



# HEALING TOGETHER:

ADDRESSING SLAVERY IN OUR FAMILIES' HISTORIES

A CLASS PROJECT

## GUIDEBOOK

PRESENTED BY:



COMING TO THE TABLE

A PROJECT OF EASTERN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY'S  
CENTER FOR JUSTICE AND PEACEBUILDING





# HEALING TOGETHER:

ADDRESSING SLAVERY IN OUR FAMILIES' HISTORIES



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## PROLOGUE

**W**ith the election of Barack Obama as the first African American president of the United States, many people breathed a sigh of relief. Finally, they thought, we can move on as a nation, out from under the shadow of slavery and racism directed toward African Americans. However, although in the legal sense slavery in the United States ended well over a century ago, its impact remains with us as individuals, families, communities, and as a nation to this very day.

Research tells us that unresolved trauma can be passed through generations, which can often result in prolonged feelings of uneasiness and ambiguity. (See for example, Lev-Wiesel, "Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma across Three Generations" and Kellerman, "Epigenetic Transmission of Holocaust Trauma: Can Nightmares be Inherited," both cited in Resource List at the end of this guidebook.) Furthermore, the "rationale" for racism in this country is historically grounded in the construction of laws, beliefs, and practices that supported the implementation of the enslavement of Africans. Therefore, to uproot racism of all kinds, we need to confront this history.

The purpose of **Healing Together: Addressing Slavery in Our Families' Histories** was to introduce community members to the genealogical research related to their family's connection to slavery while engendering an emotional healing journey towards individual and community reconciliation of America's most "Peculiar Institution."

Our experience as the facilitators of the course was inspiring and rewarding, as we were privileged to witness the formation of a new body of people committed to work together toward personal and communal transformation. Through this guidebook to the class we offer our experience as a resource to a wider network.

*"Seeking to transform an old legacy of pain, injustice, denial and disconnection into a new legacy of healing, justice, honesty and connection, by acknowledging and addressing the truth about slavery in America's history, and its continuing impact on our lives today."*

NEW LEGACY PUGET SOUND MISSION STATEMENT, AUGUST 2010

## NEW LEGACY PUGET SOUND

**I**n 2008 New Legacy Puget Sound began when six Puget Sound area women with prior connections through their work with Coming to the Table (see description below), a public library film series on the historical harms of American slavery, and healing retreats for those with family links to slavery decided to start meeting regularly.

Three of these women were of African descent and had ancestors who had been enslaved; three were of European descent and had ancestors who had been enslavers or had been involved in the slave trade. All of the women had a connection with Coming to the Table; one of the Coming to the Table founders was a participant, one of the group's member served on the advisory board, another on the community practice board.

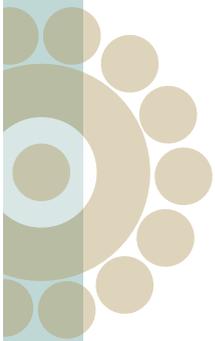
Each member of the group brought not only personal and professional resources, but had larger community connections. For example, one was the president of a local African American historical society; another was a reference librarian.

New Legacy Puget Sound began as an informal meeting time to come together to talk, process, and most importantly, to create a supportive community for healing the hurts from the legacy of slavery. As a result of meeting monthly for approximately two years, the six women grew into a cohesive group that wanted to take further action and give something back to the larger Puget Sound community.

After some discussion the idea for presenting a class emerged. This class would focus on the goal of healing through genealogical research and connection between descendants of those who had been enslavers and those who had been enslaved.

As the plans for the class progressed, the questions of mission and vision began to materialize. The importance of group identity became apparent as the goals and objectives of the class were being discussed and beginning to take shape.

Since the class would be their first project working as a group, roles had to be more clearly defined, and responsibilities doled out. What emerged was a consensus model where all acted in both support and leadership roles. For example, the two group members that were the facilitators also played other



roles, such as interviewing, creating application forms, and bringing needed supplies. If one of the facilitators could not attend, another member of the group would step in to assist, etc.

Although sponsoring the Healing Together class greatly strengthened our relationships, the importance of New Legacy Puget Sound being formed before the class began cannot be overstated. New Legacy Puget Sound had prior relationships with each other, with the community, and was able to tap into existing connections. Our own experience in providing for one another a safe, healing atmosphere allowed New Legacy Puget Sound to push into a challenging area where others would witness our living model of healing, history, connection and action.

## COMING TO THE TABLE

Coming to the Table seeks to acknowledge, understand and heal the persistent wounds of the institution of slavery and its aftermath.

Coming to the Table's co-founders Susan Hutchison and Will Hairston, both white descendants of slaveholders, met in 2004. Based on their very positive experiences with "linked descendants" (descendants of people enslaved by their ancestors) and their passion for ending racism, Susan and Will approached Eastern Mennonite University about sponsoring a gathering of "linked descendants." The university agreed and contributed valuable expertise in the fields of trauma and restorative justice.

Since the pilot Coming to the Table event in 2006, the project has received funding from the Fetzer Institute and the Kellogg Foundation and has expanded to include many descendants of slaves and slaveholders, as well as others interested in furthering the project's mission of addressing slavery's legacies in the United States.



## THE COMING TO THE TABLE MODEL: HEALING HISTORICAL HARMS

**O**ur approach to teaching the Healing Together class was grounded in a model called Healing Historical Harms.

This framework emerged over the early years of Coming to the Table; it was developed and articulated by Amy Potter Czajkowski and David Anderson Hooker of the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University in conversation with Coming to the Table members. The premise of the Healing Historical Harms strategy is that effective work to confront and remedy the lingering legacy of historical injustices must address four areas: history, healing, connecting, and action. While efforts in any one of these arenas are valuable, to get the necessary traction to transform persons and communities there must be a focus on all four.

In an unpublished article on this approach, Potter Czajkowski shows how the four elements work together:

Learning the **history** of all sides involved in the event or on-going events exposes the roots of the harm. Emotional and spiritual **healing** of the hurt left over and passed between generations enables clear flexible thinking and the possibility of reaching out to or receiving someone on the other side of the impact of the harms. **Connecting** and forming community with the “other” enable alliances that can build a critical, representative group to sort through the impacts of the harms and plan for a different future. Finally, **action** is required so that the harm is stopped and does not continue to hurt others and get passed between generations (*emphasis added*).

After participating in trainings in using the Healing Historical Harms framework, the Healing Together facilitators took the opportunity to incorporate the four components at all levels of our class, and they interacted organically in the curriculum.

We addressed history chiefly through genealogical research, which was a central focus of our sessions; we also assigned and discussed readings on slavery as it existed in the United States. Telling the stories that emerged from the family history research became an invaluable practice for strengthening our connections. We chose an African American church and historical museum as venues for our sessions to expose the participants to local black

history, but this choice was also a way to take action in support of black institutions. By regularly sharing the impact of the class on their relationships and actions outside our sessions, the participants became increasingly aware of their own process of healing and of the power of the connections we were making with one another

Any given project may incorporate the four elements in its own unique way, with activities varying according to needs, vision, and context. For example, although genealogical research can be a significant part of such a project no matter where it is taking place, our own location in the Pacific Northwest (Seattle, Washington), where there are no physical sites directly linked to the enslavement of African Americans, limited our options for the kind of historical work we could do. In other parts of the United States, the class could include visits to plantations or walking Black heritage trails. Furthermore, there is no one correct order to follow in terms of the components and not every project needs to include each one equally. In our case connection seemed to be the logical starting point to set the stage for addressing history in Class 2, in which an unanticipated situation prompted us to focus on healing in Class 3. Our overall experience suggests that, wherever you begin, eventually you will want at least to touch on each of the elements. Together they seem to act like legs of a table in providing a stable foundation for the efforts to have some traction.



## THE ALLIED MODEL: A BUDDING THEORY

**W**hen we began this work we simply embraced the lessons and materials from the trainings that we had received from Coming to the Table. We took the healing, connection, history and action model and began to craft a curriculum based on its tenets, adding elements from our respective academic and professional experiences.

It worked – really worked! So we had to back up and ask the question: Why? What made the Healing Historical Harms model so effective? We realized that Healing Historical Harms provided a solid **strategy**, but what we needed was a **theory** to show not how, but why it was working.

We have drawn on both of our academic backgrounds, as well as our life experiences, to come up with a budding theory. What follows here is, of course, a work in progress; but we wanted to share with you some of our thinking to provide a framework for your own projects.

We posit that this approach works because we as **humans being each have an innate need for mutuality**. Each of us has a need for positive affirmation. There is a concept in psychology developed by Heinz Kohut called mirroring: as infants we each need our parents/caregivers to acknowledge what we are feeling, and through that acknowledgment we begin to develop a sense of self-worth. This need continues throughout our lives. This model works because it taps into that need; as we went through the classes we made sure that we built a container that acknowledged and gave equal weight to the feelings that came up as we did the work.

We are also aware that oppression produces a legacy of dysfunction in all of us, and it creates **different expressions of that dysfunction** or pain or anger or shame in different groups, depending upon their particular historical relationship to that legacy. In exploring and acknowledging the pain of the past, we also worked with the group to help them recognize the differences between African American and European American expressions.

Healing is not only one of the foundational elements in the Healing Historical Harms approach, it was also in the title of our series, Healing Together: Addressing the Legacy of Slavery in Our Families' Histories; and the group came into the experience committed to healing as a goal. As a crucial theo-

retical component, we define **healing specifically as distinct from coping**. The effectiveness of this model is related to the motivational power of transformation.

Finally, during the course all became **committed to being allies to each other** – not just white allies in support of African Americans, but those of European descent realizing that they likewise needed the support of those of African descent as allies. Being an ally means using all of the empathy we can bring to bear, and then asking how we can help. We do not assume that everyone wants or needs help, but that we all need to be acknowledged. The theory behind our work then consisted of four parts:

1. Acknowledgement of each other’s humanity and of the need to be in positive relationships. This reciprocity contributes to a sense of self-worth through mutual acceptance.
2. Recognizing the different expressions of the result of oppression depending on where one stands in relationship to the legacy of oppression, as targeted or privileged.
3. Forming a commitment to healing not coping. This is commitment that takes us out of our comfort zone, but facilitates true reconciliation.
4. Commitment to be allies to each other, not just European Americans to African Americans, but one to another.

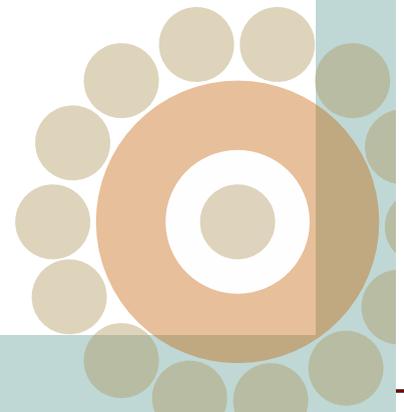
As you begin to develop your own classes or courses, please feel free to contact us with any thoughts, or insights that you may have as you observe the participants in your project.



## A WORD ABOUT THE USE OF LANGUAGE

**W**e acknowledge that words have power, and we have tried to be thoughtful in our use of the terms that have become labels for heavily weighted social realities of unjust human relationships. Accordingly, in recognition that the capture, subjugation, and trading of African peoples were violent acts of aggression to which the targeted people did not agree and that did not diminish their full humanity, we choose to refer to these people not as “slaves,” but as “enslaved persons.” Following the same thinking, we use the terms “enslavers” and “slaveholders,” rather than “slave owners.” However, we use the language both of “enslavement” to speak of the process of the enactment of the oppression and of “slavery” to describe the resulting institution.

