



Collective Trauma: Economic Crisis & Historical Trauma

2025

Description: How do shared experiences of economic hardship and historic events shape our communities, our understanding of the world, and our paths forward?

Estimated time: 1.5 hours

(1) Getting acquainted and comfortable 5 - 10 min.

Welcome

- Thank you for coming and for your willingness to engage in this important conversation.
- We are a part of The Great Reset, which was born out of a shift we're seeing in our country. We have been in a place where we don't tend to speak 'beyond our bubbles' and across perspectives. The Great Reset has been opening up a grey space for such conversations since 2018. You are now part of keeping the conversation going, and we thank you.

The Pillars of The Great Reset

- To share our own thoughts and perspectives with humility
- To learn from others and listen with respect

Ground Rules

- Every comment is valid and deserving of respect
- We show respect by speaking one at a time, putting our phones on silent, and staying engaged, even when we are not speaking
- In the interest of time, I may cut in to ask you to 'top-line' something if we need to move on. This means simply offer up a synopsis of your thoughts and speak in bullets, not paragraphs
- We don't share outside this space unless specifically given approval. No recording, no sharing names, and no sharing of comments unless a sign-off is given.
- You are in control of what you share.
- We recognize people have different relationships to these topics. Some may have lived experiences with what we discuss; others may be learning about it for the first time. All positions are valid.

Confidentiality

I would like a verbal from everyone that you are here of your own volition and out of respect for one another. You should keep what others say in this room unless they give you permission otherwise. (go around and get verbal agreement). Further, you agree to adhere to the principles outlined already: to deliver your perspectives bound to the principles of respect, to **listen with humility, and offer grace to others who are sharing this space.**

*Remind participants that unless anyone asks for this not to be recorded, we will be recording, and we would like to use clips for future posts.



Personal Introductions

Please share your name, where you live, and tell us about a time you felt part of something larger than yourself (for example: a community event, a shared celebration, a collective effort).

(2) Expectations and Reality 60 min.

- *From our introductions, we heard about positive collective experiences. But communities also experience difficult times together. What does the term “collective trauma” mean to you?*
 - (Allow for various definitions; affirm that there is no single right answer)
- Have you noticed ways that challenging events or periods affect not just individuals, but whole communities or groups of people?
 - What does that look like?
- Think back to a time of economic uncertainty - either one you lived through or heard about from family/community. What changed in daily life?
 - (Examples might include: 2008 recession, COVID-19, family business losses, etc.)
 - You can share your own experience or something you witnessed.
- How do economic challenges affect more than just finances?
 - Relationships? Sense of security? Trust in institutions? Community cohesion?
- When economic hardship hits a community, who tends to be affected first or most severely?
 - Why do you think that is?
 - What does this tell you about how our systems work?
- Have you noticed economic stress being passed down through families or communities - worries, behaviors, or beliefs that persist even after the immediate crisis passes?
- Many of the economic patterns we’ve talked about are rooted in history. Can you think of past events or policies that still influence who has access to resources and opportunities today?
 - (Facilitator note: Be prepared with examples if needed: redlining, discriminatory lending, union-busting, displacement, but allow participants to bring up what they’re aware of)
- When we don’t acknowledge historic harms or patterns, what happens?
 - To those personally affected? To the broader community? To our ability to move forward?

(3) Closing comments 5 min. ● What helps communities recover and rebuild after shared hardship? Remind everyone after they click off to complete the short video recapping their thoughts and that we most gratefully accept donations to keep the conversation going.

Resources <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2020/09/collective-trauma> <https://www.epi.org/>