AN LPI REFLECTION RESOURCE

The LPI Reflective Practice Approach:
Anti-Oppression (AOP) In Action

With contributions by the Advanced Social Work Practice Seminar, SWP 51, 2008
(“The Child Welfare Class”)
Ryerson School of Social Work, Toronto, Canada

A project by Liberation Practice International (LPI) with contributions from students of Ryerson’s School of Social Work

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The LPI Reflective Practice Approach: Anti-Oppression (AOP) In Action

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This reflection resource was developed with the contributions of Ryerson Social Work students in their 4th year practice class, taught by Jana Vinsky and Henry Parada. A strong focus of the course was on practicing social work from various anti-oppression perspectives within Child Welfare, of which many students had their field placements.

Near the end of the course, students were asked to name 3 AOP practices they could see working within Canadian Child Welfare. These practices were then organized according to “the 7 E’s” reflection framework of the LPI Reflective Practice Approach (www.liberationeducation.com), of which they studied throughout the year.

Practices continued to be added based on classroom discussion. It was then further developed by Dianne Prevatt-Hyles (Director of LPI), for a more comprehensive understanding and a transferable use of the 7E’s reflective framework, beyond Child Welfare settings.

Many students were surprised by their extensive list, and felt it challenged a common narrative that says AOP can only be practiced within specific roles and settings. This reflection resource is to challenge that narrative and to inspire others to consider more ideas. This is not an exhaustive list but an invitation for further reflection. LPI DVDs are available to facilitate the most effective use of this document, providing discussions and scenarios to augment the ideas presented.

This list should be accompanied with training or the LPI DVD Collection, so as not to simplify complex practice with a “to do list”. This systematized reflective framework is part of the LPI Reflective Practice Approach developed by Dianne Prevatt-Hyles and Jana Vinsky, and is copyrighted. It is only available through permission and should not be distributed without speaking with Jana Vinsky.

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SEVEN MAPPING POINTS:
The 7E'S OF LIBERATION

An LPI Reflective Practice Approach authored by:
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Points of Reflection: For “LPI Reflexive Engagement”

This reflective framework, integrates the 7 Mapping Points (7E’s of Liberation), which is transferable across roles, contexts, purposes and settings. It facilitates critical reflexivity for moment-to-moment practice, facilitating self and community love, transformative communication, collective consciousness, and action for personal and structural liberation. It can be used in relating to one self or others within various contexts.

The 7E’s can be used for problem/resilience conceptualization, as well as ongoing implementation and evaluation of individual and organizational practices. The 7E’s are seen as interlinked. When using this framework, mapping points may intersect and overlap. They are non-linear, non-conclusive and ever moving.

Each mapping point highlights the effects of power on life experiences, including possibilities and resilience. It also points towards practices for individual and community valuing and liberation.
SEVEN MAPPING POINTS: The 7 E's OF LIBERATION

"Emancipation" is understood as the ability to see through the taken-for-granted truths, definitions and scripts perpetuated by the dominant culture. These often inform our internal and external dialogues. It is about deconstructing the "Systemic Chatter", in order to expose power relations, and to clarify one's position in relation to them. It also facilitates ‘esteem’, a valuing of oneself and community.

"Expression" is countering the effects of regulation, suppression and cultural imperialism. It is about asserting and facilitating a space for voice, personal significance, cultural identity, ancestry and full social participation.

"Entitlement" is countering the effects of exploitation and marginalization, through addressing rights, resources and rootedness (stability, safety, security). It facilitates equity and building ‘home’. It addresses structural issues through political and social action on individual, local, national and international levels.

"Energy of Possibility" counters individual and collective 'spirit injury' (emotional and energetic injury), which often include the effects of oppression and stressed contexts, along with other life experiences. Through acknowledging emotional pain and its effect on behavior, as well as exploring holistic initiatives, a movement towards transformative healing and a space of energy, resilience, passion and possibility can emerge.

