

humanature

Storytelling + Narrative Inquiry: Centering Humanity

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SPARX Conference

Storytelling and Narrative Inquiry:

Centering Humanity

Narratives

- Humans constantly create and exist within narratives. It is important to compassionately practice curiosity and challenge the narratives and stories you tell yourself. This includes stories about yourself, others, and the world around you.
 - Narratives inform how we understand ourselves, others, and the ways in which society works, or should work. They also inform how we manage expectations of ourselves and others. Narratives influence how we consider needs, this includes the contexts of safety, joy, and well-being for ourselves and others.
 - Sample questions: What stories are informing my definition of professionalism? How does that definition support or complicate the development of more diverse, caring, or equitable workplaces/teams/processes/etc.?

Bio-Psycho-Social-Spiritual Development

- According to the Health Sciences Model of Human Development, our species develops in four dimensions:
 - Biological [Physical]
 - Psychological [Mental]
 - Social [Relational]
 - Spiritual [Meaning-Making]
- These four dimensions are co-occurring (happening at the same time) and dynamic (influencing one another).
- Spiritual in this context does not mean religious. The term is used to describe the sense and activity of meaning-making that all humans engage in. Humans practically make meaning out of everything that happens to and around us, particularly when no meaning is provided.
- When designing for, and talking about, wellbeing, these dimensions *must* be considered.



Centering Humanity

- To center humanity, you must be purposeful and intentional in widening the circle of concern and care.
- Consider constructs like *risk/harm, safety, well-being, and health* in all four categories of human development. Use these frames to practice inquiry and inform the more nuanced learning necessary to support change management in the context of DEI/REI and belonging. Below are some sample questions that might help as starting points for group or individual reflections and conversations.
 - *Risk/Harm*
 - What potential psychological or social harms could be created for our stakeholders, internally or externally?
 - In the context of our next project or activities, what potential psychological risks might exist for our stakeholders?
 - What spiritual [meaning-making] considerations should we consider as we design our next engagement or giving strategy? Are there ways in which we might negatively influence, or send, messages and unintentionally cause harm? How might we learn more about the people and communities we're hoping to impact in service of better answering these questions?
 - *Safety*
 - In what ways might we be creating a safe or unsafe environment? How might we practice curiosity and learn more from our stakeholders?
 - Do we understand the nuance of differing definitions of safety as it relates to the identities present in the workplace, on our teams, or in the communities we engage with? Do we have tools or processes to make sense of that information and then act upon it?
 - *Well-Being*
 - Whose well-being is always centralized or given consideration in our workplace? How might we center the well-being of others often not centralized or fully considered? How might we go about collecting and making sense of this information?
 - Are you aware of how others around you, or within the area/project of concern, are doing psychologically? Are their relational [social] needs for well-being met? How might you find out if you are unsure?
 - How might you organize learning about the well-being of your team or stakeholders across the 4 dimensions of human development?



- Imagination
 - According to the work of Dr. Elinor Amit, it appears that our imaginative faculties will overwhelmingly be geared towards pictures or words as its base of imaginative material when engaging a subject, topic, or idea.
 - Things that seem close to us physically, psychologically (time-based, safety, threats, etc.) or socially (identity factors, experiential factors, etc.) are usually imagined in pictures.
 - Things that seem further away from us physically, psychologically (time-based, safety, threats, etc.) or socially (identity factors, experiential factors, etc.) we will tend to use words or language to imagine.

Debiasing: Tactics to Interrupt Potentially Biased Decision-Making

- The act of engaging in activities to disrupt, lessen, or minimize the thinking and activities that are a result of social cognitive bias (unconscious and conscious bias).
- Reference videos, including some techniques and background information, are included in the “Continued Learning Materials” section at the end of the document

Belongingness

Belongingness: Community Social Integration

“It considers the social conditions that lead to the marginalization of low-income folks and traditionally marginalized social groups...[and explores] the role ‘membership’ plays in the defining and enforcing of our ‘collective.’ Belongingness theory demands a more detailed analysis of people and place compared to an absolutist understanding of the income required to feed or house a certain number of bodies. In order to promote belongingness, civil society must drastically re-imagine its moral obligations to its constituents... [and] must work harder to widen the circle of human concern to encompass more and increasingly diverse communities.”

Conceptualized by john a. powell, Director of the The Othering and Belonging Institute, at UC Berkeley



Continued Learning Material

Microaggressions at work: Recognizing & overcoming our biases

By: Kelly Luc

10 min read

[Link](#)

Debiasing: How To Change Your Mind

THUNK, Episode 126, Sept. 2017, 10 min.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=dfLWnbEI59w

Premortem to eliminate thinking biases.

Daniel Kahneman, Nobel Laureate, Dec. 29, 2014

www.youtube.com/watch?v=MzTNMalfyhM

