



Action Camp: Lessons Learned

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**Disclaimer**

These lists and information sheets are in no way complete. They are intended to get you started on thinking about these topics. Please use them as seeds.

If you have any feedback, please send it to [info@nasco.coop](mailto:info@nasco.coop). We welcome comments and suggestions for improvement.

## Assumptions

- Because racism, sexism, classism, ableism, ageism, heterosexism, and other forms of oppression are so widespread, we have internalized negative beliefs, prejudices, stereotypes about groups of people in our communities. This began to happen when we were young, when we couldn't distinguish truth from stereotype, before we could recognize misinformation or object. As a result, we all have responsibility for looking at what we have learned and making a commitment to dismantle oppression in our lives.
- Dismantling systems of oppression and unlearning the oppressive attitudes we have learned is a lifelong process. Most of us have been struggling with these issues, some for years and years already. None of us are beginners and none of us have perfect clarity. However, if we acknowledge that our collective knowledge is greater than that of any individual, we can commit to sharing our experiences and actively engaging in dialogue and behaviors that promote liberation and reject oppression.
- Individuals and organizations can and do grow and change. But significant change comes slowly and requires work. The changes that happen quickly are usually cosmetic and temporary. Change on issues of justice, equity, and fairness come after resistance, denial, and pain have all been worked through. Progress on oppression and equity issues never happens when we're looking the other way; it takes our focused attention and commitment.
- We cannot dismantle oppression in a society that exploits people for private profit. If we want to dismantle oppression, then we must be about building a movement for social and economic justice and change.
- While single individuals can inspire change, individuals working together as an organized whole, in groups, communities, and organizations make change happen.

Adapted from a publication of changework, 1705 Wallace St., Durham, NC 27707

## Key Words

The following words are words that are frequently associated with discussions on power and privilege. This list is designed to give all participants a clear understanding of how the words will be used in discussion.

- **Ableism:** A set of practices and beliefs that assign inferior value or worth to people who are differently-abled developmentally, emotionally, physically, or psychiatrically.
- **Ageism:** Prejudice or discrimination against a particular age group, often the youth or the elderly.
- **Ally:** Member of the “majority” group who works to end oppression in their personal life through support of and as an advocate for the oppressed population.
- **Bisexuality:** Emotional and sexual attraction to people of both sexes and/or genders.
- **Class:** A social ranking based on income, wealth, status, and/or social and economic power.
- **Classism:** The systematic assignment of characteristics of worth and ability based on social class, and systematic oppression of those in subordinated class groups.
- **Colonialism:** The invasion, occupation, and potential destruction of one group’s culture or land by a dominant group. This also applies to colonization of the mind, wherein the oppressor eradicates the history or integrity of a group of people.
- **Cultural Appropriation:** The adoption of cultural elements not in one’s own culture without full knowledge of or respect for their value to the original culture.
- **Culture:** The behavioral patterns, beliefs, and thoughts that are expressed by a community.
- **Differently-abled:** A descriptive term for persons who are disabled emotionally, physically, and/or mentally. Target of ableism.
- **Discrimination:** An action taken based upon a pre-judgmental belief.
- **Ethnicity:** A social group based upon shared values, behavior, language, and/or cultural heritage.
- **Gender identity:** How a person identifies and sees themselves based on society’s gender roles.
- **Heterosexism:** An ideological system that denies and stigmatizes any non-heterosexual form of behavior, identity, relationship, or community and perpetuates the belief of heterosexual relationships as “normal.”
- **Inclusiveness v. Equality:** To include everyone in a community rather than attempt to treat them all equally when equality may not be as effective. (For example: You give two people the exact same set of instructions and materials to make a model airplane. After giving them both the same amount of time to construct the plane, only one person has a finished product. Why? Because only one person had the ability to read.)
- **Internalized Oppression:** People within an oppressed group believing, acting, and or enforcing the dominant system of beliefs about themselves or other members of their oppressed group.
- **Intersexed:** Persons who are born with sex chromosomes, external genitalia or an internal reproductive system that is considered to have the characteristics of both sexes.
- **Oppression:** To dominate over a group of people based upon given privilege. To be set against societal standards of “normalcy.”
- **Passing:** The ability of a person to be regarded as a member of a particular group other than their own, such as a different ethnicity, race, class, sex, or disability status, generally with the result of gaining social acceptance.
- **Person/People of Color:** People who identify themselves as non-White.
- **Prejudice:** A judgment based upon preconceived notions. In the context of social groups, prejudice usually manifests as a bias against a certain group of people, based on dominant stereotypes of that group.