As racial identifiers we use “European descent,” “European Americans,” and “white” to designate those on the privileged side of the equation, while “African descent,” “African Americans,” and “black” are the terms employed for those targeted by oppression. We anticipate that our choices will not please everyone, but our intention is not to offend.



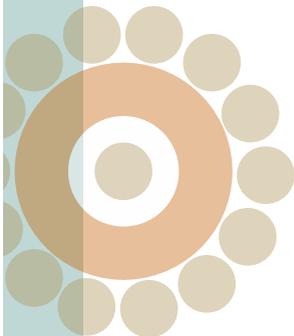
# HOW TO USE THIS GUIDEBOOK

Be flexible! We are excited to share our recipe with you, but you of course will be using local ingredients. Our experience was shaped by the resources we had at hand, including the skills and talents of our planning group, our contacts with the larger community, and the wonderful individuals who offered themselves as participants for the class.

Your version of the course will obviously reflect your own vision, needs, and strategy for using the raw materials available to you.

Furthermore, one of the gifts to us in writing this guidebook was the realization of how we ourselves learned to be flexible in responding to the organic flow of the class. Although we planned meticulously for each session, we frequently found ourselves looking at each other and saying, "Let's go with it!", as a class member would share an insight too precious to table for later discussion. In Part IV of this guidebook, the lesson plans reflect a mix of our original ideas for each class session and what actually happened!

The layout of the guidebook generally follows the path from the inception of the project of the class through its implementation and ending with options for evaluation. Part I presents factors for consideration even before the actual organization of the class itself, while Part II covers the basics of the curriculum and the resources necessary to implement it. Part III gives guidelines for identifying and recruiting participants. Parts IV and V feature the plans for each class and for the culminating public presentation, respectively, including detailed descriptions of key activities. Part VI is on evaluation. At the back of the guidebook are appendices, including templates and examples of forms; class handouts; advertising materials; and lists of resources.



# PART I: GETTING STARTED

## The Work Before the Work

Prior to any organizing venture, there is work to be done on multiple levels, starting with the personal. This class requires a significant investment of energy and an inner commitment. Be very, very clear about why it is you want to form a class like this. Keep in mind the following as you begin:

- As you go through each of these questions, remember that only you can really answer them.
- Work like this should ideally be done with allies, people that you know and trust to give you loving honest feedback to help you decide how ready you are.
- No matter how long you've been doing work like this, we would suggest that you ask yourself these questions, and revisit them on a regular basis.

We suggest the following questions to guide your self-reflection:

1. What is my vision and/or mission? Look at the broad purpose of your work. Example: "A world that works for everybody and where no body's left out."
2. What is the current manifestation of the work? What is my portal? Describe your project and approach.
3. What is my stake in this work? Identify the personal benefit to you from doing this work.
4. What is my ideal job description? What am I called to do? Announce your vocation. Get at your passions, work preferences, role in the project.
5. What do I bring to this work? Make an inventory of your personal and professional strengths, skills, operational styles.
6. Who is part of my current "posse"? My beginning network? Who are my conversation partners? What are their roles? Identify your current conversation partners, supporters, collaborators and their investment.

7. What practices and behaviors do I have in place to support my well-being as I do this work? Name what you do on a regular basis to restore yourself.

8. How does this work shape your agenda for your personal healing? Reflect on the issues and questions that you anticipate (or already know) this work will bring to the surface.

## Forming a Group to Create the Class

If you are deciding that this is the path that you'd like to take, one of the first things to think about is who you are going to do this with. Finding like-minded individuals is going to be important. Do understand that by "like-minded" we mean people who understand, share, and are willing to work towards the mission, vision and goals of this project. We don't mean that each and every person you work with needs to have the same background or belief system. As a matter of fact, you will need individuals that represent the constituent group you will be targeting and eventually working with. One way to explore the extent of shared values is to have each potential participant consider the questions presented in the section above on "The Work before the Work."

Finding and forming a group to create this class will take time; time to identify group members, time to meet and gel as a group, time to lay out a common mission & common goals. We cannot emphasize enough that this first step is crucial.

## Leadership and Roles

Once you identify a group clearly defining roles is your next step. The two basic roles that we identified were facilitators and support team. We also formed committees and developed a task matrix for accountability and timeliness.

### ***Facilitators***

Identifying facilitators for this class is an important step to take early on in the process. Their role includes devising the syllabus, planning and implementing the individual sessions, and for the duration of the class coordinating the efforts of the support team.

Important skills for facilitators to bring to the table are curriculum development and teaching; experience in the one of more of the areas of diversity education, anti-racism training, or multi-generational trauma healing is also

invaluable. Because of their responsibilities and expertise, the facilitators' honoraria are the costliest line item in the project budget. The sooner the facilitation role is filled, the quicker the whole team can relax and focus enthusiastically on the project.

We strongly recommend having two facilitators. Although initially we were thinking of having only one facilitator, we quickly realized that co-facilitation was a better strategy for a number of reasons. First, team leadership modeled the essential components of connection and healing in every class session. The harms done by the institution of slavery have everything to do with separation, alienation, and disruption of relationships. So, co-facilitation gave ongoing, concrete evidence that addressing slavery can mean creation of healthy relationships.

Having two facilitators also creates continuity. Should one of the facilitators be absent, there is no break in the curriculum presentation. Having another member of your group substitute for an absent facilitator may or may not be necessary depending on the lesson plan for the class. Either way, with two you will maintain continuity. Furthermore, with two facilitators, we had a wider range of complementary gifts and skills to draw from. In our case, Pat's competence as a psychologist and Ann's pastoral experience with individuals and groups meant that from our different vantage points we could work together to create a safe environment for participants to share deep feelings and commitments. On a practical level, we also had more options for working in different configurations to attend to the needs of participants in the moment.

For example, if one student was having particular difficulty, one facilitator could speak to her privately without disrupting the flow of the session. By the time the class ended, we realized that neither one of us could have done even half as good a job of facilitation alone!

It is important to note that we are using a facilitation model as opposed to a teacher/student model. We found that the individuals that are ready to participate in the classes bring experience, wisdom, and insight to the table. These are gifts that could and should be readily shared with all.

Facilitators will act as guides, mediators, and as a valuable resource. Having at least one African American facilitator is essential. In New Legacy Puget Sound class, two women of African descent emerged as the facilitators, in contrast to the general practice in much anti-racism and diversity work of interracial leadership teams. Although we were selected because of our skills and experience and not because of race, we realized that having African Americans in this key role turned out to work as an unanticipated benefit. Our leadership was a weekly example of changing the legacy of

slavery by modeling what those changes could and would look like. Also, as facilitators, we drew on the skills of the white members in the larger, racially balanced support team, to provide leadership where appropriate. We are not prescribing this set-up for every circumstance, but once again we are suggesting you think flexibly about resources available to you.

The facilitators will act as a voice of leadership during the duration of the class. They (or one) will be the designated contact person who both sends and receives pertinent information. Although others in your group who will be acting in a support role may be charged with finding certain things (e.g., locating space, identifying speakers, etc.), having one or two people in charge of getting the information out keeps the chance for communication errors down.

The individuals selected should be experienced facilitators. They must be able to sit comfortably with intense feelings and conflict; know when to intervene and redirect energies in the room; give equal time to all members of the class; respect those who are more introverted, while inviting everyone into the discussion; and to be an attentive, holding presence for the sometimes highly-charged work of healing. The facilitators must also be willing and able to commit to four to six hours a week outside of class to work on the lesson plans, revamp the material as needed, and to debrief.

### ***Support Team***

The members of New Legacy Puget Sound were both the planning and the support team for the class. In this latter role, **their main function was to create a caring environment in which the class could engage in the difficult work of confronting the legacy of slavery.**

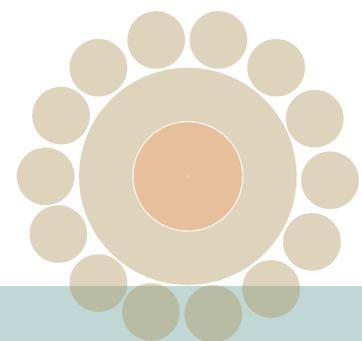
The support team was present for every class (as much as their individual schedules allowed) and took on various tasks as needed. For some discussions and activities, they participated as class members; but because of time limitations, they often had to refrain from sharing. This necessity caused some tension because New Legacy Puget Sound and class members alike were eager to hear from everyone in the room; however, we have been able to address this situation in the second series of classes in which everyone gets to share on an equal footing. Keeping the class size to a minimum of ten is our suggestion.

The support team also took on many of the chores associated with the final presentation, including planning, set-up, and clean-up, although class members pitched in fully in this effort. The specific roles within the support team may vary depending on the make-up of your group, the needs of the class, etc., but the following tasks we found to be crucial:

- **Community resource contact:** A person or persons should be designated to research and contact local genealogical groups, libraries, museums, etc. This support role will be responsible for interactions with community resource groups, including collecting materials, disseminating information, and, if need be, coordinating activities and/or speakers.
- **Class material:** This support position will be responsible for gathering notebooks, pens, pencils, paper, flip charts, name tags, and other class room materials. For our group the individual that took this role on also took on the task of locating and purchasing a timeline of United States history by Howard Zinn. She was also able to locate recycled notebooks that were donated to our group.
- **Food:** If the group decides that snacks, coffee, water, and tea are in order, and there is money in the budget, this support role is essential. Even though you may not have the money you can always ask the class members to bring things to share. Whichever route you choose, having one person to coordinate food and beverages cuts down on chaos.
- **Timekeeper:** We cannot stress how crucial this role is! The topics you will be discussing are emotional and people tend to dominate if not held to time limits. The timekeeper will work closely with the facilitators during the class time. This person should have a stop watch or some timing device that is audible to the group. In addition this person should be comfortable cutting people off when it is time.
- **Ancestry.com coordination:** This support role will be responsible for coordinating sign-up for class members on Ancestry.com. Figure out in advance if you would like to pay for individual memberships, or if you would like to reimburse class members. The person in this role will have the responsibility of checking with Ancestry.com ahead of time to find out what the payment options are.

### ***Committees & Task Matrix***

One of the best ways to ensure that all support tasks are completed and assigned is to form committees within your group. This way the responsibilities fall on several individuals, lightening the load. Below is a Task Matrix that New Legacy Puget Sound created along with committees, responsibilities, and a timeline. (See Appendices on the next two pages for template).



## Task Matrix

<b>Task</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Person(s)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Room Rental	ASAP 08/24/2010	Pat R.	Pat R. will email Amy to request \$250.00 in advance for Mt. Zion room rental & 501c (3) proof
Project Description	09/04/2010	Pat R. Ann Elly	Pat R. will send out the first draft by 08/24/2010
Participant Criteria & Application Development	09/30/2010	Pat R. Mary Susan	
Curriculum Development	Draft by 09/30/2010	Pat R. Ann Susan	Class outline by 10/30/2010
Event Promotion/Media	09/30/2010	Pat R. Pat M-T.	EMU will assist with press release, etc.
Recruitment Strategy	10/01/2010 Through 11/20/2010	Pat R. Ann Susan	
Material Prep & Logistics	Ongoing (???)	Elly	

## Funding

Facilitators – 2	\$ 3,600
Materials – includes copying, office supplies, notebooks, etc.	\$ 300
Refreshments/Food – includes food for final event	\$ 500
Space rental – includes final event space rental	\$ 1,200
Honoraria for outside speaker	\$ 100
Ancestry.com 1 month subscriptions (includes the two month free trial, which totals 6 weeks of access)	\$ 280
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 5,980</b>

Identifying what you need prior to the class will also help you to solicit material donations. For example, New Legacy Puget Sound was able to save a considerable amount of money on class material because of the notebooks that were donated. Two community members also donated their time by coming to speak to the class pro bono.

