1 Why This? Why Now? Why Me?

Words like "freedom," "justice" and "democracy" are not common concepts; on the contrary, they are rare. People are not born knowing what these are. It takes enormous, and above all, individual effort to arrive at the respect for other people that these words imply.

—*James Baldwin*
(The Price of the Ticket, *1985)*

The spirit of democracy is not a mechanical thing to be adjusted by abolition of forms. It requires change of heart.

—*Mahatma Gandhi*

Justice is what love sounds like when it speaks in public.

—*Michael Eric Dyson*
(I May Not Get There with You, *2001)*

Until the great mass of people shall be filled with the sense of responsibility for each other's welfare, social justice can never be attained.

—*Helen Keller*
(Out of the Dark, *1920)*

We cannot teach people anything; we can only help them discover it themselves.

—*Galileo Galilei*

I have made myself what I am.

—*Shawnee Chief Tecumseh (*Address to General William Henry Harrison, *1810*)

We have to confront ourselves. Do we like what we see in the mirror? And, according to our light, according to our understanding, according to our courage, we will have to say yea or nay — and rise!

—*Maya Angelou (*Mother Jones, *1995)*

GETTING CENTERED

You have most likely chosen this book because you want to help yourself and others work in a way that fosters diversity and inclusion, high expectations, cultural competence, and/or equity. In short, you want to do your best to guide the Cultural Proficiency journey for yourself and others. Take a few moments to write your response to this question: Why do you do this work (or aspire to do this work)?

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EPISODE ONE: AN INVITATION
THAT DIDN'T SEEM SO INVITING TO JACK

Jack's heart sank as he read the e-mail from the director of his department. It was an invitation—a summons, really—to attend a Cultural Proficiency seminar. For a full five days! The term *Cultural Proficiency* was new, Jack observed, but surely this seminar was just another cultural diversity training effort? With his heavy workload and the fact that he had already completed several diversity presentations, surely he didn't need another one?

What had begun as a promising Monday was quickly going south. Jack had dropped off his two daughters at school, rushed to his office, and arrived ten minutes early. With those ten precious minutes, he'd hoped to get a jump-start on his week. He was behind on three deadlines and had two observations of math teachers that afternoon. His main project of overhauling the district's math curriculum was more demanding than he'd anticipated: his calendar was jammed for months with meetings, workshop presentations, and observations and consultations with math teachers.

This invitation to a five-day seminar seriously disrupted his plans. The seminar was in three weeks, and his director had instructed him to clear his calendar for those five days. With so many pressing tasks and deadlines, how would he make up that time? What's more, Jack had never experienced those types of presentations to be particularly helpful. The topic may have been diversity, but people—perhaps including himself—had always been reluctant to discuss anything of substance having to do with the subject. He didn't need a repeat of these tedious sessions. But apparently Lillie Cohen, the director of his department and his immediate supervisor, thought differently.

He read the e-mail again.

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Dear Jack: You are invited to participate in a leadership cohort
that will explore Cultural Proficiency through a five-day seminar
facilitated by two international consultants, Drs. Barbara
Campbell and Frank Westman. Over the past few months, they have
served as facilitators of a similar process for the
superintendent, senior leadership, the board of education, local
government officials, and community leaders. As a result,
Stocklin County Public Schools leadership has recommended and
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approved formation of this leadership cohort, tasked with
supporting the start of a widespread focus on facilitating
Cultural Proficiency for Stocklin staff. You would be an
important asset to this group and overall process. If you
accept, please clear your calendar for the first week of next
month. Thank you for your commitment to every student in
Stocklin County.

                                               Sincerely,
                                             Lillie Cohen
                            Director of Curriculum and Instruction
                               Stocklin County Public Schools
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"Cultural Proficiency . . . what the . . ." Jack's grip tightened around his coffee mug. Surely Lillie had made a mistake? He was already culturally sensitive! What was Cultural Proficiency anyway? Some sort of "sensitivity training" for staff who didn't have any common sense when it came to dealing with people who didn't look like them? Or who'd broken the "rules" of political correctness? Or didn't know the rules to begin with? There were people around with bigoted backgrounds or tendencies, but Jack, as the product of a multiracial high school and a liberal city, knew the score.

"Can't I just take a test that proves I'm not a racist?" Jack muttered. "I don't have time for this!" Dark clouds seemed to gather over his head. Moments ago, getting caught up on work seemed within his grasp. Now he felt that possibility slip-sliding away. Snatched away, rather, by this lesser priority.

Jack's jargon detector went into high alert. What was up with the term *facilitate*? It seemed like the latest edu-speak buzzword. Perhaps the district leaders were rebranding diversity presenters as *facilitators* to make these tiresome workshops seem more interactive. Lillie's phrase that these international facilitators had facilitated "a similar process" had Jack scratching his head. Since when was a seminar a *process?* Was this more jazzed-up jargon?

Even the name of the workshop was annoying. Cultural Proficiency. He'd first heard the term a few months ago, and its use was on the rise. Without questioning anyone or putting much thought into it, Jack figured it was the most recent trendy term for diversity or maybe multicultural education.

