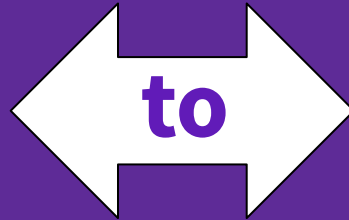


ASSOCIATION OF RESEARCH LIBRARIES

On The Edge Series

Safe Space



Brave Space

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Agenda To Guide Our Exploration

Safe Space / Brave Space



Context

Defining

Skill
Sets

Crowdsourcing
Ideas

Source and Inspirational Material

Hines, S. (2017) From Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces
acrl.libguides.com/c.php?g=899144&p=6468942&t=32809

NASPA Policy and Practice Series: Safe and Brave Spaces (2017)

Zheng, L. (2016) Why Your Brave Space Sucks
The Stanford Daily

DeEtta Jones & Associates; Library Management Skills Institute (2019)

Wexelbaum, R. (2016) The Library as Safe Space

Rosener, Frigo, Ponischil, Belanger, Rander & Salazar (2019)
In The Library With The Lead Pipe: Leading from the Center

Context for Safe and Brave Space

- **Safe Space** on college campuses were originally designed as space specifically set aside for people with marginalized or minoritized identities.
 - People of Color
 - LGBTQ+
 - Survivors of Sexual Assault
 - First Generation Students
 - Undocumented individuals and DACA recipients
- **Brave Space**, relatively new - responding to safe space criticism that it is both too much and not enough.

Context for Safe and Brave Space

- “SPACE” can refer to an actual physical space that is purposefully created or it can refer to a conceptual place in time as individuals gather with a shared focus.
- Outreach & Service vs. Internal Engagement
- Creating or operating in a Safe or Brave Space is rarely openly taught
 - Emotional Intelligence
 - “Soft Skills” or Relational Skills

Context for Safe and Brave Space

Impact of successful Safe Space:

People with minoritized identities are more engaged and less threatened.

Impact of successful Brave Space:

- Organizational values are experienced, not just spoken.
- Increased organizational transparency and authenticity.
- Better decision making and more innovation from including more voices and empowering more engagement.

Defining Safe and Brave Space

SAFE

- Physical Space Created
- Inclusive (passive)
- Risk Avoidant
- Rules of Etiquette
- Dialogue
- Comfort in Safety
- Critical Mass
- Non-Judgemental
- Advocacy
- Default

BRAVE

- Environment Created
- Equitable (active)
- Calculated Risk
- Rules of Engagement
- Multi-Partial
- Discomfort in Challenge
- Representation
- Non-Closure
- Activism
- Responsive

Defining Safe and Brave Space

5 Elements of Brave Space (higher education)

Arao & Clemens (2013) The Art of Effective Facilitation

1. Controversy with Civility
2. Owning both Intentions and Impact
3. Challenge by Choice
4. Respect
5. No Attacks

Safe Space = support services for specific minoritized identities.

Defining Safe and Brave Space

PUSHBACK

- It impedes freedom of speech
- It impedes intellectual freedom
- It creates “snowflakes” and avoids resilience
- Creating space for some and not others is discrimination
- Shared space should be neutral space
- We can't promise “SAFE”, maybe “safer”
- This allows the dominant narrative to dominate
- Supports the assumption that all viewpoints are EQUAL
- These spaces make targeted identities more targeted
- Success of these spaces require minoritized people to do the work

Defining Safe and Brave Space

SAFE

Space for Connection & Support

A space of physical and psychological safety for marginalized or minoritized people to feel supported, to be able to openly discuss their experiences and to respite from threat or harm.

Community for Justice

BRAVE

Space for Collective Learning

A space where people of varied backgrounds, experiences, beliefs and perspectives can come together to explore and learn together without censure or harm.

Community for Freedom

Defining Safe and Brave Space

SAFE

Space for Connection & Support

Collections, exhibits, events and services are inclusive of marginalized or minoritized voices and experiences.

I can see myself.

BRAVE

Space for Collective Learning

Collections, exhibits, events and services are critically considered through a multi-partial lens, balancing the influence and representation of narratives beyond the dominant.

I can express myself.

