

WORLD TRUST PRESENTS

# Light in the Shadows



Produced and Directed by Shakti Butler



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Dear Participant,

Enclosed you will find the conversation guides for use with the video *Light in the Shadows*. I hope you find them helpful and a support for dialogue.

It has taken quite some time to develop this guide. As you know, the video is intended for those who are ready for taking "next steps" in exploring issues of race in the United States. The guide will hopefully deepen opportunities for insights into the complex issues that are part of deconstructing issues of equity.

We would like to suggest that you be prepared to make copies of the guides for your viewers. In addition to using the conversation exercises as they are presented please, do have group shares among all the participants after **each** of the five conversation sections are completed. For example, if you select portions of conversations, your group share should take place before you move on to the next topic.

Thank you once again for selecting this video/dialogue program. If you have any questions, suggestions or feedback, do not hesitate to contact us.

Best wishes,

Shakti Butler, Ph.D.  
Executive Director  
Producer/Director *Light in the Shadows*  
Producer/Director *The Way Home*

## STAYING AT THE TABLE



### A HEART-TO-HEART CONVERSATION PROGRAM for ***LIGHT IN THE SHADOWS***

by Shakti Butler and Sharon Ellison

#### **World Trust's Mission Statement**

Our mission is to create and develop global social media programs that stimulate deep learning, healing, transformation and change towards more equitable and sustainable communities. World Trust Educational Services, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

#### ***Light in the Shadows Heart-to-Heart Conversation: An Intention***

*Light in the Shadows* presents the voices of 10 multi-racial/multi-ethnic women. Their conversation explores issues related to some of the dynamics of race and power in the United States. This program represents a "next step" in the Heart to Heart Conversations Video Program learning series and is meant to follow either our first Conversation Video Program - *The Way Home* or prior engagement with this subject. Therefore,

***IT IS STRONGLY SUGGESTED THAT THIS VIDEO AND ITS MATERIALS BE SEEN BY PEOPLE WHO HAVE HAD PREVIOUS EXPOSURE TO ISSUES OF DIVERSITY AND THAT THE GROUP CONVERSATIONS ARE FACILITATED BY AN EXPERIENCED TEACHER(S) OR TRAINER(S).***

#### *Special Acknowledgements*

*Many people have supported the development of these materials. For their selfless and committed collaborative efforts we say, thank you with deep gratitude and love to Yolanda Ronquillo, Robin Ortiz-Young, Mercedes Martin, Lakshmi Hannah Kerner, Bronwyn Heaps and Rick Butler. We also thank the AKONADI FOUNDATION for their financial support.*

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**TO THE FACILITATOR:**

Thank you for you for choosing to work with *Light in the Shadows*. We have designed these materials to provide a structure that will support and guide the transformative learning potential that may emerge from this learning program. This package of materials contains the following:

1. *LIGHT IN THE SHADOWS* (1) video
1. Welcome letter
1. Guides (3) for Facilitator, People of color and Euro-Americans
1. Evaluation Form

Please feel free to use these materials in any way you find useful. Also, we would love to hear from you should you have comments, suggestions or questions.

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## **LIGHT IN THE SHADOWS**

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#### **A LETTER TO YOU FROM THE PRODUCER/DIRECTOR**

Dear Learning Companion(s),

Thank you for participating in Heart to Heart Conversation's second video/dialogue program, *Light in the Shadows*. It is intended to generate and support discoveries related to the multiple ways people see and experience the world along lines of race and power. This advanced learning process uses conflict as a tool to forge connection among people.

One of the benefits of exploring and learning about "isms", such as race, gender, sexual orientation and class, is that they are portals which provide ways to develop consciousness about the perceived "other" – people who are not like you. This exploration requires rigor and, in spite of the discomfort it often brings, can lend itself towards creating balance, equality and unity among disparate peoples. The learning that can come from the willingness to pursue what is hard can yield transformation that enriches life and living.

My Father used to tell me that every day is a learning day. Into his 90's he was an inspiration to others. His vibrant aliveness was fueled by his eagerness to learn, accompanied by his willingness to love. In fact, when I expressed my apprehension about his imminent demise he opened his eyes, looked compassionately into mine and asked, "Don't you want me to grow?"

In order that any intellectual pursuit bear meaningful fruit it must be accompanied by the wisdom of the heart. The fruit, in this instance, is participating in an ever-widening connection amongst all people that honors the human spirit. To this process, I have dedicated my life.

My personal intention is to live a life filled with loving and learning and to share it with others. It is in this spirit that I offer to you, *Light in the Shadows*. May you use it wisely to help yourself and others continually grow into what it means to be fully human.

On behalf of love and learning,

Shakti Butler  
Producer/Director, *Light in the Shadows*  
Producer/Director, *The Way Home*  
Executive Director, World Trust



## **LIGHT IN THE SHADOWS**

### **A HEART-TO HEART CONVERSATIONS LEARNING PROGRAM**

#### *FACILITATOR'S GUIDE*

#### DIALOGUE OVERVIEW

This material provides a structure and process for using *Light in the Shadows*, our second video in the Heart-to Heart Conversations Program. It is designed for primary facilitators or teachers who will be engaging participants in an exploration of issues related to race and power in the United States. This new conversation follows our first Heart to Heart Conversation Program with its revelatory video, *The Way Home*, initiating dialogue about race, gender and class.

*Light in the Shadows* presents the voices of ten multi-racial/ethnic women, facilitators from *The Way Home*, who provide entrée to what may be considered a **"next learning step"**. We strongly suggest that this program be seen and used by people who have already worked with issues of race. In addition, we recommend that an experienced teacher(s) or trainer(s) facilitate the conversations.

The conversation guides, **when used in their entirety**, provide material for a 7-hour retreat – or longer. However, these **materials can be modified** to focus on specific issues or to accommodate 45 to 50-minute time frames. If this shorter time period is what you are working with, then you may want to consider allotting 3 consecutive sessions to assure responsible delivery. For example, as a first session, you may want to have a preparatory class or classes that consist of reference materials that create a context for the subject matter. The second session would consist of showing the video and reviewing the guides for reflection at home or with study group partners. The third session might consist of group conversation or presentations that you have structured. In any event, the overall intention of this guide is to provide structural support for the purpose of deep learning, healing and behavioral change.

Although the primary facilitator is free to use this manual "word for word" please note that, in terms of language and/or style, it is only a *suggested*

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format. Once you, as the facilitator, are comfortable with the program and the process please feel free to reshape the steps that have been outlined such that they suit your delivery objectives. Of course, you should also feel free to use vernacular that is appropriate for your setting and complements your personal style.

#### PROGRAM RATIONALE

This conversation is designed as an equal opportunity learning program. Everyone, regardless of color, is invited to work on his or her respective internalized beliefs and internalized racism. This is not an easy thing to do. Therefore, it is imperative to create a community environment whereby people are encouraged to wrestle with feelings, beliefs and the subsequent disorienting dilemmas that may emerge when belief systems are challenged. Thus, this program requires that the facilitator address common questions and emotions that may arise for the participants as part of an introduction or orientation. For example:

- • Why are we working in affinity groups?
- • What do I do or which group do I go to if I identify as multi-racial or feel that I don't belong in any specific group?
- • Be prepared to address emotional responses to belief systems and personal experiences that may be challenged.

#### PERSONAL PREPARATION

Effective delivery of this material requires solid preparation:

- • You, as the facilitator, should review the video more than once before you actually use it.

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- • It is also helpful to read through and personally respond to the materials in order to clarify your learning objectives. If
- you have someone else you can work with, that would be preferred.
- • It is important that you also spend time creating a solid personal intention. Creating your own intention requires that you engage in a self-informed process that results in your gathering your own emotional wisdom. I refer to this as the wisdom of the heart. This is not an intellectual process although you are certainly using your own intelligence. Rather it is reviewing or deepening your ability to access and express why it is that this conversation is important to you personally.

