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SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

Understanding Bias
to Unleash Potential™

 FranklinCovey
THE ULTIMATE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

- Before we get started today. Please make sure you have a pen and paper handy.
- Please make sure that you download the “Unconscious Bias Participant Guide” attached to the TEAMS invite.



"Now, more than ever, we need to address hurtful distractions and harmful structures that get in the way of all staff feeling welcome at work and being able to focus on VA's mission."

- National Center of Organizational Development, 2020



Choose **VA**



Acknowledgements

- Content on health care disparities was graciously shared by Dr. Calvin Ho, Pain Medicine Fellow, UCLA/VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System.
- The Diversity Speaks team at the Columbus VA ACC contributed to some of the slides used here: Misty Hopkins, Colleen McSweeney and Dr. Nicole Jackson.

Quick note on CE credit

- 3 hours of accredited CE provided for these disciplines: physicians, psychologists, nurses, social workers, and counselors
- To receive CE credit:
 - complete your Pre-Test before this class ends
 - attend the full session
 - complete the course evaluation in TMS within 30 days from today
 - obtain your CE certificate in TMS

Overview of our time together

- Quick level-set on healthcare disparities
- What is Bias?
- Identifying Bias
- Cultivating Connection
- Choosing Courage



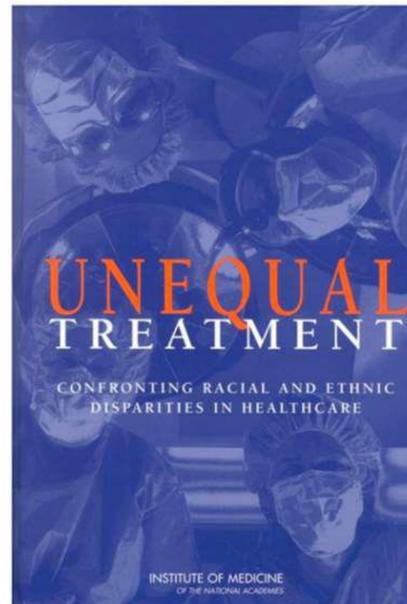
What do we know about healthcare
disparities?

Healthcare disparities that are associated with higher mortality:

- Cancer care
- Cardiovascular care
- Renal care
- HIV care
- Asthma care
- Physical Rehab
- Diabetes care
- Maternal health care

Research about healthcare disparities

- **Unequal Treatment: Confronting Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care, 2003. Institute of Medicine.** Racial and ethnic disparities in health care are known to reflect access to care and other issues that arise from differing socioeconomic conditions. There is, however, increasing evidence that even after such differences are accounted for, race and ethnicity remain significant predictors of the quality of health care received. In *Unequal Treatment*, a panel of experts documents this evidence and explores how persons of color experience the health care environment. The book examines how disparities in treatment may arise in health care systems and looks at aspects of the clinical encounter that may contribute to such disparities.



Factors involved in health disparities

Health System-level Factors

Clinician-level Factors

Patient-level Factors

American Medical Association – Center for Health Equity’s Strategic Plan, May 2021

The AMA has stated that racism is a public health crisis.

Their strategic plan includes five main approaches to addressing inequities in health care and within the AMA:

- Implement anti-racist equity strategies through AMA practices, programming, policies, and culture.
- Build alliances with marginalized doctors and other stakeholders to elevate the experiences and ideas of historically marginalized and minority health care leaders.
- Strengthen, empower, and equip doctors with the knowledge and tools to dismantle structural and social health inequities.
- Ensure equitable opportunities in innovation.
- Foster truth, racial healing, reconciliation, and transformation for AMA’s past by accounting for how policies and processes excluded, discriminated, and harmed communities.

What Is Bias?

- A **preference** in favor of or against a thing, person, or group compared with another.

What Is Bias?

- A **preference** in favor of or against a thing, person, or group compared with another.
- It may be held by an individual, a group, or an institution.
- It can have negative or positive consequences.

ACTIVITY:
BIAS IN ACTION QUIZ

True or False?

As a woman's body mass increases, her pay decreases.

True or False?

In the United States and other Western nations, **for every 1% increase in a woman's body mass, there is a 0.5% decrease in pay.**

True or False?

In Canada, the US, the UK, and Australia, a job seeker with a **non-Western** name has to submit more resumes than a job seeker with a **Western** name in order to get a response from the recruiter.

True or False?

Job seekers in most Western countries who have non-Western names have to submit **approximately 30% more** resumes to achieve the same results as job seekers who have Western names.

What Percentage?

What percentage of male CEOs of Fortune 500 companies are over 6 feet (180 centimeters) tall?

- A. 30–40%
- B. 40–50%
- C. 50–60%

C. 50–60% of male CEOs

Specifically, **58% of male CEOs of Fortune 500 companies** are over 6 feet (180 centimeters) tall. **14.5% of US males** are taller than 6 feet.

True or False?

- Black Americans have a two to threefold greater risk for kidney failure, as compared to all other Americans.

