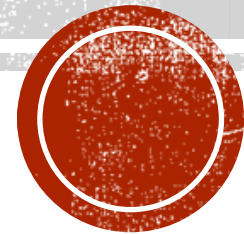


# CAK Conference 2023

USING A SOCIOLOGICAL LENS:

**INCLUSION, CONNECTION, &  
RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION  
IN OUR WORK WITH SENIORS**



University of Louisville

# WHAT WE'LL DO TODAY:

- Explore what it means to use a sociological lens
- Explore what it means to use a “small is all” framework
- Explore how we might foster greater inclusion, meaningful connections, and respectful communications in our work with seniors by asking powerful questions



# WHAT IS A SOCIOLOGICAL LENS?

- The sociological imagination:

Connects individuals' lives with the economic, political, and social context in which they live(d).

Connects biography with history.



**EXAMPLE**



# HOW MIGHT A SOCIOLOGICAL LENS AFFECT OUR WORK WITH SENIORS?



# WHAT IS A “SMALL IS ALL” FRAMEWORK?

We can ask ourselves:

- What are some small ways we can tweak our current practices?
- Then, when and how can we reflect on those small shifts in practice, and shift again as necessary?



# HOW CAN WE CREATE

- greater inclusion,
- meaningful connections, and
- respectful communication in our work with seniors?



# HOW CAN WE CREATE

- greater inclusion in our work with seniors?





# WHAT IS EQUITY?

- When people get what they need, according to need



# POWERFUL QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Who is coming to access our programs, services, and events?
- Who is not coming?
- Might any group(s) feel excluded from our programs, services, and events, even if this unintentional on our part?
  - Do those who are not attending know about these services?
  - Are there any cultural, income-based, language, or other barriers that might keep people from these services?
  - How can we find out – instead of guessing – about what keeps people away from these services?
  - What other programs, services, and events might better meet their needs?



# EQUITABLE CARE PRACTICES:

- We all have more to learn; equity is not a fixed point, but a continual journey.
- Think of equitable care as applied to your senior populations and choose one arena where you might want to make a small shift. (You know your own pain point(s) – choose what feels meaningful to you.)
- Write for a minute about the above.



# HOW CAN WE CREATE

- meaningful connections in our work with seniors
  - Between seniors and us, our staff
  - Between seniors themselves



# RESEARCH ON RELATIONSHIP-RICH PROGRAMS



# POWERFUL QUESTIONS TO ASK

Where do we see our senior populations developing meaningful connections

- With our staff members?
- With other seniors?

In other words, which programs, services, and/or events seems to foster these types of connections?

Are there programs, services, and/or events where we can foster these meaningful connections more intentionally?



# MEANINGFUL CONNECTION PRACTICES:

- Think of “meaningful connections” as applied to your senior populations and choose one arena where you might want to make a small shift. (You know your own pain point(s) – choose what feels meaningful to you.)
- Write for a minute about the above.



# HOW CAN WE CREATE

- respectful communications in our work with seniors?





# POWERFUL QUESTIONS TO ASK

In our events, services, and programs for seniors, where are we communicating most respectfully and powerfully?

- For those programs, what is it about the communications that make them so powerful with our senior populations?

Are there staff members who are particularly successful in their respectful communication with our seniors?

- What is it about their communications that make them so successful, and
- Are there ways in which these staff members can model for / inspire / train / encourage other staff members to communicate in similar ways?



# RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION PRACTICES:

- Think of “respectful communications” as applied to your senior populations and choose one arena where you might want to make a small shift. (You know your own pain point(s) – choose what feels meaningful to you.)
- Write for a minute about the above.



**SHARE OUT**



# **JOURNALING:**

- **What can I take away from today's workshop?**
- **What small shifts might I/we make in my/our practices with our seniors?**



# COLLECTIVE REFLECTION

- One thing I learned today is...
- I had no idea that...
- I will try to...





[ganoteconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:ganoteconsulting@gmail.com)

Cynthia Ganote on LinkedIn



# COMPASSION VS. EMPATHY

- Empathy is often defined as feeling the same emotions as the other person.
- Compassion makes space for others' emotions without identifying with them.

