



Unlearning Club FAQ

Introduction

The Unlearning Club is one component of a larger project at Public Health Sudbury & Districts (Public Health) called: *The Unlearning & Undoing White Supremacy and Racism Project (Unlearning Project)*. See page 1 of the [Unlearning Club Learning Schedule](#) for more details.

Through this Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section, Public Health invites members of the public or organizations to start their own unlearning journey. This FAQ will provide key details about starting your own version of the Unlearning Club and your unlearning journey. If you do not find the answers or information you are looking for, please contact the Unlearning Project team at unlearning@phsd.ca.

How to Create Your Own Unlearning Club

Question	Answer
What is the Unlearning Club?	<p>The Unlearning Club is an 18-month learning journey that explores racism, white supremacy, and colonization as key factors influencing health outcomes. At Public Health, this project is voluntary for staff, management, and our Board of Health. The Unlearning Club aims to provide participants with the tools to recognize how anti-Indigenous racism and white supremacy manifest in our daily work, through policies, practices, and processes, and to actively adopt anti-racist strategies to challenge and dismantle these systems.</p> <p>The Unlearning Club is one of four parts of the larger Unlearning & Undoing White Supremacy and Racism Project. The Unlearning Club is the only part available online.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Cultural competency training2. Unlearning Club: voluntary structured 18-month learning journey with monthly learning modules and facilitated discussions.3. Foundational Obligations to Indigenous Peoples series: Presentations for all staff that review the foundational documents upholding the rights of Indigenous peoples such as UNDRIP, TRC, and MMIWG.4. Thinking Intersectionally series: A learning opportunity about intersections of Indigenous identity with Two Spirit life experience, disAbilities, etc.
Will the other parts of the Unlearning & Undoing White Supremacy and Racism Project be available online?	Not at this time.
How is the Unlearning Club structured?	The structure outlined below reflects an Unlearning Club with a group of people working through the material together.

	<p>There is an individual learning commitment and a monthly facilitated discussion. The learning commitment is found in each month's learning module; within it you will find:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The names of the primarily Black, Indigenous, and People of colour (BIPOC) experts who have developed the resources you will learn from that month. • Two options for prep work, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A quick dip which includes learning resources with a time commitment of no more than two hours. ○ A deep dive which includes learning resources with a time commitment of more than two hours. • Optional related resources for participants who want to explore the month's topic further. <p>If you are participating in the Unlearning Club as a group, you may want to come together to unpack and reflect on your learnings. At Public Health we chose to meet in a two hour monthly facilitated discussion. Choose a timeframe that works for your group. If you are participating in the Unlearning Club on your own, we recommend journalling about what you are learning. You may also wish to share your new learnings with those around you.</p>
How did Public Health create the facilitated discussion groups?	<p>When unlearning in a larger project, dividing participants by affinity is helpful when processing the learning that is occurring. Public Health decided to group participants by affinity group based on race (Indigenous, Racialized, and White) and decision-making power (staff, managers, executive committee, Board of Health).</p> <p>Using race as the affinity group has many benefits such as demonstration that anti-racism work is for all races, not placing the unpaid emotional labour of anti-racism on the shoulders of racialized colleagues, and provides a safer space to process your thoughts, feelings, and emotions around these challenging topics.</p>

	<p>Groups were also divided by decision making power: staff, manager, executive committee, Board of Health. This grouping was done intentionally to allow for more open dialogue while reducing power imbalances.</p> <p>These groups are kept consistent throughout the whole project. Overall, affinity groups allow for increased participation and a sense of safety and belonging.</p> <p>For more information on the benefits of an affinity group please see Michael et al., 2009¹.</p>
How long will the Unlearning Club meet and what is the time commitment?	<p>The Unlearning Club is designed to take 18 months. Each month, participants are presented with two options for learning: a “quick dip” or a “deep dive.” It is recommended to complete the “quick dip” to gain a basic understanding of the concepts. The “quick dip” will generally take under two hours to complete. The “deep dive” provides a more thorough knowledge of the subject, and the optional related resources supplement your learning.</p>

How to Access

Question	Answer
Where can the online resources be found?	This document serves as the only publicly available online document.
Is there a cost to starting an Unlearning Club?	<p>Public Health is providing this Unlearning Club outline free of charge.</p> <p>The Unlearning Club resources are publicly available or low barrier to access and have been purposefully selected to avoid putting additional burden on BIPOC people.</p> <p>You or your group may choose to purchase the books found throughout the project. Be sure to check with</p>

