

# Journey Mapping: Becoming aware of the influence of race, class, culture on results

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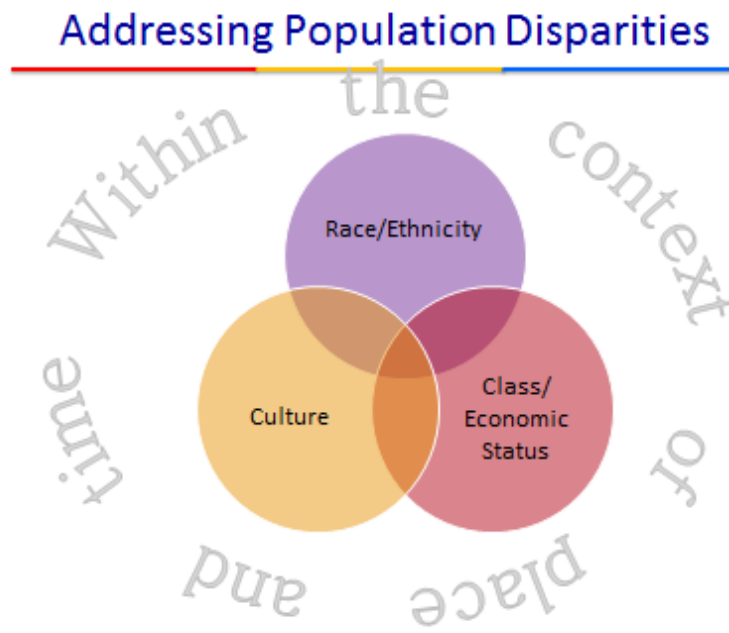
Addressing disparities to advance equitable opportunities is core to the work of Results Based Leaders. Conversations about how and why race, class and/or culture are reflected in disparities are fundamental to developing strategies that contribute to the well-being of program or whole populations. Leaders' capacity to take collaborative action to achieve results is enhanced when they understand their own and others' experiences and assumptions about how race, class, culture contribute to disparate results and inequitable opportunities for populations.

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The **Journey Mapping Exercise** allows leaders to reflect on and express how their own life experiences influence their understanding and assumptions about race, class, culture and other factors, e.g., gender or sexual orientation. These experiences may influence (consciously or unconsciously) the ways leaders approach their disparities work. From this self-awareness, leaders develop the ability to share their own and listen to others' experiences to better explore the underlying assumptions that inform their strategies.

## I. The Journey Map Context

Assumptions regarding race, class and/or culture exist within the context of place and time. Views and perspectives regarding disparities are often influenced by when and where they take place. Context matters. The diagram below is a visual representation of how the context of time and place provides a context for understanding the influence of race, class and/or culture.



## **II. Creating your Journey Map**

This is an exercise that invites a bit of creativity to enrich the conversation. You'll need 8.5 x 14 paper, crayons, colored pens, pencils, glitter or other materials that may help ignite the creative process.

### **Step One: Reflect on your own experience of race, class, and/or culture**

Consider what influenced you – your family, your community, and your educational and work experiences. How did you identify your own race, class and culture at the beginning of your journey? Where are you today? How did your life journey shape your values and beliefs? In what ways did race, class, culture influence how you understand what contributes to the result you are focused on? How did they lead you to the work/contributions you make or want to make to the result?

### **Step Two: Draw your journey map**

On the top of page write your name and the program /population result that you are contributing to i.e., “all children in Baltimore City enter school ready to learn.” Start with the place and time of your birth (context matters) and then move from that point to your result. Think of major events or influences in your life. Identify key events that stand out or that have made an impression on you. Your reflections in step one will inform the milestones that you select to plot on your journey map.

## **III. Journey Map Dialogue**

Once you have completed your journey map, have a conversation with a partner about your race, class, culture experiences, assumptions and beliefs. Allow yourself to candidly share your own experiences. Focus on listening to and more deeply understanding your own and the other person's experiences. How do those experiences shape the assumptions, perspectives and views that you and they hold about the contribution of race, class, culture to disparate results. What role do time and place have in how your and their assumptions were shaped.

## **IV. Identifying Assumptions**

After the conversation, journal the following: How might your experience of race, class, and culture influence the results work that you do? What are the insights from your conversation that might influence how you engage in conversations to constructively explore the development of strategies to address disparities?

Awareness of how one's and other's experiences inform assumptions about the influence of race, class and/or culture equips leaders to have the authentic conversations necessary to develop strategies that effectively address disparities and create equitable opportunities.