

A CADRE Webinar
Visiting a House on the Other Side of Town
Dr. Johnny Lake
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Transcript

Marshall Peter: Hello and thank you very much for joining CADRE's Webinar with Dr. Johnny Lake entitled, Visiting a House on the Other Side of Town. Today's webinar is one in a continuing series of CADRE Webinars.

You should be seeing some poll questions on your screen. Please take a minute to answer them. A few technical notes; phones have been muted to minimize interruptions.

When we open up the call for questions, we'll ask you then to press #6 to unmute your phone and then *6 to remute. Please do not unmute your phones during the call until you're invited to do that.

We also do strongly recommend calling in using a telephone rather than computer audio. You can also enter questions or comments into the chat box in the bottom right hand corner of your screen. CADRE staff will be attending to those throughout the webinar.

Our presenter today, Dr. Johnny Lake, is an international consultant, trainer, and speaker certified in programs respecting leadership, diversity, community building, cross-cultural communication, interaction skills, and equity and ethics for youth and adults.

Dr. Lake consults with government, professional and educational agencies and organizations. He is an Assistant Professor of Education in the Teacher and Counselor Preparation Program at Northwest Christian University and an Administrator on special assignment with Eugene 4J school district and a strong advocate for the needs of at risk youth providing teacher training institutes and student learning and leadership opportunities.

Dr. Lake is an internationally recognized writer and storyteller. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in History from Willamette University and Master's in Educational Leadership and Administration and Ph.D. in Educational Leadership Policy, Management, and Organization from the University of Oregon.

Dr. Lake is a former Chairman of the State of Oregon Commission on Black Affairs. His scholarship is focused on teaching and learning around issues leadership, diversity, race and culture, personal organizational growth, cultural competency, and communication.

He assists individual schools and traditional institutions to gain critical knowledge and skills as well as developing effective methods and strategies to bring about growth and progress and to build and support productive relationships.

On a personal note, Johnny has been a good friend for a number of years and we are really thrilled to have him joining us today. It's a real pleasure to introduce you, Johnny.

Johnny Lake: Thank you. And thank you all very much for the opportunity to be here with you and to spend a few minutes. Time always flies, especially when you're working with people.

This presentation today is one that is focused on the intellectual part of this conversation, but also we will talk a lot about the experiential part of this conversation.

Visiting a House on the Other Side of Town is the title of this because we often find ourselves working with other people different than ourselves. And so when we think about the other side of town, it is usually some place different than where we live. So that's the reason for the title.

The first slide. I want to lay a foundation that we are talking about meeting the needs of human beings and this is something that in our society seems to be a contest.

If a person is sick, does the person deserve to see a doctor? I do this with little children; first grade, second grade, third grade. Everybody says, yes they do. But ask adults. If a person is sick, do they deserve to see a doctor? And we end up with a debate.

What about food? If someone's hungry, does a person deserve some food? Little children, yes they do, no contest. Adults? Well, maybe if they work. Or if they contribute something to society.

So what we find in this modern conversation is that many of the basic needs of human beings have become negotiated or become centers of profit so that we cannot meet the needs of -- even the common, every day needs of human beings.

The slide states, what does a person deserve? The health and well-being of our community is a shared responsibility. And as we work to create a fair and equitable community, we still see the consequences of historical and societal problems most vividly displayed in the challenges faced by those who are already marginalized.

We find class, race, gender, poverty, disability, culture -- other identity issues becoming part of people's lives and they intersect often in ways that frames the destiny of that person.

So what does a person deserve?

Maya Angelou has a beautiful quote. I wanted to use this one. The ache for home lives in all of us, the safe place where we can go as we are and not be questioned. That is so simple, but so powerful that all of us need this place so we can be ourselves and we won't necessarily be questioned because of who we are.

Ralph Ellison states a very powerful quote. When a child has no sense of how he should fit into the society around him, he is culturally deprived and I think all of you know that this applies very strongly to adults as well because we all need a sense of how we fit into this society we have created.

Portes and Rumbaut reports a pervasive and positive sense of cultural heritage is unmistakably related to mental health and social well-being. Next slide.

For agencies, we often find institutional contexts that often defy us figuring out who's the person, or who do we talk to. But if you talk from the sides of the client, they come to your agency, they might not even know the name of your agency. They might not know the address. They might not know the name of your position, but the key person that they're looking for, that's the person that's important.

So the face of your agency is not a website, it's not a building, it's not a business card. For many of the people who access needs especially when they are in times of need, they're looking for that person and that person might be you.

Without the key persons in our agencies and our organizations, we find ourselves often unable to meet the needs of the community that we try to serve, oftentimes failing in that mission.

I want you to think about this in terms of manual labor. How many people did manual labor before? I grew up doing bricklaying and construction. It's really hard work.

How many people have done intellectual labor? That's something that I can tell you a lot about. By the time you get to a Ph.D., you're really tired of intellectual labor.

And how many people ever even heard the term emotional labor? This is something that don't often get talked about even in the agencies where we do work for other human beings. We often don't think of it as emotional labor.

This is a powerful term and I want you to put it in your vocabulary if you don't already because it is actually what we pay for the work that we do. This is what's required in order to help other people.

We will lift other people up and when they succeed, what happens to our spirit? We rise and fly with them. And, in fact, we can't wait to go tell somebody.

You know what happened to Joe? He really did good. You know what? This is really going great. We can't wait to celebrate the success of some of the clients we serve.

But what happens when they don't succeed or when they end up in the ditch or when they fail. Guess what happens to us? Whether we wanted to or not -- whether we wanted to or not, we go with them and this is why we have to pay careful attention to the fact that we pay for the work we do. So it means you have to take good care of yourself and the resources you bring to this otherwise you may not be able to help anyone.

Next slide. This one is important because we talk about these issues, we talk about these issues, we claim we care about people, we claim we care about our society, we claim we want to help and this, in this case, considered an espoused theory -- something we claim.

People say they value diversity. How big of a huge audience -- how many people value diversity? One hundred percent of the hands go up, but there is often a contradiction that our theories and practice don't often match up with our espoused theory.

That often we claim more than we actually do so we'll have diversity celebrations once a year on Black History Month, Cinco de Mayo, Women's History Month, those kind of things that are token gestures that actually are used to indemnify us about the real issues that go on the rest of the year.

Oh, Black History Month's coming. I think I'm black the rest of the year. So in these cases, oftentimes when it's brought up that there's a contradiction here, we tend to get uncomfortable and don't really want to talk about why we only do token work in these areas. This is one I would say put in your vocabulary as well so that we have a closer relationship between what we espouse as our work and actually what we do as a practice.

Literacy is thought to be reading and writing. If a person can read and a person can write, we call them literate. But Toffler has this amazing quote about this 21st Century. That the people who are considered illiterate in this 21st Century will not be those people who cannot read and write, but it will be people who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.

That's a significant paradigm to think about that if you cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn, you will be considered illiterate in the culture of this 21st Century.

These quotes came from a business presentation. I thought I would share them with you guys. In business, they say whatever confidence means today we can be sure it's meaning will have changed by when? As soon as tomorrow. So competence is an ongoing struggle we have to maintain.

And the next quote is the foundation for future professional competence seems to be the capacity to learn how to learn. So in this process, we have to continually be able to learn, unlearn, and relearn.

And Aristotle has this beautiful quote. I use this with kids. I use it with adults. When you want to learn as badly as you want to breathe, then and only then will you become wise.

So in these conversations we have with our clients and their communities, when we really want to learn, what are we going to let stop us? Nothing.

If someone takes your breath away, you will fight with anything you get your hands on. If you truly want to learn, you're not going to let anything stop you from learning what you need to successfully meet the needs of the community you serve.

Next slide. These are just prompt questions to prompt your own reflection because the key to learning, especially in these contexts, is to be able to be reflective, to engage an idea, to think about things, but to be reflective and bring it back to yourself. What does this mean?

One of the first times you noticed that other people were different than you, what did that feel like to you when you experienced that? Think about a time when you've been treated differently because of your differences.

Also think about a time when you may have treated someone else different based on who they were.

Stories. I am a Southerner. I come from a community where stories are part of your everyday life. Every lesson is embedded in a story.

In fact, when you study culture, you study religion around the world. Every single culture in the world uses stories to pass on morals, beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, ways of being, ways of doing.

Every religion uses stories, parables to teach a lesson so stories are significantly a key part of our culture and our learning.

Next slide. The stories we tell ourselves and what we tell each other form a foundation, a basis, an explanation, oftentimes a rationalization or justification for the way we see things, understand things, and the way we do things.

So that when we live in the richest society in the world and we have hungry children, there are stories we tell ourselves that allow us to ignore that.

When we have the richest country in the world and we have people who don't have health care and they die because they don't have health care, we have narratives that allow us to rationalize that and explain that away so that we don't feel full responsibility for it.

Stories or narratives represent and present a sense of a reality that we live with whether it's a real false reality or a true reality. Those stories make the foundation or basis for that.

So the very nature of our reality is continually shaped and defined by these narratives that we use to explain the way we are in the world.

An incredible number of recent studies about implicit bias suggest that the natural psychological categories that we have learned and help us to sort out the world, these come from our childhood and that they bring with them positive, but also negative biases that oftentimes we're not even aware of. And even if we are aware of them, they're very difficult to shake or get away from.

And so when we think about these things, we have to think about how do we help unlearn and relearn new ways of seeing the world around us.

Lerone Bennett has this amazing quote that history acts because it is the basis of the image which we -- which is the ground of our acts, for people act out of this image, but they respond not to the situation, but to the situation transformed by the image that they carry in their mind.

So when we think about race in our society, gender in our society, poor people in our society, there's certain images we have of these people that cause us to see them differently than what they may actually be.

Oftentimes we find ourselves individually challenged by some of these issues and so when we are challenged by these issues, we often defend ourselves individually when most times we may not be guilty ourselves individually of the practice or the behavior that actually marginalizes or excludes other people.

It may be a structural or societal challenge that we may not individually participate in, but if we are part of an organization, a part of a community, sometimes these structural and societal challenges end up producing negative outcomes for other people.

And so we find ourselves in a dilemma sometimes if we ourselves are not part of the problem of having to work with a problem.

Next slide. Concepts and this includes race, gender, class, ability, sexual orientation that have proven useful in ordering things easily achieve such authority over us that we forget their earthly origin and accept them as unalterable givens.

A long habit of not thinking a thing wrong gives it a superficial appearance of being right. So we live in a society where we have moved away from issues such as racism and sexism and classism; that they are practices that we still carry along that end up producing negative outcomes for certain people.

And this is the slide that talks about those issues. Because we come to these conversations and oftentimes we are not aware of what we bring. How do we learn our behaviors? How do we learn our beliefs?

I think I'm going to take this jacket off because I think it's getting warm. [LAUGHS]

Because we come from communities and different places that are very different from each other and so oftentimes our own attitudes and behaviors are not something we're conscious of.

It's like a fish in the water. If there's a fish in the water, does he know he's in the water? Fish is swimming in the water. He doesn't know he's in the water. Only time a fish knows he's in the water is when? When he's actually out of the water.

And when a fish is out of the water, is he just sitting there taking it easy? I'll get back in the water sooner or later. No. The fish is actually flopping around, trying to do what? Get back into the water. Get back into his comfort zone.

And that's what we look like when we are outside our cultural comfort zone. We tend to look like that fish out of water which is flopping around, trying to get back to our cultural comfort zone.

So how do you become aware of these attitudes, beliefs, behaviors that have been taught to us often unconsciously? Most times we're aware of this when we come in contact with someone who is different than us. Who may express a different belief than us or have a different attitude, different behavior, something that we're not familiar with and then we have to negotiate that.

Next slide. And this is where I want to have you think about the narrative of Visiting a House on the Other Side of Town.

In our agencies, we often find people that we truly want to help. They may be someone we have an affinity with or someone we like their personality or we know their difficulties and challenges and we really, truly want to help that person.

And so we decide that we're going to go out of our way to help that person.

[OFF-CAMERA COMMENTS]

Hello, we're back. Okay. And in this context, we often think about trying to help people that we care about. But context is really important because the context defines our world view.

The Russian proverb says, to a worm in horseradish, guess what? The whole world is horseradish.

So where I grew up was 814 Pruitt St., Bolivar, Tennessee. That's my home. And if you're in my house, you come out the front door and you turn left, you at the church. In fact, the church is so close to our house that you could hear the preacher preaching, you could hear the choir singing, you could hear Miss So-and-So shout when she fell out because the church was that close to my house. Even without leaving the house, you could go to church.

And if you move next door to the church, there was a store. And in this little store was where we spent all our money. They'll give you cookies two for a penny. You could get caramel kisses two for a penny. In fact, you could do pretty good trouble with just a quarter at this store which I did many times.

If you came out of my house and you went to the right, you ended up at my Aunt Bazerine Horton's house. Anybody know Aunt Bazerine Horton? Nobody knows her except me.

She's a small black woman who had flowers all over her yard, was always working in the yard, was the nosiest thing on the street, and always told everything she knew. In fact, anything she found out about me, she told my mother. In fact, she got me more whippings than anybody on the street.

[PAUSE]

If you went next door to my Aunt Bazerine Horton's house, you ended up at my next Auntie's house. And this was my Aunt Ada Lee Lake. And she was a little different than Aunt Bazerine Horton.

In fact, she didn't tell on me. If you did something bad at her house, she'd give you a warning. If you do that again, I'm going to have to tell your mama.

So if you listened, you didn't end up in trouble. And plus she made cakes, cookies, and pies all the time. So going to my Aunt Ada Lee's house was always a treat.

Next door to her was Miss Brown. She was our third grade teacher in the little school that was right across the street. And she was a very strict teacher. And a very strict woman at home.

Our ball went into her yard one day. She picked it up like this, walked in the house with the ball and said, keep your ball out of my yard. In fact, she kept it for a whole week.

All the way up that street -- Pruitt Street -- everybody looked like me, walked like me, talked like me, were like me and everybody was black. Many of them were related to me. Most of them I knew their families.

I could walk into their house without even knocking on the door. It's nobody but Johnny anyway.

And so in this situation, 814 Pruitt Street, I learned by 10 years old what the world looked like. So when I'm walking up and down Pruitt Street and I look up and I see a person who was white, without even thinking about it, my first conclusion was often that person must be lost or that person doesn't live here or that person must be coming to get somebody's insurance money or that person must be coming to be to cut somebody's phone off or that person must be the police and he's in plain clothes and he thinks we don't know what the police looks like. We know exactly what the police look like around here. They look like that person.

And so I would ask you to think about how in my little 10 year old mind did I develop a context view that allowed me to immediately exclude someone who did not look like me? And so in this context, I had learned a certain bias about the way the world is supposed to look so naturally that I didn't even have to think about it. It's just that's the way the world was.

And so when you think about your own experiences, think about how many people grew up in a place that was similar to 814 Pruitt Street where most of the people around you that kind of walked like you, that kind of talked like you, that kind of act like you, that kind of were like you.

And so with most audiences when I ask this question, we end up with the conclusion that most of us have grown up in what should be considered a monocultural perspective of the world. So we've learned to see the world through one lens.

And when we learn to see the world through one lens, it's often very difficult to expand that to see the world through multiple lenses.

But when we live now in what is considered a multi-cultural context, we are asked on a regular daily basis to see the world through multiple lenses. And this is where these differences oftentimes become to be a conflict because a monocultural worldview says that there's one way to see the world and that's usually my way, not anybody else's. And if you don't agree with me, I'm sorry for you. You must be wrong.

And so this is the mindset that comes with a monocultural perspective. When we ask people to admit that there's multiple ways to be right, it becomes a challenge.

So that when we talk about issues like gay marriage, it becomes a challenge because it seems that there's only way to be married.

And when we talk about many issues in our society, we end up, if we are trapped in a monocultural perspective, of having conflict with other people who may see the world or live in the world differently than we do.

Next slide. So when we think about this house on the other side of town, we come to this conversation already married to ideas about this part of town.

That didn't come from a presentation. That came from the society around us. So what do you already know about this other side of town? What do you already know about people on the other side of town?

In fact, you don't live over there so how often do you go to that side of town? We don't go there unless we have some business there.

So you decide within your agency that you're going to go to that other side of town and you tell your colleagues, I'm going over to the other side of town. I'm going to go and help that family.

And you want to make your plans right, so you look up the MapQuest and you find the MapQuest and it gives you the directions to get there. And you get your materials together, get your notebook and your papers and your pen and everything you're going to use and you start on your journey.

In fact, you tell your colleagues, I'm headed over on the other side of town. And when you get over there, you're driving down the street and you find the street and you turn to go down the street. That's what MapQuest says.

And you go down the street and you're looking for the street and each street that goes by, there's no street signs. And as you go further down into the neighborhood, you get a little worried because there's no street signs.

You can't find the street. In fact, you look at your MapQuest and it's like, it's supposed to be somewhere here. So instead you go back to the main street and you start counting streets. And you go down to the street, and down to the street, and down to the street until you find it on the MapQuest. This is the right street.

And so you turn on the street and you're going to find the house. And you start looking at the numbers on the houses and guess what? [LAUGHS] Many of the houses don't have a number.

And so you get frustrated again because I gotta find this house. And so you go back and you start counting houses and you add up the numbers between and add up the numbers between and you come to the place where the numbers say the house should be.

The numbers are lower here, the numbers are higher here, but guess what? There's no house there. In fact, there's just a little road that goes around behind the house.

And you decide, well, that must be where this house is because it's not on the main street so it must be on the back street. So you start down this little road and do you think it's a paved road? It's not a paved road.

Do you think it's a gravel road? Not even a gravel road. In fact, this is just a dirt road. And it has pot holes in it. And when you make that curve to get on that little road, you hit a pot hole. Boom! And your nice little car hits the bottom.

And you're a bit concerned now, but you want to see this family so you continue down this road and you turn and you avoid another pot hole and you hit a second pot hole. Boom! Your little car is suffering.

In fact, for the people on that street, how many pot holes do you need to hit before they figure out that you are not from their street? You hit about one more pot hole. By the time you hit three pot holes, people are looking out their windows trying to see, who is this person coming down our street?

And they see your little car. They don't recognize it. They see you in the car. They don't recognize you. And they're like, who are they coming to see?

And so you go down and you find the house that you think is the house, the one that you want to visit and there is no driveway to get up to the house.

In fact, the people who live in the house park their cars on the grass in the front of the house. Are you going to park your car on the grass in front of the house? No.

