

2020

OSSEO AREA SCHOOLS

ISD  279

MASSP Summer Conference Presentation

Race - At Whose Pace?

Michael Lehan

Osseo Senior High School

Michael came to District 279 in 2009 and has served in many administrative roles, most recently as the principal at Osseo Senior High School for the past five years. Michael was recognized as the Minnesota Association of Secondary Schools Principal 2020 High School Principal of the Year and Osseo Senior High was just named US World & News Report Best High School for the third consecutive year. Michael attributes both recognitions to the brilliance of the scholars he serves and the dedication of staff he serves with.

Michael holds a Bachelor of Science in Family Social Science with a minor in Youth Studies from the University of Minnesota, and a Masters from the St. Mary's University in educational leadership. Michael obtained his Ed.S degree from the University of St. Thomas, where he is currently working toward his Doctorate.

In the fall, Michael looks forward to continuing his work on behalf of the scholars, families, and staff members of Osseo Area Schools as the new Assistant Superintendent of Equity & Achievement. He is enthusiastic and energized to contribute to our work in his new role.



Session Outcomes

In this session, we will explore **system thinking tools** that will help frame our work ahead as site leaders. We will examine our **social soil** to understand that our schools are a *microcosm of our larger society*. This session will equip participants with the **critical thinking and framing skills** necessary to engage and sustain **social justice conversations** at the site level.

How might we foster **activism, healing, and liberation** for our scholars while holding space for their truths? You will leave this session with *strategies to enact so that your scholars will feel seen, valued, and heard*.




Grounding

You can't teach what you don't know,
and you can't lead where you won't go.

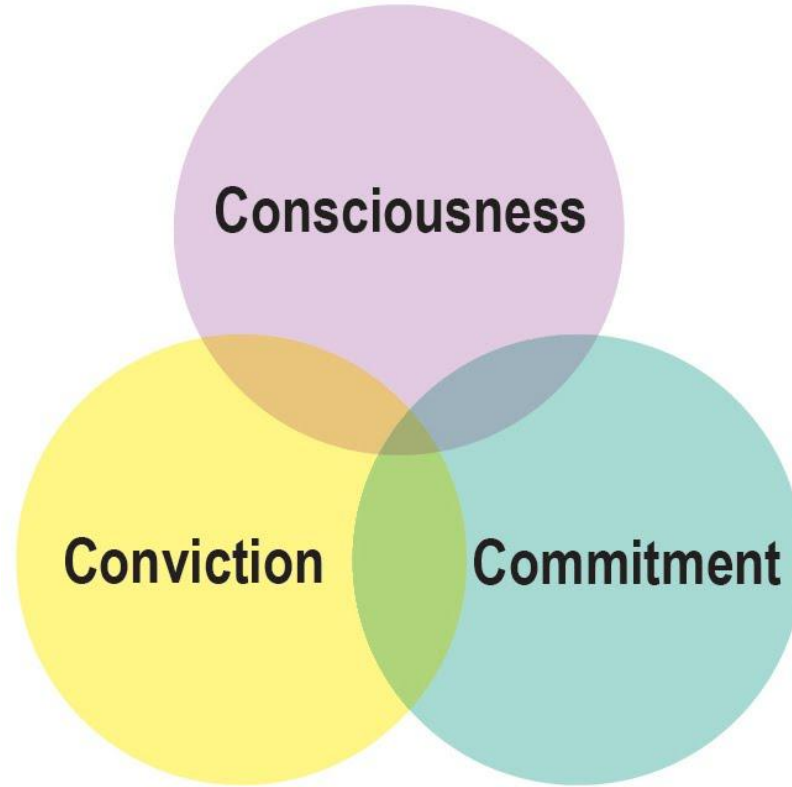
-Malcolm X



Presentation Orientation


- Welcome
 - Concept Framing
 - Thinking tools
 - Vital Voices
 - Action
 - Questions
- 

3 Cs of Change





Consciousness

- Data: Quantitative
 - Stories: Qualitative
 - Self-Analysis
 - Self-Reflection
 - Isolate Race
 - Various Perspectives
- 

LOGIC MODEL

We do not see things as they are, we see things as WE are.

