

## Brave Conversations Facilitator Tips & Tools

Thank you for participating in our Brave Conversation TtT Session. We hope that the session added value to your journey in doing your PART for advancing Equitable Practices and Equity Literacy. We are excited to share resources from the session with you, but we, also, want to provide a disclaimer that this is ongoing work. No “one and done” session will prepare you for all aspects of facilitating Courageous Conversations but practice and a commitment to doing the work will cultivate brave spaces.

One of the first principles we want you to remember is that we are all moving along this journey on the Steps of Growth. Growing and changing are natural functions in life. There are times when growing and changing involve a decision or action. The steps of growth help us be more conscious and aware of the process of change. Supporting ourselves and others in the process of growth and change motivates and inspires courage for the unknown. Awareness of these five steps allows us to become more attentive and responsive to the needs of others. Gently providing nurture and support enhances the growth processes of those with whom we interact. If we ascertain where on the steps a person might be, the adjustment of expectations and responses is utilized depending on what the person may need.

### The Five Steps of Growth



Using the image of the steps as our guide, there are five levels on the steps.

- The lowest step is below ground level, where a person is unaware. They may even be unaware that they are unaware. Similar to being in a basement. This unaware place may feel comfortable or numbing. As a person climbs to the next step, they find themselves on the step of

- Awareness. This may be painful or celebratory, depending on what has been discovered in this early process of moving from unaware to aware.
- Once a person steps from awareness, they move to the step of Understanding. This is an opportunity to understand what it is they have become aware of. Often times people miss or avoid this step in their haste to take action too soon. Whether it be researching or pondering, the Understanding step is a creative chance to deepen our mastery of self-discovery.
- The fourth step along the journey is the Action step. This may be a time of brainstorming new ideas related to their new awareness and growing understanding. On this Action step we move and become active in our choices since we have spent time understanding.
- Finally, at the top of the stairs is reflection. This is a time to evaluate, assess and perhaps celebrate the voyage of growing and changing. We might need to keep looking back down the steps to reflect, evaluate our experience, at times discovering a need to begin again.



*Human conversation is the most ancient and easiest way to cultivate the conditions for change – personal change, community and organizational change, planetary change. If we can sit together and talk about what's important to us, we begin to come alive. We share what we see, what we feel, and we listen to what others see and feel.*

*- Margaret Wheatley (2002)*

## Thoughts to prepare for Brave Conversations:

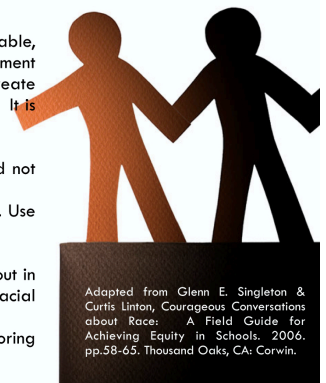
### How do I open the meeting and How important is opening?

- Provide participants with **Community Norms** to establish expectations for “how we are together”. We want the conversations to be sobering wake up calls regarding the realities of systemic inequity, social injustice, and the historical trauma and their impact. And, at the same time, we

#### The Four Agreements of Courageous Conversations

1. **Stay engaged:** Staying engaged means “remaining morally, emotionally, intellectually, and socially involved in the dialogue” (p.59)
  - Everyone is invited to participate but you always have the right to pass
  - During breakout rooms, please share the air space. Community growth depends on the inclusion of each voice.
2. **Experience discomfort:** This norm acknowledges that discomfort is inevitable, especially, in dialogue about inequity, and that participants make a commitment to bring issues into the open. It is not talking about these issues that create divisiveness. The divisiveness already exists in the society and in our schools. It is through dialogue, even when uncomfortable, the healing and change begin.
3. **Speak your truth:** This means being open about thoughts and feelings and not just saying what you think others want to hear.
  - In our chat box and breakout rooms, speak from your own experience. Use “I” statements.
4. **Expect and accept nonclosure:** This agreement asks participants to “hang out in uncertainty” and not rush to quick solutions, especially in relation to racial understanding, which requires ongoing dialogue (pp.58-65).
  - The goal is not always to agree- it is about hearing and exploring divergent perspectives.

#### Community Norms: How We Are Together



want to impress and empower participants to become passionate about changing outcomes for organizational change. Community Norms set the stage for participant engagement, sustained dialog, and deeper learner.

- Provide **Predictions, Disclaimers, and Acknowledgments (PADs)**. These statements allow participants to understand what the conversation will entail and what it is not meant to include.
  - **Predictions** are statements about how information might be received by participants, how they might feel upon hearing it or how they may respond once they reflect on it.
  - **Acknowledgments** are statements about the information itself: what is true about it or how it will be presented.
  - **Disclaimers** are statements about what facilitators cannot do or have chosen not to include. These are statements that often suggest that participants need to take responsibility for assessing and applying information in their own situations.
- Give participants the opportunity to become present to the moment and commit to the process of learning.



of learning. “You can increase the freedom, candor, and quality of conversation in your meetings by focusing on two key areas: giving permission and inviting authenticity. Permission to say or ask anything is priceless. It allows us to fully express ourselves: to seek what we want, to give feedback, to speak up about issues when we find the need. In your own meetings, talk about permission up front — it’s best to address it directly rather than assume it’s already there. What permission would you like from the group” .... in order to facilitator, in order to be authentic,

in order to be honest, in order to create space for healing. (Adapted from Paul Axtell, Harvard Business Review)

## How can I design a meeting to help learning happen?

- **Create Brave Space**: Initiating social justice dialog through Courageous Conversations should not be constructed to remove risk from the equation. That is simply impossible. These conversations will be uncomfortable at times, stretch participant learning, core beliefs, and experiences. We suggest to shift the language from safety to emphasizing the importance of bravery, to help participants better understand - and rise to the challenge of genuine dialog.

