

TEAM DISCUSSION GUIDE

BLACK LIVES MATTER

This Team Discussion Guide will walk you through a conversation with your team on Black Lives Matter. After having this discussion, your team will be able to:

- Understand how the movement began.
- Know what it means when we say *Black Lives Matter*.
- Know how to get involved if they choose to..

Prior to Leading This Discussion

The topic of Black Lives Matter is complex and can be considered controversial. However, understanding the historical context will help set the foundation for a meaningful discussion. Please complete the following pre-work before you begin leading this discussion with your team(s).

1. Review the **Facilitating Compassionate Conversations** resource on our [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion web page](#) under **How to Talk to Your Teams**.

How to Talk to Your Teams

Talking about these topics can be tough. The last thing we want to do is create animosity or more confusion. So we must lead these conversations with dignity, compassion, integrity, and empathy. *How* you lead the conversation is just as important as *what* you say. Below, you will find a guide that can help prepare you to lead these conversations with your team.

Facilitating Compassionate Conversations Guide

We've created Team Discussion Guides on five topic areas that are important to our organization: Black Lives Matter, Grounding in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Implicit Bias, The Responsibility of Privilege, and Understanding Systemic Racism. Click on any of the tabs below to read about the available Team Discussion Guides and download them to use with your team.

2. Review *Everywhere is War: Why We Say Black Lives Matter*. It is located on the Black Lives Matter tab under How to Talk to Your Teams on the [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion page](#).
3. Send the following message to your team(s) at least 2 days prior to the discussion:

*We will be discussing Black Lives Matter as a team. To help orient us all on the topic, please review **Why We Say Black Lives Matter** on the **Black Lives Matter** tab under **How to Talk to Your Teams** on the [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Resources](#) page. This will be part of our discussion; please come prepared to reflect on what you learned.*

Thank you for taking the time to lead this important discussion with your team(s). If you need additional assistance or have questions, please reach out to odl@fairview.org.

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Orient Your Team

Use these points to quickly set the context for the conversation. Provide the handout.

- Welcome! Today we are going to discuss Black Lives Matter – the movement, what it means, why it's important, and how we can support it.



Make the Connection

Use these points to help identify and connect the importance of this topic to your team and reinforce the goal of the session.

- This topic is important to our team because:
 - M Health Fairview supports the mission of the Black Lives Matter movement. Having meaningful, respectful discussions on this topic are important for us as employees at M Health Fairview.



Ignite the Conversation

Use the questions and key points to start an authentic dialogue with your team.

1.	First, read the Acknowledgement on the back of this sheet.	>>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask: Does everyone agree to be respectful, whether we agree or disagree?
2.	Let's talk about how the Black Lives Matter movement started. Does anyone know what the movement's mission is?	>>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask: Can anyone tell us how the Black Lives Matter movement started?• Say: The Black Lives Matter Foundation is a global organization in the US, UK, and Canada that was founded in 2013 (see back for more context).• Ask: Will someone read the mission of Black Lives Matter from your handout? (Reinforce the mission – see back)
3.	What do people mean when they say, "Black Lives Matter"? How is it different than saying "All Lives Matter"?	>>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask: Does anyone want to share what they think people mean when they say Black Lives Matter or use the hashtag #blacklivesmatter? (allow responses)• Say: The call for Black lives to matter is a rallying cry for ALL Black lives striving for liberation. What does that mean and how is it different than "all lives matter"? (see back)
4.	How can you get involved?	>>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask: Does anyone have any ideas for how those who wish to can support Black Lives Matter? (allow responses) (see back for more information)• Reinforce: The first step for those who want to is to learn more. Be curious. Come from a place of understanding and respect.



Take Action! If you want to learn more about Black Lives Matter, use the resources in your handout. You are encouraged to keep the discussion going, learn from people who have a different perspective than you, and always come from a place of understanding and respect.

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1. **Please read this Acknowledgement before you begin the discussion:** *Before we begin, it's important to acknowledge that everyone has their own understanding and beliefs. I ask each of you to be open to new or different ideas and be willing to learn. I also ask you to be respectful to your colleagues, no matter what your position or beliefs are.*
2. **The Black Lives Matter Foundation, Inc** is a global organization in the US, UK, and Canada that was founded in 2013 in response to the acquittal of Trayvon Martin's murderer. The movement began with the use of the hashtag #blacklivesmatter and quickly grew into a powerful movement.
 - **BLM's mission is to eradicate white supremacy and build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes.** By combating and countering acts of violence, creating space for Black imagination and innovation, and centering Black joy, we are winning immediate improvements in our lives.
 - **Who is Trayvon Martin?** Trayvon Benjamin Martin was a 17-year old black male who was murdered on February 26, 2012, by a neighborhood watch captain who had been following Martin (against the advice of a 911 dispatcher) because he "looked suspicious." The perpetrator was eventually acquitted of second-degree murder.
3. **What does it mean to say that "Black Lives Matter"?** The call for Black lives to matter is a rallying cry for ALL Black lives striving for liberation.
 - **What does that mean?** *Liberation* in this context means freedom from a system that continues to oppress Black people and perpetuate White supremacy. This structure – also known as **systemic racism** – impacts the way Black people are treated in the healthcare system, the criminal justice system, the education system, the housing system, etc.
 - **How is this different than saying, "All Lives Matter"?** This is a common response to Black Lives Matter. The Black Lives Matter movement is about reducing a significant disparity that many other communities do not experience. The fact is, "all lives" do not face this same disparity. **"All lives matter" won't be a true statement until Black Lives Matter.**
 - Remember equality vs. equity? Historically, Black lives have been less worthy than White lives. As we advocate for change and equity, we cannot dismiss the long history of racism in this country. This does not mean Black lives matter *more* than other lives.
4. **If you want to get involved, the first thing to do is LEARN MORE.**
 - **Maybe you have some discomfort with this movement or topic.** That's OK. The way you start to move past that is by educating yourself about the movement, the struggles the Black community has faced, and how history informs where we are today.
 - **Study history.** You don't have to go back to school – all the information you need is there; you just need to find it, study it, and make connections between it and our world today. See your handout for some resources.
 - **Have discussions with your family and friends.** Start the discussions from a place of understanding and respect. Expect defensiveness or even anger. Be willing to listen and try to help people understand what the movement is about. However, know when to call it quits. This is hard work.
 - **Ask what the movement needs.** Go to the Black Lives Matter website and explore how you can get involved.