



**AMERICA
NEEDS**

ALL

OF US.

**A TOOLKIT FOR TALKING ABOUT
BIAS, RACE, AND CHANGE**

**WELCOMING
AMERICA**



BUILDING A NATION OF NEIGHBORS



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INTRODUCTION

There has never been a more important time to talk to our communities about what it means to be a truly welcoming place. Welcoming is about more than tolerance—it's about developing a true respect and appreciation for our neighbors, creating policies and programs that support inclusion, and making sure that everyone—newcomer or longtime resident—feels they belong.

Welcoming is also about equity, and more specifically, racial equity—achieving the best and most fair results for everyone so that we can all prosper. To get there, we have to be proactive and engage in conversations with our community that are not always easy, but are crucially important.

As an organization concerned with creating more equitable and inclusive communities, and with addressing the root causes of what makes communities unwelcoming for immigrants and refugees in particular, Welcoming America has learned that leaders benefit from tools that help them to engage with what we call “receiving communities”—the places that are being reshaped by demographic change and immigration, and the diverse longtime residents who live there. This means getting at the thorny issues that prevent communities from moving forward, together.

Fortunately, America is in the middle of a much needed and long overdue conversation about race, bias, and immigration. And when our communities change demographically—and when immigrant communities become more racially and religiously diverse, as they are today—this conversation becomes even more important, and the tools to effectively engage receiving communities all the more critical.

At the time of publication of this toolkit, the country is not only in the midst of a presidential election and its often divisive rhetoric, but grappling in very public ways with what a more racially and religiously diverse America means for both policy and everyday culture. And unfortunately, too much of that conversation is being conducted by TV talking heads more interested in debating and debasing than in building resilient and thriving communities.

For ordinary people who want to engage in meaningful conversations about our changing communities, immigration, and racial bias, it can be challenging and difficult to know how or where to start. You don't have to look very far—just the television news or social media—to see how polarizing the discourse can be. And that discourages us from stepping into conversations about these topics with people in our community, workplace, or place of worship.

Out of fear of saying the wrong thing or not having a space to talk about these issues, there are millions of people in our communities who are not engaged in the dialogue about immigration and bias.





WELCOMING COMMUNITIES START PRODUCTIVE CONVERSATIONS

But there are some communities where we are having the tough conversations, and using them to get to know one another better and to build stronger communities. There are cities and counties joining the Welcoming movement every week, and creating policies and practices that welcome all residents, including newcomers, who are revitalizing neighborhoods and bolstering economies. We are finding that when we take the time to get to know one another, to challenge each other to be our best selves, and to work together to dismantle barriers to equal opportunity, we get better results in the form of healthy, equitable and prosperous cities, counties, and states.

We believe there is also an enormous opportunity to engage those who are unengaged. As advocates, service providers, policy makers, and community leaders, we can help shape people's understanding and help them see the value and benefits of being equitable and inclusive places where everyone, including immigrants, can thrive.

BASED ON RESEARCH, TESTED IN THE FIELD

The framing and messaging strategies contained in this toolkit are adapted and refined from extensive research conducted by Emory University professor and political strategist Dr. Drew Westen and supported by the Four Freedoms Fund on how to talk to Americans about demographic change and unconscious bias.

According to Westen there are two major issues underlying public opinion about immigration and other major public policies: fear and anxiety about demographic change and unconscious prejudice. The good news is that his research showed that when we address people's fears and unconscious bias directly, we can successfully shift their attitudes and opinions to be more accepting of immigrants.

There are two major issues underlying public opinion about immigration and other major public policies: fear and anxiety about demographic change and unconscious prejudice.

But we also know that research only takes us so far. We had to develop language that reflects our values and that people could use comfortably. We worked with leaders and practitioners in the field of immigration and racial justice to ensure that the content of the toolkit was informed by the real experiences of people who we envision using this resource. We have also included a list at the end of this guide to help you continue to learn and improve your practice.

