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Lesson Plan

“I’m Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness” Austin Channing Brown (Convergent Books, 2018)

Week 1

Read Chapter 1.

Go to Canvas-Discussions, and write two paragraphs.

Paragraph 1: Summarize what you read.

Paragraph 2: Answer these questions:

- Why did your parents name you what they did?
- Have you ever wanted to change your name? To what, and why?
- Describe the racial diversity at your high school.

Week 2

Read Chapters 2 and 3.

Go to Canvas-Discussions, and write two paragraphs.

Paragraph 1: Summarize what you read.

Paragraph 2: Answer these questions:

- When did you have your first black teacher, supervisor, pastor? Who was that person? What impact did she/he have on your life, or, what did you learn from that experience?
- What does “racial harmony” mean to you?

Week 3

Read Chapters 4 and 5.

Go to Canvas-Discussions, and write two paragraphs.

Paragraph 1: Summarize what you read.

Paragraph 2: Answer these questions:

- Austin Channing Brown had a revelation on a college trip to Sankofa. What has marked a turning point in your life?
- Baylor's "Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion" says that Baylor seeks "to embody Christ's teachings of love and inclusivity across boundaries of racial, ethnic, gender, socio-economic, religious, and other expressions of human difference. Because, at Baylor, 'Love thy neighbor' are not just words...they are a way of life." How diverse are your classes or halls or organizations at Baylor? (Baylor's full statement on its Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion can be found here: www.baylor.edu/diversity/index.php?id=934474)

Week 4

Read Interlude: Why I Love Being a Black Girl, and Chapter 6.

Go to Canvas-Discussions, and write two paragraphs.

Paragraph 1: Summarize what you read.

Paragraph 2: Answer these questions:

- In Interlude, Brown writes, "I sit at the feet of my elders and listen to them honor our shared past." Who is an "elder" in your life, someone who has helped you remember and honor your past? (And an elder isn't always a member of your family.)
- Chapter 6 is titled White Fragility. Brown writes: "If white family members are being racist, we must take Grandpa's feelings into account before we proclaim our objections to such speech." Has that happened to you? Was there a time where you knew someone was being racist but you couldn't speak up in fear of hurting that person's feelings? Talk about what happened.

Week 5

Read Chapters 7 and 8.

Go to Canvas-Discussions, and write two paragraphs.

Paragraph 1: Summarize what you read.

Paragraph 2: Answer these questions:

- Chapter 7 is titled Nice White People. What are some steps that “nice” white people in your life can take that will move them beyond “niceness” and into real change?
- In Chapter 8, The Story We Tell, Brown writes about how racism and the struggles of people of color are often glossed over as we learn about history. Google “Jesse Washington Waco” and summarize what happened on May 15, 1916. Disclaimer: Some things you read and images you see on some websites are going to be disturbing. Also, don’t use Wikipedia for this; dig a little deeper.

Week 6

Read Chapter 9 and Interlude: How to Survive Racism in an Organization That Claims to Be Antiracist.

Go to Canvas-Discussions, and write two paragraphs.

Paragraph 1: Summarize what you read.

Paragraph 2: Answer these questions:

- Early in Chapter 9 – Creative Anger – Brown writes, “It is rage inducing...when we work at companies and ministries when no one above middle management looks like us.” Spend a few minutes on the Baylor website and see how many people of color you can find who are department chairs, vice presidents, deans or head coaches.
- In the last paragraph of Interlude, Brown writes: “You are a creative being who is capable of making change. But it is not your responsibility to transform an entire organization.” Likewise, it is not *your* responsibility to change your entire church, hall, club or university, but you can make an effort. What are two things you can do within your immediate circle to make a change for the better?

Week 7

Read Chapters 10 and 11.

Go to Canvas-Discussions, and write two paragraphs.

Paragraph 1: Summarize what you read.

Paragraph 2: Answer these questions:

- What have encounters with the police looked like for you (or your family)?
- What has the Black Lives Matter movement meant to you?

Week 8

Read Chapter 12 and Interlude: A Letter to My Son.

Go to Canvas-Discussions, and write two paragraphs.

Paragraph 1: Summarize what you read.

Paragraph 2: Answer these questions:

- Do a bit of research and summarize what happened on Sept. 15, 1963, at Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama. (Again, read more than just Wikipedia for this assignment.)
- What music do you remember your parents listening to as you were growing up? Do you still listen to any of that music? Why or why not?

Week 9

Read Chapters 13 and 14.

Go to Canvas-Discussions, and write two paragraphs.

Paragraph 1: Summarize what you read.

Paragraph 2: Answer these questions:

- On the news program Meet The Press, on April 17, 1960, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., said, “I think it is one of the tragedies of our nation, one of the shameful tragedies, that eleven o’clock on Sunday morning is one of the most segregated hours, if not the most segregated hour, in Christian America.” Do a bit of research (again, no Wikipedia) and explain what Dr. King meant.
- In the book’s last chapter, Standing in the Shadow of Hope, Brown writes about the death of her hope, about her hope...just running out. Have you ever had a time in your life where you felt hopeless, like there was just no way out of what you were facing? Talk about that time. If not, have you ever had a friend or family member facing hopelessness? How did that situation resolve?

For the final essay, write at least two pages – typed, double-spaced – and address these topics.

- What you learned reading I’m Still Here. (Don’t summarize the book; you’ve already done that.) Talk about what you can take away from the reading.
- Talk about how you can do...better. Be specific. Give concrete examples of things that you...*you*...can do to pursue racial justice and reconciliation.