Pepperdine University

Graduate School of Education and Psychology

RECLAIMING OUR ASIAN AMERICAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER IDENTITY FOR SOCIAL

JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (RAISE):

AN EMPOWERMENT CIRCLE FOR EAST ASIAN, SOUTH ASIAN, SOUTHEAST ASIAN,

AND PACIFIC ISLANDER COLLEGE-AGED WOMEN

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by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation outlines the literature and methods used to create the Women's RAISE Circle, a culturally-specific intervention for Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) women in a university or college setting. The term *Asian American/Pacific Islander women* is used to indicate inclusivity of women from all of the AAPI ethnic communities. The acronym RAISE represents the rationale and purpose of the circle: "*R*eclaiming our *A*sian American/Pacific Islander *I*dentity for *S*ocial justice and *E*mpowerment." Thus, the RAISE Circle provides a space for AAPI women to voice their concerns related to experiences of racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression. Included activities also seek to promote an exploration of personal and interpersonal experiences with intersecting identities and engagement in difficult conversations about oppression, power, and privilege. As an empowerment group, the RAISE Circle aims to help participants feel empowered to bring their concerns to the broader community and continue working for social justice for AAPI people. This dissertation includes the RAISE Circle Facilitator's Handbook and Primer, indications for use, limitations, and implications for the future.

Introduction

According to Espiritu (1993), the term *Asian American* (AA) historically emerged out of (1) an inability or unwillingness by the non-Asian, dominant society to accurately make distinctions between Asian American subethnic groups and (2) the resulting amalgamation of numerous subethnic groups into one (Okazaki, 1998). Consequently, numerous stereotypes about *Asian American/Pacific Islanders or Asian/Pacific Islander Americans* (more inclusive and recently coined terms; Nomura, 2003), developed out of this imposed identity; for instance, the enduring stereotype that Asian American/Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) are all alike (Kawahara & Fu, 2007). For decades, ever since the first major wave of Asian immigrants in the 1800s, AAPIs had been referred to as "Orientals" by lawmakers and the media and were seen as threats to American (or United States) culture (Lee, 2015). In more recent decades, AAPIs have been defined by the *model minority* stereotype, a label created to continually oppress other communities of color and to perpetuate a lie that AAPIs receive all the same privileges as White/European Americans (Suzuki, 1989). AAPI women, in particular, have additionally faced an objectification of "exoticism" and societal messages of inferiority for not conforming to Western standards of beauty (Hall, 1995; Root, 1990). Furthermore, AAPIs of all ages, birthplaces, and generation statuses continue to experience the perpetual stereotype that we are foreigners in our own land (Yoo, Burrola, & Steger, 2010).

Despite the historical and contemporary misuse of the term Asian American, an Asian American movement evolved out of AA political participation in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. Asian American college students, in particular, joined various civil rights campaigns: namely, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) rights; women's rights; and ending the Vietnam war. Through this civic engagement, the *Pan-Asian American* identity was used to create unity and

alliances amongst the various Asian ethnic subgroups and to fight for the rights of all AAs. With the *Pan-Asian American* identity, AAs identified common contemporary and historical experiences, formed important and enduring organizations and institutions that addressed AA inequalities and issues, and demanded fuller recognition and inclusion in American society (Lee, 2015). This socio-political history of activism among AAPI college students, furthermore, sets a solid foundation upon which to build a college women's group that aims to help AAPI women empower themselves and their communities.

The purpose of this dissertation is the development of a culturally-centered and social justice-oriented group intervention for AAPI college-aged women in a university or college setting. I, the author, developed this intervention within an Applied Scholarship Community (ASC) Lab in which my ASC Lab partner, Marlene Garza, M.A., concurrently developed an empowerment and social justice-oriented group for adolescent boys of African Ancestry. We have both received training in theories and techniques of multicultural-ecological and community interventions as well as engaged in adult practicum experiences within culturally diverse communities. In addition, we value understanding the impact of our personal identities on our clinical work and engaging in reflective practice. As a result, I have provided both a brief description of our backgrounds below and a brief reflection on our own group process of developing two separate group interventions.

I am a second-generation, bicultural, Chinese and European (White) American woman with a strong interest in multicultural and feminist issues in psychology as well as in working with college-aged populations. My Asian and European (White) ancestry has led me to experience both the negative impacts of oppression as well as the benefits of power and privilege and has led me to be acutely aware of sociopolitical inequities. As a result, I have a particular

interest in promoting social justice and providing culturally appropriate mental health services to marginalized ethnic groups. Marlene, is a Chicana studying to become a psychologist for communities of color. She has worked for many years as a school counselor in an urban public high school and witnessed many attempts to acculturate youth of color with various cultural beliefs and backgrounds into mainstream ways of thinking, disciplining, educating within the education system. Due to the fact that our personal dissertations focus on two very different groups (AAPI college-aged women and adolescent boys of African Ancestry) and our goal was to create two separate culturally-specific interventions, much of our handbooks differ in content. However, both handbooks share a common underlying social justice and empowerment framework to address the negative effects of racism and oppression these two groups have experienced in our society (Harrell, 2000). Thus, we frequently collaborated and sought feedback from one another on group activities and discussion topics related to social justice and empowerment.

Overall, our social justice-oriented interventions aim to promote: (a) critical consciousness of the impact of white supremacist ideology, power, and privilege on diverse communities; (b) development of ethnic and intersecting identities; (c) increased desire to engage in social justice work; and (d) knowledge of ways to take social justice action. Our social justice work serves to empower historically oppressed communities to reject the status quo and feel capable of effecting change on behalf of themselves and others. It, moreover, serves to confront societal systems that are based on white supremacist ideologies, power, and privilege to create more equity for historically oppressed communities (e.g. communities of color, women, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people; Suyemoto, Day, & Schwartz, 2015).

Asian American/Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) and Traditional Mental Health Services

Asian American/Pacific Islanders have historically underutilized traditional mental health services (Leong, 1986; Liu, Tsong, & Hayashino, 2007; U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001), though the reasons for this may differ somewhat. Various obstacles have tended to prevent AAPIs from accessing mental health services (Tung, 2011; Uba, 1994). For instance, there is a cultural inhibition around seeking services, which includes stigma toward mental health problems, shame on the entire family (Lee, 2002), and insufficient recognition of mental health issues. Other obstacles to treatment involve the lack of awareness of and/or inaccessibility to available services, a minimal number of services provided by mental health professionals who are culturally sensitive and bilingual, as well as a lack of financial resources (Liu et al., 2007). In addition, Van Brunt (2008) explains that due to the Asian cultural value of emotional self-control (Kim, Atkinson, & Yang, 1999), AAPIs may be reluctant to share their feelings of distress with mental health workers.

It is important to note that the underutilization of services by AAPIs is not an indication that they experience less distress than other ethnic groups. AAPI youth, in particular, have experienced significantly high rates of suicide (Noh, 2007) and depression (Cheng, Lee, & Iwamoto, 2012), in addition to being more likely to experience suicidal ideation and to attempt suicide than their White counterparts (Kisch, Leino, & Silverman, 2005). Additionally, national suicide rates in 2007 revealed that suicide was the second leading cause of death for AAPI women aged 15 to 24 (Heron, 2011), alongside a rapid increase in the rate of completed suicides among AAPI women aged 15 to 24 to 96.3% between the years 2000 and 2009 (National Center for Health Statistics, 2012). Further complicating the matter of suicide, AAPI students on college

and university campuses in the United States often encounter negative stereotyping, disregard, and hostility (Alvarez & Yeh, 1999).

Liu et al. (2007) contend that there is a need for culturally specific interventions due to higher premature termination rates and tendencies of AAPIs to postpone use of counseling services until situations are dire. For example, in Johnson, Takesue and Chen's (2007) study, it was discovered that AAPI students at Brown University utilized psychological services at the same rate as White students in 1996; however, AAPI students utilized crisis services at a substantially higher rate than their White peers. Asian American/Pacific Islander students appeared to only use services when their situations became unbearably dire, which suggests a common hesitancy to use Western therapy services. Matsushima and Tashima (1982) noted that, while acculturated AAPIs may be more inclined to utilize professional counseling services, most see therapy as a last resort after having tried to solve their problems on their own, or having sought help from family members and support in their community (i.e. spiritual healers, elders, herbalists, or physicians; Lee, 1997).

Services that are culturally sensitive to both the needs and strengths of AAPIs have been found to increase the use of mental health services among AAPIs at the same rate as other groups (Akutsu, 1997). It has also been suggested that when AAPI women and their therapists match in terms of ethnicity and gender, there seems to be a reduction in premature termination as well as an increased duration of treatment (Fujino, Okazaki, & Young, 1994). Hence, the creation of an Asian American/Pacific Islander women's group on college campuses, led by AAPI women facilitators, provides a way to challenge some of the previously noted obstacles to treatment and research (Liu et al., 2007).

Literature & Existing Resources Review

College is a significant and transitional time for many students, especially because this is usually the first time that students are living away from home. AAPI students, in particular, may find it difficult to reconcile maintaining values of family obligation and loyalty with being physically away from home (Liu et al., 2007). Furthermore, AAPI women may have increased struggles with balancing academics, family, and interpersonal relationships, which have the potential to engender more serious mental health issues, including depression and anxiety (Wong & Mock, 1997).

Moreover, college may be the first time that AAPI young adults have to face the harsh realities of racism and discrimination, particularly if they have transitioned from a more homogeneous community of the same ethnic and cultural background to a homogeneous community of another background (i.e. a school with a majority of White/European American students; Johnson et al., 2007). As a result of these realities, the unique experiences of AAPI women college students deserve and require acknowledgement in the form of culturally appropriate mental health interventions on college campuses (Liu et al., 2007). Furthermore, Kiang (2002) and Suyemoto et al. (2015) have found that courses on AAPI studies are correlated with increased positive feelings about being Asian American/Pacific Islander, as well as a greater sense of empowerment, self-efficacy, belonging, social integration, and commitment to community (Suyemoto et al., 2015). Such findings provide evidence that community-based intervention groups, which incorporate Asian Pacific Islander cultural knowledge and awareness, may serve to further social justice initiatives within AAPI communities. These findings, in addition, have served as an impetus for the development of an empowerment group handbook specifically targeted to AAPI college-aged women. For the purposes of this empowerment group

handbook for AAPI college-aged women, we will consider the term *Asian American/Pacific Islander* to include individuals of East, Southeast, and/or South Asian descent and/or Pacific Islanders, and Native Hawaiians living in the United States.

Okazaki (1998) describes an additional tension between diversity and commonality that exists within the discussion of AAPI women. It is the acknowledgement of numerous within-group differences (more specifically, differences amongst the varying ethnicities from East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific Islands) paired with the recognition that common experiences and identities do exist. In the same way that women's psychology explores how gender impacts the psychological experiences of a certain group of people, Asian American/Pacific Islander psychology explores how ethnicity influences the psychological experiences of a certain group of people. However, the defining characteristics for women are much simpler than for AAPIs.

Previous research on culturally specific mental health services have maintained a larger focus on individual as opposed to group therapy interventions, and there is a scant amount of research exploring the effectiveness of group therapy for AAPIs (Liu et al., 2007). Thus far, three seminal articles have been written on ethnically heterogeneous Asian American/Pacific Islander empowerment groups for young AAPIs and AAPI college-aged women (Johnson et al., 2007; Liu et al., 2007; Suyemoto et al., 2015). Suyemoto et al. (2015) conducted the first qualitative study that explored the impact of social justice youth programming on development of racial and ethnic identities, as well as involvement with social justice for AA high school students (ages 15 to 17). The study included five male and three female Asian Americans who identified as Chinese, Vietnamese, and Chinese-Vietnamese. This research served to help the Coalition for Asian Pacific American Youth (CAPAY), a community-based activist organization

in Boston created in 1993 to empower AAPI youth, understand the effectiveness of their

program. In particular, this study provided a program review of the Asian American Studies

Workshops (AASW), a series of 10 workshops from September to December that reflect Freire's

(1970) liberatory education philosophy. AASW afforded participants with a knowledge base and

a framework for involvement in social justice. Each workshop took two to three hours and

involved didactic instruction and interactive activities. In addition, group instructors validated

and processed the participants' emotional reactions to racism, and then subsequently explored

the nature of systemic oppression. More specifically, instructors explained that the point was to

direct anger towards "the racist system and racist actions" rather than simply towards White

people (Suyemoto et al., 2015, p. 127). The creators of the program did not tailor the curriculum

to particular ethnic groups within the AAPI community; however, the instructors provided

examples from Boston as well as the primarily Chinese and Vietnamese communities and

neighborhoods in which the student's lived. In addition, critical race and racial empowerment

theories found in AAPI studies served as a general foundation for the workshops. At the end of

the group, participants reported a greater understanding of race and ethnicity as well as

development of their own ethnic and racial identities. In addition, participants reported a greater

sense of empowerment and social justice responsibility, as well as increased engagement in

social justice action (Suyemoto et al., 2015).

Johnson et al. (2007) presented examples of two AAPI group interventions at two

separate universities (Brown University and Duke University) in order to illustrate efficacy and

relevancy of a group approach with AAPI students. The Culture Conscious Group was formed in

1997 at Brown University to provide a supportive space for AAPI students to discuss cultural

conflicts in their environment, their ethnic heritage, and their sense of self that may differ from

cultural and familial expectations. While the authors did not indicate the number of members in the groups, they did report that the rate of male and female participation in the group, as well as various ethnic group participation, have reflected admissions data for AAPI students at the university. The majority of group members were of East and South Asian ethnicities (which was congruent with their greater number on campus), while Southeast Asians, Filipinos, individuals of mixed ethnicity, and Chinese and Korean adoptees were also present.

Topics for discussion included issues of concern for AAPI students (i.e. dating and interracial dating; academic pressures and career/major choices; the experience of racism; and family/cultural factors and pressures that impacted each of these concerns). In addition, the group focused on ideas about self-image, life choices, and self-worth. The group only met three times in a location outside of the university counseling center. Group facilitators gave brief explanations about their interests in issues of ethnic identity and culture in order to model self-disclosure for the group and decrease feelings of shame or discomfort among the students. Participants were told that this was not a therapy group, though personal disclosures were encouraged and confidentiality was required. The first meeting included a reading of "anonymous slips" which participants had disclosed their conflicts around identity and culture. These slips provided a way to bypass feelings of shame around sharing personal information with the group. Due to the fact that common issues were shared on the slips, subsequent discussions by the students occurred with less fear of uncertainty or shame. Subsequent meetings incorporated issues addressed in the first session and typically started with discussion prompts at the beginning of each session. The group creators used this direct approach because AAPIs may benefit from it more than a traditional approach (Pinderhughes, 1989; Takahashi, 1989). At the end of the group, students from four out of the seven groups sought traditional counseling, while

other students sought out leadership opportunities through the Office of Student Life in order to support their identity consolidation. Johnson et al. (2007) suggest that this type of group serves as a gateway to traditional therapy for those students who may not otherwise seek help as well as prevents the need for further mental health services by offering timely support and empowerment to AAPI students who may be experiencing issues such as discrimination, racism, or internalized racism. It is important to note, however, that these authors are making the assumption that traditional therapy adequately addresses culture and context and will not undermine the enhanced cultural awareness obtained through culturally-centered groups, which evidence suggests is likely not the case (Smith, Rodríguez, & Bernal, 2011).

The Life on the Hyphen Group, which started in 2001 at Duke University, was adapted from the Culture Conscious Group and included four sessions conducted by an AAPI therapist and psychiatrist from the counseling center (Johnson et al., 2007). Throughout the four weeks, participants discovered more about their strengths, ethnic identity, and political voice. By the end of the group, students began to participate more in and strengthen the AAPI community on campus as well as develop stronger connections with other cultural groups. In addition, students fought to create an AAPI Studies Program at Duke, which would include AAPI literature, history, arts, and social sciences. Thus, the group served to promote personal growth as well as encourage changes in the university to better serve future AAPI students (Johnson et al., 2007).

For her dissertation, Van Brunt (2008) created and piloted an online support group for AAPI lesbian and bisexual women (a marginalized group in the AAPI community for whom there is a scant amount of psychological research and available mental health resources, in addition to a greater experience of stigma within both their own culture and the dominant society) in order to determine its effectiveness in decreasing depressive symptoms and increasing

life satisfaction. The study included 83 self-identified AAPI women, between the ages of 18 and 50 (with a mean age of 28), who were romantically attracted to other women. Participants were recruited through university clubs and organizations, Yahoo groups, listservs, professional organizations, political action groups, support groups, and community resources, and the majority (52%) reported an income of less than $25,000. Ethnic groups represented in the study included: Chinese (27%), Indian (17%), Vietnamese (13%), Korean (12%), Multiethnic (11%), Filipino (8%), Taiwanese (6%), Japanese (1%), Laotian (1%), Pakistani (1%), Sri Lankan (1%), and Thai (1%). Religions represented in the study included: Buddhism (23%), Christianity (16%), Agnosticism (8%), Hinduism (6%), Atheism (4%), Islam (1%), Judaism (1%), Other (14%), and None (27%). The majority (55%) of participants identified as second generation AAPIs.

Van Brunt's (2008) project consisted of four separate four-week online support groups (intervention and no-intervention control groups), which each consisted of 11 to 12 members. Each session included a question to which participants could reflect on and respond. Participants were asked to post at least one response per week, but were also encouraged to provide responses to other posts as well. Each of the questions related to identity concerns that impact AAPI women who have a romantic attraction to women.

The results of Van Brunt's (2008) study indicated that the online support group did not have an effect on depressive symptoms, though it did lead to a significant increase in life satisfaction among participants (in comparison to the no-intervention control group). This finding provides support for hosting a heterogeneous Asian American/Pacific Islander empowerment group, considering the ethnically diverse sample.

In the age of information and technology, it would be negligent to ignore the racism and sexism that have spread rapidly in cyberspace, and the impact they have had on college students within the AAPI community (Museus & Truong, 2013). In 2011, a white undergraduate student from University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) named Alexandra Wallace, posted a YouTube video of her personal rant called "Asians in the Library." The video consisted of her complaints regarding "these hordes of Asian people that UCLA accepts into [her] school" and the use of cell phones by Asian students in the library, and also included her imitations of the Asian languages ("Ching chong ling long ting tong"). Outrage in response to the video from the AAPI community and across the United States eventually led Wallace to drop out of UCLA. Furthermore, in 2012, after numerous students from Ohio State University had posted racist tweets on Twitter about AAPI students on the campus, a student created a Tumblr blog to expose racism at the school called *OSU Haters*. Additionally, University of California, Berkeley students created a discussion on JuicyCampus titled "How do I get an Asian sorority chick to *&@!# me…?" The discussion received multiple comments that accentuated hypersexual stereotypes of AA women and even encouraged college men to drug and sexually assault them (Museus & Truong, 2013).

These examples reveal the extent to which racism and sexism still exist on college and university campuses today and the need for a space in which AAPI college women can become aware of these issues, explore feelings of hurt, anger, and sadness, become empowered to challenge stereotypes and assumptions, and engage in social activism to fight against these systemic issues.

Currently, the Asian Women's Health Initiative Project (AWSHIP) at Boston University, School of Social Work (see APPENDIX B) is in the process of conducting a study on the

AWARE (Asian Women's Action for Resilience and Empowerment) intervention, which is

funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). The AWARE study, conducted at

Wellesley College and directed by Dr. Hyeouk Chris Hahm, focuses on increasing the mental

and sexual health of Korean-American, Chinese-American and Vietnamese-American young

women in a personal and culturally-sensitive manner. It includes group therapy sessions and

secure daily text messages (called "Aware Stories") that provide encouragement. The group is

made up of eight sessions:

1. "Introduction to AWARE"

2. "ABCDG Parenting & Coping Disempowerment"

3. "The Catch-22: The Double-Bind"

4. "Who do I see in the Mirror? Body Image and Discrimination"

5. "Romance, Violence, and Everything in Between"

6. "Sex and Substance Abuse"

7. "Giving Yourself Grace"

8. "New Beginnings" (Boston University School of Social Work, 2017, para. 4).

Differences between the AWARE therapy group, other aforementioned therapy groups, and the

RAISE Circle are noted in Chapter III: Development[1].

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[1] Please note: In order to provide RAISE facilitators with background knowledge to conduct the women's circle, I have created a primer with a more in-depth literature review than is provided here. Please see APPENDIX A for this primer.

Handbook Development

This chapter outlines the procedures that were used to develop the Women's RAISE Circle Facilitator's Handbook. Both a review of the literature and consultation with experts in the field of multicultural psychology were implemented to develop this handbook. The literature review provided information about: (a) the current prevalence of empowerment and social justice groups within the United States, (b) multicultural considerations for AAPI college-aged women, and (c) theoretical models (i.e. intersectional feminism and internalized oppression) that help explain the experience of marginalized populations in the United States. Moreover, the handbooks were created specifically as guides for facilitators to conduct these circles within colleges and universities.

