The Compass

FOCUSING ON "AGE"- ADDRESSING MODEL

Last year, we introduced the ADDRESSING Model (Hays, 2016), a framework to understand the most significant aspects of human identity. Age, generational differences, and what they "mean" are socially defined, so the social significance varies from one culture to another. However, they have implications in the way children/youth, adults, and older adults are treated.

SELF-REFLECT

• Growing up, how was each generation expected to behave? How are you expected to behave in relation to each of these age groups? What if they are a different gender or social status than you?

• Do you "fit in" with the labels for your age and generation?

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

• Ever heard of "AGEISM"? Defined by the WHO (2021) as:

    o "... the stereotypes (how we think), prejudice (how we feel), and discrimination (how we act) directed towards people on the basis of their age. It can be institutional, interpersonal, or self-directed."

• What comes to mind when you read: Why is the Silent Generation so...? Why are Boomers so...? Why is Gen X so...? Why are Millennials so...? Why is Gen Z so...?

    o Those first thoughts your brain finds to these questions are often the stereotypes and prejudices that are socially transmitted (aka implicit bias). If we act on these, even unintentionally, that leads to discrimination, or inequity in behavioral healthcare

    o The Five Generations Currently in the Workplace (Gorges, 2018)

Generation	Time Frame	Associated Stereotypes
Greatest Generation	1922-1943	"Silents," Self-Sacrifice, value authority
Baby Boomers	1944-1960	"Workaholics," competition, communication
Generation X	1961-1980	"Latchkey generation," "Lost generation," work-life balance
Millennials	1981-2000	"Anxious generation," "Everybody gets a ribbon," idealistic
Generation Z	Since 2000	"Internet generation," Digital Natives, stressed & depressed

    o For Gorges, these generations are a myth perpetuated by media, disallowing for varied experiences, with no consensus amongst researchers or outside of the US.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

• Use the ADDRESSING Model to find gaps in understanding and take trainings to resolve them.

• "Onlyness" (Merchant, 2019) describes the unique and original space that each individual "occupies" based on their experiences and the various factors that make up their identity (aka intersectional approach).

    o Meet client and coworkers in their "Onlyness"

• Spend time with individuals spanning various generations or ages.

• Question immediate thoughts & feelings regarding age:

    o Ageism leads to poor health & reduced quality of life for older adults

    o Ageism causes youth and younger adults to feel like they lack value

Any thoughts? Please share with us at CulturalCompetence@KernBHRS.org

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