

UNCOVERING UNCONSCIOUS BIAS FOR INCLUSIVE OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES

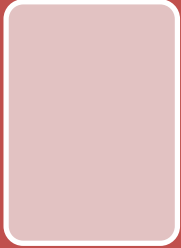
Ava Holliday
The Avarna Group



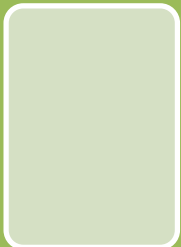
OUR LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

- Questions, questions, questions
- Reserve the right to change your mind
- Expect discomfort, non-closure, & imperfection from yourself and others
- Expect a productive (not necessarily safe) space

SOME DEFINITIONS



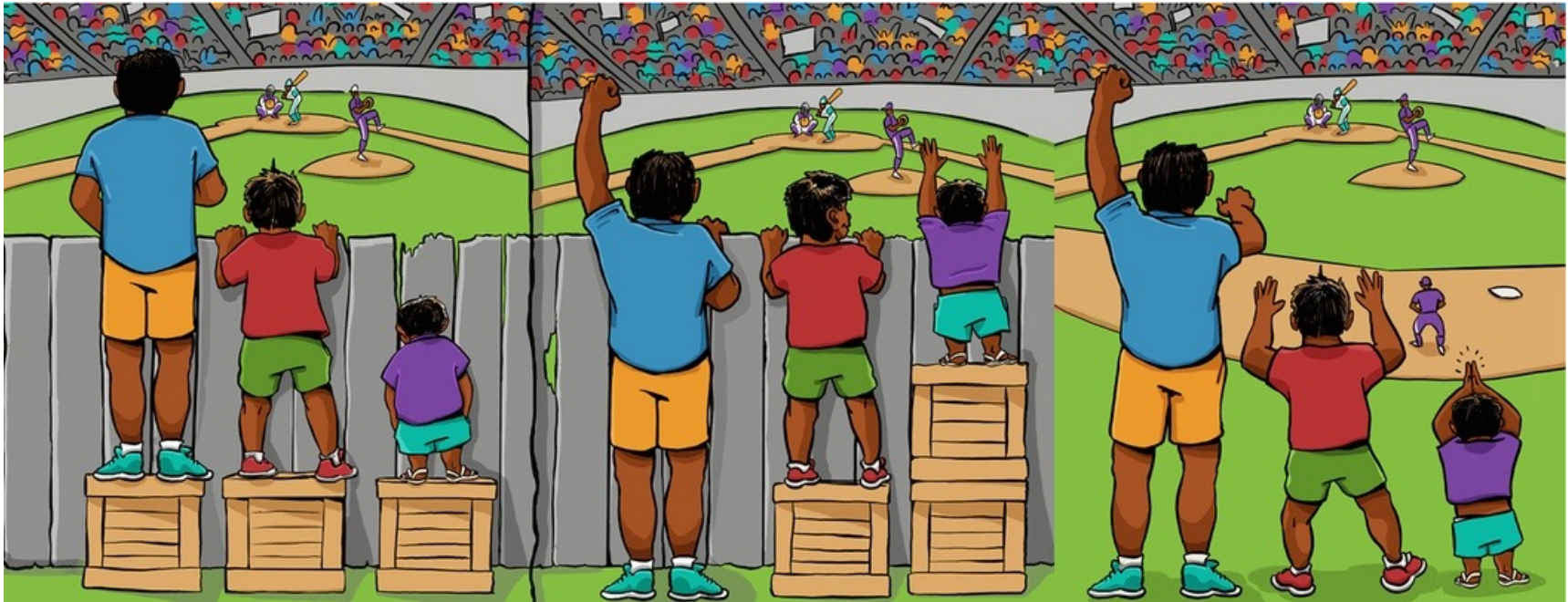
Diversity: The differences between us based on which we experience advantages or encounter barriers to opportunities and resources.



Inclusion: Celebrating, valuing, and amplifying voices, perspectives, styles, values, and identities that have been marginalized.



Equity: An approach to ensure fairness; to ensure everyone has equal access to the same opportunities; recognizes that advantages and barriers exist.



Equality

Equity

Justice

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Cultural Competence: Your ability to interact effectively across various dimensions of diversity

CULTURAL COMPETENCE IN ACTION



Diversity is what we are.

