



# Rx RACIAL HEALING WORKSHOP FOR CO-FACILITATORS

With Dr. Gail C. Christopher



# WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & AGREEMENTS



A photograph of a forest path. The path is covered in fallen red and brown leaves. There are several trees with green foliage on either side. The lighting is soft, suggesting an overcast day or a shaded forest.

Rx Racial Healing is the result of the privilege of working and learning with, as well as loving and being loved by, countless individuals through the decades.

My dear Parents James Henry and Emma Lucille Minor

My firstborn child, Ntianu

My now adult children, Hassan and Heather

Activist, Dick Gregory

Dr. Roland Sidney

Allen Kullen

Barbara Sabol

Community-Based Activists and Healers

Numerous Staff, Consultants and Volunteers of Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation (TRHT), including Annette, Luz, Alice, Linda, Michael, Mike, Emil, Mee, Monica and DuShaw

Maurice Parris

Julie Williams

Jake Ann Jones



# What is Rx Racial Healing?

Individual, collective and societal process of replacing the now consciously and unconsciously embedded belief in a false taxonomy and hierarchy of human value with a heartfelt awareness, appreciation, and belief in the sacred interdependence and interconnectedness of humanity.

It is the process of learning that we are one expansive human family. This is a journey from fractionalization to wholeness; from division and separateness to unity. It is a recommended protocol for increasing individual and collective capacity for perspective taking and empathy.

# Agenda



## Day One

### Participatory Module 1:

#### *What We Need to Know About Racial Healing*

- ☐ Workshop Goals & Learning Objectives
- ☐ Influencing Theories
- ☐ Milestones in Development Process
- ☐ What Rx Racial Healing is Not & Why
- ☐ Conceptual Framework
- ☐ The Power of the Rx Racial Healing Circle
- ☐ Simulation Rx Racial Healing Experience

### Participatory Module 2:

#### *How We Need To Be as Co-Facilitators & Why*

- ☐ Five Core Skills & Capacities: Supporting Research

### Summary & Adjourn

## Day Two

### Participatory Module 2:

#### *How We Need to Be as Co-Facilitators & Why*

- ☐ Five Core Skills & Capacities: Supporting Research

### Participatory Module 3:

#### *What We Need to Do to Implement Rx Racial Healing Circles*

- ☐ Key Elements & Process
- ☐ Creating Compassionate Spaces
- ☐ Contexts & Opportunities
- ☐ Review Resources

### Summary & Next Steps

# Workshop Goal

To model practices and provide key ideas that will deepen understanding, enhance capability and increase motivation to expand circles of human compassion; and co-facilitate the practice with and for others.



# Learning Objectives

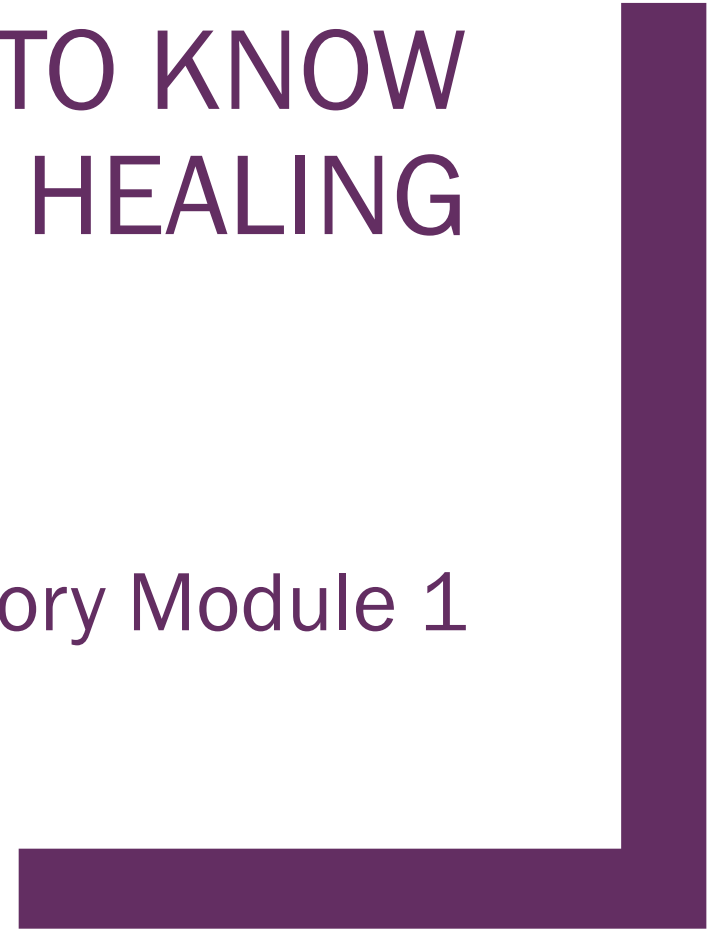
Participants will

- ✓ Increase understanding of the principles and theoretical underpinnings of the Rx Racial Healing approach and methodology.
- ✓ Enhance skills required for facilitating Rx Racial Healing circles.
- ✓ Increase awareness of related resources and tools.
- ✓ Work with experienced Rx Racial Healing practitioners and become aware of other Racial Healing practitioners, across the country who are familiar with this approach.



# WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT RX RACIAL HEALING

Participatory Module 1



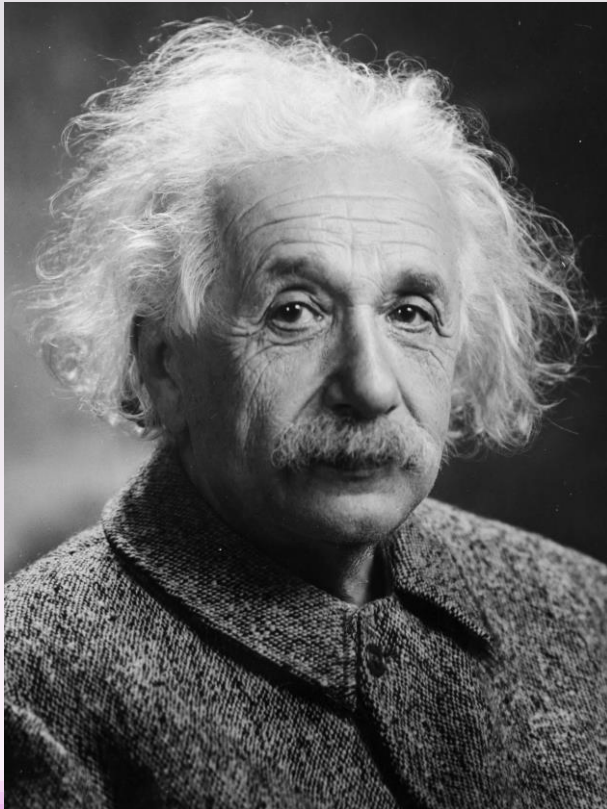


# 7 Rx Racial Healing Principles

- The global human family is interconnected as we all are the descendants of a shared human ancestry.
- The antiquated, destructive, mythical belief in a hierarchy and taxonomy of human value is an obstacle to the continued evolution of humanity. This belief is to be replaced with an understanding of the truth about our interconnected and equal human essence.
- Our primary innate human imperative is to be connected loved and nurtured. People need to feel safe and to perceive that we are valued and not threatened by our fellow human beings.

