Poverty, Race, Class & Culture

How race, class and culture perpetuate poverty

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ANSWER POVERTY .org

Preparation Workbook

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All of us… are more than the worse thing we ever did.

None of us… are as innocent as we think we are.

All of us… have some prejudice we cannot justify.

None of us… live free from unwarranted judgement.

All of us… see the world as if we are at its center.

None of us… appreciate how connected we really are.

All of us… are more than our demographic designation.

None of us… are free from being stereotyped as one thing.

All of us… are more than our political affinities.

None of us… are as political as we assert.

All of us… must accept responsibility for what America is or

None of us… will see what it can become.

Robert Caldwell

November 9, 2016

Poverty Race Class & Culture

Greetings

Thank you for your participation in **Poverty Race Class & Culture.** Do you remember what happened on or about the date on the previous page November 9, 2016? This is when Donald Trump was elected to his first term as President of the United States. It was at that time I wrote "All of Us…" I had been doing some form of this work for over 20 years, and it *captured the "Spirit"* of all I had done and still do today. It is that spirit from which this class was developed.

The issues of poverty and racism are complex, and they continue to be perpetuated in large part because we do not realize they are harming *"All of Us…"* , no matter our station in life. The purpose of this class is to help participants understand that complexity, recognized *"their part"* in it, so they can be better equipped to address it more effectively.

Again, the issues of poverty and racism complex, and we all bring life experience and perspective that inform our opinions and beliefs about them. This is designed as space for you to share yours and to hear those of the others in this class. So, we welcome your participation and trust this experience will add value to the work you do in the community.

Robert

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Why Pre-Class preparation?
This class has challenging content that has proven difficult for some to hear and process. So, we are asking that you complete this Preparation Session before the first class begins *(Check for date/time).*

It will introduce the framework for the class, the learning objectives and some of terms and definitions you need to understand in order follow the content. You will also be able to determine your own learning objectives and identify some questions you hope to have answered during the class.

Below is your guide to this workbook:

Page 4: How to get the most out of this Class

Page 5: Learning Objectives

Page 6: Class Framework: (5) Questions to be answered

Page 7: Key Definitions

Page 8: Personal Reflections on Key Definitions

Page 9: Key Definitions Leaning Activity

Page 10: Personal Learning Objectives

Preparation

How to get the most of this class

Do not equate ***Mental Assent*** *(intellectual agreement)* with Understanding or Ownership

Western Education

Over the past 250 years Education in America has come to focus primarily on information mastery. People can advance and get "degreed" by providing information in ways that meet the criteria established by universities. However, a person's life (behavior) does not have to reflect in some measurable way the information that they have mastered. In other words, in many disciplines you can get a master's degree or a Ph.D. without being a practitioner. As a result of this we (Westerners) often believe that if we have been exposed to information or because we agree with information, we somehow own it. But often that information is not evident in the way we live.

Eastern Education

or Afra-Asiatic Rites of Passage

On the eastern half of the globe, however, the focus is on skill building. This is known as the **"Rites of Passage"**. People move through "passages" (or marked stages of development) by demonstrating both an intellectual understanding and ability to "DO" or live that understanding. A person must demonstrate both a mastery of "information" and a life (behavior) that indicates that they have internalized the information.

Sit with any ***Negative or Defensive Reaction*** to any of the content. Ask questions, reflect and process to learn why you reacted that way.

Be willing to ***Re-Examine*** your ideas about your education, your vocation your social / relational network and yourself…

Realize that this is but a ***Small Step*** in the journey of a lifetime…Be patient, be persistent and be committed to learning and growth…

Preparation

Framing Question

Luke 6:41- 42

Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the *plank in your own eye?

How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,' when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

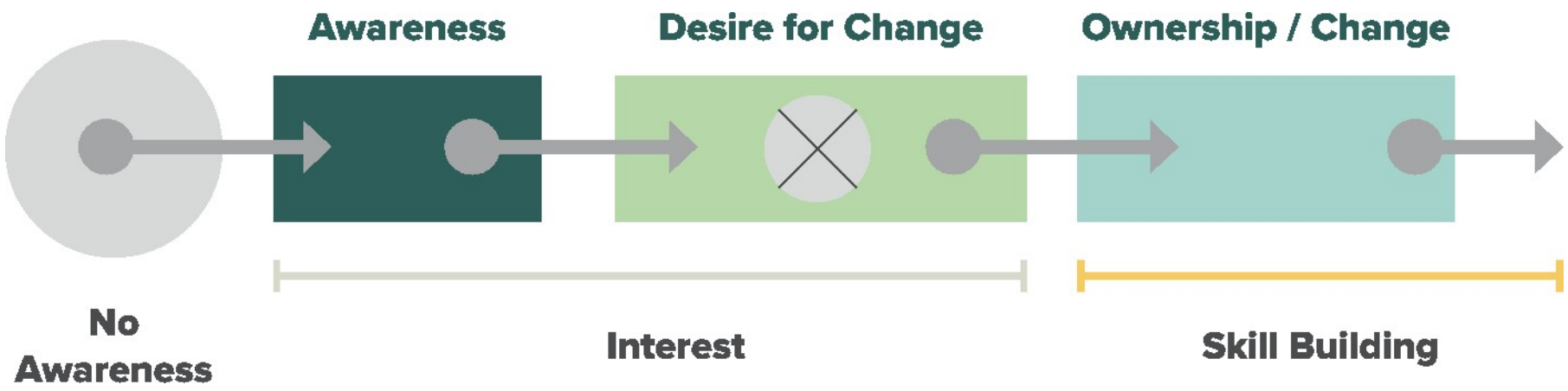
Learning Objectives

What do we want to do?