"Engagement" is being able to deeply encounter another person/group. It acknowledges lenses of objectification and challenges one's own internalization of scripts and definitions imposed by the dominant culture. It is the ability to be with one another, seeing our self and others for who we are, not letting judgment/evaluation and structured relations get in the way. It is about valuing our self and another. It is about recognition and respect.

"Efficacy" counters a sense of powerlessness, helplessness, limited access, opportunity and mobility. It is about gaining or facilitating confidence, competence and capacity to impact one's environment, so as to transform internal/external barriers.

"Exercise of Power" is countering the personal/structural barriers that inhibit individual and collective well-being. It is about using our discretionary power and collective abilities to facilitate individual/ organizational/ structural transformation. It is about enacting our personal/collective agency.
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SEVEN MAPPING POINTS: The 7E'S OF LIBERATION

Emancipation:

"Emancipation" is understood as the ability to see through the taken-for-granted truths, definitions and scripts perpetuated by the dominant culture. These often inform our internal and external dialogues. It is about deconstructing the "Systemic Chatter", in order to expose power relations, and to clarify one's position in relation to them. It also facilitates 'esteem', a valuing of oneself and community.

Systemic Chatter

- Practice critical self-reflexivity in-the-moment. What views are informing me/creating me/ the experience?
- Am I valuing marginalized knowledge, including children's knowledge/knowing? Challenging adultism?
- Countering normativity, noticing assumptions, expectations, norms/knowledge
- Watch out for oppressive systemic chatter/meta-narratives/dominant discourses that have us work against our values and commitments
- Looking for assumptions and notions of what is normal (normalized measurements) - questioning everything and anything, and do consciousness-raising.
- Questioning labels, diagnosis & circumstances of the people we work with.
- Being constantly aware of the language we use
- Watch out with our case notes for oppressive terminology & actively use anti-oppressive terminology when conversing with other professionals, etc.

- Talk about the problem as the problem, not the person. Externalize the problem and attributes when writing case notes.
- Looking at the person, not the picture (image) will help us to practice with compassion, because the picture can be deceptive.
- With everyone we encounter - colleagues, service users - reminding ourselves that 'the concern, personality trait, behaviour, etc.' is only one piece of a very complicated and multifaceted individual/situation, and therefore in no way defines who they are/the situation.
• Separating the person from the problem – using externalization (Narrative Practice).
• Focus on the “relationship with” the problem (i.e., drugs), rather than making it their identity (i.e., “addict”, “substance user”).
• Locate the problem in the relationship, not the person. Ask the person to take a position “in relation to” the problem (i.e., drugs).

• Understand problems in terms of social problems and power relations. Use this in our case notes.
• Use narrative practices to allow us to get a picture of how one feels and experiences the problem they are dealing with.
• Externalize “The Society” when talking with service users.

• Challenge the lens of generalization. Do not assume all people with "disabilities, mental health and addictions" have the same experiences and needs.
• Watch for binaries in how we talk about power.
• Challenge scientific bias such as “evidence based practice”, and its truth status, due to being rooted in positivism; challenge the medicalization of all emotions and human life.
• Challenge Euro-centric definitions, values and interventions
• Do not assume people are damaged because they experienced violence
• Be careful not to pathologize, psychologize; listen for people’s meanings
• Look at particularity and do not assume what someone is doing is based on their culture.
• Challenge normative definitions such as of ‘the good family’ and ‘appropriate parenting’. Challenge terminology of ‘broken home/family’, etc.
• Ask people to define their important relationships, let family or support systems be defined by them
• Re-define disability

Expression:

"Expression" is countering the effects of regulation, suppression and cultural imperialism. It is about asserting and facilitating a space for voice, personal significance, cultural identity, ancestry and full social participation.

