**Scale of Inclusion:**

**Transformation of One’s Community**

Inclusion is a process, approach, and attitude not a place or a program. This scale is to help evaluate your communities’ initiative. The goal is by working together we will all be striving to attain a 5 (Full inclusion/Transformation). Inclusion is not looking at how one person can fit into a situation; inclusion looks at how to transform a system so it can better respond to a diverse community.

Note: this scale can be added to and is not all exclusive, it is to give you an idea of where your project is and where we strive to be.

1. Denial – Exclusion

* People with disabilities are not included in the planning process.
* People with disabilities are not in programs.
* People with disabilities are seen as a problem that must be fixed.
* Effort is made to fit people with disabilities into a current situation, with lots of effort on changing the person with a disability and no effort on transformation of the system.
* When inclusion does not happen the explanation is “well we just don’t have those people,” “those people are always angry,” or “they have their own program.”

2. Charity

* Organization pities people with disabilities and sees persons’ with disabilities lives as tragedies.
* Organization is proud of themselves for “helping those people.”
* People without disabilities are in control of the environment with no intention of involvement or leadership by people with disabilities.
* People with disabilities are viewed as the project (people to be mentored, people to take care or, people to serve, people to raise funds for etc.).
* People with disabilities are present but not seen as peers or potential friends.
* Staff and neighbors have low expectations for people with disabilities.

3. Project with Funding

* Inclusion will happen when a funding source is available.
* People with disabilities are included until the group wants to do something the person with disability “can’t” do. Attitude is that they can “sit this one out” and can join later.
* Accommodations are viewed as expensive ventures.
* People with disabilities are pitied and included because it is the “right thing to do.”
* People with disabilities may be insincerely praised for their efforts because it is so great that they are there.
* Organization praises themselves for outreaching to “those” people.
* Organization does not change practices or actions, except when someone with a disability is involved.
* People with disabilities are included in a particular project as full partners, but other activities by neighborhood association are held in inaccessible locations.
* People with disabilities are “present,” but not actively “participating.”

4. Understanding – Integration

* People with disabilities are given particular projects and jobs to do that are separate from the group.
* People with disabilities are part of the group and the group says they “do not see difference” (this approach does not honor the diversity and experience of the disability community; it also fails to recognize Ableism/oppression).
* People without disabilities understand that inclusion should happen, but still see barriers as a physical oppression. No work is done on how people without disabilities benefit from Ableism and a system of oppression.
* People with disabilities are plugged into an organization and systems are adapted slightly for that individual to fit into the way the organization has always done business.
* Organization sees accommodation as “special needs” for the person with disability to work/participate in the organization’s environment.
* Disability access issues are addressed but are only brought up by staff or community member with disabilities and/or one staff person ally.
* People with disabilities may be seen as inspirational.

5. Transformation of a system- Inclusion

* People with disabilities are a partner
* Disability is seen as a natural and beautiful part of human diversity.
* Inclusion is a proactive approach; programs and organization are universally accessible because it is the way they do business not just for a particular person.
* Inclusion is viewed as a benefit to all members of the community, not just those with disabilities.
* It is believed that all people have gifts and talents they bring to the organization.
* Focus is on the changing the environment not a person.
* People with disabilities are viewed as resources and contributing members of the organization.
* People with disabilities are found at all levels of organization. Including the board.
* System is reevaluated to look at what participation is? What is the basis of value? How may we change to maximize the gifts and talents of all individuals?
* Organization has developed a circle of accountability\* to the disability community, which includes people with disabilities and organizations run by people with disabilities and their allies.
* Organization has developed authentic relationships with people with disabilities.
* Inclusion is a philosophical shift in thinking, not a program or a set of procedures.
* Organization recognizes non-disabled privilege and works on holding themselves accountable for exploring this privilege and how they can be an ally to the disability community.
* Organization recognizes that people with disabilities have many identities, so to truly transform to inclusion organization must work on their privilege around race, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, etc.

\*Circle of accountability- people who will hold you to your commitments of inclusion. This group of people can advise you in your path to transformation.

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