Safe Space	Brave Space <span>@Brit Hawthorne</span>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A place or environment in which a person or category of people can feel confident that they will not be exposed to discrimination, criticism, harassment, or any other emotional or physical harm.</li> <li>• A space free of judgement, without shame</li> <li>• Ultimately a space of support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourages Dialog</li> <li>• A space where participants feel comfortable learning, sharing, and growing</li> <li>• Is inclusive to all races, sexes, genders, abilities, immigration status, and lived experiences</li> <li>• Acknowledges that we come from different experiences that impact our core beliefs</li> <li>• Hold one another <b>accountable for doing the work</b> of learning together, seeking understanding, and creating community</li> </ul>



- **Respect the potential threat level in groups:** Developing the skills of being a threat to inequity means practice, practice, and more practice. Much of what a participant will do and won't do as an ally or accomplice to advance equity practices has to do with their personality, past history, core beliefs, and individual circumstances. Courageous Conversations will increase participants' awareness about boundaries and connecting their boundaries to their comfort zone, growth zone, and danger zone. Allow for opportunities to reflect on how comfort, growth, and danger zones show up in life, professionally and personally.
    - **Comfort Zone:** A place of action and inaction on systemic equity. You can be effective in your comfort zone, but there are times when opportunities to intervene pass by.
    - **Growth Zone :** This is a zone of less comfort and a focus on action from a growth edge. A zone to learn about self, seek new ways to create action, and take risk to stand for others.
    - **Danger zone:** A scary zone past your boundaries. The push creates defensiveness- the risk feels too great and may cause a shut down
- Racial Healing Handbook by Dr. Anneliese A. Singh

### What will I do if problems arise?

- Practice **Spacious Listening:** This means that we stay in a spacious place where there is a lot of room to hear and reflect. During Courageous Conversations, when we are triggered, our minds really focus on the hurt. We get defensive and respond either by getting upset or shutting down. This is not the place for listening. Spacious listening allows us to listen with a more compassionate heart rather than just waiting for our turn to respond. Spacious Listening focuses on:
  - Not just hearing, but understanding
  - Not being right, but getting clarity
  - Building trust in a relationship
  - More on processing than fixing
  - More on accepting than agreeing
  - More than just words, includes body language

A a facilitator, using the the process of Spacious Listening when participants have been triggered and emotions are high allows for participants to feel heard, process their emotions, and sit on the Step of Understanding to unpack what is happening below the surface of outward behaviors. Spacious Listening is an intentional form of communication in which the Listener focuses their attention on the information being shared by the Speaker and generates responses that reflect the content, feelings, or possible meaning of what is being shared.

Remember the three step process:

1. Acknowledge your "Gut Response"
2. Pause to understand the "Internal Dialog" of the other person.
3. Use a listening statement to explore understanding

Examples of Listening Statements:

It sounds like...

It seems...



That makes you feel...

It bothered you that...

When you aren't getting...

The hard part about this is...

Thanks for speaking up...

What I hear you saying is...

I appreciate your perspective,  
but...

Why do you say that...

What do you mean...

Tell me more...

It hurt you....

You would like to change...



- Hold participants accountable to Community Norms. At times, it may also be necessary to **Interrupt** statements, comments, and threats to equity. As a Facilitator of Courageous Conversations, you must speak up against every biased remark, every time it happens. Letting one go, then speaking up against the next one, sends an inconsistent message: that sometimes bias is ok; other times it isn't. Letting the first instance go without comment also sends the message to anyone within earshot that it's ok to say bigoted things. So interrupt it. Every time. In the moment. Without exception.
- **Draw the fire.** When something happens in a group that has the potential to create emotional or relational harm to the environment of the group, group dynamics, or individual safety, facilitators quickly intervene and redirect the turmoil toward themselves rather than onto someone in the group or the group in general. They can also personalize the statement of the participant's feelings and perception as belonging uniquely to that person as opposed to being a universal experience.
  - "So (person's name) you are feeling very... about this" - draw the attention back to you the facilitator for a response
  - "People can often feel... about this" - redirect from a personal attack to a generalization
  - "As we shared at the beginning of the conversation, we are not here to debate if the system is wrong. We all can..."
  - "Let's all take a few minutes to consider other ways to respond..."Listen to draw the fire to diffuse the stress. Generalize to neutralize, by using basic principles to calm and diffuse tensions. Set limits and boundaries as a reminder for those involved that they must maintain the Community Norms/ Agreements. Take a break to interrupt the tension. These responses are very effective whenever there is something highly emotional occurring in a group. The goal is to diffuse the tension. It is not about addressing the actual

content of the issue, which can be done later when emotions are not so intense.

## IMAGINE

*“Create a journey of where we came from to where we want to be.”*

### Imagine – 45-60-minute Conversation

The objective of this learning experience is to build organizational capacity to engage in ongoing “Brave Conversations” about diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice. Each conversation should reinforce learning, comfort level through practice, and deeper commitment to engaging in Brave Spaces. Each sample conversation will provide examples of exercises designed to guide the facilitator and participants through a journey experience in order to enhance the skill of curiosity and digging deeper to gain understanding of self and others.

