



Lewis Family Consulting

Embracing Our Diverse Tapestry: *Finding Common Ground*

This Learning Community focuses on building collaboration and cultivating a culture of inclusivity where everyone feels valued and heard. By further learning how to invest in meaningful relationships, participants will work to create a positive and sustainable impact on their workplace environment. They will learn ways to identify common goals and interests and empower all members to be a part of the decision-making process. Participants will better learn to:

Learning Objectives

- Better identify opportunities for collaboration and person-centered engagement.
- Recognize biases and values to approach problems more objectively and make ethical choices aligned with their principles.
- Develop the skill of empathy through increased insight and awareness.

Big Question: How can cultural humility help us to better find common ground with others?

Quotes to Ponder

Embrace a diversity of ideas. Embrace the fact that you can disagree with people and not be disagreeable. Embrace the fact that you can find common ground - if you disagree on nine out of 10 things, but can find common ground on that 10th, maybe you can make progress. **If you can find common ground, you can accomplish great things.** -David Boies

I like to see myself as a **bridge builder**, that is me building bridges between people, between races, between cultures, between politics, **trying to find common ground.**-T. D. Jakes

Dear Diary

How has journaling been going?

What have you learned?

Reflect on a time...

You were immersed in a completely foreign environment... when you were “the other.”

How did you feel?

How did you make connections?

What are some of the mistakes you may have made?



How would you do things differently now from *a culturally humble perspective*?

Finding Common Ground

Definition: CO-BUILD; If two people or groups find common ground, they agree about something, especially when they do not agree about other things. (Collins Dictionary)

Reflective Question: What does common ground mean to you?

Bias Implicit/Explicit

"Implicit biases come from culture. I think of them as the thumbprint of the culture on our minds. Human beings have the ability to learn to associate two things together very quickly—that is innate. What we teach ourselves, what we choose to associate is up to us."

-Dr. Mahzarin R. Banaji

Implicit bias (also referred to as unconscious bias) is the process of associating stereotypes or attitudes towards categories of people without conscious awareness – which can result in actions and decisions that are at odds with one's conscious beliefs about fairness and equality. This can lead us to make biased and unfair decisions regarding who we hire for a job or select for a promotion, which classes we place students into and who we send out of the classroom for behavior infractions, and which treatment options we make available to patients. And, we know from extensive research, that this happens all the time in our schools, in hospitals, in policing, and in places of employment.

Consideration #1: Situate learning about implicit bias in a historical and socioeconomic political context.

We are not born with negative biases toward any particular group of people. The biases we have internalized, both consciously and unconsciously, have been "primed" through our experiences – images and messages we receive every day about who is "normal" or "desirable" and "belongs" and who is "different" or "undesirable" and "not one of us." These messages are neither neutral nor random. In the United States, "whiteness" is the dominant and privileged identity; socially constructed to justify conquest and slavery and reified in laws and policies, both historic and current, that ensure that white people benefit disproportionately from the benefits of society and are protected from more of its harms. White supremacy is baked into our country's DNA. As such, what is deemed good and acceptable is normed to white people and we have all, white people and people of color, internalized an "anti-black and brown" bias. The effects of these biases results in both individual and institutional acts and are pervasive across sectors including education, health, employment, and housing. The negative associations and assumptions we make about people of color have been wired into our unconscious mind over hundreds of years and show up in all of our institutions today.

Reflective Questions: What are some of the ways bias impacts finding common ground?

What are some of the ways bias can impact the services we provide?



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Reference: <https://www.nationalequityproject.org/frameworks/implicit-bias-structural-racialization>

Flexible Anchor Method and Cultural Values

“Meeting someone where they are...” What does this mean?

Flexible Anchor Method: *“Meeting someone where they are”*

To move in the direction of that individual, **you have to know where you’re at**

Anchor: Where you’re currently at-> **Destination:** Where do you need to go-> **Line:** Thinking about what it takes to get there

Anchor: Equity is always the end-goal: What people need to get to a healthy quality of life, which doesn’t mean a lot until you add meaning to it...

What DO the people you serve need to have a healthier quality of life?

Line: It’s irrelevant where you start or where you are at currently?

Cultural Values

Look at these values and pick the 3 that stick out to you the most and write them in your journal

Respect	Honesty	Equality	Integrity	Compassion
Family	Responsibility	Community	Tradition	Harmony
Freedom	Loyalty	Cooperation	Innovation	Diversity

Cultural values are the beliefs, attitudes, goals, morals, and knowledge shared by a society. They can vary widely between cultures and can include:

- Respect: Respecting others, authority, and hierarchy
- Individualism: Valuing independence and individual rights, and placing emphasis on standing out
- Time: The importance of time
- Gender roles: Views on gender roles and equality
- Uncertainty: Attitudes towards uncertainty
- Work ethics: Perceptions of work ethics and success
- Religion: Religious beliefs, which can shape how people view the world and interact with it
- Language: Language can be used to transmit values, laws, and cultural norms, and can influence personal identity and create boundaries of behavior
- Celebrations: Celebrations can nurture relationships and strengthen values



Steps to a Common Ground

1. **Humanize First:** Acknowledge their humanity and recognize our tendency to “other” someone different than us
2. **Seek to understand BEFORE being understood:** What are they REALLY saying?
Practice empathy through perspective taking i.e. Putting yourself in their shoes
3. **Build, NOT Destroy:** Know what you want to get out of an interaction with another person i.e. prove a point or gain understanding? *“Do I want to be right? Or in relationship?”*
4. **Silence is Golden:** Sometimes, it’s better to be quiet... especially if the conversation has devolved into a debate. *“If you have nothing nice to say, don’t say anything at all...”*
5. **Know your limitations:** Self-awareness is key... Be aware of your reflexive response i.e. How do you initially respond to new AND contrary information?
6. **Protect Your Peace:** If you know a conversation has the potential to stress you out, don’t even engage at the onset.
Identify what’s in your control and what isn’t

Reflexive Response Reflections

How does your bias influence your approach, if so, how? And what steps can you take to recognize and manage these biases more effectively?

How can increased awareness of your values help enhance collaborative efforts and focus more on the individual's needs?

How do you identify (or fail to identify) opportunities for person-centered engagement, and what can you do differently in the future to enhance collaborative efforts and focus on equity?

How do your values influence your approach, and what steps can you take to recognize and use these more effectively? Additionally, how can increased empathy and awareness help you make more objective and ethical choices?