#### CREATING A PERSONAL INTENTION

The process of creating your own intention is a personal one. If this is not something you have done before here are a few suggestions:

- Select a time and place where you can be undisturbed.
- Create an atmosphere that will support being in a relaxed environment.
- Have a journal/writing paper and pens or art supplies at your disposal.
- Relax! Observe your breath or pretend that you are in your favorite place and have at your disposal great energy or wisdom.
- You should prepare some questions for yourself. Here are some basic suggestions. Ask yourself why you want to engage others in this conversation program. What outcomes would be most satisfactory and rewarding for you, as well as, the people with whom you will be working? Ask if there is anything else that you need to become aware of in order to do a good job with this material.

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- Write, draw, move your body and allow yourself to be in a state of inquiry and to be open to some surprises in terms of this internal reflection.
- Summarize your experience by writing a clear intention for yourself. Again, this is distinct from setting goals and objectives.

### **THE CONVERSATION GUIDE DESIGN**

#### Historical References

In 1999, a three-year video project was released called, *The Way Home*. The video is a montage of 64 women organized into eight ethnic groups – Indigenous, African American, Asian, Bi-racial, Euro-American, Latina, Indigenous, Jewish, and Arab. The dialogue among these women reveals the types of conversations on race often hidden to those outside each respective racial/cultural background. Upon viewing *The Way Home* it is clear that these women are dedicated to creating bridges of understanding related to issues of oppression – primarily race. As a result of the honesty, commitment and willingness of the participants, viewers have a rare and powerful opportunity to engage in dialogue themselves that follows the video and which often results deep learning and change. It is Racism 101, a survey course, if you will.

The video you are about to work with, *Light in the Shadows* is Racism 301. It captures a critical slice of time that was part of the preparation process for producing *The Way Home*. The value of this particular conversation, which took place among the original co-facilitators of the eight ethnic groups of women, is that it is an illustration of how conversations on race can break down along the lines of race and power.

The video captures a conversation that took place a after a third white woman, a facilitator, decided to leave the group. The feelings and issues that emerge as a result of her leave-taking became the focus of this video

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conversation. Both of the white women you will see in this film ultimately stayed for the duration of the project.

#### Social Transformation, Healing and Change

This video illustrates some of the difficulties and misunderstandings that can take place in conversations across lines of race, class, and culture. The subtext we are focusing on is power – what it is, who has it and how it is used. Based on some of feedback we received when we showed the movie to focus groups, it was clear that many people have a hard time watching this video. Some have reported that it brings up a lot of emotions and frustrations without providing much in the way of obvious solutions or hope for how we can come together across lines of diversity. So, we are aware that showing this film can create an experience that **is** frustrating and **does** cause breakdowns. However, we believe it is useful to stay at the table and struggle with the tough issues until we can gain deeper understanding of and greater skill at cross-cultural communication.

So often, after people go through diversity training, there is initial hope. Then when the going gets rough, discouragement returns and people give up. The danger then, and even here, with this film, is that instead of moving forward, people become resigned, returning to old stereotypes and prejudice that reinforce old beliefs. Then sadly, instead of getting through these old blocks we defend our beliefs and positions and then, justify them to others and ourselves. The intention for this video and its ensuing dialogue is to inspire the type of deep learning that can strengthen, heal, and connect people in a way that supports equitable social transformation.

#### Study Questions

The study questions have been designed to assist participants in terms of analyzing the interactions that took place among the women and, at the

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same time, exploring their own responses to the video. The conversation allows people to go deeper and explore insights based on their experience with the program. Our hope is that people will work with these questions and continue to think about them over time. Perhaps the learning experience will lend itself towards building capacities that allow all people to “stay at the table”, change behavior and, in turn, create more authentic alliances. For alliances to work, they must be based on the kind of deep understanding and personal commitment that allows people to weather the hard times.

#### The Conversation Structure

People engage with one another in affinity groups that will consist of (1) white women /men and (2) women/men of color. The reason for this is quite simple. We participate in this conversation from different worldviews and experiences. In order to come together we need room to explore our feelings, thoughts and reactions without the obvious concerns and restrictions that often happen within mixed groups. Both groups come together intermittently throughout the conversation to share the respective learning and proposed actions that have taken place.

There are newly emerging cultural definitions being created by racially mixed people that resist outdated mono-racial categories. We support people having the right to define who they are within the context of culture. However, for the learning purpose of this conversation we encourage people to choose the group they will work with based upon their own *lived experience*. If they identify with, or are accepted as, being a member of mainstream America then they are in the white group. If their lived experience is outside dominant culture then, they should work with the people of color conversation guide.

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People sometimes resist participating in the conversation structure provided and, of course, they have the right to choose how they wish to participate... or not. However, it is important that you, as the facilitator, are clear about and feel comfortable explaining the rationale behind the structure. If you are not, then you should change it before hand.

There are five (5) topics or rounds to the conversation that follow the video. The topics are:

1. The Power of Voices: Checking in on your Authentic Responses
2. Exploring Power: Personal, Social, and Institutional
3. Polishing Stones: A Look at our Inner Demons
4. Alliance Building: How can we Connect?
5. Action Steps: What's it Going to Take to Change?

#### The Process

The suggested process is iterative. It consists of reviewing information and/or instructions, engaging in conversation, journaling, sharing in dyads or groups, considering questions, journaling and sharing once again. This process is rhythmic in nature. Please note that there is more to be done than the average time allotted allows in these dialogue sections.

You may divide or select the process outlined below in any way that best suits your objectives and allotted time. The steps in the process are:

1. Setting the Context: The group will be provided a context for each exercise in the form of a "reading". Each reading also explains the structure and directions for each segment. Each participant will have identical copies and follow along with the instructions that are being read.

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2. Journaling: Participants will capture their feelings and thoughts by writing or drawing in their journal, (or both).
3. Shared Conversation: Each person will have time to speak uninterrupted. After everyone has spoken, general responses will be shared.
4. Study Questions: The reader will share a round of critical questions to consider.
5. Journaling
6. Shared Conversation: Repeat
7. Move on to the next topic and repeat the entire process.

#### **THE CONVERSATION**

**\*\*\* ALLOW SHARES OR A BRIEF CONVERSATION TO TAKE PLACE AMONGST ALL PARTICIPANTS AFTER EACH CONVERSATION SECTION IS COMPLETED. IT IS AN INVITSTION FOR PEOPLE TO SHARE WHAT THEY ARE OBSERVING, FEELING OR LEARNING ABOUT THEMSELVES AND A WAY FOR YOU, AS THE FACILITATOR, TO TAKE THE POULSE OF THE ROOM.**

#### **A. WELCOME**

**(3-5) MIN**

This is a time for you to *welcome and invite* your audience into a learning experience. You may include your own personal reasons about why you have chosen this conversation program, what makes it an important contribution to studying the issues it addresses and what the perceived benefits are for participants.

#### **B. CONOCIMIENTO**

**(10 - 15) MIN**

Commonly referred to as ice-breakers, this is a time to offer exercises that build connection and form community. Often, particularly when time is

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short, people tend to omit this part of the process. However, without it, the conversation often remains shallow or limited. In order to establish an environment that supports authentic dialogue you may wish to use cultural questions that are answered in dyads or groups of four. Group sharing follows, at which time the facilitator should make relevant connections about core group strengths or values that are evident.

