Module 2: Dialogue Across Difference

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MODULE TWO

Dialogue Across Differences

This module constitutes an interactive exchange among participants that deepens the understanding of how race, gender, culture and privilege impact us personally and contribute to, or undermine, the effectiveness of the workplace. This workshop builds on the basic understanding of diversity acquired in Module One and teaches dialogue skills that foster a safe and productive work environment where employees trust one another.

The goals are:

- To understand the experience/perspective of those different from us;
- To use dialogue as a skill to communicate across lines of difference;
- To find ways to include various perspectives in our deliberations and decisions.

Note: Module Two has an accompanying Participant Workbook
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### Check-list of Preparation Materials

1. Photocopy the Participant Manual for Module II to distribute to participants.

2. Assign the following article as pre-reading:
   - *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack* by Peggy McIntosh
   - *Making Differences Matter: Three Paradigms for Managing Diversity* by Ely and Thomas

3. Prepare the following materials on a flipchart. Please note all these materials are also available on PowerPoint and in the Participant Manual.
   - Three Paradigms for Managing Diversity
   - Ground Rules on Intelligent Conversations
   - Dominant-Subordinate Group Matrix
   - Conditioning Screens Matrix
   - Flipcharts of different privilege groups distributed around the room
   - Low-Context vs High Context Cultures
   - Dialogue Skills

3. Ensure all logistical arrangements are in place for room set up, meals and others.

### Sample Agenda for a one day program

<table>
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<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>9:00 - 9:30</td>
<td>Welcome and Introductions</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30 - 9:45</td>
<td>Goals and Course Overview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:45 - 10:45</td>
<td>Unpacking the Privilege Knapsack (includes break during gallery walk)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:45 - 11:00</td>
<td>Dialogue Skills Overview and Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 - 12:30</td>
<td>Inter-group Dialogue on Race</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:30 - 1:15</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<td>1:15 - 1:30</td>
<td>Icebreaker</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30 - 2:30</td>
<td>Inter-group Dialogue on Culture</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:30 - 2:45</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:45 - 3:45</td>
<td>Dialogue on Gender (Activity 7 or 8)</td>
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<td>3:45 - 4:30</td>
<td>Dialogue on Breakthrough in Systems Change</td>
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<td>4:30 - 5:00</td>
<td>Closure Share Learning and Commitments</td>
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Activity 1: Welcome and Introductions

Purpose: To begin the event; to establish the circle; to break the ice; to learn names.

Instructions:
1. Open the event by welcoming people, underscoring the importance of gender equity and diversity to the organization and the value of this training program in enhancing awareness about the relevance of these issues to CARE’s effectiveness.
2. Greet the circle and ask everyone to state their name and speak briefly about something in their lives [work or personal] that they feel excited about.

Facilitator’s Tips:
- It is important for CARE staff to introduce the external facilitators.
- It is important to note whether there are supervisors and their direct reports in the room. Emphasize the importance of honoring honesty and openness.

Facilitator: “Everyone in the room has an important role to contribute towards building a safe environment for honest and open dialogue.”

Activity 2: Goals and Course Overview

Purpose: To set goals for the course.

Instructions:
1. Provide an overview of the three paradigms for managing diversity and highlight that the third paradigm is what this training aspires to create. Use either the PowerPoint presentation or a flipchart to describe these paradigms.

   1. **Discrimination and Fairness**: Measures how well an organization achieves its recruitment and retention goals and legal mandates.
   2. **Access and Legitimacy**: Measures how well an organization matches its internal demographics to its targeted customers.
   3. **Learning and Effectiveness**: Measures how well learning takes place and how effective an organization is in incorporating different perspectives in substance, structures and processes. Explain that paradigm I & II are nested within paradigm III. CARE’s goal is to advance towards the third paradigm.

2. Emphasize that Module One provided an introduction to different dimensions of diversity. Participant feedback however, showed a desire and a need to dig deeper into the issues and learn more about how race, gender and culture affect our lives and our work. Thus Module Two intends to delve deeper. The focus is to develop dialogue skills that facilitate this exploration. Refer participants to the flipchart and review the following goals:

   - To increase understanding of the experience of those different from ourselves.
   - To learn to use dialogue as a skill to improve communication across lines of difference.
   - To find ways to include various perspectives in our deliberations and decisions.
3. Highlight that at CARE we say that we want to change power relationships. We state that we cannot find sustainable solutions to poverty without dealing with power. In Module One we explored dominant and subordinate group membership. Module Two is about a skill-set needed to re-balance power dynamics. Emphasize why dialogue skills are important in addressing power dynamics and building strong relationships.

4. State that we will be focusing on three ‘differences’ today: race and ethnicity; culture; and gender.
   - **Gender**: Gender is the one dimension of diversity that cuts across CARE. In Country Offices, gender is a ‘hot’ issue and can be potentially dangerous to challenge. In addition, CARE has identified gender as a critical area to focus on and emphasize in its programming.
   - **Race and Ethnicity**: Race and ethnicity are more complex areas of diversity and are often avoided. Yet feedback and CARE’s experience shows that we cannot ignore this subject. Whether in the US or outside, race and ethnicity is very important, and we need skills in order to talk about this difficult topic.
   - **Culture**: CARE is a western organization working within non-Western cultures so in order to be effective, we have to refine systems and practices to find a good balance and build a creative partnership between the two. When you learn about diversity, you see how culture is enriching and not divisive.

5. Elucidate that this course seeks to equip participants with the knowledge and skills to utilize difference and diversity as a vital resource to advance our vision and mission.

6. Before beginning the next exercise, go over some ground rules for the day. You may use the Intelligent Conversations Rules as a guide. This can be found in the Participants Workbook.

**Facilitator’s Tips**
- People have raised the question about why it would be important to surface differences, and is it not preferable to be blind to them or to focus on what is common instead. Respond that it is important to be aware of what privileges you hold and its impact on others. It is important to explore differences, understand them and then throw them out if you so desire.
- People in CARE like to walk away from trainings with concrete skills. Thus emphasize that dialogue itself is a skill-set and toolkit which will be learned and practiced today. It is a useful skill which needs to be learned if we are going to deal with people different from ourselves and use that difference as a resource.
Facilitator’s Tips

- Some participants find they have several subordinate group memberships and thus find it hard to find a place to stand among the dominant groups. But when they do, it is enlightening for them to find privileges they were previously not aware of.
- This is a difficult exercise for some. For example, white males may find it hard to come up with privileges. This is indicative of their lack of awareness. Thus, this exercise is often a humbling experience to realize how much privilege one has. Often people may want to know what can be done to change this. Emphasize the power of being aware. State that when you are aware, you can educate your own group about these privileges and call out discrimination when you see it.

Activity 4: Dialogue Skills

**Purpose**

To increase understanding on why dialogue skills are important

**Instructions**

   - **Discovery mode**: Participants show understanding and willingness to be changed.
   - **Sharing Truth**: Participants share truth of personal experience using ‘I’ statements.
   - **Active Listening**: Participants give full attention to content, meaning, and feelings.
   - **Surfacing Assumptions**: Participants uncover beliefs that underlie opinions and ‘facts’.
   - **Suspending Judgments**: Participants put judgments aside to actively listen.
   - **Attending to the ‘whole’**: Participants notice themes, patterns and implications.

2. Give a short lecture on why diversity work, including this particular workshop, are important in this ‘dialogue’ context. Take participants back to the Iceberg diagram discussed in module 1. Explain how dialogue skills are an effective toolkit for surfacing what is below the iceberg and for exploring power relations.

**TIME**

15 - 20 Min
Dialogue can:

➤ Bring to the surface some of what is below the water line in the iceberg. See Figure 2 for an illustration.

➤ Bring to the surface the fact that CARE’s work to eradicate poverty through an advocacy approach requires that it deals with power relations and therefore requires dialogue skills in order to explore power relations further.

