TIDE Session 6: Sustaining Equitable Supports

1. TIDE Session 6

1.1 Sustaining Equitable Supports

Notes:

Welcome to our sixth and final module in this series. I am Tessa Boutwell of VCU's Office of Strategic Engagement, and on behalf of our entire staff and partners, we'd like to thank you for your dedication to listening and continuing this important work throughout these modules.

Today's final session is called: "Sustaining Equitable Supports." This session will highlight strategies you can use to commit to DEI work long-term, and to sustain yourself for years to come.
We hope that you leave today with applicable strategies for your work, and for supporting individuals with disabilities.

1.2 Virginia Board for People with Disabilities

Virginia Board for People with Disabilities

Thank you
Virginia Board for People with Disabilities

Notes:

Again, we are grateful to the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities for their support of this training.

Funding for this project was supported, in part, by the VCU School of Education Office of Strategic Engagement. The mission of the Office of Strategic Engagement is to support educators by creating a culture of educational excellence and equity in schools and communities through education, collaboration, and innovation. We provide relevant, research-informed professional learning aimed to increase awareness and drive strategic actions in the area of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

As we conclude this series, we're so thankful that they have believed in this partnership and value the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion for support organizations. Their support of this training has provided space for you to grow in your practice and understanding of diversity, equity and inclusion.

Their commitment to this cause is appreciated, and we are thankful for their partnership.

1.3 RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Be **O**pen

Be **S**elf-Reflective

Be **E**ngaged.

VCU School of Education

Office of Strategic Engagement

Notes:

We introduced these rules of engagement to you during our first session together. Before we get started today, let's review them.

First, be open: we invite you to listen radically and vulnerability with empathy. We understand that some of these topics may be a bit uncomfortable, and we challenge you to consider your thinking. We invite you to be open to listening and to feel comfortable with being vulnerable while sharing and reflecting on your experiences.

Next, be self-reflective: A lot of information in this series requires you to self-reflect. We want to emphasize that this is a journey and you will continue to learn and grow. Self-reflection will be key in your work as you seek to be a more culturally responsive practitioner.

Finally, be engaged: Engagement looks different for everyone. However, we'd like you to connect with the content and material that's being shared. If something resonates with you, we invite you to pause, reflect, and take notes. We also encourage you to engage beyond this series to continue to question yourself about how this content is relevant in the work that you do.

1.4 Defined intersectionality

Quick Recap: Last time we....

- Defined intersectionality
- Considered our own identities as they relate to marginalization
- Discussed who is being served by the direct support workforce

Notes:

Here's a quick recap of our fifth module that talked about showing up as a co-conspirator in your work.

We built on the understanding of an ally and learned the term co-conspirator. In order to ensure we're all using the same language, we first identified the roles of both allies and co-conspirators. Each of these roles are different and require different actions, which we highlighted last week.

Then, we looked at the process of transitioning from being an ally to a co-conspirator. Because these two roles require different actions, we clarified that the ways that allies and co-conspirators "show up" can be different and we identified them. We discussed that allies typically "show up" in thoughts, but a co-conspirator may show up in action.

Finally, we explored steps you can take to actively show up as a co-conspirator in your work. We shared with you the action continuum and took time to consider our places thereon. We encouraged each of you to identify ways that you can take action in your own roles.

1.5 TODAY'S GOALS

Notes:

As we wrap up our time together, we have three goals to guide this final session. First, we'll identify strategies and practices to equitably support those in the IDD community. We believe that these strategies need to be equitable, meaning that they should allow all individuals that you support to thrive.
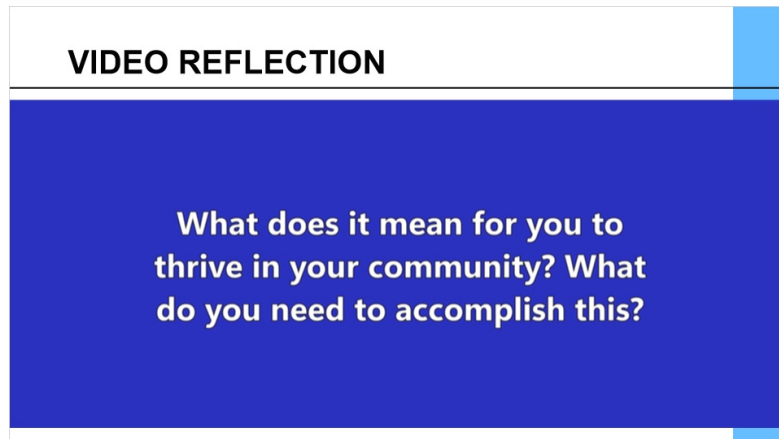
Then, we'll give you time to reflect on how you can implement these strategies and practices in your daily work.

