

Bias Speech is a Barrier to Belonging

This program is about thinking about language and its impact on belonging in our teaching and other workspaces. In this training we will talk about what bias speech is, how to identify it and how to do something about it! Hopefully, it reminds us that we value dignity, belonging and justice for all our co-workers, patients, and community members.

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT THROUGHOUT THIS TRAINING

- . How do these behaviors impact our mission?
- . Impact team cohesion?
- . Impact interpersonal dialogue?
- . Impact how people feel?
- . Impact my personal growth?



What Does Discrimination Look Like in...

- ..hiring & firing
- ..work assignments
- ..volunteer assignments
- ..information sharing
- ..work equipment distribution
- ..promotions
- ..input
- ..consequences



Microaggressions...

- ...everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate exclusionary, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their real or perceived membership in a marginalized group
- Also known as Subtle Acts of Exclusion, Abusive and Exclusionary Acts, Microassaults, Microinsults, Microinvalidations
- Described as death by a thousand cuts.

What is the difference between a microaggression and other slights or acts of rudeness?

- Microaggressions are based on social / systemic power imbalance
- Microaggressions are based in stereotyped/prejudicial beliefs about a culture or marginalized group. An insult is calling someone a jerk. A microaggression is an insult that is based on inaccurate and incomplete information about someone's cultural or group identity. A microaggression is saying someone is a jerk because of their culture or marginalized group.
- Microaggressions impacts more than the person targeted-it impacts anyone that is part of that group.

Impacts of harmful behaviors

How do bias speech and discrimination impact your orgs mission?

Impact our relationships with colleagues, stakeholders, volunteers, staff?

Impact my personal growth?



Intent < Impact

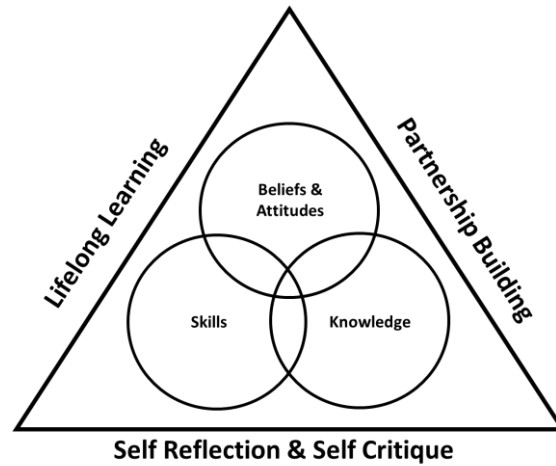
Have you ever accidentally tripped someone? Has anyone ever accidentally tripped you? Our intent to not hurt someone does not negate or erase the harm.

Some of the possible negative impacts/harms of microaggressions are confusion, anger, anxiety, helplessness, hopelessness, isolation, frustration, trauma, feelings of not belonging, reduced self-confidence and self-image, and fear. In the training we concentrated on these two negative impacts:

- Stereotype threat is defined as “a situational predicament in which people are or feel themselves to be at risk of conforming to stereotypes about their social group.” If bias speech is consistent in someone’s work or learning spaces, it amplifies this fear.
- Imposter syndrome is the feeling that we are “frauds.” When we are experiencing imposter syndrome, we are doubting our abilities, intelligence, talents even our actual accomplishments.
 - ✓ Ways to overcome imposter syndrome
<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2021/06/cover-impostor-phenomenon>
 - ✓ Ways to support someone that is struggling with Imposter syndrome or stereotype threat: [Mentoring Someone with Imposter Syndrome \(hbr.org\)](https://hbr.org/2019/05/mentoring-someone-with-imposter-syndrome)

When I am feeling like an imposter or experiencing stereotype threat anxiety I will:

When my co-creator/colleague or friend expresses anxiety over imposter syndrome or stereotype threat I will:



Cultural humility is a lifelong process of self-reflection and learning. Cultural competency implies a destination, that there is an endpoint in which you can know everything about another culture. Cultural humility acknowledges that there is no end point. Cultural humility recognizes that learning about your own and others culture is a life-long process. Cultural humility recognizes the needs to acknowledge and address power imbalances, promotes empathy, be open to being wrong and changing your mind, celebrate differences, and commit to personal, interpersonal, group and institutional change and accountability.

- ✓ **H:** Humble about the assumptions you make and open to change
- ✓ **U:** Understand your own background and culture and its impact on others
- ✓ **M:** Motivate yourself to learn more about the other folk's backgrounds
- ✓ **B:** Begin to incorporate this knowledge into your work
- ✓ **L:** Life-long learning-there is no end goal
- ✓ **E:** Emphasize respect and belonging

One way that I can recognize and develop cultural humility in myself is to...

