

# Bias Override



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PRESENTER

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Deputy Director of Programs & Training  
Perception Institute



# Agenda



**Welcome/Introduction**

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**Group Agreements**

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**Brief Overview:**

- The Mind Science of Bias
- 



**Affinity Discussion Prompt**

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**Group Discussion**



# Group Agreements



Be present!

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Keep the focus on  
identity and race.

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Acknowledge we  
are at different  
places with the  
things we discuss  
today.

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Speak your truth.  
Suspend  
judgement.



Expand your  
comfort level and  
push yourself;  
learning happens  
when we are a little  
bit uncomfortable.

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Notice your own  
defensive  
reactions. Attempt  
to use these as  
entry points for  
self-reflection.

# B.R.I.C.K

Foundational Principles Towards Bias Override, Individual Opportunity & Professional Success

## OPPORTUNITY & SUCCESS



**B**ELONGING



**R**ESPECT



**I**NVESTMENT  
INDIVIDUATION



**C**ONVERSATION



**K**INDNESS

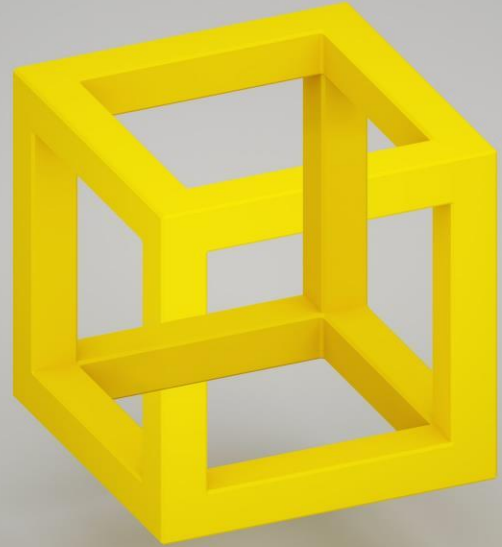
# The Fairness Paradox- **why we are here?**



**We hold values of justice and equity, yet our behavior may not reflect these ideals.**

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How can we resolve this paradox?



# The Science of Bias



**Identity Anxiety**



**Implicit Bias**



**Stereotype Threat**

# The Science of Bias



## Implicit Bias

The brain's automatic, instant association of stereotypes or attitudes toward particular groups, often without our conscious awareness



## Identity Anxiety

A stress response before, during, or after a cross-group interaction

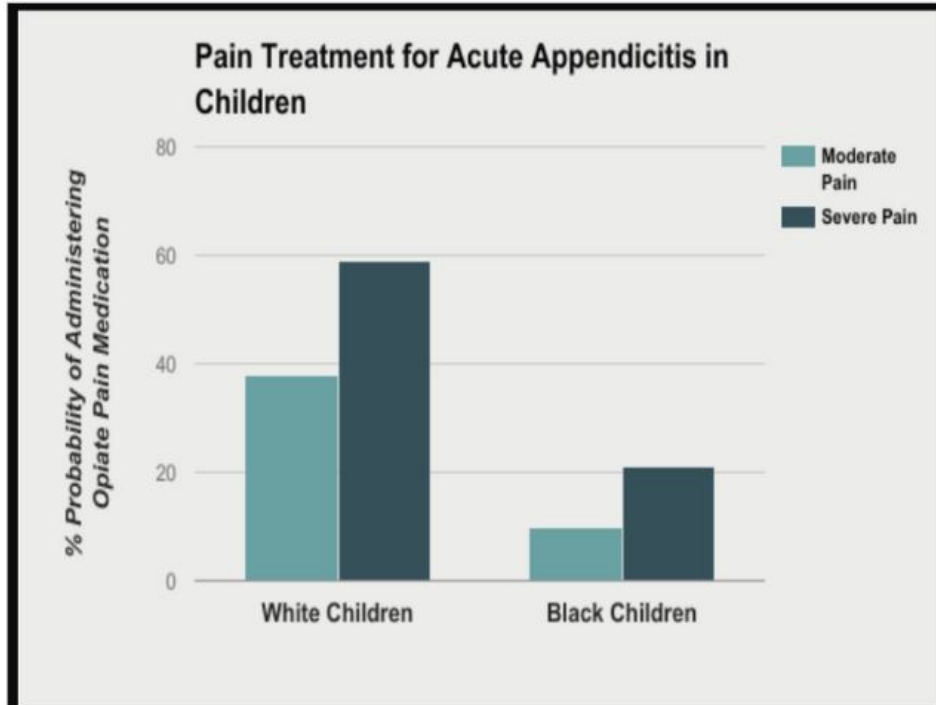


## Stereotype Threat

When a negative stereotype about an outgroup member is triggered, it a stress response undermines and overwhelms one's ability



# Where bias work began?



Goyal et al. (2015)

