

Seeking Awareness: Uncovering Implicit Bias

Texas Conference on Ending Homelessness
September 27, 2023





Agenda Overview

- Introduction
- The Air We Breathe
- Strategies to Counteract Implicit Bias
- Consultancies
- Closing

Community Agreements

- Speak your truth
- Ensure equity of participation
- Seek to understand
- Respect the diversity of experience and contexts in the group
- Lean in to be vulnerable with one another
- Accept and expect non-closure

Objectives for today

- Understand how unconscious bias operates and how it impacts individuals, institutions and structures in creating inequities
- Examine and discuss strategies to reduce the effect of this bias



Moment of reflection

- *What's a hope you have coming into today's session?*



The Air We Breathe

“If we live in America, we are racism-breathers, and it doesn't matter what color we are. We don't try to be, we aren't usually conscious of the racism we've breathed... We are so unconscious of these realities that we seldom see how even our language is embedded with racist overtones...”

Lisa Delpit – Multiplication is for White People



The Air We Breathe

Oppression is the air we breathe

Oppression: *The systematic and prolonged mistreatment of a group of people.*



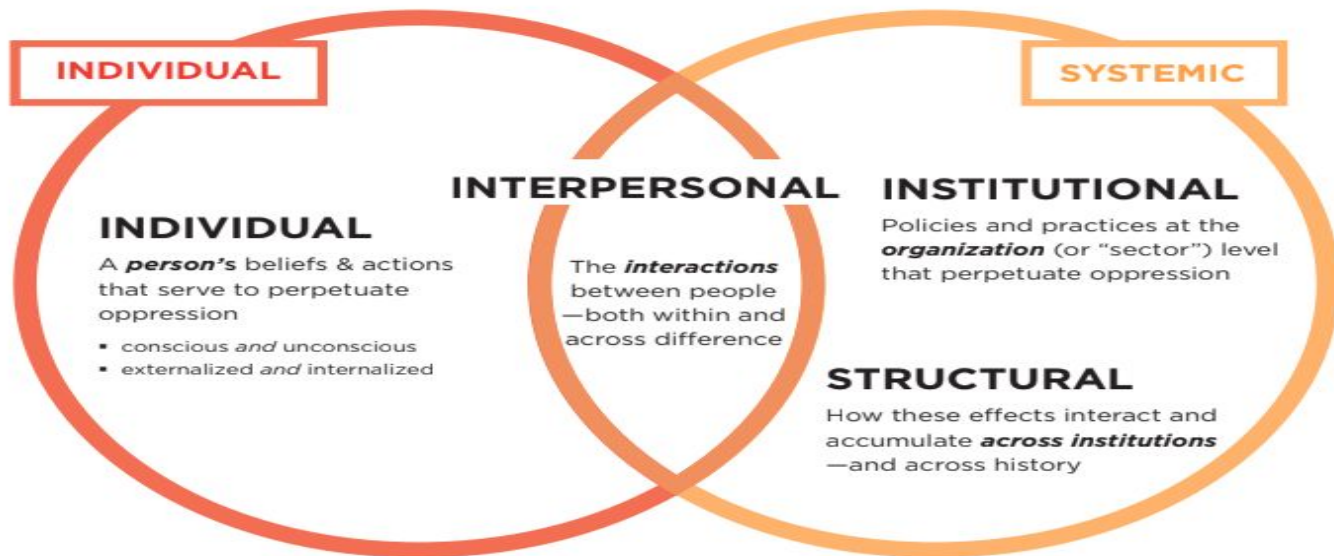
J. CHACÓN
— CONSULTING —



Types of Oppression

Internalized Oppression: acting out of oppression on one's self. People believe messages they receive and, because of the oppression, act harmfully toward themselves.

Transferred Oppression: prejudicial actions toward someone in one's own group (or, in the case of racism, in another ethnic group)



Some overlapping phenomena playing out at each level.

