



IMPLICIT BIAS 101

Standing for Equity in the Roanoke Valley (SERV)



Land Acknowledgement

Standing for Equity in the Roanoke Valley (SERV) is committed to honoring the spaces that we occupy in advance of our work. We begin our time together by acknowledging that all across this country we stand and meet on traditional lands served by Native peoples. We honor America's First People and all elders, past, present, and emerging, and we are called on to learn, and share what we learn, about the tribal history, culture, and contributions that have been suppressed in telling the story of America.

I want to acknowledge that we gather on the traditional land of the **Tutelo** past and present, and honor with gratitude the land itself and the people who have stewarded it throughout the generations. This calls us to commit to continuing to learn the history of those who come before us and how to be better stewards of the land we inhabit.

Learn about the lands you live on at <https://native-land.ca/>

SERV's MISSION

We will:

- Educate others about a number of race related issues including privilege, implicit bias, stereotypes, microaggressions, systemic and historical racism, and racial trauma.
- Advocate locally and nationally alongside our Black Friends and organizations by walking in tandem with, or behind, our Black friends, not in front of them.
- Remain apolitical, as racial justice can occur in any area of the political spectrum.
- Be comfortable with being uncomfortable. We understand that discussions around race can be difficult and may cause many to feel defensive and vulnerable. We commit to continue educating ourselves and to having hard conversations.
- Invite all cultures, races, and orientations to join us in raising our voices for equity and racial justice.

In this space, we each promise to:

- Speak from our own experiences and perspectives.
- Listen generously to the experiences and perspectives of others, creating supportive space for each person to learn.
- Actively resist making assumptions about one another.
- Refrain from fixing, saving, advising, or correcting each other.
- Be mindful of “taking space and making space” to ensure everyone has opportunities to speak and to listen.
- Expect and accept non-closure, because the work of disrupting racism is ongoing.
- Be willing to be challenged to disrupt racist patterns, both by the activities and discussions and by other participants.
- Respect the confidentiality of personal information and stories shared here.



WHAT IS IMPLICIT BIAS?



Activity

“A father and son were involved in a car accident in which the father was killed and the son was seriously injured.

The father was pronounced dead at the scene of the accident and his body was taken to a local morgue. The son was taken by ambulance to a nearby hospital and was immediately wheeled into an emergency operating room. A surgeon was called. Upon arrival and seeing the patient, the attending surgeon exclaimed “Oh my God, it’s my son!’ Can you explain this?”

Implicit Bias is...

Attitudes, Stereotypes & Beliefs
that can affect how we treat others



Race



Ability



Gender



Culture



Language

Implicit bias runs contrary to our stated beliefs. We can say that we believe in equity (and truly believe it). But then unintentionally behave in ways that are biased and discriminatory.

IMPLICIT BIAS



Social scientists believe that implicit biases are learned as young as age 3, and may be fueled by stereotypes perpetuated in the media or other beliefs passed along by parents, peers, and other community members

IMPLICIT BIAS

- Implicit biases operate almost entirely on an **unconscious level**
- Explicit biases and prejudices are intentional and controllable, implicit biases are less so
- A person may even express explicit disapproval of a certain attitude or belief while still harboring similar biases on a more unconscious level
- Such biases do not necessarily align with our own **sense of self** and personal identity
- Are malleable and can be unlearned and replaced with new associations

IMPLICIT BIAS

- While people might like to believe that they are not susceptible to these biases and stereotypes, the reality is that **everyone engages in them** whether they like it or not
- It does not mean that you are necessarily prejudiced or inclined to discriminate against other people
- It simply means that your brain is working the way it should, taking in information to **form associations** and make generalizations
- It is the natural tendency of the brain to **sift, sort, and categorize** information about the world that leads to the formation of biases

IMPLICIT BIAS

- Implicit bias is not the same thing as racism, although the two concepts are related
- Overt racism involves conscious prejudice against members of a particular racial group and can be influenced by both explicit and implicit biases
- Other forms of discrimination that can be affected by unconscious biases include ageism, sexism, homophobia, and ableism

IMPLICIT BIAS

Overview

<https://www.nytimes.com/video/us/100000004818663/peanut-butter-jelly-and-racism.html?action=click&module=video-series-bar®ion=header&pgtype=Article&playlistId=video/who-me-biased>

Discussion

How have you seen bias in your family,
friends, media, education, etc.?

