

COMMON GROUND ETHNIC RELATIONS MODERATOR'S GUIDE

A Moderator Guide for Small Group Discussions on Ethnic Relations

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Southern Institute for Education and Research
at Tulane University

Introduction:

America has reached a crisis in ethnic relations. As urban areas change in ethnic composition, racial conflicts have increased over social and government policies. Americans yearn for orderly change and progress. Yet ethnic conflict remains the single greatest obstacle for urban economic growth and political harmony. We urgently need to find common ground for solutions to ethnic inequality and conflict.

The Southern Institute for Education and Research addresses this problem through the Common Ground Project, a long-term education program designed to promote constructive dialogue on ethnic problems and solutions. The Common Ground Project encourages inter-ethnic dialogue through small, integrated discussion groups called Study Circles. Our purpose is to illuminate options, not advocate any specific remedy.

Common Ground study circles follow a three-part format: 1) sharing our own ethnic identity and experiences; 2) defining terms necessary to discuss ethnic relations; and 3) discussing ethnic-based community problems their possible solutions.

The process is simple:

1. Form a Common Ground study circle of five to 20 people. You can recruit from existing organizations or acquaintances. Ethnically integrated groups are strongly suggested.
2. Have at least one group member trained as discussion moderator through the Southern Institute's training program.
3. Distribute the "participant's guide" to the study circle members.
4. Meet for three or more sessions for discussions based on the format in this manual. Move the group toward making choices and defining their agreement as well as differences.

Common Ground study circles are for people who want to participate in diagnosing their community's ethnic problems and discovering solutions. The circles can become ongoing forums for exchanging ideas, resolving conflict, and promoting change.

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What is a Study Circle?

Basic Format

A dozen people are comfortably seated around a living room or meeting room, one speaking, several others looking like they would like to make a point, one skimming an article as if searching for a particular item, another scanning the group, and the others listening attentively. This is a study circle in action.

In a study circle, 5-20 people meet several times to discuss the various choices our society or their organization might make concerning a social or political issue. Complex issues are broken down into manageable subdivisions, and controversial topics are dealt with in depth.

Each discussion lasts approximately two hours and is directed by a well-prepared study circle leader whose role is to aid in lively but focused discussion.

Two individuals, the organizer and the moderator, are central to the creation and success of a study circle. The study circle organizer orders study circle course material, recruits participants, arranges the logistics of the meetings, and chooses the discussion leader. The study circle leader stimulates and moderates the discussion and guides the group toward the goals that it has agreed upon.

Philosophy and Background

The study circle is a well-tested, practical, and effective method for adult learning and social change. Study circles are voluntary, informal, democratic, and highly participatory. They assist participants in confronting challenging issues and making difficult choices. Study circles engage citizens in public and organizational concerns, bringing the wisdom of ordinary people to bear on difficult issues. Cooperation and participation are stressed so that the group can capitalize on the experience of all its members.

The study circle is small-group democracy in action; all viewpoints are taken seriously and each participant has an equal opportunity to participate. The study circle belongs to the participants: individual members ultimately set the agenda and control the content of the discussions. The process of democratic discussion among equals is as important as the content.

The goal of a study circle is not to impart enough facts to make the participants into experts, but rather to deepen their understanding and judgment by focusing on the values that underlie opinions. The group "works through" difficult issues and grapples with choices. Common ground is sought in the end, but consensus or compromise is not necessary.

Suitability to a Variety of Organizations

Almost any organization can use a study circle to educate and empower its membership. Churches, civic and community groups, businesses, advocacy organizations, and unions have all used this small-group discussion format. Study circles are appropriate for a large national organization that may develop an original study circle course for 100 different discussion groups and for a small local group that may use a book for a single study circle.

A study circle will provide benefits for both the participants and the sponsoring organization. The participants gain knowledge, improve their communication skills, increase their self-esteem, and have a rewarding personal experience. For the sponsoring organization, a study circle represents a valuable training opportunity that can improve participants' ability to advance the organization's interests and may increase their commitment to the organization. A study circle will also benefit an organization's leaders by providing valuable feedback and suggestions.

Variations on the Basic Format

There are many variations to the basic format for a study circle. The ideal study circle meets once a week for at least three sessions and rarely for more than five or six. While regular weekly discussions usually produce optimal results, other schedules can also work well. Some groups may want to combine a study circle with their regular monthly meetings. For those groups that cannot meet regularly, a workshop format can be used at a conference or a retreat with the entire study circle taking place in one or two days.

