

GR3 READ-in Guidebook

RD5

RADICAL DHARMA
FRAMEWORK for
LIBERATION



“One of the extraordinary things about liberation is that you do not feel the need to control things when you’re free, because the illusory nature of control becomes clear to you.”

Rev. angel Kyodo Williams - Radical Dharma: Talking Race, Love, And Liberation, p. 154



Weekly READ-in guidebook for the Great Radical Race READ (GR3)

RD5 • Framework for Liberation

Though we are creating a collective experience around the process of reading and discussing critical titles, GR3 goes far **#beyondthebookclub**.

For each of the five weeks of GR3, we will gather for a collective “READ-In” (Race Education Awareness & Disruption) session that organizes our reading and (un)learning around the Radical Dharma Framework for Liberation. The Framework was reverse-engineered from decades of experience and two years of intensive observation of what elements contributed to transformative shifts in a wide variety of people around race.

Each week, READeRs will be charged with practices & actions that, taken together, situate people in reclaiming connection, care and compassion as the means by which to transform race, while also calling people into meaningful action steps.

The Radical Dharma Framework for Liberation (lovingly called the RD5) is a cumulative five-pillar strategy for engagement through GR3. Each READ-in session will present a new pillar from the framework to develop a personalized and comprehensive approach to reading & processing discussion and conversation in ways that support the group to deepen into relationship with the text and each other as a whole. Each pillar is designed especially to help guide READeRs in integrating the insights and connections we find within our reading circles, into our daily lives.

This READ-in guidebook is offered to further support the process of reading and conversation around your chosen book and for translating it into an embodied experience.



Holding the Space & Dedicating the Goodness of the Circle

- Hold the space of your circle by beginning with a moment of silent centering into the present moment.
- To open the space, any one person volunteers to light a candle and/or incense to burn or whatever feels like a way to intentionalize the time, for the duration of the circle's gathering time and speaks out loud a collective intention to dedicate the goodness of the circle (any positive energy that comes of it) to whatever that person would like to dedicate that day (e.g., I dedicate the goodness of this circle to those living in cages. Or, I dedicate the goodness of this circle to those who dedicate their lives to social justice.)
- To close the space, you can collectively recite a short verse that captures the spirit of your intention to show up. We've included the **Warrior Spirit Prayer of Awakening** (next page) which was written by Rev. angel Kyodo williams as a response to the events of September 11, 2001 and has since been recited by thousands of people.



Warrior-Spirit Prayer of Awakening

May all beings be granted with the strength, determination
and wisdom to extinguish anger and reject violence as a way.

May all suffering cease and may I seek, find and fully
realize the love and compassion that already lives within
me and allow them to inspire and permeate my every action.

May I exercise the precious gift of choice and
the power to change that makes me uniquely human and is the
only true path to liberation.

May I swiftly reach complete, effortless freedom so that
my fearless, unhindered action be of benefit to all.

May I lead the life of a warrior.

RD5

RADICAL DHARMA FRAMEWORK for LIBERATION

RD5 Pillar 1

CONTEMPLATIVE APPROACH

week one

GR3 READ-in guidebook



CONTEMPLATIVE APPROACH

Dropping into a contemplative approach calls us to set aside the relationship we have to the words being spoken and let their meaning slow down the field of feeling so we may resonate differently. Allow for the gap between intention and experience. By honing our ability to slow down, observe, reflect, and be in relationship with what is actually happening around us, this approach allows for what Rev. angel Kyodo williams calls the “interruption of the tyranny of time” so we can meet our whole selves with presence, spaciousness, and curiosity. To support that effort, she developed a meditation practice that is designed to be easily carried into one’s everyday life, “Being With Point” or simply Point Practice.



CONTEMPLATIVE APPROACH

Point:

Taking the time to slow down and notice your surroundings, feelings, body, and thoughts, and then watching for patterns over time can be a transformative experience in itself. Sometimes we don't need much more than a witness to change and, since we cannot change what we cannot see as Rev. angel says, let's start by learning to notice what we see in real time, more of the time. Curiosity about your own experience in response to whatever is happening is a great place to return.

