

## Earliest Memories of Racial Socialization

(adapted from Bell, 2010)

### Purpose:

- Use your memory and imagination to recall your earliest conceptions of race.

### Learning Objectives:

- Identify the foundations of your understandings of race.
- Understand the power of implicit and explicit racial conditioning.

### Procedure:

1. Take a moment to center yourself and focus inward. This can be done by taking some deep breaths with your eyes closed, finding a quieter space, silencing your phone, or whatever grounding practices feel most accessible to you.
2. Picture this:
  - a. You are about 5 years old.
  - b. You are sitting next to a trusted adult. This could be a parent, a grandparent, close family friend, or any significant adult who played a role in your upbringing.
  - c. Now, imagine having a conversation with that person about race. This does not have to be a real conversation that happened but imagine what it might have been like to have that conversation. Play out the scene in your mind. If you need help visualizing, consider these questions:
    - i. How did you start the conversation? What was the adult's affective response? Did their facial expression or body language change? What language was used in the conversation? What was their tone? What was your emotional response? How long did the conversation last? How was race addressed explicitly? How was race addressed implicitly?
3. When you are done, draw or write about the scene you just visualized. Try to include as much detail as possible and record any significant dialogue.
4. Return to the present moment.
5. Reflect on the scene with these guiding questions:
  - a. How might this interaction have impacted your perception of race at a young age?
  - b. Did you learn more about your own racial identities or the racial identities of others in this conversation?
  - c. To what extent were racialized hierarchies implied in this conversation?
  - d. Compare the conversation to your current conceptions of race. Is it similar or different?
  - e. If you were the trusted adult in this situation, how might you react differently?