#### **C. INTRODUCING THE GUIDELINES**

**(10) MIN**

1. General conversation guidelines are presented at this time. You can list them on a chart and put them up or just talk about them. What will make the conversation "safe" and "productive" for participants? Some points you may want to cover are:
  - a. Confidentiality
  - b. Compassionate Listening
  - c. Respect
  - d. Benefit of Challenging Yourself
  - e. Tell your Truth
  - f. Willingness to make "mistakes"
2. Talk briefly about how the conversation will be structured. For example, if you are dividing this program into three sessions explain what will be covered in each session.
3. Be ready to guide each of the topics in the conversation sections that you are planning to use. It is important to talk about the uses of both dyads and group check-ins. Just a few sentences will suffice.

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**D. INTRODUCTION TO THE VIDEO (TO BE READ BY THE FACILITATOR/TEACHER)**

Please read the letter from the Producer/Director (p. 3)

Feel free to add your own personal comments

**E. THE VIDEO (TRT: 45 MIN)**

**F. THE CONVERSATIONS**

**G. CLOSURE**

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**STAYING AT THE TABLE**

**CONVERSATION GUIDE INTRODUCTION**

**(08 MIN)**

**Primary Facilitator:** The intention of this guide is to help generate a deeper reflection; one that will hopefully shed light on the shadows of our individual/collective knowing and unknowing. In order to create and support an environment that is contemplative, respectful and trust-filled it is suggested that during each round of conversation every person be allowed to speak uninterrupted. A respectful pause will provide a natural entry for the next speaker. As we continue opening our minds and hearts we are building upon the strengths that this community has to offer. We are also authentically supporting and encouraging possibilities for deep learning, healing and change.

*May we use truth, courage and compassion to expand beyond our limited beliefs, assumptions and judgments about one another and ourselves. May we understand more fully the meaning of true justice and experience a deep connection to life that is free of fear.*

**JOURNAL**

Please take a moment to set a personal intention that will guide and support your full participation throughout this conversation and the ones that may follow. Write it down in your journal.

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**CONVERSATION #1: REFLECTIONS**

**(60 MIN)**

Intention: (1) to explore our various personal and collective feelings; (2) to notice and explore sameness and difference for the purpose of learning.

**A. Yes and No Questions**

**(15 MIN)**

**Primary Facilitator:** The following 62 questions have been designed to help you identify your *feelings*, stimulate your thinking and provide support for the conversations that follow. Please read and answer them, almost without thinking, so that you are responding from your gut reactions. Many of these questions are oriented towards dominant cultural thinking so, if a question is unclear or makes no sense to you, just skip it and go to the next one. Mark the boxes that indicate your closest response to each question.

When you have completed the questionnaire, please take a few moments to journal your general feelings or comments as they relate to your experience. Perhaps you have more questions or impressions that you would like to share with your conversation partners. Note what they are so that you can refer to them during your conversation.

- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you have strong emotional reactions to the video?  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you see the women confronting one another?  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you see women of color as speaking out clearly and strongly?  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you see white women as speaking out clearly and strongly?  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you see any women of color who did not speak clearly and strongly?  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you see any white women who did not speak clearly and strongly?  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you feel protective of any of the women of color in the video?  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you feel protective of either of the white women in the video?  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you see the discussion in the video as happening among individual women?

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- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you feel the white women were outnumbered?  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** If your answer is yes, did it bother you?  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you feel angry or irritated towards any of the women of color?  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you feel angry or irritated towards any of the white women?  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** When you are angry with someone do you usually tell that person directly?  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** Does that tend to change based upon race?  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you tend to withhold your anger towards women of color?  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you tend to withhold your anger towards men of color?  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you tend to withhold your anger towards white women?  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you tend to withhold your anger towards white men?  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you believe the women of color when they said that they normally maintain silence about their experiences related to race and racism in predominantly white settings?

*Did you believe or agree with the women of color who said that **white people**:*

- Y\_\_ N\_\_** *Generally check out if a person of color brings up an issue of racism?*  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** *Tend to dismiss the validity of what a person of color says about her/his experience?*  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** *Often accuse people of color of being too emotional, too sensitive, too angry?*  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** *Blame the person of color for creating his/her own problems?*  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** *May retaliate if a person of color raises an issue about racism?*  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** *Can, consciously or not, want people of color to be uncomfortable in order to maintain the power imbalance?*  
**Y\_\_ N\_\_** *Are you jealous when people of color exhibit camaraderie that does not include you?*
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did it make sense to you that people of color would feel angry rather than supported when a white person expresses empathy in private over a racist incident, but does not speak up publicly?

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- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do any of the women of color's perceptions about white people ever apply to you?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you experience women of color as being willing to say what they think?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you think white women have as much trouble speaking up as women of color?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you think white women have more trouble speaking up than women of color?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you experience any of the women of color as attacking either of the white women?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Have you ever felt invisible as a white woman or man because you believed a person of color saw you only as a member of a white oppressive society?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** When a woman of color expressed strong feelings did you feel any defensiveness or anger?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Were you able to hear a woman of color express anger about something that didn't make sense to you, and respond with curiosity?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** When women of color expressed anger, could you feel their pain under their expression of anger?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** If you felt strong emotions while watching the video, did it interfere with your ability to empathize with any of the women of color?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** If you felt strong emotions while watching the video, did it interfere with your ability to empathize with any of the white women?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_.** Were you unable to hear the stories of the women of color because of the intensity of your own feelings?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you ever dismiss the validity of the story, experience or opinion expressed by a woman of color because it didn't make sense to you?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Have you ever dismissed the validity of a story, experience or opinion expressed by a white woman because she was angry or because it didn't make sense to you?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you respond with any intensity when Penny, the white Jewish woman, became angry in the video?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you feel she expressed her anger clearly?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you wish the white women had spoken up differently in the video?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you see the women of color expressing their concern for white women not staying at the table?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you see "checking out" as being an expression of power?

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- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you see "checking out" as being an expression of a lack of power?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you see the choice of "checking out" as being an issue of privilege or power?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Have you ever "lost your voice" – "checked out" around one or more women of color?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Have you ever "lost your voice" – "checked out" around one or more white women?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you understand the concept of "life vs. work"?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you see the women of color supporting each other?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you see the white women supporting each other?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you experience any of the women of color supporting either or both of the white women?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you see either or both of the white women supporting the women of color?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you think the white women were giving more energy to women of color than they were getting back?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you think women of color were giving more energy to the white women than they were getting back?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you think the women of color wanted the white women to stay at the table?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you see yourself projected in any way on the screen?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you consider yourself as someone who is committed to social justice issues?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Would you have had a hard time staying at that table?

***If you like, take a few moments to silently stand and stretch; then continue on your own***

### **B. REFLECTIONS - TAKING IT DEEPER**

(15 MIN)

**Primary Facilitator:** Please reflect and journal your responses to the questions in the order given below. Jot down your responses using simple words or phrases rather than complete sentences so that you can complete all of the questions in the time allotted.

1. Write down an example of a section (or two) of the video that impacted you. Identify, if you can, what was being said or

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expressed and by whom. What were your “felt” responses? You may also make a list of the emotions and thoughts that came up while you were watching the video.

2. Did you feel affirmed by any women in the video? If so, who were they and why?
3. Did you feel protective of any women in the video? If so, who were they and why?
4. Which women did you empathize with the most? The least? Why?
5. Did you feel challenged and/or affirmed by the video in terms of what you believe you know about yourself and others in relationship to culture, race and race relations?

**C. SHARED REFLECTIONS AND CONVERSATION**

(20 MIN)

**Primary Facilitator:** In our dyads each person will have 4 minutes to speak uninterrupted followed by a moment of silence. If your partner says something you want to remember, reflect upon or mention in relationship to your own experiences please jot it down in your journal. After the dyads there will be 12 minutes for general conversation among dyad pairs.

