



# 'You Can't Lift People Up by Putting Them Down':

How to Talk About Tough Issues of Race, Poverty, and More



# Directions



1. Scan the QR code and read the article. (10 minutes)
2. The Power of the Pause  
Finish your sentence, not your paragraph
3. Pair and Share  
Find someone whose name you don't already know, introduce yourself and discuss the Group 1 quote and questions. (6 minutes)
4. Pair, Square  
Find another pair and make a group of four. Discuss your answers to the Group 1 questions. (6 minutes)
5. New Pair  
Create a new pair with someone in your group and discuss the Group 2 quote and questions.
5. Repeat Pair Share, Pair Square for Group questions 2-5.



*"Our premise is that defining people by their aspirations and contributions is essential **before** acknowledging their challenges and investing in them for their continued benefit to society."*

- Can asset-framing for equity be applied to the unhoused population? If so, how?
- How might we (service providers) benefit from defining a person by their aspirations and contributions before acknowledging their challenges and providing services or programs?

### **GROUP 1**



*"Stigmatizing narratives are especially powerful because our brains categorize stigmatized things as inherently threatening. That's why we instinctively want to avoid, control, or kill spiders, rats, and roaches. We have a similar aversion to anything stigmatized (including "at-risk urban youths")."*

- Who else do we talk about disparagingly or in a patronizing way in our systems? Who else has been stigmatized by threatening narratives?
- Is there an element of threat and/or control in the way services are provided to the people you work with?

## **Group 2**





*"the simple practice of defining people by their aspirations and contributions prevents "dehumanization" and impairs stigmatization... It is also a more accurate depiction of the realities people face."*

- What are some common narratives you hear on a daily basis?
- What are some of the realities that the people receiving services are facing?

### **Group 3**



*"the simple practice of defining people by their aspirations and contributions prevents "dehumanization" and impairs stigmatization... It is also a more accurate depiction of the realities people face."*

- How might the system be impacting individuals who receive services?
- How might we reframe common narratives to offer "something much more accurate, more inspiring and more effective" at revealing the inequities present?

### **Group 4**



*"...in that reality, we are primed to fix the system rather than stigmatize the person."*

- What is your role in changing the narrative?
- Why is this important?

### **Group 5**

# Directions

1. Thank your group and return to your seat.
2. Pick a question from the following list and discuss with the people at your table.







## *Large Group Discussion:*

- What are some of the systemic causes behind homelessness, and how can they be addressed?
- How can we shift the narrative around homelessness from one of blame and stigmatization to one of support and understanding?
- How can we engage with unhoused individuals in a way that acknowledges their dignity and agency?

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*Thank You!*

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