

# Constructing an Equitable Exchange

Social Justice & Diversity in Counseling Groups

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# Interconnectedness

““My humanity is caught up,  
is inextricably bound up, in yours.’  
We belong in a bundle of life.  
We say, ‘A person is a person  
through other persons.’”

(Tutu, 2007, p. 31)

# Our Role as Helpers

We can all do something to  
“strengthen the fabric of our  
shared humanity”

(Clinton, 2007)

# Counselor Competence

“All individuals exist in social, political, historical, and economic contexts, and psychologists [mental health professionals] are increasingly called upon to understand the influence of these contexts on individuals’ behavior.”

(American Psychological Association, 2002, p. 1)

# Social Justice & Diversity in Counseling Groups

“Group work...has the potential to serve as a vehicle to dismantle oppressive systems and structures that impede human development”

(Ratts, Anthony, & Santos, 2010, pp. 166-167)

# Learning Objectives

- Identify the stages inherent in the process/goal of social justice and apply the concepts discussed to group work
- Enhance counselor self-awareness, improve therapists' conception of the client worldview, and enrich the counseling relationship
- Consider strategies to expand clients' consciousness of diversity and social justice issues, and facilitate constructive dialogue among group members

# Outline

- Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies  
(American Counseling Association, 2010)
- The Dimensions Social Justice Model  
(Ratts, Anthony, & Santos, 2010)
- Unlearning Racism, Bard College

# Activity

- Dyads
- Describe a time you experienced exclusionary behavior by others due to an aspect of your identity
- Discuss the impact of the event
- Consider the implications to your work with clients

