



FranklinCovey
ALL ACCESS PASS®
SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

Understanding Bias to
Unleash Potential™



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FranklinCovey is a global company specializing in performance improvement.

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UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

Understanding Bias to
Unleash Potential

NAME



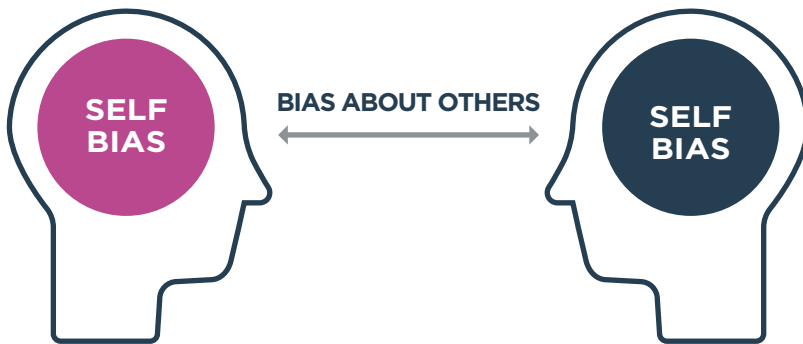
Introduction

UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

Understanding Bias to
Unleash Potential

What Is Bias?

Bias is a **preference** in favor of or against a thing, person, or group compared with another. It may be held by an individual, a group, or an institution, and it can have negative or positive consequences.



Conscious and Unconscious Bias

CONSCIOUS BIAS

EXPRESSED DIRECTLY

WE ARE AWARE OF THE BIAS

"Salespeople need to be extroverted."

"We have a bias for action in our organization"

"It would be difficult for someone of her age to do all that travel."

UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

EXPRESSED INDIRECTLY

WE ARE **NOT** AWARE OF THE BIAS

"I don't think she'd be a good fit in our team."

"We don't have time to talk about alternatives."

"That promotion requires a lot of travel. He seems better suited to the role."

"There is no neutrality. There is only greater or lesser awareness of one's bias."

PHYLLIS ROSE, AUTHOR

Bias in Action in Your Life

Where do you experience bias?

Age Group	Physical Ability
Color	Physical Appearance
Education Level	Political Views
Expertise	Race/Ethnicity
Family Status	Religion
Gender	Sexual Orientation/Identity
National Origin	Socioeconomic Status
Personality	

What areas in your work and life have been affected by bias, either positively or negatively?

Confidence	Physical Health
Creativity	Relationships
Decision-Making	Risk-Taking
Emotional Health	Safety
Employment	Self-Esteem
Engagement	
Opportunity	
Performance	
Personal Freedom	

What is the impact?

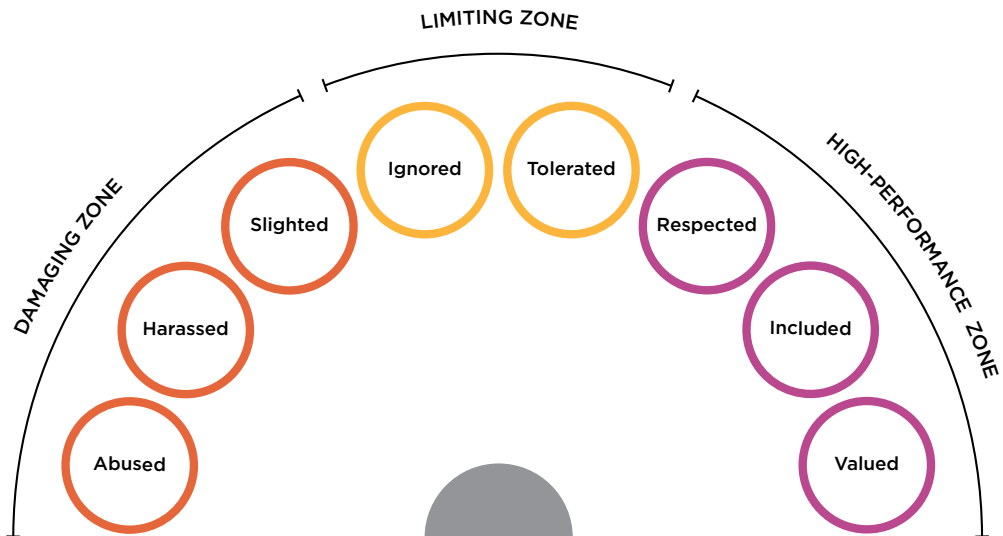
Video: *More Than You See*

What insights did you have about bias from the video?



Impact of Behaviors

Our biases significantly impact how we behave toward ourselves and each other. The behaviors range from positive, inclusive behaviors to those that are hurtful and abusive.



HIGH-PERFORMANCE ZONE

When we make the effort to be aware of and address our biases, we actively behave in ways that make people feel valued, included, and respected.

LIMITING ZONE

When we don't make an effort to address biases, we allow them to limit the contribution of others. Ignoring or tolerating others affects their sense of belonging and, ultimately, their engagement and contribution.

