Creating Inclusive Relationships Series

Part II Perceptions Versus Reality

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WE RE DIVINE
WHERE THE JOURNEY BEGINS

Guidelines for Today

Life begins at the end of your comfort zone

Neale Donald Walsch

Addressing " differences" is not about "being comfortable" it is about discovering one another, breaking habits that create barriers.-*Unknown*

- **Make a Commit to the process…IT'S A JOURNEY!**
- **Trainings alone are not effective, cognitive and behavioral**

Flexible approach

- An environment that supports Making & Owning mistakes and learning from them.
- **You are asked *SIT IN THE EXPERIENCE & LEAN INTO "DISCOMFORT"*; acknowledging that the natural stress responses of Fight, Flight or Freeze will occur**
- **Building tolerance for discomfort and Opportunities for Growth**
- **Mitigating the Power Dynamics**
- **Institutional Accountability**
  - Shift the Cultural of the Entire Agency

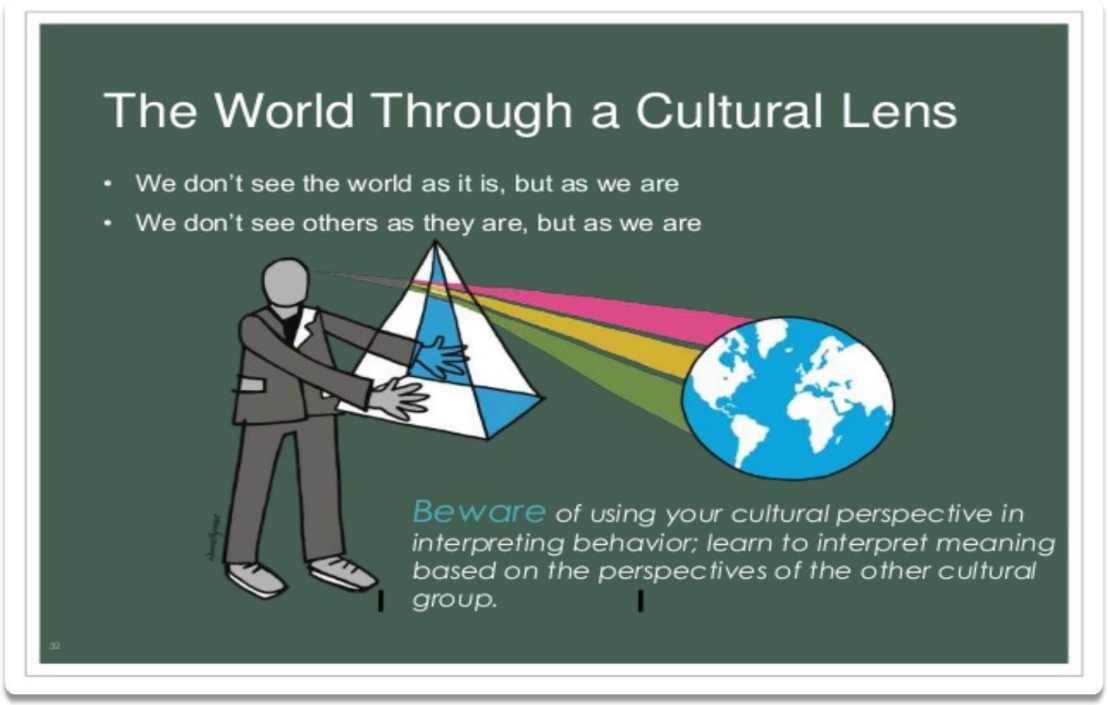
Open to learning and unlearning-as we are experiencing something new, different.

- Listening to understand
- **Defense mechanisms are either put up or brought down**
- Opting out is not an option

