

A hand holding a pair of glasses with a forest scene reflected in the lens.

Challenging Implicit Bias: Exploring the Way Forward

Session co-sponsored with Health Equity Initiative

2021 New Jersey Sustainability Summit

Melanie McDermott • Renata Schiavo • Tina Wong

May 18, 2021 • 11:30AM – 1:00PM

Presentation created by Tina Wong



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Our Mission

Health Equity Initiative (HEI) is a member-driven nonprofit membership organization dedicated to build a global community that engages across sectors and disciplines to advance health equity. By bringing together and enlisting the efforts of the public and private sectors, professions and communities that have both a stake and an influence on social determinants of health, HEI advocates for improving conditions and achieving equity in health for all. We focus on championing transformative change to advance health equity, supporting knowledge, engaging communities and leaders, and building capacity to address barriers that prevent people from leading a healthy and productive life.

Together we are reimagining the dynamics of health and social systems

Bridging silos, building one community for health equity

www.healthequityinitiative.org





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Agenda

Session Goals:

- Discuss **how** implicit bias may **show up** in municipalities or schools
- Explore how local governments and communities may be **affected** by individual and/or institutional bias
- Generate **ideas** and **solutions** on **the way forward** to an equitable future



Group Agreements



Connect



Grow



Small Group Discussions



Large Group Share-Out / Debrief



Case Studies



Closing



Group Agreements

- Be present
- Respect confidentiality
- Question ideas, not people
- Be ok with non-closure
- Speak and listen from the heart
- Show grace



Connect

Photo by Ezra Jeffrey-Comeau on Unsplash

Let's connect! [10 minutes]

In Small Groups... ~1 minute each person

1. Introduce yourself (name, pronouns, organization / affiliation)
2. How are you connected to Sustainable Jersey / Health Equity Initiative? (i.e., Green Team member, community member, Sustainable Jersey Schools, etc.)
3. Why did you sign up for the session? OR What are you looking to gain/learn?

Grow



“our unconscious reactions come out of a locked room, and we can't look inside that room. But with experience we become expert at using our behavior and our training to interpret - and decode - what lies behind our snap judgment and first impressions.”

— *Malcolm Gladwell, Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*



Defining and Understanding Implicit Bias

What is implicit bias?

The positive and/or negative attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.



Let's do a
quick
exercise!



247 x 18

We Make Decisions in One of Two Systems:

- Personal Background
- Cultural Experiences
- Previous Experiences

SYSTEM 1

Intuition & instinct

95%

Unconscious
Fast
Associative
Automatic pilot

SYSTEM 2

Rational thinking

5%

Takes effort
Slow
Logical
Lazy
Indecisive



Source: Daniel Kahnemann, "Thinking, Fast and Slow"

Common Types of Unconscious Bias



Affinity Bias

Feeling a connection to those similar to us



Perception Bias

Stereotypes and assumptions about different groups



Halo Effect

Projecting positive qualities onto people without actually knowing them



Confirmation Bias

Looking to confirm our own opinions and pre-existing ideas.

Graphic from BeApplied.com

Gender
Bias

Beauty
Bias

Ageism

Racial
Bias

How does implicit bias show up...



in your municipalities?



at your schools?



at your workplace?

How does implicit bias affect...



your municipalities?



your schools?

