

# Breaking the Silence: Embracing Cross Racial Dialogue and Action

Our purpose is to facilitate a conversation on racism to increase confidence within communities to build alliances across racial lines, interrupt the interconnected nature of racial barriers and strive to impact a change of heart and mind to dismantle racism. Our goal is to create an environment, not only of authentic dialogue but also individual empowerment.

Three definitions that help

- Racism – the systematic oppression of people of color, which may be overt or covert, intentional or unintentional.
- Racialized – the culture of racial prejudice in America has changed; many currently use non-race related reasons to continue to deny African-American equal access to opportunity.
- Structural Racialization – this does not require racist actors, it is a system of social structures that produces cumulative, durable, race-based inequalities.

We use three videos in our discussions ***Cracking the Code: A system of Racial Inequity, Healing Justice*** put out by the World Trust and ***An American Story: Race Amity and The Other Tradition*** E Pluribus Unum raceamity.org. The videos give us a frame to address the system of racism in America, to spark conversation that can engage both the head and the heart. Sessions are dedicated to the continued process of dismantling racism and the subtle forces that shape it.

- January 30                      Session 1: Culture & Identity the Dynamics and History of Racism in America
- February 06                    Session 2: Internalized & Institutional Racism: Bias and Privilege in American
- February 13                    Session 3: Systemic Racism: Housing in America
- February 20                    Session 4: Healing Justice: Change and Viable Possibilities
- February 27                    Session 5: Healing Justice: The Deeper Causes of Trauma
- March 06                        Session 6: Race Amity: The Lost Narrative of America

All meetings are 11am-1pm

Individual empowerment through open dialogue is only one part of the process of *understanding, identifying and interrupting* racism in America. We also have to work to dislodge the place racism takes in our thoughts and actions and hence our society. Together we dismantle racism one heart at a time, one thought at a time and one step at a time.

Presenters – Henry Colado: A member of Bahai Faith for 41 years.

Married 42 years, 2 children

Facilitated session for the Institute for Healing Racism

Was a Duval County Public Schools facilitator for Multicultural classrooms (trained teachers)

Co-developed Breaking the Silence

Charmaine Myers Coates: A Bahai for 30+years

Mother of 3 adult children raised as Bahai's and a 6 yo granddaughter

Psychiatric Registered Nurse for 40 years; presently doing COVID testing full-time

Has worked in the past with Mr. Rutstein Healing of Racism workshop.

Previous experience with Henry collaborating on projects, including on race unity; Henry nor I are experts in the arena of racism but we are dedicated to Baha'u'llah's instructions and we step into this arena as learners.

Co-sponsors (so far) the Bahais of Pinellas County, the Pinellas County Advocates for Race Amity, Unitarian Universalists of Clearwater Social Justice Council, MyStar96.com