Initiatives of Change

Tips for maintaining a team

The most important role of the core group is to model relationships within the group that reflect the kind of changed relationships that it is advocating to the larger community. Participants must be prepared to share their mistakes and their ongoing struggles. Here are some tips for maintaining healthy teams.

1. Put people before projects. Commit to each other. Build relationships that will last beyond the life of any particular activity. Spend time together, not just as work but enjoy social time. Invite the team into your private space – your home. Play and celebrate together.

2. Share responsibility and avoid reliance on one person. Be sure everyone in the team is clear about his or her role. Use diverse co-chairs to lead meetings or make presentations.

3. Hold each other accountable to the principles of honest conversation and personal responsibility. Be aware that the tensions and conflicts within the larger community are always present within the team/network that is attempting to bring change.

4. Deal with issue as they arise openly and directly. Unaddressed issues fester and divide. Work on challenging relationships; difficulties can be growth opportunities.

5. Share risk. Don't ask a colleague of another racial, ethnic, religious, or political background to take steps of courage without an equivalent readiness on your part.

6. Hold fast to vision and mission. But welcome new ideas. Each team member, even the newest has a contribution to make. Everyone brings something to the table.

7. Establish short- and medium-term goals as well as lofty visions. People need to see success in small areas.

8. Be generous with one another. Allow each other the right to make mistakes. Recognize that we are all on a journey.

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