- **Privilege:** Having access to or benefiting from resources and social rewards based on something you have no control over (race, gender, sexual orientation). (A lack of “bumps in the road”)
- **Race:** A group of people artificially classified together based on physical appearance, ancestral heritage, and/or ethnic classification.
- **Racism:** The belief that one race is superior to another. Found in both individual acts and dominant institutions.
- **Self-Representation:** The way someone chooses to present him or herself to the world. Often misused by someone associating one person’s representation to represent a whole community.
- **Sexism:** Beliefs and actions that perpetuate the perceived inferiority of non-male identified people and promote stereotyping of social roles based on gender.
- **Stereotype:** A label or generalized notion about a group of people.
- **Transgender:** Persons who cross gender lines and/or societal gender norms.
- **Transsexual:** A person whose internal image of themselves is different from the gender role assigned to them.

## Fabric of Oppression in the U.S.

<b>Identity Categories (examples)</b>	<b>Privileged Class</b>	<b>Oppressed Classes (examples)</b>	<b>Form of Oppression</b>
Race	White/Anglo/European descent	People of Color, including people whose ancestors came from the Americas, Africa, Asia, and the Arab world. Bi/tri/multi-racial people Sometimes white people who “appear nonwhite”	Racism/White Supremacy
Sex	Men	Women, Intersex people, Transsexual people	Sexism
Gender Identity, Gender Assignment, & Gender Presentation	Men and Women who conform to cultural gender norms	Transgender, Transsexual, Intersex, and Genderqueer people. People who do not or cannot conform to societal gender norms.	Gender Oppression
Religion	Christians, especially Protestants	Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Atheists, Pagans, and followers of other “smaller” religions	Anti-Semitism, Racism, White (Christian/Aryan) Supremacy
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual people	Lesbians, Gay people, Bisexual people, poly-folk.	Heterosexism/Heterocentrism
Socioeconomic Class	Rich people/Ruling class people (inc. Upper Middle Class)	Poor people, working class, middle class	Classism
Physical, Psychological, & Developmental Ability	Temporarily Able/TAB (temporarily able-bodied)	Disabled/differently abled	Ableism
Age	Middle-aged	Young, Old	Ageism

## Levels and Types of Oppression: Examples

### Individual Conscious

- using racial slurs, telling a “good fag joke”
- defacing property/possessions of people of color
- believing Whites are intellectually superior

### Individual Unconscious

- laughing at racist or heterosexist jokes (supporting the conscious racism, heterosexism of others)
- pointing out that people of color sit together at lunch or socialize together (perceiving this as separatism) while ignoring groups of Whites that sit together and have their own social groups
- expecting people from oppressed groups to teach the oppressive groups about their oppressive behaviors, not taking responsibility for learning how one’s actions may be hurting others

### Institutional Conscious

- internment of Japanese Americans in concentration camps during WWII
- instructing sales personnel to watch Black people carefully in the store for fear of robbery
- forced sterilization of poor Black, Hispanic, and Native American women by the US government

### Institutional Unconscious

- assuming that White staff can meet the needs of all people but staff of color can only meet the needs of other people of color
- destroying inadequate housing in poor Black neighborhoods and replacing it with commercial facilities/upper income housing
- making AIDS testing mandatory
- including only the White cultural perspective in the development of standardized tests

### Cultural Conscious

- Into the 1950s, Native American children were sent to schools off of their reservations where they were made to speak only English, prevented from and punished for speaking their own language.
- The Reagan Administration eliminated bilingual education in US public schools.

### Cultural Unconscious

- Language: The English language associates white with good, righteous, pure and black with evil, dirty, death, disgrace.
- Holidays: Columbus Day and Thanksgiving are celebrated as national holidays instead of days of national mourning.

## **Starting and Running A Diversity Committee In Your Co-op**

I was asked to prepare a document with some advice for co-ops interested in creating some kind of "diversity committee". The following remarks aren't particularly systematic or comprehensive. In my opinion working on diversity is a continual process of learning, evaluation and adjustment. I wouldn't want to suggest that there is a simple set of steps which you follow and then are finished with. But I've had the chance to work and reflect on diversity issues within the Inter-Cooperative Council (Ann Arbor) for a long time and here are a few pieces of advice which I've found valuable and which I would want to pass on to anyone in a cooperative organization who wants to be involved in the same.

### **Be clear on whom you are serving.**

As you set your goals, plan events, write policies, or make other decision, you should occasionally think about which groups really benefit from each action. Are you helping international students? Are you helping people of color from the U.S.? The white majority? Women? Men? Queer members? Are there some groups you are ignoring?

