

Implementation Strategies Project

Coordinated by the Lower Mainland Multicultural Education Consortium, in
association with Canadian Heritage, Multiculturalism B.C.,
and the Ministry of Skills Training and Labour

Session 5: Handling Racist Incidents:

- defining a racist incident
- knowledge and skills in dealing with incidents
- strategies to prevent future incidents
- skill practice and development

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HANDLING RACIST INCIDENTS

AGENDA

MORNING

Introductions: Facilitators

Introductions: Participants

Guidelines and Agenda

Small Group Exercise: Definitions: Stereotypes, Prejudice, Discrimination, Segregation.

Break

Video: Barbekueria

Definition of Racism through reflections from the video

Internalized Oppression

Lunch

AFTERNOON

Dealing with Racist Remarks and Behaviours

Demonstration

Practice

Break

Critical Incidents: Problem Analysis and Strategies

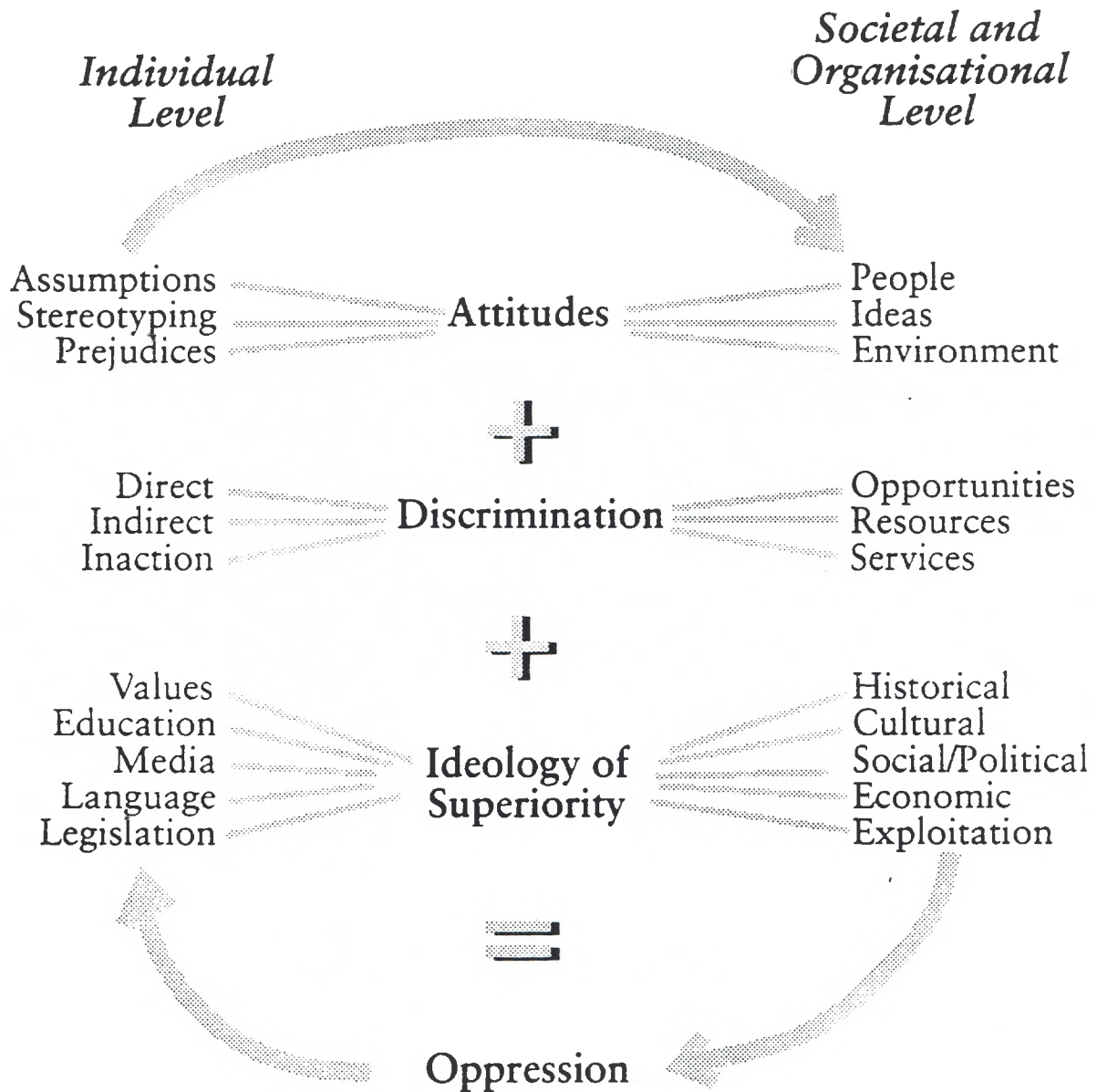
Review and Closure

Evaluations

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- * To define what is a racist incident
- * To explore subtle and blatant incidents
- * To develop knowledge and skills related to racist incidents
- * To develop strategies to prevent future incidents
- * To practise skills related to incidents

Definition of Oppression



WHEN YOU ARE TRIGGERED or SOMEONE CALLS YOU A RACIST, A SEXIST, ETC.:

- * Assess and clarify the implication and meaning for you/ them.
- * Pay attention to your feelings and thoughts.
- * Assess whether there's a "grain of truth."

Examine your own attitudes.

Reflect on your behaviors that exclude/ impact - personally, organizationally.

Identify specific issues.

Think of the effects of stereotypes.

- * Own the "grain of truth," if appropriate.
- * Have a dialogue to decide where to go from here.

Remember we need to separate feedback on our behaviour from attacks on our person.

RESPONDING TO RACISM

BY

John Kehoe
Stephen Culhane
Lili Yee

And a grenade explodes
in the sunless afternoon
and words run down
like a frothy white spit
down her bent head
down the serene parting of her dark hair
as she stands too visible
from home to bus stop to home
raucous, hyena laughter
"Paki, Go Home!"

(Returning the Gaze:111:1993)

Preface

The purpose of this training package is to teach high school students how to respond to racist incidents. It was our expectation that high school students who participated in the program would be more likely to recognize a racist incident and describe an appropriate response. It was also our expectation that the students would respond appropriately when confronted with an actual racist incident. Both of these expectations were confirmed in a systematic evaluation of Responding to Racism.

