James Hollywood III

Omega Graduate School

PHI 923-32 Contextualization for Social Change

Professor David Moser

April 4, 2025

Assignment #1 Core Essential Elements

1. Select One (1) Core Essential Element from the Syllabus Outline:
2. Create a 350-word original discussion paper (with cited sources) during the week of the residency. Be prepared to discuss and engage with other students during the live sessions. Post this document in DIAL.
3. Professor will check for quality of content and word count requirements. Grade assigned will be credit or no credit.

This class couldn’t have come at a better time. After serving on the Board of Directors, I recently became Deputy Director at the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) Maryland. NAMI Maryland focuses on mental health advocacy, education, and support across the state. Since entering this position, I have been navigating internal cultural misalignment, communication breakdowns, outdated or missing processes and procedures, and low morale. On top of that, we are dealing with severe budget cuts, two upcoming significant events that require money upfront, and one of our major events is no longer accessible as years prior. Also, the changes in the current political landscape, including the removal of DEI-related funding under the Trump administration, made it harder for state funding and Maryland budget deficits. Our long-time Executive Director is also preparing to retire, and I indicate that I am being prepared for that role with all these new emerging issues.

That’s why I believe this course is essential in my current career. I don’t just want to react; I like to think, reflect, and respond clearly. I want to study what is happening around me and inside the organization through a deeper lens. I believe the Praxis Model will help me walk through this in a way that is thoughtful and grounded: observing what is going on, analyzing the systems behind the surface of the problems, reflecting on what Scripture and my faith say about leadership and justice and planning how to move forward with action and communications that honor people and value the truth.

The essential element that speaks to me is Contextualization for Constructive Social Change. I want to lead in a way that does not ignore the broken pieces but does not give in to hopelessness. I believe God is present even in organizational dysfunction. Throughout this course, I hope to grow in how I lead through transitions, communicate more effectively, manage conflict, and ultimately help rebuild trust and alignment in a place that desperately needs it.