

IMPLICIT BIAS

How it shows up and what we can do about it



2019 California WIC Association Conference
San Diego, CA

PUBLIC HEALTH
ADVOCATES

EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO BE HEALTHY

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OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

- Define implicit bias and examine the ways it may show up in our work
- Identify our own privileges and disadvantages to better understand where our biases may exist
- Describe how biases interact with existing power dynamics
- Identify immediate and long-term strategies to begin to address bias in our work

HEALTH INEQUITY

- A **systematic and unjust** difference in health and illness
 - Related to but **different** than health disparities
 - Not all health disparities result from inequities
- Based on membership in an oppressed group with historical/ongoing restricted access to societal resources
- Not “natural”
- Public health has a responsibility to remediate inequities



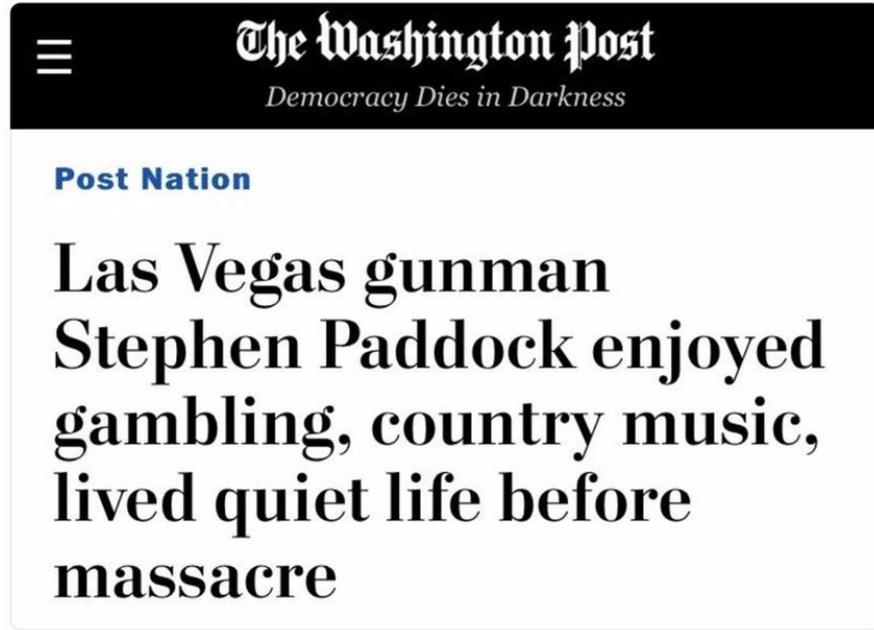
IMPLICIT BIAS

Attitudes and stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions and decisions in an ***unconscious*** manner

- Favorable and unfavorable
- Activated ***involuntarily***
- Do not necessarily reflect our ***declared beliefs***
- Favor our ***own*** group
- Malleable – may not be of consequence



BIAS + INSTITUTIONAL REINFORCEMENT = PRIVILEGE



The Washington Post
Democracy Dies in Darkness

Post Nation

Las Vegas gunman Stephen Paddock enjoyed gambling, country music, lived quiet life before massacre

9:58 AM · 02 Oct 17



cleveland.com
COVERING NORTHEAST OHIO

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Tamir Rice's father has history of domestic violence

(Update: A line has been added to this story to give insight into the motivation to investigate the parents' background)



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Photo courtesy Cuyahoga County

CLEVELAND, Ohio -- Tamir Rice's father has a history of violence against women.

Leonard Warner, who fathered the [12-year-old boy fatally shot](#) by a Cleveland police officer Saturday, has multiple convictions for the abuse of women, court records show.

People from across the region have been asking whether Rice grew up around violence. The Northeast Ohio Media Group investigated the backgrounds of the parents and found the mother and father both have violent pasts.

