

Building a Multi-Ethnic,  
Inclusive & Antiracist  
Organization  
Tools for Liberation Packet

for Anti-Racist Activists, Allies, & Critical Thinkers



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## Tools for Liberation Packet Contents

1. <u>Anti-Racism Definitions From A Human Rights Framework</u>	3-4
2. <u>Acts/Omissions – Overt/Covert Racism</u>	5
3. <u>Characteristics of Dominants and Subordinates</u>	6
4. <u>The Intersectionality of Oppression</u>	7
5. <u>The Usual Statements</u>	8
6. <u>A Chronicle of the Problem Woman of Color in Non-Profits</u>	9
7. <u>The Organizational Spiral</u>	10
8. <u>Characteristics of a Highly Inclusive Organization</u>	11-12
9. <u>Qualities of a Committed CEO</u>	13
10. <u>Qualities of an Anti-Racist Ally</u>	14

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### Core Reading List

- Color of Violence: The Incite! Anthology. South End Press, 2006.
- Race, Class, and Gender in the United States. Paula S. Rothenberg (ed). 6<sup>th</sup> Edition. Worth, 2004
- Living Chicana Theory. Carla Trujillo (ed). Third Woman Press, 1998.
- Sister Outsider. Audre Lorde. The Crossing Press, 1984.
- Women, Race and Class. Angela Y. Davis. Vintage Books, 1983.
- Are Prisons Obsolete? Angela Y. Davis. Seven Stories Press, 2003.
- The Heart of Whiteness: Confronting Race, Racism and White Privilege. Robert Jensen. City Lights Books, 2005.

