

Unpacking Bias & Micromessaging In The Era Of Social Distancing



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Rules Of The Road

1. Speak in "I" statements, avoid speaking on behalf of your group (we feel) or another group's (they think) identity.
2. Listen to understand, not to respond.
3. If something is said that hurts or offends you, acknowledge that the comment (not the person) hurt your feelings and explain why.
4. Stay engaged, it's okay to feel frustrated but don't drop out.
5. Practice putting down the mic (allow others room to speak).
6. Practice picking up the mic.
7. If you're not sure how to say something, write it down and come back to it later.
8. Don't expect complete agreement. This is a discussion, not a debate.

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NEOCORTEX

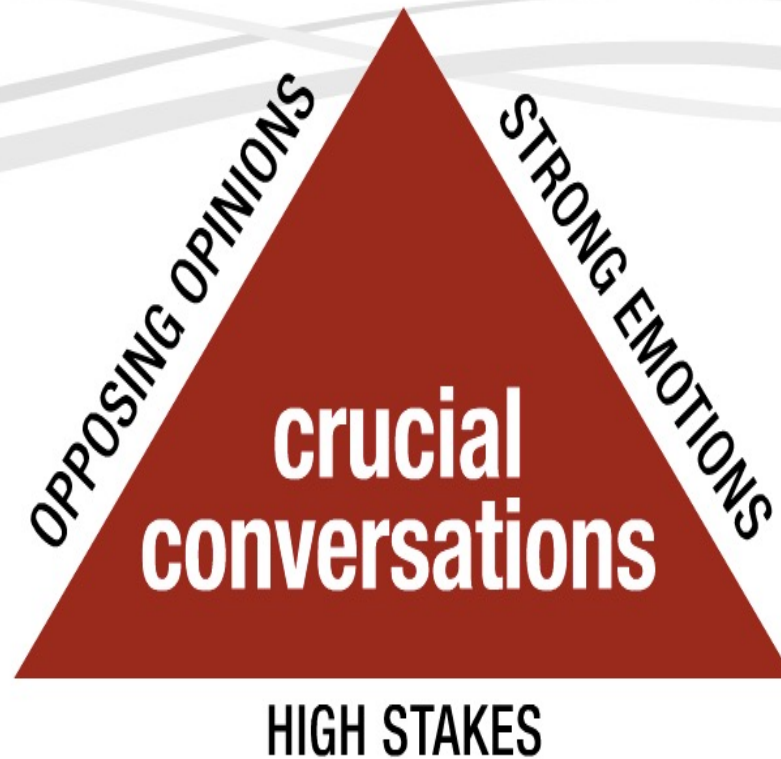
LIMBIC
SYSTEM

REPTILIAN
BRAIN



What Makes a Conversation Crucial?

Three elements:



Explicit vs. Implicit Bias

Explicit bias are attitudes that are at the conscious level, are deliberately formed and are easy to self-report.

Implicit bias are attitudes that are at the unconscious level, are involuntarily formed and are typically unknown to us.



Does having implicit bias make me a _____?

Getting Uncomfortable: Self-Reflection Exercise

I mostly feel _____ when discussing race,
because _____.



So...why care?

Because implicit bias **impacts performance**, which puts the mission in jeopardy.

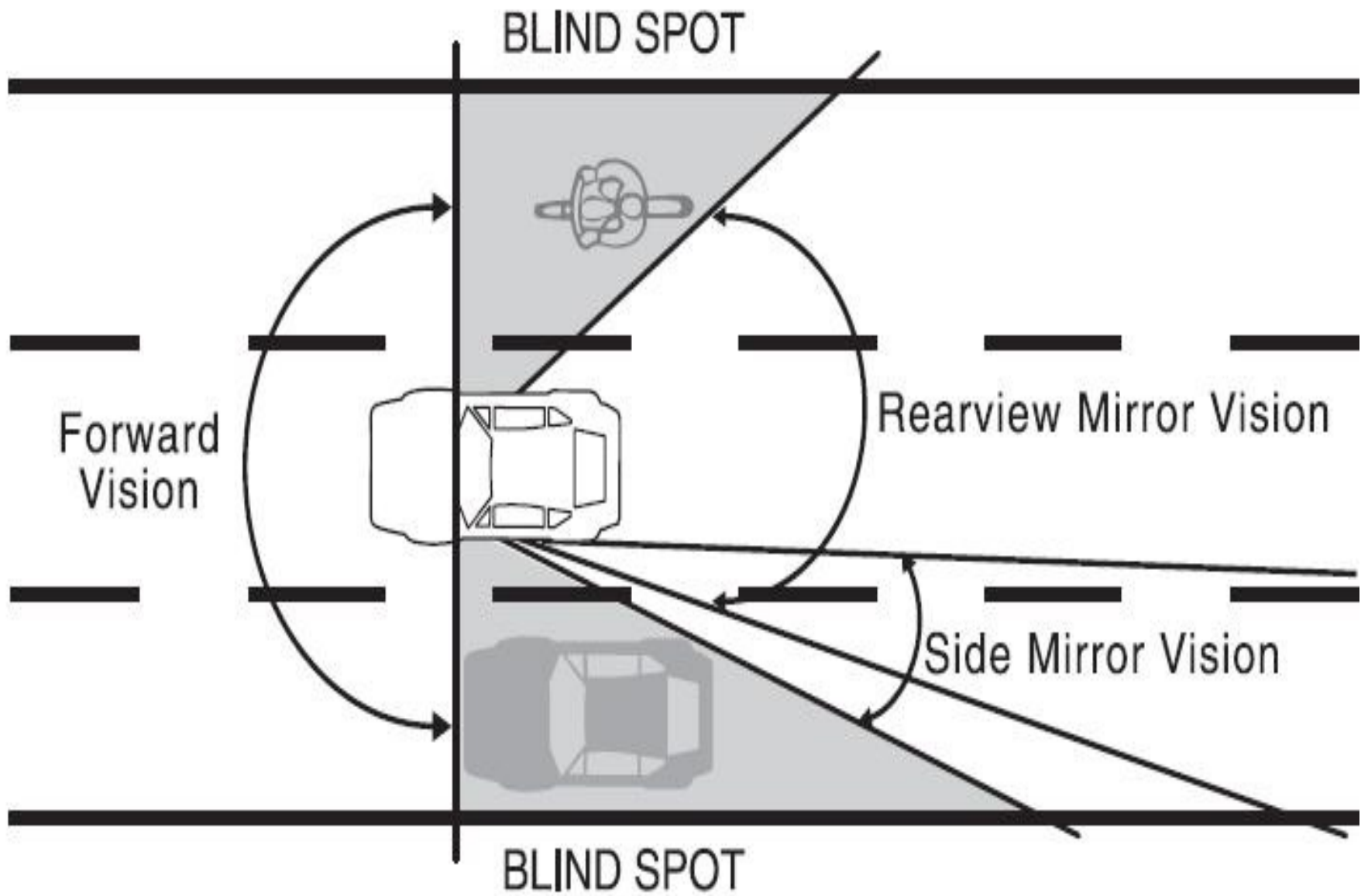




Network Analysis

DIRECTIONS:

- Recalling the past six months, write down the names of people with whom you discussed matters important to you? (eg: friends, family, business associates, staff, etc)



Origins

- Human survival is predicated on quickly categorizing. eg: Is there a saber tooth tiger around the next bend?
- We are constantly being exposed to cultural norms based on identity.
- Stereotypes are constantly being activated, which leads to stereotype threat.
- Norms turn into stereotypes, stereotypes turn into implicit and explicit bias.

Real World Example

312 letters of recommendation for medical faculty **successfully hired** at large U.S. medical school. Letters for women vs men:

- Shorter
- More letters for women with “*minimal assurance*”
- More gendered terms in letters for women
- More letters for women included “*doubt raisers*”
- Men more frequently referred to as “researchers” and “colleagues.”
- Women more frequently referred to as “teachers” and “students”
- Women – 4X more references to personal lives
- Women - Fewer *standout adjectives* (“outstanding” “excellent”) and more *grindstone adjectives*.