Videotapes or audiotapes as well as written material can be used to spark discussion. Small-group activities and exercises are included in some study circles to add variety to the sessions.

The strength of the study circle is its flexibility. Every group's situation is unique, and study circle organizers are encouraged to adapt the basic format to their communities and organizations in whatever way is appropriate.

The Role of the Participant

The participants are the most important ingredient in a study circle. Their interest, enthusiasm, and commitment, along with the skill of the leader, ultimately determine the success of a study circle.

The goal of a study circle is not to master a text or to learn a lot of facts, but rather to deepen understanding and judgment. This can occur in a focused discussion when people exchange views freely and consider a variety of viewpoints. The process--democratic discussion among equals--is as important as the content.

The following points are intended to help you make the most of your study circle experience and to suggest ways in which you can help the group. Although this advice will be self-evident if you have experience in discussion groups, these points will be a valuable reminder to even the most experienced participant.

Make a good effort to attend all meetings. The comfort level of the group depends upon familiarity with other participants, not just as acquaintances or members of the same organization, but as peers in this particular group with its own special history and fellowship. Attend even if you have not completed the readings. The readings are important, but each session will open with a summary of the material.

Communicate your needs to the leader. The leader is responsible for guiding the discussion, summarizing key ideas, and soliciting clarification of unclear points, but he/she may need advice on when this is necessary. Chances are you are not alone when you don't understand what someone has said.

Help keep the discussion on track. Make sure your remarks are relevant; if necessary, explain how your points are related to the discussion. Try to make your points while they are pertinent.

Address your remarks to the group rather than the leader. Feel free to address your remarks to a particular participant, especially one who has not been heard from or who may have special insight. Don't hesitate to question other participants to learn more about their ideas.

Listen carefully to others. Make sure you are giving everyone the chance to speak. Keeping a pen handy to jot down your thoughts may help you listen more attentively since you will not be concerned about losing the point you want to make.

Speak your mind freely, but don't monopolize the discussion. If you tend to talk a lot in groups, leave room for quieter people. Be aware that some people may want to speak but are intimidated by more assertive people.

Don't withdraw from the discussion. You have a responsibility beyond that of listening. Everyone in the group, including you, has unique knowledge and experience; this variety makes the discussion an interesting learning experience for all. Failing to speak means robbing the group of your wisdom.

Engage in friendly disagreement. Differences can invigorate the group, especially when it is relatively homogeneous on the surface. Don't hesitate to challenge ideas you disagree with. Don't be afraid to play devil's advocate, but don't go overboard. If the discussion becomes heated, ask yourself and others whether reason or emotion is running the show.

Remember that humor and a pleasant manner can go far in helping you make your points. A belligerent attitude may prevent acceptance of your assertions. Be aware of how your body language can close you off from the group.

Maintain an open mind. You don't score points by rigidly sticking to your early statements. Feel free to explore ideas that you have rejected or failed to consider in the past.

Use your critical faculties. Don't accept without question the statements made by authors of the readings, the leader, or other participants. Think about whether statements are provable; decide whether assertions are based on fact or opinion, feelings or reason, primary or secondary sources; and be on the lookout for deceptive argument techniques such as bandwagon or scare tactics, personal attack, faulty deductive reasoning, and vague generalizations.

Strive to understand the position of those who disagree with you. Your own knowledge is not complete until you understand other participants' points of view and why they feel the way they do. It is important to respect people who disagree with you. They have reasons for their beliefs which are usually not dumb or unreasonable. You should be able to make a good case for positions you disagree with. This level of comprehension and empathy will make you a much better advocate for whatever position you come to.

Moderating a Study Circle

Once a study circle is underway, the study circle moderator is the most important person in terms of its success or failure. The moderator guides the group toward reaching the goals that have been set by the organizer and the participants. It is the moderator's responsibility to stimulate and moderate the discussion by asking questions, identifying key points, and managing the group process. While doing all this, the moderator must be friendly, understanding, and supportive.

The moderator does not need to be an expert or even the most knowledgeable person in the group. However, the moderator should be the most well-prepared person in the room. This means thorough familiarity with the reading material, preparation of questions to aid discussion, previous reflection about the directions in which the discussion might go, knowledge of the people and personalities in the group, and a clear understanding of the goals of the study circle.