Inclusion is what we do.

Equity is how we do it.

Cultural competence is what we need
to do it well.

WHY DEI?

- 1. Problem-solving:** Diverse and inclusive groups are better at complex decision-making and problem solving.
- 2. Relevance:** Maintain relevance to an increasingly diverse PNW.
- 3. Access:** Everyone deserves access to what the Mountaineers has to offer and to the outdoors in general.
- 4. Inclusion:** Everyone deserves an inclusive experience in the Mountaineers and in the outdoors.
- 5. Future of the environment:** More people outdoors means more environmental stewards.
- 6. Honoring all connections:** People have a myriad connection to the outdoors and we should honor all those connections.

A photograph of a tiger in a field of tall, dry, golden-brown grass. The tiger is partially obscured by the grass, with only its head and shoulders visible. The background is a dense field of similar grass, creating a textured, natural setting.

Every moment ...

We receive 11 billion bits of information

We can only process 40 bits

99.999996% is UNCONSCIOUS



IMPLICIT BIAS

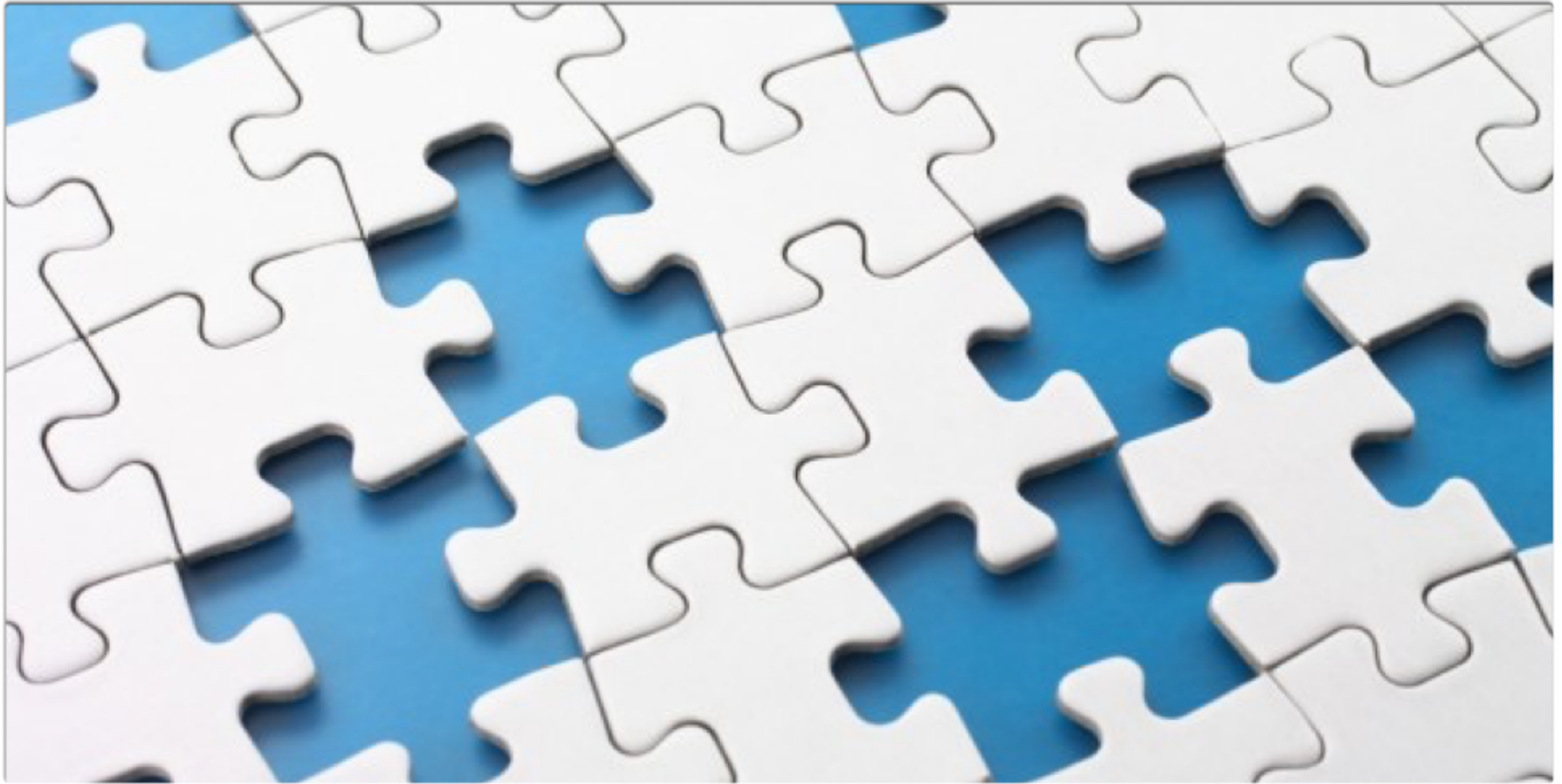
Unconscious, subtle, involuntary assumptions or judgments we make every day based on our prior experiences and culture