We know that because there are a variety of organizations represented here, the way that you apply these strategies may look different for your respective roles. While we'll give you time to reflect on this today, we also encourage you to reflect on these strategies and practices beyond our module time together. How can you apply them in your daily interactions? Maybe even outside of your work?

Finally, we'll let you consider what your next steps are in sustaining an equitable and inclusive environment long-term. When we started this series, we reminded you that the DEI journey is continuous. This means that there is no end destination in mind. You will continue to learn and grow, and require patience to sustain these efforts. Today

we'll talk about what sustainability means and how you can be invested in this work for long-term.

1.6 VIDEO REFLECTION

VIDEO REFLECTION

What does it mean for you to thrive in your community? What do you need to accomplish this?

Notes:

We'll start with a video reflection. Before I share the video I want to remind you of the definition of intersectionality. It is defined as: the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as class, race, gender, regarding the overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage; it's a theoretical approach that's based on this premise.

When we discussed intersectionality, we highlighted how people are often disadvantaged by multiple sources of oppression, including their race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and other identity markers. Intersectionality recognizes that these identity markers do not exist independently of each other, and that they often create a complex convergence of oppression. Consider that well today while you watch this final video.
What does it mean for you to thrive in your community? What do you need to accomplish this? We ask you to listen and hear the perspectives that are highlighted here.

1.7 Systems creating success in our communities

Systems creating success in our communities

- Cultural representation - *"I need to have people who look like me."*

- Lingual representation - *"... and listen to me." tools to communicate*

- Asset-based opportunities - *"I plan to move out soon"*

Notes:

Now, we'll shift our conversation to talk about the importance of representation. You'll see that we've highlighted three pathways to create success in our communities, specifically when it comes to supporting individuals with disabilities. Each of these pathways and ideas have been pulled from the video that was just shared.

The first two systems are cultural and lingual representation.

Cultural representation speaks to the importance of having someone with a shared cultural or ethnic identity. Several research studies have shown throughout the years that cultural representation not only allows for individuals to create connections, but it leads to inclusion and belonging.

Lingual representation focuses on having the necessary tools to communicate. In our last session, we discussed how important it is to ask follow-up questions to ensure that you understand the message that is being communicated. Listening for understanding is extremely important when supporting others. We must have the necessary tools to convey a message so that others understand you, and so that individuals feel not only supported but also thriving.

Finally, asset-based opportunities are essential. An asset-based approach focuses on strengths. It views diversity in thought, culture, and traits as positive assets. Therefore, it seeks to find the positive instead of the negative. You heard the individual from the video share: "I plan to move out soon." An asset-based approach creates avenues for more opportunity and this is essential to achieving equitable outcomes.

1.8 Representation
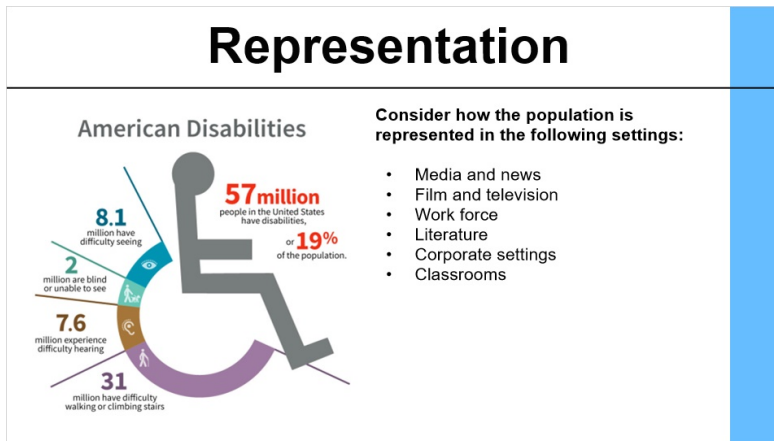
Notes:

This graphic highlights the number of Americans with disabilities. We want you to think about the various settings we have displayed, and how individuals with disabilities are represented.

There is a significant underrepresentation in these settings of people with disabilities, and often when they are included, they can be misrepresented. Sometimes people with disabilities can even be seen as sentimental, having overcoming some catastrophe, or even abjected or degraded.

First consider the three types of representation we just displayed - cultural representation, lingual representation, and asset-based opportunities. In reviewing these settings shown on the right, what immediate examples of disability portrayal do you think of when these settings come to mind?

There can be representation here, but it must be authentic, or else it may be deemed as cultural appropriation which in turn hinders the efforts of representation.
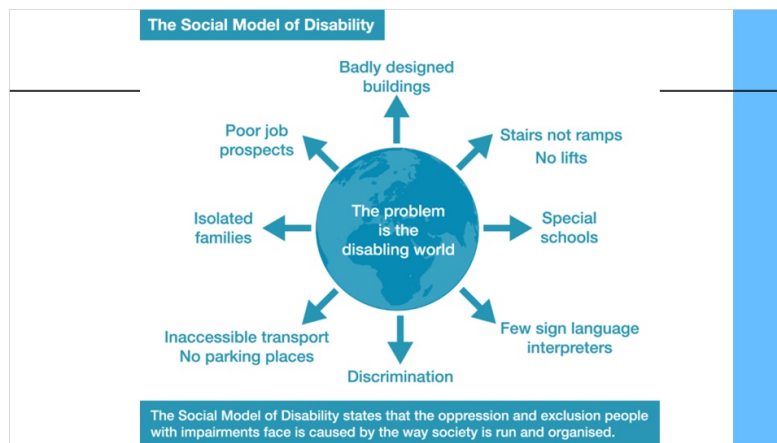
1.9 Medical Model
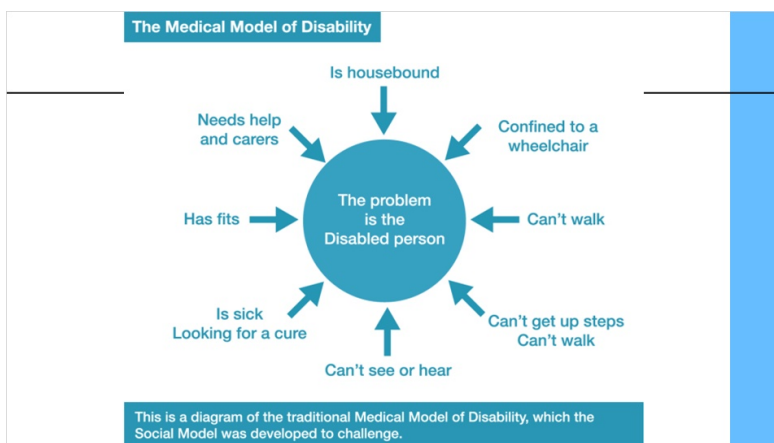
Notes:

On the screen you'll see the medical model of disabilities. This is a traditional model that was developed during the 1960s and 70s as people with disabilities were starting to take action against oppression and exclusion.

As you can see, it represents the prevailing examples of how disability is viewed in society, traditionally and medically with the perspective that disabilities need to be prevented/cured/contained. This module also presents an individual with disabilities as a charitable issue that is "unfortunate." It perpetuates the idea that individuals with disabilities need pity, and need to be catered to. You can see here that the opportunities for asset-based experiences are not included. This model is done exclusively from a deficit-based perspective, and leaves little room to actually explore the societal and systemic issues that are the problem. This model does not account for the different barriers that we've identified that can perpetuate and prevent access.

1.10 Social Model

Notes:

Now on the screen, you'll see the Social Model of Disability. This is radically different than the previously shown medical model. This depicts that people may have impairments but that the oppression, exclusion, and discrimination of people with impairments is not an inevitable consequence of having the impairment, but rather can be caused by the way society is run and organized.

The Social Model of Disability holds that people with impairments are 'disabled' by the barriers operating in society that exclude and discriminate against them. It focuses us to think about systems and structures that may need to be changed. It also requires us to think about who has the power and access to change this.
The Social Model not only identifies society as the cause of misunderstandings around disability but, equally as important, it provides a way of explaining how and where society goes about disabling people with these impairments. It can serve as a kind of "road map" or to-do list that may identify the barriers that people with disabilities encounter and where efforts must be placed to remove them. You'll notice that the disabling barriers from a Social Model approach include: Attitudinal, physical, and communication barriers. We highlighted each of these barriers last week, and they continue to prevent accessibility for individuals who need it.

1.11 Stella Young

Stella Young, TEDx Sydney

*Stella Young
Comedian, journalist, and
disability rights activist.*

Notes:

Now we'll watch this TedTalk by Stella Young, entitled: I'm Not Your Inspiration, Thank You Very Much. Stella Young was a comedian, journalist, and disability rights activist. She spoke on the TED stage in 2014 and explains how people living with disabilities are not meant to be seen as heroes.

1.12 Breakout Groups

Breakout Groups

- What resonated most with you from this video of Stella Young?

- How can we define success in our community?

- What systems are necessary for ensuring participant success in our community?

LET'S TALK

Notes:

After watching this Talk, let's take some time to reflect on the following questions.

First, What resonated most with you from this video of Stella Young?
How can we define success in our community?
And finally, What systems are necessary for ensuring participant success in our community?

1.13 ALLY

Notes:

Understanding that everyone is at a different place in their journey, we want to bring back this word "ally." If you are encouraging individuals to start thinking about how they can "show up," here's an acronym that may be helpful.

A: Acknowledge and respect individual experiences and abilities. Again, this goes back to what we've highlighted throughout the importance of understanding different perspectives. Everyone has their own individual experiences and abilities, and it's important to respect that everyone is different.

L: Learn about different disability types. Knowledge applied can be powerful. We encourage you to learn about different disabilities types, and to evaluate what you don't know. Ask questions to those around you, and seek to understand.

L: Leverage your influence to promote accessibility and inclusion. This goes back to evaluating what power and privilege you hold. How can you use your influence to eradicate barriers and promote accessibility and inclusion for others? Remember, we all have influence in some way. We invite you to think about what your influence is and how you can leverage it.

Y: Yield the floor to people with disabilities to help identify and eliminate barriers. Each of the reflection videos we've shown you from week-to-week have the importance of censoring the ideas of individuals with disabilities. We've shared the importance of minimizing our own voices to ensure that the voices of those who we seek to support is elevated. Encourage those around you to do the same. Ask yourself: Who is missing from this conversation? Whose opinion needs to be included?

1.14 Our Final Session

Our Final Session

Which of the following topics do you feel resonated most with you during our time together? Why?

1: Culturally Responsive and Inclusive Practice
2: Unpacking Implicit Bias
3: Shifting Perspective to Provide More Equitable Support
4: Examining Disparities through Intersectionality
5: Moving From Allyship to Co-Conspiratorship
6: Sustaining Equitable Supports

Notes:

As we come to a close, let's review some of what has been covered in these modules.

In our first module: we defined diversity, equity, and inclusion. We highlighted the importance of approaching your work with a goal of creating an inclusive environment.

Second: We talked about implicit biases. We discussed how our biases can show up in our work, and we talked about the importance of being aware of biases so that we can take action.

In Module 3, we talked about power, privilege, and perspective. We highlighted the importance of understanding other perspectives, as well as our own privileges.

In Module 4, we examined the intersectionality framework, and we learned how marginalized communities often face compounded levels of oppression.

During the fifth module, we talked about being a co-conspirator, and how to shift from being an ally with just thoughts and words into a co-conspirator of actions.

And finally today in module 6, we wrap up with strategies that you can apply to sustain this work in your communities long term.

1.15 Final Thoughts

Notes:

As we conclude today's session and this series, I'd like to share this quote from Stella Young. "Disability doesn't make you exceptional, but questioning what you think you know about it does."

We hope that you learned during the series, but we also hope that we've challenged you to think about your own background, beliefs, and areas where you can still improve and grow. One of our rules of engagement as you may remember is to be self-reflective, and we really hope that you continue to reflect beyond this training series. Continue to challenge your thinking, acknowledge your privileges, and assess how you can be supportive from an equitable perspective.

1.16 THANK YOU

Notes:

Thank you all so much for your time and engagement during this six-session series. We appreciate you for listening and for the work that you do in your communities.

1.17 Evaluation

Notes:

To complete the **Evaluation** for this module and obtain your **Certificate of Completion,** click the 'Continue' button.