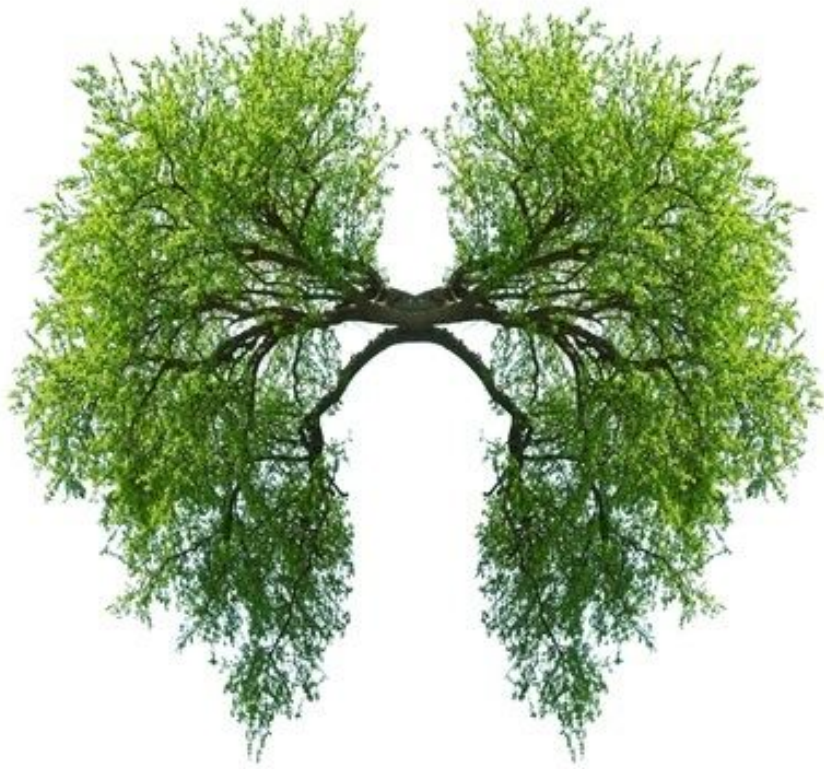




Embracing Equity

Wholeness Opening



SESSION 5:

Continuing Development



CRITICAL ACTION IS AN
ONGOING JOURNEY



Recommit to Group Norms (about 15 minutes)

Take time now to silently review the group norms. Remind yourself of the group's commitment to these norms. Also recognize that it is hard to perfectly follow every norm in every conversation. Therefore, as you review the group norms, identify one norm that you want to focus on for this specific session and be intentional about re-committing to it. This will help you recognize and actively practice these norms and translate them to other aspects of your life.

Have each group member briefly SHARE:
Which norm do you want to focus on during this specific conversation and why?

Circle of Trust® Touchstones

developed by Parker J. Palmer and the Center for Courage & Renewal
www.couragerenewal.org

Learn more about Circles of Trust® at www.couragerenewal.org/approach

Give and receive welcome.

People learn best in hospitable spaces. In this circle we support each other's learning by giving and receiving hospitality.

Be present as fully as possible.

Be here with your doubts, fears and failings as well as your convictions, joys and successes, your listening as well as your speaking.

What is offered in the circle is by invitation, not demand.

This is not a "share or die" event! Do whatever your soul calls for, and know that you do it with our support. Your soul knows your needs better than we do.

No fixing, saving, advising or correcting.

This is one of the hardest guidelines for those of us who like to "help." But it is vital to welcoming the soul, to making space for the inner teacher.

Speak your truth in ways that respect other people's truth.

Our views of reality may differ, but speaking one's truth in a Circle of Trust does not mean interpreting, correcting or debating what others say. Speak from your center to the center of the circle, using "I" statements, trusting people to do their own sifting and winnowing.

Learn to respond to others with honest, open questions...

instead of counsel or corrections. With such questions, we help "hear each other into deeper speech."

When the going gets rough, turn to wonder.

If you feel judgmental, or defensive, ask yourself, "I wonder what brought her to this belief?" "I wonder what he's feeling right now?" "I wonder what my reaction teaches me about myself?" Set aside judgment to listen to others—and to yourself—more deeply.

Trust and learn from the silence.

Silence is a gift in our noisy world, and a way of knowing in itself. Treat silence as a member of the group. After someone has spoken, take time to reflect without immediately filling the space with words.

Observe deep confidentiality.

A Circle of Trust depends on knowing that whatever we say will remain with the people to whom we choose to say it — whether in small groups or in the large circle — and will never be passed on to others without our explicit permission.

Attend to your own inner teacher.

We learn from others, of course. But as we explore poems, stories, questions and silence in a Circle of Trust, we have a special opportunity to learn from within. So pay close attention to your own reactions and responses, to your most important teacher.

Know that it's possible...

to leave the circle with whatever it was that you needed when you arrived, and that the seeds planted here can keep growing in the days ahead.



Transforming Society

Taking Critical Action and Activism as a Montessorian

We define critical consciousness as an ability to recognize, understand, and reflect on interlocking systems of oppression and to take action to resist them⁴. Critical consciousness involves reflection on the interaction of privilege and oppression in your daily life, as well as reflection on how systems of oppression are institutionalized. In addition to reflection, critical consciousness includes action to resist oppression. Taking action in your personal life includes ways take a lot of different forms: (1) interpersonal relationships; (2) conversations you have with others about the systems of oppression (e.g., socializing one another's critical consciousness versus bigotry talk). Action within larger social systems includes joining together with other people to build a community of resistance that will collectively work toward dismantling systems of oppression.