TALKING ABOUT RACE WORKS

One of the most exciting findings of the research was that it actually helps to talk about race explicitly. When we talk about the different ways black and brown, Asian and Arab American people get treated in our society and systems, people respond positively.

That makes the toolkit even more important. We need to be talking about race and bias with one another, but we are also naturally concerned or uncomfortable about bringing up tough topics. That is the purpose of the toolkit—to help people step into their discomfort so that we can ALL get more comfortable together talking about race and bias, and working to make our communities more equitable places for everyone.

A RESOURCE, BUT NOT THE ONLY ONE

This toolkit was created to be a communications resource for those working in the field of immigration and immigrant integration. It provides practical messaging tools and strategies that address people's fears, anxieties, and prejudices head on. In that way, the messages in the toolkit are particularly designed to talk to those whose minds are not yet made up about immigration and the changes they may be seeing in their community. They may have questions, concerns, or are just unsure.

For Welcoming America this messaging work is part of a broader strategy to support organizations and partners at the local level to help reframe the conversation and shift the long-term narratives that will advance more inclusive policies.

But with topics like immigration and prejudice, there are many facets that we could not fully or adequately address. For example, the messaging in this toolkit does not address structural racism (See: Resources on Structural Racism and Equity on page 8). Unconscious bias, which this toolkit *does* address, is a component of and compliment to structural racism, but we understand that this is an important limitation to recognize.

Our hope is that this toolkit is the start of the conversation to talk more openly about race and prejudice—not the end. We hope this toolkit will inspire, encourage, and support those in the field to feel more confident in initiating and navigating these challenging conversations by providing a practical set of tools. **We hope that this toolkit helps people lean into these conversations, not away from them.**

Whether you are a nonprofit or local government working to create more equitable policies and need a starting point for the conversation; a mayor, school board member or civic leader looking to set the tone and advance change; or are a community champion that would like to see your organization, company or community become a more inclusive place, we hope you will find this toolkit useful. While designed for individuals looking to engage immigrant receiving communities and build more welcoming communities, we hope that this toolkit can also help anyone who is concerned with creating more equitable and inclusive policies and places.

Change almost always starts with a conversation, so the more conversations we can start, the bigger difference we can make.

To achieve the fully inclusive and equitable society we envision for America, we know there is much more work to be done beyond talking. We need to help people see the world differently and see what is possible when we truly value one another and come together around a positive vision for our communities and country. But change almost always starts with a conversation, so the more conversations we can start, the bigger difference we can make.





ABOUT MESSAGING

This message toolkit is designed to help immigrant communities and advocates engage everyday people in dialogue as well as deliver strong messages that will encourage community members, leaders, and policy makers to better support and welcome immigrants in their community. But before we dive into the specifics of this work, it is always valuable to become grounded in best practices.

As you incorporate the ideas from this toolkit and further develop stories and messages, remember the key principles of meaningful messages:

Perception trumps reality.

A person's opinion isn't based on reality—it's based on his or her perception of reality. Listen to and accept your audiences' perceived reality, then craft your messages to resonate with it, and use these new messages to reshape perception.

Emotion trumps logic.

Logic supports our emotions and is used to justify our decisions, but research indicates we usually apply logic only after we've made our emotional decisions. Logic plays a part in decision-making, but emotion is always the main ingredient. Emotions will get people passionate about your cause. Appeal to your audience's emotions first and you'll win them over.

Brevity trumps precision.

You don't need to accurately describe every issue or idea in your messaging. And in a world where we've grown increasingly accustomed to sound bites and 140-character tweets, you won't have enough attention time to do so. Use the few moments of attention people give you to convey what is essential about the work you're doing.

Values trump features.

Above everything else, your work is founded on values. Don't talk up programs and services that may not matter to your entire audience; talk about the core values that animate your work—values that your audiences share.

Vibrant language trumps jargon.

Whenever possible, use clear and concise (and emotional!) language to make sure your audience can understand and connect with your message.

Actions trump magic words.

Smart messaging expresses action; messaging isn't magic, and it can't take the place of good strategy or execution. Good messaging can't undo or reverse bad deeds. People can tell if your actions don't line up with your words.

Your audience trumps you.

Chances are, you (and your staff and board) are not the audience you need to influence. You and your closest stakeholders are immersed in the work and already bought in. Your messaging is crafted to help you reach people who are not yet engaged. It needs to resonate with their perspective and answer for them, "So what?"



AUDIENCE

When it comes to creating any effective messaging, understanding whom you are trying to persuade and tailoring your messages to them is key. The audience for the messaging in this toolkit is for community members and civic leaders who could be potential supporters. These individuals may be “unsure” how they feel about the issues of immigration and changing demographics or haven’t been exposed much to conversations about race and racism.

Opinion researchers sometimes refer to these individuals as the “moveable middle.” That means the audience for these messages are people who may not necessarily share your opinions about immigration, racism, or unconscious bias, but they share enough common values and beliefs that they are open to your message. With the right stories or values-driven messages, they could be engaged.

Some examples of people who might be included in the target audience may include elected or public officials, clergy members or faith leaders, system leaders and planners, service providers, business leaders, neighborhood residents, and grassroots community leaders.

MESSAGE THEMES



The following frames and messages have been adapted and refined from a set of messages developed by political strategists and that have been extensively researched and tested through audience polling.¹ Two of the messages provide language to talk to your audience about the benefits and value of ethnic and racial diversity. The other two messages provide ways to talk to people about unconscious bias. We have also provided examples or scenarios where these messages might be most appropriate or effective. We hope together these messages provide you a toolbox from which to draw the right message for the right audience at the right time.

UNCOVERING UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

Top-line Message: We can start by recognizing our unconscious bias.

We're used to thinking of prejudice as something you either have or you don't. But despite our best attempts to rid ourselves of prejudices and stereotypes, we all have them.

For example, it's not easy for a hard working 55-year-old white guy or a hard working young black or Latino kid to get a job. They walk into a room and a stereotype about their age, race, or ethnicity walks in with them.

Hopefully, one day prejudice and stereotypes won't be a factor when it comes to who gets the job. We are not there yet. But we can start by recognizing that as humans, we all have unconscious stereotypes and that we can do something about them.

Use this message:

- ▶ When having a personal one-on-one conversation with a neighbor, relative, or colleague who may question how race might be a factor today or who may believe racism no longer exists, or when responding to someone who uses a racial stereotype.
- ▶ As a way to begin conversations with receiving communities and build understanding between newcomers and longtime residents, and between people of different races/ethnicities in your community where there may be tensions. For example, you can use this messaging to frame a welcoming community dialogue or forum to talk about changing demographics and race more openly, and then invite people to share their personal experiences of being welcomed or unwelcomed.

¹ Based on research conducted by Drew Westen, Ph.D. with Westen Strategies for Four Freedoms Fund. Original research available upon request from Welcoming America.

- ▶ When working with institutions to help them become more welcoming places for everyone. For example, you can use this message to support conversations with local government leaders, your own organizational leadership, or your constituents around why these conversations are necessary or why it's important to focus more intentionally on ensuring that a workforce or community board is reflective of the community.
- ▶ As a way to approach educational discussions in your community about different immigrant experiences based on race and ethnicity. For example, in talking about welcoming policies and how they can address access to opportunity and equity, you can use these messages to show how immigrant communities might have different trajectories based on their race or being a visible “minority.”

WE CAN DO BETTER

Top-line Message: By being conscious of our biases, we can limit their effects on how we treat people.

As Americans we believe in treating everybody fairly regardless of what they look like or where their ancestors are from. But what we believe consciously and what we feel and do unconsciously can be two very different things.

