

Seeking the Beloved Community Worksheet

The activities below explore how generations of inequities deeply harm communities of color and indigenous communities, and how participants can begin to build a new world, a more just and fair world, through empathy and self-reflection. These activities were adapted from Training for Change and Wellstone Action modules and developed in collaboration with New American Leaders and Vote Run Lead. All materials are for public use with accreditation to Vote Run Lead and New American Leaders.

1. Exercise #1-- Close Your Eyes

Close your eyes and recall a time when you were NOT chosen for something or a time when you were left behind. Where were you? How old were you? What happened? How did it make you feel? Do you recall the way your body responded -- did you hunch over? Cross your arms? Did your cheeks flush? Did anyone notice that you were left out? How did that acknowledgement or lack of acknowledgement feel? Jot down key details of that memory.

2. Exercise #2-- Aspiration

Part 1:

Close your eyes and imagine what a just and fair world looks like. How do you know it's different? Does it look like more blue skies? What does your community look, sound and feel like in this new world? Take a minute and write down or draw out how this new world appears?

Part 2:

As you reflect on this new world, ask yourself, what are you willing to give up to create this just and fair world you envisioned? This can be something tangible or a state of being--for example, "I give up the need for single use plastic bags," or "I give up the need for comfort in difficult and honest conversations." For non-White participants, your approach to this question may be different. This is likely NOT your first nor 5th time in an exercise around racial inequities. A lot of times, women of color especially end up shouldering the emotional labor for this kind of work. So your answers to this question of what you are willing to give up could be "I give up sharing my story with people who haven't earned the right to hear it yet." Jot down your list.

3. Exercise #3-- Headline

Imagine it is the year 2030, ten years after the global pandemic that revealed grave inequities in the United States. Your hometown paper is doing a special edition about how politics in the U.S. changed since that pandemic, especially as it relates to racial and economic injustices. They want to feature an article about your 2020 campaign and what you did to contribute to that change. What would the main headline of that article be? And what did you do to engage with communities of color or indigenous communities in 2020, during the pandemic, that made a difference? How did you show up? Write out your campaign activities in a format as the first paragraph of the article. For example:

Headline:

Nimco Ahmed's Innovative Get Out the Vote Tactics Led to the Transformation of the Electorate in House District 52

Body:

In 2020, after hosting over 20 virtual town hall meetings with community activists from the God Squad and Black Churches Alliances, Coalition for Asian American Leaders, Hispanic Advancement Now and Dream of Wild Health, Nimco Ahmed's state house campaign created over 50 public service ads focused on telling the story of how communities of color and indigenous communities were disproportionately affected by the deadly COVID-19 virus. Those ads were shared numerous times on social media and on the youtube channels of various ethnic press networks. As a result, over 50,000 people collectively viewed the ads and since the ads asked viewers to turn their outrage into a vote for change, that led to over 20,000 new people registering to vote and over 30,000 people requesting absentee ballots. Those new voters from communities especially affected by the virus became the deciding factor in the 2020 election and saw the ushering of a new wave of democratic leadership. Ten years later, House District 52 and the surrounding house districts have the most ethnically, economically and generationally diverse delegation in the whole state.