- Create 3 journeys
  - Where we came from to where we want to be
  - Where we are now to where we are going
  - Where do we want to go
- Opening activities can be used to start the conversation, warm up participants to the experience, and set the stage for engagement and open dialog about current truths and the possibilities for growth and change.
- Include interactive feedback from the participants in 15 min increments to promote dialog and manage dosing of content

Two examples of opening journey Conversations that connect people to their own experiences and the power that personal experience can have on a person’s journey include:

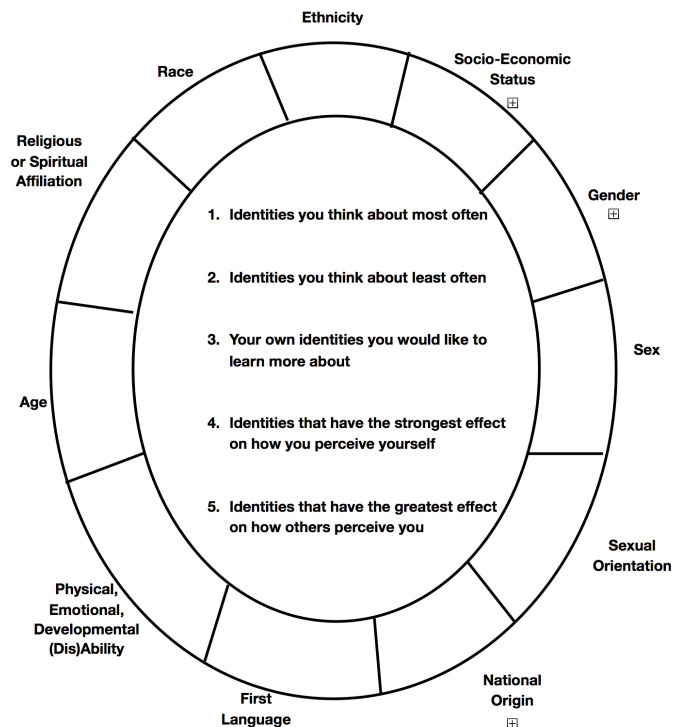
### 7 Circles

Materials needed: 1 blank sheets of white paper per person; pen or pencil

- Draw a medium-sized circle in the center of a piece of paper.
- Around that circle, draw seven smaller circles connected to the larger circle.
- Write your name in the center circle.
- In the smaller circles, write the names of seven groups with which you identify (examples: gender, nationality/ethnicity, religious affiliation, political stance, geographic ties, family role etc.)
- Debrief after the personal reflection:
  - Talk about at time when you felt proud to be a member of a certain group.
  - When did it feel painful to be a member of a certain group?

- adapted from Continuing Courageous Conversations Toolkit funded by the  
Iowa Department of Human Services

## Social Identity Wheel:



## 4 Layers of the identity that we bring into community

- The Core Dimension is how we think and communicate.
- Internal Dimensions are largely out of our control but have a powerful impact on behaviors and attitudes.
- External Dimensions are largely within our control and are choices formed by environmental, social and cultural factors and experiences.
- Organizational Dimensions are largely defined and influenced by the group or organization in which we work.

## Do I Have The Full Picture

Materials needed: 2 blank sheets of white paper per person; pen or pencil

**Read aloud:** The world is full of diverse groups, languages and experiences, multiracial and interclass. But our upbringing, family, friends, schools and churches, from which we develop our world view, are often not so diverse. Did your background expose you to racial diversity? Does your current life expose you to racial diversity?

**On one of your sheets of paper**, draw a face-shaped oval or circle. Draw one component of a human face (eye, nose, mouth, ear, another ear, hair, etc.) for every “yes” answer you have for the following questions as they relate to your childhood.

It’s okay if you don’t draw a completed face. We’ll discuss what we were able to draw at the end of the questions.

- At least one member of my immediate family (parents, siblings, grandparents) is from a racial/ethnic group other than my own.
- At least one family in the neighborhood of my childhood home (one of about 10 homes) was of a racial/ethnic group other than my own.
- At least one of my close childhood friends was from a racial/ethnic group other than my own.
- The religious group, synagogue, mosque or church I attended was racially mixed (at least 10 percent of the members were of a racial group other than my own).
- The schools I attended were racially mixed (at least 10 percent of the student body were from a racial group or groups other than my own).
- At least one of my school teachers, or coaches was of a racial/ethnic group other than my own.
- I grew up in a home where I NEVER heard my parents or siblings say a negative word about groups of people by race or ethnicity.
- Of the friends my parent(s) socialized with and regularly invited to our home, at least one was from a racial/ethnic group other than their own.

**Discuss:**

Were you able to create a full face?

During your childhood, how were you exposed to racial diversity and equity?

**Read aloud:**

Now, let’s look at our current exposure to diversity. On the other piece of paper, once again draw an oval or circle face shape. As with the previous questions, add a facial component each time you answer “yes” to a question. But this time, think about the questions as they pertain to your current adult life.

- At least one member of my extended family (cousins, spouse, sister-in-law, mother-in-law, etc) is from a racial/ethnic group other than my own.
- At least one family in my current neighborhood (one out of about 10 homes) is of a racial/ethnic group other than my own.



- At least one of my close friends is from a racial/ethnic group other than my own.
- The religious group, synagogue, mosque or church I attend is racially mixed (at least 10 percent of the members are of a racial group other than my own).
- The schools my children attend(ed) are racially mixed (at least 10 percent of the student body are from a racial group or groups other than my own).
- In my home, we NEVER say negative words about groups of people by race or ethnicity.
- Of the friends I socialize with and regularly invite to my home, at least one is from a racial/ethnic group other than my own.

### **Discuss:**

What does your “adult” face look like compared to your “childhood” face?

