



# Unconscious (Implicit) Bias



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# The Implicit Association Test (IAT)

- ▶ A tool for measuring implicit bias:
  - ▶ Measures the amount of time it takes an individual to make an association between two concepts displayed as either words or images
  - ▶ A person with implicit bias against African Americans might take longer to associate the word “good” with a Black face than with a White face.
  - ▶ <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>



The Awareness  
Test

What colors are the following lines  
of text?

Sky

Grass

Dirt

Sunshine

Stop Sign

What colors are the following lines  
of text?

**Brown**

**Green**

**Blue**

**Red**

**Yellow**

# What is implicit bias?

- ▶ The attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner
  - ▶ Activated involuntarily, unconsciously, and without one's awareness or intentional control
  - ▶ **Everyone** is susceptible
  - ▶ Do not necessarily align with individuals' openly-held beliefs or reflect stances they endorse

# Am I biased?

- ▶ We are all more or less positively or negatively biased towards a variety of characteristics of people based on:
  - ▶ Our upbringing and experiences
  - ▶ Temporary or situational prompts

***Bias doesn't make you prejudiced, it makes you human!***

# Where does implicit bias come from?

- ▶ Our evolutionary need to figure out what's good and what's bad; what will help and what will hurt us
  - ▶ Categorization: sorting into groups
  - ▶ Essentializing: assigning a quality/attribute to a category
- ▶ Our tendency to be “tribal” and seeing safety in numbers
  - ▶ Bias against those who are different from us and favoritism toward those we perceive as similar
- ▶ Societal messages



# What can I do about my biases?

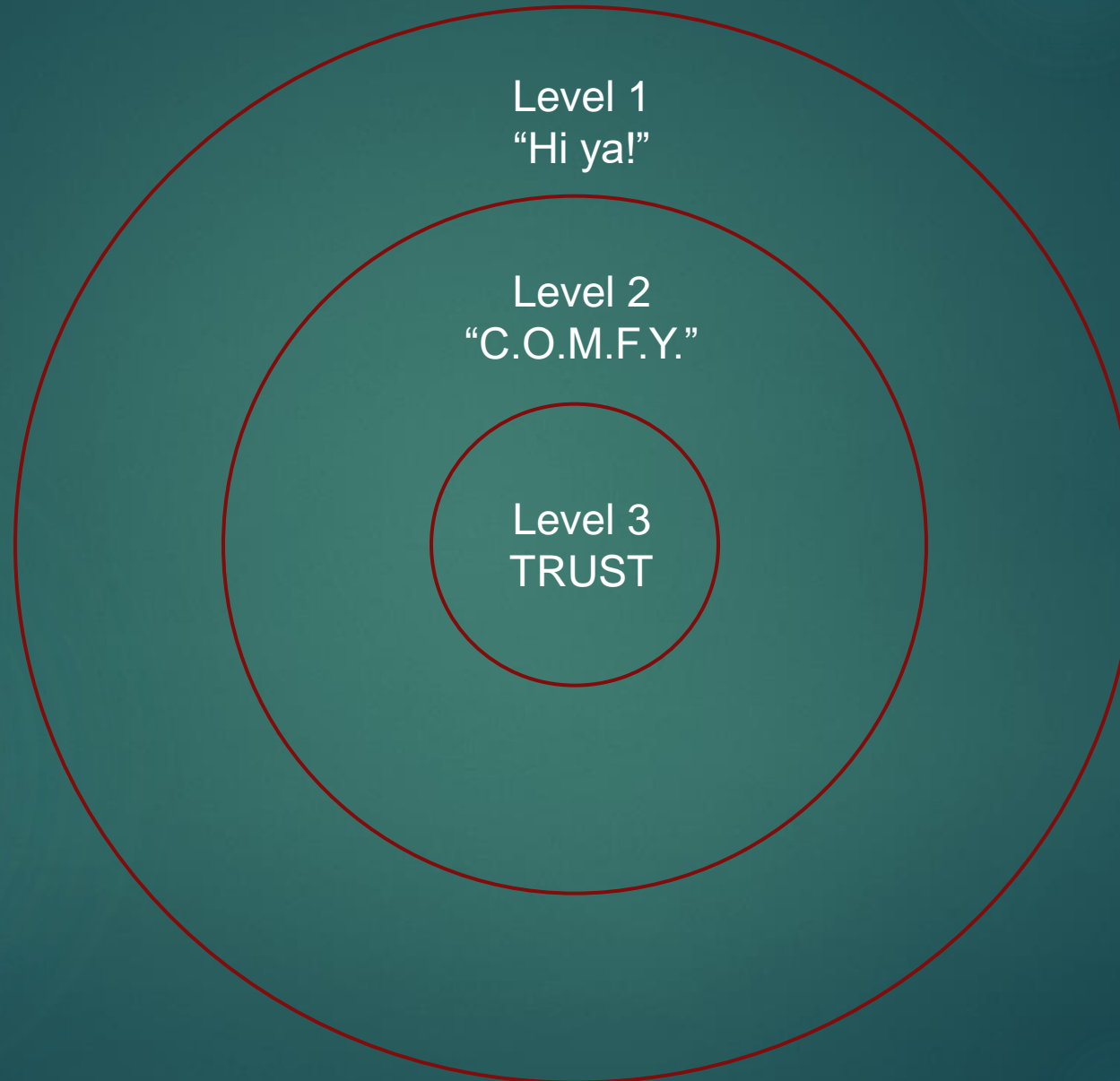
- ▶ ***Get out of denial***
- ▶ ***Walk toward your discomfort***
- ▶ ***When you see something, say something***

