

A Workshop-within-a-Workshop

**Effecting Change:
Venturing Beyond, While Maintaining, Our Safe Circles**

Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies Workshop
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Facilitated by:
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How many of us feel the tug between seeking safe and comforting communities of friends and compatriots, and wanting to be forces of positive change in response to the very fraught and often angry world swirling around us?

Communities such as HumanDHS provide support, affirmation, refuge from the figurative storms, and sounding boards to float ideas, opinions, and artistic expression. These safe circles are invaluable for maintaining our well-being. If, however, we wish to serve as change agents, then typically we must venture beyond those safe circles, often in a more public setting. These activities may involve, among other things:

- Writing and publishing
- Performing (theatre, music)
- Creating (artistic work in any form; groups & organizations)
- Speaking, discussing, facilitating, and conversing (in any medium)
- Designing
- Running (as in for elective office)
- Protesting
- Leading/administering (organizations, groups, projects)
- Testifying (in any venue)
- Teaching (in any setting)
- Organizing
- Caretaking
- Building
- Inventing
- Healing
- Advocating
- Negotiating/Mediating
- ...and otherwise putting ourselves “out there.”

These efforts and the responses they attract may be fulfilling, rewarding, and impactful. They also may be exhausting, frustrating, and possibly threatening. In some cases, they may trigger

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past difficult or traumatic experiences. In such circumstances, we understandably may seek to return to safer grounds, for brief or longer periods of time.

This workshop recognizes that duality. It will invite us to pose questions to ourselves, applying one of two **frameworks for inquiry**:

The first option is roughly adapted from a social action research model:

- **Personal vision and assessment:** What kind of change do I want to see? What can I do to help achieve it? What personal and external resources do I have to engage in a change agent mode? What are my places of support and affirmation amid all this, and how do I nurture and maintain them?
- **Specific actions:** What specific actions do I want to take? How do I do them? How do I monitor my own well-being?
- **Challenges:** What personal barriers or obstacles might make it difficult for me to engage in the activity I wish to pursue? How do I work through or overcome them?
- **Evaluation:** How do I measure success? How am I doing, personally?

The second option is a personal SWOT (Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats) model:

- **Strengths:** What strengths do I bring to this desired realm of activity?
- **Weaknesses:** What weaknesses do I bring to this desired realm of activity?
- **Opportunities:** What opportunities do I have to make a difference?
- **Threats:** What threats may present themselves as I engage in this activity?

Our Workshop-Within-a-Workshop Time (90 minutes): During our workshop-within-a-workshop, we will divide our time this way:

- **Describe the purpose of the workshop (15 minutes):** The modest goals of this time together.
- **Release time (30 minutes):** You step away, apply a framework for inquiry, search the Web, etc.
~Take notes! Especially if this theme resonates with you, the thinking you do here may lead to something much more substantive.
~With online searches, ask away! *E.g.*, “How to start a podcast/blog/newsletter,” “How to create an online course,” “How to post comments on news sites,” “How to become a (fill in the blank),” “How to contact an elected/appointed public official,” “How to engage in self-care.”
- **Small groups (30 minutes):** Folks are invited to share whatever salient point(s) they wish from what they learned and/or planned via this exercise.
- **Reconvene as a full group (15 minutes):** Quick summing up.