Does your current environment have more exposure to diversity?

How do you think your past and present experiences with race, diversity, and equity shape how you view others?

- Exercise adapted from M. Garlinda Burton's The Face Test

### **Creating spaces for experiences:**

Using current organizational research, historical data, vision/ mission, allow participants to reflect on the current experiences that the organization creates for diverse groups that are served.

### **Journey Mapping Discuss-**

How does your organization shape diverse experiences?

What are some possibilities for growth and change?

### **Miracle Question**

"Suppose you closed your eyes and became relaxed and while you were relaxing a miracle happened and issues of organizational inequity, bias, and diversity were resolved. When you opened your eyes, what are the first signs you'd see that would make you know something had changed and issues of systemic inequity were gone."

~ adapted from Switch by Dan and Chip Heath

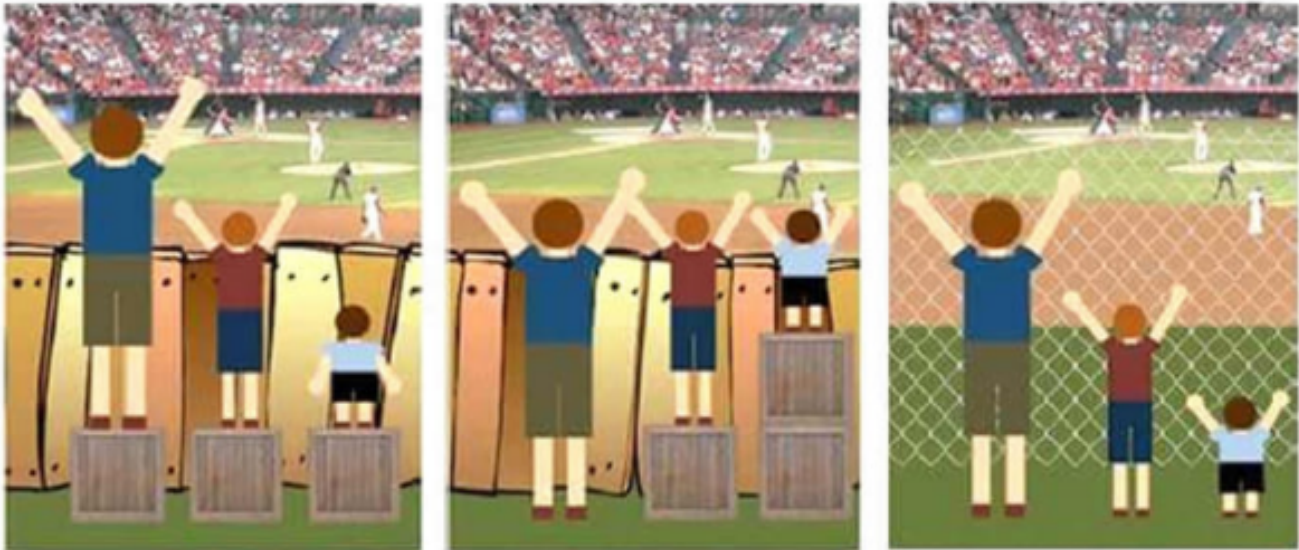
**Chart Responses:** Allow time for the participants to be open and honest about the tangible evidence of change that would reflect systemic growth in the advancement of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice for the organization.

## Make the distinction between Diversity and Equity:

*“Diversity is a valuable and worthwhile goal in itself, but research in areas like welfare, juvenile justice, and education shows that it does not guarantee equitable educational outcomes. So we want to be cautious about imagining that it is a magic bullet solution. It is surely necessary, but it may still not be sufficient.”*

**Allow the group time to define equity for themselves and explore an image of equity.** What message does this image convey to you about the difference between equality and equity?

### EQUALITY VERSUS EQUITY



**Equity** is the recognition and undoing of historical and systemic injustices that occur within a system.

**Educational equity** is the result of eliminating individual, organizational and institutional barriers, practices and policies that prevent the realization of children’s lifelong learning and self-actualization, regardless of racial, cultural, religious, gender, economic or any other social factor.

- School Readiness Consulting

Present data to reinforce the impact of systemic inequity on children, adolescents, families, communities, and diverse groups. Communicate the Allostatic Load that marginalized practices have created and the generational impact on child and student outcomes.

<http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/quizzes.html>

<https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/StepUpLeadEquity.pdf>

**Why are people still so angry? :**

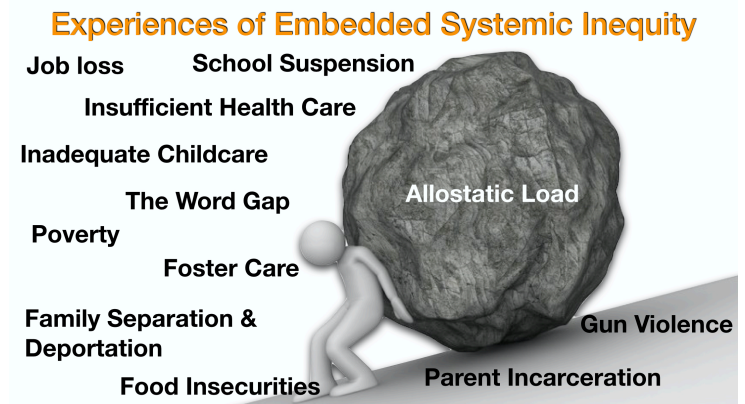
<https://youtu.be/AGUwcs9qJXY>



**Journey Mapping Discuss:** Action step to continue the conversation

To what extent do improvements to education depend on us improving educational equity?

