

Community Health Committee Training

LEARNING CIRCLES ADDRESSING RACISM

A Health and Human Rights Programme



LEARNING NETWORK

The Learning Network is a collection of 5 civil society organisations based in Cape Town:

1. The Women's Circle,
2. Ikamva Labantu,
3. Epilepsy South Africa,
4. Women on Farms Project and the
5. Cape Metro Health Forum

The Learning Network serves as the umbrella body in the Western Cape and includes 4 higher education institutions:

1. University of Cape Town (UCT)
2. University of the Western Cape (UWC)
3. Maastricht University, in the Netherlands
4. Warwick University in the UK



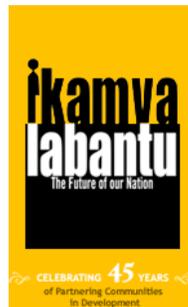
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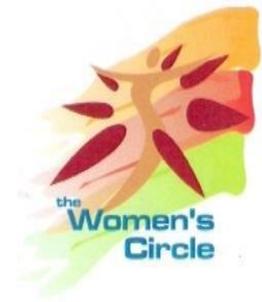
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Contents

1. Addressing Racism	5
2. What is Inequality	6
3. Understanding Racism	6
4. History of Racism	8
5. Internalised Racism	14
6. Inter-group behaviours	15
7. What is Redress?	18
8. How do we Change?	20
9. Child Development Theory	20
10. Intervention at Institutional Levels	24
11. Theory on Transitions	25
12. Sources of Information	28

Addressing Racism

Learning Objectives: Community Health Committee members will;

- Unpack their earliest recollection of racism.
- Develop an understanding of what racism means.
- Reflect on the broad history of racism from the colonial period to current.
- Unpack the theory of inter-group behaviours as a result of systemic racism.
- Reflect on the notion of internalized oppression.
- Understand that a transforming society requires people who are conscious of their contribution towards the development of a non-racial society.
- Explore theories of managing transition.

*“Racism is a touchy subject. While some argue that everyone has been racist at some point, there is much debate about the different types of racism. The two main forms are **overt** and **covert** racism.*

Overt racism occurs when you blatantly say or do things that discriminate against another person based on his or her race. Laws against blacks sitting in the front of a bus are an example of overt racism.

Covert racism is far subtler. It manifests in differentiated treatment of others on a personal, and often less identifiable, level. School teachers who personally use race to decide what students will receive attention in class, are practicing covert racism.” Gordon Allport.



Activity 1: What is Inequality?

15 minutes

Purpose: Participants recognize inequality in various relationships.

Method: Brainstorm.

Material: Flip-chart and khokis

Procedure: The facilitator asks participants to brainstorm a range of unequal power relations evident in society and writes it up in to columns reflecting the powerful and the powerless.

The facilitator sets the tone for a more interactive session. Participants are asked to move their chairs into a closed circle.

Activity 2: What is Racism?

1 hour

Purpose: For participants to reflect on their own exposure to racism and its consequences.

Method: Fishbowl.

Material: Chairs

Procedure: Sitting in a circle participants commit to confidentiality in order to create a climate of trust. Facilitators, sitting with participants, ask each person to recall their most memorable or first encounter with racism. The facilitator could start if participants are hesitant.

Session 1: Understanding Racism

Definitions: Racism

OXFORD: Prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against someone of a different race based on the belief that one's own race is superior:

WIKIPEDIA: The belief that all members of each race possess characteristics, abilities, or qualities specific to that race, especially so as to distinguish it as inferior or superior to another race or races: *theories of racism*.

Definitions: Race

According to John H. Relethford, author of *The Fundamentals of Biological Anthropology*, race; *“Is a group of populations that share some biological characteristics...These populations differ from other groups of populations according to these characteristics.”*

Scientists can divide some organisms into racial categories easier than others, such as those which remain isolated from one another in different environments. In contrast, the race concept doesn't work so well with humans. That's because not only do humans live in a wide range of environments, they also travel back and forth between them. As a result, there's a high degree of gene flow among people groups that makes it hard to organize them into discrete groups.