Like many of his colleagues, Jack had only cursory knowledge of district leadership's recent involvement with Cultural Proficiency consultants. He knew they'd been meeting in response to numerous issues—some downright troubling issues—that had emerged as the result of the growing diversity of the student population in Stocklin County. The leadership had stated that their goals were to improve the school system. Jack knew what some of these issues were:

- Stocklin staff members were struggling to have productive conversations in response to disaggregated data. Results were mixed. District-wide student data had clearly exposed disproportionate student outcomes according to race and ethnicity as well as between and among other student groups. But it was almost as if some staff members would rather not engage in the equity conversation at all than to risk saying the wrong thing or using the wrong term with the result of possibly being labeled as prejudiced by what some staff referred to as "the political correctness police."

- Public response to the recent school redistricting process had become racialized and politicized. The community seemed divided. At least one hate group had emerged, writing threatening letters to district-level administrators and to an African American school principal. The messages were to keep "those" kids out of "our" community.

- To date, Stocklin County School System had experienced two decades of population growth, doubling in size from approximately twenty thousand to forty thousand students. Student demographics according to race shifted from

  - 76% to 47% White,
  - 10% to 16.5% Black/African American,
  - 8% to 16% Asian,
  - 3.5% to 12% Hispanic,
  - 0.5% to 0.5% Native American, and
  - 2% to 8% Two or More Races.

- Families in the district now spoke more than twice as many languages as they had one decade prior: fifty-three different languages, representing seventy different nations. Most spoke English, Spanish, or Korean.

- At the start of the school year, the headline in the local newspaper read, "Stocklin: Now a Majority Minority County." This headline spurred polarizing conversations. A local blogger wrote about how the increasing diversity was "ruining this once-great community." Meanwhile, a national magazine had identified Stocklin as the country's second-best community in which to live, citing its high-performing schools, quality community amenities, and ethnic diversity.

- The school superintendent had identified global and cultural competence as "21st-century skills" for every student to become college, career, and community ready. One of the first priorities was to increase world language curricular offerings and expand these offerings into the elementary schools. Another priority was ensuring excellence (inclusion, high expectations, and cultural and global competence) with equity in curriculum, instruction, classroom and school environments, and district policies.

Jack knew these facts, figures, and priorities. He was an educator committed to his profession, to his community, and to his students—especially underserved students on the margins. Thus, he was sympathetic and supportive of the district's stretching itself to improve service for the increasingly diverse population. But he struggled to understand why he, Jack McManus, personally needed training in Cultural Proficiency, especially for five days. Wasn't that preaching to the choir? He was already on their side!

During Jack's five years as the district's math curriculum specialist, his goal had been to make math accessible to all students. Wasn't that culturally proficient? In fact, he was in the middle of an overhaul of math curriculum and instruction that was being well received by teachers, praised by leaders (including the head of the local NAACP), and recognized by several national organizations. These new instructional units applied sound theory and research to engage diverse learners. They leveraged group work employed numerous learning modalities, and even integrated the arts. This approach gave students a voice. Jack believed that he was already serving the diverse students of

Stocklin County by doing what he did best. If he could just finish this overhaul of math curriculum and instruction and get all teachers sufficiently trained, he would be able to rescue students on the margins.

Jack couldn't shake the idea of an actual test for antiracism: a formal test that would identify staff in need of diversity training. "If only the department had a test, they'd see that I don't need this," he ruminated. "I'm white but have an antiracism resume. I went to a diverse high school with a multiracial group of friends. My college electives dealt with diversity and sociology. I was in the first wave of education majors required to take the multicultural education teacher preparation course. I'm focused on closing the achievement gap through curriculum and instruction."

Tough luck. This so-called invitation may have been worded politely, as if he had the freedom to refuse—but he didn't have a choice. Not really. Not if he valued his career. Not if he wanted to avoid being labeled as someone inclined toward insubordination. He didn't want to end up like his social studies counterpart whose career—rumor had it—had been stalled indefinitely because she spoke out against a superintendent's initiatives years ago.

Still, Jack thought, Lillie Cohen was an educator he respected. Her commitment to social justice was a trait he admired and emulated. In addition, she was highly competent. Jack had never seen her display poor judgment. So perhaps . . . perhaps she knew more than he did. Perhaps he should be a little more open to this facilitation process she obviously believed in.

Still . . . five full days! He was losing control of his overcrowded calendar. He was being yanked away—for a huge chunk of time—from his work to attend this event. Ironically, this would delay his completion of the curriculum and the corresponding teacher training that would actually benefit students being oppressed.

Trying not to clench his teeth, Jack cancelled his appointments. Never had there been such an uninviting invitation as Lillie Cohen's invitation to Cultural Proficiency. Jack leaned back in his chair. Through the window, he could see the tired, gray January snow falling. He felt tired at having to meet all these demands. He looked at the ceiling. The panel with the water stain still hadn't been replaced. His cubicle—small to begin with— now seemed tiny and cramped.

Jack felt irritated and blamed Lillie. Yet he admired her. It was a good thing she hadn't wandered into his cubicle at that moment, he thought. He might have uttered a curt word or two!

He sat and fumed: "Why this? Why now? Why me?"

Reflection

What is familiar to you about Jack's experience thus far? What is unfamiliar? How would you describe Jack's energy state (his emotional state in response to the e-mail message)? What words reflect his state? What is relatable to your experiences?

Why do you think Jack's supervisor is inviting him to this Cultural Proficiency seminar?

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WHY CULTURAL PROFICIENCY?

In our episode about Jack, he was genuinely puzzled about Cultural Proficiency. He assumed it was a new name for diversity and sensitivity trainings. Just more of the same. At this point, Jack had not put forth the effort to check his assumptions. He was, at worst, complying with the invitation out of fear of being perceived badly. At best, he was grudgingly acquiescing to his supervisor's judgment.

