



First Parish in Concord

Unitarian Universalist | ALL ARE WELCOME!

First Parish

Commission on Institutional Change (COIC)

Final Report

to the

Standing Committee and Congregation

April 18, 2024

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*Link to COIC's complete [Year One Report](#)

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COIC Charge

The First Parish Standing Committee established the Commission on Institutional Change (COIC) in the fall of 2021 with the following 3-point charge to be completed over two or more years:

- *Assess congregational policies, practices and procedures for their alignment with our UU values of equity, inclusion, and diversity.*
- *To engage First Parish members, friends and staff in identifying opportunities for systemic change that will help FPC realize itself as a place of radical welcome and anti-oppression work. An example might be working toward congregational adoption of the 8th Principle.*
- *To recommend action(s) that serve to dismantle white supremacy within the culture, practice, policies and procedures within FPC. An example might be carrying out the “Welcoming Walls” initiative.*

On March 16, 2024, members of the COIC voted to sunset our group as of Annual Meeting, June 2, 2024. We have enjoyed our work with the First Parish community and feel we have completed the parameters established in the 2021 charge to the best of our abilities.

There is, of course, much more anti-oppression work for our congregation to tackle but we believe there needs to be a larger critical mass in our community to take us to the next level. This then is our final report summarizing the work we’ve done over the last two and a half years.

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Eliminating Oppression

People involved in anti-oppression work, including those at First Parish, have learned that this work is always more complicated and time consuming than first imagined. (Think *Welcoming Walls*.) That, despite the fact that there is already measurable support for anti-oppression work within our community.

The goal of achieving true equity, freedom, and justice in our society invariably requires a steady chipping away of practices and policies that have intentionally and unintentionally fostered the status quo and sustained systemic oppression for centuries. In effect, it entails a necessary, multi-generations-long shift in our society, and we understand this is a slow process which will require long-term commitment and the ability to remain open to thinking in fresh ways.

Righting the ills caused by institutional racism requires many privileged White people to acknowledge the enormous advantages we and our ancestors have had across the generations, above and beyond our individual abilities and efforts. We hope both lay leaders and congregants of First Parish will accept the responsibility all White people share for the damage inflicted on people of color throughout our country's four-hundred year history. We understand this requires a profound and often uncomfortable psychological shift. First Parish in Concord is in the early stages of this journey, when compared with many other UU congregations.

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Relevant Trends

COIC believes it is important to consider all anti-oppression work at First Parish in the context of both our own aging congregation and some general [nationwide trends](#).

For example:

- [Demographic shifts](#) predict the United States will become a minority White country (49.7%) in 2045.
- 56% of Americans now report they attend religious services seldom (25%) or never (31%). Only three in 10 Americans say they attend services every week (21%) or almost every week (9%)
- Two decades ago, 42% of adults attended religious services every week or nearly every week. Currently the figure is 30%.
- Among young adults (18-29 years) 35% report they have no religious preference and only 22% attend church regularly.
- Both large and small churches report a decline in Americans giving to churches. The number of Americans who say they donated to religious causes has dropped from 62% to 44% since 2001.
- 55% of churches [reported](#) a decrease in giving for 2023 due to inflation.

Against an overall decline in traditional church attendance, it is essential for First Parish to seek new ways to attract new members in order to thrive. That may mean we have to proactively research what types of programs will draw in young families and young adults. We may need to look for new ways to promote our social, social justice, community, and spiritual offerings through wider outreach efforts, and lessen our focus on Sunday worship as our church's main draw. All of us will benefit by becoming a warmer, more welcoming community to everyone who comes to our door.

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COIC Work - Year Two - 2023-24

Meetings: Met every two weeks through this church year.

Interviews: Completed and reviewed one-on-one interviews with both staff and lay leaders that were begun during the previous church year. Our goals were to learn more about each group's work, what they think COIC needs to know, and how COIC can best coordinate related anti-oppression efforts.

