



[A link to the Racial Wounding Reporting Form](#) is at the bottom of this document.

### **Definition of Racial Wounding**

First and foremost, racial wounding is what a Person of Color says it is. We offer this definition knowing there are many other possible definitions.

We understand racial wounding to be protecting power, [white supremacy culture](#), institutions, or the status quo above the well-being of a Person of Color in any of the following ways:

- Harm to a Person of Color, whether intentional or not
- An act, sentiment, or behavior diminishing someone's humanity to a race-based stereotype
- Othering, exclusion, silencing, erasure, or denial of a Person of Color's lived experience
- Dictating the appropriateness of a Person of Color's emotional response (tone policing)
- Appropriating, tokenizing, or exotifying the cultures of People of Color.
- Disrespect of the boundaries of a Person of Color; nonconsensual feeling of entitlement to People of Color's time, attention, emotional labor, bodies, and spaces
- White people being present where it's not appropriate, and feeling justified (for example in a POC-only space)

### **Guidelines for the Committee to Address Racial Wounding**

#### **Priorities for this Committee:**

- 1. Holistic healing for racial wounding that occurs within FGC's events, committee meetings, or communications.**
- 2. Deepening our relationships as Friends and making our community stronger.**
- 3. Offering tools for accountability and amends making to Friends who have caused harm with actions and attitudes that stem from white supremacy.**
- 4. Holding FGC accountable for its organizational responsibility to the community for harm that occurs at its events, in meetings and communications.**

#### **Committee formation:**

**8-10 standing members. Committee service term is a 3-year commitment**

**Not every member will hold every grievance.** The committee should be large enough to ensure that **at least 3 committee members serving can be available to convene as a support circle** for the purpose of holding a Friend's grievance even on short notice. **Names and pictures of committee members will be known** so that Friends bringing a wounding have the opportunity to recuse or request committee members handling their particular case.



**Friends lifting up a grievance also have the option to invite 1 or 2 other Friends not in the committee to join their support circle.** These invited Friends will be ad hoc members of the committee for as long as the specific support circle they were invited to join is meeting.

**Committee members should have a good understanding of the impacts of racism and feel capable of noticing and curbing their own assumptions.**

In order to meet the needs of Friends of color coming forward with grievances **the committee should be composed of Friends with diverse identities and life experiences** including race, age, geographic, class background, and gender. Representation of Friends who are Indigenous or Black/of African descent is particularly important to hold this work.

Engaging Friends who have caused harm in accountability processes could become a crucial part of this work. **The committee will need members who can hold deep compassion and patience for Friends who have caused racial harm** and believe in the possibility of these Friends' transformation.

#### **Committee Charge & Advices:**

**Friends will be heard and believed.** The process stewarded by this committee is intended to serve people who have experienced racial wounding within the FGC community. These Friends are the highest authority throughout this process. Committee members should place unconditional trust in each individual Friend of color who engages in this process, listening fully and believing the experience and self-knowledge of these Friends.

**This process is about building relationships and maintaining community, not about a checklist of goals or steps.** The committee's primary priority is to walk with and tend to the needs and healing of the person affected by racial wounding. Build trust, stay in relationship, check in often- not just about the harm.

**Friends may request whatever remedy they feel is necessary to alleviate the wounding** of this circumstance. Some possible examples might include but are not limited to:

- Just being heard and held in worship by the working group,
- Documentation of the incident,
- To be heard out by the wounding party without their reply.
- To receive an apology.
- Change of policy that guarantees of non-repetition,
- The initiation of an accountability process for the wounding party.
- In extreme cases where attempts for remediation have failed the wounding party may be asked to leave the FGC event in order to make the space safe.\*
- The pattern of oppression exemplified by the incident should be brought to the full body by designated noticers.

**Support circles should call on the resources and support of the larger committee** when necessary to fully address the incident of racial wounding that occurred. The committee members in the support circle may differ from the committee members maintaining a related accountability process.



Some cases will be handled between individuals, some cases may bring to light the need to implement a measure at a structural level. In all cases, the committee's task is to do what is necessary to facilitate the aggrieved Friend's request. This may mean inviting/encouraging Friends who caused harm to take part in the necessary remediation or accountability process. It could mean passing the concern to the appropriate standing committee to continue the work of holding FGC organizationally accountable. In these cases, the committee should maintain contact with the said committee at least until it is clear that the measure is not at risk of falling between the cracks.

**Consensual communication is key.** The purpose of this committee is not to force Friends to relive an experience of racial wounding, but to support them in healing. Friends will not be expected to share more than they are comfortable sharing. If that leaves some details unclear the committee will not pry for more clarity. Instead, practice asking for permission to inquire about something more deeply. Eg. "Can I ask you more about...?" pay attention to body language. A begrudging yes is not clear consent.

**The confidentiality and privacy of Friends engaging in this process will be respected.** If any information is to be shared publicly or with any party collaborating in remediation it will be only at the explicit request of the Friend who brought this grievance. It is important to stay away from a burden-of-proof interrogation. A possible message to send after receiving a report with very little detail might be: "Thank you for sharing this with us. If you ever want to share more, we'd love to hear more detail about your experience so that we can help it not happen again to others. Please let us know if there are any accommodations that would make sharing more accessible for you?"

### **Documentation:**

Incident reports of each case of racial wounding will be made up by the committee and these records will be kept by FGC. These reports will be fairly general and will not contain identifying information. The purpose of these reports is for FGC's organizational transparency. Please include when the incident occurred, the type of incident, and when the committee/support circle met about it.

The aggrieved Friend will decide if they want the details of their experience and/or process of remediation documented beyond the incident report. If there is documentation, the person who has experienced racial wounding will approve any written minutes and will have complete control over who keeps these records.

### **Advices & resources for successful accountability processes:**

#### **[Video playlist for creating accountability process](#)**

In your invitation be clear about the impact of the harm and the fact that you are offering an opportunity to come into community.

Accountability requires consent. Don't be sneaky. Change can only really occur when a Friend makes a commitment to change.



Understand the anatomy of an apology through a lens of anti-oppression and help Friends learn how to give them.



## THE ANATOMY OF *an apology*

### Acknowledgement

This happened/ bearing witness - this is particularly critical in the context of a world that gaslights individuals/ communities into believing that their experiences of oppression are fragmented incidents and not part of a larger system that supports and enables violence and marginalization of their communities.

### Emotional Uptake

Creating space for folks to feel their feelings, without being policed on the appropriateness, validity, duration and intensity of their emotional response.

### Centre the Hurt

It's not about our feelings of guilt, but about the feelings and needs of those we have harmed. Those we've harmed shouldn't have to support us during an apology, nor should they have to coach or cheer for us.

### Accountability + Changed Behavior

Taking ownership of our actions, naming and understanding them and changing the identified problematic behaviors, patterns, thoughts and words. Not providing irrelevant context/ justification to minimize the impact of our actions.

### Divest From Forgiveness

Invest in the labor of reconciliation, divorced from appeasing our feelings of guilt and focusing on healing and supporting those we've harmed. Apologize without forgiveness as a target, but healing, regardless of whether we're forgiven or not.

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Transformation takes time, and trust in the relationship. Give space but don't disappear. Stay in relationship and check-in often.

Unpack the root systems of harm. What is the bigger pattern at play?

Don't ignore the impact, but do pay attention to intent so that Friends know they are actually being heard. This is important for bringing Friends into accountability. What needs are not being met?

[This is a link to the form to report an incident of racial wounding.](#)

This is a living document and should be revisited and revised by the Addressing Racial Wounding Committee periodically.

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