

Hello and welcome to R.O.C.K. Mat-Su’s *Braided Stories: Building Equitable Communities for Alaska’s Children & Families* workshop. In this bag you will find goodies, materials, and resources that you will need for the four-day workshop. We look forward to meeting you and working together soon. In the meantime, please orient yourself to the items in the bag and information in the binder.

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What's in the bag?

In this bag are the following items:

- Snacks and beverages to keep you nourished as we learn and work together.
- Fidget items to help your hands stay busy so your mind can focus.
- Markers, paper, and other supplies to help with workshop activities and assignments.
- Mobius Strip: Blank white strip of paper to use during Session A: Identity (Day 1).
- Timeline Poster: Pin this up for reference during Session B: History (Day 2).
- Thumb Drive with digital copies of resources in this binder including three PowerPoint presentations to review for a pre-work assignment prior to Session B: History (Day 2).
- Personal Timeline 11x17 sheet of paper to be used for a pre-work assignment before Session C: Awareness (Day 3).
- Materials binder: See information below.

Pre-Workshop

Letter to Participants and Articles

Please read the following welcome letter and the three printed articles before Session A: Identity (Day 1). The letter also has links to two videos to watch before the workshop begins. This information can be accessed at <https://www.rockmatsu.org/equity/> under the Pre-Workshop dropdown menu. The articles are titled:

White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack

Diversity Training: Good for Business but Insufficient for Social Change

Defining Racism

Letter to Participants

Dear Attendee of the Braided Stories Workshop,

We are grateful that you have committed to participate in R.O.C.K. Mat-Su's *Braided Stories: Building Equitable Communities for Alaska's Children & Families* Workshop. Through this workshop we will create a safe space for the exploration and transformation of racism in Mat-Su communities. We are very excited to participate with you as we share this new curriculum developed specifically for our communities and with the deep partnership of local people and organizations.

As you know, this is a critical topic for our community to explore and it touches us all deeply and in very different ways. Please know that we have incorporated into the workshop many different ways for the group to move in to explore racism, and to move out to reflect, restore and process the emotions that may come up.

To help you prepare for the workshop, we request that you take some time to review the following resources. We will be sharing many others at the workshop, and these will provide you a strong foundation for starting this exploration with us.

If you have questions or concerns before we meet, or if you would like any special accommodations at the workshop, please feel free to contact Betsy Smith at bsmith@rockmatsu.org or 907-317-1896. We look forward to meeting you soon,

Thea Agnew Bemben and Kameron Perez-Verdia

Pre-workshop resources

- White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack, Peggy McIntosh, <https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/mcintosh.pdf>
- Diversity Training: Good for Business but Insufficient for Social Change, David Rogers, Western States Center, 2001. *See attached*
- Defining Racism Handout, adapted from Western States Center's Dismantling Racism: A Resource Book for Social Change Groups (pages 13 and 38). *See attached*
- Video: Bryan Stevenson, Equal Justice Initiative, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QqItywx6Eh4>
- Video: Honor Native Land: A Guide and Call to Acknowledgment, US Department of Arts and Culture, <https://usdac.us/nativeland>

White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack

by Peggy McIntosh

Through work to bring materials from Women's Studies into the rest of the curriculum, I have often noticed men's unwillingness to grant that they are over-privileged, even though they may grant that women are disadvantaged. They may say that they will work to improve women's status, in the society, the university, or the curriculum, but they can't or won't support the idea of lessening men's. Denials which amount to taboos surround the subject of advantages which men gain from women's disadvantages. These denials protect male privilege from being fully acknowledged, lessened or ended.

Thinking through unacknowledged male privilege as a phenomenon, I realized that since hierarchies in our society are interlocking, there was most likely a phenomenon of white privilege which was similarly denied and protected. As a white person, I realized I had been taught about racism as something which puts others at a disadvantage, but had been taught not to see one of its corollary aspects, white privilege, which puts me at an advantage.

I think whites are carefully taught not to recognize white privilege, as males are taught not to recognize

Peggy McIntosh is Associate Director of the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women. This essay is excerpted from her working paper, "White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women's Studies," copyright © 1988 by Peggy McIntosh. Available for \$4.00 from address below. The paper includes a longer list of privileges. Permission to excerpt or reprint must be obtained from Peggy McIntosh, Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, Wellesley, MA 02181; (617) 283-2520; Fax (617) 283-2504

male privilege. So I have begun in an un-tutored way to ask what it is like to have white privilege. I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets which I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was 'meant' to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools and blank checks.

Describing white privilege makes one newly accountable. As we in Women's Studies work to reveal male privilege and ask men to give up some of their power, so one who writes about having white privilege must ask, "Having described it, what will I do to lessen or end it?"

After I realized the extent to which men work from a base of unacknowledged privilege, I understood that much of their oppressiveness was unconscious. Then I remembered the frequent charges from women of color that white women whom they encounter are oppressive. I began to understand why we are justly seen as oppressive, even when we don't see ourselves that way. I began to count the ways in which I enjoy unearned skin privilege and have been conditioned into oblivion about its existence.

My schooling gave me no training in seeing myself as an oppressor, as an unfairly advantaged person, or as a participant in a damaged culture. I was taught to see myself as an individual whose moral state depended on her individual moral will. My schooling followed the pattern my colleague Elizabeth Minnich has pointed out: whites are taught to think of their lives as morally neutral, normative, and average, and also ideal, so that when we work to benefit others, this is seen as work which will allow "them" to be more like "us."

I decided to try to work on myself at least by identifying some of the daily

I was taught to see racism only in individual acts of meanness, not in invisible systems conferring dominance on my group.

effects of white privilege in my life. I have chosen those conditions which I think in my case *attach somewhat more to skin-color privilege* than to class, religion, ethnic status, or geographical location, though of course all these other factors are intricately intertwined. As far as I can see, my African American co[workers, friends and acquaintances with whom I come into daily or frequent contact in this particular time, place, and line of work cannot count on most of these conditions.

1. I can if I wish arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.
2. If I should need to move, I can be pretty sure of renting or purchasing housing in an area which I can afford and in which I want to live.
3. I can be pretty sure that my neighbors in such a location will be neutral or pleasant to me.
4. I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed.
5. I can turn on the television or open to the front page of the paper and see people of my race widely represented.
6. When I am told about our national heritage or about "civilization," I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.

