





## **FORTIFY**

### Racial Equity Series III

*Beginning Where You Are  
As Who You Are*

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# Beginning Where We Are...



## OVERVIEW

Shame about one's ignorance on matters of race has been identified as one of the key factors that leads to an epidemic of silence as violence when it comes to movement for Black Lives. Another variable is the very real challenge is the social costs of confronting friends and family who profess racist ideas and may even engage in racist behaviors. This webinar helps us begin to forge a pathway towards greater voice on the lifelong journey of racial equity.

*Let's begin where we are.*

# FORTIFTY

## *THE RACIAL EQUITY SERIES*



- I. Creating a Common Language for the Conversation
- II. Being Ally, Accomplice, Accompanist, Advocate, and Anti-Racist
- III. Beginning Where You Are As Who You Are**
- IV. Getting Ready for Racial Inquiry: Deeper Dimension of Racial Equity Dialogue
- V. Learning the Adaptive Racial Conversation Hierarchy Approach
- VI. Living into Racial Equity: Intention and Action

# SESSION I: Creating a Common Language

RACIAL EQUITY

CHOSEN NARRATIVE

BUBBLES AND ECHO  
CHAMBERS

RACE AS SOCIAL  
CONSTRUCT

LIVED EXPERIENCE

CRITICAL RACE  
THEORY

WHITENESS AND  
BLACKNESS

DEGREES OF RACISM

SYSTEMIC RACISM

WHITE PRIVILEGE

WHITE FRAGILITY  
MEETS BLACK RAGE

MICROAGGRESSION

INTERSECTIONALITY

HISTORY OF JIM  
CROW

ANTI-RACISM



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ADVOCATE

ONGOING  
RACIAL  
EQUITY  
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ACCOMPANIST

ACCOMPLICE



# Let's Begin

*In a word , phrase or short sentence...*

**Who is the you that you are  
bringing to begin today's  
Racial Equity exploration?**

*Thoughts*

*Feelings*

*Identity*

*Images*

*Inquiry*



**PLEASE USE THE CHAT**



# RACIAL EQUITY

## Beginning Where You Are

*“People will see and hear exactly what they can afford to see and hear.”*

***James Baldwin***







**CENTRAL INQUIRY**

*What can you  
afford to see and hear  
on Racial Equity  
beginning  
**Where You Are  
As You Are?***

# Shame and Blame in Racial Equity

SHAME



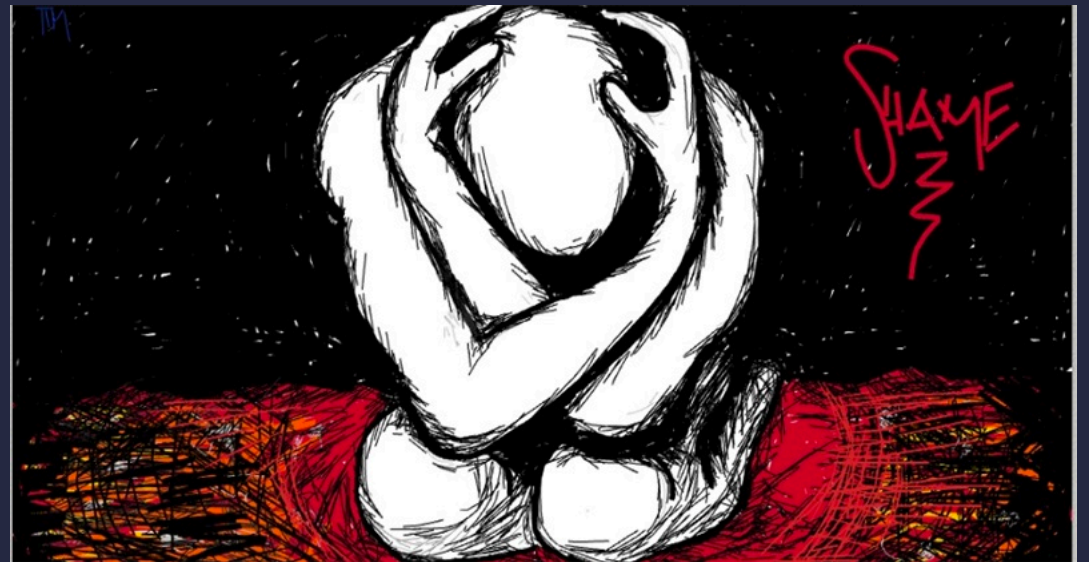
# Role of Shame in Racial Equity

- Psychological SOCIAL defense
- “a painful feeling of humiliation or distress caused by an awareness of having done something harmful or foolish”
- shame asks questions about what those behaviors mean about *who we are*.
- *Shame says “I am bad”*



