

# *Bias & Bullying*

## School Diversion Project



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### **STUDENT PROGRAM CURRICULUM**

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### **OVERVIEW**

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**THE JUSTICE EDUCATION CENTER  
WEST HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT**

# THE JUSTICE EDUCATION CENTER

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Adapted from *The Bias Crimes Diversion Project*

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*Bias & Bullying*  
School Diversion Project

**PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

**STUDENT PROGRAM  
CURRICULUM**

# Introduction

## THE BIAS & BULLYING SCHOOL DIVERSION PROJECT

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### THE JUSTICE EDUCATION CENTER

For over thirty years, the Justice Education Center has been actively engaged in local, state, and national public policy development and community dialogue concerning the equitable administration of criminal justice. Focusing on research and strategic planning, statewide education and training, publications, development, and national consulting, The Justice Education Center provides expertise and experience in curriculum development and training in the criminal and juvenile justice fields.

### THE BIAS CRIMES DIVERSION PROJECT

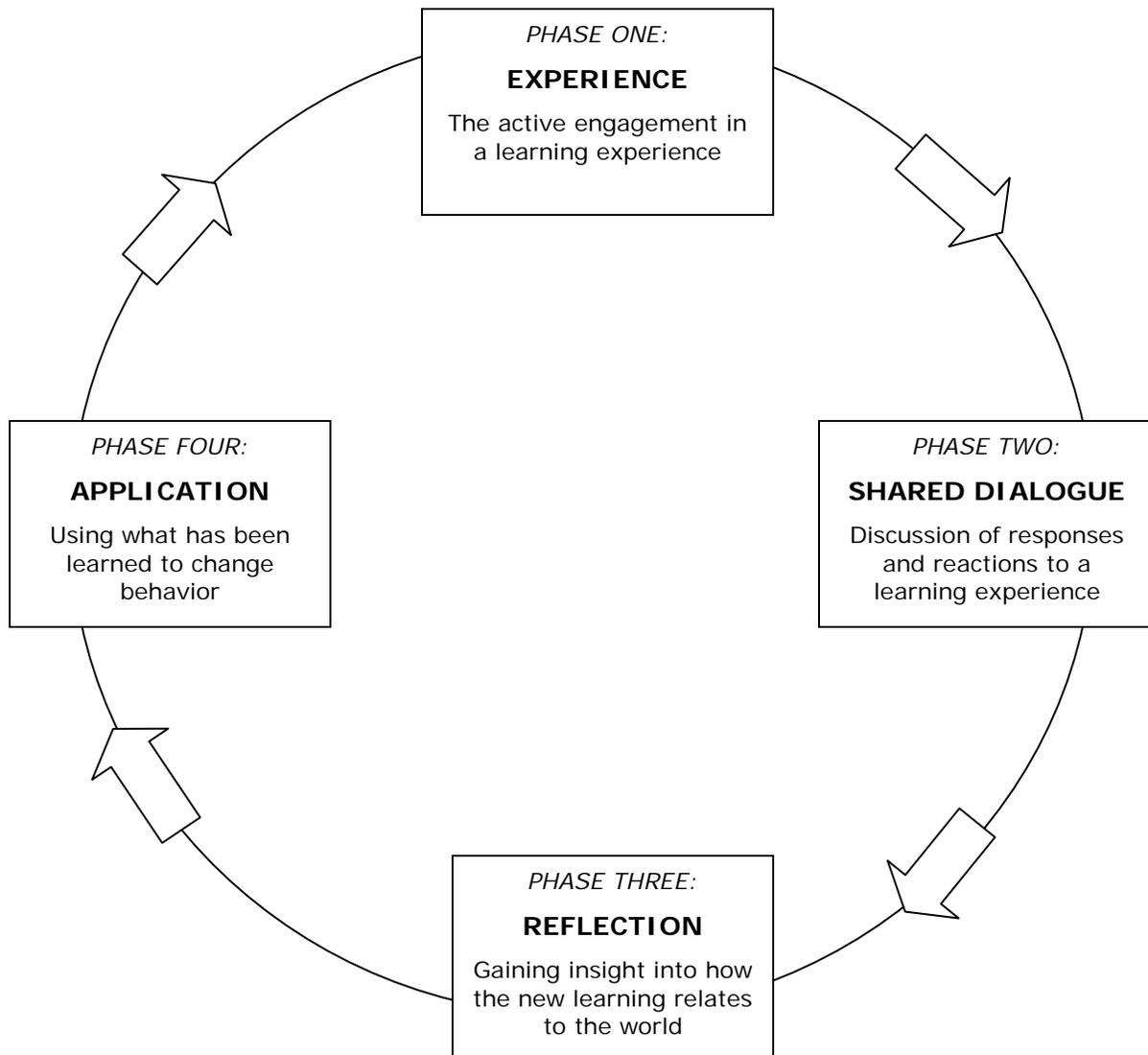
The past twenty years have produced disturbing trends in the incidence of hate crimes. Over the past twenty years, crimes motivated by hate and bias have more than doubled across the State of Connecticut. Since 2001, the Justice Education Center, through a contract from the Connecticut Judicial Branch Court Support Services (CSSD), has directed the *Bias Crimes Diversion Project* (BCDP). Consisting of a series of sequential weekly sessions, the interactive, research-based program is designed to increase participants' cognitive, problem-solving, and conflict resolution skills and to provide hate crimes and discrimination prevention and intervention strategies. The Bias Crimes Diversion Project Curriculum, addressing adult and youthful offenders, was the first of its kind in the nation.