So you drive on down to the end of the road where you park at the end of the street and decide to walk back. Do you think you walk back on a nice little sidewalk? In fact, there's no sidewalk and you're walking on the side of the road and you almost in the ditch.

You think the people don't see you? They see you and they're wondering, who is this person? Why don't they walk in the road like everybody else? They're walking on the side in the ditch.

And you walk up to the house and you start up to the house and you walk up to the porch and the porch is almost as tall as you are. In fact, you can barely see over the edge of it. And no steps to go up on the porch.

And you step around the porch and you look on this side. There's no steps. You step around the porch, you look on this side and there's still no steps. You think the people in the house don't see you?

They see you walking around in their front yard of their house and they're wondering, why don't they come on up to the house? And you finally see a little trail going around the side of the porch where the grass is worn and you follow it around and you find a stump that's on the backside of the porch that people step up on to get up on the porch.

And you figure, that must be how they get up on the porch. So you step up on the stump and you get up on the porch. And you go up to the door and is there a nice doorbell to ring? There's no doorbell. In fact, there's no screen door. There's just a door.

And you decide to knock on the door. And you knock on the door and the door swings open by itself. It was already open. What's your first reaction?

You reach and you pull the shut back because nobody seemed to open the door, but you didn't know it but they opened the door for you a long time ago because they saw you wandering around the front of the house.

And so you pull it back shut. And you stand there for a second and someone comes up and opens the door again and it's the oldest grandmother in the house. And she opens the door and she don't say anything to you. She just opens the door and walks back into the house.

And you assume that must mean come in the house. So you walk into the house. And when you walk into this house, it doesn't look like any house you've ever been in.

In fact, you look to the right and there's a bed and a dresser and a lamp. There's a bedroom right in the living room. And you walk past the bedroom and there's chairs that have items on it and covered up and there's a big chair for the grandmother that sits right in front of the big screen TV.

And grandmother says, come on in the house and why don't you have a seat? You look around, you don't see anywhere that you would really want to sit, so what do you say? I think I'll stand.

And what does that say to the family when you say I think I'll stand?

So, grandmother goes over and she cleans off her chair. She takes her macramé off, she takes her sewing off, she takes her book that she's been reading, she takes her remote, and she cleans off the chair, she sweeps it off with her hand, and she says, baby, why don't you come on on and sit down. You can sit down right here.

And you go up to the chair and the first thing you do is reach down and brush it off again. What do you say to the grandmother and the family when you reach down and brush off the chair again?

And you decide to sit down. So you sit down in the chair and the grandmother says, we just getting ready to eat. And you smell some food that doesn't smell like anything you've ever eaten in your life.

And she says, why don't you have some food with us? And what do you say? Well, I had a late lunch. Or I'm not really that hungry. What do you say to a family when you refuse their offer of food?

In anthropology, it is suggested that when people invite you to share in their food practices which are usually pretty private and pretty intimate, they're inviting you into their culture. And so when you say I don't think I want any food or I had food already, I don't want to eat, not only are you rejecting the food, but you're also rejecting the people.

Okay, grandmother's still trying to be nice to you so she gets the littlest girl in the house. She said, baby go in the kitchen and get him a drink of water.

And so the littlest girl in the house runs in the place you think is the kitchen and she comes back with some water and it's in a jar that doesn't look like anything you've ever drank out of before.

And she gives you the water to drink and what's the first thing you do? You hold it up, look at the water, see if it's clean, and do you drink it? You don't even drink it. You sit it on the floor.

Then you come out with your notebook and your papers and your pencil and you say, Miss So and So, Mr. So and So, I'm here to help you and your family.

At this point, how much currency do you have left in that household?

Audience: Nothing.

Johnny Lake: In fact, what do they want you to do now?

Audience: Leave?

Johnny Lake: They'd like you to get up, take your little notebook, take your little papers, take your little pencil, and leave so that they can enjoy their house and their food and their water and their family.

And so in this interaction, I want you to think about how complex this is because the messages are so subtle. The messages are so subtle that we often don't think about them.

Non-verbal communication is actually 80% of what you communicate between yourself and another human being will not be the words out of your mouth. And in most of the non-verbal communications that happen in this example I give you, they are subtly invisible to both parties even though the impact is so devastating.

For the person who came from the agency, they came there with best intentions and they were trying to be polite based on their perception of the situation they were in. For the people who were in the family, they were attempting to be gracious and kind and welcoming to that person, but because of the two different world views, end up getting asked to leave.

And so I want you to think about this in the context of our work from agencies to families and especially non-traditional families or families that are not meeting the norms that people tend to think of because these very sensitive interactions help define that relationship.

So that when that person goes away and you go back to your agency, you have to make a report about that family. What report are you going to make? Are you going to say I was rude and I was unkind and I was insensitive to that family? Or what are we going to say?

They didn't really want our help. I tried. I even went to the house. And when we describe the house, how are we going to describe the house? You going to say it's a nice place to live or is it a hazard?

They don't have steps to the porch. There's clutter all over the house. If it catches on fire, the children are going to be in danger. I mean we're going to say this family is not doing well and they don't want our help.

And so when the second person comes to the same family. They have the first experience. They're going to have the second experience. And is this one going to be any better? Because now they have an attitude about you and the people from your agency.

And so that one doesn't go any better and let's say the family goes through this five times, six times, 10 times. And then maybe you go to the house and you are the person who is sensitive and aware of these

differences. And you knock on the door and you see the curtain move so you know that someone's in the house, but they don't even open the door.

What do we say then? We will scratch those people off the list. They don't want any help. They wouldn't even answer the door. We knew they were in there and they don't want any help.

And so just through these subtle interactions we end up with this incredible divide that has to be addressed some way because people in those communities, in those situations, do still need help, but this depends on the people who are interfacing, interacting with them.

Next slide. Stereotypes. The example I give you is loaded with stereotypes. Loaded with already held beliefs about other people which is what a stereotype is. And how many of us stereotype? It's actually normal human behavior to stereotype.

It's how we organize the world, one thing is kind of like another thing is kind of like another thing. Stereotyping is kind of like walking. When we put our feet on the ground, we are predicting that something's going to be there. And we get so comfortable that we don't even think about it.

