
What We Know: The Collective Wisdom of Multi-Racial Families

Information for Participants

Please review all four pages of this document before you consent to participate. Thank you

Overview

The three people who conceived of this project are all part of multi-racial families, with parents, partners and/or children who identify differently from each other in terms of race and racial history, and whose skin color is different from each other. They all also activists and scholars of racism, race, and social justice. Everyone associated with this project is dedicated to restorative practice, and to dismantling racism and white supremacy.

We share a belief 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. We also know that racism is alive and well, costing lives, degrading humanity, and limiting access to economic opportunity and basic human rights at every moment.

In our families, we hold both of these truths every day: In order to be in loving family with each other, we must see each other as fully human, transcending race, and we must acknowledge racism and our differing realities and experiences of racism.

Our experiences and beliefs lead us to believe that multi-racial families, collectively, know something that could inform restorative practice and social reconciliation around race and racism in communities and organizations. This project is designed to find out what we know, and then get that out into the world.

The project begins with research; you are invited to be part of that research by participating in an interview with a member of the research team. Based on project interviews, the project team will create resources and strategies to drive change in communities and organizations.

The Institute for Liberatory Innovation

The Institute for Liberatory Innovation is a 501(c)3 non-profit with a mission to generate and implement actions for a more socially equitable and nonviolent future. The core work of the ILI is to conduct collaborative research and informal learning, and, based on our findings, create innovative strategies and take action to generate systemic change. Learn more about the ILI [here](#).

Core Project Team

Lucinda Garthwaite. Project Co-Lead.

Lucinda is the Director of the Institute for Liberatory Innovation, which she founded after a thirty-year career in higher education, most recently as a senior leader at [Goddard College](#). Lucinda was a Fellow of the Fielding Institute for Social Innovation from 2015 - 2017 and holds a Doctorate in Leadership for Change from Fielding Graduate University, a Masters in Education from the University of New Hampshire, and an MFA in Creative writing from Goddard College, and has participated in restorative practice education with the Insight Prison Project, Stronghold, and Roca, Inc. Lucinda's writing is available on the [ILI Blog](#).

Karena Montag. Project co-lead.

Karena is co-founder of [Stronghold](#), offering consultation and facilitation rooted in anti-racist analysis and framed by Restorative and Transformative Justice philosophy and practice. She has trained hundreds of community members in the practices and principles of Restorative Justice and circle-keeping and consulted on and facilitated racial justice processes for nonprofits and educators in the U.S. and in Central America. She received the Harriet Whitman Lee Partnership Award from the Association for Dispute Resolution of Northern California (ADRNC) and Oakland's Finest Award from the LoveLife Foundation. Karena received an M.A. in Integral Psychology from the California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS) and maintains a private psychotherapy practice in Berkeley, CA.

Jordan Laney. Senior Research Associate & Research Project Coordinator.

Jordan is an Appalachian culture scholar, and a facilitator & educator focused on building resilient rural communities. Her work has included documenting the erasure of Black and women Appalachian musicians, supporting first generation Appalachian college students, and evaluating educational programs with the Virginia Tech Department of Engineering. Jordan teaches in the Department of Religion and Culture at Virginia Tech, and in the Appalachian Studies program at Appalachian State University, and has been honored for her teaching, scholarship, writing and social justice advocacy. Jordan holds PhD in Cultural and Political Theory from Virginia Tech, and MA in Appalachian Studies from Appalachian State University

Janet Thompson. Senior Research Associate.

Janet served on the faculty in the graduate program in counseling at the University of New Hampshire, and as a faculty member at Union Institute and University and Lesley University. Janet practiced as a mental health counselor for over thirty years, including in leadership, frontline service, and crisis response for a regional hospital behavioral health unit. Her teaching and research has included work with adult development, socio-cultural contexts for counseling, women, culture and change, grief and stress. Janet holds a PhD in Educational Studies from Lesley University, and an MA in Counseling from the University of New Hampshire.

Shelley Vermilya. Project co-founder and Senior Research Associate.

Shelley has taught multicultural education, identity development, race, gender and disability studies for over twenty-five years, at Goddard College, the University of Vermont and St. Michael's Colleges, and is a community facilitator with the Vermont Peace and Justice Center's Racial Justice project. She has participated in restorative practice training through The International Institute for Restorative Practices, The Insight Prison Project, Stronghold, and the North Dakota Study Group. Shelley holds a Doctorate in Education in Leadership and Policy Studies from the University of Vermont, and MA in History from Goddard College. Shelley currently serves as the ILI Equity Scholar in Residence in the Washington Central School District in central Vermont.

