

SUMMARY BRIEF SESSION 1

Wednesday, September 29 | 8:00am - 12:00pm | Thompson Barn, Lenexa

HERE'S WHAT HAPPENED DURING THE SESSION:

Welcome and Overview

The Racial Equity in Communities (REIC) pilot kicked off with an energetic gathering at Thompson Barn in Lenexa. More than 40 residents, elected officials, and staff from the **pilot jurisdictions** started the day with networking and an overview of the program goals, process, and intended outcomes. Participants were introduced to the **Thought Partners** whose collective goal is to support implementation of organizational priorities in jurisdictions through culturally-responsive leadership that leads to racial equity, inclusion and belonging for all people in your community.

Shared Agreements

Participants explored the intersections of identity that shape an individual's unique experience, and learned about **Brave Space** ground rules as an alternative to Safe Space. Participants learned that there are four primary ways that people deal with situations related to systemic oppression, which are captured in the **Courageous Conversations Compass**. This is a reminder that racial equity work includes difficult conversations that may challenge the way you think about your identity in relation to others, but we have tools that will help you succeed in getting good results from the conversation.

Readiness Assessment Data Review

Thought Partners from Critical Social Change Project (CSCP) reviewed the aggregate findings of the culturally responsive research process (including the readiness assessment and focus groups). The research explored the evidence, context, and capacity for racial equity change in pilot jurisdictions, and captured **eight themes** which were used to design the curriculum of the REIC pilot program. Each jurisdiction will have up to 2 hours of technical assistance to review their own disaggregated findings with CSCP.

Adaptive Leadership

Learning is a **cyclical process**! As we move through REIC, there may be moments that you go from feeling secure and competent to completely unaware, and that's a normal part of the learning process. This is important to remember as we practice **distinguishing technical and adaptive work**, because racial equity is adaptive work that requires learning to uncover problems and solutions. Staying in the "productive zone", being intentional in continuously observing-interpreting-intervening, and moving between the "balcony" and the "dance floor" are all helpful skills that we will continue to practice as you implement the work.

Pilot Jurisdictions:



Thought Partners:

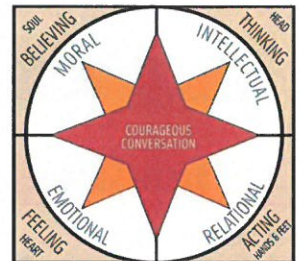


Brave Space Ground Rules:

Controversy with Civility
Own your Intentions and Impact
Challenge (Yourself) By Choice
Respect Cultural Differences
Challenge Ideas, Not the Person

Source: Aron, B. & Clemens, K. (2013). From safe spaces to brave spaces.

Courageous Conversations Compass:



Source: Singleton, C. E. (2015). Courageous conversation about race.

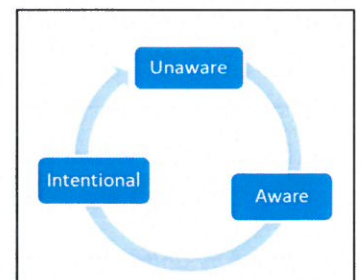
Readiness Assessment Themes:

- Theme 1 | Desire for Racial Diversity
- Theme 2 | Representation and Belonging
- Theme 3 | REI Support and Awareness
- Theme 4 | REI Organizational and Community Healing
- Theme 5 | Hostile and Intimidating Work-Life Environment
- Theme 6 | Fearful Work-Life Environment for REI Change
- Theme 7 | Divided Work-Life Culture for REI Change
- Theme 8 | Desire for Action-Based REI Implementation

Distinguishing Technical vs. Adaptive Work:

	TECHNICAL WORK	ADAPTIVE WORK
THE PROBLEM	IS CLEAR	REQUIRES LEARNING
THE SOLUTION	IS CLEAR	REQUIRES LEARNING
WHOSE WORK IS IT?	EXPERTS OR AUTHORITY	STAKEHOLDERS
TYPE OF WORK	EFFICIENT	ACT EXPERIMENTALLY
TIMELINE	ASAP	LONGER TERM
EXPECTATIONS	FIX THE PROBLEM	MAKE PROGRESS
ATTITUDE	CONFIDENCE AND SKILL	CURIOSITY

