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Teaching While White: White Identity Development and Antiracism for Educators

Amber Mackenzie Taylor

University of San Francisco, akenzietaylor@gmail.com

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University of San Francisco

**Teaching While White:
White Identity Development and Antiracism for Educators**

A Field Project Presented to
The Faculty of the School of Education
International and Multicultural Education Department

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Masters of Arts in International and Multicultural Education

by
Amber Mackenzie Taylor
May 2017

**Teaching While White:
White Identity Development and Antiracism for Educators**

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTERS OF ARTS

in

INTERNATIONAL AND MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

by

Amber Mackenzie Taylor
Date Submitted April 2017

UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Under the guidance and approval of the committee, and approval by all the members, this field project has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree.

Approved:
Monisha Bajaj

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Dr. Monisha Bajaj

Date

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
List of Tables	iv
List of Figures	v
Acknowledgements	vi
Abstract	vii
Chapter I - Introduction	1
Statement of the Problem	2
Purpose of the Project	7
Theoretical Framework	10
Definition of Terms	16
Chapter II - Review of the Literature	20
Overview	21
Critical Race Theory and Whiteness	22
White Racial Identity Development	23
White Racial Conditioning	28
White Privilege	30
White Fragility	31
Silence and Silencing	32
Mindfulness and Antiracism	34
Summary	36
Chapter III - The Project and Its Development	37
Auto-Ethnography: The Positionality of the Researcher	37
Description of the Project	40
Development of the Project	41
Conference 1 - Teachers 4 Social Justice	47
Conference 2 - Honolulu International Conference on Education	53
Conference 3 - Symposium on Engaged Scholarship	60
Cross Event Analysis and Emergent Themes	68
Chapter IV - Conclusions and Recommendations	73
Outcomes Across Conferences	73
Alignment with Critical Race Theory	75
Recommendations for Further Development of the Curriculum	76
Next Steps in Presenting the Curriculum	78
Recommendations for White Identity Development and Antiracism	79

Recommendations for Educators Facilitating Discussions of Racism	80
Recommendations for Further Research	80
Conclusion	81
References	83
Appendixes	89

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Conference location, theme, audience, and logistics.	69
Table 2. Pre-workshop background information, across settings. Participants were asked to rate the following statements prior to participating in the workshop.	70
Table 3. Outcomes of the workshop, across settings. Participants were asked to respond to rate the following statements as a result of the workshop.	71
Table 4. Activity rating scale, across settings. Participants were asked to circle any parts of the training that they found particularly helpful.	72

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. The stages and phases of White racial identity development	23
Figure 2. Fluid and flexible statuses of White racial identity development	27
Figure 3. Pre-workshop background information, T4SJ	47
Figure 4. Outcomes of the workshop, T4SJ	48
Figure 5. Activity rating scale, T4SJ	49
Figure 6. Pre-workshop background information, HICE	53
Figure 7. Outcomes of the workshop, HICE	56
Figure 8. Activity rating scale, HICE	57
Figure 9. Pre-workshop background information, USF	63
Figure 10. Outcomes of the workshop, USF	64
Figure 11. Activity rating scale, USF	65

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

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WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

Abstract

This project explores the use of mindfulness in antiracist professional development for educators, documenting the development and implementation of workshop curriculum across three conference settings. The purpose of the project was to engage White educators in the important inner work of understanding White racial conditioning and actively challenging the institutional and structural racism inherent in our education system. Beginning with an understanding of race, racism and Critical Race Theory, the curriculum was designed to support White educators in developing their own racial identities to further their own personal development. The workshop focuses on White Identity development (Helms, 1990) to support participants in developing awareness of their own racial conditioning, introducing Whiteness Identity Development (Helms, 1990), White privilege (McIntosh, 1989), and White fragility (DiAngelo, 2011) while addressing common impacts of White racial conditioning - including silencing, colorblindness, color muteness, and the use of racially coded language. The curriculum explores concepts related to race and racism while offering mindfulness practice as a means of supporting self-reflection and skillful engagement with discomfort and difficult discussion. Participants were challenged to explore their own awareness of and role in addressing racism. Through this process White educators can begin to deconstruct racism in themselves and in the educational spaces where they work. It is only through this crucial *inner* work, that we as educators can begin the *outer* work of addressing “educational debt” (Ladson-Billings, 2006).

Keywords: White identity development, antiracism, mindfulness, education, professional development

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

Chapter I - Introduction

The number of students of color in U.S. classrooms is increasing, yet the vast majority of teachers are White. In 2011, 81.9% of teachers and 51.7% of students were White (US Department of Education, 2016). Yet, teacher education and pre-service training have done little to address this change in demographics. In popular culture and the media, films like *Dangerous Minds* (Simpson, Bruckheimer & Smith, 1995) and *Freedom Writers* (DeVito, Shamberg, Sher & LaGravenese, 2007) often perpetuate images of "cool" White educators using alternative teaching strategies to reach students of color. However, as Thomas (2007) argues "being 'cool' is not enough" (p. 62). "In order to challenge the dominating forces in our society we need to interrogate the way racism clandestinely creeps into our lives and our classrooms" (Thomas, 2007, p. 62).

White educators are rarely challenged to be critically self-reflective about the impact of our own racial conditioning in the classroom. We are not challenged to consider the ways in which our White racial identity impacts our teaching or our students. We do not study Whiteness, White cultural norms, or antiracism education. Without White racial identity development and antiracism education, White educators risk continuing racist educational practices and contributing to the maintenance of institutionalized racism in U.S. education.

As a White educator, a central question that guides this field project is: How can White educators best support one another in developing knowledge and becoming critically self-reflective about our racial identities and our pedagogical practices? Can professional development addressing race, racism, White racial identity, White racial conditioning, and antiracism help White educators respond differently to race and racism? Throughout this paper, I will capitalize White in order recognize Whiteness as a racial identity and draw attention to

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

Whiteness. Furthermore, I will use *we* and *our* when referring to White educators and White identity to acknowledge my own Whiteness, to reflect my participation in this work, and to express solidarity with White educators working toward racial justice.

Statement of the Problem

Historically, White privilege was used to justify the accumulation of wealth and property among an elite class, these wealthy White property owners founded the United States (Darder & Torres, 2004; McMorris, 1998). Throughout modern history racism has allowed White folks to accumulate wealth, power, and property from the possession and labor of People of Color. "The concept of race in the Western world stems from a need to justify two historical processes: first, the taking of land from indigenous peoples, and second, enslaving Africans to work the land" (McMorris, 1998, p. 704). These forms of oppression and appropriation are many and varied; from the literal occupation of land and the use of slave labor, to the commoditization of Black art and ideas by White artists and inventors (Lemke, 1998; Tate 2003). Racism has and continues to determine access to citizenship, property rights, access to education, and the likelihood of arrest and survival when encountering law enforcement (Alexander, 2012; Bonilla-Silva, 2014; DiAngelo, 2011, Mallett, 2015; Omi & Winant, 2014).

Race is not real, yet its impacts are undeniable. As Darder & Torres (2004) argue, "[r]ace has no scientific basis, yet racial categorization certainly foregrounds social structure and action. The majority of people in this country continue to believe that they belong to a specific race, and this has an impact on the way they conceive of their social identity" (p. 152). Living in the United States, we are each conditioned within these racial realities. Our identities are ascribed characteristics and interpreted through race, a process often called racing (Powell, 2012) or racialization (Darder & Torres, 2004).

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

Racialization is "a process by which populations are categorized and ranked on the basis of phenotypical traits or cultural signifiers" (Darder & Torres, 2004, p. 13). We learn to navigate structures, institutions, and interpersonal interactions according to these racialized identities. As Beverly Tatum (2001) so aptly explains:

Prejudice is one of the inescapable consequences of living in a racist society. Cultural racism - the cultural images and messages that affirm the assumed superiority of Whites and the assumed inferiority of people of color - is like a smog in the air. Sometimes it is so thick it is visible, other times it is less apparent, but always, day in and day out, we are breathing it. None of us would introduce ourselves as 'smog-breathers' (and most of us don't want to be described as prejudiced), but if we live in a smoggy place, how can we avoid breathing the air? (p. 102)

However, even acknowledging the ever-present role of racism remains controversial. "A liberal position on race and racism is that it is a horrible thing of the past that is now behind us and that we as a society can move past this history to have a truly color-blind society" (Oliva, et al. 2013, p. 141). Color-blind and post-racial ideologies serve to obscure current racial realities.

During Obama's presidency many would have had us believe we were living in a post-racial society (Vaught & Hernandez, 2013, p. 371). "[The term] Post-racial began to come into vogue after Obama won the Iowa caucuses and fared well in the New Hampshire primary" (Schorr, 2008, para.7). According to a bias survey conducted by MTV, "73% of millennials believe never considering race would improve society" (Dow, 2015). According to a CBS News Poll conducted in 2014, "60% of White Americans say race relations are 'generally good' " (Dow, 2015). However, as Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (2014) explained, "Obama's election did not

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

represent 'racial progress' or signified a rupture with either the racial order or the dominant racial ideology at play in the nation, namely, color-blind racism" (p. xiv).

Politicians continue to use racially coded language to mobilize voters, promote policies which will disproportionately impact communities of color, and summon race based fears to garner support among white voters (López, 2015). Throughout the 2016 election we saw the use of more overt racism, sexism, and bigotry as a means of mobilizing support for Donald Trump (López, 2015). Since the election we have seen drastic increases in hate crimes (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2016) and a re-emergence of more overt racism in politics (López, 2015; Searles, 2016). However, the majority of White folks in the United States have continued to distance themselves from individual racist acts, holding on to the illusion of color-blind politics. While a more thorough discussion of these events and their potential meaning are beyond the scope of this project, it is important to note that these events served as context to each of these presentations and may have impacted participants in the workshop.

Functioning in a racist society, members of the dominant group have the "luxury of obliviousness" (Johnson as cited in Whitley, 2006), that is, the privilege of not having to notice or acknowledge race and racism. As Whitley (2006) explains, "[w]hen individuals are part of the majority, their membership in the dominant group seems normal and natural and is often taken for granted ... Whites seldom consider the possibility that their race comes into play at all" (p. 13). It is often difficult for Whites to acknowledge the existence or presence of racism. This discomfort and confusion has been called both cognitive dissonance (Bell, 1995) and White fragility (DiAngelo, 2011). Cognitive dissonance refers to the psychological tension caused by information which contradicts current knowledge, previous experience or ways of thinking

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

(McFalls & Cobb-Roberts, 2001). "Because dissonance between opposing ideas is unpleasant, people are motivated to reduce the dissonance" (McFalls & Cobb-Roberts, 2001, p. 165).

For many White folks living in the United States, nearly all experiences with race cause cognitive dissonance. As Robin DiAngelo (2011) explains, "White people in North America live in a social environment that protects and insulates them from race-based stress" (p. 54). When encountering race, White folks seeking to reduce or avoid this stress. Common White responses to race and racism often include denial, deflecting, and minimizing. As Vodde (2001) argues "[i]f privilege is defined as a legitimization of one's entitlement to resources, it can also be defined as permission to escape or avoid any challenge to this entitlement" (Vodde as cited in DiAngelo, 2011, p. 65). These behaviors contribute to color-blindness, refusing to acknowledge an awareness of race and silencing discussions of race and racism. As a result, they serve to reinforce White privilege, White dominance, and White supremacy.

In the context of our society, racism has significant impacts on our education system. Racism has been normal, present, and acceptable in our education system for most of our recent American history. In over 380 years, since the first public school opened in the American Colonies in 1635, racial segregation has only been illegal in the United States for the past 62 years since *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954. In the past 62 years, we have seen a continued legacy of racism evidenced by re-segregation, the privatization and de-funding of urban schools, and the creation of the school to prison pipeline (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Darder, 2014; DiAngelo, 2011; Lipman, 2013; Mallett, 2015).

All educators, regardless of their race, are working in institutions which were designed to sustain the status quo. As critical pedagogy teaches us, schools "perpetuate or reproduce the social relationships and attitudes needed to sustain the existing dominant economic and class

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

relations of the larger society" (McLaren, 2009, p. 77). These social relationships and attitudes include socially constructed notions of race and White racial superiority. Thus, our education systems reproduce relationships of domination and suppression, supporting systems of White privilege and White supremacy.

Moreover, Whiteness is significantly overrepresented among educators. Not only are educators almost twice as likely as their students to be White (U.S. Department of Education, 2016), "Whiteness is the assumed norm" (Ochoa, 2014, para. 3). Further, "not acknowledging their racialized backgrounds makes it easier for White educators to ignore their racial privileges and the legacy of racism in the U.S" (Ochoa, 2014, para. 3). In spite of increasing diversity among students "even when whites are a small percentage of students, whiteness still dominates" (Ochoa, 2014, para. 1).

As Ladson-Billings (2006) argues in her article "From the Achievement Gap to the Education Debt: Understanding Achievement in U.S. Schools," the achievement gap is not an accurate representation of the discrepancies in academic achievement among different racial groups. Ladson-Billings (2013) argues that:

... our focus on the achievement gap is akin to a focus on the budget deficit, but what is actually happening to African American and Latina/o students is really more like the national debt. We do not have an achievement gap; we have an educational debt. (p. 5)

Historical and institutional racism have denied people of color access to culturally responsive high-quality education for generations (Gay, 2000). This educational debt is compounded with each generation.

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

Our public education system was designed to uphold and reproduce White cultural norms and promote assimilation (Freire, 2009; Giroux, 2003). For nearly 400 years it has continued to do just that, benefiting White students at the expense of students of color. Yet, in 2017 we seem to be in a critical moment (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012), the tides of public opinion may be turning toward a re-acknowledgement of racism in the dominant narrative. There is an increased visibility of police brutality toward and murder of black Americans in our news and social media (Chang, 2016). Young organizers have given voice to contemporary concerns through the Black Lives Matter movement (Chang, 2016). Public awareness may be shifting as well: according to a Washington Post poll in July of 2016, 63% of respondents stated that race relations in the United States are "generally bad" and 55% of respondents stated that race relations are "getting worse."

It is my hope that this moment offers an opportunity for educators to acknowledge the role of race in education and challenge our own racially biased practices. By creating communities of White educators engaged in the important inner work of understanding our own White racial conditioning and committed to actively challenging the institutional and structural racism inherent in our education system, I believe that White educators can begin to deconstruct racism in ourselves and in our schools. As we begin this important *inner* work, we as educators can also begin the crucial *outer* work of addressing this educational debt.

Purpose of the Project

I am a White educator. I am speaking from the belief that we, White folks, have the responsibility and the privilege of supporting one another in taking a more active and engaged stance in dismantling racism in our society, our institutions, and our schools. I entered into this work through participation in a 6-month course on Whiteness at the East Bay Meditation Center in Oakland, California. I approach this work as a practice and believe that there are no experts. I

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

hope that this workshop will allow me to partner with other White educators in this work and create community as we work to understand and engage in antiracist education. Throughout this project, I will endeavor to recognize my role in this work and my responsibility as a White educator. I will draw from my experience working to understand my racial identity, navigating my race in the classroom, and moving toward antiracism in my life and in my role as an educator.

I believe we must work to developing our own racial identities and to develop communities of White educators practicing antiracism. As Thomas (2007) states, "... we need to interrogate our own racial and class privilege before we can effectively function in an increasingly diverse classroom where the teacher is almost always White" (p. 147). It is crucial that we begin to understand the ways in which our Whiteness affected our experiences in school and the ways in which it could be impacting our students. As Rocío Inclán, director of human and civil rights at the National Education Association, explains, "[i]f you are not aware of your own personal biases ... then you lose the kids on a personal level and you can lose them in academics as well" (as cited in Rich, 2016, para. 20). Finally, we must learn about our racial conditioning to address our own cognitive dissonance and White fragility, and respond skillfully to race and racism. As DiAngelo (2011) explains, "it is critical that all White people build the stamina to sustain conscious and explicit engagement with race" (p. 66).

The purpose of the project is to create and present a workshop that will offer a safe space for White educators to begin this work by examining and confronting our own racist conditioning in order to move toward antiracism in our schools. According to all measures, student diversity is significantly greater than teacher diversity; and diversity and inequality among students is growing (US Department of Education, 2016). Given the significant

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

overrepresentation of White educators, it is crucial that we become part of the solution to addressing racial inequality in education. We must also explore ways to support White educators in developing an understanding of race, racism, and their own racial identities. Like Vaso Thomas (2007), I was inspired by critical race theorists to believe that we must understand our own racial identity and racial privilege in order to teach effectively (Thomas, 2007, p. 147). In this project I will reflect on my own White racial identity as I create and present workshop curriculum and materials to address White racial identity and racial inequality in our schools.

My goal in developing this curriculum is to support White educators in developing their own racial identities to further their own personal development; develop awareness of racism in our educational institutions; develop strategies to stay present with discussion of race and racism (to avoid silencing); to begin to develop skillful means of responding to race and racism (to avoid reinforcing White supremacy); and ultimately, to begin working toward active anti-racist behavior in our schools and our communities (to avoid maintaining white-normative expectations and perpetuating pro-white bias).

The curriculum will teach concepts related to race and racism while offering mindfulness practice as a means of supporting self-reflection and skillful engagement with discomfort and difficult discussion. The workshop will focus on the inner personal work of White educators to cultivate awareness of racial injustice. The curriculum will address the structural realities of racism in the American educational system (Ladson-Billings, 2006) and will build on the theoretical frameworks of Critical Race Theory (Brown & Jackson, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2013) and racism (Tatum, 2001) in the United States. I will discuss White Identity development (Helms, 1990) and will work to support participants as they build awareness of their own racial conditioning. I will introduce the concepts of Whiteness (Helms, 1990), White privilege

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

(McIntosh, 1989), White fragility (DiAngelo, 2011) and our notions of the “good” White self (DiAngelo, 2011). I will address common impacts of our White racial conditioning - including silencing (Castagno, 2008), colorblindness (López, 2015), color muteness (Pollock, 2009), and racially coded language (DiAngelo, 2011). Participants will be invited to explore their own awareness of and role in addressing racism.

Workshop participants will be encouraged to develop awareness of race and racism in the United States and explore their own racial identities and racial conditioning. Throughout this project I will offer the practice of mindfulness as a means of engaging with racism (Berila, 2016; Lueke & Gibson, 2015; Magee, 2015; Orr, 2002) and will explore ways of working with challenging emotions that arise when we address the racism we encounter in ourselves, in our colleagues, at the institutions where we work, and in our daily lives as educators. Participants will have opportunities to practice the use of mindfulness to stay present with racism, and participate in role-play to practice the use of skillful means of responding to racism. Finally, participants will be offered a space to consider next steps in working toward anti-racist behaviors and practices.

Theoretical Framework

In order to begin a discussion around race and racism, we must first have a shared understanding of race. Race is a socially constructed system of categorizing human beings based on physical appearance. In 1998, the American Anthropological Association (AAA) made a statement on race explaining that:

In the United States both scholars and the general public have been conditioned to viewing human races as natural and separate divisions within the human species based on visible differences. With the vast expansion of scientific knowledge in

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

this century, however, it has become clear that human populations are not unambiguous, clearly demarcated, biologically distinct groups. Evidence from the analysis of genetics (e.g.; DNA) indicates that most physical variation, about 94% lies within so-called racial groups. Conventional geographic 'racial' groupings differ from one another only in about 6% of their genes. (AAA, 1998, para. 1)

Historically race emerged in the 17th century with usage increasing in the early 18th century (Smedley & Smedley, 2005, p. 19). "The fabrication of a new type of categorization for humanity was needed because the leaders of the American colonies at the turn of the 18th century had deliberately selected Africans to be permanent slaves" (Smedley & Smedley, 2005, p. 19).

Racism has been used throughout the history of the United States in order to justify and support the accumulation of wealth and property among Whites: "economic exploitation has always been central to the emergence of racism" (Darder & Torres, 2004, p. 154). From slavery centuries ago to predatory lending practices today, racism has allowed for the accumulation of wealth among Whites at the expense of People of Color (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; DiAngelo, 2011). The need for labor and the creation of racial categorizes was followed by the development of racialized science and public policy, defending the need for racism and embedding racism in our laws and institutions (DiAngelo, 2011; Omi & Winant, 2014).

