Witnessing Whiteness at UW-Madison

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We are not aware that we are distancing ourselves from the problem instead of working toward a solution.

– Shelly Tochluk
Session Goals

- Set an intention for future action
- Investigate the intentions and impacts of using race-distracting strategies
- Explore why white people use certain strategies that keep us from paying attention to race
- Highlight the importance of self-work for white people in racial justice work
Participation Guidelines

- Notice & explore moments of defensiveness denti
- Impact matters more than intent
- Strong feelings are okay
- Listen actively & discuss sincerely
- Take risks
- Speak from your own experience
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<th></th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Both</th>
<th>Austin</th>
<th>Brown</th>
<th>Channing</th>
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When you hear the word "whiteness" what comes to mind?
What did you feel?

While listening to Robin DiAngelo talk about white fragility,
While listening to Austin Channing Brown's keynote, what did you FEEL?
Why did you choose this session? (Pick top 2)

- Other
- I'm skeptical about white accountable groups

Engage in self-work regarding racial injustice

To learn more about witnessing Whiteness
What is Witnessing Whiteness?
Goals of Witnessing Whiteness

- Build community
- Create accountability
- Identify patterns and develop tools
- Notice and respond
- Explore personal relationships to race
Race distancing behaviors and why we do them
Reflection Activity...
What might they mean? What might they hope?

When someone says „I'm colorblind„, what
How might saying you are colorblind impact someone negatively even if it was meant positively?
You feel?

Imagine that someone says they don’t see an important part of you. How would that make you feel?
What are other race distancing strategies you've seen/heard/done?
Why is it important for us to know about the negative impacts of these strategies?
What feelings came up for you while doing this reflection?
What did you learn from the exercise?
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The following are very common injustices and impacts of technologies used to host news.

1. Tell people we need to have a level of acceptance.
2. Tell people we need to be open.
3. Tell people we need to be aware of who we are.
4. Tell people we need to be open to change.

The difference between people is that people are not always open to change. People are not always open to new ideas. People are not always open to new experiences. People are not always open to new ways of thinking.
How have past participants been impacted?
It has released some of the guilt and shame, and instead provided me with an actionable lens to hold myself accountable.
culture.

promote a more equitable and just
my knowledge of racism and
racism and take actions to increase
I continually think about my role in
out:

beyond just "calling other people
exploring ways to do anti-racist work
off race in my daily life and in
More confidence in discussing issues
I speak up when I notice my whiteness in action or when my racial identity is influencing my response.
I have leveraged my leadership position to launch new DEI initiatives in my unit.
0 upvotes
0 questions

What questions do you have?
Resources

witnessingwhiteness.com

healandharmonize.com