HISTORICALLY DISADVANTAGED

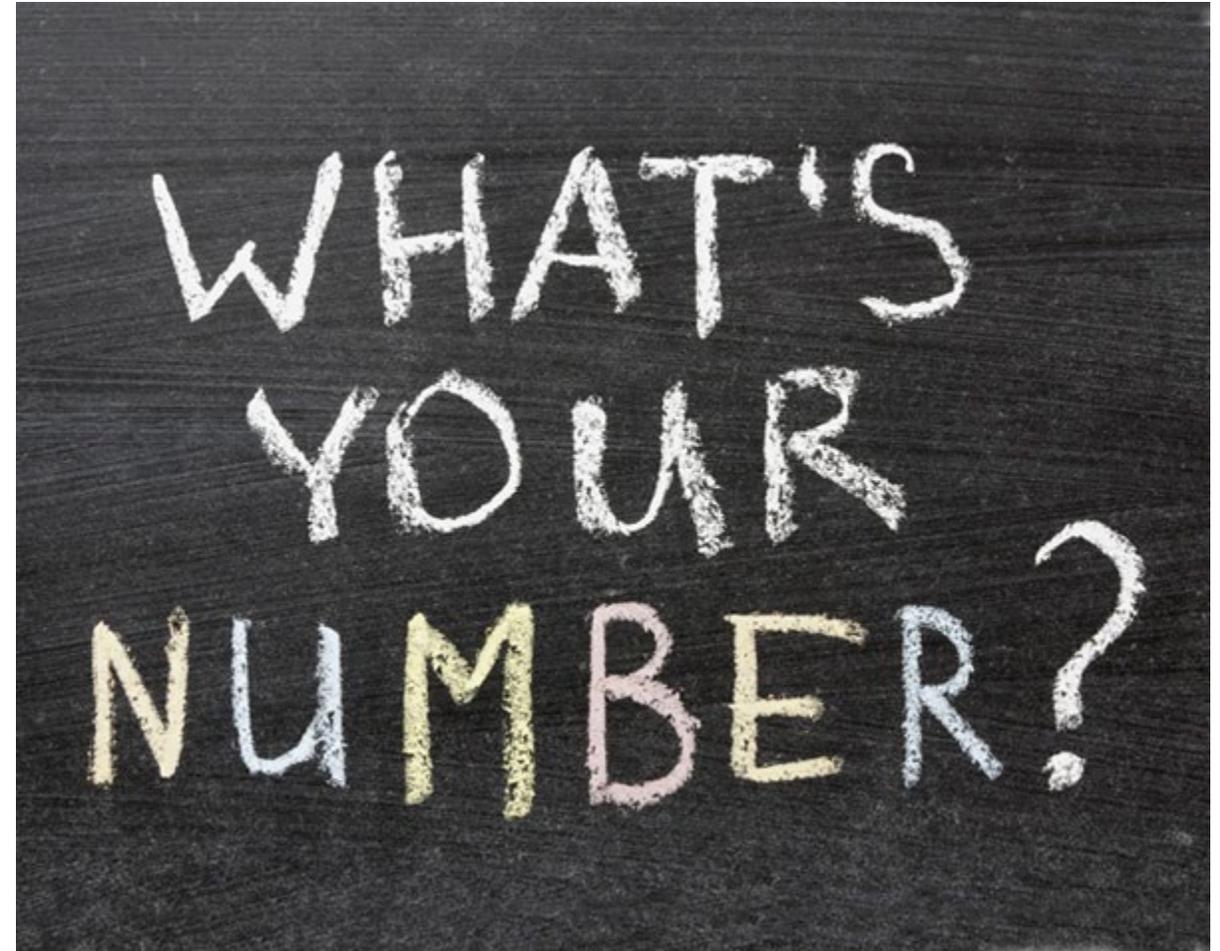
A GROUP ANALYSIS FOR THE UNITED STATES

TYPE OF OPPRESSION	VARIABLE	ONE-DOWN
Racism	Race/Ethnicity/Color	People of Color (African, Latinx, Native, Asian/PI,)
Sexism	Gender	Women, non-binary, transgender
Heterosexism	Sexual Orientation	LGBTQIA
Religious Oppression	Religion	Sikhs, Muslims, Jews, Catholics*, Not religious
Classism	Socioeconomic Class	Poverty, working class, low hourly wage workers
Elitism	Education level/ place in hierarchy	Not college-educated; less prestigious schools
Xenophobia	Immigration Status	Immigrants (especially from nonwhite countries)
Linguistic Oppression	Language	Non-English Speakers
Ableism	Physical or mental ability	People with disabilities

YOUR ONE-DOWN IDENTITY IN THE US

Think about:

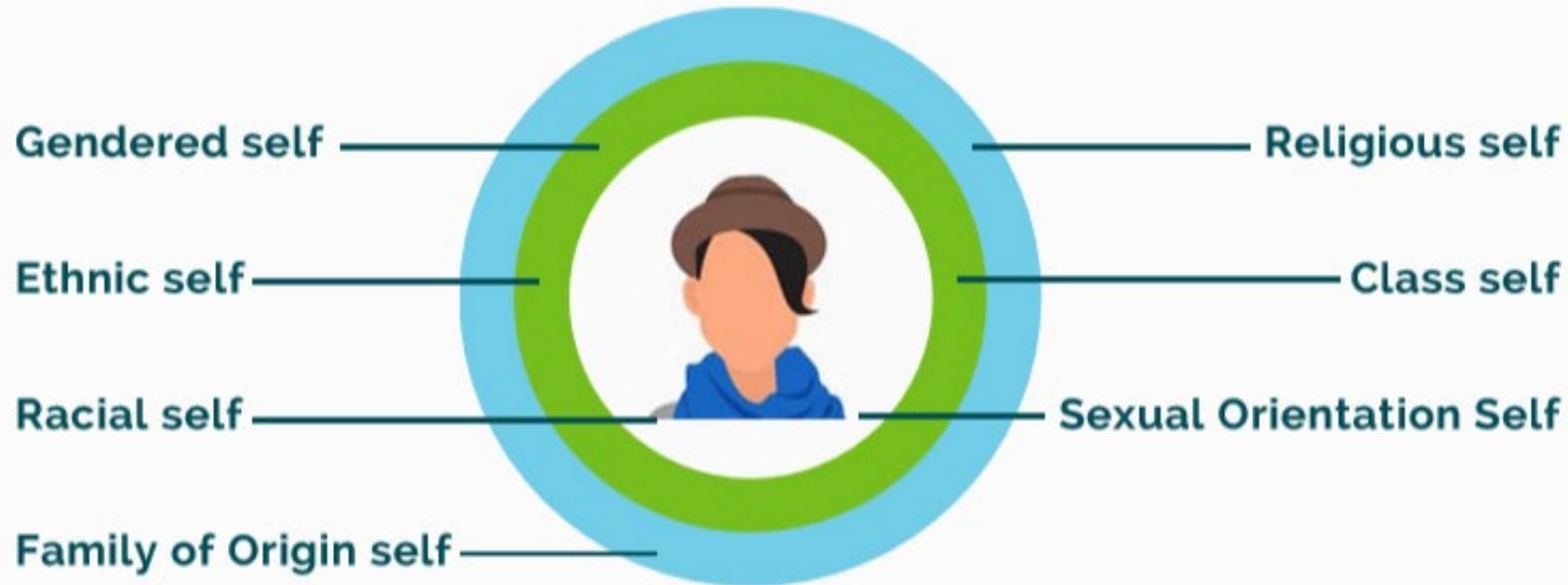
- How many **ONE-DOWN** identities do you have?
- How has your **ONE-DOWN** identity shaped your experience?
- Are there policies that govern your **ONE-DOWN** identity or disproportionately impact you because of it?



SHIFT FROM SINGULAR TO MULTI-DIMENSIONAL

SHIFT FROM SINGULAR VIEW OF SELF TO MULTI-DIMENSIONAL VIEW OF SELF

Some parts of us align with privilege and some parts with subjugation.



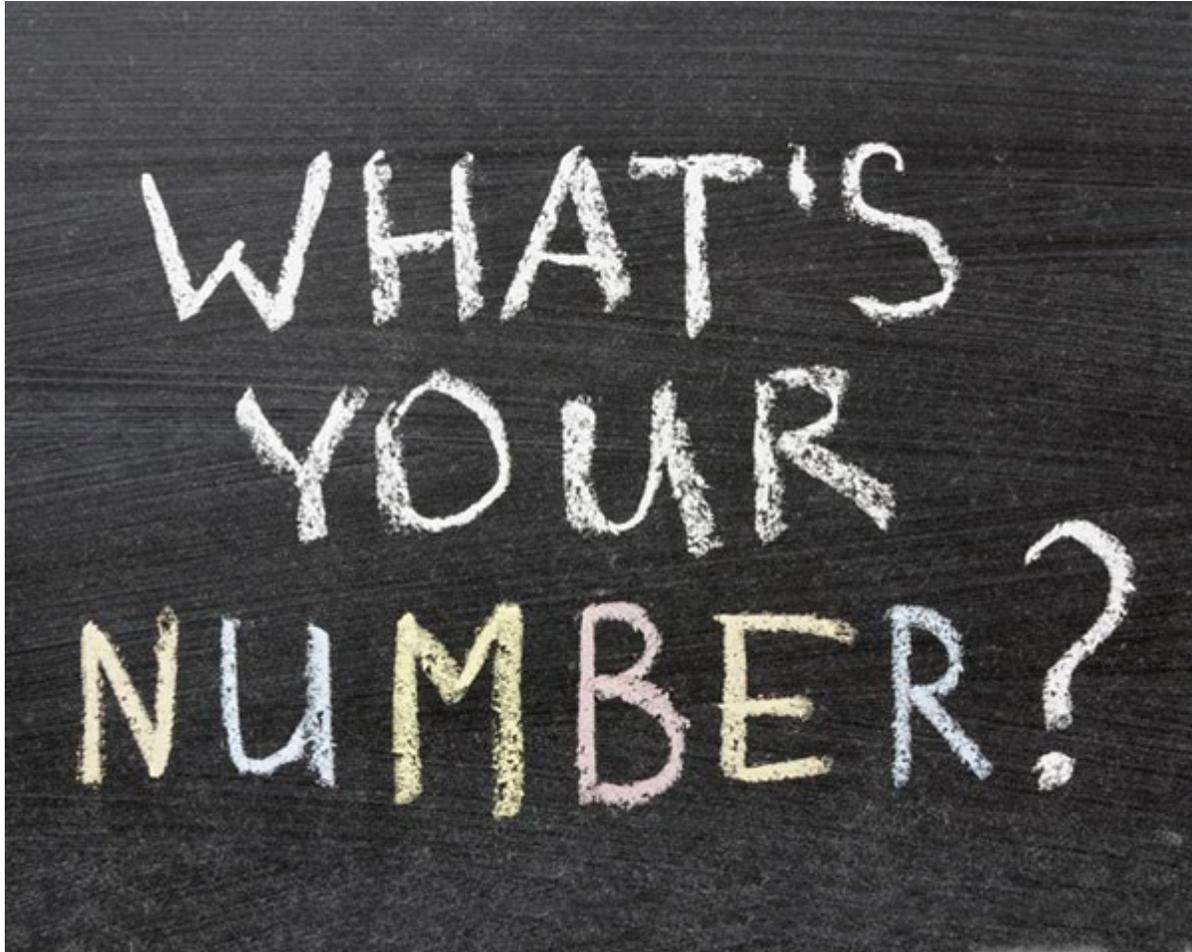
Each of us goes through the world thinking of self as subjugated self; this leads us to have a blind spot vis a vis others.

HISTORICALLY **ADVANTAGED**

A GROUP ANALYSIS FOR THE UNITED STATES

TYPE OF OPPRESSION	VARIABLE	ONE-UP
Racism	Race/Ethnicity/Color	White
Sexism	Gender	Men
Heterosexism	Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual
Religious Oppression	Religion	Protestants
Classism	Socioeconomic Class	Owning, upper/middle class, managerial
Elitism	Education level/ place in hierarchy	College-educated; top 20-40 schools
Xenophobia	Immigration Status	U.S. Born
Linguistic Oppression	Language	English Speakers
Ableism	Physical or mental ability	Able-bodied persons (body/mind)

YOUR **ONE-UP** IDENTITY IN THE US



Think about:

- How many **ONE-UP** identities do you have?
- How has your **ONE-UP** identity shaped your experience?
- Are there policies that govern your **ONE-UP** identity or benefit you because of it?

HISTORICALLY ADVANTAGED AND DISADVANTAGED A GROUP ANALYSIS FOR THE UNITED STATES

TYPE OF OPPRESSION	VARIABLE	ONE-DOWN	ONE-UP
Racism	Race/Ethnicity/Color	People of Color (African, Latinx, Native, Asian/PI,)	White
Sexism	Gender	Women, non-binary, transgender	Men
Heterosexism	Sexual Orientation	LGBTQIA	Heterosexual
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Classism	Socioeconomic Class	Poverty, working class, low hourly wage workers	Owning, upper/middle class, managerial
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HOW DO YOUR ONE-DOWN AND ONE-UP IDENTITIES INTERSECT?



PRIVILEGE MAY MAKE US OBLIVIOUS...

- to the ways that our behavior could be exclusionary
- to challenges that we don't face
- to the ways our comments could offend or injure someone

“PRIVILEGE IS WHEN YOU THINK SOMETHING IS NOT A PROBLEM BECAUSE IT’S NOT A PROBLEM TO YOU PERSONALLY.”

LEVELS OF RACISM

- **Personally-mediated racism** - an acute stressor, including individual insults and discriminatory acts
- **Institutionalized racism** - *discriminatory, race- or class-based policies and practices (informal and formal)*
- **Internalized racism** - acceptance by members of the stigmatized races of negative messages about their own abilities and intrinsic worth
- **Cultural racism** – determines which group qualities and characteristics are valued/devalued

The new
racism is
to deny
that racism
exists

Anti-Blackness

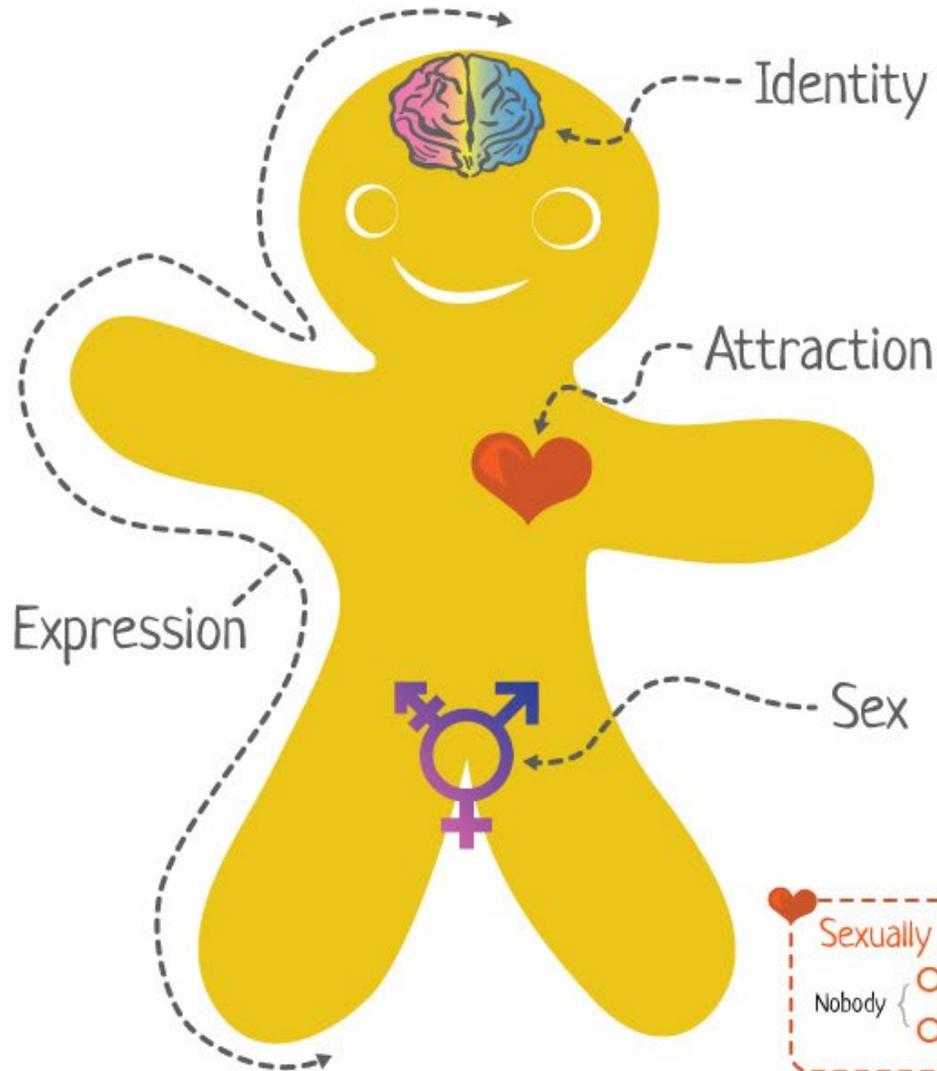
- Talk about **anti-blackness** not just *racism*
- Privileges are not equitably distributed
- Bias against black people within communities of color
- Examine pro-whiteness
- Examine benefit from and complicity with anti-blackness



The Genderbread Person v3.3

by its pronounced **METROsexual**.com

Gender is one of those things everyone thinks they understand, but most people don't. Like *Inception*. Gender isn't binary. It's not either/or. In many cases it's both/and. A bit of this, a dash of that. This tasty little guide is meant to be an appetizer for gender understanding. It's okay if you're hungry for more. In fact, that's the idea.



Plot a point on both continua in each category to represent your identity; combine all ingredients to form your Genderbread

4 (of infinite) possible plot and label combos

Gender Identity

⊘ Indicates a lack of what's on the right.

Woman-ness

Man-ness

How you, in your head, define your gender, based on how much you align (or don't align) with what you understand to be the options for gender.

Labels: "woman", "man", "two-spirit", "genderqueer"

Gender Expression

Feminine

Masculine

The ways you present gender; through your actions, dress, and demeanor; and how those presentations are interpreted based on gender norms.

Labels: "butch", "femme", "androgynous", "gender neutral"

Biological Sex

Female-ness

Male-ness

The physical sex characteristics you're born with and develop, including genitalia, body shape, voice pitch, body hair, hormones, chromosomes, etc.

Labels: "male", "female", "intersex", "MtF Female"

Sexually Attracted to

Nobody {

(Women/Females/Femininity)

(Men/Males/Masculinity)

Romantically Attracted to

Nobody {

(Women/Females/Femininity)

(Men/Males/Masculinity)

In each grouping, circle all that apply to you and plot a point, depicting the aspects of gender toward which you experience attraction.