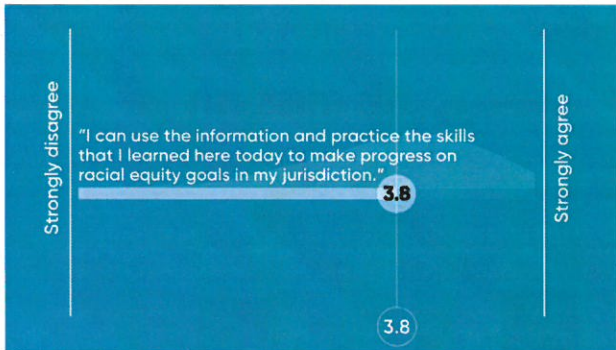
Learning as Cyclical:



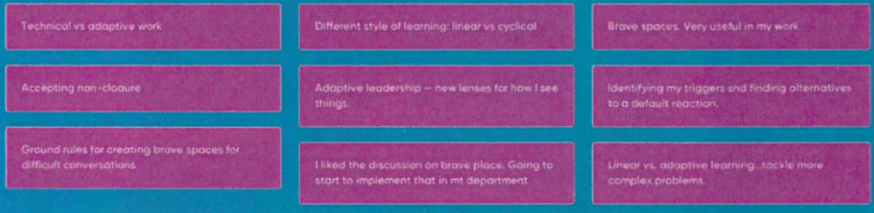
SUMMARY BRIEF SESSION 1

SESSION EVALUATION

We use real-time evaluation software to track and interpret what happens during REIC sessions. A sample of evaluation results can be found below:



Name one new skill you learned today. How can you relate it to your work?



APPLIED KNOWLEDGE

In this section you will find activities and "thought experiments" related to the content from Session 1 which are offered to support your ongoing exploration and cyclical learning process.

Brave Space

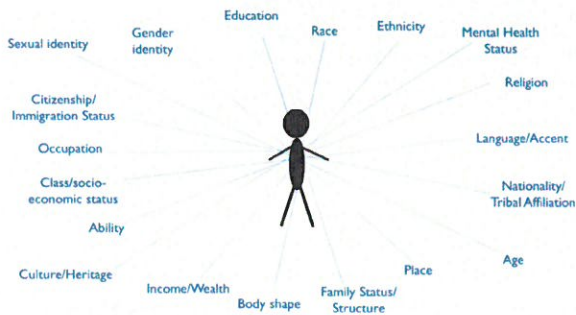
Experiment

Introduce Brave Space ground rules at your next meeting with other members of your jurisdiction. Notice what happens.

Identity

Self-Reflection

Consider a time when you were very aware of your identity. What aspects of your identity stood out the most in that situation? What did you think and feel?



Learning Adaptively

Peer Partner Discussion Topic

What's most helpful to you from these concepts as you think about making progress on racial equity in your community?

- Unaware – Aware – Intentional
- Technical v. Adaptive Work
- Observe – Interpret – Intervene
- Getting on the Balcony
- Managing self: recognizing triggers & default response

Next Steps

Connect with your peer partner

Plan to attend a readiness assessment debrief for your jurisdiction

Read Part 1 & 2 of *Your Leadership Edge*

Next Session: Wednesday, October 20 | 8:00am - 12:00pm | Thompson Barn, Lenexa

SUMMARY BRIEF SESSION 2

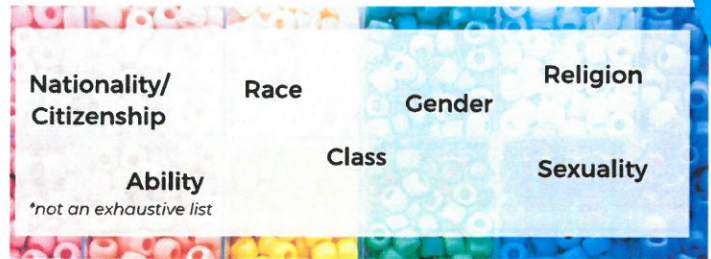
Wednesday, October 20 | 8:00am - 12:00pm | Thompson Barn, Lenexa