**D. DEFINING MOMENTS – TAKING IT DEEPER**

(05 MIN)

**Primary Facilitator:** In the video there were stories that can be referred to as “defining moments.” These moments address the broad question, “who am I,” in relationship to race and cultural history. Examples of defining moments in the video are:

- Millie, an Indigenous woman, spoke of her own transformed identity as a result of participating in the occupation of Alcatraz. She reclaimed her strength when she reframed her connection to her own history. The actions of her people inspired her to be proud of herself.

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- Penny, the white Jewish woman, talked about an uncle who had been a judge, and one of the founders of the white citizens' council. She realized that denial was part of her racial history and that it was important to notice.
- Intisar, an African American woman, talked about what it meant to be considered bizarre amongst her college colleagues but, after thinking about the situation, was proud to be so because she was able to retain her own cultural values and authenticity as a black woman.

Choose a defining moment/story in your own life when you felt informed, connected or affirmed by coming to know or understand your own strength through your culture/people. Write and/or capture it in your journal.

**E. SHARED REFLECTIONS AND CONVERSATION**

(20 MIN)

**Primary Facilitator:** In our dyads each person will have 4 minutes to speak uninterrupted followed by a moment of silence. If your partner says something you want to remember, reflect upon or mention in relationship to your own experiences please jot it down in your journal. After the dyads there will be 12 minutes for general conversation among dyad pairs.

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**CONVERSATION # 2: RACE AND POWER/*PODER***

**(60 MIN)**

Intention: To explore some of the dynamics of power through image and story.

**A. Setting a Context:**

**(05 MIN)**

**Primary Facilitator:** In this conversation we will be exploring some of the different “faces” or aspects of power. The common definition of power is often related to having “control or authority over others”, both directly and/or indirectly. However, the literal translation of the Spanish verb *poder* is power (which can be used as a noun and a verb.) It is being used here to exemplify what it means “to be able.” When these two different perspectives – power over and “empowerment” – are examined, we can see that both of these qualities, although different, are able to operate at the same time. However, we often lump power/*poder* together by failing to distinguish their qualities or *modus operandi*.

These two forms of “power dynamics” are expressed in the video. Exploring the women’s words, in tandem with our own reflections and stories, will provide opportunities for us to untangle some assumptions about power – what it is, how it operates, how/when we use it or are at the effect of it – personally, socially and/or institutionally. Here are a few of the women’s comments from the video that illustrate the relationship and complexity between *poder* and power over. Do you remember when ...

- Ericka, an African American, recounts a historical dynamic between the slave master and slaves, and the master’s fear of their song and dance.
- Wenny, a Chinese woman, talks about alliance building when she issues a plea for white women to “stay at the proverbial table.” She

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names a phenomenon referred to in the video as “checking out.” She is referring to the group’s history of having difficulty finding white women who were willing to “hang” through the tough conversations.

- Penny, a white Jewish woman, talks about a planning program at school where she suggested that – given that whites had been calling the whole agenda – shouldn’t the black students go first? One of the African American women said “Don’t you see how you’re still letting us go first?”
- Susan, the white woman new to the group, talks about her subjective sense that she actually has the power to “... give something up” and that she is very lucky to have what she has and, in a way, that it actively oppresses other people.

These stories are examples of *power/poder*. They show that the ability to clearly name or talk about racism (or any other “ism”) is not the same as being able to manage or control internal, social or institutional racism.

So, what does the juxtaposition of *power/poder* mean to women and men who are red, black, yellow, white and brown? How can we untangle issues of power for ourselves, as well as the intersection of power and internalized oppression? By sharing our own stories we will explore the dynamics of power at the personal, social and institutional levels. We will begin our preparation for this conversation by reflecting and sharing in our affinity groups.

**B. STORIES, SHARED REFLECTIONS AND CONVERSATION** (10 MIN)

**Read:** The next round of conversation will take place between dyad partners. We will explore these two sides of *power/poder* by choosing a story from the video (one that was just read or another that you remember).

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You may also choose a personal story of your own. Please use story to talk about and explore how power and *poder* can be intertwined. Be willing to see how even in the presence of “power over”, one can still find moments of *poder*. Use the next 5 minutes to have this conversation with your dyad partner.

**C. SHARED REFLECTIONS AND CONVERSATION (TAKING IT DEEPER)** (20 MIN)

**Read:** In examining the proverbial “shoe on the other foot,” consider the following questions as a starting point to talk about how you use power/*poder* in your own life – when you’ve had it and when you have not – in relationship to race. Feel free to chat with your partner as you note or capture your responses in your journal to the stories from your own lives that illustrate the following:

- 1 A time when you have used power/*poder* in a way that was of benefit to you and other people of color. Who were they? How were they – or not – “people like you?” What were the circumstances?
- 2 When you have used power/*poder* in a way that was of benefit to you but not to other people of color. Who were they? How were they – or not – “people like you”? What were the circumstances?
3. Has there been a time when you have used power/*poder* in a way that was of benefit to you and white people. Who were they? What were the circumstances?
4. Has there been a time when you have used power/*poder* in a way that was of benefit to you but not to other people of color. Who were they? How were they – or not – “people like you?” What were the circumstances?

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**D. SHARED REFLECTIONS AND CONVERSATION**

(20 MIN)

**Read:** In groups of 4-6, share what you have discovered, experienced or learned about power/*poder*.

**GROUP SHARE (10-15 MIN)**

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**CONVERSATION #3: POLISHING AND OFFERING STONES (65 MIN)**

Intention: to explore, share and release some of the internalized messages that limit us as people of color.

**A. Read: (02 MIN)**

Internalized oppression is the process by which a member of an oppressed group comes to accept and live out the inaccurate myths and stereotypes applied to the group. Internalized oppression is named in the video through the women's stories and comments. Ericka, an African-American woman, speaks about "*... the demons within*" when she says,

*" ... that's where the fight begins and the battle always is."*

She is referring to the powerful healing that comes from using obstacles and suffering as a wise teacher. Priscilla, a Latina, speaks of her anger and sense of alienation from other Latinos because her family wanted her to only speak English. She had to struggle against feeling "*...dirty, ignorant and lazy...*" and assimilate so that she could feel worthy of being loved and accepted. Sema, an Arab-American, addresses internalized oppression when she asks, "*Isn't that what oppression is all about? It's that not only are our voices silent but we become censors of ourselves, in that quest to assimilate and to become civilized and acceptable and employable and right that we learn to mute our own voices. We learn to oppress ourselves and to look at each other like 'if only she would just not say that.'* And when we learn how to use the tools of the master to oppress ourselves then the job of it is done."

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Dealing with internalized oppression consists of noticing the “demons” or patterns of beliefs and behaviors that are limiting. Some of these patterns are so close and familiar that we do not notice how and when they are in operation. The purpose of this section is to challenge ourselves and to support one another in “noticing” the distress patterns that we describe by saying things like “that’s just the way I am” or “that’s just the way we are.”

**B. JOURNAL**

(15 MIN)

Please scan the following questions and answer, in your journal, the ones that stand out as important for you. You may talk with your dyad partners as you note your responses.

1. When do you notice what you or your people have that is wonderful, that is great? When is it hard to notice?
2. How and under what circumstances do you assimilate, fit in, or give up who you are to become part of the mainstream?
3. What parts of you are unacceptable? To whom and based upon what?
4. When and how do you resist “the norm” and stay grounded in who you are?
5. Name a situation(s) when you feel, or have felt, silenced by other people of color.
6. How did your parents or grandparents assimilate?
7. How, when or where did they resist?
8. Some of the classic patterns of internalized oppression are that we, as people of color, can be overly critical, faultfinding, invalidating, in need of “straightening others out.” How would you evaluate yourself in terms of these characteristics when it

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comes to dealing with yourself, your partner, your children, other family members, friends and colleagues?

