Changing Constructions, Changing Paradigms:
Access to COMMUNITY & CITIZENSHIP
Across the Lifespan

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“When the course of civilization takes an unexpected turn...we naturally blame anything but ourselves...we are all certain of one thing: that THE LEADING IDEAS which have become common to most people cannot have been wrong. We are ready to accept almost any explanation except one: that the present state...may be the result of error on our own part, and that some of our MOST CHERISHED IDEAS may have produced results utterly different from those we expected.”

F.A. Hayek, The Road to Serfdom, 1944

RATIONALE

Purpose:
➢ we unpack three CRITICAL concepts
➢ we IMAGINE how they might be used to achieve full citizenship in society for everyone
They are:
➢ the SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION of disability
➢ Foucault's DIVIDING PRACTICES
➢ Policy PARADIGM SHIFT
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this session, participants will be able to:

- **Discuss** how the current construction of disability **limits perceptions** about individuals with ASD/Disability’s place in society;
- **Describe** how dividing practices **limit the rights** and participation of individuals with ASD/Disability in society; and
- **Imagine** how a policy paradigm shift might **drive change** in perceptions, policy, and practice to promote access to citizenship.

Think, Pair, Share

- **Think:**
  
  When you hear the words **AUTISM/ DISABILITY**, what do you think about?

- **Pair:**
  
  Turn to your neighbor and share your thoughts.

- **Share:**
  
  A few examples for the whole group.

MODELS OF DISABILITY

Functional Limitation/Medical Model

- The condition **defines** the individual – diagnosis first language
- Limitations are **inherent** in the person
- The condition is **labeled** in opposition to “normal” – the “fix it” bias

Jones, 1996
MODELS OF DISABILITY
The Social Construction of Disability

- DISTINGUISHES the biological condition & the social environment
- Limitations ORIGINATE from the interplay of internal and external factors
- The condition is UNDERSTOOD as a typical part of the human experience

(Levin, 2017; Scherba de Valenzuela, 2014)

STOP for QUESTIONS

Think, Pair, Share

- Think
  What are your social and personal roles? Write down a few. Choose ONLY one as the most important

- Pair
  Share these with a new neighbor. Discuss: How difficult was it to choose one? Why?

- Share
  A few sample responses for the whole group
DIVIDING PRACTICES DEFINED

- **Bio-Power:** the use of scientific examination and measurement to divide and govern a population as a population (Foucault, 1994)
- Attaching labels to people marked by a diagnosis & making the labels seem natural and necessary (Levin, 2017)
- Dividing the population into dichotomous groups defined by disability labels: “Disabled”/“Autistic”) and Normal (Tremain, 2005)

Three Dividing Practices

- **Master Status:** Labeling to assign diminished social status that collectivizes & blurs individuality and uniqueness; denial of certain basic rights (Levin, 2017; Rosenblum & Travis, 2006)
- **Othering:** Dichotomizing normal/abnormal, able/disabled, ‘autistic’/‘neurotypical’, us/them; MARGINALIZATION (Levin, 2017; Rosenblum & Travis, 2006)
- **Passport to Services:** Justifying labels only for purpose of providing services; entails all risks above (Levin, 2017)

STOP for QUESTIONS
Think, Pair, Share

 Think
   What are your dreams for good ASD policy? Write down a few.

 Pair
   Pair with a neighbor and discuss them. Write down your top two or three dreams of good policy

 Share
   Share a few dreams from among the whole group

POLICY PARADIGM SHIFT:
The Structure of Scientific Revolutions

 Evidential and philosophical ANOMALIES BUILD within an established scientific theory

 A DISCONTINUITY OCCURS and is documented by a series of critical findings discussed in a series of scientific papers and meetings

 Taken together, these findings establish A NEW CONCEPTUALIZATION of the field that shares neither assumptions or vocabularies with the old

The Road to a New Mexican Autism Tsunami Policy Paradigm Shift

 A GAP in the conceptualization and delivery of ASD services OPENS

 ASD community members start to DREAM about what GOOD POLICY would look like

 Dreams of good policy are solidified in PLANS TO SHIFT the ASD INFRASTRUCTURE
GOAL:
ACCESS TO CITIZENSHIP

- INDIVIDUAL CHOICE
- REMOVE SYSTEMS BARRIERS
- DIGNITY OF RISK
- COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
- MEANINGFUL WORK AT MARKET PRICE & BENEFITS
- INDEPENDENCE IN LIVING ARRANGEMENTS, RECREATION, & RELATIONSHIPS

ACHIEVED BY

- CONTESTING THE MEDICAL MODEL
- CHALLENGING THE ABLED/DISABLED & NORMAL/ABNORMAL DICHOTOMIES
- DEVELOPING A SELF-ADVOCACY COUNTER-DISCOURSE
- ADVOCACY BASED ON RIGHTS, ABILITIES, & DIVERSITY

“My point is not that everything is BAD, but that everything is DANGEROUS, which is not exactly the same as bad. If EVERYTHING is dangerous, then we always have SOMETHING TO DO.”

—Michel Foucault, On the Genealogy of Ethics, 1984

Your Questions and Comments
SOURCES

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