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How did we get here?

On September 19, 2019, the Arlington County Board adopted an Equity Resolution to examine and address racial inequities. Arlington, as well as cities across the nation, are grappling with historical policies and practices that have resulted in residential segregation, which in turn has created racial inequities in food security, housing security, income security as well as gross disparities in access to healthcare, education and worker protections. While there is strong political will to examine and address racial inequities in Arlington, without a shared understanding and informed examination of the impact of historically unfair systems, new policies supporting racial equity, diversity and inclusion may remain mostly on paper, no matter the good intentions of the plan.

Challenging Racism is an Arlington-based 501(c)3 organization focused on educating people about the prevalence and inequities of institutional and systemic racism, and giving them the knowledge and tools to disrupt racism where they encounter it – in their family, work and community.

We are excited to partner with **Arlington County** to support the Arlington County Manager's Office in its initial effort to open connection with the community on race and racial equity in a series of conversations that foster greater understanding of the issues, provide skills to support productive conversations, and generate interest in further engagement.

Over the long term, these efforts can move us forward to a common goal and vision of...

"What does racial equity in Arlington look like, and how can we get there?"



A Conversation On Privilege

Agenda

Welcome and Introductions

- Welcome
- Leader Introduction
- Housekeeping

Guidelines for Discussion

Beginning our Conversation - Connecting with one another.

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- **Activity 1: Introduction - Connecting with one another**
- **Activity 2: Introduction - Connecting with one another**
- **Activity 3: Arlington Housing - Bringing it home**

What Can You Do? What is your commitment to racial equity?.

Wrap up and Closing



Guidelines for Discussion

"There is value in learning to speak together honestly and to relate to each other with dignity, without rushing to common ground that would leave all the hard questions hanging. We learn to speak differently in order to live together differently."

From Better Conversations: A Starter Guide - On Being Civil Conversations Project

Structure helps create a respectful and brave space.

We ask for a different kind of seeing, listening, and speaking.

Here are our basic guidelines:

- o Listen deeply - to others, to yourself
- o We don't have to agree
- o Accept discomfort
- o Expect and accept lack of closure
- o Equity of Airtime; 3 before me - let three more people speak before you speak again
- o Both/And - not binary; Complexity; Not either/or
- o Use I language; Speak for yourself/own experience
- o Lean into curiosity
- o Remember to breathe

Beginning our Conversation: Connecting with one another

We want to give you an opportunity to open up and connect with each other and to share what you hope to gain from these conversations.

Go around the group and share one word that describes how you are feeling right now in this space with this group.

After that is finished, go around and share what you hope to gain from the conversations.



A DISCUSSION ON PRIVILEGE

Developing Common Understanding - Definitions

Privilege - Privilege can be defined as a set of unearned benefits given to people who fit into a specific social group. Society grants privilege to people because of certain aspects of their identity including race, class, gender, sexual orientation, language, geographical location, ability, and religion, to name a few.

White Privilege/Advantage -White privilege (or white skin privilege) is a variety of opportunities and preferences assigned to White people because of their race, which are unavailable to people of color. These advantages bestow power on White people, whether White people intend or not.

Systemic Racism/Structural Racism - Systemic Racism or structural racism involves levels of racism built right into every level of our society in ways that might surprise you. This kind of racism infects the very structure of our society.



What can you do?

No one is without agency or power.

But we have seen in our discussion that there are systems in place that convey advantage or privilege to certain members of our society and it is hard to deny that the advantage falls primarily to white people.

Here are some questions that might help guide your thinking as you begin to make a plan for taking action.

- What is your circle of influence?
- Do you lead a company?
- Do you coach a team?
- Do you belong to a civic organization?
- Are you part of a community of faith?
- What is your superpower?
- What do you see in your circle of influence that needs to change?

