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## INTRODUCTION

**In the late Spring of 2020, already a challenging year in the U.S. due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the impending presidential election, the country experienced another blow with the recorded killing of George Floyd, a black man, by a white police officer. George Floyd's death wasn't the only racially charged event of the year, but it was the most flagrant, and tipped the scales. People took to the streets holding protests and rallies that ultimately spread around the globe. The charged atmosphere brought about a reawakening to the challenges of race relations and racism in the US. One of the outcomes was a return to open dialogue within communities. This document is a result of such efforts. Members of the Assembly of the Sacred Wheel gathered over the course of six months, from June through December 2020, to discuss our experiences with race and to create a tool to help foster change. What follows is that tool....**

## A PATH TOWARDS ALLYSHIP

March 8, 2021

The ASW is an initiatory mystery tradition. The goal of initiation is accelerated evolution on all levels of being. This acceleration is accomplished through intentionally provoked challenges and the creative embrace of crisis as catalyst. We are witches and know that *spiritual lessons are only truly integrated and mastered when manifested in how we live in all communities of humanity/life*. Furthermore, we live the gnosis of the great mystery that in living our refined selves, we transform the world. We recognize the call to be good allies as a direct and vital initiatory challenge.

This requires us to unmake the baneful patterns that block generative growth, in ourselves, in our brothers and sisters, and in the systems we have collectively manifested and inherited. We will ourselves to face discomfort with courage, welcoming it as a teacher that shows us the places that need to be repatterned and healed. We do this as conscious co-creators of The Beloved Community—in which we can stand together fully

present and see each other on all levels of being. This allows for authentic love and the generation of a social vision rooted in the fertile soil of that love.

The following actions are likely to lead to more positive, productive and growthful outcomes, leading not only to success in this initiation, but also to our meaningful contribution to the evolution of humanity relative to the primary challenges of our time.

### **IT IS YOUR WORK TO:**

1. Educate yourself about the concepts of unconscious, subconscious, and conscious bias and seek understanding of your implicit (and explicit) biases as they present in each situation.

Implicit bias is the unconscious collection of stereotypes and attitudes that we develop toward certain groups of people. Implicit/explicit bias misinforms those developing institutional processes that too often negatively and unfairly affect those groups (laws, procedures, language use, etc.)

Implicit biases may or may not be emotionally charged. Many of our biases are so integrated with our 'routine' understanding of the world that they barely register as thoughts/decisions – but are automatic actions/assumptions.

***“We don't see things as they are, we see them as we are.” - Anais Nin***

- *Pay attention to anything that provokes a powerful emotional reaction since it may highlight the presence of an unconscious implicit bias. Equally important is a lack of emotion about events that are negatively or cruelly affecting others - the equivalent of “Yeah. The sky is blue.” This may reveal truly unconscious biases that need to be questioned – why is the sky blue? Why do we assume this action/situation to be correct/ethical/legal/etc.?*
- *Identify and investigate the limits and blinders that interfere with your ability to see your biases by taking implicit bias tests, engaging in active introspection/meditation about specific events and experiences spoken about in the racial/social justice movements, and reflecting on messages delivered to you through your upbringing.*
- *Engage in a process of critical analysis of messages delivered through social media posts, memes and other media to identify any falsehoods, misleading*

*presentation of statistics, other manipulations of data, and logical fallacies. Examine your initial desire to believe or disbelieve the message and the reasons for that initial reaction. Examine the 'end game'/objective of the message: Who gains if the message is believed? Does that objective work toward or against positive human evolution – socially, emotionally, ethically, spiritually?*

- *Identify instances of privilege, experiences in which you were/are given different and better (privileged) access, resources, treatment or outcomes than POC in the same instance. Or, if less provoking of defense, identify when POC were treated worse/unfairly than you were in the same instance (relative privilege).*
- *Before expressing any opinion about or acting on any aspect of race in any arena of our culture (interpersonal, cultural, economic, etc.) ask yourself if you have yet put focused thought and emotional analysis into the points-of-view of all of those affected by the issue or if are you simply reciting unquestioned programming (unconscious bias).*

2. Fully engage in listening, not just hearing, and educate yourself about the difference.

- *Learn how to listen and accept new information about a person's or people's lived experience of the world with grace and faith, even if it is uncomfortable- especially if it is uncomfortable. While race issues are justifiably emotionally charged topics, it is more productive to see a person expressing their lived experience of the wider world with intensity (and often anger) less as a 'personal challenge' to defend against and more as gaining genuinely shared new information with which you can challenge yourself.*
- *Empathize. Acknowledge. Focus on their story, not yours. Your relative silence provides space for them to share their experiences – what you need to know to learn and evolve.*
- *Open space, when needed, for those expressing trauma.*

*Deep systemic injustices have traumatized many people of color throughout our country's history and gaping wounds in the national soul re racial injustice*

*and inequity have been opened once again. Those suffering injustice often need first to know that they are heard, seen, and understood.*

*Opening space means expressing that you are prepared to listen, unguarded and empathetically, without judgement, without argument, without personal agenda, without trying to 'fix it'. It is being capable of accepting, acknowledging and empathizing with another human being and expressing a true intent to understand their experience through their eyes.*

