

GETTING REAL ABOUT SRP IN 2020 AT THE ADLER RETREAT

ARE YOU TOO COMFORTABLE?

EXPLORING POWER & PRIVILEGE

TO BUILD A STRONGER ADLER UNIVERSITY



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 2020

CHICAGO - VANCOUVER - ONLINE

All campuses unite for one day to reflect on our mission by discussing themes and current events that are relevant to social justice, community engagement, and Socially Responsible Practice.

Participants will explore intersectionality, accountability, and abuse of power to deepen our understanding of SRP and enhance our skills to pursue social justice.



2020 Adler University Retreat

What is Socially Responsible Practice?

The practice of social responsibility is a value-based execution of behaviors and actions that build upon global movements for social justice and equity. Adlerians are change agents who take an inward look that explores their own connection to social problems.

The practice of being socially responsible requires that one build intentional connections with the global community to collectively work toward and ensure equitable health and wellness. The Adlerian concept of social interest informs us that individual health is inherently tethered to the health of others and the environment; thus, communal and environmental ties are essential to creating healthier environments, enacting inclusive approaches to solving problems, and promoting a thriving humanity.

In 2005, faculty at Adler University described socially responsible practitioners as fostering the development of social equality and respect through compassionate action throughout the global community. In 2009, the Board of Trustees approved this definition:

Socially responsible practitioners are educated to be effective personal and social change-agents in the pursuit of justice.

Adler University Values are infused in Socially Responsible Practice

The values of Adler University also serve to broaden our understanding of socially responsible practice as a mission toward and approach to social justice. Pluralism, Social Interest, Courage, Pragmatism, and Excellence are all essential elements of socially responsible practice. Adler University infuses these core values in the academic curriculum, campus-based programming, and external projects. Socially responsible practice is an **organizing** principle that Adler University uses to actualize Adlerian philosophy, bringing these values into movement and action.

Essentials of Socially Responsible Practice

Social justice refers to equitable distribution of economic, political, civil, cultural, social, and other resources and opportunities in society in order to promote the optimal development of persons and communities. Social justice is achieved when we demonstrate with courage and discipline a commitment to knowledge about and engagement with diverse peoples; learn about historical and contemporary inequities; build relationships to promote solidarity for social justice; gain knowledge and skills to advance social justice; confront and resist oppression; restore justice; and, make reparations and reconciliation to those aggrieved. Socially responsible practitioners must:

- Learn about and engage with a diversity of people. They develop collegial and social relationships with people whose social identities are different than their own across race, age, ability, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, military experience, income, language, and other aspects of diversity. These relationships create exposure to and empathy for the life experiences of others, challenging our own perspectives and behaviors that will not support justice. Ultimately, these relationships embody the active and lasting sense of oneness that Alfred Adler wrote about.

- Learn about historical and contemporary inequities. They access print, digital, and community resources that expose unfair treatment, recognizing personal positions of power and privilege and the historical foundation of these. This investigation is often an iterative process in which the practitioner comes to understand one level of unfair treatment, only to find as new information becomes available that this understanding is incomplete. Thus, the practitioner will need to employ analysis of systems and institutions to identify the etiology and emergence of injustice; and to engage in a life-long process of that analysis as their self-awareness and awareness of others will change over time.
- Build relationships to promote solidarity for social justice. Practitioners work with others like themselves for support and to address those areas of confusion about their own biases. They also build alliances with others different from themselves to build coalitions, reflect on their own assumptions, and gain perspective on structures and systems that keep inequity in place.
- Gain knowledge and skills to advance social justice. Socially responsible practitioners strive to acknowledge social injustice and to avoid blame as an endpoint of their efforts. Similarly, they recognize with integrity their own personal and collective power and control to effect change, neither over- nor under-estimating their capacity to act decisively. When their interpersonal, social, emotional, or technical skills are insufficient for the work ahead, they refine these skills and partner with others holding shared commitments to change.
- Confront and resist oppression (interpersonal, institutional, structural, and social). Socially responsible practitioners recognize their own positions of power and privilege, acknowledging the impact of these on their own biases and discriminatory practices, which are often supported by organizational policies and practices that maintain social inequity. They acknowledge and address the ways they themselves manage oppressive systems. Their acts of resistance include organizing, action planning, lobbying, fund raising, educating, and transforming their reactive anger into pro-active determination.
- Work to restore justice. The work of socially responsible practitioners includes influencing and developing policies, structures, practice rules, power sharing, and change leadership that is aligned with social equity. This work advances justice by meeting others where they are in the process of change, providing personally meaningful information as social motivators, promoting an equity-focused approach to social change, modeling behavior that moves us to justice, and reinforcing the movement toward justice. They also support interpersonal and institutional actions to overcome the legacy of injustice which include dialogues to promote understanding, community investments, and development of public policy that addresses barriers to equity and inclusion. This work requires civic involvement beyond voting, showing approval in social media sites, or Tweeting.
- Make reparations and reconciliation to those aggrieved. The practice of reparation seeks at its core to provide acknowledgement, responsiveness, and restoration to individuals and populations wronged through individual or collective action or inaction. Examples include the seizing of lands of Indigenous peoples of the Americas, enslavement of Africans, internment of Japanese Canadians and Japanese Americans, disregard for the survivors and families of the residential school system, continued pay inequities for women in the workplace, deprivation of professional employment opportunities for Jewish Americans in many states through the 1960s, intentional delay of a public health response to HIV, and others. These have all sparked debate about right action through reparation. Socially responsible practitioners support a formal apology on the part of nations to the living descendants of these people. They support restorative practices which include civil settlements such as direct payments, increased educational opportunities, and government-funded community investments to overcome the legacy effects of these injustices.