When we're first learning how to walk, when you're first one or two years old and you learn how to walk, do you believe that that stuff works? That you can walk? You don't believe it. And your parents try to get you to walk, they push your little behind along and you go back down on those knees as quickly as you can because that's safe and you are familiar with being on those knees.

When they ask you to walk, that's threatening. But over time you get a little practice, your legs get a little stronger, they get you some little harder shoes and pretty soon you can walk. And you might still be a little shaky, but guess what? You can walk.

And we practice this walking over time so that by the time we get to be an adult, if we are blessed with the privilege of having legs that work, we don't even think about walking. We get up out of the bed every morning and we walk.

In fact, you walk through your work, you walk through your day, you don't think about walking. You could be walking along with a friend having a great conversation and you're not thinking about walking.

In fact, if you are paying too much attention to your friend, you may not be attention to the ground and you may walk up on a curb that's about that big and boom! You're on the ground before you realize you were falling. How many people have hit the ground like that?

Not paying attention, walking along, hit the ground and you are on the ground. What's the first thing we do? Well, the first thing you do is look around to see who saw you so you can determine how embarrassed you need to be.

But the second thing you do is you jump up and your friend says, how are you? Your reaction is, I'm fine. I'm great. You may have broke your leg on the ground, but are you going to admit it? You'll walk around all day with a limp. How's your leg? Oh, it's fine. I'm doing great.

You may have to go to the hospital that night to get it fixed. Are you going to admit that you broke your leg on that little bitty little curb? Even the next day, people say how's your leg? Oh, it's great. I'll be fine. I just got a little limp.

And I want you to think about this. This is how we act with stereotypes that we carry in our head. That when they come out, where do we end up? Oftentimes on our butt or sounding like we might be sexist or sounding like we might be racist or sounding like we might be discriminatory against somebody.

But when we are actually confronted about it or asked about it, what do we say? Oh, it was just a joke. It was just fine. Or we even defend each other, you know, he's not racist or she's not sexist or he's not homophobic you know that's just -- that's rude.

And so instead of looking closely at what this means, we tend to brush it over and that means we continue to carry these stereotypes about certain people over time with rationalizations and justifications and stories that allow us to hang onto stereotypes of about poor people, about people of color, about gay people, about people with different abilities.

And so what we end up with is a pattern of stereotypes that we then justify and rationalize through the stories we tell each other.

Next slide. This is a cartoon used to demonstrate the idea of stereotypes. That we should never make assumptions about other people. The cartoon is a little bitty fish swimming along bothering nobody. The other fish is going to actually take advantage of him and instead of the fish being able to take advantage of the small fish, the small fish swallows the big one.

And this is what I want you to think about with our assumptions and to always question your assumptions. That we have ideas about the way the world looks and the way people are and we should always challenge those.

Next slide. This serves a purpose when we carry stereotypes about certain people. According to Brewer, ingroup and outgroup differentiation is really important. We filter certain people in, we filter certain people out and we use this to attribute characteristics to certain people.

And we use this to make decisions about where we locate those people and this sets up the ingroup outgroup ourselves and other kind of relationships that oftentimes leads us to think differently about other people than we do ourselves.

Go ahead. Next slide. Stereotype was something that was developed in 1922 by Walter Lippman and his quote is that this is a picture in our heads. Whether right or wrong, imagination is shaped by the pictures seen. Consequently, they lead to stereotypes that are hard to shake.

Next slide. And here's the point. The point of the story about visiting a house on the other side of town and the attitudes about other people is that they are subtle, but pervasive. In fact, Lippman calls them the subtlest and most pervasive of all influences.

We are told about the world before we see it and we imagine most things before we ever experience them. And these preconceptions, unless education has made us acutely aware, govern deeply the whole process of our perception.

Next slide. Here's four steps to deal with stereotypes and it begins first as with any kind of process of change is admitting that you engage in this behavior. And stereotyping is normal for all human beings.

But when we stereotype someone, the next step is to suspend that judgment. Don't extend that judgment to making a decision about that person, but hold onto that judgment.

Step three is to engage in legitimate and meaningful interaction with that target of our stereotype. And when we have those engagements, those interactions that are legitimate and real, we have new information that we can now use to make a better, more informed decision about other people.

So four simple steps that will help you to avoid using stereotypes to end up making decisions. We have to admit that we have them because we do.

When we walk into a house like the house I describe, there are things going through our head, ideas about the food, about the water, about the little girl, about the old grandmother, about the house, all of those things are part of our stereotypical knowledge that we have about the world.

But if we use those things to make a judgment, we end up oftentimes disturbing other people different than ourselves.

This constitutes Dr. Sue developed a terminology and a definition around microaggressions and this relates to stereotypes because again, they are so subtle and so embedded in our society that oftentimes we don't even think about them as being violations of other people's identities.

Microaggressions are everyday insults, indignities and demeaning messages sent to people of color by well-intentioned white people who are unaware of the hidden messages being sent by them. And this is through the lens of race, but this is also applicable through the lens of gender, the lens of class, disability, sexual orientation, all of these attitudes are hinged on this perception of other people.

Dr. Pierce suggested that in and of itself a microaggression may seem harmless. And this is what most of us excuse these attitudes and behaviors. You know, it wasn't a big deal, they didn't really mean that, or, you know, why did she get so upset? You know, and you actually blame the person who has probably had these things happen to them multiple times, multiple times, multiple times.

And when they dare to speak up, who's viewed as the antagonist? It's actually the person who's already the target is seen as the antagonist and generally, they will be marginalized because they dare to bring up the issue that they have faced on a regular, continual basis.

But he says that the cumulative burden of a lifetime of microaggressions can contribute to the diminished mortality, augmented morbidity, and flattened confidence. So the outcomes of this are devastating even though we may think that it's harmless.

When we talk about these issues, we often try to separate race and culture and people's identities. It's really important to think about what are we talking about when we talk about culture.

Next slide. We think of culture as something separate from a human being, but culture is a lived thing. It is not something that is separate from the person. It is only held in context of that person.

So we think oftentimes of going in and extracting culture from some human being and delivering it to a third party and then you, therefore, understand how to work with that culture. So this is the typical diversity training or the cultural competency training or those kind of things that it's viewed as if it's possible to actually learn about a culture and another person separate from any interaction with that person. And this is not true.

Culture is a lived thing. It's only held in context of the people who are living that culture. And if you truly want to engage that culture, you have to engage those people. A video is not going to do it. A two hour class, a four hour class, an eight hours class is not going to do it.

An interaction with one person from that culture is not going to do it. It's most likely going to end up leaving you with a set of ideas, already held beliefs, that when you try to apply to another person you're going to make a mistake.

And so when we look at this attitude about other cultures, we Americans are criticized often as being cultural tourists. That we kind of like to travel around through different cultures, you know, we'll eat their food and we'll dance to their music and buy some of their clothes and hang out with them for a little while, maybe learn a few words in their language. And then we consider ourselves culturally competent.

And if you are a tourist, what's the opposite of a tourist? If you're going to go and visit someplace and you're not going to be a tourist, you're going to operate like a resident.

As a tourist, you don't really care about the water and the children and the old people and the food that the people have to eat and the lifestyle that they have because you're just going to be there for a short period of time and then you're going to leave.

As a resident, do you care about the water? Do you care about the children? Do you care about the old people? Do you care about the community? And so our interactions oftentimes in our multicultural society that we have here in America, actually simulate cultural tourism and we never leave town.

We move into a culture, we operate like a tourist, we eat their food, we maybe buy some of their clothes, we learn a few words in their language and then what do we do? We go back to our home and we call that cultural competency and that is not.

Next slide. Culture is complex and it's the largest part of a person's identity. So we often here race as a lens, but it's really culture that we're talking about. So that I grew up in a culture as I described Pruitt Street that was very black and it had nothing to do with skin color. It had to do with culture.

And then when I went to school, I went to school with black kids. My first grade teacher was my auntie. My second grade, all of the kids were black. Third grade, all the kids were black. Fourth grade, all the kids were black. So by fourth grade, I knew a lot about culture.

I knew how to walk like your leg was broke, you know, if you're cool, you walk like your leg was broke and that's what you did because you wanted to be like the big boys because all the basketball players walked around school all day. They looked like they could hardly make it. Leg was broke.

Game starts, they running like a deer, dunking on people, talking trash. And after the game, guess what? They're leg broke again. They can hardly get out of the gym. That's what I wanted to be.

Wearing baggy pants. A lot of kids think that's new, but that's not new. We did that, too, but you couldn't let your mama see you wear baggy pants because she'd whoop your behind if she saw your underwear hanging out.

How to say what's up without using your hands, we learned all that stuff growing up. What's up? What's up? What's up?

And so these are characteristics of culture, but oftentimes we call it characteristics of race. And culture is a shared set of beliefs, behaviors, practices, ideas about the world, perceptions, the way we live. It includes our food, our clothes, our cars, our houses, all of the things that make up who we are is related more to culture than it is to race. And so oftentimes these things are confused.

We learn this from birth. As I described the fish in the water, learning a culture is the same as the fish in the water and we don't even realize it because it starts before we are even aware of it.

It's shared and it binds people together. So when we think about race as a binary for people, oftentimes it's more culture.

And it's social constructed so it's not a natural part of who human beings are. It's part of the society around us.

And it's an adaption. We learn how to practice a culture and this means that where you grow up is really important. So if I was born in Tennessee, but I moved to Oregon as a very young kid, my culture would be Oregon even though my ancestry would be from Tennessee.

It is a dynamic system that is in constant change and this is something that I want you to put into your vocabulary as well because we tend to carry this stereotype about certain parts of our community, the other side of town.

In our town here when people tell me, well I know how that part of town is. I'm like, how do you know? Well, I went to school there 20 years ago. And they are assuming this this community is the same as it was 20 years ago when in fact it has changed pretty drastically in the last 20 years.

And this is the point I made earlier that's often used interchangeably with race and culture. This is really how we engage the world around us. It's how we perceive the world where we believe how we evaluate it, how we behave. It is actually the broad blueprint for how we are in the world.

Groupings of people based on shared values, beliefs, and behavioral norms. When you think about skateboarding -- I work with educators. I try to get them to understand that these young people develop a culture based around certain values, beliefs, and behavioral norms and that's what culture is. And as I said, it includes the physical culture, but also the subjective or belief culture.

When we think about the story about the visit to the house on the other side of town, it is a demonstration of this cultural match, cultural mismatch. Who are we most successful with? What communities are we most successful with? The communities that mostly like the agencies, institutions in our communities. So that mainstream, middle class, dominant culture people tend to be able to access and get more benefits from the typical organization, agencies we have in our communities. So you have what you call a cultural match.

When we think about the people we fail most with or the communities we fail most with, you should think about a cultural mismatch. That there's something that's going on in this relationship that actually disservices people who are not consistently identified with the mainstream society cultures around us.

And so when we look at our organizations, generally the organization is white and middle class and the attitudes and behaviors are consistent with dominant, mainstream, middle class culture, attitudes and behaviors. And so when people don't demonstrate those things, they tend to get marginalized from the very service provider that they may need the most.

Now here's an important point about these differences and this goes back to my earlier point about monocultural versus multicultural relationships. In a monocultural interaction, there's one way to get it right and if you don't do it that way which happens to be my way, then I have to tell you that you are wrong.

And it's this engagement that comes up when we consider these interactions as cultural contests. And this quote from Kich is really significant. When a majority group assumes the power of instituting norms from which minority groups are seen as deviate, differences between these groups become institutionalized. Difference is then perceived as a deficit or as a failure to meet the standards of the majority.

And this is what subtly is at work when we have these complex cultural engagements is that it ends up being viewed as a contest between that culture and the dominant culture. And typically the discipline is expected of the people who are different.

When you act like we do, when you walk like we do, when you talk like we do, then I can help you. And so this is the challenge of a multicultural perspective is that people should not have to change who they are in order to fit into our community and to receive support and help.

This is again related to the contest that dominant culture in this society because it is dominant becomes somewhat invisible. So the Western European tradition is what this society was built on and it's viewed as the norm so it becomes somewhat invisible.

The values of this culture are pretty clear to most of us: material wealth, individualism, freedom, democracy, meritocracy, equality versus equity. Each one of these has a significant meaning in our American society.

I mean when we talk about wealth, Benjamin Franklin said better to be a liar than to be in debt. And we value the material things more than we do oftentimes the community of people around us.

And meritocracy is a huge conversation in our society right now. People get what they deserve. You earn it. That's the only way you get it. And everybody knows that that is not the truth for this society, but it's a belief that we hang on to and the reason is, is that if people are not doing well, who do we blame? The people who are not doing well.

So if you're doing what you're supposed to do, then you would have health insurance. If you're doing what you're supposed to do, you would be having food. And so we condemn people if they are not doing well by suggesting that meritocracy is actually a real value in our society.

Next slide. This results in a development of privilege and this, too, is a subtle process. And one that I want you to think about seriously because it is not something that we ourselves may necessarily create, but we ourselves will benefit from this.

So the subtle process of obtaining unequal access to societal benefits, we often take it for granted because privilege is most invisible to the ones who have it.

Next slide. This operates on a continuum so that privilege is not the same for all people even if they are a share of privilege status. So that we see this with many people who have historically or traditionally been privileged. They may not be so privileged now and this does not seem to make sense to some people.

And this is not an overt situation where you accrue your privilege. Okay, you come in and you take it. It's developed in a societal sense or in a structural sense so that all you have to do is show up.

So that with say male privilege for men who show up. They don't have to claim that male privilege. They don't have to accrue it. It exists. And so we just have to show up as a male and you get privilege. Whiteness operates the same way so in racial categories, whiteness still operates as a privileged identity.

Extreme overt process in situations where we may lack privilege. This is when people with privilege really become aware that they have it is when it's threatened or when it's challenged or when it's taken away.

The challenge we face institutionally or agency wise is that these structural barriers are bigger than any of us as individuals and that these ideas about the way the world works around us oftentimes defy any of us as individuals to address.

So that many times the question is, what am I supposed to do about racism? What am I supposed to do about sexism? And so this devolves back to the question of what do we do as organizations to help the poor individual action to undo these structural challenges?

This was related to the racial category privilege that I described a little bit earlier is that it's not a neutral act to continue to use racial categories because they are so embedded in our history, they're so embedded in our society around us so that it's not, again, an active or overt action of anyone to claim racial privilege, but it is built into our system so that it exists.

And when we know that racial inequity exists, no matter whether you are privileged or not, whether you're white or people of color, if you know that this racial inequity exists, then our responsibility is to work to try to undo that.

Time wise?

Marshall Peter: Yeah, you know, I think probably, Johnny, what we should try to do is maybe take another two or three minutes and then see if people have questions. I'd encourage people who are watching, if you have questions that you'd like Johnny to respond to, if you type them into the text box, that would be very helpful.

I'm sitting here spellbound and I hate to be cutting this off and so --

Johnny Lake: No, we're going to move forward. Next slide. Next slide. Next slide. Stay right there. Go back one. This is the point I made earlier that culture and race are conflated. In absence of clear biological evidence to support the racial definitions that we continue to use, we have instead referred to a set of cultural practices that are accepted and they function as a racial marker and as a racial category.

That's when people say acting white or acting black, that is not a racial critique. That is actually a cultural critique, but we use it still to talk about race. So when black people say Obama's not black enough, they're not talking about his skin color or his biological category.

And for white people, for Barack Obama to be black, just came up yesterday in a conversation. Why can't he be considered white if his mother's white and his father's black? He's as much white as he is black.

But this is the dilemma we face when we look at the conflation of race and culture is that even though it's not biologically sound, we still use racial definitions as if they are real.

Next slide forward. We go forward. And so what can we do is really the last couple of points I wanted to make. And we're not going to change skin color when it comes to racial issues, but when we look at what culture is, culture is socially learned.

So as Cushner says, clearly if acquiring a cultural identity through primary socialization requires full immersion in a culture over a long period of time, it stands to reason that reshaping or changing our cultural outlook as a result of secondary socialization will also take considerable time and considerable work.

Studies of cross-cultural experiences suggest that there is a predictable pattern of adjustment when interacting with people one perceives as different from oneself.

Most individuals require a significant amount of time before they can develop this understanding. Some suggest that this period may be as long as two years. So if you think about your engagement with another cultural group different than your own, think of needing at least about two years to start even developing some of the in-depth understanding of that culture to be able to be culturally competent with that community.

And respect for others is key and this where we can mediate some of the conflict is to recognize that other people have different lives than we do. Other people have different behaviors than we do and that there's no reason for there to be conflict, but that when we can find common ground and we can work together and that respect is at the foundation of that, and we can actually more successfully work in a multicultural context.

Next slide. And this is mutual accommodation and this is the reciprocity that's needed for cross-cultural interactions to work. Organizations and clients both must be willing and able to learn and practice positive behaviors and attitudes in an effort to reach what should be a shared set of common goals.

All staff and clients must help and support to develop effective skills in multicultural communication, interactions and understanding.

So this is an ongoing piece of work, not a training sessions -- the diversity training once a year or those kinds of things, but this should be happening every day that we have interactions with clients or even interactions with each other.

And so the agency will accept, respect, and build on a client's culture, language, and family knowledge and experiences as legitimate and valuable resources and as a basis for working successfully with them. And clients--and a reciprocity will learn and interact with the culture of the agency and will work to meet expectations of the agency and learn the necessary skills to reach their goals.

So, do we have questions?

Marshall Peter: Yeah, we do not have any questions so far. If you have a question that you would like to ask and you would like to do it actually using the phone, if you press #6 it will unmute your phone. And then after you've asked your question, we would ask you to press *6 to remute. That will keep the noise off the line.

So we'll pause just for a second here and if you have a question, press #6. Any questions for Dr. Lake?

Several people are typing. I think if you want to continue, Johnny --

Johnny Lake: Yeah, I'll continue. Go ahead with your questions. These are the points I put together about the relationship. These are pretty specific and you're welcome to these following this presentation because when we work with families, their participation -- and this is true for all of us. When we get to participate in some of the things we have to do or decisions we have to make, we have more ownership and more buy-in to that decision when we get to participate in that decision.

So working with families, clients and families, encourage them to participate in the decision making that's affecting their lives. This is one of the real keys to diversity work is to make sure that process is a shared process and not one that comes down autocratically or directed as if we know more than the family does.

Marshall Peter: So we do have a couple of questions.

Johnny Lake: Okay.

Marshall Peter: So, let's see, Donna says, I work in an academic setting. What introductory types of activities would you suggest for the high school age population to help them to consider these points you have presented today?