# Anti-Racism Definitions From A Human Rights Framework

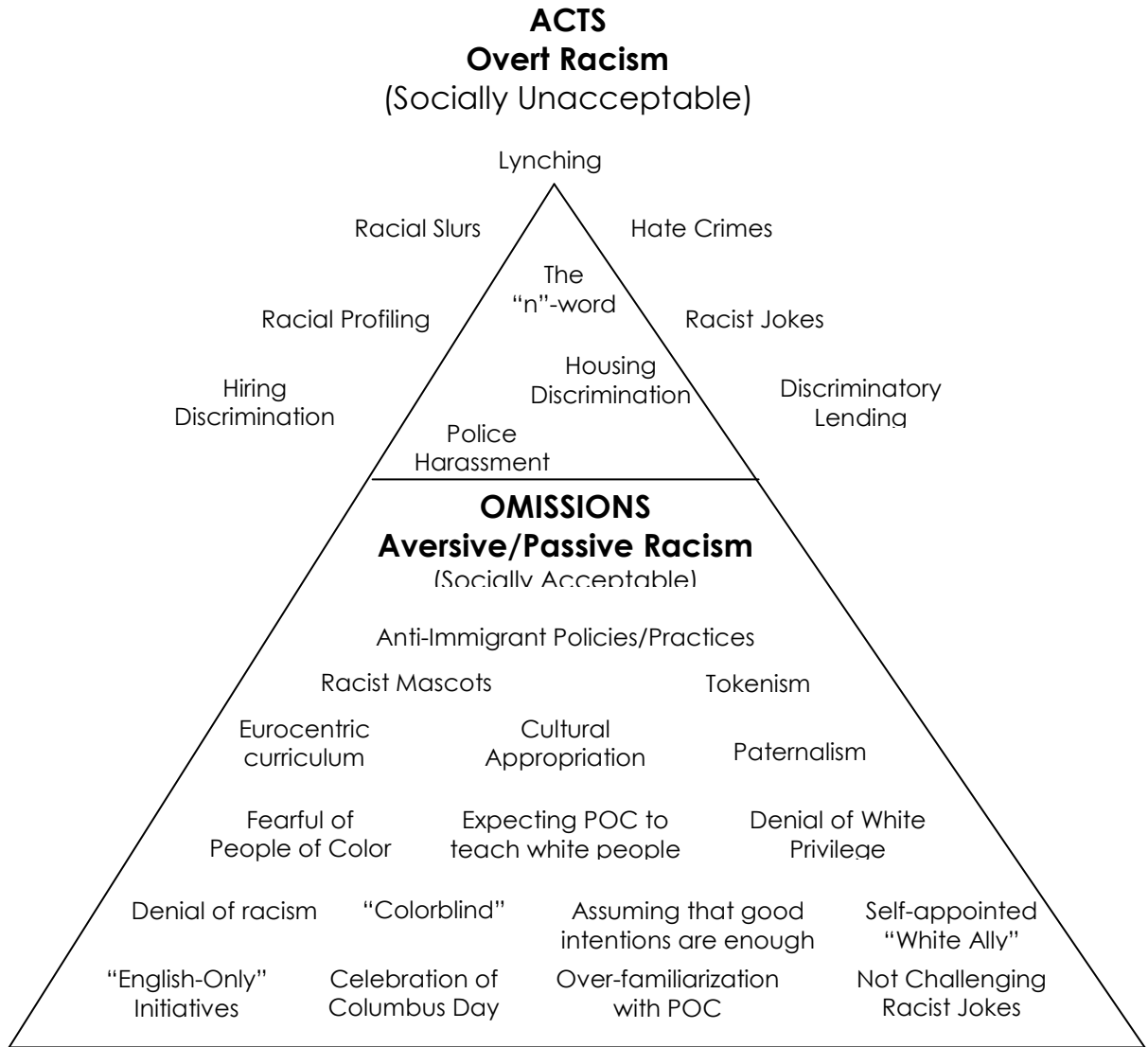
## DEFINITIONS

1. **Ally** – A member of a dominant group who works to dismantle oppression from which s/he benefits.
2. **Anti-racism** – The act of interrupting racism.
3. **Anti-Semitism** – A belief that Jewish people are an inferior race.
4. **Ascription** – Birth defines place in society.
5. **Assimilation** – Adopting the characteristics and values of the dominant group.
6. **Bigotry** – Devotion to one's own prejudices even when challenged or proven false.
7. **Border Crossing** – Supports the unentitled rights of a person from outside a cultural community to act as a voice for that community and to appropriate knowledge without actual understanding of historical, political and ideological struggle. (Antonia Darder)
8. **Capitalism** – An economic system based on private ownership and control. Produces profits for individual rather than collective needs.
9. **Colonization**: The violent taking of land, wealth, labor of indigenous peoples through domination & conquest leading to their extermination & the Transatlantic slave trade which created a permanent underclass based on race and gender.
10. **Colorism** – Favoritism toward light-skinned people of color.
11. **Cultural Appropriation** – The taking of another group's cultural knowledge, traditions or practices to use for self-benefit. Objectifies and commodifies while ignoring the group's political struggles.
12. **Cultural Racism** – Cultural images and messages that affirm the assumed racial superiority of one group and the assumed racial inferiority of another group.
13. **Difference** – A spectrum of experience or characteristics that can be complimentary or conflicting. Often involves inequality of status and power.
14. **Discrimination** – Denial of opportunities. Different treatment. Granting advantages to one group while denying opportunities to another.
  - **Individual Discrimination** – perpetuated by an individual.
  - **Structural Discrimination** – perpetuated by an institution through tradition or custom.
  - **Organizational Discrimination** – perpetuated by individuals but reinforced by established rules, policies and practices.
15. **Eurocentric** – A perspective centered on a Western worldview that has become intrinsic to the American cultural identity.
16. **Femicide** – the genocide of women when the state offers no guarantees nor creates the conditions of security for women in the community, home or workplace
17. **Genocide** – Any policy of extermination of a people through institutional acts of killing culture, identity, and the people themselves.
  - **Direct genocide** - physical killing or slow death measures.
  - **Cultural genocide** - destroys the institutions and identities of the group.
18. **Heterosexism** – A system of advantage based on sexual orientation.
19. **Homophobia** – Fear based on heterosexual values.
20. **Honor Systems** – Rank certain qualities above others. Benefits are conferred, not earned.
21. **Hypodescent** a.k.a. "one-drop rule" – Any racial mixture constitutes racial impurity. Categorized as a non-white person and relegated to a subordinate group.
22. **Inequality** – Unequal power relationship.