Socio-Political/Cultural Significance and Participation

• Empowerment – focus on building a positive sense of self /group identity
• De-centering dominant cultural interpretations/worldviews
• Making phone calls in the person’s language or means of communication
• Always offer an interpreter; make sure reading materials are accessible
• Being on Black History committee or such
• Finding ways to have people see their world reflected (positive representation)
• Allowing voices to be heard in the safety & risk assessments, and service goals
• Challenge assessment/in-take/documentation to value various cultural/political perspectives/meanings/definitions – question assumptions within these documents
• Support research studies in mental health that in which the input of consumers are sought. Consult consumer survivors as much as possible.
• Challenge the language of “mental health”.
• Create accepting spaces for all to express who they are – challenge “tolerance”
• Address issues of disability as systemic, respecting the abilities
• Pride BBQ – BBQ & contests leading up to the BBQ, getting all CAS agencies involved – Pride decorating
• Provide links/resources on LGBTQ materials (i.e., books, videos, places, etc.).
• Have a library w/ books & videos covering a wide range of LGBTQ topics put in ways people will be interested (i.e., Boys Don’t Cry- popular movie about Trans individuals w/ current popular actors) – makes learning about difference & discrimination fun/interesting.

**Individual/ organizational expression**

• Giving people space to direct the intervention, so they have a valid voice and ‘say’ in how the intervention goes.
• Consultation with community – listening to those who would be using services (including communities) to help determine what services to provide and how they should be provided – even if the service is involuntary.
• Take into account what individual people want and what they would view as progress. Incorporate what the service user is saying as beneficial expert knowledge.
• Give parents the opportunity to express/share their story (clarify that you have understood them correctly)
• Allow people to share their experiences and point out the strengths they may not have known they had. This may help their confidence (e.g., as parents).
• Create space to hear about their relationship to oppression. Invite conversation about systemic chatter. Hear anger. Work with yourself to be with people’s suffering.
• Go beyond culture in attempts to be inclusive (i.e., ask about experiences of racialization).
• Challenge cultural competency models that omit power relations
• Challenge deficit approaches to understanding people/families.
• Ask people what strengths they feel they have. Centralize their strengths in the service plan.
• Ask them what their priorities are. Including for their children. Ask children about their priorities.
• Ask children about their anxieties. Take them seriously. Deeply listen and value their immediate experience.
• Consult with previous service users for feedback (include community consultations)
• Support research on hearing service users voices to assist in directing practice/procedure/policies
• Consult with children and youth in care for on-going feedback. Listen carefully. You can also invite people who have graduated from care.
Entitlement:

"Entitlement" is countering the effects of exploitation and marginalization, through addressing rights, resources and rootedness (stability, safety, security). It facilitates equity and building ‘home’. It addresses structural issues through political and social action on individual, local, national and international levels.

- Link peoples problems to larger issues (i.e., poverty, racialization, globalization, etc.) focusing on structural change, including political issues and social work’s role.
- Wear a socio-historical lens. Recognize our own implication in larger political practices.
- Recognize structural roots of concerns; suggesting ways in which we can identify/approach people and their/our concerns in a progressive/anti-oppressive manner.
- Collaborate with community resources.
- Share AOP materials and ideas.
- Network!
- Let co-workers and agency know about community/education events/protests
- Advocate with service users (i.e., wheel chair accessible housing, inclusive education, challenge Safe Schools Act).
- Information/resource sharing.
- Share legal information
- Question whether structural realities/discourses/our approach is creating the “Resistant Client”.

- Constantly question context and structural constraints on people’s behaviour.
- Question whether daily structural variables are creating non-compliance or the perceived problem, as well as emotional reaction.
- Inform service users of their rights – do not assume they are aware of their rights.
- Provide information about what to expect from you.

