DEVELOPING AN INTERGROUP DIALOGUE PROGRAM: SHEDDING LIGHT ON IDENTITIES & INCLUSION

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WHAT IS INTERGROUP DIALOGUE?

Intergroup Dialogue (IGD) is a facilitated, face-to-face encounter that strives to create new levels of understanding, relating, action between two or more social identity groups who have a history of conflict or potential conflict.

(Zuniga & Nagda, 1993; Zuniga, 2003)
IGD Goals:

1. Help explore own and others’ social identities and statuses, and the role of social structures in relationships of privilege and inequality.

2. Foster positive intergroup relationships by developing empathy and motivation to bridge differences.

3. Foster intergroup collaboration for personal and social responsibility towards greater social justice.

(Nagda, 2006)
Why IGD?

Whelp. There’s a need.
1. There is a Need for a Discussion on Race At Work
Workplace Conversations on Race: A Need

- **Dominant Group Members Need to Feel Comfortable** (Cross, 2000; McCracken, 2000; Prime & Moss-Racusin, 2009; Schneider, Chevalier, & Tran, 2012; Zane, 2002)

- **Barriers to Engagement**
  - Colorblind vs. Color Cognizant (Foldy & Buckley, 2014)
  - White Guilt (Ely, 1995; Foldy, 2005)
  - “Protective Hesitation” (Thomas, 2001)
  - Fears of being seen as prejudiced (e.g., Richeson & Shelton, 2007; Shelton, 2003)

- **Consequences:**
  - → Cross Race Relationship Avoidance (Avery, Richeson, Hebl, & Ambady, 2009; Plant & Devine, 2003; Utsey, Gernat, & Hammar, 2005)
  - → Poor Mentorship & Outcomes (Thomas, 1993)
BENEFITS
Discussions of Race at Work
Workplace Conversations on Race: Benefits

- Increased Comfort—Cross Race Relationships
  - Improves Team Learning & Performance
  - Supports Organizational Change Initiatives re: Diversity

- Remaining Engaged
  - Difficult Conversations
    - → Increase in Work Engagement
    - → Increase in Employee Trust
    - → Increased Learning & Development Opps

- Staff feel as if they have more Agency over Institutional Change
2. There is a Need for a Discussion on Race With Students
Campus Conversations about Race: The Need

- College Campuses: 3rd most Common Place for Hate Crimes (Parker, 2006)
- Disconnect Between Institutional Values & Campus Activities (Parker, 2006)
- Silence/Silencing (Castagno, 2008)
  - Perpetuation of racism/race inequalities
  - Maintains Culture of Whiteness
- Increasing Diversity without attending to Racial Climate: Problematic (Hurtado, 1992)
  - Students of color focused on worry & fitting in
  - Increased Attrition
  - Reduced interracial interaction between
- Students Change Personal Interactions Themselves, Not Administration (Parker, 2006)
BENEFITS

Discussions of Race with Students
Campus Conversations about Race: The Benefits

- Safe dynamic to explore relationship dynamics & identities
- Identity Engagement (Dovidio et. al., 2004)
- Increased awareness & understanding of inequalities (Dovidio et. al., 2004)
  - Institutional Factors
  - Structural Factors
- Less intergroup divisiveness amongst interracial members (Dessel & Rogge, 2008)
- SOC increased positive views of conflict (Dessel & Rogge, 2008)
- Increased positive interracial relationships years later (Dessel & Rogge, 2008)
- Perceptions of greater commonality (Dessel & Rogge, 2008)
A NATIONWIDE PRACTICE
### Recommendations on How to: Intergroup Dialogue

- **Co-facilitated**
  - One female and one male
  - One person of color; one white

- **Voluntary**
- **Minimum of 6 weeks**
- **No More than One Absence**
- **Ground rules are essential**
- **Reflection is essential**
- **Strong facilitators are essential**
- **Facilitator training essential**
- **Philosophy of DIP (dialogue, interaction and perspective taking) – not focused on “teaching”**
  - Facilitators should facilitate and expose participants to information, not “teach” what is correct; not correct

- **Group size: minimum 8 (6 participants & 2 facilitators), maximum 12**
- **Makeup: At least 50% people of color**

After exploring many articles, texts, books, etc we decided as a group to use the Dr. Beverly Tatum book, “Why are all the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?”
Starting the Dialogue:
What do you know about your name? Where did it come from? Are you named for anyone? Does your name reflect anything about your background?
Intergroup Dialogue Curriculum & Process

Group Formation
- Introductions, establishing group agreements, exploring stereotypes

Understanding Self
- Exploring identities, examining messages and learning of race and racism

Understanding Others
- Sharing experiences around race, exploring community impact, identifying privilege

Allyship, Commitment, & Action
- Creating individual and group action plans, assessing community initiatives, making recommendations

Reflection & Group Closure
- Processing of experience and reflection on learning and action
Intergroup Dialogue Text & Materials

Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? by Beverly Tatum, PhD
- Each participant given a copy of the book in advance
- Focus on first three chapters to establish common language and understanding of concepts
- Related to curriculum activities

White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack by Peggy McIntosh
- PDF copy given to each participant
- Used in discussion of privilege
Opportunities & Challenges

Opportunities
- Improve campus climate and normalize difficult conversations in workplace
- Increase team effectiveness
- Development of cultural competence
- Collaboration within a division or across divisions

Challenges
- Recruitment of facilitators and participants
- Required vs. Optional
- Requires time to develop and gain traction
- Requires resources – budget, personnel
- Who “owns” it?
Interested in Starting IGD on Your Campus?
Lessons Learned & Tips to Get it Started

Start Small
Determine one topic to start with (we chose race & ethnicity) and build a curriculum around it. Start with a pilot group of your “champions” and grow the program from there.

Adjust as Needed
There are ideal conditions for running this initiative, but there may be times when you have to do the best you can to get it started. Sometimes adjustments and “figuring it out” is needed.

Campus Partners
Think about folks from other divisions or departments that would be interested. Are they “easy” initial collaborators? Can they lead the charge for their divisions?

Share It!
Use participants to help recruit others for future IGD sessions. The power of this program is in sharing experiences, so this is an effective way to get other professionals interested.

Assess to Expand
What future topics are most salient for folks at your institution? What need is out there? Draw from climate surveys and assessment data to grow the program.

Keep Trying!
Not every IGD session will be full, and sometimes it might need to be postponed. Keep working to gain traction and get people involved. It takes time.
Thanks!

Any Questions?

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References


