
A SOCIAL WORKER'S GUIDE TO RADICAL SELF-CARE

AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO PROMOTING HEALING AND THRIVING THROUGH THE STRUGGLE
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WELCOME AND WHAT TO EXPECT FROM TODAY'S DIALOGUE

Together, we will:

- Develop a Safe Space to Be Real
- Explore Common Barriers We Face in Participating in Sustainable Radical Self-Care
- Propose The Walk Our Talk Model for Radical Self-Care for Healing and Thriving
- Creating a Sustainable Radical Self-Care Plan

CREATING SAFETY: COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS (TOOL YOU CAN USE)

- Community Agreements are a tool used in group settings, from therapeutic groups to collaborative meetings across multiple disciplines and paradigms.
- This consensus-driven process differs from the traditional “ground rules” approach often found in group settings and establishes a safe learning/healing environment.
- Community agreement development is proven to be an investment in reducing miscommunication and enhancing productivity.
- Community agreements lay a foundation for embracing diversity, respectful engagement with peers, structure for a dialogue, and ways to handle conflicts if they arise.
- They also increase trust and openness to the process. It allows participants to feel they can speak and be heard as well as listen and absorb what others are saying.
- “How do I facilitate this?” The process begins by sharing that community agreements aren’t rules. They are guidelines for communication we all agree on so we can move productively through a process. The facilitator then poses this prompter question to each participant: “What do you need from the participants in this committee to feel safe and comfortable to share your ideas and opinions?” The facilitator then gives each person enough time to respond. The facilitator should ask clarifying questions to ensure they are accurately capturing each person’s requested agreement. Clarifying questions are important to help prevent any miscommunication. Ask clarifying questions to offer more detail, such as, “Tell me more about what you mean when you say ‘be respectful.’ How do you know you’re being respected and giving respect?” Be sure to restate what the person’s response to ensure the intent behind their agreement was captured. The facilitator would then record each agreement. The Facilitator closes out the activity by reviewing all the agreements and asking the participants to raise their hand if they agree to honor the community agreements for duration of the dialogue. If any person does not agree, ask them to clarify their concerns.

CREATING SAFETY: COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS (TOOL YOU CAN USE)

For Today's Dialogue, May We All Agree to:

- **Respect for one another's perspectives, worldviews, and lived experience/professional expertise**
- **Practice nonjudgement**
- **Assume positive intent**
- **Trust in the facilitation and process**
- What else do you need to feel safe and comfortable in engaging in today's dialogue?

WHY IS IT SO HARD FOR SOCIAL WORKERS TO PRACTICE SUSTAINABLE SELF-CARE?

Let's Get Real!

Brainstorm the common barriers we face as social work practitioners in creating and sustaining a practice of self-care?

WHY IS IT SO HARD FOR SOCIAL WORKERS TO PRACTICE SUSTAINABLE SELF-CARE?

- Common Barriers We Typically List:
 - No Time
 - Overstressed
 - Caseload too High
 - Competing Demands with Home, Work and Social Obligations
- Barriers We Feel Uncomfortable in Discussing:
 - Our Own Lived Experiences with Oppression
 - Gendered or Cultural Expectations
 - Significant Financial Challenges
 - Chaotic Work Environments
 - Our Own Behavioral Health Needs: Depression, PTSD, Addiction
 - Our Own Healing Needs: Complex Grief and Loss, Post-Traumatic Stress, Vicarious Trauma, Substance Abuse, Abusive Relationships



WALK OUR TALK: THE PERSONAL



WALK OUR TALK THROUGH SELF-EMPOWERMENT: HERE'S YOUR SIGN TO DIG DEEP



THE STRUGGLE IS REAL: FEELINGS AND WHAT COMES BEFORE THEM

Biology

Cognition

- Hunger
- Thirst
- Need for Oxygen
- Sleep and Rest
- Avoidance of Pain
- Warmth and Cold
- Intimacy/Sex
- Elimination
- <http://nobaproject.com/modules/drive-states>

Drives- Motivate us to fulfil goals that are beneficial to our survival and reproduction

Senses: Our primary way to perceive our worlds

- **Traditional**
- Smell (olfaction, closely linked with feelings)
- Sight (vision)
- Taste (gustation)
- Hearing (audition)
- Touch (somatosensation)
- **Recent Additions (Vestibular)**
- Pain (nociception)
- Balance and Gravity (equilibrioception)
- Body awareness (proprioception)

- **Primary Emotions**
- **Anger (Also Considered a Secondary Emotion Based on Fear or Betrayal of Trust)**
- Anticipation
- Peace
- Joy
- Trust
- Fear
- Surprise
- Sadness
- Disgust
- From these secondary and mixed emotions

Emotions: Base responses in the subcortical regions of the brain, the amygdala and ventromedial prefrontal cortices, creating bio-chemical reactions in our bodies

Feelings

- Come from the neocortical regions of the brain, which governs higher functions including conscious thought and language.
- Advised by personal experiences, biases, values and beliefs and memories.
- Created by brain applying a thought or an association to an emotion

• <https://www.thebestbrainpossible.com/whats-the-difference-between-feelings-and-emotions/>

Behaviors, Actions and Choices

SPECIAL NOTE: COMPLEX OR DISENFRANCHISED GRIEF

- Factors that influence the way an individual grieves include the relationship they had with the deceased, the circumstances around the loss, previous losses, personality traits in coping with distress and social circumstances (Worden, 2002).
- Disenfranchised grief can lead or contribute to complicated grief and encompasses many of the same conditions as complicated grief.
- Complicated grief involves prolonged unresolved feelings, a sense of feeling overwhelmed, symptoms of traumatic distress, maladaptive behaviour and persistent disbelief about the loss (Lobb et al., 2010). This type of grief may also reveal exaggerated reactions, such as clinical depression, anxiety disorder, substance abuse and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (Worden, 2002).
- Disenfranchised grief occurs when the loss does not receive normal social support, is not openly acknowledged or cannot be mourned publicly (Doka, 1989). Grief can be disenfranchised when the relationship with the deceased is not recognized, when the loss is not acknowledged or socially acceptable and when the griever is thought to be incapable of mourning or the loss did not impact them (Doka, 1989). The circumstances of the death and the way the bereaved chooses to mourn are additional factors that can result in disenfranchised grief (Doka, 2002, as cited by Attig, 2004).
- These circumstances are defined by the culture and society in which they occur and imply “grieving rules” that determine who, how, when, for how long, where and for whom the individual grieves (Doka, 1989, p. 4). These “grieving rules” do not allow the bereaved to adequately express their feelings in a way that others can and do under different circumstances (Doka, 1989).
- Disenfranchising messages from society, culture and family “actively discount, dismiss, disapprove, discourage, invalidate, and delegitimize the experiences and efforts of grieving” (Attig, 2004, p. 198). These types of behaviors interfere with the needs and rights of the bereaved by hindering, disapproving or even prohibiting their grief (Attig, 2004).
- Retrieved from <http://www.yinstill.com/complicated-and-disenfranchised-grief#sthash.YPm5H34i.dpuf>

Disenfranchised Grief:

"the grief that persons experience when they incur a loss that is not or cannot be openly acknowledged, publicly mourned, or socially supported"

- Dr. Kenneth J. Doka



ITS COMPLICATED IF YOU KEEP TELLING YOURSELF, "IF ONLY I..."

Examples of Complex or Disenfranchised Grief

- Loss of a client
- Loss of client's children
- Incarceration of client
- Illness resulting from addiction or risk-taking behavior
- Death/loss of someone with whom there is a complex relationship (abusive parent, partner, etc)
- Divorce/separation from someone who is violent
- Deaths or disabling injury while in Military
- Death of Partner in LGBTQQI Relationships
- Exposure to Trauma (self or loved ones)
- Suicide
- Death from Overdose
- Miscarriage
- Abortion
- Infertility
- And end to an Affair

COMPLICATED GRIEF

These patterns are described in comparison to normal grief and highlight variations from the normal pattern. They include descriptive labels such as the following:

- **Inhibited or absent grief:** A pattern in which people show little evidence of the expected separation distress, seeking, yearning, or other characteristics of normal grief.
- **Delayed grief:** A pattern in which symptoms of distress, seeking, yearning, etc., occur at a much later time than typical.
- **Chronic grief:** A pattern emphasizing prolonged duration of grief symptoms.
- **Distorted grief:** A pattern characterized by extremely intense or atypical symptoms.

Disenfranchised Grief

...when life brings situations & grief you are afraid to share with others.

©www.healinggrief.com



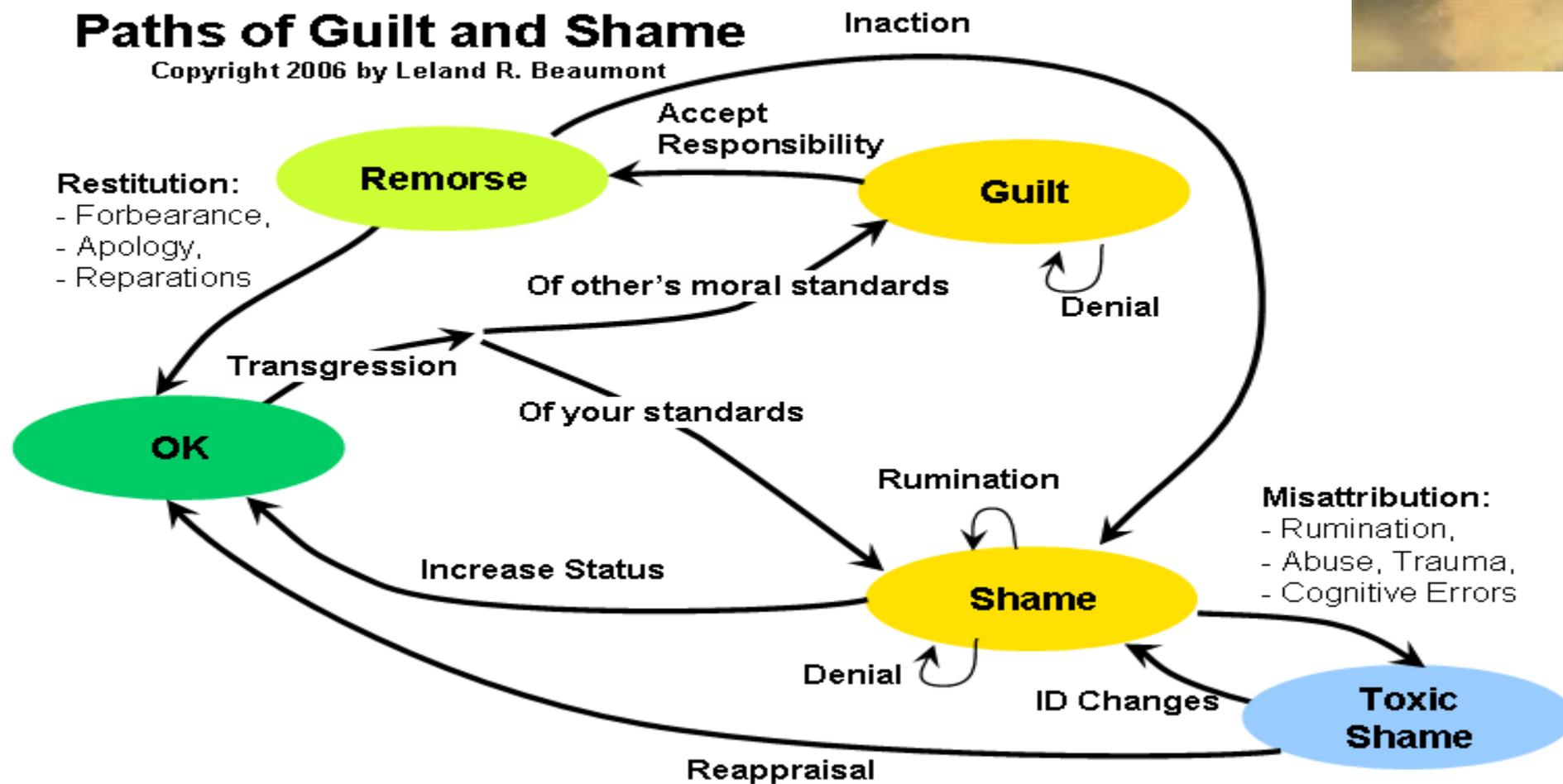
SPECIAL NOTE: TOXIC SHAME AND GUILT

The difference between shame and guilt is the difference between 'I am bad' and 'I did something bad.'

- Brené Brown

Paths of Guilt and Shame

Copyright 2006 by Leland R. Beaumont



Shame is a soul eating emotion.
C.G. Jung

MartinaMcGowan.com

STEP 1: LET'S BEGIN OUR INNER PROCESS BY EXPLORING OUR PERSONAL IDENTITIES AND VALUES

How Do We Identify?

- Culture, Ethnicity
- Gender Identity
- Sexual Orientation
- Ability Status
- Age
- Geographic/National Identity
- Spirituality
- Socioeconomic Status
- Educational Attainment
- Sovereignty Status
- Documentation Status
- Incarceration History
- Trauma Exposure

Our Core Identity-Based Values

- Please complete the Identity Grounded Values handout provided to you.
- Now narrow your list to just 5.
- Keep these values in mind when you develop your resilience plan.

LET'S CONSIDER OUR PERSONAL POINTS OF RESILIENCE AND ASSETS

1

Resilience is process of adapting well during times of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress. Strategies for resilience include:

- Problem-solving and capacity to enact plans
- Social/family/community connectedness
- Civic/community connectedness and engagement

2

Assets are qualities that support/promote resilience

- Distress tolerance
- Positive self-identity
- Perseverance

NOW, WHAT ASPECTS OF CULTURAL CAPITAL DO WE POSSESS AND HOW CAN THEY BE LEVERAGED TO PROMOTE SELF-CARE?

01

Aspirational Capital-
Resiliency and ability to
maintain hopes and
dreams

02

Familial Capital- Cultural
knowledge nurtured
among familia/kin that
carry a sense of
community history,
memory and cultural
intuition

03

Social Capital- Networks
of people and community
resources that provide
concrete and emotional
support

04

Navigational Capital-Skills
to maneuver through
institutions not created
for or by Communities of
Color (bicultural skills)

05

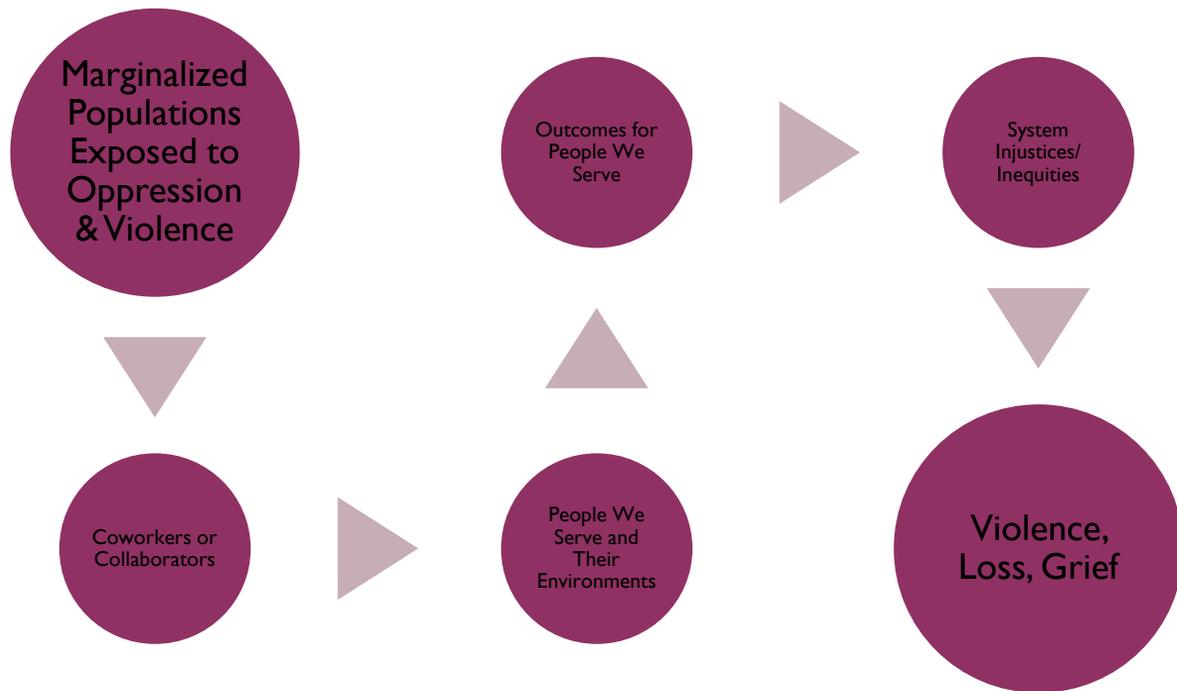
Resistant Capital –Skills
and knowledge fostered
through oppositional
behavior that challenges
inequality

06

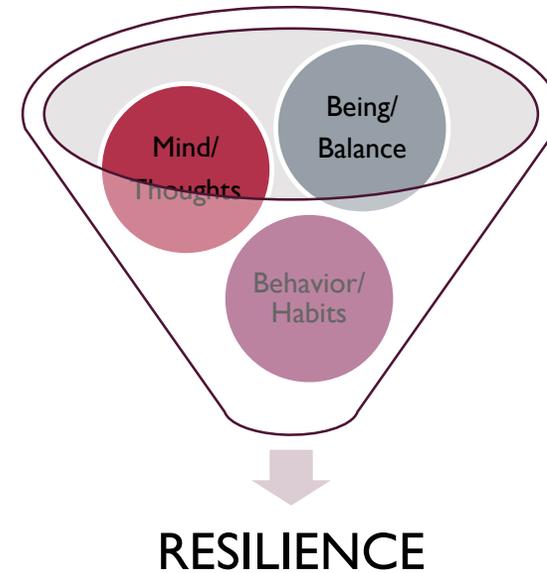
Linguistic Capital-
Intellectual and social
skills attained through
communication
experiences in more than
one language or style

STEP 2: CHALLENGE OUR NEED TO CONTROL

What is Outside Our Control



What is Within Our Control



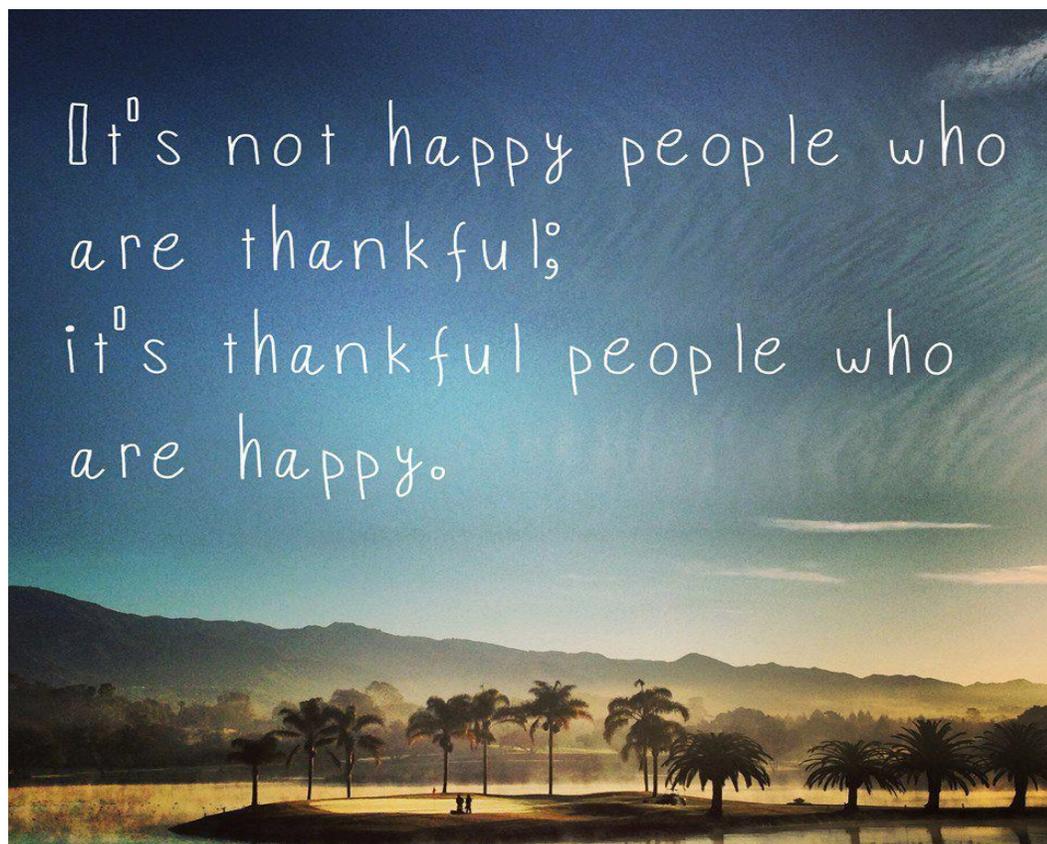
STEP 3: CHANGE OUR BEING (BALANCE)!

Ask yourself, “ Am I modeling what I want to see from the people I serve and supervise?”

- ❖ Self-regulation skills
(http://dbtselfhelp.com/html/emotion_regulation.html)
- ❖ Deep breathing (<http://www.drweil.com/drw/u/ART00521/three-breathing-exercises.html>)
- ❖ Progressive muscle relaxation
(<http://www.guidetopsychology.com/pmr.htm>)
- ❖ Mini-vaca's
(<http://stress.about.com/od/travelstress/ht/staycation.htm>)
- ❖ Distress tolerance
(http://dbtselfhelp.com/html/distress_tolerance_handouts.html)



STEP 4: CHANGE OUR MIND (THOUGHTS)!



Ask yourself, “Am I acting from memory or inspiration?”

- ❖ **Practice Radical Acceptance** (http://www.dbtselfhelp.com/html/radical_acceptance.html, & <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/enlightened-living/201302/5-steps-compassionate-acceptance>)
- ❖ **Gratitude** (http://www.gratefulness.org/readings/practice_gratitude.htm)
- ❖ **Mindfulness** (<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-courage-be-present/201001/how-practice-mindfulness-meditation>)
- ❖ **Thought Stopping** (<http://t-e-a-c-h.org/pdffiles/Negative%20Thinking%20-%20Thought%20Stopping.pdf>)

SPECIAL NOTE: PRACTICE RADICAL ACCEPTANCE

Bill O'Bier
Aug 28, 2016

Reaching Radical Acceptance

The
path leading
to radical acceptance
originates with a pause.
Stepping out of your solitude,
promptly let go of fear-driven reactivity.
Embracing and accepting all of your being,
surround yourself with the warmth of loving kindness.
Begin now to forgive yourself and others again and again.
Know that your capacity to be completely open brings wholeness.
There are no formulas for navigating all of life's situations.
[...]

hellopoetry.com/poem/1746603

- The premise of radical acceptance is the belief that suffering is inevitable and sustained pain results in the non-acceptance of the human condition of suffering.
- Many situations are out of our control and when we try to control their outcome we experience prolonged suffering.
- It's natural to deny, avoid, ignore or attempt to self-medicate through a painful experience. We may even experience a temporary relief of the suffering. The reality is that these behaviors simply mask the reality and we often feel worse when they stop working or cause further damage in our lives.

Rollin (2017) states Radical Acceptance Is:

- Acceptance of things as they are.
- Understanding what we can and cannot control in life.
- Being non-judgmental.
- Looking at "just the facts" of the situation.
- Acknowledging our situation.
- Letting go and not fighting against reality.
- An ability to tolerate the present moment, even if it's painful.
- Mindfulness of our emotions and allowing ourselves to lean into the discomfort of painful emotions. (remembering that no feeling lasts forever and if we can sit with them, they will eventually rise and peak on their own-much like ocean waves).

Reference: Rollin, J. (2017). The Importance of Practicing 'Radical Acceptance.' Retrieved March 12, 2018, from https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/the-importance-of-practicing-radical-acceptance_us_592da801e4b0a7b7b469cd99.

SPECIAL NOTE: MORE ON PRACTICING GROUNDING AND SELF REGULATION

- Self-regulation is the ability to manage “Strong Feelings,” or disruptive emotions and impulses, think before acting, and choosing to act in a way that is in your best interests and is consistent with your deepest values.



BELLY BREATHING 4-7-8 BREATHING

PLACE HAND ON BELLY AND INHALE THROUGH NOSE SO HAND IS PUSHED OUT BY BELLY.

EXHALE THROUGH MOUTH AND PUSH DOWN ON BELLY WITH THE SAME HAND TO GET ALL THE AIR OUT. REPEAT 3-10 X.

REPEAT THE BELLY BREATHING EXERCISE BUT WITH A SLIGHT MODIFICATION. INHALE FOR 4 COUNTS, WAIT 7 COUNTS AND EXHALE FOR 8 COUNTS. REPEAT FOR SEVERAL MINUTES.

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SPECIAL NOTE: EMBRACING POST-TRAUMATIC GROWTH

- Post-traumatic growth is the manifestation of positive change after an adverse, life-altering experience.
- It is possible to have interpersonal distress and emotional growth simultaneously (Tedeschi, R. & Calhoun, L. 2004).
- Traumatic change is experiential, therefore powerful.
- When survivors become comfortable in the realm of paradox (i.e., I am more vulnerable, yet stronger), then post-traumatic growth is possible (Tedeschi, R. & Calhoun, L. 2004).
- Trauma Survivors may begin to:
 - Challenge previous hard and fast assumptions.
 - Release old and formulate new life goals.
 - Become in touch with “Wiser Self.”
- Survivor self-reports of post-traumatic growth are far more frequent than reports of psychiatric disorders (Tedeschi, R. & Calhoun, L. 2004).
- Positive Life Enhancements Survivors Report:
 - Increased independence.
 - Richer sense of self-efficacy and strengths.
 - Strong appreciation for social supports.
 - Improved interpersonal relationships.
 - Expansiveness of life possibilities.
 - Enhanced appreciation for life (valuing the small things).
 - Breadth of ability to express emotions.
 - Deeper spiritual development (spiritual questioning leads to solidification of beliefs).

SPECIAL NOTE: WAYS TO SUPPORT AND FACILITATE POST-TRAUMATIC GROWTH

- Support the development of strong coping skills.
- Understand that suffering and growth often coexist, and that growth is born from the process of learning to cope.
- Bear witness to survivors' suffering.
- Offer survivors a menu of distress-tolerance skills (ex. Running a marathon, intense physical activities, ROPES course, etc.)
- Be a Human Being, Not a Human Doing- Listen, don't offer solutions.
- Accept that, though a majority of survivors find positive growth after trauma, this is not the case for everyone, and that is also very normal.

STEP 5: CHANGE OUR HABITS (BEHAVIOR)!

Ask Yourself: “Am I driving myself crazy?”

- ❖ Create a schedule that promotes balance
- ❖ Schedule bathroom breaks
- ❖ Schedule preventive healthcare visits
- ❖ Be kind to yourself by getting enough sleep/food/exercise
- ❖ Do more of what makes you feel joyful
(<http://www.beliefnet.com/Health/Simple-Ways-to-Be-Happy.aspx>)

SOMETIMES, YOU NEED TO STEP
OUTSIDE, GET SOME AIR, AND REMIND
YOURSELF OF WHO YOU ARE AND WHO
YOU WANT TO BE.

BRINING IT ALL TOGETHER!

Live Post-Traumatic Growth

- More competent and self-reliant
- Increased acceptance of personal areas of growth and one's own humanity
- Improvement in relationships
- Positive realignment of priorities
- Strengthened spiritual beliefs
- Greater appreciation of one's life

Celebrate Cultural Wealth

- Aspirational Capital
- Familial Capital
- Social Capital
- Navigational Capital (bicultural skills)
- Resistant Capital
- Linguistic Capital

Show Personal Resilience

- Foster strong personal relationships
- Be optimistic
- Effectively communicate
- Actively problem-solve
- Show self-acceptance and humor
- Be a mentor and find a mentor
- Practice gratitude and generosity



WALK OUR TALK: THE PROFESSIONAL



STEP 1: LET'S BEGIN OUR PROFESSIONAL PROCESS BY EXPLORING OUR SOCIAL WORK IDENTITIES?

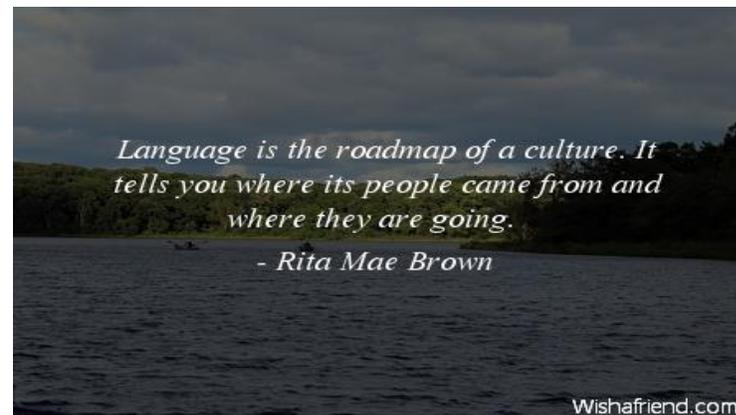
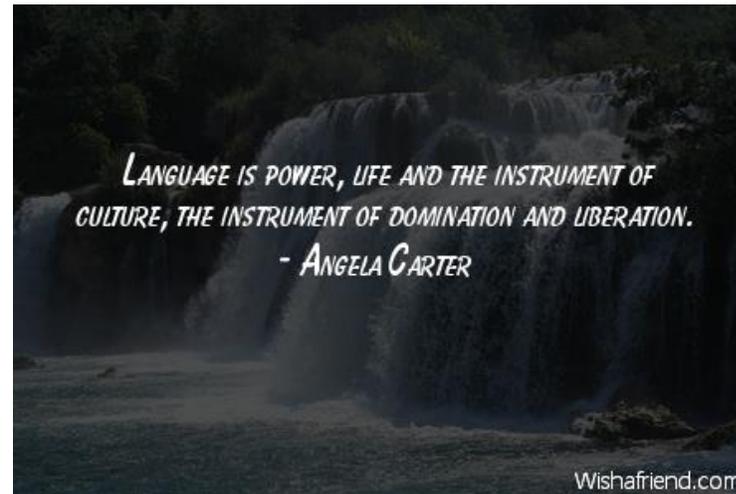
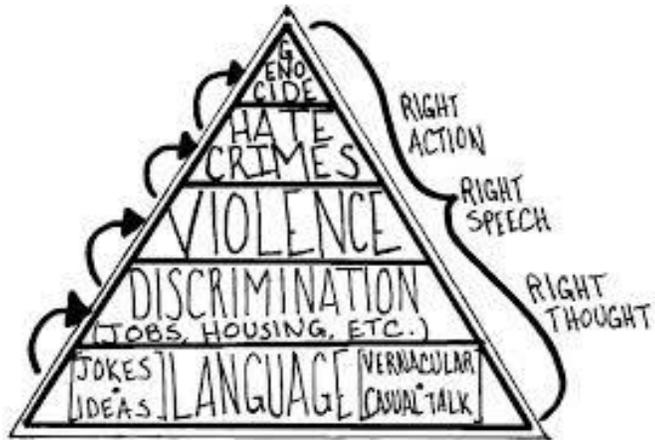
How Do We Identify?

- Social Justice
- Empowerment
- Unconditional Positive Regard
- Self-Determination
- Importance of Relationships

Our Core Identity-Based Values

- How does your professional identity match with your core identity based values?
- Where are the strong points of alignment?
- Where are the incongruences?
- What steps can you take to rectify these points of incongruence?

STEP 2: PRACTICE COMPASSIONATE SPEECH AND SKILLS FOR COMMUNICATING ACROSS IDENTITY



COMMUNICATION ACROSS IDENTITIES

Trust-Building Skills

- Active Listening
- Ask Clarifying Questions
- Listening for Feelings (You seem to be Feeling)
- Restating (What I heard You Say)
- Reflecting
- Summarizing
- Validating

Blocking/Derailing Communication

- Accusing/Blaming
- Advising
- Being Right
- Giving Excuses
- Globalizing
- Insulting
- Joking/Sarcasm
- Judging
- Interrupting
- Diagnosing
- Changing the Subject
- Threatening (Body Language or Verbally)

INTENT VS. IMPACT

**WE JUDGE OURSELVES
ON OUR INTENT
AND
WE JUDGE OTHERS ON
THEIR IMPACT**

KEEP YOUR THOUGHTS POSITIVE
BECAUSE YOUR THOUGHTS BECOME
YOUR WORDS.

KEEP YOUR WORDS POSITIVE
BECAUSE YOUR WORDS BECOME
YOUR BEHAVIOR.

KEEP YOUR BEHAVIOR POSITIVE
BECAUSE YOUR BEHAVIOR BECOMES
YOUR HABITS.

KEEP YOUR HABITS POSITIVE
BECAUSE YOUR HABITS BECOME
YOUR VALUES.

KEEP YOUR VALUES POSITIVE
BECAUSE YOUR VALUES BECOME
YOUR DESTINY.

- MAHATMA GANDHI

**WHATEVER ANYBODY
SAYS OR DOES, ASSUME
POSITIVE INTENT**

INDRA NOOVI
PICTUREQUOTES.COM



Intent vs. Impact

Intent

(what you meant)

vs.

Impact

(what you actually said)

S

Situation

Describe the situation. Be specific about when and where it occurred.

B

Behavior

Describe the observable behavior. Don't assume you know what the other person was thinking.

I

Impact

Describe what you thought or felt in reaction to the behavior.

Impact

Every action we take impacts the lives of others around us. The question is: Are you aware of Your impact?

- Arthur Carmazzi

www.carmazzi.net



INTENT VS. IMPACT

Speaker's Intent

- Ability to Express Oneself Clearly
- Implicit Bias
- Mindfulness of Others' Lived Experiences and World Views
- Understanding that Intentions are Unknown

Impact on Listener

- Lived Experiences of Oppression
- Compound Impact of Microaggressions
- Exposure to Trauma

Interpret What's Said

- Identity Informs Interpretation
- Cultured and Gendered Communication
- Observe and Acknowledge Nonverbal Cues Indicating That Negative Impact Has Occurred

Assess What Happened

- Implicit Bias
- Prior Experiences (Memory vs Inspiration)
- Identify Misalignment of Intent and Impact

Make Amends

- Acknowledge Intent and Impact Weren't Aligned
- Take Accountability and Responsibility for Impact
- Work to Understand Others' Perspective
- Learn How You Can Do Things Differently in the Future
- Accept that Amends May Not be Possible

- Common challenges in communication
- The speaker's ability to clearly express self
- The listener's ability to hear what is actually said
- Intentions of the people are not always known
- One or both parties may make incorrect assumptions or judgments
- Nonverbal cues help to identify when a person's intent and impact are not aligned
- Steps to take if your intent and impact were aligned
- Assess what happened
- Take responsibility for your actions
- Be honest about your intention
- Work to understand the other person's perspective
- Find out how you can handle the situation differently
- Make amends

References: Intent vs Impact: Why your intentions don't matter: <http://everydayfeminism.com/2013/07/intentions-dont-really-matter/>

Aligning Intent and Impact: http://www.diversitycentral.com/art13_0598.pdf

STEP 3: INCREASE AWARENESS AND STRIVE TO COMBAT MICROAGGRESSIONS AND IMPLICIT BIAS

Microaggressions are brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to people of color because they belong to a racial minority group.

- **Microassaults:** Conscious and intentional actions or slurs, such as using racial epithets, displaying swastikas or deliberately serving a white person before a person of color in a restaurant.
- **Microinsults:** Verbal and nonverbal communications that subtly convey rudeness and insensitivity and demean a person's racial heritage or identity. An example is an employee who asks a colleague of color how she got her job, implying she may have landed it through an affirmative action or quota system.
- **Microinvalidations:** Communications that subtly exclude, negate or nullify the thoughts, feelings or experiential reality of a person of color. For instance, white people often ask Asian-Americans where they were born, conveying the message that they are perpetual foreigners in their own land.
- Sue believes it's important to keep shining a light on the harm these encounters can inflict, no matter how the person of color decides to handle a given encounter. "My hope is to make the invisible visible," he says. "Microaggressions hold their power because they are invisible, and therefore they don't allow us to see that our actions and attitudes may be discriminatory."
- Unmasking 'racial micro aggressions' (DeAngelis, T. (2009), Retrieved September 7, 2013, from <http://www.apa.org/monitor/2009/02/microaggression.aspx>)

MICROAGGRESSIONS AREN'T JUST RACE-BASED...

