



Working Across Systems and Multi-Disciplinary Team

Angela Tomlin, PhD, HSPP, IMH-E®
Stephan Viehweg, LCSW, ACSW, IMH-E®, CYC-P

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ECHO

With appreciation to our colleague Lynne Sturm, PhD, HSPP

Why discuss teams?



- ◦ Work intensification
- ◦ Emotional burden
- ◦ Secondary trauma



Discussion Points for Today

- How do you define “teams”?
- Team models and methods
 - Multi-Disciplinary
 - Huddle Up
- Conflict-competence
 - Self-regulatory strategies: Mindfulness
 - Listening



Team Transformation

- “Highly functional teams provide a new way to deliver care that puts the relationship at the center of health care delivery– with high quality data delivered real-time.”
 - Cambridge Health Alliance: Relational Team-Based Care

"You can do
what I cannot
do. I can do
what you
cannot do.
Together we can
do great
things."

- Mother Teresa

Team Formats

- **Intra-disciplinary**
 - Working within single discipline
- **Multidisciplinary**
 - Different disciplines work together
 - Each provides perspective
- **Interdisciplinary**
 - Different disciplines work together
 - Perspectives are integrated—true synthesis



Interdisciplinary team practice leads to:

- Innovation
- Better care/service
- Better client outcomes
- Improved team member satisfaction





Benefits of ID Practice (Green & Johnson, 2015)

- Opportunities to learn and go beyond traditional ways of thinking
- Access to people we would not normally reach in order to serve a larger body of people
- Potential to develop lifelong relationships and bonds that may be beneficial in the future
- Gain wisdom from others
- Access new resources and the potential to develop new skills
- Increased productivity through doing more work in less time



Benefits of ID Practice (Green & Johnson, 2015)

- Sharing recognition and accolades
- Association with others who are successful
- Sharing costs
- Improved access to moneys; some funding bodies only support collaborative projects
- Cross fertilization across disciplines
- The “pooling knowledge for tackling large and complex problems” (aka ‘wicked problems’)



How do we prepare for ID practice?

- ID training can help prepare learners for ID setting in work environment
- Training across disciplines has some of the same benefits as ID practice
 - Increased knowledge of roles of different disciplines
 - Opportunity to gain skills/knowledge outside of discipline
 - Building mutual respect

“Widespread adoption of a model of interprofessional education across the learning continuum is urgently needed. An ideal model would retain the tenets of professional identity formation while providing robust opportunities for interprofessional education and collaborative care.”

(Institute of Medicine 2015)



Teamfulness: High-Functioning Teams

- *Trust*: in colleague's credibility & competence
 - You have my back (so...can be open about mistakes; welcome feedback)
 - Is critical if responsibilities are to be “spread” rather than “centralized” in one professional
- *Reliability*: your word is your bond
- *Conflict-competent*: conflict engagement skills
- *Inter-professionalism*: collaboration characterized by mutual respect & shared values
 - Team approach trumps individualism



Cross System Team Challenges

- Infrastructure
- Culture and Language
- Practices
- Interpersonal
- Others???



Opportunities in Cross System Work

- Information sharing/data systems
- Communication and Language
- Funding, braiding and blending
- Cross training opportunities
- Shared values and cooperative goals

Children's Bureau (2017)



Types of exercises that facilitate teamwork

- Exercises that facilitate *team functioning*
 - Huddle (“getting ready”; debriefing)
- Exercises that facilitate *consensus* toward team mission/shared values
 - Appreciative Inquiry
- Reflective Practice for *conflict management*
 - Mindfulness Practices
 - Mindful Listening



What is a Huddle

- Allow quick check-ins *or* longer debriefings
- Pre-visit: brief efficient meeting of all staff who “touch” the family to plan for each patient’s visit
 - Make adjustments to benefit patients & improve work life quality for staff
- Benefits:
 - Increased communication
 - Collaboration precedes decision-making
 - Manage potential crises before they arise
 - Increased awareness of how each person contributes to practice’s smooth functioning
 - Personal update to prevent misinterpretations within team



Reflective Practice

- “..to do collaboration really well is a very complex action that requires *self-awareness*...it takes strength to allow people into the conversation in a way that they can truly change the trajectory...**You have to be willing to sit there and hear input and be willing to let the person impact the final decision.**”
(Jane Park, Corner Office, NYT)
- *Conflict competence requires emotional self-regulation skills*



Conflict Competence

- Conflict with hcp **colleagues** is most difficult form of conflict (more than with patients)
- Conflict engagement is capacity to enter into & address conflicts
 - Overcome tendency to avoid, which can lead to escalated situation
 - Establish expectation for regular feedback (not just when a problem arises)
 - Dialogic mindset (vs. adversarial)
 - “A walk in the woods”



Why Self-Regulatory Skills?

- Strong emotions are one of most difficult & intimidating aspects of conflict engagement
- Start with self-reflection: *Remember back....*
 - How did your family of origin air differences?
 - Think of a time when there was a disagreement....
 - What are your preferences about acceptable & unacceptable behaviors around conversation & debate?
 - Language, tone of voice, emotional content, participation
 - What message might you have taken away from this experience?



Self-regulatory skills include...

- Role taking during difficult conversations
 - “..it’s also just as important to see yourself as others see you...” (Sharon Sloane, Corner Office, NYT)
 - Pause & self-reflect: “How might (colleague/parent/patient) be experiencing/perceiving me during this interaction?”
- Mindful listening :
 - Strategies:
 - Attentional skills
 - Skills for listening without agenda or intent to influence:
 - Receptive, bearing witness role
 - Skills for relaxing in response to one’s escalating arousal/defensiveness



The Power in the Pause (Pema Chodron)

- Pause, relax, listen deeply....then speak
 - Meet other's reactivity with steady stillness
- **Pause:** (let the mind take a break)
 - Step outside of reflexive reaction to person & to identification with the "story"
 - Step into awareness of the moment via check-in with body sensations



Mindful Listening

- Relax into awareness of body tensions
 - Choose ease rather than tension
 - Ease= soften/yield vs. resist/fight/push away
- Receive things as they are...& become available to the other person
 - Meet reactions, thoughts, urges with “notice”, “curious”, “no judgment”
 - Recognize... but do not identify with as necessarily “the truth”
 - Allows you to choose whether to act upon the reaction/thought/urge...and how



Listen Deeply

- Without agenda
- Without internal press to change the mind of the other person
- Witness, hold the other's story
- Open to being influenced by the other's words



Learn more

- Gelles, D. (2015). *Mindful work: How meditation is changing business from the inside out*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Levy, D. (2016). *Mindful tech: How to bring balance to our digital lives*. Yale University Press.
- Marturano, J. (2014). *Finding the space to lead: A practical guide to mindful leadership*. Bloomsbury Press
- Suchman, A. et al. (2011). *Leading change in healthcare: Transforming organizations using complexity, positive psychology & relationship-centered care*. London, Radcliffe Publishing.



Burning Questions

- How do you define team?
- What is your team experience like? Especially in a pandemic?
- What does teamwork look like “cross-agency”?
- What does teamwork look like in a virtual environment?