Facilitator’s Tips

- It is very important throughout the day to emphasize good examples of dialogue skills as participants engage with each other. Reinforce positive examples! Be watchful of negative ones as well.
- In most cases, participants need examples of what the dialogue skill around “sharing truth” and using “I” statements mean. You may want to offer an example. In addition, some have rightly pointed out that in some cultures it is not appropriate to use “I” statements, especially when one’s identity is closely tied to a group not as an individual. Explain that sharing the truth of an experience need not always be done using “I” statements, but can be done in other ways. Elicit from the group what this might look like.

Activity 5: Inter-group Dialogue on Race

Purpose To experience dialogue on issues of race and race relations at CARE.

Instructions

1. Begin with a short lesson on the importance of dialogue in race relations. Give a lesson on:

   * Historical Resonance: wounds from the past still affect how we live today. They still resonate among group memberships that were affected. For example, in the US context, historical resonance is particularly strong in Atlanta, a key location both for slavery and for the civil rights movement. In the international context, historical resonance may be particularly strong in South Africa due to the recent apartheid regime. Give examples of how past events affect the experience of a group. Emphasize that we must acknowledge how our historical past can influence our present relationships and effectiveness. See the hand-out on Conditioning Screens in the Participant Workbook for more details.

2. In the Atlanta Headquarters, we have used the following groupings. But based on your context, you may elect to use different groupings. Set up the dialogue by establishing three groups:

   I White Americans;
   II African Americans and
   III Other Americans of color; [this is an observer group and will have a different assignment].
   IV People from other countries [this is an observer group and will have a different assignment].

3. Ask the three American groups [White American, African American and Other American] to:

   A. Prepare questions about the experience of the other groups that you want to learn about. What do you want to know about them? Ask from the stance of true curiosity.
   B. Identify things about your own group that you think are misunderstood by the other groups and that you want to clarify. What do you want them to know about you?

4. The observer groups are to prepare questions of curiosity for each of the other groups that would advance understanding of their experiences in society or at CARE.
5. After 15 minutes, ask a representative from the African American group to choose one of their questions of curiosity and pose it to the White American group. White group answers. Facilitate the dialogue for 5-10 minutes longer if the energy is there.

6. White American group then asks one of its questions of curiosity to the African American group, with subsequent dialogue.

7. The observer group then asks one of its questions.

8. All groups then share one "truth" they want the other group to know about them.

Facilitator’s Tips

● Depending on the mix of the participant group, you may elect to divide the room only into two groups: White American and People of Color. This division has also stimulated a healthy dialogue of race relations in the US.

● Facilitator must guide the discussion closely. Challenge participants to surface their assumptions when they make statements.

● If the black-white race case is not relevant to the Country, try another contentious issue such as religion and state for example: "The relationship between Christians and Muslims exists in a complex moment with historical, legal, organizational and global dimensions. How does this affect you, especially at CARE?" Alternatively, deal with ethnic differences or caste differences or gender. This exercise also works well for a gender dialogue.

● During this process which can generate much emotion, use careful facilitation skills to provide safe space, encourage the surfacing of assumptions, emphasize the dialogue skills and highlight key points. Also re-focus the discussion when appropriate to direct experience at CARE.

● The nature of the questions posed by the groups is very important. Assure that they are true questions of curiosity. Groups should not be making statements hidden with a question format (to which they already have an answer in their own minds), but rather asking questions to which they truly seek to know the answer.

● This activity requires time. There is a big risk of opening wounds but not giving enough time to find closure and possible resolution in a healthy way.

● Lead the group in taking deep breaths after each session. Ask participants if they feel their questions were sufficiently answered.

● Balance the opportunities for all groups to speak. Facilitator must be neutral.

● Groups must not feel as if they are defending themselves. Facilitator must assure this is not happening if it appears that a group appears defensive.

Completion
Hold a plenary discussion inviting reflections on this experience. What did people feel? What did they notice? What did they learn? How will this be useful in the workplace?

"We have more in common than we sometimes think...if only we would take the time to dialogue and learn from each other and dig a little deeper."
Participant reflection

"We have such an amazing diversity of experiences and perspectives at CARE, but they don’t often come out. How can we overcome our biases and have real and honest dialogue?"
Participant reflection

MODULE TWO

MODULE TWO
Activity 6: Inter-Group Dialogue on Culture

**Purpose**

To experience dialogue on issues of cultural difference and inclusiveness.

