

Decolonization of our Minds

In this session, we reflect on the phenomenon of colonization and how it operates internally and externally. In particular, we consider how our response to being confronted with our own racism can itself reflect habits born of our privilege status. With willingness to see conditioning as simply conditioning, we can loosen our identification with being right and begin to inhabit a wider, less certain, but more connected world.

Before your meeting

Please read/watch/listen to these before your meeting:

- [White Fragility](#) by Robin DiAngelo [pdf]
- [Decolonizing the Mind](#) by Dr. Michael Yellow Bird [vimeo video]
- [A Unitarian Universalist 'Black Lives Matter' Theology](#) by Kenny Wiley [pdf]

Other Resources:

- [A Conversation With Native Americans On Race](#) [NY Times video]
- [Harsha Walia on Anti-Oppression, Decolonization, and Responsible Allyship](#) [Youtube video]
- [Spiritual Practices For White Discomfort](#) [pdf]
- [Making The Invisible Visible](#) [pdf] (Although this article discusses healing racism in Buddhist sanghas, the personal stories apply to other spiritual communities.)

Facilitation

Your group should choose a facilitator for this meeting. The facilitator role will rotate each meeting.

The facilitator's role is to guide the group through the proposed agenda. The facilitator is not expected to have any special knowledge about the topic, and responds to each question as a participant. The facilitator's role incorporates three jobs:

1. Make sure all voices are heard. We suggest "going around" to have each person speak during most sections of the agenda, rather than open discussion.
2. Keep time and keep the group moving through the agenda.
3. Ensure that a date and facilitator is set for the next meeting

Proposed Agenda

- Sit (5 minutes)
- Review Communication Guidelines that will support your group (5 minutes)
 1. Read aloud your group's guidelines developed in the first session
 2. Discuss any revisions to the guidelines
 3. Confirm that all members can abide by the group's guidelines, or at least open to practicing with them
- Mindful Sharing (80 minutes)
 - Instruction: Mindful sharing involves each participant sharing from personal experience. There is no discussion or cross-talk during this time period, only personal sharing.
 - Each person in the group can share 3-5 minutes on each question (gauge the time

depending on the number of people in your group)

- **Discussion Questions**

1. Contemplate White Fragility — the limited ability to tolerate racial stress — both internally and externally. How do you see White Fragility operating in yourself and others?

2. Our daily compassion practice can reduce our sense of fragility in the face of difficulty. How might you employ compassion to not turn away from the suffering of people of color caused by white dominance? How can it be used to be present with the suffering of white people caused by white dominance?

3. Describe some of the ways colonization shows up in your mind (such as unconscious actions, feelings or thoughts).

4. In “A Unitarian Universalist ‘Black Lives Matter’ Theology” Kenny Wiley says: “...the first principle of Unitarian Universalism stands as an unrealized promise.” Do you have a spiritual practice that supports your call to realize the promise?

- Sit (5 minutes)

- Group Reflection (10 minutes)

- Instruction: Group Reflection is like Mindful Sharing in that there is no discussion or cross-talk, however the focus is on what kind of experience the participants had during the meeting rather than on the content covered.
- Each person in the group can share 2-3 minutes about what it was like to participate in the group (gauge time based on number of people in the group)
- PROMPT: What was it like to engage in Mindful Sharing today? How has this been for you so far?

- Plan the next meeting (5 minutes)
 - How did your technology or meeting logistics work? Any changes you would like to try for the next meeting?
 - When will you meet?
 - Who will facilitate?
- If there's time left, finish with a closing sit (5 minutes)