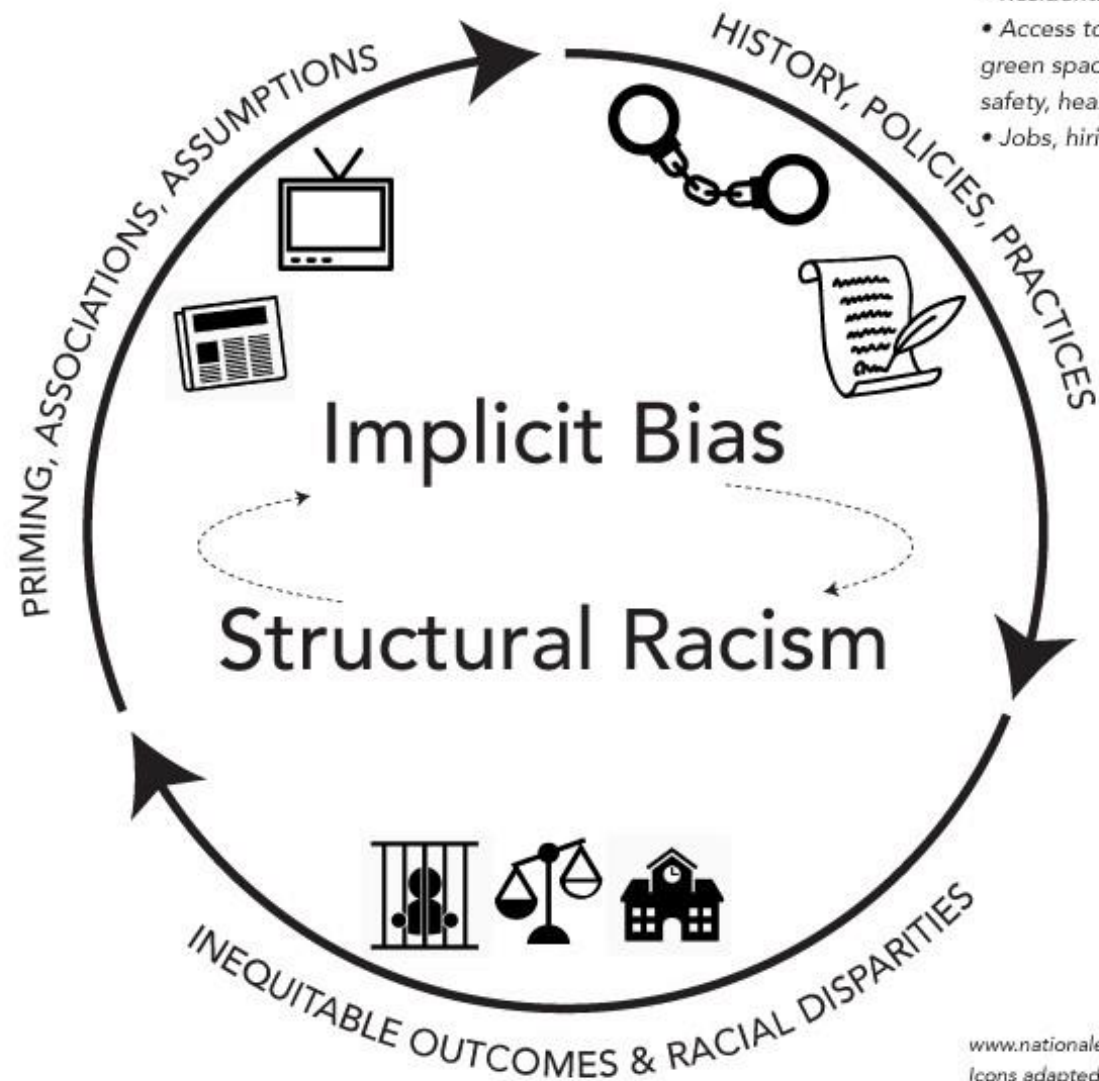


your workplace?

Implicit Bias and Structural Racism Cycle

“Biases not only affect our perceptions, but our policies and institutional arrangements. Therefore, these biases influence the types of outcomes we see across a variety of contexts: school, labor, housing, health, criminal justice system, and so forth...These racialized outcomes subsequently reinforce the very stereotypes and prejudice that initially influenced the stratified outcomes.”

-John Powell, author of *Racing to Justice*



- Voting rights
- FHA Loans
- Residential segregation
- Access to education, green space, resources, safety, healthcare, etc
- Jobs, hiring, & advancement



Small Group Discussions

Small Group Discussions [20 minutes]

Individuals take 2-3 minutes to answer questions on own.

2-3 people can offer to share their stories while group can offer suggestions, ideas.

Identify a person to summarize discussion for share-out...

Identify a time when bias (might have) played a role in a decision that was made or an action that was taken, etc.

1. What happened?
2. Who was/were most impacted in your situation / scenario? What biases were at play?
3. What are some solutions to address / mitigate these biases, centering those most affected?



