Fostering empathy to create a culture of social belonging

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About Me

- M.A. UT Austin, Advertising
- 10 years of industry experience
- Teach courses in Public Relations, Advertising, Digital Campaigns and Social Media
- Podcast Host of Starting Line 1928
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What is Empathy?
“I usually think about empathy in a way where you’re trying to put yourself in someone else’s shoes and really just trying to see the world how they see it before making a judgment on them.”
Empathy

"the ability to understand and share the feelings of another."
Empathy

Social Belonging
3 ways to foster empathy

- Mindfulness
- Group Solutions
- Model it
Mindfulness

Mindfulness is most defined as the state of being attentive and aware of what is taking place in the present.

Activity: Journaling

At the start of the semester, students are provided with a small notebook for journaling. The notebook removes the temptation to edit that accompanies the use of a word processor. To kick off the journaling process, students are led in a discussion of the benefits of mindfulness and introduced to freewriting.

At the beginning of each class, a prompt is displayed as students enter the class space. The prompts range from self-reflection prompts to quotes to artwork. Calming music is played, and students are asked to hold questions until after free write. Students are given the first ten minutes of class time to write. At the end of the semester, students are given the option to share journal entries with the instructor for extra credit.
What do I know to be true that I didn’t know a year ago?
Group Solutions

- Students are sorted into groups they don't usually work in
- Divide the whiteboard into two categories "Pain Points" & "What my team could use help with"
- Using post-its, students add their thoughts or leave a tally
- Predetermine groups are handed a post-it to solve
- Then each group shares the problem they tackled and advice on how to solve it.
- If a group seems stumped, have the whole class problem solve.
- It is strongly encouraged to recap these strategies in either an announcement or class later.
Model it

- Build in grace to your syllabus i.e. late passes, dropping a lowest grade etc.,
- Allow student's input to help shape the class and ask for it
- Add check-ins
- If a student shares an opposing view, listen and consider the why
- Think about how you respond to requests
- Share your own life experiences
Let's Connect

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