### **Have a focused set of goals/purposes**

There are many different possible goals which a "diversity committee" can have. Do you want to increase Recruitment/Retention for people of color? Do you want to make the houses more queer-friendly? Do you want to increase the number of cultural events in your organization? Do you want to educate your members about diversity? Do you want to address policies on prejudicial behavior in your houses? Translate written materials into multiple languages? Diversify the staff? I would recommend focusing on a small number of goals at first (one or two) and making some progress with those before trying to expand what your committee does.

### **Build a regular calendar of events.**

To varying degrees, this will probably be true of your other committees as well, but you might think about creating a regular annual schedule or calendar of events so that you don't have to keep re-inventing the wheel. If you have a successful event or project, you might want to do it again next year with your new members so you build a regular program of activities so you don't have to keep re-inventing the wheel.

### **Make Connections with the Outside**

Especially if you are just starting to create some kind of diversity committee it can be incredibly valuable to identify and make connections with groups or individuals in your area who are also working on diversity related issues. Get advice from NASCO (either from the organization itself or from one of the Caucuses). If your co-op is near a University setting, many schools have cultural/ethnic/gender/orientation/religion based organizations which might be a resource. Many schools also have an Office of Multicultural Affairs, which might also be a good place to go to for advice. Local political organizations. Organizations which your members are already involved in.

### **Democracy is a funny thing**

Dealing with diversity issues in cooperatives often has certain challenges. One challenge is how do you get an organization run by majority-rule to address the needs of it's minority group members? I don't think there are easy answers here. But you might want to think about the various levels in your organization where decision-making takes place (the house, the board, various committees, conflict resolution) and try to gradually set up a structure where diversity issues are given the appropriate amount of consideration.

For example, at the house level, a consensus-type process has an advantage because it allows small groups or an individual to protect themselves from imposition by the majority. But at higher levels, a consensus structure tends to be conservative and makes institutional changes difficult to bring about.

### **Safe Spaces**

By their very nature, some diversity issues can make people defensive. I would suggest that at all times you should strive to be friendly, respectful and considerate of people's feelings. And perhaps not every topic or issue is appropriate for every kind of forum. But \*somewhere\* in the organization there need to be spaces where concerned members can candidly discuss the problems which come up. This is something which the committee should strive for, at least among themselves. It is also essential that there be safe spaces where minority members (of whatever stripe) can be listened to and their concerns addressed without fear of intimidation.

### **Internal activism**

Even among co-ops which see themselves as progressive, there may be a certain amount of inertia, or even resistance when it comes trying to promote positive changes in the organization. Don't be surprised by it. Just understand it if it comes. Set reasonable but significant goals. Pace yourself. Don't give up. Don't burn yourself out.

### **Include Pleasant Activities**

You definitely want to strike a good balance between "serious" activities which discuss problems and "fun" positive events which entertain and make people feel good. One major genre of "fun" event would be showing a movie or having a festival associated with a group represented in your co-op. An open mike or a poetry slam can also be fun.



## Activities/Discussion Starters

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### **Examining Power and Privilege**

Tools to Organize Trainings for your Co-op

#### **Meet and Greet**

**Time:** 5 Minutes

**Materials Needed:** None

**Purpose:** To loosen the group up and open for more serious discussion.

Ask the participants to stand in a circle, and then ask each person to turn to the person on their right and greet them as if they really didn't want to be there-- you just can't wait to get out of there! Then everyone (simultaneously to create lots of fun and excitement) turn to the person on their left and greet them as if they are a long lost, deeply loved relative who has just returned home and you're about to see the person for the first time in years! In fact, you thought you may never see this person again until this very moment. Okay, now ask everyone (again simultaneously) to turn to the person on their right again and greet them as if they just told you that you won the state lottery for 50 million dollars and you have the ONLY winning ticket! After the exercise, ask the group to reflect how they felt when after each greeting. Were they upset after the first greeting, happy after the second and so on. Ask them to relate this to real life situations; does your first approach to a new conversation or experience set the tone for the rest of the discussion/experience? Stress how important it is to keep an open mind and neutral posture when discussing difficult topics, this will allow for clear communication and productive discussion.

#### **Juggling Names Game**

**Time:** 5-10 minutes

**Materials Needed:** 3-5 balls, of all shapes, sizes, and weights, depending on the size of the group

**Purpose:** Learn each other's names, get everyone laughing, and more comfortable with each other

Stand in a circle. Start with one ball. Throw the ball to one person, and say their name right before you throw it. (If you don't know their name, ask first.) Do this until everyone has had the ball once. Then, repeat this. Same people, same names, same order, just faster. As you start the cycle for a third time, start adding in extra balls, until it gets a little too much and everyone starts laughing. The goal is laughter and balls going everywhere. This is one of my favorite ways to start off a group, since it's such a fast activity and is so much fun.

