

RACIAL JUSTICE TOOLKIT

Commission for Racial Justice
Episcopal Diocese of Ohio



INTRODUCTION

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

– *Prayer for the Human Family* (Book of Common Prayer, p. 815)

This toolkit is a resource for parishes and individuals as we all do the holy work of justice and reconciliation. Often people don't know where to start, and these resources are offered as a way to get started. People come from very different starting places regarding race and racial justice, and these tools are offered as a way to build common ground in undertaking this work of addressing racism and becoming anti-racist in our congregations and communities. If you have questions or would like a facilitator to work with you, please contact one of us and we would be glad to assist.

Denise Caywood
dcc1655@gmail.com

Allison Hauserman
abhauserman@yahoo.com

The Rev. Margaret D'Anieri, Canon for Mission
mdanieri@dohio.org

Pentecost 2021

SOME CONSIDERATIONS

The following questions may help a parish or group discern their path as they approach doing racial equity work.

WHY?

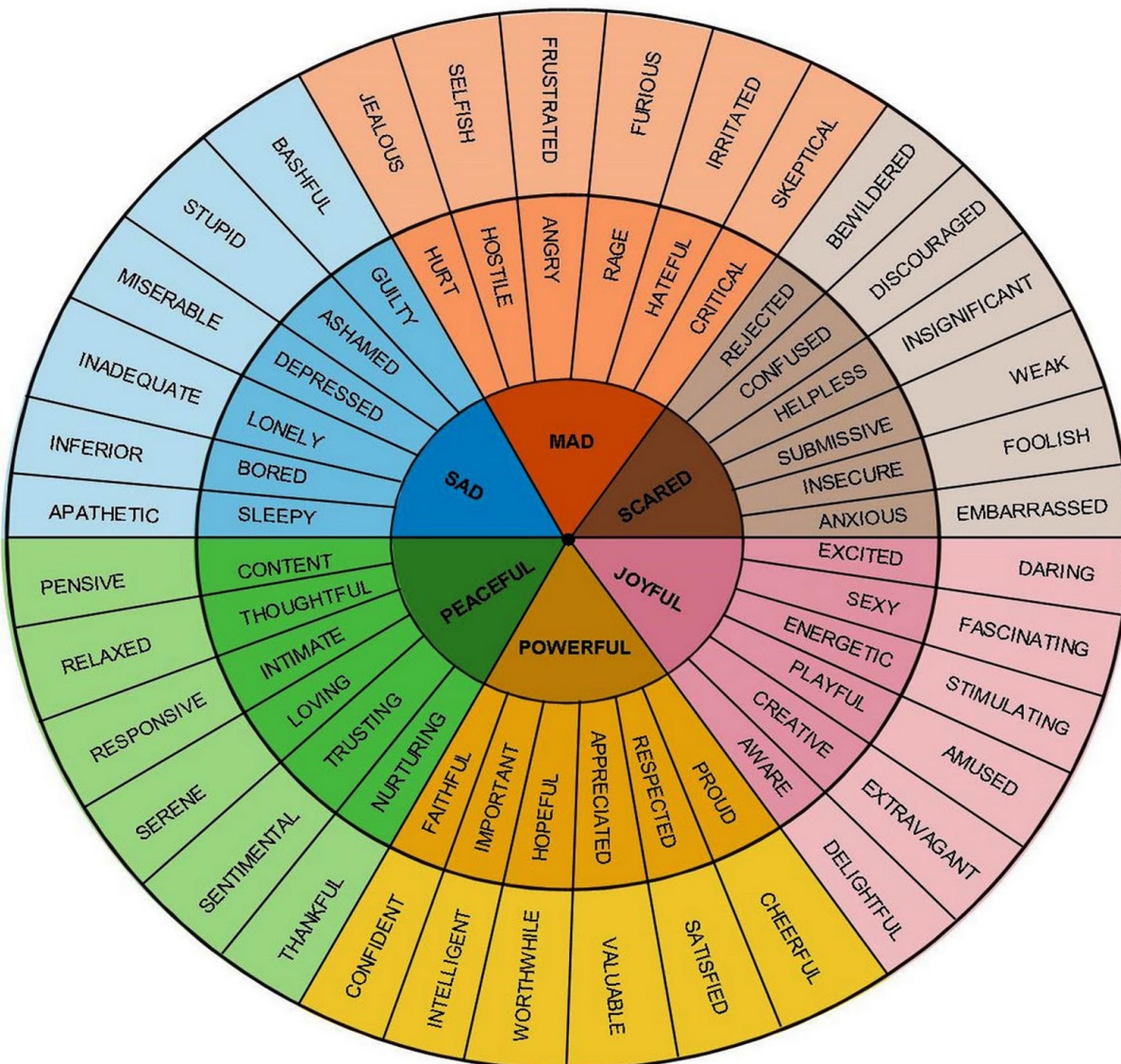
- Why should WE do this work?
 - It is part of loving our neighbor.
 - Matthew 22:35-39

