# CONNECT A ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2025





## Deepening DEI Knowledge by Exploring Self-Awareness

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## Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the City of Boston is located on the unceded ancestral lands of the Massachusett and Pawtucket Tribes.

We pay our respects to the ancestral bloodlines of these historic tribes and their descendants who still inhabit these historic territories today.



## What to expect during this session:

- Building Shared Language
- Exploring the Self and the Cycle of Socialization
- Understanding Identity, Power,
  Privilege and Bias
- Navigating Challenging Times



## **Touchstones**

- Be present, presume welcome and extend welcome
- Listen deeply
- Believe that it's possible to emerge refreshed, surprised and less burdened
- No fixing, no saving, no advising, and no setting each other straight
- Always by invitation
- Speak for yourself and speak your truth in ways that respect others' truths
- Suspend judgment
- Listen to the silence
- Maintain confidentiality
- Expect and accept a lack of closure
- When things get difficult, turn to wonder



## **Building Shared Language**

Sense of Loss INCREASES as you move closer to creating equitable culture









Diversity is the representation. Diversity can be measured through numbers and is usually tracked by race, gender, sexual identity, age, ability level, cognitive learning differences, education, economic background.

Belonging is the ongoing culture created to have all people feel welcome across difference. Manifested in the relationships, in conversations, physical space and written word.

Inclusion is the participation. Inclusion is usually achieved when diverse populations are involved in decision-making that impacts the policies and practices of the organization.

Equity requires changing structures of power & privilege so disparities of historically under- represented groups are eliminated and therefore outcomes cannot be predicted by that grouping.

You've been asked to the party.

You feel welcomed and comfortable going to the party.

You've been asked to help plan the party.

Redefines what the party entails, who has the power to plan the party and if there should be a party.