Racism is often described as prejudice plus power. Racism is a system of racial domination and oppression. As DiAngelo (2012) explains:

In the United States the dominant group is White, therefore racism is White racial and cultural prejudice and discrimination, supported intentionally or unintentionally by

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

institutional power and authority, and used to the advantage of Whites and the disadvantage of people of color. (p. 87)

It is crucial that we understand racism as a system of power and privilege. Racism operates on many levels: structural, institutional, and cultural (Bonilla-Silva, 1997; Vaught & Castagno, 2008). While prejudice may be demonstrated in interpersonal interactions between people of any race, only Whites have the systemic power to demonstrate racism (DiAngelo, 2011). "Racism is deeply embedded in the fabric of our society. It is not limited to a single act or a single person" (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 88). Like Robin DiAngelo (2012) notes, "when I say [from an antiracist perspective] that only Whites can be racist, I mean that in the United States, only Whites have collective social and institutional power and privilege over people of color" (p. 89).

Over the past 50 years, scholars have begun to address racism including critical legal studies, Critical Race Theory, and the resulting study of whiteness. In the 1970s a movement emerged among legal scholars seeking to "expose and challenge the view that legal reasoning was neutral, value-free, and unaffected by social and economic relations, political forces, or cultural phenomena" (Brown & Jackson, 2013, p. 12). The critical legal studies (CLS) movement was initially led by "predominantly White neo-Marxist, New Left, and counter-culturalist intellectuals" (Brown & Jackson, 2013, p. 12). In the 1980s, Critical Race Theory (CRT) emerged "out of a sense that, while CLS had developed some very significant insights about how the legal process worked, the movement did not adequately address the struggles of people of color, particularly blacks" (Brown & Jackson, 2013, p. 13). In the summer of 1989, critical race scholars met in Madison, Wisconsin (Brown & Jackson, 2013, p. 9). CRT scholars focused on racial inequity, seeking to understand "how a regime of White supremacy and its subordination of people of color had been created and maintained in America" (Brown & Jackson, 2013, p. 14).

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

In the early 1990s scholars began to take up an exploration of Critical Race Theory in education, examining the role of racial inequity in education (Ladson-Billings, 2013). Critical Race scholars Delgado and Stefanic (2012) outlined the following tenets or hallmarks of CRT: (1) a belief that racism is "normal, not aberrant, in US society" (Ladson-Billings, 2013, p. 37), (2) a belief in interest convergence, (3) a belief that race is socially constructed, (4) a belief in intersectionality, and (5) a belief in the importance of voice and counter-narrative (Ladson-Billings, 2013, p. 37). Critical race theorists argue that racism is normal in U.S. society, as Hochschild (1984) explains "liberal democracy and racism in the United States are historically, even inherently, reinforcing; American society as we know it exists only because of its foundation in racially based slavery, and it thrives only because racial discrimination continues" (Hochschild as cited in Ladson-Billings, 2013, p. 37).

In this project, I approach race and racism through Critical Race Theory. Many scholars studying Whiteness were inspired by Critical Race Theory, as demonstrated by the development of WhiteCrit (Yosso, 2005). As Leonardo explains, "White people must ground their practical self-work in Critical Race scholarship because it poses essential questions to White people engaging race" (Leonardo as cited in Utt & Tochluk, 2016, p. 4). I will include Critical Race Theory within the curriculum and work to promote an understanding of the tenets of CRT in the workshop. In order for participants to begin to consider the impacts of racism in our society they must understand that "racism is not some random, isolated act of individuals behaving badly. Rather, to a CRT scholar racism is the normal order of things in US society" (Ladson-Billings, 2013, p. 37). I will also work to infuse an understanding of Derrick Bell's (1995) radical realism, urging that we accept the permanence of racism in U.S. society. It is crucial that we begin by accepting these historical realities before attempting to challenge them.

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

In the United States today many White folks believe that racism is in the past. "Yet racial disparity between Whites and people of color continues to exist in every institution across society, and in many cases is *increasing* rather than decreasing" (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 89). These disparities are apparent throughout health, economics, wealth, criminal justice, and education (DiAngelo, 2011). As discussed above, schools as institutions are responsible for reproducing the status quo (McLaren, 2009). Cultural norms and expectations in our schools are based on White dominant culture, as a result "[m]ost individuals from White ethnic groups have experienced learning that is grounded in their own cultural norms" (Chávez & Guido-DiBrito, 1999, p. 45).

Educators tend to reproduce the systems and structures in which they learned and were trained. "Feelings of comfort and 'rightness' for many educators are likely to mean that they have created learning environments based on their own cultural norms ..." (Chávez & DiBrito, 1999, p. 45). The reproduction of White cultural norms in the classroom is demonstrated in the omission of non-dominant narratives and counterstories (Ladson-Billings, 2013. p. 41-43) and the hidden curriculum (McLaren, 2009). The use of White-normative curriculum and discipline standards maintain White-normative concepts of scholarship, dialogue and behavior (Emdin, 2016). The racist consequences of these practices are seen in the "achievement gap" as well as discrepancies in student referral to special education and graduation rates. These racist practices are then codified in behavior expectations and discipline practices, the racist implications of which are seen in the impacts of zero-tolerance discipline policies and the school to prison pipeline (Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Darder, 2014; DiAngelo, 2011; Lipman, 2013; Mallett, 2016).

In response to these discrepancies, we have seen the development of deficit thinking. Just as race science evolved to support the inferiority of Black Americans during slavery, social sciences evolved to support the inherent school failure of students of color. Ideas like the

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

"culture of poverty" (Au, 2014, p. 175) developed, which argue that students of color lack the intellectual ability and cultural knowledge to be successful in school. This type of deficit thinking argues that students are to blame for their own individual lack of success, without taking into account the systemic and institutional racism which has caused communities of color to be impoverished. We must instead consider the history of oppression and exclusion of people of color which caused this educational debt (Ladson-Billings, 2006).

This project will build upon the "belief that racism is normal or ordinary, not aberrant, in U.S. society" (Ladson-Billings, 2013, p. 37) and the belief that White cultural norms are embedded in our education system (Donnor, 2013). At the foundation of this project is the belief that:

[E]ducators must continually reflect on the influence of the relationship between their own racial and ethnic identity and how they define an effective learning environment and a successful learner. Feelings of comfort and 'rightness' for many educators are likely to mean that they have created a learning environment based on their own cultural norms rather than on a multicultural learning framework. (Chávez & Guido-DiBrito, 1999, p. 45)

To begin this work, I will draw on Helms' (1997) statuses of White identity development as a framework for White identity development and DiAngelo's (2011) work on White fragility.

Building on this theoretical framework the curriculum will address five key ideas inspired by the construction of race and Critical Race Theory in order to address racism and White antiracism in education. These concepts include: (1) understanding racism in the United States (Tatum, 2001); (2) exploring racism in our education system (Ladson-Billings,

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

2006); (3) understanding White identity development (Helms, 1990); (4) examining White racial conditioning and White fragility (DiAngelo, 2011); and (5) the use of mindfulness and compassion to sustain us in this work (Berila, 2016; Magee, 2016). These concepts will be further explored in the literature review (Chapter 2).

Definition of Terms

The following terms will be used throughout this project:

Antiracism - antiracism is defined through opposition to racism. In this project antiracism will be used to refer to behaviors which actively countering or challenging racism. Like the term, allyship, it is important that we conceptualize antiracism as an active process, not an identity, i.e. antiracism for educators not antiracist educators.

Bias - bias is defined as "an inclination of temperament or outlook; especially: a personal and sometimes unreasoned judgment" (Dictionary, 2002). In discussing racism bias refers to our thoughts or tendencies. Bias is often used as a less charged term for prejudices. In this project we will focus on awareness and exploration of our own biases, including implicit or unrecognized biases.

Cognitive dissonance - cognitive dissonance is a psychological term referring to the tension, stress, or disorientation caused when faced with information which conflicts with your prior knowledge. Critical race scholar, Derrick Bell (1995) suggests that cognitive dissonance occurs when encountering a racial experience that differs from your own.

'Good' white self - the term 'good' white self refers to the modern colorblind construction of race which teaches us that racism is something that 'bad' people do, conceptualizing racism as individual actions and interactions. This creates a binary of 'good' White people who do not actively engage in racist behavior versus 'bad' White people who are actively racist. This binary

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

allows 'good' White people to distance themselves from racism without actively participating in antiracism.

Mindfulness - mindfulness is a secular practice of meditation, inspired by the Buddhist tradition of mindfulness meditation. Mindfulness is a state of kind or nonjudgmental awareness. Through the practice of mindfulness one cultivates an ability to be present in the current moment without judgment. This project explores recent research suggesting that mindfulness practice helps decrease bias (Lueke & Gibson, 2015, p. 284).

Race - race is a socially constructed system of categorizing people according to physical characteristics. While not based on scientific fact, race has become a very powerful construction within the United States, impacting the ways that we think about and behave toward one another.

Racial conditioning - racial conditioning is the ways in which we are taught to think about one another based on race. It can be difficult for White folks in the United States to become aware of their racial conditioning since White cultural norms are affirmed and upheld as normal and neutral. In this project we will specifically consider the ways in which White folks are conditioned to respond to race and racism, including denial, avoidance, silence and silencing.

Racialization - racialization is the process through which race is applied. Racialization can refer to the application of race to a range of topics for example, scholars might consider the ways in which housing is impacted by race or the racialization of housing. Racialization can also refer to the ways in which an individual's appearance or identity is given meaning through the use of race, for example, the process of defining the Irish first as "other" then as White. In this project we will consider the ways in which Whiteness interacts with racialization.

Racing - racing refers to the process through which race is projected onto individuals. Powell (2012) argues that the construction and application of race is an active process through

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

which race is applied to an individual. In this project we will seek to understand race and racial identity as active and ongoing.

Racism - racism is defined as "a belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race" (Dictionary, 2002). Racism unfairly privileges White folks at the expense of People of Color. In the United States, racism is often conceptualized as an attitude or action occurring at an individual or interpersonal level. However, racism as a complex system of power and privilege permeating throughout our culture, structures, and institutions (DiAngelo, 2016, p. 191).

Whiteness - Whiteness has historically been defined through exclusion, Whites are those who are not People of Color. Whiteness is also defined through opposition, Whiteness versus Blackness. In the United States, Whiteness has been constructed as normal and neutral.

White fragility - White fragility is "a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable" (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 247). DiAngelo argues that White folks in the United States are insulated from race and racism, resulting in White fragility. In this project we will explore mindfulness as a means to become aware of and respond skillfully to White fragility.

White privilege - White privilege refers to the unearned privileges given to White folks based on their race. White privilege includes lack of awareness of one's racial identity and the ability to escape or avoid conversations about race and racism. In this project we will explore our own White privilege and the ways in which it impacts our awareness of and response to race and racism.

White savior complex - White savior complex refers to the belief among White folks that they are uniquely able to solve the world's problems. White savior complex embodies continued

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

dynamics of patriarchal imperialist relationships expressed through White settler colonialism.

White savior complex is often used to refer to White folks working with communities of color believing that their work will improve the community or that they will be able to save people from the community. In this project I use White savior complex to problematize my interactions with communities of color, studying international development and teaching students of color.

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

Chapter II - Literature Review

Too often in the United States, White educators are invited to participate in diversity training or multiculturalism for the benefit of people of color. Liberal White educators are often committed to undertaking this work in an attempt to better meet the needs of their students. Like Utt and Tochluk (2016), I assert that "White teachers in urban schools must turn their racialized focus away from implied deficits of students of Color in the 'achievement gap' frame and toward the impact their racial identities have on their craft" (p. 1). However, I object to the notion that this work applies only White teachers in urban schools; instead, I argue that White teachers everywhere must undertake this crucial inner work. Calls for diversity and multiculturalism in education are often approached through the White dominant narrative, portraying Whiteness as normal / neutral. This framework maintains the role of the White educator as the benefactor, the savior (Cammarota, 2011; Cole, 2012; Straubhaar, 2015). White folks must undertake racial justice work not as an act of charity but as an act of liberation (Edwards, 2006).

Throughout this project, I use the term White folks to refer to people classified racially or perceived to be White, those who are over-privileged in our society and who benefit from contemporary and historical racism in the United States. The use of the term White folks also refers to *The Ways of White Folks* in which Langston Hughes (1934) chronicled race and race relations in the United States. As Emdin explains in his book *To White Folks Who Teach in the Hood ... and the Rest of Y'all Too*, "the term White folks is an obvious racial classification, but it also identifies a group that is associated with power and the use of power to disempower others" (2016, p. 15). In using the term White folks, I ask that White readers engage with me to reflect on our association with Whiteness, power, and privilege, as well as the use of Whiteness to

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

oppress and dehumanize.

I seek to name my own Whiteness and directly address my roles as a White educator, scholar and researcher. I use *we*, *our*, and *us* to take ownership of my Whiteness and to express solidarity with those White educators undertaking the work of anti-racism. Through this language I hope to offer community for the White reader seeking to begin this work. I have carefully considered each use in hopes of both building community for White folks and speaking inclusively for all readers, wherever possible.

As White educators, we must interrogate our own racial identities *not* because we are teaching students of color, but because we are White. While this work may benefit students of color, it is crucial that we begin to undertake this work not as an act of charity but as an act of liberation. We White folks must begin to understand race and racism in order to liberate ourselves from the continuing harm and dehumanization caused by our complicity in oppressive structures and institutions. We must look inward, developing our own racial identities and developing communities of White educators engaged in antiracism, in order to liberate ourselves from the pain and privilege of racism.

Overview

As discussed in chapter one, I will build upon the tenets of Critical Race Theory, especially “the notion that racism is not some random, isolated act of individuals behaving badly. Rather to a CRT scholar racism is the normal order of things in US society” (Ladson-Billings, 2013, p. 37). I believe that White cultural norms are embedded in our education system and that White educators must remain critically self-reflective in order to move toward anti-racism. As Chávez and Guido-DiBrito (1999) explain, “[f]eelings of comfort and 'rightness' for many educators are likely to mean that they have created a learning environment based on their own

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

cultural norms rather than on a multicultural learning framework" (p. 45).

I hope that this curriculum will support White educators in this crucial reflection and in building stamina to address race. As DiAngelo (2011) explains, "it is critical that all White people build the stamina to sustain conscious and explicit engagement with race" (p. 66). To begin this work, I draw on Helms' (1997) statuses of White identity development as framework for White identity development and DiAngelo's (2011) work on White fragility.

This project explores racism in the United States through a Critical Race lens, understanding that racism has significantly impacted access to and quality of education for people of color. I argue that the resulting disparities in academic achievement cannot be accurately described as an achievement gap, but should instead be understood as an educational debt (Ladson-Billings, 2006). I will work to support educators in developing an understanding of Whiteness, White racial identity (Helms, 1990), White racial conditioning and White fragility (DiAngelo, 2011). These concepts will be used along with a practice of mindfulness and compassion to support participants in moving toward antiracism (Berila, 2016; Magee, 2015; Orr, 2002).

Critical Race Theory and Whiteness

As discussed in chapter one, this project holds a critical race lens, thus, it is important to understand the theoretical journey from Critical Race Theory to Whiteness. Race in the United States was constructed as a binary, White vs. Black, or Non-Black vs. Black. Whiteness was constructed as the antithesis of Blackness and Blackness as all that is not White. Throughout U.S. history, racial development has defined and redefined European immigrants within a pan-White identity. White ethnic groups including Jewish, Eastern European, and Irish, were first seen to be "other" and only later redefined as white. These White ethnic groups were racialized

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

as White to protect the needs of the wealthy (Omi & Winant, 2014).

Despite the violent often deadly history of racialization in the United States, it was not until the Civil Rights Movement that scholars began to name and analyze these longstanding practices of racialization. "Theories and models of Black racial identity began to appear in the counseling psychology and psychotherapy literature around the early 1970s in response to the Civil Rights Movement of the era" (Helms, 1990, p. 9). Black racial identity models "were state models in which theorists proposed that individuals could potentially move from least healthy, White-defined stages of identity, to most healthy, self-defined racial transcendence" (Helms, 1990, p. 17). William Cross' (1971, 1978, 1986) models of Black and White racial identity were amended by Helms and her colleagues (Helms, 1990, p. 19) in the 1980s.

White Racial Identity Development

Janet Helms' (1984, 1990, 1995) theory of White Identity Development "envisions a developmental process (defined by a series of stages or statuses) through which Whites can move to recognize and abandon their privilege" (Diller, 2013, p. 81). She presents two phases of White Racial Identity Development: phase one, the abandonment of racism; and phase two, defining a nonracist White identity. Within these phases Helms provides six stages of identity development: (1) contact, (2) disintegration, (3) reintegration, (4) pseudo-integration, and (5) immersion/emersion, and (6) autonomy. A diagram of the stages and phases of White Racial Identity Development (Helms, 1990, p. 56) is shown below:

Phase 1: Abandonment of Racism	Phase 2: Defining a Nonracist White Identity
Stage 1: Contact	Stage 4: Pseudo-Independence
Stage 2: Disintegration	Stage 5: Immersion / Emersion
Stage 3: Reintegration	Stage 6: Autonomy

Figure 1. The stages and phases of White Racial Identity Development (Helms, 1990, p. 56)

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

Helms' six stages of White Racial Identity Development offer a framework for understanding how Whites might think about race and racism. It is my hope that by understanding these statuses in our own development and considering the identity statuses of those around us we might more skillfully engage in conversations about race and racism. Thus, I would like to offer an introduction to each of these six stages.

In Helms' first phase, abandonment of racism, an individual might experience three stages of identity development: contact, disintegration, and reintegration. (1) The contact stage is marked by obliviousness about race. "A person in the Contact stage typically approaches the world with a color-blind or cultureless perspective and general naiveté about how race and racism impact on herself or himself as well as other people" (Helms, 1990, p. 68). Color-blindness refers to the idea that one does not see race. Color-blindness has been co-opted by conservative politicians and policy makers since the Civil Rights Movement in an effort to undermine race-based affirmative action and dismantle legal protections put in place during the 1960s. Color-blindness implies that universal programs put in place will benefit everyone equally and discourages direct discussion of race. This approach does not take into account historical or political racism and falsely equates equal opportunity with equality. Color-blindness and post-racialism remain popular among both liberals and conservatives, resting on a comforting illusion that racism is a thing of the past (Bonilla-Silva, 2014). In this project we will work to move away from color-blind practices to acknowledge race and racism.

According to Helms (1990) the next stage of White identity development is disintegration, in this phase White folks might struggle to accept the implications of being White in our society as they wrestle with shame and guilt. (2) The disintegration stage is marked by disorientation and anxiety surrounding race.

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

During this stage, the person may feel caught between White and Black culture, oppression and humanity. On the one hand, she or he does not want to assume responsibility for discrimination by acknowledging his or her Whiteness and the benefits that result therefrom; on the other hand, because one and (usually) one's social environment are not Black, one cannot identify entirely with Blacks or Black culture. (Helms, 1990, p. 68)

In this phase White folks might avoid discussion of race or contact with people of color, continuing color-blind practices to protect the "good White self."

In the third stage, nearing what Helms calls the abandonment of racism, White folks might cling to familiar racial conditioning and privilege. As Helms explains, (3) the reintegration stage is marked by feelings of superiority around race, "idealization of everything perceived to be White and denigration of everything thought to be Black. Anger covertly or overtly expressed as well as projections of one's feelings characterize the person in this stage" (Helms, 1990, p. 68). In this stage White folks might make a final attempt to justify the power and privilege given to them throughout their lives through race-based systems of domination and White privilege.

In Helms' second phase, defining a non-racist identity, an individual might experience three more stages of identity development. These stages represent attempts to understand and accept the impacts of race and racism in our society. In this phase of White identity development, color-blindness and racial conditioning become more conscious and less significant in shaping one's interactions with people of color and one's engagement with race.

First, (4) the pseudo-independence stage represents movement past shame and guilt, allowing for moments of acceptance. As Helms (1990) explains, this stage is marked by an "internalization of Whiteness and capacity to recognize personal responsibility to ameliorate the

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

consequences of racism. The person has an understanding of Black culture and the unfair benefits of growing up White in the United States" (Helms, 1990, p. 68). In this stage one might be more open to discussions about race, historical racism, and race-based discrepancies in U.S. society today. One might experience less cognitive dissonance and a greater ability to think clearly about race.

Next, one might experience (5) the emersion stage, shifting one's focus from racism to Whiteness, beginning to study Whiteness and the stories of Whites working toward antiracism.

Often such a person will immerse herself or himself in biographies and autobiographies of Whites who have made similar identity journeys. He or she may participate in White consciousness-raising groups whose purpose is to help the person discover her or his individual self-interest in abandoning racism and acknowledging a White racial identity. Changing Black people is no longer the focus of her or his activities, but rather the goal of changing White people becomes more salient. (Helms, 1990, p. 62)

The immersion/emersion stage is marked by an understanding of privilege. One might become involved in organizations focused on White anti-racism, i.e. Standing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) or attend the White Privilege Conference (DiAngelo, 2016, p. 337-338).