Another Real World Example

Evaluation of Resumes:

- Resumes sent to a variety of employers advertising openings in local newspapers in Chicago and Boston
- Randomly assigned “white-sounding” or “African American-sounding” names to resumes
- Applicants with “white-sounding” names were more likely to be called back to interview for positions.
- For “white-sounding” names, applicants with better qualifications were more likely to be called back. For “African American-sounding” names, applicants with better qualifications were **not** more likely to be called back.

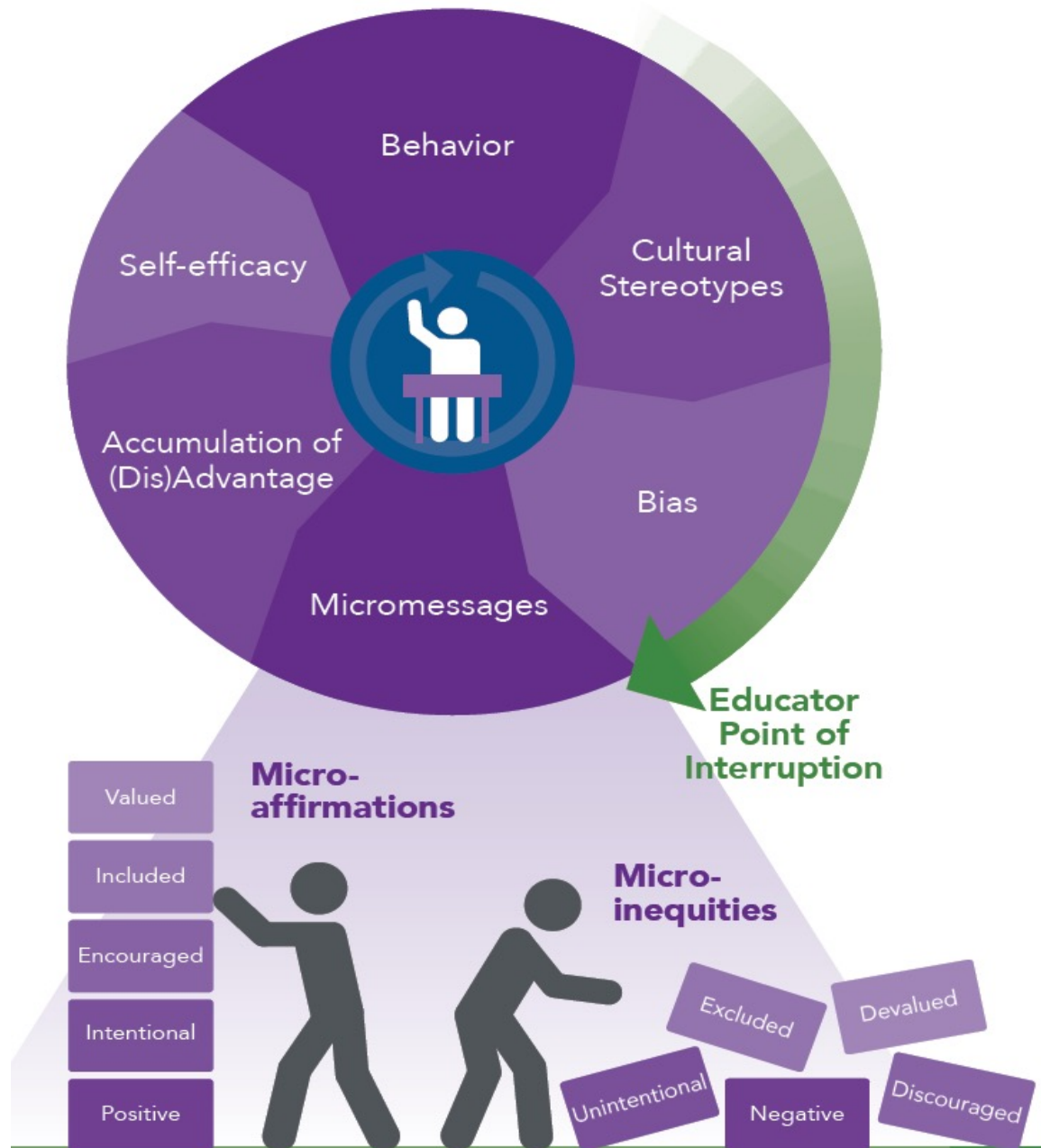
**Can you spot the invisible barrier and
whom it most negatively impacts?**

1. A healthcare visit often requires long, unpredictable waits in the doctor's office.
2. You hold your department meeting at 8am or 5pm.