HERE'S WHAT HAPPENED DURING THE SESSION:

Exploring Privilege

The session began with an activity designed to bring awareness of **white privilege** in relation to the other privileges experienced based on being members of certain societal identity groups. Participants self-identified their privileges, leading to a robust discussion about what it means to have multiple, intersecting identities.

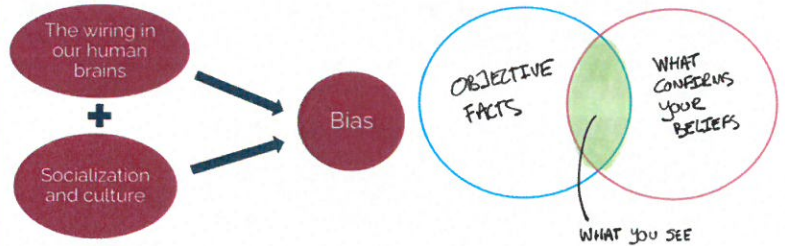
Forms of Privilege



Biased Brains

The first learning module focused on the concept of bias from a neuroscience perspective: bias is the brain's way of sorting potential threats to safety and survival. Survival requires that brains learn quickly, so the brain wires a pattern of behavior into the brain. That pattern is what we call **bias** - a tendency to be for or against something. Our brains learn to categorize what is and isn't a threat from our own experiences, our interpretations of those experiences, the stories we hear and the culture around us. Our brains perceive social threats in similar ways to physical threats. Researcher David Rock summed up what our brains experience as social threats with his **SCARF model**. Once the brain interprets a person or a situation as a threat (whether real or perceived), it gears up and responds with a "fight, flight, or freeze" response the next time we encounter it. Therefore, we can believe deeply in racial equity and still encounter challenges and even resistance in ourselves - all because of bias. To see and address bias requires bringing together people with a diverse range of lived experiences, and accepting that their experiences are as real and as "true" as our own.

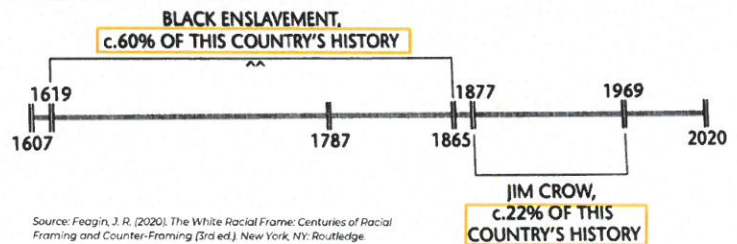
Bias



SCARF Model



White Racial Frame



White Racial Frame & White Dominant Culture

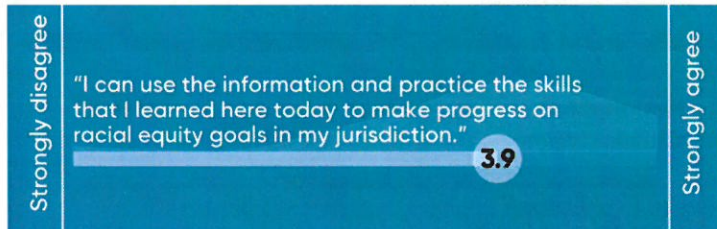
The second learning module focused the **White Racial Frame** - the dominant racial frame that has long legitimated, rationalized, motivated, and shaped racial oppression and inequality. The white racial frame is the foundation of systemic racism and white dominant culture norms. The white racial frame contributes to collective memory and collective forgetting (one concrete example can be found in minstrel shows of the early 20th century which depicted enslaved Black people as happy and content). It operates through individual actions and behaviors, and provides widely shared racialized understandings, images, narratives, emotions, and action inclinations that routinely shape family, community, and institutional realities and behaviors. The discussion included exploration of nine traits of **white dominant culture**, defined by Tema Okun as the explicit to subtle ways that the norms, preferences and fears of white European descended people overwhelmingly shape how we are as a society. Participants were challenged in small groups to identify alternatives to these dominant culture characteristics