Let's look at assumptions behind Jack's belief that this seminar was more of the same. Cultural Proficiency is not the same old ideas dressed up in new jargon. It is not a seminar, although people can engage with Cultural Proficiency in seminar form. For a start, Cultural Proficiency is a unique idea with a specific framework. It's more than theory—it is also a process. As a process, Cultural Proficiency is a metaphorical journey of change. This journey—when undertaken with goodwill and assisted by skilled facilitation—leads to the realization of our better selves and to schools that serve all students well. In short, Cultural Proficiency can help us achieve the moral purpose of schools in a diverse diverse democratic society—to ensure *excellence with equity* in education (Blankstein & Noguera, 2015; Ferguson, 2007, 2015; Howard, 2015a; Lindsey, Kearney, Estrada, Terrell, & Lindsey, 2015; U.S. Department of Education, 2013).

Achieving *excellence* alone may not be enough. For, as equity and social justice educator Gary Howard (2015b) reminds us, (1) excellence without inclusion is segregation and (2) excellence without equity is nothing more than elitism. In a democracy, excellence without equity is an oxymoron. Conversely, equity alone is not enough, because without excellence, equity could equate to mediocrity. Considering these caveats, what does *excellence with equity* look like? From a Cultural Proficiency standpoint, it is a way of being within which educators advocate for and ensure that every student receives the benefits of these assets:

- *High expectations:* Access to a high-quality education, based on (1) a belief that every student will meet and exceed rigorous standards, and (2) a fundamental assumption that every educator will educate students to the highest of standards.
- *Inclusion:* (1) A strong sense of belonging, and (2) the educational benefits of a diverse environment and curriculum.
- *Cultural competence:* An ability to interact effectively with individuals across cultures and dimensions of difference.
- *Equity:* The specific supports that a student needs in order to access a high-quality education, as opposed to the same supports everyone else receives.

The Cultural Proficiency journey proceeds through several identifiable Phases. These Phases move from the Awareness Phase to the Commitment Phase, and from the Commitment Phase to the Action Phase. Awareness begins with inward exploration into the uncharted terrain of our inner world of unconscious assumptions and cultural conditioning. This Phase involves acknowledging, identifying, confronting and—when necessary—removing and replacing assumptions that act as barriers to equity and equality. When allowed to remain unexamined and unchallenged, these assumptions support and maintain the existing structural systems of oppression and privilege. Working through this stage can be uncomfortable (and this is where facilitator support is particularly helpful), but it will be well worth it for educators to stick with the process.

The Awareness Phase helps develop a greater understanding of one's self and one's organization, in addition to greater insight into the larger social, political, and cultural context. It helps educators (and other leaders) understand the dynamics of power that manifest in entitlement and as institutionalized privilege and oppression. As the process continues, growing awareness takes shape in the form of commitment, which powers the journeyers (educators engaged in Cultural Proficiency) through the Phase of intentional moral action. This type of action involves aligning or improving policies, procedures, and practices to reflect our awareness and commitment. It's the process of *inside-out* change.

In addition to manifesting as a journey (the process), Cultural Proficiency is a framework (the content) that provides guidance and pragmatism for realizing excellence with equity in education. The Cultural Proficiency Framework (the content) contains four components that are called the Tools of Cultural Proficiency (Cross, 1989; Lindsey, Nuri-Robins, & Terrell, 2009).

1. *The Barriers:* Values, beliefs, behaviors, and systems that inform a worldview that prevents/restricts individuals and organizations from working, educating, and interacting effectively and harmoniously across cultures.

2. *The Guiding Principles:* Values and beliefs that inform a worldview that enables individuals and organizations to work, educate, and interact effectively and harmoniously across cultures.

3. *The Continuum:* Language for describing degrees of effectiveness of policies, practices, values, and behaviors in working, educating, and interacting across cultures.

4. *The Essential Elements:* Behavioral standards for measuring and planning for effective work, education, and interaction across cultures.

In its most essential form, Cultural Proficiency is a comprehensive approach to shaping a healthy environment—an organization's climate and culture. Lindsey et al. (2009, p. 4) define Cultural Proficiency as "a model for shifting the culture of the school or district; it is a model for individual transformation and organizational change. Cultural Proficiency is a mind-set, a worldview, a way of being assumed by a person or an organization for effectively describing, responding to, and planning for issues that arise in diverse environments. For some, Cultural Proficiency is a paradigm shift from viewing cultural differences as problematic to learning how to interact effectively with other cultures."

How is Cultural Proficiency different from other approaches to inclusion and equity? Why is it not old ideas dressed up in new jargon? First, it is not an off-the-shelf program: it is customizable to address the particular issues of individual educators, schools, offices, and communities. But the most significant differentiating aspect is that Cultural Proficiency is anchored in the belief that people must start by gaining clarity around *their own* individual and organizational assumptions, values, beliefs, and responses to dimensions of difference (Lindsey et al., 2015) including but not limited to race, ethnicity, social class, language, nationality, faith, ability, age, gender, and sexual orientation. This means making the time and putting forth the effort to work on one's self. It's why Cultural Proficiency is called an *inside-out* approach to achieving excellence with equity in education.

WHY CHOOSE EQUITY?

