

“JOURNEYING ACROSS THE DIVIDE”
First Congregational Church, Westfield
June 4, 2017

INTRODUCTION - REV. DR. MARK BOYEA

1. Dr. Arie Kruglanski - University of Maryland

- Holocaust survivor as child
- Decades dedicated to studying extremism and conflict
- In every situation of conflict, you must understand the “Three N’s” of the other:
Need; Narrative; Networks

2. James Baldwin

- “I am a human being first and an American second - all other distinctions are a lie that give false structure to the world.”
- The way forward necessitates an insistence on that recognition FOR ourselves and FROM those who see us as “other”, but also an insistence FROM ourselves FOR those WE consider to be “other”.

3. Matt Taibbi

- Political journalist and author
- “The other side is bad” isn’t really a message or plan
- “You can’t just dismiss people as lost, misguided, dumb or bad, unless every great thinker from Jesus, to Tolstoy, to G

Some human development basics borrowed from various sources

Peggy A. Rothbaum, Ph.D.

FCC Seminar June 04, 2017

Dr. Jean Piaget stages of cognitive development

Most mature stage is formal operations which begins at 12 and continues into our 20's. This includes deductive (specific conclusions drawn using logic), thinking about thinking, abstract thinking, imagining and taking the perspective of the other, thinking about one's self, tolerating disagreements and different perspectives.

Dr. Martin Hoffman development of empathy

Development of sympathy, guilt, empathic anger and feelings of injustice. Most mature stage is empathy for another's life condition -- By late childhood or early adolescence children become aware that others' feelings may not just be due to the immediate situation but stem from their more lasting life situation. Empathy may also be found with respect to entire groups of people (the poor, the oppressed, etc.) and thus transcend immediate experience.

Dr. Lawrence Kohlberg moral reasoning, the basis for ethical behavior

Full development means that individuals live by their own ethical principles—principles that typically include such basic human rights as life, liberty, and justice. Rules as useful but changeable mechanisms—ideally rules can maintain the general social order and protect human rights. Rules are not absolute dictates that must be obeyed without question. This is not the same as rebelling or refusing to follow rules for self absorbed reasons.

Dr. Sigmund Freud the unconscious and defense mechanisms

We are not aware of all of our emotions and thoughts and how they translate into behaviors. None of us can see everything about ourselves. One of my favorite defense mechanisms is projection, which we use to deny qualities in ourselves (both positive and negative) while attributing them to others. Another is transference, which is literally what the word means. Emotions or thoughts belonging to one situation or person are put on another.

Some characteristics of borderline personality disorder

Inability to tolerate disagreement, everything is black or white, turning on people when we don't agree, idealizing people until they disagree with us, lashing out.

Narcissism

It's all about me and what I want and need.

Quote from Senator Stabenow and commentary about why we should care about the Great Lakes if we don't live in Michigan:

Stabenow (without hesitation): "Yes. It's called having a country." And there -- right there -- in 6 words, the good Senator illuminates the crux of the problem we face in resisting the entire Republican philosophy and agenda. They believe, in the marrow of their bones, that each American is engaged in his or her own personal zero-sum struggle of "us" against "them." It's white vs. black; "real" Americans vs. immigrants; Arkansans vs. Michiganders; conservatives vs. liberals; rich vs. poor. They don't even bother with the pretense that we share any responsibility for one another as fellow Americans. Indeed, they outright reject the very notion of it.

Excerpts from
Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement without Giving In

Roger Fisher and William Ury

Harvard Negotiation Project

Peggy A. Rothbaum, Ph.D.

Bargaining over positions is inefficient, produces unwise agreements, can damage relationships.

Instead:

1. Separate the people from the problem.

Understand how they think and their perceptions.

Give everyone a stake in the outcome.

Have all stakeholders participate in the process.

Understand and legitimize the emotions involved of all stakeholders.

Don't react to emotional outbursts.

Listen and pay attention to what others are saying.

Talk and explain.

Build relationships.

Let people vent or "blow off steam".

2. Focus on interests, not positions.

"Behind opposed positions lie shared and compatible interests as well as conflicting ones."(page 42).

Each side has multiple interests.

Be concrete but flexible.

3. Invent options for mutual gain.

Brainstorm.

Broaden the options.

Look for mutual benefit and gain.

Look for commonalities among differences.

4. Insist on using objective criteria.

Self explanatory.