IMPLICIT BIAS RESEARCH



RESEARCH

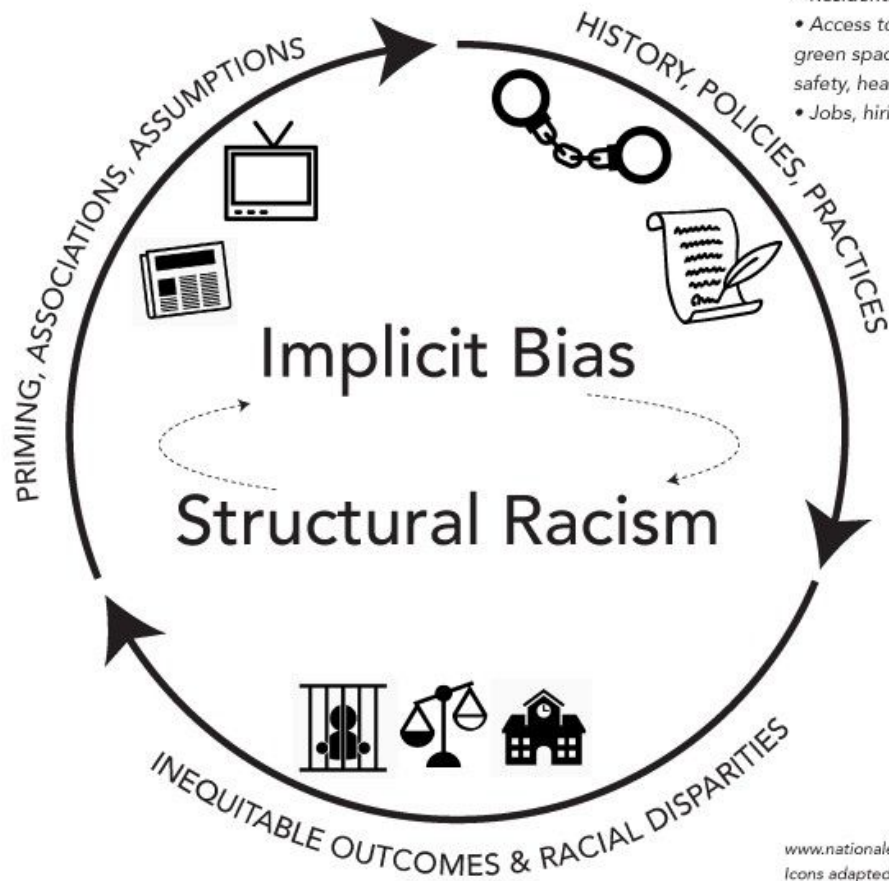
- A 2012 study found that as pediatricians' pro-White implicit biases increased, they were more likely to prescribe painkillers for vignette patients who were White as opposed to Black
- A 2017 report found that black girls ages 5 to 14 were viewed by adults as “less innocent” than white girls of the same age
- Research has found that when controlling for numerous factors (e.g., seriousness of the primary offense, number of prior offenses, etc.), individuals with the most prominent Afrocentric features received longer sentences than their less Afrocentrically featured counterparts

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/implicit-bias/>

<http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/research/understanding-implicit-bias/>

RESEARCH

- A 2015 study showed that White teachers, when asked about any specific Black student, were about 30% less likely than Black teachers to predict he or she would someday earn a college degree
- A meta analysis of 10 research studies found that implicit racial and gender biases influence
 - Outcomes including job interviews and hiring practices
 - Police behavior
 - Access to medical treatment



- Voting rights
- FHA Loans
- Residential segregation
- Access to education, green space, resources, safety, healthcare, etc
- Jobs, hiring, & advancement

