

Discussions on Race and Equity (DRE)

DRE In Our Community - A Public Conversation: Facilitator Guide

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Challenging Racism presents:

Discussions on Race and Equity: A Public Conversation

INTRODUCTION

Background Information: (PG)

On September 19, 2019, the Arlington County Board adopted a *Racial Equity Plan* to examine and address racial inequities. Arlington, as well as cities across the nation, are grappling with historical policies and practices that have resulted in residential segregation, which in turn has created racial inequities in food security, housing security, income security as well as gross disparities in access to healthcare, education and worker protections. While there is strong political will to examine and address racial inequities in Arlington, without a shared understanding and informed examination of the impact of historically unfair systems, new policies supporting racial equity, diversity and inclusion may remain mostly on paper, no matter the good intentions of the plan.

Challenging Racism is an Arlington-based 501(c)3 organization focused on educating people about the prevalence and inequities of institutional and systemic racism, and giving them the knowledge and tools to disrupt racism where they encounter it - in their family, work and community. We are excited to partner with Arlington County to support the Arlington County Manager's Office in its initial effort to open connection with the community on race and racial equity in a series of Public, Leadership, and Neighborhood conversations that foster greater understanding of the issues, provide skills to support productive conversations, and generate interest in further engagement.

Over the long term, these efforts can move us forward to a common goal and vision of ***"What does racial equity in Arlington look like, and how can we get there?"***

A Public Discussion on Race and Equity Session Agenda

Welcome and Introductions (5 mins)

- Welcome from Arlington County (Project Background & Project Context/Scope) (2 mins)
- Challenging Racism & Facilitator Introductions (1 mins)
- Objectives & Housekeeping (2 mins)
 - By the end of this discussion you will have...
 - Discussed Privilege and Bias
 - Practiced Guidelines for Productive Conversations
 - Provided important feedback to the sponsors of this program
 - Identified concrete actions that you will take to impact your circle of influence to disrupt racism
- This session lasts from _____ to _____.
- Chat will be monitored. Questions to tech support.

(Total Elapsed Time (TET) - 5 mins)

Rules of Engagement - Guidelines for discussion (4 mins) (PG)

There is value in learning to speak together honestly and to relate to each other with dignity, without rushing to common ground that would leave all the hard questions hanging. We learn to speak differently in order to live together differently.

From Better Conversations: A Starter Guide - On Being Civil Conversations Project

- Structure helps create a respectful and brave space
- We ask for a different kind of seeing, listening, and speaking
- Here are our basic guidelines:
 - Listen deeply - to others, to yourself
 - We don't have to agree
 - Accept discomfort
 - Expect and accept lack of closure

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- Equity of Airtime; 3 before me - let three more people speak before you speak again
- Both/And - not binary; Complexity; Not either/or.
- Use I language; Speak for yourself/own experience
- Lean into curiosity
- Remember to breathe

Statement of Intention:

The mission of Challenging Racism is to empower and inspire people to disrupt racism one compassionate conversation at a time.

We are not going to discuss whether racism exists, whether it is systemic, or whether it is real. Racism exists, it is systemic, and it is real. And we are working to eliminate racism in order to create a just and equitable world.

(TET - 9 MINS)

Beginning our Conversation: Who am I? Why am I here? (17 m)

We want to give you an opportunity to meet each other, to introduce yourselves, and to share what brings you to these conversations. We will break into small groups for this. Each group will choose a **spokesperson** who will provide a **short** summary in Large group - **Please summarize the group answers to “Why are you here?”**

ACTIVITY 1: **Small Group Introduction** (12 mins)(DCP)

1. Introduce yourself please
 - a. What is your name?
 - b. Your community/neighborhood?
 - c. Why are you here?
 - d. Choose your spokesperson
2. Large group - Reports from 4 small groups. Report to large group (5 mins)
 - a. Report from each group - 1 minute each
 - b. Report on the responses to **“Why are you here?”**
 - c. DATA COLLECTION POINT (DCP) - Facilitators record summaries.

(TET - 26 mins)

A DISCUSSION OF PRIVILEGE

Activity 1: One way to look at a system of privilege (17 mins)

Large group - Video: What is it like to be Left-Handed? (8 mins)

<https://youtu.be/g1swN72r5Fk>

ZOOM Poll - choose one (1 min)

Option 1. My dominant hand is LEFT and I was surprised by some of what I saw in the video.

Option 2. My dominant hand is LEFT and I was NOT surprised at all by what I saw in the video.