One study showed how strong these unconscious biases can be, even when they contradict our stated values. When college students were asked to evaluate black and white job applicants who had really strong or really weak resumes, race didn't matter. They picked the best candidates. But when the applicants' credentials were somewhere in the middle, in that grey zone, white applicants tended to get the job.

We may not be able to eliminate our unconscious stereotypes and prejudices, but we can recognize them and take steps to limit their effects. We can do better if we recognize them, talk openly about them, and decide to treat people equally regardless of their skin color.

Use this message:

- ▶ To talk to longtime residents of communities that have become more diverse about why a more intentional, welcoming effort is needed to achieve better results for everyone. Use this message to also communicate that welcoming is about everyone.
- ▶ To begin a conversation around how your organization or institution, or a partner organization such as a school or service provider, can be a more welcoming one. For example, this message can be used to talk to board members, your executive director, or HR director about the importance of diversity and reviewing your organization's or company's hiring practices and policies or training for staff.
- ▶ To encourage elected officials or local leaders to examine and strengthen the racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity in government agencies and appointments to public commissions. For example, many communities have seen growing diversity in their immigrant population that is not reflected in the leadership of local institutions.





RESOURCES ON STRUCTURAL RACISM AND EQUITY

The primary goal of this toolkit is to offer a starting place for conversations about race, bias, and immigration. We believe that change begins with conversations that help people see the world differently and to think about what we need to do together to create a society where everyone has an opportunity to contribute their best. However, we understand when talking about race and bias, it is not simply about individuals and conversations but also about changing institutions, policies, and systems. Unfortunately, it didn't feel possible to adequately address structural racism and unconscious bias within one toolkit—as related as these two topics are. There are many great existing resources on structural racism and we share them here in the hopes of advancing a vital area of work.

Annie E. Casey Foundation: The Race Equity Inclusion Action Guide

www.aecf.org/resources/race-equity-and-inclusion-action-guide

Annie E. Casey Foundation: Race Matters Toolkit

www.aecf.org/search?q=race+matters+toolkit

Cracking the Codes: The Systems of Racial Inequality

(a film designed to deepen the national conversation on race)

<http://crackingthecodes.org>

Emptying the White Knapsack

<http://www.kzoo.edu/praxis/emptying-the-white-knapsack>

PolicyLink: Getting Equity Advocacy Results (GEAR) Tool

www.policylink.org/gear

Poverty and Race Research Action Council: “Toward a Structural Racism Framework”

http://www.prrac.org/full_text.php?text_id=1095&item_id=10188&newsletter_id=90&header=Symposium:%20Structural%20Racism

Race Forward: Racial Equity Impact Assessment Toolkit

<https://www.raceforward.org/practice/tools/racial-equity-impact-assessment-toolkit>

Race Matters Institute

<http://racemattersinstitute.org>

Racial Equity Tools

www.RacialEquityTools.org

WKKF Racial Equity Resource Guide

www.racialequityresourceguide.org

- ▶ When sharing data with leaders from a local institution such as a school or health or other service provider that shows racial disparities, this messaging can be used to shift conversations away from blame and toward a discussion of root causes and alignment around a vision of better outcomes for all.
- ▶ When working with educators to foster a more global and equitable classroom.
- ▶ When educating someone about racial profiling incidents against Arab Americans, African Americans, Latinos, or other people of color, or when responding to racially biased attacks or framing in the media. Use messaging to reframe the conversation.

DIFFERENT PASTS, ONE FUTURE

Top-line Message: We should focus on what unites us—our shared hopes for our families and country—not our different pasts.

In this country we believe each person should have an equal opportunity to make it if they work hard. That should be true regardless of the color of your skin or where your ancestors were from. Because no matter who our ancestors were, they all wanted the freedom to speak, to pray, and to raise their children with hope.

We may not all share the same history, but we share one future as a country. We need to stop thinking in terms of us versus them and start thinking in terms of just us: Americans united by the bonds of shared freedom and equality. If we can do that, there's nothing we can't do together.