Birds of a feather

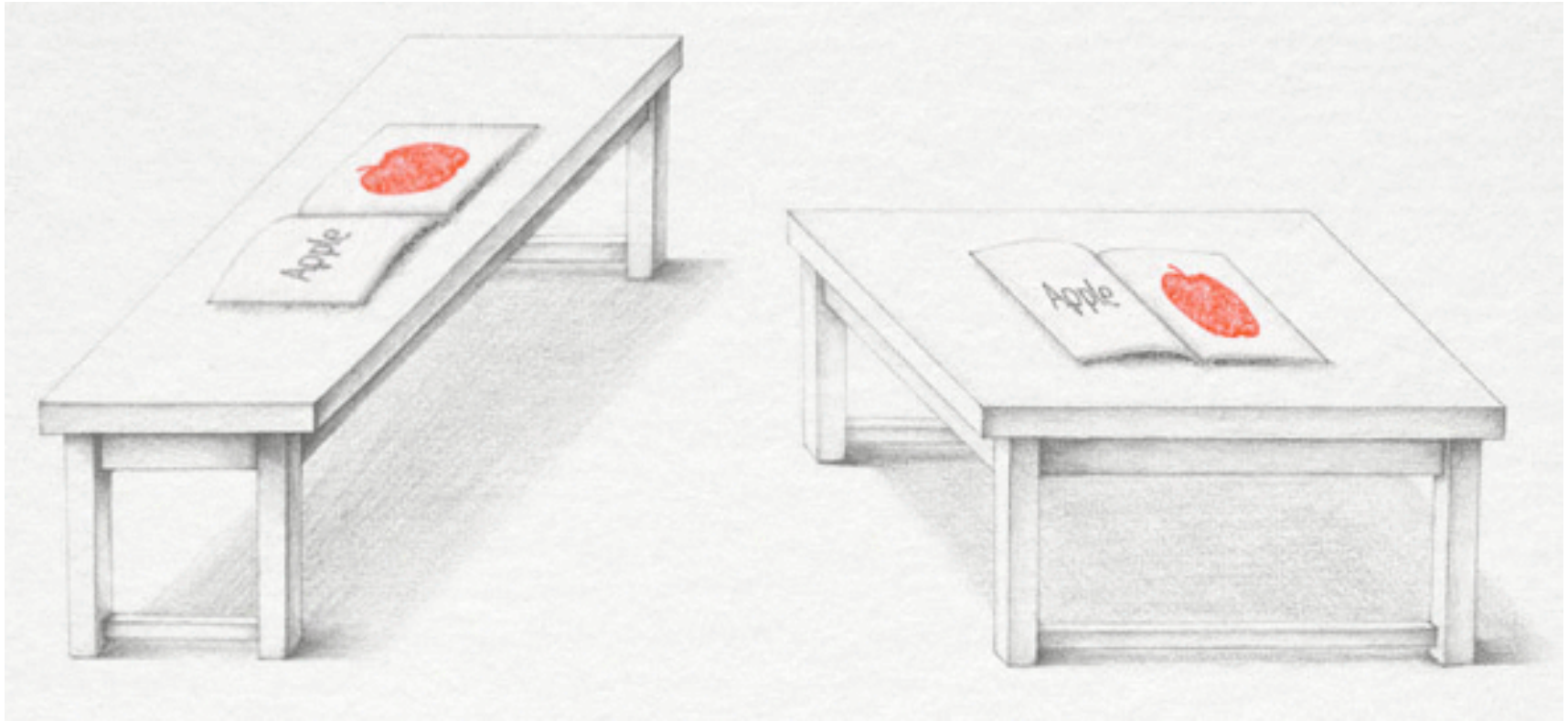
AFFINITY BIAS

Preferences we have for people who are more like us.