9. Where do you check out and what is the cost?
10. How would you feel about yourself if you lined yourself up according to skin color, hair texture, facial features within your different circles among family, friends or colleagues? Would your notions of who you are or how you feel about yourself shift in any way?
11. Do you tend to invalidate or diminish people of your own race or other people of color?
12. How do class differences affect your opinions about people of your own race or other people of color?
13. What are some of your basic assumptions and beliefs about men of color – (red, yellow, black and brown)?
14. What are some of your basic assumptions and beliefs about women of color – (red, yellow, black and brown)?

#### **C. SHARED CONVERSATION**

(20 MIN)

**Reader:** In groups of 4-6, please share what you have discovered, experienced and/or learned.

#### **D. GUIDANCE THROUGH THE DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL - (TAKING IT DEEPER)**

(05 MIN)

**Primary Facilitator:** This next round of learning will be a written imaginary conversation between each of us and a wise elder. Perhaps we can refer to this "sage" as our Higher Intelligence, Spirit, God, Nature or whatever comes to mind as we think of a field of awareness greater than our own individual selves. If this concept is completely foreign or unappealing, simply imagine you are having a conversation with a person that you consider an elder who is extremely wise and compassionate. You will be asking that source of wisdom to enter into dialogue with you.

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Please create a question or questions you wish to ask your “wise being or elder.” Take a few moments to ask yourself: What do I want to ask or know that is relevant to my learning, healing and transformation that is part of an unfolding process revealing itself to me through the subject of race? What is it that wants to be known? What stones need to be revealed and/or shifted in order to bring forth a clarity of consciousness that is in alignment with my desire to behave out of the highest integrity and equity possible? If there is a question that comes to mind, please write it down. If not, perhaps that will be the first step after entering into the journal dialogue we are about to initiate. (Pause for a minute to write down any questions that you know you have or that may have arisen today).

Let us imagine that we are about to spend some time with a great being within this field of awareness that we just spoke about. Imagine the possibility of being in the presence of one who is to be revered. How would you prepare yourself for this meeting? What would you wear? What would you bring as an offering or gesture of gratitude for such an opportunity? (Pause) Now, let’s go back to our favorite place. Imagine yourself there and use as many of your five senses as possible to paint a vivid picture. (Pause) Feel a sense of pleasure and trust that exists naturally within these surroundings. Off in the distance you see your chosen “teacher” walking towards you. You tremble with anticipation. She /he smiles at you with great tenderness as she/he welcomes you with love and compassion. You offer her/him your gift. Now, having received permission, you ask your question in whatever way you wish – it may be unspoken or simply a wordless heartfelt longing. Or, it may be a crystal clear question(s) that begs to be answered. After a few moments, you may begin to write as if that entity is answering you. Don’t think --- just write to yourself and allow this wise being to speak through your pen. Enter the words into your journal. Whatever comes, just let it be.

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**D. SHARED CONVERSATION**

(30 MIN)

**Reader:** This dialogue is **NOT** a time to judge or give advice. It is a time to listen with deep respect for others' experiences and to learn or gain insight that will help each of us grow. In this conversation we will work in our combined dyad pairs of 4 people. Each person will have 4 minutes to speak uninterrupted, followed by a moment of silence. If someone says something you want to remember, reflect or mention in relationship to your own experiences please jot it down in your journal. After everyone has spoken there will be 14 minutes for general conversation.

**15 MINUTE PAUSE**

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**CONVERSATION #4: ALLIANCE BUILDING: HOW CAN WE CONNECT? (30 MIN)**

Intention: to name the behaviors that support alliance building within and across race and culture.

**A. Primary Facilitator:** (15 MIN)

In this conversation we will address what it means to become better allies within our respective ethnicities, cultures and across cultures. Let us begin by reviewing some ways that the women in the video talked about alliance building.

Let's review a few video excerpts:

*Krishanti, the South Asian woman said, "I remember once in a room I did tell that racism hits me every single day of my life and I was nearly in tears. And the white women in that room stopped talking to me ... because, for the first time in ten years they saw me angry." Later in the video she also says, " ... and I left last month saying, "Oh my God we made another white woman cry ... and at the same time it's really painful cause we're saying, she's not gonna be back. Ok, what happens to the alliance there?"*

*Wenny, the Asian woman, said, "There's something here that's absolutely required of you in terms of alliance building ... it's like I want you to feel uncomfortable because this isn't about taking care of you. And I want you to be here feeling uncomfortable. And I don't wanna be patronized by an immediate response or no response. Does that make sense to you? What does it mean to you, Susan?"*

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Susan, a white woman, responded by saying: *"I think what I'm hearing you ask for is a considered response... just take it in, let it go through you and then take some risk basically to stay here. That's what I think you mean."*

Penny, the Jewish woman, said, *"I'm really trying to change myself and change the whole system. I mean, I'm worth hanging in here with."*

Please take a few moments to note your responses to each of the following questions in your journal while working with your dyad partner:

Your ability to be an ally

1. What is the impact of your own internalized oppression as a woman or a man on how you are afraid to be an ally?
2. If you are a man, what affect does your own conditioning have that makes it hard for you to be an ally?

Ways to strengthen your ability to be an ally

1. What behaviors do you believe are needed to build alliances within your ethnic/cultural group?
2. What behaviors are needed to build alliances across race and culture?
3. How are these behaviors the same? How are they different?
4. What skills do you need to develop to be as better ally?
5. Is there a relationship between the behaviors you have just named that would also serve you in terms of becoming or practicing being a better ally to yourself?

**B. SHARED REFLECTIONS AND GENERAL CONVERSATION:** (15 MIN)

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**CONVERSATION #5: WHAT’S IT GOING TO TAKE TO CHANGE? (45 MIN)**

Intention: To engage in a process that explores how we can use our changed behavior to support personal, social and institutional transformation that honors and respects all people.

**A: Primary Facilitator: (02 MIN)**

In the video Sema, the Arab woman, issued a challenge when she said: “We can change. We can transform. We can learn from our collective experiences and not only talk about it, but in the act of sharing our experiences through our stories and our realities, what's it going to take to transition out of where we are and to transform a culture? And to not only raise consciousness, but to see and feel real change? What is it that we can do?”

Please note your answers to the following questions in your journal as preparation for this last conversation. Choose the questions that seem relevant to you. Please note that some questions will be likely to have different meanings for people of color than white people. You may wish to discuss the questions with your dyad partner during your journal writing.

In the final general conversation that follows, you will be asked to share examples of circumstances that have allowed you to know what strengths/qualities you already have as well as ones you feel you need to develop. We will also name some concrete steps that each of us can take to become stronger at making a difference in the world.

**Read, Share and Journal: (15 MIN)**

1. Name your memory of a time when you took a stand for yourself, someone else or your people. What was that like? How were you able to do it? What were the circumstances?

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2. Name your memory of a time when you took a stand for someone who is not like you, not a member of your community. What was that like? How were you able to do it? What were the circumstances?
3. How will you prepare yourself to stay at the table during difficult discussions across lines of race – or any other “ism” for that matter?
4. Out of your examples, what strengths, qualities, attitudes, behaviors and actions can you say that you already have that make you a good learner, ally, community member and global citizen?
5. Out of your experiences, what strengths, qualities, attitudes, behaviors and actions do you need to develop to be a better learner, ally, community member and global citizen?
6. Do you see transforming racism as essential to your own emotional, intellectual and religious/spiritual healing and health? If you do, why is that so?
7. Out of your experiences what qualities, attitudes, behaviors and actions do you think you can offer to support others in their learning process?
8. How will you become a better ally to people of color?
9. What incremental steps can you take to be a better learner, ally, community member and global citizen?