- Collaborate - provide service users with as much information as possible regarding their involvement with the Society/ and other agencies - be as transparent as possible!
- Don’t make assumptions about what people need – Ask what they feel they need to eliminate/reduce risks/concerns. Develop goals and write the service plan with them when possible.
- Become referral savvy. Become aware of community resources (i.e., Harriet Tubman, Tropicana Community Services, WCREC, Across Boundaries, The Gerstein Centre, etc.).
Energy of Possibility:

"Energy of Possibility" counters individual and collective 'spirit injury' (emotional and energetic injury), which often include the effects of oppression and stressed contexts, along with other life experiences. Through acknowledging emotional pain and its effect on behavior, as well as exploring holistic initiatives, a movement towards transformative healing and a space of energy, resilience, passion and possibility can emerge.

- Understand individual/collective pain and trauma, and recognize its effects (i.e., on behavior/coping), contextualize its origins, don't silence suffering, don’t pathologize
- Learn how to read systemic pain to not 'blame the victim' when behaviour is unacceptable, while still holding people accountable.
- Be mistake friendly, including with your own mistakes. Normalize humanity.
- Ask about people/community’s own healing practices. Include this in the service plan.
- Do your own healing (individual and collective).
- Ask what’s worked previously in similar situations; challenge the deficit approach
- Support a harm reduction approach

- Be moment focused and celebrate the small victories (remember the "ripple effect")
- Support people to distinguish systemic chatter that might be de-energizing
- Ask about dreams, possibilities, hopes and desired futures (including for children)
- Have an open space for people to speak of spirituality; including with colleagues
- Do self-care; do practices that keep you “in the zone”; support self-care of team
- Maintain your own hope/possibility practices; remember why you do the work
- Ask what can we do, rather than always focusing on the limits (e.g., with AOP).
- Look for spaces to do AOP every day – stay moment focused.
- Plant your flower. Do a little. Remember the tipping point theory.
- Remember past social movements and union gains.
"Engagement" is being able to deeply encounter another person/group. It acknowledges lenses of objectification and challenges one’s own internalization of scripts and definitions imposed by the dominant culture. It is the ability to be with one another, seeing our self and others for who we are, not letting judgment/evaluation and structured relations get in the way. It is about valuing our self and another. It is about recognition and respect.

Recognition: Acknowledging & respecting individual/community perspectives and strengths

- Consider frames of reference, memories/meanings when trying to understand someone
- When engaging with the person listen to their voice even though we may not agree.
- Respect and engage the person, whether the service user is an adult or child.
- Do not assume we Know. Stay open and curious.
- Ask the person how they make sense of what’s happening, invite discussion about culture, community/social location/subject positioning and the political.
- Elicit their meanings/knowledge/contexts – including from children.

- Be mindful of the wording you use in your documents/how we narrate.
- Write case notes using AOP language & post structural language, avoid absolute truths and certainty when possible.
- Challenge assumptions in assessment documents.
- Write case notes with service users. Do collaborative documentation when possible. Let people know what you are writing and where the notes can go.
- Be transparent with what they can expect from you/the agency, so there are no surprises

- Challenge mother blaming discourses; challenge mother myths in general.
- Challenge father myths, seek out their input
- Ask people who their supports are. Don’t assume they have a family or want one.
- Find out people’s definition and meanings of family.
- Find out about the relationships the family deem important, including to pets.
- Ask them who they consider to be their family and the importance and closeness of each relationship. Let them define the importance of closeness (i.e., how close is good for them) in their relationships.
- Challenge cultural constructs of “successful family relations”.

- Looking at the person and not their disabilities, limitations or titles
- Acknowledge a person’s strengths, knowledge and experience, especially as parents.
- Not pathologizing the service user, but focusing on strengths, and how they are coping
- Not pathologizing coping strategies
• Acknowledging actions of transformation and personal agency
• Know your own social location (subject positioning); talk about your location with others, make space to hear from them
• Using cultural dialogic practice to engage mutually - to hear and share perspectives, re: cultural implications.
• Recognizing particularity within culture, challenge generalizations
• Working towards comfort level, addressing fears of unknown when working across differences, work with the systemic chatter and personal history in each moment.

