Having Conversations About Isms

CARE Equity
Molly Gutilla
Erin McKay
Kory Thomas
Suzuho Shimasaki
Acknowledgements

- Courageous Conversations
- Denise Materre Consulting
- RIHEL
  - Carl Larson, Ph.D.
  - Effley N. Brooks, III, MBA
Objectives

- Better understand how isms are perpetuated and how they can be addressed
- Increase comfort and skills in addressing isms
Agreements

- Non-Judgmental / No Blame
- Active Listening
- Respect being in different places
- Step up / Step back
- Request clarity when needed
- Be honest
- Help foster a safe environment
Introductions

- Name
- Preferred gender pronoun
- Organization
- When have you made an incorrect assumption about someone?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender Pronouns</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>He/Him/His/Himself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>She/Her/Hers/Herself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Neutral</td>
<td>Them/They/Theirs/Themselves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Neutral</td>
<td>Ze/Zir/Zirs/Zirself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ze/Hir/Hirs/Hirself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Zie, Sie, Xie, Xe)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Name, Name’s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Three feet of ice does not result from one day of freezing weather.”

-Unknown, Chinese Proverb
AFRICAN QUEEN
IS THIS THE SOLUTION FOR OVERCROWDING?

TO SUPPORT FUNDING FOR 8-CAR TRAINS IN GREATER WASHINGTON, GO TO 8CARCOALITION.COM
Free to Review Your Matches

You’ve come to the right place. A place where millions of people are brought together based on the things that really matter. Like who you are on the inside. And for the last 10 years, we’ve focused on just one thing. Helping people find deep, meaningful love. So let’s get started. Because love begins here.

David + Kimbra
Matched by eHarmony
Cultural Beliefs
Cultural Beliefs

- Ideas and understandings, both implicit and explicit, about persons, society, nature and divinity
Cultural Beliefs

- Ideas and understandings, both implicit and explicit, about persons, society, nature and divinity
- Norms and moral standards that arise from these beliefs, ideas and understandings
Identities

- Sexual Orientation
- Race and Ethnicity
- Age
- Ability
- Religious Belief
- Gender
- Class
Identities

- Sexual Orientation
- Race and Ethnicity
- Age
- Ability
- Religious Belief
- Gender
- Class

Who is advantaged?
Identities

- Sexual Orientation
- Race and Ethnicity
- Age
- Ability
- Religious Belief
- Gender
- Class

- Who is advantaged?
- Who is disadvantaged?
Identities

- Sexual Orientation
- Race and Ethnicity
- Age
- Ability
- Religious Belief
- Gender
- Class

- Who is advantaged?
- Who is disadvantaged?
- How does the advantage/disadvantage show up?
Identities

- Race and Ethnicity
- Age
- Ability
- Religious Belief
- Gender
- Class

- Who is advantaged?
- Who is disadvantaged?
- How does the advantage/disadvantage show up?
"-isms"

- Race and Ethnicity (Racism)
- Age (Ageism)
- Ability (Ableism)
- Religious Belief (Religious Oppression)
- Gender (Sexism)
- Class (Classism)
What is an –ism?

- It is suffix that denotes an action, practice or principles
What is an –ism?

- It is suffix that denotes and action, practice or principles
- Criticism
What is an –ism?

- It is suffix that denotes and action, practice or principles

- Criticism: the act of applying critique

- Racism:
What is an –ism?

- It is suffix that denotes an action, practice or principles

- Criticism: the act of applying critique

- Racism: an act or system that applies and/or perpetuates the advantaged vs. disadvantaged structure within the social construct/identity of race
What is an –ism?

- It is suffix that denotes an action, practice or principles.

- Criticism: the act of applying critique.

- Racism: “a system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of phenotype.”
  Camara Phyllis Jones.
Isms Timeline
## Time Line Answer Key

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Addressing Isms
Why Cross Cultural Disconnect Occur

- Values: money, freedom, independence, fitness, physical appearance, relationships, social support, privacy, education
- Communication: language, high context vs low context
- Social structure: equality, hierarchy, time, in/out groups, self vs whole
- Attitudes: Ethnocentrism vs cultural relativism
Strategies for Resolving Disconnects

- Understand differences in perceptions
- Uncover cultural interpretations/assumptions
- Create a solution everyone can agree to
- Do not assume that there is one right way to communicate
- Be prepared for a discussion of the past
- Check your interpretations as you go
- View it as an opportunity for learning
Common Barriers

- I’m not completely sure the behavior is unacceptable.
- I used to behave similarly myself.
- Nobody has actually complained about the behavior.
- The offending party is a person in power.
- I’m not sure how to intervene effectively.
I don’t know I don’t know
1.  
2. 

I don’t know, but I think I do
1.  
2. 

I know I don’t know
1.  
2.  
(willing to act)

I know I know
6 Steps to Intervene in a Proactive and Effective Way
Step 1

- Objectively identify the specific behavior that is unwelcome or disrespectful
- Your comment, “learn to speak English if you want to work here” doesn’t support the culture we are trying to establish here.
Step 2

- Respond to the questions or concerns of your colleague
  - I agree that it takes more effort to understand what she is saying; however, that's an adjustment we are committed to make.
Step 3

- Ask your colleague to commit to stopping the behavior.
  - Your contribution here is so important, but those comments which disrespect others are not helpful and I’m asking you to stop.
Step 4

- Create a safe zone to explore other behaviors and solutions reflective of an inclusive and respectful work environment.
- I see you are frustrated, and I want to support all of us to find a better way. Let’s find a moment when things are calm to share our feelings without criticism or judgment. It’s important to me that you feel safe too.
Step 5

- Establish policies and procedures to set clear guidelines and expectations for acceptable and unacceptable behavior.
- Our goal is to provide timely and effective services. To serve all of our clients in the best possible way, we recognize the value of bi- and multi-lingual competency as critical to our workplace. We will seek to understand and communicate with all of our clients in their preferred language.
Step 6

- Encourage and recognize positive behavior. Praise in public, censure in private.
  - I appreciate working with you and seeing all the ways you have chosen to stretch and grow. It’s great to be part of a team that consciously chooses to learn and create respect.
  - Can I have a moment to share something that’s on my mind? Let’s find some place private and without distractions where we can talk.
Case Scenarios
Four Agreements of Courageous Conversations

- Stay engaged
- Speak your truth
- Experience discomfort
- Expect and accept non-closure
Role Playing
Debrief

- Did the conversation go the way you wanted it to go?
- What was challenging?
- What could you do differently next time?
- What will you commit to starting, stopping, and/or continuing?
We find comfort among those who agree with us, growth among those who don’t.

-Frank A. Clark
Thank You!

Questions?

Molly Gutilla  
molly.gutilla@ucdenver.edu

Erin McKay  
erin.mckay@careequity.org

Kory Thomas  
kory.thomas@careequity.org

Suzuho Shimasaki  
suzuho.shimasaki@careequity.org