# Role of Blame in Racial Equity

- Psychological PERSONAL and SOCIAL defense
- “...the discharging of of emotional hurt and pain. It has an inverse relationship with accountability.” Brené Brown
- Blame loses the opportunity for empathy and invariably evokes retribution from *who we are*.
- *Blame says, “You are bad”*



# Shame and White Silence





## can·cel cul·ture

Cancel culture is a form of public shaming that tries to hold someone accountable for their actions by publically calling out their behavior as problematic.

# Blame, Call-Out and Cancel Culture





## ON ANTI-RACISM

*“Being held accountable for racism and **feeling shame** is not the same as **being shamed.**”*

Brené Brown



**BLAME AND SHAME IN RACIAL POLARIZATON**





**SHAME**

**CANCEL**

**FRAGILITY**

**BLAME**



**SHAME**

**RACIAL  
EQUITY**

**FRAGILITY**

**BLAME**

**CANCEL**

***EXIT***

***EXIT***



**SHAME**

**CANCEL**

**FRAGILITY**

**BLAME**

~~**RACIAL  
EQUITY**~~

***EXIT***

***EXIT***



**SHAME**

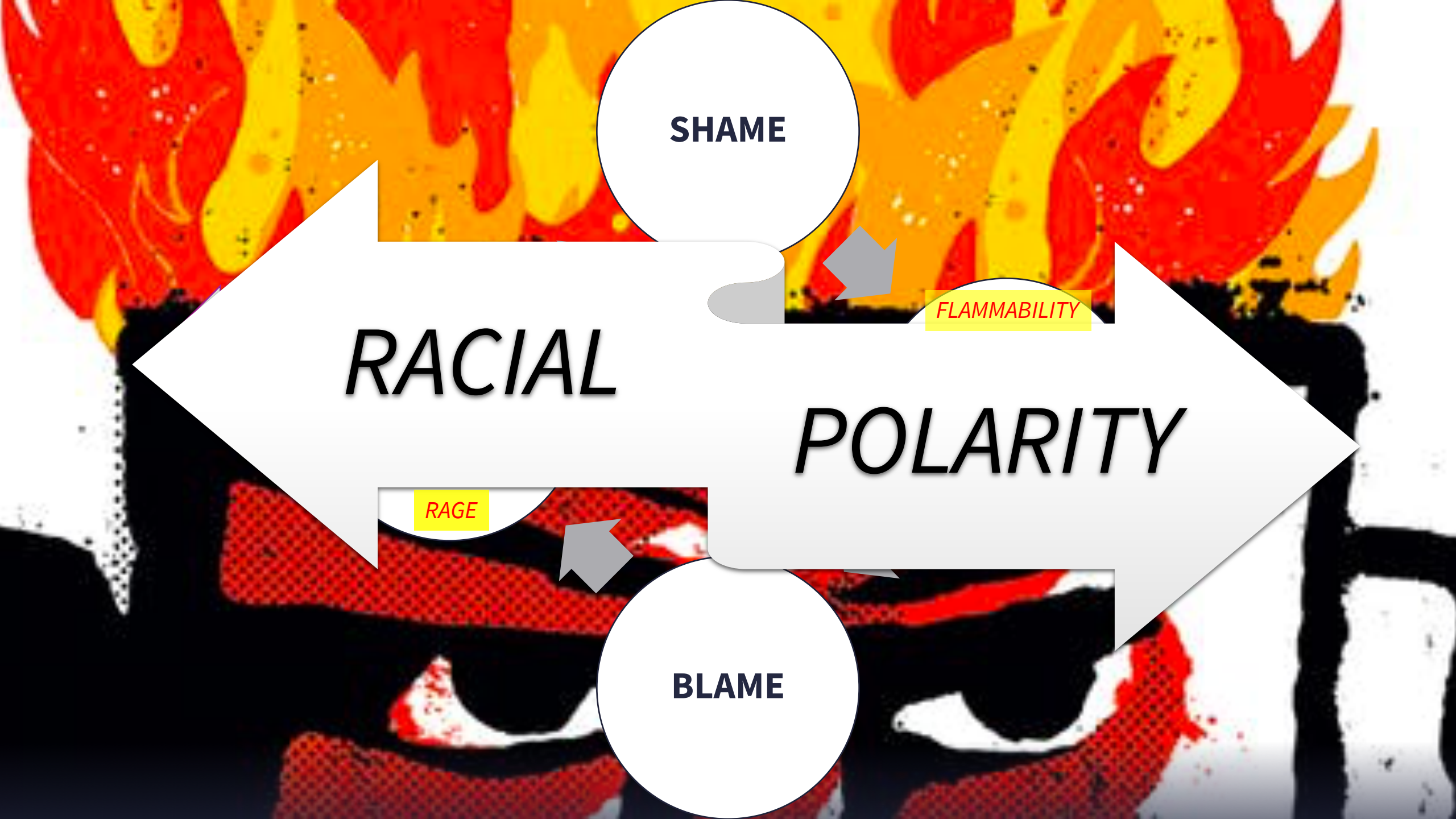
**FLAMMABILITY**

***RACIAL***

***POLARITY***

**RAGE**

**BLAME**



FIXED  
CHOSEN  
NARRATIVES

ECHO  
CHAMBERS  
|  
BUBBLES

SILENCE  
SHAME  
VIOLENCE

FLAMMABILITY

RACIAL

POLARITY

RAGE

BACKLASH  
BLAME  
RETRIBUTION

# beyond shame and blame



*“...many of us are only motivated to move against domination solely when we feel our self-interest directly threatened. Often then, the longing is not collective transformation of society...but rather simply for an end to what we feel is hurting us...Fundamentally, if we are only committed to improvement in that politic of domination that we feel leads directly to our individual exploitation and oppression, we not only remain attached to the status quo but act in complicity with it, nurturing and maintaining those very systems of domination...”*

**bell hooks**

From “Love as Practice of Freedom” (pg 244)

# Where Am I?

## A POLL

**The challenge I MOST may need to address in racial equity is a tendency to:**

- Feel shame about my level of racial awareness and/or racism