### THE BIAS & BULLYING SCHOOL DIVERSION PROJECT

In 2010, the Justice Education Center embarked on a process to adapt the successful *Bias Crimes Diversion Project* to assist school communities in addressing bullying and bias incidents. The *Bias & Bullying School Diversion Project* provides public, private and parochial schools with a curricular intervention designed to educate students who have engaged as perpetrators in incidents of bullying and bias in their schools. In contrast to expulsion or detention strategies, this project provides interactive, research-based content designed to increase participants' awareness and understanding of the impact of these behaviors on themselves, their targets, and the school community at large and to motivate them to choose more respectful and non-biased communication and behavioral strategies.

## THE LEARNING CYCLE

This curriculum is based on an experiential learning model comprised of four sequential phases. In the initial phase, participants engage in interactive group exercises. Following this experience, learners share their initial reactions and responses to the exercise through a variety of modalities, including individual writing or drawing, pairs sharing and small or large group discussions. After sharing their initial responses to the exercise, learners have opportunities for a deeper reflection on the larger implications of the learning, how it relates to the world and to their own beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. This process often begins with large group discussion after an exercise, and is continued in opportunities to reflect on learning through in-class journaling assignments and subsequent discussion of these assignments in the following session. Finally, participants have opportunities to plan and practice ways to apply what they have learned to their own life and circumstances.



## PROGRAM GOALS

This *Bias & Bullying School Diversion Project* curriculum provides participating students with approximately 12 hours of training, structured in either 3 – 4 Sessions. These Sessions are sequential, working together to accomplish the following goals:

- To increase participants' awareness and understanding of the impact of bias and bullying behaviors on themselves, their targets, and the school community at large
- To motivate participants to change attitudes and behaviors that move them from being perpetrators of bias and bullying to collaborators who prevent acts of prejudice
- To provide opportunities for participants to develop and practice skills to choose non-biased communication and other behavioral strategies

## THE BIAS & BULLYING SCHOOL DIVERSION PROJECT CURRICULUM

The *Bias & Bullying School Diversion Project* Curriculum consists of weekly Sessions. Sessions are typically from 3—4 hours in length, are interactive in nature and include a variety of formats designed to address different learning styles, engage participants in the learning process, and motivate them to take steps towards sustainable, positive change.

Each Session includes the following:

- Objectives
- Facilitators' Notes for Introducing the Session
- Instructions for Activities
- Optional Out-of-Class Assignments

There are also units that include necessary handouts and worksheets, in-class journaling assignments, closing activities and written program evaluations.

## ABOUT THIS CURRICULUM

### Agendas

Sample agendas are provided in Unit II. These include two options for multi-session student programs:

**The 4-3 Option:** Twelve (12) hours of training, divided into four 3-hour training sessions.

**The 3-4 Option:** Twelve (12) hours of training, divided into three 4-hour training sessions.

Note that these options have been color-coded to minimize confusion. Although sessions are designed to be delivered approximately one per week, minor variations in this design

will not impact the program effectiveness. Because session content is sequential and builds upon previous learning, program planners should avoid scheduling sessions more than two (2) weeks apart.

