

Holding Spaces for Racial Equity through Belongingness: The Promise of a Developmental Approach to Adult Learning

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RIDES Mission

Our mission is to disrupt systemic inequality in America's schools

by

- building individual and team capacity to tackle race and racism

and

- supporting use of improvement tools, practices, and examples

to help

schools, districts, and charter management organizations **promote diversity, equity, and true integration.**

WHY: RIDES distinguishes between desegregation (getting the bodies in the building) and true integration, that seeks these outcomes:

- Academics**

- Belongingness**

- Commitment to dismantling racism and oppression**

- Diversity**



Mary Antón



Ellie Drago-Severson

Community Ethos

- Speak your truth and respect others' truths
- Honor intent and Accept and Repair your Impact
- Own your Biases
- Invite and Embrace feedback on your biases
- Share the Space and Time
- Lean in to conversations that challenge you
- Expect and Accept Non-Closure



We're all searching for a way to build a
beloved community.

—Representative John Lewis

AGENDA for Today

Part I

- Why a Developmental Approach?
- What are Ways of Knowing?
- How Understanding Ways of Knowing can help to differentiate support for teachers

AGENDA for Today

Part 2

- The Challenge of Racial Equity Work
- Understanding the centrality of the Four I's of Oppression
- The Essential need for Belongingness and Dignity
- Coaching for adaptive change
- The promise of a developmental approach

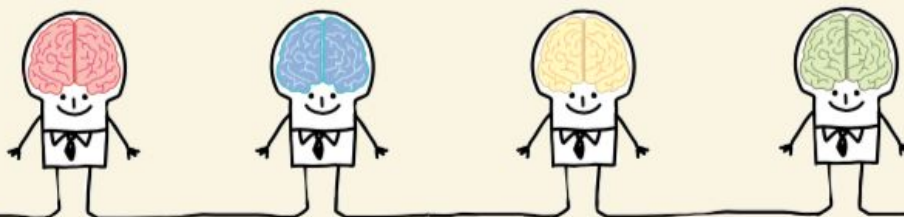
Why a Developmental Approach

- Developmental diversity
- Better meet the needs of adult learners
- Adaptive Challenges for All Leaders
 - Heifetz (1994)
- Preconditions: Trust, Safety, and Respect
 - Drago-Severson & Blum-DeStefano (2018)
Leading Change Together

How Do You “Know”?

Each of us has a “Way of Knowing” that filters our experience of ourselves, others, and our relationships. This chart offers a framework based on Robert Kegan’s constructive-developmental theory to understand how each of us, depending on our way of knowing, develops during adulthood. It also includes ideas about how we can challenge ourselves and support each other’s growth. Use the top part of the chart to identify which “way of knowing” best describes you. The bottom part shows some ways you can further your development to incorporate other ways of knowing.

—Ellie Drago-Severson writes, consults, and teaches about adult educational leadership at Columbia University.



	I am rule-based.	I am other-focused.	I am reflective.	I am interconnecting.
Stages:				
The most important thing is:	Fulfilling my own needs, interests, and desires.	Meeting expectations and getting approval.	Staying true to my values, which I generate.	Reflecting on my identity, being open to others’ views and to changing myself.
Concerns:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules. • Clear definition of right and wrong. • Immediate self-interest. • Other people are either helpful or obstacles. • Abstract thinking has no meaning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority figures set goals. • Self-image comes from others’ judgment. • Responsible for others’ feelings and vice versa. • Criticism and conflict are threatening. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set goals based on own values and standards. • Self-image based on my evaluation of my competencies and integrity. • Contradictory feelings and conflict are ways to learn. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set goals in collaboration. • Share power. • Find common ground, even with seeming opposites. • Open to exploration, conflict, complexity, and others’ perspectives.
Guiding questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Will I get punished?” • “What’s in it for me?” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Will you like/value me?” • “Will you think I am a good person?” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Am I staying true to my own personal integrity, standards, and values?” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “How can other people’s thinking help me to develop and grow?”

How Do You “Know”?

Yes! Fall 2009

www.yesmagazine.org

Adapted from
Drago-Severson, E.
(2010). *Leading Adult Learning: Supporting Adult Development in our Schools*.
Corwin/Sage

Reflective Space

How might UNDERSTANDING “ways of knowing” influence how you set up structures and experiences for educators?



