

# Unconscious Bias: Raising Health Equity

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Harm Reduction Coalition

Adapted from Tamika Jackson's Implicit Bias Training

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# **Dr. Orisha Bowers**

Orisha Bowers, Ph.D. is the Regional Director at national Harm Reduction Coalition. She is a lifelong community advocate, educator, and leader. Dr. Bowers, also an ordained minister combines her love for women's health, rights, and justice with research and interdisciplinary studies to continue to creatively transform the community for universal liberation.





# **Learning Objectives**

- Define Implicit Bias
- Define and tease apart personal biases and how they may affect my work
- Understand the intersections between implicit bias, race and class.
- Identify ways to recognize and combat implicit bias in practice and engage in the gradual process of self awareness and institutional change



### Polling Question #1 Respond in the chat box

What is one word that describes your feelings after you have experienced unconscious/implicit bias?



# Mind Game

- I cdnoult blveiee that I cluod aulaclty uesdnatnrd waht I was rdanieg. Every single word is misspelled.
- Everyone of us read it without effort. We did not consciously decode the message.
- Aoccdrnig to rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtsy, it deosn't mttaer waht order the Itteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoatnt thing is that the frist and Isat be in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can still raed it wouthit a porbelm. This is becuseae the human mnid deos not raed ervey Iteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe.
- Your unconscious mind is able to decode this.

# **Defining Bias**

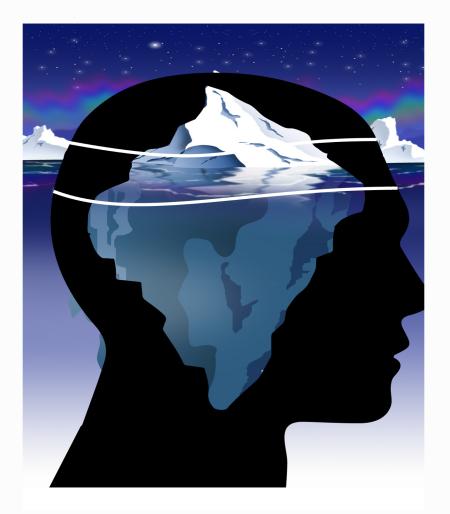
### Implicit bias

Attitudes and beliefs (positive or negative) about other people, ideas, issues, or institutions that occur outside of our conscious awareness and control, which affect our opinions and behavior.

### **Everyone has implicit bias.**



# **Implicit Bias**





# "US" vs. "THEM"

#### In-group

- A group that one belongs to and identifies with.
- "Us"
- A Social group toward which a member feels respect and loyalty
- Tend to think of members of the ingroup as superior to outgroup members

#### **Out-group**

- A group that one does not belong to or identify with.
- "Them"
- A social group toward which a person feels a sense of competition or opposition.
- Tend to be treated or thought of as inferior (not as good) by ingroup members



### YOUR GROUP "TRUSTED 10"

<u>Initials</u>	Gender	<u>Race</u>	<u>Sexual</u> Orientation	<u>Educatio</u> <u>n</u>	Disability	<u>Marital</u> Status	Religion



# **Cognitive Dissonance**

The unpleasant emotion that results from believing 2 contradictory things at the same time.



### "THE FIRST STEP TO DEFEATING OUR **HIDDEN BIASES IS TO BE HONEST** WITH OURSELVES ABOUT THE BLIND SPOTS WE HAVE. HAVING A BIAS IS ONLY HUMAN. THE ONLY SHAME IS IN MAKING NO EFFORT TO IMPROVE." -DR. MAHZARIN BANAJI



- Implicit bias generally results in a preference for dominant group members and creates privilege for people in those groups.
- Privilege is a special right, advantage or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group of people.



# **Types of Privilege You Might Have**

- 1. Race and Ethnicity
- 2. Sexual Orientation
- 3. Gender and Gender Iden
- 4. Financial Situation
- 5. Able bodied
- 6. Religion
- 7. Citizenship
- 8. Education Level





# **Biases to Consider**

- Gender Bias
  - Physical characteristics
- Racial Bias
  - Racial Anxiety
  - Fear of law enforcement
  - Higher burdens of proof

- Bias faced by immigrants
  - Cultural bias
  - Language bias
- Disability
- Geographic needs
- Stereotype threat





# **Back to the Basics**

- Active listening
- Come without judgment
- Come without preconception
- Believe client
- Doubt yourself
- Be mindful



# Diversity

Everyone is individual and differenct



# Inclusion

Inclusion is a sense of belonging: feeling respected, valued for who you are; feeling a level of supportive energy and commitment from others so that you can do your best at work



### Workplace Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Defined

#### Begin with an inclusive culture...



#### **1. INCLUSION**

A company works toward a culture that is inclusive where everyone feels they belong.

#### 2. EQUITY

Systems and processes are evaluated to remove biases and equitable leadership practices are put in place.

#### **3. DIVERSITY**

When workplace inclusion and equity are made a priority, diverse talent is attracted and retained.

To create organization change reverse the traditional order of DEI to IED.





Enthusiastic, passionate and inspiring Strong, engaging and dynamic communicator

Proactive not reactive

Effective networker and facilitator

Works in cooperation with others

#### CHANGE AGENT

Capable of engaging in self-assessment, self reflection and analysis

Critical and systems thinker with the ability to solve problems creatively

Ability to act as a responsible citizen

Committed to the lifelong learning of themselves and others

Understanding of environment, social and economic connections



# Interventions

- Debiasing
- Preventing Implicit Bias from Affecting Behavior
- Other Ideas and Visions Forward



# **Retraining our Minds: "Debiasing"**

- 1) Reprogram your brain to create new associations
  - 1) Stereotype Replacement
  - 2) Individuation
  - 3) Increase Opportunities for Contact
- 2) Be intentional
- 3) Use the "Flashlight" to expose biases
- 4) Understand and redirect such thoughts don't try to suppress them
- 5) Question yourself...
- 6) Continue to educate yourself and those around you.
- 7) Our Work should not be ONE SIZE FITS ALL
- 8) Commit to an ACTION PLAN!!!







## **Question & Answer Period**

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