



TORONTO
NEIGHBOURHOOD
CENTRES

Earning The Rainbow: Strengthening Inclusive Practice in the Workplace (Staff)

This workshop series and materials were prepared by William Porter in collaboration with members of the Rainbow Affinity Group for Toronto Neighbourhood Centres (TNC). You are free to use/adapt the materials as long as they are credited to: William Porter and Toronto Neighbourhood Centres.

ABSTRACT:

This workshop series focuses on our workplace environments, exploring how we can strengthen inclusive practice. These are experiential workshops to help identify challenges and explore solutions.

BACKGROUND:

This series was built over many meetings of the Toronto Neighbourhood Centres' Rainbow Affinity Group and informed by the lived experience of front-line workers, agency staff, managers and executive directors. The Rainbow Affinity Group is a Toronto based network of 2SLGBTQIA+ services providers who collaborate on policy development, evaluation, education, celebrations and mutual aid efforts.

RATIONALE:

Utilizing an experiential approach to facilitation, this series aims to improve inclusive practice through evaluation and mutual understanding of the unique challenges faced in our workplaces. The designers of this series agreed that we often learn the most from our mistakes and strived to build a safer learning environment where our mistakes can be modeled for collective advancement.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE:

This is a 4-part workshop series designed for both individual agency implementation and broad multi-agency engagement. Designed as "building blocks," the series moves from the practical aspects of client experience, to the staff experience, to the management and upper management experience, and then concludes with a learning exchange.

WORKSHOPS:

- #1 – Don't Assume (Front Line)
- #2 – Strengthening Inclusive Practice in the Workplace (Staff)
- #3 – Strengthening Inclusive Practice in the Workplace (Management)
- #4 – Learning exchange (All)

ROLES:

Co-Facilitator #1:

- Lead Topic Introductions/Transitions
- Modeling Behaviours (Vulnerability, Compassion) to Promote Participation

Co-Facilitator #2:

- Dramatic Reading of Scenarios
- Modeling Behaviours (Vulnerability, Compassion) to Promote Participation

Co-Facilitator #3:

- Dramatic Reading of Scenarios
- Modeling Behaviours (Vulnerability, Compassion) to Promote Participation
- Chat Monitoring

Co-Facilitator #4:

- Dramatic Reading of Scenarios
- Modeling Behaviours (Vulnerability, Compassion) to Promote Participation
- Slide Management

Evaluation Team:

- Manages pre-post evaluations
- Transfers & Shares evaluation insights.

SLIDE 1: EARNING THE RAINBOW: STRENGTHENING INCLUSIVE PRACTICE IN THE WORKPLACE

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

WELCOME:

This workshop focuses on our workplace environments, exploring how we can strengthen inclusive practice in areas from hiring, to meetings, to community programming. This workshop is exclusively for non-management staff and will inform our next workshop exclusively for management staff.

These are experiential workshops to help staff identify challenges and explore solutions from real life scenarios. We will give participants an opportunity to explore the gaps between policies and practices and day to day realities with the hope of enhancing a safe and welcoming workplace for everyone.

SLIDE 2: AGENDA

CO-FACILITATOR INTRODUCTIONS (*DROP OUT OF SLIDES*): (2min each)

Name, Pronoun, Agency & Role. Share one story of a mistake or challenge that models the vulnerability and honesty needed for the workshop.

Prompts:

What/who inspired this workshop? (RAG context)

Why – personally – are we here? (Lived experience)

Who are we? (Staff; there are no managers here).

SLIDE 3: COMMUNITY GUIDELINE STATEMENT

We invite everyone to turn on their camera, as this is NOT recorded. Everyone in this workshop has unique experiences, knowledge and ways of knowing. In support of that reality, we ask that everyone strive to share time equitably, build off our fellow participants' ideas and – when we do not have consensus – challenge the idea and not the individual. This is a learning environment with no prerequisites. These can be very personal stories; and so, if you want to share but want to distance or keep a story confidential, please feel free to say, “someone told me” or “I heard that”, and remove any gender/agency/time markers. If anyone would like to add to the community guidelines, please drop your ideas into the chat as we walk through introductions.

Prompts:

“one mic, one diva”

“one step forward to speak, one step back to listen”

PARTICIPANT INTROS (*DROP OUT OF SLIDES*):

Name, Pronoun (NOT required, no outing), Agency & Role. What brings you to this workshop?

Thank you all for sharing!

SLIDE 4: HIRING

A candidate meets with potential employers for the role of a 2SLGBTQIA+ Program Coordinator.

