Transformative Dialogue: Managing Conflict through Empowerment and Empathy

Agenda
- CR Approaches
- Rationale
- Strategies
- Cases
- Questions

Approaches to Managing Conflict

- Power
- Rights
- Interests
- Transformation

* Folger & Bush
Rationale

- Service Coordinator
- Roles
- Negotiation
- Mediation – Emergent
- Process vs. Outcome
- Rules vs. Relationships

Transformative Dialogue

- Crisis in interaction
- Focus on emotions, relationship, process
- Transform society
- Outcome is secondary

Transformative Shifts

- Violence ☉ Peace
- Avoidance ☉ Engagement
- Contempt ☉ Respect
- Competition ☉ Collaboration
Rationale for Transformative Approach

Empowerment

Recognition

Dignity & Worth

Self-Determination

Expanded Choices

Civility

Honesty

Reliability

Control over process

Caucusing

Facilitating insight

Facilitating creativity

Accessing information

Growing with conflict

Client-Centered

Recognition SHIFTS

Reflecting on other’s situation

Letting go of own viewpoint – open to other’s

Showing understanding and concern

Apologizing for having thought poorly

Changing behaviors in light of new understanding
Difficult Conversations

Tendency to avoid conflict when we are:
- Uncomfortable with conflict
- Uncertain about the outcome
- Unprepared for how to deal with the other person
- Socialized to promote harmony
- Not feeling good about self
- Feeling afraid of the other

Engaging in Difficult Conversations*

1. Assess value in engaging rather than avoiding
2. Identify potential challenges… and prepare/pre-empt (e.g., safety concerns)
3. Discover your emotional triggers
4. Accept responsibility: Let go and still care
6. Define your needs, interests, and wants
7. Consider and acknowledge all sides
8. Do not challenge the other’s sense of identity

* Stone, Patton, & Heen
Case 1: Violating Privacy

- SC accidentally sends email intended for Rufus to Cynthia
- Email notes Rufus is behind on rent and also mentions he is HIV+
- When Rufus finds out, he is furious with SC (Sara Clare)

Case 2: Noisy Neighbors

- Carmen complains Flora makes too much noise
- Flora lonely – TV & Radio are only source of entertainment – Also, hearing impaired
- Threats against each other
- Suspect racism
Case 3: Gossip

- Mr. Tibbs tells SC that Hillary sells drugs from her apartment.
- Hillary tells SC that Mr. Tibbs has borderline personality disorder and abuses his cats.
- Both threaten to call police.

References