### **Recommended Group Size**

The optimum size for student programs is between 20-25 participants. This group size maximizes students' learning as it affords a wide range of opportunities to learn from the perspectives and experiences of others.

This curriculum recognizes that group size will vary and occasions will arise when very small numbers of students form the participant group. In such cases, aim to have no fewer than four (4) participants when scheduling the training sessions. Students attendance at all sessions is required.

### **Room Arrangement**

Choose a room of adequate size with moveable seating that provides room for students to move freely about and gather in small groups when necessary. In general avoid arranging seating in classroom style. Chairs in a circle promotes sharing among group members, rather than addressing comments and responses to the trainers at the front of the room. If the room has a chalkboard or whiteboard, you may use this for brainstorming; however, provide chart paper to record the ground Rules and be sure to take these with you when you leave each session. This original list of Ground Rules should be reposted before each subsequent session and revisited before beginning the session activities.

### **Reproducible Handouts and Worksheets**

**Unit VIII. Handouts & Worksheets** contains copies of all of the handouts and worksheets you will need for the training sessions. These have been printed with blank pages on their reverse sides to facilitate photocopying. The exception to this is double-sided handouts which are printed in the Unit double-sided. Most copy machines are able to prepare double-sided copies and this format should assist you in this process. In the event that one of these worksheet/handout pages is lost, a copy of each resource also appears in the body of the training activity in which it is used.

### **Program Evaluations**

In general, more honest and accurate feedback is secured when participants are allowed to complete written evaluation forms anonymously. Program evaluations are used by The Justice Education Center to continually update, revise and adapt the curricular materials. At the conclusion of each training program, please return the originals of the Participant Evaluation Forms to The Justice Education Center.

# Skills FOR FACILITATORS

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## SAMPLE CONTENT

### **CREATE A NON-THREATENING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT.**

In order to facilitate participants' self-motivation to change, they must feel free to explore their attitudes and feelings and to interact and share with one another. Be open, genuine, supportive, and non-judgmental. Use humor at appropriate times. After providing instructions, check for understanding and avoid jargon or language that participants may not understand. Ensure that mutual expectations, guidelines, and ground rules for discussion are understood and agreed-upon. Use these guidelines to build trust among participants and to establish and maintain a safe environment.

### **MAKE USE OF ESTABLISHED GROUND RULES.**

It is important that everyone in the group understands what is expected of them and what they can expect of others. The ground rules are critical to this process, articulating guidelines for the curriculum's participatory, experiential activities. For example, everyone is expected to actively participate, to speak and listen respectfully when others are talking. Many of the topics covered in the weekly agendas will be difficult for some students. It is also possible that participants have never had the opportunity to reflect on their own feelings and attitudes about other people and groups. While people are unlikely to benefit from feeling they are under pressure to share something they feel uncomfortable sharing, it is important to establish the expectation of participation. Allow participants to "pass" if they need additional time to think about their response to a certain topic, but clarify that you will be coming back to them to hear their response after others have shared their thoughts. For additional information on establishing ground rules, see pp [XX-XX](#).



## UNIT II: TRAINING AGENDAS

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### SAMPLE CONTENT

#### Multi-Session Student Programs

The *Bias & Bullying School Diversion Project* curriculum consists of approximately twelve (12) hours of training for youth who have engaged in perpetrating bullying and/or bias incidents in their schools and communities. Two options for presentation of the program content have been provided, the **4-3 Option**, consisting of four 3-hour training sessions and the **3-4 Option**, consisting of three 4-Hour training sessions. The training sessions that comprise these agenda options are designed to be presented approximately once weekly for a period of 3-4 weeks, and are colored coded for easy access.

#### Student & Family Workshop

In addition, a full-day (5 hour) Family Workshop model is provided. This workshop brings together student participants with adult members of their families to increase the group's overall understanding and awareness of the dynamics of bullying and bias behaviors. For the first half of this workshop, adults and students work in separate sessions to address issues unique to their specific roles and situations. During the second half of the workshop, the groups join together to further explore the impact of bias and bullying behaviors and to develop skills that support efforts to choose more respectful and inclusive behaviors.

