



**CREATING AN
ANTI-RACIST
ORGANIZATION:
MOVING FROM
TALK TO ACTION**

NYAPRS Executive Conference
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MISTRUST OF INSTITUTES OF AUTHORITY

Without adequate support, BIPOC employees are likely to perceive their environments as more interpersonally and institutionally biased against them

Here are some **COMMON MISSTEPS** to avoid:

- KEEPING SILENT
- BECOMING OVERLY DEFENSIVE
- OVERGENERALIZING
- MISTAKING EQUALITY FOR EQUITY



COMMON MISSTEPS...



KEEPING SILENT

- The default response is often silence
- Many Whites fear as being seen as prejudiced, so they adopt color blindness instead
- Many managers think they lack the skills to have difficult conversations around differences
- No one has the perfect words --- it is the leader's responsibility to try, conveying care and concern for all employees

- **Desmond Tutu** once said, *"If you are neutral in the situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor."*
- **Dr. Martin Luther King** remind us, *"in the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends."*



COMMON MISSTEPS...

BECOMING OVERLY DEFENSIVE

- When our worldviews, position, or advantages are questioned or challenged, accept the individual's truth and seek to understand
- Example, diminishing protestors by focusing on and judging those who engaged in looting instead of discussing the unjust act that drove people to the streets
- Another example, searching for evidence about what the victim did to deserve police abuse rather than demonstrating compassion and empathy
- Leaders must resist such reactions because they do not allow for constructive engagement



TAKE MEANINGFUL ACTION...

Leaders must **not** only offer **PHYSICAL** and **PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY**: they also have the **POWER AND THE PLATFORM TO LEAD CHANGE**.

- **Statements from the top are valuable; they are just a start**
- Anyone at any level of the organization, can take small steps to exercise compassion and initiate action that provides needed support and promotes racial justice for BIPOC as well as others who are marginalized
- Managers have a particularly important role in connecting with their employees on these issues



TAKE MEANINGFUL ACTION...

- **ACKNOWLEDGE** – any harm that BIPOC have endured
- **AFFIRM** – individual's right to **SAFETY AND PERSONHOOD** and help them feel protected
- **ACT** – think critically about how you can use your power to **EFFECT CHANGE**

*Racism is not just BIPOC problem; it's everyone's problem because it erodes the fabric of society. Leaders at every level must use their **power, platform, and resources** to help employees and communities overcome these challenges and build a better world for all of us*



RACIAL EQUITY DEFINED ...

“A mindset and method for solving problems that have endured for generations, seem intractable, harm people and communities of color most acutely, and ultimately affect people of all races.

This will require seeing differently, thinking differently, and doing the work differently.

Racial Equity is about RESULTS that MAKE A DIFFERENCE and LAST.”

OpenSource Leadership



ANOTHER MEANINGFUL ACTION...