Other than Point:

Rushing through, intellectualizing, convincing other people, needing to be right or woke or better, having the answers, pontificating, lecturing, diatribes, carrying on internal dialogues. Judging or shaming yourself about having those responses are also Other Than Point.

Core Practice: Point Meditation

Other examples of practices that expand awareness:

Sitting meditation, prayer, active listening and storytelling, reflective journaling, visual art, movement and dance, or walking introspectively in nature



week one

Individual Practice & Group Instructions

CONTEMPLATIVE APPROACH

1. Commit yourself to a contemplative approach of your choosing this week (see examples, previous page). Each day, try to find 5 -15 minutes for quiet self-reflection. Consider keeping a journal of your thoughts and emotions, noting them down throughout the week.
2. Each of you arrived at the decision to join this GR3 circle; so, let's take some time to honor that choice. Take some time to journal about how you arrived here. What brought you? What are you bringing? Did you have to leave anything behind to enter this space?
3. In Group - spend time at the beginning of opening the space for introductions.
 - *Check in Round:* Share your name and pronouns, how you identify in terms of race (Black, mixed race, Asian Canadian, etc.) and how you are doing right now. Feel free to share briefly if there is a bit of context you need to provide (e.g., I only started to identify as a person-of-color after taking this class or whatever the case may be).
 - Second Round: Share something of what you reflected on by way of honoring your transition into this circle. What brought you? What are you bringing? By naming what brought us here, what we brought with us, and what we are leaving behind, we begin to deepen into contemplative relationship with our own journey and the resonances of that journey with others.



week one

Individual Practice & Group Instructions - cont.

CONTEMPLATIVE APPROACH

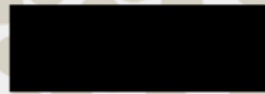
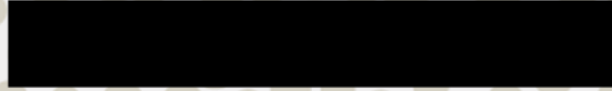
4. Throughout this week and the weeks to come, use the following questions to consider how to bring a contemplative approach to reading practice and group discussion.

- *Process:* How do you process new insights that you have gained about yourself, your family, and your community in relation to race? Notice how you process and with whom. What do you notice about these processing spaces?
- *Patterns:* What do you notice as you read? What is your pattern? Do you absorb new information like a sponge? Do you notice resonance? Resistance? Disagreement or the desire to challenge? What do you notice about the feelings that arise when you encounter new information? What helps you get comfortable with “not knowing”?
- *Praxis:* Slowing down and paying attention to praxis is about noticing where the new theories we encounter in the reading meet the rough road of practice. Are you integrating new information in different ways in your everyday life? Noticing where a shift might have been needed in the recent past? Self-interrupting and shifting in the moment? What are you working to integrate, if anything? What do you need to integrate new information? Could you use more support? What might that look like?



RD5 Framework for Liberation: elements

CONTEMPLATIVE APPROACH



air



RD5

RADICAL DHARMA FRAMEWORK for LIBERATION

RD5 Pillar 2

EMBODIED PRACTICE

week two

GR3 READ-in guidebook



EMBODIED PRACTICE



Embodiment practices help curate habits of self-interruption of unskillful patterns in order to ground ourselves in centering and dropping into presence. Disruption outside begins with self-interruption inside. When we are present, we become responsible, owning what is ours. Lama Rod Owens defines embodiment as “the embracing of all the ways in which we show up.”

An embodied practice is one in which we listen and learn with our whole being. We bring awareness to our breath, body, heart, and mind in order to gain knowledge about ourselves and ourselves in relationship with others. Embodiment is akin to allowing oneself to drop in beneath the turbulence surface in order to observe what gives rise to turbulence and to develop right relationship with the source.



EMBODIED PRACTICE



Point:

Allowing ourselves to present to the feelings and sensations that arise in our bodies with increasingly less judgment.* Not all the ways we know stuff happens in our head. Our body has experience and “knowing” before our brain makes sense of them. Becoming embodied is about developing the conditions and skills for being able to tune into the language of the body, especially when triggered, so we become more in sync with the new information our bodies have to tell us about what we are thinking and feeling at any moment, in real time.

