



Cohesive Over Connected: How to Move From Working Near Each Other to Working With Each Other

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Our Goal in the next 15 mins.....

Understand what occurs when communication and role clarity breakdown and disrupt teamwork using the IPEC Competencies for Interprofessional Work/Education.

- Question:
“What is the biggest barrier to teamwork in your daily work?”





These 4 pillars (competencies) help us move from working near each other to working with each other

Common Denominators Are:
Communication and Role Clarity



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A policy change is on the table.

Several education leaders are involved—curriculum, faculty development, assessment, and student affairs. Everyone agrees the change is important, but each group has been working independently. Messages are inconsistent, responsibilities overlap, and questions are surfacing only after decisions have been made.

Rather than asking, “*Who is responsible?*”, the group pauses and asks two questions:

The Team Asks

How are we communicating with one another?

Are we sharing information early? Are decisions communicated consistently?
Are we creating opportunities for questions and feedback?



Who owns what?

Who makes the decision? Who develops the materials? Who communicates the change? Who implements it? Who evaluates whether it works?



How many times have you written a policy without team collaboration?

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Mapping the Work

Rather than asking, “Who is responsible?” the group mapped the responsibilities together.

Area	Who Does What?
 Communication Shared messaging and consistent updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop one communication plan• Agree on common messages• Provide opportunities for questions and feedback
 Policy Decision Strategic direction and approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify decision-makers• Ensure stakeholder input• Confirm final policy language
 Materials & Resources Tools, guidance, and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop implementation materials• Create FAQs and resources• Align with existing systems
 Implementation Communication and rollout	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicate with faculty and learners• Support training and onboarding• Address questions and barriers
 Evaluation Measure and improve	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Track completion• Gather feedback• Assess impact and make adjustments

A New Approach



Shared Communication

One communication plan and common messages.



Role Clarity

Define who leads, who contributes, who implements, and who evaluates.



Shared Purpose

Keep the focus on the educational outcome rather than individual departmental responsibilities.



Collaboration

Build the policy with the people responsible for making it work.



The policy itself has not changed dramatically.
The way the educators work together has.



The Key Administrative Insight

- A policy isn't successful because it was approved.
- It's successful when the people who **implement it, experience it, support it, and are affected by it** understand the purpose and can work together to make it effective.
- **Connected:** *"We included everyone in the conversation."*
- **Cohesive:** *"Everyone helped shape the solution."*

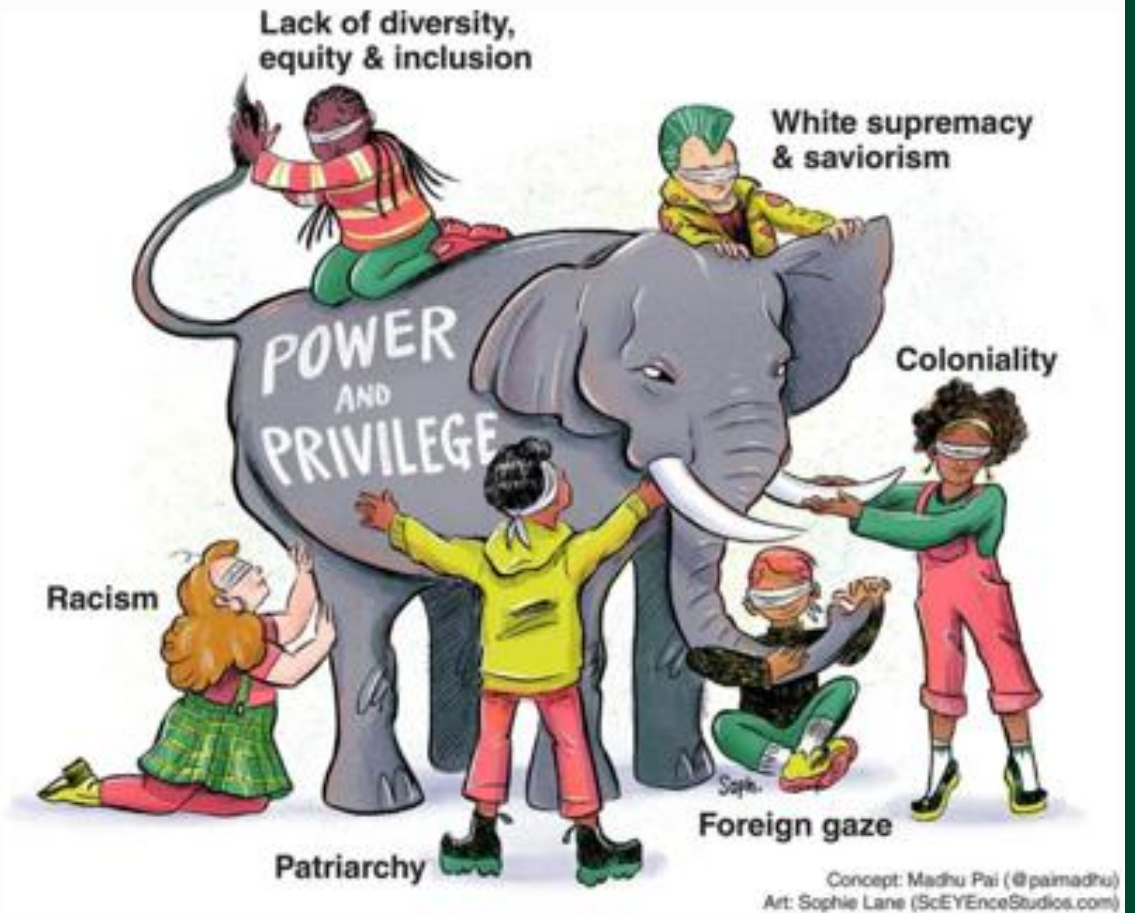
Dismantling Hierarchies: drawing from global health partnership experiences