Skin color remains a primary trait Westerners use to place people into racial groups. However, someone of African descent may be the same skin shade as someone of Asian descent. Someone of Asian descent may be the same shade as someone of European descent. Where does one race end and another begin?

“People in the 17th century...were more likely to distinguish between Christians and heathens than they were between people of color and people who were white...,” Perdue. *Christian conversion could make American Indians fully human, they thought. But as Europeans strove to convert and assimilate Natives, all the while seizing their land, efforts were underway to provide a scientific rationale for Africans' alleged inferiority to Europeans.*

Thanks to scientific advances, we can now say definitively that race is fluid and thus difficult to pinpoint scientifically. “Race is a concept of human minds, not of nature,” Relethford writes. Nadra Nittle. Wikipedia

History of Racism: Based on Economic Plunder

Racism is not confined to South Africa. It was propagated during the period of colonization to exploit indigenous people and justify taking control of resources, mainly by **Britain** but also **countries like America, Spain** and other **European countries**.

What is 'The British Empire'? The British colonies made up about a quarter of the world's population and area. As the British Empire expanded, it brought with it European ideas and the English language to its colonies.

Why did the British colonise? In the 16th century, England was a poor country. When they began colonising, it was not as missionaries. When the English put to sea, it aimed to seek immediate profits.

The Industrial Revolution which took place in Europe in 17th century gave rise to the need for raw materials. The British looked at South-east Asia as a good target as they were rich in natural resources. After some early colonies were established and become the sole markets to buy English goods, the English realised the huge commercial potential of overseas acquisitions. They consequently tried to expand their colonisation.

To expand their business and find buyers for their products, these companies looked for trading posts in the other countries. When the government in these countries was not strong enough, the English gradually took complete control.

In the 17th century, the British set up plantations to produce sugar and tobacco on the islands of the Caribbean as well as in North America. These colonies attracted a large amount of European settlers. The British needed labourers to work in these plantations, so they started to trade slaves.

In **America**, the use of slaves on farms introduced a very violent, racist period as white settlers used racism to justify the degradation and submission of black slaves.

Slavery Timeline in America

1609 - Native tobacco is first planted and harvested in Virginia by colonists.

1613 - A Dutch trading post is set up on lower Manhattan Island.

1616 - Tobacco becomes an export staple for Virginia.

1616 - A smallpox epidemic decimates the Native American population in New England.

1619 - The first session of the first legislative assembly in America occurs as the Virginia House of Burgesses convenes in Jamestown. It consists of 22 burgesses representing 11 plantations.

1619 - Twenty Africans are brought by a Dutch ship to Jamestown for sale as indentured servants, marking the beginning of slavery in Colonial America.

There are many other examples of global racism. We, however, are embarking on the development of a non-racist and non-sexist society and need to understand our own history of racism.

South Africa

In South Africa racism was legislated in 1948 and it started a concerted campaign of pushing black people into homelands, ghettos and legally excluding them from economic development.

The Apartheid Legislation in South Africa was a series of different laws and acts which were legislated over a long period of time, to help the apartheid-government to enforce the segregation of different races and cement the power and the dominance by the whites, of substantially European descent, over the other race groups.

Starting in 1913, the Nationalist Government in South Africa enacted laws to define and enforce segregation. With the enactment of Apartheid laws in 1948, racial discrimination was institutionalised. According to economist Walter E. Williams, apartheid "*maintained white power by denying political and economic liberty to black South Africans.*"^[1]

The effect of the legislation was invariably favourable to the whites and detrimental to the non-white racial groups.

What makes South Africa's apartheid era different from segregation in other countries is the systematic way in which the National Party, which came into power in 1948, formalized the Apartheid rules through the law.

This led to an international campaign against South Africa and internal unrest that destabilized the country over almost five decades.