(TRAUMA NOTE: *Some types of trauma may make direct experience without therapeutic guidance and support too painful and cause harm. Please consult a therapist if you experience overwhelm, disorientation and loss of access to sensory awareness when practicing.)

Other than Point:

Intellectualizing, imposing stories and narratives over what you are hearing in/through the body, avoiding or suppressing emotion and sensation -- especially discomfort, dismissing what your body is “telling you,” not learning to discern what your body is telling you from habit-patterns, talking in your head while others are speaking when you are uncomfortable with or don’t like what is being said.





EMBODIED PRACTICE

Core Practice:

Centering in Presence, Point meditation, EAR listening

Other examples of practices that deepen embodiment:

Contemplative practices that encourage internal “listening” including... body-scanning, reflecting upon/journaling sensory experience, movement coordinated with breath — especially repetitious, tai chi, qi gong, different types of yoga, meditation, sounding, practices of isolating sensation, vigorous dancing, shaking, earthing, etc. Anything that increases interoception.





week two



Individual Practice & Group Instructions



EMBODIED PRACTICE

1. Commit yourself to an embodied practice of tuning into your physical response to the reading this week. Each day, try to find 5 -15 minutes for quiet self-reflection. Consider keeping a journal of the sensations and thoughts and emotions that arise as you read, noting them down throughout the week. Do you notice sleepiness? Rushing? Dissociation? Emotional?

Resist the need to add story or explanation to your observations and simply notice and journal the patterns of feeling-sensation that reading about race in this way raises for you.

2. In Group - spend time at the beginning of opening the space for introductions.

- *Check in Round:* Share your name, pronouns and as appropriate, racial identity. How are you feeling right now?
- *Second Round:* Using the Embodied Active Resonance (EAR) Listening (below), share something of what you reflected on by way of honoring the embodied experience of reading about race. By naming what we notice, we begin to deepen into embodied relationship with our own reading practice and what we are learning from the experience, not just in our heads, but in our bodies.





week two



Individual Practice & Group Instructions - cont.



EMBODIED PRACTICE

2. *Second Round* continued.....

Rev. angel's Embodied Active Resonance - EAR Listening

This is an embodied practice for engaged community building developed by Rev. angel Kyodo williams.

Each speaker should get a set time, perhaps five minutes, to share their experience.

One person will agree to keep time and give the speaker a one minute warning before their time is up.

Listeners hold a space of witness for the speaker without pulling the speakers energy with either nonverbal facial or vocal affirmations, empathy, or concern.

Listeners follow the speaker's words closely, noticing what resonates and where in their body they feel resonance.

Speakers share from the heart without pulling listeners' attention, affirmation, or concern, almost as if speaking to ourselves.

Try to speak for the full five minutes. Leave one minute for silence between each speaker.



■ ■ week two

■ ■ Individual Practice & Group Instructions - cont.

■ ■ EMBODIED PRACTICE

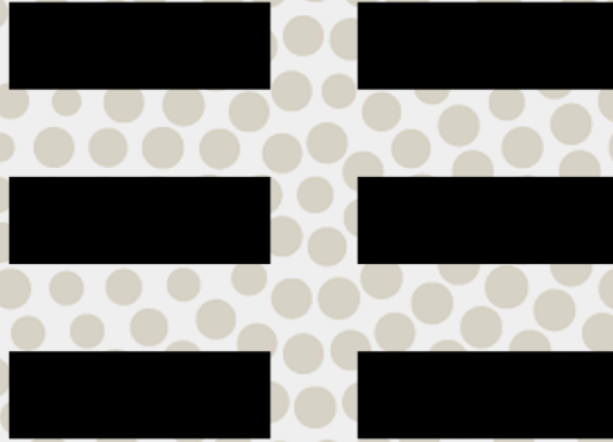
3. Throughout this week and the weeks to come, use the following questions to consider how to bring embodied practices to your reading practice and group discussion.

