



MARTHA HURWITZ

WELL-MEANING WHITE FOLKS: A Circle Series

Hello friends:

Most of you know of my recent and keen interest in racial equity and anti-racism work. I've found my place in the world as a white person. It is horrifying on the one hand - what a cunning system of inequity I uphold by just being my well-intentioned self. But I also feel deeply motivated: to understand the role I play, unwittingly and by choice; to expose the beams of this insidious and brilliantly-crafted infrastructure that works really well to benefit me; to find ways to ameliorate the situation that don't cause more harm.

So I'm heading back into my role as educator. This time, I've crafted a series of circle-based workshops focused on who I am and who you all are: well-meaning white folks (otherwise known as WMWF). We are liberal, progressive and well-intentioned. We support causes that make our world more equitable. We want to eliminate, or at best minimize, structures and behaviors that create the haves and the have nots. We want to do something.

These workshops target an essential dilemma that arises when we try to fix a system rigged to oppress: helping often causes harm. Our very ideas about what to do and how to do it are borne out of our whiteness. Our intentions are good but our actions can land with an impact we neither intend, nor see. I once I invited a black friend to a movie discussion about [When They See Us](#); she appreciated being in the company of white folks owning their whiteness and talking about race. But she resolutely turned down this event because I had neglected to consider how (re)traumatizing the show would be for her, given that she has sons the same age as the exonerated five. I have dozens of other examples. The circle process I'll be using in the workshop is particularly effective for these kinds of tender, loaded and deeply personal explorations.

I'm running a couple of pilot events and would love your participation in the first. It'll be an exchange: I'll give you lunch and a free workshop; you give me your honest feedback and reflections on your experience. To make sure there are people I don't know, I'd appreciate it if you would consider bringing another person who's interested in the topic. I'm shooting for 8-12 total.

Details: Saturday, November 16, 2019, 1:00 - 4:30pm

Let me know if this is of interest, and if you can make it.

best,
-Martha