**B. GROUP CONVERSATION**

(15 MIN)

**CLOSING THE CONVERSATION --- FOR NOW! (15 MIN)**

***(LED BY PRIMARY FACILITATOR)***

## **STAYING AT THE TABLE**

### **CONVERSATION GUIDE INTRODUCTION**

**(08 MIN)**

**Primary Facilitator:** The intention of this guide is to help generate a deeper reflection; one that will hopefully shed light on the shadows of our individual/collective knowing and unknowing. In order to create and support an environment that is contemplative, respectful and trust-filled it is suggested that during each round of conversation every person be allowed to speak uninterrupted. A respectful pause will provide a natural entry for the next speaker. As we continue opening our minds and hearts we are building upon the strengths that this community has to offer. We are also authentically supporting and encouraging possibilities for deep learning, healing and change.

*May we use truth, courage and compassion to expand beyond our limited beliefs, assumptions and judgments about one another and ourselves. May we understand more fully the meaning of true justice and experience a deep connection to life that is free of fear.*

### **JOURNAL**

Please take a moment to set a personal intention that will guide and support your full participation throughout this conversation and the ones that may follow. Write it down in your journal.

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**CONVERSATION #1: REFLECTIONS**

**(60 MIN)**

Intention: (1) to explore our various personal and collective feelings; (2) to notice and explore sameness and difference for the purpose of learning.

**A. Yes and No Questions**

**(15 MIN)**

**Primary Facilitator:** The following 62 questions have been designed to help you identify your *feelings*, stimulate your thinking and provide support for the conversations that follow. Please read and answer them, almost without thinking, so that you are responding from your gut reactions. Many of these questions are oriented towards dominant cultural thinking. If a question is unclear or makes no sense to you, just skip it and go to the next one. Mark the boxes that indicate your closest response to each question.

When you have completed the questionnaire, please take a few moments to journal your general feelings or comments as they relate to your experience. Perhaps you have more questions or impressions that you would like to share with your conversation partners. Note what they are so that you can refer to them during your conversation.

- Y\_\_ N\_\_ Did you have strong emotional reactions to the video?  
Y\_\_ N\_\_ Did you see the women confronting one another?  
Y\_\_ N\_\_ Did you see women of color as speaking out clearly and strongly?  
Y\_\_ N\_\_ Did you see white women as speaking out clearly and strongly?  
Y\_\_ N\_\_ Did you see any women of color who did not speak clearly and strongly?  
Y\_\_ N\_\_ Did you see any white women who did not speak clearly and strongly?  
Y\_\_ N\_\_ Did you feel protective of any of the women of color in the video?  
Y\_\_ N\_\_ Did you feel protective of either of the white women in the video?  
Y\_\_ N\_\_ Did you see the discussion in the video as happening among individual women?  
Y\_\_ N\_\_ Did you feel the white women were outnumbered?

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- Y\_\_ N\_\_** If your answer is yes, did it bother you?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you feel angry or irritated towards any of the women of color?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you feel angry or irritated towards any of the white women?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** When you are angry with someone do you usually tell that person directly?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Does that tend to change based upon race?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you tend to withhold your anger towards women of color?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you tend to withhold your anger towards men of color?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you tend to withhold your anger towards white women?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you tend to withhold your anger towards white men?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you believe the women of color when they said that they normally maintain silence about their experiences related to race and racism in predominantly white settings?

*Did you believe or agree with the women of color who said that **white people**:*

- Y\_\_ N\_\_** *Generally check out if a person of color brings up an issue of racism?*
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** *Tend to dismiss the validity of what a person of color says about her/his experience?*
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** *Often accuse people of color of being too emotional, too sensitive, too angry?*
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** *Blame the person of color for creating his/her own problems?*
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** *May retaliate if a person of color raises an issue about racism?*
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** *Can, consciously or not, want people of color to be uncomfortable in order to maintain the power imbalance?*
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** *Are you jealous when people of color exhibit camaraderie that does not include you?*
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did it make sense to you that people of color would feel angry rather than supported when a white person expresses empathy in private over a racist incident, but does not speak up publicly?

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- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do any of the women of color's perceptions about white people ever apply to you?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you experience women of color as being willing to say what they think?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you think white women have as much trouble speaking up as women of color?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you think white women have more trouble speaking up than women of color?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you experience any of the women of color as attacking either of the white women?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Have you ever felt invisible as a white woman or man because you believed a person of color saw you only as a member of a white oppressive society?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** When a woman of color expressed strong feelings did you feel any defensiveness or anger?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Were you able to hear a woman of color express anger about something that didn't make sense to you, and respond with curiosity?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** When women of color expressed anger, could you feel their pain under their expression of anger?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** If you felt strong emotions while watching the video, did it interfere with your ability to empathize with any of the women of color?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** If you felt strong emotions while watching the video, did it interfere with your ability to empathize with any of the white women?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_.** Were you unable to hear the stories of the women of color because of the intensity of your own feelings?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you ever dismiss the validity of the story, experience or opinion expressed by a woman of color because it didn't make sense to you?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Have you ever dismissed the validity of a story, experience or opinion expressed by a white woman because she was angry or because it didn't make sense to you?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you respond with any intensity when Penny, the white Jewish woman, became angry in the video?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you feel she expressed her anger clearly?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you wish the white women had spoken up differently in the video?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you see the women of color expressing their concern for white women not staying at the table?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you see "checking out" as being an expression of power?

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- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you see “checking out” as being an expression of a lack of power?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you see the choice of “checking out” as being an issue of privilege or power?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Have you ever “lost your voice” – “checked out” around one or more women of color?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Have you ever “lost your voice” – “checked out” around one or more white women?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you understand the concept of “life vs. work”?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you see the women of color supporting each other?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you see the white women supporting each other?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you experience any of the women of color supporting either or both of the white women?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you see either or both of the white women supporting the women of color?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you think the white women were giving more energy to women of color than they were getting back?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you think women of color were giving more energy to the white women than they were getting back?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you think the women of color wanted the white women to stay at the table?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Did you see yourself projected in any way on the screen?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Do you consider yourself as someone who is committed to social justice issues?
- Y\_\_ N\_\_** Would you have had a hard time staying at that table?

***If you like, take a few moments to silently stand and stretch; then continue on your own***

### **B. REFLECTIONS - TAKING IT DEEPER**

(15 MIN)

**Primary Facilitator:** Please reflect and journal your responses to the questions in the order given below. Jot down your responses using simple words or phrases rather than complete sentences so that you can complete all of the questions in the time allotted.

1. Write down an example of a section (or two) of the video that impacted you. Identify, if you can, what was being said or expressed and by whom. What were your “felt” responses? You

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may also make a list of the emotions and thoughts that came up while you were watching the video.

2. Did you feel affirmed by any women in the video? If so, who were they and why?
3. Did you feel protective of any women in the video? If so, who were they and why?
4. Which women did you empathize with the most? The least? Why?
5. Did you feel challenged and/or affirmed by the video in terms of what you believe you know about yourself and others in relationship to culture, race and race relations?

#### **C. SHARED REFLECTIONS AND CONVERSATION**

(20 MIN)

**Primary Facilitator:** In our dyads each person will have 4 minutes to speak uninterrupted followed by a moment of silence. If your partner says something you want to remember, reflect upon or mention in relationship to your own experiences please jot it down in your journal. After the dyads there will be 12 minutes for general conversation among dyad pairs.

