



“Things which matter most must never be at the mercy of things that matter least.”

- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

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As I reflect on the field of psychology, and the CPA, it is clear to me that we suffer from internalized oppression. We have been on the defense for so long that we have begun to defend against one another. We need to be more proactive, rather than reactive. I have come to appreciate the need to defend and protect, but I have also come to learn that in this process, we respond and react to the agendas of others, while having lost our own vision at times. As a profession, we are the authority on healthy living and teaching others to endure in times of crisis and stress in order to create, or recreate, that which they have lost. More importantly, we establish for many of our clients ways to develop a sense of connectedness, purpose and collaboration with others. It is now time that we regain our sense of connectedness and collaboration in order to defend against our own internalized oppression.

My greatest fear is that we have come to socially, politically and professionally occupy spaces which have been systematically forced upon us, rather than building the internal barriers to defend against these systems. In essence, we have begun to fight with one another for limited resources. As a result of this professional oppression, many have been deceived to believe that their survival, and self-preservation, is reliant upon oppressing others in the process. In our struggle to create the internal barriers and internal advocates needed to launch psychology to the next level, we have limited our strength and power. Limited strength, limited resources, and limited power forces us to react, more than to create and initiate.

If psychology is going to create the change we have demanded for so long, we must begin to work together, define our priorities collaboratively, and do a better job designing our plan for implementation. We must not allow ourselves to feel paralyzed by external forces that deceive us into believing that if we demand from, and oppress, one another, that this is some how going to make our profession better. We must not forget, and must always remember, that we all want to advance, promote, and create better spaces socially, politically, and professionally for ourselves, our students and the communities we serve. While we may have different ideas about how to fertilize and grow our own yards, it is important that we not allow these ideas to supersede our points of commonality, and shared vision. We are systematically oppressing and weakening one another, while building up those external forces around us. This begs the question “Is this really working?”

If we are going to launch psychology into the future, we must find ways to work together. It will be important for us to remember what our common ground is and develop ways to stay connected on that level. If we do not strive towards this end, we will continue to sacrifice that which matters most, for things that matter least. (U)

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