External approaches to excellence with equity have not gotten us far enough. Take our nation's aspiration for equity in education as an example. The evidence is in (and has been in for quite some time) that we have fallen short of providing every student exactly what they need to succeed academically: we do not distribute opportunity equitably (U.S. Department of Education, 2012, 2013). This shouldn't be news, and our current situation continues to call for urgent action. At the same time, the United States has certainly not remained apathetic or idle in response to its long-standing educational inequality.

Over the past sixty years, the United States has mandated equity in education through a series of judicial and legislative actions such as *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education* (1954), *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (1965; ESEA), *Title IX* (1972), and *No Child Left Behind Act* (2002; NCLB) (see table 1.1). On December 10, 2015, President Barack H. Obama expanded those efforts by signing into law the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA).

Table 1.1 Analysis of Three Acts Addressing Social Inequality

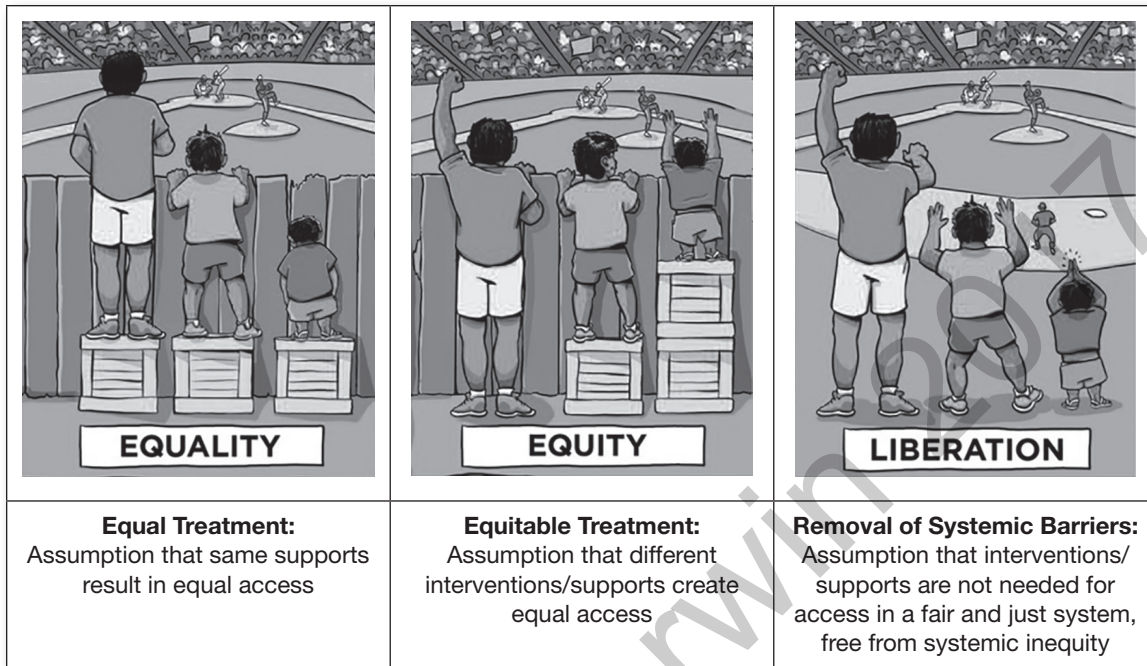| Legislation	*Civil Rights Act* **(1964)**	*No Child Left Behind Act* **(2002; NCLB)**	*Every Student Succeeds Act* **(2015; ESSA)**
Spirit of the Law (moral goals)	Liberate U.S. citizens from systemic oppression (present since European colonization of North America) and discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Guarantee equality for every U.S. citizen regardless of race (Kennedy, 1963). Bring justice and hope to all U.S. citizens and bring peace to the country (Johnson, 1964).	Liberate students from failing schools by reauthorizing the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA; 1965) to correct a system in which students from some demographic groups were more likely to succeed and other students were more likely to be left behind (White House, 2002). Increase student performance and reduce race- and class-based disproportionality in student outcomes between student demographic groups.	Liberate students from failing schools by reauthorizing the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA; 1965) to ensure teachers, schools, and states have what they need to meet the goals established in 2002 with the NCLB: provide every child with an excellent teacher and high-quality education (White House, 2015).

Legislation	*Civil Rights Act* (1964)	*No Child Left Behind Act* (2002; NCLB)	*Every Student Succeeds Act* (2015; ESSA)
Letter of the Law (technical goals)	• Prohibit discrimination in public places. • Desegregate schools and other public facilities. • Make employment discrimination illegal.	• Disaggregate data to prevent schools from effectively hiding achievement gaps among student groups. • Establish state standards, test students annually, track progress, and ensure every student demographic group reaches proficiency in reading and math by 2013–2014.	• Uphold protections for underserved students. • Maintain accountability expectations for low-performing schools. • Expand access to high-quality preschool. • Require every school to teach every student to high standards.
Status toward achieving the Spirit of Law (results)	Fifty years later, social inequality according to race still exists (Light, 2014), as evidenced by disparities between groups in • Median household income, • Average family wealth, • Percentage of demographic groups in poverty, • Unemployment rates, • Incarceration rates, • Housing, and • Education.	Fourteen years after Congress passed NCLB, achievement gaps between student demographic groups still remain. There is no consensus that NCLB's test-driven accountability system has led to increased growth in student performance or narrowed achievement gaps (National Education Association [NEA], 2015).	To be determined.