# 7 Rx Racial Healing Principles

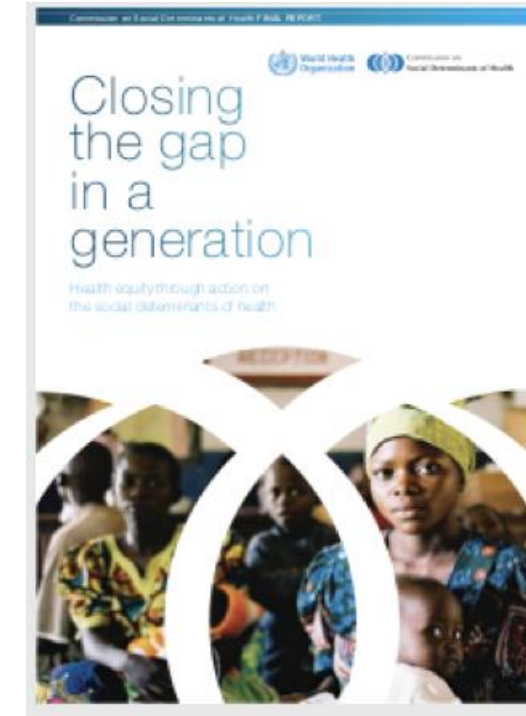
- A societal belief is an idea or thought that is pervasive and repeated often enough to harden into automatic behaviors which create structures and systems to embody the foundational belief.
- Racial/human hierarchy is a persistent societal belief that has caused immeasurable harm and human suffering. The belief must be eliminated.
- Our human brains have evolved to best retain, communicate and understand stories and narratives. We can influence and shape core beliefs and perceptions when we engage in sharing our diverse stories of agency and resilience.
- We choose to co-create and to model the desired state in which all are valued equally when we experience co-facilitated, compassionate Rx Racial Healing circles.



*"A human being is a part of a whole...(but) he experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest... This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty."*

*Albert Einstein*

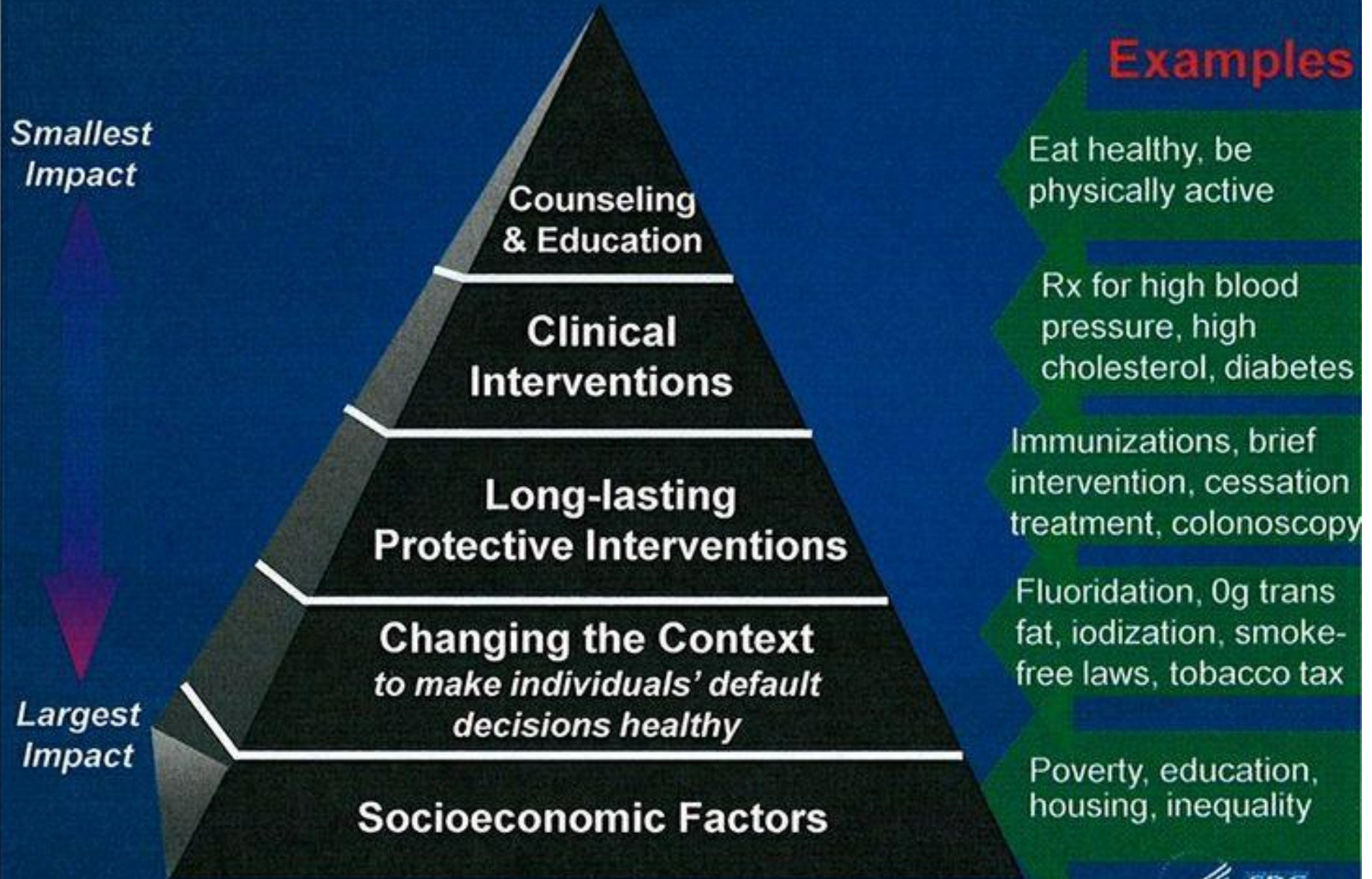
“Health is the measure of the degree to which a society delivers a good life to its citizens.”



