

Understanding Privilege and its Role in Enhancing Equity



Dr. Sandra Miles

Head of Practice – Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Academic Impressions

Sandra@academicimpressions.com

she/her - @sandramilesphd

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The background of the slide is a grayscale photograph of a library. It shows rows of bookshelves filled with books, with a person sitting at a table in the distance, reading. The lighting is soft, creating a quiet and studious atmosphere.

learning OUTCOME

After participating in this workshop, you will leave with a plan to strengthen your approach to allyship and engage in more genuine support activities.

Ground Rules

- We agree that I'm not here to teach you how to not be racist or biased or accuse you of being racist or biased.
- I will assume that everyone participating today is a good person.
- We need to agree that we are safe and not in any danger, even if we feel uncomfortable.
- We need to be willing to be uncomfortable.
- We will be honest in a way that prioritizes honesty, not what people think of us.
- We will resist the urge to get defensive.
- We will share and consider examples of our own behavior.
 - The Devil does not need an advocate in this space.
- We will give grace.



#1

Awareness and Empathy

Understanding Social Conditioning

Social Conditioning/Bias Develops:

- Over the course of a lifetime and beginning at a very early age:
 - i.e., Pink is for girls; blue is for boys.
- Through exposure to direct & indirect messages
 - Religious teachings
 - Children's flash cards
- Through every type of media
- With reinforcement (or reflection) from our peers, family, professors, coaches, and others

Awareness and Empathy: Understanding Different Perspectives

PRIVILEGED GROUP		MARGINALIZED GROUP
Late 30's to late 50's/early 60's	1. Age	Younger; Older
White	2. Race	Person of Color; People who identify as Biracial/Multiracial
Male	3. Sex Assigned at Birth	Female; Intersex
Cisgender	4. Gender Identity	Transgender; Gender Nonconforming; Gender Queer
President, Vice Presidents, Deans, Directors, Faculty, Supervisors	5. Hierarchical Level	Students, Graduate Teaching Assistants, direct service staff
Heterosexual	6. Sexual Orientation	Gay; Lesbian; Bisexual; Queer; Questioning
Upper class; Upper middle class; Middle class	7. Social Class	Working class; Living in poverty
Graduate or 4-year degree; highly valued school; private school	8. Educational Level; Credential; Certificate	High school degree; 1 st generation to college; less valued school; public school
Christian (Protestant; Catholic)	9. Religion/Spirituality	Muslim, Jewish, Agnostic, Hindu, Atheist, Buddhist, Spiritual, LDS, Jehovah Witness, Pagan, ...
U.S. born	10. National Origin	"Foreign born;" Born in a country other than the U.S.
Not disabled	11. Disability Status	People with a physical, mental, emotional and/or learning disability; People living with AIDS/HIV+
"American;" Western European heritage	12. Ethnicity/Culture	Puerto Rican; Navajo; Mexican; Nigerian; Chinese; Iranian; Russian; Jewish...
Fit society's image of attractive, beautiful, handsome, athletic...	13. Size, Appearance, Athleticism	Perceived by others as too fat, tall, short, unattractive, not athletic...

The Danger of a Single Story



BREAKOUTS



As the saying goes, “you can’t un-ring the bell”. What are some new perspectives you hope to bring into future conversations based on this context of privilege as a useful tool, not just a source of shame.