Cultural Humility Worksheet (Based on the paper The 5 Rs of Cultural Humility: A Conceptual Model for Health Care Leaders)

- Reflection
 - Aim: One will approach every encounter with humility and understanding that there is always something to learn from everyone.
 - Do I agree with this aim-why or why not?
 - Thinking: What did I learn from each person in that encounter?
 - Feeling: How does this feel?
 - Doing: What will I do?
- Respect
 - Aim: One will treat every person with the utmost respect and strive to preserve dignity and respect.
 - Do I agree with this aim-why or why not?
 - Thinking: Did I treat everyone involved in that encounter respectfully?
 - Feeling: How does this feel?
 - Doing: What will I do?
- Regard
 - Aim: One will hold every person in their highest regard while being aware of and not allowing unconscious biases to interfere in any interactions.
 - Do I agree with this aim-why or why not?
 - Thinking: Did unconscious biases drive this interaction?
 - Feeling: How does this feel?
 - Doing: What will I do?
- Relevance
 - Aim: One will expect cultural humility to be relevant and apply this practice to every encounter.
 - Do I agree with this aim-why or why not?
 - Thinking: How was cultural humility relevant in this interaction?
 - Feeling: How does this feel?
 - Doing: What will I do?
- Resiliency
 - Aim: One will embody the practice of cultural humility to enhance personal resilience and global compassion.
 - Do I agree with this aim-why or why not?
 - Thinking: How was my personal resiliency affected by this interaction?
 - Feeling: How does this feel?
 - Doing: What will I do?

Positive impacts of creating diverse, inclusive, and engaging environments.

In the workplace in general:

- Lowers harassment, discrimination, and other toxic workplace behaviors
- A diverse workplace is more effective and successful than more homogenous spaces
- Promotes pro-social behavior
- Diverse organizations perform better and are more profitable
- Higher engagement results from diversity and inclusion
- Inclusive workplace teams perform better
- Inclusive spaces create higher team morale
- People can have better physical /mental health & take less leave for health issues.
- Engagement and inclusion increase trust
- Diverse teams make better decisions
- Diverse, inclusive, and engaged spaces are more innovative

-McKinsey, Harvard Business Review, Great Place to Work, Forbes, Cloverpop, Glassdoor

In Non-Profits:

- Greater outreach which mean greater impact.
- More diverse staff mean a more knowledgeable and effective team
- Creates a healthier workplace with better team cohesion, less stress and better retention.
- Reflects centers values in action

-San Diego Foundation

In K-12 schools:

- Increased safety by reducing isolation
 - Creates a more welcoming environment for everyone-students, staff, and educators
 - Increased opportunity for friendships
 - Increased social network
 - Students show more respect for others
 - Students feel more confident and safe
 - Increased collaboration and participation between students
 - More engagement
 - Readiness for inclusion outside of school
 - It fosters inter-cultural respect and may even reduce bullying
- Drexel University, Inclusive Schools Network, Community Living Toronto, Resilient Educator

In Higher Ed:

- Improved student retention & outcomes
 - Better critical thinking skills
 - Better preparation for navigating post college/university world
 - Diverse faculties resulted in better retention of students from marginalized communities'
 - Fosters better in-class discussions
 - Improves communication skills
 - Improves intergroup dialogue
 - Fosters mutual respect and teamwork
- American Association of University Professors, The PhD Project, Inside Higher Ed, American Council on Education

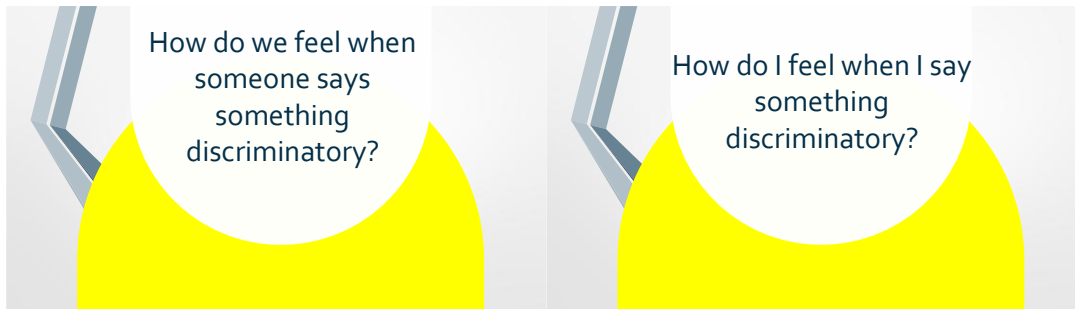
REFLECTIONS



Questions to consider

- Do I assume everyone has the same experience working/living here as I do?
- Is everyone given the same access to resources/knowledge?
- How am I creating belonging in my org/community/home/school?
- How can I be an ally/advocate/accomplice?
- Am I asking for other perspectives or basing all decisions on my own viewpoint?
- Regardless of my official status or role, what power do I have to make change?
- Leaders: What policies, procedures, resources, or other support are in place for folks facing bias, discrimination, & bullying?
How are you creating an environment of support and care?
- How are policies enacted?
 - **Do they include discrimination from clients/vendors/other service providers/stakeholders?**

If I am resistant, why? Why am I fighting to keep the status quo? What do I lose if I don't change my thinking or behavior? What do I gain if I do?



Can these big feelings get in the way of change and connection?

How can we honor our feelings-which happen to us all-but manage them to get to growth and communication.