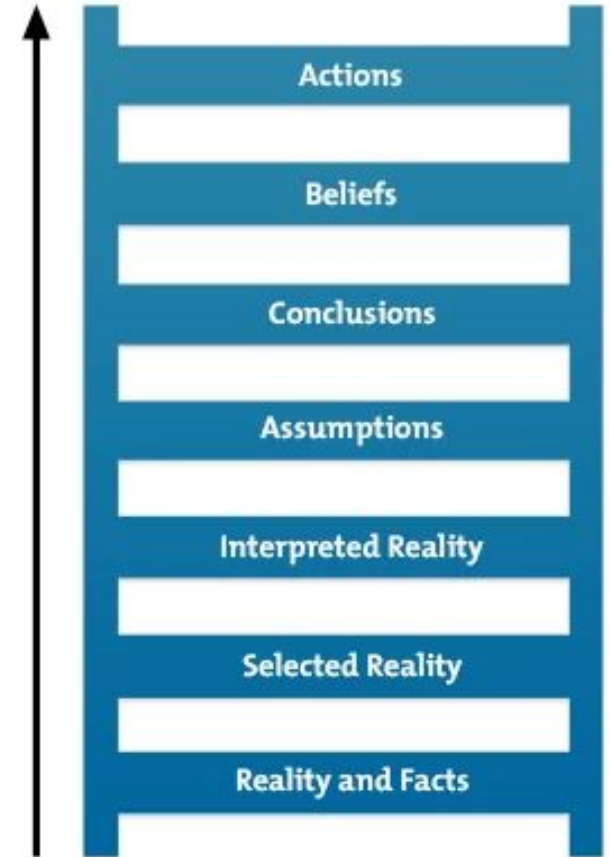
Decolonizing the library

Creating / Maintaining Safe and Brave Space

Building Skills (and expectations) Around **Appreciative Inquiry**

- Assuming actions and choices are coming from good intent.
- Utilize the Ladder of Inference as a Mental Model
- Taking a positive approach to gain insight

The Ladder of Inference was developed by organizational psychologist Chris Argyris and used by Peter Senge in his 1990 book; *The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*.



Creating / Maintaining Safe and Brave Space

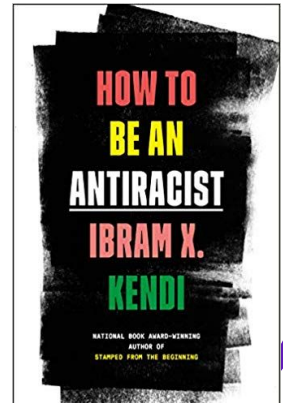
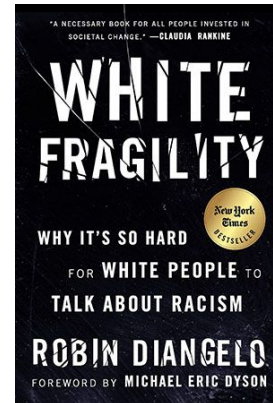
Building Skills Around **The Intent / Impact Gap**

- Checking In - In the Moment
- A Culture of Assessment (learn the impact)
- Taking Responsibility & Recovering from a Mistake
- Implicit Bias Interruption

Creating / Maintaining Safe and Brave Space

Building Skills Around **Anti-Opressive Practices**

- Systems Analysis to deconstruct and rebuild systems
- Power & Privilege Dynamics
- Ally Practices
 - *Anti-Oppression Resource and Training Alliance*
 - *Racial Equity Institute*



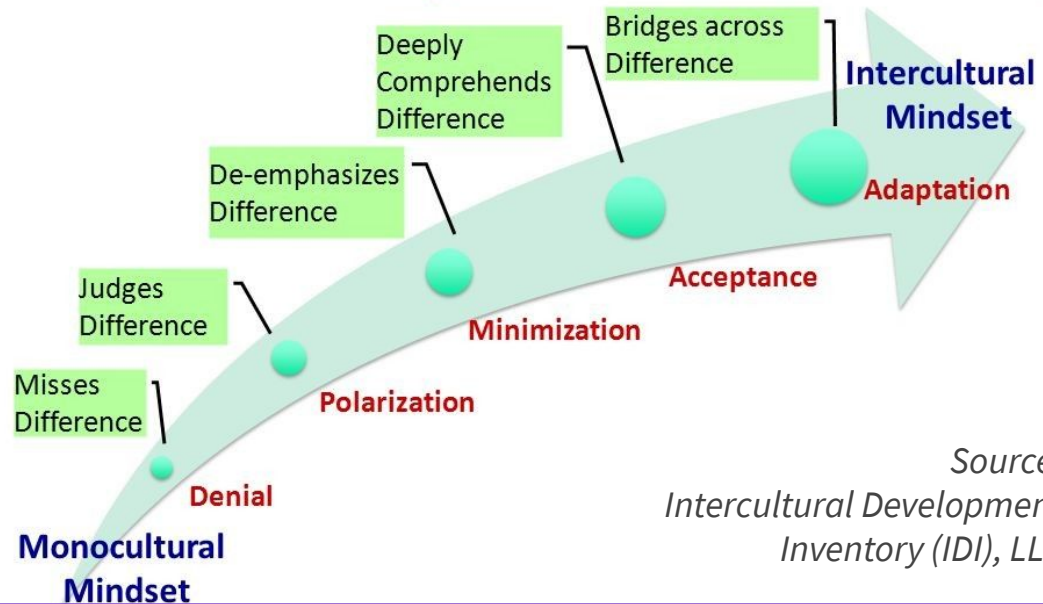
Creating / Maintaining Safe and Brave Space