- Notice how you feel and what's coming up for you after practicing EAR listening. What do you notice?
- Is there any information you received from this practice that might support how you have conversations about race inside this circle? Outside this circle?
- Notice any discomfort or disease that arose in this practice. Is that a pattern for you in conversations about race?
- How are the conversations about race within the text sitting with you?
- Are there things that support you to stay with the text? What are you noticing that you need to get more of, or less of, to stay in conversation with it?



RD5 Framework for Liberation: elements

EMBODIED APPROACH



earth



RD5

RADICAL DHARMA FRAMEWORK for LIBERATION

RD5 Pillar 3

LIBERATORY PATH

week three

GR3 READ-in guidebook



LIBERATORY PATH

“At the risk of seeming ridiculous, let me say that the true revolutionary is guided by a great feeling of love. ... We must strive every day so that this love of living humanity will be transformed into actual deeds, into acts that serve as examples, as a moving force.” – Che Guevara

The Liberatory Path is generating awareness of what brings us here and centering that with love — even the challenging parts. It reflects what drives our work; who grounds our work; and how we close the gap between priorities and what really matters by drawing on the teacher, spirit, and guides who led us to this work for inspiration and support, rather than imagining we have to reinvent the wheel. Any liberatory path requires abolishing both white-body supremacy and anti-Blackness. To walk that path requires centering wisdom and the traditions of liberation that we have inherited or that have charted a path. It also requires that we be in choice about those inheritances that invest in white-body supremacy and anti-Blackness so we can disarm, disrupt, and deconstruct these things within our own being-body and the spaces we inhabit that obstruct our path forward. This includes the healing (making whole) of our own and our ancestors’ past transgressions. From there we can act in forward movement.



LIBERATORY PATH



The Design

Centering Black liberation is a critical component of the liberatory path in the globalized-US context of these times. Specifically because anti-Blackness — the resistance to Black peoples' freedom from theft of their agency, violence, aggression and their being entitled to self-determined expression and thriving — is the linchpin of white-bodied supremacy and owning class rank and rule. **This is by Design.**

Black people didn't make centering Blackness critical to abolishing white supremacy, white-bodied ruling class elite did and still does. It's the why of Black Lives Matter.

Anti-blackness is global, transcultural, trans-issue, encompasses all races, and is expressed through many overt and covert cultural practices including most potently colorism, which allows it to be taken up even by people that are subject to it. It's most powerful and insidious function is to transcend other forms of bonding and identification including nationalities, religions, and ideologies. In this way, it reifies white-bodiedness as the centerpoint of acceptability and, by extension, but even more potently, belonging. White supremacist ideologies are upheld by the more subtle and pervasive reification (making something constructed appear natural, normal, universal and absolute) of the culture of whiteness. Aligning or.....



LIBERATORY PATH



The Design (continued)

....striving to align with or be proximal to whiteness is contingent upon anti-Blackness. **By Design.** One could say that without abolition, anti-Blackness will eat your best ideas, intentions and impulses for liberation for breakfast.

Centering Black liberation is not to the exclusion of liberation of other peoples. It is not either/or. It is both/and. The labor of disarming, disrupting and deconstructing The Design that are necessary to bring oneself and society to the abolition of anti-Blackness while asserting the sovereignty of the indigenous, rights of the Earth, and so on would necessarily include the liberation of all peoples. It would not solve all social issues. It would liberate peoples to be able to solve social ills once the enormous amount of energy spent maintaining white-bodied supremacy and anti-Blackness is freed up.



LIBERATORY PATH



Point:

We must learn from the past in order to move towards the kind of future we envision. Centering the conditions for Black liberation to set the conditions for collective liberation while recognizing that we cannot yet do this without disarming our selves of white supremacy, so we must do our own labor and repair. Most of us cannot even conceive of Black peoples as free and until we do, we cannot truly envision liberation.

Other than Point:

Color blindness, spiritual bypassing, Issue trumping, oppression Olympics, nihilism, instant “allyship,” wanting reconciliation without repair and redress.