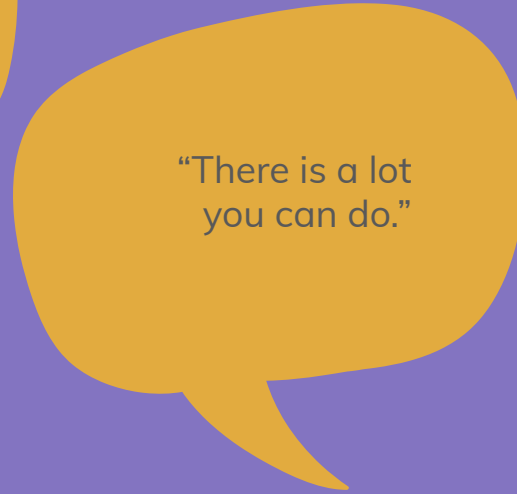
TAKE THE IMPLICIT BIAS TEST

- Go to Harvard's implicit bias social attitudes assessment on race, gender, mental health, and more
 - <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>
- Click on the "Project Implicit Social Attitudes" link
 - It will require you to register and read the preliminary info
 - Choose the "Race IAT" and take the test
 - If you are not automatically directed to the listing of tests, click on the "take a test" tab at the top
- You will receive a "slight, moderate, or strong" preference for Black or White





"Now that I
know I have bias,
what do I do?"



"There is a lot
you can do."

STRATEGIES TO COMBAT OUR IMPLICIT BIASES

| | Description | Resources |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| I ntrospection | Explore and identify your own implicit biases by taking implicit association tests or through other means. | Project Implicit – Implicit Association Tests (https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/) |
| M indfulness | Practice ways to reduce stress and increase mindfulness, such as meditation, yoga, or focused breathing. | “Three Ways Mindfulness Makes You Less Biased” (https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/three_ways_mindfulness_can_make_you_less_biased) |
| P erspective-taking | Consider experiences from the point of view of the person being stereotyped. This can involve consuming media about those experiences, such as books or videos, and directly interacting with people from that group. | “A Conversation About Growing Up Black” (https://www.nytimes.com/video/opinion/100000003670178/a-conversation-about-growing-up-black.html?module=inline) |
| L earn to slow down | Pause and reflect on your potential biases before interacting with people of certain groups to reduce reflexive reactions. This could include thinking about positive examples of that stereotyped group, such as celebrities or personal friends. | “Snacks and Punishment” (https://www.nytimes.com/video/us/100000004818677/snacks-and-punishment.html?playlistId=100000004821064) |
| I ndividuation | Evaluate people based on their personal characteristics rather than those affiliated with their group. This could include connecting over shared interests or backgrounds. | “Long-Term Reduction in Implicit Race Bias: A Prejudice Habit-Breaking Intervention” (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3603687/) |
| C heck your messaging | Embrace evidence-based statements that reduce implicit bias, such as welcoming and embracing multiculturalism. | “The Impact of Multiculturalism Versus Color-blindness on Racial Bias” (http://groups.psych.northwestern.edu/spcl/documents/colorblind_final_000.pdf) |
| I nstitutionalize fairness | Promote procedural change at the organizational level that moves toward a socially accountable health care system with the goal of health equity. | The Equity and Empowerment Lens (https://multco.us/diversity-equity/equity-and-empowerment-lens) |
| T ake two | Practice cultural humility, a lifelong process of critical self-reflection to readdress the power imbalances of the clinician-patient relationship. | “Cultural Humility Versus Cultural Competence: A Critical Distinction Defining Physician Training Outcomes in Multicultural Education” (https://melanietervalon.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/CulturalHumility_Tervalon-and-Murray-Garcia-Article.pdf) |

Consider Your Perspective & Audit Yourself

“Check Our Bias to Wreck Our Bias”

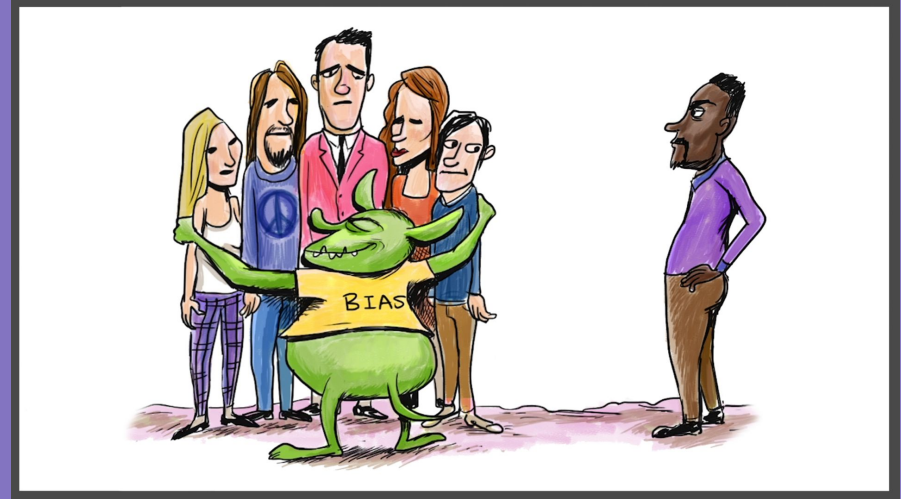
<https://www.nytimes.com/video/us/100000004818668/check-our-bias-to-wreck-our-bias.html?action=click&module=video-series-bar®ion=header&pgtype=Article&playlistId=video/who-me-biased>