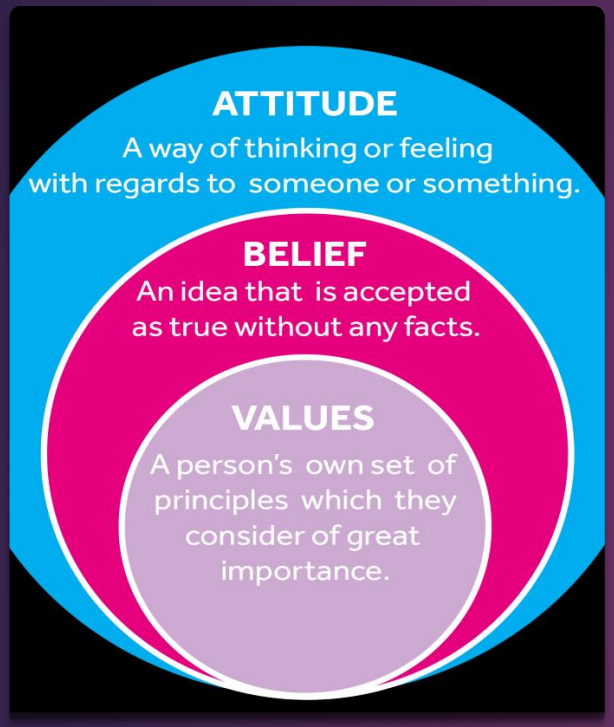
Culture

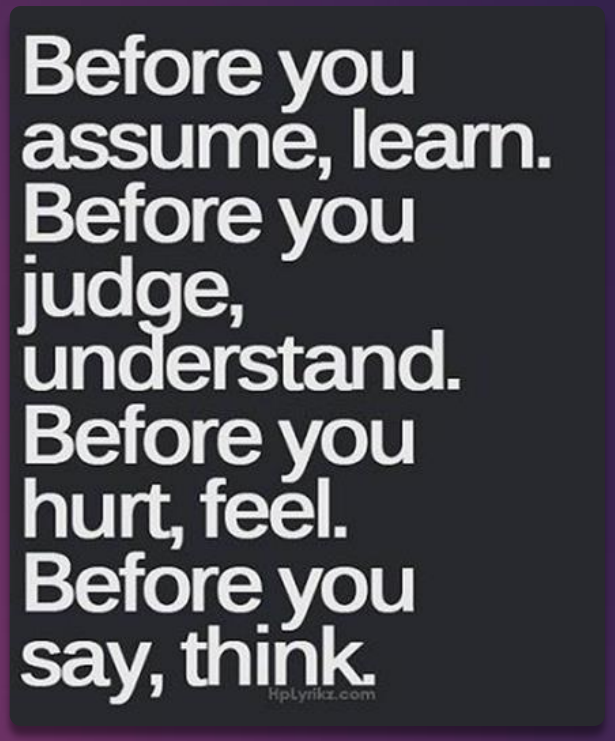
Patterns of shared basic assumptions and behaviors that are learned and/or taught (implicitly and/or explicitly) as the correct way to perceive, think and feel.

--N. Abdul-Wahid



- **Whose culture is viewed as "right" or "normal"?**
- **Who is represented and who is left out?**
- **Based off your experiences consider the cultural "norms" blind spots, biases (unconsciously or consciously that lead you to make assumptions or cultural misinterpretations?**
- **Now consider how they influence workplace polices, practices and standards?**





UNPACKING ASSUMPTIONS & BIASES

WE ALL HAVE THEM, BUT WE ALL DON'T ACT ON THEM

1ST Thought vs Second Thought

Addressing microaggressions and biases in the workplace

In the video the individual talked about "loaded language" and "Free to take up space"…

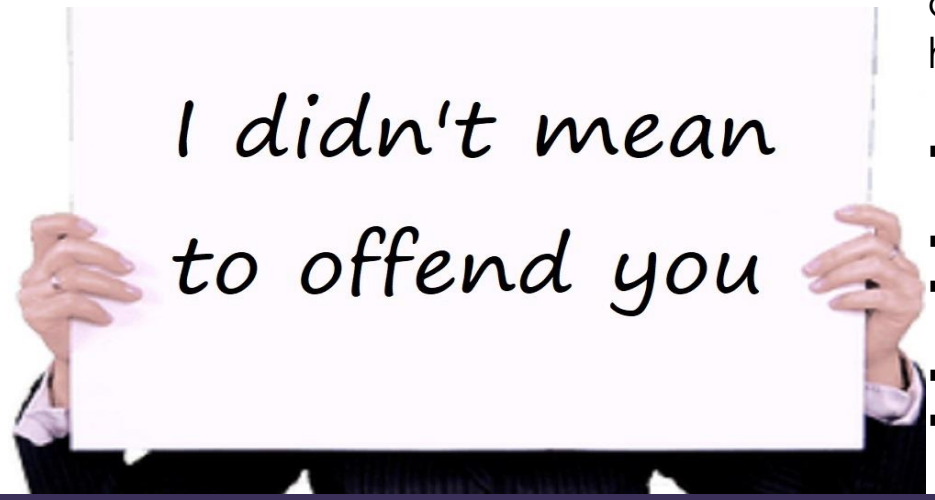
Consider your work environments and system you represent:

- Whose experiences, values, beliefs, culture are visible (represented)?
- Whose experiences, values, beliefs and culture are left out?
- Who can be their whole authentic self without negative consequences?
- What or who influences the culture, policies and practices?
- Are your policies and practices culturally inclusive?