Microaggressions

- Microaggressions are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership

Micromessaging



Micromessaging

- Micromessages can be positive or negative
- Our background informs how we send & interpret micromessages
- Self-monitoring is an everyday thing
- Difference triggers microinequities
- Similarity triggers microaffirmations
- You have choice in sending microaffirmations or microinequities

Micromessaging

Micromessages are those subtle – and sometimes not-so-subtle – nonverbal messages that people send through body language, tone of voice and the way they inflect words.

Micromessages signal at an immediate gut level how people feel about each other. You can use nice words when speaking to other people, but if at the same time you inadvertently send out negative micromessages, those nonverbal signals will have a more enduring impact than anything you say.

Managers, supervisors and other leaders should become avid students of their own facial expressions, styles of personal engagement, body language and other nonverbal communicative attributes. Then they should try to send positive micromessages, not harmful ones that breed resentment and undermine performance.

Microaggressions	Examples	Messages
Ascription of intelligence. Evaluates someone's intelligence or aptitudes based on their race and gender.	(To a woman of color): "I would never have guessed you were a scientist!" Or "How did you get so good at math?"	People of color and/or women are not as intelligent and adept at math and science as whites and men.
Assumption of criminality/danger. Presumes a person of color to be dangerous, deviant or criminal because of their race.	A white person crosses the street to avoid a person of color, or a professor asks a young person of color in an academic building if they are lost, insinuating they may be trying to break in.	People of color don't belong here, they are dangerous.
"Othering" cultural values and communication styles. Indicates that dominant values and communication styles are "normal" or ideal.	Structuring grading practices in such a way that only verbal participation is rewarded, failing to recognize cultural differences in communication styles, and varying levels of comfort with English verbal communication.	Assimilate to the dominant culture.
Second class citizen. Awards differential treatment.	Calling on men students more frequently than women students; mistaking a student of color for a service worker.	Men's ideas are more important; people of color are destined to be servants.
Gender/sexuality exclusive language. Excludes women and LGBTQIA community.	Forms that only offer male/female choice for gender; use of the pronoun "he" to refer to all people.	There are only two acceptable genders; men are normative and women are derivative.

Strategies	Teaching Suggestions
Address the comment.	Ignoring these comments can be tempting, especially if you feel uncomfortable, but that will send the message that such comments are okay.
Decide if immediately pursuing the topic is in the best interest of the class.	If necessary, count to ten and take a deep breath. If you feel unprepared to engage the topic, tell the class that you will talk about it at the next class meeting. Then prepare in the meantime, and revisit the topic at the next opportunity.
If you decide to pursue it, legitimize the discussion.	Avoid changing the subject or dismissing topics of race, gender, sexuality, citizenship status, disability, etc. as they arise (unless you are clear that you will return to the topic in the near future). This dismissal is itself a type of microaggression against some students.
Use a direct approach to facilitating the discussion.	Don't be a passive observer, or let the class take over the discussion. Similarly, try not to expect students to be "representatives" speaking for their identity groups, or to make up for your lack of comfort or knowledge. The A.C.T.I.O.N. Framework (Souza, Ganote, & Cheung, 2016) is one method for effectively responding to microaggressions in your classroom.
Validate the feelings of your students.	Avoid questioning, dismissing, or playing down feelings that your students have about issues of difference and power. They are trusting you when they share their feelings.
Be willing to accept a different reality than your own.	It's likely that if you have a different background and circumstances than your students, and the stories, feelings, and views they share may not resonate with your own.
Consider sharing the ways in which you have been conditioned by the circumstances of your life and society.	Revealing yourself as "flawed" will encourage students to take risks by sharing their experiences and thoughts, and communicates courage in approaching conversations about difference and relationality.