On that day President Obama stated, "With this bill, we reaffirm that fundamentally American ideal—that every child, regardless of race, income, background, the zip code where they live, deserves the chance to make of their lives what they will" (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). The ESSA contains many equity-related provisions including (for the first time) the requirement that schools prepare *all students* to succeed beyond PK–12 by meeting college- and career-readiness standards.

Mandates like these are laudatory in a society attempting to realize democracy by ensuring social justice through liberating itself from a tradition of perpetuating social and educational inequality. However, as with previous efforts, a tension remains between the spirit (intent) and the letter (literal interpretation) of the law because—by its very nature—a *behavioral response* from educators to a *legislative mandate* can take us only so far, and that's not far enough.

Legislative mandates for equity in education and society have not succeeded in attaining the moral goal (the spirit of the law) set out in these judicial and legislative actions: that of liberating our students from systemic oppression. Despite the fact that legislative mandates have reached several technical goals (the letter of the law) and have caused some positive educational and social changes, they have fallen far short of delivering equitable student outcomes and of transforming the system into a system free from institutionalized inequity (figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1 Equity for Equal Access and Opportunity

EQUALITY	EQUITY	LIBERATION
Equal Treatment: Assumption that same supports result in equal access	**Equitable Treatment:** Assumption that different interventions/supports create equal access	**Removal of Systemic Barriers:** Assumption that interventions/supports are not needed for access in a fair and just system, free from systemic inequity

WHY CHOOSE INCLUSION?

In spite of its well-intentioned goals, the standards-based educational reform movement that culminated with NCLB (2002) and led to ESSA (2015) may have actually worked *against* our nation's youths receiving the benefits of diverse and inclusive schools and classrooms. The movement started under President Ronald W. Reagan with the publication of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983 (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). It formed national goals and content standards under President George Herbert W. Bush in 1989 and enacted a standards-based vision under President William J. Clinton in 1994. It was then—in the 1990s—when K–12 policy context shifted in ways that accepted and emphasized separate but equal (equally accountable) schools and classrooms—what some have referred to as *neo-Plessyism,* drawing from a landmark U.S. Supreme Court ruling that upheld segregation as constitutional (table 1.2).

Before the 1990s, K–12 schools in the United States had a growing focus on multicultural education and curriculum development with an intention of teaching and learning within diverse environments. Emerging research was substantiating the value of social outcomes, group work, and pedagogy that emphasized relating across differences and—overall—ongoing and intentional engagement with diversity so that students might receive maximum educational benefits.

However, during the 1990s the K–12 educational policy context shifted away from this diversity and inclusion focus and toward a focus on equity and outputs. The mantra became educating all students to high standards and closing achievement gaps in any

Table 1.2	Timeline of Higher Education and K–12 Educational Research, Policy, and Legal Strategy on Issues of Racial/Ethnic Diversity	
Prior to 1955	Early Affirmative Action/Desegregation Litigation *Sweatt v. Painter (Higher Ed)* *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (Higher Ed)* *Brown v. Board of Education (K–12)* Across all of these cases, researchers and lawyers pressed for an emphasis on: 1. Tangible Factors: equal access for all students to buildings, resources, and faculty 2. Intangible Factors: Status, prestige and the reputation of the institutions; association with other students (future alum); and changing the "hearts and minds" of all students	
Late 1950s to Early 1970s	Implementation and Ongoing Litigation Focus of K–12 and higher education on student assignments/admissions, racial balance, and outcomes (test scores, graduation rates, etc.) Greater focus on things that could be counted (Tangible Factors); Less focus on Intangible Factors, including sociocultural issues on campuses and in classrooms	
Late 1970s to 1990s	Post-Milliken and Post-Bakke Access/Admissions issues (Tangible Factors) became more complicated Focus on Intangible Factors (hearts and minds), including campus hostility related to race; campus climate and inter-racial understanding; curriculum and pedagogical issues, including ethnic studies, sociocultural issues within classes and detracking movement that addressed the social construction of ability	
Mid 1990s to Today	K–12 Policy and Context Works Against Promoting the Education Benefits of Diversity Fragmented school districts and interdistrict segregation Accountability over diversity: Neo-Plessyism School desegregation litigation wanes and remains focused on 14th Amendment issues Most educational research on sociocultural issues in K–12 pedagogy not connected to desegregation/diversity	Higher Education Focus on Education Benefits of Diversity Growing body of research to support evolving litigation on affirmative action and 1st Amendment rights of universities; higher education leaders champion the arguments re: preparing students for global economy and society

Source: The Century Foundation. (2016). *How Racially Diverse Schools and Classrooms Can Benefit All Students*. Used with permission.

environment, including environments racially and socioeconomically diverse or isolated. Educational equity became about teaching every student well in *any* neighborhood, school, or classroom. There was no need to focus on integration and inclusion as long as the focus was on equal outputs.

While the nation narrowed its attention to the use of standardized test scores to measure progress, our public schools seemed to become less concerned about actively developing diverse and inclusive—or even integrated—schools and classrooms to influence positive educational outcomes for all. What resulted from this era of heavy-handed accountability and standardized testing is a "public education system that is simultaneously becoming increasingly diverse in terms of its student population and increasingly segregated and unequal" (Wells, Fox, & Cordova-Cobo, 2016, p. 6). In 2016 U.S. schools were more racially and socioeconomically segregated than they had been for decades (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2016).