True

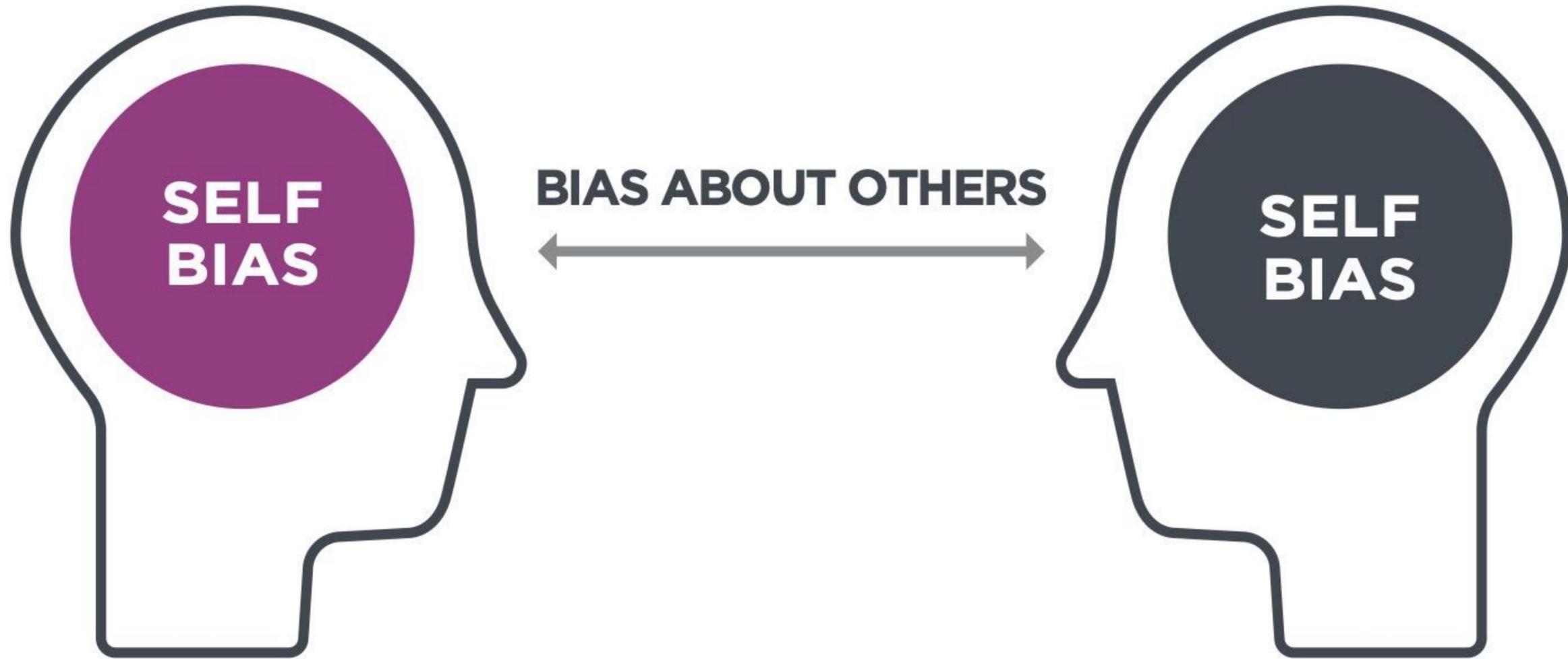
- **True.** Black Americans have a two to threefold greater risk for kidney failure, as compared to all other Americans.
- Although health disparities are often blamed on individual behaviors, Black Americans' increased risk of kidney failure is compounded by significant race-based inequities in their health care, including 1) suboptimal prevention, 2) delayed recognition and treatment for kidney disease risk factors, 3) lack of access to health care, 4) poor referrals for evidence-based health care, 5) poorer quality dialysis treatment, and 6) lower rates of kidney transplantation.

More Facts about Bias in Action

- **71%** of leaders pick proteges of the same race or gender.
- In the US, minority patients are **less likely** to receive pain medication than white patients.

Federal Employee Voice Pulse Survey – January 2022

- Three themes: Equity, Engagement and Re-Entry
- Equity Questions:
 - ✓ Agency leadership shows that diversity and inclusion is important through their actions
 - ✓ I have to hide part of my identity to be successful at work
 - ✓ People on my team listen to me even when I have views that are dissimilar



CONSCIOUS BIAS

EXPRESSED
DIRECTLY

WE ARE AWARE
OF THE BIAS

UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

EXPRESSED
INDIRECTLY

WE ARE NOT AWARE
OF THE BIAS

The Problem...

The biases we have about ourselves and about others significantly impact the decisions we make and the results we get.

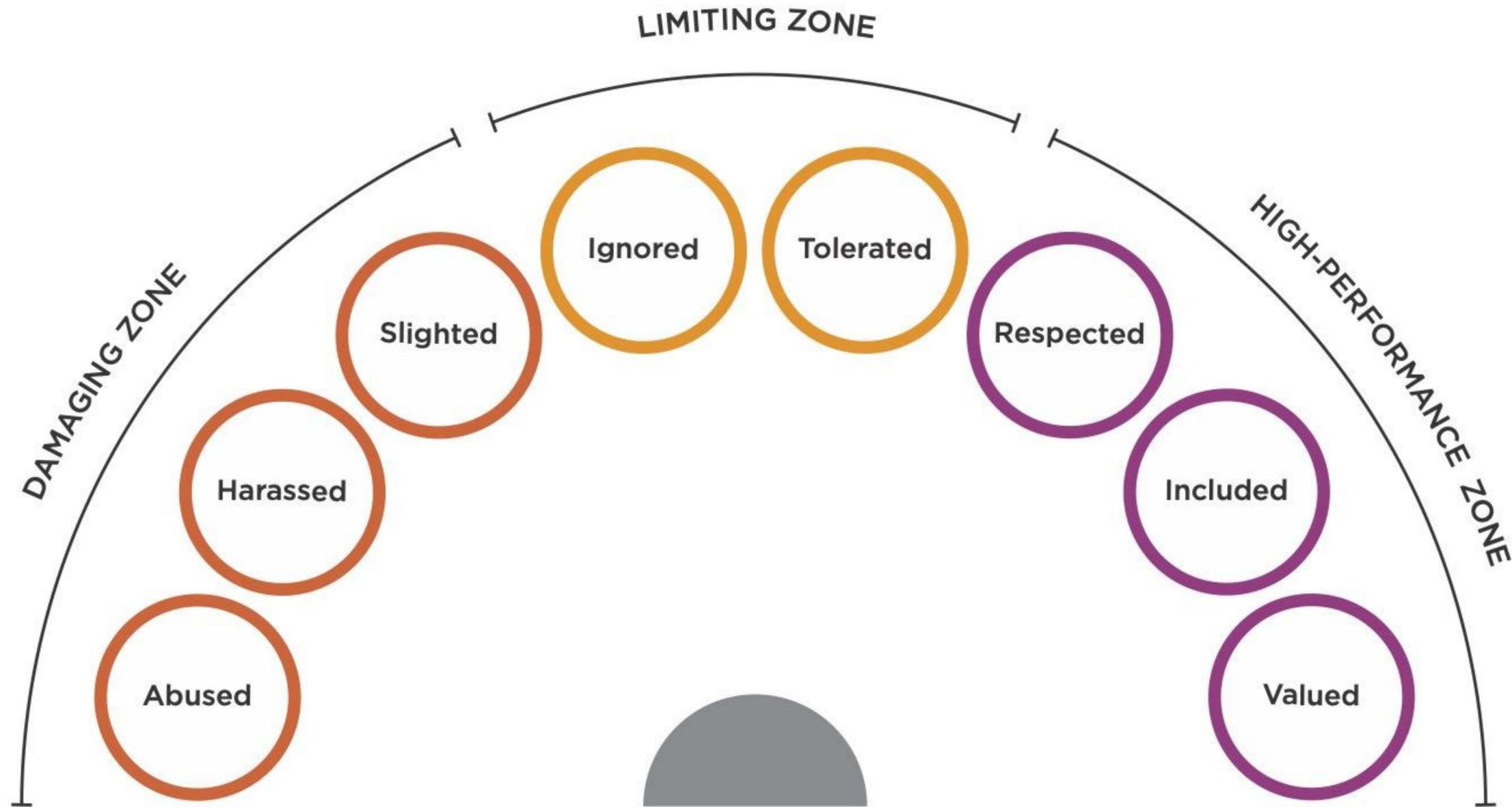
Individually:

1. Where do you experience bias in your life?
2. What areas of your work and life have been affected by bias, either positively or negatively?
3. What is the impact?