Micromessaging

Share one experience with **microinequity** and one experience of **microaffirmation** you have experienced at work or outside of work.

The Impact of Praise

Neutral Praise	"That's a really high score."	No Improvement
Intelligence Praise	"That's a really high score, you must be very smart."	30% drop in performance
Effort Praise	"That's a really high score, you must have worked hard at these problems."	Improvement

Micromessaging Self-Assessment

	Existing Strengths	Opportunities
Vision, Leadership, Communication		
Public Service		
Pathways for Access & Success		
Healthy Culture		
Mentoring		



What is Phubbing?

Phubbing is the not-so-subtle habit of snubbing someone by focusing on your phone rather than the person in front of you. It lessens empathy and increases psychological pain of exclusion.

- How does it detract from team building?
- How does it erode performance?
- Who does it impact?
- What exacerbates it?

Who me?

- Do you multitask?
- Do you monitor your phone while on Zoom/landline/in-person conversation?
- Is your phone visible when you're in a meeting, at the dinner table, or in bed?

What's The Fix?

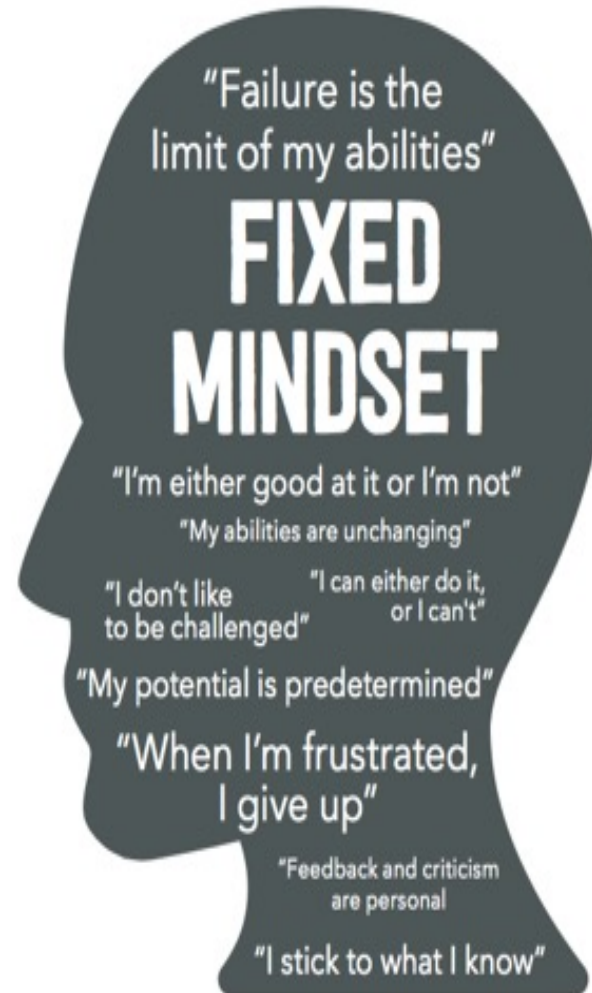
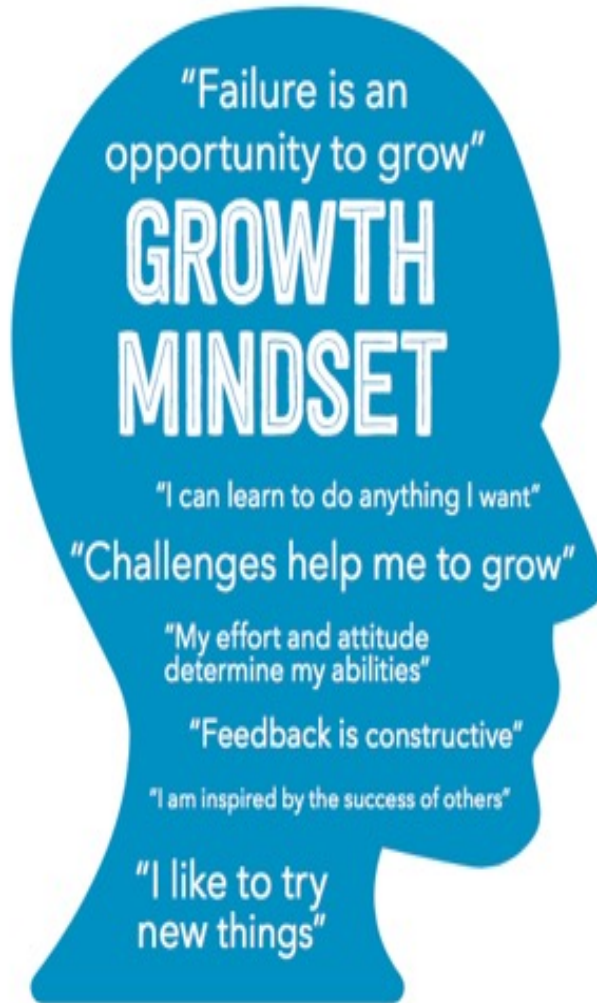
- Change starts with awareness – from self or from others.
- Start a new habit rather than try to fix an entrenched one.
- Tie new habit to the immediate tail end of a good habit.
- Give yourself and others grace.

