Grab Your Compass and Rotate the Bezel in the Direction of Social Justice: An Orienteering Adventure with Mary Breunig

Association for Experiential Education Webinar
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marybreunig.com
Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing……..
The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice.

Martin Luther King Jr.
A Closed Mind is a wonderful thing to lose
LET THE PEOPLE KNOW THE FACTS
AND THE COUNTRY WILL BE SAFE.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN
To the press alone
checkered as it is with abuses
the world is indebted
for all the triumphs
which have been gained
by reason and humanity
over error and oppression.

James Madison
TRUTH
COVID is the Great Equalizer

We’re All In This TOGETHER
1. Oppression exists (group, institutional and/or individual cultural exploitation)
2. Privilege exists (birthright or unearned benefit)
3. We all have work to do
4. We do this work through compassion, accountability, and activism. (We have to both care about and feel responsible for each other and DO SOMETHING about it)
It’s Easy to Miss Something you are not Looking For
Safe Space

Contested Space

* Curious
* Brave
* Courageous
Contested Space

... who has the right to space and who has the privilege to contest claims to space?

...the same concrete, symbolic, and social spaces can be experienced differently by multiple people at various times, depending on social position, cultural roots, and perceptions (Rimstead & Beneventi, 2019).
All Lives Matter ... and....

NOW, WE TRANSFORM
social identity ➔ either (societal) power or unjust treatment (oppression)

- Gender
- Race
- Culture
- Sexuality
- Socioeconomic Status / Income Disparity
- Religion
- Ability
- Age
- Education
- First Language
- Preferred Gender Pronouns
- ........
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System or form of oppression:</th>
<th>‘Race’ oppression</th>
<th>Gender oppression</th>
<th>Class oppression</th>
<th>Sexual oppression</th>
<th>Ability oppression</th>
<th>Age Oppression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assumed norm:</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Male-bodied</td>
<td>Middle-upper class</td>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>‘Able’-bodied</td>
<td>‘Adults’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is considered to be marginal or not the norm:</td>
<td>Non-whites or people of colour, Aboriginal people, mixed race people</td>
<td>Female, and transgendered, transsexual and intersex people</td>
<td>The poor and working class</td>
<td>Homosexual or queer folks</td>
<td>‘Disabled’ people</td>
<td>Children, youths, and the elderly (seniors)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of the discrimination based on this system of oppression:</td>
<td>Racism</td>
<td>Sexism and transphobia</td>
<td>Classism</td>
<td>Heterosexism, homophobia, bi-phobia, and transphobia</td>
<td>Ableism</td>
<td>Ageism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
* birthright or unearned benefit

unearned privileges lead to unearned power based on societal norms (the roots and nourishment of the flower – societal hegemony)

conversations about social (in)justice are usually quite uncomfortable because it’s personal and we may feel complicit
And….we are!
SURFACE CULTURE

DEEP CULTURE

Communications Styles and Rules:
- Facial Expressions
- Gestures
- Eye Contact
- Personal Space
- Touching
- Body Language
- Conversational Patterns in Different Social Situations
- Handling and Displaying of Emotion
- Tone of Voice

Notions of:
- Courtesy and Manners
- Friendship
- Leadership
- Cleanliness
- Modesty
- Beauty

Concepts of:
- Self
- Time
- Past and Future
- Fairness and Justice
- Roles related to Age, Sex, Class, Family, etc.

Attitudes toward:
- Elders
- Adolescents
- Dependents
- Rule
- Expectations
- Work
- Authority
- Cooperation vs. Competition
- Relationships with Animals
- Age
- Sin
- Death

Approaches to:
- Religion
- Courtship
- Marriage
- Raising Children
- Decision-Making
- Problem Solving
**STEREOTYPE**
Widely held, preconceived and oversimplified image or idea about a person, group, or thing.\(^5\)

Over time, stereotypes can become unconscious biases.

**UNCONSCIOUS BIAS**
An automatic association or attitude about race or gender, for example. Operates beyond our control and awareness. Informs our perception of a person or social group. Can influence our decision-making and behavior toward the target of the bias. Is a powerful predictor of our behavior.\(^6\)

**PRE-JUDGING**
An attitude about a person or group of people that is based on a belief or stereotype.

**BEHAVIOR**
Based on preconceptions and unchecked assumptions. Can create in-groups and out-groups by favoring one group over another.