Share-Out & Debrief

What was the
scenario / situation
/ problem because
of implicit bias?

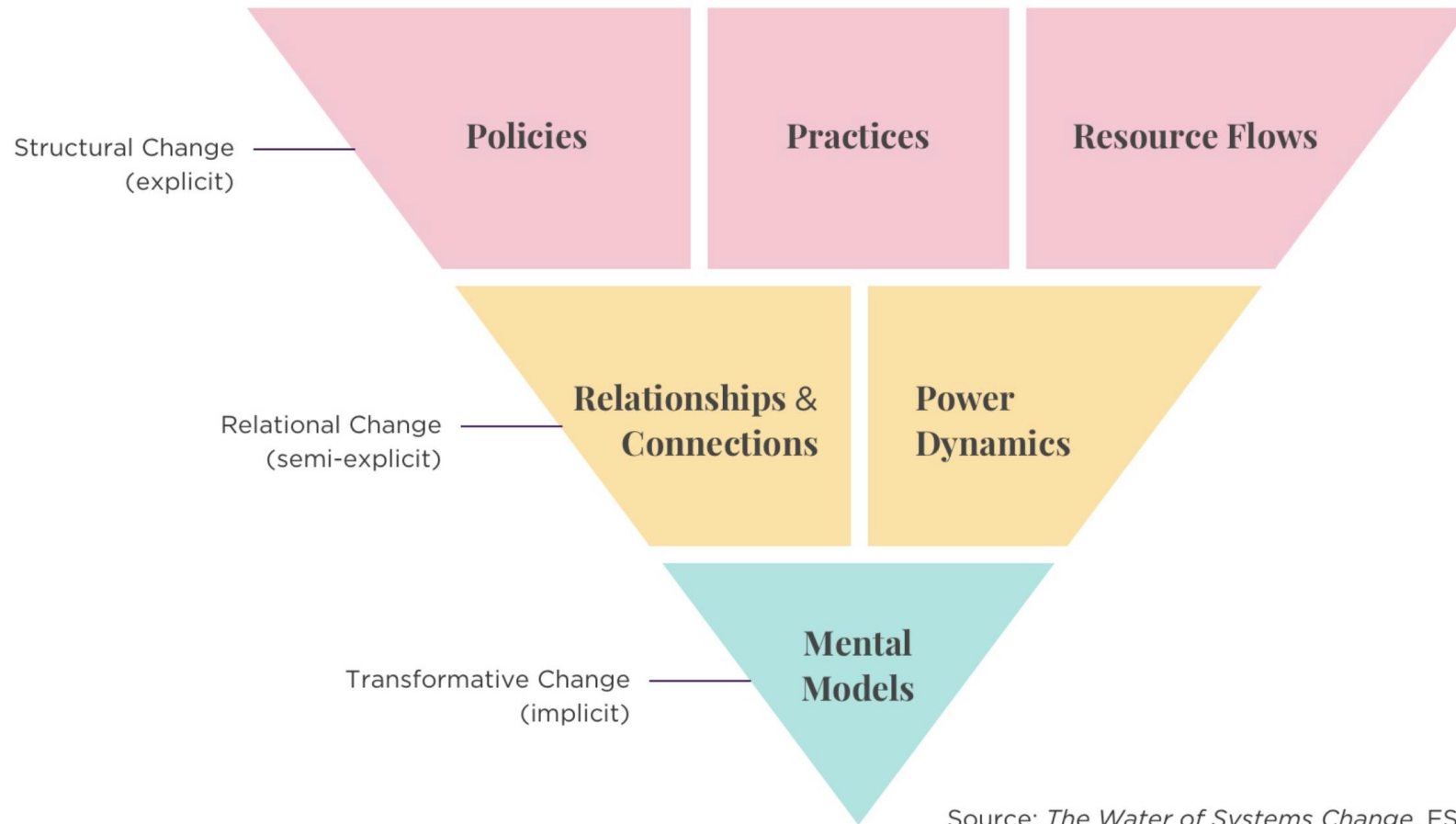
What were some
of the ideas and/or
solutions to
addresses it?

