

Overcoming Implicit Bias When Working with Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Communities

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Image Credit: Manny Francisco

TRANSGENDER EQUITY CONSULTING

- Our work is committed to building the leadership of Trans women of color, sex workers, immigrants, and incarcerated peoples as experts in creating a more just world.
 - Workshops, training, organizational development, conflict mediation, speaking, conference & convening planning



Image Credit: Manny Francisco

AGENDA

- Objectives
- Organization and Project Overview
- What is Implicit Bias?
- Why is this important?
- How do we combat it?



Art Credit: Anshika Khullar

OBJECTIVES

This webinar will serve as a technical assistance resource for the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program and the broader public health community. The specific objectives of this webinar are to:

- Discuss implicit bias and how it shows up.
- Develop a shared understanding about the harmful impacts of implicit bias.
- Explore ways to combat implicit bias.

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

NASTAD

WHO: A national non-profit representing public health officials who administer HIV and viral hepatitis programs funded by state and federal governments.

WHERE: All 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, seven local jurisdictions receiving direct funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the U.S. Pacific Islands.

HOW: Interpret and influence policies, conduct trainings, offer technical assistance, and provide advocacy mobilization for U.S. health departments

Project Overview

Special Project of National Significance – Part F

- **Funder:** HRSA HAB
- **Goal:** Identify, catalog, disseminate, and support the replication of evidence-informed approaches and interventions to engage people living with HIV (PLWH) who are not receiving, or who are at risk of not continuing to receive HIV healthcare.
- **Partnerships:** NASTAD, Northwestern University's Center for Prevention Implementation Methodology, and Howard Brown Health Center
- Three-year project: September 1, 2018 – August 31, 2021
 - Extended through August 2022

Center for Innovation and Engagement Overview

CIE's goal is to:



Identify



Catalog



Disseminate

innovative, evidence-informed models of HIV care.

CIE Resources

Key Features:

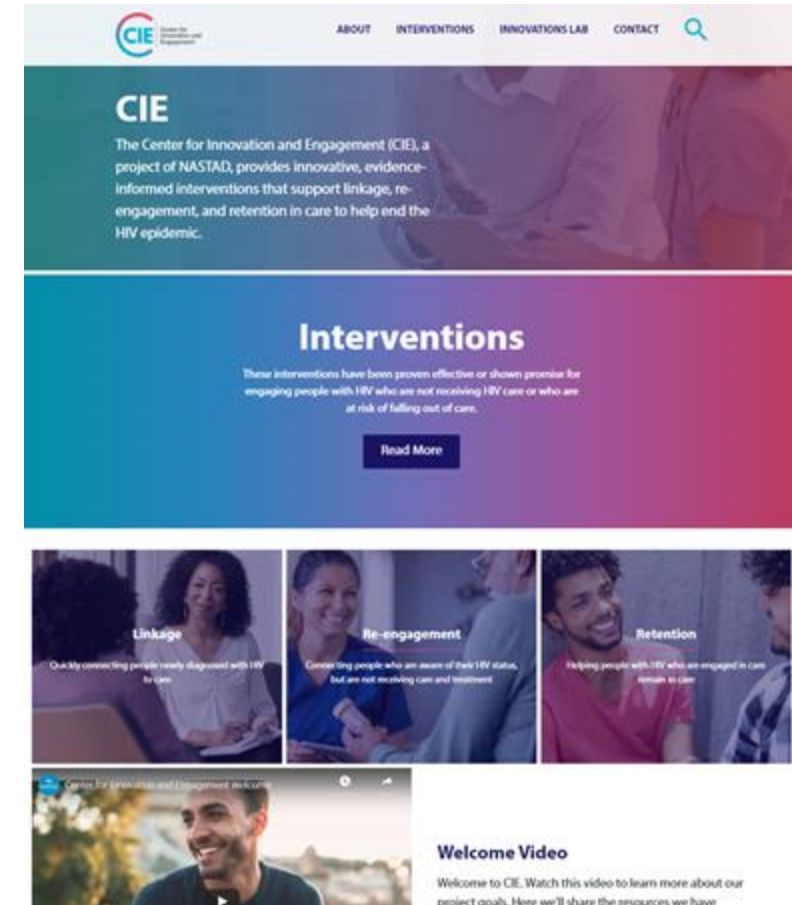
- Implementation Guides
- Provider Tools
- Videos
- Key Info Presented Up-Front
- Cost Calculator & How-to Video
- Listserv
- Webinars, TA Request System, Population-Specific Tip Sheets, and more!



Implementation Guides



Website



SETTING THE STAGE

What is Implicit Bias?