Johnny Lake: I work in the academic setting quite a bit with high schoolers and this conversation is a very powerful one for them because they're living a lot of this kind of conversation I'm having with you.

I would suggest space and opportunity for them to actually have real engagement with other young people who are coming from different places than they are. I have several groups in local high schools here. One group is called EYES -- Equity Youth Educators and it's made up of an incredibly diverse group of kids who actually have real conversations about what it's like to be in the school that they're in and how they can help support each other.

So I would say -- because when I ask students, when do they talk about these kinds of issues at school? And they say, when there's a problem. I said, what happens then? Well, they bring in somebody like you and they have conversations with us and then they go away. And I said, what happens then? Well, we just wait for another problem.

And so what has happened in schools where especially around these kinds of issues is we've allowed it to be a deficit conversation that for our kids they already know if they're going to have a conversation about these things, it must be because there's a problem.

So I would suggest that you try to move it from a deficit approach conversation to a more positive and proactive approach about how these kids can build skills to work effectively in a multicultural context which they're living in every day. But we tend to have resegregation right within many of our schools so that these issues, again, don't get talked about even though it may be a multicultural school.

So, also food is one of the things that is a wonderful bridge builder for young people. So with the groups I meet with, we always share food. We prepare food with each other and we share food. So some of the subtle ways of building bridges could also be used.

Marshall Peter: So we have actually a number of questions. I'm going to kind of skip just for a second because I think the food thing continues to be so important. Emily Seigler asked, oftentimes families we work with offer her a drink and she says no mostly because she knows they can't afford to give her something. What would be the best answer so that she does not offend them?

Johnny Lake: This is where you have to consider what it means for them to share their small resources with you. It's actually more meaningful when they choose to share it with you. What I suggest and what I always do is reciprocate with that same family so that next time you go by there or even that same day, go bring something back as something to show your appreciation for that because to close that door is to disrespect their generosity.

Marshall Peter: Michael, I apologize. We don't have time really to respond to your question. Michael asked a question about disproportionate suspension rates and so on and I think it's probably beyond the remaining time. If you want to make a quick comment about that.

Johnny Lake: I got some contact information that's at the end of the PowerPoint, Michael. I think your question is a really important one and I actually do a lot of work in that area right now. Be really glad to communicate with you outside of the conversation we're having here.

Marshall Peter: So I think that given the amount of time that we have, we'll give you one last one, Johnny. A quick -- and it's ridiculous to try to answer these quickly. What does research suggest we should do to educate our workforce to be more culturally competent?

Johnny Lake: Research suggests that this is related to people's opportunities to learn. When we look at the actions that have been taken especially at the structural level, we have given short, short shrift to the really necessary requirements of people that actually learn so that people will -- I call it CPR diversity training because people will typically have about that much opportunity to supposedly learn skills.

So we have to make the distinction between these -- I'll say token even though I think most people think that they may be legitimate -- their token diversity conversations that usually end up putting people in more discomfort with these issues than actually building skills. So I would suggest that you have to enter a process of learning over time that is continual not just the highlight of the diversity training we had last October and, oh, we're going to have another one next October.

This is typically what happens. But on the ground training that actually works within the organization and to build that capacity within the organization because when you got to keep bringing people from outside in and they leave, this is not necessarily building capacity within your organization.

And I'd be glad to entertain that question further as well.

Marshall Peter: So you know, there's a real irony here. As Johnny pointed out that this isn't really a, you know, a one day workshop or a webinar. It's really a much, much more substantial commitment that needs to be made in order to really not be a tourist, but to really begin to acquire some of the capacity as a resident.

With that in mind though I really feel like Johnny cautioned me and, in fact, it's been true that the amount of time that we were affording today was really going to be insufficient to even, you know, kind of dip the smallest part of a toe into what it is that he'd like to share. So with that in mind, I'm going to -- after we wrap up today -- we'll talk with Johnny about the possibility of him coming back and doing a part 2 for us.

It's really our interest at CADRE to continue to push these issues into your attention. I know that the folks that have been on the call, these are concerns that you all have, but we'd love to see if we can get Johnny to come back and do a part 2 for us.

And you've put up a few --

Johnny Lake: Yeah, and your question because this conversation, I mean, we're using technology, but it is best dealt with as a dialogue so that your questions should inform my responses. My introduction, my presentation should prompt your questions, but your questions should also be included in the response. So any follow-up questions would be appreciated.

What I put up is a list of the different short pieces that are related to this conversation today. Any of them if you contact that email address, you can have access to those articles.

Marshall Peter: Okay, thank you very much, Johnny.

Johnny Lake: Yeah, and there's one last picture I wanted to share with you. This is my grandmother, Leona Patrick. She's 83 years old in this picture. This is 1961. She was 77 years when I was born. She lived in the country with no running water, no electricity. She had been a field worker all of her life so she didn't have social security as an income.

She only went to fourth grade because that's all they thought a black woman of her time needed. But she is the reason that I ended up with a Ph.D. because she always believed in me and as an agency person, I want you to think about this situation.

I was six years old and in the country with this old woman who was 83. And she had no running water in the house. No electricity. She had no education. She had no income. How many agency people would leave a little boy like that in a house with an old woman like that? Or would we not take him out and put him somewhere where we think he might be better off?

And this what I mean when I talk about this different culture is to be able to see the value in a culture that might not look the same as ours. But I tell you, if I was not in the house with that old woman growing up, I wouldn't be standing here in front of you.

And so we have this incredibly rich American society that's multicultural whether we have practiced it or not and I think our key to success in these communities is to find the value within these communities and to help those communities to build on those values.

Marshall Peter: So, Johnny, thank you very much for just an absolute knockout presentation today. You certainly once again have just really done it right.

Johnny Lake: Thank you, thank you. Thank you all very much for your attention.

Marshall Peter: I want to thank everybody for joining us today. You will be getting a link to a very brief Survey Monkey to give us feedback about today's webinar and we will again -- we'll be talking to Johnny about having him to do another one.

I also want to let you know we're just finalizing arrangements for a webinar on May the 29th which will be entitled Dispute Resolution Made Easy using CADRE's newly released parent guides. As this gets finalized, we'll be sending out announcements, but that will be May 29th, 11:30 to 12:45.

So again, Johnny, thank you so very much. Thank you all for joining us and --