**Variations:** If the group already knows each other's names, and just needs to practice them, then participants can throw balls to anyone. If the group is large, split it up into multiple smaller groups. As more balls get added in, you can also add rounds where people can:

- Run from group to group
- Call out the names, and throw balls to people in other groups (soft balls are better for this variation.)

#### **Self Portrait**

**Time:** 4-8 Minutes

**Materials Needed:** Plain paper and pens.

**Purpose:** To get every participant familiar with one another, while acknowledging how they perceive others and how others perceive them.

**Key Words:** Stereotype, Prejudice, culture, race, ethnicity, gender, self-representation.

Ask each participant write or draw words, pictures, and/or phrases that they think characterizes and/or defines them. Make sure to answer any and all questions ambiguously leaving plenty of room for creativity. After each participant has completed their drawing, have them get into pairs. Each paired group will then repeat the activity drawing words, phrases and pictures that describes their partner. You may opt to let each participant ask their partner two to three questions to help them with their partners self portrait. After every participant has completed both sets of drawings, have each participant share their pieces.

**Discussion Questions:**

- Is there a difference between how we see and/or describe ourselves and how other people see us?
- Did any one write down or draw physical attributes to help define them? Why or Why not?
- Did anyone use words or phrases that can be considered stereotypical or based upon societal standards? ([Edie West 196](#))

(We used a variant of this exercise—just having each person make a name tag with their name and an image that describes them. This allows people a second way of describing themselves, and helps start conversations among a group of people who do not already know each other.)

**Introductions: Two Truths and One Lie**

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Materials Needed:** none

**Purpose:** Team building, getting to know each other, having fun.

Sit in a circle. Everyone tells their name, then two things that are true about them, one thing that is false. For each person, the group gets to talk for a few seconds/minute about which statement they think is false before the answer is revealed.

**Introductions: Who are we?**

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Purpose:** Allow participants time to get to know one another, and dispel some of the assumptions they may have made about one another. Demonstrate the experiences that lie behind appearances, and cannot be identified by appearances.

- Stand in a circle.
- First take one step into the circle and share the things about yourself that one can tell by looking on the surface (I am a woman. I have short hair. I wear glasses.)
- Next take one step out of the circle and share things about yourself that are below the surface (I am queer. I am hard of hearing. I speak Spanish.)
- Take turns moving around the circle and sharing.
- Offer the group the opportunity to go around a second time.

This is another exercise that allows people to share things that they feel are important to share with the group, without forcing anyone to self-identify, answer questions they don't feel comfortable answering, or putting anyone on the spot.

### **Introductions: Where are you from?**

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Purpose:** Allow people share and understand the social and cultural backgrounds they are all coming from. Allow people to hear examples of different types of communities.

Introduce yourself:

- What is your name?
- Who are your people/who are your folk? (This question allows people to self-identify as anything they want-- their race, sexual orientation, gender—without forcing anyone to answer a question about identity that they are not ready, willing, comfortable, or able to answer)
- What kind of community are you coming from?
- What are the issues going on in that community?/Why did you come here?/What is it you're hoping to work on?

### **Dot Game**

**Time:** 20 minutes

**Materials needed:** for a group of 35, 10 dots of one color, 10 dots of a second color, 5 dots of a third color, 3 dots of a fourth color, 2 dots of a fifth color, 1 dot of a sixth color, 4 "mixed" dots that are two different colors

**Purpose:** To demonstrate our inherent tendencies to group off based on similarities. Once demonstrated, to encourage people to identify, analyze, and challenge those tendencies within themselves.

Ask everyone to close their eyes and explain that you will be coming around to put a sticker on their foreheads. Tell them there is to be no more talking for the rest of the game. Once everyone has received a dot ask them to "get into groups." Make sure this is all you say. Do not answer any questions about what you mean by your statement. Allow the members to silently get into separate groups. Allow a good amount of time for this, so that groups can form, break up, form again, then get moved around... They will inevitably get into groups according to the color of their dots. Ask everyone to look around at all the separate groups. Remind them that you simply said to "get into groups."

### **Discussion Questions:**

- How did you find your group?
- How did you know which group was yours?
- Did you help anyone get into a group? How/why did you do that?
- For those with multicolored dots, how did you find a group?
- How can this exercise be applied to the "real world?" (How does it demonstrate things that may happen in the "real world" or tendencies we may have?)
- What role does guilt play in anti-oppression and social justice work? Do we need to feel guilty of our tendencies to group ourselves?
- Once we are aware that we have such tendencies, what can we do about that?