- Blame others for their level of racial awareness and/or racism
- Stay silent for fear that I may say something something shameful and racist
- Call someone out on race in a manner that is more about me than them
- Assume an attitude of righteousness about my racial stance(s)
- Remain indifferent, avoiding such encounters whenever and wherever possible



# **SOURCES OF SHADOW IN RACIAL EQUITY EFFORTS**

*Things that show up when we are not at our best*





# Shadow Sources in Racial Equity

*Protecting the “I”—in the name of “right”*

## SHAME

- INERTIA
- INDIFFERENCE
- INACTION
- IMPARTIALITY\*

## BLAME

- INTIMIDATION
- INSINUATION
- INSTIGATION
- INQUISITION

**CHAT: Which have you done?**

# EMPATHY

*BREAKING*

*THE SHAME AND BLAME CYCLE*

*IN RACIAL EQUITY*



# PERFORMATIVE AND TRANSFORMATIVE EMPATHY

## PERFORMATIVE

- appearance of care/like sympathy
- easily forgotten/well-intended
- emphasis on optics over substance-- sustains status quo

## TRANSFORMATIVE

- deliberative action/genuine empathy
- ongoing learning/commitment
- emphasis on behaviors/likely to create disruption to status quo





The Art of Rafael Lopez

# **SOCIAL IDENTITY ESSENTIALISM AND INTERSECTIONALITY**

*The Adaptive Challenge of Conversations  
on Who We Are*

# SOCIAL IDENTITY

*“Our identity is a socially-constructed object; specifically, we are discursively-constructed objects...we are (to a significant extent) the way we are because of what is attributed to us or how we are classified...what we take to be the reality of our being is an artifice or invention of the culture in which we are embedded... creating the consciousness in which we live...”*

**Judith Butler**



# SOCIAL IDENTITY



Judith Butler

“You only trust those who are absolutely like yourself, those who have signed a pledge of allegiance to this particular identity...

Indeed it may be only by risking the *incoherence* of identity that connection is possible...”