Ten social studies classes from two high schools participated in the study. Three teachers taught the program with grade 9 or grade 11 classes. Six classes were taught the program and four classes served as control classes. All classes were pretested with a measure of their willingness to accept cultural diversity (Appendix 1) in order to establish experimental and control group equivalency. A posttest written response to racist incidents (Appendix 2) found that Experimental classes had more knowledge about how to respond to a racist incident than the control subjects. That is the least one could expect because the experimental group had just been taught how to respond to a racist incident. The measure of behavior was unobtrusive. Pairs of students were asked to go to a room to discuss school rules. While sitting in the room, they were witnesses to a racist incident staged by two actors. The trained subjects reacted significantly more positively and appropriately to the incident than did the control subjects. Appendix 3 provides actual examples of responses and how they were scored.

A third expectation was that subjects participating in the program would become less racist than subjects who did not participate in the program. There was no significant difference

between the responses of experimental and control subjects on the Evidence of Racism Scale.

The program was presented to the students over three consecutive class periods and, as a result, only a limited number of scenarios were presented. It may be that if more scenarios were presented over a longer period of time there would be a positive change on the Evidence of Racism Scale. The measure is included in Appendix 4.

The incidents used in this program were gathered from teachers, high school students and members of the community. The informants were asked to describe incidents which were likely to reflect racist behavior and how they were resolved. Most of the incidents are set out in the form of a playlet. It is best to make a copy of the scenario for each actor so that they can practice their lines. Some of the incidents are set out in narrative form and can be used for discussion when the students tire of role playing.

The materials should be used in classrooms where there can be a purposeful discussion of the incidents and appropriate responses. It is most important that students be given an opportunity to practice responding to an incident. It is imperative that the practice be taken seriously. It needs to be emphasized that the behavior and language of the perpetrators is used to illustrate the critical incident. Neither the behavior nor the language is acceptable under any other circumstances. Frequently the students have a very limited number of responses to say or suggest when they are practicing a racist response. We have provided a set of categories in Appendix 5 which should help the students increase their range of responses. However, even with the assistance of the categories, it is important for students to generate their own responses in their own words. It is also important to practice the responses in first person. Students have a

tendency to turn to the teacher and say, "This is what I would say," or "I would say". Try to get them to say it as a response to the situation.

Ungerleider and Douglas (1989) have suggested four possible types of responses that students might use when confronting a racist incident. They are: no response, neutral response, partial addressal and full addressal. A person who gives no response typically ignores a situation and pretends they did not see or hear anything. A neutral response does not confront the issue, but recognizes that something has happened by telling the students to stop or to get back to work. A partial addressal takes place when the perpetrator is told the comments are unacceptable but the victim is not reassured and no punishment is given. Another kind of partial addressal is when the perpetrator is ignored but the victim is given assurance, support and comfort. A third partial addressal is when the perpetrator is confronted and the victim is reassured but no punishment is given to the perpetrator. Most high school students will not be in a position to administer punishment. A full addressal is when the incident is discussed, the perpetrator is punished, and the victim is reassured publicly and privately. Critical incident number one teaches the various responses to the incidents. The students very quickly learn the meaning of the four responses.

It is important that schools not promise more than they can deliver to improve student to student attitudes. Ideally we want our students to hold positive attitudes toward racial and cultural diversity. If the ideal is unattainable we would like them to exhibit non-discriminatory behavior, even if they hold negative attitudes. If peer or other pressure persuades them to behave in discriminatory ways, it would be desirable if they had attitudes and values which told them they were doing something wrong. They would, therefore, not be surprised at the consequences of

their discriminatory behavior. We clearly do not want our students to hold negative attitudes and exhibit discriminatory behavior with the belief that they are acceptable.

Critical Incident Number One

Situation: Three Grade Ten boys are walking into an English class immediately after a heated floor hockey game in P.E. class.

Participants: Masaki is of Japanese descent; Joey, of Ukrainian descent, and Paul of Greek descent.

Scenario:

Masaki pushes Joey. Joey trips over a garbage can at the entrance to Mr. Stewart's English class, and falls over. Paul is friends with both boys.

JOEY: (Standing up, angrily) Hey! What's your problem Masaki?!

MASAKI: What do you mean...? Eh... look it was an accident.

(Mr. Stewart is gathering books from a supply room at the back of the class. He can hear what is going on, but cannot see.)

JOEY: (Seeing other students are watching; becoming angry and embarrassed)

Ya, right...like the way you play hockey man... you NIPS just can't play!

MASAKI: (Flustered and angry) I've told you not to call me that...

JOEY: Hey, it's no big deal...

(Masaki moves directly in front of Joey, to confront him.)

MASAKI: Don't do it! (pushes on JOEY'S shoulders).

(A third student, Paul, steps between the two.)

PAUL: Come on you guys, just relax, eh...

Discussion:

1. Here are four possible responses by Paul. After reading them, decide which one you feel to be most appropriate to this situation.

Choice A

Separate the two boys and decide to treat them equally, with the objective of showing they are both wrong.

Choice B

Separate the two boys, and then go and sit down.

Choice C

After separating the boys, explain to Joey that his comment was unacceptable, and simply will not be tolerated. Make a point of speaking to Joey and Masaki in an equal way for the physical altercation. Tell Joey he should not use the term even in fun. Provide comfort to Masaki, by telling him that Joey should not have said what he said.

Choice D

Once the two boys have been pulled apart, take the time to tell Joey that his comment was inappropriate. Explain to him that this type of racial slur is not acceptable.

2. Each of the choices on the previous page reflect one of four basic responses that could be given in this situation: **No-Response**, **Neutral Response**, **Partial Addressal**, and **Full Addressal**.

The least effective response is Choice B. This is considered to be **No-Response**. It ignores both the racial slur and the altercation itself.

Choice A is a **Neutral Response**. While the physical actions are addressed, nothing is done to address the racial slur, which might offer reassurance to the victim.

A more effective response would be Choice D. As a **Partial Response**, Paul has dealt with the unacceptable nature of Joey's comment. However, little has been done to reassure the victim.

Choice C is the most effective response. This is a **Full Addressal**. Paul directly addresses the racial slur, and deals with the entire situation resulting from it. This response allows for a much fuller reaffirmation of the victim's self-worth.

3. Role play the situation, trying each of the four different responses.

EXAMPLES OF HANDLING PUT DOWN

A. Put Down Comment

Hey Goof Ball, Heard you blew the Math test, You're even stupider than I thought.

B. Responses

1. *Limit Set*
Are you calling me names because you want me to feel bad?
2. *"I" statement.*
I don't listen to people who enjoy putting other people down.
3. *Ask a question*
(a) Do you know why you are putting me down?
(b) Whats your problem.
4. *Repeat back*
(a) You heard right, I didn't do very well on the Math test.
(b) You have such a grasp of the obvious.
5. *Identify feelings*
(a) Well I'm glad my Math mark made somebody happy. It sure as hell didn't make me happy.
6. *Agree*
Yeah I flunked so whats your point.
7. *Make a Joke*
See that's what happens when you don't cheat.
8. *Change the Subject*
It was a tough test! Why don't you ask me how I did in English?
9. *Ask for Advice*
Instead of putting me down why don't you give me some help.
10. *Leave*
Ya, Okay buddy. See ya later.
11. *Ignore*
Say nothing and leave.

Responding to Racism - John Kehoe Study

Some schools in Surrey participated in the Responding to Racism Program. Some of Dr. Kehoe's findings were:

1. "On post tests experimental classes had more knowledge on how to respond to a racist incident than control subjects "
2. "Trained subjects responded better to racial incidents."
3. "No significant difference between the responses of experimental and control subjects on the Evidence of Racism Scale."
4. "It is most important that students be given an opportunity to practice responding to an incident. It is important that the practice be taken seriously."
5. "It is important that students generate their own responses in their own words and to practice the responses in the first person." (see Appendix 5 - helps students to increase their range of responses.)
6. "Ungerleider and Douglas have suggested four types of responses that students might use when confronting a racist incident:"
 - no response
 - partial addressal
 - neutral response
 - full addressal
7. "Students very quickly learn the meaning of the four responses." (see critical incident #1)
8. "Ideally, we want our students to hold ^{positive} attitudes towards racial and cultural diversity. If the ideal is unattainable we would like them to exhibit non-discriminatory behaviour, even if they hold negative attitudes."

THE RACIST INCIDENT

Think of a time when someone said something offensive to you. Define the context, who was involved, and what specifically was said.

- At work, meeting
- "those people shouldn't be allowed in if they can't speak English + I mean really don't understand it"

How did you feel?

- frustrated, tired
-

What did you think?

- "do we ever have a long way to go here"

What did you do?

- how do we become able to assess language competency - so they can participate; we can truly know level;

INTERNALIZED OPPRESSION

1. The individual starts to believe that her presence is not important
2. The individual feels that her participation does not matter
3. The individual denies her ability - I can't do it
4. The individual denies her ambition - I didn't want it anyway
5. The individual denies taking responsibility - I don't have any control over my life - I have no power to change it
6. The individual turns to alcohol or drug abuse and/or violence against self and own group

- a sense of invisibility

CROSS CULTURAL AWARENESS - VALUING DIVERSITY

DEFINITIONS

STEREOTYPES:

A typical example of pattern.

A conventional oversimplified conception.

A fixed and distorted generalization made about all members of a particular group.

PREJUDICE:

An unfavourable opinion or feeling formed beforehand or without knowledge, thought or reason.

Any preconceived opinion or feeling, either favourable or unfavourable.

RACISM:

A belief that one's own race/culture is superior and has a right to rule others.

A policy of enforcing such asserted rights.

Prejudice plus institutional power.

Racism involves attitudes of prejudice and stereotyping, discrimination, and an ideology of superiority.

DISCRIMINATION:

An action or behaviour based on prejudiced feelings and ideas. Discriminatory behaviour is aimed at people perceived as "different". To discriminate a group has to have some form of power over another group in order to restrict or exclude in some way.

Systemic discrimination involves practices that may be neutral and entrenched within organization that have the effect of discriminating against a group of people.

SEGREGATION:

One group is isolated, excluded, ghetto-ized by another group. It could be intentional or unintentional.