Help Participants:

- Better understand how the Legacy of Slavery in America shapes our biases and assumptions about poverty…
- Better understand how our biases and assumptions shape our social, political, and economic institutions…
- Better understand how our social, political, and economic institutions shaped how we live *(choices & behaviors)* in ways that perpetuate poverty and its harmful impacts on **All of Us…**
- Develop personal strategies that interrupt the perpetuation of poverty and its harmful impacts on **All of Us…**
- Develop organizational strategies that better serve people trapped in the social injustices that result from living in poverty…

Class Framework: Continuum of Growth and Change



(5) Questions to Growth & Change

1. What is the problem?
2. Why is it a problem?

3. Why is it my problem?
4. What can I do about it?

5. How do I get Started

Awareness / Interest

Skill Building

Desire for Change

Key Definitions

Poverty is a state or condition in which one lacks the usual or **socially** acceptable money or essential resources for a certain standard of living.

Race refers to the most general of genetically transmitted **physical** characteristics

Ethnicity a population, group or subgroup made up of people who share a **common** descent, cultural background or heritage.

Class a group of people sharing the same **socioeconomic** location (or status) in a societal context.

Culture is a set of ideas, values, attitudes, **beliefs** and behaviors shared by a group of people in a societal context

Racism is social, political and economic ideas, values, attitudes, beliefs and **behaviors** that perpetrate societal inequities based on the "race" of a human being.

Structural, Systemic, & Institutional Racism
The infusion and **normalization** of racism into our social political and economic institutions in ways that advantage one race to the detriment of others.

Whiteness & Blackness
Are social **constructions** (inventions) that normalize a set of social political economic ideas, values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors that promote White (lighter) skinned people as superior and Black (darker) skinned people are inferior in ways that advantage White (lighter) skinned individuals and groups.

Socialization
The shaping influence that a body of ideas, values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors has on an individual or group by the socially dominant group in a particular societal context.

***Social Location**
Your place or position in society as defined by your gender, race, social class, age, ability, religion, sexual orientation, and geographic location…

When, Where, to Whom you were born, or the Body you were born into … none of which you had any control over.

Privilege
Is a function of ***Social Location** which determines your access to the resources and opportunities necessary for achieving success in our socio-economic system AND…often insulates you from the impacts of most unjust and many just *(or deserved)* consequences that work against success in our socio-economic system.

Preparation

List (2) or more things that stood out to you from the **Social Location?** Why?

List (2) or more things stood out to you from the **Definition of Racism?** Why?

List (2) or more things stood out to you from the **Definition of Privilege?** Why?

Learning Activity *(Approximately 10 Mins)*

If/Then

This learning activity shows the connection between our understanding of the Key Definitions used in this class and our ability to address and resolve some of our own problem biases. Fill in the blanks below using the prompts below.

If we do not understand...	Then it leads to ...
Socialization	A failure to understand Social Location
Ethnicity	A failure to see our Common Struggle
Culture	A failure to understand our Social Biases
Race	A failure to see our Social Similarities
Institutional Racism	A failure to understand how Dominant Culture Works
Assimilation	A failure to understand how Cultural Influence Works
Privilege	A failure to understand our Social Advantages

Using the above grid, determine which of the terms best describes the scenarios below. Write the term in the blank space provided.

1. An American woman counsels a Somali woman to buy more flattering clothes for herself. **This is a failure to Understand_____ .**

2. Friends of a young born in Korea and raised in America wonder why she has no knowledge of her Korean heritage. **This is a failure to Understand_____ .**

3. An American business establishes an English Only policy and time off only for current American holidays. **This is a failure to understand_____ Racism .**

4. A Chinese child comes to the America and begins to take on the culture of Hip Hop. **This is an example of _____ .**

5. A Jewish American businessman establishes a business practice of dealing only with other Jewish American businessmen. **This is a failure to understand_____**

6. A prep school student gets an internship at a company owned by a family friend. **This is an example of _____ .**

7. A (White) single mother chooses not to attend a support group for single mothers led by an (Black) single mother.

This is a failure to understand their common _____ .

Personal Learning Objectives

The link to the **Class Two Video** is available in the **Virtual Classroom**

Take some time to clarify your own learning objectives for this class.

These may help to think about why you decided to take this class.

Were there experiences that helped to influence your decision to take this class? Is there something you hope to do with what you learn?

Make a list of 3-5 personal learning objectives you have for this class: