Organizational Transformation:
Addressing the Effects Of Race, Intersectionality & Oppression

- Our Team
- Lead Change
- Strategic Action
- State of Affairs
- Accomplice Work

Vera House Incorporated
Our Team

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Executive Director of Vera House

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Associate Director of Vera House
Co-Chair of Survivor’s Network
Our Story ~ Our Purpose
Hope To Get

• What do you hope to get from our time together?

• What will make this worth your time?
Think strategically about addressing the resistance and challenges

Identify effects of race, intersectionality & oppression

Recognize personal work necessary for greatest level of development & competency

Objectives
Maintaining Our Space Requires:

- Center Non Dominant Voices
- Manage Fragility (defensiveness, tears and reaction)
- Authenticity & Transparency
- Take Risks
- Receive Accountability
- Acknowledge and Allow Mistakes
- Generosity of Spirit
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Our Team
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STATE OF AFFAIRS
How did we get here

- Catalyst Moments
- White Supremacy
- Role & Effects of Abuser
- Activity
Sparks: Can Be Ignored

- Dale Carnegie Training
- Staff of Color Resignation

No Allies To Be Found
White Supremacy and Racism as the Abuser

Parallels
- Victim & Staff Response

Speak Up
- Who Does & who Doesn't

Lost in Subtleties
- Bathed in White Supremacy & Racism

Power & Control
- Dynamics External vs. Internal

Denial Continuum*
- Do not admit
- Event not abuse
- Was not important
- Is not important

*Salter - "Homegrown Solutions"
Reality Check: Organization Complicity

White Supremacy & Racism at Work
Dominant Culture

- Perfectionism
- Sense of Urgency
- Defensiveness
- Worship of Written Word
- Only One Right Way
- Paternalism
- Binary Thinking
- Power Hoarding
- Fear of Open Conflict
- Individualism
- I'm the only one
- Right to Comfort

Elements of White Middle Class Dominant Culture
Kenneth Jones & Tema Okun, 2001
Safety vs. Comfort

**Safety:**

- I feel that in this space I can ask questions without fear of judgement

- I can voice my perspective and know that I will be validated for the fact that it is my truth

- Others challenge my ideas, but that challenge is in the spirit of greater shared understanding and growth

**Comfort:**

- I feel that in this space, my reality will be agreed with and unchallenged

- I don't have to explain myself to be understood and I don't have to justify my perspective as everyone shares it
Activity:
Agree~Disagree~Unsure
Not a day goes by that I don't think about my privilege or lack of privilege.
Organizational Transformation:
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Leading the Change
Charging into the wind

HOME

IDENTITY

EXPECT
**STARTS AT HOME**
*Transformation*

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Organization Identity Transformation

- We may not be what you think we are
- Social justice/human rights at the forefront
- Address relationship with justice system
Resistance & Fragility

- Intention vs Impact
- White Middle Class Dominant Culture
Safety vs. Comfort

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- I don't have to explain myself to be understood and I don't have to justify my perspective as everyone shares it
• Talk about **power** and **structure** before talking about social privilege

• Understand that we all come to the conversation from different standpoints **formed by power**

• Power makes it violently difficult to be **open** and **honest**

• This is just the **beginning** .... Continue outside of this room
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Our Team

State of Affairs

Lead Change

Strategic Action

Accomplice Work
Advocate, Ally & Accomplice

What is the difference?
**Accomplice:** Doesn't look for oppressed communities to make them feel better and affirm their work

**Accomplice:** Use their privilege to address others with similar privilege

**Accomplice:** Actively listen and approach with curiosity, rather than defensiveness

**Accomplice:** Educates themselves, rather than burdening people of color to do so

**Accomplice:** Identifies and owns power, rather than abdicates it
When Accomplices Show Up

- Dale Carnegie Training
- CNY Pride
- Board of Directors
- Black Lives Matter
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Strategic Action

- Leadership Commitment
- Anticipate and Embrace Resistance
- Strategic Plan Direction & Evaluation - IDI (Intercultural Diversity Inventory)
- Action Plan based on evaluation
- Board Ownership
- Resiliency Building - Vicarious Trauma Prevention Plan
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