

**Controversy with Civility: Promoting Active Engagement in Civil Dialogue  
around Controversial Topics at Portland State University**

MIRANDA WILLIAMSON & MICHAEL ANTHONY

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Committee Members: Tom Hastings-Advisor and Committee Chair, Katie Jundt-Community

Partner, Rob Gould-Conflict Resolution Department Chair

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## ABSTRACT

Promoting controversy with civility requires an awareness of one's own worldview, an awareness of others, building trust, identifying the roots of controversy, and fostering dialogue. The *Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership* (MSL) conducted at Portland State University found that students lacked skills in engaging in controversy with civility. This project examines the literature on civil dialogue and controversy with civility, to provide trainings that build skills related to controversy with civility. The final trainings will be housed on the website dedicated to the Civil Dialogue Committee either under the Office of Diversity and Inclusion or the Dean of Student Life. The ultimate hope is that the trainings will be built upon and integrated into curricula, workshops, and orientations in a way that begins to shift the campus environment to one that encourages civil dialogue across differences. Most of the trainings have already been given to various groups of students, student leaders, and community members and the results of those individual trainings are included in this document.

## INTRODUCTION

Dialogue among Portland State University's students, faculty, and staff is essential for a robust, open, and engaged college campus. Bringing together participants to talk with one another in a civil manner can be a complex and challenging endeavor. Civil dialogue is necessary for all to feel a sense of collective efficacy and responsibility. In fact, efforts to foster positive civil dialogue around issues of conflict, race, religion, social justice, diversity, violence prevention, restorative justice, and nonviolent social change can be a daunting task for any university, and Portland State University is no exception. To this end, the Civil Dialogue Committee was formed in 2009. Its mission is the fostering of a campus environment that encourages free speech within a context of education and community building by equipping members of the Portland State community with the skills needed to engage in civil dialogue around controversial topics. The group seeks to assist faculty, staff, and students by identifying existing resources; developing trainings, workshops and other co-curricular and educational programs; and advocating for the integration of civil dialogue into every aspect of university life.

This project was designed to meet the need for the development of trainings that build skills around engaging in controversy with civility. The trainings are one hour in length, reproducible, and contain a combination of theory and interaction. They will be housed on the Civil Dialogue Committee's website, which will be under The Office of Diversity and Inclusion or the Dean of Student Life. Thus, the trainings are both accessible and reproducible for student leaders, faculty, and staff.

## PROBLEM STATEMENT AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Fostering an environment that promotes civility in dealing with controversy allows all interested parties to discuss difficult topics openly, providing a better understanding of diverse perspectives, and serving to build a collaborative campus community. Maintaining a campus environment that allows space for students to discuss controversial topics and providing tools for those students to utilize when engaging in dialogue is essential for the continued growth and holistic well-being of the student body. While, Portland State University has many course options that can help students develop communication skills (e.g., Women, Gender, and Sexualities Studies; Conflict Resolution; and Communication), not all students have access to those programs or courses.

The *Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership* (MSL) was conducted at Portland State University by National Clearinghouse for Leadership Programs (2010) to measure students' leadership values at both the institutional and national levels. The MSL study examined the influence of higher education on student leadership development in areas related to the Social Change Model of Leadership Development. Areas measured were consciousness of self, congruence, commitment, collaboration, common purpose, citizenship, and controversy with civility. The study was sent to a random selection of 4,000 undergraduate students and an additional 500 students who identified as leaders on campus as a comparison sample. At Portland State University 567 undergraduate students out of the 4,000 and 85 out of the 500 student leaders responded. These students reported that college improved their understanding and engagement in almost all the aforementioned areas of leadership. The finding that stood out, however, was controversy with civility. The study defined controversy with civility as “recognizing two fundamental realities of any creative effort: 1) that differences in viewpoints

are inevitable, and 2) that such differences must be aired openly but with civility. Civility implies respect for others, a willingness to hear each others' views, and the exercise of restraint in criticizing the views and actions of others" (p. 14). Students reported that they were actually better at controversy with civility prior to their senior year of college. The MSL showed that involvement in student organizations did not improve how students scored on controversy with civility. So, in effect, maybe attending colleges such as Portland State University decreased their ability to engage in civil dialogue over controversial topics.

Portland State University is a community growing in diversity, which can lead to negativity and conflict when its members are entering into dialogue with others on campus. The bringing together of diverse perspectives has created a distinct need for methods of engaging one another in controversy with civility. The MSL clearly shows that there is a need for both theoretical and practical learning around ways to engage in civil dialogue across differences.

Dialogue can succeed or fail, and when it succeeds genuine, honest communication is taking place. With dialogue, there can be a meaningful meeting of minds and perspectives, and a deeper sharing of ideas, which could promote harmony and heal wounds. Civil dialogue is the openness, inclusiveness, equality, creativity, and flexibility that parties share with one another. The problem is fostering a campus environment that promotes controversy with civility, and the need is for avenues that are readily available to students for the development of communication skills that help them engage in civil dialogue, thus promoting a campus climate that places value on controversy with civility. These avenues for working toward civil dialogue at Portland State University can include information, trainings, and workshops.

LITERATURE REVIEW  
EVALUATING THE NEED AND VALUE OF PROMOTING CIVIL DIALOGUE IN HIGHER  
EDUCATION

This section examines literature on the need for promoting civil dialogue in higher education. The majority of the authors represented in this literature review agree that learning to engage in controversy with civility benefits all involved. The main focus of this section is on the application of ideas in an effort to shift a culture to one that promotes controversy with civility. Promoting controversy with civility requires the fostering of dialogue (Alvarez, 2009). Key terms used to search for articles were *civil discourse*, *civil dialogue*, and *controversy with civility*. All three terms are connected and are interchangeable in much of the literature. Controversy with civility is the act of respectfully and willingly engaging in dialogue around disagreements that arise from the sharing of diverse perspectives and opinions (Alvarez, 2009). Civil discourse and civil dialogue are the respectful exchange of views while engaging in active listening, refraining from interrupting or using oppressive language (Bornstein, 2010).

In order to gain a deeper understanding of controversy with civility, Alvarez (2009) expanded on the meaning of the words. Controversy differs from conflict. A conflict is made up of opposing sides and in group relationships often involves a debate. Controversy also involves differing ideas and perspectives, but rather than creating sides that attempt to persuade, controversy encourages dialogue around an idea with the goal of gaining a deeper understanding. Civility does not imply agreement, but rather stands as a value, requiring that all opinions are listened to with respect. In combination, controversy with civility is the act of respectfully and willingly engaging in dialogue around disagreements that arise from the sharing of diverse perspectives and opinions (Alvarez, 2009; Higher Education Research Institute, 1996).

*Controversy with Civility in Higher Education*

The Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL) (2011) examined leadership development and the role of involvement in leadership to learning, using the social change model. The study showed that students' scores related to consciousness of self, congruence, commitment, collaboration, common purpose, citizenship, and controversy with civility were highest on commitment and lowest on controversy with civility and citizenship. Also, there were significant differences between student leaders scoring higher than uninvolved students except in the areas of controversy with civility and citizenship. The purpose of the MSL study is to examine the influence of higher education on college student leadership development (Dugan, 2006).

Bornstein (2010) and Pierce (2006) argue that civil dialogue is not portrayed in society at large; therefore civil dialogue must be taught in schools. The task of teaching civil dialogue is made more difficult by outside media that reinforces the values of arguing louder and interrupting more. Bornstein states that there is a growing need for academic leadership in promoting civil dialogue that demonstrates alternative ways of expressing disagreement while seeking common ground. Education for civil dialogue needs to be built into curricula in order to restore civility in America and produce effective citizens. Pierce agrees with Bornstein that the university is the ideal place for civil dialogue to occur and that it is the educator's responsibility to model civil dialogue with colleagues as well as guide students to civil dialogue in the classroom, but Pierce states that higher education is failing that mission. The university often emulates the intolerance of society (Mallory & Thomas, 2003).

It is the responsibility of educators to teach controversy with civility in schools in order to promote a democratic society (Mallory & Thomas, 2003; Parker, 1997). The job of higher

education is to help people be better citizens and so the task of promoting civil dialogue rests on universities (Bornstein, 2010; Parker, 1997; Pierce, 2006).

### *The Application of Controversy with Civility*

Promoting the active engagement in civil dialogue around controversial issues means the fostering of a sustained culture where different perspectives are respected and used to create opportunities for dialogue and understanding. This is done by bringing controversies into the open, giving space for dialogue around the issues, and having an appreciation for those who express differing perspectives. Engaging in controversy with civility also requires an awareness of one's own worldview, an awareness of others, building trust, identifying the roots of controversy, and fostering dialogue (Alvarez, 2009).