Building Skills Around Intercultural Competence

ARL: [ClimateQUAL.org](https://climatequal.org)

- Foster a culture of healthy organizational climate
- Facilitate the ongoing collection of staff feedback
- Enable libraries to interpret and act on data

Intercultural Development Continuum: Primary Orientations

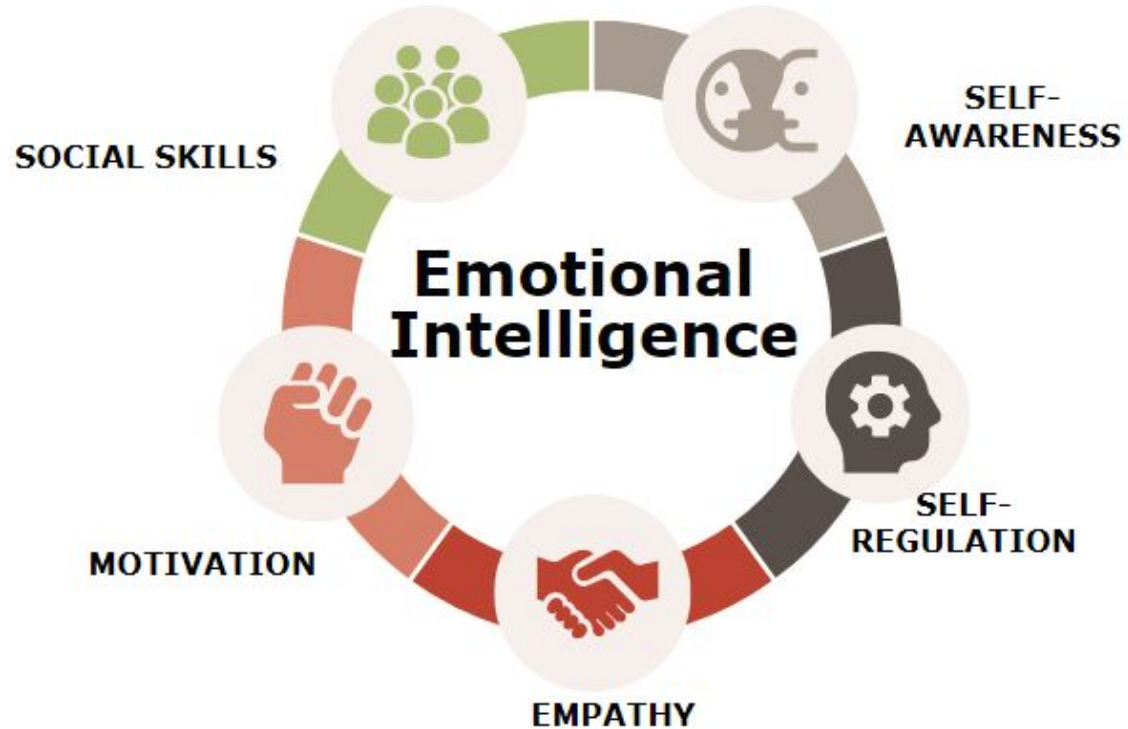


Source:
Intercultural Development
Inventory (IDI), LLC

Creating / Maintaining Safe and Brave Space

Building Skills Around **Emotional Intelligence**

Source: *EDUCE*



Creating / Maintaining Safe and Brave Space

Building Skills Around **Trauma Informed Practice**

- Recognizing where trauma exists, how it presents and the precipitating factors of the trauma
- Developing and managing a strategic response to the trauma
- Developing anti-trauma practices

San Francisco public library
Denver public library
Folsom public library

Crowdsourcing

**Questions about or
thoughts to add to the content?**

SAFE & BRAVE SPACE

Definitions, Criticisms, Skills Needed

Crowdsourcing

Have you been talking about and/or engaged in Safe or Brave Space practice in your organization?

Defining Safe and Brave Space



Safe Space

Inclusive Practices
Org. Climate

- Bias Interruption
- Inclusive Leadership
- Safe Space Dialogues
- Focus Group

Brave Space

Equitable Practices
Org. Culture

- Performance Management
- Equity Forum
- Think Tanks
- Supervisor Training/Support

Crowdsourcing

Have you been talking about and/or engaged in Safe or Brave Space practice in your organization?

If not, why not? If so...

How have you been defining and/or talking about Safe Space or Brave Space?

What practices would be considered Safe Space practice for your organization?

What practices would be considered Brave Space practice for your organization?