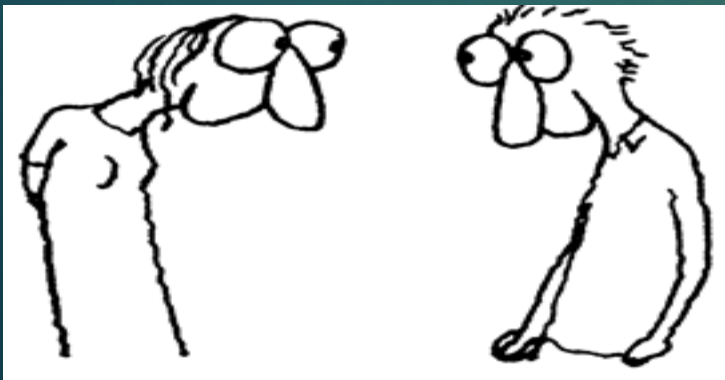


# Cultural Diversity: "Me" - "You" - "Us"



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# What are we talking about? Is it about differences or about unity?

The issue has to do with:

- ▶ who am I, who are you,
- ▶ is “me” at counterpoint to “you” ,
- ▶ what influences what we see and how we interpret or perceive others,
- ▶ whether or not we’re both capable and prepared to see beyond the “me”, “you” to “us” , and
- ▶ how we might achieve that end...



# Who am I? Who are you? Who are we?

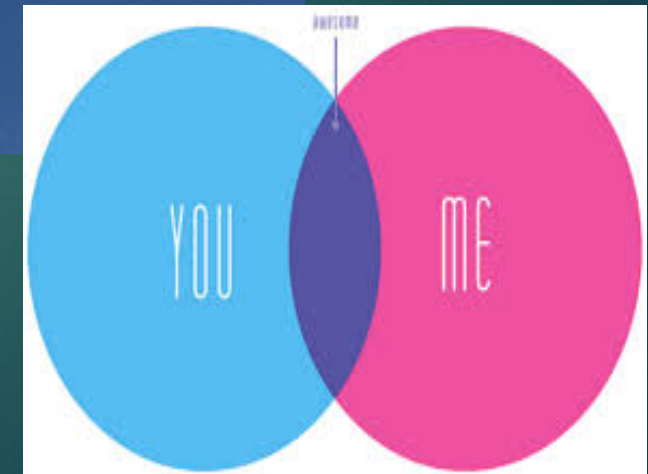
▶ *At some point in life, all of us confront the question, "Who am I?" and "Who are you?"*



- ▶ The development of a person's identity is one of the major developmental tasks.
- ▶ Who I am, you are, who we are is a result of both direct and indirect influences.
- ▶ Along life's continuum we must resolve conflicts with our own identity.

# A “me” – “you” dichotomy?

- ▶ Is there a division or contrast between “me” “you”? Are they two things that are or are represented as being opposed or entirely different?





Different isn't by definition negative ~ it's how it's understood and embraced that matters ...