Core Practice:

YOU Practice, Centering in Presence, Point meditation, EAR listening





LIBERATORY PATH

Other examples of liberatory practices:

Recognizing the work of those on this path who have come before us. Seeking out, building relationships with, and honoring the ancestors, teacher, spirit guides and life coaches who enable us to be here, give us a sense of direction, and mirror our highest selves back to us. Offering gratitude for those who led them. Celebrating and sharing the lessons we learn from them with right honoring and attribution. Claiming your ancestors wholeness by including their brokenness.

Speaking of honoring: please do NOT share the practices shared through GR3 outside of your circle/caucus until it has been explicitly expressed that you can and how. We will get that to you soon.



week three

Individual Practice & Group Instructions

LIBERATORY PATH

1. Each day, try to find 5 -15 minutes for quiet self-reflection. Commit yourself to a mapping practice of tuning into your embodied sense of journeying along a path of liberation as you are reading this week.

- **Map Backward:** Map who you consider to be your ancestors -- wanted and unwanted, known and unknown, in free flow: don't restrict it to conventional lineage type formats. Let the form and shape of writing that unfolds be a teacher. Use a **YOU Practice:** do this with your **non-dominant** hand as possible. It will be frustrating, uncomfortable and bring up stuff that draws your attention away from your head. It will also be revelatory if you return to your body as the Point of your attention-awareness.

(YOU = Yielding to Other and Un-doing.*)

- **Bring it Forward:** Consider keeping a journal of the guides, texts, communities, and experiences that have served as teachers to you and set you on this path, giving you grounding, purpose and direction along the way. How can you honor these teachers in small, everyday ways? How can you celebrate what you have already learned and share those gifts with others?



week three

Individual Practice & Group Instructions - cont.

LIBERATORY PATH

2. As you read for this week, begin with Centering in Presence, then take some time to reflect on the following questions:

- *Disarm:* Notice what you are seeking from this text. How did you come to know you don't have it?
- *Disrupt:* What will you have to make your way through in order to claim your own liberation. Where from the past can you identify the unexpected markers that show a way forward that you can build upon. Hint: It doesn't matter if the markers are from other arenas or don't look like what you think an act of liberation is supposed to look like. (Remember Harriet Jacobs choosing living in a small space to be free.) It is better that you find the loopholes: the paths that are not as obvious and not well-worn as these readily get co-opted by systems, thinking and patterns of dominance.
- *Deconstruct:* What quotes are most resonating or represent the path forward? What is in the way of your liberation right now? Who is the front line of your journey to liberation with you? Who is at your back?



week three

Individual Practice & Group Instructions - cont.

LIBERATORY PATH

3. In Group - spend time at the beginning of opening the space for introductions.

- *Check in Round:* **Center in Presence.** Share your name and pronouns. Drop in to your own experience and share on what the quality of your felt experience is right now?
- *Second Round:* Using the **Embodied Active Resonance (EAR) Listening*** (practice in week 2 instructions), share something of what you reflected on by way of honoring the teachers who set you on this path of liberation.

By naming what we notice, we begin to deepen our embodied relationship with our own reading practice and what we are learning from the experience - not just in our heads, but in our bodies.

- Proceed with free form reflections on the readings drawing from guiding questions from weeks one and two, wherever needed.

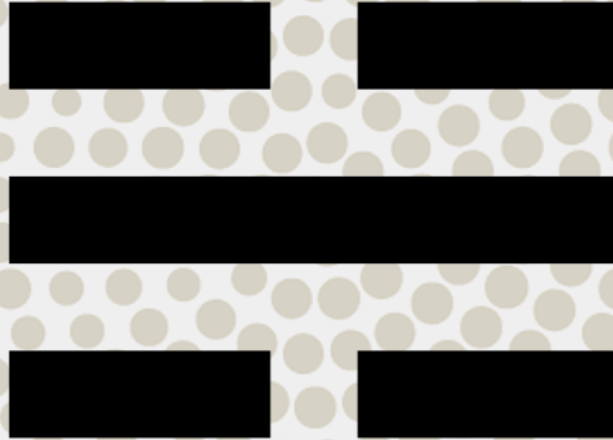
* A Glossary of Terms and Practices will be created soon.

Patience. We are making the road.



RD5 Framework for Liberation: elements

LIBERATORY PATH



water