*Commission on Social Determinants of Health*  
*Sir Prof. Michael Marmot Chair WHO*



# Factors that Affect Health



The belief in a hierarchy of human value - racism - is a fundamental driver of the social determinants of health: the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age.

# Why Rx: Why a Prescription?

- A prescription is a recommendation that is authoritatively put forth
- I am recommending that people in communities and organizations across America become committed to and actively engage in the process of replacing the deeply held, antiquated belief in a false hierarchy of human value with a new understanding of and commitment to honoring the equal and interconnected value of all people.

## INFLUENCING THEORIES



# Influencing Theories

Self-compassion through  
Mindfulness

Perspective taking and  
empathy

Stress, allostatic load and  
resilience

Emotional Intelligence

Adult Learning

A General Psychological  
Theory of Love

# Influencing Theories Terminology

## **Self-compassion Through Mindfulness:**

Treating oneself with kindness and nonjudgmental acceptance in response to perceived challenges and failures. Mindful awareness; a state of being fully engaged in the present moment enables self-compassion as it quiets the mind and physiological stress responses often triggered during future focus and during episodes of multi-tasking. Mindfulness in the context of self-compassion as described by K. Neff, the leading researcher in the field, refers to the "balanced awareness of negative thought and feelings involved in personal suffering."

## **Perspective Taking and Empathy**

Perspective taking is the art of perceiving or understanding a situation or concept from their point of view of another person. Empathy is the capacity to understand and share the feelings of another; the capacity to create authentic affinity or rapport with another.

## **Stress:**

An increased demand for energy and resources for adaptation. Stress becomes distress when, (as described by Lazarus and Folkman in 1984) individuals experience demands or threats without sufficient resources to meet those demands; or to mitigate the perceived threat.

# Influencing Theories Terminology

## **Allostatic Load:**

Term coined by McEwen and Stellar in 1993 describes the “wear and tear” that accumulates as an individual is exposed to repeated and chronic stress and distress.

## **Resilience:**

Our capacity to recover quickly and well from adversity or difficulty. S. Southwick describes key resilience factors as Mindful Awareness, social support and realistic optimism.

## **Adult Learning Theory**

Combines what is known about designing learning environments/opportunities for adults that respect and support learners; enable them to draw from their vast life experiences; while engaging them in activities or “doing”.

## **General Psychological Theory of Love:**

Introduced by Lewis et al in their 2000 book, A General Theory of Love, offers insights on emotional physiology and neuroscience emphasizing how we are affected by those closest to us through resonance and regulation and the profound implications throughout life.

# Stressed vs Stressed Out

## Stressed

- Increased cardiac output
- Increased available glucose
- Enhanced human functions
- Growth of neurons in hippocampus & prefrontal cortex

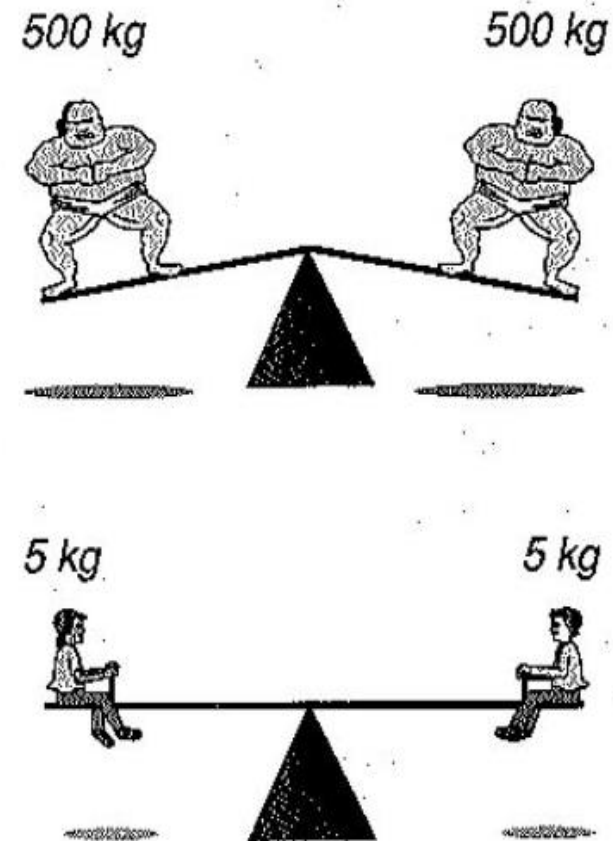
## Stressed Out

- Hypertension & cardiovascular diseases
- Glucose intolerance & insulin resistance
- Infection & inflammation
- Atrophy & death of neurons in hippocampus & prefrontal cortex



# Allostatic Load

*The End of Stress: As We Know It.*  
McEwen BS, Lasley EN  
Washington, DC; John Henry Press. 2002