# Essentialism

*...members of certain categories have an underlying, unchanging property or attribute (essence) that determines identity and causes outward behavior and appearance.*

*An essentialist account of gender, for example, holds that differences between males and females are determined by **fixed, inherent features of those individuals...***

*Meaning (or identity) is supplied by **a set of necessary and sufficient features** that determine whether an entity does or does not belong in a category.*

**Identity is Fixed**

**Group Membership is Static**

**Group Identity causes Our Behavior**

**WHAT ABOUT RACE?**



Term originally coined by legal scholar  
Kimberlé Crenshaw, Columbia Law School







## **INTERSECTIONALITY**

is a term that acknowledges the rich experience of belonging to different groups and locations at the same time



# INTERSECTIONALITY

UCSB Center for Center for New Racial Studies

...the complex of reciprocal attachments and sometimes polarizing conflicts that confront both individuals and movements as they seek to "navigate" among the raced, gendered, and class-based dimensions of social and political life....

# Double Consciousness as Intersectionality

*“One ever feels his twoness  
--an American, a Negro;  
two souls, two thoughts,  
two unreconciled strivings;  
two warring ideals in one dark  
body, whose strength alone  
keeps it from being  
torn asunder.”*

**W.E.B. DuBois**

***The Souls of Black Folk***



W. E. B. Du Bois

# INTERSECTIONALITY AND LIMINALITY

**LIMINALITY**

...the experience of the space between two perceived fixed states characterized by potential and emergence of some yet known expression...



LIMINALITY



# LIMINALITY



*In Between Days*  
DRISCOLI BABCOCK GALLERY  
New York

# INTERSECTIONALITY

and the rise of relational politics

*To condemn, excoriate, or wage war against a constructed other in our society is inherently self-destructive;  
**for we are the other.***

*[The “other”] are born of us, emulate us, derive their sense of identity from us - and vice versa.*

Gergen (1999)



# INTERSECTIONALITY

## HYBRIDITY

*...the mutual intermingling of language, identity, art, and culture through which we:*

- perceive the world
- negotiate meaning
- (re)define who we are
- relate to others



*Jazz, Blues, Hip-Hop, Rock and Roll, Calendar, Religion  
Yoga, Meditation, Restorative Justice, COVID-19-----Slavery, Colonization, and...*





*The Adaptive Challenge of Conversations  
on Who We Are*





# Adaptive Challenge in Racial Equity and Social Identity

Fluidity/transactions at the boundary of identity with "the other" (procreation/co-creation)

Presence of multiple identities within, between and surrounding us (projection and valence)

Absence of "absolute necessity" of social identity/ social construction (beyond essentialism)

