Transformative Race Talk: a lever for organizational improvement

GUEST PRESENTER: DR. DECOTEAU IRBY
Research Agenda

Racial equity work requires developing a distinct organizational capacity for noticing, engaging in, and learning from racial conflicts and dilemmas. Developing the consciousness that this process is central to equity work is likely to bring white teachers closer to the racialized experiences that students of color encounter on a routine basis.
Suggested Readings


Objective and Methods

To increase participants’ understand of the role of *transformative race talk* and *equity-focused teaching practice* as important aspects of increasing organizational capacity for improvement.

**Establishment of Holding Environment.** The workshop involves taking risks in a “dangerously safe” experiential learning environment.

**Deliberate Practice.** The workshop invite participants to learn by *doing the work* of noticing and talking about what equitable and inequitable practice entails.

**Personal and Collective Critical Reflection.** Participants will have opportunities to engage in critical self- and collective-reflection.

**Practice.** Participants will notice, name, and challenge people to confront racial anxieties.
Aguilar's Coaching for Equity Framework

What you see

What you say & when

Where you look

Self-awareness

Who you hear & how
Observation and Mini-Essay

American history observation (declaration of independence):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p07cEjN8W0U

Watch the video and write a mini-essay outlining:

A. General overview of what you observed,
B. The strengths of the lessons, and
C. Areas for growth
D. Conclude with description of how you would talk to this colleague about improvement.
Aguilar’s Coaching for Equity Framework

- What you see
- Where you look
- Who you hear & how
- Self-awareness
- What you say & when
How?
Transformative Race Talk

Increases collective capacity to notice and analyze problems, identify, name, and generate solutions:

a) Formal facilitation routines that promote openness and transparency,
b) Racially specific language use (and awareness of racism), and
c) Group talk that reflects self-reflection about spheres of influence.
ACTIVATING TRANSFORMATIVE RACE TALK PRACTICE

**While Sharing:**

Start with **how you feel** (emotional state) to contextualize your statement.

*Use I statements, speak from experience, speak your truth, state what you argue or believe (avoid broad generalizations and speaking for others – unless given permission to do so).*

Focus on use of supporting evidence and methods used to arrive at conclusions, based in descriptive observation FIRST.

**BE specific about race, class, gender, etc.**

**When Responding:**

Acknowledge what you hear others say, openly show appreciation for honesty and courage, validate experiences of others.

*Ask clarifying questions, ask for evidence, ask for disconfirmation* (give an example that is the opposite of what you experienced, learned, or read), etc. Push back by using specific authors, concepts, etc.
Re-Observation and Noticing

American history observation (declaration of independence):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p07cEjN8W0U

Watch the video and be prepared to discuss:

A. Overview of what you observed with focus on equity

B. The strengths of the lessons, and

C. Areas for growth as relates to equity

D. Conclude with description of how you would talk to this colleague about improving access and opportunity for all students.
Cultivating Public Race-Talk as a Lever for Organizational Learning

You can collectively address problems you can collectively discuss.

Disrupting race-neutrality by making race-talk a visible lever for collective learning will increase your organization’s capacity to problem-identify and problem-solve racial inequities.
The Reflection Process
Video Analysis Activity

High School Math Observation:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CH4IMgEM9og

Middle School Math Observation:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xah__C_aTkZs

American history observation (declaration of independence):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p07cEjN8W0U

American history observation (civil rights):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kGD6WBaCzVQ

American history (Brown vs. Board):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HaTY0IbkjHc
## Making sense of racial inequities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Racist thought</th>
<th>The thought that a classified group is superior or inferior to any other group. Actions, conscious and unconscious, that stem from racist thoughts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intrapersonal</strong></td>
<td>Intrapersonal anxiety, fragility, fear, etc. – inner dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interpersonal</strong></td>
<td>Prejudicial treatment of some, preferential treatment of others reflected in relational interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Substantive conflict</strong></td>
<td>The <em>goals</em> of what school should accomplish – curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional-Procedural</strong></td>
<td>Normative and taken for granted routines that reinforce racism regardless of intent – Policies, procedures, behaviors, practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Systemic-Historical</strong></td>
<td>The precedent(s) and structures that ensure white supremacist thoughts shape actions and behaviors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>