- Microaggressions can occur against any marginalized population.
- LGBTQ participants described that when they experienced microaggressions, they felt depressed, anxious, and even traumatized (Nadal, Wong, et al., 2011)
- Microaggressions committed against LGBTQ communities include:
 - **Use of heterosexist or transphobic terminology**, like “That’s so gay.” 9 out of 10 LGBTQ high school students report experiencing harassment at school and why 2/3 of them say they feel unsafe (Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network, 2010)
 - **Endorsement of heteronormative culture and behaviors**
 - **Assumption of universal LGBTQ experience**
 - **Assumption of sexual pathology or abnormality**
 - **Denial of bodily privacy**

<http://psychologybenefits.org/2014/02/07/anti-lgbt-microaggressions/> retrieved 2/8/15

NEGATIVE IMPACT OF MICROAGGRESSIONS

- Create hostile and invalidating educational and work climate
- Devalue social group identities
- Lower work productivity and educational learning
- Perpetuate stereotype threat
- Create physical health problems
- Negative behavioral health outcomes, including distress, anxiety and depression

Taken from: Dr. Diane J. Goodman Small Things Matter: The Impact of Microaggressions on Individuals and Organizations

ELIMINATING MICROAGGRESSIONS: THE PERSONAL

- Become aware of own bias
 - Learn about other social/cultural groups
 - Be observant—notice reactions
 - Listen when someone raises a concern
 - Get feedback on interpersonal behavior and environment
 - Interrupt microaggressions when witnessing them
 - Educate others about microaggressions to be able to identify and stop them.
-
- Taken from: Dr. Diane J. Goodman *Small Things Matter: The Impact of Microaggressions on Individuals and Organizations*

ELIMINATING MICROAGRESSIONS: THE PROFESSIONAL

- Use your influence wisely
 - How many people can you influence?
 - What is your chain of influence?
 - How can you alter/use that positively? –
- Know your levels of power
 - What decisions do you make?
 - What power do you have?
 - How many people can you influence?

DEFINING IMPLICIT BIAS

- Cognitive process of categorizing like objects together and develop related cognitive biases that result in and perpetuate individuals' implicit reliance on stereotypes
- These stereotypes may then operate largely independent of the intent of an individual
- According to social cognition theory, stereotypes are person prototypes that act as “implicit expectancies that influence how incoming information is interpreted” (Lee, 2005) and remembered
- Stereotypes cause discrimination by influencing how individuals process and recall information about other people. (Lee, 2005)

ELIMINATING IMPLICIT BIAS

- Awareness
- Contact
- Becoming an Ally through:
 - Acknowledging privilege
 - Listening and believing experiences of marginalized group members
 - Being willing to take risks
 - Being humble and willing to be confronted about own behaviors and attitudes
 - Taking a stand against oppression
 - Believing we can make a difference
 - Cultivating support from other allies
 - Working to examine own privilege

STEP 4: BE THE CHANGE BY ACTING AS AN ALLY

- An ally is someone of one social identity group who stands up in support of members of another group; typically a member of a dominant group standing beside member(s) of a group being discriminated against or treated unjustly.
- Being an ally is more than being sympathetic toward those who experience oppression.
- Being an ally means being willing to act with and for others in pursuit of ending oppression and creating equality



BECOMING AN ALLY

- As an ally, you have a perspective that is different than people directly involved.
- We have the ability to think about each other, empower each other, and act on each other's behalf in our day-to-day lives or in emergency situations.
- Becoming an Ally through:
 - Learn about each other's cultures/histories
 - Establish friendships with people who experience marginalization
 - Acknowledging privilege
 - Examine own prejudices
 - Listening and believing experiences of marginalized group members
 - Support on issues that marginalized communities name as critical/important
 - Support groups to gain power in their communities
 - Being willing to take risks
 - Being humble and willing to be confronted about own behaviors and attitudes
 - Taking a stand against oppression
 - Promote leadership of people in groups that traditionally don't take leadership positions
 - Believing we can make a difference
 - Cultivating support from other allies
 - Work to change the systemic/institutional constructs that are the root causes of inequality and oppression
 - Develop alliances

WHY SHOULD YOU BE AN ALLY?

Ultimately, our own struggles are tied to everyone else's. Here is why:

- We live in an increasingly diverse country. In order to organize, unify, and empower communities, people need to learn how act on each other's behalf.
- When you give support to others, you are developing allies for your own groups and your own causes
- In order to address and change the systemic problems that cause oppression, you will need a lot of people who work together cooperatively and who are not vulnerable to divide-and-conquer tactics.
- When you are standing up against oppression, you are creating a moral standard in your community.
- Groups are frequently isolated from each other: "Us" from "them" and "them " from "us." Often groups that are targeted feel that no one cares about "their" issues and they can't get help.
- Being an ally is an antidote to isolation for those targeted by oppression *and* those in the targeting role--it empowers *everyone* involved.
- Our communities need the voices, opinions, and help of people from many different groups. As we reach out to groups, they will be more likely to become involved in and give their energy to the bigger community.
- Last, but not least, in the process of becoming an ally, you have an opportunity to regain your humanity in a society that can often be dehumanizing.

WHY SHOULDN'T YOU BE AN ALLY?

- Not everyone should be an ally in all situations. There are times when our motivations are not useful or can even be detrimental.
- Don't be an ally to diverse groups as a way of avoiding your own group.
- Don't be an ally to alleviate feelings of guilt.
- Don't be an ally in order to "help" people because you feel "better" than they are.

STEP 5: DECOLONIZE OUR BEINGS AND PROFESSION

Event

As an event, decolonization concerns reaching a level of critical consciousness, an active understanding that you are (or have been) colonized and are thus responding to life circumstances in ways that are limited, destructive, and externally controlled.

Process

As a process, decolonization means engaging in the activities of creating, restoring, and birthing. It means creating and consciously using various strategies to liberate oneself, adapt to or survive oppressive conditions; it means restoring cultural practices, thinking, beliefs, and values that were taken away or abandoned but are still relevant and necessary to survival; and it means the birthing of new ideas, thinking, technologies, and lifestyles that contribute to the advancement and empowerment of Indigenous Peoples.



NELSON'S (2017) DECOLONIZING OUR BEINGS AND PROFESSION FRAMEWORK

Building on Michael Yellow Bird's Conceptual Model of Decolonization, review this spectrum of ways in which we are impacted by colonization. Select an area on which you would like to focus. Spend time reflecting on ways you personally are impacted and develop 2 to 3 actions you are willing to undertake to begin your personal decolonization journey.