PROCESSING BREAK



#2

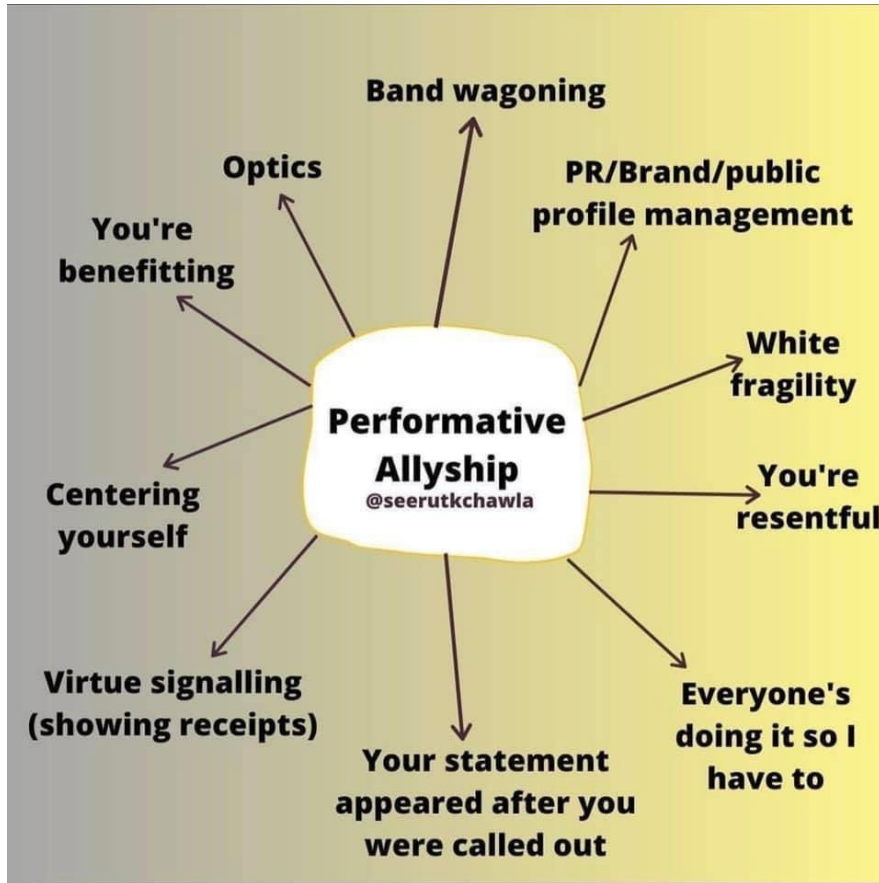
Action and Advocacy

Action and Advocacy: Using Your Privilege to Enhance Equity

1. Take on the struggle as your own.
2. Transfer the benefits of your privilege to those who lack it.
3. Amplify voices of the oppressed before your own.
4. Acknowledge that even though you feel pain, the conversation is not about you.
5. Stand up, even when you feel scared.
6. Own your mistakes and de-center yourself
7. Understand that your education is up to you and no one else.

Guidetoallyship.com

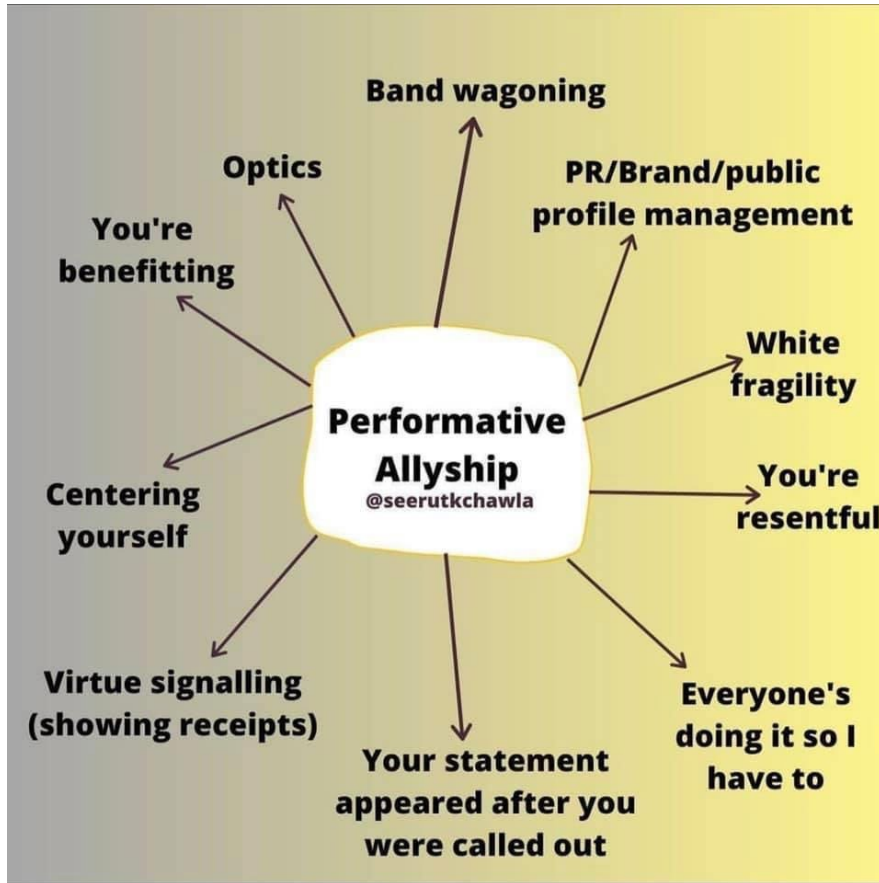
Action and Advocacy Enhancing Equity



Action and Advocacy Enhancing Equity



Action and Advocacy Enhancing Equity



Action and Advocacy: How to Address Problematic Behavior

BOTD

Benefit of the doubt:

- I know you didn't intend this, but when you mispronounce my name, I feel...

