

11:00 Welcome

(Read aloud to the group)

We welcome you to the (name of group) Racists Anonymous Group and hope you will find in this fellowship the help and friendship we are fortunate enough to enjoy. We who have struggled to heal from the problem of unexamined racism and privilege understand as perhaps few others can. We, too, were lonely and frustrated, but in Racists Anonymous we discover that no situation is really hopeless and that it is possible for us to find both inner peace and outer agency, as well as more connection and genuine emotional intimacy with others.

Before we begin, let us acknowledge with a moment of silence that the land currently governed by the United States of America was nurtured, loved and cared for by Indigenous people for thousands of years before contact with and colonization by Europeans. We now sit on land that was owned by the Coast Salish People, specifically those from the Duwamish Tribe, land which was never formally ceded to the United States government. May all Indigenous people and nations be granted respect, reparations and sovereignty and may we all learn to see ourselves as part of a history still unfolding.

(hold silence for a few moments)

We urge you to try our program. For decades, the Twelve Steps have helped many people find solutions that lead to serenity, even when faced with seemingly impossible and overwhelming problems. So much depends on our own attitudes, and as we learn to place our problems in their true perspective and contexts, we find they lose the power to dominate our thoughts and our lives. We find ourselves able to act where previously we had felt frozen. This is liberation.

Our lives are bound to improve as we apply the RA principles. Without such spiritual help, living with unexamined racism and privilege is too much for most of us. Our thinking becomes distorted by living segregated, compartmentalized lives, and we become disconnected, fearful and rigid without knowing it.

Racists Anonymous is a fellowship of people who share their experience, strength, and hope in order to solve their common problems. We believe racism and white privilege are social illnesses, infecting us all in different ways, and that changed attitudes can aid recovery. Racists Anonymous is not a representing entity in itself and is not, as such, allied with any religious sect, denomination, political party, organization, or institution;

it does not engage in any controversy; it neither endorses nor opposes any cause, officially speaking. RA's individual members, however, can learn how to engage in an anti-racist stance in all matters of their lives. Inherently, Racists Anonymous is an anti-racist organization that inspires the abolition of racist ideas from our personal lives and the systems we live in.

There are no dues for membership. Racists Anonymous is self-supporting through its own voluntary contributions. Racists Anonymous has but one purpose: to help people who want to heal from the effects of privilege, racism and white supremacy. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps, by welcoming and giving comfort to those seeking help, and by giving understanding and encouragement to the racist not yet in recovery.

The Racists Anonymous program is based on the Twelve Steps (adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous), which we try, little by little, one day at a time, to apply to our lives, along with our slogans and the Serenity Prayer. The loving interchange of help among members and regular reading of anti-racist literature thus make us ready to receive the priceless gifts of connection and serenity.

11:05 The 12 Steps of Racists Anonymous

Would someone care to read the 12 Steps?

(Someone reads 12 Steps)

11:10 The 12 Traditions of Racists Anonymous

Would someone care to read the 12 Traditions?

(Someone reads the 12 Traditions)

11:15 Introductions

Anonymity is a fundamental principle of the Racists Anonymous program. Everything that is said here, in the group meeting and member-to-member, must be held in confidence. Only in this way can we feel free to say what is in our minds and hearts, for this is how we help one another heal.

Now we will go around the room and introduce ourselves by first name. My name is _____.

Today our topic will be:

Session 1 - Racism as a cultural illness that has personal implications, rather than simply a moral failure of individual persons-- how did we acquire this illness? (Step 1)

(The disease model frames it as something that is a shared affliction rather than something that is ours alone.)

Session 2 - The challenge of talking with other people about our own racist thoughts and feelings--why is community necessary? (Step 2)

Session 3 - The challenge of committing to a path of compassionate anti-racist practice-- what gets in the way? (Step 3)

Subsequent Sessions- engage the group in their preferences

Suggestions:

- examine each of the steps week by week;
- the role of shame and how it is transformed;
- tolerance levels and helpful and harmful strategies for conversations about race;
- what white solidarity looks like;
- liberalism and “garden-variety white supremacy”;
- the oppression inherent in American values of individualism, perfectionism and meritocracy;
- when being called out helped and when it hurt (what does it mean/look like to “call in” instead?);
- the principles of regular self-inquiry, connection with community, accountability, amends/reparations, and leadership

11:17 Sharing Session

Please feel free to share about today’s topic or whatever is on your heart or mind. At this meeting we discourage feedback, advice giving, and crosstalk. Examples of crosstalk include: referencing a share by using the sharer’s name, agreeing or disagreeing with a share, interrupting a share, or making comments during a share. Please practice respect by listening only. For those who are members of other 12-step programs, please focus on your RA experience. This meeting closes at 12:00, and we want everyone to have a chance to share. We suggest that shares be limited to 3 minutes. A timer will go off after two as a reminder. Is there a volunteer to set a timer?

(A timekeeper is identified who will operate a timer)

11:40 Break for Tradition 7 and Announcements

We have no dues or fees; according to our Seventh Tradition: ‘Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.’ We do this through our own voluntary contributions by passing the basket to cover group expenses, including rent, purchase of literature, and support of our service arms. We contribute in gratitude for what we have received from Racists Anonymous.

Are there any announcements about events or activities that are pertinent to the intentions of this Racists Anonymous group that anyone would like to share?

11:55 Closing

In closing, we would like to say that the opinions expressed here were strictly those of the person who gave them. Take what you liked and leave the rest. The things you heard were spoken in confidence and should be treated as confidential. Keep them within the walls of this room and the confines of your mind.

A few special words to those of you who haven't been with us long: Whatever your problems, there are those among us who have had them, too. If you try to keep an open mind, you will find help. You will come to realize that there is no situation too difficult to be bettered and no unhappiness too great to be lessened. We aren't perfect. The welcome we give you may not show the warmth we have in our hearts for you. After a while, you'll discover that though you may not like all of us, you'll love us in a very special way—the same way we already love you. Talk to each other, reason things out with someone else, but let there be no gossip or criticism of one another. Instead, let the understanding, love, and peace of the program grow in you one day at a time.

Will all who care to, join me in a closing circle (holding hands or not) with a moment of silence and the Serenity prayer.

*Optional: "Let this circle represent what we **cannot** do alone, we **can** do together."*

*Grant us the serenity
To accept the things we cannot change,
Courage to change the things we can,
And wisdom to know the difference.*