



COACHING WITH COLOR COGNIZANCE



SESSION GOALS

- To become aware of our own stories/perceptions about race and how they may have been formed and reinforced over our lifetime
- Discuss the dynamics of Race
- Define two important terms
- Begin to identify ways to develop our individual Color Cognizance and how we may incorporate it into our coach training and practice

WORKING AGREEMENTS

- Listen and observe yourself and others with attention
- Ask clarifying questions
- Experiment with suspending judgment/knowing
- Invite humility while cultivating curiosity for the purpose of learning



ACTIVITY:
WHY AM I A COACH
TRAINER?



ACTIVITY:
WHAT MAKES A GREAT
COACH/TRAINER?



ACTIVITY: SHARE YOUR “LEARNING ABOUT RACE” STORY

- Recall a moment(s) at any point in your life when you became aware of race and its differences?
- What happened?
- As you learned of other races, what were the stories/messages associated with them?
- How are those same messages and stories about other races perpetuated in society today?

PERCEPTUAL LENS

Shaped throughout our lifetime by:

- Cultural Learning (norms, language, values, behaviors, practices)
- Historic Group Learning & Cultural Narrative (experiences, stories, history, thematic beliefs)
- Individual Learning & Narrative (individual experiences, trauma, & history)
- Social & Institutional Learning (patterns of historic behavior in relevant institutions)

WHY THE EMPHASIS ON RACE?

1. Perhaps the most charged dimension of diversity in most of the world
2. Most difficult to discuss and topic most often avoided, especially in cross-race groups
3. Has the greatest impact on life chances and opportunities: often the best predictor of wealth, education, health housing , employment, and other measures of well-being


Implicit Association Test (IAT)

- People don't always say what's on their minds. One reason is that they are unwilling. Another reason is that they are unable. The difference between being unwilling and unable is the difference between purposely hiding something from someone and unknowingly hiding something from yourself.
- The Implicit Association Test (IAT) **measures attitudes and beliefs that people may be unwilling or unable to report.** The IAT may be especially interesting if it shows that you have an implicit attitude that you did not know about.
- The IAT measures the strength of associations between concepts (e.g., black people, gay people) and evaluations (e.g., good, bad) or stereotypes (e.g., athletic, clumsy).
- Take the Test...

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/user/agg/blindspot/indexrk.htm>

IMPLICIT BIAS





“ We tend to do more of what we’ve already done in the past, rather than rethink what we’re doing. Without this new thinking, all we can do is continue to repeat the actions we’ve already taken, which will of course lead to the same outcomes that we already have. Repackaging the same actions in a program called coaching is just another version of the same mistake...”

James Flaherty-Coaching: Evoking Excellence in Others



COLOR BLINDNESS

Colorblindness emphasizes similarity and assimilation, which has been the dominant mode regarding race in the United States since the 1960s. Colorblindness, presumes a universal sameness among all people, argues that race and culture are largely irrelevant and that people should be understood as individuals, not identity group members. It downplays the existence of current day discrimination and racism, seeing them as vestiges of the past.

(Sue, 2015)

COLOR BLINDNESS

“You are stuck in the belief that Whites are the obstacles to your progress. Yes, racism happened in the past, but it’s a small thing now. It’s a different world we live in. You don’t realize that the world is wide open to you. Didn’t we have a Black president? Look at Asian Americans, for example. They have made it in our society by hard work and their dedication to their families. Look at my grand-father. He stood on his own ground, settled it, and made something of his life in the face of much prejudice. Every man can stand on his own ground. Why do you people [people of color] always have to fight being part of this country. What is that saying? Oh yeah, “When in Rome do as the Romans do.” Can’t we all just be Americans?”



COLOR COGNIZANCE

Color cognizance, combines an awareness of the profound impact of race and ethnicity on individuals and communities, a belief in the richness of racial and cultural heritage, and an acknowledgment of prejudice and discrimination that has real impact in the lives of people of color.

(Sue, 2015)

How to Build Our Color Cognizance

The CHALLENGE

We don't recognize when biases shape our decisions in ways that limit us and our clients.

We are wed to our established ways of being, processes, approaches and perspectives and we don't expand our learning networks or proactively seek alternative points of view or experiences.

We go bias/colorblind because we worry our acknowledgement of race/color differences will create greater division, cause harm and result in discomfort.

Our inability or unwillingness to constructively address bias limits coaching performance and effectiveness leaving a void in ourselves, clients, and our coaching discipline.

The SOLUTION

Assess Cultural Awareness - Learn to see when we default to our biases and not be driven by our emotions and "Thinking Fast." Evaluate attitudes, values, biases and behaviors

Understand Cultural Context - Actively seek to learn about and acknowledge the contextual cultural dynamics in society and the workplace affecting the client and their lived experiences. Build meaningful connections with sincere empathy and curiosity for the sake of learning

Build Skill - Strengthen skills that allow us to act with courageous compassion to counter bias and its harmful impacts. Actively develop and practice appropriately relevant, sensitive interventions and strategies

Build a coaching culture committed to the training and development of awareness, knowledge, understanding, and abilities to effectively address the realities of race and its impact on our lived experiences.

WHERE TO FIND COLOR COGNIZANT COACHING

A. Setting the Foundation

- Meeting Ethical Guidelines and Professional Standards
- Establishing the Coaching Agreement

B. Co-Creating the Relationship

- Establishing Trust and Intimacy with client
- Coaching Presence

C. Communicating Effectively

- Active Listening
- Powerful Questioning
- Direct Communication

D. Facilitating Learning and Results

- Creating Awareness
- Designing Actions
- Planning and Goal setting
- Managing Progress and Accountability



MOVING FORWARD AND TAKING ACTION

- What can you do immediately in your training to build Color Cognizance in coaches?
- What is the benefit of doing so?

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT AND REFLECT UPON


*As Coach trainers and Coaches, we can't leverage what we
don't talk about.*

How could the undiscussed dynamics of race
prevent us from fulfilling our purpose as coaches
and coach trainers?




“Coaching with Color Cognizance is not a destination. It is a process of ongoing learning that courageously invites deep self-awareness and assessment of programmed biases, stereotypes, and viewpoints of others as well as increasing awareness of the contexts, cultures, and lived experiences of others who are different from us”

Adapted from Sue and Sue (2008)



“To reach others, we have to first know ourselves. And to contact the deeper truth of who we are, we must engage in some activity or practice that questions what we assume to be true about ourselves.”

--Adapted from A.H. Almaas



“I think we have to own the fears that we have of each other, and then, in some practical way, some daily way, figure out how to see people differently than the way we were brought up to.”

Alice Walker



QUESTIONS, REFLECTIONS & APPRECIATIONS

RESOURCES

- Derald Wing Sue (2015) RACE TALK and the Conspiracy of Silence: Understanding and Facilitating Difficult Dialogues On Race. New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons
- Erica Gabrielle Foldy and Tamara R. Buckley (2014) The Color Bind: Talking (and Not Talking) About Race At Work. New York: Russell Sage Foundation
- Martha Lasley, Virginia Kellogg, Richard Michaels, and Sharon Brown (2015) Coaching for Transformation , Second edition. Discover Press




SUPPLEMENTAL SECTION

HOW TO BECOME MORE COLOR COGNIZANT?

Rosinski Model – Philippe Rosinski, *Coaching Across Culture*

- **Recognize and Accept Differences:** acknowledge, appreciate and understand that acceptance does not mean agreement or surrender
- **Adapt to Differences:** move outside ones comfort zone, empathize, exercise a temporary shift in perspective – adaptation does not mean adoption or assimilation
- **Integrate Differences:** hold different frames of reference. Analyze and evaluate situations from varying cultural perspectives
- **Leverage Differences:** make the most of differences, strive for synergy, look for gems indifferent cultural approaches



If We Always Do
What We Always DID
We'll Always Get
What We Always Got