



Exploring Race and Culture from a Trauma-Informed Lens Training Tool Kit

Segment 1: White Privilege Part 2 – Growing into Authentic Allyship and Racial Justice

YouTube link: <https://youtu.be/nnB-KlrI14>
Video length: 32:44

Panel participants on video

- Linda Hall, Director – Office of Children's Mental Health – Facilitator
- Armando Hernandez – Chief Diversity Officer, Journey Mental Health Center
- William Parke Sutherland – Health Policy Analyst, Kids Forward
- Pat Parker – Curriculum and Instruction Manager, the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare at UW – Milwaukee

After watching the Exploring Race and Culture from a Trauma-Informed Lens – Growing into Authentic Allyship and Racial Justice video, discuss the following questions with the group you viewed the training with. If you viewed the training individually, consider these questions.

Discussion questions

1. How have you been affected and/or benefitted from implicit bias?
2. What are ways we can use our privilege to amplify historically suppressed voices?
3. Discuss the differences between the three forms of allyship Armando discussed: 1) performative charity, 2) authentic allyship, and 3) embodied solidarity (see "3 Forms of Allyship" document in the toolkit).
4. Select one of the stories Pat discussed (her daughter playing in the play land or her experience getting a taxi in Baltimore). How did these stories make you feel? How could you respond in similar situations?
5. Discuss the concept of "de-centering" (Armando discussed in question 2 – de-centering is examining whose voice is at the center of the discussion and placing the voice of those historically oppressed or people of color at the center). How could this change the work you do?
6. What does authentic allyship look like in your life?

Resources

- "From White Racist to White Anti-Racist – the life-long journey" By Tema Okun, dRworks
<https://www.fammed.wisc.edu/files/webfm-uploads/documents/diversity/LifeLongJourney.pdf>

- Guide to Allyship - an open source starter guide to help you become a more thoughtful and effective ally.
<https://guidetoallyship.com/>
- 9 Reasons Why Acting in Solidarity for Racial Justice Is Preferable to “Allyship” by Jaime Grant.
<https://thebodyisnotanapology.com/magazine/over-the-ally-9-ways-solidarity-is-an-act-of-radical-self-love/>

Notes from video

Recent dialogue on the topic of allyship indicates the term can be problematic. Understanding that words matter, this discussion invites panelists to share their thoughts on allyship.

Question 1: What are your thoughts on allyship?

Armando

- 2 considerations
 1. We need to start with “innerwork”. We need to be committed to learning our own history as well as the history of historically oppressed and marginalized groups.
 2. We need to do the foundational work around implicit and unconscious bias as this will show up in our work.
- We need to acknowledge how we participate in oppressive systems.
- Allyship needs to be every day, ongoing work. We need to:
 - Listen.
 - Use our privilege to amplify historically suppressed voices.
 - Accept criticism with grace, even if it’s uncomfortable.
- There are 3 forms allyship can take:
 1. Performative charity – this is problematic, doesn’t build power, focuses on what “I” do to help.
 2. Authentic allyship – focused on the interpersonal impact, the driver is to act with compassion.
 3. Embodied solidarity – focus on cultural and political transformation, sharing power, enhancing and building the voices of those populations at the margins and historically oppressed. This is integrated into who I am. It takes humility as it is an ongoing process.

William

- White people can get caught up in “Am I using the right words?” as we discuss this topic.
- Focus on intent.
- Remember that the struggle for social justice isn’t about you.
- It is important to follow the evolving thought and work of BIPOC organizations.
- This work is ongoing – to do that as a white person you need to understand why you are called to this work. If you are doing it for a badge, you probably aren’t going to get that, and when you don’t you will probably stop.
- This work will be hard and include conflict.
- Be honest about how these systems of oppression have affected you and your people.
- There isn’t anywhere to “arrive” at – it is a constant journey of learning, growing, and unlearning. This isn’t a certificate, it is a call to act and think differently, and center justice in your life.

Pat

- I'm uncomfortable in allyship when it is focused on someone else's oppression.
- If someone becomes an ally because they feel guilty, they may find the cost of being an ally outweighs their motivation.
- Authentic allyship is living a change.

Question 2: What does authentic allyship and real action look like?

William

- Much of this work is in the little things – standing up, speaking out, and not going with the flow because you don't want to rock the boat.
- One of the things white people can do is to challenge other white people when we see racism and to act in solidarity. It is particularly important to challenge racism when there are only white people in the room. It isn't "if" whiteness is operating in the room but "how" whiteness and racism are operating.
- Silence from white people is not OK, it reinforces racism and those messages. Even if you don't know what to say, saying something in the moment is really important. Practice this.
- If someone points out how your actions hurt them, recognize that this is really a gift – that they trust you and think you can learn and change. Thank them for giving you that feedback. It will help you be a better ally.

Armando

- We need to listen deeply and pay attention.
- We need a deep commitment – friendship is a deep commitment. Do we have a deep commitment to equity and delivering services in a way that everyone presents to us?
- De-centered practice – whose voice is at the center, that we are prioritizing, whose values are most important? Whose story is preferred at the moment?
- De-centered practice promotes
 - Giving space
 - Giving away power
 - Giving voice/preference to those historically oppressed and people of color – putting them at the center instead of yourself.
- When you de-center you lead into building strategic coalitions that have shared interest.
- All this leads into telling a new story.

Pat

- Real action looks like when we understand that a threat to justice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. quote).
- An authentic ally has made a choice to live their life in a certain way, always maintaining anti-racist values and behaviors, especially when the situation calls for an anti-racist response.
- Solidarity is when you see wrong and act right. What effects one impacts all.
- When an ally realizes injustice includes them they become infected against anti-racist behavior and we walk together. If you are in solidarity you keep pressing on. If you get weary, don't stop. Understand that we are further along that when we first started.
- Quote by aboriginals in Australia in the 1970s: If you have come to help me you are wasting your time. But, if you have come because your liberation is bound up in mine, then let us work together.