

Bystander Intervention

A FOCUS ON BIAS

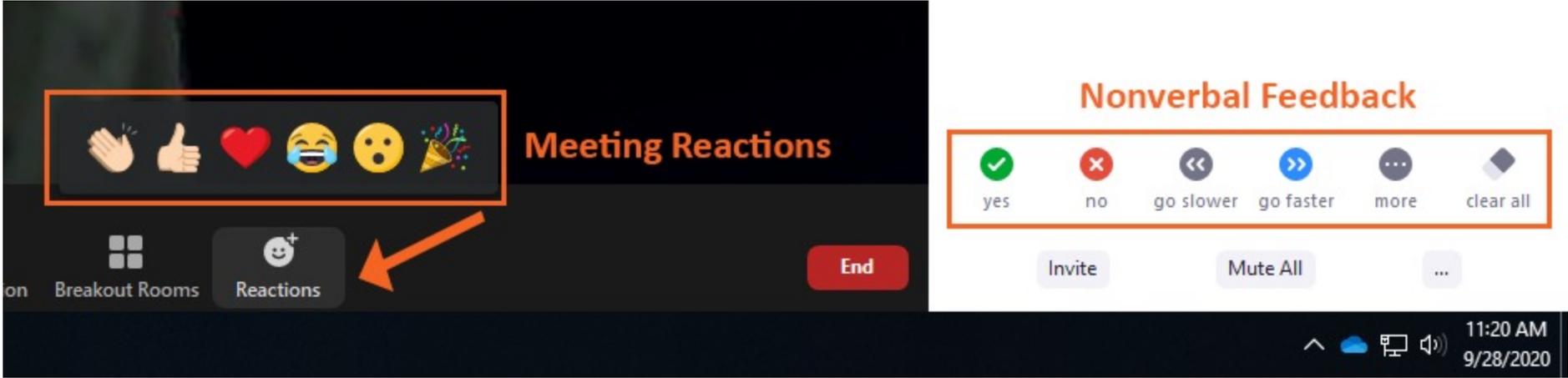
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Learning Outcomes

Participants will develop tools to help:

1. Recognize injustice and the effect of unjust behaviors on the work environment and overall climate
2. Understand what factors affect our probability of intervening in potential cases of bias or other negative situations
3. Apply specific intervention techniques to the situations that you may witness

Using Reactions



Operating from bias

The Cambridge English Dictionary's definition of bias states that **bias** is “the action of supporting or opposing a particular person or thing in an unfair way, because of allowing opinions to influence your judgement.”

Recognizing Bias

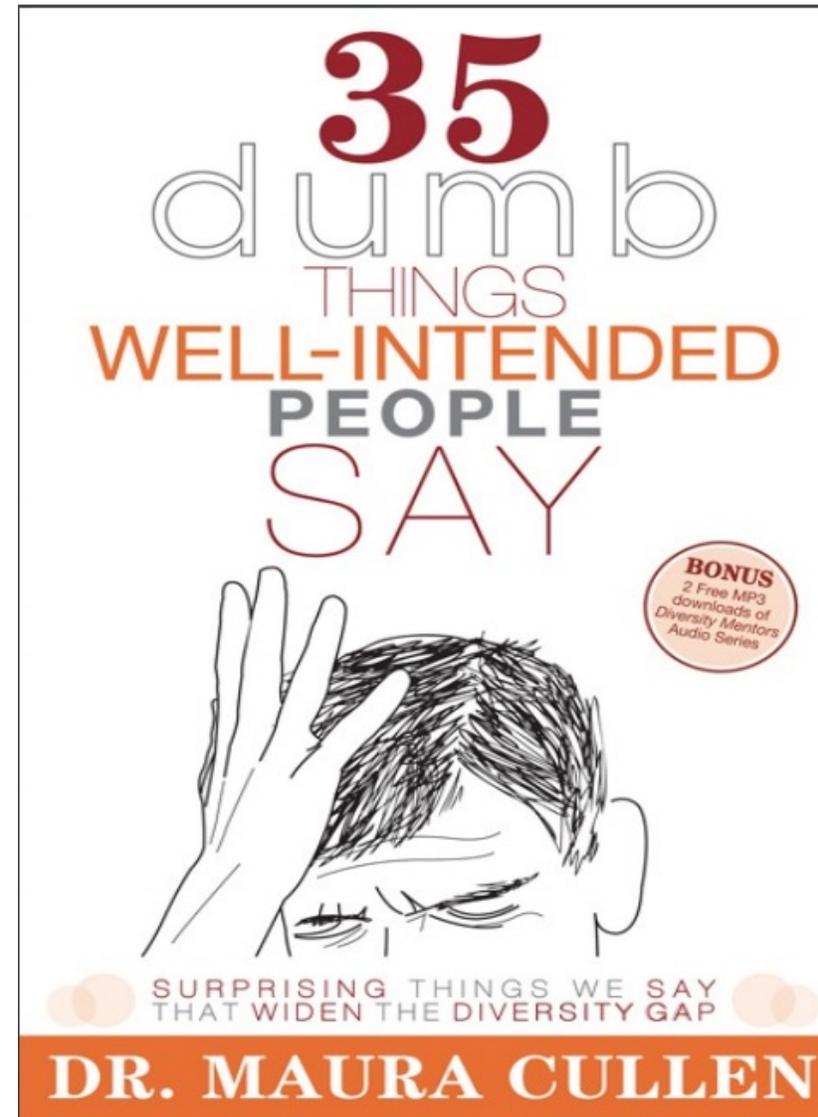
These incidents of bias often represent a much deeper-rooted expression of hostility against a person or group because of race, religion, nationality, gender, gender identity or expression, ethnicity, sexual orientation, political party, diversity of perspective, etc., than we would like to admit.

Bias Incidents

A 'bias incident' refers to language and/or actions which demonstrate bias against persons because of, but not limited to, their actual or perceived race, color, religion, ethnic or national origin, gender, genetic information, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or status as a military veteran.

Recognizing Bias

- Can you think of a time when you said something to someone and it just came out wrong?
- What does intent vs. impact mean to you?



“Even well-intended people cause harm... and they don't even realize it is happening!”

Recognizing Microaggressions

Psychologist Derald Wing Sue (as cited in Granger, 2011) defines microaggressions as "brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to certain individuals because of their group membership".

Recognizing Microaggressions

Types of Microaggressions (Sue, et al., 2007)

Microassaults (Often Conscious)

- Explicit racial derogation meant to hurt the intended victim

Microinsults (Often Unconscious)

- Communications that convey rudeness and demean a person's social identity. Subtle snubs, frequently unknown to the perpetrator

Microinvalidation (Often Unconscious)

- Communications that exclude, negate, or nullify the thoughts, feelings, or experiential reality of a person

**You speak
excellent
English!**

**WHAT IS A
MICROAGGRESSION?**

**Everyone can
succeed if you
just work hard
enough.**

**Where are
you from?**

**All lives
matter.**

**You are so
articulate!**

Examples of Microaggressions

What is a bystander?

A bystander is someone in a crowd who sees a potentially harmful situation and does nothing. A bystander does not protect the values of safety, trust, and honor that are central to our community.

The reality is that everyone is a bystander, every day, in one way or another to a wide range of events that contribute to the marginalization of certain groups within or organizations.

You have a choice to make

Often, we witness situations in which someone makes an inappropriate comment or exhibits forms of harassment. Sometimes, we say or do something, but at other times, we choose simply to ignore the situation. How do we make those decisions? Is there a safe way to increase the number of times and situations in which we might choose to act, and could that way also make sense for others?

What stops us from making the choice to act?

One thing that stops us from intervening in uncomfortable situations is the concept of bystander effect. There are two major factors that contribute to the bystander effect.

First, the presence of other people creates a diffusion of responsibility.

The second reason is the need to behave in correct and socially acceptable ways.

What steps does it take to intervene?

Notice the incident

Bystanders first must notice the incident taking place

Obviously, if they don't take note of the situation there is no reason to help

Interpret the incident

Bystanders also need to evaluate the situation

Determine whether it is an emergency—or at least one in which someone needs assistance

Assume responsibility

Another decision bystanders make is whether they should assume responsibility for giving help

If it is not something that bystanders can handle determine if an authority should take responsibility

What stops us from intervening?

Situational ambiguity. In ambiguous situations, (i.e., it is unclear what is happening) people are much less likely to offer assistance than in situations involving a clear-cut emergency (Shotland & Heinold, 1985).

Pluralistic Ignorance. We often defer to the cues of others around us to decide whether we should respond (Clark & Word, 1974).

Evaluation Apprehension. We're afraid we'll look foolish (Latane & Darley, 1970)

Diffusion of responsibility. The presence of others may *diffuse* the sense of individual responsibility.



Cracking the Code: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GTvU7uUgjUI>

What's your position?

Could bystander intervention be helpful in this situation?

- Yes. Bystander intervention would be helpful in this situation. (Clap)
- Perhaps. Depending on a number of factors. (Heart)
- No. This situation would have likely happened with or without a bystander intervening. (Thumbs up)

What are some ways to intervene in this situation?

Should I respond?

Be mindful of the boundary between your own personal values and the values you represent through your job. Though it may be difficult, when responding to a constituent, you should always speak from the values of the organization and not your own.

Should I respond?

Consider the potential risks or consequences of responding or not responding, whether in the moment or at a later time. Some questions include:

- If I don't respond, will I regret not saying something?
- If I don't respond, does that convey that I accept the behavior or statement?
- If I respond, will the constituent become defensive and will this lead to an argument?

How should I respond?

If you do decide to respond, here are suggested steps to take:

Using indirect communication:

Remove yourself from the situation entirely by excusing yourself (“I’m sorry, I have to make a quick phone call” “Can you hold on a second? I need to speak with [insert name]”) and walking away or ending the phone call.

Speak to your supervisor, event lead, or your HR liaison and ask them to help address the issue. Letting your supervisor or HR liaison know about the incident(s) makes it possible for you and your team to be proactive in addressing the issue and/or preventing further occurrences.

Bystander Intervention Shapes Change and Belonging

- We all play a long-term role in recruitment, retention, and overall job satisfaction
- Emergent change is continuous (Burnes, 2009) and intervention plays an important role within ever changing environments
- We all play a part in belonging
- We all play a role in organization effectiveness
- We all deserve to be respected and valued

How does this all come together?

If you were to witness bias or microaggression, what is one thing you would feel comfortable doing to intervene?

How does bystander intervention help our organizations and communities?

What is the impact on our organizations and communities when people do not intervene?

How do you take this discussion back into your spaces?

Attempts to Act

Now that you understand the thought process of bystander intervention, do what you can to help when you see situations that need to be confronted in one way or another.

Sometimes intervention comes in the form of reporting something that you have witnessed or heard about.

Tips for in the moment intervention

Paraphrase (Repeat Back)

Empathy and Compassion

- Listen for the feelings behind the statement

Act clueless

- Ask folks to explain their comments

Challenge the stereotype

- Give information, share your own experience, offer alternative perspectives

Be a good colleague or friend

- Remove someone from harms way if a situation doesn't feel right
- Call authorities if it is an emergency

Questions?

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