Finally, (6) the autonomy stage is marked by a "bicultural or racially transcendent worldview. He or she has internalized a positive, nonracist White identity, values cultural similarities and differences, feels a kinship with people regardless of race, and seeks to acknowledge and abolish racial oppression" (Helms, 1990, p. 68). In this stage one might begin to move toward allyship: partnering with organizations and people of color to address racial justice; feeling more confident participating in conversations about race across racial categories.

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

However, it is important to remember that Helms did not propose these stages as linear or fixed, but shifting over time and dependent upon context. In more recent publications, Helms (1995) emphasizes the use of status rather than stage to support an understanding of the fact that we might each identify with any number of different statuses depending on context. Thus, I proposed the following figure as a reconceptualization of these fluid and flexible status of White Racial Identity Development.

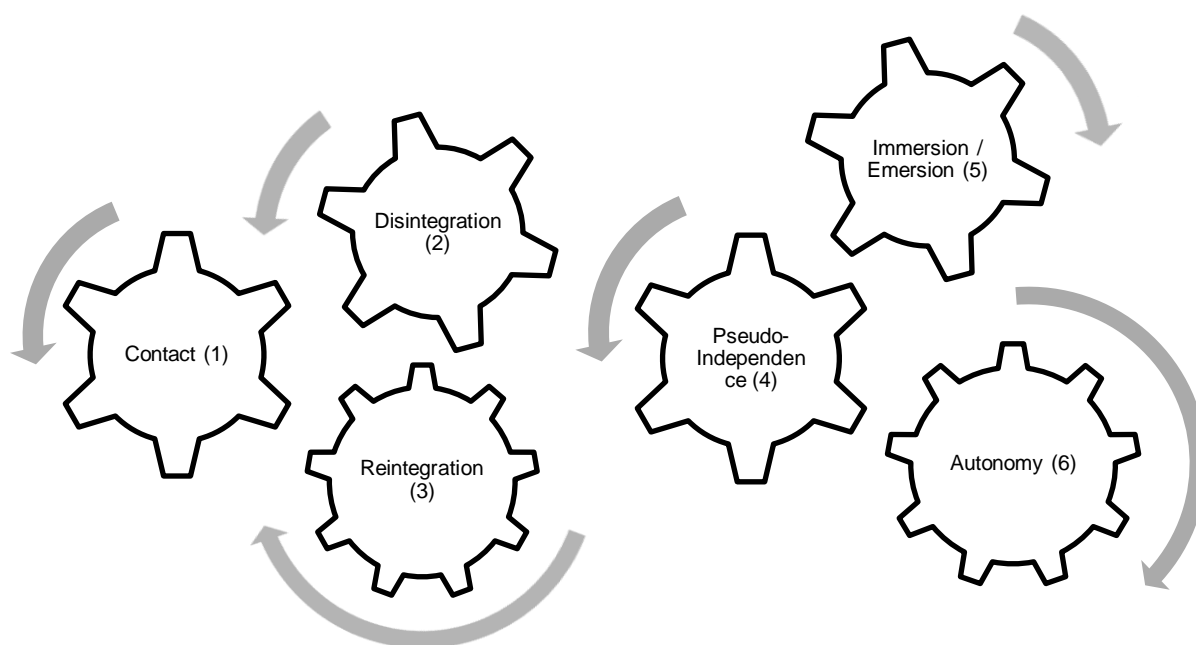


Figure 2. Fluid and Flexible Statuses of White Racial Identity Development (Adapted from Helms, 1995)

Thus, we must also consider other factors impacting our racial identities and behaviors, including White racial conditioning and White fragility, as well as the resulting experiences and behaviors. Helms' statuses of White racial identity development provide a crucial context for understanding White identity and White racial conditioning. In addition to this theoretical framework Helms also developed a White Racial Identity Inventory; these statuses and the inventory have since been used to examine race-based fear (Siegel & Carter, 2014), predict

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

awareness of White privilege (Hays, Chang, & Havice, 2008) and much more.

Each of us enters into this work in different statuses of White racial identity development and these statuses change over time and through context. In this project I will also propose the use of mindfulness as a means of becoming aware of our White racial conditioning, being present with the discomfort that arises, and learning to respond more skillfully to our own racial conditioning and racism.

White Racial Conditioning

Racial conditioning refers to the ways in which we are conditioned to behave and respond based on our prescribed racial identities. In the United States, race has been constructed as a binary between black and White. Society projects racial identities on us based on physical attributes or characteristics, Powell (2012) calls this process "racing." Throughout history race and racism have been used as tools of oppression for the accumulation and protection of wealth, power, and privilege. "When individuals are part of the majority, their membership in the dominant group seems normal and natural and is often taken for granted ... Whites seldom consider the possibility that their race comes into play at all" (Whitley, 2006, p. 13). This obliviousness to the presence of race and racism is a fundamental part of White racial conditioning in the United States. The "luxury of obliviousness" (Johnson as cited in Whitley, 2006, p. 15) allows White folks to avoid seeing, experiencing, or addressing race or racism in everyday life.

White racial conditioning serves to maintain the status quo, supporting societal norms and institutions which over-privilege Whites. Beverly Tatum (2001) explains using the analogy of a moving walkway:

I sometimes visualize the ongoing cycle of racism as a moving walkway at the

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

airport. Active racist behavior is equivalent to walking fast on the conveyor belt. The person engaged in active racist behavior has identified with the ideology of White supremacy and is moving with it. Passive racist behavior is equivalent to standing still on the walkway. No overt effort is being made, but the conveyor belt moves the bystanders along to the same destination as those who are actively walking. Some of the bystanders may feel the motion of the conveyor belt, see the active racists ahead of them, and choose to turn around, unwilling to go to the same destination as the White supremacists. But unless they are walking actively in the opposite direction at a speed faster than the conveyor belt - unless they are actively antiracist - they will find themselves carried along with the others. (p. 104)

As Tatum points out, we may or may not feel the motion of the conveyor belt; we may or may not recognize the role of race in our institutions or our interpersonal interactions, depending on the status of our White racial identity development (Helms, 1990). In addition, this passage illustrates how turning toward antiracism is counter to our White racial conditioning.

The concept of White racial conditioning also begins to illustrate ways in which White cultural norms are asserted and reasserted as societal norms through social interactions with White systems, White institutions, White corporations, and White people. For example, White cultural norms are reproduced in our schools as behavioral expectations. Students are expected to use White social norms for classroom conversation—including volume, vocabulary, grammar and sentence structure, and conversational turn-taking when speaking, to name a few (Utt & Tochuk, 2016). This assertion of White cultural practices as the norm often occurs unconsciously among White educators and among educators of color who have been socialized

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

to teach in White dominated schools and institutions (Emdin, 2016). Again, in order to effectively address race and racism in our schools, we must first look deeply at our own racial conditioning (Leonardo & Boas, 2013).

White Privilege

Growing out of Critical Race Theory, "Whiteness Studies has emerged as an interdisciplinary intellectual project aiming to unmask the power and structural advantages associated with Whiteness as a social identity and location" (Bonds & Inwood, 2016, p. 717). In 1988, Peggy McIntosh popularized the concept of White privilege using the analogy of an "invisible knapsack." In her writing, White Privilege is presented as a list of concrete individual benefits given to White folks which are meant to remain unseen. More recently, the merits of McIntosh's work on White privilege has been questioned. Two main critiques have emerged: (1) focusing on White privilege can mean that we are focusing on interpersonal racism rather than systemic or cultural racism and (2) focusing on privilege can fall short of acknowledging White supremacy or White domination. (Bonds & Inwood, 2016; Lensire, et al. 2013)

In this project I use the concept of White privilege to help participants understand that race affects each of us in small and large ways on a daily basis and that White privilege often impacts our ability to acknowledge and address racism. Johnson (2006, p. 22) calls it the "luxury of obliviousness" (Johnson as cited in Whitley, 2006). White privilege often means that White folks do not have to acknowledge their race; as stated earlier, in the United States Whiteness is culturally constructed as normal or neutral. As McIntosh (1989) explains, being White affords us any number of unearned (and unseen) privileges. Beyond recognizing the racial privilege of Whiteness, we must also examine the ways in which privilege is powerful. "If privilege is defined as a legitimization of one's entitlement to resources, it can also be defined as permission

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

to escape or avoid any challenge to this entitlement” (Vodde as cited in DiAngelo, 2011, p. 65).

The purpose of this project is to design a workshop which invites White educators to acknowledge their privilege and relinquish their ability to escape and avoid.

White Fragility

The first challenge that we face in this process is our own White fragility, "a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable" (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 247). The term White Fragility was first introduced by Robin DiAngelo in 2011. As discussed above, “[w]hite people in North America live in a social environment that protects and insulates them from race-based stress” (DiAngelo, 2011). Thus, White folks do not typically develop a capacity to see and engage with issues of race and racism in our society. Robin DiAngelo (2011) uses the phrase White fragility to describe Whites’ lack of capacity to cope with race-based stress.

White Fragility is a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate White racial equilibrium. (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 54)

As DiAngelo explains "[r]acial stress results from an interruption to what is racially familiar" (2011, p.57). An interruption is something that disrupts or challenges the social construct of Whiteness as normal and neutral.

In her research, DiAngelo (2011) identifies a number of common interruptions. An interruption can be a challenge to any tenet of Whiteness or White supremacy, including a challenge to any of the following: objectivity, White racial codes, White racial expectations and

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

need/entitlement to comfort, colonialist relations, White solidarity, White liberalism, individualism, meritocracy, White authority, White centrality (p. 57). For example, in Tatum's (2001, p.104) analogy of the moving walkway, the act of turning against the flow of racism and White supremacy causes an interruption to White solidarity. Thus in moments of identifying White privilege, naming, or opposing racism, we might experience White fragility.

These interruptions are common triggers for race-based stress among White folks. Thus, it is common for White folks to experience significant social and psychological stress in working toward antiracism. Having been insulated from race-based stress (DiAngelo, 2011), seeing or engaging with race and racism often feels new, unfamiliar, and overwhelming. Critical Race scholars suggest that these encounters with race and racism result in cognitive dissonance (Derrick Bell, 1995. para. 13), a mental confusion or disorientation resulting from the awareness of a reality or experience that is contradictory to one's own experience. In the context of this project it is important for us to understand White Fragility and cognitive dissonance in order to recognize when we are experiencing them and take steps to respond skillfully.

Silence and Silencing

One common White response to White fragility or the cognitive dissonance, is silence and/or silencing. This silencing protects Whiteness as neutral, preserving White supremacy. Each time systems, institutions, or people silence discussion of racism, Whiteness is allowed to remain "neutral" and "normal." Silencing can be overt, as seen in the assertion that "all lives matter," in stating that a situation was not about race, or in changing the subject. Silencing can also be implicit: for example, when one falls silent in conversations about race or avoids situations which might lead to discussion of race or racism. These acts of silencing and the belief that it is best not to discuss topics of race are closely interconnected with the concept of 'colorblindness.'

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

It is sometimes thought that being "blind" to race allows us to create equal opportunity and to treat individuals impartially by insisting that race does not play a role. White educators are particularly susceptible to silencing as they navigate curricula and classroom discussions:

Well-meaning teachers are sometimes unintentionally discriminatory when they remain silent about race and racism ... Such silences about racism are sometimes thought to be appropriate because they demonstrate that teachers are "colorblind," that is, fair and impartial when it comes to judging people based on their race. They insist that they see no difference in their students, in spite of their students' obvious differences in race and ethnicity. This patronizing stance facilitates the denial of racism because, according to Pearl Rosenberg "... people who are colorblind have an optical defect that limits their ability to see." (Whitley, 2006, p. 74-75)

As Whitley points out, the problem with the language of colorblindness is that it implies an inability to see color rather than confronting this socially conditioned response to race and racism. In response to this problem, "Mica Pollock refers to the purposeful suppressing of words associated with race as 'colormuteness.' Colormuteness is a result of people's uneasiness with directly addressing issues of race" (Whitley, 2006, p. 75). However, muteness like blindness refers to a physical disability and an inability to speak, rather than a conscious or unconscious failure to challenge this socially conditioned behavior. Thus, out of respect for persons with disabilities and in an effort to challenge our active role in these practices, I will use the terms silence and silencing.

As Ochoa (2014) argues, "[n]ot acknowledging their racialized backgrounds makes it easier for White educators to ignore their racial privileges and the legacy of racism in the U.S."

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

Furthermore, “[i]f privilege is defined as a legitimization of one’s entitlement to resources, it can also be defined as permission to escape or avoid any challenge to this entitlement” (Vodde, 2001, p. 144). Thus, we must challenge White educators to do the inner work to understand our racial conditioning, to build stamina, to overcome our White fragility, to renounce these privileges, to join the crucial historical ongoing conversations about race in our nation.

Mindfulness and Antiracism

Mindfulness has become widely practiced and implemented in the United States as a secular technique (Purser & Loy, 2013). "Mindfulness meditation focuses the individual on the present and encourages practitioners to view thoughts and feelings nonjudgmentally as mental events, rather than as part of themselves" (Lueke & Gibson, 2015, p. 284). Mindfulness or lucid awareness (Bodhi, 2011) was derived from ancient Buddhist meditation practice. This an ancient meditation. While the instruction of mindfulness in non-secular mindfulness-based interventions is not without problems (Monteiro, Musten & Compson, 2015), the practice of mindfulness has become increasingly popular across a wide range of professions (Williams & Kabat-Zinn, 2011).

As Williams and Kabat-Zinn (2011) explain, since the late 1970s mindfulness has been introduced more and more broadly within the United States. "Over the past decade, training in mindfulness—the intentional cultivation of moment-by-moment non-judgmental focused attention and awareness—has spread from its initial western applications in medicine to other fields, including education" (Meiklejohn et al., 2012, p. 291). Typically mindfulness based instruction in education has been focused on students as an intervention to promote self-regulation, self-soothing, and expected classroom behavior. Fortunately researchers are beginning to consider the use of mindfulness for both students and teachers in order to promote well-being (Meiklejohn et al., 2012).

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

Moreover, the spread of mindfulness-based interventions throughout healthcare, education, and the corporate world, has been accompanied by significant growth in research on the effectiveness of mindfulness (Williams & Kabat-Zinn, 2011). Researchers are beginning to explore the role of mindfulness in reducing bias and in responding to racism and discrimination (Brown-Iannuzzi, Adair, Payne, Richman, & Fredrickson, 2014; Lueke & Gibson, 2015; Magee, 2015; Orr, 2002). As Magee (2015) explains:

The good news is that mindfulness and related practices do assist in increasing focus and raising awareness, and have been shown to assist in minimizing bias. While the research is ongoing, studies are beginning to show that mindfulness meditation and compassion practices serve as potent aids in the work of decreasing bias. (para. 6)

While the bridges between mindfulness, anti-oppression, and anti-racism are new, scholars have begun to explore the use of mindfulness in confronting racism (Magee, 2016) and facing discrimination (Brown-Iannuzzi et al., 2014).

In this project I offer the practice of mindfulness as a means of being with the discomfort, confusion, and challenging emotions which might arise as we work to understand our own racial identity and racial conditioning without succumbing to White fragility or cognitive dissonance. As Berila (2016) explains in *Integrating Mindfulness into Anti-Oppression Pedagogy: Social Justice in Higher Education*:

Mindfulness education is one valuable way to help students fully integrate and embody the lessons of anti-oppression pedagogy. In fact, the very practice of mindfulness is a fundamental catalyst for transformation. If, as Audre Lorde said, "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house," then we need to learn

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

new ways of being in the world. Integrating mindful learning into anti-oppression pedagogy lets us do just that. (p. 12)

Like Magee (2015), I will apply these same beliefs to professional development and adult education. By cultivating mindfulness and non-judgmental awareness, we can increase awareness of our own biases and behavior allowing us to respond more skillfully to race and racism. I offer mindfulness as a means of integrating and embodying the lessons of antiracism.

Summary

Through this project I will seek to honor the questions raised by Critical Race theory, explore race and racism, consider the role of Whiteness and White Identity, and challenge White folks to use mindfulness as a way to develop their ability to present and respond skillfully to race and racism. I will offer Helms' White Identity Development and DiAngelo's White Fragility as ways to understand Whiteness and areas for critical self-reflection. Like Utt and Tochluk (2016), I will challenge White educators to engage in critical self-reflection, while offering mindfulness as a means of engaging in anti-oppressive practice (Berila, 2016).

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

Chapter III: The Project and Its Development

In this chapter, I will share my own personal context for the project; in doing so I hope to share a little bit of my background and positionality as a researcher. I will describe the development of the project, methods, and data. The data presented here include participant responses to the workshop (through my observations, rating scales, and open ended questions) as well as my reflections as a participant-observer, or in this case, a participant-presenter. Throughout this process I will seek to acknowledge my role and perspective as researcher while sharing experiences and findings that might support White educators in moving toward racial identity development and further dialogue about race within education.

Auto-Ethnography: The Positionality of the Author

I grew up immersed in middle-income suburban comfort. I was born and raised in California, surrounded by the "luxury of obliviousness" (Johnson as cited in Whitley, 2006, p. 15). I had the privilege of two college educated liberal parents and the double privilege of having an early childhood educator as a mother. It was not until I was completing my teaching credentials that I began to unpack the layers of carefully supported learning experiences that filled my childhood. I was raised with a family narrative of activism, liberalism, atheism, and a healthy dose of cynicism. Both of my parents were disaffected Catholics, having attended years of Catholic school with a few cruel nuns and any number of moral contradictions. During multicultural celebrations and family history projects, my parents shared stories of our Irish Catholic family, of both of my grandfathers' military service, and of our Cherokee ancestry on my father's side. More recently, I have begun to wonder how these stories served to maintain the good White self, supporting the idea that racism is something far away done by bad people, and

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

distancing us from bad racist White folks (DiAngelo, 2016).

Throughout elementary and middle school, I remained unaware of race and profoundly aware of class. In our wealthy suburban context my family seemed poor. We rented a home in the flats surrounded by wealthy homeowners in the hills overlooking Bennett Valley. Despite very active and prepared parents, good grades, and having been identified as gifted, my teachers made it clear that my outspoken behavior was not appreciated. By the end of junior high, it was clear to me that I was not the right type of student.

Fortunately, our district elected to create magnet schools that year and offered students the opportunity to choose which high school they wanted to attend. I was privileged to know about these changes, had the resources to visit several schools, and enrolled in a school outside of my attendance area. I left one of the highest achieving schools in our district to attend one of the newest. I choose to attend a school on the other side of town. I realize now that with that move, my perceived identity shifted from being poor to being white.

As soon as I stepped foot on campus the principal and teachers made it clear that they assumed I would succeed. That assumption changed my self-perception and my entire relationship with school. For the first time, I was from the right side of town, I was from a good family, and I was expected to succeed. While I loved the attention and soaked up the benefits and opportunities offered, I also began to realize how arbitrary those judgments were if they could change in a single summer.

In my suburban high school, the student body was less White and our teachers (mostly White) made an effort to offer a more multicultural learning environment. For the first time, I began reading books about other cultures and other perspectives. Still, it was not until college that I began to meet students and teachers who directly challenged my White cultural norms and

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

expectations. I felt cosmopolitan, at the time. I was eager to move to a more diverse area, yet our suburban city was the only place I had ever lived. I now know that the city where I was raised was, at the time, 93.4% White, as reported in the 1980 census. I have recently begun to consider how my White suburban childhood impacted my experience in education and my practice as an educator.

In 1999, I moved one and a half hours' drive south, from Santa Rosa to Berkeley. I was one of just three students from my high school to be accepted that year to the University of California at Berkeley. College was the first time I encountered efforts to disrupt our White supremacist culture and my own construct of White culture as normative. My roommates were a freshman and a sophomore, both women of color, both aware of their racial identities and involved in identity-based organizations on campus. One day that fall, the older of my roommates, a Chicana activist, called me a racist and compared me to Hitler. To this day, I cannot recall anything else about our conversation. Though I did not know the term at the time, it was one of my first experiences with cognitive dissonance. At the time, I felt attacked, everything seemed to be spinning. It was also one of the first times I recall talking not about race or racism, but about my own racial identity.

Throughout college I became increasingly aware of my Whiteness and my lack of a White cultural identity. The elements of identity I carried from childhood and my family's stories of our history and culture seemed problematic. I began trying to justify my interest in international development and my specialization in Africa, feeling uneasy with the legacy of White racism and colonialism. Ignorant of my Whiteness and privilege, I succumbed to White savior complex (Cammarota, 2011; Cole, 2012; Straubhaar, 2015) even as I sought to avoid it. I believed and disbelieved that I had a unique ability to either name or solve problems outside of

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

my own community. When I graduated from college, I was desperate to avoid contributing to racist White colonial patterns in international development, upon graduation I chose instead to remain in the U.S. and begin working in education.