Use this message:

- ▶ When opening a conversation with a neighbor, community members, or audience who may be skeptical of new immigrants moving into your community.
- ▶ When speaking with elected officials or the general public to encourage support for immigrant and refugee policies or programs in your city or town.
- ▶ When developing talking points or a letter to the editor of a local newspaper.
- ▶ When addressing interracial tensions between groups within a demographically changing community.
- ▶ To create a more expansive view of diversity that goes beyond “black and white” and to encourage faith, nonprofit, and civic leaders to create greater opportunities for immigrant and refugee communities to contribute.



AMERICA NEEDS ALL OF US

Top-line Message: America is stronger when we all have an opportunity to contribute.

You look at fire departments in many major cities, and you'll see what America is increasingly looking like in the 21st century: whites, blacks, Latinos and Asians working together.

When you are fighting a blazing fire, you trust that your brother or sister has your back. You are not thinking about the color of their skin or where they are from. You are focused on one thing—protecting lives.

What binds together a diverse fire department is what it takes to bind together a diverse society—shared values and goals. But that doesn't mean asking people to give up what they value about their heritage. Our cultures and heritage make each of us unique. Those things don't take away from who we are as Americans. They add to it.

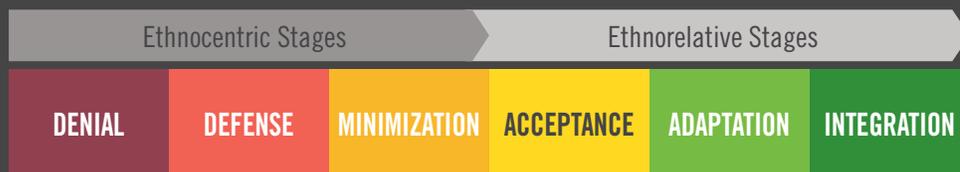
By giving each person an equal opportunity to contribute, it makes the entire team stronger. It makes America stronger.

Use this message:

- ▶ When talking with individuals and receiving communities who are concerned about the impact of immigrants on American culture and values.
- ▶ To respond to anti-immigrant or refugee attacks in the media or by politicians who may be using divisive rhetoric.

Developmental Model

EXPERIENCE OF DIFFERENCE



This is based on the **Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity**, or the Bennett Scale, named for its developer, Dr. Milton J. Bennett. When thinking about and trying to affect how people evolve in their understanding and comfort level with cultural difference among people, it can be helpful to reference these stages in that process.

- ▶ To encourage support for immigrant and refugee friendly policies in your city or region.
- ▶ In developing welcoming plans, to talk about why a plan is needed, and why diverse community participation in creating and implementing the plan is critically important.
- ▶ To support programs, policies, or initiatives that promote and strengthen racial diversity in your organization, company, or local government.

Note: in some communities, a fire department may not be the best team analogy. You can substitute here for a sports team or an aspirational vision for another group that you think will resonate broadly in your community.

TALKING POINTS FOR TOUGH QUESTIONS

The purpose of this toolkit is to help you embrace conversations about race and immigration more confidently. We understand talking about these issues with skeptical audiences is not easy. We have come up with a few examples of the types of questions or comments you might confront when talking about these issues and how you could use the messaging to redirect and reframe the conversation.

Note that we provide the questions only as a reference point and do not recommend that you restate them in your communications or messaging. For example, when you restate a claim or myth in a “frequently asked questions” document, you can inadvertently reinforce the myth in your reader’s mind, rather than dispel it.

Q: Maybe racism was a problem in the past, but I don’t see what it has to do with today?

A: We like to think only our grandparents’ generation struggled with racism because it was conscious and more explicit. But today, it’s hard for many of us to admit even to ourselves that we may be prejudiced because it’s less socially acceptable than it was back then.