From: Verna Myers' Ted talk, "How to Overcome Our Biases? Walk Boldly Toward Them"


# What is important to remember?

- ▶ We all have biases: this is a way for us to process and organize information
- ▶ Our unconscious biases are often in conflict with our egalitarian value systems and beliefs
- ▶ Implicit biases predict and determine our actions and decisions more than explicit biases
- ▶ Awareness of and intention to counter our biases can help us overcome them

# Circle of Trust



# Backup Slides



Pass out Trust questionnaires; give instructions and time for completing = 5 minutes

Notes:

1. Forms should be folded in advance so that only the name column is showing
2. Instruct participants not to unfold until told to do so
3. Let them know they will not be required to share their paper
4. Instruct them to list as many people as they can who are the most trusted people in their lives (except for spouses, partners, and other close family members)

Please hold questions to the end unless they are clarifying questions because you can't hear me, I've spoken unclearly, or I have failed to define a term.

# What can I do about my biases?

## ▶ ***Understand the risk factors:***

- ▶ Certain emotional states can exacerbate implicit bias in interactions with stigmatized group members
- ▶ Lack of explicit, concrete criteria for decision making
- ▶ Easily accessible attributes (race, gender, etc.)
- ▶ Low-effort cognitive processing rather than deliberate, effortful thinking
- ▶ Distracted or pressured decision-making circumstances
- ▶ Lack of feedback

# What can I do about my biases?

## ▶ **Take action:**

- ▶ Understand implicit bias and how it affects our decision-making and behavior
- ▶ Identify and consciously acknowledge real group and individual differences and similarities
- ▶ Routinely check thought processes and decisions for possible bias
- ▶ Identify and remove/reduce distractions and sources of stress in the decision-making environment

# What can I do about my biases?

## ▶ **Take action:**

- ▶ Establish concrete standards for decision-making in advance
- ▶ Seek feedback from others and articulate your reasoning process
- ▶ Imagine or seek out counter-stereotypes
- ▶ Seek greater contact with counter-stereotypic role models
- ▶ Practice making counter-stereotypic associations



# What would you do?

- ▶ Click to view in browser:
- ▶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ge7i60GuNRg>
- ▶ 4:40 minutes

# Bias Video

- ▶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I1UDJjHhRVU>
- ▶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N4xQcLEedL0>



# Other Resources

## **Books:**

“Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People” by Mahzarin R. Banaji and Anthony G. Greenwald

“Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking” by Malcolm Gladwell

<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2019/02/americans-remain-deeply-ambivalent-about-diversity/583123/>

<https://www.npr.org/2019/02/25/697615956/the-atlantic-these-are-the-americans-who-live-in-a-bubble>