Field study of 940,000 children treated in the ER for acute appendicitis 2003-2010

Finding:

In multivariate analyses, white children were 3x more likely to be treated with opiate pain medication than black children, for the same level of pain

Covariates:

Ethnicity (Hispanic/non-Hispanic), age, sex, insurance status, triage level, and pain score



# What is a Bias?

**a preference for**

**OR**

**an aversion against**

**a person or group of people**



# Implicit Bias

## The Basic Definition



The brain's **automatic, instant association of stereotypes or attitudes toward particular groups**, often without our conscious awareness

# Why is this important?

- > We have greater bias towards people we are not familiar with

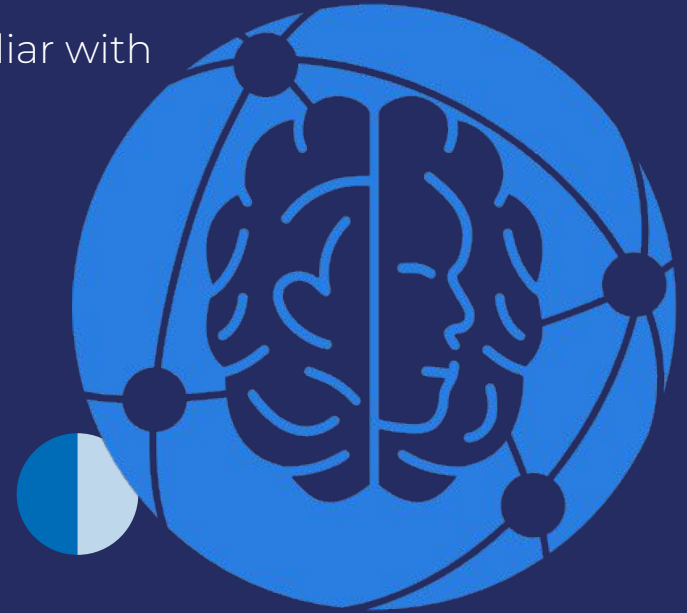
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- > Without personal interaction or knowledge of a group, assumptions and stereotypes fill in the gap

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- > Integration and genuine interaction decrease OUR biases

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# Let's Get Personal

Fill in the blank...

\_\_\_\_\_ Race

\_\_\_\_\_ Ethnicity

\_\_\_\_\_ Language

\_\_\_\_\_ Gender Identity

\_\_\_\_\_ Sexual Identity/Presentation

\_\_\_\_\_ Religious Affiliation

\_\_\_\_\_ Ability/Different Ability



01

I am...

02

My elementary school was mostly...

03

My college was mostly...

04

Most people at the last wedding or union I attended were...

05

Most close friends are...

06

People in my home are...

07

My team is mostly...

08

The people I socialize with at work are mostly...

09

My last 3 mentors were...

10

My last 3 mentees were...

11

Role models in my field are...



**What are your goals for these sessions?**

**\*\*\***

**What about this work do you believe impacts your leadership style and/or overall department/division?**



BIAS

STEREOTYPED  
IDEAS

BEHAVIOR/  
TREATMENT

## Attribution Error

We attribute negative in-group behavior to external situational factors and negative out-group behavior to character or personality.



Maybe her computer is acting up, and she is having trouble logging in

**vs.**



She really struggles with time management

# GUIDES OR GATEKEEPERS?





# Bias Override Tools

**01** Humility

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**02** Slow down

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**03** Cross group/counter stereotypes exposure

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**04** Self-assessment  
What can I do differently?

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**05** K.N.O.W

---

**06** R.E.S.E.T



# IMPLICIT BIAS

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# Unconscious vs. Conscious Brain

The brain takes in **11,000,000** bits of information per second, but can only process **40** bits consciously

*Wilson, T. D. (2004). Strangers to Ourselves.  
Harvard University Press.*



# Stroop Task

State the color of the text

Stroop (1935)

BLUE

RED

GREEN

BLACK

GREEN

RED

BLUE

BLACK

BLACK

BLUE

GREEN

RED

GREEN

GREEN

BLACK

BLUE

# Stroop Task

State the color of the text

Stroop (1935)

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RED

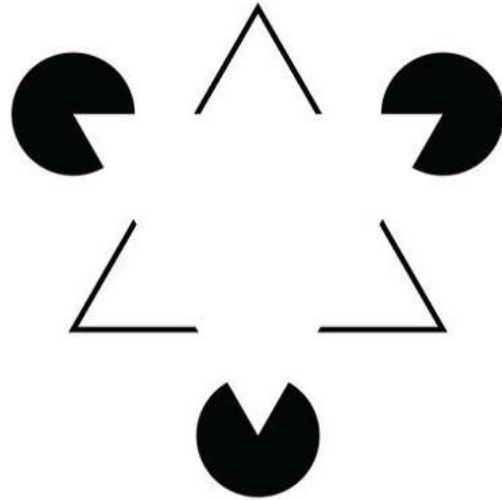
GREEN

GREEN

BLACK

BLUE

How many **triangles** do you see?