7. I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race.

8. If I want to, I can be pretty sure of finding a publisher for this piece on white privilege.

9. I can go into a music shop and count on finding the music of my race represented, into a supermarket and find the staple foods which fit with my cultural traditions, into a hairdresser's shop and find someone who can cut my hair.

10. Whether I use checks, credit cards, or cash, I can count on my skin color not to work against the appearance of financial reliability.

11. I can arrange to protect my children most of the time from people who might not like them.

12. I can sear, or dress in second hand clothes, or not answer letters, without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty, or the illiteracy of my race.

13. I can speak in public to a powerful male group without putting my race on trial.

14. I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.

15. I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.

16. I can remain oblivious of the language and customs of persons of color who constitute the world's majority without feeling in my culture any penalty for such oblivion.

17. I can criticize our government and talk about how much I fear its policies and behavior without being seen as a cultural outsider.

18. I can be pretty sure that if I ask to talk to "the person in charge," I will be facing a person of my race.

19. If a traffic cop pulls me over or if the IRS audits my tax return, I can be sure I haven't been singled out because of my race

20. I can easily buy posters, postcards, picture books, greeting cards, dolls, toys, and children's magazines featuring people of my race.

21. I can go home from most meetings of organizations I belong to feeling somewhat tied in, rather than isolated, out-of-place, outnumbered, unheard, held at a distance, or feared.

22. I can take a job with an affirmative action employer without having co-workers on the job suspect that I got it because of race.

23. I can choose public accommodation without fearing that people of my race cannot get in or will be mistreated in the places I have chosen.

24. I can be sure that if I need legal or medical help, my race will not work against me.

25. If my day, week, or year is going badly, I need not ask of each negative episode or situation whether it has racial overtones.

26. I can choose blemish cover or bandages in "flesh" color and have them more or less match my skin.

I repeatedly forgot each of the realizations on this list until I wrote it down. For me white privilege has turned out to be an elusive and fugitive subject. The pressure to avoid it is great, for in facing it I must give up the myth of meritocracy. If these things are true, this is not such a free country; one's life is not what one makes it; many doors open for certain people through no virtues of their own.

In unpacking this invisible knapsack of white privilege, I have listed conditions of daily experience which I once took for granted. Nor did I think of any of these prerequisites as bad for the holder. I now think that we need a more finely differentiated taxonomy of

privilege, for some of these varieties are only what one would want for everyone in a just society, and others give license to be ignorant, oblivious, arrogant and destructive.

I see a pattern running through the matrix of white privilege, a pattern of assumptions which were passed on to me as a white person. There was one main piece of cultural turf; it was my own turf, and I was among those who could control the turf. *My skin color was an asset for any move I was educated to want to make.* I could think of myself as belonging in major ways, and of making social systems work for me. I could freely disparage, fear, neglect, or be oblivious to anything outside of the dominant cultural forms. Being of the main culture, I could also criticize it fairly freely.

In proportion as my racial group was being made confident, comfortable, and oblivious, other groups were likely being made unconfident, uncomfortable, and alienated. Whiteness protected me from many kinds of hostility, distress and violence, which I was being subtly trained to visit in turn upon people of color.

For this reason, the word "privilege" now seems to me misleading. We usually think of privilege as being a favored state, whether earned or conferred by birth or luck. Yes some of the conditions I have described here work to systematically over empower certain groups. Such privilege simply *confers dominance* because of one's race or sex.

I want, then, to distinguish between earned strength and unearned power conferred systemically. Power from unearned privilege can look like strength when it is in fact permission to escape or to dominate. But not all of the privileges on my list are inevitably damaging. Some, like the expectation that neighbors will be decent to you, or that your race will not count against you in court, should be the norm in a just society. Others, like the privilege to ignore less powerful people, distort the humanity of the holders as well as the ignored groups.

We might at least start by distinguishing between positive advantages which we can work to spread, and negative types of advantages which unless rejected will always reinforce our present hierarchies. For example, the feeling that one belongs within the human circle, as Native Americans say, should not be seen as privilege for a few. Ideally it is an *unearned entitlement*. At present, since only a few have it, it is an *unearned advantage* for them. This paper results from a process of coming to see that some of the power which I originally saw as attendant on being a human being in the U.S. consisted in *unearned advantage* and *conferred dominance*.

I have met very few men who are truly distressed about systemic, unearned male advantage and conferred dominance. And so one question for me and others like me is whether we will get truly distressed, even outraged about unearned race advantage and conferred dominance and if so, what we will do to lessen them. In any case, we need to do more work in identifying how they actually affect our daily lives. Many, perhaps most, of our white students in the U.S. think that racism doesn't affect them because they are not people of color; they do not see "whiteness" as a racial identity. In addition, since race and sex are not the only advantaging systems at work, we need similarly to examine the daily experience of having age advantage, or ethnic advantage, or physical ability, or advantage related to nationality, religion, or sexual orientation.

Difficulties and dangers surrounding the task of finding parallels are many. Since racism, sexism, and heterosexism are not the same, the advantaging associated with them should not be seen as the same. In addition, it is hard to disentangle aspects of unearned advantage which rest more on social class, economic class, race, religion, sex and ethnic identity than on other factors. Still, all of the oppressions are interlocking, as the Combahee River Collective Statement of 1977 continues to remind us eloquently.

One factor seems clear about all of the interlocking oppressions. They take both active forms which we can see and embedded forms which as a member of the dominant group one is taught not to see. In my class and place, I did not see myself as a racist because I was taught to recognize racism only in individual acts of meanness by members of my group, never in invisible systems conferring unsought racial dominance on my group from birth.

Disapproving of the systems won't be enough to change them. I was taught to think that racism could end if white individuals changed their attitudes. [But] a "white" skin in the United States opens many doors for whites whether or not we approve of the way dominance has been conferred on us. Individual acts can palliate, but cannot end, these problems.

To redesign social systems we need first to acknowledge their colossal unseen dimensions. The silences and denials surrounding privilege are the key political tool here. They keep the thinking about equality or equity incomplete, protecting unearned advantage and conferred dominance by making these taboo subjects. Most talk by whites about equal opportunity seems to me now to be about equal opportunity to try to get into a position of dominance while denying that *systems* of dominance exist.