HOW DO WE DEAL WITH OUR BIASES?

- Researchers suggest it is helpful to **“refute”** and **“counter”** the negative stereotypes that fuel biases
- Recognize that stereotypes really aren’t true, and oppose them with ideas that are:
 - Example:
 - It’s not true that all Black boys are loud and disruptive
 - It is true that children who talk a lot often are enthusiastic

HOW DO WE DEAL WITH OUR BIASES?

- While implicit biases can have an impact on your behavior, there are things that you can do to reduce your own bias
- **Focus on seeing people as individuals.** Rather than focusing on stereotypes to define people, spend time considering them on a more personal, individual level



HOW DO WE DEAL WITH OUR BIASES?

- **Work on consciously changing your stereotypes.** If you do recognize that your response to a person might be rooted in biases or stereotypes make an effort to consciously adjust your response
 - Before entering a conversation with a another person, take a ten-second pause to ask yourself:
 - "What are my biases toward this person?"
 - "How can I disrupt my autopilot thoughts?"

Slowing Down

<https://www.nytimes.com/video/us/100000004818677/snacks-and-punishment.html>

HOW DO WE DEAL WITH OUR BIASES?

- **Get out of your comfort zone**
 - The longer we stay in our “bubble” of individuals who think like us, look like us, etc. the bigger our biases can grow



HOW DO WE DEAL WITH OUR BIASES?

- **Adjust your perspective.** Try seeing things from another person's point of view.
 - How would you respond if you were in their same position?
 - What factors might contribute to how a person acts in a particular setting or situation?



HOW DO WE DEAL WITH OUR BIASES?

- **Stop tone policing:** When marginalized people speak up about struggles, and people from more dominant groups focus not on *what* is said, but on *how* it is said
 - Listen to the voices of colleagues who have been underestimated or misjudged
 - When people of color are brave enough to name bias, they hear that they're "too emotional" or "making things up."
 - There's nothing made up about implicit bias. Learn from those who have the courage to speak up.

HOW DO WE DEAL WITH OUR BIASES?



- **Be aware of and avoid microaggressions:** prejudices that leak out in interpersonal situations and decision points
- Experienced as slights, insults, indignities, and denigrating messages

RACIAL MICROAGGRESSIONS



HOW DO WE DEAL WITH OUR BIASES?

- Remember, you do not need to share your implicit bias test score with anyone
- Implicit biases are malleable - one can take steps to minimize the impact of unconscious bias
- Once people are made aware of them, those biases can be successfully addressed



