

Allyship: How to Support People Impacted by Hate and Bias

What are my biases?

Explicit Bias (conscious)

Deliberate or intentional beliefs or attitudes applied to a person, group or community with awareness of the prejudice and acts on them knowingly.

Implicit Bias (unconscious)

Attitudes and beliefs that affect our actions, understanding and decisions about a person, group or community in an unconscious manner.

How to be an Upstander

A bystander might just stand by and watch, but an **upstander takes action** to address the situation and show support for those impacted.

Remember every situation is different and there's no one right way to respond.

- Always prioritize your safety and the safety of those around you.

Being an upstander can look like:

- Interrupting or engaging to stop the behavior
- Providing support to a victim who has experienced a hate incident
- Reporting the incident to law enforcement or community organizations
- Educating yourself and others about the experience and needs of targeted communities

De-escalation Tips and Having Difficult Conversations

Pause

Take a breath or count to 10 to calm your nerves and assess the situation, rather than rushing in.

Practice situational awareness

Become aware of your surroundings, entrances and exits, and the role of others who may be present.

Assess the situation

It may not be possible to reason or problem-solve with someone who is enraged.¹

- **Always prioritize safety!** Disengage or remove yourself from a situation when necessary to keep yourself or others safe.

¹ https://www.jointcommission.org/-/media/tjc/documents/resources/workplace-violence/CPI-s-Top-10-De-Escalation-Tips_revised-01-18-17.pdf

De-escalation Tips and Having Difficult Conversations cont.

If you choose to engage or respond, these communication strategies can support difficult conversations and de-escalation:

Self-regulation: try to stay calm and be aware of signs of anger or tension you might be holding in your body or your voice.

- Take some deep breaths, drink some water and relax your body.
- Consider your body language and remember that respectful eye contact, distance and posture can depend on culture and context.
- Practice self empathy: take a break or set a boundary whenever you need to.

Listen

- Give the other person time to express their concerns and feelings.

Reflect

- Reflect or mirror what you hear to show you are listening and clear up misunderstandings.

Empathize

- When someone is angry or agitated, they may be in distress, frustrated, or afraid.
- People may be more open to hearing your point of view after you have listened to and empathized with them.

Ask questions

- If you hear something that offends you or you believe is untrue, try asking a question to clarify the person's point of view.
 - “Can you help me understand what you mean when you say...?”
 - “Tell me more...”
 - “What led you to that point of view?”

Share your point of view

- “I have had a different experience...”
- “I see it differently. I'd like to share my point of view...”

Remember the difference between intent and impact

- Sometimes bias-motivated harm is intentional. Hates crimes are the most extreme example of this. Other times, an individual may not realize the pain or suffering they have caused with their words or actions and they may get defensive if someone tries to tell them.
- Impact matters! If someone tells you that your words hurt them, it is your responsibility to listen and try to address it, even if you did not intend harm.
- If you have experienced harm or pain due to someone else's words or actions and they deny any wrongdoing, you might say:
 - “I hear that wasn't your intention, but it still made me feel...”
 - “I'd like to share my experience...”
- For more tips, see [*When do we call out bias, and when do we call in?*](#) from Seed the Way.

Resolve or Disengage

- Does the other person have a need or request?
- Do you have a request of the other person?
- Do you need to end the conversation to take care of yourself or stay safe?
- Set boundaries calmly but firmly. Remove yourself from the situation and ask for help when needed!