

YIN AND YANG AS A TRANSFORMATIVE PERSEPECTIVE DIALOGUE

A RESEARCH PRESENTATION

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ABSTRACT

This interactive session encourages communication between individuals who may or may not be members of different identity groups. Identity groups have significant value for individuals in terms of belonging, but they can become hindrances and block interaction.

Yin and yang are an eastern concept that suggest a blending of perspectives that, in the western mindset, are often perceived of as opposites that must, by their nature, clash. This concept offers an alternative perspective, enabling perspective transformation and encouraging dialogue.

Mezirow speaks of a disorienting dilemma that can lead to perspective transformation. Participants will have an opportunity to understand and experience elements of yin and yang that can lead to this transformation, thus leaving behind the rigid extremes of many societal ideas, such as: male or female, gay or straight, etc. Something cannot be still without movement. Bad cannot exist without good, vice versa. If one cannot exist without the other, we must understand the importance of everything in between the extremes.

Attendees will participate in safe, respectful, deep group discussion and interactive learning activities, and will leave with a better understanding of how they might better facilitate communication using this new perspective.

SELECT REFERENCES

Mezirow, J. (1991). *Transformative dimensions in adult learning*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

Sodan, A. C. (1999). Toward successful personal work and relations—Applying a yin/yang model for classification and synthesis. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 27(1), 39-71. doi:10.2224/sbp.1999.27.1.39

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