CONFIRMATION BIAS

Our tendency to interpret information based on a way that confirms our own previous beliefs and experiences.



PICTURE THIS

After scrubbing down, a surgeon walks into surgery for a routine appendectomy. The surgeon greets the patient and the surgical team, tells the patient about the process of the surgery, and waits for the anesthesiologist to begin the anesthesia process. A surgical nurse assists in the anesthesia process while another continues to organize the surgical instruments. Once the patient is fully under, the surgeon turns to one of the nurses and says, “let’s get started. Scalpel please.”

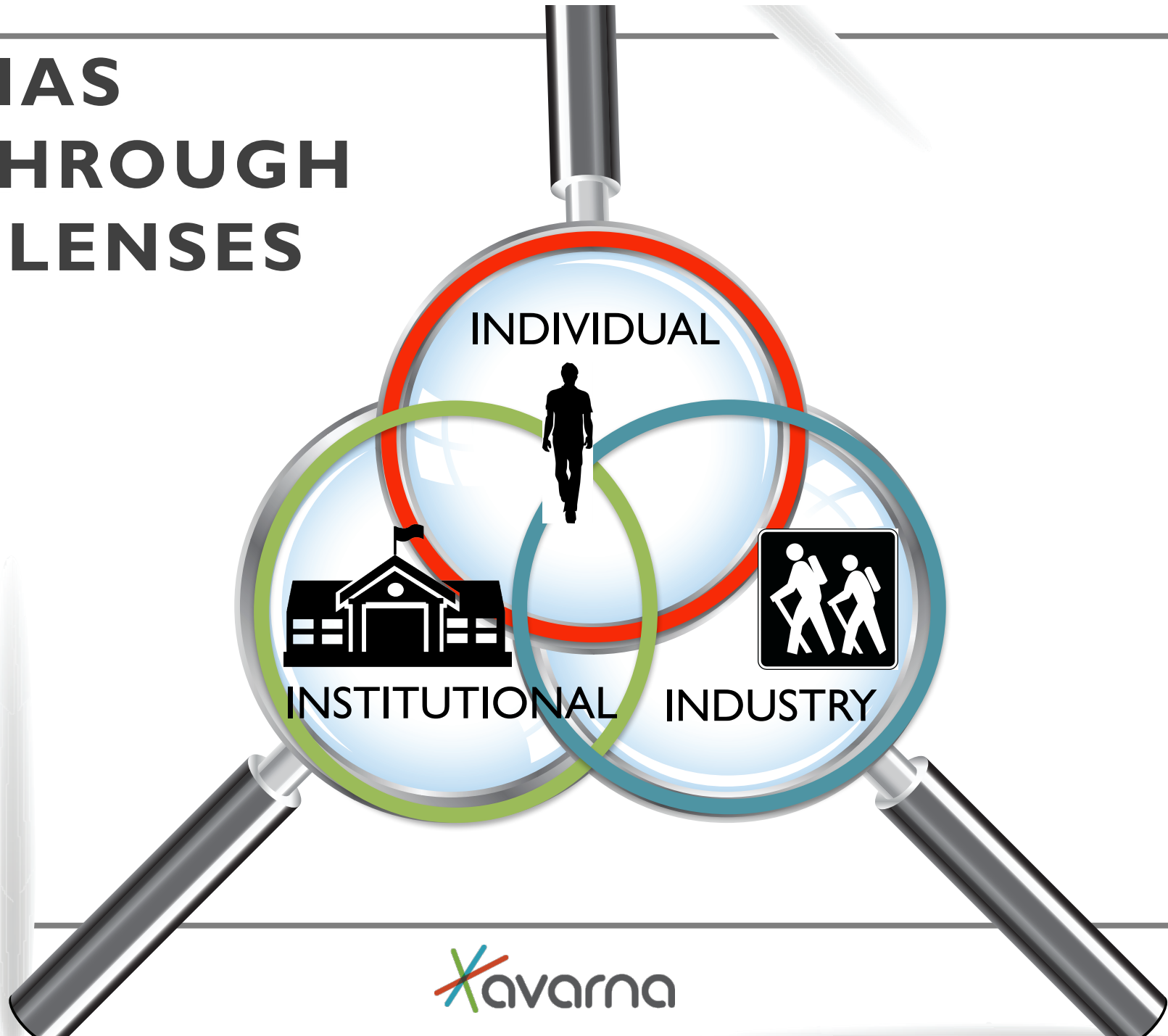


DANGER!!!



BIAS

BIAS THROUGH 3 LENSES



MICROAGGRESSIONS

Wow, you're really articulate.

Where are you really from?

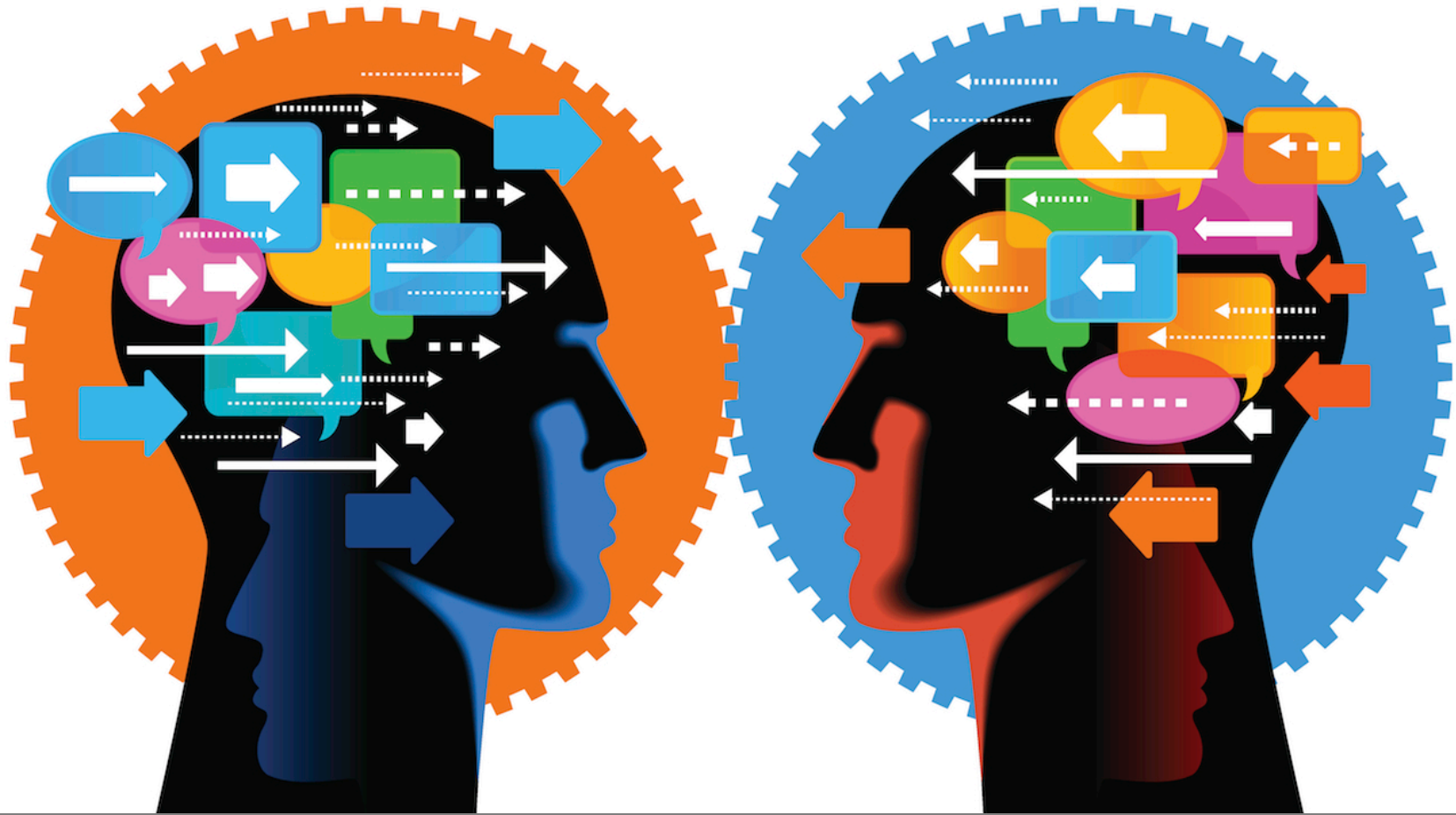
You're a much better driver than I expected.