Research Design

We will interview at least 100 adult members of multiracial families. All interviews will be recorded and transcribed. The project team, joined by four other Associates to ensure a multi-racial perspective, will interpret the transcript data using a transformative phenomenology approach¹. That interpretation will lead to research findings, which will be presented as collective wisdom to inform multi-racial relationships in general.

Research Participant Information

Research participants (you) are adult (18+) members of multi-racial families who agree to an interview with the member of the core project team (your project contact person) who reached out to them regarding the project.

Pre- Interview

We encourage you to read this entire document, then schedule an interview and complete a consent form. If you have any questions prior to scheduling your interview, or if you need to change your interview appointment, please email Jordan Laney at jordanlaney@liberatoryinstitute.org.

The Interview

Your interview will be with either Jordan Laney or Janet Thompson. After you sign up for a time for your interview, you'll receive a confirmation notice. Jordan or Janet will follow up within 48 hrs with an email containing the zoom link for your interview.

The interview will be recorded, and the recording transcribed. Once the transcription is complete, the recording will be deleted. You will have the option to turn your camera on or off during the interview. (If you're unable to join us by Zoom, we'll send you a call in number.)

The interview will last 60-90 minutes, starting with a brief overview, confirmation of your consent to participate and be recorded, and several simple demographic questions. Your answers to demographic questions will not be assigned to you by name; we'll use them only to help us be sure we're hearing as broad a range of experiences as we can from among participants as a whole.

The interviewer will have a few questions to ask, which we hope will lead to a conversation based on your individual experience as a member of a multi-racial family. Once your conversation starts, you can expect to be asked questions like, "can you say more about that?" because we are really interested in your particular and specific experience.

Please don't feel any pressure to come up with "wisdom" yourself, though if you have ideas and insights we'll be glad to hear them. Your voice will be among many others, and it's the researchers' job to find the collective wisdom in all of those stories, together.

If at any time during the interview you would rather not respond to a question, please just say that, "I'd rather not respond," and the interviewer will move on, no questions asked. Also, if you say something and regret you said it, or want to be sure it's not quoted directly, just say, "Please don't quote that," and we will not. If you need to end the interview at any time, for any reason, just say that you need to stop, and that will be the end of the interview.

Confidentiality

Please read this part of the consent form carefully and check all boxes that apply to you. We will respect your specific wishes regarding confidentiality. If, after your interview, you wish to change your preferences, just [email Jordan Laney](mailto:jordanlaney@liberatoryinstitute.org) with your adjusted preferences are, and we will respect those. You may change your preferences up until the findings are in final draft. We will contact you at that point and send you a draft to review, along with an invitation to change your preferences then for a final time.

The transcript of your conversation will not contain any identifying information; all names including yours will be redacted before the transcript is read by the rest of the research team. The only people who will see

your redacted interview transcript are core project team members and Associates who join us to analyze transcripts. All will be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement prior to reading the transcripts. Transcripts will be stored in a private folder on the ILI Drive for one year following completion of all interviews, and then will be deleted.

Transcriptions will be created by Artificial Intelligence (AI), and human transcriptionists who are required by their employer to sign non-disclosure agreements.

After the interview

In Thanks for your Participation

If you agree in the consent form, we will thank you by name in our findings. If, as we expect they will, the findings lend themselves to published book form, we'll thank you in those acknowledgements and send you two signed copies of the book, one for yourself and one to pass on.

Invitations to Participate in Strategies

If we develop strategies that include opportunities to research participants to join us, for example on video or in public, we may reach out to you to invite you to participate in those strategies. We will of course respect your response, including your silence if you choose not to respond to our outreach.

Intellectual Property and Financial Gain

Participants will not be paid, or benefit financially from this research. The conclusions of the core project team, synthesized from all interview transcripts combined, will be the property of The Institute for Liberatory Innovation unless and until the ILI transfers to ownership of a different publisher. Team members will be paid for their work on the project, and any additional proceeds will support the work of the ILI.

If you have any questions at any time, please don't hesitate to contact Jordan Laney at jordanlaney@liberatoryinstitute.org

If, after reading this document and scheduling your interview, you decide you would prefer not to participate, just send Jordan an email to that effect, and we will thank you and leave you be.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of your interviewer, please contact ILI director and project lead [Lucinda Garthwaite](#). Your concerns will be held in confidence unless you agree otherwise.

ⁱ See, Simpson, S. K. (2008). Experiencing phenomenology as mindful transformation: An autobiographical account. In Rehorick, M. (Ed.), Transformational phenomenology: Changing ourselves, lifeworlds and professional practice. Lanham, MD (USA): Lexington Books.