#### Group Size

The optimum group size for trainings for middle and high school students is approximately 25 participants; however, there is some flexibility in group size. Slightly larger groups can be managed, but it will be necessary to lengthen the agenda to include all recommended activities and for active participation of all students. Groups as small as four can also be scheduled, although larger group sizes maximize students' learning through opportunities to interact with a greater number of other students.

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# Sample Agenda

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▶ **SESSION ONE OBJECTIVES:**

*Participants will . . .*

- learn about the *Bias & Bullying School Diversion Project*.
- establish guidelines for working together.
- begin to build a common vocabulary for discussing issues of bias and bullying.
- develop an understanding of the concepts of bullying, stereotyping, prejudice, and bias-motivated behavior.

## *SESSION ONE AGENDA OUTLINE:*

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<b>I</b>	<b>WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS</b>	<b>15 minutes</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Facilitator Introductions</b></li><li>• <b>The Justice Education Center</b></li><li>• <b>The Bias &amp; Bullying School Diversion Project</b></li><li>• <b>Introduction to Session One</b></li></ul>	
<b>II.</b>	<b>SETTING THE GROUND RULES</b>	<b>10 minutes</b>
<b>III.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY:</b> <i>Participant Introductions</i>	<b>10 minutes</b>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>COMMUNICATION SKILLS</b> <i>Are You Listening?</i>	<b>30 minutes</b>
<b>V.</b>	<b>LANGUAGE:</b> <i>Building a Common Vocabulary</i>	<b>30 minutes</b>
	<b>&gt;&gt;&gt; BREAK &lt;&lt;&lt;</b>	<b>15 minutes</b>
<b>VI.</b>	<b>WHY WE'RE HERE:</b> <i>Choices &amp; Consequences</i>	<b>30 minutes</b>
<b>VII.</b>	<b>JOURNALING EXERCISE:</b> <i>Looking Back</i>	<b>30 minutes</b>
<b>VIII.</b>	<b>CLOSING ACTIVITY</b>	<b>10 minutes</b>

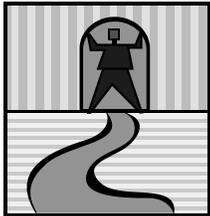


## UNIT III.

### INTRODUCING THE SESSIONS

Unit III: **Introducing the Sessions** provides instructional facilitator notes for leading each session.

#### SAMPLE CONTENT:



### INTRODUCING SESSION THREE:

#### PRIOR TO THIS SESSION . . .

- Read over and become familiar with the Session Three curriculum.
- Copy the agenda on a sheet or chart paper or the chalkboard. **NOTE:** Do not include times on the posted agenda.
- Repost Ground Rules developed in Session One.

#### Option 4-3 ONLY

Write the definitions of **Bullying** and **Cyberbullying** on a sheet of chart paper or the chalkboard.

#### Option 3-4 ONLY

Write the following questions on a sheet of chart paper or the chalkboard for the activity *The Raised Fist*.

- Why is this person raising a fist, about to take a punch?
- Is the person alone? If not, who is the person with?
- If others are present, in what way are they involved?

## **I. WELCOME BACK THE GROUP.**

### **REVIEW GROUND RULES.**

Review the posted ground Rules and ask if there are additional Ground Rules anyone would like to add. By a show of hands or other method, ask again for consensus from the group to adhere to the agreed-upon Ground Rules during the session.

## **II. INTRODUCE SESSION THREE.**

### **SHARE INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.**

This week's class focuses on feelings, specifically the feelings associated with prejudice. We will be looking at what it is like to feel different and what it feels like to be the target of the prejudice and biases of others. We have all at one time experienced the feelings of being an outsider, of feeling different from everyone else. In this class, we'll be looking more closely at this issue and the ways feelings about other people's differences can motivate prejudice and hate."

### **REVIEW SESSION THREE AGENDA.**

## **III. PROCEED WITH THE SESSION THREE AGENDA ACTIVITIES.**

All activity instructions can be found in **Unit IV. Activities & Instructions.**



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## UNIT IV.

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### ACTIVITIES & INSTRUCTIONS

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**Unit IV. Activities & Instructions** includes instructions for all of the training activities that comprise the Bias & Bullying School Diversion Project curriculum.