- *Be aware of your world view (your particular philosophy of life or conception of the world) and be willing to step outside of that world view, recognizing that it is socially constructed (a mutual agreement) among those of similar experience and must adapt as our awareness grows deeper and broader.*
  - *Articulate your world view, as if you would have to communicate it to someone that has not met you. If you are unable to articulate your world view about race issues in our culture, you have not thought enough about it to be 'aware' of it.*

*It is not necessary to express your world view to others when listening to them (and, in fact, it may be counter-productive, if not asked to). Understand that the history of race relations in the United States (the world) has been one of repression and denial of racism. While you may intend to offer your experience as a way of identifying or relating to the other's experience, it is most likely to be perceived as a rebuttal ('we were all treated badly in some way') or a coopting/redirecting of the experience ('I had it just as bad as you'). Your job is to focus on hearing and understanding what is being shared with you. However, even when unspoken in every situation, being able to define and articulate your world view is essential to personal growth: how will you evolve a world view you are unable to articulate or define?*

3. Learn the reality of the history of racism and racial injustice woven in our national soul and the history of the anti-racism movements that have and are still moving the nation forward in healing and reconciliation.

- *Recognize most of us have been taught a version of history that has been warped, intentionally and through rote ignorance, and does not accurately describe the national experience re racism, and especially does not accurately describe the lived experiences of minorities.*
- *Embrace new scholarship and analysis as vital to the national healing and accept that learning new and true information on racial trauma and injustice will be uncomfortable and require full examination of our biases (explicit and implicit) and use of listening skills.*
- *Own that you are responsible for educating yourself. Always ask if someone is able/willing to contribute to your education and never assume it is their responsibility to do so. Many have been/are traumatized and are not yet willing or able to participate in your education. A person cannot be expected to educate others about their trauma or the collective trauma while in the state of being continuously traumatized. They get to decide when they are able and willing. When someone is able and willing, honor it as the gift of time, energy, and care that it is.*
- *Accept that persons of color (POC) are subject to the same forces that have warped the version of history taught to non-POC. It is unreasonable to expect every POC to be an expert in racial injustice in our nation. POC are also in the process of digesting new scholarship and awareness re race in the US. It is most likely to be productive, however, if non-POC individuals offer resources or education on the subject to POC only when asked.*
- *Remember the labor of the marginalized and remember this is the work of the collective. Know that this history may not have been recorded accurately nor completely in the mythologized history of our country. Respect the work that has gone before and ask how you can further the cause.*
- *Acknowledge and remember that while independent members of oppressed groups have successfully negotiated to thrive within oppressive systems (not every member of an underinvested group feels personally oppressed), it does not negate the pervasiveness of the systems of oppression nor their devastating consequences.*

4. Do the work of integration: *I will become more aware of my responsibility and my accountability and how I can impact/influence/change the world.*

*As stated in the first paragraph of this document, spiritual lessons are only truly integrated and mastered when manifested in how we live in all communities of humanity/life. This can only be truly accomplished when we align all parts of the Self (Body, Mind, Heart, and Will) with the Higher Self and Divine purpose. Accepting perfection is rarely possible, we must aspire to this relentlessly.*

5. Do support those without your privilege with through actions, not just words.

- *Embrace that intentions must be willed into action.*
- *Make specific plans to act on your awareness of your bias, the information gained by educating yourself, and the understanding gained through listening to the lived experiences of POC, to plan specific ways in which you can act to use your privilege to further anti-racist efforts.*
- *Hold yourself (and one another) accountable for taking the planned actions.*
- *Ask POC and those in the activist arena how you can best forward anti-racist goals. It is not always necessary to 'reinvent the wheel' – and doing so often produces unintended, counter-productive effects. ASK.*
- *Financially support POC-owned businesses, organizations, and activist efforts when possible and until inequity has been eliminated.*

## ALLYSHIP RESOURCE LIST:

- 1) *Anti-Racism Guide: Resources for Education and Action*, UC San Diego  
<https://ucsd.libguides.com/antiracism/allyship>
- 2) *Anti-Racism and Allyship 7 Day Journey*, by Margaret Neale, Sarah Soule, Hannah Yanow. Stanford Graduate School of Business  
<https://gsb-sites.stanford.edu/anti-racism-and-allyship/>
- 3) *Project READY: Reimagining Equity & Access for Diverse Youth*, A free online professional development curriculum. <https://ready.web.unc.edu/>
- 4) *Anti-Racism and Allyship Resource Starter Kit*, Beveridge & Diamond. <https://www.bdlaw.com/anti-racism-and-allyship-resource-starter-kit/>
- 5) *Building Allies, Turning Privilege Into Change*, <https://www.buildingallies.org/>
- 6) *Black Attorney Affinity Group Allyship + Anti-Racism Resource Kit*, Cooley. <https://www.cooley.com/-/media/cooley/pdf/baag-allyship-and-antiracism-resource-kit.ashx>
- 7) *Anti-Racism Resources*, Harvard University. <https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/antiracismresources>
- 8) *Anti-Racism Resources*, University of Dayton. <https://libguides.udayton.edu/c.php?g=925349&p=6669239>
- 9) *Racial Justice Resources: Antiracism and Solidarity*, University Libraries, University of Washington. <https://guides.lib.uw.edu/c.php?g=1046891&p=7596474>

- 10) *Anti-Racism Resource Guide*, Emory University School of Medicine. <https://med.emory.edu/about/diversity/anti-racism-guide.html>
- 11) *15 Common Logical Fallacies and How to Spot them*. <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/common-logical-fallacies>