It seems to me that obliviousness about white advantage, like obliviousness about male advantage, is kept strongly inculturated in the United States so as to maintain the myth of meritocracy, the myth that all democratic choice is equally available to all. Keeping most people unaware that freedom of confident action is there for just a small number of people props up those in power, and serves to keep power in the hands of the same groups that have most of it already.

Though systematic change takes many decades, there are pressing questions for me and I imagine for some others like me if we raise our daily consciousness on the perquisites of being light-skinned. What will we do with such knowledge? As we know from watching men, it is an open

The question is: "Having described white privilege, what will I do to end it?"

question whether we will choose to use unearned advantage to weaken hidden systems of advantage, and whether we will use any of our arbitrarily-awarded power to try to reconstruct power systems on a broader base. ■

Diversity Training:

Good for Business but Insufficient for Social Change

By David Rogers
Western States Center
Trainer/Organizer

In the past ten to fifteen years, diversity training has become a boom industry, as government agencies, corporations, and non-profits attempt to manage race and racial attitudes in the workplace. Organizations employ diversity training for reasons ranging from protection against liability to a more liberal notion that "in diversity there is strength." The belief that workplace diversity can bring increased productivity, new ideas, and therefore higher profits, appeals particularly to corporations. Although diversity training may make good business sense, the model falls terribly short of the comprehensive racial justice approach required for progressive social change.

Diversity vs. Racial Justice

The difference between diversity training and the racial justice approach embedded in Western States Center's Dismantling Racism Project begins with the definition of racism. Diversity training sees racism primarily as the result of individual action: personal prejudice or stereotyping, and intentional acts of discrimination by individuals. A racial justice definition includes these beliefs and acts, but considers individual acts of prejudice only one dimension of racism. More importantly, racism is defined as a set of societal, cultural, and institutional beliefs and practices — regardless of intention — that subordinate and oppress one race for the benefit of another.

The case of Amadou Diallo, an unarmed black man shot 41 times by four white New York City Police officers (all of whom were acquitted), illustrates the difference between these two views. While a diversity approach might pursue sensitivity training for the officers, a racial justice perspective would hold the entire criminal justice system accountable and demand systemic change.

Multi-Culturalism

In diversity training's prejudice reduction model, individual attitudes and beliefs are the focus of change. With the goal of harmony and efficiency in the multi-racial workplace, diversity training emphasizes awareness and appreciation of the contributions of different cultures.

What too often gets lost in the muddy waters of multi-cultural awareness is any analysis of power and the ways racist attitudes and organizational culture operate. How do white people gain advantages from racism? What is the daily impact of racist oppression on people of color? Why do white people regularly dominate meetings? Is the white way of doing things still assumed to be the preferred mode of operations?

While white staff may develop a greater appreciation for people of color through diversity training, it can avoid these questions and leave the dominant organizational culture intact. Multi-cultural awareness often assumes a level playing field — despite real power imbalances between white people and people of color.

Who's Got the Power?

In contrast, the racial justice approach of Western States' Dismantling Racism (DR) Project analyzes race in an institutional and cultural context, not as a problem to be solved by individual enlightenment. It develops an understanding of power, who has it, and how it gets used. As practiced with progressive groups around the region, the goal of the DR Project is to build a shared analysis of how racism is perpetuated by organizational structures, processes, norms and expectations (in addition to individual behavior and attitudes).

Jean Hardisty, in *Mobilizing Resentment*, calls for programs like the DR Project to "move white people beyond tolerance and inclusion, to envision actual power-sharing and learning to take leadership from people of color . . ."

The DR Project assumes that white people and people of color have different work to do. White people need to understand how their privilege operates, how they perpetuate racism, and how they can become allies to people of color. For people of color, the process of empowerment involves struggling with the impact of internalized racist oppression. The Project attempts to develop models that value and build leadership in people of color while holding white people accountable for their racism. Diversity training can ask white people to change

their consciousness while leaving their dominance intact; a racial justice approach requires an organizational transformation of power relations.

Who's at the Table?

The organizational change sought through diversity training assumes that appreciating and increasing human variety is important and necessary. The end goal is peaceful integration of people of color, rather than a strong shared analysis of racism and anti-oppression practices. This approach often leads to tokenization. *People of color are like the raisins in my oatmeal; it just takes a few to make the dish more rich.*

The diversity model's focus on who is sitting around the table can unreasonably assume individuals are speaking "for their people." Paul Kivel, in *Uprooting Racism*, warns of the dangers of tokenization: "We don't want to become complacent and believe that we understand the need of a community through hearing from a few 'representatives.'"

A racial justice analysis does not ask individuals to speak for the interests of an entire constituency. Furthermore, it underscores the importance of paying as much attention to who is not in the room as who is. In working with predominantly white organizations, the DR Project helps them struggle with how to address the interests of those not directly included.

Diversification or integration is not always the best thing for an organization. Take an all white organization, for example. A diversity approach would combine prejudice reduction with some organizational development, perhaps resulting in revisions of the personnel policies, job descriptions, and hiring practices. Yet, very little else about the organization would have changed. Even if the

organization is successful in bringing people of color on board it would be a shallow victory. Take a snapshot of the organization from year to year; you'll see a few people of color in each photo, but the faces will be different each year. People of color might get hired but they won't stay very long because they are being asked to fit into the existing dominant culture.

A DR approach with such an organization won't

start with the premise or suggestion that the organization must recruit people of color. Certain groundwork needs to be done before that is a viable or advisable goal. The organization might begin with a "white privilege training" rather than a diversity training. The goal is to create an organizational culture with a deep and shared understanding of racism where white people are committed to holding themselves accountable,

and where naming racism and other oppression when it occurs is encouraged and not avoided. Without these qualities in place, people of color may find a harsh reality beneath the welcoming organizational veneer.

Taking Action

Working for social change, it is not enough to develop a diverse, culturally competent staff, board, and membership. In the context of the horrid history and current institutional and societal practice of racism and injustice, a friendly workplace is not enough. DR education and practices are designed not only to understand racism in its complexities, but to work actively against it.

