

CAPSTONE RETREAT

Resource Materials

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According to Helms (1993), White people should be encouraged to see themselves as racial beings because such efforts bring the insight necessary to eliminate oppression. In predominantly White communities where diversity is often equated only with "color," White people generally consider multiculturalism a non-issue because "everyone is the same." This perspective:

- Dismisses People of Color within the community
- Perpetuates whiteness as an oppressive and unexamined norm
- Ignores other cultural perspectives and identities (e.g., spirituality, class)
- Fails to effectively address difficulties experienced between the privileged and oppressed.

The following ideas and exercises are provided as tools and suggestions for you to adapt and utilize with your students to increase self-awareness, understanding and activism.

KEYS FOR ENGAGING WHITE PEOPLE IN MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

↔ **Broad Understanding of Diversity**

Diversity is more than just what is "seen," (e.g., race), it is all the ways we make sense of the world. Each individual is comprised of multiple identities and multiple oppressions interconnect.

↔ **All Have Something to Offer and to Gain**

It is essential for White people to view themselves as a cultural beings with unique identities and perspectives - not neutral (Barndt, 1991). This equips White people to engage in discussion about diversity from a place of strength not deficit, and to understand how oppression involves and impacts all people – including themselves.

Activities include:

- "If you came to my house..."
- "What's in a Name?"
- Step in, Step Out
- "Who am I, What do I Bring?" (Dr. Jamie Washington)

↔ **Understanding Power & Privilege**

Power is essential element of oppression – not just prejudice but the power to enforce that prejudice individually, culturally and institutionally. Privilege is the benefit(s) resulting from this inequity.

Activities include:

- Step forward/step back
- Isms & Obias
- Unequal resources activity (Johnson, Joining Together)
- Privilege Cards

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↔ **Balancing Challenge & Support**

Sanford wrote of the need to provide a balance of challenge and support for individual growth to occur. It is important to create learning environments/opportunities where individuals are safe to be “unsafe.”

↔ **Understanding Intent vs. Impact**

Although one’s intent may not be to offend, it does not invalidate one’s impact on the other person. It is essential to acknowledge the feelings/perspective of the other, apologize, and accept the consequences.

Activities include:

- Shoe Sales
- Questioning to prompt reflection.
- Cross Cultural Communication

↔ **Being an Ally**

Provide information and practical tools to help answer “Now What?” Encourage individuals to become an Ally, someone with privilege/power who is aware and intentional about working to dismantle oppression in collaboration with those oppressed.

Activities include:

- Interruption scenarios
- “Dudley Do-Right” & Rosa Parks
- Information & Resources (e.g., *A People’s History of the United States*, by Howard Zinn, connections with other Allies).

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE OF COLOR

While there is no special hierarchy of oppression, racism has a tremendous impact in the United States – especially in predominantly white communities. So while addressing issues of power and privilege, it is essential to provide support for students whose experience as “target” is highlighted by such conversations

Activities include:

- Racial Caucusing
- Highlighting Campus/Community Resources

RELEVANT CONCEPTUAL/THEORETICAL REFERENCES:

Barndt, J. (1991). *Dismantling racism: The continuing challenge to white America*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress.

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum.

Helms, J. (1993). “Toward a model of White racial identity.” In J. Helms (Ed.), *Black and White racial identity: Theory and practice* (p. 40-66). Westport, CT: Praeger.

McIntosh, P. (1992). “White privilege and male privilege: A personal account of coming to see correspondences through work in women’s studies” In M. Anderson & P. Collins (Eds.), *Race, class and gender: An anthology* (pp. 70-81). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

OTHER SUGGESTED MULTICULTURAL RESOURCES:

Adams, M.; Bell, L. & Griffin, P. (Eds.) (1997). *Teaching for diversity and social justice: A handbook*. London: Routledge.

hooks, b. (1995). *Killing rage: Ending racism*. New York: Henry Holt & Company.

Lowen, J. W., (1995). *Lies my teacher told me: Everything your American history textbook got wrong*. New York: The New Press.

Pharr, S. (1988). *Homophobia: A weapon of sexism*. Little Rock: Chardon Press.