### Question Circle

**Time:** 5-15 minutes

**Materials needed:** a group of people

**Purpose:** observe the level of understanding of the group for any given topic, assess what the needs of the group are and what topics need to be covered, observe what questions the group has, in a way that doesn't put anyone on the spot or assume a base level of knowledge

- Participants stand in a circle.
- Rules of the game:
  - You have to ask a question.
  - You cannot repeat a question that has already been asked.
  - You cannot answer the question you were asked.
    - If you break any of these, you're "out" and sit down, either in the middle of the circle, or just where you were standing (but not outside the circle—then you can't observe and listen as well.)
  - You can ask a question to either person, on either side of you.
  - Questions can be about two topics: (Such as: 1. Power, privilege, oppression in general 2. What the week is going to be like)
  - Examples of questions:
    - How much sleep will I get this week?
    - What does internalized racism mean?
    - When did you first start thinking about class?
    - Am I going to like the food?
- One person starts, questions go around from there.
- Play until you as facilitator have the information you need, feel the group is wearing out, or running out of questions.

### Timeline

**Time:** 30-50 minutes

**Materials needed:** pens/pencils, post-it notes (or index cards and masking tape), wall

**Purpose:** This activity does a few things:

- It puts the experiences of the people present first.
  - It demonstrates that the topic is real, not theory. It grounds the group and helps it talk about real life experiences.
  - It shows that everyone knows something about the topic, and so has something to contribute.
  - It highlights the quantity and differences of the experiences and knowledge in the room.
  - It helps build an atmosphere where people feel comfortable and willing to share with each other.
- Pass out pens/pencils and at least post-it notes to each person.
  - Ask each person to write down at least 3 "aha" moments on the subject you are covering. Sample subjects include:
    - When you started to become aware that this world is unfair—that not everyone has the same opportunities.
    - Your first memories of awareness of race.
    - Your first memories of awareness of class.
  - Write on moment per post-it note. Depending on the group, as each person to also put on the note either:
    - The year in which the event occurred.

- Their age when the event occurred.
- Post up on a wall a post-it that says “THEN” and a post-it that says “NOW”. As they finish, have participants stick their notes up in the appropriate places on the wall. (They’ll help organize them all.)
- Allow some time for everyone to read the entries quietly.
- Discussion questions:
  - Did any of these stand out to you? Move you?
  - Does anyone want to talk more about one they wrote?
- Leave this timeline up for the rest of the training, so that people can return to it and read what’s up there.

**Forced choice:**

Helps start dialogue. Say a statement. (Our co-op has open and voluntary membership. I like bats more than cats. Gender expression and gender identity are not related.) All those who agree with the statement move to one side of the room, those who disagree to the other. (Those on the fence or who can’t decide can stay in the middle). Have people explain why they chose to place themselves where they did. Avoid creating a spectrum. Forcing yourself to be in one of three locations inspires thought and really forces you to consider how you feel about something you may not have thought much about before.

This can be used either as a getting-to-know-each-other exercise, or as a powerful way to start dialogues and explore how we actually feel about different topics.

## **Facilitated Discussions**

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### Power Dynamics in Diverse Groups

#### **Guidelines, Boundaries:**

**Time:** 1 hour

**Materials Needed:** paper, pens

**Purpose:** Define what safe spaces are, then identify our needs as a group in order for a safe space to be created for the week.

#### **Discussion Questions:**

What is a safe space?

What things make us feel unsafe? What do we NOT want to see or hear?

What things do we need to feel safe? What do we love seeing and hearing?

How do we build safe spaces in our communities?

What agreements can we come to as a community?

#### **Calling ourselves out**

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Purpose:** To discuss different techniques for calling each other out and critique and analyze these techniques. To identify how calling each other out can be helpful for the group, and how it can be hurtful. To identify ways to call each other out that have the most positive effects for both the individual and the group. To share stories and allow time for group bonding. To identify barriers to calling each other out and brainstorm ways of overcoming these barriers.

#### **Questions:**

- What does it mean to call someone out?
- What is a time when you were called out? How did it make you feel? Was it done well?
- What is a time when you called someone out? How did it go well? What would you have done differently?
- Was there a situation when you wished you had called someone out or said something but didn't? What prevented you? What would you have needed to feel comfortable saying something?
- What are techniques we can use to overcome some of the barriers that we come up against?

#### **What's going on at home?**

**Time:** 1 hour

**Purpose:** Allow participants the time to identify instances of oppression in their communities. As a facilitator, gauge the participants: how much do they

demonstrate knowledge of oppression? Identify as a group commonalities within the communities. Demonstrate specific examples of different types of oppression. Create a collection of specific situations that the group can discuss and work on later in the week.

**Free write:**

What are the specific issues or situations in your community where you either see or experience oppression? (These can be things that you want to deal with when you get back, things you want help with, want to brainstorm ways to deal with it at home) What things are going well in your community? What do you love about your community?

share

**Questions:**

- What trends or similarities to you hear?
- What types of oppression did you hear modeled in these stories?
- As a facilitator, why would I have chosen this activity to start off the week?
- Is there anything you would change about this if doing this with a group at home?

**Power Dynamics Role Play**

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Power Dynamics in Diverse Groups

Everyone gets in groups of 4. Each person in the group gets a card with a secret number: 1, 2, 3, or 4 (no one has the same number).

Take turns having the rest of the groups be an audience, with one group 'performing' at a time. The performing group is a family, 2 parents, 2 kids. Each person has/ exerts as much power as they've got on their number. 1 is the most, 2 second most, etc down to 4, which has the least amount of power/ control/ authority/ charisma. Each person should only know their own number! We're gonna guess later...

Groups perform for about 1 1/2- 2 minutes. The less bold a group is the more cues you can give them: the kids are just getting home from school, or you need to decide what to have for dinner, or what to watch on TV, or who does the dishes etc. It helps to have kids of different ages (a 5 year old can get a lot of attention and have a lot of power, a dad can be super submissive, a teenager can be bratty and get their way, or be bratty and be ignored... age and personality don't determine power, only the numbers do).

Have groups freeze in the middle of the role play, turn in their numbers, and pick new ones, so that they have different power dynamics. It's okay if someone gets the same number twice. Resume the conversation where it left off and observe how it shifts with different power dynamics.

Depending on how sophisticated the group is, you can have them start with their 'drama' levels at 3 out of 10 (how intense are they BEING their numbers) and then crank it up to 8 or 9 to see how people use their power. I usually only do this option with folks who have a deeper analysis of power dynamics. The point would be to show how you can be a 1 in a group, but still keep it under control and not totally take up all the space and control how a group functions.

Then the 'audience' tries to guess who had what number, before, and then after the switch. The 'actors' reveal their true numbers.

Repeat for each group of 4!



## **Power Dynamics Thermometer Activity**

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### Power Dynamics in Diverse Groups

1. Print up two lists of the names of all the members of your house or community.
2. Label one list: amount of power each person has. Label the other list: amount each person uses their power for the good of the community.
3. Copy these lists and give each member of the community one of each list.
4. Have each person rate all the members of the community, including themselves, on a scale of 1-10 for each of the two items: amount of power each person has, and amount they use their power for the good of the community. (1 means no power, 10 means a LOT of power).
5. It is important people's ratings remain anonymous!
6. Tally up the resulting numbers for each person and post them for the house to see, preferably in the form of a thermometer (each person has two bars after their name, each bar representing their total number based on the opinions of all the community members).
7. Discuss the results as a group.

### **Potential Discussion Questions:**

- Who has the most power?
- How is the power people have related to gender? Race? (ie: Are those with the most power mostly white? Mostly male?) If there is a correlation between power and race or gender, why is that?
- Does the group want the power to be stratified? Do we want hierarchical relationships in the house?
- If not, what can we do to more evenly distribute the power?
- If yes, do we feel confident those with the most power are using to the good of the group?

## Action Camp Resources and Further Readings...

### Websites and Collectives

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#### The Blackstripe

An informational website dedicated to providing information regarding Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people of African Descent.

[www.blackstripe.com](http://www.blackstripe.com)

#### Bluestockings Activist Research Project

Each month Bluestockings Activist Research Project invites organizers and movement researchers to reflect on the work they do and compile a list of books that have helped shape their analysis of social justice issues. This month they've teamed up with Fierce, an organization building the leadership and power of LGBTQ youth in NYC.

[http://www.bluestockings.com/barp\\_01.pdf](http://www.bluestockings.com/barp_01.pdf)

#### Catalyst Project

A center for political education and movement building based in the San Francisco Bay Area. They are committed to anti-racist work in majority white sections of left social movements with the goal of deepening anti-racist commitment in white communities and building multiracial left movements for liberation.

[www.collectiveliberation.org](http://www.collectiveliberation.org)

#### Challenging White Supremacy Workshop

Useful definitions, articles, etc.

[www.cwsworkshop.org](http://www.cwsworkshop.org)

#### Class Action

Class Action inspires action to end classism. They raise awareness, facilitate cross-class dialogue, support cross-class alliances, and work with others to promote economic justice.

[www.classism.org](http://www.classism.org)

#### Colours of Resistance

A grassroots network of people who consciously work to develop anti-racist, multiracial politics in the movement against global capitalism. They are committed to helping build an anti-racist, anti-imperialist, multiracial, feminist, queer and trans liberationist, anti-authoritarian movement against global capitalism.

[www.colours.mahost.org](http://www.colours.mahost.org)  
[cor@mutualaid.org](mailto:cor@mutualaid.org)

#### The Deaf Queer Resource Center

Information that specifically pertains to Deaf and Queer individuals.