Over time, I began to see the fallacy in my logic. I became aware of issues of equity in my classroom, racial disparities in special education, and my own Whiteness. I recently chose to begin teaching in urban schools and actively explore race and Whiteness in the classroom. I have worked to turn toward issues of race and begin developing my own White cultural identity and White antiracism. I have participated in several antiracism trainings including: a six-month training through the East Bay Meditation Center called the White and Awakening in Sangha, which focused on White antiracism and community building; a two-day training with The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond called Undoing Racism; and an Anti-Bias Education for K-12 Educators workshop with the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles and the Anti-Defamation League. Over the past year and as part of this master's field project, I have developed and presented this 90-minute workshop on antiracism for educators. Through this project, I hope to work with White educators to develop our racial identities, transform the racist practices we too often replicate, and disrupt the racist structures in which we work.

Description of the Project

The purpose of this project has been to develop a 90-minute professional development workshop to introduce the topics of race, racism, racial identity development, and antiracism for White educators through the use of mindfulness and self-reflection. The workshop included a presentation, activities, opportunities for small group discussion, and a resource list for participants. Over the course of this project, I presented the workshop in three conferences; documented the purpose, structure, and demographics of each conference; solicited participant

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

input through dialogue and workshop evaluations; and recorded my observations in a reflective journal. I used my reflections and participant responses to evaluate the workshop curriculum and shared my findings and recommendations for racial identity development and antiracism workshops for educators.

Development of the Project

This curriculum was inspired by my experience in the White and Awakening in Sangha program at East Bay Meditation Center in the Spring of 2016. The East Bay Meditation Center, located in downtown Oakland, California opened its doors in January 2007 to offer meditation and spiritual practice with a deep attention to diversity, social action, social justice, racial justice, and inclusion (<https://eastbaymeditation.org>). East Bay Meditation Center offers a wide range of meditation groups or *sanghas* and mindfulness based activities and classes for people of particular identity groups, including People of Color, members of the LGBTQIA same-gender loving and Two-Spirit community (Alphabet community), people with disabilities and chronic illnesses, young adults, and other underrepresented communities.

The White and Awakening in Sangha program (WAS) was developed in response to the request that leaders within the community support White folks in working together to understanding racism without learning at the expense (or through the emotional labor) of people of color. The course provided an introduction to White identity and antiracism through the lens of Buddhist practice. Over the course of six months, we attended one day-long course per month addressing various aspects of White identity, racism, and activism. Instruction was grounded in the practices of meditation, mindfulness, loving kindness and compassion—that is, cultivating love for one's self and all beings (Chödrön, 2010; Kabat-Zinn, 2009). In each class we sought to practice antiracism and build community within the meditation center. In one of our final

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

meetings the community divided into small groups to discuss specific areas. In this small group meeting we discussed the need to bring anti-racism work into education.

In the fall of 2016, I received an email from a fellow participant in WAS, Anne Bauer. She asked if I would be interested in partnering with her to create a workshop on mindfulness and anti-racism for educators which we would present at the Teachers 4 Social Justice Conference. WAS inspired both of us to find ways to bring mindfulness and antiracism into our lives as educators. In addition, Anne and I both found common ground between a potential workshop and our areas of study. Anne is a preschool director and Ph.D. candidate in education at Mills College focusing on mindfulness in education. I am an education specialist and master's candidate focusing on antiracism for educators. Together, we developed the curriculum as an extension of the work we had done through WAS. We collaborated by phone and online to develop a workshop proposal for the conference.

After the proposal had been accepted, we met at a cafe for several hours, discussing our shared vision and intentions for the workshop. We developed an outline and discussed activities we hoped to use in the workshop. We agreed on areas of concentration: Anne would focus on mindfulness instruction and holding space for difficult discussion, and I would develop and present conceptual frameworks and content related to race, racism, and antiracism. We continued our collaboration online as we created our presentation slides and collected workshop materials. We wrote to the leaders of WAS and to Professor Reza, USF, to request permission to use activities they had shared with us. We met a second time to attend the Teachers 4 Social Justice presenter orientation and review the workshop material over dinner. Finally, we carpooled on the day of the conference, revisiting our intentions and centering ourselves during the trip to San Francisco.

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

Following the Teachers for Social Justice Conference, Anne and I discussed a shared interest in continuing our work and continuing to present together if possible. Unfortunately, Anne was not able to attend the second or third conference with me. Anne encouraged me to continue presenting and developing the workshop. After the initial development of the workshop I continued to present, reflect and revise on my own. Anne and I have exchanged occasional emails to discuss the workshop and maintain contact. I hope to continue to partner with Anne and others in the community as I move forward in this work.

This project emerged from the desire to extend my learning and to bring antiracism into my work as an educator. It is my hope that by we can begin to support educators in exploring these topics and developing a community to begin learning about race and racism, without learning at the expense or through the emotional labor of people of color. This curriculum seeks to provide an introduction to race and racism with a foundation in mindfulness, designed to promote self-awareness and self-reflection among White educators. The workshop was presented at three educational conferences: (1) the 16th Annual Teachers 4 Social Justice Conference: *Intersections of Teaching and Power* in San Francisco California, October 2016, (2) the 15th Annual Hawaii International Conference on Education in Honolulu, Hawaii, January 2017, and (3) the 5th Annual University of San Francisco School of Education Symposium on Engaged Scholarship: Education as Activism, February 2017. The participants were those attending the conference who self-selected to attend the workshop. I documented the purpose of each conference, location, theme, structure and size.

Following these three presentations, I used the workshop evaluations and participant-presenter reflections to conduct a mixed methods evaluation of the project. Throughout the project I acted as a participant-presenter, participating in the workshop and presenting/co-

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

presenting. I worked to create a workshop environment in which I acted as a facilitator and shared my own experiences as a White educator working toward antiracism, rather than as an expert or trainer. I shared resources, conceptual frameworks, and mindfulness practices which have been useful and instructive for me, and attempted to create a space in which participants could engage in dialogue and share knowledge and resources with the group.

This project used a combination of auto-ethnography, participant observations, and surveys for a mixed methods approach. In this project I worked from a critical change or critical theory perspective. “As an example of the critical change orientation, critical theory approaches to fieldwork and analysis with an explicit agenda of elucidating power, economic, and social inequalities” (Patton, 2002, p. 548). I looked critically at racial inequalities in education and challenged educators to consider racial inequalities within their own identities and their relationships with students. “Critical change criteria undergird empowerment evaluation, diversity-inclusive evaluations, and aspects of deliberative democratic evaluation that involve values-based advocating for democracy” (Patton, 2002, p. 550).

I documented my experience creating and presenting the workshop as well as my own experience becoming aware of my race and turning toward antiracism. I recorded my reflections on this process throughout the project. The auto-ethnographic portion of the project is reflected in my personal history, reflections on the experience, and analysis of the materials. I used participant observations to document interactions with participants as well as my observations of the settings and my presentation. As Patton explains, “[e]valuators and researchers should strive to neither overestimate nor underestimate their effects but to take seriously their responsibility to describe and study what those effects are” (2002, p. 568). I hope that by sharing these reflections candidly I might support others engaged in this work.

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

Finally, I used surveys to evaluate participant responses to the material. I included a combination of rating scales and open-ended questions. Rating scales were used to describe participant identity and background knowledge for a quantitative analysis of the workshop. In the evaluation of the workshop participants were asked to complete two rating scales. On the first rating scale participants were asked to rate the following statements on a scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree:

I identify as White.
I have privileges because I am seen as White.
I am often aware of my race in daily interactions.
I am comfortable talking about White privilege.
Race often comes up in my classroom.
I often talk to my students about race.

On a second rating scale participants were asked to rate the following statements of outcomes as a result of the workshop:

I learned something new about race and racism.
I feel more comfortable talking about race.
I better understand racism in our schools.
I better understand my own racial conditioning.
I learned strategies to stay present with racism.
I practiced mindful awareness and skillful means.
I am more prepared to address race in the classroom.

These scales allowed me to quantify participant responses, providing a numerical representation of participant's prior knowledge and the outcomes of the workshop.

In addition, the evaluation allowed participants to indicate which activities were particularly helpful, list additional comments / questions / or requests, and respond to open-ended questions including: what would you have liked more of, what would you change or leave out, and what is your commitment moving forward. Open-ended questions, participant comments, and my reflective journal entries were used to create a narrative of the participant

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

experience as well as an analysis of my perspective as facilitator.

Throughout this project the material was presented through opt-in workshops in conference settings. As a result there are a number of limitations to the project. Participants were limited to those with the means, opportunity, and desire to attend and participate in each conference. Among conference participants, workshop participants were those who opted-in to the workshop, meaning that they read workshop offerings and responded with interest to the workshop title or the following summary of the workshop:

This workshop will focus on the inner personal work of White educators to cultivate awareness of racial injustice. We will work to build an understanding of the structural realities of race in the American educational system. We will explore the impacts of our own White racial conditioning on our awareness of and role in addressing racial inequities in their classrooms. We will explore conceptual frameworks for racism and Whiteness (Helms, 1990) – including White privilege, White fragility and our notions of the “good” White self (DiAngelo, 2011). We will discuss White Identity development (Helms, 1990) and build awareness of our racial conditioning. We will practice mindfulness and explore ways of working with challenging emotions that arise as we address racism – for example, our own internalized racism, that of our colleagues and the institutional racism we encounter in our daily lives as educators. Finally, we will consider possibilities for moving forward in this work, through mindfulness (Berila, 2016), community building, and activism. We approach this work as a practice and believe that there are no experts; we hope that you will partner with us in this work today.

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

Thus, participants were—to some extent—open to considering their own racial identity and chose to participate in an explicit conversation about race, racism and Whiteness. Conference participants who were not open to discussing race or were unaware of their racially identity likely opted-out. As a result, this project speaks to professional development for educators who are interested in Whiteness and antiracism and/or those who have already begun this work.

The results of the evaluations were used to complete a content analysis of the workshop curriculum based on participant responses and participant-presenter reflections. I documented my reflections on the experience of each presentation and critiqued the curriculum. I shared my findings and recommendations from this project, as well as potential implications for working with White educators to develop awareness of race, racism, and promote antiracism education. This project was completed in the spring of 2017. In future research, I hope to work in more sustained collaboration with groups of educators in order to engage in participatory action research and further document and challenge my personal development as an antiracist educator working to build community in this work. Further study will be needed in order to consider the most effective and supportive means of sharing this work with those who have not yet begun considering their racial identities and the ways in which their race impacts their work in the classroom. Finally, this project did not seek to address community organizing or action steps for educators; these are urgent and critical, both merit careful consideration and further study.

Conference 1: Teachers 4 Social Justice - San Francisco, California

Participant Responses. This workshop was first presented at the 16th Annual Teachers 4 Social Justice Conference - Intersections of Teaching and Power in San Francisco California, October 2016 (T4SJ). This was the only conference in which I co-presented with Anne Bauer, the co-creator of the workshop. Over 2,000 educators and students attended the conference,

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

which specifically targeted toward educators who are active or interested in social justice and activism. The conference included two keynote speakers: noted education scholars Pauline Lipman and Sean Ginwright. Participants had the opportunity to select two workshops from the conference offerings. The workshops included a range of topics geared toward instructional techniques, affiliation groups, and professional development. There were a number of workshops offered for educators of color. Two workshops (including ours) specifically named Whiteness in education as a focus; both were offered during the same morning break-out session.

When we arrived at the conference, our workshop signup list was full, 30 people had signed up to participate. We prepared materials for 40 participants and agreed to accept all participants. Forty-five people participated in the workshop, one (1) left early and 41 completed workshop evaluation forms. Ninety% of workshop participants agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I identify as White.” Participants were not asked to identify by race (beyond this question) or by gender. Co-presenter Anne Bauer and I both identify as White women. At the end of the workshop, participants were asked to rate the following statements on a scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The following graphs show the percentage of participants who responded with “agree” or “strongly agree” to each of the statements. The participant survey also provided space to mark activities which participants felt were particularly helpful, and space to respond to open-ended questions including: what would you have liked more of, what would you change or leave out, what is your commitment moving forward, and space to list additional comments / questions / or requests.

The first rating scale included pre-workshop or general background information including racial identity, awareness of race and racial conditioning, and engagement in discussions of race and racism personally and professionally. According to this data, 90% of participants identified

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

as White, 96% acknowledged having White privilege, 90% acknowledged often being aware of their racial identity, and 83% stated that they were comfortable talking about White privilege.

Only 57% of participants were comfortable talking about race, 54% stated that race often comes up in their classrooms, and 44% stated that they often talk to their students about race.

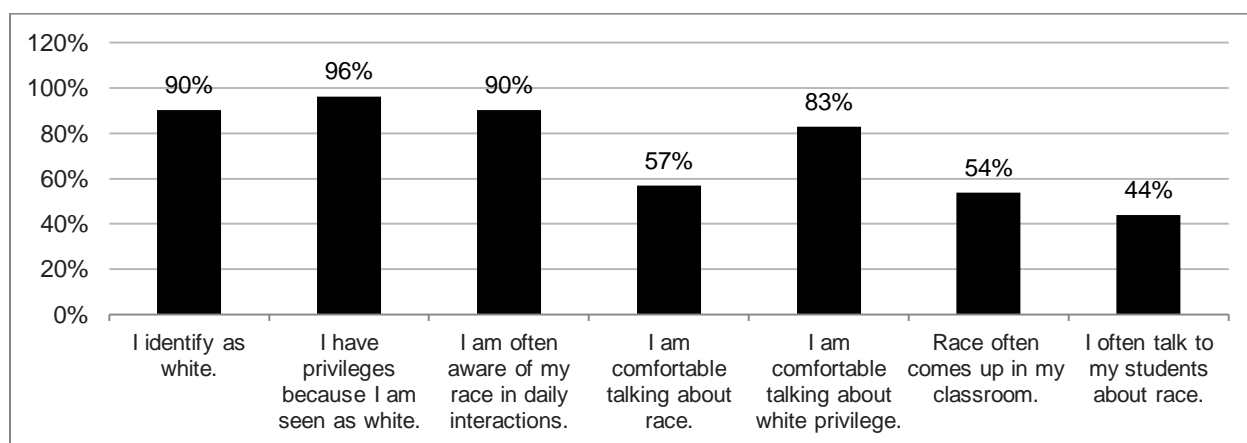


Figure 3. Pre-workshop background information, T4SJ.

Participants then completed a second rating scale including comments related to learning about race, comfort addressing race, and strategies for responding to racism as a result of the workshop. The highest ratings were for learning strategies to stay present with racism (85%) and practicing mindful awareness and skillful means (84%), followed by learning something new about race and racism (76%), and better understanding their own racial conditioning (76%). The lowest ratings were for understanding racism in our schools (41%) and being more prepared to address race in the classroom (54%). Several participants requested additional focus on racism in the classroom and/or expressed a desire for activities or curriculum that could be used in the classroom.

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

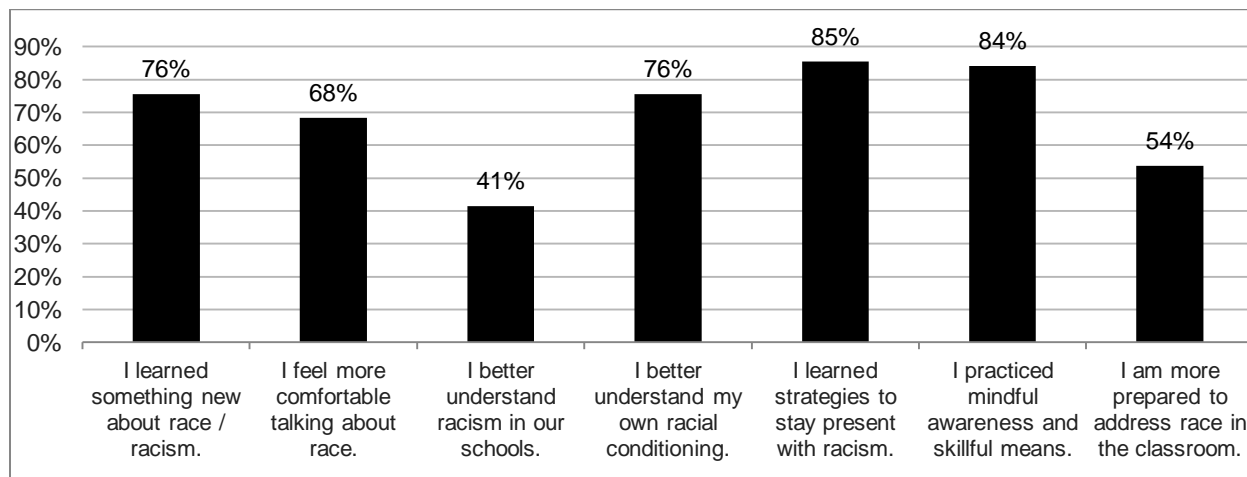


Figure 4. Outcomes of the workshop, T4SJ.

Finally, participants were asked to circle activities that were particularly helpful for them. The following figure 3 shows participant responses. No activity received zero votes. The highest rated activity was the discussion of active racism, passive racism, and antiracism, based on the Beverly Tatum (2001) passage explaining racism as a moving sidewalk (p.104, included here on page 35). Our use of quotations and discussion of racial conditioning were also rated very highly. The lowest rated activities were the dyads discussing active, passive and antiracism, the role-plays practicing skillful means, and the power flower activity. Interestingly, participants also commented to request reduced lecture time and additional time for activities and discussions. This could indicate that the impact of the activities was diminished by the shortage of time or perhaps that participants would have preferred different activities.

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

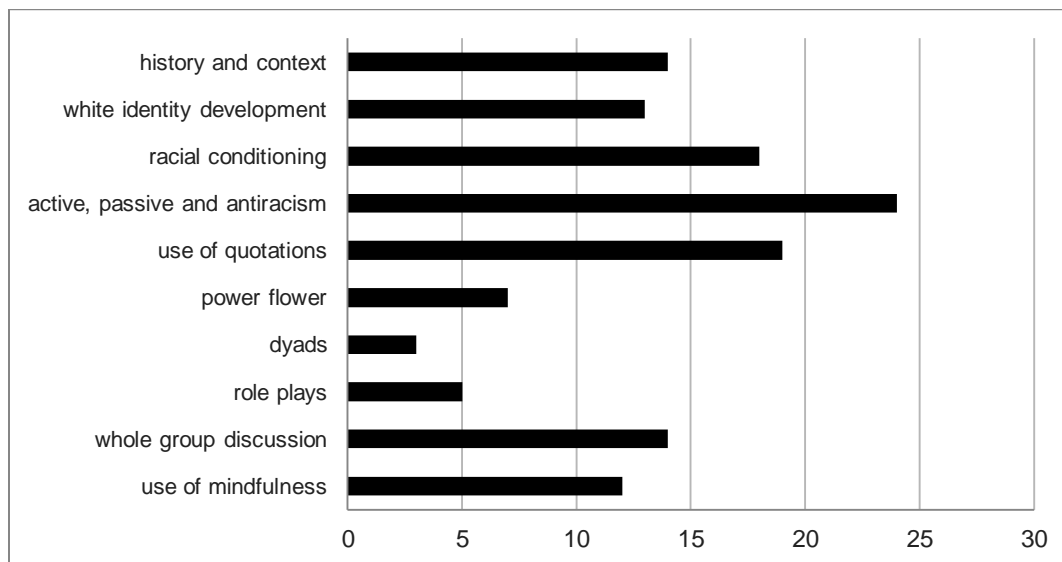


Figure 5. Activity rating scale, T4SJ.

Participant-Presenter Reflections. Immediately following the workshop, I wrote the following reflections.

Our workshop was one of the first to fill up. We arrived to see a "workshop full" sign posted nearly an hour before the first keynote address. Thirty people had already signed up for the workshop when it was listed as full. We decided to accept everyone who came and had forty five participants. We were encouraged by the clear interest in the workshop. Several participants mentioned this being workshop they could attend as White folks, observing that there were a number of workshops based on affinity group for people of color, i.e. for Black Educators, for Latinx Educators. Everyone appeared engaged during dyads and small group discussion. We had some difficulty with attention signals and shifting attention back to the larger group. As we presented material to the group as a whole, everyone was quiet and appeared attentive. One woman left the workshop early.

We received overwhelmingly positive feedback. Feedback for the

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

conference was even more positive than feedback on the workshop evaluation. A number of folks who came to speak to me asked for the resource list, asked about my graduate program, and praised the combination of antiracism and mindfulness. We referred several participants to the East Bay Meditation Center for additional information on the WAS course we participated in. Anne shared that both of the black men who participated came to speak with her after and complimented us on the work, one said we "got it just right" and encouraged us to take out the "White" part because "everyone needs this" also suggesting that we provide this training in all of the schools starting with the security staff. A number of participants complimented us on the work and on our presence; one stated that we were good role models in the work.