Option 3. My dominant hand is RIGHT and I was surprised by some of what I saw in the video

Option 4. My dominant hand is RIGHT and I was NOT surprised at all by what I saw in the video.

Option 5. I do not have a dominant hand and I was surprised.

Option 6. I do not have a dominant hand and I was NOT surprised.

Share results of the poll. (1 mins)

Questions for the whole group - Please respond in Chat: (2 mins)

- What did you see?
- What did you notice?

(Facilitator or Zoom master shares chat responses with the large group.)

Opportunity for sharing: (3-4 people) (5 mins)

Have you had an experience like this? Would you like to share with the group?

TET (43 mins)

Transition to systemic privilege and how it plays out in broader systems.

Activity 2: Another way of looking at privilege (8 min)

“When we identify where our privilege intersects with somebody else's oppression, we'll find our opportunities to make real change.”

— *Ijeoma Oluo, So You Want to Talk About Race*

“White privilege is an absence of the consequences of racism. An absence of structural discrimination, an absence of your race being viewed as a problem first and foremost.”

— *Reni Eddo-Lodge, Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race*

Developing Common Understanding - Definitions (Slides & PG)

Privilege - Privilege can be defined as a set of unearned benefits given to people who fit into a specific social group. Society grants privilege to people because of certain aspects of their identity including race, class, gender, sexual orientation, language, geographical location, ability, and religion, to name a few.

White Privilege/Advantage - White privilege (or white skin privilege) is a variety of opportunities and preferences assigned to White people because of their race, which are unavailable to people of color. These advantages bestow power on White people, whether White people intend or not.

Systemic Racism/Structural Racism - Different facets of racism work interactively (in individuals, institutions, laws and habits) to reinforce a system that racializes outcomes even in the absence of obvious racist intent. Racialization refers to the dynamic interconnected process that creates cumulative and durable inequities based on race.

ZOOM Poll: (DCP)

Where have you seen or experienced systemic racism in the Arlington community?

Check as many as apply. **(2 mins)**

- Housing
- Education
- Environment
- Job Market
- Policing
- Mass Incarceration
- Healthcare
- Public Space
- Community Groups (Kiwanis, Rotary, Scouts, etc.)
- Recreation/Sports Organizations
- Religious/Faith Based
- Other

Share the poll results (1min)

TET (51 MINS)

Activity 3: Arlington Housing - Bringing it home: (32 mins)

African Americans have lived in Arlington for generations, but Arlington has not always been a welcoming place. This video, just produced by the Arlington Alliance for Housing Solutions reveals some of the history of discrimination and segregation in housing in Arlington. (8 mins)

<https://youtu.be/ijuP07GjFqY>

Small Group Conversation: (15 mins) - (PG)

- What is privilege?
- What systems of privilege did you identify?
- How does the system of racial privilege in housing impact other areas of privilege?
- Spokesperson from each group - different from last time

Large Group (5 mins)

- Each Group Reports
- Summary

A Synthesis Statement: (1 mins) (PG) No one is without agency or power. But we have seen in our discussion that there are systems in place that convey advantage or privilege to certain members of our society and it is hard to deny that the advantage falls primarily to white-body people. So here are some questions that might help guide your thinking as you begin to make a plan for taking action.

- What is your circle of influence?
- Do you lead a company?
- Do you coach a team?
- Do you belong to a civic organization?
- Are you part of a community of faith?
- What is your circle of influence?
- What is your superpower?
- What do you see in your circle of influence that needs to change?
- What can you do?

(TET 80 MINS)

A DISCUSSION OF BIAS

INTRODUCTION (2 mins)

We all have biases and blind spots. This is the human condition.
What are your internal biases?

Bias - definition (SLIDE & PG)

Bias is a preference in favor of, or against, a person, group of people, or thing. These initial human reactions, which are often unconscious, are rooted in inaccurate information or reason and are potentially harmful. Biases are also part of being human. When we can begin to **recognize** our own patterns of bias we have the power to challenge the negative or harmful biases within ourselves.

Why are we all biased?

Bias is how our minds streamline thinking so we can quickly make sense of the world. Our brains are biologically designed to perform these quick judgments unconsciously. In early prehistory, this unconscious, streamlined thinking was a form of protection against threats from the natural world. Over time, this way of processing has persisted between individuals and groups of people. When acknowledging another person or group, the brain intuitively forms an opinion – good, bad, or indifferent - often minimizing the complexity and humanity of others. Although bias is automatic, with practice, we can learn to change our thinking to allow a fuller, more nuanced understanding of others.