# Dale's Cone

## Verbal Receiving

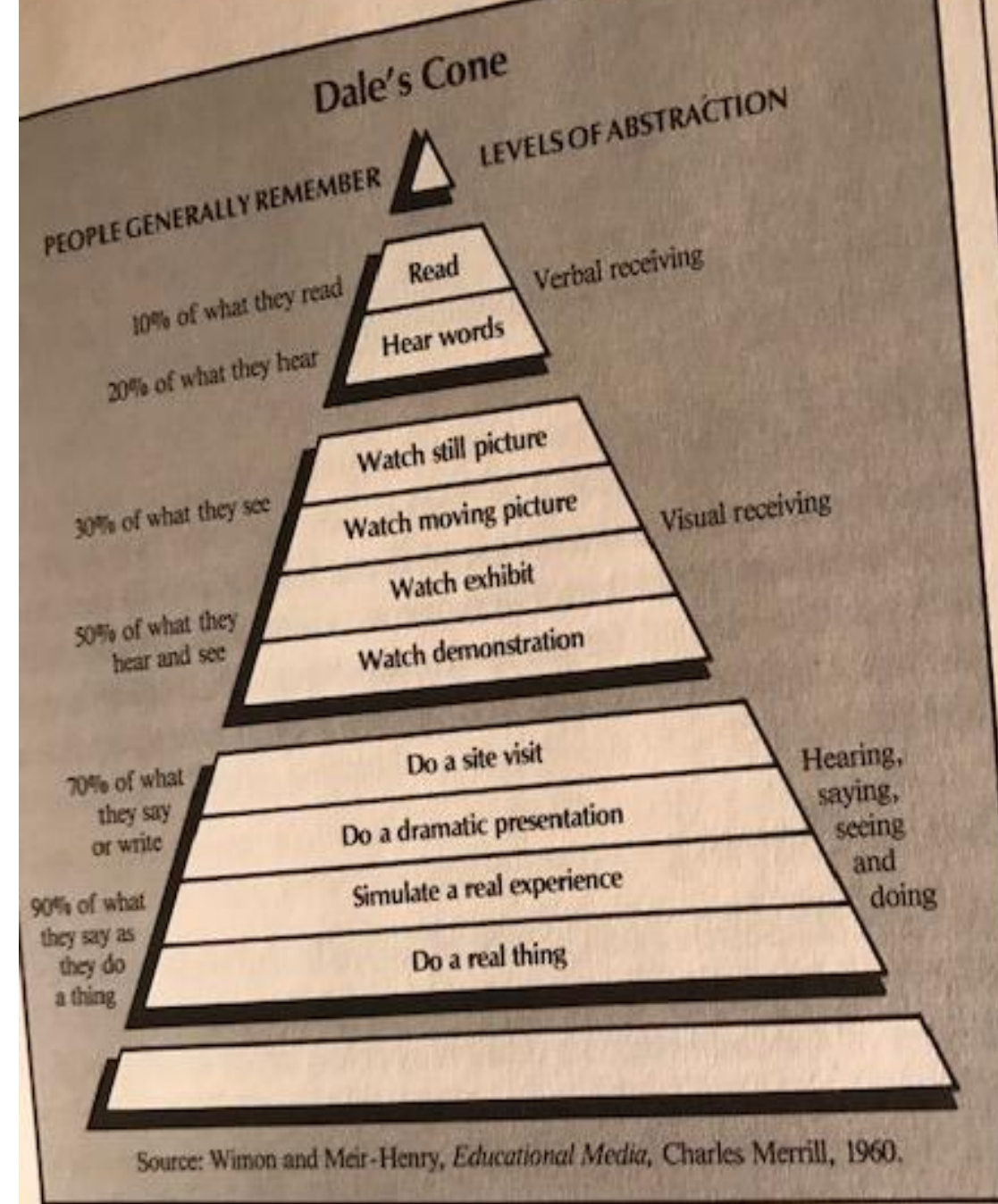
- Read (10% of what they read)
- Hear Words (20% of what they hear)

## Visual receiving

- Watch Still picture (30% of what they see)
- Watch moving picture (30% of what they see)
- Watch exhibit (50% of what they hear and see)
- Watch demonstration (50% of what they hear and see)

## Hearing, saying, seeing and doing

- Do a site visit (70% of what they say or write)
- Do a dramatic presentation (70% of what they say or write)
- Simulate a real experience (90% of what they say as they do a thing)
- Do a real thing (90% of what they say as they do a thing)



# Milestones in Development Process

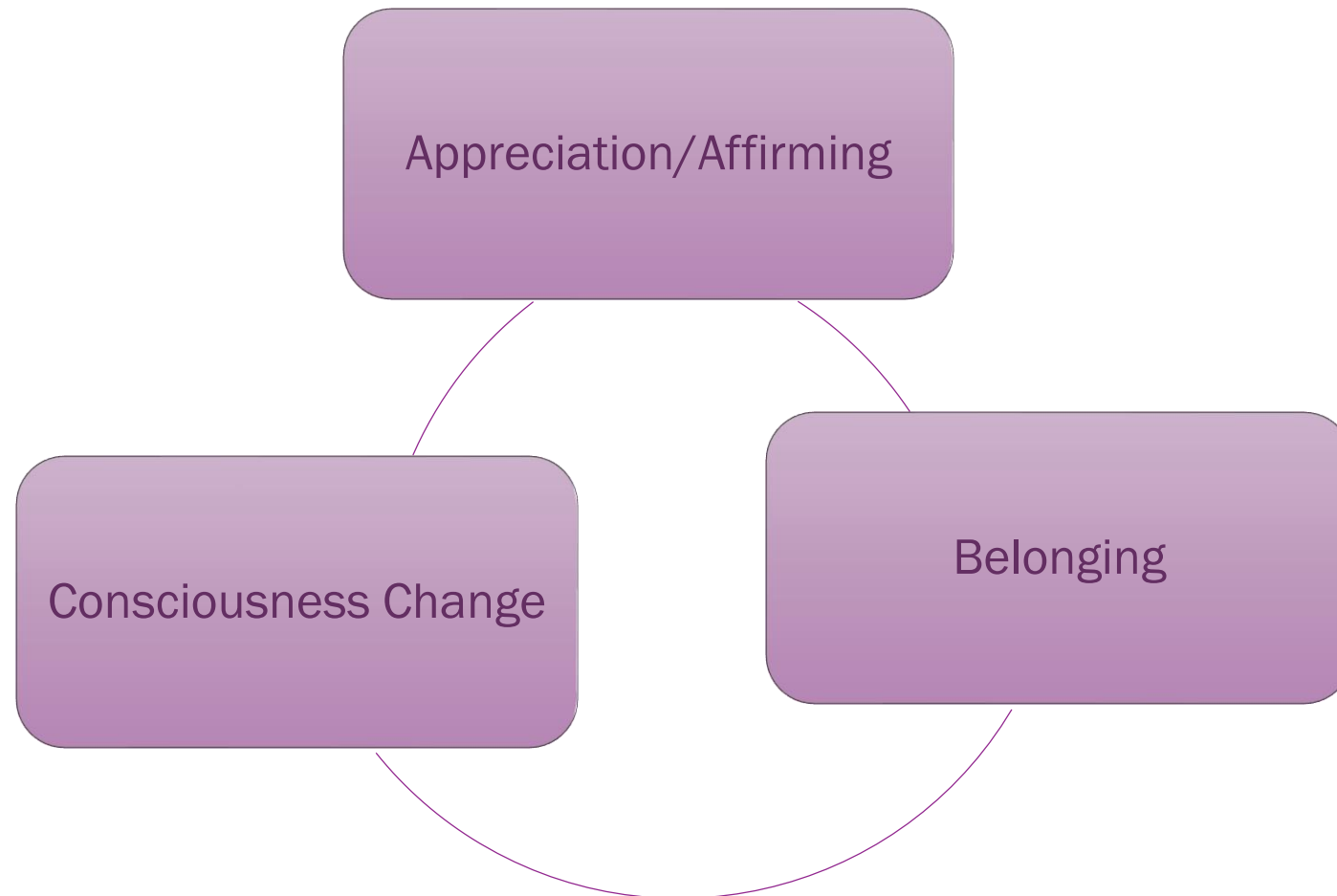
- Body Owner's Workshop
- Nutrassessment Centers, Inc.
- Family Development Institute
- Women's Self-Employment Project
- Appreciative Learning Educator's Support Program
- Americans All National Multicultural Education Program
- Place Matters National Health Initiative
- America Healing
- Truth Racial Healing and Transformation (TRHT)