Skillful racial justice work also creates a basis for understanding systemic inequality and oppression based on other identities such as classism, sexism, heterosexism, and ableism. This approach is essential for building bridges between those who are marginalized. Nothing less is required if we want a broad, strong, and cohesive movement for progressive social change. 🐾



Defining Racism

Race

Race refers to socially constructed categories and hierarchies that are mostly based on bodily features. Race has no scientific or biological basis, but it does create significant cultural meanings and social realities. Race splits people into groups having to do with historical patterns of oppression and rationalization of that oppression. Due to the historical and current significance of these racial realities, racial categories cannot be easily dismissed, discounted or simply wished away (as theories of “melting pots” and “color blindness” try to do).

People of Color

The term people of color (POC), like race, is not based in any biological or scientific fact. Rather, people of color is used in the U.S. to describe people who share the common experience of being targeted and oppressed by white supremacy.

Racism

Racism is defined as a set of societal, cultural and institutional beliefs and practices (regardless of intention) that oppress one race for the benefit of another. Key indicators of racism are inequities in power and opportunities, unfair treatment and the disparate impacts of policies and decisions. Racism condemns millions to

poverty, inadequate health care, substandard jobs, violence and other conditions of oppression. In short, racism is a system that routinely advantages white people while disadvantaging people of color. Where there are racial inequities, there is racism.

TYPES OF RACISM

Part of what makes racism so powerful in the U.S. is the many modes in which it operates. Many dominant discussions of racism begin and end with personal racism—individual, person-to-person acts of racism. But, as we’ll see through the following definitions, racism is much more complex than that, and often much more difficult to identify.

Personal Racism

Personal racism is the way in which we perpetuate racism on an individual basis. Personal racism encompasses acts (like using racist slurs), characterizations (like sexualizing people of color) and assumptions (like the idea that masculine of center people of color are “scarier” or “less trustworthy” than white masculine people). While personal racism is real and destructive, it is not the end of the discussion on racism.

Definitions created by changework, 1705 Wallace St., Durham, NC and adapted from Western States Center’s *Dismantling Racism: A Resource Book for Social Change Groups* (pages 13 and 38). Dismantling Racism Project, Western States Center, www.westernstatescenter.org/tools-and-resources/Tools/Dismantling%20Racism

Cultural Racism

Cultural racism includes the norms, values and standards assumed by the dominant culture which perpetuate racism. Some examples of cultural racism include:

- Defining white skin tones as “nude” or “flesh colored.”
- Identifying only white people as great writers, composers or historical leaders and only acknowledging people of color as side notes, if at all.
- “Melting pot” theories, which require people of color to assimilate into dominant white culture and accept it as the norm.
- Anti-ness.

Those aspects of society that overtly and covertly attribute value and normality to white people and whiteness ultimately devalue, stereotype and label people of color as “other,” different, less-than or render them invisible. Our society suppresses the cultures of people of color by concentrating cultural resources in the hands of white-controlled institutions, by subjecting cultural production and distribution to a market logic, and then by using this relative cultural monopoly to spread myths about their races, their abilities, and their roles, which provide the basis for racist belief and action in the other social institutions.

White Privilege

White privilege refers to the rights, advantages and immunities enjoyed by white people in a culture that values whiteness as the norm. In her influential essay, “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack,” Peggy McIntosh defined white

privilege as “an invisible package of unearned assets which I [as a white person] can count on cashing in on each day, but about which I was ‘meant’ to remain oblivious.”

Internalized Dominance

From birth, those of us with privileged identities are socialized to internalize dominance. We come to believe that our privilege, or even superiority, is natural and that all opportunities are granted based on individual merit. “*I never had a hard time finding a job. Pull yourself up by your bootstraps!*” Internalized dominance is the fuel for oppression. For example, if men don’t acknowledge that they benefit from sexism, gender inequality remains the status quo. And if white people don’t acknowledge that they benefit from racism, they are cosigning onto white supremacy. (For more on this term, check out: <http://everydayfeminism.com/2015/01/your-internalized-dominance-is-showing/>).

Institutional Racism

Institutional racism encompasses discriminatory treatment, unfair policies and inequitable opportunities and impacts that are based on race and that are produced and perpetuated by institutions. Institutional racism occurs within and between institutions, distributing resources in such a way that reinforces advantages for white people. Institutional racism is not based on intent, but is still has a severe impact.

Institutional racism is one of the forms of racism that is largely overshadowed

by discussions of personal racism. When we focus on individual acts as the be-all and end-all of racism in the U.S., we lose sight of the institutional structures that perpetuate racism in some of the most insidious ways.

Racist institutions perpetuate the myth that racism is no longer relevant, which undermines our ability to dismantle it. In order to address racism in a meaningful way, we must rename and reframe our reality. We won't end racism by tricking racist institutions. An institution can never be meaningfully and fully restructured to address racial inequities if the discussion is not framed around racism.

Structural Racism

Structural racism is defined by Race Forward, formerly the Applied Research Center as “the normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics [...] that routinely advantage white people while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of color.”

The intersection of structural racism, institutional violence and historic deprivations creates a society in which racism and economic disparity are often intertwined. Structural racism:

- Operates through every institution (including non-profits).
- Operates upon generation after generation of communities of color (as opposed to homophobia and transphobia, which, while they do have severe impacts, do not operate reliably and cyclically on generation after generation of a family or a community).
- Is at work in all parts of U.S. society, including its history, culture, politics and its very social fabric.

This analysis of structural racism informs a way to talk about racism that is unique from the way we talk about homophobia and transphobia.

Workshop Overview

Land Acknowledgement

At the start of each day of the workshop, we will do a land acknowledgement. The following handout provides the background on this important practice.

This information can be accessed at <https://www.rockmatsu.org/equity/> under the Workshop Overview dropdown menu.

Workshop Visual Overview

This is an overview of what we will be doing together throughout this workshop. This information can be accessed at <https://www.rockmatsu.org/equity/> under the Workshop Overview dropdown menu.

Resilience Resources

Additional tools and resources we will draw on throughout our time together. This information can be accessed at <https://www.rockmatsu.org/equity/> under the Workshop Overview dropdown menu.

Switching Practice

Grounding Practice

Cultural Resiliency Components

Body Sweep Practice

Tea Partners

A practice we will engage in throughout the workshop. This information can also be accessed at <https://www.rockmatsu.org/equity/> under the Workshop Overview dropdown menu.