For a bigger bite, read more at <http://bit.ly/genderbread>

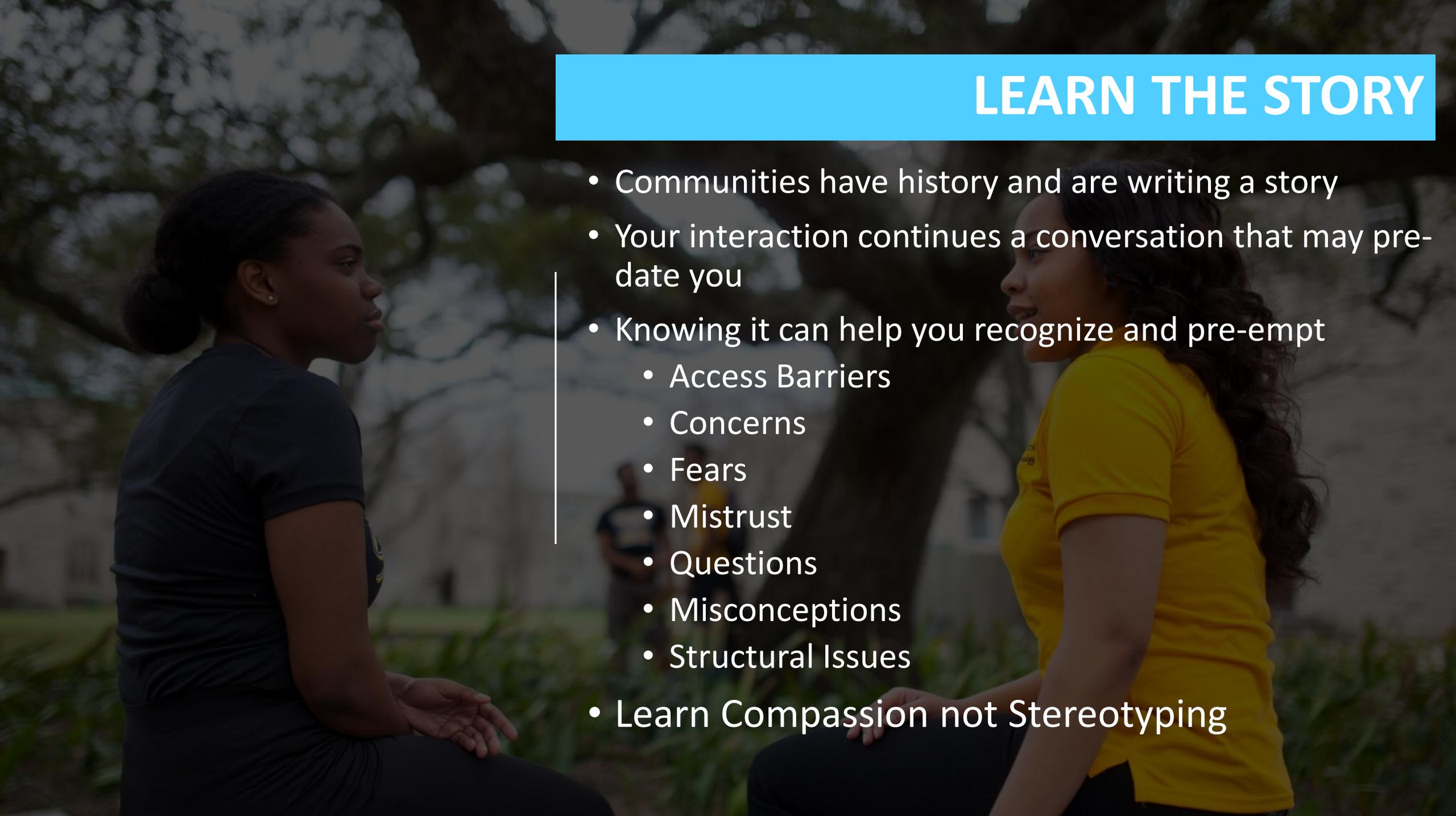
INFORMATION WE CAN'T BE TRUSTED WITH

Best practices must be institutionalized

- “Blinding” techniques to achieve more racial equality
 - Withholding information at steps of process
 - Standardize compassion not punishment – e.g. Foster Care, Prop 47
- Increased interaction and understanding

I've learned...
that we should
be very careful
of whom we
trust...

www.puhealthadvocates.org

A photograph of two women sitting outdoors, facing each other in conversation. The woman on the left is wearing a dark grey t-shirt and has her hair in a bun. The woman on the right is wearing a bright yellow t-shirt and has long, dark, curly hair. They are sitting on a grassy area with trees in the background. The image is dimmed to serve as a background for the text.

LEARN THE STORY

- Communities have history and are writing a story
- Your interaction continues a conversation that may pre-date you
- Knowing it can help you recognize and pre-empt
 - Access Barriers
 - Concerns
 - Fears
 - Mistrust
 - Questions
 - Misconceptions
 - Structural Issues
- Learn Compassion not Stereotyping

CHANGE THE FRAME

- Assume Positive Intent
 - People want to meet their needs
 - “Suicidal” attempts to do so
- Behavior doesn't always align with intent
 - Ask why would a reasonable person behave this way?
- People who need the most love often ask for it in the most unloving ways



ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

- Participant-Centered
 - Build Relationship
- Reflective Listening
- Open Ended Questions
 - More Involvement
 - Ownership
 - Commitment to the Process