Interviews were conducted with leaders of the following groups:

- Advocates for Women's Empowerment (AWE)
- Congregational Life
- Diversity Committee
- First Tuesday Group
- Immigration Justice Task Force
- Jewish Awareness Group
- Music (Beth Norton)
- Nominating Committee
- Partner Church Committee
- Pastoral care (Liz Weber)
- Reclaim Our Democracy
- Religious Exploration (Amy Freedman)
- Racial Justice Action Group (RJAG)
- Social Justice (Paul Langston-Daley)
- Standing Committee
- Trustees
- Women's Parish Association (WPA)
- Wright Tavern Legacy Trust

Major takeaways from our interviews. Our leadership:

- Sees a lot of privilege in the congregation.
- Desires more anti-oppression education.
- Worries that institutional change may trigger a backlash.
- Advocates for clear communication about any changes we make.

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- Suggests instituting [Process Observation](#) at the end of all gatherings as a way to make sure all voices are being heard.

Liaisons: COIC maintained liaisons with (RJAG) Racial Justice Action Group (Cindy Soule), Diversity (Dana Snyder-Grant), and Wright Tavern (Peter Nobile) committees. COIC representatives attended meetings of these committees throughout the year to ensure close communication among congregation members with similar anti-oppression goals.

Communication: COIC continually updated our webpage with anti-oppression related resources and events and contributed regularly to our COIC webpage, *FP Weekly*, FaceBook page, and Sunday Announcements about these resources and events.

Covenant: COIC, along with other First Parish groups, urged and supported the creation of a congregational covenant.

Sanctuary Tech: COIC member Peter Nobile worked with staff on the addition of monitors in the sanctuary and upgrading AV equipment around the pulpit to further enhance accessibility.

Pulpit Handrails: COIC member Peter Nobile shepherded through former Senior Minister Rev. Howard Dana's desire to promote accessibility by adding handrails to the pulpit. Handrails are now installed.

UUA Materials: COIC reviewed the anti-oppression curriculum from UUA ([Widening the Circle Report](#) and its companion [Study Guide](#)) which provided us with valuable background about what is happening in our denomination. Though we ultimately decided the materials were not sufficiently relevant to our congregation to offer the full curriculum, we do encourage members to download and read the [report](#).

BLUU: COIC read, reviewed, and discussed the 2022 [Black Lives of Unitarian Universalism](#) report.

Welcoming Walls (WW): The goal of the WW initiative is to create a church environment that reflects our active and vibrant congregation and welcomes newcomers. COIC contributed to the relaunch of the project this year. COIC member Cindy Soule has been an active member of this RJAG working group since its inception in 2018.

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Democracy Festival: We participated in the First Parish *Democracy Festival* on May 20, 2023. Our table offered an interactive display allowing attendees to register where they fit along the continuum of anti-oppression sentiment. Participants chose which of the following “I” Statements best corresponds to their attitudes:

1. I'm worried about the problems White people face in our country today.
2. I think attempts to reframe our country's history go too far.
3. I don't believe our country has a major problem with racism.
4. I prefer to avoid talking about race and racism.
5. Conversations about racism upset me.
6. I believe a legacy of colonization and slavery persists in America.
7. I condemn colonization, slavery and racism.
8. I am sorry about the historical and current racialized inequalities in our society.
9. I'm actively working against racism and toward racial equity and justice.
10. I think we should compensate Black Americans and Indigenous people for the injustices they and their ancestors have suffered.

COIC also provided a handout with generic guidance on *How to Apologize*.

Operations: COIC collected and reviewed First Parish bylaws, brochures, policies and procedures, where we looked to revise language around power and privilege. Our priorities were to make text easier to understand, eliminate positions and/or policies that are no longer followed, and ensure that bylaws reflect optimum operating procedures.

We met with Chair Gib Metcalf and Virginia Taylor of the Standing Committee subcommittee and with the Trustees to review our suggested changes to the First Parish Bylaws and to answer their questions.

We returned the following documents with proposed changes as listed below:

Operations: Fifi Ball

Facilities Use Guidelines and Fees

Financial Procedures

FP Emergency Procedures

Four Informational Brochures near the church office. We made suggested changes to three (*Welcome, Partner Church, Pastoral Care*). In conjunction with the Congregational Life Committee (CLC) and with support from both Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd and Rev. Paul Langston-Daley, we removed a fourth brochure, *The Brief History of First Parish*, which requires a complete rewrite.