VIDEO:
MORE THAN YOU SEE



Impact of Behaviors



Employees who perceive themselves to be the target of bias are:

- **3x** as likely to be disengaged.
- **3x** as likely to withhold ideas.
- **3x** as likely to leave their job within the year.

DISRUPT BIAS, DRIVE VALUE, CENTER FOR TALENT INNOVATION.

CHALLENGING BIAS MATTERS BECAUSE...

There is no idea more fundamental to performance than how we see and treat each other as human beings.



By applying what you learn today...

You will increase your ability to:

- ✓ Notice and adjust for biases
- ✓ More fully respect, include and value the people around you.



IDENTIFY **BIAS**



PRINCIPLE:
Self-Awareness

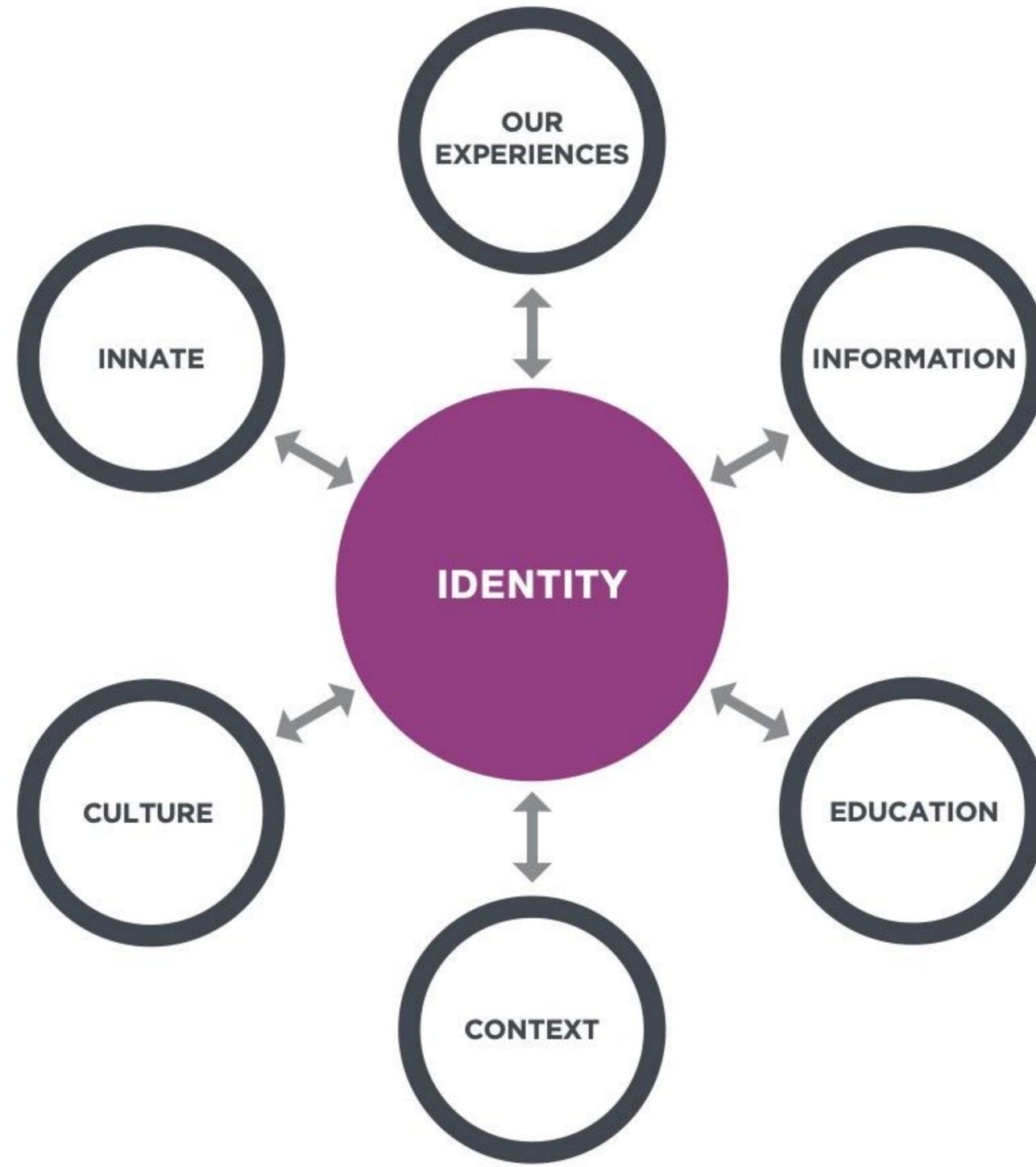
FRAME

I am not biased.
I view things
objectively.

REFRAME

Bias exists in
everyone, including
me. I actively think
about how bias is
at play in the
choices I make.

Where do biases come from?



Individually:

1. Complete 10 “I am...” statements about who you are.

Individually:

1. Complete 10 “I am...” statements about who you are.
2. Put an ✖ next to the identifiers that can make you biased toward others.
3. Put an ○ next to the identifiers that can make others biased toward you.

A photograph of a woman with short hair, wearing a white turtleneck sweater, smiling broadly. She is sitting in a crowd of people, with other people visible in the background. The image is slightly dimmed to allow the text to be read clearly.

“We think we see the world
as it is, when in fact we see
the world the way we are.”

STEPHEN R. COVEY

VIDEO:
THE BRAIN AND BIAS

VIDEO:
THE BRAIN AND BIAS

What triggers bias in the brain?

How can neuroplasticity help
you mitigate bias?



You're faced with around **11 million** pieces of information at any given moment. The brain can only process about **40 of those bits** of information, so it creates shortcuts and uses past knowledge to make assumptions.

TOR NØRRETRANDERS, AUTHOR, *THE USER ILLUSION*.

Three Bias Traps



INFORMATION OVERLOAD

We are bombarded by information that our brains automatically filter. Some of the information we filter out is actually useful and important.



