

Compassionately Engaging our Racialized Reactions
(worksheet practice)

1. Ground yourself by taking several deep breaths.
2. Recall one of the reactions you noticed from the whiteboard exercise or over the past few days that stirred something within you. Perhaps a powerful emotion, thought, inner voice, or impulse to behave in some way that you have found difficult to be with.
3. Spend some time 'Paying Attention' to this reaction. Extend it a non-judgmental and welcoming presence of care that genuinely seeks to understand its experience. (NOTE: If you are feeling anything other than non-judgmental open curiosity and compassion toward this stirring, then another feeling/emotion has slipped in -- notice that movement then invite it to relax until you genuinely feel open and curious toward it.) Invite it to embody its experience by sensing:
 - a. What gender would it be?
 - b. How old would it be?
 - c. Is it raced in a particular way?
 - d. What does this reaction look like as it experiences this emotion (its facial, expression, its bodily posture, its attire, etc.)?
 - e. What is the reaction feeling and experiencing in the situation that activates it?
4. Cultivate an awareness of the personified reaction by developing a deeper understanding of it through asking it the following questions:
 - a. What fears does it carry?
 - b. What longings pulsate within it?
 - c. What aches or ancient wounds are sensitive and still haunt it?
 - d. What gifts or joys excite it and yearn to flourish more fully?
5. After you have finished this conversation, invite the personified reaction to summarize what it has shared with you through filling in the following:
 - a. "Whenever I (the personified reaction) get activated, I need you to hear and understand _____; in short, I long for _____"
6. Before completing this practice, discern any invitation of one concrete way you might extend this personified reaction compassion or participate in their flourishing. What is the deep wisdom or deep truth that is underneath this reaction that really needs to be heard and honored in conversations about race? What is the wisdom that wants to be shared?
7. After you have finished this interview, think of a physical object that represents or symbolizes this persistent interior movement. Make sure the object is something you can carry with you for a few days (for example, a coin, stone, button, bead, cross, acorn, ring, etc.).
8. If it feels right to you, conclude your reflection by inviting any sacred reality you know - God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, a healing image a beloved ancestor - to be with the personified interior movement in whatever way feels healing and life-giving.