

FACILITATING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

BLANE HARDING

DIRECTOR OF DIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT

OFFICE FOR INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

- ❖ **Speak directly to the other person(s).**
- ❖ **Speak as calmly in a matter-of-fact tone as possible.**
- ❖ **Avoid finger-pointing, whether blaming or literally pointing fingers**
- ❖ **No interrupting.**
- ❖ **Make sure you understand what the other person has said before you respond.**
- ❖ **Drop your assumptions.**

GROUND RULES

- ❖ Prepare
- ❖ Ask
- ❖ Recognize
- ❖ Express
- ❖ Solve

HERE ARE THE 5 STEPS THAT ARE KEY TO
MASTERING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS



Two things to remember in life:

1. Take care of your **thoughts** when you are alone.
2. Take care of your **words** when you are with people.

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PAULO FREIRE

“It is impossible to talk of respect for students, for the dignity that is in the process of coming to be, for the identities that are in the process of construction, without taking into consideration the conditions in which they are living and the importance of the knowledge derived from life experience, which they bring with them to school. I can in no way underestimate such knowledge. Or what is worse, ridicule it.”

PRINCIPLE #1 : ALL BLACK LIVES MATTER.

PRINCIPLE #2 : LOVE / SELF-LOVE IS PRACTICED IN EVERY ELEMENT OF ALL WE DO.

PRINCIPLE #3: SPIRITUAL GROWTH IS DIRECTLY TIED TO OUR ABILITY TO EMBRACE OUR WHOLE SELVES.

PRINCIPLE #4: EXPERIMENTATION AND INNOVATION MUST BE BUILT INTO OUR WORK.

PRINCIPLE #5: MOST DIRECTLY AFFECTED PEOPLE ARE EXPERTS AT THEIR OWN LIVES.

PRINCIPLE #6: THRIVING INSTEAD OF SURVIVING

PRINCIPLE #7: 360 DEGREE VISION

The 7 Principles of Black Lives

“If you asked me to name the greatest discoveries of the past 50 years, alongside things like the internet and the Higgs particle, I would include the discovery of unconscious biases and the extent to which stereotypes about gender, race, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and age deprive people of equal opportunity in the workplace and equal justice in society.”

Commencement Baccalaureate Address,
18, 2014

Dr. Nancy Hopkins, from Boston University's
“Invisible Barriers and Social Change,” on May

141st



WHY TALK ABOUT BIAS?

Bias is central to multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skill. To be culturally effective you must know how bias affects individuals of various backgrounds and cultures, **be aware of their own bias**, and be skilled at controlling bias (Sue & Sue, 2003).


“It is probably not possible for us to get rid of all our biases, nor is it desirable. Our brain’s way of sorting through lots of stimuli quickly is what allows us to move through the world and survive.

What we need to learn is how to slow down the biases that betray our values long enough for us to act in a way that is more aligned with what we believe.”

