

Practice

and

Model

Respectful

Behavior

Workshop Guidelines

- 1. Speak from your heart and your experience.
Use "I" statements.**
- 2. We're not here to judge each other, put each other down or compete.**
- 3. Listen to the wisdom everyone brings to the group.**
- 4. Give each person the time and space to speak.**
- 5. Practice 'Active Listening.' Respect the person; challenge the behavior.**
- 6. Create anti-racist language and anti-racist group dynamics.**
- 7. Please come on time!**
- 8. Please do the 'homework.'**
- 9. Call if you can't come to a session.**
- 10. Share workshop expenses.**

(‘Anti-Racist Toilet Training’)

Creating Anti-Racist Group Dynamics

- ***Raise your hand to speak;**
- *** Prioritize voices of people of color in the group;**
- ***Prioritize voices of quiet white folks in the group;**
- *** Practice ‘Active Listening.’
Challenge Respectfully.**

Creating Anti-Racist Language

- ** “When you said or did...or when...happened...
** “I felt... I thought...
** “Because I feel...I think...I have experienced...
** “Something that’s worked for me is...
** “What do you think about that?”**

ACTIVE LISTENING

Active listening is an expression of respect for another person. Active listening involves suspending your judgment about *what* a person is saying, and concentrating instead on attending to the *emotions* behind the words. Active listening requires that the listener forget temporarily what *you want to say*, and concentrate instead on what *she/he* is actually saying at the moment.

To indicate that you *understand*, you might say...

- " Then the problem as you see it is..."
- " Do you mean, for example, that...?"
- " If I understand you correctly, you feel we should.."
- " You would like me to..."

After you have summarized your understanding of what you have heard, give the speaker the chance to reflect on your perceptions, until all miscommunication is resolved. If the speaker is quiet for awhile, sit with the silence. It's OK.

Then encourage the person to elaborate or clarify:

- " How did you feel about that?"
- " Can you say more about this?"
- " Is there something else that's bothering you?"
- " Where do you think we see things differently?"
- " How would you like things to change?"

Some comments to avoid: "It'll be okay. It's not that bad." "I understand. I have the same problem." "When that happened to me, I really got angry, too."

(Adapted from ACTIVE LISTENING by Gil Lopez, an African American anti-oppression trainer whose wisdom and love inspired many people. Gil passed a few years ago in San Francisco. His spirit lives on.)

EACH ONE TEACH ONE

The *Each One Teach One* anti-racist grassroots organizing strategy was used by African American organizers in the Southern freedom movements of the 1950's and 1960's. As the name suggests, each organizer focuses her/his efforts on intensive, one-on-one communications as a method of bringing another person into the struggle.

COMPONENTS of the *Each One Teach One* organizing strategy are:

- * **Personal:** an intensive conversation between two people;
- * **Experiential:** the organizer can draw on her/his own processes of anti-racist transformation to communicate commitment to anti-racist work;
- * **Respectful:** to be effective, it necessitates Active Listening and Respectful Dialogue;
- * **Educational:** teaching another is the best way to deepen your own learning; the strategy strengthens the organizer's anti-racist grassroots organizing skills;
- * **Political:** the content of the message is one of the struggle for justice; the purpose is to bring people to events/actions that engage them in the struggle; *the strategy validates the importance of every individual activist in creating grassroots anti-racist movements;*
- * **Spiritual:** the organizer is inviting the person addressed to join her/him on a life-transforming path of becoming an anti-racist activist.

SAMPLE OUTLINE for *Each One Teach One*:

- (1) Think of a friend you would like to invite to an event/action (activities well-suited for *Each One Teach One*).
- (2) Approach your friend in person or over the phone.
- (3) Invite to the event/action using your *own* story and experiences.
- (4) Appeal to *their* story and self-interest – *what's in it for them?*
- (5) Practice and model Respective Behavior! Listen attentively, and respond to their comments and concerns.
- (6) Reiterate how much it would mean to you to have her share the experience with you. If she says no, make sure she can change her mind. *Don't give up or lose hope, it's hard work!*
- (7) Confirm your date the day before the event/action, and attend it together.
- (8) Gather your friend's feedback, and offer opportunities for further action.

CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM IS AN ACT OF LOVE!

Respect the Person. Challenge the Behavior:

- ** Don't challenge a person's motivations. Leave that to a dialogue between the person and her Creator.*
- ** Focus your concerns on the effects of her behavior on other people. Be specific.*

Affirm the positive work *first*:

- ** Say what you liked about the work.*
- ** What insights did you gain?*
- ** How did the work strengthen your commitment?*
- ** What new skills did you learn?*

Focus on areas for improvement:

- ** Suggest alternatives.*
- ** Make specific suggestions.*
- ** Never blame a person; focus on the behavior.*
- ** Unless a person did something really offensive, refrain from saying, "I didn't like that."*

View a 'mistake' as a *learning opportunity*.

- ** Remember that we are all just human beings doing the best we can.*