How does it feel when we harm someone?

- « You 're pregnant! Congratulations! »
*Touches belly
- Flight, fight, freeze & fawn
- How do we manage shame so we can get to communication?



What can I do to make sure I get to communication? What did I learn? How can I behave moving forward?

How would you respond?

Earlier at lunch, Andre told Tara it was not ok to joke that a woman co-worker was "crazy, I mean bipolar with a capital B."

Later you, Searah, and Daniel are talking about the incident. Searah says "Andre is really overreacting. Who is he to tell Tara what they can and cannot say..." Daniel agrees and says "Tara clearly didn't mean to offend anyone, she was kidding around. Andre doesn't have a sense of humor"

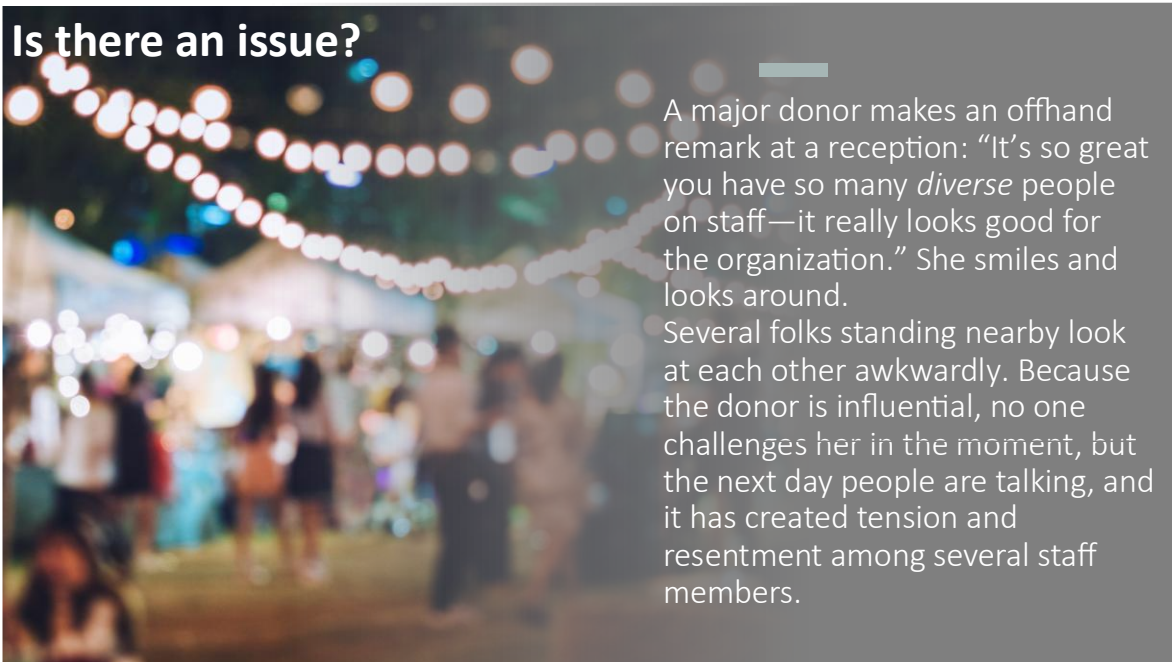
Andre approaches you after lunch and says "I thought you'd back me up earlier. I'm gotta say I am disappointed, I thought you had my back."

Is there an issue? If so what and why is it an issue?

Is there a learning or understanding block? If so what?

What can we say or do to educate, live values, correct misinformation and support?

Is there an issue?



A major donor makes an offhand remark at a reception: “It’s so great you have so many *diverse* people on staff—it really looks good for the organization.” She smiles and looks around.

Several folks standing nearby look at each other awkwardly. Because the donor is influential, no one challenges her in the moment, but the next day people are talking, and it has created tension and resentment among several staff members.

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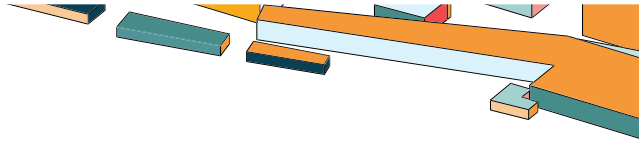
Is there an issue?

During that same donor reception, a board member introduces staff to a group of volunteers. When introducing Alex, the board member says, "This is Alex. Their *preferred* pronouns are they/them. I always forget." Then he turns to a member of leadership and winks, "Thanks for reminding me."

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WELLNESS CHECK!

Take a moment to laugh today! Talk to your funniest friend. Watch your favorite comedy, comic, a Tik Tok or Reel that always makes you laugh. Laughter feels good and is good for you. So, take some time to laugh today!

[Laughter: A New Prescription for Good Health - Kendal at Oberlin](#)



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You got this!

- We all want to live, learn, work, or play somewhere we feel respected and like we belong.
- Dignity, equity, and belonging are actions we choose to take everyday.
- Values are verbs that we act out every day.
- We are all part of the solution for making positive change in our communities.
- Remember to be kind to yourself and others.
- **Go forth and be awesome!**