**Instructions**

1. Give a short lesson on CARE as a global workforce; expressing both the tensions and richness inherent in this. The main tension is that CARE is a western organization working in non-western cultures. Emphasize the importance of dealing with other cultures within CARE. Tell a story about how cultures impact how people see the world. Give the High Context and Low Context lesson. Refer to the Participant Workbook.

2. Set up the rolling fish bowl seating arrangement with two concentric circles of chairs. An inner circle facing inwards and an outer circle. See illustration in Figure 3.

3. The inner circle always has two extra chairs. In the USA, we have used the following three groups:
   - Staff from the Global South who moved to Atlanta
   - Staff who have lived overseas and represent the Global North
   - Staff who have never lived overseas

   Each group takes turns in moving to the inner circle. If doing this exercise in the Global South, these categories may change.

4. Start with the first inner circle representing staff from the Global South who moved to Atlanta. All other participants sit in the outer circle and are invited to join the inner circle at any time to ask questions of curiosity by sitting in one of the empty seats and posing their question. Constantly remind those in the outer circle of this option as they often forget; however, there must always be one empty seat. Thus, if all seats are full, one person must leave the inner circle. This allows for different participants in the outer circle to ask questions and engage with the issues raised by those in the inner circle.

5. The inner circle should discuss:
   - What has been your experience of moving to the United States (or another country)?
   - What is it like working in CARE-HQ (or in whatever country you are in) when you come from another culture/country?
   - In what ways do you find yourself adjusting to this culture? What is lost? What is gained? How has this affected you?

6. Give the first group in the inner circle at least 10 minutes to discuss these questions, and then debrief the activity.

7. Invite the second group to the inner circle and continue reversing the inner and outer circles until all three groups have had a chance to dialogue around these questions. Each group having the opportunity to share the reality of their experience.

**Facilitator’s Tips**

- Probe on how culture impacts organizational effectiveness including work-style and performance evaluation. Participants will tell stories but push them to link those stories to how it impacts on work effectiveness.
- Highlight that cultures that are relationship-based have difficulty in a task-oriented system. Ask participants to give concrete examples of how this is true.
- Probe participants to think about what is lost, if non-Americans adapt to the Western system.
- Ask how the fear of “losing face” impacts working relationships.
- Ask participants to reflect on how to maintain a global standard but also allow for local difference.
- This methodology can be used with different groupings such as gender, race, ethnicity, religion etc.

**Completion**

Everyone returns to the larger circle. Debrief by asking what participants learned from this exercise and how they can apply what they learned to CARE.
Activity 7: Inter-Group Dialogue on Gender

**Purpose**
To experience dialogue on issues of gender and the impact of changes in this area in recent times, especially at CARE.

**Instructions**
1. Describe that some changes happen quickly and others happen slowly. For example, representation of women in organizations has increased, yet women still remain absent from top management.
2. Set up two rows of chairs, facing one another. Women are to sit on one side, and men on the other. See Figure 4 below.
3. You then ask five sets of questions and give instructions.
   a. For the women to discuss: "One thing I appreciate about men is..." Women have two minutes to share while the men listen.
   b. For the men to discuss: "One thing I appreciate about women is..." Men have two minutes to share while the women listen.
4. Ask for highlights and thoughts, then ask men to move one chair to their left. Continue on with the second set of questions.
   a. For the men to discuss: "One thing I think is challenging as a man at CARE is..." Men have two minutes to answer while the women listen.
   b. For the women to discuss: "One thing I think is challenging for men at CARE is..." Women have two minutes to answer while the men listen.
5. Ask for highlights and thoughts, then ask men to move one chair to their left. Continue on with the third set of questions.
   a. For the men to discuss: "One thing I think is challenging as a man at CARE is..." Men have two minutes to answer while the women listen.
   b. For the women to discuss: "One thing I think is challenging for men at CARE is..." Women have two minutes to answer while the men listen.
6. Ask for highlights and thoughts, then ask women to move one chair to their left. Continue on with the fourth set of questions.
   a. For the women to discuss: "One thing I think is challenging as a woman at CARE is..." Women have two minutes to answer while the men listen.
   b. For the men to discuss: "One thing I think is challenging for women at CARE is..." Men have two minutes to answer while the women listen.
7. Ask for highlights and thoughts, then pose the final questions for both groups to discuss:
   a. What are some things I think ought to happen in the CARE system to address some of the challenges over the gender issue.
8. Ask for highlights and thoughts and document these on a flipchart.