**DISCRIMINATION**
An ACTION that follows prejudicial attitudes. Denial of opportunity or unequal treatment regarding selection, promotion, etc.\(^7\)
Microaggressions

The everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults which communicate derogatory messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership
Passive marginalizing behaviour is equivalent to standing still on a moving walkway. The conveyor belt moves you and the privileges you carry along. Unless you are actively walking in the opposite direction at a speed faster than the conveyor belt, unless you acknowledge your privileges and ACTIVELY engage in anti-oppression, you will be carried along with the privileged others.
We Need To Do Better

* Bearing Witness
* Empathy
* Allyship

* ACCOMPLICE-SHIP
* Anti-oppressive activism
TREAT OTHERS THE WAY THEY WANT TO BE TREATED.

#THEPLATINUMRULE
Decentre Yourself

- Rather than describing a student or participant as “diverse,” use specific language like “person of colour” (colour blind = not okay)
- Refer to student’s families as “parents or guardians” versus “mom and dad”
- Avoid microaggressions
- Educate participants about the indigenous peoples who lived and currently live on the land you are teaching on
  - Avoid co-opting Indigenous practices in your outdoor programs without acknowledgement and analysis (e.g. sweat lodges, dreamcatchers “arts and crafts” projects)
- Tailor environmental ethics guidelines (i.e. LNT principles) to be culturally relevant
- Every day, practice one act of accomplice-ship and encourage others to do the same
- Learn and teach about outdoor role models from communities different from your own with a view toward representation (but not tokenism)
- Modify your structural practices, language, organizational culture, and hiring practices to reflect your values and beliefs
- Avoid “stand alone” diversity trainings, curricular units, or courses. Adopt an anti-oppressive framework and diverse-perspective content as integral components of every aspect of your program
Choose reading lists that represent a diversity of perspectives

* Specific to outdoor and environmental education, rescript the historical “founding fathers” narrative, seeking out women and BIPOC writers and adventurers that are often underrepresented

* Learn about, from, and with historically underrepresented individuals and emerging OEE organizations: Melanin Base Camp, Brown People Camping, Out There Adventures, Fat Girls Hiking, Outdoor Asian, Unlikely Hikers, and other organizations.

* Don’t seek out partnerships so that your organization can claim affiliation. That is usury. Amplify the work of those organizations by finding out how you can best support them.
* Support black-owned businesses
* Learn from the leadership of people of colour on how to transform and dismantle racism but don’t require them to caretake you in that process
  * Be prepared to feel really uncomfortable
  * Show up and engage on the frontlines of this work
* Quotes at the end of email signatures (e.g. In every walk in nature one receives far more than he seeks ~ John Muir) reifies the white male hegemonic historical stereotype of OEE – Consider what your email signature conveys relevant to issues of social (in)justices
* Include Preferred Gender Pronouns in your introductions and email signatures
* (em)bodied references – “fitness” tests for outdoor courses or questions on medical forms that ask for your weight and the amount (and type) of daily exercise you do potentially represent (obesity) size-based oppressions

* Challenge by Choice and Full Value Contracts presume individuals in any given group hold shared values and equal agency and voice, which is presumptive. What unintended outcomes might occur if a transgender individual is required to do a canoe tip test or wear a climbing harness on a ropes course, potentially exposing some body part which they choose to not publicly expose? Is that individual able to exercise “real” choice?
Self-Educate

- Peggy McIntosh – Unpacking the Knapsack of Privilege and Privilege Checklist
  https://nationalseedproject.org/Key-SEED-Texts/white-privilege-unpacking-the-invisible-knapsack
- Environmental Justice is Social Justice
  https://www.thegoodtrade.com/features/environmental-justice
- Harvard’s Project Implicit
  https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html
- Privilege Walk
  https://opensource.com/open-organization/17/11/privilege-walk-exercise
- Power Flower
  http://lgbtq2stoolkit.learningcommunity.ca/training/power-flower/
Act

* 21-day Racial-Equity Habit Building
  * https://www.debbyirving.com/21-day-challenge/
  * http://lgbtq2stoolkit.learningcommunity.ca/training/power-flower/
* California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies – Resources for Discussions About Race
  * https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AGLEOINitQ1J17MvQXZxrpEbAvr42r5RewjO_iXaKtE/edit
* 75 Things White People Can Do for Racial Justice | Corinne Shutack
May your choices reflect your hopes, not your fears.

Nelson Mandela