

# Incorporating Other Voices

Facilitating the Dialectic Between  
Public Health and the Contextual  
Health Concerns of the Community



Black Health Coalition of Wisconsin, Inc.

“Of all the forms of inequality,  
Injustice in health is the most  
shocking and the most  
inhuman.”

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., 1963



# The Leadership Revolution in Health Care

## Porter-O'Grady and Wilson (1995)

- “Health care should not be viewed as isolated from other social realities. It is important to realize that violence, education, family dynamics, and social commitment, for example, have an effect on who ends up in the health care system. Unaddressed social concerns will always have some impact.”



# The Leadership Revolution in Health Care

## Porter-O'Grady and Wilson (1995)

Organizations are often held hostage by those who have no intention of changing. Responding to the noise they make takes up precious time that could otherwise be spent making the necessary changes.



# The Leadership Revolution in Health Care

## Porter-O'Grady and Wilson (1995)

- “For too long in organizations the 5-10 percent of those who actively oppose innovation have articulated their feelings with great energy and determination. Opponents of a change typically find something wrong with the change, reasons not to make the change, problems with moving in the new direction, or difficulties with the new demands the change will create.”



# Negotiating At An Uneven Table

Source: Kritek, 1994

- “When negotiating a conflict, on one’s own behalf or that of others, a site of negotiation is created, a table. Each person brings to that table a set of personal givens.....In a culture where some persons are viewed as appropriate to be at a given table, others are implicitly viewed as inappropriate. The latter group often struggles over time to get to the table, to be a part of the negotiation.”



# Negotiating At An Uneven Table

Source: Kritek, 1994

- It is often difficult to accept the fact that getting to the table assures nothing at all.
- One may be permitted or even invited to the table, but is unaware of all the implicit and explicit assumptions that guide being at the table.
- Everyone at the table may communicate an assumption of parity among participants, but the emotional acceptance of such parity may not be established, either consciously or unconsciously.



Health Education and Community Empowerment:  
Conceptualizing and Measuring Perceptions of Individual,  
Organizational, and Community Control  
Israel, Checkoway, Schulz, Zimmerman (1994)

## Definition of community

A community is a locale or or domain that is characterized by the following elements:

1. Membership --a sense of identity and belonging
2. Common symbol systems--similar language, rituals, and ceremonies;
3. Shared values and norms:



Health Education and Community Empowerment:  
Conceptualizing and Measuring Perceptions of Individual,  
Organizational, and Community Control  
Israel, Checkoway, Schulz, Zimmerman (1994)

**Con't Definition of Community**

4. Mutual influence--community members have influence and are influenced by each other;
5. Shared needs and commitment to meeting them; and
6. Shared emotional connection---members share common history, experiences, and mutual support.



# Health Promotion and Empowerment: Reflections on Professional Practice Labonte (1994)

Empower :When described as a reflexive verb means the act of gaining or assuming power. In this definition individuals or groups are taking control themselves.



# Public Health Research and Lay Knowledge

## Popay and Williams (1996)

- “The social patterning of health and illness--the way in which some groups or classes of people become ill and others remain healthy--is a subject that calls out for the imaginative use of many different disciplinary perspectives and methods in close collaboration with lay people.



# Public Health Research and Lay Knowledge Popay and Williams (1996)

The question of the meanings people attach to health and illness has emerged as an important theme but still seen as only 'lay beliefs' and therefore not real knowledge .



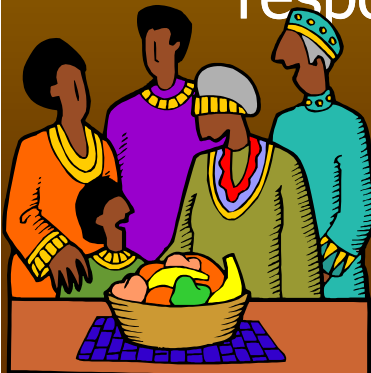
# Health Promotion and Empowerment: Reflections on Professional Practice Labonte (1994)

- 1. All partners have established their own power and legitimacy. This often requires a period of conflict, and some enduring strain between powerful and powerless groups, and a transfer of resources from the former to the latter.
- 2. All partners have a well defined mission statement
- 3. All partners respect each other's organizational autonomy by finding that visionary goal that is larger than anyone of their independent goals.



# Health Promotion and Empowerment: Reflections on Professional Practice Labonte (1994)

- 4. Community groups partners are well rooted in the locality and have a constituency to which they are accountable.
- 5. Institutional partners have a commitment to partnership approaches in work with community groups.
- 6. Clear objectives and expectations of the partners are developed.
- 7. Written agreements are made clarifying objectives, responsibilities, means, and norms.



# Health Promotion and Empowerment: Reflections on Professional Practice Labonte (1994)

- 8. Community workers have clear mandates to support community group partners without attempting to get them to “buy into” the institutional partner’s mandate and goal.
- 9. All partners strive for and nurture the human qualities of open mindedness, patience, and respect.



# Introduction to Community Empowerment, Participatory Education, and Health Wallerstein and Bernstein (1994)

- Community Empowerment: a social-action process in which individuals and groups act to gain mastery over their lives in the context of changing their social and political environment.
- Community Empowerment starts when people listen to each other, engage in participatory dialogue, identify their commonalities, and construct new strategies for change.



# Ethnographic Approach to Community Organization and Health Empowerment

Braithwaite, Bianchi, Taylor (1994)

1. The impact of targeting behavior change of individuals, without efforts to bring about systemic change at multiple social levels that shape public health practice, is diluted by focusing on the person only.



# Ethnographic Approach to Community Organization and Health Empowerment

Braithwaite, Bianchi, Taylor (1994)

2. Ethnographic techniques can establish the context for problem solving and conflict resolution; such strategies are less commonly cited as essential tools for enhancing the milieu of a coalition partnership than are decision-making strategies for planning and implementation (decision making typically involves conflict, negotiation, and compromise).



# Conclusion



?

Black Health Coalition of Wisconsin, Inc.