

SESSION 1: THE PROBLEM TREE

SUNDAY 10:15AM -- 12:15PM

Session 1 At a Glance

- Welcome, Overview, Introductions & Agreements (10:15-10:40)
 - Welcoming (2 minutes)
 - Overview (3 minutes)
 - Introductions (5 minutes)
 - Agreements (10 minutes)
- Leaves (10:40-11:10)
 - Introduction and presentation of first leaves (10 minutes)
 - Break out groups discuss leaves (10 minutes)
 - Report back and group discussion (10 minutes)
- Roots (11:10-12:00)
 - Introduction (5 minutes)
 - Small groups (25 minutes)
 - Report back (20 minutes)
- Conclusion (12:00-12:15)

GOALS:

- Introduce participants to workshop and develop agreements for how to work/talk together
- Use Popular Education Activity called "The Problem Tree" to map out:
 - Day to day experiences of human rights crisis as they relate to track (leaves)
 - Discuss and identify root causes of our problems (roots of tree)

Set Up the Room & Tips Before the Workshop

- Be early! Check in w/ your co-facilitators.
- Determine lead facilitator, scribe (writer), and time-keeper for each section.
- Create big open semi-circle w/ flip chart/tree/white board visible to all.
- Leave plenty of open space at doorways and chairs for wheelchair access.
- Ensure anyone in need of interpretation has it.
- Review, familiarize and organize yourself with pre-prepared flip chart materials and handouts.
- Make sure the tree is visible and clear for all.
- WRITE BIG!
- Be gentle, respectful and assertive to keep on time.

MATERIALS:

- Flip chart, markers, white board, extra pens
- BIG tree with leaves and roots
- 3-5 leaves that will already be written out as starting points
- Core Agreements and Human Rights Principles written on big paper
- Session I Goals on big paper
- Note-taking sheets for breakout groups
- Discussion questions/instructions for breakout groups

Welcome, Overview, Introductions, Agreements (10:15-10:40)

1. Make sure that the room is set up and everyone gets seated.
2. Welcome everyone to the room.



SAY WHAT—Welcome Everyone to the People’s Convention for Human Rights!
(You can say a few more words here welcoming people to the room and the track.) **How many of you were at the opening plenary?**

3. Ask if anyone would briefly re-cap some of the main points from the opening plenary.



SAY WHAT—Great, thanks for that recap. One of the things we heard in the plenary was a need to see this weekend and this movement as part of history. We are fortunate to stand on the shoulders and learn from those who fought for justice and human rights before us.

So before we get started let’s read a quote from Martin Luther King to link us to this history and set the stage for the purpose of this 1st workshop:

“The prescription for the cure rests with the accurate diagnosis of the disease.”

4. Go over the goals of the workshop.



SAY WHAT—The goal of this workshop is to work together to map out our day to day experiences of the human rights crisis and explore and identify the root causes, or as Reverend MLK says develop an “accurate diagnosis of the disease.” The rest of the convention will build off of this first session, so before we start we can take some time to set up the space for a great day together!

5. Present the workshop’s Goals (refer to them on big paper)
6. Present the workshop’s flow:
 - Brief introductions
 - Develop agreements about how to work and talk together
 - Introduce the Problem Tree
 - Listen to a few problems identified during outreach for this track
 - Break into small groups to share/discuss our experiences of the human rights crisis
 - Work together to identify the root causes of our problems
 - Explore what divides us from uprooting these root causes



SAY WHAT— I also want to remind folks that each track (Food, Housing, Healthcare, Education, Environment, and Work with Dignity) is going through this same process. It's cool to envision us collectively working to diagnose our problems.

Then, in Session 2 this afternoon, we will envision a new society where the root causes of these problems would be uprooted. In tomorrow's sessions, we will envision how to make our vision a reality, plus build our tools and capacity.

