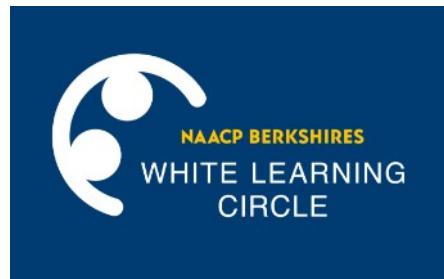


"Do not expect to be taught or shown. Take it upon yourself to use the tools around you to learn and answer your questions."
[Guide to Allyship](#)



Third Round Syllabus 2022-2023

Aspirational Outcomes

- We each move forward in our personal journey towards becoming anti-racist;
- We each have become more effective at recognizing and resisting white-centeredness.
- We each discover one or two areas of particular interest that lead to more in depth study and a commitment to become active in working for change, especially, but not solely through the NAACP Berkshire County Branch;
- We each feel supported and energized by belonging to a group of learners committed to fostering racial justice.

Preparation - prior to our first meeting

- Subscribe to and read regularly the *Anti-Racist Daily* <https://www.antiracismdaily.com/>
- Read one of the following books **you have not already read** in the order listed:
 1. *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson
 2. *So You Want to Talk About Race* by Ijeoma Oluo
 3. *The Conversation* by Robert Livingston

These publications will provide a basic shared understanding upon which to build in our work together.

Member-led Discussion

In order to stimulate discussion among Circle members, for each session two members will take the lead in presenting their personal responses to the book they read for the topic under discussion. **Guiding questions** (see below) provide the framework for these personal responses. Assignments of lead members for each session will be worked out at the organizational session.

General discussion will follow these presentations. The final half hour of many sessions will be time to engage with a **Black Mentor** (see below).

Guiding Questions – the framework for approaching the reading

The focus of the Circle is on personal growth in becoming an anti-racist. Each member begins at a unique place in this journey. While books are the primary tool for learning, the Circle is neither a book group, nor an academic course. The guiding questions are intended

to promote self-reflection and personal examination about how race has had an impact in our lives:

- What surprised you in the book you read and why?
- Did anything you read make you uncomfortable, defensive, or angry and why?
- How did what was presented line up or not line up with your own experience / view of the world?
- What did you learn about white-centering? How has it operated in your personal relationships and the opportunities you have had?
- Did your reading prompt you to see things about yourself and your life, and your beliefs and behavior, that you hadn't noticed before?
- Did the reading make you reconsider any of your assumptions, behaviors or actions? What changes are you considering?
- What questions did the book raise for you that you are interested in exploring further?

Black mentors

The circle is composed of white members only:

- so members do not refrain from honest speaking for fear of “exposing themselves”
- so white members do not look to a Black person to raise the difficult issues and to make white members feel good;

In order to keep the Black experience framed in our discussion, a Black mentor will attend the last half hour of most meetings to help with questions and issues that arose from our discussion.

Topics

- Early sessions address origins and history of racism, the Black experience and being white;
- Then there will be 8 sessions on NAACP “gamechanger” topics;
- Final sessions will be on white supremacy, and anti-racism.
- Along the way there are two sessions for catch-up and general reflection.

Reading

For each topic there are 3 or 4 choices of books. Offering this limited option affords everyone the opportunity to read something not previously read and facilitates use of a library for access to the books while maintaining a degree of commonality among members to spark discussion. With a few exceptions, these books are all works of Black authors. For each topic there are also two or three other media sources for supplementary exploration.

Learning Partners

Each member of the Circle is paired with another member of the Circle for the entire course of the Circle. Pairs will engage with each other (in person, by phone, Zoom, or texting) at least once between every session for a minimum of 30 minutes for the purpose of sharing with each other their answers to a guiding question. Partners have the opportunity to develop a deeper relationship with one another than is possible with the entire group, building mutual trust that invites honest sharing of personal reflections.

Session Leader role

For each session, two members have responsibility for co-facilitating the session, including:

- preparing ahead by reading one of the books for the topic under discussion;

- time management for the session;
- each making a brief presentation using the book they read framed around one or more of the **Guiding Questions**;
- ensuring inclusive and respectful dialogue/conversation among the group;

Typically the co-leaders connect with each other prior to the session to plan how they will share the leadership.

Each member will be a session leader for multiple sessions during the course of the Circle.