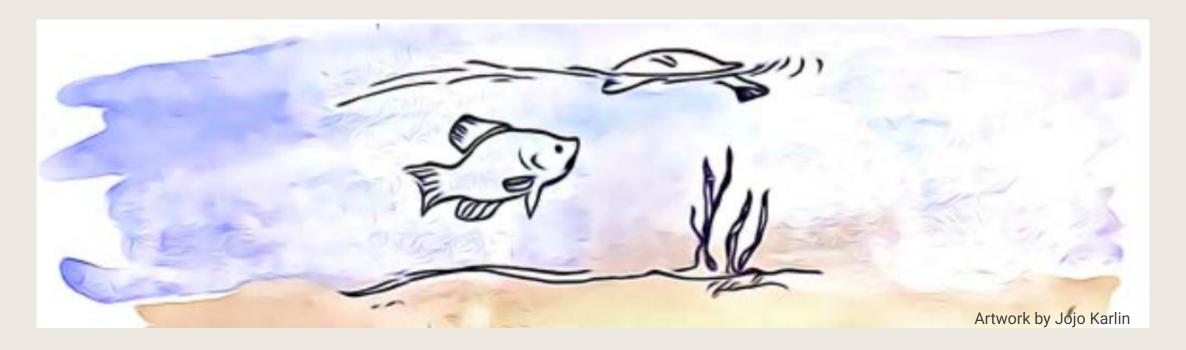
## **Building Shared Language**



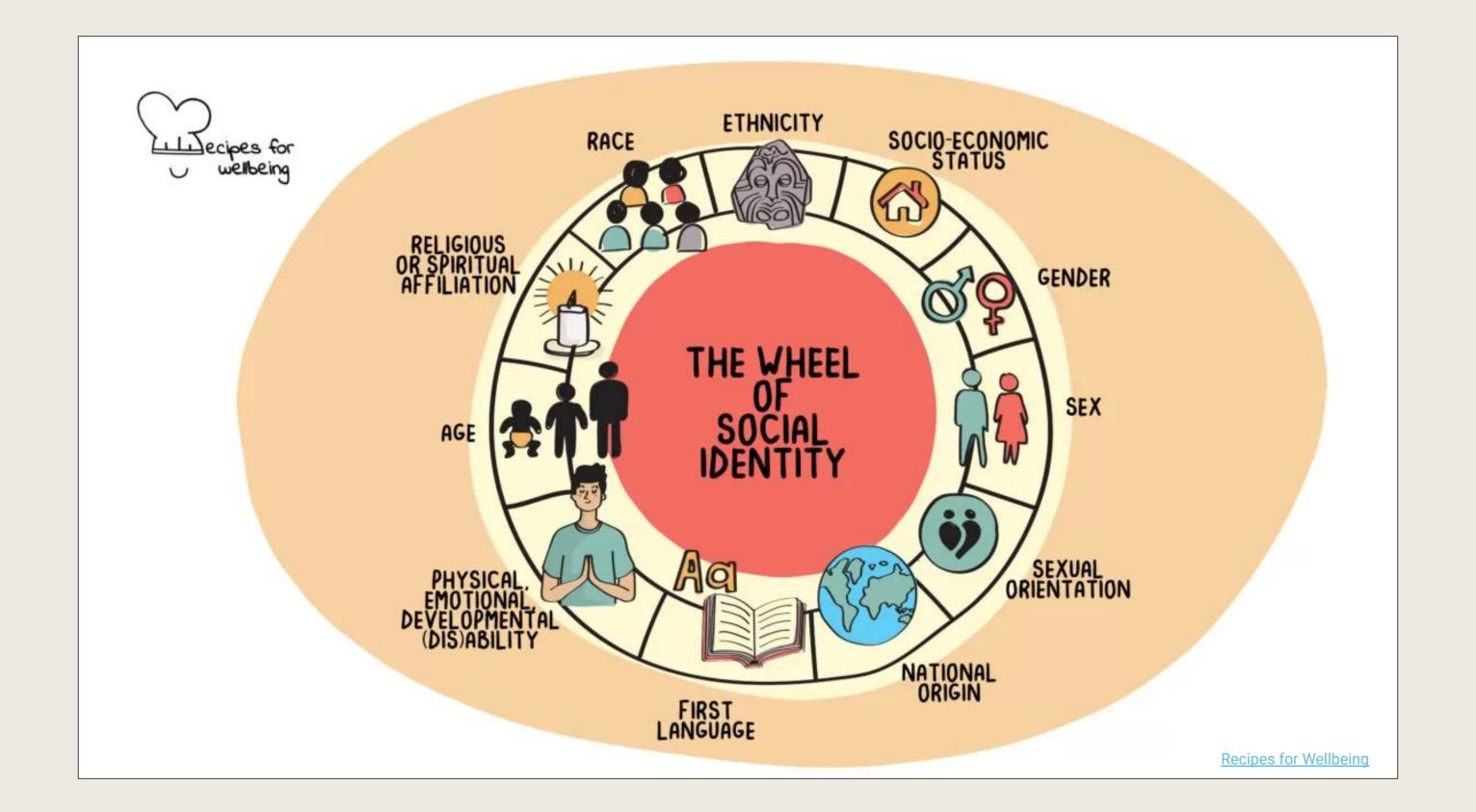


## The Water We Swim In

Two young fish are swimming along. An older fish swims by and says, "Good morning - how's the water today?"



The two young fish swim on for a bit, and eventually one of them looks over at the other and says, "What the hell is water?"



# Understanding the Cycle of Socialization

#### Cycle of Liberation

Raise consciousness, interrupt, dismantle & take a stand

#### **Actions**

- 1) Continue back to "The Beginning" and perpetuate biases, stereotypes, norms, histories, habits & taditions
- 2) Break the Cycle--Cycle of Liberation

#### Results

- Internal feelings and social standing
- "Abnormal:" shame, silence, isolation, anger, stress, barriers to achieve
- "Normal: "confidence, security, autonomy, access to opportunities

#### The Beginning

- Born into a world with mechanics in place
- Bias, stereotypes, norms, histories, habits & traditions

#### Why do we go along with what we are socially taught?

We know what it feels like to be isolated

We are scared of what we don't know

#### Additional Enforcements

- Rewards & punishments, support & stigmas
- You receive positive messages when you act according to what you are taught even if it isn't truth
- You receive negative messages when you question the status quo