Wray, M. & Newitz, A. (Eds.). (1997). *White trash: Race and class in America*. London: Routledge.

Zinn, H. (1995). *A People's History of the United States: 1492 – present*. New York: HarperCollins.

NOTES

WHO AM I & WHAT DO I BRING?

Describe

Describe your background or identity on the basis of:

- race/ethnicity
- gender/sex
- spirituality
- ability (physical/mental)
- socio-economic class
- age
- physical appearance
- sexual orientation

Difficulties

What have been some difficulties for you, growing up as described above?

Sources of Strength

What have been some sources of strength for you, growing up as described above?

Your “fit”

How has your background or identity affected your fit in your university / community?

Adapted from “Who am I, What do I Bring?” Developed by Dr. Jamie Washington

ADDRESSING STEREOTYPES

Exercise utilized by the Residential Life Department at Colorado State University

PREPARATION

If possible, prepare the room to the participants' arrival by posting sheets of paper around the room – one per participant and each labeled with a different category/group. Be sure and mix them up so similar groups are not posted all together (e.g., religious, racial, sexual orientation).

Possible sheets include:

- Asian American
- African American
- Arab American
- Republican
- Non-English Speaking
- Rich
- Atheist
- White
- Transgender
- Bisexual
- Christian
- Democrat
- Poor
- Female
- Gay
- Straight
- Islamic
- Over 50
- Homeless
- Male
- Lesbian
- Non-English Speaking
- Jewish
- College Student
- Chicano/Latino
- Male
- Lesbian
- American
- Jewish
- Disabled
- Multiracial

INTRODUCTION

One element helping perpetuate oppression is the distancing and stereotyping of the “other.” The less one knows or has access to people/communities different from their own, the less one is able to make connections and collaborate – especially in regard to challenging oppression.

A stereotype is an assumption, often held unconsciously, involving the intelligence, ability, personality, etc. of another person or group of people – accepted as true without proof or demonstration.

Spradley, J. & McCurdy, D. (Eds.). (1994). *Conformity and conflict: Readings in cultural anthropology*. New York: HarperCollins.

DIRECTIONS

Each person is to select a different sheet of paper and stand in front of it. They will be given 45 seconds to write as many terms, phrases and stereotypes for each listed group. Remind participants that this exercise is not about “do I” or “don’t I” believe these terms, phrases and stereotypes. Write your first thoughts/impressions – what you have heard or learned from friends, family, media, experiences, etc. – refraining from trying to edit or censor your thoughts.

After the first 45 seconds, everyone will move one station to their right and be given another 45 seconds. This will repeat until participants return to their original sheet.

When the exercise is complete, have individuals bring their sheets into the middle of the room and create a circle. Ask participants to silently move around the circle and read what has been written. As they finish, invite people to free-write their thoughts and feelings.

PROCESS QUESTIONS

- How did it feel to do this exercise?
- What do you notice about what has been written/Why are most, if not all, negative?
- What would you like to do with all this? (Usually participants want to rip, burn, destroy the sheets – this allows movement into the next section of the exercise).

DISMANTLING THE STEREOTYPES

Participants are invited to stand and take a sheet and talk about why they believe what is written is untrue – rip up the paper and throw it into a trash can. Ask that no more than two people to come up for each list and remind them they do not have to be a member of the group represented on a sheet to be affected by what has been written and to respond.

STEREOTYPES VS. OPPRESSION

Through discussion, opportunity may arise to clarify the difference between prejudice and oppression. Prejudice is a judgement – a favorable or negative attitude based on limited information, often on stereotypes. To be truly useful, refuting stereotypes and prejudice means more than just being open minded – but seeing the systems in place that create inequity.

Oppression occurs when individuals or groups have the power to enforce their prejudice. For example:

RACIAL PREJUDICE + POWER = RACISM

Definition from People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, New Orleans.

So – oppression involves systematically reinforcing the differences between social groups – reinforcing inequality... individually, culturally, institutionally. It means exploiting one group over another to receive privilege.

EXAMPLES:

Heterosexism

- Individually: Acts of intolerance... “you’re so gay.” – cause discomfort, ostracizing
- Culturally: Valentines day – images we see, cards we can buy – what kind of couples do you see represented and encouraged.
- Institutional: The government recognizes only opposite sex marriages for privileges such as adoption rights, survivor benefits, right to sue for wrongful death.

Racism

- Individually: (racial slur)
- Culturally: (images of black men in the media)
- Institutional: (racial profiling)

NOTE TO FACILITATORS

This exercise can raise significant emotions so it is essential to create a safe space for participants to be “unsafe” (e.g., confidentiality, support/challenge). Be sure and have plenty of time for processing and have some closure activity that brings the group together.

UNEQUAL RESOURCES

Exercise adapted from Johnson & Johnson (1997) Joining Together: Group theory and group skills, 6th edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

This exercise initiates discussion regarding how persistent unequal resource distribution in society impacts attitudes, achievement, and advancement.

MATERIALS

Group 1: scissors, ruler, paper clips, pencils, two 4-inch squares of red paper, and two 4-inch squares of white paper.

Group 2: scissors, glue, and two sheets each of gold paper, white paper, and blue paper, each 8 X 11 inches.

Group 3: felt-tipped markers and two sheets each of green paper, white paper, and gold paper, each 8 X 11 inches.

Group 4: five sheets of paper, 8 X 11 inches - one green, one gold, one blue, one red, and one purple.

Prize: Candy or other prize that can be shared by all placed in a bag so participants can not see the contents but are assured a prize is at stake.

PARTICIPANT INSTRUCTIONS

Each group is to complete the following tasks:

- Make a 3 X 3 inch square of white paper
- Make a 4 X 2 inch rectangle of gold paper
- Make a 3 X 5 inch T-shaped piece of green and white paper
- Make a four-link paper chain, each link of a different color
- Make a 4 X 4 inch flag in any three colors

The first group to complete all the tasks accurately is the winner. Members of the winning group will receive a prize. You must use only the materials I have given you, but you may negotiate with each other for the use of needed materials and tools on any mutually agreeable basis.

PROCESS QUESTIONS

- What relationship did resources have to winning?
- What relationship did resources have to negotiation?
- What would happen if I did the same activity at the start of every class period with each group getting the same resources they did today? What would your reaction be? Why?
- What connections can you make between this task and conditions based on race in society?

UNDERSTANDING OPPRESSION

Exercise developed by Laura C. Engelken; 117 May Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA 95062; 831.426.3584

PIPE CLEANER STATUES

Individuals choose three pipe cleaners and are asked to create a statue representing the important pieces of their identity. Folks share these with each other in small groups and/or go around the room sharing their identity.

BOX

Have participants present their pipe cleaner statues and then go around the room enforcing "community." Encourage those whose structures are too large to remove or adapt their pieces (e.g., it is in their best interest, provide room for others) and praise those who fit easily and nicely.

Process Questions

- How did you feel about this exercise?
- How did you feel when encouraged to change? Seeing others asked to change?
- How did it feel to be the one who fit? How did others feel about those who fit?
- How might this exercise relate to societal forces and expectations?
- Does this ever happen at (university/organization)? In what ways can this happen in our community (i.e., people "told/given the impression they must hide/remove pieces of their identity).

OPPRESSION

One way to conceptualize and discuss the dynamic of oppression is to think of it as a box. Ask participants to consider the pipe cleaner exercise in light of the following description:

The root of the word oppression is the element press...Presses are used to mold things or flatten them or reduce them in bulk, sometimes to reduce them by squeezing out the gases or liquids in them. Something pressed is something caught between or among forces and barriers which are so related to each other that jointly they restrain, restrict, or prevent the thing's motion or mobility. Mold Immobilize. Reduce."

M.Frye (1983). *The politics of reality*. Trumansburg, NY: The Crossing Press.

Oppression is a social phenomenon based on the differences between social groups. The result is the exploitation of one social group by another for its own benefit, either real or perceived.

Spradley, J. & McCurdy, D. (Eds.). (1994). *Conformity and conflict: Readings in cultural anthropology*. New York: HarperCollins.

Process Questions

- What identities/characteristics often are the ones that "fit" in our society and structure (e.g., male, white, able-bodied)?
- What are some of the goodies associated with fitting into the box (e.g., money, education, governmental representation)

Inequality: *A human relationship marked by differences in power authority, prestige, and access to valued goods and services, and by the payment of deference.* Spradley, J. & McCurdy, D. (Eds.). (1994).

Some of us fit in this box better than others, but likely everyone has a piece sticking out – experiencing those social forces communicating there is something not quite right with them. But most likely, everyone has an element of privilege as well. Often it is easier to be aware of where we are on the negative side than to realize how we are on the positive side-receiving the goodies (i.e., privilege).

I have always had access to affordable health care. I can choose to legally marry my partner and have that marriage recognized at all levels of government.

If I am going to go out to dinner with friends, I do not worry whether the building is accessible to me.	ABILITY
I can be open about who I am and be around people's kids and not have them be suspicious of me.	SEXUAL ORIENTATION
I'm fairly certain I can attend any event and know there will be people of my race present.	RACE
People do not make assumptions about my intelligence or work ethic based on the size and shape of my body.	SIZE
When I strongly state my opinion, it is usually seen as assertive not as aggressive.	GENDER / RACE/ SEXUAL ORIEN,
When I am with others of my race, people do not think we are segregating ourselves or causing trouble.	RACE
I can usually afford, without much hardship, to do the things my friends want to do for entertainment.	CLASS
When filling out forms for school or work, I am represented in the boxes I am asked to check for identification.	GENDER / RACE
I can choose the style of dress I am most comfortable in and feel reflects my personality and identity, and know I will not be perceived by people as a threat to them.	TRANSGENDER
If pulled over in traffic by a police officer, I can be sure I haven't been singled out because of my race.	RACE
I do not worry about walking alone at night.	GENDER
When I speak, people do not make assumptions about my intelligence based upon my style of speech.	ABILITY/ RACE/ ETHNICITY
When attending classes or other events, I do not have to worry about having an interpreter present to understand or participate	ABILITY / LANGUAGE
I can book an airline flight, go to a movie or ride in a car and not worry about whether there will be a seat that will accommodate me.	ABILITY/ SIZE
People assume I was hired or was admitted to school because of my credentials rather than because of my race or gender <i>or become an ambassador</i>	RACE/GENDER
As a child, I could use the "flesh" colored crayons to color my family and myself and have it more or less match our skin color.	RACE

PROCESS QUESTIONS

- How was it to do this exercise? 4
- How was it to consider the number of cards you had in your hand?
- How was it to notice the cards those around you were either putting down or keeping in their hand?
- What does it feel like to have that privilege?
- In light of the exercise we just did-what is privilege-how would you define it?

Peggy McIntosh describes **privilege** as *an invisible package of unearned assets which I can count on cashing in on each day, but about which I was "meant" to remain oblivious. In fact, privilege is an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear and blank checks.*

- What is it like to acknowledge you have privilege?
- If you are privileged, you have no choice whether you have it? But being aware – what are you going to do with it?

POWER, POSITION AND PRIVILEGE “STEP OUT”

Source Unknown

Similar to the privilege card exercise described above, the “Step Out” exercise highlights the privileges held by individuals/groups. Using the same statements – changing them to read, “Please take a step forward if...” You can also change the nature of the statement and ask individuals to “Please take a step backwards if...”

INTRODUCTION

Ask individuals to form a line by holding hands. You can also ask the group to line up in birth order without speaking. This can be used as a quick introduction to privilege by asking, “What privileges did you have that enabled you to complete that task, (e.g., sight, common understanding of numbers and calendar year– such as the number 3 meant March).

Establish ground rules by inviting participants to:

- Step forward, back or stand still in response to each statement as it applies to them.
- Remain holding the hand of the person(s) next to them throughout the entire exercise.
- Pay attention to feelings – try to reserve judgement upon them but just notice them and continue moving through the exercise.
- Decide for themselves what they want to share. It is not being dishonest or disloyal to a part of one’s identity to decide not to reveal something about yourself.
- Respect confidentiality regarding what participants share; it is not appropriate to “out” others saying they should or should not move in response to a particular question.
- Participate in silence without giggling, talking or questioning.