Figure 1.2 Four Types of Diverse Environments

Exclusive   Segregated   Integrated   Inclusive
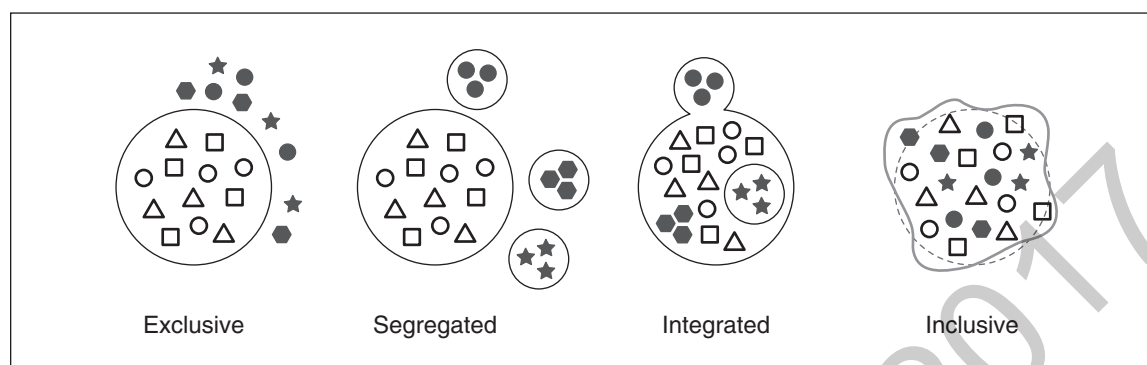
Source: Theodor Heuss Kolleg, *Diversity Dynamics: Activating the Potential of Diversity in Trainings*. Retrieved from: http://www.theodor-heuss-kolleg.de

Meanwhile, as our K–12 trajectory was becoming clear in the 1990s, higher education in the United States moved in the other direction (table 1.2). Leaders of the nation's colleges and universities worked to establish policies (such as race-conscious admissions) to help shape campuses that are often more diverse than the college students' prior PK–12 schools. But proximity does not ensure connectivity, nor does it guarantee that students receive any of the other benefits of diversity. Campuses also have to be inclusive (figure 1.2).

Certainly our institutions of higher education have much work to do around inclusion, as evidenced by the 2015 surge of college student activism calling for such (Barnhardt & Reyes, 2016; Wong, 2015). Nevertheless, the commitment of higher education to diversity and inclusion has been strengthened over the past two decades as the result of its own research that revealed the numerous educational benefits of diversity and inclusion for *all* students. These benefits are not restricted to minority students, which is a common misperception (Bowman, 2010; Crisp & Turner, 2011; Engberg, 2007; Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002; Haas, 1999; Ruggs & Hebl, 2012). Benefits of diversity and inclusion include

- Boosted self-efficacy;
- Greater social and emotional well-being;
- Enhanced learning outcomes;
- Increased intercultural and cross-racial knowledge, understanding, and empathy;
- Better preparation for employment in the global economy; and
- Increased democratic outcomes.

In its report, *How Racially Diverse Schools and Classrooms Can Benefit All Students*, The Century Foundation—a progressive public policy think tank that seeks to foster opportunity, reduce inequality, and promote security at home and abroad—concluded that the lack of maximizing educational benefits through diversity and inclusion as a defining theme within PK–12 schools and classrooms is troubling (Wells, Fox, & Cordova-Cobo, 2016, p. 20). The foundation urges stakeholders to pay more attention to this issue and use it to envision a PK–12 system that develops the empathy, understanding, and cross-cultural skills requisite of a healthy and increasingly diverse democratic society.

WHY INSIDE-OUT?

These facts show that achieving moral goals of inclusion and equity requires more than a *behavioral response* from educators to a *legislative mandate.* It requires a *moral response* from educators to a *mandate of the heart.* For example, we must work toward equitable student outcomes because we believe it's right and morally just to do so, not because we'll get punished if we don't. We must create diverse and inclusive schools because we value humanity and the well-being of students, even in the absence of an external mandate forcing us to do so. Inclusion and equity are each a moral summons.

When it comes to morality, policy and legislation in and of themselves are limited. In the best of all possible worlds (Voltaire, 2000), we would do what is morally right without the pressure of the law; but in the world we live in, legal constraints and demands can function to push us toward better behavior. Still, if we do what's right simply because of the fear attached to not following the law, that's a problem. Fear of sanction or punishment is a negative motivation that results in minimal compliance, at best. Once minimal compliance is met and the fear is removed, motivation ceases (Deming, 2000).

We will surely continue to allow exclusive or segregated—or at best integrated (figure 1.2)—schools and classrooms unless we educators *value* the *why* behind inclusion. We'll continue to fall short of our equity aspirations (figure 1.1) unless we stop reacting mindlessly to the technical aspects of equity mandates. Instead, we need to choose to move their spirit forward (Lindsey, 2011). Mandates clearly serve to protect us from our worst selves, but they do not bring about our better selves. And to fulfill the promise of democracy through our schools, we need to work on becoming our better selves, and becoming our better selves is a personal journey.

THE JOURNEY TO BECOMING OUR BETTER SELVES

Cultural Proficiency is a journey from *who we currently are* to *who we want to be.* It's a continuing, never-ending journey, because becoming one's better self requires ongoing work. Furthermore, this journey is an inside-out process of change that begins with changing one's self. The absence of an inside-out process may be the reason it takes so long for the moral outcomes of legislative changes to appear. To help us understand the benefits of focusing on the personal and internal process of change, let's turn to the work of William Bridges (2009), a world-famous expert in the human aspects of change.