Share-Out

Reminder: respect confidentiality

Strategies & Tools to Mitigate Implicit Bias

1. Increase self-awareness
2. Build empathy
3. Practice mindfulness
4. Examine power dynamics
5. Community as assets
6. Continue learning



Source: *The Water of Systems Change*, FSG

Six Conditions of Systems Change



Case Studies

HEi Health Equity Initiative
JOIN THE MOVEMENT

Health Equity Initiative's Journey and Commitment: Key Action Areas and Main Focus

Community/Membership Building
via our role as convener

**Professional Development,
Capacity Building and Training**
via our workshops, webinars and
resources

Partnerships – to engage different
players and foster alliances

Education and Advocacy in support
of health equity

Advocate

Advocate for community engagement and
multisectoral solutions

Address

Address social discrimination (e.g., racism, gender bias, bias
toward low-income groups or the LGBTQI+ community,
xenophobia, other forms of implicit and/or institutional
bias) as a key determinant of health

Promote

Promote equity and social justice in the design of
cities and other kinds of built environments

Focus on

Focus on system-change across professional sectors
and disciplines

www.healthequityinitiative.org

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Health Equity Initiative's

10 Years
Commitment/
Journey in
Addressing Social
Discrimination,
Implicit and
Institutional Bias

Sample Resources and Initiatives

- Racism is a Health Equity Issue 2020-2021 Campaign
- Racism and Health Equity, Poverty and Health Equity, LGBTQI+ bias and Health Equity Mindmap Series
- Racial Healing and Health Equity Community Conversations Series
- Health Equity Initiative 2018 Summit focus on social discrimination and bias
- Blog posts, reports, webinars, and many other resources of 10 years
- Commitment to address discrimination and bias across all action areas, partnerships, and programs

Upcoming Webinar (June 10): Community Informed Urban Planning: Urban Planners Partner with Community Residents to Promote Health Equity and Address Bias

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Sustainable Jersey's Commitment



Social Equity integral to SJ vision of sustainability

Intentionally leveraging program to advance equity in our communities

What are the barriers that local government or schools can address?

- Bias and discrimination in municipal decision-making & services
- Provision of the conditions for good health: housing, access to healthy food and green spaces, digital divide, etc.

SJ forging into new areas through partnerships (Task Forces)

SJ's Diversity & Equity Task Force



Involves partners in guiding SJ's work on equity and anti-racism

Develops 'actions' for SJ certification program

- new ***anti-bias*** action - provides municipalities guidance building on the kind of conversations we're exploring today
- healthy housing, removing lead from drinking water, access to healthy food, environmental justice/health in all policies

Closing



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3, 2, 1 Reflection



Name 3 things you learned / you're taking away



List 2 things you want to learn more about or still have questions about



Identify 1 action you commit to taking to challenge your own implicit bias

Resources

[curated by Tina Wong]

Books

- [Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People](#) by Mahzarin Banaji and Anthony Greenwald
- [Thinking, Fast and Slow](#) by Daniel Kahneman
- [Race on the Brain: What Implicit Bias gets Wrong About The Struggle for Racial Justice](#) by Jonathan Khan
- [Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain](#) by Zaretta L. Hammond

Videos

- [How to Outsmart Your Unconscious Bias](#) - Valerie Alexander at TEDxPasadena
- [We All Have Implicit Biases. So What Can We Do About It?](#) - Dushaw Hockett at TEDxMidAtlanticSalon

Movies / Documentaries

- When They See Us directed by Ava DuVernay / Netflix
- Coded Bias directed by Shalini Kantayya / Netflix

Social Media

- IG @TheConsciousKid
- IG @goodgoodgoodco
- IG @ohhappydani

Social / Racial Justice Organizations; Training / Coaching

- Race Forward - www.raceforward.org
- Color of Change - www.colorofchange.org
- Indigenous Environmental Network - www.ienearth.org
- GLSEN - www.glsen.org
- Awaken - www.visionawaken.com
- Seachange Collective - www.seachangecollective.org
- Pamela Major - <https://meliabloom.com>

2021 NEW JERSEY

SUSTAINABILITY
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Thank you for joining us!

Stay in touch

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