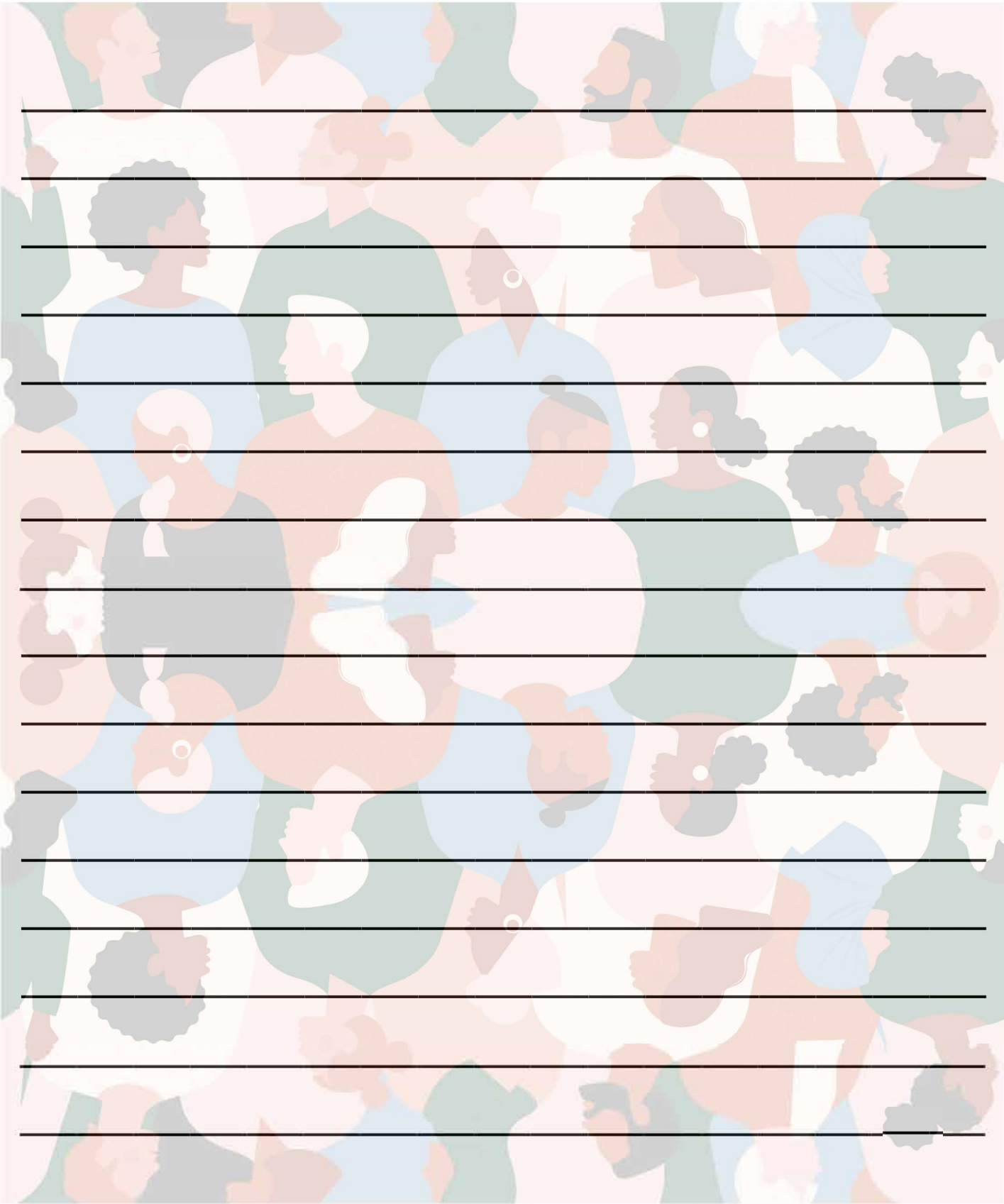
For more information on Arlington County DRE use the link below.

<https://topics.arlingtonva.us/equity/dre/>

[Please fill out the online feedback form.](#)



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