PROCESSING

Before leaving the line and beginning process questions, ask participants to take a moment to identify where they are standing – looking around at the rest of the group and taking a moment to think about the exercise.

- What came up for you in this exercise? What were you feeling?
- How did you feel when you moved forward and someone else did not? (e.g., physical tension)
- How did you feel when others moved forward and YOU did not?
- How did you feel about your position in line at the end of the exercise? Did anything about it surprise you?

The people in the front are those possessing the most privilege in this group. This is not about guilt for those of us in front – although that is an okay and normal emotional response. This is about noticing where we have privilege where others may not.

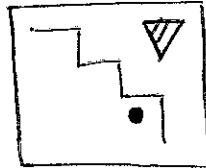
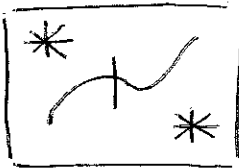
This exercise is to experience the results of a system that has been created to favor some characteristics or experiences of a person over others.

- How have you benefited from privilege? If you are in a position of privilege, what can you do?
- How have you experienced lack of privilege? If you lack privilege – what can you do?
- What can we/what do we want to do given these realities? How can we address these inequalities?

CROSS CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Exercise compiled by Laura C. Engelken; 117 May Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA 95062; 831.426.3584

Divide participants into pairs – having them decide between themselves who will draw and who will describe and then sit back to back. Give the individual drawing a pencil and an 8 1/2 X 11 sheet of paper. To the other person, you will give an equal size sheet of paper with a pre-drawn design. The design should be fairly basic, such as:



The pair must replicate the picture – without ever looking at each other's paper. Give participants approximately 5 minutes to do the exercise and then process.

PROCESS QUESTIONS

- How was it to do this exercise?
- What things did the listener do that made you more or less successful?
- How about the one explaining?
- How might this relate to communicating with people different than yourself?

CROSS CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Adapted from: "Reader for Psychology 251. "Housing & Residential Life, Student Affairs Division, California Polytechnic State University. (1995).

Although communication seems a straightforward process involving the sending and receiving of messages, it is highly complex and influenced by differences in values, perceptions, assumptions and communication styles. Communication is easiest between participants who share many of these factors – the more difficulties arise when there are differences.

This is what we mean by cross-cultural communication. **Culture** is the knowledge people learn, share and use to understand experience and generate behavior. Basically, culture is how we make sense of our life and the world.

Factors Influencing Communication:

Values: Values are based upon what we believe is true, correct and important. For communication between people with differing values to occur, each person must be willing to understand and learn about the values of the other.

For Example: What is a true triangle (e.g., equal lateral, obtuse)

Perceptions: Perceptions are our "mindset" based on our values, previous experience, culture and expectations. For effective communication to occur, each participant must accept the validity of the other's perspective and be willing to examine a topic from their point of view.

For Example: What is a SMALL circle?

Assumptions: An assumption is a statement or judgement accepted as true without proof or demonstration. Based on values and perceptions, there are two types of assumptions: *stereotypes* and *suspicious*. Stereotypes are assumptions, often held unconsciously, involving the intelligence, ability, personality, etc of another person or group of people. Suspicious are assumptions involving doubt or mistrust. For communication to proceed, assumptions must be verbalized and clarified.

For Example: Distrusting and always second-guessing your partner.

Communication Style: Communication style is the way in which we say what we say. The words, tone of voice and physical stance we use in conversation are as important as the content. For example, white culture's communication style involves: standard English, written tradition, direct eye contact, limited physical contact and controlling emotions. Such differences must be identified to allow participants to focus upon the content of their conversation.

For Example: "Yup – okay..." "The one describing thinks s^ohe is being asked to hurry up & stop explaining, when the one drawing is instead encouraging him^oher to continue

Things to Remember:

- Pay attention to the speaker's content
- Set aside your values and assumptions, withholding judgement
- Be complete and explicit
- Be alert for different meanings, asking for clarification
- Paraphrase
- Difference between intent and impact
- Do not ask questions you would/could not answer yourself.

