

NOTE FROM THE CEO, MAXINE CRUMP

You are beginning a unique experience: a Dialogue On Race series designed to provide a way for talking about the difficult subject of race, a social construct responsible for wrongs in the past while currently accepting race as normal.

In the Dialogue on Race Original Series, participants have a chance to unpack the confusing narrative. Through this educational process, everyone has a chance to bring their beliefs, thoughts, and ideas to the conversation. The process uses factual materials and clearly defined terms.

What is unique about this process is that its success does not depend on experts. The format is led by facilitators trained to set an environment for open, honest, brave conversation that can lead to understanding and change.

The dialogue is a series of conversations in which, over the six sessions, participants have space and time to reflect on what has been a lifetime of living with race as normal, and finding that it's a social construct that has unsolved problems that were here before we were born.

Therefore, the orientation is necessary for this dialogue to be able to help everyone have the best possible outcomes. The orientation prepares you to have the kind of conversations that people call for; conversations that lead to understanding and change.

Preparing ahead of time is key to you having the outcome you would like to have. At your first session, the facilitators will have an orientation review to further clarify your understanding that this conversation is the kind of talk that can lead to action.

It will be great if you come prepared. I wish you a wonderful experience.

ORIENTATION DETAILS

This orientation describes the entire six-week series and what you can expect from each session. It describes the format, the facilitators' roles, your roles, and the ground rules.

The facilitators will review the logistics and tools that are used in the virtual setting.

They will review this information at your first session. Reading the orientation prepares you to be ready for your first session of the DOR Series. We are looking forward to having your voice in the conversation.

Each session covers a **major activity around race in the country**: The construction of the system of race, the determination of who its beneficiaries are, the legal framework in which it operates, the movement that determined it to be illegal, the controversial Affirmative Action toward improvements, and why talking about race matters.

- **Session 1: Definitions and Distinctions & A Brief History of Race** – This session clarifies the terms used throughout the series as well as a brief history of race and its link to building the country.
- **Session 2: Understanding the Meaning of Whiteness** – This session covers the race structure that determined the meaning of whiteness and its preferred status in the society.
- **Session 3: Understanding Institutional Racism** – This session looks at institutional power that assures full rights and privileges for citizens who are white by limiting access to those who are not, and how understanding power is important to change.
- **Session 4: Struggle and Transformation** – This session follows the movement that led to the Civil Rights Act, with a focus on one of its leaders, Dr. Martin Luther King.
- **Session 5: Affirmative Action** – Looks at the measures put in place with the intention of leveling the playing field, while recognizing the fact that it is still a controversial issue. This session looks at the issue in that context.
- **Session 6: Talk Is Action** – This session shows that while talking about race is important, it's the kind of talk and the strategies used that matter.

- **Dinner and Dialogue** – And finally, the tradition before social distancing was to offer an opportunity for participants to join in a social gathering we call Dinner and Dialogue. Now that we are virtual, we ask the group to determine what they would like to do in the context of social distancing. We talk about that at the end of the series to determine as a group whether you would like to carry out that tradition and how you would prefer to do it.

LOGISTICS AND ORIENTATION DETAILS FOR USING THIS VIRTUAL FORMAT

The orientation sets the tone for the entire series. When using this virtual format, we try to keep as much of the in-person experience as possible. There are things you can do to help make it a better conversation for everyone.

- The Zoom chat box is open until the session starts. Afterwards, it works best if everyone will agree to make all comments openly and honestly during the conversation. This keeps the facilitator's attention focused and helps the flow of the conversation.
- We try to keep as much of the in-person experience as possible and we have found that it's best if everyone is live on camera during the conversation. If you need to leave the conversation, it is OK to turn off your camera until you return.
- It's best to mute your microphone if there are others in the room or if you expect any outside noises. Remember to unmute when you are ready to speak.
- Another tip that keeps the in-person experience is to raise your hand when you wish to speak instead of the hand raised icons. Of course, there are times when you have a spontaneous comment, and we say sure go right ahead.
- There will be a 10-minute break announced midway through the dialogue.

HOW THE DIALOGUE FORMAT WORKS

The sessions are timed. We start and end at the appointed times. This is to honor your time and to let you know what you can count on from us.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR EACH DIALOGUE SESSION

A few tips that can help you get the most out of the conversation.

- Review the assigned materials beforehand.
- Make notes so that when you get to the session you will already be prepared to offer thoughts on the materials. We will ask you what stood out to you and what got your attention.
- Another helpful idea is to think about what you would like to share in the opening reflection period beforehand and be ready to share it.

ROLES OF PARTICIPANTS AND FACILITATORS

What is Facilitation?

Facilitation is **the act of engaging participants in creating, discovering, and applying learning insights.**

The Participant's Roles:

1. Actively and honestly participate in the discussions.
2. Demonstrate respect by listening attentively to others.
3. Remain open-minded and allow open discussion of experiences.
4. Attend at least five of the six sessions.
5. Review the assigned material before each session.

In the case of this dialogue, everyone's voice is key to the success of the dialogue.

Facilitator's Roles and Responsibilities:

The facilitator is a neutral, non-evaluative, non-judgmental process manager. The facilitator is neither the traditional chairperson nor the traditional decision-maker.

The facilitators do not manage the participants. The participants are trusted to maintain civility.

1. The facilitator never competes with the group members.
2. The facilitator helps the group break stalls in the conversation by offering problem-solving strategies and making process comments.
3. The facilitator respects and defends the group members and their ideas from attack.
4. The facilitator does not permit anyone to be put on the spot.
5. The facilitator keeps the group focused on the task.

Now that we have defined our role as facilitators, when necessary, remind us of our responsibilities; we would appreciate it.

The ground rules are:

- Be honest.
- Remain live on camera, except when you need to leave your space temporarily.
- Let us know when you are not going to be at a session. (Your voice is missing when you are not here.)

Are there any ground rules you would like to add? If not now, you can always add them anytime during the series. Does everyone agree to these ground rules?

FORMAT OF EACH SESSION

Reflection:

Each session opens with a 15-minute reflection time. This time is set aside for you to talk about whatever is on your mind. It can be thoughts, observations, and experiences from your week. It can include what you have seen in the news, articles you've read, people you have talked to, direct experiences, or just thoughts that have come to your mind from the previous session.

We hope you will find the reflection a great space to freely bring your thoughts and ideas to help expand the conversations.

The three topic questions:

To assure a more complete conversation, this DOR Series uses topic areas that are in the form of questions. We call the Topic Questions. They help guide the discussion in a way that leads to a more complete conversation that what is typical when talking about race.

A description of the format and how it works:

Topic Question 1 looks at the information in each article/video and asks, "What got your attention?"

Topic Question 2 asks you to talk about where you recognize, experience, or observe instances of racism related to the session's topic that we are on that day.

We take a **10-minute break** at the midpoint in the dialogue. This is during Topic Question 2.

During the break, the facilitators have a discussion with each other to look at where the conversation has gone in the first half of the session and discover what might need further exploration or what can expand the conversation. **After the break**, the facilitators bring back those discoveries and continue with Topic Question 2.

Topic Question 3 focuses on what you would like to see done or changed, and what you can see yourself doing.

BENEFITS OF ORIENTATION

The facilitators use tools that you may not see us using. We use timing cues to help distribute the time between the three topic areas and we send each other necessary messages. This is to ensure a fuller and more complete conversation with as few distractions as possible. We tell you these things so that you can relax and focus on having a meaningful conversation, and we will do the rest.

These details are an important part of creating a space for open, honest, and brave conversation. We will do everything we can to make sure that is what you will experience.