Identifying potential donors and funders should begin by identifying contacts that the members of your group has.

- Make a list of all that is needed (materials, space, etc.)
- Based on the above list, create a list of individuals, organizations, etc. that may be able to provide your group with the resources needed for your class. For example, a church may be able to provide you with meeting space. Is there anyone in your group that is a member of, or affiliated with a church that might be willing to do so?
- Finally, would your group be willing and able to charge for the class?

We realize that not smaller communities will not have access to a variety of resources such as museums, universities, or even other diverse communities. In such a case we would suggest that you research the nearest large city and perhaps take a field trip to visit a museum, gemological society, or (with the permission of the congregation) engage in a discussion with a traditionally African American church. You can also contact Coming to the Table, or us (the authors) to ask for suggestions and/or resources.

## PART II: CREATING A TAILORED CURRICULUM

### ***Introduction***

[Healing Together: Addressing Slavery in Our Families' Histories](#) brought together a select interracial group of descendants of African and European Americans to provide them with support for researching and reckoning with their family ties to historical American slavery. The objective was to engender an emotional healing journey towards individual and community reconciliation of America's most "Peculiar Institution." Based on the Healing Historical Harms model, our emphasis was on **history, healing, connection, and action**. (Although we have noted below the particular emphases of each of the components and classes, all four of these areas were interwoven throughout the sessions.)

The components of the curriculum were:

- Introduction to the historical and ongoing impacts of slavery (history)
- Genealogical research of family connections to slavery (history and connection)
- Facilitated sharing in a supportive environment (healing and connection)
- Exploration of the possibilities for healing on a personal and community level (healing and action)
- Planning of and optional participation in a culminating community event (action)

There were six weekly class sessions, which ran for two hours each on Saturday mornings, culminating in a Saturday afternoon public presentation where class members shared their experiences and learnings.

<b>Class Session</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Healing Historical Harms emphases</b>
Class 1	Introduction to class, participants, Healing Historical Harms model, legacy of slavery	connection
Class 2	Researching family history related to slavery: an introduction	history and connection
Class 3	Using feelings for healing	healing and connection
Class 4	Researching family history: a session at the Genealogy Center at the Northwest African American Museum	history and connection
Class 5	Connecting the dots: putting family history into larger perspective	history and healing
Class 6	Locating ourselves in healing cycle and next steps	healing and action

Part IV of this guidebook provides detailed lesson plans for each of these sessions. However, for the series to be most useful in your context, you will need to tailor the curriculum to meet your goals and objectives, to address the particular historical contexts of the participants in your class, and to make the best use of the resources your community can provide. A series in the southeastern United States, for example, where there are many local historic landmarks related to slavery, could include field trips and walking tours, in addition to (or even instead of) on-line genealogical research. In a place with more limited resources, several film viewings with facilitated discussions could be the centerpiece of its curriculum. Use the Resource List as a starting point for research about options.

### **Identifying Local Resources**

The basic resources needed to make this class work are facilitators, the support team, presenters, and appropriately equipped venues for the classes and final presentation. Below is a checklist of the recommended personnel and facilities, the suggested deadlines for making contact with them, the

tasks or function they will do or provide, and the time required from them.

As planners, you need to pool your information about the resources in their local community that will support the curriculum. Remember: be flexible and creative in using this list. Feel free to reshape the curriculum in order to take advantage of the gifts your locale has to offer. These unexpected treasures in your own backyard will make your Healing Together class uniquely effective for your location. Don't forget to make use of the assets of your planning group. From doing "The Work Before the Work" (see Part I), you will already have a sense of their passions, skills, and experience of your core group.

### Resource List and Timetable

Resource	Contact (at latest) by	Function/Task and Time Needed
Facilitators	3 months before class begins	planning - 1 month before class; facilitation - every class session; class preparation - 4 - 6 hours weekly for duration of class
Support team	3 months before class	support of facilitators - every class session and intermittent meetings (before class begins, planning, recruitment, review of applicants - 2 hours weekly)
Local genealogist	2 months before class begins	presentation - session 2; possibly instruction - session 4
Church, school, community center, or other venue for classes and final presentation	3 months before class begins	classroom and auditorium facilities - all sessions and final presentation
Genealogy society, museum, library, university, or other research facility	2 months before class begins	computers and genealogical software - session 4

#### Notes on Resources

Facilitators (See Part I.)

Support Team (See Part I.)

Local Genealogist(s)

Exploring family history is a central component of the Healing Together class. The role of the local genealogist is to introduce the participants to the basic methods and tools for doing genealogical research in Class 2 and to work with them in Class 4 in exploring their respective family legacies in relationship to slavery. A background in African American history and personal work on confronting racism are desirable prerequisites for this role.

Although these sessions can be facilitated by two different persons, anyone who does so must have the understanding, skills, and experience to deal sensitively with the emotional impact of researching the history of slavery. In our project, a representative of the local genealogical society made the introductory presentation in session two, while a skilled volunteer at the African American historical museum coached the class members in their work in the museum's computer lab in session. No matter who the presenters are, we urge that the facilitators of the class or other members of the planning group meet with candidates for this role to introduce to them to the approach of the class and to assess their capacity to be mindful of healing and connection as they guide the participants in their historical work. Let them presenters know that, when strong feelings come up, we "brake for dialogue"; so they may need to pause during their talk for the class to debrief.

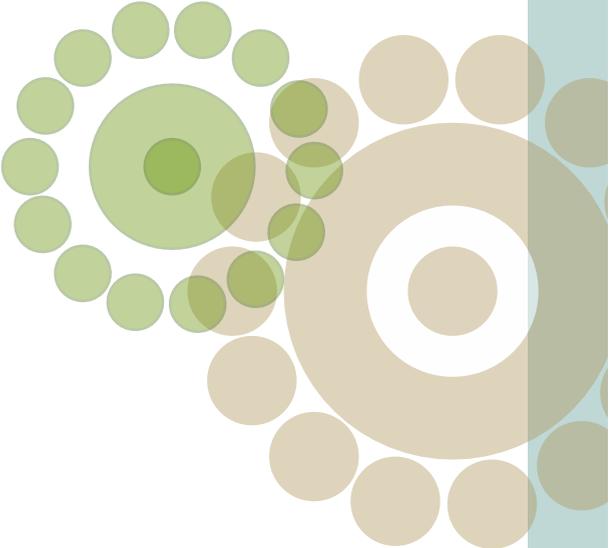
### ***Venue for Sessions and Final Presentation***

The considerations for selecting a venue for the class sessions and final presentation include cultural relevance, ambiance of healing and reconciliation, appropriate facilities, accessibility, and cost. As we have already mentioned, holding our activities in a historically African American church and a black historical museum reminded us on a weekly basis of the adaptive strengths of the black community and gave us an opportunity to support those institutions. Planners also need to think about the space as a conducive environment for healing. A visit is in order before making a decision about a venue so that you can make a fresh assessment of it as a "safe enough" space for the members of the class.

Five of six of our sessions took place in a classroom at the church, which had space for presentations, tables and chairs that could be configured for different discussion formats, and internet access. For our final presentation we moved to the museum, which had suitable space and equipment in its auditorium for a video presentation, panel discussion, and buffet. We also had the added advantage of being surrounded by an exhibit on a local black historical site. We suggest you prepare a list with all your anticipated needs before you begin contacting sites.

### ***Research Facility for Computer Lab Session***

*Class 4 calls for a setting that allows participants to work collaboratively in researching their family history in relationship to slavery. Ideally, such a setting would have computer equipment and pertinent genealogical software, as well as a staff person to guide the research.* The same historical museum where we held our final presentation had all the facilities we needed for the research session. Being at the museum gave some of the class members a first-time opportunity to see some of its exhibits and put the histories they were learning about into a wider, contemporary context. Other possible sites for this session are libraries, genealogical or historical societies, or university history departments.



## PART III: RECRUITING

### Creating a Class Description

Prior to any recruiting efforts make sure that you have a clear, succinct class description. It should be brief and to the point. When preparing the description, be aware of whom it is you are trying to reach. We recommend having a group no larger than 10, with an equal number of individuals of African American and European American descent. Have several different versions available for fliers, website, and tailored handouts. Include all pertinent information including:

- Time
- Location
- Cost
- Expectations

The following page shows the course description New Legacy Puget Sound used on its website.

### Identifying a Target Audience

This is a course for those who are ready to ask hard questions, and are prepared for healing. We found that having the right mix of individuals was critical. As we talked about whom it was we wanted we found ourselves discussing the aspect of healing as being paramount. We were looking for individuals that were focused not only on genealogical research and family connections to slavery, but those who wanted to heal through dialogue with descendents from the other side; this was something that had to be done in community.

With that in mind, it is crucial to find individuals who have some familiarity deliberately working with racially diverse groups, specifically African & European American. New Legacy Puget Sound made sure to send fliers and announcements out to as many communities as possible. We sent information on the classes to both predominately African American and European American churches, African American genealogical groups, selected list-serves, libraries, and social service agencies.

We also were looking for individuals that had some computer skills and access to a computer since most of the research work we would be doing

## Healing Together: Addressing Slavery in Our Families' Histories

**Winter 2011 • Six Saturday mornings • 10-12 noon**  
**January 8, 15, 22, 29, and February 5, 12**  
**Public event: Saturday, Feb 26, 1-3pm**

**Location: Seattle Central District**

**Course Objective:** To bring together an interracial group and to provide them with support for researching and reckoning with their family ties to historical American slavery.

**Course Description:** Although American slavery ended well over a century ago, the impact remains with us as individuals, families, communities, and as a nation to this very day. The aftermaths and legacies of slavery are evident in persistent social, economic and political divisions and inequities. In addition, research tells us that unresolved trauma for victims, perpetrators and bystanders can be passed through generations, and often results in residual feelings of fear, anger, disconnection, denial, uneasiness and ambivalence.

Direct descendants of people who were enslaved and those who were enslavers have a unique relationship to this legacy, and it is our experience that we can benefit tremendously from learning together and healing in community. The purpose of this course is to provide a small interracial group of community members who know or suspect they have ancestral ties to slavery with support for researching those ties, and to facilitate an emotional healing journey towards individual and community reconciliation of America's most "Peculiar Institution."

### **Content Overview:**

- Introduction to the historical and ongoing impacts of slavery
- Genealogical research of family connections to slavery
- Facilitated sharing in a supportive environment
- Exploration of the possibilities for healing on a personal and community level
- Planning of and optional participation in a culminating community event

Costs for this course are being provided by Coming to the Table. There is no fee for participants; however, significant commitment is required for course attendance, participation and homework.

**NOTE:** The genealogical research will require computer and internet access. Participants are encouraged to seek help as needed from a family member or friend. Assistance is available from course teachers on a limited basis.

would be on-line and on personal time. In addition we set up a Google group to send out class notes, readings, assignments, and other important communications. We found this to be a vital part of staying connected.