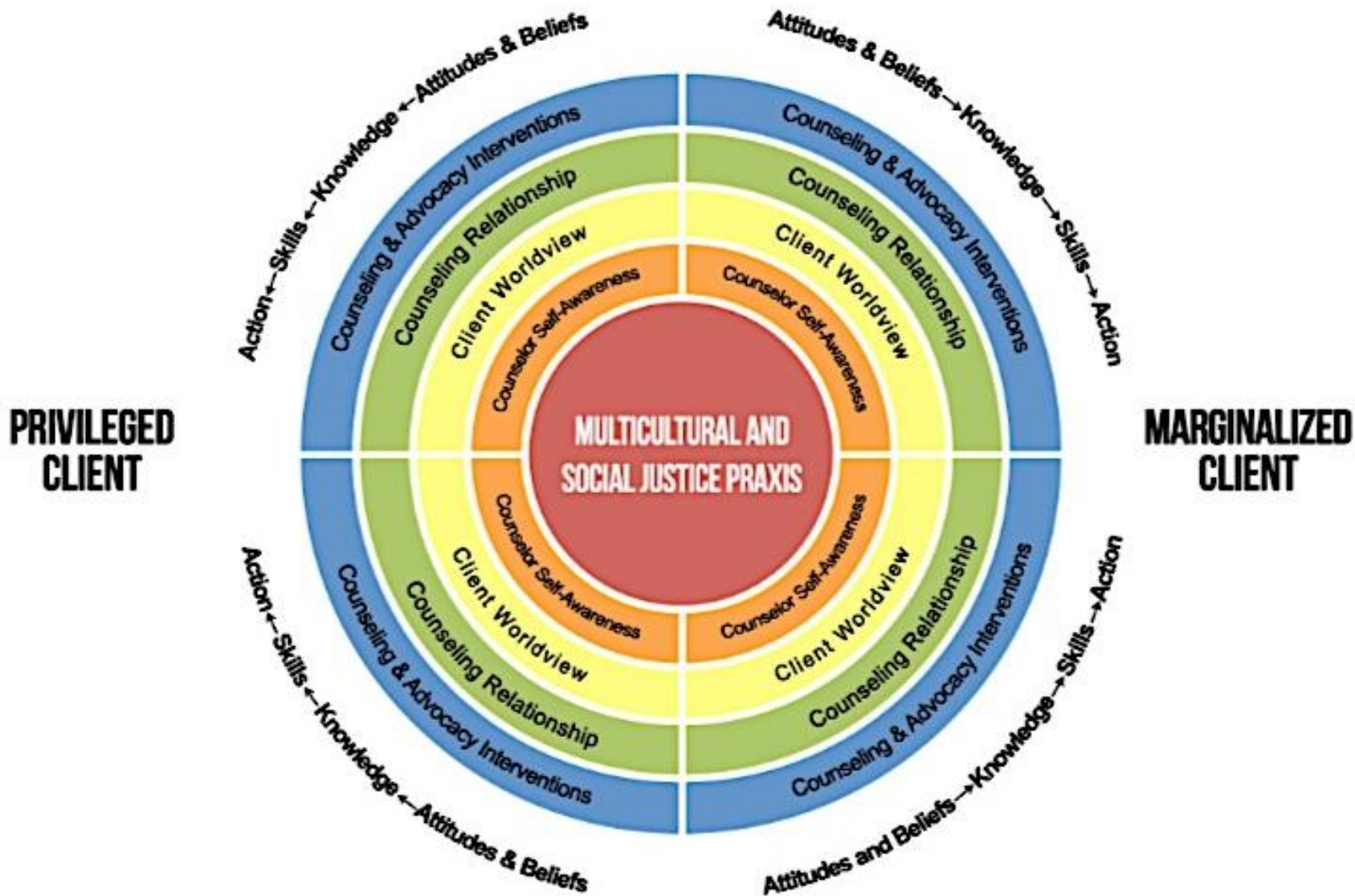


# Multicultural & Social Justice Counseling Competencies

American Counseling Association



**PRIVILEGED  
COUNSELOR**



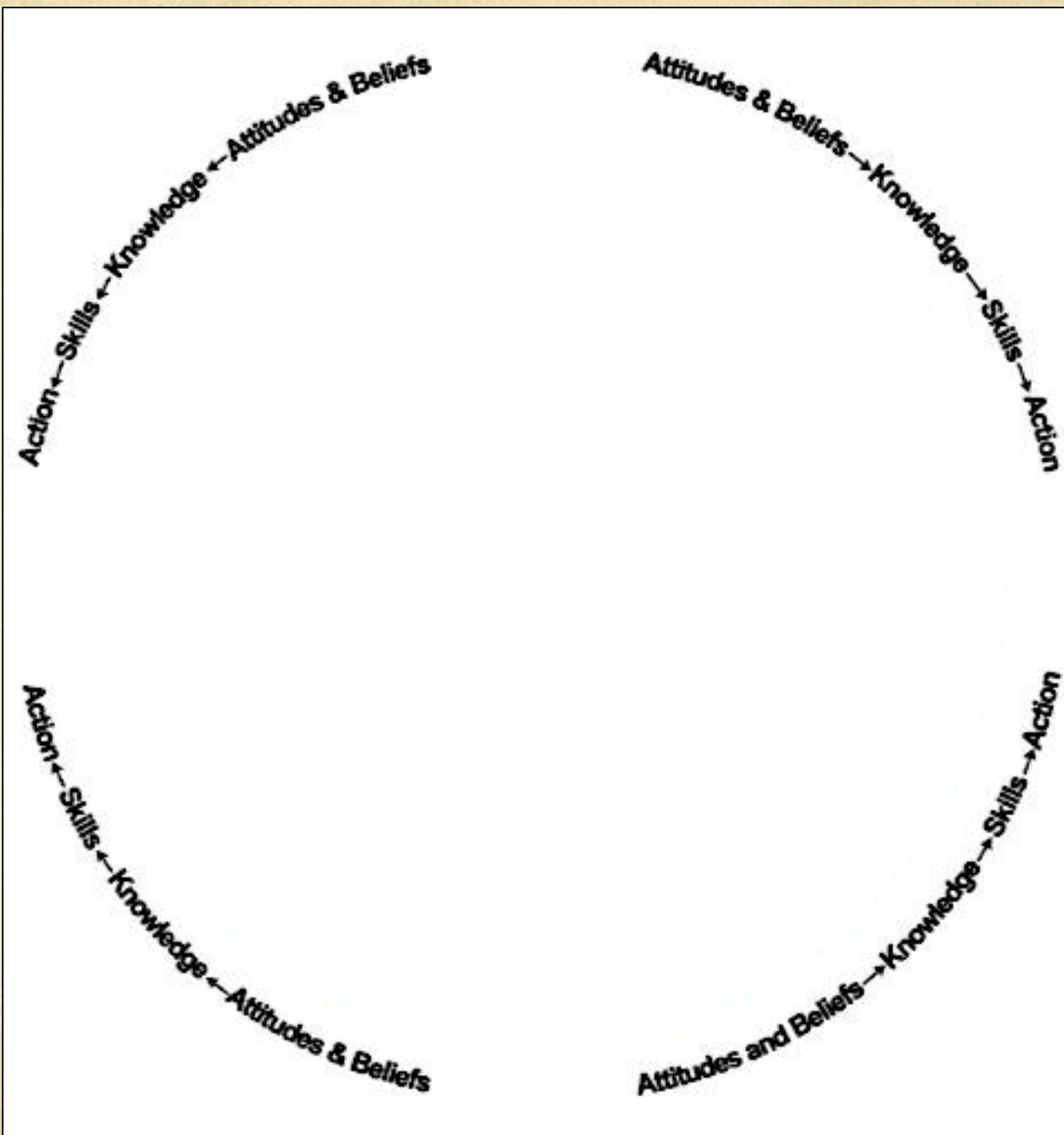
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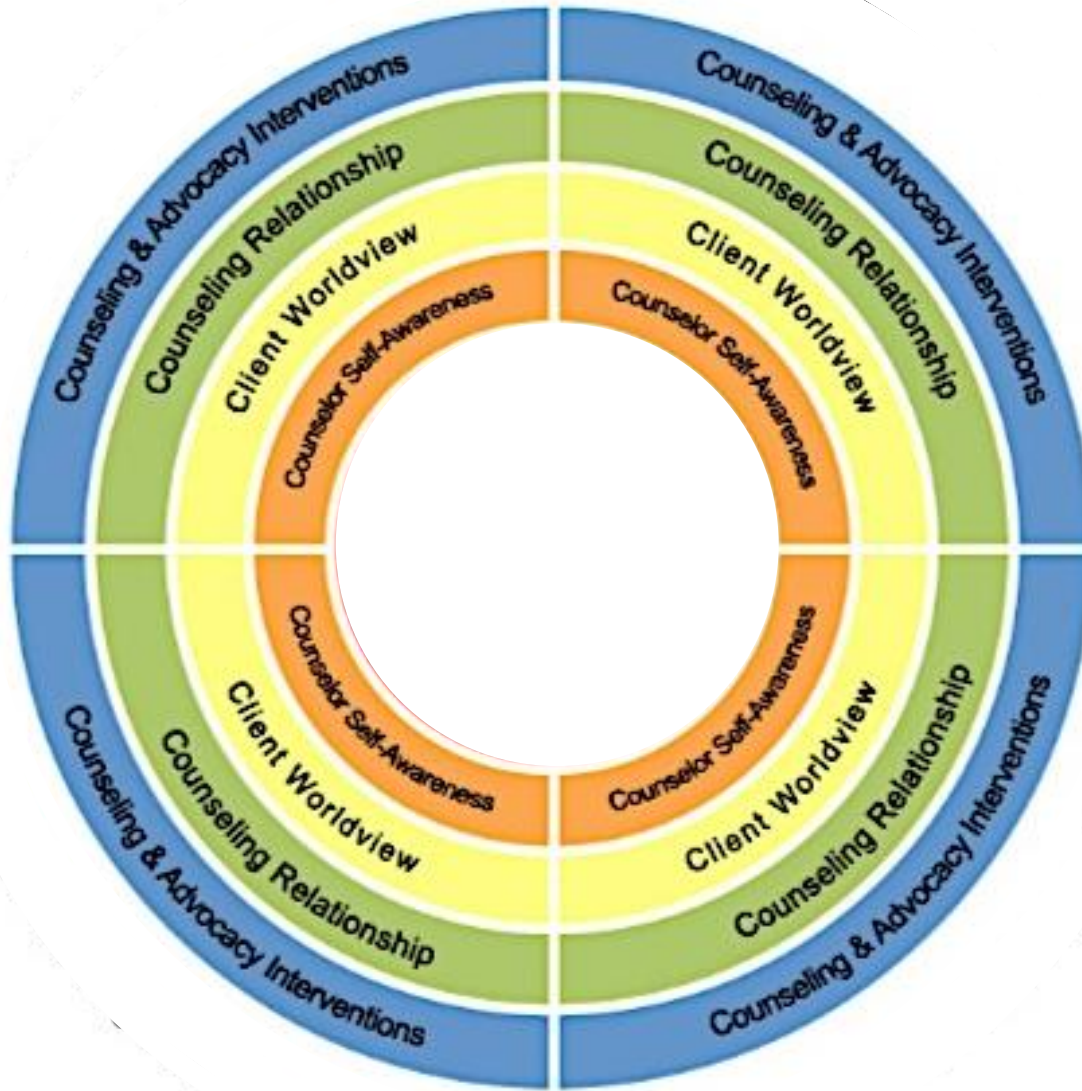
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# Multicultural & Social Justice Counseling Competencies

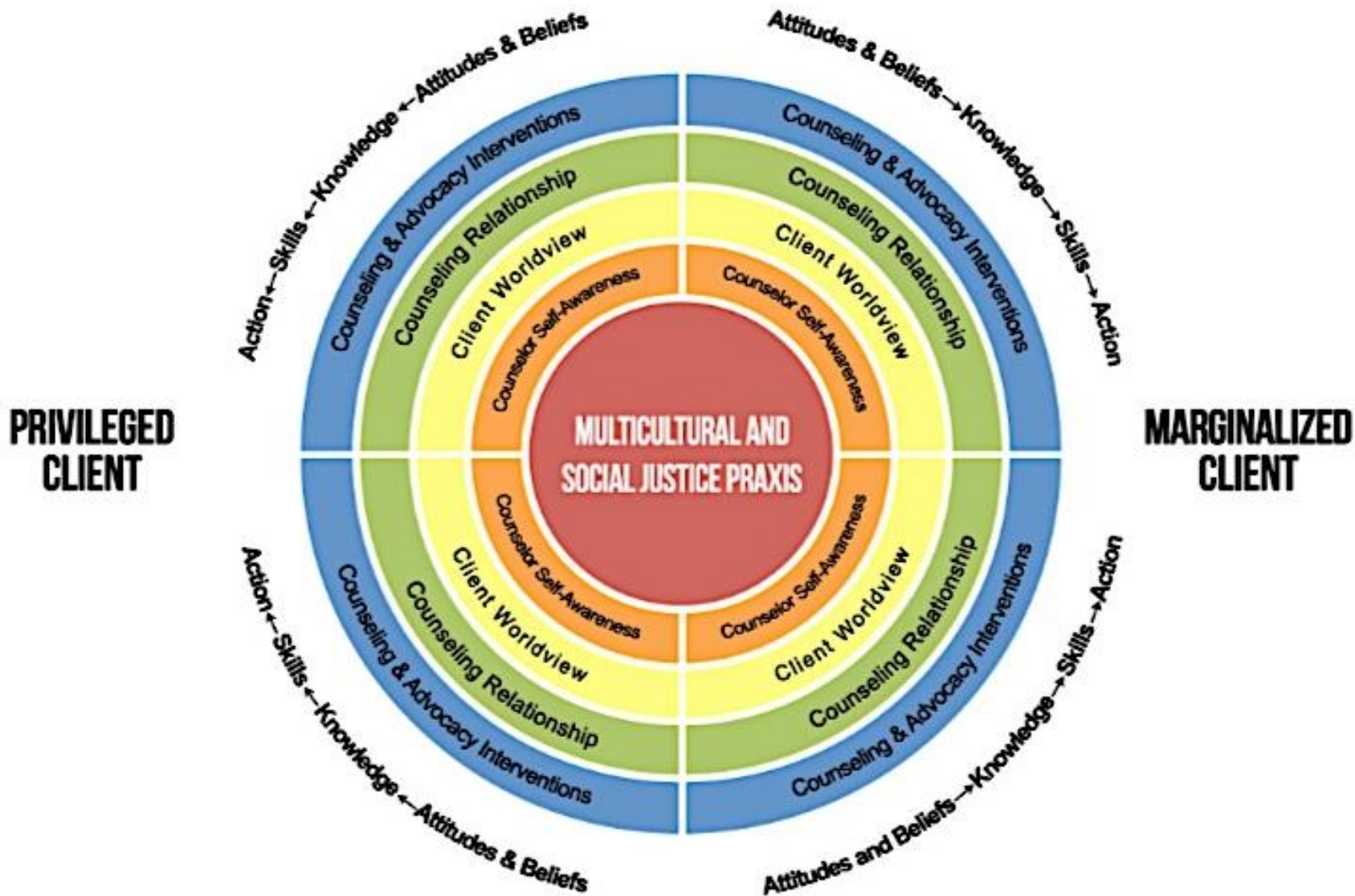
American Counseling Association

## Key Concepts

- Social Identities
- Social Group Statuses
- Power
- Privilege
- Oppression
- Strengths
- Assumptions
- Worldviews
- Values
- Beliefs
- Prejudices/Biases

○ Limitations

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COUNSELOR**



# Counselor Competence Basics

“Remember that everyone else is not exactly like you”

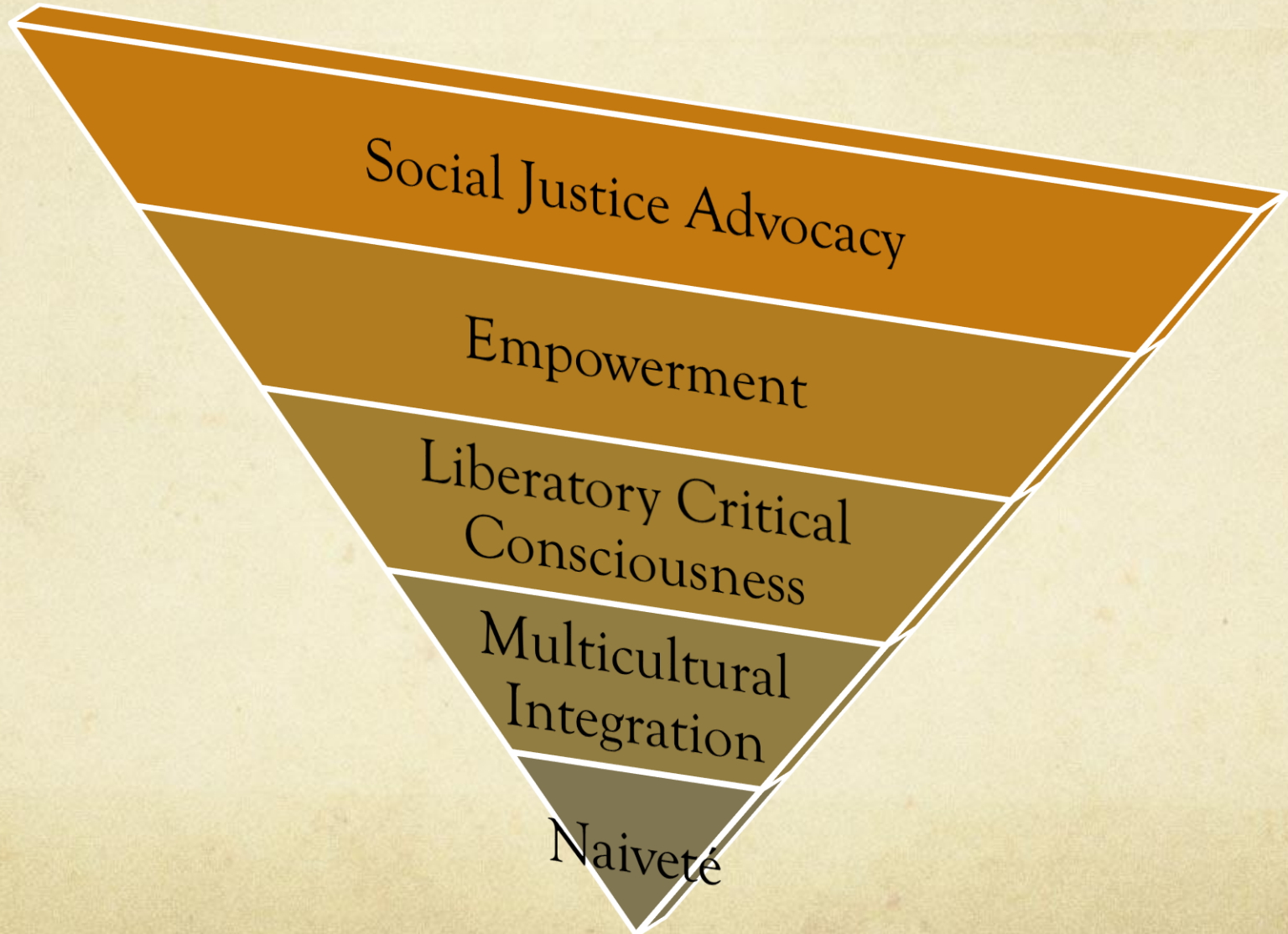
“When you do find yourself uncomfortable with differences, please look at yourself and your biases first”

