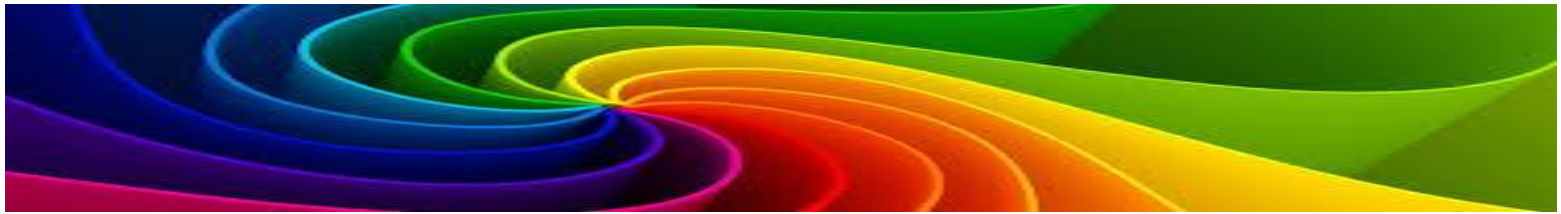


# What's In It for Me?

## Interprofessional Collaboration across Academic Institutions

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## Context

- Canadian Working Group on HIV and Rehabilitation (CWGHR) educational modules developed
- Modules used by four universities as part of their Interprofessional Education (IPE) curricula
- Need for a facilitator guide for the module identified
- Working group with representation from each university and CWGHR struck to develop the facilitator guide

# Task Accomplished

- Completed a comprehensive customizable Facilitator Guide for conducting interprofessional groups
- Resources shared by all participating university programs to identify best practices for:
  - Facilitation
  - Interprofessional (IP) facilitation
  - Face-to-face IP facilitation
  - Online IP facilitation
  - Blended IP facilitation



# Opportunity for Reflection

In a world of institutional and professional silos and competitive environment:

- What enabled the work to be done?
- Where were the challenges/inhibitors?
- What could be learned and shared from the experience?



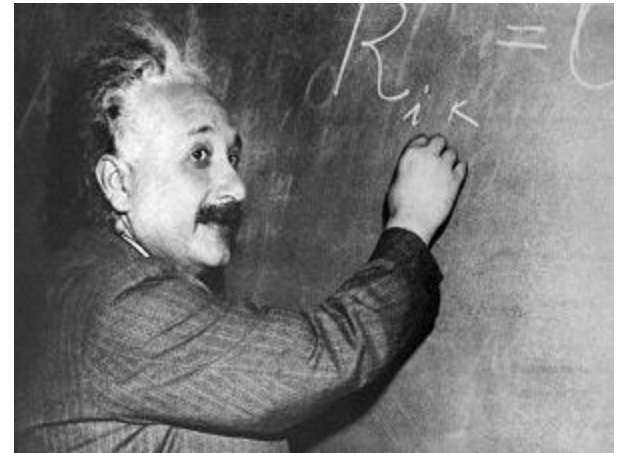
# Process of Discovery

- Considered applicable theories to help us understand what happened
- Decided to engage in a collegial discussion
- Worked with an external facilitator to link theories and questions to be discussed
- Held an in depth, purposeful, collegial discussion
- Analyzed transcript data



# Theories Considered

- Contact Theory
- Functional Theory
- Symbolic Convergence Theory
- Tuckman's Model of Stages of Group Development



# Intergroup Contact Theory



- *Equal Status*: Each group in the contact situation should have equal status
- *Common goals*: Members of the group should be working on common goals
- *Intergroup cooperation*: Goal attainment is an interdependent effort without intergroup competition
- *Support of Authorities*: The group should have institutional support

Allport (1954); Pettigrew (1988)

# Functional Theory



To make effective decisions, group members must:

- agree to making the best decision,
- consider resources required to accomplish task,
- identify process to be followed,
- describe process for interactions, and
- Review and revise the decision-making process.

Gouran & Hirokawa (1996)



# Symbolic Convergence Theory

- Makes sense of communication
  - Symbolic - verbal and non-verbal messages
  - Convergence – shared understanding and meaning



# Tuckman's Stages of Group Development

- Forming
- Norming
- Storming
- Performing
- Adjourning



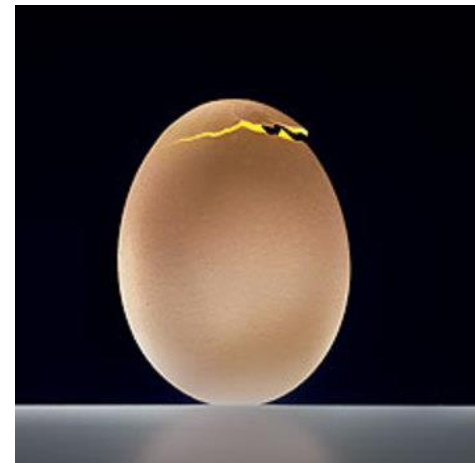


# Analysis

- Qualitative approach– inductive thematic analysis within a realist paradigm
- Data analyzed by research assistant
- Performed close reading to identify similar units and then group into themes
- Shared themes with group participants
- All reviewed transcripts to verify themes and see if other ideas were emerging

