



From Recognition to Action: What do you do to challenge inequities?



National Center for Women and Information
Technology, Summit 2014



What we are going to do



First 5-10' brief intro

Create our group for 15'

Discuss- create basis for next exercise

Work creatively, performing new conversations/arguments.

Debrief, goodbye

Micro inequities and affirmations

Micro inequities

"the seemingly small [...] mechanisms of discrimination that have significant effect by excluding the person of difference and by making that person less self-confident and less productive"

Micro affirmations

“apparently small acts, which are often ephemeral and hard-to-see, events that are public and private, often unconscious but very effective, which occur wherever people wish to help others to succeed.”

Improvisation: Creating unscripted scenes together

improvisation

improvisational theater: games and exercises created in which people collectively solve problems, including creating the inclusive group that can solve problems.
-Spolin, 1999. Lobman&Lundquist. 2007

Make your partners look good

Focus is on the "ensemble" • Not about being funny

Yes, and

Radically accept what's already happened • Build with it

Make and receive offers

EVERYTHING is an offer

Do not pre-determine/write a scene

It's okay not to know • The collective creation is the focus

Improvisational exercises

What affirmations did you experience?

What was challenging?

What strategies did you use?

Improvisational exercises

What situations or examples of micro affirmations do you want to get better at making?

What micro inequities do you want to get better at addressing?

Examples: Guo, 2014

"...she got a summer research assistantship at the MIT Media Lab. However, instead of letting her build the GUI (like the job ad described), the supervisor assigned her the mind-numbing task of hand-transcribing audio clips all summer long. He assigned a new male student to build the GUI application."

(while struggling with a problem set) "Well, not everyone is cut out for computer science; have you considered majoring in bio?"

(after being assigned to a class project team) "How about you just design the graphics while we handle the backend? It'll be easier for everyone that way."

"Are you sure you know how to do this?"

"You only got into MIT because you're a girl"

http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/technology/2014/01/programmer_privilege_as_an_asian_male_computer_science_major_everyone_gave.html

Examples: Brogaard, 2013

"After I was placed in the very last session of two consecutive conference programs, I started noticing that those very last sessions of conferences, which hardly anyone attends, and last sessions of the day, during which nobody can concentrate, are where most of the female speakers get stuck."

"I'm continuously amazed how otherwise enlightened people simply don't think of women when they think about who to invite to conferences and contribute to edited volumes."

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Micro affirmations

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improv
science

keep stepping up!

Raquell Holmes, Ph.D.: improvscience



Research Assistant Professor at the Center for Computational Science at Boston University; Adj. faculty at the Mathematical Computational Modeling Sciences Center at Arizona State University and founder of improvscience. She authored Modeling and Bioinformatics for Cell Biologists and teaches mathematical modeling to biologists. Improvisation and performance are central to her teaching scientists how to build inclusive work environments. She is active in XSEDE, SC Broader Engagement and co-founded the annual New England Undergraduate Computing Symposium.