How can we rethink the questions we ask during professional development, team collaboration, and building-wide professional learning so that they encourage professionals to look through an equity lens?



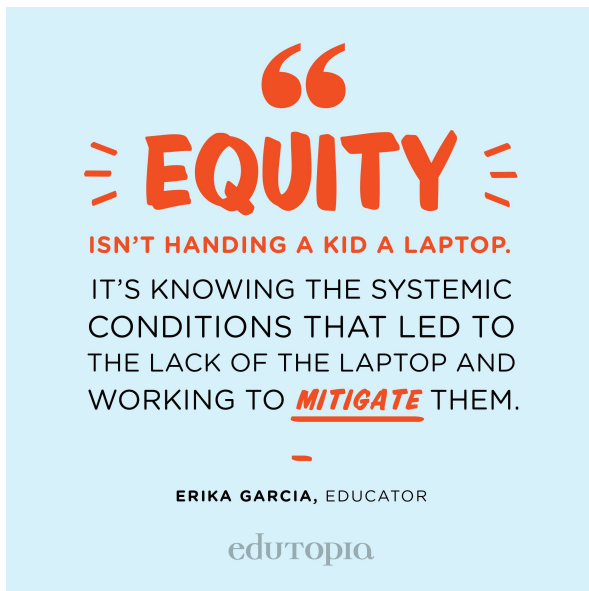
### **INTROSPECTION**

**“Looking inward to identify roles in making a difference through CHANGE”**

45-60-minute Conversation

**“How do we move from the superficial to the profound in order to co-create equitable learning experiences?”**

- adapted from CHOOSE - The Classroom Index



**'Cause I Ain't Got a Pencil**  
I woke myself up  
Because we ain't got an alarm clock  
Dug in the dirty clothes basket,  
Cause ain't nobody washed my uniform  
Brushed my hair and teeth in the dark,  
Cause the lights ain't on  
Even got my baby sister ready,  
Cause my mama wasn't home.  
Got us both to school on time,  
To eat us a good breakfast.  
Then when I got to class the teacher fussed  
Cause I ain't got no pencil.

By Joshua T. Dickerson

### Closing two gaps:

**Heart Gap:** Understand each person's experiences. Fiercely and unapologetically live with compassion beyond lip service.

**Mind Gap:** Understand the larger systemic dynamics in which racism and lack of equity operate

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bs2Fv3YiSFM>

- Developing the skills of being a threat to inequity means practice, practice, and more practice. Much of what a participant will do and won't do to advance equity practices has to do with their personality, past history, core beliefs, and individual circumstances. Courageous Conversations will increase participants' awareness about boundaries and connecting their boundaries to their comfort zone, growth zone, and danger zone. Allow for opportunities to reflect on how comfort, growth, and danger zones show up in life, professionally and personally.
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    - Racial Healing Handbook by Dr. Anneliese A. Singh

### Journey Mapping Discussion:

**Comfort Zone:** Write about a time as an equity ally where you were somewhat effective in your efforts, but you could have been more effective.



**Growth Zone:** Use the example just shared, and now write about how you might have moved more toward your growth zone in this situation. What are the actions you might have taken if you had a “re-do” of that same situation? How could you have been more effective?

**Danger Zone:** Again, take the same instance you wrote about in your comfort zone. What about that situation would push you into your danger zone? Think about things that might have made you shut down or get defensive. What would you need in terms of support from yourself and others to move you out of that danger zone?



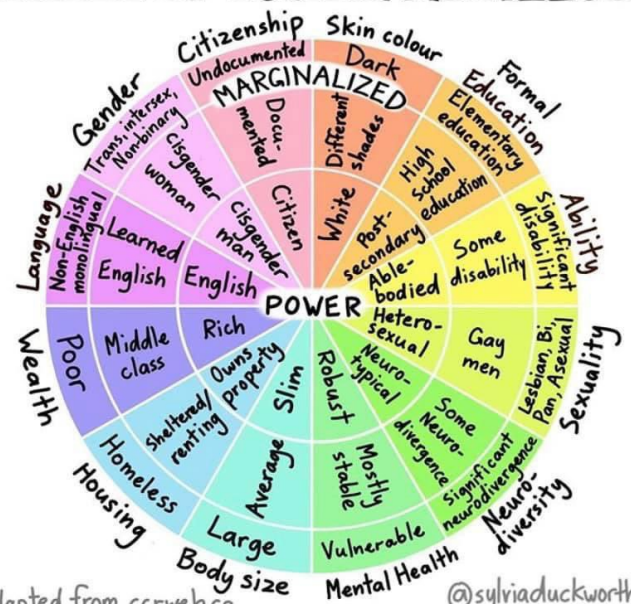
~ adapted from Dr. Anneliese A. Singh, Racial Healing Handbook pp. 181- 182

## “How do you see your role in shaping equitable practices?”

*An Accomplice actively supports others who are experiencing injustice, prejudice, and discrimination. If you have privilege of any kind - from being White, cisgender, able-bodied, or having enough or more than enough financial resources, and more... the key idea as an accomplice is that you are using the privilege you have to refute oppression.*

~ adapted from Dr. Anneliese A. Singh, Racial Healing Handbook

## WHEEL OF POWER/PRIVILEGE



Adapted from ccrweb.ca

@sylviacluckworth

**Building a Bridges means Practice, Practice, and more Practice...**

## What role will you play in being a threat to inequity?

### • Indifference :

“The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference.

The opposite of art is not ugliness, it's indifference. ...

And the opposite of life is not death, it's indifference.”