35 and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. 36 "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" 37 He said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 38 This is the greatest and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"
- What does this have to do with us?
 - All of us are impacted by injustice
 - Martin Luther King, Jr. said "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere"
 - "He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" Micah 6:8
- Why is this about being followers of Jesus instead of being politically partisan?
 - Parable of the Lost Sheep (Matthew 18:10-14)
 - In our Baptismal Covenant (pages 304-305, BCP) we promise to respect the dignity of all people and to work for justice and peace
 - Becoming Beloved Community ... Where You Are
https://www.episcopalchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/11/bbc_where_you_are.pdf

ISSUES TO DEAL WITH BEFORE STARTING

- How do you feel about exploring racial issues?
 - Angry
 - Excited
 - Interested
 - Fearful
 - Resentful
 - Other feelings?

Here is an example of a Feelings Wheel to help explore feelings:



- How can you set aside any feelings that would keep you from an open exploration of the issues?

- Recognition and/or discussion of feelings helps
- Role play some possible outcomes of participating in this work, for example:
 - I may learn things about myself that I don't like
 - I may learn things about others that I don't like
 - I may feel hurt or hurt others
 - I may be bored
 - I may not learn anything new
- Meditate on the following: (Amended from March 24, 2021 Forward Day By Day)

John 10:12-13: The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep.

In this parable, we have two important characters: the Good Shepherd and the hired hand. As Jesus describes, the hired hand works is concerned only for himself and his safety. In a way, the hired hand already has let the wolf of fear come into the fold, letting his instinct for self-preservation affect his willingness to fend for the sheep.

Many times, we are called to be the assistant or the hired hand. However, we cannot let the wolf of fear guide our actions, causing us to run away. We cannot let the wolf of racism scatter the sheep and devour them as we watch idly by. We cannot let the wolf of homophobia scare the sheep from entering the gates.

When the wolves show up before us, they may frighten us. But when we put our trust in God, we find the courage to show God's life-saving love to all who seek it.

MOVING FORWARD: What "wolf" is keeping you from acting as Jesus would? Pray for strength to set your fears aside.

- Symbolic actions
 - What's in Your Heart? (See appendix)

- Where are you starting from?
 - What level of knowledge does the group have?
 - What level of openness does the group have?
 - These or other surveys/questionnaires can help determine the group and individual baselines. (the second one is long and may work better if edited)
 - <https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/documents/assets/pdf/education-outreach/Personal-Self-Assessment-of-Anti-Bias-Behavior.pdf>
 - https://unitedwayaddisoncounty.org/client_media/files/ReneeWellsAnti-RacismSelfAssessmentTool.pdf
- Who should lead this?
 - Clergy
 - Lay leadership
 - Lay person from the congregation who has some expertise/experience
 - A paid consultant
 - A volunteer member of the Commission for Racial Justice
- Hopes and Concerns Activity
 - Give each member of the group two sticky notes of different colors
 - Designate one color for hopes and one for concerns
 - Ask participants to write a hope and a concern on the appropriate color with no name on them
 - Attach sticky notes to newsprint
 - Read the notes out loud so that the group is aware of one another's hopes and concerns
- Have group read and agree to Touchstones (or another set of group norms)
 - Touchstones (<http://www.couragerenewal.org/PDFs/Touchstones-Updated2019.pdf>)
 - Have group read and agree to a common set of definitions
Essential Concepts (see appendix) Discuss the idea of "trying on" unfamiliar or disagreed with terms

HOW TO CHOOSE RESOURCES

- Use readily available, inexpensive or free resources to start
- Explore the Episcopal Church website (<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/>) for ideas
- Consider showing some TED talks (highly recommend Sue Borrego, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XIRxqC0Sze4>)
- Consider having parish leadership read *The Little Book of Racial Healing* by Thomas Norman DeWolf and Jodie Geddes before starting any deeper exploration
- Consult the list of resources (next page) and look at resources keeping in mind the starting place you determined above
- Consider watching the video *Traces of the Trade* and discussing

RESOURCES

Episcopal Church

- Sacred Ground (<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/sacred-ground/>)
- Office of Black Ministries (<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/black-ministries/healing-internalized-oppression/training-registration/>)
- Responding to Racist Violence (<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/responding-to-racist-violence/>)
- Becoming Beloved Community (<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/beloved-community/>)
- Racial Reconciliation Resources (<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/racial-reconciliation/resources/>)
- The Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing (<https://www.centerforracialhealing.org/>)
- Province V Website (<https://www.provincev.org/dismantlingracism.html>)—includes book list

YWCA 21 Day Challenge (<https://www.ywcaofcleveland.org/eliminate-racism/21-day-racial-equity-challenge/>)

APPENDIX

ESSENTIAL CONCEPTS

One of the ways to begin true dialogue is to develop a common language. There are many unhealthy ways in which we continue to separate ourselves from each other. The following terms and definitions are eight of those ways.