Circle Process

To help us close our work together each day. This information can also be accessed at <https://www.rockmatsu.org/equity/> under the Workshop Overview dropdown menu.

R.O.C.K. Mat-Su Goals Map

R.O.C.K. Mat-Su supported the design and development of this training. Please review and understand this framework by reviewing the following one-pager. This information can be accessed at <https://www.rockmatsu.org/equity/> under the Workshop Overview dropdown menu.

Glossary of Key Terms

Following are terms and definitions that will be used during the Braided Stories: Building Equitable Communities for Alaska's Children & Families workshop. This information can be accessed at <https://www.rockmatsu.org/equity/> under the Workshop Overview dropdown menu.

Additional Reading and Resources

Following are additional reading and resources to explore. This is a small selection of the many resources available to support efforts to learn, see, promote equity, and be anti-racist. This information can be accessed at <https://www.rockmatsu.org/equity/> under the Workshop Overview dropdown menu.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

WHY?

- Offering recognition, reverence, and respect for Alaska Native Peoples and the land
- Opens gatherings and spaces in a good way
- Leading with your intentions
- Countering colonial narratives of “discovery” and supports truth telling
- Creating spaces for the invisible and reparation of relationships
- Impactful gesture of respect for the many insurmountable losses experienced throughout history

HOW

Step 1- Prepare

- Ask knowledgeable locals or conduct research to find out whose land you are on.
- Note that it may be more than one group. Look here: <https://native-land.ca/>

Step 2- Invite

- Invite local peoples to give a prayer or welcome before your land acknowledgment.
- Ask permission of the local peoples in the room to speak on their ancestral lands.

Step 3: Identify

- “I am honored to be with you today on the homeland of the Eklutna Dena’ina.”
- “I would like to acknowledge that this gathering is being held on the ancestral land of the Yup’ik people.”

Step 4- Articulate respect and intentions

- “I would like to pay my respect to Elders both past and present.”
- “I want to respectfully acknowledge the Dena’ina peoples who have stewarded this land throughout time immemorial.”
- “I would like to share that I come with good intentions.”

SIGNS

Email

- “I acknowledge my residence in Bentah (Wasilla), the ancestral territory of the Dena’ina and Ahtna Peoples. I offer my reconciliation and respect to their elders past and present.”

Website

- “The Anchorage Museum sits on the traditional homeland of the Eklutna Dena’ina. The Museum is committed to recognizing and honoring the land, culture and language of the Dena’ina people. We recognize and respect the continuing connection, by Alaska Native people and all Indigenous people, to the land, waters and communities.”

Building Signs

- “Dena’inaq eñen’aq’ gheshtnu ch’q’u yeshdu. I live and work on the land of Dena’ina.”

WORKSHOP GOAL

To create a safe space for the exploration and transformation of racism.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How do we strengthen Mat-Su families and keep children safe by creating equitable and just communities?

★ **AGENDA**

SESSION A- IDENTITY

Overview

What will we be accomplishing together?

Mobius Strip

How does identity shape us?

Unpacking Racism

What is racism and how does it operate?

SESSION B- HISTORY

History Timeline

What is the history of colonization and racism?

SESSION C- AWARENESS

Personal Timeline

How does my timeline overlap?

Theater of the Oppressed

How do we see and shift power?

SESSION D- ACTION

Transforming Racism

How do we strengthen patterns of well-being, resilience, and empowerment?

Planning

What steps will I take?

★ **AGREEMENTS**

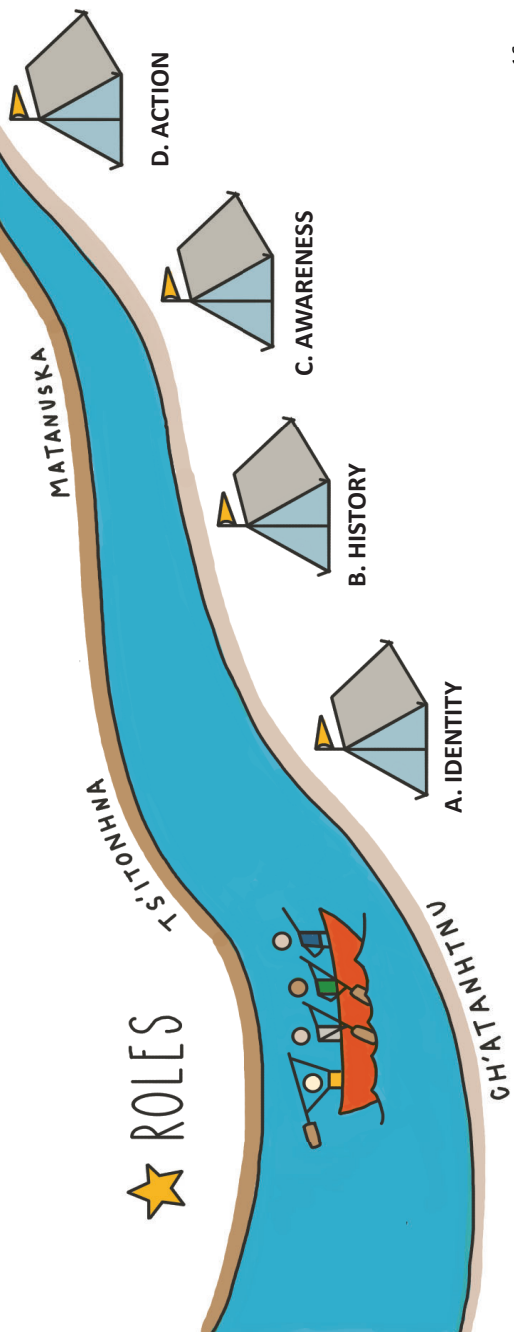
- Be present
- Be curious
- Be brave
- Be reflective

★ **OUTCOMES**

1. Understand **identity & racism**
2. Apply a **historical lens**
3. Develop **awareness of power**
4. Create an **action plan**



★ **ROLES**



SWITCHING PRACTICE

Practices that support safety, care, and resilience

SUMMARY

Navigating the complexity of racism requires resources from both sides of the brain. Cross lateral exercises help us to activate both sides of our body and brain. By engaging both sides, we make available the cognitive resources necessary for complex problem solving and critical understanding. These exercises are based on the research of Eric Jensen. See video for more detailed instructions: www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZH6QI8QjkZA.