The most difficult aspects of leading a discussion group include keeping discussion focused, handling aggressive participants, and keeping one's own ego at bay in order to listen to and truly hear participants. A background of leading small-group discussion or meetings is helpful. The following suggestions and principles of group leadership will be useful even for experienced moderators.

Beginning

"Beginning is half," says an old Chinese proverb. Set a friendly and relaxed atmosphere from the start. The goals of the study circle should be discussed and perhaps modified in the first session, as should the ground rules for discussion. It is important that participants "buy in" right from the beginning.

Managing the Discussion

Keep discussion focused on the session's topic. Straying too far could cause each session to lose its unique value. A delicate balance is best: don't force the group to stick to the topic too rigidly, but don't allow the discussion to drift. Most people do not regard a "bull session" as a valuable use of their time.

Do not allow the aggressive, talkative person or faction to dominate. Doing so is a sure recipe for failure. One of the most difficult aspects of leading is restraining domineering participants. Don't let people call out and gain control of the floor. If you allow this to happen, the aggressive will dominate, you may lose control, and the more polite people will become angry and frustrated.

Draw out quiet participants. Do not allow anyone to sit quietly in the corner or to be forgotten by the group. Create an opportunity for each participant to contribute. The more you know about each person in the group, the easier this will be.

Be an active listener. You will need to truly hear and understand what people say if you are to guide the discussion effectively. Listening carefully will set a good example for participants and will alert you to potential conflicts.

Stay neutral and be cautious about expressing your own values. As the moderator, you have considerable power with the group. That power should be used only for the purpose of furthering the discussion and not for establishing the correctness of a particular viewpoint. If you throw your weight behind the ideas of one faction in the study circle, your effectiveness in managing the discussion will be diminished.

Use conflict productively and don't allow participants to personalize their disagreements. Do not avoid conflict, but try to keep it narrowly focused on the issue at hand. Since everyone's opinion is important in a study circle, participants should feel comfortable saying what they really think -- even if it's unpopular.

Don't be afraid of pauses and silences. People need time to think and reflect. Sometimes silence will help someone build up the courage to make a valuable point. Moderators who tend to be impatient may find it helpful to count silently to 10 after asking a question.

Do not allow the group to make you the expert or "answer person." The point of a study circle is not to come up with an answer, but for the participants to share their concerns and develop their understanding. Don't set yourself up as the final arbiter. Let the group decide what it believes and correct itself when a mistake is made.

Don't always be the one to respond to comments and questions. Encourage interaction among the group. Participants should be conversing with each other, not just with the moderator. Often questions or comments are directed at the moderator, but they can be deflected to another member of the group.

Synthesize or summarize the discussion occasionally. It is helpful to consolidate related ideas to provide a solid base for the discussion to build upon.

Using Questions Effectively

Ask hard questions. Don't allow the discussion to simply confirm old assumptions. Avoid following any "line," and encourage participants to re-examine their assumptions. Call attention to points that have not been mentioned or seriously considered, whether you agree with them or not.

Utilize open-ended questions. Questions such as, "What other possibilities have we not yet considered?" do not lend themselves to short, specific answers and so are especially helpful for drawing out quiet members of the group.

Concluding

Don't worry about attaining consensus. It's good for the study circle to have a sense of where participants stand, but it's not necessary to achieve consensus. In some cases a group will be split, and there's no need to hammer out agreement.

Close each session with a summary and perhaps an evaluation. Remind participants of the overall goals of the program and ask them whether the discussion helped the group to move toward those goals. You will definitely want evaluations from the group at the midpoint of the program and during the final session.

Leading Discussions on Ethnic Relations

The discussion moderator should encourage participants to read "The Role of Participants" before the first session. The role of the study circle moderator is to draw people in, ensure that all views are heard, and help participants learn from each other. Following are some special considerations for moderators of discussions on ethnic relations.

Creating safety and comfort within the group is the bottom line for the success of a study circle on ethnic relations. This should be the moderator's highest priority. This means ensuring that each person is able to express himself or herself honestly, without being belittled or ridiculed. If attacks occur, the moderator must intervene immediately to cut them short. Sensitivity, empathy, and familiarity with people of different backgrounds are essential qualities for the moderator.