Rationale for Creating the RAISE Circle Handbook and Group Heterogeneity

The primary goal of this handbook is to provide a resource for mental health professionals and/or community-based organizations that can be used to promote empowerment, liberation, social justice, and well-being among AAPI college-aged women. Though a small body of literature on the development and implementation of empowerment groups exists, to the best of my knowledge, there has yet to be a creation of an empowerment, liberation, and social justice-oriented group specifically for AAPI college-aged women. It is my belief, as promoted by the Emotional Emancipation Circles℠ (EECs℠; Grills, Aird, & Rowe, 2016), that community activism is a key component of the movement toward empowerment, and this aspect does not appear to be included in much of the past literature on work with college-aged AAPI women. Furthermore, it could be argued that this handbook should focus on one particular ethnic subgroup within the AAPI community. The reality is that all persons in the United States have been socialized to see people based on their phenotype, regardless of cultural traditions, common

interests, or language (Okazaki & Saw, 2011; Omi & Winant, 1994). This socialization serves to maintain a social hierarchy in society whereby people of color are viewed and treated as inferior to white people (Markus, 2008). AAPIs (no matter birthplace, age, or generation status) will frequently be as "Where are you from?" (as in, "What country outside of the United States are you from?"), with the assumption that all AAPIs are immigrants (or foreigners) in the United States, and further perpetuating the lie that AAPIs are not true Americans (Sue et al., 2007). They are also frequently lumped into one category despite a huge diversity of ethnic, sociocultural backgrounds (Okazaki, 1998). As such, I have chosen to create a heterogeneous group based on empowerment and social justice principles for AAPI college-aged women.

General Procedure

First, existing research on empowerment groups was thoroughly reviewed to show what clinical resources are currently available, and to indicate gaps in the literature. Specific strategies employed are discussed below. This helped the author develop awareness of social justice efforts that have been used in the greater community that can also be generalized to college and university populations. Additionally, this comprehensive review of the literature informed the creation of the Women's RAISE Handbook, which is informed by and consistent with the development of an empowerment, liberation, and social-justice oriented group for AAPI college-aged women.

Secondly, the handbook and primer were developed based off of the literature review in addition to information from the EEC℠ handbook (The Association of Black Psychologists and Community Healing Network, Inc., 2016), and other culturally-informed group handbooks (Grenard-Moore & Vasquez, 1990; National CARES Mentoring Movement, Inc., 2012). The RAISE Handbook and Primer were designed to be easily distributed to and understood by group

facilitators and other mental health professionals and paraprofessionals participating in the RAISE Circle. The handbook, furthermore, includes a weekly measurement tool that can be used for future program evaluations on effectiveness and impact.

Literature Review and Analysis Procedures

   Identification of source material and study selection. The Women's RAISE Facilitator's Handbook has been thoughtfully crafted with the use of available literature on AAPI women from the fields of psychology, women and gender studies, education, counseling, history, sociology, social work and other mental health related fields. While the Women's RAISE Circle is not considered a traditional therapy group, literature on counseling AAPI women has been used in the process of creating this handbook to address any cultural issues that are likely to emerge during the facilitation of this circle. More specifically, research on previous empowerment and social justice groups conducted within the United States was analyzed to gain a sense of what has been effective or ineffective in conducting such groups. In addition, literature on multicultural considerations for AAPI college-aged women was reviewed, including within and between group differences. Furthermore, literature on systemic and internalized racism as well as empowerment groups and liberation psychology were explored to both provide rationale for the handbook and inform what topics and interventions to include in the handbook.

   Search strategies. Research databases such as PsychINFO, PubMed, and Google Scholar were used in search of the literature for this proposed dissertation project. These databases provided experimental, correlational, quantitative, qualitative, and theoretical studies on the aforementioned topics. In this literature review, the author paid particular attention to peer-reviewed articles related to: (a) the current prevalence of empowerment and social justice groups within the United States, (b) multicultural considerations for AAPI college-aged women, and (c)

theoretical models (i.e. intersexual feminism and internalized oppression). Scholarly books were also reviewed for additional information about the previously stated topics. Further information was also obtained through information published by national and public health initiatives. In addition, existing EEC℠ and other empowerment handbooks were reviewed for social justice group content in regards to working with AAPI women in a college or university setting (due to a limited number of college groups in the literature).

To facilitate an organized review of the literature, combinations of the following keywords were inputted into the literature databases: *Asian, American*, *pan*, *East*, *South*, *Southeast*, *Pacific Islander*, *college*, *university*, *students*, *empowerment*, *groups*, *social justice*, *activism*, *implicit*, *biases*, *women*, *internalized*, *effects*, *mental health*, *services*, *therapy*, *ethnic match*, *oppression*, *racism*, *stereotypes*, *sexism*, *colorism*, *body image*, *suicide*, *ethnicity*, *identity*, *development*, *self-consciousness*, *self-esteem*, *relationships*, *family*, *career*, *generation*, *immigration*, *measure*, *scale*, *religion*, and *model minority*.

Impact of Applied Scholarship Community (ASC). The process of working in an ASC uniquely afforded my ASC lab (or group) partner and me the benefits of working collaboratively to create two empowerment group interventions. Our specific ASC group, chaired by Daryl Rowe, Ph.D., provided a shared and vital space for critical discourse that challenged western theory, practice, and methodology in psychology. Through the ASC group, we experienced the benefits of group work: namely, receiving feedback and being held accountable for critical thinking around social justice and empowerment-oriented work. Such feedback and accountability are two outcomes we seek to create through our group interventions. We also gained support, self-efficacy, and a sense of community, which are three major outcomes known to empowerment-oriented groups (Donaldson, 2005) that we seek to create and achieve through

our empowerment group interventions for Asian American/Pacific Islander college-aged women and adolescent males of African ancestry. Moreover, through fostering this community both in the ASC lab and empowerment groups, we strive to support and increase community development in both populations. Thus, our interventions focus on creating a sense of community, belongingness, and agency that promotes action and community engagement. Furthermore, our interventions take a strengths-based, bottom-up approach that considers the multi-layered contexts in which our participants, families, and communities live rather than taking a top-down, expert-driven western approach centered on psychopathology, deficits, and individualistic goals (Kana'iaupuni, 2005).

In addition, both of our empowerment groups incorporate technology and social media platforms (e.g. polleverywhere.com, implicit.harvard.edu, and YouTube.com) to support and augment participant engagement amongst adolescents and young adults. Facilitators are encouraged to exercise creativity in incorporating appropriate and relevant social media materials into weekly content to spark meaningful discussion in the groups. Such use of technology and social media serves to make our interventions more applicable and appealing to an increasingly technological and social media-driven society.

Development of handbook content. The purpose of this extensive literature review was to aid in the development of a valuable and relevant handbook that would provide culturally-congruent services that promote social justice and empowerment. The content of this handbook was informed by existing knowledge and research on empowerment and social justice groups within the United States, multicultural considerations for AAPI college-aged women, and theoretical models (i.e. intersectional feminism and internalized oppression) that help explain the experience of marginalized communities in the United States. In addition, the handbook was

informed by the EEC_{SM} handbook (The Association of Black Psychologists and Community

Healing Network, Inc., 2016), the AASW (Suyemoto et al., 2015), two articles on ethnically

heterogeneous Asian American empowerment groups (Johnson et al., 2007; Liu et al., 2007), and

Grenard-Moore & Vasquez's (1990) professional training handbook, *Women's Therapy Groups*.

Topics from the AWARE study (see APPENDIX B) and others (Johnson et al., 2007; Liu

et al., 2007) inspired the structure and several of the main topics included in the RAISE

handbook: (a) Introduction; (b) "Who do I see in the Mirror? Body Image and Discrimination;"

and (c) "Romance, Violence, and Everything in Between" (Boston University School of Social

Work, 2017, para. 4).

Description of the Handbook and Primer

The Women's RAISE Circle Handbook serves as a mental health clinician's resource to provide a culturally-specific intervention for AAPI women. The term *Asian American/Pacific Islander women* is used to indicate inclusivity of women from all of the AAPI subethnicities. The acronym RAISE represents the rationale and purpose of the circle: "*R*eclaiming our *A*sian American/Pacific Islander *I*dentity for *S*ocial justice and *E*mpowerment." Thus, the RAISE Circle provides a space for AAPI women to voice their concerns related to experiences of racism, sexism and other forms of oppression. Included activities also seek to promote an exploration of personal and interpersonal experiences with intersecting identities and engagement in difficult conversations about oppression, power, and privilege. As an empowerment group, the RAISE Circle aims to help participants feel empowered to bring their concerns to the broader community and continue working for social justice for AAPI people.

The Women's RAISE Circle was inspired by the EECs℠ (Grills et al., 2016), which are self-help support groups developed by the Community Healing Network to provide collective healing for adults of African ancestry and to dismantle perpetuated lies of white supremacy. Thus, the RAISE Circle handbook includes a similar format and similar activities found in the EEC℠ handbook (The Association of Black Psychologists and Community Healing Network, Inc., 2016) including weekly quotes for inspiration, short video clips to provide examples of content, and facilitator questions to spark more in-depth discussions. The RAISE Circle also ends with the topic ("RAISE our Voices") to address the importance of community outreach and social justice work in a similar manner as the EECs℠ ("Carrying the Message Forward").

The RAISE Circle Handbook (see APPENDIX D) includes four main sections:

1. Introduction (A letter to RAISE Facilitators, Rationale for the Circle, Goals of the Circle, Overview of the Circle, and the Ground Rules).

2. Weekly Circle Content (see below).

3. References.

4. Appendices (Weekly Handouts, Weekly Evaluation Form, Key Terms, and Resources).

The Weekly Circle Content for nine sessions includes:

1. *Introduction to the Women's RAISE Circle*. Sets the foundation for the next eight weeks. Includes discussion of the Purpose and Goals of the circle as well as the Ground Rules for the circle to establish bravery in the circle. Serves to create rapport and trust amongst the circle members.

2. *Implicit Biases/Racism/Stereotypes*. Includes discussion of implicit biases, racism, and Asian stereotypes to process painful experiences of discrimination and increase awareness of internalized oppression.

3. *My Asian American/Pacific Islander Identity*. Allows circle members to explore their intersecting identities as AAPI women through dialogue and art.

4. *Body Image/Self-Love*. Addresses both common body insecurities amongst AAPI women and Asian sex stereotypes that negatively impact the way women view themselves. Includes discussion of internalized racism and sexism as they relate to physical appearance.

5. *Family*. Explores the struggles that AAPI women experience in their families as well as strength, resilience and sacrifice found within their families.

6. *Safety in Relationships*. Addresses rape culture and explores societal messages and myths related to victim-blaming from an intersectional feminist perspective. Explains the cycle of violence and ways to recognize unsafe relationships.

7. *Identity and Intimate Relationships*. Includes discussion of important aspects of identity, sexuality, and intimate relationships from an intersectional feminist perspective.

8. *School/Career/Purpose*. Allows circle members to explore their career interests and goals and to consider how racism, oppression, and internalized oppression in society may act as barriers to success. Affords members the opportunity to explore how their chosen career paths relate to or provide their sense of purpose.

9. *RAISE our Voices*. Connects us to our responsibility for and commitment to the AAPI community and humanity as a whole. Circle members may choose to have a potluck this week as a way to end the experience together.

The RAISE Circle Primer (see APPENDIX A) provides a foundation of knowledge for RAISE facilitators, persons interested in understanding the purpose behind the Women's RAISE Circle, and persons simply wanting a deeper understanding of diversity and cultural issues related to AAPI women, specifically AAPI women in a university or college setting. Major topics included in the primer include: cultural and diversity considerations in leading the RAISE circle; what do we mean by *empowerment?*; within-group differences amongst RAISE circle participants; racism and microaggressions; internalized oppression (racism and sexism); implicit bias; critical consciousness; Asian American/Pacific Islander ethnic identity; Asian American/Pacific Islander ethnic identity development; body image and self-love; family; safety in relationships; identity and intimate relationships; school, career, and purpose; the model

minority myth; and RAISE our voices (the last session, community outreach, social justice work, and circle termination). Many of the topics correspond directly with the weekly circle titles and some are simply additional topics that are important for facilitators to know when leading the Women's RAISE Circle.

Discussion

Indications for Use

The Women's RAISE Circle Handbook was designed, first and foremost, for colleges and universities with an AAPI student population as it is a culturally-specific intervention. The RAISE Circle is an empowerment group rather than a traditional therapy group intended for AAPI college-aged women, a marginalized group negatively impacted by interpersonal and systemic experiences of racism, sexism and other forms of oppression. Participants may come from diverse social class and Asian/Pacific Island ethnic backgrounds, may have differing sexual orientations, may have different religious beliefs, and may come from all over the United States and the world. AAPI students struggling with severe mental health concerns (i.e. substance addiction, eating disorders, psychosis, or suicidality) may need a higher standard of care to manage symptoms in conjunction with or before participating in the group.

The handbooks inclusion of nine weekly topics fits within the typical quarter system at a college or university; however, they will easily fit into a semester system as well. The Women's RAISE Circle provides an alternative way to provide support to AAPI students who may be less inclined to seek traditional therapy services (Johnson et al., 2007; Liu et al., 2007). It may be particularly useful at universities where racial tensions run high and/or hate crimes against women and communities of color occur on campus. The circle may serve to increase resilience and empowerment among the AAPI women on campus who are affected by such hate crimes and acts of discrimination.

Clinical Implications

Very few interventions specific to AAPI college students haven been implemented and discussed in the literature (Johnson et al., 2007), even fewer have focused specifically on AAPI

college-aged women (Liu et al., 2007) and even fewer have gone through empirical or experimental program evaluations (Boston University School of Social Work, 2017; Van Brunt, 2008). Even still, much of this work has pertained to a more traditional therapeutic approach. In gathering literature for the RAISE Handbook, only one article specifically addressed social justice through youth programming for high school students (Suyemoto et al., 2015) and only one currently active and unpublished study addressed empowerment for AAPI women in a college setting (Boston University School of Social Work, 2017). This dissertation serves to help fill this gap in the literature around social justice and empowerment group interventions for AAPI college-aged women and provides a resource for future research in this area.

Furthermore, AAPIs have historically underutilized traditional mental health services (Liu et al., 2007; U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001). Therefore, culturally specific interventions are needed to prevent premature termination of services and prevent the postponement of mental health services until situations are dire (Liu et al., 2007). The Women's RAISE Circle affords universities and colleges with a culturally-specific outreach service to empower and support students who identify as both AAPIs and women, while simultaneously encouraging civic engagement, social justice work, and community outreach.

Limitations and Future Directions

This intervention was specifically designed for AAPI women in a college or university setting. Thus, it may not be fully applicable or age appropriate for younger or older AAPI girls or women in other settings. It also does not fully apply to other women of color or white women; however, topics included in the handbook (i.e. internalized sexism/racism as well as social justice and empowerment) may provide guidance for other empowerment groups for other communities of color and/or women from other racial and ethnic backgrounds. In addition, the

RAISE circle's inclusion of all AAPI subethnicities may be a deterrent for those AAPI students seeking a more homogeneous AAPI ethnic group for support and commonality. As a result of the RAISE Circle being an Asian American/Pacific Islander group, dozens of subethnicities may be represented and, thus, not every subethnicity's concerns and experiences may be addressed fully and adequately in this setting. Even though aspects of the RAISE Circle will likely provide support to members from diverse backgrounds and address common experiences across the vast AAPI community, our intent was not to be *the* sole source of support regarding subethnic concerns. Our intent, rather, was to create unity within the entire AAPI community to collectively raise our voices and bolster our fight for social justice for members of each subethnicity and culture. With that in mind, students may be directed to an ethnically-specific AAPI empowerment/therapy group or to an ethnically-specific student group on campus for additional support.

Moreover, AAPIs frequently experience the stereotype of being "all alike," and we must take caution not to perpetuate this stereotype in our AAPI circle. Participants may feel marginalized and disempowered if they are not given adequate time and space to voice their concerns and perspectives; thus, the topic of cultural differences and intra-ethnic relations both inside and outside of the group must remain an important aspect of discussion throughout each session. It is important to keep in mind that intra-ethnic conflict may already exist or occur within the RAISE Circle due to the level of diversity which exists across the entire AAPI community and the varying degrees of oppression experienced by AAPI women. The term Asian American is often taken as synonymous with *East Asian* American, thus leaving many Asian American communities (namely, Southeast Asian, South Asian, and Pacific Islander subethnic communities) in the "margins of marginality" as quoted by Naheed Islam (Menon, 2006, p. 350).

This means that the concerns and issues faced by many communities (e.g. Cambodian Americans, Samoan Americans, and Sri Lankan Americans) often go unnoticed and unaddressed. Further discussions of interethnic differences and group cohesion may be found in the *Primer* under the section titled "Within-Group Differences Amongst RAISE Circle Participants." Also, on page 5 of *The RAISE Circle Facilitator's Handbook*, I have outlined five ways to foster cohesiveness across diversity in the RAISE Circle. Please see the Handbook (see APPENDIX D) for further detail.

Furthermore, language barriers may also exist for international Asian/Pacific Islander (API) students, and topics presented may not fully address the needs and concerns of international API students. International API students may need an ethnically-specific support group in order to speak the same language and understand the content of the group. They may also benefit from meeting students in a similar situation to make connections and avoid isolation (Carr, Koyama, & Thiagarajan, 2003).

The purpose of this dissertation was to develop a culturally-specific intervention for AAPI college-aged women. Thus, the Women's RAISE Circle did not receive a program evaluation and conducting a program evaluation is the next step to determine program effectiveness and outcomes of the circle. Future program evaluation may include a pilot study and/or focus group(s) to determine which specific topics, activities, and discussions included in the handbook lead to an increased sense of empowerment and desire to work for social justice and what specific topics, activities, and decisions may be important to include in the future. Thus, the handbook is considered a work in progress as technology advances and as various diversity issues and concerns come to the forefront. A pilot study and/or focus groups may also provide guidance around additional topics to include in the handbook and around developing

continued involvement with group members after the circle ends. For instance, the fact that the RAISE Circle is based on a short-term model means that a continued sense of community and accountability around action and service may dissolve if not adequately reinforced. One major question for future implementation and research is, "How can we continue to build on community and accountability once the circle ends?" Thus, future research on this intervention is strongly encouraged. If a program evaluation on the Women's Raise Circle shows effectiveness, then this handbook may provide additional support for empowerment and social justice groups for other oppressed and marginalized communities.

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APPENDIX A

Extended Review of the Literature (The Women's RAISE Circle Primer)

The Women's RAISE Circle Primer

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

The Women's RAISE Circle Handbook was created in the process of completing a dissertation centered on a culturally-specific intervention for Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) women in a university or college setting. As an empowerment and social justice-oriented intervention, the RAISE Circle inherently carries a strong political agenda and maintains a strong philosophical stance around creating a supportive community and working to overcome systemic and institutionalized oppression. Thus, it diverges significantly from traditional therapy groups, while still holding the potential to provide the therapeutic benefits of community support and action (Donaldson, 2005). The handbook has been thoughtfully crafted with the use of available literature on AAPI women from the fields of psychology, women and gender studies, education, counseling, history, sociology, social work, and other mental health related fields. While the Women's RAISE Circle is not considered a traditional therapy group, literature on counseling AAPI women has been used in the process of creating the RAISE handbook to address any cultural issues that are likely to emerge during the facilitation of the RAISE circle. This primer provides a foundation of knowledge for (a) RAISE facilitators (namely, licensed mental health professionals or trainees and interns under the supervision of a licensed mental health professional); (b) persons interested in understanding the purpose behind the Women's RAISE Circle; and (c) persons simply wanting a deeper understanding of diversity and cultural issues related to AAPI women, specifically AAPI women in a university or college setting.

Cultural and Diversity Considerations in Leading the RAISE Circle

Kim, Atkinson, and Umemoto (2001) argue that, even though there are profound within-group differences amongst AAPIs (see page 51, "Within-Group Differences Amongst RAISE Circle Participants"), they still share several common cultural values and beliefs. Such cultural

values and beliefs include collectivism, hierarchical relationship, respect for authority, emotional

self-regulation, conformity to norms, family recognition through achievement, filial piety,

humility, and avoidance of shame (Van Brunt, 2008). In fact, due to the Asian cultural value of

emotional self-control, RAISE participants may be reluctant to share their feelings of distress

with the rest of the circle (Van Brunt, 2008). Furthermore, the majority of AAPI families have

lived in the United States for two or fewer generations (Kim, Ng, & Ahn, 2005). As a result,

Asian cultural values, beliefs, and worldview still impact the manifestation of psychological

issues, relationships with others, and the expression of feelings and emotions within AAPI

communities (Liu, Pope-Davis, Nevitt, & Toporek, 1999; Kim & Omizo, 2005) and will likely

be present in AAPI college populations.

According to Yu and Gregg (1993), facilitating group counseling with AAPIs differs

from working with traditional Western groups (Liu et al., 2007). For instance, some AAPI clients

may be confused by traditional Western approaches that place importance on autonomy,

individuation, verbalization, confrontation, and conflict resolution which may lead clients to

terminate prematurely (Liu et al., 2007). Nevertheless, group services for AAPI students provide

a space for discussion of racial and ethnic conflicts as well as intergenerational pressures, that

may serve to support healthy identity development and potentially prevent issues from turning

into severe psychological distress (Dunbar, Liu, & Horvath, 1995). Groups specifically for

AAPIs that incorporate discussion rather than a focus on mental health treatment, in addition, are

likely to appear more appeasing to AAPI students than groups with a Western-approach that may

feed into mental health stigma (Clark, Severy, & Sawyer, 2004). This emphasis on discussion as

opposed to treatment is also more in line with the Asian cultural values of avoiding shame and

saving face (Lee, 2002). For this reason, we do not refer to the Women's RAISE Circle as a

therapy group, and instead refer to it as an empowerment group (see page 50, "What do we mean by *empowerment*?"). Furthermore, in providing an AAPI women's circle with facilitators who are also AAPI women and in focusing on the strengths of both circle members and facilitators, we can promote culturally sensitive mental health services on college campuses (Liu et al., 2007).