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Standing Committee: Chairs Liz Rust and Gib Metcalf

Church Bylaws

SC Policy Documents:

- 1.0 Preamble & Ends
- 2.0 Means Policies
- 3.0 Operations Policies
- 4.0 Head of Staff Linkage Policies
- 5.0 Finance Policy
- 6.0 Sabbatical Policy
- 7.0 Membership Policy
- 8.0 Policy on Congregational Groups
- 9.0 Operating Details
- 10.0 Disruptive Behavior Policy

Policy: We drafted and sent relevant staff a suggested policy for selecting locations for church events, including those that are originally scheduled for outside the church but moved inside at the last minute because of bad weather. Last minute relocation presents a potential accessibility issue, particularly when the elevator is not operational. Our suggested policy asked that events prioritize accessibility in determining location. (i.e. Parish Hall vs. Emerson room).

Education: We asked and arranged for Rev. Jim Sherblom to teach a five-week class (Sept.-Oct 2023) on the history of racism at First Parish and in the town of Concord, which impacted both indigenous peoples and Black Americans. About 25 people participated. Research from Jim's forthcoming book provided the content for the class. His information is now accessible to a wider audience through a series of [podcasts](#). His book is scheduled for publication fall, 2024.

Education: We assessed whether First Parish is ready as an institution to participate in the second phase of *Beloved Conversations (Among)*. Our conclusion is that more work is needed before the congregation is ready to commit to this whole-congregation program.

Education: We reached out to local indigenous residents. Dan Boudillion and Strong Bear were scheduled to speak at FP on May 19, 2024 about the *Praying Indians* and their historical connections with First Parish and Concord. Unfortunately they canceled in March.

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Training: COIC co-sponsored a three-day [Jubilee Three](#) training in the Boston area, along with other area churches, in October 2023. One First Parish member attended.

Training: Maintained a list of FP members who have completed anti-oppression training of any type. (*Waking up White*, [Beloved Conversations](#) (both virtual and in person), [Healing Embodied Racism](#), [Transforming Hearts](#), [Jubilee Three](#)).

Apology: COIC member Rev. Ken Reeves wrote and facilitated discussions with congregants on a COIC-created draft of a First Parish apology for its historical mistreatment of indigenous people and people of color. Ken attended multiple committee meetings to discuss and revise his draft with many FP groups. This is an area where First Parish lags behind many other UU congregations who have already issued apologies and have land acknowledgements in place. COIC discussion sessions were held on Juneteenth 2023, Indigenous Peoples weekend 2023, and on April 28, 2024.

In what appears to be the absence of widespread support now, members of the COIC have opted not to bring the current draft of the apology to Annual Meeting 2024 for a full congregational vote. Going forward, further consideration of a church apology will likely be handled by the Racial Justice Action Group (RJAG) in conjunction with Rev. Paul Langston-Daley and the next Senior Minister.

Benediction: COIC met with Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd to discuss the First Parish Benediction and the different ways it can be interpreted. Seth then delivered a four-sermon series about our Benediction to the congregation in the fall of 2023. COIC hosted two follow-up meetings to assess whether the congregation has an interest in altering the Benediction text. Those who attended were grateful for an opportunity to discuss the topic. Among the comments we heard:

- Some felt characterizing people as “weak” is unnecessarily harsh.
- Others felt the text hints at a *privileged White savior* attitude.
- Some said our Benediction is missing a spiritual piece, in that it mentions neither *God* nor *love*.
- There is no reference to *kindness* or how to treat others.

Because most who attended our discussions remained in support of the current Benediction, COIC determined there is insufficient interest in altering the Benediction at this time.

Related to these issues, there is also a contractual agreement First Parish makes with all Senior Ministers that gives each full control over worship, suggesting that decisions about any Benediction fall into the worship leader’s realm (rather than the congregation’s).

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Microaggressions: We solicited our congregation for instances where someone felt they were disrespected by another member of the congregation. We wanted to find out how widespread the problem is. No stories were submitted, though many of us have regularly witnessed such episodes.

Events: COIC members attended, supported and/or co-sponsored various events related to anti-oppression work. (ex: *Raising Consciousness* Workshop with Dr. Carlos Hoyt at Concord Academy, *The Busing Battleground* event, Robbins House presentation in February 2024 about Ellen Garrison, others.)

Library: We supported and contributed suggestions to RJAG for a moveable book cart that features notable anti-oppression books. The cart is often displayed Sundays at coffee hour.

Banner: We carried the COIC banner for “2024 Celebration Sunday”.

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Summary - Year One - 2022-23

(Link to the COIC's complete [Year One Report](#))

Meetings: Met every two weeks through this church year, beginning February 2021.