FEELINGS OVER FACTS

When we have strong feelings about something, we tend to be driven by our beliefs rather than by facts. Our impulses and beliefs can override our logic and thinking processes.



NEED FOR SPEED

We take shortcuts to act quickly. Often these time-savers are based on bias and can be simplistic, self-centered, and even counterproductive.

Information Overload: Common Biases

CONFIRMATION BIAS

We tend to seek out information that supports our existing beliefs.



Information Overload: Common Biases

CONFIRMATION BIAS

We tend to seek out information that supports our existing beliefs.

ANCHORING BIAS

We tend to rely on the first piece of information we see.



Anchoring Bias Example:

- A new behavioral health program has been introduced for treating posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The program is voluntary and the decision to implement is made at the provider level. At VA Facility A the treatment is described as having a 67% chance of success. At VA Facility B the treatment is described as having a 33% chance of failure. Which facility has the higher rate of adoption at the care provider level? Why?

Feelings Over Facts: Common Biases

IN-GROUP BIAS

We tend to favor people we like and who are like us, while excluding and judging those who are different.



Feelings Over Facts: Common Biases

IN-GROUP BIAS

We tend to favor people we like and who are like us, while excluding and judging those who are different.

NEGATIVITY BIAS

We are more powerfully influenced by negative experiences than positive or neutral experiences.



Need for Speed: Common Biases

ATTRIBUTION BIAS

We judge others on their actions, but we judge ourselves based on our intent.



Need for Speed: Common Biases

ATTRIBUTION BIAS

We judge others on their actions, but we judge ourselves based on our intent.

SUNK-COST BIAS

We tend to continue things because we've invested time, money, or resources into them.



How do the common biases
show up in your life?

IDENTIFY BIAS

2

BIAS TRAP: INFORMATION OVERLOAD

We are bombarded by information that our brains automatically filter. Some of the information we filter out is actually useful and important.

EXAMPLE BIASES:

Confirmation Bias

We tend to seek information that supports our existing beliefs.

Getting news from a single source.

Anchoring Bias

We tend to rely on the first piece of information we see.

Misdiagnosing an illness by paying too much attention to the first symptom identified.

?

IDENTIFY BIAS

3

BIAS TRAP: FEELINGS OVER FACTS

When we have strong feelings about something, we tend to be driven by our beliefs rather than by facts. Our impulses and beliefs can override our logic and thinking processes.

EXAMPLE BIASES:

In-Group Bias

We tend to favor people we like and who are like us, while excluding and judging those who are different.

While considering candidates, hiring the candidate who shares your background.

Negativity Bias

We are more powerfully influenced by negative experiences than positive or neutral experiences.

Remembering a bad customer experience instead of the good or neutral ones.

!

IDENTIFY BIAS

4

BIAS TRAP: NEED FOR SPEED

We take shortcuts to act quickly. Often these time-savers are based on bias and can be simplistic, self-centered, and even counterproductive.

EXAMPLE BIASES:

Attribution Bias

We judge others on their actions, but we judge ourselves based on our intent.

Thinking another person is ineffective because they made a mistake.

Sunk-Cost Bias

We tend to continue things because we've invested time, money, or resources into them.

Keeping something you don't need, just because you spent money on it.

>>

Back of cards 2, 3 and 4

IDENTIFY BIAS

BIAS TRAP: INFORMATION OVERLOAD

Use these tips to avoid this bias trap.

Pause: Question It

- What information have I excluded?
- Have I only chosen data that confirms existing beliefs?

Seek to Understand

- Have I explored the opposing side?
- What is an alternative point of view?

Check Assumptions

- What am I assuming?
- What are others assuming?

Learn

- What information am I avoiding?
- What are the critical facts I need in order to make an effective decision?



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IDENTIFY BIAS

BIAS TRAP: FEELINGS OVER FACTS

Consider the following tips to avoid this bias trap.

Pause: Question It

- What am I feeling? Why?
- What am I making up?

Seek to Understand

- Am I jumping to conclusions?
- What have I discarded because it didn't fit my beliefs?

Check Assumptions

- What am I assuming?
- Who can I check my assumptions with?

Learn

- What are the facts that support what I'm feeling?
- What other information do I need?



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IDENTIFY BIAS

BIAS TRAP: NEED FOR SPEED

Use these tips to avoid this bias trap.

Pause: Question It

- What shortcuts am I taking?
- Is this the right decision, or just the thing that is in front of me?

Seek to Understand

- Why do I need to act fast?
- What are the unintended consequences of acting fast?

Check Assumptions

- If I had more time, what would I be doing differently?
- Would this be the best solution if there were no previous investment of time or energy?