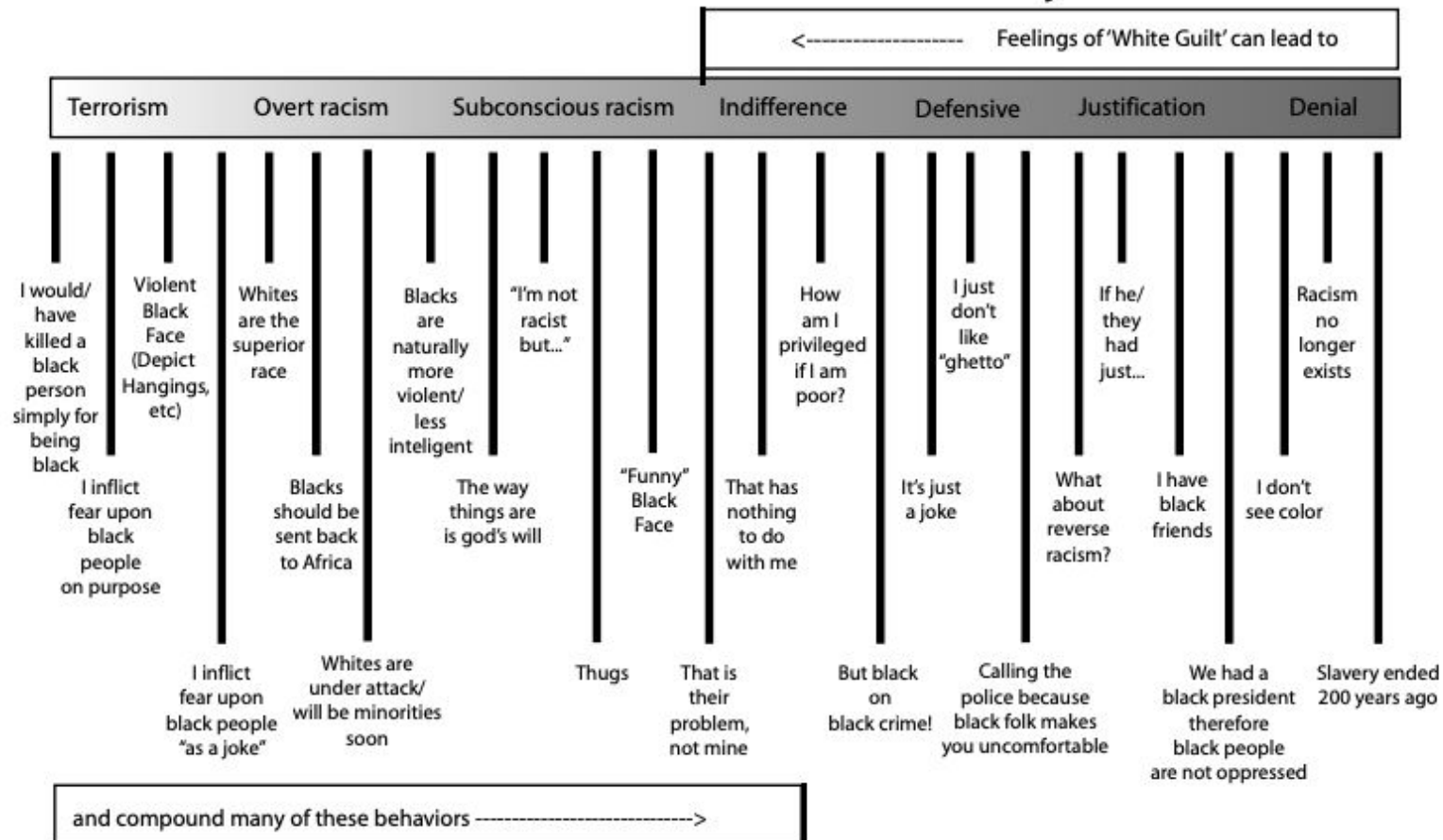
Discussion

Once we are aware of our biases, we can mitigate and interrupt them. How will you do that?



**NOW THAT YOU KNOW YOU
HAVE BIAS, LET'S TALK
ABOUT RACISM**

Racism Scale: Where do you fall?



| White Savior | "Woke" justification | Performative Ally | Awareness | Allyship | Abolitionist |
|--------------|----------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------|--------------|
|--------------|----------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------|--------------|

| | | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Whites were slaves too | | There is only 1 Race, the human race. | I will help you, but only if I lead | Being involved in this will help my reputation | | Systemic racism is very real and needs to be ended | |
| There are plenty of succesful POC; they just need to work harder | | There is no need for POC to have their own safe spaces; we are all one | Love conquers all. | If they want our help they should be nicer/more respectful | I expect praise and/or publicity | Yes, my life as a poor white person has been hard but it isn't as hard as if I were poor AND a POC | I will make space for POC |
| | If we can't use the "N" word, they shouldn't either | | | | My experience as a white person is drastically different than that of a POC. | | I will put my safety, health & freedom on the line to fight for POC. I will let them lead and not try to be at the center. |

To move “up” the scale... read, learn, and grow



Your to do list:

- **Be honest with yourself**
- **Take an implicit bias test**
- **Engage in self-reflection**
- **Notice your automatic thoughts**
- **Take a mindful pause**
- **Read black authors**
- **Go to places where you are the minority**
- **What else will you do?**

REFERENCES

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