



Greetings Study Group Leaders!

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year from the Study Group subcommittee of AET's Social Justice Committee.

As you plan for your upcoming meetings this year, AET hopes that study groups will dedicate time to ongoing discussions about how our role as educational therapists intersects with social justice to support AET's Statement of Commitment:

"AET is committed to racial and social equity and justice. As such, we are looking inward and outward at the systemic inequities that exist in our profession and in the lives of our students."

The Social Justice Committee recognizes that we, as individuals, come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences, and possess varying degrees of knowledge around topics related to social justice. Our goal, therefore, is to provide relevant and flexible programming, as well as resources to support your efforts in this area. However, your study group chooses to engage with these resources, we recognize that some members may experience different levels of comfort during these conversations. While we certainly acknowledge this, we also encourage all members to participate in this important work by engaging in it together through the incredible opportunity to learn, share, and grow in our study groups!

To support your efforts, we have provided two pathways that study groups can use to springboard these conversations: **Option 1** can be used as a structured "presentation" with guided participation that is well-suited as a stand-alone experience during a full meeting, and **Option 2** can be used to facilitate ongoing inquiry, reflection, and discussion in smaller chunks of time over the course of several meetings throughout the year.

Option 1 utilizes this TEDx Talk [How to recognize your white privilege -- and use it to fight inequality](#) and article entitled [White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack](#), both from Peggy McIntosh.

- We recommend sharing these with study group members prior to the meeting in which they will be discussed, so they can ideally preview them ahead of time.
- Even if members have not had the chance to preview the materials shared, this format enables all to learn and engage during the meeting.
- The attached document entitled, "Educational Therapy and Social Justice: Investigate, Reflect, Share," offers a structured way to present these ideas at your meetings.

Option 2 utilizes the “Ongoing Exploration and Reflection Questions” and “8 Identities” documents attached below.

- Our suggestion is to offer the 8 Identities document to your members, along with one or both of the readings on the Questions document for your members to read, either ahead of or even during your meeting since they are all relatively brief.
- Once members have had a chance to explore these resources, they may select one or more of the attached questions to deepen the conversation during meetings.

Both of these options REQUIRE the establishment of a “safe space” in which all members are invited to participate and feel their voices will be heard. A useful guide to help create this space, “Agreements for Multicultural Interactions,” is attached. Additionally, both options rely on members being allowed the time and space to reflect individually, as well as time to share their responses and experiences if they so choose. Written reflection can also be an incredibly powerful tool for many.

Please be assured that wherever we are on the continuum of learning about social justice, we can expect the process to be messy and mistakes to be made. This is why it is critical that a safe space for all is established and nurtured. And remember, just as we try to teach our clients, learning is a PROCESS! As James Baldwin wrote, “not everything that is faced can be changed but nothing can be changed until it is faced.”

We look forward to embarking on this journey of discovery. In addition to the attached resources, if you would like further support or have questions about facilitating these discussions, we are here to help. Please feel free to reach out to us with any questions or requests.

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