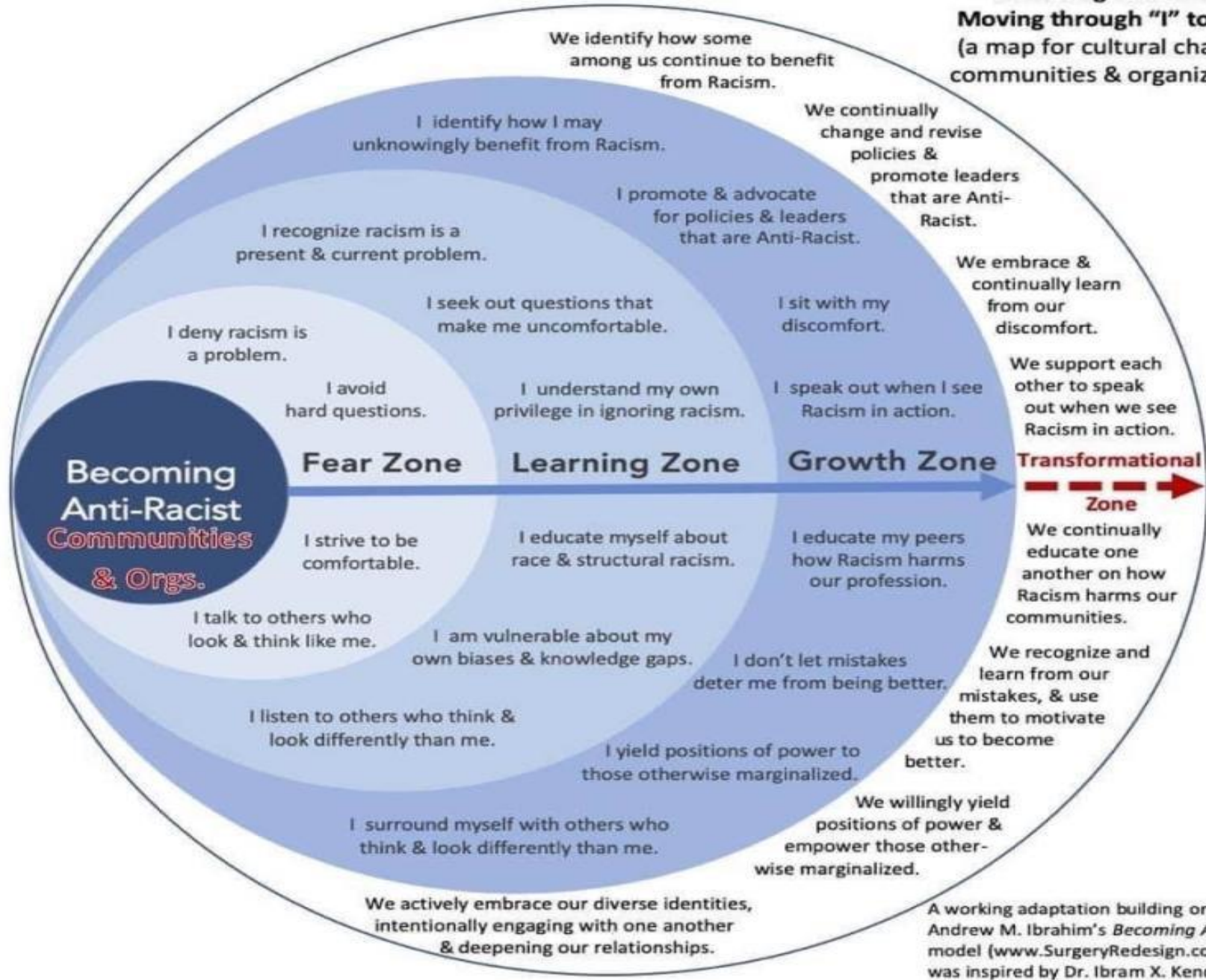
Vernã Myers, 2012

https://www.ted.com/talks/verna_myers_how_to_overcome_our_biases_walk_boldly_toward_them?language=en

According to the Anti-racism Digital Library, "Anti-racism can be defined as some form of focused and sustained action, which includes inter-cultural, inter-faith, multi-lingual and inter-abled (i.e. differently abled) communities with the intent to change a system or an institutional policy, practice, or procedure which has racist effects."




**Becoming Anti-Racist:
Moving through "I" to "We"
(a map for cultural change in
communities & organizations)**



A working adaptation building on Dr. Andrew M. Ibrahim's *Becoming Anti-Racist* model (www.SurgeryRedesign.com) which was inspired by Dr. Ibram X. Kendi's work, *How To Be An Antiracist*. (Adapted by Tyler Olson, PhD candidate.)

- ❖ Non-awareness: of difference refers to individuals that have no or limited experience with diversity. It is not that they do not recognize difference but they place no value on difference and approach each person as an individual regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, class, sexual orientation, and so forth.
- ❖ Awareness of difference: indicates that you not only recognize difference but realize that it actually holds some value to the individual and your relationship with them. However, you may lack the training, expertise, and ability to apply the knowledge you have.
- ❖ Acceptance/acknowledgement: of difference indicates that during this stage you have accepted that different does not mean deviant and you have a responsibility to become more culturally competent.
- ❖ Understanding cultural difference: indicates you have taken the necessary steps to increase your cultural knowledge through diversity training, workshops, discussions with others, and self education to better understand and relate to a wide range of diverse individuals.
- ❖ Cultural adaptation: indicates you now have the ability to apply what you have learned and adapt your approach to the needs and communication styles of those around you.
- ❖ Intercultural skillfulness: indicates you have expanded your comfort zone and have become a culturally competent. You now have the tools, knowledge, and skills to relate to a wide range of individuals and feel comfortable in doing so. These skills have been gained but keep in mind that they need to be maintained and this is an on-going process in which we continue to learn and expand our knowledge.

- ❖ **Evaluative:** Making a judgment about the worth, goodness, or appropriateness of the other person's statement.
 - ❖ **Interpretive:** Paraphrasing — attempting to explain what the other person's statement means.
 - ❖ **Supportive:** Attempting to assist or bolster the other communicator.
 - ❖ **Probing:** Attempting to gain additional information, continue the discussion, or clarify a point.
 - ❖ **Understanding:** Attempting to discover completely what the other communicator means by their statements.
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MUTUALIST

- ❖ The doctrine or practice of mutual dependence as the condition of individual and social welfare
- ❖ Mutually beneficial association between different kinds of organisms

FOUR LEVELS OF OPPRESSION/"ISMS" AND CHANGE

- ❖ **Personal: Values, Beliefs, Feelings**
 - ❖ **Interpersonal: Actions, Behaviors,
Language**
 - ❖ **Institutional: Rules, Policies,
Procedures**
 - ❖ **Cultural: Beauty, Truth, Right**
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PARTNERSHIPS / RELATIONSHIPS

- ❖ Visions and goals: mutually agreed upon.
- ❖ Understanding and appreciation for one another's work.
- ❖ Ongoing communication.
- ❖ Value, solicit, and learn from students.
- ❖ Create and implement shared inclusive decision making.
- ❖ Utilize reciprocal learning.



PARTNERSHIPS / RELATIONSHIPS

- ❖ Respect, trust, and mutual understanding
 - ❖ Develop a belief that all contribute to the student, community, and institution
 - ❖ Share resources
 - ❖ Celebrate shared accomplishments
 - ❖ Consistently advocate for one another
 - ❖ Identify and collectively challenge organizational structures
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