Charter: Created and filed COIC charter.

Covenant: Approved a COIC covenant.

One-on-One: Met with Rev. Howard Dana, Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd and Rev. Paul Langston-Daley to ask for their input on our work.

Interviews: Initiated one-on-one interviews with both staff and lay leaders. (See page 6 for more detail.)

Web: Created our own COIC [web page](#), which we updated regularly with events, articles, and other resources about anti-oppression work.

UUA Material: Read and discussed the UUA's [Widening the Circle](#) report.

Nearby Towns: Explored what nearby towns and congregations are doing with DEAI work.

Training: Engaged in training on the nature and process of change.

Training: Studied ways to handle *difficult conversations*.

Training: Three additional COIC members completed Jubilee Three Training.

8th Principle: Supported approval of the [8th UU Principle](#); passed by the First Parish congregation.

Kickoff Event: COIC Kickoff Event, [Afro-American History in Concord Tour](#), October 16, 2022. Led by Mary-Wren vanderWilden.

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Brochures: Removed the brochure entitled “*A Brief History of First Parish*”, which contained some potentially offensive language.

Workshop: Co-sponsored CB Beal workshop and sermons (Winter 2023)

Banner: Created a COIC banner and participated in 2023 Celebration Sunday.

Report: COIC submitted an [interim report](#) (February 1, 2023) to the Standing Committee with recommendations to help dismantle White supremacy at First Parish. Met with members of the Standing Committee to review that year one report. (April 11, 2023)

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COIC Congregational Recommendations

Education

Expand our congregation's understanding of the [characteristics of White supremacy culture](#) (see Appendix 1) so that people can more easily recognize its influence on our daily lives. Organize a church-wide or community-wide *White Supremacy Teach-in*. (Rev. Paul Langston-Daley has expressed interest in developing a presentation to be shared with congregants and groups.)

Increase parishioner participation in anti-oppression trainings: [Beloved Conversations](#), [Jubilee Three Training](#), [Transforming Hearts](#), [Radicalized Trauma](#).

Offer congregation-wide training in conflict management.

Offer congregation-wide training on microaggressions. COIC believes many in our congregation do not yet fully understand what constitutes a microaggression.

Offer congregation-wide training on intersectionality.

Register and complete [Beloved Conversation - Among - Part II](#), which will involve our entire congregation.

Who We Are

Share the UUA's own history of reckoning with DEAI by screening [The Wilderness Journey](#) movie.

Devote a full church year to congregation-wide, anti-oppression book reading and discussion, where services regularly coordinate with shared readings. Prominent guest speakers/authors could be invited or panels organized, opening these events to the general public. (This could be one important way to grow our congregation.) Shared readings might include: [My Grandmother's Hands](#), [The Warmth of Other Suns](#), [White Fragility](#), [American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World](#), [How to Be An Anti-Racist](#), [The Color of Law](#), [Biased](#), others.

Reexamine the First Parish mission statement to see if the congregation wants to change/add to it. Our current mission is focused on those already part of the community. We may be served

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better by a mission statement that is more outer-directed, reflecting our congregation's anti-oppression work and our desire to welcome new people and grow.

Complete *Welcoming Walls* in Parish Hall, Parlor, Vestibule, hallways, and other public areas to better reflect current First Parish activities, engagement, UU values, and social justice work. We recommend including our commitment to anti-oppression as a central theme. As we continue to celebrate our history and mark anniversaries, COIC suggests information about our church history and past ministers be presented in a more fully balanced way, even when we are not proud of some of our past actions.

The COIC hopes our elected lay leaders and congregants will one day champion the issuing of a public apology, for the past harms done by the institution of First Parish to people of color.

Communications

Solicit media coverage of First Parish's anti-oppression actions, locally and statewide, so that those outside our community know more about what we do and what we care about.

Write a new brochure on First Parish's history that acknowledges its involvement in the institution of slavery and violence against indigenous peoples. (A helpful model is the North Andover UU church brochure [*Hidden in Plain Site*](#).)

Install a plaque or other permanent fixture (outside the building and/or inside, near entrances) acknowledging our church's past role in harming enslaved and indigenous peoples. Name the people enslaved by our former ministers.