Liu et al. (2007) assert that a blending of feminism and multiculturalism with the recognition of the complex intersection between culture and gender are crucial elements in working with AAPI women. Sexism found in some AAPI patriarchal cultures is still a profound and personal issue due to the fact that these cultures are founded on a structured hierarchy of power with very specific gender and family roles (Chow, 1991; Tummala-Narra, Houston-Kolnik, Sathasivam-Rueckert, & Greeson, 2017). These Confucian gender role ideals often found in Asian cultures may appear in complete opposition to the gender equality ideals found in Western cultures, and there are considerable pressures within the United States to assimilate to the ideal of gender equality (Okazaki, 1998); however, Okazaki (1998) emphasizes that AAPI men and women (as well as others who maintain various roles and identities) have the capacity to engage in identity and gender role reconstruction while still maintaining meaningful ties to their cultural heritage. It is also important to note that AAPI women have varying degrees of contemporary and traditional gender role expectations across generations, subethnicities, and socioeconomic groups. Thus, not all AAPI women conform to traditional Confucian notions of gender roles, a belief that is often overgeneralized (Okazaki, 1998).

In taking a feminist and multicultural approach to leading the Women's RAISE Circle as promoted by Liu et al. (2007), we encourage the circle facilitators to be flexible in establishing boundaries with participants (Enns, 2000). Allowing room for appropriate self-disclosures by the

facilitators regarding personal gender and ethnicity experiences serves to promote trust and openness in the circle. In addition, it is important to acknowledge the facilitator's presumed role as an "expert" while also allowing other circle members to serve as a resource in providing information or advice. Furthermore, flexibility is needed both in regards to potential multiple roles as a circle facilitator/mentor and rules around "gift giving." Circle members may wish to seek guidance from facilitators regarding academic and career choices. They may also wish to give a gift as an expression of gratitude and/or celebration. Additionally, members may wish to contact one another outside of group. While external contact between group members is often not allowed in traditional therapy groups, if this leads to stronger group cohesion in the circle it need not be discouraged. That said, continued consultation and/or supervision is advised in regards to multiple roles and boundaries in the group (Liu et al., 2007). Lastly, Liu et al. (2007) emphasize the importance of acknowledging possible reservations around discussing issues of sexual orientation and sexuality because of gender role expectations in traditional Asian/Pacific Island cultures (Aoki, 1997). In order to be more inclusive of intersecting identities of the women in the circle, facilitators may need to be more proactive in bringing these issues up for discussion (Liu et al., 2007).

Our feminist and multicultural approach emphasizes an understanding of how our context impacts our circumstances. We aim to increase awareness of the impact of White supremacist ideologies, racism, sexism, and other negative societal messages on identity. We also encourage the circle facilitators to help the women explore the source (from whom and from where) of their learned values and expectations. Through this process, the facilitators can work to empower circle members to acknowledge harmful internalized messages we have received about being women of color (Liu et al., 2007).

What do We Mean by *Empowerment*?

The Women's RAISE Circle is referred to as an *empowerment* circle with an awareness that the word empowerment has various critiques and interpretations of its meaning (Dalrymple & Burke, 2006; Riger, 1993). Thus, it is important to emphasize that our use of the term empowerment is not an attempt to displace collective responsibility onto the personal responsibility of AAPI women (Thompson, 2003). The development of personal empowerment does not excuse the public establishment from the moral obligation to create, protect, and maintain equality, justice, and human rights for all. Furthermore, this use of the term empowerment is rooted in Solomon's (1976) work *Black Empowerment: Social Work in Oppressed Communities*. Solomon defines empowerment:

> As a process whereby persons who belong to a stigmatized social category throughout their lives can be assisted to develop and increase skills in the exercise of interpersonal influence and the performance of valued social roles. (as cited in Dalrymple & Burke, 2006, p. 106)

Solomon argued that the white community has devalued members of black communities to the point where members of the group feel powerless to improve their lives. Despite Solomon's focus on black communities within the United States, her work may also be applied to other historically devalued groups (Dalrymple & Burke, 2006). Throughout history, AAPI women in particular have experienced immigration exclusion, sexism, racism, classism, xenophobia, and homophobia. Such experiences of oppression and inequality within society and in their own communities have led to long-term deleterious effects on AAPI women across diverse ethnic subgroups, which have further led them to feel silenced and invisible (Chow, 2000).

Gutiérrez (1990), in addition, defines empowerment as "a process of increasing personal, interpersonal, or political power so that individuals can take action to improve their life situations" (p. 149). Oppressive forces in society limit the degree of power that marginalized communities have to improve their life circumstances so as to maintain a hierarchy of inferiority and superiority. Thus, empowerment serves to (a) help these communities see their own worth and value in society and (b) begin to reject the systemic forces that sustain their oppression (Dalrymple & Burke, 2006). In rejecting such forces, these communities increase their power to make decisions and take action within their own lives (Dalrymple & Burke, 2006).

During the 1960s and 1970s, AAPI women increasingly began to engage in consciousness raising, self-awareness, feminism, community participation, and political activities as a means of challenging their experiences of inequality and oppression (Chow, 2000). To make further structural changes in society, they also made alliances with women, people of color, AAPI men and other allies working to change the hierarchy of power and inequality that exists throughout society. Through empowerment, coalition building, networking, and feminist solidarity, women in the AAPI community can help increase the presence of justice and equity within the United States (Chow, 2000).

Within-Group Differences Amongst RAISE Circle Participants

The Women's RAISE Circle has been created for AAPI college-aged women. On one hand, this is considered a homogeneous ethnic-specific group. On the other hand, there is great heterogeneity within this population. It is important to note that these women come from very diverse backgrounds in regards to specific subethnic group experiences, language, socioeconomic status, generational level, immigration story, religion, and values (Wong & Mock, 1997). Such diversity must be considered and attended to when providing culturally

specific and sensitive mental health services to AAPI women on college campuses. It is possible that group members may argue or disagree with one another due to either similarities or differences in generational status, level of acculturation, religion, and socioeconomic status (Liu et al., 2007). Interethnic conflicts (e.g., between Chinese Americans and Vietnamese Americans) may also disrupt cohesion in the circle and must be attended to from the first meeting and throughout subsequent meetings (Ngo & Lee, 2007). Espiritu and Ong (1994) warn that differences in socioeconomic status amongst AAPI ethnic communities may contribute to problems maintaining cohesion in the group and establishing a pan-ethnic unity. For example, Japanese and Chinese Americans are viewed as having more financial success than other groups like Filipino and Vietnamese Americans, and they also have more leadership positions in AAPI organizations (Park, 2008). While each member of the circle enters with their own experiences of oppression, it will be important to discuss and acknowledge ways in which certain members experience privilege in their communities as well (i.e. East Asian, wealthier, cis-gender, Christian, straight women in the group may not experience the same degree or type of oppression as some of their peers in the circle). In other words, our aim is to not only support and elevate the voices of individual members of the circle, but to collectively support and elevate each other's voices to address both subethnic and panethnic interests.[2] Furthermore, in taking a postmodern stance on AAPI psychological literature, Uba (2002) warns against the tendency to cite Buddhism, Confucianism, and other "homogenized representations of ancient Asian cultures" as explanations for the behaviors of all "contemporary Asian Americans." In doing so, we

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[2] Further suggestions for maintaining group cohesion across diversity are provided in the RAISE Circle Handbook on page 98.

perpetuate the stereotype of AAPIs as foreigners in the United States (Okazaki & Saw, 2011, p. 149).

Even in addressing the name of this Women's RAISE Circle, diverse backgrounds must be considered. For instance, AAPI women who are marginalized or highly acculturated may be dissuade from participating in a circle that centers around racial and cultural issues. Conversely, students with a traditionally defined ethnic identity may prefer a subethnic specific group or Asian Pacific women's group rather than an "Asian American" women's group. It is important to emphasize to potential members that women who identify as Asian American, Asian, East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, Pacific Islander, bicultural, or multicultural may participate in the Women's RAISE Circle (Liu et al., 2007). With empowerment as our goal, we believe that both AAPI women with varying degrees of acculturation and those with defined subethnic identities may benefit from participation in this group.

Furthermore, it is important to remember that circle members will likely be at various stages of their ethnic identity development (see page 60, "Asian American/Pacific Islander Ethnic Identity Development") and of their experience of critical consciousness (see page 57, "Critical Consciousness"). As RAISE Circle facilitators, we must take a stance of non-judgment to create a space that fosters growth in these areas (Osajima, 2007). Lastly, as Women's RAISE Circle facilitators, it is imperative to debrief with our co-facilitators and/or supervisors throughout the process to explore reactions to the circle members which may be triggered by our own experiences, assumptions, values, and biases. We must also take a stance of humility in being able to acknowledge any areas in which we lack the knowledge and skills to work with circle members of various religions and ethnicities (Liu et al., 2007).

Racism and Microaggressions

Mio, Nagata, Tsai, and Tewari (2007) explain that particular Asian Pacific ethnic groups have been targets of racism throughout U.S. History during times such as the Japanese American Internment during World War II, the Vietnam and Korean Wars, the fear of Chinese communism in the 1990s, the events and aftermath of 9/11, and the more recent fear of outsourcing jobs to foreign countries, such as India. However, because the general population in the United States has a tendency to group differing Asian ethnic communities into one category, racism experienced against one ethnic subgroup often extends to all other AAPI groups (Mio et al., 2007). This shared experience of racism in the AAPI community informed the decision to make the Women's RAISE Circle a heterogeneous AAPI group as opposed to a homogeneous, ethnically-specific group.

Historically, racism against communities of color generally appeared as a direct and overt hateful act intended to establish White dominance and superiority. In contrast, the contemporary form of racism often presents as disguised and indirect (Sue & Sue, 2003), with probably well-intentioned White Americans acting based off of unconscious attitudes and beliefs (see page 56, "Implicit Biases") that are harmful to communities of color (DeVos & Banaji, 2005). Researchers have begun to use the term "racial microaggression" to explain this newer form of racism which people of color experience on a daily basis (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000; Sue, Bucceri, Lin, Nadal, & Torino, 2007). In a study on racial microaggressions against AAPIs, Sue et al. (2007) identified eight universal microaggressive themes specifically about our AAPI community:

1. We are viewed as foreigners in our own land.

2. We are ascribed intelligence.

3. Our women are seen as exotic.

4. Our interethnic differences are invalidated.

5. We are denied our racial reality.

6. Our cultural values and communication styles are pathologized.

7. We are treated as second class citizens.

8. We are invisible in discussions of race (Sue et al., 2007).

Sue et al. (2007) also identified some less commonly reported experiences of microaggressions in their focus group: (a) Asians are bad drivers and (b) Asian men are not masculine enough to date.

Of course, many AAPI women will experience other group-specific microaggressions related to their gender and possibly sexual orientation, ability-level, socioeconomic status, etc. (Sue, 2010). Therefore, RAISE facilitators are encouraged to include a broader discussion of microaggressions that occur across each participant's intersecting identities.

Internalized Oppression (Racism and Sexism)

One negative consequence of racism, microaggressions, and other forms of oppression is internalized oppression, which occurs when people start to believe sociological and political messages that teach marginalized persons to blame themselves and their communities (Brown, 1995). Throughout public and academic discourses, internalized racism may be referred to as "internalized White supremacy," "internalized racial oppression," "internalized Whiteness," or the often-criticized term "racial self-hatred" (Pyke, 2010). The concept of internalized oppression has often been misinterpreted as being a problem or shortcoming of those who are oppressed. However, it is neither of these things, nor is it a result of ignorance, weakness,

psychological defect, inferiority, gullibility, cultural issues or biological traits of the oppressed (Pyke, 2010). Padilla (2001) explains that internalized oppression *is* "a multidimensional phenomenon that assumes many forms and sizes across situational contexts, including the intersections of multiple systems of domination" (as cited in Pyke, 2010, p. 553).

In the 1960s and 70s, anti-colonial writers criticized the impact that colonialism had on persons oppressed in South America and North Africa. These writers, including Fanon (1963, 1967), Freire (1970) and Memmi (1965), illustrated the concept of a "colonized mentality," which describes both a feeling of inferiority and an inclination to become more like the colonizers. Fanon, Freire, and Memmi emphasized that internalized racism is not merely a psychological issue but an issue of structural oppression (Pyke, 2010). Their writings heavily influenced civil rights activists in the United States who argued that, similar to international colonialism, White supremacist ideology in the U.S. engenders a sense of inferiority, especially around body image and racialized features like eye shape and skin tone (Bagwell, Bagwell, & Fayer, 1994; Pyke, 2010).

Implicit Biases

Implicit biases and stereotypes about AAPI women may also be internalized (Yoo, Burrola, & Steger, 2010). As defined by Grills, Aird, and Rowe (2016), implicit biases are "deep-seated attitudes that operate outside conscious awareness—that may even be in direct conflict with a person's stated beliefs and values" (p. 9). Through use of the Implicit Association Test (IAT), Devos and Banaji (2005) found that AAPIs tend to believe, unconsciously, that they are less "American" than White Americans, despite their disagreement with the stereotype of being a foreigner in their own home (Yoo et al., 2010). Furthermore, Root (1995) found that AAPI women, who are often rewarded by their family and society for deference and

submissiveness and punished for independence and assertiveness, may integrate such stereotypes (deference and submissiveness) into their identity and behave in a way that confirms them. Such examples illustrate the power of internalized societal and oppressive messages to influence one's identity and behavior.

In exploring internalized oppression, internalized implicit biases, and internalized stereotypes, AAPI women can learn to discredit the limits they place on themselves; on what they are capable of; and on how the world could change for the better. Mezirow (1991) refers to these processes as emancipatory learning, and suggests that the healing of internalized oppression can simultaneously serve to ignite social action (as cited in Rosenwasser, 2002, p. 54).

Critical Consciousness

Exploration of internalized oppression may also evoke critical consciousness for AAPIs. Critical consciousness, or *conscientizatión*, as defined by the (Paulo) Freire Institute (2017) is "the process of developing a critical awareness of one's social reality through reflection and action." It is also important to note that "Action is fundamental because it is the process of changing the reality" (Freire Institute, 2017, para. 5). Omatsu (2000) noted that the critical consciousness displayed by Asian American college students in the 1960s appeared to be "a rejection of the passive Oriental stereotype and symbolize[d] the birth of a new Asian—one who will recognize and deal with injustices" (p. 80). Thus, in developing critical consciousness, AAPI women can increase their awareness of various acts of oppression against themselves and their community and then act to end those oppressive practices and systems. As noted on page 4, RAISE participants may enter the circle at varying levels of consciousness and may need time and support to develop their own *conscientizatión* (Osajima, 2007).

Asian American/Pacific Islander Ethnic Identity

It is imperative to remember that *Asian American/Pacific Islander* is an umbrella term for more than 43 Asian ethnic subgroups in the United States (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001). These subgroups have been categorized into four major groups: East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander (Uba, 1994). People from East Asian countries include the Chinese, Koreans (primarily Southern), and Japanese. While many people from East Asian countries still follow traditionally Asian religions (i.e. Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism), 31% of Chinese Americans identify as Christian (the most popular religion for Chinese Americans), and most Korean Americans also identify as Christian due to being sponsored during immigration by Christian churches. Furthermore, it is important to note that, while Japanese military aggression in China and Korea between the Sino-Japanese War and World War II have led to feelings of resentment among many older Chinese and Korean immigrants, these sentiments are not as pertinent to Chinese, Korean, and Japanese generations born in the United States. It is possible, nonetheless, that these issues may still surface within a multi-ethnic AAPI college women's group (Mio et al., 2007).

South Asian countries include India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and the Maldives. As of the year 2010, Asian Indians have constituted the second largest group of AAPIs in the United States (18.6% of the Asian population; Hoeffel, Rastogi, Kim & Shahid, 2012). Hinduism and Islam serve as the primary religions of influence among people from these countries, though Buddhism, Christianity, and Sikhism also have major influence in this region. Similar to relations between the East Asian countries, tensions still exist between Indians and Pakistanis, particularly amongst older immigrants (Mio et al., 2007). Despite various differences among South Asians, they share a history of colonization as well as cultural values, and are

viewed in the United States as "minorities" based on physical features, such as skin color (Bhattacharya & Schoppelrey, 2004). Furthermore, Ngo (2006) asserted that in the aftermath of the September 11th attacks in 2001, South Asian Americans have had to endure an increasing rate of hate crimes and hate speech committed by people who misperceive them as terrorists or Muslim (Verma, 2004). More specifically related to working with South Asian American women, Inman (2006) stated that it is important to explore and consider the prominence of ethnicity, race, and religion in their lives particularly across generations. For example, her 2006 study indicated that level of religiosity and higher levels of ethnic identity amongst second generation women are more predictive of *cultural value conflict* in intimate (dating/marital) relationships (Inman, 2006). Cultural value conflict refers to unpleasant affect (e.g. anxiety, guilt) and conflicting thought patterns that occur due to navigating the expectations from one's culture of origin and White American cultural values (Inman, Constantine, & Ladany, 1999). Furthermore, the importance of family cannot be overlooked when providing health care to immigrant South Asian women, as they often consult with family members when making decisions about their health (Grewal, Bottorff, & Hilton, 2005).

Southeast Asian countries include Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Cambodia (Hong & Ham, 2001). Catholicism serves as the predominant religion amongst these countries due to the influences of French colonization, whereas Buddhism serves as a major cultural influence throughout these countries. Therefore, many Southeast Asian Americans follow the religious practices of Catholicism while still maintaining Buddhist cultural beliefs (Mio et al., 2007). Most Southeast Asian American came to the United States after 1975 as refugees or the children of refugees from the Vietnam War, and there is a lot of ethnic diversity within this subethnic category. Ethnic communities from Vietnam include the Vietnamese, Montagnards,

and Khmer Kampuchea Krom. Southeast Asians from from Laos include Lao, Hmong (or Mong), Taidam, Khmu, and numerous other ethnic groups. Ethnic communities from Cambodia include Khmer (Cambodians), Khmer Loeu, and Cham (Ngo, 2006). Use of the term Southeast Asian American throughout this dissertation mainly refers to Vietnamese, Cambodian, Hmong, and Lao Americans. Ngo (2006) notes that, like South Asian American students, Southeast Asian American students often have familial obligations in addition to academic work, such as translating for elders, serving as drivers, taking care of younger siblings, and cooking dinner.

People from the Pacific Island countries constitute the most diverse subset of Asian Americans (Espiritu & Omi, 2000). Such countries include the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Hawaii (in the United States), Tahiti, Samoa, Fiji, Guam, and various other island countries (Mio et al., 2007). As of the year 2010, Filipino Americans have represented the third largest group of AAPIs in the United States (Hoeffel et al., 2012). Contrastingly, the other Pacific Islander groups represent a very small number of the entire AAPI population. Catholicism, Christianity, Islam, and indigenous religions are most common among Pacific Islanders (Mio et al., 2007). Native Hawaiian culture, in particular, includes strong spiritual ties to ancestors and the land and a strong sense of family ("ohana") that includes shared childrearing and recreational activities that incorporate the environment and family (Kana'iaupuni, 2005).

Asian American/Pacific Islander Ethnic Identity Development

It is likely that young AAPIs from all of these ethnic subgroups will, at some point in their early life, experience a growing awareness that they are different from the dominant culture as they go through the beginning stage of identity development (Kim, 2001; Sue, Mak, & Sue, 1998). This awareness may then lead them to experience ideas of group inferiority, self-hatred, negative body image, isolation and/or feelings of responsibility for maltreatment by the dominant

group toward ethnic persons (Kim, 2001; Pyke, 2010; Sue et al., 1998). In order to manage and

minimize these negative experiences, Asian Americans may attempt to become more White and

less Asian (in terms of both culture and appearance). In fact, research has indicated that young

adult Chinese Americans who recently immigrated to the United States tend to view "being

Chinese" and "being American" as a dichotomy in which the more American one becomes the

less Chinese one becomes (Tsai, Ying, & Lee, 2000). In order for AAPIs to achieve a strong and

healthy ethnic identity, they must develop a positive sense of their Asian Pacific cultural heritage

and characteristics while living in a society that privileges Western culture, appearance, and

values (Phinney, 1990, 1992; Sue et al., 1998). Toward later stages of identity development, an

AAPI is more likely to possess a positive self-concept; a more even-handed perspective of the

self and other persons from different ethnic backgrounds; an integration of ethnic identity with

other distinct identities; and a better sense of connection and relevance within a broader

sociocultural and political context (Kim, 2001; Phinney, 1992; Sue et al., 1998; Sue & Sue,

2003; Van Brunt, 2008). Furthermore, the development of a strong Asian Pacific ethnic identity

is correlated with resilience against stressors, psychological well-being, and increased self-

esteem (Crocker, Luhtanen, Blaine, & Broadnax, 1994; Yoo & Lee, 2005). Additional benefits

of positive ethnic identity have been correlated with a better sense of community and

connectedness in AAPIs (Lee, 2003).