#### **D. DEFINING MOMENTS – (TAKING IT DEEPER)**

(05 MIN)

**Primary Facilitator:** In the video there were stories that can be referred to as “defining moments.” These moments address the broad question, “who am I?” in relationship to race and cultural history. Examples of defining moments in the video are:

- Millie, an Indigenous woman, spoke of her own transformed identity as a result of participating in the occupation of Alcatraz. She reclaimed her strength when she reframed her connection to her own history. The actions of her people inspired her to be proud of herself.

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- Penny, the white Jewish woman, talked about an uncle who had been a judge, and one of the founders of the white citizens' council. She realized that denial was part of her racial history and that it was important to notice.
- Intisar, an African American woman, talked about what it meant to be considered bizarre amongst her college colleagues but, after thinking about the situation, was proud to be so because she was able to retain her own cultural values and authenticity as a black woman.

Choose a defining moment/story in your own life when you felt informed, connected or affirmed by coming to know or understand your own culture/people. Write and/or capture it in your journal.

#### **E. SHARED REFLECTIONS AND CONVERSATION**

(20 MIN)

**Primary Facilitator:** In our dyads each person will have 4 minutes to speak uninterrupted followed by a moment of silence. If your partner says something you want to remember, reflect upon or mention in relationship to your own experiences please jot it down in your journal. After the dyads there will be 12 minutes for general conversation among dyad pairs.

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**CONVERSATION #2: RACE AND POWER/*PODER***

**(60 MIN)**

Intention: To explore some of the dynamics of power through reflection, story and conversation.

**A. Setting a Context**

(05 MIN)

**Primary Facilitator:** In this conversation we will be exploring some of the different “faces” or aspects of power. The common definition for power is often related to having “control or authority over others”, both directly and/or indirectly. However, the literal translation of the Spanish verb *poder* is power (which can be used as a noun and a verb.) It is being used here to exemplify what it means “to be able.” When these two different perspectives – power over and “empowerment” – are examined, we can see that both of these qualities, although different, are able to operate at the same time. However, we often lump power/*poder* together by failing to distinguish their qualities or *modus operandi*.

These two forms of “power dynamics” are expressed in the video. Exploring the women’s words, in tandem with our own reflections and stories, will provide opportunities for us to untangle some assumptions about power – what it is, how it operates, how/when we use it or are at the effect of it – personally, socially and/or institutionally. Here are a few samples of some of the women’s comments from the video that illustrate the relationship and complexity of *poder* and power over. Do you remember when ...

- Ericka, an African American, recounts a historical dynamic between the slave master and slaves and the master’s fear of their song and dance.
- Wenny, a Chinese woman, talks about alliance building when she issues a plea for white women to “stay at the proverbial table.” She

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names a phenomenon referred to in the video as “checking out.” She is referring to the group’s history of having difficulty finding white women who were willing to “hang” through the tough conversations.

- Penny, a white Jewish woman, talks about a planning program at school during which she suggested that – given that whites had been calling the whole agenda – shouldn’t the black students go first? One of the African American women replied by saying, “Don’t you see how you’re still letting us go first?”
- Susan, the white woman new to the group, talks about her subjective sense that she actually has the power to “... give something up” and that she is very lucky to have what she has and, in a way, that it actively oppresses other people.

These stories are examples of power/*poder*. They show that the ability to clearly name or talk about racism (or any other “ism”) is not the same as being able to manage or control internal, social or institutional racism.

So, what does the juxtaposition of power/*poder* mean to women and men who are red, black, yellow, white and brown? How can we untangle issues of power for ourselves, as well as the intersection of power and internalized oppression? By sharing our own stories we will explore the dynamics of power at the personal, social and institutional levels. We will begin our preparation for this conversation by reflecting and sharing in our affinity groups.

### **B. Three Mini Conversations**

(30MIN)

**Read:** The next set of dialogues look at power through three different lenses by, (1) translating issues of racism into gender issues; (2) talking about the

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issue of support – who was supporting whom – in the video; and (3) checking out. There will be three rounds of conversation – one following the other – **between dyad partners only**. Complete as much you can. A general conversation will follow.

**Round 1: Translating issues of Racism into Gender Issues** (10 MIN)

Please read the following sentences. Note what meaning(s), if any, changes when the issues of race are translated into issues of gender. As examples, the first few sentences are already translated.

- They (women of color) may maintain their silence about their experiences related to race and racism if they find themselves in the company of white people.

*Women may maintain their silence about their experiences related to sexism if they find themselves in the company of men.*

- They (women of color) felt angry rather than supported when a white person expressed empathy in private over a racist incident, but did not speak up publicly.

*They (women) felt angry rather than supported when a (male) expressed empathy in private over a (sexist) incident, but did not speak up publicly.*

Continue this process with the following statements.

- White people often check out if a person of color brings up an issue of racism.
- White people often dismiss the validity of what a person of color says about her/his experiences related to race.

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- White people often blame the person of color for creating her/his own problems.
- White people may want people of color to be uncomfortable in order to maintain the power imbalance.
- White people are jealous of the camaraderie people of color seem to have.

Using these examples with your dyad partner, talk about what happened when you translated issues of race into issues of gender. How did it change or reinforce your experience of what the women of color said? Do you believe that white women experience any of the same power dynamics regarding issues of sexism as do people of color when dealing with white oppression? What do you believe is the range of consciousness that men can have about their behavior? What prevents or stops consciousness from happening?

***Have a brief conversation with your dyad partner about your experience with this exercise.***

**Round 2: Talking about the issue of support - (your perception of who was supporting whom – in the video). (10 MIN)**

- When you shifted your lens to look through your understanding of how sexism works, how did it impact your understanding of who was confronting, attacking or helping whom in the video?
- What were your other thoughts about who was getting support?
- What happened to the power dynamics in the group when you made the translation from women of color to gender issues?

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***Have a brief conversation with your dyad partner  
about your experience with this exercise.***

**Round 3: Checking Out -The term in the video called “checking out” referred to behavior that can look like (10 MIN)**

- being silent or not speaking up
- not hearing someone else’s perspective
- blanking out on the emotional impact of someone else’s story
- setting up a wall of defenses
- going “to sleep” over someone else’s pain (or your own)
- being unable to see the harm being caused to others by one’s actions or lack of actions
- not being accountable
- being indecisive – not taking a stand
- being deprived of emotion or emotionally unavailable
- being angry

***Have a brief conversation with your dyad partner  
about your experience with this exercise.***

**GROUP SHARE (10-15 MIN)**

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**CONVERSATION # 3: POLISHING AND OFFERING STONES (65 MIN)**

Intention: to explore, share and release some of the unconscious and conscious messages that limit us as white people.

**A. Read:** (15 MIN)

In the video Ericka issues an invitation to all of us when she says:

*"I would ask that every human being go to the place where they've had that dark night of the soul, reach in there and pull that thing up and polish it and unravel it's...whatever, and name what's in it and offer it to others."*

The following questions may help your personal reflection process. Use them to respond to Ericka's invitation in your journal. What have you struggled with on your journey towards consciousness and equity related to issues of race in the United States? Read each question, take a minute or two to make notes in your journal, then discuss each one with your partner.

1. What makes this conversation/equity consciousness hard?
2. What have been/are your fears?
3. How do you work with them?
4. What have you learned?
5. What gifts have you received as a result of your struggles?
6. How has/does your wrestling with these issues made you a better human being? How do you apply what you have learned in other areas of your life?
7. Can you name where you are still having a hard time?
8. Can you name your gifts (lessons learned) and offer them to others?

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**B. SHARED REFLECTIONS AND CONVERSATION**

(? MIN)

**Read:** In our dyads each person will have 4 minutes to speak uninterrupted followed by a moment of silence. If your partner says something you want to remember, reflect upon or mention in relationship to your own experiences please jot it down in your journal. After the dyads there will be 12 minutes for general conversation among dyad pairs.

