IMPLEMENTATION EXERCISE

DECENTERING WHITENESS

Time required: 45 minutes

Materials required: For each participant, Courageous Conversation Journal and a copy of the worksheet that follows

1. Present the Sixth Condition of Courageous Conversation:

    Examine the presence and role of Whiteness and its impact on the conversation and the problem being addressed.

    Based on your reading, define Whiteness according to

    Color

    Culture

    Consciousness

2. Divide participants into small groups of three or four, and distribute a copy of the worksheet to each group.

3. Have groups work on defining, unpacking, applying, and decentering: *Defining* means to arrive at a common definition of the characteristic. *Unpacking* invites the group to explore how the concept plays out in each member's personal life. *Applying* is finding the connections between the characteristic of Whiteness and schooling. *Decentering* is identifying ways in which group members challenge or replace the characteristics of Whiteness with other contrasting ideals.

4. Based on each group's level of readiness, have group members construct the meanings of the following terms on their own, or ask them to refer back to meanings presented in this chapter:

    Universal perspective

    Individualism

    Avoidance

    Decontextualization

5. Bring the groups back together and debrief the experience.

6. Have participants reflect in their Courageous Conversation Journal on the concept of Whiteness and how it informs their understanding of race and their own personal racial identity.

SIXTH CONDITION OF COURAGEOUS CONVERSATION

Examine the presence and role of Whiteness and its impact on the conversation and the problem being addressed.

DECENTERING WHITENESS

This exercise assists educators in defining, unpacking, applying, and decentering Whiteness. Participants should complete each column in the table to develop a fuller understanding of how White consciousness impacts teaching and learning.

DECENTERING WHITENESS

Whiteness	Defining: What does it mean?	Unpacking: What does it mean in my life?	Applying: What does it look like in my work?	Decentering: How do I challenge it in my work?
Universal perspective				
Individualism				
Avoidance				
Decontextualization				