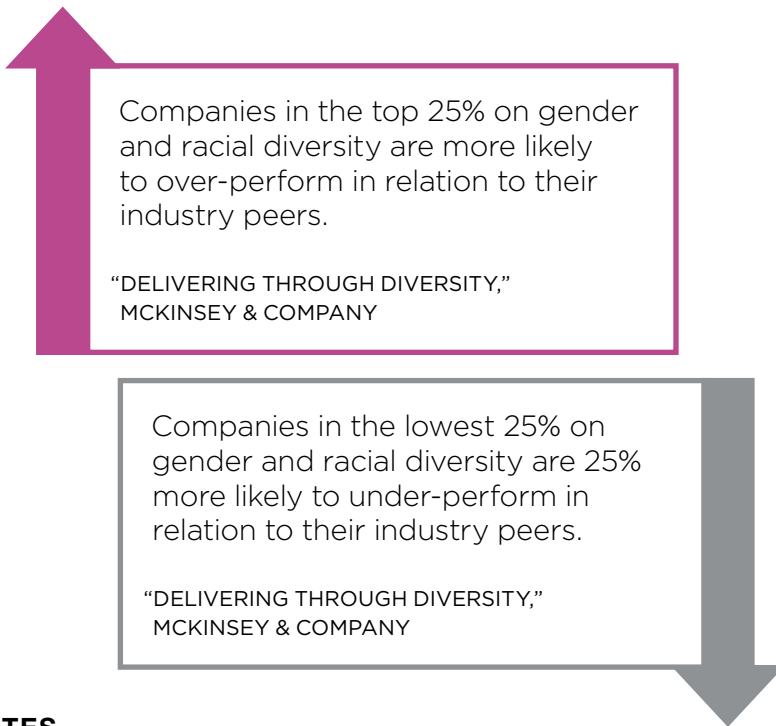
DAMAGING ZONE

When we either intentionally or unintentionally use verbal, nonverbal, or environmental behaviors that communicate negative, hostile, or derogatory messages, we can affect people's emotional, mental, and physical well-being. Behaviors that damage vary from microaggressions (everyday slights, snubs, or insults) to harassment and abuse.



The Impact of Bias at Work

When we understand biases and address them, we unleash each individual's full potential to innovate, solve problems, and get results. When we operate in ways that address bias, we can then realize the benefits of different perspectives to overcome challenges and realize opportunities.



NOTES

Excerpted from "Delivering through Diversity", January 2018, McKinsey & Company, www.mckinsey.com.
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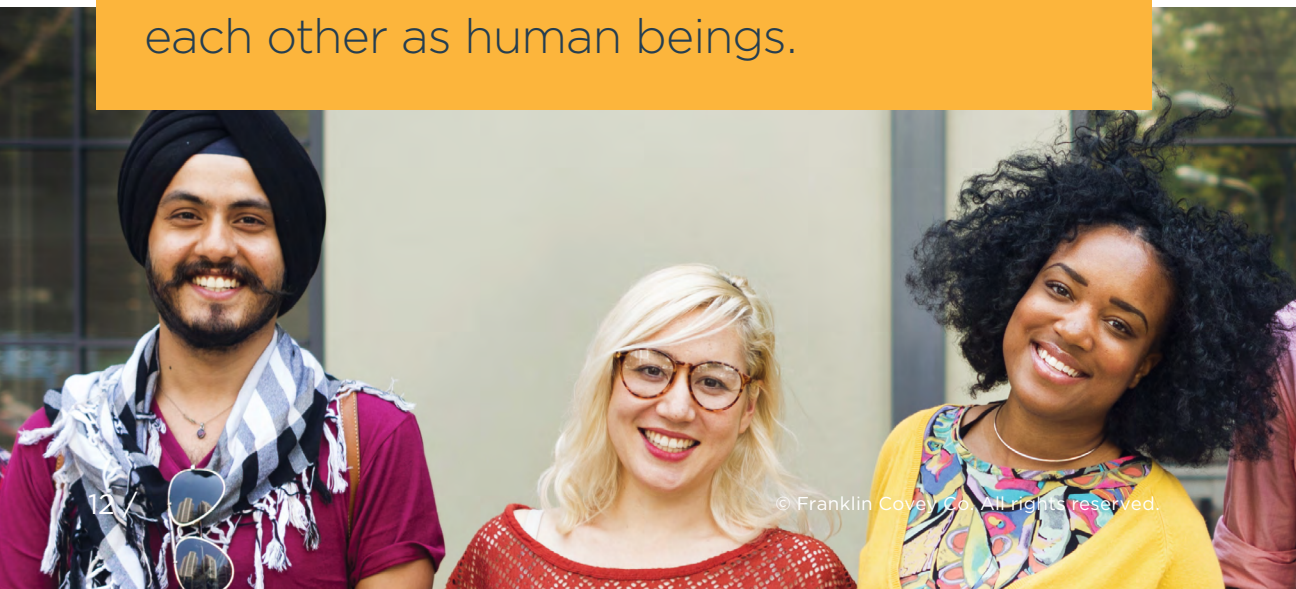


The Promise of Understanding Bias

By applying what you learn in this work session, you will increase your ability to:

- Notice and adjust for biases.
- More fully respect, include, and value the people around you.
- Release everyone's potential to contribute their best.

There is no idea more fundamental to performance than how we see and treat each other as human beings.



Understanding Bias Model







IDENTIFY BIAS



PRINCIPLE:
Self-Awareness

Identify Bias Roadmap:

1. Our personal identity influences, and is influenced by, our biases.
2. The way our brains work creates biases.
3. Three bias traps lead us into biased thinking and behavior.

Frame and Reframe

FRAME

I am not biased.
I view things
objectively.