(Egan, 2007, p. 11)



# Dimensions of Social Justice Model

Ratts, Anthony, & Santos, 2010



# Dimensions of Social Justice Model

Ratts, Anthony, & Santos, 2010

Incorporating “social justice into group work occurs in a developmental stage-like fashion...” however, “the degree to which social justice is experienced within group modalities varies depending on counselors’ familiarity, comfort level, and expertise with facilitating social justice issues” (p.162)

# Dimensions of Social Justice Model

Ratts, Anthony, & Santos, 2010

## Naiveté

- “Group is facilitated from an **intrapsychic** and **ethnocentric**-based perspective” (p. 162)
- “The group process, interactions among members, and the problems that occur within group approaches, are viewed generically” (p. 162)
- Group leaders “utilize interventions that ignore important social, political, economic, and cultural factors that can help group members better understand their experiences” (pp. 162-163)
- Clinicians “promote and maintain an oppressive status quo, even when group workers have the best of intentions” (p. 166)

# Dimensions of Social Justice Model

Ratts, Anthony, & Santos, 2010

## Multicultural Integration

- Extrapsychic – “group members are encouraged to understand each other and their experiences within a broader cultural context” (p. 163)
- “Group leaders focus their efforts on helping members understand the role culture plays in conceptualizing problems, group conflict, and the relationships formed between group members” (p. 163)

# Dimensions of Social Justice Model

Ratts, Anthony, & Santos, 2010

## Liberatory Critical Consciousness

- “Clients become aware that the problems they experience are connected to forces outside themselves, they begin to realize they are not to blame for their plight” (p. 164)
- Group members realize that “the problem is in the environment, and long lasting change can only come about by attending to the social, political, and economic conditions that negatively contribute to client stress” (p. 165)
- Group members gain a better understanding of themselves and the conditions that helped form their beliefs and the beliefs of others

# Dimensions of Social Justice Model

Ratts, Anthony, & Santos, 2010

## Empowerment

- Group members are encouraged to “find their voice, identify and build on strengths, and develop self-advocacy skills” (p. 165)
- Participants embrace their identity and advocate for themselves in the group

# Dimensions of Social Justice Model

Ratts, Anthony, & Santos, 2010

## Social Justice Advocacy

- Social Justice Advocacy “expands traditional boundaries of group” (p. 165)
- Advocacy skills obtained in the group generalize to one’s community
- “Taking an issue beyond the group setting and into the environment allows group members to work together to change social structures that are causing them stress” (p. 166)

# Dimensions of Social Justice Model

Ratts, Anthony, & Santos, 2010





# Unlearning Racism

## ○ Collaboration

Bard College Counseling Service

Bard Educational Opportunities Program (BEOP)

Bard's Trustee Leader Scholar (TLS) Program

## ○ Components

Workshops (closed/open, education & skill-building)

Open Forums (topical)

Counseling Groups (exploration, mental health)

Student Ambassadors

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