Lisa V. Adams, MD

Professor of Medicine, Epidemiology, and CFM

Director, Center for Global Health Equity

Associate Dean for Global Health



Global health, as currently practiced, has many asymmetries in power and privilege. Coloniality is but one manifestation of supremacy. Source: Abimbola et al. PLOS Medicine 2021 (<https://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article?id=10.1371/journal.pmed.1003604>) [-] MADHUKAR PAI



GH Partnerships to promote health equity

- GH requires working in partnerships
 - Education
 - Research
 - Collaborative care delivery
- Many lessons transferrable to interdisciplinary educational teams
 - IE Team similar to a multicultural collaboration
- Advantages...and plenty of challenges



Image: <https://17globalgoals.com>

GH Partnerships Interdisciplinary teams to promote health equity in education

- GH requires working in partnerships
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How can we get it right?



Image: <https://17globalgoals.com>

Interdisciplinary teams

- At the heart of any collaboration or teamwork is to practice equity
- The “HOW” matters as much as the “WHAT”
- Challenges can result from working across differences:
 - Cultures (including by discipline!)
 - Languages
 - Time zones
 - Social and professional hierarchies (explicit and implicit)
 - Histories/legacies/relationships to colonization (colonizer or colonized)
 - Social norms, priorities (community, process vs outcomes)
 - Systems (healthcare, business, legal, educational)
 - And more...

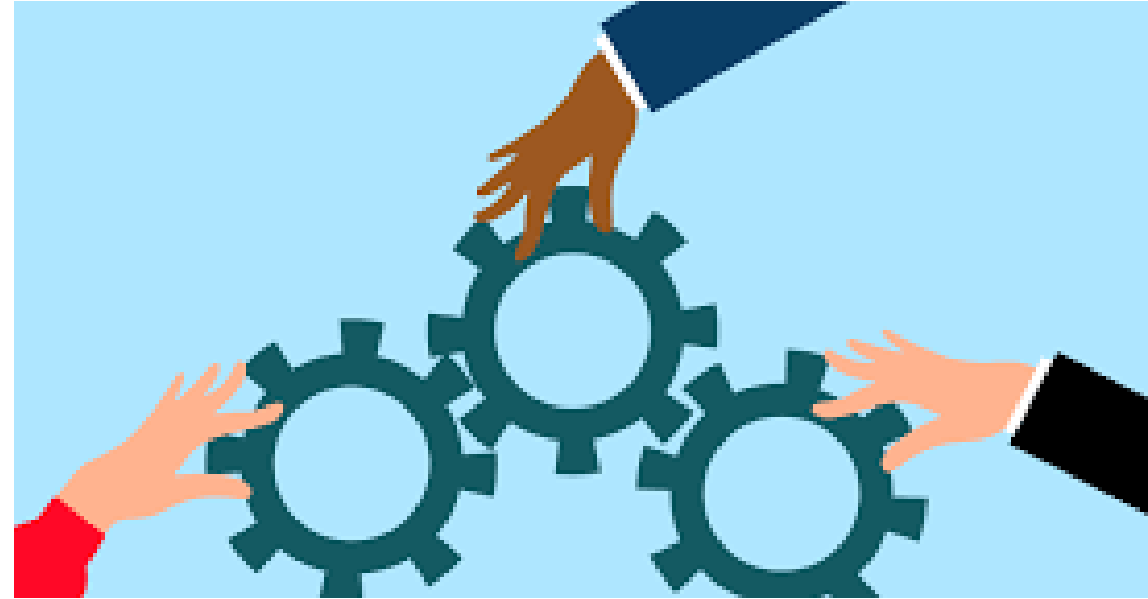


Image: Pxhere

Interdisciplinary teams

- At the heart of any collaboration or teamwork is to practice equity
- The “HOW” matters as much as the “WHAT”
- Challenges can result from working across differences:
 - 1) Cultures (including by discipline!) → framing of issues, etc.
 - 2) Languages (words matter moments)
 - 3) ~~Time zones?~~
 - 4) Social and professional hierarchies (explicit and implicit)
 - 5) Histories/legacies/relationships to colonization → systemic racism, other systemic drivers that impact our interactions
 - 6) Interpersonal issues – communication styles
 - 7) Misaligned priorities
 - 8) Systems if working across different institutions
 - 9) And more...