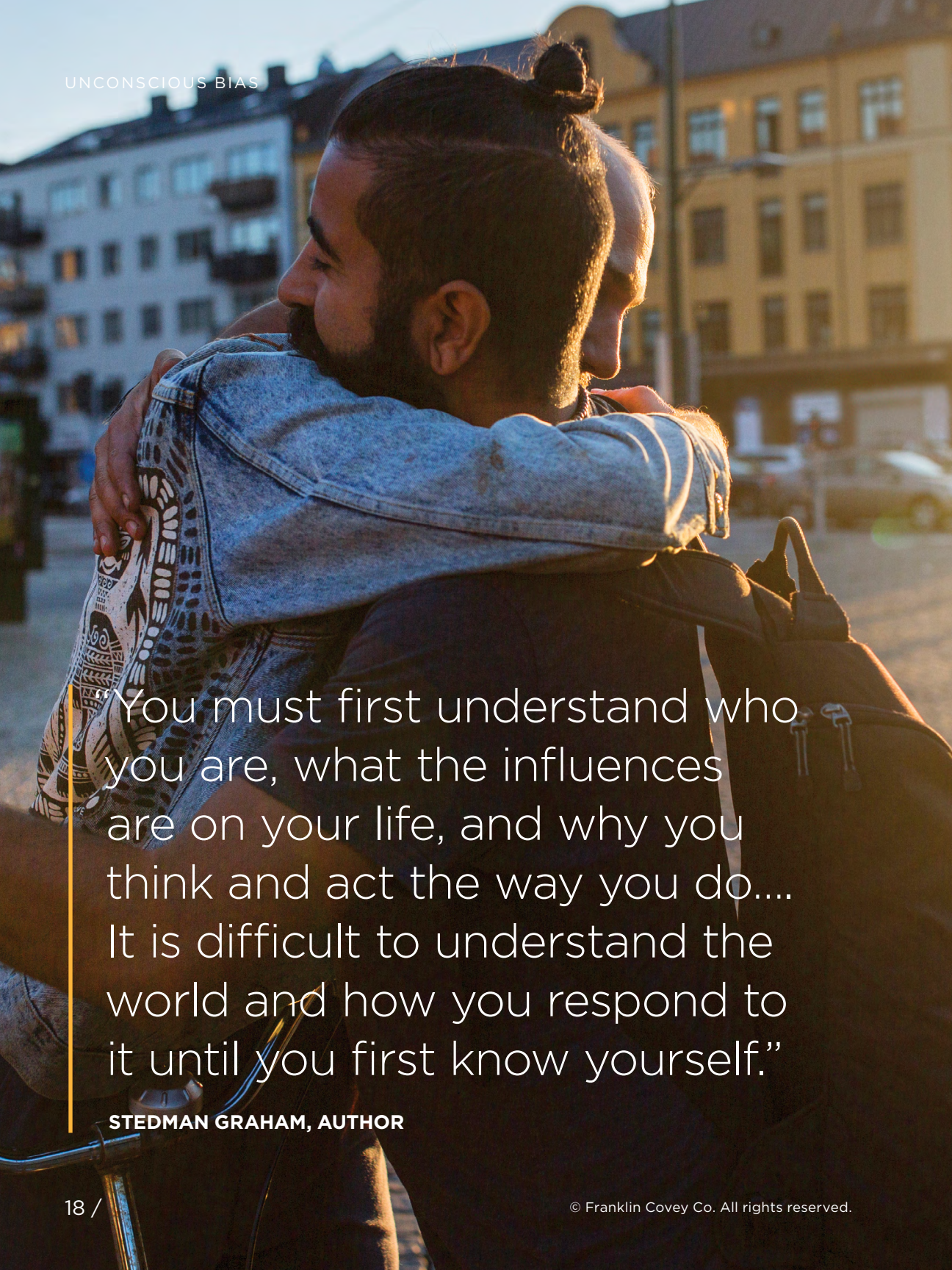
REFRAME

Bias exists in
everyone, including
me. I actively think
about how bias
is at play in the
choices I make.

What is the contrast between the frame and reframe above?

“We’re blind to our blindness. We have very little idea of how little we know. We’re not designed to know how little we know.”

DANIEL KAHNEMAN, AUTHOR, PSYCHOLOGIST

A photograph of a man and a woman embracing on a city street at sunset. The man, in the foreground, has a beard and a topknot, wearing a denim jacket over a graphic t-shirt. The woman is behind him, her arms around his shoulders. They are both looking towards the right. The background shows a city street with buildings and parked cars, bathed in the warm light of the setting sun.

You must first understand who you are, what the influences are on your life, and why you think and act the way you do.... It is difficult to understand the world and how you respond to it until you first know yourself."

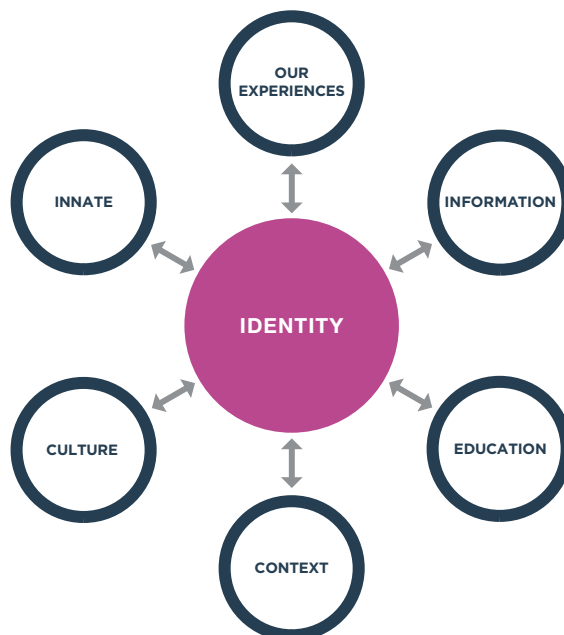
STEDMAN GRAHAM, AUTHOR

Sources of Bias

Our biases are shaped by many factors.

- Our own experiences.
- Information we consume: news, social media, stories, books, movies, etc.
- Our education: the schools we attend, the subjects we study, the levels of study we pursue, etc.
- Our context: family, friends, work, where we live, what we do, who we spend time with.
- Our culture: spoken and unspoken rules of our community/society.
- Innate characteristics: traits we are born with are highly familiar to us.

All these factors shape how we see ourselves and can cause each of us to have our own different set of biases (both conscious and unconscious), which in turn influence our identity.



Identity and Bias

1. Complete 10 “I am...” statements that describe who you are.
2. Put an x next to the identifiers that can make you biased toward others.
3. Put a circle next to the identifiers that can make others biased toward you.

x o

I am

I am

I am

I am

I am

I am

I am

I am

I am

I am

Key Points:

- Our identifiers can be sources of positive and negative bias.
- Some of our identifiers can cause us to act in biased ways toward others.
- Some of our identifiers can cause others to act in biased ways toward us.
- Identifiers can become more or less important in different contexts.
- Important identifiers are often felt deeply and may be associated with struggle.
- An identifier can be more significant (positive or negative) when we are a minority in a dominant group.

“We think we see the world as it is, when in fact we see the world the way we are.”