The candidate passes by the pride flag on the window and several posters pertaining to queer and trans programming and is impressed with the amount of visibility on the walls.

Manager: “Welcome! I am the manager for community programs... When running a program, how do you ensure a positive space? Mmmhmm, yes... How do you avoid misgendering new clients? ...Great, great answer... We have regular equity and inclusion training here, so we expect that... What would you do if a participant uses unacceptable language? ...Yes, yes, that's very good.”

At the end of the interview, the manager offers to walk the candidate to the exit of the building which the candidate accepts. The candidate seems to hesitate, but in the end simply thanks the manager for their time and leaves the office.

Prompts:

What is going on here for the interviewee?

Does anyone have a similar experience or story they can share?

SLIDE 5: TRAINING vs PRACTICE

Prompts:

How do we support inclusion?

How do we ensure staff safety?

SLIDE 6: MEETING

In late April, an ED asks a queer staff member to attend a meeting about the Pride Parade with other members from the TNC network. This has nothing to do with their job, but of course they agree.

ED: “Thanks everyone for joining. Our 2SLGBTQIA+ community is well represented at this table, and we love to have our allies here too!.. With Pride just around the corner, there is a lot to do and little time to do it. ... So who can be lead?

[Silence...]

Chorus: “I have Refugee Week” “I have Healthy Hearts” “I have ???”

QS: I have run Pride marches in the past... I'm part time so have some capacity concerns, but...

ED: Wonderful! Not to worry...

Chorus: “We will all support you!”

Prompts:

What is going on here for the staff?

Does anyone have a similar experience or story they can share?

SLIDE 7: ACCOUNTABILITY

Prompts:

How do we support inclusion?

How do we ensure staff safety?

SLIDE 8: BREAK (5 MIN)

SLIDE 9: COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING

A frontline worker comes to your agency to complete a safety check prior to booking your community space. She takes note of the free wifi, access to gender neutral washrooms, but notices all sports programming is gendered and there is no pride programming visibility. The event date has arrived, and you and the same frontline worker are welcoming community members. The event is open to all, and some youth and their guardians are attending.

You both overhear a conversation:

Child: “Mom! Is that a man or a woman?”

Mother: “Shhhhh! You know that’s a man.”

You look at each other...

Prompts:

What is going on here for the staff?

Does anyone have a similar experience or story they can share?

SLIDE 10: ALLYSHIP

Prompts:

How do we support inclusion?

How do we ensure staff safety?

SLIDE 11: THANK YOU

CREDITS:

Prepared by:
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We are thankful for the support of members of the Rainbow Affinity Group. In particular, the following members for their contributions throughout the development process:

Nickie D’Cunha
Pam Gawn
Ingrid Palmer
Abinna Subramaniam
Chi Cheng Wat



Strengthening Inclusive Practice in the Workplace

Earning the Rainbow Series

Agenda:

- Land Acknowledgement
- Community Guidelines & Introductions
- Hiring
- Meetings

-----Break-----

- Community Programming
- Evaluation

Community Guidelines

- This workshop isn't recorded, we invite everyone to turn on their camera if they feel comfortable
- Be conscious of everyone's unique experiences, knowledge and ways of knowing
- Share time equitably
- When challenging a point, make sure to challenge the *idea* and not the *individual*
- This is a learning environment with no prerequisites of knowledge or experience
- If you want to share, but want to keep a story confidential, please feel free to say: "someone told me" or "I heard that" and remove any gender/agency/time markers
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At the end of the interview, the manager offers to walk the candidate to the exit of the building which the candidate accepts. The candidate seems to hesitate, but in the end simply thanks the manager for their time and leaves the office.

Hiring...

Training vs Practice

How do we promote inclusion?

How do we ensure staff safety?

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[Silence...]

Chorus: "I have Refugee Week" "I have Healthy Hearts" "I have too many clients!"

QS: I have run Pride marches in the past... I'm part time so have some capacity concerns, but...

ED: Wonderful! Not to worry...

Corous: "We will all support you!"



Meetings...

Accountability

Training vs Practice

How do we promote inclusion?

How do we ensure staff safety?

BREAK



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The event date has arrived, and you and the same front line worker are welcoming community members. The event is open to all and some youth and their guardians are attending.

You both overhear a conversation:

“Mom! Is that a man or a woman?”

“Shhhhh! You know that’s a man.”

You look at each other...

Community Programming...

Accountability

Training vs Practice

Allyship

How do we promote inclusion?

How do we ensure staff safety?

Post-Workshop Evaluation

The Earning the Rainbow Workshop Series is the product of the efforts and expertise of many contributors

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