The diagram below provides details and insight regarding these anticipated phases and is designed to support organizations in their transition through their racial equity development in order to deepen their commitment, understanding and analysis.

**SIX PHASES of RACIAL EQUITY PRACTICE**

**Phase I: Familiar Dysfunction**
- **People of Color (POC) often experience:**
  - Unaware of historical impact of race and resulting trauma.
- **Predominately White/White-led organizations are:**
  - Positioning themselves as one of the “good” ones.
- **Equilibrium in the organization begins to shift.**
  - People in the organization begin to develop a shared language and framework for understanding racism.
  - People of Color (POC) are expected to “fit in” to existing culture.
  - Expectations of POC begin to rise, as white people in the organization may become hyper-defensive or sensitive, given the expectation of different behavior.

**Phase II: Explicit Commitment to Racial Equity**
- **Equilibrium in the organization begins to shift.**
  - People in the organization begin to develop a shared language and framework for understanding racism.
  - People of Color (POC) are expected to “fit in” to existing culture.
  - Expectations of POC begin to rise, as white people in the organization may become hyper-defensive or sensitive, given the expectation of different behavior.

**Phase III: Culture Shift/Not Knowing**
- **People of Color (POC) often read white people’s complacency as intentional.**
  - They may also perceive racial equity with the need for white people to change, which can diminish their sense of power and agency, resulting in high levels of frustration and hopelessness.
  - White people begin to question what once seemed certain.
  - Expectations of POC begin to rise, as white people in the organization may become hyper-defensive or sensitive, given the expectation of different behavior.
People start to identify their individual and collective power to make change or shift the organization without focusing on depending on others to change. People continue to identify useful and/or effective ways to disagree, looking for the value in different perspectives while assuming positive intent. Caucuses provide support for people to work through challenges related to racial equity work. People begin to sharpen their skills for holding each other accountable with a sense of possibility rather than judgment.

Relational Trust

Focus on building a culture of appreciation

Begin to identify individual and collective power

People start to identify their individual and collective power to make change or shift the organization without focusing on depending on others to change. People continue to identify useful and/or effective ways to disagree, looking for the value in different perspectives while assuming positive intent. Caucuses provide support for people to work through challenges related to racial equity work. People begin to sharpen their skills for holding each other accountable with a sense of possibility rather than judgment.

Phase IV

Equity Goals Clarified

Explicit Racial Equity Goals Named

Address all 3 levels

Connecting across complexities of the racial equity work

Ready to identify and name specific and explicit racial equity goals at the cultural, institutional and personal levels. Naming these goals now rather than earlier, before the culture shift and “not knowing” stages, allows these goals to address the nuance and complexities in inherent racial equity work. Naming these goals now also means the groundwork has been laid for everyone to understand the integral connection between institutional, cultural and personal work.

Phase V

Equity Practice

Improved open and transparent communication

Culture of support, ongoing learning & accountability

Long-term commitment

Once goals have been clarified, the organization leaps into the racial equity work with an appreciation for complexity, ongoing learning and reflection. The organization works to establish a culture that provides support for accountability, one that presumes good intent while continuously improving on the effort to bring intent and impact closer together through improved communication and mutual respect. The organization understands racial equity as an ongoing practice rather than a specific destination, aligning with the organization’s mission and values.

Phase VI

6 Phases of Racial Equity Practice

addressing all three levels

Organizations move through each of these phases at different paces. Although reaching your organizations racial equity goals may feel urgent, it is important to recognize each phase and work to move through each phase deliberately. Doing this will allow your organization to focus on addressing inequality at the personal, cultural and institutional levels, creating more opportunity for sustainable, systemic change. It is also good to note that organizations may find itself in multiple phases at once, depleting back to a phase depending on changes in leadership within the organization. This is not unusual—goal is to stay committed with a willing and ready team!

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THREE EXPRESSIONS of RACISM

Using this chart, identify how institutional policies and practices reinforce individual acts and how cultural beliefs and norms reinforce institutional policies and practices.

Consider how institutional policies and practices and cultural norms encourage you and your organization to participate and/or collude.

CULTURAL beliefs, values, norms

How do institutional and community beliefs, values, norms validate whiteness and invalidate People and Communities of Color?

PERSONAL individual acts

How are individuals reproducing or colluding with racism in their attitudes and behaviors?

People of Color:

Excluded

Underserved

Financially Exploited

Oppressed/Invalidated

How are white people:

Included

Served

Financially

Resourced

Uplifted/Validated