That is a big part of the problem. When we don’t recognize that we have biases they can affect how we make decisions, like whom we hire for a job, or whom we select for a promotion. And if it’s mostly white people that are unaware of their prejudices making these decisions, think about what that means for African Americans, Latinos, or other people of color.

The more aware and openly we talk about our prejudices, the more we can make sure they don’t affect how we treat people.

Q: I don’t see color. To me everyone is equal. We are all one race. The more we label ourselves or talk about race, the bigger the problem becomes.

A: Most people would agree with you that everyone should be treated equally. And most people probably think they do treat people equally no matter what they look like or who their ancestors are. But there can be a big difference between what we say we believe and what we feel or do unconsciously.

There is a growing body of scientists studying our unconscious biases. In fact, a group at Harvard called Project Implicit has devised an online test to help individuals learn more about the biases they may unknowingly have. They’ve found that race does matter for the vast majority of us.

We are also learning that the more we actually recognize and talk about our unconscious biases, the more we can make sure that it’s REALLY not a factor in how we treat people.





Q: We can barely take care of the people we have. There are already too many Americans struggling to find jobs. We have too many problems we can't solve as it is without bringing more people into this community.

A: We all want to do our best for our families and our communities, and it turns out that welcoming newcomers is what's best for all of us. Becoming a more welcoming community means more customers for our local businesses, more jobs created by immigrant entrepreneurs, and a thriving economy that benefits us all. By recognizing the contributions that we all make to creating a vibrant culture and a growing economy, we make our neighbors feel more included and our community more welcoming to new Americans and to everyone who calls our community home.

Think about our grandparents and great grandparents—many who moved here from someplace else like the newcomers today. A hundred years ago, they helped build the Greatest Generation. The New Americans coming today can help do the same thing if we give them an opportunity. Whether it's the brilliant innovator producing new technologies, the small business owner creating jobs in our neighborhood, or the janitor cleaning our schools, does it matter whether they were born in India or Mexico, as long as they are contributing to making America and our community stronger?

Q: If everyone speaks a different language or has a different culture, how can we still be America?

A: Bridging cultural difference is not always easy, but cultural diversity is a good thing. Remember most of our grandparents and great grandparents were from somewhere else. We're proud of the culture they taught us—the foods, languages and traditions they passed down to us. Our cultures have a long history of expanding and finding room for new ideas and flavors, and it's part of what makes them so vibrant. They make us who we are and all of us together make up America.

Whether we were born here or not, or whether we speak English fluently or are just learning it, what matters most is that we all want the same thing—the freedom to speak, to pray, and to raise our children with hope. That's what binds us as a community, as a country. We need to stop thinking in terms of us versus them, and start thinking in terms of just us. If we can do that, we will be able to do so much, together.

ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

This toolkit stems directly from a body of work conducted by Dr. Drew Westen, a professor in the Departments of Psychology and Psychiatry at Emory University and the founder of Westen Strategies, LLC, a strategic messaging consulting firm to nonprofits and political organizations. In addition to developing and testing the messages that formed the basis of the messaging recommended herein, he offers some specific advice for people working on overcoming fear of difference and unconscious bias:

- ▶ To disarm unconscious prejudices, we need to speak to shared values, and use the right analogies.
- ▶ Consistent with recent research, “diversity” is no longer a dirty word, but it helps to contextualize it (e.g., as synonymous with what used to be called the “melting pot,” a term that we do not recommend because it erases differences, which is not the goal).
- ▶ “Multiculturalism” is too abstract and not as strong; rather, it’s better to create images of people standing shoulder to shoulder.
- ▶ We should never speak about prejudice without distinguishing level of consciousness; failing to do so activates unconscious stereotypes and creates inaccurate and polarizing discussions.
- ▶ Effective messages return to our shared conscious values as Americans.
- ▶ Speak to the progress we have made before speaking of how far we still need to go.
- ▶ Use emotionally compelling, concrete examples or analogies. Examples and analogies that work best come from science and less from everyday life; they are less threatening.
- ▶ Populist language cuts across racial lines and makes “us” inclusive.
- ▶ Speak of *unconscious prejudice*, not *unconscious racism*, to avoid defensiveness and widen the scope (e.g., to unconscious prejudices involving gender and sexual orientation).
- ▶ Do not use academic language or jargon.
- ▶ Turn “them” into “us,” through message and syntax; e.g., use phrases such as “whether white, black, or brown, we all...”; avoid third-person constructions (“they” and “them”).
- ▶ Understand “priming” and order effects; e.g., research showed a difference in ordering “white” before black and brown or African-American and Latino-American. It’s also more effective to address progress before continued problems.
- ▶ Acknowledging that prejudices are not limited to white people reduces defensiveness (e.g., Obama’s race speech in Philadelphia).



RESOURCES

WELCOMING AMERICA RESOURCES

Stronger Together: Making the Case for Shared Prosperity through Welcoming Immigrants in Our Communities
www.welcomingamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/wac.toolkit.WEB_.FNL_.pdf

National Welcoming Week
www.welcomingweek.org

Fostering Welcoming Communities Through Dialogue
www.welcomingamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/wac.dialogue.w01.pdf

The Receiving Communities Toolkit: A Guide For Engaging Mainstream America in Immigrant Integration
www.welcomingamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Receiving-Communities-Toolkit_FINAL1.pdf

WELCOMING REFUGEES

Welcoming Refugees
www.welcomingrefugees.org

Reframing Refugees Messaging Toolkit
www.welcomingrefugees.org/reframing-refugees-messaging-toolkit-0

RACE AND UNCONSCIOUS BIAS RESOURCES

Perception Institute
www.perception.org

Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity
www.kirwaninstitute.osu.edu

Race Forward: The Center for Racial Justice Innovation
www.raceforward.org

Drop the I-Word Campaign Toolkit
www.raceforward.org/practice/tools/drop-i-word-campaign

Racial Equity Tools
www.racialequitytools.org

Within Our Lifetime
www.withinourlifetime.net

Outsmarting Our Brains: Overcoming Hidden Biases to Harness Diversity's True Potential
[http://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/Outsmarting-our-brains/\\$FILE/EY-RBC-Overcoming-hidden-biases-to-harness-diversity.pdf](http://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/Outsmarting-our-brains/$FILE/EY-RBC-Overcoming-hidden-biases-to-harness-diversity.pdf)

Haas Institute for A Fair and Inclusive Society – UC Berkeley
<http://diversity.berkeley.edu/haas-institute>



Center for Social Inclusion

www.centerforsocialinclusion.org

Race Matters: How to Talk about Race Toolkit

www.aecf.org/resources/race-matters-2

Race Matters Institute

www.racemattersinstitute.org

Implicit Bias Test

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS RESOURCES

Race Equity Tools

www.racialequitytools.org/glossary#diversity

Race Equity and Inclusion Toolkit (“Core Concepts,” p. 5)

www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/AECF_EmbracingEquity7Steps-2014.pdf#page=5

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AND MESSAGING RESOURCES

Vision, Values and Voice: A Social Justice Communications Toolkit

<http://toolkit.opportunityagenda.org>

SmartChart: An Interactive Tool to Help Nonprofits Make Smart Communications Choices

www.smartchart.org

Planning to Win: The Just Enough Guide for Campaigners

<http://www.justenoughplanning.org>

The Opportunity Agenda: Talking Points and Fact Sheets

http://opportunityagenda.org/talking_points

No More Mushy, Middle-of-the-Road Messages

<http://www.lightboxcollaborative.com/no-more-middle-of-the-road-messages>

More Than the Perfect Pitch: Connecting with the Right Reporter...Mad Lib-Style

<http://www.lightboxcollaborative.com/pitch-a-reporter-mad-lib>

Beth Kanter’s Blog

<http://www.bethkanter.org>

Build Your Airport: Content Strategy to Help Your Content Take Flight

<http://www.lightboxcollaborative.com/building-content-strategy>

Center for Social Inclusion: Talking About Race Toolkit

<http://www.centerforsocialinclusion.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/CSI-Talking-About-Race-Toolkit.pdf>