Body Image/Self-Love

Despite the existence of both gender and ethnic social inequalities experienced by AAPI

women, the women's movement in the United States has mainly attended to the suffering of

White middle-class women and ignored women of color (Chow, 1991). Due to the privileged

status of White women in the feminist movement, oppressions of race, sexual orientation, and

class against women of color were often ignored and deemed not as important as the oppression of gender (Fong, 1978; as cited in Chow, 1991). As a result, there has been some variance in regards to ideas about the application of feminism to AAPI women in psychology (Okazaki, 1998). True (1990) argued for a cultural adaptation of feminist therapy for AAPI women, while Bradshaw (1994) explained that the values and characteristics of AAPI women are often rejected and labeled as undesirable gender role stereotypes by White middle-class feminists. Such values include passivity, obedience, self-restraint, inhibition, adaptability, fatalism, and family (Okazaki, 1998). Root (1995), furthermore, contends that the psychology of AAPI women largely centers around the intersectionality of race, gender, and class within a social system that functions based on varying levels of power and privilege. The challenge for AAPI women is to find a way to develop a healthy identity by integrating the tension between their gender role and their culture while also grappling with stereotypes and images perpetuated by society in the United States (Kawahara & Fu, 2007).

Even though AAPI women, and other women of color, experience sexism in their everyday lives, it is vitally important to also be aware of the added challenges and oppression that co-occur with the existence of racism (Liu et al., 2007) and internalized racism (Museus & Truong, 2013; Pyke, 2010). These two separate issues require an integration of both feminist and multicultural theory. Many AAPI women during the women's movement experienced racism as a more pervasive and impactful experience in comparison to sexism (Fong, 1978, as cited in Chow, 1991), and many chose to side with the Asian community (Root, 1995). However, it appears that among younger generations who have acculturated to U.S. culture at a faster rate than older generations, young AAPI women have had at least an initial tendency to denounce their ethnic background during the early stages of identity development (Kim, 2001; Sue et al.,

1998) and have likely disregarded their ethnic heritage due to internalized racism and gendered stereotypes (Museus & Truong, 2013; Pyke, 2010). Furthermore, AAPI women experience the double oppressions of sexism and racism around issues such as body image. AAPI women, as well as other women of color, must contend with the same sexual objectification and ideal of thinness that Anglo women experience, while also having to contend with ideals of beauty most often represented by Anglo women's body types and facial features (Hall, 1995; Root, 1990). As stated previously, internalized racism is also a central theme experienced by many AAPI women (see page 55, "Internalized Oppression"), which often leads them to disprove of their own ethnic features, skin color, and/or other AAPIs and Asian Pacific immigrants (Liu et al., 2007).

AAPI women, in addition, often experience the pressure of sociocultural standards from *both* Anglo and Asian Pacific communities, which may engender negative body image (Berry, 1997; Kawamura, 2011). For instance, cultural emphases in the Asian community on thinness, comparison to other Asian women, and familial criticism of weight have led Asian American women to experience body dissatisfaction (Smart & Tsong, 2014). Moreover, Asian American women report experiencing less satisfaction with their faces than European American women (Kennedy, Templeton, Gandhi, & Gorzalka, 2004). In fact, 6.2% of blepharoplasties (eyelid surgeries) are obtained by Asian American women who dislike their eyes and want to conform to White ideals as well as gain better opportunities in employment, dating, and marriage (American Society of Plastic Surgeons, 2013; Hall, 1995; Kaw, 1993). In South Korea and Japan, blepharoplasty is also one of the two most common surgical procedures in these countries (International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons, 2014). Furthermore, many women in South Asian communities are confronted by the issue of skin color, particularly both the unconscious and conscious preferences for light skin color, as light skin is often associated with beauty,

competence, and goodness among South Asians (Tummala-Narra, 2007). It is important to also note that first- and second-generation Asian American women may experience even more pressures related to physical appearance than other generations because they are likely to experience two sets of beauty norms (from both White/European and Asian cultures). This may put additional pressure on them to succeed in their professional and social lives with the "right" physical appearance (Smart & Tsong, 2014).

It is important to note that the cultural emphasis on thinness for mainland Asian American women may not fully apply to Pacific Islanders. Pacific Islander college students have been found to have a higher body mass index than their mainland Asian peers and to experience more satisfaction with their health and their appearance than their mainland Asian peers. Thus, Pacific Islanders may have a higher body weight and experience greater body satisfaction, while mainland Asians may have a lower body weight and experience lower body satisfaction (Latner, Knight, & Illingworth, 2011).

Lastly, starting college and experiencing relationship changes in certain circumstances can trigger body image concerns and eating problems among AAPI adolescents and young adults (Smart & Tsong, 2014; Smolak & Levine, 1996). Thus, college is an opportune time to discuss body image with these women. In Smart and Tsong's (2014) study, AAPI women reported experiencing improvements in body image when they put body weight into perspective, gained self-acceptance, and learned to focus less on appearance and more on other personal attributes. They also reported experiencing empowerment when they started to appreciate the ways in which their bodies function (Smart & Tsong, 2014).

Family

Many college-aged AAPI women often find it difficult to balance personal struggles with intergenerational family conflict. Such conflict may pertain to "unconventional" choices made by younger generation AAPI women such as intimate relationships with partners from different ethnic backgrounds and/or academic and career choices viewed as unusual or deviant for AAPIs (Fu, 2002). For some women, these conflicts may result in losing support from family members (Liu et al., 2007). Less traditional, second-generation AAPI women (American-born daughters of immigrants), in addition, may face added stress in relationships with their more traditional mothers (True, 1990). College-aged AAPI women may also experience difficulty balancing the demands of family, work, and school and may benefit from extra emotional support from their peers and counselors (Liu et al., 2007). These women may also benefit from exploring the sacrifices their families have made for them to have a successful future and acknowledging their family's strengths (Saw & Okazaki, 2010). The Chinese-American film, *The Joy Luck Club*, which is based on the novel by Amy Tan, provides numerous examples of Asian family dynamics and common familial experiences: namely, intergenerational conflicts, mother-daughter challenges, sacrifice, gender role expectations, cross-cultural relationships, and resilience (Markey, Wang, Tan, & Bass, 1993).

Safety in Relationships

In a sample studied by Porter and Williams (2011), 37% of AAPI college students reported experiencing psychological abuse and 15% reported experiencing sexual abuse in intimate relationships. These statistics indicate that intimate partner violence (IPV) among AAPI college students deserves attention (Nguyen, Jackson, Schact, George, & Pantalone, 2016). Furthermore, AAPI college women may be less likely to seek professional help and disclose

intimate partner violence due to a desire to "save face" and avoid disgracing their families. This desire likely stems from the common Asian Pacific cultural values of interdependence and social harmony, in which familial needs are prioritized over personal needs (Hall, Sue, Narang, & Lilly, 2000). However, this desire to save face may lead to future physical and psychological issues if the violence is left ignored (Bhuyan, Mell, Senturia, Sullivan, & Shiu-Thornton, 2005; Nguyen et al., 2016). AAPI women, in general, who have experienced intimate partner violence are also less likely to seek help from mental health professionals than Black, Latino and White women who have experienced IPV (Cho & Kim, 2012).

Confucian principles, which are found in many Asian Pacific cultures, may influence the ways in which some AAPI women experience IPV (Bhuyan et al., 2005; Shiu-Thornton, Senturia, & Sullivan, 2005). Values based in Confucian principles include maintaining a social hierarchy in which older adult men posses the highest authority and power within a family (Shim & Nelson-Becker, 2009). In addition, values around male privilege (e.g. a husband has the right to discipline his wife) have been reported by a third of a study sample of Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Cambodian adult women in the United States. In the same study, a third of the sample approved of situation-specific violence related to situations such as, the wife had an affair with another man, nagged her husband too much, refused to do house chores or embarrassed him at a party (Yoshioka, DiNoia, & Ullah, 2001). Similarly, as stated in Tummala-Narra et al.'s (2017) article, Indian Americans may be taught to believe that a man's sexual needs are more important than the needs of women, which has the potential to lead to acceptance of sexual abuse toward women (Ahmad, Driver, McNally, & Stewart, 2009; Tummala-Nara, P. Satiani, & Patel, 2015).

In Shiu-Thornton et al.'s (2005) qualitative study, Vietnamese American women viewed IPV both as a source of shame for the victim and as a private issue that should stay within the family. These women also indicated that they would prefer to remain in the relationship and accept the IPV rather than possibly shame their family, disrupt the lives of their children, and/or face retaliation from the abusive partner. Similar findings were also reported in Bhuyan et al.'s (2005) qualitative study on Cambodian American women (Nguyen et al., 2016).

According to Nguyen et al.'s (2016) study, victim-blaming and situation-blaming may occur frequently amongst AAPI college women. Thus, prevention programs are advised to specify IPV behaviors and help participants identify risky partners and situations by providing information on the cycle of violence in intimate relationships (Nguyen et al., 2016). Discussion in these programs should also address societal messages related to victim-blaming, myths about victim-blaming, and challenges to those myths (Nguyen et al., 2016).

Identity and Intimate Relationships

Some possible themes that may arise in discussing identity and romantic relationships include: (a) interracial/multicultural relationships (AhnAllen & Suyemoto, 2011), (b) LGBTQ experiences as an AAPI woman (Szymanski & Sung, 2013; Van Brunt, 2008), and (c) ethnic identity and gender role expectations (Leu, Walton, & Takeuchi, 2011; Tummala-Narra et al., 2017). From a feminist and multicultural stance, participants will likely benefit from identifying expected gender norms in both Asian Pacific and Western cultures (i.e. "The woman must cook" and refrain from premarital sex) and identifying personal desires (i.e. "I would rather do something else with my time than cook" or I would like to explore my sexuality) in intimate relationships. This exploration serves to help participants make informed decisions in romantic relationships (Liu et al., 2007). As previously stated on page 49, facilitators may need to be

proactive in acknowledging possible reservations around discussing issues of sexual orientation and sexuality because of gender role expectations in traditional Asian cultures (Aoki, 1997; Tummala-Narra et al., 2017). Furthermore, it is important to recognize findings from research on East Asian, Southeast Asian and Indian men and women in the United States, which indicate that a stronger connection to one's ethnic identity often relates to more traditional gender role expectations (Leu et al., 2011; Tummala-Narra et al., 2017).

School/Career/Purpose

AAPI college students are often influenced by their family of origin and cultural values during the process of choosing an academic major and potential career path (Clark et al., 2004). Intergenerational conflicts between college students and their parents around career choices may also lead to the student's increased distress over decision-making (Liu et al., 2007), especially if the student's chosen career path meets neither cultural expectations nor gender norms (Clark et al., 2004). DeVaney and Hughey (2000) state that families of students of color often heavily influence these students to take a specific career path and follow cultural traditions and rules (Clark et al., 2004). Thus, even though the main purpose of the RAISE Circle is not to provide career counseling, the week dedicated to school, career, and purpose allows the women to reconcile their own academic and career wishes with their cultural values and family's wishes. Furthermore, participants may benefit from feeling understood by their peers in the circle and being able to work on the same issues around academic and career decision-making together (Clark et al., 2004).

The Model Minority Myth

As of the year 2008, AAPIs have constituted roughly 6.6% of all students pursuing a college degree in the United States. AAPI women have made up approximately 56% of all AAPI

students pursuing higher education, and this number is still growing rapidly (Kim, 2011). AAPIs have often been labeled as the "model minority" by which other "racial minorities" should strive after (Suzuki, 1989). On one hand, it appears that young AAPI women fit this stereotype and are highly successful. One out of every two young AAPI women have earned a college degree or higher, as compared to one in every three young white women (Hune, 2002), and AAPI women represent the highest educated group of women compared to any other ethnic or racial group in the United States (Pew Research Center, 2012). Furthermore, statistics from 2011 indicate that 44% of employed AAPI women worked in upper management, professional, and associated occupations, which is higher than the percentage of employed white (42%), African American (34%), and Hispanic (25%) women (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). In 2011, AAPI women who worked full-time even received a higher median weekly salary of $751 as compared to white women who received $703 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013; The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations, Department of Professional Employees, 2010). On the other hand, AAPI women between the ages of 15 and 34 have one of the highest percentages of depression and suicide compared to women from all other racial and ethnic groups in the United States (Cheng, Lee, & Iwamoto, 2012).

Furthermore, there have been varying levels of academic success amongst AAPI ethnic groups. More specifically, East and South Asian American groups (i.e. Chinese and Asian Indians) have higher graduation rates for high school, undergraduate school, and graduate school, while the majority of Southeast Asian Americans (i.e. Laotians, Cambodians, and Hmong) never finish high school with rates similar to, if not lower than, other racially marginalized groups (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007). Amongst Southeast Asian Americans, Vietnamese Americans have reached more academic and career success than the three other

Southeast Asian groups. Additionally, Southeast Asian American students, like other AAPI groups, have received conflicting stereotypes as either hardworking or low achieving students (Ngo & Lee, 2007). According to Ngo (2006), this dual perception has led to a lack of support for Southeast Asian students based on the assumptions that they either (a) do not experience any problems or (b) are too lazy to deserve assistance (Um, 2003). Moreover, we cannot simply place blame on ethnic or class cultures for academic underachievement in AAPI communities, but must take into consideration the negative impact that institutionalized racism and oppression has on them (Ngo & Lee, 2007). For instance, the low literacy rates experienced amongst Native Hawaiian children is likely a byproduct of the 1896 banning of Hawaiian language in Hawaiian schools rather than simply due to overgeneralized assumptions, such as they all engage in substance use and have low aspirations (Kana'iaupuni, 2005).

This *model minority* rhetoric has created a myth that AAPIs do not experience negative effects of systemic racism and oppression as do other marginalized groups. Suzuki (1989) explained that political conservatives used the *model minority* stereotype in reaction to social justice movements that sought to eliminate inequalities found in institutions, legal systems, and social arenas within the United States. Success among AAPIs was seen as proof that European Americans and societal institutions were not racist (Suzuki, 1995; Wollenberg, 1978), and was used to invalidate the fight for social justice (Yoo et al., 2010) as well as create conflict between AAPIs and other marginalized groups, such as persons of African ancestry (Leong, Chao, & Hardin, 2000). In reality, use of the term *model minority* ignores the historical and contemporary political fight by AAPIs against racism in public education, which has at times been fought alongside Native Americans, African Americans, and Latino/as (Suzuki, 1995; Yu, 2006).

Raise Our Voices (The Last Session)

The increased use of the model minority stereotype in the late 1960s also contrasted significantly with the rise, among AAPI youth, of racial consciousness and political activism (Suzuki, 1995; Yu, 2006). AAPI college students were the first to join forces and create a pan-Asian identity (Espiritu, 1993). Then, in the 1970s and 1980s, college students worked with members of the community to develop a panethnic unity among AAPIs, which included the creation of social services, community organizations, and Pan-Asian civil rights groups (Nakanishi, 2001). This socio-political history of activism among Asian American college youth, furthermore, sets a solid foundation upon which to facilitate a college women's group that aims to help Asian American women empower both themselves and their communities. In addition, Kiang (2002) and Suyemoto et al. (2009) have found that courses on Asian American studies are correlated with increased positive feelings about being Asian American, as well as a greater sense of empowerment, self-efficacy, belonging, social integration, and commitment to community (Suyemoto, Day, & Schwartz, 2015). Such findings provide evidence that community-based intervention groups, which incorporate Asian cultural knowledge and awareness, may serve to further social justice initiatives within Asian American communities.

Despite the fact that the Women's RAISE Circle is not a traditional therapy group, the last session ("RAISE our Voices") will probably feel like a termination session for participants and facilitators and, therefore, must be treated like one. Circle participants will likely have experienced a wide range of emotions and insights throughout the past nine weeks and experienced a connection to one another as a result. Hence, the last session may produce feelings such as loss, sadness, change, or satisfaction amongst the women and is best addressed in prior sessions. The participants may decide to have a potluck or some other ritual to celebrate the

work, growth, and empowerment experienced through the circle. In addition, the facilitators and participants may want to allow time to discuss how they have impacted one another and what it feels like to say goodbye. If desired, participants may also choose to stay in touch after the experience ends (Liu et al., 2007).

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APPENDIX B

Table B1. Women's Empowerment Groups for AAPI College Students

Name	Approach	Website	Purpose
Asian Women's Action for Resilience and Empowerment (AWARE) by: Asian Women's Health Initiative Project (AWSHIP)	University/National Research and Outreach Initiative; Funded by Boston University, School of Social Work and funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)	http://www.bu.edu/awship/be-aware-of-aware/what-is-aware-asian-womens-action-for-resilience-and-empowerment/	A study that seeks to improve the mental and sexual health of Chinese-American, Korean-American, and Vietnamese American young women in a way that is sensitive to their unique cultural challenges and experiences, and promotes resilience and empowerment.
UCI Counseling Center: Asian American Women's Support Group	Campus Initiative (also studied in Liu, Tsong, & Hayashino, 2007)	http://www.grad.uci.edu/news-and-events/calendar/events/2013/2013-05-09-%20CC%20AAWSG.html	A support group created to provide a safe and supportive space for Asian/Asian American women to explore social and cultural issues related to values, family concerns, religions, intergenerational conflict, career concerns, dating, sexuality, immigration, academic stress, gender roles, identity, etc.

APPENDIX C

IRB Non-Human Subjects Determination Notice

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board

June 2, 2017

Courtney Shen

Project Title: Reclaiming our Asian American/Pacific Islander Identity for Social Justice and Empowerment (RAISE): An Empowerment Circle for East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asia, and Pacific Islander American College-Aged Women

Re: Research Study Not Subject to IRB Review

Dear Ms. Shen:

Thank you for submitting your application, *Reclaiming our Asian American/Pacific Islander Identity for Social Justice and Empowerment (RAISE): An Empowerment Circle for East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asia, and Pacific Islander American College-Aged Women,* to Pepperdine University's Graduate and Professional Schools Institutional Review Board (GPS IRB). After thorough review of your documents you have submitted, the GPS IRB has determined that your research is **not** subject to review because as you stated in your application your dissertation ***research*** study is a "critical review of the literature" and does not involve interaction with human subjects. If your dissertation research study is modified and thus involves interactions with human subjects it is at that time you will be required to submit an IRB application.

Should you have additional questions, please contact the Kevin Collins Manager of Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 310-568-2305 or via email at kevin.collins@pepperdine.edu or Dr. Judy Ho, Faculty Chair of GPS IRB at gpsirb@pepperdine.edu. On behalf of the GPS IRB, I wish you continued success in this scholarly pursuit.

Sincerely,

Judy Ho, Ph. D., ABPP, CFMHE
Chair, Graduate and Professional Schools IRB
Pepperdine University

cc: Dr. Lee Kats, Vice Provost for Research and Strategic Initiatives
     Mr. Brett Leach, Compliance Attorney

APPENDIX D

The Women's RAISE Circle Handbook

Reclaiming our
Asian American/Pacific Islander
Identity for
Social Justice and
Empowerment (RAISE):

An Empowerment Circle for East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander American College-Aged Women

November, 2017

Courtney Shen, M.A.
Pepperdine University

The RAISE Circle
Facilitator's Handbook

Collectively, we build the unwavering strength to RAISE our voices against the injurious forces of racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression. We, furthermore, empower ourselves to reclaim our Asian American/Pacific Islander identity as women of diverse Asian Pacific cultures and as Americans.
The RAISE Circle Creed

CONTENTS

A Letter to RAISE Facilitators

Dearest RAISE Circle Facilitators,

Thank you for answering the call to serve and lead in the Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. Our AAPI family has a long history of pain and triumph, oppression and resilience. Our AAPI identity, which has served to bring us unity in times of distress, has unfortunately been used as a way to marginalize our community and continually oppress other communities of color. In spite of that, previous generations have paved the way for activism and social justice work to help us and other people of color establish a level of equality with our White brothers and sisters. It is with their courageous spirit that we are guided to continue this work and reclaim our AAPI identity.

My desire to create an AAPI women's empowerment circle that is centered around the reclamation of our identity has stemmed from my own experience and growth in acknowledging, exploring, and understanding my own identity as an Asian American woman. My father immigrated to the United States from Hong Kong in the 1960s at the age of 5 with his younger sister and his parents. The same year that he immigrated, my mother was born in Cleveland, Ohio to two White parents of Polish, Irish and Scottish descent. I grew up in a culturally blended family, which was both fascinating and confusing at the same time. I constantly struggled with the question, "Am I more Asian or more (White) American?" It wasn't until starting graduate school in psychology that I really began to learn about my Asian roots and my experience of internalized oppression. It wasn't until this time that I began to develop my own Asian ethnic identity. I would have loved the opportunity to explore my Asian and Asian American cultural identity in college with my AAPI peers, and thus am very excited by the opportunity to create this space for current college students.

Lastly, I must emphasize my intention in creating the Women's RAISE Circle. This circle is meant to promote empowerment and social justice for AAPI women from East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander communities. It affords space for exploration of ethnic identity and group support for stressors related to discrimination, marginalization and oppression. However, this circle is not to be confused with a therapy group in the traditional sense of the term. At it's very core, this circle holds a strong political and philosophical stance that serves to reclaim our AAPI identity and foster the same unity that previous generations have created before us to promote empowerment and social justice for all AAPIs.

Of course, this work would not be possible without your caring heart, service, and leadership.

With love and gratitude,

Courtney Shen, M.A.

Introduction

What does it mean to be an Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) woman? The true answer to this question is varied and complex. The term Asian American/Pacific Islander serves as an umbrella term for over 43 Asian ethnic subgroups in the United States (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001)[3], which have been further categorized into four major groups: East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander (Uba, 1994). Each of these various Asian Pacific ethnic groups have numerous differences such as languages spoken, religious beliefs and traditions, cultural values and traditions, cuisine, history of colonization, and opportunities for success in the United States (Okazaki & Saw, 2011). Every woman in each of these groups has her own story involving experiences such as her place of birth or immigration story and intersectional identities such as degree of acculturation to the United States, generation status, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic background (Root, 1995). The RAISE Circle affords space for these women to explore their intersecting identities and reclaim an identity that has historically been used to categorize and oppress them based on race (Lee, 2015).

