

## **We have been here before...and before...and before**

### **Are we ready to do the REAL work required to advance Racial Equity**

Individuals and organizations seem to be scrambling with questions with respect to what's next and how best to move forward so that systemic change is sustainable. Suddenly, there have been a plethora of materials, articles, books, and videos, across all learning modalities regarding how to advance equity and address racism.

Exposed to the world now, are the multitude of killings prior to George Floyd. Exposed to the world now, are the many black deaths that have continued since the killing of George Floyd. Exposed to the world now are the investigations of what may be termed "[modern day lynching\[s\]](#)" and recruitment efforts by the KKK.

What I will offer for are several basic foundational principles to advance equity (community or organizational):

1. A key factor to the process of advancing equity is the motivation (the desire) to "want to" as opposed to "have to." Consider if you want to do the work required or do you want to just to check the boxes? Meaning, we do the bare minimum required in completing and consequently stop even checking the boxes
2. Being willing to assess your own bias, stereotypes, values, beliefs, behaviors, and all things related to self-awareness. Self-Awareness connects you to Self-knowledge, which is critical in the determination of how you show up, how you can manifest these foundational principles into tangible equity with respect to serving others and/or conducting yourself in the community. You must be willing to continually assess your own "isms" to be willing to advance equity.
3. The principle that you seek out different "cultural encounters" - that you take the initiative in engaging and interacting in different cultural experiences. Different cultural encounters provide you the opportunity to acquire knowledge and understanding that leads to respect for each other. This in turn supports the development of a growth mindset. A growth mindset is the theory that with determination and hard work you can improve your skills and talents over time.

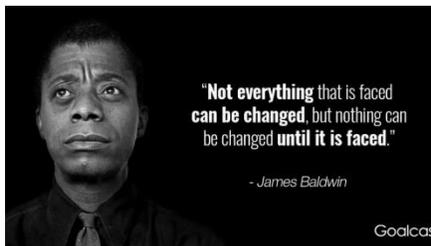
The advancement of equity requires the deconstruction of institutional racism and necessitates being intentional. One must assess their own cultural awareness, relationally develop common definitions, tackle dynamics of power and privilege, and acquire knowledge to attain proficiency in cultural competency. This is accomplished individually and organizationally.

Scientific studies have determined that the key for change is being repetitive, as this ultimately encourages formation of habitual patterns and new pathways in the

mind. Meaning, if you purposefully and continually go back to reevaluate and assess your own bias, and, consistently seek different cultural encounters, these intentional acts are supportive of advancing equity. For clarity, first one must choose to be educated before application.

The steps provided here are basic and practical. I assert that for decades although they have been provided and even promoted, there has been no visible change. Advancing equity is difficult work, because for forward movement, one must understand how to take theory into practice and strive not to arrive but strive to be skilled. Once skilled, you can actively interact and actually “move the needle” for change.

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