According to Elie Wiesel, "indifference" is defined simply as "no difference." But it's actually much more complicated and nuanced, especially when talking about indifference toward human suffering throughout the world.

## Roles for Engaging

<b>Actor</b> - Proverbial toe in the water (Low Risk) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Does not disrupt the status quo</li> <li>- Spectator to the process</li> <li>- Begins to ask questions</li> </ul>	<b>Ally</b> - Opts in or Out (Mid Risk) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Read, watch films, attend events</li> <li>- Actively engage on a board to gain greater knowledge of systemic bias</li> <li>- When in high risk situations, will opt out of conflict</li> </ul>	<b>Accomplice</b> - All in (High Risk) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Go beyond own learning by engaging with other people</li> <li>- Disrupts policy, practices of systemic inequity</li> <li>- Leverages power and privilege to the benefit of others</li> </ul>
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### Journey Mapping Discussion:

- Are you more of an Actor, Ally or Accomplice? Why is this roll a good fit for you?
- What specific strengths do you have related to this equity justice role that you could use to impact or share with others? (List 3-6 of them)
- For the roles that do not fit you, think about why this is. Might assuming one of these roles push you into your comfort or danger zone?

### Develop the Practice of Equity Literacy

Basic Principles for Equity Literacy : An important aspect of equity literacy is its insistence on maximizing the integrity of transformative equity practice. We must avoid being lulled by popular “diversity” approaches and frameworks that sometimes are popular because they are no real threat to inequity. The basic principles of equity literacy help us ensure we keep a commitment to equity at the center of our equity work and the broader equity conversation. [equityliteracy.org](http://equityliteracy.org)

<http://edchange.org/handouts/Equity-Literacy-Principles.pdf>

Pitfalls to the Growth: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=71Jjp0J\\_jgw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=71Jjp0J_jgw)

## INNOVATION “Building a Plan”

### Innovation – 45-60-minute Conversation

Build active and spacious listening to increase ability to understand equitable spaces.

*Human conversation is the most ancient and easiest way to cultivate the conditions for change – personal change, community and organizational change, planetary change. If we can sit together and talk about what’s important to us, we begin to come alive. We share what we see, what we feel, and we listen to what others see and feel.* Margaret Wheatley (2002)

**Spacious Listening** - This means that we stay in a spacious place where there is lots of room to hear and reflect. When we are triggered, our minds really focus on the hurt. We get defensive and

respond either by getting upset or shutting down. This is not the place for listening. We can listen with a more compassionate heart rather than just waiting for our turn to respond. NEAR@Home

**Discussion:** “What gets in the way of listening?”

## FEAR

Fear is a stress response that lets us know it is time to act. The problem becomes when Fear becomes our place of residence that our perception and perspective shift.

Intro: Each of us perceives things uniquely. This demonstration heightens awareness. Asking ourselves how individuals, communities, and the world at large view people impacted by inequity and injustice, bias, and marginalization is a beginning step to compassion. This information is an invitation to consider what kinds of lenses you and participants are looking through and to become highly aware of intentionally putting on your equity lenses.

**Script:** Here is an invitation: Imagine how you might feel if you were wearing the following glasses which symbolically demonstrate the many ways we perceive moments of distress, discomfort, trauma triggers, and/or emotional or relational wounding which push against our core belief and value systems.



### **First eyeglasses (blocked vision):**

“When you look through lenses that completely block your vision, everything is shielded from view. This represents how, at times, people might be oblivious, completely unaware, or unable to see the basic, fundamental aspects of a situation, or dynamics of a relationship. We each have moments when we are unable or unwilling to see or consider anything that is going on outside ourselves. In addition, there are others who may be looking at us or the world wearing lenses through which they cannot see at all.”

### **Second eyeglasses (limited vision/ spotted):**

“Now notice your vision is blocked, however you see a limited view. Sometimes people have a small degree of awareness, some limited recognition of what is going on. This experience creates a ‘spotty vision’ that prevents them from seeing anything but what is directly in front of them, which means they miss much of the story. People may make decisions based on very limited vision because they are unaware that their vision is limited. Sometimes they know their vision is limited and they just don’t know how to expand that vision.”

### **Third eyeglasses (rose-colored vision):**

“Looking through tinted lenses, we may be reminded how sometimes people see the world through rose-colored glasses. This is a distortion of reality. When people are wearing glasses with this tinting, they probably believe everything is fine, they may deny realities or discount painful or serious situations. People may assume that everything is or soon will be okay because they can clearly see the rosy glow of success and happiness all around them. This is different from being hopeful or optimistic. When people wear these glasses they are distorting and avoiding realities, perhaps refusing to face facts.”

#### **Fourth eyeglasses (distorted vision/ scratched):**

“Imagine that your vision is fairly good and yet still leaves something to be desired. You almost see the world around you with clarity, yet it is not fully clear. You may not even realize your vision is unclear. Having this clear, but slightly distorted, view represents the way most people see around them. If you take the distorted glasses off and experience full visionary acuity, clarity might be revealed.

#### **Fifth eyeglasses (clear and slightly magnified):**

“Wearing completely clear, magnified lenses represents choosing lenses that consider equity possibilities when viewing the people around you. Allowing yourself to become aware and recognize another person’s behaviors, needs and feelings as potentially impacted by inequity, injustice, bias, discrimination, etc is highly respectful. It means you intentionally take responsibility for conducting yourself in ways that would not induce or exacerbate hurt, shame, bias, prejudice, or trauma while being compassionate with yourself and others. None of us sees exactly the same thing when we look through these lenses. There may be some distortion based on the level of magnification and our own eyesight. This demonstrates how no two people view possibilities in precisely the same way.”