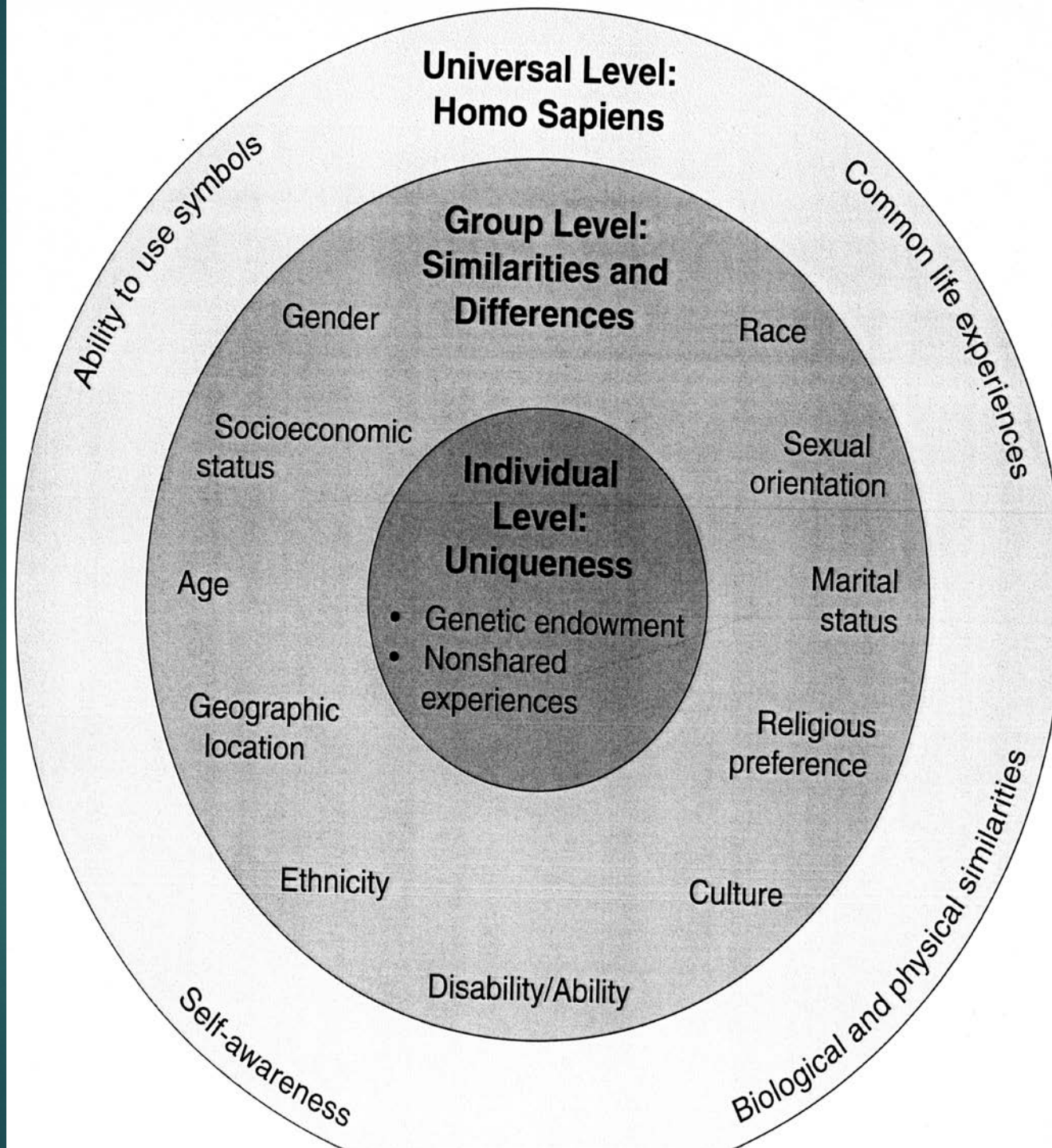
- ▶ Do all of us have to be made to fit the same mold as everyone else (Procrustean Logic)?
- ▶ At a minimum 'cutting out' that which makes us unique isn't the answer!

# A Model of Personal Identity

- ✦ Sue (2001) proposed a **Tripartite Model of Personal Identity**
- ✦ Illustrated as three concentric circles which describe the **individual, group, and universal** levels of personal Identity
  - ✦ **Individual:** each person is unique in genetic makeup, personality, and personal experience (**individual** differences set us apart from other human beings and is integral in our Identity)
  - ✦ **Group:** focuses on the basic similarities *and* differences among individuals (society divides us up into groups based on various demographic characteristics, therefore a part of our identities is based on our membership in these groups)
  - ✦ **Universal:** there are characteristics that we share with all other human beings such as biological needs (food/water), physical similarities (anatomical similarities), common life experiences (birth/death), and common practices or behaviors (the use of language for communication)

# Tripartite Development Of Identity

(Sue & Sue, 2003)



We are like all others

We are like no others

We are like some others




# Multicultural Premise

- ▶ A fundamental precept is that: We are all CULTURAL BEINGS
- ▶ Our Cultural Identities are simultaneously *multidimensional*, *multifaceted*, and include interdependent characteristics on the:
  - ▶ *Individual Level*
  - ▶ *Group Level (e.g. social group identities)*
  - ▶ *Universal Level*

We bring the fullness of our identities into any human interactions we engage in and so *all of our relationships are "cross-cultural" in nature*





Okay, so we're all cultural entities – but what influences going from me and you to us?



At a minimum: Experiences, Input, Filters

# Input, Filters and Affect

- ▶ *Input:*

- ▶ what is put in, taken in, or operated on by any process or system.

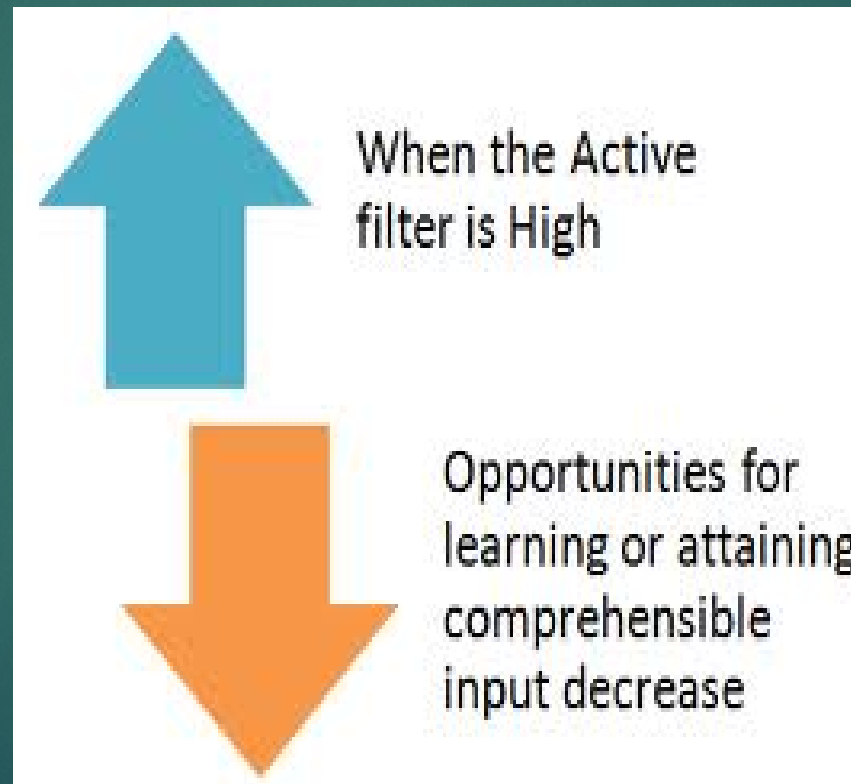
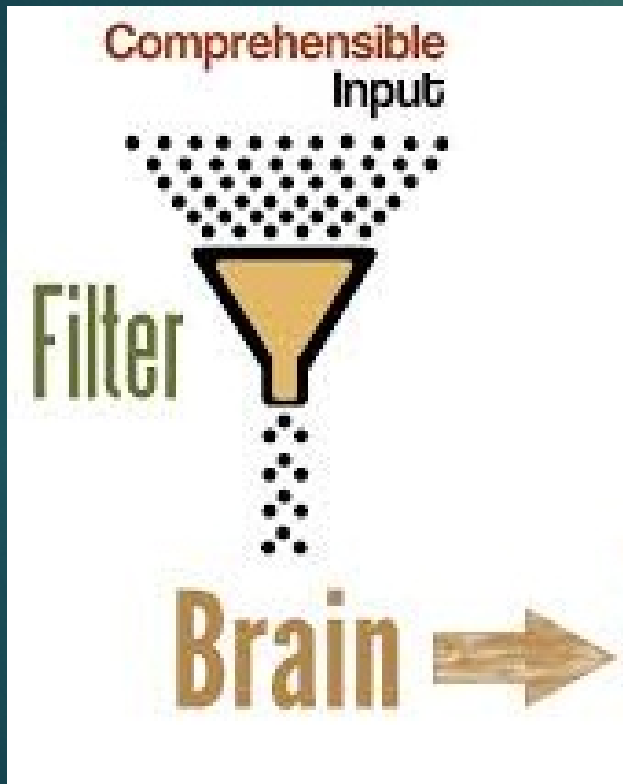
- ▶ *Filter:*

- ▶ a device to slow or impede the removal of "impurities"

- ▶ *Affect:*

- ▶ to have an influence on or effect a change in feeling or emotion; to influence, sway; enabling agent for or as a result of modes of cognition.
- ▶ Need to be 'open' to input to have a low affective filter ...

# Krashen's Comprehensible Input and the Affective Filter



# Socio-cognitive / Perceptual filters

... Why do we pass over certain input?

## ▶ *Socio-cognitive*

- ▶ Reality is socially constructed – sensory perception plays a role in this construction process.

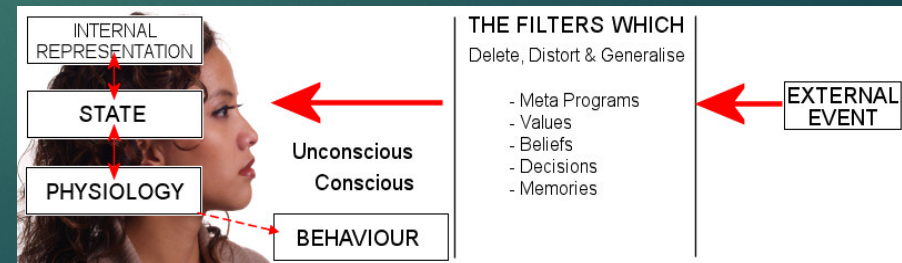
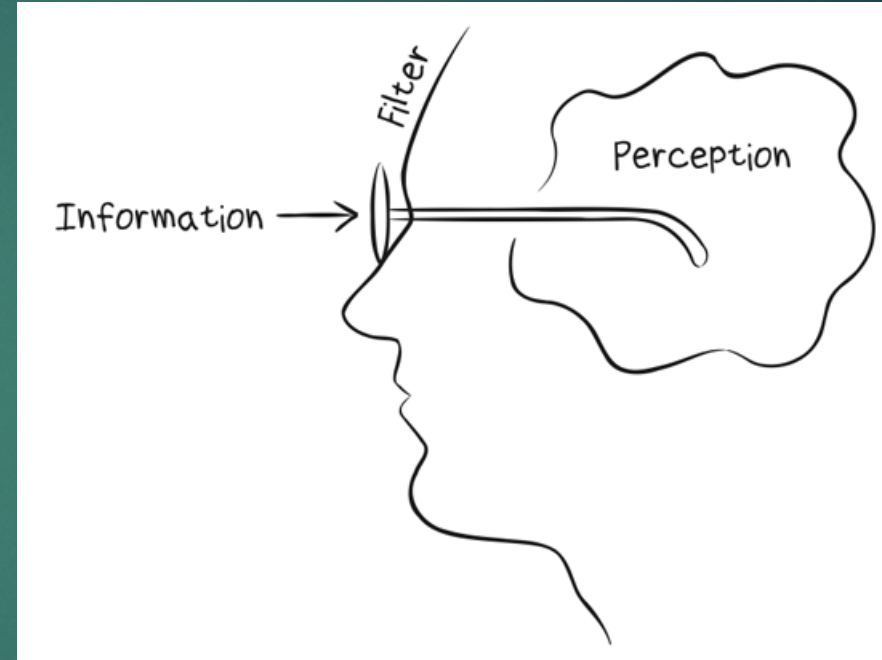
## ▶ *Perception*

- ▶ Filters information in and out dictating what we pay attention to and act upon.
- ▶ They also can block out or distort reality and keep us from seeing things as they are!

The way in which we act or react in a "+" or "-" manner to information is filtered by our perceptions.

# Perception has several steps...

- ▶ **Exposure** – sensing a stimuli
- ▶ **Attention** – an effort to recognize the nature of a stimuli
- ▶ **Awareness** – assigning meaning to a stimuli
- ▶ **Retention** – adding the meaning to one's internal makeup



# How do shifting Multicultural Dimensions impact the “me”, “you”, “us” paradigm in our Educational Settings ...

Our students today come from:

- ▶ Multicultural, multiracial, multilingual, mixed multigenerational families, multi-disability, multi-environments (inner city, suburb, rural, etc.)
  - What about our Teachers???

# Do we facilitate teachers developing IS / ME – going from the me/you to the us?

- ▶ Courses – required and/or elective
- ▶ More courses
- ▶ Specialized courses
- ▶ Immersion Practicum
- ▶ Mentors / Mentoring
- ▶ In house and selected field experiences ...

What are the parts of the whole???



JUST KIDDING



# Multicultural Efficacy & Intercultural Sensitivity

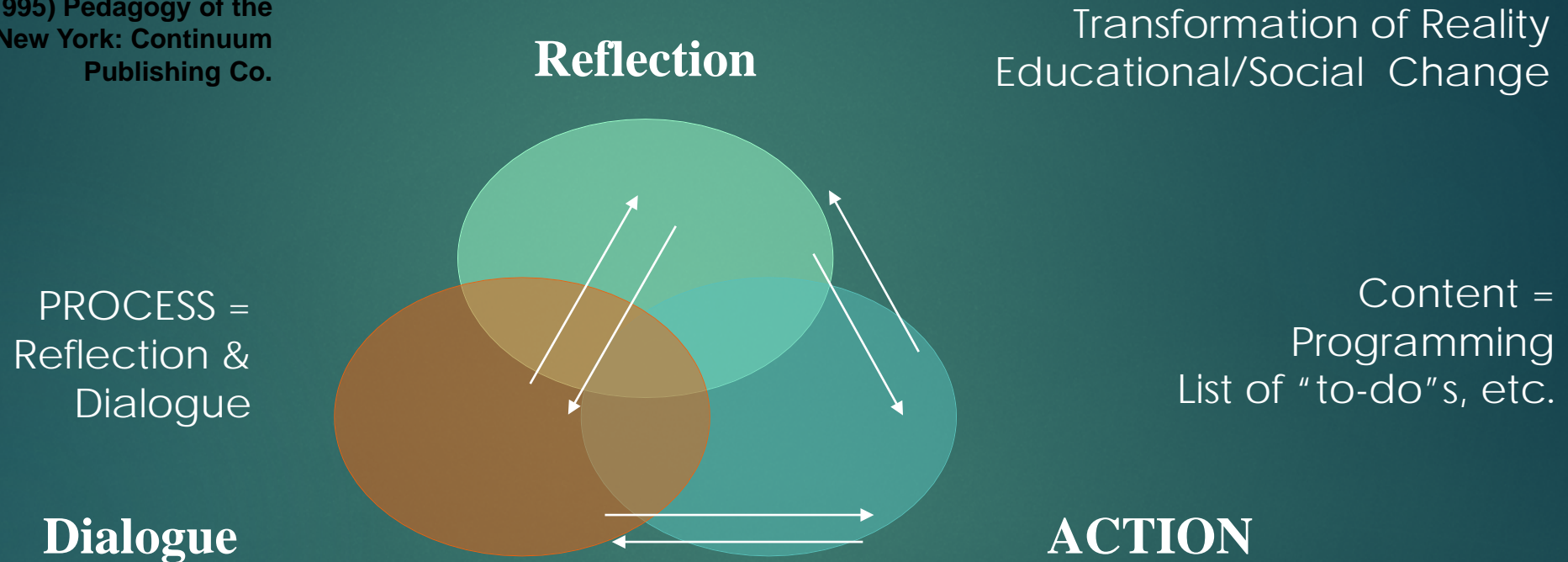
- ▶ 'Multicultural efficacy' = a sense of teachers' self-efficacy to execute various multicultural teaching practices, including those practices labeled "culturally responsive"
- ▶ 'Intercultural Sensitivity' = the ability to recognize perspectives of an event or behavior, to recognize one's own cultural values and those of others.

# Why do our interventions sometimes fall short???

- ▶ It isn't always the students, WE need to look into the mirror...a clean, un-opaque, realistic image of who we are, how we communicate and what we design as experiences for the students...towards developing their ICS and ME!
- ▶ We argue that WE need to also reflect on and cultivate a critical awareness of our own cultural identity to be able to cultivate it in our students.

# Paulo Freire's Praxis Model for Education & Social Change

Adapted from:  
Freire, P. (1995) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum Publishing Co.



PROCESS =  
Reflection &  
Dialogue

**Dialogue**

**ACTION**

Dialogue and Reflection combined with Action =  
Transformational *change that*  
*is lasting (cycle repeats)*

# The Challenge



- Facilitating the development of filters that don't need to block but rather allow input to go through
- Figuring out ways of making the "us" the gestalt of its "me" – "you" parts
- In other words having the "us" represent the organized whole that is perceived as more than the sum of its parts

It's clear that we need more than theory...





*Σας Ευχαριστούμε Πολύ, Thank you very much,  
Moltes Gràcies, Mercès, Muchas gracias , Merci,  
Hartelijk dank, Danke sehr, Köszönöm, Takk, Arigato, Paldies, Achu, Dziekuje,  
Muito Obrigado, Va multumim frumos, Spasibo balshoye, Tapadh Leat, Dakujem,  
고맙습니다 , Tack, Hvala lepa, Dekuji Wa'-do,  
Falemenderit shumë, Grazie Mille, Shukriya,  
Tashakkur, Çok tesekkür ederim ...*

*JA Spinthourakis, 2015*