Concentric Circles: Unpacking Privilege and Power
Developed by Maggie Potapchuk, MP Associates

Individual Assessment

1. What do you need to consider about your role of working with the organization, based on your understanding of racism, privilege, and other oppression issues?
    Reflect on your:
    - *Hot button issues (intense emotional reaction)*
    - *Areas you want more information*
    - *How you believe change evolves?*

2. What do you need to consider about working with the organization, based on your different identity groups?
    Think about:
    - *How might your internalized racial superiority and/or internalized racism[1] come up in interactions with different identity groups?*
    - *What are ways people could perceive you based on your different identity groups?*
    - *What type of support do you need to not internalize those perceptions?*

3. What do you believe are your strengths working with the organization?

4. What may be your challenges? What issues do you think may come up in working with *this* organization on *this* change process?

5. If working on a team with different racial/ethnic group identities for this consulting project, have there been discussions about: oppression, power and privilege issues? How to define the roles of team members to lessen the reinforcement of stereotypes? How to assess our process and give feedback regularly?

6. What type of support do you need in addressing racism, privilege, and power issues with the organization?

7. Reflect on how this possible contract may conflict and/or complement your core values: What was the process used to recruit consultants? What are the values of the organization? Have you identified a support network to discuss interventions if asked to collude? What are my bottom-line issues that I will walk away from the contract? For this work, who are you accountable to?

Organizational Assessment

1. What, if any, are the differences between how the presenting issues are being defined by different racial/ethnic groups within the group? Are the differences between how the groups define the problem known to each other? Have they discussed their differences in perceptions and experiences?

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[1] Definition Internalized Racial Superiority: *A complex multi-generational socialization process that teaches White people to believe, accept, and/or live out superior societal definitions of self and to fit into and live out superior societal roles. These behaviors define and normalize the race construct and its outcome: white supremacy.* From Racial Identity Caucusing: A Strategy for Building Anti-Racist Collectives –Crossroads Ministry. Internalized racism: Definition of Internalized Racism *is the situation that occurs in a racist system when a racial group oppressed by racism supports the supremacy and dominance of the dominating group by maintaining or participating in the set of attitudes, behaviors, social structures and ideologies that undergird the dominating group's power.* From Donna Bivens, "Internalized Racism: A Definition" –Women's Theological Center

2. What are the organizational priorities in terms of racial equity issues and outcomes – when push comes to shove, what gets done first or best? What gets cut or watered down?

3. To what extent are resources aligned with the stated priorities or attention to racially equitable outcomes?

4. Who does staff "protect" in terms of risk or embarrassment, or severity of consequences if something doesn't go well – for example, do the Board's interests override constituent interests? Is there a racially equitable process on how these kinds of tensions are resolved?

5. How are equity and power issues discussed by the full group? By identity groups? Between staff and board? With constituents? (patterns, process, climate)

6. What are the "under the table" issues not being discussed by the full group? Between race/ethnic identity groups? *Under the table* refers to those behaviors and beliefs seen as illegitimate or perceived as too risky to openly address." Marshak and Katz – *Keys to Unlocking Covert Processes*

7. What are the patterns of responses when an individual or a group raises a difficult issue, especially one involving inequities, power and/or privilege? Are there different patterns of response by various staff groups? By race/ethnic identity groups?

8. What are the norms for communication and feedback within and between groups (board, senior staff, administrative staff, volunteers, constituents and racial/ethnic identity groups)?

9. Assess the type of gatekeeping[2] behavior with the people you are working on the project.

10. What are the formal and visible decision-making processes within the organization? Within the formal decision-making process, who is included and excluded from the process?   What are their roles within the organization and what are their racial/ethnic identities?

11. How do inequities, privilege and power dynamics impact the formal decision-making process within the organization?

12. What are the consequences if the decision-making process is not followed? Are there different consequences based on roles within the organization and/or racial/ethnic identities?

13. How are ideas and/or concerns given credibility within the organization? What are the racial/ethnic identities and the staff roles of the individuals who may provide credibility to an idea or concern?

14. What are the opportunities for new leadership to emerge within the organization? What are the barriers for new leadership to emerge? What are the characteristics of leaders which are most affirmed?

15. How do the different groups (staff and race/ethnicity groups) respond to conflict? Are there different responses based on the identity group or role of the persons involved in the conflict?

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[2] Gatekeeping definition: "Gatekeepers act as the buffers between institutions and communities. This is not necessarily negative, as communities often need gatekeepers. However, we need gatekeepers who are accountable to the communities and not the institutions they represent. Gatekeepers can keep people and resources in, or they can keep people and resources out. This does not mean that we are stupid or bad people. The socialization process that sometimes happens to us when we are immersed in White Institutional Culture ensures that we become so invested in the institution that our vision and values become one with the institution. Again, the challenge is to shift the incentives, values, status and rewards toward doing well on community terms…" From Barbara Major, Chapter 7, "How Does White Privilege Show Up In Foundation and Community Initiatives?" p. 76 – Flipping *the Script: White Privilege and Community Building* – Potapchuk, Leiderman, Bivens and Major.

16. Describe a significant organizational change process completed by the organization in the past. How is the previous change process perceived by different groups (staff groups and racial/ethnic groups) within the organization? What type of resistance occurred, if any?

17. Describe the organization's strengths, commitment, and skills to create an equitable inclusive organization through addressing privilege and power issues.

18. Describe the organization's challenges, patterns, and lessons learned to create an equitable inclusive organization through addressing privilege and power issues.

Accountability with Constituents

1. How is the organization currently perceived by constituents? Are there different perceptions based on racial/ethnic identity groups? What is the process for determining resources and services for constituents?

2. Where on the spectrum do most constituents view the organization - as welcoming and open _or_ exclusive and closed? Are there different perceptions based on racial/ethnic identity groups?

3. How are privilege and power dynamics impacting the organization's relationship with and perception by constituents?

4. What may need to change internally and/or externally, to increase the organization's credibility with constituents regarding their commitment to equity?

5. What is the process for determining resources and services for constituents? Is the process perceived as equitable by constituents? Are there different perceptions based on the race/ethnic identity?

6. What is the level of involvement of constituents in the decision-making process to determine resources and services? Are constituents encouraged to provide input, insight, and/or direction? Are there opinions reflective in organization's decisions? Are there different levels of involvement based on racial/ethnic identity?

7. How do different groups (board, senior staff, and administrative staff) respond to concerns, ideas from constituents? Are there different responses based on racial/ethnic identity groups?

Reflection

1. Assess your interaction with the client: What were the privilege and power issues present? How did your different group identities play out in the interaction? When did you collude? What were the barriers that stopped you from intervening? When did you intervene? Was it effective? How did you create transparency in the contracting process? How would you rate your transparency of communication with the client?

2. Reflect on the feedback from the client. What do you need to change next time? What worked well based on their perceptions? What are the areas do you need to grow and develop in increasing your knowledge and improving your skills to address privilege, power and oppression?