Take Charge of Your Communications with LightBox Collaborative’s 2015 Editorial Calendar

<http://www.lightboxcollaborative.com/2015-editorial-calendar>





THE “ROAD TRIP” METHOD FOR CHANGING HEARTS AND MINDS

by Holly Minch, Lightbox Collaborative

We’ve been doing lots of thinking about the power of conversations as a means to create lasting social change. In partnership with the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund and the Breakthrough Conversations Project, we engaged in rigorous research and testing of one of the most powerful social change tools known to progressives: the simple conversation.

We focused on conversations between family and friends who had different views about difficult topics like gay marriage, immigration reform, and abortion. We studied what can happen when we are willing to share our experiences and opinions and then ask our family and friends to take action on the issues we care about.

Along the way, we learned something interesting: When people are different from us, with different ideas and opinions, changing someone’s mind is like a road trip.

1. The car has to be well-packed.

If you are going to go on this journey of changing someone’s heart and mind, you have to start with some common ground. You must be willing to take risks in order to gain the rewards that the relationship promises.

2. Choose the best time to go.

Difficult conversations are better when they are well-timed. Look for openings—whether it’s events in your own lives or in the culture—to create common ground and open the conversation.

3. Go together.

Recognizing that conversations about differences are difficult, keep in mind what you have in common: your interest in the relationship.

4. Conversations are the route you travel together.

Sometimes the road may meander. But as long as you travel the path together, you’ll find that conversations are effective at changing attitudes and behavior.

5. You can bond over little things, like tunes and snacks.

More often than not, it’s the mundane things that we build our relationship on that really bind us. Keep it personal, real, and ordinary.

6. Make use of the scenery along the way.

If the issue you disagree on is visible in media and popular culture, point to it. Visibility helps make the idea more familiar.

7. There are no shortcuts.

Changing hearts and minds is a process. It takes time and a sequence of steps, so be patient.

8. You’ll arrive at a great destination together.

As we spoke to folks who’ve traveled this road, we heard time and again that it was worth it. Friendships were stronger, families closer, and people more able to simply be themselves.

Take a journey with someone who is different than you, and you will change the world.



QUICK GUIDE

A lot has been covered in this toolkit. One of the most important ideas that we can emphasize is that conversations matter. When we talk about race and prejudice directly, rather than avoid them, we can make a difference. We can reduce prejudice and help people understand why welcoming newcomers is good for all of us.

We offer this quick reference of the top things to remember when having these conversations:

- ▶ Don't avoid the elephant in the room. Talk openly about race and ethnicity to appeal to people's conscious values and challenge their unconscious biases.
- ▶ Acknowledge that we all have unconscious biases or unspoken stereotypes. As humans we can't help it. But we can help what we do about them.
- ▶ The more we talk about race and prejudice openly, the more we can make sure it doesn't influence the way we treat people.
- ▶ Remind people of the values we all share as Americans—no matter where our ancestors came from or what language they spoke.
- ▶ We are stronger together when everyone can contribute.
- ▶ Our diversity adds to our strength as communities and as a nation.
- ▶ Use analogies of cooperation and unity that people can relate to—fire departments, sports teams, etc.
- ▶ Keep learning and asking questions! As you are having these conversations, don't forget to keep examining your own biases and to keep listening to the voices and experiences of others.
- ▶ Look critically at the structures and systems that perpetuate racism and inequity in our society. Support changes and work across identities that increase opportunity for people of color through conversations, messaging, and action. The resources provided here point to some concrete ways to start this work in your community.

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