## SAMPLE CONTENT:

### *THE RAISED FIST*

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#### **PURPOSE:**

This activity provides an opportunity for participants to explore the dynamics of acts of bullying and bias and to begin to develop alternatives to these behaviors.

#### **REQUIREMENTS:**

**Materials:** paper, pens or pencils

**Time:** 60 minutes

#### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Prior to conducting this activity, write the following discussion questions on a sheet of chart paper or the chalkboard:
  - Why is this person about to throw a punch?
  - Is the person alone? If not, who is the person with?
  - If other people are present, what are they doing? How are they involved?
  - What was the “final straw” that led to the person’s decision to raise his or her fist? Where did it take place? Who else was involved?
  - What happened to help create the feelings and frustrations behind the incident?

2. Divide participants into two small groups. Explain that all groups will be creating and acting out a story about bullying that ends with the same picture: a person raising a fist about to take a punch.
3. While small groups are developing their role plays, write the following questions on a sheet of chart paper or the chalkboard:

*The Raised Fist: Finding a pattern of behavior:*

- Is it likely this person has responded this way before?
- Make up a similar incident that happened in the past to this person.
- Is this person likely to act in a similar way again when feelings of anger and of being treated unjustly arise?

*Changing a pattern of behavior:*

- What outside forces could prevent this kind of situation from happening again?
  - What could this person do to stop responding in the same way?
  - What are some possible alternative responses?
  - What would be helpful responses from friends and onlookers?
4. Circulate around the room to help small groups stay on task and accurately follow directions. Strongly reinforce that no actual physical contact should occur among group members as they act out their scene.
  5. Reconvene the group and have groups act out their scenes. At the conclusion of each presentation, ask for feedback from the large group about what they believe was actually going on in the scene, asking: *What do you think is at the root of this situation?* Allow about 5 minutes after each presentation for this feedback process.
  6. Explain to groups that they are now going to look deeper at the choices of the people in the scenes, and develop ideas for ways to better address the things that seem to be at the root of the bullying incident. Ask participants to stay in their same groups and choose one person who will take notes on the group's discussion to share later in the activity. Provide each group with some blank paper and a pen or pencil.
  7. Instruct groups to discuss the person in their scene who was the main perpetrator of the bullying or bias incident. Ask groups to imagine that this choice demonstrates a pattern of behavior. Ask participants to consider this pattern of behavior as they discuss together the questions you prepared in step # 3. Allow another 10-15 minutes for the process.
  8. Reconvene the group and have the person in each small group who agreed to take notes share the group's ideas. As groups share, write the ideas they have for changing the pattern of behavior on chart paper or the chalkboard.
  9. After small groups have shared their ideas, lead a discussion using some or all of the questions that follow:

- Summarize for the group why the person in your scene was engaging in bullying.
- What feelings do you have for the target in your story?
- Do you feel sympathy for the person raising the fist? What is the difference between understanding and sympathizing?
- What action would you take if you were in a similar situation?
- What kinds of actions could be taken to move difficult and tense situations forward to positive solutions?
- As a result of this activity, can you see any destructive patterns in your own life?
- What approaches could you use to change recurring patterns of behavior?



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## UNIT V.

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### IN-CLASS JOURNALING ASSIGNMENTS

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**Unit V. In-Class Journaling Assignments** includes weekly in-class journaling assignments and follow-up discussion activities that align with the existing program content. These activities provide opportunities for participants to reflect upon their learning in the program and explore its relevance to their own life and experiences.

#### SAMPLE CONTENT:

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## ABOUT IN-CLASS JOURNALING ASSIGNMENTS

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Each week, participants will be asked to complete an in-class journaling assignment called a *Personal Reflection*. Because participants are secondary school students who may have both curricular and extra-curricular obligations, this program does not include the expectation that participants will complete out-of-class assignments. However, personal reflection on the topics covered in the workshop sessions and how these topics relate to participants' own lives and experiences are important parts of the learning process.

In-class journaling assignments allow participants time to think about their experiences during the session and to consider the ways their learning applies to their own lives. Set aside 10-15 minutes near the end of the session for participants to complete these assignments. Explain to them that the following class will provide time for revisiting the topic and discussing their thoughts and ideas in response to the assignment. In-class journaling assignments are mandatory, but participants should not be required to share what they have written unless they choose to do so. A general discussion of the topic will support participant's individual self-reflection without forcing people to reveal thoughts and ideas they view as confidential.