It is important to spend some initial time in the discussion making sure that everyone in the group understands the various viewpoints expressed in definitions or any readings you may care to use. To do this, you can ask for volunteers to present each of the views by explaining how a thoughtful, reasonable person could hold that particular view. Or, you can accomplish the same purpose by breaking the group down into smaller working groups for a short time. Ask each group to prepare to make a case for a particular view when it returns to the larger group. Beginning a session in this way encourages openness to a range of views and prevents the group from becoming too narrowly focused on one particular viewpoint.

After the review of the viewpoints, the moderator can open the floor for discussion and debate, encouraging people to say what they like and what they don't like about each of the views. The group might look at the strengths and weaknesses of each viewpoint in turn, or proceed in a less structured way. Throughout the discussion, the moderator should encourage participants to explain the underlying reasons for their beliefs.

Well before the end of the session, the moderator should start asking participants to point out areas of agreement that exist, especially on values. While consensus is not an essential goal in a study circle, the moderator should help participants understand areas of common

concern or agreement. In order to close on a positive note, it is good to ask participants to describe how their thinking changed as a result of the discussion or to reflect upon the discussion process itself.

Ethnic Relations Discussion Goals

By the close of the discussion sessions everyone should:

1. Be able to identify the range of viewpoints regarding ethnic problems.
2. Make a good case for those positions one dislikes as well as the position one likes, and consider ideas and choices one has not considered before.
3. Realize one's own knowledge is not complete until one understands why others feel the way they do about their viewpoints.
4. Understand the underlying values of each viewpoint expressed in the meeting.
5. Make a choice about possible solutions to ethnic problems in your community, and understand the common ground held with others.

Session One: Breaking the Silence

Experiences, perceptions, and beliefs.

This is the "ice breaker" session structured to introduce the participants to one another and open the discussions. The objective of this session is to help group members examine their own perceptions, attitudes, and experiences in light of those of others. For this discussion to work, everyone in a group must help the group moderator maintain a safe, comfortable, and respectful environment for personal sharing.

An understanding of and commitment to the study circle process as an open, thoughtful, focused discussion is essential for this session. The essence of the process is thoughtful

listening to others to understand their points of view and a willingness to re-examine one's own attitudes.

Note: In order to allow more time for individual sharing and careful listening, you may want to divide into smaller groups of five people or less. Throughout the session, it is essential that everyone get a chance to speak, interact and participate.

FORMAT

Part One:

Introductions: Have participants pair off with someone they do not know and take one minute telling each other about themselves. Each should say 1) who you are, 2) describe your ethnicity and what it means to you, and 3) mention one thing about yourself that people should know. Have the listener take notes and then go around in a circle and have each participants introduce their partners. (10 minutes)

Ground Rules: Have the group create a list of discussion ground rules for discussing race relations and prejudice. Post these on the wall at the beginning of each discussion. You may suggest a few based on the "Role of the Participants" section in this manual. You may also want to suggest confidentiality and that each person should commit to attending all three sessions. (10 minutes)

After listing the rules, discuss the difference between debate and dialogue by reading a few of the dialogue descriptions from the blue handout.

Expectations: Discuss what you expect to gain from the discussions. Post these expectations on the wall. (10 minutes)

Part Two:

Name shield exercise: The name shield is a symbolic chart representing an individual's life history, ethnic ancestry and values. Have each participant take a few minutes to draw a name shield and then discuss it with the group (demonstrate with your own name shield prepared in advance. (30 minutes)

Questions:

1. What insights did you get from this exercise? What do we have in common? Different? Ask if discussing our differences helps or hurts race relations?

Analysis: Name shield rely on 1) disclosure as a way of building empathy and 2) active listening. Both of these are important in reducing prejudice. Differences are inevitable. Lead

the group to discussing the importance of learning skills to negotiate our differences rather than bury them.

2. Why do many Americans feel uncomfortable talking about racism and ethnic relations? Are you uncomfortable talking about this subject? Why?

3. How do we acquire prejudices? What do we need to do to unlearn them.

Analysis: At an appropriate point you may ask if prejudices are based on negative experiences and negative information (from relatives, friends, media etc.). Suggest that to unlearn prejudices we need new positive experiences and new positive information.