- **Implicit bias** refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner¹
- Subtle, unintentional, and unconscious forms of bias
- Activated quickly and unknowingly by situational cues (e.g., a person's skin color or gender expression)

Implicit Bias and Stigma

- **Stigma** refers to the social devaluation of people who are perceived to be different than the majority (e.g., based on race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, health conditions)
- Implicit bias reinforces prejudices and stereotypes, thereby *perpetuating* stigma
- Implicit bias influences conscious evaluations of others and subsequently impact health outcomes (e.g., client-provider interactions and clinical decision making)

Implicit Bias and HIV

- Implicit bias can exacerbate HIV stigma
- **HIV stigma** which refers to irrational or negative attitudes, behaviors, and judgments towards people with or impacted by HIV²
- Clients may be less likely to go through the HIV care cascade
- Legacy of discrimination toward transgender and gender nonconforming populations (TGNC)
- Lack of awareness and knowledge about the health and social needs of TGNC clients
- We cannot end the HIV epidemic without addressing the negative impact of stigma on HIV care efforts and health outcomes.



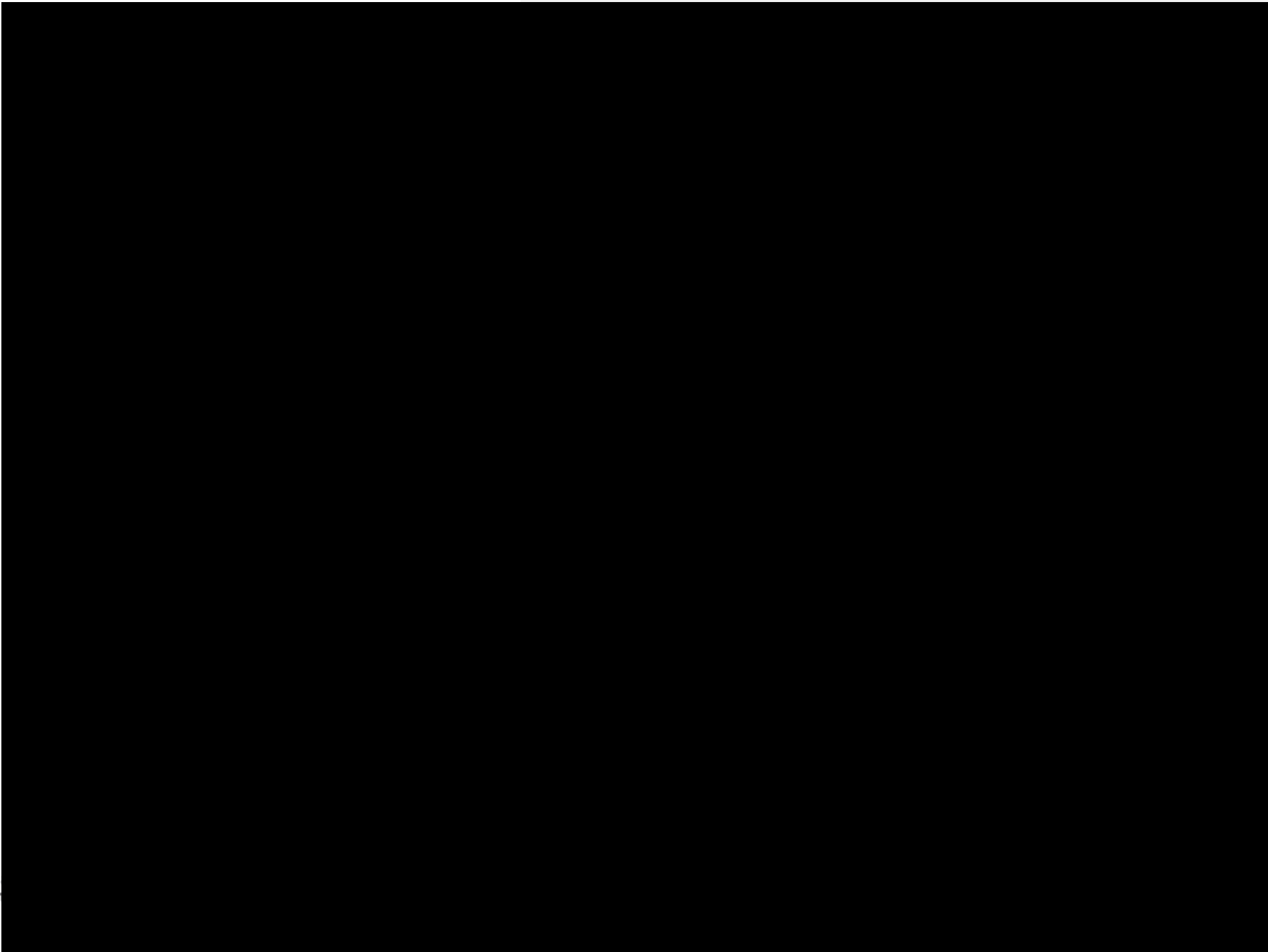
Case Study: Natalia



Photo Credit: Fenway Health

We see a lot of biases in Natalia's experience with the clinic.