Advent of Legalised Racism:

- **1913 - The Natives Land Act:** Aimed at regulating the acquisition of Land by black South Africans. The first major piece of segregation legislation passed by the Union Parliament, and remained a cornerstone of Apartheid.
- **1934 - Mixed Marriages Act** was instituted: The first of many segregationist laws devised to separate privileged white South Africans from the black African masses.
- **1950 - The Group Areas Act:** (Act No. 41 of 1950) was created on 27 April, the day that is today recognised as Freedom Day in the New South Africa.

Black South Africans were forcibly removed from their homes and relocated to homelands in rural areas and what is today known Cape Flats in Cape Town and ghettos in urban areas throughout South Africa.

Notable events leading to the Toppling of a Racist Government:

- **21 March 1960 – The Sharpeville Massacre:** An uprising in Sharpeville led by the Pan African Congress (PAC), led to the first massacre of black people protesting racist laws. 69 people were killed.

According to an account from Humphrey Tyler, the Assistant Editor at Drum magazine; *“The police have claimed they were in desperate danger because the crowd was stoning them. Yet only three policemen were reported to have been hit by stones - and more than 200 Africans were shot down. The police also have said that the crowd was armed with 'ferocious weapons', which littered the compound after they fled.*

I saw no weapons, although I looked very carefully, and afterwards studied the photographs of the death scene. While I was there I saw only shoes, hats and a few bicycles left among the bodies. The crowd gave me no reason to feel scared, though I moved among them without any distinguishing mark to protect me, quite obvious with my white skin. I think the police were scared though, and I think the crowd knew it.”

Sharpeville signaled that the South African government was not going to yield to the mood of black nationalism then sweeping across Africa, and that white South Africans did not accept that they were "colonials" to be swept into the sea by "decolonization". Sharpeville thus foreshadowed the coming conflict between black nationalists and Afrikaner nationalists over the next thirty years.

In the wake of the shooting, a massive stay-away from work was organised and demonstrations continued. Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd declared a state of emergency, giving security forces the right to detain people without trial. Over

18,000 were arrested, including much of the ANC and PAC leadership, and both organizations were banned. The National Party government felt that outlawing the ANC and PAC would discontinue their operations. This was not the case. Some leaders went into exile abroad, while others stayed in South Africa and pursued the fight domestically. They went underground and initiated secret armed opposition groups.” Tom Lodge. Actions against Apartheid in S.A.

1961 – Resistance against Apartheid goes underground: The ANC and PAC ran campaigns of sabotage through their armed wings, Umkhonto We Sizwe (Spear of the Nation, MK) and Poqo ("Pure" or "Alone"). The ANC leader, Chief Albert Luthuli, did not support an armed struggle, but there was growing backing for a violent struggle as people became more and more aggravated by the government's aversion to hearing them out. In June 1961 the ANC executive concurred on the formation of MK.

1976 – Soweto Uprising: In 1976, protesting the forced use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction, Soweto students took to the streets. Hector Petersen, a 13 year-old-boy, was the first casualty of this protest.

1980 – Global Anti-Apartheid Movement: The international movement of solidarity with the struggle for freedom in South Africa was arguably the biggest social movement the world has seen. Virtually every country in the world has a history of anti-apartheid activity, in diverse forms. In many countries, anti-apartheid activities were linked (formally or informally) with local struggles against oppression of many kinds. Most anti-apartheid movements (AAMs) did not restrict their activities to South Africa, but supported liberation movements in Southern Africa more broadly. Besides individual countries, a range of regional and international organisations added their voices to the struggles against apartheid.

All these actions resulted in a situation that made the country ungovernable. In 1990, the national party announced the unbanning of the political parties which led to the negotiation, which culminated in the first election that included the black majority.

1994 – First Democratically Elected Government: For the first time, black South Africans could vote, which brought in a democratically elected government. Apartheid, however, is still with us but a lot of people remain in denial about its impact and consequences.

Currently: *“There are 56 million people in South Africa. 50% of those people live below the breadline – the majority of poor people are black. This means they are trapped in a system that favoured whiteness and white business at the expense of the poor.*

Many white people will blame this entirely on the new government and while government must be critiqued for failing to adequately change the system and deliver to the poor, white people refuse to see the role of white greed and corporate power in this systemically skewed and racialised economy.” Gillian Schutte.

