Virtual Facilitation Guidelines & Resources

Equity-focused conversations are supported by:

- Providing ample time and space for emotions and imagination
- Inviting people's full humanity into the collective space
- Helping people tap into their personal agency
- Normalizing messiness and leaning into discomfort

Some ideas to foster the above:

- Intentionally name experiential outcomes - what's the experience you want people to walk away with? How will you design for that?
- Use of quotes, videos, poems, music
- Inviting full humanity:
  - Normalize work-from-home-during-a-pandemic life!
  - Provide ample stretch, dance, body, brain breaks
  - 20-20-20 or other quick screen breaks
  - Invite people to pause and pay attention to their emotions, to their body, to their environment
  - Permission to turn off video as needed
- Always provide opportunities for people to reflect on "What's mine to do?"
- Explicitly name moments of discomfort and messiness and invite people to pause, explore emotions and lean in

Key 'Ingredients' of Equity-focused Learning and Dialogue

- Relationship & trust-building
- Deep listening & storytelling
- Attention to voice and participation
- Inside-out and identity-based reflection and intention setting connected to equity
- Shared language about and building commitment to work on equity and oppression
- Space for practical application of ideas

Some ideas to foster the above:

- Use breakout rooms to provide space for small group talk structures (pair chats, trios, other group configurations)

- Invite interaction in multiple ways … use polls, chat, unmute-and-speak, individual journaling, writing into a shared google doc
- Co-develop community agreements
- Offer scaffolded prompts that allow people to explore:
    - Who they are (their identity)
    - How being who they are in this world has shaped the experiences and opportunities they have had (or not)
    - Experiences with, thoughts, feelings about racial and other forms of oppression (after community has been built in a group – don't start here)
    - Their agency to lead for change – "what is mine to do?"
    - Utilize constructivist listening structures and other forms of intentional listening
    - Utilize protocols (helping trios, tuning protocols) to support practical application, thought-partnership and invite all voices

General Facilitation Principles:

- Let go AND embrace the virtual space. Don't be attached to how you would do things in person. Embrace what you can do amid the constraints - and the new opportunities - of the virtual world.
- Bring your whole self - and encourage your participants to bring theirs. Consider a whole person approach to participation (e.g. body breaks, breathing, somatics). Recognize that our home and work lives are merged in this moment. Consider opening by welcoming kids, pets, significant others, roommates.
- And recognize boundaries. Give permission to "stop video" or mute when needed. Encourage people to get creative with virtual backgrounds if they do not want to share their personal space.
- Get into the rhythm. Use cadences and routines to make your participant's experience manageable and support them to not be overwhelmed by the Zoom technology.
- Give yourself time AND grace. Acknowledge and accept that learning how to facilitate virtually takes preparation. Expect that there will be a learning curve and mistakes/hiccups will happen.
- Translate AND Create. Try your best to translate in-person activities into a virtual environment. Think outside the box to imagine new possibilities for interaction and delivery.