LEFT BRAIN	RIGHT BRAIN
Logic	Intuition
Science	Arts
Analysis	Creativity
Facts	Feelings
Parts	Whole
Verbal Language	Body Language

POINTING TO THUMBS UP EXERCISE

1. POINT- With one hand point with the index finger to the other.
2. THUMBS UP- With the other hand point your thumb up.
3. SWITCH- Now switch one hand from pointing to thumbs up, then switch the other hand from thumbs up to pointing.
4. ADVANCE- Try the switching practice facing out, to the side, and in different positions to challenge yourself further.

FINGER WALK

1. MAKE TWO L'S WITH YOUR HANDS- With your hands in front of you, create two L's with your hands.
2. THUMB TO INDEX FINGER- Connect right index finger to left thumb, then right thumb to left index finger.
3. WALK- Now walk your fingers up, like in the children's activity "itsy bitsy spider."

GROUNDING PRACTICE

Practices that support safety, care, and resilience

SUMMARY

Certain emotions and situations can act to throw us off balance. When we receive challenging news our first reaction is to sit down or brace ourselves against a wall. In these moments of uncertainty and threat, it can be helpful to ground ourselves by physically touching a solid object and bringing our conscious awareness to it. The following steps offer simple guidance for grounding.

1. GATHER

Pause and gather yourself by bringing your attention to your body.

“Pausing, I am aware that I am in my body.”

2. FOCUS ATTENTION

Focus your attention on the point of contact between your body and a solid object. Your attention can focus on the space between the soles of your feet and the ground; between the palms of your hand and a table, or between your legs and a chair.

“Aware of my body, I bring attention to the space between my feet and the ground.”

3. BRING AWARENESS

Bring awareness to the solidity of the ground, table, or chair.

“Aware that the world is constantly changing, I recognize the solidity of the ground in this moment.”

4. DWELL IN THE FEELING

Spend a few breaths recognizing the feeling of being grounded and solid.

“The earth is solid; I am grounded”

CULTURAL RESILIENCE COMPONENTS

Practices that support safety, care, and resilience

SUMMARY

Five wellness practices based on the Deg Xit'an, Athabascan cultural teachings taught by Dr. LaVerne Xilegg Demientieff, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.



Wellness is fostered by cultivating love and acceptance for self, which allows us to express love and acceptance for others.

I practice compassion by...



Wellness is fostered by being in our bodies and in relationship with others.

I practice connection by...



Wellness is fostered by being together for celebrations and in times of hardship.

I practice community by...



Wellness is fostered by observing the world around us and being open to signs that help to guide us in our life and in our work.

I practice curiosity by...



Wellness is fostered by practicing rituals that create connection to a higher power, spirit, ancestors, and each other.

I practice ceremony by...

BODY SWEEP PRACTICE

Practices that support safety, care, and resilience

SUMMARY

This practice was shared by Anna Olik during the Alaska Blanket Exercise in November, 2019 at the Alaska Native Medical Center. This practice was passed on to Anna by her mom, Elizabeth Olik of Pilot Station. The Body Sweep was practiced by Elizabeth Olik each morning as a ritual to start the day. Anna gave permission for this practice to be shared and used by others. It has been adapted to help participants release from any tension that may arise during the workshop.

1. GATHER

Pause and gather yourself by bringing your attention to your body.

"Pausing, I am aware that I am in my body."

2. SWEEP

Beginning with your feet, use your hands to "sweep" your body. Gradually make your way up your body, sweeping both the front and back of each body part. End with your head, taking care to sweep your eyes, ears, nose, and mouth.

"Sweeping my body, I cleanse my body."

3. RELEASE

After finishing the sweep, gather the invisible tension and release them out a window or door.

"I now release my tension."

4. DWELL IN THE FEELING

Spend a few breaths recognizing any feelings or sensations.

"Releasing my tension; I can move forward."

TEA PARTNERS



Joyful Sisters: Cecelia Andrews & Alice Frank Demientieff, Deg Xit'an Athabaskan

The use of Tea Partners (Sixoldhid) is a Deg Xit'an Athabaskan traditional practice that instills a responsibility toward the welfare of others in the community and beyond. Other cultures in Alaska may have similar versions of this practice. Elders and parents connect tea partners together, someone older with someone younger, and a male with a female.





They are described as friendships, mentors, and thinking partners. The spirit of the tea partner means that you share your best food with your partner, king salmon, moose, fish ice cream, that you help your tea partner and offer them support when they come to your community, and that you gift them with things like beaver mittens or a warm marten hat and in turn they will share their catch with you. It is about sharing and caring for others, about reciprocity and balance, and survival.

Your tea partner is someone you will honor throughout their lifetime and in turn they will honor you. It's about responsibility for others. You can imagine the strength these connections create. Tea Partners build a grassroots safety net built into and across communities.

CIRCLE PROCESS

OVERVIEW

The Circle Process is an opportunity to speak openly and honestly about your thoughts and experiences. It is also a unique opportunity to listen deeply to the truth of other group members. The Circle Process comes from a number of Native American traditions and has been used by many groups for generations to facilitate meaningful interaction.

 <h3>1. SPEAK FROM THE HEART</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Speak when you have the talking piece.• Speak not only with your head & your ideas, but with your feelings as well.• When you speak truthfully you are speaking from the heart.	 <h3>2. LISTEN FROM THE HEART</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listen deeply when another person has the talking piece.• Listen without judgment and with an open mind, even if you disagree with what the person is saying.• Listen not just with your mind, but with your heart as well
 <h3>3. BE SPONTANEOUS</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Try to wait before the talking piece comes to us before we decide what we want to say.• If you are thinking about what you are going to say, then you are not listening completely to the person who is speaking.• When you don't pre-plan you will often be surprised what comes to you when it is your turn.	 <h3>4. GO TO ESSENCE</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Something that is "lean" doesn't have anything extra on it.• When you speak, keep in mind that many others would like a chance to speak, and that there is limited time.• Use only those words necessary to get your point or story across.

Working collectively towards large-scale systems change, in our lifetime, we will:

Strengthen families so all children thrive in a safe, healthy and equitable community.



End child abuse and neglect, and reduce Adverse Childhood Experiences.