The Talmud

Critical Reflective Questions:

Do we know what we need to know about our community?

Whose voices are needed?

Who benefits?

Associated Actions:

Professional Disposition

Engagement of perspectives - There is danger in a single story

Create safe spaces for honest dialogue that promotes vulnerability and creative thought

Expand opportunities to interface with our community members - be in relation with our community (diverse thinking)

Constant reflection - examine our past to identify patterns and trends

LOGIC MODEL

Every child deserves a **champion**—an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection, and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be.

Rita Pierson

Critical Reflective Questions:

How does this policy or practice advance our mission?

Does my decision further marginalize a certain group?

Who is the champion of our most marginalized groups?

Associated Actions:

Professional Disposition

Center scholars in each conversation

Robust and meaningful physical, mental and emotional health material and support systems

Each PD experience offers consumables for teacher leaders with clear and deliverables and associated support

LOGIC MODEL

All day long we are either filling up or dipping into each others buckets by what we say and what we do. Try to fill a bucket and see what happens.

Carol McCloud

Critical Reflective Questions:

Selfish or selfless?

Who am I centering in this conversation?

What level of comfort are you experiencing?

If comfortable, are you dipping into someone else's bucket?

Associated Actions:

Professional Disposition

Seeking first to understand

Honor the humanity around us

Believe none of what you hear, half of what you see, and all of what you know

PBIS / Check and Connect

LOGIC MODEL

We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there "is" such a thing as being too late. This is no time for apathy or complacency. This is a time for vigorous and positive action.

Martin Luther King Jr.

Critical Reflective Questions:

Who is harmed by my inaction?

Do I have *courage* or do I desire *comfort* - you can't have both.

How might I dare greatly?

Associated Actions:

Professional Disposition

Be the lead leader - Mission Critical

Be an agitator - We must own our data

Critical introspection of your moral imperative

Examination of privilege and capital

The Human Factor

What is your relational capital?

What is your professional disposition?

What motivates YOU?



Process Pause

What is coming up for *you*?

To act is to be **committed**, and to be **committed** is to be in danger -Baldwin



Thinking Tools

THE ICEBERG

A Tool for Guiding Systemic Thinking

EVENTS

What just happened?

React

PATTERNS/TRENDS

What trends have there been over time?

Anticipate

UNDERLYING STRUCTURES

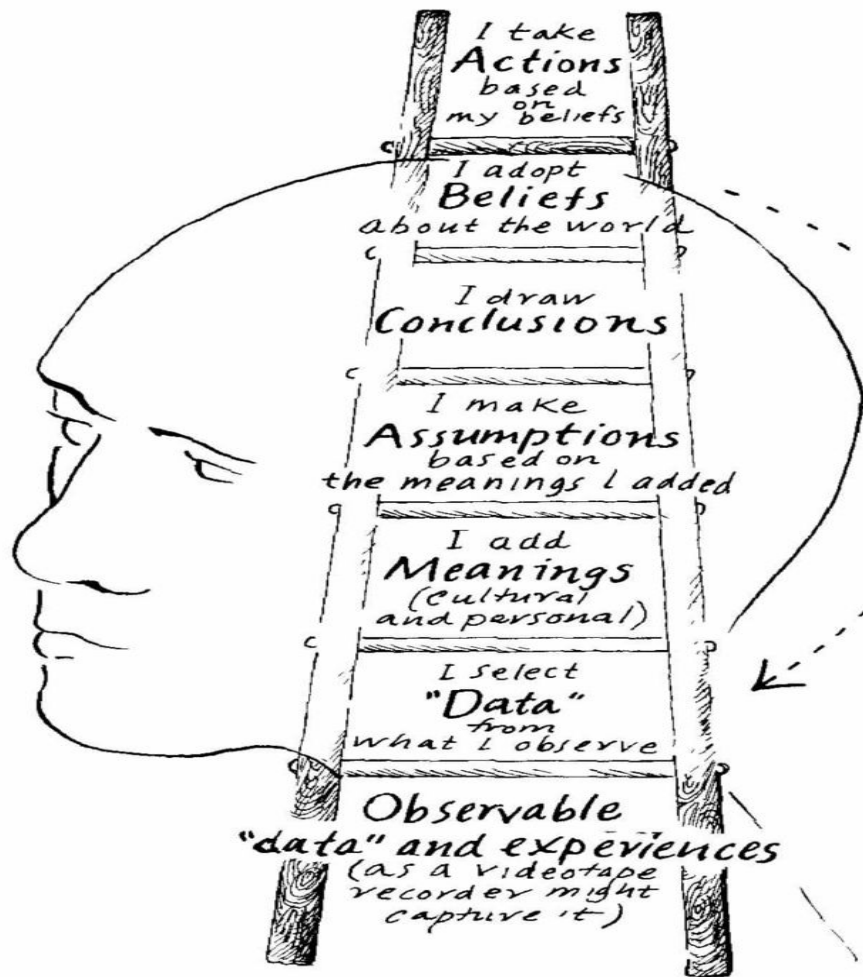
*What has influenced the patterns?
What are the relationships between the parts?*

Design

MENTAL MODELS

*What assumptions, beliefs and values do people hold
about the system? What beliefs keep the system in place?*

Transform



The reflexive
loop (our
beliefs
affect
what
data we
select
next
time)

2020

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Osseo Senior High School

Race and Culture



Conviction

- Values
 - Beliefs
 - Morals
 - Mental Models
- 

Race and Culture

What does it look like to hold space?

To ***allow*** others to exist as is

To ***honor*** others to be as is

To ***validate*** others to think as is

To ***witness*** others to grow as is

To ***accept*** others to live as is

Author unknown

Creation and Purpose of Race and Culture

- Responding to a need
- Building consciousness, space of healing, telling of truths, sharing of stories
- We have navigated the murder of Philando Castile, the 2016 election, the Parkland shooting, and the murder of George Floyd, to name a few.

The Importance of Centering Scholar Voice


My Role

- Circle
- Building relationships
- Creating and maintaining a safe space

The Space

- Conversations become organic, honest, raw, uncensored, and vulnerable
- How do stories connect and sustain us?
 - Friday narratives


Reflections for Scholars

- How do the experiences of your family and ancestors shape your approach to what you're learning?
 - How is what you're learning both a mirror (reflection of yourself) and a window (view into experiences outside of your own)?
 - What is an aspect of your learning that you feel personally connected to? How does this make you feel? What do you wonder? What does it make you want to do?
- 

Distance Learning

Scholars have so much to say when we create space -- *even during distance learning!*

Google Site Project

- What is the relationship between race, law and power?
 - Are people I study presented as having agency? Autonomy? Strength? Power? Identity? How am I allowed to engage in non-dominant narratives that are told by people from marginalized communities?
 - How have resistance, innovation and advocacy by Black Americans over the course of American history contributed to the nation's wealth and the strengthening of its democracy?
 - How does my family's story compare to the dominant stories in history and shift how I understand my role within history?
- 

Race and Culture II

- Space of action
 - Absent Narratives
- Race and Culture II Flex
 - OSH Biracial Girls Group

We know our scholars are ready to have conversations about race

5 sections of Crime and Justice
4 sections of Race and Culture (I and II)

How do I position myself as a white woman to be racially conscious enough to hold space for my scholars of color?

- Equity Team
 - Distance Learning (*I wish my teacher knew...*)
- Equity Book Club
- Osseo Speaks
- Affinity Space (*building individual and collective consciousness to dismantle white supremacy*)
- Equity resources
- Experience discomfort
- Understand that it's a journey


Process Pause

What is coming up for *you*?