There have been many freedom fighters who protested this human rights violation, not least of all, Nelson Mandela who became the first black President of a free society. Many went into exile and some remained and spoke out within the country. Steve Biko was one of the many outspoken anti-racism activists. He was killed for it.

The fight against international racism was supported by many musicians and cultural activists. The world also had a very vocal advocate in the form of Bob Marley, a Jamaican musician, who fearlessly campaigned against racism as evidenced in his music.

Bob Marley: *“Until the philosophy which holds one race superior and another inferior is finally and permanently discredited and abandoned ... Everywhere is war. Until there are no longer 1st class and 2nd class citizens of any nation ... It’s*

a war. Until the color of a man's skin is of no more significance, than the color of his eyes, it's a war. Until the basic human rights are equally guaranteed to all without regard to race. It is war!"

Other Quotes

George M. Fredrickson: *"In all manifestations of racism from the mildest to the most severe, what is being denied is the possibility that the racialisers and the racialised, can co-exist in the same society, except perhaps on the basis of domination and subordination."*

Internalised Racism: When black people believe racist theories about themselves and white people and still perceive themselves as constant victims based on their skin-colour or start to behave in self-destructive ways, believing that a racist society offers very little opportunity for progress. Internalised racism is also a term used for those black people who accept white supremacy.

In a society where racial prejudice thrives in politics, communities, institutions, dominant western culture and popular culture, it's difficult for victims of racial prejudices to avoid absorbing the racist messages that constantly bombard them.

While some black people grew up in diverse communities where racial differences were appreciated, others felt rejected due to their skin color. Being bullied because of ethnic background and encountering harmful messages about race in greater society may be all it takes to get a person of colour to either develop a pathological rage or begin loathing themselves. This is often very unconscious behaviour. For some black people, the impetus to turn racism inward occurs when they see whites still receiving privileges denied to black people.

By the same token, some white people who have been the beneficiaries of racial privilege, try and posture these privileges as a consequence of 'natural superiority'. South Africa has a very cruel, racist and divided

history, based not only on racial prejudice, but on a number of other orthodox beliefs about gender, sexuality and culture. It is still reflected in our inter-personal relationships. We are still the apartheid generation and it could take a number of generations of inter-racial mixing and the achievement of economic parity and an integrated society for the stereotypes to dissipate.

In the meantime, workplaces become sites of struggle because it is a place where we are forced to interact with each other. Based on the understanding that consciousness brings about change, the following theories attempt to describe some behaviours in the workplace, that are based on beliefs of superiority and its opposite.

**INTER-GROUP BEHAVIOURS: INSTITUTIONAL/SYSTEMIC LEVELS IN
MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT**

Old-fashioned Racism	Modern Racism	Internalised oppression	Transformers
<p>Constant Instructive tone: <i>"Do as I say."</i> Parent-child interactions. Often impatient. Based on the belief that black people struggle to understand anything.</p>	<p>Dysfunctional Rescuing: <i>"Here let me do it."</i> Will not hold black staff accountable for poor performance or attitude. Tend to focus on petty issues such as spelling or late-coming rather than substance.</p>	<p>System beating: Sulking, withdrawal, passive aggressive. Use racial oppression as an excuse to do as little as possible and justify taking little things.) E.g. time, or using the phone for long, personal calls.</p>	<p>Functional Helping: Seek and support access to previously denied domains. Accept that all people are equal and require new opportunities and new experiences in order to progress.</p>
<p>Victim blaming: <i>"They are just lazy, slow, and incompetent."</i></p>	<p>Talks with Condescension: Shares information from a position of superiority.</p>	<p>System blaming perspective: <i>"No use trying, nothing has changed. 'They' will never let us progress."</i></p>	<p>Confrontation: Being direct, expressing needs and wants and opinions clearly.</p>
<p>Avoidance of contact: Only talk</p>	<p>Superficial contact: Name drop and</p>	<p>Avoidance of contact: Generalisation of all</p>	<p>Sharing information: Pro-active efforts at</p>