TOUCHSTONES

Touchstones are an established set of mutually agreed-upon principles that guide how participants will treat, and be with, each other in “deep dialogue” using the Coming to the Table Approach. They aim to address participants’ needs and expectations to feel safe and/or brave enough to speak openly and honestly and help us all make more space for each other. There shouldn’t be too many, nor should they be too rigid, lest they feel like a straitjacket. Touchstones are reminders of standards of behavior. Not hard rules. They are a means to an end, a way toward relationship. If they become an end, they should be revisited. Below are examples that can be used or modified to meet the needs of your group. Developing your own Touchstones is a good way to build group cohesion. The above description is adapted from, and more information about Touchstones can be found in, [The Little Book of Racial Healing](#).

- **Be prepared and 100% present in our sessions.** Prioritize the work in your daily life so you come prepared; then set aside the usual distractions of things undone, things to do.
- **Listen deeply.** Listen intently to what is said; listen to the feelings beneath the words. *“To ‘listen’ another’s soul into life, into a condition of disclosure and discovery—may be almost the greatest service that any human being ever performs for another”* (Douglas Steere).
- **Try it on.** Make an opening for new ideas by trying them on for size. Give yourself the time to get to know them, to consider how they fit you.
- **No fixing.** Each of us is here to discover his or her own truths. We are *not* here to set someone else straight, or to help “right” another’s “wrong”, to “fix” or “correct” what we perceive as broken or incorrect.
- **Identify assumptions; suspend judgments.** Our assumptions, although usually invisible to us, often shape our worldview; our judgments, frequently automatic, can block our growth. By pausing to identify assumptions and suspend judgments, to the degree possible or reasonable, we can listen to the other, and to ourselves, more fully.
- **Share with each other honestly, even when it makes you feel vulnerable.** Help each other to identify blind spots, in order to make space to choose change.
- **Maintain confidentiality.** Create a brave space for courageous sharing by respecting the confidential nature and content of our discussions.

Adapted from ideas, concepts, and practices used in a [Circle of Trust](#) and also from a version initially developed for [Coming to the Table](#) by Ann Holmes Redding, Ph.D. & Pat Russell, Psy. D.

Calendar and Learning Resources 2022-23

Oct. 2 Organizational Meeting

Overview of plan
Review of Syllabus
Personal introductions
Assigning leaders for each session

Oct. 16 History

Books:

Stamped From the Beginning: a History of Racist ideas in the United States by Ibram X. Kendi
The Warmth of Other Suns by Isabel Wilkerson
The Half has Never been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism by Edward Baptist
White Rage: the Unspoken Truth of Our Racial Divide by Carol Anderson

Media:

[The 1619 Project](#)

[Race and Racist Institutions – from Stonybrook University](#)

The African Americans: Many Rivers to Cross author/host Henry Louis Gates,
PBS documentary – widely available in libraries

Black Mentor:

Oct. 30 Being Black

Books:

I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness by Austin Channing Brown
Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates
When they Call You a Terrorist by Asha Bandele & Patrisse Khan-Cullors
Born a Crime by Trevor Noah
Eloquent Rage by Brittany Cooper
Heavy by Kiese Laymon

Media:

[Who Is Black In America \(CNN Documentary\)](#)

[Race Matters: America in Crisis PBS NewsHour Special](#)

Black Mentor:

Nov. 13 Being White

Books:

The History of White People by Nell Irvin Painter
Mediocre: The Dangerous Legacy of White Male America by Ijeoma Oluo

Nice Racism: How Progressive White People Perpetuate Racial Harm by Robin DiAngelo
White Fragility by Robin DiAngelo

Media:

[Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack](#) Peggy McIntosh, feminist, activist Robin DiAngelo and the Problem With Anti-racist Self-Help: What two new books reveal about the white progressive pursuit of racial virtue By Danzy Senna

[White People: I Don't Want You To Understand Me Better, I Want You To Understand Yourselves](#) by Ijeoma Oluo

[The White Man's Guilt - Ebony article by James Baldwin](#)

[The March of the Karens](#) by Lagaya Mishan in NYT Magazine

The White Savior Industrial Complex by Teju Cole (Atlantic Magazine)

Nov. 27 Time to reflect together

Dec. 11 Voting Rights

Books:

One Person, No Vote by Carol Anderson

Say It Louder by Tiffany Cross

Uncounted: the Crisis of Voter Suppression in America by Gilda Daniels

Media:

[Voting Laws Round-up 2022](#) Brennan Center for Justice

All In: the Fight for Democracy with Stacey Abrams – documentary on Amazon Prime

[Whose Vote Counts?](#) Frontline

Black Mentor:

Note: 4 week break for winter holiday season

Jan. 8 Education

Books:

Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria by Beverly D Tatum

The Skin that We Speak: Thoughts on Language and Culture in the Classroom by Lisa Delpit

Unconscious Bias in Schools by Tracy A. Benson and Sarah Fiarman

Blackballed: the Black & White Politics of Race on America's Campuses by Lawrence Ross

Media:

[Why black girls are targeted for punishment at school -- and how to change that](#) TED talk by Monique W. Morris

[Edutopia: Diversity](#)

[Why hugging out racism in education just won't cut it | Laura Mae Lindo](#)
TED Talk
[Learning for Justice](#) from the Southern Poverty Law Center

Black Mentor:

Jan. 22 Environmental Justice

Books:

What the Eyes Don't See by Mona Hanna-Attisha
Farming While Black by Leah Penniman
The Color of Food by Natasha Bowens

Media:

[David Lammy: Climate justice can't happen without racial justice TED talk](#)
[Majora Carter: Greening the ghetto TED talk](#)
[Climate Justice Alliance](#)
[Sunrise Movement](#)

Black Mentor:

Feb. 5 Criminal Justice

Books:

Just Mercy by Bryan Stephenson
The New Jim Crow by Michelle Alexander
Rage of Innocence: How America Criminalizes Black Youth by Kristin Henning
Until We Reckon by Danielle Sered

Media:

[**The Black Family in the Age of Mass Incarceration**](#) by Ta-Nehisi Coates
[Slaves of the State](#) 13th Amendment, mass incarceration and the prison industrial complex *Educating4Democracy* blog
[What prosecutors and incarcerated people can learn from each other](#) by Jarrell Daniels TED talk

Black Mentor:

Feb. 19 Housing

Books:

The Color of Law: a Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America by Richard Rothstein
Race for Profit: How Banks and the Real Estate Industry Undermined Black Homeownership by Keenaga-Yamahtta Taylor
Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City by Matthew Desmond

Media:

[Shelterforce: the Original Voice of Community Development](#)

What if gentrification was about healing communities instead of displacing them? By [Liz Ogbu](#) TED talk

Mass Fair Housing

[Dudley Neighbors Community Land Trust](#)

Black Mentor:

Mar. 5 **Time to reflect together**

Mar. 19 **Health**

Books:

Medical Apartheid by Harriet Washington

Black Man in a White Coat by Damon Tweedy

My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies by Resmaa Menakem

Media:

[Why your doctor should care about social justice by Mary Bassett](#)

TED talk

[How racism makes us sick by David R. Williams](#) TED talk

[The Use of Race in Medicine and Implications for Health Equity](#) session 1
UCSF School of Medicine

Black Mentor:

April 16 **Economic Justice**

Books:

The Sum of Us by Heather McGee

White Space, Black Hood: Opportunity Hoarding and Segregation in the Age of Inequality by Sheryll Cashin

Decolonizing Wealth: Indigenous Wisdom to Heal Divides and Restore Balance by Edgar Villanueva

Media:

[Racism has a cost for everyone by Heather C. McGhee](#) TED talk

[Racial Justice also means Economic Justice](#) excerpt The Laura Flanders Show

Black Mentor:

April 30 **Reparations**

Books:

From Here to Equality by William Darity and Kirsten Mullen

Long Overdue: the Politics of Racial Reparations by Charles P. Henry

Media:

[The Case for Reparations](#) by Ta-Nehisi Coates in *The Atlantic*
[Why We Need Reparations for Black Americans](#) by Rashawn Ray and Andre M. Perry

Black mentor:

May 7 White Supremacy

Books:

Backlash: What Happens When We Talk Honestly About Racism in America by George Yancy
Everything You Love Will Burn: Inside the Rebirth of White Nationalism in America by Vegas Tenold
American Swastika by Pete Simi and Robert Futrell

Media:

[White Supremacy Culture](#) Tema Okun's contribution to "our shared anti-racist racial justice commitment"

May 21 Anti-Racism

Books:

How to be an Anti-racist by Ibram X Kendi
Tears We Cannot Stop: A Sermon for White America by Michael Eric Dyson
Letters to My White Male Friends by Das-Devlin Ross
What White People Can Do Next by Emma Dabiri

Media:

[The difference between being "not racist" and antiracist](#) by Ibram X. Kendi TED talk
[Guide to Allyship](#)
[Ezra Klein Interviews Ibram X Kendi](#) Transcript from the *New York Times*

Black Mentor:

June 4

White Learning Circle – Evaluation