## What Rx Racial Healing is Not & Why

- Not conversations about the fallacy of race.
- Not a dialogue about race.
- Not a community forum on race or racism.
- Not anti-racism, dismantling structural racism, or confronting race work.
- Differs from racial equity work and /or diversity equity and inclusion (DEI) work.
- Not multi-cultural education or cultural competence training.
- Not anti-bias training.



# Conceptual Framework



## Conceptual Framework: Appreciation/Affirming

- Researchers at the Heart Math Institute refer to Appreciation as:
  - *“Denoting feelings of thankfulness, which has an energetic quality that uplifts one’s energy and spirit.”*
- The “feeling” of being affirmed and appreciated changes the intrinsic rhythm of the heart or heart rate variability.
- This change reflects movement in the human body from a stress state to a state of more balance and relaxation.
- There is mounting objective evidence that positive emotional states are associated with improved health and increased longevity, while promoting helpfulness, generosity and cooperation.
- These benefits have important implications for health and for our capacity to have healthy relationships or minimally healthier interactions with perceived “others.”

# Conceptual Framework: Belonging

- A fundamental human need, drive, and motivation; experiencing it reduces physiological stress responses.
- Social belongingness is defined as the perception of social connectedness in groups – fitting in socially with others. Racial hierarchy can generate repeated experiences of exclusion and not belonging.
- Belongingness theory first proposed by researchers Baumeister and Leary in 1995:
  - *Human beings have a pervasive drive to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive and significant interpersonal relationships.*
  - *Meeting this fundamental human need or desire requires both frequent, affectively pleasant interactions that happen within a context of temporarily stable and enduring frameworks of “affective concern for each other’s welfare or well-being.*

# Conceptual Framework: Consciousness Change

- “Changing hearts and minds.”
- Increased awareness and capacity.
- The co-facilitated state of appreciation, affirmation, and belongingness in *Rx Racial Healing* experiences navigate participants along a continuum toward de-biasing by replacing false, stereotypical narratives about the “perceived other” with more authentic engagements.
- Authentic engagements elicit understanding, perspective taking, compassion and empathy.
- Webster defines consciousness as:
  - *The quality or state of being aware, especially of something within oneself; the state or fact of being conscious of an external object, state, or fact; awareness, especially concern for some social or political cause.*
- Creating a shift in consciousness or awareness is both a cognitive and an emotional, or affective process.

# Conceptual Framework: Consciousness Change



Key aspects of the consciousness change process:

- Reason
- Research
- Re-description
- Real World Events
- Resonance
- Resistance
- Resources
- Rewards

*The Art and Science of Changing Hearts and Minds*  
Howard Gardener, Harvard Psychologist



# Why Rx Racial Healing Circles?

People have used circles for healing engagement over sustained periods of time because of a few inherent qualities:

- Circles temporarily suspend real and perceived hierarchies. Everyone is equal in the circle.
- Circles meet basic human needs for connection through eye contact, proximity to others, and the experience of belonging.
- Circles support focus and attention away from distractions.

# Why Rx Racial Healing Circles?

- The Rx Racial Healing circle process emphasizes perspective taking, compassion and empathy.
- Empathy and tolerance are very different outcomes.
- Rather than simply tolerating another person's presence, true empathy requires the art of perspective taking and requires awareness and understanding of the experience of another.
- Sharing authentic stories in a deftly facilitated circle of engagement helps increase empathy for individuals and collectively among all circle participants.
- The Rx Racial Healing approach makes story an action. The focus, attention, and deep listening generate powerful changes in perception that help break down biases.

# The Power of the Rx Racial Healing Circle

- Provides a co-facilitated engagement opportunity for groups of 12 - 26 diverse participants.
- Designed to provide affirming experiences of belonging and sharing of authentic, prompted narratives that reveal our agency as well as our interconnected and common humanity.
- Designed to alter conscious and unconsciously held beliefs and biases about the "perceived other."
- The experiences reveal the absurdity of the antiquated idea and belief in a hierarchy of human value.

# A Simulation Rx Racial Healing Experience

# HOW WE NEED TO BE AS CO-FACILITATORS & WHY

Participatory Module 2



# Five Core Skills & Capacities: Supporting Research



## Five Core Skills & Capacities: Committed to “Doing No Harm”



- Healing is NOT a deficit frame.
- Healing is a natural, ongoing process. It is part of the essential nature of life; and is as constant as the rising and setting of the sun, or breathing and the beating of the human heart. Effective efforts to support our innate natural healing process should be committed to “Doing No Harm.”
- By highlighting the absurdity of the antiquated false belief in a hierarchy of human value; and by lifting up our common humanity, the Rx Racial Healing approach reduces the risk of participants’ experiencing negative emotional reactions such as anger, blame, guilt and shame during the Rx Racial Healing circle process.