New Connections

Learn how other groups have successfully forged relationships with local indigenous people. Establish a First Parish connection with local indigenous people. Under their guidance, craft a land acknowledgement that is meaningful to them. We could incorporate that land acknowledgement in our *Order of Service* and post it at other locations.

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We could study whether any portion of the land First Parish claimed from indigenous people can be returned to its original state or whether we could create another mechanism for reparations.

Explore creating a relationship with other churches, especially those with more diverse congregations, where joint activities can be scheduled. For example, we and a sibling church could share social justice work days or pot luck dinners. This would allow us to form more personal relationships across differences, which is difficult in our less diverse home area.

Our Practices

Examine First Parish practices for choosing lay leaders, to cast a wider net and encourage all people to be considered, rather than our current norms which are often centered on personal relationships and connections. This will likely mean changing how leadership opportunities are communicated to the congregation.

Eliminate, simplify, or reduce reliance on the formality inherent in using [*Robert's Rules of Order*](#) to guide church meetings. These rules can be off-putting to those not familiar with them. Instead, prioritize the inclusion of all voices.

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Operational Recommendations for Staff

Worship Practices

In choosing material for worship services, continue to expand the inclusion of voices and music from traditionally marginalized groups (i.e. indigenous people, Black Americans, Latinx people, others.) [*Voices from the Margins*](#) is a good beginning reference for readings. COIC recognizes the good work Beth Norton has already begun to widen the music we hear during worship services.

Education

Look for opportunities to present anti-oppression content (i.e. films, speakers, curricula) to both children and adults in our community. For example, COIC applauds the work of Rev. Amy Freedman and Dawn Van Patten in introducing the UUA's [*Jubilee Kids*](#) curriculum.

Social Justice Connection

Expand the connection between worship and congregational social justice work. Include relevant groups and committees in planning related services, increase lay participation, and acknowledge First Parish's social justice work in services whenever appropriate.

Look for new ways to expand, coordinate, and recognize programs, activities, and services related to anti-oppression work.

Continually review congregation-wide social justice efforts and continue to facilitate cooperative work and eliminate or reduce redundancy (For example, Diversity, RJAG, Immigration Justice Task Force, etc.)

Hiring

Examine First Parish hiring practices to cast the widest net and reflect progressive hiring trends, like [*Blind Recruitment*](#). This may require different types of outreach and changing where and how staff openings are advertised.

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[Access](#)

Establish a permanent group to attend specifically to the needs of those in our congregation with disabilities.

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Conclusion

Because of the longstanding racialized history of our country, many White people, especially affluent ones, are new to considering the inequities that underpin all our lives. Many of the COIC recommendations are aimed at addressing these inequities. However, we recognize that not all people have spent as much time steeped in these issues as we have during the last three years.

Although this iteration of the First Parish COIC has fulfilled its specific charge, the six of us remain passionate about furthering anti-oppression goals. We hope to see a growing number of the First Parish community commit to this important work of learning and growth, to keep our congregation vibrant and relevant in our changing world.

We remain eager to discuss any aspect of this final report in more detail.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Nobile

Ken Reeves

Toby Smith Ropeik, co-chair

Darien Smith, co-chair

Dana Snyder-Grant

Cindy Soule

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[Appendix I: Characteristics of White Supremacy Culture](#)

We offer the following widely accepted guide for those who may be unfamiliar with the hallmarks of our dominant culture.

Perfectionism

- Little appreciation expressed for others' work
- Criticism more common
- Criticism of person or their work in their absence even more common
- Mistakes seen as personal failings

ANTIDOTES: Develop a culture of appreciation; develop a learning organization, where it's expected that everyone makes mistakes and those mistakes offer opportunities for learning

Sense of Urgency

- Continued sense of little time that undermines inclusivity, and/or democratic and thoughtful decision-making
- This sacrifices potential allies in favor of quick or highly visible results
- Reinforced by funding proposals that promise (and funders that expect) too much for too little

ANTIDOTES: Realistic work plans; leadership that understands that things take longer than anyone expects; discuss and plan for what it means to set goals of inclusivity and diversity, particularly in terms of time; write realistic funding proposals

Defensiveness

- Organization and energy focused on preventing abuse and protecting those in power
- Criticism of those with power viewed as inappropriate
- Difficult to raise new or challenging ideas
- Energy devoted to avoiding hurt feelings and working around defensive people

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ANTIDOTES: Understand how defensiveness is linked to fear (of losing power, face, comfort, privilege); name defensiveness as a problem when it is one