# Emerging Themes

- Understanding of and respect for differences
- Motivations
- Stages of group development
- Equality among university partners – neutral leadership from CWGHR
- Group strengths
- Resistance
- Communication



# Understanding of and Respect for Differences



- Acknowledge differences among members (ideas, needs, roles on the team), across institutions and across professions

*“...be cognizant of some of the things that are important to the group members”*

*“One of the things I learned that’s very different across universities is the way the IPE departments are running.”*

*“...within the IPE world that we all do represent our own perspective and have different perspectives coming into it.”*

# Motivations

- Group members felt a responsibility to the group; felt an elevated sense of responsibility as it was a peer asking them for feedback/input
- Other motivations for involvement included – learning, meeting operational requirements, valuing the outcomes, positive energy of the team, and ‘doing justice’ to a special opportunity



- *...it's really valuable to sit around the table and to hear the commitments and the desire to continue with the work...a commitment to this and in fact to each other as part of this role."*
- *"So the concept of moving towards best practice to me was what was really very intriguing way to see what else was being done or how we can contribute."*
- *"...the willingness of everyone to contribute, to what is clearly for me beyond even the extra mile in terms of the group work and that has been such a great motivator for me"*

# Stages of Group Development

- Norming and role assignment:

*“...there’s competing voices and you know, sometimes you need to be clear what’s okay and what’s maybe not part of the group norms.”*

*“...acknowledge some of the proprietary tensions that we might feel from our various institutions in terms of sharing materials and stuff and who would take the leadership role in the group.”*



- Group process check-in:

*“Thinking about...team dynamics and not really fully discussing how we would handle that and perhaps it just the time.”*

*“What are ways we want to change or look at our process moving forward?”*

# Equity among University Partners, Neutral Leadership

- Impetus for the collaboration came from outside the universities
- Invited to participate so we were all equals
- CWGHR was “neutral territory”; helped facilitate the conversations on an egalitarian level amongst group members



- *“I think you hit on a very fundamental piece is that the impetus for the collaboration came from a neutral ground...here is an opportunity to work together and you are all coming in as equals....”*

# Strengths of the Group

- Everyone was forthcoming – steps up and takes responsibility
- Group members have a skill set from working in IPE – promotion of collaboration
- Group relationships
- Momentum
- Group members represent different pro
- Shared values



*“relationships trump a lot of things about priority setting....one of our meetings was called at a time when I had to be in the US on a vacation day and I felt so strongly that I needed to be on the call because, you know, I was part of this group and my relationships are very important with everyone here...”*

*“I looked at the outcome beyond the guide actually and I looked at the years of experience around the table and I thought I have no issues with being confident that whenever this group puts their minds together they can, you know, exceed and supersede the expectations...”*

*...forthcoming with sharing and collaboration that it started to feel that there was this sort of more potential for other things”*

# Resistance

- Universities are traditionally hierarchical, bureaucratic and very proprietary, with an overriding focus on intellectual property
- All universities shared freely, but group members recognized some internal struggle

*“...we are doing something really grand here that absolutely cannot be ignored and we are flying in the face of all of those, you know, structures that impede us.”*

*“...but knowing the structure that sits around me it created the sense that those questions that were in my mind, even though I didn't act on them, I know that they were there.”*

# Communication

- Validation of others' ideas
- Recognizing the contributions and strengths of other members
- Staying connected and keeping each other apprised of changes





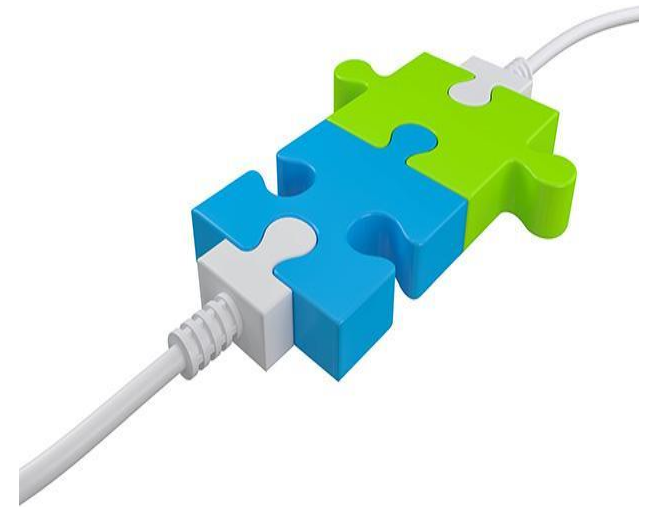
# Summary Comments

- Key enablers: equal status; common goals; intergroup cooperation; external leadership
- Key inhibitors: university siloes; university culture that is proprietary; focus on intellectual property



# Process

- Considering the process of factors that enabled and inhibited collaboration in light of known theory was very beneficial to both the current state and future opportunities





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