Building a Culture of Belonging: The Role of Psychological Safety

Office of Strategic Consulting | Ignite: Fueling Organizational Excellence

May 1, 2024

Individual-level Reflection:

- What identities are most salient or important to you as a UW-Madison employee?
- What identities do you hold that signal to others that you belong here at UW-Madison?
- What is the relationship between the identities that are most salient to you and those that signal to others that you belong?
- What experiences have made these identities matter to you?

Team-level Reflection:

- What hierarchies are in place that are both unspoken and integral to the lived experiences of team members in your unit?
- How do those hierarchies impact the sense of psychological safety in the workplace?

Organizational-level Reflection:

- How effective is your department or unit at creating a sense of psychological safety for you, your colleagues, as well as students?
- What factors currently contribute to feelings of safety or lack of safety in your department or unit?
- Who are the people in your department or unit who influence your sense of psychological safety or lack there-of?
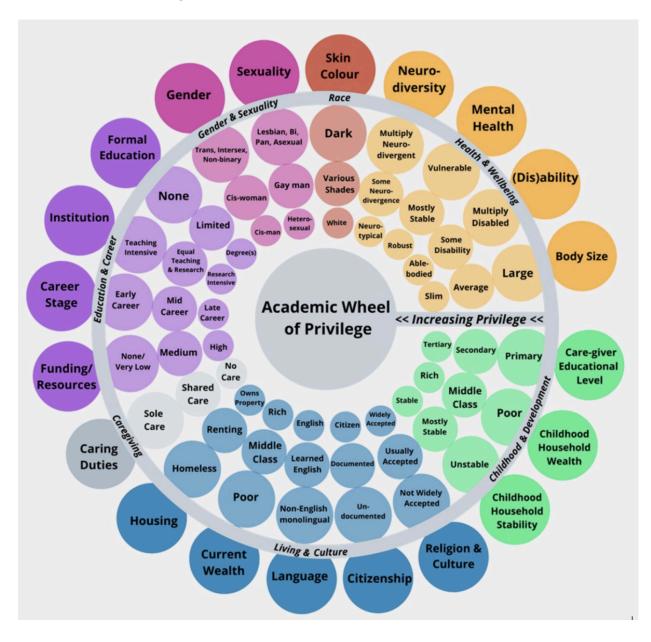
_____

Don Gillian-Daniel <dldaniel@wisc.edu> & Binnu Palta Hill <binnu.palta.hill@wisc.edu>

Reflection prompts for discussion:
- What power dynamics do you see existing in your department or unit that are based on hierarchies as well as social and cultural identities?
- How do these impact psychological safety in your department or unit?
- How might we address power dynamics, hierarchies and biases in our departments or units that undermine psychological safety?
- Given your sphere of influence in your department or unit, what proactive steps could you take to promote psychological safety?
- How will we as a campus know if we're succeeding in building greater psychological safety?
    - What changes might we see over time?

Wrap-upIndividual Reflection questions:
- What are your key takeaways from today's session?
- How will you apply what we discussed to your work in the University? (Plan to share out.)

Social Identities, Privilege and Power[1]

[1] Adapted from: NASA TOPS—Success Stories of Open Science Series
Equitable Science for All: Q&A with Dr. Flavio Azevedo on open science practices:
https://blogs.nasa.gov/transformtoopenscience/2022/07/25/success-stories-of-open-science-series-equitable-science-for-all-qa-with-dr-flavio-azevedo-on-open-science-practices/