STEPHEN R. COVEY

The Three Regions of the Brain

EMOTIONAL

- Emotions
- Behavior
- Memories
- Motivation

PRIMITIVE

- Survival
- Heart Rate
- Breathing
- Fight, Flight, or Freeze



THINKING

- Abstract Thought
- Planning
- Attention
- Self-Control
- Choices
- Follow-Through

Neuroplasticity is the brain's ability to form new connections and neural pathways. Creating change in how our brains process information takes time and effort, but we can rewire our thinking.

Video: *The Brain and Bias*

What triggers bias in the brain?

How can neuroplasticity help you mitigate bias?



Bias Traps and Common Biases



INFORMATION OVERLOAD

We are bombarded by information that our brains automatically filter. Some of the information we filter out is actually useful and important.

Confirmation Bias

We tend to seek out information that supports our existing beliefs.

Anchoring Bias

We tend to rely on the first piece of information we see.



FEELINGS OVER FACTS

When we have strong feelings about something, we tend to be driven by our beliefs rather than by facts. Our impulses and beliefs can override our logic and thinking processes.

In-Group Bias

We tend to favor people we like and who are like us, while excluding and judging those who are different.

Negativity Bias

We are more powerfully influenced by negative experiences than positive or neutral experiences.



NEED FOR SPEED

We take shortcuts to act quickly. Often these time-savers are based on bias and can be simplistic, self-centered, and even counterproductive.

Attribution Bias

We judge others on their actions, but we judge ourselves based on our intent.

Sunk-Cost Bias

We tend to continue things because we've invested time, money, or resources into them.



UNCONSCIOUS BIAS



Summary: Identify Bias



- Our personal identity influences, and is influenced by, our biases. This can create biases that lead to both positive and negative outcomes for ourselves and others.
- The way our brains work to process information creates biases. As a result, we all have biases.
- Three bias traps cause our brains to create shortcuts, or biases, that can lead us into biased thinking and behavior.

What have you learned about your own biases? Push yourself to identify biases you may have.





CULTIVATE CONNECTION



PRINCIPLE:
Openness

Cultivate Connection Roadmap:

1. Increase empathy and curiosity.
2. Broaden and deepen networks.

Frame and Reframe

FRAME

If I understand my biases, I can fix them on my own.

REFRAME

Only when I cultivate meaningful connections can I see past bias and value the people around me.

What is the contrast between the frame and reframe above?

“Never underestimate the empowering effect of human connection. All you need is that one person, who understands you completely, believes in you and makes you feel loved for what you are, to enable you to unfold the miraculous you.”

DRISHTI BABLANI, AUTHOR

Video: *All of Us*

What resonated with you as you watched the video?

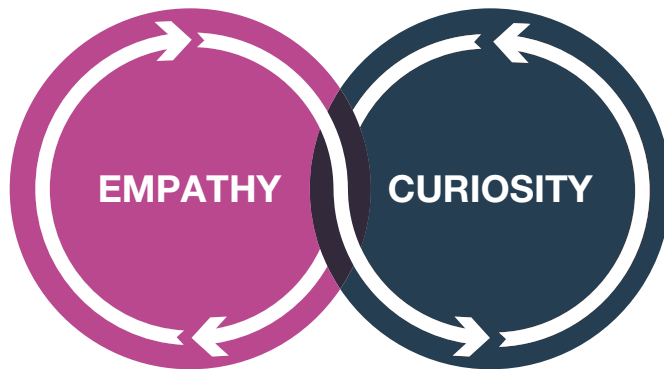
What emotions did you experience?



Empathy and Curiosity

Empathy: The ability to understand another person's experiences, feelings, and emotions. Empathy is an emotional process: connecting with your heart.

Curiosity: The desire to learn more about someone or something. Curiosity is a mental process: connecting with your head.

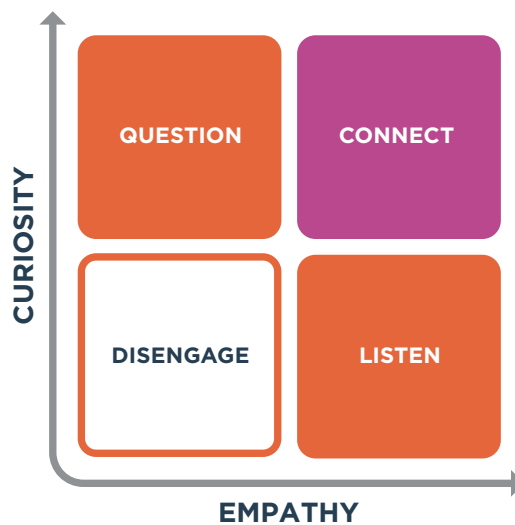


Empathy and curiosity reinforce each other and fuel connection. We can practice empathy and curiosity toward ourselves as well as toward other people. These skills help us surface, manage, and address our biases.

NOTES

Empathy and Curiosity Grid

When we practice both empathy and curiosity, we are more open-minded and less judgmental. The quality of our decision-making improves because we have been less biased and more inclusive in the information we've gathered.



Empathy and Curiosity Self-Assessment

EMPATHY

What makes it easy for you to practice empathy?

What makes it hard for you to practice empathy?

CURIOSITY

What makes it easy for you to practice curiosity?

What makes it hard for you to practice curiosity?

Practice Empathy and Curiosity

NOTES

CULTIVATE CONNECTION

PRACTICE EMPATHY AND CURIOSITY

Tips to increase empathy and curiosity.

Have Empathy

- Position yourself physically at the same level.
- Be fully present as you listen.
- Restate words and identify feelings to show you understand.
- Withhold judgment.

Be Curious

- What am I thinking or feeling?
- What are they thinking or feeling?
- What biases are surfacing, both positive and negative?

Build a Connection

- What do we both care about?
- How am I like this person?
- What do I respect or like about this person?

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“If you don’t understand, ask questions. If you’re uncomfortable about asking questions, say you are uncomfortable about asking questions and then ask anyway.”