The development of critical consciousness is important in teacher training because it contributes to teacher competence in classroom culture, student assessment, discipline, and family engagement⁵. In the process of developing critical consciousness, teachers are challenged to explore power dynamics in the classroom. This enables teachers to incorporate an understanding of how sociopolitical and economic systems shape people's experiences. In turn, informed by such understanding, the teacher's ability to validate human experiences and establish alliance increases.

The development of critical consciousness also involves recognizing and challenging personal biases regarding aspects of social identity such as race, gender, or nation of origin; this in turn provides for a deeper understanding of how internalized and interpersonal oppression shape teaching practices. Moreover, an understanding of the institutionalized oppression enables teachers to support students' resistance to unjust structures and practices.



Final Project: Create a TOOL for Critical Consciousness

Choose one of the following options, or create your own! The goal of this tool is for it to be useful for you in your day-to-day teaching practice.

___ **Scorecard on Lessons:** Create a tool to evaluate the Critical Consciousness in your lesson plans. Use these scorecard weekly with at least one of your lessons.

___ **Reading List:** Create a list of at least 5 books you will include in your classroom for the age-group of your students that promote critical consciousness.

___ **Learning to Cultivate Classroom Culture:** What are at least 3 classroom culture techniques that promote critical consciousness? How and why? Implement these in your classroom.

___ **Responding to Trauma:** Write a 1-2 page reflection and synthesis of race-based trauma and some relevant resources that you could utilize to support students.

___ **Student Activism:** Help students develop their identities as activists by intentionally highlighting how students are doing critical action inside or outside of the classroom.

Transforming Society

Taking Critical Action and Activism as a Montessorian

- **Sign up on the chat box to create a roster**
- **Share your project**
 - **If time allows, ask for insights and feedback.**
- **Any questions?**



REFLECT and then **SHARE:**

What are the major understandings and actions steps you are taking away?

Post-Embracing Equity Survey

Please take 10-15 minutes now to fill out the Post-Embracing Equity Closing Survey.

If you are interested in being part of the continuous development and growth of Embracing Equity, be sure to fill out the survey [here](#).

Appreciations



Embracing
Equity

What's Next?



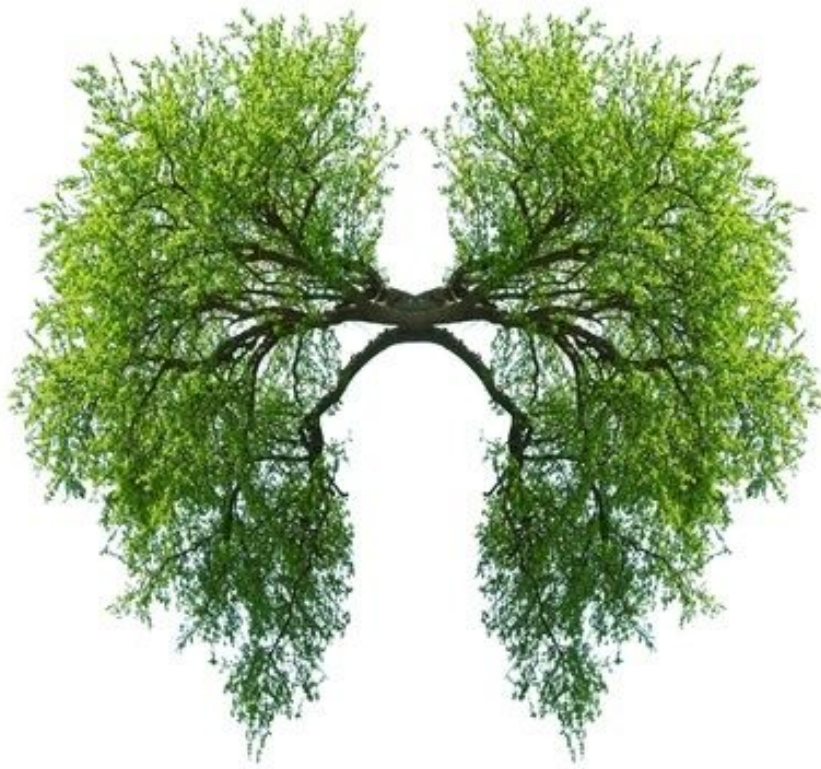
Congratulations, you have completed Embracing Equity! However, the work is not finished, it is just beginning. Becoming a critically conscious individual and educator is a process that is ongoing and always requires reflection and analysis of self and systems of oppression that are preventing marginalized populations from having access to fair and equal rights. It is important to view this as a developmental process. Embracing Equity provided a beginning for this work, but it is up to you to maintain awareness on issues that impact black and brown children, children from low income communities, students with disabilities, and students living in urban and rural areas. Upon learning about these issues, you have the responsibility to act and fight for equity for all. Throughout your development, you will make mistakes. Owning up to your shortcomings and admitting when you have allowed your privilege to overshadow your better judgment of creating an equitable environment is the only way to correct your mistakes. If this is new for you, it will feel uncomfortable. We are urging you to lean into this discomfort, because the discomfort that students of color face every day goes beyond what you may feel in that one moment. Remember Embracing Equity is about your growth, but the transformation that you experience must be used for the good of others.

As you appreciate the development you have experienced from Embracing Equity, please share with your network. Building critical consciousness is work that everyone must complete. Educators have an added responsibility to deliver critically conscious instruction, but this work is needed in every aspect of life. As you reflect on what is next, sharing Embracing Equity with your family, friends, colleagues, and anyone who needs an awareness of how to transform society should be at the top of your list. The work of developing racial identity to become critically conscious in order to transform society is a large task. One person cannot do this on their own. Please share and help us use Embracing Equity to build more activists in our society.

"Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet depreciate agitation, are those who want crops without plowing up the ground."

-Frederick Douglass

Wholeness Closing



Thank you!