This unit provides instructions for the journaling assignments that are part of the training agendas, as well as guidelines for large group discussion of the assignment topics on the following week.

# IN-CLASS JOURNALING ASSIGNMENT #1

## SESSION ONE: *LOOKING BACK*

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1. Prior to conducting this activity, write the following personal experiences on a sheet of chart paper or the chalkboard:
  - An experience of bullying or bias where you were the target of the behavior
  - A time when you were a bystander
  - A time when you were the perpetrator
2. On a second sheet of chart paper or a different section of the chalkboard, list the following questions:
  - A brief description of what happened
  - Words that describe your feelings during the incident
  - Whether your actions or responses were planned or motivated by your feelings in that moment
  - Words that describe your feelings after the incident.
3. Begin by reminding participants of the roles that people can play in incidents of bullying or bias. Review the terms if necessary. NOTE: Descriptions of the common behaviors associated with bullying and bias are included in Part II of the handout, *Some Common Terms*.
4. Display/refer to the first list created prior to conducting this activity (direction #1). Ask participants to open their journals and write a paragraph that describes a personal experience they have had in each of the roles.
5. Before students begin, instruct them to leave out people's names and any other identifying information about those who were involved. Refer to the second list created prior to the activity (direction #2). Tell them that their paragraphs should include words that describe the feelings they were having during the experience when they were in that role, whether their actions or responses were planned or motivated by the feelings they were having, and words that describe their feelings after the incident.
6. Allow ten minutes of in-class time for students to respond in writing to the journaling assignment. Ask them to come to the next class prepared to discuss their responses with the group.

# **DISCUSSION: *LOOKING BACK*** **(IN-CLASS JOURNALING ASSIGNMENT)**

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## **PURPOSE:**

This discussion of participants' in-class journaling assignments is designed to strengthen their understanding of basic concepts related to bullying and bias by linking the theoretical concepts to their own life experiences.

## **REQUIREMENTS:**

**Materials:** completed journaling assignments

**Time:** 20 minutes

## **INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Ask for volunteers to share the responses they listed for each of the different roles on the *Looking Back* worksheet.
2. Lead a discussion, using some of the questions below.
  - As you were thinking of your experiences in the different roles, were any of the three roles easier to respond to? Which role? Why do you think it was easier?
  - Did you have trouble remembering an experience with any of the assigned roles? If so, which one?
  - In thinking back on an experience of being targeted in a bullying incident, what feelings do you remember? What feelings did you have when you were a bystander?
  - In the experience when you engaged in bullying behavior, what feelings do you remember having? Did you plan your actions ahead of time or did your feelings cause you to lash out? How did you feel after the experience?
  - What did you learn from this activity?



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## **UNIT VI.**

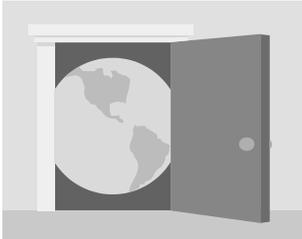
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### **CLOSING ACTIVITIES**

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**Unit VI. Closing Activities** provides a collection of activities that can be used to bring closure to the training session each week.

#### **SAMPLE CONTENT:**



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### ***SMALL CHANGES***

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Ask participants to stand in a circle facing one another. Acknowledge that everyone has dreams for their lives, positive changes they would like to happen in their work or relationships or other parts of their life. Remind the group that great changes can happen as a result of people's willingness to make small changes. Ask people to share aloud one small change they are willing to make as a step toward a larger change they want for their lives. Ask participants to set aside all the reasons they have for why the change will never happen, and just take one small step towards it. Provide a minute or so for people to think about the small change before beginning with sharing your own small change.



5. Please share your thoughts about the usefulness of the Journaling Assignments.

6. As a result of participating in this program, in what ways do you see yourself, your life, or other people differently? Why?

7. Overall, how would you rate this program? (Please circle your response.)

Outstanding

Very Good

Not Sure

Fair

Poor

What is the main reason you chose this rating? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your feedback and your participation in the program!**