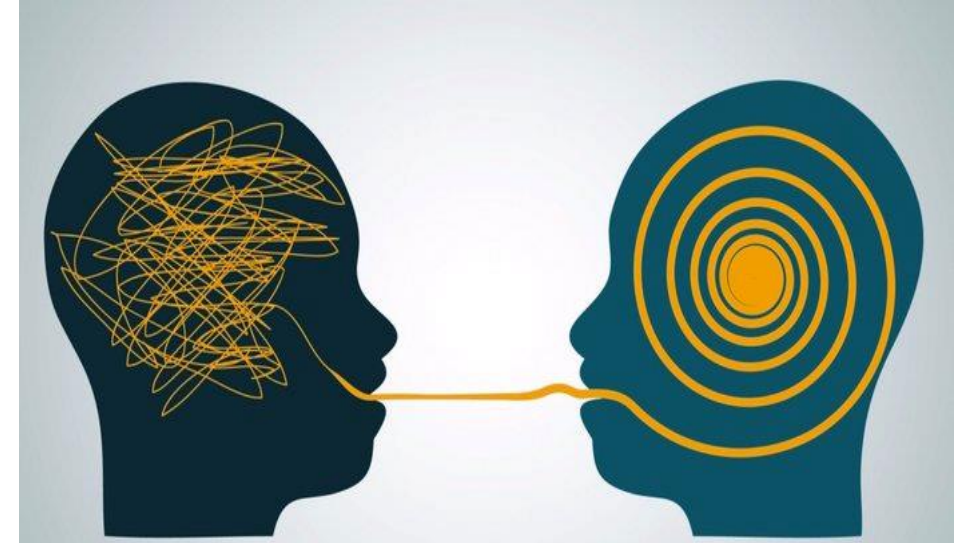
## Five Core Skills & Capacities: Committed to “Doing No Harm”



- Stress and distress sensitive environments are facilitated during the Rx Racial Healing circle process through activities designed to meet basic human motivational needs. These needs are for a sense of: (1) emotional security; (2) self-expression through authentic connections; and (3) affirming agency and empowerment.
- Some Circle participants may be anxious and fearful about discussing racial issues. Fidelity to the Rx Racial Healing Circle design elements and protocol will help to minimize the possibility of increasing stress and/or distress during the experience; and help to elevate innate physiological healing dynamics such as lowering cortisol levels and increasing oxytocin.

# Five Core Skills & Capacities: Emotional Self-Awareness & Emotional Intelligence

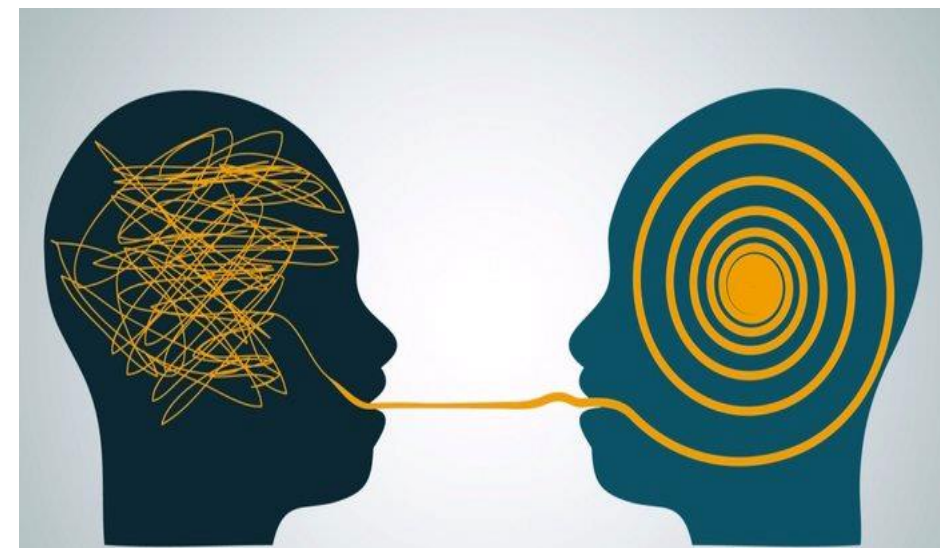
- Emotionally self-aware individuals can recognize their own emotional states or moods; and take responsibility for using self-regulation tools to improve their own health and the quality of their interactions and relationships. It is a cornerstone of emotional intelligence.
- Emotional intelligence, a concept popularized by Psychologist Daniel Goleman in his best selling 1996 book of the same name.
- Defined by Goleman as our ability to: recognize, understand and manage our own emotions and recognize, understand and influence the emotions of others.





# Five Core Skills & Capacities: Emotional Self-Awareness & Emotional Intelligence

- Related emotional intelligence skills and competencies include: self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness and relationship management.
- Emotional self-awareness: our ability to accurately perceive our own emotions in the moment and to understand our tendencies across situations. Self-management, our capacity to apply our own awareness of our emotions and to stay present, flexible and to direct our communications and behaviors positively.
- Social-awareness describes our ability to accurately discern emotions of other people and manage relationships. Good observational and listening skills are required. Relationship management: interactions and relationships are effectively managed and bonds built are cherished over time.
- Emotional intelligence skills and competencies are honed through practice and feedback and are challenged during times of stress.





## *My Grandmother's Hands*

Author: Resmaa Menakem

Somatic Therapist

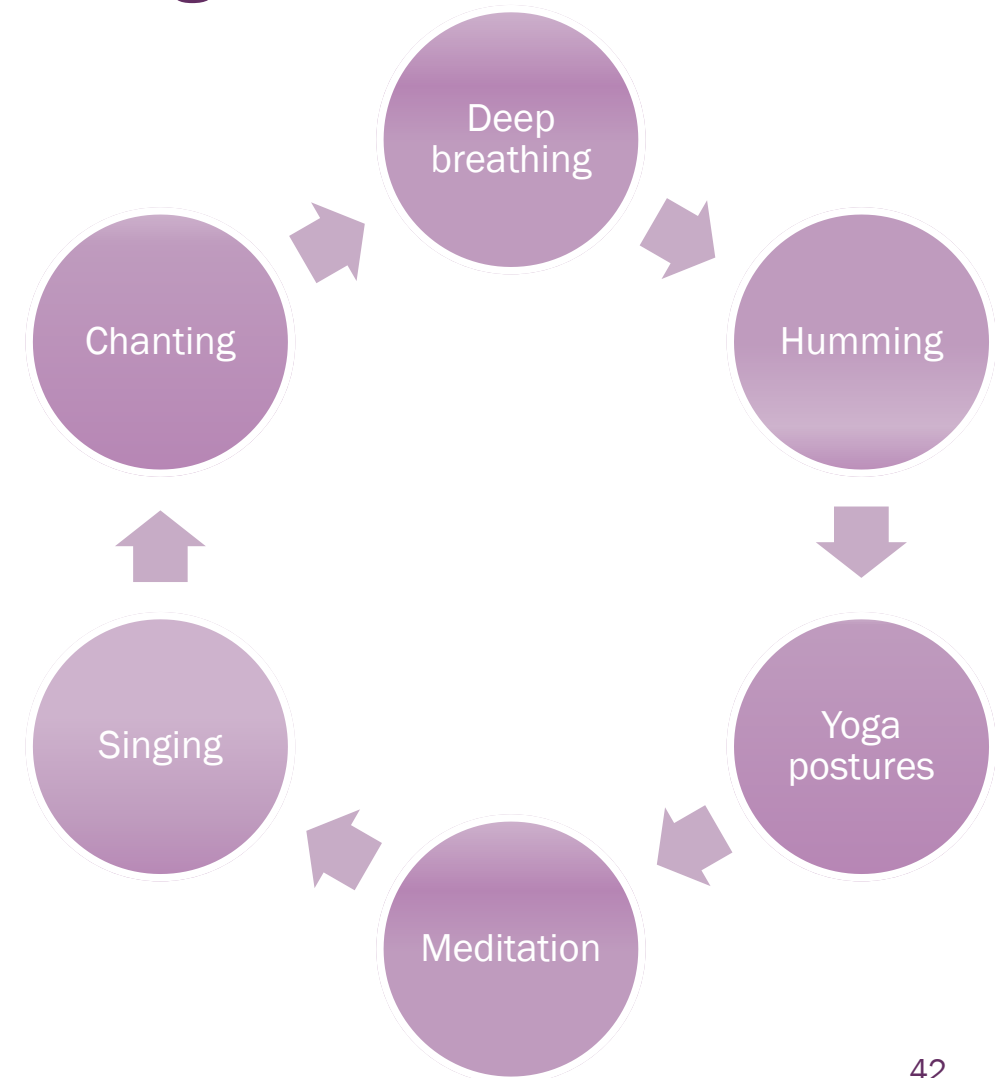
*“A calm settled body is the foundation  
for health, for healing, for helping  
others and for changing the world.”*





