



American
Occupational Therapy
Association

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion 101

MODULE 1

Learning Objectives

Welcome to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion 101. In this module the fundamentals of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will be explored and will seek to:

- Define Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).
- Identify the importance and benefits of DEI.
- Provide an assessment tool for self-reflection.
- Present resources for further assessment.



What is Diversity?

Diversity ask the question: Who is in the room? (Mallery, 2018)

Diversity is any dimension that can be used to differentiate groups and people from one another (Pavlou, 2019).

Influences

Diversity

- ✓ **Internal**
- Race
 - Age
 - National Origin
 - Ethnicity, such as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, Person of Color)
 - Cultural Diversity
 - Gender
 - Sexual Appearance
 - Sexual Orientation
 - Physical Ability
 - Mental Ability

- ✓ **External**
- Interests
 - Education
 - Appearance
 - Citizenship
 - Geographic Location
 - Family Status
 - Spirituality/Religion
 - Relationship Status
 - Socioeconomics Status
 - National Origin
 - Experiences

- ✓ **Organizational**
- Job Function
 - Management Status
 - Work Location
 - Department
 - Seniority
 - Union Affiliation

- ✓ **World View**
- Cultural Events
 - Politics
 - History Knowledge

Source: (Chan, 2021)

Why is it Important?

Encouraging diversity incorporates all the elements that make each individual unique and provides the opportunity to both **learn** from one another and **connect** with each other.

Why is it Important?

- Diversity enhances creative input, differing ideas, and considers varying perspectives to problem-solving.
- In patient care, a diverse therapeutic team encourages cultural understanding of a diverse patient population (Saha, 2008).

A Lack of Diversity May Lead to Health Disparities

Evidence shows that, broadly speaking, people of color have **greater incidence and more severe cases of diseases** compared to white people in the U.S.



Source: International Neurology Journal, 2020

Source: (Clements, University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, 2021)

Benefits



Diversity

Address social determinants

Improve quality of care, access and equitable treatment.

More Innovation

Diverse perspectives promote creative solutions.

Improve Communication

Decrease cultural bias and communication breakdown.

Boost Creativity

Interacting with various cultures for greater learning and self-improvement.

Increased Trust

Respecting differences, identifying similarities, leveraging strengths.

Reduce Health Disparities

Cultural understanding can improve health disparities and outcomes in diverse patient populations.

Enhanced Awareness

Understanding culture, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs and values, social realities.

Higher Retention

Increase representation and promotion based on achievement and talent.

Increase Engagement

Equal participation without prejudice.



Equity

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What is Equity?

Equity asks the question: Who is trying to get into the room and can't? (Mallery, 2018)

- Equity refers to the fair and just treatment in relation to opportunities, access to those opportunities and the available resources for everyone (Braveman, 2019).
- Providing equitable opportunities and access means changing the structure and systemic barriers that create inequities (Milken Institute School of Public Health, 2020).



Equity vs. Equality

There is a difference between equality and equity and the method in which they are implemented can have vastly different outcomes for underrepresented populations.



Equity vs. Equality

Equity



Equality means each person or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities.

Every school in the district has received new computers for a computer lab. The hours of operation are the same as the school hours and closes at 3:00 p.m. All students of every ethnic and socioeconomic background can **equally** use the computers.

Implementing equitable practices means removing obstacles that prevent or prohibit equal and fair access. **Equitable** access means **expanding** the hours of operation or offering evening or weekend hours for students who do not have access to Wi-Fi or a computer at home to study or complete homework.



“**Equity** is a solution for addressing imbalanced social systems. Justice can take equity one step further by fixing the systems in a way that leads to long-term, sustainable, equitable access for (future) generations.”

Difference: While all students can **equally** use the computers, every student does not have **equitable** access for success.

Source: National Academies of Sciences, 2017



Benefits

Equity as a shared vision and value...



- **Increases community capacity**
- **Structures outcomes**
- **Fosters multi-sector collaboration**
- **Encourages solutions for equitable opportunities in health**
- **Provide a foundation for a vibrant, healthy community**

Source: National Academies of Sciences, 2017



Benefits

“The route to achieving equity will not be accomplished through treating everyone equally. It will be achieved by treating everyone justly according to their circumstances.” (Race Matters Institute, 2014)





Inclusion

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What is Inclusion?

Inclusion asks the question: Has everyone been included and has everyone's ideas been heard? (Mallery, 2018)

In a practice or academic setting, inclusion is defined as “the achievement of a work environment in which all individuals are **treated fairly and respectfully**, have **equal access to opportunities and resources**, and can **contribute fully to the organization's success.**”
(Diversity & Inclusion: Definition, Benefits & Stats, 2019)



Why is it Important?

- Inclusion offers a sense of belonging, in which diverse groups can present their **authentic selves**, **contribute equally**, and are **afforded the same opportunities and access to resources** (Reiners, 2021).
- Inclusion provides the **safe space** for collective differences and diverse backgrounds to be included, respected, and valued.





Advocates

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SPEAK UP!

Advocates

What Can YOU Do?

Advocacy asks the question: How can I help?

We can all be advocates for diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Recognize that **silence is action.**

Do Your Part

✓ **Share**

Share resources and access for leadership opportunities and professional development.

✓ **Encourage**

Encourage others through advocacy.

✓ **Recognize**

Recognize and normalize speaking out against discriminatory practices and systemic inequities.

✓ **Empathy**

Show empathy for the racial trauma experienced by communities of color.

✓ **Listen**

Listen and be mindful of other's experiences.

✓ **Assess**

Assess and identify unconscious biases.



Self-Reflection Activities

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Reflection Activity



Self
Reflection

DEI Meaning

What does diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) mean to you?

DEI Training

What DEI training have you received, and how have you applied what you learned in your practice or current environment?

DEI Involvement

How actively involved are you in DEI efforts in your occupational, school or work environment?

DEI Importance

Why is DEI important to ensuring optimal therapeutic outcomes and advancing the field of occupational therapy?

DEI Experience

How has your career or lived experienced been enhanced by diversity and inclusion?

Assessment Tools

For more information, please see DEI Toolkit for resources and assessment tools.

Visit: www.aota.org



References

Self
Reflection

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