

Using Intergroup Dialogue Principles for Library Professional Development at an Academic Library

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Overview

Agenda

- Introduction to intergroup dialogue (IGD) framework
 - Social identity snapshot exercise (in pairs)
 - IGD in action (case study)
 - Next steps
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Learning Goals

What we will do:

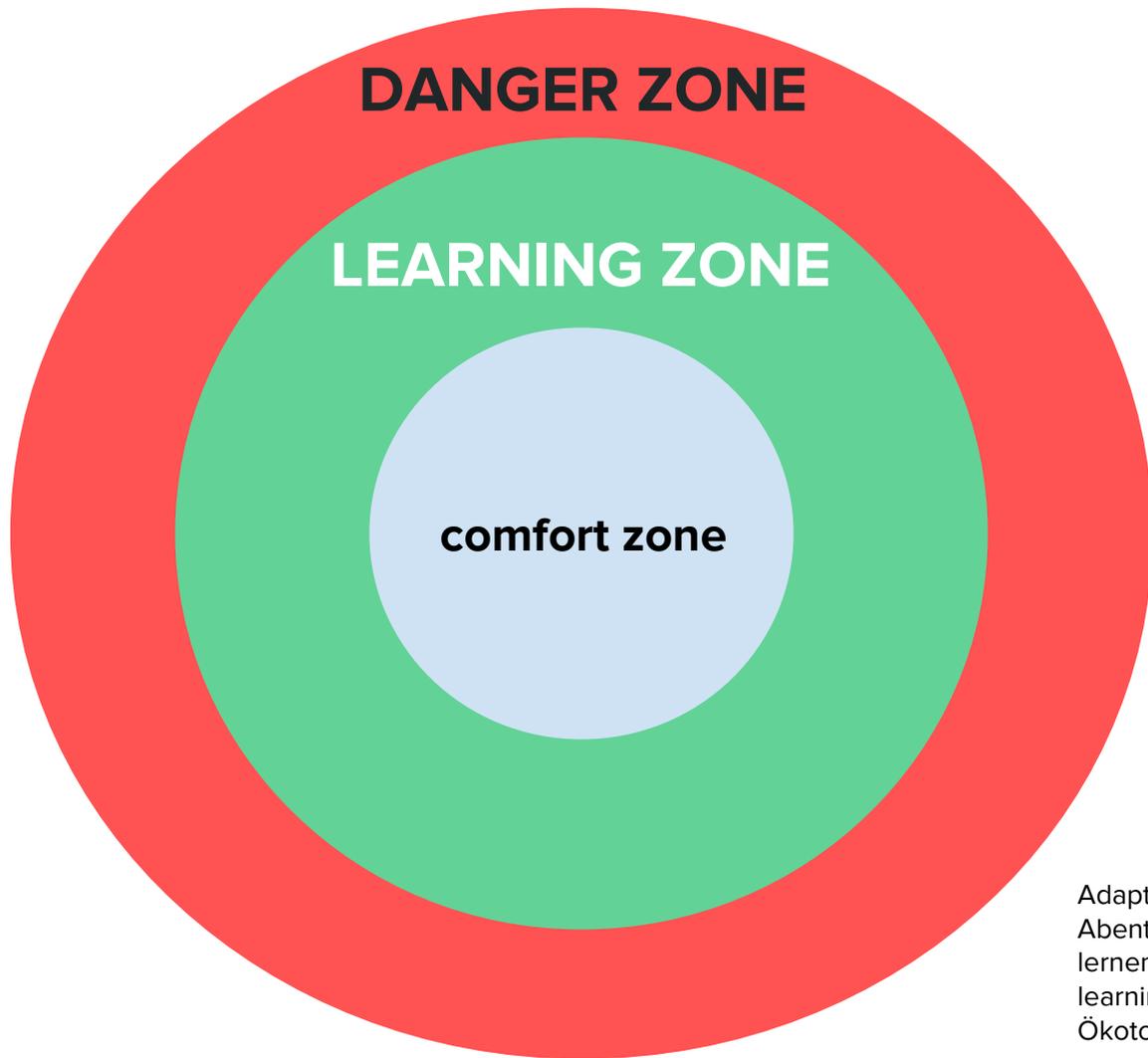
- Understand basic dialogic principles
- Develop a foundational understanding of different social identities
- Increase our awareness of intersectionality, power, and privilege
- Connect dialogue with library work