“The ultimate measure of a (hu)man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy. - MLK



Commitment

- Examine the normative set of values and beliefs that determine access and opportunities
 - Positively impact lived racial experience
 - Challenge status quo
 - Implement new systems
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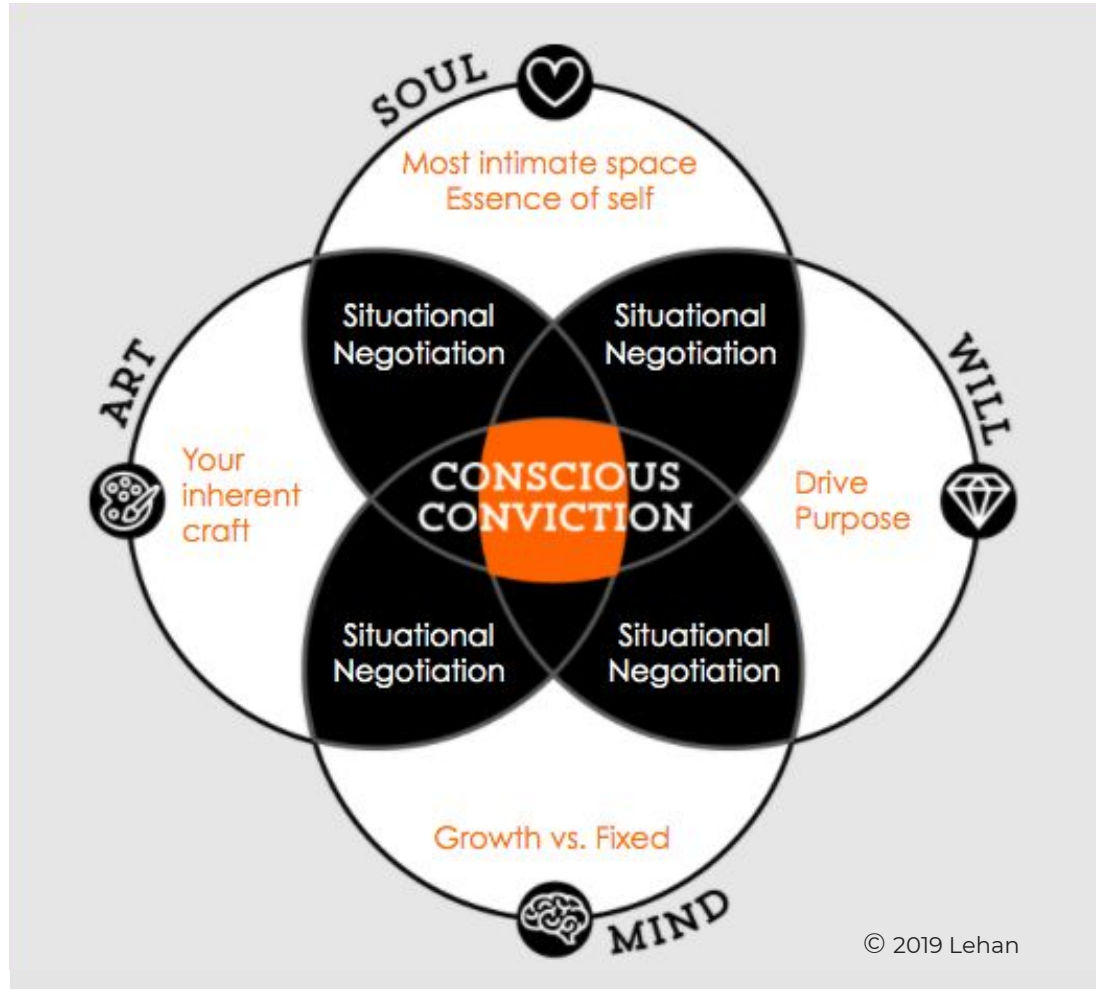
Conviction Thinking Tool

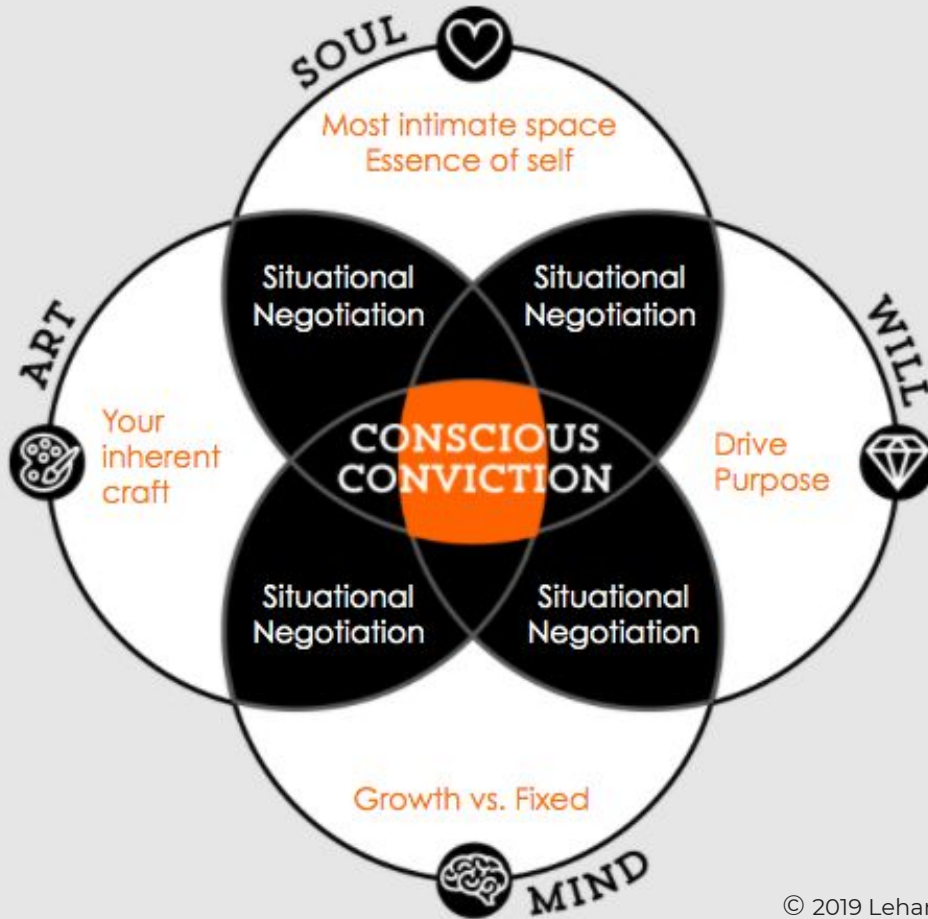
To what degree am I willing to stand unapologetically, with passion and purpose, towards a divine outcome that advances our work?

“Walking in, or toward your purpose”
Michael B

Stated Simply:

Is it a hill worth dying on or not?





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Our work is...

So that work.

I AM _____

SO THAT _____.

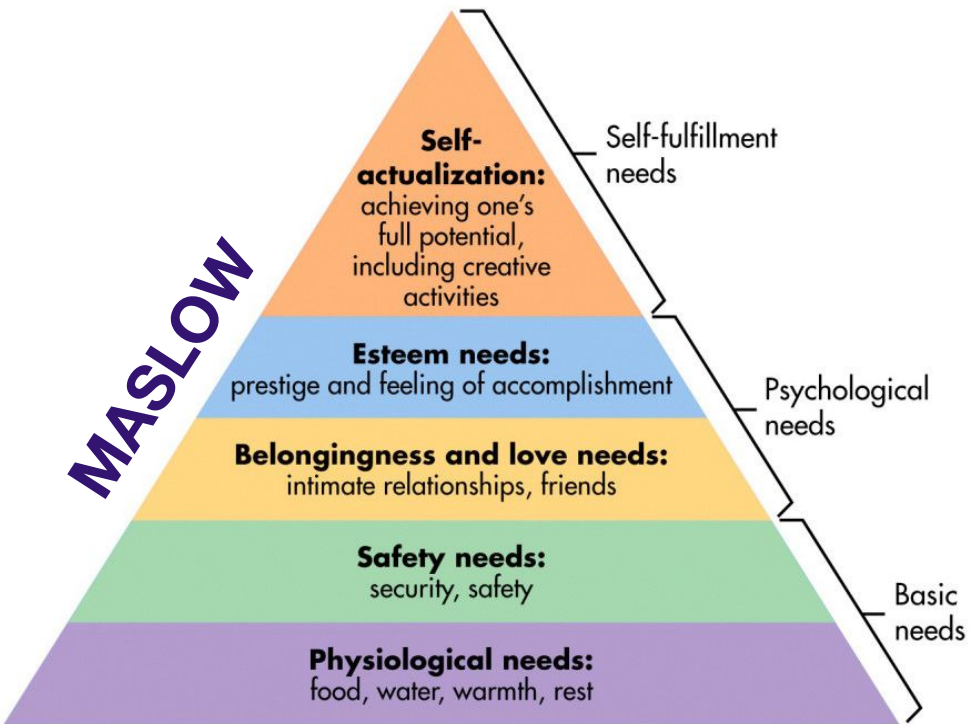
Do *you* know the answer to these questions?

