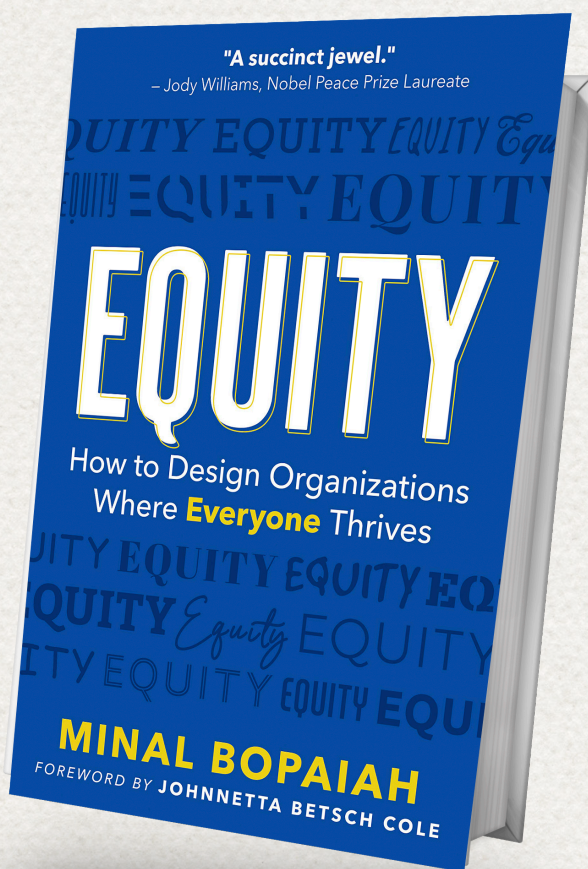


GCORR Book Study Guide

Equity: How to Design Organizations Where Everyone Thrives

By Minal Bopaiah

FOR SMALL GROUP & INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION



RELIGION & RACE

The United Methodist Church

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

This book study guide follows the structure of the book:

Session 1: Introduction and Chapter 1
The Relationship between Bias,
Systems, and Equity

Session 2: Chapter 2
A Design Approach to IDEA

Session 3: Chapter 3
Engaged and Equitable Leadership

Session 4: Chapter 4
Bridging the Gap

Session 5: Chapter 5
Communicating the Change

Session 6: Chapter 6
Creating Equity Through Media and
Marketing and Conclusion

Sessions may be completed each week for a 6-week study.

KEY THEME

Teaching leaders to create an organizational structure to allow all staff to thrive, not just some staff.

BOOK SYNOPSIS

“Bopaiah demonstrates how leaders can effectively raise awareness of systemic bias and craft new policies that lead to better outcomes and lasting behavioral changes.”

Bopaiah offers step by step process for designing an equitable organization. The book teaches leaders how to create an organizational structure to allow all staff to thrive, not just some staff.

KEY TERMS

Key terms are highlighted in the book and definitions are found in the glossary section.

Terms include:

- Introduction: privilege, model minority, gaslighting, colonialism, equality, equity, and DEI
- Chapter 1: rugged individualism
- Chapter 2: dehumanization and predatory capitalism
- Chapter 4: employee resource groups, nudge, unethical pattern
- Chapter 5: framing
- Chapter 6: tokenism, intersectionality

OPENING PRAYER

God, who created and is still creating through us, help us open our hearts and minds to the experiences of one another. Calm our hearts and minds when we may be uncomfortable. And expand our hearts and minds as we learn how to care for your creations equitably on Earth. Amen.

OPENING THOUGHT

“Designing an organization where everyone thrives takes ingenuity and courage, especially if you are trying to do so in a wider system that has bias baked in (U.S. culture, for example).” Page 23.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (INTRODUCTION)

1. Do you know when or how your family/ancestors first arrived in the United States? Describe a challenge (individual or systemic) you know they faced when they first arrived. What groups or individuals assisted them in making the transition?
2. Consider what you know about the public education system in your community. Who benefits and who hurts with the current system?
3. Do you agree with the author regarding how we should strive for equity rather than equality?

4. Describe an example of equity versus equality.
5. Describe a social or work setting where you feel you do not have systemic power. Describe a social or work setting where you do have power. Describe how you operate in one instance versus the other (i.e., how and when you speak; how people with more/less power respond to you; your role in decision-making).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (CHAPTER 1)

1. Recall a time when you exhibited racial bias. How did you recognize your bias? How did you change your thought patterns and actions when you became aware of that bias?
2. The author asserts that the “default human” is white, male, straight, able-bodied, in early or mid-adulthood, Christian, and upper-middle class. Explain how this default ideal hinders/helps how you see yourself and others.
3. When did you first realize how systemic privileges and preferences benefit those in the “default” group? How does that complement/conflict with the notion that everyone achieves based on individual merit?
4. Why do organizations have a difficult time designing an equitable system? What are the challenges?

5. Willingness among leadership is critical to changing organizations. What challenges face leaders in your context who want to center those people “who need and deserve better outcomes”?

