

The US Academy of Professional Dialogue

Join us in a participative webinar about Intergroup Dialogue with Rebecca Cannara and Francine Ortega

November 17, 2021 12:00 -2:00 pm EST

Rebecca Cannara, MA is the Executive Director of the Universal Human Rights Initiative (UHRI), a non-profit organization based in Los Angeles, California. She has a master's in Education from UCLA, where she conducted research on providing Intergroup Dialogue as part of the professional training of pre-service educators. At UHRI, Rebecca developed an intergroup dialogue program with her colleague Dr. Manpreet Dhillon Brar. Since 2016, UHRI has been offering Intergroup dialogues in community, school, non-profit and for-profit settings to help build bridges during times of increased polarization and hate crimes.

Francine Ortega, LCSW is a licensed clinical social worker with a passion for social justice. For the past twenty years, Francine has worked in a variety of mental health settings with children, youth and families. For Francine, facilitating intergroup dialogue is an exciting extension of her clinical work, as it seeks to promote individual and system growth and change using the powerful tools of communication and reflection.

While generally 10 weekly 2-hour sessions led by two facilitators, UHRI facilitators adapt the number of sessions based on the needs of the community they work with. The overall goals of intergroup dialogue are:

- To develop a language and capacity for dialogue -- deep listening, suspending judgments, identifying assumptions, reflecting, and inquiring—in a diverse society;
- To reflect upon and learn about self and others as members of a social group(s) in the context of systems of privilege and inequality;
- To explore the similarities and differences in experiences within and across social group memberships;

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- To gain knowledge and understand the impact of sex and gender on gender relations in the United States;
- To develop skills to work with differences, disagreements, and conflicts as opportunities for deeper understanding;
- To identify and plan individual and collective actions that contribute toward more inclusive and just communities.

As one dialogue participant explains, "This dialogue connects, inspires and reinforces what it means to truly live in community with one another. We can all love our neighbor a little better and UHRI shows us how."..

Ashley S. (2020 dialogue participant)

A Participative Webinar

During the webinar your cohosts, Nancy Dixon and Linda Ellinor, will interview Rebecca and Francine to provide an overview of their thinking. We will then move participants into small groups for reflection on the interview and how their experience has meaning in our lives and work with dialogue. To close our time we will come back together with questions and reflections from our small groups.

