

DIVERSITY DIALOGUE FACILITATOR TRAINING



**EMORY UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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 - Nadine J. Kaslow, PhD, ABPP
 - Eugene W. Farber, PhD, ABPP
 - Noriel E. Lim, PhD
 - Chanda C. Graves, PhD, ABPP
 - Erica Marshall-Lee, PhD
 - Naadira Upshaw, PsyD



OBJECTIVES

- Overview strategies to promote a respectful space for discussions about diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Overview strategies to promote a respectful space for discussions about harm and discrimination toward marginalized groups



OBJECTIVES

- Discuss how to utilize groups as an active listening, learning, and action-focused opportunity
- Discuss how to partner with the relevant constituency group(s) to determine the questions that will guide the group discussions



PREPARE YOURSELF

- Assess how prepared you feel to talk about issues related to diversity and the experiences of marginalized groups
 - Conduct your own emotional readiness evaluation/reflection
- Seek to close your own education/knowledge gaps about history and current events
- Identify and recognize your own blind spots or biases
 - Implicit Association Test



PREPARE YOURSELF

- Find comfort in your discomfort
- Practice having these conversations – the more your practice the more comfortable it becomes
- Welcome discomfort, as it can facilitate change
 - Remember, being uncomfortable does not mean tolerating microaggressions, racism or other forms of oppression (i.e., you do not have to become comfortable tolerating racial slurs)
- Risk discomfort by asking yourself difficult questions



PREPARE THE TEAM

- Partner with the relevant constituency group to determine
 - The structure for the diversity dialogue – consider small groups only versus a large group discussion prior to and/or following small group conversations
 - 3-4 focus group questions



PREPARE THE TEAM

- Develop questions that address emotional reactions and that focus on action steps
 - What emotion/combination of emotions did you feel when you heard about the incident and how are you feeling now?
 - What actions have you taken or would you like to take to take care of yourself and take care of the community? What actions do you recommend that your organization/institution take?



PREPARE THE TEAM

- Determine a priori a plan to report out on the focus group conversations and to follow up on the discussions and action steps recommended



GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How would you handle a constituency group that does not want to allow space for group members to discuss their feelings or reactions, but only wants to focus on action plans?



SET THE STAGE

- Introduce yourselves as co-facilitators to the group
 - Allow group members to choose when they speak if they introduce themselves
- Structure the time
- Model the behavior you would like to illicit
 - Respond with compassion
 - Self-disclose in a genuine way
 - Respect different viewpoints



SET THE STAGE

- Frame the conversation
 - May include readings, poems, personal stories, etc.
- Detail the questions that will be discussed in each group
- Share the report out plan
- Describe the expected follow-up plan



SET THE STAGE

- Discuss the facilitators of productive conversations (a more collaborative approach than ground rules)



SET THE STAGE

- Consider the following facilitators
- Strive to create a safe, respectful, nonjudgmental, and brave space
 - Maintain confidentiality – our stories stay, our learning leaves
 - Speak for ourselves, using “I”, not “we”, statements
 - Listen actively, with compassion and curiosity
 - Share or ask clarifying questions
 - Be mindful of time so every one who wants to speak can – Make space and take space



SET THE STAGE

- Consider the following facilitators
- Strive to create a safe, respectful, nonjudgmental, and brave space
 - Engage in respectful dialogue, with the goal of learning
 - Lean into discomfort and take risks in sharing
 - Honor people's courage and vulnerability in sharing and inquiring
 - Put on camera if possible (if applicable)



SET THE STAGE

- Discuss the purpose of the group – have a respectful space to discuss issues around diversity and action steps to improve equity and inclusion of marginalized groups



SET THE STAGE

- Create a respectful space
 - Provide support to increase the safety and visibility of marginalized or oppressed community members – Offer support for all parties to engage in productive conversations
 - Show respect for the humanity of all participants – Demonstrate respect
 - Accept varying opinions – Engage in controversy with civility



SET THE STAGE

- Create a respectful space
 - Acknowledge and discuss instances where a dialogue has affected the well-being of another person - Own intentions and impacts
 - Intention – what you think or feel and how that influences their behavior during an action or conversation
 - Impact – how your actions or conversation impacted the other(s)
 - Use active listening, center on others' feelings, and genuinely acknowledge your contributions if your actions negatively impact others



SET THE STAGE

- Create a respectful space
 - Can opt to step in and out of challenging conversations – Challenge by choice
 - Strive to not intentionally cause harm and address such harm when it occurs – Refrain from attacks



SET THE STAGE

- Create a respectful space
 - Support a focus on difficult and controversial topics, in which people are willing to experience emotional discomfort and take risks to be vulnerable and confront painful and difficult truths
 - Strive for a “brave” space and acknowledge people’s courage



SET THE STAGE

- Convey a recognition that microaggressions may occur and it is the responsibility of all parties to acknowledge and intervene
- Reflect on the importance of awareness and empathy in understanding both microaggressions and their impact



SET THE STAGE

- Convey the goal is to balance sharing with listening, learning, and determining action
- Communicate that groups work best when we hear multiple perspectives and experiences
 - Remind people that they are welcome to share if they feel they don't know what to say and that total silence can have a pernicious impact



SET THE STAGE

- Encourage people to have their video cameras enabled during the group session if possible, but recognize that there are many valid reasons people choose not to do so and respect their choices and handle in a flexible manner
- Remind participants that what is said in the group and by whom should stay in the group
 - Note that only themes will be shared



GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How would you handle it if the group members question your competence to co-facilitate the group? (e.g., 2 White facilitators leading a discussion related to race/ethnicity, trainees co-facilitating groups in which there are trainers)
- What would you recommend about facilitators of productive conversations?



ATTEND TO THE GROUP

- Facilitate discussion – listen intentionally and deeply to the group
- Make space, don't take space
- Foster a culture of inclusion
- Encourage discussion among members
- Encourage everyone to share
 - Direct the conversation more if one member takes a lot of space
 - Try to make universal the comments of the person who shares a lot
 - Invite those who are quiet to engage



ATTEND TO THE GROUP

- Allow for silence – remember, silence is important and can promote conversation
- Attend to and take care of each member in the group, even those whose views differ from yours
- Encourage people to take responsibility
 - Acknowledge privilege
 - Own mistakes and the harm they may have caused



ATTEND TO THE GROUP

- Follow the lead of the group
 - Find a balance between group members' sharing thoughts and feelings and moving toward action
- Use your own emotional reaction to guide the group
- Express appreciation for each person's contributions throughout the group



GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How do you typically feel when there is silence related to diversity, equity, and inclusion and how does this influence how you respond?



ADDRESS EMOTIONS

- Be careful not to dismiss emotions or move towards “fixing or action” too fast
- Let tension play out if it promotes dialogue *and* learning
- Defuse the situation if tension is confrontational or jeopardizes safety
 - Redirect in-fighting and process the in-fighting experience



ADDRESS EMOTIONS

- Provide validation when emotions and personal experiences are shared
- Reflect back emotions and ask the group if others share similar feelings
- Encourage sharing of feelings when the group becomes emotionally heavy (e.g., people are crying or angry)
- Check-in on nonverbal emotional expressions



BE MINDFUL OF PRIVILEGE AND POWER

- Be cognizant of privilege and power in the group and in the co-facilitator team
- Attend to ways in which privilege and power affect the conversation
 - Note who is represented here and who is absent
 - Note whose voice is the loudest or most frequent and who is not speaking



BE MINDFUL OF PRIVILEGE AND POWER

- Be attuned to the reality that some voices are unintentionally centered due to hierarchies related to gender, race, or title, etc.
- Strive to engage with your co-facilitator and all group participants in a manner that does not collude with power and privilege dynamics



GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How would you handle situations in which one person dominates the conversation?
- How would you address a situation in which a senior person who has power over you challenges your perspectives related to problems associated with diversity, equity, and inclusion?



ADDRESS MICROAGGRESSIONS

- Notice microaggressions - Everyday subtle, unintentional or intentional behaviors or interactions (e.g., insults, degrading messages, indignities) that communicate some sort of bias toward historically marginalized groups
 - Remember, “micro” doesn't mean that these acts can't have big, life-changing impacts



ADDRESS MICROAGGRESSIONS

- Use microintervention strategies to:
 - Make the invisible visible
 - Develop insight: “Can you see what is happening here?”
 - Disempower the innuendo by naming it
 - Stereotype, microaggressions, etc.
 - Ask for clarification of the statement or action
 - Broaden the ascribed trait
 - “I think that applies to everyone.”



ADDRESS MICROAGGRESSIONS

- Use microintervention strategies to:
 - Disarm the microaggression
 - Affirm, validate, and support the intended target
 - Respectfully express disagreement (verbally and nonverbally)
 - Interrupt and re-direct when it is becoming harmful
 - Remind the group of the rules



ADDRESS MICROAGGRESSIONS

- Use microintervention strategies to:
 - Educate the perpetrator
 - Differentiate between intent and impact
 - Promote empathy
 - Reframe the meaning or statement
 - “Can you think of other reasons for Will’s behaviors?”
 - Seek external reinforcement or support
 - Sue et al., 2019



ADDRESS MICROAGGRESSIONS

- Process reactions to microaggressions in the group
 - Ask the person who made the statement to clarify the intent of their statement
 - Ask participants how a comment was experienced by them
- Use the microaggression as a learning opportunity for the individual and the group



GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What are some strategies you and your co-facilitator can agree upon ahead of time and or in the moment if a microaggression occurs and one of you cannot respond?
- What other microinterventions have you found to be helpful?



CLOSE THE GROUP

- Provide participants with information on upcoming events, educational resources, and/or direct actions
- Leave participants with a sense of closure at the end, even if the closure only consists of a summary of issues raised and questions unanswered
- Manage the time so the discussion does not end abruptly



POST-GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

- Make time to process the group with your co-facilitator and/or the team of co-facilitators
- Reflect on what you experienced, learned, and want to learn or the actions you want to take going forward
- Take care of yourself!



RESOURCES

- Racial Justice Resources
 - http://psychiatry.emory.edu/documents/racial_justice_resources.pdf
- Race Talk and Facilitating Difficult Racial Dialogues
 - <https://ct.counseling.org/2015/12/race-talk-and-facilitating-difficult-racial-dialogues/>
- Tips for White Trainers Leading Multi-Racial Groups
 - <https://www.trainingforchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Tips-for-White-Trainers-Leading-Multi-Racial-Groups.pdf>
- Dialogue Strategies and Examples
 - <https://www.racialequitytools.org/act/strategies/dialogue-and-deliberation>





QUESTIONS