Activity 1: Challenge Assumptions (13 mins)

Video: Blind Spots: Challenge Assumptions - <https://youtu.be/BFcfqmVah8>
(3 mins)

Small Group Discussion on Bias (10 mins)

- When have you felt “othered” in a situation, workplace, environment?
- When have you noticed your own assumption or bias that turned out to be surprisingly inaccurate?
- Where do those assumptions/models/ideas come from

Return to Large Group
(TET 98 MINS)

Activity 2: Challenge Your Bias (12 mins)

Video: Heineken video: #OpenYourWorld (5 mins)
<https://youtu.be/VM3A2nc4DJs>

Large Group Discussion (7 mins)

- How can you challenge your own biases?
- Why is that hard?
- Why is that important?

(TET 110 MINS)

Activity 3: What Can We Do? (12 mins)

A Synthesis Statement: (PG & SLIDE) (1min) No one is without agency or power. But we have seen in our discussion that there are systems in place that convey advantage or privilege to certain members of our society and it is hard to deny that the advantage falls primarily to white-body people. So here are some questions that might help guide your thinking as you begin to make a plan for taking action.

- What is your circle of influence?
- Do you lead a company?
- Do you coach a team?
- Do you belong to a civic organization?
- Are you part of a community of faith?
- What is your circle of influence?
- What is your superpower?
- What do you see in your circle of influence that needs to change?

Commitment: Identify one specific action you will take as a result of this conversation. If you feel comfortable you are encouraged to share that intention in the chat. (2 mins)

County recommendation (PG) (DCP) (9 mins)

We would like you to share what you would like to convey to the CM and CB regarding the race and equity work in Arlington. You will also get a chance to share on the post participation feedback form.

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Round Robin for participants to share regarding an action step/on race and equity in Arlington County. *(This could also be shared in a comment section with a few people sharing “popcorn” style. Easier capture)*

Closing: Thank you for spending this time with us. You may have more questions than answers at this point. That is not unusual. We have provided a list of resources so that you can go back to some of the videos you saw, or learn more about something that interests you. There are great resources in the workbook including the county’s RACE page.

(TET 123 MINS)

Resources: (PG)

1. White Like Me - Video Clip
<https://www.kcet.org/shows/link-voices/white-like-me-race-racism-and-white-privilege-in-america-clip>
2. "White Like Me"
<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3125676/>
3. White Privilege, Systemic Racism, and Implicit Bias
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I2D0KKunhQ0>
4. Yeah, Let's Not Talk About Race
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/10/opinion/george-floyd-racism.html>
5. Anti-Racist Reading List
<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/02/antiracist-syllabus-governor-ralph-no-rtham/582580/>
6. White Privilege & Black History podcast
<https://open.spotify.com/show/6ZOvfl3VHAXNcLZbpvoLSu>
7. Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black man
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8jUA7JBkF4>
8. Larry Wilmore "Black on the Air" interview with Isabel Wilkerson on "Caste"
<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/isabel-wilkerson-on-caste-systems-that-we-currently/id1234429850?i=1000487471292>
9. The Danger of a Single Story
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9lhs241zeg>
10. Privilege Walk - Atlanta Journal Constitution <https://youtu.be/m3AMhtHPKNk>
11. The \$100 Race: <https://youtu.be/kyl4EJhq47A>
12. The Unequal Opportunity Race - Short film for the African American Policy Forum, showing metaphors for obstacles to equality which affirmative action tries to alleviate. All graphics and animation by Erica Pinto. https://youtu.be/vX_Vzl-r8NY
13. James Corden Gets a Lesson on White Privilege - Comedian James Corden gets a lesson on the nature and substance of white privilege from one of his patient staff members. <https://youtu.be/BUB3MGWT3xo>
14. Arlington Housing - African Americans have lived in Arlington for generations, but Arlington has not always been a welcoming place. This video, just produced by the Arlington Alliance for Housing Solutions reveals some of the history of discrimination and segregation in housing in Arlington.
<https://youtu.be/ijuP07GjFqY>
15. Heineken video: #OpenYourWorld
<https://youtu.be/VM3A2nc4DJs>
16. Blind Spots: Challenge Assumptions - <https://youtu.be/BFcjfqmVah8>

Organizations that support this work:

Challenging Racism - www.challengingracism.org

Arlington County RACE page

Arlington County Library

Smithsonian Race Page

Arlington Alliance for Housing Solutions - www.alliancefor housingsolutions.org

NAACP - www.ArlingtonNAACP.com