What is the *lived experience* of students of color in your building?

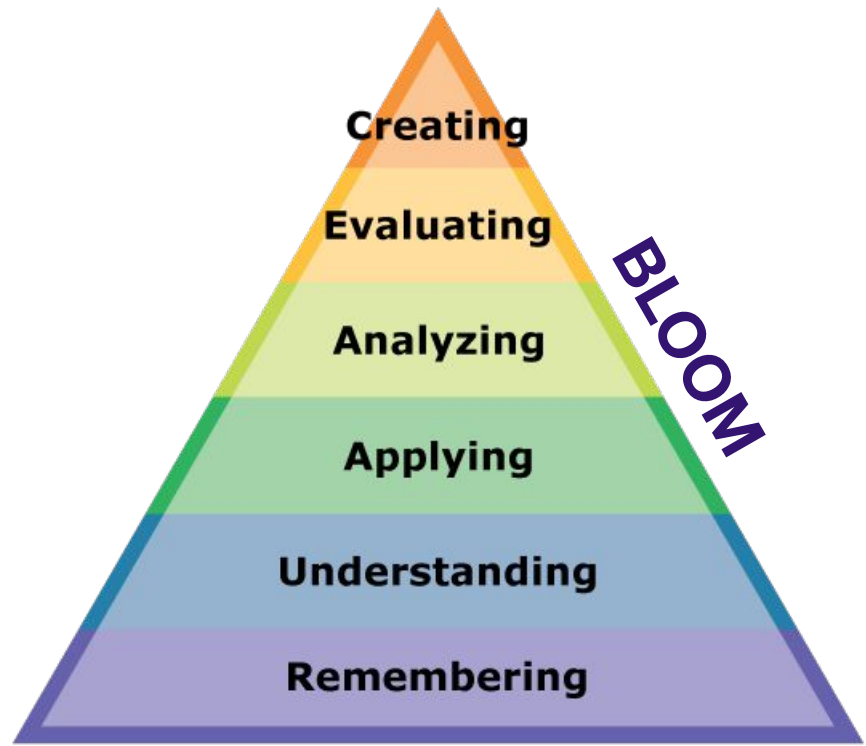
How is *race experienced* by students of color in your building?

What *safe spaces* do you have for students of color, and how do you know?





MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS




Bloom's Taxonomy

*We must Maslow before we Bloom.
For staff, scholars, and families.*

Action

Your charge, as leaders, is to develop and then demonstrate the capacity to *identify* and *respond* to the impact race and other inequities have on your building.



In Conclusion

What: Agents of Action walking in collective purpose is how our mission is actualized. **(C1)**

So That: Our communities are seen, valued, and heard. **(C2)**

And Now We: Model Mission Critical professional disposition with conscious conviction. Empower our community not as receivers of information but as shapers of knowledge. **(C3)**



Resources

Books regarding racism in our society

Link [HERE](#)

Trauma:

[National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)

[Resources on Trauma for Caregivers and Families](#)



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Ubuntu - *I am because we are*

In Community - Thank you