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WORKING ASSUMPTIONS

If we are going to work for social justice; if we are going to work to counter act racism; we need to create a structure, a farmework if you will, in order to do this work effectively. To do that we make the follow assumptions. WE call these our working assumptions.

1.a.

Racism is long-standing and pervasive - we all absorb it.

None of us here created the problems of racism or the other oppression we saw the 'wheel of Oppression diagram'.

All of us, white folks and POC, are bombarded with racist **mis**-information from the day we are born.

IT's in our advertising, our vocabulary, our history books, our literature and our economic policies. Like just another part of the air we breath.

1.b. *We're not ot blame, but we are responsible for change.*

This means that we must distinguish between guilt and responsibility.

We are **not** to blame for the really screwed up stuff (misinformation if you will) that we were exposed to as kids.

But As Adults, particularly as guidance counselors, mentors, we **are** responsible responsible for interupting the cycle of oppression.

If we are not to blame then we are not guilty.

When you embark opun the road of anti-racist work your going to go thru the cycles of guilt fear shame anger very simular to those of a survivor.

Be aware of the points on this cycles on they can be tools or obstacles.

Personal Guilt in not necessary, it is not a tool. It is and obstacle and antiproductive.

2. *Unlearning and undoing racism is a lifelong journey.*

This work is never done.

An anti-racist society is not osme thing I necessarily think we can accomplish in our life time.

It tooke many many life times for it to become so pervasive.

If we are diligent, productive and very dedicated our children have a chance to see this through for us.

However There is no manual, there is no check list and there is no certificate of achievement that says kimberly Manning is no longer racist.

We are all going to make mistakes along the way. You've got to walk before you can run.

3. *White people and people of colore are all negatively affected by racism, but in different and asymmetrical ways. For people of color, racism profoundly harms, damages and detroys material, psychological, physical, spiritual, and emotional well-being in the short, medium and long-term.*

White people...

4. *The price of continuing racism...*

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5. There are no stupid questions. Again this is a learning process. I special pay attention to unfamiliar feelings or occurances that just don't look feel or sound right, but I just can't necessarily put a finger on it. These are usually good cues.