PREJUDICE is a pre-judgment on insufficient grounds; it can be positive or negative.

BIGOTRY is a more intensive form of prejudice and carries the negative side of pre-judgment. The bigot is usually conscious of his/her feelings, nurtures them, and is often defined by them.

SCAPEGOATING is the act or practice of assigning blame or failure to persons or groups instead of placing it directly on the person(s) to whom the blame or failure actually belongs.

STEREOTYPING is attributing characteristics to a group simplistically and uncritically. Often, there is the assumption that those characteristics are rooted in significant biological differences.

DISCRIMINATION is the act or practice of according negative differential treatment to individuals or groups on the basis of group, class, or affiliation such as race, religion, and gender.

PRIVILEGE is an advantage or benefit that can be earned, inherited, or conveyed by societal norms. Some people have more privilege than others.

INTERSECTIONALITY is a theoretical framework for understanding how aspects of a person's social and political identities might combine to create unique modes of discrimination and privilege. Intersectionality identifies advantages and disadvantages that are felt by people due to a combination of factors.

DIVERSITY encompasses all attributes and characteristics of an individual. Diversity is a gift from our creator God and anything which causes us to overlook, devalue, or denigrate that gift is a sin.

"What's in your heart?"

What "wolf" is keeping you from
acting as Jesus would?

Put your response in the heart below.



Big Feelings Wheel



Interrupting Bias: Calling Out vs. Calling In

Calling Out:

- When we need to let someone know that their words or actions are unacceptable and will not be tolerated
- When we need to interrupt in order to prevent further harm
- Will likely feel hard and uncomfortable, but necessary
- Allows us to hit the “pause” button and break the momentum

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| Wow. Nope. Ouch. I need to stop you right there. | That word/comment is really triggering and offensive. Be mindful and pick a different word. | I need to push back against that. I disagree. I don't see it that way. |
| Okay, I am having a strong reaction to that and I need to let you know why. | I don't find that funny. Tell me why that's funny to you. | I wonder if you've considered the impact of your words. |
| Hmmm.. maybe you want to think this one through a bit more and speak about it later. | I need you to know how your comment just landed on me. | That's not our culture here. Those aren't our values. |
| Is sex/gender/gender identity/gender expression/race/class/ ethnicity/religion/ability/ immigration status/ body type/ marital status/ age/ pregnancy relevant to your point? How? | It sounded like you just said _____. Is that really what you meant? | I feel obligated as your peer/colleague/co-worker /friend/supervisor to tell you that your comment wasn't okay. |
| It sounds like you're making some assumptions that we need to unpack a bit. | You may or may not realize this, but you're talking about me/my story/my identity markers. | I need to leave the room if the conversation is going to continue down this road. |
| Remember, it is a powerful thing for the target of oppression to hear these words from the mouth of an ally! | | |

Adapted from Oregon Center for Educational Equity: *What Did You Just Say? Responses to Racist Comments Collected from the Field Used with Permission.*



Calling In:

- When there is an opportunity to explore deeper, make meaning together, and find a mutual sense of understanding across difference
- When we are seeking to understand or learn more
- When we want to help imagine different perspectives, possibilities, or outcomes
- Provides for multiple perspectives and encourages paradigm shifts
- Focused on reflection, not reaction
- Is *not* just a suggestion with an uptick (Don't you think you should...?)

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| I'm curious. What was your intention when you said that? | How might the impact of your words/actions differ from your intent? | What sort of impact do you think your decision/comment/action might have? |
| How might someone else see this differently? Is it possible that someone might misinterpret your words/actions? | How might your own comfort level, assumptions, expectations, prior experiences be influencing your beliefs, decisions, process? | How is ___ different from ___? What is the connection between ___ and ___? |
| What criteria are you using to measure/assess etc? | How did you decide, determine, conclude... | What would have to change in order for ___? |
| What do you assume to be true about ___? | Why is this the best way to proceed? What other approaches have you considered? | What is making you the most fearful, nervous, uncomfortable or worried? |
| Why do you think that is the case? Why do you believe that to be true? | Why do you think others have/haven't moved in that direction? | How do you know it's working? |
| Why did the result or response cause a problem for you? | What would other stakeholders say/think/feel? | In your opinion, what is the best case scenario? |
| Think: How might we call out the behavior, while calling in the person? | | |

Adapted from the School Reform Initiative *Pocket Guide to Probing Questions*
Used with Permission.

