



Working with Difference

Dept. of Social Work Education Field Instructor Training

Fresno State

January 10, 2018



DIVERSITY

Challenges in Teaching and Practice

- Teaching
 - Creating a safe enough environment to explore social justice issues and practice implications
 - Implications for self awareness - lived experience, social identity, owning biases
 - Learning about “the other”; attending to social power issues
 - Contextual approach that examines historical, institutional, and societal factors
- Practice values
 - Interpersonal skills, engagement skills, process orientation
 - Culturally proficient skills, (NASW, 2015), Micro/Macro, Ethics
 - Curiosity



Field Supervision Goals/Tasks; Challenges

- Elements of effective supervision (Munson, 1983)
 - Focus on student's learning needs
 - Field Instructor Forthrightness
 - Mutuality
 - Communication
 - Use of case material
 - Working relationship between student and supervisor
- Challenges of future social work practice (Reisch & Jarman-Rohde, 2000)
 - Marked increase in social and economic inequality
 - Increased employment insecurity + decline in wages and benefits
 - Decline in social character of work, e.g., technology, alienation (increased Substance use, IPV, Mental Illness), reduced intergroup contact



Intergroup Dialogue (IGD) Principles*

- Provides systematic approach that integrates *didactic and experiential*; allows class dynamics (culture) to develop and deepen
- Major issue regards students learning about *social power* and its effects on their life (i.e., social identity, interpersonal interactions, lived experience), and role of societal/institutional factors
- Based on intergroup contact theory
- Gaining traction in teaching social justice in social work
- Seeks to raise awareness about privilege, oppression, and structural discrimination
- Originally developed to focus on creating dialogue between groups that, historically, have had conflict
- Dialogue conducted in a sustained, facilitated context

*Resources are from University of Michigan, Center for Intergroup Dialogue

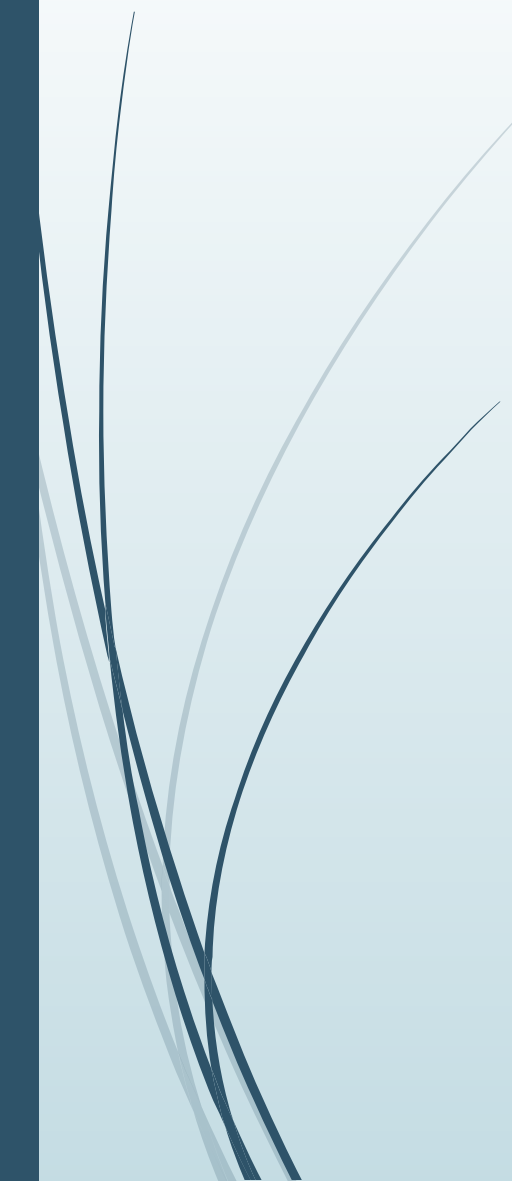


Key Intergroup Dialogue Concepts

- Social Power,
- Institutional discrimination
- Privilege (Agent Group); knowingly or unknowingly benefit/exploit unfair advantage
- Oppression (Target Status); marginalization/invisibility/devaluation; expendable/replaceable.
- “Othering”; the “other”
- Intersectionality
- Ism’s – Racism, Ableism, Heterosexism/Genderism, Classism, Sexism, Religious intolerance, Sizeism.....and more
- Equity, Social Justice
- Collusion
- Ally Building



4 Stages of IGD

1. Creating a Shared Meaning of Dialogue
 - a. Develop agreed upon norms/guidelines
 - b. Form and build relationships within the group
 2. Identity, Social Relations, and Conflict
 - a. Understand concept of social group identity, privilege/oppression, intersectionality
 - b. Learn and practice dialogue skills
 - c. Explore various types of oppression, differences & commonalities
 3. Practicing Dialogue; Hot Topics
 - a. Examine effects of social structures/institutions on individuals & social groups
 - b. Probe for and encourage reflection, meaning and sharing
 4. Alliances and Other Next Steps
 1. Explore what it means to be an ally and take initiative to engage an ally
 2. Reflections on future personal/professional growth
- 