**Facilitator's Tips**
- This methodology is useful especially at the end of the day, as it engages everyone and keeps the energy flowing.
- If there are not an equal number of men and women in the room, arrange that some configurations speak in triads instead of dyads.
- The gender dialogue has also been done utilizing the inter-group methodology used in this exercise for the race dialogue or the fishbowl methodology.
- Many state the importance of not only practicing sensitivity in the workplace, but at home, and highlight the importance of considering these issues at the personal, organizational and programmatic levels.
- For additional ideas on having a gender dialogue, refer to the fourth module in this manual.

**Completion**
Hold a plenary discussion, inviting reflections on this experience. What did people feel? What did they notice? What did they learn? How will this knowledge be useful in the workplace? How might it relate to our programmatic work?
Activity 8: Using the Ladder of Inference to Surface our Assumptions

Purpose To surface assumptions and how they can impact our reactions and attitudes towards others.

Instructions

1. Have participants break up into groups of four. Explain that there is a ladder methodology that will be tested today. This ladder helps us figure out how our assumptions color the conclusions we make. The ladder illustrates a process we use to reach conclusions, and separates that process into steps that we can individually analyze. Instead of rushing to conclusion, the ladder allows us to step back and see how we work through that process.

2. Call attention to the Dialogue Skill: Surfacing Assumptions. Explain that there is a process by which we arrive at fact and make conclusions. The process is so quick and unconscious that we rarely stop to examine that process.

3. Explain that we will use the ladder of inference as a method to analyze scenarios. Explain that there are three stages in forming conclusions. The first stage is noticing observable data. The second stage is our experience, judgment and beliefs about the data that forms an interpretation. The third stage is the actual conclusion.

4. Explain that the ladder lines are not parallel, they cannot be, because people do not climb the ladder the same way in order to reach the top. People make conclusions based on different processes of thought. If you can, refer to comments, observations from throughout the day and use them to elucidate the point.

5. Read the scenario below out loud. Ask each individual to use the ladder of inference to write down important data, their interpretation of the data based on their experience, and their conclusion.

Scenario One: A work unit at CARE gets a new member: a young, very attractive woman, who wears clothes that make her more attractive. There is an older woman in the unit, and the older woman observes that the young woman is getting a lot of the good assignments and is often invited out for lunch by her male colleagues. In addition, the manager often comes into her office and sits on her desk. The older woman also notices a lot of casual body touching. She approaches the younger woman and asks: "What is going on with you and the manager?" The younger woman just shrugs.

6. Ask for highlights and possible conclusions, compare and contrast the different conclusions and process participants used.

7. Repeat the exercise and read one or two additional scenarios and give the same instructions.

Scenario Two: Brian, who is a man, applies for a job, but ultimately doesn’t get the job. He feels strongly that he is the right person and is especially upset because the position was filled by a woman. The hallway talk confirms his feelings that the position was a “no man need apply” position. He goes to his manager, Sheila, very upset about this decision and is thinking about filing an HR complaint. Sheila has always wanted to diversify her team. She experiences pressure from top management to diversify her team. She doesn’t want to encourage Brian to file a complaint nor does she want to lose Brian and feed the perception that Brian was not qualified to apply.

Scenario Three: A senior staff in your project always makes jokes about women in the project and uses biased language to describe women and men staff. You are working in the project and find his attitude offensive. The rest of the staff are used to him and say that he means no harm. One day he gets very upset because you tried to challenge him and he pointed out that things had always been that way, and that until you came along there were no complaints and they had been one big happy family. He suggests that if you cannot fit in you should not work there.