¹ Michael, A., Conger, M. C., Bickerstaff, S., Crawford-Garrett, K., & Fitts Fulmer, E. (2009). *Becoming an anti-racist white ally: How a white affinity group can help*. University of Pennsylvania. https://diversity.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/2962/2021/01/becoming-an-anti-racist-white-ally_how-a-white-affinity-group-can-help.pdf

	your local library and second-hand bookstores for lower barrier options. Some resources can also be found in an audiobook format.
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Administration

Question	Answer
What do I do if I find a broken link?	Please email the project team at unlearning@phsd.ca to notify us of the issue.
How is this program being evaluated?	There are several evaluation components that have gone through and been approved by Public Health's Research Ethics Review Committee, including: Rapid Reflection Questions, White Fragility Scale, Process Evaluation, Outcome Evaluation, Facilitator Focus Group, and Summative Evaluation. You are encouraged to evaluate your unlearning journey as well.
How will the evaluation results be used?	The evaluations will be used to guide program improvements and inform policy and practice changes. Evaluation components are happening pre, mid, and post Unlearning Club to help understand the impacts and changes this project may have throughout the process. Consider evaluating your unlearning journey as well.

Supports Available

Question	Answer
I am worried about using the wrong term. Is there a resource that can support my learning?	The Indigenous Primary Health Care Council created a document called Culturally Appropriate Language Guide that can be accessed online.

Trigger warning: some of the content may be difficult to learn about.

What supports do you suggest?

It is important to consider your well-being and ensure you are incorporating self-care strategies throughout the learning. Some months will have content that is more difficult to learn about. Triggers may be expected or unexpected, immediate or latent. In all these examples, it is still important for you to ensure your wellness.

For Indigenous participants, it may be appropriate to reach out to an Elder or Knowledge Holder for support. Follow your teachings and remember to support your wholistic well-being.

It may not be appropriate for non-Indigenous participants to overburden Elders or Knowledge Holders; please find alternative supports for your wellness. For example, the affinity groups are designed to be a safe place to work through thoughts, feelings, and emotions. Let the facilitator know when you need to take a break from the discussion during facilitated discussions.

For additional support outside of your affinity group, ConnexOntario is a free and confidential call center that can help connect you with appropriate mental health supports across Ontario:

<https://connexontario.ca/> or [1-866-531-2600](tel:18665312600)

Conclusion

Question	Answer
What happens at the end of the 18-month voluntary Unlearning Club?	<p>Like any learning, it never really ends.</p> <p>With this learning and new knowledge, you will find yourself immersed with many opportunities to apply what you have learned to your work and personal environments. One goal of the project is to begin to recognize white supremacy and racism in our policies, practices, and procedures at Public Health. You may find similar inspiration where you live, work, and play.</p> <p>You may also find you want to continue your own personal learning journey by revisiting months you</p>

found interesting or resources you may have missed. Where the journey goes from here is up to you!

Miscellaneous

Question	Answer
Are there shortform names I can use for the Unlearning & Undoing White Supremacy and Racism?	<p><i>The Unlearning Project</i> is the shortform name for the Unlearning & Undoing White Supremacy and Racism Project.</p> <p><i>The Unlearning Club</i> is the voluntary 18-month learning journey that includes monthly learning modules and facilitated discussions.</p>
What do we mean by white supremacy?	White supremacy is an ideology or belief in much of our society and systems that whiteness or being white is a value and is superior to others. It has been programmed into and shows up in all kinds of ways in our everyday lives and the systems that we interact with, like the health care system. Participating in these systems does not make us bad people. This project asks each participant to look at their actions objectively to work towards undoing potentially harmful patterns and behaviours.
What is the symbolism behind the Unlearning Project Logo?	<p>The turtle was chosen because the turtle represents Truth in the 7 Grandfather teachings.</p> <p>Turtles have 13 large plates on their back which corresponds with the 13 moon cycles of a year.</p> <p>Five additional circles attached to the turtle represent the additional 5 moons that make up the 18 months of the Unlearning Club.</p> <p>Turtles also have 28 small plates on the outside rim of the shell which corresponds to the 28 days of the moon cycle.</p>