- **Temporary Inequality** – Temporary power-over relationship. Socially defined superior and inferior groups. Superior group has responsibility to “raise up” inferior group and to eventually end the relationship of inequity.
  - **Permanent Inequality** – Permanent power-over relationship. Superiors enforce inequity and do not help inferiors. No goal to end inequality.
23. **Institutional Racism** – A system of advantage based on race rooted in and reinforced by cultural, political, economic and educational foundations. Never accidental.
  24. **Internalized Oppression** – Internalized belief of racial inferiority about own racial group.
  25. **Internalized Sexism** – Internalized belief of gender inferiority based on gender.
  26. **Intersectionality** – The intersection where multiple forms of oppression come together.
  27. **Intra-racism**–Internalized racism played-out among different racial communities of color.
  28. **Jim Crow** – The system of legalized racial segregation.
  29. **Legal Fiction** - The act of inventing made-up law by policy-makers to achieve a political purpose. The political invention is given real legal meaning and enforcement through the passage of it into law.
  30. **Misogyny** – A hatred of women.
  31. **Nativism**– a policy of favoring native inhabitants over immigrants
  32. **Oppression** – A relationship that exists between groups where dominates benefit at the expense of subordinates reinforced by a system of social inequity.
  33. **Patriarchy** – A belief that men are superior to women. Culture is male dominated, centered, and identified.
  34. **Passing** – An attempt by non-whites with light-skinned privilege to skirt the discrimination barriers imposed by law and custom by attempting to “pass” for white.
  35. **Prejudice** – A preconceived belief usually based on limited information.
  36. **Race** – An ever evolving social, legal and political construct that has no basis in biological fact.
  37. **Racial Stereotypes** – Preconceived notions based on assumptions of racial superiority and inferiority.
  38. **Racialization** – The extension of racial meaning to a previously racially unclassified concept, group or practice.
  39. **Racialized Privilege** – The granting of privileges based on preferred racial identity.
  40. **Racism** – A system of advantage based on race.
  41. **Reverse Racism** – A disputed concept. Discrimination (a denial of opportunity) by subordinates against dominants.
  42. **Sexism** – A system of advantage based on gender.
  43. **Social Power** – Access to social, cultural, and economic resources and decisionmaking.
  44. **System** – Combines social power, institutional power (policies & practices), cultural messages, and individual actions.
  45. **White Privilege** – An unacknowledged system of favoritism and advantage granted to white people as the beneficiaries of historical conquest. Benefits include preferential treatment, exemption from group oppression and immunity from perpetuating social inequity.
  46. **White Supremacy** – A system of exploitation to maintain wealth, power and white privilege.
  47. **Whiteness** – A racial identity created by upper-class colonialists to distinguish themselves from indentured servants and slaves. A guarantee against being enslaved.

Race, Class, and Gender in the United States. Paula S.Rothenberg (ed). 6<sup>th</sup> Edition.Worth, 2004  
Living Chicana Theory. Carla Trujillo (ed). Third Woman Press,1998.

# ACTS & OMISSIONS



## Characteristics of Dominants and Subordinates

Oppression: a relationship that exists between groups where dominants benefit at the expense of subordinates.

Characteristics of Dominants	Characteristics of Subordinates
Make and enforce the rules; has resources to do this	Rendered invisible – voices are invalidated or silenced
Define the roles of the subordinates	Internalized unworthiness
Experience is normative – create the standards for ‘professional conduct’	Know more about dominants than vice versa
Promotes myth of meritocracy and legitimizes inequality	Experience Internalized Oppression – internalized belief of racial inferiority about our own racial group. Includes “colorism”, favoritism toward light-skinned people of color
Control systems: education, political, religious, economic	Experiences are not included into the social, political, legal or educational discourses
Define the measures of intelligence and create standards	Must concentrate on survival, become targets
Reserve highly valued roles for themselves and guard them	Penalized for speaking out ◊ emotional or physical toll, so pay the cost or opt out
Ability to impede the success of subordinates – laws, hiring practices, etc.	Denied self-determination
Conflict avoidant; don’t want to talk about inequality and don’t recognize that inequality breeds conflict	System results in identity-confusion