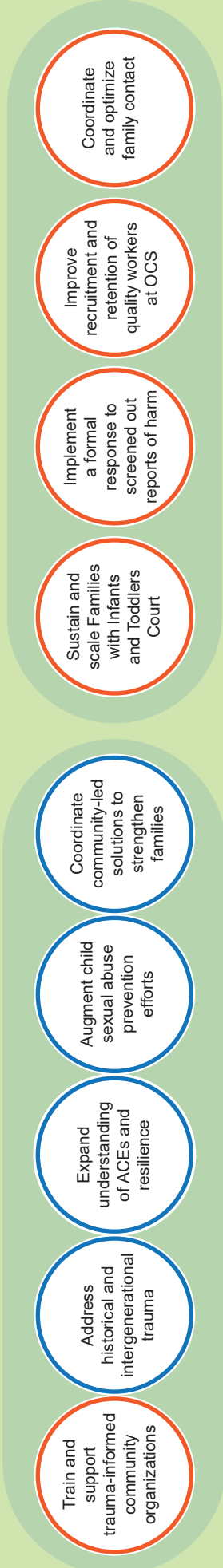


OBJECTIVES

STRATEGIES

First Responders, Child Protection, Court System and Corrections

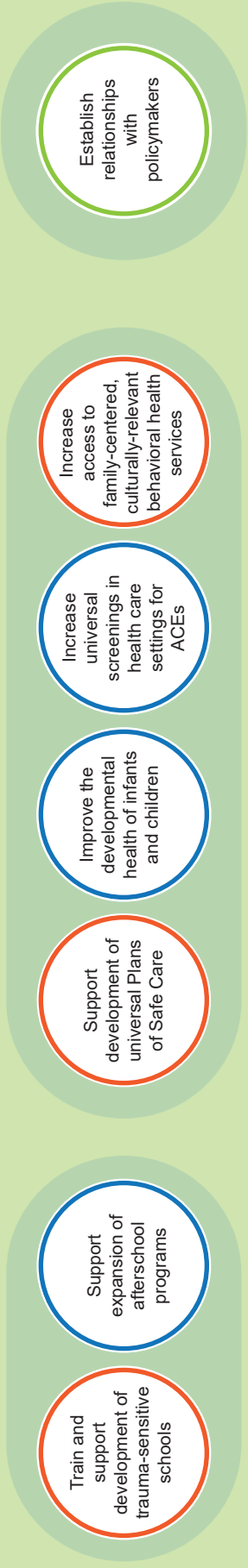
Communities



Policy, Systems, Partners, Advocacy

Health and Family Support

Early Learning and Schools



blue is primary prevention workgroup

orange is secondary and tertiary prevention workgroup

green is policy workgroup 23



Vision: All Mat-Su children are safe, healthy, and thriving

VALUES

Compassionate Hopeful
Fun Locally driven Ideal
Partnership Healing Harmony
Social equity vibrant
Peers supporting peers Simple Wholeness
Inclusive Non-judgmental
Peaceful Culturally relevant

Raising Our Children with Kindness (R.O.C.K.) Mat-Su is a diverse group of community members working collectively to promote family resilience and end child maltreatment in Alaska's Mat-Su Borough. Representing the varied communities of the borough, R.O.C.K. Mat-Su builds relationships and implements effective strategies to realize our vision that all Mat-Su children are safe, healthy and thriving. We welcome your involvement.

Please check out our website at www.rockmatsu.org for more information, or contact us directly at info@rockmatsu.org.

Glossary of Key Terms

Session A: Identity

Microaggression

A comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a predicted attitude toward a member of another group. (*Oxford Languages*)

Implicit Bias

People act based on prejudice and stereotypes without intending to do so. (*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*)

Identity

A social category defined by both personal affiliation and social membership. (*Science Direct, Social Identity Theory, Confronting Prejudice and Discrimination, 2019*)

Racism

Racism is a set of societal, cultural and institutional beliefs and practices (regardless of intention) that oppress one race for the benefit of another. (*Western States Center's Dismantling Racism: A Resource Book for Social Change Groups. Defining Racism Handout*)

Personal Racism: The way in which we perpetuate racism on an individual basis.

Systemic Racism: A system that continually advantages one racial group and systemically disadvantages another over time.

Anti-Racist

One either allows racial inequalities to continue, as a racist, or confronts racial inequities, as an antiracist. There is no in-between safe space of 'not racist.' (*Ibram X. Kendi, How to Be an Anti-Racist*)

Colonialism

A practice of domination that subjugates one people to another. (*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*)

Colorism

A practice of discrimination by which those with lighter skin are treated more favorably than those with darker skin. (*National Conference for Community and Justice*)

Session B: History

Safety and Threat Response

The brain's central role of keeping ourselves safe and avoiding threat. (*Center for Courageous Living*)

Artifact

Objects crafted and used for a particular purpose; artifacts are not neutral and tell and celebrate specific narratives. *(Oxford Languages)*

Frontier: The extreme limit of settled land beyond which lies wilderness.

Pioneer: A person who is among the first to explore or settle a new country or area.

Settler Colonialism

A form of colonialism that seeks to replace the original population of a colonized land with a new society of settlers. *(Learning for Justice Magazine)*

Pattern

Something from which a copy is made; a way something is done, organized or happens, often in a repeating series. *(Cambridge English Dictionary)*

Resistance

The act of fighting against something that is attacking you or refusing to accept something. *(Cambridge English Dictionary)*

Session C: Awareness

Awareness

A way of seeing and investigating the world that empowers one to shift it. *(Merriam-Webster)*

Oppression

Systematic domination of one group of people for the benefit of another group of people. *(Glasberg, Shannon, Davita, Deric (2011). Political Sociology: Oppression, Resistance, and the State. USA, p. 1)*

Power

The ability to direct and shift the world around us. *(Merriam-Webster)*

Spect-actor

Someone who actively works to see, investigate, and shift the world around them. *(Wardrip-Fruin, 352; Wardrip-Fruin, Noah, and Nick Montfort. "From Theatre of the Oppressed". Cambridge, Mass.: MIT)*

Session D: Action

Well-being

The state of being healthy, happy, and prosperous. *(Merriam-Webster)*

Resilience

A way of being that enables us to not only survive adversity, but to adapt and thrive. *(Merriam-Webster)*

Empowerment

The process of becoming stronger and more confident in directing one's life and shifting the world around them. *(Oxford Languages)*

Additional Resources for Workshop Participants

Below is a list of resources to broaden your understanding of racism and increase your fluency to address it. These are not required reading and listening; however we have tried to assemble a list that presents multiple perspectives in different formats. We hope these are helpful to you.