Ask

Ask questions that reflect/raise awareness

- How do your parents feel about you being heterosexual?

Bring Attention

Bring attention to the PROCESS of the discussion

- I'm noticing that whenever we talk about _____, someone changes the subject. I'm curious what others have noticed.

Ask

Ask clarifying question

- What has been your experience that led you to believe _____?

Action and Advocacy: Barriers to Addressing Bias in real time

Fear

- What if I make a mistake?
- What if I can't handle the situation?
- What if I say something biased?
- People may get emotional, and I'm not prepared for that.
- Am I making this worse?

Prioritizing Personal Comfort

- The conversation will get out of control.
- Am I ready to have this conversation?
- What if I damage my relationships with others?

Deconstruct bias in real time – Tip #1

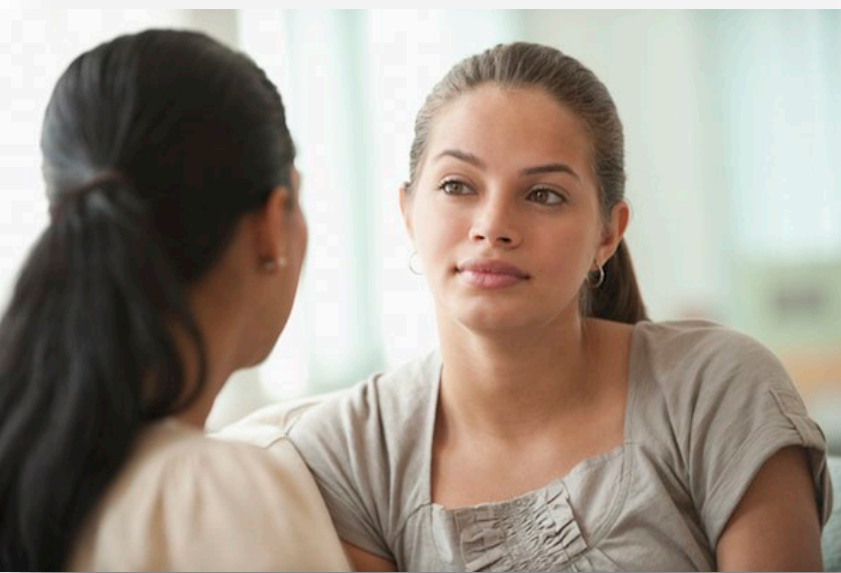
Resist the urge to be defensive:

- **Avoid:** “I don’t think [person] meant it that way.”
- **Try instead:** “That perspective hadn’t occurred to me. I’m sorry this comment made you feel that way. How can I help?”



Deconstruct bias in real time – Tip #2

Encourage accountability with grace:



- **Avoid:** “If it really made you that uncomfortable you should report it.”
- **Try instead:** “I believe [person] would be horrified to know they made you feel that way. Let’s try bringing it to their attention and if that doesn’t work, we can pursue other options.”

Deconstruct bias in real time – Tip #3

Step up with courage and vulnerability:

- **Avoid:** Silence due to fear of saying the wrong thing.
- **Try instead:** “I don’t know exactly how to approach this, but your comments have really made me uncomfortable. Can we discuss it?”



PROCESSING BREAK

#3

Practice Creates (Some) Comfort

GROUP DISCUSSION



Reflecting on Privilege

1. What did we learn?
2. Did anything surprise you?

Common Reasons We Retreat Rather than De-Escalate

Fear

- What if I make a mistake?
- What if I can't handle the situation?

Prioritizing Personal Comfort

- Am I ready to participate in this discussion?
- Am I making this worse?

Prioritizing Personal Reputation

- If I don't do this well, I'll let people down.
- If I don't manage this well, people will get hurt.