Power Analysis

• Know your impact on the person, due to your privilege (social location/positioning) & positional power as a social worker. Acknowledge this with service users/colleagues when possible. Discuss their power as well.
• Acknowledging our social location/ subject positioning and what power we bring to service users as social workers; also acknowledging their places of power.
• Recognize the privilege in place that allowed you to acquire knowledge. Share your privilege e.g., knowledge, power, experiences, etc. Encourage people to tap into/enact their power/privilege.
• Not operating from a power over stance
• Try to meet parents outside of the office to create a less oppressive atmosphere.
• When sitting behind the glass (in access visits) be transparent. Show room behind the glass divider.
• Being transparent with service users – explain why we are writing, etc.
• Always be honest when you don’t have the answer, no one can know everything

• Use narratives effectively in order to ensure that the person feels heard, understood, appreciated, and most importantly seen as experts in their own reality and truth.
• When gathering testimonies, repeat what you have gathered to ensure they feel it accurately reflects their disclosure
• Ask people what works best for them, include the children’s input
• Working with people on their own goals - not just focusing on the agency’s goals or mandates, figuring out what else we can work on, how to support in other ways
• Having people use their own language and create their own understanding and meaning of their power in relation to the problem and ideas for intervention

Engagement in the workplace

• Respect – you can do small things to show respect. Being polite is not the only form of respect. (e.g., being considerate, cooperative, assisting colleagues with workload, getting teas and coffees for the team, have a pleasant and easy going tone of voice when speaking with others, etc.).
• Support colleagues - acknowledge the daily difficulties in doing this type of work.
• Acknowledge supervisors and management for what they do – thank them.
• Let colleagues know about community events, resource sharing, self-care opportunities, go for lunch together, design team events, ask for consultants to come and speak during branch or team meetings.
"Efficacy" counters a sense of powerlessness, helplessness, limited access, opportunity and mobility. It is about gaining or facilitating confidence, competence and capacity to impact one's environment, so as to transform internal/external barriers.

**Efficacy – service providers/change agents**

- Exploring how we (and service users) can gain credibility, validity and voice to be effective change agents for ourselves and others and to be heard when advocating.
- Increase our efficacy by: learning from service users, continuing our awareness regarding culture/power, intervention models, skills, forms of practice (e.g., watch informative documentaries; listen out for consumers/service users’ interpretation and evaluation of services, workers, etc. Keep reading journals publications, etc.).
- Having the opportunity and time to reflect on our interaction while on home visits
- Do interdisciplinary work
- Provide training around oppressive language used against LGBTQI and provide appropriate names/words. Challenge intake forms for inclusion.
- Try to refer to agencies whose values, mission, and procedures are based within anti-oppressive framework/practices, such as: Wraparound, and to agencies linked to social movements (i.e., feminist), and agencies who provide holistic healing outside the Euro-centric medical model (i.e., Across Boundaries).
- Go to training sessions
- Request training beyond cultural competency, challenge cultural competency models

- Understand that the knowledge you gain is to support others in their empowerment and self-love, not to oppress. Be careful of “negative power temptations”.
- Exploring with service user the particular systemic chatter that may de-energize them and acknowledge that which may energize
- Acknowledging people's achievements and actions. Support these narratives.
- Support people in their own empowerment by giving them the tools they need.
- Collaborate - provide people with as much information as possible regarding their involvement with the agency- be as transparent as possible!
- **Facilitate connection** and support through your own relating/approach – who are you being?
- Connect people to self-help, mentorship, grassroots organizing, together figure out where they can find support in their family or community.
- **Facilitate collective consciousness.** Support people’s efficacies by having them meet others who share the same problems.
- Connect families with others (also within their own community if they are interested) who are going through similar problems – listen to their needs and perceptions, encourage community development/activism.
- Encourage them to collectively acknowledge structural issues and generate ideas on how to address the problem through their lenses.
• **Facilitate capacity strengthening for action.** Facilitate skills such as advocacy, networking, to address the collective processes impacting them. Send them to workshops, courses, etc.
• Acknowledge and collaborate with resources, knowledge and skills within the person’s communities, to facilitate change and transform the issues impacting them.