- When the receptionist hears a lower voice and automatically tells Natalia where the men's room is, instead of asking Natalia for her pronouns and telling her where the women's restroom is.
- In the new patient paperwork that had a women's section that assumed all women experience pregnancy, and menstruation. Or that ONLY women experience these things.
- When the provider states he is not familiar with trans healthcare and does not think he can treat Natalia.
- When she says she has the flu, the provider assumes it must be HIV related



Implicit Bias | The Impact

In a survey of 27,715 trans and nonbinary individuals in 2015³:

- **30 percent** reported being fired, denied a promotion, or experiencing some other form of mistreatment related to their gender identity or expression.
- **More than 26 percent** of those who experienced housing instability avoided staying in a shelter because they feared being mistreated as a transgender person.
- **20 percent** have participated in the underground economies⁴

Implicit Bias | **The Impact**

In a study based on the 2008 National Transgender Discrimination Survey (NTDS)⁴:

- **70 percent** of respondents experienced discrimination when access healthcare
- Transwomen and transmen reported delaying accessing care due to fears of discrimination.
- Nonbinary individuals reported delaying accessing care due to cost.

INTERVIEW

Implicit Bias

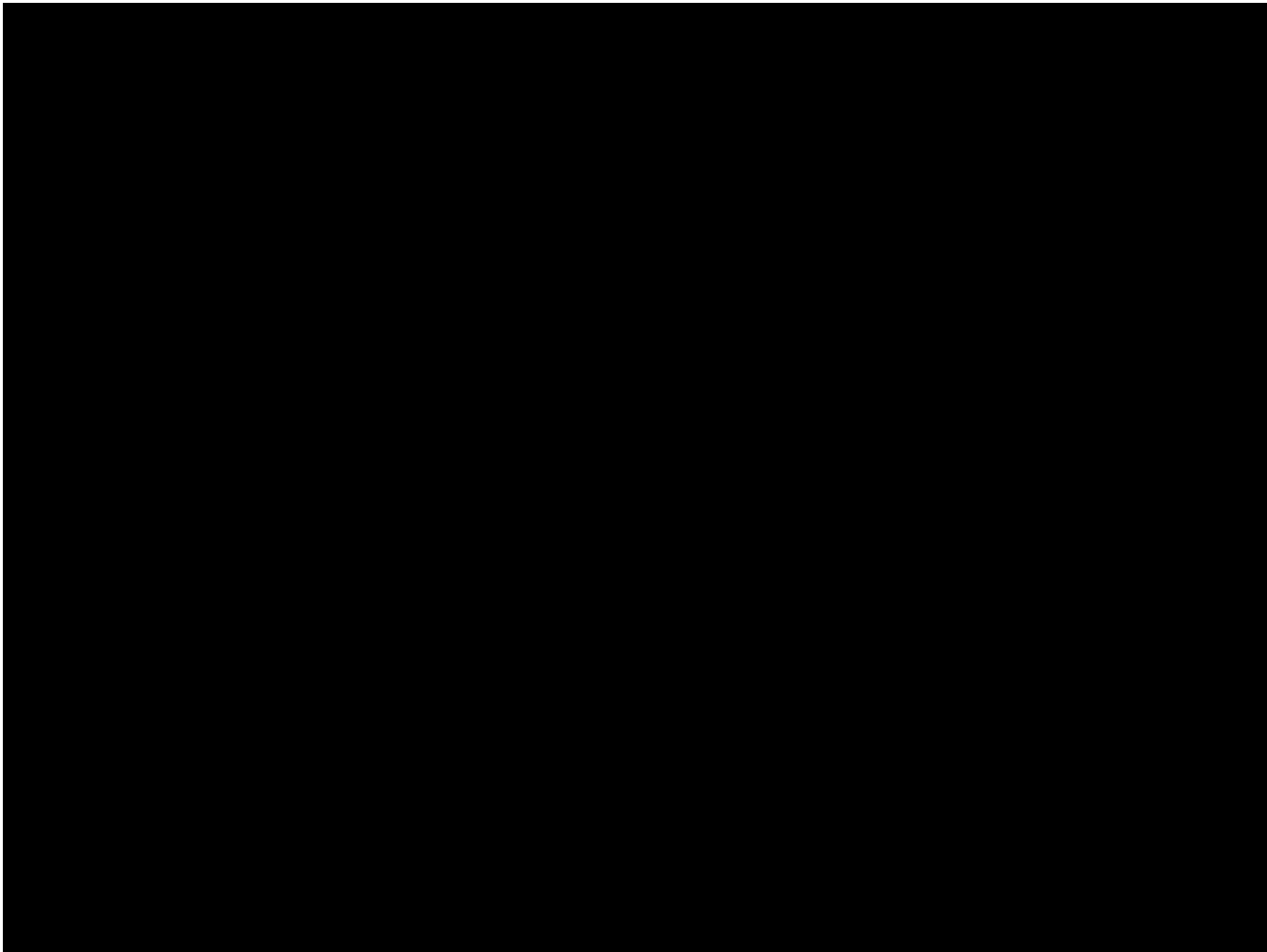
It's not just what you say

- Implicit bias does not only refer to how you behave outwardly towards someone.
- Internalized biases toward TGNC populations can mean using the wrong pronoun for them when thinking about them. Other examples include:
 - Referring to them by a different name than the one they have expressed a desire to be referred to as.
 - Directing someone to a specific bathroom based off assumptions you have made about their gender.
 - Referring individuals to gendered groups again based off assumptions.

In a survey by the National Center for Transgender Equity, one third of respondents reported having negative experiences with healthcare providers when seeking care.

- 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey Report

VIDEO



Myth of “realness”

- With an influx of trans visibility in mainstream media, there has been an increase in the belief that there is a “right” way to transition or to look.