**BIAS**



**STEREOTYPED  
IDEAS**



**BEHAVIOR/  
TREATMENT**

## **Confirmation Bias**

Once the brain is familiar with a false belief, over time the belief becomes truth.



**The brain likes to be right!**



**We then tend to search for and interpret information in a way that confirms the pre-existing bias .**



## Why is this important?

# All of us have implicit biases



You are not **“blind”** to race simply because you may wish to be

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Implicit bias can manifest itself in the **workplace** and with **clients**

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“Good **intentions**” are not “good enough”

# Implicit Bias is...

## Increased by

- ✓ Stress
- ✓ Time pressure
- ✓ Multitasking
- ✓ Lack of clear criteria for decision-making
- ✓ Ambiguous or incomplete information
- ✓ Lack of familiarity with group

## Not reduced by

- ✗ Good intentions
- ✗ Someone else telling you to reduce your bias
- ✗ Suppressing bias
- ✗ Avoiding people from other groups
- ✗ Thinking you don't have bias



# Interventions to Interrupt Bias



**Clear  
Protocols**



**Individuate**



**Counter-  
Stereotyping**



**Perspective  
Taking**



**Peer-to-Peer  
Intergroup  
Contact**

# IDENTITY ANXIETY

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# Identity Anxiety

The Basic Definition



**A stress response  
before, during, or after a  
cross-group interaction**

# The Different Impacts of Identity Anxiety

Out-Group Concern

“Will I experience  
negative **treatment**?”

In-Group Concern

“Will I be negatively  
perceived?”

# Identity Anxiety: Client Impacts



SHORTER  
INTERACTIONS



AVOIDANCE



AWKWARD  
CONNECTIONS



NAVIGATION  
BURDENS

# Identity Anxiety: Workplace Impacts



WORK  
ALLOCATION



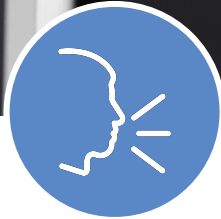
FACILITATING  
CLIENT  
CONTACT



FORMAL  
MENTORING



INFORMAL  
SOCIALIZING



CONSTRUCTIVE  
FEEDBACK

# Poll Time

## Identity Anxiety

How much identity anxiety do you experience?

A. Very little

B. A moderate amount

C. Quite a bit

Do you think you experience more identity anxiety inside or outside the context of work?

A. Inside

B. Outside

# How to Address Identity Anxiety

## Evidence-based interventions:

- Intergroup contact

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- Behavioral scripts

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- Positive priming

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- Client-centered communication





# Avoid Unnecessary Errors



**K**now names / pronunciation  
of names



**N**o identity presumptions



**O**pen conversations



**W**iden your circle

# RESET Conversation



**R**efocus from embarrassment



**E**mphasize apology



**S**kip self-justification



**E**xplore accountability



**T**hank you

# STEREOTYPE THREAT

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# Stereotype Threat

“Poor. Irresponsible”

“Overly emotional”

“Angry, intimidating”

“Not intelligent”

“So dramatic”

> When a negative stereotype about an outgroup member is triggered, it can undermine that person's ability to fully participate

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> The effect is more likely in an environment where the individual is the only one from the outgroup



## What causes threat?



Awareness that people may endorse stereotypes

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Anticipating bias

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Witnessing differential treatment

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The environment suggests you do not belong

Grady & Edgar (2003); Abdou et al. (2010); Gonzalez et al. (2018)



**Experiencing  
stereotype  
threat**



## What happens?

Our brain is focused on disproving our group's negative reputation



Heart rate increases

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Blood pressure rises

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Brain diverts cognitive resources away from task

Walter & Spencer (2009); Lewis & Sekaquaptewa (2016)

# Reducing stereotype threat for clients



Create an identity-safe environment



Build trust that agents are allies

# Mind Science Conclusion



**Identity Anxiety**



**Implicit Bias**



**Stereotype Threat**



# PRACTICE TIPS



**Use  
standardized  
procedures**



**Allow the client to  
set the limits in  
the housing search**



**Use objective  
information from  
third-party sources**



**Offer a variety  
of choices and  
options**

# OPPORTUNITY AND SUCCESS



B.R.I.C.K

A group of business professionals in a meeting, with text labels overlaid on the image. The image is in a dark, monochromatic style with a blue border. The text labels are: Surprised, Verified, Concerned, Challenged, and Excited.

**Surprised**

**Verified**

**Concerned**

**Challenged**

**Excited**

**THANK YOU!**