Why did we choose college-aged AAPI women? College is a significant and transitional time for many students, especially since this is often the first time that students are living away from home. AAPI students, in particular, may find it difficult to reconcile maintaining values of family obligation and loyalty with being physically away from home (Liu, Tsong, & Hayashino, 2007). Furthermore, AAPI women may have increased struggles with balancing academics, family, and interpersonal relationships, which have the potential to engender more serious mental health issues, including depression and anxiety (Wong & Mock, 1997). Differences in acculturation levels between generations often lead to conflicts related to issues such as dating choices and career goals (Fu, 2002). Moreover, college may be the first time that AAPI young adults have to face the harsh realities of racism and discrimination, particularly if they have transitioned from a more homogeneous community of the same ethnic and cultural background to a homogeneous community of another background (i.e. a school with a majority of White/European American students) (Johnson, Takesue, & Chen, 2007). As a result of these realities, the unique experiences of AAPI women in college deserve acknowledgement in the form of culturally appropriate mental health interventions on college campuses (Liu, Tsong, & Hayashino, 2007).

Why did we decide to make a circle for AAPI women? This handbook was created for licensed and/or supervised mental health clinicians to conduct empowerment groups for AAPI women in a university or college setting. It is a culturally-specific intervention with a strong political and philosophical basis that is aimed to help AAPI women empower themselves and their communities and promote social justice. One may argue that using a multiethnic framework can be disempowering if it privileges some experiences over others (i.e. the East Asian American experience over the South Asian American experience). Thus, we want to be

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[3] Please see **page 154** for references.

very specific about this circle's intent. In following in the footsteps of previous generations of AAPI college students, we aim to create a sense of unity amongst the vast diversity of ethnicities and cultures within the broader AAPI community to raise our voices against oppression, marginalization, racism, and White supremacist ideology. Furthermore, it is our hope that providing a communal space for these women to discuss difficult issues around identity development and discrimination will help increase our sense of empowerment to thrive as AAPI women in our academic environment and beyond.

How can we foster cohesiveness across diversity in the RAISE Circle? We cannot ignore the potential for conflict in a heterogeneous AAPI group that is both ethnically and culturally diverse. In order to foster cohesiveness across diversity, we encourage our facilitators to do the following:

1) embrace an intersectional approach (Hernández, Almeida, & Dolan-Del Vecchio, 2005) by verbally and explicitly acknowledging these differences in the opening session and encouraging members to share differing opinions and perspectives;

2) invite members in the opening sessions to share any concerns they may have with disclosing personal experiences in such a diverse AAPI group and then validate and appropriately address these concerns (this may or may not include referring them to another group or resource);

3) explicitly state the purpose of this circle, which is to empower AAPI women and create unity amongst the AAPI community to work for social justice;

4) explicitly state that members of the circle who do not feel comfortable in the circle or who do not agree with its philosophical underpinnings may choose to forgo participation in the circle at any time without judgment (though feedback to the facilitator would be greatly appreciated);

5) take a stance of humility when leading these circles to allow voices to be heard from every community that is represented in the group. It is impossible to truly understand each person's experience without allowing them the space to share their own experience with the rest of the circle (Liu, Tsong, & Hayashino).

Lastly, facilitators should choose activities and video clips from the handbook that will be meaningful to the participants. Facilitators may exercise creativity in showing newer media clips or media clips that are not included in the handbook that appropriately address the intended weekly content and also speak to the communities present in the circle. In the Resources section of this handbook, there is a list of websites that may provide additional video clips for East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander American members. Keep in mind that diversity in the circle goes beyond Asian Pacific ethnicities and includes various aspects of one's experience and diversity (e.g. socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and gender identity).

Purpose and Goals of the Women's RAISE Circle

The Women's RAISE Circle is about reclaiming both our unique and collective identities as Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) women in the United States, so that we can 1) increase our awareness of the impact of internalized oppression on our lives, 2) develop an integrated understanding of our multiple and intersecting identities, 3) empower ourselves to succeed in an academic environment and beyond and 4) collectively RAISE our voices against oppression and demand social justice as further explained below:

1) **Increase awareness of internalized oppression.** We will not allow ourselves to be defined by the *model minority* stereotype, a label created to continually oppress other communities of color and to perpetuate a lie that we receive all the same privileges as our White/European American brothers and sisters (Suzuki, 1989). We will not embrace an objectification of our "exoticism" or a stance of inferiority for not conforming to Western standards of beauty (Hall, 1995; Root, 1990). We will not define ourselves as foreigners in our own land (Yoo, Burrola, & Steger, 2010), or as "all alike" (Kawahara & Fu, 2007).

2) **Integrate our multiple and intersecting identities.** Through knowledge of shared struggles within the AAPI community and through the narrative of our own unique stories, we develop and strengthen our multiple and intersecting identities (Root, 1995). Our shared struggle and history of AAPI activism provides cultural wisdom for managing and understanding the deleterious effects of oppression and internalized oppression on our lives (Suyemoto, Day, & Schwartz, 2015). Our personal stories provide context for our understanding of shared struggles in the AAPI community. These personal struggles may be influenced by such factors as our place of birth or immigration experience, our generation status, our sexual orientation, the socioeconomic class we grew up in, history of colonization, violence and/or interethnic conflict, history of adoption, and gender role expectations in both our Asian Pacific and American cultures (Kawahara & Fu, 2007; Root, 1995).

3) **Empower ourselves.** In joining together to express our common pain and struggles and in recognizing our internalized oppression (Brown, 1995), we develop the strength and courage to discredit the limits we place on ourselves, on what we are capable of; and on how the world could change for the better (Rosenwasser, 2002).

4) **Collectively ignite social action.** We will follow in the footsteps of the AAPI college students in the 60s, 70s, and 80s who joined forces to create a pan-ethnicity and voice concerns related to social issues impacting the AAPI community (Espiritu, 1993; Nakanishi, 2001). We will continue to work together to keep our culture alive and promote justice in our community for generations to come.

Notes to the Facilitator

The RAISE Circle Primer:
This handbook is accompanied by a primer that provides both the rationale for the Women's RAISE Circle and scholarly literature to support the content and activities included throughout the RAISE Handbook. Please review the primer in preparation for the circle.

Format of the RAISE Circle:
Services provided on college campuses are inherently time-limited typically due to either quarter or semester system constraints. The Women's RAISE Circle is a structured time-limited circle with weekly predetermined topics (Liu, Tsong, & Hayashino, 2007). It includes 9 sessions so as to not interfere with finals at the end of a quarter. This will ideally lead to increased participation throughout each week.

Symbol of the RAISE Circle:
The lotus flower, which is displayed throughout this handbook, only grows in the context of dark and muddy waters. It was chosen as the symbol for the Women's RAISE Circle because, in addition to being a traditional Asian symbol, it represents the ability of AAPI women to feel empowered and thrive amidst the darkness of current and historical oppression.

The RAISE Circle Creed:
"Collectively, we build the unwavering strength to RAISE our voices against the injurious forces of racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression. We, furthermore, empower ourselves to reclaim our Asian American/Pacific Islander identity as women of diverse Asian Pacific cultures and as Americans." – Courtney Shen
The RAISE Circle Creed represents the heart and soul of issues of the Women's RAISE Circle. It is introduced in the Ground Rules and recited at the closing session.

Weekly Recommended Readings for the Facilitator:
Each week's agenda includes a few scholarly articles (listed at the end of each week) which have been summarized in the RAISE Primer. These readings are not required, though facilitators may find them useful. The activities and themes for each week were carefully crafted and chosen to reflect issues discussed in the literature that are likely to concern AAPI women in a college or university setting. Facilitators are encouraged to review the articles *or* corresponding Primer topics *before* conducting the week that corresponds with the reading to incorporate considerations from the reading into group discussions.

Weekly Quotes:

Weekly quotes are included throughout the handbook (in quotations) to provide inspiration related to various circle topics. The quotes are typically read at the beginning of session to help introduce each week's content to the group and to provide a source of deeper and more meaningful discussion. These quotes also serve to introduce RAISE Circle participants to AAPI leaders in a wide range of careers (i.e. television, comedy, journalism, dance, psychology, music, activism, and government).

Tips for the Facilitator:

Tips for the Facilitator are included throughout the handbook for extra guidance in leading the circle. Make sure to review these each week prior to the circle meeting.

Tips for the Circle Members:

Tips for Circle Members are also included throughout the handbook to serve as helpful tips and reminders. Make sure to review these each week prior to the circle meeting and remember to inform the participants before the meeting ends.

Facilitator Scripts:

Facilitator Scripts are printed in purple and in quotes; however, they need not be read verbatim. These scripts simply act as guides in leading the circle. It is also helpful to read the scripts prior to the group to ensure that you cover important details and provide a more fluid transition between activities.

Polleverywhere.com:

Particularly during the first few weeks, facilitators should incorporate cell phone use, maintain anonymity, and increase participation in the group by using www.polleverywhere.com. Create an account before starting the group and design a poll based on the group topic. Consider turning some facilitator questions each week into polls to spark interest and conversation.

Weekly To-Do List:

1. Review the RAISE Primer or corresponding recommended readings for that week.
2. Review each media piece and consider issues or questions that may arise in discussion.
3. Print required handouts for the week.
4. Prepare the room prior to the meeting, and arrive early to set up the videos, handouts, polleverywhere.com polls, and any other materials required for weekly activities.

Overview of the Women's RAISE Circle

WEEK 1 Opening Session

WEEK 2 Implicit Biases/Racism/Stereotypes

WEEK 3 My Asian American/Pacific Islander Identity

WEEK 4 Body Image/Self-Love

WEEK 5 Family

WEEK 6 Safety in Relationships

WEEK 7 Identity/Intimate Relationships

WEEK 8 School/Career/Purpose

WEEK 9 RAISE Our Voices

The Ground Rules of the Women's RAISE Circle

The purpose of this circle is to establish a brave space (Self & Hudson, 2015) where we, as Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) women, can voice our concerns related to our experiences of racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression. We aim to establish a brave space where we can explore our personal and interpersonal experiences with intersecting identities and engage in difficult conversations about oppression, power, and privilege. In order to create this space, we aim to establish the following:

1) **Reclaim our AAPI identity.** In joining this circle, we express our desire to reclaim our own AAPI identity (not the identity placed upon us) as women of diverse Asian Pacific ethnic cultures and as Americans.

2) **Maintain confidentiality.** We understand that what is said in the group stays in the group. Each member has their own right to share their own personal experiences outside of the group, but will agree to protect the anonymity of others in all external communications.

3) **Practice non-judgment.** We will commit to practicing non-judgment. This includes monitoring our own verbal and nonverbal communication of judgment, such as through facial expressions and body language.

4) **Embrace vulnerability to achieve a beginner's mind.** To the best of our ability, we will strive to be vulnerable (both verbally and non-verbally) in this circle. As Murphy-Shigematsu (2014) states, through vulnerability, we can embrace humility, self-reflection and a beginner's mind. A beginner's mind allows us to further embrace uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity and furthermore allows us to deepen our knowledge through humility, wonder, and awe (Murphy-Shigematsu, 2014).

5) **Share disagreement (and agreement) respectfully.** When discomfort or disagreement arises in the group, we will respectfully acknowledge our differences in the service of personal growth and group harmony. We will refrain from "crosstalk" (impulsive interruptions) to listen to and honor what is being shared.

6) **Be fully present.** We will listen to others in the same way we would like to be heard. By giving our full, undivided attention to the group, we communicate that we value each other and that what each person says matters.

7) **RAISE our voices.** Collectively, we build the unwavering strength to RAISE our voices against the injurious forces of racism, sexism and other forms of oppression. We empower our community to continue the fight for social justice.

8) _____: What else might you need in this space to feel brave and share your experience with other members of the group?

THE OPENING SESSION
(WEEK 1)

The opening session of the Women's RAISE Circle will set the foundation for the next eight weeks. The facilitator will lead the circle members through the <u>Purpose and Goals</u> of the circle as well as the <u>Ground Rules</u> for the circle to establish bravery in the circle. This first meeting and Week 1 activities will also serve to create rapport and trust amongst the circle members.

WEEK 1 AGENDA (90 min)

- **Introduction:** Welcome/Purpose and Goals of the Circle (10 min)
- **Activity 1: Setting the Ground Rules and Fostering Cohesiveness** (20 min)
  YouTube Video: "Thich Nhat Hanh on Compassionate Listening l SuperSoul Sunday l Oprah Winfrey Network" (3:21)
  Discussion: How can we use Compassionate Listening to foster unity in our circle?
- **Activity 2:** History of the term Asian American (10 min)
- **Activity 3:** Introductions. Learn why each member chose to attend the group and what they hope to get out of it. (45 min)
- **Closing:** Reactions to session. Introduce next week's topic. Evaluation form. (5 min)

Materials Needed:

- Access to the Internet
- Handout of the Purpose and Goals of the Circle
- Handout of the Ground Rules
- Handout of the History of the Word Asian American
- Monitor, LCD projector or screen to view YouTube clip

> **YouTube Video:** Thich Nhat Hanh on Compassionate Listening l SuperSoul Sunday l Oprah Winfrey Network (3:21)
> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lyUxYflkhzo

Introduction: Purpose and Goals of the Circle (10 min)

Instructions for the Facilitator: Welcome circle participants. Hand out the "Goals of the Women's RAISE Circle" to each member. Read through and describe the main bullet points on the handout. Ask the members if they have any questions related to the goals of the circle.

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Activity 1: Setting the Ground Rules and Fostering Cohesiveness (20 min)

Instructions for the Facilitator:
1. Hand out "The Ground Rules of the Women's RAISE Circle" to each member. Ask for volunteers to read each rule and offer additional rules.
2. Read the Facilitator Script.
3. Play the YouTube clip on Compassionate Listening.
4. Lead a discussion on fostering cohesiveness based on a) the YouTube clip on Compassionate Listening and b) the Introduction question "How can we foster cohesiveness across diversity in the RAISE Circle?" and subsequent bullet points (pg. 5).

Facilitator Script:
"We are now going to watch a short clip of Thich Nhat Hanh speaking about Compassionate Listening. Thich Nhat Hanh is a Vietnamese Buddhist monk and spiritual author who is known for leading the great non-violent movement during the civil war in Vietnam in the early 1960s. He was nominated by Martin Luther King, Jr. for the Nobel Peace Prize."

Video: Thich Nhat Hanh on Compassionate Listening l SuperSoul Sunday (3:21)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lyUxYflkhzo

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Activity 2: History of the term Asian American (10 min)

Instructions for the Facilitator:
1) Read the Facilitator Script.
2) Facilitator Questions:
    a) Is there anything about this history that surprises you?
    b) What do you think this history means for us moving forward?

Facilitator Script:

"Throughout the circle we will start with a few inspirational quotes from AAPI leaders in a wide range of careers. Today, instead of quotes, we will open with a brief history of the term Asian American from Erica Lee's book, *The Making of Asian America.* Please note that Pacific Islander was later added to be more inclusive. May I have a volunteer read the handout?"

> **History of the term Asian American:** In the 1960s, Asian Americans joined various civil rights campaigns: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) rights; women's rights; and ending the Vietnam war. This political participation sparked an Asian American movement. The *Asian American* identity was used to create unity and alliances amongst the various Asian ethnic subgroups and to fight for the rights of all Asian Americans. For decades, Asian Americans had been referred to as "Orientals" by lawmakers and the media. They were seen as threats to American culture and stereotyped as all the same. With the *Asian American* identity, they identified common contemporary and historical experiences, formed important and enduring organizations and institutions that addressed Asian American inequalities and issues, and demanded fuller recognition and inclusion in American society. Lee, E. (2015). *The Making of Asian America: A History.* New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

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Activity 3: Circle member introductions (45 min)

Instructions for the Facilitator: Encourage each member to state:

1) Their name, year in school, and major.
2) Their ethnic background, generation status, family immigration story, religion, and/or any other information they believe is important for the circle members to know.
3) Why they chose to attend the circle and what they hope to get out of it.

Tips for the Facilitator (Activity 3):

1) Choose the number of items to ask based on the size of the circle.
2) Model each response for the group. This should help build rapport with the group.
3) Write each of the items on a white board/chalk board to help members remember each item to respond to.
4) Pay attention to any themes that emerge from the introductions. It might be helpful to point them out to the group and share how these themes will be addressed in the coming weeks. Examples from Liu, Tsong, and Hayashino (2007) include:
   a. Feeling pulled between Western and Asian cultural values
   b. Shame in not being able to speak the same language as parents or grandparents
   c. Internalized racism/sexism/classism/heterosexism etc.
   d. Intergenerational conflicts

Recommended Readings:

Johnson, A. B., Takesue, K., & Chen, B. (2007). Identity-based discussion groups: A means of providing outreach and support for Asian Pacific American students. *Journal of College Counseling, 10*, 184-192. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-1882.2007.tb00018.x

Liu, Y., Tsong, Y., & Hayashino, D. (2007). Group counseling with Asian American women. *Women & Therapy, 30*(3-4), 193-208. http://dx.doi.org/10.1300/J015v30n03_14

Okazaki, S., & Saw, A. (2011). Culture in Asian American community psychology: Beyond the East-West binary. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 47*, 144-156. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10464-010-9368-z

Osajima, K. (2007). Replenishing the ranks: Raising critical consciousness among Asian Americans. *Journal of Asian American Studies, 10*(1), 59-83. https://doi.org/10.1353/jaas.2007.0006

Reminder for Circle Members: "We will be doing an online activity next week that will require each member to use either a smart phone, tablet, or laptop. Please remember to bring one of these devices to the next meeting. In addition, the online activity is compatible with recent versions of common browsers including Google Chrome, Safari, and Mozilla Firefox. You will want to bring a device that has at least one of these browsers and that has both Javascript and cookies enabled."

Implicit Biases/Racism/Stereotypes
(WEEK 2)

Discussion of implicit biases, racism, and stereotypes in Week 2 serves to provide a brave space to process painful experiences of discrimination and increase awareness of internalized oppression. **Note:** Activities 4, 5, and 6 are optional if there is time remaining.

WEEK 2 AGENDA **(90 min)**
- **Check-In:** Allow members to reflect on their experience in the circle last week. (5 min)
- **Week 2 Quotes** (5 minutes)
- **Activity 1:** Acknowledge and Discuss Interethnic Relations (10 min)
- **Activity 2:** Stick Figure Exercise (10 min)
- **Activity 3:** Asian American IAT (15 min)
  Process/discuss activity and results (20 min)
- **Activity 4 (Optional):** "#NOTTHESAME" (2:44)
  Discussion: "#NOTTHESAME" (15 min)
- **Activity 5 (Optional):** "I am not your Asian stereotype" (9:38)
  Discussion: "I am not your Asian stereotype" (25 min)
- **Activity 6 (Optional):** "Who is Vincent Chin? l NBC Asian America" (3:19)
  Discussion: "Who is Vincent Chin? l NBC Asian American" (15 min)
- **Closing:** Reactions to session. Introduce next week's topic. Evaluation form. (5 min)

Materials Needed:
- Access to the internet
- Smart phone, tablet, or laptop for each participant
- Monitor, LCD projector, or screen to view YouTube clips
- White Board/Large Post-It Paper
- Handout of Week 2 Quotes
- Handout of Stick Figure Exercise

YouTube Video: #NOTTHESAME l Jubilee (2:44)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bf0CyvzkpQQ

TED Talk: I am not your Asian Stereotype l Canwen Xu l TedxBoise (9:38)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_pUtz75lNaw

YouTube Video: Who is Vincent Chin? l NBC Asian America (3:19)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MWVvInj88Jo

Week 2 Quotes:

"Telling me that I'm obsessed with talking about racism in America is like telling me I'm obsessed with swimming when I'm drowning." – Hari Kondabolu (Comedian who discusses race, inequity and identity, Son of Indian Immigrants)

"There is a drill that nearly all Asians in America have experienced more times than they can count. Total strangers will interrupt with the absurdly existential question 'What are you?' Or the equally common inquiry 'Where are you from?' The queries are generally well intentioned, made in the same detached manner that you might use to inquire about a pooch's breed." – Helen Zia (Author, Advocate for gay rights, women's rights, and Asian American visibility)

"We were American citizens. We were incarcerated by our American internment camps here in the United States. The term 'Japanese internment camp' is both grammatically and factually incorrect." – George Takei (Actor, Prominent figure in the LGBT community)

"Yes, we are all the same under the skin, and human beings, but why is being human defined from a White, Western perspective?" – Derald Wing Sue (Psychologist, Author, quote from *Race Talk and the Conspiracy of Silence: Understanding and Facilitating Difficult Dialogues on Race*)

> Give the group about 5 minutes to react and respond to the quotes.

Activity 1: Acknowledge and Discuss Inter-Ethnic Relations (10 min)

Instructions for the Facilitator: Acknowledge both the diversity that exists within the circle and the challenges with inter-ethnic relations in a heterogeneous group. Allow members to share their opinions and re-emphasize the importance of respecting differing viewpoints. Continue to acknowledge and discuss inter-ethnic relations throughout this session.