INDIVIDUAL	INTERPERSONAL	INSTITUTIONAL	STRUCTURAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual advantage and disadvantage • Explicit bias & Implicit Bias • Stereotype threat • Internalized oppression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reproductive discourse (single truths, blame, externalization) • Microaggressions • Racist interactions • Transferred oppression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biased policies and practices (e.g. in hiring, teaching, discipline, parent-family engagement) • Disproportional (e.g. racialized) outcomes and experiences • White dominant cultural practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems of advantage and disadvantage • Opportunity structures • Societal history of oppressive practices and policies

Trios

- *What's coming up for you?*
- *How have aspects of your identity shaped how you see and think about the “air we breathe”?*
- *What is an asset or strength you bring to seeing the “air we breathe”?*

Working Toward Equity

Equity is:

- removing the predictability of success and failure that currently correlates with any social or cultural factor
- examining biases, interrupting inequitable practices, and creating inclusive and just conditions for all
- discovering and cultivating the unique gifts, talents and interests that every human possesses



Our Unconscious Minds

The unconscious mind processes an estimated **11 million** pieces of information per second.

The conscious mind processes an estimated **40** pieces of information per second.



The Unconscious Mind in Action

Red

Blue

▶ **Blue**

Orange

Orange

Red

Brown

Brown

Green

Red



The Unconscious Mind in Action

Brown

Green

Red

Orange

Blue

Red

Brown

Orange

Red

Blue



The Unconscious Mind & Implicit Bias

Implicit bias is the process of associating stereotypes or attitudes towards categories of people without conscious awareness.

Our implicit biases are activated involuntarily and reside deep in the subconscious.

This can result in actions and decisions that are at odds with one's intentions or explicit values.



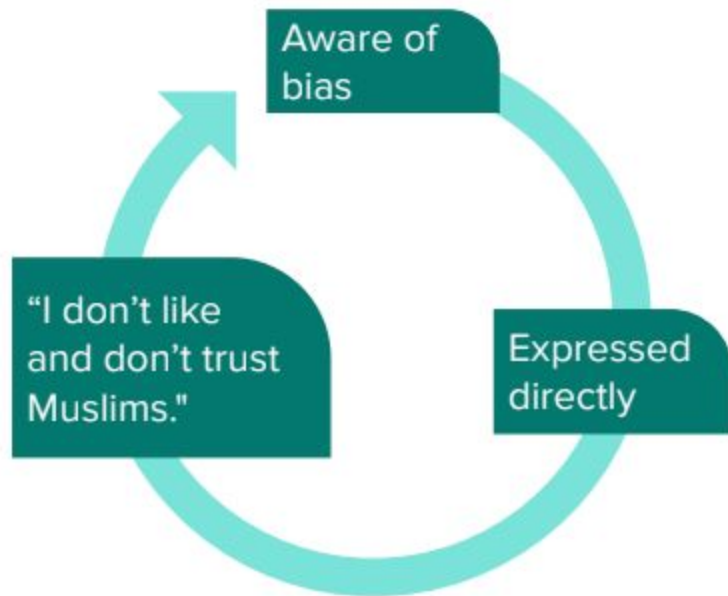
Implicit Bias

Some areas where bias can be activated:

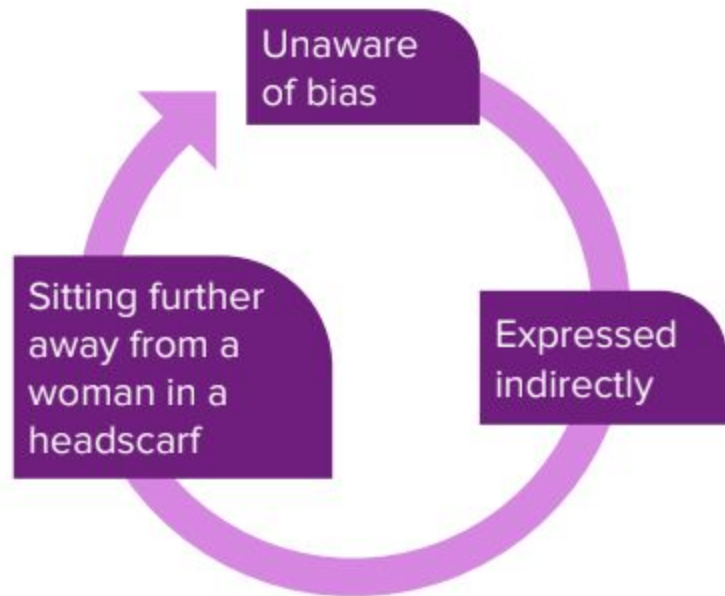
- Race
- Class
- Able-bodiedness
- Religion
- Size
- Dialects
- Clothing
- Gender identity & expression
- Sexuality
- Country of origin
- Age
- Language
- Scent



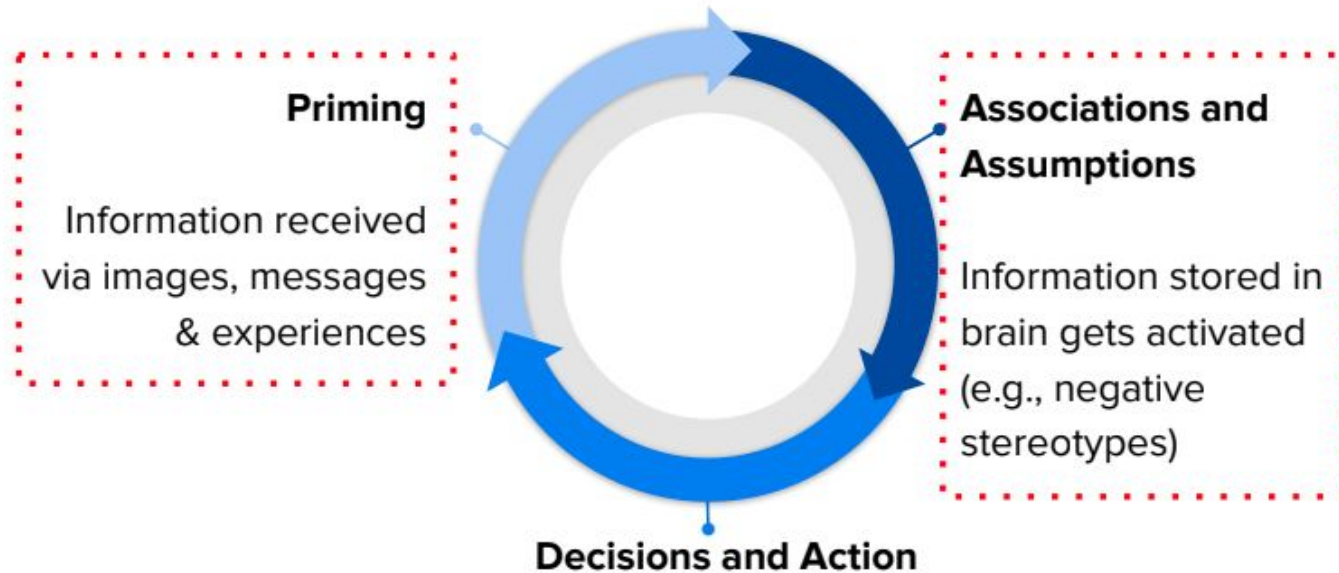
Explicit Bias



Implicit Bias



Three Processes that Develop Implicit Bias



Decisions and actions at odds with one's intentions or explicit values which are driven by unconscious associations and assumptions



Priming & Associations

What associations are being primed in the following images?

Example:

This seems to be associating _____ people with _____."