## Application Development

As you develop your application, make sure that all of the criteria that you have for participants are addressed by a question or questions in your application. While you will be able to interview people later on, you will need to consider who it is you want to interview first. Make sure that your application is both thorough and brief as possible. Creating several ways in which applicants can submit their applications is also an important consideration. New Legacy Puget Sound had a post office box for hard copies of the application, and a website that could accept on-line submissions. Below is the New Legacy Puget Sound application form:

**Healing Together Application Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you know or suspect that some of your ancestors were enslaved or enslavers, or had another direct connection to slavery? If so, what have you learned or heard?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Why are you interested in participating in this course? What do you hope to get out of it?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What experience, if any, do you have with genealogical research?

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have access to a computer and the Internet? \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe what experiences, if any, you have had with the following:

- *interracial dialogue on race related issues*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

• *cultural competency trainings*

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• *diversity training*

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• *other relevant experience*

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Can you commit to attending each of the six classes and the public presentation (including the run-through)?

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How many hours per week can you devote to “homework” between classes? \_\_\_\_\_

(Homework will include some reading, genealogical research, talking to family members, checking in with course partners on the phone.)

This exploration could bring up emotions like anger, fear, embarrassment, shame and grief. How do you think you would deal with such feelings and emotional expression in yourself and others?

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We hope to achieve some degree of balance in the course with regard to age, “race,” “class”/socioeconomic “status,” and gender.

Please tell us about yourself as relates to these identity, heritage and social location groups.

---

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How did you learn about this course?

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## Vetting the Applications

Prior to vetting the applications, create a check list of those things that are most important to your group for accepting an application. Make sure that the group agrees on what the criteria will be, but delegate the vetting process to a small committee.

New Legacy Puget Sound's emphasis was on healing, so that became a priority. We had several applicants that had extremely strong backgrounds in genealogical research, or working with diverse groups, or an incredible knowledge of history. What they lacked was a commitment to healing as evidenced in the essay portion of the application. We were also determined to create a class that had an equal number of descendents of Africans who had been enslaved and European Americans whose ancestors had participated in the slave trade. Fortunately for us, we did not have to sacrifice one criterion for the other. This was due in part to making sure we recruited from very diverse groups and neighborhoods.

One of the issues that New Legacy Puget Sound struggled with was recruiting young people between the ages of 18 and 25. Although we made efforts to connect with local colleges and universities, we did not attract a sizeable number of young applicants. If young people are in fact a target population for your group, we would suggest making sure that you include a number of young people in the original planning group who are well connected with their communities.

Creating a scoring system is one way to approach vetting the applications by assigning a point value to your criterion list. For example, if your highest criterion is in the domain of healing, assign healing questions/answers a "10", a "9" for community-building, and so-on.

Our committee vetted the applications as group. We discussed each application, including the strengths, weaknesses, and if anyone in the group knew the individual applicant we asked for their opinions. Once we had decided on whom we would like to interview, the committee divided the applications and began calling.

## Interviews

While answers on application forms can tell us a lot about individuals, person-to-person interviews can tell us even more. For those applicants that no one in New Legacy Puget Sound knew and recommended, interviews were held. We each had specific questions for each of the applicants. For example, if the committee agreed on an applicant, but felt we needed to know more about their background working with diverse groups one member of

the group would be assigned to make the call and ask that question as a lead in, but would engage the person in a more in-depth conversation.

We strongly recommend that if you do not know an applicant personally an interview is in order. Although some applicants look really good on paper, interviews can reveal such things as motive, and comfort levels with discussing topics that may cause discomfort - things that may not show up in an application.

## Acceptance

Creating a racially balanced group with individuals that will contribute to building and facilitating a safe environment should be toward the top of your criterion. Remember that creating a safe environment does not mean the elimination of conflict, so having people that can sit with discomfort is also a major consideration when accepting applicants.

Once the individuals are accepted, notification should be sent out as soon as possible in order to give individuals enough lead time to calendar and plan for the classes and final presentation.

Setting up a Google group or some other on-line communication we found to be essential to the dissemination of information both before and during class.

For those not accepted into the class we suggest that you also inform them as soon as possible AND create a wait list. In case one of the applicants that you accept cannot attend, if there is someone else on the list that may have scored 9 out of 10 possible points and is acceptable to your group having a wait list is a convenient way to make sure that your class will be full.

Prior to the First Class:

- On-line introductions to each other
- Pre-class survey for those organizations that would like to measure the impact of the classes (pre & post). The survey in the Appendices was required by Coming to the Table for funding purposes. We would suggest, however, that each group design a survey specifically to measure their own goals and objectives; as an example, questions on how comfortable are people with discussing the enslavement aspect of their families' histories may be one variable to measure.
- Readings sent out (all Coming to the Table publications and, except for Potter Czajkowski, available at [www.comingtothetable.org/resources](http://www.comingtothetable.org/resources)):



*Researching African American Family History*, by Patricia Moncure Thomas

*Confronting Slavery in Your Family's History*, by Susan Hutchison

*Genealogy: Researching Your Family History*

*Resources for Researching Your Family History*

*Researching Slave Holding and Slave Trading Ancestry*, by Rev. David  
Pettee (not sent originally, but recommended)

*Healing Historical Harms: The Approach*, by Amy Potter Czajkowski



# PART IV: CLASS-BY-CLASS GUIDE

## How to Use This Section

By this point in your planning, you probably have the outline of a curriculum for your own class. We encourage you, therefore, not to be distracted by our lesson plans. We offer them primarily as suggestions and to provide some concrete examples of activities that might be useful within a variety of contexts.

You should also know from the outset that these outlines are in many cases different from our original plans for the classes. In a series where healing was the priority, we found we had to depart from our plans and go with the organic flow of the encounter. In presentations on history, for instance, we had to pause to deal with the raw feelings that the stories of the past elicited. The sessions were a kind of laboratory where we worked to build the capacity of participants to stay at the table when difficult emotions surfaced and to demonstrate the transformative potential of truth-telling in a committed community. Nevertheless, we cannot overstate the importance of thoughtful planning. Thorough preparation beforehand freed us up to be aware, responsive, and flexible in the classes themselves.

For each class we give a brief overview and a flow chart. In most cases we provide more detailed descriptions of a few exercises which were particularly effective. You will find suggestions for more activities in *The Little Book of Dialogue for Difficult Subjects* and *The Little Book of Circle Processes*, both of which are in the Resource List. Take and adapt whatever you can use and leave the rest!

## Introduction to Classes

Before presenting notes, lists, and charts of materials and activities for each of the six Healing Together classes, we want to emphasize some of the consistent elements that made the whole series work well. First of all, we cannot overestimate the importance of keeping central the goal of providing a nurturing space for the healing process to unfold. By careful selection of participants, we ended up with a group that was eager to get down to the task. Along with the support team, as facilitators we modeled a community whose interactions made clear the value of taking the risk to be honest and vulnerable with one another in entering the unfamiliar territory of slavery's legacy. We knew we were on the right track as people began to move beyond their

safety zone and disclose their fears, anger, and limitations, as well as their joys and triumphs.

Building the environment also entailed developing a consistent rhythm to the sessions. We were careful to “bookend” each class with a check-in. The opening one helped to clear away any mental distractions that would limit the participants’ ability to be present and to remind us all of both the difficulty and significance of the work we were doing together. Our closing round often gave folks the opportunity to identify a “carry-out,” an idea or experience from the session that they could take away with them for further reflection. We also gave previews of the day’s activities at the beginning of the class and plans for the next session at the end. In this setting, with the high probability of intense feelings, we knew it was important for people to have a clear picture of where we were headed. Balance and pacing were another way to maintain a supportive atmosphere, establishing a rhythm between head and heart, mind and body. Over the weeks we began also to relax a little about time; we found it was more important to give people opportunities to connect with one another and to share their experiences than it was to deliver the entire package of content in any given class. However, we frequently used a timer for exercises where it was crucial that everyone have an equal opportunity to share. We spent time in our weekly debriefing and planning sessions between the classes thinking together about individual class members and their progress; to prevent disconnection, we tried to call anyone who had been absent from class.

## **Prior to the First Class**

### ***Online Introductions and Pre-Class Surveys***

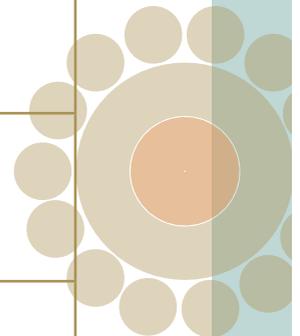
One of the best decisions we made was to ask the participants to introduce themselves to one another online prior to the first class meeting. We all got to see the enthusiasm of the group, which seemed to reassure and reinforce the commitment of everyone. Students also filled out an online survey as part of the evaluation process for the class.

### ***Readings***

After we received the surveys, we sent them a short reading list of Coming to the Table handouts. See Part III for the reading list.

## Overview of Classes

<b>Class Session</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Healing Historical Harms emphases</b>
Class 1	Introduction to class, participants, Healing Historical Harms model, legacy of slavery	connection
Class 2	Researching family history related to slavery: an introduction	history and connection
Class 3	Using feelings for healing	healing and connection
Class 4	Researching family history: a session at the Genealogy Center at the Northwest African American Museum	history and connection
Class 5	Connecting the dots: putting family history into larger perspective	history and healing
Class 6	Locating ourselves in healing cycle and next steps	healing and action



## **Class 1: Introduction to class, participants, Healing Historical Harms model, legacy of slavery**

Focus: Connection

### **Overview**

The primary goal of this class was to establish a supportive environment for the work ahead. The facilitators and support team arrived early to set up the space.

We configured the working tables in a circle so that everyone would have eye contact. Light refreshments were laid out on another table.

Because students had introduced themselves online prior to the first meeting, they had some sense of one another already and recognized their mutual commitment to the project of healing. Most of the activities of the class were designed to deepen those connections already made. The facilitators took turns in leading.

Notebooks were prepared and distributed at the first class. They contained (items marked with asterisk included in Appendices):

- The syllabus
- Examples of ancestral/genealogical charts from Ancestry.com, any Museums (such as the Northwest African American Museum), & the public libraries
- The Touchstones from The Welcome Table of Mississippi (2010)
- "Step-by-Step Guide to Oral History," by Judith Moyer, 1993, from: [http://dohistory.org/on\\_your\\_own/toolkit/oralHistory.html](http://dohistory.org/on_your_own/toolkit/oralHistory.html)
- "Fundamentals of Oral History," Texas Preservation Guide lines from the Texas Historical Commission: <http://www.thc.state.tx.us/publications/guidelines/OralHistory.pdf>
- \*Legacy & Aftermath of Slavery: Blank chart created by Pat Russell
- Chapter 9: Slavery without Submission, Emancipation with out Freedom, from *A People's History of the United States*, Zinn, Howard, 2003
- Chapter 5: No More Peck O' Corn: Slavery and Its Discontents, from *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America*, Takaki, R., 1993
- A notepad

After the gathering time and the distribution of notebooks, we did several rounds of introductory activities, alternating between the participants sharing about themselves and the facilitators giving overview of the purpose, approach, logistics, and content of the series. The class ended with a preview of the next class.

### ***Class 1: Flow Chart***

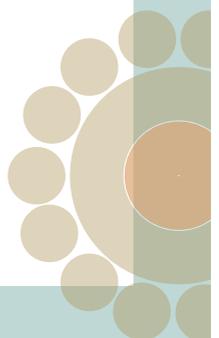
<b>Content</b>	<b>Resources needed</b>
Class focus: Connection	Notebooks, food , nametags, index cards; basket for index cards
Gathering time, refreshments, distribute notebooks	Food, nametags, notebooks distributed as people arrive
Welcome	
Introductions: Name, place of birth, sanctuary or place you feel best	
Intro to purpose of class. History, connection, healing, action. Overview of syllabus: six classes, run-through, presentation. Logistics: homework expectations, attendance. Comments: Syllabus in notebooks – it is not carved in stone.	Syllabus
Expectations, fears, hopes: (see description below)	Index cards, basket
Touchstones: (see description below)	Touchstones handout
Invitation to tell why they're here: Introduction by facilitators – refer to information from application: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beginning process of getting to know each other and understanding our commitment to this work.</li> <li>• Thank people for on-line intros.</li> <li>• What brings you here?</li> </ul> 3-minute time limit	
Preview of next week: Focus: family history, genealogist's visit; beginning to develop shared perspective on larger history. Homework for next week: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin research [interviewing family members, remembering stories, review any previous research, etc.]</li> <li>• Sign up for and begin to explore ancestry.com.</li> <li>• Readings: Coming to the Table handouts, Taylor and Zinn timelines.</li> <li>• Readings from Takaki and Zinn.</li> <li>• Instructions: As you read, think about where and how your family might fit into the timelines and narratives.</li> <li>• What feelings are you having in doing this reading and initial exploration?</li> </ul>	Notebooks (syllabus)

## Exercise: Expectations, Fears, Hopes

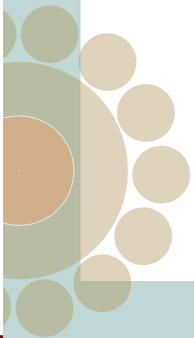
- Purpose: This exercise helps people feel more connected by providing a relatively safe way to express their honest concerns about the class. It can alleviate the tension that comes from unspoken anxieties in the room and let people know that they are not alone in their anticipations. The order of presentation, from expectation to fear to hope, is intentional: the flow is from the most neutral kind of anticipation, through the most difficult, and ending on the positive note of hope.
- Supplies: Index cards, 3 x 5 or 4 x 6, one per class member; a basket to collect cards.
- Process:
  - o Explain the purpose and process of whole exercise first.
  - o After receiving an index card, each person lists on it one expectation, one fear, and one hope about the class and then puts it into a basket. Important points to emphasize: (1) Write legibly so that someone else can read your comments. (2) Do not sign the card. (3) Label the expectation, the fear, and the hope.
  - o The basket circulates a second time. Each person pulls a card out from the basket, returning it if it happens to be his or her own and selecting another.
  - o Going around the circle the first time, each person reads out an expectation. Pause at the end of the go-round so that the group can absorb what they've heard. Repeat the process with the fears and then the hopes.
  - o Give the group a brief time for discussion of any feelings, surprises, reliefs that arose from expressing and hearing the expectations, fears, and hopes.

## Exercise: Touchstones

- Purpose: Introducing the Touchstones early on, asking for the class to respond, add to, and agree to use them, and returning to them in later class sessions supports all the participants in co-creating a nurturing environment.
- Supplies: Touchstones handout. (See Appendix.) A copy of the Touchstones should be in each participant's notebook.
- Process:
  - o Explain the purpose of exercise.
  - o Invite group members each to read aloud one Touchstone apiece, going around the circle. (Mention that passing is always an option;



- some people are shy about reading.)
- o Ask people to identify and repeat any of the Touchstones that they recognized as particularly important to them.
  - o Ask for additions to the list.
  - o Ask for agreement to observe the Touchstones in the interactions of the group. Mention that anyone in the group may ask to revisit them.
  - o If there are additions to the Touchstones, draw up a revised list for distribution at the next class meeting.



## Class 2: Researching family history related to slavery: An introduction

Focus: History and connection

### **Overview**

This class featured a presentation by a local genealogist on doing family history. Because it took place during the weekend of the Martin Luther King Day holiday, we acknowledged Dr. King and his work at the beginning of class.

The genealogist’s talk and the subsequent discussion elicited strong feelings on the part of the class as they grappled together with the impact of the historical institution of enslavement on family life, including the practical difficulties for African Americans to trace lineage.

### **Class 2: Flow Chart**

Content	Resources needed
Class focus: History and connection	
Gathering time, refreshments	Food
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check-in: An acknowledgment of Martin Luther King, Jr.</li> <li>• Go-round on where folks are</li> </ul>	Quotes from Dr. King
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preview of day</li> <li>• Housekeeping</li> <li>• reminder of Touchstones,</li> <li>• check-in about final presentation and run-through schedule</li> </ul>	
Introduction to Family History: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview</li> <li>• specific concerns in working on connections to slavery</li> </ul> Speaker from a genealogical society presenting on research	Guest Speaker
Break	
Share about the emotional impact of researching family history connected to slavery, using Legacy and Aftermath of American Slavery Chart	
Preview of next week: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus: history, developing shared perspective on larger history, legacy, and aftermath.</li> <li>• Homework for next week:</li> <li>• Encourage people to work together outside of class.</li> <li>• Finish readings: Takaki &amp; Zinn to end.</li> <li>• Review timelines from Taylor and Zinn.</li> <li>• Begin researching with Ancestry.com.</li> <li>• How does your research on your family fit into the larger history?</li> <li>• What feelings and insights come up as you work?</li> </ul> Suggest journal for reflecting and sharing. Mention final presentation.	
Check-out: Start with moment for self-reflection. Something that you will take away from today? Something that you might change about today? Questions?	

## Exercise: Legacy & Aftermath of American Slavery Chart

- Purpose: Filling out and discussing this chart supports active analysis of the information presented in the readings about slavery and allows class members to place their own families' histories into a larger context. Using the chart helps make concrete the differing manifestations of the impact of enslavement on African and European Americans. This chart can be used at several points during the course, particularly in our format in Classes 2 and 5.
- Supplies: Legacy and Aftermath Chart. (See Appendices.)
- Options: Because this chart can be used in several different class contexts, we offer here suggestions of ways to use it, rather than a process for one class.
  - o Using the version of the chart found in the Appendices, which gives examples, discuss the concepts of legacy and aftermath.
  - o Ask the class if there are additional areas of impact of slavery to add to the categories.
  - o Ask for more specific examples that came up from the readings.
  - o Working in ethnic constituency groups or in the large group, ask people to tell stories about how their families' histories reflect the legacy of slavery.
  - o Discuss ways of addressing, healing from, and transforming the legacy.

## Class 3: Using feelings for healing

### Focus: Healing and connection

In preparing for Class 3, we knew we would need to address the intense emotions that had arisen in the previous class and to show how in the group we could welcome and work through them. We departed, therefore, from the original plans for the session and did not follow up in detail on the homework assignment from Class 2, although we referred to the Legacy and Aftermath chart.

The centerpiece of the class was a presentation and exercise on how to identify and mine uncomfortable feelings as they surfaced in our discussions of slavery and racism. See next page for description.

In this presentation, the concept of families of feelings draws on the anti-racism training work of Visions, Inc. (<http://www.visions-inc.org>).

#### ***Class 3: Flow Chart***

<b>Content</b>	<b>Resources needed</b>
Class focus: Healing and connection Goal: (1) helping people to take responsibility for feelings and behaviors (2) processing last week's class (3) using feelings for healing (4) intro to effects of historical trauma	Talking stick Paper, markers
Gathering time, refreshments	
Preview of day: healing through connection, response to desire for more interaction, quotation from Martin Luther King, Jr., making use of experience of previous week, reminder of Touchstones.	
Feelings as Compass (see description below)	Poem by Rumi
Question: What feelings have come up for you from our classes? European American participants are to go through the first round; African Americans second round. 5 minutes apiece.	
Debrief with whole group: How was that experience for you? What are the messages from the feelings?	
Check-in about next week and final presentation Next week: Will continue work started today. Research in museum or other available research facility (library, university, genealogical society, etc.)	
Check-out: Moment for self-reflection. Something that you will take away from today? Want more of? Less of?	

## ***Presentation and Exercise: Feelings as Compass (originally presented as Feelings for Healing)***

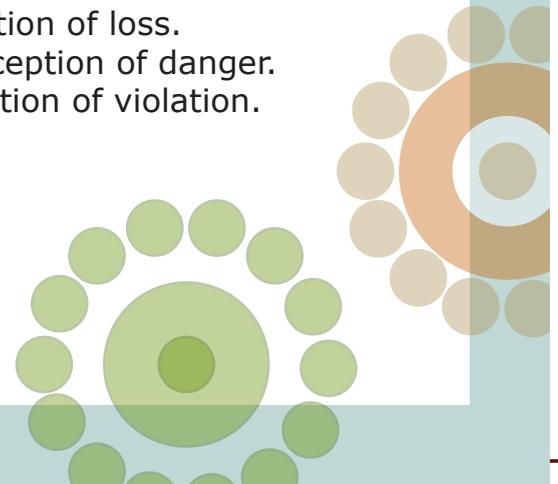
- Purpose: This presentation and exercise provided a strategy for the class to address together the difficult feelings, including anger, shame, guilt, embarrassment, and hopelessness that arose in our sessions.
- Supplies: Newsprint with information about Feelings as Compass posted and for further note-taking.
- Process:
  - o Begin with distributing or reading the poem by Rumi, "The Guest House." (See Appendices.)
  - o Outline of presentation This work on slavery brings up difficult feelings, feelings that we would like to avoid or that can push us away from the conversation.

These same feelings can be seen as resources, if we understand two-part approach for dealing with them.

- Part 1: Expression of the feelings – we need to provide each other with "safe-enough" space to let the feelings out, so that the energy bound up in them can be released and discharged.
- Part 2: Use of feelings as compass points, from which we can take readings to help us orient ourselves and better understand the differing legacies of slavery.
  - o Second part of approach actually helps us get perspective on our feelings so that we can give each other space to express them.
  - o Feelings as compass points:

Three "families" of painful feelings point to three different kinds of experiences or perceptions.

    - > Sad family points to experience or perception of loss.
    - > Scared family points to experience or perception of danger.
    - > Mad family points to experience or perception of violation.





o Outline of exercise

- On newsprint, write headings for each of the families of feelings “Sad: points to loss” ; “Scared: points to danger”; “Mad: points to violation.”
- Taking each family in turn, ask for examples of feelings that would fit under the category and list them under the appropriate heading.
- Ask class what kinds of feelings have surfaced for them in dealing with their familial relationship to enslavement.

o Discussion questions:

- What historical or current experiences or perceptions of loss, danger, or violation do the feelings point toward? What did your people lose in slavery?
- What were the dangers? What were the violations? Ask people for concrete examples and stories, if possible.
- What differences and similarities are there in the patterns of feelings among people of African descent? among people of European descent?
- What do we need from each other in order to express and heal from these feelings?

o Closing: Invite the group to reflect on their experience of doing this exercise.

## Class 4: Researching family history: A session at the Genealogy Center at the Northwest African American Museum

Focus: History and connection

This class session, which was extended for two hours over the normal time, gave students a chance to become familiar with the resources of an important local institution and to share with each other information and strategies for doing family research. We also broke into groups according to racial-ethnic background to provide additional safety for continuing the work begun the week before.