Part Three:

Experiences: Each participant discusses their first experience with prejudice. This may be on any basis--ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, etc.--and it may be as victim, instigator, or witness. Each person should tell their story and consider the following: How did you feel about this situation? How did you respond to this situation? (30 minutes)

Now, each participant is asked to discuss their last experience with prejudice. Each person should tell the story, and include the following: How did you feel about this situation? How did you respond to this situation? (30 minutes)

Follow-up Question: What did you learn from this exercise?

If time allows, you may ask how your racial attitudes differ from your parents.

Part Four:

Reflection on the Session: To make sure that we understand what happened during this first session, let's think back over the last two hours of discussion. First, what different activities did we do? When, in these two hours, did you find yourself reacting with concern? Feeling anxious? Hopeful or upbeat? Was there a moment that you sensed that this discussion has a real connection to your everyday lives? As we come to the end of this first session, has your thinking or viewpoint changed in any way? What would you say is your common ground? **(10 minutes)**

Session Two:

Definitions

This session is designed to develop a common vocabulary to discuss ethnic relations.

FORMAT

Part One:

Definitions: Have volunteers read aloud each definition on the handout.

A productive discussion begins with a clarification of terms. Below are some definitions of important terms that often come up in race-relations dialogues. Although the definitions apply to many ethnic and racial groups, for clarity we have chosen to express some definitions in black and white terms.

(100 minutes)

The study circle need not agree on the definitions. Instead they are encouraged to use the terms to clarify their own thinking and comments. During the discussion indicate whether you agree or disagree with the definition.

TERMS

PREJUDICE:

A negative or hostile attitude toward a person or group, formed without just grounds or sufficient knowledge -- impervious to evidence and contrary argument. Prejudice is an *attitude*. All ethnic groups possess some prejudices.

DISCRIMINATION:

Unequal treatment of people based on their membership in a group. In contrast to prejudice, discrimination is *behavior*. To discriminate is to treat a person, not on the basis of their intrinsic qualities, but on the basis of a prejudgment about a group. Discrimination can be either *de jure* (legal, as in segregation laws) or *de facto* (discrimination in fact, without legal sanction).

Questions:

1. To discriminate means to exclude people based on their membership in a group (ethnic, religious, etc.). Some minority groups (racial, ethnic and religious) have created separate traditions, organizations and institutions. What is the purpose of this "self-segregation"? Are all forms of discrimination socially harmful?

2. Is choosing to marry within your religion "discrimination"? Do the following cases both represent harmful discrimination:

- A. A Native American decides to marry within her/his ethnic group to preserve their culture.
- B. A white-supremacist wants to marry within her/his ethnic group to preserve the white race.

Analysis:

Suggest to the group that attitudes can change the meaning of behavior.

Is the white-supremacist's intent to preserve an endangered culture, or preserve a majority group's power?

3. After this discussion, write on a large piece of paper:

Non-prejudiced discriminator

Prejudiced non-discriminator

Ask the group to give examples of both.

Analysis: A non-prejudiced discriminator could be someone who makes choices based on ethnicity but not motivated by negative attitudes, e.g.,

- 1) one who dates within their religious group to preserve a minority religion or
- 2) institutionalize racism (refer the group that definition).

A prejudiced-nondiscriminator could be someone who has prejudices but does not act on them. Ask the group if we might say that we are all, to some degree, prejudiced non-discriminators? Normally we use the term "discrimination" in a negative sense. We are use the term in a value-neutral sense in this discussion to highlight how some choices based on race or ethnicity are not inherently harmful.

STEREOTYPE:

Usually negative images, beliefs or assumptions about a group of people without regard to their individual differences. Every stereotype contains a "grain of truth" that legitimizes it in the eyes of the person who holds it.

Questions:

1. Have participants give examples of stereotypes as you list them on a large sheet of paper. The more ridiculous, the better. Include at least one stereotype that you can deconstruct, i.e.,

explain the historical origins. Have the group discuss how they think some of the listed stereotypes started. Is there some "grain of truth" that validates the stereotype in the eyes of the beholder?

As you analyze stereotypes, you may want to mention the "attribution error" theory. There is a tendency for in-groups to attribute the negative behaviors of an out-group to *internal flaws* (they don't have a job because they are lazy). Within our in-group we are more likely to attribute negative behaviors to *external circumstances* (my son doesn't have a job because the economy is down). The group will notice that the listed stereotypes invariably link negative behaviors or internal character flaws--ignoring external circumstances.