White Dominant Culture Traits



SESSION EVALUATION

We use real-time evaluation software to track and interpret what happens during REIC sessions. A sample of evaluation results can be found below:



Name one new skill you learned today. How can you relate it to your work?

SCARF lens

Pausing to consider if/when/where the white dominant cultural lens is at play

How to breathe and retrain my reactions to difficult conversations

I learned that I do have the vocabulary to explain things and I can be more confident about having these difficult conversations.

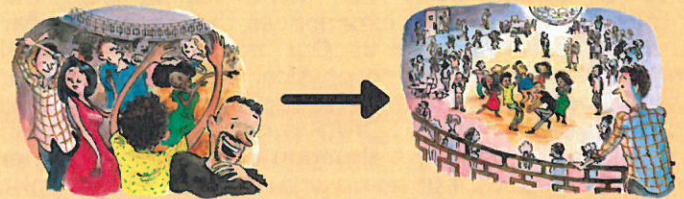
Noticing the White Framework and how to reflect on how it impacts me and my clients.

GROUP WORK

This session included time in breakout groups so that participants could build relationships and process the content.



The goal is to help participants move from the "dance floor" to the "balcony".



APPLIED KNOWLEDGE

In this section you will find activities and "thought experiments" related to the content from Session 2 which are offered to support your ongoing exploration and cyclical learning process.

Privilege

In her paper (attached), Peggy McIntosh listed 50 examples of white privilege. The privilege bead exercise is not an exhaustive list, so in your free time see how many examples of white privilege you can come up with.

White Dominant Culture

Notice examples of white dominant culture traits in your jurisdiction. You might observe your next meeting, review your jurisdiction's website, or notice your interactions when receiving services. Consider what an alternative would be.

Next Steps

Meet with your peer partner to discuss the questions in the *White Culture Handout* document (attached).

Define the Terms (attached).

Continue Reading Part #1 & #2 of *Your Leadership Edge*

Managing Triggers through Breathing

Any time you feel triggered based on a perceived social threat, take these steps to calm your nervous system so that you can make wise choices about your reaction:

- Put both feet on the floor. Sit up straight. Close your eyes or soften your gaze.
- Notice where in your body you feel the tension or anxiety. Don't overthink it.
- Take a deep breath in through your nose, silently counting to 4. Imagine your breath going to the place in your body where you feel tension.
- Breath out through your mouth, silently counting to 8. Imagine the tension leaving your body as you exhale.
- Repeat as many times as needed.

Next Session: Wednesday, November 17
8:00am - 12:00pm
Thompson Barn, Lenexa

SUMMARY BRIEF SESSION 3

Wednesday, November 17 | 8:00am - 12:00pm | Thompson Barn, Lenexa

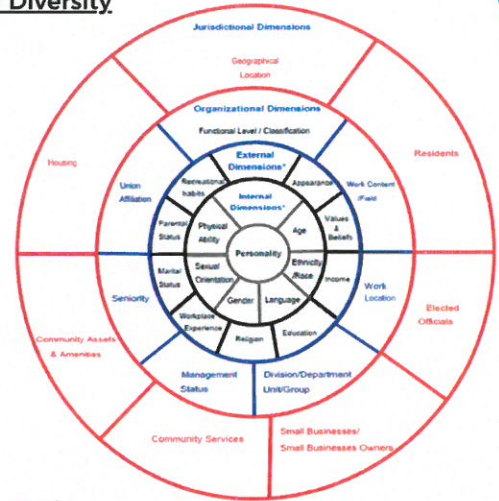
HERE'S WHAT HAPPENED DURING THE SESSION:

LEARNING HIGHLIGHTS

Dimensions of Diversity

The session began with an exploration of the **Dimensions of Diversity**, a lens to help us understand the filters through which all of us process stimuli and information. Our internal and external dimensions, assumptions, and behaviors impact our decision-making patterns in the organizational and jurisdictional dimensions. Individual reflection and large group discussion assisted participants to view the dimensions through the lens of the white racial frame, collective memory/forgetting, and jurisdictional culture.

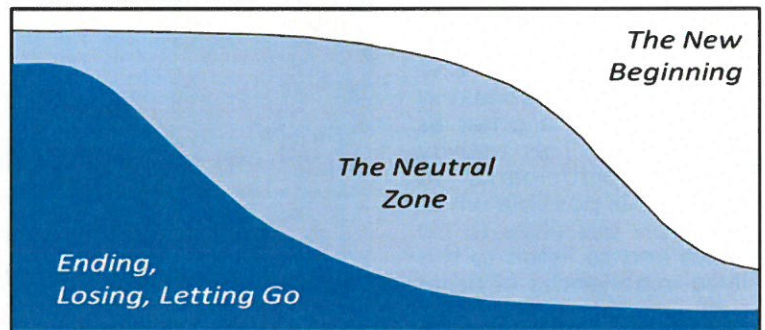
Dimensions of Diversity



Change, Transition, and Loss

The first learning module focused on **Attending to Transition and Loss**. Transition is the psychological process people go through in moving through situations of change. Loss is a part of transitions. A key leadership skill for racial equity change is speaking to loss and listening to the losses that others experience without intervention or judgement. This leads to transformational relationships that are the foundation of systemic change. To demonstrate the importance of this skill and its impact, facilitators invited participants into a "fishbowl" to speak to loss and to listen to the losses of others.

The Transition Cycle

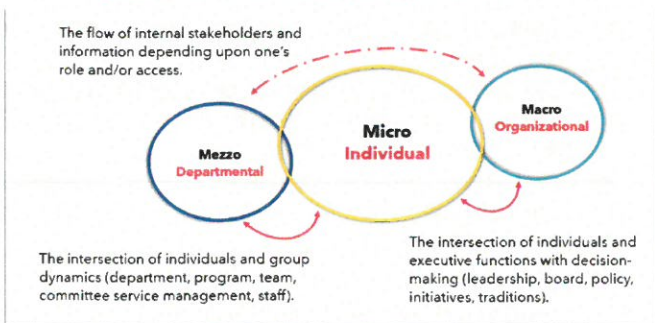


Jurisdictional Culture and Climate

The second learning module focused on understanding the culture and climate of jurisdictions, particularly as it relates to systemic outcomes and norms. **Culture** is witnessed through shared values, attitudes, beliefs, and customs. **Climate** is comprised of the direct and indirect actions and behaviors (attitudes and beliefs) that impact individual experiences and sense of belonging. Contributions to jurisdictional culture and climate are made at three levels: micro (individual), mezzo (departmental) and macro (organizational). We explored the micro-level using the **Saboteur Assessment**, which enabled participants to see how emotional triggers to social identity threats can bring up a range of emotions and actions - all of which contributes to culture and climate. The mezzo and macro structure of jurisdictions - policies, routines, relationships, resources, power structures, and values - also matters. Only by altering underlying structures and operating mechanisms at the jurisdictional level can a jurisdiction achieve substantive culturally-responsive systems change. The small group conversation that followed was designed to help participants understand the ways that unexamined climate and culture can result in racial equity change that is symbolic rather than substantive.

Jurisdiction Dimensions: Organizational Structure

Organizational Structure: Macro, Mezzo, Micro Dimensions



© Critical Social Change Project, 2020.