Within an organizational culture that does not support controversy with civility, challenges to the norm are often met with negative consequences. Alvarez (2009) suggests that a culture built on conflict avoidance lacks room for challenges to the structure and stifles differing points of view. The Social Change Model for Leadership Development approaches leadership as a collaborative process to bring about positive social change, and controversy with civility is expressed as the creation of a culture that welcomes differences as a positive force and seeks to draw meaning from difficult situations (Alvarez, 2009; Pree, 2009). Engaging in controversy with civility is an opportunity to create a safe space that serves to enhance knowledge of self and others, find value in the group's diversity, and establish a common purpose. Building this trust will ultimately lead to greater levels of collaboration and strengthen the bonds of community. Knowing one's self and the skills to use when engaging in a dispute are necessary for becoming a positive force for social change (Alvarez, 2009).

Collaboration is a shared decision making process with an equal distribution of power where all stakeholders have a part in the decision making. Collaboration allows for differences to be explored and has the potential to build and strengthen community. The construction of communication is a key element to the collaborative process. The first step in collaboration is identifying concerns, values, and interests through civil dialogue. The second step is the deliberation over the decisions feasibility and applicability (Daniels & Walker, 2001).

Universities must continue to represent a safe space for the expression and exploration of controversial ideas. Faculty leadership is necessary to shift the campus environment to one that promotes civil dialogue. Bornstein (2010) suggests faculty and administrators should challenge students, who may lack familiarity with civil debate, active listening, or engagement in the expression of different ideas, to find common ground and make compromises for the benefit of the group.

Parker (1997) suggests that diversity is the key to growing. Finding ways to increase students' interactions in the common areas of the institution as well as in its classrooms will serve to foster deliberation around academic and social controversies. In the classroom faculty should teach from academic theory the difference between controversy with civility and just plain controversy. Skills to help students cultivate civil dialogue include how to: engage in active listening, gain an understanding of worldviews other than one's own, criticize ideas without demeaning the persons who express them, admit a lack of knowledge on a subject, slow the urge to judge, draw analogies in a discussion, and support others' right to express ideas even if they are unpopular.

*Facilitating Dialogues in Higher Education*

Diversity in schools leads to the mingling of unique perspectives and values which makes universities a perfect place for the development of behaviors that will teach tolerance, respect, a sense of social justice, and the ability to work with others (Parker, 1997). Intergroup dialogue has become a preferred practice in higher education for fostering learning and building understanding among diverse groups of students. In *Intergroup Dialogue in Higher Education: Meaningful Learning About Social Justice* the authors suggest that there are specific goals of an intergroup dialogue. Those goals include the exploration of differences and commonalities, reflection, and an exploration of actions. In higher education intergroup dialogues serve to promote the integration of diverse perspectives, encourage social responsibility, build relationships, and work to build collaborative solutions (Zuniga, Nagda, Chesler, & Cytron-Walker, 2007). Another model for dialoguing important and controversial topics consists of maintaining a sustained space on campus for such dialogues to occur rather than holding a specific dialogue at a specific time (Mallory & Thomas, 2003).

Policies about the campus environment can originate at the highest levels. Bornstein (2010) believes that the president of a university has the responsibility to support civil dialogue by resisting both external and internal pressures to limit the expression of controversial ideas. Furthermore, the president can support the hosting of controversial speakers and even invite community leaders to hold discussions on challenging local and national issues.

#### *The Limitations of Civil Dialogue*

Delpit (1995) uses the education system to describe a widespread phenomenon called “silenced dialogue” to describe a missing half of the dialogue, due to power imbalances. Delpit emphasizes the importance of recognizing power: who has it and who does not. Power is difficult to quantify or measure, and while one person may feel that they have very little power another

may see them as having a lot. Furthermore, recognizing one's own power and/or dominant position, to some extent, entails taking responsibility for oppressing another group. To avoid "silenced dialogue" students must be able to recognize and understand their own positions of power, and be ready to engage in active listening.

In a study focused on web-based discussion to determine how the concept of civility shaped dialogue it was revealed that civil dialogue as a norm helped to develop consensus-building and promoted understanding. However, the study emphasizes that engagement in civil dialogue does not equal effective communication. Civil dialogue can be marginalizing and it does not always allow dialoguing participants to effectively communicate their opinions (Hurrell, 2005).

### *Conclusion*

Promoting civil dialogue may be challenging from multiple angles. However, civil dialogue reflects historic American values of diversity, acceptance, and collaboration. In a higher education setting learning to engage in controversy with civility through civil dialogue provides an avenue for people from diverse ethnic, religious, and political backgrounds to integrate into an institution (Bornstein, 2010).

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A portion of the Civil Dialogue Committee's mission is to foster a campus environment that encourages dialogue and community building by equipping members of both the Portland State community, and the surrounding community with the skills needed to engage in civil dialogue around controversial topics. This Project is designed to promote that mission through the development and facilitation of workshops that teach specific skills around:

1. **Interrupting Oppressive Language-** An interruption is anything said to interrupt oppressive behavior or language. The purpose of this workshop is to help participants develop tools to give interruptions that create a deeper connection and serve to build trust, mutuality, and compassion. (Full training found in appendix A.)
2. **Empathy-** Part of learning how to understand different perspectives is finding the path to empathy. Empathy is the capacity to know emotionally what another is experiencing from within the frame of reference of that other person, the capacity to sample the feelings of another, or to put one's self in another's shoes. This workshop is designed to help tap into those feelings of empathy in an effort to help improve communication skills and build connections. (Full training found in appendix B.)
3. **Active Listening-** Active listening is a structured way of listening that requires a quieting of the mind, and often involves reframing what the speaker said and repeating it back to them. This workshop is designed to build awareness around skills to cultivate when engaging in active listening. (Full training found in appendix C.)
4. **Stereotypes-** Stereotypes are generalizations, or assumptions that people make about the characteristics of all members of a group. This workshop is a facilitated discussion that

serves to build awareness around the formation of stereotypes that could be the first step towards changing potentially harmful behavior. (Full training found in appendix D).

5. Nonviolent Communication- Nonviolent Communication (NVC), also known as compassionate communication, guides individuals through a process of communication skill building that assists with the conscious and intentional expression of feelings and needs in order to create empathic connection (Rosenberg, 2003). (Full training found in appendix E).
6. Peer Mediation- This training is designed to be a sampling of basic mediation skills. Peer mediation skills will add to one's ability to act as an impromptu mediator in a conflict among peers. (Full training found in appendix F).
7. De-escalation- This training explores avenues to de-escalate a conflict situation where conflict has risen or appears to be spiraling out of control. This training works on in-the-moment skill building. (Full training found in appendix G).
8. Facilitating Dialogues- This training will serve as a guideline for anyone seeking to facilitate a dialogue, whether the topic is controversial, informative, or healing. Unlike the other trainings, it is meant to serve as a tool for someone seeking to facilitate a dialogue, so it is not taught directly from text, but rather modeled through experience. (Full training found in appendix H).
9. Engaging in Controversy with Civility- This training is a discussion about Controversy with Civility. What is it? What does it look like? Why is it important? (Full training found in appendix I).

Each training is designed to be approximately one hour in length and reproducible by student leaders, advisors, staff, or faculty. Most of the trainings have been piloted at Portland

State University or with community partners. Trainings are available online and accessible to all students. Portland State University offers many opportunities to present at leadership conferences, volunteer in-services, and individual classrooms. During the course of this project several opportunities arose to pilot trainings, receive feedback, modify as needed, and spread the word about the Civil Dialogue Committee. The main focus group for these trainings was student leaders, due to the need shown by the MSL, accessibility to this group, and the influence that student leaders have on the student body.