[www.deafqueer.org](http://www.deafqueer.org)

#### Freedom Center

Freedom Center is a support and activism community run by and for people labeled with severe 'mental disorders.' We call for compassion, human rights, self-determination, and holistic options. We create alternatives to the mental health

system's widespread despair, abuse, fraudulent science and dangerous treatments.  
[www.freedom-center.org](http://www.freedom-center.org)

#### Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation

GLAAD offers training and technical assistance on how to handle the media.  
 800-GAY-MEDIA  
[glaad@glaad.org](mailto:glaad@glaad.org)  
[www.glaad.org](http://www.glaad.org)

#### Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN)

GLSEN is an educational and advocacy group with chapters all over the United States dedicated to end anti-gay bias in schools.  
 121 W. 27th ST. Suite 804, New York, N.Y. 10001  
 (212) 809-8585  
[glsen@glsen.org](mailto:glsen@glsen.org)  
[www.glsen.org](http://www.glsen.org)

#### The Icarus Project

A network of people living with experiences that are commonly labeled as bipolar or other psychiatric conditions, The Icarus Project envisions a new culture and language that resonates with our actual experiences of 'mental illness' rather than trying to fit our lives into a conventional framework.  
[www.theicarusproject.net](http://www.theicarusproject.net)

#### INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence

INCITE! is a national activist organization of radical feminists of color advancing a movement to end violence against women of color and our communities through direct action, critical dialogue, and grassroots organizing.  
<http://www.incite-national.org/>

#### Intersex Society of North America

[www.isna.org](http://www.isna.org)

#### National Center for Transgender Equality

<http://nctequality.org>

#### Project South

Connecting struggles of the Global South to the U.S. South. Resource for workshops/trainings/organizing materials.  
[www.projectsouth.org](http://www.projectsouth.org)

#### Southerners on New Ground (SONG)

Anti-racist feminist queer organizing (and so much more). Organizing tools, gatherings.  
[www.southernersonnewground.org](http://www.southernersonnewground.org)

## Books, Readings, and Publications

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*Anti-Semitism.* Minnie Bruce Pratt, Barbara Smith, and Elly Bulkin  
anti-semitism

*Bi Any Other Name: Bisexual People Speak Out.* Loraine Hutchinson and Kani Kaahumanu  
sexual orientation

A collection of essays by a diverse group of authors who address issues like the role of bisexuality in the movement of sexual orientation equality.

*Bridging the Class Divide.* Linda Stout  
class

Founder of the Piedmont Peace Project, Linda Stout's experiences as an anti-classism activist provide valuable grassroots and community organizing tools and challenge organizers to analyze the effectiveness of the methods they currently use.

*Class Matters.* bell hooks  
class

*Color of Violence: the INCITE! Anthology.* INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence  
race, sexism

*Colorlines Magazine*

A national, multi-racial magazine devoted to the creativity and complexity of communities of color.

[www.colorlines.com](http://www.colorlines.com)

*Conversations –Straight talk with America's Sister President.* Johnetta B. Cole  
race, gender

This book relates the struggles and triumphs of everyday African American women.

*Conquest.* Andrea Smith

*The Cost of Privilege: Taking on the Systems of White Supremacy and Racism.* Chip Smith/Freedom Road Socialist Organization  
race

*The Culture of Make Believe.* Derrick Jensen

*Dragon Ladies: Asian American Feminists Breathe Fire.* Sonia Shah  
race, sexism

*Everyday Acts Against Racism.* Maureen T. Reddy, editor  
race

A great book for parents and teachers who have been raised in multicultural families, or those who wish to aid in the growth and development of children.

*Everywhere All The Time.* Matt Hern

age

*Field Day.* Matt Hern  
age

*Friends Make the Best Medicine.* The Icarus Project  
mental health  
[www.theicarusproject.net](http://www.theicarusproject.net)

*Games for Actors and Non-Actors.* Augusto Boal  
Theatre of the Oppressed

*GenderQueer: Voices From Beyond the Sexual Binary.* Joan Nestle, Riki Wilchins, Clare Howell  
gender

*Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology.* Barbara Smith, editor  
race, sexism

*Homophobia.* Byrne Fone  
sexual orientation

*In Defense of Childhood.* Chris Mercogliano  
age

*Left Turn Magazine*  
A Movement publication written by folks on the ground resisting global capital, white supremacy, heteropatriarchy, and imperialism in the U.S. and abroad.  
[www.leftturn.org](http://www.leftturn.org)

*Madness and Civilization.* Michel Foucault  
mental health

*Memoir of a Race Traitor.* Mab Segrest  
race

*Middlesex.* Jeffrey Eugenides  
trans issues  
A fiction book that explores what it is to live as an intersexed person.