### **Class 4: Flow Chart**

<b>Content</b>	<b>Resources needed</b>
Class focus: History and connection	Guest presenter on African American genealogical research
Before Class: Send out e-mail: (1) Ask about what they want to do (2) Bring research question (3) Suggest rereading intros (4) Bring brown-bag lunch (5) Please be on-time (6) Memory stick (7) Laptop, if you wish (8) Ancestry.com:	
Presentation on African American genealogy resources, Q & A.	Guest Speaker
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check-in and sharing of research questions.</li> <li>• Share thinking about plans for break-out groups.</li> <li>• Explain need for European Americans to do work among themselves.</li> <li>• Address mixed-heritage folks: how would you this work best for you?</li> </ul>	
Break-out groups	
Lunch Together: check-in about the morning, plan rest of time accordingly	Lunch
Some options: mixed-group discussion, more research, continue European American group, combination of the above	Research questions Memory sticks
Check-in about next week: "weaving" session--bring all readings (Healing Historical Harms, Takaki, Zinn) and legacy chart; recruit two volunteers to work on final presentation	
Check-out: Moment for self-reflection. Something that you will take away from today? Want more of? Less of?	

## Class 5: Connecting the dots: putting family history into larger perspective

Focus: History and healing

After reviewing both the Touchstones and the work from Class 3 on using feelings for healing, class members shared some of their discoveries about their families’ histories from the session at the Northwest African American Museum. The facilitators encouraged them to think about the legacy of slavery affected their feelings about doing genealogical work. The class also used the readings to reflect on their own families’ histories within the broader historical context of enslavement.

### **Class 5: Flow Chart**

Content	Resources needed
Class focus: History and healing Review history-healing-connection-action model using legacy chart	
Before class: E-mail Come prepared with a. Readings – Healing Historical Harms: insights, questions; Takaki and Zinn: where does your family history connect to larger story? b. Legacy chart: example of legacy in your family history c. Come on time d. Be ready for check-in (min. apiece): question - what is your burning question raised by last week’s class? e. Remember “expect non-closure”	
Check-in: What is your burning question raised by last week’s class?	
Housekeeping: • Final presentation – work in progress • Preview of class	
Review of feelings work and touchstones: • Touchstones • Intro: feelings as compass • Importance of self-forgiveness • Suggested strategy for mining feelings for healing and action: awareness, acceptance, action	Touchstones
Discussion of reading and legacy chart: (1) HHH article (10 min.) (2) Takaki and Zinn: where does your family’s history connect to larger story? (20 min.) (3) Legacy chart: (30 min.) a. intro: go over categories, ask them for others b. give one example from their family history of legacy	Takaki and Zinn articles Legacy chart
Preview of next week	
Check-out	

## Class 6: Locating ourselves in healing cycle and next steps

Focus: Healing and action

The agenda for our final class was full. Our aim was closure for this first phase of our work together. To that end we introduced the healing cycle from *The Little Book of Trauma Healing* and had the class consider where they were in that work. They also filled out the final evaluation, as well as discussing plans for the upcoming public presentation. We closed with a ritual in which people voiced one hope for themselves and one for the community formed by the class for the continuation of the healing begun among us.

### Class 6: Flow Chart

Content	Resources needed
Class Focus: Healing and action	press release
Before class: E-mail with press release for comments (final event)	
Check-in: what do you need to share to help you be present? [timed, 1 minute per person]	
Preview of today’s class – Class focus: healing and closure. Last session of this series: evaluation and next steps. Presentation in two weeks. Housekeeping: Plans: run-through, discussion of where we go from here-come with ideas. Plans for final presentation: press release; menu: info from caterer, volunteers for beverages, salad/veggies, dessert, paper products	
Healing together: Feelings as compass, part 2.	
Where are we in the process of healing: hand out two charts with comments (1) Violence Trauma Conflict (2) Trauma healing cycle (see below)	Violence Trauma Conflict and Trauma healing cycle charts (from <i>The Little Book of Trauma Healing</i> , see Resource List)
Evaluation: Introduction – will get survey via e-mail from EMU, today for us: where am I? What was impact of class? Appreciations (see below)	
Closing ritual	Basket, stones, candles

## PART V: FINAL EVENT & COMMUNITY PRESENTATION

We feel that it is an important part of the healing process to present what has happened to the larger community. It is both validating and celebratory to acknowledge publicly what has been accomplished. In addition, it is highly educational, and lends visibility to the work that your group has been doing.

New Legacy Puget Sound class participants presented their experience to the Seattle community at the end of the course. It was held at the Northwest African American Museum between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. The program included introductions of New Legacy Puget Sound members and class participants, a brief presentation about the background of New Legacy Puget Sound and *Coming to the Table*, a 30-minute film by participants, additional comments by participants, Q&A, an invitation to join the *Coming to the Table* network, and a community meal. The film was especially powerful and the highlight of the event. Approximately 50 guests attended, and many were extremely moved by the program.

### Venue

Choosing a venue for the final event is as important as choosing a location for the class. Where you hold the event needs to be at a location that speaks to the healing work that you will be doing and have done. As noted above, we chose the Northwest African American Museum for several reasons:

- The facility was central located in the historic African American community in Seattle.
- The room that we were fortunate enough to rent for the occasion had an exhibit reflecting the diversity of the community.
- The technical support was first-rate.
- The space was accommodating for our presentation.
- It was easy to set up for the caterers.

It is important to consider all of these items when choosing a venue.

## Presentation Development

This cannot be done without the participants. With that said, we found that it initially seemed to be both a bother and a burden for the participants in our class. They felt that it took up too much time and energy. What we did was plan out a very general program that included a participant panel along with presenting them with a certificate of accomplishment. Two of the participants volunteered to help the lead facilitator plan the event.

We were very fortunate to have the talent within the group that we did. One of our participants spearheaded a film project. Initially the group decided on having a panel presentation. Once the film was complete it then became part of the presentation. It was an unmitigated success! What was important was the investment that the class members had in the presentation. One of the class members had been working on a quilt, which we were fortunate enough to have for our final presentation and it was displayed prominently at our event.

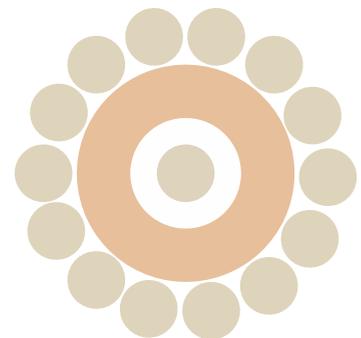
When deciding a presentation keep in mind that you will most likely have limited resources. The considerations should include:

- The amount of time
- The space limitations
- The amount of money/resources that you have for expenditures (e.g., catering, room rental, etc.)

## Alternatives to a Final Presentation

Not all groups may have access to the resources that New Legacy Puget Sound did. Some suggestions to having a costly final event are listed below:

- Having a one-day extended workshop
- A field trip or pilgrimage to a revered location
- Creating a blog
- Creating a Facebook page
- Have a small potluck gathering for friends & families



## PART VI: EVALUATION & REPORTS

Whether or not your group obtains funding from a foundation or other entity that requires detailed reporting or donations from individuals it will be important to evaluate the effectiveness of your class. It's best to begin your evaluation process at the earliest planning stages of your project. What goals and objectives do you have? How will you know you have met them? What measurements will be used to gauge effectiveness? Asking and answering as many of these questions as you go will assist your preparation of a final evaluation.

It is critical that you let the class participants know that you will be evaluating the class from the very beginning. In our acceptance letter to participants we let them know that our funding source wanted data, beginning with the pre-class survey, which also served as the post-class survey (included in the Appendices). If we were to redesign our class, we would choose not to use that particular survey; it did not adequately capture our goals and objectives, and found that it measured attributes that were, for the most part, already present in the class participants because of the criteria New Legacy Puget Sound has set for participants. Instead, we would look for ways to measure healing attributes, such as "Ease with discussing enslavement with African or European descendants," or "Comfort level when confronting my own family history."

If your group thinks that they would like to have an audio or video recording of the class, you must get permission from members. Remember that this is a safe space that you are creating for community members.

Not all people will feel safe being recorded. When asked about having the class audio or video recorded, or having an outsider come in to take notes our class was very clear that they did not want that type of documentation done.

### Elements of Evaluation

According to Puett (n.d.), program evaluation is done for a number of reasons:

- Demonstrate program effectiveness to funders
- Improve the implementation and effectiveness of programs

- Better manage limited resources
- Document program accomplishments
- Justify current program funding
- Support the need for increased levels of funding
- Document program development and activities to help ensure successful replication [<http://www.musc.edu/vawprevention/research/programeval.shtml>]

There are generally two recognized methods for collecting data that will support your evaluation: qualitative & quantitative.

- Qualitative: This measures the quality of a program or project rather than its quantity. Data sources for this include:
  - o Notes that have been taken in each class by designated group members (Not class participants!)
  - o Audio and/or video recording (if the class members approve prior to recording)
  - o The “Expectations, Fears, Hopes” (see Part IV, Class Session 1) exercise; use it at both the beginning and end of class to measure change
  - o Final class evaluations
- Quantitative: This measures the number of things. While this is by no means an exhaustive list here are some basic data sources to include:
  - o Number of applicants
  - o Number of participants
  - o Number of classes
  - o Attendance
  - o Budget
  - o Pre & Post survey
  - o Number of people attending the final presentation

We have included in the Appendices the final report as an example and guideline for a final report.

## RESOURCE LIST

This is by no means an exhaustive list of resources, but we offer them here as a wonderful place to begin.

### **Books/Articles:**

Blassingame, John W. *The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum South*. Oxford University Press, 1979.

DeGruy, Joy. *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome: America's Legacy of Enduring Injury & Healing*. Uptone Press, 2005.

Kellerman, Natan P. F. *Epigenetic Transmission of Holocaust Trauma: Can Nightmares be Inherited*. Retrieved September 4, 2001 from: [http://peterfelix.tripod.com/home//Epigenetic\\_TTT.pdf](http://peterfelix.tripod.com/home//Epigenetic_TTT.pdf)

Kraybill, Ron, and Wright, Evelyn. *The Little Book of Cool Tools for Hot Topics: Group Tools to Facilitate Meetings When Things Are Hot*. Good Books, 2006.

Lev-Wiesel, Rachel. *Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma across Three Generations: A Preliminary Study*. *Qualitative Social Work*, Volume 6(1), pp. 75-94, 2007.

Moore, Henry, and O'Brien, John. *When People Care Enough to Act, 2nd Edition*. Inclusion Press, 2009.

Pranis, Kay. *The Little Book of Circle Processes: A New/Old Approach to Peacemaking*. Good Books, 2005.

Schirch, Lisa, and David Camp. *The Little Book of Dialogue for Difficult Subjects: A Practical, Hands-On Guide*. Good Books, 2007.

Takaki, Ronald. *A Different Mirror: a History of Multicultural America*. Little Brown & Company, 1993.

Yoder, Carolyn. *The Little Book of Trauma Healing: When Violence Strikes and Community Is Threatened*. Good Books, 2005.

Zinn, Howard. *A People's History of the United States*. Harper Perennial Modern Classics, Revised Edition, 2010.

