Jewish oppression has often functioned as the opening wedge for the oppression of other groups. Because of the historical use of Jews as social scapegoats, Jewish oppression has been condoned even when people mobilized against other forms of oppression. But when one oppression is condoned, all forms of oppression are legitimized and the unity of all liberation efforts is weakened.

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