Books and Articles

- How to Be an Antiracist, Ibram X. Kendi, <https://www.ibramxkendi.com/how-to-be-an-antiracist>
- Chickaloon Spirit, Katie Wickersham Wade; especially chapters 12 (pages 143-145), 26 (page 189-191, Part 3, chapter 1 pages 315-316)
- An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States, Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, Author's Note and Introduction (first 19 pages), <https://bookshop.org/books/an-indigenous-peoples-history-of-the-united-states-9780807057834/9780807057834>
- White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack, Peggy McIntosh, https://psychology.umbc.edu/files/2016/10/White-Privilege_McIntosh-1989.pdf
- Diversity Training: Good for Business but Insufficient for Social Change, David Rogers, Western States Center, 2001. <http://foodsecurity.org/race/drdiversity.pdf>
- Defining Racism Handout, adapted from Western States Center's Dismantling Racism: A Resource Book for Social Change Groups (pages 13 and 38). Dismantling Racism Project, Western States Center, www.westernstatescenter.org/
- A "Far North Dixie Land": Black Settlement, Discrimination, and Community in Urban Alaska, Ina Hartman and David Reamer, <https://academic.oup.com/whq/article/51/1/29/5626071?guestAccessKey=f913c7d7-3df5-40a9-802d-4018ab39dcb8>
- Between the World and Me, Ta-Nehisi Coates, <https://ta-nehiscoates.com/books/between-the-world-and-me/>
- The Conscious Kid, Anti-Racist Children's Books, <https://www.theconsciouskid.org/antiracist-childrens-books>

Podcasts

- Fresh Air, Bryan Stevenson, Equal Justice Initiative, <https://www.npr.org/2020/01/20/796234496/just-mercy-attorney-asks-u-s-to-reckon-with-its-racist-past-and-present>
- Dolly Parton's America, Episode 8 "Dixie's Disappearance", <https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/dolly-partons-america/episodes/dixie-disappearance>
- Following Harriet, <https://following-harriet.simplecast.com/>
- Coffee + Quag, <https://www.coffeeandquag.com/>
- 1619 Project, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/23/podcasts/1619-podcast.html>

Websites and Videos

- Mark Charles, TEDxTysons, 'We the People' – the three most misunderstood words in US history, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HOKtqY5wY4A>
- Bryan Stevenson, Equal Justice Initiative, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qqltywx6Eh4>
- 21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge, <https://www.eddiemoorej.com/21-day-challenge>
- Unequal Opportunity Race, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eBb5TgOXgNY&feature=youtu.be>
- Alaska Highway Project, <https://alaskahighwayproject.blogspot.com/>
- 1619 Project, New York Times, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/1619-america-slavery.html>
- Project Implicit, Harvard, <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html>
- Birth of a White Nation, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=riVAuCOdnP4>
- Honor Native Land: A Guide and Call to Acknowledgment, US Department of Arts and Culture, <https://usdac.us/nativeland>
- The Race Gap: Black | White, Reuters, <https://graphics.reuters.com/GLOBAL-RACE/USA/nmopajawjva/index.html#0>
- Race | Class: White and Black Men, New York Times <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/03/19/upshot/race-class-white-and-black-men.html>
- The 13th, Netflix, <https://www.netflix.com/title/80091741>
- Amend: The Fight for America, Netflix, <https://www.netflix.com/title/80219054>
- When They See Us, Netflix, <https://www.netflix.com/title/80200549>

Session A: Identity

Switching Practice

See Resilience Resources in Workshop Overview for the Switching Practice handout. This information can be accessed at <https://www.rockmatsu.org/equity/> under the Session A: Identity dropdown menu.

Session B: History

Pre-Work for Session B: History and Timelines

After the Session A: Identity (Day 1), please complete this pre-work assignment to prepare for Session B: History (Day 2).

Review the timeline slides presented in the three PowerPoint presentations (World & North America, Alaska, Mat-Su) found on the thumb drive in your bag; this information can be accessed at <https://www.rockmatsu.org/equity/> under the Session B: History dropdown menu.

Identify one event to present from the time range you are assigned and share the slide before Session B: History with Thea at thea@agnewbeck.com. Be ready to read the text on your chosen slide.

Grounding Practice

See Resilience Resources in Workshop Overview for the Grounding Practice handout. This information can be accessed at <https://www.rockmatsu.org/equity/> under the Session B: History dropdown menu.

Cultural Resiliency Components

See Resilience Resources in Workshop Overview for the Cultural Resiliency Components handout. This information can be accessed at <https://www.rockmatsu.org/equity/> under the Session B: History dropdown menu.

Session C: Awareness

Pre-Work for Session C: Personal Timeline

After the Session B: History (Day 2), please complete this pre-work assignment to prepare for Session C: Awareness (Day 3). On the Personal Timeline 11x17 sheet of paper write or draw your timeline and reflect on the following prompts.

- Identify how racism and colonialism shaped your personal life and your family's life.
- How has your own and your family's racial identity shaped your experiences?
- When did you become aware of race and racism? What experiences with race and racism have you had in your life?
- What did you learn from these experiences? How were your beliefs about race shaped?

Body Sweep Practice

See Resilience Resources in Workshop Overview for the Body Sweep Practice handout. This information can be accessed at <https://www.rockmatsu.org/equity/> under the Session C: Awareness dropdown menu.

Session D: Action

Grounding Practice

See Resilience Resources in Workshop Overview for the Grounding Practice handout. This information can be accessed at <https://www.rockmatsu.org/equity/> under the Session D: Action dropdown menu.

R.O.C.K. Mat-Su Goals Map

See R.O.C.K. Mat-Su Goals Map in Workshop Overview. Please review and understand this framework by reviewing the following one-pager for Session D: Action (Day 4). This information can be accessed at <https://www.rockmatsu.org/equity/> under the Session D: Awareness dropdown menu.