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**Experiential Dislocation Assignment: Attending the Yonkers St. Patrick's Day Parade
CD770 – Professor Dr. Nathaniel B. Perez ATS**

I. St. Patrick's Day Parade

My event attended was the Yonkers St. Patrick's Day parade, held on Saturday March 18, 2023 on McLean Avenue in Yonkers, New York. Though this event has been held annually for more than 65 years, because of this assignment, I decided to attend. Yes, it was my first time. When I go to parades, I try to go near the end so that I don't miss anything. The parade commenced at about 1PM. I positioned myself in the midst at about 1:15PM.

I. How Did I Feel Being in the Minority?

Upon arriving, I must admit I was a bit unsettled. At the time of my arrival there were absolutely no one of color but me. There were those few Caucasians, who glanced at me with a smile that seemed very receptive, but no one said hello to me. The rest of those present pointedly ignored me, acting as if I wasn't there. Because of this reception I began to wonder how is it that people can be so comfortable in having an event like this, and at this magnitude, in the midst of the third largest city in New York, and show not only such entitlement, while at the same time subtly show me rejection? My answer within was; this is just another example of Closet racism.

II. What Things Both Internally and Externally Contributed To You Feeling This Way?

Obviously, the first thing that caused me to feel the way that I felt was my Blackness; me just being me. In environments like this I'm reminded that I live in a racist society. Whether overtly or covertly I know that I am looked upon as a lower class citizen and in some cases a

lower class human. So at best I may get a smile from a few but from the mass majority I receive no acknowledgement. As I walked amongst the caucasian crowd, I began to question whether or not I maybe needed permission to be present or maybe I should've linked up with someone Irish to give me some legitimacy. My skin was the only difference. I actually dressed in green from top to bottom to show my acknowledgment of their celebration. But to no avail, most of what I received was the since of "What are YOU doing here?"

III. In What Ways Were You Caused to be Aware of Your Difference?

I was pointedly made aware of my difference (besides what has already been mentioned) as I watched the parade itself. It was truly and pointedly a White Irish Parade. Yes, there were participants in the parade who were people of color. But they were present only because they were elected officials, who themselves knew they had to be present. I can imagine that they didn't get the same reception I received. Every significant person of the parade was white. For example the Grand Marshall, Brendan A. Fitzgerald, who is a Catholic Priest and Pastor of St. Barnabas church in the Bronx, was white. Upon research, I was happy to find that one of the leaders I saw marching was a Coleman; Mickey Coleman of the County Tyrone Society. But he was not black. I was aware of my difference as well by the fact that I observed only a few other people of color besides me. In my entire time in the midst, there were at the most maybe five families that were of color present.

IV. What Have You Learned About Reconciliation as a Result of This Experience?

If Reconciliation is the ongoing spiritual process involving forgiveness, repentance and justice that restores broken relationships and systems to reflect God's original intention for all creation to flourish" as Brenda Salter McNeil defines it, then what I've learned about

reconciliation was not here; other than the recognition that it is needed. If reconciliation was present, I may have felt like an outsider initially because of my own discomfort, but it would've soon vanished by the way in which I could've been greeted as I saw others not of my melanin greeted. But I wasn't. I was tolerated. I wasn't insulted. No one treated me ugly. But no one showed me that they really wanted me there; Racism in the Closet.