Photo: iStock

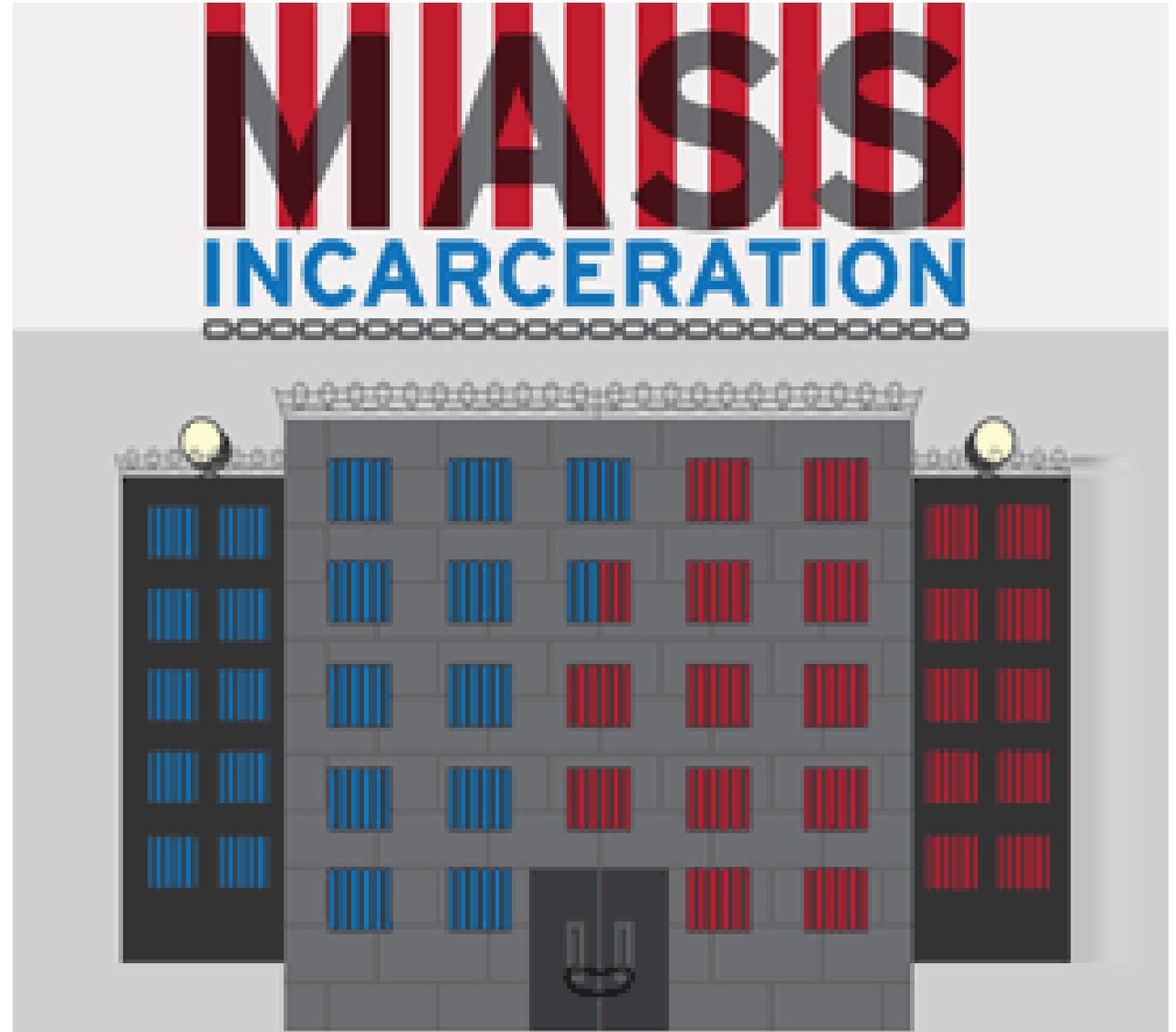
ENGAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

- Empathetic/Reflective Listening
 - Other-directed
 - Non-defensive
 - Imagine others' perspective
 - Values, needs, abilities, motivations, and barriers
 - Desire to receive and understand the other
- Resist the Urge to:
 - Give advice
 - Solve the problem
 - Be the expert



AVOID CRIMINALIZATION

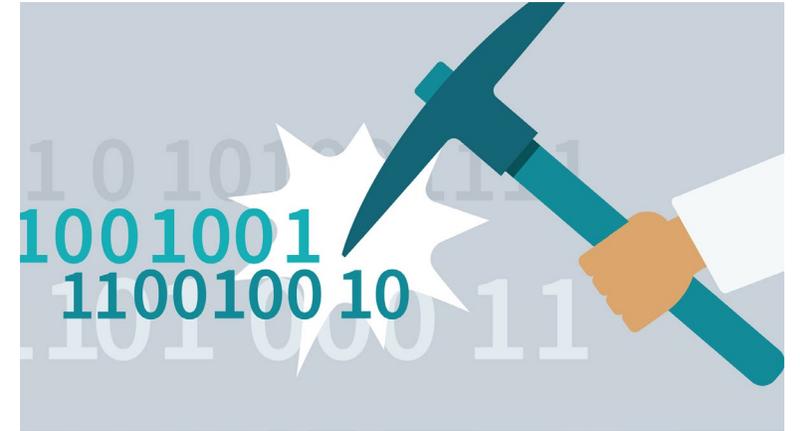
- History of policing has resulted in widespread fear and mistrust
- Mass incarceration has had devastating impact on Black and Latino communities – and vulnerable people within them (mentally ill, homeless, LGBTQ)
- Avoid calling law enforcement, except in extreme circumstances
- Consider another safety plan for staff to handle disputes



ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN: MINE THE DATA

Notice the Issues

- Internally, are **ONE-DOWN** staff....?
 - ...leaving the organization at the same level?
 - ...underrepresented or absent from leadership?
 - ...only working on specific programs?
 - ...expected to do all of the unpaid diversity/mentoring work?
 - ...overrepresented on medical leave?
- Externally, is your organization...?
 - ...partnering with community members from one-down communities?
 - ...trusted within the one-down community affected by the issue?
 - ...addressing structural barriers?



HIRE FROM WITHIN COMMUNITIES

- Mistaking the mirror for merit
- Consider if jobs require
 - Degrees
 - Academic/Job Experience
- What are the critical success factors?
 - Do job descriptions match the skills needed?
 - Partnering with unpaid/underpaid community organizations to ensure your success?



MAKE A COMMITTMENT

- Continue the conversation/learning
- Common language and understanding
- Understand Implicit Bias
 - Harvard Implicit Bias Test – online
- Suggested Reading
 - Waking up White – Debby Irving
 - Racism without Racists – Eduardo Bonilla-Silva
 - Between the World and Me – Ta-Nehisi Coates
 - **25 Habits of Culturally Effective People –Vernā A. Myers**

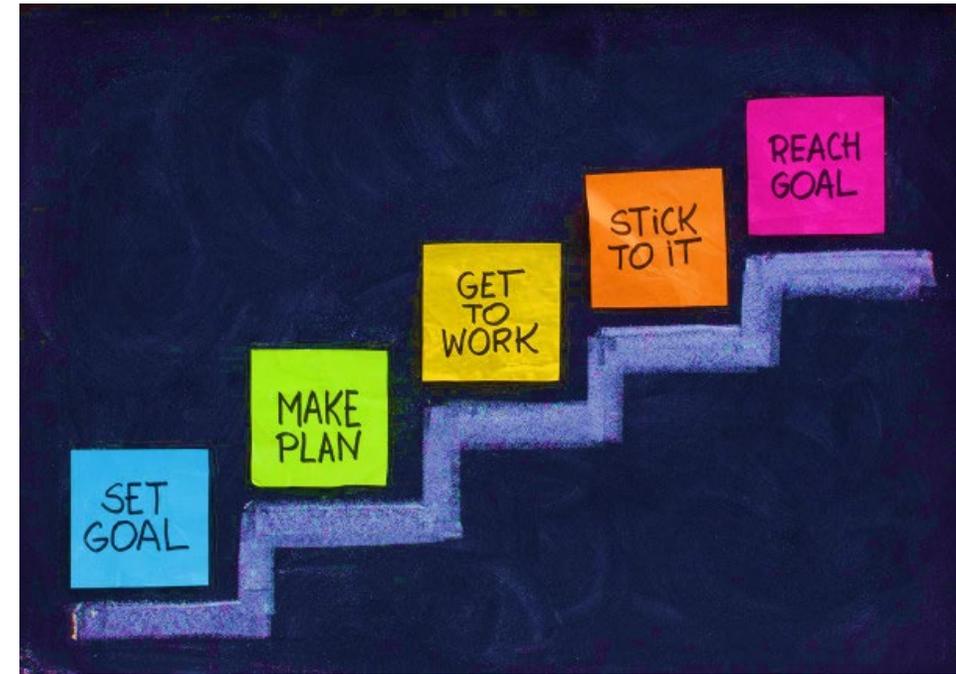
VERNĀ A. MYERS

WHAT IF I SAY THE WRONG THING?

25 HABITS FOR CULTURALLY
EFFECTIVE PEOPLE

CULTURE AND NORMS MUST CHANGE

- **Ongoing** learning must be prioritized
- Develop common language, understanding and **agreements**
- **Staff Performance Goals on Equity** to create sustainability



PRACTICAL APPLICATION



- What haven't you done that you will **START** doing because it may work with your clients or program?
- What are you currently doing that you will **STOP** doing because it is harmful or isn't working?
- What are you already doing that you will **CONTINUE** doing because it works well?

SUMMARY

- **KNOW YOURSELF:** Understand your own privileges and biases to become a better practitioner and advocate
- **CHANGE THE FRAME:** Instead of asking “why won’t you?” ask “why can’t you?”
- **DEVELOP A STRATEGY:** Identify needs and resources to thoughtfully put a plan into place
- **START, STOP, CONTINUE:** Commit to continuously improve your work

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