**Exercise of Power:**

"**Exercise of Power**" is countering the personal/structural barriers that inhibit individual and collective well-being. It is about using our discretionary power and collective abilities to facilitate individual/organizational/structural transformation. It is about enacting our personal/collective agency.

- Use my CAS power to work with service users to advocate for services
- Work with the Ministry on policy for inclusion and facilitate its implementation.
- Develop guidelines for working with LGBTTQQL
- Encourage research (i.e., qualitative); share frontline workers’ views with the Ministry
- Increase voice of service providers & service users (communities) in policy decisions.
- Increase representation of service providers in networks where decisions happen.
- Work with policy to address the roots of problems, such as poverty in relation to neglect.
- Work with Newcomer communities to inform them about Ontario policies, re: CAS
- Create policy to reflect values of non-dominant groups, work with community groups to gain input into CAS policy development

- You can do small things to make a difference
- Give workers literature about AOP and how to apply AOP practices
- Share knowledge with service users and be transparent
- Share information either through writing or conversation
- Collaborate with co-workers and join committees (i.e., Transformation).
- Join committees, encourage others to join – start AOP projects (within and across agencies).
- Develop courage; collectively express alternate perspectives, and challenge oppressive structures that create many of the problems we encounter in our social work.
- Know making a difference is hard work. Be willing to do the work.
- Separate the family from the problem; focus on their strengths and advocate for their needs by bending and addressing the systemic restraints/structural barriers that keep families/communities marginalized. Facilitate their advocacy and networking skills
- Discuss with families how they feel about structures in place that are oppressive and how together formulate a plan of action to address the needs of their family, and explain how the process works in regards to child protection, investigation and so.

- Be careful of how you speak of families when you are upset.
- Challenge the language workers use when discussing service users’/situations with other workers.
• Challenge co-workers on the chatter that happens when working with families. Do not participate or be a by-stander to oppressive conversation that occurs when labeling a family – or child.
• Prepare and de-brief children when they hear adults converse about them in planning meetings.

• Present cases in supervision with courage to advocate and be an ally to the child/family, i.e., if your supervisor is under the influence of systemic chatter.
• Encourage on-line activism
• Start new committees to enhance organizational policies and practices
• Start reflection groups to examine daily/organizational practices/systemic chatter.
• Give people the CAS complaint procedures
• Join with domestic violence workers, anti-poverty activists, etc. to protest
• Propose ideas to OASW for collective activism
• Work with other institutions such as the School Board to create structural change at a Ministry level
• Collaborate with other agencies to enhance services for Trans people.
• Activism in the moment, “dropping ideas”/ asking questions.
• Change agents can start in micro ways-activism in small moments.
• Live anti-oppression everyday. Practice in your everyday life.
• Start with the social worker in the mirror. Keep the finger pointed at you.
Personal Reflection:
Systemic Chatter

Systemic Chatter consists of the dominant narratives, which are both informed by and support the structures found within our society. Systemic Chatter shows up within our internal and external dialogue reflecting inherited power relations within historical and contemporary conversations.
Building the Noticer

The Noticer: A voice within us that notes the presence of Systemic Chatter & disputes it. The job of the Noticer is to distinguish between Systemic Chatter and our own values, preferences and intentions, so we can willfully act out of our commitments. The Noticer helps us create a space for personal agency. The following are entry points into noticing the Systemic Chatter:

Paint a Picture
Can you describe the Systemic Chatter? How do you know it is present? What’s the nature of this Chatter? What does it look like, feel like, etc.? Is it verbal? What sound does it make? How loud is it? Is the voice friendly or angry - what is the texture of the voice? Is it a whisper or a scream? How does it feel in your body? Does it feel big and vast, or small and meek? Does it flash images in front of you? Does it make you feel big, strong and entitled, or small, weak, scared and invisible? What sense of power does this Systemic Chatter carry? Does it puff you up or deflate you?