Scenario Four: You are the manager of a two-year project supported by a donor who is very strict about targets and deadlines. As a manager you recruited 5 women in your project to ensure gender balance in your team. Now three of them are pregnant and requesting maternity leave, all at the same time.

Facilitator’s Tips
- Push people to think about how their assumptions affect their conclusions and why this would be important to pay attention to.
Use the exercise to surface gender stereotypes and how this can impact our ability to manage diversity in the workplace.

Solicit ideas from participants on what would be the appropriate approach or behavior in handling these challenging situations.

Completion
Hold a plenary discussion, inviting reflections on this experience. What did people feel? What did they notice? What did they learn? How will this knowledge be useful in the workplace?

“I stereotype and didn’t realize it.”
Participant’s reflection

“We all have built-in biases that influence our assumptions and conclusions, and that cannot be avoided, we need to recognize them and be aware how they influence our views of others.”
Participant’s reflection

**Activity 9: Strategies for Breakthrough in Systems Change**

**Purpose**
To engage in dialogue about how to apply lessons learned throughout the day to promote systems change.

**Instructions**
1. Break participants into small groups of 3-4 participants.
2. Ask each group to imagine the desired end state for GED in CARE as already true. Ask them what it would look like? What would they see, hear, feel? Encourage participants to base their thoughts on what they learned throughout the day about what it takes to fully embrace GED.
3. Ask the groups to share highlights of what they talked about.
4. Then ask each individual to identify 1-2 self-limiting beliefs about being able to change the culture at CARE. Ask participants to write them down and then to toss the pieces of paper away in an act of setting aside their self-limiting beliefs.
5. Now ask participants what that feel like and what new possibilities they see as they set their self-limiting beliefs aside.
6. Share with them eight strategies below. These strategies for breakthrough are tried and tested practices based on credible theory and decades of successful implementation in a variety of fields. Ask participants for their reactions to these strategies and discuss how they can be useful to mobilize change, challenge existing power structures, or change behaviors or mindsets.

**Eight Strategies for Breakthrough in Systems Change**

1. Know that energy follows thought; what you give your attention to, you energize or strengthen.
3. Remember that if you always do what you always did, you always get what you always got. Start with awareness of habitual patterns, then do it differently.

4. See the desired end state as already true; describe it, act as if it were so.

5. Build on your experience of success; gather and appreciate your existing wisdom.

6. Use right-brain methods of generating creative options.

7. Be a model, a mirror, and a magnet for the change you seek.

8. Declare what you want to achieve; declare collectively, then do what it takes to make it happen.

Facilitator's Tips
- This exercise is a simple process to engage participants in dialogue about what it would take to influence change when participants return to their day-to-day work at CARE.
- This exercise emphasizes individual responsibility for influencing change.
- Often conversations get stuck when participants begin to uncover the many challenges and barriers. This exercise helps participants move beyond these barriers.
- In most cases, participants find it difficult to let go of their self-limiting beliefs, because they see their beliefs as ‘true’ and ‘real’ and do not want to acknowledge that the limitations often come from their perception.
- The intent is to leave participants with a sense of optimism that change is possible.

Activity 10: Closure

Purpose
To get a sense of completion of the day; review key learnings; share commitments; evaluate the event.

Instructions
1. Ask the group to form a large circle. Then ask people to share briefly something important they learned that they will take away with them, and what they will commit to do to take their learning forward within the workplace.

2. Conclude by saying that in all human interaction training, the question is what needs to be done for the learning to last. Explain that change must happen at three levels in order to last and be systemic:
   - **Political level**: Decision makers must buy-in to the desired change;
   - **Institutional level**: Structures, procedures, policies must reflect expectations;
   - **Social level**: The hearts and minds of each person is changed and each person commits to transforming their community.

3. Conclude by saying that it doesn’t matter which of the three levels happens first. Each takes a different kind of work, and we each have a role to influence change at all three levels.

Completion
Administer the evaluation form for participants to complete before leaving.

“We are all born without prejudice. We learn it as years go by. We need to see ourselves and one another as little babies, free of prejudice and feelings of difference.”

Participant’s reflection