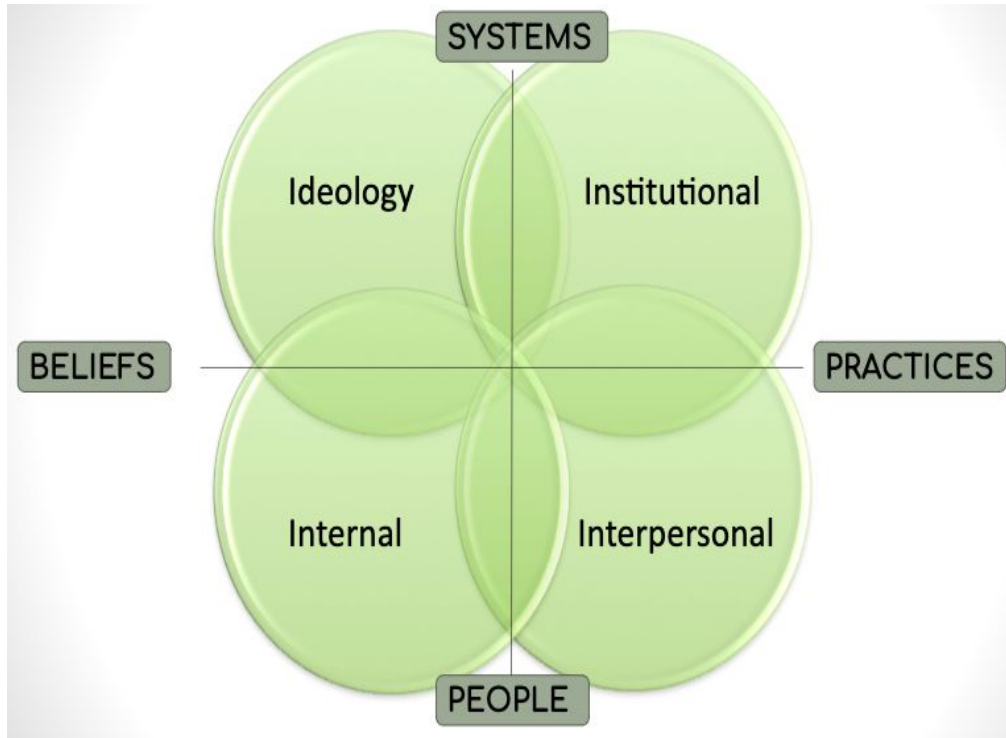
Belongingness, Holding Spaces and Adult Learning

- The work of developing nuanced perspectives around RACE
- The Challenge of Creating Belongingness
- Holding Spaces for the work

The Work of Creating Nuanced Perspectives around Race

- The Water We Swim In
- The Four I's of Oppression

Systemic Oppression - The 4 I's



Internalized- Implicit Bias, Unconscious Bias, Internalized Privilege, Internalized Oppression.

Interpersonal- Macroaggression, Microaggression, Stereotype Threat.

Institutional- Explicit and Implicit Policies/Practices.

Ideology- Race, Racism, Privilege, White Privilege, White Supremacy, Whiteness, Systemic Oppression, Structural Racism

Belongingness is ...

the ethos, the culture, climate and relationships fostered in an organization that allow for each person to bring their unique racial, ethnic, religious and gendered identities into their spaces each day.

Belongingness is characterized by a sense of feeling included, feeling heard and seen, feeling “good enough”. It is both having a voice and hearing the voices of others. It is recognizing and naming the privileges and working to raise up the voices of those with fewer privileges than your own. It is the recognition that positional power is real and the work that is done to mitigate its impact, that racism is real and the work that is done to name and dismantle its hold on structures, systems, policies and individuals. It is both the internal work we do in self reflection and the external work we do in creating holding spaces that allow others to be their authentic selves with us and those around them.

When we open up spaces for belongingness in classrooms we are committing to both examining our impact and structures as adults operating in white normed institutions and to creating brave spaces in which we wonder and question, we sit with hard conversations and choose inquiry over control. It is the commitment to affirm the essential dignity of each of our students, our colleagues, our families – even when we disagree.
(M. Antón, 2020)

The Challenge of Creating Belongingness

- Adult Belongingness in Schools
 - Do you see me?
 - Am I good enough?
 - Am I on the Inside or Outside?

Creating Holding Spaces at School

- Clear vision and direction
- Opportunities for growth at different developmental edges
 - Professional Learning
 - Teaming
 - Collaborative Learning
 - Challenges and alternative viewpoints

A recognition that the work may look different for each adult and follow a different timeline and trajectory.

Structures to Create Adult Holding Spaces and how they promote Racial Perspective Taking

- Co-learning Teams
 - Ex. The RIDES equity team cycle learning process
- Coaching Opportunities
 - Individual and Networks
- Leadership Experiences
 - Informal and Formal

Belongingness for Students

requires that adults do the deep work that challenge the underlying assumptions and barriers that racism and the 4 I's render daily as normal.

Challenging Perspectives for Adults

requires creating brave holding spaces for exploring new understandings about the world. We CAN set up these structures in schools to develop trust with peers and administrators to facilitate these experiences.

Questions, Comments and Discussion

Thanks!



Any questions?

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