



Critical Conversation on Race #3

July 22, 2020

Plenary Discussion Notes

(Draft from PRIE)

Participants:

- Reviewed the results of the questionnaire administered during the June 25th Critical Conversation
- [Review an interview with Ibram X. Kendi](#) (an 8 minute clip)
- Broke into small groups to discuss:
 - Reflect on the following:
 - the video clip of Dr. Kendi's presentation; and,
 - the data from the last Critical Conversation questionnaire.
 - PROMPT: "What are the feelings, realizations, offerings, and/or general temperature of your group's reflection?"
 - Please prepare to share the one or more words or phrases that best captures the temperature of your group.
 - Identify one note-taker and representative to share out the following:
 - "What are the feelings, realizations, offerings, and/or general temperature of your group's reflection?"
- Reported back to the whole group

Discussion notes from that plenary discussion – based on the report outs:

Group 1: Some people use race to define their group and to draw the group together (us v. them). Real gains cannot be made until we tap people's self-interest. When people begin to see that it's not a zero sum game – others can be empowered without that coming at the expense of your own power. Our country is so divided on this right now, it's impossible to talk to each other. The key is seeing and relating to each other as human beings first, not racially identified groups.

Group 2: Connecting with each other, just talking is so important. Systemic racism must end.

Group 3: Racism is always taking place. It's up to use to identify it – we have to take action to stop racist behavior. Anti-racism is what you *do* not who you are.

Group 4: Consider impact v. intent. "The road to hell is paved with good intentions." It's important to have black voices in the room when we're discussing policies. We have to be willing to talk about it, otherwise it's not going to get better. Racism is not a caricature. We can't be afraid to point the finger at ourselves...

Group 5: It is so important just to talk to each other. Have the discussion. Create definitions together. Build mutual, shared understanding.

Discussion points:

- Yes, let's keep talking, as a campus community.
- But how can we ACT to improve our culture and practice? For example, could we develop a practice of not considering peoples' names during the hiring process?

- We must sustain awareness of these issues in all our spaces
- We need a place where people can post and share resources (Library Anti-Racism Guide)
- What about the work the campus did 4-5 years ago called “Courageous Conversations”? We had the first of a 2-day conversation during Flex Day, October 2016, but then we never did the second day!
- One college, one book: can we all read and share about the reading?
- White people might want to get together and do their own work
- September is Hispanic Heritage month – can we do something with that? There is anti-Blackness in the Latinx community
- The Dream Center website could be a place to post resources
- James Baldwin's [A Talk to Teachers](#) could be a good resource for discussion

A quick poll was administered (and then erased)....Participants were asked to “Please let us know how you would like to continue this conversation and/or provide other options for continued connection and action:” Tentative results were:

- Continue monthly, campus-wide conversations such as this one (via Zoom) (86%)
- Form smaller, voluntary groups that could schedule and convene at their own pace (60%)
- Create Book Clubs that folks could join to read and discuss relevant texts periodically (45%)
- Movie Club (organized by the Library via Kanopy or Films on Demand); participants would view a film together and discuss (50-60%)
- Interactive Learning Workshops with the authors of “Minding the Obligation Gap” via Zoom ?
- Other