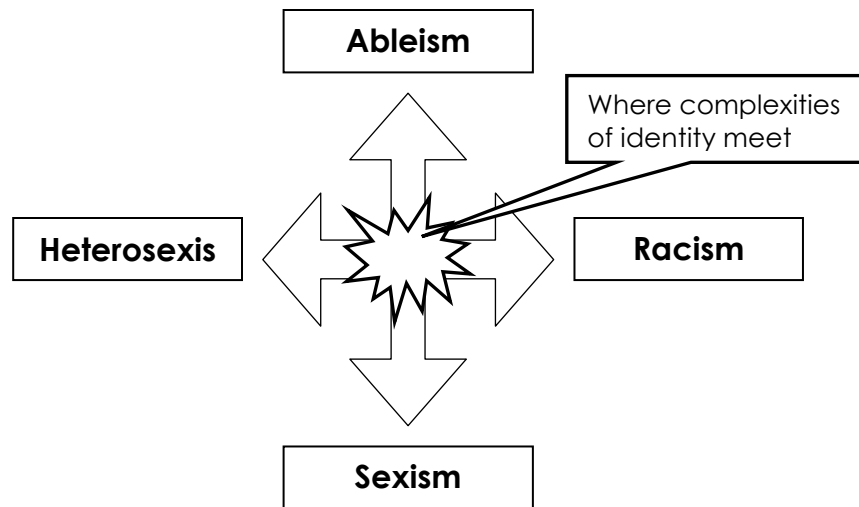
Source: *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States*. Paula S. Rothenberg (ed). 6<sup>th</sup> Edition. Worth, 2004

# The Intersectionality of Oppression

**Intersectionality:** The point where experiences of oppression collide.

- **Racism:** A system of advantage based on race. The subordination of people of color by white people.
- **Sexism:** A system of advantage based on gender. The subordination of women by men.
- **Heterosexism:** A system of advantage based on sexual orientation. The subordination of LGBTQ-Two Spirited by heterosexuals.
- **Ableism:** A system of advantage based on physical/mental ability. The subordination of people with disabilities by people without disabilities.

What happens when movements just focus on one issue? What are the consequences?



## Parallels between Racism & Sexism:

- Both are learned
- Perpetuated by stereotypes
- Both involve acts of systemic coercion
- Both involve subordinates & dominants
- Both may culminate in violence

**Women do not suffer under patriarchy equally.** Factors include:

- Race, Class, Job Availability, Age, Access to Resources, Sexual Orientation, etc.

Williams, Kimberlé Crenshaw. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color". In: Martha Albertson Fineman, Rixanne Mykitiuk, Eds. *The Public Nature of Private Violence*. (New York: [Routledge](http://www.routledge.com), 1994), p. 93-118.