to and socialize with own race group except to give instruction.	reference to black friends, associations.	white people as holding prejudice.	integration with different cultures in work, home and social life.
Denial of Differences: Bootstraps myth rather than the historical truth.	Denial of privilege: <i>"My parents were not racist."</i>	No personal responsibility: Use racist past as blame for all current circumstances.	Acceptance of differences: Regarding culture, beliefs, socialization and opportunities, not as an excuse but as an historical fact.
Body-language: Parent-child tone, scolding, hands on hips.	Body-language: <i>Swaying "I'm past all that".</i>	Body-language: Cowed, angry or avoidance.	Body-language: Direct and open.
Deny history of oppression: Use educational advantage or command over dominant language to 'prove' superiority.	Acknowledge political significance but denies cultural impact: Why don't 'they' develop/are 'they' so violent? Often theorise as activists about how to push 'them' forward.	Focus on political significance of differences: Use white educational advantage or cultural and language differences to disengage.	Actively engage: Actively addresses and supports transformation to address both political and cultural impact of racist global history. Does not participate in racial stereotyping.
Blocks access to equal opportunities for progress and to fair remuneration.	Denies extent of racial privilege toward own development.	Use racial attitudes of others as an excuse not to apply effort in work environment.	Takes full responsibility for own growth, 'consciousness' of racial practices and community development.

"It is true, race isn't theoretically about skin color. Race is a systemic, governmental, judicial set of processes rooted firmly in an exploitative history that

have entrenched racial inequalities. So, for instance, race isn't that I'm white and you're black. Race is a set of laws that were entrenched to favour whiteness and that most often victimised black people. Race is the common stereotype that if a black family moves into a neighborhood, property values go down and noise levels go up, or when too many black kids move into a private or public school it soon sees whites leaving the school. Race is shooting 44 striking black men dead because black working class bodies still have very little value in a white dominated system and many white people will think and say that they deserved it. Race is the common white assumption that all black people are lazy even though between 4am and 7am, the streets are filled with black folk making their way to badly paid jobs in white areas because they work hard to survive and feed and clothe their families." Gillian Schutte

Because of stereotypes and ongoing prejudice, black people are often assumed incompetent and prevented from progress, particularly in white institutions and corporations.

Definitions

Stereotype: If one or a few people do it, the whole group is labelled in the same manner.

Prejudice: Bias, pre-conception or pre-judgment.

Characteristics of Transformational Leaders

1. Pro-active change agents. (Identify themselves as such)
2. Courageous and prepared to be 'the voice'.
3. They believe in people (regardless of 'race')
4. They are value-driven (focus on integrity, ethics rather than material growth)
5. They are life-long learners
6. They have the ability to deal with complexity, ambiguity and uncertainty
7. Visionaries

Activity 3: What is Redress?

20 minutes

Purpose: Participants reflect on the need for redress.

Method: Debate

Procedure: Participants divide themselves into two groups, one supporting the need for redress and the other group provide reasons why it is not needed anymore, after having read the quote below.

Quote from an Article in the Mail and Guardian: Gillian Schutte

“Whenever “diversity” or “race” comes up as a way to create opportunities for the previously disadvantaged, some indignant white person is sure to say, “Race shouldn’t matter as much as merit. I don’t think people should be judged on the colour of their skin. Everyone should be judged regardless of their colour.” So why then do white people continue to judge black people according to their skin colour? Why does critique of blackness by the white regime always centre on their morphology, their blackness, ‘their culture’, ‘their penis’, ‘their bad use of English, among other things? This message is implicit and sometimes explicit in white critique of blackness, whether in news reportage, art, satire, cartoons or columns.”

Activity 4: Does Racism Affect how Black People treat each other? 30 minutes

Purpose: Participants reflect on Internalised Oppression.

Material: Flip-chart and khokis

Method: Buzz session

Procedure: In groups reflect on the table that follows, creating examples.