N

/the social dilemma



The Big Game Changer



Reframe

Experiments were run to elicit fright: a signing competition (“Don’t Stop Believing”), a public speaking contest, and a difficult math exam. In each experiment, subjects were randomly assigned to tell themselves one of three things before their performance: 1. keep calm 2. get excited 3. do nothing

In all three contexts, the subjects who reframed their anxiety as excitement outperformed the others.

Excitement primes the opportunity mindset, and if you think good things will happen, you’re more likely to make less less mistakes.

Beyond Believing

Am I a....

- Bystander?

- Ally?

- Accomplice?

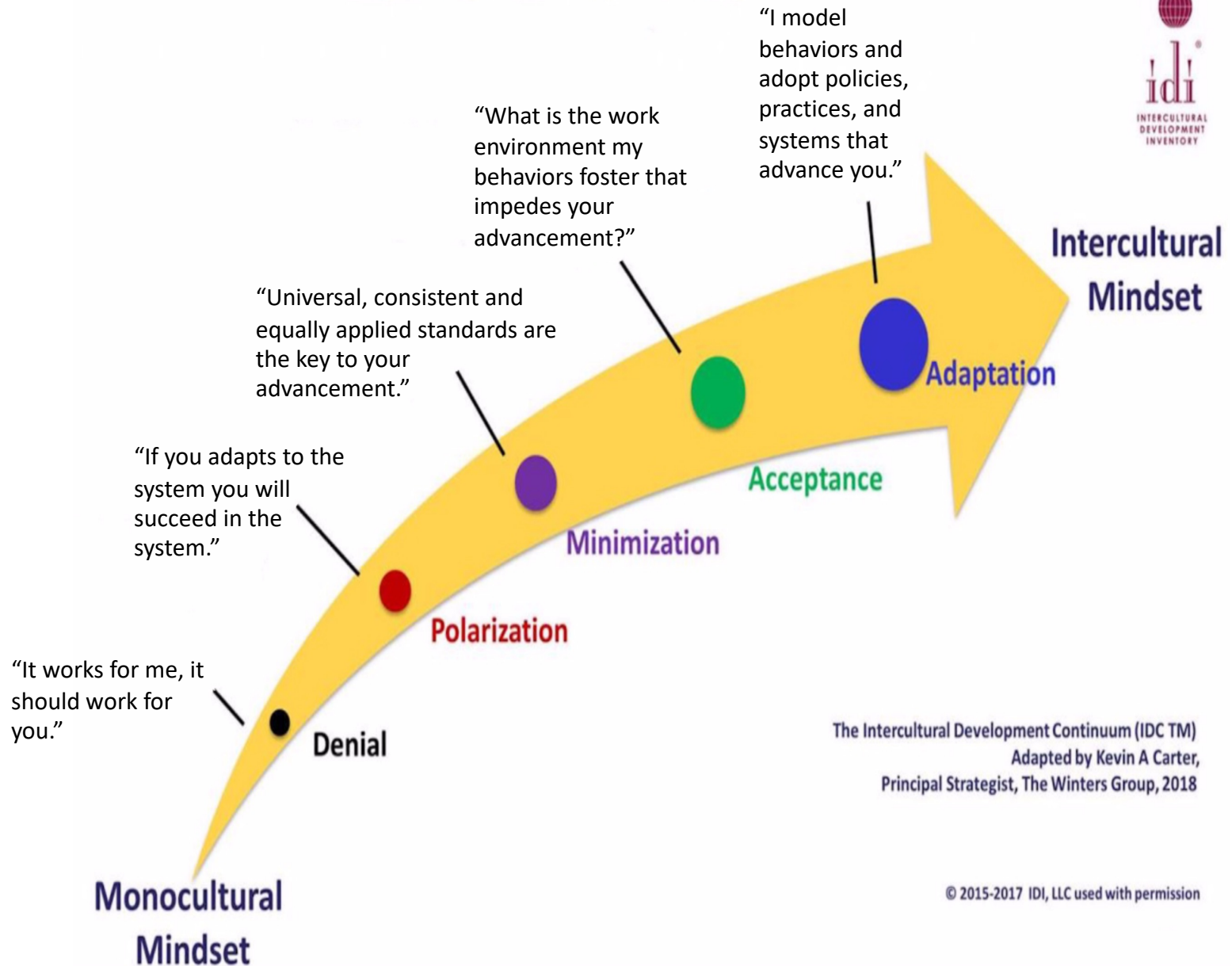
Build Concrete Steps To An Inclusive Work Environment

