Learning How to be Anti-Racist 8/19/20

Slides and materials from the discussion held on 8/19/20

COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

1) Please change your name in Zoom to include your pronouns.

2) Prepare to get uncomfortable and lean into that.

3) Use the "raise hand" feature if you would like to speak next.

4) Assume good intentions when others are speaking and take a breath before responding.

5) Use "I" statements and speak from your own experiences.

WHITE SUPREMACY

The idea (ideology) that white people and the ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions of white people are superior to People of Color and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions.

WHITE SUPREMACY

Dismantling Racism Works web workbook

Is ever present in our institutional and cultural assumptions that assign value, morality, goodness, and humanity to the white group while casting people and communities of color as worthless (worth less), immoral, bad, and inhuman and "undeserving."

WHITE SUPREMACY

Dismantling Racism Works web workbook

Also refers to a political or socio-economic system where white people enjoy structural advantage and rights that other racial and ethnic groups do not, both at a collective and an individual level.

What WHITE SUPREMACY does

Defines what is "normal", "professional", "effective", "good", or what is "not good", "at risk", "unsustainable"

- Ex: Places an emphasis on the written word as a form of professional communication
- Ex: The belief that a certain tone of voice is required to be believable, professional, polite

**Overt White Supremacy
(Socially Unacceptable)**

Lynching

Hate Crimes

Blackface   The N-word

Swastikas   Neo-Nazis   Burning Crosses

Racist Jokes   Racial Slurs   KKK

Calling the Police on Black People   White Silence   Colorblindness

White Parents Self-Segregating Neighborhoods & Schools

**Covert White
Supremacy
(Socially
Acceptable)**

Eurocentric Curriculum   White Savior Complex   Spiritual Bypassing

Education Funding from Property Taxes   Discriminatory Lending

Mass Incarceration   Respectability Politics   Tone Policing

Racist Mascots   Not Believing Experiences of BIPOC   Paternalism

"Make America Great Again"   Blaming the Victim   Hiring Discrimination

"You don't sound Black"   "Don't Blame Me, I Never Owned Slaves"   Bootstrap Theory

School-to-Prison Pipeline   Police Murdering BIPOC   Virtuous Victim Narrative

Higher Infant & Maternal Mortality Rate for BIPOC   "But What About Me?"   "All Lives Matter"

BIPOC as Halloween Costumes   Racial Profiling   Denial of White Privilege

Prioritizing White Voices as Experts   Treating Kids of Color as Adults   Inequitable Healthcare

Assuming Good Intentions Are Enough   Not Challenging Racist Jokes   Cultural Appropriation

Eurocentric Beauty Standards   Anti-Immigration Policies   Considering AAVE "Uneducated"

Denial of Racism   Tokenism   English-Only Initiatives   Self-Appointed White Ally

Exceptionalism   Fearing People of Color   Police Brutality   Fetishizing BIPOC   Meritocracy Myth

"You're So Articulate"   Celebration of Columbus Day   Claiming Reverse-Racism   Paternalism

Weaponized Whiteness   Expecting BIPOC to Teach White People   Believing We Are "Post-Racial"

"But We're All One Big Human Family" / "There's Only One Human Race"   Housing Discrimination

13 CHARACTERISTICS OF WHITE SUPREMACY CULTURE

Source – Showing Up For Racial Justice

- PERFECTIONISM

- DEFENSIVENESS

- WORSHIP OF THE WRITTEN WORD

- EITHER/OR THINKING

- FEAR OF OPEN CONFLICT

- PROGRESS IS BIGGER, MORE

- RIGHT TO COMFORT

- SENSE OF URGENCY

- QUANTITY OVER QUALITY

- PATERNALISM

- POWER HOARDING

- INDIVIDUALISM

- OBJECTIVITY

From Dismantling Racism: A Workbook for Social Change Groups, by Kenneth Jones and Tema Okun, ChangeWork, 2001

PERFECTIONISM

Read More About Perfectionism

- Little appreciation expressed among people for the work that others are doing; appreciation that is expressed usually directed to those who get most of the credit anyway
- More common is to point out either how the person or work is inadequate
- Or even more common, to talk to others about the inadequacies of a person or their work without ever talking directly to them