Quantity Over Quality

Measurable things are most valued
Little value attached to process
Discomfort with emotion and feelings

ANTIDOTES: Include process goals in planning; develop a values statement about how work will be done in the organization; develop methods for measuring process; recognize when you need to get off the agenda to address people's feelings and underlying concerns

Worship of the Written Word

Those with strong documentation and writing skills are more highly valued, even in orgs where ability to relate to others is key
The org doesn't value other ways in which information gets shared

ANTIDOTES: Analyze other ways people get and share information; come up with alternative ways to document what is happening; work to recognize the contributions and skills that every person brings to the organization; make sure anything written can be clearly understood (is jargon-free)

Only One Right Way

Belief there is one right way to do things and that people will learn and adopt it When they do not, then something is wrong with *them*

ANTIDOTES: Accept that there are many ways to get to the same goal; notice and name behavior when folks/groups push "one right way"; acknowledge you have a lot to learn from community partners' way of doing; be willing to adapt; never assume you/the organization knows what's best for others

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Paternalism

Decision-making clear to those with power; unclear to those without it
Those with power feel capable of making decisions for and in the interests of those without power
Those with power don't view as important or necessary understanding the views/experience of those for whom they decide

ANTIDOTES: Ensure transparency about decision-making; include people affected by decisions in the process

Either/Or Thinking

Things are either/or, good/bad, right/wrong, with us/against us
No sense that things can be both/and
Results in oversimplifying complex things
Increases sense of urgency that we must do this or that, without time to consider a middle way

ANTIDOTES: When people use 'either/or' language, push for more than two alternatives; when people simplify complex issues, encourage deeper analysis; with urgent decisions, make sure people have time to think creatively

Power Hoarding

Little value around sharing power
Those with power feel threatened when change is suggested & experience this as a judgment of them
They also assume they have everyone's best interests at heart, and that those wanting change are ill-informed, emotional, or inexperienced

ANTIDOTES: Include power-sharing in your org's values statement; discuss that good leaders develop the power and skills of others; understand that change is inevitable and that challenges to leadership can be productive and healthy

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Fear of Open Conflict

People in power try to ignore or run from conflict

When someone raises an “issue,” response is to blame that person rather than look at the issue

Emphasis on being polite, so raising difficult issues is being impolite, rude, or out-of-line

ANTIDOTES: Role play ways to handle conflict before it happens; distinguish between politeness and raising hard issues; once a conflict is resolved, reflect on how it was resolved and/or might have been handled differently

Individualism

Little experience or comfort working as part of a team

People feel responsible for solving problems alone

Accountability goes up and down, not sideways to peers or those whom the organization serves

Desire for individual recognition and credit

Competition valued over collaboration

ANTIDOTES: Include teamwork in your org values statement; make sure that credit is given to all those who participate in an effort, not just the leaders; practice group (not individual) accountability; use meetings to solve problems, not just report activities

I'm the Only One

Connected to individualism, the belief that if something is going to get done right, I have to do it

Little or no ability to delegate work to others

ANTIDOTES: Evaluate people based on their ability to delegate to others; evaluate people based on their ability to work as part of a team to accomplish shared goals

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Progress is Bigger, More

Observed in systems of accountability and success measurement Progress is an org that expands (adds staff, projects, etc.) or serves more people (regardless of quality of service)

Gives no value, not even negative value, to the costs of this so-called progress

ANTIDOTES: Ask how actions today will affect people seven generations from now; ensure that any cost/benefit analysis includes *all* costs, not just financial ones; ask those you work with and for to evaluate your/org performance

Objectivity

Belief that objectivity is possible

That emotions should not play a role in decision-making or group processes

Requiring people to think in a linear fashion and ignoring those who think in other ways

Impatience with any thinking that does not appear logical

ANTIDOTES: Realize that everybody's perspective is shaped by their worldview; realize this means you, too; push yourself to sit with discomfort when people express themselves in ways unfamiliar to you; assume that everybody has a valid point and your job is to understand it

Right to Comfort

Belief that those with power have a right to emotional and psychological comfort

Scapegoating those who cause discomfort

Equating individual acts of unfairness against White people with systemic racism that targets people of color

ANTIDOTES: Understand that discomfort is at the root of all growth and learning; don't take everything personally.