



DISCUSSIONS
ACROSS
DIFFERENCES



WITH
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READING BETWEEN THE LINES

Facilitator Guide

Description

"Reading Between the Lines", challenges audiences to imagine themselves in the middle of a community crisis with limited resources. How do you manage? What do you need in order to survive a system and community interrupted? What will the community need? Will stereotypes and biases play a role in your thoughts, behavior and actions? Learn how one individual can serve as a catalyst for creating compassion and delivering support, towards meeting the needs of individuals, families and the community during a period of unrest.

Objectives

Participants will be challenged to:

- Look at a community in crisis from a different point of view.
- Think about their personal reactions to civil unrest.
- Understand how experiences shape perspectives and biases.
- Address personal fears based upon stereotypes.
- Re-think what it means to "be heard".

Target Audience

This program is intended for groups, organizations and people interested in building inclusive communities through dialogue and discussion regarding race.

Background

When the unthinkable happens, how does one react? In this series, understand how a community leader was able to help manage a crisis and provide community support during a time of need. Biases can cause anxiety and stereotypes can cause fear. Our reactions to our implicit biases will cause us to react a certain way in various situations. Learn how one leader manages to evaluate his own biases while bringing aid to the community that wanted to be heard.

Tips for Facilitating

Considering the opinions and points of view presented in this video, facilitators will need to focus discussion on those conversations and thoughts that affect inclusion, respect, and valuing others. To best facilitate the discussion, facilitators should **carefully review the video and prepared materials in advance of presentation.**

Suggested Guidelines:

- Review all presentation materials and the video in advance of your session.
- As you begin the session, establish ground rules for sharing opinions. Stress the need to be respectful of others.
- Set expectations for the session by sharing the objectives and agenda before the video is shown.
- Provide instructions for capturing discussion outcomes and observations.
- Actively manage time to allow sufficient discussion of each section and capture observations without judgment.
- Anticipate distractions or off topic comments in your session and have statements ready to steer the conversation back on topic. An example includes “That is an interesting comment. Let’s discuss it further after the session to allow time to cover discussion items more directly related to the video”.
- When the session concludes, thank everyone for his or her participation and courageous conversations.

Materials and Equipment Needed

- Video: “Reading Between The Lines”
Click on link: <https://youtu.be/OBPJgFs6lGg>
Wi-Fi or data connection is needed to view video
- Laptop with Video Screen, or Room with Projector and Screen for showing video
- Flip Chart & Easel, Blackboard, Smart board, or paper to take notes
- Markers or writing instrument
- Facilitator Guide

Time Requirements

- Room Set-Up: 5 minutes
- Video: 12:17 minute runtime
- Discussion Time: 30 - 40 minutes

Reading Between The Lines

Introducing the Program

Welcome participants. Inform the audience that the video they are about to view is one that addresses fear, a community in crisis and will encourage an internal assessment regarding biases and assumptions based upon stereotypes. They will be challenged to think of ways to engage in a dialogue, respect the need to be heard and develop solutions to impact community success.

Give advanced notice that there will be questions following the video for discussion and learning.

Give audience "thinking time" after asking a question. Be prepared to give an example, should there be no responses.

View Video (Run Time: 12:17)

Group Discussion

As each question is discussed, make note of key points on a flip chart or paper. For large audiences (more than 10-12 people), consider dividing into smaller groups to discuss questions. Key points from each small group can be shared with the larger group and captured on the flip chart at the conclusion of their discussion.

Discussion Questions

1. *How should people react in the middle of a community crisis?*

Possible Answers:

- I am not sure.
- Be afraid and flee the situation.
- Arm themselves and protect my family and property.
- Remain calm.
- Try not to fear the unknown.
- Show empathy.

2. *How do personal biases and stereotypes play a role in your reactions to a community crisis?*

Possible Answers:

- Growing up in non-diverse environments can cause you to fear people different from you.
- People remove themselves from the situation. It has nothing to do with race.
- When people see others acting out what is perceived stereotype, it gives a lot of credibility to that stereotype.

3. *Why would a group of citizens proclaim that they are not being "heard?"*

Possible Answers:

- Their requests for support fall on deaf ears.
- The poor and underserved have no voice.
- Citizens believe that they are being treated unfairly, share the sentiment with those in authority, but nothing appears to be done about it.
- I am not sure. This is a free country. Everyone has the ability to voice their opinions and concerns in a way that they feel most comfortable.

4. *How do you help a community heal that has lived in fear for an extended period of time?*

Possible Feedback:

- You must begin a new dialogue, with openness in order to build trust.
- Reach out to those of different backgrounds and try to understand their perspectives.
- Allow time to pass.
- The community will never be the same. No city has ever completely healed from a time of crisis.
- Bring jobs to the area.
- Diversify the community's leadership and authority.

5. *What can be done to reduce fear of people that are different?*

Possible Feedback:

- You can attempt to walk in someone else's shoes, but this is difficult to do.
- Talk to people of diverse backgrounds to better understand them.
- Seek to understand our own implicit biases and evaluate any fear that may be a result of those biases.

Review Objectives

Participants will be challenged to:

- Imagine themselves in the middle of a community crisis
- Think about personal reactions to civil unrest
- Understand how experiences shape perspectives and biases
- Address personal fears based upon stereotypes
- Re-think what it means to “be heard”

Closing Comments

Conclude the session by sharing your organization's or group's policy statement or position on diversity. Be sure to thank the participants for their contributions to discussions and for their time.

Survey

Please take a few minutes to complete a brief survey on the *Discussions Across Differences* video series:

Click on link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DiscussionsAcrossDifferences>

Let's keep the dialogue going.