MICROAGGRESSIONS

Unconscious everyday behaviors that often unintentionally disempower someone based on a non-dominant or marginalized identity.

GRAPPLING WITH INDIVIDUAL BIAS

THE 4 QUADRANT SHUFFLE



THE 4 DIMENSIONS OF GRAPPLING WITH INDIVIDUAL BIAS

MITIGATE YOUR BIAS (homework):

- Be curious: listen, read, participate.
- Allocate time for learning (podcasts, articles, books), especially from different voices, perspectives, and authors.
- Keep track of “aha!” moments.
- Build rapport with people different from you.
- Expose yourself to counter-stereotypic examples & role models.
- Decrease exposure to stereotypic perspectives (movies, TV, etc.).
- Expose yourself to discomfort & the unfamiliar.
- Reduce stress, fatigue, cognitive overload (that’s when bias “seeps out”).
- Utilize rubrics for decision-making.

INTERRUPT YOUR BIAS (in the moment):

- Slow down.
- Look for social cues that what you are doing or saying is not sitting well with someone or a group (Have you lost their attention? Are their arms folded? Have you lost eye contact? Are they unsure how to answer your question?).
- Ask yourself what you are NOT seeing.
- Ask yourself if there is a different explanation.
- Tell the person or group that you think your bias might be seeping through and ask them to give you feedback.
- Be open to feedback.
- Let go of your ego and the desire to “be right.”

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CHALLENGE OTHERS’ BIAS:

- Ask yourself what unconscious biases others may be holding.
- Be clear about the outcomes you hope for (change in behavior, or in attitude?).
- Remember that the target *and* perpetrator of the incident may need support.
- Approach the person with unconditional positive regard & assume positive intent.
- Rather than humiliating or shaming, be curious about where they’re coming from.
- Use an appropriate tactic: The four ways you can take action (alone or in combination) are: (1) Direct: Intervene at that moment; (2) Distract: Steer the group’s attention away from the conversation in a more positive direction; (3) Delay: Intentionally wait to discuss bias for a later time; (4) Delegate: Ask someone else to intervene.
- Focus on the person’s behavior or actions, not character.
- Focus on the impact of the person’s actions, not their intent.
- Be patient – you may need to circle back a few times to resolve the situation.
- Realize there is no one way to do this: how you interrupt may depend on identity & sphere of influence.
- Failure is ok. Even if you don’t change behavior or mindsets you set precedent that this behavior is not ok.

WHEN YOUR BIAS IS CHALLENGED:

- Avoid saying, “But I didn’t mean it” (remember intent is not relevant in microaggressions).
- Show genuine appreciation (“thank you for that feedback.”) – a person is gifting you a learning opportunity.
- Don’t get defensive – own your impact.
- Don’t say, “Stop being so sensitive!” or “You’re so PC.”
- Take some time to reflect if you need it.
- Do your homework.
- Don’t rely on a person from a marginalized group to educate you on being more inclusive. Do your own research first.
- If you want to externally process your experience, reach out to people with similar identities to you (though ask the person first if they want to process with you!)
Internalize the feedback.

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WHERE INSTITUTIONAL BIAS TYPICALLY MANIFESTS

Recruitment & Hiring

Definition of risk & risk mgmt policies

Admissions process

Health screening

Dietary restrictions based on culture/religion

Program Structure & Activities

Marketing & Social Media

Built Environment (Physical spaces)

Curriculum & Teaching Styles

HOW DOES INDUSTRY BIAS MANIFEST?



“What is the Wilderness? ...Wilderness is not simply a place or an idea; it is also a political process.”

- *James Morton Turner*

ACTIVITY

Our Myriad Connections to the Outdoors



Pair and Share: Find a partner and discuss the following:

1. What reasons do you have in common?
2. What reasons don't you have in common?
3. To the extent you have different reasons, why?
4. Did any of the listed reasons surprise you? Why?



SOME CONTEMPORARY (AND MORE ETHNICALLY DIVERSE) VOICES . . .



Dorceta Taylor



Carolyn Finney



Gregory Cajete



Lauret Savoy



Laura Pulido

QUESTIONS? GET IN TOUCH.



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