**Web Sites:**

Setting up a website  
[www.top10bestwebsitehosting.com](http://www.top10bestwebsitehosting.com)

Genealogical Research  
<https://www.familysearch.org/>

Coming to the Table  
<http://www.comingtothetable.org>

New Legacy Puget Sound  
<http://newlegacypugetsound.org/>

Traces of the Trade  
<http://www.tracesofthetrade.org/>

**Films:**

*Traces of the Trade*, see above website for information

*The Healing Passage: Voices from the Water*,  
<http://www.thehealingpassage-voices.com/>

**Facilitation Training and Educational Opportunities:**

Pat Russell, Psy. D. & Ann Holmes Redding, Ph. D., the authors of this guidebook, are available for trainings, consultations, and facilitation. They can be reached via email at [chromatraining@gmail.com](mailto:chromatraining@gmail.com)

Connecting Communities/Hope in the City Facilitation Training,  
<http://www.hic.iofc.org/ccfp>

Eastern Mennonite University, Center for Justice & Peacebuilding Strategies for Trauma Awareness & Reconciliation (STAR) Training,  
<http://www.emu.edu/cjp/pti/star/>

Eastern Mennonite University, Center for Justice & Peacebuilding Summer Peacebuilding Institute, <http://www.emu.edu/cjp/pti/spi/>

Visions, Inc, <http://www.visions-inc.org>



# APPENDICES

## I. Pre/Post Survey

Participant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions. Please respond to the following questions by circling your level of agreement with these statements. Choose from: "Strongly Disagree," "Somewhat Disagree," "Somewhat Agree," or "Strongly Agree."

Rate your level of agreement with these statements:

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat Disagree</b>	<b>Somewhat Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
1. I feel that I notice racism on a regular basis.	0	1	2	3
2. I feel that action should be taken to correct problems of racism.	0	1	2	3
3. I feel responsible for helping to correct problems of racism.	0	1	2	3

How effective would these topics be in reducing the impact of slavery and racism in America?

	<b>Extremely Ineffective</b>	<b>Somewhat Ineffective</b>	<b>Somewhat Effective</b>	<b>Extremely Effective</b>
4. Learning about the historical experiences of slaves.	0	1	2	3
5. Learning about the historical experiences of slaveholders.	0	1	2	3
6. Connecting with others with a family history of slavery	0	1	2	3
7. Connecting with others with a family history of slaveholding.	0	1	2	3
8. An African American person taking steps to heal from their past.	0	1	2	3
9. A White person taking steps to heal from their past.	0	1	2	3

Rate your level of interest in the following topics:

	<b>Extremely Uninterested</b>	<b>Somewhat Uninterested</b>	<b>Somewhat Interested</b>	<b>Extremely Interested</b>
10. Learning about your family history as it relates to slavery?	0	1	2	3
11. Learning about the historical experiences of slaves.	0	1	2	3
12. Learning about the historical experiences of slaveholders	0	1	2	3
13. Connecting with others with a family history of slavery.	0	1	2	3
14. Connecting with others with a family history of slaveholding	0	1	2	3
15. Taking actions to help myself and/or others heal from the impact of slavery.	0	1	2	3

Instructions. Please respond to the following questions by circling how likely it is that you will engage in each of the following activities in the future. Choose from: "Extremely Unlikely," "Unlikely," "Likely," or "Extremely Likely."

How likely is it that you will engage in these activities in the future?

	<b>Extremely Unlikely</b>	<b>Somewhat Unlikely</b>	<b>Somewhat Likely</b>	<b>Extremely Likely</b>
16. Speak to someone you have a close relationship with about the effects of racism?	0	1	2	3
17. Speak to someone you do not have a close relationship with about the effects of racism?	0	1	2	3
18. Seek opportunities to address legacies of slavery?*	0	1	2	3
19. Learn more about your genealogy?	0	1	2	3
20. Visit a website that promotes the idea of addressing racism?	0	1	2	3

	<b>Extremely Unlikely</b>	<b>Somewhat Unlikely</b>	<b>Somewhat Likely</b>	<b>Extremely Likely</b>
21. Make some personal/interpersonal changes as it relates to the aftermath of slavery?*	0	1	2	3
22. Seek community-level/institutional-level change as it relates to the aftermath of slavery?*	0	1	2	3

\*Specific examples to be inserted by CTTT

23. What do you think it would take to reduce racism in America?

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24. Today's Date:

25. What is your age in years? \_\_\_\_\_

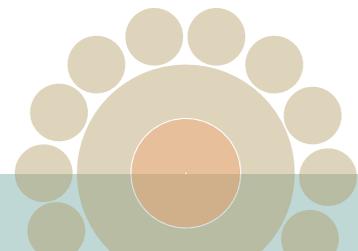
26. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

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27. What is your sex? *Circle one*    Male    Female

28. What is your race? *Circle one*    Black/African-American    White    Other

***Thank you for completing the survey!***



## II. Welcome Letter to Participants

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Welcome! We are so excited to have you in our Healing Together: Addressing Slavery in Our Families' Histories! Before our class begins there are a few things that we would like to share with you as well as invite you to join us in an on-line group:

- First off we will be sending you a survey. We will be sending you a link very soon with the Survey Monkey address. Once you have completed the survey, please contact me at \_\_\_\_\_ so I can send you the pre-readings for the first class.
- The classes will be held at \_\_\_\_\_, located at \_\_\_\_\_. One of our group members will meet you at the door to direct you to the classroom we will be using. Should you get lost or need help finding the location morning please call \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.
- Classes will be held every \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_. We would like to extend an invitation to you to come a bit early or stay a bit later if you feel the need to talk. If you have any questions or concerns, please email \_\_\_\_\_ and s/he will respond ASAP.
- We would like to for each participant to introduce themselves prior to our first class via a Google group we have created. Before we add you to the group we would like to make sure it is okay with you. When you reply to this email please state that it is okay and we will add you to our group.
- For the first class we will be reviewing the syllabus, get to know each other better, talk about how we will interact as a group, and introduce the topic of slavery, its legacy, and how we are all still effected today.
- And finally, please reply to this email so we know that you receive all of the information, and that we do in fact have the correct address for you.

Welcome!!!!

### III. TOUCHSTONES

- **Be 100% present, extending and presuming welcome.** Set aside the usual distractions of things undone, things to do. Bring all of yourself to the experience. We all learn most effectively in welcoming spaces. Welcome others here, and presume that you are welcomed.
- **Listen deeply.** Listen intently to what is said; listen to the feelings beneath the words. “To ‘listen’ another’s soul into life, into a condition of disclosure and discovery—may be almost the greatest service that any human being ever performs for another” (Douglas Steere). Listen to yourself also. Strive to achieve a balance between listening and reflecting, speaking and acting.
- **Try it on.** Make an opening for new ideas by trying them on for size. Give yourself the time to get to know them, to consider how they fit you.
- **Always by invitation.** It is never “share or die.” You will be invited to share in pairs, small groups, and in the large group. The invitation is exactly that. You will determine the extent to which you want to participate in our discussions or activities.
- **No fixing.** Each of us is here to discover our own truths. We are not here to set someone else straight, or to help right another’s wrong, to “fix” or “correct” what we perceive as broken or incorrect in another member of the group.
- **Identify and suspend assumptions and judgments.** Our assumptions, although usually invisible to us, often undergird our worldview; our judgments, frequently automatic, can block our growth. By pausing to identify both assumptions and judgments, we can listen to the other, and to ourselves, more fully; thus, our decisions and actions are more informed.
- **Speak your truth.** Say what is in your heart, trusting that your voice will be heard and your contribution respected, even if it is different from or even opposite of what another has said. Own your truth by speaking only for yourself, using “I” statements.
- **Respect silence.** Silence is a rare gift. After someone has spoken, take time to reflect and fully listen, without immediately filling the space with words.
- **Maintain confidentiality.** Create a safe space by respecting the confidential nature and content of discussions in the circle. What is said in the circle remains here.

- **When things get difficult, turn to wonder; try “both/and”, rather than “either/or”.** When someone else’s truth challenges your own, try turning to wonder: “I wonder what brought her to this place?” “I wonder what my reaction teaches me?” Also, allow for the possibility of multiple experiences and perspectives: let “both/and” create a larger, shared space.

- **Expect “non-closure.”** Stay in the present. We probably won’t get to the end of the road today.

*(These Touchstones are adapted from ideas, concepts, and practices used in a Circle of Trust. The Circle of Trust® approach is a Registered Trademark and can only be used by trained facilitators. Other sources: The Welcome Table of Mississippi 2010 and Visions, Inc. This version was used for Healing Together, Seattle, 2011. Pat Russell, Psy.D., and Ann Holmes Redding, Ph.D.)*

### IV. Task Matrix

Task	Timeline	Person(s) Responsible	Notes
Room Rental			
Project Description			
Participant Criteria & Application Development			
Curriculum Development			
Event Promotion/Media			
Recruitment Strategy			
Material Prep & Logistics			

## V. Legacy & Aftermath of American Slavery Chart Discussion Guide Winter 2011

<b>Areas of Impact</b>	<b>Economic</b>	<b>Educational</b>	<b>Psychological</b>	<b>Sociological</b>	<b>Intellectual</b>	<b>Spiritual</b>	<b>Political</b>
Results	Disproportionate poverty for AA	Dropout rate for AA	Anger for AA	De facto segregation	Value attributed	Strong AA	Lack of clout for AA
				(affects both groups)	to educational achievement by/ for AA	spiritual beliefs	AA
	Disproportionate wealth for EA	Number of AA in college	Inflated sense of entitlement for EA	Value placed on family by AA	The Harlem Renaissance AA		
				Incarceration rates for AA			

## **VI. Poem by Rumi (for use with Feelings as Compass exercise)**

### **The Guest House**

This being human is a guest house.  
Every morning a new arrival.  
A joy, a depression, a meanness,  
some momentary awareness comes  
as an unexpected visitor.  
Welcome and entertain all!  
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,  
who violently sweep your house  
empty of its furniture,  
still, treat each guest honorably.  
He may be clearing you out  
for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice,  
meet them at the door laughing,  
and invite them in.

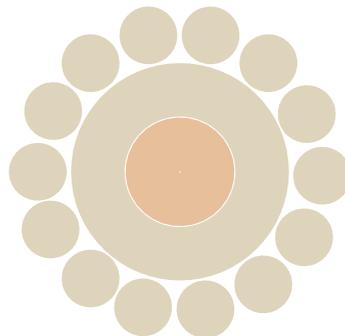
Be grateful for whomever comes,  
because each has been sent  
as a guide from beyond.

- Jelaluddin Rumi

Translated by Coleman Barks Copyright 1997 by Coleman Barks. All rights reserved.

From The Illuminated Rumi.

From [http://www.gratefulness.org/poetry/guest\\_house.htm](http://www.gratefulness.org/poetry/guest_house.htm)



## **VI. Final Project Report**

### **Final Report The Puget Sound Project**

#### **Healing Together: Addressing Slavery in our Families' History**

#### **A Six Week Class Presented by**

#### **New Legacy Puget Sound January 8 – February 12, 2011**

This is the final report for the Coming to the Table project, funded through Eastern Mennonite University's Practice and Training Institute, for the Puget Sound Project.

#### **Project Overview**

The project, Healing Together: Addressing Slavery in our Families' History, was a six-week course that consisted of an inter-generational and racially mixed group. The participants were introduced to the Coming to the Table (CTTT) model of history, connection, healing, and action model through assistance with their genealogical research while connecting and attempts at emotional reconciliation with familial involvement with American slavery.

Exploration of both the historical and contemporary impacts of American slavery were introduced and examined in weekly two hour classes. Through this exploration connections within the group were made which was evidenced by the ongoing commitment of several group members to continue this exploration with each other, and the expressed need to take action steps within their respective communities.