CHIMAMANDA NGOZI ADICHIE, AUTHOR AND SPEAKER

Practice Empathy and Curiosity

What did you learn about the other person?

CULTIVATE CONNECTION

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CULTIVATE MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS: START SAFE

To connect with someone for the first time, start safe. Use the questions below to get started. (Use the questions on the back of this card to go deeper.)

- What are you working on?
- What's the best thing that's happened to you today?
- What did you do before you came to this job? What did you like most about it?
- What are you good at?
- What is your favorite place?
- What do you do to get rid of stress? What do you like most about that?
- What are you interested in that most people haven't heard of?

How are you like this person?

CULTIVATE CONNECTION

CULTIVATE MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS: DIVE DEEPER

Once an initial connection is made, use some of these questions to enrich it. (Use the front of this card to make an initial connection.)

- What is your next adventure?
- What are some things you've had to unlearn?
- What small gesture from a stranger made a big impact on you?
- What is the most challenging thing you do on a regular basis?
- What do you do to make the world a better place?
- What opportunities do you have for growth and development?
- What is something you've been meaning to try?
- What is something everyone should do at least once?

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Examine Your Frequent Connections

This activity helps you explore the depth and breadth of your connections with others so you can identify and address potential sources of bias in your life.

1. List 10 people from your professional network that you choose to interact with. List the people you most frequently connect with, not who you think you should connect with. Be honest with yourself.

Professional Network

- Who do you go to for professional advice? Who comes to you?
- Who do you go to for mentoring/coaching? Who comes to you?
- Who would you go to for help with a project? Who comes to you?

2. With your identified list of people, count the number of people who are the same and different from you in each of the categories below.

Same	Different		Same	Different	
		Age Group			Physical Ability
		Color			Physical Appearance
		Education Level			Political Views
		Expertise			Race/Ethnicity
		Family Status			Religion
		Gender			Sexual Orientation/ Identity
		National Origin			Socioeconomic Status
		Personality			

3. What do you notice about who you choose to connect with?

4. How does who you connect with affect your influence?

Build Broader Connections

Include new people in your network who can help you see past bias. By challenging your thinking, you can overcome blind spots and create a space where everyone can contribute and feels valued.



Summary: Cultivate Connection



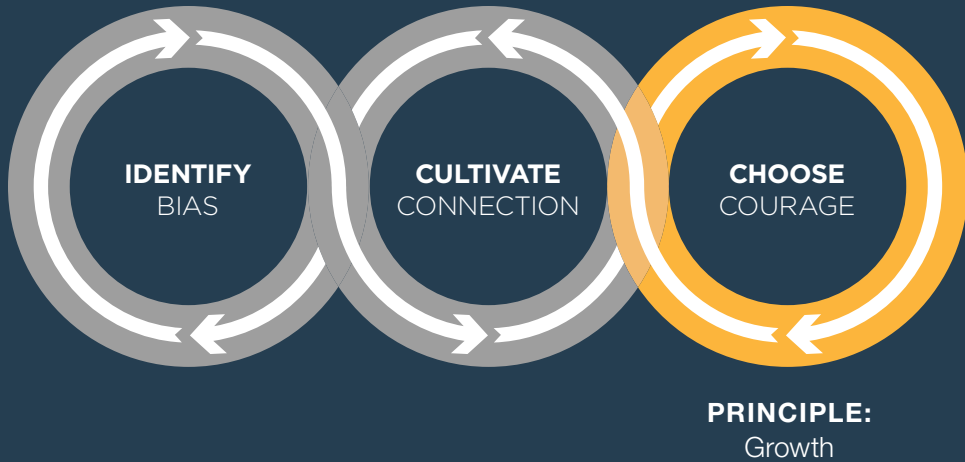
- When we cultivate connections with people through empathy and curiosity, we are able to surface and explore bias—both in ourselves and others.
- As we consciously broaden and deepen our networks, we are able to increase our understanding of, and value for, different points of view.

What have you learned about cultivating connections?





CHOOSE COURAGE



Choose Courage Roadmap:

1. Understand the nature of courage.
2. Act with courage to address biases that:
 - Limit me.
 - Limit others.
 - Limit my organization.

Frame and Reframe

FRAME

If I confront bias,
it will just create
more division.

REFRAME

When I effectively
confront bias, I
create a space
where we are all
valued and able to
contribute our best.

What is the contrast between the frame and reframe above?

“It’s easy to stand with the crowd.
It takes courage to stand alone.”

MAHATMA GANDHI, ACTIVIST

What Does Courage Mean?

Bravery	Concentration	Enthusiasm
Caution	Silence	Heroism
Endurance	Responsibility	Care
Firmness	Determination	Effort
Vulnerability	Conscientiousness	Kindness
Boldness	Presence	Daring
Listening	Deliberation	Discipline
Audacity	Attention	Tenacity
Fearlessness	Valor	Mindfulness

What does courage mean to you?



"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear."

NELSON MANDELA, POLITICIAN

"Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day that says I'll try again tomorrow."

MARY ANNE
RADMACHER, AUTHOR

"A person with outward courage dares to die; a person with inner courage dares to live."

LAO TZU,
PHILOSOPHER

"Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen."

WINSTON CHURCHILL,
POLITICIAN

"Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage."

ANAÏS NIN, AUTHOR

"The most fundamental aggression to ourselves, the most fundamental harm we can do to ourselves, is to remain ignorant by not having the courage and the respect to look at ourselves honestly and gently."

PEMA CHÖDRÖN, AUTHOR

"Courage is an inner resolution to go forward despite obstacles; cowardice is submissive surrender to circumstances."

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR., ACTIVIST

"Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear—not absence of fear."

MARK TWAIN, AUTHOR

Courage Defined

Courage is the mental or moral strength to strive and persevere in the face of uncertainty, fear, or difficulty. **Effective courage is both careful and bold.**

Careful Courage

Careful courage is valuable when there's high risk and low safety.

What are the strengths and limitations of having careful courage?