Bridges (2009) posits that most organizational change efforts fail or linger indefinitely because we as leaders do not attend to the transitions people must go through as a result of change. The key point here is that *change* is different from *transition.* Change is external; it can and does happen overnight (for instance, NCLB or ESSA can be a bill one day and the law the next). However, transition is internal. It does not happen overnight. It can be largely hidden because it takes place in the hearts and minds of people.

For instance, NCLB resulted in changes (letter of the law) of practice and policy such as disaggregating student data according to demographic groups. Its moral goal (spirit of the law) required a transition *from* a system that sees itself as responsible for sorting and selecting the winners from the losers (the "best and the brightest" from the "worst and

the dimmest") and *to* a system that sees itself as responsible for educating *all* students to high standards, leaving no student behind. Without managing this transition, educators, schools, and school systems end up wandering around in the psychological wilderness, which is the limbo between the old sense of identity and the new (Bridges, 2009, p. 8). This space is the wasteland where organizations (people) may keep the letter of the law but are not committed to its spirit, essence, or intent. Wandering in the wilderness is not simply squandering time: when it comes to educating our nation's youths, this metaphoric wandering is an immoral and inane waste of an entire generation's brainpower, potential, and vitality that contributes to the decay of our democracy.

Table 1.3 Cultural Proficiency: Developing a Healthy Mind-set

FROM	TO
UNHEALTHY MIND-SET	**HEALTHY MIND-SET**
Operating from an us/them hierarchy focused on fixing *them*.	**Working in community focused on transforming *our* practices.**
• Blame • Holding schools accountable • Fixing students • Underachieving students • Giving students a voice by empowering them • Closing the achievement gap • Atomistic view of excellence and inclusion—separate entities • Exclusive schools and classrooms • Atomistic view of excellence and equity—separate entities • High expectations for some • Equity and excellence in opposition—only one at a time can exist • Letter of the law • Actions based on meritocracy myth • Achievement gap • Remediation • Atomistic view of developing caring relationships and delivering instruction—separate entities • Essentialized notions of diversity: dichotomous categories • Believing multicultural education benefits only minority students	• Shared responsibility • Supporting professional responsibility • Becoming better self • Underserved students • Amplifying student voices by creating conditions for enabling agency and self-empowerment • Ensuring excellence with equity[1] • Holistic view of excellence and inclusion—excellence without inclusion is segregation • Inclusive schools and classrooms • Holistic view of excellence and equity—excellence without equity is elitism • High expectations for all • Equity and excellence in concert—equity without excellence results in mediocrity • Spirit of the law • Systems that perpetuate social equality • Educational debt[2] • Reconciliation • Holistic view of culturally sustaining pedagogy through developing caring teacher–student relationships • Holistic notions of diversity: intersectionality and dimensions of difference • Believing Cultural Proficiency benefits students, teachers, and society

Notes:

1. Ronald Ferguson (2015) of Harvard University's Achievement Gap Initiative recommends educators and policymakers focus more on "excellence with equity" and less on "closing the achievement gap."

2. Gloria Ladson-Billings (2006) offers the concept of "educational debt" as a responsible alternative to the "racial achievement gap," a phrase that she posits supports deficit thinking.

But we have the power to stop wandering. It's our choice. The direct route to educational excellence with equity is Cultural Proficiency; this is a journey that starts with self and results in profound school change. The crucial and defining element that makes Cultural Proficiency work where many other approaches have failed or produced mediocre results is that Cultural Proficiency provides solid theoretical and pragmatic support for the all-important transition period. We cannot move from the oppression of systemic exclusion and inequity in education to the democracy of culturally proficient schools without an internal transition that involves developing clarity about our new identity and what it is that we truly value and believe. The Cultural Proficiency journey provides us with guideposts and other tools to help us navigate that transitional period in a direct and efficient manner.

Even with Cultural Proficiency, we cannot expect to arrive overnight or in the blink of an eye. This journey is not like jumping into the *Millennium Falcon* with Han Solo yelling, "Punch it!" and Chewbacca thrusting our vehicle into light speed. Not hardly. Cultural Proficiency involves reflection and dialogue, which take time. It requires us to slow down to build momentum to go fast (CampbellJones, 2013). It must be noted, however, that slowing down does not mean inaction. That is a false dichotomy that rightly arouses suspicion, especially among individuals whose identity includes groups historically served poorly by our society's painstakingly slow historic progression toward socially just outcomes—a movement that started with the Emancipation Proclamation (January 1, 1863) and more recently inched forward with the Every Student Succeeds Act (2015). Simply put, delaying action any longer is not acceptable. Thus, in the context of Cultural Proficiency, slowing down to build momentum to go fast means progressing carefully and acting deliberately in an informed, strategic, and efficient manner. We build speed as we go.

By engaging in this process, we allow ourselves to be born as proactive leaders. We consciously develop a commitment to a healthy mind-set of teaching and learning in a diverse democratic society. (table 1.3). We choose to change our minds and give birth to new thinking—as individuals and as a whole generation of educators—to let go the old traditions of inequality and to embrace new ways of seeing, engaging with, and responding to diversity.