- Are any stereotypes being (unintentionally) reinforced?
- How do you bring daily microaggression to people's awareness?

- What is your role and responsibility in unpacking the impact?
- How will you mitigate and recognize power imbalances that are part of the workplace culture?
- What is the role of the institution, organization or system that you represent?
- How will you establish accountability?

Citation: Addressing micro aggressions and biases in the workplace, 2017



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 .

Microinvalidations: Communications that subtly exclude, negate or nullify the thoughts, feelings or experiential reality of a marginalized individuals.

Microinsults: Verbal and nonverbal communications that subtly convey rudeness and insensitivity and demean a person's racial heritage or identity.

- What do you need to prepare yourself and unpack the experience of racism and racial biases.
- What is the impact of micro-aggressions?
- What is the experience of the person being targeted? What do you think was the impact on each child?
- How do you recognize various experiences?
- How do you bring to people's awareness the foulness of those that perpetrated discrimination?

Citation: Racial microaggressions in everyday life: Implications for clinical practice.
By Sue, Derald Wing,Capodilupo, Christina M.,Torino, Gina C.,Bucceri, Jennifer M.,Holder, Aisha M. B.,Nadal, Kevin L.,Esquilin, Marta.American Psychologist, Vol 62(4), May-Jun 2007, 271-286

Lived Experience

Before you judge… <u>experience</u> the person, reflect on self and be open to listen to understand vs. being understood

Some events are disruptive enough to cause a near-immediate shift.

Marginalized groups are made to feel as if they are less important that those who hold more power or privilege

- What have you **inherited**?
- What is your **role and responsibility**?
- **Who is responsible for unpacking the impact?**
- Are your policies and practices culturally inclusive?
- Whose experiences, values, beliefs, culture are **visible (represented)**?
- Whose experiences, values, beliefs and culture are **left out**?
- Are any stereotypes being (unintentionally) reinforced?

The Cost of (Implicit) Biases/Cultural Misinterpretations

1955 Emmett Louis Till-14-yea-old. Lynched in Mississippi
2020 Quawan Charles 15-year-old of Louisiana Reportedly Lynched to Death.

- How has privileged and power been used historically? How is it used now?
- How do we make sure that everyone gets home alive?
- What is in your sphere of influence?
- How do we "**Respond** with understanding and awareness vs. "**React**" out of biases, fear, cultural misinterpretations?

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INTENT VS. IMPACT
Good Intentions Is Not Enough

INTENT & IMPACT are often not the same. When communicating IMPACT trumps INTENT.

- We tend to judge ourselves on our intent and others on their impact..
  - I am experiencing you as this…
  - This is how I have been experiencing you, I just wanted to check in with you about that.
  - This is currently the impact on how I have been experiencing you, is this your intent?

How do I hold space exactly? Holding space is about how we learn to be with others without judgment.

- It doesn't require you to be anyone other than who you are, although a lot of times people must learn to let go of their own beliefs to really hold space for another.
- Demonstrate a willingness to be vocal and visible in communicating and promoting the values of diversity, equity, inclusion and intercultural communication.
- Influence and enact organizational change.
- Make the DEI initiative a top priority, and a part of the culture.

Part II: Perceptions are not always Reality- The Impact of Cultural Misinterpretations & Lack of Cultural Understanding!

In this session we will explore the impact of implicit biases, Micro aggressions, assumptions, and pre-conceived notions that often lead to cultural misinterpretations. Conflict occurs when perceptions, assumptions, biases, and reality do not align.

- What is culture
- Beliefs and Cultural messages
- "Professionalism" Who defines it?
- The cost of implicit Biases

Understanding beliefs, values biases and cultural messages that contribute to race based conflict and cultural identity

- Microaggressions, invalidations and insults
- What is the impact of micro-aggressions?
- How do you bring daily microaggression to people's awareness?
- What is your role and responsibility in unpacking the impact? Consider individual role, lifelong learning, and self-reflection.