Inter-personal expression of racial behavior within;	
Dominant groups	Victim groups
Natural acceptance and credibility	Constantly have to prove (and grovel)
Authority accepted	Authority resented
Support each other's progress	Act as gatekeepers to each other's progress



Martin Luther King

I have a Dream:

"I have a dream... — a dream yet unfulfilled. A dream of equality of opportunity, of privilege and property widely distributed; a dream of a land where men will not take necessities from the many to give luxuries to the few; a dream of a land where men will not argue that the color of a man's skin determines the content of his character; a dream of a nation where all our gifts and resources are held not for ourselves alone, but as instruments of service for the rest of humanity; the dream of a country where every man will respect the dignity and worth of the human personality."

How Do We Change?

Can we Change? Yes We Can!

In order to address change we have to look at the roots of our socialization which brings us back to child development and the role of the early environment in shaping who we are.

This relates to the extent or lack of stimulation, early exposure to violence, access to books or a lack of it, toys and educational opportunities, the quality of our interaction with significant adults and interactions with the broader environment.

We have already established that a racist world created the construct for the environment that many black children are still trapped in. Now look at its impact on the growing human being.

At Individual, Families and Community Level: Child Development Theory

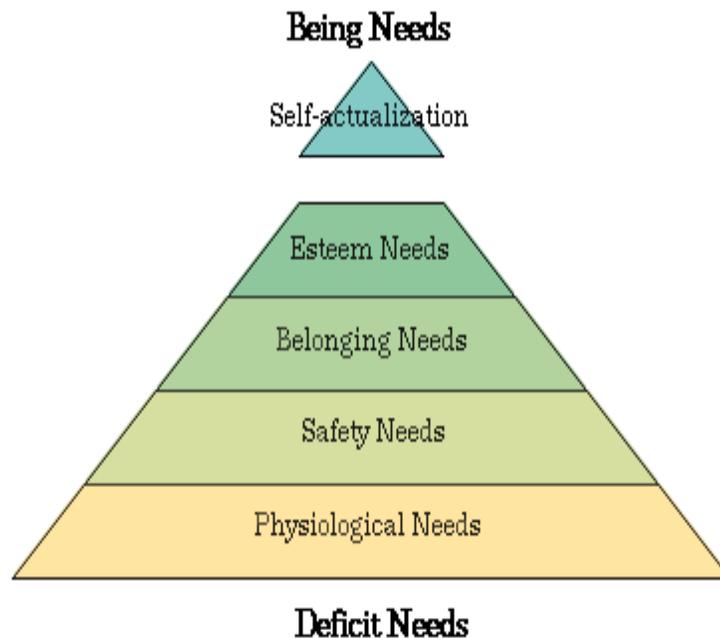
Maslow's Theory: Hierarchy of Needs and Self-Actualisation

Central Premise: Some needs take precedence over others. For example, if you are hungry and thirsty, you will tend to try to take care of the thirst first. After all, you can do without food for weeks, but you can only do without water for a couple of days! Thirst is a “stronger” need than hunger.

Likewise, if you are very, very thirsty, but someone has put a choke hold on you and you can't breathe, which is more important? The need to breathe, of course.

On the other hand, sex is less powerful than any of these. Let's face it, you won't die if you don't get it! In other words, what people become

in adulthood is based completely on what the earliest socialization and environment provided for the young child. It has absolutely nothing to do with skin-colour. Let's look at the theory of child development.



Maslow took his idea and created his now famous **hierarchy of needs**. Beyond the details of air, water, food, and sex, he laid out five broader layers:

- The physiological needs,
- The needs for safety and security,
- The needs for love and belonging,
- The needs for esteem, and
- The need to actualize the self, in that order.

1. **The physiological needs.** These include the needs we have for oxygen, water, protein, salt, sugar, calcium, and other minerals and vitamins. Also, there's the needs to be active, to rest, to sleep, to get rid of wastes (CO₂, sweat, urine, and feces), to avoid pain, and to have sex!

