INTERCULTURAL CONTACT HYPOTHESIS LESSON PLAN

Introduction:

In this activity, participants will be introduced to the Intercultural Contact Hypothesis and the four contact conditions that encourage reduced prejudice and good relations.

Participants will also consider the potential consequences of contact that does not meet these conditions.

Objectives:

As a result of this activity, participants will be able to:

1. Describe and define the four contact conditions.
2. Discuss how the four contact conditions can reduce prejudice and lead to better relations, and how the absence of these conditions can create unjust and unhealthy relational dynamics.
3. Correlate case studies to their corresponding contact condition.
4. Discuss personal experiences and examples of the four contact conditions.

Time:

40-60 minutes.

Group Size:

Small Group.

Materials:

Participant Instructions (in Downloads).

Intercultural Development Continuum Stages:

- Denial
- Polarization
- Minimization
- Acceptance

AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Goals:

Cultural Self-Awareness:

- To articulate insights into own cultural rules and biases (e.g., seeking complexity; aware of how their experiences have shaped these rules, and how to recognize and respond to cultural biases, resulting in a shift in self-description).

Openness:

- To initiate and develop interactions with culturally different others.
- To suspend judgment in valuing interactions with culturally different others.

Allport, G.W. (1954). *The nature of prejudice.* Cambridge, MA: Perseus Books.

Other Skills:

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion.

Activity Instructions:

1. The participants will be introduced to the four contact conditions of the Intercultural Contact Hypothesis (10 minutes):
    - Equal Group Status and/or Size
    - Common Goals
    - Intergroup Cooperation
    - Support of Authorities, Law, or Customs
2. In a group discussion, participants will answer questions related to the four contact conditions (10-15 minutes – choose as many of the questions below as time allows):
    - Why is establishing equal group status important to achieving common goals?
    - How could unequal group size create an increased potential for conflict?
    - How can working toward common goals lead to intergroup cooperation?
    - What happens when groups have goals, values, or needs that seem to conflict with each other?
    - How can intergroup cooperation be strengthened by the support of authorities, law, or customs?
    - How can institutional and societal leaders help reduce prejudice and/or improve relations?
    - When might these leaders get in the way of positive relations at the grassroots level?
3. Participants will then be introduced to case studies that correspond to a specific contact condition. Participants will read the case studies, identify which contact condition they correlate with, and discuss implications (10-15 minutes). (See PowerPoint in Downloads for case studies).
4. Participants will then engage in a final debrief in which they share personal and practical examples of the four contact conditions (10-15 minutes):
    - Which of the four conditions in Allport's Contact Conditions do you find the most challenging to meet? Why?
    - Can you think of a time when you were in a dynamic with a different group where there was unequal status? What were some challenges you faced navigating these dynamics? What was the outcome of the contact?
    - Can you think of personal examples of establishing common goals? What were they?
    - Describe an experience of achieving intergroup cooperation.

Allport, G.W. (1954). *The nature of prejudice.* Cambridge, MA: Perseus Books.

- Give an example of how support of authorities, law, or customs can help resolve intercultural conflicts.

Allport, G.W. (1954). *The nature of prejudice.* Cambridge, MA: Perseus Books.