Power Dynamics in the learning and work environment: Watt can we do?

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Conflict of Interests

• DB is a shareholder in Aifred Health, a mental health AI company
Objectives

Objectives:

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

1) Share positive and negative personal experiences involving power dynamics as learners and teachers.

2) Identify situation in their own contexts that are inherently laden with power differentials and share experiences on how these were managed.

3) Develop strategies to mitigate consequences of power differential including misperception, projection, barriers and disconnection.
Of 543 residents in 13 programs participating (84% response rate), 35% were female.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abuse Type</th>
<th>Source (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychological</td>
<td>Attending 68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Patients 79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nurses, HD 77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender discrimination</td>
<td>Females: Attending 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Patients 88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nurses 71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males: Attending 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Patients 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nurses 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Harassment</td>
<td>Females: Attending 35</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peers 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males: Attending 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peers 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial / Homophobic</td>
<td>All HP: 50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Residents’ experiences of abuse, discrimination and sexual harassment during residency training. McMaster University Residency Training Programs.
LEGO® Part 1 & 2

• Part I  Build a tower (object, action, theme, value)

• Part II  Explain this
### 7 Powers Leaders Can Use for Good or Evil

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Power Type</th>
<th>Source of Power</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legitimate Power</td>
<td>Higher position; deserving the position matters for followers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coercive Power</td>
<td>fear/bullying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert Power</td>
<td>skills, knowledge and experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informational Power</td>
<td>short term power; does not build credibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power of Reward</td>
<td>performance review, raises, promotions, awards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection Power</td>
<td>influence by proxy-political, coalitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referent Power</td>
<td>most important &amp; real power; quality of relationship/how built</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- depends on personal traits and values: honesty, integrity &amp; trustworthiness, reliability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

John French and Bertram Raven 1959, Nicole Lipkin, *What Keeps Leaders Up At Night*
LEGO® Part 3

Build your model power (in education)

Each describe your model to your small group
LEGO® Part 4

In your small groups, each build and describe a difficult Power/Education situation you are currently experiencing

Choose one “story” that the small group will work on for the remainder of the workshop
Mentalizing

Self from the outside
Others from the inside

Accurate and effective mind reading:
  • automatically going beneath the surface
  • basing our responses on a sense of what underlies another’s behaviour: desires, needs, feelings, reasons, beliefs...

  • https://www.menningerclinic.com/clinicians/clinical-resources/mentalizing
‘The neuroscience of leadership’ & power

**PERCEIVED** Threat or Reward

- Threat
  - Flight
  - Fight
  - Freeze
  - Faint
  - Friend...

- Reward
  - Calm
  - Trust
  - Connect
  - Esteem

[https://www.cpd.utoronto.ca/blog/](https://www.cpd.utoronto.ca/blog/)
• The Brain in Threat Mode

Executive function **offline**

Flight, fight response **engaged**
Powerful Rewards & Threats

SCARF-neuroscience of leadership

- **Status**
  
  in relation to others
  
  ↓ in status
  
  real or perceived

- **Certainty**
  
  brain looks for certainty

- **Autonomy**
  
  having a choice ↓ level of stress

- **Relatedness**
  
  friend / foe
  
  belonging to a group
  
  ↑ level of trust

- **Fairness**
  
  "unfair"
  
  ↑ threat response

Rock D. Youtube: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=isiSOeMVJQk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=isiSOeMVJQk); What is your strong suit; others?
Rewards & Threats

Status
- Patient/MD/health disciplines
- specialty; rank;
- shaming comments

Certainty
- Change in department strategic plan;
- illness; financial

Autonomy Choice
- Hours worked;
- # complex patients;
- focus on efficiency only

Relatedness friend / foe
- Toxic workplace;
- criticism;
- humiliation

Fairness
- Favouritism; nepotism;
- inequity–pay; workload

Rock D. Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=isiSOeMVJQk; What is your strong suit; others?
The Central Relational Paradox

• Humans need relational connections
• Disconnection: ↑ human suffering/violence
• ↑connection, ↑ pro-social behaviour  McCauley M 2013

• if hurtful, we keep parts of ourselves out of connection (hidden) in order to stay partially in connection

• Implications for conflict: need for reconnection  B West C 2005

LEGO® Part 5

Individually build a resolution
Co-create a joint resolution

Identify barriers to proposed resolution

Identify strategies to overcome revealed barriers OR repair relationships

Identify what you need to do differently & what you need from others.
Debrief

• Benefits, challenges
• Other applications
• Extract Simple Rules (min specs) / Pearls: ‘Disconnection & Repair (if safe); SCARF threats help understand reactions; Look for humanity & speak to it if present; Look for motivation of behaviour & common ground to repair; Disconnect person from problem; Respond to behaviours not personality; Abuse requires action from others with power- repair may/not be possible’
Contact & Resources

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https://www.cfpc.ca/uploadedFiles/Education/Intimidation_and_Harassment_en.pdf

https://www.lego.com/en-us/seriousplay/background Follow link to “community based model”