Guidelines for Dialogue

- Confidentiality
- Our primary commitment is to learn from each other
- We will not demean, devalue or “put down” people for their experiences, lack of experiences or difference in interpretation of those experiences
- We will trust that people are always doing the best they can
- Challenge the idea and not the person
- Speak your discomfort
- Monitor your airtime
- Maintain a safe atmosphere



Activity 1: Discussion, Debate and Dialogue

- Break into small groups
- Review the Handouts and Share:
 - What distinctions stand out for you in relation to the three types of communication?
 - Your thoughts about which communication is most “familiar” to you, i.e., that you observe?
- Pick a Hot Topic
 - First talk about the selected Hot Topic (list to be displayed on next slide). Each participant then chooses either Discussion or Debate for an open group exchange for about 5 minutes;
 - Then shift to Dialogue on the same Hot Topic for about 5 minutes
 - Debrief for 5 minutes – What did you observe about using the two modes?



Possible Discussion/Debate Hot Topics

- Affirmative Action
- Same-Sex Marriage
- Universal Health Care
- Native American Mascot Use in Universities/Athletics
- Separation of Church and State in the Educational System
- Rape Culture
- Assisted Suicide
- Other



Social Identity

- Reflects groups that we identify with and how others see us
- Can vary depending on context
- Can be clear or ambiguous (e.g., “multiracial”)
- Can be individually chosen *and* can be ascribed by others
- May not be made public or easily ascribed
- Can change over time

A dark blue arrow points to the right at the top left. Below it, several thin, curved lines in shades of blue and grey sweep across the left side of the slide.

Activity 2: Social Identity

- Review and complete the Social Identity Profile Handout
- Pair off with someone and share your profile (5 - 7 minutes each)
- Share impressions regarding the activity
- DEBRIEF
- *Peruse the Social Identity Timeline Handout. Reflections on our social identity over time identifies various life course factors and dynamics.*

A dark blue arrow points to the right at the top left. Below it, several thin, curved lines in shades of blue and grey sweep across the left side of the slide.

Intersectionality

- The complexity of an individual's social identity highlights the presence of many diverse and meaningful identifications and personal qualities.
- Every individual has privilege and oppression
- Important to see a person in their complexity and not view them as just one aspect of who they are.
- Suggests that the unique combination of identifications means more or less privilege/target status and the importance of recognizing an individual's totality



The LARA Method – Key dialogue skill

- **L**isten without resistance
- **I**dentify & suspend assumptions
- **S**et aside roles & status
- **T**houghtfully consider what others share
- **E**xplore your reactions through your social identity lens
- **N**urture awareness of others & yourself



LARA

1. **Listen – until:**
 - a. You hear the values that they're speaking from or a feeling/experience that you share.
 - b. You can be open to them and connect
2. **Affirm:**
 1. Express the connection (e.g., feeling, experience, principle) in their question or statement that represents a fear or issue.
 2. If you can't find anything....find a way to convey that you aren't going to attack or judge them and you see them as having as much integrity as you do.
4. **Respond:** Respond to the issue the person raised. If you don't know the answer, say so; perhaps refer them to other sources.
5. **Add information:** Add information you want to give the person. Your information might help them see the issue in a new light or redirect the discussion in a more meaningful direction. Identify relevant facts and corrections. Feeling heard, they can be more open to your remarks. Offer resources or personal experience.



Addressing Triggers and Hot Topics

□ Triggers

- When talking with others you find yourself angry or irritated when you hear certain comments or attitudes
- Most of us have certain words that trigger strong emotion; we can have an involuntary reaction.
- We may have certain topics that are difficult to discuss without trying to “convert” the other person to our way of thinking.

A dark grey arrow points to the right from the left edge of the slide. Several thin, curved lines in shades of blue and grey originate from the left side and sweep across the slide, framing the text.

Responding to Triggers and Hot Topics - Triggers cause emotional responses

- Leave
- Avoidance
- Silence
- Rationalization
- Confusion
- Discuss
- Confront



Activity 3: Identifying Triggers and Hot Topics

1. Consider situations as a supervisor where you felt triggered by someone's behavior or discovered that someone you're interacting with felt triggered.
2. Share responses. [List group's responses]
3. Small group discussion: In your group, you are invited either as a group or individually, to select one of the listed topics/triggers for small group discussion. Reflect on the supervision situation, trigger experience and what happened.
4. After sharing, apply the IGD principles that could facilitate working effectively with difference in supervision situations similar to what you've discussed.



Large Group Discussion and Debriefing

- Highlights from small group discussion on triggers/hot topics
- Anticipated challenges
- How can you use this in supervision and with your staff?



References

Munson, C. (1983). An introduction to clinical social work supervision. New York, N.Y.: The Haworth Press.

NASW (2015). NASW standards and indicators for cultural competence. Washington, D.C.: Author.

Reisch, M. & Jarman-Rohde, L. (2000). The future of social work in the United States: Implications for field education. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 36(2), 201-214.