2. What is the difference between a generalization (e.g., most cowboys like country music) and a negative stereotype (e.g. most young African-Americans are lazy). Are generalizations about ethnic groups always harmful? If not, when do generalizations become negative stereotypes?

Hypothetical: Bubba is going to Japan on a business trip. His friend Buster advises him that the Japanese consider it an insult if one refuses to share a drink alcohol with them. Is Buster stereotyping?

After the group discusses this, volunteer the following definition:

Generalization--Definition: a general idea or judgement based on particular instances. Generalizations are assumptions about a group based or inferred from experience or perceptions. Generalizations are flexible and can be revised in light of new evidence.

Analysis: Generalizations are natural and human ways of organizing information. They are scripts that we pull from our memory banks to help make decisions about people. They are yardsticks for evaluating objects, people and events. They allow us to size up situations.

Generalizations are inevitable and frequently useful. But they always have the potential of becoming harmful stereotypes (a dangerous neighborhood can become "dangerous people").

Stereotype: a fixed, shared opinion of a group that allows for no individuality. The key difference between a generalization and a stereotype is that while generalizations *describe* behavior stereotypes *predict* the behavior of individuals in a group. Unlike generalizations, stereotypes are often not altered in the face of new and contrary evidence.

Analysis: Suggest to the group that if we all generalize, then we all have the potential to stereotype. Admitting that we generalize is the first step to countering stereotypes in ourselves.

3. Ask for some words or phrases that turn stereotypes into generalizations (some, many, a few, often, most).

4. Is there such a thing as a "positive" stereotype?

RACIAL MYTH:

Erroneous theories or stories, ostensibly based on fact, that serve to explain the conditions of a racial group. Racial myths employ grand stereotypes to diagnose inequality and rationalize unequal treatment. For example, the myth that taxes have skyrocketed because blacks are living luxuriously on welfare. Contrast this myth with the reality in Louisiana where welfare program costs amount to less than 2% of the entire state budget, and the average welfare payment to a family of three is \$168 per month.

BIOLOGICAL OR "OLD FASHIONED" RACISM:

The belief that people of color are inferior to whites because of biological traits that produce inferior intellectual, emotional, and cultural qualities. This overt racism was prevalent in the past. "Old fashioned" racists believed that racial differences were rooted in genetic differences; that "inferior genes" produced crime, poverty and racial inequality. In their view, biological inferiority justified inferior social treatment for blacks--slavery, segregation and discrimination.

SYMBOLIC RACISM:

Some social scientists believe that "old-fashioned racism" has given way to "symbolic racism". Symbolic racism is anti-black prejudice expressed through code-words and symbolic issues rather than overtly bigoted language. This is "covert bigotry". This theory maintains that many whites retain deeply imbedded racist attitudes acquired in their youth. But because of social pressures, whites feel uncomfortable publicly expressing these underlying prejudices. Instead they profess to believe in equality while using code-words, such as "welfare underclass" to mean "blacks", as a way of venting their anti-black prejudices. The symbolic racism theory argues that public debates on crime and welfare issues can easily become polite ways to express racial resentment.

Questions:

1. Give some other examples of how code words might be used.

INSTITUTIONAL RACISM:

Those established laws, customs, and practices which systematically reflect and produce racial inequalities in American society, whether or not the individuals maintaining these practices have racist intentions. Institutional racism is *discrimination* without *prejudice*. Individuals can unintentionally discriminate by applying policies that perpetuate past inequalities.

For example some banks "redline"--refuse to make home loans in poor neighborhoods. Since most poor neighborhoods are black, redlining effectively denies loans to qualified blacks. While the bankers' *attitude* is unbiased, their *behavior* has the same effect as deliberate racism. For blacks, white behavior can be more damaging than white attitudes.

Questions:

1. Are college admissions tests a form of institutional racism? Can you give some examples of a policy or practice that unintentionally discriminates?

Racism--General Definition

Combining the above concepts we can broadly define racism as: racial or cultural prejudices exercised against a racial group by individuals and institutions in a position of power, intentionally or unintentionally. Power distinguishes mere prejudice from racism. Prejudice (an attitude) combines with power (a behavior) to produce racism (a system). Prejudice becomes racism when it is practiced by the economically, socially, or politically powerful (businesses, government, political majorities).

