

*If you have come here to help me,
you are wasting your time. If you
have come here because your
liberation is bound up with mine,
then stay and we can work
together.*

Lila Watson, Aboriginal Educator/Activist



Creating Diverse Communities: Religion and Power

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Opening Doors Diversity Project



Workshop Objectives

- To develop a common language for talking about power, privilege and difference.
- To examine the impact of Christian hegemony on social, political, and economic power in the U.S.
- To develop a vision for what spiritual diversity within a community would require.
- To collectively develop strategies for increasing spiritual acceptance and religious equity on campus.



Working Agreements:

- Confidentiality
- Listen for understanding
- Respect for others and multiple perspectives
- Open, honest dialogue with no repercussions



INTRODUCTION TO THE WORKSHOP

WE ARE MEMBERS OF GROUPS

SOCIAL SYSTEMS ASSIGN STATUS TO GROUPS



Group Identity: Spiritual Beliefs

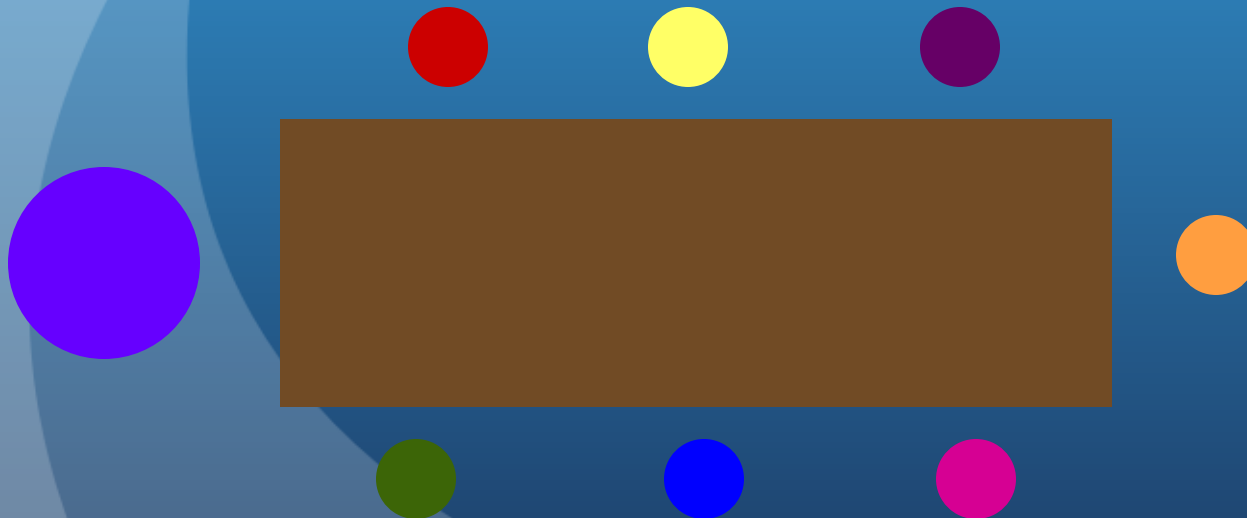
Up - Down Activity
How do we identify spiritually?

DOMINATOR MODEL

“Power over”

Dominant

Excluded



DOMINATOR MODEL

“Power over”

Dominant
Roles

Excluded

Agent → Ally

Victim → Empowered

Christian

All other spiritual beliefs

PARTNERSHIP MODEL

“Power with”





PARTNERSHIP MODEL: Spirituality

Creating “Power With” Dynamics

Identify any values, behaviors, attitudes, skills and conditions that would support movement to a Partnership Model in your community on spiritual beliefs.



Partnership dynamics:

Behaviors: Assertive

Values:

- Cooperation
- Respect and Dignity
- Different Treatment = Equivalent Outcome

Skills:

- How to negotiate common ground
- How to speak the language of diversity change
- How to transform agent and victim roles



Intersectionality of our
religious identity with other
group identities

Roles

Dominant

Agent → Ally

Christian

Adults (working age)

White People

Men

Owning Class

“Standard” English

Temporarily-abled

Heterosexual

Formally Educated

Magazine look

Citizen

“Traditional” Family

Early immigrants

Middle Class

Excluded

Victim → Empowered

All other spiritual beliefs

Young People, Elders

People of Color

Women, Transgender

Working Class, Working Poor, Poor

English as 2nd, 3rd..., no English

Differently-abled

Gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, questioning...


Educated by life

Everybody else

Temporary resident, undocumented..

All other family forms

Current and forced immigrants



What Dominator Model dynamics are preventing movement to partnership?

Based on your personal experience as a Christian (dominant) or Other Spiritual Beliefs (excluded) identify what gets in the way of creating partnerships that can lead to healthy diverse religious communities?



Overcoming Dominator Model Barriers:

Using the list of Dominator Model barriers, identify strategies for overcoming them within society and within your spiritual community.

CLOSING:

You are invited to share an appreciation for a thought, an idea, yourself or another participant.