Maslow believed, and research supports him, that these are in fact individual needs, and that a lack of, say, vitamin C, will lead to a very specific hunger for things which have in the past provided that vitamin C -- e.g. orange juice.

2. The safety and security needs. When the physiological needs are largely taken care of, this second layer of needs comes into play. You will become increasingly interested in finding safe circumstances, stability and protection. You might develop a need for structure, for order, some limits.

Looking at it negatively, you become concerned, not with needs like hunger and thirst, but with your fears and anxieties. In the ordinary adult, this set of needs manifest themselves in the form of our urges to have a home in a safe neighborhood, a little job security and a nest egg, a good retirement plan and a bit of insurance, and so on.

3. The love and belonging needs. When physiological needs and safety needs are, by and large, taken care of, a third layer starts to show up. You begin to feel the need for friends, a sweetheart, children, affectionate relationships in general, even a sense of community. Looked at negatively, you become increasingly susceptible to loneliness and social anxieties.

In our day-to-day life, we exhibit these needs in our desires to marry, have a family, be a part of a community, a member of a church, a brother in the fraternity, a part of a gang or a bowling club. It is also a part of what we look for in a career.

4. The esteem needs. Next, we begin to look for a little self-esteem. Maslow noted two versions of esteem needs, a lower one and a higher one. The lower one is the need for the respect of others, the need for status, fame, glory, recognition, attention, reputation, appreciation, dignity, even dominance. The higher form involves the

need for self-respect, including such feelings as confidence, competence, achievement, mastery, independence, and freedom. Note that this is the “higher” form because, unlike the respect of others, once you have self-respect, it’s a lot harder to lose!

Maslow sees all these needs as essentially survival needs. Even love and esteem are needed for the maintenance of health. He says we all have these needs built in to us genetically, like instincts. In fact, he calls them **instinctoid** -- instinct-like -- needs. Under stressful conditions, or when survival is threatened, we can “regress” to a lower need level. When your great career falls flat, you might seek out a little attention. When your family ups and leaves you, it seems that love is again all you ever wanted. When you face chapter eleven after a long and happy life, you suddenly can’t think of anything except money.

Institutionalised racism, brutally enforced, created a world where a large percentage of our population did not have their primary needs met and could never fully self-actualise, as they focused on having their primary needs met. This requires the pro-active efforts of government and its various institutions and arms to put in place developmental opportunities in areas of the greatest need.

In addition, we need to focus on our individual needs, growth and development, and the primary needs of all children, in order to change society, rather than perceiving the world from a racial perspective only. In this way we move toward a world where every person can self-actualise.

People’s behavior and their development are based on consistently having their primary and other developmental needs met from birth, throughout childhood and into adulthood. It is also based on a supportive environment that recognizes individual potential and provides the resources to develop these.

Governments are responsible for a great many of these needs whilst families are responsible for others. It is important that the community hold governments accountable for safety, access to employment, water and food. It is also imperative that families are held accountable for ensuring the progress, safety and developmental stimulation of children in their care.

There is also a dire need for family support and intervention, where these needs are not met.

Racism must therefore be understood from its historic perspective and consequences and not as inherent traits related to skin-colour.

Intervention at Institutional levels: South Africa, a Society in Transition

Transitions have three stages;

1. Endings
2. The Wilderness (or hiatus)
3. New beginnings

1. You have to end before you begin.

Notice how everyone is talking about what has to begin, what has to be put in place and no one is mentioning what has to end. We cannot develop a new identity or a new purpose until we let go of the old one. We have to deal with these endings openly, which means that there has to be a levelling of the playing field.

Activity 5: How do we pro-actively work at transforming? 20 minutes

Purpose: Participants reflect on what needs to change in order to move forward.

Material: Flip-chart and khokis

Procedure: In groups discuss a list of areas that require levelling of the playing field. Answer the Question. *“What needs to end?”*

The ongoing strikes in the mining industry provide an example of black people fighting to address the legacy of apartheid where bosses earn unbelievably unrealistic salaries and black adults just manage to get to work and back, struggle to pay for rent, food and school fees.

