**Minutes of the 9-26-2016 Meeting**

**Faculty Community of Practice in Equity and Privilege**

1. We started by watching a short video of Dayna Cunningham (part 2 of the interview). I played it from my Edx account. As some of you found out, it is not available outside. The first part is on YouTube and quite interesting as well <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Whp5oP8d3YA>.
2. We proceeded with the discussion about a suggested co-practice around empathy. The thought is that
   1. Empathy is a necessary component of a truly inclusive, open, welcoming culture.
   2. Human capacity for empathy is not fixed. It can be developed/increased through practice.
   3. We seek to model the behaviors we want to inculcate in our students.

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| *“Dyer posited that if we could teach a younger generation to put themselves in another’s shoes, we could solve every social problem on the planet. Civil unrest, poverty, oppression, and other global social issues would vanish if we could create a worldwide culture of compassion.”*  Ludvik, Marilee J. Bresciani. The Neuroscience of Learning and Development: Enhancing Creativity, Compassion, Critical Thinking, and Peace in Higher Education (An ACPA / NASPA Joint Publication) (Kindle Locations 4806-4808). Stylus Publishing. Kindle Edition. |

* 1. Our current book (that we have not started reading and discussing yet) and from which the above quote is taken puts empathy as one of the steps in a compassionate behavior:

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| Compassion has the following four key components:  1. Awareness of suffering.  2. Sympathetic concern related to being emotionally moved by suffering (i.e., empathy).  3. Wish to see the relief of that suffering.  4. Responsiveness or readiness to help relieve that suffering  Ludvik, Marilee J. Bresciani. The Neuroscience of Learning and Development: Enhancing Creativity, Compassion, Critical Thinking, and Peace in Higher Education (An ACPA / NASPA Joint Publication) (Kindle Locations 4838-4842). Stylus Publishing. Kindle Edition. |

1. We spent the session discussing empathy, our understanding of it, our level of comfort, and how we could practice the empathy walk. In particular, the following points were discussed:
   1. The difference between being aware of others and their condition (mostly cognitive) and *feeling* empathy and being moved, sharing their emotions.
   2. Whether there is any “truth” to empathy and things that supposedly reside in the heart or whether this is all too “peace and love”-y to have a place in our discussions. It was pointed out that brain-imagine techniques can now visualize these processes and their lasting impact on the brain.
   3. Does empathy have to be universal? We all have our natural circles of empathy: our families, our people, our friends, our students, isn’t that enough? Does it have to extend to the whole human race? …. That is precisely the point. We all have boundaries that we find challenging. This is why empathy is a capacity that we develop. We all have some of it. We all have some boundaries to cross.
2. The practice: Do the empathy walk and blog about it on our website.
3. Examples: <https://empathywalk.org/>
4. Resources: Distributed a summary of the “Four levels of Listening” by Otto Scharmer.
5. Description

Source: *Theory U: Leading from the Future as It Emerges* - 2nd Edition

by C. Otto Scharmer (Author), Peter Senge (Foreword) --- email Karen if you want this book

--- associated EdX MOOC

“EMPATHY” WALK

This practice was developed by MIT's Ed Schein. Ed has shaped the field of organizational learning and leadership over the past 50 years. He is author of numerous books including *Process Consultation Revisited*, *Helping,* and *Humble Inquiry*.

Purpose:

To develop empathy for someone very different from yourself

To develop your skill in establishing a relationship across a significant boundary

Procedure:

Spend some time exploring (thinking and researching) what kind of person would live in a world that is most different from the one you are in—a person that may be very different from you. Be creative, let your imagination run.

Having decided what kind of person to look for, figure out how you could actually find and meet such a person in the next week in your city or neighborhood.

Make contact with this person and go meet them.

Plan to spend several hours getting to know the person you picked and try to get into that person’s world enough to get a feel for what it would be like to be in that person’s world. How you go about this, what you say to the person, what kind of time you actually spend, etc. is all up to you. There are no rules or guidelines. Be creative. The idea here is to get away from your computer, go out into the world, and practice empathy, relationship building, and deep listening with someone.