There was some discussion in the evaluation of confusion with the power flower exercise and some desire to go deeper or discuss more. Most of the suggestions for changes were related to structure, needing more time or more space. One participant suggested leaving out mindfulness. Several participants requested activities or material to use in the classroom with students. Anne and I debriefed during lunch and while riding public transportation home. We revisited our intention to offer an opening and introduction into White identity development and White antiracism to support in our own personal development as educators.

We agreed that the majority of suggestions fell outside the intended purpose of the workshop and agreed that it would be nice to offer a longer session or a series of courses in order to more thoroughly address the topic. We shared a

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

concern that perhaps we could have more clearly communicated our focus on inner personal development and not activities for classroom use. We agreed that we would have liked to do a fuller role play around skillful means using the observer, speaker, and respondent structure we had used in WAS. We also agreed that it would be wonderful to offer a second part or follow up to discuss critical pedagogy, community / coalition building, and ways of engaging in conversations about race with people of color. (Workshop Reflection notes, 10/08/16)

This first presentation at the Teachers 4 Social Justice Conference in San Francisco, California allowed use to implement the curriculum among educators and activists. By co-presenting at this initial conference, I was able to focus on the content of the curriculum. This initial presentation provided several insights in the clarity of the curriculum and pacing of the presentation. While I made as few adjustments as possible to the curriculum to preserve the integrity of the evaluation, participant feedback did allow for several minor adjustments to the workshop. In the fall of 2016, as I was preparing for the Teachers 4 Social Justice Conference, Professor Betty Taylor spoke with my class and encouraged students to apply to the Hawaii International Conference on Education in Honolulu. Encouraged by the warm reception we received in San Francisco I submitted a workshop proposal.

Conference 2: Hawaii International Conference on Education - Honolulu, Hawaii

I was accepted as a presenter at the Hawaii International Conference on Education (HICE) in Honolulu, January 2-6, 2017. HICE was a multi-day event offering workshops, panel presentations, and poster sessions for a wide range of educators. Participants ranged from preschool educators to adult educators who provide instruction in a wide range of education and healthcare professions. Over the course of the conference, I was able to participate in a range of

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

discussions around cultural competency, race, and identity. According to the HICE website, the conference was attended by over 1,300 participants from more than 36 countries (<http://hiceducation.org/>). Hawaiian studies professor Keoni Kuoha gave a keynote address on the second day of the conference on place based culture-focused learning. The workshops, panel discussions, and poster sessions included a range of topics geared toward instructional techniques, affiliation groups, and professional development.

The conference was a four-day event in Honolulu at the Hilton Village Resort and Conference Center. Workshops, panel presentations (15-20 minutes per presenter), and poster sessions were scheduled from 9:00-4:30 each day. My workshop was scheduled on the final day of the conference from 9:45-11:15 am. There was no registration process for individual workshops or presentations, participants were able to drop in and move between sessions. My workshop was in a large space with an overhead projector, computer and rows of 30-40 chairs. There were a number of errors in the printed conference program and my co-presenter, Anne Bauer, was not able to attend. I was nervous about presenting on my own and being able to model mindful engagement with the material.

Nineteen people attended the workshop, four people left early. Three of the four people who left early were fellow USF students who had to leave early due to travel plans; the fourth person did not share a reason for leaving. Fifteen people stayed for the duration of the workshop, I received fifteen completed evaluations: ten identified as White, four did not, and one did not respond to the statement "I identify as White." The majority of attendees participated throughout the workshop. We had an odd number of participants and one chose not to participate in a dyad with me or in a group of three.

Participant Responses. The same evaluation was used as in the first conference.

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

Participants were asked to respond to two rating scales and several opened questions. The first rating scale included prior knowledge and general background information including racial identity, awareness of race and racial conditioning, and engagement in discussions of race and racism both personally and professionally. According to this data, 80% of participants stated that they were often aware of race in their daily interactions, 80% reported feeling comfortable talking about race, and 67% felt comfortable talking about White privilege. In this session 64% of participants identified as White and 60% acknowledged having privilege because they are seen as White. Forty-nine percent reported that race often comes up in their classroom, one added “only if I bring it up,” and 47% agreed that they often talk to their students about race.

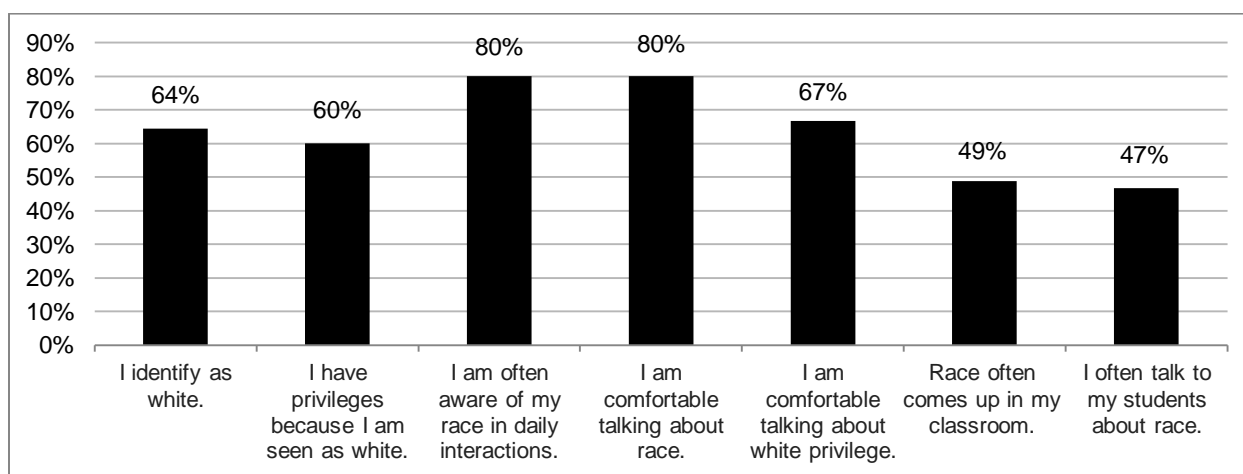


Figure 6. Pre-workshop background information, HICE.

Participants then completed a second rating scale, rating comments related to learning about race, comfort addressing race and strategies for responding to racism as a result of the workshop. The highest ratings were for learning something new about race and racism (87%), feeling more comfortable talking about race (73%) and being more prepared to talk about race in the classroom (73%). Sixty percent of participants stated that they learned strategies to stay present with racism. The lowest ratings were for better understanding racism in our schools (53%), better understanding my own racial conditioning (53%), and practicing mindful

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

awareness and skillful means (47%). Several participants requested additional time for group discussion or made suggestions for changes in presentation style.

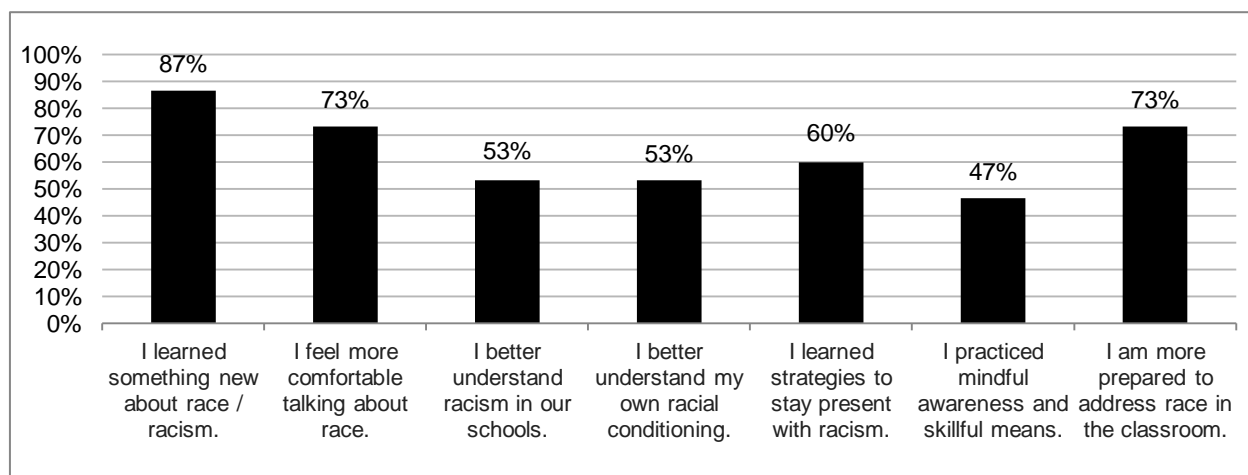


Figure 7. Outcomes of the workshop, HICE. Participants were asked to respond to rate the following statements as a result of the workshop

Finally, participants were asked to circle activities that were particularly helpful for them. The following graph shows participant responses. The highest rated activities were the discussion of active, passive and antiracism, based on the Beverly Tatum (2001) passage explaining racism as a moving sidewalk, and discussion of White identity development based on Janet Helms' (1990) statuses of White identity development. The use of quotations and discussion of racial conditioning were next highest rated. The lowest rated activities were the role-plays practicing skillful means, whole group discussion, dyads, and the power flower activity. The use of role-plays received zero votes.

In both this conference and the previous presentation (T4SJ), participant ratings for hands on activities were lower than ratings for direct instruction. Interestingly, this data seems to contradict participant comments requesting less lecture and additional time for activities and discussions. Perhaps the shortage of time negatively impacted participants' experiences of the group discussion. In this presentation (HICE) in particular, lecture topics received higher scores

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

than activities and whole group discussion was one of the lowest rated items.

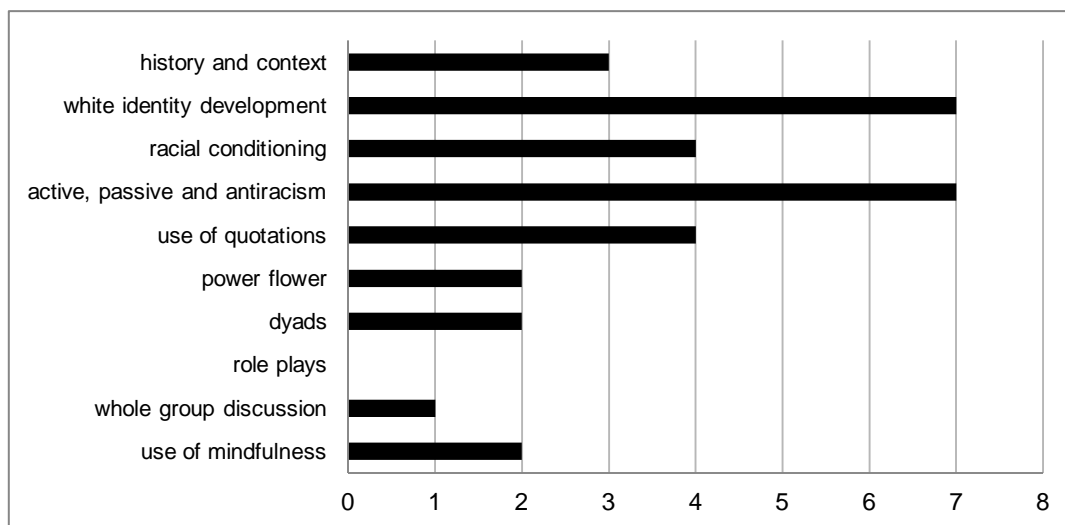


Figure 8. Activity rating Scale, HICE. Participants were asked to circle any parts of the training that they found particularly helpful.

Participant-Presenter Reflections. Following my presentation at HICE, I wrote the following reflection:

The workshop ran the full 90 minutes without including time to complete the evaluation. Due to the on-going nature of this project I have attempted to avoid changes to the presentation between conferences. However, I did make two minor changes after presenting at the Teachers 4 Social Justice Conference in San Francisco based on participant responses. I modified the introduction to include reflection questions, moved the power flower activity later in the presentation, and rewrote the instruction in an attempt to address confusion that arose in the first workshop. The role-play activity was also slightly different between presentations. In San Francisco we were able to use a video clip, in Hawaii the conference center did not offer internet and we were only able to listen to the audio.

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

When presenting in San Francisco we were running late and shortened the role-play portion. While presenting in Hawaii I attempted a fuller version of the role play, asking participants to listen to audio, then asking one person in each group to play McKenna, participant in the Whiteness Project (see Appendix A), and allowing time for members of the group to try using skillful means to respond. Lastly, I passed out the survey at the beginning of the workshop to allow participants to begin completing the demographic information and stressed the importance of their input. I was not able to provide structured time at the end for discussion or evaluations. Many participants responded to the rating scale and not the open-ended questions. Participant responses on the rating scale indicating results of the workshop were positive. There were a few suggestions including a greater focus on mindfulness and more time for discussion.

Speaking with participants after the presentation, a White woman expressed compassion fatigue. She shared that she has been involved in antiracism for a long time and is tired of meeting people where they are. I tried to listen and validate. I shared that I do believe each of us has a different contribution to make and encourage self-compassion. An African American man thanked me for the material, shared how important it is, and said that he wished more people were doing this work. I agreed. Another White woman spoke with me and shared that she had an “ah-ha” moment, that she had done a lot of work on race and racism but she is still reading and never does anything, “I learn and learn and learn, I never do anything.” She said she realized she needs to do something. Finally, I spoke with a woman who identified as a person of color, she shared that

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

she was grateful to hear White people talking about these issues that she often talks about these things with people of color, but that she has never been in a space where she heard White people talking about them. She thanked me for the presentation.

In reviewing responses to the open-ended questions two comments in particular stood out: (1) do not refer to White folks as "they" and (2) do not read material on the slides. I was curious about both of these comments. When writing the presentation I was careful to use "we" / "I" when speaking about White folks. I am curious when I strayed from that language. I do believe I used "they" when I was speaking about skillful means and confronting someone who made a racist comment. I am curious if there were other times. Second, I am not sure I agree with the suggestion to avoid reading information from the slides. In the sessions following mine, I attempted to read the slides as presenters spoke and was only able to attend to the speaker or the slides. I am curious if that is an expectation in conferences and how that might affect learning and access to the information presented. I am interested in further exploring options for group participation and the balance between direct instruction and implicit learning.

Upon reflection, I would have liked to commit additional time to introductions and sharing responses to the discussion questions. The backgrounds, roles, and identities of participants in this setting were varied. It would have been helpful to have a fuller understanding of the group before presenting. It would also have offered participants an opportunity to build community. Moving forward I would also like to develop a longer version of the training to include

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

more explicit instruction in mindfulness and the use of specific mindfulness practices paired with each portion of the presentation. For example, it could be helpful to introduce the use of a body scan before participating in the power flower activity, offering participants a specific strategy for tuning into their physical and emotional response to the topic of privilege. (Workshop Reflection notes, 1/06/17)

The Hawaii International Conference on Education was a very different experience, the majority of participants were professionals and Professors of higher education. Much of the feedback was more editorial than experiential. Similar to the initial presentation, I attempt to avoid significant alteration of the curriculum and worked to present the workshop with fidelity. While preparing for the Hawaii International Conference on Education, Professor Emma Fuentes supported me in my research and encouraged me to apply to present at the University of San Francisco School of Education Symposium on February 4th, 2017. I submitted a proposal for a pedagogical workshop.

Conference 3: Symposium on Engaged Scholarship, USF - San Francisco, California

My proposal was accepted and as the final piece of my thesis project, on February 4th, 2017, I presented at the University of San Francisco's 5th Annual Symposium on Engaged Scholarship hosted by the School of Education in conjunction with an Open House for USF School of Education. The event was promoted by the University of San Francisco and the School of Education. The event was attended by current and prospective students in the School of Education along with some friends and family members of the presenters. Presenters included current graduate students, doctoral students, and university professors. The Symposium included panel discussions, round table discussions, paper presentations, pedagogical workshops, and

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

poster sessions as an opportunity for members of the School of Education to share their research. No registration was required for the Open House, Symposium or break-out sessions.

The Open House was held on Saturday morning with lunch and the Symposium following in the afternoon. The Symposium started with a panel discussion on the school to prison pipeline. Panelists included Professor Nathan Alexander, USF Teacher Education Department; Timothy Long, Peer Educator at the San Quentin GED Program; and Professor Desiree Zerquera, USF Leadership Studies Department. Following the panel discussion, the Symposium offered two sessions of small group events, each lasting 60 minutes. During each time slot there were 12-14 small group events occurring simultaneously, as well as poster sessions. Most of the small group events were round table discussions including two or more presentations in the 60 minute time slot. This workshop was offered in the second time slot from 3:30-4:30 just before the closing reception.

This workshop was attended by 5 people. This was the smallest of all of the workshops. It was also the smallest overall event, with no more than 200 people attending the Symposium. There were only two sessions of workshops, as a result quite a few workshops were offered at the same time and many presenters reported that the turnout to their presentations were low, only 2-5 people. While I was thrilled to be able to get a single room, in order to present the workshop in a similar format as the other conference presentations, the length of the workshop and the fact that I was not participating in a panel presentation may have negatively impacted attendance.

In the printed Symposium program, symposium organizers had listed the title of my workshop as “White Educators to Cultivate Awareness of Racial Injustice” rather than “Teaching While White: White Identity Development & Antiracism for Educators.” When I asked about the reason for the change, symposium organizers stated that I had submitted without a title and that

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

the title had been selected from the language of the summary. My records show submission with the same title and summary as each of the other conferences. Unfortunately, as a result of this change, the language used in the program significantly changed the message to participants and shifted the tone of the message portrayed, using much less engaged and active language. This change may also have impacted participation.

Five people attended the workshop, including one White man and four White women. One participant left early. Out of the five participants, four completed evaluations. This was the smallest of the three workshops and overall much quieter. Participants seemed reluctant to comment. Three participants made comments to the whole group and four out of five helped read quotes aloud to the group. Overall participant responses seemed positive. Two participants commented on the experience, one elaborated on a comment they had shared with the group. No one approached me individually following the presentation. Two participants stayed and helped gather materials and clean up the space.

Participant Responses. The same evaluation was used as in the other conferences. Again, participants were asked to respond to two rating scales and several open questions. The first rating scale included pre-workshop or general background information including racial identity, awareness of race and racial conditioning and engagement in discussions of race and racism personally and professionally. According to this data, 100% of participants acknowledged having privilege because they are seen as White. 75% of participants stated that they identify as White, 75% of participants stated that they were often aware of race in their daily interactions, 75% reported feeling comfortable talking about race, and 75% reported that race often comes up in their classroom (or workplace). Fifty percent reported feeling comfortable talking about White privilege and 50% agreed that they often talk to their students about race.

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

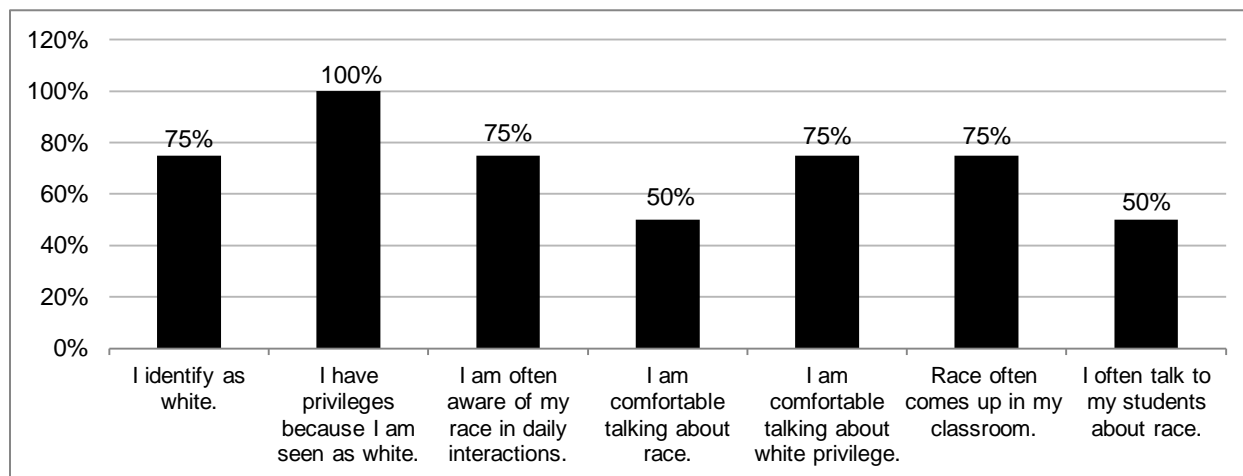


Figure 9. Pre-workshop background information, USF. Participants were asked to rate the following statements prior to participating in the workshop

Participants completed a second rating scale, rating comments related to learning about race, comfort addressing race and strategies for responding to racism as a result of the workshop. One hundred percent of participants reported learning something new about race and racism, better understanding my own racial conditioning, learning strategies to stay present with racism, and practicing mindful awareness and skillful means. Seventy-five percent of participants reported feeling more comfortable talking about race and feeling more prepared to address race in the classroom. Only fifty percent of participants reported having a better understanding racism in our schools. Two of the four participants who completed evaluations stated that they would have liked more time.