PERFECTIONISM

- Mistakes are seen as personal, i.e. they reflect badly on the person making them as opposed to being seen for what they are -- mistakes
- Making a mistake is confused with being a mistake, doing wrong with being wrong
- Little time, energy, or money put into reflection or identifying lessons learned that can improve practice, in other words little or no learning from mistakes
- Tendency to identify what's wrong; little ability to identify, name, and appreciate what's right

PERFECTIONISM

Antidotes

- Develop a culture of appreciation, take time to make sure that people's work and efforts are appreciated
- Develop a learning mindset, where it is expected that everyone will make mistakes and those mistakes offer opportunities for learning
- Create an environment where people can recognize that mistakes sometimes lead to positive results
- Separate the person from the mistake
- When offering feedback, always speak to the things that went well before offering criticism
- Ask people to offer specific suggestions for how to do things differently when offering criticism

SENSE OF URGENCY

- Continued sense of urgency that makes it difficult to take time to be inclusive, encourage democratic and/or thoughtful decision-making, to think long-term, to consider consequences

- Frequently results in sacrificing potential allies for quick or highly visible results, for example sacrificing interests of communities of color in order to win victories for white people (seen as default or norm community)

- Reinforced by rushed funding proposals which promise too much work for too little money and by funders who expect too much for too little

SENSE OF URGENCY
Antidotes

- Realistic workplans
- Leadership which understands that things take longer than anyone expects
- Discuss and plan for what it means to set goals of inclusivity and diversity, particularly in terms of time
- Learn from past experience how long things take
- Write realistic funding proposals with realistic time frames
- Be clear about how you will make good decisions in an atmosphere of urgency

DEFENSIVENESS

- The organizational structure is set up and much energy spent trying to prevent abuse and protect power as it exists rather than to facilitate the best out of each person or to clarify who has power and how they are expected to use it

- Because of either/or thinking (see below), criticism of those with power is viewed as threatening and inappropriate (or rude)

DEFENSIVENESS

- People respond to new or challenging ideas with defensiveness, making it very difficult to raise these ideas

- A lot of energy in the organization is spent trying to make sure that people's feelings aren't getting hurt or working around defensive people

- The defensiveness of people in power creates an oppressive culture

DEFENSIVENESS
Antidotes

- Understand that structure cannot in and of itself facilitate or prevent abuse
- Understand the link between defensiveness and fear (of losing power, losing face, losing comfort, losing privilege)
- Work on your own defensiveness
- Name defensiveness as a problem when it is one
- Give people credit for being able to handle more than you think
- Discuss the ways in which defensiveness or resistance to new ideas gets in the way of the mission

EITHER/OR THINKING

- Things are either/or, good/bad, right/wrong, with us/against us
- Closely linked to perfectionism in making it difficult to learn from mistakes or accommodate conflict
- No sense that things can be both/and
- Results in trying to simplify complex things, for example believing that poverty is simply a result of lack of education

EITHER/OR THINKING

- Creates conflict and increases sense of urgency, as people are felt they have to make decisions to do either this or that, with no time or encouragement to consider alternatives, particularly those which may require more time or resources

EITHER/OR THINKING
Antidotes

- Notice when people use either/or language and push to come up with more than two alternatives
- Notice when people are simplifying complex issues, particularly when the stakes seem high or an urgent decision needs to be made
- Slow it down and encourage people to do a deeper analysis
- When people are faced with an urgent decision, take a break and give people some breathing room to think creatively
- Avoid making decisions under extreme pressure

White Supremacy Characteristics

(Perfectionism, Sense of Urgency, Defensiveness, Either/Or Thinking)

How are these characteristics at play in your life?

What can you (or your organization) do to disrupt these characteristics?

ACTION ITEM #1

If you haven't already, go to www.whiteaccomplices.org Read through each step.
Click through each image in Step 3 and read each page.

ACTION ITEM #2

Go to www.savethepostoffice.net
Participate in the action
this Saturday, August 22nd,
if you are able.

Text "USPS" to 50409
to sign a petition.