

Facilitation as a Practice for Equity, Inclusion and Power-Sharing

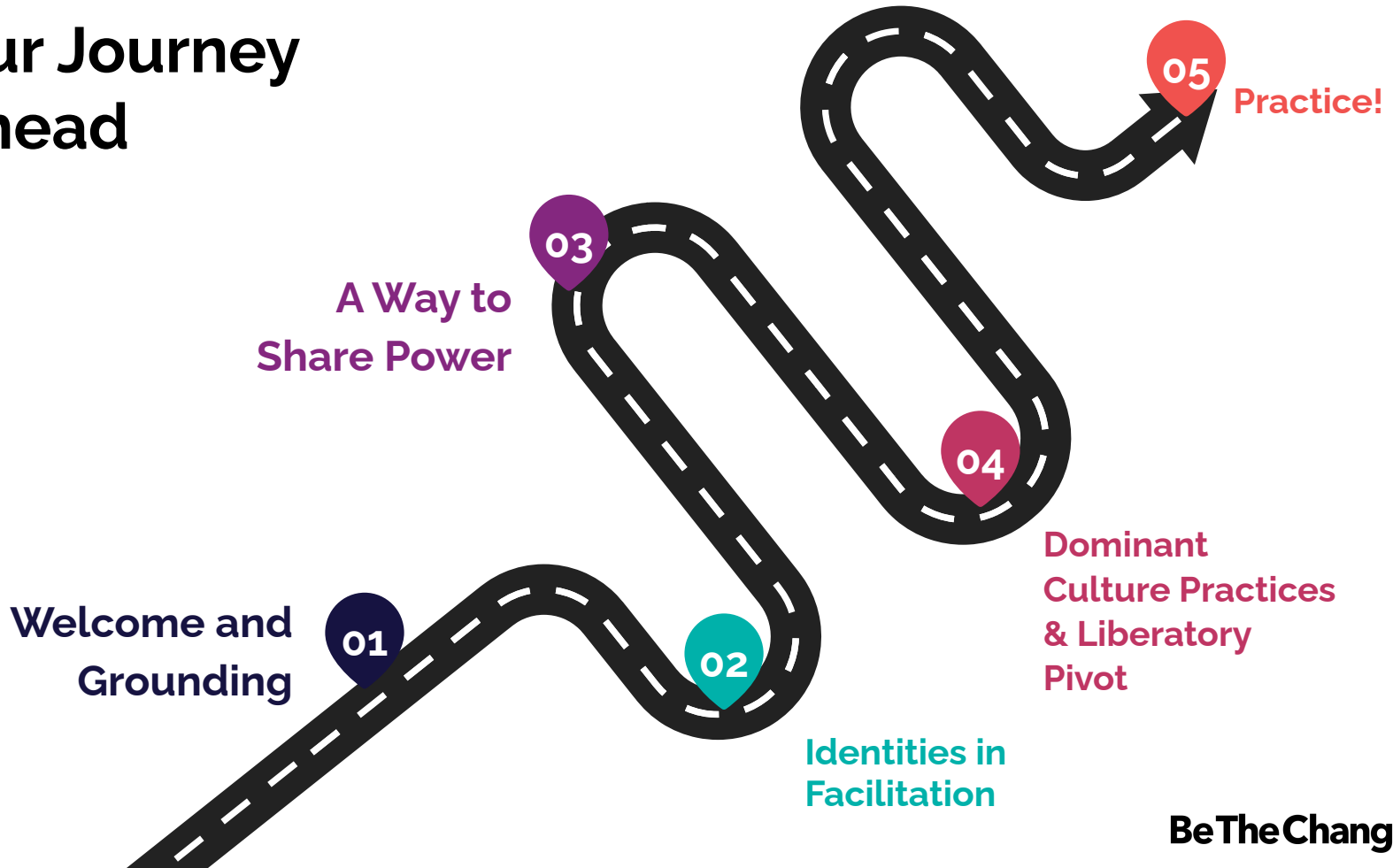


Public Training Series 2026

BeTheChange™



Our Journey Ahead



Race Forward Renaming



**Black/
African-American**



White