Describe the promoted conversations
What is the Systemic Chatter telling you about this person/group? What are the conversations Systemic Chatter is bringing to you? Detect the story lines, metaphors, myths, assumptions, explanations/justifications… Is it trying to get you to deny structural inequities? Is it promoting a dominant view, erasing marginal identities and perspectives? Who says that what Systemic Chatter is saying is the truth? Who benefits from this truth?

Identify the message
If you were to summarize in a few statements what the Systemic Chatter is telling you about this person/group/yourself, what would it be? (i.e., “those people are” immoral, abnormal, backwards, disgusting, weird, liars and frauds, helpless victims....).

Locate the histories
Where do you think these conversations come from? What are the origins? How old are these conversations? What are the histories of the material structures that go along with these conversations? What institutions parented these conversations?
Detect funnels & forms
What structures help keep this conversations alive, i.e., institutions such as family, school, media, religion, etc. What are the forms used by Systemic Chatter to deliver these conversations (i.e., labeling, representation, the talk and text of social practices - how structures, procedures, treatments speak about people’s lives)? What are the economics behind these conversations, such as consumerism, etc.?

Ascertain Tactics
What are some of the ways the Systemic Chatter is trying to get you to comply with its agenda? What are the normative, taken-for-granted truths it’s espousing? (i.e., natural, average, appropriate, acceptable, normal, neutral, true, should be...). What emotions does it produce in you? (i.e., disgust, anger, pity, discomfort, curiosity, suspicion, fear...). Does it make you feel threatened? What does it say you will lose if you do not comply?
Distributed Lenses

It distributes lenses of objectification.
Process of Objectification
What processes is the chatter trying to lead you into? (i.e., criminalization, infantalization, romanticization, paternalism, tokenization, exotification, normalization, othering, universalizing, generalizing, moralizing/deviancy, scapegoating, blame, meritocracy/individual responsibility...).

Lenses of Engagement
What are the underlying components of the lenses of this Systemic Chatter? (i.e., assessment/evaluation, measurement/comparison, emotional spaces and yearning, cognitive authority, expectations, paradigm attachment...). What expectations, norms and standards are being used to define success/failure, adequacy/inadequacy? What is said to be good/bad, right/wrong? What cultural constructs might be at play?

The Agenda
What agenda do you think this Systemic Chatter has? Is this agenda about furthering the inferiorization, powerlessness, and sense of worthlessness of this person/group/you? Is it sustaining processes of marginalization, exploitation, and exclusion? Is it about sustaining the privileging of the dominant culture's norms? How is it working to sustain the current distribution of wealth, access and opportunity? What practices does it want you to engage in to support institutionalized oppression? How is Systemic Chatter trying to get you to line it up with power so it can implement its agenda?

Absence
Are there moments when the Systemic Chatter is less present when you are with this person/group/yourself? If you were to describe in detail the felt sense of what it is like when the Systemic Chatter is “put aside”, what would you say? If you could choose a name to best describe this felt sense, what would it be? How does it feel when a clearing begins to occur for Transformative Communication?

From I-It to I-Thou

For more on these ideas of I-it I-thou, see Dennis Ross (2003).
God in Our Relationships: Spirituality Between People from the Teachings of Martin Buber.
Theoretical Influences:

The LPI Reflective Practice Approach is influenced by Black Feminist Thought, Martin Buber’s Philosophy of Dialogue, Michael White and David Epston’s Narrative Therapy, Jan Fook’s Critical Reflective Practice and Beverley Prevatt-Goldstein’s Cultural Dialogic Practice and Liberation Theology.

References