## Five Core Skills & Capacities: Self-Centering, Listening & Calming Skills

Tools and practices for  
self-centering.



*“Storytelling employs a different kind of listening. The body relaxes, settles back, is more open and less anxious. We take in story before screening the content. We are engaged emotionally, as well as mentally. This different kind of listening allows information to be exchanged more thoroughly, leading to greater understanding between people.”*



*Circle Process*  
Author: Kay Pranis



# Five Core Skills & Capacities: Skilled in Perspective Taking and Empathy



## Perspective Taking:

- The art of perceiving or understanding a situation or concept from the point of view of another person.

## Empathy:

- The capacity to understand and share the feelings of another.
- The capacity to create authentic affinity or rapport with another.



# Five Core Skills & Capacities: Awe, Wonder, Curiosity, Humor & Joy



- Although the study and science of the experience of awe is relatively new, about 15 years old, related insights are increasing rapidly.
- Psychologists, Keltner and Haidt offered a conceptual framework for awe. They suggested that experiences of awe can be characterized by two phenomena: “perceived vastness” and a “need for accommodation.”
- Whether we are in the presence of a natural wonder of nature such as the Grand Canyon or in the presence of a world-famous celebrity, the moment can evoke a sense of vastness and generate the need for cognitive realignment.
- We are challenged to alter our mental structures that we use to understand the world. This can make us sense greater connectedness with other people because we are less focused on ourselves. Researchers describe these feelings as self-transcendent.
- Additional benefits include greater humility and reduced physiological stress responses, if the awe is perceived as non-threatening.

*“Humility, central to having a realistic and secure sense of self, alongside an appreciation of the value and contributions of others, represents a vital virtue at the foundation of morality and is a key to living in social groups. Awe, which arises as we confront the vastness and complexity of the world, helps individuals gain perspective on their importance and place within it.”*

Jennifer Stellar, et al



## The Science of Awe

White paper prepared for the John Templeton Foundation by the Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley

### Executive Summary

If you've hiked among giant sequoias, stood in front of the Taj Mahal, or observed particularly virtuosic musical performance, you may have experienced the mysterious and complex emotion known as awe.

Awe experiences are self-transcendent. They shift our attention away from ourselves, make us feel like we are part of something greater than ourselves, and make us more generous toward others.

But what is awe? What types of experiences are most likely to elicit feelings of awe? Are some people more prone to experiencing awe? And what are the effects of awe?

While philosophers and religious scholars have explored awe for centuries, it was largely ignored by psychologists until the early 2000s. Since then, there has been growing interest in exploring awe empirically. This has led to a number of fascinating discoveries about the nature of awe, while also raising many questions still to be explored.

#### What is awe?

Awe is a complex emotion that can be difficult to define. Feelings of awe can be positive or negative—unlike most other emotions—and can arise from a wide range of stimuli. In a landmark 2003 paper, psychologists Dacher Keltner and Jonathan Haidt presented a “conceptual approach to awe.” In this paper, Keltner and Haidt suggested that awe experiences can be characterized by two phenomena: “perceived vastness” and “need for accommodation.”

“Perceived vastness” can come from observing something literally physically large—the Grand Canyon, for example—or from a more theoretical perceptual sense of vastness—such as being in the presence of someone with immense prestige or being presented with a complex idea like the theory of relativity.

An experience evokes a “need for accommodation” when it violates our normal understanding of the world. When a stimulus exceeds our expectations in some way, it can provoke an attempt to change the mental structures that we use to understand the world.

# WHAT WE NEED TO DO TO IMPLEMENT Rx RACIAL HEALING CIRCLES

Participatory Module 3

# Key Elements & Process

- A clearly expressed intention and agreed upon purpose: to create an opportunity for sharing while increasing the capacity for empathy and perspective taking with those perceived as different from ourselves.
- An understanding of the Rx Healing Circle methodology within the broader context of healing circles.
- Compassionate co-facilitators who reflect the desired diversity and who are capable of holding the space, modeling the process and being fully present.

# Key Elements & Process

- A thoughtful process of inviting a diverse group of people representing diverse perspectives to be part of the circle.
- A space large enough to hold your circle that is comfortable, welcoming and, if possible within a nature setting.
- Dyads or pairings to facilitate a prompted sharing of authentic personal narratives including deep listening and immediate affirming feedback. A registration or sign-up procedure needs to provide demographic information to facilitate diverse matches for these dyads (pairings) that will occur during the healing circle.
- Prompts or guiding questions to help participants recall meaningful life experiences to share during the day.



# Creating Compassionate Spaces

- Compassionate engagement requires warmth, humility, care and intention for addressing the motivational needs and emotional well-being of one another.
- Rx Racial Healing circles embody the process of compassionate engagement.
- By recognizing that the belief in a taxonomy and hierarchy of human value was a conceptual belief and cognitive construct perceived as necessary and essential for life choices, co-facilitators commit to demonstrating self-compassion and kindness as this construct is challenged and replaced.