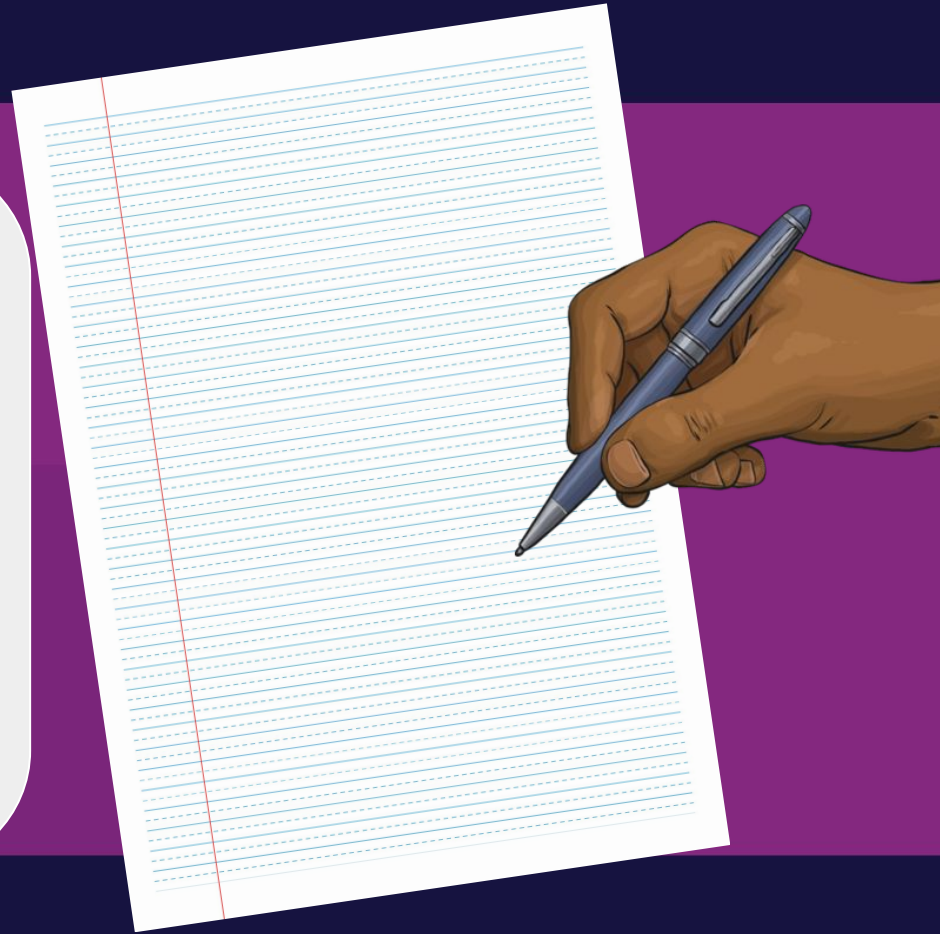


Write In Your Own (i.e. Asian, POC)



Journal & Discussion...

- Which identities are you most aware of when you are facilitating?
- How does this make holding space easy and why does this make holding space hard?