Activity 2: Stick Figure Exercise (15 min)

Instructions for the Facilitator: Hand out the "Stick Figure Exercise" (pg. 16) to each circle member. Ask each member to silently fill in the blanks with the "images" or "labels" that they think of when they hear the term "Asian American woman." Discuss reactions to the exercise and point out any pertinent themes that are mentioned (i.e. internalized stereotypes and implicit biases). **Note: This is an excellent time to use www.polleverywhere.com to incorporate cell phone use into the circle. This will allow participants to share their responses anonymously and allow the group to see themes in their responses.** You can use these themes to segue into Activity 2.

"Asian American Woman"

Age:

_____

Height:

_____

Weight:

_____

Ethnicity:

_____

Born/raised:

_____

Language spoken at home:

_____

Religious/Spiritual Influences:

_____

Sexual orientation:

_____

Socioeconomic status:

_____

Career interests:

_____

Other:

_____
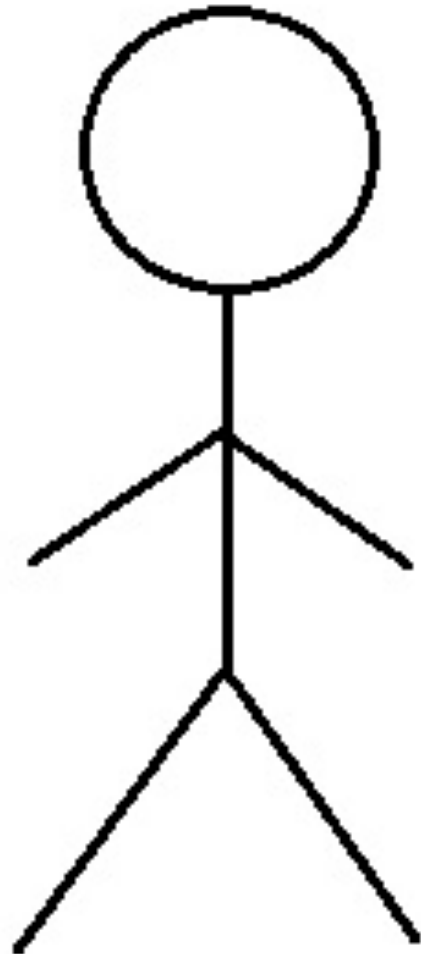
This exercise has been adapted from Liu, Tsong, and Hayashino's 2007 article.

Activity 3: *Asian American Implicit Association Test* (Asian – European American' IAT)[4] (15 min)

Instructions for the Facilitator:

1) Introduce the *Asian American Implicit Association Test*.
2) Inform the group that there will be a discussion after the activity.
3) Allow members about 10 to 15 minutes to complete the test. (Troubleshooting: https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/india/support/index.jsp).
4) Go through the Facilitator Questions below. Allow the discussion to flow naturally.

Facilitator Questions: (20 min)

- What issues did your scores on the test raise?
- To what extent do you think this might apply to you?
- How have you made the implicit assumptions about others (and about you)?
- How does it affect your view of AAPI people?
- Why is this information important? What does it reveal?

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Activity 4 (Optional): YouTube Video (2:44)

Video: #NOTTHESAME l Jubilee
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BfoCyvzkpQQ

Instructions for the Facilitator:

1) Read the Facilitator Script to introduce the YouTube video and brief discussion.
2) Allow the discussion to flow naturally. (15 min)

Facilitator Script:

"We are now going to watch a short clip from the #NotTheSame campaign, which serves to challenge the *model minority* stereotype that all AAPIs are successful and have the same access to college and other opportunities as our White brothers and sisters. It is inspired by stories from AAPIs who have experienced poverty, homelessness, refugee struggles, prejudice, and bullying. (Play the video.) What are some of your thoughts and reactions to this video? How do you identify yourself? (Side note: We will discuss identity further next week.) What are some struggles you have experienced that have gone unheard? For more information, you can visit www.wearenotthesame.org for scholarship information and ways to get involved."

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[4] Activity 3 was adapted from the Emotional Emancipation Circle℠ (The Association of Black Psychologists and Community Healing Network, Inc., 2016).

Activity 5 (Optional): TED Talk (9:38)

Video: I am not your Asian Stereotype | Canwen Xu | TedxBoise
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_pUtz75lNaw

Instructions for the Facilitator:
1) Introduce the TED Talk and brief discussion.
2) Go through the Facilitator Questions below. Allow the discussion to flow naturally.

Facilitator Questions: (25 min)
- What stereotypes have you experienced as an AAPI?
- What is the first thing that people typically notice about you?
- At what point did you come to think of yourself as different as an AAPI?
- Have you ever tried to reject your API identity or felt ashamed of being API? If yes, what was your experience like? If no, what do you think were your protective factors?
- How does the *model minority myth* hurt AAPIs and other people of color?
- Have you ever tried to speak out about stereotypes and racism? If yes, what was the result? If no, what has prevented you from speaking out?

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Activity 6 (Optional): YouTube Video (3:19)

Video: Who is Vincent Chin? | NBC Asian America
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MWVvInj88Jo

Instructions for the Facilitator:
1) Introduce the YouTube video ("Who is Vincent Chin? | NBC Asian America").
2) Inform the group that there will be a brief discussion after the video.
3) Go through each of the Facilitator Prompts/Questions below. Activity 4 Facilitator Questions may also be used if you do not have time to present the Activity 4 video.

Facilitator Prompts/Questions: (10 min)
- Have you heard of Vincent Chin?
- If not, what is it like to hear his story?
- How does knowing Vincent Chin's story influence your understanding of how racism impacts our AAPI community?
- One possible theme to discuss is the experience of invisibility and invalidation of our racial experience as AAPIs.

Recommended Readings:

Devos, T. & Banaji, M. R. (2005). American = White? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 88*, 447-466. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.88.3.447

Pyke, K. D. (2010). What is internalized racial oppression and why don't we study it? Acknowledging racism's hidden injuries. *Sociological Perspectives, 53*(4), 551-572. http://dx.doi.org/10.1525/sop.2010.53.4.551

Sue, D. W., Bucceri, J., Lin, A. I., Nadal, K. L., & Torino, G. C. (2007). Racial microaggressions and the Asian American experience. *Asian American Journal of Psychology, S*(1), 88-101. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/1099-9809.13.1.72

Tummala-Narra, P., Alegria, M., & Chen, C-N. (2012). Perceived discrimination, acculturative stress, and depression among South Asians: Mixed findings. *Asian American Journal of Psychology, 3*(1), 3-16. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0024661

My Asian American/Pacific Islander Identity
(WEEK 3)

Week 3 allows circle members to explore their intersecting identities as AAPI women through dialogue and art. **Note:** Activity 2 is optional if there is time remaining.

WEEK 3 AGENDA (90 min)
- **Check-In:** Allow circle members to reflect on their experience in the circle last week. (5 min)
- **Week 3 Quotes** (5 min)
- **Activity 1:** Intersecting Identities Handout & Collage (70 min)
- **Activity 2 (Optional):** "Chinese students protest against 'xenophobia'…" (2:32) Discussion: "Chinese students protest against 'xenophobia' at Columbia U…" (10 min)
- **Closing:** Reactions to session. Introduce next week's topic. Evaluation form. (10 min)

Materials Needed:
- Access to the internet
- Handout of Week 3 Quotes
- Construction Paper, Markers, Crayons, Old Magazines
- Music for Activity 3 (You may use Spotify, Pandora, iTunes or a music player of your choosing. Recommended artists include Yo-Yo Ma and Kishi Bashi).
- Handout of My Intersecting Identities
- Monitor, LCD projector or screen to view YouTube clip

   YouTube Video: Chinese students protest against 'xenophobia' at Columbia University (People's Daily China) (2:32)
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9flOzmpShI

Week 3 Quotes:

"I'm not going to die because I failed as someone else. I'm going to succeed as myself."
— Margaret Cho (Comedian, speaks for Asian American and gay/lesbian perspectives)

"I am an American, not an Asian-American. My rejection of hyphenation has been called race treachery, but it is really a demand that America deliver the promises of its dream to all its citizens equally." — Bharati Mukherjee (1940-2017, an Indian-born American writer and English professor emerita at University of California, Berkeley)

"Sometimes our pride holds us back from sharing our struggles. And sometimes our pride bursts with how far we have come, urging us towards more." — Manar Waheed (White House Domestic Policy Council, Deputy Policy Director for Immigration, and advocate for Muslim and immigrant communities) #AAPIheroine

Activity 1: Intersecting Identities Handout and Collage (70 min)

Instructions for the Facilitator:

1) Introduce the Intersecting Identities handout (as a way to visualize our intersecting identities) and ask participants to each read a line from the handout.
2) Ask participants if they believe there is a dimension of human diversity that is not represented in the chart, and if so, ask them to share what they would add.
3) Hand out poster paper, magazines, crayons and markers.
4) Read the Facilitator Script.

Facilitator Script: "With each of these diversity dimensions in mind, we would now like you to identify the dimensions that are particularly relevant to you and your own identity. We will spend the next half of the meeting creating collages that represent each of our respective Asian American identities and then present them to the circle in the remaining time."

Intersecting Identities

"In a pluralistic society like the United States, persons are multicultural rather than belonging to a single ethnic group that can be summarized easily by a single or even a hyphenated label."
- Celia Falicov, PhD (Clinical Psychologist)

DIMENSIONS OF HUMAN DIVERSITY AND EXPERIENCE	DESCRIPTIONS OF DIVERSITY DIMENSIONS	EXAMPLES OF CULTURE-CARRYING COLLECTIVE ENTITIES
Nationality/National Identification	Country of citizenship or long-term residence	Japan, China, Vietnam, Philippines, India
Ethnicity	Ancestry-related group identification	Pacific Islander, Taiwanese, Filipino
Race	A socially constructed set of phenotypic characteristics that have social and political meaning	"Asian", "Native", "Mixed"
Geographic-Regional	A place reference that encompasses a specific geographic or regional area	Southern USA, Northern India, Pacific Islands
Language	The particular language spoken for societal communication	Hindi-speaking, English-speaking
Spirituality-Religion	Affiliation with or socialization into a belief system related to the transcendent	Hindu, Catholic, Buddhist, Evangelical Christian, Muslim, Atheist
Age/Generation	A developmental stage or generational cohort	Teen, Young Adult, Millennial, Generation X
Gender	Sense of biological sex	Female, Male, Queer, Transgender, Cisgender
Sexual Orientation	Identity or experience with respect to sexual and romantic attraction	Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Straight, Questioning
Socioeconomic Status	Level of economic means and/or social status in a society	Wealthy, Middle Class, Working Class, Poverty
Physical Environment	Characteristics of the physical environment that affect collective lifestyle	Rural, Urban, Suburban, Island, Jungle, Mountain
Developmental or Acquired Disability	A specific physical disability that affects lifestyle and access to societal resources	Blindness, Deafness, Quadriplegic
Sociopolitical Status	Membership in dominant or oppressed group in a particular context	Majority status, oppressed societal group
Institutional/Organizational Affiliation	Membership or identification with an organization or institution	Military, Alcoholics Anonymous
Occupation/Vocation	Career or vocation into which one is socialized	Medical professional, Athlete, Actor, Businesswoman
Experiential	Specific life experiences or lifestyles that have strong socialization elements	Drug addiction, Internment Camps

Adapted from Harrell's (2016) original. Please see References for further information.

Activity 2 (Optional): YouTube Video (2:32)
Video: Chinese students protest against 'xenophobia' at Columbia University
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9flOzmpShI

Instructions for the Facilitator:
1) Introduce the YouTube video ("Chinese students protest against 'xenophobia' at Columbia University")
2) Inform the group that there will be a brief discussion and activity after the video.
3) Play the video.
4) Read the Facilitator Script. (10 min discussion)

Facilitator Script:

"What are some of your initial thoughts regarding this video? (Allow participants time to provide responses. Allow the discussion to occur naturally.). We have shown this video because it provides an example of the ways in which our Asian Pacific Islander (API) names are often tied to our family history, culture and identity. At the same time, Western culture often requires us to reject our API names and assimilate to Western culture with an American name. Have you ever experienced discrimination around your name? If so, how has that discrimination impacted your relationship with your own ethnic identity? How has that discrimination impacted your sense of belonging in the U.S.?" (Allow participants time to provide responses.).

Recommended Readings:

Inman, A. (2006). South Asian women: Identities and conflicts. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 12*(2), 306-319. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/1099-9809.12.2.306

Iwamoto, D. K., & Liu, W. M. (2010). The impact of racial identity, ethnic identity, Asian values, and race-related stress on Asian Americans and Asian international college students' psychological well-being. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 57*(1), 79-91. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0017393

Lou, E., Lalonde, R. N., & Wilson, C. (2011). Examining a multidimensional framework of racial identity across different biracial groups. *Asian American Journal of Psychology, 2*(2), 79-90. http://dx.doi.org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1037/a0023658

Perera, M. J., & Chang, E. C. (2015). Depressive symptoms in South Asian, East Asian, and European Americans: Evidence for ethnic differences in coping with academic versus interpersonal stress? *Asian American Journal of Psychology, 6*(4), 350-358.
http://dx.doi.org.lib.pepperdine.edu/10.1037/aap0000030

Body Image/Self-Love
(WEEK 4)

Week 4 addresses both common body insecurities amongst AAPI women and Asian/Pacific Islander sex stereotypes that negatively impact the way women view themselves. This week includes discussion of internalized racism and sexism as they relate to physical appearance, and discussions of generational differences in addressing weight/physical appearance. **Note:** Activity 2 is optional if there is time remaining. Activity 1 will likely go longer than 30 minutes.

WEEK 4 AGENDA (90 min)

- **Check-In:** Finish collage presentations. Allow circle members to reflect on their experience in the circle last week. (15 min)
- **Week 4 Quotes** (5 min)
- **Activity 1:** "Asian American Women Share Their Body Insecurities" (2:43)
  Discussion: "Asian American Women Share Their Body Insecurities" (30 min)
- **Activity 2 (Optional):** "The Weird History of Asian Sex Stereotypes" (6:13)
  Discussion: "The Weird History of Asian Sex Stereotypes" (30 min)
- **Closing:** Reactions to session. Introduce next week's topic. Evaluation form. (10 min)

Materials Needed:

- Access to the internet
- Handout of Week 4 Quotes
- Monitor, LCD projector or screen to view YouTube clips

> **YouTube Video:** Asian American Women Share Their Body Insecurities (Boldly) (2:43)
> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bkorprbsPgY&index=2&list=PLNRj-ioWzu3JEsh_MNqh99044T6-XRCpw
>
> **YouTube Video:** The Weird History of Asian Sex Stereotypes l Decoded l MTV News (MTV News) (6:13)
> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HS2jGfW5aOE

Week 4 Quotes:
"I have this firm belief that I am who I am for a reason. If I change something, I'm cheating myself of whatever it is I'm supposed to learn from my body. You know, I'm legally blind. I'm 20/750, since I was in fifth grade. I wear glasses and contacts, but I won't even get lasik." – Carrie Ann Inaba (Singer, Dancer, Actor, Choreographer. Also directs, writes and edits film. Known for *Dancing with the Stars.* Born in Honolulu, of Japanese, Chinese, and Irish ancestry.)

"If you're a woman, if you're a person of color, if you're gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, if you're a person of size, a person of intelligence, a person of integrity, then you're considered a minority in this world. And it's going to be really hard to find messages of self-love and support anywhere. It's all about how you have to look a certain way or else you're worthless. For us to have self-esteem is truly an act of revolution and our revolution is long overdue." – Margaret Cho

"Just because you are blind and unable to see my beauty doesn't mean it does not exist." – Margaret Cho (Comedian, Actor, Activist)

"I think one of the most radical things a girl can do is to own her own body. And we learn so young not to own these bodies of ours." – Staceyann Chin (Poet, Jamaican and Chinese, LGBT Activist)

> Give the group about 5 minutes to respond to the quotes.

Activity 1: **YouTube Video** (2:43)
Asian American Women Share Their Body Insecurities
(Boldly) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bkorprbsPgY&index=2&list=PLNRj-ioWzu3JEsh_MNqh99o44T6-XRCpw

Instructions for the Facilitator: 1) Introduce the YouTube video and brief discussion to follow. 2) Go through each of the facilitator questions below. 3) Let the conversation flow naturally.

Facilitator Prompts/Questions: (30 min)
- Discussing our insecurities can be difficult. What might get in the way of discussions about body image and body insecurities?
- Discuss insecurities related to Asian/Pacific Islander (API) cultural expectations. How do API cultures/our families define the word 'beauty'?
- Discuss insecurities related to broader societal expectations. How does our society in the United States seem to define the word 'beauty'?
- How do you define the word 'beauty'? How might our API body insecurities be related to internalized racism/sexism (or oppression in general)?

Activity 2 (Optional): YouTube Video

The Weird History of Asian Sex Stereotypes | Decoded | MTV News
(MTV News) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HS2jGfW5aOE
(6:13)

Instructions for the Facilitator:
1) Introduce the YouTube video ("The Weird History of Asian Sex Stereotypes").
2) Inform the group that there will be a discussion after the video.
3) Go through each of the Facilitator Questions below, allowing a few minutes for members to think about and discuss their responses before moving on to the next question.

Facilitator Questions: (30 min)
- In what ways have API sex stereotypes impacted you?
- How do you feel about API sex stereotypes?
- In what ways might sex stereotypes of API men impact API women?
- How might *sexual prejudice/fetishizing* impact our identities as AAPI women?
- How might *sexual prejudice/fetishizing* be a result of institutionalized racism?
- How might our experiences as women *and* as AAPIs (two marginalized groups in society) impact our self-image and ideas about self-worth?
- How might API body insecurities (internalized sexism and racism) and API sex stereotypes impact our beliefs about our self worth as AAPI women?
- What do you think Margaret Cho meant when she said, "For us to have self-esteem is truly an act of revolution"?
- What might happen if we focus on attributes aside from our appearance? **Let's list some of those attributes now.** (The facilitator can write this list on the board for everyone to see.) Let's think a little further. What ways might our body help us function aside from creating our physical appearance? (The facilitator can list these on the board as well.)

Recommended Readings:

Frederick, D. A., Kelly, M. C., Latner, J. D., Sandhu, G., & Tsong, Y. (2016). Body image and face image in Asian American and white women: Examining associations with surveillance, construal of self, perfectionism, and sociocultural pressures. *Body Image, 16*, 113-125. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2015.12.002

Okazaki, S. (1998). Teaching gender issues in Asian American psychology: A pedagogical framework. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 22*, 33-52. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-6402.1998.tb00140.x

Smart, R., & Tsong, Y. (2014). Weight, body dissatisfaction, and disordered eating: Asian American women's perspectives. *Asian American Journal of Psychology, 5*, 344-352. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0035599

Family
(WEEK 5)

Week 5 explores the struggles that AAPI women experience in their families as well as strength, resilience, and sacrifice found within their families. **Note:** Activity 3 is optional if time permits.

WEEK 5 AGENDA (90 min)
- **Check-In:** Allow circle members to reflect on their experience from last week. (10 min)
- **Week 5 Quotes** (5 min)
- **Activity 1:** "Run River North – Monsters Calling Home" (3:51)
  Initial thoughts: "Run River North – Monsters Calling Home" Lyrics (5 min)
- **Activity 2:** "First Person: Run River North" and Family (location 3:34 -7:40)
  Discussion: Family Relationships (30 min)
- **Activity 3 (Optional):** "The Joy Luck Club – Meet the Parents" (2:57)
  Discussion: Family and Intimate Relationships (20 min)
- **Closing:** Reactions to session. Introduce next week's topic. Evaluation form. (10 min)

Materials Needed:
- Access to the internet
- Monitor, LCD projector, or screen to view video clips
- Handout of "Monsters Calling Home" Lyrics
- Handout of Week 5 Quotes

> **YouTube Video: "**Run River North – Monsters Calling Home [Official Music Video]"
> (Run River North) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k1lDXolzhd4 (3:51)

> **KCET.org Video:** First Person: Run River North
> https://www.kcet.org/shows/artbound-presents-studio-a/first-person-run-river-north (location 3:34-7:40)

> **YouTube Video:** "The Joy Luck Club – Meet the Parents"
> (yuenmya) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WhtjwGZlaew (2:57)

Week 5 Quotes:
"To forget one's ancestors is to be a brook without a source, a tree without root." – Chinese Proverb

"Coming from an Asian culture, I was always taught to respect my elders, to be a better listener than a talker." – Lisa Ling (Journalist, TV presenter, Author, and Daughter of Chinese and Taiwanese immigrants)

"I have been lucky to count among my mentors strong women like my mom – who raised five girls while working as a child care provider – and my grandmother – one of the first Filipino nurses in the United States and the matriarch of our family. These women encouraged me to speak up and they stressed the value of education and continuous learning." – Nani Coloretti (Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development) #AAPIheroine

Give the group about 5 minutes to react and respond to the quotes.

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Activity 1: YouTube Video (3:51)
Run River North – Monsters Calling Home [Official Music Video]
(Run River North) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k1lDXolzhd4

Instructions for the Facilitator:
1) Hand out lyrics to the song "Monsters Calling Home." (on page 28)
2) Introduce the YouTube video ("Monsters Calling Home [Official Music Video]").
3) Inform the group that there will be a brief discussion after the video and play the video.
4) Go through each of the Facilitator Questions and the Facilitator Script.

Facilitator Questions: (5 min)
- What are some of your initial thoughts about the meaning behind this song?
- Who are the monsters calling home?

