

Title:

"I Won't Dance, Don't Ask Me": Concerning Why Workplace Bullying Bystanders Simply Stand By

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Session Title:

"What Did That Mean?" An Examination of Personal Disposition in Nursing Education and Practice

Slot:

F 10: Friday, 28 July 2017: 2:30 PM-3:45 PM

Scheduled Time:

3:10 PM

Keywords:

barriers, selective inattention and workplace bullying bystanders

References:

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Kennison, M., Dzurec, L.C., Cary, A., & Dzurec, D. J., III. (2015). Seeking the 'magis': A pathway to enhancing civility in higher education. *Jesuit Higher Education*, 4 (1), 27-35.

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Abstract Summary:

Extending Cross's (1981) model addressing deterrents to adults' participation in continuing education, the investigators' purpose was to use hermeneutic analysis to identify dispositional, situational, and institutional factors that serve to immediately dissuade workplace bullying bystanders' interventions in situations of workplace bullying, thus contributing to bullying's tenacity in the workplace.

Learning Activity:

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE
1. Examine workplace context and personal disposition as features that influence bystander behaviors in situations of workplace bullying.	Discussion and powerpoint slides will address the effects of context, as background milieu, as well as presenting the influence of personal disposition on establishing boundaries for day-to-day activities, behaviors, and interactions in the workplace.
2. Describe factors that discourage bullying bystanders from intervening in bullying situations.	Discussion will focus on the ways that formal considerations addressed in many workplace policies sidestep consideration of behaviors such as workplace bullying. It will address dispositional and situational factors, as well, as they are identified in published descriptions of bystander behaviors.
3. Recognize the significance of bystander actions to workplace bullying outcomes.	Presenter will address why it is important for bystanders to take action in situations of workplace bullying, as well as the consequences of their overall reticence to act.

Abstract Text:

Purpose:

Extending Cross's (1981) model addressing deterrents to adults' participation in continuing education, the investigators' purpose was to use hermeneutic analysis to identify situational, institutional, and dispositional factors that serve to immediately dissuade interventions on the parts of workplace bullying bystanders. Bystanders are those individuals who observe bullying but are not directly targeted by bully perpetrators. Bystanders' reticence to act subtly but effectively perpetuates bullying actions.

Methods:

Through a review of published first person narratives and descriptions of bystanders' experiences in bullying situations, the investigators selected relevant, textual quotes and accounts (hermeneutic description), identified themes portraying the character and essence of those quotes and accounts (hermeneutic reduction), and then considered the meanings that emerged from the selected text and the emergent themes, collectively (hermeneutic interpretation). Meanings inferred through this three step, credible and auditable hermeneutic process were considered, then, in light of Cross's (1981) categories

of situational, institutional, and dispositional factors. Findings of the study contribute to clarifying the complexity inherent in bystander response to situations of workplace bullying, and speak to the significance of disposition and context to furthering the intervention reticence of the bystanders who observe bullying in the workplace.

Results:

Findings of the study address bystanders' concerns about responding to situations of workplace bullying, and speak to the significance of disposition and context to furthering bystanders' tendencies for bystander reticence. This reticence takes place frequently; still, bystanders frequently experience physical and psychological impact as a result of their distant involvement in workplace bullying. Analysis suggests that bystander intervention can influence the outcomes of bullying. Bullying bystanders' active intervention, though, tends to be discouraged by virtue of the way workplace context interfaces with personal disposition. Moreover, when the workplace context fails to provide objective permission to recognize and actively address bullying behaviors, as it often does, bystanders tend to exhibit the group conformity that constrains their active involvement in actions that will thwart bullying actions. Surrounded by others who deny bullying's expression, bullying bystanders tend to overlook bullying behaviors, to doubt that they've actually seen them, and to question what right they have to report them.

Conclusion:

Numerous researchers have addressed the significance of workplace bullying bystanders' actions to ultimately abetting or deterring workplace bullying acts. Findings of this study demonstrate that bystanders' tendency to avoid intervening in bullying situations results from a confluence of dispositional, situational, and organizational factors. Consequently, efforts to stem workplace bullying may well be improved by incorporating education and training to empower bystanders to become 'upstanders,' skillful in responding to workplace bullying situations in the context of a safe, supportive organizational climate.