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

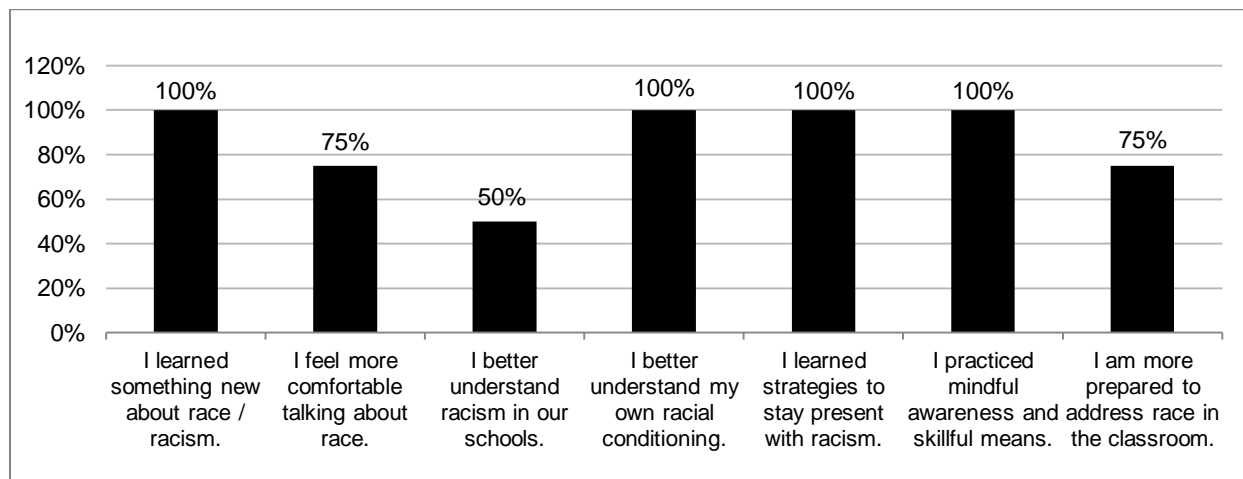


Figure 10. Outcomes of the workshop, USF. Participants were asked to respond to rate the following statements as a result of the workshop

Finally, participants were asked to circle activities that were particularly helpful for them. The following graph shows participant responses. The highest rated activities were discussion of White identity development based on Janet Helms' (1990) statuses of White identity development, discussion or racial conditioning, and the discussion of active, passive and antiracism, based on the Beverly Tatum (2001) passage explaining racism as a moving walkway. One participant rated the history and context as particularly helpful and one participant rated the use of quotations as particularly helpful. No one marked the power flower or role play activities (dyads were omitted due to time constraints). One participant commented that the power flower activity was not particularly effective in this setting since there was not sufficient time to complete the activity. No one marked the whole group discussion or use of mindfulness as particularly helpful.

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

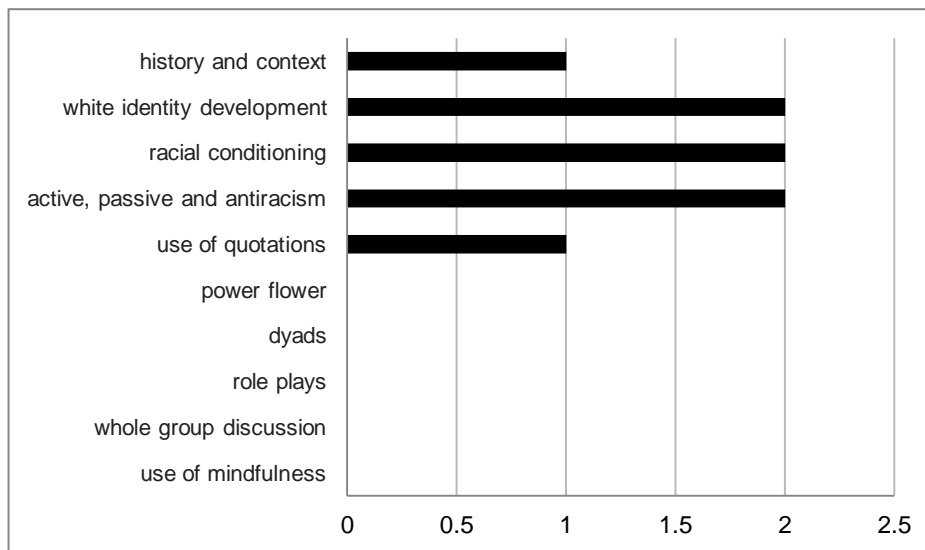


Figure 11. Activity rating scale, USF. Participants were asked to circle any parts of the training that they found particularly helpful.

Participant-Presenter Reflections. Following the Symposium, I made a number of observations and wrote a reflection, shared below. As in previous presentations, I attempted to avoid changes to the presentation between conferences. Due to time constraints it was necessary to make a few changes to condense the material for this presentation. The workshop was significantly shorter at this conference. Scheduling allowed for only a 60 minute presentation rather than 90 minutes as in the other conferences. Due to time constraints, I attempted to condense the material. Based on responses from the previous conferences, I shortened the second section, "White Racial Conditioning", summarizing the content and eliminating the dyad activity. I attempted to keep the remainder of the content as consistent as possible for the sake of this project and for the purposes of evaluating the content. The workshop filled the entire 60 minute time slot without including time to complete the evaluation.

Aside from these changes I used the curriculum as presented at the Hawaii International Conference on Education including the introductory reflection questions and the use of the power flower activity later in the presentation with revised instructions. At the Symposium, as in

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

the Teachers 4 Social Justice Conference, I was able to use a video clip from the Whiteness Project as a starting place for the role play activity. When presenting at the Symposium, I used a condensed version of the role play, as we had done at the Teaching 4 Social Justice Conference. I played the video clip and asked each participant to try responding to McKenna with a partner. As in the other conferences, I shared some examples of skillful means and invited participants to try some of the skillful means from the handout provided with their partner. Finally, as in Hawaii, I passed out the survey at the beginning of the workshop to allow participants to begin completing the demographic information and stressed the importance of their input. I was not able to provide structured time at the end for discussion or evaluations. Similar to participants in Hawaii, many participants responded to the rating scale and not the open-ended questions. Participant responses on the rating scale indicated that results of the workshop were positive. The only suggestion offered in this workshop was a request for additional time.

No one approached me to talk after the presentation. One woman shared that she is French and found it helpful to learn more about race in the United States, stating that there is no racism in France and that it has been difficult for her to understand race and racism since she arrived here. I stated that race does often look different in different places. Unfortunately, I think that was all I said. Two participants said thank you as they left. My parents stayed after, helping to clean up supplies and commenting on the workshop, sharing things they had observed or thought about during the workshop.

Given the small group size, I invited participants to share their responses to the reflections questions. However, as in previous workshops, I would have liked to commit additional time to introductions and sharing responses to the

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

discussion questions. A deeper understanding of participants' relationship to the content could also have allowed me to tailor the presentation more to the needs of the group. I was disappointed by the lack of enthusiasm for the activities. Moving forward I am interested in exploring additional time, alternate activities, and a greater focus on mindfulness in order to deepen the curriculum.

Following this presentation, as in Hawaii, I am excited to develop a longer version of the training to include more explicit instruction in mindfulness and the use of specific mindfulness practices paired with each portion of the presentation. In the first portion of the workshop, I would like to introduce the practice of mindful awareness or mindfulness of the breath as a strategy for staying present as we discuss race and racism. In the second portion of the workshop, I would like to introduce the use of a body scan mindfulness practice before participating in the power flower activity offering participants a specific strategy for tuning into their physical and emotional response to the topic of privilege. Finally, in the third portion, I would like to incorporate mindfulness of emotion as a means of checking in with yourself and responding mindfully to race and racism in our lives.

Having completed the final presentation, I am now evaluating the curriculum and reflecting on the process. While completing this evaluation, I have been invited to share the workshop at a regional training day in the public school system where I work. I will be offering a three hour expanded workshop on April 10th. In discussing the project with the event coordinator and receiving comments on my thesis proposal, I hope to add additional time for each activity, additional

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

mindfulness exercises, additional discussion of racism in our schools, and additional time to discuss commitments and next steps.

Moving forward, I hope to collaborate with local mindfulness organizations and schools in order to develop workshops to share within our schools and communities. I spoke with the director of a local mindfulness organization about coordinating a month-long training for educators, pairing meditation practices with the content, covering one topic per week with follow up tasks and shared reading. In this context I would like to pair: White privilege with the body scan; ways we defend the good White self with mindfulness of the breath; and skillful means with noting or naming thoughts and emotions. I am also considering adding a fourth section to consider community action and next steps. Through future presentations I hope to develop more lasting relationships with individuals doing this work locally within their schools and communities and help bring together communities of educators working for racial justice through peer education and mindfulness. (Workshop Reflection notes, 2/05/17)

Presenting at the USF Symposium on Engaged Scholarship offered an entirely new set of challenges: as it was the smallest event, with the shortest time frame, the curriculum was further condensed. It was clear in participant responses that the shortened time frame was not as effective for engaged learning. Having completed all three conferences, it is important that we examine similarities and differences, as well as themes emerging across conferences.

Cross-Event Analysis and Emergent Themes

Over the course of all three workshops, a number of themes emerged. In this section I will review the data presented above in order to analyze commonalities across events. First, it is

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

important to consider the events themselves. Each conference had a different focus, was advertised differently and drew different participants. A summary of these variables is shown in the chart below.

Table 1. Conference location, theme, audience, and logistics.

Conference	Location	Theme	Audience	Conference Attendance	Workshop Participants	Evaluations Completed
Teachers 4 Social Justice (T4SJ)	Mission High School - San Francisco, California	Intersections of Teaching and Power	Educators, School Staff	Over 2,000	45	98%
Hawaii International Conference on Education (HICE)	Hilton Hawaiian Village Waikiki Beach Resort - Honolulu, Hawaii	15th Annual - Keynote Address on Place Based Learning	Educators, Trainers, Professors, Health Care Professionals	1,300	19	79%
Symposium on Engaged Scholarship (USF)	University of San Francisco - San Francisco, California	5th Annual - Education as Activism: The Role of Educators, Counselors, and Scholars	Staff, Professors, Students, Prospective Students	200 Estimate	5	80%

Despite some notable differences across settings, some common trends emerged. First, across all three conferences, an average of 75-85% of participants: identified as White, acknowledged having racial privilege, were aware of race in daily interactions, and felt comfortable talking about White privilege. An average of 47-46% of participants were comfortable talking about race, reported that race often comes up in the classroom, or often talk to their students about race. These findings underline the importance of supporting White educators in finding ways to acknowledge race and racism in our schools and to skillfully engage

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

in conversations about race.

Table 2. Pre-workshop background information, across settings. Participants were asked to rate the following statements prior to participating in the workshop.

	T4SJ	HIC	USF	AVERAGE
I identify as White.	90%	64%	75%	76%
I have privileges because I am seen as White.	96%	60%	100%	85%
I am often aware of my race in daily interactions.	90%	80%	75%	82%
I am comfortable talking about race.	57%	80%	50%	62%
I am comfortable talking about White privilege.	83%	67%	75%	75%
Race often comes up in my classroom.	54%	49%	75%	59%
I often talk to my students about race.	44%	47%	50%	47%

In addition, across all three conferences a majority of participants reported that as a result of the workshop they learned something new about race and racism (88%), felt more comfortable talking about race (72%), better understood their own racial conditioning (76%), learned strategies to stay present with racism (82%), and practiced mindful awareness and skillful means (77%). The lowest ratings for outcomes across all three conferences were feeling more prepared to address race in the classroom (67%) and understanding racism in our schools (48%). These findings could indicate a need to focus more directly on institutional racism in education, provide more space to discuss ways in which racism emerges in our classrooms, and ways in which we can respond skillfully.

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

Table 3. Outcomes of the workshop, across settings. Participants were asked to respond to rate the following statements as a result of the workshop.

	T4SJ	HIC	USF	AVERAGE
I learned something new about race and racism.	76%	87%	100%	88%
I feel more comfortable talking about race.	68%	73%	75%	72%
I better understand racism in our schools.	41%	53%	50%	50%
I better understand my own racial conditioning.	76%	53%	100%	76%
I learned strategies to stay present with racism.	85%	60%	100%	82%
I practiced mindful awareness and skillful means.	84%	47%	100%	77%
I am more prepared to address race in the classroom.	54%	73%	75%	67%

Finally, across all three conferences, material on White identity development, racial conditioning and the use of quotations were rated highest, marked as particularly helpful. Activities, including dyads and role plays, were rated lowest across all three conferences. These scores could demonstrate a need to further develop activities in which participants can engage with the material. In the evaluation comments, numerous participants remarked on the need for additional time. The efficacy of these activities could increase given more time for participants to engage and work in small groups / dyads. These scores could also reflect unease or discomfort surrounding activities and engagement with topics around race and racism, making these activities less preferred, in favor of higher ratings for direct instruction which might pose less risk for participants. Analyses of these findings will be discussed in greater length in chapter four along with recommendations for further work and study.

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

Table 4. Activity rating scale, across settings. Participants were asked to circle any parts of the training that they found particularly helpful.

	T4SJ (44)	HICE (15)	USF (4)	OVERALL (63)
History and Context	32%	20%	25%	29%
White Identity Development	30%	47%	50%	35%
Racial Conditioning	41%	27%	50%	38%
Active, Passive, and Antiracism	55%	47%	25%	51%
Use of Quotations	43%	27%	25%	38%
Power Flower	16%	13%	0%	14%
Role Plays	11%	0%	0%	8%
Whole Group Discussion	32%	7%	0%	24%
Use of Mindfulness	27%	13%	0%	22%

In this chapter I have shared my auto-ethnographic notes and documented the development of the projects. I have explored participant responses to the workshop and curriculum as well as my reflections on the workshop experience and the curriculum across three conference presentations. I have also considered a few emerging trends in participant responses looking for similarities, strengths, and weaknesses across settings. In the coming chapter, I will consider my findings as well as recommendations for further research and next steps.

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

Chapter IV - Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of the project was to create and implement a professional development workshop introducing White educators to race, racism, White identity development, and antiracism through a Critical Race lens—while creating a safe space for critical self-reflection through the use of mindfulness practice. In this chapter, I consider the findings of the project as well as recommendations for future work. I consider the outcomes across all three conferences, alignment with Critical Race Theory, and the use of mindfulness practice within the curriculum. I then document my next steps in continuing this work. Finally, I share recommendations, specifically: recommendations for educators pursuing antiracism, recommendations for educators facilitating discussions of racism, and recommendations for further research.

Outcomes Across Conferences

Overall the data show both a high level of racial identity awareness among participants in the conferences and much lower levels of awareness of race in the classroom and comfort discussing race. As shown in chapter three, across all three conferences an average of 75-85% of participants identified as White, acknowledged having racial privilege, were aware of race in daily interactions, and felt comfortable talking about White privilege. At the same time, only 47-46% of participants, on average, were comfortable talking about race, reported that race often comes up in the classroom, or often talk to their students about race. This disparity, along with the overrepresentation of White racial identity among educators (US Department of Education, 2016), underline the importance of supporting White educators in finding ways to acknowledge race and racism in our schools and to skillfully engage in conversations about race.

According to the survey data and participant responses, the curriculum and workshop

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

model were effective in increasing participant knowledge of race and racism, building capacity to address race, and introducing mindfulness as a means of staying present with the discomfort that might arise in addressing race and racism. Across conferences, over 80% of participants reported that they learned something new about race and racism, 76% reported that they better understood their own racial conditioning. On average, 72% of participants reported that they felt more comfortable talking about race, 82% reported that they had learned strategies to stay present with racism, and 77% reported that they had practice mindful awareness and skillful means (77%). Participant responses reflect a positive overall response to the creation of safe spaces to provide education related to race, racism, White identity development, and antiracism.

Across conferences participant ratings were lowest in the areas of understanding racism in U.S. schools (48%) and feeling more prepared to address race in the classroom (67%). These findings could indicate a need to focus more directly on institutional racism in education, provide more space to discuss ways in which racism emerges in our classrooms, and ways in which we can respond skillfully. Participant comments also reflected a desire for activities which could be used in the classroom. However, as discussed in my participant-presenter reflections (chapter two) this was not the intention of the workshop. While our society and the education field in particular often promote the use of concrete curriculums and activities, critical pedagogy and multicultural education teach us that token events and activities will never be sufficient for transformative education. It is crucial that we continue down the challenging road of critical self-reflection without succumbing to the false allure of tokenizing practices.

Across all three conferences participants responded most positively to curriculum related to White identity development, racial conditioning and the use of quotations. On average these items were rated highest across conferences with participants marking them as "particularly

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

helpful." Hands-on activities included dyads and role plays were rated lowest across all three conferences. These scores could demonstrate a critique of the activities chosen or the need for additional time. Numerous participants remarked on the need for additional time, which could have impacted the effectiveness of hands-on activities.

It is also important to consider that racial conditioning and subjectivity might play a role in participant responses to survey questions. These scores could reflect discomfort with actively engaging topics around race and racism. Participants gave higher ratings for topics covered through direct instruction (which allows participants to remain in a more passive role and might pose less risk for participants). Actively participating in activities could cause cognitive dissonance or trigger White fragility, resulting in lower participant scores on the evaluations. Participant survey responses are subjective and may be impacted by cultural conditioning. As Bonilla-Silva (2013) argues, “the normative climate in the post-civil rights era has made illegitimate the public expression of racially based feelings and viewpoints, surveys on racial attitudes have come like multiple-choice exams in which respondents work hard to choose the ‘right’ answers” (p. 11-12). Yet, in providing training, it is important to consider participants perceptions of the curriculum and of their own attitudes and behaviors.

Alignment with Critical Race Theory

I would like to consider the ways in which the workshop curriculum reflects the tenets of Critical Race Theory. The first tenet of Critical Race Theory—racism is normal—is clearly reflected in the foundations of this workshop. A second tenet—that race is a social construction—is implied through the discussion of race, but this could perhaps be made more explicit. However, the remaining tenets—interest convergence, intersectionality, and counter-narrative—are not addressed. Critical race theorists might argue that the workshop does not do

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

enough to confront participants with the realities of racism.

I hold two conflicting opinions. First, further teaching of the principles of Critical Race Theory could support participants in developing a broader understanding of race and racism in our society. Second, these ideas might seem radical and deter some individuals who have not yet developed an awareness of the breadth and depth of racism in our society. In order to remain focused on the inner work of White folks who are just awakening to the realities of racism, I might consider interest convergence and intersectionality as material for future workshops or follow-up discussions. It has been my experience entering into this work that there is an ebb and flow, that I must at times practice mindfulness and wait for the waves of emotion, the tide of White Fragility, to recede in order to more skillfully re-engage with the work.

In this context and responding to the comments from participants, I would like to be more explicit in stating our focus on self-reflection as a transformative action. Numerous participants complained that they were hoping for activities they could use in the classroom. There is no activity or curriculum that can address racism in the classroom without the challenging inner work of educators to become antiracist. It is crucial that we avoid essentialism and tokenism and do the work of inner transformation in order to be agents of change in the classroom.

Recommendations for Further Development of the Curriculum

Three areas of growth emerged across conferences: (1) the clarity of intent, (2) limitations of content, and (3) application of mindfulness. First, as discussed above, it was clear in participant responses that the curriculum did not clearly address the intent of the workshop. While our color-blind society and our activity-focused education system may have contributed to participants' desire for antiracist activities or materials, the curriculum should clearly address the focus on critical self-reflection as transformative action. Only through critical self-reflection can

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

educators begin to show up in ways that are anti-racist allowing them to challenge their own racist conditioning and act in solidarity with educators and students of color.

Second, there were a number of limitations within the content. Given the limitations of the project and the goal of developing a 90-minute professional development workshop it was necessary to limit the breadth and depth of the content. However, the curriculum would benefit from the inclusion of several additional concepts and areas of inquiry. It should be made clear in the curriculum that race is socially constructed. The introduction to race would benefit from discussion of the construction of race, the construction of Whiteness, and a brief history of racialization in the United States. It could be helpful to reorganizing the presentation, using the areas of structural, institutional and interpersonal racism as portions of the presentation. The curriculum could benefit from more explicit discussion of silencing ("color blindness"/ "colormuteness") and the discussion of implicit bias, microaggressions, dysconscious and unconscious racism, and equity traps. In addition, it could be helpful to provide additional guidance and resources for participants interested in continuing toward antiracism. It could be helpful to add a fourth section, creating space to consider community action and next steps.