Questions:

1. Prejudice + Power = Racism. What does this mean? Can minorities be prejudiced? Racist?

2. Of the different forms of racism which is most common today? Why?

Part Two:

Reflection on the session: To make sure that we understand what happened over this first session, let's think back over the last two hours of discussion. First, what different activities did we do? When, in these two hours, did you find yourself reacting with concern? Feeling anxious? Hopeful or upbeat? Was there a moment that you sensed that this discussion has a real connection to your everyday lives? As we come to the end of this first session, has your thinking or viewpoint changed in any way? What would you say is your common ground?

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Session Three:

Solutions

This final session discusses community problems and possible solutions.

FORMAT

Part One:

Challenging prejudice. This is a light-hearted exercise in learning how to react to prejudiced remarks. Ask for a couple of volunteers to role play (you may want to assign these in the previous session to give time for preparation). Assign them the following scenario: (45 minutes)

Two friends are watching a basketball game. One says "How many black people does it take to screw in light bulb?" What do you say? What if the defense is "I was only joking, don't be a puritan." Let the role-players act for a two or three minutes. Then ask the group to analyze what happened. What is an appropriate response? What worked? Group members may want to recount their own experiences.

Other Scenarios:

Thanksgiving dinner and Uncle Biff starts talking about "the greedy Jews."

How do we handle prejudice with loved ones?

Your boss says he wouldn't hire a Mexican because they steal everything not nailed down.

How do we react to prejudice in unequal relationships?

Analysis:

Its may not always be possible to confront prejudice with those that exercise power over us. But we can challenge prejudices with friends, co-workers etc. who exercise power over *someone else*. The objective is to do what we can, when we can.

Part Two:

Vision:

What is your vision of an ethnically ideal society? Should we "preserve diversity" or endeavor to "erase racial and religious differences"? What rights and responsibilities would majority and minority groups have in order to maintain your ideal world? (20minutes)

Part Three:

Building Bridges:

We live in different worlds, based on class, ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation and lifestyle. Accepting and valuing our diversity, how do we also arrive at Common Ground? Brainstorm a list of ways that we can create bridges between people of different backgrounds and interests.

Part Four:

Reflection on the Program:

Close the session by asking people if they would like to get together again for similar discussions. Ask them to think back over the last three sessions. What did you learn? How has your thinking or viewpoint changed in any way? What would you say is your common ground? (10 minutes)

Annotated Bibliography on Racism and Race Relations

This bibliography is selected primarily from recent works that reflect aspects of the current national dialogue. Videos and other bibliographies are listed as well.

Berry, Wendell. *The Hidden Wound*. San Francisco: North Point Press, 1989.

Personal recollections and considerations of the effects of racism on whites as members of the dominant race. Offers insights into the moral, social, and political dilemmas of race relations.

Brooks, Roy L. *Rethinking the American Race Problem*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.

Argues that no meaningful talk about or work on the problems of African-Americans can take place without merging the question of race with that of class structure. Argues that self-help is the best hope for African-Americans. Intended audiences are civil rights legal scholars and the general public.

Democracy's Next Generation II: A Study of American Youth on Race. Washington, DC: People For the American Way, 1992. For price and ordering information, contact People For the American Way, 2000 M Street NW, Washington, DC 20036, (202) 467-4999. Abridged version also available.

Examines racial attitudes among today's youth, and argues this is a crucial first step for breaking the cycle of blaming between whites and minorities. Finds that young people's attitudes on race reflect the anger and tension of the past decade. Study includes three facets: a nationwide telephone survey of 15- to 24-year olds; focus groups of white youth; and in-depth, one-on-one, face-to-face interviews with white and minority "children of the civil rights era."

Edsall, Thomas Byrne, with Edsall, Mary D. "When the Official Subject is Presidential Politics, Taxes, Welfare, Crime, Rights, or Values...the Real Subject is RACE." *Atlantic Monthly*, May 1991.

Argues that considerations of race are "imbedded in the strategy and tactics of politics, in competing concepts of the function and responsibility of government, and in each voter's conceptual structure of moral and partisan identity."

EXTRA! magazine, July/August 1992. *EXTRA!* is a publication of FAIR (Fairness & Accuracy In Reporting), 130 West 25th Street, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10001, telephone: (212) 633-6700, FAX: (212) 727-7668.

Issue devoted to analyzing racism in news reporting and other aspects of mass media.

Hacker, Andrew. *Two Nations: Black and White, Separate, Hostile, Unequal*. New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1992.

