Addressing Intersecting Identities in our Work to End Violence Against People with Disabilities

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Setting our intentions

Agreements: Creating a brave space

- Awareness of body language

- Kindness toward ourselves and others

- Gratitude for the space, this time and the people around us

- Resourcefulness

- Be here now

- Take space, make space

- Stay curious and open

- "Wait, why am I talking?" (WAIT)

- Commitment to centering racial equity

- Practice flexibility

Commitment to a brave space
(Z. Ruby White Starr, 2017)

Safe Space	Brave Space
Free of discomfort or difficulty/Experience discomfort as a violation of "safe" space ground rules	Explores content that pushes one outside of their comfort zones / Experiences discomfort as pre-requisite to learning
Agree to Disagree	Controversy with civility
Don't take things personally	Own your intentions and your impact
Determine for yourself to what degree you can participate/Remove yourself if you get triggered	Be aware of what factors influence your decisions about whether to challenge yourself on a given issue.

Objectives

- Review key terms related to equity work;

- Apply an equity lens in our work to dismantle ableism and violence against people with disabilities; and

- Share strategies for Coalition building work

Why center Racial Equity?

- People of color with disabilities face marginalization on the basis of both race and disability

- Yet, our work to improve services for survivors with disabilities has not necessarily addressed barriers based on race.

- To have maximum impact, focus and specificity are necessary.

- Strategies to achieve racial equity differ from those to achieve equity in other areas. "One-size-fits all" strategies are rarely successful.

Terms

White supremacy

Oppression

Racism

Structural racial inequities

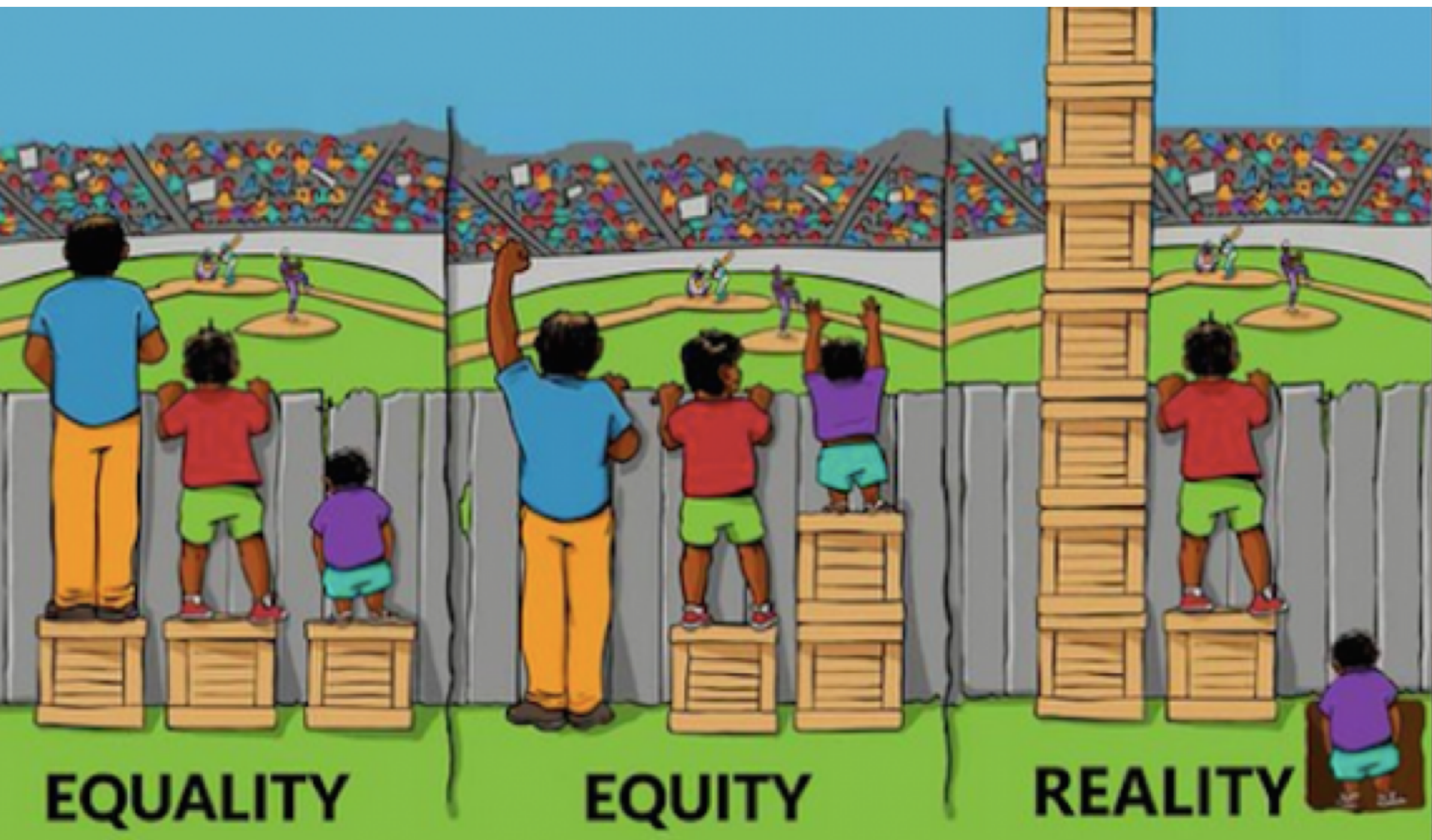Internalized supremacy/internalized oppression