Finally, it was clear from participant responses that the use of mindfulness within the curriculum could be further developed. It could be helpful to introduce research on the impacts of mindfulness in mitigating the impacts of bias and discrimination and provide direct instruction in mindfulness practice, or present the workshop within meditation and mindfulness communities in order to ensure prior knowledge of and commitment to mindfulness. Presenting to broader audiences, I would like to provide direct instruction in mindfulness and pair specific mindfulness practices with each area of content. For example, teaching the body scan as a mindfulness practice before introducing White privilege would encourage participants to notice

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

what arises in their bodies while discussing their privilege; instruction on mindfulness of the breath could be taught alongside the ways we defend the good White self; noting thoughts and emotions could be taught with skillful means of responding to racism.

Next Steps in Presenting the Curriculum

While completing this project I have been invited to present the curriculum in an workshop for the public school system where I work. I will be presenting the curriculum in a three-hour workshop, expanding the curriculum to include many of the changes discussed above this year. I will be directly addressing the intention of the workshop and including additional time for each of the hands-on activities.

In the workshop, I will be co-facilitating with two of my colleagues: one presenting mindfulness instruction and one presenting grounding activities. We will provide direct instruction in mindfulness practices practice paired with each area of the curriculum and will provide explicit opportunities for practice. In addition, we will be offering a series of grounding activities to support self-regulation for those who are less familiar with mindfulness. These concrete activities and strategies will also provide participants with strategies to use in the classroom and potentially share with their students. Finally, we will be creating additional space for discussion of racism in our schools and additional time to discuss next steps within our school communities.

In the long term, I hope to partner with a local mindfulness organization to coordinate a month-long training for educators, which would pair meditation practices with the content and cover one portion of the curriculum each week, with follow up tasks and shared readings. I hope to sustain my engagement in antiracism education by developing community based interventions, working with fellow educators in the local community to develop study groups and create

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

community. White racial conditioning encourages individualism and isolation; I hope to challenge these cultural norms and build relationships with individuals doing this work locally within their schools and communities. I hope to come together in community with educators working for racial justice through peer education and mindfulness. Finally, I hope to pursue further research in this area by getting involved in participatory action research with White educators practicing antiracism.

Recommendations for White Identity Development and Antiracism

For those interested in pursuing a deeper understanding of race, racism, Whiteness, racial conditioning, and antiracist or anti-oppressive pedagogy, I highly recommend continued study, participation in group or community learning experiences, and development of a consistent mindfulness or meditation practice. For those new to discussions of race and Whiteness, Robin DiAngelo's (2012) book, *What Does It Mean to be White? Developing White Racial Literacy*, offers a wonderful starting place as it defines terms, offers concrete examples, and provides discussion questions for each chapter.

For those looking to deepen their knowledge of race in education, I recommend Lisa Delpit's (2012) *"Multiplication is for White People": Raising Expectations for Other People's Children*, Christopher Emdin's (2016) *For White Folks Who Teach in the Hood ... and the Rest of Y'all Too*, Shawn Ginwright's (2016) *Hope and Healing in Urban Education: How Urban Activists and Teachers are Reclaiming Matters of the Heart*, and Beverly Tatum's (2007) *Can We Talk about Race?: And Other Conversations in an Era of School Resegregation*. For further recommendations and scholarly research please see the attached reference section. For guided learning opportunities, please consider antiracism or racial justice trainings in your area.

For continued learning about mindfulness and meditation, I highly recommend reading

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

the works of John Kabat-Zinn and Thich Nhat Hanh and considering opportunities for guided practice in your area. Meditation centers and secular mindfulness practice can offer us a space to explore our own conditioning and develop the capacity to be with discomfort, slowing our reactions and allowing us to respond more skillfully. For those interested in mindfulness as a practice supporting antiracism, I recommend Beth Berila's (2016) *Integrating Mindfulness into Anti-Oppressive Pedagogy*. Finally, in approaching this work, I recommend building our capacity for fierce compassion, endless patience, and tireless persistence.

Recommendations for Educators Facilitating Discussions of Racism

For those considering facilitating discussions of race or racism, I urge continued compassion and share my belief that antiracism is a practice, much like meditation is a practice. When discussing antiracism and especially when serving in a leadership role it is crucial that we practice critical self-reflection, model compassion for self and others, develop community and learn to act in solidarity. I found Undoing Racism with the People's Institute (<http://www.pisab.org/>) and the White and Awakening in Sangha at East Bay Meditation Center (<https://eastbaymeditation.org/>) particularly helpful in my journey so far. I am looking forward to attending the White Privilege Conference (<http://www.whiteprivilegeconference.com/>), April 26th-30th, and continuing my work toward antiracism.

Recommendations for Further Research

While there is a growing body of literature helping us to understand Whiteness, it is crucial that we continue to consider the impacts that the overwhelming Whiteness of American educators have on both Students of Color and White Students. Continued study is needed in order to fully understand the impacts of Whiteness in education, strategies for teacher education

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

and training in antiracism, and the potential impacts of critical self-reflection and pedagogical practice on racism in education. We must challenge our institutions of higher education and teacher preparation programs to address race, identity, and racial justice pedagogy in order to prepare educators to effectively address these topics in the classroom.

It is crucial that we work to understand both effective strategies for educator allyship and means of addressing race and antiracism effectively with students, especially young students. The majority of research on anti-racism, racial justice, and social justice education focuses on secondary and higher education. We must begin to challenge the colorblind notion that these issues should not be addressed in primary grades; only color-blindness and White fragility can convince us that young children should not discuss these important topics with guidance and support from adults in their lives. Finally, further study is needed in order to demonstrate the impacts of mindfulness in antiracism and its potential role in antiracism education.

Conclusion

This project explored the use of mindfulness in antiracist professional development for educators, documenting the development and implementation of workshop curriculum across three conference settings. The data demonstrated the effectiveness of professional development in increasing knowledge of and willingness to discuss race, racism, and White Identity development as evidenced by the participants' post-workshop evaluations. The workshop engaged White educators in the important inner work of understanding White racial conditioning and actively challenging the institutional and structural racism inherent in our education system. Functioning through a Critical Race lens, the workshop focused on White Identity development (Helms, 1990), White privilege (McIntosh, 1989), and White fragility (DiAngelo, 2011). Participants were challenged to explore their awareness of and role in addressing racism using

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

mindfulness as a means of staying present and responding skillfully. This project speaks to the importance of educating educators about race and racism and offers a sample curriculum for those seeking to continue in this work (see Appendix A).

WHITE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANTIRACISM FOR EDUCATORS

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APPENDIX

Teaching While White:

White Identity Development and Antiracism for Educators

Teaching While White: White Identity Development & Antiracism for Educators

Anne Bauer & Amber Taylor

Workshop Summary

This workshop will focus on the inner personal work of White educators to cultivate awareness of racial injustice. We will work to build an understanding of the structural realities of race in the American educational system (Ladson-Billings, G. 2006). We will explore conceptual frameworks for racism (Tatum, B. 2001) and Whiteness (Helms, J. 1990) – including white privilege, White fragility (DiAngelo, R. 2011) and our notions of the “good” white self (DiAngelo, R. 2011). We will discuss White Identity development (Helms, J. 1990) and build awareness of our racial conditioning. We will explore the impacts of our own White racial conditioning on our awareness of and role in addressing racism in our classrooms. Throughout the workshop we will practice mindfulness and explore ways of working with challenging emotions that arise as we address racism - our own internalized racism, that of our colleagues, and the institutional racism we encounter in our daily lives as educators. Finally, we will consider possibilities for moving forward in this work, through mindfulness (Berila, B. 2016), community building, and activism. We approach this work as a practice and believe that there are no experts, we hope that you will partner with us in this work today.

Workshop Agenda

Our Intention, Our Perspective & Community Norms

- Flower Power - Sponge activity
- Our Intentions and Perspective
- EBMC Agreements - Suggestions, Requests

Race in our Schools, Being with the Discomfort & Building Capacity

- History & Context
 - Racism is Normal - Critical Race Theory - Ex: Intent vs. Impact
 - Structural, Institutional & Cultural Racism
 - Racism in Education - Structural Inequities & Educational Debt
- Being with the Discomfort and Building Capacity

Activity: The Power Flower

Racial Conditioning & Whiteness as Normal

- White Identity Development
- White Fragility / Cognitive Dissonance - Privilege, Shame, Guilt
- Avoiding Race - Silencing, Racially Coded Language, Color Blindness / Muteness

Handout: Ways We Defend Our “Good” White Selves

Active Racism, Passive Racism, Anti Racism & Skillful Means

- “The Moving Sidewalk”
- Skillful Means

Activity: The Whiteness Project (Video) & Role Play

Dialogue & Final Thoughts

- Silent Meditation, Reflection – Write or Draw, Dialogue & Commitments
- Evaluations
- Resources & Contact List

Teaching While White: Workshop Summary

This workshop will focus on **the inner personal work of White educators** to cultivate awareness of racial injustice. We will work to build an understanding of the structural realities of race in the American educational system. We will explore the impacts of our own **White racial conditioning** on our awareness of and role in addressing racial inequities in their classrooms. We will explore conceptual frameworks for **racism and Whiteness** (Helms, J. 1990) – including white privilege, White fragility and our notions of the “good” white self (DiAngelo, R. 2011). We will discuss **White Identity development** (Helms, J. 1990) and build awareness of our racial conditioning. We will **practice mindfulness** and explore ways of **working with challenging emotions** that arise as we address racism – for example, our own internalized racism, that of our colleagues and the institutional racism we encounter in our daily lives as educators. Finally, we will consider possibilities for **moving forward in this work, through mindfulness** (Berila, B. 2016), **community building**, and **activism**. We approach this work as a practice and believe that there are no experts, we hope that you will partner with us in this work today.

Teaching While White

White Identity Development & Antiracism for Educators

Anne Bauer & Amber Taylor - Symposium on Engaged Scholarship, February 2017

Workshop Agenda

— — —

1. Our Intention, Our Perspective & Community Norms (5 minutes)
2. Race in our Schools, Being with the Discomfort & Building Capacity (15 minutes)
History & Context, Structural Racism in Education, Being with Discomfort
3. Racism, Racial Conditioning & Whiteness as Neutral (15 minutes)
Racism as Normal, **White Identity Development**, White Fragility, Cognitive Dissonance
4. Active Racism, Passive Racism, Anti Racism and **Skillful Means** (15 minutes)
5. Reflection, Dialogue & Commitments (10 minutes)
Evaluations and Resources

Intention & Perspective

— — —

- **Intention:** creating a safe space for White educators to discuss and confront our own racist conditioning in order to move toward antiracism in our schools.
- **Perspective:** buddhism, meditation, education, we met at EBMC in the White Awakening Sangha, we approach this work as a practice and believe that there are not experts, we hope that today you will partner with us in this work.

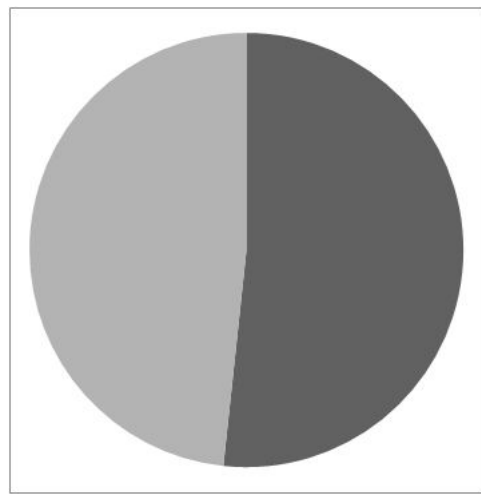
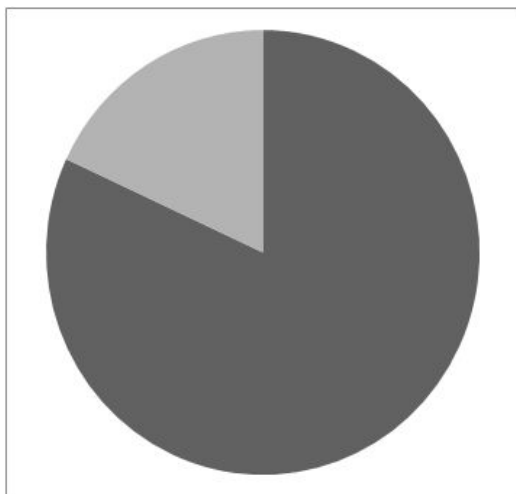
We each are coming from different places, levels of awareness and experiences. Invite you to be where you are and have patience and compassion for yourself and others.

Groups Agreements

EBMC Agreements

- Both / And
- Practice Self Focus
- No Shame / No Blame
- Create Space / Take Space
- Intent and Impact
- Practice Mindful Listening
- Right to Pass *
- Confidentiality

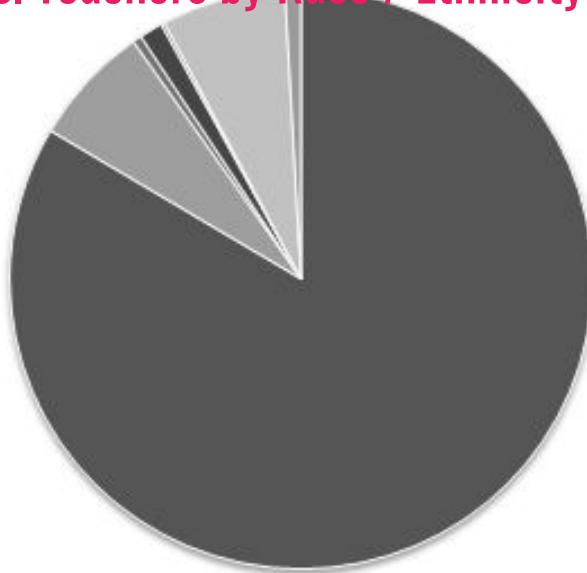
In 2011-2012 81.9% of educators were White ...



... while only 51.7% of students were White

US Department of
Education , July 2016

U.S. Teachers by Race / Ethnicity



- White, 83.5%
- Black, 6.7%
- American Indian / Alaskan Native, 0.5%
- Asian, 1.3%
- Native Hawaiian, 0.2%
- Hispanic, 6.9%
- Two or More Races, 0.9%

National Center for Education Statistics, 2010

“Whiteness is the assumed norm ... Not acknowledging their racialized backgrounds makes it easier for White educators to ignore their racial privileges and the legacy of racism in the U.S.” (Ochoa, 2014)

"When individuals are part of the majority, their membership in the dominant group seems normal and natural and is often taken for granted ... **Whites seldom consider the possibility that their race comes into play at all**" (Whitely, 2006)

“White people in North America live in a social environment that protects and **insulates them from race-based stress.**” (DiAngelo, 2011)

“If privilege is defined as a legitimization of one’s entitlement to resources, it can also be defined as **permission to escape or avoid** any challenge to this entitlement.” (Vodde as cited in DiAngelo, 2011)

“[I]t is critical that all white people build the stamina to sustain conscious and explicit engagement with race.” (DiAngelo, 2011)

History & Context:

- **Racism is Normal in Our Society**
Critical Race Theory & Critical Race Theory in Education
Ex: Intent vs. Impact
- **Beyond Interpersonal Interactions**
Structural, Institutional and Cultural Racism
Ex: Redlining and Gentrification
- **Racism in Education**
Beyond Deficit Thinking, Culture of Poverty
Structural Inequities in Educational
Ex: Educational Debt

"Prejudice is one of the inescapable consequences of living in a racist society. Cultural racism - **the cultural images and messages that affirm the assumed superiority of Whites and the assumed inferiority of people of color - is like a smog in the air.** Sometimes it is so thick it is visible, other times it is less apparent, but always, day in and day out, we are breathing it. **None of us would introduce ourselves as 'smog-breathers' (and most of us don't want to be described as prejudiced),** but if we live in a smoggy place, how can we avoid breathing the air?"

Beverly Tatum, "Defining Racism: Can We Talk?" (2001)

Being with Discomfort & Building Capacity

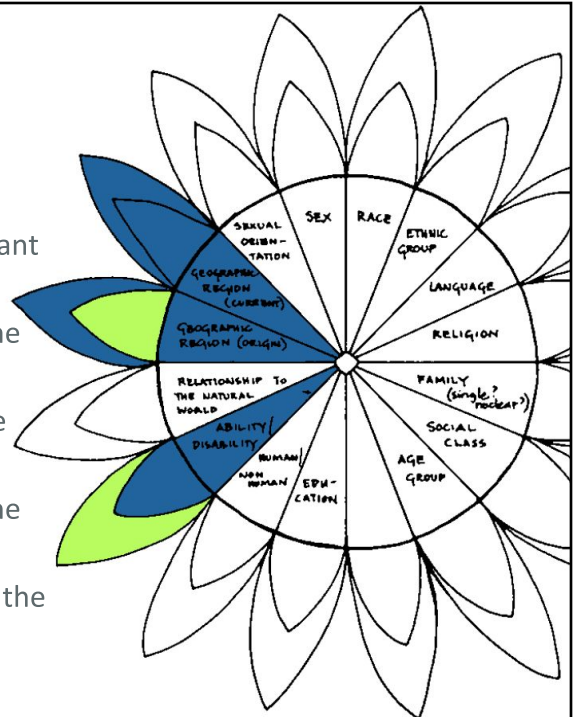
Being with the Discomfort – cultural conditioning to avoid race and discomfort
Building capacity & Normalizing – comfort / suffering

- Self-Awareness
- Skillful Means
- Calling People In

Check In with Your Body & Your Breath

Activity: Power Flower

1. Color the center slice to represent the dominant societal norm or privileged group.
2. Color the small / “inner” petal to represent the way you are seen in society. If your identity matches the dominant social norm please use the same color to show that privilege.
3. Color the large / “outer” petal to represent the way you see yourself. If you identify with the dominant social norm please continue to use the same color to show that privilege.



Activity: Power Flower

1 - RACE

6 - SOCIAL CLASS

11 - ABILITY / DISABILITY

2 - ETHNIC GROUP

7 - AGE GROUP

12 - RELATIONSHIP TO THE NATURAL
WORLD

3 - LANGUAGE

8 - YOUR CHOICE

13 - GEOGRAPHIC REGION (ORIGIN)

4 - RELIGION

9 - EDUCATION

14 - GEOGRAPHIC REGION (CURRENT)

5 - FAMILY

10 - HUMAN /
NON-HUMAN

15 - SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Suggestions for number 8 could include: citizenship status, property ownership, body politics, perceived beauty / attractiveness / health ...

“... we need to **interrogate our own racial and class privilege** before we can effectively function in an increasingly diverse classroom where the teacher is almost always White.”

(Thomas, 2007)

Racial Conditioning & Whiteness as Normal

- Disrupting the Silence
- Talking about Privilege
- Developing Self-Awareness

White Identity Development

Helms (1995) developed a series of status “through which Whites can move to recognize and abandon their privilege”

- Contact Status = Obliviousness
- Disintegration Status = Disorientation & Anxiety
- Reintegration Status = Superiority
- Pseudo-Independence Status = Deceptive Tolerance
- Immersion/Emersion Status = Understanding Privilege
- Autonomy Status = Acceptance

“the person has come to peace with his or her own Whiteness, separating it from a sense of privilege, and is able to approach those who are culturally different without prejudice.”
(Diller & Moule, 2005)

White Racial Conditioning

- Protecting “The Good White Self”
 - Privilege, Shame & Guilt
 - White Fragility - inability to tolerate discomfort
 - Cognitive Dissonance - confusion arising from encountering race
 - Whiteness as Property - access to resources based on race
- Avoiding Race
 - Silencing - ex: I’m sure that wasn’t about race
 - Racially Coded Language - ex: low socioeconomic status
 - Color Blindness, Color Muteness - inability to see / speak race

Activity: Opting Out vs. Leaning In - Dyads

- What is coming up for you so far?
- What is a time when you were aware of your racial conditioning?
How does that feel in your body?
- How do you protect the “good white self”?