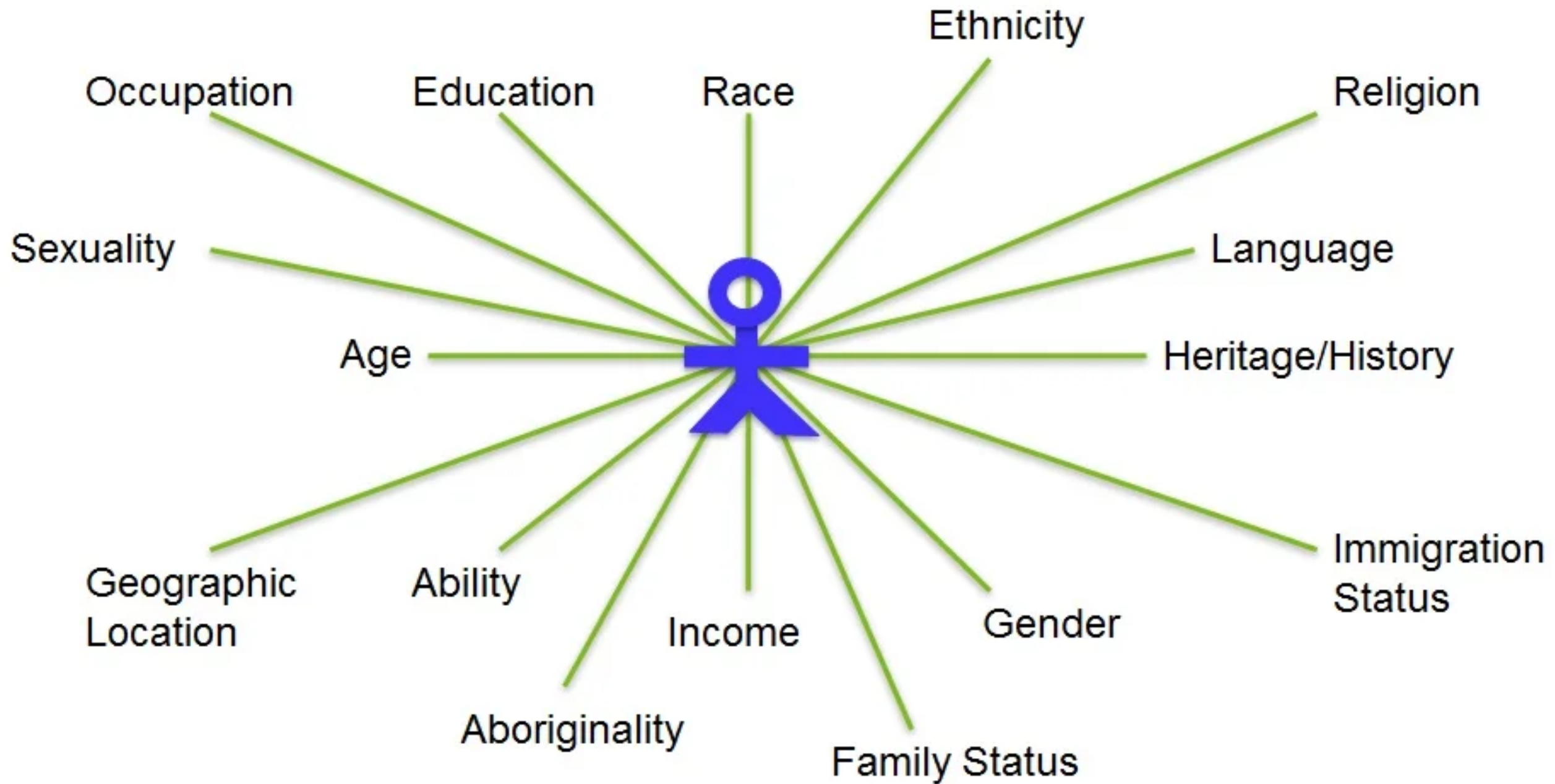
Paradox of self-attribution and representation/ who we say we are vs. what we represent to others

# Paseo Protocol– *Identity Exploration*

**Purpose: to examine issues of identity, diversity, beliefs, and values - and connect them to our experiences with racial equity**

- **Center** - your name
- **Outside** - a word, phrase or symbol that captures some element of your identity
- **Lines**- indicating the nature, quality and strength of the element to your sense of identity
- **Beyond** - additional layers --how you perceive yourself and/ or others perceive you