An analysis of what keeps whites and blacks far apart. Argues that most liberals no longer make race a high priority. Argues that both left and right share the pervasive misconception that blacks are inferior. Looks at the way issues of race affect the choices ordinary Americans make in their daily lives.

Kozol, Jonathan. *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools*. New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1991.

Describes what is happening to children from poor families in the inner cities and the less affluent suburbs. Argues that public schools in most of the U.S. remain segregated and unequal.

Lemann, Nicholas. "The Other Underclass." *Atlantic Monthly*, December 1991.

Examines Hispanic subgroups; demonstrates that Puerto Ricans are the worst-off ethnic group in the country. Looks at different theories that offer some explanation of why there is a Puerto Rican underclass.

Leone, Bruno. *Racism: Opposing Viewpoints*. San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 1986.

Historical readings that demonstrate a variety of viewpoints as applied to questions of racism from the beginning of the U.S. to the present. Contains a section on the nature of racism.

Melville, Keith. *Remedies for Racial Inequality: Why Progress Has Stalled, What Should Be Done*. Dayton, OH: National Issues Forums Institute, 1990. For price and ordering

information, contact Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 2460 Kerper Boulevard, Dubuque, IA 52004-0539, (800) 338-5578. Abridged version suitable for new readers also available.

Pogrebin, Letty Cottin. "From Our Heads and Our Hearts: Connecting with Black Women." *Lilith*, Winter 1991.

Describes the genesis and progress of a black-Jewish women's dialogue group.

Racism in America. San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 1991.

An anthology of readings examining various aspects of racism in America today. Chapters include: "Is Racism Responsible for Minority Poverty," "Do Minorities Deserve Special Treatment," and "How Can Racism Be Stopped?"

Sigelman, Lee and Welch, Susan. *Black Americans' Views of Racial Inequality: The Dream Deferred*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Most social science work on racial attitudes has focused on white attitudes; this remedies the gap by examining the attitudes, values, opinions, and behaviors of black Americans. The final chapter summarizes what we know and don't know about what and how Americans think about racial inequality, how attitudes are changing, and how perceptions shape society.

Steele, Claude M. "Race and the Schooling of Black Americans." *Atlantic Monthly*, April 1992.

A social psychologist, Steele makes an argument about the sometimes subtle messages minority students receive. Believes that stigma is connected to school achievement patterns for black Americans.

Steele, Shelby. *Content of our Character: A New Vision of Race in America*. New York: St. Martin Press, 1990.

Asserts that it is time for blacks to stop thinking of themselves as victims.

Race and Class. A Journal for Black and Third World Liberation. Published quarterly by the Institute of Race Relations, London.

Examines issues of race and class worldwide.

Rothenberg, Paula S., ed. *Racism and Sexism: An Integrated Study*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988.

More than 70 interdisciplinary readings covering issues of importance to blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans. Topics include: legal status, consequences of inequality, stereotyping and language, how to move ahead.

Sowell, Thomas. *Markets and Minorities*. New York: Basic Books, 1981.

Analysis of the economic situation of America's racial and ethnic minorities. Offers an explanation of why government programs to improve the lot of minorities have failed, and argues that minorities can use the market to Three Rivers, Amoja.

Cultural Etiquette: A Guide for the Well-Intentioned. Indian Valley, VA: Market Wimmin. Available from Market Wimmin, Box 28, Indian Valley, VA 24105.

A brief, practical guide to countering the disinformation and ignorance that come with pervasive stereotypes that affect everyday language. Written "for those unlearning racism and anti-semitism."

Terkel, Studs. *Race: How Blacks and Whites Think and Feel About the American Obsession*. New York: The New Press, 1992.

Interviews ordinary Americans; people talk candidly about how race affects their daily lives.

Williams, Juan, with the Eyes on the Prize Production Team. *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years, 1954-1965*. A companion volume to the PBS Television Series. New York: Viking Penguin, Inc., 1987

A history of the civil rights movement as seen by the participants then and now. Time-line of the movement, readable stories, photos.

Williams, Patricia. *The Alchemy of Race and Rights: Diary of a Law Professor*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991.

Autobiographical essay by a lawyer and professor of commercial law. Williams is the great-great-granddaughter of a slave and a white southern lawyer. Reflections on the intersection of race, gender, and class. Offers thoughts on some of the racial incidents that have been in the headlines over the past few years.