



Generating strategies for a more equitable and nonviolent future.

## What We Know: Multi-Racial Relationships Initiative

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### Overview

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The goal of this project is to contribute to the work of dismantling systemic racism and racial inequity.

Increasingly, social change agents understand that relationships are as critical to sustained and long-term change as activism, politics and policy; writer and activist adrienne maree brown has written that, in the work of social transformation, “relationships are everything.”<sup>1</sup> The theory that drives our research is that strong multi-racial relationships are an essential and powerful tool in the long work of dismantling racism.

The project assumes that biological race is a myth, unsupported by science and social history, created and maintained to support and enforce the subjugation of particular ethnic and cultural groups. Racism, however, is alive and well, costing lives, degrading humanity, and limiting access to economic opportunity and basic human rights.

Many of us at the ILI are members of multi-racial families, with parents, partners and/or children whose skin color is different from each other’s and who don’t share the same experience of racism. In order to be in loving family with each other, we see each other as fully human, transcending race. At the same time we acknowledge racism, and our differing realities, ancestral histories, and experiences.

This project focuses on the lived experiences of these families, and the collective wisdom in those experiences, as a source of insight and practice in support for strong and intentional multi-racial relationships.

### Learning

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ILI senior research associates are conducting interviews with 100 adult members of multi-racial families. When we complete that process, transcripts of these conversations will be carefully read by a multi-racial team to identify common themes, experiences and insights. From those readings, the core team will generate findings.

Our timeline is to complete interviews by the end of May 2021, analysis by Mid-July, and to generate and begin implementing change strategies by September 2021.

### Impact

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We anticipate that the findings from our research will lend themselves to published materials, public webinars and events, and resources for organizations and community groups. When our findings are established, we will develop a targeted strategy to drive change at those levels and through social media.

### Project Leadership

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This project is led by Karena Montag, MFT, Founding Co-Director of [STRONGHOLD](#) and Lucinda Garthwaite, Ed.D., Founding Director of the [Institute for Liberatory Innovation](#). Karena and Lucinda are members of multi-racial families.

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<sup>1</sup> Brown, a.m. (2017) *Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change. Changing Worlds*. A.K. Press. Page 19.

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Please contact us to learn more: