Finding Connection Across Cultures

Using PERSONAL LEADERSHIP to Communicate with Mindfulness and Creativity
Hello!

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At your table please share:

1. Your name, pronoun, job, department/office

2. Find three surprising things you have in common
Learning Objectives

- Gain knowledge about Personal Leadership (PL) as an intercultural tool
- Introduce the 6 practices of PL to find connections across cultures
- Understand and practice the Critical Moment Dialogue (CMD) process
- Use the CMD process to create a thoughtful response to a cultural challenge
Intercultural communication refers to the communication process, in its fullest sense, between people of different cultural backgrounds.
Four Layers Of Diversity

Internal Dimensions:
- Age
- Race
- Gender
- Personal Habits
- Religious
- Sexual Orientation
- Physical Ability
- Educational Background

External Dimensions:
- Geographic Location
- Income
- Work Content Field
- Work Location
- Division/Department Unit/Group

Organizational Dimensions:
- Functional Level/Classification

The Cultural Iceberg

Surface Culture
- Arts, Music
- Styles, Fashion
- Rituals
- Behavior
- Language, etc.

Observable

Out of awareness
Deep Culture – out of awareness until you engage it

- Values, Beliefs
- Nature of friendship, Norms
- Physical space
- Ways of handling emotion
- Expectations, Roles
- How things get done
- Concepts of time management
- Communication style
“Leadership is, at root, about understanding and managing our own internal experience”
We must begin with ourselves.
Practices developed by Schaetti, Ramsey, and Watanabe for SIIC in 1998

Noticed that cultural specific and general knowledge is not the key to cultural competency

Crosses the divide between diversity and intercultural training

This methodology is used in international education, study abroad, diversity initiatives, teambuilding, global business, and leadership development.

http://intercultural.org/siic.html
Framework of two principles and six practices designed to stay connected to inspiration and creativity in the face of the new and unfamiliar.
Two Principles of PL

Mindfulness
- Being present
- Using all intelligence

Creativity
- Becoming choiceful
- Being curious
Do what I have always done. My automatic pilot behavior

1. Recognize Something’s up

3. Discern Right Action

2. Invite Reflection

Personal Leadership Process
My automatic pilot behavior
Be mindful. Catch and attend to the sensation, the emotion, the judgement.

1. Recognize Something’s up

2. Invite Reflection

3. Discern Right Action

Take leadership of my experience. Use the 6 practices to move from gut reaction to mindful action.

Personal Leadership Process

Be creative. What, if anything, is the right thing for me to do, to say, to whom, when, and how?

Don’t what I have always done. My automatic pilot behavior.
6 Practices of Personal Leadership

- Aligning with Vision
- Engaging Ambiguity
- Cultivating Stillness
- Attending to Judgement
- Attending Emotion
- Attending Physical Sensation
1. Something’s UP!
Critical Moment scenarios
What “Something’s up” means
Write about a time when you felt “Something’s Up!”

You’ve experienced resistance, conflict or challenge around cultural difference in an organization, class, leadership position, or workplace setting.

1. How did it feel?
2. How did you react/respond?
3. What is your relationship to that challenge now?
Judgements prevent us from consciously witnessing and creatively engaging difference.

“It’s all too easy to judge something unfamiliar as bad simply because it is unfamiliar, and something else as good just because we know it” (PL).
Judgement Tracking
Realize that emotion paradoxically both blocks and offers an opportunity to learn about the situation.

“The more we can step into a position of witnessing our emotions, the more we will be able to disengage from the story we tend to create around them” (PL).
Attend to that small voice or gut instinct, bodily reaction that something is, or is not, sitting well with you.

“We can intentionally work with and through our bodies to improve our performance when we’re confronted with the new and unfamiliar” (PL).
Mindfulness, present moment awareness is a technique in which one focuses one’s full attention only on the present. This allows individuals to experience current thoughts, feelings, and sensations without judgement.

“Sit quietly and breathe. Consider the cultural viewpoint of others, their expectations and anxieties; your cultural expectations and how these have shaped your response” (PL).

http://wellness.pdx.edu/realms-positive-psychology
“Cultivate inner stillness and quiet. This is not dependent upon where you are or what you are doing” (PL).
Engaging Ambiguity

Change and difference create a time of uncertainty, of “liminality” between what was and what will be.

“Embrace the uncertainty of not knowing what to do. Don’t look for right/wrong, but understanding and insight” (PL).
Visions provide **direct support** as we live and work in **situations of difference**. Commit to being an expression of our highest and best.

“**Return to your vision as a leader. Make choices that support you living in alignment with your vision**” (PL).
Crafting a Vision Statement

**Become (Fruits):**
Visionary, Charismatic, Decision Maker, Disciplined, Facilitator, Influential, Initiator, Inspirational, Open, Inclusive, Dynamic, Organizer, Responsible, Empathetic, Honest, Authentic, Compassionate, Courageous, Positive, Planner, Listener...

**Practice (Roots):**
Reflect, Speak up, Nurture, Challenge, Breathe, Ask questions, Witness emotion, Notice, Listen, Attend to judgment, Inquire, Mentor, Support, Be present, Be kind, Celebrate mistakes & successes, Find beauty, Let go, Take action, Pay attention, Share, Be transparent, Lead by example...
Jill’s vision statement when facing the unknown:

*When encountering difference I actively** listen** and stay **curious** when uncomfortable, **notice** judgments and **reflect** before I respond, and **let go** of an outcome and **learn from mistakes.** So that through **mindful practice** and **honest reflection** I am a **courageous** and **curious** human being/coworker.*
Pilar’s vision statement:
As an interculturalist operating at my highest and best, I am thriving when I follow my passion which is sharing meaningful knowledge with people around me and maintaining balance in my life so I coexist with difference and contentment with myself and others in different spaces.
Vision is not enough. It must be combined with venture.

“It is not enough to stare up the steps, we must step up the stairs”.
-Vaclav Havel-first president of the Czech Republic

Receive your truth for this moment. What, if anything, is the right thing to do? or say? to whom, when, how?
Mindful Practice using PL
Quick Self-reflection

Return to your cultural challenge

1. Taking a breath, what insights come from the practice?
2. Write down quick snapshots of each of the PL practices.
3. Discern a Right Action/Letting Go

*Briefly respond on the CMD sheet*
In pairs share:
What was this process like for you?
Any additional insights gained from working through the PL process?
Which practice(s) do you hope to incorporate into your work/life?
Bibliography
Thanks!

Handouts:

→ https://www.pdx.edu/diversity/the-psu-culturally-responsive-workshop-series

Any questions?
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