

## **Personal Guidelines for Holistic Engagement**

During the Community Engagement Workshop at the BSAS Annual Conference, workshop participants identified how we can each personally work to address personal biases. This document reflects the strategies participants identified during the session.

### Strategies for countering personal biases

- Calling yourself in, as described by Loretta Ross (Note: Dr. Ross is making online courses available in January/February from \$5 on her website: <https://www.lorettaross.com/online-courses/calling-in-the-calling-out-culture>)
- In addition to learning about and identifying biases – think about the second look strategies:
  - Learning about the historical and political frames that create biases can help us do that “second look” strategy
  - Be conscious of when you are in a space (IE, new environment) where it is easy to ignore the second thought, and be prepared
  - Counteracting the bias as quickly as possible after the “second thought” to reverse it with kindness and connection - Say Hi, be kind, break bread, etc
- Self Reflection:
  - Deep listening to try to challenge my biases
  - Ask questions to ourselves, self-reflection, cultural competence. Stop to think for a moment.
  - Seek out and listen to stories of those we don’t know
- Learn to be more proactively critical about the information we take in
  - Asking questions of others
  - Being curious - having curiosity about the experience of others
- Mindfulness, take some deep breaths, and try to think before speaking or moving forward
- Find others to talk this through
  - Finding a person (or more than a person!) you trust to have open conversations about your bias with is a huge tool for growth (for both parties)
- Ask people to tell you their story
- Being mindful of the language we use, so being careful to not “other” or “these people”
  - When someone uses this language, challenge them. Or show them how we are similar, or the real stories behind the individuals who are being “othered”
- Exposure to different cultures, by going to cultural festivals (when we can!), read books, see movies
- Educational piece is important – being a tourist in your own community, and engage in the aspects of your community authentically. Be mindful to not create a sense of touring a zoo, where people and the cultures are seen as being in cages, or monolithic.
- Be intentional with a thought that everything and everyone is a story, when we know someone’s story we are able to be more empathetic and understanding.
- Be more aware in checking stigma and stereotypes created by the media and others beliefs.
- If we come from an open place and willingness to learn rather than allow implicit bias to lead us it creates that openness in order to learn to form an informed reaction and or belief
- Find your villages

- A few resources:
  - Teaching Tolerance, The New Jim Crow,
  - White Fragility,
  - The Double Standard on Social Policy,
  - Books by Brene Brown.
  - Beyond Ally by Dr. Maysa Akbar
- Consider using the SPACE practice (sent in a separate document), as developed by MindBridge