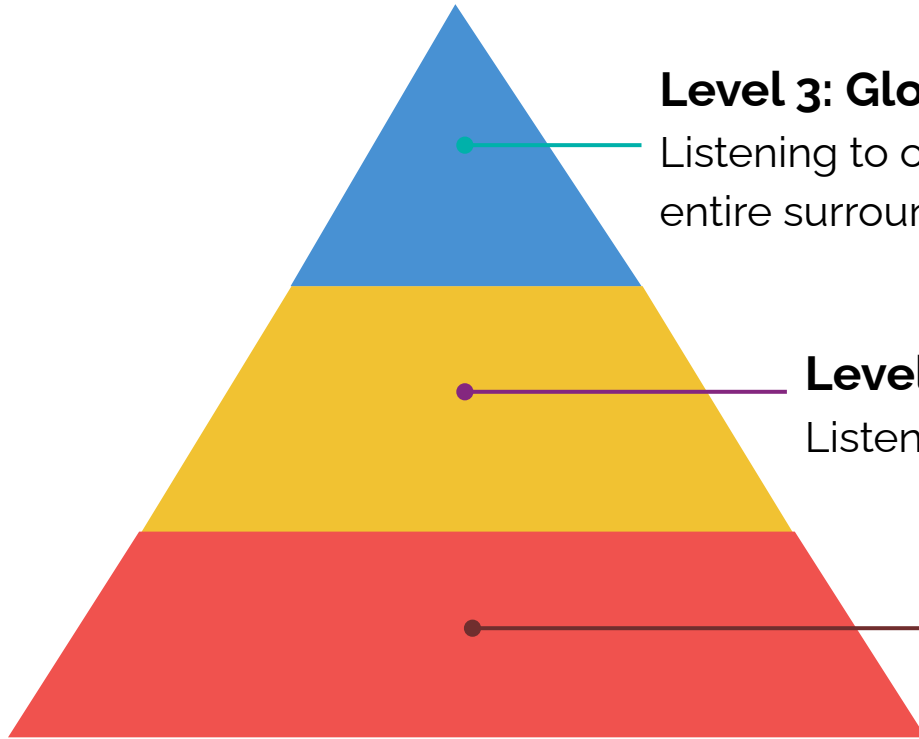


**Focus on
Impact Rather
Than Intent**

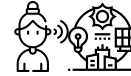
**Black & Indigenous
Voices First &
Non-Black POC
Voices Next**

**Interrogate
Any
Resistance**

The 3 Levels of Listening



Level 3: Global Listening



Listening to others in the context of their entire surroundings

Level 2: Focused Listening



Listening intently to another person.

Level 1: Internal Listening



Listening to your inner voice

Creating A Speaking Order

- Newest Hires
- Youngest in the room
- Eldest in the room
- Non-Dominant Language users
- Temporary Hires
- By workgroup/Team
- Non-Management
- Women/Queer/Trans
- Non-Staff/Volunteers

Take
care of
your
needs!





Dominant Culture Characteristics

Okun suggests that the characteristics of white dominant culture can be harmful not in and of themselves but **“when they are used as norms and standards without being pro-actively named or chosen by the group...”**

What is it: A body of work that lists characteristics of dominant culture which show up in our organizations that centers whiteness.

Source:

[Dismantling Racism: A Workbook for Social Change Groups, by Kenneth Jones and Tema Okun, ChangeWork, 2001](#)



PERFECTIONISM

How things look and appear are very important. Mistakes are not welcome, expected or celebrated. Things are meant to be well received and well executed the first time around. Pointing out mistakes is one way to maintain one's power.





DEFENSIVENESS

Feedback or critique are not invited. There is a belief that the way things are being done is the best way, and nothing needs to be changed. Innovation is blocked.



Zoom Inclusive Breakout Group Practices



Audio

Invite the audio only to share first.



Time

Be mindful of time. Try to split time evenly. If someone does not get to share, chat them afterwards.



Accessibility

Offer people different ways to share (via chat/reactions)



PPP

People Process over Product.

Let's dismantle dominant culture in our meetings!

How can a facilitator activate **perfectionism**?

Sticking to time with less response to needs of group.

Documentation that has to be "right." Needing to reflect a picture even if it's not that easy to demonstrate.

Using only your language and slang.

Need to address a sense of urgency with certain audiences.

What could we do instead?

Checking in with the group. Seeking consent to possibly pivot for the group to decide.

Making it known it's hard to quantify and making room for the abstract though voice or on paper.

Making room people to take their time to speak their point in multiple languages. Getting translation support and knowing who is in the group.

Inquiry? Asking self: Is there flexibility here? Creating a container that can be slow and imperfect. Name it. Be explicit with the tone and why.

How can a facilitator activate **Defensiveness**?

More apologetic or agreeing to appease.

Making things personal

What could we do instead?

Not responding directly. Considering a delayed response.

Removing self from outcome and content. Considering

Fluid Facilitation Techniques



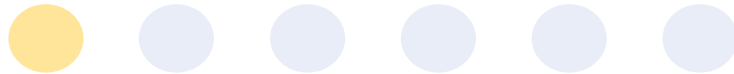
Fluid Facilitation

1. Interrupt
2. Re-frame
3. Expand Participation
4. Validate
5. Welcome Resistance
6. Acknowledge the Climate
7. Practice, Yes and

Interrupt

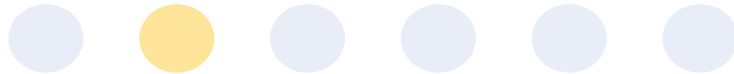
“Pause” someone in a friendly way. Let them know you heard their point.