Facilitator Script: "We will now watch a clip of the band discussing both the meaning behind the song 'Monsters Calling Home' and challenges their families have faced in America across generations. We will then have a discussion after the video."

"Monster's Calling Home"
Run River North

Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh oh

They're walking to the
Beat of a broken drum.
Digging for worth in
A land under a foreign sun.

The children call bitter words
Of a strange tongue.
Hearts down, they're walking
Heavy until the dying's down.

Oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh

I see their hands.
Some hold a bottle,
Some hold back.
And in their eyes,
A wave of light
In a sea of black.

Their voices low,
Trembling for blood to drink.
And what they know
Of a deep that cries to
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
Deep in the night,
The night oh they call,
They call,
In the night, the night
Oh they call,
They call now.

Oh hear the monsters calling home,
No they don't wanna be alone, but the
Closet they keep closed.
Swallow the key so that nobody,
Nobody knows how they beat

Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh oh

They beat their chest to the sounds
Of their broken hearts.
Crying wolf under sheep's skins,
Reaching out their claws.

Stomping their feet,
Never letting up the dust
Choking up their lungs.
Told to be a father,
Growing up into a fatherless

Son, oh my son, won't you come, won't you come.
Son, oh my son, won't you come, won't you come.
Son, oh my son, won't you come, won't you come.
Son, oh my son, won't you come, won't you come.

Oh hear the monsters calling home,
No they don't wanna be alone, but the
Closet they keep closed
Swallow the key so
Nobody knows how they beat.

Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh oh

Written by Alex Hwang

Activity 2: KCET.org Video Discussion and Family Relationships

First Person: Run River North (location 3:34-7:40)
https://www.kcet.org/shows/artbound-presents-studio-a/first-person-run-river-north

Instructions for the Facilitator:
1) Play the video.
2) Slowly go through each of the facilitator prompts/questions. Allow the conversation to flow naturally. Questions from Activity 3 may also be use if you don't have time to show the video clip.

Facilitator Questions: (30 min)
- When (if ever) have you felt misunderstood by a family member(s)?
- When (if ever) have you felt like an outcast from your family?
- When (if ever) have you questioned your allegiance to your family?
- When (if ever) have you had to choose between your family and social roles?
- What (if any) intergenerational differences do you experience with your family in regards to values or communication?
- What are some challenges that you experience in communicating with your family?
- What sacrifices have your parents and other family members made for you?
- What are some of your family's biggest strengths?

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Activity 3 (Optional): Managing family and intimate relationships

The Joy Luck Club – Meet the Parents (2:57)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WhtjwGZlaew

Instructions for the Facilitator:
1) Introduce the YouTube video ("The Joy Luck Club – Meet the Parents").
2) Read through the Facilitator Script (page 30) and start the video.
3) Go through each of the Facilitator Questions on page 30. Let the conversation flow naturally.

Facilitator Script: "The last part of today's meeting will be a discussion that focuses on managing family and intimate relationships. Managing each of these aspects of our lives can be very challenging, especially when we face generational differences within our family and cultural differences within our relationships. We will start with a short clip from the film The Joy Luck Club and then have a discussion afterward."

Activity 3: Continued...

Facilitator Questions: (20 min)

- In what ways did this clip illustrate the challenges of blending cultures in romantic relationships?
- Have you experienced similar challenges in your own life?
- What are some challenges you might anticipate in romantic relationships in your own life (particularly challenges related to your identity, family, and/or culture)?

Recommended Readings:

Saw, A., & Okazaki, S. (2010). Family emotion socialization and affective distress in Asian American and White American college students. *Asian American Journal of Psychology*, *1*(2), 81-92. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0019638

Sklar, Q. T., Pak, J. H., & Stacy, E. (2016). Parent-child closeness and acculturation in predicting racial preference in mate selection among Asian Americans. *Asian American Journal of Psychology*, *7*(4), 263-273. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/aap0000059

Yang, M., Haydon, K. C., & Miller, M. J. (2013). The relationship between intergenerational cultural conflict and social support among Asian American and Asian international female college students and their parents. *Asian American Journal of Psychology*, *4*(3), 193-200. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0030966

Safety in Relationships
(WEEK 6)

Week 6 addresses rape culture and explores societal messages and myths related to victim-blaming from an intersectional feminist perspective. It also addresses the cycle of violence and being able to recognize unsafe relationships. **Note:** This topic can be very triggering and may require the full 90 minutes to adequately process what has been discussed in the group. However, if participants have no experience with sexual assault or abusive relationships, week 6 can be combined with week 7.

WEEK 6 AGENDA (90 min)
- **Check-In:** Allow circle members to reflect on their experience in the circle last week. (10 min)
- **Week 6 Quote**
- **Activity 1:** "How to Not Get Raped" (2:42)
  Discussion: Brief reactions to the clip (5 min)
- **Activity 2:** "How Rape Culture Has Evolved Throughout History" (6:37)
  Discussion: Societal messages and myths related to victim-blaming (15 min)
- **Activity 3:** "Cycle of Violence" (2:28)
  Discussion (Optional): Experiences in Harmful Relationships (30 min)
- **Closing:** Reactions to session. Introduce next week's topic. Evaluation form. (10 min)

Materials Needed:
- Access to the internet
- Monitor, LCD projector or screen to view YouTube clips
- Handout of the Cycle of Violence

> **YouTube Video:** "How to Not Get Raped"
> (Anna Akana) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=86ST_suvc9I (2:42)
>
> **YouTube Video:** "How Rape Culture Has Evolved Throughout History"
> (marinashutup) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ek5UAygoyD8 (6:37)
>
> **YouTube Video:** "Cycle of Violence" (Cal State San Bernardino)
> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=woQ2bqLYjnY&t=3s (2:27)

Activity 1: YouTube Video (2:42)

"How to Not Get Raped"
(Anna Akana) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=86ST_suvc9I (2:42)

Instructions for the Facilitator:
1) Introduce the YouTube video ("How to Not Get Raped").
2) Read through the Facilitator Script and start the video.
3) Ask for reactions to the clip. (5 min)

Facilitator Script:
"For our first activity, we will be watching a clip from a YouTuber named Anna Akana. Anna uses humor to discuss difficult topics (including sexual assault and rape) from an intersectional feminist perspective. Some of the content in the video may be triggering. We will have a brief discussion about the video and then watch a follow-up video by another YouTuber who identifies as an intersectional feminist."

● ●

Activity 2: Societal Messages and Myths Related to Victim Blaming

YouTube Video: "How Rape Culture Has Evolved Throughout History"
(marinashutup) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ek5UAygoyD8 (6:37)

Instructions for the Facilitator:
1) Introduce the YouTube video ("How Rape Culture Has Evolved Throughout History").
2) Read through the Facilitator Script and start the video.
3) Go through each of the facilitator questions. Let the conversation flow naturally.

Facilitator Questions: (15 min)
- What are some of the societal messages women receive related to victim-blaming?
- What are some common myths about victim-blaming?
- What are some challenges to those myths?
- In what ways might sexist and derogatory terms (i.e. "slut," "whore," "loose," etc.) contribute to victim-blaming and rape culture?
- In what ways might racism and sexism together contribute to victim-blaming and rape culture?

Week 6 Quote:
"You know, when a man is raped, you never hear about what he was wearing."
– George Takei

Activity 3: The Cycle of Violence and Discussion (40 min)

YouTube Video: "Cycle of Violence" (Cal State San Bernardino)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=woQ2bqLYjnY&t=3s (2:27)

Instructions for the Facilitator:
1) Read the Facilitator Script to introduce the YouTube video ("Cycle of Violence").
2) Give each member the "Cycle of Violence" handout, and let them know they can fill in the blanks as they watch the video. It will be reviewed after the video ends.
4) **After the clip ends, go through each stage of the cycle and make sure everyone understands each one.**
5) Go through the Facilitator Prompts/Questions. Let the conversation flow naturally.

Facilitator Script:
"For our next activity, we will introduce the cycle of violence. Are any of you familiar with it? (**Pause**). The cycle of violence provides a way to understand the cycle that occurs over and over in an abusive relationship. Many AAPI college-aged women engage in victim-blaming (blaming themselves) and situation-blaming (blaming the situation) rather than placing the blame on the abusive partner (Nguyen et al., 2016), so it is important to familiarize yourself with the aspects of an abusive relationships."

Facilitator Prompts/Questions: (30 min)
- First, **acknowledge that this is a difficult topic and no one is required to share details of their experiences.** Invite circle members to ask questions or provide personal experiences in unsafe relationships.
- Intimate partner violence (or domestic violence) can come in different forms. The main categories include: physical abuse, emotional, verbal abuse, sexual abuse, financial abuse, digital abuse, and stalking (www.loveisrespect.org, 2016). The U.S. Department of Justice defines domestic violence as a "pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner," and it includes any behaviors that manipulate, intimidate, humiliate, frighten, isolate, terrorize, threaten, coerce, blame, injure, hurt, or wound someone (The United States Department of Justice, 2016, paragraph 2).
- Have you ever experienced any of these forms of abuse in a relationship? How did you realize that you were being abused? What led you to leave or end the relationship?

Tip for the Facilitator: Visit www.loveisrespect.org and www.justice.gov/ovw/domestic-violence to familiarize yourself with the different forms of intimate partner violence (domestic violence) before the meeting. The full web address is listed in the Recommended Readings section.

Recommended Readings:

Klaw, E. L., Lonsway, K. A., Berg, D. R., Waldo, C. R., Kothari, C., Mazurek, C. J., & Hegeman, K. E. (2005). Challenging Rape Culture. *Women & Therapy*, *28*(2), 47-63. http://dx.doi.org/10.1300/J015v28n02_04

National Domestic Violence Hotline. (2016). What are the different types of dating abuse? Retrieved on May 20, 2017 from http://www.loveisrespect.org/is-this-abuse/types-of-abuse/#tab-id-1

The United States Department of Justice. (October 31, 2016). Domestic violence. Retrieved from https://www.justice.gov/ovw/domestic-violence

Tummala-Narra, P., Houston-Kolnik, J., Sathasivam-Rueckert, N., & Greeson, M. (2017). An examination of attitudes toward gender and sexual violence among Asian Indians in the United States. *Asian American Journal of Psychology*, *8*(2), 156-166. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/aap0000078

Nguyen, H. V., Jackson, M. A., Schact, R. L., Ung, C. M., George, W. H., & Pantalone, D. W. (2016). Asian American college women's in-the-moment responses to a dating violence situation. *Asian American Journal of Psychology*, *7*(3), 176-184. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/aap0000050

Identity/Intimate Relationships
(WEEK 7)

Week 7 includes discussion of important aspects of identity, sexuality, and intimate relationships from an intersectional feminist perspective. **Note:** This week may be combined with week 6 if there are no concerns about abusive relationships amongst the participants.

WEEK 7 AGENDA (90 min)

- **Check-In:** Allow circle members to reflect on their experience in the circle last week. (10 min)
- **Activity 1:** "I'm Not Normally into Asian Girls, But…" l Feminist Fridays (5:32) Discussion: Racism, Sexism, and Equality in Dating and Intimate Relationships (30 min)
- **Activity 2:** "Coming Out (AKA Surprise, Mom and Dad)" (location 1:11-8:26) Discussion: Identity in Relationships (30 min)
- **Closing:** Reactions to session. Introduce next week's topic. Evaluation form. (10 min)

Materials Needed:

- Access to the internet
- Monitor, LCD projector, or screen to view YouTube clips

    YouTube Video: "I'm Not Normally into Asian Girls, But…" l Feminist Fridays (marinashutup) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ek5UAygoyD8 (5:32)

        YouTube Video: "Coming Out (AKA Surprise, Mom and Dad)" (marinashutup) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eNyZIcmGScU (location 1:11-6:11)
Option: If time remains, you can watch the rest of the video.

Facilitator Script: "Today's meeting will be a discussion that focuses on exploring identity and intimate relationships. We will be watching two videos from YouTuber Marina Watanabe. Marina speaks from an intersectional feminist perspective and discusses different aspects of her identity (focusing on her race/ethnicity and sexual orientation) in both of the videos. In between the videos we will reflect on our own identities and relationship experiences."

Activity 1: YouTube Video

"I'm Not Normally into Asian Girls, But…" | Feminist Fridays
(marinashutup) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ek5UAygoyD8 (5:32)

Instructions for the Facilitator:
1) Introduce the YouTube video ("I'm Not Normally into Asian Girls, But…").
2) Inform the group that there will be a discussion after the video about intersectional identities and relationships.
3) Read the Facilitator Prompts/Questions. Allow the conversation to flow naturally.

Facilitator Prompts/Questions: (30 min)
- What are some of your initial thoughts about what was said in the video?
- Have you experienced similar racial microaggressions or racist comments in relationships with partners from other racial/ethnic backgrounds?
- What about microaggressions related to gender and sexism?

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Activity 2: YouTube Video

"Coming Out (AKA Surprise, Mom and Dad)"
(marinashutup) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ek5UAygoyD8 (5:32)

Instructions for the Facilitator:
1) Introduce and play the YouTube video ("Coming Out (AKA Surprise, Mom and Dad)").
2) Read the Facilitator Prompts/Questions. Allow the conversation to flow naturally.

Facilitator Prompts/Questions: (30 min)
- **First, acknowledge the difficulty in discussing this issue, and reiterate that no one has to share their experience.**
- Would anyone like to share their personal experience with coming out or questioning their sexuality or gender?
- What are some of your initial thoughts about what was said in the video?
- If you identify as straight, was there anything in the video that gave you more information as an ally?

Recommended Readings:

AhnAllen, J. M., & Suyemoto, K. L (2011). Influence of interracial dating on racial and/or ethnic identities of Asian American women and White European American men. *Asian American Journal of Psychology, 2*(1), 61-75. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0023325

Szymanski, D. M., & Sung, M. R. (2013). Asian cultural values, internalized heterosexism, and sexual orientation disclosure among Asian American sexual minority persons. *Journal of LGBT Issues in Counseling, 7*(3), 257-273. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15538605.2013.812930

Van Brunt, R. A. Z. (2008). An online support group intervention for Asian American lesbian and bisexual women. *Retrospective Theses and Dissertations*. Paper 15825. Retrieved from http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/rtd

School/Career/Purpose
(WEEK 8)

Week 8 allows circle members to explore their career interests and goals and to consider how racism, oppression, and internalized oppression in society may act as barriers to success. It also affords members the opportunity to explore how their chosen career paths relate to or provide their sense of purpose.

WEEK 8 AGENDA (90 min)

- **Check-In:** Allow circle members to reflect on their experience in the circle last week. (5-10 min)
- **Week 8 Quotes** (5 min)
- **Activity 1a:** "Run River North Is Making Music, Sharing Stories" (3:57 min)
  Discussion: "Run River North Is Making Music, Sharing Stories" (15 min)
- **Activity 1b:** Career Goals and Potential Setbacks (50 min)
- **Closing:** Reactions to session. Introduce next week's topic. Evaluation form. (10 min)

Materials Needed:
- Access to the internet
- Monitor, LCD projector, or screen to view YouTube clips
- Handout of Career Aspirations and Potential Setbacks
- Handout of Week 8 quotes
- White board w/ dry erase markers OR poster-sized note pad

> **YouTube Video:** Run River North Is Making Music, Sharing Stories l Take Back l NBC Asian America (3:57)
> (NBC News) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3iq22sVmNb4

Week 8 Quotes:
"You change the world by being yourself." – Yoko Ono (Artist, Anti-War Activist, Singer, born in Tokyo, Japan, 1933-Present)

"The whole world is starting to realize that it was the most unwise thing for our society to have ignored women power, to run the society with male priorities." – Yoko Ono

"Hollywood likes to put actors in boxes, and it likes to put Asian actors in really small boxes." – Sandra Oh (played Dr. Christina Yang on *Grey's Anatomy*, daughter of Korean immigrants, 1971-present)

"A person should aspire to try out new things and explore new opportunities. Confidence, perseverance, persistence, and knowledge play a key role in achieving the most challenging feats." – Sunita Williams (U.S. Navy Captain and NASA Astronaut, of Indian-Slovenian descent) #AAPIheroine

Activity 1a: YouTube Video (3:57)
Run River North Is Making Music, Sharing Stories l Take Back l NBC Asian America (NBC News) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3iq22sVmNb4

Instructions for the Facilitator:
1) Read the Facilitator Script.
2) Play the video.
3) Move on directly to Activity 1b.

Facilitator Script:
"We will now watch a short clip on Run River North, the band we were introduced in Week 5 when we discussed family and relationships. In this clip, the band members discuss various aspects about being both 2nd generation Korean Americans and musicians. After the clip, we will go through a handout on Career Aspirations and Potential Setbacks and have a discussion related to both the video and the handout."

Activity 1b: Career Goals and Potential Setbacks Handout (50 min)

Instructions **for the Facilitator**:

1) Hand out "Career Goals and Potential Setbacks" after the clip has ended.
2) Go through the handout with the circle allowing time for members to write down and respond to each prompt.
3) If time permits, you can continue with the Facilitator Questions.

(Optional) Facilitator Questions:

- How might your career interests and goals be impacted by various oppressions that exist in our society?
- Do you foresee any challenges with being seen as an equal in your career(s) of interest?
- What are some societal expectations about AAPI women that might impact your confidence in being able to succeed in your career(s) of choice?

Career Goals and Potential Setbacks

1. Write down one or more potential career paths. (Consider your dream job and other areas of special interest).

   _____

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   _____

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2. What are some potential barriers or setbacks to succeeding in this career that are related to being an AAPI woman as well as other aspects of your identity?

   _____

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   _____

   _____

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   _____

3. What are some potential barriers or setbacks to succeeding in this career that are related to your relationship with your family and your family's values?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. In what ways might this/these chosen career(s) give you a sense of purpose in life?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

Recommended Readings:

Clark, M. A., Severy, L., & Sawyer, S. A. (2004). Creating connections: Using a narrative approach in career group counseling with college students from diverse cultural backgrounds. *Journal of College Counseling, 7*, 24-31. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-1882.2004.tb00256.x

Ngo, B. (2006). Learning from the margins: the education of Southeast and South Asian Americans in context. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 9*(1), 51-65. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13613320500490721

Yu, T. (2006). Challenging the politics of the "Model Minority" Stereotype: A case for educational equality. *Equity & Excellence in Education, 39*(4), 325-333. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10665680600932333

Tip **for Circle Members**: "If you would like more assistance in career planning, I recommend visiting the career center on campus. You can also do a Google search of the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). It is a free online source of detailed career information from the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. The website is... https://www.bls.gov/ooh/."

RAISE Our Voices
(WEEK 9)

The final week of of the Women's RAISE Circle connects us to our responsibility for and commitment to the AAPI community and humanity as a whole. Circle members may choose to have a potluck this week as a way to end our experience together. **Note:** Activities 3 and 4 are optional if time permits.

WEEK 9 AGENDA (90 min)
- **Check-In/Reflection:** Allow members to reflect on their experience in the circle last week. This may include time to grab food if you choose to have a potluck. (15-30 min)
- **Week 9 Quotes** (10 min)
- **Activity 1:** "This Is What LGBT Life Is Like Around the World l Jenni Chang and Lisa Dazols l TED Talks" (11:50)
  Discussion: "This Is What LGBT Life Is Like Around the World..." (15 min)
- **Activity 2:** "Life Stories: Cambodian Activist Vanessa Na" (6:07 min)
  Discussion: How can we RAISE our voices against injustice in our community? (15 min)
- **Activity 3 (Optional):** "Remembering Grace Lee Boggs (1915-2015) PT. 1" (7:05)
  Discussion: "Remembering Grace Lee Boggs" (15 min)
- **Activity 4 (Optional):** The History of Asian American/Pacific Islander Activism (15 min)
- **Closing:** Reactions to the last session and the Women's RAISE Circle as a whole. Evaluation form. (10 min)

Materials Needed:
- Access to the internet
- Handout of Week #9 quotes
- Handout of the History of Asian American/Pacific Islander Activism
- Monitor, LCD projector, or screen to view YouTube clip

  YouTube Video: "This Is What LBGT Life Is Like Around the World..." (11:50) (TED) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ivfJJh9y1UI

  YouTube Video: "Remembering Grace Lee Boggs (1915-2015) PT. 1" (7:05) (Democracy Now!) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V1zzrqkA3U8&t=168s

  YouTube Video: "Life Stories: Cambodian Activist Vanessa Na l NBC Asian America" (6:07) (NBC News) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=adVebl3mgAs

Week 9 Quotes:

"Speak up… The worst thing that will happen is people say, no, I disagree… The best thing that can happen is you've really spoken up and represented a view and advanced yourself."

> – Tina Tchen (Chief of Staff to the First Lady Michelle Obama)
> #AAPIheroine

"You cannot change any society unless you take responsibility for it, unless you see yourself belonging to it and responsible for changing it."

> – Grace Lee Boggs (Author and Social Activist, 1915-2015) #AAPIheroine

"Being a victim of oppression in the United States is not enough to make you revolutionary, just as dropping out of your mother's womb is not enough to make you human. People who are full of hate and anger against their oppressors or who only see Us versus Them can make a rebellion but not a revolution. The oppressed internalize the values of the oppressor. Therefore, any group that achieves power, no matter how oppressed, is not going to act differently from their oppressors as long as they have not confronted the values that they have internalized and consciously adopted different values."

> – Grace Lee Boggs

"What's important for my daughter to know is that… if you are fortunate to have opportunity, it is your duty to make sure other people have those opportunities as well."

