



# DISCUSSIONS ACROSS DIFFERENCES



WITH

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THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RACE

Produced by Ameren Corporation

## **Facilitator Guide**

## Description

"The Psychology of Race," focuses on how an individual may think about race, racial identity or ethnicity based upon conditioning and experiences. It challenges the participants to develop ways to understand race, its inherent challenges and stereotypes. Participants will be encouraged to appreciate and value racial differences, even when faced with personal biases, in pursuit of a true understanding of diversity.

## Objectives

Participants will be challenged to:

- See race and eliminate "color blindness"
- Understand personal biases
- Value other's differences

## Target Audience

This program is intended for groups, organizations and people interested in building inclusive communities through dialogue and discussion regarding race.

## Background

Our understanding of race has been developed as a social construct that has been created from individual perspectives based upon early development, experiences and external forces, such as the media. Research and science suggests that we are more alike than different, but how we think about race forms our thinking and behavior towards each other and challenges us to think about what it means to be "color blind."

## Tips for Facilitating

Considering the opinions and points of view presented in this video, facilitators will need to focus discussion on those conversations and thoughts that affect inclusion, respect, and valuing others. To best facilitate the discussion, facilitators should **carefully review the video and prepared materials in advance of presentation.**

## Suggested Guidelines:

- As you begin the session, establish ground rules for sharing opinions. Stress the need to be respectful of others.
- Set expectations for the session by sharing the objectives and agenda before the video is shown.
- Provide instructions for capturing discussion outcomes and observations.
- Actively manage time to allow sufficient discussion of each section and capture observations without judgment.
- Anticipate distractions or off topic comments in your session and have statements ready to steer the conversation back on topic. An example includes “That is an interesting comment. Let’s discuss it further after the session to allow time to cover discussion items more directly related to the video”.
- When the session concludes, thank everyone for their participation and courageous conversations.

## Materials and Equipment Needed

- Video: “The Psychology of Race”  
Click on link: <https://youtu.be/Vw8B94owBxE>  
*Wi-Fi or data connection is needed to view video*
- Laptop with Video Screen, or Room with Projector and Screen for showing video
- Flip Chart & Easel, Blackboard, Smart board, or paper to take notes
- Markers or writing instrument
- Facilitator Guide

## Time Requirements

- Room Set-Up: 5 minutes
- Video: 14:09 minute runtime
- Discussion Time: 30 - 40 minutes

## *The Psychology of Race*

### **Introducing the Program**

Welcome participants. Inform participants that the video they are about to view is one that challenges them to think about race and how our personal biases may impact our thinking and behavior towards others.

Give advanced notice that there will be questions following the video for discussion and learning.

Give audience “thinking time” after asking a question. Be prepared to give an example, should there be no responses.

### **View Video (Run Time: 14:09)**

### **Group Discussion**

As each question is discussed, make note of key points on a flip chart or paper. For large audiences (more than 10-12 people), consider dividing into smaller groups to discuss questions. Key points from each small group can be shared with the larger group and captured on the flip chart at the conclusion of their discussion.

## Discussion Questions

1. *When you hear the word “race” what comes to mind?*

**Possible Answers:**

- I think of minorities.
- I think of conflict of some sort.
- I don't think about race
- I think of someone different than me.

2. *What are your thoughts on being “color blind” as it relates to race?*

**Possible Answers:**

- I really don't see color.
- I pay attention to people's actions and do not categorize an entire group of people based upon my experience with one person.
- It's impossible not to see color when you interact with an individual.

3. *How can we acknowledge our biases?*

**Possible Answers:**

- I don't believe that I have biases.
- I treat people fairly or as equals.
- Think about how I was raised or socialized and acknowledge whether or not that conditioning has shaped my views or behavior towards other races.
- Just admit your biases. Do not be ashamed of who you are nor your views.
- Think about our views or actions towards other races in various situations.
- Evaluate our thoughts on education, housing, healthcare, justice system.

4. *The video discusses who sits to together for lunch. What are your thoughts on who you should socialize with during your free time at work?*

**Possible Feedback:**

- There are always cliques in schools and work settings.
- I sit with who I like and am comfortable with—not based upon race or gender
- I never paid attention to this.
- When you see some people sit together, it does make the group look suspicious. This is similar to what happens when groups of certain people gather at the shopping malls.
- People like to be with others who are just like them. It does not mean that they are excluding others.

5. *How can we better understand the experience of others through race?*

**Possible Answers:**

- We can hypothetically place ourselves in their shoes.
- I will never understand but I can show empathy for others.
- It is too difficult to do, because I cannot switch the color of my skin.
- We can listen.
- Show trust and respect.
- Try to incorporate diversity into various phases of daily activities.

## **Review Objectives**

Participants will be challenged to:

- See race and eliminate “color blindness”
- Understand personal biases
- Value other’s differences

## **Closing Comments**

Conclude the session by sharing your organization’s or group’s policy statement or position on diversity. Be sure to thank the participants for their contributions to discussions and for their time.

## **Survey**

Please take a few minutes to complete a brief survey on the *Discussions Across Differences* video series:

Click on link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DiscussionsAcrossDifferences>

***Let's keep the dialogue going.***