What we won't do:

- **Undo systemic oppression and fix all the “isms”**
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Community Guidelines

- Confidentiality
- Our primary commitment is to learn from each other
- We will not demean, devalue, or “put down” people for their experiences, lack of experiences, or different interpretations of those experiences.
- We will trust that people are always doing the best they can
- Speak your discomfort
- Monitor your airtime
- This is just a starting point
- Expect and accept a lack of closure



Adapted from Senninger, T. (2000).
Abenteuer leiten – in Abenteuern
lernen (Facilitating adventures –
learning in adventures). Münster:
Ökotopia Verlag.

LARA: Affirmative Listening

- **Listen** -- Listen with an intent to understand. Listen for underlying principles, cultural values, emotions, and issues behind what is being said. Listen for commonalities.
- **Affirm** -- Affirm the principles or issues in what was said, or simply the feelings or emotions that were expressed. Affirming is not agreeing, it's acknowledging or recognizing what is shared.
- **Respond** -- Respond to the issues that were raised and the underlying needs behind them. Ask questions about what was said.
- **Add** -- Add information to the conversation. After seeking to understand, seek to be understood.

	Interrogation	(object of) Curiosity	Affirming Inquiry
Goal of the inquiry	Seeking “proof” or facts supporting discordant experiences or narratives to the inquirer	Seeking explanation or insight into the experiences unfamiliar to the inquirer	Participating in the mutual exploration of experiences and narratives by sharing and inviting to share
Inquirer’s attitude	Doubt, suspicion, skepticism close-mindedness	Naivety, assumed normalcy, unexamined privilege	Openness, humility, reciprocity
Likely reaction or feelings	Defensiveness, anger, mistrustful, rejection, isolated	Tokenized, “othered,” commoditized, exploited or used	Mattering, engaged, affirmed

Affirmative Inquiry: Do's

- Mutual vulnerability
- Mutual contribution
- The inquirer's need or desire "to know" must be subjugated to the subject of inquiry's agency to decide to engage or answer.
- Mutual benefit
- The affirming process begins with an invitation to share (mutually); travels a generative, creative and imaginative journey of possibilities; and ends with an expression of appreciation, affirmation and/or gratitude.

Adapted from National Intergroup Dialogue Institute at the University of Michigan (2016). "Translating Appreciative Inquiry for Intergroup Dialogue Facilitation: Affirming Inquiry." (handout)

Affirmative Inquiry: Don'ts

- Educational (Dialogic) Exploitation
 - **Experience Parasites** – Individual level
 - **Cultural Strip Mining** – Societal/Group level

Monologue

- One voice, multiple participants
- One voice maintains the silence of others
- Win-lose orientation
- Disregard relationships

Discussion

- Multiple voices, multiple participants
- Each voice tries to persuade others
- Win-lose orientation
- Retain relationships

Debate

- Multiple voices, multiple participants
- Each voice tries to overcome the others
- Win-lose orientation
- Disregard relationships

Dialogue

- Multiple voices, multiple participants
- **Each voice tries to create mutual understanding**
- Not about winning or losing
- Build relationships

What is Intergroup Dialogue?

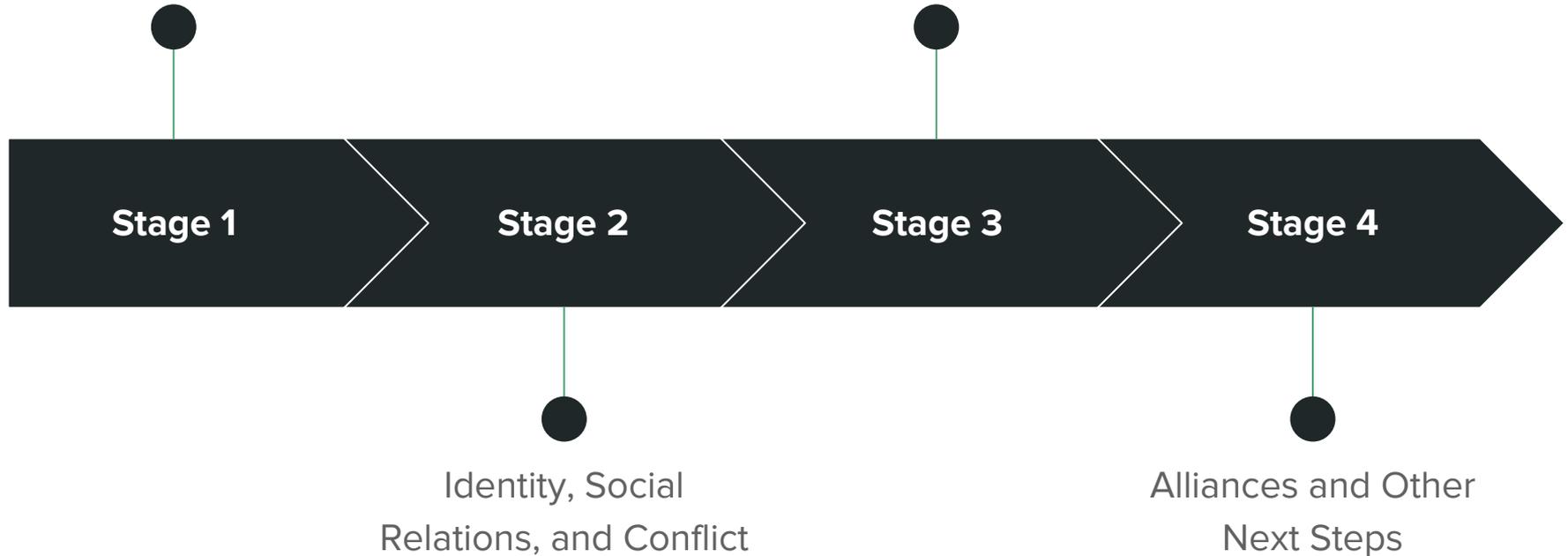
Intergroup dialogue is a **face-to-face facilitated conversation between members of two or more social identity groups that strives to create new levels of understanding, relating, and action** . . . Intergroup dialogues encourage direct encounter and exchange about contentious issues, especially those associated with issues of social identity and social stratification. They invite students to **actively explore the meanings of singular (as men or as women) or intersecting (as men of color or as white women) social identities** and to examine the **dynamics of privilege and oppression that shape relationships between social groups in our society**. In addition, the dialogues build dispositions and skills for developing and maintaining relationships across differences and for taking action for equity and social justice.

[Zuniga, X. \(2003\). "Bridging Differences through Dialogue." *About Campus: Enriching the Student Learning Experience*, 7\(6\), 8-16.](#)

Group Beginnings:
Creating a Shared
Meaning of Dialogue

Practicing Dialogue:
Getting to the Root of
Intergroup Inequality

**IGD is a 4-stage
model**



Stages of Intergroup Dialogue

Stage 1

- Identifying the differences between discussion, debate, dialogue
- Developing group norms
- Examples of activities
 - Icebreakers & team builders
 - Facilitators share personal stories
 - Social identity profile
 - Leads into Stage 2

Stage 2

- Exploring social group identity
- Exploring differences in power and privilege
- Understanding the process of socialization
- Examining structural oppression & privilege
- Examples of activities
 - Cycle of socialization & identity timelines
 - Privilege walk

Stages of Intergroup Dialogue

Stage 3

- Examining the impact of social structures and institutions on individuals via pertinent social issues
- Practicing dialogue
- Learning to embrace conflict while staying in dialogue
- “Dialogue about the dialogue”
- Examples of activities
 - Take A Stand
 - Crossing the Line
 - Four Corners

Stage 4

- Exploring empowerment, allyhood, and action planning
- Determining next steps
- Building capacity & identifying alliances
- Examples of activities
 - Spheres of influence
 - Cycle of Liberation

Social Identities

Common social identities

- Race
- Gender
- Sexual orientation/sexual identity
- Ethnicity
- Socioeconomic status
- Religion
- Ability

Social Identity & Social Power

- **Oppressed/Marginalized/Target Group** - Group that faces oppression and has less social power; social identity groups that are disenfranchised and exploited.
- **Privileged/Dominant/Advantaged/Agent Group** - Group that has privilege and more social power; social identity groups that hold unearned benefits or advantages in society
- **Intersectionality** - The ways in which each person's social identities interconnect and contribute to unique, multiplicative, and layered experiences of oppression and privilege. Everyone holds multiple social identities (i.e., gay man; White woman; upper-class Person of Color). Social identity power is also contextual, which means it can vary depending on the environment in which one is located at any given moment.

Social Identity & Social Power

Oppression: A system that perpetuates an imbalance of advantages and resources based on perceived social group memberships.

Oppression can happen on multiple levels.

- **Individual:** One person's actions that reflect prejudice against a target social group.
- **Institutional:** Policies, laws, or rules enacted by organizations or institutions that disadvantage specific groups and while providing advantages to others. Examples of institutions: religious, governmental, educational, legal, and health care.
- **Societal/Cultural:** Social norms and customs that have a differential and/or harmful impact on marginalized groups. These norms almost always have a historical significance, and the impacts are not always intentional.

Activity

Social Identity Snapshot Exercise

1. Complete your profile (3 minutes)
2. In pairs, each of you will share TWO social identities--one that you are most aware of, one that you are least aware of (3 minutes each)
3. Only share to your level of comfort--practice LARA & be mindful of the community guidelines (but try to stay in the learning zone)

Community Guidelines

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Debriefing

1. What was it like filling out the profile? Did you feel anger, discomfort, excitement, frustration, etc.?
 2. Did you learn anything new about yourself?
 3. What were the easiest/hardest boxes to complete?
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Activity

Four Corners Exercise

- In pairs, take turns sharing a brief story that answer each of the four prompts
 - In this case, you will each listen only to the other person's story —do not ask questions or interrupt
 - Only share to your level of comfort & be mindful of the community guidelines (but try to stay in the learning zone)
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Share a time when you were put down, discriminated against, oppressed because of one of your marginalized social identities. If you have not experienced either, why do you believe it has not happened to you?

Share a time when you perpetuated discrimination, stereotyped or put down another individual/group of their marginalized social identity through direct action, inaction or silence

Share a time when you spoke up or interrupted stereotyping or discrimination of another individual/group from a targeted social identity group in your presence.

Share a time when you witnessed discrimination or stereotyping of another individual/group from a marginalized social identity group but did not intervene and you were consciously aware of it. What type of internal reaction did you have to not intervening?

Debriefing

1. Why do you think this exercise is structured this way?
 2. Which “corner” was the easiest for you to be in? Which was the most difficult?
 3. How can this relate to building community among your library staff?
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Multipartiality: Balancing power

DOMINANT/GRAND/MASTER/META-NARRATIVE

Agent

Target

Impartiality/Neutrality

Partiality/Advocacy

Multipartiality

Professional Development Day @ UD Libraries

Why did we do this workshop?

Mission-critical

Stated vision for the University of Dayton: [The University for The Common Good](#)
(from President Eric Spina's inaugural address in April 2017)

As President Spina stated in an email to campus, **“to be truly excellent, the University of Dayton must deeply commit to – and achieve – improved diversity, equity, and inclusion on campus.”**

- How can we ensure we are contributing to inclusive excellence at UD through our work at the Libraries?
- How are we personally and professionally prepared to welcome one of our most diverse class of incoming students this fall?

Collaboration is essential

Campus Partners

- Merida Allen, Office of Multicultural Affairs
- Robert O'Hara, Housing & Residence Life
- Chanel Wright, Center for International Programs

Each person has been trained in intergroup dialogue and attended the University of Michigan National Intergroup Dialogue Institute. <https://igr.umich.edu/article/national-intergroup-dialogue-institute>

*The University of Dayton has adopted some aspects of the Michigan IGD model to fit our resource levels and current needs. The Michigan IGD model has been in place for over 20 years and is very robust.

“Finding Common Ground for The Common Good” workshop

Modifying the IGD 4-stage model

- Not a true “intergroup dialogue”
- Focus on stages 1 & 2

Attentive to multiple identities

- Seating assignments
- Roving, rotating facilitators
- Check-ins

Challenges

- Lack of demographic diversity in library faculty & staff
- Time constraints
- Sustainability/infrastructure issues around continued development

How can you create a
more inclusive
community at your
library?

What are some ways
of using IGD in your
work?

What can I/We Continue, Start, Stop?

- As an individual?
- As a work group (department, division, etc.)?
- As the Library?



Questions? Thank you!

Special thanks to Merida Allen, Robert O'Hara, and Chanel Wright