

Understanding Implicit Bias: What is it and why it matters

Video Discussion Guide



The short animation video, *Understanding Implicit Bias: What is it and why it matters*, follows the difficult and vitally important conversation between a mentor in the behavioral health field and their mentee on unexamined biases. Self-awareness of these thoughts can help us to evolve and to disrupt our biases and lead to stopping mental health disparities. Recognizing that unexamined bias (i.e., racial or gender biases) has a detrimental impact on this therapeutic relationship as well as treatment outcomes, it is critical that clinicians learn how to become aware of these implicit biases and attend to them.

Learning Objectives

This video aims to define important concepts with animations. After watching it, viewers will:

- Learn where implicit bias comes from
- Be introduced to how unexamined bias can impact therapeutic relationships and treatment outcomes
- Gain insight that everyone holds the responsibility of addressing biases and disrupting systemic disparities

Plan a Viewing

There are several ways to share this film with mental health providers including therapists, peers advocates, supervisors, and directors. Staff members can view it on their own or there can be a planned gathering with several staff members.

It is very important to follow-up after viewing the film to support making connections between implicit biases and how they impact our lives and the lives of the people we support.

Establish some norms to support everyone and create a judgement-free environment when discussing the film.

Some suggestions include using 'I' statements and being respectful of others perspectives. You can use the provided discussion questions to guide this conversation.

Discussion Questions

1. Where does implicit bias come from? Does everyone have implicit bias?
2. How might implicit bias impact your behavior? Can you think of any examples where that's occurred in your life?
3. What kind of power structures have you witnessed or experienced in your personal and professional life?
4. In thinking about implicit bias, which groups of people or identities may be more likely to be negatively affected?
5. How are implicit bias and unconscious beliefs connected and how do they differ?
6. How do implicit biases affect the way you interact with your colleagues? What about your clients?
7. What challenges have your clients experienced due to implicit biases?
8. What examples can you think of that illustrate the impact of implicit bias on the mental health continuum?
9. How does the construct of a binary as described by the mentor (perceptions of good vs. bad, right vs. wrong) play into implicit bias? How can we address this?
10. What steps can you take to address your own implicit bias?
11. How do you stay accountable to your own privilege?

Questions Specifically for Supervisors and Administrators

- Explore what structures and sources of information inform the development of implicit bias.
- Connect how awareness of implicit bias can positively or negatively impact therapeutic interventions.
- Establish how providers in the mental health continuum can confront their own biases effectively (with whom and where can this space be found?).
- Discuss how supervisors can effectively create a safe and accountable space to address and confront biases with their supervisees. What do supervisors need to create for this work to be accomplished?

Access the Video

Visit ctacny.org and go the Tools tab.

Scroll down to *Defining Important Concepts with Animations*

and select the video title **“Understanding Implicit Bias: What is it and why it matters”**