INTERRUPTING & TAKING ACTION

Exercise developed by Laura C. Engelken; 117 May Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA 95062; 831.426.3584

DIRECTIONS

This exercise is run like a “Dudley Do Right” skit. Start by asking for volunteers for each role (e.g., “Okay, I need a bus driver”) and creating a “stage,” setting up chairs to serve as the bus. Volunteers stand at the side as you read the story and act out their role as it is described in the story (this takes some direction from the reader/facilitator).

Excerpt from an interview with Rosa Parks: My Soul is Rested: Movement Days in the Deep South Remembered. Written by Howell Raines.

I left my work at the men’s alteration shop, a tailor in the Montgomery Fair department store. I crossed the street to a drugstore to pick up a few items instead of trying to go directly to the bus stop. When I had finished this, I looked for a Cleveland Avenue bus that apparently had some seats on it.

At that time it was a little hard to get a seat on the bus. But when I did get to the entrance of the bus, I got in line with a number of other people getting on at the same stop.

As I got up on the bus and walked to the seat – I saw there was only one vacancy that was just back of where it was considered the white section. So this was the seat I took, next to the aisle, and a man was sitting next to me. Across the aisle there were two women.

At this point, there were a few seats at the very front of the bus that was called the white section. I went on to one stop and I didn’t particularly notice who was getting on the bus. On the third stop there were some people getting on, and at this point all of the front seats were taken.

Now in the beginning, at the very first stop I had got on the bus, the back of the bus was filled with people standing in the aisle. I don’t know why this one vacancy I took was left, because there were quite a few people already standing toward the back of the bus. The third stop is when all the front seats were taken, and this one man was standing.

When the driver looked around and saw he was standing, he asked the four of us, the man in the seat with me and the two women across the aisle, to let him have those four seats.

At his first request, didn’t any of us move. Then he spoke again and said, “You’d better make it light on yourselves and let me have those seats.” At this point, of course, the passenger who would have taken the seat hadn’t said anything. In fact, he never did speak to my knowledge.

When the three people, the man who was in the seat with me and the two women, stood up and moved into the aisle, I remained where I was. When the driver saw I was still sitting there, he asked if I was going to stand up. I told him, no, I wasn’t. He said, “Well, if you don’t stand up, I’m going to have you arrested.” I told him to go on and have me arrested.

He got off the bus and came back shortly. A few minutes later, two policemen got on the bus, and they approached me and asked if the driver had asked me to stand up. I said yes, and they wanted to know why I didn’t. I told them I didn’t think I should have to stand up.

They placed me under arrest and had me to get in the police car. I was taken to jail and booked on suspicion, I believe...They had to determine whether or not the driver wanted to press charges or swear out a warrant, which he did. Then they took me to jail and I was placed in a cell.

In a little while I was taken from the cell, and my picture was taken and fingerprints made. Then, I went back to the cell and a few minutes later I was called back again. I found out that Mr. E.D. Nixon and Mrs. Clifford Durr had come to make a bond for me.

PROCESS QUESTIONS

- What strikes you about this situation?
- Who were the people involved (list them on newsprint)?
- What were all the potential responses for these people?

Each person had a role to play in this situation-whether or not they had an “official” leadership role. We all have the ability to impact our lives and the lives of others-to shape our community.

SEGWAY TO SCENARIOS

Each individual has an opportunity to interrupt an act of intolerance and/or to respond in a just, equitable and supportive manner. Sometimes the myth is that Ms. Parks was just tired and didn't want to move, but in actuality, she had been involved in non-violence training and other conversations regarding how to challenge discrimination in the South. She prepared herself for such an opportunity.

DIRECTIONS

Allowing individuals to practice how they might respond to intolerance provides an opportunity for role modeling, skill building and individual/group empowerment.

Split participants into small groups to discuss various realistic scenarios that directly relate to individual's experiences and work/personal lives – answering questions such as:

- What issues were raised in this scenario?
- What are some ways to interrupt or respond to this scenario?

Have small groups report back to the whole – either through conversation and/or dramatization. Write all potential responses on a sheet of paper as they arise (e.g., do nothing, get angry, ask questions). After each group presents their suggestions, allow other individuals to respond and have a dialogue about how one might respond.

Some important points to address:

- Intent vs. impact
- Time, manner & place
- Sphere of interest vs. sphere of concern
- Importance of allies
- Interconnectedness of oppression