Trainings conducted are listed as follows:

Portland State University's Women's Resource Center Volunteer In-service

- *Controversy with Civility: Nonviolent Communication*, May 11 and May 27, 2010
- *Controversy with Civility: Learning Empathy*, July 29 and November 5, 2010
- *Interrupting Oppressive Language*, January 21, 2011

Oregon Peacemakers Conference, Resolutions Northwest

- *Interrupting Oppressive Language*, October 21, 2010
- *Stereotypes*, October 21, 2010

The Salvation Army White Shield Center, Portland, Oregon

- *Interrupting Oppressive Language*, two sessions, February 23, 2011

Sister to Sister Mentoring Program, Portland State University's Women's Resource Center's

Empowerment Project

- *Empathy and Active Listening*, February 5, 2011

Portland St. University's Annual Leadership Conference

- *Stereotypes*, January 28, 2011

Madison High School, Portland, Oregon

- *Interrupting Oppressive Language*, two sessions, March 11, 2011

Sister Talk Back Session, Portland State University's Women's Resource Center

- A facilitated dialogue for Muslim women, December 9, 2010

## EVALUATION OF PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS

The plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the project consisted of the distribution of an evaluation form given out after each training and, where appropriate, a discussion session with the trainees. On the form, trainees were asked to rate six aspects of the training on a scale from one to five (one being the lowest score and five being the highest). 1) The workshop met my expectations, 2) I will be able to apply the knowledge learned, 3) The content was organized and easy to follow, 4) The presenter was knowledgeable, 5) The workshop was interesting and practical, 6) How do you rate the workshop overall? Other questions were included: Did the workshop succeed in creating an environment where diverse perspectives are valued, and do you feel that the information learned in this workshop would be useful during a conflict situation in promoting controversy with civility?

Answers to the evaluation were helpful with the adjustment and modification of the trainings, but did not prove if the knowledge imparted in the trainings served to promote a campus environment that encourages dialogue around controversial topics. Also, many training opportunities, such as the PSU Annual Leadership Conference, required the use of their evaluation form, thus negating the ability to get specific feedback. This is where the second portion of the evaluation plan came into play. Towards the end of each training (as applicable, because asking this after the facilitation of a dialogue in some cases would not be appropriate) participants were verbally asked to discuss how they would apply the skills/techniques learned in the training in a situation of controversy. If participants were able to make the connections and respond in a way that demonstrated their understanding of how the skills could be used for engaging in controversy with civility, then the training was considered a success.

## PROJECT OUTCOME

This project had two initial outcomes. First are the final trainings that were edited due to the results from the evaluation of the trainings effectiveness. The second outcome was the production of an accessible website for the Portland State University Civil Dialogue Committee where the trainings will be housed. The inputs were the creators' time and vision, the time and engagement of participants, and feedback from the Civil Dialogue Committee that produced the creation and conducting of trainings and the designing of the website. There are three levels of outcomes to this project. The initial outcome, as stated above, is trainings that, in most cases, resulted in participants displaying a greater understanding of how to use certain skills to engage in controversy with civility, and the website to house them. The intermediate outcome is the online availability of trainings that will serve to teach skills that create a greater understanding of how to engage in controversy with civility for students, faculty, and staff to pull from. The long term goal is that the Civil Dialogue Committee, aided by these trainings, will begin to shift the campus climate to one that understands and values engagement in controversy with civility.

The goal in conducting the trainings was to assess their effectiveness in helping individuals gain skills for engaging in controversy with civility. After most trainings, when applicable, participants were asked how they might apply the skills learned in the training in a situation of controversy. In most cases participants were able to make concrete connections to the skills they had learned and how those skills would contribute to their ability to engage in controversy with civility. However, the level and type of responses varied depending on the group and what expectations they had about the training. During the Interrupting Oppressive Language training, conducted at the Oregon Peacemakers Conference for Resolutions Northwest with a mix of middle school and high school students, three of the participants stated that they now felt that when someone said something rude or oppressive, they had other options for

responding as opposed to saying something mean back. This group came to the Oregon Peacemakers Conference seeking skills related to conflict resolution, so they were easily able to find connections to the training and engagement in controversy with civility. A similar version of this workshop was conducted at Portland State University's Women's Resource Center for a group of student leaders who also were able to articulate how these skills would benefit them in their lives as nonviolent activists. The Interrupting Oppressive Language trainings that were facilitated for two groups of students at Madison High School and for two groups at the White Shield Center, an alternative high school for young women, received a lot of unexpected push back. Some of the students were attached to their language and wanted to defend it, rather than focus on the skills presented to them. For example, the expression "I love you man, no homo" was adamantly defended by one or two members in each of those groups.

In the Learning Empathy and Building Active Listening Skills trainings, both conducted for the Sister to Sister Mentoring Program mentors, mentors were asked to articulate how they would apply these skills in a situation of controversy and they immediately began to discuss conflicts in their mentees' lives and how they would use empathy and active listening to support their mentee in their time of conflict. Although this training was very useful to the mentors and they rated it highly in the evaluation, they were focusing on the skills in a different context than where the trainers were able to set the intent around promoting civility in personal conflicts.

Participants' answers to how they might apply the skills learned in the training in a situation of controversy were collected verbally, so not every participant responded due to time constraints or the decision not to reply. However, these participants had an opportunity to hear the others' ideas about the application of skills in engaging in controversy with civility and hopefully benefited from the discussions.

On average the workshops received very high ratings. The two Stereotypes trainings, one at the Resolutions Northwest Peace Conference and the other at Portland State University's Annual Leadership Conference, received high scores from the majority of the participants regarding the workshop's applicability of knowledge learned to conflict situations and overall structure.

The final versions of the trainings will be housed on the website dedicated to the Civil Dialogue Committee under the Portland State University's Office of Diversity and Inclusion or the Office for the Dean of Student Life. These trainings are completely reproducible. The hope is that trainings will be integrated into curricula, workshops, and orientations.

The website is Portland State University compliant, thus containing the same search bar and header as all Portland State web pages. The first page contains the Civil Dialogue Committee's mission. The top tabs are labeled Civil Dialogue Committee Charter, Trainings, and Members. As the user scrolls over each tab links to individual trainings or committee members contact information becomes visible. The website will play a vital role in promoting controversy with civility. It is designed to be updated on a regular basis with new training material, as well as audio and video of trainings added.

The trainings and website are designed to be built upon and updated with the goal of the Civil Dialogue Committee communicating to the student body through the use of these trainings and this website in a way that begins to shift the campus environment to one that encourages civil dialogue across differences.

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## Appendix A-1

### Interrupting Oppressive Language

**Introduction/Purpose:** The purpose of the training is to practice skills to intervene when oppressive language is being used in order to learn a new skill that serves to deepen our connection with others and promote civility when in controversy. Controversy with civility is the act of respectfully and willingly engaging in dialogue around disagreements that arise from the sharing of diverse perspectives and opinions (Alvarez, 2009; Higher Education Research Institute, 1996). Skills to cultivate include how to: engage in active listening, gain an understanding of worldviews other than one's own, criticize ideas without demeaning the persons who express them, admit a lack of knowledge on a subject, slow the urge to judge, draw analogies in a discussion, and support others' right to express ideas even if they are unpopular.

**Theory:** An interruption is what we say to interrupt oppressive behavior or language. The purpose of this workshop is to help develop tools to give interruptions that create a deeper connection, and help to build trust, mutuality and compassion. As an interrupter we are proceeding with the notion that we all want to be good people, the goal is to help folks connect to their goodness. An important thing to remember when learning this new strategy is that there is not a formula. Develop your own way to do interruptions and it will come more naturally.

(Introduction and theory, 5 minutes)

**Step 1:** Begin a discussion by creating a common definition of oppression with participants. Make sure that the definition that evolves includes something about institutional power. Now start a discussion about oppressive statements, words, and the reason that they are oppressive. For example, lame is a commonly used word to describe something that we do not like. This can

be found oppressive because it is also used to describe someone who has a physical disability that hinders their mobility. (5 minutes)

**Step 2:** Model an interruption with a volunteer. Have a volunteer say the oppressive statement. This is a very important step. Model an interruption that illustrates a dialogue rather than a persuasion. Many beginning interrupters get stuck on trying to be right. This is NOT the purpose of an interruption. (3 minutes)

**Step 3:** Get the participants thinking and talking about their feelings around interruptions. Ask questions like, have you ever been interrupted? What did it feel like? Share an example of a time when you were interrupted or use the following: In a Native American Studies class, I said, “I wish I was Native American, they are just so spiritual and connected to the earth.” A classmate interrupted me by saying, “I hear that you have a lot of respect for Native American traditions. However, labeling them all as spiritual and connected to the earth could be tokenizing. Not all Native Americans today are spiritual or connected to the earth. It could make someone who was Native American and neither spiritual nor connected to the earth feel like their identity was invisible. You may want to express your appreciation in a way that acknowledges that there are many different people with different beliefs and values that identify as Native American.” I felt very ashamed of myself and my comment. I was also grateful to my classmate because the last thing I wanted to do was make a comment that offended or hurt someone. Get participants to start thinking and talking about how they would like to be interrupted. Also, how they would like others to feel when interrupted. This can be done by staying in one large group, or for richer discussion have folks talk to their neighbor for three minutes before coming back to the large group. (5 minutes)

**Step 4:** Discuss some strategies and skills for interrupting. You may want to have the participants create a list of strategies by shouting out their ideas, or you may want to give them the following list and talk about examples of each:

- A. Ask clarifying questions.
- B. Speak from personal experience.
- C. Use statistics or facts.
- D. Use humor when applicable.
- E. Make/include positive or validating comments when interrupting.
- F. Use “I statements” and don’t accuse or attack.
- G. Give an invitation to dialogue.
- H. Be non-judgmental.

Skills to cultivate while learning to interrupt:

- A. Think well of others.
- B. Demonstrate patience.
- C. Know your objective when interrupting.
- D. Share new information or knowledge.
- E. Demonstrate your leadership skills.
- F. Don’t lecture, converse.
- G. Always be interruptible...this includes interrupting yourself before anyone else needs to, as well as being open to interruptions from others. (10 minutes)

**Step 5:** Break participants into groups of two or three. Give them a list of statements and situations to practice interruptions. (A worksheet is provided at the end of this training. Some examples cover the same issues with a variation in the wording. Decide which examples fit best

and limit the ones used to those). Have one person read the oppressive statement and the other act as the interrupter. Have any additional group members give feedback. Tell participants to feel free to play with being both difficult and easy to interrupt. Tell participants to take care of themselves during this exercise. Skip any that are too painful to deal with and take a break if necessary. These are meant for practice, so should be difficult, but not emotionally stressful (S. Eck, personal communication, July 28, 2010). (20 minutes)

Walk around and help groups out if needed. Some of the statements may be so common to participants that they will have a hard time working through how harmful and oppressive they can be. Examples D, F, G, I, J, K, and O may need further explanation. Below is an example of how one could dissect these:

- D. “I don’t want to do that assignment! It is retarded.” Explanation: Retarded is a word that is used to describe someone who has a mental disability. Using it as a term to refer to something we dislike contributes to a culture that is intolerant of disabilities.
- F. “I think all feminists are femi-nazis.” Explanation: A femi-nazi is referring to a woman who wants to wage war on all men. One definition for feminism is the struggle to end sexist oppression (Hooks, 1984).
- G. “Mexicans tend to be really patriarchal. You know they feel like it’s okay to beat their partners. They also have a higher tendency to have bad tempers.” Explanation: Like several of the interruption examples, this is stereotyping. Stereotyping is attributing a quality or behavior to a group of people. Every time a person performs this behavior they reaffirm the stereotype and whenever they act contrary to the behavior they are the exception (Plous, 2003). Many cultures are patriarchal, including most Western cultures.

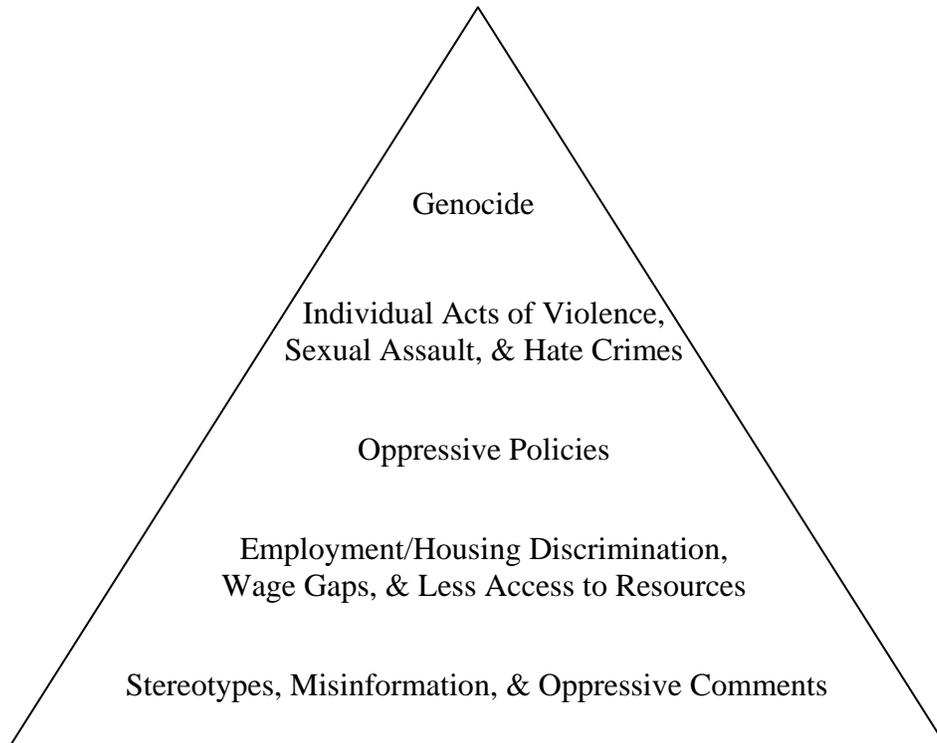
What we know about domestic violence is that it is not culture specific. It affects everyone.

- I. “Bums just like being poor. If they wanted a job they would get one.” Explanation: Society often blames victims of poverty. Blaming the victims of structural violence for the problems they face will never lead to a more equitable society. We need to look at the positions people are born into as well as the way society shapes their life course in order to help people further their actual life circumstances into their potential circumstance.
- J. “PSU should give a psychological evaluation to all new students, so we don’t end up going to school with crazy people.” Explanation: This statement brings up questions of who should and should not have access to higher education and who gets to decide.
- K. “That makes me want to kill myself!” Explanation: Mental health issues are serious and negatively impact the lives of many people. Killing one’s self is nothing to be blasé about. 30,000 people die from suicide each year leaving millions affected by the experience (National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 2010).
- O. “I’m so fat. I’m a cow.” Explanation: Saying oppressive things to oneself is still continuing a cycle of negativity.

**Debrief:** Ask participants to share any scenarios that they had a difficult time coming up with an interruption. Turn to the group for help discussing possible interruptions. Ask participants to share any thought provoking rich dialogues that came up when doing interruptions. Spend some time talking about strategies participants practiced and what worked best. (10 minutes)

Sometimes it is necessary to explain why stopping the cycle of oppressive language is important. Below is a diagram that illustrates how oppressive language feeds into a culture that is

more likely to engage in other acts of violence. It may help to draw the below diagram for participants. (Use any remaining time here)



**Closing Question:** How might you apply the skills learned in this training in a situation of controversy?

## Appendix A-2

### Interruption Scenarios

In each of the following scenarios, have one person be the one making the oppressive statement and have the other person be the interrupter. This is a role-play, so get into character. Feel free to be difficultly or easily interrupted. This is a chance to practice different strategies for interrupting oppressive language. Note: many of these scenarios may be difficult or trigger emotions. Please, take care of yourself. You may skip or ask group members to skip any that you are not prepared to deal with today (S. Eck, personal communication, July 28, 2010).

- A. “Do you like my new sweater? I got a really good deal on it, I jewed them down.”
- B. “That’s stupid. That is so gay.”
- C. “You gave this to me, don’t be an Indian giver.”
- D. “I don’t want to do that assignment! It is retarded.”
- E. “I love you man, no homo.”
- F. “I think all feminists are femi-nazis.”
- G. “Mexicans tend to be really patriarchal. You know they feel like it’s okay to beat their partners. They also have a higher tendency to have bad tempers.”
- H. “You’re Middle Eastern? Really? It’s so good to know there are actually decent Middle Eastern people out there.”
- I. “Bums just like being poor. If they wanted a job they would get one.”
- J. “PSU should give a psychological evaluation to all new students, so we don’t end up going to school with crazy people.”
- K. “That makes me want to kill myself!”
- L. “Asians are bad drivers.”
- M. “You are very ambitious for a girl.”
- N. “I’m offended that Black people can call white people racial names but us white people can’t call them racial names back or it’s ‘Discrimination’.”

- O. "I'm so fat. I'm a cow."
- P. "Some people like being poor. They see their families doing it and they just stay that way."
- Q. "What do you mean you don't celebrate Christmas? Christmas is for everyone!"
- R. "I wish I had his disability so I could skip class and get extra time on tests."
- S. "Oh, they'll get in anywhere you want. They got [high SAT score] and there're black!"
- T. "Why is she so loud? Women are supposed to be lady-like and feminine, yet she acts like a man."
- U. "That skirt is too short. She is such a slut!"
- V. "You know, Obama may have black skin, but he was basically raised white."
- W. "If you don't like being reminded of sexism, just ignore it."
- X. "Ohmygawd, there're totally not what people think of when they think of Muslim women. There're so... cool!"
- Y. "Why can't we just forget about slavery? It's been so long, people need to get over it."
- Z. "She is so OCD!"

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## Appendix B

### Learning Empathy

**Introduction/Purpose:** The purpose of the training is to deepen our understanding of empathy in order to learn a new skill that serves deepen our connection with others in order to promote civility when in controversy. Controversy with civility is the act of respectfully and willingly engaging in dialogue around disagreements that arise from the sharing of diverse perspectives and opinions (Alvarez, 2009; Higher Education Research Institute, 1996). Skills to cultivate include how to: engage in active listening, gain an understanding of worldviews other than one's own, criticize ideas without demeaning the persons who express them, admit a lack of knowledge on a subject, slow the urge to judge, draw analogies in a discussion, and support others' right to express ideas even if they are unpopular.

**Theory:** Part of learning how to understand different perspectives is finding the path to empathy. Empathy is the capacity to know emotionally what another is experiencing from within the frame of reference of that other person, the capacity to sample the feelings of another or to put one's self in another's shoes. This workshop is designed to help tap into those feelings of empathy in an effort to help improve communication skills and build connections. (Introduction and theory, 5 minutes)

**Exercise 1:** Divide the participants into groups of three or four. Have them sit in a circle. Supply them with half sheet note cards. Have each group member write down a conflict that they are currently dealing with in their lives on the card. Have them drop the cards in a pile in the middle of the group and then have each member randomly pick a card from the pile. Taking turns each group member is to then read the contents of the card as if the problem were their own. After each card is read all group members are then to give advice and feedback, including the member

whose conflict was being presented, to the person speaking. The person speaking should stay act like this is their conflict the entire time that they are receiving advice. It is important that they know that for the entirety of this exercise this is their conflict. At no point should group members out themselves as the owners of a conflict that was read by someone else. This would defeat the purpose of the exercise.

The goal of the exercise is to put oneself in the position of another individual and empathize with that individual and the conflict they are experiencing. This exercise creates a safe place to empathize with others and feel others empathize with your conflict (R. Powers & K. Kirkpatrick, personal communication, April 25, 2009). (20 minutes)

**Debrief:** Bring the group back together for a few moments of reflection and debrief. Ask participants the following: 1) How did it feel to take on someone else's conflict as your own? 2) How did it feel to hear someone else living your conflict? 3) What was it like giving advice on your own conflict? (5-6 minutes)

**Exercise 2:** Now that the group understands what empathy is the next exercise is designed to practice ways in which we can give empathy. Divide into groups of three or four. Ask participants to use the language "Are you feeling \_\_\_\_\_?" as a question. Have a moment of silence for each group member to think of a situation in which they would like to receive empathy. This can be a conflict, past or present traumatic event, frustrating situation, or even a recent cause for celebration or joy. Allow each group to begin with a volunteer. When the volunteer is completely finished describing their situation or telling their stories have the other participants ask if the other person is feeling a particular emotion that they heard, until all appropriate feelings are exhausted. Then allow the volunteer to reflect on the feelings presented and either agree or disagree with the feeling and offer up feelings that may not have been

mentioned. Have the volunteer verbally reflect on the feelings that resonates the most. Have participants repeat the process until all group members have had a chance to receive empathy.

(10 minutes)

**Debrief:** Bring the group back together for a few moments of reflection and debrief. (5 minutes)

**Exercise 3:** The final exercise is in self-empathy. For this exercise the language of Nonviolent Communication is going to be used. Make sure to explain to the group that this language can be used when giving empathy to others as well as when engaging in self-empathy. Again split the participants into groups of three or four. Allow a moment for participants to think of something they are really hard on themselves about. For example, “I am really lazy during the week. When I get home from school all I do is watch TV. I should either workout or do homework.” Have the other group members give empathy to the speaker by connecting a feeling and need. Have group members say “Are you feeling \_\_\_\_\_ because you need \_\_\_\_\_?” Repeat until all participants have gone. (L. Lowe-Charde, personal communication, April 18, 2010). (10 minutes)

**Debrief:** Be sure to emphasize that this exercise is a way to get in touch with your inner voice of negativity and receive self-empathy. Ask if participants the following: Would you be willing to give yourself the same kind of empathy that you just received the next time your inner voice of negativity acts up. (5 minutes)

**Theory/Conclusion:** There are several other ways to give empathy that we did not practice today. Often we can show that we were listening and attempting to empathetically connect by repeating what the speaker just told us. For example, “It really sounds like you are frustrated and hurt because you wanted to go to the movies on Saturday, but your date called five minutes before they were supposed to pick you up to cancel.” Another way we can express our empathy

is by mirroring the emotions that we are seeing. Sometimes we have an urge to be extra cheery when faced with someone's sadness in order to cheer them up. Challenge yourself to move away from this urge, unless someone requests a distraction. Instead try being sad with them if they are sad, or happy with them if they are happy. (5 minutes)

**Closing Question:** How might you apply the skills learned in this training in a situation of controversy?

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## Appendix C

### Building Active Listening Skills

**Introduction/Purpose:** The purpose of the training is to practice active listening in order to learn a new skill that serves to deepen our connection with others and promote civility when in controversy. Controversy with civility is the act of respectfully and willingly engaging in dialogue around disagreements that arise from the sharing of diverse perspectives and opinions (Alvarez, 2009; Higher Education Research Institute, 1996). Skills to cultivate include how to: engage in active listening, gain an understanding of worldviews other than one's own, criticize ideas without demeaning the persons who express them, admit a lack of knowledge on a subject, slow the urge to judge, draw analogies in a discussion, and support others' right to express ideas even if they are unpopular.

**Theory:** Active listening is a structured way of listening to someone that requires a quieting of the mind. Another term for active listening is empathic listening. Empathetic or active listening requires the cultivation of certain skills. Being an active listener does not require being in agreement with someone. Communication requires more than just talking it also requires listening (Stewart, Zediker, & Witteborn, 2006). (Introduction and theory, 5 minutes)

**Step 1:** Divide participants into groups of two. Tell participants to designate person A and a person B. Ask participants to think of something that they feel strongly about. This could be a political issue, life decision, emotional event, or conflict. Give person A around thirty seconds to think of something. Person A is going to speak for two minutes straight with no interruption from person B. Encourage person A to speak for the entire three minutes. Person B's only job is to listen. Ask B to refrain from head nodding, gestures, or making any sounds. After the two

minutes are up, switch speakers. Give B thirty seconds to think of an issue that they feel strongly about. B will now speak for three minutes straight. (10 minutes)

**Debrief:** Ask participants the following: 1) Speakers, how did it feel to be listened to in this way? 2) Listeners, what was it like listening silently? What urges did you have? (5 minutes)

**Step 2:** The debrief will segue into the next exercise, which consists of a detailed explanation of the roadblocks or barriers to communication and active listening. Write the following where they are visible to all participants. Explain each roadblock as it comes up or encourage participants to help with explanations.

**Roadblocks to communication:**

Criticizing- Evaluating the other negatively. For example, “It is your fault; you should have done \_\_\_\_\_ instead.”

Name-calling- “You are so lazy!”

Diagnosing- Analyzing the others motives or problems.

Topping- Telling a story which is tops the other’s story, issue, concern, or triumph.

Ordering- “Stop whining!”

Threatening- Using the threat of punishment or retribution to motivate.

Moralizing- Offering “should.”

Excessive/Inappropriate questioning-

Advising- Offering solutions.

Diverting- Offering distractions.

Logical Argument- Offering a logical solution.

Reassuring- Dismissing the others concerns, not allowing them to feel badly. “It will all work out, you’ll see.”

(Bolton, 1979; Gordon, 2000)

Generate a conversation around the roadblocks. Have folks discuss the ones that they find themselves doing most often. Ask which ones listeners in **Step 1** found themselves gravitating towards. The purpose of this conversation is to show participants that we all engage in this type of communication and a variety of these roadblocks are used. (15 minutes)

**Step 3:** Now that students know what not to do when engaging in active listening write a list of skills to cultivate when engaging in active listening somewhere that is visible to all participants or pass out a handout with the following on it:

1. Maintain natural and appropriate eye contact
2. Watch your body language, try to position your body so you are facing or leaning towards the person you are listening to
3. Try to focus on key issues and not get sidetracked by minor details
4. Encourage the other person to talk more by asking open ended questions like “Can you tell me more about that?”
5. Repeat back in your own words what you heard the other person say

(Donahue, 1996) (5 minutes)

**Step 4:** Have participants switch partners. Have pairs select a person A and person B. Give person A 30 seconds to think about the last argument that they had that they would be willing to share. Have person A begin by talking for two minutes straight about their argument. After the two minutes are up have participant B repeat back what they heard from participant A. Repeat this process with person B as the speaker. (10 Minutes)

**Debrief:** Ask participants the following: 1) What active listening skills did you struggle with or notice that you may need extra practice with? 2) What skills did you find the most natural or easiest? (5 minutes)

**Theory/Conclusion:** The three main skill sets for engaging in active listening are: focusing, encouraging, and reflecting (Stewart, Zediker, & Witteborn, 2006). (2 minutes)

**Closing Question:** How might you apply the skills learned in this training in a situation of controversy?

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## Appendix D

### Stereotypes

**Introduction/Purpose:** A stereotype is a broad generalization about a particular group.

Stereotypes can be negative, and some would argue that there are good stereotypes. For example, a student who is Korean American, points out that she is often expected to be good at math without even trying because many people in the U.S. believe that "all Asians are good at math." She points out that she does not fit this stereotype because she must study math hard to keep up, but she never gets credit for how hard she works. Either way, stereotypes are usually inaccurate. Stereotyping does not mean that the person is racist, but simply that we all tend to stereotype as a way of sorting out a complex multicultural environment.

**Theory:** Building awareness around our formation of stereotypes could be the first step towards changing that potentially harmful behavior. The same applies to thought processes such as stereotypical thinking. This exercise will help create awareness by, first, helping participants to understand what it feels like to be stereotyped and, second, by making them aware of their own stereotypical thought patterns.

**Exercise 1:** Divide the large group into groups of five to six participants, and invite them to designate a leader who will be the group spokesperson during the debriefing section. Ask each group member to give two examples of times when they were stereotyped incorrectly because of their ethnicity, race, gender, age, etc. (15 minutes)

**Debrief:** Call the group back together and invite group leaders to share the examples of times when others had incorrectly stereotyped individuals in the group. Ask those who had this experience to share how it made them feel. Common responses will be "diminished," "negated," "unappreciated," "like I wasn't really there." Point out that this is exactly how others feel when

we apply stereotypes to them, and how important it is to remember the negative emotion they felt. This could help us to be more careful not to cause others to feel the same way. (10 minutes)

**Exercise 2:** Divide the large group into groups of five to six participants, and invite them to designate a leader who will be the group spokesperson during the debriefing section. Ask each group member to give two examples of times when they stereotyped someone else incorrectly because of the other person's ethnicity, race, gender or age. The challenge with this exercise will be getting people to discuss times when they have stereotyped others. People might admit to having stereotyped a doctor or lawyer, but never to having done so with someone of a different race or ethnicity. (15 minutes)

**Debrief:** Call the group back together and invite group leaders to share the examples of times when they had incorrectly stereotyped individuals in the group. (10 minutes)

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## Appendix E-1

### Nonviolent Communication

**Introduction/Purpose:** The purpose of the training is to deepen our understanding of Nonviolent Communication in order to learn a new skill that serves to promote civil dialogue around controversial issues. Controversy with civility is the act of respectfully and willingly engaging in dialogue around disagreements that arise from the sharing of diverse perspectives and opinions (Alvarez, 2009; Higher Education Research Institute, 1996). Skills to cultivate include how to: engage in active listening, gain an understanding of worldviews other than one's own, criticize ideas without demeaning the persons who express them, admit a lack of knowledge on a subject, slow the urge to judge, draw analogies in a discussion, and support others' right to express ideas even if they are unpopular.

**Theory:** Rosenberg (2003) examined the factors that affect the ability to connect compassionately through the use of nonviolent communication (NVC) and the role of language and words in creating connection. NVC, also known as compassionate communication guides individuals through a process of communication skills building that assists with the conscious and intentional expression of feelings and needs in order to create empathic connection. Rosenberg suggests a four step model to follow when practicing NVC. First, practice a judgment free observation of a situation. An observation is the ability to articulate what is happening that either is or is not meeting one's needs without adding an evaluation. Second, cultivating the ability to authentically express feelings and then connect those feelings to the needs behind them. Lastly, the ability to articulate a doable and specific request that expresses what one is wanting from another person. The basis of NVC is the ability to utilize these four steps to express what is alive in us and connect to others using these steps to empathetically discover what is real them.

Rosenberg (2003) suggests that NVC could be used in all types of communication situations, including schools, organizations, institutions, disputes, and conflicts. Many feel uncomfortable engaging others on points of differences because it renders them vulnerable (Alvarez, 2009; Rosenberg, 2003). Practicing NVC can lead to a transformation of inner self that in turn empowers one to see how to transform the outer world. NVC liberates people from enemy images of the other (Rosenberg, 2005). The purpose of nonviolent communication is to create connection and build compassion.

Begin by checking in with the group and doing a brief introduction. Have each participant say one thing that they need in order to create a comfortable and safe space to share. Write this down where it is visible to all. This is particularly important with this workshop as personal conflicts are often being shared. After everyone has introduced themselves ask if anyone would like to add to the guidelines. (Introduction, theory, and check-in, 10-15 minutes)

**Exercise 1:** Pass out the Feelings and Needs List (complete list show in appendix E-2). This first exercise focuses on building listening skills and creating connection through empathy. Divide participants into pairs and ask them to think about a recent unresolved conflict with another person that they would be willing to share. For example, a recent write-up at work, an ongoing argument with a partner, or a roommate issue. Remind participants to take care of themselves through this process of sharing and only use a conflict that they are comfortable discussing in this manner. Have the pairs decide which participant wants to talk about their conflict first. The speaker will talk for two minutes without interruption. The listener is to sit quietly and patiently listen without interrupting to question, give advice, or for any reason. Time the speaker. At the end of the two minutes have the listener pull out their Feelings and Needs List. Have the listener practice giving empathy by using the framework “Are you feeling \_\_\_\_\_ because you need

\_\_\_\_\_?” After which the speaker can respond. Have the listener continue to guess feelings and needs for about a minute. Switch roles and repeat the process. (Approximately 10 minutes)

**Debrief:** Ask the following questions: 1) As listeners what did it feel like to remain silent and what were some of the urges you had? (Be sure to validate the urges of listeners to interrupt, share a similar story, and give advice, etc. as natural responses to the pain of other.) 2) As speakers how did it feel knowing that the listener couldn't speak? 3) What did it feel like to receive empathy in this way? (5 minutes)

**Exercise 2:** Next we are going to work on an expression of feelings and needs with an observation followed by a doable request. Observations are important because they connect people through a shared reality rather than arguing opinions, and they help to prevent reactions based on interpretations. Neutral observations answer some or all of the following questions: What, where, when, who, how and how often? For example, “she was tapping her pencil as I talked,” is an observation. “She was impatient,” is an interpretation. An observation is difficult because it eliminates all judgment and is simply a neutral observation of an event.

Have everyone switch partners. Have each partner briefly re-explain the conflict that they just received empathy for. Now, have the pairs work together to develop an observation for each other's conflict. Ask some participants to share the observations that they developed in their pairs with the larger group. Help participants if any of their observations contain an evaluation of good or bad, judgment of what should or should not have happened, an analysis of why it happened, a story about past related events, predictions about what might happen, justification about why it happened, blaming, and exaggeration. (5-6 minutes)

**Exercise 3:** For the final exercise participants will work individually to create a doable request. Using the observation that they just created, the feelings and needs list, and the following

framework: “When I (see, hear, notice) \_\_\_\_\_, I feel \_\_\_\_\_ because I need \_\_\_\_\_. Would you be willing to \_\_\_\_\_?” (Lowe-Charde, 2007). (5 minutes)

**Debrief:** Ask the following questions: 1) Did anyone struggle with this exercise? (Get the groups input to help those that struggled to refine their doable request.) 2) Would anyone like to share their doable request? 3) Do folks feel comfortable expressing this request? Why or why not? (Remind participants that this is a request. The person receiving the request may not respond to it in the way that they had hoped, so they need to be prepared to have a dialogue about other possible solutions.) (5-6 minutes)

**Closing Question:** How might you apply the skills/techniques learned in this training in a situation of controversy?

## Appendix E-2

**Feelings and Needs List**

“When I (see, hear, notice) \_\_\_\_\_, I feel \_\_\_\_\_ because I need \_\_\_\_\_.  
Would you be willing to \_\_\_\_\_?”

<u>Feelings</u>		<u>Feelings</u>		<u>Needs</u>	
<b>Delighted</b>	<b>Relaxed</b>	<b>Scared</b>	<b>*Angry</b>	<b>Intimacy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Joyful	Relieved	Apprehensive	*Furious	Empathy	Competence
Happy	Rested	Dread	*Rage	Connection	Contribution
Amused	Mellow	Worried	*Irate	Affection	Efficiency
Adventurous	At ease	Panicky	*Resentful	Warmth	Growth
Blissful	Light	Frightened	Irritated	Love	Learning
Elated				Understanding	Challenge
		<b>Nervous</b>	<b>Frustrated</b>	Acceptance	Discovery
<b>Thankful</b>	<b>Content</b>	Jittery	Disappointed	Caring	
Appreciative	Cheerful	Anxious	Discouraged	Bonding	<b>Order</b>
Moved	Glad	Restless	Disheartened	Compassion	Structure
Touched	Comfortable		Impatient	Communion	Clarity
Tender	Pleased			Spirituality	Focus
Expansive		<b>Tense</b>	<b>Shocked</b>	Sexuality	Information
Grateful	<b>Friendly</b>	Cranky	Disturbed		
	Affectionate	Stiff	Stunned	<b>Autonomy</b>	<b>Celebration</b>
<b>Excited</b>	Loving	Stressed	Alarmed	Choice	Mourning
Enthusiastic	Passionate	Overwhelmed	Appalled	Freedom	Aliveness
Overjoyed		Agitated	Concerned	Spontaneity	Humor
Fervent	<b>Energetic</b>	Aggravated	Horrorified	Independence	Beauty
Giddy	Exhilarated			Respect	Play
Eager	Exuberant	<b>Hurt</b>	<b>Sad</b>	Honor	Creativity
Ecstatic	Vigorous	Pain	Grief		Joy
Thrilled		Agony	Despair	<b>Security</b>	
	<b>Alert</b>	Anguish	Gloomy	Predictability	<b>Honesty</b>
<b>Satisfied</b>	Focused	Heartbroken	Sullen	Consistency	Integrity
Fulfilled	Awake	Lonely	Downhearted	Stability	Authenticity
Gratified	Clearheaded			Trust	Wholeness
		<b>*Depressed</b>	<b>Torn</b>	Reassurance	Fairness
<b>Interested</b>	<b>Peaceful</b>	Disconnected	Ambivalent		Expression
Curious	Tranquil	Detached	Confused	<b>Partnership</b>	
Absorbed	Serene	Despondent	Puzzled	Mutuality	<b>Peace</b>
	Calm	Dejected		Friendship	Groundedness
<b>Healthy</b>		Bored	<b>Jealous</b>	Companionship	Hope
Empowered	<b>Confident</b>		Envious	Support	Healing
Alive	Secure	<b>Tired</b>	*Bitter	Collaboration	Harmony
Robust	Safe	Burnt Out		Belonging	
	Hopeful	Exhausted	<b>Embarrassed</b>	Community	<b>Nurturing</b>
		Lethargic	*Ashamed	Consideration	Food/Water
			Contrite	Seen/heard	Rest/Sleep
			*Guilty		Safety

\*These are alarm feelings letting you know that judgments and “shoulds” are in your thoughts and you are disconnected from needs (Lowe-Charde, 2007).

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## Appendix F

### Peer Mediation

**Introduction/Purpose:** Peer mediation is a negotiation-based strategy that teaches peer mediators alternative strategies to help resolve conflict among their peers. In peer mediation, individuals are trained as conflict managers and apply problem-solving strategies to assist their peers in settling disputes in a manner satisfying to all parties. Such a strategy may help keep many minor incidents from escalating over time into more serious incidents. More importantly, peer mediation teaches individuals an alternative set of skills that they can apply in conflict situations.

**Theory:** In mediation, an impartial third party attempts to help others come to a win-win, rather than a win-lose resolution of conflict. In peer mediation, student mediators are taught a process of communication and problem-solving that they apply to help their peers reach settlements of their disagreements without confrontation or violence. In the process of training, mediators learn that conflict can be constructive and positive, and that their role as mediators is not to judge, nor to force an agreement or solution. Rather, students come to mediation voluntarily, and are guided by peer mediators to move from blaming each other to devising solutions acceptable to all parties.

#### The Mediation Process

##### 1. Introduction:

- Mediators introduce themselves to the parties involved, ask for their names, and explain the process, including confidentiality.

## 2. Sharing Perspectives

- Each party tells his/her story of what happened.
- Parties share their interpretation of what happened and how the conflict made them feel.

## 3. Getting More Information

- Mediators ask open-ended questions to clarify and verify.
- Mediators ask, “Is there anything else that we need to know?”

## 4. Defining the Problem

- Mediators paraphrase and restate each parties account.
- Mediators guide parties to come to an agreement about what the problem really is.

## 5. Brainstorming Solutions

- Parties brainstorm possible solutions.
- Mediators ask parties to talk about which solutions the parties are willing to agree on and which ones are not agreeable.

## 6. Possible Solutions

- The parties decide how they will proceed.
- Parties come to an agreement on which solutions are the best.
- Mediators ask if the parties are satisfied and if they need anything else from the mediation.

## 7. Closing

- Mediators thank the parties for participating and remind them, if necessary, of confidentiality.
- Mediators mention that if the parties need help in the future, the mediation process is always available to them.

### Helpful Mediator Questions (use during the mediation process and for role-play practice)

1. What would you like to talk about?
2. Can you say more about that?

3. How does this make you feel?
4. What do you need or want?
5. What is it that bothers you most about this?
6. What ideas do you have about this?
7. What would you like to see happen?
8. Is there anything else you would like to talk about?
9. What would you find helpful right now?
10. What needs to change for you to feel better about this situation?
11. Is there anything you could do to make this situation better?
12. I am not quite clear about this. Could you help me get a better understanding?
13. What could you do differently if this conflict happens again?
14. Do you feel this conflict is resolved?

## Appendix G

### De-Escalation

**Introduction/Purpose:** De-escalation is the calming down or reduction in intensity of a heated conflict. De-escalation can happen quickly, but in most cases, it is a slow progression, which takes effort and time. There are usually several dimensions with a conflict, and as one or more of the dimensions within the conflict become less intense, the conflict can lessen in size. Some elements of the de-escalation process are:

1. Simple Listening – Sometimes all that is needed is to allow an angry person to vent all their anger and frustration to someone who is actually listening to what they are saying.
2. Active Listening – Active listening is the process of really attempting to hear, acknowledge and understand what a person is saying. It is a genuine attempt to put themselves in the other person's shoes; and not only listen to the words the other person is saying but also the underlying emotion.
3. Acknowledgement – Acknowledgement occurs when the person can legitimately understand the person's angry emotion. The person can respond with “wow, I can see how something like that could make you angry”; or “man, if that happened to me, I might be angry, too.”  
Confirming the legitimacy of the emotion is important, but not the behavior. It is important that the person realize that being angry is not the problem, but the way he/she is choosing to act out those angry feelings.
4. Apologizing – Sincerely apologizing for anything in the situation that is believed to be unjust is the fourth de-escalation topic. The apology is not about an imaginary wrong. It is not about taking responsibility for something that was not someone's fault, because an apology can be made without taking on the blame. For example, “I'm sorry the situation has you so frustrated,”

or “I’m sorry you are having an awful day.”

5. Agreeing – Often when people are angry about something, there is a small amount of truth in what they are saying. Listening for that truth and agreeing with it can often diffuse the situation and the person’s anger will start to subside.

6. Inviting Criticism – Asking the angry person to voice his or her criticism of yourself or the situation more fully can be helpful not just in that situation, but in others as well. The person can be asked to tell you everything that has you upset and do not hold back. This invitation may sometimes temporarily intensify the angry emotions of the person, but if the encouragement to vent is continued eventually, they will run out of complaints.

**Exercise 1:** Divide the large group into smaller groups, and give them controversial topics to discuss. Two individuals within each group will discuss one of the topics given to them. One person in the discussion will be the instigator and attempt to escalate the discussion into a conflict, while the other person will use de-escalation techniques to calm that person using some of the elements of the de-escalation process. Other members of the group will observe and take notes. This exercise will continue until every member of the group has had a chance to role-play. (20-30 minutes)

**Debrief:** : Call the group back together and invite individuals to share what worked in the de-escalation process and what did not work. Ask the group what they learned, and what suggestions do they may have to make the process more effective. (15 minutes)

**Exercise 2:** This exercise would be the same as exercise 1 but the only difference would be the role-play would take place in front of the entire group. (15 minutes)

**Debrief:** Call the group back together and invite individuals to share what worked in the de-escalation process and what did not work. Ask the group what they learned, and what suggestions do they may have to make the process more effective. (10 minutes)

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## Appendix H

### Facilitating Dialogues

A dialogue is a facilitated face-to-face discussion that brings together a group of people for the purposes of learning from one another and sharing experiences. A dialogue can consist of one or more identity groups. The decision to hold a dialogue usually arises from a current event, situation or climate, this could be local or global, and that has an impact on the community.

**Step 1:** Think about the purpose of the dialogue and who will be invited. For example, do you want to collaborate around future decisions, create a space for healing, share experiences, and/or build community?

**Step 2:** Decide what space to hold the dialogue in. This is an important aspect of the dialogue. A neutral, comfortable space is essential. Think about the seating arrangement in the space. A circle is often a great way to seat a dialogue.

**Step 3:** Draft Questions for the dialogue. Think about the history behind current feelings that prompted the dialogue. Shape the questions to start out with a connecting and less emotionally charged question and end with a similar question.

**Step 4:** Facilitating the dialogue: Set the intention and tone. You may want to lay some ground rules. For example, be respectful, keep identities confidential, no oppressive language, and share air time. Ask the questions and allow everyone time to speak. Ask participants to answer the questions and refrain from responding to what the person before them said. Also, allow participants the option to pass on any questions that are too difficult. Thank participants for sharing and give empathy when applicable. Be careful not to show a bias if the conversation is controversial.

**Decisions to make when facilitating a dialogue:**

1. What is your topic?
2. Who is invited to the dialogue? Is this open or is this closed to a few select groups?
3. What is the purpose of this dialogue?
4. What questions should be asked at the dialogue?

## Appendix I-1

### Controversy with Civility

**Introduction/Purpose:** The purpose of the training is to deepen our understanding of controversy with civility. Controversy with civility is the act of respectfully and willingly engaging in dialogue around disagreements that arise from the sharing of diverse perspectives and opinions. To break it down: Controversy is a disagreement on an idea or topic that allows for the open discussion of those differences without creating an argument where one person's goal is to win over the other. Civility means responding to a disagreement in a way that respects the point of view of others.

**Theory:** The first step in learning how to engage in controversy with civility consists of knowing that it is okay to express a disagreement with someone's ideas or views. Often the first instinct is to avoid conflict situations, by giving in, walking away, ignoring it, or staying silent. Many people are conflict avoiders because engaging in disagreements across differences often means becoming vulnerable. Controversy is an inevitable part of group interactions which can lead to positive collaboration in an environment of civility. To better understand controversy with civility one needs to cultivate certain skills. The skills that this training touches on are building an awareness of one's own world view, an awareness of other worldviews, identifying the root of controversy, and engaging in dialogue. (Introduction and theory 5 minutes)

**Knowing One's Own World View:** The decisions that we make are influenced by our collective life experiences. Pass out the World View worksheet (found in appendix I-2). Instruct participants to spend some time thinking about their identity. Have individuals fill in the diagram with traits that make up their identity. For example, the center of someone's diagram may be their gender because it informs other parts of their identity, but this may not be true for someone

else of the same gender. It may help to do a diagram of yourself for the whole group. After most participants have completed the diagram ask them to turn to someone next to them and share their diagrams. (10 minutes)

**Debrief:** Ask participants to share any findings during this exercise. Ask if anyone had a difficult time thinking about their identity. The way we approach controversy is informed by our experiences too. Ask participants to consider putting controversy in the center of the diagram and think about what parts of their identity or experiences inform the way that they relate to controversy. (10 minutes)

**An Awareness of Other Worldviews:** Engaging in controversy with civility requires the understanding that there is not just one correct point of view. Each individual brings their own worldview to a situation. Cultural differences need to be taken into consideration too. Divide participants into pairs. In the pairs hand each participant a separate role, one supervisor and one worker. Give participants a moment to read their role and prepare to play this person. Tell participants not to share the role descriptions with one another. Begin role play. (15 minutes)

Roles:

5. The supervisor- You are from a culture where there are small power distances. In a work situation you value the input of your subordinates and seek a collaborative process (Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2005). You are from a low-context communication culture, which means you are direct in your language and use of words (Hall, 1998). You assigned your subordinate to a project and are having a problem with it not being completed on time. You want to work with them to create a solution so that the project can get done soon. You also want to know why the project was not done on time.

6. The worker- You are from a culture where there is a large power difference. At work you expect to be told what to do. An ideal boss would give clear concise instruction (Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2005). You are from a culture that uses high-context communication, which means that you rely on cultural context to make meaning out of what you are saying. For example, you may tell a story that relates to what you are experiencing. Relationships and saving face are very important to you (Hall, 1998). You were assigned a project by your supervisor, but one of the pieces of the project was ruined by a co worker. Your boss is questioning you about the project, but you wish to maintain your relationship with both your co worker and boss.

**Debrief:** Ask participants to share their experiences attempting to communicate in the role play.

(5 minutes)

**Identifying the Roots of Controversy:** Controversies can sometimes be attributed to a difference in opinion, but attributing a conflict to a difference in opinion does not get at the source. Instead try asking: Is this conflict a difference in values and ideas, which can be considered normal and valuable? Or did this conflict arise from a frustration surrounding a lack of decision-making, unresolved prior disagreements, a lack of communication, or a change that disrupted the norm? (5 minutes)

**Dialogue:** The ability to dialogue may be the most important skill in achieving controversy with civility. A dialogue is not a debate. The goal is to actively listen to one another and gain an understanding about what is being said. To engage in a dialogue practice: 1) Asking questions and seeking clarification, 2) Noticing what you are feeling and expressing your feelings about what is being said, for example, when I hear that I feel really disconnected, or I feel concerned

about that, 3) Listening as much as you talk, 4) Seeking to empathize with other's views. (5 minutes)

**Conclusion:** Controversy with civility does not mean avoiding controversy to maintain civility.

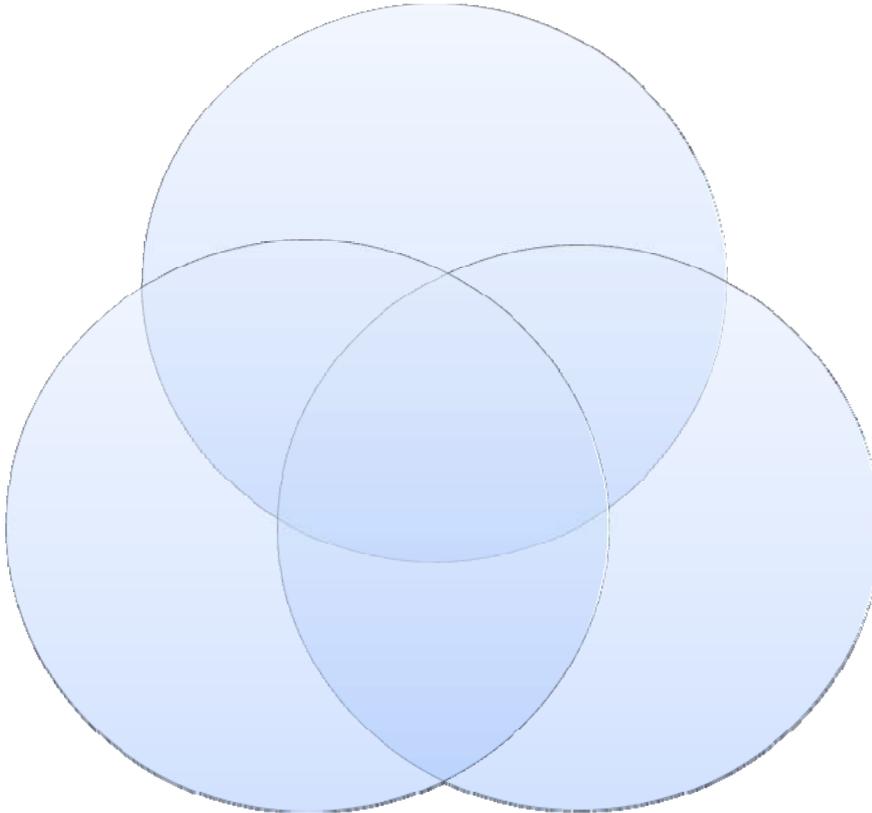
A group is not required to agree on every issue in order to support controversy with civility.

Rather controversy with civility creates an environment where opinions and differences are valued and can lead to a constructive dialogue around a collaborative outcome. Skills to cultivate include how to: engage in active listening, gain an understanding of worldviews other than one's own, criticize ideas without demeaning the persons who express them, admit a lack of knowledge on a subject, slow the urge to judge, draw analogies in a discussion, and support others' right to express ideas even if they are unpopular (Alvarez, 2009; Higher Education Research Institute, 1996).

## Appendix I-2

### World View Diagram

- Race
- Culture
- Sex
- Gender
- Class
- Sexual Orientation
- Ability
- Values
- Religion



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