

TEXT CHAT CONTENTS

WEB CONFERENCE

Engaging Men and Boys

Wednesday, June 30, 2010

1:00PM-2:30PM Eastern 10:00AM – 11:30AM Pacific

Presenter

Tony Porter

Public

Hello!

hi y'all!

Any opportunity to learn!

Hi all,

Nell Myhand: What groups of men have we historically worked with

Our partners and sons (of females in the movement); community men

Young men

coaches, male teachers

Men in colleges

I am Rose, not Christine: We have worked with teens, batterers, criminal legal system men, allies

Nell Myhand: We need to engage grassroots community based organizations because...

This is where we get to the community men who are not parts of the systems. Peace and justice groups, community action programs, etc.

It is the best way to get beyond talking to "the choir"

Get to men who are already political

Because we need those who really make up the norms of the community

to engage those involved in the problem with the solution

Grassroots organizations are engaged in work that is, hopefully, accountable to the community... to leaders of movements.

I think it will be helpful to know what first engaged men like Tony, Juan, Ted, Jackson, etc. to be allies and activists

I am working on a national conference; a program director is looking at the workshops and structure and accusing us of "catering to 'special interest groups'" and why can't we all just be together with one goal? Arrggghh!

I would ask her how is she defining "all"?

I sent her a two page, detailed letter. Cannot say more right now.

That's for the program director who is challenging any attention paid to working with "difference".

"All" is a composite of many that are "different".

The woman mentioned is typical of those who think all folks will be fine with things as she, in the dominant, privileged group, do

Bottom line is having RESPECT for folks in communities, not thinking we come in to "teach" or "give them" lessons. (like the horrific Ruby Payne seminars.)

Ruby Payne seminars are sold all over the country to teach poor people how to be more "like us". Racist and classist... and making tons of money from education systems.

I am pleased to say that in our NYS DELTA projects we are keeping an anti-oppression context for our work.

It's interesting... I'm having to rack my brain to think of the community organizations that are truly grassroots, from this definition. I would say: NAACP; Voices of the Heart (a consumer mental health organization); and perhaps Glens Falls Youth Center. I'd have to think if there are others. OK, also Open Door soup kitchen.

I love the model. It gives me more ideas on how to reach deeper into my community. One of our projects is to train adult men in healthy manhood so they can facilitate workshops to boys in their own communities. I'm using Kivel's Young Men's Work curriculum. We will encourage the men to tweak the curriculum to fit the needs of the boys they know/work with.

There are some ways in which our own victim services organization is grassroots, but maybe not on all levels.

Another layer of silencing has occurred recently with the right wing... e.g Sarah Palin.. pproudly and sarcastically talk about "grassroots" and "community organizers" as undesirable and problematic... and this now can be a layer we have to work through in our work, getting that mythology repeated by uninformed folks.

Nell Myhand: What strategies we are using to overcome these challenges?

I just thought of another thing... we've been doing work to engage Head Start fathers; this is another way we are pushing ourselves to reach those who have less than middle class folks.

We need some help sometimes to counter the dishonest messages from people like Palin

We need facts, liek those given us form Paul Kivel's work, economic justice organizations, etc.

part of the problem is when "grassroots" gets negatively racialized and is thus coded racism.

more spokespeople to counter her (and others) messages. I don't feel that we have anyone speaking out on need/importance of grassroots.

David Lee: Paul Kivel and Allan Creighton are revising Helping Teens Stop Violence -- to be released in the WInter

besides Obama campaign

when middle class white people organize against a multi-national corporation depleting their communities of resources, they're considered "concerned citizens".

Attempting to organize as allies to women of color in the anti-domestic violence movement in NY state, to continue to respect and listen to the voice of women of color in the movement.

clarification: when poor people or PoC organize and have advocates, the issues get racialized and tape into peoples racism. but, when mainstream or white people do it, they're called "concerned citizens".

Striving to make our young men's primary prevention program be youth-led, to counter adultism

There was no space for this in certain groups and organizations, and the context of the concern is real important I have always believed that we need healing for all people who are oppressed!

Nell Myhand: Men...

I think we can make space for men to heal concurrently with holding men collectively accountable for ending men's violence against women.

We are encouraged to hide from the truth of the effects of racism, classism, militarism, heterosexism, etc.

If we cannot work on the concepts of healthy "manhood" we cannot do any anti-oppression work. We are all interdependent... As Martin Luther King, Jr. so brilliantly pointed out over and over

There are a whole lot of men out there/in here who are hurting from living with DV/SA in their younger years!

Every organizer and activist should read everything that bell hooks ever wrote!!

Tony, it's great to be in this discussion with you! I think we have to have a good, careful plan for moving down this necessary path of men's healing. We know there are/were good reasons in the movement for staying away from the stuff that we called "therapeutic approach" etc., that could be a slippery slope to "excuses". So people may be suspicious of something called "men's healing". We have to know how to talk about it well. Because yes, I agree about men's healing....I think we all agree that a little baby boy is completely good, and doesn't ask to be indoctrinated to be an agent of sexism against women and girls. And... as I have noted to you, other than being female, every other demographic group I personally belong to is privileged... so I must be an ally and learn from my colleagues about how we support healing across a range of oppressed groups.

Yes, I agree!

What is important in addressing healing for any of us is to stay very clear about who is in power, how domination and oppression works, and the difference between the malice of the oppressor, versus the real pain of the oppressed, (Friere)

Nell Myhand: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/S7GL53J>

Thanks!

Chad Sniffen: Thanks everyone.

For the pod discussions, I would love to continue to talk about challenging ourselves to engage a wide range of people in the community including those with less power... talk about what does "grassroots" mean, using an anti-oppression lens for this work, etc.
Thank you!

Ty

Thank you!

see everyone in the pods!