**Affinity Groups**

*Objectives:*

Following completion of this session, learners will be able to:

1. Distinguish work that is best done in community with folks who share a racial identity, from work that is best done with the broader group
2. Share experiences of one’s own race with others of one’s race, critically examining the role of power in these experiences
3. Examine racism-related priorities within one’s racial affinity group.

*Preparatory Work:*

Prior to attending the session, learners have been asked to:

* 1. For those who will attend the **white affinity caucus**, read/skim the following commentaries:
     1. [What I said when my white friend asked for my black opinion on white privilege](https://onbeing.org/blog/what-i-said-when-my-white-friend-asked-for-my-black-opinion-on-white-privilege/?fbclid=IwAR0A41PqRyJc_18uma5P5e6amR9IIBGVkrwmJKchNqHhovWa5QZm45PiH5o)
     2. [I don't know what to do with good white people](https://jezebel.com/i-dont-know-what-to-do-with-good-white-people-1671201391)
  2. For those who will attend the **BIPOC affinity caucus**, consider\*\* reading the following.
     1. [Internalized Racism](file:///\\pedsfs-01.pediatrics.wisc.edu\private$\edk008\APD%20Equity%20Diversity%20Inclusion%20Materials\Curriculum%20Lesson%20Plans\Internalized%20Racism) (in lesson plan folder) OR if you prefer a longer chapter by Donna Bivens, you can find it here: [What Is Internalized Racism?](http://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/What_is_Internalized_Racism.pdf)
     2. <https://www.ted.com/talks/jabari_lyles_black_self_white_world_lessons_on_internalized_racism?language=en>

*\*\*Note Internalized racism is a “recommended topic” for a BIPOC affinity caucus. However, this discussion will be guided by what is important to YOU so if this topic is not of interest to you, feel free to skip:*

*Facilitator Preparatory Work:*

Send out email with preparatory work

If you will be facilitating a racial affinity group, you may wish to read:

1. Guide- Caucuses as a Racial Justice Strategy from JustLead Washington
2. White Caucus FAQ

*In Session Facilitator Guide*

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| 30min | Racial affinity groups | Racial affinity groups  In the first 5 minutes in the group, ask participants to do a written reflection on the below questions. These will be redundant to some residents who have done this before—this is intentional (let them know that!). Experiences, answers and identity change over time. Reflecting on these changes is an important part of growth.  1. What has it felt like in the past to talk with other people who share your racial identity about race?  2. What has been useful about these conversations for you?  3. What has been challenging?  *Note to facilitator: racial affinity caucuses are intentionally somewhat unstructured. While there is a goal (create a space for learning and work around issues of racism), there is often not a set agenda especially for the first time a caucus meets. This may be uncomfortable for some participants. If you notice discomfort, you may wish to call out this lack of agenda and encourage the group to examine why there is discomfort around that. Allowing the priorities of the group to evolve naturally, rather than having a “person in charge” drive the agenda, creates a more equal distribution of power. How is this different from our current dominant culture?*  Opening the caucus: “Sometimes, we face challenges that are unique to our group. This is a time for us to define and discuss our most pressing concerns. Our program meets in a caucus on occasion, but it has been quite a while. We have some new members of our residency, while others have graduated and moved on.There have been many events in our world and country since that time…”  **BIPOC group:**  “Often, a BIPOC caucus will focus on internalized racial oppression and/or discussing strategies and ideas to organize against white supremacy culture, racist systems, and other racist dynamics in our work and lives. But really, we should discuss what is most important to us as a group. I’d like to create space for anyone who has a topic they’d like to discuss, whether it is one of those topics or something else, to enter into the conversation.”  (allow time for responses)  If the conversation lags, consider presenting one or more of these topics as a point of conversation (or, as above, take a moment to critically examine the lack of agenda and why this creates discomfort):  1. Internalized racism / internalized oppression  2. How do we define ourselves?  3. “Passing”  4. Economic success vs political success: what to do if these are in contradiction? What is more important?  5. How important is it to hold onto our cultural history?  6. The bilingual debate  7. Intergroup dating  8. Affirmative action  9. What unique challenges do we each face? What are our common challenges?  10. Where do I belong?  11. Intergroup competition  12. What do we need to be successful in our work on this issue?  13. What work do we need white people to do with us, and without us?  14. What would it take for us to feel able to say our mind in the full group?  **White group:**  “Often, a white caucus will begin by examining the roles of racism and privilege in our own lives; but other common themes can include accountability, addressing discomfort, and exploring what it would look like to participate more actively in the redistribution of our privilege and power. But really, we should discuss what is most important to us as a group. I’d like to create space for anyone who has a topic they’d like to discuss, whether it is one of those topics or something else, to enter into the conversation.”  (allow time for responses)  If the conversation lags, consider presenting one or more of these topics as a point of conversation (or, as above, take a moment to critically examine the lack of agenda and why this creates discomfort):  1. Affirmative action  2. White privilege  3. What obligation do whites have to address racism and inequities?  4. Blame  5. Reverse discrimination  6. Does white culture define America?  7. How can we support white people who work on this issue?  8. How can we support BIPOC who work on this issue?  9. Fear  10. What challenges do we face?  11. What is unique about our work on this issue?  12. What do we need to be successful in our work on this issue?  13. What are you doing to redistribute your privilege and power?  14. How are you addressing the reality that "comfort is our enemy"? (i.e. white people need to be uncomfortable in order for the status quo to change, otherwise, comfort will be the enemy by thwarting progress)  15. How are you building your own personal accountability towards meaningfully answering the above questions? | BIPOC^: Vivek, Santhi, Cathy, Mary, Sheryl, Mala, Alisha  White A: Emily, Aaron  White B:  Dave, Heidi, Megan  ^Please sub-divide further if desired |  |
| 10 min | Racial affinity groups | Remain in affinity groups  Facilitator asks each member to reflect:  • What was it like to take part in this conversation?  • What did you hear that fit with your experience? What did you hear that surprised you?  Members can share (or not) as they wish and as time permits.  *\*\*Each group should spend some time discussing what (if anything) they would like to and are willing to share with the full group about their experience in the racial affinity caucuses. This may include learnings they want to bring back to the whole group, reflections on the experience, things they wish those in a different affinity group knew about their experience, etc. Sharing will be optional, but each group will be given an opportunity to report back. Please identify a main spokesperson, though others will be welcome to join in (it is helpful to have someone designated to at least kick off the conversation).* | Same as above |  |
| 10 min | Large group | Offer time for each affinity group to share if they wish with the large group. This is not required, merely a space/time for groups to share with others if they so desire (and feel it will be helpful). |  |  |