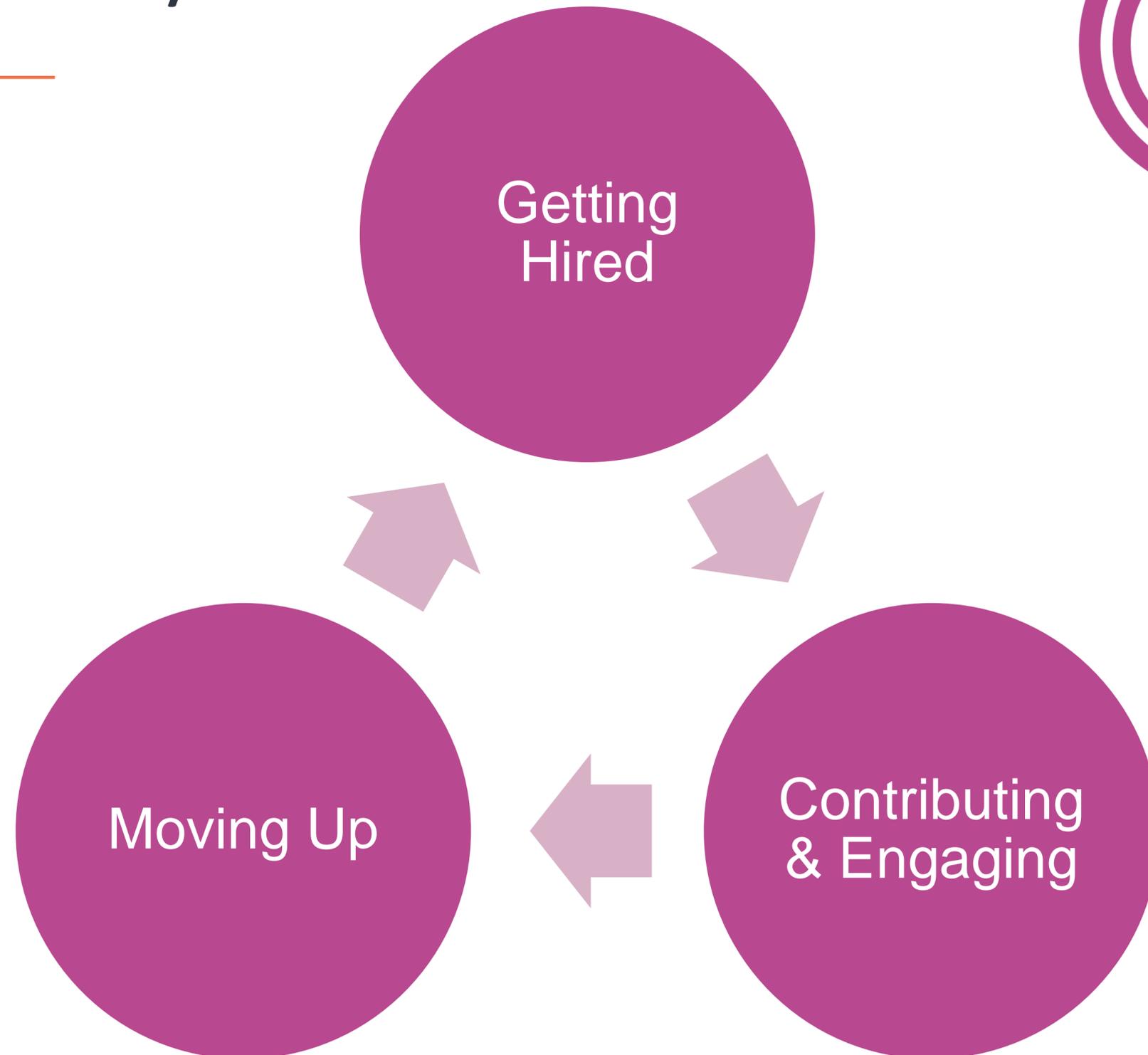
Learn

- What would the best solution look like?
- Can I make a checklist to help me take effective action?



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Talent Lifecycle



BREAK



CULTIVATE
CONNECTION



PRINCIPLE:
Openness

FRAME

If I understand my biases, I can fix them on my own.

REFRAME

Only when I cultivate meaningful connections can I see past bias and value the people around me.

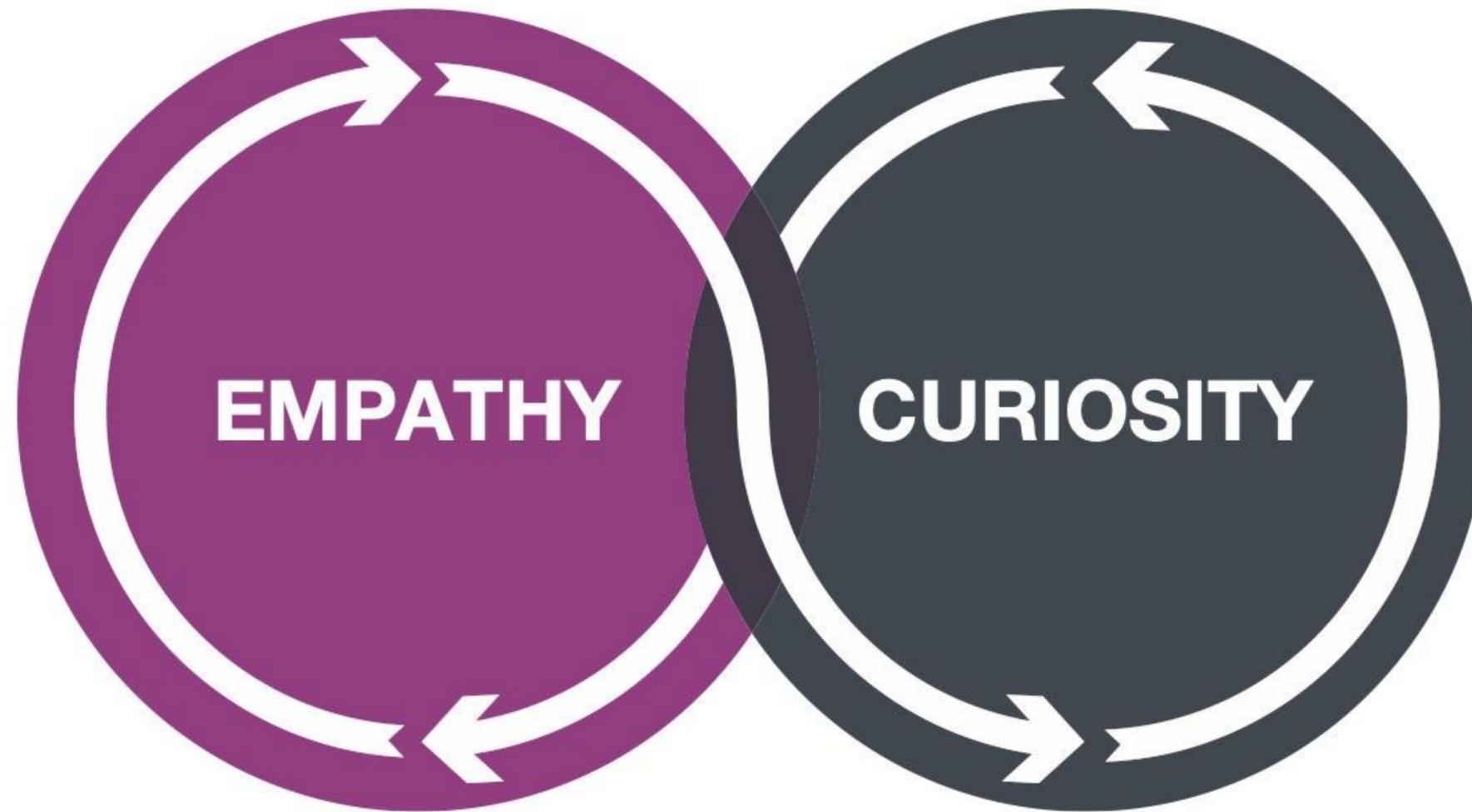
VIDEO:
ALL OF US

VIDEO:
ALL OF US

What resonated with you as
you watched the video?

What emotions did
you experience?

How do we
cultivate connection?



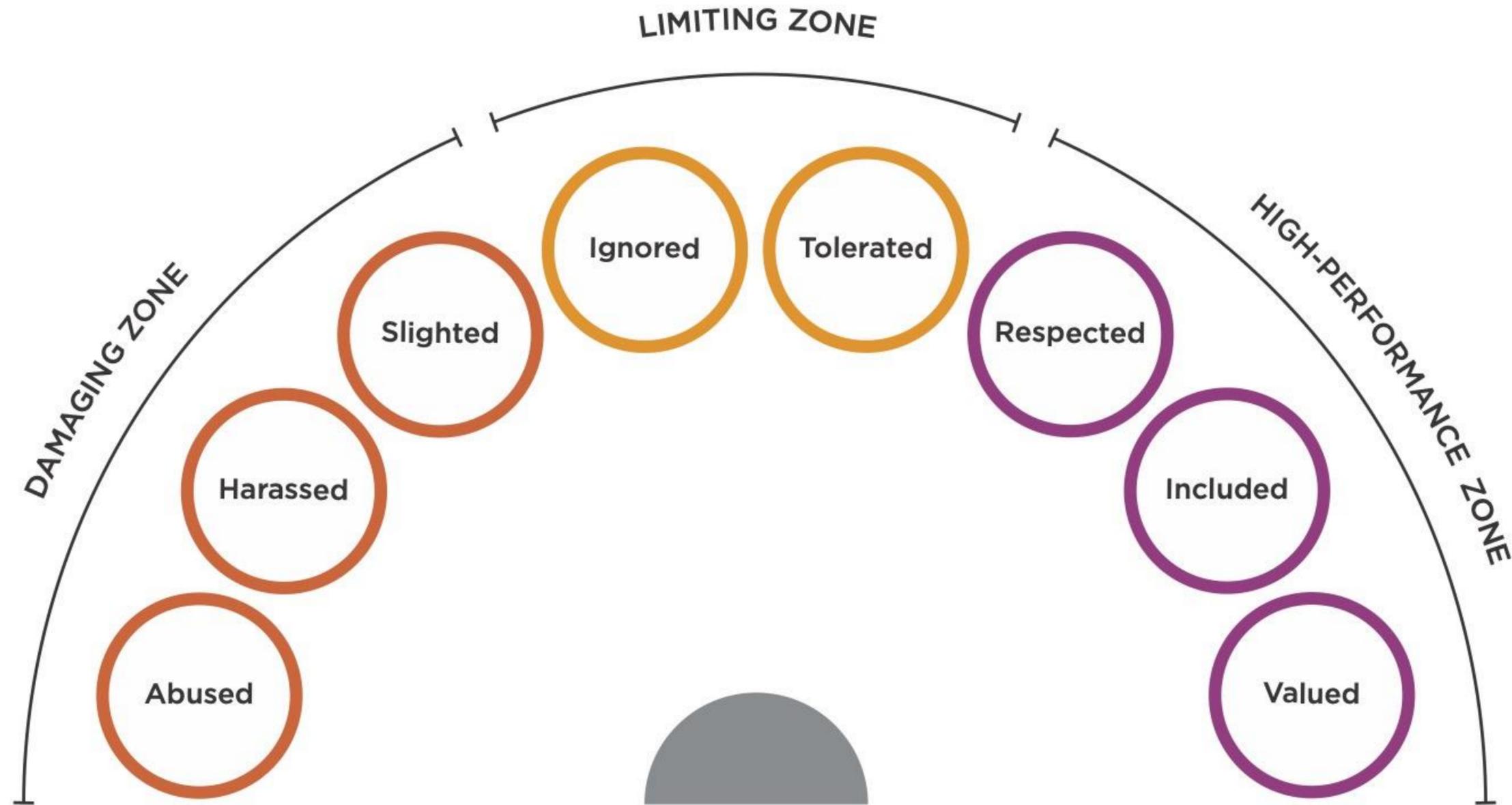
Empathy is...

The ability to understand another person's experience, feelings, and emotions.

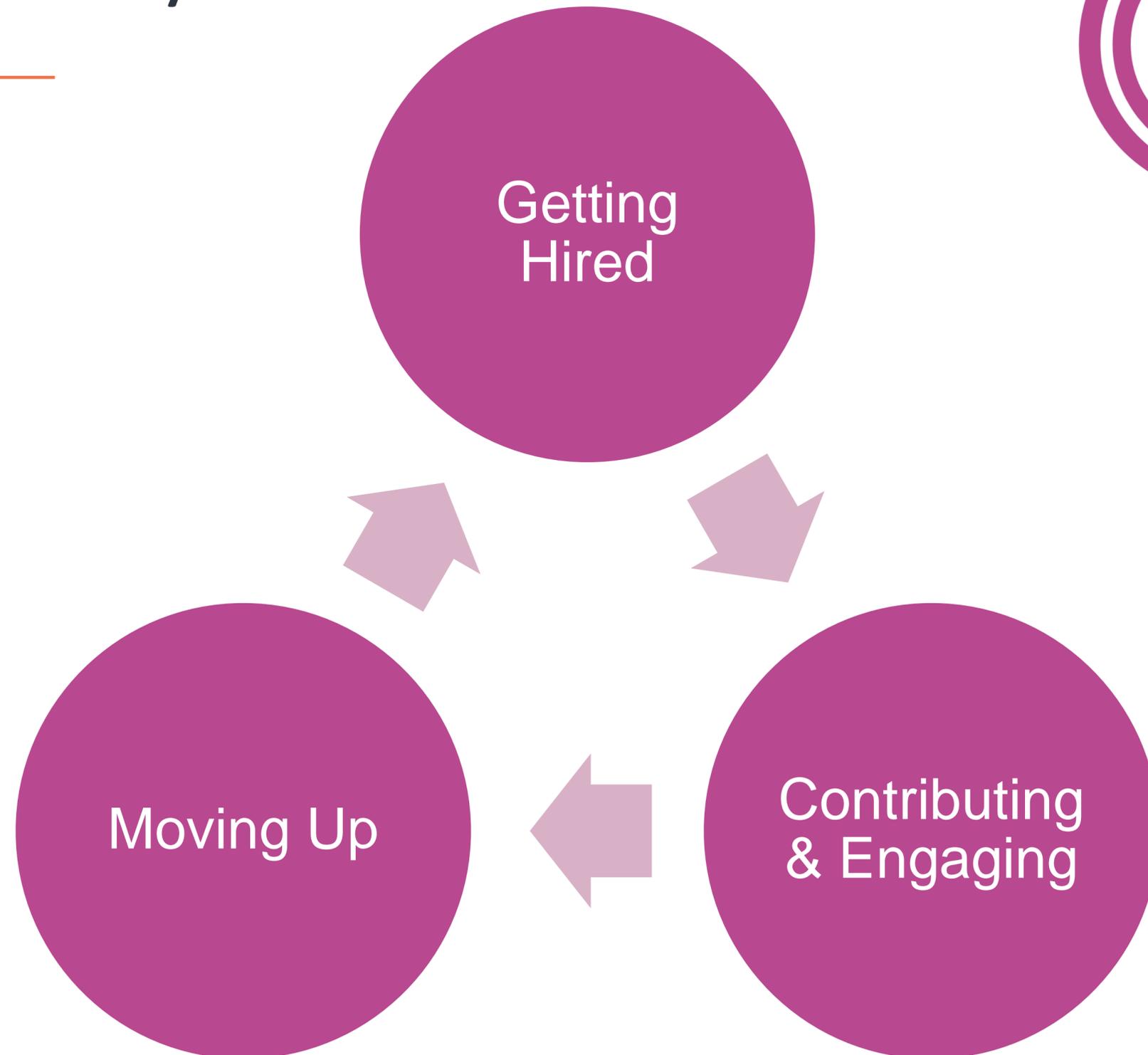
Curiosity is...