CLOSING PRAYER

“God, our creator, and the ground of our being, we give you thanks for all of the blessings of this life, especially for the gift of each other and our work. Every person is a treasure, and every life a sacred gift. May the work we do diminish the chasm of disparity and bring about greater justice and equity. We ask your blessings, in the name of Jesus, and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”
- *Catholic Health Association of the United States*

OPENING PRAYER

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OPENING THOUGHT

"We can make life easier or harder for people; thus we have a responsibility to use this power wisely." Page 43.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Often, ideas are defined as better or worse rather than different and equal. Context is key. Why do you think white, U.S., and northern European ideas are viewed in your context as superior to those posed by Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)?
2. Feedback is essential and needs honest responses. How does your context allow for open and candid responses? What can be done to create a culture of honesty in your context?
3. How does the leadership in your context exhibit the seven behaviors of inclusive leadership (page 46)? (Or do you?)

CLOSING PRAYER

"Grant us, Lord God, a vision of your world as your love would have it:

a world where the weak are protected, and none go hungry or poor;

a world where the riches of creation are shared, and everyone can enjoy them;

a world where different races and cultures live in harmony and mutual respect;

a world where peace is built with justice, and justice is guided by love.

Give us the inspiration and courage to build it, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

United Church of Christ

SESSION 3: CHAPTER 3

ENGAGED AND EQUITABLE LEADERSHIP

03

OPENING PRAYER

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OPENING THOUGHT

"Equitable leaders must become comfortable with difference, seeing unity in diversity." Page 49.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you know the systems you are in and where you fit within each system (Group Identity Wheel)?
2. What systems have helped you in your success/achievements?
3. When focusing on systems that support an individual's achievements, how does that make you feel, knowing the achievements are because of the system and not solely personal actions?
4. Leadership learns by listening to the experiences of people in the organization. Is your local church or annual conference supportive of people sharing their feelings, or do you think people will not share because they feel unsafe? If people feel unsafe, how can leadership change the culture?

CLOSING PRAYER

"God,
All peoples have their origin in you and it is your will to gather them as one family in yourself. Fill the hearts of all people with your love and the desire to ensure justice for all their brothers and sisters. By sharing the good things of the earth, may we secure justice and equality for every human being, an end to all division, and a human society built on love and peace. We make this prayer in Jesus' name. Amen."

Newman Catholic College

OPENING PRAYER

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OPENING THOUGHT

“Engaged leaders understand that if they want to design more equitable organizations, they need to center people who have historically been pushed to the margins.”
Page 65.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think some people who have been historically pushed to the margins are not the primary focus of your congregation/ministry setting's mission, worship, and program priorities?
2. What sustainable behaviors or outcomes might your group adopt to help center marginalized groups' concerns, ideals, voices, norms, and needs?
3. What aspects of your current systems conflict with DEI objectives?

4. To create an equitable system, those not treated equitably must be part of the solution. How can your local church or annual conference include those who have not benefited from the system to be part of the recreation of the system?

CLOSING PRAYER

“Holy One, we know you by many names, but still we are part of one human Family, Your family.

Open our hearts and minds so that we see Your reflection in the face of every person on this earth.

Help us to forge bonds of compassion, dignity, and respect with every person.

Guide us to fully grasp that disability and difference never lessen a person's need for love, friendship, belonging, respect, and for the opportunity to work, contribute, and lead.

Let prejudice, stigma, fear, and presumptions never interfere with our ceaseless efforts to assure that each and every person is able to feel the embrace of family, community, and of God.”

By Rabbi Edie Menscher and Rabbi Rick Jacobs

OPENING PRAYER

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OPENING THOUGHT

“Change is always hard, always upsets some people, and always involves loss.” Page 92.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are the obstacles in your group/organization systems to adopting new behaviors to create equity?
2. What was the most challenging aspect of creating a message template for your ministry settings, and why?
3. What did you learn from the chapter that impacted or expanded your understanding as a Disciple of Jesus Christ?

CLOSING PRAYER

“God of mercy and compassion, we bring forth into your presence all the communities that are experiencing segregation, discrimination, and oppression based on caste, class, creed, color, and gender both in the church [and] in the society. It is your death on the cross that has put an end to all enmity by breaking down the walls that separate us. We ask you to empower us, O Lord, to tear down the fences of hatred and indifference. Liberate us from the bonds of pride and self-seeking. Enable and strengthen us to overcome our prejudices and fears. Grant us your courage to open ourselves to others, so that we may continue to live in solidarity with the oppressed communities. Amen.”

A Prayer of Solidarity, National Council of Churches in India, Dalit Liberation Sunday 2009

OPENING PRAYER

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OPENING THOUGHT

“Media have the power to mitigate bias and promote equity on a systemic level.” Page 95.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (CHAPTER 6)

1. When your group/organization creates its websites or newsletter (or any communication), how does it consider the following:
 - Representation?
 - Experience?
 - Accessibility?
 - Compensation?
 - Harm Reduction?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (CONCLUSION)

1. What have you learned from this book that impacts your decision-making process?
2. How will you impact your local church or annual conference in becoming more equitable?

CLOSING PRAYER

God of all Creation, we are so thankful to have: *(Invite participants to share what they are grateful for learning during this study group).*

Help us to: *(Invite participants to share what they want help in.)*

Remind us that we are your hands and voice in creating systems and structures that value all your creation.

Amen.



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