- Introductions. Lets do a quick round of introductions. Please be mindful of time. Quickly say your name, organization, and where you're from plus 2 words that describe what drew you to this particular track. (Facilitator models this VERY QUICKLY but calmly first.)
7. Agreements. Now that we got a quick sense of who we are, lets spend some time agreeing how we want to work and talk together this weekend. These are only some agreements that our host committee identified as important to start with. In a minute we can add more.
 8. Read each agreement 1 by 1 (already written out on big paper) and ask if anyone could BRIEFLY explain it. If nobody jumps in, read them from the guide.
 9. Great, do we all understand and agree to hold eachother to these? Any questions? Ask if there are any other agreements important to y'all to build a safe, participatory, and respectful space? Write out additional agreements next to others.



SAY WHAT— One last piece to share on agreements and we'll move on. At the rally we heard the Human Rights Principles: Universality, Equity, Transparency, Accountability, and Participation. We'll have more time to discuss these principles in Session II. For now we just want to add these principals to our agreements about how we work together this weekend, OK?

Note: If there are questions about principles, it's best to say we'll get more into those in Session II and that the principles are defined in their program as well.

The Problem Tree (10:40-11:10)



SAY WHAT—Like with all good organizing and education, we are going to start with our experiences. In this case, let's start from our experiences of the human rights crisis as it relates to (PICK YOUR TRACK: food, housing, healthcare, education, environment, work).

1. Explain that the Problem Tree is a popular education tool used for a long time in movements all over the world to map out:
 - Day to day experiences of human rights crisis (leaves of the tree)
 - Explore and name root causes of our collective problems (roots of tree)
2. The LEAVES of the tree represent our Problems and Issues. Introduce Content Facilitator to present first of 5 leaves.



SAY WHAT—So, we are first going to hear from _____ who will share an experience of the human rights crisis as it relates to _____ (track). Then we'll hear a few more brief experiences that were identified as part of the process building toward the conference. These first 5 problems are the first 5 leaves of our tree and then we will all have a chance to add to them.

3. Content facilitator(s): Share a 2-3 minute story of their own experience with the track's issue area.
4. After story is shared, post it as a leaf on the tree (it will be summarized and condensed on a big leaf in advance)



SAY WHAT—So this is our first leaf and now we'll ask a few members of the audience to read a few other problems that were identified during our outreach efforts.

5. Ask audience to please remain silent while the problems are read. Ask volunteers to read aloud the leaves. Hand out leaves to volunteers. Read 1 at a time. Pause in between but don't discuss.
6. Post each of the leaves on the tree.



SAY WHAT—OK, so now we've got 5 leaves to get us started but of course this is by no means a complete picture. There may be some you can relate to and there may not be. That's OK. We all have some connection to this track so now let's turn to a neighbor into groups of no more than 2-3.

7. Break out groups to discuss more leaves. Groups should take 10 minutes to introduce yourselves and discuss two questions: How do you relate to these leaves in terms of your day to day experience of these problems? What new leaves would you add?
8. Provide a 3 minute warning by announcing it loud and clear.

9. Report Back and Group Discussion. Can 1 person in each group please report back about which leaves you would add to the tree based on the experiences discussed in your group?
10. Scribe write new leaves on big paper (NOT on tree yet). You may need to ask participant for help to summarize and condense language to 1 short phrase (we have 5 examples already).
11. Whichever facilitator is NOT taking the lead on next section writes new problems onto leaves and posts them up on the tree—BIG and VISIBLE to all—while the lead on the Roots section gets that started.

The Roots (11:10-12:00)



SAY WHAT—Thank you all for sharing your stories. So, as you can see (pointing to the tree and the new leaves) there is no shortage of serious day to day problems we are struggling with. And like a doctor who uses a bandaid approach to healing, we will never change these problems unless we accurately diagnose the root causes.

1. We are going to break out into groups of 6-8 people in a minute. In each group we need:
 - 1 person to take good notes
 - 1 person to present to whole group
 - Everyone to keep the discussion focused and respectful of the agreements
2. Before people breakout present and read the Discussion Questions (written on big paper):
 - What are the ROOT CAUSES of these problems/leaves?
 - What are the deepest political, economic, and social forces/systems that produce these problems/leaves again and again?
 - How do the roots produce the leaves? (be specific and work together to describe the relationship between roots and leaves)
3. The goal is for each group to listen and learn from each other and work together to identify:
 - 1-3 ROOT CAUSES of these problems/leaves;
 - Describe HOW the roots produce the leaves? OR What is the relationship between the roots and the leaves?