CHOOSE COURAGE

COURAGE THAT DRIVES CHANGE: CAREFUL COURAGE

7

Effective courage is both careful and bold. Careful courage is especially valuable when there's high risk. Use these ideas to practice careful courage when addressing bias.

Use Softening Statements

- "What I'm hearing you say is..."
- "It seems like..."
- "When you said _____, what did you mean?"

Create a Safe Place

- Reflect before speaking.
- Give yourself and others time. "Let's take a break now and come back later."
- Apologize when you need to.
- Have a one-on-one discussion.
- Avoid shaming.
- Assume good intent.

"Self-control is the chief element in self-respect, and respect of self, in turn, is the chief element in courage."

THUCYDIDES, HISTORIAN

Bold Courage

Bold courage often inspires immediate change.

What are the strengths and limitations of having bold courage?

CHOOSE COURAGE

COURAGE THAT DRIVES CHANGE: BOLD COURAGE

Effective courage is both careful and bold. Bold courage makes the case for an immediate need to change. Use these ideas to practice bold courage when addressing bias.

Be Direct

- Ask for what you want.
- Call things what they are.
- Share the evidence and the impact.

Challenge the Status Quo

- Be willing to say no.
- Point out problems.
- Offer solutions.

Include Others

- Call other people into the conversation.
- Ask for feedback: "What can we do to make this right?"
- Create opportunities.

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UNCONSCIOUS BIAS



Video: *Courage in Action*

Who showed courage in the story?

Ways to Act With Courage

COURAGE TO IDENTIFY

NOTICE BIAS HAPPENING.

Bias happens at the speed of thought. When we have the courage to identify bias in ourselves and others, we can begin to address the impact it has.

Be courageous and continue to explore the impact of bias for you, for others, and for your organization.

PAUSE: QUESTION IT
(Page 60)

SEEK TO UNDERSTAND
(Page 61)

CHECK ASSUMPTIONS
(Page 62)

LEARN
(Page 63)

COURAGE TO COPE

DEAL WITH BIAS.

Being the subject of bias can take a toll on well-being. Coping with the effects of bias looks different in every situation. It could be stepping away, choosing a response beforehand, finding a coach, or even sharing your experience with others.

PRIORITIZE SELF CARE
(Page 64)

**PROACTIVELY CHOOSE
A RESPONSE** (Page 65)

GET A COACH OR MENTOR
(Page 66)

SHARE YOUR STORY
(Page 67)

COURAGE TO ALLY

HELP OTHERS WITH BIAS.

Whether you are the subject of bias or not, being an ally can bring about change. Teaming up with others to explore bias can make a significant impact. Offering support, mentoring, or helping another be heard are powerful ways to address bias.

TEAM UP WITH OTHERS

(Page 68)

OFFER SUPPORT

(Page 69)

BE A COACH OR MENTOR

(Page 70)

AMPLIFY OTHERS' VOICES

(Page 71)

COURAGE TO ADVOCATE

PROACTIVELY ADDRESS BIAS.

As an advocate, you take proactive steps to address bias. Advocates educate others and can inspire more people to take action. Building networks to bring people together can have a great impact.

ENACT GROUP STRATEGIES

(Page 72)

WRITE ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE

(Page 73)

ORGANIZE NETWORKS

(Page 74)

SPEAK UP

(Page 75)

Bias Scenarios

Review the scenario.

What would you do to address bias productively in this situation?



Summary: Choose Courage



- Courage can be both careful and bold.
- When we act with courage, we address the biases that limit us, our teams, our customers, and our organizations.
- We act with courage when we identify bias, cope with bias, act as an ally, and act as an advocate. Doing so can have positive impacts at all levels, including for our organizations.

What have you learned about choosing courage?

Addressing Bias Action Plan

Choose one everyday situation at work where you want to explore and address bias:

1. Identify Bias: Review Practice Cards 2–4. How can you notice and address one of the bias traps in your everyday situation?
2. Cultivate Connection: How will you cultivate meaningful connections so you can see past bias and value the people around you?
3. Choose Courage: Review Practice Cards 8–11. Choose one skill you can apply to your everyday situation for the next four weeks.

4. Schedule regular check-ins (at least weekly) with yourself to monitor your progress.

Week 1

Week 3

Week 2

Week 4

5. Choose someone to be your Accountability Partner. The role of Accountability Partner is to challenge you, support you, and hold you accountable for making progress. Answer the following:

What support do I need from my Accountability Partner?

How often do I need to check in with my Accountability Partner?

6. Schedule a call with your Accountability Partner. Invite them to help you make progress and set up regular calls to discuss progress, get feedback, celebrate wins, and work to overcome obstacles.
7. If you are a manager, what is one thing you can do to help your team understand and address bias? (See the Manager Resource Guide on the following pages for suggestions.)

Manager Resource Guide

Move your team into the high-performance zone using these steps.

Step 1: Identify Biases That Impact Your Team

- 1. Complete Your Addressing Bias Action Plan.** Work on your commitments weekly and review progress with your Accountability Partner.
- 2. Address Bias in Your Decisions.** Consider decisions about team members from hiring, to training, assignments, and promotions. How can you minimize bias's impact on these decisions?
- 3. Identify Biases That Affect Your Team.** Consider each team member. What biases (your own or others') might limit their development? How will you address those biases?
- 4. Avoid the Bias Traps.** Use Practice Cards 2, 3, and 4 to rewire your thinking to recognize bias traps and avoid common biases.



Step 2: Cultivate Connections on Your Team

1. **Share Your Commitments.** Share with your team how your perspective on bias has shifted. Go public on one thing you will stop, start, or do differently.
2. **Move Toward the High-Performance Zone.** Use Practice Card 1 to share the Impact of Behaviors Model in your 1-on-1s. Ask each team member which zone they are in and why. Get their input on how you can help them move to High Performance.
3. **Build Meaningful Connections on Your Team.** Use Practice Card 6 in your 1-on-1s to strengthen your connection with team members. Model empathy and curiosity when you do (Practice Card 5).
4. **Build Empathy and Curiosity Skills.** Use your Exploring Empathy and Curiosity Cards in team meetings to improve your team's empathy and curiosity skills.