“I’m going to pause us for a moment right here.”



Re-frame

- Restate what someone said in a succinct way.
- Clarify what you think they are saying. Organize many points into buckets.
- Remove shame or judgment so the group can examine impact vs. intent for themselves.



Expand Participation

Try saying:

- Can I hear from someone who has not spoken? What do others think?
- Type a response into the chat.
- Let's go into breakout rooms to check-in.
- Let's use a speaking order to ensure we hear from the various identities represented here - let's ping pong between leadership team members and non-leadership staff.



Validate

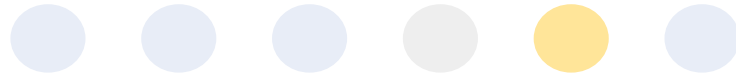
Affirm the parts of one's contribution you can agree with.



Welcome Resistance

Ask folks to challenge the ideas of the facilitator or another participant.

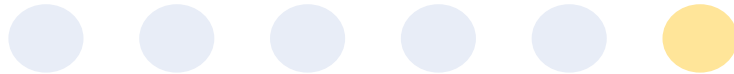
Try saying: This is one way to think about this issue, what do others think? What resonates? What doesn't?



Acknowledge the Climate

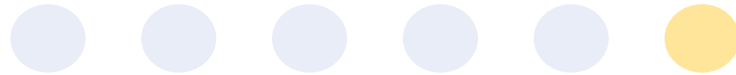
Try saying:

- I can see this topic is bringing up feelings so let's take a moment and take a breath to ground us. It is okay to agree to disagree.
- I'm going to invite a breath so we can all take in what was just said.
- I might need a moment after that... okay to take a quick break?



Practice Yes, And

When you hear an idea and want to offer an alternative, say “yes and let's also consider...” as opposed to saying No or But.



Fluid Facilitation Practice

Assign each person in your group a number.



Person 1 read the scenario and bring it to life.



Persons 2-4 take turns responding using one fluid facilitation move.



Agreements

Do the Activity!

Really try on the facilitation moves - don't talk about it.

Check Any Resistance

These are real scenarios - they may trigger you or bring up defensiveness.

Take Care Of Yourselves During and After

We have some options but you know how **BEST** to take care of you.

Scenario #1: Unconscious Bias

A black person says to a Latinx person, "Wow, you're so articulate. How long have you been in the U.S.?"

Interrupt

Re-Frame

Expand Participation

Validate

Acknowledge the
Climate

Welcome Resistance

Reflect on after practice:

Which of these feels possible for you based on your position, identity, and analysis?

Scenario #2: Silence

A staff member states that they are finding it difficult to stay engaged in the meeting, as they are feeling disheartened by all the Anti-Black violence that has been occurring in the community recently. The rest of the attendees remain silent.

Reflect on after practice:

Which of these feels possible for you based on your position, identity, and analysis?

Interrupt

Re-Frame

Expand Participation

Validate

Acknowledge the
Climate

Welcome Resistance

Scenario #3: Oppression Olympics

At a racial equity training, a female trainee is disengaged and frustrated. She says:

“Why aren't we also talking about sexism? Women are oppressed too. I feel like we are always talking about racial equity and ignoring other people who experience discrimination.”

Reflect on after practice:

Which of these feels possible for you based on your position, identity, and analysis?

Interrupt

Re-Frame

Expand Participation

Validate

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Scenario #4: Not-So-Micro Aggression

At the start of a meeting, a white staff member logs in 5 minutes late and apologizes for being on “CP Time”.

Reflect on after practice:

Which of these feels possible for you based on your position, identity, and analysis?

Interrupt

Re-Frame

Expand Participation

Validate

Acknowledge the
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Welcome Resistance

Liberatory Facilitator Competencies

01

Holds strong critical self awareness and understands the privilege they bring into the space.

02

Activates multiple learning modalities to support groups learning.

03

Invites push back on meeting content non defensively.

04

Continuously seeks group consent about process and pauses during challenging moments to rebuild consent about process and creates space in the session agenda for emergent ideas.

05

Remains attentive to power dynamics in the room and invites perspectives from various “parts” of a group, centering the voices that are typically marginalized.

06

Uses creative ways to invite various perspectives, divergent learning styles, and is mindful of pacing that can be compounded with positional power in a room.