

INTRODUCTION TO PERSONAL OR ORGANIZATIONAL DIVERSITY,
EQUITY & INCLUSION WORK FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SELF- REFLECTION TOOL



WE BELIEVE

Before launching into DEI work of any kind or creating policy or procedure to increase community engagement, it is VITAL to assess ourselves and our own implicit biases that will inevitably not only affect but inform our work, choices and interactions. This self-assessment tool is designed to be done at every level of the organization from Board & CEO to direct care staff. The answers are not for review, they are for self and to identify the basis of your own belief system privately before beginning inclusion and community work. Participants will only need paper and a writing utensil. Answers will preferably be written, not typed to allow for greater reflection. When you are ready, follow the prompts and give yourself plenty of time to review and reflect on your own answers. The only requirement is 100% honest.



#1

List 3 (cultural, historic, social) factors that YOU feel affects comfort, safety and trust in Black, Brown, and Indigenous folks within your organization.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

When answering this question, you aren't listing the "right" answer.

Without a great deal of deep thought about what you've been taught or the reaction to your answer, list the three things you personally believe prevents BIPOC folks from being willing to engage or feel comfortable in your space.

Remember, be honest, no one will read your answers but you.

#2

For each of the 3 things you listed in #1, list one thing that YOU are personally doing in your every day work to address or combat those issues that you identified.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

When answering this question, you aren't talking about agency/org wide policy or procedure. It doesn't matter your level of leadership or the work that you do. If you identify those three factors as being prohibitive from engaging the groups of people you are tasked to work with- what is one thing you are personally doing in your everyday work to combat those things from being prohibitive for the community you serve?

#3

For each of the 3 things you listed in #1, list one thing that your agency/org is doing to address or combat those issues that you identified?

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

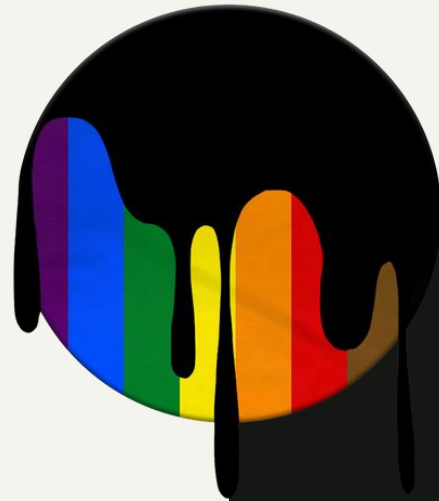
When answering this question, you are specifically talking about the things your agency/org has done to address the prohibitive factors that you identified.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

#4

Can you identify what informed your answers to the first question? What has given you those impressions?

We don't always know where we pick up ideas from and very rarely give it any thought. This IS what implicit bias is and every single person carries it. In the first question you identified what you thought was prohibiting better community engagement. Where did those ideas come from? What clients/patients have told you? What you learned in school or in-services? The media? What you have directly encountered in your work? What other staff that come from the community have told you? What staff not of the community has told you?



TIME TO
REFLECT

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

#1 Identify the Need

It's important to know what we are even fighting for or against. Sometimes plans are created because they are common practice masquerading as best practice.

What are the things that are actually the root cause that are prohibiting your ability to connect? Have you thought about it? Have you talked about it?

You'll delve into this more deeply as we go through the reflection but it's important to know what beliefs you hold as to what the problem is and where you got them from.

And if you have directly gotten these ideas from your staff or the community you serve, what did they tell you needed to be different? And did you listen?

#2 What are you doing about it?

Very few of us are in the position to independently create organizational change. Our research has shown that employees rarely feel that they have the power to change much, including DEI issues.

What you do have some control over is how you do the things you do every day. Of the issues you identified, what things have you incorporated in your daily work to address them?

If you hire people, do you seek folks that identify with or as the community you serve?

Have you engaged with the community you serve in any way other than at or in your job?

If you have staff, do you listen to them in the ways you don't feel like your supervisors listen to you?

#3 What are you doing about it?

Especially if you are in an administrative position, what are the things that your agency is directly doing to combat the things that you identified?

Often agencies & orgs take a "throw it all at the wall and see what sticks" approach. Or they do what everyone else is doing whether it has been successful or not.

You should be able to plot the answers from #1 and draw a direct correlation to the techniques you are trying to combat them.

You'll see it more in depth in the final reflection, but making sure the issues you listed in #1 are the actual issues according to your staff from the community and community members and getting their input about what they need to repair those divisions is key.

#4 Identifying Your Implicit Bias

Oftentimes, we have no idea where we picked up the ideas we carry regarding why we can't connect to an audience. We've picked up ideas from our upbringing, media, education, colleagues etc. We are often taught concepts about this by people who don't live, love or look like the communities we serve. That is your implicit bias. Those ideas you carry and your ability to be honest with yourself about them, find their origin and keep that knowledge present when you interact with people or develop strategy is the #1 key to doing it "right." You will waste endless time, human effort and resources chasing a problem that may be the speculative problem and not even the actual issue causing the divide. Listen to your community, your staff, read your complaints, talk to the folks who chose not to work for you, who choose to no longer be in your care. Ask them why. And ask them WHAT THEY NEED instead of speculating or deciding for them. If your staff no longer seems engaged in making these changes, in creating these plans- look into how many suggestions they've made that have gone unheeded. If the things you've tried to engage the community you serve aren't working- stop doing them and ask them what they need instead. Then do it.