Step 3: Use Courage to Address Bias

1. **Choose a Courage Skill.** Choose one skill from the Courage Skill Builder (pages 60–75) to work on with your team. If appropriate, ask for your team's input on which skill to choose.
2. **Run a Courage Skill Builder Session.** Take 15 minutes in a team meeting to review the skill following the directions in the Courage Skill Builder. Ask team members to commit to using the skill.
3. **Follow Up on Commitments.** Decide on a realistic plan for taking action. Track progress through team meetings or 1-on-1s.
4. **Run More Courage Skill Builder Sessions.** As you make progress, move on to others skills. Keep going!

Courage to Identify

PAUSE: QUESTION IT

Read the definition below.

Bias happens at the speed of thought. When we check our thinking, we recognize biases that might be impacting our decisions and reactions.

Spend 5 minutes to explore and discuss this strength using the following prompt:

Think of a time when you acted in a biased way and realized it afterward. What would have helped you catch yourself before you acted?

Review the tips below. Discuss how they can help you identify and deal with bias.

Pause before you act.

Ask yourself:

- What am I thinking? What am I feeling?
- Am I being reactive?
- What's causing my reaction?

Note any commitments:

Application Example

A leading professional-services firm mandates mindfulness training for all high-potential personnel. Mindfulness is a skill that helps us be aware of our thinking.

Courage to Identify

SEEK TO UNDERSTAND

Read the definition below.

When we seek to understand ourselves and others, we learn about our biases and theirs. We begin to cultivate connection, see past bias, and value different perspectives.

Spend 5 minutes to explore and discuss this strength using the following prompt:

Think of a conversation you had with someone where you had very different points of view. What would have helped you understand each other better?

Review the tips below. Discuss how they can help you identify and deal with bias.

Distinguish between facts and feelings.

Use empathy and curiosity to understand what others are thinking.

Ask: What's important here? Why?

Note any commitments:

Application Example

A major financial company provides opportunities for groups of 40 employees to form listening groups to talk about challenges in creating an inclusive workplace.

Courage to Identify

CHECK ASSUMPTIONS

Read the definition below.

Some assumptions are based on feelings, opinions, and biases. When we examine our assumptions, we can see biases in our thinking.

Spend 5 minutes to explore and discuss this strength using the following prompt:

Think of a time when someone (maybe you) made an assumption that turned out to be wrong. What was the impact on the people involved?

Review the tips below. Discuss how they can help you identify and deal with bias.

Ask yourself:

- What are the facts?
- What am I missing?
- What have I made up to fill in the gaps?
- What assumptions are others making?

Note any commitments:

Application Example

In a state with 80% unemployment for people with cognitive and intellectual disabilities, a manufacturing firm launched a disability internship program, broadening their pipeline to drive results and also addressing a societal need.

Courage to Identify

LEARN

Read the definition below.

“Solving” for bias is not a one-time endeavor. It is a learning process where we commit to explore the impact of bias in our lives, organizations, and society.

Spend 5 minutes to explore and discuss this strength using the following prompt:

Think of a time when you learned something new and it changed your view about a previously held belief. What helped you change how you saw the situation?

Review the tips below. Discuss how they can help you identify and deal with bias.

Commit to learning about bias. For the next three months:

- Listen to podcasts on bias; read articles or books on bias.
- Choose one bias to notice and learn more about it.
- Invite others to learn with you.

Note any commitments:

Application Example

A healthcare organization provides unconscious bias training and holds annual follow-up conferences and seminars to address different components of bias.

Courage to Cope

PRIORITIZE SELF-CARE

Read the definition below.

Being the subject of bias can take a toll on well-being. It is important to effectively deal with any associated physical stress or emotional distress.

Spend 5 minutes to explore and discuss this strength using the following prompt:

Think of a time when you were experiencing negative effects of bias. What could you have done to take the space and time you needed to recover?

Review the tips below. Discuss how they can help you identify and deal with bias.

Take a break to clear your mind.

Ask yourself:

- How do I need to take care of myself in the short term?
- How do I deal with this for the long term?

Note any commitments:

Application Example

An organization has “focus rooms”—individual-size conference rooms to give people access to private space. The company also provides a wellness program.

Courage to Cope

PROACTIVELY CHOOSE A RESPONSE

Read the definition below.

When we react to situations, our responses can be impulsive and often make the problem bigger. When we are proactive, we choose a better response.

Spend 5 minutes to explore and discuss this strength using the following prompt:

Think of a time when you said something or did something you regretted afterward. If you could relive that time, what would you say or do differently?

Review the tips below. Discuss how they can help you identify and deal with bias.

Identify a bias you experience often.

Plan what you can do or say when you face this bias in the future.

Use the response and keep improving it.

Note any commitments:

Application Example

A public-sector agency has built several approaches for employees to seek confidential and expert advice on how to handle difficult situations related to bias. So when an incident occurs, employees can proactively seek guidance on how best to respond.

Courage to Cope

GET A COACH OR MENTOR

Read the definition below.

Coaches and mentors give us the gift of their experience. They share their lessons about how to identify and cope with bias.

Spend 5 minutes to explore and discuss this strength using the following prompt:

Think of a coach or mentor in your life who helped you deal with a difficult situation. What did they do that helped you?

Review the tips below. Discuss how they can help you identify and deal with bias.

Choose someone who can help you see other perspectives and who has effectively coped with bias.

Commit to regular conversations for at least a six-month period.

Note any commitments:

Application Example

In one academic organization, staff members of color were feeling disconnected and unsupported. The university set up a mentoring program across demographic profiles and roles.

Courage to Cope

SHARE YOUR STORY

Read the definition below.

Each of us has our own stories. When we are courageous and share our story, we better understand ourselves.

Spend 5 minutes to explore and discuss this strength using the following prompt:

Think of a story about a bias you held in your life. What happened? What's the key lesson you learned?