SAY WHAT—It's not easy to come up with these roots and that's OK. We all think differently. We all bring different experiences and perspectives. We are here to listen and learn from each other, but also to diagnose the roots of our problems together.

4. Form groups of 6-8 people and then divide up. If possible, each facilitator (both process and content) should divide up and help facilitate each group. Your role should be very light facilitation to keep the conversation focused on the questions and report back, NOT to provide answers. Watch for people who just say things like "It's all about capitalism/racism/imperialism." Invite them to explain how the specific system causes the specific leaves. If folks get too

theoretical ask them to please keep language accessible for all, maybe by using the 'whoa.'

5. 20-25 minutes MAX for this discussion. (Let it go 25 minutes only if discussions are really rolling well in more than ½ the groups. Give 10 minute and 2 minute warnings.
6. Report Back/Group Discussion. Call everybody back for report back and discussion. Each group shares: 1) 1-3 Roots; 2) Describes how the roots produce the leaves.
7. Facilitator doesn't comment nor do others comment. Just listen to everyone report back.
8. If someone is not clear try asking: Can you say more please? Or, how would you condense this?
9. Facilitator/Scribe Writes out (BIG ENOUGH/CONDENSED FOR ALL TO SEE) roots (not on tree but on different piece of big paper) and the HOW.
10. After the report back open a whole group discussion:
 - What are the most common roots we named? (Discuss for 2-3 minutes)
 - We want to respect all the roots we developed here. At the same time we want to remember MLK's quote and challenge each other a bit to "diagnose" the problems together.
 - ARE THESE ROOT CAUSES OR COULD SOME BE SYMPTOMS OF DEEPER ROOT CAUSES? WHAT DO Y'ALL THINK? I don't have the answers, but let's talk together and consider this.
11. Place a star next to anything that the group decides might be more of a symptom or isn't clear if it's a root or not. It's OK if there isn't total clarity...you don't have to 'know'
12. Explain that some of these might be placed somewhere in between the leaves and roots. (But

Conclusion (12:00-12:15)



SAY WHAT—We started this workshop by sharing the day to day problems we face. Then, we worked together to identify the roots that cause those problems. (Refer to the tree.) Whether its healthcare, housing, food, education, the environment, or work, the current system is failing to meet our basic dignity and rights. We are all here because we know this and we know that we've got to work together to create a world in which all of our fundamental needs and rights are met.

1. Let's take a moment to consider a key question: What is it that is stopping the overwhelming majority of people from uniting to change this? What keeps us divided?
2. Discuss this question until 12:10 if time allows. If not, just let the question hang and ask folks to reflect on it after the workshop.
3. Scribe should write out the brainstormed ideas (if time allows).



SAY WHAT—We are going to close as we opened with inspiring words from Martin Luther King. After years of struggle in the civil rights movement in 1967 he began to articulate a new and broader root cause and human rights vision that we want to close with:

“We have moved from the era of civil rights to the era of human rights, an era where we are all called upon to raise certain basic questions about the whole society. We have been in a reform movement...But after Selma and the voting rights bill, we moved into a new era, which must be the era of revolution. We must recognize that we can’t solve our problems now until there is a radical redistribution of economic and political power...”

We share this because it invites us to look at what’s underneath ALL the problems in all our tracks. POWER.

As MLK developed as an organizer, he began to articulate a vision of people who were long divided along racial lines to unite to create what he called “a new and unsettling force” to uproot this power.

45 years later its clear that uniting means engaging our divisions. And we can’t simplify or understate these divisions as they stand the test of time. Racism, Sexism, Ableism, Heterosexism, Ethnocentrism and all systems of oppression are deeply engrained in our attitudes, behaviors, beings, movements and society.

As we work together to heal this history and divisions...As more of us see that the rich and powerful are able to maintain power and control of the major institutions of society because of our divisions...As we unite and build unity we can begin to envision this need for a “radical redistribution of economic and political power”...

In Session II we will work together to envision the world we want and in Session III and the workshops tommorow we work to discuss and build the movement to get us there.