The desire to learn more about someone or something.

Impact of Behaviors



Talent Lifecycle



CULTIVATE CONNECTION

PRACTICE EMPATHY AND CURIOSITY

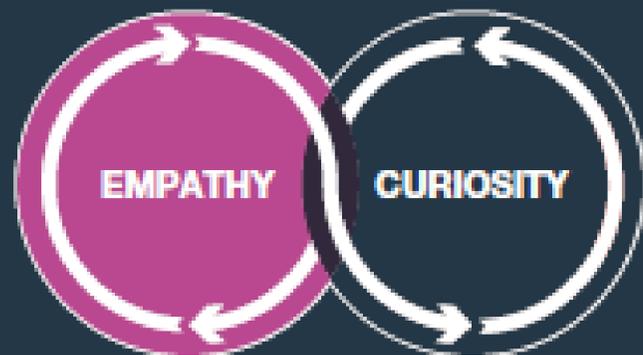
5

Empathy is...

The ability to understand another person's experiences, feelings, and emotions. The key is to put yourself in the other person's shoes.

Curiosity is...

The desire to learn more about someone or something. The key is to fall in love with questions rather than answers.



Together, empathy and curiosity help us cultivate connection and be more open-minded so we can recognize and address any biases in our thinking.

CULTIVATE CONNECTION

PRACTICE EMPATHY AND CURIOSITY

Tips to increase empathy and curiosity.

Have Empathy

- Position yourself physically at the same level.
- Be fully present as you listen.
- Restate words and identify feelings to show you understand.
- Withhold judgment.

Be Curious

- What am I thinking or feeling?
- What are they thinking or feeling?
- What biases are surfacing, both positive and negative?

Build a Connection

- What do we both care about?
- How am I like this person?
- What do I respect or like about this person?

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CULTIVATE MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS: START SAFE

To connect with someone for the first time, start safe. Use the questions below to get started. (Use the questions on the back of this card to go deeper.)

- What are you working on?
- What's the best thing that's happened to you today?
- What did you do before you came to this job? What did you like most about it?
- What are you good at?
- What is your favorite place?
- What do you do to get rid of stress? What do you like most about that?
- What are you interested in that most people haven't heard of?

Large Group Debrief

- Did you learn something new?
- Did you find something in common?
- **Did you find that one of your biases was challenged?**

CULTIVATE CONNECTION

CULTIVATE MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS: DIVE DEEPER

Once an initial connection is made, use some of these questions to enrich it. (Use the front of this card to make an initial connection.)

- What is your next adventure?
- What are some things you've had to unlearn?
- What small gesture from a stranger made a big impact on you?
- What is the most challenging thing you do on a regular basis?
- What do you do to make the world a better place?
- What opportunities do you have for growth and development?
- What is something you've been meaning to try?
- What is something everyone should do at least once?

Let's look at where we might want to build more connections.

Network Audit

- On a piece of paper, list your 5 closest professional connections. That is, who do you go to in the workplace and who comes to you?
- Take 5 minutes to answer the questions on page 39.

2. With your identified list of people, count the number of people who are the same and different from you in each of the categories below.

Same	Different		Same	Different	
		Age Group			Physical Ability
		Color			Physical Appearance
		Education Level			Political Views
		Expertise			Race/Ethnicity
		Family Status			Religion
		Gender			Sexual Orientation/ Identity
		National Origin			Socioeconomic Status
		Personality			

Ask Yourself...

- What do I notice about who I choose to connect with?
- How does who I connect with affect my influence?
- What did I notice about my network?
- What is one of the impacts of this?





CHOOSE
COURAGE



IDENTIFY
BIAS

CULTIVATE
CONNECTION

CHOOSE
COURAGE

PRINCIPLE:
Growth

FRAME

If I confront bias, it will just create more division.

REFRAME

When I effectively confront bias, I create a space where we are all valued and able to contribute our best.

What does courage mean to you?

- Take 30 seconds and type your responses in the chat.

Courage is...

The mental or moral strength to strive and persevere in the face of uncertainty, fear, or difficulty.

Effective courage is both
careful and bold.

CHOOSE COURAGE

7

COURAGE THAT DRIVES CHANGE: CAREFUL COURAGE

Effective courage is both careful and bold. Careful courage is especially valuable when there's high risk. Use these ideas to practice careful courage when addressing bias.

Use Softening Statements

- "What I'm hearing you say is..."
- "It seems like..."
- "When you said _____, what did you mean?"

Create a Safe Place

- Reflect before speaking.
- Give yourself and others time. "Let's take a break now and come back later."
- Apologize when you need to.
- Have a one-on-one discussion.
- Avoid shaming.
- Assume good intent.

CHOOSE COURAGE

COURAGE THAT DRIVES CHANGE: BOLD COURAGE

Effective courage is both careful and bold. Bold courage makes the case for an immediate need to change. Use these ideas to practice bold courage when addressing bias.

Be Direct

- Ask for what you want.
- Call things what they are.
- Share the evidence and the impact.

Challenge the Status Quo

- Be willing to say no.
- Point out problems.
- Offer solutions.

Include Others

- Call other people into the conversation.
- Ask for feedback: "What can we do to make this right?"
- Create opportunities.

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Reflection

- When have you used careful or bold courage?



**That Little
Voice Inside**

COURAGE TO IDENTIFY

NOTICE BIAS HAPPENING.

Bias happens at the speed of thought. When we have the courage to identify bias in ourselves and others, we can begin to address the impact it has.