**Conclusion:** Utilizing the tool of Equity lenses gives each of us an ability to take in our world and the people in it with heightened awareness and appreciation. People deserve and often need the gentle handling trauma-sensitive people can offer. Intentionally wearing equity lenses means that we do not inadvertently contribute to the deepening or agitating of unjust experiences.”

Adapted from Enhancing Trauma Awareness by Lakeside Global Institute

#### **Example of Fear Lenses:**

**“What does fear sound like in the field of educational equity?” :**

- Blackout lenses “Equity doesn’t apply to me... our district doesn’t have racial diversity”
- Spotted lenses “Here’s one more thing...”
- Scratched lenses “Why try to help them? They will just end up in jail, just like their dad!”
- Rose lenses “I don’t see color. I just see kids.”
- Polish our lenses and Magnify (lenses) the importance of this work... This what it looks like -

Often times in response to FEAR, we may **RESSQ** instead of listen.

**Reassure**

**Explain**

**Suggest/ Solve**

**Story Steal**

**Question**

Although each of these is a form of communication, none of them is listening. In order to have Courageous Conversations both parties must polish their lenses and be willing to spaciously listen.

Spacious Listening is:

- Not about just hearing, but understanding
- Not about being right, but getting clarity
- Focused on building trust in a relationship
- More about processing than fixing



- More about accepting than agreeing
- More than just words, includes body language

## Steps to practice Spacious Listening:

1. Acknowledge your “Gut Response
2. Pause to understand the “Internal Dialog” of the other person.
3. Use a listening statement to explore understanding

### Example:

*Maria Stine, an adjunct faculty member at Boise State University. One of her colleagues, preparing to begin a new semester, said to Dr. Stine, “You can tell kids whose families don’t have an education.”*

*As it turns out, Maria Stine, who has multiple degrees and solid educational credentials, grew up in a lower-middle class family, the daughter of parents who had to drop out of school to begin working. She didn’t immediately challenge her colleague’s comment. Instead, she said, “Tell me more. Tell me what you mean by that.”*

Adapted from Teaching Tolerance / Interrupt

### Practice Spacious Responses:

*What I hear you saying is...*

*I appreciate your perspective, but...*

*Why do you say that...*

*What do you mean...*

*Tell me more...*

*It hurt you....*

*You would like to change...*

## Breakout Rooms: Spacious Listening

### 1. Speaker

- Share a problem or challenge. Something you are comfortable in sharing for about 2 min.
- Pause while speaking. This will give the listener an opportunity to practice using Listening Statements.
- After the dialog share how you felt.

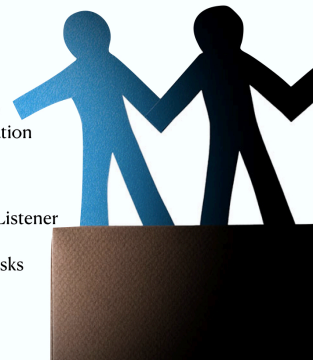
### 2. Listener

- Be highly aware of your nonverbal responses
- Mentally seek to understand (Gut and Internal Dialog)
- Say/ Use Listening statements to process the conversation
- Refrain from RESSQing

### 3. Coach

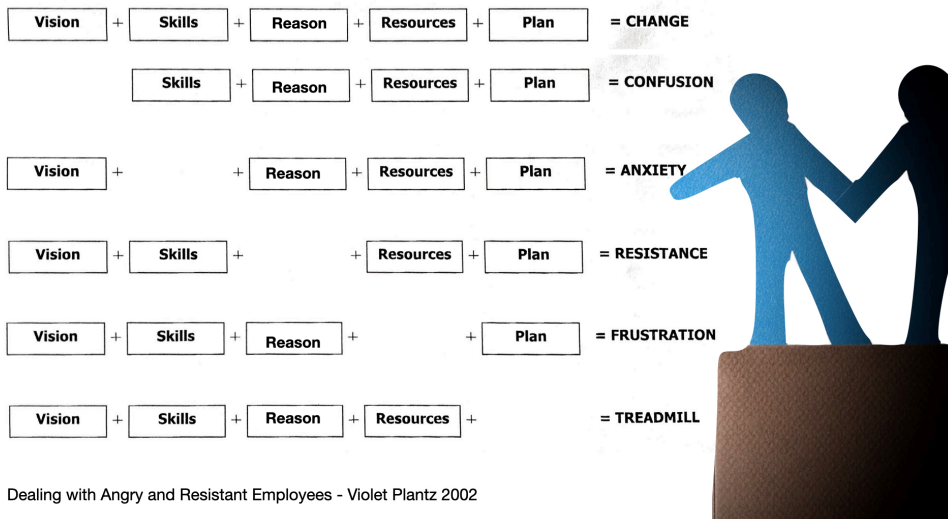
- If you hear a RESSQ statement, gently encourage the Listener to use a Listening Statement
- Be open to assisting if either the Speaker or Listener asks

Lakeside Global Institute



**How can we begin to have dialog in brave spaces as Allies and Accomplices in transformational equity work? What do we need to think about as:**

- Professionals
- Advocates for children
- Diverse Learners, Leaders, and Influencers
- An institution



**Vision:** Create a clear vision and equity statement for desired outcomes and avoid distraction of detours.

**Skills:** What roles and skills/content information can Living Strong support you with to build capacity?

**Reason to Be:** Learn to facilitate for resistance, not become roadblocked by it. Strengthen the organization's *why* messaging

**Resources:** How can we leverage resources, open up conversations, and breakdown silos? - (Living Strong Consulting resource guide will be provided)

**Plan:** With equity at the center, create a roadmap for stakeholders to work collaboratively to move in a common direction - *"Lazer focused on the Why."*



## INFUSED "Integrating Action"

Infused: 45- 60 Minute Conversation

**As we take action to be a threat to inequity, what outcomes or change do we want to see?**

Return to the Miracle Question and the participants brainstorm. (Reflection and Growth)

### Miracle Question

"Suppose you closed your eyes and became relaxed and while you were relaxing a miracle happened and issues of organizational inequity, bias, and diversity were resolved. When you opened your eyes, what are the first signs you'd see that would make you know something had changed and issues of systemic inequity were gone."

