Creating Meaningful Collaborations Between Mainstream and Culturally-Specific Organizations

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Goals and Objectives

By the end of this webinar participants will:

- Explore power-sharing and equity frameworks that can either cause harm or elevate underserved communities.

- Be able to describe ways to counteract inequalities.

- Recognize components of equitable, mutually beneficial and meaningful collaboration.

Harmful Views of Culture

Cultural Destruction	Cultural Incapacity	Cultural Blindness
Eliminates differences	Demeans difference	Dismisses differences
Represented by policies or practices that are destructive to cultures; most extreme being genocide. Purposeful destruction of a culture.	Doesn't intentionally seek to be culturally destructive, but lacks capacity to help minority clients. May perpetuate bias, support discriminatory practices, or send subtle messages that others are not valued or welcome	Provides services with expressed philosophy of being unbiased, functions with belief that culture or color make no difference, believes that helping approaches used by dominant culture can be universally applied. Encourages assimilation.

Favorable Views of Culture

Cultural Pre-competence	Cultural Capacity
Acknowledges & responds to differences	Learns and grows because of differences
Accepts and respects difference, engages in continuous self-assessment, attention to the dynamics of difference, expansion of cultural knowledge and resources to better meet the needs of marginalized populations. Works to hire unbiased employees, seeks advice and consultation from the community served, and actively decides what it is and is not capable of providing.	Holds culture in high esteem. Commits resources to develop cultural capacity. Adds to the knowledge base of culturally competent practice by conducting research, developing culturally based therapeutic approaches, and implementing, publishing and disseminating the results of demo projects. Hires staff who are oppression/equity specialists. Advocates for equity in systems and throughout society.

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Institutional Racism

Refers to the policies and practices within and across institutions that, intentionally or not, produce outcomes that chronically favor, or put a racial group at a disadvantage.

Systemic/Structural Racism

- A system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate racial group inequity.

- Structural racism is not something that a few people or institutions choose to practice. Instead it has been a feature of the social, economic and political systems in which we all exist.

Institutional & Systemic Racism

Power is the ability to decide what a problem is, to decide what needs to be done about it, to decide who will be included to solve it, in what capacity, and with what resources.

Concerns in Communities of Color

- Institutional racism and systemic bias in the delivery of services by the criminal justice system & helping services

- Mistrust of mainstream formal systems

- The under-representation of people of color among service providers and in positions of leadership

- Formal systems that do not include relevant or alternative resources

Language Access Practices that Harm Latino Families

- Using non-certified interpreters solely based on limited Spanish speaking ability

- Using immigration enforcement officials as interpreters

- Using interpreters as advocates even though they lack any advocacy background

- Discouraging people from seeking help except during limited hours when a Spanish speaker is available.

- Failing to listen to and work with community members and organizations.

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Latin@ Cultural Values

- **Respeto** refers to the important value of respect for others and for social customs

- **Familismo** refers to the importance of family closeness/unity and getting along with and contributing to the well-being of the family and the extended family.

- **Personalismo** influences parents' expectations of the parent–worker relationship. It is a cultural expectation for mutual, caring, respectful engagement as a foundation for building trust and rapport

Increasing Cultural Capacity

Includes:

- Being aware of one's own biases, prejudices, knowledge, limitations, etc.

- Recognizing professional power and avoiding the imposition of those values

- Gathering information. Listening/asking questions

- Negotiating the acceptance of a different set of values

- Developing linkages and collaborating with culturally specific community groups

Types of Partnerships

- **Networking** is **exchanging information** for mutual benefit.

- **Coordination** is **exchanging information** and **altering activities** for mutual benefit and to achieve a common purpose.

- **Cooperation** includes **exchanging information**, **altering activities**, and **sharing resources** for mutual benefit and to achieve a common purpose.

- **Collaboration** includes **all of the above**, **plus enhancing the capacity of another organization** to achieve a common purpose.

COC Barriers to Collaborations

- Asked to provide training or participate on an advisory meeting because issues are important, but required to cover our own expenses

- Asked to review a tool or product after it's in its final stages to "infuse" cultural competence.

- Asked to "collaborate" after everything is already decided and with little info except a request for a budget covering XX number of days to contribute to what the greater "they" come up with.

Result of Barriers

- Become undervalued: Organize trainings, sign on to coalitions late in the process without being included in its formation or priority setting, and conduct outreach and translation for free.

- Become stretched beyond their capacity (making them appear inept or unreliable).

- Lack a knowledge of unwritten rules designed and navigated by mainstream organizations.

- Are unable to build their capacity.

Identification & Assessment Domains of Institutional Bias

- Values and Attitudes

- Communication

- Community/Consumer Participation

- The Physical Environment, Materials, and Resources Available

- Policies and Procedures

- Culturally-specific based Practice

- Training and Competency Standards

Doing Our Own Work

- Deepen your understanding of the impacts of racism

- Study feminist work by women of color to deepen your understanding of the intersections of oppression/liberation;

- Question frames of reference that:
    - elevate sexism as a primary issues and others as auxiliary,
    - create qualifications for jobs based on historical assumptions
    - question different communication styles, attitudes toward conflict, and approaches to completing tasks;

- Learn from your mistakes with humble and honest reflection.

Doing the Organizational Work

- Work with culturally specific TA providers and communities that work from an anti-racist foundation

- Put important issues on the table, frame issues around the most marginalized, and put them to work in different situations when examining a problem, developing approaches, or considering policy.

- Use an Intersectional/Multilayered Approach Right from the Start (not as something extra).

Use an Intersectional/Multilayered Approach

Access to Meaningful Education

- resources and supports to cultivate, retain, and nurture good teachers and administrators;

- specialized curriculums; and

- increasing standards

Access to Meaningful Education for the most marginalized

- Resources and supports to cultivate, retain, and nurture good teachers and administrators, specialized curriculums, and increasing standards;

- Nutritious meals, stable housing, and access to health care;

- Curriculum and pedagogical approaches that teach relevant history and counter unconscious impact of pervasive negative stereotypes; and

- English language supports, First language supports, and interpretation and outreach in parent's first language.

How Can You Counteract Inequalities?

- Assess current strategies.

- Learn about your community.

- Document racist activities.

- Make translation points between your experiences with sexism and try to get a picture of parallels between racism, ethnocentrism, etc.

- Identify policies that need to be challenged.

- Determine short-term and long-term goals.

- Consider existing and needed resources.

How Can You Counteract Inequalities? (2)

Tell stories about the racism in your lives and assist one another to release the intense feelings that underlie these stories.

These stories can include experiences with racism, the racist lies we were told, the times we acted out racism, and the racist attitudes that were held by people around us, as well as the successes we've had in fighting racism.

Organizational Strategy to Reduce Prejudice and Oppression

Create a committee representing all levels in your organization. Such a committee can establish & facilitate the following steps:

- Develop support for change throughout the organization/community.

- Identify the cultural groups to be involved.

- Identify barriers to working with the community.

- Assess the current level of cultural capacity.

- Identify the leadership and resources needed to change.

- Develop goals & implementation steps & deadlines to achieve them.

- Commit to an ongoing evaluation of progress (measuring outcomes) and be willing to respond to change.

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Meaningful Collaborations

- Effectively engage diverse communities through intentional, fully equitable, and reciprocal partnerships.

- Do not frame the issue, decide what the problem is, and develop tools to respond without including those most effected.

- Seek congruence with the most marginalized to develop models, approaches, and research to respond to domestic violence, sexual assault, etc.

Meaningful Collaborations (2)

- Review your budgets for an equitable distribution of resources.

- Examine the role you play to perpetuate trickle down.

- Identify the culturally specific community based nonprofits that should tackle the issues.

- Mentor them through strategic partnerships.

- Adequately resource them to participate fully, build their own capacity, and design strategies from the inception of an idea to implementation.

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