The participants presented their experience to the Seattle community at the end of the course. It was held at the Northwest African American Museum between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. The highlight of the program was a film done by the participants. The program included introductions of NLPS members and class participants, a brief presentation about the background of NLPS and CTTT, a 30 minute film by participants, additional comments by participants, Q&A, an invitation to join the CTTT network, and a community meal. The film was especially powerful and a highlight for many. Approximately 50 guests attended, and many were extremely moved by the program.

## New Legacy Puget Sound

New Legacy Puget Sound (NLPS) is the group that originally proposed the project. NLPS is an informally organized interracial group, currently composed of six women who became friends after participating in healing retreats for descendants of enslaved people, descendants of enslavers and others interested in healing from slavery's legacy. Two NLPS members served as the facilitators for the course.

- Pat Russell, Psy. D., has over 20 years of multi-cultural and community based experience. Among her areas of expertise are working therapeutically with diverse individuals and communities to heal past traumas. Dr. Russell served as the Lead Facilitator for the six week course.
- Ann Holmes Redding, Ph. D. Dr. Redding has taught African American history and culture at the high school and college levels and was a curator at the Museum of Afro-American History in Boston. She has served as a consultant in anti-racism and multi-cultural work in professional and volunteer capacities and as part of her vocation as a Christian minister. Dr. Redding served as the second Facilitator.

Other NLPS members who acted in support roles, which included interviewing and screening applicants, note-taking, and attending classes were:

- Susan Hutchison is a descendant of Thomas Jefferson and many other southern slaveholders. She co-founded CTTT and is currently the Community Coordinator. Ms. Hutchison has co-authored a book focusing on the stories of descendants of slaveholders.
- Mary Heyward Douglass is the seventh great-granddaughter of Nathaniel Heyward, a South Carolina rice planter who was one of the largest slaveholders (if not the largest) in the United States. Ms. Heyward Douglass is a reference librarian and responds to questions related to history, genealogy and maps.
- Patricia Moncure Thomas has written a book entitled *Moncure Place... Connecting Family and Friends*. She is President of the Black Historical Society of Kitsap, Inc. Ms. Moncure Thomas is a member of the CTTT Community Practice Board. She is the principal of Browns Point Elementary in Tacoma, WA.
- Elly Hale was born and raised in the Western US, but she discovered her family's east coast history included a major role in the North American slave trade. Invited by a distant cousin to explore this history and its present day legacy, Elly and her cousins were filmed in Ghana, Cuba, and Rhode Island as they explored this legacy. *Traces of the Trade* screened at Sundance Film Festival. Ms. Hale has led discussions about white privilege at numerous Seattle screenings of the film.

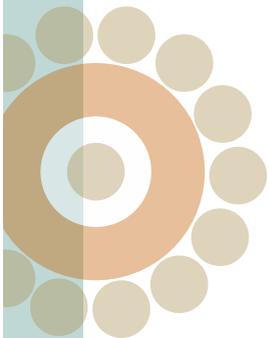
## Summary of Accomplishments

### Application Process:

- Created website for NLPS that included the application for the class
- Advertised class through on-line list serves such as genealogical societies, sent to community-based social service organizations, churches, and word of mouth.
- 17 applications were received either through the mail sent to NLPS post office box or through the on-line application from the website
- Applications were vetted by a three member subcommittee of NLPS. Some applicants were chosen for interviews, others were selected based on personal knowledge of an applicant
- Criteria selection was based on ethnic identity (in order to create balance), knowledge or a strong suspicion of familial ties to American slavery, past experience working with and in interracial groups (e.g., diversity training, working with diverse communities, etc.), and a commitment to healing. The latter was demonstrated through a narrative question on the application, and/or through an interview
- 10 individuals were selected

### Prior to the First Class:

- On-line introductions
- Pre-class survey
- Readings sent after survey completed were all CTTT handouts:
  - o Researching African American Family History, by Patricia Moncure Thomas
  - o Confronting Slavery in Your Family's History, by Susan Hutchison
  - o Genealogy: Researching Your Family History
  - o Resources for Researching Your Family History
  - o Healing Historical Harms: The Approach, by Amy Potter-Czajkowski



## Notebooks:

Included in the notebooks NPLS handed out were:

- The syllabus
- Examples of ancestral/genealogical charts from Ancestry.com, the Northwest African American Museum (NAAM), & the Seattle Public Library
- The Touchstones from The Welcome Table of Mississippi (2010)
- "Step-by-Step Guide to Oral History," by Judith Moyer, 1993, from [http://dohistory.org/on\\_your\\_own/toolkit/oralHistory.html](http://dohistory.org/on_your_own/toolkit/oralHistory.html)
- "Fundamentals of Oral History," Texas Preservation Guidelines from the Texas Historical Commission: <http://www.thc.state.tx.us/publications/guidelines/OralHistory.pdf>
- Legacy & Aftermath of Slavery: Blank chart created by NLPS
- Chapter 9: Slavery without Submission, Emancipation without Freedom, from *A People's History of the United States*, Zinn, Howard, 2003
- Chapter 5: No More Peck O' Corn: Slavery and Its Discontents, from *A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America*, Takaki, R., 1993
- A notepad

## Participants

Ten participants from Seattle were chosen from approximately 17 applicants. Applicants were selected based on their application, and interviews. Special consideration was given to racial background. The aim was to create balance between those who were possible descendants of enslaved and those who were descendants of those who participated in the owning, buying, selling, and bondage of enslaved people. The class participants were:

- LueRachelle Brim-Atkins: 63 year old woman of African heritage, former teacher, current consultant on diversity issues in the work place.
- Robert Jackson: 67 year old, white, male, retired former faculty member from the University of Washington Tacoma Social Work Program and the School of Social Work at Colorado State University.
- Jonnali Mayberry: multi-ethnic, young woman, with a Masters Degree,

currently pursuing a second masters in mental health therapy, working at a community mental health clinic serving primarily low-income people of color.

- Chuck Richards: 66 year old white, male, retired teacher.
- Georgena Frazier: 27 year old African American woman who was a student at a cosmetology institute
- Laura Foreman: age not given, European American woman who identified as middle class
- LaKeshia Kimbrough: 36 year old, single African American mother working part-time
- Barbie-Danielle DeCarlo: age not given, a woman born into multiple ethnicities - African-American, Italian, Mississippi Choctaw, Eastern Band & Oklahoma Cherokee Scottish, Louisiana Creole, and a sprinkle of 'unknown' – a student
- Becky Logan: a 65-year-old white, middle-class woman
- Lynn Gordon: a 54 year old, white, middle class woman

Three of the participants missed at least one class.

While all of the participants admitted that they struggled with the class at some time, two of them appeared to have more difficulties than the rest. One was an African American participant, and one was a European American participant.

In the case of the African American participant anger and the discomfort that she experienced around feeling the anger most likely was the driving force that kept her distant from the rest of the group. Although she would speak up during class when acknowledged, she was more difficult to contact outside of class by the facilitators, and rarely volunteered to share experiences while in class.

The European American participant struggled with what she identified as shame, and a resulting silence. One of the NLPS members met with her to talk about her concerns and feelings. Some of her immediate family and ancestral history kept her shamed and therefore feeling very defensive. It was the more immediate family history (involvement with the Klan) that was the trigger for her. With the help of Susan Hutchison she was able to parse out the difficulty she was having, and to place herself in a position of being able

to hear historical criticism without internalizing it so much.

All of the participants expressed feeling more connected to each other, along with a greater understanding of each other. Notable among the many comments was one of the African American participants who said, “This is the first time in my life that white people have acknowledged that they benefited from slavery. Thank you to the white people who are here and staying here—despite what will be nasty, smelly, mucky . . .” During that same class, one of the NLPS members apologized for her ancestors part in the slave trade.

Each one of the participants expressed an interest in continuing the group in some form. The consistent criticism that was expressed was that there was not enough time each Saturday, and/or that there should have been more than six weeks for the classes.

### **Classes**

Six classes were held on consecutive Saturdays beginning January 8, 2011. All but one of the classes was held from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Mt. Zion Baptist Church (one of Seattle’s oldest and largest African American churches). One class was four hours long, and met at the Northwest African American Museum in their genealogical research library. There was one additional class gathering at NAAM in order to rehearse the final presentation and to discuss plans to continue with the group.

The second class we had was most notable. The class had a European American genealogist as a guest speaker. The African American participants took issue with the genealogist’s use of language (e.g., slaves as opposed to enslaved people) and the context. At one point during the presentation the genealogist noted when looking for African descendants to look under property such, much like one would register a horse. Participants felt as though the facilitators and members of NLPS should have spent more time and put in more effort to find an African American genealogist that would be more sensitive to the special needs of African Americans. One of the participants, who was also a volunteer at NAAM, was able to secure an African American for the class at NAAM.

### **Curriculum/Class Content**

We began with the original syllabus (see attached), however considerable changes were made. The final curriculum is also attached. Most notably, there was not enough time to cover all of the topics NLPS originally intended.

Notes were taken at each class by two members of NLPS (attached).

### **What NPLS Has Learned**

One of NPLS' members, Susan Hutchison, summed up the general feelings of the group:

I would say we learned that, at least with the right combination of people, this can be done, and that it can be very meaningful and healing, and can build community in a racially mixed group. It is pioneering work, a new approach.

I think we learned that it really worked to give a lot of thought to the application process, the curriculum, the process of leading the group. It made a big difference to have the Google group and to invite people to introduce themselves in the period before the class started.

The model of history, connecting, healing and action worked. People faced history, built connections, experienced healing as a result, and took action in the form of talking to friends and family members in new ways, working to make a beautiful video presentation, working to put together a great event that inspired a bunch of people, and probably more things [that] I can't think of right now or don't know about.

The main challenge had to do with time. Participants needed plenty of time to connect, to talk, to process, and it would not have worked well to cut that short and charge ahead with the original curriculum. Another challenge, I think, is that it takes a solid team to do this, and that means either a lot of volunteer time or a lot of money to pay people.

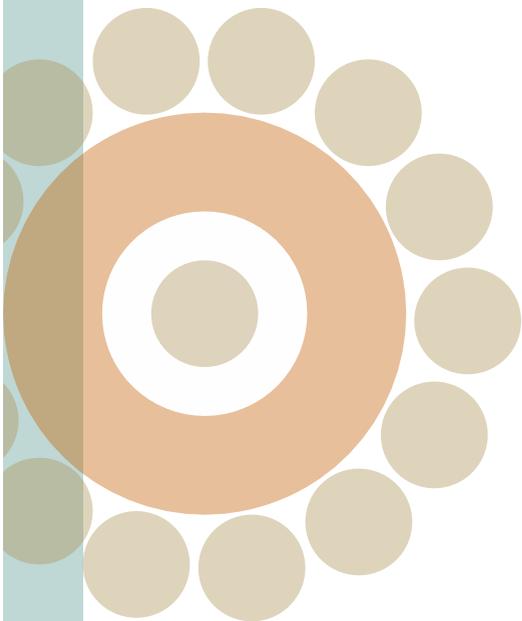
Also this should probably not be attempted by people who have not done significant self-reflection and learning around race. It is a charged subject obviously and brings up tender feelings and conflict. This isn't a model that could be quickly replicated with a whole lot of people. It needs a small group setting with skilled leadership. But under the right conditions, it's fabulous!

I think it's worth saying that from our experience we believe this kind of project shows a lot of promise . . . and should be further supported.



**Notes**

## Notes





**Notes**