The Saboteurs Assessment

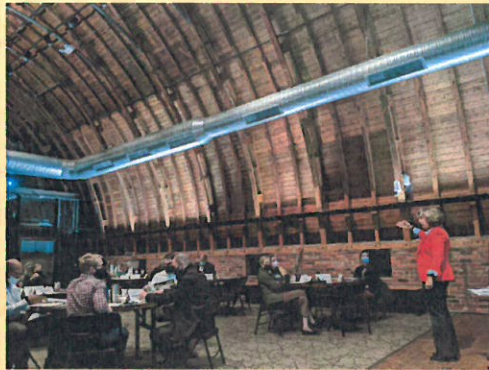


		MOTIVATION		
		Independence	Acceptance	Security
STYLE	Assert	CONTROLLER	HYPER ACHIEVER	RESTLESS
	Earn	STICKLER	PLEASER	HYPER VIGILANT
	Avoid	AVOIDER	VICTIM	HYPER RATIONAL

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

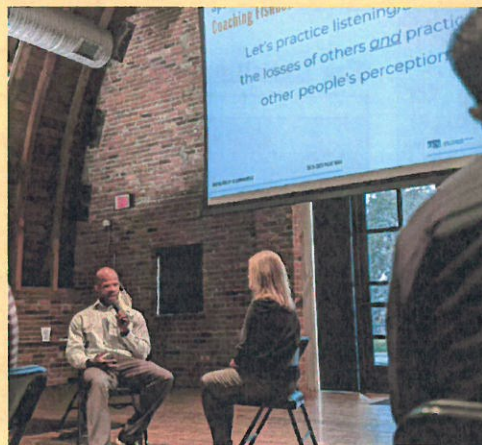
Addressing the Elephants in the Room

We dove into some controversial topics such as the use of the term "white supremacy". The discussion was described by participants as a *breakthrough moment* that enabled Brave Space to be activated, and encouraged everyone to push past triggers, discomfort, and default reactions so that new awareness could emerge in the group.



Speaking to Loss

To model the practice of speaking to loss and listening with empathy, this session included two conversations between pairs of participants - one as the storyteller speaking to loss, and the other as the listener. This activity enabled participants to see what is possible when we allow ourselves to be brave and to listen to the lived experiences of other without intervention or judgement.



SESSION EVALUATION

We use real-time evaluation software to track and interpret what happens during REIC sessions. A sample of evaluation results can be found below:

Strongly disagree

"I can use the information and practice the skills that I learned here today to make progress on racial equity goals in my jurisdiction."

3.8

Strongly agree

Name one new skill you learned today. How can you relate it to your work?

Differentiating between symbolic and substantive action

Identifying my saboteurs

Learned about change vs. transition

Learning to listen and build relationships

APPLIED KNOWLEDGE

In this section you will find activities and "thought experiments" related to the content from Session 3 which are offered to support your ongoing exploration and cyclical learning process.

Speaking to Loss

Spend some time one-on-one with your peer partner. to practice speaking to loss and acknowledging the losses of others. Here are some questions to get you started:

- What are some losses that you have experienced during these REIC sessions? What forms of loss have you experienced (i.e. loss of familiar patterns, loss of meaning, loss of comfort)?
- Viewed through the Dimensions of Diversity lens, are these losses: external, organizational, or jurisdictional?

Attached to this brief is an article on "Empathy, Listening Skills and Relationships" that you may find helpful.

Next Steps

Read attached articles on the Saboteurs to learn more about this concept.

Attend your jurisdictional readiness assessment debrief in December

Reflection on Symbolic and Substantive Actions

Here are some questions from the end of Session 3 that you can continue discussing with your peer partner and others in your jurisdiction:

- Now that you have been introduced to symbolic and substantive actions, identify a symbolic adoption and a substantive action taking place in your jurisdiction.
- How does your jurisdiction's climate and culture enable symbolic adoption? Identify barriers that prevent REI.
- How can communities move toward substantive racial equity actions in jurisdictions?