**OPERATIONALIZE
RACIAL EQUITY IN
YOUR ORGANIZATIONS**

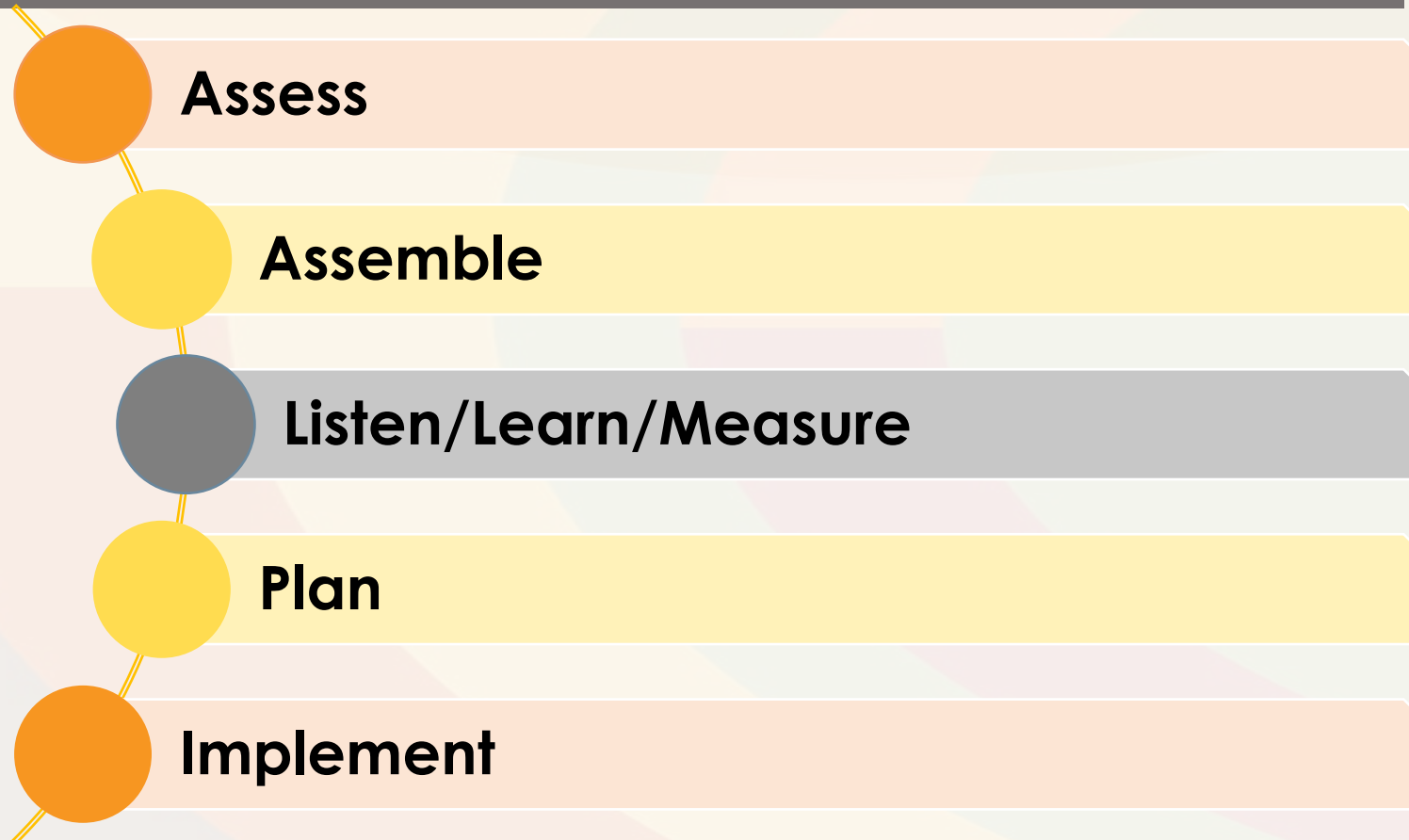


A PLACE TO START...



- How do we get started becoming a racially just organization?
 - How do we deal with conflicts and tensions that will happen in a racial equity change process, especially when they are complicated by power dynamics?
 - What can we expect may be included in an organization's roadmap for racial justice?
- What are ways to measure progress and be accountable to the communities and people we work with?
 - How do I choose what tools and resources to use in our work of becoming a racially just organization?

AN ORGANIZATION'S ROADMAP FOR RACIAL JUSTICE



STEPS TAKEN AT LIFESPAN AND ARC OF MONROE

- Edith Jones - Benefit Manager at Arc of Monroe
- Brian Potvin - Coordinator of Person-Centered Approaches at Arc of Monroe
- Paul Caccamise - Vice President for Program at Lifespan



HOW DO WE GET STARTED TO BECOMING A RACIALLY-JUST ORGANIZATION

Critical and Consistent Components of the Change Process

1. **Create a Racial Equity Leadership Team**
2. **Develop a Common Language and Analysis**
3. **Conduct a Racial Equity Organizational Assessment**



RACIAL EQUITY LEADERSHIP TEAM

- **THIS TEAM NEEDS TO BE DIVERSE** by departments, positions, identity groups, tenure, and informal/formal leadership.
- **INVEST IN THIS TEAM** – provide time in people’s schedules to participate, build their skills and knowledge, and ensure staff and other stakeholders have clarity about their role.
- **BE EXPLICIT ABOUT THE AUTHORITY**, decision-making autonomy, team responsibilities, and expectations of staff in the change process.
- **PROVIDE EQUITABLE SUPPORT** to each team member



RACIAL EQUITY CHALLENGES

- **COMMUNICATION IS UNCLEAR OR NONEXISTENT** – The workforce needs to know what the plans are in order to understand how to live into them
- **INTERNALIZED STRUGGLES WITH WHITE IDENTITY** – The need for affirmation for doing “good work” can put undue pressure on a colleague of color to constantly affirm allyship. Epitomizes White privilege, in which White allies hope people of color will show gratitude for helping
- **LACK OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT** - Showing either a lack of commitment or mixed messages toward. Often there are bold statements with no action
- **EDUCATION AND CONVERSATION NOT PART OF CULTURE** – Resources and opportunities for shared and individual learning should be viewed the same way as regulatory education and training



CHALLENGES FACED AT LIFESPAN AND ARC OF MONROE

- Edith Jones - Benefit Manager at Arc of Monroe
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FACE CHALLENGES, CELEBRATE WINS

- Identify Challenges Quickly – Understand when to change course and when to seek out other resources
- Demonstrate Organizational Integrity – Live up to who you say you are
- Commit to Utilizing Resources – Distribute organizational time, talent, and treasure equitably
- Normalize the Conversations – Incorporate education and talking about experiences as a regular part of organizational processes



AN ORGANIZATION'S ROADMAP FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

Assess: Policies, Hiring Practices, Decision Making, etc.

Assemble: From All Areas Of The Organization

Listen/Learn/Measure: Programs, Workforce, Community

Plan: Lead The Way, Get Everyone Involved

Implement: Equitable Culture Development



SUMMARY

Now is the time to act on our commitment to justice, to interrogate how the system of white supremacy is operating, to be bold and take significant risks, and to work collectively for organizational transformation. It is well past time to operationalize racial justice.



CONTACT INFORMATION



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