#### First Socialization

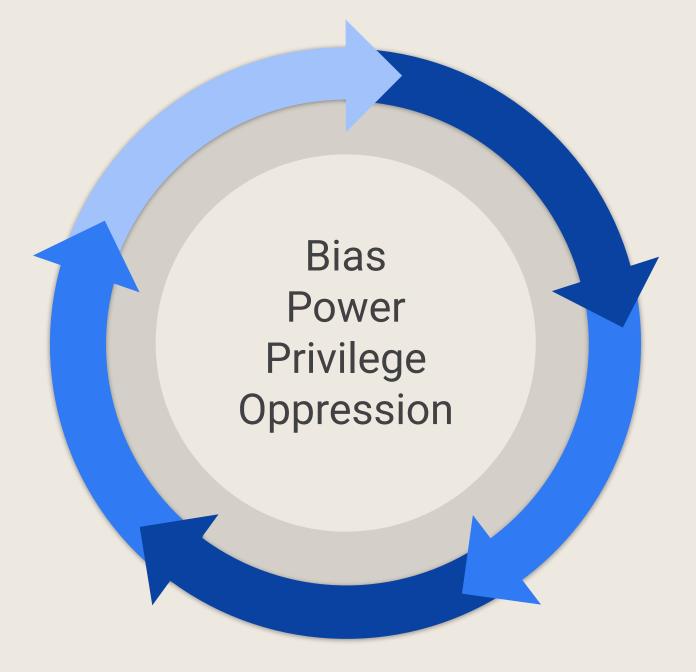
- Taught on a personal level by family/peers/men tors we love and trust
- Reinforced by group affiliations (who you hang out with that is taught the same message)

#### Institutional & Cultural Enforcements

- Messages you're surrounded with are reinfroced by media, schools, church, business, & other insitutions
- These perceptions become normalized; you do not question the way things are

Adapted from Bobbie Harro, 1982

## Impacts of the Cycle





## **Reflection Questions**

- 1. What factors shape your identity?
- 1. What parts of your identity do you choose for yourself?
- 1. What parts of your identity are determined for you by other people or by society?



## Diving Deeper into Power & Privilege

- Privilege is interconnected with power in our society i.e. those who have privilege have the ability to create/maintain societal norms, often to their benefit at the expense of others etc.
- Privilege does not mean that a person has not experienced struggles or that their life has not been difficult.
- Privilege does not mean that you did not work hard for the things you have.
- Privilege is fluid; it can change as you move through life.
- Privilege *is contextual*; identities you hold can give you an advantage or a disadvantage based on how people perceive you.
- Privilege *has strategically been set-up* as a "taboo" subject, allowing those in dominant groups to ignore embedded, and often invisible, forms of oppression.

# Breaking Down the Cycle...

#### CYCLE OF LIBERATION Cycle of Liberation developed by Bobbie Harro Intrapersonal Change within the Core of People about What They Reaching Out Believe about Themselves Interpersonal Movement Out of Self Toward Others Seeking Change in How We Value Critical Incident Experience and Exposure Speaking Out and Naming Injustices Taking Stands, Using Tools, Exploring and Experimenting Others and See the World That Creates Cognitive Dissonance Empowerment of Self: Introspection, Education Consciousness Raising Gaining: Dismantling **Working With Others** Inspiration, Collusion. A. People "Like Us" for Support Authenticity Privilege. B. People "Different from Us" Internalized Core for Building Coalitions, Oppression Questioning Assumptions, Self-Love Rules, Roles, and Structures Self-Esteem of Systems Balance Integrating, Joy Spreading Hope and Support Inspiration, Living Our Security Dreams, Modeling Spiritual Base Organizing, Action Authenticity, Integrity and Planning, Lobbying, Fund Maintaining Wholeness, Taking Care of Raising, Educating, Renaming Self and Others Reality, Refusing to Collude or Take Privilege, Being a Role Model, an Ally, Transforming Anger, Moving into Action **Critically Transforming Institutions** and Creating New Culture Influencing: Systemic Policy, Assumptions, Structures, Definitions, Rules, Taking Leadership, Risks, Guiding Change, Healing, "Power Shared" Change in Structures, Assumptions, Philosophy, Rules, Roles Creating Change

## **Tools for Navigating Challenging Times**

- Assume positive intent
- Check and challenge our own biases
- Effectively communicate
  - Identify barriers
  - Listen deeply and listen to understand
  - Withhold judgment
  - Be curious- ask questions
- Sit with discomfort
- Lean into honesty, openness and vulnerability
- Expect and accept the lack of closure





### Resources

- Bobbie Harro: <u>The Cycle of Socialization</u>, <u>The Cycle of Liberation</u>
- TedTalk- Verna Myers- <u>How to overcome our biases?</u>
- Power, Privilege and Oppression
- Harvard Implicit Bias Test
- Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People, Book by Anthony Greenwald and Mahzarin Banaji
- TedTalk- Brene Brown- <u>The Power of Vulnerability</u>