

Report on Change Groups to Spring 2019 Interim Meeting

Just three weeks ago the Working Group on Racism (WGR) and the *ad hoc* Growing Diverse Leadership (GDL) Committee completed their initial training for BYM Change Groups. WGR and GDL have been encouraging BYM Local Meetings to form “Change Groups” of Friends committed to working to reduce racial barriers within their Meetings.

Dr. Amanda Kemp from Lancaster Friends Meeting led a team of four facilitators for two full days of training. Thirty-six Friends attended the January training, which focused on white fragility and how to have a conversation about race that plants a seed in the other participant. The session ended early because of concerns about icy roads as temperatures dropped. A ZOOM call in February was used to cover the last part of the January curriculum. It focused mostly on how best to hold someone to account.

The early March training focused on how white supremacy culture affects both us individually and our Meetings. Time was also devoted to learning about the Implicit Association Test and how to recognize and mitigate implicit bias. We ended with developing individual action plans.

Thirty-six of us participated in the January training and 24 were on the February ZOOM call. Thirty of us took part in the March training. A total of 44 different BYM Friends took part in at least one portion of the training. Sixteen attended all three sessions. We are aware of ten BYM local Meetings that currently have Change Groups.

A Google Group has been formed for sharing information and experiences. Friends have also been encouraged to organize weekly buddy calls with a couple of other participants for both accountability and sharing. There will be an opportunity for Change Group members to share their experiences at a “Connecting Local Meetings” workshop during Annual Sessions this August.