- However, we know that gender is a spectrum and that visibility does not equate to safety.
- The number of transwomen of color murdered continues to increase each year.
- The life expectancy of transwomen of color is 35 years.



Photo Credit: American Society for Engineering Education



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PROMISING STRATEGIES

Confronting Your Own Implicit Bias

- For most people in the public health community and other professions it might feel threatening to acknowledge that they have implicit bias.
- It takes courage to acknowledge that prejudicial thoughts enter our heads sometimes
 - It is only through a fearless inventory of those thoughts and taking the time to deconstruct them that we can truly change how we feel (and treat people)!

ASK YOURSELF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- How do my current beliefs serve me?
- What might I lose if I change my beliefs?
- What are the costs of maintaining my current perspective?
- How might it benefit me to change?

Combating Implicit Bias

Know yourself

Combating implicit bias requires self examination and exploration. We are all inundated with stereotypes and stories. It is our responsibility to upend those stereotypes and unlearn our biases.

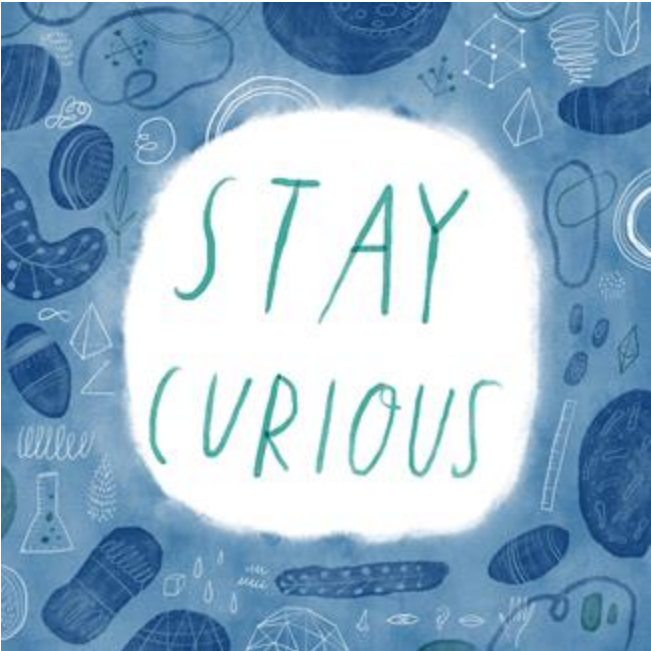
- Slow Down
- Ask yourself: Are you making generalizations?
- Reframe
- Interrupt



Photo Credit: Equinox Gender Clinic

Combating Implicit Bias| Reprime

Reprime yourself
Stay curious



RESOURCES

Trans Equity:

[Trans and Nonbinary People Navigating Healthcare Video](#)

Trans Equity:

[Respecting Trans and Nonbinary Pronouns Video](#)

REFERENCES

1. Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity – Implicit Bias Module Series: <http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/implicit-bias-training/>
2. HIV.gov – Standing Up to Stigma: <https://www.hiv.gov/hiv-basics/overview/making-a-difference/standing-up-to-stigma>
3. National Center for Transgender Equality – The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey: <https://transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/usts/USTS-Full-Report-Dec17.pdf>
4. Kachen, A., & Pharr, J. R. (2020). Health Care Access and Utilization by Transgender Populations: A United States Transgender Survey Study. *Transgender health*, 5(3), 141–148. <https://doi.org/10.1089/trgh.2020.0017>

Thank You!

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