Review the tips below. Discuss how they can help you identify and deal with bias.

Capture stories of bias in your life.

Help others cope by sharing how you cope.

Note any commitments:

Application Example

An individual started a photo project. It has grown to more than 20 million global followers on social media. The personal stories provide glimpses into the lives of others, helping people feel heard and building connections around the world.

Courage to Ally

TEAM UP WITH OTHERS

Read the definition below.

Allies recognize that while they might not be a member of a marginalized group, they can team up to support those who are experiencing bias and make a significant impact.

Spend 5 minutes to explore and discuss this strength using the following prompt:

Think of a time when you saw a group make an impact by teaming up around something they cared about. This could be a group you were involved with or that you benefited from.

Review the tips below. Discuss how they can help you identify and deal with bias.

Identify a bias that impacts others in your organization.

Find others who want to address this bias.

Identify ways to educate others of the impact of this bias.

Note any commitments:

Application Example

A government agency ensures that sponsors of Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are not members of the underrepresented group the ERG focuses on. This is a best practice for building inclusion initiatives that work.

Courage to Ally

OFFER SUPPORT

Read the definition below.

Allies listen and offer support. It is often incredibly impactful for those experiencing bias to know they have the support of a friend or colleague to vent to, and be heard and reassured by.

Spend 5 minutes to explore and discuss this strength using the following prompt:

Think of a time when a colleague was struggling with something. Did you offer support? If not, what held you back? If so, how did that feel?

Review the tips below. Discuss how they can help you identify and deal with bias.

Notice who needs support to address bias.

Use empathy and curiosity to understand the issue.

Act as a thinking partner.

Note any commitments:

Application Example

Research has repeatedly shown a concrete link between having a best friend at work and the amount of effort employees expend in their job.

Courage to Ally

BE A COACH OR MENTOR

Read the definition below.

Mentoring is one of the most consistently effective programs for addressing bias in organizations. It sparks engagement and increases contact between different groups.

Spend 5 minutes to explore and discuss this strength using the following prompt:

Think of the impact of a coach or mentor in your life. How could you help others by coaching them?

Review the tips below. Discuss how they can help you identify and deal with bias.

Offer to be a mentor or coach to others and commit to regular conversations.

Learn by listening.

Share your experiences as appropriate.

Note any commitments:

Application Example

A global financial institution noticed female managing directors were not being promoted to senior levels and were leaving to work for competitors. The organization responded by creating a mentoring program which paired executives with mid level women leaders to ensure these women had influential advocates for promotion.

Courage to Ally

AMPLIFY OTHERS' VOICES

Read the definition below.

Amplifying others' voices helps ensure that people who were previously ignored get heard. When someone who is sometimes ignored makes a point in meetings, others can repeat it to give credit to the originator. Amplifying others' voices ensures that everyone is heard.

Spend 5 minutes to explore and discuss this strength using the following prompt:

Think of a time when you felt unheard. Was there someone who spoke up for you and drew attention to your idea? If so, how did it feel?

Review the tips below. Discuss how they can help you identify and deal with bias.

Notice trends in meetings and decisions. Is anyone being left out? If someone is left out, reinforce their ideas and amplify their voice.

Note any commitments:

Application Example

Women in a government organization noticed their contributions weren't being heard in critical meetings. They committed to amplify each others' voices.

Courage to Advocate

ENACT GROUP STRATEGIES

Read the definition below.

Many voices can make much more progress than one. Group strategies help us make a difference and address the negative impact of bias.

Spend 5 minutes to explore and discuss this strength using the following prompt:

Think of a time when a company changed its policies or practices because of a group effort from employees. What was the impact on performance?

Review the tips below. Discuss how they can help you identify and deal with bias.

Set group goals for making progress on a specific bias.

Share best practices for addressing bias.

Note any commitments:

Application Example

A not-for-profit organization convenes executive leaders to advocate for, and strengthen, corporate inclusion strategies. Leaders pledge their commitment and share best practices to cultivate more inclusive workplaces.

Courage to Advocate

WRITE ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE

Read the definition below.

Curiosity and empathy are often born from a story. Stories of how real people have been affected by and addressed bias inspire others.

Spend 5 minutes to explore and discuss this strength using the following prompt:

Think of the last time you heard someone's personal story and it changed how you saw things. What about the story made an impact on you?

Review the tips below. Discuss how they can help you identify and deal with bias.

Tell your story to help people understand your context and perspective.

Share how you are addressing bias on appropriate media.

Note any commitments:

Application Example

With so many formats for social media—140 characters or less, video, images, podcasts, and writing—there are millions of stories of people dealing with bias and advocating for change. These stories help us relate to different experiences and realities.

Courage to Advocate

ORGANIZE NETWORKS

Read the definition below.

One of our primal needs is to belong to groups or networks. Research has shown that building networks to bring groups together can counter the impact of bias.

Spend 5 minutes to explore and discuss this strength using the following prompt:

Think of a time when you were the “only” in the room—the only in your profession, the only... What did it feel like? How is that different from when you are one of many in a group?

Review the tips below. Discuss how they can help you identify and deal with bias.

What biases do you want to explore with others?

What networks exist at work or in your community that you could join?

What new networks could you create?

Note any commitments:

Application Example

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs, also called Affinity Groups) are designed to ensure that every employee feels supported. ERGs tie their goals to the goals of the organization.

Courage to Advocate

SPEAK UP

Read the definition below.

Directly addressing a biased comment or action can help you and the other person realize their behavior may cause unintended harm.

Spend 5 minutes to explore and discuss this strength using the following prompt:

Think of a time when you spoke up about something important that others were not aware of. What made it easy or hard? What was the response?

Review the tips below. Discuss how they can help you identify and deal with bias.

Confront bias with courage and consideration.

Most people don't intend to be biased, so assume positive intent.

Note any commitments:

Application Example

Executives in many organizations communicate their interest in having people speak up clearly and often. Having senior leaders endorse this behavior can make a lasting impact.