■ Ways to De-Escalate a Conversation

You are in a subordinate role

Benefit of the doubt :

- I know you didn't intend this, but...

Acknowledge the emotion:

- You seem very frustrated right now and I'm finding it difficult to engage.

With direct reports/those with lower rank and students

Offer affirmation:

- You have a right to be frustrated and I'm sorry for what I did to contribute to your frustration.
- That's fair
- I never thought of it that way and I appreciate you bringing it to my attention
- You are allowed to express all of your emotions with me.

BREAKOUTS



David: Have you spoken to Frank about the position you were hoping to fill?

Kelly: Yes, but he said there wasn't any room in the budget for it.

David: Are you sure? When I was in the men's room I heard him telling Allen that a project was being tabled so it would open up some funds for other projects. I'm pretty sure Allen is going to get a position funded now, so maybe you should circle back.

Kelly: Wow... why wasn't that mentioned during the leadership meeting?

David: I don't know. Maybe it happened afterwards?

Kelly: Well why wouldn't he circle back with me if he knew I had a position to fill? This is classic boys club behavior.

David: Whoa... calm down. I wouldn't have mentioned it to you if I had known you were going to be upset.

Kelly: Really? Important budget decisions are being made in the men's bathroom, but I'm the problem for calling it out?

David: Whatever. Just don't tell Frank I told you. I only told you because you're one of the Deans I trust. I don't want any part of the backlash if you don't handle this the right way.

Kelly: Don't worry. I know you're still new

1. Identify all the persons with privilege and how they use it in this scenario?
2. What can each person present or mentioned do differently to reduce the tension?

Frank is the CFO; Kelly is a Dean; David is a Dean from a different school.

GROUP DISCUSSION



Report Out:

1. Identify all the persons with privilege and how they use it in this scenario?
2. What can each person present or mentioned do differently to reduce the tension?

BREAKOUTS



Realistically, how often do you believe you can deploy these methods with people who have NOT attended this training?

- What would be the most difficult aspect and how can you overcome it?

■ Bringing it all together...



Action and Advocacy: Assessing Your Environment

Highlight Inclusive Spaces/Communities

- Where are the spaces in your organization that are safe and welcoming for all? *(Note: there is a difference between “open” to all and “welcoming” to all)*
- What evidence do you have that the spaces you oversee (i.e. your building(s), your office, your classroom) are welcoming?

Areas for Improvement

- Which spaces and departments seem to overwhelmingly attract people with privilege?
- What strategies could we implement today to be more inclusive?

TAKEAWAYS

- **You must see privilege as useful before you can use it create more equity.**
- **Engaging in uncomfortable conversations requires courage and vulnerability.**
- **Leaning into the emotion of the conversation can often de-escalate faster than trying to minimize or run away from it.**

QUESTIONS?

Thank you!

Please remember to complete the *event evaluation*.
Your comments will help us continually improve the
quality of our programs.





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"American;" Western European heritage	12. Ethnicity/Culture	Puerto Rican; Navajo; Mexican; Nigerian; Chinese; Iranian; Russian; Jewish...
Fit society's image of attractive, beautiful, handsome, athletic...	13. Size, Appearance, Athleticism	Perceived by others as too fat, tall, short, unattractive, not athletic...
Proficient in the use of "Standard" English	14. English Literacy	Use of "non-standard" English dialects; have an "accent"
Legally married in a heterosexual relationship	15. Marital Status	Single; divorced; widowed; same sex partnership; unmarried heterosexual partnership...
Parent of children born within a 2-parent heterosexual marriage	16. Parental Status	Unmarried parent; do not have children; non-residential parent; LGBTQ parents...
More years on campus	17. Years of experience	New; little experience on campus
U.S. citizen	18. Immigration Status	People who do not have U.S. citizenship, are undocumented
Suburban; valued region of U.S.	19. Geographic region	Rural; some urban areas...less valued region
Light skin; European/Caucasian features	20. Skin color; phenotype	Darker skin; African, Asian, Aboriginal features...
Nuclear family with 2 parents in a heterosexual relationship	21. Family Status	Blended family; single-parent household; grandparents raising grandchildren; foster family...
Extrovert; task-oriented; analytical; linear thinker	22. Work Style	Introvert; process-oriented; creative; circular thinker