This new and healthy response is possible. As Dewitt Jones (1996) says, "We will see it when we believe it." We can do it if we value the principles of democracy, if we believe that inclusion and equity in education are moral mandates of our hearts, and if we act with the will to educate all children (Hilliard, 1991; Lindsey, Roberts, & CampbellJones, 2013). We can do this with sustainability *if* we embark on a journey that begins with examining our values, beliefs, and actions with the intent of becoming our better selves. In doing so, we can—as the phrase attributed to Mahatma Gandhi suggests—"be the change we wish to see in the world."

WHY FACILITATION?

The Cultural Proficiency journey (the process) is challenging. Thus, those on the journey benefit from learning and leading with a knowledgeable and skilled facilitator. To facilitate means to guide, ease, or make a process possible. Thus, facilitation is implicitly linked to process, which is a series of steps toward a goal. As such, facilitators of Cultural Proficiency guide groups and make their journeys easier.

Table 1.4 Group Facilitation Misconceptions	
Misconception	**Reality**
1. Facilitator is synonymous with trainer or presenter.	Quite the opposite. Trainers and presenters set objectives and share information with a group. Facilitators use tools and techniques to draw out information from a group as it progresses in a process toward accomplishing its own objective.
2. Facilitation is a buzzword for interactive presenting.	Facilitation means structuring interaction for participants within a group to make the group's work easier than if they did not have a facilitator. Facilitation is not a buzzword for simply using questions, small groups, or constructivist learning approaches within trainings or presentations.
3. Facilitating is easier than presenting.	Facilitating a group requires deep knowledge, skills, and abilities. It does not come easily, especially for those trained in teaching, who often have to unlearn professional practice and develop new assumptions.
4. Facilitation methods are magic.	A group that has a highly skilled facilitator must still work hard to accomplish its objectives. A facilitator doesn't pull gimmicks and tricks that will solve the group's problems for it. However, to the untrained eye, skillful facilitation might look like magic. Not so. It is a discipline with principles, tools, skills, and techniques that can be learned.

Source: Adapted from The Institute of Cultural Affairs. *Caution: Misconceptions about Facilitation*. http://www.icab.be/top/top_3.html

As Jack intimated in this chapter's episode, many misconceptions exist about group facilitation (table 1.4). In actuality, facilitation is a discipline of its own, quite different from presenting, training, and teaching. According to Hunter (2007, p. 19), "Facilitation enables a group of people to achieve their own purpose in their own agreed way." Furthermore, Sibbet (2002, p. iv) defines facilitation as "the art of leading people through processes toward agreed-upon objectives in a manner that encourages participation, ownership, and creativity from all involved."

Facilitation is more art than science. As an art, facilitation is a body of expertise that includes principles, skills, and practices. It is concerned with helping individuals within groups to have the opportunity to fully participate in setting goals and achieving those goals. In general, facilitation ultimately makes it easier for groups of people to adapt in order to fulfill work and life goals (Sibbet, 2002).

What, then, are the duties and responsibilities of educators who assume the facilitator's role of guiding groups on their Cultural Proficiency journey? Essentially, the function of culturally proficient facilitators is to serve groups interested in ensuring excellence with equity in education. Facilitators lead by example, guiding people step by step through transformative processes into our better selves where we can create a new and better reality, one within which all educators effectively educate all children. A culturally proficient facilitator's knowledge base includes the following:

- A nuanced understanding of the *why*—why schools in a democratic and diverse society need Cultural Proficiency and why Cultural Proficiency must be facilitated and not simply presented (part I of this book).
- An in-depth and experiential grasp of the *how*—how to use the Cultural Proficiency Framework (content) on the Cultural Proficiency Journey (the process) in pursuit of excellence with equity in education (part II of this book).
- Knowledge, skills, and abilities with the *what*—what culturally proficient facilitators value, believe, and do in professional practice (part III of this book).

Reflection

What ideas are resonating with you in regard to the need for the inside-out process of Cultural Proficiency to achieve excellence with equity in education? Why?

_____

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What ideas do you wish to explore in regard to the need for facilitators?

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Please revisit table 1.3. What ideas are resonating with you? Why?

_____

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DIALOGIC ACTIVITY

1. Respond to or review your responses to the three reflection questions.

2. Use first turn/last turn protocol (table 1.5) to explore perspectives and discover individual and shared meaning.

Table 1.5   First Turn/Last Turn Protocol

Step	Procedure
1.	Form a group of four to eight people. Ensure each person has three index cards.
2.	Silently and individually respond or review your responses to reflection questions.
3.	On each of the three index cards, write the idea from the text that is resonating with you. (One index card per reflection question.) On the back of the index card, write *why* that idea is resonating with you.
4.	Start: The designated person in the group starts by reading (without commentary) their idea related to the question.
5.	Listen: The starter listens as each person in the group comments on the idea.
6.	Share: The starter reads (without commentary) the back of the index card: why the idea is resonating with them. The round ends.
7.	Repeat steps 4–7 for as many rounds as it takes to exhaust the index cards. Each person will have at least one turn being the starter.
8.	After rounds are finished, open a general discussion in response to the text and ideas that were shared but not explored in depth.
Tips:	• Strictly follow protocol for steps 4–6. No cross talk. • Resist the urge to comment immediately after sharing your idea. • If someone shares the same idea someone else had written on their index card, that person can simply read the "why" when it's their turn to comment. • During step 8, pay attention to sharing airtime, seeking to understand, and posing dialogic questions such as why, when/where, and who questions. • As a variation, cut step 3.

Source: Adapted from Robert Garmston and Bruce Wellman (2009), *The Adaptive School,* p. 212.