- Develop long range workforce planning with aspirational goals in recruitment, retention, promotion.
- Develop a suite of professional development tools designed to keep the conversation fresh and ongoing. One & Done is a recipe for failure.
- Sustained Dialogue or Crucial Conversation models work
- Assess Climate and Culture:
 - Are you fully utilizing your EEO reports or are they shelfware?
 - How are we doing in key areas and pay bands?
 - Where are there opportunities for development?
 - Are you accounting for multi-generational workforce needs and expectations?
- Create affinity groups based on experience as well as personhood.
- Be intentional – disrupt your norms – what you read & watch, how you socialize.
- You are your best Case Study!





Find yourself on the spectrum, and make a choice



Where to begin?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FRvVFW85IcU>

Harvard Implicit Association Test

Background on IAT:

Mahzarin Banaji, Harvard University (<http://onthehuman.org/2011/09/the-dark-dark-side-of-the-mind/>)

Brian Nosek, University of Virginia

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2RSVz6VEybk>

Take the test:

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>

Recommended Reading:

Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do, by Claude Steele

<http://www.amazon.com/Whistling-Vivaldi-Stereotypes-Affect-Issues/dp/0393339726>

Data Report & Research

National Academies Report

- Gender disparities
- Intersectionality (Race and Gender)

Ensure equitable opportunities and support

- Commitments to take corrective action
- Analyze and use data for organizational change
- Establish campus framework for monitoring progress

Research in DE & I

- Page, Scott (2007) – Diversity and productivity
- Banks. Jeffrey (1996) – Knowledge formation and socialization
- Dweck, Carol (2012) – Growth Mindset

A Few Resources....

- Stamped from the Beginning, <https://www.amazon.com/Stamped-Beginning-Definitive-History-National/dp/1568585985> by Dr. Ibram Kendi is an excellent historical primer.
- James Baldwin movie, <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt5804038/> which shows how racial attitudes persist.
- If you love data and math equations, Dr. Scott Page speaks to the concept of how difference generates innovation and better ideas (you can google him and find some good youtube videos of his work as well). <https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/scottepage/home/the-difference/>
- On being good-ish, Dr. Dolly Chugh, <https://behavioralscientist.org/why-being-good-ish-is-better-than-being-good-a-conversation-with-dolly-chugh/>