Privilege

Equality

Equity

Racial equity

Allyship

EQUALITY   EQUITY   REALITY

Vera   Center on Victimization + Safety

Let's Review

Systemic/ structural racial inequities

A system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways, to perpetuate racial group inequity.

Structural racial inequities is not something that a few people or institutions choose to practice. It has been a feature of the social, economic and political systems in which we all exist.

Institutional racial inequity

Refers to the policies and practices within and across institutions that, intentionally or not, produce outcomes that chronically favor, or put a racial group at a disadvantage.

Reflection

A deep examination of personal beliefs and assumptions about ourselves

A process of connecting our histories with our current selves

An awareness of how values, biases, cultural background, regional perspectives, personal history, and beliefs impact our work with everyone

The process of opening up space for emotional and intellectual exploration

- Adapted from Ruby White Starr

Questions for reflection

- Why might communities of color mistrust formal systems?

- Name ways that personal and cultural barriers may get reflected as deficiencies.

- How does your organization perpetuate inequities?

Let's Talk *Privilege*

What about privilege?

Privilege: those who don't have to think about it are "privileged"

In all cultures, contexts of privilege and access are created by certain norms against which all other sub groups are compared.

Privilege assessment

- Where do you have privilege?

- How can you address your privilege?

Privilege & access

In all cultures, contexts of privilege and access are created by certain norms against which all other sub groups are compared.

In the U.S., attributes of the dominant culture include English as a primary language, "whiteness", Christianity, physically able, male, economically resourced and heterosexual.

Why privilege matters?

- Privilege and access arise from having one or more of the above attributes of identity.

- Privilege includes not having to recognize own culture as norm, access to resources, connections and status.

- Privilege for one group can create the dynamics of oppression.

- Impact of institutions - our society is set up with YOU in mind

Why do we need to know?

- The more we know about race and bias the better we can be in our work.

- People's experiences of bias and oppression will affect their interactions, help seeking, etc.

- Incorporate oppression & trauma into every level of your work.

Issues Impacting Communities of Color

Impact on communities of color

- Different attitudes and expectations about help-seeking.

- *Mainstream* intervention methods generated barriers.

- Biases in delivery of services/responses by the legal system.

- Mistrust of mainstream formal systems.

Impact on communities of color (2)

- The over representation of white people in positions of leadership-with real decision making power.

- *Formal* systems that do not include relevant or alternative resources.

- Structural & institutional racial inequities.

An Analysis of our Movements from a Racial Equity Lens

History of our movements

- Disability Rights
    - Passing of ADA in 1990

- Violence Against Women
    - Violence Against Women Act in 1994

    - LGBTQ+ Rights

    - Labor movement and others

The Journey to Center Racial Equity in the Coalition to End Abuse of People with Disabilities

Uniting to End Violence Against People with Disabilities Coalition

A national Coalition comprised of activists with disabilities; disability rights and anti-violence advocates

Centers the lived experiences of those most marginalized and commits to ending violence against people with disabilities while dismantling racism and ableism.

Funded by the NoVo foundation and led through a partnership between the Vera Institute of Justice and the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (NRCDV).

2016 – Present
WHERE WE HAVE BEEN

Goals

GOAL 1

Increase cohesion, alignment, and collaboration among key anti-violence and disability rights leaders and organizations.

GOAL 2

Develop a shared vision, goals, and strategy for advancing efforts to address violence against people with disabilities.

Goals (2)

GOAL 3

Increase interest, buy-in, and action among essential allies and other stakeholders who have yet to embrace or join the movement to end violence against people with disabilities.

GOAL 4

Address immediate priority areas identified by the national coalition that has been assembled.

Reflection points

First 2 in- person convenings

- Unexpected loss & transition

- Struggled with finding alignment and shared priorities

- Established workgroups

- Developed resources

- Loss of 2 members

- Inability to center racial equity

Pausing to center racial equity

Taking a necessary pause

- Transitioned from a Core Working Group to a Learning Community.

- Identified key values.

- Established two new Work Groups.

  1. People of Color/People with Disabilities.

  2. Aspiring White Allies.

- Hosted an in-person meeting for the People of Color/ People with Disabilities work group

  + Explored Internalized Oppression

  + Established Coalition Priorities

- Used Graphic Facilitators

3rd Convening

+

- Work groups shared their experiences with each other
  - "I'm ready to take the lid of oppression off my head. I hope you do the same"
- Began action planning
  - Policy and Practice workgroups
- People with disabilities leaned into their leadership role
  - Vocal, energized, and connected

What does intersectionality mean to us?

Power + Privilege

Disability and Oppression

Using the term oppression to describe the daily reality of people with disabilities

How does oppression show up?

- Victimization
- Power imbalance
- Bullying
- Lack of rights
- Discrimination
- Less eligibility
- Disempowerment

- Lack of respect
- Alienation
- Being kept down
- Feeling of isolation
- Internalized oppression

Internal vs. External Oppression

Internalized Oppression

Things that we believe about ourselves that others say about us

THE TRUE FOCUS OF REVOLUTIONARY CHANGE IS NEVER MERELY THE OPPRESSIVE SITUATIONS THAT WE SEEK TO ESCAPE, BUT THAT PIECE OF THE OPPRESSOR WHICH IS PLANTED DEEP WITHIN EACH OF US.

AUDRE LORDE

4000 YEARS FOR CHOICE

Ableism

Ableism refers to "discrimination in favor of able-bodied people."

But the reality of ableism extends beyond that to the way our culture views disabled people as a concept.

Ableism is also the belief that people with disabilities "need to be fixed or cannot function as full members of society" and that having a disability is "a defect rather than a dimension of difference"
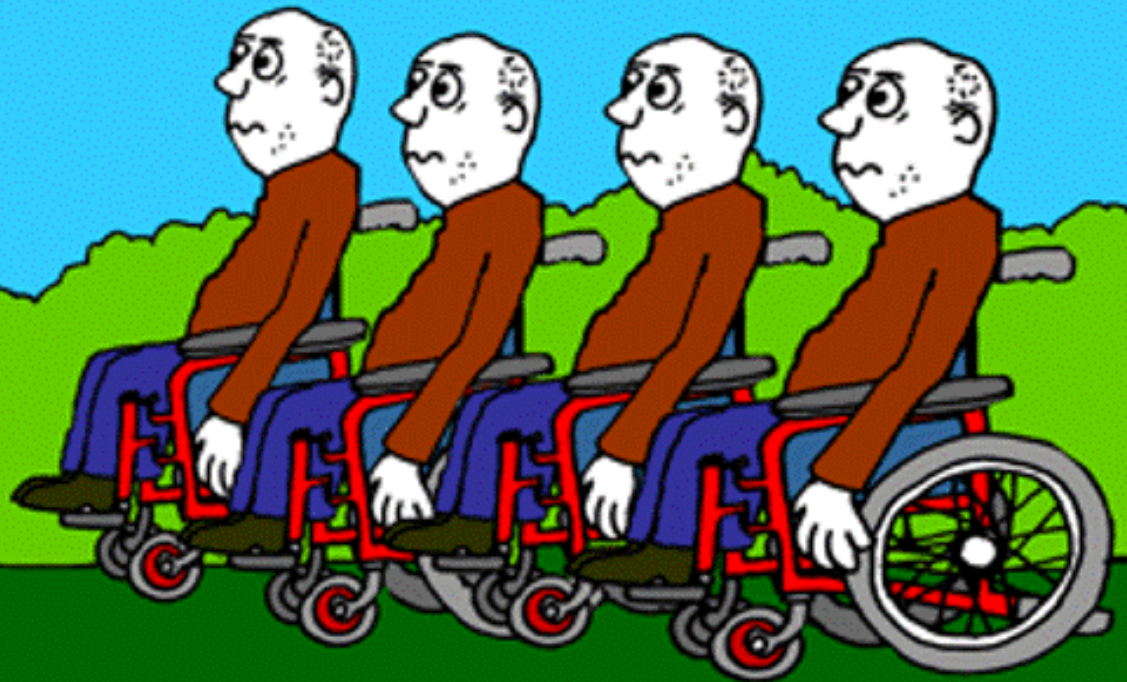
The shared journey of aspiring allies

Dismantling white privilege & internalized superiority

Reflecting on the role of white allies in our respective movements
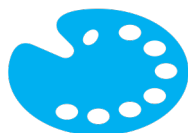
Exploring own vulnerabilities

Rethinking power

Racial Equity

Where do racial inequities show up in our work?

Policy & research priorities

Program design

Outcome measures

Others?

Centering racial equity

1   Bringing the margins to the center

2   Operationalizing our ideals

3   Dismantling white privilege from within our movements

4   Working towards liberation

LOOKING AHEAD

Questions?
Comments?