> – Kamala Harris (U.S. Senator from California, the first Jamaican
> American and South Asian American Attorney General in California)

"My journey toward political consciousness began with two simple steps. First, I recognized we live within white supremacy that seeks to hide our racial difference. Second, I committed myself forever to divesting from that system, because liberation is not the product of complicity and ignorance. Although I occasionally falter and sometimes outright fail, I continue to try. Because I know that for us Asian Americans equality will not be the result of assimilation. Emancipation will be borne of acknowledging and fighting for our fundamental difference."

> – Kim Tran, (Blogger at everydayfeminism.com)

Activity 1: TED Talk (11:50)

"This Is What LGBT Life Is Like Around the World l Jenni Chang and Lisa Dazols l TED Talks"
TED https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ivfJJh9y1UI

Instructions for the Facilitator:
1) Read the Facilitator Script and play the TED Talk.
2) Lead a brief discussion around reactions to the TedTalk. (15 min)

Facilitator Script: "As this is our last week of the Women's RAISE Circle, we would like to provide you with hope and examples of courage from LGBT people from around the world who have raised their own voices for justice and equality. After watching this 12-minute TED Talk called, 'This Is What LGBT Life Is Like Around the World', we will have a brief discussion."

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Activity 2: YouTube Video (6:07)

"Life Stories: Cambodian Activist Vanessa Na l NBC"
NBC News https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=adVebl3mgAs

Instructions for the Facilitator:
1) Introduce the YouTube video ("Life Stories: Cambodian Activist Vanessa Na l NBC").
2) Inform the group that there will be a brief discussion after the video.
3) Go through each of the facilitator prompts and questions below. Allow the discussion to flow naturally. (15 min)

Facilitator Prompts/Questions:
- In the video, Vanessa Na says, "There are lots of different ways to approach activism, but I have found that when I approach activism with love [...] that's when it's been the most transformative for me." How do you understand this approach to activism?
- What challenges do you anticipate will occur in pursuing activism and social justice for AAPIs?
- How might we avoid burnout in fighting for social justice for AAPIs and other marginalized and oppressed communities?
- One way to avoid burnout is to pick one or two concerns to focus on. Let's brainstorm some of those issues. (Facilitator can write these on the board.)
  Possible strategies/concerns: political engagement; scholar activism; pay gaps for AAPI women; violence against AAPI women/sex trafficking; representation in the media; misuse of the model minority stereotype against other communities of color; immigration/immigrant concerns

Activity 3: YouTube Video (7:05)

"Remembering Grace Lee Boggs (1915-2015) PT. 1"
Democracy Now! https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V1zzrqkA3U8&t=168s

Instructions for the Facilitator:

1) Introduce the YouTube video ("Remembering Grace Lee Boggs (1915-2015) PT. 1").
2) Inform the group that there will be a brief discussion after the video.
3) Read the Facilitator Script. (15 min)

Facilitator Script: "While Grace Lee Boggs spent most of her life as an activist for the Black Power Movement, much of her work serves as an inspiration for activism for AAPIs and other persons of color. What were some her key ideas about activism in the clip?"

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Activity 4 (Optional): The History of Asian American Activism Handout

Instructions for the Facilitator:

1) If time permits, you can hand out "A Brief Summary of Asian American Activism" (pages 47-48) to the circle participants. **Note:** If you choose to have a potluck, time may be limited.
2) Allow participants to volunteer to read.
3) Conduct a brief discussion reflecting on the content in the handout.

Recommended Readings:

Chan, W. Y. (2011). An exploration of Asian American college students' civic engagement. *Asian American Journal of Psychology, 2*(3), 197-204. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0024675

Suyemoto, K. L., Day, S. C., & Schwartz, S. (2015). Exploring effects of social justice youth programming on racial and ethnic identities and activism for Asian American youth. *Asian American Journal of Psychology, 6*(2), 125-135. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0037789

Wray-Lake, L., Tang, J., & Victorino, C. (2017). Are they political? Examining Asian American college students' civic engagement. *Asian American Journal of Psychology, 8*(1), 31-42. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/aap0000061

A Brief Summary of Asian American/Pacific Islander Activism

- The **1965 Immigration and Nationality Act** allowed new generations of Asian immigrants to come to the United States.
- AAPIs joined various civil rights campaigns including lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) rights; women's rights; and ending the Vietnam war.
- The *Asian American* identity was used in the 1960s to create unity and alliances amongst the various Asian ethnic subgroups and to fight for the rights of all AAPIs. For decades, AAPIs were referred to as "Orientals" by lawmakers and the media. They were seen as threats to American culture and stereotyped as all the same. With the *Asian American* identity, they identified common contemporary and historical experiences, formed important and enduring organizations and institutions that addressed Asian American inequalities and issues, and demanded fuller recognition and inclusion in American society.
- Immediately after World War II, Japanese Americans joined forces with African Americans to decry the rule that only whites were allowed to live in certain Los Angeles neighborhoods. In working together, they pushed LA's civil rights agendas and set the foundation for future activism across racial lines.
- **Yuri Kochiyama** was a Japanese American activist born in California in 1921 to Japanese immigrants and was incarcerated at the Jerome, Arkansas interment camp. She met Daisy Bates (NAACP Little Rock chapter president) when she moved to New York City with her husband and became very interested in civil rights. She also became a community organizer and associate of Malcolm X. Furthermore, Kochiyama helped connect the East Coast Asian American movement to the civil rights movement led by African Americans, and fought to end racial profiling that occurred after September 11, 2001.
- **Philip Vera Cruz** was a Filipino American activist who immigrated to the U.S. in the early 20th century. He worked for 30 years on farms as well as in canneries and restaurants in Washington and Minnesota and moved to California in the 1950s where he joined the Filipino labor movement. In 1965, he aided in the organization of the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee through strikes and boycotts that disabled the grape industry in Delano. Vera Cruz also contributed to the development of the United Farm Workers (UFW) that served both Filipino farmers and other ethnic groups, such as Mexicans. He worked under Chicano César Chávez as the UFW's vice president until 1977, and he spent his later years educating young activists about grassroots efforts, the rights of workers, devotion to democracy, and maintaining solidarity.
- **Grace Lee Boggs** was a Chinese American activist born to Chinese immigrants in 1915 and raised in Providence, Rhode Island. She attended Barnard College and received her PhD from Bryn Mawr in 1940. Grace became a social justice activist in the 1960s and engaged in activism for African American civil rights. She married African American activist James Boggs and worked with her husband for decades in the late 20th century in various movements (e.g. Black Power, civil rights, women's rights, labor issues, environmental concerns, antiwar campaigns, and AAPI rights).

- AAPI activists in the 1960s rejected the label "Orientals," the *model minority* stereotype, and the emphasis on cooperation and assimilation. They also created a pan-ethnicity with the term *Asian American*, and embraced commonalities amongst the Asian immigrant and ethnic subgroups

- The **Asian American Political Alliance (AAPA)** was founded in 1968 at UC Berkeley by Yuji Ichioka, Emma Gee and other activists. It included a multigenerational, multiethnic group of Asian American men and women from different class backgrounds and became the first organization that used the term "Asian American." The AAPA criticized the United States for being racist, exploitative, and imperialistic and proclaimed that Asian Americans still experience oppression from a racist majority. The AAPA also established a commitment to solidarity with other communities of color who have been exploited and oppressed and opposed U.S. imperialism, including the Vietnam War. It only lasted until late 1969 (one year), but inspired other Asian American social justice organizations

- The **Third World Liberation Front (TWLF)** was a group formed at San Francisco State University and UC Berkeley in 1969. It included Asian American, Chicano, African American and Native American student groups who voiced a need for curricula and programs that were relevant for persons of color. The TWLF resulted in SFSU creating the first School of Ethnic Studies in the U.S.

- At the same time student activists were working on college campuses, community activists worked to provide social services, affordable housing, labor rights and health care for poor and working class Asian Americans.

- **Activism amongst AAPI women:** Similar to other women fighting for civil rights, AAPI women typically received secondary responsibilities in AAPI organizations. The men gave speeches, made decisions and served as the representatives of the organizations. However, the women were expected to create newsletters, make coffee, take notes, and clean the bathrooms. AAPI women realized they faced the "triple oppression" of being working women of color and thus began to promote change in their own communities. **Asian Women United** and **Organization of Asian Women** (1960s and 1970s) were committed to raising the status of women through service projects and education.

- **Asian American LGBT activism (October 1979):** LGBT AAPIs felt excluded from mainly white LGBT organizations, other liberation organizations and movements that either ignored LGBT issues or were homophobic. More than 600 black, Native American, Asian, Latino and white people attended the **First National Third World Gay and Lesbian Conference in Washington, D.C.** the same weekend as the **First National March for Gay and Lesbian Rights.**

Reference: Lee, E. (2015). *The Making of Asian America: A History*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

History of the word Asian American: In the 1960s, Asian Americans joined various civil rights campaigns: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) rights; women's rights; and ending the Vietnam war. This political participation sparked an Asian American movement. The *Asian American* identity was used to create unity and alliances amongst the various Asian ethnic subgroups and to fight for the rights of all Asian Americans. For decades, Asian Americans had been referred to as "Orientals" by lawmakers and the media. They were seen as threats to American culture and stereotyped as all the same. With the *Asian American* identity, they identified common contemporary and historical experiences, formed important and enduring organizations and institutions that addressed Asian American inequalities and issues, and demanded fuller recognition and inclusion in American society. Lee, E. (2015). *The Making of Asian America: A History*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

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Week 2 Quotes: Implicit Biases/Racism/Asian Stereotypes
"Telling me that I'm obsessed with talking about racism in America is like telling me I'm obsessed with swimming when I'm drowning."
　　　— Hari Kondabolu (Comedian, Best known for his comedy about race, inequity and
　　　identity, Son of Indian Immigrants)

"There is a drill that nearly all Asians in America have experienced more times than they can count. Total strangers will interrupt with the absurdly existential question 'What are you?' Or the equally common inquiry 'Where are you from?' The queries are generally well intentioned, made in the same detached manner that you might use to inquire about a pooch's breed."
　　　— Helen Zia (Author, Advocate for gay rights, women's rights, and Asian American
　　　visibility, quote from *Asian American Dream*)

"We were American citizens. We were incarcerated by our American internment camps here in the United States. The term 'Japanese internment camp' is both grammatically and factually incorrect."
　　　— George Takei (Actor, Prominent figure in the LGBT community)

"Yes, we are all the same under the skin, and human beings, but why is being human defined from a White, Western perspective?"
　　　— Derald Wing Sue (Psychologist, Author, quote from *Race Talk and the Conspiracy of
　　　Silence: Understanding and Facilitating Difficult Dialogues on Race*)

Week 3 Quotes: My Asian American Identity

"I'm not going to die because I failed as someone else. I'm going to succeed as myself."
   — Margaret Cho (Comedian, speaks for Asian American and gay/lesbian perspectives)

"I am an American, not an Asian-American. My rejection of hyphenation has been called race treachery, but it is really a demand that America deliver the promises of its dream to all its citizens equally."
   — Bharati Mukherjee (1940-2017, an Indian-born American writer and English professor emerita at University of California, Berkeley)

"Sometimes our pride holds us back from sharing our struggles. And sometimes our pride bursts with how far we have come, urging us towards more."
   — Manar Waheed (White House Domestic Policy Council, Deputy Policy Director for Immigration, and advocate for Muslim and immigrant communities) #AAPIheroine

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Week 4 Quotes: Body Image/Self-Love

"I have this firm belief that I am who I am for a reason. If I change something, I'm cheating myself of whatever it is I'm supposed to learn from my body. You know, I'm legally blind. I'm 20/750, since I was in fifth grade. I wear glasses and contacts, but I won't even get lasik."
   — Carrie Ann Inaba (Singer, Dancer, Actor, Choreographer and head of a small video-production company for which she directs, writes and edits film. Known for *Dancing with the Stars.* Born in Honolulu, of Japanese, Chinese and Irish ancestry.)

"If you're a woman, if you're a person of color, if you're gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, if you're a person of size, a person of intelligence, a person of integrity, then you're considered a minority in this world. And it's going to be really hard to find messages of self-love and support anywhere. It's all about how you have to look a certain way or else you're worthless. For us to have self-esteem is truly an act of revolution and our revolution is long overdue."
   — Margaret Cho (Comedian, Actor, Activist)

"Just because you are blind and unable to see my beauty doesn't mean it does not exist."
   — Margaret Cho

"I think one of the most radical things a girl can do is to own her own body. And we learn so young not to own these bodies of ours."
   — Staceyann Chin (Poet, Jamaican and Chinese, LGBT Activist)

Week 5 Quotes: Family
"To forget one's ancestors is to be a brook without a source, a tree without root."
        – Chinese Proverb

"Coming from an Asian culture, I was always taught to respect my elders, to be a better listener than a talker."
        – Lisa Ling (Journalist, TV presenter, Author, and Daughter of Chinese and Taiwanese
        immigrants)

"I have been lucky to count among my mentors strong women like my mom – who raised five girls while working as a child care provider – and my grandmother – one of the first Filipino nurses in the United States and the matriarch of our family. These women encouraged me to speak up and they stressed the value of education and continuous learning."
        – Nani Coloretti (Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban
        Development) #AAPIheroine

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Week 8 Quotes: School/Career/Purpose
"You change the world by being yourself."
        – Yoko Ono (Artist, Anti-War Activist, Singer, born in Tokyo, Japan, 1933-Present)

"The whole world is starting to realize that it was the most unwise thing for our society to have ignored women power, to run the society with male priorities."
        – Yoko Ono

"Hollywood likes to put actors in boxes, and it likes to put Asian actors in really small boxes."
        – Sandra Oh (played Dr. Christina Yang on *Grey's Anatomy*, daughter of Korean
        immigrants, 1971-present)

"A person should aspire to try out new things and explore new opportunities. Confidence, perseverance, persistence and knowledge play a key role in achieving the most challenging feats."
        – Sunita Williams (U.S. Navy Captain and NASA Astronaut) #AAPIheroine

Week 9 Quotes: RAISE Our Voices

"Speak up... The worst thing that will happen is people say, no, I disagree... The best thing that can happen is you've really spoken up and represented a view and advanced yourself." (Tina Tchen, Chief of Staff to the First Lady Michelle Obama) #AAPIheroine

"You cannot change any society unless you take responsibility for it, unless you see yourself belonging to it and responsible for changing it." (Grace Lee Boggs, Author and Social Activist, 1915-2015) #AAPIheroine

"Being a victim of oppression in the United States is not enough to make you revolutionary, just as dropping out of your mother's womb is not enough to make you human. People who are full of hate and anger against their oppressors or who only see Us versus Them can make a rebellion but not a revolution. The oppressed internalize the values of the oppressor. Therefore, any group that achieves power, no matter how oppressed, is not going to act differently from their oppressors as long as they have not confronted the values that they have internalized and consciously adopted different values." (Grace Lee Boggs)

"What's important for my daughter to know is that... if you are fortunate to have opportunity, it is your duty to make sure other people have those opportunities as well." – Kamala Harris (U.S. Senator from California, the first Jamaican American and South Asian American Attorney General in California)

"My journey toward political consciousness began with two simple steps. First, I recognized we live within white supremacy that seeks to hide our racial difference. Second, I committed myself forever to divesting from that system, because liberation is not the product of complicity and ignorance. Although I occasionally falter and sometimes outright fail, I continue to try. Because I know that for us Asian Americans equality will not be the result of assimilation. Emancipation will be borne of acknowledging and fighting for our fundamental difference." (Kim Tran, Blogger at everydayfeminism.com)

Cycle of Violence

Honeymoon Phase

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Tension Building Phase

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Explosion Phase

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Honeymoon Phase 2

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Women's RAISE Circle Weekly Evaluation Form

RAISE Community: _____ **Name (optional):** _____
Date: _____ **RAISE Circle No.** ____ **Today's Topic:** _____

I. *Please take a few moments to reflect on the activities in today's RAISE Circle. Rate your experiences using the following scale:*

   1 Poor   2 Fair   3 Neutral   4 Good   5 Excellent

Please circle one rating per item.

		Poor				Excellent
A.	Introduction Activity	1	2	3	4	5
B.	Activity (Name:_____)	1	2	3	4	5
C.	Activity (Name:_____)	1	2	3	4	5
D.	Opportunity for Participation and Practice	1	2	3	4	5
E.	Degree of Group Cohesiveness	1	2	3	4	5
F.	Facilitators' Performance	1	2	3	4	5
G.	Today's Circle Overall	1	2	3	4	5

II. **What are your personal RAISE Circle goals?**

Was this RAISE Circle relevant to those personal goals? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ Not Sure

III. **What are your RAISE goals for your community?**

Was this RAISE Circle relevant to those community goals? ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ Not Sure

What were the most successful parts of today's Circle? [*For example: Powerful or Enjoyable experiences]*

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How could today's Circle be improved? [*For example: Concerns; Activities that you think worked better than others; If you rated an item as "poor" or "fair", be sure to tell why.]*

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Any other comments? [*Include additional comments to help us improve the Raise Circle. Recommendations for future activities.]*

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Key Terms

Critical Consciousness – A growing awareness of the hidden ways in which our societal context and various forms of oppression impact our lives. In developing critical consciousness, Asian American women can increase their awareness of various acts of oppression against themselves and their community and then act to end those oppressive practices and systems (Osajima, 2007).

Empowerment – The act of helping oppressed communities (1) see their own worth and value in society, (2) reject the systemic forces that sustain their oppression, and (3) increase their power to make decisions and take action within their own lives (Dalrymple & Burke, 2006).

Internalized Oppression – A negative consequence of racism and other forms of oppression that occurs when people start to believe sociological and political messages that teach marginalized persons to blame themselves and their communities (Brown, 1995).

Intersectionality – An analysis of the interaction of a person's age, race, gender, sexual orientation, disability status and other various diverse aspects of one's identity; including the various levels of oppression and/or social privilege experienced by the person based on these identities (Hernández, Almeida, & Dolan-Del Vecchio, 2005).

Social Privilege – Any advantage, entitlement, sanction, immunity, right or power bestowed by the dominant group to a group or person simply based on being born into certain prescribed identities across the various domains of race, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, age, religious affiliation, and ableness (Black & Stone, 2005).

White Supremacy – An economic, cultural and political system that (1) operates in the service of white people, (2) affords whites with societal power and material resources, (3) maintains unconscious and conscious notions of entitlement and white superiority, (4) defines the perceptions and interests of whites as the norm and (5) leads to daily reenactments of "white dominance and non-white subordination" across a wide range of social contexts and institutions (Ansley, 1997, p. 592, as cited in Gillborn, 2006).

Resources

Asian and Pacific Islander American Social Justice Organizations

Asian Americans Advancing Justice (AAJC): "An affiliation of five organizations that work together to provide programs and services to the AAPI community nationwide" with a mission "to advance civil and human rights for Asian Americans and to build and promote a fair and equitable society for all."
Website: http://advancingjustice-aajc.org/

Asian Pacific Islander American Public Affairs: "A non-profit, non-partisan and grassroots organization" with a mission "to promote the advancement of Asian and Pacific Islander (API) Americans through active participation and leadership in civic and public affairs."
Website: http://www.apapa.org/about-us/our-mission

Gender-Based Violence Support

Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence (APIGBV): "A national resource center and clearinghouse on gender violence in Asian and Pacific Islander communities. It serves a national network of community-based organizations; advocates and professionals in legal, health, mental health, and social services; government agencies; state coalitions; national domestic and sexual violence organizations; and activists from communities and social justice organizations working to eliminate violence against women."
Website: www.api-gbv.org/

Family Crisis Center Hotline: If you believe you are in a domestic violence situation, please call our hotline: 559-784-0192.
Website: http://www.ccfamilycrisis.org/what-is-domestic-violence/

LGBT Support

National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA): "A federation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) Asian American, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander (AAPI) organizations."
Website: www.nqapia.org/wpp/

Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Social Justice Organization

Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC): "A national organization based in Los Angeles" with a mission "to promote social justice by engaged Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities through culturally relevant advocacy, research, and development."
Website: http://empoweredpi.org/

Scholarship Information for AAPIs

Asian & Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund: "The largest provider of college scholarships and resources to help AAPI students succeed."
Website: http://www.wearenotthesame.org/

South Asian American Mental Health and Social Justice Organizations
MySahana: "A nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing awareness about mental health, emotional health and well-being in the South Asian community."
Website: http://mysahana.org/

South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT): "A national, nonpartisan, non-profit organization that fights for racial justice and advocates for the civil rights of all South Asians in the United States."
Website: http://saalt.org/

Southeast Asian American Social Justice Organization
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC): "A national organization that advances the interests of Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese Americans by empowering communities through advocacy, leadership development, and capacity building to create a socially just and equitable society."
Website: http://www.searac.org/

Suicide Prevention
Asian American Suicide Prevention & Education: "A joint project of Asian American Federation and Hamilton-Madison House." This organization focuses on Asian Americans in the New York metropolitan area; however, the website offers additional resources for suicide prevention related to Asian Americans across the United States.
Website: www.aaspe.net

Asian LifeNet Hotline: (877) 990-8585
Cantonese, Fujianese, Japanese, Korean, and Mandarin offered 24/7.

The National Suicide Prevention Hotline: (800) 273-8255 (TALK)
More than 150 languages offered.

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"Just like the lotus, we too have the ability to rise from the mud, bloom out of the darkness and radiate into the world." – Unknown