"I sometimes visualize **the ongoing cycle of racism as a moving walkway at the airport**. Active racist behavior is equivalent to walking fast on the conveyor belt. The person engaged in **active racist behavior** has identified with the ideology of White supremacy and is moving with it. **Passive racist behavior** is equivalent to standing still on the walkway. No overt effort is being made, but the conveyor belt moves the bystanders along to the same destination as those who are actively walking. Some of the bystanders may feel the motion of the conveyor belt, see the active racists ahead of them, and choose to turn around, unwilling to go to the same destination as the White supremacists. But unless they are walking actively in the opposite direction at a speed faster than the conveyor belt - unless they are **actively antiracist** - they will find themselves carried along with the others."

Beverly Tatum, "Defining Racism: Can We Talk?" (2001)

Cultivating Skillful Means for Anti-racist Engagement

— — —

Compassion for self and others

Speak from a position of empathy

Speak from your own experience

Engage people in the spirit of curiosity

Consider stating your own position vs. challenging

Pause

Ask permission

Separate person from action

One-liners to support your mindful response in the moment

Practice WAIT: Why Am I Talking?

Activity: Practicing Skillful Means

Activity: The Whiteness Project (Video Clip)

- Role Play Skillful Response
- Try on Means of Responding
- Reflect on Effective/Ineffective Means
- Whole Group Role Play / Debrief

The Whiteness Project



"I am an American before
I am anything else"

Kathie, Buffalo

60% OF WHITE AMERICANS SAY RACE
RELATIONS ARE "GENERALLY GOOD."

73% OF MILLENNIALS BELIEVE
NEVER CONSIDERING RACE
WOULD IMPROVE SOCIETY



"I don't see color,
I mean I do ..."

Makenna, Dallas

Dialogue & Final Thoughts

- 2 minutes - Silent Reflection / Meditation
What came up for you today?
What resonated for you?
What made you uncomfortable?
What would you like to explore further?
- 3 minutes - Reflection – Journal / Drawing
Record your thoughts, consider adding a commitment you can make to move toward anti-racism ...

Guided Questions for Discussion

- What is something that resonated for you in today's workshop?
- What is something you are taking away from the workshop today?
- What is one commitment you can make to move toward active anti-racism? (Ex: not un-friending)

Thank you!

Amber Mackenzie Taylor
University of San Francisco
akenzietaylor@hotmail.com
teachingwhilewhite@gmail.com

Please take a few moments
to complete an evaluation
before you leave ...

There will also be a
resource list available.

“Whiteness is the assumed norm ... Not acknowledging their racialized backgrounds makes it easier for White educators to ignore their racial privileges and the legacy of racism in the U.S.” (Ochoa, 2014)

"When individuals are part of the majority, their membership in the dominant group seems normal and natural and is often taken for granted ... **Whites seldom consider the possibility that their race comes into play at all**" (Whitely, 2006)

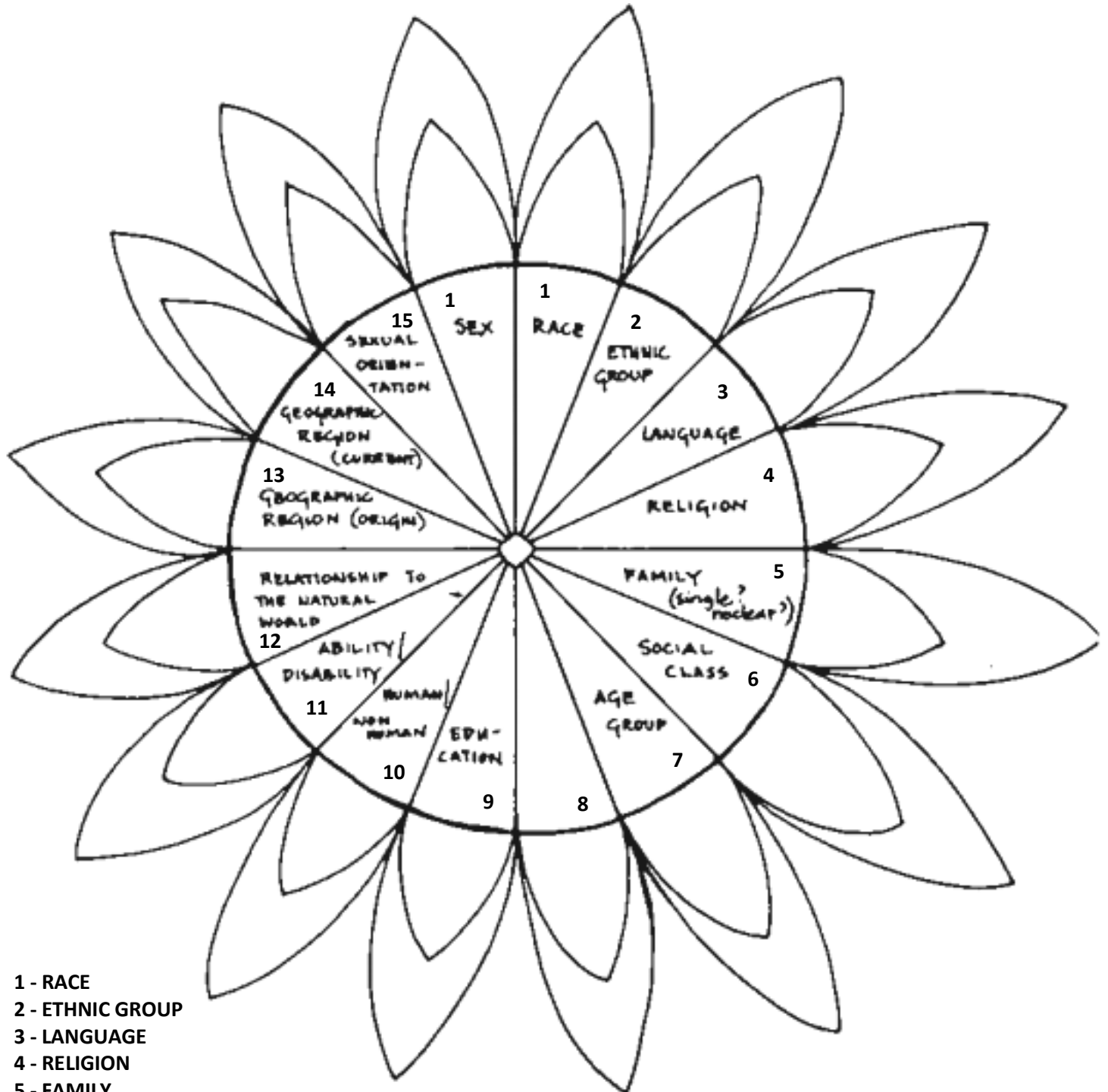
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“[I]t is critical that all white people build the stamina to sustain conscious and explicit engagement with race.” (DiAngelo, 2011)

The Power Flower

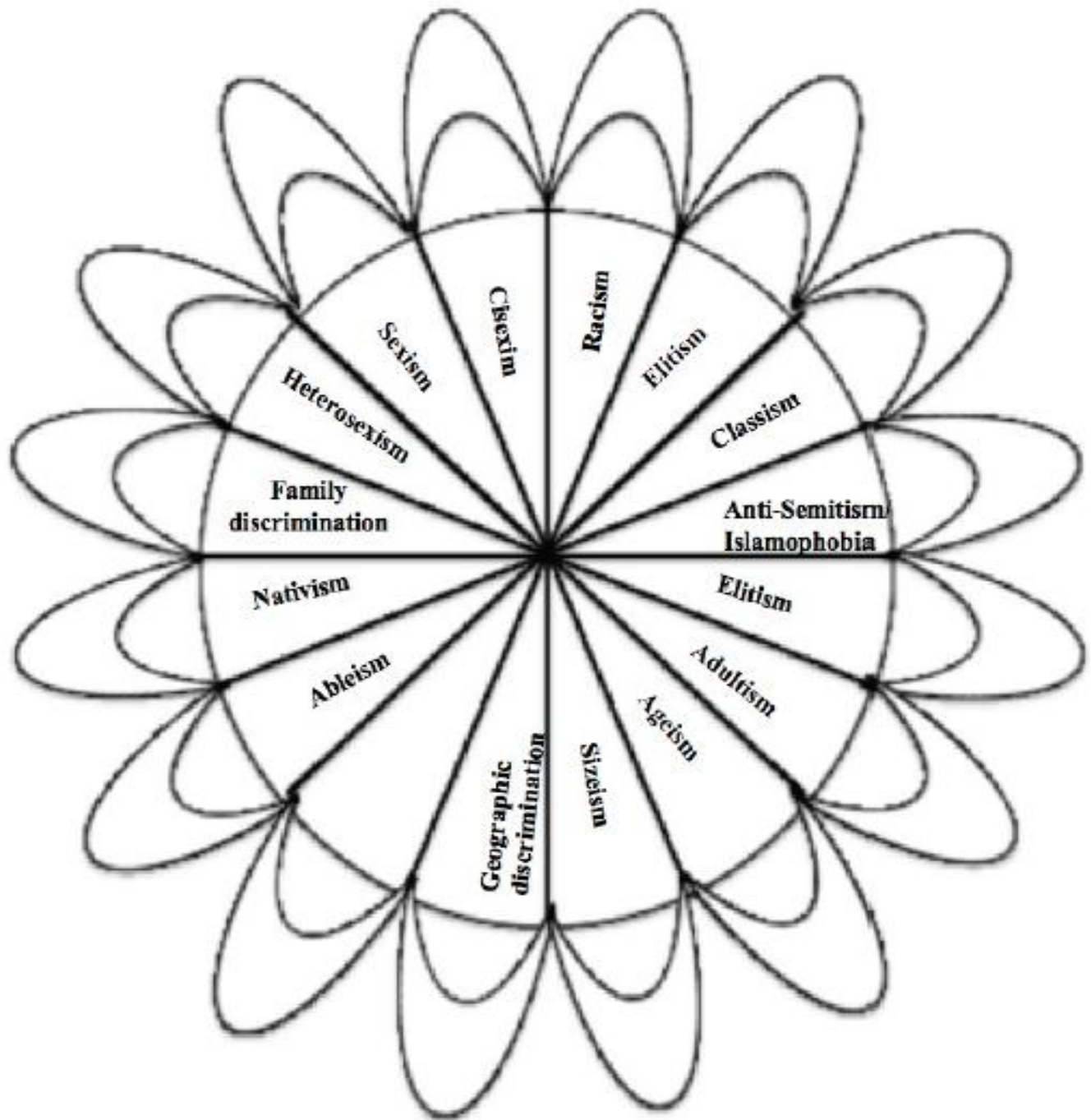
Source: Arnold, Rick, Bev Burke, e.a., Educating for a Change, Between The Lines, Toronto (1991)



- 1 - RACE
- 2 - ETHNIC GROUP
- 3 - LANGUAGE
- 4 - RELIGION
- 5 - FAMILY
- 6 - SOCIAL CLASS
- 7 - AGE GROUP
- 8 - (YOUR CHOICE)
- 9 - EDUCATION
- 10 - HUMAN / NON-HUMAN

- 11 - ABILITY / DISABILITY
- 12 - RELATIONSHIP TO THE NATURAL WORLD
- 13 - GEOGRAPHIC REGION (ORIGIN)
- 14 - GEOGRAPHIC REGION (CURRENT)
- 15 - SEXUAL ORIENTATION

The Power Flower Reflecting on the "Isms"



Reference: *Educating for a Change*. R. Arnold, B. Burke, C. James, D. Martin, B. Thomeas (1991). Adapted by Ilalo Kalika, (2001) Adapted by JuanCarlos Arauz, (2008)

WAYS WE DEFEND OUR 'GOOD' WHITE SELVES

Crystal Johnson, Kitsy Schoen. White Awakening Sangha. East Bay Meditation Center, 2015.

- Withdrawing from interacting - emotionally, intellectually, socially and/or physically
- Assuming/insisting that race is not at play in any given interaction
- Minimizing/denying difference (believing in color-blindness or in Buddhist circles privileging the ultimate over relative)
- Focusing on our intent vs. the impact of what happened on person from targeted group
- Shifting the discussion to our own experience of oppression
- Minimizing/denying realities of oppression
- Wanting redemption/approval/acceptance from people of color
- Using shame/guilt/distress as a buffer/show-stopper
- Assuming our perspective is 'right' - if it doesn't make sense to us that means it doesn't make sense. Assuming our sense of timing is right.
- Not being willing to take risks, make mistakes. Not going outside our comfort zone. Staying quiet and letting others make mistakes.
- Hearing a person of color's experience of racism as an 'attack'
- Blaming the person who is raising race related issues for our feelings
- Believing our feelings are facts (if I feel attacked, that's what happened)
- Refusal to explore/accept/acknowledge our racial/racist conditioning
- Denigrating POC in order to feel better about ourselves (this could be a sign of both clinging and aggression)
- 'Wanting' to be anti-racist without giving up any privileges
- Equating discomfort/distress with lack of safety
- "I'm not like other white people." Judging and separating oneself from other white people.
- Asserting the 'right' to be seen as an individual rather than as a member of our racial group membership.
- Intellectualization - focusing on the intellectual understanding of the situation to minimize the anxiety-provoking/difficult emotions you're feeling. Separating the emotions from the ideas.
- Rationalization - convincing oneself that the situation is not as bad as it seems, that no wrong has been done and all is ok
- Social comparisons - convincing oneself that what you did was not as bad as it could have been or that you managed the difficult situation better than someone else would have. Assuming you are

more skillful.

- Using distraction - thinking of anything else or purposefully finding things to do, to distract oneself from the mistake or mess you made.
- Dissociation – “zoning out” to escape difficult feelings
- Confusion/delusion - staying in a state of confusion, bewilderment, feeling muddled.
- Sadness - feeling hopeless, depressed about one’s ability to ever skillfully handle a similar situation.
- Doubt - doubting oneself; pondering/questioning your ability to be skillful, to know enough to intervene effectively in a situation. Doubting your intention.
- Blaming the POC - she’s too sensitive, too defensive. What I did wasn’t that “bad.”
- Assuming my experience is “right” - feeling “enlightened” and self-righteous about the situation.
- Misusing the concept that it’s OK to make mistakes and shirking responsibility for the impact of what was said/done/or not done.
- Self-righteousness with other white folks.

RACIST BEHAVIORS and MICRO-AGGRESSIONS

Some issues raised fall more under the category of racist behavior and micro-aggressions; these are listed here. However, it’s important to also note that the ways we defend our ‘good white selves’ are in fact aggressions/micro-aggressions.

- Asking people of color to educate us.
- Not being aware of our stereotyping
- Rushing in with ‘whiteness’ - solutions/approaches that make sense to us (sometimes called ‘dysfunctional rescuing’)
- Denigrating POC in order to feel better about ourselves (this could be a sign of both clinging and aggression?)
- Thinking and moving in a way that indicates you think all people of color want to be your friend, want to talk to you. And/or wanting to be friends with people of color so moving toward them without an intuitive sense that the feeling is mutual.

SKILLFUL MEANS: ADDRESSING RACISM, WHITE SUPREMACY AND PRIVILEGE WITH OTHER WHITE INDIVIDUALS.

Stay rooted in compassion for self and other. We share the inevitable absorption of racist conditioning. Dividing ourselves into good and bad white people is not helpful for collective liberation and structural change. Ranking, including ranking ourselves in terms of racism, is an expression of our white conditioning. Turn heart/mind towards the other white person/people. A kind expression can go a long way.

Begin by acknowledging something positive. Whether it's as simple as "I'm so glad you raised this. I'm sure there are others thinking something similar". Perhaps it's identifying a positive motivation (intent), for example: "I can see you were trying to make a connection...". before addressing impact.

Speak from a position of empathy, trying to identify and acknowledge the person's feeling and the associated need/value. "I wonder if you are feeling uncomfortable and wanting to connect with the group."

Speak from your own experience. Acknowledge that you've said/thought/done similar things.

Follow up and stay connected. Check in with the person whose words/actions you've challenged. Invite their feelings / feedback. Take responsibility for any unskillful behaviors on your part and also honor if the person does not want to engage further.

Consider stating your own position vs. challenging. A great opportunity to use "and" (not 'but').

Engage people in the spirit of curiosity. Remember, we might be making incorrect assumptions. We can simply ask, "would you be willing to tell me more about what you were thinking?"

It may be helpful to **ask permission.** "I notice I'm feeling uncomfortable with what's happening. Would you be willing to hear my thoughts on this and try to sort this out together?" Or ask if the person would be open to talking more at a later time.

Practice WAIT: Why Am I Talking? Who am I doing this for? What are my motives? Am I speaking 'for' a person of color? Am I wanting to show that I'm more enlightened? Is this useful, truthful, skillful and timely?

Pause - taking a breath, calming the reactive mind/impulses can help foster more skillful discussions.

This document is rooted in work of Paul Kivel and adapted by Christopher Bowers, Kitsy Schoen and the leaders and participants of *White and Awakening in Sangha*, a program of East Bay Meditation Center.

Connect the issue at hand to Dharma practice. The purpose of practice is to benefit self AND others. We want to understand if our actions cause harm, regardless of our intent. Racism harms all of us.

Separate the person from the action. Calling a person racist not only hurts them but may also deny that racism is not just personal but institutional. We are not static beings. Labels can box people in and are a full-proof way to end a conversation. It also weakens your message because it's easy to poke holes in the all-or-nothing 'racist' label. Speak to the words or behavior and not the person's character.

Consider inserting a 'placeholder'. This can be a useful practice for those moments when we know something harmful is happening but we can't articulate it or are not sure if intervening in the moment will be the best option. " I'm feeling uncomfortable with what just happened and am not totally clear about it. I just want to put a placeholder here and sort it out later"

Be strategic. Decide what is important to challenge and what's not. Think about strategy in particular situations. Did something significant happen that feels too important to not interrupt even if I can't do it perfectly, or is it a situation where I can wait and sort out my own reactions and decide what I do want to talk w/ the other white person about at another time?

ONE-LINERS TO KEEP IN BACK POCKET:

"Ouch". Saying "Ouch" allows us to express discomfort with what is being said or done- whether we address it in the moment or later.

"Whoops" Saying "Whoops" is a quick way to acknowledge that we've said something harmful - and we can either use it as a placeholder or as a lead in to noting what we've caught ourselves saying or doing.

"WOW- Racism"

"What if this IS about race, what would that mean to you?"

"I may not say this perfectly...."

"Can I give you a love tap?"

This document is rooted in work of Paul Kivel and adapted by Christopher Bowers, Kitsy Schoen and the leaders and participants of *White and Awakening in Sangha*, a program of East Bay Meditation Center.

Teaching While White: Resource List

Many thanks to Crystal Johnson, Kitsy Schoen and all of the members of the White Awakening Sangha at East Bay Meditation Center, Spring 2016. If you are interested in participating: <http://www.eastbaymeditation.org/index.php?s=104>

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Okun, T. White Supremacy Culture. www.dismantlingracism.org

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Teacher Diversity Revisited. A New State-by-State Analysis. AP, Teach for America Delta Institute. <https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/TeacherDiversity.pdf>

California Department of Education <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sd/cb/ceffingertipfacts.asp>

Whiteness Project <http://www.whitenessproject.org/millennials>

Books Recommendations

Dear White America & White Like Me: Reflections on Race from a Privileged Son, by Tim Wise

The Heart of Whiteness: Confronting Race, Racism and White Privilege, by Robert Jensen

Privilege, Power, and Difference, by Allan G Johnson

Waking up White and Finding Myself in the Story of Race by Debby Irving

Understanding White Privilege: Creating Pathways to Authentic Relationships Across Race, by Frances Kendall

For White Folks Who Teach in the Hood...and the Rest of Y'all Too: Reality Pedagogy and Urban Education by Christopher Emdin

Teaching While White Participant Survey - Symposium on Engaged Scholarship USF, February 2017

<i>Please rate each of the following statements:</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I identify as white.	1	2	3	4	5
I have privileges because I am seen as white.	1	2	3	4	5
I am often aware of my race in daily interactions.	1	2	3	4	5
I am comfortable talking about race.	1	2	3	4	5
I am comfortable talking about white privilege.	1	2	3	4	5
Race often comes up in my classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
I often talk to my students about race.	1	2	3	4	5

<i>As a result of today's workshop ...</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I learned something new about race / racism.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel more comfortable talking about race.	1	2	3	4	5
I better understand racism in our schools.	1	2	3	4	5
I better understand my own racial conditioning.	1	2	3	4	5
I learned strategies to stay present with racism.	1	2	3	4	5
I practiced mindful awareness and skillful means.	1	2	3	4	5
I am more prepared to address race in the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5

Please circle any parts of the day that were particularly helpful for you:

history & context white identity development racial conditioning active, passive and antiracism
 use of quotations power flower dyads role plays whole group discussion use of mindfulness

What would you have liked more of ...

What would you change or leave out ...

What is your commitment moving forward ...

Additional comments / questions / requests:

Optional* Name:

Role:

Grade Level: