Move at the speed of trust; connection is more important than mass.

- aidrienne maree brown

THE HOME FOR LITTLE WANDERERS

THE HOME

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BETTER, BRIGHTER FUTURES FOR KIDS

THE HOME

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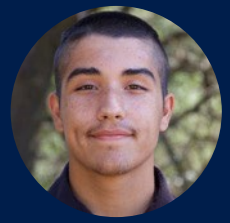

Moving at the Speed of Trust

How Circles with Mental Health Workers Support Belonging and Wellbeing

July 2024 | NACRJ

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The Home for Little Wanderers
Workforce, Learning, and Development Vision Statement:

To create an inclusive environment where everyone's identities, experiences, unique knowledge and perspectives are valued. Our hope is that learners leave trainings with increased confidence about who they are in the work and have further developed their voice and skills to support youth, families and each other.

Training Agreements

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I will:

1. Explore my own biases and identify my assumptions
2. Be a mindful listener, and listen to understand
3. Be present
4. Ask questions and stay curious
5. Pay attention to and use the pronouns shared by others
6. “Speak from I” - my own experience/perspective
7. Consider the intent vs. impact of my words on others and others on me
8. Assume best intentions
9. Go easy on myself, it’s okay to make mistakes
10. Take space / Make space
11. Take the lessons, leave the details

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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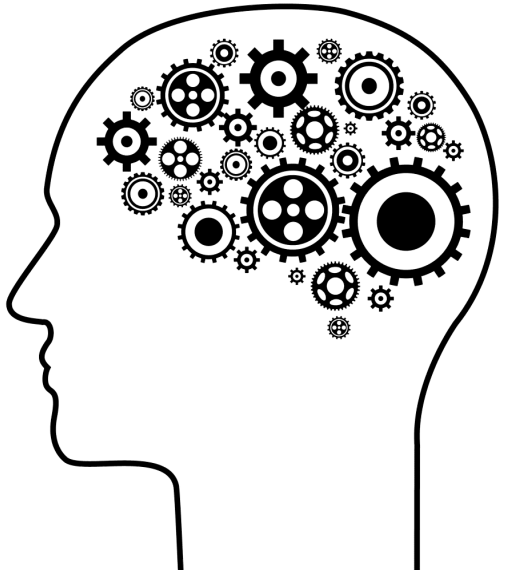
1. Discuss the importance of Circle practice in DEIB initiatives and staff Wellbeing
2. Explain the Dimensions of Power and how they connect with Circle Practice
3. Understand storytelling in community as a Wellbeing practice



Belonging

Think about a time when you experienced belonging.

- What did it feel like?
- What made this possible?

About the Home for Little Wanderers

- The Home is the oldest child welfare organization in the country, founded in 1799
- In Massachusetts, New York, and New Hampshire
- A 1000-employee non-profit organization serving 15,000 youth from birth to 26 years old and their families
- Work with youth and families who are living with the effects of individual and systemic trauma
- Serves youth and families at multiple levels of care: Community Service Agencies, Family Resource Centers, Outpatient and School-based therapy, intensive home-based services, and Residential treatment

Demographic of The Home for Little Wanderers

200 + years of serving “At Risk youngsters”

• 15,000	Clients (growing)
• 75%	Clients = BIPOC
• 1000	Employees
• 49%	BIPOC employees
• 4/35	LGBTQ+ Focused Programs
• 70 +	International Employees

About the Home for Little Wanderers

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- Began incorporating Circle practice in 2011
- Multiple programs within the Home keep Circles
  - within staffing teams to build community and mitigate burnout
  - with families to center the voice of parents and their children throughout the treatment process

Circle Practice with employees

- The Home's Impact Corps
- Diversity Committee
- Restorative Practice Work Group
- Circles within Teams
- Multi-day Circle Practice training

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BETTER, BRIGHTER FUTURES FOR KIDS

“The people closest to the pain, should be the closest to the power.”

– Ayanna Pressley

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Discussion

Round 1: What are your reflections on the video?

Round 2: Think back to the exercise we did to start the workshop, specifically the conditions that allowed you to experience Belonging. In what ways does Circle foster a sense of Belonging?

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The DEIB Strategic Plan

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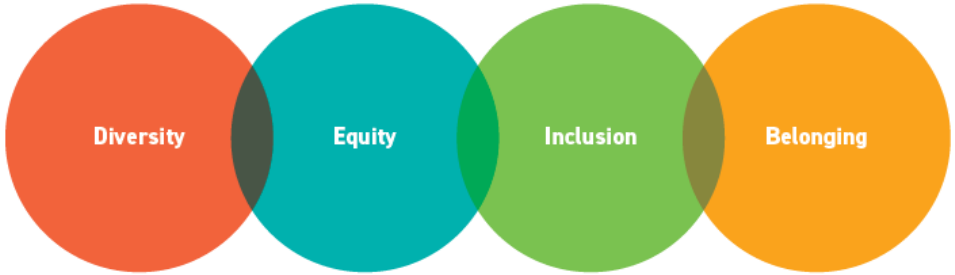
Diversity: Diversity is an evolving concept that includes but is not limited to understanding, embracing, and valuing differences inclusive of but not limited to various races, colors, ethnicities, genders, sexualities, ages, religions, disabilities, gender identities and expressions, Veterans; along with differences in education, skill sets, thought and life experiences. The concept of Diversity is rooted in affirmative action and the Civil Rights movement of the 1960's.

Equity: The creation of opportunities for historically underrepresented or marginalized populations to have equal access to and participate in the same programs, services and opportunities created for non-marginalized populations, while creating opportunities for closing any gaps in participating and achieving within an organization.

Inclusion: Is the culture in which different people can come to work, feel comfortable and confident to be themselves, work in a way that suits them and delivers upon organizational business needs. Inclusion will ensure that everyone feels valued and importantly, adds value. Inclusive organizations are 3.3. times more likely to be high performing and five times more likely to be agile.

Belonging: The feeling of security and support when there is a sense of acceptance, inclusion, and identity for a member of a certain group or place. Belonging is a key component of inclusion. When employees are truly included, they perceive that the organization cares for them as individuals as their authentic selves. That is good for employees and ultimately improves business performance.



The DEIB Strategic Plan and Circle

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Actively Recruit a Diverse Workforce that is Reflective of the Populations We Serve

Pursue a comprehensive strategy to build and maintain a high performing workforce, with a focus upon increasing diversity at the Board of Director, Leadership (Director, Vice President and Executive) and Clinicians within The Home.

Take Proactive Measures to Retain The Home's Diverse Workforce

Develop and implement strategic actions to keep employees motivated and focused so that they elect to remain employed and fully productive for the benefit of children and families we serve.

Foster an Inclusive and Connected Culture

Cultivate a supportive, welcoming, inclusive, and fair work environment that allows employees to feel connected to the agency's mission and contribute to their full potential.

Power Literacy

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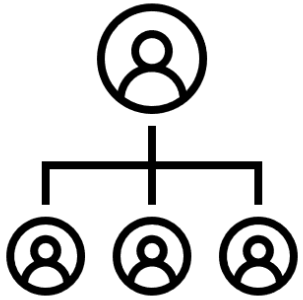
Power Over

- Linked to domination and force
- Enables one individual or a group to make the decisions that affect others, and to enforce control

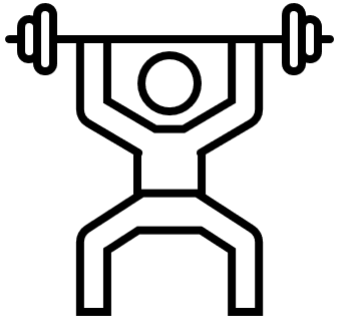


Power With

- Manifested in influence
- The ability to suggest and be listened to, to begin something and have others join in that action

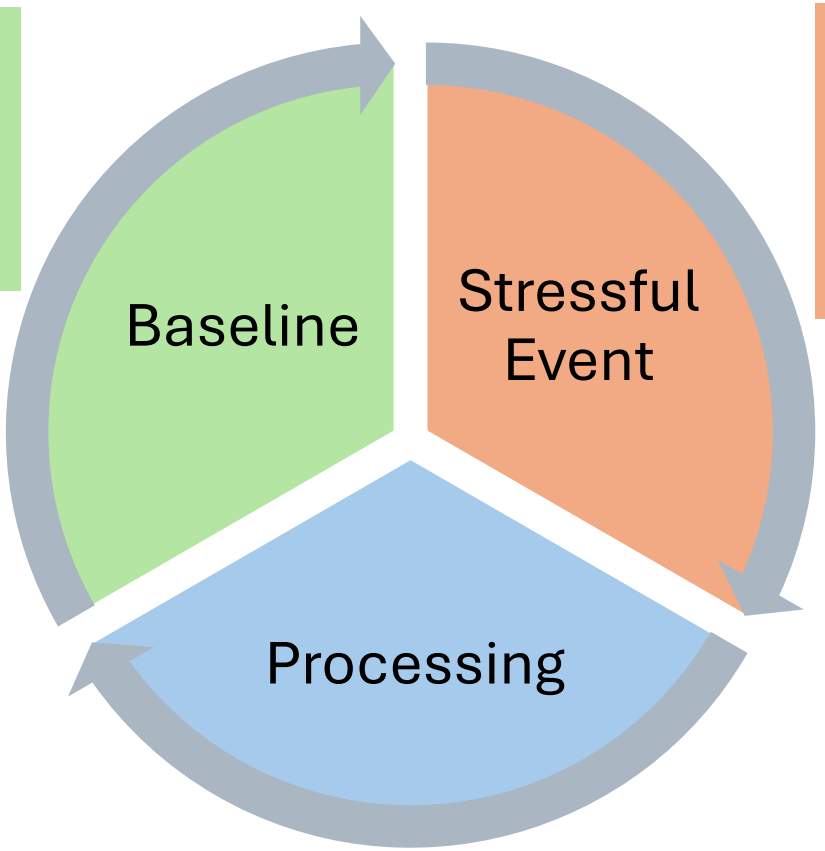
Power-from-within

- Personal Power, our mastery of tasks and unfolding abilities
- The ability to make choices and take actions that positively affect our lives
- Can be attitudes and guiding beliefs



Storytelling in Community

- Builds empathy and strengthens relationships
- Allows us to see each other in our full humanity



- Decreases bias
- Increases my ability to interpret someone else's words and actions in a positive way, even under stress

- Having a voice to tell my story and be listened to helps heal the traumatic effects of a stressful incident
- Increases awareness that I am not alone

Reflection

What is one thing you learned today?

Remembering the global Indigenous wisdom of “Seven Generations,” what action will you take because of what you’ve learned?

How will this action effect seven generations into the future, while honoring the efforts of seven generations before you?

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I believe that with time it must become an incredible pleasure to be able to be honest, expect to be whole, and to know that we are in a community that will hold us accountable and change with us.

- aidrienne maree brown

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Thank you!

Please be in touch!

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