And it takes A LOT more time to collaborate equitably

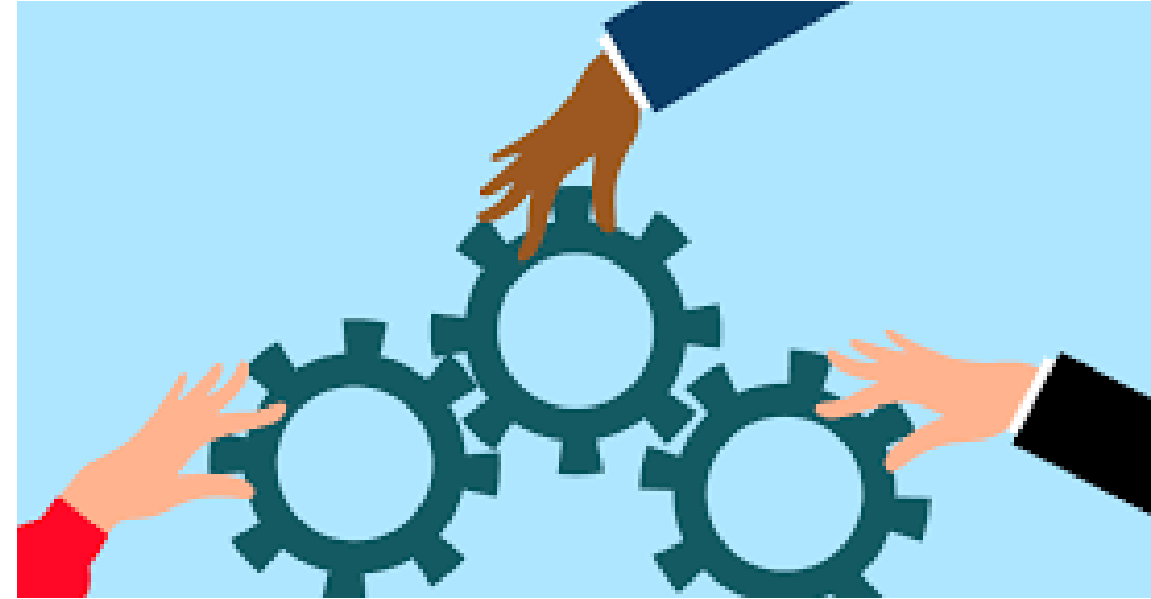


Image: Pxhere

*What challenges
have you faced?*

Where things can go wrong

When they (we, I, *someone*)...

- Determines/drives the priorities, next steps, timeline
 - Prioritizes project deadlines over ensuring collaboration and balanced participation
- Doesn't recognize tacit approval (when people don't feel comfortable speaking up)
- Doesn't acknowledge the power differential, setting the the stage at the start
- Doesn't fully understand or learn about or establish the team's process for collaborating, conducting work, and making decisions
- Rely solely on emails for communication
- Ignore warning signs a partnership or team is deteriorating
 - Radio silence
 - Forge ahead without confirmation/checking in



Partnership/teamwork “failures”

- Do any of these sound familiar?
- Have you ever witnessed any such actions?
- Have ever found yourself doing any of these? (perhaps in a milder form?)

My uncomfortable truth:

I have done them all.

TEDx: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_NUEepj06pc



Image: www.tdtpc.com



LET'S
DISCUSS

Breakout rooms for discussion
Your examples / your successes



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First-aid for collaborating: building teams/partnerships

Do what we ask our students to do...

REFLECT!

- Constantly(!) on our social location and our positionalities
- Critically ask ourselves how our multiple intersecting identities inform and influence our behaviors
- Consider how we think of and navigate our social and cultural identities as tools for...
- Ask more, listen more, learn to become an ally



Image: universityaffairs.ca/

Final thoughts

After 30+ years of working in global health partnerships, teams, collaborations, I've learned a lot

What I REALLY learned

Everything is relational.

Relationships are the foundation for collaborative (all our) work.

*Partnerships – especially when built across divides of historical hierarchies and inequities – **must move at the speed of trust.***

Adapted from Stephen Covey, author of The Speed of Trust: The One Thing that Changes Everything

*If you want to go fast, go alone;
If you want to go far, go together.*

- African Proverb

