



Belonging Community Conversation on Antiracism

Host Guide

Imagine Fox Cities Initiative



Dear Change Maker,

Thank you for considering hosting the third discussion in the series of the Belonging Community Conversations on Race. The topic of this third dialogue is antiracism. First things first, please read the short set of materials provided carefully before beginning your conversation.

The goals of these conversations are to listen and share personal stories without judgement in order to create a foundation upon which to take action together to eliminate racism.

The expressed American ideal is the creation of a society that is fair and has opportunity for all, regardless of individual or group identity. We see examples every day of how we fall short of this ideal. We hope these conversations will help us understand why we are unable to reach our admirable but elusive goal. By enhancing our understanding of the issues related to racial injustice, we can plan a better way forward together that will improve the wellbeing of all of us in the Fox Cities, and create a community in which we know that we belong.

Thank you for taking this important step toward changing our community for the better. We hope you will also consider hosting the other two conversations in this series if you have not already done so. In order to ensure that we keep improving this work and that your efforts have the biggest impact, please complete the short five-item survey after your conversation by following the link at the end of the facilitators/host guide.

With gratitude,

Imagine Fox Cities Belonging Group

Facilitator's Instructions

This Imagine Fox Cities Belonging Conversation offers a simple, sociable and structured way to practice communicating across differences while building understanding and relationships. Typically, 4-7 people meet by video call or in person for about 90 minutes to listen to and be heard by others. Rather than debating or convincing others, we take turns talking to share and learn. No preparation is required, though background links are available for participants to gain more information on the topic. Anyone can host using these italicized instructions. Hosts also participate. Some hosts may offer a Q & A after Closing. This uses the Living Room Conversations format

Introductions:

Why We're Here (~10 min)

Each participant has 1 minute to introduce themselves.

Share your name, where you live, what drew you here, and if this is your first conversation.

Conversation Agreements:

How We'll Engage (~5 min)

These will set the tone of our conversation; participants may volunteer to take turns reading them aloud. (A more detailed explanation of each is attached.)

Be curious and listen to understand.


Show respect and suspend judgment.

Note any common ground as well as any differences.

Be authentic and welcome that from others.

Be purposeful and to the point.

Own and guide the conversation.



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Question Rounds:

What We'll Talk About

Optional: a participant can keep track of time and gently let people know when their time has elapsed.

Round 1:

Getting to Know Each Other (~15 min)

Each participant can take 1-2 minutes to answer the following questions:


- a. What emotions come up as you anticipate discussing race, racism and antiracism?
- b. What do you hope to get out of this conversation? Why did you choose to participate?

Round 2:

Round Two: Race (~45 min)

To be read by the host

The ability to have meaningful conversations about race will be instrumental in developing a just and equitable society free from racism. However, this skill is not taught in schools, nor is it easily acquired. Unless one is part of a diverse community comprised of members willing to share intentionally their experiences with one another for mutual growth, most people will not have deep exposure to these conversations. The purpose of this conversation series is to help participants increase their capacity to engage in discussions in a productive manner. We recommend that you participate in all three of the guides in the series about race, racism and antiracism to have the most meaningful and transformative experience.



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One participant can volunteer to read the definition of antiracism.

Antiracism is the practice of identifying, challenging and changing the values, behaviors, structures, policies and practices that perpetuate systemic racism. Because racism occurs in all spheres of society, antiracism is necessary in all aspects of our lives. Consequently, antiracism is an active way of seeing and being in the world, a practice, that promotes positive social change.

“To be an antiracist is a radical choice in the face of history, requiring a radical reorientation of our consciousness.” Ibram Kendi

Take ~2 minutes each to answer a question below without interruption or crosstalk. After everyone has answered, the group may take a few minutes for clarifying or follow up questions/responses. Continue exploring additional questions as time allows.

- a. Antiracist and racist are not set identities. So it is more productive to think about behaviors and decisions as either supporting systemic racism (racist) or working to break the cycle of racism in our society (antiracist). Do you agree with these statements? Please explain, why or why not.
- b. Share an action you have taken to interrupt the system of racism that exists in our society.
- c. What actions can you take within your family or faith community to model and promote antiracism?
- d. What actions can you take at work to model and promote antiracism?
- e. What is most difficult about becoming an effective antiracist? What has prevented you from acting in ways that are antiracist?



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Round 3:

Reflecting on the Conversation (~15 min)

Answer the following question:

In one sentence, share what was most meaningful or valuable to you in the experience of this conversation?

*Take 2 minutes to answer **one** of the following questions:*

- a. What new understanding or common ground did you find within this topic?
- b. Has this conversation changed your perception of anyone in this group, including yourself?
- c. What question do you wished was asked that was not included in the conversation?
- d. Name one important thing that was accomplished here.
- e. Is there a next step you would like to take based upon the conversation you just had?

Closing (~5 min) Provide feedback!

<https://tinyurl.com/RaceConversationFeedback>



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Conversation Agreements

Be curious and listen to understand.

Conversation is as much about listening as it is about talking. You might enjoy exploring how others' experiences have shaped their values and perspectives.

Show respect and suspend judgment.

People tend to judge one another. Setting judgement aside opens you up to learning from others and makes them feel respected and appreciated. Try truly listening, without interruption or crosstalk.

Note any common ground as well as any differences.

Look for areas of agreement or shared values that may arise and take an interest in the differing beliefs and opinions of others.

Be authentic and welcome that from others.

Share what is important to you. Speak from your experience. Be considerate of others who are doing the same.

Be purposeful and to the point.

Do your best to keep your comments concise and relevant to the question you are answering. Be conscious of sharing airtime with other participants.

Own and guide the conversation.

Take responsibility for the quality of your participation and the conversation as a whole. Be proactive in getting yourself and others back on track if needed. Use an agreed upon signal like the "time out" sign if you feel the agreements are not being honored.



Understanding Antiracism

"To be an antiracist is a radical choice in the face of history, requiring a radical reorientation of our consciousness." Ibram Kendi

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Interview with experts:

<https://www.cbsnews.com/video/authors-robin-diangelo-and-ibram-x-kendi-on-how-to-become-aware-of-privilege/#x>

Greater Good Science Center antiracism resources:

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/antiracist_resources_from_greater_good

[\(This resource has many good, accessible articles that reference research directly.\)](#)

Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) resources:

<https://www.splcenter.org/20150125/speak-responding-everyday-bigotry>

Allyship:

<https://www.vox.com/2020/6/2/21278123/being-an-ally-racism-george-floyd-protests-white-people>

<https://everydayfeminism.com/2013/11/things-allies-need-to-know/>

<https://medium.com/equality-includes-you/what-white-people-can-do-for-racial-justice-f2d18b0e0234>