~ adapted from Switch by Dan and Chip Heath

## Creating space to heal:

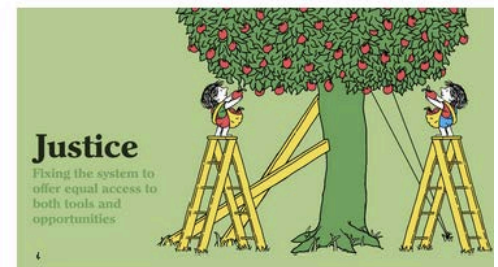
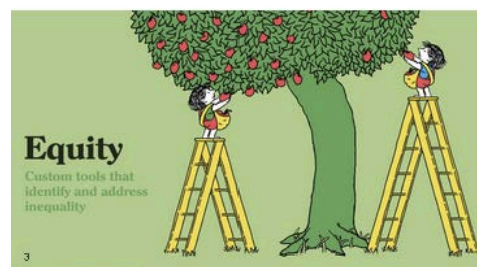
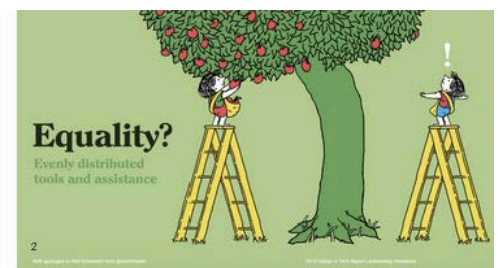
Educational outcome disparities are not the result of deficiencies in marginalized communities' cultures, mindsets, or grittiness, but rather of inequities. Equity initiatives focus, not on "fixing" students and families who are marginalized, but on transforming the conditions that marginalize students and families. by Paul Gorski for EdChange and the Equity Literacy Institute. Revised June 5, 2020.



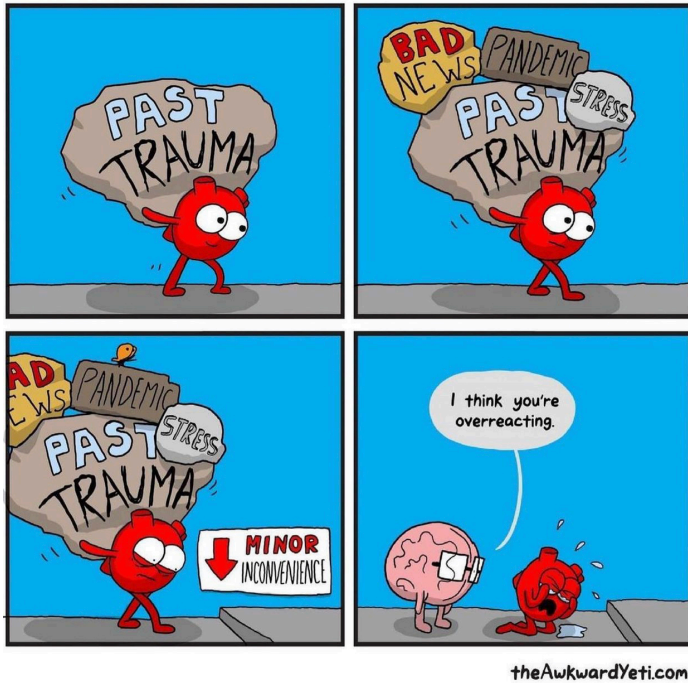
In order to achieve equity we must prioritize the interests of the students and families whose interests historically have not been prioritized. Every policy, practice, and program decision should be considered through the question, "What impact is this going to have on the most marginalized students and families?" by Paul Gorski for EdChange and the Equity Literacy Institute. Revised June 5, 2020.

## Principles for Creating Healing Justice Communities that addressed the marginalized experiences of groups:

- Healing is in response to the needs of the community
- Dismantle Inequity within Ideology, Practices, and Policy
- Healing harnesses the human agency and power within culture and community that already exists
- Improves personal well being
- Healing contends with systemic inequity and oppression and the emotional and psychological trauma of oppression
- Offers room for innovation and new possibilities



**Historical Trauma:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AWmK314NVrs&t=8s>



**Ask better questions, so you can add better value.**

What are the ideology barriers and challenges with me and with my organization?

How is implicit bias and racism operating in this situation?

How do “I” contribute to it? How can “we” eliminate it?

### **Journey Mapping Discussion:**

- Take a moment to reflect on the ways you are different now from when you started this journey. What have you learned about yourself and how have you grown?
- When you think about your next steps in your equity and justice healing journey, what are the five most immediate next steps for you to take to keep increasing your clarity and vision?
- What does a racially just and equitable world look like through your lenses now?

**Journey Mapping Process:** [https://youtu.be/mZYNNlrai\\_s](https://youtu.be/mZYNNlrai_s)