# Four Component Parts of a Prompt



An invitation to share a story and your feelings about...

...a specific time in your life...

...that addresses requested conditions of the prompt and...

...reveals a moment of empowerment or agency

# Sample Prompts

**Address our motivational need for a sense of security:**

Share a story about a time in your life when you were in a new situation and perceived to be a minority or not part of the larger group; and someone went out of their way to make you feel welcome. How did you feel and how did their outreach affect you?

**Address our motivational need for self-expression:**

Share a story about a time when you needed to be heard and your need was recognized; you were heard. How did that make you feel and what impact did that experience have in your life?

**Address our motivational need for empowerment; to have some measure of control.**

Share a story about a time when the odds were clearly stacked against you, but you did not give up and you prevailed. To what did you attribute your determination and personal agency. How did this experience make you feel and how has it affected your life?

# Steps in The Rx Racial Healing Process

## **Phase One: Planning**

Community members come together to plan the Rx Racial Healing activity.

This entails securing sponsorship, conducting outreach for inviting diverse participants, identify and prepare co-facilitators (2 for each circle of 12-26 people). Co-facilitators meet, agree on prompt and curate pairs or dyads to optimize diversity.

## **Phase Two: Implementation**

Day of conducting Rx Racial Healing Circle.

Co-facilitators facilitate flow of the experience according to Recommended Protocol.

## **Phase Three: Debrief and Next Steps**

Debrief with facilitators and organizers.

Discuss options for next steps given context and opportunities.

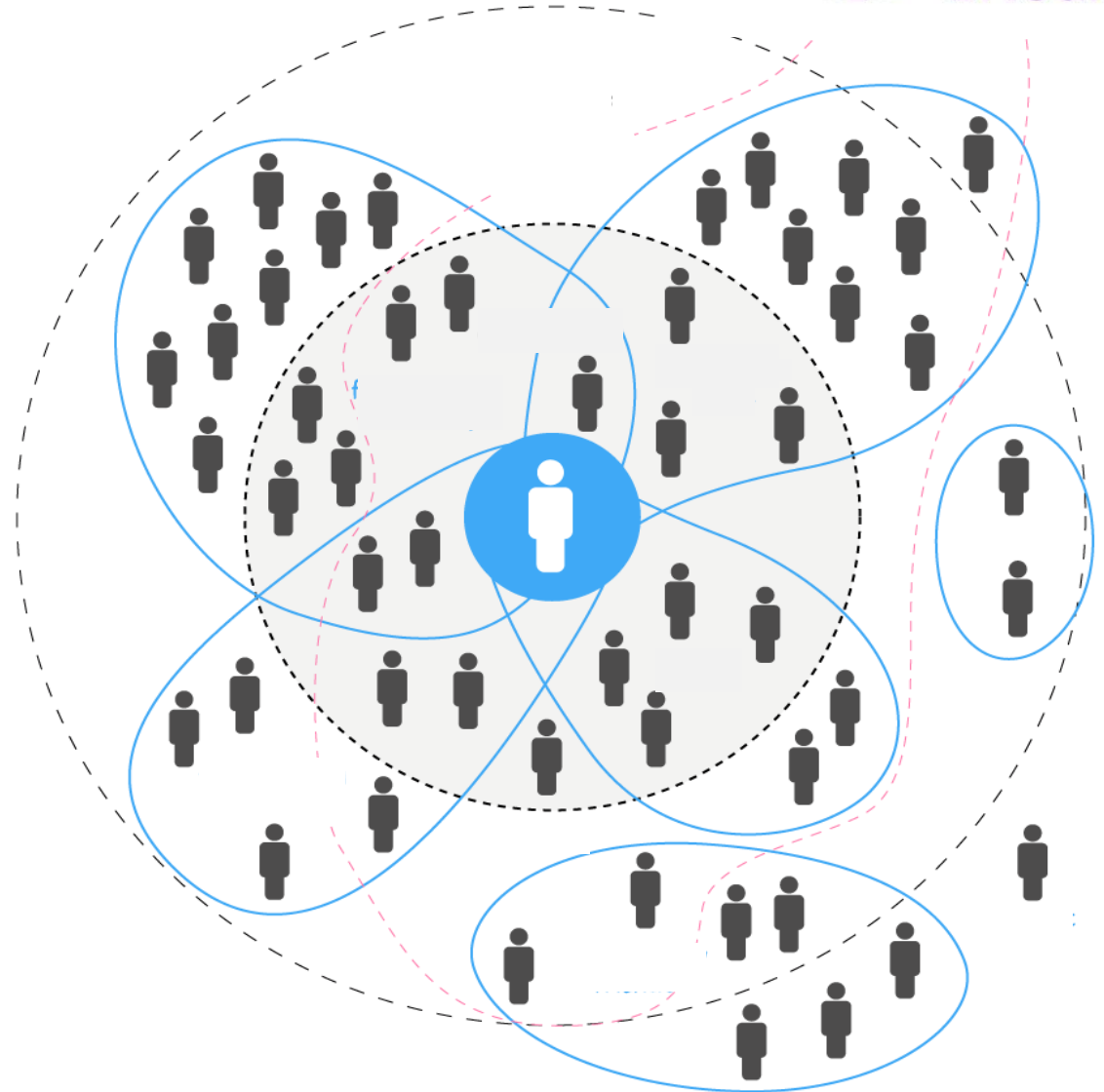
# Sample Rx Racial Healing Protocol

TIME	AGENDA ITEM
10 minutes	Welcome
5 minutes	Introductions
5 minutes	Group Agreements
15 minutes	Re-introductory Exercise
10 minutes	Group Reflection
10 minutes	Deep Reflection Question/Prompt
10 minutes	Co-Facilitators Model Response
10 minutes	Dyad sharing
25 minutes	Individual Sharing in Circle and Group Reflection
45 minutes	Lunch Break
110 minutes	Individual Sharing in Circle and Group Reflection
10 minutes	Circle Closing

# Contexts & Opportunities



- Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation implementation (TRHT)
  - *American Association of Colleges & Universities*
  - *American Library Association*
  - *Humanities Councils*
- Private sector organizations
- Public sector organizations
- Non-Profit organizations





## RESOURCES & NEXT STEPS

# Resources



- Sample Rx Racial Healing Co-Facilitators Agenda
- Racial Healing Practitioners
- Sample Agreements and Touchstones
- Books & Articles
- Glossary & Terms



THANK YOU,  
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