From a human rights perspective, discuss what it means to live in an equal society. Brainstorm the list of examples generated.

Theory on Transitions

1. Between the ending and the new beginning, there is a hiatus

In between letting go of the old way and taking hold of the new, there is a difficult journey “through the wilderness”. This is a dangerous time when systems don’t work and some are deliberately crashed in order to build from scratch. It is a time in which people lose heart. A consciousness that this is a part of the change process helps people to adjust to the chaotic interim between letting go of the old and taking hold of the new.

2. The hiatus can be creative

The same forces that make the in-between time difficult, mean that the normal resistance to change won’t work well either. For this reason, the interim is potentially a creative time, when new things can be introduced more quickly. This is a time to reflect on outmoded ways of thinking, taking stock, letting go. It is a time to view every problem as an opportunity to abandon outmoded ways and create more adaptive and effective ones.

3. Transition is Developmental

What ends is not just a situation but a whole chapter and a stage of development in the organisation’s (Racist S.A. to democratic S.A) life

cycle. Behind the scenes a new organization is taking shape. It is easier to see in retrospect, but it is worth remembering at the time that there is a purpose to all the stress and disturbance (e.g. multi-party democracy developing with lots of new parties and slimming down of one big party is not a bad thing). We only take forward those aspects of the past that are valuable and viable.

4. Transition is also a source of renewal

The developmental leap from one stage to another, like leaps in nature, releases energy. Organisations come out of a painful crisis with new energy and focus. Institutions and individuals need to re-prioritise as a way of un-loading un-useful ways of being or policies that are no longer relevant or helpful. It is a release and should be paired with an effort to clarify and celebrate the new strategies, new identity and new mission (non-racial, non-sexist society).

5. People go through transitions at different speeds

People get strung out along the road like runners in a marathon. Those who have put in more effort could easily collapse and should be dragged to the side of the road for medical intervention, but the race does not stop. The leaders are often far out of sight because they have a head start, they feel more in control of their fate. The followers need to let leaders know or let them go if they are galloping too far ahead or off on the wrong path. This happens.

6. Most organisations are running a transition deficit.

Many organisations do not give people a chance to complete the transition cycle. 'Conscious' leaders are required to keep people focused on the goal. If there is a change of guard, the followers have to be very sure that they choose a leader who is focused on the transitional goal, otherwise they are heading backwards.

Some leaders think they are saving time by hurrying people, but are actually leaving people with unfinished business to carry along with them. Sooner or later the load will get too heavy and some apparently small change will send the whole system into psychological bankruptcy. To keep that from happening, slow down.

Conclusion

Twenty years on, we (South Africa) are still very much in the hiatus in terms of organizational development. We had the wonderful privilege of starting our road to democracy with a president who had an excellent understanding of the sacrifices that black people would have to make in order to move ahead from rage and the need for revenge.

It does, of course, need to be matched by an equally magnanimous gesture by the white community. White people have to pro-actively participate in nation-building. As a country we cannot afford the luxury of 'unconscious' racist behavior.

Our nation requires some kind of acknowledgement that white people benefitted from apartheid and that white people are not the only competent people in our society. In fact, the social engineering that led to the disaster that South Africa is, is based on white incompetence.

By contrast, President Nelson Mandela had to go to extra-ordinary lengths to prove that black people are as capable and competent as anyone else. He did this despite 27 years of incarceration and an ongoing onslaught against his person, his family and the broader black community, that would have broken the spirit of lesser men.

Information sources and Acknowledgments:

1. Organisation in Transition. Volume 5, No. 3. 1992. William Bridges
2. Characteristics of Transformational Leaders. "The Transformational Leader." Noel Ticky and Mary Anne Devanne
3. Anita Marshall adapted some information from an Anti-bias Training-of-Trainers Course. Julian Sonn and Associates.
4. Zeta Makamandela-Mgukulwa, the UCT ombud, reviewed the material and provided constructive feedback.