## The Usual Statements

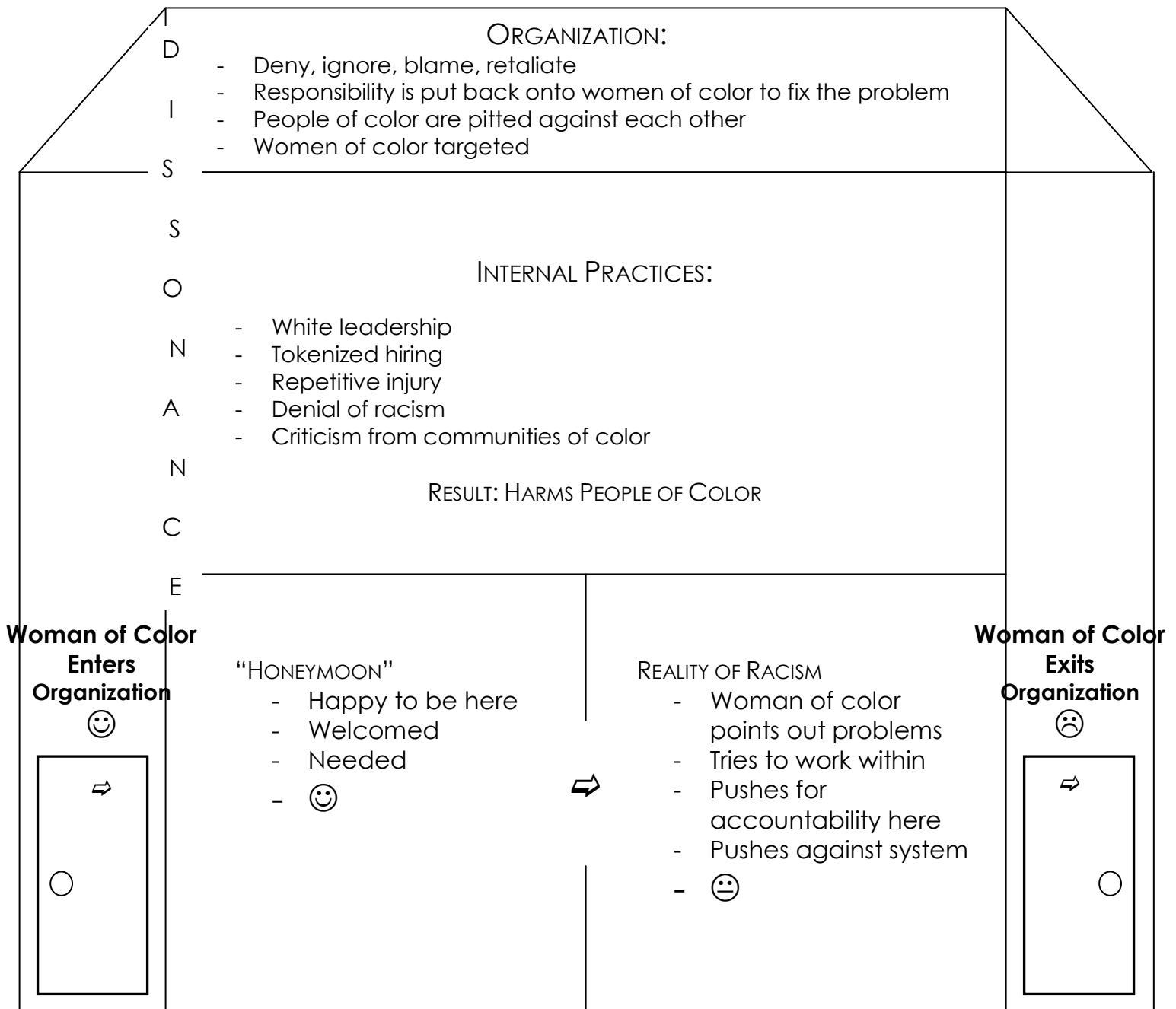
Also known as “What people of color never want to hear again” from white people engaging in discussions about racism. The following are just a few statements commonly heard during anti-racism trainings. This list is not exhaustive but is meant to be used as a guideline for ‘what not to say’ for white people who are sincerely working on their white privilege.

1. Why are you so angry?
2. You're too sensitive.
3. I feel (unsafe, judged, attacked, abused, etc.)
4. I will only talk if everyone is respectful.
5. I'm a person of color too. Isn't 'white' a color?
6. I'm colorblind: I just see people, not skin color.
7. Why isn't it separatist to have a group just for people of color?
8. What about MY class/gender/religious/sexual orientation oppression as a white person?
9. Talking about racism takes the focus off of (women's issues, the environment, classism, etc.)
10. When are we going to stop talking about racism and get to the *real* work??
11. I can't possibly be racist because I am dating a person of color (or, because I adopted a transracial baby.)
12. That other person of color isn't offended, so why should you be?
13. Aren't you just so articulate!
14. We can't find any qualified women of color to join our workplace.
15. I come from the East/West Coast where people are much more inclusive.
16. I marched with Martin Luther King.
17. Other:



# A Chronicle of "The Problem Woman of Color" in a Non-Profit

PURPOSE Of Organization: To Help Others



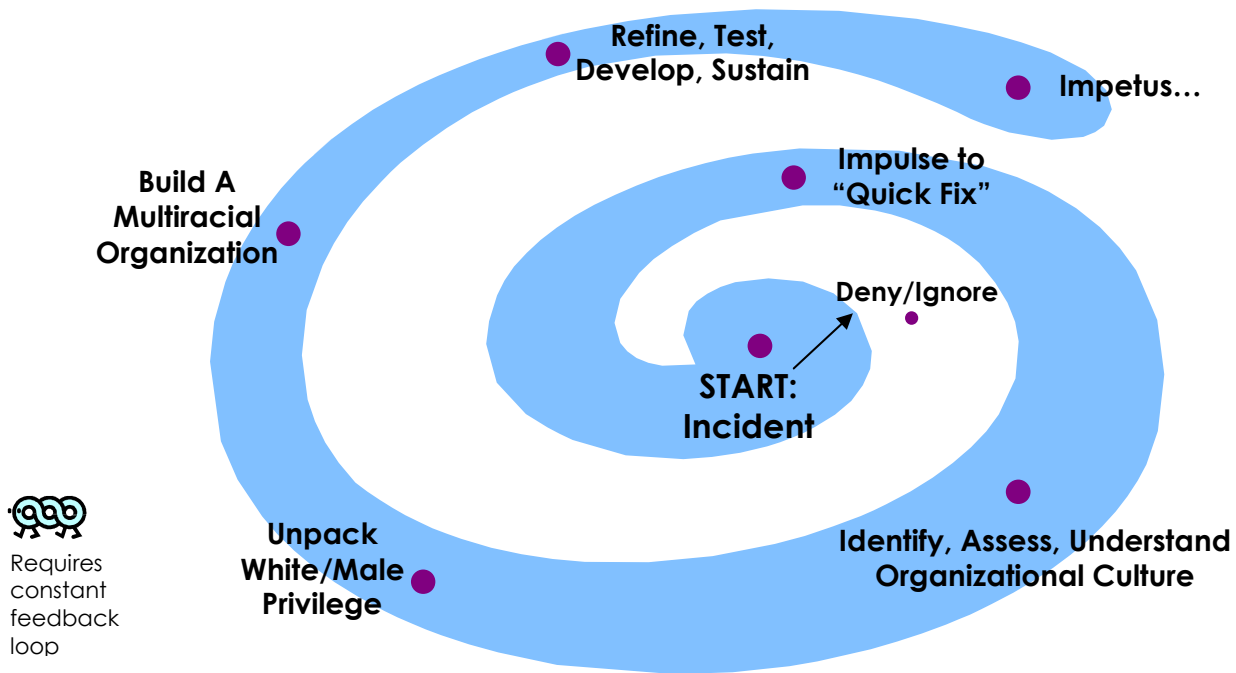
FOUNDATION: Problem becomes Woman of Color

INSTITUTIONAL RACISM REDEFINED:

"Communication Issue" "Not a Good Fit" "Not Qualified" "Personnel Issue"

# The Organizational Spiral

Building Multi-Ethnic, Anti-Racist, Inclusive  
Organizations & Collaborations



Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Non-Violence (SPAN) historically was a white feminist organization that has gone and continues to go through a transformational process to become a more inclusive antiracist and multiracial organization. This illustration is an attempt to outline the complex path SPAN continues to travel.

# Characteristics of Highly Inclusive Organizations

Summary of The Denver Foundation's Expanding Nonprofit Inclusiveness Initiative

Prepared by Katherine Pease and Associates

## Research

210 completed survey or 30% response rate out of 700 organizations in Metro Denver with budgets of \$500,000 and over surveyed.

- How inclusive are organizations?
- How interested are nonprofits in becoming more inclusive?
- What are the best practices and barriers to inclusiveness?

## Characteristics

- o Highly inclusive organizations are diverse organizations with large numbers of people of color, AND
- o Highly Inclusive organizations also incorporate ...
  - positive environment for all—programs planned and implemented with awareness of cultural nuances
  - communications with cultural sensitivity
  - internal systems bridge cultural gaps

## Why is inclusiveness important?

- o U.S. and Metro Denver are increasingly diverse
- o Business imperative for corporations
- o Mission imperative for nonprofits
- o ***Race, ethnicity and culture matter when delivering services or doing advocacy***

## Findings

Metro Denver nonprofit sector: generally inclusive, with the notable exception of Latinos.

- Latinos are underrepresented on staffs (13%) and boards of directors (7%) compared with their presence in the populace (17%).
- Approximately 25% of Metro Denver nonprofit boards have no people of color
  - o 58% are designing a diversity strategy

## Barriers

Most significant barrier: perception that mission is not relevant to communities of color

- "Color-blind" leadership: A one-size-fits-all approach does not foster inclusiveness
- Failure to recognize board and staff prospects among volunteers and clients

# Characteristics of Highly Inclusive Organizations (cont')

**Implementation:** What are the best practices of inclusive nonprofits?

## **Best Practice #1: A Committed CEO**

Most important element: a CEO with a commitment to inclusiveness

1. CEOs of color and white CEOs can be equally effective
2. Most important function of board is to hire a CEO who is committed to inclusiveness and then support their efforts