Be courageous and continue to explore the impact of bias for you, for others, and for your organization.

PAUSE: QUESTION IT
(Page 60)

SEEK TO UNDERSTAND
(Page 61)

CHECK ASSUMPTIONS
(Page 62)

LEARN
(Page 63)

COURAGE TO COPE

DEAL WITH BIAS.

Being the subject of bias can take a toll on well-being. Coping with the effects of bias looks different in every situation. It could be stepping away, choosing a response beforehand, finding a coach, or even sharing your experience with others.

PRIORITIZE SELF-CARE
(Page 64)

PROACTIVELY CHOOSE A RESPONSE (Page 65)

GET A COACH OR MENTOR
(Page 66)

SHARE YOUR STORY
(Page 67)

COURAGE TO ALLY

HELP OTHERS WITH BIAS.

Whether you are the subject of bias or not, being an ally can bring about change. Teaming up with others to explore bias can make a significant impact. Offering support, mentoring, or helping another be heard are powerful ways to address bias.

TEAM UP WITH OTHERS
(Page 68)

OFFER SUPPORT
(Page 69)

BE A COACH OR MENTOR
(Page 70)

AMPLIFY OTHERS' VOICES
(Page 71)

COURAGE TO ADVOCATE

PROACTIVELY ADDRESS BIAS.

As an advocate, you take proactive steps to address bias. Advocates educate others and can inspire more people to take action. Building networks to bring people together can have a great impact.

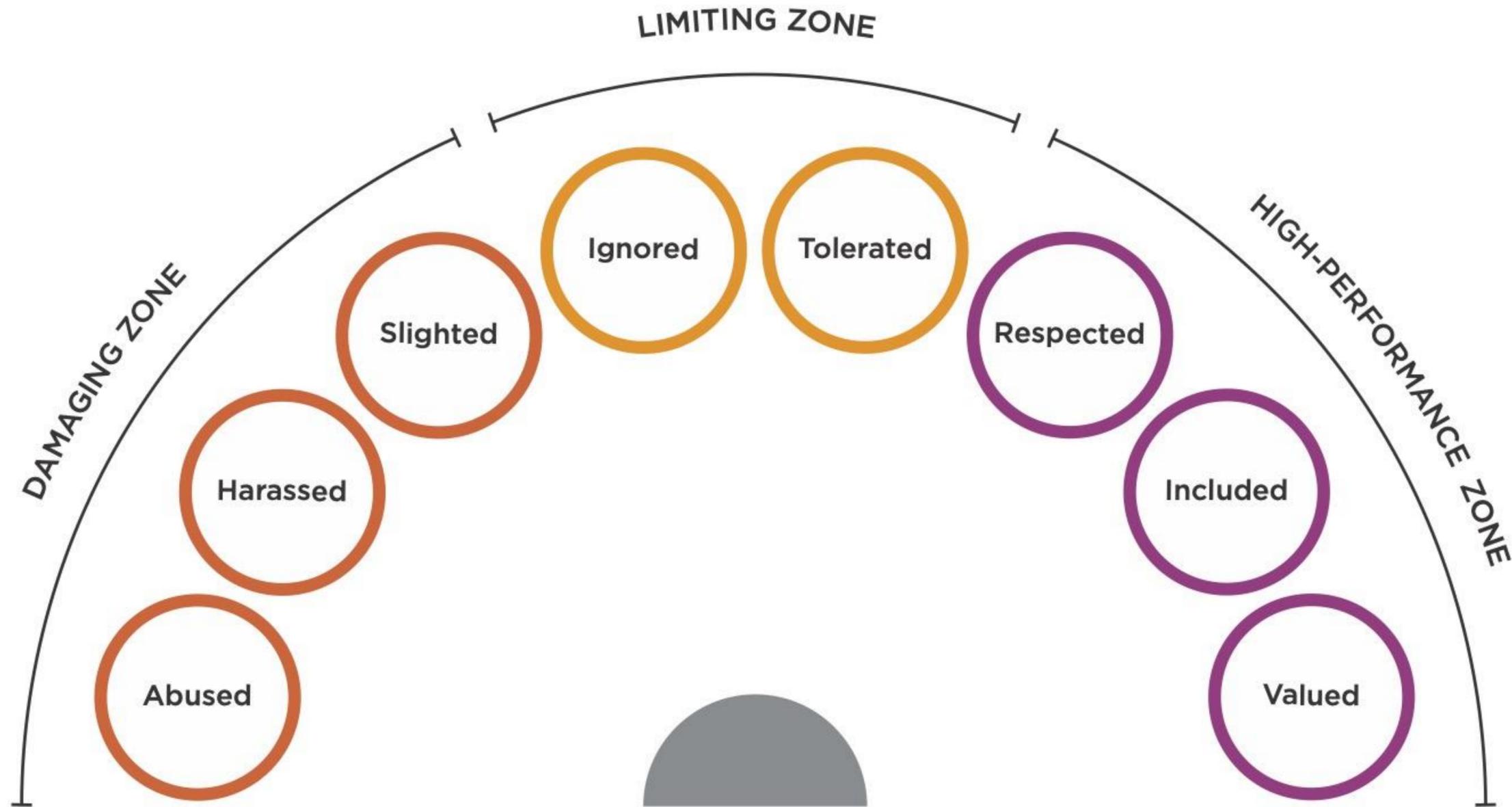
ENACT GROUP STRATEGIES
(Page 72)

WRITE ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE (Page 73)

ORGANIZE NETWORKS
(Page 74)

SPEAK UP
(Page 75)

Impact of Behaviors







Choose VA

What we know ...

Staff who feel **welcome, valued, and included** at work are more engaged and are more able to focus on VA's mission ... **providing consistent, excellent care to our Veterans.**

What do you want to do next?

Some options:

Continue the conversation with people in your life

Practice one of the strategies you identified on the practice cards

Look out for bias as you go through your day

Bias reading list

Managers – attend trainings related to an equitable talent life cycle

VA Office of Health Equity / Office of DEI website

Franklin Covey All Access Pass activities

Healthcare Equity VA-ECHO training series

[Healthcare Equity VA-ECHO \(sharepoint.com\)](#)



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UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

Understanding Bias
to Unleash Potential™



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Quick note on CE credit

- 3 hours of accredited CE provided for these disciplines: physicians, psychologists, nurses, social workers, and counselors
- To receive CE credit:
 - attend the full session
 - complete the course evaluation in TMS within 30 days from today
 - obtain your CE certificate in TMS