

## Scenario Response Worksheet

At a conference workshop focused on healing practices, a white, male teacher, who uses yoga, meditation, and other spiritual practices to support people suffering from PTSD, speaks of the need to move beyond seeing the “other.” He shares with the audience that he has done enough meditation that he no longer sees “other,” and that it allows him to see beyond the suffering to the innate divinity of the person. He says that with that comes a responsibility to everyone, that because another person’s suffering is his suffering that he has a responsibility to alleviate suffering the world. A white participant interrupts to ask him if this means that he believes we all need to pay attention to racism and other “-isms” that impact people in today’s world. He responds that he is not political. The white woman presses the point, saying she is not trying to be political, and that she’s trying to understand if a responsibility to everyone, to reduce everyone’s suffering, includes a requirement to work against racism. The teacher responds to her by saying, “You need to stay in your garden. My garden is working on PTSD and helping people wake up spiritually. Your garden may be activism. But, I’m going to stay over here and do my work.”

1. What are the tensions in this scenario?

2. To what degree do the themes in this scenario play out in communities of which you are a part? Where do you think they come from (culturally, theologically, etc.)? How are they supported?

3. How is privilege and/or racism manifesting?

4. How would you feel if you were in this situation?

5. What would you say in response? (*For faith communities: What spiritual/theological beliefs help ground you in that response?*)

In small groups:

6. How would you hope people would respond to this situation?

7. How could the use of “both/and” thinking inform the response?