## **Best Practice #2: A Long-Term, Holistic Approach to Inclusiveness**

- Inclusive practices must be integrated into:
  - Programs
  - Communications
  - Board/staff/volunteer recruitment
  - Culture and environment
  - Overall management practices
- Shot-gun approaches have neutral or negative effects

## **Best Practice #3: Recognizing All of the Potential Contributions of People of Color**

People of color can be valuable:

- Centers of knowledge about clients and services
- Financial contributors
- Volunteers and board members
- Staff members

## **Best Practice #4: Recruiting and Retaining Staff of Color**

1. Recruitment can be strengthened through creating consistent policies and practices to connect with communities of color; not enough to wait for applicants to come to you
2. Good management practices lead to retaining all staff, including staff of color
3. Normalizing performance review and professional development practices can equalize playing field

## **Best Practice #5: Creating Inclusive Programs**

1. One Size Fits All: No consideration of needs of diverse populations
2. Specific to Communities of Color: Developed specifically for needs of various populations
3. Universal and Inclusive: Designed for all clients with an awareness of different groups' needs
4. Organizations often transition through the three stages as they become more inclusive

## **Best Practice #6: Two-way communications with communities of color**

1. Organizations need to communicate about their work to communities of color
2. Also need to listen and learn from communities of color and ask for feedback, especially if help is needed overcoming major barriers

## Qualities of a “Committed CEO”

- ❖ Commit money, time for training and actively participates
- ❖ Willing to take risks & acknowledge privilege and power differentials
- ❖ Open to/seek out feedback & integrates it
- ❖ Engages in a transparent decision-making process
- ❖ Hires People of Color “with politics”
- ❖ Willingness to change course if their way is not working
- ❖ Doesn't operate in a vacuum by being removed from everyday struggles
- ❖ Shares power while recognizing the hierarchy of responsibilities
- ❖ Effectively outreaches to diverse communities
- ❖ Is humble enough to admit “I was wrong” or “I take responsibility”
- ❖ Recognizes when injury is caused and works to repair the damage
- ❖ Implements a clear conflict resolution process and models it
- ❖ Is an ally in anti-oppression work

## Qualities Of An Anti-Racist Ally

- ❖ Does something daily to earn the title of 'ally.' Recognizes that their "white ally badge" expires at the end of the day and must be renewed by a person of color.
- ❖ Title is not self-identified by white people but identified by people of color
- ❖ Understands that one person of color's white ally is not automatically another person of color's ally.
- ❖ Identifies and names racism directly.
- ❖ Takes the front line as a buffer; not as a 'savior.'
- ❖ Recognizes that remaining silent, "neutral" or "objective" can be a form of race privilege.
- ❖ Takes responsibility for self-education and doesn't expect POC to teach them.
- ❖ Cultivates genuine relationships with people of color that are mutually beneficial.
- ❖ Is hyper-vigilant about interrupting racism, but is not hyper-arrogant about being a "white ally."
- ❖ Struggles every day with understanding and undoing aspects of their own privilege.
- ❖ Works regularly to develop a deeper understanding of ongoing colonial relationships.
- ❖ Understands that people of color's experiences of racism is not debatable.
- ❖ Doesn't require people of color to display proof of racist injury.
- ❖ Knows that people of color are the experts of their own experiences.
- ❖ Acts in solidarity with people of color without taking over their liberation efforts.
- ❖ Doesn't expect gratitude from people of color, or to be recognized as a white ally.
- ❖ Takes on racism as a problem because it is *personally* offensive.
- ❖ Is motivated by a quest for justice, rather than a sense of guilt.
- ❖ Open to, and invites challenge. Expects support and accountability from other emerging allies.
- ❖ Unconditionally opposes oppression with no strings attached.
- ❖ Accepts that making mistakes is part of becoming an effective ally.
- ❖ Acknowledges, apologizes for, and learns from own mistakes without retreating.
- ❖ Interrupts racist statements or behaviors whether or not a person of color is present or objects.
- ❖ Participates respectfully in communities of color and avoids "cultural tourism."
- ❖ Is committed to social justice and an end to oppression in all its forms.

## Endnotes

The “Tools for Liberation” are only as good as the framework in which they are actively used. While some pieces may be useful as stand-alone points, their true effectiveness comes in context, with challenging discussion, examination of privilege, and a core, shared commitment to an anti-racist practice.