« Wokeberg »

- "cancel culture": people who makes a mistake lose their right to participate in dialogue (or to be listened to)
- Rigid categorisation and distinction of people of different 'colour' (racialisation)
- Concerned people (who have a specific social identity) have priority in taking turns
- "safe space"
- The frame of oppression can and should be used to analyse any situation
- minority / majority relation as a frame of reference is everywhere
- Collective responsibility (all whites participate in maintaining a system of domination over racialised people)
- Punishment / ritual humiliation
- membres of minorities should not have the responsibility / burden of educating members of majority, it is their responsibility
- We do not negotiate with people who replicate oppressions - even if it is only through an unfortunate remark
- Important to avoid hiding inequalities tied to "race"
- Power relations and domination is present in any human activity
- To understand a person of different colour, social identity etc) one must have the same social identity
- It is assumed that having a specific social identity implies having experiences of specific oppressions
- It is important to avoid that members of the dominant society erase the expressions of people of oppressed groups
- It is important to avoid more suffering of oppressed people
- It is important to recognise the dominant position of whites historically and in the present, not as individual but as systemic phenomena
- such an education is a tiresome process, possibly contributing to minority members' exhaustion and oppression
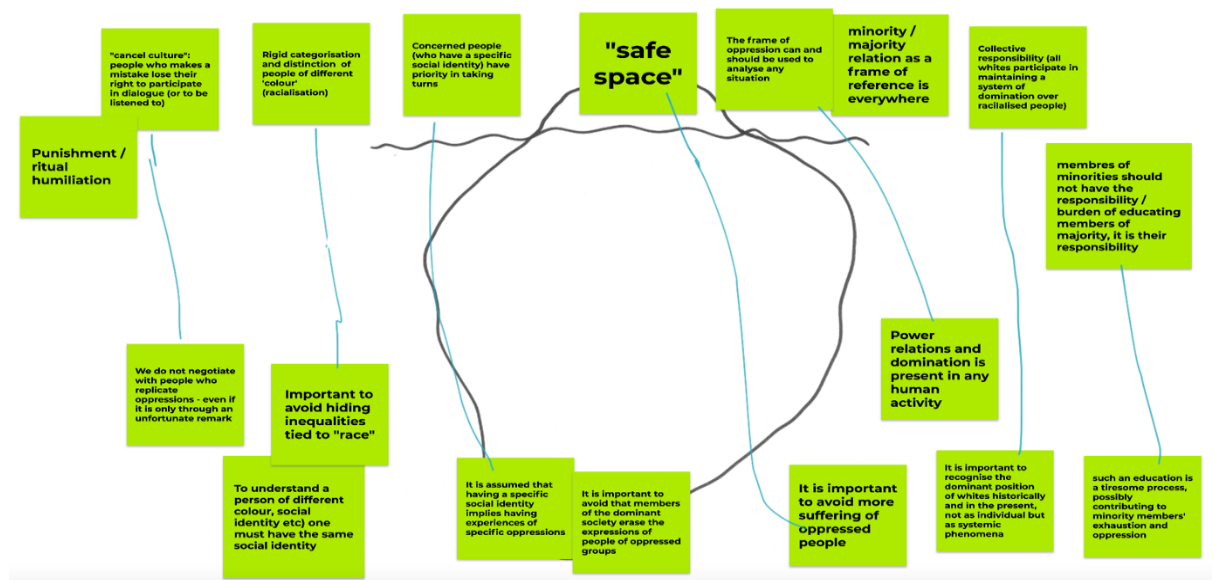
PREPARED BY: élan interculturel

TAGS (3 categorizations)

Is this activity focusing on one of the 3 steps of the method or tackling a transversal challenge facilitators may face?	Step of the method	NO	Decentering	Discovery of the frames of references of the other	Negotiation
	Sensitive zone	YES	STATUS		

Small Description

Please explain in a short paragraph (using grammatically correct full sentences) what your activity is about, why did you create it?

This activity wishes to explore in what way "Woke" principles, practices can be aligned or in contradiction with the principles and practices of an intercultural approach like ours.

Quick info

TIME FRAME 30-60min	**GROUP SIZE** 2-10	**FACILITIATION LVL** Beginner	**COMFORT ZONE** Safe	**MATERIALS** Pen and paper or a computer/mobile device.

30-60 min	6-12	advanced	Mildly challenging	Flipchart, post-its and markers or smartboard

Preparations needed

- Identify may currents / debated of social justice movements in your context
- Learn about different principles and practices related to protection of members of minorities promoted by different social justice groups
- Think about the practices and values connected to your intercultural approach
- Make your own "wokeberg" before the activity
- Prepare to define the concept of "woke"

Instructions Step By Step

Please give step by step instructions of your activity, including debriefing. Be direct, address the reader as a facilitator directly: eg. ask your participants to stand in a circle…

The word "woke" is first used in the 1930s, in African-American subculture, to denote alertness to racial prejudice and discrimination. It is after the shooting of Michael Brown (2014)[1] that the Black Lives Matter movement gives it a wider recognition. In 2017 the word makes its appearance in the Oxford English Dictionary, and is used by wider public, until in 2020 Kenya Hunt describes it as "the word of our era"[2] In this activity we are referring to it in its widest sense, regrouping a diversity of currents and groups aligned behind anti-racist, anti-oppression goals. We acknowledge that this gesture implies some generalization that may hide important nuances that differentiate different currents, the activity should be carried out with this knowledge in mind. The aim is not to freeze stereotypes about "woke" positions, to the contrary, it wishes to explore their rationality, the underlying values and to compare them to the principles and practices of intercultural approaches.

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[1] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shooting_of_Michael_Brown

[2] https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/nov/21/how-woke-became-the-word-of-our-era

Step 1.

Present the metaphor of iceberg, as a tool often used by interculturalists to show the link between visible and hidden aspects of cultures: above the water level are the visible / perceivable manifestations while under water the values, norms, representations that sustain and give meaning to the elements above.
In the first round of the activity, invite participants to propose elements of "visible practices" or "values, norms and representations" that they have met during trainings, discussions, articles and that they identify with the "woke" concept as used nowadays[3]. Collect the contributions (see examples in the illustration above).

Step 2.

Check the contributions together, see if most participants recognize them as connected to "woke" movements. It is important to use this step to get rid of contributions that reflect participants' stereotypes or prejudice about "woke" rather than actual descriptions or hypothesis.
In this same step try to find connections between the contributions proposed as "practices" (above the water) and principles / values corresponding to them that could be placed under the water level.
At this point you may arrive to an iceberg as the example we added above.

Step 3.

Proceeding item by item (considering the pairs of visible / non visible elements together) explore how the specific practice or value is compatible / aligned with / in contradiction to our intercultural approach. Whenever there is a divergence, add a post-it detailing the difference. Make it explicit, that if there is a divergence it is not sign that one approach is right and the other is wrong. We'd merely like to analyse in what ways they differ.

Hints for the facilitator

- Be attentive about possible sensitivities of participants, take care of their possible membership in social movement groups as well as minority groups: in no way the activity should be perceived as a threat to these identities. If needed refer back to the collaboration rules you may have established earlier on.
- This is not a necessary activity in any MCE training, but it may be a useful addition if there are culture shock experiences collected when anti-racist positions, concepts related to oppression can come up.

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[3] For a definition and basic info on the concept please see the text "Status differences in MCE trainings"

Ressources (Who invented this activity or who inspired it)

If you invented it, please write the name of your colleague and institution as you'd like it to be referenced
If you used ideas /activities of others please put full reference as concretely as you can

Activity developed by Vera Varhegyi (élan interculturel, Paris), wokeberg in illustration created by Vera Varhegyi and Ariella Rothberg