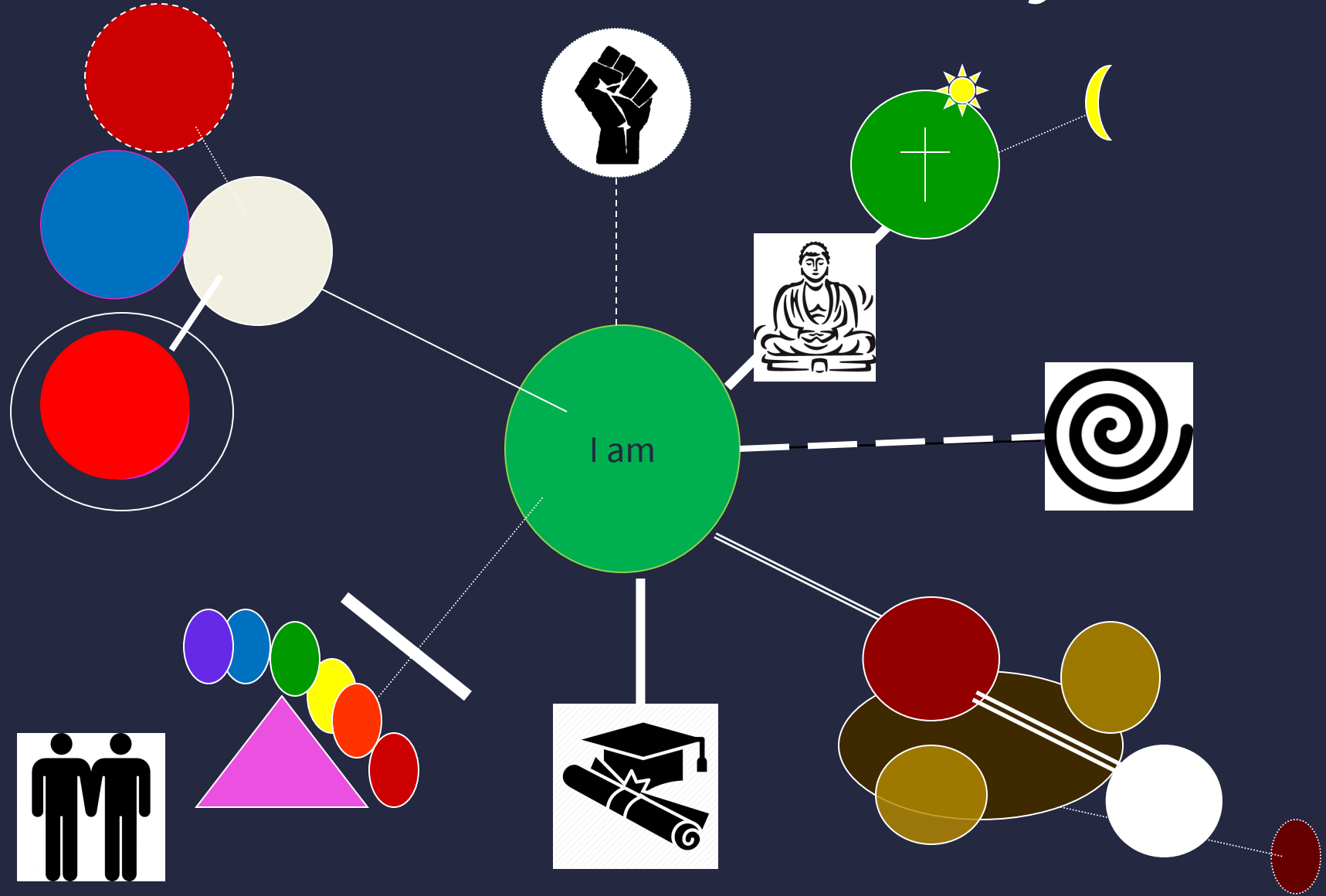




Choose Your Essence—Who Are You?—One Must be Race

# Essentialism and Dominance in Identity

*An Exercise in Intersectionality*



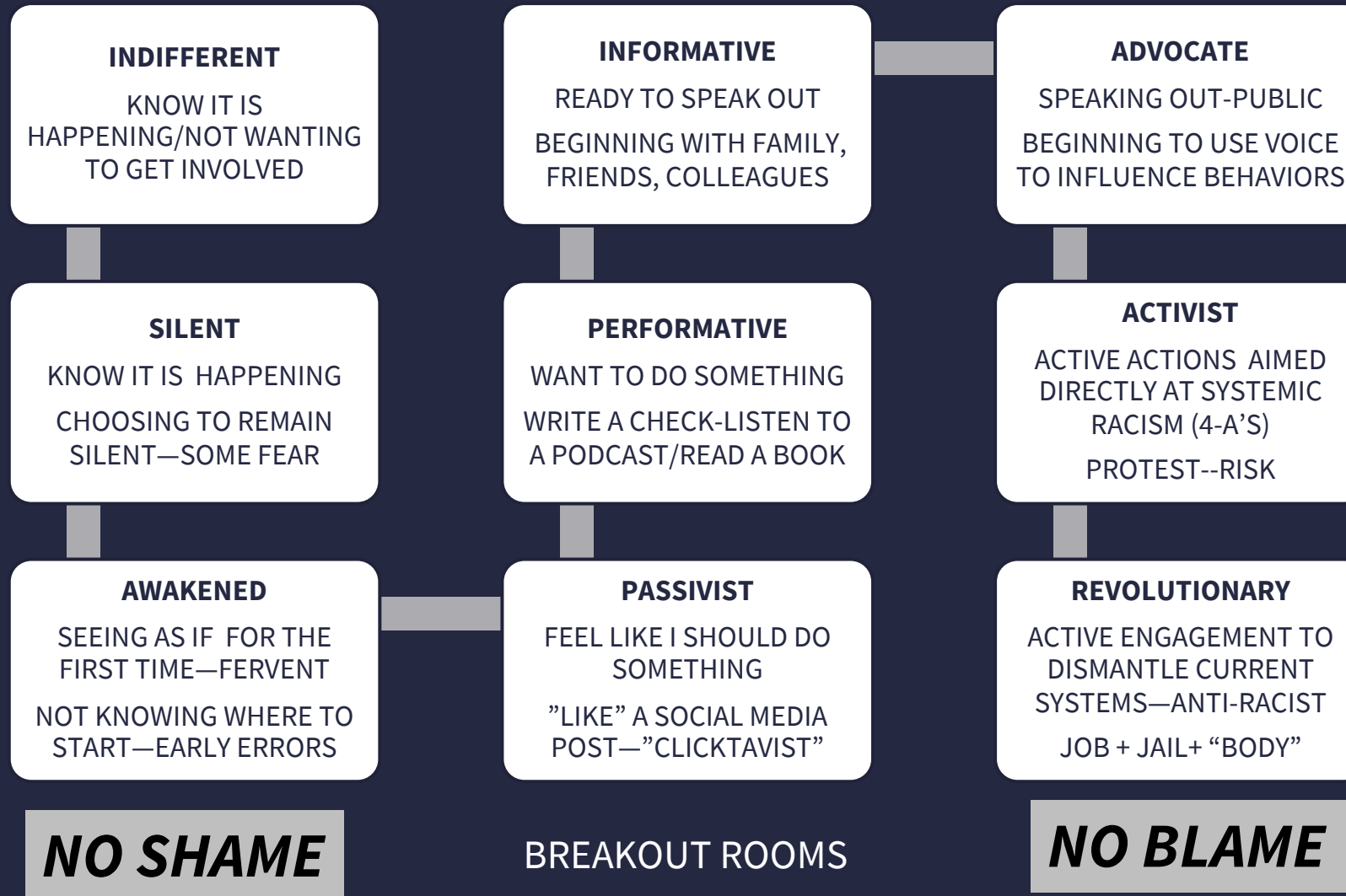
# Racial Equity Journey

*Assessing Where You Are*



# RACIAL EQUITY JOURNEY—A CONTINUUM

## WHERE AM I?



# BREAKOUT ROOM

## *AGREEMENTS AND GUIDELINES*

### **DESIGNATE A TIMEKEEPER**

so everyone has an  
equal and equitable  
opportunity to speak

### **BE OKAY WITH THE SPEAKING ORDER...**

*Yes, it has meaning  
AND...*

When speaking,  
**BE BRAVE**

**BE HONEST**

**BE BRIEF**

When listening,  
**PRACTICE EMPATHY.**  
**SEEK TO UNDERSTAND**  
the feelings of others

### **EMBRACE THE DISCOMFORT**

as a natural part of the  
process

### **Disagree**

on ideas and behaviors  
**WITHOUT ATTACKING  
OR INSULTING ANYONE**

**RECOGNIZE AND  
RESPECT EACH  
OTHER'S HUMANITY**

**FOCUS ON THE  
LEARNING**  
see what you can  
**LET GO TO LET COME**

*BE KIND, FOR EVERYONE YOU MEET IS FIGHTING A BATTLE YOU KNOW NOTHING ABOUT*



# CLOSING THOUGHT



“When I dare to be powerful—to use my strength in the service of my vision—then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid.”

• *Audre Lorde*



**ONE WORD...  
ONE PHRASE ...**

*TO CHARACTERIZE  
YOUR LEARNING TODAY*



## **INDIVIDUAL**

- Identity and difference
- Individual advantage and disadvantage
- Explicit bias
- Implicit bias
- Stereotype threat
- Internalized oppression

## **INTERPERSONAL**

- Reproductive discourse (“Discourse 1”)
- Microaggressions
- Racist interactions
- Transferred oppression

## **INSTITUTIONAL**

- Biased policies and practices (e.g. in hiring, teaching, discipline, parent-family engagement)
- Disproportional (e.g. racialized) outcomes and experiences

## **STRUCTURAL**

- Systems of advantage and disadvantage
- Opportunity structures
- Societal history of oppressive practices and policies

# Dominance and Subordination in identity

*“Simply put, we are not in conflict because of our racial, ethnic, gender, religious, and other differences. Conflicts related to those differences are real but minor. We are in conflict because these differences are structured in relationships based on dominance. Dominance is the root of the conflict, not the differences. The differences between us could be worked out rather easily without the dominance-subordination structure and conditioning in which they are imbedded.”*

**Roberto Chené**

Southwest Center for Intercultural Leadership