*My Gender Workbook.* Kate Bronstein  
gender

*Navigating the Space Between Brilliance and Madness.* The Icarus Project  
mental health  
[www.theicarusproject.net](http://www.theicarusproject.net)

*Nobody Passes: Rejecting the Rules of Gender Conformity.* Matt Bernstein Sycamore  
gender

*Rainbow of Desire.* Augusto Boal  
Theatre of the Oppressed

*Refusing to Be a Man: Essays on Sex and Justice.* John Stoltenberg  
sexism

*The Revolution Will Not be Funded.* INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence, editor

*Savage Inequalities.* Jonathon Kozol  
race, class, and age

*Stone Butch Blues.* Leslie Feinberg  
sexual orientation, gender, transgender issues

*Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook.* Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell, Pat Griffin

This book includes opinions and experiences from several well-known facilitators through discussion and suggested activities. It is designed to give a foundation to those who wish to explore diversity in a group setting.

*Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom.* bell hooks  
race, class, and the education system

*Theatre of the Oppressed.* Augusto Boal  
Theatre of the Oppressed

*The Teenage Liberation Handbook.* Grace Llewelyn  
age

*This Bridge Called my Back: writings by radical women of color.* Cherrie Moraga, Gloria Anzaldua  
race, sexism

*Tools for White Guys who are Working for Social Change ... and other people socialized in a society based on domination.* Chris Crass  
race, sexism  
<http://www.xyonline.net/tools.shtml>

*Trans Liberation: Beyond Pink or Blue.* Leslie Feinberg  
trans issues

*Transforming a Rape Culture.* Emilie Buchwald, Pamela Fletcher, Martha Roth  
sexism

*Transgender Warriors: Making history from Joan of Arc to Dennis Rodman.* Leslie Feinberg  
trans issues

*The Underground History of American Education.* John Taylor Gatto  
age: the institutionalization of ageism

*This Bridge We Call Home: Radical Visions for Transformation.* Gloria E Anzaldua, Analouise Keating

*Upping the Anti: A Journal of Theory and Action Anti-capitalist, anti-oppression, and anti-imperialist publication.*

www.uppingtheanti.org

*Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice.* Paul Kivel

race

A great book for both White people and people of color, it explores tactics that can be used to address concerns regarding racism.

*When the Drama Club is Not Enough: Lessons from the safe schools program for Gay and Lesbian students.* John Perrotti and Kim Westheimer

sexual orientation

*"Why Are All The Black Kids Sitting Together In The Cafeteria?" And other Conversations about Race.* Beverly Daniel Tatum, Ph.D

race

*Yours in the Struggle: Three Feminist Perspectives on Anti-Semitism and Racism.* Elly Bulkin

race, anti-semitism, sexism

*Zami: A New Spelling of My Name.* Audre Lorde

*Zero Tolerance: Resisting the Drive for Punishment in our Schools.* ed. William Ayers, Bernadine Dohrn, Rick Ayers

(unread by us, tell us what you think)

#### **More Authors to Check Out...**

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- Ella Baker
- Cesar Chavez
- Piya Chatterjee
- Angela Davis
- Thich Nhat Hahn
- Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Amina Mama
- Michael Nagler
- Howard Thurman
- Alice Walker

## Movies

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At Home in Utopia. Michal Goldman. 2008

Jewish immigrants organize housing co-ops in the 1920's & 30's

Bamboozled. Spike Lee. 2000

race

Color Adjustment. Marlon Riggs. 1992

race

Ethnic Notions. Marlon Riggs. 1986

race

Jana Sanskriti. <http://www.janasanskriti.org/films.html>

Documentary about the Indian federation of Theatre of the Oppressed near Kolkatta.

Just Call me Kade. Sam Zolten. 2002

transgender issues

Life and Debt. Stephanie Black. 2001.

globalization, race, class

PBS Point of View documentaries.

perspectives of people whose stories haven't been traditionally told; topics brought up include race, class, health, immigrant rights, stereotypes, feminism, religion and spirituality, stereotypes, mental wellness, ability, ageism, sex work, sexuality, etc.

Rehearsing Reality. <http://www.rehearsingreality.org/>

An interactive docufragmentary on Theatre of the Oppressed.

Shellmound. Andrés Cediél. 2004

race, native american rights

The Take. Avi Lewis, Naomi Klein. 2004

class

Tongues Untied. Marlon Riggs. 1990

race, sexual orientation

Venus Boyz. Gabriel Baur. 2002

female masculinity

Waging a Living. Roger Weisberg. 2006

working poor, class issues