A young man walks through chest deep flood water after **looting** a grocery store in New Orleans on Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2005. Flood waters continue to rise in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina did extensive damage when it made landfall on Monday. (AP Photo/Dave Martin)



Two residents waded through chest-deep water after **finding** bread and soda from a local grocery store after Hurricane Katrina came through the area in New Orleans, Louisiana. (AFP/Getty Images/Chris Graythen)



What is the association being primed by this statement/image?



“This seems to be associating _____ people with _____.”



Priming & Racism

“If we live in an environment in which we are bombarded with stereotypical images...and are rarely informed of the accomplishments of oppressed groups, we will develop negative categorizations of those groups that form the basis of prejudice.”

Beverly Daniel Tatum



Media Images Activity

- At your table, discuss: What is the association being primed in these images?

("_____ is associating _____ people with _____.")

(10 min)



Implicit Bias

#1

What is the **association** being **primed** by this statement/media image?

“This seems to be associating _____ people with _____.”



Implicit Bias

#2

What is the **association** being **primed** by this statement/media image?

“This seems to be associating _____ people with _____.”



Implicit Bias

#2

What is the **association** being **primed** by this statement/media image?

“This seems to be associating _____ people with _____ .”



Implicit Bias

#2

What is the **association** being **primed** by this statement/media image?

“This seems to be associating _____ people with _____.”



Share out

- *What was it like to analyze these images?*
- *What came up for you during this activity?*



Implicit Bias + Institutional Oppression

Biases get institutionalized through collective practices, decisions, and policies like:

- *Who we call back for a job*
- *Which crimes are punished more severely*
- *Who receives proper pain medication*
- *How quickly some people are shot by police*



Break – 5 min

The Good News

Implicit biases are **malleable**. Our brains are incredibly complex, and the implicit associations that we have formed can be gradually unlearned through a variety of debiasing techniques.



Strategy 1: Stereotype Replacement

- Recognize stereotypical thoughts.
- Calm your “lizard brain” and prime it with an intention



Strategy 1: Stereotype Replacement



What stereotype replacement can we use here?



Strategy 2: Create Human Connections

- Create human connections
 - Build cross-race, cross-difference relationships
 - Increase opportunities for contact and individuation



Strategy 2: Create Human Connections

Danger of a single story TED Talk

“The single story creates stereotypes. The problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story.”

– Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie



Strategy 3: Create New Narratives

Use counter-stereotypic imaging and messages



Strategy 3: Create New Narratives



Strategy 4: Perspective Taking

Consider contrasting viewpoints and recognize multiple perspectives by taking a first-person stance.

Reflect on your cultural frame of reference and how they might influence how you understand your perspectives and behavior of others



Strategy 5: Change the Structure

Change the structure to interrupt and mitigate bias

Minimize priming that activates associations



Strategy 5: Change the Structure

- Removing names from resumes/applications
- Blind auditions



Putting Strategies into Action

Strategies to Mitigate Bias

1. Stereotype replacement:
Calm your “lizard” brain
2. Create human connection
3. Create new narratives
4. Perspective-taking
5. Change the structure and the process

Consultancy (10 min each)

- **Presenter:** What is a strategy I want to practice (or support others to practice) with more intentionality? What might open up for me through practicing this strategy? (5 min)
- **With your partner:** Brainstorm some possibilities for how you might implement that strategy (5 min)



Share out

- *What is one learning you're taking away from this session?*



*“Not everything that is faced can be changed, but
nothing can be changed until it is faced.”*

- James Baldwin



Taking It Forward

- **Prioritize your own inner work**
 - Examining your own biases & unpacking the ways you have been primed and formed associations that influence your actions
- **Attend to building conditions** that support you and your colleagues to create a culture that normalizes and values naming & interrupting bias
- Collaborate with others **to re-design structures & practices** that mitigate and eliminate bias



Stay in touch!

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Appreciations

спасибо

GRACIAS

谢谢

THANK YOU

ありがとうございました

MERCI

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