ONE STEP TOWARD DECOLONIZING OUR PROFESSION IS TO PRACTICE CULTURAL HUMILITY AND SOCIAL WORK: EVERYTHING IN AMERICA IS SEEN THROUGH IDENTITY (CLASS, RACE, GENDER) AT EVERY LEVEL. TO NOT ACKNOWLEDGE OR DIRECTLY EXPERIENCE THIS IS PRIVILEGE

Life-Long Learning and Critical Self-Reflection

“My identity is rooted in my history, and I get to say who I am.”

1. Culture is an internally-defined expression of oneself that evolves over a lifetime.
2. Every person has their own lived experiences and no two people are alike.
3. Understanding oneself and others through the lenses of identity is an ongoing process. At the Micro level, social work direct practice is informed by supervision in this area.
4. At the Mezzo and Macro levels, social workers can regularly facilitate focus groups and other methods for feedback to promote authentic change processes.

Recognizing and Challenging Power Imbalances

1. Practicing critical reflection and building insight into power imbalances at the personal, organizational, community and societal levels is key.
2. At the Micro level, social workers address power imbalances through acting as allies in personal, healing/transformation and empowerment and client advocacy.
3. At the Mezzo and Macro levels, we share power and act as allies in change with communities toward equity.
4. Social works should partner with the people we serve to ensure culturally-grounded programmatic design/evaluation.

Institutional Accountability

1. At the Micro level, social workers hold systems and institutions accountable through client advocacy.
2. At the Mezzo level, we act as advocates and educators in multidisciplinary settings to build awareness of the strengths, resilience and needs of the people we serve.
3. At the Macro level, social workers are ethically compelled to engage in social and political action that promotes social justice and equity.
4. Social workers should focus research on points of cultural capital and community cultural wealth as strategies for restoration and healing.

STEP 6: PRACTICE ONGOING CRITICAL REFLECTIVITY

- Reflection allows deeper understanding of oneself in context, how identity is embedded in interactions with others and the shared meaning that is created, and to search for new explanations for one's behavior and intentions.
- Reflection also examines ways things can be changed.
- Premises of critical reflectivity are:
- People and institutions contribute to the oppressive behaviors and practices that perpetuate inequality;
- Daily interactions with others, have broad and profound ramifications regarding oppressive behaviors/thoughts;
- One's conscious anti-racist convictions, attitudes and behaviors do not exclude one from participation in perpetuating inequality.

Questions to Facilitate Critical Self-Reflectivity

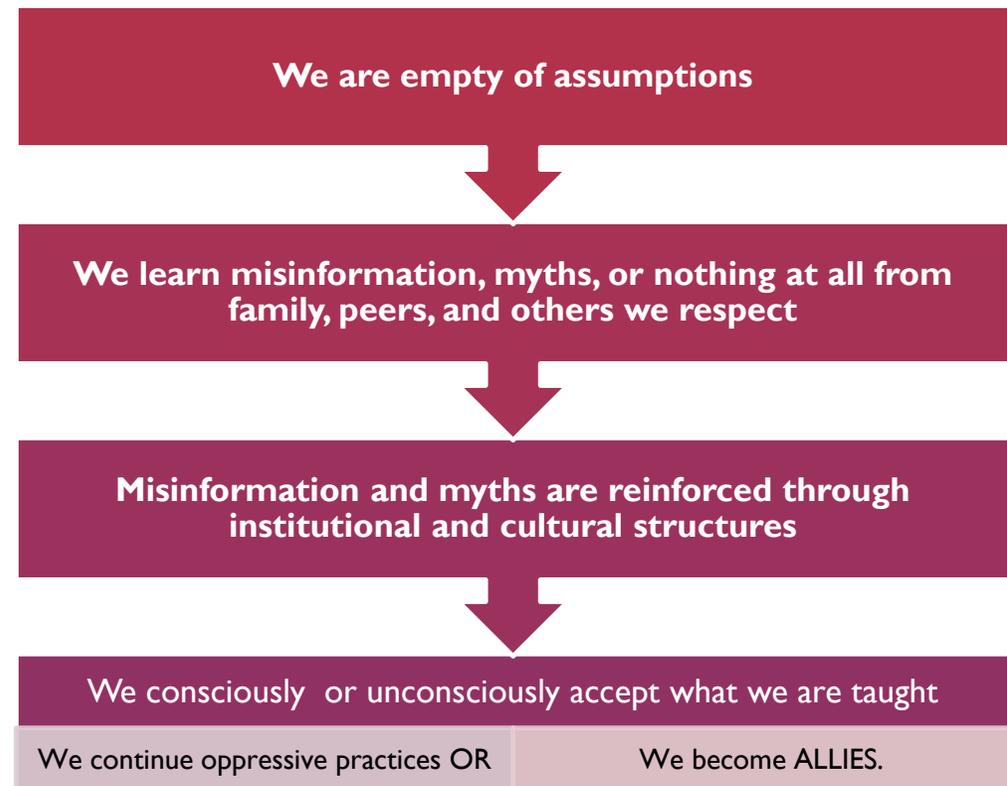
- What do I do daily that may contribute to inequality?
- What have I learned about how to perceive/relate to people from my group and other groups and what is the source of that learning?
- What do I know about how to relate to and interpret behavior of people with identities similar to and different from my own?
- What have I learned about how to interpret the behavior of people whose race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, ability, or religious affiliation differ from mine?
- What do I know about my conscious intentions when I interact with clients who have these identities?
- Why do the consequences or outcomes of my actions not fit with or match my good intentions?

OUTCOMES OF CRITICAL REFLECTION

Outcomes

- Recognition of disparities in power and authority between ourselves and others
- Understand our actions have unintended consequences for others
- Challenge the “assumption of normality”
- Understand roles of socialization, stereotypes, misinformation, myths partial histories, and how these are reinforced by institutional and cultural structures such as the media, schools, religion and governmental and legal systems, in our behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes
- Examine belief systems and ways of knowing: How and why we believe what we believe, “know what we know?”
- Create opportunities for change and making informed choices through newly developed understanding

Learning and Unlearning Assumptions of Hierarchical Social Orders



CREATING YOUR SUSTAINABLE PLAN FOR RADICAL SELF-CARE

- What are three steps you are willing to take right now to improve your self-care?
- What barriers might you anticipate?
- What strategies can you identify to address those barriers?





THANK YOU!

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