**C. THE DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL - (TAKING IT DEEPER)**

(05 MIN)

**Primary Facilitator:** This next round of learning is a written imaginary conversation between each of us and an imaginary wise elder. Perhaps we can refer to this sage as our Higher Intelligence, Spirit, God, Nature or whatever comes to mind when we think of that field of awareness greater than our own individual selves. If this concept is completely foreign or unappealing, simply imagine that you are having a conversation with a person that you know to be extremely wise and compassionate. Whichever partner you choose, you will be asking that source of wisdom to enter into dialogue with you.

Take a few moments to ask yourself: What do I want to ask or know that is relevant to the learning, healing and transformation that is part of an unfolding process revealing itself to me through the subject of race? What is it that wants to be known? What stones need to be revealed and/or shifted in order to bring forth a clarity of consciousness that is in alignment with our desires to behave out of the highest integrity and equity possible? If there is a question that comes to mind, please write it down. If not, perhaps that will be the first step after entering the journal dialogue we are about to initiate. (Pause for a minute to write down any questions that you know you have or that may have arisen today).

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Let us imagine that we are about to spend some time with a great being within this field of awareness that we just spoke about. Imagine the possibility of being in the presence of one who is to be revered. How would you prepare yourself for this meeting? What would you wear? What would you bring as an offering or gesture of gratitude for such an opportunity? (Pause) Now, let's go back to our favorite place. Imagine what it would be like to be there by using as many of the five senses as possible. (Pause) Feel a sense of pleasure and trust that exists naturally within these surroundings. Off in the distance you see your chosen "teacher" walking towards you. You tremble with anticipation. She /he smiles at you with great tenderness as she/he welcomes you with love and compassion. You offer her/him your gift. Now, having received permission, you ask your question in whatever way you wish – it may be unspoken or simply a wordless heartfelt longing. Or, it may be a crystal clear question(s) that begs to be answered. After a few moments, you may begin to write as if that entity is answering you. Don't think --- just write to yourself and allow this wise being to speak through your pen. Enter the words into your journal. Whatever comes, just let it be.

**D. SHARED CONVERSATION**

(30 MIN)

**Primary Facilitator:** This dialogue is **NOT** a time to judge or give advice. It is a time to listen with deep respect for others' experiences. We may gain insight from the shared responses that will help us grow. In this conversation we will work in our combined dyad pairs of 4 people. Each person will have 4 minutes to speak uninterrupted, followed by a moment of silence. If someone says something you want to remember, reflect upon or mention in relationship to your own experiences please jot it down in your journal. After everyone has spoken there will be 14 minutes for general conversation.

**15 MINUTE PAUSE**

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**CONVERSATION # 4: ALLIANCE BUILDING: HOW CAN WE CONNECT? (30 MIN)**

Intention: to name the behaviors that support alliance building within and across race and culture.

**A. Primary Facilitator:**

(15 MIN)

In this conversation we will address what it means to become better allies within our respective ethnicities, cultures and across cultures. Let us begin by reviewing some ways that the women in the video talked about alliance building.

Let's review a few video excerpts:

*Krishanti, the Southeast Asian woman says, "I remember once in a room I did tell that racism hits me every single day of my life and I was nearly in tears. And the white women in that room stopped talking to me....because, for the first time in ten years they saw me angry." Later in the video she also says, " and I left last month saying 'Oh my God we made another white woman cry' ... and at the same time it's really painful because we're saying, she's not gonna be back. Ok what happens to the alliance there?"*

*Wenny, the Asian woman, says, "There's something here that's absolutely required of you in terms of alliance building ... it's like I want you to feel uncomfortable because this isn't about taking care of you. And I want you to be here feeling uncomfortable. And I don't want to be patronized by an immediate response or no response. Does that make sense to you? What does it mean to you, Susan?"*

*Susan, a white woman, responded by saying: "I think what I'm hearing you ask for is a considered response...just take it in, let it go through you and then take some risk basically to stay here."*

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Penny, the Jewish woman, says, "*I'm really trying to change myself and change the whole system. I mean I'm worth hanging in here with.*"

Please take a few moments to note your responses to each of the following questions in your journal while working with your dyad partner:

#### Your ability to be an ally

1. What is the impact of your own internalized oppression as a woman or a man on how you are afraid to be an ally?
2. If you are a man, what affect does your own conditioning have that makes it hard for you to be an ally?

#### Ways to strengthen your ability to be an ally

1. What behaviors do you believe are needed to build alliances within your ethnic/cultural group?
2. What behaviors are needed to build alliances across race culture?
3. How are these behaviors the same? How are they different?
4. Are there places where you can shift (or help others) from checking out to staying at the table?
5. Are there steps you need/want to take for yourself or others during the hardest moments of hearing what people of color have to say about white oppression without taking it personally? Feeling invisible? Wanting to defend yourself ("I'm not a racist. This doesn't apply to me.")
6. Are there steps you need/want to take that will enable you or others to have *curiosity* when something a person of color says doesn't make sense to you or that you may disagree strongly with?

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7. What skills do you need to develop to be a better ally?
8. Is there a relationship between the behaviors you have just named that would also serve you in terms of becoming or practicing being a better ally to yourself?

### **B. SHARED REFLECTIONS AND GENERAL CONVERSATION:**

(15 MIN)

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**CONVERSATION #5: WHAT'S IT GOING TO TAKE TO CHANGE? (45 MIN)**

Intention: To engage in a process that explores how we can use our changed behavior to support personal, social and institutional transformation that honors and respects all people.

**A: Primary Facilitator: (02 MIN)**

In the video Sema, the Arab woman, issued a challenge when she said: *"We can change. We can transform. We can learn from our collective experiences and not only talk about it, but in the act of sharing our experiences through our stories and our realities, what's it going to take to transition out of where we are and to transform a culture? And to not only raise consciousness, but to see and feel real change? What is it that we can do?"*

Please note your answers to the following questions in your journal as preparation for this last conversation. Choose the questions that seem relevant to you. Please note that some questions will be likely to have different meanings for people of color than white people. You may wish to discuss the questions with your dyad partner during your journal writing.

In the final general conversation that follows, you will be asked to share examples of circumstances that have allowed you to know what strengths/qualities you already have as well as ones you feel you need to develop. We will also name some concrete steps that each of us can take to become stronger at making a difference in the world.

**Read, Share and Journal: (15 MIN)**

1. Name your memory of a time when you took a stand for yourself, someone else or your people. What was that like? How were you able to do it? What were the circumstances?

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2. Name your memory of a time when you took a stand for someone who is not like you, not a member of your community. What was that like? How were you able to do it? What were the circumstances?
3. How will you prepare yourself to stay at the table during difficult discussions across lines of race – or any other “ism” for that matter?
4. Out of your examples, what strengths, qualities, attitudes, behaviors and actions can you say that you already have that make you a good learner, ally, community member and global citizen?
5. Out of your experiences, what strengths, qualities, attitudes, behaviors and actions do you need to develop to be a better learner, ally, community member and global citizen?
6. Do you see transforming racism as essential to your own emotional, intellectual and religious/spiritual healing and health? If you do, why is that so?
7. Out of your experiences what qualities, attitudes, behaviors and actions do you think you can offer to support others in their learning process?
8. How will you become a better ally to people of color?
9. What incremental steps can you take to be a better learner, ally, community member and global citizen?

#### **B. GROUP CONVERSATION**

(15 MIN)

#### **CLOSING THE CONVERSATION --- FOR NOW! (15 MIN)**

***(LED BY PRIMARY FACILITATOR)***