

Facing Race, Racism, and Stereotypes

An evening of learning and reflection hosted by the Dover School District with support from the Thomas W. Haas Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation



Program Outline

Welcome! Please sign in, get a nametag and help yourself to refreshments...

6:00 Welcome from the Dover School District – Bill Harbron

6:05 Opening remarks and Learning Community Agreements – Michele Holt-Shannon

6:15 Video: The Danger of a Single Story – Mo Nunez

Pairs: What are some of the “single stories” in Dover?

6:30 Talking about race, racism, and stereotypes – Dottie Morris

6:40 Small group conversation groups – Michele

See small group conversation guide on the reverse

7:40 What is meaningful about our conversations? – Mo

Next steps and feedback

8:00 Adjourn

Materials adapted from Everyday Democracy and Living Room Conversation discussion guides

www.nhlistens.org

Small Group Conversations

To have healthy communities and a strong country, we need to face racism head-on. In a democracy, there must be ways for everyone to have a voice in finding solutions and in carrying them out. One important shift in our national conversation was when more people began to talk about the ways that racism and its effects are imbedded in our institutions, our practices, and our culture, preventing all of us from having the kind of country and communities we dream of. Though everyone does not agree about the nature of racism in our country, people of all backgrounds and political views see that it is a serious challenge. Racism is more than one incident or a single person's actions. Communities across the United States are becoming more and more diverse. This is true in Dover. **This conversation is about creating a community where all of us can thrive.**

First, take a few minutes to complete the exercise below (about 10 minutes)

Personal Journey Timeline: Becoming Aware of Race

The goal of this activity goal is to reflect on experiences that have shaped your understanding of race and systemic racism.



1. Working independently for about 10-12 minutes, note on the journey line a few significant events/ experiences you remember most as impacting how you have thought about your racial identity or others' racial identity. It can be a personal, professional, national, or global event. Prompting questions for meaningful memories and reflections:
 - a. When did you first realize you were considered by others to have a particular racial identity?
 - b. What were you taught about other people's races?
 - c. What are your earliest memories of interacting with people of a different racial identity?
 - d. Where and when did you first experience or witness an act of racism?
 - e. Where and when was the first time you intervened during an act of racism?

Note any emerging themes—what does your timeline tell you about your own journey?

Round One: Let's Get to Know Each Other (30 Minutes)

We encourage you to take your time with introductions. Don't rush through this first part but instead, take a few minutes to answer the questions below.

- After introducing yourself and sharing a few of your connections to the Dover community, answer one of the following questions:
 - Talk for a few minutes about your racial or ethnic background.
 - Tell a story or give an example to show how your background or what you've been taught affected your ideas about racism and other ethnic groups. *Share one event on your timeline.* How did the event leave you thinking, feeling, reflecting? How did that event shape who you are today?

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Round Two: What Are Our Experiences of Race, Racism and Stereotypes? (25 minutes)

Remember that the goal for this conversation is for all of us to listen and learn about where we have different opinions and where we have shared interests, intentions and goals. You may only have time to focus on some of the questions below.

- Have you experienced racism or discrimination? Have you seen it? How has it affected you or people you know?
- How do you think young people see racism today? Compare your views with your parents' beliefs about different racial or ethnic groups. How are they the same? How do they differ?
- You may have heard family members, friends, co-workers, or neighbors make prejudiced remarks. How do you think they learned their prejudice? How do you feel when you hear people talk this way? How do you react?
- Do you think that individual patterns of racial bias or systemic, structural forms of racism affect opportunities and programs in the Dover community?

Closing Round: What Are We Learning Here? (10 Minutes)

Briefly answer the following questions:

- What learning, new understanding, or appreciation do you have about our community and addressing race, racism and stereotypes?
- What did you appreciate the most about what happened here?

Back to large group conversation and closing...

Community Agreements

- Share air time so everyone gets a chance to be heard.
- Be respectful and use respectful language.
- If you disagree, consider asking a question rather than arguing to prove your point.
- It's okay to disagree, but don't personalize it. Focus on the idea, not the person.
- Speak up if the process doesn't seem fair.
- Personal stories stay in the group unless we all agree we can share them.
- If you talk about people who are not here, don't use their names.
- Speak for yourself. Don't try to speak for "your group."
- It's okay to put issues like race and class on the table.
- We all share responsibility for making the group productive.
- Listen to each other...