Coming Together Across Differences

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Our Objectives Today

- Explore your assumptions about **culture**
- Research about **cultural difference**
- Strategies for self and organization to become **culturally proficient and responsive**
- Opportunity **to take one step in life long learning** and change within your role

Session Guiding Principles

- Life Long Learning Process

- "Culture" defined broadly (ability, race, ethnicity, income/education, religion, sexual orientation, etc.) from Assets perspective

- Each person brings varied cultural dimensions to every interaction

- We all have biases and preferences

- We can all learn to be culturally "responsive"

Guiding Principles (continued)

- Power affects everything

- "NO guilt, NO shame" (Dr. Peggy Mackinstosh)

- Effective intercultural communication is possible, it requires effort

- Conflict prevention is necessary to ensure success of children with disabilities and efforts must be early

Population Shifts Mean More Intercultural Skills Are Needed

- By 2030 children of color will constitute over half of students in U.S. schools

- Children born into poverty increased to 1 in 5
  - Poverty is highly correlated (.99) with low academic achievement

- Continued disproportional representation in racial, ethnic and socio-economic groups in:
  - achievement
  - discipline
  - drop-out rates

Making the Case for Multicultural Education *The Education Case*

Problems with Culture and Conflict in Special Education

- **Over-identification of LEP students in sped**
  - **Statute specifically prohibits considering limited English proficiency as factor in determining eligibility**

    Reg. § 300.306(b)(1)(iii)
- **Over-identification of students based on race and ethnicity in sped becomes monitoring priority under IDEA 2006 Reg. § 300.646**

More Problems

- OCR and complaints to state Human Rights Commissions contesting referrals based on race

- Public reporting of disaggregated data based on race, ethnicity, language, disability, poverty, etc. in NCLB

- Parents report that school personnel demonstrating trustworthiness would help them avoid due process

Neely, 2005

What Culture *is Not*

6 Myths of Culture: (Avruch's)

1. CULTURE IS HOMOGENOUS
2. CULTURE IS A THING
3. CULTURE IS UNIFORMLY DISTRIBUTED AMONG MEMBERS OF A GROUP
4. AN INDIVIDUAL POSSESSES BUT A SINGLE CULTURE
5. CULTURE IS CUSTOM
6. CULTURE IS TIMELESS

Kevin Avruch. *Culture and Conflict Resolution (1998)*

Activity Questions

With your group, discuss the following:

1. Why is this a myth and not a truth?

2. Have your values and beliefs, and/or those of your organization, been shaped by this myth?

   OBSERVATIONS?

Culture defined historically

- Exclusive: "high" culture, not "folk culture"

- Evolutionary continuum: "savagery" to "barbarism" to "civilization"

- Plurality and uniqueness: no judgment

Contemporary Definitions of Culture

- ". . . complex systems of meanings created, shared and transmitted by individuals in particular social groups" *

- ". . . denotes the shared implicit and explicit rules and traditions that express the beliefs, values, and goals of a group of people" **

* Avruch, 1998

**Harry and Kalyanpur, 1999

Culture is . . .

- **Generic**
  - universal attributes of human behavior
  - "human nature"
- **Local**
  - reflects diversity
  - derivative of individual experience

Cultural Identity

- **Macroculture** defined by national culture

- **Microcultures** reflect differing dimensions: age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, social status, geographic location

- **Affiliations** based on life experience

Cultural Interactions

- Pluralistic: **Mosaic**

- Assimilation: **Melting Pot**

- Integration: Cultural **Exchange** and Mutual **Influence**

Developing Effective Intercultural Communication

Shared responsibility

- – Parents

- – School personnel

- – Mediators

- – Department personnel

- – Administrators

- – IEP Facilitators and Chairs

So Where Should We Begin?

- Begin with **SELF-ASSESSMENT**: Where am I on the continuum of becoming culturally proficient?

- Wherever I am is fine; it's my effort and commitment to moving forward that counts

- Everything that I know about myself will influence my interactions with others AND

- My abilities to properly analyze and ensure that my systems of service are culturally proficient (whether school or state personnel, parent advocate, etc.)

Cultural Proficiency Continuum

FROM...
- Cultural Destructiveness
- Cultural Incapability
- Cultural Blindness
- Cultural Pre-Competence
- Cultural Competence   TO...
- Cultural Proficiency

Lindsey, Nuri and Terrell, *Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders* (1999, 2001) and *Facilitator's Guide,* based on Cross, Bazron, Dennis and Isaacs *(1989)*

Cultural Proficiency Continuum
Cultural Destructiveness

- The elimination of other people's cultures
  - "This is America, everyone should speak English."
  - "I have been teaching this way for 25 years and I am not going to modify or water down my curriculum for any student."

Cultural Proficiency Continuum
Cultural Incapability

- Belief in the superiority of one's own culture and behavior that disempowers another's culture
    - "I can't believe my Japanese boys only scored in the 80th percentile!"

Cultural Proficiency Continuum
Cultural Blindness

- Acting as if the cultural differences one sees do not matter or not recognizing that there are differences among and between cultures
  - "When I see children with disabilities, I do not see their disability or color, I only see children."
  - "Why do we have to suffer through another professional development on diversity!"
  - School policies that result in proportionately more minority or disabled children being disciplined than white children

Cultural Proficiency Continuum
Cultural Pre-Competence

- Awareness of the limitations of one's skills or an organization's practices when interacting with other cultural groups
- Awareness of entitlement
- Accomplishment of single goal (i.e. hiring minority person) fulfills any perceived obligation toward that minority group
  - "We need an African American person on this IEP team."
  - School, parent center or state department recruits members of underrepresented groups but makes no plans for supporting them or adapting the workplace

21

Cultural Proficiency Continuum
Cultural Competence

- Interacting with other cultural groups using the Five Essential Elements of Cultural Proficiency as the standard for individual behavior and school practices:
  - acceptance and respect for differences
  - ongoing assessment of one's own and the organization's culture
  - attention to the dynamics of difference
  - continuous expansion of cultural knowledge and resources
  - adaptation of one's values and behaviors and the organization's policies and practices
- "We must continuously train staff about communication strategies that lead to understanding other people's views."

Cultural Proficiency Continuum
Cultural Proficiency

- **Cultural Proficiency:** Esteeming culture; knowing how to learn about individual and organizational culture; interaction effectively in a variety of cultural environments

  - "I believe conflict is natural and normal. I am glad we are learning how to do things differently when conflict occurs."

Language:
Becoming Culturally Proficient, Being Culturally Responsive

- Language and the words used express cultural values

- Be aware of Social v. Content language

- Literal translations/interpretations are usually not possible

- Find a *cultural broker*

More Language Considerations

- *First language* is needed when issues are emotional, technical, even if fluent

- Avoid use of child, relative or friend of non-English speaker (Best Practice)

- Build in extra time for session/communication

- Hire a competent, culturally appropriate, knowledgeable interpreter

So What to Do with our Systems or Institutions?

"Cultural proficiency represents the policies, practices and procedures of a school or the values and behaviors of an individual that enable that school or person to interact effectively in a culturally diverse environment. "

Randall B. Lindsey, Kikanza Nuri Robins, and Raymond D. Terrell, **Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders** based on Cross, Bazron, Dennis and Isaacs *(1989)*

Becoming Culturally Proficient

5 Elements of Organizational Cultural Proficiency:

Value Diversity (Name the Differences)

- Assess One's Culture (Claim Your Identity)
- Manage the Dynamics of Differences (Frame Conflicts)
- Institutionalize Cultural Knowledge (Train about Diversity)
- Adapt to Diversity (Change for Diversity)

Randall B. Lindsey, Kikanza Nuri Robins, and Raymond D. Terrell, *Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders* based on Cross, Bazron, Dennis and Isaacs *(1989)*

Value Diversity (Name the Differences): Research Examples

- Geert Hofstede, PhD, Netherlands
- Former IBMer, researcher in business and management
- Founder of Institute for Research on Intercultural Cooperation
- Most extensive data collected by IBM in over 70 countries from 1967-1973
- Hofstede analyzed data and created 5 Dimensions to explain differentiation in cultures

Hofstede Dimensions: Differences that might affect interactions

- Power Distance
- Individualism/Collectivism
- Masculinity and Femininity
- Uncertainty Avoidance
- Long-Term Orientation (5th dimension added later after China study, from Confucianism)

Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations Across Nations. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2001

Edward T. Hall and Proxemics: Different space requirements can impact conflict

- Anthropologist
- Known for Proxemics, study of the human use of space within the context of culture
- Human perceptions of space are molded and patterned by culture
- Different amounts of space: intimate, social and consultative and public space
- Ex. from his work: Europeans require half as much distance in conversation as U.S. (4-7")

Hall*, Beyond Culture,* Garden City, NY: Anchor (1977)

Different Relationships to Time Might Cause Conflict: Hall again

- Monochromatic orientation to time:
    - Time can be divided, used, wasted
    - Time is a commodity
- Polychromatic orientation:
    - Time is flexible and fluid

Hall, *The Dance of Life: The Other Dimensions of Time,* Garden City, NY: Anchor (1977)

Communication: Content or Context More Important?

- Hall: High and Low Context Cultures
- High Context:
  - Context more important than verbal content
  - Great value placed on tradition, ceremony, manner of communication
- Low Context:
  - Setting is not as important as content of communication
  - More focus on the outcome of the dispute

Saving Face

- Intertwined with individualistic and collectivist characteristics of culture
- Individualistic cultures more apt to focus on saving one's own face
- Collectivistic cultures focus on saving the face of others
- Influence on communication and proposed solutions to disputes

Ting-Toomey, S., *Intercultural Conflict Styles: A Face-negotiation Theory,* (1988)

Dialogue Question

How could these generalizations about "culture" help or hinder you and/or your organization to become more culturally proficient and responsive?

So... The Big But....

- Research examples may help inform us
- Help us uncover differences that are unseen by us that need attention
- BUT:
  - THEY ARE NOT RECIPES FOR CULTURAL PROFICIENCY
  - THEY ARE NOT ALWAYS ACCURATE

OUR FOCUS SHOULD BE...

Cultural Proficiency requires us to develop a **set of skills and awareness**, just like a mediator's toolbox, that allows us to **be adaptable** and **respectful** of persons **of any culture** that we interact with or provide services to

IDEA Contains Cultural Assumptions

IDEA encompasses 6 principles of law:

✓ Right of every child to education

✓ Right to non-discriminatory assessment

✓ Individualized and appropriate education

✓ LRE to ensure opportunity for association with typical peers to maximum extent appropriate

✓ Right to challenge any aspect of education

✓ Parent participation in decision-making

Three Core Values

- Individualism

- Equity

- Choice

Example: Special Education and Individualism

- *Individualized* Education Plan
- Focus in the IEP meetings and in the IEP on the student, services to family and child (IDEA provides for "counseling" and interagency collaboration) often not discussed, maybe no strong connections to community agencies
- Goal of transition - independent living

Be Culturally Responsive…

Four Step Process:

1. ID values in IEP/IFSP recommendations

2. ID family values underlying response

3. Describe values to family: do they match with the family's values?

4. Work collaboratively to develop solutions that are compatible with both family and IDEA
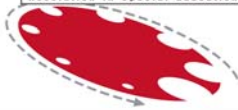
Harry and Kalyanpur, 1999

Dialogue Question

What are the cultural assumptions and/or biases in IDEA and special education that might lead to conflicts?

RESOURCES

- National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems (NCCRESt), 2005.
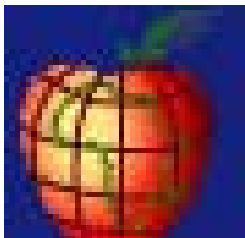
- CADRE

  www.directionservice.org/cadre

- Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice

  http://cecp.air.org

- National Center for Cultural Competence, Georgetown University

  http://gucchd.georgetown.edu/nccc

- National Alliance of Black School Educators & ILIAD Project, 2002

  www.nabse.org

RESOURCES, cont.

– <u>Why Are So Many Minority Students in Special Education?</u> Beth Harry and Janette Klinger, Teacher's College Press, 2005

– <u>Culture in Special Education: Building Reciprocal Family-Provider Relationships</u>, Maya Kalyanpur and Beth Harry, Paul H. Brooke Publishing Co. 1999

– <u>Culture & Conflict Resolution</u>, Kevin Avruch, United States Institute of Peace Press, Washington, D.C., 2004

– <u>Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach</u>, Jane Vella

– *Culture and Conflict,* Michelle LeBaron, 2003

– <u>Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations Across Nations.</u> Hofstede, Geert. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2001

RESOURCES, cont.

– "The Cultural Competence Continuum", Cross, T. L., B.J. Bazron, K. W. Dennis, and M.R. Isaacs.,1989

– Intercultural Conflict Styles: A Face-negotiation Theory. *Ting-Toomey, S., 1988*

– Cultural Proficiency: A Manual for School Leaders, 1999, 2001 and Facilitator's Guide, Lindsey, Nuri and Terrell, based on Cross, Bazron, Dennis and Isaacs, *1989*

– "Keys to Access: Encouraging the use of mediation by families from diverse backgrounds," CADRE, 1999

Summary

- ❑ Commit to a Life Long process of Learning

- ❑ Find a "Cultural Buddy"

- ❑ Remember definition of "Success" might not be the same across cultural groups

- ❑ Be aware that every interaction is a cross-cultural interaction

. . .Anais Nin

We don't see things
as they are,
We see them as we are.

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